

# then & now

The Camrose Railway Station was built in 1911 by the Canadian Northern Railway to a third class plan. In 1917, Canadian Northern Railway became part of the new Canadian National. The station remained open and active up to October 1988, when it closed. It was then that the Canadian Northern Society became interested in keeping this station alive, restoring it and developing it into a park and museum.

On September 10, 1992 the station was towed to a new concrete foundation 500 metres southwest of its original site. It is now located on the corner of 44 Street and 47 Avenue. Work on the station prior to the move consisted of replacing rotten waling, cleaning and painting and replacing windows. As more funds were raised and grants obtained, the society was able to bring heat and water into the building in February 1993.

The freight shed connected to the end of the station was turned into a tea room, and along with the rest of the station and grounds a grand opening was held in June 1993. The tea room has developed extensively since then. During the summer season approximately 2000 people visit. Themed lunches are held as well as special occasion bookings for Christmas parties, conferences, weddings and school group programs. The tea room also features CN dining car menus and china, railway signs, beautiful enlarged photos and collectables.

Along with the development of the tea room, there are also several display areas, library archives resource area, boardroom, developed telegraph operator's office, gift shop and office space, which is leased to tenants. The station has been painted inside and out, re-shingled, new flooring put in several rooms, new entrance including a wheelchair ramp and a main parking lot developed and gravelled.

Approximately 500 feet of track lies in front of the station where an antique pump car, old motor car, and an antique gang car are displayed. A gazebo has been built along with a dance floor and a Canadian Pacific shelter which are all used for picnics and other activities held at the station throughout the summer season.

Perhaps the biggest changes to the station grounds are the gardens, making the Camrose Railway Station truly a park. Commencing the long weekend of May you can take a self-

*then*



*Camrose Station on its original site, prior to 1992.*



*Station moved to its new foundation, Sept. 1992 with the beginning stages of restoration taking place.*



*Left: Tea room*



*Right: Library archives in the station.*



*Track being laid in front of station.*



*Gazebo built and ready to be placed in the yard.*

*Glenys and Bruce Smith standing in front of the Morgan Garden Railway in its very early stages of development.*



directed or guided Heritage Flower Tour of the park viewing more than eight gardens.

A most impressive garden at the station is the Morgan Garden Railway. It was designed to represent Canadian Northern's line between Camrose and Drumheller between 1900 and 1930. Replica miniature buildings from Camrose, Meeting Creek, Donalda and Big Valley include schools, churches, a barn, and grain elevators. Remote control and electric Baldwin steam engines wind their way on G-scale rails past these buildings as well as past a fountain, rock garden, and flowers. A Queen Elizabeth Rose was planted in the garden on the occasion of the Queen's Golden



*Above and below: Morgan Garden Railway*



Jubilee in 2002. The garden was named after Flight Sgt. Engineer Gwynfryn Morgan, and honours other war heroes killed in the line of duty. His nephew, Gwyn Morgan, a long-time supporter of the Canadian Northern Society, contributes each year to the station park and museum.

The success of the Camrose Railway Station Park and Museum is due to a handful of loyal volunteers and members of the Canadian Northern Society. However, without the total dedication and commitment from Glenys and Bruce Smith, the station would not be the success it is today. Glenys and Bruce have been members of the society since it started and in March 1999 moved into the living quarters of the station. Much of the inside work was completed by the Smiths. They are the driving force behind all the programs and activities that the station holds. They not only work to ensure future funding for the station and park but have also spent endless hours building the flower beds and restoring the buildings and station grounds. Recently, the Smiths moved out of the station living quarters, but continue to be around the station daily.

For more information on the upcoming summer season at the Camrose Station and hours of operation, please visit the Canadian Northern website at [www.canadian-northern.ca](http://www.canadian-northern.ca).



*More beautiful flower beds that can be seen in the summer months at the station park.*

