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Jim Elliott, former Belleville resident, is now retired and living in Tillsonburg. Elliott recalls his days growing up in Belleville's Brassey Street area.

"They were always friendly and seeing us with lunch under our arms produced nothing more than a smile and a cheerful wave. My friend and I always had much fun in the woods playing on what we called 'the rubber trees' because we could bend them right to the ground and watch them spring upright again."

He noted, "the coal shutes would have been located at the eastern end of Station Street just before it crossed the tracks and linked up with another east and west road that is now Airport Parkway. This crossing of the tracks was closed some time ago."

Weekends took him and his family to the scenic countryside in the Hastings and Prince Edward counties. "If you had a car swimming at Oak Lake, Presqu'ile, Barcovan and Consecon was always fun for both adults and children. Lake-On-The Mountain was a nice place to visit. Another fall favourite was a day trip north through the lower part of Algonquin Park."

Elliott's father was a railway engineer in the CNR and his freight runs were from Belleville to Mimico (Toronto) going west and Belleville to Brockville going east.

"Once he took me with him to Toronto right in the cab of the engine. It was a great experience and just to blow the whistle at numerous crossings was a thrill. We stayed at the railroad YMCA in Mimico and returned to Belleville the next day."

Three of Elliott's uncles were also engineers with the CNR. One of them worked in Belleville, while the other two worked in Lindsay and in Winnipeg, Man.

"At least once each summer I got to ride in the caboose of a train destined to Toronto via Peterborough to visit my aunt and uncle and two cousins who lived in Lindsay. This branch line no longer exists and was probably a victim of the trucking industry and increasing family travel by automobile," said Elliott.

The caboose — no longer used on today's trains — was the last car on every freight train.

"The conductor and trainman rode in this car which had an elevated portion where one could see the entire length of the train. These people used to keep a look out for any problems that might spring up with any of the cars in these maybe 100 plus cars."

Elliott lived in Belleville until 1960 working as general manager at Corbin Lock Company of Canada Ltd. He was transferred to the company headquarters in Connecticut. Eventually, he became the president of the company's worldwide operations with over 8,500 employees. On retirement, he and his wife Clancie settled in Tillsonburg. His wife has since died.

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