

TRAX

NEWSLETTER OF THE SUDBURY NORTHERN RAILROAD

January, 2005 Meeting

There was no meeting held in January as Art Taylor, scheduled to host, unfortunately works evenings throughout the year and sends his regrets.

February, 2005 Meeting

The SNRC thanks Garth Harris for hosting the February meeting. Garth has been busy making changes to his layout.

March, 2005 Meeting - nothing scheduled

Meeting Schedule - 2005 Tentative

Apr.	.....	Dick and Richard Gattoni
May	.....	Mike Svos
June	.....	nothing scheduled
Sept.	.....	nothing scheduled
Oct.	.....	nothing scheduled
Nov.	.....	nothing scheduled
Dec.	.....	nothing scheduled

News in General

Hobby Depot Moves

Recently, the Hobby Depot has moved a block or so northerly on the same side of the street to 609 Notre Dame Avenue next to Lagace's Confectionary. The postal code is slightly different, now being P3C 5L4. The phone number is 560-8452. Mike Svos says you can still get the same good deals at the new location.

Received in the Mail

The two following items for TRAX were submitted by SNRC member Dale Wilson and are summarized below. They are from John Strother-Stewart of Saskatchewan who sent them to Dale.

"Railway still kept on track"

This news clipping by Jana G. Pruden of the Regina 'Leader-Post' describes the newly formed "Great Western Railway Ltd." based in Shaunavon, Saskatchewan, a small town of about two-thousand plus situated about 100 kilometres miles south-west of Swift Current in the south-west part of the province. Trackage owned by the short-line totals 496 kilometres from Assiniboia south of Moose Jaw through to Consul in the extreme south-west of the province and back east to Val Marie, due south of Swift Current and just above the border with Montana.

Four hundred investors put together the deal to take over the railway which was originally CPR trackage before a short interim

ownership by a British Columbia company who could not make a go of it.

Plans are initially to haul grain and other similar crops with a potential for industry such as ethanol plants. A tourist train may also be a possibility.

#### Tape Review

Strother-Stewart also informed Dale that he had received a copy of a tape produced by Big "E" Productions entitled "Canadian Pacific's Saskatchewan Main". The tape focuses on the main line between Moose Jaw and Swift Current, a section about 180 kilometres in length. The plan, apparently, was for the producer of the tape to document all the activity over 28 (???) hours, days presumably being longer out in the stubble lands. John's review doesn't encourage one to run out and buy this tape as he says that the focus seems to be on showing "entire trains along with explanations of CP's train numbering system, historical facts, driving economic forces of that portion of the line." The tape is 123 minutes long and from John's review he says "it can be tedious". Caveat emptor!

#### New Books

"From Telegrapher to Titan - The Life of William C. Van Horne"; Valerie Knowles; published by the Dundurn Group, 2004; 501 pages with bibliography, notes and index.

This biography of Van Horne makes a useful addition to Omer Lavallee's "Van Horne's Road" and W. Kaye Lamb's "History of the Canadian Pacific Railway". The book is easily readable, not overly scholarly as is the James J. Hill's biography. Knowles follows Van Horne's life from his childhood where his preoccupation seemed to be collecting fossils through his involvement with American railways, his ramrodding through of the CPR, his art activities and his building of railroads in Cuba. About \$55 at Chapters and other book stores.

#### In the News

##### Grand Skiing Scheme

Daniel Gauthier, the co-founder of Cirque du Soleil, the circus without animals, who had sold out his share of the business two years ago, reportedly for \$800 million, is putting his business acumen on the line again. Gauthier bought a mountain, Le Massif, (770 metres drop) in the Charlevoix area about 100 kilometers east of Quebec City on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River and has constructed a down-hill ski complex to rival Mont Tremblant (645 metres drop). Among the many plans Gauthier has are development of a tourist train from Quebec City on CN-based trackage. With increased crowding at some ski resorts, the quest for something "new" and the allure of Quebec City there is potential for a successful tourist train for both skiers and day-trippers.

##### The Prince's Revenge

Recently there has been a huge increase in the importation of goods (insert "cheap Chinese crap" here) from the Orient and elsewhere to North America via the Pacific ocean. Ports along the west coast of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico are plugged to the eyeballs with container traffic, much of it sitting on ships in harbours for lack of unloading capacity. Los Angeles saw over 5,000 ships in 2004, with a record 94 on one day in October. Capacity of the harbour is 30 to 50 vessels and some 118 were diverted, even as far as Mexico. Vancouver suffers from the same problems. The rail capacity is insufficient to take away all the goods landing at the port.

Enter Prince Rupert. Although the facilities are inadequate at the present there are two points in it's favour. The harbour is one of the deepest natural ports on the west coast and is a day's sailing closer to Chinese ports. Plans are in the works to increase the capacity of the port to 500,000 containers a year by 2007 and to 1.5 million by 2010. Much of the CN line east from Prince Rupert formed part of the short lived Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and was built with a ruling grade of about 1/2%. Canadian National has put aside \$75 million to add terminal trackage at the port but it is not known what would have to be done to bring the line from Prince Rupert through Prince George to Edmonton to a standard to carry the considerable increase in traffic. Stay tuned

### Hot Cinders in My Shorts - Viewpoint From the Editor

#### Moribund Redux

"Is there anybody out there?"

"Nod your head if you can hear me"\*

\* 70's British rock group "Pink Floyd"

Response to suggestions for re-vitalizing the Sudbury Northern Railway Club have been lukewarm to nil. Lack of enthusiasm for the Club is reflected in the paid-up 2005 membership of sixteen as compared to a possible thirty-one for late 2003. Some former members didn't bother to inform the club as to whether they were joining/paying in 2004 and 2005 and consequently newsletters to these folks were funded by the paying members. If your name was on the 2003 membership list and you didn't get a newsletter this year it's likely because you didn't pay your dues in person or by cheque.

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Take a youngster train-watching today.