

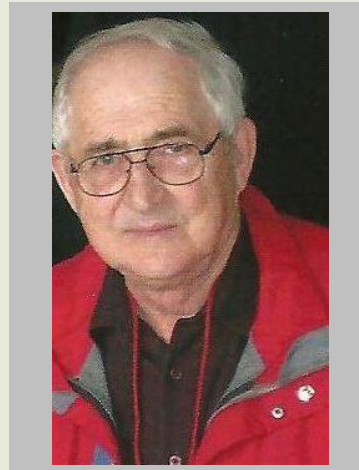
A MAN TO REMEMBER

Dear Readers,

This month we will be taking a break from the Scrapbook mini-series in order to pay tribute to a passionate railroader who passed away earlier this year. Jim Downey worked on the railway here in Newfoundland until its closure in 1988. After that he continued to share his love of railroading through song, producing two CDS full of wonderful railway themed songs and ballads. Jim Downey was a friend of the museum and even graced us with his presence several years ago during the “Railway Days” event. His dedication and song will be sorely missed.

Please take the time to read the tribute that his loving family wrote in his honour.

Sincerely,
RCM Staff



JAMES DOWNEY

Tribute to James Downey

Volume 41 – May 2012

Tribute to a Former Railroad Worker-NL
James Downey 1934-2012

James was born in the Codroy Valley and was the second youngest of 13 children. He lived in the Valley for just about his entire life. He and his wife Martha had nine children, 22 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Jim’s thirty-five year career with the railroad began in Halifax, NS. He then transferred to Newfoundland and Labrador where he spent the remainder of his career until the railroad’s closure in 1988. Jim’s love and passion for the railroad were obvious to anyone close to him.

In later years Jim expressed his love and passion in the many songs that he wrote and sang (although he would tell you very quickly that singing was not his calling). Some of Jim’s songs were recorded on two CDs. In these songs Jim sang enthusiastically about his experiences on the railroad.

Jim’s first song titled, “I Love Working on the Railroad” speaks passionately about how he fell in love with the railroad: “Listening to the humming of the wheels-clicking of the joins-rocking in the curbs.” In other songs Jim provides vivid memories and pictures of the train: “Moving with a full head of steam, around the mountain side, climbing big hill, easing down the grade, crossing the bog, going through deep snow cuts and around blind rock cuts.”

Songs titled, “Passion Train,” “Padre,” “The Last Train before Christmas,” “Hockey Train”

and “The Storm of 74” provide fun- loving anecdotes that help bring adventure and life to Jim’s train experiences. Lines in the songs such as, “Easy on the throttle, shove the brake valve over, stick them back to back,” helps brings even more feeling and life to his songs.

Jim’s favorite song, “Two Ribbons of Steel” speaks of how the train connected people and helped bring prosperity to communities. Two other songs “Sammy,” and “Sparky is Bringing Her In” are delightful reflections of the work of two coworkers. Another song “Train Engines Were Always called She” allowed Jim to speak of the pride he had for trains. He refers to the train as “Such beauty as you ever seen”, “holds her head up with pride for you and me” and “love at the beginning and love at the end”.

In “Political Barter Affair” and “Goodbye Railroad” Jim calls out former Premier Brian Pickford and former Federal Minister Honorable John Crosbie for “taking our railroad”. He says the railroad was everyone’s dream and those who caused its demise will have to answer that great roll call someday.

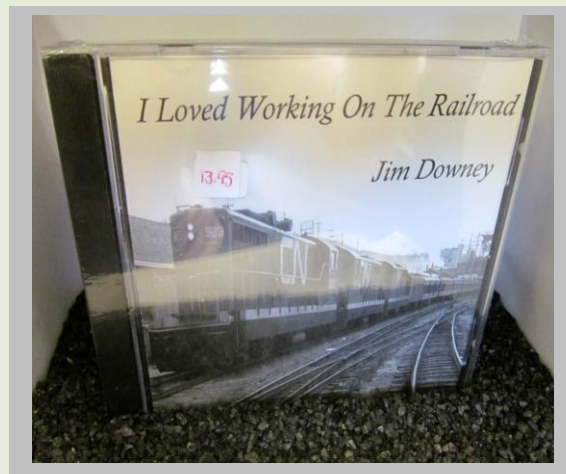
Jim was also proud to have written a song about the fate of his brother, Bernard, during WWII. It is displayed in the national archives for war veterans in Ottawa.

Jim was also invited to sing some of his music about the railway at a national CNR

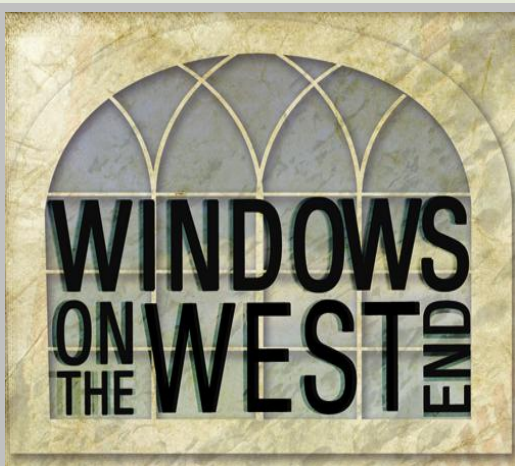
Both of Jim Downey’s railway themed CDs, *I Loved Working on the Railroad* and *Two Ribbons of Steel*, are available in the RCM gift shop.



TWO RIBBONS OF STEEL



I LOVED WORKING ON THE
RAILWAY



Summer Announcements

This year **Window on the West** will be on **June 23rd**.

The West End will be alive with history and activities. Come on down and see the bouncy castles, fire trucks and much more. A great way to spend a day with the whole family!

As a special treat starting at Windows on the West, the RCM will host the Marine Institute Touch Tank every Thursday this summer!

Conference...but can you believe he was too apprehensive to attend and perform his music.

Jim also wrote a song or two about his other important passion: his family. In one song he refers to his family as his rainbows and says that after finding his first rainbow he is now surrounded by 10 more (his wife and nine children). Jim truly loved his family and they dearly loved him. A few years ago after his wife Martha experienced an illness he wrote and recorded a loving tribute to her "What Will I Do Without You." Jim's wife Martha is doing well but misses Jim dearly.

After enjoying many years of good health, Jim said goodbye to his family on March 10, 2012. He is now in another place but we are sure he is writing and singing with the same passion. In his own words, "you had to go and leave us so soon- time will move more slowly now that you are gone".

Amen to that.



GIFT SHOP



New Items In Store!

Brand new steel items have arrived at the RCM.

The pearl and steel design to the left is just one of the many great new pieces that have arrived in store.

Steelx prides itself on offering a variety of pieces for a variety of looks!

FOR THE KIDS

www.railwaycoastalmuseum.ca

Three of a Kind

Pulling into our station this month is a **large** selection of **new** Thomas the Tank Engine trains!

This month we are featuring **TRIOS!**

These three packs of Thomas Engines are all available for a great price. Selection includes: Narrow Gauge Engines, Thomas and the Stinky Cheese, Whiff and the Scrap Cars, Fergus and the Power Cars, Toby and Bash on the Farm, and Thomas's Tall Friends.

