

Newsletter169

Keith's Corner/Mc Gill News

August 5,2022

A Steam Locomotive's Destiny

The old, railroad steam engines were in vogue for over a hundred years. Those of us who grew up with them, have fond memories of them in our hearts and minds.

I wrote about some of my memories of old #40 in Newsletter168 and quickly received an email from a former WPHS, 1954 classmate, John Beynon, asking if I remembered when KCC/NNR scrapped some steam engines to help with the WWII scrap metal drives. I don't remember that, but I do remember the metal scrap drives, done by the Cub and Boy Scouts during WWII. We often wondered and hoped that some of the metal we picked up was eventually used in a U.S. Army tank or a U.S. Navy ship. There just wasn't any scrap aluminum around, so we didn't contribute to the making of airplanes. However, we McGill heathens did pick up every scrap of tin/aluminum foil, no matter how tiny. This was dropped from our bombers to confuse the enemy's radar. It was called chaff.

After WWII was over, KCC managed to buy some Army tanks for scrap metal. The turret and tracks were taken off and only the lower body was obtained. They were stacked on end in a gondola car and brought into McGill. Many McGill men and boys would go up at night and climb into the gondolas and remove items from the tanks. There were large pieces of plastic that were used in a periscope device. These were cut into pieces to make knife handles. I still have a compass from one of the tanks.

I do remember when the first diesel engine came into McGill. I think it was #800. Soon KCC began to scrap some of their steamers from the Ruth pit and yard engines from Ruth, East Ely and McGill. Some of them had the slope backed tenders.

I did manage to find a few photos that my father, Bud Gibson had in his collection. He wrote some notes on the back of each photo.



My Dad wrote on the back of this photo, that this engine, #300 was used as switch engine in the freight yards and also as a standby for the electric engine at the mill car dumper area. The engineers liked it because the reverse lever was air operated and much easier to use than the manual ones in other engines.

The ultimate destiny of these old work horses was to be cut into small pieces, melted and cast into balls used in the ball mills to crush the ore into a powder. Not a nice fate for these iron horses.

Author's Note—John Beynon, mentioned above, entered a contest in the early 1950s, by Kennecott, to name their new monthly publication. John came up with the name "Kennevadan" and won the contest.

McGill News

Getting lots of visitors to the Drugstore lately from Las Vegas. They are escaping from the heat. This week we are staying in the middle 80s and have had a few drops of rain. Just enough to get the weeds growing again. The car traffic has really slowed down since the 4th. Guess the high gas prices are having their effect. Next big celebration will be the McGill Annual Birthday Party at the Big Splash over Labor Day weekend.

Oldies

1909—February 15—Graham Mercantile changed their name to Campton Mercantile (now Bradleys)

1911-March 10---Fred T. West was the manager of The Campton
(his grandson stopped in and visited the Drugstore last week.)

Old Photo



Old #300 awaiting it's fate in the KCC Salvage yard. Notice the roll up curtain at the back of the cab.