

# Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 2023

22/01/2023 CTV News

Winchester

No One Hurt After Train Collides With Van at Rail Crossing South of Ottawa

22 January 2023

North Grenville Ontario - There are no reports of injuries after a freight train collided with a vehicle south of Ottawa.

Emergency crews responded to the collision on County Road 18 near Dennison Road in North Grenville Sunday evening.

Ontario Provincial Police said the train was blocking two miles of track, and it would take approximately four hours to clear the scene.

"Thankfully, no one was injured," the OPP said.

Photos shared by the OPP on Twitter showed a badly damaged white van near the rail crossing.

02/02/2023 CityNews

Kingston (CN)

Gananoque

Man dies in crash involving train in Leeds and Thousand Islands Township

A car was struck by a passenger train on the tracks near Pykeview Drive, killing the 75-year-old driver of the vehicle.

The 75-year-old driver, and lone occupant of the vehicle, was pronounced dead at the scene.

One man is dead after a collision involving a car and a passenger train in Leeds and the Thousand Islands Township.

The Leeds County Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was called to the train tracks near Pykeview Drive just before 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

A car had been struck by a train on the tracks, which shut down all train traffic until 10 p.m.

The 75-year-old driver, and lone occupant of the vehicle, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Out of respect for the privacy of the victim's family, the name of the man, who is a local resident to the area, is not being released. A post-mortem is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 2.

CN Police and CN Rail have responded and the cause of the collision is under investigation.

02/02/2023 CBC News

Kingston (CN)

Gananoque

Man Killed in Vehicle-Train Collision

Gananoque Ontario - The OPP said officers were on scene Wednesday afternoon to investigate the fatal collision on the train tracks at Pykeview Drive in the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, about a five-minute drive north of Gananoque.

OPP Sgt. Erin Cranton said the driver was a 75-year-old man.

Cranton told CBC the collision happened shortly after 16:00, Wednesday, and that both CN Police and CN have been engaged.

VIA Rail confirmed in an email to CBC News that train 67 en route to Toronto had collided with the vehicle.

As of 23:00, Wednesday, train 67 was back on the move after a delay of more than six hours, according to VIA.

A total of 926 passengers across nine trains were impacted by the delays, VIA said.

VIA told CBC that train 67 passengers would receive a travel credit.

The Transportation Safety Board said in an email to CBC News that it is monitoring the situation but is not currently investigating.

Police urged people to avoid the area.

03/02/2023 Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Gananoque

Motorist, 75, killed after car hit by train

A 75-year-old man died Wednesday afternoon after his car was hit by a passenger train on the tracks at Pikeview Drive in Leeds and the Thousand Islands Township, Ontario Provincial Police said. Leeds County OPP officers responded to reports of the crash just before 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, police said in a media release Thursday. The driver, a local resident who was alone in the vehicle, was pronounced dead at the scene. A post-mortem examination is scheduled for Thursday. The man's name was not released. The cause of the collision is under investigation with CN rail and CN Police engaged, the OPP said. Train traffic was stopped until just after 10:00 p.m.. Wednesday.

09/02/2023 Radio-Canada

Maniwaki

La locomotive de l'ancien train à vapeur ne finira pas ses jours à la Ferme Dalton

Toujours entreposée dans un hangar à l'ancienne gare de train, la locomotive du train touristique Hull-Chelsea-Wakefield ne finira pas ses vieux jours au parc écologique de la Ferme Dalton.

La présidente de la Corporation d'aménagement de la rivière Blanche (CARB) de Gatineau, responsable de la Ferme Dalton, Nathalie Lepage, a annoncé qu'en raison de plusieurs défis, la ferme est obligée de décliner l'offre de la Ville de Gatineau.

"Ça a été une longue discussion au conseil d'administration, mais après réflexion, il y avait effectivement de nombreux défis qui nous ont amenés à refuser. Nous avons d'abord un défi d'expertise. Ça prend de l'expertise pour une locomotive de cette taille-là. Il y avait des enjeux de sécurité aussi," a commenté Mme Lepage.

Les autres défis qui ont refroidi la corporation, ce sont les coûts associés à l'entretien de la locomotive et le manque d'espace pour entreposer la locomotive, ajoute Mme Lepage.

"On essayait de trouver le meilleur endroit où ça aurait pu être installé et on ne voyait pas non plus d'endroit possible", a-t-elle continué.

En 2017, la Ville de Gatineau avait annoncé qu'elle comptait faire déménager l'engin, immobilisé à Hull depuis 2011, afin qu'il devienne l'un des attraits du parc écologique de la Ferme Dalton.

Un an plus tard, le conseil devait se prononcer sur le financement de ce transfert.

Un plan B?

Dans une déclaration écrite, la Ville de Gatineau a indiqué à Radio-Canada qu'elle avait "offert à la CARB d'installer, sur le site de la ferme du parc Dalton, la locomotive de l'ancien petit train à vapeur de Wakefield. Cette offre a toutefois été déclinée par le conseil d'administration de la CARB, qui en a informé la Ville au printemps 2022."

N'empêche que le conseiller du district de la Rivière-Blanche, Jean Lessard, s'est dit "déçu" de savoir que le projet n'aboutira finalement pas.

"On était tous emballés, mais quand on a vu certaines embûches, on s'est dit que le recul était mieux."

La Ville n'a toujours pas de plan pour l'avenir de cet engin. Elle dit cependant étudier d'autres options.

Le conseiller souhaite que la locomotive puisse demeurer à Gatineau. Il la voit même se garer au futur Musée régional de l'Outaouais.

Cette option est encore hypothétique aux yeux des responsables du musée qui ne cachent pas leur intérêt. Le président du Musée régional, Jean-Marc Blais, admet que cela "cadrerait très bien" avec le projet en chantier.

Il convient toutefois que cela est une question d'espace disponible. "Une fois qu'on aura un site, on saura où le musée pourra s'installer, et ce sera plus facile pour nous de déterminer si on a les espaces pour collectionner un gros item comme celui-là."

En attendant, la locomotive de l'ancien train à vapeur va demeurer cachée dans son hangar.

The Day the Army Came to Town

Canada - The winter of 1941-1942 was a dark time for Canadians.

Europe was firmly in the hands of Nazi Germany and the Royal Air Force had only just managed to fight off the Luftwaffe and win the Battle of Britain.

England was hungry and needed weapons, but the sea lanes back to North America were infested with German submarine wolf packs which tormented the merchant ships that were trying to keep the United Kingdom alive.

On 7 Dec 1941 the Japanese launched their infamous attack on Pearl Harbor, pulling a reluctant America into the war and opening the West Coast to a new threat.

Only a few weeks later the British garrison at Hong Kong, which had just been reinforced with almost 2,000 Canadians, fell to the Japanese Army, and the entire Allied force was either killed or captured.

By Christmas Day, 290 of the Canadian soldiers who had arrived in Hong Kong the previous month were dead and more than 1,600 others were sent off to prisoner of war camps, where 264 more would die before being liberated in 1945.

Train Allowed Public to See Soldiers and Weapons First Hand

Faced with bad news in Asia and a seemingly unstoppable German army in Europe, the political and military leaders in Ottawa needed to do something to rally the Canadian people to the cause of the war.

At the beginning of 1942 they settled upon a masterful public relations campaign to bolster support for the military.

A 15-car-long train, advertised as the Canadian Army Train, was assembled in Ottawa to carry more than \$3 million worth of "Made in Canada" military equipment on a 24,000 kilometre coast-to-coast tour of the country.

Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel J.E. McKenna, a veteran of the Great War, and a popular member of the Royal Montreal Regiment, the train's role was to provide the Canadian public with a chance to see the soldiers and weapons of their army first hand.

More practically, the train also served as a mobile recruitment centre, drawing young men and women from across the country into the ranks of the armed forces.

Of equal importance, it was also a running advertisement for the sale of the Victory Bonds needed to finance the war.

Coaches were painted red, blue, gray, and maroon to honour the colours of the four Canadian Divisions that had been formed.

The 65 soldiers who lived and worked aboard the train during its tour were hand picked to represent more than 40 different units from across the country.

The train usually visited two or three towns per day, setting up for three hours at a time to let people walk through the carriages and see a broad range of military equipment, most of which had never been shown in public before.

Exhibits included a Valentine Tank, a Bren Gun Carrier, a jeep, a 25 pound artillery piece, light and heavy machine guns, rifles, small arms, clothing, medical equipment, communications and signaling devices, and an 800,000,000 candlepower searchlight that was visible from up to 100 kilometres away.

The cars were organized into displays representing different parts of the army, including the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, the Royal Canadian Engineers, the Royal Canadian Artillery, and even the Dental and Medical Corps.

Also on board was a display from the Canadian Red Cross Society that focused upon its role in sending care packages to allied prisoners of war, and in and collecting blood serum to send over to Britain to help treat wounded soldiers and civilians.

Stops in Cornwall and Rigaud

The train started its tour in Ottawa on 3 Feb 1942 and over the next three months visited 202 different communities across the country, drawing in a remarkable 800,000 visitors at a time when the population of Canada was less than 12 million people.

Residents of Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec were first able to visit the train on the afternoon of 23 Feb 1942 when it stopped in Cornwall after having come along the St. Lawrence River from Brockville.

The next morning the train moved on to Rigaud where more than 2,000 people, led by the mayor, came out to welcome it.

Later that day it proceeded to Ste. Anne de Bellville, where almost 5,000 people walked through the exhibits, the highest turn out to date for the tour.

For its visit to Quebec the English posters that offered information on the military equipment aboard the train elsewhere in Canada were switched to bilingual signs.

On board, the 15 bilingual soldiers who normally attended to the exhibits were augmented with more French speaking soldiers, in order to better convey their message to local citizens.

Following a visit to Montreal and the Eastern Townships, the train continued into the Maritimes, before turning around and heading westwards across the country, all the way to Vancouver.

Then, circling to the east once again, the train made its way back across Canada stopping in towns all along the way before finally ending its tour in Montreal on 10 May 1942.

Hard days remained throughout the rest of 1942.

In June the Alaskan islands of Attu and Kiska were occupied by Japanese forces, bringing the war to the doorstep of North America.

Later, in August, the Canadian Army launched its ill-fated raid on Dieppe, where almost 1,000 men died in less than 12 hours on the beaches of France.

The war was not going well, but the Canadian people remained committed to the cause and by the end of the fighting more than a million Canadians and Newfoundlanders had served in the military.

Of these, 45,000 never made it home.

While the Canadian Army Train certainly didn't win the war, it did manage to win the support of the population at a time when victory was by no means certain.

Shawn MacWha.

21/02/2023 Kingstonist Winchester Smiths Falls

Multiple freight train cars derailed at Smiths Falls yard

On the morning of Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, Kingstonist received report of a freight train derailment in Smiths Falls.

According to a local resident, 15 or more train cars had derailed from the CP tracks between Lorne Street in Smiths Falls and Rosedale Road. They also noted that two transport trucks carrying rails and rail ties, as well as crews were at the scene shortly after noon.

Following multiple inquiries from Kingstonist, CP Rail issued a short statement regarding the incident.

"Last night a freight train derailed at slow speed in the Smiths Falls yard. The derailed rail cars remained upright. There were no leaks, spills or injuries," CP said. "The incident is under investigation."

Picture caption:

A tractor trailer brings rails and rail ties to the scene of a CP Rail derailment in Smiths Falls. Photo by Pete Harris

Train derailment in Smiths Falls yard Monday night

A CP freight train derailed at slow speed in the Smiths Falls yard Monday night.

Canadian Pacific confirms that the cars stayed upright after derailing. They confirmed that there were no leaks, spills, or injuries.

An investigation into how it happened is being carried out, and there's been no word on possible damages.

Historic Calumet railway station preservation effort continuing.

Grenville-sur-la-Rouge

Grenville-sur-la-Rouge continues to develop plans to preserve the historic railway station in Calumet.

According to Mayor Tom Arnold, architects and engineers are developing plans and protected costs to submit to the Quebec Gatineau railway, and discussions continue between the municipality and the railway.

In November 2021, council approved entering negotiations with the railway about the future of the building, which had fallen into extremely poor condition.

On January 31, 2023, Grenville-sur-la-Rouge council approved a transaction with the railway to pay for work already done during the past year in order to put a temporary cover over the station, as the existing roof was no longer reliable or stable. Arnold said that the total cost of that work was about \$9,000, but the railway was covering about \$5,000 of the expense.

The mayor is optimistic the municipality and the railway will eventually reach an agreement on preserving the station.

"I'm hopeful we'll get something going soon," he said.

Arnold noted there is not a lot of time left due to the poor condition of the building.

"We can't wait forever, obviously the building is degrading," he commented.

The Quebec Gatineau Railway is a division of Genesee and Wyoming. The 450-kilometre line from Gatineau to Quebec City, which crosses the southern part of Argenteuil was part of the Canadian Pacific Railway until 1997. The Quebec Gatineau Railway continues to own the Calumet station. Arnold said Grenville-sur-la-Rouge council wants the station to be saved and is doing what is within its means to ensure it is preserved.

## Une nouvelle vie pour la gare du Bourget

Construite en 1893 et désaffectée dans les années 1970, la gare de Bourget est un lieu historique laissé à l'abandon depuis plus d'une décennie, mais la Corporation du sentier récréatif Prescott-Russell (CSRPR), la Ville et les propriétaires de Hammond Hill et de la Broken Stick Brewery cherchent à donner une nouvelle vie à ce bâtiment patrimonial local.

Lors de la réunion du conseil municipal du mercredi 8 mars, Aaron Markel, propriétaire d'Aim Project Management et de Hammond Hill eco resort, a proposé un projet de 1,5 million de dollars pour restaurer la station et créer un bâtiment multifonctionnel qui comprendrait un restaurant et un café, une micro-brasserie, un atelier de réparation de bicyclettes et offrirait des espaces communautaires et des programmes, tout en conservant le design d'origine intact.

« Je ne pense pas qu'il y ait quelque chose de plus intéressant que de redonner vie à quelque chose, a dit M. Markel. « Il n'y a pas de désignation patrimoniale, mais notre intention est de la reconstruire comme si elle l'avait été. L'ensemble de la façade doit donner l'impression d'être à bord d'un train d'il y a 100 ans. »

Markel, dont l'entreprise a participé à la restauration d'autres bâtiments patrimoniaux, se concentre sur la création de constructions respectueuses de l'environnement. Il a déclaré que le maintien de l'histoire et de la culture de la gare est d'une importance capitale tout en offrant un espace qui rassemble la communauté. Le fait de voir la gare dans son état actuel l'a attristé et l'a incité à agir.

« Il y a toutes ces nouvelles constructions et ces maisons plus anciennes, et puis il y a ce qui devrait être un point de repère planté au milieu. Et c'est en train de se décomposer. Littéralement en train de pourrir sous les yeux de tout le monde », a commenté M. Markel.

Il a également déclaré que l'accueil réservé par la communauté depuis que le projet a été proposé a été remarquable. Même s'il pensait qu'il s'agissait d'un projet important, il ne savait pas à quel point il serait bien accueilli par la communauté dans son ensemble.

« De nombreuses personnes m'ont contacté pour me dire que c'était génial et pour me remercier, a dit M. Markel. C'est une grande fierté pour nous. »

Les conseillers ont voté à l'unanimité en faveur du projet et l'ont soutenu avec enthousiasme, indiquant que le projet de restauration s'inscrivait parfaitement dans le plan stratégique et la stratégie de développement économique de la ville, qui visent à améliorer l'économie locale dans les zones rurales et à créer des espaces communautaires dynamiques. L'administration de la ville est maintenant chargée de négocier le contrat de vente.

« Je pense que cela attirera les gens dans le village et leur permettra de profiter de tout ce que nous avons à offrir, a dit Diane Choinière, conseillère municipale de Bourget. Cela montrera aux résidents que l'accent n'est pas mis uniquement sur Rockland. Cela montre que nous sommes prêts à établir des partenariats avec des entreprises et des organisations locales pour réaliser des projets comme celui-ci. »

## Prochaines étapes

Un accord de vente comprendrait le transfert de la propriété du bâtiment à la CSRPR pour un prix symbolique (la famille Robillard a donné la station à la ville en 2013) et le transfert de 450 000 dollars de frais de développement, collectés auprès des constructeurs au fil des ans et mis de côté pour la gare.

La gare rénovée constituerait un autre arrêt attrayant le long du sentier CSRPR, qui attire chaque année des centaines de milliers de marcheurs, de cyclistes et de motoneigistes. Actuellement, le sentier de 72 kilomètres, qui s'étend de la frontière du Québec jusqu'à Orléans, a plusieurs destinations le long de son parcours, dont aucune ne se trouve actuellement dans Clarence-Rockland, à l'exception du Camping Paradis à Bourget, qui est listé comme hébergement potentiel à proximité du sentier.

Dans sa présentation au conseil, M. Markel a indiqué que la construction prendrait jusqu'à deux ans, mais il a précisé qu'il préférerait « moins promettre et plus livrer. »

Au fur et à mesure de l'avancement du projet, la Ville organisera des réunions publiques afin de tenir les habitants informés et recueillir leurs suggestions et commentaires sur la nouvelle vie de la gare.

## Translation

## A new life for Le Bourget station

Built in 1893 and decommissioned in the 1970s, Bourget Station has been an abandoned historic site for over a decade, but the Prescott-Russell Recreation Trail Corporation (PRSRC), the City and the owners of Hammond Hill and the Broken Stick Brewery are looking to breathe new life into this local heritage building.

At the Wednesday, March 8 City Council meeting, Aaron Markel, owner of Aim Project Management and Hammond Hill eco resort, proposed a \$1.5 million project to restore the resort and create a multi-purpose building that would include a restaurant and café, microbrewery, bicycle repair shop, and offer community spaces and programs, while keeping the original design intact.

"I don't think there's anything more interesting than bringing something back to life," Marcel said. There is no heritage designation, but our intention is to rebuild it as if it had been. The entire façade must give the impression of being on board a train from 100 years ago. »

Markel, whose company has been involved in the restoration of other heritage buildings, focuses on creating environmentally friendly constructions. He said maintaining the station's history and culture is of paramount importance while providing a space that brings the community together. Seeing the station in its current state saddened him and prompted him to take action.

"There are all these new builds and older houses, and then there's what should be a landmark planted in the middle. And it's breaking down. Literally rotting in front of everyone's eyes," Markel said.

He also said the community has received a remarkable response since the project was proposed. Even though he thought it was an important project, he didn't know how well it would be received by the community as a whole.

"A lot of people contacted me to say it was great and to thank me," Marcel said. This is a source of great pride for us. »

Councillors voted unanimously in favour of the project and enthusiastically supported it, stating that the restoration project fits perfectly with the city's strategic plan and economic development strategy, which aims to improve the local economy in rural areas and create vibrant community spaces. The city administration is now responsible for negotiating the sales contract.

"I think it will attract people to the village and allow them to enjoy all that we have to offer," said Diane Choinière, Bourget City Councillor. This will show residents that the focus is not just on Rockland. It shows that we are willing to partner with local businesses and organizations to deliver projects like this. »

## Timeline

A sale agreement would include transferring ownership of the building to the CSRPR for a nominal price (the Robillard family donated the station to the city in 2013) and transferring \$450,000 in development costs, collected from builders over the years and set aside for the station.

The renovated station would be another attractive stop along the CSRPR Trail, which attracts hundreds of thousands of walkers, cyclists and snowmobilers each year. Currently, the 72-kilometre trail, which stretches from the Quebec border to Orleans, has several destinations along its route, none of which are currently in Clarence-Rockland, with the exception of Camping Paradis in Bourget, which is listed as potential accommodation near the trail.

In his presentation to council, Markel said construction would take up to two years, but said he prefers "less promise and more deliver."

As the project progresses, the City will hold public meetings to keep residents informed and gather their suggestions and comments on the station's new life.

Via Rail train en route to Ottawa delayed by more than 2 hours due to mechanical trouble

A Via Rail train en route to Ottawa was delayed by a mechanical issue Monday afternoon, but another train arrived to get passengers to their destination.

Travellers on Via Rail train #42 from Toronto to Ottawa were stranded outside Smiths Falls, Ont. for about two hours. According to Via Rail's online schedule, the train should have arrived in Ottawa just before 5 p.m. The train had arrived in Smiths Falls at 4:13 p.m. but Via Rail says it became stuck a short time later.

In a statement to CTV News, Via Rail said train #44, the next scheduled trip, would take the stuck passengers the rest of the way.

"We can confirm that VIA Rail train 42 is currently stopped at Dwyer Hill with mechanical issues," the statement sent at 6:15 p.m. said. "Via Rail train 44 is en route and will be connecting with train 42 to transport passengers to their final destination in Ottawa."

The trip from Smiths Falls to Fallowfield Station in Ottawa is normally around 30 minutes, but passengers on train #42 didn't arrive at that stop until just before 7 p.m.

Train #44 was scheduled to arrive at the Tremblay Road station in Ottawa at 6:43 p.m. but was delayed by about 35 minutes and arrived at around 7:20 p.m.

22/03/2023 City News

Alexandria

Ottawa

Via Rail apologizes, investigating after Muslim man told not praying at Ottawa station

Via Rail says it apologizes unreservedly to the man and to the entire Muslim community.

Via Rail has apologized and says it's investigating after a video of an employee telling a Muslim man not to pray at its Ottawa station circulated online.

The video on TikTok appears to show a Via Rail employee telling a man that he cannot pray at the station and he should go outside if he wants to pray.

Via Rail says it apologizes unreservedly to the man and to the entire Muslim community. It says it is taking what happened "very seriously" and an investigation is ongoing.

05/04/2023 CityNews

Kingston (CN)

Montreal-Toronto VIA Passengers Stranded for Hours Due to Fallen Debris

Ontario - Several VIA Rail trains between Toronto and Montreal were cancelled as passengers were stranded for hours due to power outages and track obstructions, including fallen trees.

Passengers tell CityNews that they have been idle since Wednesday afternoon and were reportedly told they won't arrive in Toronto until midnight.

On passenger aboard a VIA train from Ottawa en route to Toronto says their train hit a tree in the afternoon between 13:00 and 14:00.

"Passengers were told that a train was coming from Montreal to take them to Toronto. At 18:30 passengers were told this was false, and there was no train from Montreal," said Melissa Brooks.

Tony Brooks says he left Ottawa for Toronto at 14:30 on Wednesday, but his train stopped shortly after because of the weather.

A replacement train showed up six hours later.

"What upset me, it's unbelievable that there is no contingency plan. We were out in the woods, they wouldn't let anyone off the train. My wife, who was in Toronto, said she would come and get us, but there was no way to get off. There was no street to access," Tony Brooks said.

A VIA official tells CityNews that strong winds and heavy rain mixed with thunderstorms across southern Ontario greatly affected travel, noting they are offering full refunds to passengers impacted, plus 50 percent travel credits.

"Power outages and track obstructions are causing service delays and cancellations in the Montreal-Toronto corridor," VIA tweeted.

On its website, VIA listed the cancelled trains as 39, 48, 54, 59, 68, 69, 668, and 669.

No passengers were injured.

05/04/2023 CTV News

Kingston (CN)

Lyn

Freezing rain caused numerous Via Rail cancellations between Toronto and Montreal

A Via Rail train has been stopped between Ottawa and Kingston because of a fallen tree on the tracks.

According to ViaRail.ca, train 645 from Ottawa to Toronto remains stopped near Lyn, Ont. It departed Ottawa at 2:32 p.m. and was scheduled to arrive in Toronto at 7:03 p.m.; however, it is now significantly delayed.

Witnesses at the scene say the train stuck a piece of a tree that had fallen across the tracks, likely weighed down by ice during Wednesday's significant freezing rainstorm.

CTV News Ottawa has reached out to Via Rail for more information.

In the meantime, the rail service says several trains are cancelled on the Toronto-Montreal corridor because of the weather.

"Power outages and track obstructions are causing service delays and cancellations in the Montréal -Toronto Corridor. Cancelled trains are: 48, 54, 59, 68, 69, 668, 669. We apologize for the inconvenience and passengers impacted by these cancellations will receive a full refund and 50% travel credit," Via Rail says.

## Railway Tunnel Reopens

Brockville Ontario - One of downtown Brockville's biggest marvels has opened its oversized doors for another season.

The much-anticipated spring reopening of the Brockville Railway Tunnel took place Thursday, with mayor Matt Wren describing this year in particular as one of recovery, and moving past the challenges of the last few years.

"It just seemed that, rather than just opening the doors and turning on the lights we should take pause and celebrate the fact we have this marvelous thing in our community, the oldest railway tunnel in Canada," Wren said at the opening ceremonies.

"I think the other thing that makes this small gathering important is that, perhaps, we can finally celebrate with confidence the fact we are entering a summer season that will feel back to normal."

The popular tourist draw, which closes its doors for the winter each year, will now be open from 09:00 to 21:00 seven days a week, until October.

The opening ceremony at the south entrance of the tunnel Thursday was well attended, with around 40 people in attendance, including members of the Brockville Infantry Company, and Brockville Legion Pipes and Drums.

The well-loved facility first opened to the public in 2017, after a years-long fundraising campaign, as well as extensive planning, studies, and construction work.

Wren said while he wasn't involved with city council when the decision was made to restore the tunnel, he did have the opportunity to walk through before construction began.

"That involved flashlights and gum rubber high boots. It was certainly very interesting to see, but it was impossible to envision what this could become," Wren said.

"It wasn't easy, it was a very big endeavor, and if it weren't for the determination of a number of individuals, and the tremendous generosity of many donors, we wouldn't be standing here today in front of what is truly a gem in our downtown core and on the shores of our beautiful waterfront."

The attraction has turned into the main tourism draw for the city, each year bringing tens of thousands of visitors to the city's downtown core.

Wren said the tunnel "is by far and away the main draw attracting people to visit our city."

"It has put us on the map," he said.

There is no charge for admission to the tunnel, but officials ask for donations in one of the red donation bins at either end of the tunnel to help pay for the ongoing costs to run it.

05/05/2023 CTV News

Kingston (CN)

Kingston

Updated 6 May 2023 4.10 p.m.

CN Rail says there was a "limited leak" of adipic acid into the Little Cataraqui Creek from a derailed train car in Kingston, Ont.

However, officials insist there is no danger to the public or the drinking water following Friday's derailment.

The cleanup continues after six cars on a 12-car CN Rail train derailed and a small rail bridge collapsed on the Cataraqui Industrial Spur near Bath Road.

Officials initially said that there was no evidence any of the "dangerous goods" being transported by the train had spilled into the Little Cataraqui Creek.

However, on Saturday, CN Rail said there was a "limited leak," which has now been contained.

"One of the rail cars transporting adipic acid experienced a limited leak which has since been controlled. Adipic acid is a solid industrial product commonly used in food and to make everyday household items such as nylon," CN Rail said in a statement to CTV News Ottawa.

"There is no danger to public safety or drinking water."

As of Saturday afternoon, CN Rail said four of the six derailed cars have been re-railed and "are in the process of being safely removed from the site."

Transport Canada says the department is "monitoring the situation closely" in Kingston, and inspectors have been sent to the site.

Bath Road remains closed between Queen Mary Road and Armstrong Road while the cleanup continues.

Kingston transit is warning riders to expect delays due to the road closure. A free shuttle operated by Kingston Transit is available for pedestrians and cyclists who need to cross Bath Road at the derailment site.

05/05/2023 CBC News

Kingston (CN)

Kemptville

Updated May 6

Kingston train derailment caused 'limited' acid leak, CN says

CN says no risk to drinking water, public safety after small spill

One of the cars on a freight train that derailed in Kingston, Ont., Friday morning experienced a "limited leak" of industrial acid, CN now says.

The rail car was transporting adipic acid, a "solid industrial product commonly used in food and to make everyday household items such as nylon," CN said in a statement Saturday.

The spill, which was no more than five litres, has now been controlled and poses no threat to public safety or drinking water, CN said.

The rail company initially said no leaks had been detected.

The train was carrying what CN described as "dangerous goods" when it derailed over the Little Cataraqui Creek, which is part of a marshland conservation area, at around 10:35 a.m. Friday.

CN said Saturday that its crews and local first responders remain on site, and four of the derailed cars are now back on the tracks.

Two of the cars ended up in the water after the derailment, Kingston Police said yesterday. There were three crew members on the train, but no injuries have been reported.

The derailment also caused a small rail bridge over the creek to collapse.

Bath Road has been closed between Queen Mary and Armstrong roads since the derailment and is expected to remain closed until Monday.

Emergency services responding to train derailment in Kingston

Published May 05, 2023 - Last updated 1 day ago

A CN train that derailed Friday morning near Bath Road was carrying two chemicals to the Invista Canada Co. textile plant, but officials have not yet confirmed whether a spill occurred.

"The train was carrying dangerous goods; there are no reported leaks at this time," Julien Bedard, media relations adviser with CN rail, told the *Whig-Standard* Friday.

The two chemicals were adipic acid and hexamethylenediamine. Both are used by Invista Canada Co. to produce nylon.

"Both are not good for the water environment," Brad Joyce, commissioner of transportation and public works for the City of Kingston, said at the scene.

The Environment Ministry and Transport Canada have sent inspectors to the site.

The incident happened approximately 75 metres north of Bath Road at 10:35 a.m. as the train was travelling southeast on the Cataraqui Spur into the plant.

At the scene, it was clear the bridge over Little Cataraqui Creek had collapsed under the weight of the train near the east bank of the river. Kingston Police Const. Anthony Colangeli said five of the train's 12 cars had derailed.

Joyce said that two cars had entered the river.

"The train was carrying two chemicals that are used in processes at Invista," Joyce said. "The chemicals we've identified, we don't want them going into the water.

"At this point in time, it does not appear (there are) any major leaks, or even minor leaks, that we can tell. There may be some creosote, just from the rail ties that have broken."

Joyce said Kingston Fire and Rescue crews have set up a boom as a precaution and may set up additional booms if they find it necessary. He explained they did not find any evidence of a spill while using the Kingston Police drone to examine the scene.

"The water is not moving as aggressively as I thought it might be at this time of the season, and with the boom set up, we're fairly confident that (a leak) can be contained if anything does occur," Joyce said. "It's not good for the water, clearly, and we're hoping it stays contained as (CN) remediates it."

Invista Canada Co. representative Paul Brown said the textile company is aware of the derailment.

"The derailment is on the CN Spur line and the train was inbound to our site," Brown said. "Invista stands ready to support CN and local authorities as they continue to assess their next steps to safely clear the tracks."

There were three crew members aboard the train, none of whom initially reported injuries, Colangeli, said.

Gary Wheeler, spokesperson for the Environment Ministry, explained the ministry's role is "to assess any environmental impacts and ensure the responsible parties eliminate any adverse effects, clean up the spill, and restore the natural environment."

He said CN is the responsible party in this case and they've already retained a cleanup contractor and environmental consultant. They were expected to arrive Friday afternoon. The ministry's environmental officer will continue to assess environmental conditions and will follow up to ensure appropriate steps are being taken to contain any spilled material and to mitigate any environmental impacts.

Wheeler said there is no known threat to human health from the derailment. The ministry doesn't expect any impacts to drinking water, but it has notified the municipality's water plants as a precaution.

Krista Fazackerley, supervisor of communications and education for Cataraqui Conservation, explained that Little Cataraqui Creek, with its headwaters being near Glenburnie, generally flows southwest and empties into Lake Ontario at Cataraqui Bay.

While the river has some groundwater contributions, there are not many.

"Primarily, the creek receives its water from precipitation that flows from higher to lower areas and therefore collects in smaller tributary streams that lead into the main branches of the creek," Fazackerley said.

Police said on Twitter at about 10:50 a.m. that Bath Road has been closed to traffic between Queen Mary Road and Armstrong Road. Colangeli anticipated Bath Road would be closed for the rest of the day, depending on how much cleanup would be required.

"Please find an alternate route on your morning and afternoon commute," police said.

Police said in a news release that they are asking the public to avoid the area of the tracks between Armstrong Road and Queen Mary Road as a precaution and so emergency crews can do their work.

At about 11 a.m., Kingston Transit announced that all of its Route 11 and Express 700 buses would not be able to provide service between Portsmouth Avenue and Centennial Drive.

07/05/2023 *CTV News**Kingston (CN)**Kingston*

Small Spill Contained as Last Rail Car Removed from Derailment Site

7 May 2023

Kingston Ontario - The last rail car involved in a derailment in Kingston has been removed from the tracks, but a small amount of adipic acid was spilled in the process, CN says.

Six cars of a 12 car train derailed Friday when a small rail bridge collapsed on the Cataraqui Industrial Spur near Bath Road.

CN said the last car was removed at around 10:00, Sunday, but a small amount of adipic acid was released into a prepared containment area.

"The contained product is currently being extracted," a CN spokesperson said in an email just after 13:00. Environment Canada and CN contractors have been monitoring water throughout the recovery process and there is no danger to public safety or to drinking water."

Adipic acid is a solid industrial product commonly used to make nylon, but it can also be used as a food additive.

There was a limited leak of the acid Saturday, CN said, which was also contained.

The city of Kingston said Sunday that the eastbound lanes of Bath Road between Armstrong and Queen Mary roads would reopen for the Monday morning commute from 06:30 to 08:30.

"Full closure of Bath Road will resume at 08:30 and remain in place during the afternoon commute. Detours and the Kingston Transit shuttle will also resume at 08:30," the city said Sunday.

CN estimates that work at the site will be completed by Tuesday.

Transport Canada to inspect Kingston rail spur following 3rd derailment in 3 years

Transport Canada says it will inspect the track, bridges and crossings along the entire Cataraqui Industrial Spur, a section of rail in Kingston, Ont., that's seen three derailments in the past three years.

The commitment comes after six cars CN said were carrying "dangerous goods" left the track on May 5, which caused a small leak of industrial acid and shut down a major road for roughly four days for around-the-clock cleanup.

Residents and officials say the frequency of incidents on the same short stretch has left them concerned about safety and searching for answers. The derailment happened in the "heart of the city," according to Mayor Bryan Paterson, who couldn't believe the scale of the mess it left behind. He said CN has committed to working with the city and local officials have asked the company to share the results of its investigations into previous incidents at the site.

"I think that there should be a full broad investigation to understand, is there anything that's leading to these derailments?" Paterson said.

Data collected by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada shows there have been four other derailments on the spur in the past 19 years - one each in 2004 and 2007, and two in 2020.

In a statement, CN said it values safety and will apply lessons learned from the most recent incident to improve its operations.

"The cause of the derailment is still under investigation, but it remains important to remember that each incident is different so we would caution against linking previous incidents," spokesperson Julien Bédard wrote in an email.

CN won't share inspection reports

While railway companies, including CN, are responsible for maintenance and safety along their infrastructure, Transport Canada monitors those efforts through audits and its own inspections to make sure rules are followed.

It directed questions about the maintenance and inspection history of the bridge to CN.

But in an email to CBC the company said it does not publicly share inspection reports, citing "safety and security reasons."

CN did say the rail bridge over Little Cataraqui Creek, the site of the derailment, is inspected annually and the last inspection happened in October 2022.

The company did not respond to questions about the age of the bridge or when it last underwent a major repair.

Eric Gagnon, a Kingston-based rail enthusiast who has written about the spur on his blog, Trakside Treasure, said it's built up a "very bad reputation."

He said the five-kilometre section is a low-speed service for an industrial plant, rather than rail that sees frequent passenger traffic, which could be a factor in the derailments.

"That says to me, we only have to maintain it to that standard," he said.

"It's a business, and you're not going to invest any more money than you have to, but I think there is a real safety component in that equation at some point."

'There is a problem here'

Gagnon said officials need to recognize "there is a problem here" given the fact chemicals and acids are being carted through a marshland.

CN said "significant upgrades" have been made to the track bed near the derailment site and it "diligently inspects all of its infrastructure and makes repairs when necessary," with safety in mind.

Constable describes Kingston train derailment that collapsed small bridge

Kingston Police constable Anthony Colangeli said five cars derailed, some of which fell into the water.

Transport Canada's last inspection at the site happened in 2020 and focused on the flashing lights and bells at the crossing, but its examination following last week's derailment will be more fulsome.

It will include "inspections on the crossings, warning systems, track and bridge structures on the entire CN Industrial Spur," wrote spokesperson Hicham Ayoun in an email.

"Appropriate action" will be taken if any deficiencies are identified, he added.



Padolsky: Why Ottawa's former CPR rail bridge should get a heritage label

This crossing, now used by pedestrians and cyclists, has clear historic value. But the city has allowed it to deteriorate, an obvious example of 'demolition by neglect.'

On April 26, Ottawa Council voted to overturn a recommendation by its built heritage committee to apply a heritage designation to one of the city's few surviving 19th-century railway landmarks: the CPR Railway bridge over the Rideau River in the "Hurdman" precinct. This act puts the city "on track" to demolish this historic structure and build a new bridge as recommended by its infrastructure and water services department.

The CPR (M&O Railway) bridge was constructed in 1898 as part of a high-speed passenger rail link from Montreal, New York and Washington to the heart of Canada's new capital. In 1966, the bridge was relieved of its railway function when the federal government, following the NCC's Greber Plan (1950), removed the railway network from the capital's core area. Happily, the CPR bridge was given a new vocation in 1999. With a few minor repairs and modifications, it was repurposed by the City of Ottawa to become a valuable pedestrian and cycling bridge, linking downtown communities on each side of the Rideau River.

So why must the CPR Bridge be demolished and replaced?

First, a note about the CPR bridge's heritage values. The City of Ottawa Heritage Valuation Report (2023) has confirmed that the CPR bridge qualifies for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. It is recognized as an early example of a "through plate girder bridge" and "one of the last remnants of the historical rail infrastructure leading to the core of the city." The city's report affirms that the bridge has cultural heritage value "for its design, associative and contextual value."

The CPR bridge is also a landmark with historic values. It was built by the Dominion Bridge Company using steel fabricated by the famed Carnegie Steel Company led by Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish-American billionaire-industrialist- philanthropist. Carnegie's proud "signature" on the CPR rail bridge can be discovered on the top flange of the northeast girder abutting the easterly bank of the Rideau River. Carnegie played an important role in Ottawa's cultural history by donating the funds to build the Ottawa Central Library (1905), demolished by City of Ottawa in 1971, and the surviving Rosemount Branch Library (1918). These were among the 1800 "Carnegie" libraries built in the United States and Canada.

Plate-girder bridges were first developed in Britain in the 1850s and proved to be a creative design option in the 19th and early 20th-century worldwide where multiple-pier bridges to span river crossings were optimal. "Through plate girder bridges," similar to the CPR bridge, have been granted historical designations and preserved in Europe, the U.S. and Canada. So why must Ottawa's CPR bridge be demolished and replaced?

Because the City of Ottawa infrastructure and water services department (responsible for the stewardship of Ottawa's bridges) has reported that the CPR bridge is severely deteriorated and in "poor" condition. According to a detailed condition assessment and renewal options study (2018), the cost of rehabilitating the bridge (\$11.84 million) would exceed the cost of a new bridge (\$9.86 million). The department's conclusion, indifferent to heritage considerations, is to replace the bridge.

But how did this severe deterioration come about? A close review of the 2018 detailed engineering report is revealing. It appears that from the date that the city acquired the CPR bridge (1996) to the date when the condition assessment was undertaken (2017), the city undertook no serious program of repairs and preventative maintenance that could have stopped the bridge from deteriorating to its sad state in 2017. The report also discovered that the last time the steel bridge was coated (painted) was in 1969, - long exceeding its expected service life. This evidence, translated into the city's heritage policy's language, can be genuinely called "demolition by neglect."

The city's built heritage committee's April 11, 2023 recommendation that council grant heritage designation to the CPR bridge - as a step towards ensuring its rehabilitation and long-term preservation - was supported by Heritage Ottawa, local citizens, local community associations, the Ottawa Railway Historic Circle and significantly, two former senior City of Ottawa bridge engineers who devoted their careers to caring for Ottawa's bridge infrastructure.

I appeal to Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and Ottawa Council to direct the city manager and staff to report back with a rehabilitation and long-term maintenance strategy that would ensure that the robust, historic and still useful CPR rail bridge over the Rideau River - now a 125-year-old Ottawa landmark - will be conserved for another 125 years, and a joy of future generations.

**16/05/2023    Kingstonist**

**Kingston (CN)**

**Kingston**

CN and Environment and Climate Change Canada Provide Brief Updates Regarding Kingston Derailment

Kingston Ontario - After authorities and experts weighed in on the environmental implications of the train derailment just north of Bath Road, government agencies and CN have provided a few brief updates.

The derailment, which occurred on Friday, 5 May 2023, remains under investigation, though the derailed cars have been removed from the site. Those train cars that fell off the bridge as it collapsed beneath the train were lifted out of the marshland, and now sit at the Invista Centre, the destination of the train in the first place, as the train was pushing cars towards the nylon manufacturing site on the spur line dedicated to serving Invista on Front Road

As previously reported, in order to complete the removal of the train cars, tons of gravel was poured into and onto the marshland surrounding the now-broken rail bridge.

CN has now provided further information on that infilling process and plan.

"CN used about 5,000 tons of locally sourced shot rock for the access road and building up the area where the bridge collapsed, and roughly 250 tons of locally sourced ballast to help reconstruct the roadbed," Julien Bedard, a media relations spokesperson with CN, said in response to Kingstonist inquiries.

Bedard also answered one of the questions many posed upon hearing of, or seeing, the infilling in the area following the derailment.

"As part of remediation of the site, some of this material will be removed to restore the site as close as it was before the incident," Bedard relayed. Last week, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) pointed to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), its federal counterpart, as the authority dealing with the environmental implications associated with the derailment and subsequent remedial work.

After reaching out to ECCC on Thursday, 11 May 2023, Kingstonist received response from the federal agency on Monday, 15 May 2023.

According to ECCC, their ministry has been charged with investigating the situation.

"The Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) Enforcement Branch has been advised of the train derailment that happened on 5 May 2023 in Kingston, and has opened a file on the matter," said Cecilia Parsons, media relations spokesperson for ECCC.

"Enforcement officers attended the site from 5 to 7 May 2023 and took samples. ECCC is unable to provide further information at this time."

Kingstonist continues to follow up with CN, the MOE, and ECCC, and will provide further coverage as more information becomes available.

## VIA Train With 210 Passengers on Board Stops Due to Engine Failure

28 May 2023

Alexandria Ontario - More than 200 passengers were stuck on a VIA train near Alexandria for several hours Sunday evening, after a mechanical issue stopped the train.

VIA says train 37 stopped approximately "half a mile away from the Alexandria station" due to an engine failure.

The train with 210 passengers on board was travelling from Montreal to Ottawa when it stopped, with it originally scheduled to arrive in Ottawa at 18:35.

"Another VIA train will push the train to Alexandria station to allow passengers to disembark while they await another train to take them to their final destinations," VIA said in a statement at 20:40.

One passenger on board train 37 said on Twitter that the air conditioning was not working on the train.

Passengers on social media reported VIA train 39 (Montreal to Ottawa) towed train 37 to Ottawa.

The VIA Rail train tracker showed the two trains were scheduled to arrive at the Ottawa Train Station just before 23:00.

Heritage streetcar told to hit the road after city reclaims garage space

Heritage enthusiasts who've been working more than two decades to bring a relic of Ottawa's transportation past to life say the project is now in peril because OC Transpo wants to reclaim space at its garage.

Rheume Laplante is the co-ordinator of the long-gestating Streetcar 696 Restoration Project, named after the last remaining 600-series streetcar that serviced Ottawa between 1915 and 1959.

Streetcar 696 wound up at a railway museum in Quebec, left to rot under a tarp, until it was brought back to Ottawa. In 2000, Laplante and others began building a replica, using mostly newly manufactured parts.

Their goal is to operate the 15-metre-long streetcar as a historic display in Lansdowne Park.

"It means a lot," said Laplante, a retired OC Transpo worker. "My dad used to go on the streetcars. He was talking about it all the time ... It brings back good memories."

Needs to go by end of June

But Laplante said the restoration group was told by OC Transpo in April the replica would need to be moved out of the agency's Merivale garage on Colonnade Road, at the group's expense, by June 30.

"This is an OC Transpo project. It's not my project," Laplante said. "It was my goodwill to work on this project."

The news they were getting the boot, he added, came only a year after the project was publicly lauded by former Mayor Jim Watson and the previous city council.

"I feel I've been betrayed and disposed of," Laplante said.

Larry McNally, the group's secretary-treasurer, agreed.

"We are months away from finishing the rebuild of the car body. Now the whole project is in the air," McNally said via email.

OC Transpo has supported the project for many years by agreeing to store the replica for free and allowing the group to use city tools and utilities, according to a statement from the city.

"Due to operational needs, however, including renovations as part of the ongoing transition to zero-emission buses, OC Transpo is no longer able to donate space to host this project," said Robert Lafontaine, the city's program manager of transit facilities maintenance, in the statement.

The city is consulting departments to see if a temporary location can be found until the group can find a new permanent home, Lafontaine added.

City has 'run out of options'

In an email Laplante received Saturday from Mayor Mark Sutcliffe's office, the mayor's director of issues and outreach, Scott Moffatt, said the need for space is "legitimate" after the city agreed to house their streetcar for nine years.

Alternative locations have been discussed, Moffatt said in the email, which Laplante shared with CBC News.

But none of the city-owned options would allow for the streetcar to be worked on.

"I do not believe it makes sense for the city to move the streetcar from one location to another unless the new location provides volunteers with the ability to continue restoring the streetcar," Moffatt added.

While offering to help with the move, the mayor's office strongly encouraged the group to investigate private storage options.

"I am sorry that I was not able to come to a more favourable resolution for you and your team of dedicated volunteers," Moffatt's email concluded.

"We certainly appreciate your commitment to this project, but the city has simply run out of options to be able to continue supporting the restoration."

David Jeanes, treasurer of the citizen transportation advocacy group Transport Action Canada, said he's hopeful "the real estate issue" can be resolved.

"The fact that OC Transpo wants to use [the garage] for a different purpose doesn't balance the important heritage value to the City of Ottawa and to OC Transpo," said Jeanes, whose group supports the restoration project and has provided it funding.

"People often forget that Ottawa used to be in an industrial city. It also represents our transportation history ... and the volunteers responded to a call from OC Transpo."

Tornado among prior setbacks

Laplante says he's not willing to move the streetcar, despite what the city says. Nor is working on the project outside an option, he added.

According to Laplante, the impending eviction is just the latest setback that's hampered progress on the restoration project in recent years.

First, the 2019 tornado damaged the streetcar, he said. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

The project's volunteers are mostly retired, Laplante added. Four of them have died since the project began.

"I'm lucky to keep the ones I already have," he said.

Captions to pictures

This photo of Streetcar 696, housed at OC Transpo's Merivale garage, was taken in 2020, just a month before the COVID-19 pandemic, which hampered progress on the restoration project. (Submitted by Gerald Gaugl)

Rheume Laplante, the co-ordinator of the long-gestating Streetcar 696 Restoration Project, is an OC Transpo retiree. He's pictured here with the streetcar replica in 2017. (Giacomo Panico/CBC)

Larry McNally, the restoration group's secretary-treasurer, provided this alternate view of the replica taken in 2020. 'We are months away from finishing the rebuild of the car body,' he said Sunday. (Submitted by Gerald Gaugl)

Ottawa city council recognized the Streetcar 696 Restoration Project last year. (Jean Delisle/CBC)

David Jeanes is with citizen transportation advocacy group Transport Action Canada and says the project has 'important heritage value' for the nation's capital. (Guy Quenneville/CBC)

This photo shows the replica as it stood back in 2017. (Giacomo Panico/CBC)

VIA Rail rerouting trains around Cornwall, Ont. after truck falls over the tracks

VIA Rail is rerouting trains around Cornwall, Ont. on Wednesday after a semi-truck fell left Hwy. 401 and landed on the CN Rail tracks just outside of the city.

Ontario Provincial Police say one lane on Hwy. 401 westbound is closed between Boundary Road and County Road 27 near Cornwall following a collision.

A video on Twitter shows a transport truck partially off the road at the CN Rail line.

Police say a man driving an unloaded tractor-trailer eastbound on Hwy. 401 struck the guard rail, enter the centre median and drove over the bridge/underpass. The truck landed on the CN Rail tracks.

The driver was treated for minor injuries.

The collision has forced VIA Rail to reroute trains around Cornwall because the tracks are impassable.

"A semitruck fell over CN tracks just east of Cornwall and the tracks are currently impassable. No trains were involved in the incident," VIA Rail said in a statement. "We are directly informing impacted passengers and will provide more updates as the situation evolves."

VIA Rail says trains 60, 61, 62 and 63 will not be stopping at Cornwall station and will be rerouted through Ottawa. Trains on the Toronto-Montreal line are expected to see at least a one-hour delay.

14/06/2023 CTV News

Ottawa Electric

Streetcar '696' restoration project in limbo

For more than a century, Ottawa residents hopped on streetcars for work or play. One of the last remaining - number "696," - is facing a bumpy ride to restoration.

The made-in-Ottawa Streetcar is stored inside of an OC Transpo bus garage on Colonnade Road where volunteers have been restoring it for more than 20 years.

"It's part of Ottawa History," said Rheume Laplante, the project's co-ordinator.

Laplante says the project is nearly finished but its future is unknown. Volunteers have been told the streetcar has to move by the end of the month "otherwise they're going to drag it out."

In a statement to CTV News Ottawa Robert Lafontaine, the city's program manager of transit facilities maintenance says the space is needed.

"The City has been working with the volunteers of the Streetcar 696 Project for many years and has supported the project through in kind donations of space, minor use of hydro and water and the temporary use of some tools and equipment where such use would not impact operations,"

Lafontaine said. "Due to operational needs, however, including renovations as part of the ongoing transition to zero-emission buses, OC Transpo is no longer able to donate space to host this project."

He adds the city is looking to see if another temporary location can be found until the group finds a permanent home.

"Now, the whole project is up in the air, we have no idea what's going to happen," says Larry McNally, another volunteer with the project.

Volunteers say they have spent around 150,000 hours working on the streetcar and about \$250,000 in materials and services has been donated through sponsorships.

"It's not our streetcar, it's the city of Ottawa street car," says another volunteer, Gerald Gaugl.

Michael Kostiuik is with Canada's Capital Streetcar, a group that would like to see heritage-style streetcars downtown. "It'd be nice if they can finish the restoration to make it a fully operational streetcar, so the public can see what our streetcars used to look like."

Caption to photo:

Historic image of streetcar 696. (Courtesy: Rheume Laplante)

25/06/2023 CTV News

Kingston (CN)

Mallorytown

VIA Rail Train Stops Outside Kingston Due to Flames in the Exhaust Stack

25 June 2023

Mallorytown Ontario - A VIA Rail train travelling from Ottawa to Toronto was delayed for several hours Sunday evening after a mechanical issue with the engine near Kingston.

VIA Rail says train 645 was forced to stop in Mallorytown at 16:15 "due to mechanical issues caused by flames in the exhaust stack."

"The flames went out as soon as the engine was stopped."

There were 163 passengers on board the train travelling from Ottawa to Toronto.

There were no reports of injuries.

VIA Rail says train 55 will tow train 645 to Toronto.

Emails to CTV News Ottawa indicated trains 55 and 645 were still sitting outside Mallorytown at 19:45.

The VIA Rail moving maps showed the two trains were moving just after 20:30 with an arrival time in Toronto after 23:00.

27/06/2023 Ottawa Citizen

Kingston (CN)

Mallorytown

Via Rail train on its way to Toronto from Ottawa forced to stop

A Via Rail train headed to Toronto from Ottawa on Sunday was forced to stop in the Kingston area because of mechanical issues caused by flames in the exhaust stack. VIA 645 came to a halt in Mallorytown at 4:15 p.m. with 163 passengers on board. Via Rail said in an emailed reply to this newspaper. It said the flames went out as soon as the engine was stopped, but the local fire department was called and train 55 was sent to the location to couple with 645. In the email at 9:16 p.m., Via Rail said the train was "on the move" again operating approximately four hours late."

Miniature Train at Upper Canada Village Still Out of Service

29 June 2023

Morrisburg Ontario - Work to return the miniature train ride at Upper Canada Village to service remains incomplete 11 months after it derailed.

The popular miniature train, known as The Moccasin, derailed 28 Jul 2022 in what officials called at the time a minor incident.

The derailment was caused by a "sun kink" in the rails, which saw the last car of the train derail.

No injuries were reported at the time of the incident.

Earlier this year, officials with Upper Canada Village operator St. Lawrence Parks Commission told The Leader the train would return to service, however, two months into the season, work has not yet begun.

"SLPC has put health and safety at the forefront of everything it does, adopting a safety-first culture at all its sites," said Geoff Waycik, director of historic sites with the SLPC, in response to questions from The Leader.

"The miniature train at Upper Canada Village will not reopen until it is safe to do so."

Waycik said the SLPC is in its procurement process "to engage a qualified contractor" for repairing the track.

Those repairs will include rebuilding the existing station stop at Crysler Beach on its original loop line, and adding a new station stop near the Battle of Crysler's Farm Memorial building.

"The estimated timeline for reopening is dependent on the results of the procurement process and ensuing contracted work," Waycik said.

The last significant work completed to the Moccasin ride was in 2009-2010 when an extension to Crysler Park Marina was added, nearly doubling the length of the track at the park.

However, many of the signals installed at the time of the extension were never completed or entered into operation.

Over 10 years later, those items remain unused.

The extension itself was not operated after the 2019 season.

Sometime after the end of that season the roadbed which supports the track heaved.

A visual investigation by The Leader in summer 2022 found multiple locations on the extension where the roadbed had heaved, in some cases substantially, and several places where debris was across the line.

This spring, officials said only the original line between UCV and Crysler Beach would return to service at this point.

That line was originally constructed in the early 1960s with the opening of the site.

30/06/2023 *CBC News* *Ottawa Electric*

Heritage streetcar to stay put in city-owned garage - for now

streetcar 696 was set to be ejected from Merivale garage Friday

A painstakingly crafted replica of a streetcar that trundled through Ottawa decades ago will be able to stay in its current home for now as the city hatches a plan for its long-term future.

Streetcar 696 was facing eviction from OC Transpo's Merivale garage on Colonnade Road by the end of June.

Volunteers had been using the space to work on the replica, named after one of the last cars to operate in Ottawa before streetcar service ended in 1959.

But earlier this month, they told CBC they'd received notice that they'd have to find a new home for the streetcar, at their own expense, by June 30. OC Transpo wanted to reclaim the space, citing "operational needs" that included renovations as part of the city's transition to a zero-emission bus fleet.

At transit commission yesterday, however, OC Transpo general manager Renée Amilcar said the streetcar would be able to stay at the garage until city staff figured out a permanent solution.

"[That should come] as soon as possible, because we absolutely need the space," Amilcar said.

"We should have had access to that space at the end of this month, unfortunately. We're trying to find a solution, so hopefully at the end of next month we should have [one] to propose."

'Such a cool project'

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the restoration efforts, with volunteers unable to access the garage for long stretches of time, said David Jeanes, treasurer of citizen transportation advocacy group Transport Action Canada.

Jeanes told transit commission that even so, that work is now almost done.

"I would say that the replica as built is the property of the city. And so I think you should be concerned as to what happens to it," Jeanes said.

Capital Coun. Shawn Menard told Jeanes it would be great to eventually display Streetcar 696 at the Horticulture Building at Lansdowne Park, given the long history of streetcars running down Bank Street.

"It's been such a cool project, and to let a piece of our history just kind of fade away this way, after all the work that's been put in, it doesn't make much sense," Menard said.

"I think we need, through the city, to be facilitating the space for you to finish the project."

Calumet station; At the centre of it all

By Shawn MacWha

During the latter years of the Nineteenth Century the Government of Québec funded the construction of a number of "colonization railroads" to open up new parts of the province to settlement and economic development. The Québec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway (QMO&O) was one such undertaking and in December, 1885 it was granted a charter to build a line from Québec City to Ottawa along the north shores of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers. By connecting the largest cities in the region with smaller towns and villages along the province's two greatest rivers it was hoped that the railway would spark new industries to stem the tide of young Quebecers who were leaving their homes to find jobs in the bustling factories of New England.

Construction of the railway began in the first weeks of 1876 and the 200-kilometre-long section of track between Montréal and Alymer was finished in the spring of 1877 thanks to the efforts of almost 600 workers. Stations strung out along this line included ones in Ste. Thérèse, Ste. Scholastique, Lachute, Staynerville, Calumet, Fassett, Thurso, Masson, and Hull as well as a number of smaller towns along the way. Like the station in Calumet the majority of these buildings were single story wooden structures that featured a ticket office, a small restaurant, indoor and outdoor waiting areas and a warehouse for freight. Goods and passengers waiting outside were protected by large overhanging eaves and the station master had small office which projected out from the main part of the building to allow him to see up and down the tracks for approaching trains. Starting in 1878 the stations also had telegraph offices operated by the Dominion Telegraph Company offering towns along the railway with an instant connection to the outside world.

Almost immediately upon its completion, Calumet station became the centre of activity for the surrounding region. In May, 1877 a new steamer service was established which allowed travellers in Ottawa to board the steamship Geneva and sail down the river to connect with the train at Calumet. From there passengers could then proceed directly to Montréal, making the voyage from the nation's capital in an unprecedented seven hours. For those visitors who wanted to stay in Calumet to enjoy the local fishing, boating, and country pursuits the Calumet House Hotel offered fine accommodations at reasonable rates only a few minutes away from the railway station. Other travellers preferred to cross the river by ferry and take a stagecoach to the larger resorts in Caledonia Springs. There patrons stayed at places such as the Grand Hotel where they could bathe in the town's famous mineral waters and engage in recreational activities such as bowling, lawn tennis, croquet, and horseback riding. Evenings featured dances, parties and even an orchestra. Around the turn of the last century tourists from all over Canada and the United States, and even as far away as Europe, came to take the waters in this idyllic little Eastern Ontario town.

While the QMO&O sold its tracks between Montréal and Alymer to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1882 the railway remained the primary means of transport along the north shore of the Ottawa River until the coming of reliable roads in the 1920s. Along its route three different resource railways came down from the Laurentians to join the main line and add important freight revenues to the CPR: the Thurso and Nation Valley Railway, the Salmon River and Northern Railway, and the Dominion Timbers Railway. Passengers too used the railway to move between Montréal, Hull and the towns and villages in between. During the 1920s, for example, there were up to four trains a day between Calumet and Montréal, and two that ran westwards to Hull. However, with the decline of passenger traffic in the latter years of the Twentieth Century service dropped to only one regular train per day in the 1970s, plus a Sunday service to, but not from, Montréal. Passenger service along the line was stopped completely in the fall of 1981, with the last train stopping in Calumet on November 14.

That is not to say that there were not calls for a resumption in service. In 1985, for example, this newspaper reported on the efforts of Lachute resident Arthur Goldup to have passenger service reinstated along the line from Calumet to Montréal. While this unfortunately never occurred and Montréal's EXO network has yet to make the obvious connection to Lachute there have nonetheless been on-going efforts to at least save the station. As early as 1990 the CPR offered to sell the building to the village of Calumet, which wanted to convert it into a library, for only one dollar. However, the \$120,000 price tag for the land upon which it sat derailed (sorry) the plan to transfer the station to the municipality and CPR ended up keeping the station.

Several years later the CPR finally succeeded in getting rid of the station, as well as its "north shore line," on November 1, 1997 when it sold it to the Québec Gatineau Railway (QGRY), a subsidiary of Genessee & Wyoming Inc. While freight trains have continued to roll by Calumet since that time the days of people stopping here to enjoy the local countryside, or head off on other adventures, are sadly now over.

Fortunately there are still efforts afoot to save the station, which is now almost 150 years old. As James Morgan reported in *The Review* earlier this year ("Calumet railway station preservation efforts continue," February 17, 2023) <https://thereview.ca/2023/02/17/calumet-railway-station-preservation-effort/> the Grenville-sur-la-Rouge council recently agreed to work with the QGRY to put a temporary cover over the station and cooperate on its eventual preservation and restoration. Given how much of Canada's industrial history has been lost to decay or the wrecking ball one can only hope that these efforts will be successful and that this station can once again find a place in the life of the community.

## The Push, Pull and Jerk: A Short History of the Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway.

By Shawn MacWha

The idea of connecting the growing cities of Montréal and Ottawa with the emerging transcontinental railway network using a route along the north shore of the Ottawa River was first proposed by the Montréal Northern Colonization Railway (MNCR) in the early 1870s.[1] In 1873 the company's Chief Engineer, Charles Legge, produced a detailed report that highlighted both the feasibility and the benefits of running a train from the anticipated western terminus of the MNCR in Alymer to the northern end of L'Isle-aux-Allumettes opposite the town of Pembroke, Ontario.

From there the rails would cross the

Ottawa River and follow its Ontario shoreline to Mattawa from where it would then connect to the Pacific Railway near Lake Nipissing.[2] This report noted several advantages to a route that stayed, to the greatest extent possible, in Québec including generous provincial track subsidies and the growing population of the Pontiac region. Unfortunately, Legge's recommendations were not realized by the MNCR which instead spent most of the 1870s connecting the cities of Montréal and Hull. (update against QMO&O line was complete from Montreal to Alymer in 1877 following a charter in December, 1875)

Railway promoters in the Pontiac, undeterred by the failure of the MNCR to reach their region, sought to organize a new company and in May, 1880 The Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway Company Act (PPJR) was passed, granting its directors permission to construct a single or dual-track railway from a point on the MNCR (which had, by then, been renamed as the Québec Montréal Ottawa and Occidental Railway (QMO&O)), near either Hull or Alymer to such point in the County of Pontiac as may be found most suitable for crossing the Ottawa River and from there onward to Pembroke.[3] The railway, often (dis)affectionately known as the Push, Pull and Jerk or the Push, Pull, Jump and Run, sought to realize the MNCR's original vision to connect the larger markets of Central Canada with the West using a route through Québec, and that vision resulted in the inclusion of the term Pacific Junction within its name.[4] That said, like in so many other places around the country local farmers and businesses were also eager to have the railway built so that they could ship their products to the growing cities and markets across the continent. There was particularly strong interest in having a railway to ship the vast timber harvests from the Black and Coulonge river valleys to markets in the northeastern United States.[5]

As evidence of this interest, on July 26, 1881 the Pontiac County Council voted unanimously to provide the PPJR with a subsidy of \$100,000 to assist with the construction of the railway through the region.[6] There were, however, significant concerns regarding the legality of the debentures signed by the county warden at the time and local officials attempted to have the subsidies annulled.[7] Arguments surrounding this case caused significant divisions within the local community and it ultimately took the Supreme Court of Canada to decide that the county was indeed bound by the debt and would need to pay the PPJR for its efforts.[8] This affair was so traumatic that decades afterwards the economic impact of being forced to pay the subsidies was still considered by some to be among the greatest disasters to ever befall the region.[9]

Legal difficulties aside, construction of a standard gauge route using 56 pound steel rails began in the summer of 1882 and by January, 1883 fifteen miles (24 kilometres) of roadway had been graded westwards from Alymer, and four miles (6.4 kilometres) of track had been laid.[10] That same month, the railway's general contractor, C.N. Armstrong of Montréal, ambitiously put out a call for tenders to construct a rail bridge across the Ottawa River located at La Passe, Ontario, just downstream from Fort Coulonge.[11] Progress, however, stalled for the remainder of 1883 as the company paused to deal with its legal challenges, secure track subsidies, make adjustments to its proposed alignment and establish clearer specifications for the construction of the roadway.

In July, 1884 the railway published a document providing potential contractors with clear instructions on a wide variety of matters relating to the construction of the line such as the grading of the roadway, the type of fencing required along its route, the type of railway ties and spikes to be used, and the requirement to install of a telegraph line along the right of way. Of particular interest these directions stipulated that stations were to be built every seven miles (11.3 kilometres) and that the buildings shall in all respects be equal to that at St. Martins on the heretofore Québec Montréal Ottawa and Occidental Railway. [12] The

contractors were also given specific instructions to use high quality ballast amounting to 2,000 cubic yards per mile and to purchase only steel rails "of the best quality of English or American manufacture. In order to ensure speed and efficiency on the track builders were also directed to ensure that the grade of the roadbed should, at no point, exceed one per cent and that no curve along the route have a radius of more than 1,433 feet.[13]

Perhaps most importantly for the communities of Western Québec, during this time the railway also agreed upon a major alteration to its proposed route. Rather than crossing the Ottawa River at La Passe as had been previously expected, it was instead decided to keep the route on the north shore of the river all of the way to L'Isle-aux-Allumettes as had first been suggested by Legge in 1873. There the company would construct an iron bridge that would be "equal in quality to the Chaudière bridge over the Ottawa before proceeding on to Pembroke where the proposed station would be equal in size to that at Thurso." [14]

With clearly established guidelines work on the railway re-started in the summer of 1884 and about 200 men set about laying down the 48 miles (77 kilometres) of steel rails that had already been delivered to the company. [15] Unfortunately, the railway and the local population soon came into conflict due to disagreements about the value of the land upon which the line was being constructed. In a story widely reported across North America in late July, 1884 farmers protesting the construction of the railway approximately 6 miles (10 kilometres) northwest of Alymer forcibly stopped PPJR work crews, necessitating the deployment of a company of soldiers from Ottawa and Carleton Rifles to maintain the peace.[16] While the crowd was eventually dispersed it appears that not all were satisfied with the outcome for only a month later \$500 worth of railway ties belonging to the PPJR were burned in a suspicious fire. [17] This, alas, seemed to be a perennial problem for the PPJR and in 1887 farmers in Litchfield once again threatened to tear up the railway tracks and wreck the trains "unless prompt settlement is made by the company for right of way, wood contracts and other transactions in which they feel themselves unjustly treated." [18]

Notwithstanding these problems progress on the line continued and by the end of 1884 21 miles (34 kilometres) of track had been completed, linking Alymer and Quyon, with stations also located at Breckenridge Farm and at Eardley. According to a contemporary account of the time the route just after Breckenridge "...passes one of the richest farming districts in the Ottawa Valley. The land is as level as the prairie, and the farmers are all wealthy and have well stocked farms." One such farm, owned by Hector MacLean, was highlighted as being 2,000 acres in size and worth a princely sum of \$100,000. Passenger

service along the route began on December 9, 1884, likely using a 4x4x0 60 foot Hinkley locomotive that had been purchased by the PPJR in 1882.[19] Work continued throughout 1885 and the railway reached Shawville, 36.8 miles (59.2 kilometres) west of its starting point in March, 1886. By November of that year it had reached as far as Fort Coulonge, 50.3 miles (81 kilometres) from Alymer and by February, 1887 the line finally reached what would become its western terminus in Waltham, 70.60 miles (113.6 kilometres) from Alymer. [20] There the company constructed both a roundhouse and a wye junction for

turning the engines around for their return trip to the city. The last stretch of track between Fort Coulonge and Waltham was, however, not inspected by government engineers or put into service until August 22, 1894 at which point the Minister of Railways and Canals recommended

payment of \$16,192 in outstanding subsidies and rail operations began along the full length of the PPJR.[21] At its peak a workforce of almost 1,600 men laboured along this route, many of them experienced Italian-Americans railway workers from New England.[22].

By the time the steel reached Waltham the company's rolling stock consisted of four locomotives, as well as three passenger cars, one baggage car, five box cars, 20 hopper and dumping cars and 35 platform cars. [23] In an early account of the line from a Montréal newspaper the railway's equipment was very favourably described as follows; "To begin with it might be in order to say something of the equipment of the road, which, I have no hesitation of saying, is one of the finest of the kind in the Dominion. It was made as per order of Mr. H.J. Beemer, by the Cobourg Car Works, who must have thought of every little modern convenience that the travelling public require. It consists of a first class, second class and smoking car combined, and baggage, express and mail car combined is fitted out with air brakes etc. The engine is a flood from Rhode Island Engine Company with all the latest improvements." [24] Another account of the time also noted that the new passenger cars were of the highest quality and had been "beautifully finished inside in cherry and plush." [25]

It bears noting that shortly after the PPRJ finished its connection to Waltham the newly created Pontiac and Renfrew Railway Company constructed a short 4 1/4 mile (6.8 kilometres) long spur from mile post 33.7 on PPJR near Wyman for the sole purpose of connecting to the Bristol Iron Mine near Lac Des Chats on the Ottawa River. This line, completed in late 1889 then shipped iron ore from the mine to the PPJR and then on to Alymer, where it was transferred to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) network for carriage to the steel furnaces of Pennsylvania. At its peak the Pontiac and Renfrew was carrying an impressive 130 tons of ore a day to the PPJR.[26]

With endpoints now in Alymer and Waltham the railway was finally faced with the need to cross the Ottawa River. At the eastern end of the line the City of Ottawa, with its potential freight and passenger revenue lay temptingly in sight across the river, while the western end of the line stopped in a small village well short of any potential connection to the transcontinental network. In early 1887 survey work was done north of Waltham to find a suitable route across the Ottawa River or, barring that, to continue the line up the Québec side of the river until Mattawa.[27] At the time it appeared that the railway favoured the western connection, and by the summer of 1887 stone had already been cut for bridge piers and was laid alongside the track near Quyon.[28] However, discussions were also underway at the other end of the line and in May, 1893 the PPJR and the Ottawa and Gatineau Valley Railway (OGVR) announced that they would work together to build a bridge across the Ottawa River at Nepean Point. Neither company was itself profitable enough to pay for the bridge and it was only through a joint effort the link could be built. After several years of negotiations, which included securing permission from the Minister of Militia and Defence to use the land on the Ontario side of the river, construction began and on February 22, 1901 the Royal Alexandra Bridge linking the cities of Hull and Ottawa was completed.[29]

Yet for all of these efforts the PPJR did not get to realize the benefits of its long sought after bridge. On September 2, 1902 the PPJR and the OGVR merged, and together with their newly constructed inter-provincial bridge, formed the Ottawa Northern and Western Railway (ONWR).[30] Only two months later, on November 1, 1902, ONWR was itself leased by the CPR for a period of 999 years, changing the former PPJR into the CPR's Waltham subdivision.[31] Between June 1901 and June 1902, its last year as an independent company, the PPJR operated two locomotives, two passenger cars, one baggage car, four box cars, 43 flat cars, a snow plough and a flanger (also known as a scraper). During that period the railway carried 37,137 passengers and 13,572 tons of freight, earning a respectable profit of \$6,341 dollars.[32]

For much of the 20th century the tracks of the former PPJR were run, more or less, profitably by the CPR although changes, of course, happened over the years.[33]

In 1916 the disused Pontiac and Renfrew Railway tracks to the Bristol Mine, which had been inactive since the 1890s, were lifted and shipped over to Europe to help with the allied effort in World War One.[34] Then in 1956 the mine re-opened and rails were once again laid down by the CPR on the old roadway to bring the ore out to feed the Stelco steel furnaces in Hamilton.[35] Nevertheless, as with railways across the province the advent of better cars, trucks and highways after the end of the Second World War greatly diminished the viability of the line and on September 30, 1959 scheduled passenger services were cut.[36] Over the following years the CPR did run a few special trains to Waltham for rail enthusiasts, such as one in 1966 that saw more than 100 members of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association travel this route aboard two Canadian Pacific diesel dayliners, but never again would the trains routinely connect the people of the region.[37] Freight, however, continued to run along the former PPJR rails until the end of May 1984 when operations west of Wyman ceased and the tracks were lifted.[38] From 1984 until 1991 the CPR still ran trains to the old iron mine along what had once been the short Pontiac and Renfrew line in order to collect tailings for track ballast. These trains then followed the remaining stub of the CPR Waltham subdivision from Wyman down to Alymer where it was then moved on to maintain roadways across North America.[39] Those operations too finally ceased on March 29, 1991 and the CPR abandoned this last remaining section of track on the Waltham subdivision, bring an end to rail operations on what had been the PPJR.

While the tracks and ties of the former PPJR have now all been lifted a strong legacy of the railway remains. The roadbed from Wyman all the way up to Waltham, a distance of 92 kilometres, has been converted into a fine rail trail with a paved and rock dust surface and 14 rest areas strung out along the pathway. Aptly named the Cycloparc PPJ this route now offers walkers and cyclists from around the world the opportunity to explore the picturesque towns, farms, forests and wetlands of the Pontiac region. [40] In Shawville visitors can stop at The Pontiac Museum, which is housed in the former PPJR railway station, and see many relics of the old line. Afterwards, they can wander downtown for an ice cream cone or a pastry from the town's famous bakery. Elsewhere, in Ottawa, the Alexandra bridge remained open to rail traffic until the main passenger terminal was moved from downtown to the Alta Vista neighbourhood on the city's (then) eastern end in 1966. Now used as a roadway for cars, the bridge itself is nearing the end of its lifespan and the National Capital Commission is looking to dismantle and replace it starting in 2025. Thus while the PPJ railway never fully realized its ambition of connecting Montréal to a path to the Pacific along the north shore of the Ottawa River it did succeed in connecting the communities of Western Québec to the broader world, an accomplishment that echoes down to this day.

[1] For clarity's sake it should be noted that the idea to link the cities of Monteval and Ottawa via the north shore of the river was first seriously proposed by the Montréal and Bytown Railway Company in the early 1850s.

[2] Legge's study referred to the location as Deep River, which is not to be confused with the town of that name further upstream on the Ottawa River which was a planned community developed during the Second World War in support of the Manhattan project. Rather in the 1870s "Deep River" and "Chenail Culbute" were used interchangeably to refer to that branch of the Ottawa River running north of L'Île-aux-Allumettes. See "Montréal Northern Colonization Railway," *The Gazette* (Montréal). April 26, 1873, pp. 1-2 and "An Act to grant additional powers to the Montréal Northern Colonization Railway Company and for other purposes," *Statutes of the Province of Québec Passed in the Session Held in the Thirty-Fourth Year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Being the Fourth Session of the First Parliament*. (Québec: Charles François Langlois, 1870), p. 109.

[3] An Act to incorporate the Pontiac and Pacific Junction Railway Company. Acts of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada Passed in the Forty-Third Year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria and in the Second Session of Parliament. Vol II. Local and Private Acts. (Ottawa: Brown Chamberlin, 1890), p. 31.



- [4] Mervyn T. Green, "What's in a Name?" Canadian Rail., No. 348, January, 1981, p. 15 and Mervyn T. Green, "What's in a name? Part 2" Canadian Rail. No. 364, May, 1982, p. 145
- [5] "Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway," The Gazette (Montréal). January 1, 1883, p. 4.
- [6] "The Pontiac and Pacific Junction Railway," The Gazette (Montréal). July 27, 1881, p. 1.
- [7] For an excellent account of the local tensions surrounding this subsidy see Graham G. Gordon, *Suffering from a Want of Communication: A History of Transportation in Pontiac County*. (self-published booklet, 2000) pp. 27-41.
- [8] *The County of Pontiac vs. Ross*, 1890, 17 SCR 406 (Supreme Court Judgment dated March 10, 1890.)
- [9] "Three Disasters," The Equity (Shawville). June 24, 1981, p. 12.
- [10] "Notes from the Capital," The Gazette (Montréal). July 17, 1882, p. 1 and "Dominion News," The Gazette (Montréal), January 11, 1883, p. 1.
- [11]
- "Tenders for Bridge," The Gazette (Montréal). January 2, 1883, p. 4.
- [12] Contract and Specification Relating to Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway (Printed by Order of Board). (Montréal: The Gazette Printing Company, July, 1884), p. 24. See also Ron Brown, *Rails to the Atlantic*. (Toronto: Dundurn Books, 2015), p. 111.
- [13] Contract and Specification Relating to Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway (Printed by Order of Board), pp. 22-25.
- [14] Contract and Specification Relating to Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway (Printed by Order of Board), pp. 24-25.
- [15] "P.P.J. Railway" The Equity (Shawville). July 31, 1884, p. 3.
- [16] See, for example, "Fight over Right of Way" Chicago Tribune. July 29, 1884, p. 3, "Canada," St. Louis Post-Dispatch. July 28, 1884, p. 2 and "Trouble with Railroad Builders," The Philadelphia Inquirer. July 29, 1884, p. 1.
- [17] "Dominion News," The Victoria Daily Times. September 3, 1884, p. 1.
- [18] "Ticks from the Wires," The Kingston Daily News. September 2, 1887, p. 1.
- [19] "Opening a New Railroad," The Gazette (Montréal). December 10, 1884, p. 1 and "Railways of the Eastern Townships of Québec," Canadian Rail., No. 151, January, 1964, p. 19.
- [20] Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1890*. (New York: American Banknote Company, 1890) p.1052 and Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1900*. (New York: American Banknote Company, 1900,) p. 817.
- [21] Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway - Minister of Railways and Canals Recommends Payment subsidy 60 th to 70 th miles west of Alymer. Government of Canada Order in Council Number 1894-2735 dated September 8, 1894. There is some confusion as to when the line was opened to Waltham, with Poor's *Manual of the Railroads of the United States* indicating in several editions that it was opened in January, 1887.
- [22] "Condensed News" The Montréal Star. January 28, 1886, p. 1 and "Province of Québec News," The Gazette (Monteal). July 12, 1886, p. 2. During this time it was not uncommon for railway contractors to employ Italian-American workers who had gained experience developing the railways of the United States. For example, at the same time that Italians were building the PPJR a different group of Italians from New England were busily employed constructing the Orford Mountain Railway in Québec's Eastern Townships.
- [23] Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1889*. (New York: American Banknote Company, 1889), p. 966.
- [24] "The Pontiac Region," The Gazette (Montréal). January 18, 1888, p. 2.
- [25] "The Pontiac and Pacific," The Ottawa Journal. May 21, 1887, p. 1.
- [26] For an excellent overview of this little industrial line see Colin Churcher, "The Pontiac and Renfrew Railway - The Railway to the Bristol Mines," *Branchline*. Vol 46, No. 11, December, 2007, pp. 8-9.
- [27] "Province of Québec," The Gazette (Montréal). May 9, 1887, p. 2.
- [28] "Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway Co.," The Gazette (Montréal). July 26, 1887, p. 4.
- [29] Bruce Ballantyne, "Maniwaki Requiem," Canadian Rail. No 394, September -October, 1986, p. 156 and Ottawa and Gatineau Railway and Pacific Junction Railway permission to place their rails and bridge on military land at Nepean Point. Government of Canada Order in Council 1987-1614 dated July 5, 1897. For an extremely interesting account of this bridge's construction see "The Royal Alexandra Bridge at Ottawa," *The Railroad Gazette*. Vol. XXXIV, No. 29, pp. 568-570.
- [30] Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1903*. (New York: American Banknote Company, 1903), p.848.
- [31] Annual Report of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30th 1902. p. 6 and "Ottawa Historical Club Tours Pontiac," The Equity (Shawville). April 28, 1966, pp. 1 and 4.
- [32] Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1903*, p. 848.
- [33] For an interesting account of rail operations during this time see Duncan du Fresne, "Memories of the Pontiac," *Branchline*. Vol. 21, No. 9, November 1982, pp. 7-9.
- [34] Douglas N.W. Smith, "Push, Pull and Jerk No More," Canadian Rail. No. 423, July-August, 1991, p. 133.
- [35] "Stelco Spends \$100 million on Tomorrow," The Financial Post. July 14, 1956, p. 44.
- [36] "Passenger Service Steam Locomotives on CPR discontinued," The Equity (Shawville). October 1, 1959, p. 1.
- [37] "Ottawa Historical Club Tours Pontiac," pp. 1 and 4.
- [38] "Le Pontiac n'a plus de chemin de fer," Le Droit (Ottawa). 27 Octobre, 1984, p. 15 and "The last CPR train out of Shawville," The Equity (Shawville). May 30, 1984, p. 1.
- [39] Ray Farand, "Pontiac Pilgrimage," Canadian Rail. No. 399, July-August, 1987, p. 124.
- [40] Brown, *Rails to the Atlantic*, pp. 111-112.

**26/07/2023 Eastern Ontario Review Pontiac Pacific Junction**

The second portion of Shawn MacWha's article appeared on 26 July. Sere 19 July for this.

## Upper Canada Village Train Closed Indefinitely

5 August 2023

Morrisburg Ontario - Out of service for over a year the miniature train ride at Upper Canada Village will remain closed indefinitely.

The ride, which has been shuttered since heat-related track damage caused a derailment on 22 Jul 2022, was to return to service this summer.

At the opening of the season, the St. Lawrence Parks Commission (SLPC), which operates the popular train ride, indicated that repairs to the original loop between Crysler Beach and the village would reopen this year.

The extension loop to Crysler Park Marina was to remain closed this year as additional work is needed to address areas where the track roadbed has heaved significantly.

According to the SLPC, two tenders were issued by the agency, one to repair the track on the original loop, the other for ongoing maintenance of the line.

No bids were received by the end of June deadline for either tender.

"As a result, work will not begin this summer as previously anticipated," said SLPC spokesperson Katie Forrester.

"The team is determining next steps."

The SLPC's three year business plan has \$200,000 budgeted in 2023-2024 for the miniature train equipment, and \$250,000 in 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 for the miniture train track.

The miniature train has been a visitor favourite for decades at Upper Canada Village.

In June, Geoff Waycik, director of historic sites with the SLPC told The Leader that the agency was planning to rebuild the Crysler Beach station stop, and add a new station stop near the Battle of Crysler's Farm Memorial, while repairs to the amusement ride were made.

The train, known as the Moccasin after the local steam train milk-run that ran between Brockville and Cornwall into the 1950s, last had significant work completed in 2009-2010.

At that time, an extension loop was added to Crysler Park Marina.

That extension has not been used since 2019.

The amusement ride was originally built in the early 1960s with the opening of UCV.

Phillip Blancher.

The young railroader at the centre of a very old mystery  
Story by The Canadian Press

Carson Lake -- Frank Burchat, a local Barry's Bay man with a unique love of local history, got all choked up last Wednesday just as he was about to unveil a plaque in the middle of nowhere. It was dedicated to a young railroader few people have ever heard of. It was understandable.

Frank has been coming to Carson Lake since his parents built a cottage there 62 years ago. It's where he built his own retirement home over 20 years ago.

But last Wednesday, he was standing pretty much in the proverbial wilderness and yet there were 25 people happily there with him. He had invited them to a very unique ceremony he had organized on a lonely stretch of the old Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound railroad bed, just north of where he now lives along Carson Lake. They were all there to pay respects to someone who had died there 114 years ago to the day, at exactly 9:15 p.m. Monday, August 16th, 1909.

Mr. Burchat was there to unveil a plaque he paid for himself and that he and his friends were placing in that wilderness to remind anyone with even a passing interest to remember a young 20-year-old man who had been killed on that stretch of shoreline a very long time ago.

It happened, as the Ottawa Citizen explained back in 1909, when a mixed, westbound Grand Trunk Railway train was suddenly derailed after hitting 'a washout' along the tracks.

"The engine, tender and four cars loaded with merchandise and two empties left the track, and rolled down an embankment near the lake," wrote the Citizen. "Luckily, the passenger cars did not leave the rails, and all passengers escaped unhurt. But the engine's fireman, 20-year-old William J. Thurston of Madawaska, could not be found.

"At last, he was found," added the newspaper, "under a car, crushed to death."

Among the 25 people gathered together last Wednesday at the very spot where Mr. Thurston died were eight members of his extended family: Debra Thurston-Prescott, a great niece; Barbara Thurston-Silke, another great niece; Kevin Thurston, a great nephew; Doug Thurston, a nephew, Norma Thurston-Lewis, a niece; Margaret Thurston-Kranz, a niece; Hugh Thurston and Christine Kranz.

Despite William's death that day, three of his brothers would go on to become railroad station agents working throughout eastern Ontario. His younger brother, Albert, would become station agent at Killaloe, Wilno, Barry's Bay and even the Thurston's own hometown of Madawaska. Brother Hugh would end up as station agent in Pembroke.

In fact, William's youngest brother, John, only seven years old when his older brother was killed, would grow up to become station agent in Killaloe and then hold the same job in Barry's Bay from 1958 to about 1965. His daughter, Norma Thurston-Lewis, remembers living upstairs at the old Barry's Bay Station before graduating from the village high school in 1964.

Yet, most people have forgotten the men and women who made that old 19th and 20th Century railroad work and that once connected Eganville, Golden Lake, Killaloe, Wilno, Barry's Bay, Madawaska and Whitney.

Most have certainly never heard of that deadly accident 114 years ago this month.

Then, along comes Mr. Burchat. He knew the original 1909 washout was easy to explain. It was due, said the newspaper of the day, "to a cloud burst which wrought havoc to crops and railway lines in the district; it washed away the ballast along the GTR line at different points. It was one of the heaviest rains in many years in the district."

Yet, in only a matter of days, the mess left by that 1909 derailment was cleaned up, the tracks repaired, and life pretty much went back to what passed for normal for most people.

But even before Mr. Burchat retired to the area, that accident was not something he could forget. Nearly 50 years ago, he had heard 'the persistent rumour,' as he called it: That the steam engine and two flat-bed cars that had killed William J. Thurston were still deep down in Carson Lake, having been spotted there in the 1960s or '70s by two reputable German scuba divers, some 85 feet below the surface.

Mr. Burchat, also a certified scuba diver, decided to go look-see, as did Pat Flynn, another certified diver and one of Mr. Burchat's Carson Lake neighbours. So too did a number of other area friends who happened to be divers. Over the years, all worked their way down into the surprisingly cold and dark depths of Carson Lake, but they could find nothing.

"It's cold, you can't see your hand in front of your face, yet looking up it is surprisingly clear," said Pat Flynn of the time he went looking into the black water of Carson Lake.

Still, Mr. Burchat was not about to give up. Six years ago, he got others to pitch in including Wendy Wolak, the president of the Carson, Trout, Lepine and Greenan Lake Association. She's also another history buff and so she contacted a well-known railroad historian, Colin Churcher, who uncovered some new facts.

He discovered that on August 16th, 1909, a torrent of rain had come rushing down a steep hillside and had undermined nearly a mile of track near Carson Lake. The mixed train had tried to ditch itself in hopes of avoiding any real damage. Mr. Churcher also found out that another eastbound train had passed less than an hour prior to the accident but saw no washout. Mr. Churcher was doubtful that the steam engine and box cars would have been left in the lake, as they would be too valuable. He suggested that the railroad of the day would certainly have had the technology to retrieve any sunken rolling stock.

Mr. Burchat then stumbled across another derailment less than a mile away. It had occurred January 21st, 1897, and killed three other OA & PS railroad employees. Despite such awful tragedies, there isn't even a 'wreck of the old' whatever song to commemorate either accident.

Still, others continued to step forward and confirm the story of an old steam engine sunk deep below Carson Lake. Wade Parsons, whose parents used to own Pleasure Point Resort near Carson Lake, being one. Then there was Nancy George, who still resides at Carson Lake; she was pretty certain those German scuba divers had brought up some train artifacts, namely a metal teapot and some railroad cutlery.

Dorthey Wilson then stepped forward and said she had located William J. Thurston's tombstone. It was in Madawaska and soon a gaggle of Mr. Burchat's friends and relatives headed off, along with Mr. Burchat, to not only verify that fact, but, more importantly, to carefully clean up the grave site and tombstone. Others quickly threw in on the hunt, as if they were hell-bent to find the Holy Grail, or that even more mythical treasure on Oak Island, or whatever in tarnation, Mr. Burchat was on about. They included Ted, Cathy and Grant Grzywniak, Brian Moore, Debbie Donaldson, Jakob Kachel and Kris Totosko.

Almost miraculously, next came the OPP's Search and Recovery Unit who were in the area working on another case and decided they could use the mystery of the old train to newly train some of their new scuba team.

Enter OPP Sgt. Michael Coe and Constables Jenny Brown, Matt Duquette and Brian Kielman. They were based in Gravenhurst and though their main area of operation is major crime, weapons recovery and missing persons, somehow, Mr. Burchat bamboozled them into bringing along their Side-Scan Sonar and a Remote Operated Vehicle that can dive to 500 feet, to say little of a drone that was used to fly over much of Carson Lake. After that, came the Gignac Dive Team -- Wayne Gignac and his daughter, Samantha, who are both advanced dive instructors. They too slipped into the cold Carson Lake water, recorded at 4°C at 140 feet. At 100 feet, scuba divers are limited to only 20 minutes due to blood nitrogen level issues that can lead to 'the bends.' They pushed the envelope as best they could, but no luck.

"They didn't find anything either" said Mr. Burchat before finally concluding only last week, "there is no train in the water."

That may be so, but thanks to Frank Burchat's relentless pursuit, hundreds of people now know the name of William J. Thurston and something of his tragic history. Or as Margaret Thurston-Kranz eloquently put it at the end of last Wednesday's dignified ceremony smack-dab in the middle of nowhere: "My dad was very family oriented; he would have loved this."

Mr. Burchat may be a lot of things but he's certainly a very good friend of Billy Thurston.

Barry Conway, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, The Eganville Leader

CN inspection found 'significant drop' in bridge condition months before Kingston derailment.

Company says it was 'appropriate' to schedule repairs at the crossing for late 2023

Months before a derailment and bridge collapse caused an acid spill in Kingston, Ont., an inspection by CN rail found components of the crossing had seen a "significant drop" in condition.

The bridge was scheduled for repair in November 2023, but despite the severity of the condition, the company didn't provide instructions to fix the problem, monitor the span or re-evaluate its safe load capacity in the meantime.

Those findings are among 40 issues and concerns raised by Transport Canada rail safety inspectors along the five-kilometre section of track called the Cataraqui Industrial Spur.

Ian Naish, a former director of rail investigations with the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, said what they reveal is concerning.

"You knew about this problem. You knew things were getting worse. Why didn't you do anything in the interim?" he said, summarizing his read of the report examining the bridge.

Around mid-morning on May 5, six cars left the rails. Two tumbled into Little Cataraqui Creek below.

An estimated five to 10 litres of adipic acid, which is used in the food industry and to make products like nylon, was leaked. No injuries were reported.

Part of Bath Road, a major commuter artery through the city, was shut down for four days during the cleanup.

It marked the third derailment on the spur in just over three years.

CBC obtained 22 pages detailing Transport Canada's inspection reports following the latest incident through access-to-information legislation.

They identified 32 issues with the signals and road crossings and four concerns each with the track and bridge.

"It's just a little spur, right? You wouldn't expect a litany of problems like that," said Naish, who now works as a rail safety consultant and reviewed the reports.

"It just shows to me as shabby maintenance."

Company says it has made repairs

Transport Canada's inspection of the bridge is of particular interest as that's where the derailment occurred.

It found CN's inspections of the span weren't carried out at the required frequencies and pointed specifically to a 2020 underwater report that indicated algae at the site, but didn't provide any further evaluation of the bridge substructure or river bed.

"The report does not meet the expectation" of CN's own bridge safety management plan (BSMP), it reads.

An issue was also noted with the 2023 underwater probe, which didn't provide riverbed condition or sampling of the timbers.

A 2022 CN inspection rated some bents "the piles and base that support a bridge over water" near Bath Road as being in poor condition, according to Transport Canada.

That resulted in the company carrying out followup inspections in November 2022 and March 2023, but any instructions to monitor the bridge or initiate a temporary order for engineers to slow down while crossing it were not documented or made available to the federal inspector, it reads.

Although the rail company had plans to repair the bridge, the issues identified in its own inspections were not "corrected, protected, monitored or re-evaluated," Transport Canada found, adding CN was also not observing its BSMP around record keeping.

Another 2020 report was provided by an external contractor who also found their work impeded by algae.

Transport Canada said that inspection failed to provide an update on the condition of the bridge's substructure, but no further action to evaluate the structural integrity of the crossing was recommended by either the contractor or CN.

Naish said the findings show proper records weren't being kept about the spur and risk wasn't being managed well.

"The lower the ranking, the faster you have to fix things," he said. "They didn't actually take any interim action to ... remedy that situation."

Inspections show 'shabby maintenance' along troubled Kingston rail spur, safety consultant says:

CN declined a request for an interview.

In response to a detailed list of questions, the company provided a brief statement, saying it carries out regular inspections and acts promptly when issues are identified, including along the Cataraqui Spur.

Following the derailment, CN said it's completed a "thorough exploration" of the track structure using its automated technology, replaced railway ties, added crushed rock to the rail bed and made other repairs.

Asked by CBC why the company did not act on the findings of its own inspections that said the bridge conditions were poor, CN said it was deemed "appropriate" to schedule the repairs for late 2023.

Cause of derailment still a question

Four months after the derailment, it's still not clear whether the bridge collapse caused the cars to crash, or if it was the derailment that caused the bridge to break.

The Transportation Safety Board (TSB), which is the federal investigator for rail accidents in Canada, rated the incident a Class 5, meaning data was collected but investigators weren't sent to the scene.

CN said its investigation into what happened is ongoing.

A company rail bridge safety document from 2016 includes the claim that "no train derailments have been caused by the structural failure of a CN bridge in modern times."

Naish, the rail consultant, said the simplest explanation, looking at Transport Canada's findings, is that the support structure of the bridge failed.

Two derailments that happened within weeks of each other on the spur in March 2020 weren't at the bridge, but all three occurred on the same short section of track while the locomotives were "shoving" or pushing cars, as opposed to pulling them.

Given the number of incidents, Naish said TSB should have done an investigation to identify possible patterns or issues in order to improve safety going forward, describing it as "an opportunity that was missed."

Transport Canada said it has received CN's response to its inspection, including corrective actions, but those changes are considered businesses decisions, so it cannot share further information.

Kingston Mayor Bryan Paterson said the third derailment on the spur "elevated" the issue for him and the city as a whole, adding he's conveyed the gravity of the situation to CN.

City officials have been in communication with the company since and Paterson said he believes it's taking the issue seriously.

"I just want to make sure that this doesn't happen again," he said.

## 10 Years Later and Crossing Largely Unchanged

Ottawa Ontario - Ten years after an OC Transpo bus smashed into a VIA Rail passenger train in south Ottawa, killing six, a key safety improvement recommended in the wake of the tragedy, grade separation at the busy crossing, remains unfulfilled, and could still be years away. The collision on 18 Sep 2013 occurred on a crystal clear morning just east of Fallowfield station in Barrhaven, where the Transitway curves north and crosses the train tracks before continuing alongside Woodroffe Avenue.

Five bus passengers and driver Dave Woodard died in the crash.

Dozens more were injured.

In its final report, released in December 2015, the Transportation Safety Board (TSB) concluded the tragedy "was not caused by one single person, action, or organization," citing instead a number of contributing factors.

Among those was the speed at which bus 8017, a double-decker packed with morning commuters heading downtown, was travelling as it approached the crossing: 67.7 kph, just over the posted limit of 60 kph.

At that speed, the TSB calculated the bus would have required 35.9 metres to come to a full stop once Woodard applied the brakes.

Unfortunately, it had just 35.6 metres to avoid striking the passing train, a matter of one foot.

Subsequent testing showed that had the bus been travelling at the posted speed limit, it would have stopped well short of the crossing.

"This demonstrates that even a small increase in speed can greatly increase the required stopping distance, which can lead to an accident," TSB investigators found, noting that OC Transpo generally regarded speeds within 12 kph of the posted limit to be within the acceptable range.

The report also noted bus 8017 was nearly four minutes behind schedule when it pulled away from the Fallowfield stop at 08:47.

**Video Monitor Likely a Distraction**

Driver distraction likely also played a role in the collision, the TSB found.

At the time, OC Transpo drivers were required to keep an eye on passengers with the aid of a small split-screen video monitor mounted in the upper left corner of their compartment, and remind them that no standing was permitted on the upper deck.

This requirement forced drivers to "periodically glance at the screen while the bus was in motion," the TSB wrote, noting "glances lasting two seconds or longer are significantly associated with accidents and near accidents."

Conversations among passengers standing near Woodard were likely another source of distraction

Finally, the TSB noted the alignment of the Transitway itself, which curves sharply to the left as inbound buses approach the rail crossing near Woodroffe, a configuration that "proved to be problematic," especially since the driver's view was obscured by overgrown foliage and a large sign.

All this combined to reduce the driver's "stopping sight distance" to less room than was available, despite the flashing lights, ringing bells, and lowered gates at the rail crossing ahead.

**5 Recommendations**

The TSB issued five recommendations stemming from its investigation, four of which were aimed at Transport Canada, which was urged to implement the following:

Comprehensive guidelines governing the installation and use of in-vehicle video monitor displays;

Crashworthiness standards for commercial passenger buses to reduce the risk of injury;

Mandatory event data recorders, or "black boxes," on board commercial passenger buses;

Specific guidance regarding grade separation, overpasses or underpasses, at crossings such as the one where the 2013 crash occurred.

In an update last week, the TSB confirmed Transport Canada updated its guidance regarding video monitors in February 2019, and two months later issued new guidelines for assessing grade separation, but has failed to make adequate headway on the other two items.

The TSB's fifth recommendation urged the City of Ottawa to "reconsider the need for grade separation at the Woodroffe Avenue, Transitway, and Fallowfield Road level crossings," regardless of any federal guidelines or legislation.

In fact, the city has been planning for just such a project for at least two decades, relying initially on environmental assessments conducted in the 1990s.

Residents were opposed to the notion of an overpass, however, and by early 2003 engineers had deemed subsurface conditions in the area unsuitable for an underpass.

The project was revived in 2017 when city council approved a feasibility study for grade-separated crossings at Woodroffe, Fallowfield, and the Transitway.

By 2020, the concept plan had advanced to the functional design phase with the approval of an environmental assessment of Stage 3 LRT, which will eventually reach Barrhaven.

That report will be formally filed next month, and the province is expected to sign off on the project next April.

**A Costly Project**

According to a statement attributed to Vivi Chi, the city's director of transportation planning, the two projects could occur separately, but it would be extremely costly.

"While the current plan is to construct the three grade-separations at the same time as the Barrhaven LRT, there is the option of proceeding with the crossings separately, at a cost of approximately \$535 million (in 2023 dollars)," Chi wrote.

"The City is committed to working with senior levels of government to secure potential future funding opportunities for this project so that it can proceed to detailed design and construction."

According to the TSB, while timelines have not been specified, "the City of Ottawa estimates that it will be at least 8 years in the future, and it will depend on funding and contributions from senior levels of government."

Nevertheless, the board believes the city has demonstrated "satisfactory intent" to complete the project.

Some are less patient, however.

**Growing Impatience**

"That is an item that should have been actioned immediately. It should have taken precedence over everything," said Clint Crabtree, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 279, which represents OC Transpo drivers and other employees.

"I just don't see a reason why it's taken 10 years and nothing's been done. I find that unacceptable."

The city has taken other steps toward improving safety near the crash site, including keeping the approach clear of any visual obstruction and reducing the speed limit there to 50 kph.

According to the TSB, OC Transpo has stepped up speed monitoring.

Drivers also face fewer distractions thanks to the introduction of Plexiglas shields, and those on-board monitors are now disabled while the bus is in motion.

Additionally, VIA Rail and the city have improved communications regarding crossings where trains and traffic meet.

According to Barrhaven East Coun. Wilson Lo, a former OC Transpo driver who now represents the ward where the 2013 collision occurred, OC Transpo is "constantly" reminding drivers to remain vigilant as they approach level crossings.

"That culture of safety around those railway crossings has certainly improved and been really drilled into operators' minds. The crash was something that woke up something in the organization about railway crossings in general," Lo said.

While Lo noted some residents remain "very strongly in favour" of grade-separation despite the enormous cost and inevitable disruption such a project will bring, he acknowledged the city will likely mark more of these grim anniversaries before it's realized.

"Even if it does get funded it's going to be several more years before shovels get into the ground," he said.

While the TSB isn't mandated to enforce its recommendations, the board said in an email on Friday it will continue to request updates from the city. "While the Board recognizes that the grade separation projects are a significant undertaking requiring planning, consultations, various levels of approval, and funding in order to proceed, until the grade separations are constructed, the identified risks will remain," the TSB wrote.

**15/10/2023 CTV News**

**Chalk River**

**Renfrew**

Renfrew, Ont.'s caboose refurbished after 2-year project

It's a symbol of the town of Renfrew. Sitting at the town's entrance just off of Highway 17, the big yellow CP caboose has been brought back to life. For the past two years, a volunteer group named 'Friends of the Caboose' have been working to strip the old rail car of its decaying lead paint and give it a fresh look.

The completion of that project was celebrated Saturday in Renfrew at Haramis Park.

"It kind of looked really bad for a while," said Sandi Heins, former town councillor and member of the Friends of the Caboose group. "It was very rusty, and then it was very gray, and it had a tent over it. And then it got painted this lovely yellow."

Former Renfrew mayor Howie Haramis brought the CP Rail caboose to the town's visitor centre in 1994.

Haramis's daughters were on hand Saturday to see part of their father's legacy brought back to life.

"Dad was big on keeping the history of the town alive, and bringing tourism and industry into Renfrew was his main stake," said Jane Haramis-Nikolic.

At one point, many railroads ran through Renfrew, transporting people as well as lumber. That's one of the reasons volunteer Art Jamieson felt the caboose needed to live on.

"We had three train tracks come through Renfrew," says Jamieson.

"It was at the beginning of the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway), the CNR (Canadian National Railway), and of course the K&P (Kingston and Pembroke Railway)."

"This is the only reminder of the past. So that's why we all thought it was very important and the people are responding to it as well."

Initial estimates to revitalize the caboose pegged the project too expensive and dangerous due to the removal of lead paint.

There were thoughts to sell and scrap the caboose for \$3,500. Now, approximately \$36,000 has been put into the project, and those in town say it was worth every penny.

"As a young child, you listened for that whistle," June McLaughlin told CTV News. "You listen for the sound of the train going over the iron bridge. It was our childhood growing up."

"It's the main entrance of Renfrew right," remarked Mayor Tom Sidney. "And I think if it wasn't there, there'd be a big void."

After years of bringing up the rear, Renfrew's caboose is now set to stand front and centre for years to come.

"It's something that my dad was really proud of, was the town of Renfrew as well as all the people in it," said Haramis-Nikolic.

"And I think seeing the caboose rehabilitated and restored the way it is, is a real testament to the town but more importantly the people."

VIA Rail Lawsuit is the Last Outstanding City Suit from Crash

Ottawa Ontario - A lawsuit involving the City of Ottawa and VIA Rail is the last outstanding legal matter for the city related to the 2013 bus-train crash that killed six people.

To date, the city has settled 38 of the 39 lawsuits arising from the 18 Sep 2013 crash.

Kyle Nash, Michael Bleakney, Connor Boyd, Karen Krzyzewski, Rob More, and bus driver Dave Woodard, were killed in the crash and dozens were injured when the bus drove onto the tracks and collided with a moving train heading from Montreal to Toronto.

VIA is suing the city and Woodard for \$4 million in damages.

In its statement of claim, the railway said that figure represents "losses to the plaintiff's railway business and for damage to the train, railway tracks, and crossing."

The company also said it's owed more than \$200,000 for payments it made related to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act on behalf of the two locomotive engineers on the train that day, Kevin McCardle and Gregory McGrath.

VIA alleges the crash happened because of negligence and breach of duty on the part of the city.

It alleges all safety protocols (lights, bells, horizontal gates) were in place and working at the crossing, asserting "all motor vehicles travelling on Woodroffe Avenue came to a stop at the railway crossing."

The company also points to design issues at the crossing where the crash happened.

The city "failed to ensure that the Transitway was properly designed and had proper signage to warn of the railway crossing," the claim said.

In its defence, the city said the design, signage, and maintenance of the crossing "reflect the results of policy decisions exercised in good faith." Driver Training Questioned

VIA also alleges the bus driver didn't have the necessary training.

The suit alleges Woodard was driving "in a careless manner and failed to avoid the collision," and "failed to keep a proper lookout and prevent the collision from happening when he knew or ought to have known that the collision was to occur."

In its statement of defence, the city said all OC Transpo bus drivers are adequately trained.

"All bus drivers, including Mr. Woodard, were qualified and trained to operate vehicles within its fleet, in accordance with all applicable legislation, standards, and industry practices."

The city also has a counterclaim against McCardle and McGrath, alleging the engineers were negligent.

All But 1 Lawsuit Settled

In an email statement, city solicitor David White said the city's automobile and general liability insurance were triggered because of the claims regarding damages from the crash itself, and claims with regard to the design and maintenance of the Transitway.

Each has a \$3 million deductible the city has to pay per occurrence.

"The insurers have appointed external legal counsel to represent the City in relation to all claims," the email said.

In an email, counsel for VIA Rail said they wouldn't comment on a case before the courts.

The email said the total amount of the settlements was just under \$20 million, though "confidentiality prevents the City from disclosing the specific amount of any individual settlement."

By 2017, the city said it had settled 31 of the 39 claims against it, paying out \$8 million, and that had risen to 35 settlements and a total of \$9.7 million in January 2019.

TSB Crash Report

There were 83 people on the OC Transpo bus when it crashed into passenger train No. 51 at a level rail crossing near Fallowfield station.

The driver of the bus was likely distracted by a video screen he was required to monitor on the job, according to a 2015 report from the Transportation and Safety Board of Canada (TSB).

The report also listed the speed of the bus, the curve of the road ahead of the crossing, company practices, and bus crashworthiness as contributing factors.

The TSB made five recommendations after reconstructing and analyzing the 2013 crash.

Four recommendations were directed to the Department of Transport:

Develop comprehensive guidelines for the installation and use of in-vehicle video monitor displays, in consultation with the provinces, to reduce the risk of driver distraction;

Develop and implement crashworthiness standards for passenger buses to reduce the risk of injury;

Require passenger buses to be equipped with dedicated, crashworthy event data recorders;

Provide specific guidance as to when grade separation should be considered;

The final recommendation was that the City of Ottawa reconsider the need for grade separation at the Woodroffe Avenue, Transitway, and Fallowfield Road level crossings.

27/10/2023

KingstonWhig Standard

Kingston (CN)

Morrisburg

Grand Trunk Railway Locomotive 1008 Revitalization Project Continues

Morrisburg Ontario - A great deal of work has been accomplished by the Friends of GTR 1008 group this year.

The organization which saved the historic train display next to Chrysler Park Marina near Upper Canada Village, spent the summer months painting and repairing the siding of the baggage car, and work continues later this fall with roof repairs to the cars.

The long-term project of the group is to cosmetically revitalize the display that has been at Aultsville Station location since the late 1950s.

Volunteers with the organization got into the Halloween spirit last weekend, decorating the display for the season.

"Our committee of volunteers has made some wonderful progress this year in our quest to restore this beloved landmark," said Friends of GTR 1008 chair Kirsten Gardner.

"Twenty plus years ago when I (personally) decorated the train for the first time at Christmas, I knew that it would also look fabulous as a spooky train at Halloween. This year we had the opportunity, and it is our way of thanking the community for the continued support."

05/11/2023

Eastern Ontario Review

Alexandria

Alexandria

Renovations are being made at Alexandria's historic railroad station.

The station was built in 1916 and 1917 by the Grand Trunk Railway, which eventually became part of Canadian National Railways (CN).

Currently, it serves as a stop for passengers on VIA Rail's Ottawa-Montréal line. In 1994, it became a federally designated Heritage Railway Station.

According to VIA Rail, the work being done to the Alexandria station include various elements to maintain the facility. These include roofing replacement, small foundation repairs, brick repointing, and replacement. Completion is planned for the end of November. The renovations will not alter the heritage features of the station building.

The Alexandria station is not staffed and is open 60 minutes before a train arrives, and for 30 minutes after departure.

A labour of love leads to a new business, and an award

The Clarendon Station is the last standing station along the old K&P Rail line, and until recently, it looked like it was going to join all the other stations along the route as existing only in grainy photos.

Noel Bateman, who has some education and experience in heritage restoration, was looking for a new project to sink his teeth into and learned that the building was at a final crossroads. It was being used as a residence, but had been declared unfit for habitation by the township of Central Frontenac's building department.

That meant the selling price was low but at that time but the building "was basically at the end of its functional life," Bateman said. "The roof had been leaking for some time, and since it was resting on piers which also needed remediation, it could not have carried on in that state. There was some structural repair that was required as well."

What followed was a two-year COVID project for Bateman, who worked on it full time, with a lot of help from a number of local contractors. "It was a unique project and people wanted to help save it. I was so lucky to have some of the best people around to help. Honestly, history was preserved by our local community."

Interior work was extensive, all wall treatments and flooring needed to be pulled off, there was roofing and structural work needed.

"It was literally down to the studs," he said.

The building had two sections and it still does. The front was partitioned off into an office and a waiting room, and the back was an open space for storage and deliveries. Now, the front has been converted into a comfortable open concept kitchen and living room with one bedroom on the main floor and two more on the second level.

The old "Freight Room" is set up as a games room with couches and a TV. It is also a great spot to lock up bikes at night or to hang wet winter coats and gear after a day of snowmobiling.

It has become a unique vacation property, sitting right on the K&P trail.

"It's pretty easy to access, just off Road 509, but it is on the edge of a wooded section of trail," said Bateman.

Since opening to renters in the spring of this year, it has attracted cyclists along the trail, as well as families looking for a country getaway. Summer was great and the holidays are full. With a dump of good snow and bookings from the snowmobile community, it is shaping up to be a good first year.

It will take a few years to recoup the investment he, and his wife, Kathy, have made into bringing the building back from the brink of collapse, not to mention two years of full time labour.

The project has drawn some attention from the local community as well, mostly positive, and at the recent Frontenac County Business Awards, the Batemans received the Partnership and Collaboration Award, for "working with other business operators in the region to bring new products, services, and experiences to market."

In announcing the award, the judges said that the Batemans "collaborate and support local businesses by stocking their rental property with local goods, regularly attending farmers markets to support local food producers and small business operators. They also offer use of their rental home for local charitable events. They are a shining light in the community, endlessly supportive of other businesses."

"Kathy deserves all the credit for that," said Noel. "She handles social media and keeps our contacts strong."

With the K&P Trail set to finally be completed within a year or two, the Clarendon Station property is slated to play a key role as a link between a growing market for trail-based tourism, and honouring the history of the K&P railway which opened up the region to development 150 years ago.

Clarendon Station is located on Clarendon Road, off Road 509. Turn right at the Ardoch Road sign and take the next right. Interested in booking? Contact 1-613-985-3150 or book through [cottagesincanada.com](http://cottagesincanada.com) or search Clarendon Station on Instagram and follow the booking links.

#### 06/12/2023 KingstonWhig Standard Other

Miniature Train Returns to Upper Canada Village as Alight at Night Begins

6 December 2023

Morrisburg Ontario - The miniature train at Upper Canada Village (UCV) has returned to operation.

The St. Lawrence Parks Commission, which owns the UCV, announced the return of the train from a nearly 18 month absence as the Alight at Night festival opened 1 Dec 2023.

The train, which derailed on 22 Jul 2022 was not in operation throughout the remainder of the 2022 season, and the entire summer and fall 2023 seasons.

"Final testing was completed this week, and the miniature train has been given the green light to operate at Alight at Night," said SLPC spokesperson Katie Forrester in response to an inquiry by The Leader.

No details were released on what repairs were made or how the work was completed to return the train to service.

In August, The Leader reported two tenders issued by the Crown agency relating to the train line, one for repairs, the other for ongoing maintenance of the line were unanswered and the ride was closed indefinitely.

The SLPC's three-year business plan allocated \$200,000 for miniature-train equipment, and \$250,000 for track repair.

The amusement ride connecting UCV to Chrysler Beach and Chrysler Park Marina needed track work.

Heat-related expansion kinks in the steel rails were found to be the cause of the 2022 ride derailment.

Asked when the repairs were made, or if the train is operating only to Chrysler Beach, or to Chrysler Marina during Alight at Night, Forrester responded, "Yes, no changes since the last time we provided information."

The Alight at Night event at the village opened 1 Dec 2023 with more than one million LED lights decorating the buildings of the 1860s village.

This is the 23rd season for the award-winning winter event.

Alight at Night runs Thursday to Sunday evenings until 17 Dec 2023, and is open nightly afterwards until 7 Jan 2024, excluding 24-25 Dec 2023

Tickets for the event are available online only via the UCV's website.

Phillip Blancher.



## Couple Breathes New Life Into Small Town Station

Sharbot Lake Ontario - Longtime couple Noel and Kathy Bateman have worked together on renovations before, but never on something like the historic Clarendon train station north of Sharbot Lake.

The building is one of the last standing train stations on the Kingston & Pembroke (K&P) Line, which once connected downtown Kingston to Renfrew by rail and is now a converted multi-use trail.

Clarendon Station, steps away from the path, has been privately owned since the 1970s.

It operated as a hunting camp for some years, Noel said, until it gradually declined and a leaky roof caused significant water damage.

"Leaky roofs are the killer of old barns and buildings," Noel said, adding that the structure had basically been condemned as unlivable.

Even though it needed a great deal of remediation, the Parham, Ontario, couple purchased the station two years ago.

According to Kathy, they worked "like dogs" to convert it into a vacation rental in time for March Break earlier this year.

"We definitely had a few family meetings over our negotiations over certain parts of the project," said Noel, who's a contractor.

They are still happily married, Kathy said, but meeting their construction deadline didn't come without its bumps.

A teacher, Kathy said she'd come back home from school only to be asked by Noel to weigh in on finishing touches, leading to some "more heated" moments.

"But in the end, it's just so satisfying when you get those decisions behind you and then things would come together," she said.

The couple opened up the space, in part by knocking down a chimney in the middle of the station, which had to go anyway for structural reasons, and tried to retain the original trim.

"It had already been essentially almost stripped of the studs," Noel said of the building.

"There was really only one original staircase left."

Friends, train enthusiasts, and local contractors pitched in on design touches and sign-painting so that, Kathy said, it felt like "the community restored the building."

"There are so many people who just love the sort of romance of the train and train travel, and what it was like back in the day," she said.

Won Local Award

Last month, the Batemans were among a number of local businesses recognized by Frontenac County for their work in 2023.

"When they made a really sweet speech and called our names, we were both a bit sucker punched," Kathy said.

"We didn't expect that kind of support."

Fran Smith, the mayor of Central Frontenac, said short-term rentals in general have caused some concern in the region, with some people worried about "wild parties."

But with the owners living in the area, "that kind of thing may not be a problem at all," Smith said.

"It's a beautiful spot," she said of the Clarendon Station renovation.

"I think you're more apt to get people who are going to be respectful of the place, and probably people that want to go out and use the trail for biking, hiking, or even snowmobiling."

Guy Quenneville.