

Greely Grist

With Mel Tomkins

Memories of Manotick Station

At a recent meeting of the Manotick Station Community Association, which is organizing the 125th celebrations commemorating the opening of the railway, it became very apparent that some people have mistaken ideas about the area served by Manotick Station, when the railway was prospering. One suggestion was that the area would extend from Regional Road 25 to the Dozois Road, a distance of about two kilometres (a little over a mile) on each side of the tracks. As one who lived in full view of the station for about twenty-five years, dating from almost the beginning of the century, this writer has a different picture of the area involved.

From as far back, at least, as the turn of the century, Mr. Johnston Clapp made two trips daily between Manotick village and the station. He would be carrying mail bags, parcels, light freight and train passengers. So in reality, at that time, Manotick village was a part of the Manotick Station area. The village was also connected to the station by a telegraph line.

Until the late teens Mr. Clapp used horse-drawn vehicles all year round; but about 1920, "Minnie" and "Maud" were given a rest during the summer months, as the mail driver had purchased a "Model T." Ford truck and later a "Four-ninety Chevrolet car. As the roads were not ploughed then in winter, it was back to the horses again when the snow came.

In addition to the service from Manotick, many people came in their own horse drawn vehicles to meet the train to bring passengers, or to meet someone getting off the train. At Christmas time or other holidays it was a common sight to look down from the house on the nearby hill to see the station yard full of teams or single horse vehicles which had come from miles around. For two winters while attending Lisgar Collegiate, this writer joined with other students in taking advantage of a special student rate to travel by train while going to school in Ottawa.

As the number of automobiles increased, business at the station decreased. After bus routes were established on the highways, and the buses started to carry the mail, the service from the village to the station was discontinued.



Manotick Station: Now the comfortable home of Oswald and John James Fox on Regional Road 8.

During the same era, there were six dairy farmers who shipped their milk to Ottawa daily by train. Norman Spratt came from about two miles north of the station. Sidney Payne drew his milk from about two miles south. William Tomkins and Harry Tomkins lived on farms next to the tracks on the east side; George Mansfield brought his milk from about four miles away on the River Road near Manotick. The farthest away was John Pritchard who lived two miles south of Manotick on the West side of the Rideau river, a distance of about six miles. In winter Mr. Pritchard found it colder to cross the frozen Rideau and load his milk at Bray station. As the local train did not run on Sundays, there was always a double load of eight-gallon milk cans on Monday mornings.

Not far from Regional Road 8 there was a large cattle yard, with a ramp for loading cattle into the cars. This yard like the cattle guards at the crossings was given a fresh coat of whitewash every spring. The cattle cars were slatted on the sides to allow air for the animals. Drivers would pick up cattle yard to be shipped to the stock-yards in Montreal or Toronto.

Every spring the Collins brothers (Charlie, Steve and Walter) used to bring in several carloads of lumber. It was piled beside the siding tracks and was drawn by team and wagon to the River Road near Long Island locks. As there was no such thing as half-load laws at that time, the old unpaved Town line road (Regional Road 8) was deeply rutted when the lumber was all drawn.

About the same time Mr. Alex Spratt, who had a flour, feed and coal business in Manotick

brought in everything by train to Manotick Station. Some of the feed or coal was loaded directly to the customers' wagons or sleighs while the remainder of the car loads would be stored in the feed shed or the coal shed. The remains of the foundation of the weight scales, used for weighing the coal, may still be seen on the west side of the driveway which led to the station. This writer worked one winter for the late Mr. Spratt and saw customers coming from beyond Greely on the east to well beyond Manotick village on the west.

To one who lived by the railroad in those times, it would seem that the Manotick Station area extended over six miles to the east and still farther to the west, but only a few miles north and south to the Gloucester Station and Bray Station areas.

Notice

The Russell Minor Hockey Association annual meeting will be held at Dr. F. Kinnaird Community Centre, May 28, at 8 p.m. Election of officers for 1979-1980 will be held at that time. Anyone wishing to place a name in nomination should contact Barry Carscadden at 445-5477.

CLASSIFIED

CHIMNEY SWEEP — For fast, clean, efficient service at reasonable rates phone Mike Pygas, 445-5786.

BABYSITTER WANTED — Responsible babysitter on occasional basis for children aged 2 and 5 years. Phone 445-2878.

FOR SALE — 1977 Suzuki TC-100 dirt bike, brand new, approx. 50 miles. Asking \$775.00. Phone 445-5217.

REPAIRS — Radio, T.V. and Small Appliances. Call Jack 443-3723, (659 Notre Dame, Embur)

STAIN GLASS — Custom windows and lamps. Call 445-2080.

FOR SALE — Used furniture and antiques. Call 448-2374.

FOR SALE — Sears portable Electric ARC Welder, 50 amp, 115 volt, helmet, gloves, vest included, like new. \$60.00. Call 445-5707.

WANTED — A student 18 years or over to work in the Russell Public Library for the months of July and August. Typing necessary. Please apply in writing stating qualifications to The Russell Public Library, 472 Concession St., Russell, Ont. K0A 3B0.

MOVING SALE — 56 Mill Street, Russell, May 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This sale will feature

small electrical appliances, Bissell carpet sweeper, bedspreads, books, house plants, adjustable window screens, camping equipment, car rack, boy's skates, lady's bicycle and many other items.

FOR SALE — Tent trailer — sleeps 6 — table, spare tire with rim and bumper, hitch included. Call 445-5352.

FOR SALE — 4 185-70 x 13 radial tires. Call 445-5709.

Birth

VEH — Ron and Suzanne are pleased to announce the arrival of a son, Peter, born April 22 at 9 lbs. 1 oz. A brother for Erika.

Coming Events

Pre-school registration for Metcalfe Co-op Nursery School will be held May 10 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe. Fee is \$10.00 per family. Children must be 3 years old by Dec. 31, 1979. For information call 821-3013 or 821-1756.

There will be a Spring Dance at the Metcalfe Lions Den on May 26 from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. sponsored by the Metcalfe Co-op Nursery School. There will be good music, a bar and prizes. Tickets are \$2.50 each and available at 821-1187 or 821-1756.

COME AND PLAY CARDS

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8:00 p.m.

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