

The



TRAINMASTER



Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society.

Bryan Leeder, Editor; PO Box 5978; Vancouver, WA 98668. Telephone: (206) 693-0976.

CHAPTER TIMETABLE NO. 296--MAY 1987

May 7, 1987 Thursday 7:00 pm--May BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING at the Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club at the corner of North Vancouver Avenue and Russell Street. All Chapter members are welcome to attend. If you wish to address the board, please check in with President Doug Auburg prior to the meeting. Much give-and-take goes on here. Runs until at least 10:00 pm.

May 15, 1987 Friday 7:30 pm--May MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING at the Portland General Electric auditorium on SE 17th Avenue between Powell and Holgate. Bring slides for the "Newsreel." Monthly raffle and goodies; leave some money in the "kitty" so we can eat well. Program to be announced.

Every Saturday 12 noon NO-HOST LUNCHEON at the Semaphore Restaurant at the corner of SE 17th Avenue and Holgate Blvd. Our group sits in back.

May 9-10, 1987 Saturday and Sunday--CASCADES-DESCHUTES RAIL ADVENTURE. Portland-Chemult-Bend-Wishram-Portland excursion train.
S O L D O U T S O L D O U T S O L D O U T

Thanks to the WILLING WORKERS who helped the editor assemble THE TRAINMASTER last month: Fred Dorsett, Alan Viewig, and Ben and Bob Weaver.

Please welcome these NEW MEMBERS to the Pacific Northwest Chapter: George R. Martin, Albert and Donna Powell, Dale V. Miller, Michael R. Graham, Larry S. Geraci, Caroline O. Chubb, Garry and Beverly Johnson, Henry A. Lines, Richard E. Nock, Katie T. Harmon, Geoffrey Shepherd, James and Marian Hermanson, Donald and Susan Hollis, Patsy Jane O'Malley, Jocelyn Watt, Richard L. Andrews, Elwood J. Riggs, Robert and Darlene Hoyt, Charles Burrows, Eugene Fabryka, William Crossman, Dr. and Mrs. Vernon Golay, Rufus L. Cone, Naomi B. Gray, and Dr. and Mrs. Robert L. Bacon.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE REPORT by Bob Slover--In spite of the nice weather, several library committee members took time from their Saturday to sort through magazines and books in Room 1 on April 25. Work is continuing on the shelves in Room 1A. Special thanks to Gordon Zimmerman for cleaning the area in front of Room 1A. Our next meeting will be Saturday, May 16 at 10:00 am in Room 1.

LAKE COUNTY'S RAILROAD--by Ed Immel

Oregon's newest railroad is a little over a year old and appears to be on its way to becoming a permanent fixture in the state's transportation network. On January 18, 1986, Lake County commission chairman George Carlin presented a \$550,000 check to the Southern Pacific for 56 miles of track between Alturas, Calif. and Lakeview, Ore. Like it or not, Lake County, Ore. was in the railroad business.

The Southern Pacific's Lakeview branch was originally a narrow-gauge line constructed by the Nevada-California-Oregon Railroad Company. Starting out in Reno, the line was projected to run in a northerly direction to the Columbia River. By 1912 the first passenger train had arrived in Lakeview, but due to lack of funds the NCO never built any further. In 1926 the line was purchased by the Southern Pacific which converted the line to standard gauge by 1928.

In 1984 the SP began the necessary actions before the Interstate Commerce Commission to abandon the line, but this time a different fate than normal awaited the trackage. The tracks were not removed but instead, a new short line railroad was born. With a grant from the Oregon lottery fund and contributions from shippers in Lakeview, Lake County purchased the line and picked Great Western Railway of Colorado as their contract operator which runs the branch as their NCO Division.

Soon after Great Western began operations, severe flooding hit the California portion of the railroad, washing out the line in 23 places, causing three big slides, and removing the approaches to two bridges. With the assistance of federal emergency funds the line reopened after being shut down for ten days. A further grant from the Federal Railroad Administration allowed a \$425,000 track rehabilitation program to begin. What had once been 10 mph track is being upgraded to allow trains to operate at 25 mph.

The Lakeview line has now settled into the routine of being a short line railroad. A good place to start a visit to the railroad is at the former NCO depot on Center Street in Lakeview. This classic two-story brick station is the headquarters for the Great Western operation and is adjacent to a three-track yard. When not being used, the line's two diesel locomotives can be seen in the vicinity of the station. To the south of the station is the engine house which in the spring of 1987 is under construction. The major shippers on the railroad are located north of the station across Highway 140. Due to the industrial activity in the area it is best to stay out of this area while switching is being conducted.

Equipment on the NCO Division consists of two orange-and-white painted GP9 locomotives. The two engines, #1617 (chopped nose)

and #1589 (high hood) are lettered for the Great Western Railway with sublettering stating they are assigned to the NCO Division. The GW emblem on the locomotives consists of a drawing of a jack-rabbit with the slogan "Fast Freight" underneath. Besides the two engines, the line is the home for a former SP bay window caboose and a self-propelled locomotive crane along with a number of ballast hoppers. Maintenance-of-way equipment includes a motor car, an American Plasser ballast regulator, and a Jackson-Jordan 16 tool tamper. The regulator and tamper were purchased from the Weyerhaeuser Company's Woods Railroad which runs out of Sycan, approximately 50 miles east of Klamath Falls.

Normally, switching is done each evening starting about 4:00 pm. On Wednesdays and Saturdays a train is operated from Lakeview to Alturas to connect with the Southern Pacific. Train departure from Lakeview is normally at 7:00 am with arrival in Alturas at 10:00 am. The GW weighs the cars in the SP yards before picking up empties. Current operations call for a SP local to be dispatched out of Klamath Falls to make a direct connection with the GW on the days the Great Western operates since the SP no longer operates through trains on the Modoc line.

The GW job usually departs Alturas around 11:00 am with an arrival back in Lakeview around 2:00 pm. A great deal of track work is being done this spring and summer and train times may change accordingly. On most trips to Alturas the freight train takes along ballast cars which are dumped and spread enroute. There are only two spur tracks between Lakeview and Alturas (Willow Ranch and Davis Creek) and further delays may occur to allow maintenance-of-way equipment to get into the clear or to set our empty ballast cars.

The line south from Lakeview runs along the shores of 25-mile long Goose Lake. The track is easily followed from parallel Highway 395, although about 20 miles north from Alturas the track veers to the west and disappears down the Pitt River Canyon. Access to this area is difficult though not impossible. The line emerges about three miles north of the California Agricultural Inspection Facility to once again parallel Highway 395. As a sidenote, the railroad's employee timetable lists the spot on their line opposite the Inspection Facility as "Bug Station." The morning run from Lakeview makes for excellent photography since the sun is on the front of the train and comes over the shoulder of the photographer if one is taking pictures from the highway. The northbound return run means one is stuck with taking pictures into the sun.

Visitors to the area will find a number of good motels in Lakeview and Alturas. The former NCO headquarters building in Alturas is now the home for the Alturas Elks Club and the former NCO Alturas depot now houses the Alturas Garden Club. There is also an SP steam engine on display in the Alturas city park.

With current operating practices one could start in Lakeview, follow the GW to Alturas and then return to Klamath Falls by way of Highway 139 which parallels the SP's Modoc line. Seeing Oregon's newest railroad and one of the Southern Pacific's more isolated lines is definitely worth the trip to southern Oregon and northern California.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Doug Auburg

I won't take much of your time this month. Things seem to be settling down and there's less to write about.

By the time you read this the Great Cascades-Deschutes Rail Adventure should be history, or nearly so. As I write this on April 26th, Excursion Manager Kerrigan Gray has passed on the word that he has cut off ticket sales for the trip until we get an count on the exact number of seats we'll have on our train. THE TRIP IS SOLD OUT!! The only question now is how many seats we'll have on the train to sell.

So that means that Kerrigan and our Treasurer Kyrian and all the rest of the Excursion Task Force as well as the Excursion Crew have brought us soundly into the black for this year's budget. THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO WORKED TO MAKE THIS EXCURSION THE SUCCESS IT HAS BECOME!! WELL DONE! Assuming that everything turns out as well as we expect on this trip, the Board plans to generally hold to the tight budget you approved last December. Oh, there will be a few high priority budget additions, I expect, but the plan is to go through this year as frugally as we can. Then next year we'll budget based on our actual income for this year. We hope that this will be the pattern for future years. We'll make the money first before we budget to spend it.

Progress continues with the City of Portland's plans to acquire the Union Station site for development. The proposal will be presented to City Council in mid-May for their consideration. Following their decision, the efforts to carve out a piece of the site for a railroad museum must begin in earnest. The Chapter Board is still working on how we can best contribute to that effort.

Over here in Vancouver, Northern Rail Services has been selected to operate the Chelatchie Prairie RR. NRS is owned by Chapter member Ed Berntsen of Tacoma. Ed has requested that the Chapter lease two of our coaches (3300 and Red River) to his firm for use on the Chelatchie Prairie excursions this summer. No response has been given as yet. The Rolling Stock and Excursions Committees are still working out possible details. We'll do our best to balance the desire to earn some money with our rolling stock with our need to preserve it.

The Library Committee continues to make progress on reorganizing our book and historic documents at Room 1. They've been meeting at least one Saturday morning a month to work on the projects. Contact Bob Slover if you'd like to help.

Nice weather's here. How about coming down to help with the restoration of our rolling stock? The Rolling Stock Committee is active every Saturday at Brooklyn Yard. Contact Larry Miller if you'd like to help.

The other committees are also hard at work on their respective projects. Most would welcome your help. Contact the Committee Chair if you'd like to volunteer your help.

Summary of Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting - 4-9-87 (continued)

Rolling Stock Committee: Larry Miller reported that the R.C.R. car lease has been delayed due to insurance problems on the Pend Oreille Valley RR. Bill Ross has been delayed in his efforts to check the Chapter's cars in Silvis, IL. Bob Jackson is working on a hot water heating system on car #3300.

Museum Advisory Council Meeting: Bob Hoffman reported on a meeting of the Northwest Rail Museum advisory council which he attended on behalf of the Chapter. The NRM is looking for a plan to finance the museum. Bob feels that the Chapter and the Oregon Assn. of RR Passengers must spark activity of the advisory council. He recommended an early meeting with the ORARP board. The Chapter board agreed to have a joint meeting.

Locomotive 4449 Management Proposal: Doug Auburg reported that he has met with City of Portland parks dept. officials about operation of the 4449. The City will recognize the Chapter's efforts to preserve the locomotive but is not enthusiastic about the proposal for a three man management committee. The City will designate a City employee to be in charge of moving and steamups of City owned locomotives.

Sale of Car #4500: Larry Miller advised that it is the consensus of the rolling stock committee that car #4500 be sold. Bob Landregan reported that the finance committee also recommends the sale. Several members present pointed out that the car was bought for parts and that more parts need to be salvaged before the car is sold. Moved by Dave Van Sickle, seconded by Kerrigan Gray to recommend to the membership that car 4500 be sold for \$1200 and that any usable parts be removed before the sale. Motion passed.

The board considered selling ex-SP&S baggage car #55 due partly to its poor condition and asked the rolling stock committee to prepare a proposal for selling the car.

P.T. Co. Propane Tanks: The board considered the purchase of 36 used propane tanks for sale by the Portland Terminal RR Co. Moved by Rich Carlson, seconded by Al McCready to spend up to \$100 for 18 used propane tanks. Jack Pfeifer moved to amend, seconded by Terry Parker to increase the amount up to \$200. Amendment failed. Kerrigan Gray moved to amend, seconded by Terry Parker that an additional \$160 be authorized to bid for all 36 tanks and that 18 tanks be offered to RCR for what we paid. Amendment passed. Main motion with second amendment passed.

Moved by Kerrigan Gray, seconded by Terry Parker to authorize President Doug Auburg to enter into an agreement to lease the Chapter's spreader to the Willamette Valley Ry. in exchange for repairing and painting the spreader. Motion passed.

Moved by Dave Van Sickle, seconded by Bob Hoffman to pay Bob Jackson approximately \$200 that Bob has spent on the heating system for car 3300. Passed.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary