

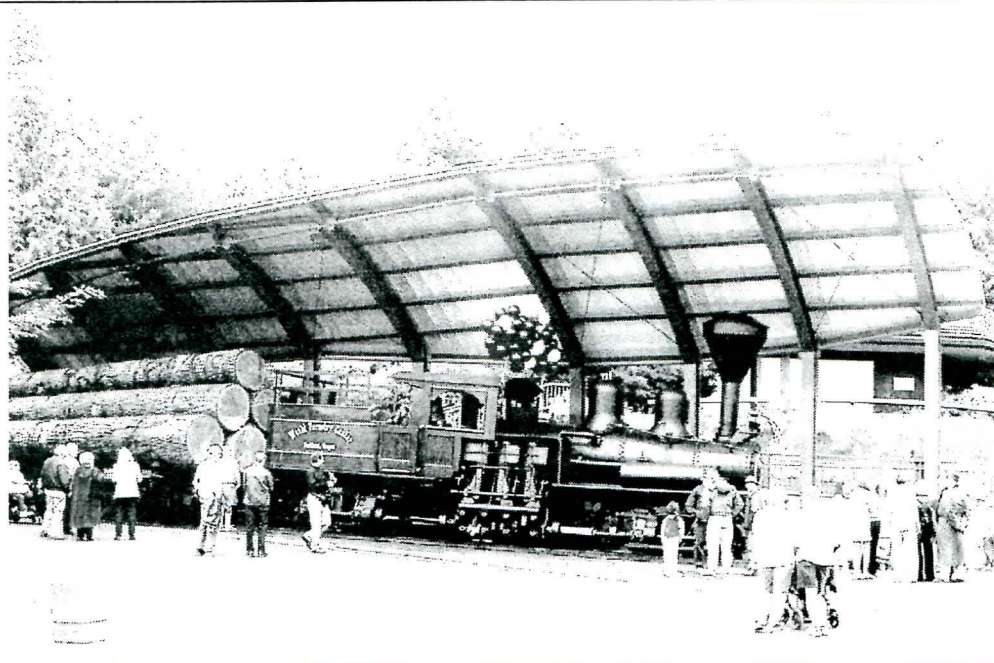
The

July
2004



Trainmaster

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



Peggy
Anniversary
On May 22, the World Forestry Center celebrated the restoration and new display location of their shay locomotive *Peggy*. This photo of the festivities was sent by Arlen Sheldrake though we suspect someone else as the photographer because Arlen appears to be in the photo. See article in last month's *Trainmaster*.

Pacific Northwest Chapter Timetable #503

Membership Meetings: July 16, Aug 20, 7:30 PM, St. Mark's Lutheran Church

July Program: Plan at this time is to have photos from the Minneapolis NRHS Convention.

If you are interested in presenting at a membership meeting please contact Ralph Johnson at 503-654-1930

Board of Directors Meetings: July 8, Aug 12, Room 208, Union Station, 7:30 PM

Lending Library: 1:30 to 4 pm, July 17 & 24, Aug 21 & 28, check-out subject to **loan agreement**.

Annual Chapter Picnic: planning is under way for Aug 14th, but this is a tentative date. Planned location will be the Washington Park Zoo (with emphasis on the railway), with the events starting at 5 PM.

2005 Convention Committee: Room 208 Union Station

Brooks Work Party: July 17, to work on making Jordan Spreader presentable for Powerland steam-up

Notable Non-Chapter Events:

National Association of S Gaugers, Western Regional Convention July 10-14, 2004, at Tacoma. Convention concludes July 14 with Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad: a roundtrip over the Mineral to Morton route that was out-of-service for nearly a decade. Assigned three-truck Heisler #91. As few railroad enthusiasts have the opportunity to travel the Morton Line, trip opened to non-convention registrants who want to collect rare mileage. Cost of the trip is \$50, includes roundtrip bus transportation from Tacoma's La Quinta Inn and box lunch prepared by La Quinta Inn. Reply by e-mail ghulin@guardnet.com or send payment to Northwest S Scalpers, c/o Jerry Hildenbrand, 495 NW Calloway Drive, Corvallis, OR 97330. Advance registration is required to assure that we have sufficient bus seats and box lunches ordered.

Helping hands needed to prepare Jordan Spreader for public viewing at Steam Up.

This is a great opportunity for members of all ages and skills to further the mission of the Chapter. On Saturday, June 17th (the day after our monthly membership meeting) volunteers will meet at Antique Powerland Museum Association (APMA) to perform cosmetic maintenance on the recently relocated Jordan Spreader. This is the first Chapter-owned piece of rolling stock to be displayed at APMA and we want to make a good impression! Soon the Chapter's former Southern Pacific flanger will also be moved to APMA and we are obligated to develop interpretive signs and to maintain the equipment for display purposes. APMA is just off I-5 at the Brooks exit north of Salem, and only 30 minutes south of Portland. Please contact chapter president Ron McCoy for directions or information. 503-244-4315.

This is an opportunity to demonstrate the actual sincerity, desire, willingness and initiative of this group to have a railroad museum in this region. With enough effort, one car can become something much larger.

Empire Builder's 75th Birthday by Arlen L. Sheldrake

Beginning June 11th Amtrak began celebrating the Empire Builder's 75th birthday at the three Empire Builder endpoints – Chicago, Seattle and Portland along with other intermediate points.

The first Great Northern Railway Empire Builder departed from Chicago at 10 p.m. June 10, 1929. The first eastbound Empire Builder departed Seattle at 10 p.m. June 11, 1929. The GN advertising touted the

Chicago to Seattle trip taking only 63 hours. The current Amtrak *Empire Builder* is scheduled for just 47 hours thanks to the assistance of two freight railroads that dispatch the train, the Canadian Pacific Railway between Chicago and St. Paul and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe between St. Paul and Portland and Seattle/Portland. The train carries the nickname of James J. Hill, a Canadian who was dubbed The *Empire Builder* for building the GN.

At the invitation of Amtrak, the Chapter joined the 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 11th celebration at Portland's Union Station with a staffed booth selling selected concession items, displaying *Empire Builder* artifacts, and talking to visitors about the Chapter and NRHS membership. The festivities included refreshments, a DJ playing train music, and a formal presentation at 3 p.m. The Chapter's replica rail car observation platform, stored and erected by Darel Mack, was the focus of our booth. Attached to the platform railing were the illuminated Chapter NRHS logo drumhead and the Ted Ahlberg recently donated SP&S *Empire Builder* drumhead.

The original planning for the Birthday included display of Doyle McCormack's GN F unit and the Chapter's Mt. Hood sleeper lounge but the limited number of tracks and congestion at Union Station prohibited these attractions. The Chapter's Mt. Hood was built in 1950 specifically for SP&S *Empire Builder* service between Spokane and Portland.

The *Empire Builder*'s westbound journey on June 11th included J. Craig Thorpe, noted railroad artist, who developed the 75th Birthday *Empire Builder* poster. You may know Craig's work as he has done multiple excellent paintings including the one for Portland's Union Station's 100th birthday as well as the Lewis & Clark Explorer train poster and the Montana Rockies Rail Tours Steam 1 (SP&S 700) poster. The *Empire Builder* poster is available for \$15 plus shipping from the Amtrak store web site.

Many thanks to Chapter members Darel Mack, Bill Hyde, Chuck McGaffey, Ted Ahlberg, Cora Jackson, Arlen Sheldrake, Kerrigan Gray and Ralph Johnson for their assistance with the Chapter display.

Some of the material for this article from the 6/3/04 Amtrak News Release *75 Years of Essential Empire Builder Service*.

Road Trip Ends in Avery St. Maries Gazette Record, October 1, 2003

It was like threading a needle except the thread was somewhat cumbersome. All 46 tons of it.

The fact the eye of the needle was partially obstructed by power lines didn't help matters either.

Despite the obstacles, a crew of volunteers had the operation sewed up in a few hours. The result is Avery is the new home to a dining car that rode the rails between Chicago and Minneapolis. Members of the Avery Citizens Committee plan to complete the restoration of the rail car and convert it into a small museum.

It is a project that started with some pictures snapped in Portland three years ago and ended Saturday when the car was resting on tracks laid next to the Avery depot.

"We were looking for a car and about three years ago we found out this one was available," John Moe, who chaired the effort, said.

Tracy Gravelle was going to Portland so she snapped pictures of the car. After seeing the photos, the committee agreed it was a project worth pursuing.

The car became available when its owner could no longer afford to pay storage fees for the 85' behemoth. Members of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society had planned to restore the car, Mr. Moe said. In fact, they completed more than half their work when they ran out of money.

"We inquired about the car about the same time they ran out of money", Mr. Moe said.

Avery residents raised the \$1,500 needed to buy the car and transport it to St. Maries. The trip from Portland to St. Maries included a slight detour in which the car was temporarily lost on a sidetrack. When it arrived in St. Maries in December, the "easy" part of the trip was complete.

The car had to be taken off the railroad and transported the 50 miles to Avery.

"We had already talked to Jack Buell and he said he would move it for us", Mr. Moe said.

Buell Trucking provided trucks and labor for the job. Labor that included fabricating equipment to transport the car.

Jim Bencik and Doug Weaver built a log trailer for the rear of the car and attached a fifth-wheel plate to the front of the car so it could be dropped onto a truck. Frank Buell and Colin Herr coordinated the effort.

Fred Guenther used his 60-ton crane to move the car.

Getting the car loaded onto the truck proved to be easier than putting it back on tracks, specially prepared for it in Avery. "We were working in real tight quarters," Mr. Guenther said.

The car was placed near the depot, between the trout pond and the highway. It took considerable wrangling, but the car was eventually placed atop its wheels, each set which weighed 19,000 lbs. and was hauled to Avery on a separate truck.

Mr. Moe said he hopes to have the car ready for visitors next summer.

Pictures caption: Heavy work: It took Fred Guenther's 60-ton crane and a fleet of equipment provided by Jack Buell but a group of volunteers managed to move a 130,000 lb. rail car from St. Maries to Avery, Saturday. One end of the car was placed on its wheels, which were transported separately. Because the rail car weighed so much, only one end of it could be lifted at a time. After the back of the car was placed on its wheels, the crane was moved and the front of the car was maneuvered into position.

This information extracted from a full-page article with 8 color pictures. Member George Michelson picked up a copy on a recent trip and shared it with the Chapter. Avery Idaho was a major crew & equipment center for the Milwaukee Road. Much of the former Milwaukee Road right of way is open to hiking, biking, and driving. The restored Avery Depot now houses a Post Office. The Chapter sold the Twin Grove to the Avery Citizens Committee in 2001/2002. Permission to reprint received from Dan Hammes, Publisher, November 23rd.

History and Development of Railroads in Alaska

By William Thomasson in 1970

Mining was the prime reason for the 27 railroads being built in Alaska, to get the miners, mining equipment, and supplies from the coast into the inaccessible interior locations, and to get the ore out. Gold, copper, and coal were the principle minerals being mined. It's odd to note that not a single logging line was built in Alaska, with so many built in all parts of the lower 48 states.

The first railroad to be built was the White Pass and Yukon Railroad. It was started in 1898 from Skagway Alaska. In one year it was hauling the miners and their equipment over the White Pass paralleling the old trail of 1898 to Lake Bennett, where the miners transferred to boats. Another year saw the rails completed on to White Horse Canada where the Yukon River Steamers took over the rest of the journey to the Klondike. Skagway was already a principle port for the Klondike gold seekers, but the railroad made it grow to quite a city. Without the railroad today, Skagway would be only a ghost town.

The next railroad to be built was completely across the state from the White Pass and Yukon route, the Seward Peninsula Railroad. It started out from Nome in 1899, one year after the White Pass railroad started. This was also built to haul miners and their equipment to the gold fields and eventually ran 80 miles north out of Nome. The first owner built 4 miles of track and called it the Wild Goose Railroad, later two other railroads were to be called the Wild Goose. This company was reorganized and by 1905 the trains ran on 13 miles of track. The sub-arctic tundra made roadbed building almost impossible, hundreds of thousands of feet of timbers had to be laid and re-laid several times to keep the track from sinking out of sight. In 1921 the Alaska Legislature took over the railroad and declared it a public highway, and extended the rails northward on to Bunker Hill, 80 miles from Nome. Anyone with a vehicle of any kind with flanged wheels could use the tracks to transport themselves and belongs to any place along the 80 miles. This convenience continued to be a policy until 5 or 6 years ago.

In the next 10 years quite a flurry of railroads were to be started, most of them were moneymaking schemes, few were successful. I said earlier that most all the railroads were built for the gold, copper, or coalfields – well there was one that had to be different.

The Yakutat and Southern Railroad was built to haul fish. It was built in 1903 and ran 15 miles from Yakutat Alaska to the Situk River where fish were loaded from the fishing boats into gondolas and hauled

to the cannery at Yakutat. This railroad was of extreme importance to all the fisherman of that area for over 60 years. The railroad was still intact but not used the last 7 or 8 years. Last year the tracks were torn up and stockpiled in Yakutat by a salvage company from Seattle. At this date the Alaska-Yukon Railroad Historical Society is attempting to recover the historical old steam engine and bring it to Anchorage for our museum. They now haul fish by airplane.

The most successful railroad built in Alaska was the Copper River and Northwestern Railway built in 1906 from Cordova on the coast inland 197 miles to the Kennicott Copper Mines. The builder of this railroad, Mike Heney, called "*Alaska's Railroad Builder*", also built the White Pass and Yukon Railroad. He died before seeing his dream, the Copper River and Northwestern, completed.

The Guggenheim's millionaire financiers had insisted that the railroad be started from Katella area, which was a poor choice. After several starts in that area it failed because of poor planning. Mike Heney had consistently said that the only location to start from successfully was Cordova, but since the financier decided otherwise, Heney left Alaska. They later had to locate him in San Francisco and bring him back to build the railroad from Cordova after all.

The first standard gauge railroad to be built in Alaska was the Council City and Solomon River Railroad which started from the coast at Dixon, located about 35 miles southeast of Nome, and built the first 10 miles in 1903. It was running 35 miles by 1914 but never reached Council City. As the gold petered out the railroad discontinued operations. The engines and other equipment are still on the beaches at Dixon rusting away.

Quite a number of railroads went bankrupt. One of the more ambitious of these started from Iliama Bay in 1913 to build to the Yukon River near Holy Cross. This was to have saved the long trip around the Alaska Peninsula, to the mouth of the Yukon and up stream. A large group from Arizona who called themselves "*Free Lovers*", sold stock in this financial scheme, but their company only built a few miles of track. All of their supplies are still on the beaches, wasted.

A couple of railroad companies started out of Valdez to build to the Yukon River near Fairbanks but only built about 15 miles to a point where a gun battle was fought over a tunnel. When one man was killed the whole scheme was dropped. Neither company continued.

The last railroad to be built was the Alaska Railroad. Although it's predecessors also started back in the early days of the rush to build railroads, it took until 1923 to get it completed. There were three railroads involved in the line that the Alaska Railroad now covers. The Alaska Central, which started from Seward in 1903, built 50 miles, and then went broke. The Alaska Northern then took over and built another 20 miles by 1911. On the Fairbanks end, the Tanana Valley Railroad started in 1905, built north out of Fairbanks to the gold fields and south to Nenana. These railroads were bought by the U.S. Government in 1914 and connected the lines that make the present Alaska Railroad from Seward to Fairbanks.

Anchorage got its start at Ship Creek with a tent city in 1914 where the Government located their headquarters for the building of the Alaska Railroad. Today 4/5 of Alaska's population lives within earshot of the Alaska Railroad whistle.

At the present time surveyors are laying out a tentative route from Nenana to extend the Alaska Railroad on to Kobuk in the Arctic where the Kennicott Copper Company is opening a copper mine, and plans also call for extending the railroad to Nome and to the North Slope oil fields, and east to connect with the British Columbia Railroad in Canada.

Out of all this colorful history, which has been touched only briefly, the first railroad, the White Pass and Yukon and the last one, the Alaska Railroad, are the only two railroads still running today.

In summarizing: 1st it shows that the railroads were needed as they were the only means of travel overland in those early days of exploring, settling, and mining in the Alaska wilderness, except for dog sleds. 2nd: the railroads faded away as their need diminished, with all the equipment abandoned and left to rust where they were last used. Now most of the travel is by airplane so in my opinion there probably will never be a major return to the railroad in Alaska unless there is an enormous population growth which most of us are not looking forward to.

Bill presented this paper to the annual Alaska Historical Society meeting and the Anthropology Convention in the early 1970s. Bill is a founding member in 1955 of the Alaska-Yukon Chapter, NRHS that disbanded in 1978, although the railroad museum that he started still exists outside of Anchorage. Bill currently lives in Portland and has been a member of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society since 1981.

CORP Tunnel Update by Robert I. Melbo

I wish it were true that Tunnel 13 was reopening in June as reported in the June *Trainmaster*. The last word (June 21st) from CORP estimates reopening of this facility around August 1st. Still about 1,000 feet between the two working faces (north and south) and almost no section of the bore has escaped ceiling collapse to one degree or another. One area bedeviling the south crew has created a cavern –no, call it a cathedral – 80+ feet above top of rail. Here, CORP will install steel sets and then encase them in 300 cubic yards of concrete to create a safe archway over the track.

Photos of our Equipment Needed

I am putting out the call for good images. I need exterior side shots, although good interior shots might be helpful too. Historical images could be helpful too. If you have images to contribute, include what you know about the photo. (who took picture, when and where). E-mail them to me if possible please. It is really a pleasure to work with such a great group of people!

- Ron McCoy, Chapter President, r.mccoy@comcast.net

PNWC-NRHS, Membership meeting minutes

May 21, 2004

Chapter President Ron McCoy called the meeting to order and led the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Guests in attendance included Gary Lippert, Benjamin Wescott, and Benjamin's father Karl.

New chapter members for May included Deon Schroeder and Mark Whitson.

Arlen Sheldrake made a motion to approve the minutes of the April membership meeting as published in the May *Trainmaster*. John Willworth seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Ron briefed the membership on the details of the POTB excursion rescheduled from May 15 to May 22. He commended the Excursion Committee folks for excellent telephone work in notifying passengers of the change. Darel Mack and Al Hall cited passenger count figures which showed that the passenger count was up about 7% over last year's Wheeler trip. Al has also done a lot of work in rounding up prizes for the on-board raffle, including numerous cab ride and family excursion tickets on local short-line and tourist railroads.

The Rolling Stock Committee made good use of the May 15 weekend, taking more time to clean and maintain cars. Ron said that the restoration work is helping to turn back time on the 6800, making it look the best it has in years. The rolling stock crew has also been performing maintenance on non-Chapter rolling stock, including the Plum Creek, the round-end "James Gilmore" and other cars. In return, the owners of these cars have granted free use of the cars for the POTB trip. A round of applause was given to:

Pete Rodabaugh, George Mickelson, George Hickok, Kimberly Hickok, Darel Mack, Rick Banton, Randy Rock,

Kyrian Gray, Kerrigan Gray, Bill Hyde, Keith Fleschner, Mark Whitson, Robert Hoelle, Ed Ackerman, Glenn Laubaugh, Arlen Sheldrake, Al Hall, and Ken Peters.

Ron thanked Easterday Janitorial for a large donation of restroom equipment and supplies which will help defray the Chapter's expenses on the May 22 trip and future trips.

Union Station will be one of many stations celebrating the Empire Builder's 75th Anniversary on Friday, June 11. The Chapter has been invited to have a booth at the event, and volunteers were solicited to help set up, staff and tear down the booth. Major stations from Portland to Chicago will celebrate the anniversary of James J. Hill's namesake train service.

Local Amtrak officials would have liked to have had the Chapter's ex-Empire Builder sleeper/lounge Mt Hood on display, but logistics made movement of the car to Union Station impractical.

Have an activity idea for a large or small group? If you have an idea for a Chapter activity, here's your chance to learn how to plan a group event.

Feel free to plan something around your own rail interests, and you'll probably be surprised at how many other members will enjoy your idea!

Contact Ron for details on how to get started.

The June 18 membership meeting will be at the World Forestry Center, near the Oregon Zoo and the Washington Park MAX station. The speaker will be Mark Reed, WFC Operations Manager, who will talk about moving and preserving "Peggy," the Shay logging locomotive on display at the Center. Meeting time is 7:30. For those who are not volunteering or riding on the POTB excursion, "Peggy" is having a birthday on May 22, with punch and cake at the World Forestry Center.

Ken Peters gave a Treasurer's report which said that the Chapter's current account balance is high, reflecting revenue received from ticket sales, but that the balance is expected to drop as invoices for excursion expenses are paid. Other notes included progress being made on the Chapter's 2003 audit, and donations are still needed for the Chapter's Maintenance of Way exhibit at Antique Powerland in Brooks.

Arlen presented a sample of the 2005 Convention artwork recently completed by Glenn Laubaugh, and said that the pre-registration form is almost ready to go to the printer. In a bold marketing move, the Convention Committee opted to make the pre-registration fee only \$10, to encourage NRHS members to sign up early to receive the convention registration materials once the 2005 events are finalized.

Other notes:

Ted Ahlberg announced that the 1984 World's Fair Louisiana Daylight envelope sets are selling for more and more as supplies get lower and lower. These are sets of

cachet envelopes, with one postmark from each stop the 4449 made en route from Portland to New Orleans. Most sets are complete, or nearly so. Buy one before they run out!

John Willworth had a large selection of videos from the lending library, including Chicago Steam Celebration, San Jose steam, and much more.

NRHS National Director Gerald Schuler reminded members to check the NRHS Bulletin for a list of rail attractions which offer discounts to NRHS members. Ask about an NRHS member discount on your next excursion or museum trip.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 pm to allow members to enjoy Cora Jackson's refreshments. The meeting program was a video of the Vancouver, Canada Steam Expo, featuring lots of steam and other locomotives, from the Pacific Northwest, and as far away as Scotland.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Long

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The Trainmaster is the official news-

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(Internet service donated to the chapter by EasyStreet On-Line Services, Beaverton, Oregon)

ISSN: 0041-0926

Editor: Glenn Laubaugh, (503) 655-5466

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T-M Deadline: 20th of previous month on most months.

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 our Organization is available.
\$35 total - \$15 for Chapter, \$20 for National**

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**Please note correspondence containing
address changes on the exterior of the
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