



**Friday, August 28, 2020**



## A Piece Of Canadiana Is Lost

Cabinet has approved demolition of another heritage building, Canadian National Railways' century-old Hornepayne Station near Sudbury, Ont. Once a landmark at the halfway point for passengers riding the transcontinental line from Ottawa to Winnipeg, the station is to be razed.

"We as Hornepayers do not want to see it demolished," said Jon Peroff, a township councillor. "This is our heritage."

"It is part of our history," said Peroff. "There are not a lot of heritage buildings in town, very few. We also have an old CNR roundhouse that is in derelict condition."

The station opened in 1921 at a cost of \$100,000, the modern equivalent of \$1.4 million, and was described by Canadian National at the time as "one of the finest" country stations on the main line. Cabinet approved CN's request to demolish the building though it is registered under the *Heritage Railways Stations Protection Act*.

Councillor Peroff said the station was abandoned for years. "It's been barricaded off," he said. "The roof collapsed. It is in rough shape."

Cabinet in its executive order asked CN to salvage whatever "character-defining features" it could as museum pieces. The Commons heritage committee estimates twenty percent of the nation's historic buildings have been lost to demolition or neglect.

"These kinds of places are what make Canadian communities distinct," Chris Wiebe, director of heritage policy at the National Trust of Canada, said in an earlier interview. "When you lose them through this death of a thousand c

you're left with is often unremarkable.”

MPs in 2017 rejected a private Conservative bill C-323 *An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act* that proposed twenty percent tax credits for property owners who saved and restored properties listed under the Canadian Register of Historic Places. “You look at what we’ve lost and you almost want to cry,” said then-MP Peter Van Loan (York-Simcoe, Ont.), sponsor of the bill.

Stephen Cheasley, president of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association Foundation, said artifacts of the railroading past tell Canada’s story. “We wouldn’t have a country if we didn’t have railways,” said Cheasley. “It’s that simple.”

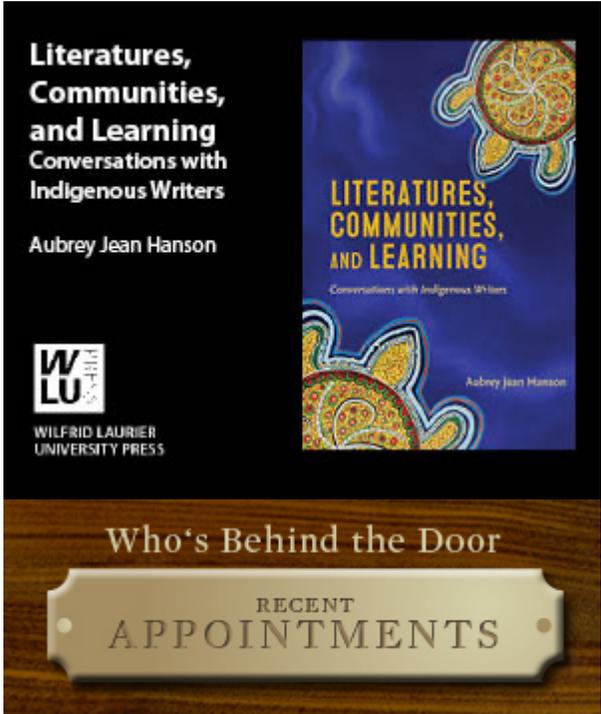
“Why do we need paintings in art galleries? Why do we need museums?” said Cheasley. “Museums are stories. It is a way to show and tell our stories.”

“There are three countries on Earth that were built by railways: Canada, the United States and Russia,” said Cheasley. “The development of railway technology enabled movement of humans and goods faster and cheaper than at any time in human history. Here was a technology that allowed them to build a country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was like the internet. Everyone wanted to be connected.”

By Staff 

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