

The information contained in these texts is as accurate as possible. It has been compiled from various sources that are difficult to cite. We hope that the reader will forgive us. Check back periodically, more history to follow...

VALCARTIER STATION

The Valcartier Train Station was built at the end of what is now Station Road around 1901. This was Shannon's second train station. The first one had been located at the juncture of what is now Gosford Road and Blvd. Jacques-Cartier alongside what was then the Quebec & Gosford Wooden Railway that served a small local population, but which was primarily used for transporting wood to Quebec City.

For over seven decades Valcartier Station served the communities of Shannon and Camp Valcartier. The station and its adjacent structures were erected sometime after the establishment, in 1901, of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway. Part of this railway is now the bed of what is known as the Vélopite Jacques-Cartier/Portneuf.

This railway commenced in the lower town of Quebec City. It then wound its way through Indian Lorette, Val Rose (Canadian Arsenals), Valcartier Station then across a newly constructed railway bridge crossing the Jacques-Cartier River (about a kilometer from the station) and on to Lake St. Joseph and beyond through numerous communities till it reached Lake St. John which is now called the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean.

In its earlier decades the local communities were heavily dependant on Valcartier Station for the handling of goods and services that are now handled by trucks, buses and cars. Mail for the area was received there daily. Farmers had farm animals and machinery delivered to this station.

The station's passenger service was vital to the local population. It was a boarding point for those doing business or visiting friends or relatives in other communities. It was also an "aller-retour" point for people working or attending high schools in Quebec City. As there were no high schools in Shannon, students went to Quebec City and Loretteville by train. This passenger service was maintained until the late 1950's. The station was in operation until the late 1970's.



Source : *“Valcartier d'hier à aujourd'hui (1914-2014)”* by Michel Litalien

Because of its proximity to Camp Valcartier, Valcartier Station played a crucial role in Canada's war efforts. After the declaration of war on the 4th of August 1914 by the British Empire, Camp Valcartier became a marshalling and training area for land forces. By September 8th, barely a month later, Camp Valcartier had already marshalled and was training some 33,000 men and 5,000 horses to form the 1st Contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Most of the men and horses, from many parts of Canada, as well as all that was necessary to house, feed and support their basic training, came through Valcartier Station.

Later, these same men and horses left through the station to be transported to the docks of Quebec to board the ships that would take them overseas. Similarly, during the Second World War and the Korean War, trained soldiers and their equipment boarded at Valcartier Station to be relayed to another boarding point where they were transported overseas.



Freight arriving at the docks from Valcartier Station was sometimes surprising.

Source : « *Valcartier d'hier à aujourd'hui (1914-2014)* » by Michel Litalien

Over the decades that it was in operation, Valcartier Station played an important role in the lives of the people of its surrounding communities as well as in the evolution and development of those communities. However, it also played a vital role on the world's stage. The many thousands of soldiers who boarded trains from its platform to fight in the trenches of France, the beaches of Dieppe, Normandy or Sicily, or on the battlefronts between South and North Korea, etc. fought the good fight and made the world a better place. Relatively few train stations can make such a claim.



2-3 October 1941 – Soldiers leaving for Hong Kong
Source: bac-lac.gc.ca - Bibliothèque et archives Canada—PA116794

As the First World War drew to a close, the worsening financial crisis in Canada's railway industry led to the federal government nationalizing many railways across the country. The Canadian Government Railways had been formed in 1915 for just such a purpose. In 1918, the name would be changed to the Canadian National Railway.

In addition to the several railways which passed through the area, the main sources of transportation in the earlier days were horse and buggy or two-wheel carts. At the time residents on the north side of the Jacques-Cartier River had to go through Sainte-Catherine to get to Quebec or Loretteville.

It is worth noting the role Valcartier Station played in a particular passenger service during the Second World War. The munitions plant, Canadian Arsenal, which employed thousands of people during this dark time, required a train to bring its employees to work and then return them to their communities. Rather than go back to the city for the day, this train would spend its “down time” on one of the station’s sidings. It was informally labeled the “Arsenal Train”.

In its fully functional heyday, this station had a Station Master, Station Superintendent as well as various other employees. It had adjacent buildings: a house for its Station Master, a house for its Superintendent, as well as sheds and storage facilities. It could support and house transient work crews who might spend a week or so in the area. Only one building remains. It is what was the Superintendent's house. It is the two-story house that is now at 30 Station Road. It was moved several times since it stood on its original location. Mr. Paul Beurivage was one of the Superintendents.



J.M. Barbeau, James O'Donnell & Alex Côté
Buildings adjacent to the Station – Source: Shannon archives

The first Station Master was Mr. Maurice Frédéric, and the last one was Mr. Gérard Morency. There was always lots of activity around the train station with the coming and going of the freight and passenger trains.



Mr. and Mrs. Roger and Yvette Linteau - 1946
Source: Private collection of Mrs. Beverley Bowles Denis



Members of the Frédéric/Linteau/Bowles families - 1948
Source: Private collection of Mrs. Beverley Bowles Denis



Members of the Frédéric/Linteau/Bowles families - 1952

Monique Frédéric and Jimmy Bowles' five children are in the front row:
(from left to right) Ronny, Beverly, Peter, Viviane and André Bowles

Source: Private collection of Mrs. Beverley Bowles Denis