

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 1991

09/01/1991 *Le Droit*

Waltham

MUNICIPALITIES WANT RAIL CORRIDOR:

The communities of Hull and Aylmer (Quebec) have asked CP Rail to transfer ownership of the Waltham Subdivision right-of-way to them as opposed to the federal government's National Capital Commission. CP Rail wants to abandon the line - now only used for hauling ballast from an abandoned iron mine beyond Aylmer. The Hull to Aylmer section is approximately 12 miles long. It is proposed to protect the corridor for possible future use as a bus rapid transit or light rail route between the two communities.

14/01/1991 *Ottawa Citizen?*

Alexandria

Carlsbad Springs

Derailement cuts service to and from Montreal (with picture)

VIA Rail service between Ottawa and Montreal remained cut this morning as workers cleared the mess of Sunday's CN freight train derailement near Gloucester. . Until the tracks are repaired, VIA trains to and from Montreal are being replaced with bus service, said Paul Garneau, VIA's manager of station services in Ottawa. About 300 VIA passengers took the bus Sunday.

CN district manager Andre Pronovost said this morning he expected the tracks to be cleared, repaired and back in service by 3 p.m.

Thirteen cars from a Montreal-to-Ottawa freight train jumped the tracks at Russell Road and Farmers Way near Carlsbad Springs at about 2:45 a.m. Sunday.

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No one was injured and no hazardous substances spilled in the Russell Road mishap. It will take several days to establish the cause of the derailement and a damage estimate, CN spokesman Richard Boileau said today.

The cause is still under investigation, Pronovost said a damaged car carrying rolls of steel may have broken the tracks.

Officials from Environment and Transport Canada were on the scene to ensure the derailement did not cause any dangerous leaks. Some cargo that concerned officials included battery fluids and naphtha, a flammable petroleum distillate commonly used as fondue fuel.

One box car that particularly concerned officials contained dangerous chemicals including naphtha, phosphoric acid and ethamine. It was, opened shortly after 6 p.m. Sunday and was found to be safe, said Fred Scaffidi, a Transport Canada spokesman.

CN brought two cranes from Montreal to lift the strewn cars from the snowy banks onto the tracks.

Transport Canada official Noel Sabbagh said there was no evidence of leaking. Area residents had no reason to be alarmed he said.

15/01/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Alexandria

Train derailement cleanup continues

Train service between Ottawa and Montreal was to return to normal this afternoon, but be replaced by bus service again Wednesday morning so workers can clean up the site of Sunday's train derailement in Gloucester.

The track is usable, but buses are being used Wednesday morning so CN workers can finish removing freight cars from the sidelines of the accident, said CN spokesman Richard Boileau. Afternoon trains Wednesday will be unaffected and service will be normal Thursday.

The cause of the derailement, which saw 13 CN freight cars jump the tracks, is still under investigation.

22/01/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Kingston (CN)

Cornwall

Inquest called into death at crossing

CORNWALL - A coroner's inquest will be held next month into the death of a CN Rail maintenance worker who was killed by a passenger train last year while working at a level crossing in Cornwall.

Robert Brown, 41, of Matilda Township, died shortly after the Sept. 19 accident at the crossing on Tollgate Road between Pitt Street and Brookdale Avenue.

Coroner Dr. Arthur Peachey said Monday the inquest will begin March 20 and possibly run a second day. The hearing will determine how the accident occurred. Brown was a member of a CN crew that was working on the double railway tracks when he was hit by a westbound passenger train at about 5.10 p.m.

An initial police report said the train was travelling at a speed of about 150 kilometres an hour. VIA Rail, CN Rail and Transport Canada have investigated the accident and are to make public their findings at the inquest.

28/01/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Beachburg

Dunrobin

CN tracks cleared at Dunrobin

A 24-car train derailement in Dunrobin was cleared Sunday ! a CN spokesman says.

The railway sent cranes and bulldozers from Montreal to help clear the tracks after the 89-car train derailed Friday night. Rene Chappaz said the cars were carrying wheat

Chappaz said it was the 67th car that derailed first and at least 250 metres of damage to the track. Fifteen of 24 cars that came off the track piled up on top of each other, he said.

No immediate damage estimates were available, but CN is investigating the cause. Regular traffic resumed around 9 p.m. Sunday.

No one was hurt in the accident.

01/02/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Alexandria

NO INJURIES

Passenger train jumps track

No one was injured Thursday night (31/1) when a passenger train derailed on CN Rail tracks just east of Sheffield Road.

A VIA Rail engine and a coach car left the track shortly after 8 p.m. The train, en route from Montreal, stopped about five kilometres from its destination, the Ottawa train station.

The engine was pulling four cars loaded with passengers when it derailed, skidded upright for about two kilometres and eventually stopped at a curve in the track.

A front wheel was missing on the coach car and the derailement left a trail of warped steel.

Passengers in the four coaches were delayed about three hours until another engine could pick up the cars and take them to the station, said Norman Bishop, a CN Rail investigator.

03/02/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Lachute

Boy injured when train hits snowmobile.

A seven-year-old Gatineau boy was in serious but stable condition Saturday night after the snowmobile he was riding was struck by a train.

Shawn Belanger was injured Saturday morning at Gatineau's L'Ami Drouin picnic site, said Gatineau police Sgt. Jean-Marc Desjardins.

Belanger's father Denis, was driving a snowmobile with two of his children aboard and crossed in front of a train, Desjardins said.

CN allowed to abandon track but VIA trains will still roll

A decision allowing the abandonment of a 34 kilometre section of CN Rail track between Richmond and Smiths Falls won't affect VIA Rail's passenger service, VIA Rail says it intends to maintain "uninterrupted" service on the line which links Ottawa and Toronto through Smiths Falls and Brockville.

"This is a key route for us and there will be no discernible change in service as far as our passengers are concerned," VIA spokesman Dianne Graham said Wednesday.

Graham said there is an informal agreement between the two companies under which VIA will buy the line for a nominal fee and then pay CN to provide the maintenance.

While details of the agreement haven't been finalized, Graham said the maintenance charges would be similar to the arrangement VIA already has with CN.

The National Transportation Agency gave CN permission to abandon the section starting Feb. 5, 1992, on the grounds the line doesn't pay and is unlikely ever to become profitable.

CN, which owns the line and has been leasing it to VIA, has been trying to unload the route for several years.

After making a profit of \$24,000 in 1986, CN reported losses of more than \$72,000 the next two years as freight traffic dwindled to only three carloads in 1988. Richard Boileau, an information officer with CN, said mileage paid by VIA did not cover all the costs of maintaining the rail line. The new agreement will cover those costs and that's the benefit of abandoning the line, he said.

VIA Rail and the town of Smiths Falls had originally opposed CN's application although no objections were received from shippers.

Smiths Falls Mayor Laurence Lee said the town's main concern was preserving passenger service.

"We consider the line a vital link between this part of Eastern Ontario and the rest of the province," he said. "Outside the automobile, it's the only way out of here."

Lee said most freight through the town is carried by CP Rail and the CN line was never a major carrier.

07/02/1991 *Globe and Mail**Smiths Falls*

VIA buys portion of Toronto route.

VIA Rail Canada and Canadian National have reached an agreement with respect to the passenger rail corporation purchasing that portion of CN's Smiths Falls subdivision between Richmond and Smiths Falls. CN had earlier received permission to abandon the line effective February 1992.

The move is precedent setting in that this is the first occasion for VIA to own main line trackage. Aside from yards, it does own the right-of-way of Canadian Pacific's former M&O subdivision between Rigaud, Quebec and Ottawa. The latter route has been set aside as an eventual high speed rail corridor.

08/02/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Smiths Falls**Smiths Falls*

Engineers jump for their lives as trains nearly collide

By Mike Blanchfield Citizen police reporter Two engineers jumped for their lives from a moving VIA passenger train after they spotted a freight train headed towards them on the same tracks, railroad officials say.

"They were bearing down on a heavy locomotive. Had they hit they would have been the first to feel it," Ken Truesdell, an investigator with the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, said this morning.

He said one of the engineers suffered minor injuries after he rolled in a ditch. Emergency brakes had been applied on the passenger train and the CP Rail freight train and they came to a stop without colliding.

The trains were travelling no faster than about 30 kilometres an hour, said Truesdell.

VIA spokesman Dianne Graham and CP spokesman Paul Thurston said they did not know how far apart the trains were when they eventually stopped.

Truesdell said a full investigation was to start today. He would not comment on whether an error played a role in both trains being on the track.

"All we know (now) is the VIA train had rights to that track at that time," said Thurston.

Three crew members on the CP Rail train were shunting freight cars near the Smiths Falls station to create a larger, main-line train.

While the engineers had the scare of their lives, for the 147 passengers the near miss was only a minor inconvenience, stopping the train for about three minutes, Truesdell said.

"I'm sure as far as anyone on the train is concerned, nothing happened," he said.

The train was travelling from Ottawa to Toronto on Wednesday afternoon.

The freight train backed up and switched to another track, allowing the VIA train to continue to Toronto.

It arrived 20 minutes late.

12/02/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Smiths Falls**Smiths Falls*

Near crash of VIA, freight train probed

It may take months to discover why a freight train and passenger train almost collided head-on near Smiths Falls Wednesday, transport officials said Monday.

Investigators from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada have to analyse recorders and dispatchers' tapes and interview witnesses before compiling their findings in a report, said safety board spokesman Jim Harris.

"There's quite a lot of work ahead of us," he said.

The report will include recommendations on how to avoid a similar incident, and will be submitted to a Transport Canada board.

The board then has 90 days to respond to the recommendations, said Peter Schnobb, public affairs liaison with Transport Canada.

"If there's a safety problem, we'll act on it right away," he said. "Otherwise we'll bide our time and wait for whatever the report comes out with."

Crew aboard the Toronto-bound VIA Rail train carrying 147 passengers and a CP Rail freight train sighted one another and engineers applied emergency brakes.

The CP Rail train had stopped and was beginning to reverse when one engineer jumped out of the VIA train, according to VIA Rail spokesman Malcolm Andrews.

The conductor suffered a minor injury to his hand.

Andrews defended the engineer's decision to jump as a moral one. "Once the train's emergency brakes are applied, there's nothing more the engineer can do," he said.

Though the brakes were hit, Andrews said, the wheels probably slid along the tracks and caused him to panic.

"He can't serve the passengers' interests by staying there and waiting for the impact."

VIA Rail, CP Rail, and CN Rail will also conduct internal investigations to trace the cause of the incident.

19/02/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Winchester**Merrickville*

CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHER INJURED

Freight train and car collide

Citizen photographer Jack Schekkerman was taken to hospital with broken bones and lacerations after being involved in a car-train collision Monday near Merrickville.

According to the Ontario Provincial Police, Schekkerman was driving south on Donoghue Road, just outside Merrickville off Hwy. 43, at about 4:30 p.m. when he approached an unprotected railway crossing and saw an oncoming train.

He tried to stop, was unable to do so and slid into the crossing, said OPP Const. Kevin Davidson. Witnesses at the scene later described road conditions as icy.

When the CP Rail freight train slammed into the driver's side, Schekkerman was thrown from the vehicle, suffering cuts to the head, a broken collarbone and bruises, said Davidson.

He was taken to Kemptville General Hospital and later transferred to Ottawa General Hospital, where he is described as in fair condition.

"He's a lucky man," said Davidson.

Merrickville is 45 kilometres south of Ottawa.

Woman confused by whistle
Train kills pedestrian in Vars.
A mentally handicapped woman was hit and killed Sunday by a passenger train in Vars.
The victim has been identified as Carol Louise Greene, 51.
Greene had lived at Residence Gregoire in Vars, a home for the mentally handicapped for 3 1/2 years.
Lucien Goyette, residence manager, said Greene and another patient were walking along the tracks about noon Sunday and became confused when they heard the approaching train's whistle,
"She attempted to walk in front of the train," he said.
Goyette said he had warned Greene not to walk too close to the tracks which run about 70 metres from the residence.

Train kills pedestrian in Vars A mentally handicapped woman was hit and killed Sunday by a passenger train in Vars.
The victim has been identified as Carol Louise Greene, 51. Greene had lived at Gregoire Residence in Vars, a home for the mentally handicapped, for 3½ years.
Vars is 25 kilometres southeast of Ottawa.
Lucien Goyette, residence manager, said Greene and another patient were walking along the tracks about noon Sunday and became confused when they heard the approaching train's whistle and walked in front of the train.

Train was speeding at fatal accident scene
CORNWALL A passenger train that killed a CN Rail maintenance employee here in the fall was speeding and didn't slow down, a coroner's jury was told Wednesday.
"The train was moving very fast with no indication of slowing down," said Fred Decaire, a Cornwall roads department sub-foreman.
Decaire other witnesses estimated the train that killed Robert Brown, 41, of Matilda Township on Sept. 19, was travelling in excess of 140 kilometres an hour.
The victim, who was dead at the scene, was a member of a CN crew that was working on the double railway tracks at the level crossing on Tollgate Road between Pitt Street and Brookdale Avenue.
The accident occurred shortly after 5:10 p.m. when the westbound train passed through the level crossing area where a crew of 17 CN employees was repairing sections of the tracks.
In addition, there were five city roads department workers and four employees of J.R. Blais Paving Limited at the scene. They were repairing the approaches to the level crossing.
Most of the workers from the three crews testified they were not given any warning about the oncoming train.
"We were not advised about that train going through," said Jean Robert Blais, owner of the paving firm.
CN maintenance worker Patrick Finnerty said normally they get a warning about a passing train.
"But this time nobody told me nothing."
Finnerty and fellow CN employees said, at the time, the victim was working between the two railway tracks.
Cornwall roads department employee Dwight St. Louis said the passing train sounded "like an earthquake without the heavy rumble."
St. Louis also said he saw the victim being hit by the train's locomotive and "flying through the air for about 50 feet before landing in the ditch."
"Cornwall Police Const. Pierre Lalonde presented 16 photos taken shortly after the mishap. Photos of the locomotive showed the left front headlight was shattered.
The inquest, being held by Dr. Arthur Peachey, was to continue today.

FATAL ACCIDENT
Engineer says train was cleared
CORNWALL A coroner's inquest heard conflicting evidence here Thursday about whether a passenger train that killed a CN Rail worker had permission to speed through a work site without slowing down.
"I was under no obligation to slow down because I got the required permission to proceed at normal speed," said Danny Stock of Laval, Que., the train's engineer.
Stock, testifying during the second day of the inquest, estimated the westbound train was travelling 152 kilometres an hour when it went through the work site on Sept. 19, killing Matilda Township resident Robert Brown.
Brown, 41, was part of a CN crew repairing sections of the tracks at the level crossing on Tollgate Road between Pitt Street and Brookdale Avenue.
CN employee Ray Amelotte of Cornwall Township told the jury that he had given the train permission to go through the work site.
"But I only did so after first getting the all clear from Norm Primeau," said Amelotte, referring to the CN work site's foreman.
But Primeau denied giving clearance for the train. "I didn't OK that train because I didn't have enough time to tell everyone the train was coming."
Amelotte's brother Brian, who was working at the site, said he overheard the conversation. "I heard Primeau say everybody's clear and let him go through."
Under railway regulations, work sites are marked by yellow and red flags, and trains can only proceed through after obtaining permission from a designated foreman in this case, Amelotte.
Blaine Newton of Ingleside, the local CN track supervisor at the time, said he arrived at the scene shortly after the 5:10 p.m. accident.
"When I saw Amelotte he was crying." Amelotte told him he let the train go through without slowing it down, said Newton.
Earlier, Cornwall pathologist Dr. John MacAuley said the victim died of multiple and massive injuries.

Reduce train speeds at work sites: inquest
Cornwall. Trains should slow to half their normal speed when passing through a railway work site, says a coroner's jury looking into the death of a CN Rail worker here.
That was one of seven recommendations made by the five-member jury Friday.
CN worker Robert Brown, 41, of Matilda Township, died Sept. 19 after being hit by a westbound passenger train at the level crossing on Tollgate Road. Brown was part of a CN crew repairing sections of the tracks.
The train was travelling at 152 kilometres an hour when it passed through the work zone, evidence presented during the three-day inquest showed.
The coroner's jury also recommended the installation of a strobe light and an air horn or siren at work sites to warn workers about oncoming trains.
Most of the recommendations were based on suggestions in a 26-page report prepared by Labor Canada safety officer Timothy Pullen of Nepean, who investigated the accident.

Train sparks cause fires

A freight train sparked several grass fires in a three-kilometre area in Nepean Wednesday, slowing traffic and worrying residents.

About 14 firefighters fought two large fires and several smaller ones along the CN Rail tracks west of Merivale industrial park. The largest fire raged in a field between Woodroffe Avenue and Merivale Road. A second burned in a clearing west of Merivale.

The fires were probably set separately by sparks spit from the wheels of one of the train cars, fire officials said.

Flames spread quickly through the dry grass and brush north of the tracks and were fanned by southerly winds gusting to 50 kilometres an hour. A Nepean Hydro pole was burned slightly but there were no blackouts.

Fires are common in the spring when uncut, dead and dry grass is easily ignited, said John Bush, a district chief with the Nepean Fire Department.

Firefighters used shovels, hoses and swatters to battle the fires for about two hours. There were no injuries or damage to property.

Motorists along Merivale near Colonnade Road hit a 100-metre curtain of white smoke spilling from a nearby field between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

"You should have heard the squeals and skids on Merivale Road," said Fred Purkis as he watched the flames from his backyard. "I was just waiting for the sound of a big crash."

Purkis and several other Crestview-area residents closed windows and armed themselves with garden hoses. Flames reached within 50 metres of their homes.

Purkis, a former volunteer firefighter, watered down his roof and back lawn, just in case. He said the field ignites almost annually, but Wednesday's fires were unmatched.

Fire officials said the homes were never in any danger because there was at least 15 metres of green grass protecting them.

09/05/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Chalk River**Haley's*

Robert Lyttle, 52, of Carp, was killed when the car he was driving was struck by a train at a railway crossing. The accident occurred at noon at the Haley Station crossing, 16 kilometres west of Renfrew.

Lyttle's car was heading west on Hwy. 17. He tried to pass two transport trucks stopped at the crossing and his car was hit broadside, said Ontario Provincial Police in Perth.

14/05/1991 *Le Droit**Alexandria**Ottawa*

"PANORAMA" RETURNS TO OTTAWA; Once upon a time, it was Canadian National's alternative to the "Super Continental". Alas, the train died in the late 1960s in the post Expo 67 slump in passenger rail traffic.

Now, VIA Rail has resurrected the name in Ottawa with the christening of its new first class lounge on May 14.

Similarly-named facilities are located in Montreal and Toronto. The Ottawa lounge takes up the former Operator's office and crew "booking room" on the east side of the concourse.

24/06/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Beachburg**Pleasant park*

Crossing victim called cautious driver

A 72-year-old Ottawa woman who was killed by a train Saturday when her car failed to stop at a railway crossing was a careful driver, says her husband.

Kathleen McCorkell, of Weston Drive, was eastbound on Pleasant Park Road in Ottawa about 5 p.m. when a four-car VIA Rail passenger train hit her Chevrolet Cavalier at a level crossing.

McCorkell had no problems with her sight or hearing, says her husband, Franklin McCorkell. "I can't see her driving in front of a train."

Coroner James Dickson has not decided if he will call an inquest, but suggested a gate might be advisable.

Transportation Safety Board investigator Alex Kocsis said it's not unusual for a crossing to have only lights and bells. Still, he said, he might recommend a gate at the crossing once the investigation is completed.

Kocsis estimated the train was travelling at the speed limit, about 65 kilometres per hour, at the time of the crash.

McCorkell, a mother of six, will be buried in her hometown of Dauphin, Man.

12/07/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Chalk River**Renfrew*

Renfrew man dies in train crash

An 82-year-old Renfrew man died Wednesday morning when his car collided with a freight train three kilometres west of Renfrew.

The Ontario Provincial Police said Noah Gauthier's car was struck by a westbound CP Rail train at 8:15 a.m. Gauthier died at the scene.

Sgt. Bob Bittorf said Gauthier was driving through an unmarked railway crossing on a private road.

21/07/1991 *Ottawa Citizen**Kingston (CN)**Brockville*

In Brockville, resident John Ma-cAri, 31, died after he was hit by a train at 2 a.m. Saturday while walking home from the Brockville Town Centre. Police said he took a shortcut and misjudged the distance of the CN Rail freight train.

21/08/1991 *West Quebec Post**Lachute**Masson*

TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER FATE OF MASSON/BUCKINGHAM JUNCTION STATION: To the west of Lachute lies the community of Masson which boasts a hyphenated station name, "Masson - Buckingham Junction". The latter signifies that Masson is the junction with the 4 plus mile "Buckingham Subdivision", which serves its name sake community at the top of the hill overlooking Masson, which is situated on the edge of the Ottawa River.

The station there is a long frame structure, dating back to the Quebec, Montreal and Occidental Railway, the original builders of the Lachute Subdivision. Its architecture is very distinctive and decidedly "Quebecois".

The last passenger train (VIA No. 177) cleared Masson -Buckingham Junction on November 14, 1981. Since then the facility has been used by Maintenance of Way crews.

Now CP wants to remove it. The town council is interested in acquiring it and turning it into a tourist site in a move reminiscent of the community of Montebello to the east where two years ago, the community moved the distinctive log station there to a prominent location on the main street.

A feasibility study has been commissioned. Here's hoping that they are successful.

21/08/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Maniwaki

ON TRACK FOR '92, WAKEFIELD PROJECT APPEARS TO HAVE RECEIVED OFFICIAL GO-AHEAD: Proponents of a revived steam excursion train along CP's former Maniwaki Subdivision between Hull and Wakefield, Quebec, may finally be seeing the light in the distance.

After months of negotiating, the Province of Quebec has finally delivered a \$1.4 million grant for the operation conditional upon the full agreement of all parties involved in the original proposal (which dates to 1985). These include the municipalities of Hull, Chelsea and La Peche as well as ski resort operator Andy Tommy, who has a contract to run the train. The Province also demanded that its grant be secured by the proponents with a combination of cash and land.

Overall, nine agreements must be finalized before any government money is spent. Three of these agreements must be signed with the municipalities. Additionally, other agreements must be signed with Canadian Pacific for running rights over the Laman Spur and the Ellwood Subdivision in order to link the Wakefield track with the Hull Station. The National Capital Commission is also involved and requires agreements with respect to the Hull Station and surrounding lands - which it owns, as well as the turntable in Wakefield.

For the municipalities involved in the deal, a formal agreement is required with the operator, Andy Tommy. Currently they only have agreements in principle. The \$1.4 million grant will be paid in stages. An initial payment of \$450,000 will be made when all of the agreements are made. Completing the upgrading of the line and other associated work will yield an additional \$450,000 in two separate payments of \$200,000 and \$250,000. The final payment, \$500,000, will be made when trains are running.

Tenders for line rehabilitation and associated construction have already been called. According to John Trent, president of the association formed to revive train service, work on rehabilitating the line could start in the very near future.

21/08/1991 *Branchline*

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21/08/1991 *West Quebec Post*

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22/08/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Maniwaki

Wakefield steam train may start next summer

Promoters of the Wakefield tourist train hope to begin excursions next summer after finally sorting out a dispute over money.

The project was delayed 10 months while train promoters tried to wrestle a \$1.4-million grant from the Quebec government.

John Trent, president of the train council, said Wednesday the province has finally agreed to release the money.

That will allow work to begin this fall on track repairs along the 27-kilometre route between Hull and Wakefield, said Trent.

The money was promised in November but both sides began bickering. Quebec wanted guarantees which the promoters couldn't give that it would get some money back if the project died.

Last week, the promoters agreed to put up a mixture of cash and land to guarantee the grant, said Andre Menard, an aide to Quebec Tourism Minister Andre Vallerand.

The steam train is to make three trips a day during tourist seasons. A diesel train, which is more rugged, will be substituted in the winter for weekend ski excursions.

Trent said one hurdle remains before the project can go ahead, but he anticipates no problems.

All the parties involved must sign an agreement to proceed with the project. They include the municipalities of Hull, Chelsea and La Peche, and Edelweiss ski resort owner Andy Tommy, who will buy and operate the train. They are investing more than \$2 million.

Trent said setbacks in the past have made him wary of saying the project will go ahead for sure. "There is no use crowing about this until we have it all in place."

01/09/1991 *Branchline*

Maniwaki

Three Day Move.

Equipment for the planned Hull, Chelsea & Wakefield steam excursion operation moved over the former CP Maniwaki Subdivision in mid-July. The 14-mile move from Hull to farm Point, Quebec, required three days as most of the crossings had to be 'dug out'. The move represents the first movement over the line since the national Museum of Science and Technology's 4-6-2 1201 departed Wakefield on September 1, 1985. No start up date has been announced. (Harry Gow, Willard Clark).

28/09/1991 *Le Droit*

Waltham

PORTION OF WALTHAM SUBDIVISION BOUGHT BY NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION: The National Capital Commission will purchase a portion of CP Rail's now abandoned Waltham Subdivision, running between Hull and Aylmer, Quebec.

The right-of-way which parallels the Lower Aylmer Road -the former Hull Electric Railway - will be "banked" for future transit projects.

The rest of the Waltham Subdivision, from Aylmer to Wyman, is for sale at market prices. Rails and ties were recently lifted.

28/09/1991 *Le Droit*

Waltham

Portion of Waltham subdivision bought by National Capital Commission.

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05/10/1991 *Le Droit*

Maniwaki

SNOWMOBILERS MAY USE ABANDONED RAIL LINE: Canadian Pacific has reached an agreement with the Gatineau Valley County Regional Municipality permitting snowmobilers to use its now-abandoned Maniwaki Subdivision between Low and Messines, Quebec.

Although the tracks were removed in the spring of 1986, CP still retains title to the land. Negotiations to sell it to the Gatineau Valley Regional Municipality have been fruitless to date. The main obstacle to a transfer of the land has been a determination of what constitutes fair market value for the corridor. CP wants \$860,000 for the corridor.

Local municipalities have promoted the snowmobile corridor and are reacting bitterly to CP's move. The asking price is considered to be too steep but they will be making an offer in the interest of preserving the right-of-way and preventing it from being sold off on a piece meal basis.

A lease has been signed for an undisclosed price. The provincial government was called in and intervened with Canadian Pacific to have any decision on the fate of the right-of-way deferred until March of 1992. The Quebec Department of Transport, in the meantime, will evaluate the corridor in terms of negotiating a purchase price with CP. (Le Droit, 05/10/91 and 25/10/91)

05/10/1991 *Le Droit*

Maniwaki

SNOWMOBILERS MAY USE ABANDONED RAIL LINE: Canadian Pacific has reached an agreement with the Gatineau Valley County Regional Municipality permitting snowmobilers to use its now-abandoned Maniwaki Subdivision between Low and Messines, Quebec.

Although the tracks were removed in the spring of 1986, CP still retains title to the land. Negotiations to sell it to the Gatineau Valley Regional Municipality have been fruitless to date. The main obstacle to a transfer of the land has been a determination of what constitutes fair market value for the corridor. CP wants \$860,000 for the corridor.

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09/10/1991 *Ottawa Citizen*

Brockville

Smiths Falls

Man survives collision as truck hits train

SMITHS FALLS - Leonard Snyder's truck didn't survive a collision with a VIA train Tuesday. But Snyder was a whole lot luckier.

Police feared that Snyder, 36, had suffered major injuries in the accident near Smiths Falls. But he didn't. He was released from hospital a few hours after the 11:40 a.m. accident.

Snyder's pickup hit the third car of a four-car train at a railway crossing on Eric Hutcheson Road, two kilometres southwest of Smiths Falls. Witnesses say they heard brakes screeching just before the truck hit the Toronto-Ottawa train, which was travelling an estimated 116 kilometres an hour.

"I've never seen metal fly like that," said Scott Cowan, 27, who was travelling to Ottawa from Kingston. "It looked like pieces of fiberglass shattering."

Don McDavid, a Toronto resident, was looking out the window listening to his Walkman when he saw the truck hit the train.

"He didn't show any signs of slowing down," said McDavid. "I was saying to myself: What the hell is he doing?"

Louise Hutchinson's first-ever train trip turned out to be more exciting than she had imagined.

"This is one trip I won't forget," the 87-year-old Don Mills woman said.

No one on the train [sic] was injured. Passengers were delayed 50 minutes.

Snyder, from Smiths Falls, was alone in the truck. He was treated at Smiths Falls General Hospital.

Ontario Provincial Police are investigating the crash. Police said the truck was a write-off.

21/10/1991 *L'Argenteuil Watchman* *Lachute*

CP Rail shows tremendous patience over disposal of stations.

Canadian Pacific does not seem overly anxious to proceed with plans for the disposal of its stations at Lachute and Calumet, Quebec. Both facilities are surplus to company requirements. In each case community support for their retention has been strong and the company - in the case of Calumet - has given the town two years to come up with the funding to acquire the facility and convert it into a library. Proposals for the Lachute station are still under consideration with a Save the Station Committee holding an open house on October 23.

23/10/1991 *West Quebec Post*

Lachute

Montebello

Recession closes station gallery.

Financial difficulties have led to the closure of the tourist information bureau and art gallery, located in the former Canadian Pacific station in Montebello, Quebec.

Built of logs - to match the Chateau Montebello - the station was moved from its trackside location to the town's main street in the summer of 1989 and shortly thereafter, opened as a tourist bureau and art gallery.

According to the art gallery owner, the station has been "a victim of recession." At the moment the Board of Directors is soliciting the provincial government for funding.

01/11/1991 *Branchline*

Alexandria

Ottawa

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPLEMENTED AT OTTAWA STATION: VIA Rail Canada has embarked upon an ambitious energy efficiency campaign at Ottawa Station. The effort is part of a large campaign that finds the passenger rail corporation getting on board the environmental band wagon.

Specific work at the 25-year-old Ottawa Station include a low-energy lighting system in the concourse; high pressure sodium lighting in the parking lots and revisions to the station power plant that will reduce steam production, leading to annual savings of \$50,000.

From an environmental perspective, VIA has removed its fuel racks - located at the west end of the station. All fuelling now takes place from a tank truck and the removal of the racks and underground storage tanks will clean up an environmental hazard that has seen oil slicks periodically contaminating the nearby Rideau River.

In an effort to cut costs, the station boilers will be converted from bunker C to light fuel oil although one wonders why the company didn't opt for much cheaper natural gas as a source of primary energy.

Other "green" programs include paper recycling and enhanced employee awareness. (Vialogue, Volume 13, No. 4)

School bus driver avoids crash with freight train

15 students on bus Citizen staff A driver of a school bus carrying 15 students managed to get his stranded vehicle off a level railway crossing in Renfrew Wednesday just in time to avoid being hit by a freight train.

The bus became stranded on the tracks on Munro Avenue at about 8:30 a.m. after a car two vehicles ahead of it stalled, said Renfrew Sgt Bob Thompson. "The driver got out of the way just in time," said Const. Paul Dowdall. Dowdall investigated the near-mishap.

The Canadian Pacific train, bound for Smiths Falls from Sudbury, was travelling at about 30 kilometres an hour, Dowdall said.

The train crew applied the emergency brake, but the train didn't come to a complete stop until the next intersection, Dowdall said.

NEW 'BACKER' EMERGES TO SUPPORT GATINEAU TOURIST TRAIN:

A new financial backer has emerged to support the operation of a steam tourist railway between Hull and Wakefield, Quebec, over what remains of CP Rail's former Maniwaki Subdivision. He is Marc Grondin, an Outaouais business man with extensive experience in the tourist industry. Grondin has offered to put up \$1 million in return for running the train over the next 25 years. Grondin's proposal comes after the original contractor operator, local tourist promoter Andy Tommy, backed out of the project. Tommy had put together an investment package to develop and run the train, conditional upon financial support from the Quebec and local governments. Just when thii was confirmed, Tommy balked at some of the conditions attached to the money.

Grondin believes the secret of financial success will be operating the train all year. Initially he intends to operate two daily trips in the summer, plus off-season trips determined by passenger demand. He has announced that operations will commence on June 27, 1992. Grondin has announced that it will cost about \$700,000 to buy a '50-year-old antique train' from an American wholesaler, and another \$300,000 in start-up costs.

The project is now in its seventh year of development following the cessation of government-sponsored excursion service. The National Museum of Science and Technology's ex-CP 4-6-2 1201 powered the last excursion trip from Wakefield on September 1, 1985. (The Ottawa Citizen, 10/12/91 and 06/01/92 via Branchline)