



pacific northwest chapter

THE TRAINMASTER

January 1979

Chapter Phone No.: 226-6747 (226-NRHS)

Number: 218

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRAINMASTER are welcomed. Please send them to: Room 4, Union Station; 800 NW 6th Ave.; Portland, Oregon 97209, or to the editor's home address, 3562 SE Harrison St., Apt. 15, Portland, Oregon 97214.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER TIMETABLE

Friday
January 19
6 PM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Chapter members are welcome to attend board meetings. This month's BOD meeting will be held at the Burlington Northern Safety Assembly Room before the regular monthly meeting.

Friday
January 19
8 PM

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The first meeting of PNW Chapter for 1979 will be held at the Burlington Northern Safety Assembly Room, located on the right hand side of what would be NW 11th Avenue extended, about two city blocks north of its intersection with NW Hoyt Street. Contact one of the Chapter officers or Trainmaster staff members listed on the last two pages of this issue if more detailed directions are required.

Refreshments, arranged for by Cora Jackson, will be served between the business session and the program. A "kitty" will be present to receive donations to help offset the cost of the refreshments.

A railroadians auction will be held at this month's meeting. Fifteen percent of the selling price of each item will go to Pacific Northwest Chapter, as was done at the last auction. In addition, "Pensacola to the Pacific", a BN-produced film concerning the proposed Burlington Northern-Frisco merger, will be shown.

Friday
February 16
8 PM

FEBRUARY REGULAR MEETING

The program for February will be American Freedom Train engine 4449, including film footage of the testing done in the Columbia River Gorge.

THE ICEBERG SPECIAL

by Ed Immel

The Pacific Northwest Chapter's New Year's trip to Spokane with the Mount Hood was anything but ordinary. On Friday afternoon KGW-TV sent down a camera crew to do a story for their "Evening Show." Around 6 pm the travelers started showing up for a late evening dinner at Union Station aboard the Mount Hood. We were first scheduled to go out Friday night aboard The Pioneer, but someone in Amtrak's Washington office made a decision that no private cars were going to be added to The Pioneer even though everyone down the line said that it would be no problem. So, we went out Saturday morning. Everyone slept on the car Friday night and were awakened by the nudge of a Portland Terminal Railroad Company switcher as the Mount Hood was added to the train.

The trip to Seattle started out nice and warm, but it got a bit chilly since we had no heat on the Amfleet-equipped train. When we arrived in Seattle a BN switcher set us onto stub track 3 where we were supposed to be hooked up to steam. The temperature was about 20 degrees and the steam lines were frozen. After much cussing and swearing a steam line was thawed out, but the switcher had left the car about three feet short of coupling up the line. A crow bar and five Chapter members moved the car the necessary footage and the line was connected. The Mount Hood was again nice and warm.

The eastbound Empire Builder was scheduled to leave at 5 pm, but because the earlier westbound train had frozen up somewhere in Montana we were short a heater car. We had to use one which was northbound on the Coast Starlight and that train was not due in until 6:30 pm. By the time the heater car was taken out to Interbay Yard and fueled and returned to King Street Station the time was 8 pm. We finally left Seattle and a good party was in swing aboard the Mount Hood by the time Auburn was reached. By midnight the complete Amtrak dining car and sleeping car crew was back in the Mt. Hood enjoying the hospitality of the Pacific Northwest Chapter.

We lost more time during the night and we did not depart Pasco until just before dawn. As we arrived in Spokane the clock on the Old National Bank said 8:15 am and the temperature was -22! It was going to be a cold weekend. Two mu'ed BN SW1500's moved the Mount Hood from the Empire Builder to the business car track in the Spokane station. Steam was immediately connected and the shore power plugged in. The more hardy of our travelers went railfanning, being taken around by several members of the Inland Empire Chapter. The more sane of the group stayed aboard the Mt. Hood and had soup and sandwiches prepared by our chef Malloy Davis. It is amazing the quality and quantity of meals that he can generate from our tiny galley, but years of experience on the Union Pacific are a good teacher. One thing can not be said about our trip, and that is that we went hungry.

KGW had called their sister station in Spokane to get some footage of us in Spokane so they could use it on their feature story Tuesday night. Right after lunch a KREM reporter and cameraman showed up to see how we were surviving, and found a happy group partaking in a little holiday cheer to keep them warm. That night the New Year was rung in by the travelers as they were toasty warm in the lounge.

A few things were learned about cold weather operations that weekend. On Sunday night the temperature dropped to -28 degrees and the warmest it got the whole time the Mount Hood was in Spokane was -6 degrees. The chef complained that the sink would not drain and it was an open pipe to the ground. During the night the faucet had dripped enough until a mound of ice had been built up from the

THE ICEBERG SPECIAL (continued)

ground into the drain pipe. A hammer was needed to break it loose so the sink would drain again. Jim Gilmore and myself had the unpleasant task of trying to empty the toilet holding tank into a portable honey bucket. It was discovered that the line was frozen but not before several gallons of waste had been released. No problem. The mistake quickly froze and it was shoveled into a plastic bag and disposed of in the garbage.

The westbound North Coast Hiawatha had been running about two hours late when we arrived on Sunday and as the day wore on it got a little bit later each time we checked. We had been scheduled to leave Monday morning at 12:21 am but by 8 am the train was still in Montana and losing time. There had been derailments, broken rails, frozen steam lines, signals that would not function, and the temperature at 35 degrees below zero. Each time we checked in the station the train seemed to lose two more hours. A pool was formed to guess what time the train would arrive in the station. One person wrote down "March"! Yours truly won the pool with a correct guess of 5:13 PM--17 hours after our scheduled departure time. The Hiawatha arrived in Spokane with every toilet frozen, little food, and no drinks left in the lounge. Everyone moved quickly from the train to the station's restrooms as the Spokane carmen used propane torches to thaw out the toilets and water fill connections.

The Mount Hood was taken from the business car track and quickly attached to the train and steam lines reconnected. Apparently the eastbound Amtrak crew had told the westbound crew about the party they had and the westbound crew wondered if we were having another party. How could the Pacific Northwest Chapter refuse?

Arrival back in Seattle was around 2:30 am on Tuesday instead of the scheduled 8:30 am Monday time. After seeing the condition of the train, completely encrusted in ice and snow, it is a small miracle the train made it at all. I'm sure that out in Montana, North Dakota and Washington are some unsung railroad and Amtrak heroes that made it all possible.

The Mount Hood was put on steam and shore power while everyone slept until the car was coupled to The Pioneer for a morning run to Portland. Once again Malloy came through with an excellent breakfast and everyone arrived in Portland well fed. At no time during the weekend did anyone suffer, except for a few hangovers on New Year's Day. The Mt. Hood had managed to come through one of her most severe tests. Does the Pacific Northwest Chapter hold the record for holding an official NRHS event in the coldest weather? Any challenges out there?

SP MOVES TO ACQUIRE PART OF ROCK ISLAND

On January 2, Southern Pacific and Rock Island announced that they were taking another step toward the acquisition by SP of a 965-mile segment of Rock Island, "which will preserve an important competitive rail route between the Midwest and points in Southern California and the Southwest," according to SP.

Southern Pacific Company, two of its railroad subsidiaries, and the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Company have filed a joint application with the Interstate Commerce Commission for the purchase of Rock Island railroad properties and operating rights between Santa Rosa, New Mexico, and St. Louis,

SP MOVES TO ACQUIRE PART OF ROCK ISLAND (continued)

via Kansas City.

The line is part of the "Golden State Route", which has been operated by the Rock Island and Southern Pacific for more than 70 years.

SP said the purchase would enable it and its Cotton Belt subsidiary to provide single-system service over this historic route and connect directly at Kansas City with several additional Midwestern railroads, including the Rock Island. Approval of the application would culminate a 15-year SP effort to obtain the line and strengthen what it calls the "potentially most efficient rail route between Southern California and the Midwest."

Southern Pacific also explained that rehabilitation will be necessary for the route extending northeast from the present SP-RI connection in New Mexico.

This will improve service to shippers and increase competition on this important route, and provide continued support for the economy of the area and railroad employment, SP said.

Filing of the multi-volume application with the ICC followed an agreement last April between SP and the trustee of the Rock Island which set a price of \$57 million, to be paid in cash at the time the transaction is closed. The project has already been considered by the U.S. District Court in Chicago having jurisdiction over the reorganization case of the Rock Island, and the court approved presentation of this transaction to the ICC.

Reports of consulting firms which studied the project recommend that SP and Cotton Belt undertake a \$224 million program to rehabilitate the line's rail, roadbed, crossties, bridges, signals and structures over a three-year period, according to an appendix to the application.

The rehabilitation would enable the route "to participate in future economic growth," the application noted.

The work would also enable Southern Pacific and Cotton Belt to offer shippers a 400-mile shorter route for the substantial amount of traffic moving between the Pacific Coast and the St. Louis gateway.

"This shorter route will conserve energy in the national interest and will yield substantial operating efficiencies and strengthen the financial base of these carriers," the application said. "This will result in a savings in fuel consumption of 9.8 million gallons per year and a savings in expenses of \$33 million per year."

The purchase would also provide to the Rock Island trustee \$57 million in cash which, he states, will enhance the prospect of a successful reorganization.

SP subsidiary St. Louis Southwestern would purchase the Rock Island lines involved and operate the major part of the main line, from Tucumcari, N.M., to St. Louis, plus the 26½-mile branch line between Bucklin and Didge City, Kansas.

The SP proper would operate the 59-mile segment of the main line between Santa Rosa and Tucumcari, which it has operated under lease from the Rock Island since 1907.

The purchase would give the Southern Pacific system a total of 14,411 miles of railroad in 14 states.

Rock Island would retain a half-interest and joint operating rights on the line between Topeka and Herington, Kansas, which is part of its major north-south route providing single-line service from Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico.

MOUNT HOOD FEATURED ON TV PROGRAM

The Pacific Northwest Chapter's private lounge-sleeper Mount Hood was featured on KGW-TV's "Evening Show" on Tuesday, January 2nd. Viewers were taken on a tour of the car as it sat in Union Station before its departure to Spokane on New Year's weekend. The tables had been set for dinner and the chef was preparing the dinner meal. Some Chapter members posed as passengers in the bedrooms and lounge section. Added footage was taken by KREM in Spokane and sent down to Portland for inclusion. The Spokane footage had a beautiful scene showing the Mt. Hood in the setting sun surrounded by snow with wisps of steam coming out from under the car as the temperature sat at -10 degrees.

The resulting publicity got the Chapter a large number of inquiries on leasing the Mount Hood for future trips. Several of them are already scheduled for the upcoming months. The marketing program for the Mt. Hood was off to a good start. Look in the Downtowner in the next couple of weeks for the Chapter's ad and the feature story on the Mount Hood.

BOOK REVIEWS

Klamath Echoes is the annual publication produced by the Klamath County Historical Society, and volume no. 16 for 1978 devotes its 100-plus pages to the subject of "Railroads into Klamath." Divided into 12 chapters, this comprehensive history of the county's railroad history covers the Southern Pacific and Great Northern main lines, dozens of logging lines ranging from the common carrier Oregon, California and Eastern to the pioneer Oregon Midland and Klamath Lake Railroads, and even the "Linkville Trolley," Klamath Falls' turn-of-the-century horsecar operation.

Contemporary newspaper quotes provide much of the historical information contained in the softbound booklet, with specific dates provided for most of the references. Many excellent local photographs are included, but the editor appears to have filled some leftover space with SP and UP company photos unrelated to Klamath County (Why devote a half page to UP's diesel-powered City of St. Louis in Cajon Pass?).

The student of Oregon railroad history should find this book of value. If you have ever wondered why Kirk--today an isolated, uninhabited siding north of Chiloquin--was the railhead of the Weed-Klamath Falls branch for 12 years before the Shasta Route was completed, you will learn that six different logging railroads connected with the SP near Kirk during the 1920's.

The 1978 Klamath Echoes costs \$4.00 excluding postage. We suspect that you could obtain a copy by sending \$4.50 to Klamath Echoes, P.O. Box 1552, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601.--Gil Hulin.

Iron Road to the West: American Railroads in the 1850s, by John F. Stover; Columbia University Press, 562 W. 113th St., New York, New York 10025, 1978; 266 pages; \$14.95.

This book is basically an overview of United States railroad development between 1850 and 1860. It is a good history of that period, although someone desiring more detailed information about a particular region's rail history would have to seek out additional sources. But Iron Road to the West is good as far as it goes. The only real flaw is the maps that are presented,

BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

as they are not detailed enough to be of much use to the reader in figuring out where the Steubenville & Indiana was in relation to the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, & Chicago, and so on. Also, a better job could have been done with the photos, as most of them are not really integrated with the text, and seem to have been scattered through the book in an attempt to attract the casual reader. However, I must concede that the latter fault borders on the nitpicking, and does not detract from the rest of the book.--Bryan Leeder.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER, NOVEMBER 1978

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Bain at 8 PM on Friday, Nov. 17th.

Walt Grande, editor of the Pacific Northwest Rail Journal, announced that the first issue of the Journal will be on the Great Southern Railway and will, hopefully, be out before the end of the year. Volunteers are needed to write articles for future publication and to assist with production of the Journal.

Election of officers for 1979: The nominating committee proposed the following slate of officers and directors: President, Ed Immel; Vice President, Terry Parker; Secretary, Chuck Storz; Treasurer, Roger Sackett; National Director, John Holloway; Directors-at-Large, Duane Cramer, Don Davison, Ben Fredericks, Jim Gilmore, Larry Miller, Gary Oslund, Jim Schmidt, and Bob Slover, with four of the nominees for director-at-large with the largest number of votes to be elected. Wm. E. Henderson, Sr. was nominated from the floor to be a director-at-large. The five nominees for Chapter officers were elected by a unanimous voice vote. The following four members were elected to the position of director-at-large by written ballot: Duane Cramer, Jim Gilmore, Gary Oslund and Bob Slover.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Chuck Storz, Secretary

SWAP-MEET SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 24TH

The first model railroad-railroadiana swap meet to be held in the Portland area is being sponsored by the Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club and the Pacific Northwest Chapter. The meet will be held on Saturday, March 24, 1979 at North's Chuckwagon in the Beaverton Mall at S. W. Cedar Hills Blvd. and Jenkins Road in Beaverton. Hours will be 10 AM to 5 PM. Those who will be selling at the meet may begin setting up at 9 AM. For those wishing to sell model railroad or railroadiana there will be a charge of \$3.00 for a full table or \$2.00 for half a table. Admission is 50¢ a person. Contact Chuck Storz for more information, or to reserve a table at the meet.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(An Oregon Non-Profit Corporation)

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ISSN 0041-0926

The Trainmaster is the official publication
Of the Pacific Northwest Chapter NRHS.

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The Trainmaster is sent to all Chapters
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Copies are addressed to the Chapter editor
or Chapter National Director. Chapters
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the circulation manager.

T H E T R A I N M A S T E R
Pacific Northwest Chapter NRHS
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800 N. W. 6th Ave.
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