

# BRANCHLINE

PUBLISHED BY THE BYTOWN RAILWAY SOCIETY INC.

FOR THE

OTTAWA BRANCH OF THE CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 7

September, 1972

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## NOTICE OF MEETING

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The next meeting of the Ottawa Branch of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association will be held on Tuesday October 3, 1972 at 20:00 Hr. at the National Museum of Science and Technology. Eric Smith will talk on "The Rivals of Steam".

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## THE SEPTEMBER EXECUTIVE MEETING

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The September executive meeting was held at the home of Bob Meldrum. The following items of business were discussed:

1. The Barry's Bay Trip - discussion as to what food and refreshments should be available resulted in a decision to sell snacks (drinks, coffee, chips etc.). A proposal to sell sandwiches was deemed to be too difficult to arrange. At the point of the meeting 35 tickets had been sold. (As of Friday, Sept. 15, 2/3 of the required guarantee had been reached).
2. NMRA Convention - arrangements were to be made to set up a booth at the Convention and information concerning the preparation of the crane was given.

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## SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

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The program for the September meeting held on September 5, 1972 was a slide presentation of past CRHA excursions, by Ken Heard. The excursions included a wide variety of steam power from a tiny 4-4-0 (CP #29) to a 4-6-4 (CP #2857 -Royal Hudson). The scenery was as varied with trip destinations such as St. Lin, Port McNicoll, Belleville and Garneau. Our thanks to Ken for an interesting and nostalgic evening.

DID YOU KNOW? -the CN-CP pool train service ended October 30th, 1965 ending some thirty years of joint service. After the 30th the two railways offered separate service with CP dropping out early in 1966.

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THE PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE

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Dear friends:

As I write this message at the end of the week of September 24th I am somewhat relieved to know that ticket sales on the Barry's Bay trip are going very well. We've passed the break even point and current response indicates a sell out. Weather permitting it should be a first rate trip.

Branch participation in the NMRA convention, while limited, has involved a few members with a lot of work, in preparing our locomotive crane for operation. In addition to the usual scraping and painting a second hydrostatic test was unfortunately required. The newly produced CV heralds were put in place and they sure do look good. Another undetected (until yesterday) set of circumstances has required repair of a broken valve on the turbo-generator and repair to a smashed (by vandals) lubricator sight feed glass.

The Branch will also have a display table at the convention hall (Chateau Laurier). The organizer in charge of this NFR affair is none other than our own Alan Craig.

As many of you know my summer was taken up with a rather time consuming course. However, in mid-September I did manage a few days away with Joyce and visited the Halton County Radial Railway. If you haven't visited this operation, you should if you can. It is more than just an operational streetcar museum; it is proof positive of what a group of dedicated people can do when they set their minds and backs to it.

You should all be called for the next meeting and all meetings thereafter. Our 'phone committee is functioning again with Bob Meldrum now at the helm. I am sure all members join me in wishing Kevin Day (the former telephone committee chairman -ed.) well in his new found position with CN in Montreal. Good luck Kevin!

My only wish now is for another successful season. Come on out and enjoy yourself at the monthly meetings. I know you will!

Sincerely  
Duncan du Fresne

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

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Telephone Committee - The telephone committee left leaderless by Kevin Day's departure for Montreal apologizes for not contacting many of the members for the September meeting. Trying harder in October will be Ken Walker, Doug Couzens, Bill Naftel, Mike Iveson, Grove Mills, Rob Millikin and Harold Wethey. Ken Lenton will be acting as backup to any member unable to do his duty.

Thoughts on Ken Heard's Slides of Early Fan Trips - I couldn't help notice that many of Ken's best slides were taken when he was only seventeen. I wish that someone had told me about organized railway groups when I was seventeen. What experiences I missed! I bet that there are some youths in Ottawa who would benefit even now from knowing about the C.R.H.A. If you know any, encourage them to come out. Their energy and enthusiasm would be an asset to the group.

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 INFORMATION LINE
 

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I have been really pleased with the response to these bits of local information. A rush trip to Guam and Japan prevented me from acknowledging in the

August issue a letter from Robert G. Leggett. He writes:

"Regular users of the pool service (Ottawa-Toronto night train) used to say, jokingly, that - in the days of steam - the CPR used to keep a special crew of drivers for the Smiths Falls to Toronto part, specially trained to 'jerk' the trains at stops and starts, to prevent sleep. This was obviously a figment of the imagination but it was never a smooth ride if only because of the single line working. I am sure that this rough ride put many people off from using the very convenient night train service. If only the pool trains could have used the old CNR Smiths Falls to Napanee line with its excellent alignment, things would have been different and rail passenger usage would not have suffered as it has."

My experience on CN 48 and 49 which use the line mentioned have been mixed. In the sleeper, I have had excellent trips but when forced into the coach by the common occurrence of a full sleeper I have had difficulty sleeping. First there is the parade of freights to watch between Toronto and Napanee and then there are the varieties of movements at Belleville where the Ottawa section is dropped off the Montreal train and at Smiths Falls to drop off a storage mail car.

For the railfan, though, these trains are old-fashioned branch-line railroading at its best.

Bruce Chapman's very complete description of motive power that can be seen locally piqued my curiosity of what it must have been like in the old days. I have many questions which will be popping up in future issues but let's start with these:

1. What type of locomotives were used by the New York Central between Cornwall and Ottawa?
2. Where were these locomotives maintained?
3. Has anyone any memories of trips on this line?

One final anecdote from Dunc du Fresne concerning the vagaries of the English language to a person whose first language is not English. It seems that many years ago on a CPR steam engine, a French speaking fireman had a black experience. As the train approached the Bank Street level crossing, the engineer, noticing that a collision with an open truck loaded with tar was imminent, shouted "LOOK OUT". The fireman obeyed!

Quiz -The Canadian Surface Transportation Administration of the Ministry of Transport supplies a fact sheet for the use of students and others interested in railways. Colin Churcher has supplied Bob Meldrum with a copy and asked for criticisms and suggestions. To provide some mental exercise, I have turned the answers into a quiz. Answers next month!

I. What happened of note on the following important dates in Canadian railway history?

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| a. April 1, 1972  | d. November 16, 1970 |
| b. April 30, 1970 | e. October 30, 1965  |
| c. April 21, 1970 |                      |
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II. When did CPR accept its last steam locomotive?  
What was it?

(Bob Meldrum)

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FROM THE EDITOR'S  
SCRAPBOOK

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New Development for Continuous  
Welded Rail

One hundred and fifty years ago the first regular tracks were set down in six-foot rail lengths. Six feet was deemed the best length a man could carry. As time went on the length of rail increased until in 1880, in Canada, the maximum length was standardized at 39ft. - a perfect size to go into the 40ft. flatcar. Now the 39-foot rail is making way for continuously welded rail of one-quarter mile lengths.

Over the past twenty years welded rail laying in Canada has been limited by severe climatic conditions which impose great stresses on the rails. Although in the last five years Canadian railways have embarked on climate-limited welded rail laying programs it has only been recently that, with National Research Council developed techniques, a year-round program has been started.

In a mile of track using short sections of rail there are 270 bolted expansion joints which allow temperature expansion or contraction of the rails. The wheels of speeding trains, as they roll over these joints, produce the familiar clickety-clack which to many (railfans) is music but to a maintenance engineer is a headache. The up and down and lateral motion of the rail causes damage to the ties and the joints and the rail ends are gradually beaten down and rounded.

Under the old welding technique, short sections of rail are welded together into desired lengths with this rail anchored firmly to prevent expansion and contraction. The life expectancy of rail is therefore doubled. When rail is laid during one season of the year problems often occur during other seasons of the year. For example, welded rail laid during the winter may develop a sun kink during the summer when temperatures soar to 130°F in the sun causing lifting of ties and rails.

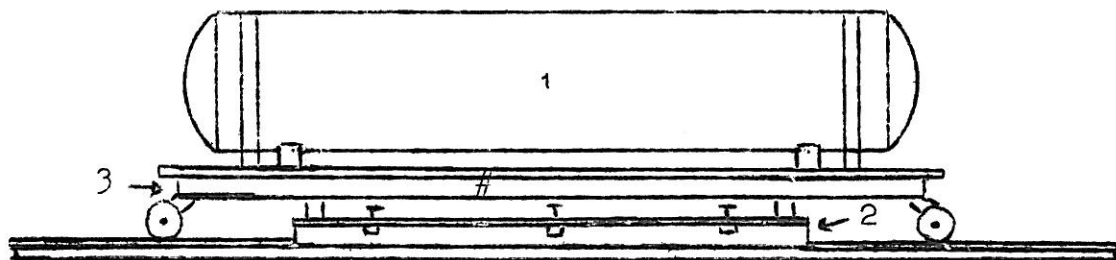
Research has shown that the answer to the problem of stress forces was to lay rail on a stress free condition at a mean temperature (65°F in Canada). With the old welded-rail technique rail crews anchor the rail at one time and return when the temperature is at 65°F to release and re-anchor the rails in their new position at that temperature.

The new technique requires heating the rails during the welding process. The problem of heating to 650°F was solved by N.R.C. by using high velocity propane gas burners. These burners, their velocity increased by air pressure are mounted under a hood in series of six pairs. These blast heat against the tracks as the unit moves over the rails at a set rate 40 feet per minute. N.R.C. also developed a method of cooling to 65°F by using a trough mounted over the rails. Ice is fed into the trough and onto the rails from an ice making machine. The ice melts, turns into water and the latent heat of fusion is used to cool the rails.

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Before these developments, season and even daily temperature fluctuations made it necessary to lay rail during a particular season and time of day within that season. Initially it was considered that a system for heating and cooling rails would be functional only from April to October. However tests have shown that welded rail laying becomes practical on a year-round basis.

The cost of the new technique will be less. For one mile of rail under the re-anchoring procedure the cost is \$1,000 while the cost for heating the rails is \$50<sup>00</sup> per mile. Both major railways, as a result, are enthusiastic about the new technique.



SIMPLIFIED DRAWING OF HEATER

1. Propane tank
2. Mount for burners (only 3 sets shown here)
3. Car frame

- approximate height of car from rails 5 ft.
- rail to be heated is placed along beside the existing trackage on which the car has been placed and hence the burners are extended out from the side of the car.

(from NRC magazine "Dimension")

← "When Trains Were Like Hotels on Wheels"  
(from the CP Rail News Aug '72)

Nostalgia is the name of the game. And it's a popular one these days. Who can remember travelling in the plush "hotels on wheels" operated by (the CPR) back in the late 19th century. And plush they were — straight-back seats, velvet-like covering, mahogany wood panelling, gas lights, small windows, and colourful designs. But when you really stop and think about it, can you imagine sitting for hours — or maybe days — in one of those plush seats in the hottest part of summer? Added to that discomfort would be the heavy clothing worn in those days — papa in his serge suit and high collar; and mamma in stiff corsets and floor length gown or suit. The only "air conditioning" was a fan. The thought's enough to make one head for the nearest air-cooled coach.

But let's face it. Those old cars were genuine works of art. Richly carved and polished wood, elaborate drapery and upholstery, gleaming silver and cut glass were the height of elegance and work-

manship.

And the food! An ad. in a 45-page 1887 Canadian Pacific travel booklet reveals that: "Local delicacies such as trout, prairie hens, antelope, Fraser River salmon, succeed one another as the train moves westward. The wines are of the Company's special importation, and are of the finest quality."

The same brochure describes the trans-continental passenger equipment thusly: "These cars are of unusual strength and size, with berths, smoking and toilet accommodations correspondingly roomy. Each transcontinental sleeping car is provided with BATH ROOMS and all are fitted with double doors and windows to exclude the dust in summer and the cold in winter... the exteriors are of polished red mahogany and the interiors are of white mahogany and satinwood, elaborately carved."

And the prices? One lower berth from Montreal to Vancouver cost \$20.00. Between Montreal and Toronto, it was only \$2.00. A regular meal was 75 cents. A Christmas Day dining car menu offered a seven course meal for \$1.00, highlighted with Malpecque oysters, green turtle soup and roast wild duck. Pommery extra dry champagne sold for \$3.50 a quart and cocktails for 20 cents. The silverware in one diner was reputed to be valued at \$3,000.

Those were the days when a buck was worth a whole dollar!

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#### THE EDITOR SPEAKS

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With this issue of the Branchline there is a second attempt at innovation. The best newsletter, bulletin magazine etc. (at least the most

interesting), includes illustrations -- whether drawings or photographs. Therefore an attempt has been made to include something other than "the printed work". Last month the Branchline included a map while this month it includes a drawing of a railway car.

I don't know how many of you have worked with Gestetner stencils but for work other than typing it is difficult to mark it. It is impossible to do fine details and hence the "picture" must be kept simple. Lines drawn too close together will end up running into each other since the marker point can never be fine enough to produce a thin line.

Regardless, I hope you like the small change. If you have any suggestions or comments, let me know.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Notes and comments, articles etc. are welcomed and may be sent to the editor at:

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Or bring them out to the monthly meetings and see your name in print!

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