



pacific northwest chapter

# THE TRAINMASTER

JANUARY 1983

NUMBER 248

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER, NRHS  
ROOM ONE, UNION STATION  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97209  
Phone (503) 226-6747

## CHAPTER TIMETABLE

- Friday, January 21  
7:00pm Annual Chapter Banquet at the Imperial Hotel in downtown Portland. Chapter members should have received a special mailing by first-class mail the first part of January.
- Friday, February 18  
7:30pm The regular February meeting of the Pacific Northwest Chapter will be held at the Union Pacific Clubhouse located at the corner of North Interstate and Russell Streets.
- Saturday, March 5  
All Day The fourth annual railroadians and swap meet will be held at the National Guard Armory on Northeast Marine Drive. More information will be in the February issue of The Trainmaster.
- Friday, March 18  
7:30pm Regular monthly meeting of the Chapter will be held at the Union Pacific Clubhouse.
- Friday, April 15  
7:30pm The regular monthly meeting of the Chapter will be held at the Union Pacific Clubhouse.
- Saturday, Sunday,  
May 14 and 15 The Cascades-Deschutes Special train on a circle rail trip around Oregon. Information elsewhere in this issue of the TM. Full trip brochure and ticket order form will be mailed the middle of February.
- Friday, May 20  
7:30pm The regular monthly meeting of the Chapter will be held at the Union Pacific Clubhouse.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING ON NOVEMBER 19, 1982

The meeting was called to order by Chapter President Ben Fredericks at 7:45 PM.

Railfan's Guide to Oregon: Jeff Asay advised that he wants to complete the lay-out of the guide by the first of the year. Current photos of good picture sites are still needed. It's now possible to use colored slides to make black and white photos for the guide.

Swap Meet: Ben Fredericks asked for volunteers to sign up tonight to help at the Swap Meet. Shifts will be 2 to 3 hours long. Help will be needed the evening before the meet to set up tables.

Annual Banquet: Ben Fredericks announced that the price for the banquet, to be held on Jan. 21, 1983, will be \$8.60 a person. The banquet will be at the Imperial Hotel in downtown Portland. The Jack Holst man-of-the-year award will be presented. The program will be a showing of the Chapter's 4449 slide show.

1983 Excursions: Ed Immel reported on plans for excursion during 1983. The one day trip to Madras and return is becoming very expensive with a per ticket price of about \$70 for 1983. Grand National Tours had trouble selling their Deschutes trip. The Chapter has asked Amtrak for a reverse Bend-Deschutes two day trip which will sell for about \$150. This trip is tentatively scheduled for May 14 and 15. The Spokane-Seattle trip will be run again in October. Other possible trips are a Memorial Day or July 4th weekend trip over the Simpson Logging line at Shelton, WA and another trip on the Seattle & North Coast RR, both of which would be run by the Tacoma Chapter. The OC&E trip is up in the air due to its high cost.

President Ben Fredericks announced and combined board and member business meeting to be held on December 15 at the Union Pacific Clubhouse. The agenda for the meeting will be sent to the membership by mail. The new Chapter membership list and a ballot for the member-of-the-year award will also be in the mailing.

Election of 1983 Chapter Officers and Directors: The following Chapter members were elected as Chapter officers and directors-at-large for 1983: President: Ben Fredericks; Vice President: Duane Cramer; Secretary: Chuck Storz; Treasurer: Larry Miller; Chapter National Director: Roger Sackett; Directors-at-Large: Ken Armstrong, Pete Dorland, Irv Ewen and Jim Schmidt.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chuck Storz, Secretary.

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*   SPOKANE, PORTLAND & SEATTLE RY. 9th Street Roundhouse - 1942-1982   *
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BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY TO ELECTRIFY LINE

The British Columbia Railway announced that they planned to electrify their new Tumbler Ridge extension. The line is being built to haul coal from the Quinette and Bullmoose coal lines northeast of Prince George to their main line at Anzac, B.C. The 86 mile line is being constructed through several mountain ridges requiring long tunnels to maintain easy grades. The costs of providing ventilation for the long tunnels were such that electrifying the trackage proved to be cheaper.

The railway has ordered seven electric locomotives from General Motors of Canada Ltd. The engines will be the first modern electric locomotives to operate in Canada. They will be built in Canada and will be designated as model GFC-6 — a full-width carbody unit producing 6,000 horsepower diesel-equivalent on six axels. They will operate from a high voltage alternating current supply of 50,000 volts, picked up by a roof-mounted pantograph from overhead catenary.

The engines will have transformers, converters and controls supplied by ASEA of Sweden under a licensing agreement. The units will have a body style based upon the F40 locomotives supplied to Amtrak and others.

WHO HAS GOT A PIECE OF THE ROCK?

from Railway Age, September 27, 1982

*The railroad has been officially out of business for two years, but over half of its 7,100 miles of line are being operated by buyers or lessees; 1,400 miles are being dismantled.*

By FRANK MALONE,  
Associate Editor

Though the Rock Island long ago collapsed as a system, some of its parts are showing signs of life under different management. In early September, new owners, would-be owners, and lessees were operating nearly 55% of the 7,100-mile system whose liquidation was ordered in June 1980. Meanwhile, 1,400 miles have been designated for removal by the L.B. Foster Co.

Sales of Rock Island lines—ranging from Southern Pacific's purchase of 991 miles to Peoria & Pekin Union's purchase of 2.8 miles—have accounted for more than 19% of the system. Another 35% is being operated under agreements, and some operators are potential buyers.

Sales so far have totaled more than \$76 million, but they have been slower than Rock Island Trustee William M. Gibbons had hoped. Why? In an August report to the bankruptcy court Gibbons cited (1) resistance to appraisals that he had obtained, and (2) a scarcity of public funding.

Efforts continue to encourage potential purchasers to enter into interim lease agreements while sales are being negotiated and sources for funding are pursued," said Gibbons. "Such interim agreements have preserved traffic bases and have provided property protection at no expense to the trustee, while affording the trustee rental income to offset the administrative costs of the liquidation. In most cases, potential purchasers require the experience of interim operations to justify their continued interest in sales negotiations."

2,500 miles under lease. About 2,500 miles are under lease, with monthly rentals totaling around \$1.4 million.

The biggest lessee is Chicago & North Western, which is paying \$425,909 a month to operate 746 miles in Iowa and Minnesota. That trackage includes the north-south "spine line" between the Twin Cities and Kansas City, and lines serving big grain producers. C&NW wants to buy it all, and negotiations have been under way for more than a year. They seem likely to continue for some time since the state of Iowa, the Soo Line and

Kansas City Southern have also shown interest.

C&NW recently lost a bidding contest for another Rock Island segment in Iowa. The winner was Milwaukee Road, which is currently trying to recover from bankruptcy. Milwaukee paid \$17 million for 64 miles between West Davenport and Washington in southeastern Iowa, plus 33 miles of trackage rights between Davenport and Clinton, Iowa. Clinton is a major point on C&NW's east-west main line, from which the railroad planned to deliver unit coal trains to a new power plant. Seeing the same opportunity, Milwaukee outbid C&NW by \$500,000, for a total of \$17 million, after an original bid of \$14.7 million.

Hailing the purchase as a "significant step in the successful reorganization of the Milwaukee Road," Trustee Richard B. Ogilvie announced that line rehabilitation would begin immediately. Rock Island's trustee called the transaction "significant for Rock Island's estate since it demonstrated that a competitive market can produce enhanced values for an estate in liquidation."

North Western was a winner, however, in the bidding for a 6.5-mile segment between Iowa Junction and Hollis near Peoria, Ill. Offering \$1.3 million, double its first proposal, C&NW outbid Peoria & Pekin Union

and Toledo, Peoria & Western. In mid-September, this deal remained to be consummated, as did a C&NW agreement to buy a 55-mile segment in western Iowa.

Another short but important Rock Island segment up for grabs is the Pullman branch serving the Lake Calumet harbor facility and several major industries on Chicago's south side. A first round of bidding in early September failed to produce an offer satisfactory to Gibbons.

Also pending in September was completion of a \$10.5-million transaction with Southern Pacific involving lines in Kansas, Arkansas and New Mexico totaling 152 miles. That would raise SP's acquisitions to about 1,140 miles—a total that includes the 295-mile Kansas City-St. Louis line, where SP has been unable to restore service as it did on the Kansas City-Santa Rosa, N.M., segment (the so-called Tucumcari Line).

Other buyers have included Archer Daniels Midland, Continental Group, Cedar Rapids & Iowa City Railway, the Fordyce & Princeton, Keokuk Northern Real Estate Co., the Little Rock & Western, and Missouri Pacific.

● **Big sales pending.** Elsewhere, looming in September were two major sales that depended on funding from the Federal Railroad Administration. The bigger one involved 645 miles between Salina, Kan., and Dallas, including a freight-service easement between Dallas and Fort Worth. The former "South Line" of the Rock Island, this is an important route that connects with the Tucumcari Line at Herington, Kansas. The purchase price is to be divided among the state of Oklahoma, for the portion of the route within its boundaries; the Missouri-Kansas-Texas, though a subsidiary called the Oklahoma-Kansas-Texas; and the Oklahoma-Kansas-Texas Rail Users Association, a shipper group. Though the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the deal in June, the O-K-T and the users association needed \$40 million in federal aid to proceed. An FRA decision was expected by Sept. 30. Oklahoma has already put up \$15 million for purchase of 350.9 miles within its boundaries. The state last year paid \$3.1 million for a 62-mile east-west segment.

"On the possibility that the transaction may not be finally approved, however, we have continued our discussions with current lessees and others who have indicated interest in acquisitions within this territory," said Gibbons. On hold was a competing agreement with the Enid Central Railway for 70 miles between Kremlin and Ponca City, Okla., valued at \$5 million.

The other transaction awaiting federal aid was a \$16-million sale of 450 miles in Kansas and Colorado to the Mid-States Port Author-

ity. Already operating part of that under lease was Kyle Railways, which would become the designated operator for the entire acquisition. The result would be resumption of full service over the Rock Island's former main line between Denver and Colorado Springs on the west, Topeka and Omaha on the east.

● **Enter the Iowa Railroad.** Awaiting government aid of a different kind was a major line lease by a new carrier, the Iowa Railroad. Since June, this railroad has been operating 361 miles between Council Bluffs, Iowa (across the Missouri River from Omaha) and Eureka, Ill.—most of the former Rock Island east-west main line. Although it serves some big grain shippers, the Iowa Railroad will probably need state subsidies. A bond issue that would provide them is stalled in court.

At Bureau, the Iowa Railroad connects with an 88-mile line between Joliet and Henry which the Chessie System is operating under a 50-year lease with purchase option. Though much of the Iowa Railroad trackage needs substantial upgrading, it could eventually provide Chessie a strategic link with the Omaha Gateway. Chessie has trackage rights between Joliet and Blue Island, south of Chicago.

Chessie shares track with the Chicago Regional Transportation Authority, which has agreed to buy 47 miles for commuter operations. The final price, however, was still being negotiated in September, and RTA was providing commuter service under lease.

A small portion of the Rock Island system continues to be operated without lease arrangements, under authority of Interstate Commerce Commission service orders. Gibbons said net revenues on those segments had improved "substantially" as a result of a new ICC provision. Service-order carriers were required to tighten the accounting procedures for the 14.4% of revenues due the Rock Island estate.

● **Dismantling unsalable lines.** While many segments of the former Rock Island are attractive to new operators, others have worth only if they're dismantled. Their value lies in material that can be used elsewhere or sold as scrap. As of late September more than 1,400 miles had been designated for take-up.

The trustee's dismantler is the L.B. Foster Co., under a contract signed about a year ago. The company has exclusive right to sell the basic track material—that is, all marketable ties, rail, and other metallic components. Besides being paid for take-up, Foster receives sales commissions related to market prices. For example, for each sale above the predetermined market price, the commission includes a percentage of the extra revenue.

In its biggest undertaking ever, the company hopes to handle more than 3,000 RI miles by 1985. Further designation for dis-

mantling depends on market conditions, which right now aren't good. Gibbons recently observed:

"The continued economic recession is having a serious impact on the ability to sell reusable rail and ties. The scrap market continues to decline, and there is very little current demand for scrap materials. Present forecasts would indicate that there will not be a viable market until sometime in the second or third quarter of 1983."

Despite market conditions, the trustee was able to report first-half gross of \$1.5 million for basic track materials. Foster has forecast eventual disposal of more than one million tons of material with estimated market value of at least \$150 million.

Foster in September was completing the take-up of a segment in southeastern Iowa that was part of the transcontinental "Golden State Route." No trains had run on the line since early 1980. Consisting of 101 miles of main track and 30 miles of sidings and yard track between Ainsworth and Allerton, this segment for many years handled all of the railroad's east-west traffic. Foster earlier this year dismantled 40 miles of the former "Sunbelt" line west of Amarillo, Tex. and other trackage in Arkansas and Tennessee.

● **Bargains in used rail.** The biggest single buyer has been Family Lines, which acquired about 55 miles of 131/2 32-pound rail from the Iowa segment. It went to the railroad's Nashville welding plant for conversion into continuous welded rail. Looking for such prospects, Foster concentrates on work-hardened rail that can still handle a lot of tonnage. And there's a considerable amount of it in the RI system, especially where major rehabilitation was under way during the attempt to reorganize before liquidation was ordered.

Besides work-hardening, price is also an attraction, at 60%-70% of new-rail cost. Another advantage is that a railroad can inspect and buy rail still in place, then tailor delivery to its own needs. "It's a good way for a railroad to inventory rail," says John W. Stephen, L.B. Foster marketing services director. "They can order according to their maintenance schedule and can plan ahead for a number of years, knowing that the rail will be there."

As a result of the agreement with Gibbons, the company established a Rock Island division, which is based in the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines. There, William A. Simmons, project manager, estimates that as much as 65% of the rail for dismantling may have "relay quality." That includes some rail as light as 85 pounds. Short lines and industrial systems are potential users, as well as major railroads.

Thomas M. Minard, project coordinator,

adds that some rail may have as much as 80% of its wear-life left. That's because the Rock Island, in addition to its last effort at rehabilitation, had greatly improved its plant after World War II. In many cases, tonnage didn't grow enough to cause significant rail deterioration.

The first stage of the marketing process is a joint inspection by representatives of the trustee and of L.B. Foster. That determines the quantity and quality of material available. Then the search for customers begins. All segments designated for takeup are open to inspection by prospective buyers.

The first workers on the scene are a Foster "prep" crew, whose job is to pull as many spikes as possible and remove track bolts from joints. Next in is a modified tractor/dozer equipped with front-end rollers for "sledding" of the rail. Dozer weight on the cross-ties combines with the rollers' lift pressure to pry rail from the remaining spikes.

Finally, a modified backhoe loads the rail onto an L.B. Foster flatbed truck for movement to the nearest trackside stockpile. There, it goes into gondolacars for delivery to the new user or a scrap dealer. With a cross-arm on its boom, the backhoe crane can load a truck in less than 15 minutes, requiring just the operator and the truck driver for the process. "With the crossarm, we were able to reduce the work force and improve safety," says Daniel Turner, rail-takeup operations manager. Where necessary, a bulldozer provides an access road. After rail is loaded, the "prep" crew returns to pick up and load spikes, anchors, plates, joints, bolts, nuts and washers. Plates and joint bars may be reusable, while the rest generally is scrap material.

Besides the segment in southeastern Iowa, a 44-mile line between Lake Park, Iowa and Lismore, Minn. was on the 1982 agenda.

Next in line was another "Sunbelt" segment, with the work schedule depending on the market. Minard says 1982 takeup will total about 300 miles.

☉ **Foster keeps busy.** Track dismantling has been part of Foster's business since 1902, and the emphasis on mechanized operations with professional crews began in the early 1970's. The company claims to have removed more than 5,000 miles of the U.S. rail system. Last year, Foster dismantled 64 miles of Milwaukee Road track in east central Iowa in less than three months.

Also last year, the company began dismantling 234 miles of former Erie Lackawanna main line in Ohio and Indiana, under a contract expected to run two and a half years. In this case, however, Foster is marketing material that it already owns, having paid \$10.9 million for right-of-way, bridges, ballast and buildings. ■

## RAILROAD STAMPS

It appears the U.S. Postal Service will please railfans in 1983. On March 25, it will issue a stamp depicting the railroad handcar. The stamp is to be in coil form, regular size, and part of the "Transportation Series" of stamps currently being issued. In May 1982, another rail-related subject - an 1870s steam locomotive - appeared on a 2¢ coil stamp.

Later in 1983 (probably Fall) the post office will issue a block of four different stamps honoring the U.S. Streetcar. The actual design subjects have not been announced, but presumably they will show vehicles that trace the development of the streetcar from the first horsedrawn car to possibly the type of double-ended car still in use on the St. Charles line in New Orleans. This line has the oldest continuously-operated cars in the country. The cars were first placed in service in the 1920s.

The streetcar issue, which will likely be large-size 20¢ stamps, is largely the result of continuous lobbying efforts for several years by a man who lives in Arkansas. Persistence sometimes pays off!

Rich Carlson

## THIS N'THAT

Some more trackage of the ex-Milwaukee Road in the Northwest was put back in service. About 20 miles of the mainline to Doris and the 6-mile Royal City Branch were restored to service by the BN. The Royal City Branch was constructed in 1967.....Kodak has announced a new film with an ASA of 1,000. The new color film should be on the shelves sometime in 1983. The new film is called Kodacolor VR 1000. Kodak reports that the fundamental changes in the shape and structure of the silver-halide crystals which go into VR 1000 is "the company's biggest advance in silver-halide emulsion technology in more than 50 years. The film is reported to be virtually grainless.

THE RUMOUR MILL RIDES AGAIN

Rail Travel News printed an article in their issue #257 that Walt Disney Productions had given Southern Pacific \$500,000 to put engine #4449 back into operation and along with several Daylight painted coaches, run a publicity train from the West Coast to Florida. The train was to run from Portland to Los Angeles and then east through Texas, Arkansas to Chicago. From here the train would head south to Pittsburgh, Washington, DC and finally to Florida.

Needless to say, the Chapter has gotten a flurry of letters, telephone calls and post cards wanting to know if it is true and/or wanting to buy tickets on the trip. As custodians of the engine for the city of Portland the Chapter is always at the center of things when any type of operation of the engine is contemplated.

First - the offer was made to the Southern Pacific to do exactly what was reported by Rail Travel News.

Second- the offer was turned down by the Southern Pacific due to several factors. A Southern Pacific spokesman reported that the railroad was very concerned that the departure date of the train from Portland of around April 1st was an unrealistic goal in light of everything that had to be done. Not only did the engine need to have extensive work to be done on it, but cars would have to be secured, repainted into Daylight colors and deadheaded to Portland.

The railroad was also concerned that since a goodly portion of the trip was off company lines they had no control over costs and the money originally budgeted for the project might be inadequate.

In light of the above, the rumor that the engine would be going to "Railroad Days" in Dunsmuir are unequally true. The #4449 needs a five year FRA overhaul plus additional work to return her to service. Due to the dollar amount needed any future operation will for an extended period of time rather than a one-shot trip to Dunsmuir.

If the #4449 is returned to service you can be assured that such news will be printed in The Trainmaster. It is amusing to hear and read the rumors as they pertain to #4449. One would think that it cost only \$4.95 to restore a steam engine and then go charging around the country playing games with it.

During the last part of December the Burlington Northern's (SP&S) 9th Street Roundhouse was torn down. This again resulted in a flurry of telephone calls, letters etc, usually saying "We've got to save the roundhouse".

Earlier in 1982 the Chapter was given a grant from the city of Portland to study the feasibility of converting the 9th Street roundhouse into a railroad museum. Professional assistance was obtained and a presentation was made to several officers of the Burlington Northern. The BN's main objection was the roundhouse was a important part of a block of land totaling 137 acres that they wish to develop in the future.

More importantly, the Chapter's study found that the roundhouse was not worth saving due to extreme structural decay especially the roof.



Additionally, earthquake damage was present in the walls. The combination of the badly decayed roof and the walls made any kind of restoration extremely expensive. An architect and a structural engineer both reported that it would probably be less expensive to build a new roundhouse that would have to meet building codes than attempt to restore the existing structure. The railroad did promise to assist the city in locating a site for a museum and would cooperate in setting it up.

The Chapter is continuing to work on the museum for Portland. However, a quick answer is not expected due to the criteria involved such as access to rail, correct zoning, attractiveness to the public etc.

### AMTRAKING

Amtrak has selected seven dome cars to be converted to headend power. The cars are all ex-Northern Pacific cars. The cars to be converted are Amtrak #9478 (NP 551), 9479 (552), 9480 (553), 9481 (554), 9482 (555), 9483 (556), 9485 (558). The 9478, 9479 and 9485 were last used in revenue service on the Chapter's steam excursion back from the opening of the museum in Sacramento May 1981. The cars will be used on such trains as the The Cardinal and National Limited.....Resort Bus Lines Chemult-Bend connection with the Coast Starlight will run between December 15 and April 22nd.....Amtrak is also planning to rebuild some Santa Fe high-level diners into diner-lounges. Several of these cars will be assigned to The Pioneer.....The Chapter's trip to Madras has been lengthened to provide a great circle trip of Oregon. The train will now operate both Saturday and Sunday May 14th and 15th. Departure will be south from Portland on the SP to Chemult and then north to Bend on the BN. After staying overnight in Bend the train will continue onwards over the OT and the SP&S north bank line to Portland. Flyers should be in the mail the middle of February.....Heavy snow in the Mid-West has caused some long delays on the Pioneer. Thursday's train from Odgen included the cars from Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays SFZ. New year's Eve train arrived in Seattle at 1:30am rather than 9:30pm scheduled.....Amtrak coach 5494 was spotted in Portland the last week in December on its way to the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad at Rye, Washington.....The Empire Builder's connection from Portland has been loading so heavy during Christmas that at times the loads into Portland exceed those into Seattle. This in turn has caused train #796 to be very sick since EB passengers used to travel on that train to make connections.. ..The Seattle Seahawks trains are not what they used to be also. The train on January 2nd ran only six cars vs the 10 or 12 of a few years ago. Apparently the teams home record has not fired up the fans. ....Amtrak has signed a new contract with the engineer's union in the Northeast Corridor that will call for being payed by the hour rather than by the division/mile as is currently the case.....The State of Montana has expressed interest in reviving the North Coast Hiawatha between Spokane and Fargo. An inspection train operated from Fargo November 9, from Billings November and then between Helena and Spokane November 11th. The train consisted of a F40 engine, a Superliner sleeper, Superliner coach, Hi-level transition car and Amtrak's inspection car #10,000.....SP's business car Oregon has been refurbished and has made one trip back to Oregon. After some fine tuning in Sacramento it will return to Portland.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER

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PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

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