

THE WHEATLAND ROUNDUP

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LITTLE BIG TOWN'S CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

Disaster has struck in Little Big Town! A massive blizzard has rolled into the Prairies, worrying Maximillian Wheatland about his Christmas Eve excursion the town's people get so excited for every year. Max, the Mayor and the town counsel have joined in an emergency meeting to discuss the possibility of canceling the excursion.

"We ought to think of a way we can run the Wheatland Express in this weather!" Begs Max.

"It just don't seem possible, Max. The tracks are covered in snow drifts, which could cause a derailment and our Snow fighter broke down yesterday! I can't imagine a way we can run the excursion and I am not going to endanger the folks of this town." The Mayor replied.

"Have y'all thought of getting Santa's help? He's got his fancy Christmas magic that helps him get presents to all the people all over the world, no matter what the weather is like. Maybe he could lend us a hand when he comes by!" Adds Taffy.

"Taffy, you're brilliant!" Exclaims Max.

"Well, I ain't here to just look pretty." Taffy replied.

"Max, go get in your train, flash the lights and make some noise with that horn. That'll get Santa's attention and we should be able to continue with your excursion with no delay!" Orders the mayor.

Max did just that. Soon enough, Santa came flying above Little Big Town, with Rudolf's nose lighting the way through the thick snow. With a jolly "HO HO HO!" Santa flew over the train tracks and with the help of his reindeer, blew all of the snow drifts away! The snow fall lightened and the whole town gathered to see Santa fly off to finish delivering all of his gifts.

Santa saved the day! The excursion continued right on schedule and was described by the guests on the train as "the most magical Christmas Eve excursion yet"! After the train ride was finished all of the town's people rushed home to bed so they could be visited by Santa Clause yet again.

NOBLE NOTATION

A PRAIRIE KID'S CHRISTMAS

Written by Bill Noble

Cast your memories (imagination) back to a time 'way before online shopping. It's Fall on the prairies in the late 1940's or early 50's and there was an early dusting of snow last night. It's cold getting up and walking to school. Although, I'm a town kid and don't know just how lucky I am. There are lots of farm kids who have chores to do and then harness a horse for the drive to school.

As I walk home after school, I check out some stuff. I hope the snow drifts up against Mr. Dolan's shed again this winter. It was a great place to dig a tunnel and make an igloo last year. I step in the back door and am engulfed in a wonderful aroma. Yes! Mom made buns and they are just out of the oven. "Go easy on those. You don't want to spoil your supper". But just a minute. What is that on the kitchen table? Oh boy, the Eaton's Christmas Catalogue is here.

The T. Eaton Company Ltd, founded in Toronto in 1869 by Irish immigrant Timothy Eaton, grew to become Canada's largest retailer with elegant department stores in every province and a nation wide mail order business. You could get just about anything at Eaton's from long johns to house construction packages that contained everything needed to build a stylish, comfortable home. It is still possible to find examples of Eaton houses on farms and in communities all across the



prairies. And, if you couldn't get into an Eaton's store, everything came to the local post office or the CN or CP Railway Express office at the local station on the train. Eaton's grew with Canada's expanding railway system, establishing strong business and cultural ties with the railways.

But none of this mattered to a kid on a farm or in a prairie town. Christmas was coming and there were important decisions to be made. Our copy of the Christmas Catalogue grew dog-eared as I studied and dreamed and planned. Having only a fuzzy understanding of the Santa Claus/Mom partnership, I dropped what I thought were casual references to items in the book. The merits of various choices were weighed. Would I go for that Red Ryder cap gun and holster or a Hornby clockwork train or maybe a Hardy Boys book? Prime Ministerial decisions are mere piffle by comparison. After I was in bed, Mom would weigh my choices and, influenced by practical considerations, might add some new underwear or a next-size-bigger pair of winter pants to the order and seal it up. Next day, as I sat in school, unaware that my Christmas morning fate was about to be delivered into the hands of Timothy's

Store, my Dad, a grain elevator agent, added the precious order to a stack of company mail and walked across the tracks to the station. Upon the arrival of CNR Number 6, the southbound afternoon train to Regina and Winnipeg, he walked up to the mail car and popped the letters in. That used to impress me!

In addition to my small but important Christmas involvement with them, Eaton's had Montreal store commissioned Canadian Pacific Railways to construct a 1/6-scale model of a Jubilee passenger locomotive and several kid-sized riding cars. The country's biggest electric train! The sixth floor of the store was transformed into Toyland. For a nickel, kids could ride through an enchanted forest populated with elves and magic and arrive for a chat with Santa. Afterwards, they would be handed a bag of goodies (worth, according to contemporary accounts, several times the 5 cent fare) to enjoy on the trip back. The next year, the Toronto store contracted Canadian National's St Charles shops to construct a replica of a CNR streamlined Northern, while the

Winnipeg store commissioned a CPR Royal Hudson a few years later.

But, Eaton's involvement with miniature trains was not limited to their three largest stores. Every store across the country had a large Lionel layout running in their Christmas Toyland. These layouts were quite large and intricate with several trains running and an array of Lionel's operating accessories on display. There were signals, bridges, cranes and log loaders. There was even a special cattle car that deposited its beefy cargo at a stock pen. These spectacular layouts started many a youngster on a lifetime journey of model railway enjoyment. I still have vivid memories of seeing the display in the store in Moose Jaw. Wow! Eaton's is gone. The name lives on in the Eaton Centre in Toronto but the company and its stores disappeared into bankruptcy in 1999. But for many of us, of a certain age, the approach of Christmas will trigger memories of the magic that arrived with the Eaton's Christmas Catalogue. And I still remember that beautiful green Hornby clockwork locomotive.





SPIKES SAFETY SCOOP

Hi boys and girls! It's me, Spike the safety dog! It's finally the Holiday season, my FAVOURITE time of the year! It's always awesome when we get a winter with lots and lots of snow to play in! Do you know how our trains run in the winter? We have a special vehicle called the Snow Fighter! Whenever there is a snowstorm or a windy winter day, snow drifts usually form on the railway tracks. In order to clear the pesky snow to allow our trains to run safely on the tracks, we send out our trusty friend, the Snow Fighter, to clear the tracks! This powerful machine is a big help to our trains and is another reason why you should always be safe and aware around any railway tracks, all year round! My friend, Gainer, and I are going to write out our Christmas lists to Santa now! I'm hoping for a giant bag of treats to last me the whole year! Merry Christmas and happy holidays everyone!



-Spike the safety dog



Help Spike decorate his Christmas tree!

Colour the tree as best as you can



Did you know
that grain hopper cars can carry
100 tons of wheat?!

OPERATIONS UPDATE



Wheatland Express Safety Train

Agribition was a great success and it was good to be able to get back to a trade show again and see people face to face again. December also brought Safety Train to its first live in-class presentation since the start of the pandemic and we couldn't be more pleased. As this year draws to a close we want to thank everybody who partook in Safety Train Presentations in 2021 whether in-person or virtual and we cannot wait to see more of you in 2022. Have a safe holiday season!



Wheatland Express Learning Centre

Learning Centre was able to take one of its newest exhibits on the road this last month to Agribition and it was a huge success. Not only did people have a blast answering the questions they also were blown away by the work of our contractors and the custom railway track table they put together for us. Learning Centre has more exciting exhibits on the way for next year and can't wait for you all to enjoy them as well. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Great Sandhills Railway

December 19th was the last excursion train for the season. We have completed the repairs to the locomotive hot starts so we should be able to shut them down and plug them in over the Christmas break. We have moved all the Storage cars out as demand for LPG's is extremely high. Work will soon begin on the new baggage car and, as weather permits, the Western town. Some final touch ups have been made to the snow fighter including repairs to the turn table.





Wheatland Express Excursion Train

Wow, December was magical, busy and amazing. On December 3rd, we hosted Rory Allen and his band rocking the hall and dinner show with his amazing tribute to the King of Rock and Roll Elvis Presley. Our Magical Christmas tours were sold out each excursion with amazing entertainment with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Singing and storytelling Elves were all part of our great entertainment. Kids and adults were all excited to see Santa and gave him long wish lists. What a sight to behold with the Christmas lights on the train when it comes rolling down the tracks. December 19 came and no more Magical Tours to be had so staff celebrated the long busy and excited Excursion season. Wheatland Express is looking forward to the 2022 season will lots of new and exciting adventures. GREAT JOB EVERYONE FOR AN AMAZING YEAR. MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.



EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Name: Victoria Yusak

Born: Saskatoon

Currently Reside: Cudworth

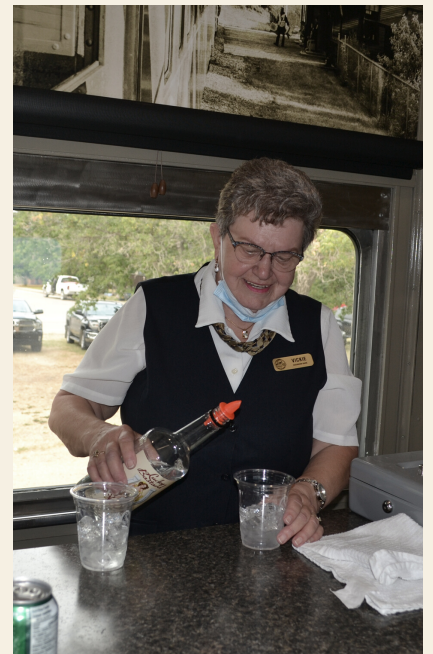
Work History: Before working with the Wheatland Express, Vick worked as a continued care aid for 27 years at Lakeview Pioneer Lodge in Wakaw

Favorite Show: Grey's Anatomy

Favorite Sports Team: Gushue Curling Team

Favorite Wheatland Railcar: Florida Car 2021 and Stettler car

Did you know: Vickie has been with us since our first ever excursion on June 18th, 2018



STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSES MOUTH

HOW TIMBIT SEE'S IT

Neigh there. I am Timbit, a reporter for the Wheatland Round-Up. My job is to keep the folks of Little Big Town updated to the goings-on on all things four-legged. It's been a cold month on the farm, but all the animals have been doing a great job growing their winter coats to stay warm for the rest of the winter! In this edition of How Timbit Sees It, I'm going to visit my neighbor Saturdaynitelites, a.k.a. Charlie.

Hello there, Charlie! Why don't you start off by telling these folks what your job is?

"Why hello Timbit! I'd love to. I'd say I'm a pretty big deal around here. I've had a pretty notable racing career. In fact, I won the Saskatchewan derby! Now that I'm



done in the racing game, I'm a stud. This means that I help make other little racing babies. During the winter I mostly just relax and look pretty, then I get sent to Olds College to get down to business."

That sounds like a pretty awesome job! Would I know any of your babies?

"Yes! In May, one of my colts was born on the farm. He was the first foal to be born right here! His name is Mondaynitelites but the girls like to call him Shrimpy because he's smaller than the other foals."

Oh yes, Shrimpy! Me and him like to run around the field during the day! He may be small, but he sure is growing fast! How has your winter been going so far?

"It's been going very well! I love the brisk weather and during the day I take naps in my hay I don't finish at breakfast! The girls don't like it very much because this means more cleanup for them but hey, I won the derby, I deserve cozy naps. Actually, I see them bringing me my lunch now! I'll see you around Timbit!"

2021 WHEATLAND EXPRESS SCHEDULE



DECEMBER

- 03 - Christmas in Graceland
- 04 - Magical Holiday Express
- 05 - Magical Holiday Express
- 11 - Magical Holiday Express
- 12 - Magical Holiday Express
- 18 - Magical Holiday Express
- 19 - Magical Holiday Express

SEE YOU ALL NEXT SEASON!



STAY TUNED FOR ADDED DATES, TOURS
AND TRAVEL OFFERS!

www.wheatlandexpresstrain.ca
