

Mike's View:

Being in the Right Place, at the Right Time, With a Camera



▲ The train is stopped, and the party is slowly moving off. This photo was picked up by many newspapers, including *The Toronto Star*, which published it on the front page on Sept 17!

I'm not clear who first said "I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it." But there's truth in this saying, as I experienced recently when a photo I took for our magazine "went viral," as they say. The photo on the left, you may already have seen.

Gloria and I were attending the Grey to Greenbelt Train Tour & Forum which included sessions and networking at Whole Village Eco-village in Caledon, followed by an excursion on the Credit Valley Explorer train out of Orangeville. Interesting things happened on the train segment.

The train route to Snelgrove and back goes through some very scenic Escarpment countryside including the Forks of the Credit. On the return trip, I was the closest passenger to the front, upstairs in the "dome" car immediately behind the engine, taking

photographs for our magazine. I knew the trestle bridge was around the corner on the winding rail line. From my vantage point, I was probably the first passenger to see people on the trestle, possibly at the same time as the train employees. This was a tourist train and it was slowing for us to experience the great view from the trestle. I continued to take photographs of what happened.

Luckily for the people on the trestle (see photo 1), ours was not a fast-moving freight train. The people on the trestle were a wedding party on a photo shoot, and in a very vulnerable position. I saw many people on the track and on the standoff beside the trestle (photo 2). It was obviously a wedding party, with a bride in a long white dress and veil. The theme of the wedding appeared to be "gangster" by the dress of the men.



▲ This is my first photo, still moving around the corner and seeing people on the trestle.



▲ The train is slowing but not stopped, the party moving in different directions.



▲ Although out of focus in this part of the photo, the bridesmaid can be seen looking like she might trip.

There were two men on the standoff platform, apparently with cameras and the rest of the people on the trestle. I first thought they were making a movie, but it became apparent they were a wedding party doing a photo shoot (photo 3). When the train came into view of them, most of the wedding party appeared to start walking back to their cars just north of the trestle.

(Photo 4) The train was already slowing and intending to stop on the trestle, but a train employee told me that the train was unable to stop in time to avoid nudging one or more of the people on the track. This was outside of my view, however. The employee said that whenever a train makes contact with a person, federal laws are in play. He said that the train's "black



▲ The wedding party at the side of the track before deciding to continue back to their cars.

box" had to be sent to Ottawa and the Transportation Safety Board had to be involved. The train did not move until all the people were off the trestle and track (photo 5).

The train then proceeded to the spot near the cars of the wedding party, a white stretch limousine and two passenger cars (photo 6). I saw train employees talking with members of the wedding

party and on cell phones. The two passenger vehicles left the location, however the limousine was held back by a train employee who stood in front of it (see photo 7, page 8).

It appeared that a man from the wedding party was shoving the employee, apparently to move him out of the way so the limousine could leave.

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▲ A train employee escorting the last of the wedding party off the trestle.



▲ The wedding party at their cars close to the track.



▲ Train employee holding back the limousine in a sea of no stopping and no trespassing signs.



▲ This photo was taken just after a shoving match to try to get the employee away from the front of the limo.

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It appeared that this man slipped and fell during the shoving match (photo 8). Both the driver and the employee faced each other on their cell phones before the limousine did leave (photo 9).

A train employee told me that the wedding party was told to stay and wait for the police to arrive, and by leaving they could be charged federally with “leaving the scene of an accident.” He said employees had the right to stop the vehicle from leaving while it was on railway lands (photo 10).

A Close Call

He indicated that the wedding party was very lucky because, if a freight train had come through, there would have been fatalities, as freight trains would not be able to stop on the trestle. He indicated that they have about one fatality a month.

A Caledon OPP car arrived some minutes later, and the train proceeded back to Orangeville after some time. Fortunately, no one got hurt, but it was clear to me that this wedding party was lucky. They would not have had any chance to react in time to a freight train moving

through. There would have been many fatalities and serious injuries. Most of the party appeared to be in the middle of the trestle and would not have been able to get to a safe area in time.

Newspapers Interested

Phil Gravelle, a freelancer for Erin’s *The Advocate*, heard that I had photos and thought his editor might be interested in them. She was, and soon an editor with *The Toronto Star* also contacted me to buy the photo. From being in the right place at the right time, my photo appeared in several local papers. **NEV**

Mike Davis is co-publisher, accounts manager and principal photographer for Niagara Escarpment Views.

Newspapers that Published the Photo:

*The Toronto Star
Caledon Enterprise
The Advocate
The Brampton Guardian
Orangeville Banner
Durham Region
Our Windsor
Northumberland News
The Mississauga News
NiagaraThisWeek
Hamilton Spectator
Cambridge Times*

For an update on this story, see “More on the Train Trestle” at www.NEViews.ca.



▲ A The limo is inching out to leave with lots of negotiation going on. At the right, the bride approaches the car.



▲ The limo leaving with train employees still making calls.