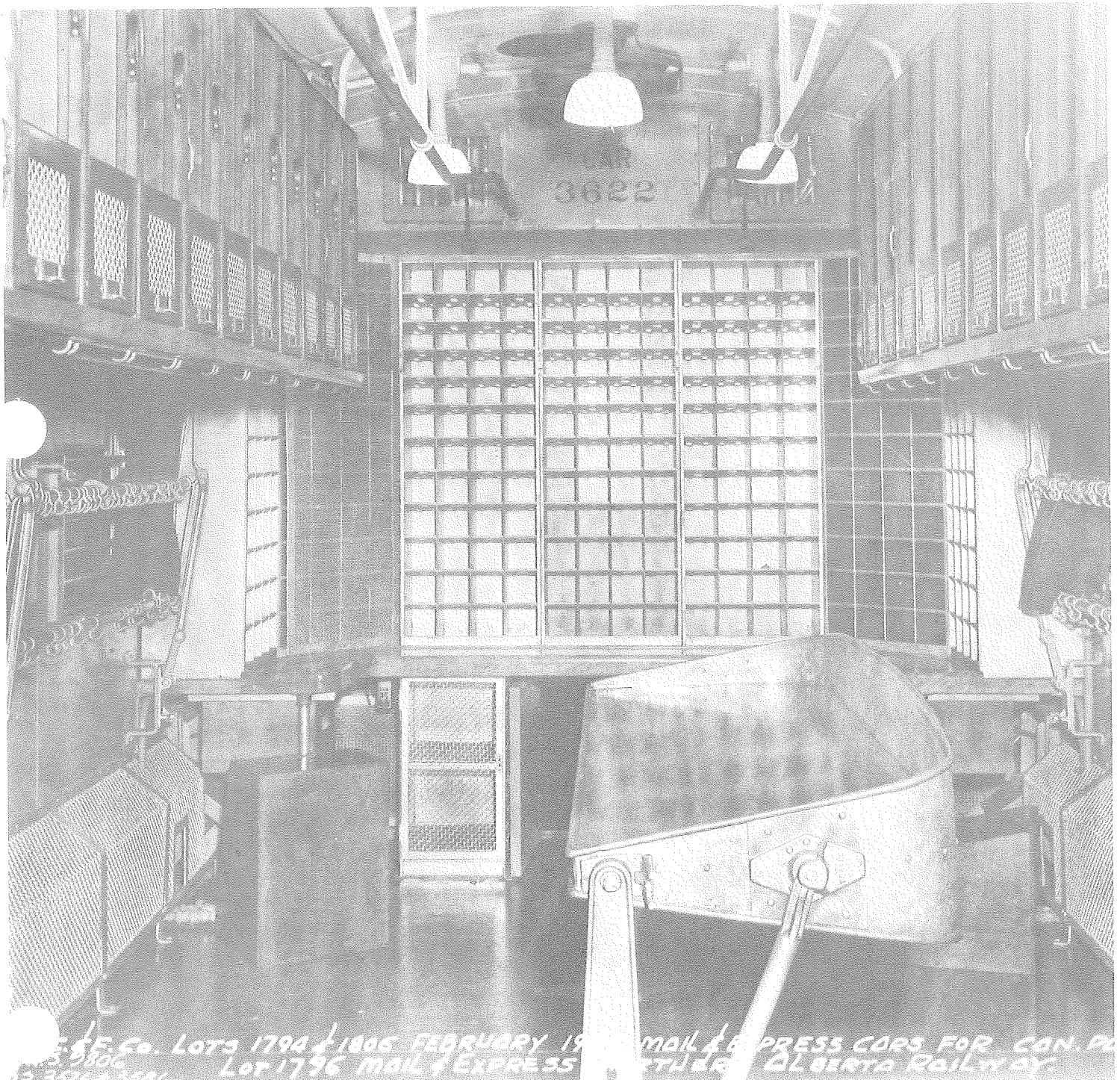


BRANCHLINE



1915 Co. Lots 1794 & 1806 FEBRUARY 1915 MAIL & EXPRESS CARS FOR CAN. PAC. RAILWAY
Lot 1796 MAIL & EXPRESS CARS FOR CAN. PAC. RAILWAY
1915 3524 & 3586



BRANCHLINE

P.O. BOX 141,
STATION A
OTTAWA, CANADA
K1N 8V1

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NOTICE OF MEETING

The next meeting of the Bytown Railway Society will be held on Tuesday, January 6 at 8 pm in the auditorium of the Museum of Science and Technology on St. Laurent Blvd.

This will be members' movie night. Our west coast member is bringing a selection of films on CP in the Rockies, and we will have others as well. This night will also be the Society's Annual General Meeting, with the reports of last year's officers, and the election of those for next year. Members will be asked to vote on a resolution to raise the 1981 dues from \$5 to \$6. Jack Scott's refreshments will be available as usual.

The February meeting will feature a speaker from the federal Department of Transport to talk on passenger rail policy in Canada.

Our December meeting was one of the most popular ever with not only our members in attendance but many of their families as well.

RESTORATION

Car 27 is sitting on its own wheels again. At a marathon work session on December 13 our crew drilled the bolster, completely assembled the truck and placed it back under the car to replace the borrowed freight car truck which had been there for these past few weeks. The job was done in one long session (some of us were still on the way home at 7:30 that night) to avoid having a partially built truck left on the Thurso shop floor. The car will have to be jacked up one more time to make final adjustments and to replace a bent centre pin. Next, we replace the end sill and start on the siding.

COVER PHOTO

This interior shot of a typical Railway Post Office car shows some of the equipment which crammed the car and enabled the crew to process the mail during a run.

A summary history of the railway Postal Service in Canada begins on Page 2. The photo is from Canadian Pacific corporate archives.

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RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE, AN HISTORIC POSTAL ERA

(Further to our announcement of the recent Railway Mail Clerks' Reunion in Ottawa, (Branchline, September, 1980) we now feature a brief history of railway mail service in Canada. The following was taken from a Canada Post announcement prepared on the occasion of the opening of the National Postal Museum on September 27, 1974. Our thanks to R.M.C. Reunion organizer Don McCarthy for supplying the information.)

"The development of the railway post office in Canada is inseparably linked to the establishment of the Canadian railway systems, which turned vast untamed stretches of land into a nation. Before the advent of the railways, mail communication was infrequent, slow, and in many cases, sporadic, depending as it did largely on the mail courier who travelled on foot, on snowshoes, by canoe and, where possible, on horseback....

In 1854, it took ten and a half days of plodding, tortuous trial-by-horseback to deliver a letter to Quebec City from Windsor, Ontario. Three years later the time to travel this 1400-mile run was reduced to one-fifth; a letter would be delivered in the then incredible time of 49 hours....

This remarkable feat was accomplished by the use of travelling railway post offices (with men sorting the mail en route), which were initiated in 1854 on the short run between Niagara Falls and London, Ontario....

The year 1886 saw the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and on 28 June of that year a train with a mail car attached left Montreal, arriving at Port Moody, British Columbia, on 4 July, having completed the first cross-Canada trip....

Dubbed the 'fast mail,' the unique post office on wheels has become a part of Canadian postal history. But for decades, as steam engines chuffed vapour, sparks and cinders across the countryside, mail clerks, in their own personal empires behind the locomotives, slung sacks, sorted letters, entered registers, and protected their cargo from all possible danger. At large settlements the train would stop and mail would be picked up and delivered. At smaller towns, clerks would throw a locked mailbag from the speeding train and operate an iron bar and hook device attached to snatch a community's outgoing mail from a catchpost. One old RMC likes to tell of the time he missed the mailbag but managed to snare a freight car on another track. When the iron bar and hook were finally released, the hook was completely straightened. . . .

The men who served on these swaying lurching platforms were unequalled in their dedication to seeing that 'the mails got through.' Hours before a train was scheduled to pull out, RMC's, working in their cramped quarters, would be busy sorting the mail. All efforts were directed to conserving as much storage area as possible, as this type of space on a train was tremendously expensive. When the train moved into a station, the bags of mail would be ready for transferring to another line or for dropping off to a local post office....

In the early days the cars were constructed of wood, but by 1949 all-steel cars were used on main lines and reinforced wood or all-steel cars on branch lines. These cars could be anywhere from 15-foot 'apartment' cars on short lines to 72-foot full-length cars on trunk lines. And the cars were not exactly luxury suites. Inside they were crammed to the roof with sorting equipment, bag racks, sorting cases, opening tables, and everything needed in a regular post office. Except for public

and financial transactions, every operation of a post office was carried on in the limited and sometimes poorly lighted confines of those four walls....

For the RMC's these cars were home when they were on a long run. Here they would stretch out on mailbags to relax or prepare their meals whenever they would find a spare minute....

Efficiency was given the utmost priority. The post office had a record of everyone who handled a letter. If a letter was sent to the wrong city through a mistake in sorting, its route was traced, the culprit identified, and a record of error entered against his name. Many of the RMC's were so efficient that they had practically no errors charged against them. Their knowledge was subject to an annual examination, and if they did not make a minimum of 90 percent, they lost their yearly salary increase. Perhaps even more important, if they made below 97 percent they lost prestige in the eyes of their fellow workers. Most made 99 percent to 100 percent....

The story is told of the young clerk who announced that he had made only three sorting errors out of 1000 in one of these examinations. An oldtimer consoled him: "Never mind, son, you'll improve with practise."...

There was always a great esprit de corps among the railway mail clerks. This rapport resulted from the long hours spent together in the locked mail cars, which were tucked up close to the engine so that passengers could not walk through them. This arrangement was primarily designed to provide security....

By the early 1950's the Post Office was operating 177 RPO's staffed by 1368 regularly assigned clerks who logged more than 57 million miles a year. By 1961 only 65 RPO's were in operation, and the 647 RMC's logged only 30 million miles a year....

On 24 April 1971 Canadians bid a nostalgic farewell to the last of the Railway Post Offices that for 117 years had been the very backbone of the speedy mail service they had enjoyed....

The last RPO runs in Canada on 24 April were: Train No. 123, Campbellton, N.B. to Levis, Quebec; Train No. 48: Toronto, Ont. to Ottawa, Ont.; Train No. 49, Ottawa, Ont. to Toronto, Ont.; Train No. 58, Toronto, Ont. to Montreal, Quebec; Train No. 59, Montreal, Quebec to Toronto, Ont....

Only once since the Railway Post Office was disbanded in 1971 has it been brought out of retirement; and that was during the royal visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip to Canada in 1973....

Aboard the royal train, two former RMC's cancelled, by hand, an estimated 18000 pieces of mail in the three days the train toured Central and Southern Ontario....

Perhaps the most suitable epitaph to the Railway Mail Clerks is a tribute to them in the London Evening Free Press in 1947:

'All have steady nerves. They think there is no one more interesting than a Railway Mail Clerk. They will travel hundreds of miles on a day off to honour an associate or attend the funeral of an RMC they have never met.'

A Fall Trip on the Prairie Dog Central

by Duncan duFresne

The Vintage Locomotive Society (VLS) held its first annual Prairie Dog Central Fall Foliage excursion on October 4th, 1980 with a run from St. James to Grosse Isle. The 6 car consist was made up of steel coach 101, trailed by 4 wooden cars with the 1908 combine on the rear. On the head end, of course, was VLS pride and joy, 98 year old 4-4-0 number 3. Prairie Dog Central equipment is not steam heat equipped so all the cars had coal fires going in their individual stoves, with the exception of 101, and were reasonably comfortable. The excursion was a sellout and saw people of all ages, including a bus load of senior citizens riding in the combine, come along for a vintage train ride and turkey supper. The dinner was held at the Grosse Isle Community Hall and was provided by the ladies of the little agricultural community in and around Grosse Isle.

The train left St. James (west end Winnipeg) at 17 o'clock (that's western railway time keeping) under mostly cloudy skies and a temperature of approximately 13 degrees C. After passing the grain elevator at Gordon, the skies began to clear. The lowering sun began to cast long shadows of the train onto the freshly harvested and yellow toned grain fields. Stands of trees in the distance, bathed now in brilliant light, glowed in the fall splendor. The 30 mph pace of the train, the sound of number 3's whistle, the empty prairie, and the sight and sound of all this from a seat in a wooden coach in a train hauled by a 4-4-0 --- a thought provoking spectacle. Is this something like the scene experienced by those early European settlers who gazed out on this seemingly endless flatland? Quite probably, although we were no doubt riding in much more comfort than those hearty souls of the day when number 3 was built.

Arrival at Grosse Isle was all too soon. The passengers detrained and walked the short distance to the Community Hall. In the meantime the crew took the train a short distance west to turn on the wye, and a very special event. After completing the backup movement onto the tail track of the wye, actually the CN Inwood subdivision, our engineer, VLS President Ralph Grant, came back to the rear platform of the combine to perform one of the most moving ceremonies I have ever been privileged to witness. Mr. Norman Stewart, an enthusiastic member and friend of the VLS, passed away on August 25, 1980 and left as his final wish that his ashes be scattered along the right of way from the Prairie Dog Central train. Norman's widow, Terri, also a VLS member, and his mother stood on the open platform with Conductor Howard Walsh nearby as Ralph said a few kind words about a lost friend. He then opened the package and began to slowly scatter Norman's ashes into the light, cool breeze. In the distance number 3's whistle was blowing, its melodious sound being carried across the empty landscape by the wind. Ralph stepped down onto the track, walked back a few yards, and in a scene illuminated by an almost setting sun, called for a moment of silence.

The scene and the silence was eerie, the only sound heard was that of the wind moving a trackside sea of grass back and forth. As I stood off to the left side of the train in the lengthening shadow of the combine I wondered if anything like this had ever happened before, or would I ever see anything like it again. With the ceremony over, wyeing was finished, the crew got cleaned up and proceeded to the hall for a well earned country meal. The more than three hundred passengers jammed the hall, dining had to be arranged in two sittings, the crew ate with the second group. After wolfing down a full plate in quick time, I left the hall and went back to babysit number 3. Shortly after, Ralph returned and decided it was time to stir up the bank in the back of the

firebox and give the boiler a good blowdown. From this moment on our pleasant fall trip was to change dramatically, for the blowdown valve jammed in the open position!! While Ralph fought with the linkage out on the left running board, and then under the engine, (this blowdown valve is located on the throat sheet) I got both injectors going. Boiler pressure was only 100 psi so the injectors weren't all that effective. In any event, the water was literally falling out of the boiler. I waited as long as I could, hoping that Ralph would get the valve closed, and finally grabbed the grate shaker bars. Unfortunately, time was running out as fast as the water and it became obvious I wasn't going to get the fire dumped in time. I took the squirt hose and stuck it in the firebox door to douse the red hot coals. It didn't take long to get the fire out now and to realize the state we were in. About this time fireman Paul Newsome returned with the other crew members. Paul was floored by what had happened, and it had happened so fast, probably in no more than 10 minutes. Down under number 3 Ralph was still fighting to get the valve closed. He was soaked in boiling water, his gloves could have been rung out, and the backs of his hands had been burned. His ears weren't too good either as the roar of the escaping hot water had partially deafened him. All of this struggle was taking place under number 3's leading driving axle, jammed between the eccentrics of the Stephenson valve gear, and in steaming pitch black conditions. We finally got some light when the train crew returned with their lamps. By taking the pins out of the valve operating linkage Ralph finally got the water flow shut off.

We now took stock of our situation; the passengers were returning to the train, number 3 had not a pound of steam left on her and the water level in the boiler was well below the crown sheet. What to do? Call for a diesel from Winnipeg? Try to get number 3 back in business? Do nothing?, that's always an option. If we could get some water from somewhere we just might be able to relight her, but even then there would be no steam for the blower - and how long would all this take? How long could the passengers be expected to hold out? And it was really starting to get cold. A clear sky and a rising wind with the Aurora Borealis plainly visible to the north. The senior citizens! What about these oldsters, no matter what was to be done they sure were going to be up past their bedtimes.

About this time our fortunes were to change again. The VLS wasn't going to give up the train this easily. A local farmer friend was asked if he could get us some water. Presto! 20 odd minutes later he had the volunteer fire department from Warren on site with 500 gallons and a pump. We soon had water flowing into number 3's boiler. As soon as it became visible in the glass all nearby scrap wood already in the firebox was lit with large quantities of car and valve oil. The fire department volunteers now took off to refill their tank and replenish the tender. To our relief the residual heat in the boiler and the wind velocity and direction caused sufficient draught to draw the fire through the boiler. Very little smoke came back into the cab and we all sensed we were going to make it! The conductor, Howard Walsh, brakeman George Warren, porters Jack Sine and Gord Younger made visits to the cab to see how we were doing. We were now doing OK. How about the passengers? Well, with one or two exceptions the more than three hundred of them were taking all of this very well. They had singsongs going, betting to see who could guess our departure time the closest, and the seniors were having a ball.

I wouldn't have believed it possible, but 50 minutes after the relight we were ready to move. When the whistle signalled a highball the seniors cheered like teenagers. VLS apologies made over the train's PA system were accepted

with cheers.

For us crew types it was a long day. The passengers all left the train at St. James around midnight, about 2 hours late. We finished up at 1:15 am, tired, filthy and in Ralph's case, cold, wet and dead beat as he, as a regular CN engineer, had worked all the previous night!

What of the future of such trips? VLS plan more of these excursion/dinner trips, several each season in fact. I for one hope they can do it. I speak as both an eater and a railroader. For me personally, I want to leave Winnipeg for home in Ottawa at the earliest possible moment. I am not scheduled to do this until the spring of 1981. I will miss the sort of people who put ancient steam trains back in business. I will miss the sort of people who, late on a Saturday evening can cross the prairie with a tank full of water for an ailing steam engine - in 20 minutes yet! I will miss the sort of people who scatter a deceased member's ashes on a little used prairie branch line. Maybe, most of all, I'll miss that delicious turkey with mashed potatoes, smothered in gravy, lovingly made by the ladies of Grosse Isle, Manitoba

How Times Have Changed

by Jim Maffre

In studying an August 1921 issue of the Canadian Official Railway Guide with Gazeteer, one cannot help but be impressed with the level of railroad activity in and out of Ottawa almost 60 years ago, when compared to the VIA Rail 1980 summer timetables.

In the 20's such places as Kazabazua, Maniwaki, Waltham, St. Jerome and Tupper Lake were the termini of passenger runs on the Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern and the New York Central lines. Sadly, these places no longer exist in the schedules, nor do we still see service to Prescott, Hawksbury or Parry Sound. A weekday in the summer of 1921 saw the following in and out of the Union Station: (bracketed figures show August 1980 activity)

Arrivals-	Through trains	10	(1)	
	To Ottawa only	29	(11)	
	Totals			39 (12)
Departures	Through trains	10	(1)	
	To Ottawa only	24	(11)	
	Totals			34 (12)
	Grand Total			73 (24)

This all made for a total movement of 73 trains way back when, and without a doubt the number of people required to staff the station, operate the fairly extensive shop and yard facilities, make up the train crews and staff the offices must have had a fairly important effect on the economic health of Ottawa. In addition to wages, there must also have been an economic spinoff through the purchase of goods and services from local suppliers in those days when our whole economy must have been much less centralized.

Service to and from Montreal has suffered the same fate in reduced numbers. On a weekday in the summer of 1921, there were 21 arrivals from and 18 departures to that great city - compared to the present 7 each way.

Another indication of how the car and other modes of transportation have changed our lifestyle may be found in comparing the weekend extra train service in and out of Ottawa. In the summer of 1921 there were 9 departures and 6 arrivals on Saturdays and Sundays against a present schedule of 2 departures.

In this exercise of historical research, the impact of the railway on small communities becomes evident. Farnham, Quebec had a population of 3,600 in 1921 and was the hub of quite an extensive network of branch lines, as well as being on the main line serving important cities in the Maritimes and the New England states. Weekday local schedules served such communities as Philipsburg, Bedford, Waterloo, Granby, St. Guillaume and Sorel on the lines of the Central Vermont, Canadian Pacific and Quebec, Montreal and Southern Railroads. Service to these localities no longer exists.

Closer to home, Smiths Falls for example, we have another example of what the railroad meant to a community. This city was and still is an important division point on the CPR, and old timers must remember the days when the shops really hummed away and brought significant economic benefit to the community. As to passenger activity, in 1921 there were 21 scheduled trains that passed through the city, 4 of them being Canadian Northern runs and the balance being CP. Today there are only the 3 Via Toronto trains.

And what has happened in Montreal? In 1921 trains ran from Place Viger, Moreau St., Tunnel, Bonaventure and Windsor stations on lines operated by the Grand Trunk, Central Vermont, Canadian Northern, Canadian Government, Canadian Pacific, Delaware and Hudson, New York Central and Quebec, Montreal and Southern lines on 220 scheduled arrivals and departures on weekdays, compared to today's total of 53.

President's Report -- 1980

1980 has been an active year for our Society in a number of different areas. Work proceeded well on our Business Car no. 27 with Dunc duFresne, George Viens, Jim Lohnes, the Robertsons, Phil Jago, Ian Walker and John Halpenny spearheading the contingent. At the same time we were able to continue restoration work at the Museum lead by Paul Bown, Ches Banks, Bruce Kerr and Earl Roberts. Once again some 25 members had the rare opportunity to work on live steam locomotive 1201 as well as to steam our crane. Les Goodwin and Jack Scott provided us with some excellent meetings with ever increasing attendance. Away from Ottawa we had an excellent get together at the Chateau Montebello and enjoyed a well attended, if cool, trip over the Thurso Railway. Duncan duFresne wrote and Bruce Ballantyne and Al Craig produced our second publication "Snow Plow Extra". Bob Meldrum and John Clark organized participation in exhibitions at the Billings House, Railfare 80 and the Ottawa Public library.

This busy year has produced additional members, ably handled by membership man John Frayne while the finances have been controlled by Mike Iveson. (They were helped by the draw organized by Ches Banks). Bruce Kerr kept track of our correspondence while John Halpenny, Phil Jago and Ron Roncari put out bulging editions of "Branchline" all in good time.

Your executive thinks it is doing a good job and with the assistance of the many members who freely gave their time are offering themselves for reelection at the January Annual General Meeting.

Colin Churcher	President	Ches Banks	Director
Paul Bown	Vice President	John Halpenny	Director
Bruce Kerr	Executive Secretary	Earl Roberts	Director
Mike Iveson	Treasurer		

THE INFORMATION LINE

LOCAL:

Railfan Ramblings with Ian Walker: Canadian National is building a new station at Coteau, Quebec. The new structure will be located immediately to the east of the current facility - a Grand Trunk original which has been extensively modified over the years.

Via Rail have replaced the Cafe/Bar/Lounge cars on its Montreal - Ottawa runs with "at seat" food and beverage service cars. The extensively modified cars are former Canada Car and Foundry 5400 and 5500 series smooth side coaches.

Modifications to the cars have involved removal of the end baggage shelves and the first 4 sets of seats, with a kitchen including a fridge, micro-wave oven and storage space being substituted. As well, the men's washroom has been removed in favour of a storage locker. Facilities for male relief have been relocated to the opposite end of the car opposite the Women's washroom.

A 2 man crew staff the premises with one person dispensing drinks and food from a special cart trundled up and down the aisles while his counterpart works the servery area.

The new system has not been well received by either crew or passengers. The travelling public finds it especially inconvenient to have an "at seat" food service with no tables at their coach seats to hold their food and beverage. Thanks to Earl Roberts for the above.

Talking with Steve Hunter of Brockville we learn that Canadian National put 5 cars off the ground on December 2 while switching DuPont Canada at Maitland, Ontario. Apparently the rails spread beneath the cars.

Misfortune continued to dog CN on December 3 when either SW 1200 #1300 or RS 18 #3648 suffered a fire in their electrical wiring while idling at Brockville yard.

CP Rail Train 927 cruised past Bedell recently with an interesting motive power hashup. Leading was SD 40-2 #5791 followed by M 630 #4558, M 630 #4564, M 636 #4720, RS 23 #8029 and C & O GP 30 #3040 - still in blue and yellow.

Does anyone know the consist and motive power of the "Constitution Express".

REGIONAL:

Turbo Slices Automobile in Half: Two Iroquois women narrowly escaped death on December 8, 1980 when Via Rail Train #66 (The east-bound Turbo) sliced their car in half at a level crossing one mile west of Iroquois.

Apparently the car stalled on the crossing and as the women attempted to start it, the crossing lights came on & the gates came down. Seeing a large oscillating light from the west, the pair quickly made their escape and were 25 yards from the crossing when the train slammed into their hapless vehicle.

Though the car was sliced in half with one section wedged between the rails of the north track and the other 300 feet away in a neighbourly swamp, the train sustained minor damage to its lower nose. After a stay of 2 hours, #66 limped into Montreal under her own power.

(Thanks to Ollie McKee and Diane Halfpenny)

Christmas Railfanning in Brockville: In view of the supplementary holiday passenger trains laid on by Via Rail in the Montreal - Toronto corridor (Branchline, October 1980) Brockville member Stephen Hunter has included the radio frequencies used by Canadian National and CP Rail trains in the area: 160.665, CN; 160.785, CN; 160.935, CN; 161.415, CN; 161.205, CN; 161.475, CP.

Regularly scheduled passenger trains include:

Train	Name	Time	Day	Remarks
49	Cavalier	01:55	ex Sat.	Terminates
59	Cavalier	02:20	Daily	Stops
58	Cavalier	03:45	Daily	Stops
48	Cavalier	04:11	ex Sat.	Originates
61	Rapido	09:35	ex Sun.	50 mph
60	Rapido	10:45	ex Sun.	60 mph
53	Lakeshore	11:30		Terminates
43	Capital	11:50		Stops
63	Rapido	12:40		50 mph
44	Capital	12:55		Stops
54	Lakeshore	13:10		Originates
62	Rapido	13:45		60 mph
67	Turbo	17:30	ex Sat.	50 mph
55	Bonaventure	18:30		Terminates
66	Turbo	18:30	ex Sat.	60 mph
45	Exec	18:50		Stops
69	Rapido	19:30		50 mph
46	Exec	19:55		Stops
56	Bonaventure	20:15		Terminates
68	Rapido	20:45		60 mph

Regular CN freight trains based at Brockville are:

- 529 - departs Brockville approx 08:30 daily except Sunday to service industries to Prescott, returns 13:30 approx.
- 590 - departs Brockville approx 14:00 daily except Sunday to service industries from Prescott to Morrisburg, returns approx 18:30
- 317 - Mainline drag freight; Arrives Brockville from Montreal between 11:30 and 13:30, waits at Brockville till 19:00 for wayfreights. Locos tie up daily at west end of yard.
- 318 - Mainline drag freight; Arrives Brockville from Belleville about 18:30 - 19:30, waits till 20:00 for wayfreights. Locos tie up daily at east end near Cedar Street.

Via's special Toronto - Halifax service operating on December 20, 22, 26, 28 will see #111 passby at 09:15 and #112 at 14:00. Though no official stop is scheduled, these trains may have to stop for water to replenish their steam heat boilers.

Special Montreal - Toronto trains on Dec. 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31 and Jan. 1, 2, and 4 are #655 arriving at 15:15 and 652 arriving at 16:35. Each train is scheduled to stop for 5 minutes.

The CP Rail wayfreight (your editor's favourite train) arrives at Brockville from Smith's Falls around 12:00; works area industries until 17:00; then departs. On Fridays, the train waits until Via Rail #46 has departed before returning to Smith's Falls. Regular power on this daily except Saturday and Sunday operation is MLW switcher 6528 with the crew quartered in van #437093.

Modelers should take note that the Tunnel Bay Modelers Club will be hosting an open house on 27 and 28 December between 13:00 and 17:00. Im

operation will be a fairly ambitious HO Trak module layout as well as exhibits of scale and prototype railroadiana. Barring unforeseen disaster, a 1500# C.N.R. live steam 4-8-4 and van will also be on display.

Interesting Motive Power: CP Rail would appear to be leasing GP 30s and GP 35s from the Chessie System. Ollie McKee of Cardinal reports seeing GP 30 #3008 and GP 35 #3562 on November 22 at Smith's Falls. Elsewhere on the Smith's Falls Division, we hear that train #82 was off the track at the Prescott Elevator on December 7, 1980.

NATIONAL:

Newfoundland Wants Railway Standard Gauged: Following a report by Canadian Pacific Consulting Services of Montreal and Project Management and Design Ltd. of St. Johns, Newfoundland Premier Brian Peckford has called for the standard gauging of the province's railway system.

The report flies in the face of a 1978 federal royal commission which had recommended a 10 year phasing out programme with current money to subsidize losses being spent on improving the island's highway network.

Standard gauging the line would connect Newfoundland with the North American rail network. At present, all cars interchanged on or off the island must have their trucks changed to accommodate whichever gauge they are traversing. (The Gazette, Montreal, 19-11-80, thanks to Omer Lavallee)

Via Beefs up Consist of Trains 16 and 17 for Christmas Rush:

During the Christmas rush, Via Rail will be eliminating over-the-platform transfers now required at Matapedia, Quebec for Montreal - Gaspé passengers.

Instead on December 19, 21, 23, 27, 29, 30 and January 3 and 4, Trains 16 and 17 will operate directly from Montreal to the Gaspé.

Consists for the trains - first announced in Via's Winter Timetable * (Branchline, October 1980) will include 3 sleeping cars, a snack bar coach, dining car, dayniter, 6 coaches and a baggage car.

According to Leo Moisan, Vice-President, Via Quebec: "Cette formule permettra d'assurer plus de confort aux très nombreux voyageurs qui se déplacent sur ce trajet durant la période des Fêtes et de fin d'année. Comme chaque année à pareille époque, tout indique que notre clientèle sera très nombreuse...." (Via Rail Canada)

Bombardier to Develop New Generation Diesel Locomotive:

A joint financing effort between Bombardier Inc. of Montreal and the Department of Industry Trade and Commerce has committed 54 million dollars towards the research and development of a new type of diesel electric locomotive.

The 7 year, 2 stage programme, will initially see the development of a new diesel engine providing higher horse power per cylinder, lower fuel consumption, higher reliability and lower maintenance costs.

In the final stage, a high technology diesel locomotive incorporating a new engine, higher track adhesion levels, and a special winter package will be developed. (Canadian Pacific News Summary, 7-11-

Via and Amtrak Negotiate Toronto - New York Service: In the aftermath of an attempt to cancel passenger train service between Toronto and Buffalo, New York, Via Rail Canada and Amtrak are discussing an

un-interrupted train service between Toronto and New York City via Niagara Falls.

Negotiations are proceeding quite favourably. Other options considered by the 2 government corporations would see a bus/limousine service between the Via Station in Niagara Falls, Ontario and the Amtrak facility on the opposite side of the river or a railliner platform to platform service between stations in the two communities to connect with Amtrak's New York - Buffalo trains. (Canadian Pacific News Summary, 7-11-80)

Interesting Ballasting Concept Applied to N.A.R. Branchline Rehab.
In order to prevent ballast contamination from fine soil particles and to allow the free passage of water without undue hydro-static pressure, the N.A.R. has been laying new ties on a special non-woven, needle punched polyester.

As well as prevent ballast contamination, this material also provides additional foundation support because of its high tensile strength. (The Headlight, Northern Alberta Railways, thanks to Paul Churcher)

Vancouver Selects Advanced Light Rapid Transit System:

The city of Vancouver has decided to install an advanced light rail transit system in its metropolitan area.

Work on the first phase of the 290 million dollar project developed by the Toronto based Urban Transportation Development Corp. will commence immediately with a line from downtown Vancouver to New Westminister, with branches to Surrey and Coquitlan.

Estimated completion of this initial phase is in time for Transpo 86, an international transportation exposition to be held in Vancouver.

Features of the system - touted as a low cost alternative to subways - include "compact, steel wheel trains on slender elevated guideways." The trains will be virtually noiseless and will incorporate an automatic operation system which will permit them to operate on one minute headways. (U.T.D.C., December 7, 1980)

INTERNATIONAL:

Save San Francisco's Cable Cars: San Francisco's ageing cable car system is in dire need of a major overhaul. Cost of the 4 year project involved in restoring the last example of a unique form of urban transportation is estimated at 60 million dollars with 80% coming from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration if the city can raise the remaining 20 million dollars. In order to accomplish this, the non-profit Committee to Save the Cable Cars has been organized to raise 12 million dollars in an ambitious national fund-raising drive which has already seen Chevron U.S.A. contribute 1 million. Contributions to save the system may be sent via cheque or money order to the Committee to Save the Cable Cars, P.O. Box 2888, San Francisco, California, U.S.A., 94126.

(Preservation News, The National Trust, December, 1980)

Canadian Pacific Sells Aroostok Shares: "Arbox Three Corporation of New York has purchased Canadian Pacific's interest in the Aroostok Valley Railroad Company in Aroostook County, Maine. . . . (The) New York company acquired all of the outstanding shares in the . . . railroad that were held by Canadian Pacific Limited. The acquisition represents 86.7% of the shares of the railroad. Financial details . . . were not disclosed".

(CP Rail News, 10-11-80)

Editor's Notes

Branchline is as large as it is going to get, for a while at least. This issue, 12 pages and a picture, is the largest one we can send for the first class rate of 26 cents. Anything more will require us to pay 32 cents or to mail at printed matter rates, (the November issue was sent at this rate at the height of the Christmas rush, and some copies haven't arrived yet). Larger issues also mean more printing, more assembling and mainly more typing, and your editorial staff has just so much time to do the job and get it out on time.

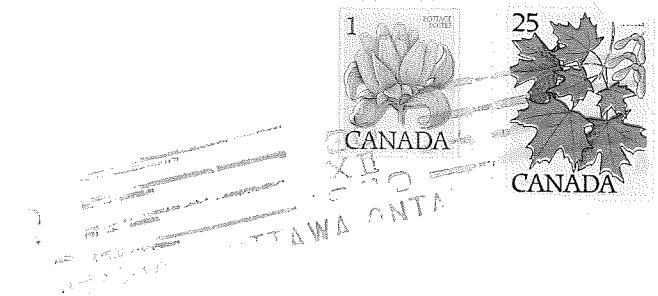
We have a lot of material lined up for forthcoming issues. Harold Craft has written about the Maniwaki line, Aubrey Mattingly has more material on Stittsville, Raymond Corley and Doug Smith have sent material on the Crusader cars, and Colin Churcher has a whole collection of anecdotes from the Great Western. All this and Phil Jago's news will be fitted into forthcoming issues.

Branchline is published eleven times a year for members and friends of the Bytown Railway Society. Articles, news items and letters are always welcomed and may be sent to the addresses below:

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