

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING

*Travelling by train in Canada
and elsewhere in North America*

2010's



by Peter Dawes

**No Matter Where It's Going:
Travelling by train in Canada and elsewhere in North America
2010's**

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FRONT COVER PHOTO

2010's-1: VIA Rail Canada's No. 1 *Canadian* pulling into Rivers MB, its entire 23 cars and two locomotives visible from the dome of rear-end STRATHCONA PARK (2011/09/29) [PETER DAWES].

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DEDICATION

to Ken Boulton.

FOREWORD

This project documents my extensive train travels over the years in most parts of Canada served by rail, and to a much lesser extent in the United States, Mexico and Costa Rica.

This volume covers the 2010's. Involved are trips from British Columbia all the way across to New Brunswick, from Québec City east along the north shore of the St. Lawrence, from Seattle across the northern United States to New York and south to Fort Lauderdale, from New York southwest to New Orleans and north to Chicago, from San Francisco north to Vancouver, also within Alaska.

This is **VERSION 14** (for changes from the previous version, please see page 256).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PETER DAWES worked as a transportation policy researcher, analyst, project manager and advisor for the Canadian Transport Commission and Government of Alberta until taking early retirement. He has had a lifelong personal and professional interest in railways and passenger trains, and resides with his wife Sandra in Edmonton, Alberta.

CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	.3
FOREWORD .....	.3
ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	.3
CONTENTS .....	.4
PHOTO CREDITS.....	.6
INTRODUCTION.....	.6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	.9
GENERAL NOTES AND CAVEATS.....	.10
ABBREVIATIONS	
SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	.12
ADDITIONAL TRACK AND EQUIPMENT OWNERS .....	.12
RAIL EQUIPMENT .....	.14
SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS.....	.16
EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS .....	.16
SAMPLE ENTRY .....	.18
QUICK INDEX OF TRAINS TAKEN	
AGENCE MÉTROPOLITAINE DE TRANSPORT .....	.20
ALASKA RAILROAD .....	.20
ALBERTA PRAIRIE RAILWAY EXCURSIONS.....	.20
AMTRAK .....	.21
CALTRAIN .....	.21
GO TRANSIT .....	.21
HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE .....	.21
LE MASSIF DE CHARLEVOIX .....	.21
METRO-NORTH RAILROAD .....	.22
SOUTHERN PRAIRIE RAILWAY .....	.22
SOUTH SIMCOE RAILWAY .....	.22
SWISS TRAVEL COSTA RICA.....	.22
TRANSLINK (WEST COAST EXPRESS) .....	.22
VIA RAIL CANADA .....	.22
WESTERN RAILWAY MUSEUM.....	.23
WHITE PASS & YUKON ROUTE .....	.23

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

2010's.....	24
OVERALL CONTEXT.....	25
TRIP DETAILS.....	26
PLACES VISITED.....	27
PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY TRIPS.....	27
ROUTE SCHEMATIC 1: ALASKA & NORTHWESTERN BC EXCEPTED.....	30
ROUTE SCHEMATIC 2: ALASKA & NORTHWESTERN BC ONLY.....	31
2010: ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN/BRITISH COLUMBIA/QUÉBEC/ONTARIO/	
NORTHWESTERN/MIDWESTERN/NORTHEASTERN U.S.	32
SYNOPSIS	33
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	35
2011: QUÉBEC/ONTARIO/MANITOBA/SASKATCHEWAN/ALBERTA/	
NORTHEASTERN/SOUTHEASTERN U.S./COSTA RICA.....	53
SYNOPSIS	54
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	56
2012: ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/MANITOBA/SASKATCHEWAN/ALBERTA.....	72
SYNOPSIS	73
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	75
2013: ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN.....	88
SYNOPSIS	89
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	91
2014: ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/NEW BRUNSWICK/ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN	99
SYNOPSIS	100
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	102
2015: ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN/NORTHEASTERN	
SOUTHERN/MIDWESTERN U.S.	117
SYNOPSIS	118
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	120
2016: ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN/MANITOBA/ONTARIO.....	136
SYNOPSIS	137
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	139
2017: ALBERTA/BRITISH COLUMBIA/ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/ALASKA.....	156
SYNOPSIS	157
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	159
2018: ALBERTA/BRITISH COLUMBIA/SASKATCHEWAN/ONTARIO/	
QUÉBEC/U.S. PACIFIC NORTHWEST.....	182
SYNOPSIS	183

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	185
2019: ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/NORTHEASTERN U.S.....	211
SYNOPSIS	212
TRIPS AND CONSISTS.....	214
GENERAL INDEX	224
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
PUBLICATIONS.....	244
WEBSITES	249
LIST OF PHOTOS.....	252
LIST OF SCANNED IMAGES.....	254
CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSION	256

PHOTO CREDITS

Bowler, Keith [*2010's-30*];
Dawes, Sandra [*2010's-9, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 35, 37, 39, 41, 44, 49, 51, 53, 55, 59, 63, 64, 65, 68*];
Dawes, Peter [*all others*];
Farand, Raymond [*2010's-32*];
Matoff, Tom [*2010's-56*];
Unidentified fellow passenger [*2010's-69*].

IMPORTANT!

Please see **GENERAL NOTES AND CAVEATS** below for important information regarding copyright, ownership, use and acquisition of photos appearing in this document (specifically under **Photographs**, page 9).

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 9th volume of my North American rail-travel project, offering detailed accounts of all train trips taken during the 2010's.

Previous volumes cover the 1950's, the 1960's, first part of the 1970's (1970-75), second part of that decade (1976-79), first part of the 1980's (1980-82), second part of that decade (1983-89), 1990's and

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

2000's. A later 2020's volume follows. There is also a comprehensive "Reprise" providing: a review of rail-passenger developments by decade; an overall summary of my travels; personal ratings of trains; interesting cars and locomotives encountered; and several tables providing more detailed trip information. (I've also prepared three "Companion Documents": No. 1, Trip Details; No. 2, Train Details; and No. 3, Equipment Details.)

Please note that I've also travelled extensively by train in Europe and, to a much lesser extent, Australia, Fiji, India and Sri Lanka, Japan and Hong Kong – the subject of a separate project called *La Grande Allure: Travelling by train in Europe and elsewhere Overseas*.

Through **2025**, the **2010's** have accounted for 12% of my North American trips over the years, compared to (in descending order): 1970's, 33%; 1980's, 21%; 2000's, 12%; 1960's, 7%; 1990's, 6%; and 1950's, 3%. (The 2020's so far: 6%).

It is important to note that I only started taking train consists at the beginning of 1974. Prior to this, trips are reconstructed from memory and are therefore speculative, with timings and car types taken from public timetables and equipment lists.

BEFORE PROCEEDING...

Those familiar with other volumes might wish to skip over the rest of this section.

Turning to the current volume, I provide **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** of those persons without whose assistance this project could not have happened. To assist readers as they go through the year-by-year accounts, I also offer some **GENERAL NOTES & CAVEATS**, **ABBREVIATIONS**, a **SAMPLE ENTRY**, and a **QUICK INDEX OF TRAINS TAKEN**.

For the **period** involved, I provide the overall context, details of trips taken, places visited, and particularly noteworthy trips. For each **year** within that period, I include a **SYNOPSIS** covering: the context; trips taken and distance travelled; types and numbers of cars and locomotives making up the trains; places visited; noteworthy train trips; fastest and slowest average speeds; and any memorable associated trips by other modes of transport.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

Then, under the heading **TRIPS AND CONSISTS** and for each train trip, I provide the date and (in a headline) service provider, train number, embarkation point, disembarkation point, origin and final destination (if different), and train name (where applicable). I go on to show the detailed train consist in a darkly shaded box, followed by departure time, arrival time, any major enroute stops, and purpose of the trip. (If more than one leg was involved, I mention the ultimate destination and connecting points at the start of the first leg.) I then describe any interesting aspects about the train and route taken, and things that happened along the way. I also provide a brief account of any relevant events that occurred before the train departed or after it arrived at my destination.

At the end of the entry (lightly shaded), I often provide the distance in both kilometres and miles, elapsed time and average speed, as well as further details on the train itself, including configuration and history of selected cars and locomotives. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, I do this only for the first trip, during that year and over that route, of a certain train or type of train.

Now for an important explanation. I fully reference every point-to-point, inter-community **rail** trip taken, including excursions on both regular lines and preserved railways – also commuter rail trips provided they went beyond the city or region concerned. I note, but do not fully reference, associated marine, road and air trips, as well as intra-community trips by main-line railways.

At the end of the volume, I provide a **GENERAL INDEX** by subject, **BIBLIOGRAPHY**, **LIST OF PHOTOS**, **LIST OF SCANNED IMAGES**, and note describing **CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSION**.

Three final points. First, please bear in mind that this is a **personal** account of rail and associated travel. It will appeal mainly to people who already enjoy train travel or might want to try it out; to railway modellers, photographers, historians or researchers; and perhaps to those who are just interested in the evolution of rail travel in Canada and (to a much lesser degree) the United States during this era. While trip purpose, references to travelling companions, and anecdotes are included, I present this information in such a manner as to be easily avoided by those looking strictly for train consists.

Second, more knowledgeable readers will find many comments and explanations to be old hat and obvious. If you fit this bill, please understand that you will be a lot more familiar with this subject area than others.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

Third, I strongly encourage feedback – everything from factual clarifications to minor typographical corrections; to additional car and locomotive information; and to photographs that might fill in gaps (or, where my efforts are concerned, improve on what I've included). Please contact me using the information shown on page 2 above.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to the following:

- the late Mark Bunting, Tom Matoff, Ken Mozersky, John Stilgoe, the late Brian Sullivan, and Greg Thompson for being key influences where both my interest in trains and career in transportation are concerned (as cited in the initial 1950's volume);
- Ken Boulton, Tom Clark, Greg Gormick, Ken Holmes, the late Fred Matthews, Doug Smith and Nicholas Vincent for being kindred spirits;
- Ken Boulton, the late Jennifer Bunting, Cindy Chow, Colin Churcher, Charlie Dawes, the late Patrick Dorin, Don McQueen, Jean Patenaude, the late Earl Roberts, Doug Smith, Dan Walter and the late Dale Wilson for providing valuable advice concerning this project;
- Shaun Fawcett for essential help in publishing these volumes online; and
- my wife Sandra for much-appreciated companionship on many trips, for design suggestions, and for developing the route schematics, website and web versions of these documents.

Specifically where this 2010's volume is concerned:

- Keith Bowler, Sandra Dawes and Ray Farand for photographs; and
- the following for providing information: Mallory Chipman regarding Joni Mitchell's "Just Like This Train"; John Coombs' websites for Alaska Railroad; Alden Dryer, Paul Gibson, David Warner and Don Winter on Amtrak cars; Bill Haithcoat on Amtrak's *Crescent* and predecessor trains; Tom Matoff on *Coast Starlight*'s routing; Earl Roberts on various Agence métropolitaine de transport, Le Massif

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

de Charlevoix and VIA equipment matters; and Doug Smith on VIA's capital programs, Renaissance accessibility modifications, *Ocean* and *Le Massif*.

Despite the assistance provided, the author remains entirely responsible for errors or omissions.

Finally, this volume is dedicated to my cousin, Ken Boulton, who has shared with me a life-long interest in trains, going back to Alexandria days.

Peter Dawes
Edmonton, Alberta
January, 2026.

GENERAL NOTES AND CAVEATS

Photographs: have been chosen to support the text, ***remain the property of the individual photographer and/or collection, are protected by copyright, and must not be used in any fashion without permission*** (please bear in mind that those involving night and winter trains often were taken in adverse lighting conditions);

Train names: are shown where formally used (and as used) by the service provider (in the case of Ontario-Québec Corridor trains, they continue to be shown after VIA dropped them from its new pocket timetable format in 1998);

BEFORE PROCEEDING...

Those familiar with other volumes might wish to skip over the rest of this section.

Timings: are shown in standard or daylight savings time, whichever was in effect;

Travel by non-rail means: is highlighted by a bullet, either on its own if it occurred at the start of a journey on a non-rail travel day, otherwise within the normal text;

Car occupied: is indicated in **Bold**;

Diesel locomotives: are referred to as "Diesel" instead of the more technically correct "Diesel-Electric";

Snack facilities: are not usually indicated but were often available (in the Ontario-Québec Corridor, by cart in Coaches);

Equipment units: are shown in several categories, examples being "Coaches & Daynitors" and "Sleeping & Business Cars" (please note that not all car types mentioned under these category titles were necessarily encountered in every decade or period);

Equipment deadheading: is indicated by *[dd]*;

Cars used for other than designed purposes: are noted as such where recorded or assumed (e.g., a Club Galley being used as a Coach carries the notation, *[as Coach]*);

Major stops: refers to full revenue stops and omits Flag or Conditional stops except where these are of special interest;

Distances and average speeds: are rounded to the nearest full kilometre or mile (distances may vary from timetables especially where conversion back and forth between the two measures was necessary and where the service provider used a different ratio; also, average speeds reflect the scarcity of dedicated, high-speed passenger trackage in North America, as well as the often considerable time required for operational, servicing, passenger access, express handling, and crewing purposes);

Equipment details: are provided for selected cars and locomotives only, in order to give the flavour, in each year, of equipment encountered (special thanks here to the Bytown Railway Society for its *Canadian Trackside Guide*, Earl Roberts and Dave Stremes, editors);

Consist-taking: has resulted in some inaccuracies and omissions, due to: switching of equipment prior to my joining or leaving a train (or during the middle of the night); mistakes made in recording equipment types; late boarding or hurried exit from trains; and occasional grumpiness or sheer laziness – in which case assumptions are made regarding the particular car or locomotive (or number of units), based in some cases on photos taken at the time, and shown in *Italics*.

ABBREVIATIONS

SERVICE PROVIDERS

[Note: coloured abbreviations carry through from earlier volumes]

AM Amtrak (National Railroad Passenger Corp.)

AMT Agence métropolitaine de transport

APRE Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions

ARR Alaska Railroad

CALT Caltrain

GO GO Transit

HAL Holland-America Line

LMC Le Massif de Charlevoix

M-N Metro-North Railroad

SPRY Southern Prairie Railway

SSRY South Simcoe Railway

STCR Swiss Travel Costa Rica

TL TransLink (West Coast Express)

VIA VIA Rail Canada

WP&Y White Pass & Yukon Route

WRM Western Railway Museum

ADDITIONAL TRACK AND EQUIPMENT OWNERS

ARM Alberta Railway Museum (Edmonton)

AT&SF Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway

BAERA Bay Area Electric Railroad Association

BCR BC Rail

CB&Q Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad

C&EI Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

CN	Canadian National Railways
C&NW	Chicago & North Western Railway
CP	Canadian Pacific Railway
CR	Consolidated Rail Corp. (Conrail)
CRCS	Colonist Rail Car Society (Edmonton)
CRI&P	Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad
CSR	Conway Scenic Railroad (Conway NH)
CWR	Central Western Railway (Stettler AB)
D&H	Delaware & Hudson Railroad
DL&W	Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad
EC	Eagle Canon Passenger Car Co. (Parkersburg WV)
FFT	Florida Fun Train
GCRT	Great Canadian Railtour Co.
GN	Great Northern Railway
G&N	Genesee & Northern Railroad
GRT	Gator Route
JLC&E	Jonesboro, Lake City & Eastern Railroad
KS	Key System
LAS	Lasco
L&N	Louisville & Nashville Railroad
MeC	Maine Central
MET	Metra (Regional Transportation Authority, Chicago)
MRL	Mississippian Railway (Fulton MS)
NAP	Naporano Iron & Metal Co.
NARC	North Alabama Railroad Club
NBEC	New Brunswick East Coast Railway
NJT	New Jersey Transit
NP	Northern Pacific Railway
NPC	North Pacific Coast Railroad
NRHMI	National Railroad Historical Society, Michigan Chapter (Bluewater)
NRHS	National Railroad Historical Society
NS	Norfolk Southern Railroad
NSH	North Shore Railroad

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

NWP	North Western Pacific Railroad
NYC	New York Central Railroad
OA&E	Oakland, Antioch & Eastern Railway
ORA	Ontario Rail Association
PC	Penn Central Railroad
PEC	Prince Edward County Railway
PJT	Pandrol Jackson Technologies
PLSR	Pioneer Lines Scenic Railway (Gettysburg PA)
PRR	Pennsylvania Railroad
PUL	Pullman Co.
RSC	Rail/Sea Cruises
SAL	Seaboard Air Line Railroad
SCL	Seaboard Coast Line Railroad
SFG	Société du Chemin de Fer de la Gaspésie
SFSAC	San Francisco-Sacramento Railroad
SLSF	St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad
SL&U	Salt Lake & Utah Railroad
SOU	Southern Railway
SN	Sacramento Northern Railway
SP	Southern Pacific Railroad
SPO	Speno International SA
SPTA	SEPTA Rail
SSS	S.S. Sykes
STCUM	Société de transport de la communauté urbaine de Montréal
TH&B	Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Railway
TM	Texas-Mexican Railway
T&NO	Texas & New Orleans Railroad
UP	Union Pacific Railroad
WEX	Wilderness Adventures
WMSR	Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

RAIL EQUIPMENT

C	Coach
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NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

CDme	Dome Coach
CDn	Coach Dinette
Cfe	Cfe
CfeL	Cafe Lounge
CfLC	Cafe Lounge Coach
CKDn	Coach Club Dinette
CX	Coach Baggage
D	Diner
DG	Diner Grill
DL	Diner Lounge
Dn	Dinette
dd	Equipment deadheading
Dn	Dinette
E	Engine (Diesel)
ed	Dual Electric/Diesel locomotive
e	Electric
ex-	Formerly
HEP	Head-end Electric Power
K	Club Galley
KDn	Club Dinette
KitC	Kitchen Coach
Kr	Club (Renaissance)
Ir-	Later
L	Lounge car
LS	Lounge Sleeper
NPC	Non-powered Cab unit
OBS	Open observation car
OC	Observation Coach
OL	Observation Lounge
OLS	Observation Lounge Sleeper
P	Parlor
S	Sleeper
SmDL	Smoker Dinette Lounge

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

SvL	Service Lounge
SY	Sleeper Dormitory
TC	Theater car
U	Generator
UX	Generator Baggage
VA	Video Arcade car
W	Caboose
X	Baggage
XT	Gallery Transition
XY	Baggage Dormitory

SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS

ct	Compartment
db	Double Bedroom
de	Deluxe room
di	Room accessible to mobility device users (Deluxe on VIA)
dr	Drawing Room
du	Duplex Roomette
ec	Economy Room
fr	Family Room
rm	Roomette
sc	Section

EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS

ACF	American Car & Foundry
ALS	Alstom
AMFT	AMF Technotransport
ARI	Avalon Rail Inc.
BBD	Bombardier
BLW	Baldwin Locomotive Works
Budd	Budd Co.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

CAF	CAF (Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles) USA
CC&F	Canadian Car & Foundry
CRM	Colorado Railcar Manufacturing
EMD	Electro-Motive Division (GM)
EPC	Emprotech Corp.
GE	General Electric
GMD	General Motors Diesel Division
HCC	Holman Car Co.
HSM	Hall Scott Motor Co.
JRS	Julien-Rail-Solutions
MB	Mercedes-Benz
MC	Metropolitan-Cammell
MKA	Morrison Knudsen/Amerail
MLW	Montréal Locomotive Works
MPI	Motive Power Inc.
MRLX	Mid America Railcar Leasing
NC&M	Niles Car & Manufacturing Co.
NO	Nippon Sharyo
NSC	National Steel Car
PS	Pullman Standard
PUL	Pullman Co.
RRM	Rader Railcar Manufacturing
RTAL	RENFE-Talgo of America
SPTA	SEPTA Rail
TRR	Tillamook Railcar Repair

SAMPLE ENTRY

BEFORE PROCEEDING...

Those familiar with other volumes might wish to skip over this section.

21-22 SEP:

AM 48 CHICAGO-NEW YORK *Lakeshore Limited*

E	[2]	815,139	CHICAGO-ALBANY
E		706	ALBANY-NEW YORK
X		1710	CHICAGO-ALBANY <i>[BOSTON]</i>
Dn		53510	"
S		62036	"
C	[2]	25094,25047	"
C	[4]	25117,25049,25001,25102	
D		8505	
S	[2]	62015 ,62004	
X		1708	

Depart Union Station 2130, arrive Pennsylvania Station next evening two hours late at 2025, stopping at South Bend IN, Elkhart, Waterloo, Bryan OH, Toledo, Sandusky, Elyria and Cleveland (over Norfolk Southern Railway), then Erie PA, Buffalo-Depew NY, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany-Rensselaer and Croton-Harmon (over CSX Corp.) – also unscheduled stops at Hudson, Rhinecliff and Poughkeepsie, due to a missed connection at Albany; * Power was supplied by General Electric P40 and P42DC locomotives out of Chicago, then a dual-mode P32ACDM onward from Albany to permit access into Penn Station; * We occupied a "Roomette" in "Viewliner" Sleeping car No. 62015, named ISLAND VIEW inside but not on the exterior; * The front Baggage, Dinette and two Coaches were removed at Albany and proceeded to Boston; * 1,558 km in 21 hrs 55 mins, or 71 km/h (959 mls/44 mph); * Nos. 815 (1993), 139 (2000-1), 706 (1995) (all GE); * No. 62015 (12rm2br1di) (MKA, 1995); * No. 8505 (Budd, 1957; ex-CB&Q 458, AM 8045); * No. 53510 (BBD, 1989); * No. 25001 (Budd, 1981); * No 1708 (Budd, 1953; ex-AT&SF C 2859, AM 4871,4703).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

Explanations:

21-22 SEP:

AM 48

CHICAGO-NEW YORK

- departure and arrival dates;
- service provider was Amtrak, train number 48;
- segment travelled (additional places in brackets would indicate train originated and/or terminated beyond these points);
- name of train;
- these Locomotives travelling from Chicago as far as Albany;
- this Locomotive taking over at Albany for New York;
- Baggage car off at Albany for Boston;
- Dinette off at Albany for Boston (*Italics* indicating car number assumed rather than recorded);
- Sleeping car off at Albany for Boston;
- these two Coaches likewise;
- these four Coaches travelling from Chicago to NYC;
- this Dining car likewise;
- these two Sleepers likewise (**Bold** indicating that we occupied No. 62015);
- this Baggage car likewise.

E 2 [2] 815,139 CHICAGO-ALBANY

E 706 ALBANY-NEW YORK

X 1710 CHICAGO-ALBANY [BOSTON]

Dn 53510 "

S 62036 "

C 2 [2] 25094,25047 "

C 4 [4] 25117,25049,25001,25102

D 8505

S 2 [2] **62015**,62004

X 1708

* 1,558 km in 21 hrs 55 mins, or 71 km/h
(959 mls/44 mph)

- distance travelled, elapsed time, and average speed in kilometres (*and miles*);

* Nos. 815 (1993), 139 (2000-1), 706
(1995) (*all GE*)

- these Locomotives built by General Electric in the years indicated;

* No. 62015 (*13rm2br1di*) (MKA, 1995)

- this Sleeper built by Morrison Knudsen/Amerail in 1995, with 13 Roomettes, 2 Bedrooms and 1 room for persons with disabilities;

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

* No. 8505 (*Budd, 1957; ex-CB&Q 458, AM 8045*)

- this Diner built by Budd in 1957, formerly Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (CB&Q) No. 458, Amtrak No. 8045;

* No. 53510 (*BBD, 1989*)

- this Dinette built by Bombardier in 1989 as part of Amtrak's Horizon fleet (again, *Italics* indicating car number assumed);

* No. 25001 (*Budd, 1981*)

- this Coach built by Budd in 1981;

* No. 1708 (*Budd, 1953; ex-AT&SF C 2859, AM 4871,4703*)

- this Baggage car built by Budd in 1981, formerly Santa Fe Coach No. 2859, Amtrak Nos. 4871, 4703.

QUICK INDEX OF TRAINS TAKEN

<i>number</i>	<i>name/route</i>	<i>page(s)</i>
---------------	-------------------	----------------

AGENCE MÉTROPOLITaine DE TRANSPORT

51	Montréal-Pincourt/T. Vaudreuil	47
-	<i>Express du musée</i>	65

ALASKA RAILROAD

-	<i>Denali Star</i>	170
-	Seward-Anchorage	166

ALBERTA PRAIRIE RAILWAY EXCURSIONS

-	Stettler-Big Valley (& v.v.)	97
---	------------------------------	----

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

<i>number</i>	<i>name/route</i>	<i>page(s)</i>
AMTRAK		
6	<i>California Zephyr</i>	187
8	<i>Empire Builder</i>	40
14	<i>Coast Starlight</i>	191
48	<i>Lakeshore Limited</i>	43
58	<i>City of New Orleans</i>	132
60	<i>Crescent</i>	129
64	<i>Maple Leaf</i>	56,126
68	<i>Adirondack</i>	126
69	<i>Adirondack</i>	45,217
97	<i>Silver Meteor</i>	57
513	Vancouver-Seattle	39
518	Portland-Vancouver	193
2155	New York-Washington	128
CALTRAIN		
197	Mountain View-San Francisco	186
360	San Francisco-Mountain View	185
GO TRANSIT		
801	Toronto-Barrie	178 [<i>Allandale Waterfront</i>]
804	Barrie-Toronto	180 [<i>Allandale Waterfront</i>]
HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE		
-	<i>McKinley Explorer</i>	168
LE MASSIF DE CHARLEVOIX		
-	Québec-La Malbaie (& v.v.)	79

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

<i>number</i>	<i>name/route</i>	<i>page(s)</i>
METRO-NORTH RAILROAD		
9615	New York-Katonah	214
9666	Katonah-New York	215
SOUTHERN PRAIRIE RAILWAY		
-	Ogema-Horizon (& v.v.)	91
SOUTH SIMCOE RAILWAY		
-	Tottenham-Beeton (& v.v.)	198
SWISS TRAVEL COSTA RICA		
-	Mata de Limón-Cambalache	61
TRANSLINK (WEST COAST EXPRESS)		
10	Port Haney-Mission City	37
VIA RAIL CANADA		
1	<i>Canadian</i>	36,68,85,94,113,120,148,152,159,206
2	<i>Canadian</i>	35,95,116,123,139,150,153,195,208
14	<i>Ocean</i>	77;106
15	<i>Ocean</i>	111
24	<i>Chaudière</i>	174
27	<i>Frontenac</i>	82
33	<i>Vanier</i>	48,103,218
38	Ottawa-Montréal	48,66,76,77
43	<i>Lakeshore</i>	145
45	<i>Rideau</i>	177
50	<i>Lakeshore</i>	144
51	<i>Lakeshore</i>	203

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

<i>number</i>	<i>name/route</i>	<i>page(s)</i>
53	<i>York</i>	49
55	Montréal-Ottawa	65,75,77
56	Ottawa-Montréal	103
57	<i>La Salle</i>	50
59	Ottawa-Kingston	220
60	<i>Meridian</i>	143,201
61	<i>Meridian</i>	65
62	Toronto-Montréal	125,176
63	Montréal-Cornwall/Toronto	104,113
64	<i>Renaissance</i>	142
65	<i>Renaissance</i>	68,83,175
66	<i>Metropolis/Renaissance</i>	75,105,202
68	<i>Bonaventure/Metropolis</i>	63,102
72	<i>Point Pelee</i>	52,63
75	<i>Erie</i>	62
84	<i>Huron</i>	50
87	Toronto-Sarnia	50
97	<i>Maple Leaf</i>	55
638	Ottawa-Montréal	64
643	Kingston-Toronto	221
644	Kingston-Ottawa	64
648	Toronto-Ottawa	173
650	Toronto-Kingston	200
668	Toronto-Montréal	124,125
669	Cornwall-Kingston	143,177
WESTERN RAILWAY MUSEUM		
-	Rio Vista Jct.- Molena (& v.v.)	189
WHITE PASS & YUKON ROUTE		
-	Skagway-Fraser Meadows	162 (& v.v.)

2010's

*ALBERTA/MANITOBA/BRITISH
COLUMBIA/SASKATCHEWAN
QUÉBEC/ONTARIO/NEW BRUNSWICK
NORTHWESTERN/MIDWESTERN/
NORTHEASTERN/SOUTHEASTERN
U.S./ALASKA/COSTA RICA*



2010's-2: Amtrak No. 8 *Empire Builder* being serviced at
Shelby MT, enroute from Seattle to Chicago
(2010/09/20) [PETER DAWES].

OVERALL CONTEXT

There's nothing not to like about the Empire Builder. The on-board crew are veterans, by all appearances, and act the part. The food is good (almost as good as that on VIA Rail's Canadian, in fact), and served promptly on real china and with real silverware wrapped in real cloth napkins you know, the way it used to be.

Author unknown.
("Ultimate Passenger Train: A route for all seasons", *Trains*, Nov. 2010, 38).

During the second decade of this century, I continued to enjoy my retirement. Train travel involved mainly annual family reunions in Ontario and Québec, the *Canadian* and tourist trains on the Canadian prairies, in Ontario and in Québec. Amtrak trains included *Silver Meteor* from New York south to Florida to access a Panama Canal cruise (which, in turn, involved a Costa Rican shore excursion involving a train), the *Crescent* from Washington to New Orleans, *City of New Orleans* north to Chicago, and *Coast Starlight* from Sacramento to Portland. I also rode trains over Alaska Railroad (including two operated for or with Holland-America Line), and a White Pass & Yukon Route steam excursion. The above quotation was inspired by our 2010 trip across the northern tier of the United States on Amtrak's *Empire Builder*.

VIA's route network and services remained largely static during this period. Federal money was spent on improving stations, rebuilding rolling stock and reducing trip times, largely in the Québec-Windsor Corridor, with "stimulus" money constituting approximately 40% of the total. Following legal challenges VIA's Renaissance fleet was finally upgraded to improve accessibility, as were some cars used on the *Canadian* (certain of the latter reconfigured to provide more luxurious "Prestige" accommodation). The Conservative government subsequently cut operating funding, requiring VIA to reduce frequency on both the *Ocean* and *Canadian* services. During the spring of 2016, a National Transportation Act Review panel recommended a legislated mandate for VIA, permission to raise funds in the private sector for a dedicated passenger railway between Montréal, Ottawa and Toronto, continued subsidization of regional, remote and *Ocean* services (the last-mentioned apparently due to the "aging demographic" of, and lack of transportation options in, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia) – but elimination of all support for the *Canadian* (based on Rocky Mountaineer's demand that subsidies be removed from what it has always seen as a competitor, rather than complementary). In 2018, the Liberal government elected three years earlier gave VIA the go-ahead to

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

upgrade some cars used on the *Canadian*, and to replace Ontario-Québec Corridor equipment. In 2019, it approved money to evaluate a dedicated passenger route between Toronto, Ottawa, Montréal and Québec.

In the U.S., the first Obama administration made passenger rail somewhat of a priority, one manifestation being an Amtrak "Viewliner II" program involving 130 new cars of various types, with an option for 70 more. There was also a "high-speed" initiative to fund improvements in various corridors, although the proposals were very modest compared to many countries in Europe and Asia. How far these initiatives proceed under the Trump administration will depend on Congress, huge projected overall annual deficits, the usual competing interests – and Trump's initial budget calling for an end to Amtrak's entire long-distance network.

TRIP DETAILS

During the decade covered by this volume, I took 113 trips and travelled 53,205 kilometres (*33,205 miles*) by train. Twenty-six of the trips were totally or mostly in the United States and one in Costa Rica.

Eighty-six of these trips were in my "Coach" category and 27 in Sleepers. Four were behind steam, and four on self-propelled trains. By number of trips: **104** – VIA; **15** – Amtrak; **3** – Agence métropolitaine de transport (AMT); **2** – Alaska Railroad (ARR), Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions (APRE), Caltrain, GO Transit, Le Massif de Charlevoix (LMC), Metro-North (M-N), Southern Prairie (SPRY), South Simcoe, Western Railway Museum (WRM), and White Pass & Yukon Route (WP&Y); **1** – Holland-America Line, Swiss Travel Costa Rica (STCR), and TransLink (*West Coast Express*).

By year, the largest distance travelled was 8,797 kilometres (*5,490 miles*) in 2010; the smallest, 1,356 km (*846 m/s*) in 2013. The largest number of trips occurred in 2018, at 16; the smallest, only 6, in both 2013 and 2019. There were 1,193 units in the trains I took: 172 Locomotives & Related Units and 1,021 cars. The latter consisted of (by overall project category): Coaches & Daynitors, 458; Parlor & Club Cars, 74; Sleeping & Business Cars, 271; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 58; Lounge Cars, 106; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 54.

Fastest average speed during this period by a **Canadian** service provider was from Cornwall to Kingston on VIA No. 669 (2016): 128 km/h (*79 mph*). **American:** New York to Washington on Amtrak's No. 2155, *Acela Express* (2015): 131 km/h (*81 mph*). **Costa Rican:** Mata de Limón to Cambalache on STCR (2011): 24 km/h (*15 mph*).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

Slowest average speed by a **Canadian** service provider was Stettler to Big Valley AB on APRE (2013): 17 km/h (11 mph). **American:** **WRM**, Rio Vista Jct. to Molena: 20 km/h (12 mph). **Costa Rican:** Mata de Limón to Cambalache on STCR (2011): 24 km/h (15 mph).

PLACES VISITED

*(Note: * indicates by non-rail means)*

Canada: **AB** – Big Valley, Edmonton and Stettler; **BC** – Chilliwack*, Fraser Meadows, Mission City and Vancouver; **NB** – Moncton and Sackville*; **ON** – Barrie, Barrys Bay*, Beeton, Belleville*, Cornwall, Gravenhurst*, Honey Harbour*, Ingleside*, Kingston, Kleinburg*, London, Long Sault*, Midland*, Morrisburg*, Newmarket*, Ottawa, Penetanguishene*, Port McNicoll*, Sarnia, Toronto, Tottenham, Vaughan*, Washago, Williamstown* and Windsor; **PE** – Cavendish*, Charlottetown*, Morell* and North Rustico*; **QC** – Austin*, Brownsburg*, Charny, La Malbaie, Montréal, Mont-Tremblant*, Orford*, Pincourt, Québec, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue and St-Constant; **SK** – Horizon, Ogema and Watrous. **United States:** **AK** – Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Seward and Skagway; **CA** – Emeryville, Molena, Mountain View, Rio Vista Jct., Sacramento, San Francisco, and Winters*; **DC** – Washington; **FL** – Fort Lauderdale; **IL** – Chicago; **LA** – New Orleans; **NY** – Beacon, Katonah and New York; **OR** – Portland; **WA** – Seattle. **Costa Rica:** Cambalache and Mata de Limón.

PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY TRIPS

2010: **AM Empire Builder**, Seattle to Chicago (a mid-September trip on an excellent, bi-level Superliner train, my first time across the northern tier of the United States); **AM Lakeshore Limited**, Chicago to New York (following the route of the famous *20th Century Limited*, my first trip in a Viewliner Sleeping car).

2011: **AM Silver Meteor**, New York to Fort Lauderdale (a January escape from a frigid “Big Apple” to sunny Florida on a workhorse, Amtrak long-distance train, another first for me down the Atlantic coast); **VIA Canadian**, Toronto to Edmonton (another great trip in early autumn on a most amazing, 1950's-era train filled with tourists and staffed by an excellent crew).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

2012: **VIA Canadian**, Washago to Edmonton (yet another superb trip on this great train, our journey beginning in an Ontario town located on Lake Couchiching after an accident involving another train necessitated a bus and van transfer from Kingston); **LMC Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix**, Québec to La Malbaie & back (fabulous scenery, food and service on this tourist train running east from Québec along the north shore of the St. Lawrence).

2013: **SPRY**, Ogema to Horizon & back (first trip on a quirky heritage railway located in southern Saskatchewan, through rolling countryside behind a small diesel locomotive); **APRE**, Stettler to Big Valley & return with six friends (last steam-hauled train of the season, behind No. 41); **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous (overnight back to Saskatchewan, in association with a visit to the in-laws).

2014: **VIA Ocean**, Montréal to Moncton (first trip on this signature train into the Maritimes since its frequency was cut from six days per week to three – on the way to Prince Edward Island by rental car); **VIA No. 56** from Ottawa to Montréal (my fastest ever on this route, end-to-end, on a late running train originating in Toronto); **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous (another overnighter back to Saskatchewan, running late but with lots of good morning company in the PARK car).

2015: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous (back to Saskatchewan again, almost on time for a change); **AM Adirondack/Maple Leaf**, Montréal to New York (the former pushed, after its locomotive broke down, into Beacon station by a Metro-North Hudson Line commuter train, where passengers transferred to the latter, Toronto-originating train for the final stretch into Penn Station); **AM No. 2155**, New York to Washington (first time on one of Amtrak's *Acela Express* "high-speed" trains, its average speed good but only by North American standards); **AM Crescent**, Washington to New Orleans (overnight in a Viewliner Sleeper, with surprisingly decent meals in a 1950's-era Diner Grill car); **AM City of New Orleans**, New Orleans to Chicago (first time over the former Illinois Central, now Canadian National, route made famous in the Arlo Guthrie song, in a Superliner Sleeper).

2016: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Toronto (first trip right across since 2012, featuring excellent staff but a modest load, considering it was July); **VIA No. 669**, Cornwall to Kingston (non-stop in 128 km/h [79 mph], my fastest trip in Canada in many years).

2017: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Vancouver (first trip right through to Vancouver since back in 1986 on the old *Super Continental*; this *Canadian* a busy, bustling train filled with tourists); **WP&Y**, Skagway to Fraser

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's

Meadows BC (first time on this highly scenic route since 1975, this time on a steam-hauled excursion); **HAL McKinley Explorer**, Anchorage to Denali (Holland-America double-deck cars hauled by ARR for cruise passengers, with a great view of Mount Denali, highest peak in North America – also featuring two cars owned by Princess Cruises); **ARR Denali Star**, Denali to Fairbanks (spectacular scenery north out of Denali on the railroad's signature, open-to-the-general-public train, with two Wilderness Adventures cars attached).

2018: **AM Coast Starlight**, Sacramento to Portland (through the Cascade mountains; the service and meals surprisingly good and scenery even better; first trip on this train, over this segment, since 1975); **AM Cascades**, Portland to Vancouver (in what Amtrak called "Business Class" on an afternoon Talgo train hugging beautiful Puget Sound for much of the way); **VIA Canadian**, Vancouver to Edmonton (a well-populated, early May trip; the mountain scenery limited in scope by late running, which meant an extra night into Edmonton).

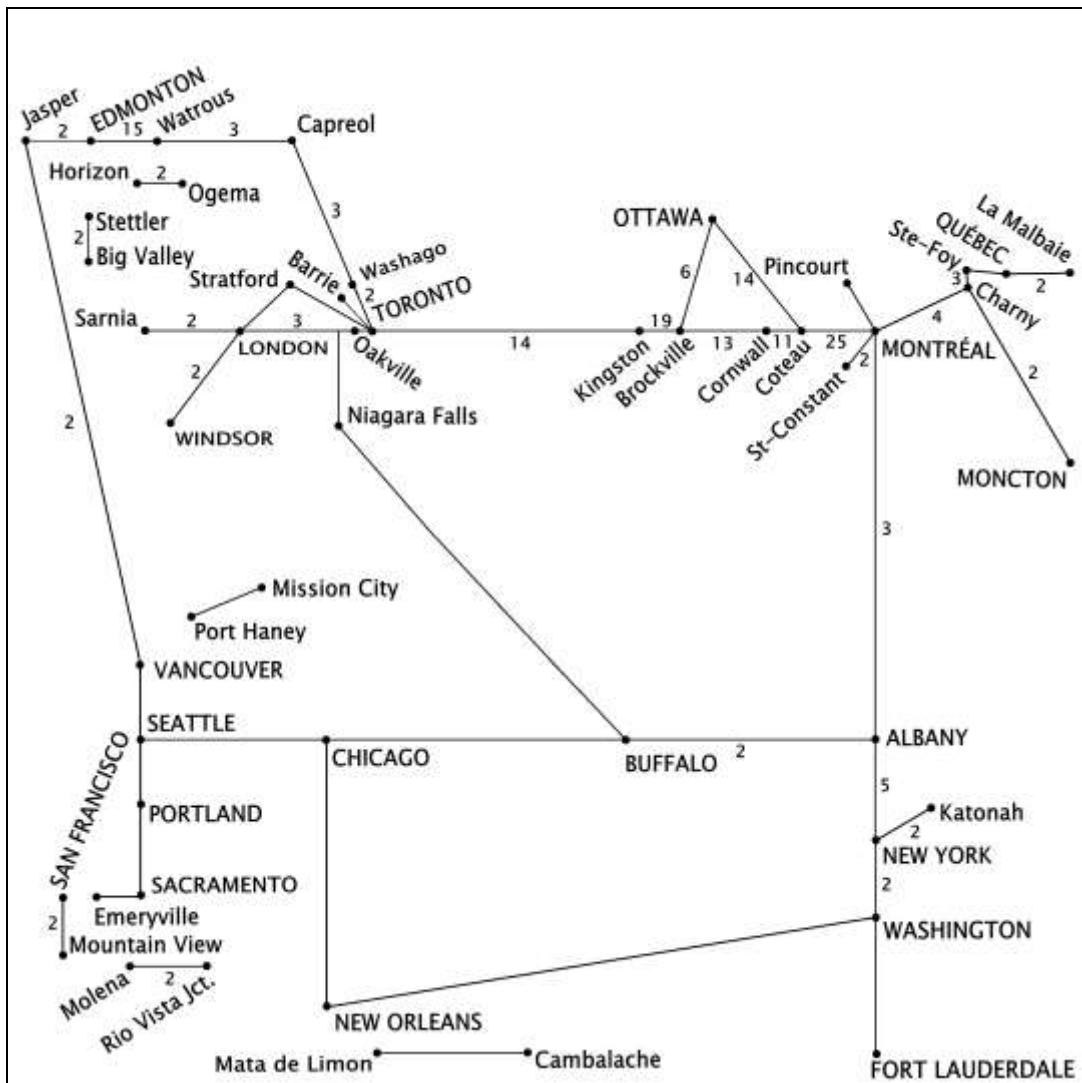
2019: **AM Adirondack**, New York to Montréal (another slow trip north, combined with *Maple Leaf* as far as Albany due to limited platform space in Penn Station); **M-N No. 9666**, Katonah to New York (on the Harlem Line, arriving on the main level of Grand Central Terminal, just as the *20th Century Limited* once did); **VIA Vanier**, Montréal to Ottawa (pausing in my old home town of Alexandria ON).

REMINDER!

All trips taken during these years were recorded, including consists.

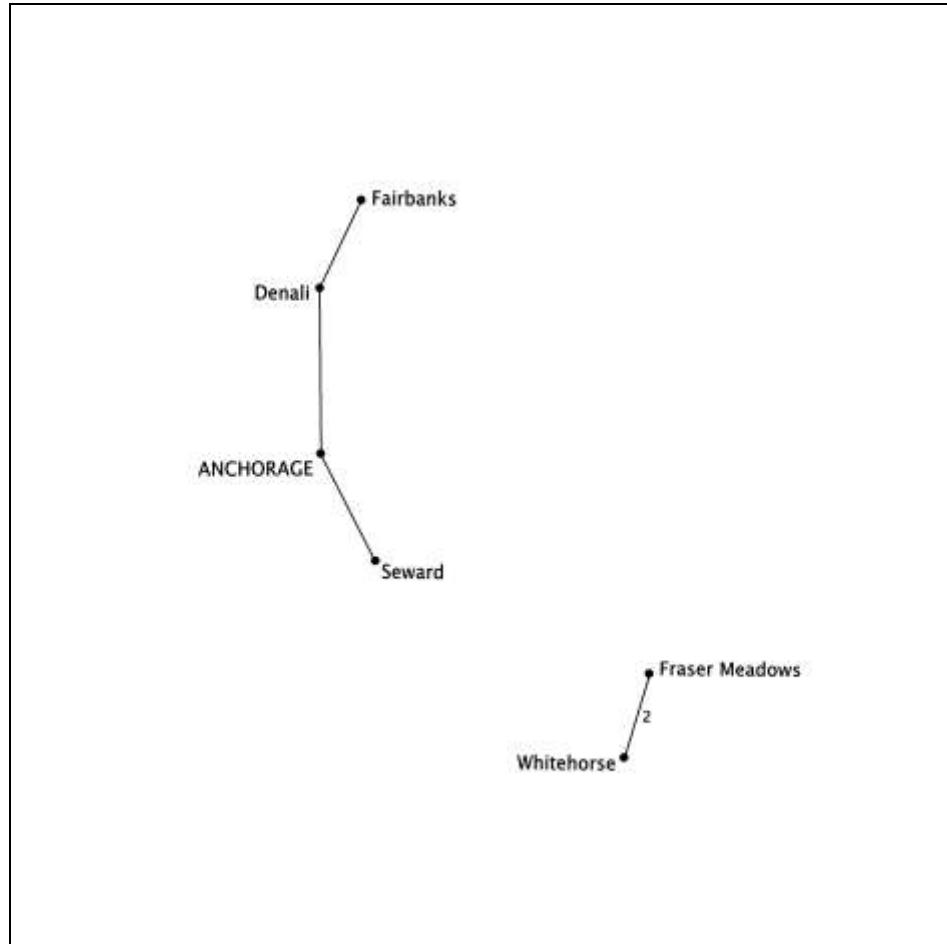
ROUTE SCHEMATIC 1: ALASKA & NORTHWESTERN BC EXCEPTED

[Showing number of one-way trips by segment (one such trip unless shown otherwise) (frequency not shown: Toronto-Barrie, 2; Toronto-Oakville, 4) (segment not shown, northwest of Toronto: Tottenham-Beeton, 2) (Port Haney-Mission City actually 2 if VIA's No. 2 Canadian included)]



ROUTE SCHEMATIC 2: ALASKA & NORTHWESTERN BC ONLY

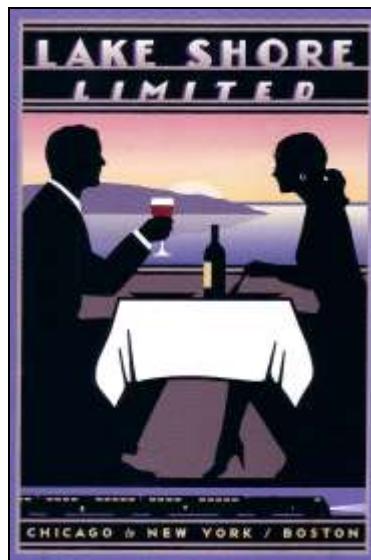
*[Showing number of one-way trips by segment
(one such trip unless shown otherwise)]*



NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

2010

*ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN
BRITISH COLUMBIA
QUÉBEC/ONTARIO
NORTHWESTERN/MIDWESTERN
NORTHEASTERN U.S.*



[Amtrak, Lakeshore Limited Dining Car Menu, cover (2010)]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2010 in connection with family visits both in Saskatchewan and back east, and to sample two northern U.S. Amtrak routes for the first time – my retirement lifestyle allowing such frivolities. The above, magnificent dining-car menu cover is for one of these trains.

Trips taken: Fifteen trips were involved covering 8,797 kilometres (*5,490 miles*), nine provided by VIA, four by Amtrak, and one each by TransLink (*West Coast Express*) and Agence métropolitaine de transport. Eleven were in my “Coach” category, the other 4 in “Sleeper”.

Equipment units: 155, made up of 25 Locomotives & Related Units and 130 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 65; Parlor & Club Cars, 11; Sleeping & Business Cars, 24; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 8; Lounge Cars, 13; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 9).

Places visited in Canada: **BC** – Chilliwack*, Mission City and Vancouver; **ON** – Kingston, London, Ottawa, Sarnia and Toronto; **QC** – Montréal and Pincourt; **SK** – Watrous. **United States:** **IL** – Chicago; **NY** – New York; **WA** – Seattle. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means.)

Noteworthy train trips: **AM Cascades**, Vancouver to Seattle; **AM Empire Builder**, Seattle to Chicago; **AM Lakeshore Limited**, Chicago to New York; **AM Adirondack**, New York to Montréal; **VIA York**, Montréal to Kingston; **VIA Huron**, Sarnia to London.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA York**, Montréal to Kingston: 107 km/h (67 mph). **American:** **Empire Builder**, Seattle to Chicago: 84 km/h (52 mph).

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **AMT No. 51**, Montréal to Pincourt: 44 km/h (27 mph). **American:** **AM Adirondack**, New York to Montréal: 54 km/h (34 mph).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

HIGHLIGHT!

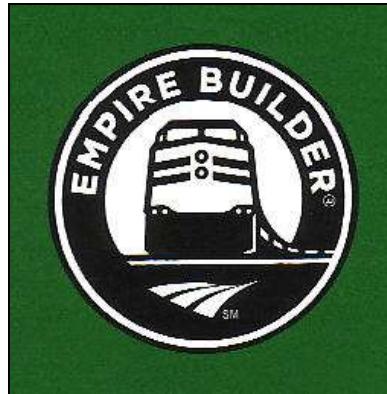
Riding Amtrak's *Empire Builder* from Seattle to Chicago across the northern tier of the United States – a well-operated and crewed transcontinental catering to tourists and locals alike.

MILESTONE

I travelled in my first Renaissance train on the Montréal-Toronto route, specifically on No. 53 *York* from Montréal to Kingston – this equipment formerly operating, where the Corridor was concerned, on the Montréal-Québec and Montréal-Ottawa routes only.



[TransLink's West Coast Express logo, from the side of a Coach (2010/09/17)] [SANDRA DAWES].



[Amtrak, Empire Builder Route Guide, cover (2008)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

17 JUN:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6449,6425
X		8615
C	[2]	8106,8101
CfeL		8502
D		Empress
CfeL		8501
S	[5]	Sherwood Manor,Craig Manor, Wolfe Manor ,Château Montcalm, Château Dollier
CfeL		8516
D		Palliser
S	[4]	Château Brûlé,Fraser Manor, Bell Manor,Macdonald Manor
OLS		Prince Albert Park

To **WATROUS** SK to accompany Sandra back to Edmonton after an extended visit with her mother; * Depart 0045, arrive 0915 (scheduled for 2330 and 0936, respectively), behind two General Motors F40PH-2's; * I occupied a Lower Berth in WOLFE MANOR, enjoying a fine breakfast in EMPRESS while severely water-logged fields and sloughs passed by; * 619 km in 8 hrs 30 mins, or 73 km/h (386 mls/46 mph); * Nos. 6425, 6449 (GMD, 1987-9); * Nos. 8101 (ex-101), 8502 (ex-CP CfLC 502, VIA 502), 8615 (ex-CP XY 3015, CP,VIA 615), WOLFE MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), EMPRESS, PRINCE ALBERT PARK (3db1dr) (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP).



[VIA, Go with Your Dreams, 2007/08, 5]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

EASTBOUND CANADIAN

VIA's mid-June No. 2 was 18 cars in length, including nine Sleepers. It reached Edmonton 75 minutes late but arrived Watrous 21 minutes early, the latter's "station" being a concrete slab which used to house a "VIA shack", which in turn had replaced the real station. (VIA required that reservations be made 48 hours in advance for minor stops such as Watrous.) Removed at Edmonton was ex-BC Rail, glass-roofed Coach No. 1721, located between CHÂTEAU MONTCALM and WOLFE MANOR, a car which had served on VIA's short-lived, Edmonton-Jasper *Snow Train Express* late in the previous decade. Intended to provide more viewing space through the mountains, this car would return to Vancouver two mornings later on No. 1.

17-18 JUN:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2]	6402,6405
X		8604
C	[2]	8119,8104
CfeL		8504
D		Emerald
CfeL		8517
S	[6]	Laird Manor,Douglas Manor, Jarvis Manor,Butler Manor, Château Viger, Château Rigaud
CfeL		8510
D		Fairholme
S	[3]	Hunter Manor,Grant Manor, Brant Manor
OLS		Assiniboine Park

Return to **EDMONTON** with Sandra; * Depart 2200, arrive next morning at 0915 (scheduled for 2048 and 0637, respectively), occupying a Section in CHÂTEAU RIGAUD; * 619 km in 11 hrs 15 mins, or 55 km/h (386 mls/34 mph); * CHÂTEAU RIGAUD (3sc8du3db1dr) (Budd/AMFT, 1954; ex-CP).

BOARDING AT WATROUS

Despite VIA's assurance by phone that she was on time at the previous servicing point of Melville SK (just three hours east), No. 1 showed up at Watrous 72 minutes late and, as with No. 2, stretching out to 18 cars. The most annoying part was that a westbound Canadian National freight appeared right at No. 1's scheduled arrival time of 2048, followed by two more before VIA finally showed up at 2200 – meaning three false alarms in the dusk, while yet more rain fell. Next morning, we were further delayed at the entrance to CN's Walker Yard in Edmonton while two freights left town, one on the main line, the other heading towards Fort Saskatchewan, helping to ensure that we arrived at Edmonton station almost three hours late. Service ranged from excellent to indifferent, the crew expertly positioning No. 1 at Watrous so that we could step right into our Sleeper, but our porter failing to supply the usual towel-and-toiletry bag. This was my first trip ever in CHATEAU RIGAUD, and GRANT MANOR would be damaged three weeks later at Jasper when sideswiped by a CN locomotive.

• **16 SEP:** To **MONTRÉAL** with Sandra via Vancouver, Seattle, Chicago and New York, starting with Air Canada to Vancouver, the main purposes being to attend a family reunion and visit friends – our first day involving the new Canada Line from airport to downtown, the No. 5 trolley out to the Sylvia Hotel on English Bay, and original SkyTrain line to the station to obtain our Amtrak tickets.

17 SEP:

TL 10 [VANCOUVER] PORT HANEY-MISSION CITY *West Coast Express*

E	903
C	[8] 301,309,103, 213 ,206,204,304
	104

Side trip to **CHILLIWACK** to visit relatives of Sandra, by rental car to Port Haney, *West Coast Express* to Mission City, then rental car again – Sandra driving alone while I took the train over its final segment; * Depart 1642 and arrive 1703, non-stop, in a train hauled by a General Motors F59PHI locomotive; * I occupied a seat in a regular, 148-seat, bi-level Coach; * 26 km in 21 mins, or 75 km/h (16 mls/47 mph); * No. 903 (GMD, 1995); * Nos. 213, 204 (Espresso Coffee Bar) & 104 (Control cab) (1995-6); 304 (2001) (all BBD); **18 SEP:** Return to Vancouver by rental car, followed by more trolley, SkyTrain and SeaBus

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

adventures in this beautiful city.



2010's-3: TransLink's *West Coast Express* No. 10 was followed by No. 12, arriving here at Mission City BC behind Motive Power Industries' MP36PH-3C No. 906 (2010/09/17) [PETER DAWES].

WEST COAST EXPRESS

... was the commuter service operated by the greater Vancouver TransLink organization between Mission City and Vancouver, using Bombardier bi-level cars in three formats: 148-seat Coach; 146-seat Coach with "Espresso Coffee Bar"; and 142- or 144-seat Control-cab-equipped Coach. This was the first of five afternoon, eastbound, Monday-to-Friday services, these trains having operated into the city in the early morning. (TransLink provided limited bus service on weekends.)

19 SEP:**AM 513 VANCOUVER-SEATTLE [PORTLAND] *Cascades***

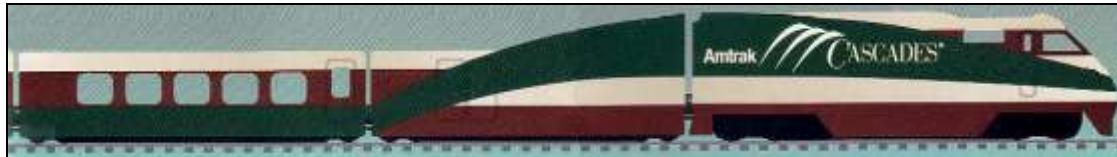
E	466
U	7900
P	[2] 7450,7550
D	7800
CfeL	7300
C	[7] 7500,7400,7425,7402,7403, 7404, 7401
X	7101
NPC	90278

Depart Pacific Central Station 27 minutes late at 0707, arrive King Street Station three minutes late at 1108, stopping at Bellingham WA, Mount Vernon, Stanwood, Everett and Edmonds; * We occupied a standard Coach in a Talgo train hauled by an Electro-Motive F59PHI locomotive, operating with an electric Generator car marked "Mount Hood" for the name of this set (No. 7900) and trailed by a "Non-powered Cab Unit" rebuilt from an F40PH locomotive to enable bi-directional running; * Our afternoon was spent walking the Seattle waterfront, which included a newish-looking but unused trolley line lurking under a massive overhead freeway which blights this scenic city; * 255 km in 4 hrs 1 min, or 64 km/h (157 mls/40 mph); * No. 466 (EMD, 1998); * No. 90278 (AM 2007; ex-278); * Cars (RTAL, 1998).

CASCADES

Amtrak operated two Vancouver-Seattle trains (one continuing onward to Portland OR) as part of a corridor service financially supported by the Washington and Oregon state governments. Spanish company RENFE-Talgo of America assembled five train sets in the U.S., our "Mount Hood" and another owned by Amtrak, the other three by Washington state. Articulated in pairs, the cars were equipped with a tilt system to allow faster speeds into curves. (The two in the lead were configured for "Business class" passengers.) Our Sunday morning train was moderately loaded out of Vancouver but nearly full by Seattle. Comfortable equipment and beautiful scenery along this Burlington Northern Santa Fe line compensated for the train's early departure time and – despite the tilt feature – slow running.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010



[Stylized Cascades Locomotive and Coach (from Amtrak Cascades "Get along the way" route guide, 2010)]

CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION AND SECURITY

Our Sunday morning *Cascade* was housed in a separate, cage-like enclosure at Vancouver's Pacific Central Station, apparently for security reasons. Added for the Winter Olympic Games held earlier in the year, the second frequency's long-term prospects were shaky, due in part to additional charges set to be levied by the Canadian government for customs and immigration, but the matter would be resolved during 2011.

19-21 SEP:

AM 8 SEATTLE-CHICAGO *Empire Builder*

E	86	ST. PAUL-CHICAGO
E	[2] 185,19	
X	1237	
X	1216	ST. PAUL-CHICAGO
C	25087	"
SY	39043	
S	[2] 32021,32099	
D	38066	
C	34134	
CX	31005	
CfeL	33040	[PORTLAND] SPOKANE-CHICAGO
C	34073	"
CX	31033	"

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

S 32027 "

Depart King Street Station 1640, arrive Union Station at 1555 two days later, stopping at Edmunds, Everett, Leavenworth, Wenatchee, Ephrata, Spokane, Sandpoint ID, Libby MT, Whitefish, West Glacier, Essex, East Glacier, Browning, Cut Bank, Shelby, Havre, Malta, Glasgow, Wolf Point, Williston ND, Stanley, Minot, Rugby, Devils Lake, Grand Forks, Fargo, Detroit Lakes MN, Staples, St. Cloud, St. Paul/Minneapolis (operating over Burlington Northern Santa Fe to this point), then Red Wing, Winona, La Crosse WI, Tomah, Wisconsin Dells, Portage, Columbus, Milwaukee and Glenview IL (over Canadian Pacific subsidiary, Soo Line, then on METRA commuter agency trackage into Union Station); * Two General Electric Genesis P42DC's powered the train as far as St. Paul (boosted by a third beyond), and we kept to schedule throughout; * Our accommodation was an Economy room on the lower level of a Superliner Sleeping car; * Two Coaches and a Cafe Lounge were added at Spokane from Portland; later a Baggage car and Coach at St. Paul; * 3,581 km in 45 hrs 15 mins, or 84 km/h (2,205 mls/52 mph); * Nos. 185 (2000-1), 19, 86 (1995-6) (all GE); * Nos. 32099 (5de14ec1fm1di), 39043, 33040, 38066, 34134 (all BBD, 1993-4); * Nos. 31005, 33040, 34073 (all PS, 1978-81); * No. 1237 (Budd, 1953; ex-AT&SF 3518, AM 1033).

EMPIRE BUILDER

This was my first trip on this train, named for the founder of the Great Northern Railway, James J. Hill, whose vision included a transcontinental railway and steamship line beyond to the Orient. Opened in 1929, Cascade tunnel was a spectacular engineering feat stretching 13 kilometres (8 miles). Our train was well patronized, especially the Sleepers. Named NEW MEXICO on the interior doors (but not on the exterior), our bi-level Superliner II car featured 5 Deluxe and 10 Economy rooms on the upper level, and 4 Economy, one Family and one room for persons with disabilities on the lower, which boasted a shower room. Economy rooms had no wash basin or toilet, requiring occupants to use facilities located on both levels; but all sleeping-car passengers were greeted with champagne in their rooms. Our female attendant was a real gem; in the Dining car, serving staff were excellent, despite being presided over by a somewhat fussy steward. The ride, even on the lower level, was smooth, enabling two of the best sleeps I've ever had on a train – although Sandra found the top bunk to be a tight fit, especially compared to the upper berth of the *Canadian*'s sections.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010



2010's-4: Amtrak's *Empire Builder* stops at Williston ND in the evening dusk, its bi-level Superliner cars making an impressive sight (2010/09/20) [PETER DAWES].

SECURITY OVERKILL

Sitting in a pick-up truck, plain-clothed Burlington Northern Santa Fe police stopped passengers from visiting the front of *Empire Builder* at the division point of Havre MT. In contrast, there had been no problem walking right up to the locomotives at Cut Bank MT earlier in the day. I've never encountered such a problem in all of my train-riding days, not even later during this trip on the platforms of both Chicago's Union and New York City's Pennsylvania stations.

CHICAGO STOPOVER

Empire Builder's on-time arrival permitted us approximately five hours in the Windy City, which we filled by walking over to Lake Michigan, riding Chicago Transit Authority's famous "El" (elevated) around The Loop, and dining at the Berghoff – a wonderful German-American restaurant/bar located a few blocks east of Union Station on West Adams Street near the theatre district.

21-22 SEP:**AM 48 CHICAGO-NEW YORK *Lakeshore Limited***

E	[2]	815,139	CHICAGO-ALBANY
Eed		706	ALBANY-NEW YORK
X		1710	CHICAGO-ALBANY [<i>BOSTON</i>]
Dn		53510	"
S		62036	"
C	[2]	25094,25047	"
C	[4]	25117,25049,25001,25102	
D		8505	
S	[2]	62015 ,62004	
X		1708	

Depart Union Station 2130, arrive Pennsylvania Station next evening two hours late at 2025, stopping at South Bend IN, Elkhart, Waterloo, Bryan OH, Toledo, Sandusky, Elyria, Erie PA, Buffalo-Depew NY, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany-Rensselaer and Croton-Harmon – also unscheduled stops at Hudson, Rhinecliff and Poughkeepsie, due to a missed connection at Albany; * Power was supplied by General Electric P40 and P42DC locomotives out of Chicago, then a dual-mode P32ACDM onward from Albany to permit access into Penn Station; * We occupied a "Roomette" in "Viewliner" Sleeping car No. 62015, named ISLAND VIEW inside but not on the exterior; * The front Baggage, Dinette and two Coaches were removed at Albany and proceeded to Boston; * 1,558 km in 21 hrs 55 mins, or 71 km/h (959 mls/44 mph); * Nos. 815 (1993), 139 (2000-1), 706 (1995) (all GE); * No. 62015 (12rm2br1di) (MKA, 1995); * No. 8505 (Budd, 1957; ex-CB&Q 458, AM 8045); * No. 53510 (BBD, 1989); * No. 25001 (Budd, 1981); * No 1708 (Budd, 1953; ex-AT&SF C 2859, AM 4871,4703).

LAKESHORE LIMITED

... followed the route of the New York Central's famous *20th Century Limited*, but took some four hours longer than the *Century*'s best timing. Norfolk Southern hosted the train as far as Cleveland, and CSX Corp. most of the way beyond in an arrangement put in place after the privatization of Conrail. (From Poughkeepsie NY, commuter agency Metro-North was used south to Yonkers, then Amtrak itself into Penn Station.). I had first encountered 53-year-old Dining car No. 8505 back in 1973 on the Seattle-Vancouver *Pacific International*. The staff were subpar compared to *Empire Builder*.



2010's-5: Amtrak Viewliner Sleeping car No. 62015 on *Lakeshore Limited*, Syracuse NY (2010/09/22) [PETER DAWES].

VIEWLINERS

Like other eastern long-distance Amtrak trains, *Lakeshore Limited* featured Viewliner Sleeping cars, built by Morrison Knudsen/Amerail in the mid-1990's. They featured "Roomettes" (slightly bigger than Superliner Economy Rooms), "Bedrooms", and one room accessible to persons using mobility devices – also a second row of windows, enabling those in the upper beds to see out. Originally intended as part of a 500-600 car order to replace Amtrak's Heritage fleet, only 50 Sleepers were built, subsequent to two prototype Sleepers and one Diner. Earlier this year (2010), a new order was placed for 130 "Viewliner II" Sleepers, Diners, Baggage and Baggage Dormitory cars, with an option for 70 more.

HAZARD OF THE TRADE

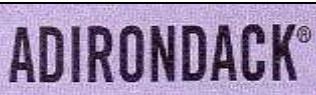
The lead engine of our *Lakeshore Limited* suffered a broken windshield when apparently struck by a fallen tree west of Syracuse NY, resulting in minor injuries to one of the enginemen. As mentioned above, this was a General Electric P40, a predecessor to the numerous P42DC's used by Amtrak. The two locomotives (the other being a P42DC) were removed from our train at Syracuse station, reappearing almost two hours later having exchanged positions.

23 SEP:

AM 69 NEW YORK-MONTRÉAL *Adirondack*

Eed	700	NEW YORK-ALBANY
E	197	ALBANY-MONTRÉAL
OL	Ocean View	"
C	82722	NEW YORK-ALBANY
C	[2] 82663,82784	
Dn	43356	
C	[2] 25021, 25075	

Depart Pennsylvania Station 0815, arrive Central Station 38 minutes late at 1948, stopping at Yonkers, Croton-Harmon, Poughkeepsie, Rhinecliff, Hudson and Albany-Rensselaer (over CSX Corp. rails), then Schenectady, Saratoga Springs, Fort Edward-Glens Falls, Whitehall, Ticonderoga, Port Henry, Westport, Port Kent, Plattsburgh and Rouses Point (over Canadian Pacific's former Delaware & Hudson line), and finally St-Lambert QC (the Canadian portion over Canadian National); * Our train was powered by a P32ACDM locomotive to Albany, then P42DC beyond; * 619 km in 11 hrs 33 mins, or 54 km/h (381 mls/34 mph); * No. 25075 (Budd, 1981); * Nos. 82663 (ex-21031,82082), 43356 (ex-CDn 20216, Dn 20916,48916) (both Budd, 1975-7); OCEAN VIEW (Budd, 1955; ex-GN 1391, AM 9361,9300,10031; Ir-WMSR, CN).



[From Amtrak, *Adirondack* timetable (2010/06/21)]



2010's-6: Genesis locomotive No. 197 and full-length dome OCEAN VIEW back on-to Amtrak No. 69 *Adirondack* at Albany-Rensselaer station for the run north along Lake Champlain to Montréal (2010/09/23) [PETER DAWES].

ADIRONDACK

... took 11.5 hours to reach Montréal, due in part to lack of pre-clearance at New York, but also a 45-minute delay when police closed the line north of Hudson NY so they could chase a fugitive down the right-of-way – definitely a first for this train traveller! Border formalities took a lot less time compared to my 2005 Plattsburgh-Montréal excursion, and the Canadian officials were much friendlier this time.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

OCEAN VIEW

Amtrak replaced *Adirondack*'s locomotive and first Coach at Albany-Rensselaer with another locomotive and full-length Dome Lounge car OCEAN VIEW, which ironically had been built for Great Northern's *Empire Builder* back in 1955. This was the first day of operation for this car, which was to travel north to Montréal one day and south the next during the fall foliage season. A news crew from a local television station and some Amtrak "suits" boarded at Albany, the reporter choosing Sandra for an interview which we were able to watch that evening over the Internet.

MONTREAL SOJOURN

Sandra and I spent the next four nights based at my buddy Shaun Fawcett's condo overlooking the approaches to Central Station, including a tour of museums and hotels in the old city, a port-and-river breakfast cruise, and a pre-season hockey game at the Bell Centre in which the Canadiens defeated the Minnesota Wild. On Saturday, a record five cruise ships were in port, including AIDALUNA, the largest passenger ship ever to reach the city at 69,200 Gross Registered Tons. (She was owned by a German-based Carnival subsidiary, AIDA Cruises.)



[\[logoserver.com\]](http://logoserver.com)

25 SEP:

AMT 51 MONTRÉAL-PINCOURT/TERRACE-VAUDREUIL [VAUDREUIL]

C [7] 707,702,703,725,733,729,732

E 526

To **PINCOURT** with Sandra, departing Lucien-L'Allier Station 0930, arriving 1021, including stops Montréal West, Dorval, Pointe-Claire and Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, behind an F59PH leased from GO Transit – the purpose being to attend a family reunion at cousin Ken Boulton's place; * We occupied control cab-equipped Coach No. 708 as far as our stop, which was the final one before Vaudreuil; * Return to Montréal by car,

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

thanks to nephew Michael and niece Carmeli; * 37 km in 51 mins, or 44 km/h (23 mls/27 mph); * No. 526 (GMD, 1988; ex-GO); * No. 702 (BBD, 1989; ex-STCUM).

LAKESHORE COMMUTER

Our Agence métropolitaine de transport Saturday morning train was sparsely loaded but conveniently got us out to Pincourt by mid-morning, stopping at familiar places. There were three problems: • the only way to buy tickets was through vending machines which were designed mainly for monthly passes, making it difficult to figure out how to buy single tickets; • on-board instructions as to which cars needed to be occupied for certain intermediate stops were unclear as to direction and weekend service; and • the last return train was at 1907, making it necessary for us to catch a lift back into the city (a consequence of offering only four Saturday frequencies).

29 SEP:

VIA 33 MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA *Vanier*

E	6407
K	4009
C	[2] 4117, 4108

To **OTTAWA** for the day to visit buddy Glen Brunton (Sandra having flown back to Edmonton for work purposes), departing Central Station 1015, arriving on time at 1213, stopping at Dorval, Alexandria ON and Casselman; * I occupied a seat in a former Southern Pacific, Texas & New Orleans and Amtrak Coach refurbished under VIA's HEP-2 (Head-End Electric Power) program, keenly watching as we paused at my old home town of Alexandria; * 187 km in 1 hr 58 mins, or 95 km/h (117 mls/59 mph); * No. 6407 (GMD, 1986-7); * No. 4108 (Budd/AMFT, 1950; ex-SP 2371, T&NO 444, SP 2232, AM 4419); * No. 4009 (Budd/AMFT, 1949, ex-C SAL 6216, SCL, AM 5201, AM, NRHMI, RSC 6014, VIA 4125).

VIA 38 OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

E	916
K	3466
C	[4] 3324,3327,3347[dd],3321[dd]

Depart 1800, arrive three minutes early at 1953, stopping only at Alexandria and Dorval QC, behind a Genesis P42DC locomotive and occupying an LRC (Light-Rapid-Comfortable) Coach – this train arriving

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010

Alexandria in 45 minutes flat; * 187 km in 1 hr 53 mins, or 99 km/h (117 mls/62 mph); * No. 916 (GE, 2001); * Nos. 3324, 3466 (ex-C 3390) (BBD, 1981-4); * Arrive Alexandria at 1845, average speed 116 km/h (72 mph).

30 SEP:

VIA 53 MONTRÉAL-KINGSTON [TORONTO] York

E	919
X	7005
K	7221[dd]
SvL	7305
K	7113
C	[3] 7211,7104,7106

To **SARNIA**, via Kingston and Toronto, the purpose being to visit old Kingston haunts and ride the original Great Western of Canada rails between London and Sarnia for the first time; * Depart Central Station 0630, arrive in the Limestone City on time at 0910, having stopped at Dorval and Cornwall ON; * 285 km in 2 hrs 40 mins, or 107 km/h (178 mls/66 mph); * Nos. 7211, 7113, 7305, 7005 (1di) (all MC, 1995-6).

MONTRÉAL-TORONTO BY RENAISSANCE

Although I had travelled in Renaissance equipment between Montréal and both Québec and Ottawa, No. 53 was the first time on the Montréal-Toronto route. While these were smooth-riding cars, one continuing deficiency was the minimal baggage space, requiring a separate car for this purpose where none was needed on either LRC or refurbished stainless-steel cars. One fellow passenger made it all the way to the door of our Coach at track level before being curtly ordered back to the Central Station concourse to check his bag – frankly, a poor effort on the part of VIA. As for the Club cars, they were provisioned from the Service Lounge car (although the front Club was not in service).



[viarail.ca/classes]

VIA 57 [MONTRÉAL] KINGSTON-TORONTO *La Salle*

E	6428
X	8608
K	[2] 4004[dd],4002
C	[4] 4102,4110,4112,4101

Depart 17 minutes late at 1315, arrive Union Station on time at 1547, stopping at Napanee, Belleville, Cobourg, Oshawa and Guildwood, occupying a former Louisville & Nashville Coach; * 254 km in 2 hrs 32 mins, or 100 km/h (158 mls/62 mph); * No. 4102 (Budd/AMFT, 1953; ex-L&N 3252, AM 5804); * No. 8608 (ex-CP XY 3008, CP, VIA 608) (Budd/AMFT, 1954-5).

VIA 87 TORONTO-SARNIA

E	909
K	3475 [as Coach]
C	[3] 3312,3361,3316

Depart Union Station 1740, arrive 10 minutes early at 2210 (one night there), stopping at Brampton, Georgetown, Guelph, Kitchener, Stratford, St. Marys, London and Strathroy; * I occupied No. 3475 operating as a Coach, no Club service being offered on this train; * 290 km in 4 hrs 30 mins, or 64 km/h (181 mls/40 mph); * No. 3475 (ex-C 3391) (BBD, 1984).

BACK ROUTE

Goderich-Exeter Railway owned or leased segments of the old Grand Trunk/Canadian National "back line", from Georgetown to London. This route was only 10 km (6 mls) longer between Toronto and London than ex-Great Western line through Brantford, but took almost an hour longer, due in part to single track and slow-running. This was my first time over the Strathroy subdivision between London and Sarnia, originally built by Great Western, later owned by Grand Trunk and CN.

1 OCT:

VIA 84 SARNIA-LONDON [TORONTO] *Huron*

E	909
K	3475[dd]
C	[3] 3312,3361,3316



2010's-7: P42DC locomotive No. 909 at London ON station, in charge of Sarnia-Toronto train No. 84 – her nose badly in need of new paint as she sits amongst the weeds (2010/10/01) [PETER DAWES].

To **TORONTO** via London, departing 0635, arriving London 22 minutes late at 0807, stopping at Strathroy – the purpose being to visit an old work colleague who had retired to London; * This was the same consist as No. 87 the evening before, but this time I occupied a regular Coach; * 95 km in 1 hr 32 mins, or 62 km/h (39 mls/40 mph).

DELAY AT KOMOKA

No. 84 was already 10 minutes late by Komoka (junction between the Strathroy and Chatham subdivisions), and sat a further 12 minutes there to permit late running No. 70 from Windsor to reach London station first. There, passengers destined for points on either the Stratford or Brantford routes into Toronto were belatedly exchanged.

VIA 72 [WINDSOR] LONDON-TORONTO *Point Pelee*

E	916
K	3466
C	[4] 3327,3324, 3347 ,3321

Depart 13 minutes late at 1141, arrive Union Station 15 minutes late at 1359 (one night at the Strathcona Hotel), stopping at Woodstock, Brantford, Aldershot (for Hamilton) and Oakville; * 185 km in 2 hrs 18 mins, or 80 km/h (115 mls/50 mph); • **2 OCT**: return to **EDMONTON** on Air Canada.

WIDE RANGING TRAIN SET

VIA's Windsor-Toronto No. 72 was made up of the same locomotive and cars, in the same order, as my Ottawa-Montréal No. 38 two days earlier, confirming VIA's sensible practice of running sets through Toronto where practical.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

2011

*QUÉBEC/ONTARIO/MANITOBA
SASKATCHEWAN/ALBERTA
NORTHEASTERN/SOUTH-
EASTERN U.S.
COSTA RICA*



*[Schematic celebrating anniversary of
Champlain & St. Lawrence Rail-
road, 1836-2011 (Exporail,
2011 program)]*

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2011 in connection with a Panama Canal cruise out of Port Everglades FL (shore excursions involving a short train trip in Costa Rica) and a family get-together in Montréal (the latter allowing a return to Edmonton on the *Canadian*). The above logo celebrates the 175th anniversary of Canada's first railway, opened in 1836 between Laprairie (south shore of the St. Lawrence, opposite Montréal) and St-Jean QC.

Trips taken: Fifteen trips were involved covering 8,704 kilometres (5,432 miles), 10 provided by VIA, two each by Amtrak and Agence métropolitaine de transport, and one by Swiss Travel Costa Rica. Thirteen were in my "Coach" category, the other two in "Sleeper".

Equipment units: 124, made up of 22 Locomotives & Related Units and 102 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 54; Parlor & Club Cars, 15; Sleeping & Business Cars, 16; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 4; Lounge Cars, 6; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 7).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **ON** – Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor; **QC** – Montréal and St-Constant. **United States:** **FL** – Fort Lauderdale; **NY** – New York; **Costa Rica:** Cambalache and Mata de Limón.

Noteworthy train trips: **VIA-AM Maple Leaf**, Toronto to New York; **AM Silver Meteor**, New York to Fort Lauderdale; **VIA Erie**, Toronto to Windsor; **VIA No. 55**, Montréal to Ottawa.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA Renaissance**, Kingston to Toronto:

114 km/h (71 mph). **American:** **AM Silver Meteor**, New York to Fort Lauderdale: 86 km/h (54 mph).

Costa Rican: **STCR**, Mata de Limón to Cambalache: 24 km/h (15 mph).

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **AMT Express du musée**, Montréal to St-Constant & return: 46 km/h (29 mph). **American:** **VIA/AM Maple Leaf**, Toronto to New York: 66 km/h (42 mph). **Costa Rican:** **STCR**, Mata de Limón to Cambalache: 24 km/h (15 mph).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

HIGHLIGHT!

Riding Amtrak's *Silver Meteor* from wintery New York down the Atlantic Coast into Georgia and Florida, disembarking at Fort Lauderdale – my first time over this famous route, on a hard-working, long-distance train.

MILESTONE

I travelled on my first-ever, Montréal to Toronto via Ottawa train, specifically No. 55 from Montréal to Ottawa – VIA now operating three westbound and two eastbound through trains more for operating reasons than passenger appeal.



[Amtrak, Dining Car Menu (from
Silver Meteor, 2011)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

- **12 JAN:** To **FORT LAUDERDALE** with Sandra to access Cunard's QUEEN VICTORIA for a cruise through the Panama Canal to Los Angeles, our Air Canada flight departing Edmonton in the midst of a snowstorm (one night in Toronto).

13 JAN:

VIA 97-AM 64 TORONTO-NEW YORK *Maple Leaf*

E	192	TORONTO-ALBANY
Eed	716	ALBANY-NEW YORK
C	[4] 25096,25018, 25004 ,82687	
KDn	48186	

Depart Union Station 0830, arrive five minutes late at 2140 (one night there), stopping at Oakville, Aldershot, Grimsby, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls ON & NY, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Rome, Utica, Amsterdam, Schenectady, Albany-Rensselaer, Hudson, Rhinecliff, Poughkeepsie and Croton-Harmon – behind a General Electric Genesis P42DC as far as Albany-Rensselaer and dual-mode P32ACDM onward to permit access into Penn Station [**all equipment AM**]; * We occupied seats in a 60-seat Amfleet II Coach, utilizing the Club Dinette for snacks; * 875 km in 13 hrs 10 mins, or 66 km/h (545 mls/42 mph); * Nos. 192 (2000-1), 716 (1998) (both GE); * No. 25004 (Budd, 1981); * Nos. 82687 (ex-?, 44183), 48186 (ex-CKDn 20132, KDn 20670, K 48970, KDn 48186, K 48964) (both Budd, 1975-7).

MAPLE LEAF

... consisted of Amtrak equipment but was operated by VIA within Canada over Canadian National. Arrival at Niagara Falls ON was at 1020, NY at 1030, but departure not until the scheduled 1240. From here, the train ran over CSX Corp. (ex-New York Central) rails as far as Poughkeepsie NY, Metro-North to Yonkers, and Amtrak itself into Penn Station. *Maple Leaf* began to get busy at Buffalo and continued to fill up all the way to New York. Although its performance was creditable on this stormy day, the 13-hour schedule was uncompetitive with other modes of transport, especially given the 2-hour wait at Niagara Falls NY.

HOST STATION

Maple Leaf stopped at both Buffalo Exchange Street and Depew stations, but drifted by the abandoned Central Terminal, whose ghost-like, art-deco tower, platforms and canopies looked as if they were waiting for passengers to board trains to New York, Chicago, Toronto and many other cities. Later, while in New York, we visited that ultimate temple of rail, the marvellously restored Grand Central Terminal.

14-15 JAN:**AM 97 NEW YORK-FORT LAUDERDALE [MIAMI] Silver Meteor**

Ee	[2]	951,912	NEW YORK-WASHINGTON
E	[3]	116,43,42	WASHINGTON-MIAMI
X		1730	
C	[4]	25073,25071,25042,25066	
DnL		28007	
D		8505	
S	[3]	62032,62038,62019	

Depart Pennsylvania Station 1515, arrive 15 minutes early next day at 1747 (one night at Hollywood FL), stopping at Newark NJ, Trenton, Philadelphia PA, Wilmington DL, Baltimore MD, Washington DC (stops to this point only to board passengers for points south of Washington), Alexandria VA, Richmond, Petersburg, Rocky Mount NC, Fayetteville, Florence SC, Kingstree, Charleston, Yemassee, Savannah GA, Jesup, Jacksonville FL, Palatka, DeLand, Winter Park, Orlando, Kissimmee, Winter Haven, Sebring, West Palm Beach, Delray Beach and Deerfield Beach (stops from West Palm Beach onward only for detraining); * No. 97 was powered by two AEM7 electrics as far as Washington, and three P42DC diesels beyond; * We occupied a "Roomette" in a Viewliner Sleeping car, one of three sold-out Sleepers assigned to this train; * Former Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Diner No. 8505 had been in our *Lakeshore Limited* the previous September from Chicago to New York; * 2,288 km in 26 hrs 32 mins, or 86 km/h (1,409 mls/54 mph); * Nos. 951 (1988), 912 (1980-2) (both EMD); * Nos. 116, 43, 42 (1996-7), 716 (1998) (all GE); * No. 62038 (12rm2br1di) (MKA, 1995); * No. 8505 (Budd, 1957; ex-CB&Q 458, AM 8045); * No. 28007 (Budd, 1982; ex-DnL, SmDL); * No. 1730 (Budd, 1961; ex-UP C 5508, AM 4440,4629); * Distance calculated from *Official Guide of the Railways*, 1965/10 (146, 388, 375, 377).



2010's-8: Amtrak Genesis locomotives, led by No. 116, in charge of 10-car No. 97 *Silver Meteor* at Orlando FL (2011/01/15) [PETER DAWES].

SILVER METEOR

... used Amtrak-owned rails to Washington, CSX Corp. to West Palm Beach, and Florida Department of Transportation beyond to Miami. For the most part, this was the former Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) route through Charleston SC, while Amtrak's other New York-Florida service, *Silver Star*, ran mainly on the old Seaboard Air Line (SAL) route via Columbia SC. Both named after famous SAL trains, *Meteor* was strictly a Miami train, while *Star* included both Tampa and Miami portions (Miami being reached by a combination of former ACL and SAL rails). Amtrak also still operated *Auto Train*, a motor vehicle-carrying service between Lorton VA (near Washington) and Orlando.

WAY BACK WHEN

Back in the glory days, Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) trains more than matched Seaboard Air Line (SAL)'s *Silver* and other services with the all-Pullman *Florida Special* and *East & West Coast Champions*. Trains of both railways followed the Pennsylvania Railroad from New York to Washington and Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac to Richmond, where they gained either ACL or SAL rails for Jacksonville. From there, SAL trains took their own routes to either Miami or Tampa (and other west-side destinations), while ACL trains used their own rails to west-side cities or those of Florida East Coast Railway to Miami. In 1968, ACL and SAL merged to form Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, which continued to provide fine New York-Florida trains right up until Amtrak was created in 1971.

MIXED REVIEW

Boarding for *Silver Meteor* commenced at Penn Station only 12 minutes before its on-time departure at 1515 hours, making for a rushed process. Our train ran 15-20 minutes late most of the way, but arrived 15 minutes early at Fort Lauderdale – a good performance for this type of Amtrak train. Service quality was more like *Lakeshore Limited* than *Empire Builder* of our September 2010 transcontinental journey, although our Viewliner Sleeping car attendant was excellent. (This Sleeper was named SPRING VIEW, but on the interior doors only.) No. 28070 was a former Smoker Dinette Lounge converted into a cost-saving “Diner/Lite” under a cost-saving initiative, its lounge space mostly taken up by Coach passengers. Similarly, the Diner crew did not offer reservations on the second day, meaning that Coach passengers took up much of the prime time space. In fact, the Diner crew were an unhappy lot, apparently because a promised extra waiter had failed to materialize.

- **16-23 JAN:** To **PUNTARENAS**, Costa Rica, on Cunard's QUEEN VICTORIA, calling at Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles) and passing through the Panama Canal.



2010's-9: Cunard's QUEEN VICTORIA docked at Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles, on her way from New York and Port Everglades through the Panama Canal to Los Angeles (2011/01/23) [SANDRA DAWES].

QUEEN VICTORIA

We decided to take this cruise in celebration of our 25th wedding anniversary, the main attraction being the transit of the Panama Canal. We could have boarded in New York, where the 2007-built, 90,000 Gross Registered Tonnes QUEEN VICTORIA rendezvoused with her new sister, QUEEN ELIZABETH, and with the much larger QUEEN MARY 2. In fact, the entire Carnival-owned, Cunard fleet sailed from New York during the late afternoon while we were enroute on *Maple Leaf* from Toronto – but I wanted to take the train along the eastern seaboard of the United States all the way to Florida for the first time, and join our ship at Port Everglades (port for Fort Lauderdale). VICTORIA and ELIZABETH sailed together down from New York, and carried on in the same manner for the first night and day out of Port Everglades before the former headed for Bonaire, the latter for Aruba (both Netherlands Antilles). Our ship then proceeded through the Canal and headed north to Puntarenas (Costa Rica), the expansion of the Canal already well underway to permit the transit of larger ships.



2010's-10: Costa Rican tourist train rests at Cambalache after hauling QUEEN VICTORIA excursionists from Mata de Limón (2011/01/23) [PETER DAWES].

23 JAN:

STCR 0805 MATA DE LIMÓN-CAMBALACHE

C [2] 12,16

E 15

Shore excursion by bus, rail, river boat, and bus again – the train departing Mata de Limón at 0805, arriving Cambalache 0835, non-stop, behind a Mercedes-Benz switcher; * 12 km (est.) in 30 mins, or 24 km/h (7 mls/15 mph); * No. 15 (MB, year unknown); Nos. 12,16 (builder & year unknown).



[from swisstravelcr.com/costa-rica]

COSTA RICAN TOURIST TRAIN

... operated over the otherwise closed 1,067 mm (3 ft 6 in), Ferrocarril Pacifico line joining the capital, San José, with the port of Puntarenas. Now owned by Incofer (*Instituto Costarricense de Ferrocarriles – Costa Rican Railroad Institute*), the line was opened in 1910 to carry coffee for export and was electrified in '30. Damaged by an earthquake in 1991 and closed in '95, it had yet to be reopened, except for this short segment from Mata de Limón (on the ocean) inland to Cambalache. The train was part of an excursion apparently organized by Swiss Travel Costa Rica, a major tourist operator in this tiny country, but the interiors of the two nicely refurbished coaches bore the logo, "Asuaire Travel". We passed right through poor neighbourhoods and finished by entering, then backing out of, Cambalache tunnel – overall, an interesting, but not particularly scenic, run. The main attraction was the subsequent river-boat tour on the Tarcoles River and estuary of the Pacific Ocean, featuring camouflaged crocodiles, noisy monkeys and spectacularly coloured macaws.

- **23-30 JAN:** Onward to **EDMONTON**, with calls at the Mexican resorts of Huatulco, Acapulco and Manzanillo before disembarking at Los Angeles, followed by a WestJet flight home.
- **15 SEP:** To **MONTRÉAL**, via Toronto, Windsor, Kingston and Ottawa, beginning with Air Canada to Toronto at the start of a 15-day trip east to visit family and friends (Sandra following six days later).

VIA 75 TORONTO-WINDSOR *Erie*

E	6434
X	8612
K	[2] 4006,4000
C	[4] 4108,8138, 4109 ,4106

Depart Union Station 1730, arrive 11 minutes early at 2148 behind a rebuilt General Motors F40PH-3, stopping at Aldershot (for Hamilton), Brantford, Woodstock, London and Chatham (one night at Ye Olde Walkerville Bed & Breakfast); * I occupied former Southern Pacific, Texas & New Orleans and Amtrak Coach No. 4109; * 359 km in 4 hrs 18 mins, or 83 km/h (224 mls/52 mph); * No. 6434 (*GMD, 1989*); * No. 4109

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

(Budd/AMFT, 1950; ex-SP 2375, T&NO 448, SP 2236, AM 4423); * No. 8138 (Budd/AMFT, 1946; ex-
NYC,PC 2954, AM,CR 5670); * No. 4000 (Budd/AMFT, 1949, ex-C SOU 830, AM 5291, SOU, NRHS, RSC
830).

16 SEP:

VIA 72 WINDSOR-TORONTO *Point Pelee*

E	913
K	3456
C	[4] 3312,3352,3355, 3361

To **KINGSTON** via Toronto, departing 0905, arriving Union Station four minutes late at 1315, powered by a P42DC Genesis locomotive and occupying an LRC Coach; * No. 913 (GE, 2001); * Nos. 3361, 3456 (ex-C 3380) (BBD, 1981-4).

BACK ON THE WINDSOR LINE

These were my first trips over Canadian National's Windsor line since 1975, when I took a train made up of Tempo equipment from London to Windsor. In 2011, VIA was providing the same frequency as CN back then: five round trips on most days of the week. No. 75 featured refurbished Budd-built cars (mainly of Amtrak lineage but including an ex-Canadian Pacific Baggage car), while No. 72 was a standard LRC train.

VIA 68 TORONTO-KINGSTON [*MONTRÉAL*] *Bonaventure*

E	911
K	3470
C	[5] 3363,3327, 3372 ,8137[dd],8129[dd]

Depart 1835, arrive three minutes late at 2113 (overnight at Hotel Belvedere), stopping at Guildwood, Oshawa, Port Hope, Cobourg and Trenton Jct.; * 254 km in 2 hrs 38 mins, or 97 km/h (159 mls/60 mph).



*[Le Corridor Québec-Wind-
sor, 2004/04, 3]*

ALMOST LOCKED OUT

Due to the late boarding of No. 68 at Union Station, I had to sprint forward upon arrival at Kingston to record the locomotive, then wait for the train to depart to get the rearmost, deadheading car. Apparently, VIA's routine was to lock the Track 2 shelter opposite from the station, considering that the next (and final) arrival of the day – No. 650 from Toronto – would not show up until almost 0100. The young lady designated to perform this function seemed mildly perturbed, lest she lock me out, but was quite friendly once told what I was doing – actually, a real “people person” and a credit to VIA.

17 SEP:

VIA 644 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-OTTAWA

E	904
X	8618
K	[2] 3454,3473
C	[4] 3369,3365,3310,3367[dd]

To **MONTRÉAL** via Ottawa, departing 1443, arriving 18 minutes late at 1702, stopping at Brockville, Smiths Falls and Fallowfield; * 190 km in 2 hrs 19 mins, or 82 km/h (119 mls/60 mph); * No. 8618 (*Budd/SPTA, 1963; ex-UP 5907, 903689*).

KINGSTON TO MONTRÉAL VIA OTTAWA

... was not the normal way of doing things, and I could have taken No. 60 around the same time and arrived at my ultimate destination not much after 1700. But I wanted to work in my old favourite Brockville-Ottawa segment into this year's itinerary and check out VIA's new Smiths Falls station, located just onto the old CN line as you leave town for the capital. Fifteen minutes of the delay occurred after we departed from the new station, the service manager pinning the blame on signalling problems. This consist, and on-board staff, continued on to Montréal after a scheduled 76-minute layover.

VIA 638 OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

E	904
X	8618

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

K	[2]	3454,3473
C	[4]	3369 ,3365,3310,3367[dd]

Depart 1800, arrive Central Station four minutes late at 2010, stopping at Casselman, Alexandria and Dorval QC (seven of next eight nights at buddy Shaun Fawcett's Griffintown condo; one at sister Dorothy's in suburban Brossard); * 187 km in 2 hrs 10 mins, or 86 km/h (117 mls/60 mph).

18 SEP:

AMT MONTRÉAL-ST CONSTANT & RETURN *Express du musée*

C	[5]	3006 ,3111,3055, 3162 ,3145
E		4144

To **ST-CONSTANT** for the day with Shaun, departing Lucien-L'Allier Station at 1100 and arriving 1130, on a bi-level train built by Bombardier and powered by a GP40FH-2 formerly owned by Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific and Union Pacific, but now leased from New Jersey Transit – occupying the lead, Control Cab-equipped Coach; * Returning, depart 1600, arrive 1630, in one of the regular Coaches; * 23 km in 30 mins, or 46 km/h (14 mls/29 mph); * No. 4144 (*EMD*, 1966; *NJT*; ex-*CRI&P* 354, *UP* 614); * Nos. 3006, 3162 (*BBD*, 2009); * Distance estimated from CP system timetable, 1949/10/30, Table 8.

EXPRESS DU MUSÉE

... was the third of four trains operated by Agence métropolitaine de transport on Sundays this year from Lucien-L'Allier to the Canadian Railroad Historical Association's Exporail at St-Constant QC. The museum was celebrating 50 years of existence, and 2011 marked the 175th year of railways in Canada. Highlights included a replica of 1848 locomotive JOHN MOLSON in steam, a preserved Montréal streetcar circulating on its loop, the sending of telegraphs from the restored Barrington NS station to the main Angus Pavilion, and the line-up of equipment in the pavilion itself.

20 SEP:

VIA 55 MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA [TORONTO]

E		904
X		8618
K	[2]	3454,3473
C	[3]	3369 ,3365,3341

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

To **OTTAWA** for the day to visit buddy Glen Brunton for an afternoon on the market, departing Central Station 0955, arriving 15 minutes early at 1200, stopping at Dorval, Alexandria ON and Casselman; * 191 km in 2 hrs 5 mins, or 92 km/h (119 mls/57 mph).

MONTRÉAL THROUGH OTTAWA TO TORONTO

VIA was now running three westbound Montréal-Ottawa trains through to Toronto, mainly for operational efficiency than passenger convenience, given that passengers heading for Brockville and points west to Toronto could get there much faster by using direct Montréal-Toronto trains. (Eastbound, two trains were running through.) This arrangement did provide through service from Montréal to Smiths Falls (for the first time since direct service over CP was cancelled in 1965), and from Alexandria and Casselman, on the one hand, to Smiths Falls and points west to Toronto on the other – good, but not exactly high-revenue producing links. No. 55 was made up largely of cars from my previous trips on Nos. 644-638 [see **17 SEP** above].

VIA 38 OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

E	901
X	8621
K	[2] 3472,3469
C	[3] 3353 ,3306,3325

Depart 1800, arrive Central Station 10 minutes late at 2009, Sandra joining me the next afternoon after fulfilling work obligations.

MORE BAGGAGE AND CLUB CARS

VIA seemed to be adding a Baggage car, as well as a second Club car, to more corridor trains, the former being from its ex-Canadian Pacific stainless-steel fleet.

26 SEP:

VIA 61 MONTRÉAL-KINGSTON [TORONTO] *Meridian*

E	904
K	[2] 3460,3473
C	[4] 3369, 3365 ,3341;3338



2010's-11: Engine crew of VIA No. 61 pose, no invitation needed, on Track 2, Kingston, on their way Montréal to Toronto (2011/09/26) [PETER DAWES].

To **KINGSTON** to visit old haunts and have dinner with brother David and wife Tani, departing Central Station 1140 and arriving five minutes early at 1417 after stopping at Dorval and Cornwall ON (one night at Hotel Belvedere); * 285 km in 2 hrs 37 mins, or 109 km/h (178 mls/68 mph).

WONDERFUL MONTRÉAL

Montréal always comes through, highlights this time including a free outdoor concert by Arcade Fire in the Quartier des Spectacles (along with 100,000 others, copious amounts of dope wafting everywhere), a family gathering at Dorothy's in Brossard; a Canadiens pre-season scrimmage at the club's training centre (also in Brossard), and a guided bike tour of Montréal (followed by a high-speed bike race alongside the canal out to Lachine and back – VIA's Sunday-only, Ottawa-Montréal No. 634 obligingly crossing overhead just west of Atwater market).

27 SEP:

VIA 65 [MONTRÉAL] KINGSTON-TORONTO Renaissance

E	903
K	3459
C	[2] 3320,3363

Back to **EDMONTON** via Toronto, departing 1817, arriving Union Station 10 minutes early at 2030 after stopping only at Oshawa; * 254 km in 2 hrs 13 mins, or 114 km/h (159 mls/71 mph).

FAST RUNNING AND FAMILIAR EQUIPMENT

Most trains were disappointingly slow during this holiday, No. 65 being the best, averaging 114 km/h (71 mph), Kingston to Toronto, with one stop. The following units showed up in *four* of my trains during this holiday: LRC Coaches 3369 (three times occupied) and 3365 (once occupied); LRC Club car 3473; and Genesis locomotive 904.

27-30 SEP:

VIA 1 TORONTO-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	6449	TORONTO-WINNIPEG
E	[2] 6418,6406	
D	Louise [dd]	
X	8615	
C	[2] 8106,8117	
CfeL	8512	
D	York	
CfeL	8510	
S	[10] Douglas Manor,Cameron Manor, Brant Manor,Carleton Manor, Mackenzie Manor,Stuart Manor, Château Rigaud,Château Dollier, Château Radisson, Château Closse	
CfeL	8504	
D	Alexandra	

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2011

S [3]	Rogers Manor, Dawson Manor,
	Draper Manor
OLS	Strathcona Park



2010's-12: Upper and lower berths made up for night use on VIA's *Canadian*, in Sleeping car DRAPER MANOR (2011/09/29) [SANDRA DAWES].

Depart Union Station 2200, arrive 15 minutes late three mornings later at 0637, behind three locomotives as far as Winnipeg and two beyond – major stops occurring at Sudbury Jct., Capreol, Hornepayne, Sioux Lookout, Winnipeg MB, Melville SK, Saskatoon and Biggar; * We occupied a Section in DRAPER MANOR; * 3,221 km in 58 hrs 37 mins, or 55 km/h (2,010 mls/34 mph); * Nos. 8512 (ex-CP CfLC, CP, VIA 512), 8615 (ex-CP XY 3015, 615, VIA 615), DRAPER MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU RIGAUD (3sc8du3db1dr), ALEXANDRA, STRATHCONA PARK (3db1dr) (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP).



2010's-13: Westbound No. 1 *Canadian* meets its eastbound counterpart No. 2 somewhere in northwestern Ontario, photo taken from Observation Dome Lounge Sleeper STRATHCONA PARK (2011/09/28) [SANDRA DAWES].

TOP-CLASS OPERATION

Our 23-car No. 1 *Canadian* operated fairly close to schedule most of the way across the country, and was staffed by excellent crews (both east and west of Winnipeg), at least in our Sleeper and the rear Dining car. We were particularly delighted to be located conveniently in the Sleeper right next to our favourite rear-end PARK car. My only quibble is that the mainly young employees rotating among waiter, porter and lounge assignments were not always properly trained in the art of bar tending and serving – certainly not as in days of yore!

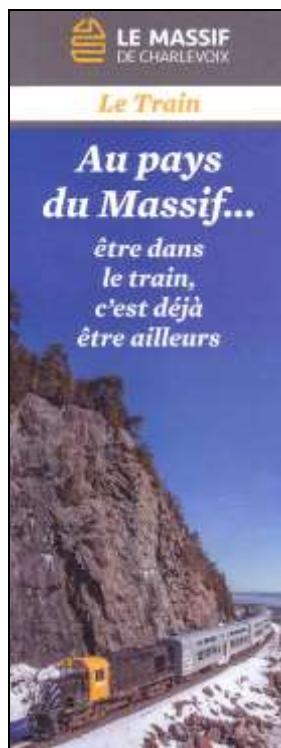
BIG CHANGES COMING?

In this observer's experience, No. 1 was unusually composed, with the front Dining car placed right behind the first Cafe Lounge (thus allowing Coach passengers to access that Diner), in turn followed by the second Cafe Lounge (which was barred to Coach occupants). Next in line were 10 Sleepers before the rear Cafe Lounge and Diner appeared, followed by the final three Sleepers and PARK car. Could this be a dry run in a rumoured turning of the rear section – to be made up of Cafe Lounge, Diner, all-room Sleepers, and PARK car – into an exclusive, higher priced “product” featuring cars then being rebuilt in the U.S.? Restricting access to the PARK car would not be welcomed by this and many other devotees of this wonderful train.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

2012

*ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/MANITOBA
SASKATCHEWAN/ALBERTA*



[Based on cover of brochure (English version:
"In the Land of Le Massif...board the train
to a whole new world") (2012)]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2012 for the usual purpose of visiting relatives and friends in Québec and Ontario, with the added spice of a trip on a recently inaugurated tourist train out of Québec City and a return home on the *Canadian*. The above is taken from the cover of a brochure describing *Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix* from Québec east along the north shore of the St. Lawrence to La Malbaie.

Trips taken: Eleven trips were involved covering 5,428 kilometres (3,388 miles), nine provided by VIA and two by Le Massif de Charlevoix. Ten were in my “Coach” category, the other one in “Sleeper”.

Equipment units: 100, made up of 16 Locomotives & Related Units and 84 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 38; Parlor & Club Cars, 8; Sleeping & Business Cars, 19; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 3; Lounge Cars, 8; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 8).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **ON** – Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto and Washago; **QC** – Baie-Saint-Paul, Brownsburg*, Charny, La Malbaie, Montréal, Mont-Tremblant*, and Québec.
(**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means)

Noteworthy train trips: **LMC Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix**, Québec to La Malbaie & return; **VIA Canadian**, Washago to Edmonton.

Fastest average speed: **VIA Metropolis**, Toronto to Montréal: 119 km/h (74 mph).

Slowest average speed: **LMC Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix**, La Malbaie to Québec: 41 km/h (25 mph).



[From photo of Generator Baggage car LCMX 302 (2012/09/21)] [SANDRA DAWES].

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

HIGHLIGHT!

Riding ***Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix*** from Québec to La Malbaie and back, with an afternoon stopover in the artist's community of Baie-Saint-Paul – this train featuring great scenery alongside the St. Lawrence and fine dining in highly reconfigured Chicago bilevel commuter cars.

MILESTONE

I travelled in my first-ever VIA trains (No. 14 *Ocean* and No. 27 *Frontenac*) equipped with Renaissance cars refitted to improve accessibility, a decade after taking part in meetings during which advocacy groups struggled to force the corporation into meeting its obligations on that score.

*La fin du voyage,
c'est le début*



The end of the line is just the beginning!

[From *Le Massif de Charlevoix* brochure, “In the Land of Le Massif...board the train to a whole new world” (2012)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

12 SEP:

VIA 66 TORONTO-MONTRÉAL *Metropolis*

E	6457
K	3463
C	[3] 3350,3366,3325
E	6411

To **MONTRÉAL**, starting with Air Canada to Toronto, Sandra to follow four days later due to work commitments (an initial eight nights at buddy Shaun Fawcett's condo overlooking the approach tracks to Gare Centrale); * Depart Union Station 1700, arrive five minutes early at 2132, stopping only at Oshawa and Dorval QC – powered by two rebuilt General Motors F40PH-3's; * I occupied a seat in one of three LRC (Light-Rapid-Comfortable) Coaches; * 539 km in 4 hrs 32 mins, or 119 km/h (336 mls/74 mph); * Nos. 6411, 6457 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 3350, 3463 (BBD, 1984; ex-C 3387).

METROPOLIS

... remained VIA's fastest train on its number-one corridor route, made up this day of three Coaches and a Club Galley. Despite the locomotive at each end, VIA was carding No. 66 fully 33 minutes longer than its original 3 hours, 59 minutes in 1992 (which back then represented an average speed of 135 kilometres [84 miles] per hour).

13 SEP:

VIA 55 MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA [TORONTO]

E	917
X	8621
K	4000
C	[4] 4116,4106,4117,4102

To **OTTAWA** to visit buddy Glen for an afternoon on the market, departing Central Station 0955, arriving eight minutes late at 1218, behind a Genesis P42DC, this train pausing in good old Alexandria ON, my home town, as well as Dorval and Casselman; * I occupied a former Southern Pacific, Texas & New Orleans and

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

Amtrak Coach, refurbished under VIA's HEP-2 (Head-End Electric Power) program; * 187 km in 2 hrs 23 mins, or 79 km/h (117 mls/49 mph); * No. 917 (GE, 2001); * No. 4106 (Budd/AMFT, 1950; ex-SP 2366, T&NO 439, SP 2227, AM 4419); * No. 4000 (Budd/AMFT, 1949, ex-C SOU 830, AM 5291, SOU, NRHS, RSC 830); * No. 8621 (Budd/SPTA, 1963; ex-UP 5906, 903688).

MONTRÉAL TO TORONTO VIA OTTAWA

No. 55 was one of five westbound Montréal-Ottawa trains now running through to Toronto, up from three in the previous year. One of these was the former, supertime, Montréal-Toronto "clean-up" train which previously ran directly via Cornwall, and while this improved frequency between Ottawa and Toronto, it deprived Kingston and other intermediate points of a fast evening service from Montréal. (Eastbound, three trains were running through, an increase of one.) VIA appeared to be was discounting these Ottawa-routed trains in order to attract through passengers.

VIA 38 OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

E	909
X	8620
K	4008
C	[4] 4103, 4101 , 4115, 4104

Depart 1735, arrive Central Station three minutes early at 1940; * 187 km in 2 hrs 5 mins, or 90 km/h (119 mls/56 mph)

NOT A THROUGH TRAIN, STRICTLY SPEAKING

No. 38 had the look of a Baggage car-equipped, Toronto-Montréal-via-Ottawa train, with good reason: it had arrived from Toronto at 1645 as No. 44, then laid over until departing for Montréal 50 minutes later at 1735 as No. 38.



[Alouette & Rider logos (scanned from game ticket, 2012/09/16)]

MONTRÉAL DELIGHTS

Highlights this time included: • visit to La Musée des beaux arts; two bike rides (featuring variously the Lachine Canal, St. Lawrence River, Île-Sainte-Hélène, Jacques Cartier Bridge high above the St. Lawrence, and back through the Vieux Port); • day trip to Mont-Tremblant (courtesy Shaun); and • dinner at niece Andrea's place on rue De Lorimier (access by Côte Vertu-Henri Bourassa Métro line and connecting bus). Shaun and I also went to Percival Molson Stadium at McGill University to watch Les Alouettes defeat the Saskatchewan Roughriders 28-17 on 16 SEP – for me, a return to the place where I watched the Ottawa Rough Riders play the Alouettes several times “back in the day”. A highlight was the 180-member, Boston College “Screaming Eagles” Marching Band, performing (get this!) arias from *Carmen* and other famous operas at halftime.

17 SEP:

VIA 55 MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA [TORONTO]

[as for 13 SEP above]

To **OTTAWA** again for the day, departing Central Station 0955 and arriving on-time at 1210, this time to visit cousin Susan (McLaren) Brown and husband Russ for lunch and a walk alongside the Rideau Canal.

VIA 38 OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

[as for 13 SEP above]

Depart 1735, arrive Central Station on-time at 1943 – both trains identical to my earlier round-trip.

20 SEP:

VIA 14 MONTRÉAL-CHARNY [HALIFAX] Ocean

E	[2]	6407,6414
X		7003
C	[3]	7220, 70217 ,7231
CfeL		7309
D		7401
CfeL		7308

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

S	[7]	79515,7518,7506,7522,7502,7513,7524
XT		7601
OLS		Evangeline Park

To **QUÉBEC CITY** with Sandra, to access *Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix*, departing Central Station 1830, arriving Charny on-time at 2140, with stops at St-Lambert, St-Hyacinthe and Drummondville – then by van across the bridge to the city (two nights at Hôtel Clarendon); * We occupied one of three Coaches, the other cars including seven Sleepers and an Observation Dome Lounge Sleeper; * 246 km in 3 hrs 10 mins, or 78 km/h (153 mls/48 mph); * Nos. 7003, 70217 (ex-7217), 7309, 7401, 7518 (10db), 7601 (all MC, 1995-6); * EVANGELINE PARK (Budd/AMFT, 1954-5, 3db1dr; ex-CP).

THE OCEAN

... was a reprise of our 2006 trip to Québec City, still operating six times per week but set to run tri-weekly come October. Apparently, the former premium “Easterly Class” was now being called “Sleeper Plus”, offered in addition to plain “Sleeper class”. Operated during the peak season, Sleeper Plus offered exclusive access to a Budd PARK Observation Dome Lounge car, which required a “Gallery Transition” car between it and the last Sleeper. Ostensibly, Coach passengers had to take meals in the Cafe Lounge, served this evening by a charming *Acadien* lady from New Brunswick. Just after she had delivered our meals, another Coach passenger asked and was told he could go to diner later if there were any meals left after the Sleeper patrons were done. (At least some of the Diner meals were being heated up right in the same Cafe Lounge, then transferred back to the adjacent Diner – presumably of higher culinary value than our fare). At Charny, we joined perhaps 10 others in waiting for the “Navette” (van transfer) for Québec City, most of them having missed preceding No. 26, which had departed Montréal at 1755 and was scheduled to reach Québec at 2100.

ABOUT TIME

VIA had finally modified its Renaissance cars to provide easier access for persons with disabilities, as evidenced by our Coach (No. 70217) and one Sleeper (No. 79515). This involved creating a wheelchair space in the Coaches and combining two rooms in the Sleepers, while enlarging the washroom facilities.



2010's-14: Author's wife Sandra waiting to depart Gare Centrale on VIA's *Ocean*, the 2 & 1 seating of Renaissance Coach No. 70217 quite evident (2012/09/20) [PETER DAWES].

21 SEP:

LMC QUÉBEC-LA MALBAIE & RETURN *Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix*

E	1821
XU	302
C	[4] 402,405,401,202

To **LA MALBAIE** for the day, after a taxi transfer out to the originating point, Parc de la Chute Montmorency; * Depart 0900, arrive Pointe-au-Pic station 1645 after a lengthy stopover at Baie-Saint-Paul; * Returning, depart backwards 15 minutes late at 1720 (cab-control Coach No. 202 leading), arrive five minutes late at 2030, followed by a taxi back to the city as arranged by the staff; * 130 km in 3 hrs 10 mins in westbound direction, or 41 km/h (80 mls/25 mph); * No. 1821 (MLW, 1957; ex-CP 8741, CP, NBEC 1821; Ir-SFG); * No. 302 (NSC, 1958; ex-CN X 9280, 9251, VIA 9651, AM, MRLX 1005; Ir-GCRT); * No. 402 (PS, 1961; ex-C&NW 86, MET 7737; Ir-GCRT); * No. 202 (PS, 1960; ex-C&NW 175, MET 8724, LMC 408; Ir-GCRT).



2010's-15: Combined *Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix* approaching Baie-Saint-Paul station, rear half to depart at 1530 back to Québec City, front half then to reverse onto the main line at 1535 and resume its journey to La Malbaie (2012/09/21) [PETER DAWES].

LE TRAIN DU MASSIF DE CHARLEVOIX

... began service in September of 2011 between La Chute Montmorency (10 km [6 mls] east from Gare du Palais) and Pointe-au-Pic (adjacent to La Malbaie). The third attempt at running a successful tourist-oriented train in these parts, Groupe Le Massif now owned this former Canadian National line, over which it planned to run trains almost year-round to serve its ski resort from Grande-Pointe and its hotel next to the Baie-Saint-Paul station. Two trains operated this day, each with four cars: • ours scheduled to depart La Chute at 0900, arrive Baie-Saint-Paul 1130, leave at 1535 for Pointe-au-Pic, depart there at 1705, and arrive back at La Chute at 2025; and • a later 0945 departure only as far as Baie-Saint-Paul, arriving back circa 1730. Each train was powered by a former Canadian Pacific/New Brunswick East Coast RS18 diesel, with hotel power supplied by a generator car built out of ex-Canadian National/VIA/Amtrak baggage cars. In 2019, this fleet would be sold to Great Canadian Railtour Co., and replaced by modest Diesel Multiple Unit trains.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012



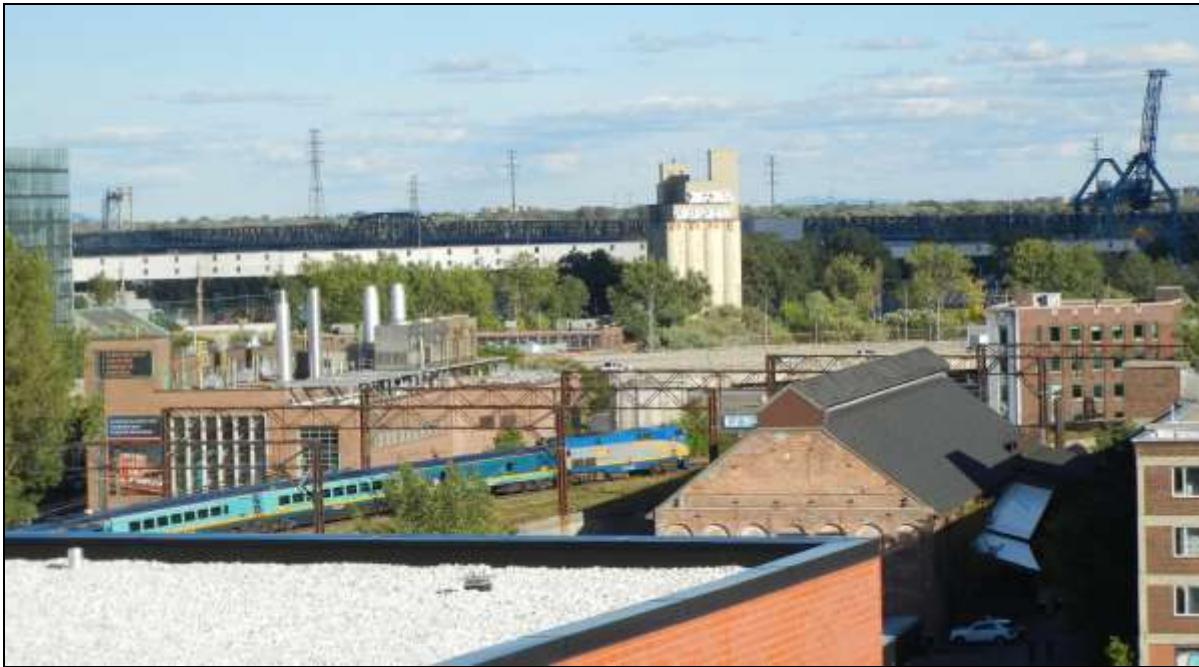
2010's-16: St. Lawrence from *Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix*, featuring a Canada Steamship Lines vessel heading up river towards Québec (2012/09/21) [SANDRA DAWES].

COMMUTER COACHES TRANSFORMED

Considerably rebuilt out of bi-level cars formerly operated by the Chicago & North Western Railway (later by Metra commuter agency) in the Chicago region, we found the Coaches to be well-designed and roomy, also beautifully lighted during the evening return trip. As for the trip itself, the scenery was truly spectacular, the Baie-Saint-Paul stopover most enjoyable, the food a gastronomic experience (despite being prepared off-board and finished in the galley), and the service top notch.

CHARLEVOIX LINE

... was opened in 1884 as far as Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, in '94 to Cap Tourmente as Québec, Montmorency & Charlevoix Railway (later Québec Railway, Light & Power), and in 1917 to La Malbaie (under Canadian Government Railways, then Canadian National from '18). During summers, there was even a Washington-La Malbaie Pullman (during the 1920's) and a Montréal-La Malbaie Parlor car (through the '50's).



2010's-17: VIA's No.26 departs Central Station for Québec in this Griffintown scene captured from the roof of Shaun's Fawcett's condo – this train about to swing onto Victoria Bridge (2012/09/20) [SANDRA DAWES].

22 SEP:

VIA 27 QUÉBEC-MONTRÉAL *Frontenac*

E	900
X	7001
Kr	7216
C	70224
SvL	7300
Kr	7105
C [3]	7207, 7212 , 7200

Depart Gare du Palais 1730, arrive Central Station on-time at 2056, with stops at Ste-Foy, Drummondville, St-Hyacinthe and St-Lambert (overnight at Shaun's); * We had spent the day exploring the old town and Plains of Abraham, strolling along the revitalized rue St-Paul and Quai St-André, and shopping at the Marché du Vieux-Port, near the station; * 272 km scheduled for 3 hrs 15 mins, or 84 km/h (170 mls/52 mph); * Nos. 7001, 7212, 7105, 7300 (all MC, 1995-6).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

FRONTENAC

... was made up of Renaissance equipment, including a Coach (No. 70224) rebuilt to provide better accessibility. No. 27 was lightly loaded this Saturday evening, with only the cars behind the Lounge in service. The journey became seriously odiferous when we ran over a skunk between Charny and Drummondville!

BEWARE THE SHORE EXCURSIONISTS

While we were there, Québec City was deluged with tourists off a Norwegian Cruise Lines vessel on an itinerary originating and terminating at New York (failed to record, but probably NORWEGIAN GEM, in service 2007, 93,350 Gross Registered Tonnes). Also in port was a condominium "residential yacht" called THE WORLD (2002; 43,524), operated by the ResidenSea company out of Florida.

- **23 SEP:** To **BROWNSBURG QC** near Lachute by automobile for a family reunion at nephew Charlie's cottage (transport courtesy sister Dorothy, then overnight back at her place in Brossard).

24 SEP:

VIA 65 MONTRÉAL-KINGSTON [TORONTO] Renaissance

E	6442
K	3466
C	[2] 3361,3337

To **KINGSTON** to visit more relatives and frequent old haunts, departing Central Station 1540, arriving five minutes late at 1818, stopping at Dorval and Cornwall ON (one night at our old standby, Hotel Belvedere); * 285 km in 2 hrs 38 mins, or 108 km/h (178 mls/67 mph).

- **25 SEP:** Return to **EDMONTON**, beginning with a bus chartered by VIA from Kingston to Oshawa, then van to Washago – our Montréal-Kingston-Toronto No. 65 having been annulled (consist of No. 65 being the same as the evening previous).

TUESDAY EVENING CHAOS

At approximately 1730 hours, VIA's Toronto-Montréal train No. 64 – due Kingston at 1737 hours – struck and killed a trespasser in the western end of the city, forcing closure of the line while emergency services responded and police and coroner investigated. Both Montréal-Ottawa-Toronto No. 657 (due 1713 but pulling in at 1800 due to “electrical problems”) and our intended No. 65 loaded their passengers at Kingston station, then backed up a short distance and sat while VIA decided whether to charter buses or wait for the tracks to be cleared. Handling the situation with great professionalism, our service manager explained that passengers were kept on the trains because Kingston station was too small to accommodate all of us and remain within fire code. (Several other trains also were affected, including VIA's flagship Montréal-Toronto *Metropolis* in both directions.) After an hour-and-a-half, both trains moved back to the platforms, where they transferred their passengers onto six buses. Along with perhaps two dozen others who were connecting to No. 1, the *Canadian*, at Toronto for points as far west as Vancouver (also to No. 89 for London), we were given priority on the first bus, which departed at 2005 for Toronto Union Station, only to veer off into Oshawa's GO/VIA station, where a van and two taxis waited to take those connecting to the *Canadian* onward to Washago.

WASHAGO NOCTURNE

Located 143 kilometres (89 miles) north of Toronto at the head of Lake Couchiching, Washago was a flag stop for the *Canadian*. Arriving there at 2340, we had plenty of time before No. 1's scheduled 0040 arrival to investigate the former Canadian National station and a cottage-like VIA shack – which might have been able to shelter 10 people in a pinch. Its only amenities were boards providing timings for the *Canadian* (the designated northbound days not taking into account the post-midnight arrival), and a phone number for Ontario Northland (ON)'s Toronto-Cochrane *Northlander* (which was about to be discontinued). Finally arriving at 0100 (right behind a long CN freight headed for North Bay and ON connections), No. 1 loaded us passengers in multiple stops and left town at 0115.



2010's-18: Author's wife Sandra leans on VIA's most unusual Washago "station", awaiting the late arrival of No. 1 *Canadian* from Toronto (2012/09/26) [PETER DAWES].

26-29 SEP:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WASHAGO-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2]	6421,6416
X		8609
C	[2]	8125,8118
CfeL		8504
S	[3]	Dunsmuir Manor,Stuart Manor, Laird Manor
CfeL		8503
D		Frontenac
S	[6]	Dawson Manor,Blair Manor, Osler Manor,Château Viger, Château Verchères,Sherwood Manor

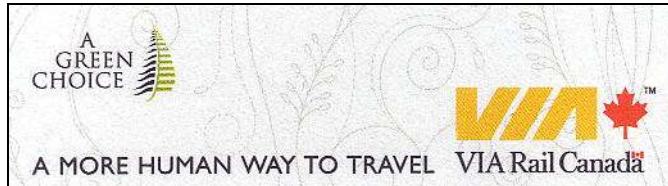
NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012

CfeL	8509
D	Palliser
S [3]	Hearne Manor, Thompson
	Manor, Carleton Manor
OLS	Banff Park

Depart 0115, arrive 2 hrs 38 mins late three mornings later at 0900, stops including Sudbury Jct., Capreol, Hornepayne, Sioux Lookout, Winnipeg MB, Melville SK, Saskatoon and Biggar, behind two F40PH-3 locomotives; * We took a Section in CARLETON MANOR, my first time occupying this car; * 3,078 km in 55 hrs 45 mins, or 55 km/h (1,921 mls/34 mph); * Nos. 8509 (ex-CP CfLC, CP, VIA 509), 8609 (ex-CP XY 3009, 609, VIA 609), CARLETON MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU VIGER (3sc8du3db1dr), PALLISER, BANFF PARK (3db1dr) (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP).

ANOTHER EXCELLENT TRIP

Our 21-car *Canadian* operated fairly close to schedule most of the way across the country, except for the last stretch through Alberta into Edmonton, where we lost a couple of hours. As in 2011, we were assigned to a Section in the last Sleeper before our favourite rear-end PARK car. The train was staffed by excellent crews, including a most affable guy in BANFF PARK, who couldn't do enough to accommodate his clients. Looming over this scene was impending transformation of the rear part of the train into a higher priced "product", using cars still under reconstruction.



[From "Great memories stay alive" brochure (2010/05)]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2012



2010's-19: VIA No. 1 *Canadian* pauses at Washago ON to pick up passengers transferred by bus, van and taxi from Kingston via Oshawa – plus one CN signals maintenance employee heading to Oba in north-western Ontario (2012/09/26) [PETER DAWES].

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2013

2013

ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN



[From "Train Rides" brochure (2013)]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2013 to visit my Saskatchewan in-laws (using the *Canadian*), to enjoy a recently opened heritage train in the same province, and to take an old favourite tourist train in Alberta. The above logo is from the cover of a brochure describing Southern Prairie's little train between Ogema and Horizon SK.

Trips taken: Six were involved covering 1,356 kilometres (*846 miles*), two provided by each of Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions (APRE), Southern Prairie Railway (SPRY), and VIA Rail. Four were in my "Coach" category (including two behind steam); the other two in "Sleeper".

Equipment units: 71, made up of 8 Locomotives & Related Units and 63 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 18; Parlor & Club Cars, 0; Sleeping & Business Cars, 23; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 4; Lounge Cars, 14; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 4).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Big Valley, Edmonton and Stettler; **SK** – Horizon*, Ogema* and Watrous. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means)

Noteworthy train trips: **SPRY**, Ogema to Horizon; **APRE**, Stettler to Big Valley; **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous.

Fastest average speed: **VIA Canadian**, Watrous to Edmonton: 62 km/h (39 mph).

Slowest average speed: **APRE**, Stettler to Big Valley: 17 km/h (11 mph). (**Note:** return trip slower, but excluded due to enroute stop for fireworks display.)

Overseas: I took my fourteenth Overseas and thirteenth European holiday (ninth and eighth with Sandra, respectively), from 2 APR to 14 MAY, visiting England, Scotland, Wales, France, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania, Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Germany.

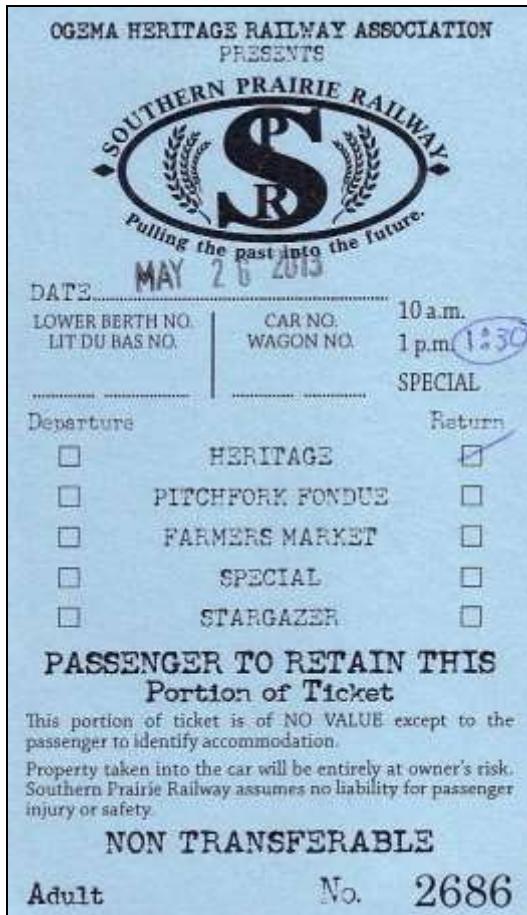
NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2013

HIGHLIGHT!

Riding Southern Prairie Railway's heritage train from Ogema to Horizon and back, across the rolling landscape of southern Saskatchewan filled with wildlife, over a former Canadian Pacific line now owned by local farmers for the main purpose of hauling grain.

MILESTONE

Travelling on the first true tourist train in Saskatchewan, pretty basic now but hopefully to feature steam in future.



[Ticket issued for Ogema-Horizon round trip (note the improbable box for "LOWER BERTH NO./LIT DU BAS NO.") (2013)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

- **23 MAY:** To **WATROUS** by car with Sandra, at the start of a 10-day visit to her family (accommodation courtesy of her mom/my mother-in-law, Frieda).

26 MAY:

SPRY OGEMA-HORIZON & RETURN

E	15
C	Mount Holly

To **OGEMA** by car, accompanied by Sandra and Frieda, to ride this tourist train; * Depart 1330, arrive 1430, non-stop, powered by General Electric GE44 diesel-electric switcher; * We occupied seats in a former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western commuter Coach; * Returning, depart 1450, arrive 1550, then back to Watrous by car; * 25 km in 1 hr or 25 km/h (15 mls/16 mph); * No. 15 (GE, 1945, ex-MeC 15,155, CSR 15); * Mount Holly (PUL, 1922; ex-DL&W, NJT, G&N, PLSR).

SOUTHERN PRAIRIE RAILWAY (SPRY)

... was established by Ogema Heritage Railway Association (OHRA) and began diesel operations in 2012 between various points along the line, both east and west of this well-kept town (pop. 400). Running "the first and only full size tourist train located in beautiful Southern Saskatchewan", SPRY employed these themes: "Heritage Trains, Farmer's Market, Pitchfork Fondue, Star Gazer, Train Robberies, Come See the Rails, Mother's Day Special, Father's Day Special, Christmas Trains, and Settlers Supper (*Train Rides*)". Our excursion was a "Heritage" outing, featuring a diesel switcher hauling one Coach – the only negative being the fumes engulfing the interior of the Coach. Future plans included longer trains powered by steam.



*[From Ogema Heritage Railway Association,
Southern Prairie Railway brochure (2012)]*



2010's-20: Southern Prairie train ready to leave Ogema SK station for Horizon (2013/05/26) [PETER DAWES].

RED COAT LINE

... was opened by Canadian Pacific (CP) in 1912 between Weyburn and Assiniboia SK, over its entire length of 180 kilometres (111 miles). For many years, the railway operated a full passenger train between Weyburn and Assiniboia, tri-weekly in each direction [Folder A, 1949/10/30, Table 99]. CP ended service in 1999 and sold the stretch between Pangman, Ogema, Horizon, and Assiniboia to local interests for continued service under the name, Red Coat Road & Rail Ltd., honouring the historic movement of North West Mounted Police west through this countryside. At first, a short line called Southern Railway operated the line for Red Coat and delivered grain to CP at Assiniboia; by 2013, Great Western Railway was performing this role.



[From website]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2013



2010's-21: Southern Prairie tourist train pauses at Horizon SK, beside a derelict Federal Grain Co. elevator (2013/05/26) [PETER DAWES].

OGEMA STATION

... was demolished when Canadian Pacific (CP) closed the line in 1999, upon which Ogema Heritage Railway Association (OHRA) purchased an identical Simpson SK building from a farmer who was using it to store grain. OHRA had done an excellent job of restoring it, including the living quarters of the agent and family. This is not surprising, given that the village operates the extensive and superb Deep South Pioneer Museum, which admits Southern Prairie ticket holders at no charge.

- **3 JUN:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.
- **13 SEP:** To **WATROUS** by car with Sandra again, to attend a wedding and help with the fall harvest (accommodation courtesy of her mom), my intention being to go home early to Edmonton by train to attend some curling practices, then return to collect her and the car a week later.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2013

16-17 SEP:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2]	6415,6409
X		8604
C	[2]	8129,8123
CfeL		8503
D		Empress
CfeL		8510
S	[8]	Dunsmuir Manor,Bliss Manor, Brant Manor, Abbott Manor , Carleton Manor,Wolfe Manor, Château Iberville,Lorne Manor
CfeL		8500
D		Imperial
S	[3]	Burton Manor,Bayfield Manor, Elgin Manor
OLS		Revelstoke Park

Return to **EDMONTON** on my own, departing 2200 and arriving next morning at 0800 (scheduled for 2033 and 0622, respectively), behind two General Motors F40PH-2's and occupying a Lower Berth in **ABBOTT MANOR**; * 619 km in 10 hrs, or 62 km/h (386 mls/39 mph); * Nos. 6415, 6409 (GMD, 1987-9); * Nos. 8503 (ex-CP CfLC, CP,VIA 503), 8604 (ex-CP XY 3004, 604, VIA 604), 8129 (ex-129), **ABBOTT MANOR** (3sc4rm5db1ct), **CHÂTEAU IBERVILLE** (3sc8du3db1dr), **EMPRESS**, **REVELSTOKE PARK** (3db1dr) (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP).

WATROUS ACTION

My westbound, 20-car *Canadian* was less than half an hour late arriving Watrous, but sat at the far east end of the yard for almost an hour while one Canadian National eastbound freight (consisting mainly of tankers and potash cars) arrived and changed crews, then was leapfrogged by a long container hot-shot which had pulled up behind. We proceeded to lose more time along the way, arriving Edmonton next morning one and a half hours late.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2013

STATION UPGRADE

Someone had laid down a modest concrete platform at Watrous during the past few years, a huge improvement on the previous base of the old VIA shelter. Perhaps this modest windfall came out of "stimulus" funding provided by the federal government in the wake of the 2008 global financial melt-down.

SLEEPING CARS

ABBOTT MANOR had come out of VIA's HEP-1 rebuilding program mislabelled as ABBOT. This was the first time I had ever encountered BURTON MANOR, and meant that I had either occupied or recorded all 42 of these cars in trains ridden over the years. As for the 29 CHÂTEAU cars, I had occupied or encountered all but two (PAPINEAU and SALABERRY).

24 SEP:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6432,6451
X		8609
C	[2]	8125,8126
CfeL		8516
D		Palliser
CfeL		8502
S	[9]	Osler Manor,Jarvis Manor, Douglas Manor,Hunter Manor, Allan Manor,Monck Manor, Château Montcalm,Château Roberval, Château Lasalle
CfeL		8509
D		Frontenac
S	[3]	Cabot Manor ,Brock Manor, Mackenzie Manor
OLS		Kokanee Park



2010's-22: VIA No. 2 Canadian, newly arrived at Watrous SK from Vancouver and Edmonton, on its way to Toronto, led by two rebuilt F40PH-2's (2013/09/24) [SANDRA DAWES].

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra; * Depart 0044, arrive 1112 (scheduled for 2359 and 0622, respectively), occupying a Lower Berth in CABOT MANOR; * 619 km in 10 hrs 28 mins, or 59 km/h (386 mls/37 mph); * **26 SEP:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.

RETURN CANADIAN

This No. 2 was half-an-hour behind schedule arriving Edmonton, then 45 minutes late departing, and would pause at the Watrous concrete slab 81 minutes *en retard*. Its progress through Saskatoon was torturous, due in part to the ongoing expansion of Canadian National (CN)'s yard. The next day after our passage, a CN freight derailed at Landis, approximately 130 kilometres (83 miles) west of Saskatoon, blocking the main line to all traffic, including VIA. There were no injuries, and only a small amount of non-flammable lubricating oil had to be reclaimed.

28 SEP:

APRE STETTLER-BIG VALLEY & RETURN

Es	41
W	79146
L	Lone Star
S	Tracy/[as Coach]
C [3]	6741, 6603 , 7279
OBS	663045
C	6744
CX	2808
C	5080
LS	Glen Sutton/[as Coach]

Day excursion with Sandra and three other couples to **BIG VALLEY** on Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions, starting with an automobile trip to Stettler; * Depart there at 1530, arrive Big Valley 25 minutes late at 1735, behind 2-8-0 Consolidation No. 41 (formerly owned by the St. Louis-San Francisco, Central Western, and other railways); * We occupied Coach No. 6603, built in 1923 for the fledgling Canadian National; * Two ancient cars lent a CP flavor: Lounge Sleeper GLEN SUTTON (1921) and Sleeper TRACY (1931); * Returning, depart 1915, arrive 10 minutes late at 2115, with the Locomotive at the front running backwards and Caboose at the other end – then back to Edmonton by car; * 34 km in 2 hrs, or 17 km/h (21 mls/11 mph), on outward trip; * No. 41 (BLW, 1920; ex-JLC&E 41, SLSF, MRL, NARC 77, CWR 9); * No. 6603 (CCF, 1923); * LONE STAR (CCF, 1924; ex-CN C 5082); * TRACY (CCF/CP, 1931, 12sc1dr; ex-CP Solsgirth, Tracy, CRCS Commonwealth, ARM 1002); * GLEN SUTTON (CCF, 1921, 4sc; ex-CP 10ct Glen Orchard, 8sc4db Virden, Verdun, Work 411293, CWR 1920).



[Seat reservation]



2010's-23: Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions Consolidation No. 41, ready to depart Stettler AB for Big Valley, trailed by a caboose and 10 other cars (2010/09/28) [PETER DAWES].

TRAIN ROBBERIES AND FIREWORKS

This was Alberta Prairie's last steam-hauled run of the year, and was made without the Water Auxiliary car used on our 2001 trip. The "train robbery" helped make the outward trip 25 minutes late, while a truly magnificent fireworks display – launched on *both* sides of the train – entertained the announced 371 passengers on the return service. Alas, I booked our group's eight tickets too late to get into my favourite car, ex-Canadian Pacific 12 Section-1 Drawing Room Sleeper TRACY. Former CN Mountain locomotive 6060 did not operate any trips this season, leaving No 41 to handle all steam excursions, which were supplemented by diesel-hauled versions lasting as late as December.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2014

2014

*ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN
ONTARIO/QUÉBEC
NEW BRUNSWICK*



[viarail.ca/en/explore-our-destinations/trains/atlantic-canada/montreal-halifax-ocean (2014)]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2014 to visit friends at a cottage in Georgian Bay (then other friends and relatives in Montréal and Ottawa), to attend the wedding of my nephew Charlie, to get together with siblings at Cornwall ON, to access Prince Edward Island (the only province I had not yet visited, via Moncton NB), and to visit in-laws at Watrous SK. The above logo celebrates 110 years of service by trains using the *Ocean* name, going back to Intercolonial Railway days and continuing today with VIA Rail.

Trips taken: Ten were involved, covering 5,016 kilometres (*3,130 miles*), all provided by VIA Rail. Six were in my “Coach” category (but none of these behind steam); the other four in “Sleeper”.

Equipment units: 119, made up of 16 Locomotives & Related Units and 103 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 32; Parlor & Club Cars, 6; Sleeping & Business Cars, 37; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 6; Lounge Cars, 14; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 8).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **NB** – Moncton and Sackville*; **ON** – Cornwall, Honey Harbour*, Long Sault*, Ottawa, Toronto and Williamstown*; **PE** – Cavendish*, Charlottetown*, Morell* and North Rustico*; **QC** – Austin*, Montréal and Orford*; **SK** – Watrous. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means)

Noteworthy train trips: **VIA Ocean**, Montréal to Moncton; **VIA No. 56**, Ottawa to Montréal; **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous.

Fastest average speed: **VIA Metropolis**, Toronto to Montréal: 122 km/h (*76 mph*).

Slowest average speed: **VIA Ocean**, Montréal to Moncton: 55 km/h (*34 mph*).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2014

HIGHLIGHT!

Taking VIA's *Ocean* from Montréal overnight to Moncton, on the famous and scenic Baie-des-Chaleurs route, albeit over some rough track through northwestern New Brunswick.

MILESTONE

Experiencing my fastest trip ever between Ottawa and Montréal, eastbound on VIA No. 56 at 1 hour and 47 minutes, meaning 105 kilometres (*66 miles*) per hour. (From Ottawa to the only intermediate stop at Dorval, this train took but 1 hour and 23 minutes, or 122 km [*76 mls*] per hour.)



[Door tag used in Ocean's Renaissance Sleeping cars, 2014]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

- **12 JUL:** To **HONEY HARBOUR ON** with Sandra, starting with Air Canada to Toronto's Pearson International Airport, then a Simcoe County Airport Service (SCAS) van to Honey Harbour, and finally a 20-minute motorboat ride to the cottage of Edmonton friends, Charles and Kath Beck (four nights there, kayaking, swimming and boating around this lovely part of Georgian Bay).

16 JUL:

VIA 68 TORONTO-MONTRÉAL *Metropolis*

E	6411
K	3461
C	[2] 3345,3355

To **MONTRÉAL**, starting with a boat ride back to Honey Harbour, SCAS van to Pearson, Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) bus to Kipling Station, then subway to Union Station; * Depart 1700, arrive four minutes early at 2126, stopping only at Oshawa and Dorval QC – powered by a single, rebuilt General Motors F40PH-3; * After occupying a seat in an LRC (Light-Rapid-Comfortable) Coach, we spent an initial two nights at buddy Shaun Fawcett's condo overlooking the approach tracks to Gare Centrale; * 539 km in 4 hrs 26 mins, or 122 km/h (336 mls/76 mph); * No. 6411 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 3345, 3461 (ex-C 3376) (BBD, 1981-4).

METROPOLIS

... remained VIA's fastest train on its number-one corridor route, but this day was made up of just two Coaches and a Club Galley. (VIA had changed the number of this train to 68 from the traditional 66 since my most recent trip back in 2012.)



[viarail.ca]

MONTRÉAL DOINGS

Shaun was his usual great host self, and frantically squired us around Montréal. But the main highlight was renting bicycles, riding to the Vieux Port, taking a ferry to Longueuil on the south shore, and cycling alongside the St. Lawrence to Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville (actually, a provincial park consisting of five islands in the St. Lawrence, cyclists having to use a small ferry over from the mainland).

• **19-20 JUL:** To **ORFORD QC** in Les Cantons de l'Est (Eastern Townships) by automobile for the wedding of nephew Charlie at nearby Austin (one night at my sister Dorothy's place across the river in Brossard, followed by another in an Orford hotel, the driving courtesy of nephew Michael; then back into the city for another three nights at Shaun's).

21 JUL:

VIA 33 [QUÉBEC] MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA Vanier

E	6441
K	3458
C	[3] 3317,3328,3302

To **OTTAWA** to visit cousin Sue (McLaren) and husband Russ for lunch at the Canal Ritz, later supper with buddy Glen on the Market; * Depart Central Station three minutes late at 0850, arrive 12 minutes late at 1107, after stopping at Dorval, Alexandria ON and Casselman; * 187 km in 2 hrs 17 mins, or 82 km/h (117 mls/51 mph).

MONTRÉAL BACK UP

Originating at Québec at 0535, No. 33 entered Central Station, then backed up almost onto Victoria Bridge before heading west for Dorval – one train doing this in each direction, Monday through Friday. It took 13 minutes after departing Central for it to begin going west, and this accounted for most of the lateness.

VIA 56 [TORONTO] OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL

E	910
K	3469

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2014

C [3] 3340,3329,**3339**

Depart 24 minutes late at 2102, arrive Central Station 22 minutes late at 2249, stopping only at Dorval, behind a Genesis P42DC locomotive; * 187 km in 1 hr 47 mins, or 105 km/h (119 mls/66 mph); * No. 910 (GE, 2001).

FAST RUN

After arriving late from Toronto, No. 56 put in a respectable performance of 105 kilometres (66 miles) per hour from Ottawa to Montréal, passing nonstop through my home town of Alexandria but pausing at Dorval – my fastest train trip ever between these two points. (Ottawa-Dorval was done in 1 hour and 23 minutes, or 122 km [76 mls] per hour.) My previous Ottawa-Montréal best had been 1 hour and 55 minutes way back in 1983 [13 MAY] in the other direction, this translating into 97 km (60 mls) per hour – also an LRC train, but one hauled by an LRC-2 locomotive. Regardless, this effort resulted in only two minutes being picked up compared to schedule. As for No. 56, it was one of three Toronto-originating trains now continuing on to Montréal, and the fastest between Toronto and Ottawa, stopping only at suburban Fallowfield before reaching the nation's capital. (In the other direction, four westbound Ottawa-Toronto trains now originated at Montréal.)

22 JUL:

VIA 63 MONTRÉAL-CORNWALL [TORONTO]

E 6426

X 8618

K 4009

C [4] 4117,**4102**,4112,4121

To **CORNWALL** with Dorothy, to meet up with David, Raymond and the latter's wife, Mary-Rose, the purpose being to visit the Glengarry Celtic Music Hall of Fame in Williamstown (into which Dad had been inducted the previous year for his music teaching in Alexandria, 1952-62), and his and Mom's graves at Long Sault; * Depart 1010 on this Toronto-bound train, arrive four minutes early at 1123, stopping only at Dorval and occupying an ex-Louisville & Nashville and Amtrak Coach; * 111 km in 1 hr 13 mins, or 91 km/h (69 mls/57 mph); * No. 4102 (Budd/AMFT, 1953; ex-L&N 3252, AM 5804); * No. 4009 (ex-C SAL 6216, SCL, AM 5201, AM, NRHMI, RSC 6014, VIA 4125); * No. 8618 (Budd/SPTA, 1963; ex-UP 5907, 903689).



2010's-24: VIA No. 63 at Cornwall ON, a General Motors F40PH-3 hauling six HEP-2 cars – this being the second of eight stops on its way from Montréal to Toronto (2014/07/22) [PETER DAWES].

VIA 66 [TORONTO] CORNWALL-MONTRÉAL Renaissance

E	6412
K	3459
C	[4] 3309,3360,3331,3362

Depart on time at 1903, arrive Central Station four minutes late at 2016

CUTBACKS

Cornwall station was now unmanned, but did provide a live, remotely controlled electronic departure & arrival display, a self-serve ticket machine, and a (clean) waiting room. This was another consequence of large reductions in VIA's operating funding, subsequent to the injection of hundreds of millions for capital improvements, partly under the guise of "stimulus" spending.

23-24 JUL:**VIA 14 MONTRÉAL-MONCTON [HALIFAX] Ocean**

E	[3]	6446,6443,6417
X		7011
C	[4]	7223,70230,7227,7231
CfeL		7309
D		7401
CfeL		7313
S	[8]	79515,7525,7520,7518,7519, 7510 ,7513,7504
XT		7601
OLS		Tweedsmuir Park

To **CHARLOTTETOWN** for the purpose of visiting Prince Edward Island, starting with *Ocean* departing Central Station 1855, arriving Moncton next afternoon an hour late at 1507, with major stops at St-Hyacinthe, Drummondville, Ste-Foy, Rivière-du-Loup, Rimouski, Mont-Joli, Matapédia, Campbellton NB, Bathurst and Miramichi; * We occupied one of eight Renaissance Sleeping cars but spent most of our waking time in the Observation Dome Lounge Sleeper; * 1,052 km in 19 hrs 12 mins, or 55 km/h (657 mls/34 mph); * Nos. 7011, 70230 (ex-7230), 7309, 7401, 7510 (10db), 7601 (all MC, 1995-6); * **TWEEDSMUIR PARK** (Budd/AMFT, 1954-5, 3db1dr; ex-CP).

THE OCEAN

... was now operating three instead of six times per week, as had been the case when we encountered it last in 2012. An army of VIA station staff finally began a chaotic boarding process around 1825 hours, understandably pre-boarding those with children and mobility issues, but then allowing Coach passengers to precede Sleeping-car guests. We were in "Sleeper Plus Class", offered only from mid-June to mid-October and over Christmas & New Year's, entitling one to complimentary meals and access to the PARK Observation Dome Lounge Sleeper, also (according to VIA's website) "informal educational activities and presentations on the Maritimes". While all rooms had two berths, ours featured a shower and was more spacious than those sold as cheaper "Sleeper Class" – the latter being offered year-round, but requiring passengers to pay for meals "at affordable prices" and allowing access to the PARK car only during the off-season.



2010's-25: VIA No. 14 *Ocean*, newly arrived at Moncton from Montréal in a light rain, three F40PH-3's pulling 17 Renaissance and one Budd Observation Lounge Dome Sleeper (2014/07/24) [PETER DAWES].

MAJOR CHANGES AND A CLOUDY FUTURE

VIA recently had closed its Charny QC station, requiring *Ocean* to cross the Québec bridge over to Ste-Foy, where a shuttle took passengers to or from Québec City. The operating crew was changed before the train backed up across to bridge to regain the main line. On the positive side, the on-board staff were excellent, in the Sleepers, Dining and PARK cars, and the morning run from Campbellton along the Baie des Chaleurs was as stunning as ever. Canadian National had leased this line to New Brunswick North Eastern Railway in 1997, but resumed operations itself in 2008. The train had been under threat of discontinuance, after CN announced plans to abandon a 71 kilometre (44 mile) segment between Bathurst and Miramichi NB, due to insufficient freight traffic. In May of this year (2014), the federal government had announced that it would provide \$10.2 million to supplement an earlier deal between CN and New Brunswick to upgrade other segments. In the meantime, our *Ocean* carefully negotiated this speed-restricted segment, meaning that it had no chance of recovering the hour lost mostly while leaving Campbellton, apparently due to a signalling problem.

SIN & SWOON

... (aka Michael James O'Brien and Michelle Tomkins) entertained passengers in the PARK and Coach Café cars during this trip. Travelling under VIA's entertainment program, their influences ranged from the Everly Brothers to Tammy Wynette. Heading to Michelle's Antigonish NS hometown, they had received a free upgrade to Sleeper class in exchange for some excellent guitar playing and harmonies, and it turned out they knew both my niece Andrea and nephew Charlie through the Montréal music scene.

CHALEUR

Ocean's companion train, the tri-weekly Montréal-Gaspé *Chaleur*, had been suspended for some time, due to track problems east of Matapedia requiring upwards of \$100 million to fix. Without the promised upgrade of the line in New Brunswick, *Ocean* would have to be diverted onto Canadian National's main freight line through central New Brunswick, not only cutting off north shore communities such as Campbellton and Bathurst, but making any future revival of *Chaleur* that much more difficult.

- **24-29 JUL:** By rental car across the Confederation Bridge for six days on ***Prince Edward Island***, including ***Charlottetown***, the “Cradle of Confederation”, and the beautiful fishing port of ***North Rustico*** (highlights being Province House where, in 1864, the Fathers of Confederation advanced the process that resulted in the Dominion of Canada three years later; the obligatory musicals, *Anne of Green Gables* and sequel *Anne & Gilbert* (both extremely well done and so very Canuck!); a bicycle ride east from Morell to Selkirk on the “Confederation Trail”; the obligatory visit to Cavendish, hometown of *Anne*'s author, Lucy Maud Montgomery; and swimming and sunbathing at Point Deroche, North Rustico and Cabot Beach Provincial Park on beautiful, clean Gulf of St. Lawrence beaches).



[From Government of Prince Edward Island,
Confederation Sentier/Trail map]



2010's-26: Author reads an information plaque before crossing this bridge on the Confederation Trail, on the way from Morell to Selkirk, following the old Canadian National roadbed (2014/07/26) [SANDRA DAWES].

CONFEDERATION TRAIL

Our ride on rental bikes commenced at Morell on the Confederation Trail, skirted St. Peters Bay (an inlet off the Gulf of St. Lawrence) to the scenic fishing port of St. Peters, then continued cross-country as far east as Selkirk, over the lightly graded, well-groomed and marked former Canadian National Railway line to Souris – 23 kilometres (14 miles) out and the same back. This segment was part of the impressive 470 kilometre (293 mile) Confederation Trail system converted from CN's PEI network. The original, narrow-gauge, Prince Edward Island Railway (PEIR) was opened in 1873, its debts becoming so large that the colony was forced to join Confederation that year with a guarantee that Canada would take over the railway and its obligations. In 1915, PEIR was placed under the newly formed Canadian Government Railways (along with the much bigger Intercolonial), then Canadian National from '23.



2010's-27: Ex-Prince Edward Island Railway/Canadian Government Railways/Canadian National Railways station at Kensington PE, opened in 1904 – bicycle trail in the foreground (2014/07/29) [SANDRA DAWES].

CANADIAN NATIONAL ON THE ISLAND

CN soon began converting the network to standard gauge and completed the job in 1929, after which rail cars could be ferried back and forth between Island (Borden) and mainland (Cape Tormentine) by ferry, including those of a through Charlottetown-Moncton train which included a peak-summer Sleeping car carried onward to Montréal in *Ocean Limited*. Passenger trains on the island were gradually downgraded to mixed passenger-freight status, and although the through Charlottetown-Moncton train ran until 1967, the Montréal Sleeper was discontinued after the '59 season. The last trains of any description were gone from the island by 1989.

- **29 JUL:** To **Sackville NB** by automobile, via Kensington, Cabot Beach Provincial Park, Summerside, and the Confederation Bridge (one night there, visiting the historic downtown and beautiful Mount Allison University the following morning).



2010's-28: Confederation Bridge, opened 1997, 13 kilometres (8 miles), viewed from PEI side (2014/07/29) [SANDRA DAWES].

30-31 JUL:

VIA 15 [HALIFAX] MONCTON-MONTRÉAL Ocean

[as for 23-24 JUL above; occupying same Sleeping car, No. 7510]

To **EDMONTON** via Montréal and Toronto, first returning the rental car to Moncton, then departing there 13 minutes late at 1545, arriving Montréal next morning 35 minutes late at 0955.

CAMPBELLTON SERVICE STOP

VIA patrons had the added convenience of a Tim Hortons, just a stone's throw from the rear Sleepers during Ocean No. 15's final New Brunswick stop. One of the VIA attendants told me of the time two wives decided on a quick dash over for some Timmys, only to have the train depart without them. A quick taxi chase allowed them to rejoin at Matapédia QC, much to their husbands' surprise, considering they hadn't realized they were missing. On another occasion, some type of alarm went off in a gentleman's compartment, while he was away having dinner. Turned out it was the timer on some type of inflatable sex toy – or so the story went!

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2014



2010's-29: Our 18-car, 3-locomotive No. 15 Ocean runs hard to make up time somewhere between Charny and Drummondville QC, the "bulb" on the roof of rear end TWEEDSMUIR PARK affixed to receive Wi-Fi (2014/07/31) [SANDRA DAWES].

NOT AS GOOD

Our No. 15 was an hour and 45 minutes late arriving at Ste-Foy, raising concern among those of us transferring onto No. 63 for Toronto; but some fancy running (and schedule padding) saw us reach Montréal only 35 minutes late and just able to make the connection. In contrast with the *Canadian*, which provided meals cooked on board, *Ocean* offered only heated-up fare (in VIA's words, "catered meals – no chef on board"), due to the basic design of British-built the Renaissance equipment. While meals on our 2009 Halifax-Montréal trip had been pretty good (considering), those on our return *Ocean* were, frankly, horrible, from a tasteless cod dinner featuring a squishy, what appeared to be potato/carrot compote, to breakfast pancakes which were tough and tasted strongly of baking soda. Furthermore, there was no brewed decaffeinated coffee, only Sanka. (Our fellow Australian and British passengers either said nothing, or expressed their disappointment.)

31 JUL:

VIA 63 MONTRÉAL-TORONTO

E	6404
X	8622
K	4006
C	[4] 4109,4103, 4106 ,4110

Depart 15 minutes late at 1025, arrive Union Station 20 minutes late at 1555, stopping at Dorval, Cornwall ON, Brockville, Kingston, Belleville, Cobourg, Oshawa and Guildwood; * 539 km in 5 hrs 30 mins, or 98 km/h (336 mls/61 mph); * Onward home by TTC subway and bus to Pearson International, then Air Canada to Edmonton.

MID-DAY WORKHORSE

This was the second time we had used No. 63 during this vacation, having travelled only as far as Cornwall nine days earlier, the full run this day involving eight stops. While there was enough time to board connecting *Ocean* passengers, transferring their checked baggage resulted in a 15-minute delay. My only complaint involved our car attendant, who fussed obsessively about storing baggage in the overhead bins and repeatedly warned passengers to occupy their assigned seats – both reasonable requests, but delivered in a bossy manner.

- **1 SEP:** To **WATROUS** by car with Sandra, to harvest her mother's humongous garden, my intention being to go home to Edmonton after a week by train, then return to collect S.

8-9 SEP:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2] 6453,6421
X	8616
C	[2] 8125,8107
CfeL	8502
D	Palliser
CfeL	8503
S	[9] Wolfe Manor,Château Lasalle,

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2014

	Château Brûlé, Elgin Manor,
	Sherwood Manor, Abbott Manor,
	Carleton Manor, Amherst Manor,
	Château Richelieu
CfL	8516
D	Emerald
S [3]	Cornwall Manor, Burton Manor, Thompson Manor
OLS	Evangeline Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing 2100 and arriving next morning at 1125 (scheduled for 2033 and 0637, respectively), behind two General Motors F40PH-3's and occupying an Upper Berth in a MANOR car; * 619 km in 14 hrs 25 mins, or 43 km/h (386 mls/27 mph); * Nos. 8516 (ex-CP CfLC, CP, VIA 516), 8616 (ex-CP XY 3016, 616, VIA 616), 8125 (ex-125), THOMPSON MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU BRÛLÉ (3sc8du3db1dr), EMERALD, EVANGELINE PARK (3db1dr) (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP).

SLAB ACTION

On a rainy evening, there was the usual activity at the darkened "slab" of concrete at Watrous: • a westbound CN manifest freight sitting there the whole time on the south through track; • an eastbound, 150-plus car container job coming through on the main; • another westbound freight passing as soon as the containers had cleared; and • (finally) the arrival of my 21-car westbound *Canadian*. [Please check photo **2010's-22**, p. 91 above, for a furtive glimpse of the Watrous "slab"!] I was the only passenger this evening, and as usual, one of the engineers stepped down from the locomotive, asked if I was checking anything (I was not), then radioed to his partner to move the train ahead 19 cars, where THOMPSON MANOR's attendant deployed the stairs so I could climb up. (This was the first time I'd ever occupied this car.) I took an Upper Berth and slept well, despite some creaks and groans from the pulleys and what have you. For the first time, I took a taxi from VIA to Corona Station, then LRT home.



2010's-30: Canadian National freight on Fabyan Trestle, just west of Wainwright AB, traversed by VIA's *Canadian* during the night in both directions (2014/09/13) [KEITH BOWLER].

THE LONGEST RIDE

This year's No. 1 started off from Watrous only half an hour behind schedule. Still roughly on time leaving Saskatoon, we would be delayed 75 minutes at Irma AB for eastbound No. 2 to pass at 0640 – the latter probably four hours late. After reaching Viking (132 kilometres [*82 miles*] short of Edmonton), we sat for an hour, finally departing at 0730 – approximately 60 minutes after we were supposed to be in Alberta's capital! We finally backed in at 1125, almost five hours late – my thoughts going out to the hundreds of passengers who would be missing a lot of great scenery by the time this train ever reached the mountains. To add insult to injury, the VIA train manager made a whole bunch of passengers wait for half an hour, before allowing us to walk down the platform to the station. First, he blamed the car attendants for not warning us to leave the train immediately upon arrival, then told us it was the CN guy who wouldn't let any one pass while a glass-roofed Coach was added, mid-train, for the run to and through the mountains.

25 SEP:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6417,6401
X		8609
C	[2]	8126,8117
CfeL		8506
D		Alexandra
CfeL		8507
S	[9]	Christie Manor,Drummond Manor, Bell Manor,Franklin Manor, Craig Manor,Fraser Manor, Château Radisson,Château Laval
CfeL		8512
D		Empress
S	[3]	Osler Manor, Lorne Manor , Cameron Manor
OLS		Yoho Park

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra; * Depart 0127 (access by LRT to Central, then taxi), arrive 1250 (scheduled for 2359 and 0936, respectively), occupying a Lower Berth in another MANOR Sleeper; * 619 km in 11 hrs 23 mins, or 54 km/h (386 mls/34 mph); • **27 SEP:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.

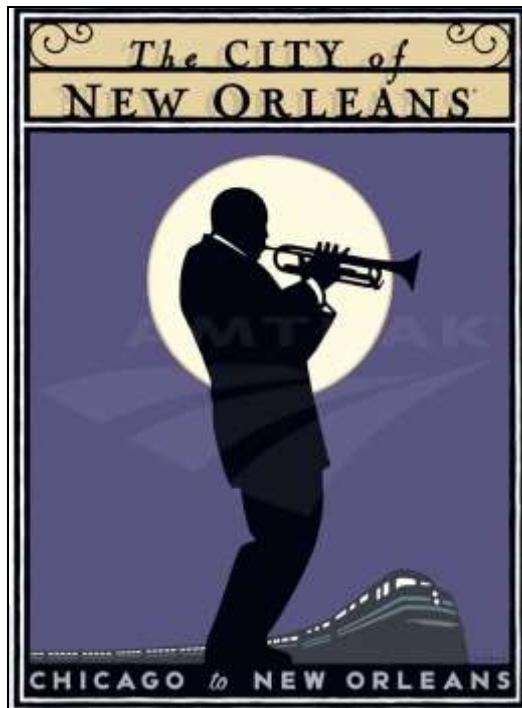
RETURN CANADIAN

My No. 2 was one hour and 40 minutes late arriving at Edmonton station, then 90 minutes behind departing, and would arrive Watrous three hours and 15 minutes off the advertised. Although I had booked an Upper Berth, the attendant made up the Lower, at no extra charge. (This train was one Sleeper shorter than my previous No. 1 westbound.) Departing Saskatoon, the train manager apologized for the lateness and warned that No. 2 would be meeting a dozen or so freights between there and Winnipeg – suggesting anywhere up to midnight for its Winnipeg arrival. The crew that I encountered were excellent, and breakfast very good – in stark contrast to what we had been served on *Ocean* back in July.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015

2015

*ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN
QUÉBEC/ONTARIO
NORTHEASTERN, SOUTHERN
& MIDWESTERN U.S.*



*[Poster for Amtrak's City of New Orleans,
used on cover of dining-car menu]
[MICHAEL SCHWAB].*

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2015: • to visit friends and relatives in Kingston, Cornwall and Montréal; • to check out New York, Washington, New Orleans and Chicago; and • to visit in-laws at Watrous SK. The above poster celebrates the legendary *City of New Orleans*, now operated by Amtrak over Canadian National's former Illinois Central line.

Trips taken: Ten were involved, covering 6,151 kilometres (3,839 miles), five provided by VIA Rail and five by Amtrak. Six were in my "Coach" category (but none of these were behind steam); the other four in "Sleeper".

Equipment units: 113, made up of 16 Locomotives & Related Units and 97 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 40; Parlor & Club Cars, 5; Sleeping & Business Cars, 30; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 9; Lounge Cars, 10; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 3).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **ON** – Belleville*; Cornwall, Long Sault*, Kingston and Toronto; **QC** – Montréal and Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue; **SK** – Watrous. **United States:** **DC** – Washington; **IL** – Chicago; **LA** – New Orleans; **NY** – Beacon and New York. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means)

Noteworthy train trips: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous; **AM Adirondack/Maple Leaf**, Montréal to New York; **AM No. 2155 Acela Express**, New York to Washington; **AM Crescent**, Washington to New Orleans; **AM City of New Orleans**, New Orleans to Chicago.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA No. 668**, Toronto to Kingston: 117 km/h (73 mph). **United States:** **AM No. 2155 Acela Express**, New York to Washington: 131 km/h (81 mph).

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA Canadian**, Watrous to Edmonton: 52 km/h (32 mph). **United States:** **AM Adirondack**, Montréal to Beacon: 52 km/h (33 mph).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015

HIGHLIGHT!

Taking Amtrak's *Crescent* from Washington overnight to Atlanta, then by day through Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana into the "The Big Easy" (New Orleans).

MILESTONE

Taking my first Amtrak *Acela Express* tilting train, from New York to Washington, these having been designed by Bombardier and GEC-Alsthom to run up to 240 kilometres (150 miles) per hour but in our case averaging just 131 km/h (84 mph), due to the conventional infrastructure.



[Sketch for Amtrak's New York-Washington-New Orleans Crescent (Amtrak timecard, 2015/01/12)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

- **17 JUL:** To **WATROUS** by car with Sandra (as in the previous year) for garden and yard work, my plan being to return to Edmonton after 10 days or so, then go back and collect her.

27-28 JUL:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] *Canadian*

E	[2]	6408,6421
X		8619
C	[3]	8142,8123,8139
CfeL		8512
D		Louise
CfeL		8516
S	[8]	Brant Manor, Lorne Manor , Stuart Manor, Château Montcalm, Draper Manor, Christie Manor, Bayfield Manor, Cabot Manor,
CfeL		8517
D		Imperial
S	[5]	Dunsmuir Manor, Hunter Manor, Carleton Manor, Château Cadillac, Château Varennes
OLS		Prince Albert Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing 2245 and arriving next morning at 1035 (scheduled for 2033 and 0622, respectively), including stops at Saskatoon and Biggar, behind two General Motors F40PH-3's and occupying a Lower Berth in a MANOR car (by taxi and LRT from station to home); * 619 km in 11 hrs 50 mins, or 52 km/h (386 mls/33 mph); * Nos. 6408, 6421 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 8123 (ex-123), 8517 (ex-CP/VIA CfLC 517), LORNE MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU MONTCALM (3sc8du3db1dr), LOUISE (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP); * CHÂTEAU CADILLAC & CHÂTEAU VARENNES (6de), PRINCE ALBERT PARK (1de1di) (Budd/AMFT/ARI/JRS, 1954-5; ex-CP); * No. 8142 (Budd/AMFT, 1946; ex-PRR, PC 4055, AM 5434, EC 4055); * No. 8619 (Budd/SPTA, 1963; ex-UP 5909, 903691).

FAMILIAR ROUTINE

Another dark and rainy evening in Watrous, this time with a CN eastbound manifest passing through and taking the siding beyond the Highway 2 crossing, then a westbound equivalent drifting by, followed by a container job also going west – just ahead of VIA No. 1, which pulled to a stop around 2240, two hours late. (Not bad, considering that VIA had emailed an ominous warning two days earlier that No. 1 would be late leaving Toronto, due to “freight congestion”.) There was one other passenger this night, a lady who had braved the elements while chain-smoking throughout the wait. I had booked an Upper (which turned out to be in LORNE MANOR, the same car I’d occupied in the year before in No. 2), but was delighted to find that the attendant had made up the Lower for me. This *Canadian* had three instead of the usual two day coaches, two of which were former Amtrak cars modernized through VIA’s HEP-1 program – as had been the ex-Union Pacific Baggage car. But the biggest change from previous years were the two CHÂTEAU Sleepers, reconfigured to accommodate just six deluxe bedrooms, and PRINCE ALBERT PARK, now sporting two deluxe bedrooms, one accommodating persons using mobility devices (who would board by means of a station-based lift, finally benefitting from an improved degree of accessibility to the *Canadian*) and redesigned lounge areas. There were also larger windows, improved lighting, and updated upholstery. These accommodations were being sold as a more expensive “Prestige Class”, although the accessible room was available to those qualifying at regular prices (now called “Touring Class”). Avalon Rail Inc. of West Allis WI did the structural work, then Julien-Rail-Solutions of Québec QC installed the interiors at their Charny facility, in a process announced in 2009, funded under the federal government’s ongoing “Economic Action Plan”, and completed in ’14. With this trip, I began taking a taxi to Corona Station, then LRT to South Campus Station and home.



[from viarail.ca]



2010's-31: Rear lounge of LAURENTIDE PARK in "Prestige" configuration, bringing up the rear of No. 2 *Canadian* between Saskatoon and Watrous (2015/06/30) [SANDRA DAWES].

JUNE CANADIAN

Sandra previously had taken the *Canadian* eastbound to Watrous, departing Edmonton at 0230 on June 30th, arriving at 1300, due to the standard "freight congestion". She even took most of the consist: two F40PH-3's (unrecorded); Baggage (also unrecorded); Coaches 8137, 8125; Skyline 8503; Diner ACADIAN; Skyline 8510; MANORS DOUGLAS, BLAIR & LAIRD (she occupied the last-mentioned); CHÂTEAUS MARQUETTE & PAPINEAU; MANORS DAWSON, HEARNE, BURTON & SHERWOOD; Skyline 8500; Diner PALLISER; MANORS CAMERON, BROCK & CORNWALL; CHÂTEAU DOLLARD; and LAURENTIDE PARK – the latter two being rebuilt "Prestige"-class cars. She ended up with a Lower in BLAIR MANOR, upgraded from an Upper. On the negative side, a crew member told her that there were only 48 passengers in the 12 Sleepers and PARK car, and this was in late June – very, very low in my experience with this train.

9 AUG:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6437,6420
X		8609
C	[4]	8130,8138,8137,8118
CfeL		8511
D		Empress
CfeL		8515
S	[8]	Abbott Manor,Craig Manor, Mackenzie Manor ,Château Laval,Bell Manor,Fraser Manor, Grant Manor, Rogers Manor
CfeL		8507
D		Emerald
S	[5]	Jarvis Manor,Elgin Manor, Thompson Manor,Château Varennes,Château Joliet
OLS		Glacier Park

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra (by LRT and taxi to station); * Depart 0135, arrive 1025 (scheduled for 2359 and 0951, respectively), occupying an Upper Berth in another MANOR Sleeper; * 619 km in 8 hrs 50 mins, or 70 km/h (386 mls/43 mph); • **12 AUG:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.

RETURN CANADIAN

My 24-car No. 2 was one hour and 35 minutes late arriving and departing Edmonton station – but would arrive Watrous only 34 minutes off the advertised. (This, after VIA's Moncton call centre had advised me, at 1900 hours, that the train was caught behind a disabled freight and they had no idea when he'd reach Jasper, let alone Edmonton!) No upgrade to a Lower this time, but this was my first time ever occupying MACKENZIE MANOR and I slept like a baby up there. Four Coaches were the most I'd ever seen on a VIA *Canadian* in the head-end electric power era, augmented to accommodate a large tour group of teenagers boarding at Edmonton for Montréal.



2010's-32: No. 2 *Canadian* departs Jasper for Toronto, topped off by three "Prestige" cars (possibly CHÂTEAU DENONVILLE, definitely CHÂTEAU CADILLAC and GLACIER PARK), these sporting a new, greyish-blue band (2015/07/11) [RAYMOND S. FARAND].

NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL TURN UP

My 9 AUG trip featured "Prestige" cars CHÂTEAU JOLLIET, CHÂTEAU VARENNE and GLACIER PARK. It was the first time I'd encountered CHÂTEAU JOLLIET since Canadian Pacific days back in 1974. Also turning up was Skyline 8515, which I had not recorded since 1982.

10 SEP:

VIA 668 TORONTO-KINGSTON [MONTRÉAL]

E	912
K	3466

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015

C [2] **3369**,3357

To **KINGSTON** with Sandra, beginning with an Air Canada flight to Toronto, at the start of an 18-day trip east to visit family and friends, then New York, Washington, New Orleans and Chicago (transfer to Union Station by the recently inaugurated airport train, *Union Pearson Express*, a 25-minute trip with intermediate stops at Weston and Bloor Street – ending up at a Union Station under what seemed to be never-ending reconstruction); * Depart 1800, arrive eight minutes early 2010, stopping only at Oshawa, behind a Genesis P42DC locomotive and occupying one of just two Light-Rapid-Comfortable Coaches (two nights at Hotel Belvedere); * 254 km in 2 hrs 10 mins, or 117 km/h (159 mls/73 mph); * No. 910 (GE, 2001); * Nos. 3369, 3466 (ex-C 3390) (BBD, 1981-4); • **11 SEP:** to nearby **Belleville** by rental car with sister Dorothy and Sandra to attend the wedding of great nice Nikki, returning to Kingston around midnight.

12 SEP:

VIA 62 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-CORNWALL [MONTRÉAL]

E 6432

K 3472

C [4] 3367,**3363**,3304,3324

E 920 TORONTO-BROCKVILLE [OTTAWA]

K 4001 "

C [4] 4104,4101,4107,4115 "

To **CORNWALL** with Sandra and Dorothy, to meet up with cousin Ken, also niece Alida and families, and to visit St. Lawrence cemetery, tour the Long Sault Parkway, and inspect a stretch of the pre-Seaway Cornwall Canal; * Depart 20 minutes late at 1204 behind an F40PH-3, arrive fully 40 minutes behind schedule at 1354, with two stops at Brockville, the first to detach No. 42 (the rear portion for Ottawa, made up of a Genesis locomotive and five HEP-2 cars), then at the station to let off and pick up passengers; * No. 6432 (GMD, 1989); * Nos. 4001 (ex-C SOU 824, AM 5285, SOU,SSS,RSC 824); 4101 (ex-SP 2369, T&NO 442, SP 2230, AM 4417) (Budd/AMFT, 1949-50).

VIA 668 [TORONTO] CORNWALL-MONTRÉAL

E 6459

K 3461

C [3] **3330**,3360,3301

Depart on time at 2141, arrive Central Station 10 minutes late at 2259, stopping only at Dorval, then

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015

booking in at buddy Shaun's Griffintown condo for four nights, the highlight being the arrival, next day, of our reclusive buddy Glen – fresh, courtesy VIA, from the western Ottawa 'burbs for a day in the big city; * 111 km in 1 hr 18 mins, or 85 km/h (69 mls/53 mph); • **15 SEP:** by rented bicycles, guided by Shaun, along the Lachine Canal and Lac-St-Louis to Dad's old hometown of **Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue**, passing through places such as Pointe-Claire and Baie-D'Urfé (then a further side trip out to a beach on the Ottawa River, near Senneville); returning on 6-car, Agence métropolitaine de transport commuter train No. 26 pulled by F59PHI No. 1329 (GMD; 2001), departing Ste-Annes 1705 against the westbound rush-hour, arriving Lucien l'Allier Station 1745 – this outing followed by dinner with nephew Charlie and his wife, Meaghan. *[Note: A difficult call, but I decided against giving this AMT train full billing here, because our trip originated on, and not beyond, the Island of Montréal.]*

16 SEP:

AM 68 MONTRÉAL-BEACON [NEW YORK] Adirondack

E	72	MONTRÉAL-ALBANY
Eed	713	ALBANY-NEW YORK
C	82977	"
C	[2] 82525,82599	
Dn	43378	
C	[2] 25062 ,25055	

Depart Gare Centrale at 1020, arrive Beacon 2020, with stops at St-Lambert, Rouses Point NY (this portion over Canadian National), Plattsburgh, Port Kent, Westport, Port Henry, Ticonderoga, Whitehall, Fort Edward-Glens Falls, Saratoga Springs and Schenectady (over Canadian Pacific's ex-Delaware & Hudson line), Albany-Rensselaer, Hudson, Rhinecliff and Poughkeepsie (over CSX rails); * We occupied seats in an Amfleet I Coach; * 525 km in 10 hrs, or 52 km/h (328 mls/33 mph); * Nos. 72 (2000-1), 713 (1998) (both GE); * No. 25062 (Budd, 1981); * Nos. 82525 (ex-21178, 21627, 82050), 43378 (ex-CDn 20207, Dn 20907) (all Budd, 1975-7); * No. 82525 incorrectly recorded as 85525, 82599 as 85299.

AM 64 [TORONTO] BEACON-NEW YORK Maple Leaf

Eed	716	ALBANY-NEW YORK
C	[4] 25081,25020, 25104 ,82997	
KDn	48174	

Depart Beacon 2151, arrive Penn Station 2259, with stops at Croton-Harmon and Yonkers, the track

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015

between Poughkeepsie and Yonkers owned by Metro-North, but beyond into Penn Station by Amtrak itself; * Five nights at the Bowery House pseudo-hostel in the Nolita district (dark, gloomy and noisy, but relatively cheap and convenient to the F-line subway); * 94 km in 1 hr 8 mins, or 83 km/h (59 mls/52 mph); * No. 48174 (Budd, 1975-7; ex-CKDn 20013, 20174).

ADIRONDACK RESCUED!

Our No. 64 *Adirondack* was powered by Genesis P42DC No. 72 as far as Albany-Rensselaer, then P32ACDM dual-power No. 713 beyond – until it broke down at 2020 hours, just short of Metro-North (M-N)'s Hudson Line Beacon Station. At 2110, a deadheading M-N commuter train showed up and pushed us into Beacon, where Amtrak's Toronto-New York No. 64, *Maple Leaf* – fortunately for us, also running late – picked up all the former's passengers and took us into Penn Station, arriving 2259. (This compared with *Adirondack*'s scheduled arrival of 2050, and *Maple Leaf*'s 2150.)

THE BIG APPLE

... proved, as expected, to be both exciting and stressful, the highlights including a visit to Liberty and Ellis islands, jazz trumpeter Richie Vitale at the iconic Smalls basement club, and a Broadway play in the form of *Jersey Boys*, the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. (OK, it dates me, but terrific entertainment!) We also: • took an occasionally hair-raising, guided bicycle tour from Manhattan over to and around Queens and Brooklyn; • walked the Brooklyn Bridge and former New York Central High Line "linear park" with Edmonton friend (and now Eastern Connecticut State University professor) Russ Sampson, having met him in magnificent Grand Central Terminal after his trip in from New Haven CT on a Metro-North commuter train; and • returned to Brooklyn to meet up with niece Laina, who was studying at New York's New School for Social Research. During the five days, we used the subways extensively, most often the F line, but also 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, A, C and E. (The stations were hot and humid; the subway cars frigidly air-conditioned!)



[Amtrak Acela Express logo]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015



2010's-33: Rear view of Amtrak *Acela Express* No. 2155, newly arrived at Washington Union Station from Boston and New York (2015/09/21) [PETER DAWES].

21 SEP:

AM 2155 [BOSTON] NEW YORK-WASHINGTON *Acela Express*

E	2038
C	[2] 3413,3534
Cfe	3306
C	[3] 3540,3533,3214
K	3214
E	2016

Depart Penn Station 1100, arrive Union Station 1348, with stops at Newark NJ, Metropark, Philadelphia PA, Wilmington DL and Baltimore MD; * We occupied seats in a Business Class coach, one of six cars propelled by powerful Bombardier/Alstom electric locomotives at either end; * We then walked "The Mall" and gazed at the White House, the city all abuzz with the Pope set to arrive next morning; * 367 km in 2 hrs 48 mins, or 131 km/h (226 mls/81 mph); * All units (BBD/ALS, 2001).

ACELA EXPRESS

... was placed in service in 2001 in Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, designed for a top speed of 240 kilometres (150 miles) per hour but averaging 131 km/h (84 mph) this day. These train-sets were composed as follows: Locomotive; 1st class Coach (with meals at seat from a Galley, therefore akin to a VIA Club car); Business Class Coach ("quiet zone"); Business Class Coach; Café; Business Class Coach; Business Class Coach; and Locomotive. At half the price, we could have taken Amtrak's Northeast Regional No. 195 bound for Richmond VA, departing five minutes after No. 2155 and arriving Washington 37 minutes later (110 km/h [69 mph]), but Acela amounted to North America's only high-speed train – even if its performance was laughable when compared to such trains elsewhere in the world. The Amtrak employee at the foot of the escalator caused some confusion by telling everyone to use any car they wished on this lightly used, mid-day service, but of course it was mainly the "suits" who were entitled to board the 1st class car.

21-22 SEP:

AM 19 [NEW YORK] WASHINGTON-NEW ORLEANS Crescent

E	[2]	4,177
X		61004
S	[2]	62049 ,62032
DG		8552
DnL		28019
C	[4]	25091,25070,25006,25056

Depart Union Station 1830, arrive Union Passenger Terminal 40 minutes late next evening at 2010, powered by two Genesis diesels south of Washington (followed by three nights in New Orleans). Major stops included Alexandria VA, Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Danville, Greensboro NC, Charlotte, Spartanburg SC, Greenville, Clemson, Gainesville GA, Atlanta, Anniston AL, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Meridian MS. * We occupied a Roomette for two in a Viewliner Sleeper and took meals in former Northern Pacific Diner Grill No. 8552; * 1,871 km in 26 hrs 40 mins, or 70 km/h (1,152 mls/44 mph); * No. 62049 (12rm2br1di) (MKA, 1995); * No. 8552 (Budd, 1957; ex-NP D 461, AM D 8047,8508); * No. 28019 (Budd, 1982; ex-DnL, SmDL); * No. 61004 (CAF, 2014).



2010's-34: No. 19 *Crescent* at Southern Railway's former Peachtree (now Amtrak's Atlanta GA) station in the early morning light, two locomotives hauling nine cars (2015/09/22) [PETER DAWES].

CRESCE

... used mostly Norfolk Southern rails on its routing south of Washington, arriving Atlanta on time (where I was able to meet briefly with train friend, Bill Haithcoat), but falling behind schedule after Birmingham AL due to heavier freight traffic. The Amtrak crew was excellent, both in the ex-Northern Pacific Diner Grill and our Sleeper. No. 28019 was a "Diner/Lite", converted from a Smoker Dinette Lounge. Two friendly gentlemen representing "Trails & Rails" further enriched the experience, this being an Amtrak-National Park Service venture whereby knowledgeable people gave educational talks on board trains. While late in the season, these fellows were enroute to New Orleans to assist a British television crew who would be shooting material on the return *Crescent* for a travel program. Alas, we had approximately 80 passengers on board after Atlanta, in a train accommodating roughly 275.

SOUTHERN CRESCENT

I had taken this route back in 1975 with train-buddy Greg Thompson, on a trip from Los Angeles through New Orleans to Washington. Southern Railway had declined to join Amtrak, preferring to keep operating its own New Orleans-Atlanta-Washington *Southern Crescent*, with Amtrak hauling it on to New York. We had Roomettes in ex-Union Pacific, by then Amtrak, Los Angeles-New York Sleeping car PACIFIC PEAK. Our time in Buffet Lounge Sleeper CRESCENT HARBOR was greatly enhanced by the presence of Southern Railway president (later head of Amtrak) Graham Claytor, Jr., who asked how the trip was going and if there were any concerns [*trip described in detail in my 1st 1970's volume*].

THE BIG EASY

As Tennessee Williams put it: "America has only three cities: New York, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Everywhere else is Cleveland". What a fabulous place, from our Latin Quarter Place d'Armes Hotel to an excellent guided walking tour, a ferry ride across the Mississippi, raucous Bourbon Street (a total, drunken gong-show, except for Fritzel's European Jazz Pub), and great jazz at the Snug Harbor club and Preservation Hall. Best of all, our Edmonton friends, Bob and Julie, joined us for the fun! But the trams stole the show, facilitated by a 3-day "Jazzy Pass" offering unlimited travel on the city's streetcars and buses. We rode the long-standing St. Charles, Canal Street-Cemeteries, and Canal Street-City Park/Museum lines, plus the recently opened Riverfront and Loyola-Union Passenger Terminal [UPT] lines. In fact, when our visit was up, we returned to UPT by means of the last-mentioned line, where our *City of New Orleans* was waiting to take us north to Chicago.



[From Amtrak timecard, 2015/01/12]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015



2010's-35: St. Charles line streetcars pass along the mansion-filled route, just before the effervescent operator recommended we jump off and have lunch at a certain restaurant ("Tell 'em 'Streetcar Sue' sent you; maybe they'll give me a free coffee!") (2015/09/24) [SANDRA DAWES].

25-26 SEP:

AM 58 NEW ORLEANS-CHICAGO *City of New Orleans*

E	[2]	163
SY		39010
S		32039
DL		37014
CfeL		33037
CX		31013
C	[2]	34059,34116

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2015



2010's-36: Our Superliner Sleeping car 32039 and Sleeper Dormitory 37014 form part of Amtrak's No. 58, *City of New Orleans*, waiting to depart Union Passenger Depot on its overnight run to Chicago (2015/09/25) [PETER DAWES].

Depart Union Passenger Terminal at 1345, arrive Union Station 10 minutes early next morning at 0850, with major stops at Hammond, Brookhaven MS, Jackson, Greenwood, Memphis TN, Carbondale IL and Champaign-Urbana (followed by one night in Chicago); * We occupied a 2-berth "Roomette" in a Superliner Sleeping car and ate meals in the Diner Lounge; * 1,517 km in 19 hrs 5 mins, or 80 km/h (934 mls/50 mph); * Nos. 32039 (5de14ec1fm1di), 39043, 33040, 38066, 34134 (all BBD, 1993-4); * Nos. 33037, 34059, 37014 (ex-D 38011); No. 31013 (all PS, 1978-81); * No. 39010 (13rm2br1di) (MKA, 1995).



[From baggage tag]

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

... used mostly ex-Illinois Central (IC), now Canadian National rails on its journey from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Michigan – Canadian National referring to itself in the U.S. as simply “CN” on rolling stock and buildings. The scenery outside the Café Lounge windows was fascinating to us Canadians, what with the bayous and Golden Eagles – but no alligators in evidence. Our train backed into Union Station 10 minutes early, freight traffic having been sparse, although I did notice one long CN container train at Jackson TN that looked a lot like those going across western Canada. Back in IC days, *City of New Orleans* actually was a day train (as Arlo Guthrie sang, “I’ll be gone 500 miles when the day is done”), while the all-Pullman *Panama Limited* was the overnight flyer. This was my first time on this route, and the experience was mixed: bi-level Superliner equipment (apparently cycled through Chicago onto the Seattle-bound *Empire Builder*), but cramped quarters in the 2-berth “Roomette”; humourless staff in the Diner Lounge and Café; and indifferent food – all in all, a real downer after *Crescent*. A mitigating factor was a New Orleans couple we met in the Café Lounge, their first time on Amtrak but very personable and seemingly willing to accentuate the few positives the corporation was offering on this train.

WINDY CITY

After admiring the magnificent (if still underdeveloped) great hall of Union Station, we walked over to Jackson subway station, bought 1-day Chicago Transportation Authority (CTA) passes, and took a Red Line subway train one stop south to the convenient Travelodge on East Harrison Street. We then rode the same line north to Wrigley Field to watch the Chicago Cubs play the Pittsburgh Pirates. In the evening, we returned to another Chicago institution, the Berghoff, for dinner and fine craft beer. Next day, we again purchased CTA day passes, walked though Grant Park and other green spaces facing Lake Michigan, rode some trains on the elevated Loop, and took a Pink Line train all the way to its terminus at 54th Street/Cermak Station (highly recommended for its views back onto the downtown Chicago skyline).

RED LINE TO WRIGLEY FIELD

Chicago Transit Authority's Addison Station was 12 stops north of our Harrison Station, but no more than a block away from the oldest stadium in the National League (NL), and second oldest in the majors after Boston's Fenway Park. Its roots went back to 1914, eight years after the Cubs won what was to be their second and last World Series to date. This direct access by elevated transit was common with the old neighbourhood ballparks around the majors, before new stadia were built, often out in the 'burbs. Pittsburgh Pirates shut out the Cubs 4-0 that day, but the Chicagoans would go on to play in the NL Championship Series, where they lost to the Mets.



[megasportsnews.com; madisonian.net]

- **27 SEP:** Return to **EDMONTON** on United Express (this flight being code shared with Air Canada and operated by SkyWest Airlines), having accessed O'Hare International Airport by means of a highly convenient Blue Line train.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

2016

*ALBERTA/SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA/ONTARIO*



[VIA baggage tag, 2016]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2016 to visit friends and relatives in Kingston, Cornwall, Ottawa and Toronto, but especially Watrous SK and area. VIA seemed to be using the slogan on the above baggage tag for general advertising purposes.

Trips taken: Ten were involved, covering 7,020 kilometres (*4,381 miles*), all provided by VIA Rail. Five were in my “Coach” category (but none of these was behind steam); the other five in “Sleeper”.

Equipment units: 164, made up of 19 Locomotives & Related Units and 145 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 35; Parlor & Club Cars, 8; Sleeping & Business Cars, 67; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 10; Lounge Cars, 20; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 5).

Places visited: **AB** – Edmonton; **ON** – Cornwall, Kingston, Ottawa and Toronto; **SK** – Watrous.

Noteworthy train trips: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Toronto; **VIA Lakeshore**, Ottawa to Toronto; **VIA No. 669**, Cornwall to Kingston.

Fastest average speed: **VIA No. 669**, Cornwall to Kingston: 128 km/h (*79 mph*).

Slowest average speed: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Watrous [*15 SEP*]: 52 km/h (*33 mph*).

Overseas: I took my 15th overseas holiday this year (10th with Sandra), from 4 APR to 17 MAY, riding trains in India and Sri Lanka.

HIGHLIGHT!

Taking VIA's *Canadian* from Edmonton through to Toronto, our first trip on this iconic train east of Saskatchewan since 2012, passing beautiful July fields of yellow canola and blue flax.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

MILESTONE

Riding VIA's *Lakeshore* (No. 43) from Ottawa right through to Toronto, one of seven trains being offered on weekdays (six on Sundays, five on Saturdays), an unprecedented frequency between these points.



AN ALL - CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

VIA Rail is Canada's flag carrying transport service. We exist to serve and, as a Crown corporation, are owned by Canadians. On our trains you can dine from a menu based on locally sourced foods and wines, see performances by homegrown artists and musicians and choose from hundreds of hours of nationally-produced programming on our on-train entertainment system. Every passenger will leave the train a little more Canadian.



[VIA waves the flag (from "5 Improvements" card, 2016/03)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

18-21 JUL:**VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-TORONTO Canadian**

E	[2]	6412,6407
X		8609
C	[2]	8130,8135
CfeL		8504
S	[3]	Abbott Manor ,Brant Manor, Rogers Manor
CfeL		8503
D		Alexandra
S	[9]	Allan Manor,Burton Manor, Monck Manor,Butler Manor, Château Montcalm,Château Richelieu,Jarvis Manor, Draper Manor, Douglas Manor
CfeL		8516
D		Frontenac
S	[2]	Château Denonville,Château Lauzon
OLS		Laurentide Park

To **KINGSTON**, via Toronto, departing on time at 2359 and arriving three mornings later, 65 minutes behind schedule at 1035, including stops at Biggar SK, Saskatoon, Melville, Rivers MB, Winnipeg, Sioux Lookout ON, Hornepayne, Capreol, Parry Sound and Washago, behind two General Motors F40PH-3's and occupying a Section in one of the MANOR cars; * 3,221 km in 56 hrs 36 mins, or 57 km/h (2,010 mls/35 mph); * Nos. 6412, 6407 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 8609 (ex-CP 3009, CP/VIA 609), 8503 (ex-CP/VIA CfLC 503), ABBOTT MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU MONTCALM (3sc8du3db1dr), ALEXANDRA (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP); * CHÂTEAU DENONVILLE, CHÂTEAU LAUZON (6de), LAURENTIDE PARK (1de1di) (Budd/AMFT/ARI/JRS, 1954-5; ex-CP); * No. 8135 (Budd/AMFT, 1946; ex-ACL 226, SCL 5415, AM/GRT 5415, TM 4).



2010's-37: VIA No. 2 *Canadian* stretches ahead 24 cars, somewhere in northern Ontario, this photo taken from rear-end LAUR-ENTIDE PARK (2016/07/20) [SANDRA DAWES].

BACK EAST ON MY FAVOURITE TRAIN

No. 2 *Canadian* arrived in Edmonton half-an-hour early, at 2230, and left on time at 2359 – in contrast to its usual performance, in our experience, of arriving sometime after midnight and departing between 0130 and 0300. Thought we'd missed the train: our taxi approached from Yellowhead Freeway, and there were the locomotives and adjoining cars heading east out of the station and onto CN; fortunately, they were just shunting out the glass-roofed Coach, which runs only between Vancouver and Edmonton. Next morning, we were approximately an hour late passing Watrous (no passengers disembarking or embarking this day). During the pause at Winnipeg, we noticed hundreds of people wandering around The Forks playing “Pokémon Go”, the “location-based augmented reality game” that had just taken off globally. We would arrive in Toronto just about an hour late as well – not bad for a 3-night transcontinental trip. The staff were almost all friendly and competent, only the steward and one server, after Winnipeg (in dining car ALEXANDRA) being a little too businesslike.



2010's-38: Sandra posing with rebuilt "Prestige", Observation Dome Lounge Sleeping car LAURENTIDE PARK, Hornepayne ON – the 24-car, 2-loco *Canadian* requiring a double stop (2016/07/20) [PETER DAWES].

HANDY LADY

As usual, we took a Section, this time No. 3 in ABBOTT MANOR, which was somewhat of a regular in our *Canadian*'s during this decade (in fact, I had occupied it back in 2013, from Watrous to Edmonton). We slept well, I in the Lower, Sandra in the Upper, although, ever ingenious, she wedged a plastic cookie wrapper around a latch in order to quell some rattling noises. Being right across the aisle from the shower room make it easy to tell if it was occupied. VIA had changed the basic consist from my trips of the year before, placing only the two "Prestige" Sleepers and PARK car behind the rear Diner. All in all, a great trip, the only downer being the small load, just 80 of us rumoured to be in the 14 Sleeping cars, despite it being peak season. This was the first time I'd recorded Coach No. 8135, whose lineage involved Atlantic Coast Line, Seaboard Coast Line, Amtrak, Gator Route and Texas-Mexican – before being acquired by VIA and modernized under its HEP (Head-End Electric Power)-2 program.

ODE TO THE CANADIAN

WESTBOUND No. 1: "There once was a train from Toronto,/ That claimed it arrived always pronto./ Although it did try,/ T'was sadly a lie;/ That poor VIA train from Toronto. **EASTBOUND No. 2:** There once was a train from Vancouver,/ Thru mountains it did so manoeuvre./ It crossed over plains/ And met other trains;/ That sleek VIA train from Vancouver. *[by Sandra Dawes, composed after 24 straight hours across northern Ontario!]*

21 JUL:

VIA 64 TORONTO-KINGSTON [MONTRÉAL] Renaissance

E	917
X	8608
K	[2] 4002,4006[as Coach]
C	[4] 4104,8112,4121,8124

Depart Union Station at 1130, arrive 14 minutes late at 1412, stopping at Guildwood, Oshawa, Cobourg and Belleville (four nights at Hotel Belvedere); * No. 64 was powered by a Genesis P42DC, and we occupied a HEP-2 Club car in Coach service; * 254 km in 2 hrs 42 mins, or 94 km/h (159 mls/58 mph); * No. 917 (GE, 2001); * Nos. 4006 (ex-C SOU 815, AM,SOU 5277, SPO/PJT 122), 4104 (ex-C&EI 484, L&N 3245, AM 5807) (Budd/AMFT, 1949, 1953); * No. 8112 (Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP 112).

THE LOCAL TO KINGSTON

No. 64 would make four stops on its way to Kingston, and a further three beyond to Montréal. Due to our *Canadian* being 65 minutes late, we just missed Ottawa-bound No. 40, which departed Toronto at 1045 and ran non-stop to Kingston for a 1250 arrival, 122 km/h (76 mph) – compared to No. 64's 94 km/h (58 mph) over the same stretch.

23 JUL:

VIA 60 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-CORNWALL [MONTRÉAL] *Meridian*

E	919	
K	3477	
C	[3] 3330,3302,3309	
E	909	TORONTO-BROCKVILLE [OTTAWA]
K	3455	"
C	[4] 3356,3311,3355,3352	"
E	902	"

To **CORNWALL** for a family reunion at niece Alida's, departing 18 minutes late at 0929, arriving 10 minutes behind at 1058, occupying an LRC Coach (as we would on all future trains on this trip) and pausing only at Brockville to detach the Ottawa portion; * 174 km in 1 hr 29 mins, or 118 km/h (109 mls/73 mph); * Nos. 3330, 3477 (ex-C 3374, K 3601) (BBD, 1981-4); * Rear P42DC possibly No. 922 (limited time to record).

VIA 669 [MONTRÉAL] CORNWALL-KINGSTON [TORONTO]

E	6417	
K	3471	
C	[3] 3360,3362,3321	

Depart 1955, arrive 2117 (both on time); * 174 km in 1 hr 22 mins, or 128 km/h (109 mls/79 mph).

CORNWALL DAY TRIP

Montréal bound No. 60 was the lead portion in this combined train, No. 50 to Ottawa attached at the rear. The decoupling process just west of Brockville took just two minutes, after which we were on our way and soon passing the station (No. 50 made that stop). Coming back in the evening, No. 669 did Cornwall-Kingston non-stop in 128 km/h (79 mph), compared to No. 60's 118 km/h (73 mph), the difference being the Brockville decoupling process. VIA's experiment with Toronto-Montréal via Ottawa trains had dissipated, only one such westbound service remaining in the schedule (but two eastbound).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

25 JUL:

VIA 50 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-FALLOWFIELD [OTTAWA] Lakeshore

E	6427	TORONTO-BROCKVILLE [MONTRÉAL]
K	3458	"
C [3]	3320,3315,3316	"
E	911	
K	3464	
C [4]	3356,3311,3355,3352	
E	902	

To **OTTAWA** to visit cousin Sue and husband Russ, also buddy Glen (one night at ByWard Blue Inn), departing 0911 and arriving at 1111 (both on time); * 175 km in 2 hrs, or 88 km/h (109 mls/55 mph).

THIS TIME, NO. 50

This was the same, combined train as two days earlier, except that we boarded the Ottawa, not Montréal, portion. For some reason, VIA was running locomotives at both ends of the Ottawa portion, despite there being only five cars. Again, we paused at Brockville (this time to detach the front Montréal portion), and made only one further stop (Smiths Falls) before reaching suburban Fallowfield Station – which was more convenient for our greeters.



[VIA boasts of a new seating configuration in LRC cars – and more frequent Corridor service (from "5 Improvements" card, 2016/03)]



2010's-39: VIA combined No. 50 (front for Montréal) and No. 40 (rear for Ottawa) pulls into Kingston station on a rainy July morning, F40PH-3 No. 6427 in the lead (2016/07/25) [SANDRA DAWES].

26 JUL:

VIA 43 OTTAWA-TORONTO Lakeshore

E	6417
K	3471
C	[3] 3360,3362, 3321

To **TORONTO** on our way back home (one night at Strathcona Hotel), departing 0720, arriving Union Station four minutes late at 1129, stopping only at Fallowfield and Kingston; * 446 km in 4 hrs 9 mins, or 107 km/h (286 mls/66 mph); • **27 JUL:** return to **EDMONTON** on Air Canada.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

OTTAWA-TORONTO EXPRESS

No. 43 was one of seven Ottawa-Toronto trains on weekdays and made only two stops: Fallowfield (to pick up passengers from the western suburbs) and Kingston. This was quite an improvement over VIA's initial frequency of three on most days of the week, back in the late 1970's. Timings were not up to the fastest, current Montréal-Toronto trains, but were a huge advance on five decades ago, at a scheduled 110 mph (68 mph). From Fallowfield to Kingston, we did 117 km/h (73 mph); from there on to Toronto, it was a scheduled 2 hrs 11 mins, disappointingly at the same average speed. No. 43 had the same consist as our Cornwall-Kingston No. 669, although we did occupy a different Coach. We went on to take in the excellent Lawren Harris exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario (access by Toronto Transit Commission No. 510 streetcar), then treat nephews Colin, Chris and loved ones to a Blue Jays game, in which they prevailed over the San Diego Padres on a 12th inning wild pitch.



[toronto.bluejays.mlb.com/index.jsp?c_id=tor;
logos.wikia.com/wiki/San_Diego_Padres]

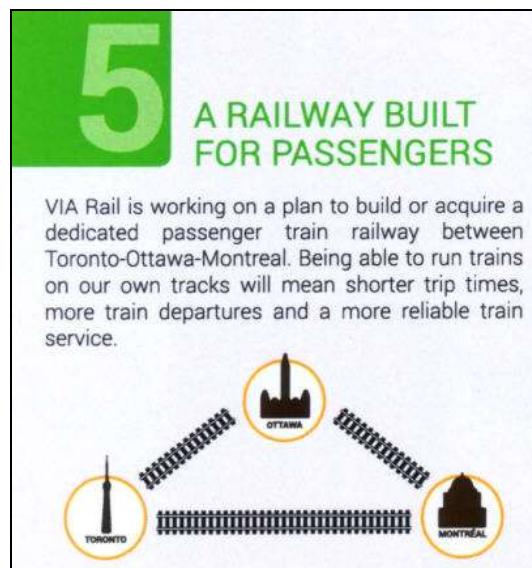
BIG PLANS

In recent times, VIA's latest head guy had been out selling the corporation's dream of "a dedicated passenger railway between Toronto-Ottawa-Montréal", which probably would involve Canadian National and Canadian Pacific freights being consolidated onto one of the two existing lines. Past talk revolved around turning the partly inland single track CP line over to VIA, which would put in jeopardy passenger service to Kingston, Brockville and Cornwall. Regardless, this would not be true high-speed rail, but rather an intermediate step. This concept was supported by a National Transportation Act Review panel, which also recommended continuing subsidies for the Montréal-Halifax *Ocean*, but not for the *Canadian*.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016



2010's-40: Bombardier low-floor, "Flexity Outlook" streetcar on the No. 510 Spadina route, at Dundas street (2016/07/26) [PETER DAWES].



[VIA's "dedicated passenger train railway" plans
(from "5 Improvements" card, 2016/03)]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

- **1 AUG:** To **WATROUS** by car for more garden and yard work, my intention being to return to Edmonton after a week, then go back and collect Sandra.

8-9 AUG:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2]	6440,6446
X		8615
C	[2]	8116,8123
CfeL		8510
S	[3]	Dunsmuir Manor, Carleton Manor ,Brock Manor
CfeL		8500
D		Emerald
S	[9]	Stuart Manor,Bliss Manor, Elgin Manor,Christie Manor Château Papineau,Château Verchères,Mackenzie Manor, Osler Manor,Cornwall Manor
CfeL		8509
D		Louise
S	[2]	Château Varennes, Château Dollard
OLS		Prince Albert Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing 2120 and arriving next morning at 0717 (scheduled for 2033 and 0622, respectively), including stops at Saskatoon and Biggar, and occupying an Upper Berth in **CARLETON MANOR** (by taxi and LRT from station to home); * 619 km in 9 hrs 57 mins, or 62 km/h (386 mls/39 mph).

NOT BAD THIS TIME

It was another rainy evening in Watrous, one very elderly lady – shepherded by what appeared to be a son – being the only other passenger. No. 1 arrived with 23 cars and only 12 minutes late at 2045, but did not depart until an eastbound freight had passed at 2120. After my usual Grand Marnier in PRINCE ALBERT PARK (being careful not to offend the high-paying “Prestige guests”!), I occupied an Upper in CARLETON MANOR, my constricted space free of any major noises emanating from pulleys or other gadgets. (In fact, the only real noise came from a guy snoring in the next door Lower, he mercifully desisting after 10 minutes.) Apart from the 35-minute pause at Watrous, our progress was steady, despite passing six freights over the 100 kilometres (*62 miles*) into Saskatoon – from whence we departed just after midnight, some 90 minutes late. Come morning, instead of welcoming “guests” into dining car EMERALD, the steward gruffly warned us that there was no breakfast, before allowing that there actually would be breakfast – but only continental style. We backed into Edmonton station only 55 minutes late at 0717. (This was the first time I’d ever recorded CHÂTEAU PAPINEAU.)

RUNNING HOT THROUGH YOUNG?

When driving out from Edmonton to Watrous on Monday, Aug. 1st (a week earlier than my Aug. 8th trip just described), we saw No. 1, the *Canadian*, heading west through Young SK (23 kilometres [*14 miles*] west of Watrous) around 1945 hours, which was approximately an hour earlier than it was supposed to stop at ... Watrous! VIA’s June 1, 2016 Timetable specified that, at conditional “Note 42” stations such as Watrous, “reservations are required at least 40 minutes before the train departure from the last station where a passenger list (L) is issued” (p. 41). In the case of Watrous, this was Winnipeg (dep. 1145). Given that Melville is shown as a regular stop (and therefore not subject to this rule), one can assume that No. 1 had honoured its 1727 departure time from there; but if no one had arranged to embark at Watrous, perhaps the train had minimal freight interference and sailed right through there and Young an hour early! (Assuming 20 minutes for the 23 kilometres, No. 1 should have gone by Young at 2053.)

14 AUG:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6440,6442
X		8615
C	[3]	8134,8116,8123
CfeL		8510
S	[3]	Dunsmuir Manor,Carleton Manor,Brock Manor
CfeL		8500
D		Emerald
S	[9]	Stuart Manor,Bliss Manor, Elgin Manor,Christie Manor Château Papineau,Château Verchères,Mackenzie Manor, Osler Manor, Cornwall
		Manor
CfeL		8509
D		Louise
S	[2]	Château Varennes, Château Dollard
OLS		Prince Albert Park

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra, departing late at 0205 (after accessing the station by LRT and taxi), arriving even later at 1320 (scheduled for 2359 and 0951, respectively), again occupying an Upper Berth; * 619 km in 11 hrs 15 mins, or 55 km/h (386 mls/34 mph); • **15 AUG:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.



*[From VIA, "Canadian": Guest
Directory, Sleeper Plus
Class" (2016)]*

BACK TO FORM

No. 2 pulled into Edmonton 2 hrs 25 mins late, and departed 2 hrs 5 mins behind time. The wait was made somewhat interesting by the departure of a fleet of Greyhounds on overnight runs, the bus company having moved into VIA's modest station on at least a temporary basis, after abandoning its downtown terminal. No. 2 had mostly the same consist as my No. 1 of six days earlier, the only exceptions being a different second locomotive and the addition of a third Coach to handle a student group heading back to Montréal. I and most other Sleeping car passengers were reassigned to other cars, at least partly to accommodate one family which had been split up, six cars apart. I had another quiet night in an Upper Berth, my first time in CORNWALL MANOR (although I had recorded this car five times before, going back to 1980). I knew we were seriously late when we departed Wainwright AB at 0720, 4 hrs 5 mins in arrears! By the crew-change point of Biggar, we were somehow only 2 hrs 50 mins behind; but leaving Saskatoon, we were 3 hrs 5 mins down. After calling VIA for an update, Sandra drove west to Young, took some photos of No. 2 waiting for a CN freight, then clocked him between Young and Watrous doing 120 km/h (75 mph). Finally, No. 2 pulled into Watrous at 1320 – 3 hrs 21 mins to the bad. According to VIA staff on board the train, freight congestion was, as usual, the culprit – the only compensation for the passengers being complimentary champagne-orange juice at brunch!

- **8 SEP:** To **WATROUS** again by car with Sandra, this time to close down the garden, again with me returning to Edmonton, then going back to collect her.



[viarail.ca, 2016]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016



2010's-41: No. 2 Canadian meeting a CN freight at Young SK, over three hours late on its way from Vancouver to Toronto, 24 cars in tow (2016/08/14) [SANDRA DAWES].

12-13 SEP:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[2]	6409,6411
X		8604
C	[2]	8125,8142
CfeL		8512
S	[3]	Blair Manor, Fraser Manor , Thompson Manor
CfeL		8517
D		Empress
S	[8]	Bell Manor,Hunter Manor, Amherst Manor,Macdonald

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

	Manor,Château Papineau,
	Cameron Manor,Bayfield
	Manor,Dawson Manor
CfeL	8515
D	Acadian
S [2]	Château Cadillac, Château Maisonneuve
OLS	Glacier Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing 2103 and arriving next morning at 0950 (scheduled for 2033 and 0622, respectively), including stops at Saskatoon, Biggar and Wainwright, and occupying an Upper Berth (by taxi and LRT from station to home); * 619 km in 10 hrs 7 mins, or 61 km/h (386 mls/38 mph).

ANOTHER DECENT TRIP

No. 1 departed Watrous just half-an-hour behind schedule, but arrived in Edmonton approximately 90 minutes late, this version having one less Sleeping car than last time. It was the first time I'd ever occupied FRASER MANOR (in which my Upper Berth was nice and quiet – no annoying sounds), and since 1989 that I'd recorded CHÂTEAU MAISONNEUVE – the latter now rebuilt in "Prestige" style.

15 SEP:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E [2]	6451,6449
X	8613
C [2]	8139,8144
CfeL	8511
S [3]	Laird Manor,Hearne Manor, Wolfe Manor
CfeL	8502
D	Fairholme
S [8]	Lorne Manor,Grant Manor, Craig Manor,Franklin Manor Château Marquette,Cabot

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2016

	Manor , Drummond Manor,
	Sherwood Manor
CfeL	8507
D	Palliser
S [2]	Château Joliet, Château Salaberry
OLS	Kootenay Park

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra, departing late at 0215 (after accessing the station by LRT and taxi), arriving even later this time at 1415 (scheduled for 2359 and 0951, respectively), again occupying an Upper Berth, this time in CABOT MANOR; * 619 km in 12 hrs, or 52 km/h (386 mls/32 mph); * No. 8144 (*Budd/AMFT, 1946; ex-NYC, PC 2926, AM, CR 5655*); • **17 SEP**: Return to **EDMONTON** by car.

EVEN LATER!

This time, No. 2 pulled into Edmonton 2 hrs 10 mins late, and departed 2 hrs 15 mins *en retard* – my stay back in Edmonton unexpectedly shortened when Sandra realized she had to back to begin teaching her kids curling classes earlier than she'd thought. Interestingly, the train paused in backing into Edmonton station, right at the station itself, to board a person using a wheelchair by lift, into KOOTENAY PARK's accessible bedroom. (This night, the PARK car eventually was spotted some 18 cars down the platform; thus, the special pause to load right at the station building.) No. 2 just kept getting later and later, arriving 3 hours 17 minutes behind into Saskatoon, and 4 hours 24 minutes at Watrous. (A half hour of this was caused by having to wait at Young – 15 minutes away – for two CN stack trains, each of which must have been in the neighbourhood of 200 cars.) This was the first time ever I'd recorded CHÂTEAU SALABERRY (also HEP-1 Coach No. 8144), and the first since 1977 for KOOTENAY PARK.

IT'S ONLY YOUR WIFE

David Look's take on VIA Rail's Canadian ("Sleeping Class," No. 101) is good fun—rather faux Paul Theroux-ish. But travelling on this train is much more than just beer bottles rolling back and forth beneath the seat or dogs peeing in the snow at Melville, SK. The lower and upper berths in the sleeping car might remind you of Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis in Billy Wilder's *Some Like It Hot*—even if it's only your wife in the upper berth and not Marilyn Monroe.

—Peter Dawes, Edmonton AB

[Letter published in *Geist* magazine (they omitted my "if" before "rather Paul Theroux-ish") (Fall, 2016, 6)]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2017

2017

*ALBERTA/BRITISH COLUMBIA
ONTARIO/QUÉBEC/ALASKA*



[Alaska Railroad boarding pass issued for Denali Star trip (2017/06/21)].

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2017 to visit friends and relatives in Vancouver, Ottawa, Montréal, Kingston, Cornwall, Toronto and the vicinity of Barrie. Our main travels involved the *Canadian* to Vancouver to access a Holland-America (HAL) sea/rail cruise to and within Alaska, the trains provided by a combination of White Pass & Yukon Route (WP&Y), Alaska Railroad (ARR), and HAL themselves. The boarding pass on the page above was for Alaska Railroad's *Denali Star*.

Trips taken: Fourteen were involved, covering 3,813 kilometres (2,380 miles), seven provided by VIA Rail, two by GO Transit, two by ARR, two by WP&Y, and one by HAL. All but one were in my "Coach" category (two of them behind steam); the other in "Sleeper".

Equipment units: 129, made up of 20 Locomotives & Related Units and 109 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 74; Parlor & Club Cars, 8; Sleeping & Business Cars, 15; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 3; Lounge Cars, 6; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 3).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **BC** – Chilliwack*, Fraser Meadows, Vancouver; **ON** – Barrie, Barrys Bay*, Cornwall, Kingston, Midland*, Newmarket*, Ottawa, Penetanguishene*, Port McNicoll*, and Toronto; **QC** – Montréal. **In United States:** **AK** – Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Seward and Skagway. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means.)

Noteworthy train trips: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Vancouver; **WP&Y**, Skagway to Fraser Meadows & return); **ARR Denali Star**, Denali to Fairbanks; **HAL McKinley Explorer**, Anchorage to Denali.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA No. 669**, Cornwall to Kingston: 120 km/h (75 mph). **American:** **HAL McKinley Explorer**, Anchorage to Denali: 49 km/h (31 mph).

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA Canadian**, Edmonton to Vancouver: 52 km/h (32 mph). **American:** **WP&Y**, Skagway to Fraser Meadows: 24 km/h (15 mph).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2017

HIGHLIGHT!

Taking WP&Y's steam train from tidewater at Skagway up and over the White Pass to Fraser Meadows BC, paralleling the famous gold-rush Trail of '98 – then back down to tidewater, following a long, diesel-hauled train at a safe distance.

MILESTONE

Riding VIA's *Canadian* from Edmonton right through to Vancouver, my first time since back in 1986 when it was still called *Super Continental* – this being Sandra's first time on most of this historic route. Amazingly for this train, we were on time much of the way, in fact an hour early into Vancouver, and enjoyed maximum viewing of the mountains, considering this was an overnight run.



- 54 Mile Roundtrip From Skagway
- Climbs Nearly 3,000 Feet in Elevation
- Fully Narrated With Historic Sites and Spectacular Scenery
- Comfortable Coaches with Restrooms

[Advertisement for White Pass & Yukon's Fraser Meadows steam excursion, 2017].



[VIA baggage tag, acknowledging the celebration of Canada's first 150 years as a country, 1867-2017]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

6-7 JUN:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] EDMONTON-VANCOUVER *Canadian*

E	[2]	6459,6457
X		8616
C	[2]	8116,8135
Cf&L		8515
S	[4]	Butler Manor,Amherst Manor, EDMONTON-VANCOUVER
		Blair Manor,Douglas Manor
C		1721
Cf&L		8501
D		Frontenac
S	[9]	Cornwall Manor,Franklin Manor
		Wolfe Manor ,Bayfield Manor
		Rogers Manor,Laird Manor
		Monck Manor,Draper Manor
		Château Closse
Cf&L		8507
D		Empress
S	[2]	Château Salaberry,Château
		Jolliet
OLS		Laurentide Park

To **VANCOUVER**, departing two hours late at 0937 and arriving next morning at Pacific Central intermodal terminal one hour early at 0842, including stops at Jasper and Kamloops North BC, behind two General Motors F40PH-3's and occupying a Section in one of the MANOR cars; * 1,245 km in 24 hrs 5 mins, or 52 km/h (777 mls/32 mph); * Nos. 6457, 6459 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 8616 (ex-CP 3016, CP/VIA 616), 8501 (ex-CP/VIA Cf&L 501), WOLFE MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU CLOSSE (3sc8du3db1dr), FRONTENAC (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP); * CHÂTEAU SALABERRY (6de), LAURENTIDE PARK (1de1di) (Budd/AMFT/ARI/JRS, 1954-5; ex-CP); * No. 8135 (Budd/AMFT, 1946; ex-ACL 226, SCL 5415, AM/GRT 5415, TM 4); * No. 1721 (CR, 2000; ex-BCR 1704 CARIBOO).



2010's-42: Observation Lounge Dome Sleeper LAURENTIDE PARK, bringing up rear of No. 1 *Canadian*, being washed at Jasper before heading deeper into the mountains (2017/06/06) [PETER DAWES].

THROUGH THE ROCKIES TO THE COAST

No. 1 *Canadian* arrived in Edmonton almost two hours late, then departed exactly two hours behind at 0937, with 26 cars in tow. Glass-roofed "Panorama" Coach 1721 and four MANOR Sleeping cars were spliced into the train, the carpersons (one was a woman!) finally succeeding in connecting the cables between Skyline 8501 and Coach 1721. (These five cars had arrived on the previous No. 2 from Vancouver and were intended to accommodate Jasper-Vancouver tour groups.) Unlike some longish *Canadian*'s in the author's experience, this one was heavily loaded, especially after Jasper; but there was always space in the Dome cars, or in the glass-roofed Coach. Mount Robson was sunny (not an everyday experience), and this being June, the day was long, giving us plenty of other great mountain views. To our surprise, we not only made up the two hours, but pulled into Pacific Central Station a full hour early (this station having served Canadian National and Great Northern trains back in the day, but now VIA, Amtrak, Greyhound and other bus companies. (Rocky Mountaineer Railtours now had its own terminal.)

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2017

• **7 JUN:** After disembarking from the *Canadian*, we took TransLink's Expo Line SkyTrain and connecting trolley bus No. 5 to Sylvia Hotel on English Bay (four nights there) – travelling on "Compass" cards, each trip being deducted until the card ran out; • **8 JUN:** To **Chilliwack** for the day on Greyhound Canada, to visit one of Sandra's relatives (Uncle Roy), retracing our trolley-Expo Line route back to Pacific Central and ending up on a chartered bus, due to the regular Kelowna vehicle being full (the driver of the charter appeared to be at least in his mid-seventies – an indication of how older people can still cut it, if they have their health); • **9 JUN:** Downtown to the Vancouver Art Gallery to see an Emily Carr exhibit and a noon-hour concert of classical music; then Lougheed Town Centre in Burnaby by Expo Line SkyTrain to visit Aunt Phoebe, catching the Nick Hempton Trio from New York at Frankie's Italian Kitchen & Bar/Jazz club on our return; • **10 JUN:** To **West Vancouver** by trolley and Seabus to North Van (Compass valid), second cousin Ted and wife Denise meeting and driving us to their place for lunch and dinner (returning the same way).

THE CANADIAN / CANADIEN

[From VIA breakfast/petit déjeuner menu, 2017]

• **11-15 JUN:** To **SKAGWAY**, Alaska, on Holland-America's ZAANDAM, calling first at Ketchikan, then Juneau.

ZAANDAM

This Inside Passage sea/rail cruise had been on my bucket list for a long time, and our Saskatoon friends, the Clancy's, enriched it by coming along. Placed in service in 2000, Holland-America Line (HAL)'s ZAANDAM was 61,400 Gross Registered Tonnes and accommodated 1,400 passengers. She was one of four sisters. Although sold out at 1,432 passengers, she never seemed crowded – a tribute to her designers. HAL was owned by the largest cruise company in the world, Carnival Corp., whose other properties included Cunard, Princess and P&O. Unlike the ships of many cruise lines, HAL's were registered in the old home country, specifically Rotterdam.



2010's-43: Vancouver skyline from North Van-bound SeaBus, ZAANDAM (61,000 GRT) on the right side of Canada Place cruise terminal, CELEBRITY INFINITY (91,000) of Celebrity Cruises on the left (2017/06/11) [PETER DAWES].

15 JUN:

WP&Y SKAGWAY-FRASER MEADOWS & RETURN

Es	73
C	[6] Lake Lindeman, Lake Muncho Lake Watson, Lake Spirit Lake Fraser, Lake Marsh

To **FRASER MEADOWS BC**, after docking at Skagway at 0600; * Depart five minutes early at 1155, arrive Fraser Meadows loop at 1345, having made one stop at the railway's shops to pick up more passengers; * Our train was headed by 2-8-2 steam locomotive No. 73, and we occupied one of six Coaches; * 44 km in 1 hr 50 mins, or 24 km/h (27 mls/15 mph); * No. 73 (BLW, 1947); * **LAKE MUNCHO** (PUL, 1885; ex-NPC, NSH 26, NWP 716); * Returning, depart 1415, arrive five minutes late at 1605.



2010's-44: Holland-America's ZAANDAM in port at Juneau, as seen from Mount Roberts Tramway (2017/06/14) [SANDRA DAWES].

BIG HOLLAND-AMERICA PRESENCE

We encountered two other Holland-America vessels in Vancouver before our cruise: ZAANDAM's sister VOLENDAM and fleet mate NIEUW AMSTERDAM. Sister company Princess also had three ships on the Inside Passage: ISLAND PRINCESS; STAR PRINCESS; and EMERALD PRINCESS. (The last-mentioned was in port the same days we were, in Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway.)



[From gohal.com]



2010's-45: White Pass & Yukon's steam excursion at Skagway, Mikado 2-8-2 No. 73 waiting to take six Coaches through the White Pass to Fraser Meadows BC and back (2017/06/15) [PETER DAWES].

WHITE PASS & YUKON

... was opened from Skagway through to Whitehorse in 1900 as a 914 mm (3 ft) narrow-gauge line, to carry miners and supplies into Yukon's gold fields. Completed just as the rush was slowing down, the railway nevertheless would become an essential link for Yukon passengers and freight, hauling out lead-zinc ore in particular. Post-World War II, White Pass became a pioneer in containerization, operating ships, trucks and trains. By 1982, a parallel road to tidewater had been completed and the main mine had closed, leading to the railway's mothballing. In 1988, a vast increase in the number of cruise ships sailing the Inside Passage enabled WP&Y to reopen as a highly scenic shore excursion as far as Lake Bennett BC, and later Carcross YT.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2017



[Map of White Pass & Yukon's Fraser Meadows steam excursion, 2017]

FRASER MEADOWS EXCURSION

Back in 1970, the author was able to take the regular White Pass & Yukon (WP&Y) train all the way from Skagway to Whitehorse; five years later, he rode it again on a Skagway-Lake Bennett excursion. Fast forward to 2017 and 2-8-2, Mikado-type, oil-fired steam engine No. 73 was in excursion service. Built in 1947; it was retired in 1963, returned to service in '82, and operational ever since the line was revived in '88. LAKE MUNCHO was built by the Pullman Co. way back in 1885 for North Pacific Coast, then served other Bay Area railroads before coming to White Pass in 1930 (her last major rebuild was in '51). LAKE SPIRIT was the oldest Coach in our train, having been built in 1881! After posing for photos at the station, No. 73 backed its train down to the docks and filled the rear four Coaches with passengers from Disney Cruise Line's DISNEY WONDER; then returned to the station to board the rest of us. We could have taken a diesel-hauled train directly from ZAANDAM, but wanted to take the steam version (Holland-America's website and phone staff appeared to be unaware of its existence). The trip itself was as scenic as ever, and WP&Y had built a loop and water facility at what they now called "Fraser Meadows", not far into British Columbia. (The diesel trains went farther north, turning at either Lake Bennett or Carcross.) On our return, we followed a 14-car train, clinging to side of the mountain as it drifted back down to tidewater.

- **15-18 JUN:** Onward to **SEWARD**, cruising Glacier Bay one day, then open seas the next; docking at 0530 on the 18th.

18 JUN:

ARR SEWARD-ANCHORAGE

E	4323
C	[4] 557,556,555,554
CfeL	351
C	[3] 553, 552 ,551[dd]
E	3013



2010's-46: Alaska Railroad's Seward-Anchorage "boat train", operated for Holland-America and led by SD70MAC No. 4323 – ZAANDAM in the background right (2017/06/18) [PETER DAWES].

To **ANCHORAGE**, on an Alaska Railroad train operated for Holland-America, departing 0645, arriving 1135, powered by an Electromotive SD70MAC and a GP40-2 diesel (one night at Westmark hotel); * We occupied one of seven Coaches; * 185 km in 4 hrs 50 mins, or 38 km/h (114 mls/24 mph); * Nos. 4323 (2004), 3013 (1978) (both EMD); * No. 552 (RRM, 1997; ex-CN X 9269 [NSC, 1957], 9648, FFT C-3 9003); * No. 351 (RRC, 1997); ex-C&NW 903 [PS, 1958]; AM 9601, FFT ENT E-1 9011 "Tiki Railbar"); * No. 555 (CRM, 2006).

BOAT TRAIN

Alaska Railroad (ARR) provided equipment for Holland-America on our Seward-Anchorage journey, in a classic "boat train" scenario: passengers disembarked; proceeded through a processing building; and emerged to find their train sitting right there. ARR's Head-end Electric Power (HEP)-equipped SD70MAC No. 4323 led, while GP40-2 No. 3013 was on the rear. The railway's public Seward-Anchorage train, *Coastal Classic*, departed at 1800 and arrived 2215 – over a route that matched up well for scenery against the others on this highly photogenic railroad.

INTERESTING EQUIPMENT

Used on “boat trains”, Alaska Railroad (ARR) called this consist its “Grandview” train. Our Coach No. 552 had a particularly interesting history: built in 1957 by National Steel Car (Hamilton ON) for Canadian National as a Baggage car; converted by Rader Railcar (Denver) into a 76-seat, glass-roofed Coach for a short-lived, late 1990’s venture called “Florida Fun Train” (FFT); and acquired by ARR in 2000. No. 351 was built in 1958 for Chicago & North Western as a Coach, acquired by Amtrak, converted by Rader into a “Video-Arcade Car”, and used by ARR as what appeared to be a Café Lounge – large windows along one side of the car, but closed in on the other. The front four cars were also glass-roofed Coaches, but had a more pedestrian lineage, having been built for AAR during 2006/7 by Colorado Railcar Manufacturing.

19 JUN:

HAL ANCHORAGE-DENALI *McKinley Explorer*

E	4317 [ARR]
ObsC [2]	Teklanika , Eklutna
KitC	Nenana
ObsC	Chulitna
KitC	Talkeetna
KitC	Kashwitna
KitC	St. Elias [PRL]
ObsC	Wrangell [PRL]

To **DENALI**, on a train operated by Alaska Railroad mainly for Holland-America (HAL), but also Princess Cruises (PRL) (two nights at Princess Wilderness Lodge); * Depart 0915, arrive half an hour late at 1705, with just the one stop at Talkeetna, powered by an Electromotive SD70MAC diesel [**equipment owned by HAL, except for locomotive**]; * We occupied one of four, double-deck Observation Coaches; * 380 km in 7 hrs 50 mins, or 49 km/h (234 mls/31 mph); * No. 4317 (EMD, 2004); * TEKLANIKA (CRM, 2005); * ST. ELIAS (TRR, 1988; ex-SP 3734 [PS, 1969]).



2010's-47: Holland-America (HAL)'s Observation Coach TEKLANIKA, lead car in Anchorage-Denali *McKinley Explorer* (2017/06/19) [PETER DAWES].

MCKINLEY EXPLORER

Holland-America (HAL) and Princess Cruises (PRC) – as mentioned above, both members of Carnival group – each owned bi-level Coaches to carry passengers connecting with their respective ships at Alaskan ports. Power this day was provided by a single, HEP-equipped, Alaska Railroad SD70MAC diesel. HAL supplied six cars, including our TEKLANIKA (89 seats and a viewing platform downstairs; 40 seats downstairs for meals; lift-equipped to allow easier access to the top floor). Three of the other cars were equipped with a kitchen. PRC provided the two rear cars, including WRANGELL (84 seats and viewing platform; 32 seats downstairs; lift). The scenery was magnificent, including clear views of Mount Denali, highest in North America – something that occurs perhaps 30% of the time. (There was no problem in HAL passengers moving back through to WRANGELL to take end-of-train photos.) Not included in HAL's cruise package, our lunches were adequate, but nothing approaching VIA's *Canadian* level.



2010's-48: Alaska Railroad's *Denali Star* at Denali, just in from Anchorage, led by SD70MAC diesels 4326 and 4323 (2017/06/21) [PETER DAWES].

21 JUN:

ARR [ANCHORAGE] DENALI-FAIRBANKS *Denali Star*

E	[2]	4326,4323
X		102
KitC	[2]	654,652
D		452
C		206
CfLC		502
C		202
KitC	[2]	Yentna,Kahiltnu [WEX]

To **FAIRBANKS**, departing at 1625, arriving 2025, 25 minutes late throughout (one night at Westmark hotel); * Two SD70MAC diesels supplied the power, and we occupied an Observation Coach at the front

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2017

of the train [**equipment owned by ARR, except as indicated**]; * 193 km in 4 hrs, or 48 km/h (119 mls/30 mph); * Nos. 4326, 4317 (EMD, 2004); * No. 102 (ACF, 1961; ex-UP 6310); * No. 652 (CRM, 2005); * No. 206 (EPC, 1989); * No. 452 (PS 1958; ex-C&NW 600, AM 9600, FFT TC E-4 9014); * No. 502 (PS, 1958; ex-UP 7014); * YENTNA (CRM, 2001).

DENALI STAR

This was ARR's regular train between Anchorage, Denali and Fairbanks, powered by two HEP-equipped SD70MAC's, the second (No. 4323) having been on our Seward-Anchorage "boat train" three days earlier. The scenery departing Denali through the river gorge was spectacular – perhaps the best we encountered on ARR-associated trains. Around 1900 hours, we paused at a road crossing so that the operating crew could be replaced before exceeding its 12-hour daily limit. The meal service in the front two Coaches was not terribly impressive, dessert consisting of an ice cream-like substance in a small cylinder – disappointing, given the hefty price of the upscale "Gold Star" service. In compensation, the car attendant and guide were both very good.

AN ECLECTIC TRAIN

Alaska Railroad (ARR)'s *Denali Star* was an interesting combination of car types with varied backgrounds. Our "Gold Star" Kitchen Coach No. 652 was another bi-level car, 72 seats upstairs and 36 downstairs in the dining area. Ordinary single-level Coach No. 206 was built by Emprotech Corp., an American assembler for Daewoo Heavy Industries of South Korea. Acquired in 2000, Diner No. 452 was of Chicago & North Western and Amtrak heritage, before being turned into a "theatre car" for the Florida Fun Train (it seemed more like a Café than a Diner on this train). Dome Coach No. 502 was an ex-Union Pacific car built by Pullman-Standard in 1958 and acquired by ARR in '71. At the end of the train were two Colorado Railcar Kitchen Coaches operated by Wilderness Adventures (WEX), which catered to Royal Caribbean and associated Celebrity cruise line passengers. There was no problem in walking back through YENTNA in order to take photos from the observation deck of KAHILINU.



2010's-49: Kitchen Coach No. 652 at Denali, part of Alaska's Anchorage-Fairbanks *Denali Star* (note viewing platform) (2017/06/21) [SANDRA DAWES].

NOT MUCH FREIGHT?

We never encountered a single freight train in motion on our Alaska Railroad-associated passenger trains, but did see modest intermodal trains in both Seward and Fairbanks yards – more piggyback truck than container in makeup. We also saw a modest number of coal cars at Fairbanks. Freight traffic had been way down since the 2008 global meltdown, and the world-wide collapse of oil prices hurt state government revenues badly – and therefore the prospects of the state-owned railroad.

- **23 JUN:** Back to **Edmonton**, by Alaska Airlines to Seattle (changing planes at Anchorage); then subsidiary Horizon Air home.

9 JUL:

VIA 648 TORONTO-OTTAWA

E	913	
K	3464	
C	[4] 3329,3335,3303,3305	
E	912	
E	916	TORONTO-KINGSTON
K	4009 <i>[as Coach]</i>	"
C	[3] 4103,4101,4118	"

To **OTTAWA**, beginning with an Air Canada flight to Toronto, then Union-Pearson Express (UPX) to Union Station; * Depart 1840, arrive Ottawa station 60 minutes late at 0018, powered by two Genesis P42DC's, occupying the "Business Class" LRC Club car (three nights at Byward Blue Inn); * 446 km in 5 hrs 18 mins, or 84 km/h (286 mls/52 mph); * Nos. 912, 913, 916 (GE, 2001); * No. 3329, 3464 (ex-C 3383) (BBD, 1981-4).

TORONTO-OTTAWA LOCAL

No. 648 was a Sunday evening "clean-up" train making every single VIA stop from Toronto to Ottawa. By Cobourg, we had fallen 35 minutes behind schedule; by Kingston, a full hour – and made up next to nothing the rest of the way. The rear portion consisted of equipment being returned to Kingston to make up VIA's Kingston-Toronto No. 651 on Monday morning, although passengers did occupy these HEP (Head-End Powered)-2 cars on this evening. This was our first trip since 2005 in what VIA now called "Business Class, and the self-styled "VIA Drinks Fairy" lady was excellent at helping compensate for the late running of this train, what with regular visits to each passenger! Overall, the meal and service were excellent, if not quite up to *Canadian* standard. As we neared Ottawa, the guy-in-charge made several apologies over the intercom, and offered 50% off the price of a future trip within six months – as long as it was on this specific route and train. We would spend two full days in the nation's capital, visiting with cousin Sue and husband Russ and old buddy Glen, and taking in the National Gallery of Art and National War Museum (both having been upgraded in advance of Canada 150 celebrations).

12 JUL:

VIA 24 [FALLOWFIELD] OTTAWA-MONTRÉAL [QUÉBEC] Chaudière

E	915
X	7001
K	7214
SvL	7307
C	[3] 70211, 7102 , 7225

To **MONTRÉAL**, departing Ottawa station at 1019, arriving Central Station 10 minutes late at 1226, No. 24 consisting of Renaissance equipment and stopping for passengers at Alexandria and Dorval QC; * Our ordinary Coach was fine, but a comedown from our Toronto-Ottawa Business car; * We then stayed two nights at sister Dorothy's over in Brossard (visiting nephew Charlie and family, also old friend Shaun); * 187 km in 2 hrs 7 mins, or 89 km/h (119 mls/55 mph); * No. 7102 & all other cars (MC, 1995-6).

CHAUDIÈRE

... was an interesting train originating at Fallowfield in the western 'burbs of Ottawa and ending up in Québec – *Chaudière* being the name used for this train back in the 1990's, when it ran only between Montréal and Québec. We were soon reminded of how tiny were the overhead compartments in Renaissance Coaches. A family of four English tourists boarded at Alexandria without tickets, explaining that the ticket machine in the unmanned station was inoperable. The amiable VIA train manager was able to complete a credit-card transaction, after much discussion over the cell phone with her supervisor. No. 24's scheduled 1-hour, 57-minute schedule from Ottawa to Montréal looked promising, but we were delayed 15 minutes at Coteau, waiting on the north track for Toronto-Montréal No. 60 to catch up and race by on the south track. By 2017, VIA had almost stopped running trains between Toronto and Montréal via Ottawa, westbound No. 51 being the only one left in the schedule.



2010's-50: VIA Genesis P42DC No. 909 in Montréal Central Station, dressed in "Canada 150" livery and waiting to take No. 65 to Kingston and Toronto (2017/07/14) [PETER DAWES].

14 JUL:

VIA 65 MONTRÉAL-KINGSTON [TORONTO] Renaissance

E	909
K	3467
C	[4] 3353, 3327 , 3302, 3336

To **KINGSTON** to visit more relatives and enjoy one of our favourite small cities, departing Central Station at 1055, arriving 13 minutes late at 1350, stopping at Dorval, Cornwall ON and Brockville (three nights at Hotel Belvedere); * This train carried a baggage car on Monday, Thursday and Saturday, but this was Friday; * Nice visit with brother David, who was in the process of moving house after some four decades; * 285 km in 2 hrs 55 mins, or 98 km/h (178 mls/61 mph).



2010's-51: VIA F40PH-3 No. 6409 leads VIA's Toronto-originating joint No. 62 (to Montréal) and No. 52 (Ottawa), into Kingston (2017/07/16) [SANDRA DAWES].

16 JUL:

VIA 62 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-CORNWALL [MONTRÉAL]

E	6409
K	3468
C	[4] 3361,3326,3323,3371
E	917
K	3476
C	[3] 4100,4111,4106

TORONTO-BROCKVILLE [OTTAWA]

"

"

To **CORNWALL** for this year's family reunion at niece Alida's, departing 1145, arriving 1316 – seven minutes late throughout; * 174 km in 1 hr 31 mins, or 114 km/h (109 mls/71 mph).

VIA 669 [MONTRÉAL] CORNWALL-KINGSTON [TORONTO]

E	920
K	3459
C	[3] 3331, 3319 ,3311

Depart a couple of minutes late at 1957, arrive seven minutes in arrears at 2124; * 174 km in 1 hr 27 mins, or 120 km/h (109 mls/75 mph).

THIS YEAR'S CORNWALL DAY TRIP

Montréal-bound No. 62 was the lead portion in this combined train, No. 52 to Ottawa bringing up the rear. After a quick decoupling process just west of Brockville, No. 62 ran non-stop onward towards Cornwall, while No. 52 did the Brockville stop. Coming back in the evening, a slightly late No. 669 did Cornwall-Kingston non-stop in 120 km/h (75 mph), and heaven help any automobile that might have ventured on to the tracks as it rushed through Brockville! This train appeared sold out, with only three Coaches on a Sunday evening. One young man had a serious nausea problem with the refurbished LRC Coaches and their half forward-, half backward-facing seats. Out of Montréal, he had been able to move to an unoccupied forward-facing seat, but unfortunately had to move back to his backward location at Cornwall.

- **17-18 JUL:** Side trip to **Barrys Bay** ON by rental car to visit brother Ray and Mary-Rose for one night, then back to Kingston for a final night.

19 JUL:

VIA 45 [OTTAWA] KINGSTON-TORONTO *Rideau*

E	6445
K	3476
C	[3] 4100, 4111 ,4106

To **MIDLAND** via Toronto and Barrie, departing Kingston three minutes late at 1236, arriving Union Station four minutes early at 1444, with no intermediate stops; * 254 km in 2 hrs 8 mins, or 119 km/h (159 mls/74 mph); * No. 4111 (*Budd/AMFT, 1949; ex-SOU 951, AM 3851*).

OLD FAVOURITE

Love using the old names for Corridor trains, as with *Rideau* here. These HEP-2 Coaches had been on Toronto-Ottawa No. 52 three days earlier, high in profile and therefore generous in head-room compared to the LRC and Renaissance cars. However, No. 45's 119 km/h (74 mph) was disappointing for a non-stop train. At Kingston, a CN freight had passed the station 30 minutes earlier, circa 200 cars; including many sporting Canpotex (a western Canadian potash export and marketing outfit) and PCS (Potash Corp. of Saskatchewan) liveries.

GO 801 TORONTO-BARRIE ALLANDALE WATERFRONT

C [6] 342,2558,2455,2035,2426,**2718**

E 561

Depart 1540, arrive 1718, on time all the way, making nine stops including King City, Aurora, Newmarket, Bradford and Barrie South, an F59PH pushing and control-cab Coach leading – the purpose being to attend the interment of our dear Edmonton friend Charles, who had passed away in May of 2016; * 101 km in 1 hr 38 mins, or 62 km/h (63 mls/39 mph); * No. 561 (GMD, 1988); * Nos. 2718 (2008-9), 342 (2015-6) (BBD); • Onward to **Midland** by rental car (four nights at Quality Inn & Conference Centre).

GO NORTH

GO's Barrie line was aimed at taking motor vehicles off of Highway 400, by serving fast-growing suburban communities such as Newmarket and Barrie itself. This was my first trip over the entirety of this line between Toronto and Barrie, which had been placed in service by the Northern Railway in 1854, and later was owned by Grand Trunk, then Canadian National (CN). CN's *Super Continental* followed this route along the west side of Lake Simcoe, while the CN-Ontario Northland *Northlander* went on the east side via Beaverton. As for our bi-level GO train, well-filled No. 801 was one of seven, late afternoon, Monday-to-Friday services, with buses providing service at other times of the day. Entirely Bombardier-built, the train's leading cab-control Coach No. 342 was one of a series placed in service during 2015-6.

• **20 JUL:** By car to nearby **Penetanguishene** for Charles' internment; • **21 JUL:** By car to **Port McNicoll** to inspect the magnificent, preserved, Canadian Pacific lake steamer **KEEWATIN**; • **21 JUL:** By car to **Newmarket** to visit an Edmonton friend's elderly father, Seamus, living there in a retirement home, surviving Highway 400's six lanes from Barrie south, the average vehicle travelling 20-30 or more kilometres per hour above the speed limit, many performing multiple lane changes and failing to signal; while the northbound lanes were gridlocked (this on a Saturday morning!) – another result of the out-of-control sprawling of Toronto in all directions, making GO Transit look like a bandaid rather than part of an effective regional land-use policy.

KEEWATIN

... was built in 1907 by Fairfield's at Govan, Glasgow, for Canadian Pacific (CP), for service alongside sister **ASSINIBOIA** between Fort William and Owen Sound on Georgian Bay, offering travellers an option to the rail route north of Lake Superior. The ships were approximately 3,880 Gross Registered Tonnes, cruised at 14 knots, provided 288 1st class berths, and were sailed by 86 officers and crew. Upon delivery to Canada, they were cut into two sections at Lévis QC, then floated through the St. Lawrence canals to Buffalo NY for re-assembly. Placed in service in 1908, CP moved the ships' southern terminal to Port McNicoll in '12. The railway operated a boat train between there and Toronto in connection with the ships, and added Sleeping cars (placed shipside) to regular trains between Fort William and Winnipeg. Amazingly, the two ships remained in passenger service through the 1965 season, and continued hauling freight until being retired the following year. In 1967, **KEEWATIN** was sold for scrap, but was preserved instead as Keewatin Marine Museum in Douglas MI. In 2012, she was towed back to Port McNicoll to serve in a similar role.



[From Friends of the Keewatin, "Tour Prices & Information, 2015" brochure]



2010's-52: Preserved Canadian Pacific lake steamer KEEWATIN
at Port McNicoll ON (2017/07/21) [PETER DAWES].

23 JUL:

GO 804 BARRIE ALLANDALE WATERFRONT-TORONTO

E 633

C [6] 4010,2122,2857,2146,2519,357

Back to **EDMONTON**, first returning the rental car to Barrie, then departing at 1102 on this GO Train, arriving Union Station at 1240 behind a Motive Power Inc. (Boise ID) MP40PH-3C (one of three Saturday and Sunday morning departures for Toronto); * No. 633 (MPI, 2009); • Onward to Pearson International by UPX train, then Air Canada home – spending one hour in a holding pattern over Edmonton while a nasty summer prairie storm went through.



2010's-53: GO Transit No. 804 backs out of storage area towards Barrie's Allandale Waterfront Station, led by Control-cab Coach 357 and sporting old and new green colours (2017/07/23) [SANDRA DAWES].

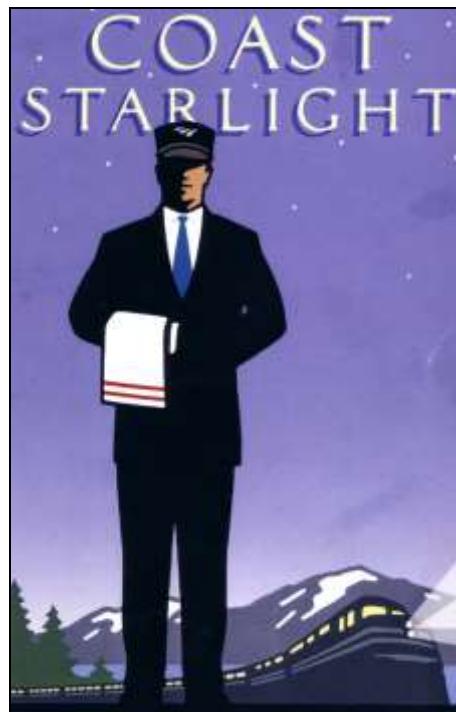
TRAVAILS OF THE CANADIAN

Subsequent to these travels, Sandra took No. 2 the *Canadian* to Watrous, departing around 0230 on **25 JUL** (two-and-a-half hours late), arriving circa 1600 (six hours behind). On **28 JUL**, she saw No. 2 go through Watrous around 1700 – seven hours late. She returned home on **11-12 AUG**, only two hours or so late. Subsequent checking of VIA's "Moving Maps" site revealed a depressing reality: Canadian National freight volume had led to late running, typically six to 12 hours, across the country. Indeed, on **22 DEC**, we saw No. 1 just east of Kinsella AB, at 1345 hours, with 20+ cars – perhaps 10 hours late on its way to Vancouver. This had better not continue into 2018!

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

2018

*ALBERTA/BRITISH COLUMBIA/
SASKATCHEWAN/ONTARIO/
QUÉBEC/PACIFIC NORTH-
WEST U.S.*



[Amtrak Dining Car Menu cover (2017/09)]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2018 to visit friends and relatives in Mountain View and Sacramento CA, Toronto, Kingston, Cornwall, Montréal and Watrous SK – also to experience San Francisco, Portland and Vancouver. Main travels involved Amtrak (AM)'s *Coast Starlight* and *Cascades* up the coast to Vancouver, followed by VIA's *Canadian* from Vancouver to Edmonton. We also took tourist trains operated by the Western Railway Museum (WRM) near Sacramento, and by South Simcoe Railway (SSR) northwest of Toronto. Another highlight was a dinner cruise on Muskoka Steamships' SEGWUN out of Gravenhurst ON.

Trips taken: Sixteen were involved, covering 5,538 kilometres (3,456 miles), seven provided by VIA Rail, three by AM, two by Caltrain, two by WRM, and two by SSR. Twelve were in my "Coach" category; the other four in "Sleeper". (None was behind steam, but two were on self-propelled trains.)

Equipment units: 159, made up of 24 Locomotives & Related Units and 135 cars (Coaches & Dayniters, 55; Parlor & Club Cars, 9; Sleeping & Business Cars, 40; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 9; Lounge Cars, 15; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 7).

Places visited in Canada: **AB** – Edmonton; **BC** – Chilliwack*, Vancouver; **ON** – Beeton, Cornwall, Gravenhurst*, Ingleside*, Kingston, Kleinburg*, Long Sault*, Morrisburg*, Toronto, Tottenham and Vaughan*; **QC** – Montréal; **SK** – Watrous. **In United States:** **CA** – Molena, Mountain View, Rio Vista Jct., Sacramento, San Francisco and Winters*; **OR** – Portland. (**Note:** * indicates by non-rail means.)

Noteworthy train trips: **AM California Zephyr**, Emeryville to Sacramento; **AM Coast Starlight**, Sacramento to Portland; **AM Cascades**, Portland to Vancouver; **WRM**, Rio Vista Jct. to Molena; **SSR**, Tottenham to Beeton; **VIA Canadian**, Vancouver to Edmonton.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA No. 60**, Kingston to Cornwall: 107 km/h (66 mph). **American:** **Caltrain No. 360**, San Francisco to Mountain View: 81 km/h (50 mph).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **SSR**, Beeton to Tottenham: 19 km/h (12 mph). **American:** **WRM**, Rio Vista Jct. to Molena: 20 km/h (13 mph).

HIGHLIGHT!

Taking Amtrak's *Coast Starlight* north from Sacramento through the Cascade Mountains to Portland, my first time over this route segment since 1975 – the service and meals surprisingly good and scenery even better.

MILESTONE

Celebrating VIA's 40th anniversary by riding the signature *Canadian* three times, plus four Ontario-Québec Corridor trains. Difficult to believe for someone who worked on VIA's creation from a regulatory perspective with the Canadian Transport Commission, and on the Minister of Transport's 1984-5 Rail Passenger Action Force.



[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Railway_Museum;
South Simcoe Railway brochure]



[Celebrating four decades of VIA,
1978-2018 (via.ca)]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

• **23 APR:** To **San Francisco** on Air Canada (changing planes at Vancouver), then taking Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) from the airport into Powell Station and a Hyde cable car to Post Street (thanks to our newly purchased Municipal Railway [MUNI] passes), and finally walking the short distance to our Beresford Arms Hotel (four nights there); • Highlights this time would include: • the usual extensive and vigorous walking tour according to (Tom) Matoff's *Official Guide to the Absurdities and Obscurities of the Western Metropolis*; • rides on all three cable car lines, the "N" Ocean Beach light rail, and the "E" & "F" historic street-car lines; • dinner at the famous and quirky Tadich Grill; • jazz at Club de Luxe in Haight-Ashbury (also by "N" line); • boat excursion to Sausalito; and • a retrospective Robert Kennedy funeral-train exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

25 APR:

CALT 360 SAN FRANCISCO-MOUNTAIN VIEW [SAN JOSE]

E	917
C	[5] 3839,4000,3804,3847,4024

To **MOUNTAIN VIEW** to visit niece Andrea, husband Liam and daughter Joni, having accessed 4th Street Station from Fishermen's Wharf by historic "E" street car; * Depart 1612, arrive 1655, behind an F40PH-2CAT, stopping only at Millbrae (to pick up from BART), Hillsdale and Palo Alto; * 58 km in 43 mins, or 81 km/h (36 mls/50 mph); * No. 917 (EMD, 1985); * No. 3839 (NO/ALS, 1985); No. 4024 (NO, 2000).

CALTRAIN COMMUTE SERVICE

... was operated by Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board between San Francisco and San Jose (some trains going beyond to and from Tamien or Gilroy). Our train was an early peak hour, limited-stop, "Baby Bullet" service, and was particularly busy this afternoon, due to Giants baseball fans returning home from an afternoon game – 4th Street Station being within walking distance of the waterfront stadium. Caltrain was operating a mixture of older-but-rebuilt Nippon Sharyo and later Bombardier bilevel cars, powered by Electromotive and Motive Power Industries diesel-electrics – a cab control Coach at the other end to make the turning of trains unnecessary.

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

CALT 197 [TAMIEN] MOUNTAIN VIEW-SAN FRANCISCO

C [5] 4005,3864,3834,3819, **3850**
E 910

Return to **SAN FRANCISCO** on a local train, departing 2205, arriving 2320, powered by an FP40PH-2 named MILLBRAE and making 16 intermediate stops; * 58 km in 1 hr 15 mins, or 46 km/h (36 mls/29 mph).

THE MUNI DELIVERS

On arriving back at 4th Street Station at 2320 hours, we boarded a No. 45 trolley bus, intending to take it to Union Square, then walk up Post to our hotel. While waiting to depart, our driver talked back and forth with two street people who had boarded, advising each to "Take care out there" when they subsequently left the bus. He suggested we stay with him to an intersection where we could catch a No. 3 trolley up Sutter to within a block of our hotel. When we got to Kearney & Sutter, he motioned a following No. 3 to pull up alongside to his left on Sutter, and we made the transfer. (The two buses were blocking this one-way street!) Like his No. 45 compatriot, the No. 3 driver could not have been more helpful, letting us off right at the appropriate spot.



[*Caltrain, SF Municipal Railway & BART logos (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caltrain; sfmta.com/blog/introducing-sfmtas-new-look; forbes.com/companies/bay-area-rapid-transit)*]



2010's-54: Amtrak's No. 6 *California Zephyr*, being positioned at Emeryville station to receive passengers, led by P42DC 202 (2018/04/27) [PETER DAWES].

27 APR:

AM 6 EMERYVILLE-SACRAMENTO [CHICAGO] *California Zephyr*

E	[2]	202,152
X		61066
S	[3]	32059,32049,32029
D		38064
CfeL		33009
C		34100
CX		31044
C		34097



[amtrak.com]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

To **SACRAMENTO**, departing on time at 0910, but arriving 22 minutes late at 1120, non-stop, behind two General Electric Genesis P42DC's (one night at Greg Thompson's place); * 138 km in 2 hrs 10 mins, or 64 km/h (88 mls/40 mph); * Nos. 152 & 202 (2000-1) (GE, 1995-6); * Nos. 31044, 32059 (5de14ec1fm1di), 33009, 34100 (all PS, 1978-81); * No. 38064 (BBD, 1993-4); * No. 61066 (CAF, 2015-6); * To **Winters** by automobile, courtesy Greg, where we met up with another old train and transit buddy, Tom Matoff, for a wonderful patio dinner; other Sacramento highlights being visits to the excellent California State Railroad Museum (featuring preserved Canadian National, 10 Section, 1 Drawing Room, 1 Compartment Sleeping car ST. HYACINTHE), and preserved Sacramento River steamboat DELTA KING.

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

This was my first time on this train since 2008, when I took it from Chicago to Grand Jct. CO, in connection with some train-riding on the Durango & Silverton steam train – then later from Grand Jct. onward to Emeryville, and another San Francisco visit. This time, we took it the short distance over to Sacramento because it provided a convenient early (but not too early) schedule compared to the Capitol Corridor intercity trains. The train trip itself was very comfortable on the top level of our Superliner Coach, the scenery beautiful along the Sacramento-San Joaquin delta, with plenty of bird life. Our delay on this double tracked Union (ex-Southern) Pacific line was caused mostly by maintenance work near Martinez. At Sacramento, the passenger tracks had been relocated away from the old station, requiring a long walk to the waiting Greg.

CABLE CAR CONNECTION

Our access to *California Zephyr* was interesting, I'd say: Hyde cable car up the hill to California Street; California cable car down the hill to Drumm Street; and Amtrak chartered bus from its Hyatt Regency hotel stop across the Bay Bridge to Emeryville. No apparent tourists on the cable cars, other than us, considering this was around 0700 hours and people were commuting to work – yes, by cable car.



2010's-55: Municipal Railway California Street cable car resting after transporting us down to Drumm Street – and our Amtrak *California Zephyr* bus connection (2018/04/27) [SANDRA DAWES].

28 APR:

WRM RIO VISTA JCT.-MOLENA & RETURN

Ce [3] 751[SL&U],1020[OA&E],1005[SN]

To **MOLENA** on a Western Railway Museum interurban excursion, accessed by automobile courtesy Greg, with Tom taking action photos; * Depart 1400, arrive 1430, occupying a former Salt Lake & Utah car; * 10 km in 30 mins, or 20 km/h (6 mls/13 mph); * No. 751 (NC&M, 1916; ex-SL&U); * No. 1005 (HCC, 1912; ex-OA&E/SFSAC/SN 1005; KS 495); * No. 1020 (HSM, 1913; ex-OA&E/SFSAC/SN 1020; SN MW302); * Return, departing approximately 1435, arriving 1505; * Timings, other than departure, from memory.



2010's-56: Western Railway Museum excursion train, consisting of two green Sacramento Northern and one red Salt Lake & Utah interurban cars (2018/04/28) [TOM MATOFF].

WESTERN RAILWAY MUSEUM (WRM)

... was located an hour or so southwest of Sacramento, on the old Sacramento Northern (SN) interurban mainline between Chico, Sacramento and Oakland. SN was formed in 1928 through the merger of Northern Electric and Oakland, Antioch & Eastern railways, brought about by a new owner, the steam-propelled Western Pacific Railroad. SN provided the fastest service between Sacramento and the East Bay (and therefore San Francisco), and in 1939 began operating over the new Bay Bridge right into the city. Alas, the entire passenger service was abandoned just two years later. Over the years, Bay Area Electric Railroad Association (BAERA) acquired several ex-SN and other cars, operating some in excursion service. In 1960, the association established what would become WRM, and eventually acquired 34 kilometres (21 miles) of former SN track. It later restored electric service to approximately 10 km (6 m/s) for excursion purposes. Built in 1916 for the Salt Lake & Utah interurban, our car No. 751 had been "interpreted" by WRM as a Parlor car and featured complementary light refreshments at seat.

29 APR:**AM 14 [LOS ANGELES] SACRAMENTO-PORTLAND [SEATTLE] *Coast Starlight***

E	[2]	12,206
X		61030
SY		39021
S	[3]	32056,32072,32106
D		38057
C		34504
CfeL		33039
C	[2]	34029,34090
CX		31047

To **PORTLAND**, after attending Camillia Symphony's performance entitled, "Pastoral Bliss" (Greg being a subscriber); * Depart 70 minutes late at 0110 (instead of the scheduled 2359), arrive Union Station 40 minutes behind at 1612, including stops at Roseville, Chico, Klamath Falls OR, Chemult, Eugene, Albany and Salem, behind the usual two P42DC's (three nights at Mark Spencer Hotel); * 1,036 km in 15 hrs 2 mins, or 69 km/h (637 mls/43 mph); * Nos. 32072 (5de14ec1fm1di), 34504 (ex-34104) (PS, 1978-81).

COAST STARLIGHT

This was my fifth trip on this train, the first being Oakland to Seattle in 1973, the most recent Oakland to Los Angeles in '87. (The track was owned then by Southern Pacific; now by Union Pacific.) Due to maintenance on UP's Coast Line, No. 14 had been rerouted out of Los Angeles via Tehachapi Pass and Bakersfield, meaning that arriving at Sacramento only 30 minutes late on the slower route was surprising good – and welcome, given the midnight hour. After servicing and passenger-handling, the train backed out of the station, then resumed its normal route to Chico and north – this necessary due to the rerouting via the Central Valley. Come the morning, the Cascade Mountains were their usual glorious self, this being a top-notch route for scenery. Our Superliner "Roomette" offered precious little room for manoeuvring, the upper berth being particularly cramped. Breakfast and lunch in the Dining car were surprisingly good, as was the service. Freight traffic seemed mainly to include forest products, but the length of trains was modest compared to CN across the prairies.



2010's-57: Crew change on Amtrak's No. 14 *Coast Starlight*, newly arrived at Portland Union Station, led by P42DC 12 – a Cascades trainset powered by F59PHI 469 to the right (2018/04/29) [PETER DAWES].

PACIFIC PARLOR CAR

... used to be attached to *Coast Starlight* for occupancy by Sleeping car passengers, in addition to the Sightseer Lounge. This car apparently provided internet access, coffee & bar service, light meals, and onboard movies. It had recently been removed, apparently to reduce costs. Perhaps the addition of a "Business" Coach (No. 34504) between the Diner and Lounge car was intended to compensate.



[From Coast Starlight schedule (2018/02/02)]

PORTLAND

... turned out to be delightful, in no small measure due to its wonderful transit system featuring Light Rail lines coming into the city from suburbs and convenient downtown streetcars operated by Tri-Met. Using day passes, we were able to access our hotel from the station by LRT, and move around the downtown on the streetcars (one line passing right in front of the hotel). Portland highlights included its various craft breweries, the Chinese Garden, Powell's humongous book store, the "Aerial Tram" taking people up to the Oregon Health & Science University campus, and a trip out-and-back on the Gresham LRT line.

1 MAY:

AM 518 PORTLAND-VANCOUVER *Cascades*

E	466
X	7111
C	[7] 7703,7205,7706,7200,7702 7203,7705
CfeL	7311
D	7811
P	[2] 7561 ,7563
NPC	7911

MT. BACHELOR

Depart Union Station at 1500, arrive Pacific Central Station 10 minutes late at 2310, having accessed the station by "A Loop" streetcar, stops including Vancouver WA, Kelso-Longview, Centralia, Olympia-Lacey, Tacoma, Seattle, Edmonds, Everett, Stanwood, Mount Vernon and Bellingham; * We occupied seats in one of two "Business"-class cars in a Talgo train owned by WSDOT (Washington State Department of Transportation), hauled by an Electro-Motive F59PHI locomotive, and closed out by a "Non-powered Cab Unit" to enable bi-directional running; * Onward by TransLink Expo Line "Skytrain" and No. 5 trolley bus to the Sylvia Hotel, English Bay (four nights there); * 557 km in 8 hrs 10 min, or 68 km/h (343 mls/42 mph); * No. 466 (*EMD, 1998*); * Cars (*RTAL, 2013*).



2010's-58: Tri-Met "A" loop streetcar, Portland OR (2018/05/01) [PETER DAWES].

CASCADES

No. 518 was the only *Cascades* train to operate all the way from Portland to Vancouver BC, the other Vancouver train originating at Seattle. (The entire route stretched from Eugene OR to Vancouver.) Track owner was Burlington Northern Santa Fe, right up to Vancouver, and freight activity consisted mainly of forestry products and containers. Our "Business" class Coach featured a speedometer, which registered 130 kilometers (*80 miles*) per hour for long stretches north out of Portland – pushing the mandated speed limit for passenger trains on such trackage. Business class was a disappointment, especially when compared with VIA: there was no service-at-seat, only the opportunity to purchase refreshments in the "Bistro" Café Lounge, which was attached to another car offering only tables, despite being called a "Dining Car". (We did receive \$3 vouchers to offset the cost of buying sandwiches and drinks.) During the Seattle stop, we were able to briefly tour the magnificently restored King Street Station. At Bellingham, we were delayed 10 minutes while the crew struggled to return the wheelchair lift to its closed position.

DERAILMENT

Back on Dec. 18, 2017, *Cascades* No. 501, enroute from Seattle to Portland, derailed on a newly opened bypass route near Olympia OR, killing three passengers and injuring 62 more. The train entered a 49-kilometre (*30-mile*) per hour curve at almost 130 km/h (*80 mph*), its leading locomotive and all 12 cars going off the tracks on a bridge crossing a freeway. As this is written, the authorities were continuing to investigate the cause.

- **4 MAY:** To **Chilliwack** by rental car out of Pacific Central Station, to visit Sandra's Uncle Roy for the day – Vancouver highlights having included English Bay and Stanley Park, False Creek ferry over to the Maritime Museum (featuring the famous Royal Canadian Mounted Police Northwest Passage ship ST. ROCH and masthead from Canadian Pacific's 1891 steamship, EMPRESS OF JAPAN), and SeaBus over to North Van & back.

4-6 MAY:

VIA 2 VANCOUVER-EDMONTON [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6439,6420	
X		8613	VANCOUVER-JASPER
X		8606	
C	[2]	8137,8140	
CfeL		8502	
S	[2]	Douglas Manor,Brant Manor	VANCOUVER-EDMONTON
C		1720	"
D		Alexandra	
CfeL		8507	
S	[6]	Abbott Manor,Amherst Manor, Burton Manor,Macdonald Manor Dawson Manor, Château Iberville	
CfeL		8517	
D		Palliser	

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

S	[2]	Château Denonville, Château Maisonneuve
OLS		Kootenay Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing on time at 2030 but arriving two days later at 0835, stops including Ashcroft, Kamloops North, Blue River, Valemont and Jasper AB; * Our power was two General Motors F40PH-3's and we occupied a Section in one of the MANOR cars; * 1,245 km in 35 hrs 5 mins, or 35 km/h (777 mls/22 mph); * Nos. 6439, 6420 (GMD, 1986-9); * Nos. 8606 (ex-CP 3006, CP/VIA 606), 8507 (ex-CP/VIA CfLC 507), ABBOTT MANOR (3sc4rm5db1ct), CHÂTEAU IBERVILLE (3sc8du3db1dr), ALEXANDRA (all Budd/AMFT, 1954-5; ex-CP); * CHÂTEAU DENONVILLE (6de), KOOTENAY PARK (1de1di) (Budd/AMFT/ARI/JRS, 1954-5; ex-CP); * No. 8137 (Budd/AMFT, 1947; ex-NYC/PC 2948, AM/CR 5666).

BACK HOME THROUGH THE ROCKIES

Our 21-car *Canadian* left Vancouver with good intentions, and lots of excited, mainly foreign tourists – only to halt perhaps 15 minutes out of the station, then start and stop for the next hour or so. According to VIA staff, three freights had been sent out just ahead, some perhaps Canadian Pacific, some Canadian National, considering that they shared CP's trackage eastbound out of Vancouver, and CN's westbound. Near Ashcroft, the *Canadian* returned to CN track, almost six hours late – one of the preceding freights apparently having mechanical issues. We then met three westbound CN freights over stretch on to Kamloops North, hauling containers, grain and sulphur. We would go on to be almost eight hours late by Blue River, and not pull into Jasper until 0100, some 9 hours behind schedule. We finally reached Edmonton 9 hrs 35 mins late at 0835 – having spent a second, bonus night on the train, and enjoying an extra breakfast. (Two Sleepers and the Panorama sightseeing Coach were detached here.)



[baldwinglobal.com/80-news-via-rail-canada-wins-2016-irm-global-risk-award]



2010's-59: VIA's No. 2 *Canadian* crossing to the other track while approaching the Rocky Mountains, somewhere between Kamloops North and Blue River BC, taken from Skyline No. 8517 (2018/05/05) [SANDRA DAWES].

AUSSIE ALERT!

VIA only allowed access to the rear-end PARK Observation Dome Lounge Sleeper by ordinary Sleeping car passengers after 1630 hours, so that "Prestige" customers paying huge bucks could have the car to themselves during prime viewing hours. At 1615, we happened to be sitting in our Skyline dome with a bunch of Australians when the thought occurred to Sandra that we all should invade KOOTENAY PARK for some pre-dinner refreshment – upon which she led the Aussies back through the dozen cars (the author protecting the rear) and invaded the space of perhaps a dozen "Prestige-ites", who were being pampered by two VIA "Concierge" people (including unlimited complimentary booze). Being Aussies, our new-found friends appeared to enjoy the whole scene, what with the mountains on all sides, comfy seats, the tracks receding into the distance, and drinks (*not* complimentary to us) in hand. In fact, when we took leave in order to meet our dinner reservation time, the Aussies stayed on to further enjoy the ambience – although they did show up in the Diner in due course!

SUPERB MORALE

Despite the late running from the start, VIA staff, without exception, were wonderful, and that translated into contented tourists, despite those disembarking at Jasper losing an evening there, and those carrying on east facing uncertain arrival times. A check of VIA's "Moving" site, two days later, showed that our No. 2 was expected to arrive in Toronto almost 20 hours behind schedule. Late running anywhere from six to 24 hours and worse had become typical for the *Canadian*, going well back into 2017, due to severe congestion on CN's transcontinental line. This was caused in large measure by strong container traffic coming into Vancouver and Prince Rupert and headed to central and eastern North American points ranging from Toronto to Chicago and Memphis – and to CN's cut-to-the-bone, "Precision Railroading" approach. Freight shippers were also being impacted, especially grain farmers. The federal government did not want to touch this problem with a 10-foot pole. When the author wrote to the Minister of Transport suggesting he had a responsibility to ensure that CN fully earned the taxpayer dollars being funneled through VIA to operate this train, his only response was to forward my letter to ... VIA!

• **13 JUL:** To **Toronto** on Air Canada with Sandra at the start of our annual trip east, transferring to a rental car and fighting late Friday afternoon traffic up the 400 to **Vaughan** for nephew Colin's wedding – which doubled as this years' family reunion (two nights at Residence Marriott); • **14 JUL:** By rental car to **Kleinburg** for the wedding at McMichael Canadian Art Collection gallery (best collection of Group of Seven paintings anywhere).

15 JUL:

SSRY TOTTENHAM- BEETON & RETURN

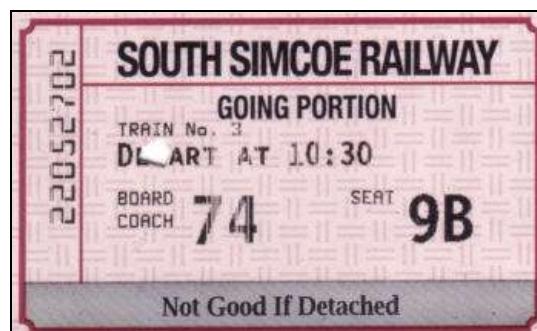
E	703
C	Beeton
CX	New Tecumseth

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018



2010's-60: South Simcoe train ready to depart Tottenham for Beeton, led by ex-Southern Railway 70-tonner No. 703 (2018/07/15) [PETER DAWES].

To **KINGSTON**, starting with a ride on South Simcoe Railway to **Beeton** and back, accessing Tottenham by the rental car; * Depart 1030, arrive 1055, behind a diesel-electric locomotive and occupying the full Coach; * Returning, depart 1056, arrive 1121; * 8 km in 25 mins, or 19 km/h (5 mls/12 mph), on return trip; * No. 703 (GE, 1948; ex-SOU, NS, NAP 703, LAS 3, PEC 703); * BEETON (CC&F/CP, 1924; ex-TH&B 74); * NEW TECUMSETH (NSC, 1929; ex-CN 7385, ORA, SSRY Chinguacousy).



[South Simcoe Railway ticket (2018)]

THE SOUTH SIMCOE

... was a heritage railway located northwest of Toronto which operated a short 8-kilometre (5 mile) stretch through pretty Beeton Creek Valley. This once was part of a Hamilton-Barrie line that opened as Hamilton & North-Western in 1878, then became Northern & North-Western the following year. In 1888, this railway was taken over by Grand Trunk. Because South Simcoe's ex-Canadian Pacific 4-4-0 No. 136 steam engine only operated on a few trains later in the season, we had to settle for 70-tonner diesel No. 703, which had begun life with the Southern Railway in the U.S. BEETON was originally built for CP's Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo subsidiary way back in 1924, while NEW TECUMSETH was formerly Ontario Rail Association's CHINGUACOUSY, which was part of the Ottawa-Wakefield steam excursion I took way back in 1974. (Despite BEETON being right next to the engine and having its windows open, diesel fumes were not an issue.) The conductor provided excellent commentary throughout the trip. Interestingly, the towns of Tottenham and Beeton were also connected by CP, by means of its parallel Toronto-Sudbury line, which the railway's *Canadian* and *Dominion* transcontinental trains once used.

VIA 650 TORONTO-KINGSTON

E	909
K	3472
C	[4] 3354,3318,3369[dd],3325[dd]
E	915

Depart Union Station 1935, arrive 10 minutes late at 2206 (three nights at Hotel Belvedere), stopping at Oshawa, Cobourg and Belleville; * This was the first time I'd occupied LRC Coach 3318; * 254 km in 2 hrs 31 mins, or 101 km/h (159 mls/63 mph); * Nos. 909, 915 (GE, 2001); * Nos. 3318, 3472 (ex-C 3396) (BBB, 1981-4); • 17 JUL: Day outing on Kingston Thousand Islands Cruises' ISLAND PRINCESS, a faux Mississippi paddle-wheeler – but always a lovely cruise.

TORONTO TO KINGSTON

... was on this evening train, which would return next morning as No. 651, departing Kingston at 0532. (Last year [2017], this train was combined with our Toronto-Ottawa No. 648 as far as Kingston.) We were 15 minutes late arriving Oshawa, apparently due to a long freight made up mostly of autorack cars blocking the south track. Something new for us at Kingston station was a scramble for taxis, which finally arrived, along with perhaps 10 unmarked cars summoned by cell phone. Our driver confirmed that the latter were Ubers, now operating in the city to a limited extent.

18 JUL:

VIA 60 [TORONTO] KINGSTON-CORNWALL [MONTRÉAL] Meridian

E	6404	
K	3464	
C	[3] 3364,3362,3302	
E	906	TORONTO-BROCKVILLE [OTTAWA]
K	3468	"
C	[4] 3353,3300,3340,3320	"
E	6421	"

To **MONTRÉAL**, starting with this train to Cornwall, departing 0925, arriving 1103, non-stop – 15 minutes late throughout; * 174 km in 1 hr 38 mins, or 107 km/h (109 mls/66 mph); * Onward by automobile to **Morrisburg**, **Long Sault** and **Ingleside**, thanks to my cousin Sue Brown and husband Russ (cousin Donald and Mara Lee joining us for lunch at Morrisburg) – the main purpose being to visit Camp Kagama (which Dad had helped found back in the 1930's), traces of the pre-Seaway flooding, the Lost Villages Museum, and Mom and Dad's resting place.

TODAY'S J-TRAIN

Montréal-bound No. 60 led this joint train, No. 50 to Ottawa bringing up the rear. One elderly lady heading to Ottawa somehow ended up in our Montréal-bound Coach, and a young fellow had the same reservation as Sandra's, but kindly offered to take another seat. Usually, VIA staff ask everyone where they are going upon boarding at Kingston, but misunderstandings could occur. Alas: • there was no access between the combined trains enroute, the lead locomotive on No. 50 blocking the way; • No. 60 did not call at Brockville station, meaning no transfer from 60 to 50 there; and • VIA understandably did not attempt to transfer passengers at the yard west of Brockville, where the trains were separated. The lady would have to reach Ottawa via Dorval.

VIA 66 [TORONTO] CORNWALL-MONTRÉAL Renaissance

E	6456
K	3453
C	[3] 3335 ,3313,3324

Depart 1929, arrive Gare Centrale 2045 – approximately half an hour late throughout (two nights at Hotel Alt, Griffintown) * First time I'd occupied LRC Coach 3335 and recorded F40PH-3 6456; * 111 km in 1 hr 16 mins, or 87 km/h (69 mls/54 mph); * Buddy Shaun Fawcett led a bicycle tour next day, from Marché Atwater across the St. Lawrence on the “ice bridge” (actually a real bridge designed to protect the Champlain Bridge from ice), through St-Lambert and Longueil, then back across the river on Jacques Cartier Bridge to Vieux Montréal; that evening, we visited sister Dorothy and Co. in Brossard.



[VIA, “We’re Just Getting Started (2018?)】

20 JUL:

VIA 51 MONTRÉAL-TORONTO Lakeshore

E	901
K	3467
C	[3] 3367,3354,3327

To **GRAVENHURST ON**, starting with No. 51 departing Gare Centrale 0610, arriving Toronto Union at 1322, 38 minutes late after stopping at Dorval, Alexandria, Ottawa, Fallowfield, Smiths Falls, Brockville, Kingston, Cobourg and Guildwood; * We occupied Club No. 3467 in this 4-car train, my first time in this car; * 633 km in 7 hrs 12 mins, or 88 km/h (395 *mls/56 mph*); * Onward to **Gravenhurst** by Ontario Northland bus (two nights at Residence Marriott); • **21 JUL:** Evening dinner cruise on Muskoka Steamships' SEGWUN.

THE LONG WAY AROUND

Because we were in no big hurry and No. 51 was the last remaining Montréal & Toronto train routed via Ottawa, we got up around 0500 in order to make the 0610 departure. The direct distance was 539 kilometres (336 *miles*); via Ottawa, 633 km (395 *mls*). Business Class was designed to assuage my long-suffering wife and make up for the early hour, but the breakfast seemed mediocre in comparison to VIA's Business Class suppers. A long freight coming our way meant we were 15 minutes late by Dorval, and we lost another 10 minutes by my old hometown of Alexandria. Regaining that 10 minutes by Ottawa, we lost close to half-an-hour more between Kingston and Cobourg. By Toronto, we were almost 40 minutes behind. In effect, this was two trains, Montréal to Ottawa and Ottawa to Toronto – only four of us in the Club car going all the way. (Most people would have taken direct No. 61, departing Montréal at 0637, arriving Toronto 1141.) Interestingly, the "Business" clientele included several young people travelling solo in non-business attire, and one family of five which included an infant.



2010's-61: LRC Coach 3327 brings up rear of VIA's No. 51 in Central Station, prior to departing for Ottawa and Toronto (2018/07/20) [PETER DAWES].

RMS SEGWUN

Reaching SEGWUN (meaning “Springtime” in Ojibwa) involved a stop-and-start, 3-hour trip up Highway 400 on Friday evening on an Ontario Northland (ON) bus, which made its way amongst hordes of commuters and cottagers. (ON's *Northlander* train had been discontinued back in 2012, necessitating the bus trip.) This was our second cruise on North America's last remaining true steam ship, and while most passengers just watched the lovely scenery of the Muskoka lakes, we spent some time talking to the fellow in charge of the machinery and watching the stoker feed the boiler with coal. Most day cruises were being handled now by fleet mate WENONAH II, a diesel-powered replica of an original vessel of the same name. Over a hundred years old, the extensively restored SEGWUN had once connected with Grand Trunk (later CN) boat trains, with cars from Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit and other U.S. points running through Buffalo and Toronto. The Royal Mail had once been transferred between train and lake steamer, where it was sorted by clerks of the “Muskoka Lakes Steamer” Travelling Post Office. By 2018, these activities were long gone, but the scenery was as beautiful as ever and the meal excellent!

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018



2010's-62: Muskoka Steamships' **SEGWUN**, docked at Muskoka Wharf, Gravenhurst, waiting to depart on her evening, three-and-a-half-hour dinner cruise (2018/07/21) [PETER DAWES].

- **22 JUL:** Back to **Edmonton**, starting with an Ontario Northland bus back south to **Toronto**, an afternoon visit by ferry to the Islands, Union Pearson Express train to the airport, and finally Air Canada home.



[“2018 Season: *Tickets & Information*”]



2010's-63: Stoker feeding the furnace of Muskoka Steamships' coal-fired SEGWUN, during evening dinner cruise (2018/07/21) [SANDRA DAWES].

- **2 AUG:** To **WATROUS** by car for yard and garden work at Mom-in-Law's place, the intention being to return to Edmonton after a week, then go back and pick up Sandra.

6-7 AUG:

VIA 1 [TORONTO] WATROUS-EDMONTON [VANCOUVER] Canadian

E	[3]	6455,6442,6449
X		8616
C	[2]	8130,8138
CfeL		8505
D		Fairholme
CfeL		8504
S	[9]	Fraser Manor,Bell Manor, Sherwood Manor ,Blair Manor,Cabot Manor, Mackenzie Manor,Osler Manor,Elgin Manor

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2018

	Château Verchères
CfeL	8510
D	Imperial
S [2]	Château Lauzon, Château Varennes
OLS	Glacier Park

Return to **EDMONTON**, departing 2330 and arriving next afternoon at 1500 (scheduled for 2024 and 0822, respectively), including stops at Saskatoon, Biggar and Wainwright, and occupying an Upper Berth in the usual Manor Sleeping car (by taxi and LRT from station to home); * 619 km in 15 hrs 30 mins, or 40 km/h (*386 mls/25 mph*).

LATE NONETHELESS

What can one say? Fifteen hours and 30 minutes to cover not much more than 600 kilometres (*385 miles*) – this on a Toronto-Vancouver schedule recently lengthened, compared to the previous summer, by some eight hours westbound. Actually, the new Watrous timing was very similar to the old, but that at Edmonton had been extended by two hours. No matter: No. 1 was already some three hours late into the former and 6½ by the latter. The main damage was done from Viking AB into the Albertan capital, a distance of 132 km (*82 mls*), during which we faced no less than eight, typically humongous CN freights. (In contrast, on 2 AUG during our drive out, we had passed No. 1 racing through Young SK, just west of Watrous, bang on time.) This was my first time occupying SHERWOOD MANOR, my Upper Berth featuring an annoying creaking noise from the intricate, and vintage, pulley system – but, thankfully, only at certain speeds. One interesting feature was “Chair Train Yoga”, conducted in Skyline 8510 by the energetic “Activity Coordinator”, backed up by the train musician on his guitar! Three F40Ph-3’s for 20 cars seemed one too many, but perhaps one was deadheading to Jasper or Vancouver. No. 1 would pick up four Sleeping cars and a “Panorama” sightseeing Coach at Edmonton for the trip west to Jasper and Vancouver.

15-16 AUG:

VIA 2 [VANCOUVER] EDMONTON-WATROUS [TORONTO] Canadian

E	[2]	6401,6442
X		8609
C	[2]	8137,8103
CfeL		8502
D		Alexandra
CfeL		8506
S	[9]	Monck Manor ,Lorne Manor, Thompson Manor,Stuart Manor,Jarvis Manor,Laird Manor,Carleton Manor, Grant Manor,Château Viger
CfeL		8500
D		Empress
S	[2]	Château Jolliet, Château Salaberry
OLS		Prince Albert Park

Back to **WATROUS** to pick up Sandra, departing modestly late on the new schedule at 1820 (after accessing the station by LRT and taxi), arriving even later at 1045 (now scheduled for 1719 and 0656, respectively), again occupying an Upper Berth; * 619 km in 16 hrs 25 mins, or 38 km/h (386 mls/24 mph);

• **18 AUG:** Return to **EDMONTON** by car.



[From printed VIA Edmonton-Watrous ticket, 2018/08/15]

EVEN SLOWER!

No. 2 turned out to be even slower than No. 1 had been, taking over 16 hours minutes and 25 minutes – despite the new schedule being 13 hours longer, Vancouver to Toronto. With 20 cars, we departed Edmonton only an hour late, but arrived Watrous almost four hours behind. It started out badly, taking over two hours to negotiate CN's Walker Yard and leave town. Less than an hour late by Wainwright, we were 4½ behind by Biggar, but had recovered an hour by Saskatoon. This was first time occupying MONCK MANOR, which thankfully was free of any creaking sounds.

DISJOINTED COMMENTARIES

While enjoying dinner as we crept through scenic Walker Yard, passengers were treated to a lengthy and mostly incomprehensible explanation of how meal service would be delivered next day. The steward advised that there would be no full breakfast or lunch, only continental breakfast, followed by brunch. Dinner would have to be early, due to the new 1900 arrival time into Winnipeg, and only some tables would be set at each of two sittings because VIA was short-staffed. Those holding 1st sitting reservations would have to show up promptly, and eat quickly, so they “could be cleared” as soon as possible before the second sitting – these instructions despite our being three hours late already, with little chance of being into “The Peg” anywhere near 1900 hours!

“JUST LIKE THIS TRAIN”

Joni Mitchell's 1974 song reminded me of VIA's *Canadian*: “Well I've got this berth and this roll down blind/ I've got this fold up sink/ And these rocks and these cactus going by/ And a bottle of German wine to drink/ Settle down into the clickety-clack/ With the clouds and the stars to read/ I'm rocking away in a sleeping car/ This jealous lovin's bound to make me/ Crazy/ I can't find my goodness/ I lost my heart/ Oh, sour grapes/ Because I lost my heart”.

RENEWAL PLANS

More than ever before, I noticed on my Edmonton-Watrous trip just how much the *Canadian*'s interiors needed refurbishment, the upholstery in particular. Encouragingly, VIA announced four projects this year, based on funding approved by the federal government:

- a contract with Bombardier for the modernization of 25 cars used primarily on the *Canadian* (renewal of interiors, including provision of Wi-Fi; mechanical and electrical upgrades);
- a contract with CAD Railway Industries for the same modernization of another 17 of these cars, but also making them fully accessible through the provision of lifts and other accessories;
- a contract with Rail GD to modernize four Diners, much as with the Bombardier contract; and
- "Request for Qualifications" from manufacturers for the replacement of Ontario-Québec Corridor cars by 32 bi-directional trainsets, a contract to be signed by the end of this year.

Good news, but we'll see what actually materializes!



[From VIA "It's Better On Board" brochure, 2018?]

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2019

2019

*ONTARIO/QUÉBEC
NORTHEASTERN U.S.*



[From timetable effective June 30 through September 28, 2019]

SYNOPSIS

I travelled by train in 2019 to attend a jazz festival in Katonah NY and concert in New York, and to visit friends and relatives in that city, Montréal, Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto. Apart from the usual VIA Rail Corridor trains, Amtrak's *Adirondack* was about as exotic as it got.

Trips taken: Just six were involved, covering 1,382 kilometres (*863 miles*), three provided by VIA, two by Metro-North Railroad (M-N), and one by Amtrak (AM). All were in my "Coach" category. (None was behind steam, but two were on self-propelled trains.)

Equipment units: 59, made up of 6 Locomotives & Related Units and 53 cars (Coaches & Daynitors, 47; Parlor & Club Cars, 4; Sleeping & Business Cars, 0; Dining & Other Meal Cars, 2; Lounge Cars, 0; Baggage & Miscellaneous Cars, 0).

Places visited in Canada: **ON** – Kingston, Ottawa and Toronto; **QC** – Montréal. **In United States:** **NY** – Katonah and New York.

Noteworthy train trips: **AM Adirondack**, New York to Montréal; **M-N 9615**, New York to Katonah; **VIA Vanier**, Montréal to Ottawa.

Fastest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA No. 643**, Kingston to Toronto: 88 km/h (55 mph). **American:** **M-N No. 9666**, Katonah to New York: 56 km/h (35 mph).

Slowest average speed by a Canadian Service Provider: **VIA No. 59**, Ottawa to Kingston: 70 km/h (44 mph). **American:** **AM Adirondack**, New York to Montréal: 54 km/h (34 mph).

Overseas: I took my sixteenth Overseas holiday (eleventh with Sandra), from 11 APR to 22 MAY, visiting Hong Kong and Japan, then returning to Vancouver, via Alaska, on Cunard Line's **QUEEN ELIZABETH**.

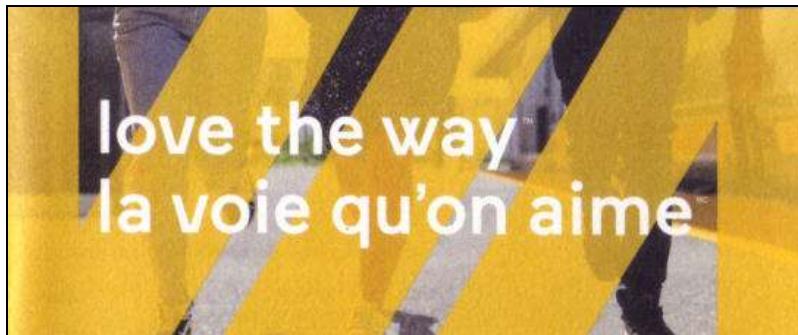
NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2019

HIGHLIGHT!

Slim pickings in North America this year, but let's say arriving back in Grand Central Terminal from Katonah on Metro-North's No. 9666, at the main-level platforms once used by *20th Century Limited*, *Montréal Limited*, *Ontarian* and other famous New York Central trains.

MILESTONE

VIA's announcement of an Ontario-Québec Corridor equipment-replacement program, funded by the federal government and designed to replace the aging Light-Rail-Comfortable (LRC), refurbished stainless-steel and Renaissance cars, also workhorse P42DC and F40PH-3 locomotives – deliveries projected to begin in 2022 and be completed two years later.



[VIA's latest slogan, actually making more sense in French than in English! (Timetable, 2019/06/02, front cover)]



[ctpost.com/local/article/Metro-North-makes-adjustments-to-Waterbury-Branch-13798989]

TRIPS AND CONSISTS

• **19 JUL:** To **New York** with Sandra on Air Canada (AC), changing planes at Toronto, then by taxi to the Gotham Hotel, West 46th Street, four blocks north of Grand Central Terminal (four nights there) (AC really outdoing themselves by switching us to their faux-discount “Rouge” brand, arriving two hours late at Toronto Pearson, and arbitrarily moving us onto a next-morning New York flight, despite our making the original connection which was also late – in the process, losing our bags for 48 hours, during which we had to negotiate with the airline’s “global” baggage tracking service, which was located in India!).

20 JUL:

M-N 9615 NEW YORK-KATONAH [SOUTHEAST]

Cme [6] 4310,4311,4095,4094,
4221,4220

To **KATONAH** to attend the Caramoor Jazz Festival; * Depart Grand Central Terminal (GCT) at 0910, arrive 1022 on a Metro-North Electric Multiple Unit train, including stops at Harlem 125th Street, White Plains and Chappaqua; * Onward to the Caramoor site by shuttle bus (10 minutes); * 66 km in 1 hr 12 mins, or 55 km/h (41 mls/34 mph); * No. 4221 (BBD, 2004-6).

HARLEM LINE

... was operated by Metro-North Railroad (M-N) out of Grand Central, our train making 10 intermediate stops before reaching Katonah. Third-rail electrification reached beyond to the town of Southeast, named due to its position in Putnam County (passengers changed there to diesel-electric trains for points north to Wassaic). M-N was operated by the state owned Metropolitan Transit Authority, which provided regional and commuter services and owned the Harlem Line. The EMU's in this train were Bombardier Class M7A's placed in service between 2004 and 2006. The 1-day jazz festival took place at multiple venues on an estate willed by a rich couple for the purpose of staging musical performances. My purpose was to see and hear an excellent Catalan band from Barcelona featuring an up-and-coming singer and trumpet player, Andrea Motis, and her mentor/bassist, Joan Chamorro.



2010's-64: Grand Central-bound Metro-North No. 9666 arriving Katonah station, 2122 hrs. (left); No. 9659 northbound (right) (2019/07/20) [SANDRA DAWES].

M-N 9666 [SOUTHEAST] KATONAH-NEW YORK

Cme [6] 4198,4199,4154,**4155**
4174,4175

Returning, depart 2124 (having hitched a ride to the station with a Caramoor board member), arrive GCT 12 minutes early at 2234; * 66 km in 1 hr 10 mins, or 56 km/h (41 mls/35 mph); • **21-22 JUL:** Subsequent New York experiences included visiting niece Laina in Harlem for lunch (she was doing her Ph.D. at Columbia University), then attending the Leonard Cohen exhibit at the Jewish Museum (my buddy Shaun playing a cameo video role), taking the Staten Island ferry over and back, checking out the new Hudson Yards development (highly commercial, to say the least), walking the northern end of the High Line (what a unique and wonderful urban park!), and going to see the Andrea Motis Quintet, this time at the Lincoln Center's famed Dizzy's Jazz Club – overall, making good use of subway lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 (in almost 40°C, or 100°F, outside temperatures, the stations were particularly hot and humid, while the subway cars were overly air-conditioned, except for one on Line 1, on the way to Dizzy's, in which the air-conditioning was not working).

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2019



2010's-65: The wonderful Andrea Motis Quintet at Dizzy's Club, New York, accessed by subway Line 7 from Grand Central to Times Square, then Line 1 to Columbus Circle (2019/07/22) [SANDRA DAWES].

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

Metro-North's No. 9615 was the first train I had ever taken from this magnificently restored architectural gem of a station, even if it was just from a lower-level suburban platform. Returning on No. 9666, it was the first time I'd arrived at Grand Central since I did so twice on Amtrak's *DeWitt Clinton/Adirondack* back in 1974, and it was through Gate 23/24 on the main level – the level on which where famed trains such as the *20th Century Limited* once arrived and departed.



2010's-66: Amtrak's *Adirondack* ready to depart Albany-Rensselaer for Montréal, Sandra posing beside P42DC 101 (2019/07/23) [PETER DAWES].

23 JUL:

AM 69 NEW YORK-MONTRÉAL *Adirondack*

E	101	ALBANY-MONTRÉAL
Eed	705	NEW YORK-ALBANY
C	[4] 25107,25124,82605,82582	NEW YORK-ALBANY [TORONTO]
Cfe	43367	"
C	81520 [dd]	"
C	[4] 82598,82554,82793,82792	
Cfe	43384	
C	[2] 25115,25069	

To **MONTRÉAL**, departing Pennsylvania Station 0715, arriving Central Station 28 minutes early at 1847, including stops at Croton-Harmon, Poughkeepsie and Albany-Rensselaer (over CSX rails), Schenectady, Saratoga Springs, Whitehall and Rouses Point (Canadian Pacific), and finally St-Lambert QC (Canadian National); * Our train was powered by a P32ACDM locomotive to Albany, then P42DC beyond; * One night at sister Dorothy's in Brossard, crossing the river on the new Champlain Bridge by regional bus, then two at the Alt Hotel, Griffintown (visiting nephew Charlie and family, also joining up with Shaun for the usual bike ride

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2019

around the city); * 619 km in 11 hrs 32 mins, or 54 km/h (381 mls/34 mph); * Nos. 705 (1995), 101 (1996-7) (both GE); No. 25069 (Budd, 1981); * Nos. 82598 (ex-21800, 44900, 44729), 43384 (ex-20019, 20240, 43240, 48240) (both Budd, 1975-7).

ADIRONDACK WOES

Our No. 69 *Adirondack* was combined with No. 63 *Maple Leaf* for Toronto, due to major platform work being done in Penn Station, meaning an hour earlier departure than usual. Check-in was chaotic, with ad hoc lineups for the two trains, presided over by an extremely bossy and loud lady. On board, the Conductor warned that we "must wear shoes" at all times; some lightly clad passengers who complained about the extremely cold temperature in our car were told that the equipment was old, the air-conditioning could not be re-set, and they should have dressed more warmly. Arrival at Albany-Rensselaer was at 1000, with *Maple Leaf* departing at 1023 after being detached and supplied with a P42DC diesel. *Adirondack*'s Café car was closed until our eventual departure at 1114, with no announcement that it had finally reopened with the usual mediocre offerings. Arrival at Gare Centrale was half-an-hour early, possibly because immigration and customs at the border took less time than expected. Frankly, some of the onboard staff were amateurish and occasionally downright rude. Combined with the incredibly slow schedule and lengthy border delay, I would find it difficult to recommend *Adirondack* to anyone other than train-travel lovers. (Can't imagine what the couple from France in the seats directly ahead of us must have thought of the whole scene, being used to TGV travel back home!)

26 JUL:

VIA 33 [QUÉBEC] MONTRÉAL-OTTAWA Vanier

E	905
K	3464
C	[4] 3313,3314,3353[dd],3303[dd]
E	6415

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2019



2010's-67: VIA No. 33 departing Gare Centrale for Ottawa shortly after 0900, having originated at Québec earlier in the morning and led by P42DC 905, in a photo taken from the 15th floor of the Alt Hotel, Griffintown, the day before we took this train (2019/07/25) [PETER DAWES].

To **KINGSTON** for more visiting, via Ottawa in order to get together with cousin Sue and husband Russ, then buddy Glen; * Depart Central Station four minutes late at 0904, arrive Ottawa on time at 1114, stopping at Dorval, my old home town of Alexandria ON and Casselman, occupying seats in an LRC Coach; * 187 km in 2 hrs 10 mins, or 86 km/h (117 mls/54 mph); * Nos. 905 (GE, 2001); * No. 6415 (GMD, 1986-7); * Nos. 3313, 3464 (ex-C 3388) (BBD, 1981-4).



[Information sheet, 2019]

BACK UP AND PARALLEL MOVES

No. 33 was pulled by a Genesis P42DC, with an F40PH-3 at the rear. Originating at Québec, I thought the purpose of a locomotive at each end would be to obviate the need to back out of Central. Instead, we indeed backed out before heading west to Ottawa. Arriving seven minutes late at Dorval on the north track, I was surprised to see what I believe was Toronto-bound No. 63 pull up parallel to us on the south track. The latter was scheduled to depart Central at 0855, but the dispatcher must have let No. 33 – scheduled to leave at 0900, but delayed to 0904 – go first.

VIA 59 OTTAWA-KINGSTON [TORONTO]

E	6449
K	3478
C	[3] 3336,3306,3305

Depart 1826, arrive 30 minutes late at 2108, stopping at Fallowfield, Smiths Falls and Brockville, the main purpose being to see brother David and wife Tani, who themselves were being visited by son Chris and wife Marcia (two nights at the Belvedere Hotel); * 190 km in 2 hrs 42 mins, or 70 km/h (119 mls/44 mph).

NO. 59

... was only eight minutes late departing Brockville and was doing not too badly about 20 minutes short of Kingston when, according to the train manager, we got stuck behind a slow-moving freight. The resulting 2-hour, 42-minute timing was reminiscent of the old days when the afternoon CP-CN pool train took around three hours between these places.



[Future VIA locomotives (corpo.viarail.ca/en/projects-infrastructure/train-fleet/fleet-replacement-program)]



2010's-68: Passengers alighting at Kingston from VIA No. 643 from Ottawa, this Sunday morning train proceeding onward to Toronto (2019/07/28) [SANDRA DAWES].

28 JUL:

VIA 643 [OTTAWA] KINGSTON-TORONTO

E	914
K	[2] 3473, 3467[dd?]
C	[4] 3357, 3318 , 3371, 3339

To **TORONTO**, departing nine minutes late at 1050, arriving Union Station 28 minutes behind at 1344, stopping at Napanee, Belleville, Trenton Jct., Cobourg, Port Hope, Oshawa and Guildwood – in other words, all the stops; * We were only 11 minutes late at Trenton Jct., but 22 behind by Cobourg, for no obvious reason; * 254 km in 2 hrs 54 mins, or 88 km/h (159 mls/55 mph); * **29 JUL:** Back to Edmonton by Air Canada.



[Celebrating one hundred years of Canadian National, 1919-2019 (Canadian Rail, 2019/05-06, front cover)]

TORONTO RAMBLES

After checking into the Strathcona Hotel, we took the Yonge and Bloor subways north and east out to Woodbine Station, then a bus south to the Beaches neighbourhood, to hook up with nephew Colin and wife Cindy. Our return to the Strath was on a 501 streetcar. Next day, we took in the Hockey Hall of Fame, then visited the old Canadian Pacific coach yard and round house located near CN Tower and the Sky Dome – now the site of the Steam Whistle Brewing Co. and Toronto Railway Museum.

SIGHTINGS OF THE CANADIAN

No trips for me this year on the *Canadian*, whose third April-to-October frequency had been cut back this year to operate between Vancouver and Edmonton only. Two sightings in Watrous, though: • No. 1 at 1600 hrs. on Wednesday, June 12 (supposed to have paused at 0754 the day before, for any passengers); and • No. 2 at 1917 hrs. on Sunday, July 7 (scheduled for 0826 – at least arriving on the intended day!). Later on, in August, Sandra took No. 2 back to Saskatchewan for some further visiting. Returning on No. 1 on Friday, Aug. 16, the VIA train manager phoned her, from the train, to advise that it would be arriving at 0730 instead of the scheduled 0754, and could she be there that much earlier. She could, and everything continued to go well into Edmonton for the 22-car, 2-locomotive train, which crossed the North Saskatchewan an hour ahead of schedule at 1950 hrs. Alas, it then encountered an eastbound CN freight lacking an essential item, the crew – cue an almost 3-hour wait there and a 2230 arrival at the station! Overall, it was obvious that cutting back the third weekly frequency had not solved the problem of severe freight congestion, and attendant crewing issues. (One of the two Dining cars on No. 1 had been repainted and labelled for “Expedition Churchill”, with a polar bear image gracing the side. Normally assigned to VIA’s recently restored and rebranded Churchill service, this car apparently had been cut in at Winnipeg to replace one of the regular Diners, for mechanical reasons.)



2010's-69: Sandra celebrating her August trip on the *Canadian* from Watrous SK back to Edmonton, with a Grand Marnier in the rear-end "PARK" car (2019/08/16) [PHOTO BY ANOTHER PASSENGER].

THE FUTURE BECKONS!

This ends my **2010's** volume, with its concentration on vacationing, visiting relatives and friends, and train-riding. A **2020's** volume will record any future trips that might be made!

GENERAL INDEX

[Please note: (i) named trains have their own entry; (ii) stations and other landmarks are indexed under the city or town concerned; and (iii) places are indexed only where they were start or end points of specific trips, or where they were of special interest]

Accessibility 25,41,44,74,78,83,121,154,210
Acela Express (AM) 26-8,118-9,125-9
Adirondack (AM) 28-9,33,45-7,118,126-7,212,217-8
Agence métropolitaine de transport (AMT) 26,33,47-8,54,65,126
AIDALUNA (AIDA Cruises) 47
Air Canada 37,52,56,62,75,102,113,125,135,145,173,180,185,198,205,214,221
Alaska Airlines 172
Alaska Railroad (ARR) 25-6,29,116-7,156,166-72; *Gold Star service* 156,171; *Grandview train* 168
Albany-Rensselaer NY 29,43,46-7,56,217-8
Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions (APRE) 26-8,89,95-6
Alberta Railway Museum (ARM) 97
Alexandria ON 9,29,48-9,66,104,174,203
Alleyne, Dorothy 65,67,82,103-4,125,202,217
Alleyne, Michael & Carmeli 48,103,174,202,217
Alstom 119,128,185
American Car & Foundry (ACF) 171
AMF Technotransport (AMFT) 35-6,48,50,62-3,69,76,78,86,94,104,106,114,120,125,139,142,154,159,196
Amtrak (National Railroad Passenger Corp.) 24-7,29,32-3,37,39-48,54,55-7,59,63,75-6,79-80,104,117-9,121,125-34,139,142,154,159-61,167-8,171;182-4,187-9,191-5,212,217-8; *Business Class* 29; *Capital Corridor* 188; *Heritage fleet* 44; *Northeast Corridor* 127-9; *Northeast Regional* 129; *Pacific Parlor Car* 192; *Superliner fleet* 27-8,41-2,44,133-4, 188,191; *Talgo* 193; *Viewliner fleet* 26-8,43-4,57,59,129
Anchorage AK 27,29,57,167-8,170-72
Antigonish NS 108
Ashcroft BC 196

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

ASSINIBOIA (CP) 179
Assiniboia SK 92
Asuaire Travel 62
Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) 41,43
Atlanta GA 119,129-31; *Peachtree Station* 130
Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL) 62-3,143-4,159
Austin QC 27,100,103
Auto Train (AM) 58
Avalon Rail Inc. (ARI) 120-1,139,159,196

Baie-des-Chaleurs 10q,107
Baie-d'Urfé QC 126
Baie-Saint-Paul QC 73-4,79-81
Bakersfield CA 191
Baldwin Locomotive Works (BLW) 97,162
Barcelona (Catalunya, Spain) 214
Barrie ON 27,102,157,178-81,200; *Allandale Waterfront Station* 178,180-81
Barrington NS 65
Barrys Bay ON 27,157,177
Bathurst NB 107-8
Bay Area Electric Railroad Association (BAERA) 190
Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) 185-6
BC Rail 36
Beacon NY 27-8,118,126-7
Beaverton ON 178
Beck, Charles & Kath 102,156,178-9
Beeton ON 27,183-4,198-200
Belleville ON 27,118,125
Bellingham WA 194
Biggar SK 151,209
Big Valley AB 27,89,97-8
Birmingham AL 130
Blue River BC 196-7

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Boise ID 180
Bombardier (BBD) 37-8,41,43,48-9,63,65,75,102,119,125,128,133,173,178,185,188,200,210,214,219
Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles) 58-9
Bonaventure (VIA) 63
Borden PE 110
Boston MA 43,111,128,135; *Fenway Park* 135
Boston College 77
Boulton, Ken 3,9,47,125
Bowler, Keith 5,9, 115
Bramhill, Bob 131
Brantford ON 50-1
Brockville ON 64,66,99,125,143-4,177,202,220
Brossard QC 65,67,103,202,217
Brown, Susan and Russell 77,103,144,173,201,219
Brownsburg QC 27,73,83
Brunton, Glen 48,65,75,103,126,144,173,219
Budd Co. 35-6,41,43,45,48,50,55-6,62-3,69,76,78,86,94,104,106-7,114,120,125-7,129,139,142-3,
154,159,194,204,218
Buffalo NY 55-6,179; *Central Terminal* 55; *Depew Station* 55, *Exchange Street Station* 55
Bunting, Mark & Jennifer 8
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway 39,41-2,194
Bytown Railway Society 10

Cabot Beach Provincial park PE 108,110
CAD Railway Industries 210
CAF (Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles) USA (CAF) 129,188
California Zephyr (AM) 183,187-9
Caltrain (CALT) 26, 183, 185-6
Cambalache (Costa Rica) 26-7,54,61-2
Campbellton NB 107-8,111
Canada 150 158,173,175
Canadian (VIA) 2,25-9,35-6,41,54,68-9,73,84-7,89,94-6,100,112-6,118,120-3,137,139-40,146,148-
55,157-61,169,173,181,183-4,195-8,206-10,222-3

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Canadian Car & Foundry (CCF) 97,199
Canadian Government Railways 110-1
Canadian National Railways (CN) 29,38,46,51,56,64-5,80-1,85,95,97-9,108-9,115-6,119,122,127,135,
147,161,168-9,179,182,188,191,196,198-200,204,221-2; *"Precision Railroading"* 198
Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) 35-6,41,45,50,63,65-6,69,75-81,86,90,92-5,95-6,120,124,126,139,142,
146,159,179-80,195-6,199-200,222
Canadian Railroad Historical Society 55,65
Canadian Transport Commission 3,184
Canpotex 178
Cantons de l'Est (Eastern Townships) QC 103
Cap Tourmente QC 81
Cape Tormentine NB 110
Carcross YT 164,166
Carnival Corp. 47,60,161,169
Cascades (AM) 29,33,39-40,183,192-5
Cascade mountains/tunnel 29,41,184,191
Casselman ON 66
Cavendish PE 27,100,105
Celebrity Cruise line (CCL) 162,171
CELEBRITY INFINITY (CCL) 162
Central Western Railway (CWR) 97
Champion (East & West Coast) (ACL) 59
Chaleur (VIA) 108
Champlain & St. Lawrence Railroad 53-4
Chamorro, Joan 214,216
Charleston SC 58
Charlottetown PE 27,100,108,110
Charny QC 27,73,77-8,83,107,112,121
Chaudière (VIA) 174
Chicago IL 24-5,27-8,33-4,37,40-2,57,74,81,118,125,131-5,188,198,204; *O'Hare International Airport*
135; *Union Station* 41-3,133-4; *Wrigley Field* 134-5
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad (CB&Q) 43,57
Chicago Cubs baseball club 134-5

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad (C&EI) 142
Chicago & North Western Railway (C&NW) 79-81,167-8,171
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad (CRI&P) 65
Chicago Transit/Transportation Authority 42,134-5
Chico CA 190-1
Chilliwack BC 27,33,37,157,161,183,195
Chipman, Mallory 9
Chow, Cindy 8
Churcher, Colin 8
Churchill MB 222
City of New Orleans (AM) 28,117-9,131-2
Clancy, Dale & Sheila 161
Clark, Tom 9
Claytor Jr., Graham 131
Cleveland OH 131
Coastal Classic (ARR) 167
Coast Starlight (AM) 25,29,182-4,191-2
Cobourg ON 173,203,221
Cochrane ON 83
Cohen, Leonard 215
Colonist Rail Car Society (CRCS) 97
Colorado Railcar Manufacturing Corp. (CRM) 167-8,171
Columbia SC 58
Confederation Bridge/Trail PE 108,111
Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) (CR) 43,63,154
Conway Scenic Railroad (CSR) 91
Coombs, John 13
Cornwall ON 26-8,100,104-5,113,118-125,138,143,146,157,176-7,183,201-2; *Canal* 125
Coteau QC 174
Creelman, Phoebe 161
Crescent (AM) 25,28,118-9,129-31,134
CSX Corp. 43,45,55,58,126
Cunard Line 55,59-60,212

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's - GENERAL INDEX

Cut Bank MT 24,42

Daewoo Heavy Industries 171

Dawes, Andrea 77,108,185

Dawes, Charles Haddon & Kathleen 104,201

Dawes, Charlie & Meaghan 8,83,100,103,108,126,174,217

Dawes, Chris & Colin 146,198,220,222

Dawes David & Tani 67,83,104,175,220

Dawes, Laina 127,215

Dawes, Nikki 125

Dawes, Raymond & Mary-Rose 104,177

Dawes, Roy 161,195

Dawes, Sandra 3,5,8-9,34-7,41,47-8,55,60,62,66,69-70,73,75,75-9,85,89,91,93,96-7,102,110-3,116,120-23,125,131-2,137,140-1,148,150-2,154-5,158,161,163,172,176,181,189,195,197-8,206,208214-7,221,223

Deep South Pioneer Museum (Ogema SK) 93

Delaware & Hudson Railroad 45,126

Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad (DL&W) 91

DELTA KING (Sacramento) 188

Denali AK 27,29,156-7,168-72

Denali Star (ARR) 29,156-7,170-2

Denver CO 168

Detroit MI 204

Disney Cruise Line (DCL) 166

DISNEY WONDER (DCL) 166

Dominion (CP) 200

Dorin, Patrick 8

Dorval QC 101,103-4,174,202-3,220

Doyle, Julie 131

Doyle, Seamus 179

Drummondville QC 83,112

Dryer, Alden 9

Durango& Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad 188

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Eagle Canon Passenger Car. Co. (EC) 120
Edmonton AB 3,9,27-9,35-6,48,52,54-5,62,68-9,73,83,85-6,89,93-7,100,102,111,113-6,118,120-3,127,135,137,139-41,145,148-54,157-60,172,178-81,183,195-6,205-10; *Light Rail Transit* 114,116,120-1,123,148,150,153-4,193,207-8,214,221-3
Electro-Motive Division (EMD) 39,57,65,167-8,171,185,193
EMERALD PRINCESS (PRC) 163
Emeryville CA 27,183,187-8
Empire Builder (AM) 24-5,27,33-4,40-3,47,59,134
Emprotech Corp. (EPC) 171
Erie (VIA) 54,62
Exporail 53,65
Express du musée (AMT) 54,65

Fabian trestle AB 115
Fairbanks AK 27,29,56-7,170-2
Fairfield's shipbuilders (Govan, Glasgow) 179
Farand, Raymond S. 5,9,124
Fawcett, Shaun 8,47,65,75,77,82,102-3,126,174,202,215,217
Federal Grain Ltd. 93
Ferrocarril Pacifico 62
Florida Department of Transportation 58
Florida East Coast Railway 59
Florida Fun Train (FFT) 167-8,171
Florida Special (ACL) 59
Fort Lauderdale FL 3,27,54-7,59-60
Fort Saskatchewan AB 37
Fraser Meadows BC 28,157-8,162,164-6
Frontenac (VIA) 74,82-3

Glacier Bay AK 166
Gaspé QC 108
Gator Route (GRT) 139-40,159

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

GEC-Alstom 119
Geist magazine 155
General Electric (GE) 41,43,45,48-9,55-6,63,76,91,104,125-7,129,142-3,153,175,188,199-200,213
217-9
General Motors Diesel Division (GMD) 35,37,48,62,75,94,101,105,114,120,125-6,139,179,196,213,
219-20
Genesee & Northern Railroad (G&N) 91
Genesis locomotives (GE) 24,41,46,48,56-9,63,68,75,125,127,127,142-3,173,175,188,213,217-8
Georgetown ON 50
Gibson, Paul 9
Gilroy CA 185
Glengarry Celtic Music Hall of Fame 104
Goderich-Exeter Railway 50
Gormick, Greg 9
GO Transit (GO) 26,47,157,178-81
Government of Alberta 3
Government of Canada 26,121; *Rail Passenger Action Force* 184
Grande Pointe QC 80
Grand Jct. CO 188
Grand Trunk Railway 50,178,200,204
Gravenhurst ON 27,183,203-5
Great Northern Railway 41,45,47,160
Great Western Railway of Canada 49-50
Great Western Railway (SK) 92
Greyhound Canada 151,160-1
Gulf of St. Lawrence 108
Guthrie, Arlo 28,132

Haithcoat, Bill 9,130
Halifax NS 10,112
Hall-Scott Motor Co. (HSM) 189
Hamilton ON 200
Hamilton & North-Western Railway 200

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's - GENERAL INDEX

Havre MT 42
Hill, James J. 41
Hollywood FL 57
Holland-America Line (HAL) 25-6,29,157,161,163,166-9
Holman Car Co. (HCC) 189
Holmes, Ken 9
Honey Harbour ON 27,100,102
Hong Kong 212
Horizon SK 27-8,89-93
Horizon Air 172
Hornepayne ON 141
Hudson NY 46
Huron (VIA) 33,50

Illinois Central Railroad 28,118,133
Ingleside ON 27,183,201
Inside Passage 161,163-4
Instituto Costarricense de Ferrocarriles (Costa Rican Railroad Institute) (Incofer) 62
Intercolonial Railway 100,109
Irma AB 115
ISLAND PRINCESS (PRC) 163
ISLAND PRINCESS (KTIC) 200

Jackson TN 134
Jacksonville FL 59
Japan 212
Jasper AB 29,36-7,123-4,160,196,207
Jonesboro, Lake City & Eastern Railroad (JLC&E) 97
Julien-Rail-Solutions (JRS) 120-1,139,159,196
Juneau AK 161,163; *Mount Roberts Tramway* 163

Kamloops North BC 196-7
Katonah NY 27,29,212-5

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

KEEWATIN (CP) 179-80
Keewatin Maritime Museum (Douglas MI) 179
Kelowna BC 161
Kennedy, Robert 185
Kensington PE 110
Ketchikan AK 161,163
Key System (KS) 189
Kingston ON 26-8,33-4,49-50,54,62-3,66-7,73,76,83-4,87,118,124-5,137,139,143-6,157,173,175-8,183,
199-203,212,219-21
Kingston Thousand Island Cruises (KTIC) 200
Kleinburg ON 27,183,198; *McMichael Canadian Art Collection* 198
Komoka ON 51

Lachine Canal 67,77, 126
Lachute QC 83
Lac-St-Louis QC 126
Lake Bennett BC 164,166
Lake Champlain 46
Lake Couchiching ON 28,94
Lakeshore (VIA) 137-8,144-5,203
Lakeshore Limited (AM) 27,29-30,43-5,57,59
Lake Simcoe 178
La Malbaie, QC 27,69-70,75-6
Landis SK 96
Lanning, Ted & Denise 161
Laprairie QC 53-4
La Salle (VIA) 54
Lasco (LAS) 199
Le Massif de Charlevoix (LMC) 26-7,72-4,79-81
Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix (LMC) 28,72-4,78-9
Lévis QC 179
Light-Rapid-Comfortable train (LRC) 48-9,63,68,75,102,104,125,143-4,173,177-8,200-4,213,219
London ON 27,33,49-52,63,84

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Long Sault ON 27,100,104,118,125,183,201; *Camp Kagama* 201; *Lost Villages Museum* 201;
Parkway 125,183

Longueuil QC 103,202

Lorton VA 58

Los Angeles CA 56,60,62,131

Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N) 50,104,142

Maine Central Railroad (MeC) 91

Maple Leaf (VIA-AM) 28-9,54,55-6,60,118,127,218

Martinez CA 188

Mata de Limón (Costa Rica) 26-7,54,61-2

Matapédia QC 108,111

Mattoff, Tom 8-9,185,188-90

Matthews, Fred 9

McGill University 77

McKinley Explorer (HAL) 29,157,168-9

McLaren, Don and Mara Lee 201

McQueen, Don 8

McWillie, Frieda 35,91,93,113

Melville SK 37,139,155

Memphis TN 198

Mercedes-Benz (MB) 61

Meridian (VIA) 66,143

METRA (Chicago Commuter Rail Service Board) 41,79,81

Metro-North 26,28-9,43,56,127,211-6; *Harlem Line* 211,214; *Hudson Line* 28,127

Metropolis (VIA) 26,73,75,84,100,102

Metropolitan-Cammell (MC) 49,80,84,106,174

Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) 214

Miami FL 54-5

Mid America Railcar Leasing (MRLX) 79

Midland ON 27,157

Minnesota Wild hockey club 47

Miramichi NB 107

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Mission City BC 27,33,37-8

Mississippian Railway (MRL) 97

Mississippi River 131

Mitchell, Joni 9,209

Molena CA 27,183-4,189-90

Moncton NB 27-8,100-1,106-7,110-1,123

Montgomery, Lucy Maud 108

Montréal QC 25-7,29,33-4,37,45-9,52,54-5,62,64-7,73,75-8,81-4,100-8,110-3,118,123,125-6,142-4,146,151,157,174-7,183,203-4,212,217-20; *Central Station* 45,47-9,65-7,75-8,81-2,102-6,125-6,174-5,201-3,217,220; *Champlain Bridge* 202,217; *Jacques-Cartier Bridge* 77,202; *Lucien L'Allier Station* 2,65,126; *Métro* 77; *Victoria Bridge* 82,103

Montréal Alouettes football club 75-6

Montréal Canadiens hockey club 47,67

Montréal Limited (NYC-D&H) 213

Montréal Locomotive Works (MLW) 79

Mont-Tremblant QC 27,73,77

Morell PE 27,100,108-9

Morrisburg ON 27,183,201

Morrison Knudsen/Amerail (MKA) 43-4,57,129,133

Motis, Andrea 214-6

Motive Power Industries 38,180,185

Mountain View CA 27,183,185-6

Mount Allison University 110

Mount Denali 29,169

Mount Robson 160

Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre (MS&DC) 183,202-6

Mozersky, Ken 8

Naporano Iron & Metal (NAP) 199

National Railroad Historical Society (NRHS) 63

National Railroad Historical Society, Michigan Chapter (NRHMI) 48,104

National Steel Car (NSC) 79,167-8,199

National Transportation Act Review 25,146

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

New Brunswick East Coast Railway (NBEC) 79-80
New Brunswick North Eastern Railway 107
New Haven CT 127
New Jersey Transit (NJT) 65,91
Newmarket ON 27,157,178-9
New Orleans LA 25,27-8,118-9,125,129-34; *Union Passenger Terminal* 129,131,133
New Orleans Regional Transit Authority 131-2
New York NY 3,25-9,33,37,42-3,45-6,53-60,118-9,125-9,131,212-8; *Brooklyn Bridge* 127; *Grand Central Terminal* 29,57,127,213-6; *High Line* 127,215; *Pennsylvania Station* 28-9,42-3,45,55-6,59,126-8,217-8
New York Central Railroad (NYC) 43,56,63,127,154,196,213
New York City Transit Authority 127
New York Mets baseball club 135
Niagara Falls ON/NY 56
NIEUW AMSTERDAM (HAL) 163
Niles Car & Manufacturing Co. (NCM) 189
Nippon Sharyo (NO) 185
Norfolk Southern Railway 43,130,199
North Alabama Railroad Club (NARC) 97
Northern Electric Railway 190
Northern & North-Western Railway 200
Northern Pacific Railway (NP) 129-30
Northern Railway 178
Northlander (ON) 84,178,204
North Pacific Coast Railroad (NPC) 162,166
North Rustico PE 27,100,108
North Shore Railroad (NSH) 162
North Vancouver BC 161-2,204
Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP) 162
North West Mounted Police 92
NORWEGIAN GEM (Norwegian Cruise Lines) 83

Oakland CA 190-1
Oakland, Antioch & Eastern Railway (OA&E) 189-90

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Oba ON 87
Obama administration 26
O'Brien, James 108
Ocean (VIA) 25,28,74,77-8,99-101,106-9,111-2,116,146
Ogema SK 27-8,89-91
Ogema Heritage Railway Association (OHRA) 90,93
Olympia OR 195
Ontarian (NYC-TH&B-CP) 213
Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ON) 84,178,203-5
Ontario Rail Association (ORA) 199-200
Oregon state government 39
Orford QC 27,100,103
Orlando FL 58
Oshawa ON 83-4,87,201
Ottawa ON 25,27-9,33-4,48-9,52,54-5,62,64-8,100-1,103-4,125-6,137-8,142-6,157,173-4,176-8,200-3;
212,218-21; *Fallowfield Station* 104,144,146,174
Ottawa River 126
Ottawa Rough Riders football club 77
Owen Sound ON 179

Pacific International (AM) 43
Panama Canal 25,54,56,59-60
Panama Limited (IC) 134
Pandrol Jackson Technologies (PJT) 142
Pangman SK 92
Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville QC 103
Patenaude, Jean 8
Penetanguishene ON 27,157,179
Peninsular Corridor Joint Powers Board 185
Peninsular & Oriental cruise line 161
Penn Central Railroad (PC) 63,120,154
Pennsylvania Railroad 59,120
Pincourt/Terrace-Vaudreuil QC 27,33,47-8

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Pioneer Lines Scenic Railway (PLSR) 91
Pittsburgh PA 204
Pittsburgh Pirates baseball club 135
Plattsburgh NY 46
Point-au-Pic QC 79-80
Point Deroche PE 108
Pointe-Claire QC 126
Point Pelee (VIA) 52,63
Port Everglades FL 60
Port Haney BC 37
Portland OR 25,27,29,39,41,183,191-5; *Aerial Tram* 193; *Union Station* 191-3; *Tri-Met* 193-4
Port McNicoll ON 27,157,179-80
Potash Corp. of Saskatchewan 178
Poughkeepsie NY 43,56
Prince Edward Island Railway (PEIR) 109-10;199
Prince Rupert BC 198
Princes Cruises (PRC) 29,161,163,168-9
Pullman Co. 59,81,91,134,162,166
Pullman Standard 41,79,133,168,171,188,191
Puntarenas (Costa Rica) 59-60,62

Québec QC 3,25,27-8,34,49,73-4,77-9,82,103,107,121,174,219-20; *Gare du Palais* 82
Québec, Montmorency & Charlevoix Railway 81
Québec Railway, Light & Power Co. 81
Québec-Windsor Corridor (VIA) 3,25-6,34,63,184,210,212-3
QUEEN ELIZABETH (Cunard) 60,212
QUEEN MARY 2 (Cunard) 60
QUEEN VICTORIA (Cunard) 56,59-60

Rader Railcar Manufacturing Corp. (RRC) 167-8
Rail GD 210
Rail/Sea Cruises (RSC) 48,63,76,104,125
Red Coat Line 92

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Red Coat Road & Rail Ltd. 92
Reinhold, Alida 121,139,176
Renaissance (VIA) 26,54,68,73,83,105,107,112,142,175,202
Renaissance cars (VIA) 25,34,49,78-9,82-3,106,174,178,213
RENFE-Talgo of America (RTAL) 39,193
ResidenSea 83
Richmond VA 59,128
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad 59
Rideau (VIA) 177-8
Rio Vista Jct. CA 27,183-4,189-90
Roberts, Earl 8-10
Rocky Mountaineer Railtours 25,160
Roseville CA 191
Royal Caribbean Cruise line 171

Sackville NB 27,100,110
Sacramento CA 27,29,183-4,187-91; *California State Railroad Museum* 188; *Camilla Symphony* 191
Sacramento Northern Railway (SN) 184,187,189-90
Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré QC 81
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue QC 27,118,126
Ste-Foy QC 107,112
St-Constant QC 27,54,65
St-Jean QC 53-4
St-Lambert QC 202
St. Lawrence River 28,54,73,81,103,201-2; *Seaway* 125,201
St. Lawrence Valley Cemetery 104,125
St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad (SLSF) 97
St. Peters PE 109
ST. ROCH (RCMP) 195
Salt Lake & Utah Railroad (SL&U) 189-90
San Diego Padres baseball club 146
San Francisco CA 27,131,183,185-90; *4th Street Station* 185-6; *Museum of Modern Art* 185
San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI) 185-6,188-9; *Cable cars* 185,188-9

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

San Francisco Giants baseball team 185
San Francisco-Sacramento Railroad (SFSAC) 189
San Jose CA 185
San José (Costa Rica) 62
Sampson, Russ 127
Sarnia ON 27,33,49-51
Saskatchewan Roughriders football club 76-7
Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 93
Saskatoon SK 96,114,115-6,122,149,151,209
Sausalito CA 185
Schwab, Michael 117
Seaboard Air Line Railroad (SAL) 48,58-9,104
Seaboard Coast Line Railroad (SCL) 48,59,104,139-40,159
Seattle WA 24,27,33-4,37,39-41,134,172,191,194-5; *King Street Station* 39,41,194
SEGWUN (MS&DC) 183,203-6
Selkirk PE 108-9
Senneville QC 126
SEPTA Rail (SPTA) 64,76,104,120
Seward AK 27,157,166-7,171
Shelby MT 26
Silver Meteor (AM/SAL) 25,27,54-5,57-9
Silver Star (AM/SAL) 58-9
Simcoe Country Airport Service (SCAS) 102
Simpson SK 93
Sin & Swoon 108
Skagway AK 26,28,157-8,161-5
SkyWest Airlines 135
Smith, Doug 9
Smiths Falls ON 64,66,144
Snow Train Express (VIA) 36
Société de transport de la communauté urbaine de Montréal (STCUM) 48
Souris PE 109
Southeast NY 214

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's - GENERAL INDEX

Southern Crescent (SOU) 131
Southern Pacific Railroad (SP) 48,62-3,75-6,125,168,188,191
Southern Prairie Railway (SPRY) 26,28,88-93
Southern Railway SK 92,142
Southern Railway (SOU) 63,76,125,130-1,198,200
South Simcoe Railway (SSR) 26,183-4,198-200
Speno International SA (SPO) 142
S.S. Sykes (SSS) 125
STAR PRINCESS (PRC) 163
Stettler AB 27-8,89,97-8
Stilgoe, John 8
Stremes, Dave 10
Sudbury ON 200
Sullivan, Brian 8
Summerside PE 110
Super Continental (CN/VIA) 28,158,178
Swiss Travel Costa Rica (STCR) 26-7,54,61-2
Syracuse NY 44-5

Tamien CA 185
Tampa FL 58-9
Tarcoles River (Costa Rica) 62
Tehachapi Pass CA 191
Texas-Mexican Railway (TM) 139,141,159
Texas & New Orleans Railroad (T&NO) 48,61-3,75-6,125
THE WORLD (ResidenSea) 83
Thompson, Greg 8,131,187-91
Thousand Islands ON/NY 200
Tillamook Railcar Repair (TRR) 168
Tompkins, Michelle 108
Toronto ON 3,25,27-8,33-4,49-52,54-7,60,62-4,65-9,73,75,83-5,96,100,102,104,104-5,111-3,118,121,124-5,127,137-42,145-6,152,157,173-5,177-80,183,198,200,203-5,207,209,212; 214,221-2;
Pearson International Airport 102,113,125,173,180,198,203,213,221; *Union Station* 50,52,56,62,

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

68-9,75,84,102,113,125,142,145,173,180,200,203,207,221

Toronto Blue Jays baseball club 146

Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Railway (TH&B) 199-200

Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) 102,113,145-7; *Flexity Outlook streetcar* 147

Tottenham ON 27,183-4,198-200

Trails & Rails (National Park Service/Amtrak) 130

Train à grande vitesse (TGV) 218

TransLink (TL) 26,33-4,37-8,161

Trenton Jct. ON 221

20th Century Limited (NYC) 27,29,43,213,216

Trump administration 26

Union Pacific Railroad (UP) 58,64-5,76,104,120-1,171,188,191; *Coast Line* 191

Union Pearson Express 125,173,205

United Airlines Express 135

Vancouver BC 27-9,33,36-40,43,84,96,140,142,152,157-63183,185,193-8,207,209212,222;
Maritime Museum 195; *Pacific Central Station* 39-40,159-61,193,195; *SeaBus* 37,161-2,195;
SkyTrain 37-8,161,193

Vanier (VIA) 29,48,103,212,218

Vaudreuil QC 47

Vaughan ON 27,183,198

VIA Rail Canada [*most pages*]; *Business/VIA-1 class* 63,173; “*Dedicated Railway*” 146-7; *Easterly class* 78; *HEP-1 program* 95,121,149; *HEP-2 program* 48,75,104,125,140,142,173,178; *Moncton call centre* 123; *Moving Maps* 181; *Prestige class* 25,121-2,124; *Sleeper/Sleeper Plus class* 78, 106; *Touring class* 121

Viking AB 115,207

Vincent, Nicholas 9

VOLENDAM (HAL) 163

Wainwright AB 115

Wakefield QC 200

Walter, Dan 8

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – GENERAL INDEX

Warner, David 9

Washago ON 27,73,83-7

Washington DC 25-6,28,57-9,81,118-9,125,128-9; *Union Station* 128-9

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) 39,193

Wassaic NY 214

Watrous SK 27-8,33,35-7,89,91,93-6,100,113-6,118,120-3,137,140-1,148-54,181,183,206-10,222-3

WENONA II (MS&DC) 204

West Coast Express (TL) 26,33-4,37-8

Western Pacific Railroad 190

Western Railway Museum (WRM) 26-7,183-4,189-90

WestJet 62

West Palm Beach FL 58

Weyburn SK 92

Whitehorse YT 164,166

White Pass & Yukon Route (WP&Y) 25-7,28,157-8,162,164-6; *Fraser Meadows steam excursion* 165

Wilderness Adventures (WEX) 29,171

Williams, Tennessee 131

Williamstown ON 27,100,104

Williston ND 42

Wilson, Dale 8

Windsor ON 27,51-2,54,62-3

Winnipeg MB 69-70,116,140,149,209,222

Winter, Dan 9

Winters CA 27,183,188

Young SK 145,147-8

Yonkers NY 40,53

York (VIA) 29-30,45

ZAANDAM (HAL) 161-3-166

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LIST OF PHOTOS

[Please refer to individual photo for credit and full caption]

2010's -

1: VIA No. 1 <i>Canadian</i> arriving at Rivers MB (2011)	1
2: Amtrak's No. 8 <i>Empire Builder</i> at Shelby or Cut Bank MT (2010)	24
3: TransLink No. 12 arrives Mission City BC (2010)	38
4: Amtrak's <i>Empire Builder</i> , Williston ND (2010)	42
5: Amtrak Viewliner Sleeping car on <i>Lakeshore Limited</i> , Syracuse NY (2010)	44
6: Amtrak <i>Adirondack</i> , Albany, with full-length dome OCEAN VIEW (2010)	46
7: VIA No. 84 <i>Huron</i> at London, led by P42DC 909 (2010)	51
8: Amtrak No. 97 <i>Silver Meteor</i> at Orlando FL (2011)	58
9: Cunard's QUEEN VICTORIA docked at Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles (2011)	60
10: Costa Rican tourist train rests at Cambalache (2011)	61
11: Engine crew of VIA No. 61 <i>Meridian</i> pose at Kingston ON (2011)	67
12: Upper and lower berths made up for night use on VIA's <i>Canadian</i> (2011)	69
13: VIA <i>Canadian</i> 's meet in northwestern Ontario (2011)	70
14: Author's wife Sandra waiting to depart Gare Centrale in VIA's <i>Ocean</i> (2012)	79
15: Combined <i>Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix</i> approaching Baie-Saint-Paul QC (2012)	80
16: St. Lawrence from <i>Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix</i> (2012)	81
17: Griffintown scene as VIA's No.26 departs Central Station for Québec (2012)	82
18: VIA's most unusual Washago "station" (2012)	85
19: VIA No. 1 <i>Canadian</i> pauses at Washago ON to pick up passengers (2012)	87
20: Southern Prairie train ready to depart Ogema SK (2013)	92
21: Southern Prairie train at Horizon SK (2013)	93
22: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> at Watrous SK (2013)	96
23: Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions Consolidation No. 41, Stettler AB (2013)	98
24: VIA No. 63 at Cornwall ON, led by F40PH-3 6426 (2014)	105
25: VIA No. 15 <i>Ocean</i> newly arrived at Moncton NB (2014)	107
26: Confederation Trail (ex-CN main line) between Morell and Peters PEI (2014)	109
27: Ex-Canadian National Kensington PE station (2014)	110
28: Confederation Bridge, taken near Borden PEI (2014)	111
29: VIA No. 15 <i>Ocean</i> between Charny and Drummondville QC, from Park car (2014)	112
30: Fabyan Trestle, just west of Wainwright AB (2014)	115
31: Rear Lounge in rebuilt VIA's "Prestige" LAURENTIDE PARK (2015)	122
32: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> departing Jasper, with "Prestige" cars trailing (2015)	124
33: Amtrak No. 2155 <i>Acela Express</i> newly arrived at Washington Union Station (2015)	128
34: Amtrak No. 19 <i>Crescent</i> , Atlanta station (2015)	130
35: Streetcars on St. Charles Line, New Orleans (2015)	132
36: Superliner cars on <i>City of New Orleans</i> , Union Passenger Terminal (2015)	133
37: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> stretches ahead 24 cars in northern Ontario (2016)	140

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's - PHOTOS

38: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> , featuring "Prestige Class" LAURENTIDE PARK (2016)	141
39: VIA Nos. 50-40 at Kingston ON, behind F40PH-3 6427 (2016)	145
40: Toronto Transit Commission "Flexity" articulated streetcar, on Spadina line (2016)	147
41: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> waiting for CN freight to pass Young SK (2016)	152
42: Observation Lounge Dome car LAURENTIDE PARK, being washed at Jasper (2017)	160
43: Holland-America's ZAANDAM and CELEBRITY INFINITY, Vancouver (2017)	162
44: ZAANDAM at Juneau AK, from Mt. Roberts Tramway (2017).....	163
45: White Pass & Yukon's Fraser Meadows steam excursion train, Skagway (2017)	164
46: Alaska Railroad's "boat train", Seward AK, operated for Holland-America (2017).....	167
47: Holland-America bilevel Coach TEKLANIKA, on <i>McKinley Explorer</i> , Denali (2017)	169
48: Alaska Railroad's <i>Denali Star</i> , Denali (2017).....	170
49: ARR bilevel Kitchen Coach No. 652, on <i>Denali Star</i> , Denali (2017)	172
50: VIA Genesis locomotive 909, Central Station, sporting "Canada 150" livery (2017)	175
51: VIA F40PH-3 locomotive 6409 on Nos. 62-52, Kingston (2017)	176
52: Muskoka Steamships' KEEWATIN docked at Port McNicoll ON (2017)	180
53: GO Transit No. 804, approaching Barrie Allandale Waterfront Station (2017).....	181
54: Amtrak No. 6 <i>California Zephyr</i> at Emeryville CA (2018)	187
55: Municipal Railway California Street cable car (2018)	189
56: Western Railway Museum interurban excursion train (2018)	190
57: Amtrak No. 14 <i>Coast Starlight</i> and <i>Cascades</i> set, Portland Union Station (2018).....	192
58: Tri Met "A Loop" streetcar, Portland OR (2018).....	194
59: VIA No. 2 <i>Canadian</i> , between Kamloops Jct. and Blue River BC (2018).....	197
60: South Simcoe excursion train at Tottenham ON (2018)	199
61: LRC Coach on rear of VIA No. 51, Montréal Central Station (2018)	204
62: Muskoka Steamships' SEGWUN, Gravenhurst ON (2018)	205
63: Stoker feeding furnace of underway SEGWUN (2018)	206
64: Grand Central-bound Metro-North No. 9666 arriving Katonah station (2019).....	215
65: Andrea Motis Quintet at Dizzy's Club, New York, accessed by subway (2019).....	216
66: Amtrak's <i>Adirondack</i> ready to depart Albany-Rensselaer for Montréal (2019)	217
67: VIA No. 33 departing Gare Centrale for Ottawa shortly after 0900 (2019)	219
68: Passengers alighting at Kingston from VIA No. 643 from Ottawa (2019).....	221
69: Sandra drinking Grand Marnier in the rear-end "Park" car of <i>Canadian</i> No.1 (2019)	223

LIST OF SCANNED IMAGES

[Please refer to individual image for reference]

2010's –

Amtrak <i>Lakeshore Limited</i> menu cover (2010)	32
TransLink <i>West Coast Express</i> logo (2010)	34
Amtrak <i>Empire Builder</i> logo (2008)	34
<i>Canadian</i> logo (2007/08)	35
<i>Cascades</i> Locomotive and Coach sketch (2010)	40
<i>Adirondack</i> logo (2010)	45
Montréal Canadiens & Minnesota Wild logos (<i>undated</i>)	47
VIA Renaissance logo	49
Schematic celebrating 175 th anniversary of Canada's first railway	53
Amtrak Dining car menu cover from <i>Silver Meteor</i> (2011)	55
Swiss Travel Costa Rica logo (2011)	61
VIA-1 logo (2004)	63
Le Train Le Massif de Charlevoix: "Au Pays du Massif" (2012)	72
Le Train Le Massif de Charlevoix logo (2012)	73
Le Train le Massif: "La fin du voyage, c'est le début" (2012)	74
Logos of Montréal Alouettes & Saskatchewan Roughriders (2012)	76
VIA Rail Canada: "A more human way to travel" (2010)	86
Southern Prairie Railway: Pulling the past into the future (2012)	88
Ogema Heritage Railway Association ticket (2013)	90
Southern Prairie Railway banner (2012)	91
Red Coat Road & Rail Limited banner	92
Alberta Prairie Railway seat reservation (2013)	97
"The OCEAN 110 Years" (2014)	99
"Please make up this room" card used in <i>Ocean</i> Sleeping cars	101
VIA Rail Canada logo	102
Confederation Sentier/Trail logo	108
Poster for Amtrak's <i>City of New Orleans</i>	117
Sketch of Amtrak's <i>Crescent</i>	119
Banner for <i>The Canadian</i>	121
Logo of Amtrak <i>Acela Express</i>	127
Banner for Amtrak's <i>Crescent</i> (2015)	131
"Thank You For Traveling With Amtrak" baggage tag (2015)	133
Chicago Cubs and Pittsburgh Pirates logos	135
VIA "Who's On Board/Qui est Partant?" baggage tag (2016)	136
VIA "An All-Canadian Experience" (2016)	138
VIA "More Trains, More Often" (2016)	144
Toronto Blue Jays and San Diego Padres logos	146
VIA "A Railway Built for Passengers" (2016)	147

NO MATTER WHERE IT'S GOING: 2010's – SCANNED IMAGES

Logo of <i>Canadian</i> on dome car (2016)	150
VIA Rail logo featuring maple leaf	151
"It's Only Your Wife", letter regarding <i>Canadian</i> (2016)	155
Alaska Railroad boarding pass for <i>Denali Star</i> (2017)	156
White Pass & Yukon ad for Skagway-Fraser Meadows steam excursion (2017)	158
VIA baggage tag, touting "Canada 150" celebrations (2017)	158
"The Canadian – Le Canadien" banner (2017)	161
Holland-America Line logo	163
Map of White Pass & Yukon's Skagway-Fraser Meadows steam excursion	165
S.S. KEEWATIN banner	179
Dining car menu on Amtrak's <i>Coast Starlight</i>	182
Sacramento Northern Railway logo	184
South Simcoe Railway shield	184
VIA 40 years, "Get on Board with our Celebrations" (2018)	184
Caltrain, MUNI & BART logos	186
Amtrak banner, "See Where the Train Can Take You"	187
<i>Coast Starlight</i> banner	192
VIA Rail Canada logo	196
South Simcoe "Going Portion" of ticket (2018)	199
VIA "We're Just Getting Started"	202
Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre logo	205
VIA ticket for <i>Canadian</i> Upper Berth (2018)	208
"The VIA Rail App"	210
Metro-North Harlem Line timetable logo	211
VIA marketing slogan: "love the way/la voie qu'on aime" (2019)	213
MTA Metro-North Railroad logo	213
From VIA info. sheet, "Want to bring your loyal companion along for the ride?" (2019)	219
Sketch of future VIA locomotives, part of a recently announced equipment order	220
Logo celebrating Canadian National's centenary, 1919-2019	221

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSION

Minor stylistic changes and routine updates, including percentage splits by decade (p. 7), plus:

- further ownership changes to Amtrak Dome Lounge car OCEAN VIEW (p. 45).