



The **STEAM WHISTLE**



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March 2007



Coordinator's Corner

By Bob Berbeck
TraiNgang Coordinator

2007 is off to a good start. Our AGM was held at Confederation Park and our first show was in a new room at Maple Ridge Hospital.

The new portion of Maple Ridge Hospital was perfect for our layout but a small problem presented itself when seven wheelchairs headed for the same area at the same time causing a traffic jam. Members quickly jumped into action to direct the traffic returning order to the room. The CPR police would have been proud if they were there.

Our next show will be at Confederation Park on the 14th of April where we will be there for two consecutive weekends. We are then at Burnaby Heritage Village for the May long weekend. The TraiNgang had a table at Western Rails this year and success selling and buying was had by all.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone out at our shows this year and I do hope everyone gets a chance to run their Trains.

Take Care and Keep on Track

Bob

Coordinator's Corner

By Emil Ferry
TraiNgang Assistant Coordinator

With 2006 ending in a snow storm and 2007 starting with a blanket of snow on the ground, the AGM was well attended and showed the continued support for the club and its future. Those who attended talked about the upcoming shows and how we as members we can help make it another great year for the TraiNgang.

The Maple Ridge Hospital was the first show of 2007. We started with breakfast where more people than planned showed up and made the setup go fast. Not only did we have trains running but thanks to Robin Willies, a new club member, the set up went smoother thanks to his work at reorganizing the track box. With continued support for all upcoming shows, for the website and for the newsletter, we will have a very fun filled 2007

Emil

Ridge-Meadows Hospital 2007

By Tom Carr

The annual Ridge-Meadows Hospital Show on March 3rd and 4th at Baillie House was an outstanding success with a total of 13 TraiNgang members participating over the two days. This was our first show in the new Baillie House building, which replaced Creekside and Alouette Manors last September. It's a very nice facility, with lots of space for us to set up our layout on the main level near the front entrance.

As in previous years we had visitors from the moment we arrived, with several of the residents spending hours at a time enjoying the trains and talking with our members about railroading as it used to be in BC and Western Canada.

Baillie House isn't our largest show, and it doesn't draw the biggest crowds, but it is certainly our most appreciated show. Every year we receive many positive comments from the residents and their visiting family members, as well as from the staff and volunteers. Our thanks to Intercon Security, and the recreational therapy staff for their assistance and hospitality during the show.

2007 Show Schedule

Our 2007 Show Schedule is as follows:

March 3 rd to 4 th 2007	Ridge Meadows Hospital
April 14 th to 21 st	Confederation Park
May 19 th to 21 st	Burnaby Heritage Museum
July 21 st to 29 th	Confederation Park
September 1 st to 3 rd	Burnaby Heritage Museum
November 9 th to 11 th	Trains 2007 Cameron
November 25 th to 26 th	Burnaby Heritage Museum

Please check our web site for periodic schedule updates and announcements.

Classifieds

The classified section is free to all TraiNgang members and can be used to either buy or sell.

Contact Rob McKee to place your ad in the next Steam Whistle.

Free to a good home **Rocks**

Recently I acquired several boxes of preformed rocks perfect for building a layout. These were given to me by a fellow model railroader who couldn't throw them away. If you are interested in saving some money and time making your own rocks give **Rob McKee** a call.

604 476-2194

Ron launches his new TV show on TLC this spring! TraiNgang Makeover



All Aboard!

By Tom Carr

The world's fastest passenger train, Great Northern's Empire Builder, hit a top speed of 84.4 mph in a sprint along the Mississippi River..... in 1958!

The Great Dome joined Great Northern's Empire Builder in 1955; it rode on 12 wheels, weighed in at 96.5 tons and seated 75 in the full-length dome. Sorry, Pullman passengers only.

Three different railroads handled the Empire Builder on its' run from Chicago to the west coast. The CB&Q from Chicago to St. Paul, the GN from St. Paul to Seattle (via Spokane), and the SP&S from Spokane to Portland.

Best of the Web

Our "Best of the Web" feature site for March 2007 is the Three Valley Gap Heritage Ghost Town site.

If you enjoy the history of the railroad in BC and the small towns that sprung up along side of the railroad you will want to see the heritage pictures and read about the history of this town. I see some great modeling ideas that would look great on a module!

Visit it at:

<http://www.threevalleygapheritageghosttown.com/>



Run!!

Scary Campfire Stories

By Rob McKee

One of the main attractions of model railroading is the ability to recreate a point of time in history. The building of the railroad shaped Canada and gave birth too our economy, trade routes, and major cities.

The construction of the railroad also gave us historical events like "The Last Spike" at Craigellachie, and the arrival of the first transcontinental train in Port Moody. Along with these historical events come the stories of the men who built the railway, myths, and some ghost stories. With summer coming soon, I thought I would share a story that can be told around the campfire.

The Ghost Train of Medicine Hat

Back in 1908 a young fireman working the night shift encountered a bright light coming towards his train 3km outside of Medicine Hat. The engineer (Twohey) screamed at his fireman to jump off the train before they collided with the oncoming locomotive but it was too late. At the very last moment the oncoming train veered to the right and with the whistle sounding the engineer and fireman could see a passenger train traveling past them. The strange thing about this incident is there is only a single track in this area. The engineer was so distraught by this incident he resigned his post and took time off working in the yard.

Several weeks later the same fireman was traveling in the same stretch of track with a different engineer (Nicholson). Once again they were met with a bright light coming at them, and once again the train veered to the right to avoid collision. As the fireman stared at the passing train he noticed the passengers of the train oddly staring at the two men. That was enough for the fireman to pack it in and go to work in the yard where he would not have to relive this frightening experience ever again.

Several months later the fireman was working in the yard when the report of an accident came in. The Spokane Flyer and a Lethbridge passenger train collided on the single track 3km outside of Medicine Hat; the exact spot where the Ghost Train appeared earlier. Seven people were killed in the accident, including the two engineers who had spotted the ghost trains. One was Twohey, and the other was Nicholson.

Scary Stuff

Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway

By Bob Berbeck

In 1871 when British Columbia joined the confederation and became a Province of Canada, an agreement was made to connect British Columbia with the Eastern provinces by a Transcontinental Railroad. Construction began in 1873 and the immenseness of the task was staggering. Several different routes were proposed, but the Western Terminus of the transcontinental line was to be in Esquimalt. At this time the settlement of Esquimalt was an important base for the Royal Navy. The proposal was for the railroad to run from Esquimalt to the northern end of Vancouver Island, crossing to the mainland via Seymour Narrows and the northern islands of the Straits of Georgia to the shore of Bute inlet.

This agreement is why the E&N passenger service is still in effect after various attempts to shut it down on several occasions.

Residents of Vancouver Island still considered the construction of a rail line between Esquimalt and Nanaimo an immediate necessity and grew impatient over the lack of progress. A sod turning ceremony was held in July 1873 and a short section of line was cleared. However, this was to be all that was built for the next 10 years. In 1881 two groups petitioned the Provincial and Federal Governments for the right to build the railroad.

In 1882 one of the groups headed by Lewis M Clements was granted a charter under the name "Vancouver Land and Railway Company" Due to the lack of funding this proposal fell through. At this time the Provincial and Federal Governments looked at the second group under the famed colliery operators Robert and James Dunsmuir. This group had originally applied for a charter to begin construction of "Victoria, Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway."

On August 20th 1883 a provisional contract had been agreed upon and signed by Robert & James Dunsmuir along with John Bryden, also of Vancouver Island, Charles Crocker & Leland Stanford of San Francisco and Collis P Huntington of New York. The last 3 were well known railroad giants of the Central Pacific Railroad and with their backing; the Dunsmuirs were assured of success in their new venture.

The railroad was incorporated on September 27 1883. The terms of the contract were such that the railroad was to be completed within 3 years.

By late April 1884, the actual construction of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway had commenced. The grade from Esquimalt to the Goldstream was initially easy but eventually it became as steep as 1.74 percent to get over the Malahat Summit.

In July of 1885 the first locomotive the No. 1 for the new Esquimalt and Nanaimo railroad arrived. This engine was a modern Schectady built 4-4-0 and weighed 40 tons. This engine was placed on the tracks at Ladysmith harbour and was used for construction southbound. E&N's engine #2 arrived in Esquimalt on the 12th of August 1885 along with a number of flatcars and was used for construction northbound.

The first Railway train hold up was between Chemainus and Ladysmith shortly after when \$14,000 was taken from the paymaster and the crews went without wages until the bandit was caught some several weeks later.

Regular passenger service was inaugurated over the E & N with a special four car excursion train on September 24 1886.

Remember When.....

.....for \$1.85 you could purchase dinner consisting of soup, pork chops, spuds, vegetables, pie and coffee? You even had a choice of beer or bourbon in "The Ranch" coffee shop – lounge car on board Great Northern's Empire Builder in the spring of 1958. A one-way coach ticket from Chicago to Seattle cost just \$59.10.

The Steam Whistle Submission Guidelines

"The Steam Whistle" is published quarterly by The Vancouver TrainGang, written submissions must be in either MS Word or e-mail text format. Graphics submissions must be in GIF format. Photo submissions must be in JPEG format, with a minimum resolution of 200 dpi and a maximum size of 6x8. Hard copy text and photographic prints or slides will not be accepted.

Please send all submissions directly to either Editor Rob McKee at mckeerob@telus.net, or Asst. Editor Tom Carr at tajcarr@shaw.ca.