

The Ferrophiliac Column

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November 1989

Well another month, and while the fall colours and days are great, the chilly breezes makes my rheumatism remind this old body of the coming winter, but I feel great because the mail keeps coming. So keep me happy and send more of those little titbits.

First, let's clean up some of the odds and ends about restaurants that are of interest to rail enthusiasts. My question about Montreal brought swift responses. Doug Brown and Julian Bernard both reminded me that the "Once Upon a Time" restaurant in Montréal is the former "Montréal and Southern Counties Railway" depot at 600 rue d'Youville. Sorry fans, I didn't connect the description in the guide with this station. The guide defines it as serving Canadian food and Métro access as being Victoria Square. After Julian and Doug jogged my memory, I guess hamburgers could be considered Canadian food and the nearest MJtro is Victoria Square. *Anyway, Doug writes:* "Yes, this restaurant has a rich railway background because the building (with very few external changes) is the former Montréal terminus of the beloved 'Montréal and Southern Counties Railway.' In fact the logo used in their neon outdoor sign uses the former M&SC logo. I have never had a meal in this restaurant, but I am told they serve excellent hamburgers that are certainly not the McDonald's ??? variety." Julian tells me that he has taken the family to this restaurant and not only are the hamburgers good but that they have many great M&SC photos, etc. on the premises.

While on the subject of food establishments for the rail enthusiast a few more to add:

Ken Andrews, tells me that he and his dog Sport went to Stratford, Ontario, where they stopped at MacDonald's on Highway # 7, on the eastern outskirts of this once major rail community. He reports this establishment has numerous photographs of local rail activities from bygone days. Ken also reminded me of the many Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto photos that adorn the walls of Art's Restaurant and Lounge on St. Paul Street, just southeast of Carlisle Street in St. Catharines, Ontario.

Mike Lindsay's favourite restaurant on his sojourns to Brockville, Ontario is Jon's Restaurant on the west side of Perth Street, diagonally across from the VIA Station. This restaurant not only has numerous rail photos, etc., but it is also a good spot to watch trains on CN's Kingston Subdivision while enjoying a meal.

The last restaurant for this month is Crossing Restaurant at the corner of Capron and Market Streets in Paris, Ontario. This restaurant is located north of CN's Dundas Subdivision (originally the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railroad) and south of CN's Dumfries Spur (originally part of the Great Western Railroad's Hamilton to London line). As both Rick Mannen and Ralph Beaumont point out, this restaurant not only has railway photos and memorabilia, but as Ralph says there is a half a dozen tables from which could takes photos of trains on CN's mainline. This restaurant, reminds me that the grape vine tells that we are to get an article on "The Joys of Railfanning with the Family" from one of our Kitchener members about a outing to Paris. Well, by the time you visit all these spots you may not want to step on the scales.

However, we need to hear about some of the converted stations, and other eating establishments of interest to our gang in both the East and West. Remember, a lot of our readers are also avid travellers.

On a totally different subject, Neil McCarten, has wetted my appetite on the myriad of rail lines that criss-crossed the general triangle between Belleville and Whitby on the south and the Peterborough area on the north. We will be after you in the next few months to help answer some of Neil's questions as well as share some of your knowledge of this area and its fascinating railroads.

Since it has taken me several months to cover one of the several subdivisions that a Rusty Railfan and I visited last summer, so I think I should at least cover another subdivision, this month. So, lets see what we spotted in our meandering along the former CN Haliburton Subdivision.

From Coboconk we wandered over to Lindsay to start a journey along the former Victoria Railway from this town to Haliburton. I must thank John Rendall of Newcastle, for many of the details about this line from his paper "Victoria Railway Tour" that he put out several years ago.

Lindsay now displays CN SW8 # 7160 along with two box cars and a caboose on Victoria Avenue, on what is left of the former Haliburton Subdivision. This line is only one of the several rail lines that this once busy rail centre sported. *As John Rendall says:* "Originally, when the line was completed and opened for traffic, trains approaching Lindsay from Haliburton or Kinmount would meet the old Midland Railway at the north end of William Street then travel over Midland rails down Lindsay Street to the shared station at King Street near St. Paul Street. In 1877 with the construction of the Whitby, Port Perry and Lindsay Railway, an extension from Port Perry to Lindsay, the Victoria Railway was granted permission to construct on a right-of-way from Pottinger Street to a new station at Melbourne Street." Several people have commented that the long gone engine house in Lindsay always reminded them of English engine houses.

Our next stop was Fenelon Falls, where the 1882 built board & batten station has had the insul brick siding removed and restored to nearer its earlier splendour. This station located on the east side of Highway 121 south of the Trent-Severn Waterway now serves as a Tourist Information Centre. As you cross the above waterway you can still see the rail bridge with its open swing span to the west of the Highway.

Some 33 miles from Lindsay is the village of Kinmount straddling the Burnt River. The station here built by Grand Trunk in 1904 has been restored to represent that era and is now used for Senior Citizens' activities. This village was once a very busy lumber centre with several mills. Two and one half miles further north a short side trip down the Howland Junction Road reveals the remnants of the junction where the Irondale, Bancroft and Ottawa Railway joined the Victoria Railway. Here at Howland or (Kinmount Junction) still stands the tiny replacement station that Grand Trunk erected following the burning of the original station. The original turntable pit with its decaying timber walls is still here to be photographed. In the junction between the two lines stands a house. Based on my documentation, it would appear to be the section dwelling constructed here in 1889. Can anyone shed any extra light on this theory.

There are several small hamlets along this line such as Gelert, Lochlin and Goulds, north of Howland, and Cameron, Fells and Burnt River to the south that once were bustling communities.

The surprise on this line to anyone who doesn't know

it, is Donald. Grand Trunk called this station Dysats in its 1907 inventory books. While now nearly a ghost town, it was once a large company town, with company stores, company houses, and the gigantic Donald (later Standard) Chemical plant that consumed thousands of cords of wood. These crumbling concrete structures are both eerie and beautiful amongst the ever growing forest. The Donald Chemical plant in its heyday just before World War I produced charcoal, acetate and wood alcohol. Its hard today to grasp just how large and active this centre would have been at that time.

The northern end of the Victoria Railway was Haliburton. While it was planned and surveys were even started to extend this line to Mattawa, but it never got beyond Haliburton. The Haliburton station still stands in a restored condition, now serving as an art gallery and craft shop. Next to it is a CN buggy converted into a Tourist Information Centre. A few hundred feet to the south is CNR 2-8-0 2616 complete with its orange driving rod. As shown in last month's Newsletter, this Alco built engine is getting a major cosmetic restoration this year. It was noted that rusted sections of the tender were being cut out and new sections welded in prior to sandblasting and painting. Haliburton once had a wooden water tower, single stall engine house, car shops, storage sheds and a small turntable. This rail line was constructed for the area's timber, so as that scene changed so changed the railways.

From Haliburton, we went on for a quick look at parts of the old Irondale, Maynooth and Coe Hill Subdivisions, so I will share our findings with you soon.