

The Trainmaster

July,
1998



The Official Publication of the
Pacific Northwest Chapter,
National Railway Historical Society
Portland, Oregon



July/August Meetings:

Board of Directors Meetings:

July 9 & August 13, Room 208, Portland Union Station, 7:30 PM

General Membership Meeting:

July 17 & August 21, St. Marks's Lutheran Church, 5415 S.E. Powell Blvd., 7:30 PM

The Love of Trains

contributed by Laurel Prager

My love of Trains goes back to the time my Grandma & Grandpa took me from Tacoma, Washington (where we lived) to Portland Oregon. It was 1928 and I was almost 5 years old. The clickity-clack over the rails, the whistle blowing, and the sound of the locomotive puffing away all was music to my ears. Today, you don't hear the same sound of the rails, but the locomotive and the whistle on steam is still the same glorious sound.

To entertain me along the way, I was given a box of animal crackers. One of each animal I lined up along the window sill, eating what was left in the box. Soot came in through the closed windows and on the crackers, and also us. Getting off in Portland, we passed by the locomotive to get into the depot. She hissed at me, letting me know that she was alive and scaring the life out of me.

Later, my Mother married my step dad who worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad. In Washington State, in the 1930's you could not buy margarine, so we came to Portland Or. on the train, with empty suit cases, for the sole purpose of buying margarine for relatives and friends. This was a common practice with those who had railroad passes.

Being on a R.R. pass we had to take the early morning to Portland and the late train home, going to a movie with a vaudeville show until it was time to head for the depot.

The steam locomotive still hissed at me as we passed by, but with less fear now. Only a loving respect for a living, breathing locomotive that was taking us home.

Kenny, (the ole Hoghead) found a time table for that run, leaving Tacoma at 1:A.M. arriving Portland at 6:45 A.M. Returning on the 11:30 P.M. train, arriving in Tacoma at 5:00 A.M.

The Tacoma domed depot has been restored, but is now a Federal Court house, with a museum built next door. You can see it from the train as it passes by to the Amtrak depot around the bend. I know I'm home when I see it, for that depot has many memories for me.

Little did I know that one day I, would marry a Railroad Engineer, named Kenny Prager. (1981) His run at the time was the Oregon Trunk, pulling freight trains to Bend, Oregon. This was the route he loved the most, though most engineers feared it for its dangerous curves along the Deschutes river. He remembers going this same route with his dad when he was 14 year old. He knows every mile of the way, as I found out when we made a trip with the N.R.H.S. down the Deschutes from Bend. Memories of happenings along the way to telling what was around the next curve, was fascinating to hear. The Oregon Electric was another favorite of his.

All this has brought me closer than ever to trains and best of all, close to a magnificent locomotive, the Spokane, Portland & Seattle #700, known as the "Lady". Her route was from Portland to Spokane, never going to Seattle. It is my dream of the "Lady", going to Seattle some day.

In 1986 Kenny decided to retire from the Railroad. He had been with AMTRAK for the last three years, with a total of 44 years service. I went with him on his last run, from Portland

to Pasco Wa. with a 4 hour stay in Pasco, with a wake up call at 1:30 A.M. On the way back I was seated in one of the economy sleepers. Couldn't go to sleep for thinking about what Ken's thoughts were, up there in the locomotive. Was he having second thoughts about retiring? With each whistle he blew, brought him closer to the end of a job well done.

May Membership Meeting Minutes submitted by Jean Hickok and edited to fit.

George Hickok, President - Offered greetings to everyone in attendance.

Treasurer's Report - George Hickok

- The account balance does not include the latest excursion amounts from May 18, 19 and June 2 trips.
- We will try not to use the Emergency fund to pay bond account. We hope to pay with excursion and sales.

National Director's Report - Gerry Schuler

- Got newsletter from National - Vic Davis resigned due to family health problems. There has been a new person named as a replacement.
- Got fliers for railfair in Scranton, PA in mid July. Ask Gerry Schuler for more information.
- George Hickok offered apologies to members who received late dues notices from National. There were problems at National that may have been resolved now.

Presidents Report - George Hickok

- Excursions results were extremely good
- Sold out all six trains
- George has received feedback from Mr. Melbo for future possibilities in excursions.

Narrow Gauge - George Hickok

- Closed sale with buyer in Salem The title has been transferred. Sale fee used to pay rent and storage fees to land owner. Since the title has been transferred, continuing storage fees and rental of moving equipment to remove the equipment from the site is not the Chapter's responsibility. [Editor's Note: The reason for sale: The chapter has nowhere to put equipment (why it was at this location in the first place), plus does not have the finances it would take to hire the moving equipment necessary, plus pay the accumulating storage fee to the land owner. This has also been a significant problem for the Oregon Electric Railway Museum. Buyer apparently has a location, plus owns narrow gauge equipment and track. This sale was viewed as the best possible future for the equipment.]

Chapter Home - George Hickok

- Chapter's Board of Directors is looking at a number of possible sites.
- Chapter officer has been talking to property owner of land between P&W line and WAPI at Hopmere. It

appears that some progress is being made.

- George Hickok was invited to the WAPI board meeting and discussed the potential benefits. Need detail drawings and intentions.

Rolling Stock - George Hickok

- W&P asked for the use of Mt Hood. This is one of the things we do for them for what they do for us.
- Motion approved at the last meeting on the lease of the caboose. W&P doesn't want to lease, they want to buy. Want to make a proposal to the membership asking if we can sell instead with the right of first refusal (if they decide to sell) in exchange for turning of the wheels on the RDC's and credit on the books for future work,
- The actual price of sale will be negotiated and approved by the board.
- With the changes in regulations, we won't be able to ever haul revenue passengers, we won't be able to use as a concession car or have anyone on the caboose that's not an employee of the railroad crew while in motion.
- Vote carried unanimously by the membership, no opposition.

President's Special Notice - George Hickok

- There was an anonymous note written to an individual and left in Room 1. **IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, solve it face to face with the individual or talk to a board member. We are all grownups. SO DON'T LEAVE ANONYMOUS NOTES LIKE THIS ANYMORE.**

Donations made recently

- Bob Jackson - 371 Diesel Electric Power Plant
- Sue Ordway - Modern Refrigeration Plant for the Mt Hood.
- Anonymous Donor - Four new batteries for the Mt Hood. The previous ones have lasted fourteen years and froze last year.

Activities Report - Marilyn Edgar

- Picnic - Saturday August 15th? Marilyn looking at this date. Will confirm that there are no other conflicts with Bob Terkelson at Brooks. Bob's group will be doing the chicken again. Marilyn will confirm with Willow Creek. The fee will probably be \$2.00 per person for the chicken and pop.

Chapter Timetable #429 - July 1998

Monthly Board of Directors Meetings:

Thursday, July 9th, August 13, 7:30 pm. Room 208, Union Station. These meetings are scheduled on the Thursday evening of the week prior to the monthly membership meeting. Please note time change to 7:30pm.

Monthly Membership Meetings:

Friday, July 17th, August 21, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5415 S.E. Powell. These meetings are conducted on the third Friday evening of every month.

Chapter Library Open Hours:

July 18 and 25, 1:00pm to 4:00 pm. The Chapter's Railroad Research Library, located in Room 1 of Union Station, is usually staffed two Saturdays a month.

Chapter Picnic At WAPI:

The chapter's annual picnic at the Western Antique Powerland will be on a Saturday in August. Fee will probably be about \$2. Contact the chapter's activities chair Marilyn Edgar, (503) 236-7271 for more information.

Upcoming Membership Meeting Programs :

June: Bruce Harmon from Greenbrier Cos., parent of Gunderson railroad car manufacturers. Explanation of different types of railroad cars and how they are made.

July: member Rich Carlson will present some samples from his 16mm film collection. Will likely include some rare middle-east footage

August: "Steam Operated Sawmill" - video from collection of Naomi Gray

September: Slide show of slides from the NRHS national convention in Salt Lake City. Convention activities included Union Pacific steam locomotive #844 pulling a train in the Royal Gorge, and several passenger trains on local short lines.

If you have any programs or program suggestions that you feel would be of interest to the Chapter, Please contact Ralph Johnson at (503) 654-1930.



The Trainmaster

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The NRHS was formed in 1935 to preserve historical material and information pertaining to railroad transportation. The Pacific Northwest Chapter, one of more than 170 affiliates, was formed in 1955 as a non-profit Oregon corporation. Any person age 16 or older with an interest in railroad history and transportation is eligible for membership.

Please address contributions, correspondence, and exchange copies of newsletters to:

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Please be sure to inform the membership chair at Membership Services, PNWC-NRHS, P.O. Box 2384, Portland, OR 97208-2384 of any changes in the status of your address.

Membership

in the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society is available as follows:

Regular: \$32/year, Joint: \$40/year

Membership prices include National Membership as well as membership in the local chapter. For more information, please contact the membership chair at the above address or phone number.

Trainmaster Contributions:

Contributions for the *Trainmaster* are most welcome. Deadline for each issue is the 20th of the previous month. Last minute additions may be made after that time, but publication can not be guaranteed. Contributions should be sent to the address, e-mail address, or fax at the top of this column, or be left in the mailbox in the door of Room 1, Union Station. Typed or word-processed material (3 1/2" disk Mac or MS-DOS plain text) is preferred for legibility, but not necessary.

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