



The Traveller

Volume 34, Issue 2

Winter 2025

Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association



Learn more about the Restoration of this Gooseneck Dray ~ Page 20



The Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association
Serving the interests of Wheelwrights since 1992
www.wcwa.ca



CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR W.C.W.A EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT:

John Lavoie

Box 15, Wardlow, AB TOJ 3M0
403-566-2448; 793-1366 cell
hippies2@telusplanet.net

VICE PRESIDENT:

Wayne Lenfesty

Box 2, Site 104, RR #3
Sundre, Alberta TOM 1X0
403-638-9310; 586-0229 cell
lenfestywd@gmail.com

SECRETARY:

Kris Burkholder

Box 2, Site 104, RR #3
Sundre, Alberta TOM 1X0
403-638-9319 - 780-945-6900 cell
Kburky32@gmail.com

TREASURER:

Bonnie McCauley

Module 4, Compartment 13
Madden, AB TOM 1L0
403-370-3904
wheelwright.assoc.treas@gmail.com

ALBERTA DIRECTOR:

Glenn Halvorson

28307 Hwy 596
Red Deer County, AB T4E 1S9
403-347-4599
mywheelshop@gmail.com

B.C. DIRECTOR:

Vacant

MANITOBA DIRECTOR:

Brian Reynolds

Box 338
Rapid City, Manitoba ROK 1W0
204-826-2120
br@haventrading.com

ONTARIO DIRECTOR:

Bonnie McCauley

Module 4, Compartment 13
Madden, AB TOM 1L0
bonnie.mccauley@auarts.ca

SKATCHEWAN DIRECTOR:

Jean Lavoie

Box 15, Wardlow, AB TOJ 3M0
403-566-2448; 793-1366 cell
hippies2@telusplanet.net

EAST COAST DIRECTOR:

Verne Cook

641 Main Rd
Jeffreys, NL A0N 1P0
403-923-3422
atlanticcarriageworks@gmail.com
WEBSITE:
www.atlanticcarriageworks.com

U.S.A. DIRECTOR:

Gary Stephenson

45 West High Street
Ballston Spa, New York 12020
518-588-4397
gstephenson@nycap.rr.com

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

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The Traveller

c/o Patricia Dawson
PO Box 442, Pendleton, OR 97801
Tel: 541-969-8563
Email: patricia.dawson2@gmail.com

To book advertising in ***The Traveller***, or for WCWA correspondence, contact:

WCWA
c/o Kris Burkholder
Box 2, Site 104, RR #3
Sundre, Alberta TOM 1X0
(403) 638-9319; (780)945-6900 cell
Kburky32@gmail.com

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

By Patricia Dawson, Editor

Plans are underway for the W.C.W.A. Annual Meeting and Conference August 14th -16th in Pendleton, Oregon, which is in the eastern section of the state. In addition to the camaraderie of working together to build much needed wheels for an early day animal hauler donated by a local museum, participants will have the opportunity to enjoy tours of the local Pendleton Woolen Mills, Historic Pendleton Round-Up Grounds, and downtown historic maker's street. Read more about the Pendleton site on pages 26-27 of this issue. We look forward to a great event!

Your W.C.W.A. Directors have been extremely busy these past few months as you will note in their extensive reports found on pages 4-15. We appreciate Vice President Wayne Lenfesty's work with social media reported on page 5 and Gary Stephenson's work with the website noted on page 14-15. Hat's off to Director, Jean Lavoie who covers the many hours of service provided by WCWA Directors to Heritage Park and Pioneer Acres Pioneer Day's event's allowing hands-on learning opportunities for visitors. Enjoy her article and photos on pages 10-11. We are pleased that Manitoba Director, Brian Reynolds is feeling a tad better and greatly appreciate his article shared on pages 12-13. Alberta Director, Glenn Halvorson has seen a lot of the country this summer as he journeyed over 19,000 km across Canada. He shares highlights from the trip on pages 8-9.

This issue of *The Traveller* continues to address the challenge of what to do with those "extra parts from the wheelwright boneyard." Our thanks to Gary Stephenson for sharing "Creative uses for Felloes in Furniture Construction" located on page 18-19. I think I had better start digging through our pile and see what I can figure out for the new patio furniture!!!! Speaking of felloes, Oregon member, Bill Dawson came home from the 2024 W.C.W.A. Conference with a variety of new ideas and techniques to apply to his wheelwright practice. In this issue he shares one of the new tips, "Construction of a Felloe Stretcher" on pages 16-17.

I remember as a teenager how "up town" we thought we were when we got our first gooseneck stock trailer! If I had only known, we were a hundred years behind the times! Our thanks to Bill Dawson for sharing his work to restore a 120+year-old gooseneck dray used in downtown Pendleton to deliver flour in the 1900's. Learn more about his restoration project on pages 20-25.

As we prepare for our upcoming 2026 issues of *The Traveller*, we would love to learn about wagon museums that are in your region as well as how you use those treasures from your "wagon boneyard." Feel free to send details my way to include in future issues of our publication at patricia.dawson2@gmail.com 

Project Photos & Articles Needed



We would like to hear from our members. Please consider sending in photos of projects you have been working on and consider submitting an article or two for *The Traveller*. This is your publication, and it proves most helpful when we all contribute. Feel free to Email your Shop Tips, Project Photos and "How - To Project" submissions to the Editor at: patricia.dawson2@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By John Lavoie, WCWA President

Hello everyone, sure hope you had a nice summer. UGH! I sure do think that winter is getting close. I guess I have no more excuses and will have to get into my shop and get some of those long-awaited projects on the go.

While we were in Cardston at the AGM, I got to talking with a neighbour camper and when it came up that I was here with the WCWA, he mentioned that he was looking for that type of wheel to make a garden cart. I luckily had a photo of some on my phone that had been donated by Carl and Sharon and we made a deal. I delivered them to Medicine Hat where he lives on our next medical appointment in Medicine Hat, and he paid cash, so we made a cheque for a donation to WCWA.



On October 2 we were invited to take part in Fun on the Farm at Heritage Park, where Bonnie, Carl, Sharon, Jean, and I all brought in things for the kids to have a hands-on experience. We had our shaving horse and horse shoe table, Bonnie had some antique tools and the wheel she made with help from Wayne Lenfesty, everyone really likes the hands-on things to do. Carl was busy with his cordless drill or brace and bits, and as usual Sharon was helping him. When we finally had time for lunch break, they fed us like kings and queens in a new building, barn turned into the lunch room just beside where we were working.

It started out cool in the morning but turned out to be a nice warm day. We had kids from private schools and public schools as well as some that were home schooled. Over all a very successful day.

I know we will be starting to get things ready for the holidays as will most of you. If you find yourself in the Wardlow area, drop in for a visit or stay awhile.

I hope to see and hear from all members, *John Lavoie* 🌻

— SAVE THE DATES! —
**Annual Meeting will be
 in Pendleton, Oregon
 AUGUST 14-16, 2026!**



Plans are now underway for the 2026 Annual Meeting which will be held in Pendleton, Oregon. Named the Top True Western Town by True West Magazine, the City of Pendleton should have plenty of interesting experiences for the WCWA Membership! While in Pendleton we are also going to roll up our sleeves and work on building wheels for a historic animal hauler at the Bill Dawson Wagon Shop located directly across from the Pendleton Woolen Mills. Our hosts, the Dawsons, are planning plenty of time to tour local sites as well as time to enjoy western cuisine. Read more about the event in this issue and watch our Facebook/Webpage for details. Look forward to seeing you in Oregon this August.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Wayne Lenfesty, WCWA Vice President



Keeping Tradition Alive: The Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association on Facebook

In an age dominated by digital innovation and electric vehicles, one might assume the art of wheelwrighting—crafting wooden wheels for horse-drawn vehicles—has faded into obscurity. But thanks to the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association (WCWA), this centuries-old craft is staying alive and one of its most vibrant hubs? A humble Facebook group.

A Community Built on Craftsmanship

Started on January 11, 2019, the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association Facebook group was created to promote and preserve the wheelwright trade. With over 310 members, the group serves as a digital meeting place for enthusiasts, professionals, and curious newcomers alike. Over the last year there have been 5320 views by interested individuals.

The group is open to the public and encourages:

- Sharing photos, videos, and articles related to wheelwrighting
- Posting items for sale or seeking hard-to-find parts
- Asking questions and engaging in discussions relevant to the craft
- Celebrating projects and showcasing personal work

The page strives to maintain a respectful and focused environment, ensuring that the group remains a safe and welcoming space for all who are passionate about the trade. Please have a look and join this enthusiastic group page. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/385395668694337>

Why Wheelwrighting Still Matters

The WCWA is more than just a Facebook group—it's a non-profit society dedicated to fostering the skills of the carriage trade. The association includes members of all skill levels, from seasoned professionals to hobbyists. Its mission is to encourage the sharing of knowledge and technical information.

The association also publishes *The Traveller*, a newsletter distributed three times a year, filled with technical insights, member stories, and updates on events and training opportunities. You have found this article in this informative publication.

A Global Reach

Though rooted in Western Canada, the WCWA's influence extends far beyond. Started in 1992 the association has members who hail from across Canada, the United States, England, and Australia. This global network reflects a growing interest in horse-drawn vehicles and the craftsmanship behind them—whether for pleasure driving, competitive events, or historical restoration.

Join the Movement!

Whether you're a seasoned wheelwright, a curious hobbyist, or someone who simply appreciates traditional craftsmanship, the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association Facebook group offers a welcoming space to learn, share, and connect. The association also has a website (www.wcwa.ca) where a wealth of information can be obtained. You can also join this enthusiastic association through information on the website. Its proof that even in the 21st century, the sound of wooden wheels rolling across the ground still resonates.

Thank You, **Wayne** 

SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Kris Burkholder, Secretary-Membership Director

We are pleased to recognize the following individuals as 2024-2025 Current Members of the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association.

Ivan Bak

Wilfred Graham Boissy

Jem Bluerher

Alan Briggs

Tim Brosseau

Kris Burkholder

Jesse Church

Verne Cook

Clark Cronquist

Bill Dawson

Patricia Dawson

Donald Forsberg

Clint Gilchrist

Glenn Halvorson

Joe Jeffrey

John Lavoie

Jean Lavoie

Elijah Pierzchala Lavoie

Wayne Lenfesty

Bonnie McCauley

Michael McGilvray

Herb Nash

William Nash

Gerry O'Neill

Kit Paterson

Edward Pimm

Stella Pimm

Brian Reynolds

Gary Stephenson

Marilyn Stephenson

Carl Swartz

Sharon Swartz

Neil Tollefson

Graham Westwell

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

Don't forget, your W.C.W.A. Annual Membership expires December 31st of each year. You may renew by sending in a cheque or money order using the form on page 30 of this issue of *The Traveller* or you may pay via PayPal by visiting our website for details. Annual Membership remains \$45 with

Family Membership at \$65. An additional fee of \$35 applies to having print copies of *The Traveller* mailed to you. Contact Kris Burkholder, Secretary at kburky32@gmail.com if you require assistance.

Membership benefits include copies of *The Traveller* newsletter, voting privileges at the W.C.W.A. annual meeting, archival use of past issues of *The Traveller* and opportunities to gather for annual conferences.





W.C.W.A. Conference & Annual General Meeting

August 22~24, 2025 | Cardston, Alberta, Canada

By Patricia Dawson;
Photography courtesy of Marilyn Stephenson

The W.C.W.A. Executive Board planned a variety of fun and informative experiences as part of the 2025 Conference and Annual General Meeting which was held in the Cardston, Alberta region of Canada in August.

Members spent their first day touring the Kootenai Brown Pioneer Village in Pincher Creek Alberta, which is a 55 min drive from Cardston. Learn more about the museum at www.kootenaibrown.ca.



On Saturday, members spent the day at the Remington Carriage Museum which is the largest museum of its kind in the world. Highlights of the day included a guided tour of the Remington Carriage Wagon Shop and Museum

and an extensive tour of the shop conducted by Jeremy Masterson, Head of Restoration Services ~ Remington Carriage Museum. Jeremy's presentation was outstanding and participants all learned a great deal while having the chance to look behind the scenes at the amazing shop. Learn more about the museum at remingtoncarriagemuseum.ca.



Members also gathered on Saturday for the Annual Meeting. In addition to general committee and officer reports the election was conducted with the following elected to serve for the 2026 program year.

- President – John Lavoie
- Vice President – Wayne Lenfesty
- Secretary – Kris Burkholder
- Treasurer – Bonnie McCauley
- Alberta Director – Glen Halvorson
- Manitoba Director – Brian Reynolds
- East Coast Director – Verne Cook
- Ontario Director – Bonnie McCauley
- Saskatchewan Director – Jean Lavoie
- USA Director – Gary Stephenson



On Sunday, the group headed to Watertown National Park for a picnic lunch and tour of the town site. Waterton boasts hiking trails and amazing wild flowers and nature views.

Our thanks to John and Jean Lavoie for organizing the various tours and annual meeting. It was a great event!



ALBERTA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Glenn Halvorson, WCWA Alberta Director

Hello again from sunny Alberta,

As I previously mentioned, our summer plan was to hook up the holiday trailer and head East across Canada. The Alberta weather was nice and sunny up until our departure in the first week of July, but we heard that it started to rain in our area shortly after we left and didn't let up until shortly before our return three months later. The result, however, was some pretty nice crops in the area.

After touring through Saskatchewan and visiting the Western Development Museum in Moose Jaw, we headed to Manitoba where I was able to stop in to see Brian Reynolds just outside of Brandon. Brian's shop left me with profound "tool envy." He has some serious industrial machinery for the extremely heavy wheels that he typically builds. Over the years I have learned a great deal from Brian's excellent articles in *The Traveller* and his valuable presence at many Annual General Meetings. Thanks for the tour and the hospitality Brian.

Heading on through Ontario, we ran into three absolute downpours where we had to stop on the side of the road with our flashers on, hoping no-one ran into the back of us. We also had a short downpour in Ottawa as we attended a CFL football game between Ottawa and Hamilton. Luckily, we were under the covered section of the grandstand. Just South of Ottawa, we found a wheelwrights shop in Upper Canada Village. I have been following them on Instagram for years. The museum didn't disappoint.

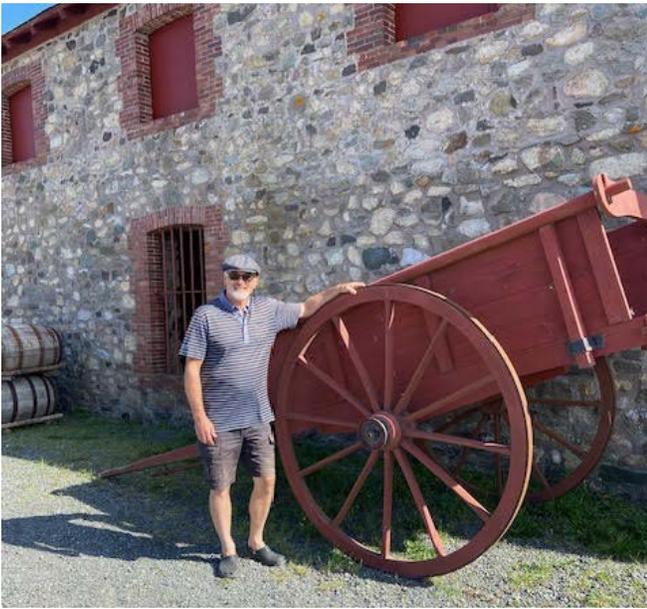
We were also fortunate to see several Mennonite farms where horses were the main source of power and also several horse drawn vehicles on the road.

We visited many more museums throughout Quebec and the Maritimes, and I was able to find quite a few wooden wagon wheels. Eastern Canada has much older history than the West, so I was able to see some different wheel construction as the designs evolved. Notably the spoke design and the method



of attaching the wheel to the axle with a pin rather than a nut. I hope you can see examples of those details in my attached pictures.





We encountered many unique wagons in the Maritimes used around the shipping industries, from times past. We saw vehicles to load ships and ferry boats in and out of the water, others to carry traps and fishing gear and some for carrying barrels and casks. I was fascinated by the variety of specialized hand carts for many different purposes, all with wooden wheels. It was easy to find wheels almost everywhere that required a wheelwright to tighten things up a bit.



I was able to find Vern Cook's place the day that we crossed the ferry into Western Newfoundland. I don't think the two of us had ever met prior. We had a great visit and went through his ambitious shop and homestead. The shop is closed in and ready for him to continue construction on the inside over the winter. He has an area for wheelwrighting, blacksmithing, cabinetmaking, painting, etc. He has great vision and has thought of virtually everything, I think. I would love to see it again once he has it completed and he is working there. It will be a great place to work. We also met his herd of goats that were hard at work keeping the jungle at bay. Thanks for hosting me, Vern.

Next, we traveled to Northern Newfoundland to the Viking Village, dated from the year 1000. I have wanted to visit there since I can remember. Besides all the Viking culture and artifacts, I learned how they found and processed bog iron into iron for their needs. Now that was interesting from a blacksmith point of view.

According to Google, it is 6200 km from our place to St John's Newfoundland, but we drove over 19,000 km (we call it dipsy doodling). It took us 2 ½ months to get to St John's Newfoundland and only 12 days to drive back. What a long and beautiful drive! My favorite part of the drive was the section of about 200 km just North of Montreal. The leaves were in full fall colors on the low mountains, and it was an incredibly gorgeous place.

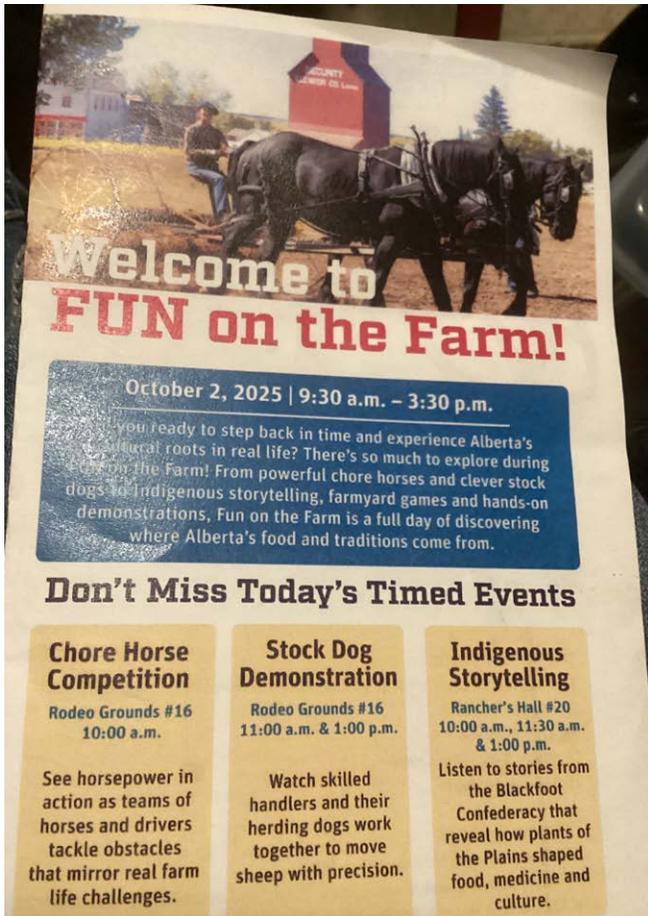
I am deeply thankful for having had the opportunity to experience our wonderful country and meet other Canadian wheelwrights.

Thank You, **Glenn** 🌻

SASKATCHEWAN DIRECTOR REPORT

By Jean Lavoie - Saskatchewan Director

Since our AGM in August, I have been extremely busy with medical appointments and haven't had very much to do regarding wheels, but on October the second we were invited to attend and show our craft at Heritage Park in Calgary. It was a one-day show where schools and homeschool kids come to the park and learn about how and where the food and products that we have come to take for granted come from, and how they came to be in pioneer days.



As a wheelwright, I was prepared to show our demo wheel and demonstrate the old tools we use. We have found with a group of kids they really love to try anything hands on.





When we arrived, there were a couple of Heritage Park volunteers in our area with a rope making machine and a spool of sisal or jute binder-twine. The older lady was looking at a folder of photos and trying to show the 13-year-old volunteer how to make a rope as that was to be this young lady's job for the day. The young lady's name was Mya and she looked terrified. Being a nosy person, and the fact that I do have a rope maker just like this one at home, I went on over and showed them how to set it up and from then on Mya and I made ropes with groups of 3 kids and each kid left with a piece of rope. By the end of the day Mya was an expert and it amazed me how well the kids listened to her and how well she interacted with them. We talked about how natural fibers are biodegradable whereas plastics cause issues in never fully breaking down. We also talked about what we could use the ropes for. All in all, it was a crazy busy day and lots of fun.

Thank You, *Jean* 🍁

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MANITOBA'S DIRECTOR REPORT

By *Brian Reynolds-Manitoba's Director*

As some of you may have noticed I have missed a few contributions to *The Traveller*, I was very aware of this as I firmly believe *The Traveller* is what binds us together as an association, especially considering the very wide geographic area we cover.

In September 2024 I was diagnosed with cancer, which came as an unwelcome surprise after a routine medical, no symptoms, so it was a complete surprise. The extensive radiation treatment that followed was in itself not too bad; however, the subsequent side effects were debilitating. The last 6 months have been a gradual recovery with encouraging test results, hopefully it stays that way. I am now at the point where I want to get back into the shop and build some wheels, there are enough wheels awaiting rebuild to last through the winter.

To get back into wheelwrighting what better way than to attend the AGM at Cardston. It was good to catch up with friends and fellow wheelwrights; it was also a great venue. The workshop at the Remington is amazing, something most of us can only dream of having, although I like to think I can address most wheelwright related eventualities in my shop.

It was also good to get a surprise visit from fellow wheelwright Glenn Halvorson back in the summer, he stopped by on route to the east coast, so we spent a pleasant couple of hours discussing everything wheelwright related. As we live in a rural area we don't get many visitors, so this was appreciated.

So, back to building wheels. I have a pair of large, heavy, canon wheels to rebuild. Yet again it is a design I have never previously encountered. Of the many heavy wheels I have rebuilt over the years it appears there is no consistency in design. I have come to the conclusion that there is a fiendishly clever group of engineers secreted away in a mountain somewhere unknown, whose sole purpose in life is to constantly come up with wheel

designs to confound wheelwrights. They almost succeeded with these particular wheels. A large bronze hub, at first glance quite straightforward, but when dismantled and studied the complex angles to accommodate alternating and opposed spokes were a challenge.



Some head scratching and several cups of tea later I could see how the design worked so the spokes were made.



On the positive side I don't have to make a new hub so hopefully once assembly starts it will go together easily, (said he hopefully!)



One of the highlights this summer has been working with one of my grandsons who is interested in wheel building, although I think it has something to do with getting paid. He has always shown an interest in the shop and always offered assistance. I had a buggy wheel in for a straightforward repair, it was loose but still solid so it was a matter of removing the tire and felloes, making adjustments and shrinking the tire on. In this case I had him do the entire job, start to finish, with only supervision and advice, no input on my part. It went well; the end result was a good, tight wheel so now he has a basic understanding of how a wheel works. I like to think this was a genuine interest in wheel building but may have had something to do with having gas money for the next few weeks!



It seems that wheels simply appeared in the shop, the wagon wheel held together with string simply appeared and came all the way from Montreal, obviously a complete rebuild but relatively straightforward. The smaller blue wheels are from a railway hand cart that is part of a museum display. A pleasant change from wrestling with heavy wheels.

I have always enjoyed visiting the many and varied venues we have attended over the years for the AGM's. This year at the Remington was no exception, although I have visited on previous occasions it was always for a visit. The AGM allowed an extended visit which allowed a detailed study of the evolution of horse drawn vehicles. I have always been interested in the evolution from horse drawn to motorized vehicles, so I was interested in an early version of this at the museum. The long drive home provides plenty of thinking time, I have several

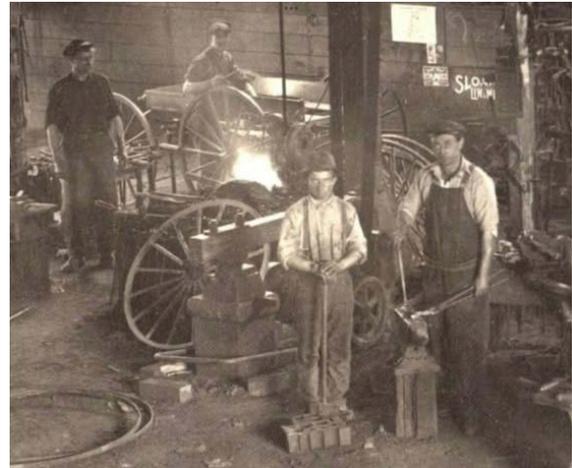


old buggy frames, a few vintage engines, and a good machine shop, so I guess I now have yet another project to build!

Finally, just an unrelated photo I happened across of a Blacksmith and Wheelwright shop, a moment in time that struck a chord with me, this was the reality of everyday life, this is what it was like. I think that it is quite special that we as an association maintain this tradition.



Thank You, **Brian** 



The general PROBLEM with 100-YEAR-OLD VEHICLES is, they are 100 Years Old!

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TO CONTACT ME: TEL. 204-826-2120 OR
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USA DIRECTOR REPORT

By Gary Stephenson, USA Director

We're finally back in NY to catch up on long neglected home projects after somewhat of a whirlwind summer this year. We are still busy and committed at the Museum of the Mountain Man in Pinedale, Wyoming although the project mix has shifted. With the Sheep Wagon now completed (but regretfully not yet to be seen under horsepower), I am now spearheading an effort to set up a working settlement period blacksmith shop at the museum. Anyone here have experience running a stovepipe up through a sod roof? Anyway, it should prove interesting and I can't wait to get to the point of lighting a fire in the forge.

Another big part of the summer was attending the AGM in Cardston, Alberta. As always, it's good to see everyone and learn new things as part of attending these meetings. At the meeting I did volunteer to set up a committee to look into what we could do to update and maintain the WCWA website. It was agreed that Patricia, Marilyn and myself would take

on this effort. So, with the committee's support and Patricia's and Deb Corbett's help I've been able to dabble with the website.

The first learning experience was getting the latest Traveller posted. This was completed password protecting this current issue while making the immediate past issue freely available. So far so good, gaining confidence I wasn't going to completely break things. Next step was to update the WCWA executive and membership contact information as this was woefully out of date. A bit more adventuresome was now adding information on where to obtain Joyce's Wheelwrighting book (Alberta Carriage) and adding Witmer's Coach Shop as an additional material source. So now, as interim amateur Webmaster and with input from others, I can see lots of room for improvements.

Probably like many of you, I had not given the website much thought other than as a delivery mechanism for *The Traveller*. As this point my assessment is that the website has been geared toward giving information to the uninitiated about the organization, and using *The Traveller* as a lure, how to become a member. Now, as I review what



Future Working Blacksmith Shop

we have as a starting point, I'm seeing lots of food for thought on the website. Actually, a banquet of thought would be a more appropriate metaphor. How about promoting future events? Reporting on those past events with writeups and pictures? The Buy & Sell page as far as I can tell is maybe 3 or more years out of date. Could we link our fundraising auction to the site? Speaking of linking, how about links to our Facebook page or to Instagram? The WCWA Executive has experienced perennial problems sharing documents like schedules, agendas, reports, minutes and the membership list. Looks like we could leverage the website to have a private page accessible only by the Executive for managing these documents. How about a visitor to the website being able to purchase their membership on the spot? The list goes on and on. Clearly these things will take time, learning, and research to accomplish even a few. But, let's see what progress

we can make and prioritize the important ones. What are the membership's thoughts?

Let's hear from you. Thank you. **Gary** 



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RESOURCES FOR WHEELRIGHTS



Wheelwrights frequently have the need to refer to a variety of sources of information to build or restore a wheel or vehicle. If you are looking for a listing of great resources don't forget to check out our WCWA website which houses a wealth of sources ranging from contact details for Wheelwright experts, area training and workshops to a listing of excellent wheelwright and wagon/carriage construction books and more.

Without a doubt, it is helpful to see an actual vehicle or the type you plan to build or restore before you tackle the job. Be sure to visit the WCWA website Resource Section highlighting Museums and Heritage Sites which covers the following:

- Cobb & Co Museum
- O'Keefe Ranch
- Pioneer Acres Museum
- Reynolds-Alberta Museum
- Remington Carriage Museum
- Smithsonian - National Museum of American History
- Western Development Museum

CONSTRUCTION OF A FELLOE STRETCHER

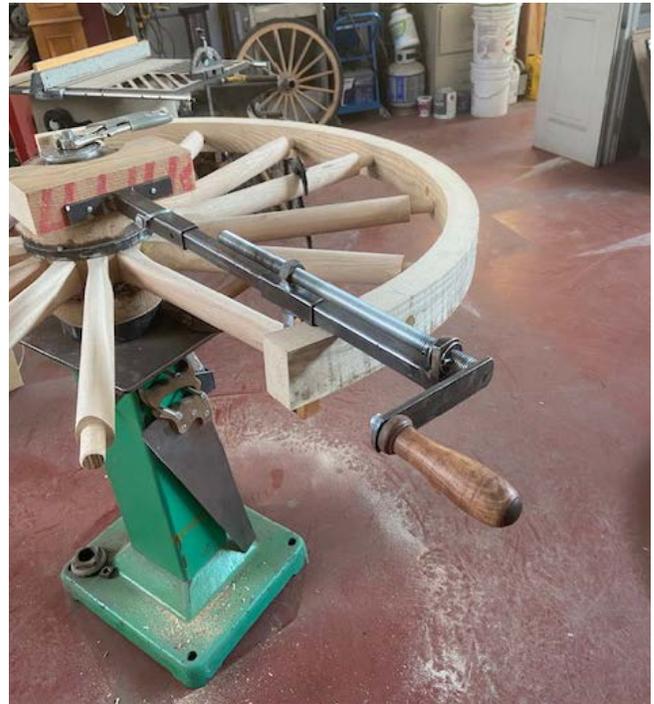
By Bill Dawson, WCWA Member - Pendleton, Oregon

In early 2024 I discovered, via the internet the Western Canadian Wheelwright Association. Their conference and annual meeting were scheduled for August 2024 in Pinedale Wyoming. After a frustrating time trying to contact the association, I was able to get in touch with Gary Stephenson who is the United States Director for W.C.W.A. He was most helpful and consequently we were able to attend a very useful, informative, and pleasant conference. I met and worked with other wheelwrights, which was something that I had not been able to do in the 25 years I had been working on wagons, buggies and wheels.

While we were rebuilding a set of Sarvin wheels for a buggy in the Museum of the Mountain Man collection (do not miss a chance to visit the museum, it is exceptionally well done) I was able to learn a construction tip from John Lavoie and a very helpful tool idea from Glenn Halvorson. These two items are what this article is about.

First, John's work tip. After assembling bent wood felloes onto the spoke tenons, usually not all of the spoke tenon shoulders will seat completely on the inside of the felloes. This is due to the fact that a wheel is circular but not necessarily round, plus the bent wood may not be bent exactly right. John said, 'you just split the end of the tenon of the spoke, which is not seating properly, snug up the felloe and drive in a wedge.' I had never heard of such a thing. I had encountered wedges in the end of spokes occasionally when breaking down a wheel but had not known why. Two issues remained; how to draw up one spoke and where to get these wedges. The latter was easy, call Witmer Coach and order a bag of 500 ash wedges for a very reasonable cost.

The former issue is a modification of Glenn Halvorson's felloe stretcher.



Glenn very kindly forwarded me a picture of the felloe stretcher he had made. As soon as I returned to my shop, I proceeded to make a copy of Glenn's tool.



I used 1" heavy wall square tube for the main piece and 1 ¼" thin wall for the hub end and hook piece. The hub end is made length adjustable using a cross pin to account for different wheel sizes. Since I had some ½" acme threaded rod and nuts I used them for the length adjustment. I did get a little fancy and ordered two thrust bearings and split collars for the handle end from McMaster-Carr to make turning the threaded shaft easier under pressure.

A piece of 12 quarter ash was cut with a large enough arc to allow it to fit various size hubs and fastened to the adjustable hub end with through bolts countersunk on the hub side

Now to my modification to Glenn's felloe stretcher. I made it into a spoke compressor also so I could use John's work tip. I made a duplicate ash hub block and drilled both blocks together in two places.



They get fastened together with ¾" all thread and nuts. The hook needs to be unthreaded and turned around to provide for a pushing action on the felloe near the spoke which wasn't seating on its shoulder.

Split the spoke tenon perpendicular to the felloe and drive in the wedge. The felloe stays where it should.



So far, my association with W.C.W.A. has exposed me to two tools and one work tip which have made the work I do better and easier. I cannot encourage all members enough to participate in these annual conferences as the information and ideas gained can be useful and helpful. Many thanks to John and Glenn for their information.

We hope all can attend the 2026 conference here in Pendleton at my shop for 3 or 4 days of Sarvin and Archibald wheel work.

A postscript to this article: I made another felloe stretcher this December as a fund raiser for the WCWA. We will offer it for sale at the August 2026 Conference. Another reason to come to Pendleton, Oregon! 🌻



CREATIVE USES OF FELLOES IN FURNITURE

By Gary Stephenson, USA Director

How many of you have old, bent felloes around obtained from wherever, that you know you are unlikely to use on a wheel? In my case, having bought out old stock from an 1890's hardware store I still never find exactly what I need. Surely, this is why they were never sold out of the store until it went out of business. I'm just glad stuff that didn't sell just got pushed up to the top floors for folks like us to eventually buy.

Well, while helping setup for the Cowboy Hall of Fame awards at the Somers' homestead for the Sublette County Historical Society I ran across what I think is a very clever solution for using these odd felloes. Clearly, this isn't a new problem, and there, staring me in the face despite visiting the homestead multiple times before, was a clever solution that had been arrived at many years before. Here was a sturdy work table built and used at a local ranch donated to the museum who knows how many years ago.

Bent felloes can be used for table legs, who would have thought! Think about it, different sizes to accommodate different heights and widths from coffee table to side table to dining table to workbench. Rather than trying to explain, here are some pictures of the example that was staring me in the face:



Note the opposing up and down matching fellies positioned to obtain the desired height.



Check out the transverse support made with another felloe.

Buggy Builder's Bulletin

A Trade Journal Serving the Horse Drawn Vehicle Industry in the U.S.A. & Canada

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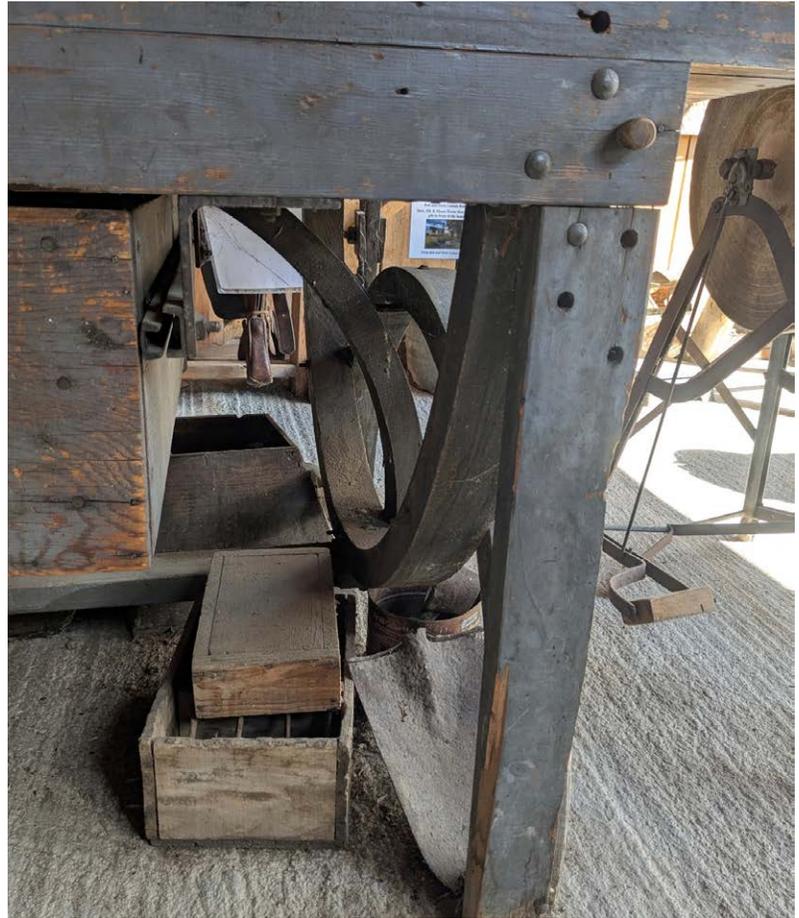
2935 Bells Chapel Road

Trenton, KY 42286

Telephone: (270) 265-0028

Add your own top of choice and voila, furniture the rustic crowd will love and pay handsomely for. To boot, this is also a great application for those plain finish carriage bolts with square nuts we have all accumulated. I'd love to see if anyone here runs with the idea, and what additional clever ideas you all come up with for felloes and our other mis-matched components. 🌻

Use of plain hardware instead of modern chrome plated varieties adds greatly to the effect.



What's Up Doc?



Chris "Doc" Jenson is a wheelwright with a wealth of experience as a practitioner, teacher and mentor. Chris offers clinics and acts as a resource for those interested in learning this historic trade.

Chris Jenson
 Doc's Buggy Shop
 403-506-2474
docsbuggysshop@gmail.com



RESTORATION OF A GOOSENECK DRAY



By Bill Dawson, W.C.W.A. Member- Pendleton, OR

One day I received that call every restoration wagonmaker hopes for: "I have this old wagon my father gave me, would you have a use for it?" Of course I said yes sight unseen. I went out to her place and found a collection of pieces used as a lawn ornament as shown.



At that time, I did not even know what kind of conveyance it was. The lady told me that her father said that the wagon had been used to haul flour in Pendleton for Walter's Flour Mill. That alone justified its restoration.

I gathered up all the parts and took them back to the shop. We began by laying all the pieces out in the best order I could figure.



At the start I did not know what some parts were. It was time to go to school and read! After researching some pictures and illustrations, I found that what I had was a Gooseneck Dray.



This style of wagon was named for the shape of the arch over the front hounds. The unique feature allowed the front wheels to be turned sharply, which allowed the wagon to maneuver a tad easier in crowded warehouse and shipping areas. Drays were designed with a rear axle that was underslung to place the bed of the wagon as close to the ground as possible to facilitate loading of goods.

For the specific collection I had gathered, one wheel was intact and parts of the headboard, jockey box, footboard, and the tailboard were the only wood pieces left.



The first piece of work was getting the front end evened up, as the bed support forks were tweaked and uneven. This required quite a unique setup clamping the gooseneck front end to the forks on the tractor front end loader to be able to move from the forge to the anvil quickly so as not to lose our heat. One strike with the sledge and we had it.



*Continued on
Page 22*

GOOSNECK DRAY Continued from Page 21



Since I now knew what I had and how it had been constructed I started to do the mockup.



The build went pretty straightforward.



Ash was used throughout. The specific construction for the 'box' came from pictures and illustrations out of my wagon/buggy library.

Then it was time for the wheels. When I build wheels here in Eastern Oregon the felloes and spokes must be ordered and on hand for a year or at least 6 months in advance of construction. Dry Ash back East is not dry out here. The fronts and the rears were both Sarvin patent hubs. The rears were the largest Sarvins I had ever worked with. Front wheels were 36" and the rears were 54". The felloes and spokes came from Wana Wheels in Shipshewana, Indiana.



Fortunately, 3 of the hubs were salvageable. Only one hub to turn and then bore after setting the tires.



Ready for evening up the tires and getting them on the gear for the first time in a long while.



Sometime after circa 1904, a set of rear wheel brakes

Continued on Page 24

GOOSNECK DRAY *Continued from Page 23*

were added. Since the pieces were included in the 'pile of rusty scrap iron' I picked up, they went on the wagon. It was a rather confusing exercise to figure out how it worked and then how to get it all strongly mounted.



When finished, it all looked fairly original.

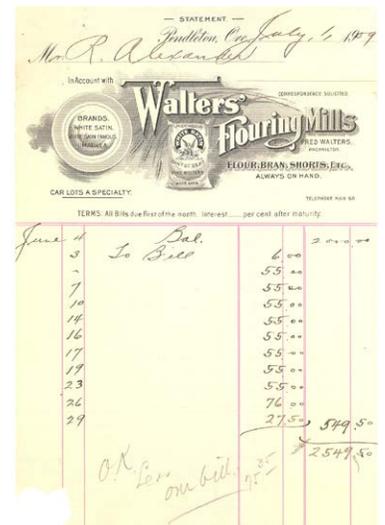


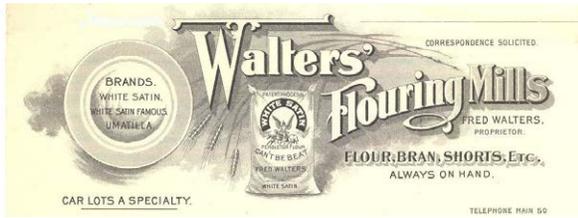
While all of this was going on Patricia, my wife came across a photograph in a book published by the Umatilla County Historical Society 'Umatilla County: A Backward Glance' The photograph was of the wagon I was restoring. Not one like it, but this wagon loaded with flour sacks for delivery. It was determined that the photo was taken some time between 1902 & 1906.



From that picture we were able to count how many sacks were on the load, what the bed stakes looked like, what the hook on the pole was for, and where the side sign boards were placed.

From an invoice dated 1909 in the historical society's archives, a letterhead was used to make the side sign boards.





The dray's paint scheme was based on original colors found on parts as the wagon was being restored.



A local collector of historical items had a flour sack from the Walters Mill and graciously let me use it to

make a copy of the White Satin Flour logo. Inmates of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institute screen-printed the logo to make flour sacks which I filled with sawdust to simulate the load of 62 100-pound flour sacks.



The Gooseneck made its first trip on Pendleton streets in close to 100 years in the Pendleton Round Up Westward Ho! Parade in 2009. 

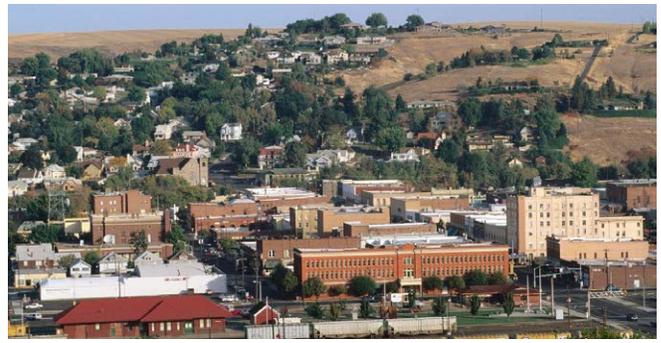


SAVE THE DATES: W.C.W.A. Conference & Annual General Meeting



August 14-16, 2026 - Pendleton, Oregon

Plans for the 2026 Western Canadian Wheelwright's Associations Annual Conference and General Meeting are now underway. The 2026 session will be held in Pendleton, Oregon at the Bill Dawson Wheelwright Shop located just minutes from Pendleton's Main Street. In addition to W.C.W.A.'s General Business Meeting scheduled for Saturday afternoon, we plan to roll up our sleeves to work on construction of Archibald and Sarvin wheels for a historic animal hauler which is slated for restoration. Those who have attended in the past have indicated they always have fun and learn a great deal by collaborating with fellow wheelwrights and we are sure the same will be the case in 2026.



Pendleton, Oregon

Founded in 1851, Pendleton Oregon is known for its rich heritage and craftsmanship. From the beautiful woven fabrics of the Pendleton Woolen Mills to the stories beneath the streets at the Pendleton Underground Tours, we are sure W.C.W.A. Conference attendees won't be disappointed.

The Dawson family and friends are eager to host us and are busy putting together a full agenda of tours and dining venues for our group to enjoy while in



Bill and Patricia Dawson's home and shop

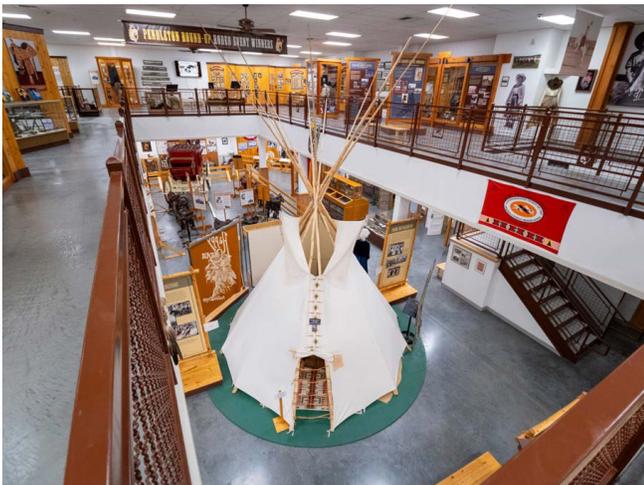




Pendleton Woolen Mills blanket production

Oregon. One stop for sure will be the Pendleton Woolen Mills which is located directly across the street from Dawson's front yard. We will enjoy a guided tour of the Woolen Mills Blanket Making Factory and of course have plenty of time to shop!

Additional tour plans during the weekend include a stop at the Pendleton Round-Up & Happy Canyon Hall of Museum and the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds for a guided tour as well as time to shop at the nearby Gift Gallery.



Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Museum



Pendleton Round-Up Westward Ho! Parade

If you are looking for custom boots, a hat maker, or a new saddle you'll be able to find a shop to meet your needs in the historic district of Pendleton. Learn about local history at the Heritage Station Museum just off Main street or travel a few miles out of Pendleton to learn more about Native American history at the Tamastalikt Cultural Institute.



Native American participation in Westward Ho! Parade

Follow PendletonBronzeTrail.com to enjoy the stories behind the many statues located in the area. Those who love vintage shops will enjoy the many antique shops and nice second-hand garment stores located in the Historic District. Nearby golf courses and hiking trails offer additional options for those seeking recreational activities. While not scheduled for part of the official W.C.W.A. itinerary, you may want to consider booking a tour with the Pendleton Underground Tours, which is an extremely popular venue for tourists. Read more about it at: pendletonundergroundtours.org

Pendleton is located in Eastern Oregon and is easily accessed along Interstate I-84. Closest airports are in Walla Walla, Washington or Pasco, Washington. A small commuter airline also is available from Portland, OR which offers three daily flights into Pendleton.

Pendleton offers a variety of lodging options including B&Bs, chain-brand hotels and two RV camping facilities. In addition, just a few miles from Pendleton is the Wildhorse Casino and Resort which has a hotel/rv option. Feel free to contact Patricia Dawson regarding suggestions for lodging or visit the Pendleton site at: travelpendleton.com/plan/your-stay-in-pendleton/

We will include more information about the Annual Meeting/Gathering in the next issue of **The Traveller**. You also can learn more about Pendleton at travelpendleton.com. 

Shelburne Barrel Factory

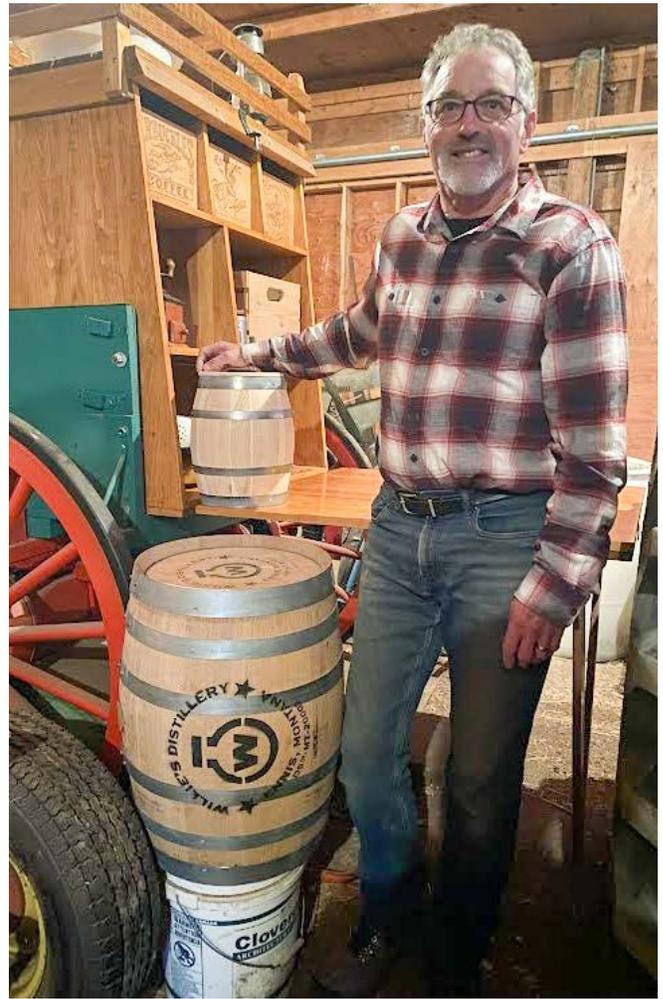
By Glenn Halvorson, WCWA Alberta Director

Now that we have returned from our cross Canada trip, the common question is "What did you enjoy the most about your trip?" That is hard to answer since there was so much to enjoy!

Shelburne, NS was a highlight with a wheelwright connection. There were 3 small museums along the cutest waterfront (several famous movies have been filmed in this location). There was a war museum that featured some local men who had served, a wholesale warehouse from a couple hundred years ago or so complete with living quarters and a basement kitchen that had a slave for a cook in days gone by, and a dory shop where someone was still building boats all these years later. Also along this waterfront street was a barrel shop that wasn't exactly a museum, but it had been in the same location for well over a hundred years and is still producing barrels. It was closed for the first couple of days that we were there, but I could see a broken farm wagon wheel in the shop, so I was really hoping to be able to talk to the owner before we left.

On our third and final day in Shelburne, the Shelburne Barrel Factory was open! I met up with the owner; George van der Meer and definitely took up way too much of his time as we went over the process of building barrels. George had bought the shop after retiring from building houses as a career. It is a fairly large shop, and I believe that George pretty much does it all mostly by himself. There was some amazing old machinery (I had no idea existed) that George keeps well maintained. I now understand a whole lot more about the process of building a barrel.

I introduced myself as a wheelwright. He told me that a museum had approached him to see if he could rebuild the wheels for a couple of cannons, so he was trying to find out as much as possible about the trade. My visit was timely as I introduced him



to **The Traveller** and Bruce Morrison's wheelwright book. I also told him that Brian Reynolds may be a source of knowledge as he has built quite a few cannon wheels. George has since taken delivery of the wheels to be repaired.

There are many pictures and videos of the coopering process on Facebook at Shelburne Barrel Factory. If you get the chance, it is worth the visit!

The day that I visited the shop, George was building half barrels for planters, but he had in stock several different sizes of barrels. I purchased a one-gallon barrel to add to my covered wagon chuck box. Last year I bought a 30-gallon barrel to serve as the water barrel for the same wagon from a distillery in Innis, Wyoming.

Thanks for the personal tour, George and good luck with those wheels. Perhaps we will see an article or two following your progress, in **The Traveller** as a guest contributor. I hope I have recollected correctly. 🌻



Bruce & Joyce Morrison

In 1991, Bruce took a course on building wheels at the Western Development Museum (WDM) in Saskatoon. Following the experience, he recognized the need for a community of wheelwrights where ideas and knowledge could be shared. Before long, Bruce and Joyce were among the founding members of the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association (WCWA). Information was disseminated through a quarterly newsletter, *The Traveller*, with Bruce as Editor, and Joyce on the computer, also handling membership and mailouts. From 2006 - 2021, Joyce also managed the WCWA website.

Identifying the need for an instructional book on wheel building, WCWA members convinced Bruce & Joyce to take on the task. Combining their knowledge with that of other wheelwrights, adding illustrations and photographs, *Wheelwrighting: A Modern Introduction Volume I* was published in 2004. In 2013, Volume II was released, a more comprehensive edition, which covered the building of seats, shaves, and buggy tops, as well as other topics.

Bruce & Joyce's contributions were invaluable to wheelwrighting and to the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association.



WESTERN CANADIAN
WHEELWRIGHT'S
ASSOCIATION

FOR SALE: 1860's Army Freight Wagon



An Army Freight Wagon from the 1860's used by the 2nd California Cavalry at Fort Bidwell, CA. After Fort Bidwell closed in 1893, the Freight Wagon was sold by the War Department and used at a California ranch for many years. It is a solid, heavy wagon with 16-foot box & lynch pin hubs. The wagon was brought back to life in 2018-2019. The complete restoration preserved hand forged parts & axels from LaBelle Wagon Works of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Full restoration is documented in photographs and a book to accompany the wagon. The current owner does not own a team, and the wagon is a tad large for a lawn ornament.

Located in Pendleton, Oregon.

\$3,500 /obo.

Contact Patricia Dawson for additional photos & details. 541-969-8563.

WCWA WHEELWRIGHT ADVISORS

At one time or another, most of us have come up against a problem that really has us stumped. At such times, we can benefit from talking with someone who has lots of experience, a problem solver. Some of our most experienced WCWA members have agreed to share their expertise and their names and contact information are listed below. **If you have a problem, don't hesitate to share it with one of these experts!**

Everette Burkholder (540) 879-9260
BURKHOLDER BUGGY SHOP
 795 Mason Street,
 Dayton, VA 22821
Field Editor "The Buggy Builder's Bulletin"

Doug Hansen (605) 996-8754
HANSEN WHEEL & WAGON SHOP
 40979 - 245 Street,
 Letcher, SD 57359 USA
 Email: dwhansen@hansen@hansenwheel.com
General Wheelwrighting

Chris Jenson (403) 506-2474
DOC'S BUGGY SHOP
 1617 - 1st Ave NW
 Creston, BC
 Email: docsbuggyshop@gmail.com
Practitioner, teacher, and mentor

Randy Kirschner (250) 262-9547
RAFTER K WHEELWRIGHT www.rafterk.ca
 Box 303, Charlie Lake, BC V0C 1H0
 Email: randy@rafterk.ca
General Wheelwrighting; Buggies & Sleighs

Brian Reynolds (204) 826-2120
Machining, Welding, Fabricating
 Box 338
 Rapid City, Manitoba R0K 1W0
 Email: br@haventrading.com

Bill Twigg (208) 882-2445
MOSCOW CARRIAGE COMPANY
 3428 Lenvill Road
 Moscow, Idaho 83843 USA
 Email: mcctwigg@turbonet.com
Wheelwrighting; Carriage Building; Hub Manufacture

The WCWA is always looking for Advisors willing to share their knowledge and skills with fellow members. Please let us know if you would like to join the list and support the advancement of the trade. Contact the Editor at patricia.dawson2@gmail.com to request your name be added to the list.

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 Email: kburky32@gmail.com

Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association Membership Renewal and New Membership Form

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Please notify the Secretary if you do not wish your name to appear as part of the WCWA membership list in The Traveller newsletter. ____ Yes ____ No

Annual Membership is \$45; Family Membership is \$65. Additional \$30 for print copy of The Traveller.

Please send your completed WCWA application, with cheque or money order to:
Kris Burkholder, Secretary at Box 2, Site 104, RR #3; Sundre, Alberta TOM 1X0 Canada
or e-tsif to: Wheelwright.Assoc.Treas@gmail.com