

## MONTREAL MINI CONVENTION SET FOR AUGUST HOLIDAY WEEKEND



a quarterly publication of the "Canadian Association of Railway Modellers"



## THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY MODELLERS

Founded October 15, 2003  
Founding Members: John Johnston, Peter Moffett,  
David King, Lex Parker

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**FRONT COVER UPPER PHOTO BY Ian McIntosh: Union Station, Toronto, at Our Home and Miniature Land Exhibit in Mississauga.**

**FRONT COVER LOWER PHOTO BY Ian McIntosh: Two Blast Furnaces at the Hamilton Steel Mill exhibit at Our Home and Miniature Land Exhibit in Mississauga.**



## observation platform john johnston: editor

### CARM CHAIR HOSPITALIZED

CARM Chair Gerald Harper went into hospital in mid January for a surgical procedure. Complications that arose from the surgery have left him hospitalized for almost 3 months. He contacted me as we are going to print to let me know that he expects to be home in the next several days. We all wish him the best and a speedy recovery.

### LAYOUT TOUR ETIQUETTE

I must admit to being a little distressed at having to address this topic. During the recent mini-meet in conjunction with the Copetown Train Show, 7 layout owners agreed to open their homes to CARM Members. One of those layout owners, CARM Member Craig Webb in addition to displaying his layout had set out a number of books for sale that outlined the history of Aberfoyle and the Aberfoyle Junction Model Railroad Club of which Craig is a member. A sign was posted indicating the books were for sale for \$10. One of the books went missing during the tour with no payment being made. It is possible that someone misunderstood and thought the books were being given away for free, however, there was no signage to that effect.

I was also one of the layout owners on that tour and have had my own experience where during the HOMES Club Layout Tour several years ago a model I had out on display on top of the layout went missing, presumably stolen.

I have seen instances where layout owners will put out something like old magazines that they want to get rid of during layout tours and invite people to take them if they are interested. However, even in that circumstance, you should check with the layout owner to insure that is correct, and at a minimum, you should thank them for their generosity. Under no circumstance should you remove something from someone's home without having checked with them.

On behalf of CARM I apologized to Craig and made him whole by paying him the \$10 for the book. Bottom line, this should not have happened. We are fortunate in this hobby that so many are willing to share with others, but incidents like those described above don't help in promoting that openness.

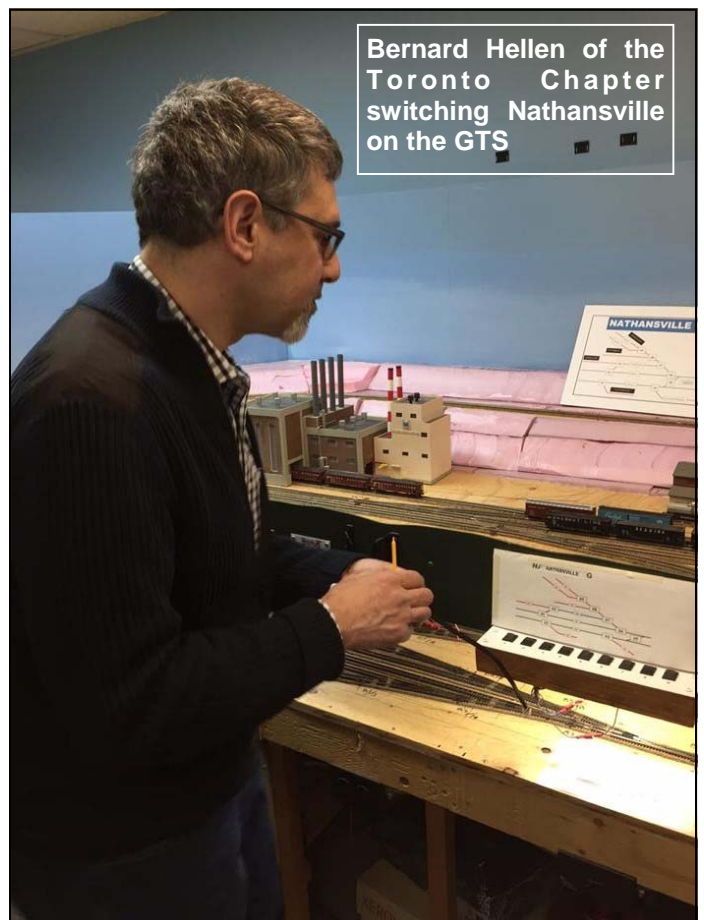
### OPERATIONS ON THE GRAND TRUNK SOUTHERN

My experiments with operations is continuing. In the last issue I described the three options I was exploring. Car Cards, Tab on Car, and JMRI Switchlists.

I painted up Car Tabs and installed them on a number of cars. I ran them on the layout for a week or so, and yes, they would be a simple and effective method of car forwarding, however, I couldn't get past the appearance. Scrap that idea. Two left.

As part of the Clinic I did for the Golden Horseshoe Chapter, I had invited participants to a future operating session on the Grand Trunk Southern. I held the first of these with members of the Toronto Chapter (**see photos by Bernard Hellen**). We used the Car Cards and I sought there feed back on ease of use and fun. I had also installed some shelves for the cards using an idea I had found on the Internet to use J Trim from siding as the shelves. One of the first things we discovered is that we are all getting older and the writing on the Car Cards which is very small is difficult to read. We also discovered that sorting up to 25 cards in your hands is not easy. Even though I had invested in the cards and the boxes, my enthusiasm for car cards was diminishing.

That brought me to my third option which was JMRI Switchlists. I downloaded the manual from the JMRI website and spent a couple of evenings reading through it and developing a series of questions on how to implement the type of operation that I foresaw for the GTS. I then contacted Ron Tuff of the HOMES Club since they have been using the system for several years and he is using it on his own layout. He was most helpful in answering my questions and we identified a number of areas in which JMRI just couldn't do what I was asking of it.



I considered changing how I wanted the layout to operate but as I examined the operation further, I was able to conclude that cars moved in a fairly predictable manner. I mapped out the car movement for my largest industry, the paper mill and even though cars went through as many as 4 trains, it was predictable. I am now looking at creating my own Excel switchlists based on this predictability. It has the added bonus of taking into account that when my grandchildren visit, there are only 3 of us and they don't necessarily operate the trains in the order the timetable calls for.

What has been really exciting in this process is that even though I have set up operations on a number of large layouts and thought I had a really good grasp of all of the concepts, I am learning new things and understanding operations in greater depth.

### COPETOWN MINI MEET AND LAYOUT TOUR

Approximately 25 Members took advantage of the Layout Tour, Clinics, and Slide Night. Feedback was positive. That being said, this will be a one time event, the locally based HOMES Club runs a Hamilton Layout Tour and we do not want to infringe on their franchise which is a fund raiser for the Club. My club group is considering hosting a Prototype Modellers Meet in conjunction with next years Copetown Show so stay tuned.

On the following pages are photographs of the various layouts that were open on the tour. My thanks go out to

Ron Tuff, Steve Tuff, David King, Rick Davis, Barry Kelly, and Craig Webb who joined yours truly in opening up their layouts for visitors.

**JOHN JOHNSTON: EDITOR**

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# Photos from Copetown Mini Meet & Layout Tour

Photos by Ian McIntosh

Photo Below: Members listening intently to clinician at Copetown.

Photos right and bottom: Craig Webb's layout





Photos Top:  
David Kings  
layout

Photos Centre  
and Bottom:  
Rick Davis`  
layout

Steve Tuff's layout



Ron Tuff's layout: John Johnston photo





## ***The Opening Doors Tour***

**2016 CARM  
Mini Convention**

**Montreal, Quebec  
July 29<sup>th</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>**

The Opening Doors Tour will be a mini convention featuring Layout Tours and a “behind the scenes” guided tour of Exporail. No clinics are planned but there will be a Meet and Greet Barbecue on Friday evening and plans are underway for a banquet and Annual General Meeting. More details will be provided in the Summer Issue of the Canadian as well as on the website.

### **LODGING**

Arrangements have been made for accommodations at Laird Hall on the Macdonald Campus of McGill University. Lodging will be approximately \$35 per person per night. Meals will be on your own with the exception of the Meet and Greet and possible Banquet. The Campus is located in Ste. Anne de Bellevue on the western tip of Montreal Island.

### **EXPORAIL**

Exporail is Canada’s foremost railway museum and they are on board with giving a detailed behind the scenes tour to participants on the Saturday. You will get into areas that are not available to the general public.

**FRIDAY July 29<sup>th</sup> and MONDAY, August 1<sup>st</sup>**

Planning is still underway to have layouts open along the 401 for members travelling to the convention on Friday and returning on Monday. We will be providing additional information in June.

### **LAYOUT TOURS**

Montreal Live Steamers 7” & 5 “ gauges

HO Scale: Sorel, St Hyacinthe & St Laurence Railway

HO Scale: Vermont & Essex

HO Scale: Canada Central

HO Scale: British Model Railroad Club of Montreal

HO Scale: West Island Modular Railway Club

O Scale and HO Scale: JAC Hobby

### **RAILFANNING**

Lots of opportunity in the Montreal area.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME  
BOTH CARM MEMBERS  
AND GUESTS**



## NATIONAL CAPITAL CHAPTER

On Tuesday April 5, the National Capital Region lost one of its members. Mike Hind, treasurer and organizer of the Trains and Tulips Convention in Ottawa, passed away in hospital after a long battle with cancer. Mike was much respected in the area and very involved in many model rail organizations. He will be much missed by all.

In spite of this loss, the National Capital Chapter embarked on an excursion to Brockville Ontario on Saturday April 9 to visit two layouts. There were several guests on the excursion, most notably from the Montreal area, and we are hoping that these guests will see the value in joining CARM and the chapter.

Due to the size of the group, we split into two groups. One group consisting of Rich Stewart of Brockville and Ian Macleod, David Eaves, Pierre Legault, Newell Decker, Denis Duhamel and J-P Cadieux of Montreal went to Alex Thum's in West Brockville. They saw a fully finished and operational layout, freelanced but based on CN and CP equipment in the late 70's. Alex uses Shipt for traffic management and a unique Schedule based "clock", built from a PowerPoint presentation. While there were trains to be run, the time was spent discussing and explaining the system.

The other group consisting of Paul Anderson, Grant Bruner, Garry Comber, Ian Frost, Jeff Hill, Peter Jackson, Jens Steer and guest went to James VanBlitterswyk's layout in Lyn. James loosely models the west coast in the Rockies. Under construction is a container seaport. All the switches are hand laid and James even has a full size switchstand that controls one of the layout switches (a really neat idea). The era is modern and the scenery



**Photo Above: Jeff Hill photo: A unit train on James VanBlitterswyk's layout.**  
**Photo Below Left: Jeff Hill photo: Jen's Stehr admires the mountain scenery and Bridge on James' layout.**



is around 75% finished.

We broke for a very nice lunch in Downtown Brockville, within sight of the Brockville Railway Tunnel. After this lunch, we had a brief chapter meeting where the new executive were elected. Bruce Leckie was elected chair and Ian Frost was elected Treasurer. Plans for future excursions were revealed.

After lunch, the groups swapped venues and enjoyed the second layout.

The weather cooperated quite well and everyone enjoyed the day.



**Photo Above Left:** Bruce Leckie photo: Garry Comber photographs the layout while Grant Bruner and Peter Jackson discuss operations and Paul Anderson looks over the yard on Alex Thum's layout.

**Photo Above Right:** Bruce Leckie photo: Kingston yard on Alex's layout. This is the heart of Alex's system and requires two operators to function efficiently.

**Photo Left:** Bruce Leckie photo: Lunch at Buds on the Bay, Brockville. From left to right: Denis Duhamel, Rich Stewart, Peter Jackson, Jeff Hill, Garry Comber, Paul Anderson, James VanBlitterswyk, J.P. Cadieux, and Newell Decker.

## Golden Horseshoe Chapter Notice of Meeting

The next GHC meeting will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion, 280 King Street West, Dundas, ON, on Saturday April 30th.

This will be our annual General Meeting and election of Officers will take place. If you are interested in holding office as Chair of the GHC or Secretary/Treasurer, please submit your name to Tom Allan.

Tony will do a hands on clinic on making trees from florist wire and sisal. Contact Tom for information on tools and supplies.

We have lined up some great layouts. Come out and visit Bryant Barbour's HO Scale layout at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting starts at 12 pm. Admission \$2. Guests welcome. Refreshments: coffee, water, and homemade cookies from Tom's wife.

For information: contact Tom at [tom.allan@bell.net](mailto:tom.allan@bell.net)

## London and District Model Railway Layout Tour Saturday, April 23, 2016 10 am to 5 pm

Tour Pass Booklets are \$5 per family and can be bought at the following locations:

Broughdale Hobby, 1444 Glenora Dr., London

LMR, 69 Holborn Ave., London

Railway City Hobbies, 9 Hiawatha St., St. Thomas

Otter Valley Railway, 53546 James Line, RR#6 Aylmer

Elgin County Railway Museum, 225 Wellington St, St. Thomas (extra charge to tour museum)

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CARM London and Area Chapter  
Western Ontario Division, NFR, NMRA**

# REPAIRING A GMD1 A POSSIBLE MODEL SCENE

TEXT AND IMAGES  
BY TED RAFUSE



This was the stage setting on Friday morning, January 9, 2015. CN's GMD1 #1437 rests in place the morning after her appearance in the Cobourg's modest CN rail yard. Rumour amongst railfans was that she had been dropped off earlier in need of a major repair, the change of the traction motors in her truck frames. She did not appear to be in need of assistance in this serene image.

Upon my return following lunch the cavalry had arrived. A Mantis 3000 crane, along with several attendant trucks of various configuration, had arrived from west of Toronto. The crane had manoeuvred itself near the locomotive while several men knelt trackside near the truck assembly beneath the cab end of the disabled unit.



Repair scenes on model rail layouts are seldom depicted. But as the axiom affirms, somewhere there is a precedent for almost anything. This pictorial article of a real change of traction wheels may provide you with inspiration to apply a similar problem/solution to your layout.

While driving through the VIA parking lot in Cobourg, Ontario, as I often do to discover if anything new is occurring or simply to watch a train roll by I observed a GMD1, alone and unattended. I stopped to take some photographs and went home. Several e-mails later the local scuttlebutt suggested the locomotive was in need of new traction sets and was awaiting the arrival of rescue equipment and personnel. I monitored the scene for the rest of the day. Next morning I attended the scene until sometime before noon. I left for lunch and returned about two in the afternoon. It was on a cold, intermittent sun and cloud Friday, prior to my return from lunch on January 9, 2015 that the rescue platoon of men and machinery appeared on the scene.

The rest of the story is best told in picture and caption format.



Despite 1437's woes, the mainline continues to operate. Occupying track 1, of 3 mainline tracks through Cobourg station, West bound locomotives 2136 and 2291 glide past the station and the mini-drama at 43 mph on track 1. Some one thousand yards to the west the locomotives will pass through a switch set transferring them to track 1 as the mainline diminishes from 3 tracks to 2.



The cables are attached to the lifting holes at the top of the steps and under strict supervision the unit is about to be lifted off its truck to allow access to the wheel sets.



**PHOTO ABOVE:** The cables taught and the pulleys functioning, the cab of 1437 is raised so that the trucks release their wheel sets. The end set is pushed away and the traction set is manhandled out from underneath. Due to a difference in height between the passing track and the yard track it appears as though the wheel sets have derailed. That is not the case however.

**PHOTO BELOW:** The damaged traction wheel set on the ground, the new one is being swung over to be set on the track in front of 1437. The cab end will then be raised again and the traction wheel set moved underneath the cab.





With the cab raised the repair crew are about to shove the traction wheel set beneath the locomotive and position it such that when the cab is lowered the journals will slide over the wheel axles.



Before the final few inches that the cab is lowered many eyes make certain that all is aligned for a perfect mating. There is no error wanted.



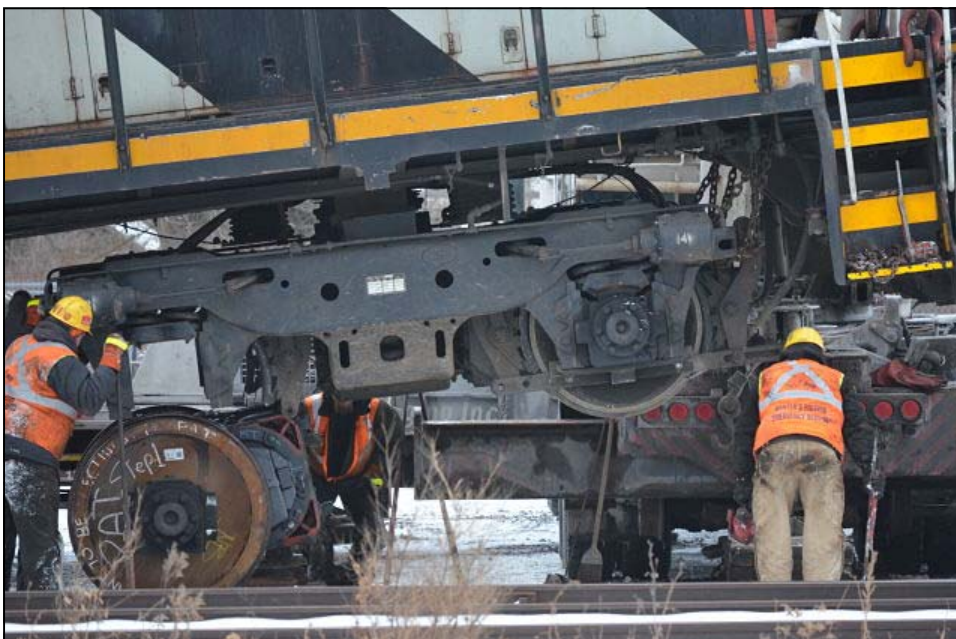
With the cab end traction unit replaced attention focused on the front end of the unit where a similar exchange is about to occur.



To the right of the individual closest to the camera is the damaged traction unit removed from underneath the front end. Chained to the boom is the new traction unit about to be lowered onto the track for eventual location under the unit.



Going up!! The front end is raised to allow the new traction unit to be shoved beneath the locomotive truck. Of note in this image is the formidable crane bracing and two large pistons for raising and lowering the boom and the pulley and hook arrangements.



Just prior to this image being snapped, westbound VIA diesel 6417 led a passenger train at 78 mph through the station corridor on VIA track 1. AS dusk approached this image reveals the new traction unit beneath the elevated locomotive and truck aligned to accept the locomotive being lowered onto the new wheel set. Moments later the repairs were completed, the flatbed trucks with the wheel sets departed the yard, the crane was restored to its moving position and it too departed the yard along with its attendant flat bed trucks with counter weights for the crane. The repairs consumed about four and one half hours of on site effort. When the locomotive left the yard is unknown to the author as it was not there the following morning.

# OUR HOME AND MINIATURE LAND

TEXT BY JOHN JOHNSTON: PHOTOS BY IAN MCINTOSH

Our Home & Miniature Land is a commercial model railroad exhibit that is presently taking shape in Mississauga, Ontario. It is the vision of Jean-Louis Brenninkmeijer. Our Home & Miniature Land will be an interactive museum showcasing Canada from coast to coast. This will be achieved through a series of 3D exhibits that are being built in stages. The first exhibits are currently being constructed by a skilled team of model makers, illustrators, engineers, and carpenters. The intent is to make Our Home & Miniature Land a prime tourist attraction, but not only that. It will also serve as an educational learning centre for students and other interested groups. There will be educational tools showing how a city actually works.

The exhibit covers 4000 square feet of floor space and has 4,790 feet of HO track with 385 turnouts currently installed. To date 30,000 hours of labour have been expended including such activities as installing 5 kms of wiring, 10,000 figures in the Rogers Centre and building 3 helixes to move trains through the various levels.

The Toronto and Hamilton exhibits are currently under construction. The Toronto exhibit includes a scale replica of the CN Tower that is three metres high, an exact

model of the Rogers Centre covering four square metres, Toronto's Union Station as it will look when current renovations on the real thing are completed, as well as the Air Canada Centre, St. Lawrence Market, the Distillery District, and the Bloor Street viaduct, not to mention the big bank towers and skyscrapers from the city's downtown core. The attention to detail is worth noting. It took four months to build the model of Union Station, 12 months for the Air Canada Centre, and longer than that for the Rogers Centre. Trains, bridges, overpasses and treed landscapes with figurines of people, along with buses, streetcars, trucks and automobiles all make for a perfect but miniature world that is in constant motion. It is a living, breathing city.

**PHOTO BELOW: Ian McIntosh stands inside the layout and gives us a sense of perspective on the size of many of the structures which we see in the various photographs.**





Our Home & Miniature Land has support and approval from the companies and organizations being depicted, including quintessential Canadian brands such as BMO, CIBC, TD, and Scotiabank, Tim Hortons, Purolator, Roots, Loblaws, Home Hardware, Petro-Canada, and many more. The Royal Botanical Gardens and Fairmont Royal York Hotel have also given their go-ahead. The Hamilton exhibit, will demonstrate among other things a steel mill in operation and has the nod from ArcelorMittal Dofasco.

When Our Home & Miniature Land is complete it will cater to three targeted audiences: families, schools, and tourists. Tourists will be treated to quality entertainment value for all ages in their visit. Students will learn how a city works, understand Canada's geography and history, and be able to take a workshop in model making. Visitors can opt to include a behind-the-scenes tour.

Plans include a replica of Toronto's historic Fort York, as well as a replica of the Battle of Queenston Heights for the Hamilton exhibit. When the entire Canada-wide project is complete, it is expected that a total of up to 20 exhibits will be involved, about six of them for Ontario. The Ontario exhibits are being built first. Brenninkmeijer and his staff took possession of the present Mississauga site in January of last year. The objective is to have most of the Ontario exhibits ready for a grand opening to coincide with Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> sesquicentennial celebration in the summer of 2017, and to have this in a prime location. Several Open Houses for invited guests, including teachers and students, were held in early March and the feedback was very positive.



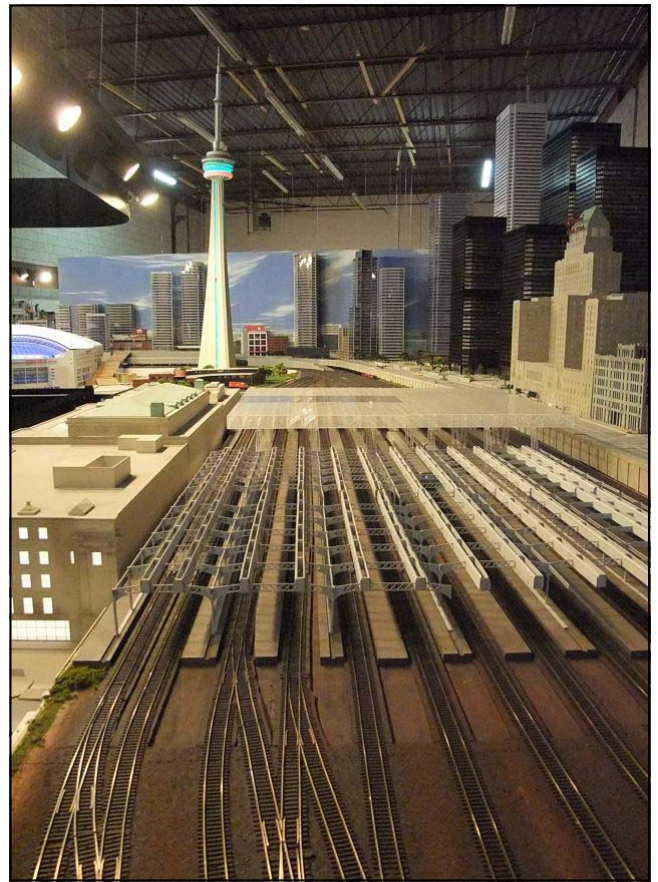
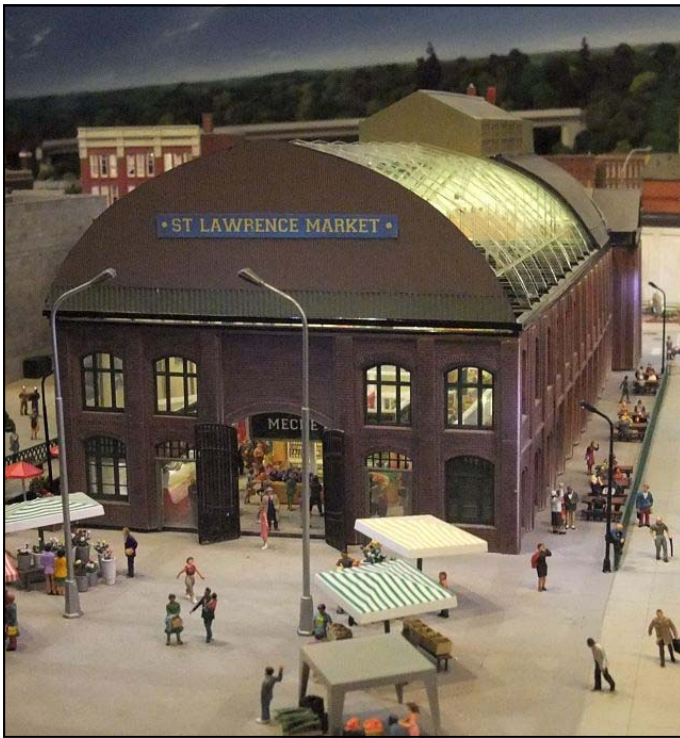
**PHOTO ABOVE:** Mock up of the Toronto area of the layout.



**PHOTO RIGHT CENTRE:** A look inside one of the Blast Furnaces in the steel mill model.

**PHOTO BELOW:** John St. Roundhouse





**PHOTO ABOVE LEFT: St. Lawrence Market**  
**PHOTO ABOVE RIGHT: Trainsheds at Union Station**  
**PHOTO BELOW: Bloor Street Viaduct**





Some of the intricate trackwork on the layout



Rogers Centre under construction

# PUBLICATION SCHEDULE FOR *THE CANADIAN*

*The Canadian* is published four times per year.  
Submission by authors or Chapters should be submitted  
by the following dates.

Spring Issue: February 1      Summer Issue: May 1  
Fall Issue: August 1      Winter Issue: November 1

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stevesans@outlook.com

## Rails across the River



A History of the Rail Car Ferry Service  
On the St. Lawrence River  
Between  
Prescott, Ontario & Ogdensburg, New York

by  
Ted Rafuse

# Rails Across The River

**A review of  
Ted Rafuse's new book  
on the ferry service be-  
tween Prescott and  
Ogdensburg**

**By John Johnston**

Long time CARM Member and frequent contributor to the Canadian, Ted Rafuse, has completed his fourth book. This will be his third book focussing on the rail marine interchange. His previous efforts included a history of the Crossen Car Company, the ferry service across the Canso Strait, and the ferry service between Rochester, NY, and Cobourg, Ontario.

The current book is 73 pages with cirlux binding and is available from Ted Rafuse, 181 Armour Court, Cobourg, Ontario, K9A 4S6 or by contacting Ted at tedrafuse1@gmail.com The price of the book is CDN \$29.95 plus CDN\$7.50 for postage to Canadian addresses or US\$29.95 plus US\$5.00 to US addresses.

The book contains numerous B&W photographs as well as 4 maps and several diagrams. It covers the entire history of the ferry operation from its start in the 1850's to its final demise in 1970 when a spectacular fire consumed the ferry apron in Ogdensburg, NY.

The book is highly detailed in its description of the various ferries that were used throughout the years and the traffic patterns that used this unique service. For someone modeling a rail marine interface the photographs of the ferry aprons, and the ferries themselves including diagrams of the car floats will be invaluable.

I found particular interest in Ted's description of the silk trains run by the CPR from the turn of the century right up to WWII. These trains had the highest priority of any train on the railroad including crack passenger trains and even the Royal Train. Nothing stopped them. Utilizing its own fleet of Empress ships, and there are interesting photographs of the fleet over many years, the CPR and its partner the NYC were able to knock 6 days of the

quickest all-US route. These trains ran from Vancouver to New York City via the ferry between Prescott and Ogdensburg. Each train travelled with armed guards and on its long journey across the country never stopped for more than 5 minutes, and then only to change engines and crews. It is a fascinating story.

If you are interested in the CPR, or rail marine interchanges this book is a must read.

PHOTO: Library and Archives Canada



The photos above and below illustrate clearly the earliest years of the ferry service and the final years. Above is the Armstrong in the early 1880's and below a PC (ex NYC) switcher at Ogdensburg in the late 1960's.

PHOTO: Bill Linley





Temperature is -40 when leased ONR GP-38 # 1809 and Xtrata GP-38 055 arrive to exchange empty ore Gondolas for full ones at the mine site of Xtrata Mines North of Timmins on New Years day of 2008.

Carman Locke photo.



## TRAIN SHOWS

Sunday, April 24th, 2016: Woodstock Model Train Show And Sale, Featuring vendors selling Model Trains and Railroad Memorabilia: plus several Operating Layouts. Oxford Auditorium and the Mutual/Market Building, on the Woodstock Fairgrounds, 875 Nellis Street. Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission: \$5.00 per person. For more information call Ian at 519-426-8875 or email: [toyshow@kwic.com](mailto:toyshow@kwic.com)

Website: [www.woodstocktrainshow.blogspot.com](http://www.woodstocktrainshow.blogspot.com)

Saturday, May 7th, 22nd Annual Auction, Nottawasaga Model Railway Club, St. Patrick's Parish Hall, 215 Pine Street (at William), Stayner, ON. Viewing 8:30 to 10:15. Auction starts at 10:30 a.m. Admission \$5. For information contact Bill Payne 705-429-2762 or Martin Alborough 705-444-5370. [www.nottawasagamodelrailway.com](http://www.nottawasagamodelrailway.com)

Saturday May 7th and Sunday May 8th, 2016: The Great British Train Show, Jim Archdekin Centre 292 Conestoga Drive, Brampton, Ontario. Hours: Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission: Adults \$10.00; Children \$5.00; Family (with a maximum of 2 adults) \$20.00

Website: [www.theplatelayers.org](http://www.theplatelayers.org)

We will have approximately 30 vendors there plus about 15 layouts in all scales from N to G.. This is an all British show. For further information contact Alan Farmer at 519-929-9692 or David Hughes at 416-590-6321

Saturday, May 14th and Sunday, May 15th, 2015: Midland District Railroad Club's 27 Annual Train Show And Sale, North Simcoe Sports And Recreation Center 527 Len Self Blvd, Midland, Ontario. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4

p.m. (both days). Admission: Adults \$5.00; Seniors \$5.00; Children \$2.00. For information contact Richard Small at 705-791-7968 or email [mdrcrs@rogers.com](mailto:mdrcrs@rogers.com)

Sunday, June 5, 2016: Ancaster Collectorfest (featuring Model Trains, Railroad Memorabilia, Operating Layouts, Die Cast Toys, Action Figures and other Collectibles) Marritt Hall and the Concession Building, on the Ancaster Fairgrounds, 630 Trinity Road, (within 15 minutes of both Downtown Hamilton and Downtown Brantford). Show Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$5.00; Children under age 12 will be admitted for free when accompanied by an adult. For vendor space or information contact Ian Ward at 519-426-8875 (please call Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) or email [toyshow@kwic.com](mailto:toyshow@kwic.com)

Saturday, September 24th and Sunday, September 25th, Montreal Model Train Exposition, Sun Youth Centre, 4251 St. Urbain Street, Montreal, Quebec. Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (both days). Admission: \$8.00 for adults; \$6.00 for Children. Free parking available at Home Depot, 100 Beaubien St. West, with free shuttle bus to the show. For more information contact Ivan Dow. Home: 514-636-9665. Cell: 514-918-1501 Email: [i.dow@videotron.ca](mailto:i.dow@videotron.ca) Show Website: [www.montrealtrainexposition.com](http://www.montrealtrainexposition.com)

October 29, 2016: Annual "BOOMERS" Auction of model railroad equipment and materials at the Harriston Community Centre, Harriston, ON. Admission \$5.00 (includes door prize draws). Tables available at 8:00am. Auction starts at 10:00 am. For additional Information contact Harold G. Jones, 16 Conroy Cres, Guelph, ON N1G 2V6, Canada. 519-821-2454. Email: [hgjones@execulink.com](mailto:hgjones@execulink.com)

# The Agawa Canyon Tour Train

By Steve Hoshel

After recognizing the popularity of the Agawa Canyon to travellers, The Algoma Central Railway started in the 1960s a standalone passenger train named the Agawa Canyon Tour Train. The landscape this train traverses certainly has beautiful, rugged scenery, and no shortage of it.

In late September 2014, 4 members of our CARM chapter spent an extra day in Sault Ste. Marie, ON on our trip to the Thunder Bay CARM convention to take in the scenery that the Algoma District had to offer. We did this onboard the Agawa Canyon Tour Train. The day we chose to travel could not have been a better day. Bright sunshine and warm temperatures made the colours pop and the walking excursion in the Agawa Canyon comfortable.

Since the tour train is scheduled to depart at 8:00 am, we arrived several minutes early to allow time for picking up our tickets, or in my case, to shoot a few photos of the equipment before boarding.

This day's train was made up of 14 cars and had the usual power consist of all three ex-Amtrak F40PHR locomotives. Numbers 104 and 105 provided the traction and number 106 supplied the HEP for the coaches.

I have to give credit to the Agawa Canyon tour opera-

tors for providing the excellent history lesson on the railway along with the scenic highlights on the trip north. These narrations are given over the public address system and on the two large screen televisions mounted at each end of the coaches. Between these narrations, there is shown live video footage of the track and scenery ahead taken by cameras mounted in the locomotives' windshield. Locomotive 105 had a colour camera, and led on the northbound trip, whereas locomotive 104 had a black and white camera and it led on the southbound trip.

The train schedule lists the departure time from Sault Ste. Marie as 8 am with an arrival time back at the station as 6 pm. The scheduled trip time is 3 hours and 45 minutes for both north- and southbound trips with a 2 hour layover at Canyon station, Milepost 114. This allows time for a lunch, which can be brought along or purchased on site, and walk-about sight-seeing excursions. The most popular excursions are to Bridal Veil Falls, the Observation lookout, and the two Black Beaver Falls.

The Agawa Canyon Tour Train is currently operated by Canadian National Railway over their Soo Subdivision. The other passenger service that ran over the complete former Algoma Central Railway, is currently suspended while CN and local interests search for an operator for this service.

If you are considering a trip on the Agawa Canyon Tour Train, by all means, go. It is well worth the trip, especially during the spectacular fall season when Mother Nature really gets her paint brush out.



**PHOTO:** By Steve Hoshel:

**At Milepost 92 north of Sault Ste. Marie, the train reaches the spectacular Montreal River trestle. This iconic bridge is 1550 feet long and not only crosses the river but also the power dam at Montreal Falls. In this picture the train is southbound.**

# AGAWA CANYON TOUR TRAIN



PHOTO ABOVE: By Steve Hoshel:

The three units used on the train , #104, 105, and 106 were all originally built for Amtrak in 1977-1978 by EMD as F40PHR's. The 'R' indicating that these units were built at least in part using parts from SDP40F locomotives. Amtrak sold the locomotives to Ski Train in Colorado in 2000, and then in 2009, CN acquired them for the Adirondack Central Railway. The photo shows a sideview of CN #106.



PHOTO MIDDLE LEFT: By Randy Schnarr:

As the train travels north you can see the beautiful fall scenery that surrounds the right of way as you traverse the Canyon.



PHOTO BOTTOM LEFT: By Steve Hoshel:

At Canyon the 104 leads 105 as they are coupled ahead of 106 for the southbound trip back to Sault Ste. Marie.