



Van-Fraser News

VAN - FRASER HERITAGE CLUB

RAILWAY MAIL CAR TO BE PREMIER EXHIBIT

As with so many other tourist attractions, the Corona Virus Pandemic has closed the West Coast Railway Park in Squamish.

This closure has provided an opportunity to refurbish the exterior of the Railway Mail Car with a more permanent coat of paint. Since Van Fraser members assumed the responsibility for maintaining the Railway Mail Car in 1989 they have worked on the car twice a year. This often included climbing onto the roof of the car, at some risk, to sand and paint. The winter weather would beat away the paint on the process would need to be repeated each spring.



Van Fraser President Fred Danells (centre) thanks the Railway Mail Car painting crew David Walmsley, Dave Heine and Blaine Thompson.

This year's closure allowed the car to be moved into the CNR Workshop across from the park where it could be worked on inside. A volunteer team from the park consisting of David Wamsley and his helpers Dave Hein and Blaine Thompson undertook the task of sanding the entire car and dealing with the 55 decayed areas including some on the roof. The repaired areas were filled with industrial grade filler then sanded smooth. Extremely high quality undercoat and paint, supplied by Cloverdale Paints in Squamish, were applied in partnership with and under the guidance of D.A. Walmsley & Co.

The car was painted in Tuscan Red, the original colour, with a black undercoat and roof. A great job was done by Dave and his team and is now ready to go back on display. Gord Bell, Manager of the West Coast Railway Park, said "The mail car looks great and we are planning to house it in the Carshop going forward which will help with exterior preservation."

Railway Mail Car 3704 will now be on display in the Interior Hall alongside the fabled Royal Hudson.

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RAILWAY MAIL CAR - continued

As with any restoration of this size each task revealed more work that had to be done before work could go on. One day Dave and Blaine removed a 150 pound brake beam from a derelict train car which they then mounted on the Railway Mail Car to provide a working handbrake. It was a challenging job but completed successfully.

Also, the north end door threshold and lower door jambs were replaced and covered with super epoxy primer. A new threshold was welded on the door.

Going forward Van Fraser volunteers can now focus on the museum exhibits inside the car continuing to add to the displays and to begin creating information placards for each artifact. Van Fraser is committed to ensuring our heritage is well presented to the public.

The West Coast Railway Park is scheduled to open to the public on July 1/20 and will only be open on following weekends. Staff are developing procedures to ensure a safe opening and experience for visitors.

The Thomas the Tank event has been rescheduled to October and as usual Van Fraser volunteers will be on hand to provide letter writing activity for the children. In December The Polar Express will go ahead on four consecutive weekends.

Many of us will be planning "staycations" close to home this year. An exciting trip could include a few nights in a Squamish hotel and visits to many of the attractions in the area including the West Coast Railway Museum,



Photo above– preparing the roof of the RMC for painting.

Photo left– the job completed.



The Britannia Beach Mining Museum, Shannon Falls, the Sea to Sky Gondola and a day at Whistler.

Watch the newsletter for notice of a One Day Trip to the West Coast Railway Park to see our refurbished Railway Mail Car and all the other Railway Cars on display.

We will provide this trip once it is safe to travel in a group.

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

As we have been hunkered down for the past few months, keeping ourselves and others safe from infection, many of us have completed (or at least contemplate) a number of projects around the house. It's been a time to sort through pictures from past trips and adventures and reminisce about good times had with family and friends. The Van Fraser Travel Club has heard from many members as they send in anecdotes and photographs. Pat Metcalf shared one of her photos from a cruise in 1972 show the bar menu with most of the drinks priced below one dollar!



The travel group at The Grand Canyon

While most of the Club Travel Plans for 2020 are on hold and people are contemplating shorter "staycations" visiting places in Beautiful BC we've always wanted to see, we should also be looking forward to the years ahead. Check out the Dates to Remember and Travel Opportunities to see what opportunities are available to our members and friends. Let us know if you have any travel suggestions to offer.

Our Annual Spring Bus Trip and the Tulalip pre Black Friday Trip have been a highlight members since our private Heritage Club trips began almost 20 years ago. For the first few years of trips we did a Nine Day Las Vegas Trip in the Spring and in the Fall a Four Day Wendo-ver Trip. These trips were so popular three buses were filled on several occasions. After the success of the Vegas and Tulalip Trips members were asking for more varied itineraries including visits to the National/States Parks. Now, a unique itinerary is planned and following the trip members ask for more of the same. Invariably, as the itinerary is being planned the questions begin; "where are going next year"; "how can we top this one?".



Terry and Adrienne Arinabou at Horseshoe Bend, Page, AZ

Here are some of the memories and highlights sent in by members during the pandemic year.

Janice- *"My favourite was Yellowstone National Park and watching the newborn bison with their parents as Old Faithful was erupting."*

Adrienne- *"Bandelier National Park. We found these ancient Pueblo Indian Cliff Dwellings intriguing. Wonderful to actually get inside the caves to marvel at where these ancient people used to live. Another was the large saguaro cactus on the Tortilla Flats in Arizona."*

Linda L.- *"So many highlights but I choose the Pueblo People and they built it. It has approximately 130 rooms. Best part was being able to hike down to get a closer look."*

Pat- *"Walking through the scenic town of Sedona with its array of red sandstone formations which appear to glow in brilliant orange and red when illuminated by the sun. Driving to the scenic overlooks and spiritual vortexes. I got a laugh at the statue of a young girl eating ice cream on the Main Street. It reminded me of Margaret who loves ice cream.?"*

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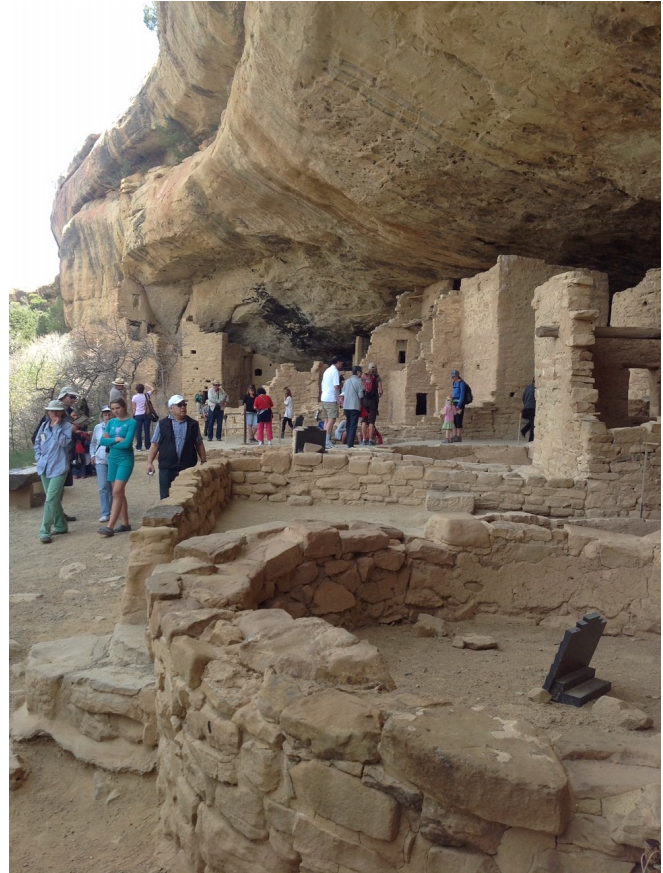
LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD (continued)

Ross- "Most memorable was definitely Monument Valley, riding around the vast red desert in jeeps, viewing the numerous red sandstone buttes and remembering all the famous movies that were made in the area. Being surprised by the awesome lunch provided in the open desert, prepared and cooked just for us by the Navajo families with steaks, salads, fry bread and more. Thanks to Ken, Harvey and Ron for BBQing burgers and chicken and the fixings for all 57 of us by the pool at our hotel in Phoenix each day after all our sightseeing."

Nick- "The unique rock formations at Bryce and Zion National Parks and Red Rock Canyon (Las Vegas) beckoning for more visits to see the views in the various lighting conditions. Loved San Francisco and lunch at Sausalito as well as our days in San Diego. What a terrific experience for our group to have a private guided tour of Hearst Castle seeing the fountain, pools and garden. Then backtracking on the bus to get a better look at the hundreds of elephant seals lounging on the coast of San Simeon CA home to the famous elephant seals as at the Piedras Blancas Rookery. Seeing Ian manoeuvre our bus through spots I couldn't even get to in a car!

Alice- "The cowboy dinner in Moab followed by an evening cruise down the Colorado river as the sun was setting, dramatic scenery, not to mention our hotel nestled amongst the red buttes.

Linda- "Best restaurant- AJSpurs near Anderson Peasoup Hotel in Buellton CA. Realxing around the hotel pool enjoying the sun with fellow passengers before dinner. Most Unique Hotel. San Juan Inn alongside the river in Mexican Hat UT. Finding our rooms with old fashioned keys in a bucket. Funniest Moment. Seeing the wild burrows try to board our bus in the rustic little town of Oatman NV and next rip having wild bandits board our bus demanding our candy followed by a Sheriff with wanted posters for Della and John (all staged for fun). Biggest Surprise. Getting the call from a Park Ranger that Crater Lake was open for the bus and making a quick detour to see this beautiful spot with mountains and snow reflected in the turquoise lake- a contrast to our hot drive through Death Valley that followed."



Mesa Verde Cliff Dwellings.



The visit to Banff

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LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD (continued)

Gerry- "We decided on Moab because it was such an unexpected tour, and the light show made these rock walls really come alive. I think we all came away from the boat ride with a new appreciation for all the things that we have, and how lucky we are to have the lives we do."

Sharon- "Blazing M Ranch BBQ & Show. Highlight being the grande finale 'Ghost Riders of the Storm' song with visuals. It was spectacular and unexpected."

Diana- "Staying overnight inside Grand Canyon Park to the sunset and sunrise."

Linda F.- "Our best memory is the fellowship on the trip. Our first trip. There were three bus loads and Cec was thrilled with the number of former colleagues that he hadn't see in years. I recognize the good value of our trips compared to the price of some commercial tour groups."



A Boat Trip on the Colorado River

Most everyone- "After days of sightseeing it is wonderful to have a few days in Las Vegas to do as much or as little as we want. Explore the buffets, take in some shows, shopping, join the bus group for Mystery Tours, having a photo taken with the 'Beard of Knowledge' at Clarke County Museum, walking the strip, lots of Happy Hours."



The Oatman Burrows trying to board the bus.

Everyone on these many tours recognized and commented on the camaraderie, the new friendships developed, and the safety of being in our group. As Betty and George noted everyone in the group looks after each other.

Unfortunately the Covid 19 Pandemic forced the cancellation of this year's trip to Rapid City SD. However, we look back on all the good times past and look forward to good times yet to come.

Plans are underway for next year's trip. First time travellers are always welcome! So plan to join the group for an enjoyable trip and some great experiences.

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD PHOTOS



Touring Monument Valley



Riding around Virginia City

On the bus to Oatman

Taking a rest at Bandelier National Park



MEDOC UPDATE

At Johnson Insurance, we understand how challenging 2020 has been. Customers have submitted an unprecedented number of Trip Interruption/Cancellation claims; more claims in the first four months of 2020 than in all of 2019. And medical coverage continues for many Canadians who were unable to return home.

We're encouraged by the early signs of recovery as the world slowly re-opens, and MEDOC customers continue to have coverage for Trip Cancellation and for travel within Canada. MEDOC travel insurance is offered on an annual basis, which allows us to provide comprehensive coverage at a very competitive price. However, we understand how the exceptional circumstances presented by this pandemic have impacted travel for all at this time. That's why we're extending the term of your MEDOC Base Plan for an additional 2 months at no charge. Your current MEDOC policy will now provide coverage [until October 31, 2020](#).

THERE WAS A TIME: RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE

The Railway Mail Service was not without possible injury particularly from derailments, snow and rock slides and collisions.

On December 30, 1949, following a collision, a Railway Mail Car was quickly transformed into a makeshift ambulance.

Just before dawn, CPR Train 8, running late because of snowslides in the Rockies, ploughed into Train 3, that was also running late. The collision resulted in the death of one passenger and seriously injured 68. The passenger coaches, which received the full impact of the collision, sustained serious damage and the engine was overturned into a ditch alongside the tracks.



The Railway Mail Car was undamaged and the three Railway Mail Clerks, L. Wright, W.J.H. Patterson and R.K. White unhurt.

Immediately following the wreck, train crews, porters, two nurses and a dentist who had been passengers, as well as volunteer passengers who were able, began to assist injured passengers. The undamaged Railway Mail Car was opened and became a makeshift ambulance/medical facility. Some of the injured passengers were able to walk to the car, others were assisted by volunteers and some were brought on stretchers. Porters brought first aid kits, blankets and sheets to be made into bandages. They also brought hot drinks and sandwiches. Caboose mattresses and empty mail bags were put into service to help keep the injured comfortable.

A Doctor and two nurses arrived from nearby Bassano AB to treat the injured. When the train was able to move again it stopped briefly at Bassano to pick up medical supplies, including plasma, and additional medical staff. The Railway Mail Clerks noted that they were impressed by the ability of the medical staff who were able to provide intravenous treatment to a patient lying on the swaying floor of a Railway Mail Car as it moved at 50 miles per hour.

When the train arrived in Calgary the injured were taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and the Railway Mail Car cleaned and put back into service.

FINDING NAMES: WE NEED YOUR HELP

The Club is in the midst of archiving and cataloguing our collection of photographs. Many of these photographs do not identify the individuals in them and we are looking to our members to help us identify them. If you are able to identify the individuals in the photos please contact us at 604 482-4311 or email vanfrasernews@gmail.com.

These two photos below are labeled as being taken in the Vancouver MPP at Number 3 Glacis—the Forward Parcel Glacis.



The two photos below are labeled as being taken in the Vancouver MPP at Number 2 Glacis—the Originating/Mail Prep Glacis.



THANKING A LETTER CARRIER

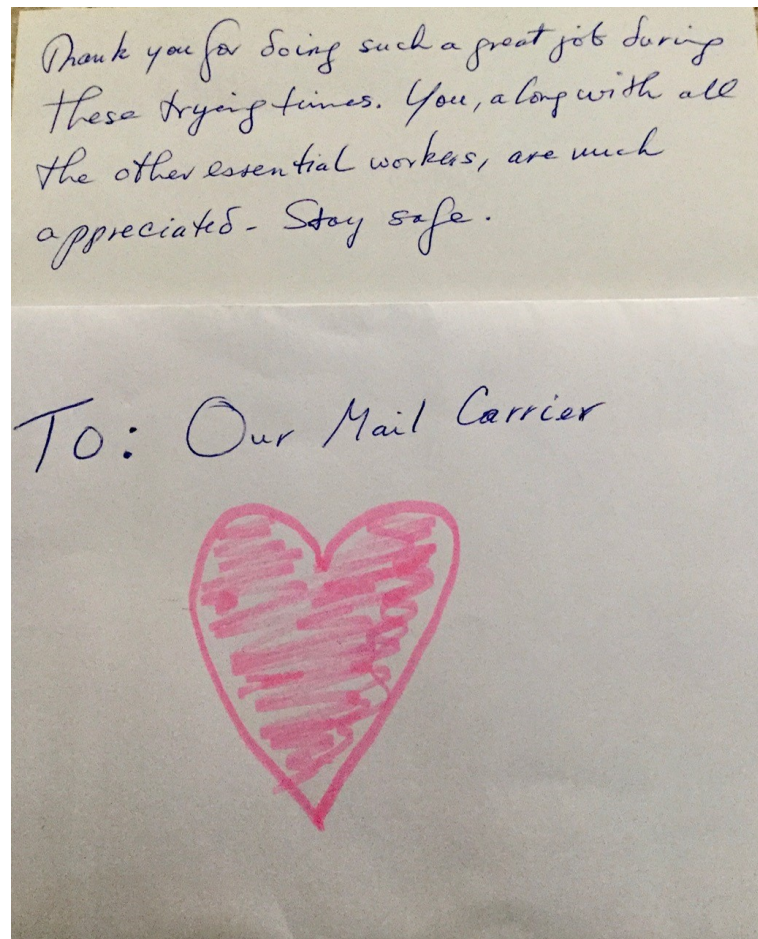
This letter was passed on to our office in the Pacific Processing Facility.

This is one of many such notes and letters that have been given to delivery employees all across the Greater Vancouver Area. They reflect the feeling of many that thanks are owed to Canada Post employees who have continued to work through the Pandemic as an essential service.

Bulletin boards in the Processing Facility Postal Stations and Depots present such items to employees.

If you have occasion to see a Delivery Employee or Retail Clerk or meet with a friend or acquaintance continuing to work take a short moment to express gratitude.

Communications operations, including Canada Post remain an important link for all Canadians. With customers staying at home on line sales has become increasingly important and Canada Post is processing and delivering parcel volumes that surpass the Christmas season.



DATES TO REMEMBER 2020



September 13-18/20	Annual Yakima U Drive Trip
September 24/20	Annual Gala Banquet, Continental Seafood Restaurant
November 9, 2020	Honouring Our Own Ceremony PPC, Richmond
November 15-18/20	Annual Tulalip Bus Trip
November 20/20	Santa Elf Orientation PPC, Richmond
November 25/20	Christmas Luncheon, Greenacres Golf Course

Van-Fraser News

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to edit
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in whole or part
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2020 TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES CANADA POST HERITAGE CLUB MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

November 15-18, 2020 4 Day Tulalip Bus Trip. Visit downtown Seattle and enjoy 3 nights in the deluxe Tulalip Resort for Pre Black Friday shopping, sightseeing, spa and pool time, casino, dining and lots of social time. \$435.00 per person based on double occupancy.

February 2, 2021 25 night Hawaii on the Koningsdam, San Diego return. Cruise from San Diego to Hawaii, visit Nawiliwili, Honolulu (overnight), Lahaina, Kona, Hilo and Kilauea Volcano. After Hawaii, visit Ensenada, Mexico, San Diego, Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas. Inside cabins from \$2690.00 plus taxes \$338.01 pp. Ask about price for package that includes all you can drink, specialty dinners and prepaid gratuities!

February 27, 2021 7 night Mexico Cruise, on the Koningsdam, San Diego return. Inside cabins from \$779.00 plus taxes \$136.00 pp. Join other members who will be on the ship arriving from Hawaii as you visit Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas.

May 2021 13 day Spring Bus visiting Rapid City, South Dakota for five days seeing all the parks in the area, including amount Rushmore, Custer, Badlands, Deadwood and 2 days in Yellowstone National Park. Call for availability. ****Watch for news about next year's trip****

June 14, 2021 14 day cruise on the Maasdam, "A Classroom At Sea". Visit Juneau, Ketchikan, Skagway, Anchorage, Homer, Haines, Inian Islands, Valdez, Misty Fjords, Tracy Arm, Hubbard Glacier on this Vancouver return trip. A unique opportunity to explore the coast in depth with special lecturers, photography expert, local culinary experiences. Opportunities for fishing. Call the Heritage Club for detailed information sheets and for current price.

NOTE: This sailing has been rescheduled to 2021 and is available to book now. Inside cabins from \$2079.00 CAD pp plus taxes and windows from \$2599.00 CAD pp plus taxes. This offer includes a signature beverage package (up to 15 drinks a day), prepaid gratuities, \$75.00 OBC and a deposit refundable til March 2021. **Call for lower prices available without the amenities or with a non refundable deposit.**

July 2, 2021 10 day Alaska cruise on the Queen Elizabeth. Visit Glacier Bay, Skagway, Hubbard Glacier, Juneau, Icy Strait Point, Sitka, and Victoria. Inside cabins from \$1598.00 plus taxes and window cabins from \$1988.00 CAD pp plus taxes. Includes all the Cunard luxuries.

October 4, 2021 11 night/ 15 night/ 7 night New England and Caribbean cruises on the Empress of the Seas, Montreal to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Call for prices and details on these three itineraries or plan back to back cruises for 33 days!

January 5/22 and January 27/22 Two 22 day cruises around South America and Antarctica on the Westerdam. Cruise one segment or cruise back to back for 44 days and two Antarctica experiences. Call now for details and to reserve your cabin.

REMINDER: Be sure you have out of country travel insurance for any trip you book and that it is active before any cancellation penalty fees are in effect for your trip. For those with MEDOC, ensure you have renewed your Heritage Club Membership for 2021 and paid your dues to be covered. Contact the Heritage Club office for info on MEDOC and for more information on any trips. Also, information for MEDOC coverage for your family and friends. Van Fraser Heritage Club: 604 482-4311 or email:

NOTE: Cruise prices and air fares change regularly as new promotions are introduced. To be sure you have current information and best price call the office and be sure you have ticked the Travel Club box on your annual registration form. We frequently send emails with travel updates to those members on the Travel Club distribution list.

