

A STEP INTO HISTORY - "Black Siding"

by PAUL BARRY
The Canadian Pacific Railway was built across the north shore of Lake Superior during the years 1882 to 1885. Near the site of Terrace Bay's present-day rail station, a ballast pit was dug to provide granular material for use in roadbed construction and maintenance. This site was known as, Black Pit.

For a brief time a small construction camp may have existed near where the railbridge now stands over the Aguasabon River. During this period of history, the river was called, Black River which is a name thought to have been derived from the dark slate found at the Falls.

It is likely that the first railbridge here had been made of wooden trestles, like others along the north shore. Prior to 1919, it was re-constructed with an iron roadbed, supported by brick columns which may date back even farther.

The site was re-named Black Siding when a yard track and a passing track were installed next to the mainline. When these additions were made has not yet been verified.

Perhaps as early as 1897, a rudimentary system of forest fire protection was put into operation. It was based on a network of lone fire rangers stationed at intervals along the railroad. Each ranger patrolled with an equipment kit consisting of a canoe, a shovel, a canvas bucket, and an axe. The first to be stationed at Schreiber was Bill Lunam, but the names of later rangers and of rangers stationed at Black Siding are as yet unknown. This track-ranger service was discontinued in 1923.

In 1935-38 the government cut a series of canals through the

height of land and thus diverted the waters of Long Lake from the Kenogami River and channelled a great volume of flow into Lake Superior via the Black River, which was re-named the Aguasabon.

During the years 1945 to 1948, Black Siding saw a boom in two large projects.

Ontario Hydro installed a diversion dam on the Aguasabon River, and constructed a hydro-electric generating station. The Longlac Pulp and Paper Company (later re-organized as the Kimberly-Clark Corporation) constructed a large pulp mill and an entirely new townsite on opposite sides of Black Siding.

Thousands of construction workers arrived to build these projects. To accommodate the increase in passenger and industrial traffic, the C.P.R. built a rail station and a rail yard at Black, as well as adding a spur line to link the transcontinental line with the millsite.

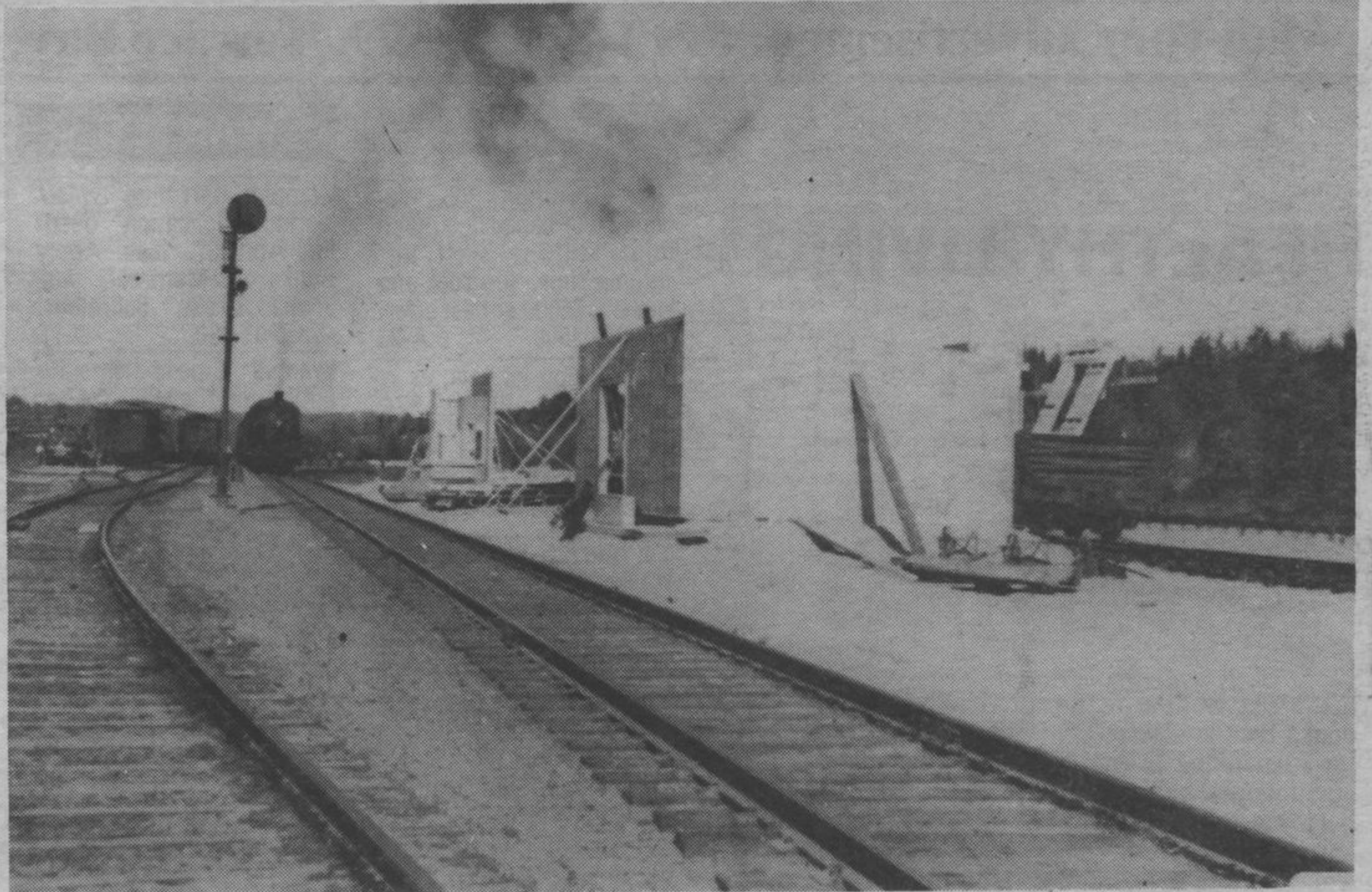
The accompanying photograph is of the construction of the rail station in 1945-46. The sta-

tion is being erected on the north side of the main line track, with the new spur line to the millsite being laid just behind. The locomotive is leaving the railbridge and is travelling toward the west. This photograph was provided by Mr. James E. Isbester, who was an engineer on the construction of the pulp mill and who was one of the original residents of Terrace Bay in 1946.

In 1947, the rail station was flooded and a portable station was installed on the north side of the tracks. In 1950-51, it was replaced by a new station, which stands today.

By 1950, the three thousand construction workers had left, the permanent population of Terrace Bay had reached 2,000, the generating station had come into service, and the mill had produced its first ton of bleached sulphate pulp, which was shipped out through Black Siding.

The railroad was the primary mode of transport because the highway was of a low standard and did not extend farther east than Terrace Bay. The



Construction of the rail station in 1945-46. Photo provided to Paul Barry by Mr. James E. Isbester who was an engineer of the construction of the pulp mill and one of the original residents of Terrace Bay in 1946.

original residents arrived by rail. With the completion of Highway 17 in 1960, auto travel grew in popularity.

Although still dependent on the railroad, the

mill also found it increasingly convenient to transport by truck, various industrial materials that earlier were shipped exclusively by rail. During the

early 1950's the C.P.R. completed its conversion from steam-powered to diesel-electric locomotives. Black Siding is still heavily used today.

This overview of Black Siding's history is incomplete. If readers have additions or comments, please leave word at the Terrace Bay Public Library.

Northern Affairs

continued from page 8

fee for this card is \$8.00 and applications are available at our office.

For persons 19 years of age and over, the Ontario Government has made an Age of Majority card available, and application forms can be obtained at Liquor Control Board outlets throughout Ontario, and also from your Northern Affairs Office. This plasticized wallet size card contains your photograph and date of birth. The fee for this card is \$2.00.

Finally, everyone should have a Social Insurance Number. Appli-

cation forms are available from U.I.C. offices and Northern Affairs Offices. There is no fee required for a social insurance card, however, most people will have to produce their birth certificate and what is known as a secondary document before the card is issued.

For further information regarding identification documents or applications, contact the Ministry of Northern Affairs Office, located on the Lower Floor of the Peninsula Building, 2 Gilbert Street, Marathon. Telephone 229-1153 or ask the operator for Zenith 33160.

Township Of Terrace Bay Spring Clean-Up-84



The week of April 30th to May 4th, 1984 will be "SPRING CLEAN-UP WEEK" in Terrace Bay.

Residents are asked to place their rubbish close to the road side, in proper containers where possible, to permit easy access for loading.

Owners of old cars on residential property who wish to dispose of same should contact the Public Works Department at 825-9016.

Please do not put out large or heavy items before cleanup week, as this slows down regular collections.

Residents are also asked not to pile sand from lawns and boulevards on the street. These piles are too compact to be handled by our sweeper.

Remember, this is our twenty-fifth anniversary, so let's all make a special effort to spruce up.

L. H. Simons,
Clerk-Co-ordinator

PRE-NATAL CLASSES

Pre-Natal Instruction Classes will be held at the Terrace Bay High School Library commencing

May 9 - June 20/84

from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Partners are invited to attend. For further inquiries please call:

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit,
Schreiber Office
824-2413



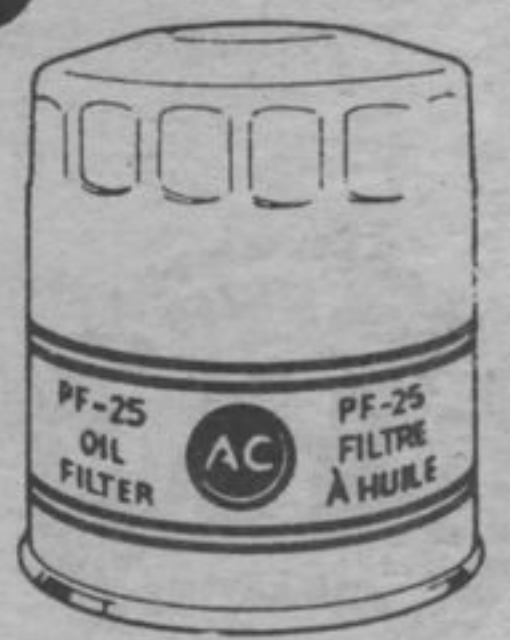
SPECIAL

AC oil filters for most General Motors cars and light duty trucks.

ONLY \$3.49

Open Saturday.
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

SPADONI BROS.
824-2244



OFFER GOOD UNTIL MAY 30 /84.

