

Canadian Northern Railway Ships

by Don Heron

*Royal Edward Ship Model
Barcelona Maritime Museum*

This year is the centennial of the construction of the *Royal Edward*.

The ship was acquired by Canadian Northern in 1910, and while in military service sank on August 13, 1915, at Gallipoli with significant loss of life.

I took photos of this beautiful twelve-foot-long ship model last December in the Barcelona Maritime Museum. This museum was full of ship models, but it is curious why they have this particular one, which to my knowledge has no connection with Spain.



Acknowledgements

In September, long-time member G.F. (Fred) Fowler, and his wife Anne, celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary in Vilna, where they now reside. Those of you that know Fred will recall he worked as Agent-Operator at Vilna in the early 1960s before moving to Houston, BC, and later to St. Paul.

Fred has entrusted the society with the safe-keeping of his station warehouse scale from the St. Paul depot, now safely tucked in the freight shed at Meeting Creek. He purchased the scale from the railway upon his retirement at St. Paul years ago, and it is a wonderful addition to the artifacts on display at Meeting Creek.

The Canadian Northern Society sincerely appreciates the support of all of those in the Village of Big Valley who lent a helping hand this summer simply keeping the railway station and the roundhouse interpretive park clean and presentable to the public and visitors. Thank you to all of those from the Big Valley Historical Society who continue to help out at the station during train arrivals, and for those who have helped cut grass, pick up refuse, and helped maintain the sites, including those volunteers involved in the Big Valley Beautification Committee. This group did a wonderful job of keeping the gardens and planters at the station looking fantastic again this year.

Thank you to the Camrose Rotary Club for their kind \$100 cash donation towards the Canadian Northern Society's savings account.

Thanks to Harry and Fran Stuber for once again this season at Big Valley shepherding the gift sales, tallying up and depositing the donations received, and just working as the dedicated community volunteers that they have always been. *The Canadian Northern Society wishes Harry a speedy recovery from a recent illness.*

The society welcomes Sheilagh Ross of Camrose as a new member. We thank you for your support of the society.

Letter from society member, Chuck Bohi, August 2007:

I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the latest edition of the *Canora Chronicle*. The photos of Big Valley station brought back many happy memories and much gratitude that it, as well as the other Canadian Northern Railway depots I love so much, have been restored and preserved.

One of what Les Kozma calls my 10,000 favorite photos was taken down the track from north of Rowley with the classic CNoR depot roofline next to the elevators. I took that photo in 1972 and it still recalls for me classic rural prairie railroading.

I don't get out west as often as I once did, but I still look forward to getting my copies of the *Chronicle*.

Thanks Again.

Chuck Bohi, White River Jct., VT

Meeting Creek News

Thanks to the generosity of Gerald and Margaret Wilde, our society was the recipient of an antique wooden grain wagon—an excellent representative of the type of equipment used to move grain in the early days from the farm to the grain elevator. Together with a team of horses, the grain wagon was a staple on every prairie farm prior to the advent of trucks, and even for many years beyond.

Gerald and Margaret have a family farmstead near Duval, Saskatchewan, where the wagon was located. Thanks to Bruce and Glenys Smith, who drove out to pick up the wagon from Camrose, and to Shawn and Karen Smith for providing their truck to bring the wagon back to Meeting Creek.



The wagon now is perfectly situated inside the driveway of the Meeting Creek elevator.

Meeting Creek station was the venue in mid-October for the filming of an Alberta-made docudrama depicting a 1908 auto race from New York to Paris that became known as the “Greatest Auto Race on Earth.” Thanks to volunteers Bruce Smith and Murray Roy, the depot was opened for a small Alberta film company known as Frame 30, who are shooting this production. The company is owned by award winning Director/Producer Michael Hamm.

Evidently, there have been many books written on the race, but never a documentary. Two of the cars used in the actual race have been replicated for this production by Mr. Hamm, and he hopes to replicate two more. The Reynolds-Alberta Museum has already given their stamp of approval surrounding the authenticity of the vehicles. The film is scheduled to air sometime in 2008 and then DVDs will be created.

The documentary will also feature some footage of Alberta Prairie’s steam locomotive 41, pulling the regular excursion train near Big Valley, and scenes using the old Canadian Northern Battle River Subdivision south of Stettler depicting a stop along a railway during the race.

Lori Pratt, long-time member of the Canadian Northern Society has been involved in this production as a volunteer, and referred Mr. Hamm to our Meeting Creek site. She reports that this production is essentially a “labour of love” that Mr. Hamm has been working on for a number of years—as a hobby.

A cash donation was provided to the society by Frame 30 for the production time spent at the Meeting Creek station.

Canadian Northern Memberships are due in January.

Please send your membership to: Secretary, Canadian Northern Society
P.O. Box 142, Big Valley, Alberta T0J 0G0

Associate memberships are \$10, Full Voting Memberships are \$20.

Membership dues are an important source of fundraising for the society to insure operations continue at our three sites. We thank you in advance for your support.

Q: Do you know where the oldest surviving grain elevator in Saskatchewan is?

A: In Fleming, Saskatchewan, the elevator dates to 1895. It was constructed for the Lake of the Woods Milling Company and had a capacity of 32,000 bushels. Fleming is near the Manitoba border.

Saskatchewan Trivia Challenge, Robin and Arlene Karpan

Camrose Happenings

It has been another eventful time for the station. The War Years tribute went very well thanks to the many volunteers who assisted, Marian Bennet, who made her presentation on the 'Battle of The Atlantic,' and the many people who visited the Tearoom for some war time food. On August 1, The 'Snow Birds' could be seen clearly from the station. Many people enjoyed a lovely afternoon watching them and enjoying desserts with a war time flare.

The 20th Anniversary and the dedication of the new kitchen took place on August 25. Mayor Mastel and our new board member, Norm Prestage, cut the ribbon. The ribbon cutting was followed by a short program. Dean Tiegs gave a brief history. We were happy to finally give due credit to the faithful members who started the society and many who continue to work very hard to continue to meet the societies goals to preserve prairie history and develop community at the various sites. A wonderful Ukrainian buffet was served. Thanks to all the board members and volunteers who attended.

Camrose Founder's Days was well attended at the station this year. Our theme paid tribute to John Pearson, who was the great-grandfather of Steve and Ross Shuman of Camrose. John was personal chef to Sir William Van Horne and was present at the Last Spike ceremony at Craigellachie, B.C., on November 7, 1885. John's picture and story have been preserved in a display at the station, donated by the Shuman family. His shortbread recipe was used as one of the desserts during Founder's Days. We would like to thank the Shumans for their contribution to the success of this day.

We would also like to thank Gary Taylor, who led garden tours during the weekend and the volunteers who took people on tour of the station during the 'Open Door.'

Many people made the summer a great one. Thank you again to all who helped in big and small ways. On September 29 we held our annual Volunteer Appreciation with 32 people in attendance. Bruce Smith was given our STAR Volunteer award.

The World Canada youth completed their time at the end of September. Jesse and Jaun were off to Bolivia. Both are determined young men to make the world a better place.

Sarah commenced her full-time job at Augustana the beginning of October. We will miss her as she did a wonderful job of organizing the office. She will be doing some volunteer activities with us so we will see her.

Diane McClaren commenced her employment the second week in October. She is currently funded for 12 hours per week. I met with our City manager and treasurer to explore an increase in pay from what we previously paid. A submission has been made to city counsel to acquire 30 hours of funding at an increased rate of pay. Diane has the qualifications and the background to be an excellent leader. We welcome her. Please give her the support she needs.

On October 30 a crew of eight people completed housecleaning of the Tearoom, Waiting Room, Operator's Office and King George Room. The kitchen was cleaned on October 31 and November 2. Bruce cleaned and waxed the floors.

This project was completed with a total of 62 volunteer hours and 8 paid hours by Diane. Thank you to Carol and Ted Rawson, Carol Roy, Dorothy Lysons, Bruce, and Kurt Bagdan for a great job. We had a decorating bee on November 6 and a baking bee on November 16 to bake the desserts for the booked Christmas parties, the Christmas tea and Cookie Walk on December 1. We are hostessing three Christmas parties to date.

The gift shop looks great as Robbie O'Riordan has purchased shelves that have been painted by Bruce and me. The gift shop sales were over \$1800 since January. We are having a Christmas White Elephant table along with a Christmas tea. The gift shop will open on Tuesdays in November and December. If you need a gift please think of our shop. There has been some wonderful donations. Thank you to all who have donated and especially to Robbie for many hours to make the gifts shop a successful fund raiser.

Murray Roy attended the Rotary meeting on October 29 and received a \$100 cheque toward a sustainability fund for the station. We also received \$100 from Kate Pasula. Alma Falk purchased a \$50 Tie Plaque. We would like to thank all these people for their support.

Other donations we would like to acknowledge are Glenys Smiths \$782 worth of garden plantings and supplies for 2007, Carol and Ted Rawson for potatoes and carrots from their garden that will be used for our coming events and bookings, Little Yard company for 200 bags of leaves that have been mixed with manure and bonemeal and spread on all the station gardens.

The first week in September Bruce and I set off to Last Mountain, Saskatchewan, to pick up a grain wagon donated by Margaret and Gerald Wilde. We picked the wagon up on the farm where it has been for over 100 years. We were welcomed with old-fashioned hospitality in the 100-year-old farm house. The old wagon is now in the Meeting Creek Elevator. This wagon is in wonderful shape. This winter we will be preparing a display which will include the history of the family who used the wagon as well as the wagon itself. We hope to work in consultation with Shawn and Karen to plan an event next fall at which time the Wildes could attend. Thank

you to the Wildes for this very significant donation.

Gary Taylor is planning courses on gardening again this January. The first three sessions will be on 'Landscaping with Perennials.' There will be two sessions on 'Pruning,' one theory and one hands-on. Please tell your friends or plan to attend if this is of interest to you.

We have applied to the Battle River Community Foundation for funds for a security system for the station. It is also a time to send in the evaluation for the CFEP grant for the Kitchen extension and platform. Other grant proposals will soon be in need of preparing.

We have a new volunteer, Donna Phillips, who is anxious to enter our archives into a new program we have just purchased. We are in need of a second good computer for the Station that will take the new program. If you know of any company that has a computer only a few years old please let us know.

I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude once more for all the people who make this place a community centre, including the support of our community and the board.

I would also like to thank the Canadian Northern Society for the engraved day timer given to me on my 65th birthday on the trip of a life time aboard the *Royal Canadian Pacific*.

Glenys Smith

The *Canora Chronicle* is the quarterly newsletter of the Canadian Northern Society—a registered charity dedicated to providing community service through heritage tourism initiatives. The editors may be contacted through the Canadian Northern headquarters (see page 1) or directly at their home:

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Plan To Attend

Christmas Tea, Cookie Walk and White Elephant Sale

Get a taste of an old-fashioned Christmas as you join us at the festively decorated Camrose Railway Station on *Saturday, December 1, from 1 to 5 pm*. Sample baked goodies, shop, and relax over a hot cup of tea. If this sounds like a good way to wind up your busy week, this is an event that you won't want to miss.

Maybe you're not familiar with the term "Cookie Walk." A Cookie Walk is an opportunity for you to hand pick a selection of tasty homemade cookies for your family Christmas celebration or office party. Our volunteers have spent hours baking so that you don't have to. Many of us would like to bring a plate of fancy homemade cookies to our office party or to surprise our family at Christmas with a selection of goodies, but we just can't seem to find the time for all of that baking. The Cookie Walk provides an easy way to add that traditional touch to your Christmas without the additional work.

The White Elephant Sale offers an opportunity to do some early Christmas shopping. A wide variety of good-quality Christmas gift items have been donated to the Railway Station for you to explore. Purchase a unique treasure for someone who is hard to buy for or a collectable railway mug, spoon, pin, clock or t-shirt. We also have a selection of hand-made crocheted and woven items.

Round out the afternoon by relaxing over a cup of hot tea and sampling a piece of homemade cheese cake. Wander through the Station Museum and get a glimpse into the railway history of Camrose and area. The Christmas Tea, Cookie Walk and White Elephant Sale will be an enjoyable way to ease into the Christmas season and an opportunity to support a local heritage site. All of the proceeds from the day's events will go directly to museum programming.

The White Elephant gift shop at the Railway Station will also be open on Tuesdays until December 18.

2007 Railway Hall of Fame Inductees

On October 15, the Canadian Railway Hall of Fame announced its 2007 inductions. The Confederation Train, a rolling exhibit with its distinctive 'O Canada' horn that crossed Canada during Centennial year in 1967, is among this year's inductees into the Canadian Railway Hall of Fame. The selection helps honour the heroes, technologies, leaders and communities of the Canadian railway industry.

Others include Calgary author Donald Bain and CPR photographer Nicholas Morant. Railway civil engineers, represented by the late J.E. Schwitzer of CP and CN retiree Ron Bailey of Edmonton—a long-time member of the Canadian Northern Society—are being recognized for their engineering feats in harsh weather and terrain. The Town of Mount Royal, QC, was created as a model community by the Canadian Northern Railway, a predecessor of CN, to finance construction of the tunnel that still carries commuters into downtown Montreal through Central Station.

"This year's inductions illustrate the important role that people and their initiatives have played in helping the Canadian railway industry grow and Canada to prosper," said Les Kozma, Director and Chairman of the Canadian Railway Hall of Fame. "Without people like these, our industry would never have made it to where we are today."

For more information on the inductees, visit www.railfame.ca.