

Local Railway Items from Ottawa Papers - 1974

Monday **18/02/1974** **Ottawa Citizen** **Buckingham**

Another train trip in the offing

Train buffs and snow fanciers will have another opportunity to get their fill of both Sunday when the Bytown Railway Society sponsors another winter rail excursion.

A chartered CP Rail train will leave Ottawa Station at noon and travel to Gatineau, Masson and Buckingham, Quebec. The train will stop long enough in Buckingham to allow passengers to see the town.

The train will return to Ottawa at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$7.50 for adults and \$5 for children between the ages of five and 12, and are available at Hobbyland, 93 O'Connor Street.

Wednesday **05/06/1974** **Ottawa Citizen** **Chalk River** **Almonte**

With picture

ALMONTE (Staff) The last 16 cars of a CP Rail freight train jumped the track while crossing a bridge and smashed into a flour warehouse here early today. The derailment caused extensive damage but no injuries.

The end of the 73-car north-bound train swung off the track at 3.35 a.m. walloping a warehouse adjacent to the Almonte Flour Company mill.

Two empty tank cars tumbled into the Mississippi River. Few of the derailed cars were carrying freight, a CP Rail spokesman said.

The wayward train uprooted more than 800 feet of track and blocked Highway 44, the town's main traffic artery. The highway remains closed today as work crews struggle to clear away the wreckage.

The warehouse, constructed in 1820, is a local landmark near the centre of town. It was vacant when the accident occurred.

Mill manager Jack Harris described the accident as spectacular. "Incredibly, no one was hurt," he said.

The train was making its regular run between Chalk River and Smiths Falls. The two CP trains scheduled to pass through Almonte today will be rerouted over CN tracks, the CP spokesman said.

CP Rail is investigating the derailment but has not yet determined the cause. Damage has not been estimated.

Friday **21/06/1974** **Ottawa Citizen** **Winchester** **Apple Hill**

Cornwall. The derailment of a westbound Canadian Pacific freight train Thursday left 29 cars, including one containing a shipment of chlorine gas, scattered along the track.

The accident occurred just east of the village of Apple Hill, 20 miles northeast of here, about noon. The cause and extent of damage are still under investigation by CP authorities.

Canadian Industries Limited in Cornwall sent an emergency team to the scene to determine whether the tank car containing the chlorine gas was leaking or damaged.

The chlorine gas was being shipped by Standard Chemical of Beauharnois, Que.

Chemical producers across the province have a co-operative agency called the Transportation Emergency Assistance Plan, to help out in situations where there is a potential chemical hazard to people and the environment.

An emergency team from Beauharnois later rerailed the tank containing chlorine and sent it back to Standard Chemical where it will undergo further tests for any damage.

Approximately half of the derailed cars were empty while others contained coke and lumber.

A CP official said that while repairs were being carried out, trains from Montreal would be rerouted through Ottawa and Smiths Falls. It is expected that more than 400 feet of new track will be laid by 3 p.m. today.

The 117-car train left the track about 50 feet from a railway crossing where five CP workmen had been reconstructing the crossing.

The train, out of Montreal, was bound for Toronto with a stop in Smiths Falls.

Tuesday **06/08/1974** **Ottawa Citizen** **Alexandria** **Ottawa**

With picture.

The first turbo train to serve Ottawa arrived in Alta Vista station "on the button" this morning. The turbo will run between Montreal and Ottawa each morning on a trial basis for the next few months. During initial tests the train will follow regular train schedules, taking two hours to make the 120-mile trip.

America's oldest railway tunnel.

BROCKVILLE - Few people are aware of the existence of a railway tunnel under the city of Brockville. Even fewer know it to be the oldest in North America. Its cornerstone was laid with great ceremony on Sept.16,1854, a memorable event in the city, then only a town of 4,000, reports a historical sketch printed by the local chamber of commerce.

Thousands of people came from the surrounding area for the ceremony, it said. As it was arranged that the stone would be laid under Masonic auspices, Brother Adiel Sherwood, sheriff of Leeds and Grenville, was deputized by the provincial grand master to represent him.

A band, the firemen, Sons of Temperance, Knights of Jericho, Odd Fellows, Freemasons, as well as the directors of the railway company, the contractors and engineers, the mayor and council and many citizens formed a procession to march through the streets to the site of the tunnel. The ceremony was marked by a salute of 15 rounds fired by the Brockville militia artillery.

Before winter, excavation had been completed between the market and the river, and the contractors had begun to blast their way through the rock to the north portal, a third of a mile distant. Their methods and appliances were crude, but the work was of such quality that it has endured for over a hundred years.

The tunnel was designed to give access to the riverfront. It was not, many thought, necessary.

However, in 1852 the Brockville council pledged its support to the building of a railway line to connect the Ottawa and St. Lawrence, which led to the incorporation in the following year of the Brockville and Ottawa railway company. There was a great deal of discussion about the construction of a railroad to connect Toronto and Montreal. The promoters of the Brockville and Ottawa link believed that their project would be a valuable feeder to such a line. It would also help to develop the country lying between the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa rivers.

Supported by grants from various municipalities on the proposed route, and by subscriptions from private individuals, the company entered into a contract in 1853 with the Sheffield firm of Sykes, Debergue and Co., to complete the line within three years for 80,000 pounds. By April, 1854, 60 miles of right-of-way had been cleared.

In August, 1854, work on the tunnel began, under the English sub-contractors John Booth and his son, David.

In 1855, the firm encountered financial difficulties and was unable to carry on without substantial assistance from the municipalities, which the latter did not feel inclined to give.

The Booths had spent \$20,000 of their own money and were unwilling to involve themselves to a greater extent. Work was suspended after nearly \$500,000 had been spent. The Yorkshiremen, who had been employed on the tunnel, had received no wages for several weeks, and threatened trouble. However, they contented themselves with seizing and wrecking the carriage of Mr. Harvey, secretary of the company.

Work was resumed on the tunnel some time later. And on Jan. 25, 1859, the first passenger train, consisting of two miniature coaches hauled by a wood burning locomotive, left Brockville's Grand Truck station. Delays occasioned by phenomenally cold weather resulted in the 46-mile trip to Perth taking nine and a half hours, rather than the scheduled three and a half hours.

The temperature is said to have been 40 below zero the day of the trial run. The wheels slipped, the couplings broke, and the passengers finally reached their destination with a rope linking their coach and the locomotive.

The Brockville tunnel was still used by diesel switching engines for some time after the last steam locomotive capable of negotiating it was scrapped in 1954, 100 years after the beginning of the tunnel.

Although now abandoned, the massive oak doors are still in place, though seldom closed now. Formerly they used to be closed each night to maintain an even temperature in the tunnel, and to keep wandering livestock out.

Such is the story of one of the earliest lines of the CPR system, running through the oldest and most unusual railway tunnel in Canada.

Wednesday 04/12/1974 Ottawa Citizen Lachute Gatineau

CP passenger train derailed in Gatineau, six people injured.

The two-unit train left the tracks at 8.43 p.m., three minutes after leaving Gatineau station enroute to Hull and Ottawa with nine passengers and three crew members.

"It would have been much worse if the train had been travelling faster," commented Constable Gerry Pilote who arrived at the scene minutes after the accident occurred.

The derailment took place at the junction of the main CP line and a Gatineau Lumber Co. siding, about 30 feet north of Maloney Boulevard.

While cause of the derailment has not been determined, police officials speculated vandals tampering with a line switch near the accident scene may be responsible.

The slow speed of the train prevented the two cars from rolling and possibly crushing the occupants.

Miraculously, occupants of the first unit, a combination engine-passenger car, suffered only shock and bruises.

Engineer Harold Greenlaw of Ottawa and four passengers occupied the first unit, which ended up on its side 200 feet from the main line.

The second unit was perched precariously on an angle a few feet from the main line. Only deep snow and a hydro pole prevented the unit from toppling over.

The train makes a regular nightly run from Montreal to Ottawa, arriving in the city at 9.05 p.m. after dropping passengers off in Gatineau and Hull.

Constable Pilote said all 12 occupants of the train were shaken up, but stated that only six, including Engineer Greenlaw, required treatment.

Five were treated at Sacred Heart Hospital in Hull for shock, cuts and bruises and later released. One passenger was taken to Ottawa General Hospital for observation of bruises to the head.

Thursday 05/12/1974 Ottawa Citizen Smiths Falls Twin Elm

A 39-year-old manotick man was seriously injured Wednesday when the truck he was driving was hiy by a passenger train in Nepean Township.

John Scobie of Rideau Valley Drive, had just delivered fuel oil to a private home and was driving north on a private road when the accident occurred, a quarter-mile east of the Twin Elm crossing near Richmons Road

Police said Mr. Scobie drove his truck onto the track in front of the westbound Ottawa to Brockville passenger train.

The engineer jammed on the emergency brake but could not avoin hitting the truck.

He was taken to Civic Hospital and was reported in fair condition with head and abdominal injuries, facial lacerations and fractured rinbs. No one on the six-car train was injured.