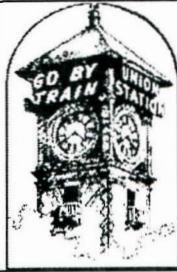


The

March
2005



Trainmaster

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



Pacific Northwest Chapter Timetable #512

Membership Meetings: March 18, April 15 7:30 PM,
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5415 SE Powell Blvd.

Board of Directors Meetings: March 10, April 7, Room 208, Union Station, 7:30 PM

Lending Library: March 19 & 26, April 16 & 30, 1:30 to 4 pm, check-out subject to loan agreement.

Annual Banquet: March 12. See announcements in January and February issues.

Notable Non-Chapter Events:

Mt. Hood Railroad Thomas the Tank Engine Visit June 25th to July 3



Union Station Painting Dedicated, Artist Honored

Artist J. Craig Thorpe, whose painting has been used as artwork on many items celebrating the 100th year of service for Portland's Union Station, gives a smile during a dedication of his painting in the station waiting room. As can be seen behind the artist, the painting now hangs on display inside the station, allowing the traveling public to view the artist's work. Photo contributed by chapter member and secretary Jim Long. See article by Arlen Sheldrake on page 4.

Chapter's 50th Anniversary

2005 marks the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Pacific Northwest Chapter. Bill Bain and Ed Berntsen are coordinating a project to incorporate our notable anniversary in the *Go By Train 2005* NRHS convention the Chapter is hosting July 5-9.

Bill and Ed want your pictures and/or slides that you took of notable Chapter events and activities. Many of our notable events are listed in the brief Chapter history in the current Membership Directory. Whether it was the making of a movie, one of the many, many Chapter excursions, dedication of the Union Station plaque, or the moving of the Jordan Spreader; all these and many more qualify as Chapter notable events. These pictures should include information the typical descriptive information of what, when and where.

Once your pictures and slides are received, Ed and Bill will put together a slide and/or PowerPoint presentation giving viewers a picture of what we have done over the past 50, yes 50 years as the first NRHS chapter west of the Rockies. Feel free to direct your questions to Ed at emb@harbornet.com or 253.383.2626 or Bill at bill@yaquina.com or 541.265.3012.

One idea for displaying this slide show came out of some brainstorming with Randy Rock at Union Station on December 19th while looking at the excellent rail car observation platform display built by Dick Ordway and Darel Mack. With reverse projection we could show this 50th Anniversary slide show in one of the platform's windows.

Please send your slides and/or pictures with descriptive information and your name and address on each slide or print by March 31, 2005 to Arlen Sheldrake, 1718 SW Parkview Court, Portland OR 97221-2640.

!!! Car & Bus Hosts Needed !!!

The Convention is coming and there will be an increased need for more car and bus hosts. If you are able, please contact Darel Mack at 503-723-3345. Here is your chance to do a little work, ride some great trips, and have lots of fun!!

2005 NRHS Convention – Register Now

You still have time to get registered for the *Go By Train 2005* July 5-9 NRHS Convention in Portland Oregon.

Our events kick off bright and early July 5th, the registration desk opens mid-day July 4th.

If you haven't already pre-registered, there are three easy ways to request a registration packet, send your NRHS membership number, name and mailing address:

E-mail: nrhs2005@msn.com

Enter information on our web site:

www.nrhs2005.com

Postal mail: *Go By Train 2005*, PO Box 6212, Aloha OR 97007-0212 USA

Registrations and event ticket orders must be submitted by June 1st. After June 1st registrations and event ticket orders will be accepted at the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Hotel Convention registration desk beginning July 4th.

Remember, we will need a whole bunch of volunteers to staff registration, car and bus hosting, safety monitors, stuffing 1000 registrant packets, and general helpers. Chapter members working the Convention need not register for the Convention but if you want to attend an event you will need to register for the Convention and purchase a ticket for that event. If you haven't already volunteered, send your name and interest to either the email or postal mail addresses listed. We need you to be a part of our Chapter's 50th anniversary celebration.

Snow Flanger Goes South

On January 22nd the Willamette & Pacific Railroad livery GP 39-2 *Monroe* with crew members David Anzur and Toby Van Altvorst with George Hickok observer did a hospital move of the Chapter's Snow Flanger from Greton to Hopmere on the former Oregon Electric. The next move of the Snow Flanger will be by Wayne Grippen Construction & House Moving on the highway to join the Chapter's Jordan Spreader at Antique Powerland Museum in Brooks Oregon.

Preparation for this move included George Hickok doing the air test with the portable air compressor and Pete Rodabaugh and Keith Fleschner draining the water from a couple of the bearing boxes and refilling all the friction bearing boxes with a new supply of oil. Pete and Keith also shadowed the move to Hopmere in case of problems.

While the body of the Southern Pacific SPMW #328 Snow Flanger needs a lot of work, the roof, which was replaced by Darel Mack several years ago, is still keeping the interior dry. The interior is a time capsule since the Southern Pacific left everything in place when they donated it to the Chapter. One

specific stipulation of the October 1981 SP donation is that the Snow Flanger is never again to be used in snow removal service.

Built for the Southern Pacific Railroad in the 1940s this may be the last wooden-body Snow Flanger in existence. Snow Flangers are still used by the railroads to remove snow from between the rails with the blades having to be raised before switches, grade crossings, and bridges.

Portland & Western Railroad provided this special move of the Snow Flanger in exchange with the Chapter for our providing a passenger coach for their employee special to Toledo during the summer of 2003.

Chapter volunteers are needed to get the Snow Flanger in shape for public display during APMA's steam-up the last weekend of July and the first weekend of August. Contact any Chapter Officer or Board member to volunteer your services. *Article by*

Arlen L. Sheldrake

Eagle Cap 2005 Season

The 2005 season opens for the *Eagle Cap Excursion Train* on May 28th. Linking Union and Wallowa Counties in Northeastern Oregon, the *Eagle Cap Excursion Train* passes through rugged canyons along side wild and scenic rivers in the Wallowa Valley with outstanding views of the Blue and Wallowa Mountains.

Excursions operate every Saturday with some Thursdays beginning May 28th and running through October 22nd. Runs vary from 40 to 60 roundtrip miles. Most departures are from the community of Wallowa. A dinner train operates on three different dates, June 11th, July 30th, and September 3rd.

The excursion trains are run by the volunteer organization Friends of the Joseph Branch with a professional train crew from the Wallowa Union Railroad. The Wallowa Union Railroad is 63 miles long and links the communities of Elgin, Wallowa, Enterprise and Joseph. The track is owned by the Wallowa and Union Counties.

For more information or tickets contact Alegre Travel at 541.963.9000 or 800.323.7330. Check the Eagle Cap web site for extensive information on the trips and the area: www.eaglecaptrain.com.

Record 2004 Ridership on Cascades

Amtrak *Cascades* announced record ridership of over 603,000 passengers during 2004 – a 2 percent increase compared to last year. This is the tenth

consecutive year of increased ridership aboard Amtrak *Cascades*.

The overall increase in Amtrak *Cascades* ridership is largely attributable to strong ridership from May through August, most notably between Bellingham, Seattle, and Portland. Passengers continue to comment on how affordable taking Amtrak *Cascades* is and the fact that they can relax, take in the scenery and enjoy their trip.

The Amtrak *Cascades* continues to rank near the top of Amtrak's 42-route national system in customer satisfaction. Features such as onboard movies, plug-ins for laptop computers, beautiful scenery, and the space for passengers to get up and move around continue to get rave reviews.

More information: www.amtrakcascades.com or 800-USA-RAIL. This information extracted from an Amtrak *Cascades* news release.

Other bits of information:

Private Varnish owners wishing to transit between Seattle and Portland must use the Coast Starlight. Private Varnish behind an Amtrak *Cascades* train would require a speed reduction. Private Varnish can transit between Vancouver BC and Seattle behind Amtrak *Cascades* trains.

The major renovation of the Albany Oregon station and grounds continues to make progress. The microwave tower has been moved and the station gutted. Major parking lot improvements are underway to the south. Passenger services are provided in a portable building.

Visitors to the Salem Amtrak station will be pleased to see a major re-roofing project underway for the railroad freight building located immediately south of the beautifully renovated station. For many years the building has been enclosed in plastic sheeting which was showing its age. Sources indicate that the owner of both buildings, the Oregon Department of Transportation, is working with the City of Salem on a possible purchase.

The ODOT Rail Division is publishing a new bi-monthly publication *All Aboard!*. Look for it on Oregon passenger station information racks or at future Chapter meetings.

McMenamins *Olympic Club* in downtown Centralia is promoting a Roy Gardner Great Train Escape package in conjunction with the Amtrak *Cascades* free companion fare available through May 26, 2005. For those not familiar with Centralia, the *Olympic Club's* back door opens almost directly to

Centralia's renovated railroad station and the BNSF mainline. At the first horn sound, if you're quick out the back door you will see a highballing freight or Amtrak squealing to a stop. The *Olympic Club* (hotel-theater-restaurant-pub facility) is one of many McMenamins historic treasures. More McMenamins information: 360.736.5164. You don't see the real Centralia from the I-5 freeway. *By Arlen L. Shel Drake*

Documenting History

The spring 2005 issue of Classic Trains magazine is full of interesting articles; one that is important to the Pacific Northwest begins on page 90.

My Freedom Train Adventure by Doyle McCormack is a great beginning to document this history for those involved in the restorations of Portland's steam locomotives. Memories are fading, everyone is getting older and some, regrettably, have reached end of track.

Please join me in complimenting Doyle for taking the time to have this article created and encourage him to do more articles. Many others, such as Chris McLarney and Ed Berntsen to name just two, should be doing the same. (Yes, I have been bugging them directly.) The history of the SP&S 700 and SP 4449 restorations must be preserved for future generations.

Thanks also to Kalmbach Publishing, publisher of Classic Trains, for helping to preserve an important part of Portland's history. These histories will be read and appreciated by many generations. *IMHO, Arlen L. Shel Drake*

Railfair '96 Image

As previously mention in *The Trainmaster*, the Railfair '96 painting commissioned by Rail Sensation Events Inc. (AORTA, PRPA, & Pacific Northwest Chapter) and painted by noted railroad artist J. Craig Thorpe now hangs in the lobby of Portland's Union Station.

The Union Station Concessionaire, Robert Kim, has for years been the primary retail outlet for note cards that display the Railfair '96 image. Sales have been steady over the years and should increase now that the painting is publicly displayed. Now this image, under agreement with J. Craig Thorpe, has been transferred to a tee shirt and coffee mug by Daylight Sales and is being sold along with other neat railroad tee shirts and mugs at the Union Station Concessions store.

The Railfair '96 image has Union Station in the background with the SP&S 700, City of Portland observation passenger car, Amtrak locomotive, and

the SP 4449 in the foreground. An observant viewer pointed out to me that the Amtrak locomotive was riding on rails supported by concrete ties, maybe a bit of hopeful artistic license.

My thanks to Robert and Daylight Sales for promoting our Railfair '96 celebration and Portland's Union Station treasure with this new tee shirt and coffee mug offering. *By Arlen L. Shel Drake*

30-Year Lease Signed

Yakima-based Columbia Basin Railroad in December 2004 signed a 30-year lease with Clark County Washington to operate the 33-mile rail line between Vancouver and Chelatchie Prairie.

As previously noted in *The Trainmaster*, the Columbia Basin Railroad has been operating this rail line, formerly operated by the Lewis & Clark Railway, since early 2004. The Columbia Basin lease can be renewed for an additional 20 years. In exchange for improvements to the track that could cost between \$6 million and \$9 million, Columbia Basin will use the line rent-free until it makes a profit.

The lease requires Columbia Basin to negotiate in good faith with the Battle Ground, Yacolt and Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Association (BYCX) to let the volunteer operation use the tracks for excursion trains north of Battle Ground. BYCX currently runs excursions out of Yacolt. BYCX volunteers have put in lots and lots of volunteer hours and donated money to get that section of the line operational.

The parent company of Columbia Basin is Pacific Standard Corporation that also runs the Spirit of Washington dinner train in Renton Washington. The potential of running a dinner train out of Vancouver on this line could be a reality in five years or so.

Some information for this article extracted from the December 22, 2004 Columbian.

Largest USA Swing Span Being Repaired

The largest operating swing span in the United States is undergoing a \$6.7 million repair after years of deferred maintenance.

Built by Willamette Pacific Railroad, which became part of Southern Pacific Railroad shortly after construction, the Coos Bay Drawbridge was first used in December 1915. The first passenger train crossed the bridge shortly thereafter, in August 1916.

The Port of Coos Bay is funding the repair of the rail bridge. The 458-foot swing span allows a 200-foot-wide shipping channel on each side of the center support pier, enough for a Panamax-sized vessel on each side. This long trestle and drawbridge

combination crosses the Coos Bay between Cordes and North Bend in southwest Oregon.

During this repair the bridge is closed to marine navigation from 7 AM to 5 PM each weekday with the bridge in open position allowing vessel movement from 5 PM to 7 AM. This schedule will now remain in effect to December 17th. Osmose Railroad Services is the general contractor for this project.

Since 1915 the bridge has undergone some repairs and modifications but seawater corrosion is unrelenting. In 1936 a steel and concrete jacket was secured to the swing span central pier. In 1989 the footing of pier 10 was retrofitted. Inspections in 1995, 1999 and 2002 identified continued deterioration of the structure. Approximately \$5 million of this \$6.7 million project is coming from

Federal TEA-21 approved by Congress in 1998. Approximately another \$10 million is needed for rehabilitating the fixed spans and approach trestles. The Port of Coos Bay plans to request additional Federal help in the years ahead.

Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad (CORP), one of the forty-six RailAmerica railroads, now operates this former Southern Pacific Coos Bay Branch Line. An extensive history of this and other Oregon lines is available in the excellent book *The Southern Pacific in Oregon* by Ed Austin & Tom Dill published by Pacific Fast Mail in 1987.

Information for this article from The Coos Bay World newspaper, Bob Melbo and other sources by Arlen Sheldrake.

February 2005 Minutes unavailable at time of publication.

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Treasurer: Kenneth I. Peters ('04, '05)
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National Director: Gerald Schuler 503. 285.7941

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Arlen Sheldrake (05, 06, 07) 503.223.7006
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Bob Jackson (03,04,05) 503. 231.4808
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T-M Deadline: 20th of previous month on most months.

Membership in our Organization is available to anyone with an interest in railroad history. Rates are: \$35 total - \$15 for Chapter, \$20 for National

Please be sure to inform the membership chair at Membership Services, PNWC-NRHS, P.O. Box 2384, Portland, OR 97208-2384 of any changes in the status of your address.

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