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THE TRAINMASTER

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NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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All exchange news letters should be sent to the Chapter's business address:

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THE TRAINMASTER

Number 162 - February 1973

PNW CHAPTER TIMETABLE

Friday
16 February

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

8 PM

The February meeting will take place in Burlington Northern's Safety Assembly Room which is situated in the long building on the east side of N W 11th Avenue extended, north of Hoyt Street (almost to the Lovejoy Ramp of the Broadway Bridge).

Program to be announced.

Refreshments served. These are arranged for by Mrs Cora Jackson, Supt of Dining and Sleeping Car Services.

Friday
19 March

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

8 PM

BN's Safety Assembly Room will also be the location for the March meeting. Program to be announced. Refreshments-

Plan ahead. Reserve the date now. "The Trainmaster", mailed under third class permit, sometimes takes weeks to reach the membership so can not be counted on as a meeting notice for the current month.

Every
Saturday

INFORMAL LUNCHEON

Noon

Yaw's Top Notch Restaurant, located at 2001 N E 40th Avenue, is the scene of this weekly gathering. A large table is reserved for the group, usually at the rear of the seating area on the west side of the building. The hostess or the cashier will direct you to the "railroad bunch for lunch".

Although this is an unofficial function of the PNW Chapter, it is attended regularly by several members and their friends.

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10 PM by Vice President Ken Dethman in the BN Safety Assembly Room in Portland. The minutes of the November meeting were approved as corrected.

Ed Berntsen moved that the Chapter not join TRAIN (Tourist Railway Association Inc.) at this time due to the expense involved and because at present most of the technical information and assistance available to TRAIN members is already available elsewhere to this Chapter. Motion carried.

Roger Phillips reported that the New Year's Eve trip Eugene to Oakland on Amtrak with our ex-SP&S lounge car Mount Hood was cancelled due to lack of enough passengers to cover costs.

Chapter Mech. Supt. Jim Gilmore reported on the Mount Hood at Cottage Grove:

1. New batteries were purchased and have been installed;
2. The 7½ KW generator from the baggage-dormitory car was installed on the Mt. Hood;
3. All electrical equipment has been inspected, and a short in the system (probably to one of the marker lights) needs repair;
4. The car was thoroughly cleaned in anticipation of the Oakland trip;
5. The Waukesha unit needs repair before the car is used with air conditioning in service.

Ed Berntsen reported on a letter from the City of Portland Park Bureau requesting assistance running a train trip for a group of mentally retarded people. The Park Bureau suggested a trip on Saturday March 17 or 24. Ed moved that Chapter personnel assist the Park Bureau with a train trip for these people on a Saturday in March or April and the motion carried.

Roger Phillips announced a tentative trip for February 17 to Seattle via Amtrak with a trolley coach trip around Seattle.

Ed Berntsen moved that the Chapter establish a literature sales program and that funds for a stock of material be appropriated by the board of directors. Motion seconded and passed on a show of hands.

Chuck Storz reported that the publisher will be working on the Chapter's SP&S book again in the near future and that action photos of late SP&S steam and early diesels are needed to complete the expanded format.

The meeting was adjourned at 11 PM.

The program preceding the meeting featured Alex Ceres' slides of Pennsylvania and Eastern U.S. electrified railroads, and Alfred Haij presented slides of the last years of Portland and Los Angeles city and interurban electric operations.

---Chuck Storz, Chapter Secretary

THIS IS THE 28TH SO IT MUST BE RENFE

by Ed Immel*

In the last episode in the furthering travels of The Trainmaster's European Bureau Chief he was riding down a mountainside in a funicular with a bunch of singing Germans. Chapter two will recount observations gathered on a 16 day, 5,000 mile survival exercise through six European countries. The Christmas trip was to be from Germany to Spain with a return by way of Italy. What follows are some highlights of the trip.

PARIS

Once the confusion of having six different railroad stations is overcome and a map of the Metro is acquired, travel in Paris is quite easy. The subway lines vary from the new rubber-tired equipment to old steel cars built before World War II. On the old equipment the motor noise is so loud it is enough to bring tears to an electric fan's eyes.

PARIS TO NIMES

This leg of the excursion combined first class service on the train Le Bourbonnaise between Paris and Clermont-Ferrand with a ride on a dome railcar through the Massif of Southern France. The railcar is a good ride since you can sit up front with the engineer or ride in the dome section. The line between Clermont-Ferrand and Nimes is through extremely rugged country and should be included in any travel plans made by a railfan.

NIMES TO BARCELONA

This section of the trip was to see if the third rail operation reported to have operated in the Pyrenees was still in existence. It took three rail connections in two hours to bring me to the town of Villa Franche where stood some of the oldest electric equipment I have ever seen that awaited passengers off our Renault railcar. The operation is open-country running with third rail in cars that were just recently metal covered since the interior is completely wood. When the third rail shoe slid over the unprotected rail that was covered with frost, showers of sparks would be thrown from the trucks of the little cars. The train came complete with a sheep herder who ate his cheese and salami and then washed it all down with drinks from a gallon jug of wine.

The scenery is tremendous and words can't really describe the countryside through which the train ran. At the summit of the run there was a meet with another train and time was available to take pictures. There was a double-ender snow plow and some other equipment, all bathed in the brilliant sunshine.

* "European Bureau Chief"

"This is the 28th so it must be RENFE", cont'd

at the 5,000 foot elevation. The trip down to La Tour de Carol was a series of switchback loops as the train snaked its way back and forth on the sides of a large valley.

At La Tour de Carol a decision had to be made whether to go right to Toulouse or left to Barcelona. The answer had to be thought over, and what better way than to eat a good French meal in the station and see what kind of equipment arrived from Spain or France. The Spanish Railway train came rushing into the station and the choice was made; on to Barcelona!

Since the Spanish and French railways have different gauges there is usually a change of equipment at the border with the Spanish Railways (RENFE) crossing into France or vice versa. After going through customs and finding a seat on the electric MU set it was discovered that the track which allowed the Spanish train to roar into the station was maintained by the French Railways and once the train got into Spain (150 yards) the speed dropped to about 30 miles per hour all the way into Barcelona.

One quick note about Barcelona; there are no more streetcars in that city. In fact one of the old Washington, DC cars was seen on display in an open field in northern Spain, probably 150 miles from where it once operated.

BARCELONA TO MADRID

This portion of the trip was made by TALGO train which seems to have been embraced by RENFE as the answer to their desire for modern equipment since most major lines have at least one TALGO train a day over them. The train is very nice and the meals served by Wagon Lits were very good. However, the train ride suffers at times from bad track which can make the trip uncomfortable. On welded rail the train is excellent although the public address system which plays background music must have taken its speakers from old crystal sets - it is really bad.

This brings us to two comments that should be made about the Spanish Railways and Wagon Lits:

Spanish Railways - Spanish train reservations are enough to drive a sane person into a mental hospital. The Spanish have reached the perfection in train reservations - for every minute you ride on the train, one minute is consumed waiting in line for a reservation and RENFE requires reservations on most trains or they throw you off.

A hint to anyone planning a trip to Spain, allow one day in each major city to make a reservation to get you to the next city. Also, you can not make return reservations from the city in which you left unless you want to pay the cost of a telegram and have the time to wait for an answer. In addition, you can make reservations only for the trains that leave the city you are in unless you again want to stand the cost of a telegram.

"This is the 28th so it must be RENFE", cont'd

Barcelona has one of the most confusing situations in regards to reservations; if you want to get space on the TEE "Catalan Talgo" you have to go to the North Station and not the station from which the train leaves! Other international trains travel the same route and leave from the Termini Station, but only the "Catalan" has to be booked from the North Station.

Wagon Lits - When one goes into the dining car on RENFE and looks at the menu you realize that Jesse James never died, but is now the head of Wagon Lits. Meal prices would make an old SP rider choke. Dinner is usually over \$6 with beverages extra; a pot of tea is 80¢ and a ½ ounce cup of coffee costs 50¢. This type of pricing is found wherever Wagon Lits is in charge of meal service.

While the passengers fork up a ransom to get a cup of coffee and a roll, the dining car crew sits down to a meal that makes the table groan under the weight of all the food (in Italy it was pasta, soup, salad, veal, rice, desert, and wine at 7:30 AM being eaten in front of all the passengers!).

Two remarks about Madrid; no streetcars are left and the subway has some of the oldest equipment around which is usually packed to the ceiling.

MADRID TO ALGECIRAS

The plan was to use this train to catch a boat to Morocco, but allowances were not made for being four and a half hours late into Algeciras, missing all the day boats. If we continued on to Africa we would be faced with the situation of being stranded there for the weekend since there were no weekend boats.

The day was doubly bad since I was suffering from drinking 10¢ a quart wine in celebrating my wife's birthday the night before. Also, the goat's cheese and sunflower seeds did not help either.

A decision was made to continue on to Granada. The ten hour trip on a rail car was ended with a hot bath and a huge meal to close out a long, long, day of train riding.

GRANADA

Besides being the site of Spain's number one tourist attraction, the Moorish castle of Alhambra, Granada is also possessed with Spain's oldest streetcars. A ride to Pinos Puente for 18¢ (for a distance of 13 kilometers) is a real travel bargain when one sees the equipment. The people-catchers are bouncing along the rail, the car has a worse swayback than a 110 year old horse, and if the windows are dirty the countryside can still be enjoyed since gaps open up in the wooden sides big enough to

"This Is the 28th so It must be RENFE", cont'd

stick a hand through. In short, this is just what every railfan is looking for in exotic rides.

What was not figured on was being stranded in Pinos Puente for an hour in the evening's darkness, besieged by beggars, children just standing and staring and watching a group of farmers chase some loose mules through the streets of town. All the while we were being entertained by a group of singing drunks in the town's cantina.

SPAIN TO ITALY

The remainder of the trip to Italy was uneventful with only the changing of wheels sets on the "Catalan Talgo" of any real rail interest. The whole train is run through a special track that either spreads the wheels on the axles or pushes them in depending on which direction a person is traveling. I saw no steam in Spain although I did get some pictures of rows of dead engines at Alicante.

ROME AND ITALY

Italy's Railways (FS) must have the oldest equipment in Europe along with some of the newest. The "Super Rapido" between Genoa and Rome averages almost 72 miles per hour while the regular train still has wooden second class seats.

Rome's streetcars seem to run everywhere even though there are only five lines left. I observed trackless trolley wire on many streets, but not a trolley bus was to be seen running under this wire.

The "Setebello" from Rome to Milan is showing its age with the front observation windows scratched so bad that it is almost impossible to see out of them.

The Italians are building a new "super railroad" between Rome and Florence that involves miles of bridges to cross valleys and long tunnels and cuts to get through the separating hills. Completion looks to be a couple of years away, but should be quite a ride when completed.

MILAN

This has got to be the streetcar fan's best operation in Italy. The equipment is old, but the insides are so heavily varnished that the walls could be used for a mirror. The cars are a two-man operation with no heat, and in December that can make for some cold railfanning. The city's system is very extensive with lines crossing and recrossing each other in a maze of tracks and routes.

MILAN BACK TO NIEDERNHAUSEN

Between Milan and Innsbruck, were observed the only stations that I saw.

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with steam, and most of them quite small in size. The TEE from Milan to Munich was new, being built in 1972 and was probably the finest train ridden on the trip - it could not be faulted. The trip over Brenner Pass and through Innsbruck is loaded with scenery and railfan appeal. It would have to be included on any European trip.

From Munich it was back to Niederhausen to collapse in the apartment after the 5,000 mile sojourn. The next day was spent separating film for mailing, laundering a mountain of dirty clothes, and planning for the trip to England this spring. I for one will not make the mistake of Irv Ewen (your illustrious editor) of ordering Yorkshire pudding for desert!

Tune in later as your European Bureau Chief does battle with language problems in England and wrestles with British Rail.

YVT FRANCHISE RENEWED

Yakima Valley Transportation Company, the freight-only 21-mile electrified Union Pacific subsidiary, received a new five-year franchise for street operation from the City of Yakima, Wash., in December 1972. YVT operates extensive street trackage in Yakima serving numerous fruit packing plants, with branches extending to nearby Selah, Wiley City, and Henryboro. The line has recently encountered flack from Yakima city planners who don't consider a railroad in the streets to be part of Yakima's future. However, after much discussion when the previous franchise expired in July 1972, a five-year renewal was granted permitting continued operation through 1977. Shippers on line aren't eager to truck their produce downtown for reloading into rail cars that could be, and are currently spotted at their suburban plants, and presumably will continue strong support of the YVT's existence. The line operates two locomotives, GE steeplecab 298 and Baldwin-Westinghouse boxcab 297, and is expected to remain electrified for the foreseeable future because the tight traction-line curves won't handle any diesel yet tested that has the pulling capacity of the electric engines.

Passenger service on YVT was discontinued in 1948. Three of the line's streetcars were transferred to the Portland Traction Company until 1958, and now are preserved and operational at the Puget Sound Railway Historical Association museum in Snoqualmie, Wash.

BN PURCHASES 1000 GRAIN HOPPERS IN PORTLAND

Burlington Northern awarded an \$18 million contract Feb. 8 to Gunderson Inc. division of FMC Corp. at Portland for construction of 1000 covered hopper cars with 100-ton, 3300-bushel capacity, (BN 451600-452599) for grain service. Gunderson is now turning out UP boxcars, and will start the BN cars in June for completion in October for the fall grain rush.

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ITT-RAYONIER TO CLOSE SEKIU LINE

ITT-Rayonier Inc. will close its Clallam Division logging railroad in April 1973, extending from Hoko Camp near Forks, Wash., to tidewater at Sekiu, on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Rayonier will rebuild the barge slip at Sekiu to move out the three Baldwin diesels and 2-6-6-2T No. 8. Lokey 8, stored since last operating on a ballast train about 1963, is owned by members of Puget Sound Railway Historical Association and will probably be moved either to their Snoqualmie museum or a Shelton storage site.

The Clallam Division, formerly Bloedel-Donovan Lumber Mills and Ozette Timber Company, was never rebuilt from the stump-dodging line laid early in this century to get the logs out quickly, and has been gradually phased out as operating costs continued to rise. Recently, log trains have operated only between inland reloads and have not dumped into tidewater at Sekiu. Picturesque Hoko Camp, one of the last full-fledged logging camps in the Pacific Northwest, is also being completely phased out.

ITT-Rayonier's other Olympic Peninsula operation, the Grays Harbor Division line north from New London near Hoquiam, Wash., to Crane Creek Reload near Lake Quinalt, continues in full swing, with log trains hauled by four ex-SP Baldwin AS-616 roadswitchers. A fifth Baldwin, formerly Kalsør Steel's Eagle Mountain Railway 1028, arrived with the new year, and will go into service in March. This line was rebuilt to heavy mainline standards between 1958 and 1962, and is expected to continue hauling logs for several decades.

CPR CONTINUES ELECTRIFICATION STUDY

CP Rail is constructing a quarter-mile section of overhead catenary at Ross Peak on its main line near Revelstoke, B.C., for the next stage of an electrification feasibility study that began in 1970. Purpose of the test is to determine the cost and the difficulties experienced in erecting catenary under northern mountain conditions, and to assess the effects of the severe winter climate on the structure. The test section is being equipped with functional hardware, but will not be energized. Supervising construction is British Insulated Calendar Cable Company.

CP Rail's study of the feasibility of electrifying its Calgary-Vancouver main line has already included electric locomotive performance tests in Norway and Switzerland. These tests, says the railroad, confirmed that "modern electric locomotives could achieve traction levels 50% higher than the diesel-electric locomotives now in use." Studies are continuing on sources of electrical supply and the economic consequences of converting to electric power.

--RAILWAY AGE--12-25-72.

----Watch for completion this spring of the new Victoria Station restaurant in the 6500 block of SW Macadam in Portland. The restaurant is one of a chain in the U.S. and uses old boxcar and caboose bodies for a building.