

Manotick Station Turns 125 With Big Bash

By Mel Tomkins



HAPPY MANOTICK STATION 125th

From left, Grenville-Carleton MLA Norm Stirling, former railway foreman Herman Smiley, Secretary of State Walter Baker and former railway worker and Castor Review correspondent Mel Tomkins aboard old hand car during Manotick Station 125th anniversary celebrations. (Photo courtesy Mel Tomkins).

It is one hundred, twenty five years since the first train passed Manotick Station in 1854. Land had been purchased from the Tomkins family for a site for a railway station. The first train went through on Christmas day of that year.

Residents of the community on Regional Road 8, midway between Manotick and Highway 31, have just finished a three day celebration commemorating the one hundred, twenty fifth anniversary of the occasion.

The success of the undertaking was largely due to the foresight and organization of Mike and Hazel Miles, Derwin and Collette Veroba, Les and Barbara Macey and Charlie and June Spiruda who were responsible for setting up the Manotick Station Community Association. The thanks of the community is also due to Mr. C. Bakker for his generosity in providing the use of his grounds and his new barn for the occasion. In fact, Mr. Bakker had piled his hay in a stack so that his barn would be empty to be used for all indoor events. Another important factor in the success of the three-day event was the enthusiasm and co-operation of the people of the community.

The Association had for sale T-shirts, coffee mugs, beer mugs and caps all with the Manotick Station insignia (a picture of an early locomotive with the numbers 1854-1979 and the words Manotick Station). In addition, they had on hand copies of a booklet prepared by the Historical Committee. This booklet, entitled "The Manotick Station Story", told many stories about the early settlers of the area. A few copies of the booklet are still available.

Friday evening's opening parade was even better than had been anticipated. Ideal weather favoured the parade as it went along the Manotick Station Road, past the store, and past the old station site and eventually wound up on the festival grounds. A total of over twenty floats, chuck wagons, old cars and other entries joined in the procession. Given a prominent place in the parade was the Queen of the neighbouring village of Manotick. On the Manotick Station float, beside the old three-wheeled hand-car were four former railway section workers, all dressed in the traditional gray striped overalls and caps. They were Herman Smiley, former foreman, John J. Fox who worked on the tracks until retirement, James Downey and Mel Tomkins. Earl Helem joined the crew and provided music along the route. The Women's Institute float was chosen as the best by the

judges.

Present to declare the celebration officially under way was Osgoode Township Reeve Albert Bouwers, accompanied by three other members of the Township Council. Bringing very special greetings were Walter Baker, Acting Prime Minister of Canada while Joe Clark was in Africa at the time and Grenville Carleton M.L.A. Norman Stirling. A corn roast and disco dance rounded out the opening night activities and the weatherman continued to cooperate through Saturday.

The program included a craft fair, held in one of the big tents, amusements for children, a softball tournament, a horse show and a Beef-on-Bun dinner. In the evening there was an exciting demonstration by the Osgoode Township Volunteer Fire Department. This was followed by the gala Festival Dance.

Unfortunately at this time of year many of the clergy are away on holidays and since the Sunday morning non-denominational service coincided with various area church services there were consequently no clergymen available. Finally the committee in charge asked Mel Tomkins, a native of Manotick Station, and a Lay Reader at Greely Church, to conduct the service. Mr. Tomkins welcomed about a hundred people and combined a service of bible readings, prayer and hymn with an interesting and informative history of the thriving community. The Scripture selections were read by Sadie Payne and Betty McInnes (nee Tomkins) who had come home from Burlington to join in the celebrations. Enough cannot be said about the part played in the service by the Downey family. Karen, Carolyn and Kevin, with their guitars, were magnificent in leading the singing. Leo and Mrs. Downey, while remaining in the background, were a wonderful help in making the arrangements with less than a day's notice.

Many changes have taken place from the time when the first tiny engine chugged past the station till now when the mighty diesels only stop when they have a loaded car to place on the siding, or to pick up an empty car.

The celebrations were judged by all to be an outstanding success and this goes to show what can be accomplished when a group of people adopt a project and are determined to carry it through.

With the festivities over, the people look backward with pride to what has been accomplished and look forward with great expectation to the many successes of the future.

Greely Grist

With Mel Tomkins

What do you know about Greely history?

How old is Greely?

How did Greely get its name?

Should it be spelled Greely or Greeley?

What do you know about the old blacksmith shop?

These are some of the questions being asked today. We find these questions hard to answer with the information that we have. We would like to know the answers. There are many stories about what Greely was like years ago. Some agree and some conflict.

There are many stories about the old toll gate and its location. There are stories about how the short street between the Anglican Church and the old blacksmith shop got its name. Many are curious about the location of the first post office and who was the first postmaster. We would like to

know where the Rossitter family lived because records of the Metcalfe Agriculture Society tell us that the first fair in the township was held in Rossitters in Greely in 1856.

If any of you readers know the answers to any of the above questions or have any information

about Greely's early history would you please pass the information on to this writer at 821-1571 or Box 21, Greely. The information will be used to answer the questions of many who are curious about the history of this growing community.

Thank you et merci beaucoup.

Russell Hair Fashion



Call Jackie at 445-5497

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Bad Water

(Cont. from Page 1)

more closely control well drillers.

In this situation, Mr. Belanger said, the driller stated in well reports to the ministry that he was installing according to specifications when actually wells were not deep enough, unsealed, and not lined to the required depth with steel casing.

Environment issues licenses to drillers and is therefore responsible for monitoring their competence, Mr. Belanger noted.

Mr. McKenna pointed out that a heavy staff increase would be required in order for the ministry to thoroughly inspect all wells installed in the province.

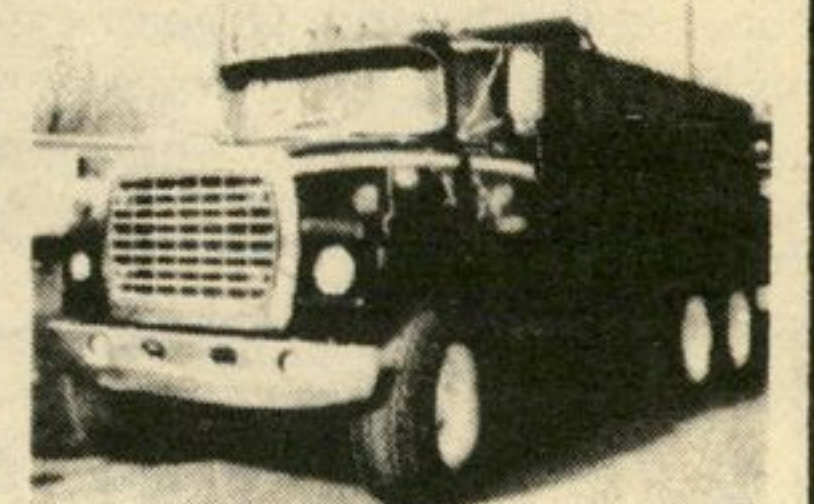
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