



THE TRAINMASTER

February 1980

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

Number 228

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER TIMETABLE

Friday
February 15
8:00 PM

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING (New Location. Please see below!)

The February 1980 meeting will be held in the Union Pacific clubhouse at the south end of the Albina yards. The clubhouse, a gray wood building, is located one block south of the intersection of Interstate Ave. and Russell St. on the west side of Interstate Ave. Take line #2 (St. Johns) or #3 (Fessenden) if coming by Tri-Met bus. Off-street parking is available on the block where the clubhouse is located. Enter the parking lot from N. Randolph St. which is on the north side of the block (away from the clubhouse). Call Chuck Storz evenings at 289-4529 if you need more directions to get to the meeting location.

The February program will feature a movie titled "Coming of the Streamliners" to be presented by David Swart. A railroading auction will be held before the movie (bring your surplus collectables and your wallet). "Newsreel" before the program. Refreshments will be served between the business session and the program.

Friday
March 21
6:30 PM

25th ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER.

Banquet followed by special anniversary program. This meeting only will be held at the Airport Holiday Inn, 8439 N. E. Columbia Blvd., Portland. Cocktail hour: 6:30. Buffet style banquet: 7:30. Program: 8:30. Cost for the banquet is \$8.95 per person. Special invitations with a reply card will be mailed to the membership.

Saturday
March 22
10 AM to
5 PM

SECOND ANNUAL RAILRODIANA AND MODEL RAILROAD SWAP MEET

Location: Airport Holiday Inn, 8439 N. E. Columbia Blvd., Portland. This is YOUR opportunity to buy, trade or sell all types of railroad and model railroad items. Tables for sellers are \$5.00 each. Admission: \$1.00 for adults, 50¢ for children under 12. Sellers should contact the Pacific Northwest Chapter or the Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club to reserve tables.

Friday
April 18
8:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING for APRIL

Reserve the date. See The Trainmaster for details.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 18, 1980

The meeting was called to order by President Ed Immel at 8:07 PM in the Union Pacific Clubhouse. This is the first meeting in a new, permanent location.

President Ed Immel reported on future trips: 1. Jasper: The Chapter is having trouble with VIA about clearance dimensions for the car Mount Hood. The Chapter must submit a clearance diagram before VIA will quote a price for the trip. 2. The trip on the Oregon California & Eastern looks good for the weekend of June 14 and 15. -- Ed also gave examples of the costs for several trips to illustrate that inexpensive trips are no longer possible.

Terry Parker reported that the 1980 Swap Meet will take place on Saturday, March 22nd at the Airport Holiday Inn. Over 50 tables will be available. Tables will cost \$5.00 each. Admission will be \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children under 12. The Chapter will have five tables to sell surplus material from its collection.

Bob Slover reported for the mechanical department: The Chapter's car Mount Hood is stored on steam in Vancouver, B.C. The Chapter has requested a quotation from the Vapor Company for a self-contained heating boiler for the car. The Chapter Board has decided to take out a membership in the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners at a cost of \$100 a year. The Association serves, among other things, as an information exchange for the car owners,

Ed Immel advised that Bob Slover has resigned as Mechanical Superintendent due to the press of school work. Gary Oslund has been asked to take over the position.

Gary Oslund reported that calendar sales are still going well. A notice in the S.F. Bulletin has produced a large volume of additional sales.

President Ed Immel reported on plans for the Chapter's 25th Anniversary meeting on March 21st. The meeting will begin with a banquet, coats and ties required for the men attending. NRHS President Allan Vaughn will attend the meeting. The program will be a slide presentation covering the 25 years of Pacific Northwest Chapter history. Slides or black and white prints of Chapter activities over the years are needed. The originals will be copied or made into slides and then returned to the owners. The copies used for the program will be kept in the Chapter library after being shown at the anniversary meeting. Banquet: A show of hands favored a buffet style dinner. Invitations with a return card will be sent to all members. The card must be returned to make reservations for the banquet. The price of the dinner will be \$8.95 a person. Schedule: 6:30 hospitality hour, 7:30 banquet, 8:30 anniversary meeting.

Terry Parker announced that the February program will feature a railroadians auction and a movie, to be presented by David Swart, on the first runs of famous streamlined passenger trains.

January program: 8mm movies of locomotive 4449 by Jack Wheelihan and Ed Immels slides of his railroad travels last November in Australia.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Storz, Secretary

SNOW JOB 80 by Ed Immel

January 1980 will go down as one of those winters that will be remembered for years to come and the railroads came through to provide transportation in the hard hit areas. It was a time of long hours for track workers, trainmen and other railroad personnel as they fought one of the heaviest snow falls on record. Most of it took place within an area approximately one mile wide and 45 miles long - the Columbia River Gorge.

Heavy snow started falling on Monday, January 7th accompanied by freezing rain in the Portland area. Heavy blowing snow occurred east of 181st Avenue in Portland and continued to Rowena (just short of The Dalles). By Tuesday Interstate 80N was closed to all traffic as highway crews with snowblowers and plows tried to keep one lane open, but with little success. Motorists sought shelter in homes, the lodge at Multnomah Falls and motels waiting for the storm to clear. Hardest hit was Hood River where by Tuesday night they had almost five feet of snow on the ground. Equally hard hit was Stevenson on the north bank where drifts of 12 feet were reported. While the snow piled up the two railroads involved, the Union Pacific on the south bank and the Burlington Northern on the north bank, worked to keep their lines open.

The Union Pacific was probably hardest hit as they ran snowplow equipped diesels between Portland and The Dalles in fleets to keep one track open. No attempt was made to open any sidings at this point. Two SD-40s could barely make headway in the snow but they kept going. Section men at Cascade Locks and Hood River shoveled out switches and kept drifting snow away from the tops of signals. Paralleling I80N was strewn with stalled trucks and cars. Amtrak's Pioneer was the only form of passenger transportation available. Stops were made at Multnomah Falls, Warrendale, Cascade Locks and other points to bring aboard stranded motorists. Some suffered from frostbite and one had to be taken to a hospital due to suffering a heart attack.

By Wednesday the snow was piling up even deeper and the Union Pacific sent out their Jordan spreader in front of two SD40's to shove the snow back from the track. At the same time orders were given to move the rotary plow from Hinkle to The Dalles to get ready to plow out some sidings. The rotary at Hinkle gets very infrequent use and is one of the last steam powered rotaries on the Union Pacific, being powered by Shay engines. The Pioneer arrived in Portland Wednesday night approximately six hours late and with standing room only due to the stranded motorists aboard. According to reports from the train there was a great party going in the lounge upon arrival in Portland.

On the north bank the Burlington Northern was having trouble keeping their line open between Vancouver and Wishram. By Wednesday morning they too were down to one track as the snow dozers ran back and forth between Vancouver and Wishram. Due to frozen switches some freights took four hours to get out of Vancouver yard and the freezing rain quickly covered the switches that the section forces had just cleared. However, by Thursday evening section crews had managed to open a siding at Stevenson to allow more frequent movements which helped to keep the track open.

SNOW JOB 80 (continued)

The mainline between Portland and Seattle was also being covered with freezing rain and snow. Snowfall depths reached 16 inches at Vancouver and 20 inches on Napavine Hill. The Mt. Rainier ran 2½ hours late as frozen switches slowed travel. The Coast Starlight was running anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours late.

As if the snow problems in the Columbia Gorge were not enough, the BN was also experiencing problems on their mainline over the Cascades. On Tuesday the snow spreader ran from Auburn to Cle Elum and on Wednesday it plowed out the Ronald Branch. On Friday it moved from Cle Elum back to Auburn bucking 34 inches of snow at Martin. The 16 inches of blowing snow at Pasco quickly covered up the retarders at the hump yard and at times the retarders had to be cleared after every movement.

Thursday, January 10th was the height of the storm. The Pioneer left Portland with extra cars to pick up eastbound stranded passengers, quickly followed by the Jordan spreader and then several freight trains. Again stops were made along the way to pick up passengers and stranded motorists. After being fired up and called for late Thursday afternoon at Hinkle operation of UP's rotary snowplow was cancelled at the last minute. Interstate highway 80N remained closed until the first part of the week of January 13th as highway crews picked their way around stalled cars and trucks.

(Editor's note: There were conflicting reports about whether or not the U.P. did or did not operate its rotary snowplow. The railroad had planned for the rotary to operate from Hinkle to Portland and then back to Hinkle after only a brief refueling stop in Portland. Evidently U.P. officials felt that the situation was enough under control by late Thursday afternoon that the rotary was not needed and therefore cancelled the call about an hour before it was scheduled to leave.)

EDITORIAL COMMENT by Ed Immel

The recent snowstorm that hit the Portland/Columbia Gorge area proved the ability of the railroads to keep things moving in spite of the weather. The news media gave great play to the way Amtrak rescued the passengers and stranded motorists as the Union Pacific and the Burlington Northern fought to keep the lines open. TV crews had dramatic footage of heavy snow, section crews shoveling snow and Amtrak personnel lifting people aboard out of the deep snow. However, behind all this are some basic facts of life concerning the railroads.

The railroads kept their lines open with their own personnel, running their own snowfighting equipment and paying their own bills. On top of this they will pay taxes for keeping the line open. It was hard to find a Greyhound snowplow or a Consolidated Freightways sander on the highway. Amtrak may take a lot of flak from the press about their normal operations but the praise runs high when they come to the rescue. The next time talk of discontinuing the Pioneer comes up, the winter of 1980 will surely be mentioned. In fact Portland's mayor wrote the Secretary of Transportation asking for another train up the Columbia since this winter showed how much the area was dependent of rail transportation.

All in all it was a good show by the railroads. But, wait until the bills come in!

MARCH PROGRAM TO CELEBRATE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER

In place of the regular meeting on March 21st there will be a special banquet to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Pacific Northwest Chapter. This special meeting will be held at the Airport Holiday Inn, 8439 N. E. Columbia Blvd., Portland. Cost of the buffet style dinner will be \$8.95 a person. Dress for this special occasion will be coats and ties. Schedule: Cocktail hour 6:30 to 7:30, Banquet 7:30 to 8:30, 25th Anniversary Program 8:30 to about 10:00. Special announcements will be mailed to the membership. Enclosed will be a reply card which should be returned to make reservations for the banquet.

The program will feature slides showing Chapter activities during the last 25 years. Priceless shots of Miln Gillespie floating down an irrigation ditch during one of the Oregon Trunk Mixed trips, Jack Holst squeezed into his bug-eyed Sprite, John Holloway with a crew cut and white socks, and highlights of the 1965 and 1978 conventions along with the Scandinavian Festival trips and much more.

OLDIES BUT GOODIES

Photos are needed for the Chapter's 25th anniversary program. They can be slides or prints, color or black and white. We will make slides from any color or black and white prints. All material will be returned as soon as it is copied. The final program will consist of copies of material and will become a part of the Chapter library. If you have photos please call the Chapter at 226-6747 and we will return your call as soon as possible.

EXTRA BOARD

Most of the BN's serviceable Alco locomotives have been put into storage during recent weeks. As of early February the only BN Alcos in service are 5 RS-11's, 4 C-424's and 10 C-425's. The last three RS-3's and all C-636's are currently out of service.

During January seventeen BN Alcos were stored serviceable as follows: At Livingston, MT: C-636 #4369; at Vancouver, WA: C-415's #4010, 4011, RS-3's #4056, #4064, #4068, RS-11's #4185, #4187, #4188, #4195, #4197, C-636's #4361, #4362, #4364, #4366, #4368. As of 2/1/80 all but the 4195 and 4369 are stored at Portland, OR.

BN Alcos stored unserviceable as of 2/1/80 include RS-3 #4078, RS-11's #4184, #4194, C-424 : #4241, C-425 #4253, C-636's #4360, #4363 and #4367 all at Livingston, MT., C636 #4365 at Hillyard (Spokane), WA and at Vancouver, WA RS-11 #4192 and C-425 #4254.

S.P. C628's #3116, 3117 and 3121 are stored unserviceable at Eugene, Ore. where they have been out of service since Sept. 1979. Prior to that they were used on the Eugene hump and are the last SP Alcos to operate in Oregon.

(Paul Guernsey)

MILWAUKEE ROAD ELECTRIFICATION - A DIFFERENT VIEW OF ITS BEGINNINGS

Mr. Thomas Lamphier, President of the Transportation Division of the BN, speaking at Midrail '79 in Duluth, Minn., replied as follows to the question: "Wasn't it a mistake for the Milwaukee to drop its electrification?" (*Editor's note: Mr. Lamphier's comments can reasonably be assumed to be based on information developed when the BN investigated the possibility of merging with the Milwaukee in 1973. The comments reveal a situation which quite probably had a strong influence on the railroad's present plight. The Trainmaster will gladly publish any reliable information which would counter Mr. Lamphier's statements*):

"As far as the electrification is concerned, and this is really where a conflict of interest appeared, you have to remember that right up until 1899, that is the end of the 19th Century, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul was a gilt edge stock, and it was referred to as The St. Paul, and there were some very large interests that had stock in that railroad, the Vanderbilts, the Rockefellers, all had stock in the company, but another man who had stock in the company was named Clark. He just happened to be President of the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., a director of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, a director of the Montana Power Co., and I believe he was also a director of the General Electric Company. Now if you ever want to see the opportunities for conflict it was in that situation and the decision to electrify. I commend to your attention the investigation of the Interstate Commerce Commission on its own motion into what went on in the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul when it first went into reorganization in 1925. It is beyond belief to see the conflict of interest that was going on. Some pretty bad things in that Company are because at that time the directors of the Milwaukee were using their position for their own advantage.

"I might say that before the Milwaukee went into receivership - went to see the judge- in 1925, all of these large interests had sold out their stock in the Milwaukee, in effect within days before they finally went into bankruptcy. And it is my opinion that the first bankruptcy of the Milwaukee resulted from one of the worst cases of conflict of interest and malfeasance and mismanagement by directors of a company that I have ever read about, and the Milwaukee Railroad and its employees were the victims of that misdirection.

"So far as the electrification is concerned, the Milwaukee Road could not have continued its operation. When the line was electrified, it was electrified in two sections between 1909 and 1921. They put up the catenary system on raw wood poles. And at the end of about the 25th year the entire pole line was in effect rebuilt, they were stubbed. That is they cut off the poles, put a new stub in the ground, and clamped the pole that was up in the air to this new stub. And they again were getting to that point when they finally decided to get rid of the electrification, where the stubbing process - the whole line - would have had to be rebuilt again. They were going through the second cycle, so to speak, of the rehabilitation of the electrification, and they just couldn't afford it. Given the dollars required and the level of business they really couldn't have done it.

"And it really was just too bad because, regardless of the fact that the 3000 volt DC was a very high cost electrification, it still was terribly efficient, and as you know there also was a plan to hook up the electrifications between Avery and Othello that never came off because they went to see the judge."

(from Central Region Limited)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER
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(An Oregon Non-Profit Corporation)

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