

# Carolina Conductor



Volume 3, Number 10

Monthly Newsletter of the Carolina Railroad Heritage Association, Inc.

October 2016

**Preserving the Past.  
Active in the Present.  
Planning for the Future.**

**Web Site:**

[hubcityrrmuseum.org](http://hubcityrrmuseum.org)

**Meeting Site:**

**Woodmen of the World Bldg.**

721 East Poinsett Street

Greer, SC 29651-6404

Third Friday of the Month at 7:00 pm

**Hub City Railroad Museum**

**and SOU Caboose #X3115:**

**Magnolia Street Amtrak Station**

298 Magnolia Street

Spartanburg, SC 29301-2330

Wednesday 10-2 and Saturday 10-2

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Newsletter articles and news due

by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month.

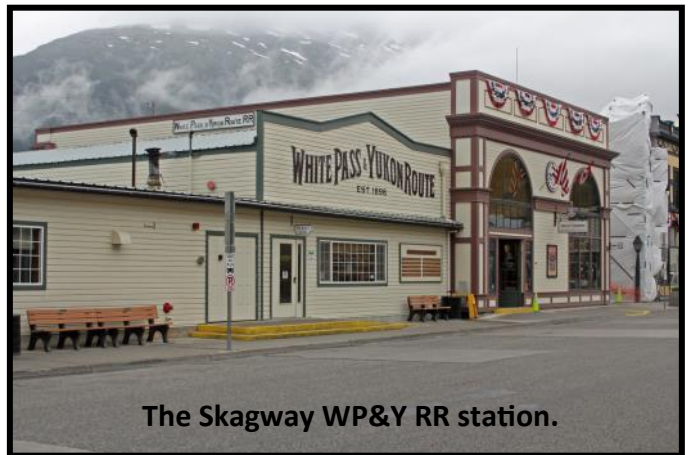
## White Pass & Yukon Railroad

**By: Phil Abers**

This past June, my brother, Rich, and I toured Alaska and the Yukon Territory. We rode the Alaska Railroad Dome car from Anchorage to Denali, we spent two days in Denali National Park and two days in the Gold Rush town of Dawson City. We took a boat trip to the Davidson Glacier, and took a cruise ship through Glacier Bay and the Inside Passage. While all these activities were great, the highlight of the trip was the 27.7 mile, 1 hour and 45-minute train ride on the White Pass and Yukon Railroad (WP&Y) from Fraser BC to Skagway, Alaska.

The WP&Y railroad was built in 1898 to support the Klondike Gold Rush in the Dawson City, Yukon Territory (YT). It took 26 months to build the railroad in severe weather and without modern machinery. The railroad climbs from sea level in Skagway to nearly 3000 feet elevation at the White Pass

Summit. The WP&Y is a narrow gauge railroad that originally went 110 miles from Skagway to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. The line was active until 1982, primarily transporting ores. The WP&Y reopened in 1988 as a tourist railroad and has been in operation since then. The railroad now operates the 67 miles from Skagway to Carcross, YT. It is an International



**The Skagway WP&Y RR station.**

Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

The scenery on the WP&Y was stunning. My brother and I have both ridden the Durango and Silverton and we found the WP&Y to compare favorably. The WP&Y starts south from Fraser along a lake. Before long the train is traveling through a narrow cut in the hillside. After 7 miles we reach White Pass Summit at 2865 feet. The Summit is also the site of the US/Canadian border, so remember

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# Arrivals

## Steamtown

By Steven Ashley



Upon arrival at Steamtown, which is operated by the National Park Service, around 9:00 a.m. on Sunday July 24, my father and I purchased tickets that included admission to the museum as well as the short train ride from adjacent to the roundhouse to the Nay Aug Gorge and return. While my father and I did not take the guided tour of the locomotive shop, we did walk through the roundhouse and viewed many of the exhibits not in the restoration shop area. The train ride was very enjoyable and was the first time that steam had operated at Steamtown in several years.



Union Pacific #4012 locomotive.

My favorite exhibits at Steamtown included Union Pacific Big Boy 4-8-8-4 #4012, Reading T1 4-8-4 #2124 and Nickle Plate 2-8-4 #759. While the first two locomotives were on display outdoors, the #759



Cut-away loco showing internal boiler workings.

was in the roundhouse next to Canadian Pacific G-3 4-6-2 #2317 and Canadian National S1b 2-8-2 #3254. Both engines had been operational in recent years, but both now require rebuilding by the Federal Railway Administration before they will be permitted to operate again. The #2317 last operated in 2010 and the #3254 was removed from excursion service following the 2012 season at Steamtown.



This weekend was thoroughly enjoyable and I



Recently restored Baldwin Locomotive Works #26.

would recommend both to anyone seeking to learn more about railroad history or just take a relaxing train ride.

## Scranton

### *Where the Great Roads Meet*

"The above essay title was once a slogan of Scranton's Chamber of Commerce and the great roads were the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western, the Delaware and Hudson, and the Erie railroads, as well as several others. But Scranton did not begin where commerce carrying roads met. It had an odd start in a deep valley without benefit of populace or industry."

# Departures

## Second SC Inland Port

South Carolina Ports Authority (SCPA) announced plans to develop a second inland port in Dillon, South Carolina to support growth of intermodal container volumes and expand access to markets in neighboring states and throughout the Northeast and Midwest.

“Inland Port Dillon will be a great diversification of our state’s logistics footprint,” said Jim Newsome, SCPA president and CEO. “Building intermodal infrastructure in our state goes hand-in-hand with the significant investment we are making to our port facilities in Charleston. This is an exciting opportunity for SCPA.”

transportation artery in the Southeast, as well as a significant base of existing Port users in the area that represent base cargo opportunities for the facility.

“Inland Port Greer has allowed the Port to increase



South Carolina Inland Port at Greer.



South Carolina Ports Wando Welch Terminal

At a meeting, the SCPA Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the Port to move forward with construction of the terminal in the Carolinas I-95 Mega Site. SCPA will break ground on the new terminal in the first quarter of 2017 and plans to open the facility by the end of the year.

“Selective development of inland infrastructure enables freight to move more easily and is critical to the growth of the Port,” Newsome said. “We are grateful for the support of our local partners, including Marlboro Electric Cooperative, to make this project possible and are already working with a number of interested companies who are potential customers of the facility.”

Located in the “Pee Dee” region of South Carolina, the site was selected for its proximity to I-95, a critical

the cargo volumes moved by intermodal rail and become a key catalyst for economic development in the Upstate,” said Pat McKinney, SCPA Board Chairman. “We are confident that Inland Port Dillon will realize similar benefits for the Port and our customers, increase local business opportunities and provide solid job growth. We appreciate the involvement and support of the state and federal agencies assisting the Port to make this project a reality.”

The site is served by an existing CSX mainline, which provides overnight access to the Port of Charleston. With 166 percent growth of SCPA’s intermodal volume since 2011, demand for such inland facilities has increased rapidly.

“Expanding intermodal service in South Carolina through Inland Port Dillon will create a competitive advantage for area businesses by lowering transportation costs and providing greater access to domestic and international markets,” said Dean Piacente, CSX Vice President, Intermodal. “This new facility will build on the state of South Carolina’s already strong freight rail network supporting continued business growth and job creation.”

A study of the market potential and proposed terminal layout was completed since the SCPA first announced its consideration of the Dillon site in April. The Port will now move into the design phase of the project, with the initial terminal build out expected to accommodate 45,000 containers annually.

# Manifest

Continued from Page 1 - WP&Y RR



to bring your passport, if you wish to ride the train.

From the Summit, we started our descent through some fabulous scenery. After about 9 miles we entered the first of two tunnels, this one being 675 feet long. This tunnel replaced the Steel Bridge built in 1901, which was the tallest cantilevered steel bridge then. We had spectacular views of the Lynn Canal, Mt. Harding



and the Chilkat Range. We then entered the second tunnel and upon exiting the tunnel we cross a trestle over Glacier Gorge. At mile 16, we had an excellent view of Bridal Veil

Falls.

The railroad continued to wind downhill, passed the trees, the mountains and the river towards Skagway.

After another 10 miles we reached Skagway and the end of the journey. What a great trip! I was thinking this is the highlight of our trip so far. It can't get any better than this. Just then, I looked out from our train in the Skagway Station and saw another WP&Y heading towards Fraser BC. It was being pulled by a 1947 Baldwin built Mikado 2-8-2! It turns out that the WP&Y has two steam engines that pull excursion trains!



The US and Canadian border.

## Wanted—Articles for the Carolina Conductor

Submit an article of 200 words or more with some photos and captions and see them in print. Every one of us has some unique railroad experience that would make interesting reading for our membership. With Jim Sheppard's passing your editor needs more contributions of local history and news.

# Rare Mileage

## History of the WP&Y RR



Built in 1898 during the Klondike Gold Rush, this narrow gauge railroad is an International Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, a designation shared with the Panama Canal, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty.

The WP&YR railway was considered an impossible task but it was literally blasted through coastal mountains in only 26 months.

The \$10 million project was the product of British financing, American engineering and Canadian contracting. Tens of thousands of men and 450 tons of explosives overcame harsh and challenging climate and geography to create “the railway built of gold.”

The WP&YR climbs almost 3000 feet in just 20 miles and features steep grades of up to 3.9%, cliff-hanging turns of 16 degrees, two tunnels and numerous bridges and trestles. The steel cantilever bridge was the tallest of its kind in the world when it was constructed in 1901.

The 110-mile WP&YR Railroad was completed with the driving of the golden spike on July 29, 1900 in

Carcross Yukon connecting the deep water port of Skagway Alaska to Whitehorse Yukon and beyond to northwest Canada and interior Alaska.

White Pass & Yukon Route became a fully integrated transportation company operating docks, trains, stage coaches, sleighs, buses, paddlewheelers, trucks, ships, airplanes, hotels and pipelines. It provided the essential infrastructure servicing the freight and passenger requirements of Yukon’s population and mining industry. WP&YR proved to be a successful transportation innovator and pioneered the inter-modal (ship-train-truck) movement of containers.

The WP&YR suspended operations in 1982 when Yukon’s mining industry collapsed due to low mineral prices. The railway was reopened in 1988 as a seasonal tourism operation and served 37,000 passengers. Today, the WP&YR is Alaska’s most popular shore excursion carrying over 400,000 passengers during the 2015 May to September tourism season operating on the first 67.5 miles (Skagway, Alaska to Carcross, Yukon) of the original 110-mile line.

# Marker Lights



Scenic Railway  
of the World



WP&Y RR locomotive #69 pulls a excursion train across a wooden trestle immediately after exiting a tunnel.



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