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THE TRAINMASTER

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May Meeting to be in Tacoma

The May meeting will be joint with the Tacoma Chapter NRHS (see below) and will be "Charter Night" for the Chapter. The meeting will be held at the Washington Natural Gas Company offices in Tacoma. To get there, take the freeway to Tacoma and use the 38th St. exit. Go west-bound to the stop light at the top of the hill. It is the first building east of the Post Office on the left side of the road. If you need a ride call Jack Holst at 255-0631 or Miln Gillespie at 222-6010 for a lift in the car pool which is being formed. The meeting is supposed to be 8:00 but since the distance from Portland makes it hard to get there by that time, the meeting will start when the Portland people arrive. An evening of top railfan movies and slides is being planned.

At this time we want to thank the group in Salem for a tremendous April meeting. With special thanks to Jay Blair and Nelson Hickok for the meeting place and the films viewed. Let's see another good group travel to Tacoma on May 21st.

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Usually the TRAINMASTER isn't published during the summer, but since the Convention is being held this year in Portland it will come out in June, July and August. Watch the TRAINMASTER for important news regarding the convention. The TRAINMASTER will probably be the way in which convention details and information will reach PNW Members and also to our exchange publications.

WELCOME TO TACOMA CHAPTER N.R.H.S.

At the quarterly Director's Meeting in Hartford, Conn. April 24th, the charter of the TACOMA Chapter of NRHS was approved. We of the Pacific Northwest Chapter are very glad that there are now two active chapters on the Pacific Coast, and we hope there will be more in the future. PNW member, Ed Bernsten, who is a Northern Pacific dispatcher in Tacoma, was instrumental in forming this fine group. Over half of them are railroaders (NP*GN) Their charter night is Friday May 21st, and a sizeable delegation of Pacific Northwest Chapter members will travel from Portland to join in the congratulations. Miln Gillespie will present their new charter on behalf of NRHS President E. Lewis Pardee. Tacoma Chapter will work closely with PNW members to help with the convention. This manpower aid is very much appreciated, and will be used to benefit all. INTERNATIONAL LIMITED passengers may have a number of "Railfan Surprises" in store for them when they arrive in Seattle for their afternoon layover. The Tacoma Chapter is offering to make their Seattle stay memorable. Knowing that "Gung Ho" outfit, I know it will be.

Miln Gillespie, VICE-PRESIDENT, West Coast
 Region N.R.H.S.

SP&S Gests Award for Dining Car Sanitation

For the second straight year the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Ry. has been cited for dining car sanitation excellence by the Public Health Service of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Russel W. Hart, associate health director and chief sanitary engineering office of Region IX, San Francisco, presented the award to Henry Wentzien superintendent of dining cars and Philip Hahn, car foreman.

Gunderson Bros. awarded rail order.

The great Northern Railway announced an order for 50 60ft, 70ton rail cars from Gunderson Bros. Engineering Corp, of Portland. The 6,000 cubic feet capacity cars will have roller-bearing trucks and feature open tops with a facility for end door unloading. Delivery on the cars, to be used in wood chip service, are expected to start in June of this year.

Gunderson Bros. has become a large builder of railcars of many types. Some cars seen rolling out of their shops were SP flats, gons, and bulk-head flats, UP cattle cars and gons: Alaska Railroad flats and bulkhead flats; Cotton Belt gons. The company is reported to be backordered for almost a year.

Railroad fare to Seattle goes up

Starting the 16th of May the roundtrip fare to Seattle will be \$5.95, up from the old \$4.95. The bus lines have also announced that their fares will go up to \$5.95 too. The new fare still figures to be one of the greatest travel bargains in the United States. The three daily, four hour, trains make it possible to spend an enjoyable day in Seattle by taking the morning pool train from Portland and returning on the evening pool train from Seattle. The trains carry a full line of equipment with a dining car, lounge and parlor cars on two of the trains (Union Pacific-Northern Pacific)

Black weekend in the Bay Area

What must have been one of the worst weekends in railfanning history was experienced by two PNW chapter members. Your editor and member Chris Pagni journeyed to the San Francisco region on the weekend of April 10-11. The trip was caused by the last run of a Sacramento Northern electric. We left Friday night on SP's "Cascade" which ran that night to 17 cars! If SP is trying (and succeeding) to remove passenger trains the "Cascade" didn't show it. The lounge and dining cars did a landoffice business all evening. The dinner of a special shrimp and rice mixture with a sauce poured over it was excellent. The meal was accompanied by a bottle of Beaulieu Vineyard Napa Valley White Wine which is bottled especially for the SP. The waiter was tops too. Our cramped seats were assigned to us by Al Hajj, SP reservations clerk and PNW Chapter member. (I wonder what Al has against me?)

Saturday morning was cloudy with a hint of rain, the perfect setting for a last train trip. Arriving in Yuba City we were greeted by Sacramento Northern steeple-cab electric 654 and two "cabeese". The train moved out of the station and up the main street of Yuba City to bridge which crosses over the river to Marysville. While running around on the trackage at Marysville there was a "drag" race with the California Zephyr in which we blew out the circuit breaker on the powerplant. The trip ended officially around 5:00 but a small group headed by Northern California Railroad Club president Paul Gordenev, rented the engine to make a last last run. This extra trip proved to be the highlight of the whole day. The first run down through the yard succeeded in moving us into dead wire! Only rigging a makeshift jumper by lashing two trolley poles together were we able to move the engine to live wire. Then the pantograph wouldn't go up. We then moved down through the yard passed the station and onto "B" Street. Earlier we had put a caboos on the ground right in the middle of the street, but this time, with the engine only, we made it. The engine moved slowly down the street with its bell clanging loudly and the engine covered with railfans. We swung around a sharp left corner, stopped for the SP crossing and went into a packing plant until we couldn't see the rails anymore. The return trip up the street was accompanied by many blasts on the peanut whistle, the loud sound of the air horn and the ringing bell. There was time for one last high speed run down through the yards in which we hit close to 45 mph, this took some doing for the engine hadn't been this fast in many years. The engine tied up at the station, the pantograph was lowered air drained from the tanks, the control handles, fire extinguisher, water jug and a box for odds and ends were removed and the doors locked. Thus was the end of the Sacramento Northern's electrification system, once the longest interurban ride over a single system in the United States. Saturday night was also the last trip of SP Nos. 19 & 20, the Oakland-Portland Mail train. Sunday night was also the last trip of the SP night train from San Francisco to Los Angeles nos 57 & 58 "The Owl". On Sunday we boarded the ATSF's San Francisco Chief for Fresno. This was my first trip on the Santa Fe and they didn't disappoint

me. The meal in the Fred Harvey diner was excellent and the lounge car had very good refreshments. (At one point I clocked the train a little of 90mph) At Fresno the connection was made for the trip back to San Francisco on the Santa Fe's "Golden Gate". The train arrived on time pulled by a pair of Alco passenger units and followed by seven filled coaches and a vando-lounge. This train was making its last run! The cars weren't filled by railfans but by ordinary travelers. Again the Santa Fe showed what a railroad they are, on time arrival at Richmond, friendly attendents in the lounge and chair cars and some very fast running.

The only bright spot in the whole weekend was the fact that on Monday the trail run would be made on the test track of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

1965 CONVENTION NOTES

Only remaining question is the matter of the possibility of steam power on the Longview, Portland & Northern Railway trip to Chelatchie Prairie on Labor Day. If we cannot get their 2-8-0 into service (due to both logistical and policy problems), we still promise a fine trip on a shortline lumber carrier using mill gons and side rail flats, plus the first fan trip to that destination. As this rail trip will be over by 3:00 PDT, we will make connections with all trains: S.P. #11 "Cascade" for San Francisco and south; N.P. #407 for Seattle-both leaving from Portland Union Station. In addition, we can make a SAFE connection with SP&S #2, the combined "Empire Builder-North Coast Limited" at Vancouver, Washington station for all points east. Our special charter busses will connect with each of these trains.

Our "first mailing" letter and initially reply postcard should be out of the hands of the printer shortly, and mailed to every NRHS member. This letter gives a complete sketch of all convention activities.

Already we have been receiving a large quantity of letter inquiring about the Convention. We are answering these as rapidly as possible-in fact I have put a committee on this to speed up replies. This is all very challenging to us, and we look forward to your enjoying the best convention ever!

Sincerely,
Miln Gillespie, Chairman
1965 NRHS Convention

REPAIRS CONTINUE AT SHADY DELL OPERATION

The work of rebuilding the miniature railway of the Pacific Northwest Live Steamers at Shady Dell is nearing completion. All track is in and ballasted with only the tamping and leveling to be done. Major filling and bridge work is completed. The picnic area is now being restored and should be finished shortly. The operation this summer should be better than ever, with several new steam engine under construction and the work on a 900lb. SP SD-9 nearing completion. Watch the June TRAINMASTER for more details on the Shady Dell operation which will be one of the places visited during the 1965 Convention.

EXCURSIONS

On June 19th the Northern California Railroad Club is running a steam-powered special train on the McCloud River Railroad using steamer #25, a 2-6-2. Open bench cars and cabooses will be used. The train will leave McCloud at 10:00am for the trip to Burney Falls State Park. The tickets cost \$12.00 for adults and are available before June 10th from Paul A. Gordenev, 1501 Fernside Blvd. Alameda, Calif. 94501

Sunset Tours will operate a special train over the Oregon Electric Ry. to Sweet Home, Oregon on Saturday, June 19th. This train will be going over a branch which has never (ed, to my knowledge) seen regularly scheduled passenger service. The line runs down the Willamette Valley and enters the Santiam River Valley up into the timber country surrounding Sweet Home. The price is \$6.95 and includes lunch. The train leaves Portland at 10th & Hoyt St. at 7:30am and return to Portland at 8:30pm. There is the possibility that passengers may board the train in Beaverton thereby gaining about an hour of extra sleep.

Sunset Tours is also running a special tour to Colorado in June. PNW members will have a flyer with this issue of the TRAINMASTER. Information on these trips and the Sunday Steam Excursions over the Vernonia, South Park and Sunset Steam Railroad can be obtained by writing the VSP&SSRR General Offices Taggart Bldg. 400 N.W. Beaverdam Rd. Beaverton, Oregon 97005, ph.644-5759.