

Railway Speeder

Many residents in Port Blandford were familiar with seeing the speeders going along the rails through the community, and several got to ride them when they worked for the railway.

The railway speeder was a small transport vehicle that ran along the rails and was used for a variety of tasks. Although slow compared to a train, it was called a speeder because it was faster than the earlier human-powered vehicles such as hand pumps and velocipedes (a

three-wheeled hand propelled track vehicle). Larger speeders were used by work crews to transport workers, tools and materials to work sites to complete maintenance on the railway and smaller ones were used by track inspectors and the fire patrol.



The fire patrol speeders were usually two-person vehicles that followed the trains to watch for sparks from the friction between the train's wheels and the track, especially during braking. Over the years, several residents of Port Blandford worked on the fire patrol speeders and there was a speeder shed located in the community.

The most common type of fire patrol speeders used between the 1950's up to the railway's closure in 1988 was made by Fairmont Railway Motors. The light-weight vehicle had handles installed underneath to lift it off of the tracks and the simple design made it easy to repair. Speeders could also tow small utility trailers that carried materials and tools as well as fire-fighting equipment for the fire patrol.

