

# Local Railway Items from Ottawa Papers - CNR

## Beachburg subdivision

**Friday 19/01/1894 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

From an item in the District News this week, it will be seen that it is now proposed to bring a railway from Pembroke to Renfrew by way of Beachburg and Foresters' Falls: in order to connect with the several railways already centering here. The scheme is being gone into with some vim, evidently, and between the natural desire of Pembroke to get a line competing with the C.P.R., and the very probably willingness of the O.A. & P.S. to have all possible feeders for their traffic, - it is quite possible that the new project will get beyond the charter stage. It must be remembered, too, that a road following the route suggested would pass through just that section of Ross or Horton where the proposed line from Pontiac county would strike after crossing the Ottawa river; and if a combination of forces could be effected, one track would do for both roads for some miles before entering Renfrew, with consequent saving of construction expenses. Some such scheme as this may yet evolve; and if Renfrewites see a chance to put in a helping word or hand at any time it would be good policy to say the word or do the deed. With the best of wishes for the prosperity of every town around - still, let all roads lead to Renfrew.

**Thursday 23/08/1906 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The engineers of the C.N. railway are now engaged in preliminary survey work on the proposed line along the front of this county-- the staff was at Bristol Corners last week. More.

**Friday 19/10/1906 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

From the Arnprior Watchman, Sand Point correspondent: The McKenzie and Mann surveying party at Portage du Fort have located the ground to build their new railway depot and yard. The Portage du Fort people are jubilant over the almost sure prospects of having at long and at last a real railroad. The surveying party leaving Portage expects to meet on their way down another party at Bell's Corners coming up.

**Friday 09/11/1906 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Chats Falls**

From the Arnprior Chronicle: Engineer Hughes and party arrived in town on Monday to do some location work for the Canadian Northern R'y Co. at the Chats rapids. It has been definitely decided, Mr. Hughes says, that this section of the new transcontinental line shall cross the Ottawa at the Chats rapids near Fitzroy Harbour and recross the same stream at Portage du Fort and run up through Westmeath, which fine farming township as at present without a railway. Thus Carleton Place, Almonte, Arnprior and Renfrew are to be given the go-by, as had for some weeks been expected here. --

**Friday 07/12/1906 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

From the Carp Review: Mr. Hughes and his staff of engineers finished their work for the Canadian Northern Railway in the Carp section the first of the week. Their division, between Hawkesbury and Pembroke, is now finished and the route laid out. The railway will cross the G.T.R. below South March station about two miles, and will strike that village running along Lake Constance to Dunrobin. From there it will continue between 2nd and 3rd line to the English church on 2nd line of Torbolton, about a mile from Woodlawn, where a station will be built. From there it will cross the town line between Torbolton and Fitzroy, and a station for Fitzroy Harbor will be built about lot 13 on the forced road to Galetta being about a mile and a quarter from the Harbor. There it will cross the Ottawa river at the foot of Chats Lake. It is not expected that any changes will be made in the above unless it is to run the line a little closer to Fitzroy Harbor. It will be a couple of years at least before this portion of the road is built, as the company are at present looking to their interests in the west. Mr. Hughes has let for Toronto where he will be engaged in the survey of that division.

**Thursday 31/01/1907 Pembroke Observer Beachburg Pembroke**

Railways for Pembroke

The Northern will enter along with others

Pembroke is destined to become a great railway centre. In addition to the two present railways we are getting the Canadian Northern from Ottawa and also we have two bright prospects of getting a line from Pembroke straight to Peterboro built by the Northern company to connect with their main line to Toronto which will put Pembroke in connection with Toronto by seven hours run. The C.P.R. will also run the K. & P. to Pembroke, also connect Pembroke with a line striking the P.P.J. at some suitable point. With the coming of all these roads and the prospect of cheap power in sight for manufacturers, we see no reason why Pembroke should not assume the dignity of a city in the near future.

**13/07/1911 Rideau Record Beachburg Hogs back bridge**

Work is to be started this week on the new C.N.R. Bridge over the Rideau River one mile south of Hogs Back. The cost of the bridge is estimated at \$40,000

**Thursday 05/10/1911 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Portage du Fort**

A staff of engineers arrived at Portage du Fort a few days ago to locate the site for the crossing of the Canadian Northern railway somewhere in the vicinity of "Lazy Schenail," some distance upriver from the village. --

**Thursday 02/11/1911 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Billings Bridge, Hogs Back**

In connection with the construction of the C.N.R. lines into this city, a huge concrete culvert is now under construction at Billings Bridge between two hills about one hundred feet apart. The work of excavating for the foundation of the culvert was commenced about two weeks ago and it was only today that the first concrete was mixed and set in place.

The foundations will be twenty feet high and on top of this will be placed twenty more feet of grading material, which will bring the top to track level, forty feet above the bottom of the hills between which the culvert is being constructed. While the work on the culvert is being rushed at a great pace, it is not thought that it will be completed for over a month yet.

Operations have also been commenced on the new Rideau River bridge which crosses near Hogs Back and which will be part of the C.N.R. Smiths Falls - Ottawa line. It will have three spans of 100 feet and two of seventy-five feet, and is to be constructed of concrete and steel throughout. This work is also being rushed but will not be completed before the spring.

A shortage of labor is to some extent hindering the progress of the C.N.R. construction, but it is being rushed ahead as quickly as possible, and it is hoped that by the first of the year the steel will be laid as far as the Metcalfe Road.

The C.N.R. yesterday began construction of the last link of the Ottawa to Toronto line. Workmen have begun the laying of steel rails beyond Hurdman's Bridge, about a mile and three quarters from the centre of the city and not far from the local C.N.R. station.

The connecting link is to be built from this city to Sydenham.

Mr. J.P. Malarkey, the well known local contractor, who has the contract for the construction of the road, is now in the city superintending the work from this end. The distance from here to Sydenham is 90 miles and the rails will be laid from this end first over the road which is practically all graded.

"We shall have the contract complete within a year," says Mr. Mullarkey, and this will mean that the line from here to Toronto will be ready for business. He says from Trenton to Sydenham the trains will run over the old Bay of Quinte road.

About 13,00 (sic) men are rushing the work, and when it is finished, the shortest line from the Capital to the Queen City will be in operation. Sir William MacKenzie, the president of the C.N.R., says the road will be running into a station in the centre of the city.

**Thursday 16/11/1911 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau River Hogs back**

Work on the construction of the Canadian Northern bridge to span the Rideau River at Hogs Back, which means the last step of the actual entrance of the C.N.R. into the city commenced today and will be completed early in the spring. The bridge will be about 400 feet long and about 30 feet wide. From Rideau Junction to the C.N.R. up town station, wherever it will be double tracks will be laid. Before next fall the line from Ottawa to Toronto will be in operation.

**21/11/1911 Rideau Record Beachburg Rideau River Hogs back**

Main News

Work on the construction of the CNR Bridge to span the Rideau River at Hogs Back was commenced on Thursday and will be completed early in the spring. The bridge will be 400 feet long and about 30 feet wide. Double tracks will be laid from Rideau Junction to the CNR station in Ottawa.

**Monday 27/11/1911 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

The C.N.R. will make application to the Railway Commission on December 5 for authority to cross the C.P.R. tracks near Chaudiere Junction on hand signal until July 31, 1912. After that date the C.N.R. may apply for permission to install an interlocking plant.

The object of the C.N.R. in wanting to cross the C.P.R. at the point in question is to facilitate the construction of the line to Toronto from Ottawa. Chaudiere Junction is half way between Billings Bridge and Hogs Back.

The C.N.R. want an extension of time to install an interlocker at the G.T.R. and C.P.R. crossing near the entrance to Ottawa.

The Board ordered the installation some time ago.

**05/12/1911 Rideau Record Beachburg Rideau Junction Hogs back**

Buying More Land

Messers Mackenzie and Mann has just made another big purchase of land at Hogs Back. The property adjoined that already owned by the C.N.R. in that district, where it is proposed to erect car shops, roundhouses and other buildings. It is stated that the CNR interest in that locality now totals 700 acres. It is understood that the company has an option on 300 more acres there, which they intend to take over shortly. The price paid for the 129 acres purchased last week was \$25,000.

**Saturday 09/12/1911 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

The contract for the last link of the eastern section of the Canadian Northern Transcontinental Railway between Ottawa and Pembroke, a distance of about 90 miles, has been awarded to Mr. J.P. Mullarkey, of Montreal.

Description of the line.

**14/12/1911 Rideau Record Beachburg**

Contract Let - For Another Link in the Eastern Section of the C.N.R.

The contract for the last link of the eastern section of the Canadian Northern Transcontinental Railway between Ottawa and Pembroke, a distance of about 90 miles, has been awarded to J.P. Mullarkey, of Montreal.

The new line passes through Nepean, South March, Carp, Torbolton and Fitzroy harbor thence across the Ottawa river, about one mile above the mile famous "Chats Falls", thence through Bristol, Clarendon and Portage du Fort where the Ottawa river is again crossed, thence through Foresters Falls, Beachburg, Westmeath and Pembroke. The line will open up and develop a territory both in Ontario and Quebec greatly in need of railway communication. The bridge across the Ottawa River at Fitzroy harbor and Portage du Fort will be constructed during the present winter and the grading commenced early next year.

Construction on the Sydenham - Smiths Falls - Ottawa section is progressing satisfactory and will be completed next fall. The Hawkesbury - Montreal line will also be finished next fall and then the Canadian Northern will have a through line between Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

**22/12/1911 Eganville Leader Beachburg**

Construction on the Ottawa-Pembroke branch of the transcontinental C.N.R. line will commence within a month's time. The statement was made by Mr. J. P. Mullarkey, who was some months ago awarded the contract for this part of the line.

The construction of the road from Ottawa to Pembroke will involve the construction of two of the biggest railway bridges that have been built around the Capital for some time. One above Chats Falls across the Ottawa River will be a bridge of some twenty spans while another, where the steel crosses the river at Portage du Fort, will also be a big structure. The combined cost will be in the hundred thousands.

The distance from Ottawa to Pembroke by the C.N.R. will be about 92 miles shorter than that along the route of any other road. It is supposed to be ready for traffic by 1913, but Mr. Mullarkey hopes to finish it by the end of next year.

**Friday 05/01/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

Work stopped on Metcalfe road bridge pending decision of the Board of Railway Commissioners with regard to widening of the road. More.

**Friday 12/01/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Billings Bridge**

The railway commissioners must now decide the dispute between the Canadian Northern Railway and the council of South Gloucester township in connection with the bridge the company was building at Billings Bridge.

Some time ago the council stopped the work for the reason that the roadway would not be wide enough and instead of using the 40 feet which the company had secured the council is trying to compel them to use 66 feet.

The railway company, on the other hand, claim that they are already under considerable expense for the work done and that to make another start would mean a greater loss.

It is not yet quite settled whether the city will insist on an even greater width still, 80 feet, and in such cases Judge Maybee has intimated the city will have to bear the additional cost entailed by the 80 feet width. But Judge Maybee has also intimated to the railway company will be ordered to make the viaduct the full width of the roadway, 66 feet.

No formal order of the Railway Board has yet been made as the secretary, Mr. A.D. Cartwright, understands that it awaits a resolution from the city council.

At all events, the width of the viaduct will be not less than 66 feet.

**Friday 19/01/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

Pembroke council will try to get the C.N.R. to bring its station into town. As now laid out on the plan, The Observer says: the profile of the projected C.N.O. Ry. as presented to council at last Monday's meeting shows the line as crossing the C.P.R. About five and a half miles east of the town, near the Government road crossing, and coming up through Mr. P. White's farm, skirting the town limits, with the station probably at the other side of the Indian river bridge. A profile such as this allows for a deviation half a mile either way, and it is not considered at all likely that the company proposes going that far away from the business centre of the town. The company claims that in coming to Pembroke at all an expensive deviation from the line at first proposed is being made. In view of this it may be taken for granted that it is not the intention of the company to put the railway out of reach of the freight and passenger traffic of a town served, as Pembroke is, by two existing railways. The Observer understands that the C.P.R. is renewing its efforts to secure a site for a more centrally located freight shed while the Grand Trunk has plans under way for extensive improvements to its yard and, station accommodation and terminal facilities here. Shrewd businessmen like MacKenzie and Mann are not going to spend money in a costly deviation of their line, and then remain where they can hope for little or no business from the town to reach which they undertook this heavy additional expenditure. A change in the C.N.R.'s plans as they regard Pembroke is due before long.

**Friday 09/02/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Billings Bridge**

It is likely the C.N.R. viaduct to be built near Billings Bridge will be only 44 feet wide. The city solicitor reported to the board of control yesterday that the Railway Commission was giving an order for a 44 foot viaduct as the authorities of the township principally concerned had intimated to the commission that the 44 foot width was satisfactory to them.

The commissioners will however give the city ten days in which to notify them that it is willing to have the viaduct made wider and pay the extra cost.

This would be about \$15,000 and Controller McClenaghan and others yesterday came to the conclusion when the township authorities were not specially interested the city council representatives would hardly be justified in spending \$15,000 of the ratepayers' money on an improvement beyond the city limits. It looks now as if the viaduct will be a 44 foot one.

**09/02/1912 Perth Courier Beachburg**

Canadian Northern Railway

John Brennan, of Arnprior, has secured the contract of building the two immense bridges of the CNR at Fitzroy Harbor and Portage du Fort and all the right of way on the Quebec side between the two places. He will have associated with him in the work, James McDonald of Smiths Falls.

**Thursday 15/02/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

When the Canadian Northern Railway is constructed along the front of Clarendon it is said that some of the farmers down there are going to have more railway than they actually need as several houses and barns are directly in the line of the proposed track, and will have to come down. How different when our own P.P.J. was under construction. Then it became quite an easy matter to dodge a pine stump when it obstructed the way, and from the character of the road after it was first built, these obstructions must have been numerous.

**Thursday 29/02/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The Fitzroy Harbor correspondent of the Carp Review last week said: The local officials employed by the C.N.R. are making purchases of land on the route surveyed for their new line, and are very busy with these preliminary operations.--

**Saturday 02/03/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

As soon as the snow clears off the ground an army of men will begin to rush construction of the C.N.R. road to Pembroke, which is the first link of the C.N.R. line between Ottawa and North Bay.

This information is learned from Mr. J.P. Mullarky, who is at the Russell, the contractor for the road. He has all the supplies ready and when he makes a start it will be a comparatively few months before the road is finished.

Early this fall the C.N.R. road from Hawkesbury to Montreal will be open for traffic. This will make a through Canadian Northern line from Ottawa to Montreal. The road from Ottawa to Hawkesbury is already in operation.

**Wednesday 27/03/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Tramway**

Construction operations will be resumed in full blast next week by Messrs. Dolan and Code, contractors for the construction of the C.N.R. line in the vicinity of Billings Bridge and crossing the Metcalfe Road.

A thousand feet of temporary trestle has recently been erected. This will be used for the dump carts to carry earth and other material used to fill in the road bed of the railway line. The height of this trestle work varies from four to forty feet, according to the nature of the ravine to be spanned. Six hundred feet of the trestle work is constructed on the east side of the Metcalfe Road and the remaining four hundred feet on the western side.

At present only a few men are engaged but a large gang will be put on next week and the building operations rushed. The first work that will be taken up will be that of the completion of the eastern abutment. Owing to the change in plans for this wing, last fall, there still remains considerable excavation to be done before the foundation will be ready to receive its hundreds of tons of concrete.

Other work along the line is reported to be progressing favorably.

**Saturday 30/03/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

That the building of the C.N.R. line between Ottawa and Pembroke will be proceeded with this spring there now seems little doubt. Engineer Whitney and his staff are now at work revising the location between Westmeath and Pembroke, and it is expected that as soon as they complete this part of the work the right of way men will commence operations.

The next step will be to commence construction and once commenced the undertaking will be rushed to completion. There have been for some time past, rumors afloat that the company was experiencing some difficulty in financing the road, but from present indications, even if this be true, it is not likely to affect this part of the line, for as a matter of fact work on the Chats bridge at Fitzroy has already been commenced. Mr. P.J. Mullarky, the contractor for the Ottawa - Pembroke division, has all along declared that work would be proceeded with as soon as spring opened and local contractors are preparing to make an early start.

**Wednesday 03/04/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Hogs back**

"We are going to build car shops in Ottawa of course," said Sir William MacKenzie, president of the Canadian Northern, "But, whether they will be big shops built at Hogs Back, I cannot say at present."

**Thursday 04/04/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

It is learned that plans are under way to purchase several hundreds of acres of land about eight miles from the city for the location of the C.N.R. car yards. The exact place is not decided upon but it will be either on the C.N.R. Ottawa - Toronto line or on the Ottawa - Port Arthur line.

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The intention of the C.N.R. it was said was to build the yards nearer the city than at present contemplated but realizing that the city will grow quickly, it was considered advisable to go out far enough where sufficient land could be bought at a moderate price.

According to the present plans, electric engines will be used for switching purposes and also for taking cars to and from Ottawa.--

**Thursday 04/04/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

All doubts of the C.N.R. Co. constructing the proposed line along the front of the county, from the Chats Falls to the point above Portage du Fort, have been pretty well dissipated during the past ten days by the fact that an official of the company has been through the district arranging with the landowners for the purchase of the right-of-way, a stroke of business which seems to have been accomplished without much difficulty, judging from the short time it took. Another evidence of assurance that the line will be built, is seen in the large quantity of timber which Mr. Wm. Hodgins has delivered at the point where the Ottawa River is to be crossed, to be used in connection with bridge construction.

--question of location of the station--

**Friday 12/04/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

All doubts of the C.N.R. co. constructing the proposed line along the front of the county from the Chats Falls to a point above Portage du Fort, have been pretty well dissipated during the past ten days by the fact that an official of the company has been through the district arranging with land owners for the purchase of the right-of-way, a stroke of business that seems to have been accomplished without much difficulty, judging from the short amount of time that it took. Another evidence of assurance that the line will be built, is seen in the large quantity of timber which Mr. Wm. Hodgins has delivered at the point where the Ottawa river is to be crossed, to be used in connection with bridge construction. With the prospect thus brightened the people along the front of Clarendon are now interesting themselves in the question of the location of the station which will be necessary to serve the requirements of that section. On this matter we learn that opinion is divided, some favouring one point and some another. This is a question in which the citizens of Shawville should have something to say, as the new line is bound to have an influence on the future trade prospects of this town. It would be well, therefore, to move to have the station located at the point believed to be the most advantageous to our local business interests. - Shawville Equity.

**Thursday 18/04/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Mr. MacKenzie of the C.N.R. engineering staff, conferred with the Clarendon council last week, in regard to the crossings at the several points where the railway will intersect with the highways along the front of the township.

**Friday 26/04/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

At the route map hearings before Hon. Frank Cochrane, Minister of Railways and Canals, this morning the routes of the C.N.R. were reached of importance to Renfrew and Prescott counties.

It was decided that the C.N.R. would pass through either Pembroke or Churchville, a suburban village, which will inevitably become a part of the town. This is according to a resolution passed by the Pembroke town council, and it was agreed to by a delegation from the Renfrew town introduced by Mr. Gerald White M.P.

**Tuesday 28/05/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Pembroke**

C.N.R. wants \$25,000 bonus from Pembroke. Would then make town a divisional point.--

**Tuesday 28/05/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Billings Bridge**

The "end" of steel on the Canadian Northern Railway Ottawa-Toronto line has now reached the Metcalfe road near Billings Bridge and finished close on to three miles of completed track out of Ottawa on the Ottawa and Smiths Falls sections.

Although the large eighty pound steel rails have only been pushed across the high trestlework spanning the mammoth cement arch for a few days, already close onto twenty-five thousand cubic yards of sand and roadbed material has been dumped on either side of the track. Two construction trains of twelve cars each and pulled by a locomotive carry tons of sand and grading material from the Canadian Northern yard at Hurdman's Bridge to the Bank street work. The trains make half hour trips over the single track road, the cars being loaded by a mammoth steam shovel at the C.N.R. sand pit on the Hurdman road.

A Journal representative who visited the scene of operations yesterday, through the courtesy of Supt. Thomas Brennan, was allowed to enter the cab of the construction engine, and travel over the newly completed roadbed.

All along the line from Hurdman's Bridge to the Metcalfe road gangs of men are engaged digging ditches, grading the slope of the track and doing everything to rush the construction work along.

At the Metcalfe road a big improvement is noticeable since two or three weeks ago. The big east abutment, thirty feet in height, is completed and stands a solid block of concrete weighing thousands of tons. The trestle, with its long spider like supports, is finished and the new steel rails, glisten from their eminence on its top. A large gang of men are employed nearby on the east side of the road, working like venerable bees in levelling and shovelling the grading material.

On the western side of the road, operations for the building of the western abutments are being carried on. Already the foundation is in and the wooden frame to hold the concrete is being erected. Owing to the grounds on the western side of the road being considerably lower than the opposite side, a steam hoist will be used to convey the thousands of tons of cement, this hoist has a lifting capacity of four tons and will carry one of the large buckets full from the giant cement mixer nearby.

The west abutment will be completed about the middle of June and will be thirty-three feet high, and contain three thousand five hundred tons of cement.

Messrs Dolan and Code are the contractors for the cement work, and J.P. Mullarkey is contractor for the grading and roadbed work.

**Thursday 06/06/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Wet weather has interfered to the extent of stopping the work on the C.N.R. where a commencement was made in Bristol township.--

**Friday 07/06/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

Some time next week Messrs. Munroe, Moffatt & Fortin will probably turn the first sod in the building of the C.N.O. Ry. line from Beachburg to Pembroke, for which they have the contract. The lumber for the building of camps at the Beachburg end, where the work will be started, has arrived and the building of the camps will be but the work of a few days. Their plant is on the way while supplies are now being secured and men engaged. A scarcity of labour is not anticipated, although wages will be fairly high. "On to Pembroke," will be the slogan as soon as work is started and the contract will be rushed to completion as quickly as possible. Nothing, of course, can be done on this end of the contract until the point of entrance into and the route through the town has been decided which, from the present prospects may be three months hence. Meantime the firm will be making steady progress towards Pembroke. Observer.

**Thursday 13/06/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Portage du Fort**

Mr. Wm. Hodgins has taken the contract for the delivery of the cement to be used in building the C.N.R. bridge which is to span the Ottawa River above Portage du Fort.

**Thursday 27/06/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

G.A. Howard sent a few teams down to Bristol, Monday to work on the C.N.R. construction.

**Saturday 06/07/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau River Hogs back**

Includes two photographs of construction.

Twelve thousand bags of cement in bridge.

C.N.R. five span structure over the Rideau is huge undertaking.

Spanning the Rideau River, about four miles and a half from the city, the Canadian Northern Railway has a few span bridges under excellent headway.

The cement piers, four in number, are already finished, also the abutments on the eastern side.

All that remains to be done at present, to allow the wooden trestle work to be started is topping off the western abutment with about four feet of cement, which will be finished in the course of the coming week. Each pier is fifty feet in height from the bottom of the foundation, about ten feet below the surface at low water.

No difficulties or delays were experienced throughout the operation save with pier No. 4 on the western side, and here it was due to the erroneous soundings of those who went before.

Marked in the plan as rock foundation, the base of pier No. 4 was to measure 16 feet by 36 feet, but when actual work was begun, quicksand formation was discovered necessitating the enlargement of the base to 20 feet by 40 feet.

A drill was sunk in the middle of the proposed base in the primary stages of erection and on being drawn out water followed it as in an artesian well. One hundred and twenty-eight piles were driven for support and the work since has been speedily carried on. Between 12,000 and 15,000 bags of cement have been used in the cement work of abutments and piers.

Simultaneously with the work on the bridge supports, two twenty-five foot cement walls are being built about 500 feet away from the western abutment, for the purpose of bridging the Metcalfe Road, the approach to be made by way of a cedar trestle. Were it not for this extra piece of work, trestle work could have been started this week.

There will be five spans in the new bridge. From either abutment to the nearest pier the span will be 76 feet 6 inches, and three central spans of 100 feet 4 inches. The graded embankment on the east side running through the Dowler Farm is being rushed so that the laying of tracks will be possible with the completion of the bridges, which will be by the first of September.

Double tracking will be placed on the new bridge and the road from Ottawa to Toronto which will be open to traffic before the end of the present year.

Something less than a mile away, construction work on the main line, Montreal to Vancouver, is being carried on to form a junction with the Ottawa - Toronto line at this point.

Construction of the cement work was under the able superintendency of Mr. Charles Johnston.

**Thursday 25/07/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Portage du Fort**

Mr. William Hodgins' teams began hauling the cement last week for the C.N.R. bridge above Portage du Fort. An immense quantity will be used.

**Saturday 27/07/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Norway Bay**

Norway Bay. The residents of the Bay are much elated over the prospects of the Canadian Northern Railway which is being rapidly constructed in close proximity to the Bay. It is expected that a station will be built at a convenient distance, so as to allow the campers easy access to the Bay. The C.N.R. will follow the Ontario shore as far as the Chats Falls, where the Ottawa will be bridged, then along the Quebec side as far as Snow Boom where the Ottawa will again be crossed. This railway will considerably lessen the distance from Ottawa to Norway Bay.

**Thursday 29/08/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

It is said the railway contractors who are grading the line of the C.N.R. along the front of Bristol and Clarendon, are finding it hard to secure men, although fairly good wages are offered. --

**Saturday 31/08/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Fitzroy**

A new contract on a C.N.R. rock cut has been let to a Montrealer, the name of whom cannot be learned. The contract will be a difficult one to fulfill as the rock in this district is of remarkable hardness and dulls the drills in a very short time. Two blacksmiths are kept busy sharpening the drills.

**Thursday 03/10/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau River Hogs back**

The Canadian Northern Railway Company's line from Toronto to Ottawa will probably be running for freight purposes, if not for passenger traffic before the close of the year. This is the expectation of the officials of the C.N.R.

The new big steel bridge over the Rideau is now practically completed which, with the bridge over the Jock River already completed, leaves the section from Ottawa to Smiths Falls ready for the putting down of the rails. The work on this is the next to be undertaken.

**Friday 04/10/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

Describing the route of the Canadian Northern through the county town, the Observer says: the crossing of the C.P.R. will be about three-quarters of a mile below the Government Road, instead of on this side, as stated last week. The survey, as stated, runs about 50 feet south of Wellington street and will cross McKay street at Mrs. Wolfe's. Taking a sharp curve from McKay's across the river to the west end of the bridge (over the ? Moffatt property) there will be an overhead crossing of main street and the line will run over the Milling Co's office to Moffatt's hill. Somewhere on that hill the station may be located, but it is quite possible also that property for a station may be purchased on either side of McKay street, near the C.P.R. This, however, is a matter which has not yet been decided upon. The location of the shops is another matter which is at present engaging the attention of the company's officials. The survey through the town is completed.

**Thursday 10/10/1912 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The C.N.R. engineers have prepared a plan of the proposed station for Clarendon Front on lots 15 and 16, range 2, for the council's approval or otherwise. --

**Saturday 19/10/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction Hogs back**

It has been definitely decided, the Journal is informed, that the main car shops of the Canadian Northern Railway will be located at Rideau Junction on the east (sic) bank of the Rideau Canal, near Hog's Back.

There has been doubt for some time as to whether the main shops of the company would be located there or not. It has been known that Sir William Mackenzie favoured Toronto, but it is stated to the Journal that the engineering department of the company, which all along has held the view that the strategic point of the system was Ottawa, succeeded last week in satisfying the directors of the reasonableness of that opinion and it was decided definitely that arrangements would be made forthwith to that end.

Rideau Junction will therefore become an important railway town. Within a few years five thousand employees of the Canadian Northern Railway will be located there, right on the borders of the capital.

It is understood that the Canadian Northern magnates have no desire to have a new town annexed to the city. In fact they will lay their plans for a separate and complete community. They will begin at once upon the scheme. The town will have its own waterworks system, and its own electric light and gas. There will be macadam and tar macadam roads, and everything will be of the most up to date and convenient character.

A number of officials of the company have been here during the past few days making the preliminary arrangements.

Five thousand employees with their families and the general business that a community creates, means that in a few years, Rideau Junction, or whatever its name is to be will be a city of at least twenty thousand inhabitants.

**Wednesday 30/10/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

Canadian Northern Railway half page advertisement. Includes a plan showing the area of the wye at Rideau Junction with the land reserved for railway purposes and on all three sides land has been subdivided for houses

"An electric gasoline car service will be in operation between Rideau and Ottawa next spring."

Company ran an excursion by the steamer "Wanekewan" for the purpose of enabling interested persons to choose property. Nov. 1 from foot of Slater street at the canal basin, admission by ticket issued by the company.

**Friday 01/11/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Fitzroy Harbour**

Fitzroy Harbour is to have a railroad station and it will have a chance to say where it is to be situated. It will be on the new transcontinental line of the C.N.R. The question will come before the railway commission on Nov. 8th. The C.N.R. is applying for approval of its location.

**Friday 08/11/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Fitzroy Harbour**

The Canadian Northern Railway Company's site for a station at Fitzroy Harbour was approved by the railway commission this morning. Some objection was taken by a municipality of Fitzroy, whose reeve appeared in protest against the proposed crossing of two roads by the line to the station. The idea of the railway was to have the two roads which it would under present conditions intersect within a few rods of each other, brought together to make one crossing over the railway line from where they could then again separate and this was approved by the board. - Citizen.

**Saturday 16/11/1912 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

Ottawa is to have a new trolley line electric line next spring operated by the C.N.R. between Ottawa and Rideau Junction.

This will be a rather unique form of transportation as it will be a combination of the electric and gasoline car. The car will be similar to the large ones used on the Britannia line. The C.N.R. are operating a number of these between Quebec and ILke St. John with much success.

The C.N.R. station at Rideau Junction will be erected next spring and will cost about \$20,000.

**Friday 22/11/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Fitzroy**

To Messrs. W.P. Costello and Gordon Munro, two young men of Pembroke, has the contract of constructing the big C.N.R. railway bridge near Fitzroy Harbour been sub-let by Messrs. John Brennan and Hugh Grant, who are chief contractors for all work to be done between Fitzroy Harbour and Portage du Fort, all of which is now under way except the harbour bridge, and this will now be commenced as soon as Messrs. Costello and Munro can get their plant on the ground. The Harbour bridge will be of steel and concrete and will have a length measurement of 1502 feet and it will be built for railway traffic only. Although the Harbour bridge is a large one, it is much smaller than the one now under construction at Portage du Fort. - Arnprior Chronicle.

**Friday 29/11/1912 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

Canadian Northern station outside of Pembroke.

Would cause too much upsetting of conditions to go through the town. Full account.

**Friday 24/01/1913 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

On Monday last the C.N.R. submitted to the town council a new route through the town. In this route the divisional yards and workshops will be situated at White's Farm. From this point the main line runs towards the town crossing the G.T.R. tracks and the Muskrat River near Foster's Axe Factory. Crossing the southern corner of Churchville a spur will run into Pembroke, leaving the main line at Gourley's Farm, then crossing the Indian river at the late Jamieson bridge running over W. Witt's property to the western side of William street on Moffatt's Point, then running on as far north as Mary street near Witt's embankment. The loacl stations and freight yards will be situated between Mary and Elizabeth streets, occupying the western jalf of that block. The spur again joins the main line at Churchville. - Pembroke Standard.

**Tuesday 28/01/1913 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Airport spur**

The Canadian Northern has closed with an Ottawa land syndicate re. the purchase of two farms on the other side of Billings Bridge. The farms were formerly known as the Upton and Langstaff properties, and it is understood the railway will use them for gravel pit purposes. As the deal was closed directly with the Toronto office the purchase price is not known. It has been estimated at \$30,000.

**Friday 31/01/1913 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

Rumors of extensive operations to take place at Rideau Junction next spring are now leaking out from C.N.R. quarters. It the first place it has been almost definitely announced that excavation work on the new station will be commenced in the spring and it is understood that the C.N.R. will erect a modern fireproof structure at this point and it will cost not less than \$30,000. The C.N.R. has sold many new lots on this new townsite and from a statement made by one of the officials this morning the C.N.R. will spare no pains to make this townsite a beautifully and flourishing railway centre.

**Tuesday 01/04/1913 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Pembroke**

C.N.R. access to Pembroke to be decided by Board of Railway Commissioners.--

**Thursday 03/04/1913 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Several heavy blasts were heard on Sunday in the direction of the C,N,R, line. Evidently the ordinances of the Sabbath do not figure ojthe estimates of railroad builders to any greater extent than with the managers of the railways after which they are built.

**Friday 04/04/1913 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

Application by C.N.R. for a route through Pembroke heard by the BRC - to come up next week.

**Thursday 10/04/1913 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Portage du Fort**

The engineers of the C.N.R. gave a swell dance in the Town hall, Portage du Fort, on Wednesday night last. These gentlemen were lavish in their invitations, and the response was generous, representatives from the whole surrounding district being present. Young people from Shawville, Bryson, Campbell's Bay, Coulonge, Westmeath, Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior and Ottawa were in attendance and shared fully in the distinguished function. Valentin orchestra supplied the music.

**Wednesday 23/04/1913 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Ottawa**

The Canadian Northern Railway will have a station in Ottawa before the end of the year, according to Mr. S.J. Montgomery, city ticket agent.

"We expect to have trains running over the line from Ottawa to Toronto within the present year," Mr. Montgomery said to the Journal.

"Will you resume the service from Ottawa to Quebec before the completion of the Toronto line?" he was asked.

"No," he replied, "it don't pay to carry passengers for the Quebec service down to the station in automobiles. When the Toronto line is finished, however, a station in the city will be absolutely necessary, and we will have one."

**Friday 09/05/1913 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

The difficulties over the entrance of the C.N.R. line to Pembroke seem within reasonable distance of settlement, and along lines we feel sure will prove satisfactory to the town as a whole. If we can have the trains run into the Grand Trunk station, either over the Grand Trunk tracks or by a parallel road, and all through passenger trains run into Pembroke, as well as local trains, and a grade separation be made at Mary street by the erection of a new bridge, we believe it will prove the most sensible and practical and servicable arrangement from every standpoint. - Pembroke Observer.

**Friday 27/06/1913 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

From a railway source the Pembroke Observer is told that an agreement between the companies was signed last week whereby the C.N.R. will be given running rights over the G.T.R. track and joint use of the G.T.R. station. As a matter of fact negotiations for the land for the necessary sidings at the junction are now in progress and may be concluded at any time, it is the intention to have the junction at or near Foster's axe factory and the plan on the part of the C.N.R. is that trains from the west shall back into the station, while trains from the east will run in and back out.

**Wednesday 03/09/1913 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Airport Spur**

A peculiar case was heard in the chambers of Judge MacTavish at the court house this morning, in which the C.N.R. sought to take possession of a right of way for the construction of a spur line in the Township of Gloucester, for the carrying of gravel. The proposed line would cut through the properties of nine farmers of the township. The railway company offered \$5,000 compensation but the farmers wanted a larger figure.

Counsel for the railway company made application to deposit a few hundred dollars in court as an evidence of good faith.

The property in question partly belongs to the Ottawa Hunt Club, Messrs. J. Gillespie, Dowler and McCarthy, farmers of the township.

The company requires a lease of five years and offered as compensation amounts averaging twenty-five dollars a year per acre. The judge decided to give the company permission to go ahead with the building of the line upon paying a deposit into the court for each farmer.

The final amount will be decided at a later date by arbitration.

**Thursday 23/10/1913 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The laying of the steel in the line of the Canadian Northern Railway between Pembroke and the point of crossing the Ottawa River at Split Rock began at Pembroke last week, and the contractor, Mr. J.P. Mullarkey, expects that section, 27 miles in length, to be completed before the real cold weather sets in. The work of laying the steel on the section between Ottawa and the Chats rapids, will, it is also expected be completed at about the same time. Work on the two bridges, that at the Chats and the one at Split Rock, - will be carried on all winter with the object of having them completed in the Spring. Then tracklaying will be undertaken on the section running along the front of this county, the grading of which is now well advanced. The whole line between Ottawa and Pembroke, which is said to be 36 miles shorter than the C.P.R., will likely be in operation early next fall.

**Thursday 13/11/1913 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

A spur line is being built from the newly opened marble quarries in Ross to the line of the C.N.R. near Portage du Fort.

**Monday 19/01/1914 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

Dynamite explosion kills 8 and injures 2 about eight miles from Quyon.

**19/01/1914 Rideau Record Beachburg**

Six Men Killed

Premature Explosion on C.N.R. Construction Work.

A dispatch from Ottawa says: Six men were killed and three others seriously injured in a dynamite explosion late Saturday on the C.N.R. construction work at Ross' Point, Quebec, opposite Arnprior. The names of the dead so far as known are: Jos. Elliot, aged 22 single Bristol Mines; Stephen J. Truedeau, 32, wife and three children Bristol Mines; Duncan Herron aged 55 married no children Bristol Mines. The other three are foreigners.

**Thursday 22/01/1914 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Six men lost their lives on Saturday evening on the line of the C.N.R. in the vicinity of Ross Point Ferry, Bristol, as the result of a premature explosion in a rock cutting. More.

**Friday 15/05/1914 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

The Observer says that contrary to reports work on the C.N.R. at Pembroke will proceed this summer. Mr. Dan McKenzie will be in charge of the track laying; a distance of about 60 miles remaining to be laid to complete the line to North Bay. Some large trestles have also to be filled in.

**19/05/1914 Rideau Record Beachburg**

C.N.R. Upper Line. Northern Ontario Section Will Be Ready In The Fall

A dispatch from Ottawa says: Some time next fall the Canadian Northern line now under construction from Ottawa to Port Arthur via Pembroke, Eastport, North Bay and Sudbury, will be put in operation for freight and local traffic and probably for traffic of all kinds, says Sir Donald Mann, vice-president of the C.N.R. With the completion of this line from Ottawa to Port Arthur, the Canadian Northern will have a through line in operation from Quebec to British Columbia.

**02/06/1914 Rideau Record Beachburg**

Brush Fires

Much damage has been done lately by bush fires along the C. N. R. near Pembroke. About eighteen miles from that town the engineers have had some trying experiences. Their camps have been completely destroyed, trestles along the railway line badly damaged, and it was with the greatest difficulty that they themselves escaped. The fire traveled to within five or six miles of Pembroke and in different sections the residents have been fighting continuously to save their buildings. Many miles of territory have been burned black and many thousands of dollars worth of timber have been destroyed. The fire is now under control.

**Friday 17/07/1914 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Rideau Junction**

Mr. J.H. Seguin, a contractor on the C.N.R. telephoned to the Journal this morning saying that he had ordered Mr. D.A. Martin, the Bank Street employment agent, to secure ten men for him, and that Mr. Martin had been unable to get the men notwithstanding the large number of unemployed men reported to be in Ottawa.

"One reason we could not secure men to work for Mr. Seguin, is that the men will not work for \$1.50 per day, which is what he offered to pay, as it would cost them a lot of money to live at Rideau Junction, where Mr. Seguin wanted the men to load cars," said Mr. Martin, "and another reason for the refusal of the men to go to Rideau Junction is that they are liable to miss an opportunity of obtaining an entire winter's work in the lumber woods, if they agreed to take the job with Mr. Seguin, which might not last more than a week."

Mr. Martin said that there is no boarding house at Rideau Junction and that the men would be expected to live in a tent and bring their own provisions from Ottawa. He said that Mr. Seguin had taken ten men up with him to this job a while ago, and when they realized the conditions under which they were supposed to work five of them quit the job at once.

**Saturday 18/07/1914 Ottawa Journal Beachburg March water**

Petty jealousies and trivial personal animosities were the outstanding features of the hearing before the Board of Railway Commissioners yesterday of the application of the Canadian Northern Ontario Railway to change the location of the station at March from mileage 22 from Ottawa to mileage 22.6 from Ottawa. While Mr. E. W. Oliver, of Toronto, watched the case on behalf of the railway company, its interests in the change of location were not voted at all. The whole proceedings, which took the whole morning, took the form of a battle of words between the residents of Armitage and the residents of Dunrobin, both in the township of March, as to the most suitable place to have the station.

The present station is situated at Armitage, about one half a mile from Lake Constant. Close by is flowing well and a creek from the lake. It is the contention of the railway company this water is too hard for boiling in their locomotives. The proposed new site for the station is in the village of Dunrobin, one half mile from the shores of Casey Lake, the water of which is claimed to be more suitable for the company's uses. The water facilities here are cited to be far more adequate than at the present location.

These facts, however, were more or less lost sight of by the thirty or more witnesses who testified on their respective sides as to the best location for the station. The Armitage body of residents told the commission that the station would serve its purpose and the surrounding country of it were left where it is. The Dunrobin witnesses claimed that no better location could be had than to have the station removed to that village. The whole trend of the morning's business was a to and fro argument by the two opposing bodies. The case is still proceeding. Mr. G. Kidd represents the March Council, Mr. Wentworth Green the residents of Armitage and Mr. Burgess for the residents of Dunrobin. (there is a garbled account in the previous day's issue)

**Thursday 23/07/1914 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

A building contractor was here a few days ago, looking over the site of the several stations that are proposed to be erected along the line of the Northern railway, in Bristol, Clarendon and Portage du Fort, with a view, no doubt, of tendering for the work.

**Thursday 18/08/1914 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Ottawa**

The new Ottawa-Toronto service of the Canadian Northern Railway opens today for the first time. For many months now negotiations have been in progress between the Central Station authorities and the Canadian Northern for running rights and terms of agreement affecting the station. All disagreements were cleared away Saturday and the contract was signed. Ottawa will now have an extra route to and from the Queen City.

The first train left the Ottawa Central station at 12.15 noon and the first through train from Toronto will arrive in Ottawa at 6.20 p.m. leaving the Toronto Union station at 9.20 a.m. The 12.15 train from Ottawa arrives at Toronto at 9.15 p.m.

The new line is unique in many ways; from Ottawa to Smiths Falls is almost as direct as the crow flies, a few thousand feet being the only variance. The line travels direct through the Rideau Lakes district and opens up such important lake front cities as Belleville, Trenton, Picton, Brighton, Colborne, Coburg and Port Hope. Café parlour cars will operate on the Toronto trains serving meals a la carte.

The local train into Ottawa in the morning from the Rideau Lakes will also operate into the Central Station, arriving here at 8.50 a.m. and the local for Rideau Lakes points leaves from the Central Station at 5.15 p.m. On Saturday the service will be the same as on other week days, it being considered that the 12.15 train will serve those who can leave after a half day and a 5.15 Saturday train is expected to be convenient for those who come into the city for the day.

It has not yet been decided to operate the Hawkesbury and Joliette trains in and out of the Central Station and pending other changes these trains will leave from the Hurdman Road Station as at present.

More - connections with B. & W., K. & P., B of Q., details of timetable

**Tuesday 18/08/1914 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Ottawa**

Montreal. Mr. D.B. Hanna, vice-president of the Canadian Northern Railway was in the city yesterday afternoon and signed an agreement with the Grand Trunk by which the Canadian Northern secures the right to use the Grand Trunk tracks into Ottawa with the use of the Central Station as its terminus there. This now gives the Canadian Northern a central station for their trains from Toronto and western points, instead of using their outlying station at Hurdman's Road. Orders were issued that all trains starting from Toronto last night should arrive at Ottawa this morning at the Central Station, and that all local trains should use the same terminus. The new arrangement will not affect the service from Montreal until after the new cut off is completed which will give the Canadian Northern direct service between Montreal and Ottawa.

As matters now stand, the Canadian Northern line will join the Grand Trunk at the Rideau bridge and the C.N.R. trains will use the Grand Trunk tracks into the Central Station. Eventually this will mean that the Central Station will become a really Union Station for Ottawa being used by the G.T.R., G.T.P., C.P.R., C.N.R., and N.Y. and Ottawa lines.

Notices to this effect were sent out by the Canadian Northern yesterday and it is regarded as a happy circumstance that the opening of the new arrangement will synchronize with the opening of parliament for the coming war session.

**Friday 11/09/1914 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

The C.N.R. line between North Bay and Pembroke was completed last week. Thirty-five miles have yet to be laid between the county town and Rideau Junction. It is expected that the line will be open for traffic this fall; it being understood that the Government desires to have the road completed as rapidly as possible, that if necessary troops from the west may be transported over it, says the Observer.

**Thursday 08/10/1914 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The C.N.R. bridge over the Ottawa river above Portage du Fort having been completed, tracklaying is now proceeding with fair progress on this side of the river, and on Sunday the rails were within a short distance of the crossing near Starks Corners. In a short time it is expected that Bristol Corners will get a view of the iron horse.

**Friday 23/10/1914 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

Pembroke Observer 15th.

Quietly and without heralding his coming, Sir William Mackenzie - he of C.N.R. fame - slipped into Pembroke on Monday night in his private car Atikoken and spent the night in (illegible) leaving on Tuesday morning for Ottawa, his train attached to the G.T.R. morning local. With him was the C.N.R. superintendent, as well as Mr. Angus Sinclair, contractor for the Capreol - Pembroke division, Mr. A. Conninger, Mr. Sinclair's superintendent and others.

It was the first train over the Capreol - Pembroke division and many townspeople were surprised when they found that work on the line was so far advanced as to permit a train to pass over it. We understand that Sir William was quite pleased with the progress made on this part of the line and that the company is determined to rush the work to completion as speedily as possible.

Sir. William and his party made good time over the new line leaving Capreol about 8 a.m., they reached here about 6.30 p.m., the total distance being about 240 miles, while for about forty miles west of Pembroke no ballasting has yet been done and that part of the journey was very rough.

Messrs. Munro, Moffatt & Fortin have a large gang of men at work closing the gap in the grading east of Pembroke and this will be finished within a month.

The bridge over the Muskrat and the trestle leading thereto are also well under way, and when this is completed the laying of the few miles remaining to be done can be proceeded with. This will leave only the ballasting to do to finish the line between Ottawa and Capreol, so that trains will be running early next summer.

The work of ballasting from Pembroke west is now being proceeded with and if the line is needed this winter for military purposes it will be available.

In a few months Pembroke will be a stopping place on another great transcontinental railway line.



**Thursday 12/11/1914 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The rails on the C.N.R. line are now well advanced through Bristol township, and in a short time connection will be made with the Ontario shore at the Chats Falls.

**Friday 20/11/1914 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg**

The Shawville Equity says that the rails on the C.N.R. are now well advanced through Bristol township, and in a short time connection will be made with the Ontario shore at the Chats Falls.

**Thursday 26/11/1914 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Operations were suspended last week on the line of the Canadian Northern railway, along the front of the county, and about 150 navvies were discharged. The rails are now laid from Pembroke to the Chats rapids, where bridge construction is not yet completed.

**Friday 23/04/1915 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Pembroke**

The building of the C.N.R. bridge across the Muskrat at Pembroke has been completed and the steel laid so that the entire line is now linked up between North Bay and Ottawa and only the ballasting remains to get the road in readiness for operation. The Observer says that nearly all of the ballasting has been done between Pembroke and North Bay and the "lift" gang will put on the finishing touches this spring. Work on the completion of the line is now starting in earnest and there seems no doubt that a regular passenger service between North Bay and Ottawa will be established this summer. Trains are passing up and down from Pembroke west now.

**Friday 16/07/1915 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Westmeath water**

Beachburg notes. As one drives up the Pembroke road one's eyes are gladdened by the sight of the new C.N.R. station which is being built about seven miles above Beachburg, on the farm of Mr. Sam Drew, and which we believe is to be known as Westmeath station. The large water tank here is almost completed, and we have been informed, though not officially, that a large gang of carpenters and builders were to be put to work this week on our station. -- We will be delighted to welcome our fair visitors this year via C.N.R. Beachburg station.

**Thursday 26/08/1915 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

Most of the stations along the line of the C.N. Railway between Pembroke and Ottawa, are well advanced towards completion.

**Thursday 16/09/1915 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

It is expected that through traffic will commence on the Canadian Northern Railway next month. It is announced that the main line is now completed.

**Thursday 21/10/1915 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

The first "official" train of the Canadian Northern Railway - Canada's third transcontinental steel highway - passed over that portion of the line which passes through Pontiac about three o'clock on Wednesday morning last. It was a special train, containing officials of the Company, Members of Parliament, pressmen, and other prominent citizens, and was designed to mark the completion of a great project, which must eventually figure largely in the future commercial progress and development of the country. It has not yet been announced when regular service is to be inaugurated in the new line but it goes without saying the people living along the front of the county will hail the time with pleasure and satisfaction.

**Friday 16/12/1915 Renfrew Mercury Beachburg Foresters Falls**

Long piece - still waiting for trains to start running.

**Thursday 19/02/1916 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg**

"Poincaire" is the name of the C.N.R. station down at Clarendon Front, and some people are kicking and wanting to know why it has been so named. Well, we can't furnish the information, and can only remark that it might have been called after a person of much less importance. Poincaire, as the president of the French nation is figuring pretty largely in the limelight just now,

**Thursday 15/06/1916 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Norway Bay**

The first C.N.R. summer special brought a goodly number of people to Norway Bay on Saturday.

**Friday 18/01/1918 Arnprior Watchman Beachburg Woodlawn**

An agent and operator are now in charge of the new Canadian Northern railway station at Woodlawn which makes it more convenient for residents of that district.

**Saturday 28/06/1924 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Norway Bay**

CNR had a huge picnic for its Ottawa area employees at Norway Bay. First train was to leave Ottawa at 0800 with 14 cars handling 1200 people; then at 1230, there would be another train of 15 cars for 1700 people.

**01/08/1924 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Pembroke**

A note that the CNR's battery-operator passenger car running to Pembroke from Ottawa would now leave Ottawa at 740am instead of 710am, meaning only a 30 minute turnaround at Pembroke before returning to Ottawa .

**Wednesday 27/10/1926 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Alice**

Passengers on the No. 1 C.N.R. train were slightly shocked when three of the coaches were derailed near Alice, Ont., at an early hour this morning. No one was injured and the delay to the passengers lasted only ten minutes, those on the derailed cars being transferred to other coaches. The three cars were rerailed several hours later.

No. 1 leaves Ottawa for the west at 1.35 in the morning. It left as usual today and had reached Alice, 96 miles west of the city, when the accident happened. No cause for the derailment was given.

**Friday 29/10/1926 Ottawa Journal Beachburg**

Queen Marie of Rumania celebrated her 51st birthday today on her special train bound from Ottawa to Winnipeg. More. From Winnipeg she went into the USA.

**Friday 25/11/1927 Chronicle Telegraph, Queb Beachburg Kathmore**

Pembroke Ont. Nov.25; Three men were injured, one critically in a head-on collision between a government forestry railway car and a section men's motor railway car on the Canadian National Railway near Kathmore, 30 miles west of here yesterday. A special train was dispatched from here and brought the injured men back to hospital. The injured are H. Jenks, Pembroke, forestry car mechanic in critical condition; George Calder, Kathmore, section man, seriously hurt; Norman Bennet, Kathmore section hand, injured about the head.

Big Strides in Power Project at Chats Falls.

Today all is changed. It's now "a quaint little tentish town." and the vast transformation in so short a time by the contractors, Messrs. Morrow & Beatty, Limited, is evidence of what experience, organization and modern equipment can accomplish. Four hundred men are now at work; a right-of-way has been cut through the woods to the main line of the C.N.R. on the Ontario side and today steel is laid as far as the Quebec boundary; huge cranes upoad the great pieces of British Columbia fir and cedar; carloads of supplies for the work; the cookeries and the sleeping quarters were hauled in; tons of rock have been blasted and removed for the right-of-way, then came the grading gang and immediately following them were the men of steel. Everything suggests highly efficient organization. The crib work of the railway is to be utilized in part as the coffer dam and that structure has already been constructed for a length of several hundreds of yards, extending almost to Mohr's island which is the center of the river and will ultimately be the center of the work. With the completion of the coffer dam, construction of the permanent concrete dam nearly three miles in length, and the power house, will be commenced. Even for an organization as large as Messrs. Morrow and Beatty. It is not anticipated that their work can be completed much sooner than three years

property damage is not anticipated except on the right-of-way of the C.N.R. line on the Ontario side; whether the railway will be reconstructed to curve away from the lake or a retaining wall built for a considerable distance has not yet been decided; in any case the difficulty occasioned by higher water levels will not be insurmountable and the line of railway appears to be the only place where damage could be attributed to these higher levels.

The abutments for two bridges on the island are ready for the steel, one with a length of eighty feet and the other one hundred feet, and when these superstructures are completed the last of the railway tracks will be laid and the contractors will operate their own rolling stock; from that time the work will proceed even more rapidly than has been the case up to the present.

http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=baguAAAIBAJ&sjid=kNoFAAAAIBAJ&pg=6874,12425741&dq=railway+railroad+rtrain&hl=en

Saturday 28/02/1931 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Beachburg

Flames Sweep Structure. Special to The Journal PEMBROKE. Ont.

The CNR station at Beachburg was destroyed tonight by fire which broke out about 10:15 pm from a cause ??? unknown. The station agent, Mr. Boyce, and his family, who resided in the upstairs portion of the building, were all absent from home at the time and very little of their household effects were saved, but Mr Boyce, who arrived on the scene after the alarm was given, saved the station books and records. The building was a frame structure and most of the contents are a total loss. The village is without fire protection and though the citizens made every effort possible they were unable to stop the progress of the flame which ??? are believed to ??? in the waiting room.

Saturday 27/04/1935 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Beachburg

If we are to celebrate Beachburg's centenary with all the éclat and unction the fine old pioneer settlement deserves, we simply must have a new railway station at that spot in the sun.

Dr. Cotnam represents Beachburg and all the rest of North Renfrew in the House of Commons and he didn't equivocate at all when he told Parliament a few days ago that a railway coach by any other name is still just a railway coach and not by any stretch of the imagination can you make a railway depot out of it. Yet that's the kind of thing Beachburg has had to look at ever since the railway station there was destroyed by fire in 1931.

what a monstrosity 't would be to find the proud name "Beachburg" tacked on to the side of an old drab and obsolete train coach in a county that gave to Canada the present minister of railways.

Friday 21/06/1937 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg

New warning signs at the Canadian National Railway bridge over the Prescott highway about six miles from Ottawa have been erected by the Department of Highways of Ontario. The highway curves sharply under the bridge and is a blind turn. Suitable black and white checkerboard signs, with red reflectors have been placed at both ends of the curve. The word "subway" is painted on the signs.

Thursday 06/01/1938 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg

Mr. Ryan, his father, is employed as a trainman at Capreol in Northern Ontario. News reached him Tuesday that his son was very low. The only train to Ottawa was a freight train so he came on that and arrived at the hospital a few hours before his son passed away.

Saturday 12/03/1938 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Kinburn

Thomas F. Olmsted, 438 Parkdale avenue, brakeman on the C.N.R. suffered painful injuries yesterday morning at Kinburn when he was accidentally knocked from a train en route to Pembroke. Details of the accident were not available, but it is understood that in some way Mr. Olmsted was knocked from the rear carriage by a small truck at the station. Dr. W. R. Dowd of Kinburn was called and ordered his removal to hospital. Later, Mr. Olmsted was able to return to his house.

Thursday 19/07/1938 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Pembroke

James Sullivan, aged 51, C.N.R. trainman, of 589 1/2 Bank street, died at Pembroke General Hospital last night as a result of injuries he suffered when he slipped beneath the wheels of a moving freight train at Pembroke on July 7.

It was found necessary to amputate the left limb which was badly crushed. A few months ago Mr. Sullivan was crushed between two cars, and had only returned to work a short time before the fatal accident occurred.

Tuesday 26/09/1939 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Ottawa, Bells Corners

The funeral of Lucien Rochon, 29-year-old son of Alfred Rochon and the late Mrs. Rochon, who was accidentally killed on Monday when a gasoline speeder on which he was riding was struck by a C.N.R. freight train just west of Bell's Corners, will be held on Wednesday morning at 7.35 from the home of his sister - -

Thursday 15/10/1942 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Bank Street

At 9 o'clock last night, two C.N.R. freight trains had a spectacular head-on collision just west of the steel trestle over the Metcalfe Road at Billings Bridge. One of the trains was transporting some forty horses for the army. At the point of impact, the two cars carrying the horses took a tumbling dive down the 85-foot embankment. Six crew members on the train were injured.

Paul Boisvenue, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alphonse Boisvenue, was returning home along the muddy dark road at the foot of the embankment, had to run to get out of the way of horses and big pieces of lumber that were falling around him. "I told my mother what had happened and she, together with her guests, Mrs. L. Lavigne, Mrs. H. Taillon, Miss. Eva Brule and neighbours Mr. Alexis Brule and Mr. and Mrs. Edouard Brule were the first to arrive at the scene of the accident". Misters Alexis Brule and Paul Boisvenue played a heroic part in helping to free what horses were left alive in the overturned cars. A total of twenty horses were either killed outright or had to be destroyed after the crash.

**Thursday 03/11/1949 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

Worker Killed When Train Strikes Truck on C.N.R. Main Line

When a logging truck was struck by a C.N.R. train near Brawney Wednesday afternoon, John Meilleur, 23, one of the occupants of the truck and two others were injured.

The injured men, Fernand Cormier and Roche Meilleur, brother of the dead man, were brought to the General Hospital here. Meilleur received treatment for head injuries and was released Friday night (?), while Cormier, whose injuries are more serious, is still a patient.

The accident occurred at what is known as the Hydro spur, where the transmission line from Rapides des Joachims crossed the C.N.R. main line, and the mixed train struck the rear end of the truck, spinning it around and overturning it in a ditch. The three occupants were thrown out and John Meilleur was struck by the engine. His body was badly mangled and his death was almost instantaneous.

The train, in charge of Conductor A.J. Cameron and Engineer Albert Bate of Ottawa, was proceeding slowly as it approached the siding.

The body of the victim and the two injured were placed on the train and brought to Pembroke.

More --

**Wednesday 29/12/1953 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Pembroke**

CN No. 1 catches fire at Pembroke.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=5jwvAAAIBAJ&sjid=Md4FAAAAIBAJ&pg=3002,5974929&dq=railway+railroad+train+cnr+cpr+bride&hl=en>

**Friday 09/07/1954 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Bells Corners**

Driver hurt as train hits truck

Gerald Cummings, 27, of Stittsville, Ont., suffered serious multiple fractures Thursday afternoon when his three-ton dump truck was struck by a CNR train at Bells Corners.

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Police reported that the young man was travelling east on the Base Line Road when the back end of his truck was struck by a train at an intersection.

The impact drove the truck into the ditch where it came to rest on its left side, a complete wreck.

The engine, No. 3200, was pulling empty passenger coaches at the time of the accident.

The crossing is marked with a white cross sign

James Murdock of 73 Delaware Avenue was the engineer and Samuel G. Anderson of 38 Merritt Avenue was the conductor.

Constable Ken Latham of the Ottawa detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police investigated.

Close to 100 in miraculous escape as train hits truck.

Ten cars spill off the track at 55 mph clip.

The CNR's eastbound Continental today knifed into a braking tractor-trailer at a level crossing on the city's outskirts, derailling a two-unit diesel and ten cars.

About 75 passengers and about 15 crew members aboard were violently shaken up. Damage was estimated at \$1,000,000.

The smash left a 300-yard tangle of wreckage and scattered cars at a crossing just north of Bells Corners.

Further Reports, Pictures C Page 7.

It was incredible that there was no loss of life or serious injury. .

Both the train and the tractor-trailer - the latter was northbound on Highway No. 15 - were heading towards Ottawa at the time of the 6.05 a.m. crash.

The train - the CNR's Continental due to arrive at Union Station at 6.35 a.m. - was travelling at about 55 miles per hour, the conductor, Daniel J. Pickett, of Capreol, Ont., told The Citizen.

Evert Bergsma, of St. Anne's, Ont., 33-year-old driver of the heavy vehicle owned by Zavitz Bros. Ltd., of Wainfleet, Ont., escaped unscathed from the accident which drew thousands to the scene.

15,000 tins of baby food.

Included among the 75 passengers who were abruptly jolted out of their sleep were more than a score of wives and children who were proceeding to Halifax enroute to join their husbands and fathers serving with NATO forces in Europe. They were due to leave Halifax on the liner Scythia on Saturday.

Spread along the railway roadbed for more than 100 yards on either side of the crossing were the contents of more than 500 unit cases of canned baby food, valued at about \$4,000. The 15-ton cargo of the tractor-trailer comprised 15,000 tins of the baby food.

The crash came after the tractor-trailer came to a stop on the tracks in spite of the efforts of the driver to bring it to a halt in time. The driver blamed the vehicle's brakes for the truck's position on the tracks.

Still shaking an hour after his harrowing experience, Mr. Bergsma recounted for the Citizen what he could recall of the moments leading up to the crash.

"I was moving along at a normal rate of speed, when I suddenly noticed the train looming up to my left. My first thought was to put on my brakes. By that time the train was practically upon me.

"But my brakes refused to work."

The driver's miraculous escape from death resulted from the fact that the train struck the vehicle near the point where the tractor section connects with the heavy trailer.

The smash literally cut the tractor, housing the driver, away from the trailer and left it practically undamaged. The cab and its occupant landed upright on the highway just to the north of the tracks. The major portion of the tractor was located about 100 feet east of the highway on the Bells Corners side of the crossing. The other part was found on the opposite side of the crossing.

Only three minor injuries.

Injuries - all minor in nature - were sustained by only three of those on the train.

The engineer, Dean C. Burrill, of 1054 Apolydor Avenue, Ottawa, received small cuts to the face and hands but was able to go home after the mishap.

J. F. MacLean, the baggageman, whose home is in Capreol, Ont., received a bruised arm, and William Evans, 37, a seaman enroute from Vancouver to Hali-I fax, suffered a wrist injury.

The only one to be treated in hospital was Evans who was released from the Civic Hospital as soon as he was attended to. CNR officials estimated that the arduous job of clearing the line would be completed by 6 p.m. and service would then be resumed over that section.

Meanwhile, the CNR's Super-Continental, due to arrive in Ottawa at 2.50 p.m., was rerouted at North Bay to run over the CPR line to the Capital. All CNR locals are temporarily running over the CNR's Renfrew Valley section from Barry's Bay. The crash occurred on a level crossing located on a straight, dry stretch of road about 500 yards north of the Bells Corners intersection. There was a regular "railway crossing" sign at the crossing but no wig-wag.

The scene in the vicinity of the crossing was one of wreckage and confusion born out of fantastic circumstances.

All of the cars and the two diesel engines were derailed.

Just three of the cars three sleepers and the dinette remained upright adjacent to the torn up section of track. The day coach was in a near-upright position but came to rest about 15 feet from the track.

The train left Capreol at 10.45 p.m. where it picked up passengers transferred to it from a train travelling east from Western Canada.

The transfer of passengers from the twisted cars to Colonial Coach buses for transport to Union station was completed before 8 o'clock.

There was little panic by those concerned. Mrs. H. A. Smith, whose address was given as Ottawa, and her sister, Mrs. P. J. Slaght, of Cobalt, Ont, was concerned about the body of their mother which was in a casket in the baggage car. The casket was later removed for transfer to Montreal. Other members of the crew, in addition to the conductor, Dean Burrill, of 1054 Apolydor Avenue, Ottawa, engineman; George Burns, of 571 Somerset Street, fireman; Allan Irwin of Capreol, trainman; and J. F. Mac-Lean, of Capreol, baggage man.

OPP Sgt. Edwin Richardson and Constables Ray Miller and Bill McGinnis, all of the Ottawa detachment, were at the scene shortly after the crash.

CNR Engineer Dean C. Surrill is resting at his Apolydor avenue home today after a train-truck wreck beyond his understanding.

He said a tractor-trailer passed a stopped car at the Bell's Corners level crossing this morning to straddle the tracks when the East bound Continental was signalling its approach.

"I could hardly believe my eyes", the engineer told The Journal. "We didn't have a chance.

"I saw a car attached to a small trailer stopped at the crossing. The transport pulled around the car and into the level crossing. It was astounding."

Mr. Burrill advised Provincial Police of the situation as he saw it and disclaimed all responsibility for the derailment.

"I slammed on the brakes but we travelled for several hundred yards", he said. The 43-year-old engineer has been an employe of the CNR for 15 years and an engineer for eight years. Some witnesses said they I overheard the truck driver say his brakes failed and he was forced to swing around the car in a bid to clear the tracks.

Asked about it some hours later, his reply was a noncommittal "Could be!"

He said, he had been instructed by his superiors and insurance officials to say nothing of the crash.

George Burns, the fireman, said he did not realize anything was going to happen until a split second before the crash occurred.

Swerved to avoid car at crossing.

Several lives possibly were saved at Bells Corners yesterday morning when transport truck driver Evert Bergsma, 33, of Wellandport, Ont., realizing his brakes were useless, swerved past a stopped passenger car rather than push it into the path of the CNR's crack Continental passenger train.

As a result of this quick-trigger thinking, the Ottawa-bound train crashed into the end of the 15-ton transport Bergsma was driving. Ten coaches were derailed but, miraculously, no one was killed. Three persons suffered minor injuries.

Statement

The driver's explanation for the crash, was revealed today by John Grace, legal counsel for Zaviti Brothers of Wainfleet, Ont, owners of the tractor trailer which was on lease to Secord Transport of Fonthill.

Bergsma's statement maintained that the truck brakes failed as he was slowing down behind the passenger car, which had stopped at the crossing for the diesel-powered train which was approaching the Ottawa suburbs at 55 miles an hour.

To avoid pushing the car into the path of the locomotive, Bergsma made a quick decision to pull out and attempt to get across the crossing before the train arrived. He stated that he knew his brakes were useless and this was his only alternative. The train was travelling at 55 mph.

This sequence of events was substantiated by train engineer Dean C, Burrill, 43, of Ottawa who said that the tractor-trailer entered the level crossing after swinging out to pass an automobile stopped for the train,

"We didn't have a chance," he said. "The truck went around the stopped car. I slammed on the locomotive brakes but we travelled for several hundred yards before the train stopped."

There was such an impact that parts of the steel siding of the truck trailer were welded to the front of the diesel cab.

Bergsma told his legal counsel that he believed there were several persons in the car which he swerved around.

Regular traffic over the damaged line was resumed at four o'clock this morning, 22 hours after the crash.

A CNR emergency crew worked continuously throughout yesterday and last night to clear the right-of-way of the 10 damaged coaches and replace 100 yards of rail and roadbed torn up in the crash. Auxiliary trains, complete with huge grappling hooks, were brought in from Capreol and Montreal,

Six coaches and the two damaged diesel units still are along the trackside but will be removed later today. All units will be "shopped" in Ottawa or Montreal for complete inspection and repair, where needed. All coaches and both diesel units will be salvagable.

Normal vehicular traffic was resumed on Highway 15 at 2.30 this morning after the last of the toppled coaches was lifted out of the way.

While the Ottawa-North Bay mainline was being put back into service all CNR trains were rerouted over the CPR mainline as far as Pembroke, then back onto the CNR line into North Bay.

The first train to resume regular service this morning was the east-bound Continental, the sister train to the one involved in yesterday morning's crash.

Ontario Provincial Police officers are back at the scene today completing their investigation, but a report will not be submitted for Crown Attorney consideration until the probe is completed.

20/05/1959 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Dunrobin

Derailement at Dunrobin. - 32 cars leave line. (with picture)

CNR work crews, laboring since 10 a.m. yesterday to clear the wreckage of this spectacular pile-up near Dunrobin, Ont. - about 20 miles west of Ottawa, expect to have the mangled 1,800 feet of track replaced and debris cleaned by late this afternoon. Nobody was injured in the derailement but damage will run to many thousands of dollars, CNR officials say. The 68-car freight running east from Capreol, Ont., to Ottawa on the CNR main line, appeared to break in half atop a slight embankment and 32 broken cars spewed grain, bags of flour, lumber and pulp wood over the countryside. Until order is restored, the four regular passenger and four freight trains using the line daily will be re-routed on to CPR tracks.

20/05/1959 Ottawa Journal Beachburg Dunrobin

In the Journal, there was a picture, and the short story below the clipping "CNR work crews, laboring since 10 a.m. yesterday, to clear the wreckage of this spectacular pile-up near Dunrobin Ont. - about 20 miles west of Ottawa - expect to have the mangled 1,800 feet of track replaced and debris cleaned up by late this afternoon. Nobody was injured in the derailement but damage will run to many thousands of dollars, CNR officials say. The 68-car freight running east from Capreol Ont. to Ottawa on the CNR main line appeared to break in half atop a slight embankment and 32 broken cars spewed grain, bags of flour, lumber and pulp wood over the countryside. Until order is restored, the 4 regular passenger and 4 freight trains using the line daily will be re-routed on to CPR tracks.

Wednesday 20/05/1959 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Dunrobin

30 loaded cars of a 68-car CNR freight train were derailed this morning near Dunrobin, about 20 miles west of Ottawa on the main line of the railway.

No one was injured in the derailement which occurred at about 10 o'clock as the freight headed towards Ottawa between Dunrobin and Malwood (near the Constance Bay Road crossing).

Railway officials arranged to have traffic re-routed over CPR trackage until the line has been cleared, and the reason for the derailement found. The freight was made up of 50 loaded cars and 18 empties.

Monday 17/10/1960 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Malwood

CNR Freight Partly Derailed.

Eleven cars of a 75-car eastbound freight train from Western Canada were derailed near Malwood, Ont., about 23 miles west of Ottawa on Friday. There were no injuries.

The CNR reported that the locomotive and the first 26 cars and the rest of the cars remained on the tracks. The 11 cars which left the track were near the middle of the train.

Details of the derailement are still under investigation by CNR officials and no estimate of damage is possible at this time.

Crews were sent from Ottawa as soon as news of the accident reached here. The task of clearing the track was expected to be complete late this morning.

Crew members of the train included two Ottawa men, Charles Wannamaker, the conductor and N.L. Beauchamp, the engineer.

Friday 13/01/1961 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg

The old days have returned to Alta Vista where a railway flagman - complete with hand sign, lantern and a shack - has been set up at Smyth Road and Norwood.

05/07/1962 The Equity, Shawville Beachburg Portage du Fort

Train fire.

Last night, as the Trans Continental (sic) CNR passenger train rolled into Portage du Fort (Quebec) station, a sectionman noticed an extreme amount of smoke surrounding the diesel. After it stopped and discharged Mr. Godon Gibbins, a passenger, it started on west.

Just then the flames began to shoot from the auxilliary engine, and the sectionman flagged the engineer, who until then had not been aware of the problem. They immediately unhooked the passenger cars and pushed the auxilliary unit onto a siding. Portage volunteer firemen continued to fight the blaze, which was now burning fiercely. The main engine then picked up the passenger cars and proceeded west.

One wonders what the results would have been if the fire had not been noticed until the train had left the station, carrying 1400 gal. of fuel and headed for the bridge to Ontario.

(Shawville Equity, July 8, 1987.)

**Wednesday 09/12/1964 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Norway Bay**

Two trainmen shaken up as freight jumps track.

Norway Bay. Two Canadian National Railways trainmen were slightly injured at 7 p.m. yesterday when a 59-car freight train left the tracks just east of here. No cause has yet been determined for the derailment of the last seven cars of the train. There was heavy damage to the cars and hundreds of feet of track were ripped up.

Brakeman Melville Swinwood, 45, of 86 Rosebella St. Ottawa, spent the night in Pontiac Memorial Hospital at Shawville. He was released today after treatment of bruises and a minor head injury.

Conductor shaken up.

Also shaken up in the accident was train conductor Patrick O'Toole of 239 Fourth Ave. Mr. O'Toole was not admitted to hospital.

A CNR spokesman said the train was bound to Ottawa from Winnipeg on the CNR's main line from Montreal to Western Canada.

CNR trains were forced to detour on the Canadian Pacific Railway track late Tuesday and early Wednesday.

**Tuesday 06/04/1965 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

NCC item held up by city council

The national Capital Commission is still in trouble with the city over the Beachburg subdivision railway line.

The city wants the controversial rail line relocated. The NCC says the work would be too expensive.

On Feb. 15, council asked the NCC exactly what the cost would be. The city has not yet received any positive answer.

So, Monday night, council passed a motion that no money be paid for the relocation of Alta Vista Drive, in connection with the proposed federal postal terminal, until the NCC, or someone, comes through with the beachburg relocation figures.

"Perhaps this will bring matters to a head," said Ald. Don Kay, who has been one of the leaders in the battle to have the line's route changed.

**Wednesday 13/10/1965 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Bells Corners**

Aerial photo.

Highway Kink Going

The troublesome kink in Highway 15 at Bells Corners will be gone and the tunnel under the railway tracks will be replaced by a wide high underpass in this project. The wide curving roadbed along the left of the tracks will carry re-routed rail traffic during construction on the underpass. The temporary road-rail crossing will be guarded by wig-wag signals.

**Friday 15/10/1965 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Beachburg line. Steamed-up owners renew battle.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=d6lyAAAAIABAJ&sjid=1uwFAAAAIBAJ&pg=5656,1073968&dq=railway+railroad+train+cpr+bride+to-train+will-train&hl=en>

**Wednesday 27/10/1965 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Four parties open talks on rail line.

Mayor Reid and officials of CNR, CPR and National Capital Commission were meeting this afternoon to discuss the proposed relocation of the embattled Beachburg subdivision.

The meeting results from a recent city council refusal to accept a government-railway opinion that the relocation of the troublesome rail line would be too expensive. Council insisted the government and both railways give a detailed estimate of the cost of the proposed relocation.

Residents of Alta Vista object to the noisy, unsightly CNR line. They claim expensive residential area has been built on the understanding that NCC planning called for the line to go elsewhere.

Although the Beachburg line is CNR property, both railways will be partners in the Ottawa terminal railway company which will operate the new union station and plan rail routes leaving the station in all directions.

**Friday 17/02/1967 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Oil tanker blazes in railway crash.

One man was injured in a flaming crash between an oil tanker and a train on Woodroffe Avenue at 10.09 a.m. today.

The man, Ken Bigalow, 28, of 2172 Regency Terrace was the driver of a double-tanker oil truck which apparently stopped on the railway tracks south of City View.

He is in Civic Hospital in fair condition.

The train hit the truck in the middle of the first tanker section, and the tanker burst into flames as it was dragged down the track.

Flames covered the train engine and burned the front out of a wooden car immediately behind.

The smashed cab of the truck rolled into the ditch on the north side of the track and the flaming tank flew into the south ditch.

Ken Trudeau, a plumber with Smith and Brown Ltd., who arrived on the scene moments after the collision said the driver in the crushed cab was unconscious. However he came to in about five minutes and was able to help rescuers get him out.

Firemen were called to put out the burning tanker.

Ivan Lawrence, head end trainman on the CNR freight bound for Barrys Bay said the train crew had only a few seconds when they saw the truck coming onto the track.

"We ducked, and there were flames all around us," he said.

Traffic was held up for about an hour and a half by the accident.

A new engine had to be brought to remove the train which was taken back to Walkley Yards.

**Friday 06/12/1968 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Half a million subsidy for rail bridge.

Over highway 7 and 15 just north of Bells Corners.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=a8cyAAAAIABAJ&sjid=gOwFAAAAIBAJ&pg=935,1522664&dq=railway+railroad+train+cpr+bride+to-train+will-train&hl=en>

**Wednesday 30/12/1970 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Dunrobin**

Ten cars flip rails - only 13 injured. With picture.

Only two persons were detained in hospital following the derailment of the crack Canadian National Super Continental train, 20 miles west of Ottawa late yesterday afternoon.

Ten cars --- one flipped over on its side about a mile from the village of Dunrobin. The engine and another car stayed on the tracks.

More than 500 yards of track was ripped apart or thrown out of alignment

CNR police are investigating the accident. Its cause is undetermined but it is known that it started with the back wheels of the locomotive.

A CNR spokesman said today he doubted the rails were responsible for the pileup. They were laid less than three years ago - a short time in the life of railway track.

It is expected to re-open the line to traffic travelling at reduced speeds by late Thursday night.

CP Rail tracks will be used until the cleanup is completed.

The CNK spokesman said estimates of damage have not yet been made, but added it would have been kept to a minimum because of deep snow which cushioned the impacts. Each passenger car is valued at \$250,000.

Thirteen persons received treatment for minor cuts and bruises at two Ottawa hospitals. Gordon Hamilton, 60, of Montreal, and Evelyn McPhail, 54, of Melville, Neb., were admitted to Civic Hospital. Mr. Hamilton suffered a wrenched back while Miss McPhail, who suffered a bump to her head, was held for observation. The train was carrying 160 passengers.

House shook

Mrs. Frances Kavanagh, who lives a quarter-mile east of the straight stretch of road where the accident, occurred, was preparing supper at the time of the derailment at 5.30 p.m.

Mrs. Kavanagh said she did not realize the train was off the rails until her son told her.

A passenger staggered into the house about 6 p.m., she said, having walked across the field. Later, two youths on a snowmobile brought train conductor Paul Machy over so he could telephone Ottawa for assistance.

Other snowmobilers brought injured people over to ambulances waiting by the house. Some of the injured were carried across by stretcher in the subzero weather.

A special three-car relief train arrived about 8.30 and returned to Ottawa with the weary, anxious passengers shortly after 11 p.m.

Conductor Machy said no one panicked in the confusion. Passengers were moved into an observation car and a parlor car to wait for rescuers.

At Ottawa Station, the passengers, many of whom had had nothing to eat since noon, were fed and bundled on special trains to continue their east-bound journey. (See also page 37)

**Wednesday 30/12/1970 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Dunrobin**

Supper time saves train's passengers (with photo)

Supper time saved countless people from serious injury when the CNR's Super Continental jumped the tracks near Dunrobin Tuesday.

The only sleeping car No. 20 to flip over on its side in the derailment contained only two persons. The rest had gone to the diner at the first call.

"I was standing with my hand on the door," said Francis Lemieux, 68, of Longlac, Ont., one of the 160 passengers.

"One moment I was standing upright, the next my head was on the floor. I'm never going to forget that.

"First I wanted to smash a window because I was afraid of gas, but then I discovered I was standing on the window."

Mr. Lemieux tried to reach a woman, the only other occupant of the badly damaged car, who was crying with pain from a shoulder injury. "But there was luggage and shoes and stuff all over the place and I got tangled in the curtains."

All the lights were out in the car, he said, but finally he helped her by pushing her out by her legs.

Ray Story of Scarborough said his greatest fear was that his car would derail. "We could hear the rails splitting, and in our car the berths were coming down.

"Some people were injured in the washrooms or in between cars."

Everything flew

Glen Cheriton, travelling from Edmonton, said two tables broke loose in the dining car and cutlery and dishes flew off the tables.

Despite all the flying missiles, only one person, a steward, was hurt, while one of the waiters may have been scalded. Two students, Ellen Hagenan, 21, and her brother Rob, 22, of Seattle, Wash., were on their way to Montreal to visit their parents.

Rob said the track was straight at the accident site and the train appeared to be moving at 35 miles an hour.

"It felt like it was braking badly. The shocks increased and then everything was thrown around in the dining car.

"It was quite exciting. I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

But for one passenger, who declined to identify himself, it was just another annoyance in a trip running behind schedule.

"There was a lot of shaking; we heard a lot of rumbling and then we waited for three hours to get out."

A relief train had brought the passengers to Ottawa from the accident site.

**Saturday 30/12/1970 Beachburg Dunrobin**

CNR SUPER CONTINENTAL DERAILED with picture

Eight cars of the 12-car Super Continental left the tracks near Dunrobin. Ont., 20 miles northwest of Ottawa, slightly injuring 15 persons. The passenger train, travelling east on the Vancouver-Montreal run derailed about 500 yards from the nearest road. Snowmobiles were used to carry the injured to ambulances after the early evening wreck. The eight cars which left the tracks came to rest in deep snow, about 20 feet from the rails. At the current Canadian Transport Commissions safety hearings, Chairman D. H. Jones criticized the CNR for the handling of safety procedures following the derailment.

**Wednesday 13/06/1973 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Norway Bay**

Car train crash at Norway bay kills three children.

[http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=cb0yAAAIBAJ&sjid=\\_ewFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4241,5019605&dq=train+railway+railroad+cnr+cpr+bride+trained+train-to+trainer&hl=en](http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=cb0yAAAIBAJ&sjid=_ewFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4241,5019605&dq=train+railway+railroad+cnr+cpr+bride+trained+train-to+trainer&hl=en)

**05/10/1984 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Bells Corners**

Tender Call. CN Rail has called for tenders for the construction of an embankment to replace the bridge over the former CP mainline at Bells Corners (Mile 12.44 of CN's Beachburg Subdivision), Work consists of supplying, placing and compacting approximately 20,000 cubic meters of fill material. Tender close was October 16.

**15/08/1989 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

VIA AND TRANSPORT 2000 DERIDE PLAN TO ABANDON LINE:

A total of \$68 million has been approved to construct a 1.6-kilometre section of Ottawa's bus transitway between Riverside Hospital and Billings Bridge. Of that amount, some \$20 million will be required to relocate a portion of CN's Beachburg Subdivision, which hosts 10 VIA trains a day (four Toronto trains and the 'Canadian' each way).

The Citizens for Ottawa Planning, a group of Alta Vista residents, has advocated that the costs can be trimmed by \$18 million if the line were abandoned and the trains routed through Walkley Yard and through the east-end industrial area to enter Ottawa Station from the east end, thus rendering Ottawa Station stub-ended. A VIA Rail spokesman said the group's proposal would undermine VIA's schedules. "Our right-of-way now provides the best possible route between Ottawa and Toronto, and it's the best possible option for any future Ottawa-Toronto service."

A Transport 2000 spokesman indicated that if the plan was ever seriously considered, it would end up costing taxpayers a lot more than \$18 million.

COMMUTER RAIL PROPOSAL Tabled for Ottawa: Canadian National has suggested that it could establish a commuter rail service linking the west end of Ottawa with the downtown core. The plan proposes a rush-hour service along the Smiths Falls and Beachburg Subdivisions which would take riders to Ottawa Station where they could then transfer directly to the municipal transit service. Local politicians have a mixed reaction to the proposal, citing worries that it would siphon traffic off the already struggling bus service and that the line is poorly situated in terms of getting passengers to their places of work in a timely fashion. Previously CP Rail System proposed an inter-provincial commuter rail operation for the Ottawa/Hull region. The idea was opposed by Quebec politicians. (Branchline)

TRAINS TO VACATE ALGONQUIN PARK: New labour pacts will allow CN to start re-routing transcontinental freight trains (mainly intermodal trains) out of the Ottawa Valley as early as the third week of November. These freights will now travel between Montreal and the west via Toronto. About 69 jobs will be cut. CN is closing the Ottawa Valley route because it needs to cut excess rail capacity in Eastern Canada. After the re-routings, about 200 kilometres of track between Pembroke and Nipissing (near North Bay), may be abandoned because no traffic originates or terminates on the line. The track runs through the northern half of Algonquin Provincial Park. Existing weekday local service between Ottawa and Pembroke be maintained. (Branchline)

End of the Line

Recluse dies in remote shack he called home

Adam Pitz, a craggy-faced recluse who stubbornly resisted every modern convention, be it plumbing, electricity or refrigeration, finally submitted to an ancient one Tuesday when a funeral was held for him in Deep River.

Pitz was found Saturday in the sagging shack he called home on the shores of Cedar

Lake in the northern Algonquin Park outpost of Brent. He was 82.

Pitz was born in Roumania, lived in the tiny seasonal community, an outfitter's launch point and former railway junction, for about 65 years. All winter, he was the only resident which led to him being dubbed "the mayor of Brent."

A Citizen reporter and photographer visited Pitz, a life-long bachelor, in the spring of 1994 and were stunned to discover the squalor of his home and the odd circumstances of his life.

The interior of the house was blackened by fire and grime and had several of its windows boarded up. There was a strong scent of oil in the air and his clothes and hands were badly soiled by an oily substance. He had no running water or telephone and, in his later years, his hearing was failing.

The toothless, quiet man saw nothing special about his life and had difficulty understanding why a newspaper would want to write about him.

His disconnection from the outside world led to some fascinating adaptations. Though a pauper in appearance, Pitz, upon being admitted to hospital for treatment of a leg injury, was found to carry a large wad of cash in his pocket. A local man also reported seeing Pitz make trips to a stash of money in an outdoor woodpile. Strangely, he was afraid of lightning, which led to the illogical boarding of the windows.

Pitz said his father arrived in Brent in the early 1930s with the railway. At the time, Brent was a busy train junction and also had a bustling sawmill.

His father is said to have died in Brent in 1967, found frozen to death.

When asked what would happen if he were to have a heart attack in the winter; with help at least 40 kilometres away, Pitz replied: "If I have a heart attack, I'll just be dead. That's all."

Nephew Fred Pitz said Tuesday his uncle, whom he had not seen for about 20 years, died of unspecified natural causes and was discovered by an employee of the neighbouring outfitter's store.

"He just loved that part of the country," said Pitz, a Nepean resident.

"He tried living in Toronto a couple of times, but hated the hum-drum of the city."

He said his uncle occupied himself by feeding his cats and birds, listening to the radio and stockpiling preserves he made himself.

Fred said Adam indeed had kept money stashed at home but, some time ago, relatives managed to convince him to put it in the bank.

Adam's brother died about four years ago. He is survived by two nephews and two nieces.

Pitz said his uncle was to be cremated after Tuesday's service. The ashes are likely to be spread near his home in the provincial park.

How fitting.

After 65 years in Brent, the last 30 in solitude, perhaps he isn't leaving, after all.

Chunk falls from rail bridge, damages car.

Riverside Drive overpass checked two weeks ago by CN rail crew.

A Riverside Drive railway overpass — a piece of which shattered the windshield of an Ottawa motorist yesterday morning — was inspected two weeks ago, a Canadian National Railway official says.

Rush hour traffic near the train station ground to a halt when a chunk of concrete the size of a loaf of bread fell and damaged the Nissan Pathfinder of Glenn Brimacombe, chief executive officer of the Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations, who was stopped below the structure. He was not hurt. But while CN said it has been inspecting and maintaining the overpass for an undisclosed number of years, it would not confirm it owns the bridge. Yesterday morning, the company said the National Capital Commission owned the bridge, but by last night it had retracted that statement.

"We're reviewing the legal documents surrounding the ownership," said spokesman Mark Hallman.

Mr. Hallman said that the bridge underwent a visual inspection two weeks ago and it was deemed structurally sound for rail traffic.

Yesterday, another inspection also deemed it safe after the company chipped away pieces of loose concrete from the section that fell.

"We're continuing to assess the situation at the moment, but the bridge does not present a safety hazard," said Mr. Hallman, who added that the overpass is used solely by VIA passenger trains and not by trains carrying freight.

Police closed parts of Riverside Drive, near Tremblay Road, for more than five hours following the incident that occurred just before 9 a.m. Shortly thereafter, officials with VIA said they inspected the tracks

and did not believe it would affect their service. By 2:45 p.m., all lanes of Riverside Drive were reopened.

The NCC owned the bridge in 1966, the same year Ottawa's train station was moved from downtown to the lot off Tremblay Road.

"Our records show that the land in this area was conveyed to the (former regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton) in 1972, subject to an easement in perpetuity in favour of the railway," said Lucie Caron, a spokeswoman with the NCC.

Ms. Caron said CN is responsible for the tracks and installations on the land, such as the overpass.

In Ontario, bridges and over-

passes must be inspected at least once every two years, according to the 1990 Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act.

In Ottawa, for example, more than 700 city-owned bridges undergo visual inspections and/or structural condition surveys by the Department of Public Works.

In October, just days after a Montreal-area overpass collapsed killing five people, the department at Ottawa City Hall reported to council that it was "confident that our structural assets are being maintained to adequate levels."



OVER \$1.5 MILLION TO OTTAWA CENTRAL: The Governments of Canada and Quebec will invest over \$1.5 million of a \$2.4-million project that will help the Ottawa Central Railway upgrade to North American standards. Under the restoration program, the Government of Canada will invest \$948,000, the Government of Quebec over \$632,000, and the Ottawa Central Railway (owned by the Quebec Railway Corporation) more than \$789,000 over a period of five years to upgrade the carrying capacity of 36 kilometres of the railway's tracks in Quebec. (Branchline)

**Wednesday 04/06/2008 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Rural mayors go it alone to plan commuter rail line

A recommendation made last June by Mayor Larry O'Brien's task force on transportation continues to gather steam even though council has shifted its focus from regional transit to transit within the city.

The task force's final report recommended region-wide rail service, mostly on existing tracks, that would include service to the city's surrounding regions, covering more distance with each of three separate service expansions in 2010, 2017 and 2037.

On June 13, Mr. O'Brien is to meet with regional mayors for a followup to last year's transportation summit. Yesterday, the mayor's office would not disclose what the city hopes to achieve at that meeting.

At last year's meeting, regional mayors were taken with the idea of extended rail service, said Arnprior Mayor Terry Gibeau.

"It seemed to make a hell of a lot of sense. Everybody signed on and away we went."

Now that the City of Ottawa has shifted its focus, Mr. Gibeau and mayors from eight other municipalities in Ontario and Quebec are in the preliminary stages of planning a commuter rail line on their own.

"It's a bunch of people who happen to be small-town politicians saying, 'Maybe we can do something from this end'," Mr. Gibeau said.

He and a group that includes Mayor Scott Wilson of Bristol, Que., aim to determine whether running commuter trains along the Ottawa Central Railway's line from Pembroke to Ottawa, criss-crossing the Ottawa River, is a viable option.

"It's a loser's argument to say we should discourage people from coming into the city," said Mr. Gibeau, "because they're going to keep coming. They're going to keep driving cars and they're going to keep polluting."

A trial run of the train tentatively scheduled for September will run from Portage du Fort, Que., to Ottawa, near the Walk-ley rail yard, said Mr. Wilson.

"It's going to be nothing extravagant. We're not going to have bleachers or raised platforms or anything like that set up."

The trial run is intended to expose the riders to the route and the duration of the trip.

"There's a whole lot of homework to be done yet," said Mr. Gibeau, including determining whether the region has the ridership to support a commuter rail line.

Although the group is working independently of the city to examine commuting options,

the western mayors have approached West Carleton-March Councillor Eli El-Chantry, whose ward the existing line crosses, about joining them for future discussions.

"Any effort from our neighbouring municipalities to reduce cars on our roads is a good sign," Mr. El-Chantry said. "Having said that, it's always the devil in the details. Who's going to pay for what?"

To the city's southwest, a rail line runs through Smiths Falls, then on to Brockville. It has been identified as a possible solution for moving commuters, said Smiths Falls Mayor Dennis Staples.

"We have a number of citizens in my area who commute into Ottawa on a daily basis, clogging up roads," he said. "We're looking at ways that we can work with the city to come up with a better approach to getting people in and out of Ottawa for work."

Mr. Staples said he and other regional mayors expect to find out more about the city's transit plans at the June 13 meeting.

**Tuesday 10/06/2008 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Municipal leaders to chime in on regional rail system plans

Municipal leaders from around Eastern Ontario are scheduled to gather at Ottawa City Hall on Friday to pursue plans for a regional rail system, Mayor Larry O'Brien announced yesterday morning.

The morning session is a followup to last year's summit, at which mayors and reeves began discussing a proposal from Mr. O'Brien's task force on transportation: to run trains from as far away as Arnprior, Smiths Falls and Alexandria into downtown Ottawa to

ease the pressure commuters put on highways 416 and 417. The panel, led by former federal transportation minister David Collenette, suggested relying heavily on existing rail lines, and potentially even serving communities in the Outaouais.

Ottawa City Council has spent the past several months examining plans for an urban mass-transit system within the city, but other Eastern Ontario towns were so taken with the idea that several have been pursuing

elements of the plan independently. - As the Citizen reported last week, mayors of communities in the Ottawa Valley are planning a test-run of a train along the Ottawa Central Railway line, which extends to Pembroke.;

Mr. O'Brien has argued that solving! the city's internal transportation is- • sues is just part of the solution for Ottawa, since so many commuters from outside the municipal boundary add to congestion in the city.

Federal Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon is to take part in the summit, as will Ontario Municipal Affairs Minister Jim Watson and National Capital Commission chief executive officer Marie Lemay.

**Wednesday 23/07/2008 CBC News Beachburg**

A passenger train running along the Ottawa River between Pembroke and Ottawa would breathe new life into the region, an economic development group says.

The group, in Quebec's Pontiac region, wants the train to travel on existing track west of the national capital, passing through Renfrew, Ont., crossing into Quebec, and dipping through Portage-du-Fort and Shawville before crossing back into Ontario at Fitzroy Harbour, toward Kanata and Ottawa.

The group's chair, Heather Alberti-Dickson, said Wednesday that such a train would "just change the face of Pontiac," a region that once relied on forestry, but has been struggling economically since the downturn in the industry.

Alberti-Dickson said she has discussed the idea with most of the communities along the A passenger train running along the Ottawa River between Pembroke and Ottawa would breathe new life into the region, an economic development group says.

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Alberti-Dickson said she has discussed the idea with most of the communities along the route, which are all trying to attract homeowners, tourists and businesses to the region.

"They're just so on board with this idea, because they can all see how it's going to benefit their communities," she said.

The Ottawa Central Railway owns the track, which is used daily to haul freight.

James Allen, the railway's general manager, said he supports the new plan and doesn't think it would be difficult to make room for a passenger train.

"Where these projects become difficult is where you have to lay down track. But where we are now the infrastructure is in place, so it's just a matter of using it."

The next step, Allen and Alberti-Dickson said, is to put together a business plan that includes information about the estimated cost of the service and the demand for it.

Once that is in place, the communities hope to approach the provincial and federal governments for money to support the project.

**Friday 22/08/2008 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Commuter rail trial run set for Oct. 5

The commuter rail line discussed by mayors of communities in eastern Ontario and West Quebec has set a date for its trial run.

On Oct. 5, the mayors of Bristol, Que., Arnprior and Renfrew will join other area politicians and Ottawa Central Railway staff on a test run of the train from the Walkley railyard to Pembroke along existing OCR tracks. The run is intended to expose riders to the route and duration of the trip.

The idea of a regional rail line for commuters was first raised last June by Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien's task force on transportation. Since then, the regional mayors have been looking into the viability of a commuter rail line on their own.

**Wednesday 10/09/2008 Ottawa Sun Beachburg**

Pembroke kicks in cash for commuter train

City to pay share of trial run for Valley-to-Ottawa route

PEMBROKE - The City of Pembroke is willing to pay up to \$1,500 to take part in the trial run of a commuter train between the Upper Ottawa Valley and Ottawa.

The Oct. 5 trial, will see a group of community leaders from Renfrew and Pontiac Counties take a train ride between Ottawa and Beachburg and back, to test the viability of a regular commuter route.

The \$10,000 cost of the trip is being split between the Pontiac and Renfrew County, which will each kick in \$5,000. Each county in turn will be asking participating municipalities to help out. "There is no budget for this," Pembroke Deputy Mayor Les Scott said. "Our cost could be anywhere from \$700 to \$800 all the way up to \$1,200, depending on who else joins in."

Although the trial run does not run as far as Pembroke, Scott said this is only designed to see how practical the idea of a regular commuter run would be. If successful, the route could be expanded to include Pembroke -- which would also open up the Petawawa region.

"This will indicate if it is worth doing at all, and if it will provide good service to the people of this area," he said.

Coun. Cheryl Lowe said a train route would be beneficial, as it is no longer convenient to get to Ottawa by bus.

"A lot of seniors are unable to drive to Ottawa," she said, so this is a worthwhile idea to investigate.

A regional commuter train was first proposed by Ottawa mayor Larry O'Brien, and since then has grabbed the imaginations of councils and economic development groups on both the Ontario and Quebec sides of the Ottawa River.

The Pontiac Community Futures Development Corporation based out of Shawville is a strong backer of regional rail.

The group has been behind a proposal to have the commuter train weave between the provinces to cover sections of both the Pontiac and Renfrew County.

In Renfrew County, Whitewater Region has been strongly supportive of the concept, with councillors seeing great opportunity and potential benefits for the municipality. Joining in to explore the idea is Renfrew, Arnprior, Pembroke and communities within the Pontiac including Bristol.

The train leaves Ottawa at 10 a. m. Oct. 5, heads to Beachburg and returns to Ottawa by 4 p. m.

**Monday 06/10/2008 The DailyObserver.ca Beachburg**

TRIAL RUN FOR COMMUTER TRAIN: After a trial run called Rail Day, municipal leaders from Renfrew and Pontiac Counties issued a joint communique declaring they support in principle the development of a commuter rail service for the region. Riding a passenger train from Ottawa to Beachburg, area politicians got their first glance at what such a service would look like. The trial run was arranged in co-operation with Ottawa Central Railway to show federal, provincial and municipal leaders the route and the benefits a commuter rail service would offer. Renfrew County Warden Janice Visneskie said that years ago it was economical to ride the train from Ottawa to the rural communities, and perhaps it is viable now. "With today's soaring transportation costs and the desire for residents to live a more environmentally-sensitive lifestyle, it is timely to investigate the feasibility of a commuter rail service between Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley," said Warden Visneskie. First proposed by Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien, the initiative has grabbed the imaginations of councils and economic development groups on both sides of the Ottawa River. "The development of a transportation program linking our communities is important to our collective economic growth and development and complements the need for improved highway infrastructure," said Whitewater Region Deputy Mayor Lowe. He explained that by using the existing Ottawa Central Railway corridor, it is not unrealistic to expect a transportation service could be established without undue hardship to link valley communities with urban employment hubs. While the declaration launches the project in the direction of devising a plan, it also urges the federal and provincial governments to assist in obtaining regulatory approvals and assistance in accessing any funding that might be available for such a concept. The next step will be to conduct marketing and feasibility studies to determine ridership and other factors. A task force has also been formed which, at this point, includes representation of Whitewater Region, the Town of Renfrew and the Town of Arnprior. Although there was no discussion of funding, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MP Cheryl Gallant acknowledged the commuter train is a vision that can be made a reality. She noted its potential to attract tourist dollars to the region. MPP John Yakabuski said rail companies may have been too hasty in ripping up the tracks. He added a commuter train presents several opportunities that all levels of government should explore. Assessing the value of such a service, Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno said there are many details that will have to be hammered out. He said the rail beds would have to be upgraded and the train would have to run at a much faster speed to accommodate work schedules. While he sees great potential in the project, Mayor Jacyno warned that expansion of Highway 17 to four lanes must still be a priority. "The two of them in unison could work together". (TheDailyObserver.ca, Oct. 6)

**Monday 03/11/2008 Ottawa Business Journal Beachburg**

CN buys Ottawa rail line

The Ottawa Central Railway is among four properties that Montreal-based railway giant CN is buying from the Quebec Railway Corp. (QRC) for \$49.8 million. CN said today it has acquired three principal railway subsidiaries of the QRC, along with a rail-freight ferry operation, giving CN back the 540 track miles of rail line it formerly owned in eastern Ontario, eastern Quebec and northern New Brunswick, as well as a ferry service on the St. Lawrence River in eastern Quebec.

CN had sold the rail lines to QRC in the late 1990s and has held a minority equity interest in the ferry operation since its startup in 1975, the company said. The OCR runs between Coteau, Que., where it interchanges with CN, and Pembroke Ont., as well as serving Hawkesbury. Between Coteau and Ottawa, the OCR operates over VIA Rail trackage.

The other properties CN is buying are the Chemin de fer de la Matapedia et du Golfe, which has 221 miles of track from Quebec to New Brunswick, the 196-mile-long New Brunswick East Coast Railway, and the Compagnie de gestion de Matane Inc., which provides shuttle boat-rail freight service on the St.

Lawrence River between Matane and Baie-Comeau, Que.

CN said it will be investing in the properties over the next three years to upgrade their rail lines and replace their existing locomotive fleet with "more modern motive power."

**Tuesday 04/11/2008 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

CN Rail reacquires lines, Quebec ferry

TORONTO - Canadian National Railway Co. said yesterday it had reacquired three former subsidiaries and a rail-freight ferry operation from close partner Quebec Railway Corp. for \$49.8 million.

CN agreed to purchase the CFMG line, a primary artery for Quebec shippers of aluminum, paper and forestry products, as well as the New Brunswick East Coast Railway and Ottawa Central lines.

The railway also acquired QRC's Compagnie de gestion de Matane Inc. rail-ferry services that runs along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River.

"QRC has done a great job with these rail properties, and we believe we can improve on that in (the) future," said Hunter Harrison, CN's chief executive, in a statement.

Mr. Harrison added that the company has a three-year investment strategy for the assets to upgrade each line and replace the locomotive fleets.

The three lines rejoin CN after the railway sold them to QRC in the late 1990s. None of the 214 jobs across the four assets are to be cut, CN said.

"Post-transaction, it will be 'business as usual' under CN ownership, with no immediate changes in freight, VIA Rail passenger rail service or employment levels," the company said.

CN has weathered economic headwinds well through the last quarter, through increased operating efficiencies, according to analysts. The company reported a 14-per-cent rise in profit in the third quarter on Oct. 23, beating expectations.

**20/02/2009 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

**AREA RAIL SERVICE STILL POSSIBLE:** The latest revision to CN's three-year rail network plan has placed the rail line (Beachburg Subdivision) that would be used for a proposed interprovincial commuter rail service in the Ottawa Valley on the list of lines to be discontinued. While this might seem like a big problem, the members of the committee looking to establish the commuter service said hope is certainly not lost. In fact, committee member Izett McBride, chairman of the growth and development committee for Whitewater region, said in some respects, the threat of the line being discontinued could speed things up. The idea of the commuter service is being headed by SADC Pontiac Community Futures in Quebec and has gained favour with Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation as well as local politicians. McBride described the current situation as a bit of a "cat and mouse game" but for the moment, the committee looking at establishing the service is continuing to move the project forward. It will worry about the fate of the rail line if and when it needs to. It is McBride's understanding that the line is slated to be abandoned in about 18 months. John Brayley, manager of network strategies for CN, said the company is required to put its intention to discontinue the line on its public plan before it can move on to the next step in abandoning the line. The intention to discontinue the line remains on the public plan for 12 months before CN is entitled to begin the process to actually abandon it. During this time, there would be an opportunity for another company, organization or railway to purchase the line. McBride believes the fate of the rail line has three possible outcomes. First, there is the possibility that the line will once again get busy and CN will change its mind. Second, another group, municipality, or railway could offer to purchase the line. The third outcome would see nothing change and CN decide to abandon the line and put it up for sale.

Those pursuing the idea of commuter rail down the valley to Ottawa are currently preparing a survey to see if residents of eastern Ontario and western Quebec are interested in the service and if numbers are sufficient to support it. Brittany Morin, economic development officer for SADC Pontiac Community Futures Development Corporation, said the survey is nearly finished and should be released to the public in about a week. Morin added that she hopes to have the results by early spring. (Branchline).

**Thursday 05/03/2009 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Ottawa Valley communities to study viability of commuter rail line

The idea of a regional rail line from Ottawa to communities in the Ottawa Valley and Pontiac is moving ahead to a study phase. The Community Futures Development Corporations of Renfrew and Pontiac counties have partnered to explore the viability of a rural commuter rail line and are conducting a public survey to gauge community interest. The survey is available online at [www.rccfdc.org](http://www.rccfdc.org) and [www.commercepontiac.ca](http://www.commercepontiac.ca). Results will be made public in April. Last fall, the commuter rail line had a trial run as the mayors of Bristol, Que., Armprior and Renfrew joined other area politicians and Ottawa Central Railway staff on a test run of the train from the Walkley railyard in Ottawa to Pembroke along existing OCR tracks. The idea of a regional rail line for commuters was first raised in June 2007 by Mayor Larry O'Brien's task force on transportation. Since then, the regional mayors have been looking into the viability of a commuter rail line on their own.

**Saturday 23/05/2009 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg Ottawa**

Via Rail apologizes for impending racket near Billings Bridge, Mooney's Bay

Via Rail is planning eleven nights of noisy work on its tracks in the southern part of downtown Ottawa, and warns that people living near by could be disturbed by it for up to three nights each.

The work is to upgrade about 10 kilometres of track, Via said in a news release. "In order not to interfere with daytime passenger train movements, the work must be performed overnight between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.," the rail company said.

The plan is for the workers to move along the track as the improvements are completed, so the machinery and crews should only be audible in any given location for about three nights, the company says.

For more information, nearby residents can call 1-888-VIA-RAIL.

Ottawa Valley towns banding together to keep trains on track

PEMBROKE —Municipal councils and interested people on both sides of the Ottawa River agree they don't want the railway tracks running through the Ottawa Valley scrapped.

Representatives of both Renfrew County and MRC Pontiac councils, the City of Pembroke, along with staff, VIPs, economic development people and other interested parties gathered Tuesday morning to meet with members of the joint rail transport committee, which has been working to get a commuter train in the region.

While acknowledging there remains a lot of work and millions of dollars in investment to make it happen, the committee's top priority now is to convince the Canadian National Railway not to tear up the 130-km stretch of track linking the region to Ottawa.

This section, known as the Beachburg subdivision, has been placed on the list of lines the railway wants to abandon.

Louise Donaldson, executive director of SADC Pontiac Community Futures, who, with its counterpart the Community Futures Development Corporation of Renfrew County, are spearheading the effort, said the news CN was looking to abandon the line within six months caught the group off guard, forcing it to scramble in order to head off the attempt.

In order to do that, she said, the committee needed to show interest it wants to purchase the rails and to get that kind of clout, has applied to Industry Canada to form the Transport Pontiac-Renfrew corporation.

"It is the threat to economic development for our regions and the commuter train which is the prime motivation for this meeting," Ms. Donaldson said, stressing it is important to preserve the tracks and not just for the potential future of a commuter train.

"It is very difficult if not impossible to sell an area to industry without rail," she said.

Ted Barron, the chairman of Renfrew County's Community Futures and the head of the rail committee, said no one wants the line to become abandoned, as once it is gone, it will never come back.

"It took a hundred years to get the rails laid down and I hope we don't lose them now," he said. "That's our life and breath."

The joint rail committee pushed ahead with this because of the tight 90-day time-line to respond to the abandonment announcement. It was hoping for both county councils to officially endorse the efforts to enter talks with CN by passing a resolution before the end of Tuesday's information meeting.

However, neither county was comfortable with this, feeling they needed to bring the matter before their full councils for endorsement.

MRC Pontiac Warden Mike McCrank said he knows this is an urgent matter, but said they need to take this back to their respective councils before they approve it.

"Here, we're a group of concerned citizens" attending an information session, he said, with no authority to make such a decision.

Warden McCrank said MRC Pontiac council is meeting Thursday to discuss other matters, so he can present this motion then.

Admaston/Bromley Township Mayor Raye-Anne Briscoe said there is no way she can support this before bringing it before Renfrew County council, agreeing with deputy clerk Jim Kutschke they didn't have the mandate to do so.

"We only have three out of 17 county council representatives here now," she said. Mayor Briscoe said she is concerned if the majority of council decides to reject this endorsement, the county would be forced to withdraw, perhaps damaging the effort beyond repair.

"I don't want to bring grief to the project," she said. "I'm just asking for the time to do this right."

The next scheduled meeting for county council is the end of August, before which the matter has to go through the development and property committee.

Warden McCrank said he feels that isn't a problem, as he expects MRC Pontiac to back the resolution this week. Renfrew County can join in later.

The idea of a commuter rail service has been gaining steam since last fall following a successful pilot run between Beachburg and Ottawa on Oct. 5, 2008, which led to local municipal leaders on both sides of the Ottawa River signing a joint statement with Ottawa city council.

This began the planning process for the project, as well as urging the federal and provincial governments to help by smoothing out regulatory approvals and seeking funding which might be available.

An online survey was also launched to gauge interest in a regular commuter service.

Harry Gow, the founder of Transport 2000 in Canada and a technical advisor for the project, told those gathered at Tuesday's meeting the interest is definitely there. Out of an estimated 6,000 who commute regularly to Ottawa, more than 600 took the time to answer the survey, with the majority of them in favour of a regular train service.

He said if done in conjunction with a nightly freight service, this can be made viable, with ticket prices kept to levels comparable to a regular bus route, with single one-way tickets ranging from \$10 to \$15 depending on where the rider boards the train.

To get it going won't be cheap. Based on the initial pilot project study, it is estimated start up costs will be \$6.8 million in the first year, including operational expenses and upgrading infrastructure and the rail stations. In the second year the cost could be \$3.3 million and in the third year \$3.5 million to finish things up.

James Allen, president and CEO of JDA Consulting, who is another member of the rail development team, said this investment is considerable, but one has to remember the assets themselves will last 20 to 40 years.

If sufficient freight customers can be secured, these revenues will be of help in keeping the rail service running, he said, and securing government funding will also help make this a reality.

The exact cost it will take to do and what will be required from both counties hasn't been determined.

Mr. Gow said the next step once the body of the new nonprofit corporation is sorted out is to develop a business plan, looking into everything from auditing the tracks, switches, signals and crossings, figuring out how viable it is and marketing the system to determining the best way to attract tourists into riding the train. All of this will have to be co-ordinated to link up to create a train system serving both Eastern Ontario and West Quebec.

"Lots of work has to be done," he said. "There is a place for regional carriers," but they will have to work hard to get and keep the business.

Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MP Cheryl Gallant, invited to attend the meeting, said she feels this is a historic day, when the councils of both Renfrew and the Pontiac sat together to work things out for the betterment of both.

MP Gallant said the Pontiac's federal government representative MP Lawrence Cannon is also a strong supporter of this rail project and together she is sure they can lobby hard on its behalf.

The new Transport Pontiac-Renfrew was to have contacted CN Tuesday afternoon.

23/10/2009 Pembroke Observer Beachburg

Corporation formed to help preserve rail tracks (e)

In an effort to keep the dream of an Ottawa Valley commuter rail line alive, the committee looking into the project has formed a corporation. This according to Whitewater councillor Izett McBride, who delivered an update on the initiative to council during its most recent meeting. The name of the not-for-profit corporation is Transport Pontiac-Renfrew. It was formed in July in an effort to keep CN from ripping up the tracks that run from Ottawa, through the Pontiac and Renfrew counties to Pembroke. McBride said Transport Pontiac-Renfrew is governed by a board of 12 members including two business representatives, two railway freight client representatives, one from Ontario and one from Quebec, members representing Renfrew County and Pontiac community futures, the Renfrew County warden, the warden of the Pontiac, Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno and three charter members. CN has listed the 130 km of track known as the Beachburg Subdivision among those lines it wants to abandon. Those seeking to get a local train service going are moving quickly to head that effort off. The work to bring a local commuter/freight train to the valley has been spearheaded by SADC Pontiac Community Futures and its counterpart, the Community Futures Development Corporation of Renfrew County. The two groups are using government funding to pay for the costs of studying the feasibility of this idea. Time is running out, as CN could begin lifting the tracks next spring. McBride said freight users of the rails have become involved as they are worried about losing this crucial link. Some of these freight users include a pellet plant at Bristol, ATC Panels in Pembroke and a pulp mill that is up for sale in Quebec. That mill could lose significant value if it lost its rail link, according to McBride. He said the cost to purchase the rail line is estimated at about \$6 million.

A proposed community rail service between Ottawa Valley/the Pontiac and the City of Ottawa/Gatineau is a project on the right track, according to Arnprior's mayor. "Rail is an idea whose time has come again," Terry Gibeau told the EMC, as he explained how the Community Futures Development Corporation of Renfrew and Pontiac Counties have partnered to promote the rail service. Partial funding through the Eastern Ontario Development Program has allowed the partnership to have a feasibility study to be commissioned with RailFuture Group. As well, a survey to assess needs and support for a commuter rail system was done on-line and Gibeau noted the results are favorable. "People are saying it has to be convenient and it has to be cost effective," he said. While Gibeau has been involved in talks about using the former CN line for community service for some time, the Town of Arnprior's involvement was solidified back in Dec. 2008 when the town passed a resolution supporting "the continued efforts of the Renfrew County Community Futures and the SADC Pontiac Community Futures to develop and evaluate the potential of a pilot commuter train project." And during the Aug. 26 Renfrew County council meeting, councillors passed a resolution supporting the efforts of what is known as the Pontiac-Renfrew Transport Group to establish a railway line that would service both Renfrew and Pontiac counties. The resolution, which also called for the county to lobby the federal and provincial government for funding, was passed following a presentation by Bahadir Eke of RailFuture Group and James Allen, the former railway administration who is now with JDA Consulting. Gibeau sits on the executive of Pontiac-Renfrew Transport Group and he noted the organization is in the process of getting incorporated. Gibeau said although in the planning stages, talks have centered on running freight on the line at night, using it morning and evening for commuters to and from Ottawa and for tourism at other times. While the survey results are in, the transport group still has a lot of work ahead of it. Gibeau said there must be some investigation into what the freight service would be like and "figure out what the tourism component might be." He also noted if CN abandons the line, which it most likely will, the group would like to get it for net salvage value. That value still needs to be established, the mayor noted.

**Friday 18/12/2009 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

The federal government is funding a feasibility study that could ultimately lead to a commuter train service running from the Pontiac and Renfrew to Ottawa. Lawrence Cannon, the MP for the Pontiac and the federal Foreign Affairs minister, said the federal portion of the \$272,000 study will be \$136,000. The rest of the amount will be covered by Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, a non-profit community organization. The study will determine if there is a business case for such a rail project.

**19/12/2009 CBC News Beachburg**

OTTAWA VALLEY COMMUTER TRAIN ON TRACK; A commuter train linking Renfrew County, the Pontiac region of west Ouebec and the city of Ottawa took a step closer to becoming a reality. The federal government announced a \$136,000 grant for a feasibility study into improving the existing railway connection between Ottawa and Pembroke. Currently, one freight train a week travels along the CN-owned tracks west of the national capital. Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, the group that's pushing for the railway improvements, would like to see the number of freight trains on the Ottawa-Pembroke line tripled and a five-day-a-week commuter service introduced within two years. Harry Gow, head of Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, said the future of both the Renfrew County and Pontiac region's economies depends on improving the rail line. (CBC, Dec 19)

**Saturday 27/02/2010 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Notice of Discontinuance of Railway Line

In accordance with Section 143 (1) of the Canada Transportation Act notice is hereby given that Canadian National Railway Company (CN) intends to sell its ownership and operating interest in the railway line described below or to discontinue operating the railway line if it is not transferred.

Beachburg subdivision in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec from a point near nepean, Ontario (Mile 14.50) Beachburg Subdivision) to a point near Portage-du-Fort, Quebec (Mile 50.40 Beachburg Subdivision)

-and-  
From a point near Portage-du-Fort, Quebec (Mile 50.40 Beachburg Subdivision) to a point near Pembroke, Ontario (Mile 88.70 Beachburg Subdivision)  
More

If by May 17, 2010 no party has made its interest known, or if no agreement has been entered into within six (6) months following this date, the railway line will be offered to the federal and provincial governments, to the urban transit authority, and to the municipal or district governments through whose territory the railway line passes. Each will have thirty (30) days to accept the offer. if no agreement is entered into, operation on this railway line will cease.

**02/09/2010 EMC Arnprior Beachburg**

- Group negotiating to purchase CN Beachburg line (e)

Things are rolling along for an organization looking to purchase the CN Beachburg line, which runs the Ottawa Valley to the City of Ottawa. Transport Pontiac Renfrew, a community-based non-profit corporation with a board of directors from Pontiac and Renfrew counties as well as city representation, has been working for a couple of years now to take over the line. If the organization succeeds, the long-term plan is to not only operate it as a commuter line, but also use it for freight transportation and tourism. A business plan has been completed and the net salvage value for the line has been determined. Both were key requirements before consideration could be given to offer to purchase the line. "We, Transport Pontiac Renfrew, are deep in negotiations with CN to purchase the railway," Arnprior mayor Terry Gibeau told his council colleagues Aug. 23. "We are at the offer/counter offer stage." Gibeau is a charter member of the corporation and has been a big proponent of developing the line for various community and industrial uses. In a separate interview with the EMC, Gibeau said he could not divulge details of the financial negotiations, however, he did say the deal "is getting really close" to being completed. "CN is being cooperative and very positive. They don't want to see the rail line closed any more than we do," Gibeau explained. He said the Transport Pontiac Renfrew board has expanded its size and membership comes from the Ottawa Valley municipalities as well as Ottawa. Ward 5 West Carleton-March councillor Eli El-Chantiry sits on the board of directors with Gibeau. With the Quebec government in support of the rail initiative, Gibeau said he and El-Chantiry would work hard to ensure that same level of support exists in Ontario.

PEMBROKE - A major obstacle to preserving the CN line running between Pembroke and Ottawa via the Pontiac has been overcome, paving the way for freight and passenger traffic to resume starting next year.

On Tuesday, Transport Pontiac-Renfrew (TPR) announced it has signed an agreement-in-principle with Canadian National Railway for TPR to acquire the lines, known officially as the Beachburg Subdivision.

In a press release, Louise Donaldson, director of Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, said this is a significant development.

"This initial agreement is a big step in the acquisition process," she said. "Some specifics of the deal still need to be worked out, but the parties are eager to complete the transaction."

No one is more pleased by the announcement than Izett McBride, Whitewater Region's new deputy mayor. He was an original member of the group that wanted a commuter rail service established on the line.

"They still need to dot the Is and cross the Ts for this," he said. "I think it is terrific they were able to reach an agreement and keep it in public hands."

The fight to save the rail started back in 2008, when private and public groups on both sides of the Ottawa River began exploring the possibility of reintroducing passenger service. A special Sunday "commuter excursion" was held on Oct. 5, 2008, in which a group of mayors, officials, reeves, media and invited guests were taken on a short rail trip to prove the feasibility of the idea.

Days later, the Ottawa Central Railway and its parent Quebec Railway Corporation, which owned the Beachburg subdivision, were sold to CN and within months after that, the line was placed on CN's abandonment list.

Fearing the impact on local industry, the non-profit Transport Pontiac-Renfrew group was formed in an attempt to ensure rail service remains in the Upper Ottawa Valley and Western Quebec.

"Rail is key to revitalizing our communities," said Ms. Donaldson. "It'll serve as a major benefit when courting new industry, plus it will attract future rail-served clients which in turn will create jobs."

Once acquired, the TPR will begin freight operations along the line as soon as possible. If all goes as planned, this is expected to be rolling in the spring of 2011. Passenger/commuter service will be brought in later, with possible tourist excursions added to the mix.

"The freight is the more profitable side of this," McBride said, which will bring in the revenues needed to upgrade the lines so they can bring in a viable passenger service.

The upcoming reopening of Trebio's Smurfit-Stone pulp mill in Portage-du-Fort to manufacture energy wood pellets will be dependent on rail service, along with other industries within Renfrew County.

The tracks have been graded to 40 mph, which is usable for freight, but need to be upgraded to allow trains to run at 60 mph for passengers.

Mr. McBride said TPR expects the rail service to be self-financing, and except for items such as the construction of stations along the way, won't be looking for municipal funds to keep the rail line going.

"They know municipalities are not in the position" to be partners in this, he said.

**10/02/2011 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

Laurentian Valley, ON, council is expected to be among the first municipalities to support a non-profit group's attempt to acquire a portion of CN track.

Following a closed meeting between members of Laurentian Valley council, Transport Pontiac-Renfrew board member Terry Gibeau, former Ottawa Central Railway manager James Allen and Pontiac Community Futures economic development officer Brittany Morin recently, the Laurentian

Valley committee recommended the township support Transport Pontiac-Renfrew's move to take over the Beachburg Subdivision railway, which is seen as a vital link to economic growth and commercial viability of both Pontiac and Renfrew Counties. Laurentian Valley Mayor Jack Wilson explained that the decision to pass this resolution has a lot to do with the benefits of rail to industry, including Laurentian Valley's fibreboard plant ATC

Pembroke, which closed its doors in November 2008. Gibeau is happy Laurentian Valley is first off the mark and he hopes the others will follow suit. The TPR road show has already visited two municipalities in the Pontiac and they have indicated they will pass

a similar resolution this week to Laurentian Valley. Gibeau has visits planned to Whitewater Region, Pembroke, Ottawa and a number of Quebec municipalities along the river. The goal is to run a short line. Laurentian Valley council is expected to vote on the resolution at its Feb. 15 meeting. (Branchline)

**11/02/2011 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

The vision of commuter rail in Ontario's Ottawa Valley moved closer to being realized Wednesday night as Whitewater council agreed to a plan that will save the CN line. Whitewater Region joins Laurentian Valley, Litchfield and the City of Ottawa in endorsing a proposal by Transport Pontiac-Renfrew to accept ownership of the 70-mile Beachburg subdivision. In exchange for the donation of land and rail assets, CN is seeking a tax receipt from the eight municipalities through which the line runs. CN and the not-for-profit

organization have already signed an agreement in principle. Deputy Mayor Izett McBride, who has represented Whitewater at the organization since its inception three years ago, said they have taken a giant step closer with this vote. CN is required to transfer rail assets to an operating railway. The group has insurance and assures municipalities they will have no liability, responsibility or financial commitment in connection with the service. The concept is to start with freight and then move into commuter rail within three years. Mayor Jim Labow foresees rail possibly reviving two critical industries - fibreboard and pulp and paper.

**24/02/2011 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

CITY VOTES TO DONATE RAIL: The town of Pembroke, Ontario, has climbed on board with Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, after council voted unanimously to donate CN land and assets to the not-for-profit company. They join Laurentian Valley Township, Litchfield and

Whitewater Region, in which the municipalities agree to accept the rail lands and transfer them over to the TP-R, in exchange for a tax receipt to CN. In turn, there is no cost incurred by the communities, and they are freed from all liability to whatever happens on those railway lands. The two kilometre stretch of rail running through the city is the municipality's contribution to transfer ownership of the rails to the TP-R, which intends to run a freight service soon along the rails, with a passenger service to Ottawa to follow three years afterwards. (Pembroke Daily Observer' Feb. 24, Mar. 4 Branchline)

**04/03/2011 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

The town of Pembroke, ON, has climbed on board with Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, after council voted unanimously to donate CN land and assets to the not-for-profit company. They join Laurentian Valley Township and Whitewater Region, in which the municipalities agree to accept the rail lands and transfer them over to the TP-R, in exchange for a tax receipt to CN. In turn, there is no cost incurred by the communities, and they are freed from all liability to whatever happens on those railway lands. The two kilometres stretch of rail running through the city is the municipality's contribution to transfer ownership of the rails to the TP-R, which intends to run a freight service soon along the rails, with a passenger service to Ottawa to follow three years afterwards. Coun. Les Scott, who introduced the resolution authorizing the land transfer, said this is pending the blessing of the Canada Revenue Agency, but no one is expecting any problems from that end.

OTTAWA VALLEY - Transport Pontiac-Renfrew is one step closer to eventually creating a commuter rail link between Pembroke and the Ottawa VIA Rail station.

On Oct. 26, city council gave its consent for TPR to acquire and operate the 32 kilometres of the rail line known as the Beachburg Subdivision that lay within the city's boundaries. It runs through West Carleton and Kanata and ends in Nepean, but TPR would look at acquiring running rights to use other tracks to get people to the VIA station on Tremblay Road in the city's east end.

It was the final approval out of nine municipalities the group needed to move forward with a plan to buy the line and use it to run more freight routes - and eventually, a commuter rail service.

"It is essential," TPR's Terry Gibeau, former mayor of Amprior, said of the city's approval.

Kanata North Coun. Marianne Wilkinson said a survey taken in the Ottawa Valley indicated a commuter line would attract several hundred riders.

"Kanata people would be able to get on there if they wanted to - it would be in the business park," she said. "I think it could be very useful in Kanata, especially the Kanata Business Park."

Ottawa doesn't want to have any liability for the project, according to the motion passed by city council.

But it's an idea that has some support around the council horseshoe, including from deputy mayor and West Carleton Coun. Eli El-Chantiry.

El-Chantiry, who sits on TPR's board of directors, said the initiative is a "very credible" one.

"Those tracks are very important to us " We don't want to make the same mistakes our predecessors made by pulling them," he said.

More than 10,000 people commute to Ottawa from the Valley, and a TPR study found that 25 per cent of those commuters would use the rail system instead, El-Chantiry said.

Gibeau said CN Rail is set to sell the line to TPR. That could happen as early as January of 2012.

In the short term, that will mean more freight shipping and therefore, more jobs in the Ottawa Valley, Gibeau said.

CN is only running the line one day per week for freight, and TPR would have it run seven days a week, Gibeau said.

A short line owned by a smaller, local group would also provide better service and hopefully attract more companies who would want to use the line to ship their goods, Gibeau added.

"But we haven't lost sight of the fact that we want to get into a commuter service," he said.

Gibeau is setting his sights a year and a half into the future. That's when he says TPR could be ready to run a commuter rail service through the valley, starting in Pembroke and ending in Nepean.

The line runs from Pembroke through Beachburg to Renfrew County before skirting into the Pontiac in Quebec. It crosses back into Ontario at Fitzroy Harbour before heading to Nepean, so there would be a number of commuter stops in Ottawa, Gibeau said.

TPR will also resume talks with OC Transpo about offering bus passes along with the commuter rail fare, so travelers can reach their final destination.

Those talks were going well a couple of years ago, Gibeau said.

"It will probably add to OC Transpo's business," he mused, and it could take pressure off OC's park-and-ride lots.

James Allen, a former rail manager and consultant for TPR, said the commuter line could have a "very dramatic impact" on OC Transpo and how the transit authority distributes its service in areas where TPR and OC Transpo could overlap. The heavy commuter rail line and the proposed path of Ottawa's planned light-rail system don't intersect.

Looking even further into the future, Gibeau said TPR could look at signing agreements with the owners of other rail lines, including ones that run to other commuting origins such as Smiths Falls.

TPR was created in 2009 after CN put the Beachburg Sub on the list for abandonment.

Thomas Geiger

Two men escaped with only minor injuries after a railway maintenance car or hi-rail travelling along the train tracks crashed into their pickup truck on Riddell Drive between Dunrobin and March Valley roads on Tuesday morning, police said.

The call came in at about 8:10 a.m., said fire department spokesman Marc Messier. Both men in the pickup truck managed to get out by themselves after the crash. No specific information on the driver of the hi-rail was available, though their injuries were also reported to be minor.

Messier said the intersection bells and lights were working when the crash occurred, and added that the intersection isn't equipped with gates.

Riddell Drive is closed between March Valley and Dunrobin roads, causing traffic delays in the area. Police said the closure could be in effect for some time while police and other agencies investigate.

The return of freight trains to an unused railway line might be the key to bringing commuter rail to Kanata and other west-end communities.

A non-profit organization called Transport Pontiac-Renfrew (TPR) could finalize a deal to take over an out-of-service Canadian National railway line in the spring, says James Allen, who has advised the group, formed in 2009 by business and political interests in Renfrew County and the Pontiac region.

"I'm optimistic that we're close enough that TPR and CN can complete their deal in the first quarter of 2012 and then roll out a freight operation," says Allen.

Once freight trains start rolling between Ottawa and Pembroke, Ont., via Portage-du-Fort, Que., the revenue generated will help finance a planned commuter service 18 months later. That means a commuter rail service between Pembroke and Ottawa's central railway station could start as soon as 2013, four years before the first phase of the city's LRT project is slated to begin operations.

Officials from both Pontiac and Renfrew have pursued a commuter rail option over the out-of-service CN Beachburg rail subdivision since 2008, when the line was owned by the Ottawa Central Railway. Shortly after a special passenger train completed a test run between Ottawa and Beachburg in 2008, CN purchased the Ottawa Central and quickly abandoned a section of railway line, which passes by or near a number of communities in the city including Bells Corners, north Kanata, Dunrobin and Fitzroy Harbour.

Allen, former chief executive of the Ottawa Central, says the railway line's prospects have improved since 2008, especially after a developer purchased a shuttered Smurfit Stone plant in Portage-du-Fort and redeveloped the property into a rail-friendly industrial park. A wood-pellet plant on the site is expected to be a major customer for a new rail operator.

The return of freight traffic on the line after five years of inactivity will help subsidize a commuter rail service, Allen says, since he expects employees of a future railway would be involved in both freight and passenger services. Allen expects to be involved in the operations of the new railway line.

In addition to freight service, the non-profit group also hopes to operate occasional special passenger services over the line before commuter service is established. This could include tourist trains that would serve whitewater rafting attractions and other tourism operators in the Upper Ottawa Valley.

This fits with the plans of Mobility Ottawa-Outaouais: Systems and Enterprises Inc., a consortium looking to bring partners together to establish a privately run passenger rail network through the capital region on existing rail lines, extending as far as Smiths Falls and La Pêche, Que.

Joseph Potvin, chief executive of the consortium, says his group doesn't want to limit itself to pursuing strictly commuter rail options, since there are other potential markets for rail in the region, such as bringing day-trippers from nearby communities into the city to shop.

**Monday 23/04/2012 Press Release Beachburg**

Ottawa valley railway plans to be operating in the fall  
CN wants to donate its railway line  
west of Ottawa to a non-profit  
community organization.

(Campbell's Bay, QC, April 23, 2012) The not-for-profit Transport Pontiac-Renfrew (TPR) has provided a progress report including information on a new Board structure and final timelines for the pending acquisition of the CN Beachburg Subdivision railway line.

In an April 19th briefing session for elected officials and representatives from the municipalities through which the line runs, existing TPR executives presented a well structured overview of its developing plan.

"The briefing brought our municipal stakeholders up to date," says TPR Director, Louise Donaldson. "TPR is hoping to be operating by November assuming the current timetable remains intact."

The process to acquire the line includes cooperation with the municipalities along the corridor. Following a line evaluation by a professional railway firm, the municipalities agreed to a process to issue applicable tax receipts to TPR. "We are awaiting CRA's stamp of approval for the replacement cost valuation method," says TPR Board member Daniel Amyotte. "The acquisition of the line depends on the final opinion of the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and transfer agreements with CN."

Also included in the briefing, information on a new set of By-Laws to ensure TPR, as a not-for-profit entity, is governed by and for the people of these communities. "The bylaws create a new membership which in turn will elect a new Board of Directors," says TPR Board member Lubomyr Chabursky. "The membership is divided into four groups to ensure that each constituency has a strong and balanced voice in the governance of TPR." The groups will include municipalities; community organizations and economic development organizations; industrial users; and interests of passenger users (for future commuter initiatives).

The fledgling railway operation itself will be managed as a for-profit activity reporting directly to TPR. Net profits from the operation will return to TPR for its use within the specific municipalities / communities. The railway operation will be headed by former Ottawa Central Railway general manager, James Allen.

"We have a tight timeline to work right through September," says James Allen. "To begin, we hope that by early May TPR will have finalized the Safety Management System and application for insurance coverage. By the end of May, CN will be in a position to provide its formal go-ahead for the donation transaction to proceed. This is a key milestone on which all further milestones depend."

The plan to acquire the rail line has been developing since 2009 when CN placed the line on its abandonment list. Business and industry in MRC Pontiac and Renfrew County have stated that in today's post-2008 recession economy, rail is needed as a shipping option. Overall, rail access itself presents a key tool to the economic rejuvenation of the region.

The briefing was held at the closed ATC Panels facility in Pembroke. Representing only one example, the plant will be in a better position to reopen, ramp-up and re-hire if rail remains. Rail is both cost-effective and environmentally preferable especially for long-haul shipments.

From west to east, municipalities along the corridor include the City of Pembroke, Laurentian Hills and Whitewater before it crosses into Québec at Portage-du-Fort. Clarendon, Litchfield, Pontiac, and Bristol are affected in Québec ahead of the line's return to Ontario and the City of Ottawa at Fitzroy Harbour. The line continues east to Walkley Yard in Ottawa.



The Last Railway Spike to be Removed  
in the Pontiac (Maybe)

Campbell's Bay Quebec - Despite documented proof that substantial business opportunities exist, CN has announced plans to remove one of the last sections of the Beachburg Subdivision from Portage du Fort, Quebec, to a point east of Fitzroy Harbour, Ontario.

According to Harry Gow and Terry Gibeau, Co-chairs of Transport Pontiac-Renfrew (TPR), "The region has worked long and hard for the re-creation of a shortline railway that would convey the products and the commuters of the upper Ottawa Valley to destinations outside the region, but current developments are making this hard to achieve."

The first section of CN line removal was completed this spring as the section from Pembroke to Portage du Fort was lifted cutting off the struggling-to-reopen ATC panel board plant in Pembroke. The ATC facility has rail infrastructure into the plant and shipping literally from the plant's back door would have been cost-effective.

An advisory of CN's latest intentions from Francois Hebert, Vice President Network Strategies, was received by TPR on 22 Jul 2013. The letter states in part, "CN held off removing the remaining 40 miles of rail because there were indications that a new customer would begin transporting aggregate over this portion of the line but we have been advised by the customer that this business opportunity will not materialize."

Gow commented that "while TPR is not a party to the details of these negotiations, the freight rates charged by CN are in our experience are significantly higher than those charged by a shortline railway, such as the former Ottawa Central Railway which operated the line before CN bought it back, and that is what keeps shippers from using this line."

Gibeau added that "CN had ignored pleas to keep the line to Pembroke as ATC Panels will restart production there, and needed the line to move its products to market. TPR then worked on an alternative for ATC, which would have given it an opportunity to use the railway from Portage with a transfer from trucks." The letter contained no reference to ATC's planned ramp-up and new business potential.

Both Gow and Gibeau have asked the three levels of government to intervene. Of these, only the municipal level has so far acted with the municipalities in MRC Pontiac zoning the land of the railway as for railway use only.

TPR urges the municipalities to ensure that their zoning is respected by CN. This measure had previously saved the CPR line from Hull to Montreal, when the municipalities of MRC Papineau zoned the line, now operated by the Quebec Gatineau Railway, a regional line.

Gow and Gibeau reiterated that "Concerted action can save the Pontiac's railway, but it will require swift and decisive action by all concerned."

Municipalities in Quebec's Pontiac region have banded together to stop a plan by Canadian National Rail to remove the last train tracks connecting them to Ottawa, but in a situation they describe as "life or death," there's been little support south of the provincial border.

"For us, the rail line is a lifesaver," said Michael McCrank, mayor of Litchfield, Que. and a municipal warden for Quebec's Pontiac region. "You only have to look at any gas station where the price of fuel is going through the roof. Down the road, manufactured goods won't be affordable if there isn't an efficient way to get them to the market.

"It's a life-or-death scenario for us."

In early January, CN Rail received permission to remove the roughly 110-kilometre Beachburg Subdivision that connects Pembroke to Ottawa. CN has already removed the near 50-kilometre stretch of rail between Pembroke and Portage du Fort, Que., but held off from stripping the remaining portion of the track. According to CN spokesman Jim Feeny, there had been discussions for a third party to buy what was left of the rail line, but those talks broke down in the past month.

"We worked with a local interest trying to attract more business or to find persons or agencies that might have wanted to take over the rail line from CN," Feeny said. "A lot of work, a lot of effort, but none of those were successful."

Feeny said CN had targeted the railway for discontinuation because there was insufficient traffic on the line and there was no longer any "economic justification" for operating the line. He said the removed tracks would be used elsewhere on the CN network but could not say where.

But there's one small hiccup in CN's plan.

The municipalities in the Pontiac region joined in April to pass a bylaw that designates the land within the railway's vicinity for "rail use only," which effectively prevents CN from removing any tracks in Quebec.

Feeny said he could not comment on the actions taken by the municipalities.

"We are operating under federal regulation and we are abiding by those regulations as we proceed," he said. "If there are other measures or other factors that come into play, we will have to deal with them as they come."

While CN cannot begin track removal in Quebec, there are no bylaws preventing it from stripping rail from the track that runs from Fitzroy Harbour to Ottawa. For those in the Pontiac, it creates a situation where their line is on an island — it's usefulness is dependent upon the ability to transport material into Ottawa and from there, to Montreal and the St. Lawrence River.

But the City of Ottawa hasn't made a move to protect the line.

"Ottawa is a big bureaucracy," said McCrank. "We've had active discussions with the previous mayor and with the present mayor, but there are a lot of people around the table, and not everybody loves rail. Some people can't understand the concept."

According to West Carleton-March Coun. Eli El-Chantiry, through whose ward the railway runs, the fate of the rail line depends on a different government institution in Ottawa.

El-Chantiry has worked with lobby groups in the Ottawa Valley and the Pontiac since 2006 to help to preserve the line. He's skeptical the bylaw in Quebec will protect the railway as CN could appeal to the Quebec government to have it overturned. And he said the price CN was asking for when the line was put up for sale, \$21 million, was simply too steep for the city's coffers. (While CN wouldn't comment on the price tag for the remaining rail, an expert familiar with the company and the railway estimated its value at \$5 million to \$10 million.)

El-Chantiry said the only hope the rail line has left is with the federal government.

"There is a viable economic future for the remainder of the line," he said. "Why are they rushing to take it out of the ground?"

He cited the potential for making it a commuter line or for tourism use. And without a railway, he said, there is little hope for any new heavy or light industry to start in the Ottawa Valley or Pontiac.

He said the municipalities need the weight of the federal government to stop CN.

"Our only hope right now is for our members in the federal government, especially Conservative members, to stand up to CN and say, 'Stop what you are doing,'" he said. "Just say that. Give the business people, and those in tourism and all of the local municipalities a chance."

Mathieu Ravnignat, the New Democratic Party MP for the Pontiac region, said he's reached out to CN to ask them not to remove the rails in Quebec but has yet to receive a response.

"I'm hoping for a positive response and will take further steps if not," he said.

Ravnignat said he's willing to reach out to Conservative Party MP Gordon O'Connor, through whose riding the rail runs on the Ontario side, to reach a solution.

"He ultimately has to decide where he stands on the issue," Ravnignat said. "This government, if they believe in the economic development of Canada, then they will ensure that investments are in place for rail." O'Connor was not available for comment

PORTAGE DU FORT, Que. Tensions in Quebec's Pontiac region are rising after mayors from the area gathered to blockade a railway from which they said Canadian National Rail attempted to illegally remove tracks on Tuesday morning.

In early January, CN received federal permission to remove the roughly 110-kilometre Beachburg Subdivision rail line that ran from Pembroke through Quebec's Pontiac region and then to Ottawa. CN removed the nearly 50-kilometre stretch of rail between Pembroke and Portage du Fort, but held off from stripping the remainder of the line as it worked with municipalities to find a new owner for the railway.

In April, fearing that no buyer would materialize, the Quebec municipalities took the initiative and passed a bylaw, approved by the Quebec government, that designated the land within the railway's vicinity for "rail use only," which legally restrains CN from removing tracks in the Pontiac.

But on Tuesday morning, Pontiac officials were alerted that CN crews were in Portage du Fort and about to begin stripping tracks.

Michael McCrank, mayor of Lichfield and a municipal warden for the Pontiac, rounded up other mayors in the area and drafted a cease-and-desist letter immediately.

McCrank said that when they arrived in Portage du Fort and displayed the letter to the CN contractor in charge, the contractor told him he had direct orders from CN headquarters in Montreal to begin removing the railway.

"We were given a stop work notice earlier today by the municipalities," said CN spokesman Jim Feeny. "We have temporarily halted the work while our law department assesses the situation."

Feeny explained that CN had worked with the municipalities to find a buyer to save the line and had acted in accordance with federal guidelines when it came to the lengthy policy process attached to removing a railway.

He said CN had targeted the subdivision for discontinuation because there was "insufficient traffic" on the line and there was no longer any "economic justification" to continue operating it. The rails would be used elsewhere on the CN network.

"CN is ripping the hearts out of rural Canada," said McCrank. "This is just one line out of dozens they've taken out over the years."

McCrank said the future of the Pontiac's economy is dependant on keeping the rail line. Without it, he said, no heavy or light industry would ever return to the region.

After CN crews went home on Tuesday, McCrank, two other mayors from the area and about a dozen other supporters joined to create a barricade on the tracks.

McCrank parked his pickup truck across the rail line and said he wasn't removing it.

While CN workers abided by the cease-and-desist letter, Feeny said, crews have been told to stop working temporarily, not indefinitely.

"I wouldn't go as far to say that we are going to adhere to the bylaw," he said.

Feeny said CN's legal team is reviewing the situation before the railway decides on a course of action.

At this point, McCrank said the future of the line rests with the Quebec government.

"It's time for them to start defending us," he said. "Quebec has endorsed the bylaw, so that means CN is fighting eight million people, not 14,500 people. But we need the government to continue supporting us."

"They need to stand up for us as Quebecers and assert our rights to make sure this thing stays here."

If Quebec doesn't uphold the bylaw, the municipalities in the Pontiac are left with few other options.

Mathieu Ravnat is the New Democratic Party MP for the region. McCrank said he's compassionate but his position as a backbencher on an opposition party comes with little power. McCrank has also written letters asking for help to the federal government and the Conservative party, but has never heard back. And across the provincial border, the City of Ottawa has shown little interest in saving the line.

"It's devastating. We're trying to create something in the Pontiac and this is happening," said William Stuart, the mayor of Campbell's Bay, who was at the barricade. "While this is still going on, there is still hope. But once the tracks are gone, it's gone."

CN would not comment on what the price tag would be to buy the remaining rail. When the entire track was still intact, it was estimated to cost around \$21 million. An expert familiar with the company and CN estimated the value of the remaining line at \$5 million to \$10 million.

McCrank said that price tag is greater than his entire region's yearly budget.

Caption for picture

Surrounded by supporters in Portage du Fort, Lichfield, Que., Mayor Michael McCrank, a municipal warden in Quebec's Pontiac region, uses his truck to block CN Rail crews sent in to begin dismantling the rail line.

Thursday

15/08/2013

Ottawa Citizen

Beachburg

Portage du Fort

OTTAWA - Canadian National Rail executives said Wednesday they will ignore a bylaw preventing them from dismantling a rail line in the area, and resume stripping tracks near Portage du Fort.

The announcement came after a one-and-a-half-hour meeting between the executives and Pontiac's top municipal bureaucrat.

On Tuesday, after being alerted that CN employees were in Portage du Fort with orders to begin removing tracks, multiple mayors from the Pontiac gathered to erect a barricade along the CN-owned railway.

In March, a bylaw was passed by the Pontiac, and approved by the Quebec government, that designated the land within the railway's vicinity for "rail use only," which legally restrains CN from removing tracks in the region.

MRC Pontiac director general Rémi Bertrand met with CN's head of network strategy John Brayley on Wednesday afternoon in Montreal to discuss the situation. According to Emilie Chazelas, an MRC spokeswoman, CN will not accept the bylaw. She said Brayley informed the MRC that work was stopped on Wednesday to "guarantee the safety of the protesters." In the meeting, Brayley also said that according to a legal opinion he obtained from CN, the rail company is within its rights to dismantle the railway.

Chazelas was unsure whether CN would begin work on Thursday, as the MRC is now hiring a lawyer to dispute CN's claims.

"The MRC Pontiac would like to remind CN that a law is in effect since March 2013 and The company must cease all work immediately," Pontiac officials said in a statement early on Wednesday morning.

A pickup truck owned by a Pontiac mayor has been left on the rail tracks in Portage du Fort and Pontiac officials said it will stay there indefinitely.

Pontiac mayors were also reaching out to Quebec Premier Pauline Marois to ask for help in defending the bylaw and the railway.

Chazelas said that even if CN begins ripping up tracks on Thursday, if the bylaw is enforced by the Quebec government it comes with a clause that states any removed tracks would have to be rebuilt.

MRC Pontiac officials call on citizens to block railway removal.

Tensions escalate as local tow-truck drivers refuse CN railway police requests to remove truck barricade

OTTAWA - The battle to protect a railway in Quebec's MRC Pontiac region from being dismantled by Canadian National Rail escalated on Thursday when a resident used his semi-trailer truck to block CN employees from removing train tracks.

On Tuesday a group of Pontiac mayors erected a barricade in Portage du Fort to block CN workers after being informed that CN was set to begin stripping rail, disregarding a bylaw sanctioned by the province that protects the rail line.

CN temporarily halted work, but after consulting with its legal team, CN employees were back in Portage du Fort on Thursday.

"We believe the bylaw that prohibits the removal of the rail is invalid as the MRC has no jurisdiction over CN's federally regulated rail assets," said CN spokesman Jim Feeny. "We informed employees that we would be resuming work."

According to Raymond Durocher, deputy municipal warden for the Pontiac, CN police arrived on Thursday morning and asked for an MRC truck parked across the tracks to be removed so work could resume.

When Pontiac officials refused, CN called a towing company.

But Durocher said the tow truck driver who arrived was also local, and after he assessed the situation, he refused the job.

"CN tried to reach all the other local towing companies and they all said no," Durocher said.

Afterward, Durocher said, CN employees attempted to work around the barricade, but shortly after they began a local truck driver arrived with his semi-trailer truck and used it to further block CN workers.

"There are too many intersections in the Pontiac. We could play cat and mouse all year," Durocher said. "And I don't think the company wants to lose money having their employees standing there watching people block the road."

"I think we can mobilize enough people and enough big rigs to paralyze the tracks right down to Ottawa."

CN workers left the scene shortly after mid-day, and Feeny would not say if they would return on Friday.

"We still maintain that we have the legal right to remove the rail as we have met all of our obligations under federal law," he said.

Michael McCrank, mayor of Lichfield and the Pontiac's warden, was meeting with lawyers on Thursday. He said they planned to file an injunction against CN on Friday.

He also wrote a letter to Quebec Premier Pauline Marois asking for support.

"The MRC is in a particularly difficult economic situation and the presence of this railway is the last hope we have for attracting businesses," he wrote.

As the battle shifts to the courts, McCrank said, the barricade will remain indefinitely.

Pontiac warden asks federal, provincial governments to intervene in CN dispute

PORTAGE DU FORT, Que. - With a legal battle over the fate of a Quebec railway set to begin between the province's poorest regional county municipality and one of North America's largest rail companies, the warden of the MRC Pontiac warned Monday the region will not be bullied.

At a press conference near Portage du Fort Monday, Pontiac warden Michael McCrank not only demanded that CN halt its removal of the region's rail lines, but also that the federal and provincial governments intervene.

"Today we say, 'Enough,'" McCrank said in a speech. "This battle goes far beyond saving a simple rail line. It's a battle for an entire region struggling to survive."

Fearing that Canadian National Rail would remove the only railway in the Pontiac region, officials passed a bylaw in March designating the land for "rail use only," making it illegal for CN to remove any tracks. But CN has contended the railway is under federal jurisdiction and the bylaw does not apply.

McCrank asked that the federal government impose a moratorium on removing the rail lines, which link the Pontiac region to Ottawa, and that it instruct international development agencies to promote the Pontiac. He also asked that the Quebec government create a substantial investment fund to "redeploy business and industries in the Pontiac to counter major economic losses to the neighbouring province of Ontario."

The region has still not recovered from the forestry crisis that rocked the area in 2008, McCrank said.

Before the press conference, McCrank was in Gatineau with top municipal staffer Rémi Bertrand to sign an injunction request against CN to stop the removal of the railway.

"We have a law in place and this is the livelihood of the Pontiac," said Bertrand. "We will not be bullied by them. The people that know me, know that I never step down."

Bertrand said the Pontiac will see the legal battle through and will not be intimidated by CN's deep pockets.

The barricade locals put in place on the rail line last week to prevent contractors from tearing it up was reduced to one truck on Monday morning, but there were no signs of CN employees or contractors.

CN temporarily halts Pontiac rail removal after hearing

OTTAWA - A truck that blocked a rail line in Portage du Fort, Que., for a week was moved Tuesday after CN rail agreed to respect a court order that the company stop pulling up the tracks.

Mayors from Quebec's MRC Pontiac region parked the truck across the tracks last week when the rail company said it would ignore a bylaw designating the land in the vicinity for "rail use only."

The bylaw, meant to legally stop the tracks from being removed, was passed because politicians in the region say the railway is their only hope for renewing the area's flagging economy.

CN has argued that the tracks are federal jurisdiction and so the bylaw has no bearing.

A hearing in Gatineau Tuesday ordered CN halt work on dismantling the contentious tracks while the issue is before the courts.

The MRC Pontiac and CN will return to court in Gatineau on Oct. 10 and 11 to argue whether or not the company needs to respect the bylaw.

Remi Bertrand, chief administrative officer for the MRC Pontiac, said he's confident going forward.

"If it were clear black and white that there's only the federal laws that apply, the court would have said that today, I think," Bertrand said. "So if they want to go more in-depth, it's because there's grounds for opening up the debate."

The municipalities are asking the Quebec Federation of Municipalities for help covering the legal costs because the decision could set a precedent for other Quebec communities, Bertrand said.

"When there's a bylaw in place, it needs to be respected," he said. "That's why laws are there."

Give Pontiac more time to find buyer for CN rail line, Ottawa councillors ask  
OTTAWA - Several west-end councillors want to help the Pontiac regional government in the Outaouais protect a precious rail line that Canadian National intends to tear up.

Next week, Ottawa city council's transportation committee is to debate writing a letter to CN asking it to give the Pontiac government more time to find someone else to take the line over, an idea proposed by Kanata North Coun. Marianne Wilkinson.

The 123-kilometre line runs from a junction near western Carling Avenue in Ottawa to Pembroke, crossing the Ottawa River twice and running through the Pontiac a good part of the way. It used to be a lifeline for freight moving to and from the Ottawa Valley, but as industry has waned so has rail traffic; CN wants to take the line up and reuse it elsewhere, ending the dreams of many on both sides of the river that the railway could once again spur economic development. Earlier this month, a Pontiac government worker parked a truck across the line to keep CN equipment from getting to work. A court hearing is coming over whether the Pontiac has the authority to forbid CN to take the line up. In the meantime, MRC Pontiac is looking for another operator.

"The MRC Pontiac strongly believes that the maintenance of this railway is critical to the economic growth in the area and its loss would be a severe blow to economic health of the area," says a report Wilkinson filed with the transportation committee. The idea of writing a letter has the backing of councillors Eli El-Chantiry and Mark Taylor, whose wards include pieces of the line.

The City of Ottawa has no direct use for the line "it's not part of any official transportation or economic-development plans, though many people would like to see commuter rail on disused railways" and has declined to buy it. In principle, though, the city would like to see it stay on the ground and in operation. Writing a letter supporting the Pontiac government is about the smallest possible action the city could take while still officially doing something.

The MRC Pontiac will be in court over the next two days to argue that CN Rail has no business pulling up the tracks through the Pontiac. By end of day Friday, a judge is expected to rule on whether or not CN has to respect a Pontiac bylaw which designates the land within the railway's vicinity as "for rail use only", effectively preventing CN from removing the tracks. The bylaw was what the Quebec municipalities describe as a "life or death" attempt to save an economic lifeline. CN has already removed the tracks from Pembroke to the Quebec border, and last August, the MRC Pontiac put up a blockade at Portage Du Fort to prevent CN from going any further. After discussions, the rail company agreed to hold off on any further dismantling of the line until the hearing that begins this morning is over.

Ottawa places potential purchase of railway line on hold.

Buying part of a railway line between Ontario and Quebec isn't worth it for Ottawa, according to city staff, so Ottawa will hold off on a potential purchase until the railway is decommissioned.

After a surplus portion of the Beachburg Subdivision line was slated to be ripped by the Canadian National Railway, Ottawa's transportation committee wanted to know how much it would cost to buy part of the line. The price for the whole line and its tracks is \$21.7 million.

The city also wrote a letter requesting a delay in the tracks being scrapped, to help Quebec communities in the Pontiac that were hoping to save the freight tracks to boost the economy.

But a report from Ottawa's deputy city manager Nancy Schepers, bound for the city's transportation committee next week, declares staff will not pursue a purchase while the tracks remain.

Costs "measured in the millions of dollars" and responsibilities of running a rail line wouldn't benefit the city enough, Schepers wrote.

"Furthermore, the purchase of active railways would require these expenditures to be made with little or no benefit in return for the City and residents," she said.

The Pontiac lost a court injunction application late last year that would have bought more time to find a buyer. The line's Renfrew County tracks have already been ripped up and no potential buyers had come forward for the rest as of December, the report said.

If the Pontiac isn't successful in finding a partner or operator of the railway, and CN approaches Ottawa about the portion here, the city "will move to reach a purchase agreement for the corridor lands," the report states.

Locally, the line runs from near western Carling Avenue in Ottawa and extends to Pembroke. It crosses the Ottawa River twice.

How Ottawa's 'town that never was' went off the rails, to be forgotten

(with sketch and aerial photo)

A piece of Ottawa history hidden for almost 100 years off Hunt Club Road was quietly buried recently to make room for a mall parking lot. It was called Rideau Yard and it was the nucleus of a town that never was.

Ottawa at one time had a number of railway roundhouses, including one at 300 West Hunt Club Rd. The site, concealed for a century in a vacant industrial lot near Antares Drive, had been our last roundhouse location to survive development.

I noticed the remains of the site when I saw a large circular pit in a vacant field. With some research, I learned it was a remnant of a large railway station and century-old ghost town called "Rideau Yard" that was built in 1915.

Constructed by the Canadian Northern Railway company, Rideau Yard opened with great expectations of handling both freight and passenger rail traffic passing between Quebec and Vancouver on the newly constructed TransContinental Rail line. This grand, new station south of Ottawa was an ambitious development that housed an 80-foot turntable and a 15-stall roundhouse, where steam locomotives were maintained. Later re-named Federal Yard, it was to be the epicentre for Ottawa's newest suburb, boasting a summer hotel and residential streets mapped out close to the Rideau River.

Yet this vision of a new town south of Ottawa never came to fruition and eventually fell into financial troubles. Canadian Northern Railway shut down Rideau Yard and the dreams of their south Ottawa development came to an end in 1922.

The hotel was being used by railway employees instead of visiting passengers, and the roundhouse and other auxiliary buildings were demolished some time around 1930. Their ruins became cloaked in overgrowth up until last month when it was finally buried to make way for a new mall.

I had wanted to document what was left of this century-old railway station before it was lost forever. A 1980 edition of the Bytown Railway Society publication "Branch Line" included a series of maps and recollections by former employees. This helped me reconstruct what may have been there.

On the site, there was a vast area of roundhouse ruins with railway artifacts strewn about. An aerial image from the National Air Photo Library clearly shows the outline of the old roundhouse building and the turntable.

Bricks from the roundhouse, pieces of twisted metal and other remnants of the lost station have now been buried under the development, which according to the Trinity Development Group website plan, will now become a Sandman Hotel.

When I explored the area last November, the turntable's open pit and centre pivot structure were concealed under a cover of vegetation but it was easy to imagine a once bustling railway station and steam locomotives trundling on their way in and out of Ottawa on the TransContinental line.

Using the similar roundhouse and turntable complex that was restored and is currently maintained by Toronto's Railway Museum and the Steam Whistle Brewery in Toronto for comparison, we can visualize what Ottawa's Rideau Yard station may have looked like when it was in operation 100 years ago.

Once labelled the most contaminated site in Ottawa, this "brownfield" property is now owned by Toronto's Unitrin and Triform Developments, which were given a grant from the City of Ottawa to deal with the contaminated land.

Railway infrastructure upgrade for better service in your area

VIA Rail Canada Inc. inform you about the upcoming upgrade of the railway infrastructure in your neighbourhood. Beginning the week of May 4, construction will begin on a new siding track near the Revelstoke community of Ottawa South.

The map below illustrates the section of track where construction will take place.

The work will begin in the non-residential area on the western side (indicated in red), transitioning into the residential area later in the week (indicated in blue). The project will be completed in two phases: preparation of grading (May-June) and track and signal work (June - early September). Construction activities could generate noise, vibration and dust from certain activities at the beginning of the project. Please be advised that in order to ensure the project is completed on schedule, some night construction work is anticipated. VIA Rail Canada Inc. is working closely with the City of Ottawa and our contractors to conduct this work with minimal disturbance to local residents.

In addition to improving the comfort, safety and reliability of our transportation service for our local customers, these upgrades form part of our commitment to the City of Ottawa to improve traffic flow along at high congestion crossings, particularly during rush hour periods.

In addition to the siding track construction, our contractor will be conducting vegetation control on VIA Rail Canada property along the rail line. In accordance with Track Safety regulations, VIA Rail Canada Inc. is required to ensure vegetation on our property does not impede sight lines to the traffic signal system and that any vegetation that poses a potential fire hazard or safety risk are cut back or removed. This includes vegetation that poses a safety risk of falling onto private property or the rail tracks themselves. This work will be confined to VIA Rail Canada's right-of-way on the rail line and will consist of cutting of brush and vegetation which constitute a hazard to the public as well as VIA Rail Canada employees. As required, prior notification of brush cutting adjacent to a residential property will be provided.