

Railway in Port Blandford

In 1892, the Newfoundland Railway passed through Clode Sound. Being the headwaters of Bonavista Bay, it was an ideal location to build a coastal boat terminal and railway station with a customs, postal and telegraph office.

The railway benefitted the new community in numerous ways. As the railhead for Bonavista Bay, new businesses opened as Port Blandford became a commercial centre. Employment opportunities in the railway provided jobs to local families, and unlike most coastal communities, Port Blandford had a direct link to St. John's and other centres via the train.

In 1949, Newfoundland joined Canada and under the Terms of Union, the Newfoundland Railway was transferred to the federal Crown corporation, Canadian National Railways (CNR). Although the rail system's passenger and cargo services started declining once the Trans Canada Highway was built across the island in 1965, the railway continued to be a major employer for many residents of Port Blandford.

On September 3, 1978, a fire broke out at the railway station and the building was lost to the community. With the decline in the industry, the station was not replaced, and on September 1, 1988, almost 10 years to the day from when the station was lost, the railway in Newfoundland was officially abandoned.

In the 1990's, the railbed was turned into a multi-use trail called the T' Railway Provincial Park, and today, many of the tourism operators in Port Blandford benefit from the recreational users. Over 100 years after being first installed through the community, the railbed is still providing opportunities.

