



Newsletter

INCORPORATED 1952

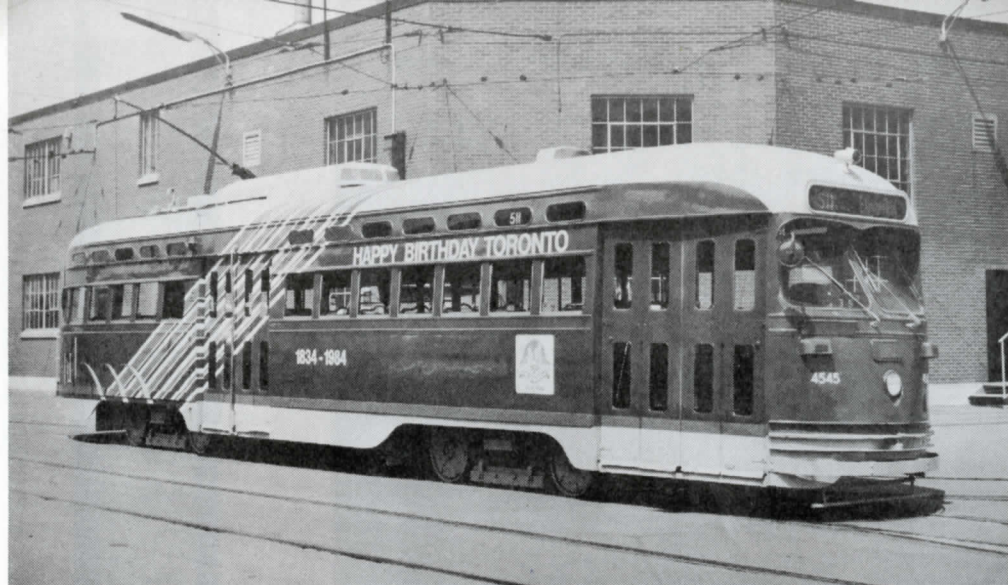
POTENTIAL OF PASSENGER RAIL (FRANCIS)

NUMBER 417

JULY 1984

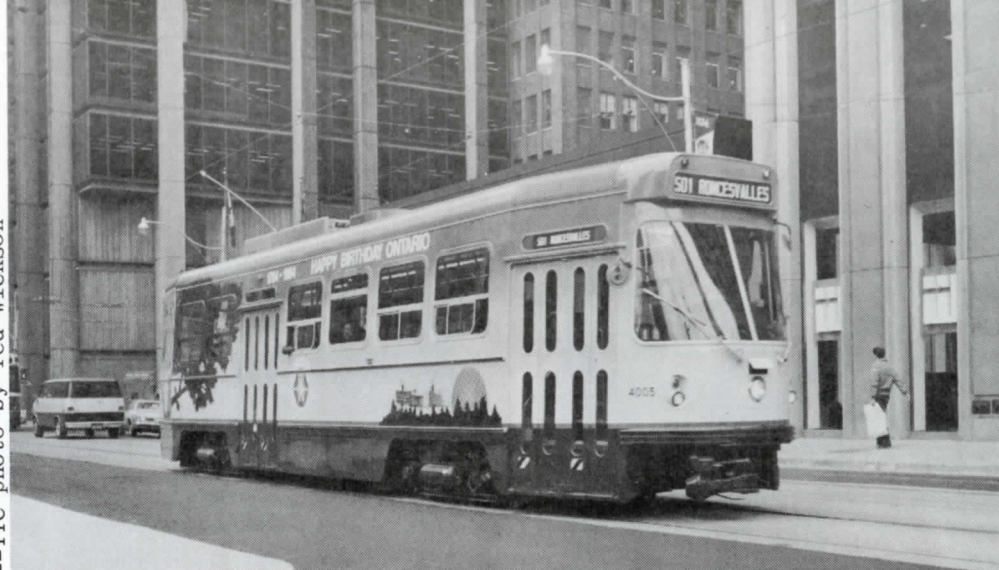


UPPER CANADA RAILWAY SOCIETY
BOX 122 STATION "A" TORONTO, ONTARIO



TTC 1951-built PCC 4545 poses at Hillcrest Shops after being repainted in its Toronto Sesquicentennial colours of two-tone blue with red, white and blue diagonal stripes. Mate 4536 has a similar treatment. All five specially-painted cars are in regular passenger service on various routes this year, the 'Year of Celebration'.

--TTC photo by Ted Wickson
--TTC photo by Ted Wickson

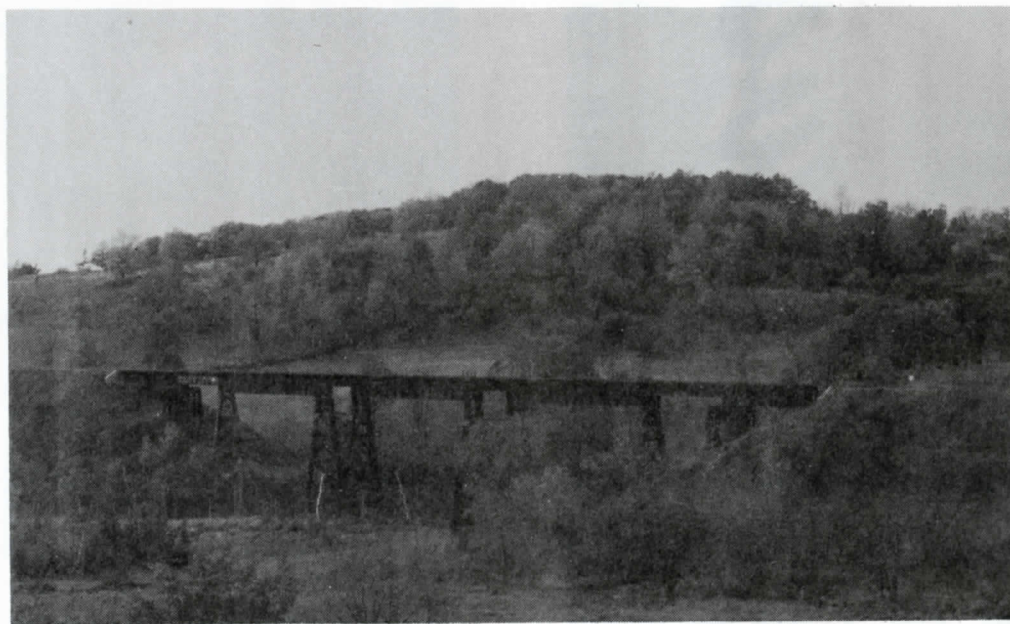


TTC 4005, resplendent in its Province of Ontario Bicentennial livery of two-tone blue with appropriate graphics, is pictured westbound on Queen at Bay. Four other streetcars (4000, 4002, 4536 and 4545) have been repainted in special paint treatments commemorating the Province's 200th birthday (4000) and the City's 150th (the other three cars).



The substantial stone Conrail (ex-NYC, ex-Canada Southern) station at Essex, Ont., which the municipality is seeking to preserve. The last passenger train past here was Amtrak's NIAGARA RAINBOW, some five years ago. June 10, 1984.

--John D. Thompson photo



Doube's Viaduct, east of Omeemee, Ont., on CN's Campbellford Sub., Lindsay-Belleville. The bridge's need of repairs, which the CN has refused to perform, has given the railway an excuse to suspend service east of Peterborough and apply for permission to abandon this section. Photo taken Oct., 1983.

--Charlie Randall photo

the new timetable

SUMMER-FALL 1984 by John Moseley

The VIA Rail timetable for the summer-fall of 1984 became effective on June 3. In its format of 60 pages it is much the same as the timetable of the previous winter-spring edition, 1983-84. The table of contents and page numbers have hardly changed. The new schedule, like the old, has 50 timetables. However, 11 of these services are entirely bus services, and one of them is a taxi service. The taxi service--No. 14: Senneterre-Val D'Or--may well have the distinction of being the longest scheduled taxi service (36 miles) operated by a rail passenger carrier in the world. It operates three times a week and takes 60 minutes to travel the 36 miles. Bus services are found all over the system. The longest bus service seems to be in Newfoundland; unfortunately no distances, either in miles or kilometres, are shown in the timetable. Passenger rail services in Newfoundland are shown only in kilometres. For the rest of Canada they are shown in miles and kilometres.

The condensed 'Across Canada Service' has scarcely changed. Arrival and departure times in Vancouver and Halifax are both the same. Westbound No. 15, the OCEAN, arrives in Montreal 10 minutes earlier, and its eastbound counterpart, No. 14, leaves two minutes later. However, 20 minutes is added to the eastbound CANADIAN, No. 2, between Toronto and Montreal.

There is an improvement on the Montreal-Ottawa schedule. There, Train 32 leaves Ottawa at 11:30, and arrives in Montreal at 1335--a reduction of 15 minutes in running time.

A new train, No. 659, Toronto-London, leaves Toronto at 2155, arriving in London at 0010. This train establishes an improved connection with the EXEC from Ottawa, which arrives in Toronto at 2110.

Perhaps the most important change in the timetable is the introduction of the PANORAMA, which operates between Winnipeg and Prince Rupert, providing daily service Winnipeg-Edmonton, and tri-weekly service Edmonton-Jasper-Prince Rupert. It would be interesting to know whether this is the first time that there has been a through sleeping car service between Winnipeg and Prince Rupert. (Can any member establish this definitively?--Ed.) The new service between Winnipeg and Prince Rupert takes 45 hours, 45 minutes, whereas the old service, including an overnight stop in Saskatoon, took 56 hours, 20 minutes. Clearly, this constitutes a significant improvement in running time.

Rumours that the passenger service between Winnipeg and Churchill would end this year have proved to be unfounded. However, one can only wonder how long Churchill will continue to operate as a viable seaport, and, if it is closed, whether VIA Rail would be prepared to operate the service for a very sparse population. It should be remembered that there is no road link between Thompson and Churchill.

The passenger rail link between Jasper and Vancouver is still closed. Perhaps the line will reopen after the next general Federal election.

There seems to be a general trend of deceleration on service 18-19, Toronto-Montreal. The 1545 Toronto-Montreal schedule has had an extra 10 minutes added. Train 64, the MERIDIAN, has had an extraordinary 55 minutes tacked onto its running time.

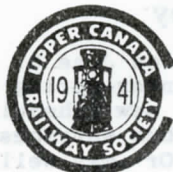
There are a number of minor changes which have been made throughout the timetable. An example would be Table 28, Winnipeg-Capreol, which still keeps to the same timing on a tri-weekly service, but on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday basis rather than on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. THE CANADIAN still runs between Vancouver and Montreal, despite rumours that it would terminate its run in Toronto commencing with the summer timetable. Persons aged 60 and over are now offered transportation at tariffs 1/3 off regular, termed "Ambassador" fares. The Canrailpass could well be the best bargain of its kind to be found anywhere. A 22 day all lines pass for \$290 in low season is a remarkable buy.

All in all, it is a timetable which calls for cautious optimism in the near future. There have been no cuts in passenger service. A deceleration in the timing of certain services will likely lead to better timekeeping. The introduction of the PANORAMA will be a boon for western travellers. Let us hope that the cause for optimism is not unfounded.

ANOTHER BIDDER FOR CONRAIL APPEARS; ESSEX WANTS TO SAVE STATION--A fourth bidder for the Canadian properties of Conrail emerged on June 11 with the announcement that Stroh Companies, brewers of Stroh's Beer (U.S.) is interested in purchase of the railroad, presumably as an independent operation in the nature of the "Erie Express" proposal of Albert Atwell.

In the meantime a "Save Our Station" campaign is under way in Essex, Ont. with the hope of preservation of the local Conrail depot. Mayor Gerry Schinkel of Essex, a member of the Committee, is selling baseball caps displaying a sketch of the station at \$6.50 apiece from his meat market. A CN spokesman has said that, if the CN-CP purchase of Conrail's Canadian assets comes to fruition, the railway would be prepared to discuss selling the station to the municipality, although the policy is to offer surplus stations first to Parks Canada. If that agency passes on the Essex structure, the town would be next in line. Whether CN would require removal of the station from the site is not known at present.

--Windsor Star, via Chas. Randall



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NEWS ITEM/EDITORIAL--GO Transit has ordered the necessary cancelling machine equipment to enable a six-month trial of the Proof of Payment fare system to be undertaken on the Streetsville-Milton line, commencing next Dec. 1. Tickets will be inserted into a cancelling machine when a passenger enters the "paid" area at the station of boarding, and tickets will not be required to be deposited at destination as under the present system. Those roving inspectors who are integral to the POP system will circulate about paid areas at stations and on trains checking for valid tickets, ready to "throw the book" at passengers who fail to produce same. What the "book" will constitute, in terms of a fine representative of several times a one-way fare (Toronto-Milton?) has yet to be revealed.

While POP is designed to reduce labour costs and speed passenger flow at stations, it can have a negative effect in a public relations sense. Transit passengers in Toronto and environs have always been accustomed to a system whereunder they pay their fare upon boarding a vehicle and then travel in peace for the balance of their trip, knowing that the transaction between themselves and the carrier is complete and that the latter will demand nothing further from them. The POP system, on the other hand, requires that cancelled ticket to be kept instantly available, with every rider being under constant suspicion and having to be somewhat "on edge" while riding or waiting in stations, facing the prospect that Big Brother can accost him at any time. It can be expected that a goodly number of passengers, of impeccable honesty, will strongly resent being suddenly subjected to a system under which, without warning, they may be required to prove that honesty. For some, it can be suspected that it will not be a case of getting used to the system--it will simply be a case of permanent resentment against the system, and some passengers of a particularly sensitive nature may be driven back to their automobiles as a result of it. Another consideration is that of the old human element--will the inspectors, subconsciously if not deliberately, "pick on" certain groups more frequently than others, i.e., the less well-dressed, children not accompanied by an adult, etc.? If there are any observed or suspected tendencies of this nature, POP will fall into further disrepute.

Possibly the foregoing overstates the case against the Proof of Payment system, but it is an element of the matter which GO Transit will presumably want to evaluate during the six-month Milton line trial, and before the POP system is adopted systemwide. The contract awarded for the POP equipment includes 25 new ticket issuing machines which will be tested separately as possible replacements for the obsolete fare registers now used on GO Transit buses.

--Facts from "GO News"; opinions from SIW



The Urban Transportation Development Corporation announced on May 10 that it has entered into an international co-operation technology agreement with the MAN Corporation of Nuernberg, West Germany, which will expand UTDC's product line with a range of non-steerable trucks. The MAN/UTDC agreement includes powered and non-powered trucks for intercity, passenger commuter, subway and light rail car equipment. This co-operation is expected to help UTDC meet 'Buy America' conditions for future contracts as trucks may be manufactured and assembled in the USA. MAN trucks will be supplied with the light rail car fleet being built by UTDC for the Santa Clara County Transit District.

COVER: CN rebuilt GP9 4027 leads a train of leased GO Transit bilevel cars eastbound at Baie Ste. Paul, Quebec, June 24, 1984. The train, known as LE TORTILLARD DU ST. LAURENT, has been chartered until Sept. 3 by a consortium of the same name comprising GO, the Province of Quebec, and the North Shore Businessmen's Association, to provide daily passenger service on CN's freight-only line between Quebec City and Point-au-Pic, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River. The round trip fare is \$30, and stops are made at St. Pierre, Baie Ste. Paul, St. Joseph de la Rive, Ste. Irene and Pointe au Pic. The car behind the locomotive is a green and white Auxiliary Power Unit outshopped by CN to provide power for lighting and air conditioning. Buses take people on local tours from the various stops. Car modifications have been made to provide a bar and food counter car, a children's play lounge, and a VIP lounge. Service began June 21, 1984, as a demonstration project.

--Ted Wickson photo

The pride, the paradoxes and the potential of passenger rail

THE 1983 ANNUAL REPORT MESSAGE OF VIA RAIL PRESIDENT
AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PIERRE FRANCHE

When I accepted the presidency of VIA about 20 months ago, VIA was receiving over \$400 million annually in government operating subsidies. Once the flagship of two great railways, Canada's passenger rail service was being operated with a fleet of largely 30-year old refurbished vehicles, thinly augmented by new rolling stock just coming into use. Just 12 months earlier, a 20% cut in VIA's route miles had caused considerable public reaction. There was indeed public uncertainty over the future of VIA.

My first year at VIA has proven challenging, stimulating and encouraging. What I found was the potential on which to build and 1983 was the first step in that rebuilding process. Indeed, it has given me real cause for optimism and pride about VIA's future potential--the service it can render to passengers and the historic contribution it can again make to Canadian unity. Any rebuilding process requires building blocks and these abound at VIA. The employee group of some 3500 is dedicated and determined to tackle what seems impossible--modernizing the VIA system. Remedial measures have been pressed forward with vigour. Studies are under way which may yet provide a major contribution to the renaissance which is needed if Canada's passenger railway service is to be more economic, more efficient.

Mindful of the National Interest--Yet, we must always be very mindful of the national interest it has served since our rail lines first reached the Pacific nearly 100 years ago. Even though we must focus on the two thirds of Canadians who live near the central travel corridor, we cannot neglect Eastern and Western Canada.

The Board of Directors, management and staff are convinced that Canada's passenger railway system can be rebuilt, modernized and realigned to meet the contemporary needs of Canadians into the twenty-first century. All are eager to rise to this challenge. It has the scent of history in the making. Successive Ministers of Transport and their Cabinet colleagues have demonstrated the government's willingness to reinvest in VIA and the passenger rail service when logical proposals are put forward. Finally (and perhaps most heartening of all), there is strong support from our 25 million shareholders. Attitudinal research studies carried out for VIA during 1983 disclosed that Canadians overwhelmingly back the passenger rail service and our plans to modernize it. And, many have "voted with their feet" by continuing to use our railway when all other modes of transport have been fighting to retain market share. Even when delays and crowded conditions at the 1983 Christmas peak were worsened by extremely bad weather, I believe a majority of our passengers had some appreciation of our difficulties. The passenger railway has a strong place in the hearts of Canadians and in their expectations for the future.

However, all of this support must not conceal the magnitude of the task that faces all of us at VIA. Modernizing a national passenger railway which had had no major investment for decades is costly, complex, and often involves long lead times. And will revenues justify the capital investment? Some relatively simple measures can be launched immediately but the big decisions will take years to come to reality. This relative inflexibility is not widely understood by an impatient public, which would like quicker action from VIA on modernization, nor even by some of the proponents of passenger rail.

A Large and Complex Mechanism--VIA is a large and complex mechanism, fraught with interacting problems of equipment, shared infrastructure and communications systems. When you try to run faster passenger trains in competition with longer, slower freight trains on the same, largely single track, it's hard to improve passenger service. Freight and passengers don't mix well! And track improvement work, necessary as it is, can slow passenger trains. All of these problems simply cannot be solved overnight. As they used to say: "You can't turn the Queen Mary around in her own length." So it is with turning VIA around. This will take a little longer if it is to be done well.

With these personal observations, let me report on some of VIA's achievements last year, on the road to the renaissance of passenger rail in our country.

New Image for Passenger Rail--VIA has adopted a new marketing posture that has begun to bring a new image to passenger rail travel. The whole corporation is being oriented to satisfying the needs of our customers. We are experimenting with forms of promotion new to VIA in serious attempts to lure people away from that most common form of transportation, the private automobile. Discounted fares have been tested and found to attract traffic, too. Our reliability--often adversely affected by our aging equipment--will begin to have greater credibility as a result of improved maintenance practices for both old and new equipment. The interim maintenance facility that VIA opened in Montreal last year has already demonstrated that fact. So has the government's decision to make a very considerable investment in a national network of four new VIA maintenance centres. This reflects the government's commitment--and VIA's--to continue to expand passenger rail efficiency and reliability. More reliable equipment will

lead to greater customer satisfaction, to increased ridership and so to increased revenue. It will help us meet the expectations of the Canadian public.

Commitment to Customers--VIA's commitment to improving customer satisfaction doesn't end with better equipment--in fact, you could say it begins with our employees. This is a central theme at VIA today. An extensive customer service training program is underway that will see all employees, including those in non-customer contact jobs, being exposed to customer service goals and objectives. The program began last fall with the so-called "front line project" in which every senior executive spent time on the "front line", working alongside baggage handlers, ticket examiners, red caps and stewards. Every senior executive, including myself, is also taking some part in a major training effort aimed at improving customer service. These programs are giving us grass roots insights and providing every employee with the tools necessary to offer better service. They will be repeated each year--with middle managers taking part in the front line effort. Employee reactions have been extremely encouraging and we feel very strongly that these programs will generate a renewed feeling of pride and involvement amongst employees throughout the organization.

We know that good service means much to our customers. We also know from the VIA attitudinal studies I mentioned earlier that Canadians, in general, strongly support VIA even though they may be impatient with present shortcomings in our service. In fact, they strongly favour an improved passenger rail system--and the considerable expenditure which is needed to reach an appropriate level of service to customers.

VIA has, of course, already embarked on a program to replace its aging equipment with modern, efficient and more comfortable trains. Delivery of the second order of 10 LRC locomotives and 50 cars has now begun. And VIA has started to develop a prototype train that would best meet the needs of VIA's light density routes in Eastern and Western Canada where shorter trains are required. New equipment for the transcontinental services could evolve from this work. A study of the transcontinental services, also underway, may indicate a need for new equipment if this service is to be modernized and improved and run more economically and efficiently. These two projects would thus logically lead to another major re-equipping of VIA's fleet, complementing the present investment in the LRC for the central corridor.

To enhance service to VIA customers, improvements to station facilities are also being put in place. It is a happy coincidence that many of these also involve restoring outstanding examples of our Canadian architectural heritage. This heritage is thus being preserved in modern use and the stations will once again represent a national presence across the land. Upgraded stations will both improve customer service and provide agreeable and productive environments for the railway personnel and other employees who work there.

Key Cost Problem--One of VIA's key cost problems has been that it inherited staffing patterns established decades ago. Faced with the specific mandate of improving efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the passenger rail business, one of VIA's key objectives is to rejuvenate labour practices to today's standards while at the same time improving working conditions and serving the public better. The fact that many of the people in passenger rail are employed by CN and CP makes this more complex to achieve. Still, they are critical to fulfilling our mandate.

About 61% of VIA's total expenses each year is paid to the two railways, CN and CP, over whose tracks our trains run, operated by their employees, guided by their signalling and other communications systems, with maintenance provided by their shops. During 1983, good progress was made by VIA in obtaining detailed billing information from the two railways. The result has been to lower rail charges to VIA. This is partly due to better management of VIA's fleet and partly to the more specific information available. Also, the results of joint productivity task forces with CN and CP have contributed to reducing our costs.

A final accomplishment of last year is one which perhaps holds the most far reaching possibilities for the future of passenger rail in Canada. This was the completion of a \$5 million, three-year study of high speed passenger rail in Canada. This feasibility study examined six options for VIA service in two high density corridors in Canada: Quebec-Windsor and Edmonton-Calgary. These options range from service levels VIA already plans to accomplish in its 1984-88 business plan to a very advanced technology system. The study report has been presented to the Federal Government, VIA's shareholder. The study indicates that the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto segment of the Quebec-Windsor Corridor operations of VIA could be brought into a surplus operating position. It could carry many more passengers, with far faster travel times and increased frequencies, through the use of high speed electric trains on tracks dedicated to the passenger service.

All of these measures can be characterized by a determination to manage this business with the level of competence that Canadians expect from us. However, in this drive to modernize and reach a more economic level of operation, VIA faces some paradoxes.

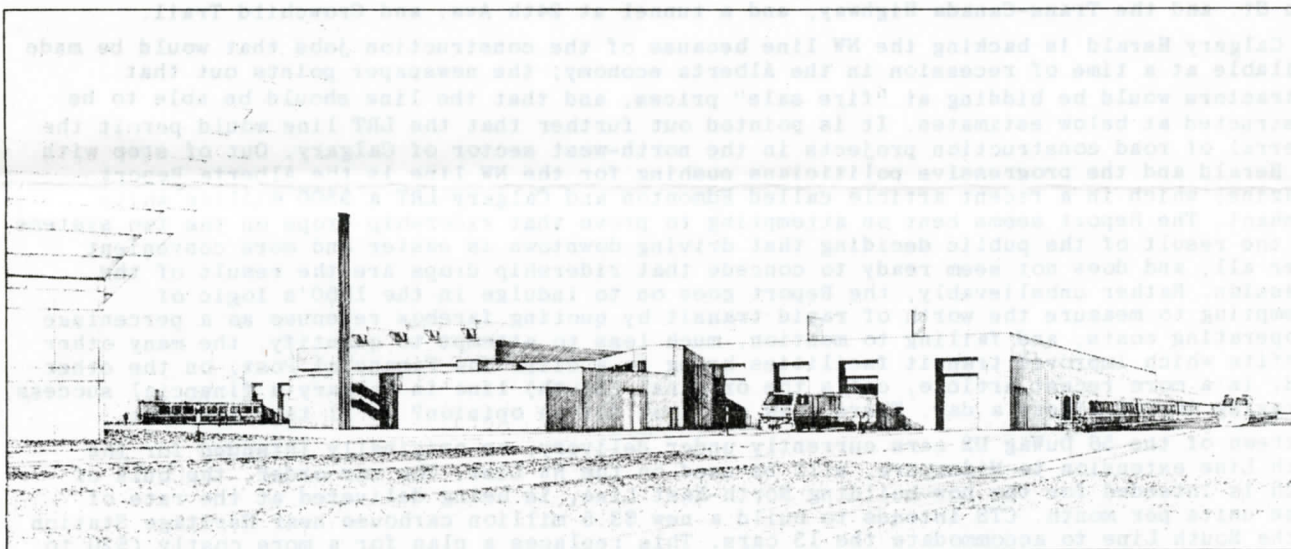
Profit Serves the National Interest--We are confronted by the dual imperatives of making a profit (or at least holding losses down to the minimum) and yet serving the national interest. The two are not necessarily always consistent. The concept of the "bottom line" has come to be part of the fabric of management at VIA. It is, of course, a familiar discipline of business. At the same time, we understand that we will continue to be required to provide passenger services that may never be profitable in the financial sense. But VIA is seeking, through its new, refined management information system, to make our cost accounting accurately reveal the true operating costs of all our routes. This will help us to manage better, either for a real profit or for the benefits of rendering a public service. It will also help the government to take a closer measure of those routes it requires to be served to meet national interest imperatives. This precise segmented accounting will remain, in my view, the best way for the government and Canadians to hold VIA's board of directors and management accountable for economy, efficiency and effectiveness, if not indeed for actual profits--under some conditions, on some routes.

Assessing VIA's Services--To give a realistic and meaningful picture of what Canada's passenger rail service actually costs, we already assess our services by type--corridor, transcontinental, intercity and remote. The character of each of these four service types is very diverse. Mixing them together presents a very distorted picture of both VIA's current performance and the future potential of passenger rail in this country. With the corridor services, the public has a choice of transportation options. Here, financial viability should be the critical test of VIA's performance in the long term. Based on present preliminary evidence, we believe a modernized corridor service can earn back the investment it will require as well as provide a key transportation facility for Canada--potentially serving 65 to 75% of Canadians. But we cannot abandon or neglect those other lower density services provided for national unity, social equity or tourism development reasons. We will work to meet the standards government sets for such services--at the lowest possible cost to the public. This is VIA's ongoing challenge: better, modern service at the least cost to the public purse, with a balance in service to all the regions of Canada.

From long decades of virtual inaction, VIA is now evolving slowly--but steadily and pragmatically--towards a more modern, more economic approach to updating a vital Canadian resource. The national passenger rail system can fit the promise and the needs of the twenty-first century. This task is difficult, complex and many-sided. There are no quick or easy solutions.

Keeping a Long Tradition--It will take time, money, effort and certainly will require sound, innovative management and dedicated employees. It can and must be done. We surely cannot afford to reject Canada's long tradition of railway excellence through either uncertainty or neglect. This, then, is the basic challenge for VIA and VIA's people--to match sound management and a firm bottom line orientation with the dictates of the national interest. In 1983, we moved closer to these goals. We will continue with the rejuvenation of Canada's passenger rail system in 1984. To me, it is an exciting, demanding and historic idea, both for VIA and for its employees as well as for the 25 million shareholders we all serve.

--forwarded by Bruce Cole



Artist's sketch of VIA Rail's new \$98.6 million Toronto (Mimico) Maintenance Centre, the steel-work for which is already largely complete. The design and construction contract is held by Cole, Sherman and Associates.

--Airline deregulation poses a greater threat to VIA Rail's transcontinental passenger trains than it does to service in the Quebec-Ontario corridor, says VIA President Pierre Franche. He observes that Amtrak has not suffered major setbacks despite several years of air deregulation in the U.S. But, VIA analysts are studying the possible impact that lower air fares could have on passenger trains between the Maritimes and Montreal and Toronto and the West Coast. Fares on long haul flights have been cut in the last year without serious erosion of ridership on transcontinentals, Mr. Franche said. "We've been successful but it's not helping our income picture". VIA will adjust service if needed between Quebec City and Windsor but "air fares have gotten about as low as they can go."

--Mike Lindsay

Miami MetroRail Opening--The south leg of Miami's new heavy rail transit system opened May 20. The 11-mile segment between downtown Miami and south-suburban Kendall was built primarily on an abandoned Florida East Coast Ry. right-of-way. The system opened with 40 cars (of 136 ordered). The 10-mile north leg to Hialeah should be completed late this year. When the system is complete, it is expected to carry 200,000 passengers each workday. More than 100,000 rode free on the opening Sunday during dedication ceremonies. The 40 cars on hand are sufficient to operate trains on the south leg at 12 to 15 minute headways; operation is initially 13 hours a day, five days a week; the fare is \$1.

--Mike Lindsay, also NARP News via Peter Oehm

CT CALGARY

WILL THE C-TRAIN GO NORTH-WEST?

The long debated North-West LRT line is facing a crisis: a decision to commence construction has been said to have been necessary by June 30, 1984 in order to provide the lead time necessary for a 1988 opening. The significance of the latter year, of course, is that the Winter Olympics are scheduled to be held at Calgary's McMahon Stadium that year, a facility which would be on the NW line. City transportation officials say that this third leg of the LRT system would be the most cost effective portion; they make this statement on the basis of the findings of a study ordered by Mayor Ralph Klein which was intended to prove to Provincial funding officials that the NW line should be constructed. After a meeting earlier this year with the Mayor of Sarajevo, Yugoslavia (site of the 1984 Winter Olympics), Mayor Klein is convinced that the NW is essential to handle traffic to the games.

While the line had originally been planned to extend from downtown to the west city limit, at a cost of \$257 million, a shorter "bargain basement" NW line project is currently proposed, which would take one of three possible forms, at costs as indicated: 1. Double track line to McMahon Stadium: \$82 million. 2. As above, with a single track extension to the University of Calgary: \$88 million. 3. Double track line to the University: \$100 million. The facility would be almost exactly three miles long with a University terminus, and almost exactly half of the six-mile extent of the NW line as originally projected.

A grant to fund engineering for the NW line was expected to come from the Province of Alberta in May. Premier Lougheed had said that the matter of Calgary LRT funding would soon be going before his Cabinet and caucus. Provincial Transportation Minister Marvin Moore has hinted that funding will become available and that an announcement will be made by the end of the year. However, engineering must be carried out and contracts awarded to permit the start of construction by March, 1985 to meet that 1988 commitment. Actually, there is an October 1987 deadline to be operational for shakedown tests. The largest items to be engineered consist of a bridge just east of the Louise Bridge on 10th St., N.W., a cut-and-cover tunnel section at 19th St. and the Trans-Canada Highway, and a tunnel at 24th Ave. and Crowchild Trail.

The Calgary Herald is backing the NW line because of the construction jobs that would be made available at a time of recession in the Alberta economy; the newspaper points out that contractors would be bidding at "fire sale" prices, and that the line should be able to be constructed at below estimates. It is pointed out further that the LRT line would permit the deferral of road construction projects in the north-west sector of Calgary. Out of step with the Herald and the progressive politicians pushing for the NW line is the Alberta Report magazine, which in a recent article called Edmonton and Calgary LRT a \$500 million white elephant. The Report seems bent on attempting to prove that ridership drops on the two systems are the result of the public deciding that driving downtown is easier and more convenient after all, and does not seem ready to concede that ridership drops are the result of the recession. Rather unbelievably, the Report goes on to indulge in the 1950's logic of attempting to measure the worth of rapid transit by quoting farebox revenues as a percentage of operating costs, and failing to mention, much less to attempt to quantify, the many other benefits which improved transit facilities bring to a city. The Financial Post, on the other hand, in a more recent article, calls the original (South) line in Calgary a financial success, averaging 40,000 riders a day. Where does one look for an opinion? We'll take the Post.

Thirteen of the 56 DuWag U2 cars currently under delivery, as originally intended for the South Line extension to Midnapore, will be used on the NW Line. The car order, the bulk of which is intended for the now-building North-East Line, is being delivered at the rate of three units per month. CTS intends to build a new \$3.5 million carhouse near Heritage Station on the South Line to accommodate the 13 cars. This replaces a plan for a more costly (\$20 to \$30 million) carhouse which had been planned for a location near McKnight Blvd. on the NE Line. These cars will be surplus to operating requirements pending opening of the NW line, but it is planned to rotate them in service with the remainder of the fleet.

North-East Line--Costs are coming down on the second C-Train route; originally set at \$258 million, the estimated cost dropped by \$49 million during 1983 and could ultimately go as low as \$210 to \$215 million. The recession has been in part responsible for these lowered costs, with contracts coming in lower than estimates, while certain cost saving measures have been initiated by the city.

Midnapore Extension--A report says that the 2.25 mile extension of the South Line from Anderson Road to Midnapore can be built for \$25 million, \$14 million less than past estimates, but advises against construction at this time as few new riders would be developed. The report says that bus operation now costs \$2 million per year in this area, while LRT operating costs would be \$5.7 million per annum. Even LRT enthusiast Mayor Ralph Klein is cool to the Midnapore extension at this time, and does not want it to get in the way of NW line funding. Midnapore and the outer three miles of the NW line thus appear destined to become post-1988 projects.

--Abstracted from press reports forwarded by our Alberta correspondent

--CN has added a 5th and 6th Toronto-Windsor train to handle automobile traffic. No. 425 leaves MacMillan Yard at 0700, changing crews at London around 1200 to 1220, and arrives Windsor at 1620 daily except Monday and Tuesday. This train handles only Windsor multilevel auto racks. Counterpart 424 leaves Windsor at 2100 and works Chatham, London, Brantford and Malport, arriving MacMillan Yard at 0620 daily except Sunday and Monday. CN now has freights 420 through 425 plus 10 VIA passenger trains and two N&W trains on the Glencoe-Windsor main line west of London.

--Tempo Jr.

Ontario Northland



Baseball Caps On Sale



The Public Affairs office has a quantity of adjustable cloth/mesh type caps for sale at \$6.00 (incl. p.s.t.)

These caps are yellow with a blue Ontario Northland crest with yellow lettering and are available at 510 Main Street East.

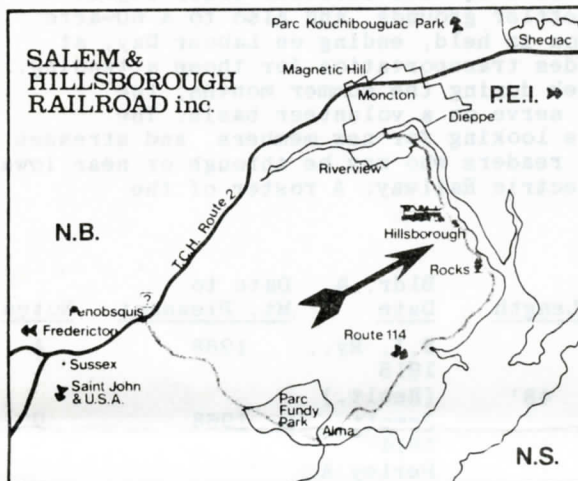
Written orders, accompanied by cheque or money order, should be directed to:

R.W. Brooks

Manager Tourism & Public Affairs

195 Regina Street

North Bay, Ontario



New Brunswick's Salem and Hillsborough tourist railroad had its grand opening on June 30, although some weekend trains ran during June. The line will operate daily during July and August with trains leaving Hillsborough Station (14 miles south of Moncton: see map) for a one hour round trip each day at 1100, 1300,

1445 and 1630. On Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays a fifth trip leaves at 1830. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays trains are diesel powered; on the other four days of the week they are hauled by steam. During September and October operation will be on weekends only. Fares are \$4.75 adult, \$4.00 senior citizen (with card), \$2.50 child (age 5-12), free for child under 5 years, \$15 family maximum. Group fares are available, depending on the number in the group and the timing of the visit. Fares are reduced to half price on rainy days. For further information and brochure, write to the Salem and Hillsborough R.R. Inc. at Box 70, Hillsborough, N.B. EOA 1X0.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear sir,

Living in Toronto's Thorncliffe Park, not far from CP Rail's Leaside Jct. station and yard, I have been accustomed to visit the station from time to time to watch trains and changes. Long before this pastime began, passenger train service had been reduced to Trains 381/383 inbound and Trains 380/382 outbound from/to Havelock, an aluminum/glass commuter shelter had been erected, and the station had been converted to the Village Station Restaurant.

Caravan-length and local freights continued to clatter by the junction/station/yard/restaurant, the latter a marvellous vantage point for train-watchers of all ages, resplendent in a totally railway oriented interior, and displaying remarkable artifacts or good reproductions thereof. Lunch or dinner at this restaurant was a pleasant occasional occasion, despite the nondescript food and the worse service.

A few weeks ago, a visit to the location revealed that the restaurant sign was gone, the caboose at the entrance had disappeared and the station and accessory dining cars, for which the restaurant was remarkable, had vanished. (Note: the station structure has been converted into offices by CP).

All, all had gone! I was astonished! Had there been no mention in the NEWSLETTER? No intimation of impending disaster? A survey of past issues was required immediately. Back to a November 1981 baseline, there had been (at least) 28 mentions of CP Rail stations, 62 CN stations and 16 "other" stations (TH&B, BofQ, NP&M, CanCent, BritRail, etc.). The most extensive coverage of an individual station "event" was given to the West Toronto station contretemps, which was also recorded and amplified by the Toronto press. There were a number of "one-line" mentions, also. The disappearance of CP's Leaside Station--one hesitates to say "destruction"--or Leaside Station Restaurant, if you prefer, was recorded in five lines in the Jan. 1984 (p.16) NEWSLETTER and four lines in the May 1984 (p.7) issue.

Mr. Editor, must we accept the situation where the disappearance of CP's Leaside Station/Village Station Restaurant is to be chronicled in only nine lines! And that after all the "to-do" which accompanied the destruction of CP's West Toronto Station? Is/was the Leaside Station of a lesser importance? Is no explanation to be published regarding the disposition of all of those wonderful railway artifacts or reproductions thereof with which the railway station/restaurant was embellished? Will the disappearance of this Leaside landmark be allowed to pass without some fitting obituary?

Having now thrown down the glove, let me make an "offer of services" to accomplish the

desired objective. If somebody would supply me with a few facts and (perhaps) some anecdotes, I would be glad to collaborate in the production of an article for the NEWSLETTER about the life and death of Leaside Station. Surely such an important regional railway event should not be allowed to pass unchronicled. Else, how will local railway clubs and station preservation societies provide an explanation to posterity for their insensibility and negligence?

Yours truly.

Sandy Worthen, 47 Thorncliffe Pk. Dr., Apt. 1103, Toronto, Ont. M4H 1J5. (416) 421-0842

(Ed. note: Yes, we plead guilty--Leaside Station, even though it dates only from 1946 (present structure) really deserves more. Who out there from among that big membership list can provide assistance to Mr. Worthen? Quite a few of you, it is to be hoped).

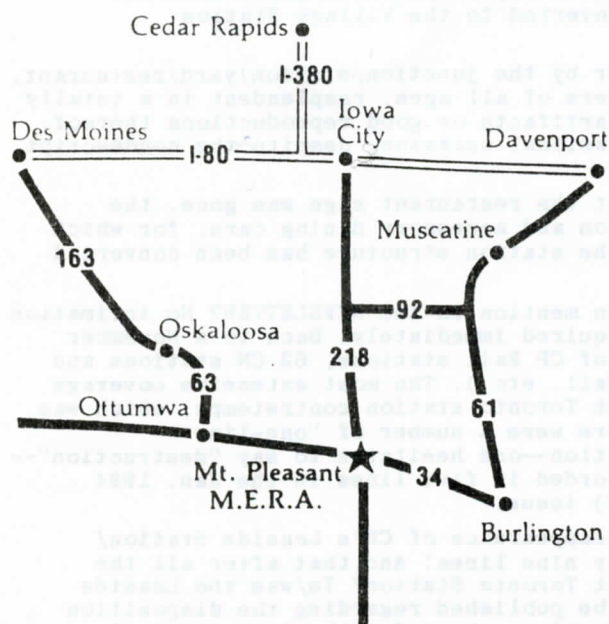


MORE ON THE MIDWEST ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION--This Association's museum line, operated at Mount Pleasant, Iowa by the Midwest Old Settlers and Threshers Association, consists of a 1 1/4 mile circular track adjacent to the Heritage Museum on the Old Settler grounds, and also to a 60-acre campground. A five-day annual reunion is held, ending on Labour Day, at which time the museum railway provides transportation for those attending. The railway operates five days a week during the summer months; the operating and maintenance crews all serve on a volunteer basis. The

Association (P.O. Box 93, Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641) is looking for new members, and stresses that experience is not necessary. For the assistance of readers who may be through or near Iowa, the accompanying map shows how to get to the Midwest Electric Railway. A roster of the Association's equipment is also presented herewith.

Midwest Electric Railway: Roster of Equipment

Car No.	Type	Original Owner	Seating Capy.	Length	Bldr. & Date	Date to Mt. Pleasant	Notes
9	DT DE Suburban, wood	Sou. Iowa Ry.	36		S.I. Ry., 1915	1968	A
320	DT DE Interurban, wood	Chicago, Aurora & Elgin R.R.	52	48'	(Reblt.) Jewett, 1914	1968	B
381	DT DE City, steel	Knoxville Lines	42		Perley A. Thomas, '30	1973	C
1718	Open Bench, "Narragansett"	Rio de Janiero, Brazil			Blt. in Brazil '11	c.1970	D
1779	"	"			"	1973	D
4476	PCC, MU	TTC	52	46'5 3/8"	St. Louis-CC&F (Fort William) '49	1982	E



Notes--A--Operated in passenger service between Mystic, Centerville and Albia., Iowa from 1915 to 1948; converted to work service 1948 and so used until 1965. Recently extensively renovated at Mount Pleasant.

B--A member of one of the last groups of wooden interurbans constructed in the U.S.; in service until the end of CA&E operations in 1957.

Purchased by Iowa Railway Historical Museum, 1962 and used at Centerville, Ia. until 1968. Has 80 MPH speed capability.

C--Purchased by Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Northern Ry. with two other similar cars, 1948, after Knoxville system abandonment, and operated between Waterloo and Cedar Falls until 1958. Donated to Midwest Old Threshers by City of Waterloo, 1971. Completely restored by Iowa Terminal R.R., Mason City, Ia., assisted by Iowa Ry. Historical Museum, Inc.

D--Purchased 1965 by the Association of Railway Museums as part of a group of 12 cars brought to the U.S.; 1718 and 1779 then purchased by Magee Transportation Museum, Bloomsburg, Pa. 1718 purchased 1970 by Old Threshers and restored by

Iowa Terminal R.R. shops; 1779 purchased later.

E--Made first run on Midwest Electric Ry. on July 23, 1983.

Salamanca Rail Museum



SALAMANCA RAIL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION--The Salamanca Rail Museum opened on June 17 in the former Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh station (built 1912) at the north end of Main St., Salamanca, N.Y. This is an appropriate city for a railroad museum as it was once the headquarters for the seven divisions of the Erie R.R. Equally appropriate is the choice of the distinctive BR&P depot with its fine construction and detailing, including its sandstone entry arches, interior red oak wainscoting and oak ceiling. The station is expected to be nominated for listing in the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, and will be the anchor for a downtown historic district being created by the City of Salamanca.

The sponsoring organization is the Salamanca Rail Museum Association, which was formed in 1980 and now numbers about 200 members. Restoration of the station (which saw its last passenger train in 1955) began in 1981, with city forces being employed for certain phases of the work. The Museum is intended to recreate an early 20th Century railroad station, with displays representative of both the railroad industry in general and local citizens who were railroaders. The SRMA was granted a Museum Charter by the State of New York in December, 1983. It continues to seek donations, and those giving \$1000 or more will be honoured on a special plaque to be displayed in the depot. In the meantime the SRMA consummated in 1983 an agreement with the New York and Lake Erie R.R. to operate excursion runs from Salamanca to Gowanda and Dayton, with the inaugural run having occurred on May 28 of that year. The group has acquired three pieces of rolling stock, including Conrail class X51C 51-foot boxcar 245070 (originally PRR, built 1960)(plus a full set of plans therefor) and two cabooses, one from the Chessie System and one from the N&W.

Membership in the SRMA is available at \$5.00 regular, \$2.50 senior citizen and \$100 life, and includes a quarterly newsletter, the "Junction Express". For membership or further information write to the Association at 170 Main St., Salamanca, N.Y. 14779.

--Information from William Fries, President, SRMA.

CN Discussions between CN Great Lakes Region Vice-President George Van de Water and Harold Gilbert, Ontario Deputy Minister of Transportation and Communications, have concluded with an agreement in principle whereby the Province will acquire more than 300 miles of abandoned branch line rights-of-way. All or parts of the following lines are to become Ontario Government property, to be used as communications corridors and/or recreational trails (hiking, skiing, etc.):

Subdivision	Mileage	Subdivision	Mileage	Subdivision	Mileage	Subdivision	Mileage
Beeton	7	Fergus	25	Forest	19	Haliburton	55
Kincardine	25	Marmora	79	Renfrew	90	Kearney Spur	6
Warton Spur	10						

The purchase price will be \$100 per acre or the assessed value of the land, whichever is the greater. Most of the bridges and structures on the lines are to be included in the purchase price, but rails and ties will be salvaged before transfer of ownership. Much as these uprailings are to be regretted and in certain cases deplored, "abandoned railfans" will have quite a bonanza in the form of old rights-of-way to explore if the Province's plan comes to fruition.

--Information from CN Great Lakes Region News

--GO Transit fares increased by 5% effective July 1. The two-part pricing formula changed from a fixed base of 40¢ plus 5.7¢ per kilometre to 42¢ plus 6¢ per kilometre. The 10-ride fare remains at 89.5% of the single fare, while the monthly pass remains at 77.5% of the single fare. Samples of the new fares are as follows:

Single Fare Between Toronto Union and	Existing Fare	Proposed Fare	Amt. of Increase
Oakville	\$2.75	\$2.90	.15
Clarkson	2.30	2.40	.10
Brampton	3.00	3.15	.15
Bramalea	2.70	2.85	.15
Richmond Hill	2.05	2.15	.10
Oshawa	3.70	3.85	.15

A year ago, revenues were covering 53% of operating costs and the forecast was that the ratio would remain unchanged throughout the year. However, the ratio climbed to over 58% due to a

higher than forecasted growth in passenger carryings as well as improved revenues from long term equipment rentals and special event carryings, combined with better than anticipated results from cost control measures. GO Transit Chairman Louis Parsons says: "It is obvious that GO has turned the corner. Careful management and continued strong support from the Provincial Government throughout the recession have put GO in a strong position to take advantage of the economic upturn. Our equipment fleet is in good shape with much of it having been renewed in the past half dozen years; we have improved our service and are ready to handle the influx of passengers brought to the system as the turnaround continues. Recent figures indicate that ridership growth has returned to the 6% range enjoyed prior to the recession and the trend is expected to continue. Initial results suggest that this summer's ridership to special events will grow significantly. GO has just signed two long term equipment rental contracts in the U.S. which will bring in significant revenues over the next three years. With the continuation of these trends and constant vigilance on spending, we are hopeful that even with a fare increase amounting to no more than the rate of inflation, the revenue/cost ratio will hit 60% this year. It now appears that attaining the 65% Government-mandated target is possible in the near future."

--GO Transit release



MOTIVE POWER *section*

POWER NOTES BY BRUCE CHAPMAN

CP--Retirements: 6502, 7012, 7013, 7046, 7048, 7056, 7087, 8577, 6584.

Transfers: 7040, 7104 from Moose Jaw, Sask. to Winnipeg, May 18.

Rebuildings: 4072 to 1302; 8633 to 1576; 8662 to 1577; 8634 to 1579; 8542 to 1578; 8679 to 1575; 8137 to 1246. The 1575 has been assigned to Parkdale Yard, Toronto.

CN--Retirements: 4122, 4126, 4249, 4312, 4322, 4326, 4242, 4265, 4321, 4333, 4341, 4404, 8041, 8068, 3710, 3712, 3729.

Rebuildings: S-13 305 has been rebuilt to MHT-410A 119, a hump trailing unit, at Moncton Shop. --Of 30 GP9 rebuilds scheduled for 1984, 15 will be heavyweights (257,000 lbs.) for Senneterre, Quebec, Class GR-418C; the balance are to be 248,000 lbs., Class GP418, for Calgary's Sarcree Yd. The renumberings are as follows:

Old No.	4100	4101	4102	4103	4104	4105	4106	4108	4109	4110	4111	4112	4115	4117
New No.	4360	4361	4362	4363	4364	4365	4366	4367	4368	4369	4370	4371	4372	4373

Old No.	4118	4119	4120	4121	4123	4124	4125	4127	4129	4130	4132	4133	4147	4150
New No.	4374	4375	4376	4377	4378	4379	4380	4381	4382	4383	4384	4385	4390	4391

Old No.	4152	4153	4154	4155	4156
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New No.	4392	4393	4394	4395	4396
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Other rebuilds, released recently from Pte. St. Charles Shops, Montreal, are: 4022, ex-4294; 4023, ex-4503; 4024, ex-4508; 4025, ex-4453; 4026, ex-4423; 4027, ex-4420; 4100, ex-4257; 4101, ex-4219.

--9104, ex-9154, and 9106, ex-9155, former A units, were outshopped as B's by Transcona.

Stored Serviceable--4590, 4595, 8050, 8191, 8214, 8166, 8165, 8179, 8229, 8232.

Stored Unserviceable--4590, 4595, 214, 1208, 1332, 3715, 7605.

Transfers--Sl3 8701 ex-8607 and 8702 ex-307 have been reassigned to Senneterre, Quebec from Moncton and Pte. St. Charles, respectively. Also on the move are: 1265, 1266, Saskatoon to Winnipeg; 7216, 7217, 7224, Winnipeg to Montreal; 1386, Edmonton to Pt. Mann, B.C.; 7158, Pt. Mann to Edmonton; 1359, Edmonton to Toronto; 1338, 1339, Montreal to Toronto; 4584, 4586, Senneterre to Toronto; 308, Montreal to Sarnia; 1066-1068, Calgary to Winnipeg; 1069, 1075, 1076 Calgary to Edmonton; 4267, 4283, 4285, 4299, The Pas to Calgary; 4300, 4301, 4302, 4304, Winnipeg to The Pas; 1900, 1903, Winnipeg to Thunder Bay; 1901, 1902, Montreal to Thunder Bay; 5146-5150, Edmonton to Prince George.

CV--Has acquired ex-BN GP9 1855 (nee NP 229) and numbered it 4929. The railway's original 4929 was a GP9 bought new and retired after an accident 11 years ago. The new 4929, unlike its predecessor, is set up to run short hood forward. (Branch Line)

Returned to Service on CN--4476, 4571.

Misc.--CP 6700 series switchers will no longer be rebuilt after this year, but will still receive classified repairs.

--SP S6 1327, lettered CCX1 (Chrome Chrankshaft) arrived in Calder Yard, Edmonton on Train 350 from the west on Apr. 27, en route to a consignee at Ft. Saskatchewan.

--WP SW9 602 has been sold to Farmer's Co-Op Fertilizer in Calgary.

--B&O 4819 was returned dead, in need of repairs, by CP on May 26.

--CP 6538 cleaned out cars on the Waltham Sub. from Wyman to Waltham on May 25, with abandonment of that portion taking place May 26. Track lifting was scheduled to commence May 29.

--The Tonawanda Island R.R., near Buffalo, has purchased a Canadian Locomotive Co. 50-ton centre cab diesel from Ontario Paper Co. of Thorold. The siderod-equipped locomotive was built in June, 1950 at Kingston, but now needs some repair work before seeing service on the TIRR.

--Empire State Express

Correction: Page 12, June 1984, third line of CP, rebuilding, 8611 to 8700 and 8607 to 8701, these are actually CNR yard units rebuilt.

--Bruce Chapman



by BRUCE COLE

to Los Angeles via Montreal, Washington and New Orleans

It's that time of year again--March School Break is coming, and where shall I take the kids this year? They want to go to a destination warmer than Churchill. We decide to go to Los Angeles; the route is different--we'll go via Montreal, Washington and New Orleans. The reservations were made mid-January with the Amtrak desk at VIA Rail. The reservation clerk wasn't sure of the layout of the Superliner cars, but this was looked after with some discussion. The kids (not kids anymore--10, 12 and 14), being well-travelled, especially by train, know what to bring to keep themselves amused. Before leaving, I get out the U.S.A. map and go over the whole route to acquaint them with the cities and areas we will be travelling. Sit back now and enjoy a most interesting trip to the West Coast.

It is Wednesday, March 7--our first day of travelling. We are at Union Station with all our gear. Union Station is probably the most architecturally impressive station I've ever seen, and it should be retained. Not too busy in the station today. Our bags are given to a Red Cap to be put in our car. Train 62 is leaving from Track One today. I was hoping it would be LRC equipment, but it isn't. Since we are in Deluxe Club, we board at 1030--everything at check-in goes smoothly. You get your boarding card and the luncheon menu; also, newspapers are available.

Once on board, we pick out four seats in the non-smoking area. When seated, our coats are taken and we are all asked if we would like tea or coffee. Train 62 today consists of the following equipment: Snack Car 2508, Club Richelieu coaches 5443 and 4887, Club 5742, baggage car 9556, B-unit 6632 and A-unit 6786.

I thought that it would be milder, seeing that it's March, but it's -10 degrees outside; there's lots of steam rising from the train. The kids are settled down now with their own books. We pull out of the station promptly at 1100. The Steward immediately comes around to collect our boarding cards and our meal selections. I still can't figure out why employees of VIA don't wear name badges--it's such a small item, but a good public relations move. Because of the cold weather, the equipment wasn't washed outside, so the windows are quite dirty.

Promptly at 1215 lunch was served--we all had the beef; from the kids' comments, they enjoyed it. We've just passed through Belleville and we're on time. Lots of snow in this area. After lunch, we walk through the cars; they're all in good condition (nice and bright), considering their age. This train is about 50% filled.

We're now arriving in Kingston on time at 1317. Only about six people get off and about 12 get on. The crew have been excellent--very attentive; I only hope it lasts until Los Angeles. Through Brockville, Cornwall--just rolling along on time; haven't passed too many freights today. When I see all the snow outside, I can't wait for spring to arrive to show life back along the rails.

It's SLOWNESS time--30 miles west of Montreal, we have come to a complete stop. Work is being done on one of the tracks, so all traffic is using just one track. We arrive in Montreal 10 minutes late at 1610. Top marks to the VIA crew on this run; it was a most enjoyable trip. All passenger trains going out of Windsor Station now (except the New York train) will be arriving and departing Central Station with the timetable change. Arrangements are made on arrival for our luggage to be put on the MONTREALER. We go for a walk; it's nice and cold in Montreal today.

Back into the station after supper; it is very busy. The OCEAN is leaving on the track beside the MONTREALER; there must be a couple of hundred people waiting to get on. We board the MONTREALER at 1850. Tonight, we have a GM unit, 200, baggage car 1231, sleepers 2887 and 2051, Dinette 28300, coaches 4704, 4722 and 4724. We're met by our Porter, who shows us to our accommodation. We have four roomettes in car 2887. We leave promptly at 1910; the Porter (a very friendly chap) comes around to make sure we are familiar with everything; he also lets us know the whereabouts of the meal service. In each roomette and bedroom or section, you get a timetable to follow your route, a Welcome Aboard card from the Porter, an Amtrak Express magazine, and a note to order coffee or tea in the morning. We are also given U.S. Immigration cards to fill out for our border crossing.

Several years ago, all equipment on this train (except the snack car) was converted from

steam to electric. Walking through these cars, they seem to be in reasonably good condition. Tonight's load is very light leaving Montreal--only about 25% filled. Before U.S. customs, we go for a snack. I must say, the crew can't do enough for you. There's a good selection of snacks from which to choose; you can pay in either U.S. or Canadian currency. Another item (VIA take note), all staff wear name badges and their uniforms are much better in style and appearance than on VIA. There is an announcement re U.S. Customs, so we head back to the sleeper.

We arrive at St. Albans for our check; for some reason, we're delayed 30 minutes. It's amazing--the kids all want to go to bed; so it's good night. I go for a nightcap and then turn in. Tonight, there's a quarter moon with lots of stars and snow; lying in bed and looking out into the countryside is most relaxing.

Good Thursday morning; it's 0600. We have electric power now and no snow, but it's cold out. Coming down through Connecticut into New York, we arrive on time at 0700. I knock on everyone's door to get up; we eat at 0745. Breakfast selections: Great American Omelet \$4.00, Pancakes and Sausages \$4.00, Sandwich Monsieur \$2.75, The Continental \$2.25, Hot and Dry Cereal \$2.00. The above come with juice, coffee/milk/cocoa. The portions are big, but they are served on plastic and cooked in the microwave.

The crew this morning is as friendly as ever. The sleepers are still only 20% occupied, but the coaches are full (they added one coach overnight). Back to the roomette and there is a newspaper waiting for me. The right-of-way from north of New York to just north of Washington is littered with more junk than you can imagine; send in the unemployed to clean it up; it's not a pleasant sight at all. Announcements are made before each station to advise passengers, and lots of thank you's are said for travelling Amtrak. I clock certain sections of this trip and find we are doing 90 MPH. There is also lots of passenger and freight traffic today. The sun has left us for clouds; they're expecting a snow storm in this area today--stay tuned. We arrive in Washington on time at 1046. Full marks to Amtrak, as the MONTREALER has been excellent in every way. It seems that they are always constructing at Washington's Union Station; well, they didn't let me down--more work is being done on the station. This station reminds me a lot of Toronto's Union Station.

In the Washington area, they now have a new subway system that runs like the BART system in San Francisco. It seems that they have this great system, but with a shortage of cars, so parts of the system are not open yet. Coming into Washington, Amtrak has a big yard, and today there is a good variety of equipment, including some Auto Train cars. Washington is a great tourist city, so it won't be too difficult to find things to do until we have to be back at the station for tonight's train. Guess what, folks--at about 1600, it starts to snow. If you want to see a city in total chaos, come to Washington in the snow.

We arrive back at the station at 1745. We get our bags from the lockers and give them to a Porter to put on board. The CRESCENT arrives in at 1805, five minutes late. At 1830, we board. We are given a friendly greeting from our Porter. On this segment to New Orleans, we also have four roomettes. The CRESCENT is long today: GM engines 257 and 327, baggage car 1175, baggage-dormitory 1624, sleeper 2430 (the one we're in), coaches 4642, 4638, 4630 and 4015, Diner 8513, Snack Car 3119, coaches 4603, 4001, 4719 and 4704, sleepers 2053 and 2994--17 cars, all converted from steam to electric.

We are travelling over the Southern to New Orleans. The Southern was one of the last U.S. carriers to turn over its passenger service to Amtrak. When the Southern was in the passenger train business, it had excellent service with sleepers that had showers.

We leave 15 minutes late at 1845. We immediately head for the diner for supper. They now give out reservations for meal sittings (it's about time). We are seated promptly. Fill in the boxes: I ordered a Canadian Club and ginger ale--they put in 7-Up; the ravioli that the kids ordered was supposed to be beef--it's cheese; I ordered the steak and asked for steak sauce--it's brought to me after I've eaten the steak; the baked potato arrived cold. After waiting 20 minutes to clear the table, they bring dessert. They have only two people working the dining car for 48 people (how stupid); the Service Director just stands around doing nothing. Considering how busy the servers were, they were pleasant and doing their best. The dinner cost \$32 and the portions were large.

Back to the sleeper and the kids settle down. Each roomette has a schedule, magazine and wake-up coffee time. Again, the Porter comes around to see if we need any help. I take a walk through the train; it's about 70% filled. Mardi Gras is on--that's why we have so many cars and people. This train has a P.A. system; they explain the meal and snack service.

Another thing I can't figure out is why they put the sleepers at the farthest point from the dining cars. The track is all welded rail--what a smooth ride. We've left the snow for rain. I go back to the lounge car for a nightcap and then to bed. Through Virginia, it's quite curvy, with some very interesting station designs: church, barn, warehouse--very different. For some reason, I get up at 0500; we are stopped at Greenville, South Carolina; they're fuelling the engines from two tank trucks.

Back to bed and up at 0630. Not a cloud in the sky; it's 20 degrees. One of Georgia's main industries is wood, and you pass a lot of mills. The area around Atlanta has lots of rolling hills. The closer we get to Atlanta, the more garbage is seen on the right-of-way. We arrive five minutes early. They are extending the subway system in Atlanta, with the new line running beside the railway tracks; it's due to open in early 1985. The Atlanta Station is very small; it's outside the downtown area, and is no larger than the old CP West Toronto Station. The train is so long that it has to stop twice down the platform. For so many people going to Mardi Gras, they take off one engine and seven cars.

It's breakfast time after Atlanta. We head down to the diner, which is now the last car. I made a reservation for breakfast the night before. When we arrive at the car, all but two tables still have not been cleared from the previous sitting. The waiter comes and hands out the forms, but doesn't change our tablecloth, which is covered with crumbs. So, I have to ask him to change it. The other waiter starts clearing the tables, but they are very disorganized; the Service Director is standing around doing nothing. Our breakfasts arrive--large, hot portions. The diner is now full--organized chaos. Breakfast selections: Bacon and Eggs \$4.25; Single Egg \$3.00; Buttermilk Pancakes with Bacon \$4.25. What will happen at lunch? Stay tuned.

The train is only about 40% filled after Atlanta. Travelling out of Atlanta, you go through Southern marshalling yards; lots of rolling stock. By looking at Southern equipment and their roadbed, you can tell that they take care to maintain their railroad. We start passing through lots of small towns, where the train goes up the main street with its horn going. It must be fun at night, with all the freight traffic. Lots of homes painted white and raised off the ground to avoid dampness. Still a good number of mills. This area to Birmingham is rolling hills, with lots of trees. You also see some very unusual houses from the train; I can't describe them, but I don't think you and I would want to live in them.

We have now gone onto Central Time. The kids are all doing their own thing in their roomettes. I have a map with me so I can follow the route. We arrive in Anniston, Alabama 20 minutes late. Going through these small towns, I have seen the local jails from the train--not too delightful a sight. When I think of Alabama and Mississippi, I go back 20 years when they were having all the racial problems.

The scenery this morning was excellent around the mills and small towns. After Birmingham, the route is relatively flat, with lots of wooded areas and cattle farms. I notice there is a plaque in our sleeper indicating the date when this car was put back in service (November 1980) after refurbishing at Amtrak's Oak Park, Illinois facilities, and when the car was built originally (1949).

It seems that all we do is eat--it's lunch time again, so off we go. I didn't bother to make a reservation, so we had to wait 30 minutes. Only half the car is being used to serve; the other half is a lounge area. You guessed it--when only half is being used, all three servers are working. Lunch selection: Beefburger \$3.75, Calzone Pocket Sandwich \$3.25, Grilled Cheese \$3.00, Shrimp Louie \$4.25, Mexican Combo Plate \$4.00; desserts--Apple Pie \$1.25, Brownie \$.75, Carrot Cake \$1.00, Cheesecake \$1.25, Ice Cream \$.75. The kids order beefburgers--guess what, they've run out; so they order grilled cheese. I have the shrimp, which is very good. We all order brownies and ice cream for dessert--guess what, no ice cream. Is this any way to run a meal service? At least they're friendly.

We pass the northbound CRESCENT at Tuscaloosa; it has seven cars. There are special roomettes on Amtrak trains for anyone in a wheel chair. South from Meridian, Mississippi you get lots of swamp and water. Parts of Mississippi have been declared disaster areas in the last few days, due to the heavy rainfall; you can tell by the water sitting in the fields. Today is sunny and about 45 degrees. It's afternoon snack time, so two of the kids go down to get drinks and chips--guess what, no chips left. Also, there is no water left in this car to use the toilets and sinks; I guess they don't refill the cars after New York.

The highlight of the trip comes when we travel over the six-mile trestle over Lake Ponchartrain at about 30 MPH. After this, the line travels inside a flood-control dyke for another 10 miles. Getting to the station in New Orleans, you do lots of switching; finally, the train backs in. The Amtrak station shares its premises with Greyhound Bus Lines. We arrive 20 minutes late. There are no Red Caps to help with the bags, but they have lots of carts down the platform. The station is well maintained; four trains use the station daily, with six trains every other day. We get a taxi and head off to the hotel for showers. We take a tour of New Orleans on Saturday morning. The French Quarter is not for kids--strip places, female impersonators, and winos sleeping in the streets. We take a horse and buggy ride, which is enjoyable.

We are back at the station at 1330 for our 1415 departure on the SUNSET to Los Angeles. It is all Superliner service. The CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, which goes to Chicago, is on the next track for its 1530 departure. Its equipment today consists of coaches 4624, 4634, 4628 and 4014, dome car 9400, lounge 28012, sleeper 2435, baggage 1230 and GM engine 256. There is a washer in New Orleans, so all equipment is cleaned before departure. Also, there is a considerable amount of Southern passenger equipment that still looks in good condition (still with Southern markings). I usually find that you can walk around the track area in U.S. stations without interference; in doing so in New Orleans, I couldn't believe the amount of garbage under the cars.

Today's equipment on the SUNSET is GM engines 704 and 714, baggage car 1133, coach-dorm 39920, coach-baggage 31001, sleeper 32040, Dining Car 38035, coaches 34050 and 39964. They let us board at 1330. The Conductor upon check-in explains the workings in the bedrooms. We have two Deluxe Bedrooms. The Porter shows us the bedrooms and tells us he will be back to explain everything. The bedrooms are a good size; they come with a shower in the toilet--you better push the right button or you'll wind up getting a shower. The cleaning of the bedrooms is not very good; I find a fork and spoon on the counter, carpets are dirty, and there are finger marks by the switches.

All space in the sleeper is gone on this train, and the coaches are about 50% filled. Finally, the diner is beside the sleeping car. We leave at 1415 (on time) travelling to Los Angeles on Southern Pacific trackage. On leaving New Orleans, a highlight is travelling over the Mississippi River Bridge, which is three miles long with parts shared by auto traffic. Once you reach the pinnacle, what a view you get of New Orleans! Then through the Southern Pacific yards and we are on our way. There was no magazine, timetable or wake-up card in the bedroom.

We are asked about dinner, so we take the 1800 sitting. The Porter comes around to make sure we are familiar with everything. The view you get from the Superliners is a lot different from a regular coach seat; the kids felt that they were on top of the world.

The diner is split in two (food and lounge) on this portion of the trip. The Porter unlocks the door between the two bedrooms for us. North from New Orleans, you travel along the water for a distance. We pass many tugs going up and down the river with three and four barges; also, a number of plants that make oil and gas rigs. When you see the size of these rigs out of the water, they're overwhelming. The nature of the area is very marshy. Natural gas is also a big industry in this part of the country, according to the number of plants we pass. Something I haven't seen for years on the SP--they still have wig wags at a number of level crossings. Also, the rail is welded on this line. It has really turned black outside--time will tell if we get rain. At New Iberia, we get a Cub group on for the trip of 20 miles to Lafayette. Gasoline in most places ranges from 90¢ to \$1.00 U.S. per gallon for Regular, and 95¢ to \$1.05 for Unleaded.

It's dinner time for a change; off we go to the diner. I want a Canadian Club and ginger ale before my meal--no rye on board. We all order dinner; no change from Thursday night's menu. The service is very good; they have three servers tonight. The food comes from downstairs in little elevators. If you are not already aware, all food service on Amtrak trains is served on plastic service for throwaway convenience. Your cutlery is still silverware. Dinner is good tonight with no problems. I must say that all the crew members on this train have been excellent--they try to make your trip pleasant. P.A. announcements are made for sights and stations. All along this portion, the gas industries must employ thousands of workers. We arrive in Houston 30 minutes early. The station is no larger than the old CP Leaside Station; only six passenger trains a week use this station. Coming into Houston, you go through the SP marshalling yards, which are huge. The kids are all asleep, so I am off to bed.

Good Sunday morning. I am awakened by one of the kids in the washroom; he has pressed the shower button and doesn't know how to turn the water off. Anyhow, we all think it's pretty funny--you have to push the toilet button to stop the water. I look at my watch and it's 0700. I open up the curtains and the change of scenery is unbelievable; we are riding the flat lands of Texas--just dry waste land. You can tell that not much rain has fallen, as everything is so dry. The kids are looking for cactus from the train and they see plenty.

We get ready for breakfast. One major problem in these bedrooms is that when the lower bed is down (it's wider than the top bed), you have a problem washing at the sink; I had to sit on the edge of the bed to shave. The Porter brings us orange juice and the morning newspaper. We head off for breakfast. You won't believe this--it took 70 minutes from start to finish; one of the car Porters was helping out and the Service Director was nowhere to be found. The food was cold. After breakfast, it's back to our bedrooms for more R and R.

It has become quite foggy. Our speed across the desert has been around 50 MPH. I don't see how anything can live out here, but life does exist. At San Antonio, during the wee hours of the morning, we received cars off the EAGLE from Chicago: coaches 34070 and 34037, Lounge Car 33009 and sleeper 32033. The Conductor lets me know that the train is running at 80% capacity. I have never seen so many mothers travelling with young children. There are not too many stops across this portion of the state. Next stop is Sanderson, arriving on time at 0950. Not much here except for the SP. There is still a water tower standing from steam days. The fog has lifted now, and we see some small hills. I can just imagine what it was like in steam days, when you were travelling this part of the country with the temperature at 100 degrees. One thing about Amtrak trains--they have the right-of-way over freights; we have already passed 16 freights in both directions. Each train is about 100 cars.

Lunch time--no problems with our lunch today, except no more chocolate ice cream. I'm sure, with the lounge car open, a lot of people are having light snacks. It is sunny and hot at 72 degrees. We arrive at El Paso, Texas on time. We have a one-hour stop. El Paso is the midway point for SP; they have huge facilities here--I counted over 70 engines. Also, the Sperry Rail Service car 138 is in the yards. The station in El Paso is of Mexican design, 80 years old, in excellent condition and well maintained. Every 15 minutes, the bells in the steeple ring. The facilities are also used by El Paso Transit to store its buses. Since there are no stores in the area of the station, we get a taxi and go to a variety store to load up. Since the kids want to see the Mexican border, we drive down and show it to them, and then back to the train in plenty of time. It's nice to have warm, sunny weather. The Santa Fe also has its midway point yards here in El Paso, and National Railways of Mexico has a line into El Paso.

At Deming, New Mexico, there is a coaling tower that still stands across the tracks.

Dinner time--reservations at 1800, so off we go. The diner is full. Guess what--tonight they have no apple pie or chicken. What about control? I don't think Amtrak has any! Other than that, no problems with dinner. The beds are down when we return, but I had to ask for fresh towels, and upon checking the sheets, they are from the previous night. Also, the garbage bin under the sink was not emptied in New Orleans, so it is full. The same goes for the second bedroom. Also, the sinks and mirrors are not cleaned throughout the day. After Tuscon, we all go to bed.

We are up at 0530 on Monday morning. We pass through SP's marshalling yards on our way into Los Angeles. I am amazed how fast we travel into Los Angeles, with all the level crossings right into the city. The Porter is running around trying to get all the beds made up before we arrive at the station, but not this trip. We arrive 15 minutes early at 0700. There are signs on the platform "Free Baggage Carts and Red Cap Service". There was only one Red Cap available and the baggage carts are 50¢. The Los Angeles station is very rustic, with 14 tracks. Very clean, but it has an empty feeling to it.

Cont'd after 'Events'



UCRS and other events and activities

by Ed Campbell

--Do not forget to take a free ride on the new Scarborough RT line during July and early August weekends. Trains will leave Kennedy Station every Saturday and Sunday from July 8 through August 12 between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. Signs at Kennedy Station will direct you to the RT platform.

Kennedy Station is the easterly terminus of the Bloor-Danforth Subway.

--Also, do not forget the July and August Toronto meetings of the UCRS. They will be held in Room L8 (basement level) of North Toronto Collegiate Institute at 70 Roehampton Ave. (the first street north of Eglinton, running east from Yonge). It is a short walk from Eglinton Station on the Yonge Subway; enter the school by way of the west side doorway--a side-walk leads directly to it from Roehampton Ave. The room is air conditioned. Still further, do not forget that the July meeting is yours to show 35mm slides and 8mm or Super Eight edited movies. All who can should bring 20 to 25 slides in 2"x2" mounts. Why not make up a set right away? Please check with George Meek at (416) 532-5617 if you plan to show movies so that you can be sure that a suitable projector is available. The program will be only as successful as you make it.

--John Laraway has been looking for members who will assist him at the CN 6213 sales booth during the period of the Canadian National Exhibition. He has not had much response thus far, so please contact him at once if you can help, at (416) 425-3162. The Society would appreciate your help.

Friday, July 20--Regular UCRS Toronto meeting at North Toronto Collegiate at 8 P.M. See note above.

Friday, July 27--Regular UCRS Hamilton Chapter meeting at the CN Hamilton Station at 8 P.M., featuring members' slides. If you make up a set to show in Toronto on July 20, why not take them to Hamilton for the 27th? There are two GO trains to Hamilton, one leaving Toronto Union at 1719 (express to Oakville) and one at 1803 (local all the way). Frequently cab cars lead on these trains, giving you a chance to see the right-of-way.

Saturday, July 28/Sunday July 29--The Bluewater Michigan Chapter of the NRHS will operate twin steam powered excursions from Detroit to Montpelier, Ohio and Fort Wayne. Power will be N&W J class 4-8-4 611. Air-conditioned and open window coaches, baggage combine for recording, two open air viewing cars and first class lounge cars. Departs Detroit at 8 A.M., returns 8 P.M. Adult coach tickets \$59, child \$47. First class tickets \$98. For information brochure write FORT WAYNE FLYER, Bluewater Michigan Chapter, NRHS, P.O. Box 296R, Royal Oak, Mi. 48068 or phone (6-9 P.M.) 313-541-5935.

Saturday, Aug. 11--The Buffalo Chapter, in conjunction with the Lake Shore Chapter, NRHS, will sponsor a N&W 611-hauled excursion train from Erie, Pa. to Buffalo and return. The Buffalo Chapter will operate a chartered bus from Buffalo to enable passengers to pick up the train at Erie, and then back from Erie following the train's return. A/C and open window cars, souvenir and food service cars. Bus connection leaves 6 A.M., returns to Buffalo 8:30 P.M. Bus-train package \$48 (train only \$35). For brochure write Buffalo Chapter, NRHS, Steam Excursion, P.O. Box 298, Getzville, N.Y. 14068, or phone (after 6 P.M.) (716) 895-2183 or 836-0872.

Friday, Aug. 17--Regular UCRS Toronto meeting at North Toronto Collegiate as noted above. 16mm movies will be shown. If you have any such movies that you would like to show, please contact George Meek at (416) 532-5617.

Friday, Aug. 24--The Hamilton Chapter will continue with another summer meeting; members' 35mm slides will be featured. All UCRS members are always welcome at Hamilton--meeting starts at 8 P.M. in the CN Hamilton Station.

Well, it's over after four nights; 4,194 miles travelled by train on six different lines. It was enjoyable to meet so many different people with a variety of personalities. The crews in most cases were friendly, but the food quality, especially on the SUNSET, was terrible. I have come to the conclusion that VIA food is much superior; VIA at least still uses flatware with most of their meals. The cleanliness could be improved upon on Amtrak trains. The idea of a P.A. system on the Amtrak trains is excellent; you are not left in the dark on delays and stations; also, they tell you about any important sights along the way. The ride in the Superliner cars was comfortable; because you are higher, you feel a little more sway. Considering the small space on the train, we all had an enjoyable time. One thing about this trip--you really see the back yards of America. Stay tuned for next year's trip!



GOODIES

As part of its "Year of Celebration" activities, the TTC has produced a set of 23 postcards, depicting historic and present-day transit scenes around Toronto, that are being offered for sale. Eight of the cards are black and white views from the TTC historical photo collection, spanning the 1880's to the 1930's--from horsecars to streamliners. The balance are in full colour, showing various TTC vehicles at familiar locations around town.

The cards may be purchased at Garfield Card Shops in Warden, Islington and St. Clair subway stations and at Commerce Court and First Canadian Place. Other outlets will be added in the future. Sets of 23 cards are also available by mail for \$5.35 (Ontario sales tax included) plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. Send your order, with a cheque or money order payable to the TTC, to: Postcards, Marketing and Community Relations Dept., TTC, 1900 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario M4S 1Z2.

And, here's another Sesquicentennial souvenir offer. Copies of the historical car cards on display in TTC vehicles this year may be bought, in sets of six, for \$10 plus 7% tax. Due to their size, the car cards cannot be mailed, but must be picked up and paid for in person at the Marketing and Community Relations Advertising Office, 5th floor, 1900 Yonge St., Toronto, during office hours.



RAIL PURCHASES--CN will spend \$105 million for new rail to be used in its 1984-85 track laying program. The largest order goes to the Provincially-owned Sydney (N.S.) Steel Corp., for 125,000 tons of standard carbon and high silicon steel rail, worth almost \$80 million. Also placed is a \$20 million order for 33,000 tons of standard carbon steel rail with Algoma

Steel Corp. Ltd. CN will test a new premium head hardened rail being developed by Algoma, a type of rail not heretofore available in Canada. The railway says that the 1983-84 and 1984-85 track programs have been substantially increased because of an improved revenue picture following abolition of the Crow's Nest Pass grain rates.

--GO Transit has leased 53 single level cars to Boston's Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority for three years, and 14 to the Maryland Department of Transportation for 18 months, to operate out of Baltimore behind 'F' units.

--Bob Johns

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