

Prince Albert Exhibition



CNR Engine
5080

History

The historical steam locomotive was hand-built in 1914 in Montreal, Quebec, and helped to bring people, produce, and lumber to Western Canada. It spent most of its career in Manitoba. CN donated the locomotive to Prince Albert in the 1960s.



Restoring

After 50 years of sitting idle in Prince Albert's Exhibition Park, locomotive 5080 is getting ready for a journey to new life – more specifically to Aspen Crossing, a railway themed park Southeast of Calgary in Mossleigh, Alta., where the engine will be restored. Prince Albert resident Arnie Lindberg has been trying to have the engine restored since 2008 but nobody in Saskatchewan had the money or volunteer help needed to get the job done.



Arnie Lindberg, left, Jason Thornhill, and Al Broadfoot holding the original number plate from engine 5080.

Restoring

The owner and creator of Aspen Crossing, Jason Thornhill, said he hopes to restore the train in two to five years and have it running on the 14 miles of tracks the park maintains. “We know it will be a long project, an expensive project, but full of passion for all of us. So hopefully we can pull it off.” Once restored the locomotive will be renamed The Spirit of Prince Albert and will promote Prince Albert tourism inside.

Al Broadfoot is assisting with the \$ 1 million restoration and says it’s “quite a process” but worth the effort to maintain a piece of Canadian history.



Relocating

Crews spent several hours on March 19, 2019 at the train's Prince Albert Exhibition site, going through the painstaking process of lifting the 112-ton chunk of steel onto a huge 92-wheeler flatbed truck.

New owner Jason Thornhill, who runs the Aspen Crossing train theme park (just south of Calgary), which will become the locomotive's new permanent home, watched over the meticulously planned lift operation. Two huge cranes were used to swing the steam engine onto the mega truck.



Relocating



March 19, 2019



Relocating



March 19, 2019



Relocating

After the two flatbed trucks were off loaded at Mossleigh, Alberta, the tender was reconnected to the engine. The engine was then prepped for rail movement to Aspen Crossing. Naturally this involved lubricating the driver axles with fresh grease. Usually a simple process. Not so this time.

After years of sitting in a park, the grease had solidified into concrete hardness. The usual method of pumping fresh grease into the fittings...did not work. The old grease would not budge from the axles. The solution was to allow the drivers and axles to sink down under their own weight, as the engine was being lifted by the giant cranes. This worked, and fresh grease was flooded in around the bearing surfaces. Safely lubricated, the engine was towed to its new home by ex CNR 8454 - an S3 Alco, which was constructed by Montreal Locomotive Works in 1952. It spent many years in Canadian Prairie service, and is now the perfect stablemate for 5080. The remedy worked, and 5080 arrived safely, and is now parked outside Jason's office window at Aspen Crossing.

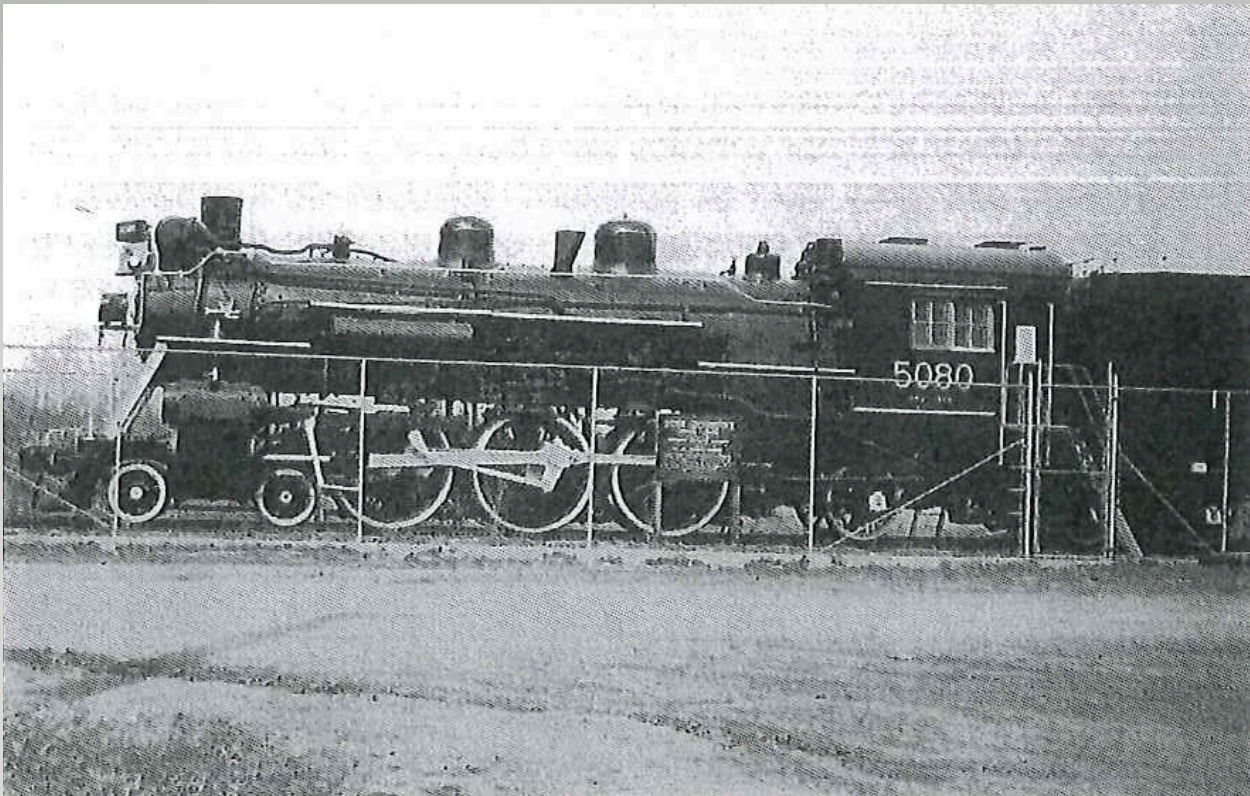




Al Broadfoot inspecting the grease cellars

Al Broadfoot inspecting the grease cellars





Steam Locomotive Number 5080 located on Exhibition Grounds.

(Photo Courtesy Wendy Frith)

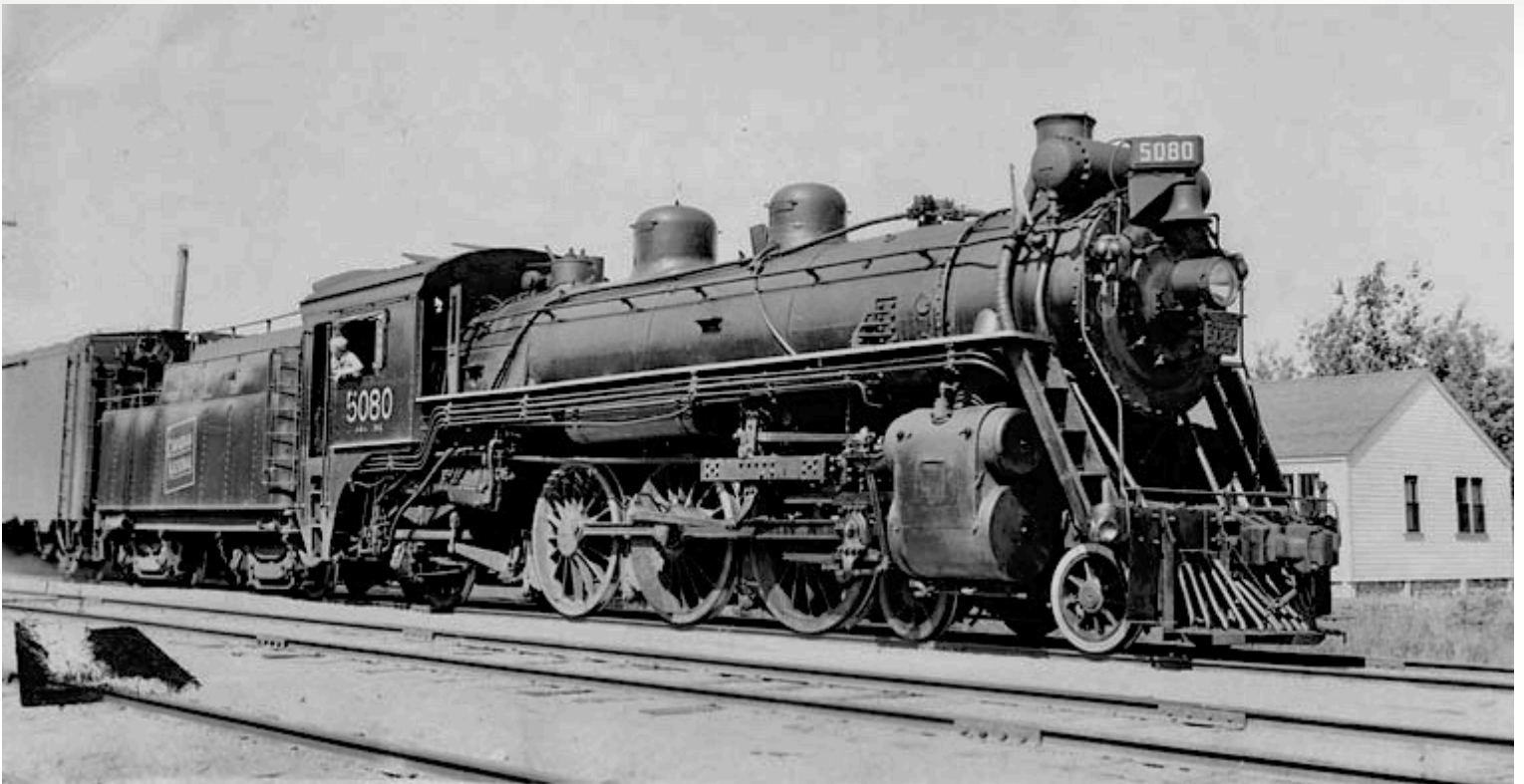
The absence of rail transportation to Prince Albert was a detriment to the growth of the community but when the railroad did arrive cooperation with the Town and the Society was excellent. Throughout the years cinders were put on the roadway of the Society grounds to keep the suffocating dust down and later were laid behind the barns. Arrangements were made with C.N.R. for special rates from Winnipeg during the Annual Fair and the Railroad was persuaded to give special prizes for various sections of the Fair.

In 1908 the Society requested the C.N.R. to place a switch near the fair grounds enlisting 10-12 cars for the purpose of more convenient loading and unloading of animals that had been shipped quite a distance to attend the fair and for various livestock sales held on the Society grounds. This proposal was immediately dealt with in a satisfactory manner for all concerned.

To remind Prince Albert of the railroading era of the early years, 1960 saw the City, Exhibition Association and the Historical Society negotiating with the C.N.R. Divisional Superintendent for the salvage of an old-fashioned Steam Engine which was being replaced by a modern diesel unit. In 1963 an accord was struck and the Steam Locomotive Number 5080, previously operated on the lines of the Canadian National Railways, was allocated a permanent spot on the Fair grounds at the west end of the property.



West entrance to Exhibition Park. This picture was taken during the placement of steam locomotive #5080 on the grounds.





Prince Albert Historical Society
Circa 1963

Prince Albert Historical Society
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