

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 1986

02/01/1986 *Ottawa Citizen*

Belleville

Sucker Lake

With picture.

A 90-car freight train derailed in an isolated area near Sharbot Lake Tuesday, spilling a dangerous chemical that could have caused an evacuation in a populated area.

Railway workers were building a dike today to contain the substance after one of the cars tumbled into Sucker Lake, about 150 kilometres southwest of Ottawa. The CP Rail derailment could have been dangerous enough to call for an evacuation if it had happened in a populated area, said Jim Renahan of Spills Action Centre, a provincial environmental agency.

No one was injured when the Toronto-bound train crashed about 7:30 p.m., tearing up about one kilometre of track. About 35 flat cars and eight diesel locomotives left the main Montreal-Toronto line.

Four containers, each containing 18,000 kilograms of the crystalized food preservative sodium hydrogen sulphite, were thrown from flat cars.

One container broke through the ice on the shallow water and cracked. CP Rail spokesman Herb Brooks said the crack is above the water line and while a small amount of the chemical may have leaked into the water, it has been determined that it wasn't enough to cause concern.

The chemical, when mixed with water, forms an acid and the resulting fumes can cause severe burning to eyes, skin and lungs.

Federal and CP investigators are trying to determine the cause. While there are no firm damage estimates, Brooks said the tally will likely be "several million dollars."

The lake drains into Bobs Lake, which is part of the drinking water system used by Perth-area residents. Provincial officials have said there is no immediate cause for concern.

The only resident near the crash site said he was warned not to drink water from the small lake by the O.P.P. "They said don't drink the water until everybody's sure," said Andrew Mathewson, 25, of Bay Street in Ottawa. He was spending the holiday at his family's cottage near the crash.

The accident site is five kilometres from the nearest road and can only be reached by foot, snowmobile or air.

Brooks expects the tracks to be clear by Saturday, and until then, traffic will be re-routed to the Canadian National line between Brighton and Brockville.

Passenger service on VIA Rail will not be affected.

The train was travelling about 70 km/h along a 10-metre embankment on the edge of the lake when it left the tracks, about 13 km from Sharbot Lake.

It was travelling within the recommended speed limit.

Mathewson said: "It looked like two of the engines had uncoupled and de-railed, but continued along the track for about a half-mile, ripping the track and splintering ties. It's a real mess."

03/01/1986 *Ottawa Citizen*

Belleville

Sucker Lake

CP Rail spill cleanup complicated

Efforts to contain a possible chemical spill at a CP Rail derailment west of Perth are being complicated by the failure of a makeshift dike built around two partially submerged cargo containers.

Work crews abandoned work Thursday on a crumbling sand-and-gravel dike in Sucker Lake, deciding to try a retaining wall of plywood to help ensure acid doesn't escape into the water system.

Clean-up officials fear the damaged containers could fall apart during a bid to fish them from the lake, and thus want to make sure the dangerous preservative doesn't pollute the area.

The containers fell into the lake when 35 cars and eight locomotives of a 90-car train derailed Tuesday, tearing up about a kilometre of track. Sucker Lake is near Sharbot Lake, about 120 km southwest of Ottawa.

Clean-up officials say more than 2,000 tons of sand and gravel have disappeared into the soft lake bed in an effort to form a small lagoon at edge of the lake.

CP crews will now try driving posts into the bottom and creating a wall using plywood sheets strung between the posts. The wall would be reinforced by sand and gravel.

Stan Kaplan, the Canadian Transport Commission's director of dangerous goods, said the containers are now stable, but have serious structural damage.

"They now look like something between a square box and a pancake."

The barrels holding the chemical have been crushed, but so far heavy plastic liners have prevented serious leakage.

Both rail containers hold 18,000 kilograms of the crystallized sterilizing agent sodium hydrogen sulphate, which forms a low-strength acid when mixed with water.

The chemical is used as a food preservative, a disinfectant and for soap production.

Chemical tests have shown minor traces of acid in the water surrounding the containers, but officials say there is no immediate danger.

If a major spill does occur, severe environmental damage would result, killing many of the fish in the lake, said John Steele of the provincial environment ministry.

Even a minor spill could damage the reproductive cycle of the fish, he said.

Even when the new dike is made secure, the containers still cannot be moved until the cars and diesels that left the main CP track between Toronto and Montreal are removed and the track is repaired.

Officials say the track work could be completed by Saturday.

Two railway cranes can then be moved into place to remove the containers on Monday or Tuesday. Kaplan said the containers will be winched slowly up the 10-metre embankment because it is too risky to lift them.

When that work takes place, environmental clean-up crews will be on the scene to remove any contaminated water in the lagoon before-it can leach into the lake.

To ensure quick action in case of a leak, the environment ministry is monitoring the acid level of the water around the containers and at a small creek that connects Sucker Lake to Bobs Lake, which is part of the drinking-water system used by Perth-area residents.

Steele said that because the lake is only a small part of the system, the potential effect on drinking water is not a major concern.

But town officials are keeping Perth's reservoirs topped up just in case.

Bruce Guthrie, manager of Perth's public utilities commission, says the reservoirs' four-million-litre capacity would normally be a one-day supply for the area. He added that water could be rationed if necessary.

There has been no official estimate of damages, but CP Rail spokesman Herb Brooks said the cost of the derailment will run to "several million dollars."

The commission will hold an inquiry.

SHARBOT LAKE - A citizens' railway safety group called Friday for a public inquiry into Tuesday's train derailment, as cleanup officials reported success in containing partially-sunken cargo containers filled with an acidic chemical.

Harold Morrison, chairman of the M-TRAC Rail Safety Organization, said: "This is a frightening wreck and I have a feeling there's a lot more (to it) than what you see."

Although the Canadian Transport Commission has announced an official investigation into the derailment of a CP freight train carrying more than 80 tonnes of hydrogen sulphate at Sucker Lake west of Perth, Morrison says a full-fledged public inquiry is needed.

He said he is "concerned about the speed of the train and how it was being operated on New Year's Eve" and questioned how safe it was to have 12 locomotives on a train.

M-TRAC, which stands for the Metro Toronto Residents' Action Committee, was formed by 25 community groups in Toronto after the 1979 Mississauga train wreck. CTC spokesman Evan Browne said public inquiries are reserved for fundamental policy issues affecting rail traffic across the country.

CTC officials and the provincial environment ministry also said Friday it is unlikely any charges will be laid in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile, cleanup crews at the wreck site, about 120 kilometres southwest of Ottawa, said Friday the cost of the accident and cleanup could run as high as \$12 million.

Thirty-five cars and eight locomotives are crumpled along a rail line flanked by a rock cut and the lake.

After earlier attempts to build a sand and gravel dike failed, workers managed Friday to build a plywood retaining wall around two cargo containers filled with hydrogen sulphate that crashed into the lake.

The plywood wall, sunk about one metre into the lake bottom, is a precautionary measure should the cardboard and plastic barrels in the rail container begin to leak.

Stan Kaplan, the Canadian Transport Commission's director of dangerous goods, said Friday the water under one of the partially submerged rail containers showed a slight acidity but levels were normal in other parts of the lake.

Kaplan said one or two barrels inside the rail container may have burst during the derailment, sending a spray of powder over other derailed cars and in the immediate vicinity of the chemical containers.

He said the acid levels were not enough to affect any form of life in the lake.

If all goes according to plan, the containers will be hauled gently out of the lake on Tuesday, he said.

Cleanup crews are also struggling to soak up thousands of litres of diesel fuel oil which seeped onto about 450 metres of frozen lake.

By late Friday afternoon, about 5,000 gallons of oil had been removed from the lake surface by cleanup crews using sponges to soak up the oil and shovels to scrape off the surface layers of ice, slush and oil.

Kaplan said test holes dug into the ice showed no oil was getting into the lake.

Glenn Swanson, CP's general manager of operations for the eastern region, said the train was travelling within the regulation speed of 45 to 50 miles an hour for unpopulated areas

Trucker leaps just before train crash

An Ottawa transport driver narrowly escaped death Wednesday by leaping from the cab of his - truck just as it was struck by a VIA passenger train at a Hwy. 17 railroad crossing near Renfrew.

None of the passengers aboard VIA's Vancouver-bound Canadian was injured as the train plowed into the front of the truck at 2:15 p.m., destroying the cab and ripping open the front of the trailer.

Provincial police in Renfrew believe that the driver, John Williams, of Fox Hollow Crescent, jumped from the cab of the truck moments before impact.

Williams was treated at a Renfrew hospital before being transferred to Ottawa Civic Hospital where he underwent surgery late Wednesday. He received multiple injuries, including fractures and a concussion, but they are not considered life threatening. -

Hospital officials said Williams was still in a surgical recovery room this morning and his condition was not immediately available.

Hwy. 17 was reopened at 2:35 a.m. today, 12 hours after the accident. Motorists had been detoured through the hamlet of Haley Station, about 10 kilometres west of Renfrew.

Debris from the destroyed truck and its trailer unit, which was loaded with bales of paper, littered the road.

Railway crews were on the scene today with a crane brought from Montreal to lift the train's steam generator unit, located behind the lead engine, back on the track.

OPP Cpl. Bob Bittorf, of the Renfrew detachment, said the impact of the collision knocked the unit off the tracks.

The train continued about half a kilometre after the collision before coming to a stop.

Train passengers were bused to Sudbury where they were to continue their trip aboard another train.

A damage estimate to the train was not available today.

It left Montreal at 10:35 a.m., stopping in Ottawa at 1 p.m., before continuing west.

Toxic drums removed individually. With picture.

About 100 barrels filled with toxic chemicals were being removed individually early today from a rail container that crashed into Sucker Lake during a train derailment New Year's Eve.

CP Rail crews used huge winches to lift one partially-submerged rail container from the isolated lake Saturday, but the second was too badly damaged to be lifted from the water while loaded.

A spokesman for CP said cleanup of the second container should be completed by day's end.

The shipment of sodium hydrogen sulphate was part of a 36-car derailment near Sharbot Lake, about 120 kilometres southwest of Ottawa.

The chemical makes sulfuric acid when mixed with water. Cleanup crews built a dike of sand, gravel and plywood around the submerged cargo to make sure the lake wasn't polluted in case of leaks from the containers.

Before they could get to the chemical, workers had to tackle other smashed containers that fell on the rail cars during the train wreck.

Stan Kaplan, the Canadian Transport Commission's director of dangerous goods, said the weekend salvage was time-consuming, but went according to plan.

"It is better to do it slowly and carefully than to do it quickly and screw things up," Kaplan said.

As the first container was pulled from the water, a small amount of chemical spilled onto the sandy embankment of the rail line, and was immediately neutralized with sodium carbonate.

Both CP and environment ministry officials regularly checked the water around the crash site for evidence of acidity, but concluded the spill was successfully neutralized.

Jack Pruner the environment ministry's officer for the Kingston area, said the chemical posed little danger to life in the lake.

"It's very localized and there's not enough to cause too much of a problem," said Pruner.

"We're fortunate the cars weren't carrying chemicals of a more toxic nature."

He said a greater environmental hazard was posed by thousands of litres of diesel fuel oil that seeped onto part of the frozen lake.

Most of the 22,700 litres has been sponged off the surface, and Pruner said the extent of damage will not be known until spring thaw.

In the meantime, he will conduct regular tests to make sure no fuel leaves the lake, entering the water system that supplies drinking water to Perth.

Eight locomotives and 36 cars of the 90-car train derailed in the accident, tearing up a kilometre of track.

The CTC, which suspects track problems caused the crash, is conducting an inquiry.

Four containers, each carrying 18,000 kilograms of the food preservative, were thrown from flat cars when the Toronto-bound train cr--

14/01/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Belleville*

Clean-up of toxic barrels completed

A cleanup crew has finished removing about 100 barrels of toxic chemicals from one of the rail containers that crashed into Sucker Lake in a train derailment New Year's Eve.

A crew from Syntath Services Ltd. of Thorold, near Niagara Falls, a company that specializes in chemical spills, began plucking individual barrels from the damaged container using a large crane Sunday afternoon. They finished Monday. (13/01)

CP Rail spokesman Jim Barlow said the barrels will be taken to a siding at Bolingbroke, about 24 kilometres from the crash site, where it will remain until it's decided how to dispose of the chemical.

The shipment of the food preservative sodium hydrogen sulphate was part of a 36-car derailment. Four containers, each carrying 18,000 kilograms of the chemical were thrown from flat cars when the Toronto-bound train crashed, tearing up a kilometre of track.

15/01/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Carleton Place**Moodie Drive*

Motorist only bruised in crash with train

A Kanata man escaped with bruises after his car struck a VIA Rail passenger train Tuesday at a CP Rail crossing on Moodie Drive, just north of Hwy. 7 in Bells Corners.

Hugh Irvine, 41, of Rutherford Crescent, said later he didn't notice the flashing warning signal as he approached the crossing on his way home for lunch about 12:30 p.m.

When he slammed on the brakes, his northbound car slid into the engine of the westbound, four-car Transcontinental train, which was travelling about 40 kmh.

The impact spun his 1985 Pontiac into another car which had stopped at the crossing moments before Irvine came along.

The VIA train, which was on its way from Montreal to Sudbury, was delayed 25 minutes. There were no injuries to passengers and the engine wasn't damaged.

The crossing was without safety gates.

Irvine said he noticed some cars stopped in two lanes at the crossing, but believed they planned a left turn.

When he realized the reason was a train, it was too late.

Following the crash, Nepean police charged Irvine with careless driving under the Highway Traffic Act.

The CP line where Tuesday's accident occurred is used by the Transcontinental, which travels at much lower speeds than the maximum 145-kmh used by Toronto-bound trains.

21/01/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Maniwaki*

Firms pledge \$5.3 million to Wakefield steam train

Businesses have pledged a total of \$5.3 million to support the once-doomed Hull-Wakefield steam train, consultants told about 100 Wakefield-area residents Monday.

The Canadian Transport Commission originally planned to force the dilapidated line from Hull to Wakefield to shut in December.

But it relented when various lobby groups insisted they could find the funds to keep the train, a perennial tourist attraction, in operation.

The money, to be donated over five years, was promised by a group of large corporations, said Guy Dancause of Perrin Lomax Consultants of Ottawa.

Dancause said \$3.5 million of the corporate donation would be needed to upgrade the track bed to Wakefield.

Another \$1.5 million would be needed to build a rail line between Montcalm Street in Hull, the proposed point of origin of the tourist train, and the existing track.

Dancause said the corporations, whom he refused to name, have given written agreement to make the tax-deductible donations.

He said the donations won't be made until it's known for certain the train will go ahead.

23/01/1986 *Low Down to Hull and Bac* *Maniwaki*

Includes a picture of Rene Chaumont, CP Rail Maniwaki subdivision Roadmaster, with Richard Wieland, Track Maintenance Foreman, supervising the cutting of the rails at mileage 20.5 of the Maniwaki subdivision, "forever ending rail service to Maniwaki". (Branchline).

04/02/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Montreal and Ottawa

Ottawa, Chateau Laurier

In an official statement on February 3rd, Marcel Masse, Minister of Communications, has announced that \$2.5 million will be expended on converting the abandoned railway tunnel adjacent to Ottawa's Chateau Laurier Hotel into a facility for the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography. Aside from renovations to the tunnel itself, the project will also involve the construction of a concrete and crystal entrance that will provide access from Rideau Street to the tunnel area beneath. The roof of the tunnel will continue to serve as the access road to the Chateau Laurier parking garage.

For those readers unfamiliar with Ottawa's rail scene, the tunnel provided access to Ottawa Union Station (located across the street from the Chateau Laurier) for Canadian Pacific trains arriving in Ottawa via the Alexandra (Inter-provincial) Bridge from various points in the Province of Quebec. Sharing the facility for many years as well, were the street cars of the Hull Electric Company whose double-tracked line paralleled both sides of the CPR across the bridge and into the tunnel until March 1946. It is also worthwhile to note that the Hull cars were turned on a loop located in the tunnel which also crossed the CP line. The structure was abandoned for railway purposes following the closing of the former Ottawa Union Station (now the National Conference Centre) in favour of the current suburban facility in Alta Vista during the summer of 1966. (From Branchline 3 1986)

06/02/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Carleton Place

Moodie Drive

Motorist fined for crashing into VIA train ;

A Kanata man who escaped with only bruises after his car struck, a VIA Rail passenger train last month, pleaded guilty to careless driving and was fined \$128. Hugh Irvine, 41, of Rutherford Crescent, 5, had not noticed the flashing warning signal as he approached a CP Rail crossing on Moodie Drive, just north of Hwy. 7 in Bells Corners.

He was charged under the Highway Traffic Act with careless driving.

14/02/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Lachute

Two terrified as train pushed car

Two Hull women lived through some horrifying minutes Thursday as their car was pushed about 30 metres after colliding with a Canadian Pacific freight train at a Hull level crossing.

Hull police said the driver of the car was watching for traffic behind her as she attempted to change lanes when she drove onto the train crossing without noticing the warning signals

Hull Lieut. Gilles Belair said the southbound train, was travelling about five kilometres per hour.

The two women in the car, driver Therese Foucault, 47, and passenger Claire Leduc, 48, walked away with minor cuts.

21/02/1986

Ottawa Citizen

New York Central

Finch

The Women's Institute of Finch (Ontario) is trying to locate a movie shot in the 1950s by the National Film Board, called The Stationmaster which featured one Dalton Henry who was the station agent in that community. The film appears to have portrayed the life and duties of a stationmaster at a junction station, Finch, being the junction between the New York Central's Ottawa-Cornwall line and Canadian Pacific's Winchester subdivision. To date, all efforts to find the celluloid have been in vain. (Branchline).

24/02/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Montreal and Ottawa

Navan

Photo shows CP Rail 1832

Train-truck crash kills Vanier man, injures another

Slippery road conditions are being blamed for Saturday's fatal collision between a freight train and a pick-up truck near Navan, just east of Ottawa.

Jean-Yves Beaudin, 19, of Lal-lemand Street in Vanier, died within minutes of the crash. He was driving the pick-up truck when it was hit by a three-car Canadian Pacific train.

Passenger Gerald Godard, 18, of Montfort Street, also in Vanier, walked away with minor injuries and was released from Ottawa General Hospital this morning.

The two men, in a pick-up truck carrying auto parts, were headed towards Vars on icy Eighth Concession Road.

Godard jumped from the truck just prior to the collision, which pushed the truck about 300 metres past the crossing.

"We didn't hear the train at all," said Godard. "When we saw it, he (Beaudin) slammed on the brakes, but there was too much ice so I decided to jump."

He was thrown clear of the train after he bumped his knee on the locomotive and later underwent surgery to correct torn ligaments in his knee.

Their truck and the train collided on a rarely-used secondary rail line near the Centaur Riding Stables. The crossing was marked with road signs only.

According to a resident of the area, the track hadn't been used for months. Police are blaming the accident on slippery roads and say no charges will be laid.

Canadian Transport Commission spokesman Peter Schnobb says commission officials will be reviewing police and railway officials' reports of the accident as part of their own investigation.

Railway officials say the locomotive was travelling between 48 and 56 kilometres an hour at the time of the crash. The track speed where the accident occurred is 64 kmh.

Beaudin's father, Roland, 63, said his son and Godard were rounding up car parts for an old car his son wanted to fix.

Godard said he barely knew Beaudin, who had contacted him through a mutual friend to help re-build the car.

Beaudin attended Andre Laurendeau High School in Vanier.

Godard, who works for a local plumbing firm and fixes cars as a hobby, said Beaudin had offered him \$100 for the job.

Beaudin is survived by his father, mother Colombe, 61, eight brothers and six sisters. "We are a big family and he was the last one at home" his father said.

CP police investigator T.R. Veary said the train was heading towards Plantagenet,

Veary said the secondary line is being considered by the railway for abandonment.

John Guertin, 53, was upstairs in his house nearby when he heard the crash.

He called police and an ambulance and then went to investigate the train and truck.

The road was slippery Saturday morning Guertin said, adding the first car to arrive at the scene, a Cumberland fire department cruiser, slid into a ditch.

The truck was a total loss,

03/03/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Beachburg

Billings Avenue

Police urge greater caution after crash at train crossing

Police are urging motorists to be more careful at railroad crossings in the wake of an accident in which a 77-year-old Ottawa woman was critically injured.

It was the 14th train-crossing accident in Eastern Ontario in the past year. Seven people have been killed in that period.

Ivy Maguire, of Alta Vista Drive, was driving home Saturday after visiting her sick husband in Riverside Hospital when her car was struck by a VIA train a few blocks from the hospital.

She is unconscious, but in stable condition at Ottawa General Hospital following the 11:15 a.m. accident at the signal-equipped crossing on Billings Avenue, near Billings Bridge.

The woman was travelling south on Billings Avenue when her 1981 Malibu was struck on the passenger side by a Toronto to Ottawa VIA train.

Ottawa police believe Maguire failed to see the warning lights at the crossing, which also is equipped with warning bells.

03/03/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Alexandria

Casselman

In another accident involving a train on the weekend, a pickup truck was scraped by a westbound VIA train in Casselman. The driver drove off without waiting for police.

A VIA spokesman said crew members saw the truck as the train struck its rear bumper.

The train, which was bound for Ottawa from Montreal, stopped and returned to the scene of the accident to find that the vehicle had disappeared.

"It looks like a driver went against a flashing red light and just got his rear end wiped out," said Casselman OPP Const. Langis Lebel.

03/04/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Long Sault

LONG SAULT - A broken wheel axle may have caused a spectacular 19-car freight train derailment here Wednesday that is blocking the main east-west CN line.

Witnesses saw sparks coming from the wheels of a boxcar seconds before the 147-car west-bound train jumped the tracks in this community 10 kilometres west of Cornwall.

Work crews aided by a huge auxiliary crane from Montreal are working today to clear the 19 smashed boxcars from the twisted west track, which covers about half a kilometre of the double main line.

Rail officials, who are still investigating the cause of the accident, hope to reopen one line by Friday afternoon.

No one was injured in the accident, which occurred shortly after 9 p.m. at the Avonmore Road crossover in the north end of the village. The train was manned by a four-man crew. "We're extremely lucky that none of the cars contained toxic materials," says Chief Jim Mac-Gillivray of the Long Sault fire department.

"It could have been much worse," said Const. Bob Taplay of the OPP. One car came within 15 metres of a natural-gas distribution centre,

Five derailed cars carrying paper products caught fire and kept local firemen on the scene until late this morning. They were aided by firemen from nearby St. Andrews and Cornwall.

"The train began to sway from side to side and there were sparks coming from one of the cars," said Bill Ver-milyea, a passing Brighton motorist. "Then it buckled and a huge ball of fire came from one of the cars."

Local officials said there is also an unconfirmed report that riders on an east-bound passenger train saw sparks coming from the bottom of a boxcar.

They also said broken rail ties at the derailment scene indicate undercarriage problems.

04/04/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Long Sault

VIA passengers bussed while crews clear derailment

LONG SAULT - CN officials hoped to reopen one of the company's two main-line tracks between Montreal and Toronto today after moving 20 freight cars that derailed here Wednesday.

"Our first priority is to be able to resume service," says Mike Matthews, CN spokesman.

Since the derailment, CN freight trains have been using CP track between Montreal and Brockville.

Train passengers travelling between Toronto and Montreal weren't as lucky. VIA officials provided them with buses between Montreal and Brockville.

Although investigators haven't yet pinpointed the cause of the derailment, it is suspected a broken wheel axle caused 20 boxcars in the middle of the 147-car train to jump the track shortly after 9 p.m.

The westbound train derailed at the Avonmore Road crossover.

Witnesses said they saw sparks coming from the wheels of one boxcar seconds before the freight cars began to buckle and collide at the railway crossing.

Five of the derailed cars loaded with rolls of fibreboard burst into flames and kept smouldering for more than 12 hours.

"But we had it under control within half an hour," said Long Sault Fire Chief Jim MacGilliv-ray, whose volunteer firemen were assisted by their counterparts from nearby St. Andrews.

"We're extremely lucky that none of the cars contained any toxic materials," said MacGilliv-ray, pointing to the cluster of nearby homes and the Long Sault Yarns plant.

"Everything shook so much that I thought it was an earthquake," said Dean Alguire, whose home backs on the derailment site.

Const. Bob Taplay of the OPP said the train's four-man crew, two riding in the front and two in the caboose, were not injured.

One derailed boxcar ended up about 150 feet from a fenced natural gas depot.

Although no one was hurt, the derailed cars were badly damaged. A 600-foot section of track was ripped up.

An estimate of the damage isn't available yet.

All but two of the 20 derailed cars were loaded with fibreboard rolls. One carried aluminum ingots and the other was empty.

"It will probably take us mrough me weenena 10 cear up and repair the second line," says Matthews.

05/04/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Long Sault

Overheated bearing blamed in derailment

LONG SAULT - An overheated wheel bearing caused the 20-car freight train derailment here Wednesday that blocked the two main CN tracks between Montreal and Toronto for 38 hours.

But CN information officer Jim Adamson said Friday, "We haven't yet determined the reason for the wheelbearing to overheat."

The defective equipment has been sent to the CN research centre in Montreal for analysis.

Meanwhile, CN work crews, aided by a huge crane from Montreal, cleared the smashed railway cars off the south track so some service could resume shortly before noon Friday.

The derailment forced CN to re-route its freight trains to the CP track between Montreal and Brockville.

Train passengers travelling between Toronto and Montreal weren't as lucky. VIA officials provided them with buses between the two centres.

"We hope to be able to resume normal traffic on both tracks as early as Monday," said Adamson. Until then there will be a slight delay to pass by the accident scene for the 24 passenger and freight trains that use the tracks daily.

No one was injured in the fiery derailment which occurred shortly after 9 p.m. Wednesday in the northern sector of this bedroom community about 10 kilometres west of Cornwall.

07/04/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Lachute

Two in hospital after collision between car, train in Gatineau

A Gatineau man and woman are in hospital after their car was hit by a freight train at a crossing near Maloney Boulevard late Friday.

The collision brings to 15 the number of accidents at train crossings in the area in the past year.

Seven people have been killed in that period.

In Friday's crash, police said two other people in the car, including the male driver, were taken to hospital to be treated for minor injuries.

The driver was released early Saturday.

Police did not know the condition of the more seriously-injured victims, who are not being identified.

The collision occurred at 10:55 p.m. Friday when the car was struck by a Montreal-bound Canadian Pacific freight train.

CP Rail spokesman Herb Brooks said the eight-car freight train smashed into the rear of the car at a level crossing on Bel-lehumeur Street, north of Maloney Boulevard.

Brooks said the crossing was marked with electric signal lights and bells, both of which were working.

Police urged motorists to be more careful at railroad crossings early last month after two similar accidents occurred within the same week.

In three of the fatal accidents involving cars in the past year, the crossings were equipped with functioning, flashing signals.

CN Offers Rail-Line To Grattan, Will Enter Negotiations

Canadian National Railway has officially offered the abandoned right-of-way and the Eganville Station to Grattan Township. CN's offer was contained in a letter written by vice-president J. Roger Lagace to Grattan Reeve Mike Keller. Reeve Keller, who received the letter on April 14, read its contents into the record at last Wednesday evening's council meeting. "Since the Province of Ontario had decided not to proceed further with the acquisition of abandoned railway lines and according to CN policy in such a case, I wish to inform you that CN is agreeable to the sale of the former station building for the sum of one dollar," Mr. Lagace wrote.

Diesel fuel from derailment site still leaking into Sucker Lake

Diesel fuel is still seeping onto the surface of Sucker Lake from the rail bed where a CP Rail train derailed New Year's Eve, Ontario Environment Ministry officials said Friday.

Jim Pruner said the fuel, spilled from damaged engines at the time of the wreck, is being contained on the surface of the water by a 100-metre-long floating boom. CP Rail officials say the oil is being removed daily.

"We have no idea how long it will take for all that oil to seep out of that road bed. It could take all summer," Pruner said.

He said the problem could continue even into next winter.

There is no evidence the oil is escaping the area encircled by the boom and polluting other areas of Sucker Lake, Pruner said.

The wreck, which occurred along the isolated shores of Sucker Lake, about 120 kilometres southwest of Ottawa, involved 36 rail cars and eight engines. It tore up about a kilometre of track.

More than 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel were collected from the ice during the two-week cleanup at the wreck site, but CP Rail spokesman Jim Barlow said he didn't know how much oil is now being removed each day.

He said damage to the train during the wreck and the cleanup to date have cost CP more than \$5 million. A broken rail is being blamed for the accident, Barlow said.

Pruner said a second and third boom have been set up where the lake discharges into Sucker Creek in case the first boom is damaged and releases any of the fuel.

During the wreck, four rail containers, each containing 18,000 kilograms of the food preservative sodium hydrogen sulphate, toppled into Sucker Lake.

Only a small amount of the acidic chemical leaked into the lake and there are no signs of environmental damage, Pruner said.

TENDERS CALLED FOR LINE DISMANTLING: Canadian National is inviting bids for the dismantling and salvaging of approximately 36.3 miles of part of the abandoned portion of its Smiths Falls Subdivision (Ontario) between Chaffeys Locks (mileage 63.0) and Strathcona (mileage 99.30). Rumour has it that the rail will be re-used in branch line rehabilitation work in western Canada.

No word has been received on the eventual disposition of the remainder of the abandoned section which runs between a point just south of the Smiths Falls station and Chaffeys Lock. Sources confirm, however, that the Rideau Valley Division of the CRHA is negotiating with CN to acquire it for the purposes of setting up a tourist train operation. (Branchline).

Trial begins of Richmond man charged with 1984 train derailment.

The trial of a Richmond man charged with causing a Nepean train derailment in which 27 people were injured was to begin to-day after he failed to appear in district court Monday.

Judge Edward Houston had issued a bench warrant for the arrest of 19-year-old Randy James Rankin, of RR 2 in Richmond, after his failure to appear in court Monday.

Rankin appeared today and told the court he was confused about the starting time of Monday's trial.

Rankin is charged with interfering with railway property and causing the June 21, 1984 derailment, which cost \$2 million in damages.

The Ottawa-bound VIA train was diverted off the main tracks into a lumber yard shortly before 11 p.m. The four-car train, on a scheduled run from Toronto, collided with three flatbeds after it was diverted just west of Moodie Drive near the Jock River.

Investigators said the train was diverted onto a side track after a \$100,000 switch protected by a \$20 padlock was tampered with.

Rankin was charged with the derailment about two weeks after it occurred.

Man derailed train after being fired.

A Kanata man diverted a speeding VIA Rail passenger train into a Nepean lumber yard in retaliation for being fired by the lumber firm, a court was told Tuesday.

The man was found guilty of causing the 1984 crash in which 30 people were injured.

Randy Leslie Rankin, 18, of Melanie Crescent, was charged with interfering with transportation. He will be sentenced June 30 for the derailment of the Ottawa-bound train. The crash is estimated to have cost \$2.25 million.

Rankin told an undercover police officer shortly after the June 21 crash he tampered with a switch and diverted the train into a lumber yard, where it crashed into three flatbeds.

Nepean police Sgt. Murray Gordon, who was the only witness to testify at the non-jury trial which lasted less than two hours, told the district court Rankin was fired from Kott Lumber on Moodie Drive for stealing employees' cars.

Gordon said Rankin told an undercover police officer planted in a cell with him that he wanted to see the lumber yard "destroyed."

Rankin told the officer he and a girlfriend used a stone to break open a padlocked switch box, tampered with the device, then replaced the lock.

The girlfriend, who later confessed the act to police, was not charged. She is now in a psychiatric institution.

The action sent the train, travelling at about 80 kilometres an hour, off the main track and on a collision course with the lumber-laden flatbeds.

Gordon testified the passenger cars would likely have crashed into the deepest section of the Jock River if the flatbeds hadn't been there.

Judge Edward Houston said Rankin acted recklessly in diverting the train and likely knew his actions could injure passengers.

Gordon said several civil actions have been started against Rankin.

Rankin opted to be tried by judge alone and pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Rankin is now under psychiatric care.

A bench warrant was issued for Rankin's arrest when he failed to appear for his trial Monday. Houston said Tuesday that was a misunderstanding, adding Rankin failed to appear because he was confused about the time the trial was to start.

CP Rail Line Goes Onto Marketplace

Grattan Township Reeve Mike Keller remarked dryly that when it rains it pours.

Reeve Keller made the comment upon the introduction of a letter from G.A. Swanson, general manager of Canadian Pacific Railway, regarding company practice on abandoned rail lines.

The CP line from Payne (near Renfrew) to Eganville was abandoned in 1982 and the firm was writing the township asking if it had any interest in it, should the province turn down the opportunity to purchase it. Admaston and Bromley Townships have also been forwarded letters.

For the past couple of years, Grattan has addressed the matter of the abandoned Canadian National right-of-way and has recently indicated to CN it would be interested in entering negotiations for the purchase of the portion of the line in the township and the Eganville Station.

As of last week's meeting, no further correspondence has been received by CN to the municipality's initiative.

As far as the CP situation is concerned, the township will hold tight until which time it is advised by the company the province has no interest in the line. Reeve Keller said he hoped there would be some input from the public if and when that juncture comes to pass.

Wakefield steam train gets reprieve as dead;ine for scrapping line extgended.

For the third time in the past year, the Wakefield train excursions were given a reprieve Friday when the Canadian Transport Commission extended by a month the deadline for scrapping the line the excursions run on.

A committee of train supporters had requested the June 1 deadline be extended to Sept. 1 to give them time to take care of the necessary administrative measures to transfer ownership of the Hull-Wakefield line from CP Rail to Hull.

However, the commission ruled the deadline would only be extended to July 3 and it would be up to the committee to convince the commission that any further delays were necessary.

Guy Dancasse, a consultant for the train supporters, says he thinks the month may be long enough, but even if it is not he is satisfied the CTC has left the door open for further extensions.

It has cost taxpayers about \$45,000 in subsidies to CP Rail to keep the Hull-Wakefield line open during the past six months while supporters scrambled to organize to be able to operate daily excursions. It will cost about another \$7,000 in subsidies to keep it open another month, said Serge Pepin, a spokesman for the transport commission's legal services.

Hull Council passed a resolution Tuesday agreeing to acquire the line from CP Rail in exchange for a \$2.9-million income tax receipt to the company.

The committee of supporters, which includes the National Capital Commission and the Outaouais Development Corporation, have laid part of the blame for the extension on delays by the federal and provincial governments in examining the train project.

Quebec Transport Minister Marc-Yvan Cote said at the Outaouais economic summit held in early May that the province intended to take over the line but he would not -commit himself to the train project, demanding further studies.

The operation of the train excursions this summer is uncertain because of the new deadline and the tripling of insurance costs. It takes the NCC about two months to set up the operation of the steam train, making the earliest excursions in September.

Public meetings on the line and the train excursions are being planned in Hull, June 12; Old Chelsea, June 17 and Ste-Cecile-de-Masham, June 18.. The time and location of the meetings will be announced later.

VIA shares in costs of oil reservoir.

VIA Rail and the City of Ottawa will contribute jointly to the construction of a \$135,000 underground oil reservoir to prevent oil and fuel spills at Ottawa Station from seeping into the Rideau River. The reservoir will be built on the east bank of the Rideau River south of Hurdman Bridge. VIA will be responsible for pumping out the reservoir: its share of the construction cost will be \$60,000.

Hull urged not to buy line for Wakefield train

Hull should should stay out of efforts to save the Wakefield steam train, a member of a committee opposed to running the train between Hull and Wakefield told councillors Tuesday.

Nicholas Patterson, chairman of the 25-member Stop the Wakefield Diesel Association, said Hull shouldn't buy the line from CP Rail for a \$2.9-million income tax receipt.

Patterson said the city could find better use for the money and shouldn't perpetuate the idea that the expanded 250-trip-a-year steam train was a viable proposition.

He called the scheme "hare-brained and uneconomical" because its viability rests on passengers riding the train in November and December.

"Who will come up to Wakefield in the depths of December," he said. Hull Mayor Michel Legere said buying the land cost the city nothing because all it issued was an income tax receipt which the CPR can deduct from its earnings as a charitable donation.

Patterson also said he owns land along the rail line and felt the increase in trips would make the railway unsafe.

The train project received its third reprieve last week when the Canadian Transport Commission extended by one month the deadline for a committee of the train's supporters to come up with a proposal to save the line.

Operation of the train this summer is still uncertain.

FERRY CAPTAIN DIES: In a recent edition. The Prescott Journal carried an obituary listing the death of Captain Doug Major, a retired boat captain off the St. Lawrence River. From the early 1930s to the 1970s, Major captained the tug Prescottont, owned by the Canadian Pacific Car and Passenger Transit Company, as it shepherded the rail car barge Ogdensburg back and forth across the St. Lawrence River between Canadian Pacific's terminal at Prescott, Ontario, and the Penn Central nee New York Central yard at Ogdensburg, New York.

Major started his career in the 1920s on the Great Lakes and became a mate on the Steel Electrician, one of the first diesel-powered boats on the waterway. The Prescottont also boasted one of these early diesel engines, in addition to other features such as ice breaking capabilities. Indeed, this diesel knowledge may have helped the Captain in securing a position with CP.

In keeping with nautical tradition, the Captain ensured that everything was just so. Indeed, member Duncan duFresne has never ceased to marvel at the pristine condition of this boat and her engine room which he had the chance to visit on numerous occasions when assigned to the Prescott coal train while he was a fireman with Canadian Pacific in the 1950s.

Another piece of history bites the dust.

The Thurso and Nation Valley Railway barreled along its track for the last time June 21, 1986, leaving behind a trail of sad and resigned people. The logging railway was originally built in 1926 by the Singer Manufacturing Company to, among other reasons, haul wood from the forests for its sewing machine cabinets. In 1964 The James Maclaren Co. bought the ailing Thurso Pulp and Paper Company and continued to use the track for its own logging purposes. It was the only logging railroad left in eastern Canada and one of the few left in North America. The train crew held out for just as long as they could, says railway superintendent, Gaetan Lafleur, but they were finally forced to surrender to progress. It is now cheaper to haul the logs by truck.

"We did everything we could to keep the cost low and the directors know it. We had very good workers and it was a special situation. It was like a family, a family affair," he says.

Since 1964 Lafleur has been superintendent of the railway, as was his father before him.

Perhaps the hardest hit by the closure, Lafleur seems on the outside to have taken it in his stride saying, "Well, you know, I take things as they come, there was no other choice."

But its not hard to see that deep feelings of regret lay underneath this well weathered man's composure.

"Last year I had an idea that the closure was coming but I wasn't sure. And then I thought we could keep it up. There was a 1974-75 study that showed it was still cheaper to haul logs by train. Ant they (management) had changed their minds before about closing it down. I thought they could change their minds again". But this time, management didn't change their minds.

In fact, says Bruce Hunt, manager of logging operations, the writing had been on the wall for the past few years.

Hunt explains that the concentration of cuttable wood got further and further away from the train tracks and that the train simply became an economically impracticable method to haul the logs. Right now plans are in the offing to construct a logging road which will open up a virgin-stand of wood in Papineau-Labelle Park.

But Hunt is quick to give credit where credit is due, saying the logging train "was definitely a good operation and it had very devoted employees."

So far, Hunt says, all 12 full-time train staff have found other jobs, some placed within the Maclaren's operation and others with Valleyfield Metals, the company who got the tender to remove the train track and ties.

Five men are without permanent jobs and now Lafleur has become superintendent of the wood yard, a job with which he says he is happy.

He says he feels sadder for those who have lost their jobs than the actual loss of the train, echoing more the sentiments, one would think, of a patron than a boss. But the Maclaren's people are not the only ones sad to see the end of an era.

Colin Churcher, director general of railway safety for Transport Canada and train buff from many years back, has been riding the train route along with Gaetan and his men for a number of years.

Along with five diesel locomotives and numerous tree-length flat cars used to haul logs, Maclaren's inherited an old Canadian Pacific Railway official car that had been built at Farnham, Quebec in 1907 and purchased by the Thurso and nation Valley Railway in 1929.

In 1979 Maclaren's later donated the official car to the Bytown Railway Society which promptly set about to renovate it right there on the premises. The Society also stores an old caboose on the grounds. And the logging train would often pull the two extra cars on a weekend run, into the bush.

Churcher talks of happy times spent on those excursions, good meals cooked on the business car's wood stove, stops along quiet streams and shared precious moments.

He laments that the end of the train is the end of an era and feels most sorry for the men who gave the railway all they had.

"They worked together, played together---really it's the end of a way of life for them.

"Their attitude and cooperation were admirable. They did everything from fixing engines, to welding and the ingenuity and energy that were exercised to keep the train running without too much expense was amazing."

Churcher emphasized that the train didn't just die out or be put out to pasture because it was old and derelict and he took pains to point out that it had performed an unflinching duty.

"That last train had a big log load and it delivered the logs as it had everyday. It fulfilled its purpose right to the end".

Two locomotives saved.

Churcher is in the process of writing the history of the line and explains, "we can't save the train but we can record its history for posterity before it gets forgotten."

At the end, the Thurso train consisted of five locomotives, 85 flat cars to haul the tree lengths and 15 cars which carried saw mill logs and was only used for slashed wood.

Some 27 miles of track was opened in 1926 running from Thurso to Singer, Quebec and by 1948 it consisted of a 56 mile main track reaching spots just north of Lac Ernest. During its lifetime the train used to haul between 26 and 32 loaded flatbeds of wood once a day which would equal about 34 to 40 truck loads.

A two-phase plan was implemented by Maclaren's to slowly ease the train out of operation.

In January of 1984 they moved their slashing equipment from the woods to the yard and they started their trucking operation less than two weeks ago.

Now the company will keep two of its locomotives and some of its cars to move wood from the slashing point to the saw mill on the six and a half mile track that will remain on the grounds.

As for the rest of the track, the first of the approximately 258,000 ties has already been torn from the ground.

Randy Douglas, Valleyfield Metals' director of merchandising, estimates that about 80 percent of the ties are good and has already sold the lot to one person. He believes there to be about 8,800 tons of good quality steel which he will sell to foundries and perhaps overseas where a lighter rail, such as this one, can still be used. North American trains, explains Douglas, need heavier rail on which to travel.

Douglas doesn't mind that a piece of history is being torn from the ground, saying it's better to pull it out than to let it rot, as he says it is in the process of doing.

"And of course, because it is cheaper to haul wood by truck, no one is going to spend money on a dinosaur," Douglas says.

No indeed.

And so the "dinosaur" will be removed. It will be taken from the ground with perhaps not the same grace and necessity with which it was placed.

Certainly the labor will be much easier and quicker than it must have been to lay the track down. After all, we have modernization to help us now. Quick and easy. The less sweat the better. Time is money.

The Thurso and Nation Valley Railway served its purpose well and one cannot feel remorse at the ending of an era, at a door of history being tightly shut and locked forever.

It seems rather appropriate that the last load of wood was taken from mile 26, the same place from which the first load had been taken almost 60 years ago to the day. The circle has been completed

Erin Scullion.

Agreement may put steam train back on track by mid-August

The once-doomed Hull-Wakefield steam train could begin operating again as early as mid-August now that a tentative agreement has been reached between supporters of the line and CP Rail.

The committee of supporters, which includes the National Capital Commission and the Outaouais Development Corporation, has until July 16 to sign a final agreement reached with CP Rail in Montreal last Friday.

Hull, West Hull and La Peche agreed in May to take over the rail line from CP Rail in exchange for a \$2.9-million charitable tax receipt.

Supporters have been scrambling for months to iron out the details of the transfer.

NCC spokesman Jean Valin said Thursday night once the commission has received official notice that a final settlement has been reached, it will begin preparing promotional material and guides for the train tours.

"Although we originally heard it would take us about two months to put this material together, it could be done sooner," said Valin.

A spokesman for the National Museum of Science and Technology, which owns the steam train, said once the agreement has been signed, it will take between four to six weeks to prepare the train for regular excursions.

The steam train is to return to Ottawa next week from Vancouver, where it appeared in an international exhibition of railway steam power as part of Expo 86.

"If everything is sewn up and a schedule is agreed upon, we should be able to begin operating by mid-August," museum spokesman Jim Malone said Thursday night.

Although supporters have been fighting to expand the line to almost daily excursions, the train will only be operating twice weekly until the end of the fall season, with the expanded service beginning no sooner than 1989, said Malone.

But news the steam train will be operating once again has upset some Wakefield residents who have been fighting the expansion.

Nick Patterson, chairman of the Stop the Wakefield Diesel Association, called the agreement, a "disaster which is only in the interest of a handful of Wakefield businessmen and not the community."

Patterson said the 56-member group opposes the project because it would mean a minimum of 200 train trips and 63,000 visitors to Wakefield each year which they say would be unsafe and hold back other alternative development projects for the area.

But Jim Brown, a member of the non-profit corporation formed to save the line, said only a handful of people are opposed to the excursions because they live along the line.

Gene Savard, a consultant for the train supporters, said CP has given the group until July 16 to sign the agreement and Dec. 15 to officially transfer the deed to the property.

He said the supporters are examining the fine print of the agreement and it is "80 per cent" certain they will accept it, he said.

"It's too cheap a blow to say CP is charging too much for the line. They've told us that in fact it's the minimal value of the property," said Savard.

He said Revenue Canada could always challenge the amount of the tax receipt and correct the amount if the corporation is overcharging for the land.

Savard said CP has agreed to operate the steam train excursions, which will take place mostly during the summer, for the next four years. This will give the train supporters a chance to get the almost daily tourist train excursions, most of which will be pulled by diesel engine, on track.

09/07/1986 *Eganville Leader* *Tramway* *Dominion Rock Products*

Another Bit of Local History Is Dismantled

Sixty-three years ago, limestone cut from a nearby quarry made its way high over the Fourth Chute road, between Eganville and Douglas, for the first time on a newly-built tramway, to be dumped into one of three big kilns.

Ever since, motorists have passed under this tramway, marvelling at the structure and its huge supporting towers. Abandoned for nearly 20 years, many are unaware of the history behind the tramway and the lime kilns and in recent years, the old site has become sort of an attraction in itself. But it's all history now.

The last piece of steel overpass was dismantled and trucked away last Monday.

The steel overpass over the Fourth Chute Road that was used for carting lime stone from the quarries in small cars on a railway track to the kilns, and the kilns themselves were dismantled in 1987.

16/07/1986 *Ottawa Citizen* *Beachburg* *Achray*

Freight train derails in bush

ALGONQUIN PARK - An eastbound Canadian National freight train went off the tracks in the dense bush of this wilderness park Monday, but no one was injured and no hazardous chemicals were spilled.

Eleven of the train's 85 cars left the tracks about two kilometres west of Achray Station, near the east end of the park, just before 8 p.m.

The cause of the derailment hasn't been established. A team of CN officials on the scene Tuesday were expected to conclude their investigation Tuesday.

CN spokesman Louise Filion said the train was not carrying any chemicals and none of the four crew members was injured.

The 20th to 30th cars from the caboose went off the tracks and over the sidings, landing on both sides of the track.

Filion was unable to estimate the damage.

The line is expected to be closed until about 6 p.m. today while a mobile crane and cleanup crew replace the cars on the line.

Filion didn't know exactly what the 11 derailed cars contained but company notes indicate they were carrying "general goods" that presented no environmental or health hazards.

The eastbound freight was travelling from Edmonton to Montreal at about 50 km an hour at the time.

Hull given 15-day extension on Wakefield train project.

Hull Council has been given a 15-day extension by CP Rail to decide whether to take over the Hull-to-Wakefield rail line.

Hull Aid. Fern Nadon said the city is ready to sign an agreement with CP but not before its lawyers examine more closely the 12-page "memorandum of understanding" CP is proposing. In exchange for giving up the line, CP is to get a \$2.9 million tax concession from the federal government.

Nadon said there are a few clauses in the agreement, which was to be signed this month, which council may ask CP to change.

Monday, West Hull Council one of three municipalities asked to sign the agreement voted unanimously to drop out of the project after receiving a negative report from its lawyer.

As well, the mayor of La Peche, the third municipality involved, doesn't think his community will sign the agreement either.

However, Hull may acquire the entire line, including the portions in West Hull (about 75 per cent) and La Peche.

West Hull Mayor Doug Minnes said the agreement being proposed by CP is "one-sided" in CP's favor and "is beyond the financial resources of this municipality."

Minnes said there are too many unanswered questions in connection with the document, adding: "I cannot put the municipality's assets at risk to get into the train business."

The agreement asks the municipalities to assume liability for any claims made in connection with the line, whether or not it was "contributed to by the negligence of CP Rail".

As well, it requires the municipalities to arrange for the supply of the railway cars and locomotives, to take out and maintain insurance coverage of no less than \$5 million, and repair and maintain the line.

Nadon, acting mayor of Hull, said acquiring the line will not cost Hull anything and the city has no intention of spending anything on maintenance.

He said a non-profit corporation made up of local interested parties plans to operate tourist train excursions and would be responsible for the repairs.

Until the agreement is signed, the Wakefield Steam Train will not operate this year. If an agreement is reached, the National Capital Commission and the Museum of Science and Technology will run the train for the first two years with CP's assistance.

23/07/1986 *Ottawa Citizen* *Maniwaki*

Deal puts steam train back on track

Three West Quebec municipalities have agreed to take over the Wakefield steam train track and expect to sign a final agreement with CP Rail within the next two weeks.

If the deal is closed as expected, the train could be chugging its way through the Gatineau Hills to Wakefield by late August or early September, said Jim Malone, a spokesman for the Museum of Science and Technology.

"It will take from two to four weeks from the day the agreement is signed to get things ready to go."

CP, owner of the track, will give it up to the municipalities for a \$2.9-million tax concession.

CP has also agreed to give the municipalities \$280,000 in a trust fund to cover any expenses incurred in the transaction.

The company was close to signing an agreement with Hull, West Hull and La Peche earlier this month when West Hull Council backed out of the deal, saying its lawyer advised against it.

It was a serious setback for the project, since Hull and La Peche representatives didn't know if they could take over West Hull's portion of the land.

But Friday, West Hull Council changed its decision at a special meeting. Mayor Doug Minnes said problems of insurance and other contractual details had been resolved to the lawyer's satisfaction.

In response to West Hull's move, Hull Council Tuesday passed the proposal to take over the track. La Peche passed the agreement Monday.

If the agreement with CP is signed, the National Capital Commission and the Museum of Science and Technology would run the train for two years.

The train's future after 1987 is uncertain, but local politicians say a committee of interested parties has indicated a willingness to run it permanently.

But not everyone is happy the train may be back on track.

Nicholas Patterson, head of the Stop The Diesel Movement, says West Hull politicians had a secret meeting Friday at which no members of the public were present.

Minnes said the Friday meeting was not secret and that members of the public were allowed to attend. Nobody did, he said.

09/08/1986 *Ottawa Citizen* *Smiths Falls* *Moodie Drive*

Crown seeks five year term for man who derailed train

A Kanata man who intentionally derailed a speeding VIA passenger train into a lumber yard, injuring about 30 people, should spend five years in prison, a Crown prosecutor said Friday.

Curt Flanagan told a district court judge that Randy Leslie Rankin, of Melanie Crescent, should be sent to federal penitentiary as punishment for the June 1984 derailment of the Ottawa-bound passenger train.

Rankin, 19, was convicted in May of tampering with a railway switch box.

His actions sent the train, filled with unsuspecting passengers travelling from Toronto, hurtling at about 80 kilometres an hour off the main track and into a Moodie Drive lumber yard.

About 30 people were sent to hospital with injuries ranging from aches and pains to broken bones. Damage was estimated at \$2.25 million.

The train collided with several lumber-laden flatbeds. They fortunately acted as a buffer, stopping the train from plunging into a deep section of the Jock River.

Rankin flipped the switch in retaliation for being fired by the Nepean lumber firm, Knott Lumber. He was fired after being caught stealing employees' cars, evidence at his trial showed. Evidence indicated Rankin wanted to see the lumber yard "destroyed".

Flanagan described the passengers as "the most innocent victims of a criminal act."

He said Rankin knew when he flipped the switch that people could be hurt, possibly killed, but just didn't seem to care.

Defence lawyer Kenneth Hall agreed the crime was a serious one, but asked Judge Edward Houston to take into consideration his client's low intelligence, immaturity and poor upbringing.

Hall said Rankin would benefit most from one-to-one counselling, something said he his client was unlikely to get because the system is swamped with offenders in need of such assistance.

Hall urged the judge to sentence Rankin to 12 to 18 months in jail and three years on probation. Rankin pleaded not guilty to the rarely laid charge of interfering with public transportation. There are no identical cases involving such a charge reported anywhere in the country, and only one similar one dating back to 1909.

Rankin was convicted by Houston based on information from a former girlfriend who helped flip the switch, and on a confession he gave an undercover officer.

The girlfriend was not charged because of psychiatric problems.

He is to be sentenced Sept. 12.

One killed as train levels van

A Toronto-bound passenger train smashed into a light blue van on Greenbank Road early this morning, killing at least one person.

VIA officials said none of the 25 passengers on the overnight train were hurt in the 12:20 a.m. accident.

Nepean police, fire and ambulance officials would give no official statement about casualties at 2:30 a.m., but a coroner was called to the scene and eye witnesses said at least one body was taken from the wreck.

The train, travelling west on the CN tracks, hit the van at the Greenbank crossing south of Fallowfield Road and carried it about 200 metres to the Jockvale Road before stopping. The van was wrapped around the train engine, and one fender was found about 20 metres from the collision point.

At the crossing, about 30 people looked on as police and fire officials used flash lights to search the tracks for other possible victims.

Another 60 people gathered at Jockvale, where the engineer and passengers remained inside the train while the investigation continued for more than two hours.

Nepean police would say only "It's serious and we're on the scene."

David Smith, 33, was on his way to his Barrhaven home when stopped by a tangle of emergency vehicles that included seven police cars, two fire vehicles, two ambulances and two tow trucks.

He said the train and van appeared to be sandwiched together.

Carol Greenwell, also of Barrhaven, said the gates at the Greenbank crossing don't always work properly and the engineer usually blows the whistle.

"Tonight the whistle was louder than usual and then we heard a crunch," she said.

The train, with an engine and two passenger cars, left the Ottawa station at 11:59 p.m. Friday, a VIA spokesman said.

Officials said recently the overnight passenger service is to be cancelled this fall.

25/08/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Kingston

Off the track: Inspectors believe an overheated axle caused 11 cars of a 131-car freight train to derail early Sunday in a residential area of Kingston. The derailment resulted in the line's temporary closure. A CN spokesman said none of the derailed cars carried dangerous substances.

25/08/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Smiths Falls

Greenbank Road

Motorist hit by train likely thought he had time to cross tracks: officials

An Ottawa man killed early Saturday when his van was struck by a passenger train at the Greenbank Road crossing likely thought he had time to drive around the barricade before the train passed by, police and VIA officials say.

Nepean police today said a conductor on the train saw the van approaching the crossing at a high rate of speed. Andre Verret, of VIA's Montreal office, said:

"We can't presume the results of the investigation in advance. But we've seen many incidents like this before and it looks that way (that victim drove around the barricade)."

Both VIA, the passenger rail service, and the Canadian Transport Commission are investigating the 12:20 a.m. accident in which John Billings, 31, of Ritchie Street, was killed.

Billings was returning home alone after helping his brother with masonry work Friday at a car dealership on Hwy. 16 when his northbound van collided with the westbound train.

"The barriers were working properly," Nepean Staff Sgt. Ronald Driscoll said Saturday.

Billings, married and a father of four, was to start a new job today.

"He just got off welfare and was getting into the construction business. He was just starting to get a break," his brother, Peter, said Saturday.

None of the train's 31 passengers was injured. They were delayed more than three hours before continuing to Toronto by bus.

Nepean police and VIA officials say the crossing's flashing lights, warning bells, and wooden barriers were working properly. The barriers were intact after the accident.

"We don't consider it's a particularly dangerous crossing," said Verret.

"It's got everything to pre-empt possible accidents. But if somebody wants to play games, we're a bit at the mercy of somebody who wants to use their imagination."

Peter Billings, 32, a cement finisher, said his brother, had spent Friday evening learning a few tricks of the trade before starting his first job Monday.

Peter Billings said his brother Barrie, 25, saw skid marks "about 40 feet long" near the accident, which, he says, indicates their brother was trying to stop.

26/08/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Long Sault

CN Rail gives Long Sault fire department Jaws of Life in thanks for derailment work

LONG SAULT - The local volunteer fire department has been presented with "Jaws of Life" rescue equipment by CN Rail to thank the firefighters for their work during an April derailment near here.

"They did excellent work and I was impressed by their actions and commitment," said Barry Lee, CN Rail superintendent for southern Ontario, in presenting the \$20,000 device.

In praising local firefighters, Lee said the freight-train derailment could have been worse had a nearby gas line and pumping station been damaged.

A delighted Fire Chief Jim MacGillivray said the Jaws of Life, used to cut and pry wreckage, was the only major equipment his department lacked.

The derailment occurred shortly after 9 p.m. April 2 at the Avonmore Road crossing, blocking CN's main tracks between Montreal and Toronto for 38 hours.

Although no one was injured, 20 cars of the 139-car westbound train jumped the tracks and were damaged severely. CN investigators said the derailment was caused by an overheated wheel-bearing.

All but two of the derailed cars were loaded with fireboard rolls, and some caught fire. Of the other derailed cars, one carried aluminium ignots and the other was empty.

Couple, grandchildren die in pre-school outing

CARLETON PLACE An Almonte couple and their two grandchildren were killed Friday afternoon when a Sudbury-bound VIA Rail passenger train smashed into their car at a level crossing three kilometres east of here.

Dead are Stanley John Taylor and his wife Joan Norma Taylor, both 64, Caroline Moxley, 6, and Graham Moxley, 4.

The youngsters were the only children of the Taylors' daughter Jill and her husband Robert Moxley, of R.R. 1, Almonte.

Const. Neil Fennell of the OPP's Perth detachment said the accident occurred at 12:55 p.m. Friday while the Taylor car was travelling south towards Hwy. 7 on County Rd. 17.

Travelling at about 110 kmh, the train hit the car broadside and dragged it about 20 pole lengths down the track.

The cause of the accident is still under investigation, and no decision has been made about an inquest. Driving conditions were ideal, with clear skies and a dry, paved road.

Fennell said the car was so badly smashed that it took police and Beckwith Twp. firemen several hours to get the victims out.

The children's aunt, Susan Moxley said the four were headed for a drive in the country.

"They were going to stay the night at their grandparents as a final treat before the beginning of school.

Beverly Smith, manager of Via Rail's Ontario public affairs, said the train involved was VIA's Transcontinental No. 1.

It left Montreal Friday morning and was bound for the west coast. None of the 150 passengers were injured.

Undamaged, the train resumed its trip around 4:30 p.m.

The engineer, pale and shaken would say little about the tragedy. "They just drove in front of us, that's all I can say," he said before driving away.

Hours after most of the wreckage had been towed away, people were still arriving to survey the crash site. They found it still strewn with pieces of wreckage, including a headlight, part of the car's front grille and pieces of the dashboard.

Fennell said this was the first he's ever heard of a fatal accident at the crossing, which is indicated only by a white wooden sign.

A Carleton Place resident, who declined to be identified, said it was not a tricky crossing. "It is a level crossing. You can see quite a ways both ways. What more can they do?"

01/09/1986 *Vialogue**Kingston (CN)**Brockville*

RENOVATIONS COMPLETED: VIA Rail Canada has just finished renovating the interior of the Brockville (Ontario) station. The project involved an expansion of the waiting room from 645 square feet to 1,160 square feet. As well, a new ticket office and baggage room have been created. In addition, the Grand Trunk-era structure also received a new heating system as well as being made more accessible for disabled persons.

To free up space for the enlarged waiting room and new ticket and baggage facilities, the CN operator, yardmaster, and crew booking and dispatching operations were moved to the CN administration building located to the east of the station. The Operator's "Bay" now occupies the building's former main entrance to the building, while the crewing functions are carried out in an area on its west side, formerly occupied by the CN Police. (Branchline)

03/09/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Maniwaki*

Wakefield steam train station-bound until 1987

High operating costs and insurance coverage have put an end to hopes of reviving the once-doomed Hull-Wakefield steam train in time for colorful fall excursions.

But organizers are confident the steam train will be pulling out of the station by next summer.

"I'm disappointed that we were unable to get things going this fall," said John Trent, spokesman for the Outaouais and Gatineau Valley Railway Committee, a 1,400-member group that has been pushing for the train's revival for two years.

A final agreement was reached July 31 between Hull, West Hull and La Peche to buy the Hull-Wakefield line for a \$2.9-million tax receipt.

The future of the train had been in doubt since CP Rail was given permission to abandon the line in December 1984.

Once the final agreement was reached, organizers had hoped to operate at least nine train runs this year.

"But it just wouldn't have been cost efficient to run the train for such a short period," said National Capital Commission spokesman Jean Valin.

He said a combination of insurance costs, hiring tickets sellers and crew members and repairing the train line are the main reasons for the delay.

"Since we were looking at about nine trips, it would have cost more than \$9,000 each time the train pulled out of the station. We would have had to charge patrons about \$30 a head to recoup the cost," said Valin.

As well, about \$80,000 in repairs are needed to the track.

At a council meeting Tuesday, Hull Mayor Michel Legere said the repair costs were far too high for so few trips.

Legere said the train must be self-sufficient and that a detailed cost-analysis of the project is needed as soon as possible.

He said he would arrange meetings with the Outaouais Development Corporation, the NCC and the concerned municipalities to "put together a management plan."

06/09/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Alexandria*

VIA offers rail mystery

VIA Rail is staging its first Murder Mystery Train package Sept. 13 and 14 aboard a special car on the Ottawa-Montreal run.

In the past, other companies have rented VIA cars to conduct murder mysteries, but this is the first time VIA is running the show, said VIA official Pierre Santoni.

Local actors will play roles in the participatory drama, starting when the train pulls out of Ottawa station Saturday at 9:50 a.m. Lunch is served on the train before it arrives in Montreal.

Participants will stay at the Europa Hotel on Drummond Street in downtown Montreal where they also dine Saturday night and breakfast the following morning.

The train leaves Montreal Sunday at 1:50 p.m. Lunch is included on the return trip.

Cost is \$179 per person and includes rail ticket, one night's hotel accommodation, breakfast, two lunches and dinner.

Santoni said the package will appeal to mystery buffs and to those interested in having fun aboard the train.

"So far we've got a lot of older, married couples going on the trip," said Santoni.

The trip is limited to 35 people but a second car may be added if the response warrants it, he said.

09/09/1986 *Ottawa Citizen**Smiths Falls**Greenbank Road*

Another investigation into a separate accident Aug. 23 that killed John Billings, 3L of Richie Street, has ruled he tried to drive around the crossing barrier on Greenbank Road in Nepean. "We feel that the driver had gone around the barrier," said Peter Schnobb, spokesman for the Canadian Transport Commission, which is responsible for railway safety. The commission made the ruling based on police and CN rail reports about the accident. A Toronto-bound VIA Rail passenger train hit the van. Cyr said many of the accidents he's investigated are caused by driver error.

09/09/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Carleton Place

Carleton Place

Man's hearing impairment may have caused fatal car-train accident

Canadian Transport Commission officials believe an Almonte man's hearing impairment caused the car-train accident that killed four people Aug. 29 near Carleton Place.

Stanley John and Joan Norma Taylor, both 64, and their grandchildren Caroline, 6, and Graham Moxley, 4, were killed when a Sudbury-bound VIA Rail passenger train smashed into their car at a public crossing, which is marked only by a white wooden sign.

"Mr. Taylor was a handicapped driver with a hearing impairment," said Bill Bell, an Almonte resident and engineer with the transport commission.

"It looked to us to be a relatively safe crossing with little or no problems."

Although the investigation into the accident has not been completed, Bell said Canadian Transport Commission officials believe Taylor's hearing impairment may have prevented him from hearing the oncoming train.

Investigators are also returning to the scene to check reports that a cornfield might have impaired his view of the train from one angle, he added.

A Perth OPP spokesman said an inquest will be held but a date has not yet been set.

In the wake of the accident, Bell is helping to organize a seminar to be held Friday by Operation Lifesaver for about 900 schoolchildren in Almonte.

Roger Cyr, national director of the railway safety organization, will speak to schoolchildren at G.L. Comba public school, St. Mary's separate school and Naismith Memorial school Friday. He hopes his messages about safety, along with a presentation by CN security police on vandalism and trespassing, will help prevent similar accidents.

CN security police will also attend the seminars to discuss problems such as trespassing and vandalism.

Operation Lifesaver is responsible for public education campaigns on train, car and pedestrian safety, engineering at train crossings and inspections and police enforcement.

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13/09/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Smiths Falls

Moodie Drive

Teenager jailed for derailment

A Kanata man convicted of causing a 1984 train crash in which 27 people were injured was jailed Friday for two years less a day by a judge who said he deserved a second chance.

District court Judge Edward Houston said he could not sentence Randy Leslie Rankin, 19, to a longer term because it would "ruin him for life, and that's not the purpose of criminal law."

Rankin, of Melanie Crescent, was convicted in May of flipping a switch that sent a VIA Rail train travelling about 80 kilometres an hour into the Kott Lumber yard in Nepean. Evidence showed Rankin wanted revenge on the firm for his firing.

The four-car LRC train, enroute to Ottawa, was sidetracked onto a dead-end spur line leading into the lumber yard and smashed into three flat-bed cars, which prevented it from ending up in the Jock River.

Some of the passenger units partially left the tracks, but none turned over.

The train's engineer had spotted the open switch but was not able to halt the train in time. Damage was estimated at \$2.25 million; 27 passengers were taken to hospital with minor injuries.

Houston said Rankin, who had a poor upbringing and was a troubled youth, was entitled "to one more bite at the apple."

"I hope what I do will assist him to . . . clean up his life."

Houston said he didn't think Rankin realized when he and a young girl tampered with the railway equipment that he could do such damage, although he added it was a miracle no one was killed.

Flatbeds in the lumber yard likely stopped the train from plunging into the deepest section of the Jock River.

Houston recommended Rankin serve the jail term at an institution in Brampton where he can receive special counselling.

Houston also put Rankin on three years' probation once the jail term is completed, ordered him to get a job, upgrade his education and take any medical treatment suggested by doctors and his probation officer.

Houston's sentence satisfied defence lawyer Kenneth Hall, who had urged a jail term of between 12 and 18 months coupled with probation and counselling.

13/09/1986

Branchline?

Smiths Falls

Jock River

JAIL TERM FOR DERAILING TRAIN:

A 19-year old Kanata (Ontario) man was sent to jail for two years less a day, and placed on probation for another 3 years after being found guilty of causing the May 1984 derailment of VIA train No. 46.

The derailment took place after the man opened a track switch on a siding into a lumber company, sending the four car train crashing into three empty bulkhead flat cars. But for the cars, the train would probably have gone down the siding and ended up in the Jock River, immediately to the east of the end of the siding.

Damage to the train was estimated at \$2.25 million and 27 passengers were taken to hospital. The man derailed the train in order to take revenge upon the lumber company for previously firing him.

At the time, the accident sparked intense calls for a review of passenger train operating practises in Canada, resulting in new rules with respect to operating high speed trains in non-signalized territory and in the equipping of main line turn-outs with safety locks instead of the normal switch lock.

17/09/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls

CN Decision Jeopardizes Tourist Train

Smiths Falls. Plans to establish a tourist train run between here and Kingston are being jeopardized by a decision by CN Rail to sell and lift a portion of the track.

"The idea will have to be canned if the track is lifted," says David Strong, president of the Smiths Falls Railway Museum, the group promoting the tourist train.

"If the rail goes, we certainly can't afford to lay new track."

CN has sold 58 kilometres of the track to Transport Canada for use in Western Canada, under a programme to upgrade branch lines there. Tenders for removal of the track are due Friday.

Strong says his group has been lobbying area MPs and transport Minister John Crosbie to intervene and keep the track in place but so far without success.

"We're still optimistic it can be stopped but time is running out," he says.

The railway museum group had been negotiating with the railway to purchase the 80-kilometre track between Smiths Falls and Harrowsmith when informed CN intended to sell it to Transport Canada.

22/09/1986

Ottawa Citizen

Chalk River

Rolphton

A Rolphton-area woman was killed and her 18-year-old grandson seriously injured in one of two car-train crashes in Eastern Ontario since Friday.

Theresa Lamure, 57, of Mackey, 200 kilometres northwest of Ottawa, died Friday evening after a Canadian Pacific freight train smashed into the back half of the car she was driving across a level crossing on Mackey Creek Road, just west of Rolphton.

In the second accident, a five-month-old Nepean boy was injured Saturday afternoon when the car his father was driving was struck by a train at a private and unmarked railway crossing just east of Inkerman Station, about 45 kilometres southeast of Ottawa. A police spokesman said Devin Joyce, of Benlea Drive, broke his arm when an eastbound CP freight train clipped the back of the family car, flipped it over, and threw it into a ditch. The boy's father, David, and sister Heather, were not injured.

MEMORY PRESERVED: A larger than life mural depicting the arrival of a Brockville and Westport passenger train at the Athens (Ontario) station now graces one of the exterior walls of the town's local hardware store.

The work was done by artist Lorrie Maruscak as part of a project commissioned by the village council to make the municipality's history easily visible. The idea was borrowed from a similar project in Chemainus, British Columbia where no less than 16 murals outline the history of that town.

The mural features the original B&W station which was destroyed by fire during the 1940s. Its replacement, built by Canadian National, is now a residence about a mile away from its original site. The colours are accurate as is the station. The frame walls are painted red and the surrounding trim is in green and cream. Some artistic license has been used to depict the 4-4-0 type B&W locomotive and baggage car, but the overall effect is quite impressive.

Canadian National received permission to abandon its Brockville to Westport Branch in 1952. (Branchline)

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Women unhurt as train slices front off car

Trapped between two railroad barriers with a train, its whistle screaming, bearing down on her car at about 150 kilometres an hour, May Serviss had just seconds to save herself and her two passengers.

The 68-year-old slammed the car into reverse and didn't even have time to scream as the speeding VIA Rail passenger train shaved off the bumper, lights and grille of her 1985 Dodge Aries.

"It didn't even jar us, it just sliced the front of the car right off and kept going," said Serviss.

"I guess my time hadn't come."

Serviss and her elderly passengers, Nellie Stillson of Ingleside and Agnes Casselman of Dixons Corners, were headed north on Brinston Road about 90 kilometres east of Ottawa when the accident occurred at 5:20 p.m. Saturday.

The three were returning from Iroquois where they had gone to see an apartment in a seniors' residence where Casselman soon will be moving.

Serviss said she slowed at the crossing because it was rough and because she didn't trust that section of the tracks. She said she saw no flashing signals before the gate suddenly dropped.

"The first thing I saw was the gate coming down and the first thing I heard was the train whistle."

Although uninjured, the three were too shocked to talk and felt so weak they could hardly stand, said Serviss

Morrisburg OPP Cpl. Eric Rid-dell estimated about \$1,000 damage was done to the train.

MUSEUM SPUR IN JEOPARDY: The worst has happened. The Railway Transport Committee has allowed Canadian National to abandon that portion of its Smiths Falls Subdivision between Smiths Falls East (mileage 34.5) and Smiths Falls Station, home of the Rideau Valley Division of the CRHA, (mileage 35.3). The decision was handed down on October 14, 1986.

The action clears the way for the removal of two bridges which carry CP Rail's Chalk River and Belleville Subdivisions over the subject trackage and their replacement with fill material. Under the terms of an agreement between Canadian Pacific and the Canadian Northern Railway which built the Smiths Falls Sub., the Canadian Northern, and its successor, was responsible for the maintenance of the bridges. CN will therefore be spared the expense of replacing the bridges (estimated to cost \$772,000) in favour of an earth fill embankment costing only \$157,000.

The decision could not have come at a worse time for the Rideau Valley Division. As mentioned in last month's issue of Branchline, the removal of the bridges will cut off rail access to the the group's museum operation based out of the former Canadian National Station in Smiths Falls. This matter was considered by the Railway Transport Committee. The RTC concluded, however, that the cost of retaining the line just to guarantee the museum's rail link was not in the public interest. Unless an alternate solution can be found, the group's plans to set up a tourist train operation between Smiths Falls and Chaffeys Locks over a portion of the previously abandoned, but not dismantled, Smiths Falls Sub. will be placed in severe jeopardy.

As mentioned in last month's issue, the Rideau Valley Division must now work actively to convince CP Rail to construct a connecting track between the west end of its Smiths Falls Yard and the erstwhile Smiths Falls Subdivision. (Branchline)

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Wakefield steam train group to examine similar projects
 Hull Council has set up a special committee to look into how tourist train projects similar to the proposed Wakefield steam train operate.
 Hull Mayor Michel Legere said the seven-member committee is part of the commitment by Hull, West Hull and Le Peche to run the tourist train efficiently.
 "We want to learn from others who have run similar projects," the mayor said.
 Legere said the idea was approved in principle by West Hull and La Peche when the municipalities signed a joint agreement to revive the train, which is to run between Hull and Wakefield.
 He said West Hull and La Peche councils would also have to approve the idea.
 The resolution called for three committee representatives from Hull and two each from the other municipalities.
 The committee will locate and research tourist train projects in Canada, the United States and Europe
 He said the work may require some travel by committee members, adding the cost of research and travel would be covered by a \$269,000 fund set up with money received from CP Rail, when the municipalities bought the line from the railway with a tax receipt.
 Council also voted to begin negotiations with CP Rail for the purchase or rental of the old Hull station, at Montcalm Boulevard and Front Street, for use as tourist train and bus station.
 In another related resolution, council voted to search for a nonprofit group to clean and prepare the 27-kilometre rail line for use in the spring.
 High operating costs and problems with insurance coverage prevented the Hull-Wakefield train from opening this fall, but Save the Wakefield Steam Train representatives say the steam train should be open for business by next summer.

YET ANOTHER STUDY: The Wakefield (Quebec) steam train operation may not be making any money yet, but its potential existence has proved to be a bonanza for area consultants.
 The line and the steam train operation were studied to death by the National Capital Commission prior to the transfer of ownership of the trackage from CP Rail to the three Quebec municipalities of Hull, West Hull, and La Peche.
 Now, it seems that history will repeat itself. According to Hull Mayor Michel Legere, a seven-member committee will be set up to examine other tourist train projects with the idea of learning how to run the operation efficiently.
 Financing for the project which will involve some travel elsewhere in Canada, and perhaps to the United States and Europe, will come from a \$269,000 fund which was established with money received from Canadian Pacific after the railway was bought by the three municipalities with a tax receipt.
 While deciding on the study, the Hull Council also voted to begin negotiations with CP Rail for the use of the Hull Station (located on the site of the Hull West Station featured in this month's issue) as a base for the tourist operation and as an inter city bus terminal.
 In what should be seen as an important move from a BRS perspective, the Hull Council also voted to search for a "non-profit group" to carry out right-of-way and track maintenance work during the spring of 1987 in order to get ready for operations next summer.

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Renfrew man killed in train crash
 RENFREW - A 70-year-old local man died in hospital Saturday shortly after his truck was struck by a freight train at a crossing here as about 150 people at a nearby auction watched in horror.
 William Guyea, of Harry Street, was westbound on Renfrew Avenue East, crossing the tracks near Barr Street, when an eastbound CP Rail freight train struck his truck broad side and pushed it about 1,350 feet down the track.
 It took local fire fighters about 20 minutes to cut the roof off the demolished truck caught under the front of the train's engine, and pull Guyea out.
 He died shortly after arriving at Renfrew Victoria Hospital.
 Renfrew Const. Tim Waugh said a post mortem was not conclusive, but indicated Guyea likely died of a combination of his injuries and a longstanding heart problem that was aggravated by the injuries.
 Waugh said the flashing warning lights at the double tracks were working, but a five-unit work-crew train sitting idle on the first set of track may have obstructed Guyea's view of the approaching train.
 Waugh said there have been previous accidents at the crossing, but no one had been killed.

TENDER CALLED FOR BRIDGE REMOVAL: Canadian National has requested tenders for the removal of the bridges carrying CP Rail's Chalk River and Belleville Subdivisions (Smiths Falls, Ontario) over mileage 34.28 of the former's Smiths Falls Subdivision. The bridges would be replaced with approximately 5,000 cubic metres of fill material as well as a corrugated metal culvert pipe.
 The move comes hard upon the heels of a recent CTC decision authorizing CN to abandon that portion of the Smiths Falls Subdivision, including the bridges in question, between Smiths Falls East and Smiths Falls Station, (mileage 35.3).
 Unless measures can be taken to ensure that the corrugated culvert pipe is of a sufficient size to allow for the passage of trains through it, the bridge removal and associated work will have the effect of eliminating the present rail connection now enjoyed by the Rideau Valley Division of the CRHA which hopes to set up a tourist train operation out of the former CN station in Smiths Falls.

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Inquest set in level-crossing death

An inquest will be held into the death of a 70-year-old man whose pick-up truck was struck by a train here two weeks ago.

William Guyea died in hospital Oct. 18 shortly after his truck was hit by a freight train at a marked level crossing on Renfrew Avenue.

Police Chief James McBain said the inquest Jan. 13 and 14 will examine the "circumstances of the train and certain details of the accident."

At the time of the accident, Renfrew Const. Tim Waugh said the flashing warning lights at the double tracks were working, but a five-unit work-crew train sitting idle on the first set of tracks may have obstructed Guyea's view of the approaching freight train.

Man killed by train identified

A Brockville pedestrian killed when hit by a passenger train Tuesday night has been identified as Ross David Dobbie, 28, of Manor Drive.

Ontario Provincial Police, who used fingerprints to identify the victim, say they don't know why Dobbie was walking on the track and are continuing their investigation.

Dobbie was hit by an eastbound VIA Rail train at 6.30 p.m. near the Lyn Road underpass, just west of Brockville.

Train traffic was halted for almost two hours while the accident was investigated.

Coroner Dr. Paul O'Connor has said no inquest will be called.

Mother's plea for safer rail crossing answered by jury

CARLETON PLACE - On behalf of four lost loved ones, Jill Moxley made a poignantly written plea to her peers Wednesday, asking them to help prevent the kind of accident that killed her parents and children.

Four hours later, a coroner's jury answered her, calling for immediate improvements at the level crossing near Carleton Place where the four were killed Aug. 29 when their car was struck by a VIA Rail train.

"We will never know why my parents failed to see the train that killed them," the Almonte-area resident wrote in a letter read at the inquest.

"... What really matters is that everything possible be done to prevent accidents such as this."

Moxley's parents, Almonte residents Stanley John Taylor and Joan Norma Taylor, both 64, and her two children, Caroline, 6, and Graham, 4, were killed at a train crossing marked only by white wooden signs.

The jury made six recommendations, the first being that flashing lights and warning bells be installed immediately at the crossing, which is on County Road 17, about 600 metres from Hwy. 7.

The jury also called for stop signs or reduced-speed signs at level crossings in rural areas, expanded public education and regular inspections of traffic counts and visibility at the crossings.

An engineer with the Canadian Transport Commission, Ian Naish, said after the inquest the jury's recommendation may speed up the process of getting lights and bells installed.

Ottawa resident Richard Moxley, whose brother Robert is married to Jill Moxley, said he was satisfied with the jury's work.

"I think the whole process was a good one today ... a step in the right direction."

The inquest was told the passenger train, which had left Ottawa for North Bay, was travelling at about 110 kmh and had sounded its whistle before crossing the road.

OPP Const. Lloyd Phillips testified the car was struck above the left front tire. It was a cool, sunny day at about 12:55 p.m.

He said there were no signs that the driver, Stanley John Taylor, had tried to brake or make a sudden turn, suggesting that Taylor simply did not see or hear the train.

Phillips also testified that Taylor had a severe hearing impairment caused by nerve damage inflicted during the Second World War.

The inquest also heard that Taylor's view of the train may, have been obscured by a large field of tall corn that bordered the track.

In her letter, in which she apologized for not attending, Moxley wrote:

"My father's hearing was impaired but my mother's was exceptionally good. All the speculation in the world is possible but none is good enough."

Moxley concluded her letter by saying:

"It is unbearable to lose your children and parents like this. It is even more unbearable to think that the authorities could sit back after such a tragedy and not at least try to prevent it from happening to someone else."

\$13,000 raised to save Smiths Falls rail line.

Smiths Falls. In only three days, citizens here have scraped together the \$13,000 needed to save a critical length of rail line from extinction.

The donations were raised over the weekend in a desperate last-ditch attempt to preserve the rail for future use by the Smiths Falls Railway Museum Association. But Ted Ferrant, a Smiths Falls architect and co-ordinator of the fund-raising blitz, said a further \$17,000 must be collected by Dec. 31 before the doomed line is safely out of the woods.

The two-kilometre stretch of track was recently purchased from Canadian National Railways by Herve Fournier Metal Inc. of Victoriaville, Que., a scrap metal dealer.

In past months the local Railway Museum Association "tried everything" to save the line, including negotiating with the president of CN and sending a telegram to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, said museum past president Bill LeSurf.

The rail line forms an integral link between the 196 km of unused CN line between Smiths Falls and Kingston that the museum group wants used for a tourist train, said Ferrant.

But CN contracted out demolition of the Smiths Falls stretch of line and authorized its removal without advising the museum group, LeSurf said.

When work began two weeks ago on tearing out the line "it came as a complete surprise to us," he said.

About 1,000 feet of line, and tracks in the yard adjoining the old station museum, were ripped up before town citizens could react. Ferrant, who is not a railway museum member and isn't "even that interested in railroads," was drawn to the cause out of a sense of urgency.

"I was appalled to think that something was being destroyed that should be developed for future generations," he said.

LeSurf said negotiations with the French-speaking scrap dealer have been done through a translator, "which was not easy to find in Smiths Falls."

The \$13,000 raised to date was donated mostly by professional people in town, LeSurf said.

OUT OF THE ASHES, A DISCOVERY: Another trace of the former New York Central branch which once linked Ottawa with the U.S. border at Cornwall, Ontario, across the river from Massena, New York, vanished in the flames of a recent house fire on December 6, 1986.

Under renovations at the time, the house was originally built as the Pana station, a stop on the NYC, about a dozen miles from Ottawa. The NYC ceased operations in the Ottawa area in 1957.

08/12/1986 Ottawa Citizen

Winchester

Another man was killed Sunday when the car he was driving ing crashed into a freight train near Cornwall.

Joseph Robert St-Denis, 44, of Finch, was driving alone when he was killed on Boundary Road about 12:30 a.m., said a spokesman for Ontario Provincial Police at Long Sault.

The police spokesman said St-Denis crashed into the Montreal-bound Canadian Pacific freight train when it was already going through the crossing which is marked only with a sign. The crossing is at the border of Finch and Roxborough townships.

"He ran into the moving train," the spokesman said.

The road was snow-packed at the time, but the sky was clear, police said. A CP Rail spokesman said no one aboard the train was injured. "They didn't even know they were hit," he said.

12/12/1986 Le Droit

Lachute

Montebello

CP Rail's beautiful log station at Montebello, Quebec, has been sold for \$1.00 on the condition that it be moved from its present site. Land has been purchased across the street with the move of the 1930-era station scheduled for next summer (Branchline).