

Train search comes up empty again

BY TALI FOLKINS
Telegraph-Journal

A Grand Falls man leading an effort to find a century-old locomotive at the bottom of the St. John River says he's growing discouraged after underwater searching Saturday yielded no trace of the train.

"It didn't go that great," Eric Ouellette said Saturday night after spending a day scouring the bottom of the river near Grand Falls with seven volunteers.

"We had a good day — we had an excellent turnout, we had a lot of people come and visit. But we didn't find the train.

"I'm kind of discouraged . . . because I was really kind of expecting to find it (Saturday)," Mr. Ouellette said.

Weather conditions were great, the team of divers was relatively large. Saturday also would have been an excellent day to find the train, he said, because it was the 103rd anniversary of the day it fell into the river after the bridge supporting it collapsed.

The day's searching focused on an area where a University of New Brunswick geology professor recently detected magnetic anomalies from a magnetometer scan, and where a group of divers claimed to have found the train three years ago. But searchers Saturday turned up only metal debris, Mr. Ouellette said.

"We looked exactly where they told us it might have been. We saw nothing."

The river's murkiness could be to blame, he added.

"We've got to take account that the visibility in that river is not great — it was about five feet (4.5 metres) of visibility in front of them today," he said. Water in the area searched is about 10 metres deep.

"I'm not going to give up on it yet," Mr. Ouellette said. "There's still a couple of routes to take and I'm definitely going to pursue them. But it's getting discouraging."

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