

## **The Ferrophiliac Column** *February 1991* **Conducted by Just A. Ferronut**

February! Time – please slow down and let me catch up. As winter whirls by, so many things seem to be happening, where does one start. Back in the August and October 1990 Columns we wrote of the former TH&B Vinemount and Stoney Creek stations. Doug Thwaites had mentioned these stations now located on the First Concession in West Flamborough were set on top of a hill well back from the road. I had made a hurried trip along this road last fall to try to confirm that they still existed, no luck. Well a few days ago while riding VIA towards Chatham, I spotted these stations, but not where stupid me was expecting. They are located on a pronounced hillock on the east side of the concession road only a few hundred feet north of CN's Dundas Subdivision. The site overlooks the Dundas Valley to the east but the main view of the tracks is to the west.

At Bothwell, Ontario, through the snow curtain our train was kicking up, there was an old station on the north side of the main drag. I believe it said over the operators bay "Bothwell Boy Scouts". While I couldn't find this one in the mountains of station data Michael McIlwaine sent me last year, perhaps he or someone in the area can fill us in on a few of the details.

Speaking of blowing snow and how its effects different areas and people. On my return from my Christmas trip a few weeks ago, I was opening and reading my mail, while watching Toronto grind to a halt with a few of inches of snow. Well if you believe in coincidence, here is one for you.

Amongst my mail that had arrived was a story Keith Pratt forwarded about the problems of a Rev. George A. Christie of Alberton travelling around western P.E.I. in winter.

One Thursday morning during the winter of 1923 or 1924, a north east snow storm started in the early morning. It was snowing quite heavily when the train arrived at Bloomfield Station, and Rev. Christie was able to get a ride out to the nearby village of Campbellton. The Reverend visited Campbellton that day and was able to get a ride back to Bloomfield Station to catch the freight to Alberton, but the storm increased in fury and the train which normally left Summerside at 1201 hours was cancelled.

Pastor Christie stayed at the Pratt's house in Bloomfield thinking he could get home on the night train, but it was also cancelled and did not even leave Charlottetown.

During the night the wind swung back around to the north west and the temperatures dropped. The gale increased and the snow drifted all day Friday, calming down Friday night. Not a train moved west of Summerside. Saturday morning dawned bright and clear, Mr. Christie borrowed Keith Pratt's snowshoes and started for Alberton across the fields to the Foy Road on the way to Alberton.

The railroad line was opened early Sunday morning through to Tignish. Late Saturday night the Friday passenger train went up behind the snow fighting train, returning from Tignish on Sunday evening. Later during Sunday night, the Saturday train went through Bloomfield Station to Tignish, returning Monday morning. Now the coincidence, while Mr. Pratt's letter was on its way to me I was skimming through old newspapers and what did I clip out to save but an article dated Sunday, March 25, 1923. The P.E.I.R., parts of which have been blocked for up to a month is now open except for a few miles. Maybe not the same storm but interesting and we in 1991 worry about a few inches of the white stuff!

Ken Andrews, noting our recent material on the

Atherley Narrows area near Orillia, has brought to my attention that the February 1991 Railfan & Railroad has an article on the swing bridge at Atherley. This same issue also has an article on Washago Junction.