

# Stewiacke 1941/42 and 2016

Jim and Phyllis Ramsay (1941/42)

Stewiacke

Nova Scotia

Jim and Anne Edgson (2016)

Central Okanagan

British Columbia

In 2016, Jim and Anne Edgson made a trip to Stewiacke to visit with their friend and Mayor of Stewiacke, Wendy Robinson. This was a bit of a pilgrimage for Jim and Anne: they wanted to visit the place where Anne's parents-to-be went to immediately after marrying in Jasper after Pearl Harbor in 1941. They had many pictures of Stewiacke taken by Anne's father, James Owen Ramsay (Jim). There were many places in those pictures Anne and Jim wanted to see; especially if they still existed. They decided to take this pilgrimage in conjunction with celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

It should be noted that Anne's brother's name is Jim as well; her sister's husband's name is also Jim! In this presentation it can be assumed that only Anne's father and husband are discussed!

It was decided that Anne and Jim would take as many pictures as possible so that they could compare the "modern" pictures with the "old" pictures. The Black and White pictures in this presentation were taken by Anne's Dad, Jim Ramsay, an accomplished amateur photographer. The color photographs were taken by the Edgson's. There is one illustration done by a talented Mi'kmaq First Nation lady, Anna Nibby-Woods.

We hope you enjoy this presentation which was truly a celebration of things Stewiacke, Nova Scotia in 1941-42 and 2016!

Jim and Anne Edgson (nee Ramsay)



“The house” in Dec 1941 – Spring 1942. 2 George Street Extension in 2016. This was Phyllis and Jim Ramsay's home from December, 1941 to the spring of 1942. The “telephone” (telegraph?) poles to the right of the home are along the CNR railway tracks; on the east side of the tracks.

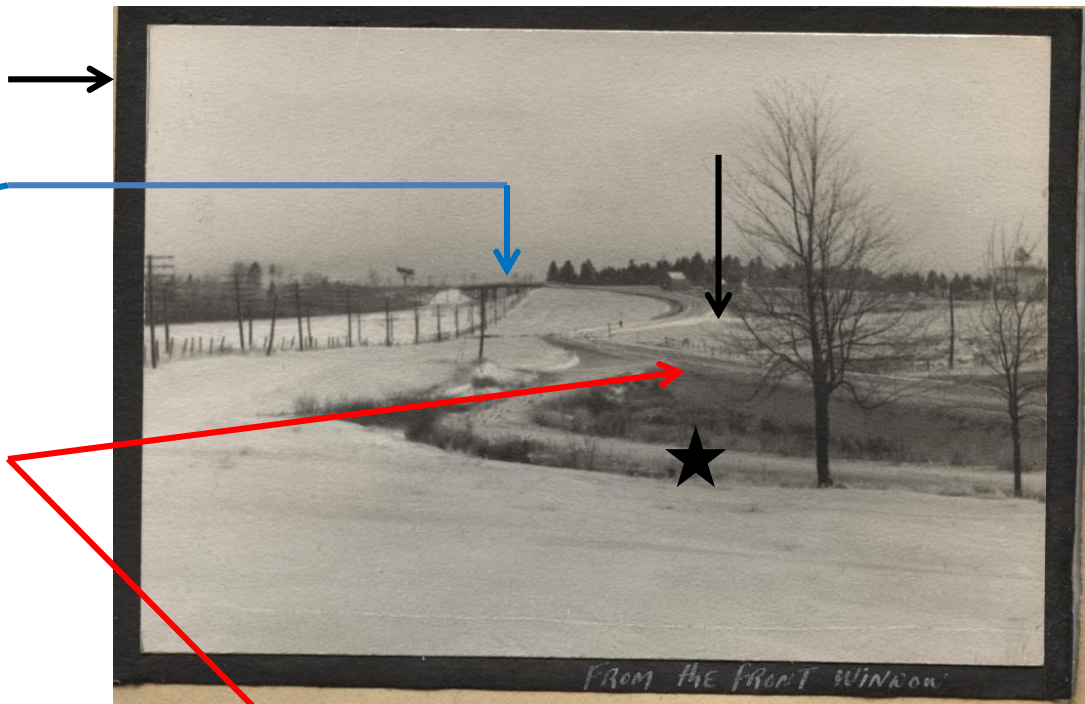


2 George Street in the summer of 2016. The front porch is now enclosed and many more trees are growing out the back. The mainline CNR between Truro and Halifax is shielded by those trees.

View from “The Front Window” of 2 George Street Extension in 1941-42. Looking at 2016 Google Maps, the curvy main road off the bridge in the background is what was probably Hwy #2 in 1941-42.

The exit from the home ★ leads directly to the old #2 in 1941. The present George Street Extension is noted by the black arrow, in 1941-42. It appears to be the same in 2016.

What puzzled Jim and Anne Edgson was the 2016 placement of #2 (dashed red arrow). This confusion was compounded by the fact that the bridge over the CN tracks in 2016 was obscured by trees! All this became clearer when what they believe is the old #2 is examined in the next page.



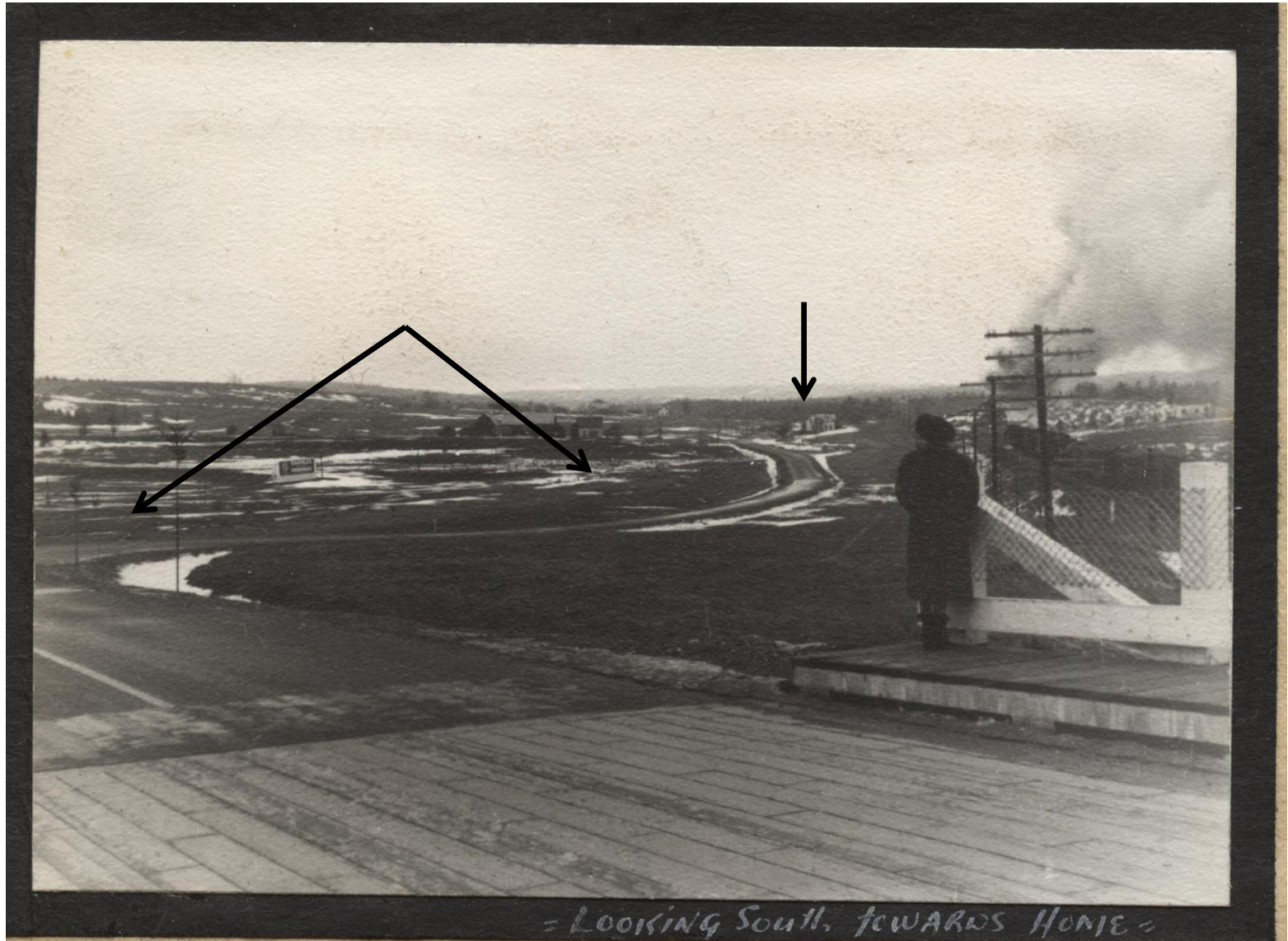
In 1941-42, the exit from the house on 2 George Street leads directly to the old Highway #2. In 2016, the exit from the house leads directly to – old pavement! The conclusion Jim and Anne had to come up with is this old pavement is the old #2.

They believe this old pavement is the old #2, linked up to the newer #2 by George Street Extension.

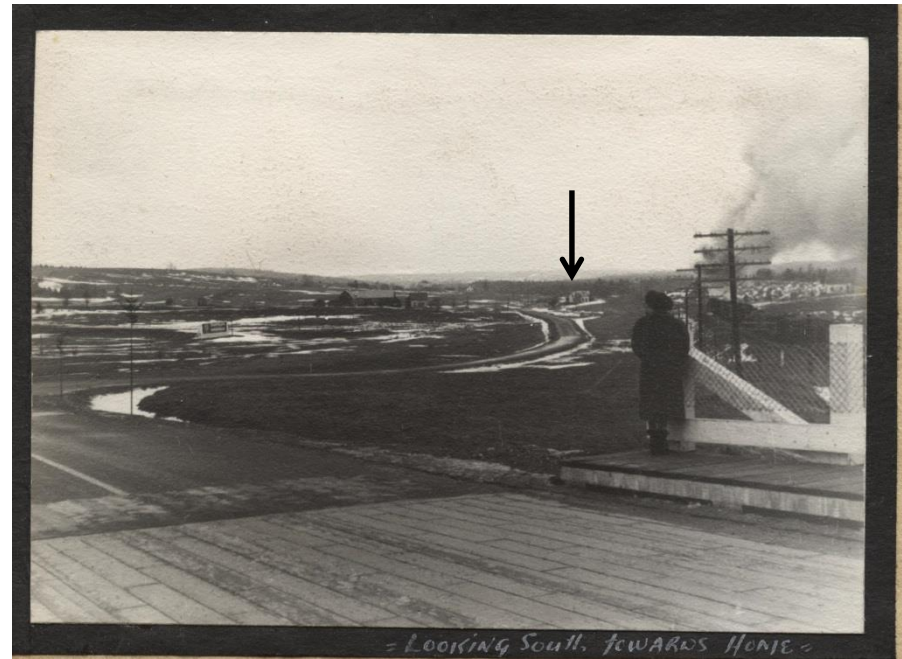
The bridge over the CN tracks is behind the trees in the left upper part of this 2016 picture.



Refer to the next page for further explanation

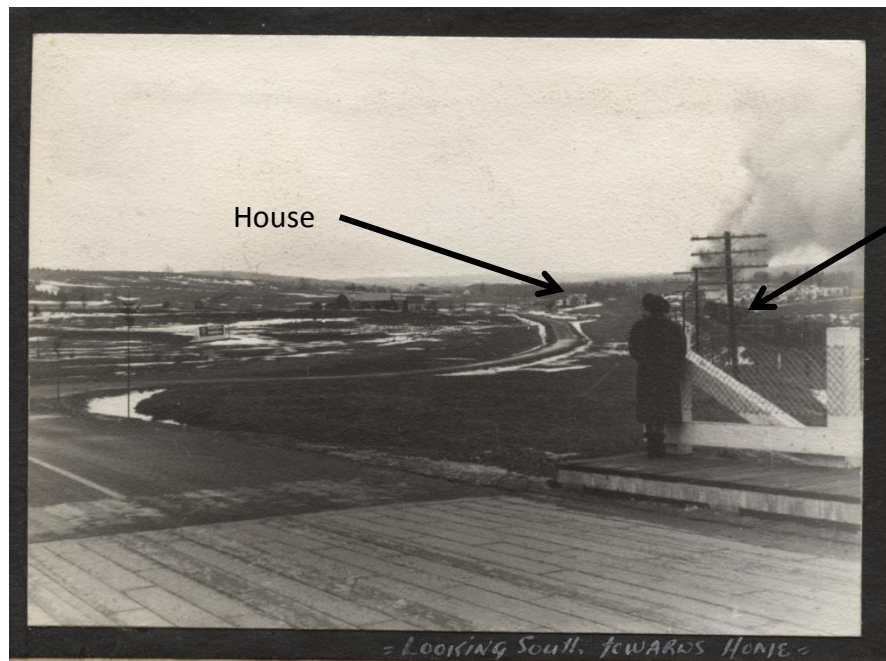


Picture to right and previous page; labelled "Looking south towards home", which is probably the house under the arrow in 1941-42. Although barely discernible, there is a rough road coming off the main road (double arrow in previous page). Coupled with the picture below, this may be the modern George St. Extension.



Left picture labelled "Village Road" in 1941-1942. This is probably is or is close to George Street Extension in 2016. Lets look more closely at these pictures in light of pictures taken in 2016 – see the next pages.

In 1941-42 the house and a steam train are clearly seen from the bridge. The house is off to the left of the rails in the distance.



Train (note smoke and steam exhaust)

House

Note that the bridge in 1941 is wooden including the deck.

In the 2016 picture to the right, the house is not visible due to trees.

Weathered concrete bridge in 2016 including the road/deck.



When observing things in 2016, the power lines give a reference to the direction of observation. The 2016 picture here shows no power lines – this shows the south facing view in 2016.



Farm off George Street Extension (Village Road) in 1941-42. Note the treed hill in the background. The farm is right on the "Village Road"

What appears in 2016 to be a little left of the farm placement above! The treed hill in the background slopes off to the left in both pictures. This 2016 picture was taken from the east shoulder of George Street Extension; the 2016 farm is quite off the road.





The picture above appears to be looking north into town in 1941-42 (you can see the rails split just beyond the bridge). The picture to the right shows that split looking from the bridge into town. It looks like the (wooden) bridge was located on yesteryear's Highway #2, with Stewiacke to the north east (to the right in the picture). Note in 1941 some phone lines are on the south side of the 1941-42 bridge.



Look for more discussion of the above picture on the next page.



Looking North in 2016



In 2016 the passing tracks on the left in 1941 (the "hole") are gone. The telegraph/phone wires are on the east side of the track in 1941 & 2016. Phone/power lines on the north side of the 2016 bridge are easily seen. See next page for more detail of the 2016 tracks.



This picture, looking north from the bridge, shows the phone lines to the east of the 2016 track more clearly. Also, because the photographer (Jim Edgson) was trying to cut out the power lines by the bridge – and didn't quite make it (!!), one power line by the bridge is just seen at the top of the picture!

The passing tracks (known as “the hole”) evident in the 1941-42 pictures are gone in 2016. The 1941-42 “hole” would have been to the left (west) of the tracks in the 2016 picture.

This shot shows the 2016 phone lines to the east of the 2016 tracks.



Looking northerly into Stewiacke off the bridge. On the previous page the 2016 view off the bridge shows trees and shrubbery on both sides of the rails obscuring any sight of any buildings today. *Note the Church spire (red arrow) and the 1941-42 Esso station (black arrow).*

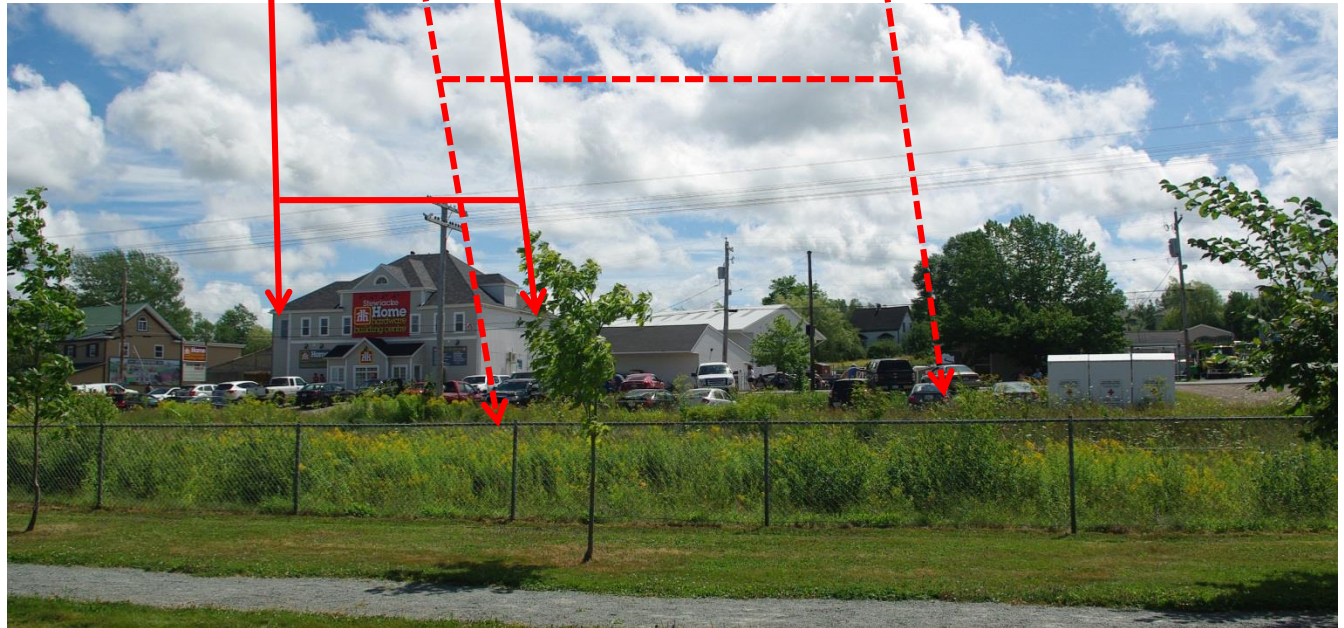


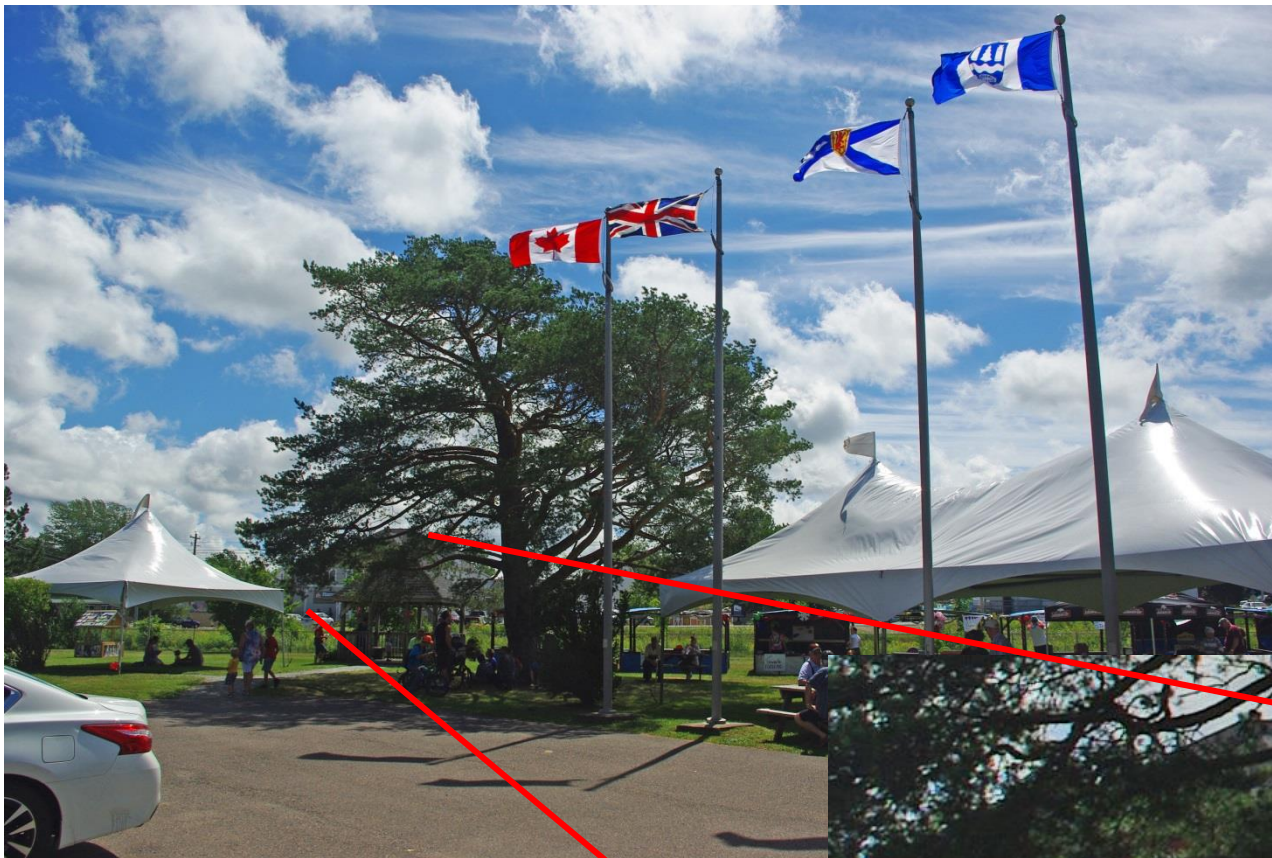
These two shots will be examined in more detail on the next pages. In the 1941-42 picture, the CN Station is on the extreme right (with semaphore signals to the right of the telephone pole). To the left of the semaphore pole is a large building. See next page.





The CN station from 1941-42 is long gone, but from the pictures Jim and Anne have, the dashed red lines below probably represent where the station was in 1941-42, in the 2016 picture below (Stewiacke old timers noted this was the case). The 2016 Home Hardware is most likely the 1941-42 building illustrated by the solid red lines.

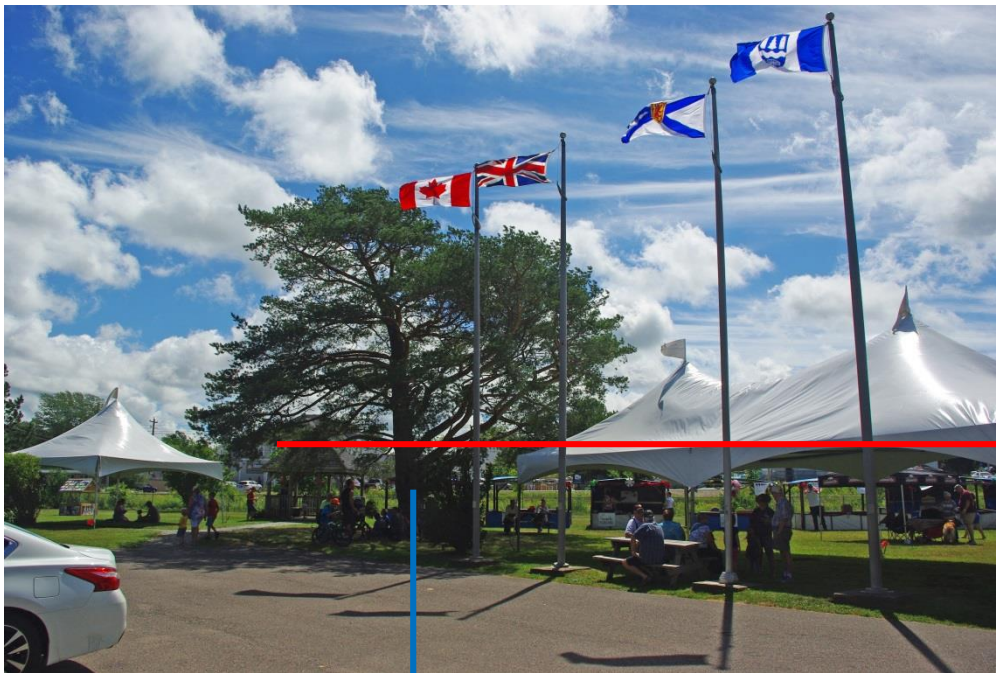




Examining the 2016 picture on the left shows something interesting. Enlarging the picture on the left, one can see the Home Hardware in the background, to the left of the big Pine Tree.

Imagine the above picture was taken a little to the left of a picture in 1941-42, and look at the next page.





It appears the two pictures on this page were taken from slightly different positions.

Home Hardware

Tree

What we are probably seeing is a (small) Pine tree in 1941-42, compared to the same (but older and larger) Pine tree in 2016! The tree in 1941 looks like it is 5+ years old, so the same tree in 2016 is probably around 80 years old!





This 1941-42 picture was taken at “the corners”. Jim Edgson had no idea why until visiting Stewiacke and examining things carefully.



First clue: the church in 1941-42 is still there in 2016. The window shapes are the same; the roof on the steeple has been modified somewhat. The Esso station is gone, but in talking with old timers, it was discovered that it had a coffee shop. More on this later.

The 1941-42 road was still there, but at first glance there was no indication why the road junction was called “the corners” in 1941-42. Jim and Anne decided to travel the road in the direction of the blue arrow. Then they found why!



The road got older and ended up as old pavement – the same pavement as around 2 George Street. It dead ended at the “new” #2.

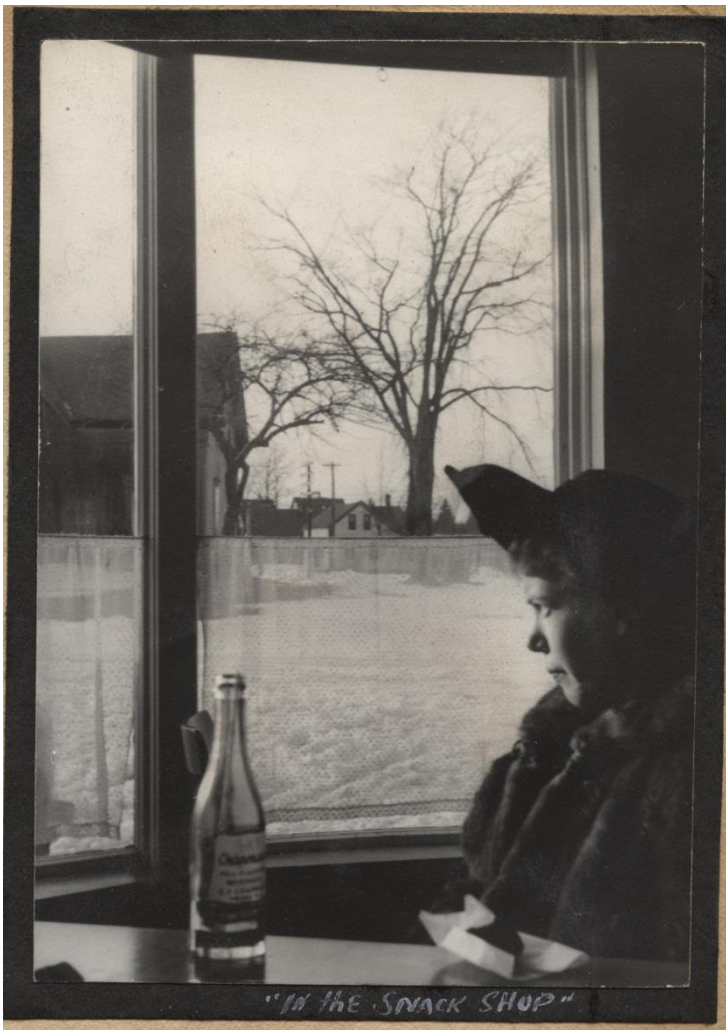
(Looking South)

(Looking North)

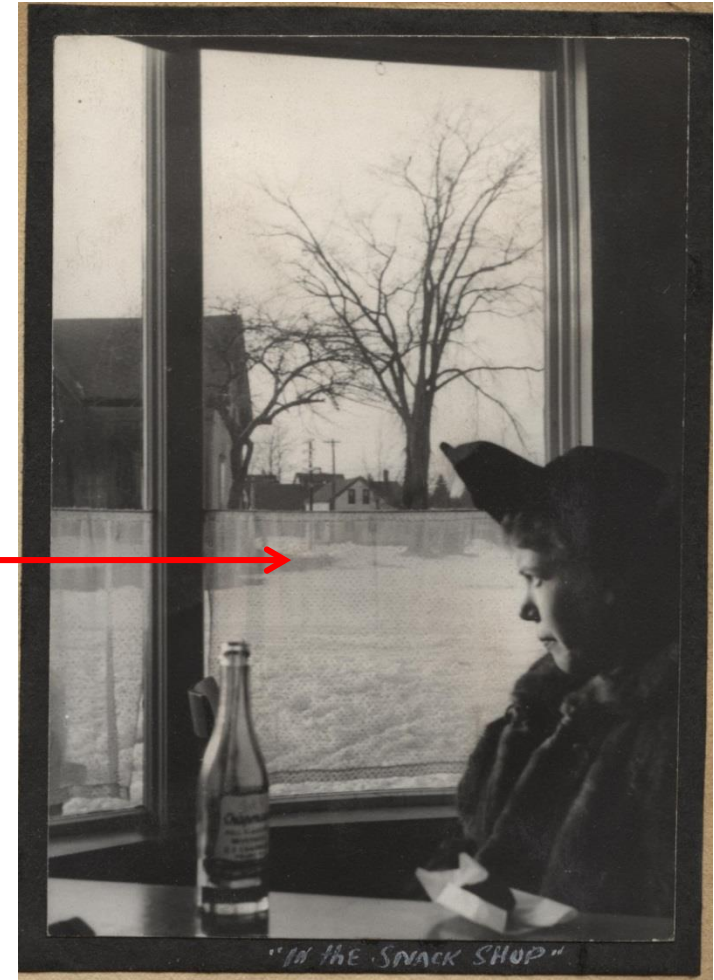


The conclusion? The junction called “the corners” in 1941-42 was actually at the “old” Highway #2. A perfect place for the Esso Station back then – and its coffee shop! The “old” #2 went right through Stewiacke!

Which brings us to the next page:



"The Snack Shop" in 1941-42; note the slight angle on the window in the left part of the left picture.



What was called "The Snack Shop" in the 1941-42 picture was probably the corner coffee shop of the 1941-42 Esso station. Now we knew why the junction was called "The Corners" in the above shot, and where "The Snack Shop" was in the picture to the right.

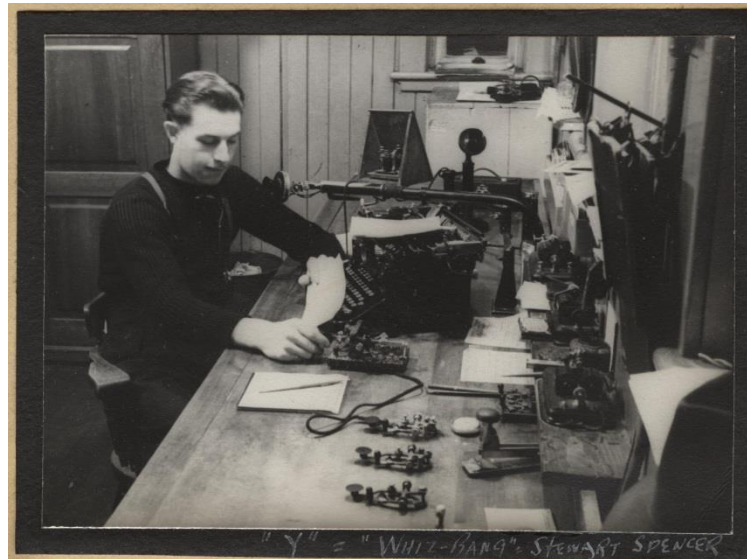


The CN Station is gone today, but something special was done in 2016 from these 1941-42 pictures (next page)





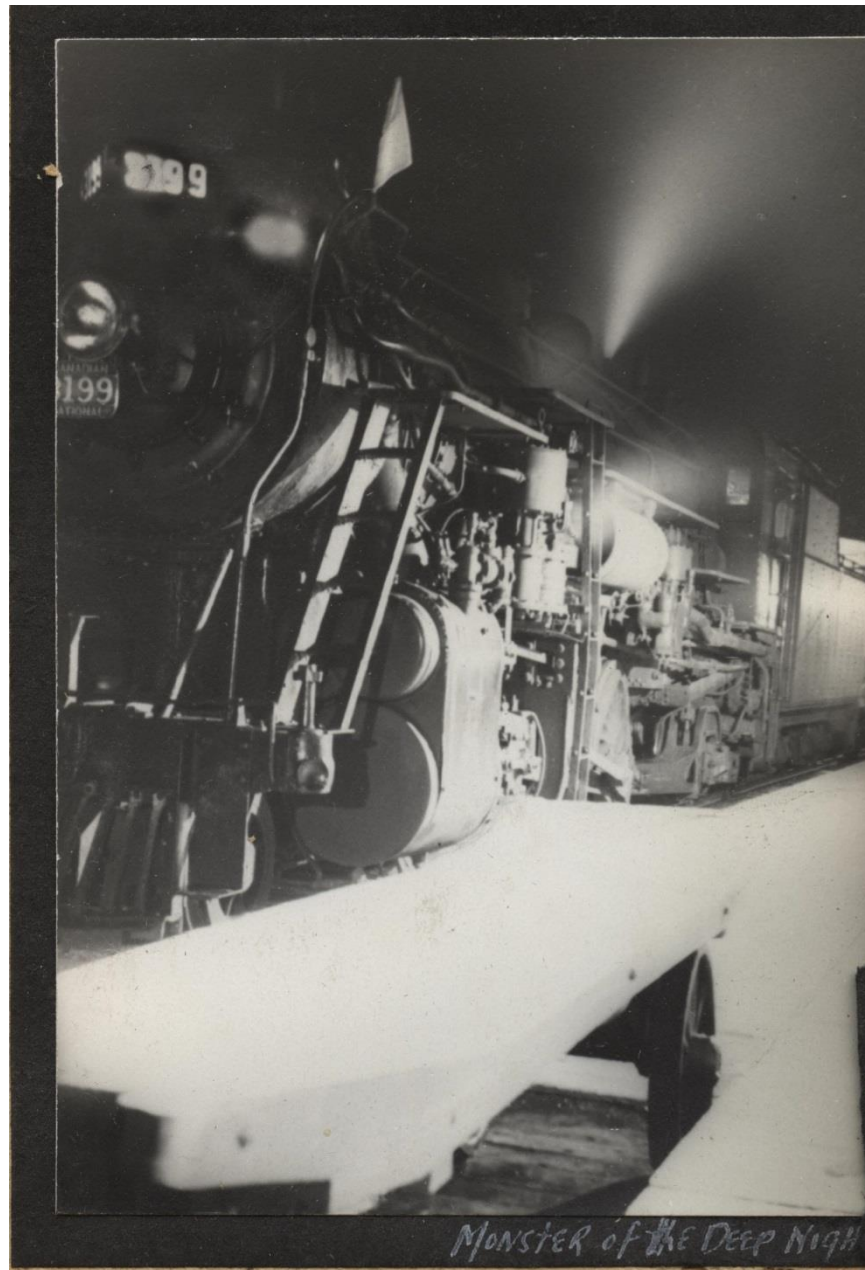
Mayor Wendy Robinson asked if Jim and Anne could provide pictures of the old Stewiacke railway station so a local artist could do a computer rendering of what the old station looked like in 1942. From the pictures on the previous page (including the one on the left above), Anna Nibby-Woods, a Mi'kmaq First Nation lady did the above right computer picture! We are truly honoured by this, and thank Anna on behalf of the Ramsay and Edgson families!



At first Jim and Anne did not know who "Lightning Slinger" was. His call letters were "OR". Normally the call letters reflected the initials of the person's first and last names. This "OR" confused Jim and Anne until they went to Stewiacke.

Karl McCully's call letters were "MC", not "KM". Stewart Spencer's call letters were only "Y". Opening up their minds and looking at other pictures, it became very obvious that "OR" was James (O) Owen (R) Ramsay – Anne's Dad!

We think it is  
a Mikado!



*MONSTER of the DEEP NIGHT*



Interior  
Shots of 2  
George  
Street in  
1941-42





House interior shots. Calendar from WE Gourley, January 1942.

Jim was invited by Stewiacke's Mayor, Wendy Robinson to make a presentation to show the Jim R pictures to the people of Stewiacke. Someone noted right away that "WE Gourley" was her father and gave an interesting accounting of what he did!





In 1941-42, there were mature trees, a brick building, an old cannon next to a cenotaph – which no doubt memorialized WWI dead. There was an apartment building and a Church to the left. It does not appear in this picture that there is a road between the Church and the cenotaph.

In 2016, the trees were gone, as was the cannon and the apartment building. There was now a road between the Church and the cenotaph. Talking to some old-timers, Jim was informed that the apartment building burned down. There was a rather interesting story on how the road between the cenotaph and the Church came about – we will leave that story to those in Stewiacke!!



With that, we draw to a close in this presentation. Anne and I were indeed very fortunate to bump into Wendy Robinson on a bus in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at a Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) meeting a few years back. What was truly interesting was that Wendy was knitting! Being as Jim's Anne knits too, Jim struck up a conversation in the middle of the bus with Wendy while Anne talked to the bus driver. Jim asked Wendy where she was from. When Wendy replied "Stewiacke", Jim yelled up to Anne "Anne, we have somebody here from Stewiacke!", startling everybody on the bus including Wendy! But not Anne! She rushed back and after explanations of why Jim and Anne were excited, a friendship was struck. That friendship resulted in this presentation.

We are truly thankful that us two from British Columbia could meet with someone from Stewiacke, Nova Scotia. We had no idea what was in Stewiacke in 2016, so Wendy's friendship and guidance on our 2016 trip was and is greatly appreciated.

Stewiacke has every right to be proud of their history and what they are today. Once again, we thank all we met there and remind them of this fact. Thank you!

Jim and Anne Edgson