



Fact Sheet

BRADFORD GO STATION

An important part of Simcoe County history

Bradford GO Station has not always been the commuter terminal it is best known as today. Throughout its more than 100-year history, this building has seen the progression and evolution of the railway industry in Simcoe County.

The Town of Bradford was created in the 1820s when Yonge Street was extended beyond Holland Landing to Lake Simcoe and the community started being built in the 1830s. Soon after this development, the railway arrived. The town's population grew to 2,000 people in the early 1870s due to the growing export industry facilitated by the railway line.

At the end of the 1800s, a booming livestock industry generated significant economic growth in Bradford. As a result the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) replaced the old train station in 1900. Bradford's economy was strongly based on its railway access with Toronto.

The architecture of the 1900 station was designed to embody the railway's corporate identity. Design features of the station included the gable, bellcast hipped roof, and deep-set eaves. These features were typical of pre-war GTR stations, and added to the station's picturesque quality. The station also had a distinctive canopied shelter, extending from the south end of the building at a slightly lower level than the main roof, and supported by two slender wooden posts. Bradford station was built as a one-storey, rectangular frame building, about 70 by 20 feet, finished with vertical board-and-batten siding.

The station's original layout, with the baggage and freight rooms occupying one end and the waiting room at the other, and the ticket and operator's office in the middle, provided service to both the public and

station staff, which would have included day and night operators, baggage, express and mail clerks, and the agent.

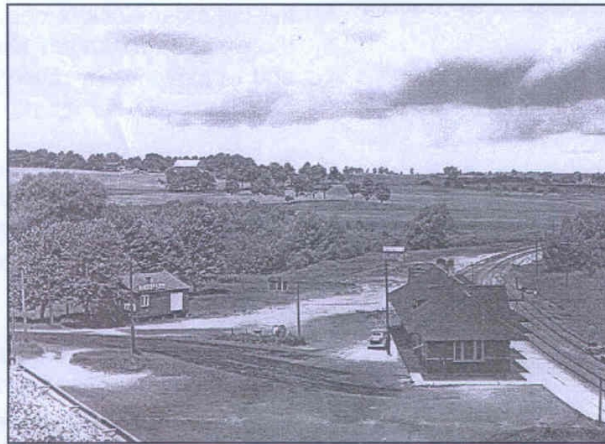
As the years passed and the local market continued

to develop, the railway began to face competition from trucking companies. Despite this, for many years the Canadian National Railway helped export local produce, especially shipments of Holland Marsh vegetables in the mid-1940s.

In the 1950s, to cope with the expanding freight business in Bradford, the station was extended by 25 feet to the south. This expansion created a large express room to assist with

large shipments of produce.

Over the years, different parts of the station building were altered or adapted for various uses. All of the station's characteristic original furnishings, such as the pot-bellied stoves, operator's desk, and ticket wicket and counter, had been removed.



Bradford Train Station around 1950
Photo courtesy of Bradford West Gwillimbury Local History Association



Section gang around 1900
L to R: Charles Davidson, Bill Adams, Bert Stares and Mr. Waldruff
Photo courtesy of Bradford West Gwillimbury Local History Association



Bradford station interior, 1904

L to R: Mr. Algeo, Jack Cook, George Green, Eddie Jackson, Charles Melbourne, Bill Simpkin, William Hirlehey

Photo courtesy of Bradford West Gwillimbury Local History Association



Bradford GO Station undergoing renovation

Photo courtesy of Joel Dempster, GO Transit



Bradford GO Station in 2003

Photo courtesy of Joel Dempster, GO Transit

GO Transit bought the Bradford railway property and station in December 1998 and has worked to update the station, while retaining its historical charm.

In April 2003, GO expanded the station facilities by purchasing 2.3 acres of surrounding land.

A new concrete foundation was poured in early 2006, to help preserve and protect the wooden station structure. During the station renovation in 2006-07, work from the last renovation in the 1950s was removed to restore the station to its original design, which included opening up the canopy and removing the old cross-dock ramps, and raised floor. Much of the wood structure including the roofs, exterior walls, and windows were saved and reused within the new construction.

This renovation also included improved washrooms, larger waiting area, a new ticket booth and ticket technology, and a new roof. Communications at the station were also improved with the addition of a PA system and CCTV.

At the end of 2006, the parking lot was increased from 85 to 360 spaces, and a new kiss & ride, barrier-free parking, and efficient high-mast lighting were added.

Added at the end of 2007, a new, longer platform now accommodates 12-car trains and features improved barrier-free service.

In early 2008, GO Transit will complete construction of a bus loop at the station.

Today, 1,800 customers use Bradford station every weekday.

GO Transit continues to maintain and care for Bradford GO Station in partnership with the provincial and federal governments and the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. The station is an important part of Ontario's history which has greatly contributed to Simcoe County's prosperity.

Sources:

Bradford West Gwillimbury Local History Association

Historic Sites and Monument Board, Railway Station Report - Former Canadian National Railways Station, Bradford ON, 1993-1994