



# **WCRA NEWS**

## **JANUARY/MARCH 2021**

**THE WCRA HAS LOST A LONG TIME SUPPORTER AND  
BENEFACTOR WHO WAS SO INTEGRAL TO THE GROWTH  
OF OUR ASSOCIATION**

**THE HISTORY OF THE WCRA'S BUSINESS CAR '  
ALBERTA' . . . THERE WAS MORE THAN ONE CPR  
DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT CARS NAMED  
'ALBERTA' . .WHICH ONE IS OURS?**



## The WCRA GENERAL MEETINGS

The General Meetings have been postponed until further notice due to the current pandemic.

### ON THE COVER:

Carl Vanderspek, a lifetime member of our association and very generous benefactor to the WCRA passed away on February 5th. A tribute to Carl by Singh Biln is included in this issue.

## MEMBER NEWS

The WCRA News is now a quarterly publication and will convert to a magazine format in mid 2021 - delay due to pandemic issues.

### PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

- If the expiry date on your membership card or date on your label is 31 Dec . 2020(12/31/20) or earlier, your membership has expired and it is time to renew. And if the label reads 9/30/20, 10/31/20 or 11/30/20, this is your last issue of the WCRA News

**We need all of you as members, please renew today.**

**Note: the bi-monthly WCRA members meetings will be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Our first Zoom meeting held on Nov. 24th was a great success with 43 online including 37 members. This is the highest number of members 'attending' a meeting in years. We had members from Vancouver Island, Squamish, Fraser Valley and even the US! The next Zoom meeting was held on Tuesday, Jan. 26th with another large 'turnout' of 32 members, 3 staff and 2 guests.**

**Details from that meeting will be in the next issue of the newsletter.**

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The West Coast Railway Association is an historical group dedicated to the preservation of British Columbia railway history. Membership is open to all people with an interest in railways past and present. We are a non-profit British Columbia society, registered as a Canadian charity. Membership prices are as follows, **Please note that GST must be added to all fees:**

Senior \$50 (\$52.50), Individual \$55 (\$57.75), Family \$65 (\$68.25) **E Members (electronic newsletter only) are \$35 (\$36.75) Senior, \$40 (\$42.00) individual and \$50 (\$52.50) family.** Other categories are:

- Junior Member (age 18 and under ) \$ 30 (\$31.50)
- Sustaining Member \$100 (tax receipt) **plus** membership type regular fee
- Life Membership \$700 (\$735) individual life / \$1,200 (\$1,260) family life

All memberships include the bi-monthly newsletter, Heritage Park admission (except Special Events), mini rail rides and discounts on food and merchandise. The Association holds a monthly meeting on the last Tuesday of the month at 1930 hours in Burnaby at Rainbow Creek Station in Confederation Park. Apply through [www.wcra.org](http://www.wcra.org) or mail to WCRA, PO Box 2387 Stn. Main, Squamish, BC, V8B 0B6

## **FROM THE EDITOR**

We hosted our second bi-monthly meeting by Zoom on January 26th. Meeting notes will be in the next issue. It was great to see another large turnout on line with 32 members attending. Together with the first Zoom General Meeting in November, these two were the best attended meetings in years. This format will continue for the foreseeable future with the next General Meeting March 30th.

This will be the last newsletter in this format for the WCRA. The new newsletter format will be quarterly with the first edition being launched in late May 2021 just prior to our grand re-opening.

The new format will be mailed to every member and it will be produced as a glossy magazine. The quarterly format will allow for much richer and in-depth content for our members.

## **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT ON CHANGES FOR 2021**

### **Membership and Season's Passes**

The format for membership has been adjusted to better represent the people that support and use the facilities in Squamish. Membership will run on the calendar year with annual memberships ending on the 31st of December each year. This change will help the association generate revenue in January and February each year when revenue is most needed for the sustainability of the association. In addition to the calendar change, going forward Membership will provide you with voting rights and the quarterly mailed newsletter but not access to the museum. In order to have an annual pass to the museum you can now purchase that separately or as a package with your membership. Thank you to everyone for supporting the West Coast Railway Association through the purchase of a membership or seasons pass or both. For questions about membership or seasons passes please contact [hardeep@wcra.org](mailto:hardeep@wcra.org). All 2021 membership and season's passes are only valid when purchased directly through Hardeep at the WCRA

### **2021 Volunteerism**

As we move into 2021 and continue to operate our facilities with a skeleton crew of staff, Volunteerism is even more important than ever in keeping our facilities running and available for the general public. If you are interested in volunteering in 2021, please contact Gord at: [generalmanager@wcra.org](mailto:generalmanager@wcra.org) We are looking for volunteers in the following sub categories. Saturday Museum Interpreters, Major Events (Thomas, NPX), Restorations and Construction, Saturday Food Services, Railway Operations. We are also building and updating old lists so if you have any interest in being contacted about volunteering please reach out to Gord via email or by phone at 604-898-9336 We will be hosting a spring volunteer orientation lunch once we get closer to opening. Please watch the website for updates.

## **Covid-19**

As we continue to make our way through the global pandemic, we are following Provincial Health guidelines for our staff and volunteers that are onsite daily. We will continue to adapt as the rules evolve and will post the most recent measures we are taking to keep everyone safe once we get closer to opening.

## **Donation - Thank You's**

A big thank you to **Patrick Doiron** for the donation of \$5,000 toward the ballast required to install a switch leading into the main station track. This switch will allow our Railway Operations team to easily pull out the Royal Hudson on special occasions and for film purposes. Thank you Pat!

Special Thanks to **Liz Haan** for the ongoing support she has given to the association. Most recently Liz donated a very valuable collection of Brass Model Trains.

## **FROM THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING**

This Meeting was conducted by ZOOM. Kyle Miller was the moderator

Chair Craig McDowall called the meeting to order at 1940 hrs with 37 Voting Members, 1 Spouse, 2 Staff and 3 Unknown [Guests] present as listed from Screen Names. THIS WAS A QUORUM.

A moment of Silence was observed for Members and Supporters who passed away:

- Wallace Audley;
- Richard Harvey
- Ernie Ledgerwood;
- Bart Mc Millan [BCRail/CN Police];
- Harry Home [CN 6060]

## **REPORTS**

Bob combined his President's Report with a number of Staff Reports:

- in his opening remarks, he said it was great to see so many members were able to participate in this first Zoom session
- the objective of this year's Business Plan was to solve the cash flow problem
- considering we had no special events this year, our financial position is fairly good BUT we have mainly survived on Government programs
- our outlook for January to March is uncertain at this time as it is COVID dependent.
- the pandemic has affected our ability to generate donations due to the current stock market being down and businesses affected by COVID.

-a dialogue has started with our debenture holders in an attempt to have a 'win win' solution to the long outstanding issue with debentures thanks to the offer from an anonymous donor to fund a cash payout of 30% of the principal and 30% of the interest due for the three outstanding years owed (other than 2020) and a tax receipt for the balance. Response so far has been good. - we have been able to secure an improved deal with BC Rail Properties as the result of the difficulties of getting access for BC Hydro service to the MP2 site due to need to bury under the tracks

- Based on the positive attendance results from our 'open only Saturdays' this past summer, we have made some tentative plans for 2021 to include DOWT now to be held in October, opening the park April through October on Saturday, Sunday and holidays plus special events with an 'all inclusive' entry fee for mini rail, speeder and RDC rides and (hopefully) MP2 tours. (See park hours for 2021 on Page 12 of this newsletter).

- Rebranding of the WCRA will hopefully be complete by spring opening with the association being renamed to better reflect its new focus. The site will re-open as an interactive museum with exhibits on all 7 tracks in the Roundhouse plus additional ones in the renovated Car Shop.

-the operating trainset will be upgraded with work to be done on both F units, and 5 coaches (2 green and 3 tuscan) when possible. Plans call for letterboards on the tuscan coaches to be changed to Canadian Pacific and the ones on the green coaches to Canadian National.

-the movie business is back up in business with Gord working hard to get rentals -Craig commented that his daughter (who is a Post Production Supervisor in the film industry) told him that due to BC's far better handling of the pandemic than California, that 2021 looks very positive for this province and hopefully for some movie site rentals for the park

-Bob advised that the Bank had renewed our mortgage at a very favorable rate. They are happy with our performance, despite the pandemic.

## **OTHER REPORTS**

Robert MacBeth reported on Railway Operations and Restoration

-Transport Canada audit went well. Tech Safety BC required a minor adjustment. Volunteers have made improvements to MP2. A new volunteer Lunch Room has been set up with COVID protocols in place, the wood shop has been re-located and set up with heating now in place for the lunch room and wood shop

-Locomotives – Christian and Jason have been continuing to work on 6520; Inspection of the oil in 561 and 6503 revealed high fuel saturation which considering time since their last oil change is not surprising.

- Trucks on some CP vintage "RCP" fleet are reaching their wear limits for their mainline operations [50-60mph]. Those on the "Alberta" are the same style and have less wear; our operations are at less than 50 mph; The trucks have swapped ... We get rebuilt trucks at no cost.
- A donor has funded the building of a 2nd Turntable lead connecting to the Main Line [and aligned to Track 7] which will make moving the Royal Hudson a one Engine operation.

### **Greg Robertshaw reported on the Collection**

- Greg is the new Chair of the Collection Committee
- still hopeful of getting some items from Western Forest Product's Englewood Logging Railway.
- they would be used to create a railway-related logging exhibit, which has always been a part of the Heritage Park's plan
- some items being considered are a unique crew speeder, trailer and a couple of log cars
- progress on this has been slow due to the pandemic and that also the site is 'land locked'
- an offer from a member to fund transportation costs and Colin Smith offering to assist through his outside contacts, will help us to hopefully obtain these artifacts

### **Miscellaneous Items**

- Bob mentioned that memberships sold after Dec. 31/20 will be for a calendar year -'Park Only' passes will be introduced (no membership benefits)
- work has started on a new website which will include an online (Shopify) Gift Shop that will sell surplus or donated items to raise funds. Expect to have it 'live' before Christmas hopefully.
- Shopify is limited to low priced items destined in Canada. High value items and any high value or US items will be processed through ebay.
- possibility of future excursions came up
- Bob explained that mainline 'per trip' insurance is not available - prohibitive cost
- With continued support of CN, we are hoping to be able to once again operate Dinner Trains and possibly RDC trips as neither are mainline
- there is currently the possibility of a private train charter mid-June for David McLean using our equipment
- Gordon Hall was thanked for his volunteering this year. He suggested that there are probably many who would be prepared to 'carry out' projects if such a list was made available. He also suggested that the mezzanine floor should become an exhibit area again

### **Other Business**

-Volunteer Hours: Jeremy advised that due to COVID this year and how much it affected volunteer activity, we can use as many reportable Volunteer Hours for this year as possible. They are recorded on a Calendar Year basis so please submit them as soon as you know you are finished for the year. For 2020, please submit them by the end of February to Donna Simon at donna@wcra.org . Or mail to her attention to the Heritage Park (PO BOX 2387, Squamish B. C. V8B 0B6.

-Mileage and Expense Claims: Cut-off for claims to receive 2020 tax receipts was Sept. 30th (due in November). Any received after that date will get a 2021 tax receipt. She can also be reached by phone: 604-484-2791. If no answer, please leave a message and she will call you back. Please separate your information into two categories:

- Time volunteering at the Heritage Park (including MP2) which also includes travel time to and from home and . .

- Time volunteering at other locations (including any hours at home) One yearly total for EACH category is fine (DS)

### **Board of Directors**

Jeremy updated the list of Board members for 2021. This was followed by a motion by the members to approve the slate (appointed Feb. 19th, 2020 to term ending March 31st, 2021):

Steve Crombie (Chair)

Max Hufton (Vice Chair)

Jeremy Davy (Secretary Treasurer)

Singh Biln

John Day

George Game

Paula Martin

Craig McDowall

Kyle Miller

Debora Sweeney

Christian Vazzaz

Rob Payette (Appointed Sept 15th, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Motion seconded by D'arcy Nelson and carried unanimously.

There being no further Business, closure was moved by D'arcy at 20:40.

Kyle, on behalf of the Board, thanked all for attending this 'milestone meeting'.

## PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

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- If the label reads 9/30/20, 10/31/20 or 11/30/20 this is your last issue of WCRA News.

We need all of you as members, please renew today. [JD]

## MEMBERSHIP Updates

Welcome as Members ...

- Steve Banfield of Mission
- Andy Foster of Salmon Arm
- Jonathan Lim and Family of Langley
- Mike Truttman of Campbell River
- Jim Hegan of Garibaldi Highlands

Welcome back as a Member ...

- Ken Doiron of Coquitlam

## WCRA Trivia #370(Jan.) by: Ryan Cruickshank

Q. Where is the North America Railway Hall of Fame?

## *Feature Article*

### ON THE FUNNEL

By Bill Johnston

### **The S.S. Prince George Serves BC's Coastal Waters – Twice!**

Canada's west coast and southeast Alaska have long been served by a variety of vessels of various sizes and grandeur. One of the major companies in this service was the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and its successor, Canadian National Railways. The main competitor at sea for the GTP and CNR was the same as the one on land, namely Canadian Pacific Railways. The Union Steamship Company was on the scene first however, servicing the traffic generated by the Klondike gold rush and other more commercial enterprises. (Union was bought out by CP in 1948). Some historical railway background is in order before covering the story of the CN ships.

Canada's first transcontinental railway (the CPR) had arrived in Vancouver in 1887 but competition in the form of the Grand Trunk Pacific was vying for an alternative outlet to the Pacific Coast. The president of this railway was Charles Melville Hays a visionary not unlike that of the CPR's famous builders. He saw a rocky promontory (10 km from the mouth of the navigable Skeena River) called Kaien Island, as having an excellent harbour. This site, some 750 km from Vancouver, was to be the site of a major new seaport and the terminus of his railway. The name for the new city was decided in a contest and chosen as Prince Rupert, after a German/English army officer and scientist from the 17th century. His Canadian connection was that he was the first Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Surveying for the townsite began in May of 1906. Railway construction proceeded eastward from Prince Rupert in 1907 and westward from Edmonton in 1909. Of course, GTP ships were used for the supply of materiel to Prince Rupert. The joining together of the railway occurred at a last spike ceremony one mile east of Fort Fraser on April 7th, 1914. The first through passenger train arrived in Prince Rupert on April 9th, 1914. By then unfortunately, Hays was dead, having perished in the sinking of the Titanic on April 14th, 1912. It was said he carried his plans for the future of the railway, and Prince Rupert, in his hip pocket. He had gone to Britain to promote and raise money for his railway. Following his death, and the onset of WWI, the GTP was in severe financial straits. The end came on March 7th, 1916 when the company was forced into receivership by the Canadian government. It was absorbed by Canadian National Railways.

Because links from coastal settlements overland were tenuous at best thriving steamship businesses supplied major communities. Victoria, Seattle, Vancouver and Prince Rupert as well as southeast Alaska and its isolated ports were well covered. Union Steamships, the first on the coast, had vessels named: Coquitlam, Cust, Coutli, Camosun, Capilano, Cowichan, Cardena, and more. Canadian Pacific's ships bore the name "Princess". They included: Beatrice, Charlotte, Kathleen, Marguerite, Norah, and Victoria. The GTP, and later CNR, ships bore the name "Prince". They included Albert, Charles, David, George, Henry, John, Robert, Rupert, and William. Two of these CN's ships were considered the "flagships" and carried regular coastal service up to and through WWII. They were the Prince Rupert and its sister ship the Prince George. Both were built in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in England and launched 3 months apart late in 1909 and early 1910.

Each was 3,379 gross tons and had a service speed of up to 19 knots. Both ships were immensely popular being well appointed with good dining facilities and comfortable cabins. For the Prince Rupert its typical itinerary would be: Depart its namesake city on a Monday at 9:00 AM, arrive Vancouver Tuesday at 4:30 PM, sail at 6:00 PM arriving Victoria at 10:30 PM.

Leave at midnight for Seattle arriving at 6:00 AM on Wednesday . It would then depart for Victoria at 9:00 AM arriving 1:30 PM. Departing at 4:00 PM it would then arrive back in Vancouver a 4:00 PM. At midnight it would then sail back to Prince Rupert arriving there on Friday morning . This scheduling was typical of many of the ships serving the coast. As industry and populations grew at Ocean Falls and similar communities stops would be made there too. Many of the ships of all lines would continueto Ketchikan, Wrangell , Sitka , Juneau , and Skagway . S.S. Prince George ran similar itineraries and later captured the tourist trade to Alaska. After an engine-room fire, that ship burned at Ketchikan in September of 1945 . In October it was sold for scrap and eventually sank under tow in Unimak Pass, Alaska en-route to China. Fires, groundings, and sinkings were the fate of many of the above-named ships, too numerous to cover here.

It was decided to build a new S.S. Prince George and as it was the last to carry the CN “worm ” logo (photo ) it is described in more detail . It was built in Yarrow Shipyards Esquimalt in 1947 at a cost of \$3 million . At the time it was the largest private commercial vessel ever constructed in Canada . It weighed in at 5,812 tons , was 350 ft long with a beam of 52 ft. It could accommodate about 350 passengers in 5 of its 7 decks . It was powered by 2 six-cylinder uniflow steam engines each with 4 oil burners . Its service speed was 18 knots (33 km/h). The ship was all white with a tricolor funnel . At the top, a broad blue band over a narrower white band over a red base.



On October 18, 1953, the ship, operating in a heavy fog with its radar non-functional, ran aground at Ripple Point, in Johnstone Strait. Captain E.B. Caldwell, then the senior Canadian National master, was in the bridge navigating by whistle and echo at the time of the grounding. Captain Caldwell saw the point shortly before striking it, and ordered the helm over, which spared the steamer from a head-on strike on the point. As a result, the hull sustained only minor damage. Prince George was assisted to port with tugs, with one of its own engines still in operation. There were no casualties.

By 1959, Prince George, with Vancouver as its base port was employed exclusively on summer cruises to Alaska. The ship changed colours in 1961 to a red funnel and black lower hull when CN adopted its new "worm" logo. (photo) A full-page ad in CNR's system timetable of 1968 describes it as a "famed" cruise ship with all outside cabins, beautifully furnished, 8 elegant public rooms and 5 meals-a-day dining. The CNR railway timetables of the 60's described a typical 9 or 10-day Alaska cruise itinerary: Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, Wrangell, Prince Rupert, Vancouver. The 1969 timetable for example quoted fares for passage, meals, and berth per person ranging from \$655 for a high season deluxe suite down to \$203 for an off-season standard cabin. In the early 60's the season was late May to September but by 1969 the season expanded. That year, as an example, the first sailing from Vancouver was April 26th with the last trip on October 11th.

Another competitor, Northland Navigation, arrived on the scene in a small way in 1942 and grew quickly enough to take over both CPSS and Union Steamships by 1958. CNR's railway timetables then named the Northland Prince as the scheduled carrier serving Vancouver, Ocean Falls and Prince Rupert on a weekly frequency. By 1975 this service was terminated having lost its subsidies from the provincial government.

Likewise, the Prince George continued with its Alaska cruises until 1975. Its scheduled 1976 season was stopped when a fire broke out 6 weeks prior to its first sailing. The ship was sold to the BC Government and then to Wong Brothers to be used as a restaurant in Nanaimo. In 1995 it was burned out by 2 mysterious fires when docked across from the BC Mining Museum at Britannia Beach. In October 1996 it was to be towed to Taiwan for breaking up but came to an ignominious end by sinking off Dutch Harbor, Alaska.

Thus ends the story of 2 Canadian National steamships named Prince George, both important vessels in the company's equipment roster and in the history of BC's (and Alaska's) coastal transportation system.

Sources: Wikipedia; Nauticapedia; and an excellent soft cover book entitled Prince Ships of Northern BC by Norman Hacking - available from Heritage House Publishing Company, Richmond BC. Photo credit: World Ship Society

wmjohnston@shaw.ca

## **Heritage Park Public Schedule for 2021**

**Hours: 10 AM - 4 PM**

Saturday - May 29th - Grand Re-opening of the Railway Museum of BC  
Saturday - June 5th

Saturday - June 12th

Saturday - June 19th - Stay for the Dinner Train (extra)

Saturday - June 26th - 'Grampa Day' (free with one paid admission)

Thursday - July 1st - Canada Day Holiday

Saturday - July 3rd - 'Grannie Day' (free with one paid admission)

Saturday - July 10th - Royal Hudson Appreciation Day

Saturday - July 17th

Saturday - July 24th - Stay for the Dinner Train (extra)

Saturday - July 31st - Photo Day - All staff in costume

Monday - Aug. 2nd - BC Day Holiday

Saturday - Aug. 7th

Saturday - Aug. 14th - Kids Day (free with one paid adult admission)

Saturday - Aug. 21st

Sunday - Aug. 22nd

Saturday - Aug. 28th

Sunday - Aug. 29th

Monday - Sept. 6th - Labour Day Holiday

Saturday - Sept. 11th - Stay for the Dinner Train (extra)

Saturday - Sept. 18th - 50% off all gift shop items

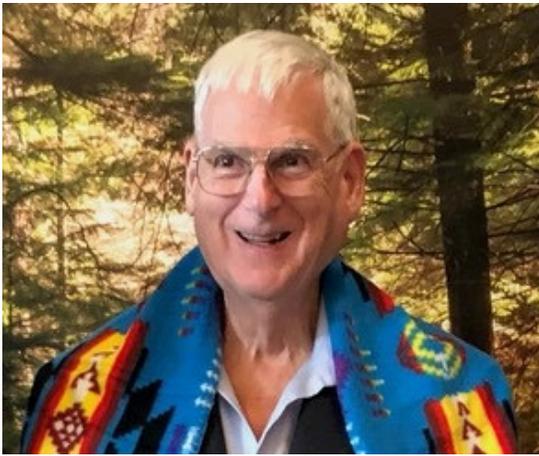
## **WCRA Loses a Great Friend – Carl P. Vanderspek**

We are saddened by the passing of WCRA life member, former director and dear friend Carl P. Vanderspek, aged 79, early Friday, February 5th, 2021 after a year long battle with cancer. Carl passed away quietly at home in Burnaby surrounded by his loving wife Margaret, family and some of his closest friends.

Carl was a UBC grad, a Chartered Professional Accountant and applied his laser sharp business acumen to a number of business ventures and projects in his lifetime, most notably as the founder and builder of Trailer Wizards. He developed and grew Trailer Wizards into Canada's largest provider of commercial trailers and sold the business in late 2019.

Carl also developed and shared his skills as a philanthropist supporting those who apply their education and skills to help others. He donated generously to health care and those in need, helping thousands to date and for generations to come.

Carl grew up in a trucking family but was also passionately involved in a series of rail hobbies, including the operation of speeders on railways in western Canada and the US, mini-rail operation and G-scale. One of his favorite places in the world was Train Mountain Oregon where he loved to entertain guests, taking them into the wilderness on his trains and rail-bikes and ending the days sharing stories and engaging in diverse conversations. Carl cherished time spent with family, friends and colleagues who joined him on long weekends to “play trains”.



Carl was a WCRA Director from 2004 to 2009 and he and Margaret have been amongst our biggest supporters. Over the years, they volunteered at many of our events and generously donated funds towards a number of projects and acquisitions. These included the construction of the Roundhouse, the purchase of two Budd railcars and the St. Jacob's tourist train, the repair of locomotives, upgrade of coaches and upgrades to our MP2 shop. In addition, they have given us their collection of speeders and their 3000 square foot G train layout.

Carl's legacy of helping those who help others, will be honoured through his Foundation - 625 Powell Street Foundation. If you would like to make a donation in Carl's name, please go to [625powell.org](http://625powell.org) where you can donate directly to many of the organizations he supports. You can also donate to the WCRA in Carl's name.

Carl Peter Vanderspek: a truly great man who achieved great things and who cared deeply for the well being of others.

### **The History of the 'Alberta'**

Did you know that six different business cars were once named 'Alberta' between 1902 and 1985. Here is the history of all six cars.

The first *Alberta* was an 1883 wooden sleeping car named *Kaministiquia* that was converted to a business car in 1902, renamed *Alberta* and assigned to the Alberta Division General Superintendent until 1917. It was renamed *Algoma* and re-assigned to the Algoma division. The car was scrapped at Angus shops in 1960.

The second *Alberta* (1917-1919) is probably the most interesting and historic. But only the body still exists today, without trucks. This wooden car started out life as a sleeping/parlour car named *Rideau*, on the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rly in 1875. CPR bought the car for almost half price (\$2500) and combined with the relics of a \$200 car at the Coburg Car Works and turned it out in 1882 as Van Horne's official car. He used it till 1885. The car went through a number of re-assignments in the West before being assigned in 1913 on the Alberta division. It was named *Alberta* in 1917. CPR withdrew it from service in 1955 and a Winnipeg businessman bought it minus its running gear and turned it into a hunting lodge at Caddam Bay on Lake Manitoba. The Fort La Reine Museum in Portage La Prairie acquired it in 1976 where it resides today.

The third *Alberta* (1919 to 1929) started out as an 1884 wooden CPR sleeping car named *St. Lawrence*. CPR rebuilt it into official car Brunswick in 1907. After a couple of re-namings, it became business car *Alberta* in 1919. In 1929, it became Car #9 and the Western Development Museum in North Battleford SK acquired it from the CPR in 1956 and transferred to their Moose Jaw Museum in 1981.

The fourth *Alberta* (now at our Heritage Park) (1929 to 1962) held the *Alberta* title the longest - a total of 43 years. It is a steel business car built in 1929 expressly for District Superintendent duty at Angus shops in Montreal. The car was named *Alberta* at the outset and then kept the name until it was numbered #8 in 1962. An interesting sidebar to this car is the Superintendent also had a 1929 Packard 'rail car' (M600) to accompany the coach. He used it to inspect trestles, bridges, and other rail assets while the coach sat on a nearby siding. It was withdrawn from service in 1969 and sold to the Mohawk Candle Company in New Westminster. In 1971 it became a rail car restaurant in Gastown and was there for almost thirty years under three different owners. In February 2002, it was acquired by the WCRA and using cranes was lifted over to the CPR siding next door and moved to Squamish. Its interior featured Indonesian Mahogany (much of which had been removed when converted to a restaurant).

The fifth *Alberta* (1973 to 1975) was originally a wooden official car built for CPR President T.G Shaughnessy and named *Killarney* (which is what he named all his business cars from 1906 on). This car was later 'steel sheathed' and after a number of re-assignments became *Alberta* in May, 1973. But less than seven months later, it caught fire at Bowden AB and was scrapped the following year at Ogden Shops in Calgary.

The sixth and final *Alberta* (1977 to 1985) is a 'steel sheathed' 1908 car built for the Grand Trunk Pacific subsidiary of the Grand Trunk Rly and named *Transcontinental*. It was a 'tail end' car and was on GTP's first transcontinental train to Prince Rupert and was present for the 'driving of GT's last spike' on

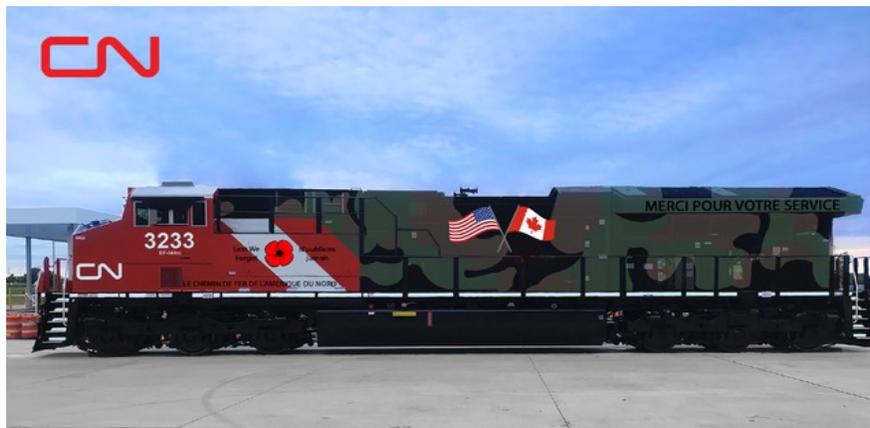
April 7th, 1914. After GT's collapse, it became a CN car until two Calgary business men bought it in 1976. Interestingly CPR then leased the car from them in 1977 and renamed it *Alberta*. Gordon Bell, owner of the Three Valley Gap Rail Museum bought it in 1985 and it is currently displayed in his Roundhouse at Three Valley Gap today.

## RAIL NEWS

### CN

CN announced on Nov. 10th, 2020 that two new tribute locomotives have been painted to pay homage to veterans and active military men and women across North America. Railway spokesman Jonathan Abecassis said. "Their custom design represents the proud footprint we have established across our network and our deep recognition for the veterans who live and work in the communities our trains pass through every day".

The locomotives feature camouflage paint on the long hood. The engineer's side of the locomotive carries a "Thank You For Your Service" message in English, along with a "support our troops" yellow ribbon. The conductor's side conveys the same in French, along with an image of a poppy and the words "Lest We Forget."



CN will recognize veterans on Nov. 11 with two minutes of silence in its offices, yards, and shops. And train crews on mainlines rang their bells at 11 AM local time.

CN has joined the 'heritage' paint as seen in the US, with five heritage units to mark the 25th anniversary of becoming a publicly-traded company. Prior to 1995, CN was the largest and oldest Crown Corporation in Canada. Since going public it has gone on to acquire four major railroads: Illinois Central, Wisconsin Central, Elgin, Joliet & Eastern, and BC Rail. The fifth 'heritage' unit is painted in a Grand Trunk Western scheme. CN's rail system now touches three coasts, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and south to the Gulf of Mexico. Of one of particular interest to us here at the WCRA is the BC Rail heritage unit (see back cover).

Microsoft founder Bill Gates has amassed a sizeable ownership stake in CN. Most of those shares were acquired through Cascade Investment LLC, an investment firm solely owned by Gates. Cascade owns 101,400,770 shares, or 14.28 percent, of the railway, according to CNN Business.

Gates has been investing in CN since 2006, and his total investment in the railway is valued at \$16.3 billion.

## **CP**

CP has bought 40 more retired UP SD9043MACs. It is possible that some may only be for parts, but unknown at this time how many will be kept operable.

CP moved 2.22 million metric tonnes of Canadian grain and grain products in January 2021. This exceeds the previous January record in 2020 by 6 percent.

A CP unit train carrying potash derailed in the Crowsnest Pass late Friday afternoon on Feb. 12th. There were no injuries. Two units derailed but stayed upright. And a total of 48 cars derailed and five cars ended up in the Crowsnest Lake.

## **Viterra Terminals**

Viterra has acquired a new switcher for its Cascadia Terminal (former Alberta Wheat Pool on the Vancouver Harbour).(KA)



## **White Pass & Yukon**

WP & Y never ran excursions during 2020, Now operations are in jeopardy for 2021 as well, in the wake of a Transport Canada decision not to allow ships carrying more than 100 people to call at Canadian ports until February 2022.

The decision, which extends a ban on ships with more than 100 passengers, will prevent most cruise ships from docking in Alaska. Most large ships that visit the state are registered in foreign countries and U.S. law prohibits them from sailing between two American ports without stopping at a foreign port in between. Cruise ships that head for Alaska either start the trip from Canada or stop there on the way.

Twenty-seven employees of the White Pass & Yukon Route were recently sent letters from the company, telling them their positions were being abolished. Many of those employees were seasonal coach cleaners. A WP & Y spokesperson stated "If we're not running tours, there's no coach cars to clean."

## **LATE BREAKING RAIL NEWS**

### **Goderich-Exeter Railway**

No one was hurt after a train derailed in Goderich, Ont. on Monday, Feb. 1 at the Goderich Harbour, near the grain elevators. The loco was numbered RLK 4095 and is an ex CN GP40. The Goderich-Exeter Railway (GEXR) is a freight railway that runs from Goderich to Stratford, Ont. "Essentially the train was leaving town and was going up an incline and at some point it ended up going back toward the grain elevators and gathered a tremendous amount of speed and collided with a transport truck," said OPP Const. Jamie Stanley, adding that the driver of the truck was not in the vehicle at the time of the crash. As the train cars approached the harbour they hit a pickup truck that was in the area. Two seniors were in the truck but they spotted the train and were able to move the vehicle and avoid a harder hit.

### **CN**

CN's Dash-8 cowlis (and the ones they acquired from BC Rail) are coming to the end of their careers. Although some have gone to scrap, the roughly 200 Dash-8s that CN bought second hand from BNSF (former ATSF) and UP (former CNW), seem to still have some life left in them.

At Piper. Mile 148 of the New Westminster subdivision marks the eastern (RR southern) end of a project to install 18,000 feet of third track alongside the existing double-track mainline with the new third track, officially the North Shore Approach Staging Track, intended to ease congestion on this route and reduce waiting times for the tunnel, which is undergoing a major upgrade to its ventilation system as part of this effort.

The Herzog Tie Train has been at Lynn Creek in North Van several times in late January and early February. Some new switches have been added as well as new signalling to accommodate more grain, coal and other traffic.(JZ)



### **Southern Railway**

A Southern train experienced a minor derailment in Abbotsford on Feb. 14th near the Feat Riverside Rd & Marshall Rd with the road closed. Apparently only one car derailed next to the head end power. Traffic was detoured until the hopper was re-railed.

### **Western Maryland Scenic RR**

Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's former Chesapeake & Ohio 2-6-6-2 No. 1309 made its first move under its own power in 64 years on Dec. 31. It was the start of test runs for the world's largest operating Mallet (which uses its steam twice) following a six-year, \$3.5 million restoration by the non-profit preservation railway. No. 1309 was the fabled Baldwin Locomotive Works' last domestic product in 1949 and is a major landmark in U.S. steam locomotive manufacturing.



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**BACK COVER**

Top Photo: CN's BC Rail Heritage unit in CN's PG shops. Photo: Ted Worsfold  
Bottom Photo: CN's Wisconsin Central Heritage unit. Photo: Ken Storey

**TRIVIA ANSWER:**

- The Non-profit charitable organization founded in 1996 is located in St. Thomas, Ontario. Their goals are to maintain, preserve and honour railway history through induction into the Hall of Fame with categories that include People, Events, Structures, Railway Art Forms, Rolling Stock, Technical Innovations, Workers and Trains, and Inventions. The Hall is located on the second floor of the brick 1873 ex-Canada Southern Railway station and officially opened in September of 2013.



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