

The Kaoham Shuttle

SITE #040302

GC1VKHP

Written & Researched by Wendy Fraser

SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Lillooet, V0K 1V0
 Train Station: N 50°41.099'
 W 121°56.166'
 Geocache Location: N 50°43.759'
 W 122°13.193'
 Accuracy: 5 meters
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page
 UTM: East 0555058;
 North 5620015 10U
 Geocache altitude: 262 m./861 ft.
 Overall difficulty: 1
 Terrain difficulty: 1.5
 (1=easiest; 5=hardest)
 Date Established: 1915
 Ownership: C.N. Rail & First Nations
 Access: • Public Road
 • Year-round
 • Vehicle accessibl
 • Detailed access information on next page.

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:
 Gold Country Communities Society
 P.O. Box 933 Cache Creek, B.C. V0K 1H0
 Tel: 1-877-453-9467
 email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com or
www.GeoTourismCanada.com

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All aboard the Kaoham Shuttle!

Described as one of the most spectacular rail trips in the world, this 'Little Engine That Could' first travels from Lillooet through the narrow Seton River canyon. It then proceeds along the scenic northwest shoreline of 24.3 kilometre-long Seton Lake, a long, fjord-like finger of glacial jade-green water. The lake is walled in by near-vertical cliffs and towering mountains soaring to heights of over 2,000 metres. Bighorn sheep, bears, deer and eagles are often seen along the route and the train will stop to

allow photographers to capture those special glimpses of the local wildlife.

The Kaoham Shuttle links Lillooet with the remote lakeside communities of Seton Portage and Shalalth. The shuttle is an economical and green alternative to the only other link between Lillooet and Seton Portage or Shalalth, a steep gravel road over Mission Mountain that concludes with a dramatic 1,300 metre descent to Seton Lake.



The Cariboo Prospector, which provided Lillooet with over 50 years of passenger service.



This safe near the Shalalth Station was used by prospectors to store their gold until it could be loaded on the train.

Shalalth is the site of B.C. Hydro's Bridge River hydro-electric complex, completed in stages from 1931 to 1960. Water is diverted from Terzaghi Dam at the foot of Carpenter Lake, and through Mission Mountain, plunging down the mountainside through giant penstocks to powerhouses #1 and #2.

Seton Portage is the site of the first railway in British Columbia. During the Cariboo Gold Rush, a tramway was built in 1861 to transport gold-seekers' supplies across the "short portage" between Seton and Anderson Lakes. Completed at a cost of \$9,000, the tramway consisted of a narrow track of wooden rails, which guided the wagons along; later, mule-drawn wagons resembling ore carts were employed on iron rails. Seton Portage was also once known for its apple orchards, and for many years the tiny community produced the annual Christmas gift box of McIntosh apples given by Canada to the Queen.

The Kaoham Shuttle rail bus is operated in partnership between Canadian National Rail and the Seton Lake Indian Band. Its first run was November 1, 2002 and it was established to provide a vital passenger service after the cancellation of the regular Budd car service that operated daily between North Vancouver and Lillooet.

The train runs along a line constructed in 1915. Hugging the shore as it does, the track above Seton Lake features some extremely tight curves, with one forming an 18-degree arc. The hour-long jaunt also includes one very long, very dark tunnel. At 1,201 metres, the Seton Tunnel is the third-longest tunnel on the former Pacific Great Eastern or B.C. Rail line.

In the St'at'imc language, the word "Shalalth" means "the lake." And "Kaoham" means "to meet the train."

Detailed access information:

- The C.N. Rail station is in the 1300 block of Main Street, Lillooet.
- Saturday to Thursday, the shuttle makes one trip from Seton to Lillooet and back to Seton.
- **On Fridays, the Shuttle offers additional service for those interested in a day trip.**
- It is essential to check and maintain schedules if riding the shuttle.
- Ask the driver to let you off at the Shalalth Station.
- Shuttle runs on schedule – do **NOT** be late.
- OR -
- From Lillooet, take Hwy#40 (Moha Road) to the dam and go left at the Shalalth turn off.
- Parking is available at the Shalalth station stop, do **NOT** stop on road.
- Use caution, tight corners and steep grades, road conditions should be considered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

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