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**Southeast Chapter**  
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**ACROSS CANADA IN MID-WINTER**  
**ABOARD VIA RAIL'S CANADIAN**  
*By Lyle Key*



*The Moonlighters' Canadian adventure began at the classic Pacific Central train station in Vancouver, British Columbia.*

When Teddy Roosevelt took a late life adventure into a South American jungle, he commented that “This is my last chance to be a little boy.” I found that I had similar feelings about my mid-winter trip across Canada aboard Via Rail’s Canadian. There hopefully will be other opportunities in the future to rekindle the excitement of train travel during the bygone post-war era, but at least for now, the Canadian is the last surviving regularly scheduled streamliner with passenger cars that date back to the mid-‘50’s. No less than 63 people travelled to Vancouver, British Columbia to join Bill Schafer’s “Moonlighters” group for the Canadian’s January 10th departure for Toronto.

The Canadian has received some well-deserved positive press in recent months, and for additional information and photos, one can refer to Fred Frailey’s article entitled “Canada’s tumbled SILVER LADY” on pages 38 – 47 of the January 2014 issue of Trains and to Don Phillip’s column entitled “The world’s finest train ride” on pages 12 – 13 of the February 2014 issue of Trains.

My journey began with a transcontinental flight from Jacksonville to Seattle on Thursday, January 9th, and the overnight layover in Seattle gave me an opportunity to ride the light rail line from the airport to my downtown hotel. After a good night’s sleep, I boarded the light rail line again for a quick trip to Amtrak’s beautifully renovated King Street Station. During the short walk to the train station, I noted that Seattle still used trackless trolleys, and later that day, I would see more of them in Vancouver. The waiting room of King Street Station must look

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like it did during the golden age of rail travel, but I boarded a brand new Talgo train for the ride to Vancouver. This was the first trip for this set of equipment, and two Talgo technicians rode the train to fix any bugs that developed. We left right on time at 7:40 am for a scenic trip along Puget Sound. It was fun to visit with several other Moonlighters aboard the train, and I had a nice breakfast of oatmeal, coffee, and a scone in the Bistro car. The train pulled into Vancouver's Pacific Central Station on time at 11:40 am, and Canadian customs officials checked me into Canada in short order. **IMPORTANT TRAVEL TIP** – It once was possible to travel to Canada with just a driver's license from a state in the United States, but a trip north of the border now requires a passport.



*During the service stop at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Lyle took this photo of the ice and snow that had accumulated underneath his sleeper, the Blair Manor.*

For the 3 day and 4 night journey to Toronto, I was in lower berth #1 on Blair Manor, a sleeper built by Budd with 4 sections (section #4 had been replaced with a shower), 6 double bedrooms, and 4 roomettes. The train left Vancouver at the scheduled time of 8:30 pm on Friday with two diesel units, one baggage car, coaches 8143 and 8130, Skyline Dome 8511, sleepers Drummond Manor (#8322), Bliss Manor (#8308), and Christie Manor (#8316), Skyline Dome 8502, dining car 8401, sleepers Cabot Manor (#8313), Blair Manor (#8307), and Mackenzie Manor (#8335), and finally, observation-dome-lounge-sleeper Evangeline Park (#8704). The Manor cars honored prominent Englishmen who migrated to Canada, and my sleeper was named for Andrew George Blair who lived from 1844 – 1907 and served as Premier of New Brunswick from 1883 – '96. He went on to several federal positions including the Chairmanship of the Board for the Railway Commission of Canada from 1904 – '07. Silver plates in each sleeper provided information about that car's namesake in both English and French.

While I was sleeping, the relative warmth and rain around Vancouver changed to cold temperatures and snow, but by Canadian standards, the weather wasn't bad for mid-winter, and we didn't experience any sub-zero

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***The Southeast Limited Newsletter is edited and published by Donald R. Hensley, Jr.***

weather! I woke up at 4:45 am on Saturday as we sat on a passing track, and a few moments later, Via train #1, our westbound counterpart, rushed by on the mainline. My train pulled into Kamloops early and then waited until the scheduled departure time. After a shave and shower, I walked up to the dining car for a terrific breakfast of eggs, toast, hash browns, and sausage. The steward and the servers remembered the Moonlighters from previous years, and they seemed genuinely pleased and excited to have us back on board.

The dome of the Park car was fairly full of Moonlighters, but there were a few seats open from which one could observe the mountainous terrain and the evergreen trees laden with snow. East of Valemont, we came to a stop where there wasn't a side track, and before long, there was an update over the train's intercom. A freight had broken down up ahead, and we were going to back up and take an alternate route to Jasper on a more northerly line. Fortunately, the alternate line was well maintained and good for 60 mph, and we were able to leave Jasper just 1 hour and 25 minutes behind schedule. Not bad considering what had transpired. Via had equipment standing by in Jasper to wash the dome windows – and that was good – but the water quickly froze on the front windows of the domes and made them opaque! Thankfully, the ice slowly melted during the daylight hours on Sunday.



*The Moonlighters' eastbound Canadian arrived in Jasper after sunset, so we used Lyle's 2009 photo of the lift used to clean the domes at that station.*

Getting back to food for a moment, Via had a different menu each day for every meal except breakfast, and on Saturday evening, I selected the rack of lamb entrée.

When I turned in for the night, the sleeping car attendant let me know that when I woke up on Sunday morning, a passenger getting on at Edmonton would be sleeping in the upper berth above me. I actually slept through Edmonton, but I was told that we had sat on the east side of town for two hours. As it turned out, we spent Sunday meeting what seemed like an endless parade of CN freights as we traversed the flat, snow-covered plains of Saskatchewan. After another good breakfast featuring pancakes, I tried out the Skyline dome ahead of the diner to watch us meet the plethora of freights headed west. As we neared Manitoba on Sunday afternoon, the Canadian pulled into a passing track behind an eastbound freight. After a bit of a wait, a westbound stack train roared past on the main line. We followed the eastbound freight ahead of us out onto the main, and when we got to the next passing track, that freight was in the "hole" waiting for us to run around it. Another eastbound freight was tucked away on the next passing track, so the passenger train finally was able to make some good progress on its eastbound trek.

On Sunday night, I had another excellent meal that featured prime rib, and I bid adieu to our enthusias-



tic steward Barry and the three servers who would be relieved by a new crew in Winnipeg. The sleeping car attendant who covered Blair Manor also would be leaving us in Winnipeg. She also had been very personable and efficient, but I think she would have flunked a bed making test administered by a Pullman inspector because the sheets Via used were too small for the mattresses in the sections. Amtrak's sleeping car attendants seem to do a better job of tucking in the sheets on their berths although they admittedly aren't as big and as comfortable as the berths in a Via section.

The train made a brief service stop at a snowy Sioux Lookout, and then we resumed our eastbound journey. Train #2 encountered very few freights as we rolled across the Canadian Shield at track speed, so we finally were chipping away at all the time we had lost. Up in the domes, one mostly saw lots of blowing snow while we were underway, but when we pulled onto a passing track for one of the few westbound freights we would encounter, we noted that it actually had a F-unit behind the first two diesels. One of the Moonlighters in the dome said that the F-unit was dead in tow.

For my final dinner on the Canadian's diner, I selected horseradish encrusted pickerel. The steward told us that the fish would be called "walleye" in the United States. The complementary meals and the service on the dining car were superb, and all of us agreed that no one should be hungry when he or she detrained in Toronto on Tuesday! After dinner, Iowa Pacific President Ed Ellis played his guitar and led a sing-along in the lounge of the observation car.



*Iowa Pacific President Ed Ellis played his guitar and led a sing-a-long in the rear lounge of observation car Evangeline Park on the evening of January 14.*

The sun was shining on Tuesday morning, and the surroundings exhibited increasing signs of civilization as we neared Toronto. We were rolling along on lots of tangent track, and we were told that we should arrive in Toronto Union Station by 10:30 am. That was great news for those of us who had booked flights from Toronto on the afternoon of January 14th! Going into Toronto, the Canadian passed a yard filled with green and white GO TRANSIT trains that weren't in service after the morning rush, and we pulled into Union Station at 10:20 am, just 50 minutes behind schedule! It's amazing how many people have a train trip across Canada on their "bucket lists," and you'll note that both of the Trains' articles about the Canadian that I mentioned earlier concluded with admonishments to ride the Canadian sooner rather than later. One hopes that this rolling time capsule will be around for many years to come, but Via is under even more political and financial pressure than Amtrak, and sadly, the Canadian could be here today and gone tomorrow.



Moonlighter Ken Briers took this picture of the eastbound Canadian in a snow covered evergreen forest west of Jasper.

During the nocturnal service stop at Melville, Saskatchewan, Lyle took this shot of the rear end of observation car Evangeline Park.



The westbound Canadian made a service stop in Edmonton during the trip Lyle and his wife made in the summer of 2009.

In the summer of 2009, Lyle and his wife Carolyn posed beside observation car Waterton Park when they rode the westbound Canadian from Toronto to Jasper.





## **It has been our pleasure...**

Jim Smith and Cliff Vander Yacht bid farewell as your Southeast Limited editor and compiler. We have enjoyed the opportunity to share our Chapter's news with you. However, we are fortunate that Southeast Chapter member, Don Hensley, has stepped up and volunteered to take over as editor of the Southeast Limited. Some of you already know Don and his passion for early railroads in the southeastern USA. Cliff and I appreciate all the Southeast Chapter members who contributed material to make our newsletter interesting. Please welcome aboard Don Hensley as the new Southeast Limited Editor.

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## **The Dispatcher's Report....**

I like to say Hi to everyone and to introduce myself. I've been a long time member of the SE Chapter, beginning when I used to live in Bartow, Florida and now I live up yonder in Waynesburg, PA. I got bit by the history bug around 1980 or so, when I found out that Florida had narrow gauge railroads and as a long time narrow gauge modeler I planned to research and model my favorite, the Orange Belt Railway. A two year stint at the Florida Archives in Tallahassee led to a life long passion for railroad history. I soon made contact with R&LHS lifetime members John B Allen and Albert Weber III, both of whom became my mentors in railroad and steam locomotive research. I soon turned to black and white photography because I needed a way to copy old photos. From there I branched out into steam locomotive negative collecting and darkroom b&w printing. This led to a long time friendship with fellow collector and historian Thomas Lawson. I have one of the larger private collections which still is accessible to the public. When the digital age dawned I started my own web site on Southeastern short line and industrial railroads which I called Tap Lines ([www.taplines.net](http://www.taplines.net)).

I have worked for FedEx Office (the old Kinkos) as a production specialist since 1997 and currently trying to sell our home and move back to Florida and get out of this cold!

As I'm heavily into both railroad history and railroad photography, I will try to fit in a historical photo essay in each edition of the Southeast Limited. This issue I have done one about the lesser known railroad photographer Henry C. Dubal of Chicago, IL. Mr. Dubal was a professional studio photographer that happened to be a rail fan. Like most rail fans of the late 30's he would take vacations that revolved around railroad spots he gleaned out of the Official Guides. Unlike most rail fans however, he used his professional equipment, a large 5x7 view camera which had to be set up on a tripod to use. Each shot meant a complicated change of film and setup so he only made one shot per subject. There was no trading of negatives with other rail fans, that was so popular with the postcard and 616 film rail fans of the day.

In my story Mr. Dubal visited the Collins & Glenville locomotive terminal in Glenville, Georgia on October 29, 1939. Afterwards he then traveled to the tiny Lakeland Railway in Lakeland, GA and then on to Valdosta where he spent the majority of the day photographing the Southern and Atlantic Coast Line. On the 30th he traveled to Moultrie (Georgia Northern and Georgia & Florida), Albany (Georgia SW & Gulf) and Pelham (Flint River & NE). On the 31st he visited the Panhandle of Florida at Blountstown (Marianna & Blountstown) and 8 miles north of South Port (Alabama & West Florida) before returning home. A great trip indeed.

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## **Announcements:**

September 11th: Regular Southeast Chapter meeting at the CSX building.

October 9th: Regular Southeast Chapter meeting at the CSX building

## Henry DuBal Visits the Collins & Glenville in 1939.

by  
Don Hensley



When Chicago professional photographer Henry C. Dubal visited the small Southeastern Georgia town of Glenville during a quiet Saturday morning on October 28, 1939, he discovered the equally small and quiet Collins & Glenville engine facilities. This railroad was all that was left of the once larger 80 mile long Georgia Coast & Piedmont which had suffered greatly at the loss of the great forests of Yellow Pine in the Altamaha River Basin after the First World War. In 1922 the line was pared back to only 20 miles between Collins & Glenville.

He quickly set up his 5x7 view camera and tripod in which he made this stunning shot of this open air terminal and its two engines.

Mr. Dubal then talked the engineer into moving the 105 so that he could then move his camera into position for this view of the old 64 engine. Luckily the engine had her driving rods down for a nice portrait. The 64 was built new for the GC&P by Baldwin (c/n29792) in 1906 and inherited by the C&G in 1922. Both engines would be scrapped after the 1941 abandonment.



Mr. Dubal then talked the engineer into posing the 105, putting the driving rods into the down position so he could snap this classic steam portrait. He probably made a promise to send the man a 5x7 print in return. This beautiful ten wheeler was made by Baldwin (c/n 51974) in 1919 and was the youngest engine on the line. She was built for connecting line Savannah & Southern RR and was bought by the C&G in 1923 after the S&S abandoned it's line.





**Virginian Railway 420 taking on water at Princeton, WV on September 5th, 1954. This Mikado was built by Baldwin (c/n 33395) in 1909 and would be scrapped in March of 1955, only six months away. Donald R. Hensley, Jr. Collection (616 size negative) Original photographer unknown.**



**Virginian Railway 738 is steaming up at the engine facilities at Elmore, WV on April 4th, 1950. The 2-8-8-2 was built by ALCO-Schenectady (c/n 61090) in 1919. Scrapped in June of 1955. Donald R. Hensley, Jr. Collection (616 size negative) Original photographer unknown.**