

NOV 75

THE TRAINMASTER

Room 1, Union Station
800 NW 6th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97209

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ORGANIZATION
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Portland, Oregon
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Otter Rock, OR 97369

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PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER
 NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 (an Oregon Non-Profit Corporation)



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pacific northwest chapter

THE TRAINMASTER

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PNW CHAPTER TIMETABLE

Every
Saturday

WORK PARTY ON CHAPTER'S SLEEPER-LOUNGE CAR "MT HOOD"

1 PM

Each Saturday, rain or shine (special events excepted), a handful of dedicated Chapter members gather at the BN's Ninth St Roundhouse yards (at the south end of Track 5) to perform maintenance and repair on the Mt Hood to make it roadworthy for charter use. Special talents welcomed, but not required. Many helping hands needed. Contact John Holloway (phone 246-5752).

Tues, Wed,
Thur, & Fri

AMERICAN FREEDOM TRAIN VISIT TO PORTLAND

11, 12,
13, & 14
November

For four long days the American Freedom Train will be on display at Portland's Union Station. In addition to the famous steam engine ex-SP 4449 (which was restored in Portland early this year) visitors will be able to see two "showcase cars" and ten exhibit cars.

8 AM - 10 PM

Tickets, available at several Fred Meyer Shopping Centers, are: \$2 for teenagers and adults, \$1 for senior citizens and children 3 to 12 years of age. Children under 3 years admitted free.

Saturdays
and
Sundays

24th ANNUAL COLUMBIA GORGE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB SHOW

8 & 9
15 & 16
22 & 23
November

For the three weekends indicated at the left Portland's largest operating model railroad will be open to the public. The clubroom housing the 20 ft by 55 ft H0 scale layout is located at 3405 North Montana Avenue (just south of Fremont Street) in Portland, Oregon.

1 PM - 8 PM

Admission fees are: 75¢ for adults, 50¢ for children under 12 years of age, and 25¢ for scouts in uniform.

"PNW Chapter Timetable", cont'd

Friday REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING (3rd Friday of each month)

21 November PNW Chapter's November meeting will be held in the Burlington
8 PM Northern Safety Assembly Room which is located about two
 blocks north of the intersection of N W Hoyt Street at 11th
 Avenue in the building on the right side (almost under the
 Lovejoy ramp to the Broadway Bridge). Contact one of the
 Chapter Officers listed inside the front cover (opposite
 page one) if more information is needed.

Refreshments will be served (prepared by Cora Jackson) following the business session. Donations are gratefully received by the "kitty" which are used to defray costs of this operation.

Walt Grande, Program Chairman, has arranged a multi-faceted program for the evening. To start things off, George Crockett of Milwaukie (Oregon) will show 16mm movies taken of transportation in the Portland area during the 1930's and 40's which include Southern Pacific steam, interurbans, and old autos.

The second feature will be "Brave New North", a 16mm sound movie on ore hauling over the White Pass and Yukon Railroad.

To close out the program the Chapter will hold an auction of railroadiana. Members are urged to bring donations of items to be sold with proceeds going to the Chapter's treasury. As before, there is also the option where a member can "sell" an item for a minimum base price which he retains with any excess going to the Chapter. Questions should be directed to Walt Grande (phone 246-3254).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE APPOINTED

At the regular meeting held on Friday, 17 October President Ed Immel appointed three PNW Chapter members to serve as a nominating committee to propose a slate of officers for 1976. Anyone having suggestions (or wishing to volunteer to serve!) should contact:

- Cora Jackson 'phone 774-3802
- Chuck Lund " 646-6322
- Roger Phillips* " 282-7691

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor for any of the Chapter Offices at the election to be held at the next regular meeting to be held on Friday, 21 November.

*Replaces W Kenneth McFarling

OREGON'S RAILWAY POST OFFICES - - GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Four and a half years have passed since Pacific Northwest Chapter members received souvenir envelopes mailed aboard the last Railway Post Office run to originate in Oregon. It was on 30 April 1971 that the Spokane Pasco & Portland RPO left Portland for the last time as part of Burlington Northern Train 24 to Spokane, Washington.

Since the advent of Amtrak the New York & Washington (DC) route has remained as the only RPO in operation in the United States or Canada. At this time it seems that the status quo may remain for the foreseeable future with neither "The Wash Line", as it is nicknamed, being discontinued nor additional RPO's being created. It should be noted that the New York & Washington RPO cars operate on overnight Penn Central trains 3 and 4 which are not part of Amtrak consists.

Rubber-tired post offices have fared no better than the flanged-wheel variety. The nation's last Highway Post Office ("HPO") route was discontinued between Cleveland and Cincinnati on 30 June 1974.

Some two dozen HPO's remained in 1971 at the time the number of RPO's was cut from eight to one. The last HPO in Oregon was the Portland & San Francisco ND (North Division) route between Portland and Ashland. This run was, in effect, a remnant of the railway mail era. Its trip numbers were 329 southbound and 330 northbound, the same as Southern Pacific's last Portland to Ashland trains.

SP's Portland-Ashland "Oregonian" trains were renumbered from 33-34 to 329-330 in December of 1932. The overnight trains were renamed "Rogue River" in 1937 when the "Oregonian" name was reassigned to through Portland-Oakland trains operating via Klamath Falls. "Rogue River" trains 329-330 continued as the last passenger service on the original Siskiyou Line until 7 August 1955. At the time of discontinuance Highway Post Office trips 329-330 replaced the RPO's on an almost identical schedule.

The Portland & San Francisco ND HPO continued until September 30, 1971 and was the last HPO in the western United States at the time of its discontinuance.

This brief review of Oregon's mobile post office history has mentioned only the final years of a century-long service. From the time the Portland & St Joseph and Portland & Roseburg RPO's were founded in the 1870's until the last RPO and HPO runs were discontinued a century later, approximately 150 Railway Post Offices and perhaps a dozen Highway Post Offices operated within the State of Oregon.

Some RPO's, such as Baker & Canyon City (1936-1937) or Eugene & Dunsmuir (1927), lasted only a year or two before the terminal cities were changed and the routes reorganized. Other RPO's remained virtually unchanged for several decades; Portland & Corvallis (1881-1932) and Spokane Pasco & Portland (1909-1971) being such examples.

"Oregon's RPO's", cont'd

For persons interested in sorting out the often confusing history of the region's RPO's, a new organization was founded in 1974. The Northwest Railway Post Office Study Group was formed to assist enthusiasts researching the former Railway Mail Service's 13th Division (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska). While the group may appeal most to the postal historian segment of the stamp collecting fraternity -- avid collectors of envelopes bearing RPO postmarks -- anyone interested in the field is welcome to contact the NW RPO Study Group about membership information. Contact Chairman Gilbert Hulin at 4891 Donald Street in Eugene, Oregon - - 97405.

MILWAUKEE ACQUIRES LINE*

On 30 May 1975 the Milwaukee Road acquired the 12.3 mile Port Townsend Railroad. This railroad was incorporated on 19 August 1887 as the Port Townsend Southern Railroad Company. Plans at that time were to construct a line south on the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to connect with a major transcontinental carrier to the south. It was hoped that with the completion of the PT&SRR a major carrier would purchase the line and make Port Townsend its western terminus. Thus Port Townsend could become a major Pacific Coast seaport.

The PT&S completed 42 miles of track southwest of Port Townsend. In the teens when the Milwaukee Road reached the Pacific Coast they purchased the Seattle Port Angeles and Western Railroad which ran between Discovery Bay and Port Angeles. In 1915 the Milwaukee Road reached an agreement with the PT&S to use its line between Discovery Bay (Jct) and Port Townsend as a connecting link with its barge service from Seattle.

From 1917 to 1944 the PT&S was part of the Milwaukee Road before it was sold to Robert S Fox, who changed the name to Port Townsend Railroad.

Milwaukee Road Employees Magazine

*Adapted from Blackhawk Chapter, NRHS newsletter "The Spike & Tie", Oct 75

PNW CHAPTER NRHS

Summary of Minutes, Regular Meeting, 17 October 1975

The October meeting was called to order at 8:15 PM in the Burlington Northern Safety Assembly Room by PNW Chapter President Ed Immel.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer Jim Gilmore reported that membership in PNW Chapter has reached 95. Al Zimmerman suggested that any money which is surplus to immediate needs be put into the savings account.

Ed Immel announced the appointment of Chuck Lund, W Kenneth McFarling, and Cora Jackson as a committee of three to nominate a slate of Chapter Officers for 1976.

Ed Immel reported that the Chapter has received a request from Let's Travel Tours, a California corporation, to charter the Chapter owned sleeper-lounge car "Mt Hood" for tours to Mexico in April and October of 1976. The request has been turned over to the passenger car committee to work out details.

Mechanical chairman Jim Gilmore reported that repairs to the Mt Hood are in progress. Chapter personnel are rebuilding the 10 KW generator. Chuck Lund is repairing a short in the marker light circuit. The refrigerator motor has been rebuilt by John Holloway. The shock absorbers on the car's trucks have also been repaired.

Ed Immel announced a tentative New Year's Eve trip to Seattle and return on the sleeper lounge car Mt Hood. Details are being worked out. The cost will be high, but the "per seat" cost can be split among several persons to reduce the price.

Ed Immel announced that the American Freedom Train will be displayed at the Union Station during its visit to Portland. The Chapter has been requested to prepare a display about the locomotive, ex-SP 4449, for use at the Station during the visit.

Walt Grande, Vice President and Program Chairman, announced that the November program will include a 16 mm sound movie on the White Pass and Yukon Railroad plus a railroadians auction.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM for refreshments provided by Cora Jackson.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W Storz, Secretary

TIJUANA CHOO-CHOO*

A train that whisks you to Portland (from Seattle?) in less than an hour, rather than the four hours it now takes on Amtrak?

High-speed trains for the future are part of a United States Department of Transportation study, announced by Senator Warren Magnuson, which will look at better and quicker ways of traveling up and down the West Coast from Tijuana to Vancouver, British Columbia. Magnuson, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, said a train similar to the much publicized Metroliner that runs between Washington, D C and Boston, Mass might "also work on the heavily traveled West Coast".

But Bob Allison, of the commerce committee staff, said the 3½ month study, to cost \$99,308, will include "technology not yet available, such as air-cushion vehicles". These trains could reach speeds of 200 miles per hour or more, compared to the approximate 45 mph average speed of the Amtrak passenger train on the Seattle-Portland route, Allison said.

The study is being carried out for the government by the firm of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, and Co. It is aimed at finding the best high-speed ground transportation system for particular West Coast areas, with environmental and energy requirements as part of the study, officials said. "Nobody knows what such a system will cost", Allison said, "because we don't yet know what is needed. The study will try to answer what is needed along the West Coast in an effort to avoid the type of problems associated with the Eastern Railroads", Allison said.

New and improved tracks will be needed for higher speed trains, a Magnuson aide noted. Magnuson said transportation officials from the states of California, Oregon, and Washington will participate in the study. The senator said the study is being conducted under provisions of the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974, which requires that an interim report be submitted to Congress by January 30 (1976?).

*Reprinted from Tacoma Chapter, NRHS newsletter "The Train Sheet", Vol 11, #7.

AMTRAK'S NEXT EXPERIMENTAL ROUTE*

At least one US Senator is convinced that the next yearly experimental route to be selected by Amtrak will be Portland-Boise-Denver. Senator Robert Packwood of Oregon told the press late this month (October 1975) that after a meeting with president Paul Reistrup and several other Western Senators, he believes that next April or May Amtrak will announce selection of the new Western route. He said that Reistrup strongly implied that the route was next in line for consideration. The last route selected, before the legal requirement that Amtrak make the selection (instead of DOT), was the Denver-Washington, DC route, still not implemented.

*Reprinted from Rail Travel News
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