



In the foreground are some of what remains of the Chignecto Ship Railway initiative from the 1800's. The BBC crew is shown in the background. (Submitted)



Bill Casey, who was contacted by the BBC shows some of the details of the never-completed Chignecto Ship Railway from the 1800's. (Submitted)



A bit of human strength moves the Tidal Runner into position. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)



Mission accomplished as a Ruggles staffer gives a high five to the captain. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)

BBC Shoots Segment in Nova Scotia

By Maurice Rees

The marvels of the partially completed late 1800's Chignecto Ship Railway has attracted the interest of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Intrigued by the story, the BBC will include it their TV series Great American Railway Journeys. It will give more exposure to the history and ingenuity of Nova Scotians and hopefully be another tool in the tourism marketing campaigns.

In January of this year a film crew working on a railroad documentary project for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) contacted MP Bill Casey seeking information about the Chignecto Ship Railway and its history.

The BBC series explores the impact of railways on North America and its success as a world leader in commercial activity. Had the

Chignecto Ship Railway been completed it would have provided a unique form of transport which could be used as a model for many other countries. For this reason the BBC has determined that it should be part of the story about North American railways.

On July 27 a film crew arrived at the Chignecto Ship Railway site near Amherst to do a preliminary inspection of the site. The complete crew will return later in August to do the actual filming for the segment.

The BBC crew examined much of the documentation available including a copy of the original deed plan. This plan is over 20 feet long and outlines each aspect of the roadway and the challenges involved in the construction. They visited the Bay of Fundy site and walked part of the railway bed.

Bill Casey said, "The BBC crew climbed on the stone foundations of the machinery used for the hydraulic lifts, and had a close look at many of the remaining barrels of concrete left from the construction. There are 197 left at one location alone. The wood of the barrels has disintegrated and the steel hoops have almost all disappeared, but the concrete has turned into cement and they are still piled exactly as they were left in 1890".

The story of Canada's lead up to confederation and the role played by Sir Charles Tupper caused to BBC crew to shoot some footage in Amherst. The crew also filmed downtown Amherst including the "Tupper Building", once owned by Sir Charles Tupper who was instrumental in the development of the Chignecto Ship Railway. At the time, Sir Charles served as the Minister of Railways and Canals. In 1896, he served as Prime

Minister. He was instrumental in provincial and federal politics for much of his life.

The BBC crew were surprised to learn that Sir Charles Tupper was born in Amherst and was one of Canada's founding fathers. He served in Britain as Canada's High Commissioner, and also became a Member of the British Privy Council. He died in Britain at 94 but he was buried in Halifax.

BBC Crew members were Rosalind Hill, Ben Rowland, and Louis Sarinha.



Bill Casey, MP, Cumberland-Colchester showed Ben Rowland, a member of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) details of what remains of the 1800's Chignecto Ship Railway. The BBC crew shot a segment for their TV series Great American Railway Journeys. (Submitted)



When it was rolled out, the details plan for the Chignecto Ship Railway measured over 20 feet. (Submitted)

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