

THE WHEATLAND ROUNDUP

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SANTA'S COMING TO LITTLE BIG TOWN

The word in Little Big Town is that Santa is coming to Town! After a slow month with no Wheatland Express excursions in November; the train is being warmed up to welcome Santa Clause for another month of tours in December.

"That Max Wheatland sure is persuasive! I have no idea how he was able to convince Saint Nic to take a break from all his Christmas preparations to come aboard the Wheatland Express for the second year in a row!" Said the Sheriff "I'm going to have to increase security for his arrival."

"I sure can't wait to see Santa Clause! I've made sure I've been good all year so I can make it on the good list. Last year I got a lump of coal... But this year I have my Christmas list ready so that I don't forget anything when I get to sit on his lap!" exclaimed Timmy, the son of the local baker.

The Wheatland staff have been working hard to make sure things are all in order for our special guest's arrival. The train has been decorated from engine to caboose to celebrate the town's favourite time of year. It sure is quite the sight to see when the Wheatland Express famously rolls down the tracks with all of its lights glimmering in the dark.

After this busy month of Christmas themed excursions, the train and staff take a well-deserved break until summertime. These months of rest allow for planning and preparation for the next season of bigger and better Wheatland Express Excursions!



NOBLE NOTATION

FUNICULAR

Written by Bill Noble

I can hear some of you asking, “What or who is funicular?” Stand by. Cast your imaginations back a hundred years or so and imagine you lived in mountainous or hilly country, or on the steep bank of a river. Or somewhere where there was a steep slope that you needed to climb. Perhaps you needed to transport minerals or go between the levels of a riverbank town or simply provide a pleasurable trip to a mountaintop lookout. Building a road or regular railway was impractical - involving loops and switchbacks and much heavy construction. Solution? A cable railway that went straight up the slope and used (at first) a single car hauled up the rails by cable. Such railways began to appear around 1820 and a number were built in Europe. Then, about thirty years later, someone had a bright idea. How about we have two cars, connected by a cable that went up the mountain and looped through a winding engine? The two cars counterbalance each other - the descending car helps to pull the ascending car up the hill. The first funicular entered service in Lyon, France in 1862 and since then several hundred have been built all over the world, many still operational today. The earliest funiculars used two parallel tracks, but this doubled the construction and maintenance costs and in the 1870s, a Swiss engineer, Carl Abt, developed a simple, robust mid-point passing track



that involves no moving parts. One car has double-flanged wheels on one side and wider, flangeless wheels on the other side. The other car has the opposite arrangement. The result? At the halfway point of the railway, the “up” car and the “down” car meet, are guided to the opposite tracks of a short double track and pass by within inches of each other. Figures 1 and 2 show a typical wheel set and passing track.

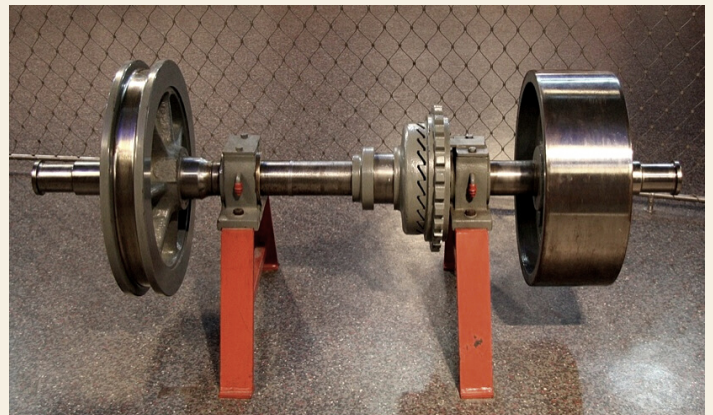


Figure 1: A funicular axle and wheel set. Note the double flange on one side.



Figure 2: Passing track at the half-way point of a funicular track. The double flanges on the opposite sides of the up and down car direct them to “their” tracks

As I said, there are funiculars all over the world with the majority in Europe and South America. There are several still operating in the United States, the most famous is the Angels’ Flight in Los Angeles. In Canada there are three still operational. The Old Quebec Funicular is the oldest. First constructed in 1879 and still operating after several upgrades, it climbs from Lower Town to the Chateau Frontenac on La Terrasse Dufferin. At Niagara Falls, Ontario, the Falls Incline Railway climbs to a viewing site above the city. In Edmonton, the River Valley Funicular carries passengers from the level of the city down to attractions in the valley of the North Saskatchewan River.

Riding a funicular is spectacular. I had the opportunity to ride several in Italy and Switzerland while on holiday in October of this year. I enclose several photographs that I took on the climb from Montecatini, an old spa town where we were staying up to the mountain-top community of Montecatini Alto, where we enjoyed a meal. Figure 3 shows one of the cars at the upper station. A typical feature of funiculars, the car is stepped to match, as much as possible, the angle of the incline.

Funiculars are a charming mixture of the archaic and the modern. The majority have been in place (and operation) for a century and employ old fashioned steel wheel on steel rail technology. However,

most, if not all, have been upgraded with modern controls and braking and safety systems. Funiculars provide safe and reliable access to amazing mountaintop sites with a touch of adventure and amazing views. If you get the chance, ride one.



Figure 3: A car of the Montecatini Funicular showing the stepped construction of the car.



Figure 4: The view down the Montecatini Funicular. The view from every window is amazing. Photo - the Author.



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



OPERATIONS UPDATE



Wheatland Express Safety Train

It is almost the new year and that means our colouring and poster contests are almost done! The deadline for our contests is January 15th, 2023. You can visit our website for the contest entry forms and while you are there you can download our activity books if you haven't already! We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable Christmas! Remember, See Tracks, Think Train!



Wheatland Charities Inc.

It is official, Tom and Jerry are retiring from service. They have found a new retirement home to live out their remaining years. We want to thank them for their service and help over the past several seasons.

We will be working on a new web site next year that will better highlight Wheatland charities and its planned programs for the 2023 year. We want to wish from our family to yours a VERY Merry Christmas and a Happy New year

Did you know that in the early 1800s, before snow fighters were invented, they had to mount plows to the locomotives to clear snow off the tracks?!



Weatland Express Excursion Train

We finished our excursions with our Christmas tours where we kicked it off with Donny Parenteau and finished off with our regular Christmas tours. We had a hot chocolate bar in the wonderland of trees. We also had pictures with Santa which was definitely a hit! We have a Christmas party private tour on December 22nd which will finish off our 2022 Excursions! Thank you to everyone who joined us aboard the train this year and we look forward to another season of exciting tours in 2023! ALL ABOARD



Wheatland Express Learning Centre

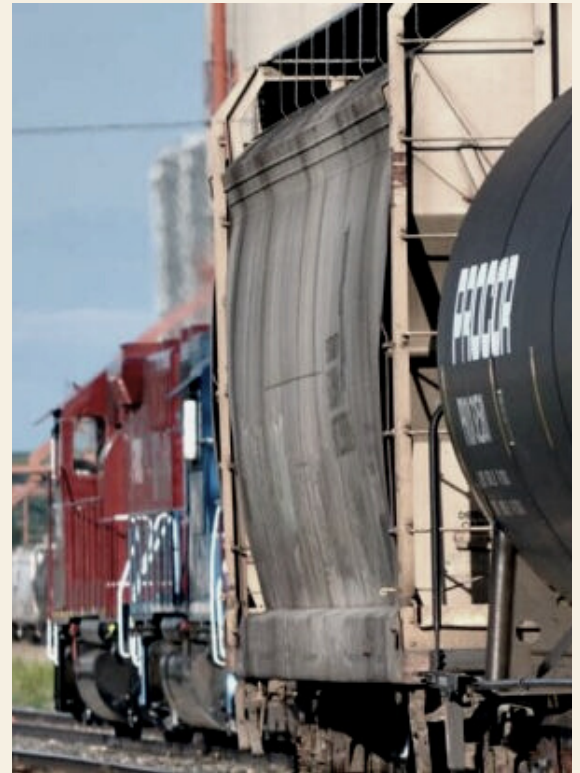
The baggage car was a perfect "Santa Car" this year during our Christmas tours. There were photos with Santa, a hot chocolate bar and a Christmas tree wonderland. The baggage car was definitely a hit. The actors loved the green room for them to change and get into costumes. We are so glad everyone enjoyed the car!



Great Sandhills Railway

The month of December for the most part has not been kind with lots of snow and WIND. We have had to push snow with the plow on several occasions. The cold is causing mechanical issues with the power and the generators on the excursion train.

We will load our first grain cars this month which is good. We have a meeting in January with CN Rail to discuss interchange issues. The 3131 locomotives will be leaving us and heading to Leader.



Western Canadian Railway Hall of Fame

Railway Employees have been a integral part of the building of Canada. The dedication that many displayed over the last 100 plus years has helped make Canada what it is today. We want to recognize those that committed their time and effort to the railway industry. You can nominate your mom, dad, grandmother, grandfather or even your mother-in-law. Entry forms will be available to briefly describe the nominees service and special notations of community service or Railway firsts.

The winners will be awarded annually with their plaque honoring their selection being on display in the newly refurbished railway learning and history centre car. The nominee or the nominees designate along with the person nominating will be awarded two tickets to a supper show and ride on the Wheatland Express!

Four Categories-

Operations: Train Crews, Dispatchers, Train Masters, Yardmasters, Superintendents

Maintenance: Track Maintenance, Car Repair Maintenance, Signal Maintenance

Builder: A person involved in non operating activities

Historical: A person that participated in any railway activity that no longer exists.

Entry Deadline: December 31, 2022

Open to all Railway employees past and present

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSES MOUTH

HOW TIMBIT SEE'S IT

Neigh there. I'm 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. I've heard that Gigi the goat has been very busy lately so let's go catch up with her!

Hi there, Gigi! Sorry to interrupt your nap in the shavings pile but the folks want to know what you've been up to!

"Oh, hello Timbit! I guess I could spare my time. It's been a very busy month! Not only do I have to walk around the farm every morning and supervise the farm staff but now I'm stuck babysitting the foals. That's why whenever I have some free time I come here and lay down in these soft warm shavings."

You are a very busy goat! Why do you have to babysit?

"At night the foals have started going into the barns, each in their own stall. Even though they practiced getting used to the stalls before winter, this is their first time

alone in a stall for the whole night. Some of them are very good and enjoy the warm alone time that they get overnight but others get a little lonely. To fix this problem, the farm help has started putting me in a stall overnight with Josie, who gets especially lonely. Ever since I have been staying with her, she eats all of her food and sleeps soundly. Eventually she won't need me to be there anymore but for now I just keep her company. It's much warmer in the barn then outside so I really don't mind babysitting. Sometimes, if I'm sneaky enough, I can eat some of Josie's grain when she's not looking."

That's good to hear, Gigi. Thanks for sharing and I'll see you around the farm!



EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Name: Courtney Frain

Born: Saskatoon, SK

Currently Reside: Saskatoon, SK

Work History: Courtney has worked at the racetrack every summer for Jamie and Judy starting at 13 years old! She also worked at Boston Pizza as a hostess before coming to work at our farm and now works out of the Wheatland Express office!

Favourite Movie: Longest Ride

Favourite Sport: Horse Racing

Favourite Wheatland Railcar: Gift Shop Car

Did you know: Courtney has been involved/riding horses ever since she could walk, restarted 2 racehorses and is starting on her 3rd this year!



2022 WHEATLAND EXPRESS SCHEDULE



DECEMBER

02 - Christmas party With Donny
Parenteau

03- Christmas Express

10- Christmas Express 10:30AM & 3PM

11- Christmas Express

17 - Christmas Express

SEE YOU ALL NEXT SEASON!



STAY TUNED FOR ADDED DATES,
TOURS AND TRAVEL OFFERS!



www.wheatlandexpresstrain.ca
