



THE WCR PRESS

VOLUNTEER & STAFF EDITION



Issue No. 2 - Tuesday, April 7, 2020

SECOND EDITION

We continue to build on our image as a heritage passenger railway operation. In this issue along with our regular stories we will showcase some of the initiatives being undertaken to achieve that goal.

Our first major step as illustrated in the First Edition of the WCR Press has been the development of a clean new look for our locomotives and fleet. Our goal is to present a consistent heritage image across our operation to our passengers when they arrive to take our trains. This edition will show the next steps in that process.

If you have questions that we can address in future issues, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Stations & Passenger Shelters – Looking to the Past to Build the Future

We are undertaking a few projects to bring our current stations, platforms and structures in line with our heritage mandate.

We are fortunate to have a group of very dedicated volunteers undertaking these projects led by our Honourary Master Carpenter Brian Ray. Brian is working his magic by taking our very unattractive “passenger shelters” which look more like a shed or manger, into something more traditional for our railway.

Brian has taken our photos, mental images or rough sketches of what we are looking for and worked his magic to rebuild our current structures, and in some cases start from scratch to achieve our goals.

Redesigned Passenger Shelters

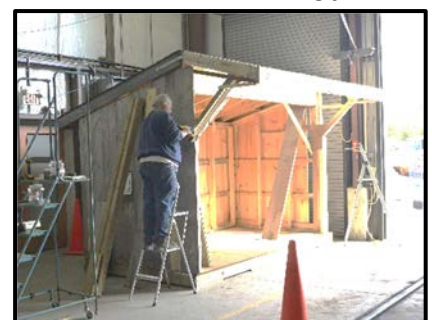


Our current shelters

We asked Brian to take the current sheds now in place at most stations and, if possible, make them look like a traditional railway “flag stop” passenger shelter found throughout North America and England. When he started it was determined that our current shelters were not built for longevity or relocation, which led Brian to completely dismantle and rebuild from the ground up to emulate the design we envisioned.



The look we are striving for.



From there, our Master Painter Grant Scheifele began applying traditional Grand Trunk Railway colours reminiscent of the early 1900s. This was halted when the COVID-19 pandemic caused the temporary closure of the St. Jacobs Restoration & Maintenance Facility.

Brian and Grant are very close to finishing this project and will resume when things return to normal or near normal.

Elmira Station

We have approval from the Region of Waterloo to construct and pave a platform in Elmira between Howard Ave. and First Street. We were to commence construction this week, but work has been put on hold until we can get up and running again when the danger of the pandemic has subsided. When this platform is complete the new “Brian” station shelter will be moved from the shop and become the WCR Elmira station. This will provide a more traditional railway installation at Elmira for Elmeda’s people movers to provide protection and safety for our passengers there as well as tours.

Waterloo Station – Northfield Drive

One of the shed-style shelters is located at our Waterloo Station at Northfield Drive across from the ION station. It has proved to be a continual challenge to remain presentable and safe for our passengers. Its location is close to a transient camp and has been frequently vandalized and/or served as a shelter for some from the camp. This situation has created several ongoing issues and challenges.

We are removing the current shelter and constructing a traditional A-frame shelter at this location. When we say “we” are constructing it, that should read Brian is constructing it.

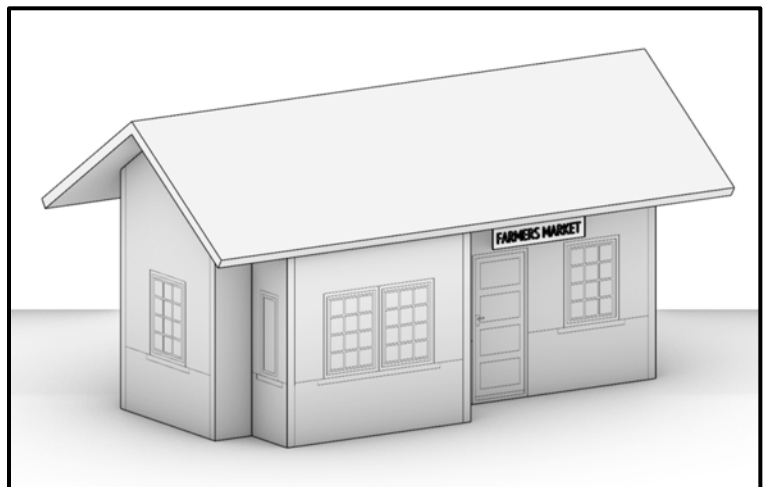


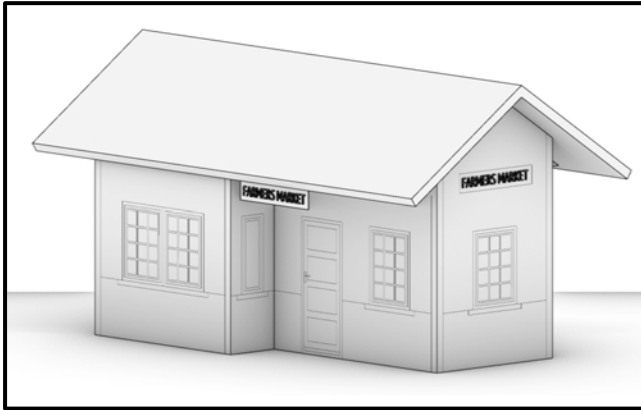
The Blue’s Brothers of the WCR – Brian and Grant at work.

When completed it will be supported by 2 steel posts resting on the footprint of the current shelter. Unlike the current structure, the replacement will have no walls, a design that will hopefully alleviate the current issues while still providing shelter for our passengers.

Farmer’s Market Station

This station stop has two of the shed-style shelters, both of which will be replaced. As a condition of approval, the company that developed and built the shopping center immediately to the east of the tracks was required by the Township of Woolwich to provide funds in trust to the Township for our use to be applied to the capital costs of constructing a platform and station-shelter at the Farmers Market. The conditions also included designated parking for the railway, which is already in use and marked as such.



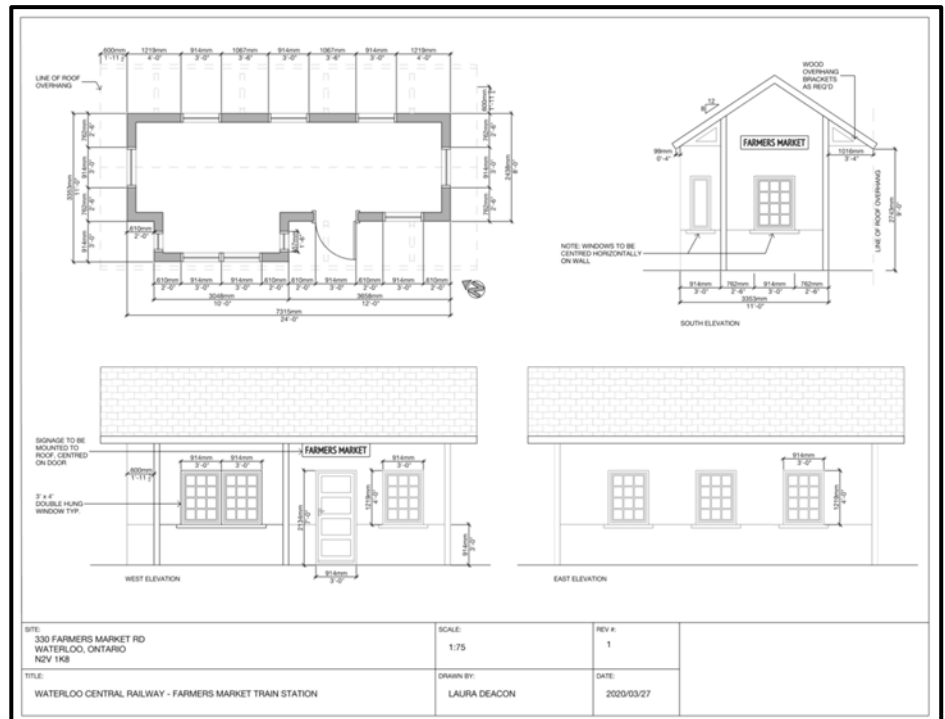


We have been very fortunate to have professional assistance from the daughter of Russ Deacon, one of our dedicated volunteers and the Assistant Manager of Training. Laura Deacon, who is finishing her studies to be an architect, designed a small station-waiting room to replace the two current shelters on the same footprint.

This still requires a formal proposal and approval by the Township to qualify for the funding as well as from the Region for the design, but we are working in that direction. Laura's design is shown here.

This structure will be used as a passenger waiting room and locked at all times other than train days. It will not have a foundation, heat, or plumbing. It is based on the drawings of several 19th Century Grand Trunk Railway stations. Our line was operated by the Grand Trunk prior to the formation of Canadian National Railways in the 1920s.

We will continue the traditional Grand Trunk paint for this structure. As a side note, we have been scouted by numerous film projects over the years, but the absence of a traditional railway station has held back numerous opportunities.



Building on Our Heritage Roots - Uniforms & Caps for WCR Train Crews

As part of our effort to present the image of a professional heritage railway operation we are providing traditional Conductor and Trainman uniforms to our volunteers and staff that will be on the platform and in the coaches as the first point of contact with our passengers. These uniforms consist of a vest, tunic, and pants with insignia to denote the traditional role. The uniform will also include traditional Conductor and Trainman caps. Yes, you can still purchase them from a company in Montreal.



Each tunic will have braid on the sleeve in keeping with past tradition. Silver buttons and one silver stripe on the sleeves for Trainman; gold buttons and two gold stripes for Conductor.



The traditional caps are also colour coordinated. We don't yet have photos of our people in the uniforms, but these photos will give you an idea of what will be coming along with our new caps, which have already arrived.



We will be returning to the WCR oval badge that can be used on the tunic of the uniform and on the cap as an identifying badge as shown below.



We are also asking our Engineers and Conductors to dress in traditional railway outfits related to these roles when working on the train. They will be provided with the traditional pinstriped coveralls and jackets with caps or something similar in denim as requested by the individual volunteer. These are depicted in the photo here.

Pinstripes will also be provided for Conductors who are qualified as Engineers and may rotate back and forth during the day between the two positions. The Conductor uniform mentioned previously is not really suited for the times a Conductor may have to be doing switching operations or find themselves crawling about under the train to connect air bags, etc.

We will also offer shop crew and steam team volunteers the same work wear as shown above with the pin striped work wear utilized for Engineers and Conductors if they desire.

Bruce Shillinglaw & Gord Mitchell

On The Spur – Home Hardware and VIA Rail



Several years ago Home Hardware, through their corporate headquarters in St. Jacobs undertook a national advertising campaign in conjunction with VIA Rail. This prompted the painting of at least one VIA locomotive in colours promoting Home Hardware.

It also brought this stranger to the Waterloo Spur, just south of our Maintenance and Restoration facility in St. Jacobs.

We are very fortunate to have Home Hardware, who is such a stalwart of a truly Canadian business as such a good neighbour.



VIA Prince Albert Park observation dome car adjacent to Home Hardware Corporate Head Office at Henry Street in St. Jacobs several years ago as part of the joint promotional campaign.

The Bells, the Bells!



Our Steam Team member and Manager of Safety Systems Kim Martin likes very shiny objects and has taken this passion to an entirely new level. This is his report.

Bell Updates No. 9 and No. 124 – Kim Martin

One of our volunteers recently became obsessed over a shiny bright object at the pinnacle of No. 9's attire. His one worry? It wasn't shiny enough!



The bells master, ... the bells

The bell became his sacred quest
 Its condition had left his mind in a mess
 He loved to ring it on the rail and in the rain
 He even would ring it for a Santa train
 Yet at each pull of the rope
 His obsession deepened as he lost hope
 How to pluck it from its perch
 And squirrel it away to do the work
 With stealth it was removed from the shop
 He began to toil, rub and froth
 Finally, with confidence he stole another
 To see if #124's bell could be recovered
 His work is done the bells do glisten
 But our poor obsessed soul will not listen
 He is already starting another!

Partner Spotlight

Elmeda Weber of Kitchen Kuttings & So Much More – *Beverly Brenneman*



Waterloo Central Railway is very fortunate to have several essential community partners, some of whom have become more than partners, and are part of our WCR family. Elmeda Weber is one of those people. Elmeda, co-owner of Kitchen Kuttings Inc., in Elmira has been one of our partners for several years.

Our location in the heart of a unique rural Mennonite area is a strong selling attraction for tourists riding our train. Our partnership with Elmeda allows us to take our experiences beyond the rails and offer more dynamic experiences showcasing our local culture and heritage.

Some experiences we offer in partnership with Elmeda include the complimentary wagon rides to and from our Elmira station and downtown Elmira.

Elmeda's tractor-drawn wagon ride meet WCR trains at our Elmira Station. Elmeda also operates the very popular Waterloo Country Mennonite Farm and Fall Tours using the same tractors and custom-designed trailers as the downtown shuttle. Partnering with Elmeda adds a rich dimension and an extra special local touch to the experiences we offer our passengers.



Elmeda and her team prepare the delicious picnic lunches for passengers on the Waterloo Country Mennonite Farm and Fall Tours. Each lunch consists of local handmade items made from traditional Mennonite recipes – fresh bread, local cold cuts, locally preserved pickles, Apple Chips by Martin's Family Fruit Farm, and a traditional Mennonite treat – Jam Jam cookies.



Her team also helps provide a delicious local touch by freshly baking each of the 17,750 cookies served to our Polar Express and Santa train passengers at Christmas.

The Kitchen Cuttings team uses ingredients sourced from local Mennonite farms and businesses to further support our wonderful community. And, they use real butter!

New in 2021 will be the Sugar Bush Breakfast Tour. Elmeda has sourced a local, Mennonite-run maple syrup operation and sugar shack that our passengers can visit to see how maple syrup is actually made. Passengers will also enjoy a Santa Fe French Toast breakfast aboard our new dining car on a special train. We had planned for this special train to begin this month, but the current pandemic has pushed the start-up to next season.



Elmeda's incredible work ethic, kindness, and eye for business opportunities that compliment her hometown and partners is admirable.

We are very grateful for Elmeda, her team's partnership, and friendship and look forward to creating new experiences with Elmeda and her talented group as Waterloo Central continues to grow and promote Woolwich Township and Waterloo Region.



Elmeda Weber baking cookies & meeting our train

WCR History – Toronto Hamilton & Buffalo Railway Caboose No. 61 – Dave Banks

Our heritage caboose No. 61 was built for the Toronto Hamilton & Buffalo Railway (T.H. & B.) which ran to all of the cities mentioned in its name. No. 61 was manufactured at National Steel Car in Hamilton, Ontario in 1914.

It remained in service until 1973, and was ultimately sold to Port Stanley Terminal Rail, in Port Stanley, Ontario in 1985. The historic van is now owned by the Southern Ontario Locomotive Restoration Society, the owner and operator of the Waterloo Central Railway.





It is believed that T.H. & B. vans were originally painted green, followed by the railway's version of "caboose red." In 1956, TH&B vans were painted in the yellow-and-black colours of Hamilton's Canadian Football League Tiger-Cats.

No. 61 received its current red paint after arriving in Port Stanley. TH&B vans were noted for displaying safety slogans on the side, a tradition maintained by No. 61 which proclaims, "Tight Grip, Safe Trip."



History of Caboosees

A caboose is an office coupled at the end of a freight train or transfer. Caboosees, also known in Canada as vans, provided shelter for the crew at the end of a train. Caboosees were required for switching and shunting, and to keep a lookout for load shifting, damage to equipment and cargo, or overheating axles (also known as hot boxes) which could derail a train. Designs were originally modified box cars or flatbed cars carrying a cabin, but later became specialized cars, with projections above or to the sides of the car so crew could observe the train from shelter. The car also served as conductor's office, and on long routes, included accommodation and cooking facilities.



Coal or wood was originally used to fire a cast iron stove for heat and cooking, later giving way to a kerosene heater, as is in ours today. Now rare, the old stoves can be identified by several essential features. They were without legs, bolted directly to the floor, and featured a lip on the top surface to keep pans and coffee pots from sliding off. They also had a double-latching door, to prevent accidental discharge of hot coals caused by the rocking motion of the caboose

The standard form of the North American caboose had a platform at either end with curved grab rails to facilitate train crew members' ascent onto a moving train. A caboose

was fitted with red lights called markers to enable the rear of the train to be seen at night. This has led to the phrase "bringing up the markers" to describe the last car on a train. These lights were officially what made a train a "train".

Originally lit with oil lamps, with the advent of electricity, later caboose versions incorporated an electrical generator driven by belts coupled to one of the axles, which charged a lead-acid storage battery when the train was in motion.

The most common caboose form in Canadian railway practice has a small windowed projection on the roof, called the cupola. The crew sat in elevated seats to inspect the train from this perch.

The invention of the cupola caboose is generally attributed to T. B. Watson, a freight conductor on the Chicago & North Western Railway in 1898.



Local Retrospective

An article on Facebook of a CPR derailment (Grand River Railway) in Kitchener caught our eye this week. Please pay special attention to the gentleman in the photo to the right – if it is not obvious, that is our own Honourary Chief Mechanical Officer Norm Gelinis back in his days as a locomotive specialist with CP who along with his colleagues got this locomotive and cars back on the tracks again.



Although not specifically on the Waterloo Spur these photos are of the motors and coaches of the CP Electric Lines – Grand River Railway and Lake Erie & Northern Railway which ran north and south out the former shops in Preston (Cambridge). The shop is shown in one of the photos.



Both photos taken at the G.R.R. – L.E. & N. Shops in Preston

The Grand River Railway ran north to Kitchener and Waterloo terminating in Waterloo just north of Erb, and Caroline Streets in Waterloo interchanging with CN where the former WCR station at Father David Bauer Drive is located. To get there the GRR trackage ran down the center of Caroline Street somewhat similar to the ION now on Caroline Street only a bit more imposing.



GRR – LE&N Shops in Preston



Kitchener

These photos were kindly provided by Mark Hymers and were taken by his father. Many of Mark's photos of a railway time gone by can be found on the Facebook Page "Ontario Branchlines Past & Present".

In each edition we plan on showcasing photographs of local railway activity from previous generations primarily on the Waterloo Spur during its original days with CN but also the main line where it connects with the Guelph Sub. Also included will be the Grand River Railway in Waterloo where Father David Bauer Drive is now along with their operations in Kitchener. If you have any photographs from this era you would like to share, please send them along.

Time For A Good Read

During this time of uncertainty and depending on your particular circumstances, you may have some extra time to do a little reading. Periodically we will attempt to bring some interesting items to your attention.

In this issue we would like to make you aware of "Railway Stratford Revised" a wonderful book that looks at the railway heritage of Stratford Ontario. The book follows the history of the shop, from when the railway first arrived in Stratford through to its heyday as one of the premiere railway steam locomotive shops on the CNR system servicing and rebuilding steam locomotives from across the country.

"Railway Stratford Revised" and is written by Stratford resident Dean Robinson. More information about this wonderful book can be found on his web site at:

<https://www.deanrobinsonbooks.ca/>

You may not be aware that our Assistant General Manager Greg McDonnell is an accomplished author in his own right having authored at least a dozen books on many topics but mostly focused on railway themes. Along with this he has been a contributing writer and editor for many years to Trains Magazine and is currently the Editor of the yearly Locomotive 2020 Issue that comes out each fall.

<https://kalmbachhobbystore.com/product/special-issue/vt-loc200901-c>

<https://trn.trains.com/authors/greg-mcdonnell>

<https://www.trha.ca/trha/greg-mcdonnells-impressive-images-of-railway-snow-plows-in-action/>

<https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/whatson-story/3370258-mcdonnell-sets-sail-in-different-direction/>

COVID-19 Operational Update

As indicated in the April 6th Notice to all Volunteers and Staff, the WCR will be following the Emergency Directives issued by the Province of Ontario and will remain temporarily closed through the end of April or as otherwise directed by the Province of Ontario and/or the Provincial and Regional Health Authorities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of SOLRS and the WCR Management Team we hope you and your families are safe and healthy during this time of uncertainty and thank you for your continuing interest. We look forward to the time when this is a memory and we are all doing again what we love and enjoy.

Southern Ontario Locomotive Restoration Society

- President – Norm Etheridge
- Vice-President – Dave Banks
- Secretary – John Vieth
- Director – Aaron Schnarr
- Director – Irvon Weber
- Director – Chris Corrigan

Waterloo Central Railway

- General Manager – Peter McGough
- Assistant General Manager – Greg McDonnell
- Marketing & Communications Manager – Beverly Brenneman
- Shop Foreman, Train Crew Scheduling & Volunteer Coordinator – Matthew Schilling
- Steam Team Manager – Irvon Weber
- Assistant Steam Team Manager – Dave Banks
- Manager of Safety Systems – Kim Martin
- Manager of Training – Dave Banks
- Assistant Manager of Training – Russ Deacon
- Ticketing & Customer Service – Anna Schnarr
- Accounts Payable & Bookkeeping – Claudia Dauria
- Systems Analysis – Ebu Siren
- Honourary Chief Mechanical Officer – Norm Gelinas
- Honourary Master Painter – Grant Scheifele
- Honourary Master Carpenter – Brian Ray

This issue compiled by Greg McDonnell, Beverly Brenneman, Dave Banks, Kim Martin and Peter McGough with contributions by Matthew Whitley, Victor Menhennet and Mark Hymers.



OUR ORGANIZATION

The Waterloo Central Railway is owned and operated by the Southern Ontario Locomotive Restoration Society; a non-profit charitable organization made up of largely volunteers dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and operation of vintage & historic railway equipment. The Waterloo Central Railway is a licensed shortline railway under Shortline Railway Act of Ontario.