

# the SwitchStand



A quarterly publication of the Guelph Historical Railway Association  
For questions, membership issues, or how to join, contact: GHRA, 516 Kortright Rd W, Guelph, N1G 3Z1

**April 2006**

**vol. 2, issue 1**

## Welcome

The SwitchStand continues in 2006! We would gladly welcome any articles of historical interest written for this newsletter. To submit an article, see the contact information on the last page.

## Club News

### Doors Open Guelph

Doors Open Guelph was a successful event for the GHRA! The official count of visitors to the caboose was 327 people. Our tour guides and volunteers were busy throughout the day with hardly a break to be had. There was almost always a lineup of people waiting for a tour, with the exception of the first couple of hours, which we used for set-up time.

We raised a total of \$274.42 in both donations and 6167 button sales.

A special thank you goes out to all our volunteers and contributors for making the day a success. The GHRA would also like to thank Ontario Southland Railway for graciously moving our caboose to and from downtown for this event, and Prior Construction for

supplying the front-end loader to move our caboose out of our siding track.

### Royal Train Footage Turnout in March

Thank you to everyone who came to the 1939 Royal Train video showing in March. 16 people came to the meeting to see this exciting view into our past.

### Marker Lamps Donated to GHRA

At Doors Open Guelph, GHRA founder and former President, Eric Repaci paid us a visit to check in on us and tour the caboose. Eric came with a surprise – two vintage Canadian Pacific marker lamps to donate to the club for our caboose. These of course a perfect fit for our collection! Thank you Eric!

The GHRA welcomes donations of any railway related artifacts of a historical nature. Please contact us if you have items you wish to have preserved for future generations.

### **Your ad here!**

Sponsor the GHRA! For a Suggestion donation of \$100, your company will receive advertisements for a year in our newsletters, and mentions on our website and at our public events! Contact a member for details.

## **Local Railway News**

### **Goderich and Exeter Changes**

The Goderich and Exeter Railway have changed their operations slightly. GEXR now interchanges all freight traffic destined for points west in London Ontario, instead of carrying all freight to Toronto. Previously, automotive frames from Thyssen-Krupp Budd Canada were interchanged in London. This move splits the traffic between both London and Toronto and allows GEXR the ability to carry a higher volume of traffic to be interchanged with CN.

### **CN Buys Back Shortlines in Alberta**

Rail America sold its Alberta properties back to CN in January 2006. One wonders what the future holds for our former CN mainline, which is currently on lease to Rail America.

### **More EMD Locomotive Tests Through Guelph**

In January and March of 2006, there were test-runs of brand new Electro-Motive Diesel locomotives, as follows:

January 21 2006: A brand new CN SD70-M2, #8014 made one round trip between Stratford and Toronto Ontario



Brand new CN 8014 passing the Guelph VIA station, January 2006. Steve Host Photo.

March 22 and 23 2006: Two brand new BNSF SD70ACes, both with the new BNSF logo, were tested, one each day also between Stratford and Toronto.

### **Operation Lifesaver/Railway Safety**

Three preventable accidents that should not have happened:

Feb 13 2006 – An Acton man was killed when a train struck him while trespassing on the GEXR right of way.

March 15 2006 a VIA rail train struck a car between Acton and Guelph, fatally injuring the driver. It was reported that the railway crossing had bell and lights, but no gates. (Toronto Star)

March 22 2006 a car slid into the side of a train on the Huron Park spur in Kitchener. There were no injuries. (The Record)

### **Former CPR Bunkhouse in Orangeville Destroyed by Fire**

On March 21 2006 the Orangeville bunkhouse was destroyed by fire. Railroad crews were called to the scene to move the Orangeville-Brampton Railway's excursion train set, which was parked beside the bunkhouse – and moved from the fire just in time. Unfortunately, the building was completely engulfed in flames not long afterwards and the firefighters had no choice but to watch it burn to the ground. Sadly, another piece of railway history is now lost forever. The building had still been in use by railway crews as an office.

### **Ontario Southland Railway Sunday operations**

In the early part of 2006 radio chatter on Ontario Southland Railway had been

noticed on Sundays. It turns out OSR has had 'trainees' from George Brown College in Oakville, who are getting some valuable hands-on experience as part of their curriculum.

On Sunday April 2 2006 Ontario Southland had two crews in operation: the first in Guelph performing work within town, and a second group of trainees and regular crew at Guelph Junction near Campbellville.

### 150th Anniversary of Rail Service in Guelph

150 years ago this June, Guelph celebrated newfound prosperity as the first railroad, the Grand Trunk arrived in town. The first passenger train made the 48 mile journey to Toronto in June 1856. Back then, steam locomotives were fired with wood which was loaded onto the train by crews and even passengers at various stops along the way. The journey to Toronto took two and a half hours, for an average speed of 19 miles per hour (30 km/h). In 1867, there were four passenger trains and two freight trains per day servicing Guelph.

Today, Guelph is serviced by six VIA rail passenger trains per day, which make the trip at speeds of up to 120 KM/h. There are also three freight trains per day which provide a vital service to many Guelph industries.

(With information from the Guelph Mercury, July 25 1967)

### Upcoming Meetings / Entertainment

**May 8 2006 – C&O in South-Western Ontario Slideshow by Peter Shergold**

**June 12 2006 – CSXT in South-Western Ontario by Steve Host (2003-2006)**

### July 10 2006 – TBA

(Visit our website, [www.ghra.ca](http://www.ghra.ca) for an up-to-date listing of our upcoming meetings, entertainment, and events)

### Support CNR 6167 restoration!

#### Buy a button!



Show your support for CNR 6167  
Purchase your CNR 6167 buttons at any GHRA regular meeting, or in person at Guelph Civic Museum. Suggested donation \$3.

### GHRA Board of Directors

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GHRA member Bruce Lowe watches GEXR Freight Train #432 pass our caboose on the day prior to Doors Open Guelph 2006.  
Photo by Steve Host.