

# Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 2004

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Belleville

OPP believe train hit man who died by lake

CPR says crew had no reason to believe anyone was struck

BY DON CAMPBELL A Kingston-area family is grieving the loss of a son after a bizarre tragedy early Sunday morning near the family cottage on Farren Lake, north of Sharbot Lake.

Jamie Stuart, 26, and most recently of Ottawa, died after sustaining massive head injuries, which Ontario Provincial Police investigators believe were caused when he was struck by a Canadian Pacific Railway freight train as he and two friends stood near the tracks shortly after 3 am.

CPR personnel however, searched the train in question, interviewed the crew and found no evidence the man was struck.

CPR public affairs official Michel Spenard said from his office in Montreal that the train's crew remember seeing two men standing in front of a vehicle that had its headlights on and was parked a safe distance from the tracks.

He said the crew did not see a third person and had no reason to believe anyone had been struck by the train.

"Our own police did a , thorough investigation of our train and found no evidence any cargo had shifted or fallen off and no evidence of anything," Mr. Spenard said. "Our crew did remember seeing two people standing back from the tracks. They could see the two in their headlights. But the train was only travelling about (60 kmh) and they had no reason to stop. For sure, they would have if they had thought they had struck something."

OPP first received a call about the incident after Mr. Stuart's two friends had already taken him to hospital in Perth. When police arrived, hospital staff were in the process of sending the injured man by land ambulance to hospital in Ottawa, where he died later Sunday morning.

Police investigated the circumstances of Mr. Stuart's death through Monday and, satisfied no foul play was involved, turned the matter over to the regional coroner's office.

Mr. Stuart spent most of his life in and around Kingston, and his parents Bruce and Eleanor and brother Rob live in Sydenham, just north of the city.

The Stuart family declined comment when reached.

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Otrain

Gatineau should develop its own O-Train service now that the City of Ottawa has offered to buy the Prince of Wales Bridge, a group of urban transit promoters said yesterday.

Pierre Laliberte, a spokesman for the Coalition pour l'amelioration du transport urbain (the Coalition for the Improvement of Urban Transport), said Gatineau could have an O-Train system linking the Aylmer and Hull sectors to Ottawa at Bayview station for \$75.3 million.

The light-rail service is intended to complement Gatineau's proposed Rapibus transitway, which would run parallel to part of the rail line at a cost of about \$150 million.

O-Train supporters say the trains use one-third as much diesel fuel as articulated buses and would make Ottawa-Gatineau trips faster than by car or bus because they would use a different bridge and a separate right-of-way.

The City of Ottawa has agreed to purchase a 13-kilometre stretch of railway tracks owned by CP Rail and the Prince of Wales train bridge for \$12.6 million. The acquisition paves the way for O-Train service to the Ottawa suburb of Barrhaven.

Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli said construction of a Barrhaven line to the VIA Rail station and OC Transpo bus terminal at Woodroffe Avenue and Fallow-field Road is to begin in 2006.

If built, the proposed 5.5-kilometre line from Bayview to the Casino du Lac-Leamy would run mainly along existing track and cost about \$18.2 million.

A 14-kilometre Hull-Aylmer line would require new track along a former CP Rail corridor beside the bicycle path along Lucerne Boulevard. The Hull-Aylmer line would cost about \$63.2-million. Trains along both lines would run every 15 minutes, carrying up to 1,150 people an hour.

Light-rail supporters say the system would provide rapid transit service to Ottawa without the need to transfer and would reduce congestion on inter-provincial bridges.

Mr. Laliberte said Ottawa's decision to buy the Prince of Wales Bridge will help Gatineau develop a solid urban transit system.