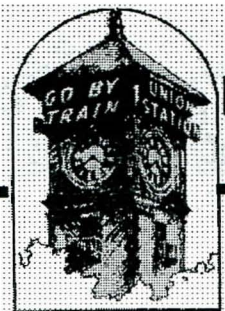


The



TRAINMASTER

Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society



April 1996

Western Pacific First Subdivision

(First part of Part 1)

(From the February, 1996 issue of The Ferroequinologist, Central Coast Railway Club, NRHS, San Jose, CA.)

Western Pacific's First Subdivision of the Western Division consisted of 93.8 miles (including 3.5 water miles over San Francisco Bay) from Stockton to Oakland and its isolated San Francisco trackage. Today this line is a part of the Canyon Subdivision of the Union Pacific. From its rail terminal in Stockton the line features some fast track as it stretches across the San Joaquin Valley floor until just beyond Tracy where it encounters the stiff grade of Altamont Pass. Once over Altamont, the line drops down into the Livermore Valley before encountering the short but scenic Niles Canyon. Once out of Niles Canyon the line turns right and runs up the east side of San Francisco Bay to Oakland.

Early History

On April 29, 1895 the Alameda & San Joaquin Railroad, a subsidiary of the San Francisco & San Joaquin Coal Company, was incorporated for the purpose of hauling coal from Corral Hollow, at Tesla. On July 1, 1896 the railroad was completed between Tesla and Stockton, 36 miles. At Stockton, coal was transferred to boats for movement to Oakland, San Francisco and other points.

On March 6, 1903 the Western Pacific Railway Company was incorporated in California to construct a rail line from Oakland to Salt Lake City, Utah. The Alameda & San Joaquin Railroad was deeded to WP on July 25, 1903, with A&SJ being dissolved on November 30, 1908. In November 1905 grading was started between Oakland and Oroville by contractors E. B. and A. L. Stone. On January 2, 1906 the first spike was driven at Third and Washington in Oakland.

November 1, 1909 marked the joining of rails at Mile Post 280.51 near the west end of the bridge over Spanish Creek, less than half a mile west of where Keddie station was to be located. While the most difficult construction along the Western Pacific occurred in the Feather River Canyon between Oroville and Portola, the Oakland-Stockton portion presented many difficult challenges. Two tunnels were required in Niles Canyon. Tunnel No. 1 at Mile Post 32.12

as 4,320.9 feet long, one of the longest tunnels on the WP. Tunnel No. 2, a 407.3-foot bore, was located at Mile Post 33.39. The railroad also had a trestle over Alameda Creek at the east end of Niles Canyon.

Once out of Niles Canyon, and past Pleasanton the railroad has a straight shot across the Livermore Valley. Leaving the Livermore Valley, the railroad encountered a stiff grade on its assault on Altamont Pass. Climbing out of the Livermore Valley, the railroad constructed the impressive Greenville Bridge, which carried WP rails over Southern Pacific's parallel line as both roads began the climb over Altamont. One more tunnel was required on this section of track, Tunnel No. 3, a 414.7-foot long tunnel located between Altamont and Midway at Mile Post 57.57.

The Western Pacific was not the first rail line through Niles Canyon or over Altamont Pass. Another Western Pacific Railroad, incorporated December 13, 1862, built about 123.45 miles from San Jose to Niles, Stockton, Brighton and Elvas, just outside Sacramento. This line was opened in December 1869 and was operated by the Central Pacific Rail Road of California from May 15, 1869 to its consolidation into Central Pacific on November 2, 1869. The new Western Pacific Railway benefited from improved construction methods, which allowed for a better grade over Altamont Pass than the first WP line.

Early Operations

Through freight service on the Western Pacific was inaugurated between Oakland and Salt Lake City on December 1, 1909 with train No. 64 eastbound and No. 65 westbound. Through passenger service began on August 22, 1910 with trains Nos. 3-4 between Oakland and Salt Lake City. At Salt Lake City the trains connected with Denver & Rio Grande trains for Denver.

To operate its freight and passenger service, Western Pacific ordered a number of 2-8-0 and 4-6-0 type locomotives and a small group of 0-6-0 switchers. The first locomotives constructed for the railroad were a group of 20 2-8-0s numbers 1-20, built by Baldwin in 1906. These locomotives were used in construction service and in local freight

(continued on page 5)

The TRAINMASTER

is the official newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, published monthly for the benefit of its members. Articles which appear in *The Trainmaster* do not express the official National Railway Historical Society position on any subject unless specifically noted as such. Material from *The Trainmaster* may be reprinted in other publications provided credit is given as to the source. Please address contributions, correspondence, and exchange copies of newsletters to:

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Circulation:

Chuck Storz, (503) 289-4529

MEMBERSHIP in the PNWC-NRHS is available as follows:

Regular....\$27/yr.

Joint.....\$35/yr.

For more information, contact the Membership Chairperson at the above address.

DEADLINES

The deadline for each issue of The Trainmaster is the 20th of the previous month. Submissions may be made on floppy disk, in Wordperfect, MS Word, or ASCII formats. The Editor reserves the right to edit or hold material at his/her discretion.

CHAPTER TIME TABLE No. 403

REGULAR RUNS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday, April 11, 7:00 P.M., at Room 208, Union Station. Enter through the main entrance, turn right two times, past the magazine stand, first door on left at hallway to Wilfs.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING Friday, April 19, 7:30 P.M., at St. David's Episcopal Church, 2800 S.E. Harrison. The business meeting will start promptly at 7:30, with the newsreel and program following a short break. Refreshments will be available; please bring some money to feed the "kitty," so it can continue to feed us!

WEEKLY NO-HOST LUNCHEON every Saturday, 12:00 Noon, at the Semaphore Restaurant at S.E. 17th & S.E. Holgate Blvd. Our group is in the back. Come on down!

ROLLING STOCK WORK SESSIONS are planned to prepare cars for leases. Contact Richard Gray (657-8250), or Peter Rodabaugh (771-8545) for an update.

LIBRARY/ARCHIVES WORK SESSION: Thursday, April 11, 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. at Room 1 & 1A, Union Station. Help is needed to get things organized and catalogued. Contact Bob Weaver (654-4274) for more information.

CHAPTER LIBRARY OPEN HOURS Every Saturday, 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. at Room 1, Union Station. Call Jim Loomis (253-3926) for appointments, if this is a difficult day and/or time for you.

EXTRA BOARD

LEON DREWS' RR SILENT MOVIE NITE: April 12, 1996 at the Milwaukie Elks Club, 13121 SE McLoughlin Blvd, Milwaukie, OR. Purchase tickets in advance, \$10 per person, at 226-3345. Feature is The General, filmed in Oregon. No-host cocktail at 6:30 P.M., dinner and movie to follow.

PORTLAND UNION STATION'S 100th ANNIVERSARY: May 10, 11 & 12, 1996. The chapter car *Mount Hood* will be on display. The *SP 4449* and the *Royal Hudson* will run trips to/from Vancouver, B.C. and Portland. See enclosed flyer for details and order form.

PNWC-NRHS SPAGHETTI FEED: May 17, 1996, 6:00 P.M. at St. David's Episcopal Church, 2800 S.E. Harrison, Portland, OR. See page 6 for information.

NRHS NATIONAL CONVENTION: June 18-23, 1996, Charlotte, NC Call (704) 647-0508 for details. Update on page 6.

PNWC-NRHS ANNUAL PICNIC: Saturday, August 17, 1996 at Antique Powerland, Brooks, OR.

MOTIVE POWER FESTIVAL: Sept. 7 & 8, 1996, in Willits, CA. Call Jack Wade (707) 459-9036 or Bobbie Yokum (707) 459-2736 for sign-up or additional information.

APRIL 19 MEETING PROGRAM

The Windy City-Railroading in Chicago

To be presented by:

Bob Terkelsen

MAY 17 MEETING PROGRAM

40 Years of Railroading in Oregon

To be presented by:

John Bauer

NOTICE: Programs are needed for future meetings. Anyone who is willing to present a program (slides, film, etc.) at a Chapter meeting, please contact the President.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

PNWC-NRHS BOARD MEETING 7 MARCH, 1996

SUMMARY of MINUTES

Call to Order: President Bob Terkelsen called the meeting to order at 7:22 P.M.
Attending: Terkelsen, Ackerman, Hickok, Rodabaugh, Schuler, Johnson, Weiler, & Larson.

Reading of Minutes: A number of minor corrections were offered to the minutes of the 1/11 & 2/13/96 board meetings and 1/19 & 2/16/96 membership meetings. **MSC Ackerman/Larson** to approve the corrected minutes as read.

VP Report: Ed Ackerman is continuing work on the key survey.

Treasurer's Report: Maxine Rodabaugh reported the account balances. Processing of membership renewals continues. Acknowledgment letters for monies donated are being prepared.

National Director's Report: Gerald Schuler reported that the chapter annual activity report has been submitted, and is expected to be published at a later date. Logging railways was suggested as a subject for the Spring 1997 National Board Meeting. The *NRHS News* has a very nice piece about Rich Carlson and his involvement with **Rail Sensations**. It is not known who submitted this piece.

Standing Committee Reports

Excursion: The Vancouver, BC trip proposed for May has been cancelled. We may try again for a mid-September date. Ed Ackerman suggested the secretary work with the committee and the board to get some letters written to see if we can get some trips lined up on local short lines.

Rolling Stock: Ed Ackerman reported that a work party has made considerable progress on repairs and brake work on the caboose, although there is more work that needs to be done. Concern was expressed regarding the need for a better way for interested persons to be informed of the schedule for work parties. If you are interested in working, please contact Ed Ackerman to be sure you are on the telephone roster. Richard Parks asked that the secretary compose a letter to the **Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club** to clarify the ownership of the wigwag signal that the chapter has loaned to the gorge. Both par-

ties are in agreement that the signal belongs to the chapter. Bob Terkelsen reported on the status of the equipment at the Trolley Park in Glenwood. George Hickok reported on the lack of proper battery maintenance in chapter cars. George is working on purchasing a portable generator of substantial size to be donated to the chapter, which can be used both to charge batteries in a number of different locations, and to provide power for working on cars.

Activities: Bob Terkelsen reported that the Swap Meet will be held on 3/9/96. All tables have been sold. Our annual banquet was held on March 2. 54 dinners were sold. Congratulations to Jim Loomis who won the Jack Holst Award. There was a discussion regarding moving the date for the banquet to a later date, due to the unusual weather this year. An early February date was suggested for 1997. Picnic at Brooks is still on for August 17. George Hickok suggested that the chapter send letters to a number of rail related groups and invite them to participate, as an attempt to build unity in the rail related community.

Museum: **MSC Ackerman/Rodabaugh** to confirm appointment of Glenn Laubaugh as chairperson of the Museum Committee. Glenn presented to the board a series of color prints showing the content of the chapter home page on the world wide web.

Library: Jim Loomis reported that Dick Ordway has donated a set of color photographs showing the Crown Zellerbach electric railway in operation at the mill in Camas in the late 1960's. The photographs show the narrow gauge locomotives that are stored at the Trolley Park in operation. The library committee will be selling some surplus material at the swap meet. Ralph Johnson will report at a later date regarding the sale of surplus materials to members.

Membership: Ralph Johnson reported that the new member packet is still out for review. There have been about 187 membership renewals received so far.

Trainmaster: *The Trainmaster* is ready for mailing. Bob Terkelsen reported that a letter has been received from Doug Auberg expressing a number of concerns regarding *The Trainmaster*. The board duly noted the content of the letter.

Concessions: Maxine Rodabaugh reported that nearly all of the 1996 calendars have been sold. A discussion followed on what should be done with a large number of old trip guides that were unearthed when ma-

terials were moved off of the floor of room 1A. **MSC Ackerman/(name not supplied - editor)** that Richard Parks be authorized to offer for sale on behalf of the chapter a selection of old trip guides. A price of \$1.00 each was suggested. Jim Loomis assured the board that the material in question is really surplus, and that copies will be retained for the chapter collection.

Rail Sensations: Gerald Schuler reported that a number of concerns from Bruce Allen of the Portland Development Commission have been addressed, and that permission has been obtained for placement of the plaque on the building. The application has been submitted to national for the plaque, and it is expected that the plaque will be unveiled at the Rail Fair celebration in May. It is suggested that Rich Carlson represent national in the presentation.

Programs: Bob Terkelsen reported the following program schedule: March: Al Viewig - *Bridges*. April: Bob Terkelsen - TBA. May: John Bauer - TBA. June: Richard Parks - *Portland Traction Under Wire*. As always, future programs are needed, contact Bob Terkelsen if you are interested.

Old Business: Bob Terkelsen reported that there is still the possibility of a tour of the El Monica maintenance facility for the west side light rail line.

New Business: A spaghetti feed before the membership meeting (*May 17 - editor*) has been suggested as a possible fund raiser.

Good Of The Order: Some good news regarding the damage to several of the railways from the flood of 1996 it appears that with a combination of federal and state funding, both the *Mt. Hood Railroad* and *POTB Railway* may be able to rebuild and remain in operation.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:24 PM.

Call Board: Membership meeting March 15. Board meeting April 11, membership meeting April 19.

Respectfully submitted,
George Hickok, secretary

CHAPTER BUSINESS

PNWC-NRHS MEMBERSHIP MEETING 15 March, 1996 SUMMARY of MINUTES

Call to Order: President Bob Terkelsen called the meeting to order at 7:52 P.M. Members and guests were welcomed.

Reading of Minutes: The minutes for all of the meetings held so far in 1996 were posted for review.

Treasurer's Report: Maxine Rodabaugh reported the account balances.

National Director's Report: Bob Terkelsen reported that the chapter activity report has been sent in, and is expected to be published in an upcoming issue of the national bulletin.

Standing Committee Reports

Excursion: Darel Mack reported that the May trip to Vancouver, BC has been cancelled as we were unable to get a commitment from Amtrak in time to meet advertising deadlines. A proposed September trip to Vancouver, BC has also been dropped, as there is no hotel space available at that time. The committee is considering a Spring '97 trip. A second run of the Membership Special on the W&P&W is still being planned for sometime this spring when the weather gets better.

Rolling Stock: Ed Ackerman reported that a work party will be held on Sunday, 3/17/1996, to repair a roof leak in the 76 (museum car). The committee is working on a possible donation of a portable air compressor. No progress on power at the work sites. Brake work on the caboose is still in process.

Activities: Annual Chapter Picnic at Brooks on 8/17/96. Bob Terkelsen reported that at the board's request, he has approached the 700 group, and asked them to attend our picnic at Brooks. Bob explained that the board is interested in building unity among the various rail interest groups in the greater Portland area. Darel Mack thanked everyone for their patience with the annual banquet, which changed dates twice due to bad weather. Attendance was 54 persons. The committee is planning a Spaghetti Feed as a fund raiser, to be held on 5/17 before the regular membership meeting. More details will be in a forthcoming issue of *The Trainmaster* (See page 7 of this issue-editor). The swap meet also went well. Terry Parker reported that all of the 230 tables were sold, with attendance esti-

mated at about 1,000 persons. Last year 130 tables were sold, with attendance of about 700 persons. Next year the plan is to offer 300 tables for sale.

Museum: Bob Terkelsen reported that the board has approved the appointment of Glenn Laubaugh as chairperson of the Museum Committee. Printouts showing the content of the chapters' Home Page on the World Wide Web were posted for review. A floor plan is being prepared which includes detailed measurements of the 76 (Museum car). Richard Parks reported on the problems that the roof leak in the 76 has caused. It is important that the correct materials be used when repairing cars, an example being the latexpaint that was used in the 76: it mildews very easily - an oil based paint is much better, although it is more work to apply correctly. The Museum Committee is also looking for members: contact Glenn if interested.

Library: Jim Loomis reported that the library continues to be open every Saturday. Jim also displayed a set of 18 color photos of the Crown Zellerbach narrow gauge electric railway in operation. These pictures have been donated to the Chapter by Dick Ordway.

Membership: Sarah Ackerman introduced John Bauer and Mike Hays, both guests of Bob Terkelsen. Maxine Rodabaugh reported that over 200 membership renewals have been processed.

Trainmaster: Jim Loomis reported that *The Trainmaster* has been mailed. Jim is still in need of help with *The Trainmaster*.

Union Station Centennial/Rail Sensations: Bob Terkelsen reported that the chapter car *Mt. Hood* has been requested for this event to be held in May, and that approval has been received for placement of the plaque at Union Station. 30,000 to 40,000 people are expected to attend the Railfair.

Programs: Bob Terkelsen reported that tonight's program will be *Bridges* presented by Al Viewig. In April, Bob Terkelsen will present *Windy City*. May is open. Richard Parks will present *Portland Traction Under Wire* in June. More programs are needed: contact Bob Terkelsen if interested. The movie screen at the church is in need of repair: please contact Irv Ewen if you would like to help with this.

Old Business: Bob Terkelsen reported it was announced at the annual banquet that Jim Loomis was the winner of the Jack Holst Award, and displayed the plaque that Jim received at the banquet. Jim was congratulated and thanked for his contributions to the chapter.

New Business: Maxine Rodabaugh reported that member Leonard Morgan has offered a bunch of crating and packing material to the chapter, if anyone is interested. Contact Maxine for additional information. Rich Carlson offered some background information on the plaque that will be placed at Union Station. The plaque is offered by the NRHS Historical Committee. 6 plaques have been placed so far, noting significant historical landmarks. The plaque will be placed near the main entrance doors, below the existing Amtrak sign.

Good Of The Order: NW Rail Museum is planning on running the 4449 to Vancouver, BC in May (See enclosed flyer-editor). PDC is looking for participants in the Rail Sensations event in May: Contact the PDC or Rich Carlson for additional information. Ownership of the grounds at the Trolley Park at Glenwood has changed hands. The park will not operate this year. The *Broadway Car (4012)* will be moved to El Monica for restoration soon. Rebuilding of the *POTB Railway* has started. There are environmental concerns with the effects of the construction on the Salmonberry River water clarity, and impact on spawning fish. The chapter will not take a stand at this time. Interested persons are asked to submit letters of support (as individuals) to the Governor's office in Salem. It is expected that the *Mt. Hood Railroad* will also rebuild. The tunnel boring machine is ready to start operations on the second bore under the West Hills. Tri-Met will be holding a party on Sunday, 3/17/1996, starting at 1:00 P.M. at the east portal of the tunnel. The boring machine will be on display. Although the public is not specifically invited, interested persons may be able to attend.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 P.M. (The board met briefly in executive session following the break. Matters discussed will be reported to the membership at a later date.)

Call Board: Board meeting 4/11/1996, Membership meeting 4/19/1996.

Respectfully submitted,
George Hickok, secretary

WESTERN PACIFIC

(continued from page 1)

service as various sections of the railroad were opened to revenue traffic. In 1908 American Locomotive Company's Brooks Works built 15 4-6-0s numbered 71-85 and in 1909 American's Schenectady Works built 45 2-8-0s numbered 21-65. American's Pittsburgh Works constructed 12 0-6-0s in 1909 for switching service. Over the years many of these steam locomotives put in many hours of service hauling trains between Oakland and Stockton.

With the inauguration of through passenger service, WP's employee timetable No. 4 dated August 22, 1910 shows two passenger trains operating out of Oakland. Train No. 8 departed the WP's Oakland Mole where passengers arrived by boat from San Francisco at 9:00 a.m. Train No. 8 arrived at Stockton at 12:30 p.m. where it continued on the Second Subdivision to its terminal in Oroville. Stops were made at Oakland, 3rd and Washington streets, Fruitvale, San Leandro, Hayward, Niles, Sunol, Pleasanton, Livermore, Carbona and Lathrop. Flag stops were made at Melrose, Elmhurst, Decoto, Altamont, Midway and Lyoth. Train No. 4, the through train to Salt Lake City departed Oakland Mole at 6:30 p.m. and arrived Stockton at 9:50 p.m.

Westward local train No. 7 from Oroville departed Stockton at 2:40 p.m. and arrived Oakland Mole at 6:30 p.m. Train No. 3 from Salt Lake City departed Stockton at 7:50 a.m. and arrived WP's Oakland Mole at 11:30 a.m.

Two freight trains were operated over the first subdivision, No. 64 to Salt Lake City departed Oakland at 9:00 p.m. and arrived Stockton at 3:15 a.m. Way Freight No. 90, operating daily except Sunday departed Oakland at 8:00 a.m. and arrived Stockton at 5:00 p.m. Westbound freight service shows No. 65 from Salt Lake City departing Stockton at 12:01 a.m. and arriving Oakland at 6:30 a.m. Way Freight No. 91 departed Stockton at 8:00 a.m. daily except Sunday and arrived Oakland at 5:25 p.m.

One additional freight train operated between Stockton and Carbona. Train No. 193 departed Stockton on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and arrived Carbona at 11:59 a.m. This train then ran as an extra on the 13-mile Tesla branch. Returning No. 192 departed Carbona at 5:00 p.m. and arrived Stockton at 7:30 p.m.

When the WP acquired the Alameda & San Joaquin Railroad the section between Carbona and Stockton became the main line while the Carbona-Tesla section became the Tesla Branch. A 57-foot turntable was installed by A&SJ at Tesla in 1896 and was retired by the WP in 1939. A wye and water tank were located at the main line junction at Carbona. The name Carbona was changed to Tracy on May 2, 1965.

Engine service facilities on the First Subdivision were at Oakland and Stockton. Oakland had a roundhouse with eight 95-foot stalls, and an 80-foot turntable. A two-stall addition was constructed for servicing diesel locomotives and the turntable was replaced by a 110-foot one.

The first Stockton roundhouse was a three-stall wooden building with an 80-foot turntable built in 1910 at the old Flora Street yard located at Sacramento and Acacia streets. It was destroyed by fire on December 13, 1914. A temporary new structure was built on the same site and was used until about 1925 when the Flora Street yard was retired and a new yard and engine facility were built at the present location south of town. A ten-stall reinforced concrete roundhouse was built at this site and an 80-foot turntable installed. In 1938 the turntable was replaced with a 110-foot one. In 1943 one stall of wooden construction and a leanto cleaning room were added to this roundhouse. The Stockton roundhouse was removed by the Union Pacific in March 1984.

WP's First Subdivision, when first constructed had only one branch line, the former A&SJ 13-mile Carbona-Tesla branch. The railroad's original charter prohibited the railroad from building any branch lines until the first mortgage was paid off. This changed in 1920 when construction began on the San Jose branch which was built from Niles Junction to West San Jose. This branch was opened to freight traffic in 1921 with the last rails spiked into place at West San Jose in 1922. WP built a small yard at 22nd and Williams Street in East San Jose. A four-stall roundhouse with an 80-foot turntable was built at this location in 1923. For a short time, passenger service was offered on this branch from a depot located at East Santa Clara street. A nightly local freight, pulled by one of the 2-8-0s operated from East San Jose to the main line connection at Niles Junction and return.

The first years of operation found both a lack of freight and passenger business for the new railroad. In 1915 the railroad entered receivership and was reorganized. On June 6, 1916 the Western Pacific Railroad was incorporated, replacing the Western Pacific Railway.

Western Pacific's Oakland Yard was located at Middle Harbor road. From this location, trains crossed the Southern Pacific Oakland-San Jose main line at a crossing protected by Magnolia Tower. Once across the SP tracks, the line ran down the middle of Oakland's Third Street to its depot at Third and Washington streets. Leaving Third Street, the line paralleled the SP's line, which was located several blocks to the west. At Melrose, WP crossed SP tracks that were once used by SP's Red Electric interurban trains to Dutton Avenue. Today this crossing is used by SP to access several industrial customers located in the area. At Elmhurst another SP industrial spur was crossed.

In 1913, WP built Niles Tower at the location of where the WP crossed the SP's main line. This was one of the few WP manned towers, on the railroad. WP charged SP 80 percent of the structure's maintenance cost, based on the amount of work handled by the two railroads at this location. This tower was closed on January 16, 1986. In June 1986 vandals torched the tower, destroying the second story. A second fire later that year destroyed what little was left of the structure. Today this crossing is handled by Union Pacific train dispatched in Omaha, Nebraska.

(continued next month)

BN fuel depot planned

**Rail official says project is being studied;
other reports sound more definite**

**By THOMAS RYLL
The Columbian**

*(From the Friday, March 1, 1996 Money section)
(Reprinted with the permission of The Columbian)*

Two 300,000-gallon diesel fuel tanks and reactivation of a long-idle locomotive turntable are part of a plan for a Burlington Northern Santa Fe freight yard in west Vancouver.

Gus Melonas, a BNSF spokesman in Seattle, declined to elaborate on the project. "We are studying the possibility of moving our refueling depot to Vancouver, and a decision is possible by spring," he said Thursday.

However, environmental documents filed with the city of Vancouver describe an extensive project that would include a series of tanks, loading and unloading facilities, a small office building and other features.

A footnote of interest to rail fans is the plan to put the rail yard's turntable back to work. The table was originally housed in a 1910-vintage roundhouse that was destroyed in a September 1970 fire. "The table was scrapped and the pit was partially demolished and filled. The decision has been made to refurbish the turntable and return it to service," says a report to the city by a Kansas City, Mo., consulting engineering firm working for BNSF.

The railroad currently refuels its locomotives at a Portland facility. That system is inefficient because much of BNSF traffic operates north and east of Vancouver. The location of the fuel depot means locomotives must at times be ferried to Portland only to have their 3,000-gallon tanks refilled and then return to Vancouver to be put back into service.

Major elements of the railroad's proposal:

- Two 300,000-gallon, above-ground diesel fuel tanks, which would be surrounded with a concrete dike for spill protection. Each tank would be 40 feet in diameter and 32 feet high.
- A 25,000-gallon tank for reclaimed oil, and an 8,000-gallon tank for lubricating oil.
- A 1,625-square-foot office building and five storage buildings of 96 or 240 square feet each.

Plans also call for a system to handle methanol, which is used as a diesel additive to thin the fuel in cold weather; and eventual installation of a hopper-car unloading system, compressor and storage tank. Those three features are related to delivery of sand, which is used for traction on slippery rails.

The turntable site is just south of 39th Street. The tanks, offices and other facilities would be south of that site.

The city's environmental review report notes that the proposed work is in an area that is already heavily industrialized, and that homes to the east are 800 feet away.

The only aspect of the proposal that drew a proposed "mitigation measure" is control of dust during construction. Watering of traveled areas and materials being transported is "considered sufficient to keep particulate emissions to a minimum at all times during construction," a city notice says.

The editor wishes to thank the unknown contributor of this article. Comments regarding this project were due in to Andrew Reule, associate planner, P.O. Box 1995, Vancouver, WA, 98668, (360-696-8005) by March 12, prior to the deadline for The TRAINMASTER.



FILES/The Columbian

This 1955 aerial photo shows Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway Company roundhouse and shops at lower left of photo.

1996 NRHS CONVENTION UPDATE

The annual convention in Charlotte is taking shape with three excellent mainline trips. The final plans are as follows:

June 18-Steam trip on the Great Smoky Mountains Railway from Dillsboro to Andrews.

June 20-Rare mileage trip on CSX (ex-SAL) from Monroe to Acme, through Hamlet.

June 21-Seminars/train show/barbecue dinner. National Meetings.

June 22-Rare mileage trip on CSX (ex-SAL main) from Monroe to Greenwood, SC.

June 23-Circle trip from Charlotte on NS (Southern) over the Blue Ridge via the loops at Old Fort and returning down Saluda grade.

This convention will cover North Carolina almost from east to west; taking in the nation's steepest mainline grade, one of the country's longest tangent tracks and the biggest remaining roundhouse—all in one week. Registration is \$20 per person. 1996 convention, P.O. Box 297, Spencer, NC 28159. Details available after March 1. Convention telephone (704) 647-0508.

(From The Hot Box-Atlanta Chapter, NRHS, Feb., '96)

DUMB AND DUMBER AWARD: The booby prize goes to two motorists for delaying 26,000 inbound commuters on Metra's Burlington Northern line on April 21, 1995. While facing each other on opposite sides of lowered crossing gates in Riverside, Illinois both motorists decided simultaneously to drive around the gates. You guessed it! They met in the middle and both cars were demolished by a Metra express train. The drivers managed to flee the scene before the impact and no injuries were recorded. Metra commuters, however, were delayed up to 30 minutes while the debris was cleared away. The two winners received multiple traffic citations. [Orderboard, Fast Mail, RRE]

Just last month I saw an 18 wheeler drive around the gates on Highway 25 in Calera. Fortunately the train involved was the local switcher and it was coming slowly. The truck got away.

Bill Boone *(from Cinders from the Smokestack, Mar. '96)*

SPAGHETTI DINNER

TO BE SERVED BY
THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER
OF THE
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PUBLIC WELCOME

DATE: MAY 17, 1996 TIME: 6:00 P.M.
AT ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2800 S.E. HARRISON ST. PORTLAND, OREGON

ADULTS: \$5.00 CHILDREN 12 & UNDER: \$3.00

A RAILROAD RELATED PROGRAM WILL BE
PRESENTED FOLLOWING THE DINNER



ALL ARE WELCOME



COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Activities: Darel Mack, (503) 654-5017
Meeting Program Coordinator: Bob Terkelsen,
(503) 399-1882
Bylaws: Janet Larson, (503) 253-7436
Concessions: Marilyn Edgar, (503) 236-7271
Excursions: Irv Ewen, (503) 232-2441
Finance: Ed Ackerman (503) 649-6000
Library & Historical Foundation: Jim Loomis,
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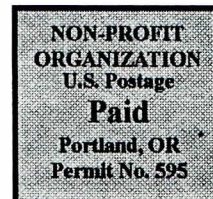
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