\$1.00 Spindrift Two 1993 Spring Volume 16 Number 3

# Cross Cascade Railroad is 100 years old

Progress was spelled with a capital "P" 100 years ago, when the rails of the Great Northern Railway met in the Cascades at a tiny hamlet called Scenic. This year the railway celebrates its Centennial, having brought hundreds of passengers to the West Coast and opened the last frontiers of the West.

James J. Hill, founder of the railroad, completed his transcontinental project without any government subsidy, and for such may be remembered among the "greats" of this country.

A "Rails Northwest '93" ceremony was held at the Snohomish County administration building with a good crowd in attendance. Among old-timers with years of service with the railroad was Fred Mortenson of Oak Harbor who with Bob Tindell of Marys-

ville, Fred Maxwell of Everett and John Robertson of Seattle had tallied 100 years of railroad service.

It was tough country in which to build a railroad, with much of the work done by hand, including tunnels, bridges and snow sheds erected in the harshest weather. The early routes included switchbacks, where a train was broken up and taken up over the mountains a few cars at a time. One disaster occurred when a mail train with a load of passengers was swept off a siding and hurtled into the valley below. This resulted in several tunnels being built, the longest seven miles long.

Oak Harbor's first Dutch families came by railroad from the Midwest to Seattle and thence by steamer to San de Fuca.

#### Chinese on Whidbey Island

In the 1880s, a number of Chinese came to Whidbey Island to farm. They were all unmarried men, or men who had left their families in China to come to this new land for the opportunity it presented of making money. Carl Engle recalled that as a boy he often visited the Chinese Compound on Ebey's Prairie. The Chinese were very friendly, and loved children. When they made trips to Seattle, they always brought back small mementos for their young friends.

During the "hard times" of the 1880s and 1890s resentment broke out among the farmers over the smaller wages asked by the Chinese, and that their money was going back to China. News-

paper editorials took up the cry, and soon the entire West Coast was affected. Most of the Chinese finally left. A few stayed and were permitted to work for farmers but could not rent land.

A Chinese named Ah Bo was the last survivor on Whidbey and had accumulated the furnishing and possessions left by his countrymen. He supplemented his meager income by gathering seaweed which he dried and sold to Chinese food stores in Seattle. He spent his summers working in an Alaskan fish cannery.

It was said that Ah Bo had no family left in China, so he did not feel the need to go home.



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# Whidbey's first and only railroad wreck

On an Island without a railroad, the most unusual disaster occurred at Ebey's Landing Feb. 23, 1967, when a huge railway barge, the Erik Foss, loaded with boxcars of Canadian lumber became stranded. Two cars were balanced over the stern, and scattered along the beach for a half mile were four other boxcars, some upright, others on their sides, without wheels, sides bent and torn. The barge tow-line had broken in a 70 mile an hour gale.

Several days later, when a Foss tug pulled the barge free, local people bought the wrecked cars for the salvage lumber, bringing to a close Whidbey's only train wreck.

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#### Island Indians wondered at newcomers

The first ten years after the white man came to Whidbey Island were years filled with the upheaval that comes when men move in on the property of others. The Indians built their "long houses" on the beach, where they also made their canoes, and family life thrived. The forests of the Island belonged to everyone.

It was a great change for the Indians

to undergo, with men of another race cutting down trees, clearing land and planting; building houses and traveling aboard great white-winged ships. There was plenty of fish and game for all, and the early settlers were not warlike. But the first ten years saw an unrest among the Indians, and a fear among the settlers, who built blockhouses for their protection.

The Indian Wars occurred during this period, farther down the Sound near Seattle, but resulting in peace be tween the whites and Indians. During this time a number of killings tool place at Port Townsend, and at Ebey Prairie where Col. Isaac N. Ebey wa killed in retribution for a massacre the took place across the waters.

Whidbey Island Indians were more peaceful lot, learning the whit man's ways and fitting into the cul

ture.

Burton Engle of Coupeville grandson of one of Whidbey's fin settlers, William Engle, in 197 wrote a History of Ebey's Landin in a special project at Skagit Valle College, relating many of the small happenings that make up the histor of North Whidbey.

The Indians worked for the se tlers, and one old Indian called Papp Job worked on the Engle farm. H couldn't understand that the objet in pitching hay was to have the forkfull land flat on the wagon! Eng finally said "Copa flapjack pappy (Copa is Chinook for like) An Pappy Job, all smiles, finally pitche the forkfull of hay as flat as a par cake. He knew what a pancake wa By 1868 near the ravine at Ebey Prairie, W. B. Engle built a wan house and commerce was established lished with the Peninsula. Freigh and passengers arrived daily.



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Prehistoric elephant unearthed

In the clay bluff to the east of the landing, W. B. Engle discoveredth remains of a prehistoric elepha deposited by glaciers long before the Indians came to live on White bey. Engle notified officials, an scientists came from the east to en cavate the bones and load them on schooner to be sent to an Easter museum. The huge ribs, bones, skill and tusks now are on display i some unknown museum.

What a find it would be today for the Island County Museum.

### In the olden days . . .

An interesting excerpt from an April 1945 newspaper found Oak Harbor citizens just as concerned then about the future of North Whidbey as they are today. Ethelee Maylor, a member of the Driver's Corps of the U.S. Citizens' Defense Corps, contributed the items which featured a Red Cross banquet in Coupeville attended by volunteer workers; a USO Dance of the Nation for enlisted men; a picture of the nation's new Chief, Harry S. Truman and a picture of the late President Roosevelt.

Noted was the fact that the Red Cross still needed workers and goods for overseas relief depots tended by the United National Clothing Collection for Overseas War Relief.

"Mainstreet," a local columnist, asked "Do you think Oak Harbor will share in the expected northwest postwar boom?

USO Director Tom Moore said that in his opinion Oak Harbor would thrive still more and would see many new industries. He added that "it is the finest place for a young man to settle down and have a home."

H.T.Hill, pioneer businessman, said it would have to share if it is part of the United States, and he looked for a general expansion.

Lillian Kellogg, pioneer mother, said yes, not a boom but a steady growth.

Chris Bos, long-time resident and businessman said he would be able to tell better after the war. It would be tough going after the war and nothing would go ahead very fast.

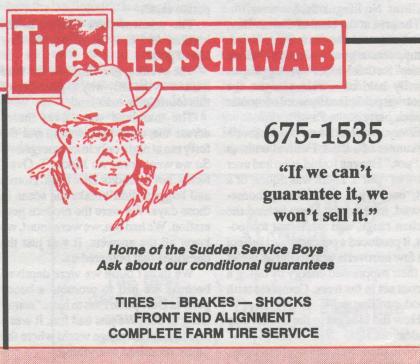
E.E. Wade, businessman, opined we would see a pretty big town here. Oak Harbor was bound to move ahead.

Aroyal wedding took place in Port Townsend in 1891, when the Prince of Wales, eldest son of the Duke of York, Chief of the Clallam Indians married Princess Bessie Jackson, also of the house of Clallam. The Rev. Myron Eels of the Skokomish Reservation performed the ceremony. The Prince brought over a fine lot of fish from Scow Bay and sold them at a good price. He was very happy over the wedding, saying it was "hyas close" or "very good." Queen Victoria, mother of the bridegroom was unable to attend the wedding. She was busy digging clams. . . . Island County Times

A July 3, 1891 item in the Island County Times: Billy Barlow, (Chief of the Skagits living on North Whidbey) gave notice to all trespassers on the beach near the Indians' potlatch house (on Penn Cove) to refrain from picking currants or gooseberries in the area. He also warned against breaking into the

house where the Barlow goods were stored. "If you want berries, or to go into the house, ask and it shall be given," he said.

On Nov. 10, 1913 the Oak Harbor News reported a trip with Charlie Wolfsen to Skagit County, and "the awful condition of the Fidalgo Road for about one mile." Soon after, the paper reported, the road was closed and "there would be no more travel this winter." Ferryman Finsen of the Deception Pass ferry said that the first severe storm of the season would sweep away the Fidalgo side landing. (This was 22 years before the Deception Pass Bridge was built.)



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## Rum running was big business

Opium smuggling was widespread on Whidbey Island in the early days. Then when Prohibition came into being, the smuggling of whiskey became big-time, and Whidbey Island was a particular site for smugglers. The Coast Guard stationed fast boats at Port Townsend, Deception Pass and Anacortes, but rum runners bypassed check points by landing at night on the shores of Whidbey, then transferring whiskey to waiting vehicles which trucked it to the mainland. Ebey's Landing was a favorite spot with its adjoining County road, as was West Beach.

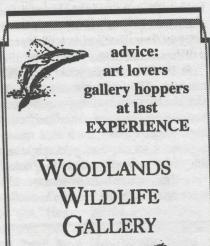
In Burton Engle's account of rumrunning on Whidbey, he tells of three boys playing on the beach, who spotted a boat with the bow floating and the stern dragging on the bottom, about 30 feet from shore. The rum-runners asked a nearby farmer to help pull their boat to shore. When the boat was pulled in, the Sheriff stepped out of the bushes and arrested the men. Two touring cars and a farm wagon were loaded with sacks of Canadian liquor. What the boys thought might have been an "old wreck" turned out to be a 40-foot speed boat with a 12-cylinder engine with an underwater exhaust. The next day the Coast Guard came to seize the boat and convert it to Coast Guard use.

In Oak Harbor logger/farmer James A. Neil, who built the 1912 barn now known as the "Roller Barn," told how a trucker came to him about 1920 and asked to rent space overnight for his

truck, at \$100 per month! \$100

truck, at \$100 per month! \$100 "big money" to farmers in those before the Great Depression, but suspected a rum-runner and refit the offer. However, other fam jumped at the chance to make \$1 month. The truck was loaded on Beach from a rum-runner craft, taken by truck across Whidbey off-loaded onto another boat at \$100 Bay, thus by-passing Deception which was closely watched by the Guard.

Engle said in his rum-running count that at Ebey's Landing be some mornings "the sandy beach" be tracked by so many footprints seemed an army had marched frow water's edge to the road."



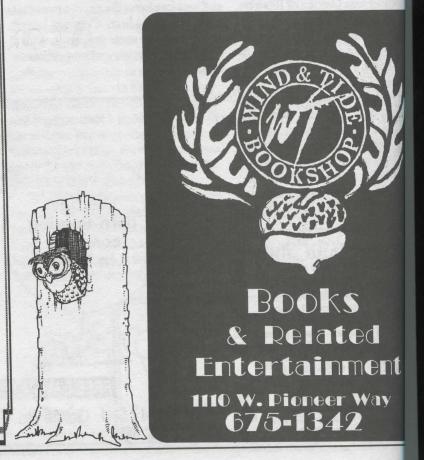


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# Historical notes from the 19th century

The evolution of early day ships in the northwest is not without humor, and according to William D. Welsh's "historical sketch of Port Townsend" the yarn about the *Eliza Anderson* steamship and her calliope was gleefully recalled by any old-timer of that era.

The Eliza Anderson was only 140 feet long with a gross of 279 tons, but made a modest fortune running between Olympia and Victoria B. C. Her ingenious owners ran her competitors off the seaways and during one of the periods of competition Captain John T. Wright had a circus calliope installed on the ship. Entering or leaving port, steam would pour from the calliope along with the strains of "John Brown's Body," "Yankee Doodle," or other American classics of that day.

One Fourth of July the Eliza Anderson was docked at the staid Canadian city of Victoria and played over and over again "Yankee Doodle" which finally grated on the nerves of Victoria Port officials. The Captain was ordered to stop the calliope or leave the dock. The Captain pulled out into the harbor where he anchored and kept the steam popping in the boilers all afternoon while the Canadian hills resounded to the music of "Yankee Doodle Dandy"!

The year 1853 brought a number of interesting events to Whidbey Island. Captain B. P. Barstow opened the first trading post at Coveland, at the head of Penn's Cove; James Busby established

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the first mill on the Island at Crescent Harbor; and Island County's first three judges were appointed, John Alexander, Samuel Crockett and S. D. Howe.

The Methodist Church was organized at the home of Dr. Richard Lansdale at Coveland in July following church services held at the home of Isaac Ebey in April. Chloe Terry became the Island's first bride on April 23 when she married R. L. Doyle. And the first official census for Island County revealed a total of 195 inhabitants including 80 voters and nearly 1,500 Indians.

Being a reporter on a newspaper in the 1860s was exciting if not hazardous, James G. Swan, a reporter for the Port Townsend Register, kept a diary of events from the weight of a halibut of 138 pounds to the recovery of the scalp of Whidbey Island's Colonel Isaac N. Ebey.

Whidbey Island and Port Townsend were just across the Straits of Juan de Fuca from each other, and boat and canoe traffic moved both ways for pioneers. Ebey had been murdered by transient "Northern" Indians at his Ebey's Prairie home on the the west side of Whidbey on Aug. 11, 1857. The scalp was taken as a trophy, but was later recovered by Capt. Charles Dodd of the Hudson's Bay Co. steamship Labouchere late in 1859, and buried with Ebey's remains.

The Schooner H. C. Page came into prominence when it was wrecked near the Point in the Straits. A big sea carried off the vessel's deckload of lumber, and Captain Obery cut away the vessel's masts. The schooner drifted ashore on Whidbey four miles south of Deception Pass, and when Capt. Obery was rescued he had been without food for 36 hours.





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#### 1925-1940

by Dorothy Neil

1925 was a big year for our family of six, who moved from Mount Vernon to Whidbey Island to rent a house in Oak Harbor. Mother had been advised that if we really meant to move to Whidbey Island, we should consider living in Coupeville, because "that is where the culture is."

Mother, formerly a school teacher, felt that in this great northwest, any culture was worth seeking. So on our first visit to the Island, the little Star touring car swung past Oak Harbor on its way to Coupeville, the County seat and the culture seat. There were no houses for rent in Coupeville.

Back to Oak Harbor, and luck was with us. There was one house on what is today 300 Ave. West; a much too small house for a couple with four kids, but there was no choice.

Izett Avenue (300 Ave. West) was a dirt road, with Keister's Marsh from the Big Oak to the highway, where the post office and sundry buildings are located. Keister told us that at one time about the turn of the century, that a railroad was being considered for the length of Whidbey Island. From Coupeville it would run across Penn Cove and on north to Deception Pass where cars would be ferried to Skagit County lines. From there? "Derned if I know," he said, scratching his head.

There were a handful of houses to the top of the hill, Chris Bos', the Rideouts, the Kamps, the Vander Voets, and Alec Kalebaugh on the corner. We remember Charlie Vander Voet especially, at a silent movie in the big IOOF Hall, when a cowboy prepared to mount his horse by hitching up his breeches and Charlie jumped to his feet and shouted, "Do't right!' Hitch up the brouke and show 'em vat you can do!

Our new home was primitive, to say the least. There was a hand pump on the back porch, for water, and a wood stove to cook on. The privy was some distance out back under a big oak. The three "bedrooms" were each just big

### ... how Oak Harbor grew

enough for a bed and dresser, with a little squeezing. But we lived there until the next summer when another house became available on Midway, near the school.

Except for a section of main street, Midway was the only street with a sidewalk. The Ladies Improvement Club raised enough money to build the sidewalk so that events at the school might be better attended, since nearly everyone walked. Cars were few and gas expensive and money scarce.

The house on Midway had been built for Roy Neil and his bride, Ruby McCrohan, by his father James Neil, and was spacious, with a bedroom fireplace and enough room outside for Mother to raise a pen of chickens and a dozen turkeys, plus a garden!

Astory went with the house: a woodpecker had gotten into the attic, and periodically rat-a-tat-tatted on the wall. Ruby was sure the house was haunted, and when her husband went into partnership in the Deception Pass Ferry with Agaton Olson, forsaking logging, the couple moved to the Fidalgo side of the ferry run and Ruby was spared her nightly "haunt."

Oak Harbor's "main street" right in the center of town, was divided into a row of newer buildings on the north, along with a cement sidewalk. On the shore side, the business buildings were of wooden pioneer stock, and had been there from the beginning of the town. A wooden sidewalk, built by volunteer townspeople ran the block-long length.

Behind the shore side of the street the slough ran, deep and wide, and the buildings were made with storage underneath. Freight boats unloaded from the slough. On the upper level, Barrington Avenue was our "downtown" (as it is now) with the doctor, dentist, druggist, furniture store, five and ten, and H.T. Hill's little "general store." H.T., a diminutive man with a sparkling eye and continual smile was one of the original "old timers," having come as a young man to North Whid-



bey in the 1880s to take a leading part in building the little town.

On the "sidewalk side" of the street was the bank, bakery, sheet-metal shop, a big new garage, the co-op store, pool hall and barber shop and the Puget Power office.

What more would one need on an Island? Not counting of course, a meat market and feed store at one end of the street, and the Oak Harbor News and photographer's office at the other?

We had everything lined up on two sides of the dirt road that was graded once a week, and where periodic festivals were held, with foot races, food booths and even horse racing livening up the populace in a day's celebration. There are pictures of those days with women in ankle length skirts and hats, with babies in baby buggies and men'in ties and straw hats. A picnic wasn't a picnic until a tablecloth was spread on the grass and everyone sat on the ground to eat.

Oak Harbor's first park, nearly a

block square and covered with oak trees, became the focus of summer festivals, and the townspeople built a picnic table and benches under a roof, an outdoor stove, and mounted a World War I cannon on a cement pad. Here Billy Barlow, the last of the Skagit Indian Chiefs, gave a memorable address one July 4.

The town was growing. Columbia Lumber came in to locate on the shore side; the Washington Cooperative Egg and Poultry Association bought the dock and built additional storehouse space and employed a couple dozen locals to candle eggs and handle feed; a new bank building sprang up where the Old Mint is today; Ray Maylor built a Chevrolet Garage; and wonder of wonders, Howard and Bessie Maylor built a theater to welcome the "talkies"; Chris Bos installed a service station at one end and Beeksma another at the west end.

One enterprising citizen, Vernon Ely, built a sandwich shop on the Midway corner where the Oak Harbor Elementary stands, where Goldie Road of those days met Neil Road near the old three story wooden high school and elementary school building. It was a time of growing, despite the difficult times of the Great Depression; there were people who had dreams and worked toward fulfillment.

It was a very small town where everyone knew everyone else; where life was difficult but not without meaning. It was home.

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### Calista Kinney Lovejoy was a pioneer

Captain Simeon Bartlett Kinney was born April 3, 1808, in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. He was married to Olive Doane of Argyle, Nova Scotia. Their first two children, Thomas and Olive Jane, were born on Simeon's father's homestead in Little River, Nova Scotia. About 1832 Simeon B. Kinney moved his family to St. John, New Brunswick where the other children were born;

Robert, Frances, Calista and Almira Antoinette.

Capt. Kinney loved his family very much and when his ship was in port they became days of keen pleasure. He had sailed the Atlantic sea lanes for many years, often taking his wife Olive with him.

In 1850 Capt. Kinney took the sailing vessel "Duke of Wellington" to San Francisco; the trip took 11 months. It was said that Capt. Kinney's wife, Olive, smuggled his daughter Frances aboard so the captain wouldn't be so lonesome when he made this long trip.

After the captain's arrival in San Francisco he learned the sad news that his wife, Olive, had died. He sent money back to his family to have them join him in San Francisco as soon as possible. His family arrived 1½ years later on the three masted full-rigged ship "George Raynes." One of the captain's grandchildren was born on this ship just after it rounded the horn. The baby, of course, was named after the ship.

In the spring of 1854 Calista traveled with her father from San Francisco to Puget Sound. The voyage took about two weeks. After delivering supplies at Coupeville, they sailed to Camano Island where they loaded pilings. During the loading Calista made friends with the Indians. They had come aboard and were fascinated with the white girl's clothing and possessions. It was believed that she was the first white woman to come to Camano Island.

The Indians liked Calista and gave her the nickname of "Kol-lis-tal-lu" meaning "good woman" or "one who has everything." Calista favored the latter interpretation.

In observing Calista, it was probably the first white lady the Indians had ever seen. They were impressed and talked about her being a lady. Their reference to her was "Utsalady" meaning "it's a lady." Utsalady is an area still recognized on Camano today. She

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### lady and a strong woman

must have made quite an impression because 50 years later there was an Indian who still remembered Calista on that first trip. He also remembered the fact that her father had taken the Indian's brother with him on a trip to China.

Howard Bentley Lovejoy was a captain whose ship, the "Chalcedony" was on the Sound for the same reason as Capt. Kinney's ship—to load pilings. Both ships were loaded and had come to anchorage at Long Point, not far from Coupeville.

Capt. Thomas Coupe and his wife had invited the two captains and Calista to dinner the evening before their sailing. Capt. Lovejoy, a young skipper, was very much taken by Calista on this occasion and was not to forget her. It was said that during the time of dinner a rain had set in, and when the dinner party was leaving Lovejoy put his cloak over Calista's shoulders as they returned to their ships. Both captains set sail for San Francisco the following morning arriving about two weeks later.

Capt. Lovejoy found many occasions to visit Calista in San Francisco and later made an urgent plea to marry her. They were married in January 1855, not quite a year after meeting.

That same month, Calista set sail on the "Chalcedony" from San Francisco with her new husband, Capt. Lovejoy, to Alaska on their honeymoon to load ice. After a long, hard trip they arrived in Sitka. Through lack of cooperation from the Russians, (they were mistaken for "a-man-of-war-ship") and in a storm they were blown back to sea and it was two weeks before they could get back to Sitka.

Capt. Lovejoy wasn't to live very long. He died at 45 leaving Calista with a family of six. She could have gone back to San Francisco, as her father had wanted her to do, but she chose to stay at the family home in Coupeville where she felt her family would be better off than in booming San Francisco.

Calista was a person with lots of courage. She had their land claim logged and as much as she needed the financial help she did not receive one cent from selling the logs, as the person who had logged it died, leaving nothing behind to settle his bills.

It was said that Calista was a wonderful seamstress with a little portable hand sewing machine. Here was a young woman with six children that she must provide for. She took the job of outfitting whole families while her older children cared for the younger ones. She hired an Indian to take her by canoe to Oak Harbor where she would stay sewing for several weeks before returning home. Her family became very responsible people.

Most of her sons stayed in shipping, becoming captains or harbor pilots. One of her sons, Howard Bartlett Love-



joy, was a designer of many ships on the Sound as well as the "Calista," named for his mother. It was built on Vashon Island for Calista's son and company in 1911. After it was christened and launched it was taken to Seattle. No doubt the "Calista" was taken along side the "Camano" a sister ship, giving the advantage of using both ships for the festivities of a dinner and dance to celebrate the new ship.



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