

MUSEUM NEWS

Hello Everyone,

As the saying goes, April showers brings May flowers and so keep in mind that the newness of spring is well on its way! Here at the RCM, we are ready for new life and new activities as the weather warms up.

We are very excited to offer a new birthday party theme for the little people in your life. We had so much success with the Thomas and Friends birthday, we are now offering a Chuggington theme!

Speaking of the kids, Little Toot Tuesdays, our children's event that runs 1-3pm every week is continuing till May 28th. So, bring your little one down for some games, crafts, and exciting activities!

The warmer weather also means more school tours and the new activities that we have for all ages have been a success! We cannot wait to see more young faces come through our doors!

Spring also means wedding season and the gift shop is a great place to stop to find that special gift for your wedding party. The men and women's jewelry that we carry is not only affordable but beautiful. It is a gift that they will cherish forever.

Happy Spring,
RCM Staff

A Bullet Though Newfoundland: The Railway in WWII

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One of the lasting memories that many visitors



USA COKE AD DURING WWII

to our museum have about the train service in Newfoundland is the name 'Newfie Bullet.' This is a very interesting nick name that came out of a time of great change in the railway and the world.

World War II was a time of both prosperity and heartache in Newfoundland. Many men left their families, either to enlist or to find work in the new industries which took off because of the demand the war effort put on the economy. From 1940 to 1945, many large changes happened in Newfoundland and the Newfoundland Railway played a part in the changes.

The war not only took men and women to new areas of Newfoundland and the world but it also brought new people to the island. Since Newfoundland is the last point in North America before the Atlantic Ocean, it



became a strategic outpost for American, Canadian, and British troops. Americans built bases on the island and upwards of 20,000 American soldiers were stationed on Newfoundland. These men and women put a new pressure on the railway and changed the way that the average Newfoundlander made their money.

The plan to build the USA naval base in Argentia meant that many people moved from St. John's and other areas to find work as labourers. The new military projects are credited for bring Newfoundland out of the Depression. Otto Tucker, a teacher who travelled to find work with the American military said that the war was "the beginning of a kind of prosperity which the fishery and lumber never brought." People were travelling on the train more than ever and that meant that the Newfoundland Railway had to make some serious changes just to keep up with the new demand.

Although the train was running for 50 years before the start of World War II, the railway was small and unprepared for the traffic that the war brought. Not only was the railway considered essential for transporting civilian and military passengers but also freight. The war effort needed resources and the mills and quarries needed to deliver them. Even with every possible train used, there was still a backlog of 7,000 cars over six months from the pulp mill. The increased traffic meant slowdowns and impatience from passengers.

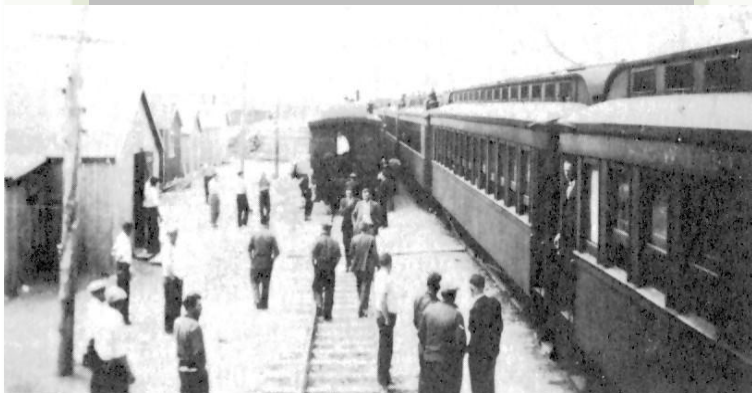
Impact the War had on the Railway

"The expansion of transportation activities during the war occurred at a phenomenal rate and the Newfoundland Railway system was required to perform services which few, realizing its pre-war capacities, would have thought possible."

Obituary for Herbert J. Russell, General Manager of the railway during WWII



FIRST AMERICAN TROOPS
BOUND FOR NEWFOUNDLAND



GANDER STATION DURING
WORLD WAR II

Another Type of Delay

A trainman was sent to check spur lines for empty cars but he didn't realize how close he was to an ammunition dump that was guarded by the Canadian Military.

As he approached, a bomber landed so he could not hear the shouts for him to stop where he was or the first few bullets that came in his direction. When he did stop, he was interrogated for 5 hours.

This held up his train and several supply trains. So the moral of this story is that it was not always the Railway that held up the trains.

The nickname the 'Newfie Bullet' came out of the delays. No one is really sure exactly where the name came from but most people believe that it was an American that came up with it. Travelling between bases was a tedious affair and the express train became known as the "Bullet," a sarcastic name commenting on the slow speed of the train.

The narrow gauge of the tracks meant that the Newfoundland trains were 10 km/h slower than the trains on the mainland but it was really the numerous stops and few trains that slowed the railway down. The train that went across Newfoundland travelled 547 km and made almost 200 stops. At each station, passengers and freight would be loaded and unloaded from the train. Although the Newfoundland Railway ran as fast as they could, it just wasn't fast enough and the name stuck. Eventually, all the trains on the Newfoundland Railway were called the "Newfie Bullet.'

Although the name was a dig at the slow speed of the trains, it did not mean that the Americans and other passengers on the train did not enjoy their time onboard. Quite the opposite, there were many reports of the antics on the train. Tucker, described the passengers as "young men and women, laughing, singing and carousing their way to Argentina." The train was a celebration for those on their way to a new life and no one seemed to mind that they went slow.



APRIL FEATURE

If you walk along the shores of the Baltic Ocean, you may be lucky enough to find pieces of ancient old amber wash up on the shores.

But if not, this pendant and earrings may be for you. The gorgeous warm glow that the amber gives off will add luxury to even the simplest outfit.

FOR THE KIDS!

www.railwaycoastalmuseum.ca



Have a Chuggington Adventure!

Not only do we have a new birthday theme but we have new Chuggington products that are sure to bring a smile to a special someone's face.

At a new price, you can get your little engineer a wooden train car for only \$9.99! We also are carrying new accessories for Chuggington which includes Wilson and Brewster flashlights and a great Wilson car carry case, which serves as storage too!