



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Once in a century celebration for West Grey's Heritage Walkway Bridge

WEST GREY, Ontario – Railway history in the former town of Durham, now a community in the municipality of West Grey, dates back well over a century and on April 25, 2018, Mayor Kevin Eccles, members of West Grey Council and staff, invited guests and the public celebrated the grand re-opening of the Heritage Walkway Bridge, an iconic pedestrian crossing over the Saugeen River in downtown Durham.

"This is certainly a time for celebration and nostalgia," said Mayor Eccles. "The timber bridge construction model is a fitting solution to restoring this landmark in our community. It's been an interesting journey from building the bridge in New Brunswick to the piece-by-piece reassembly here in Durham."

Joining the celebration was Dr. Dan Tingley, senior engineer/wood technologist and executive director at Wood Research and Development (WRD). Tingley has over 40 years of experience in the timber bridge industry and his team has designed several timber bridge restoration projects in Ontario. The West Grey bridge, however, was particularly interesting to Tingley as he and his team were able to save and reuse many of the century-old original elements of the original railway bridge. Tingley also utilized some century-old elements from the bridge that were completely decayed to teach students how to retrofit and restore old timber beams at a Level II certified course in Timber Bridge Inspection, Restoration, Maintenance and Design held in Oregon in February 2018.

"I am passionate about wooden bridges – for their durability, their esthetics and the fact that they seamlessly blend with nature and rural communities," said Tingley. "I am thrilled to celebrate the revitalization of this magnificent structure. I congratulate West Grey for investing in this solution and giving this bridge another hundred years of life while preserving its heritage and the many memories."

According to the Canadian Wood Council, timber bridges "are an excellent way to showcase the strength and durability of wood structures, even under harsh conditions"ⁱ and are an effective solution for bridges that span fast rivers or deep gorges.



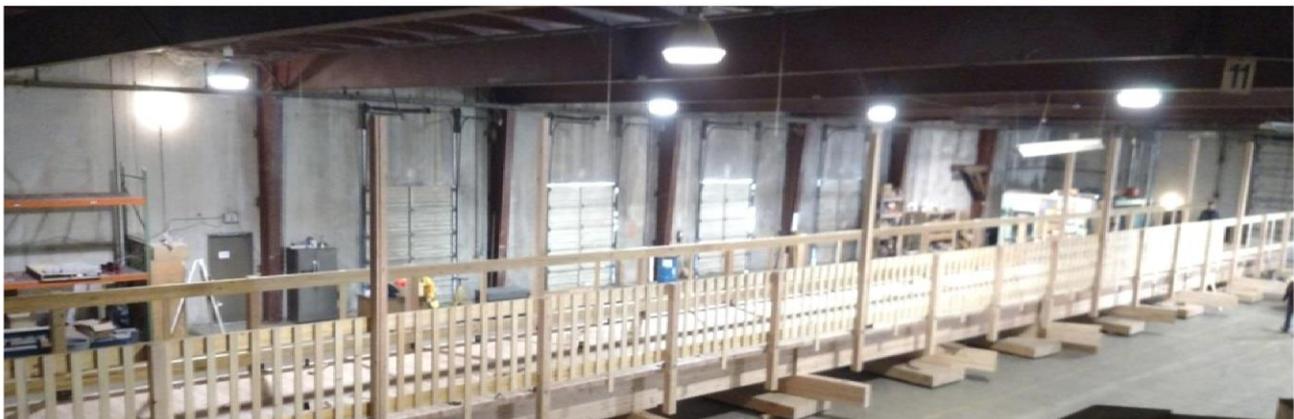
The process

The walkway bridge was restored using timber bridge construction by Timber Restoration Services (TRS) of Moncton New Brunswick, who specializes in the restoration of timber structures and particularly old railway bridges. In this restoration process, the new timber superstructure, deck and handrail system were totally assembled in the TRS manufacturing plant. Then the superstructure, deck and handrail system were disassembled and all the elements were pressure treated. This insures that all the fasteners and connectors are then located in treated holes in service. This dramatically extends the life of the bridge. The pieces of the bridge were subsequently numbered and stamped according to engineered drawings, dismantled, and shipped to West Grey and, piece-by-piece, reassembled on site. The reassembly was completed in two months due to the advanced assembly and the onsite speed of installation it allows. Project costs totaled \$560,000, slightly higher than conventional steel bridge not considering the substructure. When the restoration and extended use of the substructure is considered the restored Durham Railway Bridge cost the community half the cost of a steel bridge.

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Photo

Assembled bridge in the Timber Restoration Systems plant in New Brunswick, then disassembled and shipped to West Grey, the Heritage Walkway Bridge (second photo) shows the bridge once again assembled in place in Durham. The bridge is expected to span the Saugeen River in Durham for well over 100 years.





About West Grey

Located in Grey County, and serving a population of just over 12,000, the municipality of West Grey is a combination of rural, farm communities, friendly urban centres and quaint villages. With our quintessential 'small-town Ontario' vibe, our calming, yet breathtaking scenery, and recreation for every season, West Grey is a truly welcoming place to call home.

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ⁱ <http://cwc.ca/design-with-wood/durability/durability-solutions/durability-guidelines/timber-bridges/>