

The Ferrophiliac Column *August 1990*

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First a few additions to recent items. David Savage pointed out a fact about the CNOR Solina Station, see [Newsletter](#) June 1990. Dave mentioned, that the present station at Solina is the second structure at this site. This short lived CNOR line had the second generation station at Solina, thanks to a train derailment that demolished the first.

After, several months of wondering about the old TH&B Station in Brantford, Ontario, **ACTION!** As has been mentioned in several recent [Newsletters](#), this station which had burned several years ago, was up for redevelopment as a restaurant. Reconstruction at this site had been dormant for several months, but now the concrete workers and masons have moved in to build a new building around the station remnants. We will keep you posted on the opening date.

I have tried to convince several people that I wrote about another CNOR station, but apparently I didn't. This station on the former CNOR Orono Subdivision is located at 18 Midburn Avenue, Toronto. Midburn Avenue is a few blocks north of Danforth Avenue, east of Dawes Road in east central Toronto. This station is now used as a house and is not far south of the old CNOR right-of-way. It has been renovated, but once you look at it, the station features stand out. Apparently there was an article on this station in the Toronto Real Estate News a few years ago. However, since I don't have that article, a couple of questions. Is this station on its original site? Also what was its official name? The records that I have show only one station between Todmorden and Kennedy Road, and that was Harris Siding, but its mileage would put it nearer to Kennedy Road.

Mike McIlwaine of Leamington has sent a ton of notes on various Canadian stations that I will be drawing on from time to time. Besides the useful technical data about stations, Mike has such interesting tidbits as that the original floor in the Kitchener (formerly Berlin) station had a pattern of Swastikas incorporated in the floor design. One question Mike has thrown out relates to a rumour about two former TH&B stations. Can anyone shed any light on the scuttle butt that the old TH&B Vinemount and Stoney Creek stations were moved to the Dundas and put together as a house? This structure, if it exists is apparently within view of CN's Dundas Subdivision!

Dave Stalford sent some data from [The Era-Banner](#) of Newmarket, concerning a hotel fire on June 30, 1990. The hotel was the King George Hotel which had been built by James Forsyth in 1845. In its early days it was called the Forsyth House and then later the Pipher House. This building is of interest to rail enthusiasts since it housed Newmarket's first Toronto & York Radial Railway station.

The first official St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad train rolled through the Québec communities of Saint-Bruno and Montarville, on December 27, 1848. Under an agreement dated April 12, 1853 and effective July 1, 1853, this rail line became part of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada. In the nearly 142 years since that first train, the tracks through what is now Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville have carried some million plus trains on their travels to and from Saint-Hyacinthe and points south (Portland Maine, etc.) and to the east (Lévis, Quebec City, the Gaspé and points in the Maritimes). Grand Trunk's 1907 records shows that a 1st class wood frame station 20 feet by 44 feet had been constructed at Montarville in 1902. This station with its octagon turret still stands as the "CN St. Bruno" and as Doug Brown writes, it look like it has a new lease on life. The 1907

inventory, shows that 9/10 mile east was the Saint Bruno station, a 3rd class single storey wood frame structure, 13 feet by 26 feet. Maybe Doug will fill in a little history on the merger of these communities and their stations.

However, on to the news from Doug Brown about the present happenings and the proposed future of this fine example of a Canadian railway station architecture. June 29, 1990 is the date of importance to the residents of Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville and to rail station enthusiasts, as this was the day the Town took ownership of this station. Also see the October, 1987 and February 1989 [Newsletter](#). The future of this storey and half structure with its multi-paned windows around the turret and in the upper sashes of the dormer windows had been in grave doubt over the last few months as politicians and bureaucrats sparred over it. This station, like most had seen the decline of rail passengers, helped along by the demise of the south shore rail commuters on September 9, 1988. The death knell sounded louder early this year with the VIA Rail cuts and an application to the National Transportation Agency by CN for permission to dispose of this 88 year old structure. This authority was granted in April, 1990.

The residents of Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville renewed their efforts of the last several years to petition for the preservation of this historical building. This time agreement was reached to relocate this building some 100 metres along the tracks to become a community centre in a new park. The park, a two hectare undertaking is to be located on the grounds of the former Mount Bruno Floral Inc.

The renovations are expected to cost \$200,000 and will include placing the station on a concrete foundation and restoration of the station structure to its former glory.

Thanks to Doug Brown for this information and all the best to Mayor Dulude, the Town and all of the supporters of this substantial undertaking.

Well, Mel Andrews has answered the question about the origin of the name of Jerseyville, Ontario. I was wrong on both my guesses. Mel sent a 1982 article from the Hamilton [Spectator](#) interviewing a Mr. Hartley Van Sickle about Jerseyville. Mr. Van Sickle stated that Jerseyville was first settled by United Empire Loyalists from New Jersey in the early 1790s. They first named their community Jersey Settlement and then later Jerseyville after the state they had left behind.

This article also contained a couple of extra items of interest to rail fans. First, Mr. Van Sickle pointed out that the cream and green TH&B station in Jerseyville had 7 trains a day passing it. He also pointed out that in 1912 as a 14 year old boy, he started delivering milk to the Brantford & Hamilton Electric Railway at their station near Alberton, Ontario.

Dave Stalford also sent a few comments from the [Newmarket/Aurora News](#) about the CN station, Aurora, Ontario. The Aurora station has been basically vacant and going to "rack & ruin" for the last few years since VIA ceased using it.

The Aurora station, like stations everywhere was built near the tracks for the convenience of transferring people to and from trains. So these locations next to busy mainlines cause many to see big liabilities when discussing alternate uses for these stations. Also many are reluctant to take on the restoration and maintenance of these structures since it is not cheap, however, it appears that these problems may be overcome in Aurora as the news media states that GO Transit has expressed an interest in acquiring this station. Negotiations are being held

between CN, GO Transit and Aurora and indications are that the station would be renovated with the costs being shared by the three parties and perhaps Ontario Heritage. So I am certain that Dave will keep us posted on the developments around this century old station.

Planning a trip to Kingston, Ontario? Well Kingston's Pump House Steam Museum now has 50 square metres of model railway layout. Klaus Jecchel, a life long modeller has donated about 75% of his layout to the Museum. The layout has about 400 metres of track in its reproduction of 20th century railroading from France, Italy, Switzerland as well as from across Canada. The Kicking Horse Pass along with CP Rail's Spiral Tunnels are part of the layout. The display will also show trains departing three major stations – Toronto, Chicago and Cologne, Germany. While I haven't been there, it sounds like a display worth seeing.

TH&B and LE&N on CN Rail – Impossible, you say – No, effective August 2, 1990 CN Rail added a TH&B and a LE&N spur to its system. These names, normally associated by rail enthusiasts with trackage in the Brantford, Ontario area, have been assigned by CN Rail to trackage taken over from CP Rail. See background details in the September 1988 Newsletter.

CN has taken over parts of these two former CP Rail controlled railways. The former CP (TH&B) Waterford Subdivision from Mile 61.00 (limit of abandonment of the TH&B in the east end of Brantford) to Mile 63.7 Waterford Subdivision (limit of CP's abandonment in the City's west end) has been turned over to CN. CN will also take over the former LE&N Simcoe Subdivision between Mile 19.4 (limit of CP's abandonment in the north end of Brantford) and Mile 21.4 (point of connection with the TH&B Waterford Subdivision) near the old TH&B station at Market Street. CN will use the same mile posts as CP Rail (this may confuse many, but is to avoid a considerable amount of internal paper work), but will call these tracks by their former owners names, i.e., TH&B and LE&N Spurs.

CN's Burford Spur has been extended southward along a new alignment from mile 1.01 to mile 1.29 (this area is south of Colborne Street). At mile 1.29, the Burford Spur joins the former TH&B trackage opposite Mile 62.32 TH&B Spur. The former CP (TH&B) track being kept will extend eastward 1.32 miles to the end of steel and westward across the Grand River to connect back to the CN Burford Spur in West Brantford, through the old interchange tracks (Mile 63.7 TH&B Spur & Mile 2.7 Burford Spur). CN has abandoned most of its Burford Spur between the two connections to the CP trackage.

The former LE&N Simcoe Subdivision Mile 21.4 connects to the TH&B Spur at mile 62.70 TH&B Spur. CN is keeping 2 miles of this former LE&N track which as indicated is being called the LE&N Spur.

While on the subject of take overs, CN is also in the process of buying 6 miles of the Lake Erie and Detroit River Railway. Of course this line today is the CSXT's Number 1 Subdivision that at one time extended from Walkerville (Windsor) to St. Thomas, Ontario. CN has signed an agreement to purchase the section from Mile 2 to Mile 8 (Mile 0 is Walkerville). CN wants this line to provide more direct service to the Chrysler plant on Grand Marais Road from CN's Caso Subdivision (former Canada Southern main line). A later part of this project will see the construction of a new connection between the CSXT line and CN's Caso Subdivision at the old Pelton diamond and interlocker which will be removed.

I am aware that there are quite a few of these types

of exchanges going on across the country, so how about drop us a few details of any conveyances in your area.

CN's July/August, 1990 Keeping Track carried an article about a history book on the Northern Alberta Railway. The book is, Ribbons of Steel: The Story of the Northern Alberta Railway by Ena Schneider. Now in its second printing, the book is published by Detselig Enterprises Limited, PO Box G 399, Calgary, Alberta T3A 2G3. The cost of the book is \$18.95 softcover, or \$27.95 for hardcover plus postage.

Comments in Don McQueen and Chris Martin's Rolling Stock and OCS Equipment Column, February, 1990, Newsletter about some of the 70 year old CN OCS water cars arriving from the west for scrapping has sparked some additional comments from Jack Knowles on the subject. Jack writes that, "OCS water cars were a necessary part of steam operation in the alkali water areas. Such tank cars were used as locomotive auxiliary tenders on minor branch lines where satisfactory water was not available. The propensity of alkali water to foam makes it unsuitable for use untreated in steam locomotives. The CN auxiliary tenders could be seen on their own storage track right at a roundhouse when not in use. They featured a small headlight similar to those often mounted on the rear wall of regular steam locomotive tenders." Jack goes on to state, "that I am not sure how CP usually handled the alkali water problem, although I recall seeing CP prairie branch line steam locomotives with two regular tenders."

Anyway Jack closes with the question, "Perhaps some with detailed knowledge could enlarge on the subjects of auxiliary tenders and water treatment, including the coconut-sized balls of chemical which were dropped into tender water compartments?" So hopefully some of our western fans can enlighten us easterners.

A couple of weeks ago, two crew members of a train made the news in Southern Ontario over an alcohol matter. While the news media spent considerable effort in covering this incident, I understand it was not the first under the recent regulatory change that has extended the Canadian Criminal Code to rail operations. I guess the news people haven't been following the changes that have been taking place in railway regulations over the last two years.

The Railways, unlike truckers, have been self policing for years, with alcohol and drug offenses being handled by internal discipline under Rule 'G' of the Uniform Code of Operating Rules. I would consider it a safe bet that more railway people have been dismissed under Rule 'G' than trucking companies have under self discipline programs.

However, as part of the government's plan to make the railways' even safer with the introduction of their Railway Safety Act, they added several Acts to those already governing the railways. So on July 1, 1990, the Criminal Act was extended to cover railway operations.

So, I guess to the news media has long ago decided that similar events on the highways doesn't get much attention, so why bother to cover them. The railway case, however was probably good for ratings since most people were not aware of the change in the law and had never heard such a story before. I won't totally fault the news media at this point, but it will be interesting to see how they handle themselves in the future.

Speaking of news items, I expect the name Châteauguay, Québec needs no explanation, regardless of where you live. Doug Brown has forwarded a news article about some of the side effects that are of interest to rail enthusiasts, the special south shore commuter trains. Transports Québec has

rented two train sets from the STCUM and are operating them from Saint-Isidore via CN's Massena Subdivision (nee Montréal and Champlain Junction Railway) to Brossard and CN's Rouses Point Subdivision (nee Champlain and St. Lawrence Railway) through CN Castle Gardens to CN Cannon (junction with CN's Saint-Hyacinthe Subdivision). From CN Cannon the trains traverse the Saint-Hyacinthe Subdivision (nee St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway) to Saint-Lambert and across the Victoria Bridge to Montréal and CN's Central Station.

The first day, Monday July, 23, 1990 saw 550 south shore commuters spent 65 minutes on the 25 mile train trip from Saint-Isidore to Montréal. The trains leave Saint-Isidore at 6:20 and 7:10 a.m. and leave Montréal at 4:45 and 5:30 p.m. These trains do not pick up any passengers between the two terminal stations. Commuters did travel free for at least the first few days as Transports Québec didn't have their public transportation permit. Plans and announcements were for a \$2.00 one way fare. Many of the commuters, while they considered the present service as very slow, are in favour of the service being retained and extra stations added.

It is interesting to see the blue and white cab units and trains of the STCUM on the south shore. The second rail fan spin off of the Châteauguay incident has been the rerouting of the normal 6 to 8 trains that normally use CP's track and bridge to access Saint-Luc Yard on MontrJal Island have been diverted from Delson via this same CN route into Montréal. However, my spies tell me that it definitely appears that CN is only letting these foreign trains across its tracks at night.

Well until next month, happy rail fanning, keep the material coming and cheers.