

Railway Coastal Museum History e-Bulletin:

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End of the Line: The 20th Anniversary of the Official End of the Newfoundland Railway

September is an important anniversary in the history of the railway in Newfoundland. After more than 100 years in operation, the railway was officially abandoned by Canadian National on September 1, 1988.

Construction began on the railway in Newfoundland in 1881, although it was 1898 before the line was completed right from St. John's to Port aux Basques. For 75 years the railway was the only easy way to access the interior of the island, and the only major connection between the east and west coasts.

Once the Trans Canada Highway was completed however, the importance of the railway quickly declined. Buses and transport trucks took over the functions of moving people and freight across Newfoundland, and their speed and efficiency soon outstripped that of the

old trains.

It has been a long time since train whistles have blown in Bowring Park or the freight thundered over the Gaff Topsails, but the memories of the railway are still strong in Newfoundland and Labrador. Here at the Railway Coastal Museum, many visitors are eager to share their recollections of train travel, or tell stories about their time working for the Newfoundland Railway or CN.

Although twenty years have passed since the end of the line, the impact of the railway is still deeply felt. The Railway Coastal Museum is dedicated to preserving the history of the railway and coastal boat services in Newfoundland and Labrador. One of the most common comments left in our guestbook:

“Brings back memories.”



Work crew dismantling railway tracks in Newfoundland, Fall 1988.



The evolution of transportation in Newfoundland: Diesel engines to trucks and buses.



An abandoned station somewhere along the line of the Newfoundland Railway.
This station is listed in our catalogue as 'unidentified.'
Can you identify it?

**What do you think about the end of the Railway in Newfoundland?
We'd love to hear your thoughts and opinions!**

We appreciate any feedback or questions you may have.

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