

# The *Celebrating 60+ Years* Trainmaster

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## CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

## PORTLAND UNION STATION



Photo of Portland Union Station on Jan 21, 2021 by T. Trent Stetz

# CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

Text and Photos by T. Trent Stetz

The City of Portland grew up along the shores of the Willamette River, a major southern tributary of the Columbia River. Portland Union Station is located on the west bank of the Willamette River at 800 NW 6th Avenue in northwest Portland. NW 5th Avenue and NW 6th Avenue terminate at the station, and provide a direct connection to downtown Portland to the south.

## ★The Beginning★

The initial Grand Union Depot design concepts were developed by McKim, Mead & White from 1882 to 1886, but plans were discontinued due to financial difficulties of the Northern Pacific Terminal Company. The completion of the first steel bridge over the Willamette in July, 1888 led to a decision that year to again have various competing railroads pursue a depot on the present site of Couch Lake. Efforts started in 1888 to begin filling in the lake with gravel, ballast and sand. The "second" smaller Grand Union Depot, a Queen Anne and Romanesque blend of styles, was designed by Van Brunt & Howe, well known architects with multiple commissions for the Union Pacific Railroad for grand stations in western cities, including: Ogden, Utah; Denver, Colorado; Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Omaha, Nebraska. By 1892, over 100 pages of contract specifications were completed and sent out for bid in Portland and Kansas City. At that time, the total estimated price of the depot and annex came to \$310,420. Groundbreaking occurred in February 1890. By late 1892, contracts to fill Couch Lake were signed. Construction started in earnest in early 1893 with the filling of Couch Lake, actually a 15 foot deep lake covering about 22 city blocks, and driving about 5300 piles to a depth of about 35 feet for the depot foundation. About \$60,000 were spent on these pilings and other foundation work.

Construction was delayed with the national financial panic of 1893 and again with spring floods of 1894, with water reaching 33 feet over flood stage. Attempts to cut costs led to discussions of major plan alterations including the elimination of the tower, a staple of stations in the 1800's. In the end, it was not the tower, but the 100 foot by 630 foot steel and wood-trussed train shed which was eliminated. Construction was completed by the firm of Wakefield and Bridges for the Northern Pacific Terminal Company. The Grand Union Depot officially opened on **February 14, 1896** at 1 pm for inspection, Oregon's 37th birthday. The first train left that evening. It is the oldest major passenger terminal on the West Coast, and the oldest big city "Union Station" west of St. Louis.

The roof is made of bright red metal roof tiles, with exposed detailed pressed red brick, grey sandstone trimmings, and pebble-dash stucco masonry exterior. A feature was the projecting metal canopies with cast iron support posts at the entryway. The annex, also constructed in 1896 also by Wakefield and Bridges, contained the freestanding steam plant, storerooms, telegraph office, laundry, and police-room.

At the Grand Union Depot's opening in 1896, the yards in front of the station contained six parallel railroad tracks. Passengers gained entry to the tracks by passing through a long, narrow, enclosed one-story shed appended to the east side of the station. The tracks remained unsheltered for almost 10 years. A nearby roundhouse at Glisan and Front Streets had stalls for 20 locomotives. Support facilities including coach yards, a cleaning system, a fuel house, ice house, gas house and a turntable were located near 8th Avenue.

## ★ Lewis & Clark Exposition (1905) ★

Portland staged its first and only World's Fair from June 1 through October 15, 1905. During those four and a half months, 1,588,000 paying visitors passed through the gates to the 400-acre fairgrounds on the northwest edge of town. More than 400,000 were from outside the Pacific Northwest, a huge number of tourists for a city that was, at the time, perhaps 120,000 people. As Portland readied itself for the Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition, the issue of weather protection on the trackside again came forward, as Oregon's rainy climate required some protection for the expected onslaught of visitors to the area. In September 1904 the Northern Pacific Terminal Company announced plans for



Detail of Roof, Brickwork and Stucco on Portland Union Station

# PORTLAND UNION STATION

“important improvements” at the station. At this time, the bookshop was removed from the circular bay area and replaced by a much enlarged ticket counter. It is likely that the High Shed and platform canopies at the now renamed Union Station were added to the tracks because of the anticipated number of exposition visitors and the need for protecting passengers from the weather. In early 1905, it was reported by contractor A. K. Bentley, who also served on the Portland City Council, that materials were on the ground and work was underway on the first platform canopies at Union Station. Asphalt pavement was added between the tracks, to minimize dirt. Construction of the platforms, including both the hardscape and the protective canopies, was largely complete by mid-April 1905.



Front Entry to Portland Union Station

## ★ World War I History (1914-1918) and Later ★

Between 1917 and 1920, the federal government assumed operation of all railroads and railroad terminals to create a coordinated national transportation system in waning months of World War I. During this time, the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad and Great Northern were allowed access to Union Station. After the war, considerable public pressure kept the Terminal Company from rescinding those rights and by the end of 1922, all major passenger railroads serving Portland had use of the station at last. In 1920, two more passenger tracks were added along with an additional umbrella shed and an extension to the “concourse” shed. After World War I, national and regional railroad politics and public dissatisfaction led to Union Station's only major remodel.

In the early 1920's, ninety trains moved in or out of the station daily, 52 steam trains and 38 electrics, a train would arrive or depart about every 11 minutes!

Modifications to tracks in the yard were made to accommodate piers for the Broadway Bridge, also a National Historic Landmark, built in 1910. Additional track modifications were made to connect tracks to the new Steel Bridge, which replaced the original 1888 bridge and re-opened in 1912.

## ★ Steel Bridge (1912) ★

The construction of the unique "double deck vertical lift" Steel Bridge, replacing an earlier bridge, coincided with greater train lengths and a need for larger station platforms. The tall shed, consisting of the concourse shed & high shed and platform canopies were modified to accommodate longer trains and Tracks 6 and 7 were added with a new canopy. Electric trains were added by 1914.

## ★ Remodeling (1927-1930) ★



1930s Station's Marble Interior

Dissatisfaction with the lack of a clear, formal entry and confusing circulation patterns and dramatically increased passenger load were factors that led to the need to remodel. In 1927, the prestigious Portland architectural firm of A.E. Doyle was hired by the Terminal Rail Company to remodel the station. Pietro Belluschi, a young designer with little architectural training, was put in charge of the remodel. With input from Southern Pacific, Union Pacific and Northern Pacific, the owners of the Terminal Rail Company, the drawings were finished in 1929. Major changes included: structural, functional and formal reordering of the main waiting room (including removing interior cast-iron columns) and associated public spaces; reorganizing the entry and exit sequences from the street and tracks; and functional and formal reorganization of the wing between the dining room and the main hall. Dormers were added to permit more natural light to enter the station. All new exterior finishes were closely matched to the old. Marble for the floors and walls was shipped from Italy for the remodeling. Little has changed in the station since this remodel in 1930.

## ★ Service Expansion ★

Expansion of service at Union Station related to the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway line in 1920s required significant changes to the building and track, and at its peak period of operation in the late 1940s Union Station had as

# SERVING OREGON PASSENGERS

many as 30 separate tracks, continuing east to Front Avenue. Over time, freight rail became less utilized as some businesses turned to trucks instead of railroads for shipment of goods. In the 1950s, the US interstate highway system created a new way to ship goods and move people. Removal of tracks, as the result of the associated reduction in rail traffic, and the sale of portions of the property for private development have contracted the rail yard back to the original five track configuration.

## ★ Over Time ★

In 1922 an electrical fire damaged the northern portion of the station, which was further damaged by water during fire suppression, including significant roof damage and water damage to the waiting room. Another fire in 1937 damaged the building once again. An elevator was added in 1946. The Vanport Flood in 1948 submerged the railyard and surrounded the station with floodwaters.

## ★ Clock Tower ★

Built instead of the originally planned train shed over the five tracks, the 150-foot Romanesque/Italianate Clock Tower, with its four-sided 1898 Seth Thomas eight-day clock, has become one of the most iconic and recognizable features of the station. Each of the clock faces is 12 feet in diameter, with a minute hand 6 feet long and an hour hand 5 feet long. It is wound every seven days. On the four faces of the tower, The “Union Station” and “Go By Train” neon sign panels were added to all four elevations of the Clock Tower in 1948. These neon signs went dark in 1971. These were restored to service in 1985 by fundraising driven by local groups, including the PNWC.

## ★ World War II ★

Oregon Rails carried 1,200,000 passengers in 1940, most of whom passed through Union Station on the more than 100 daily runs. By 1944, with World War II being a major factor, 4,800,000 passengers rode trains in Oregon.

The Nursery is still standing trackside, against the east-elevation of the Main Terminal building. Informally known as the “Diaper Depot,” this building is described as a modest building of little or no architectural merit, being built of cinder block. This facility opened in April 1944 and made Portland one of only six cities in the United States to provide for the needs of mothers traveling with babies during World War II. The Portland branch of the American Association of University Women provided the 35 volunteers needed each week to staff the nursery. By the time the Nursery ceased operation in November 1, 1945, some 19,780 children and 11,615 mothers had made use of its services.

## ★ Summary ★

Union Station is much more than just the historic Main Terminal building and other related built structures. It is also the physical remains buried in the industrial landscape, which in the Area encompasses railroad history from the earliest developments by the O. R. & N. Company and the Northern Pacific Terminal Company extending through time at least up to the end of World War II. Railyards are complex industrial landscapes that characteristically occupy a sizable area and contain a large number and variety of structures and buildings. Union Station is a key structure in the history of Portland and the history of railroad development in the Pacific Northwest. First listed in the National Register of Historic Places in August 1975. Prosper Portland (previously known as the Portland Development Commission) acquired Union Station and four nearest tracks, comprising over 31 acres, in 1987 from the Portland Terminal Railroad. A plaque celebrating the station's 100th anniversary was placed at the entryway by the NRHS in 1996. One mainline track is owned by Portland Terminal Railroad Company and used by mostly freight trains. Prosper Portland has been recently leading a National Historic Landmark Section 106 review of Portland Union Station as part of the ongoing activity to develop designs to update and upgrade the station to serve the rail transportation needs of future generations. Congratulations on 125 years!



100th Anniversary Plaque  
Provided by NRHS in 1996

## ★ References ★

*Window to the Past: A Union Station Album*, Northwest Rail Museum, 1987, Mary L. Weaver, Editor

*Images of Rail: Portland Terminal Railroad Company*, Arcadia Publishing, 2016, Alfred Mullet

*Prosper Portland website*, <https://prosperportland.us/portfolio-items/portland-union-station/>, Document Library



# PNW RAIL NEWS

by Arlen L. Sheldrake



As I start into 2021 (yes, these articles begin the day after submitting the January article), I am hopeful that health leaders get their acts together and our shots of the COVID-19 vaccine are not far off for each of us and the rest of the world. As I re-watch the PBS Home Video **Influenza 1918, The Worst Epidemic in American History** (1998) I wonder why we didn't learn anything from that horrific event. Along with you, I am more than ready to return to a world where travel isn't restricted, physical distancing is but a memory, and we can again hug our extended family members. Sitting down to a plated meal in a restaurant is a very fond memory as is conversing with visitors to the Oregon Rail Heritage Center. My complaints however ring hollow when compared to those who lost loved ones during this siege; to those my profound condolences.

▶ One of the many documents headed from the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation to the chapter archives for safe keeping is a September 29, 2004 letter from the City of Portland to Rollin Bredenberg, BNSF, that the city valued the SP 4449 at \$550,000.

▶ The State Library of Oregon, Digital Collections ([digital.osl.state.or.us](http://digital.osl.state.or.us)), has a great 1915 *The Columbia River Gorge and Mt. Hood* 30-page pamphlet published by the Union Pacific System enticing people to visit this area. Lots of graphics, some still in place, others long gone. Example fares: Portland to Wyeth = \$2.40; Mosier = \$3.35; Sonny (Mitchell Point) = \$2.75. The pamphlet also notes that the Union Pacific was caring for the Oregon Historical Society owned Oregon Pony. "Skeeing" [now spelled Skiing] on Mt. Hood is pictured.

▶ The Friends of the Salmonberry Trail working with the Oregonian put up a nice 13-minute video *What will it take to turn a historic Oregon rail line into the 86-mile Salmonberry Trail?* a Peak Northwest podcast at [www.youtube.com/oregonian](http://www.youtube.com/oregonian). Some nice pictures and discussion of the current status of the line.



▶ Some December 8<sup>th</sup> updates from the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay:

- Tunnel Project Phase II: Tunnel 15 – rock removal and ditch line; Tunnel 17 – complete; Tunnel 18 – final track work done; Tunnel 19 – final dressing needs to be performed; Tunnel 20 – final track dressing needs to be performed; Tunnel 21 – complete; all work is anticipated to be completed by January 1, 2021.



- The Port awarded the on-call track repair contract to Rick Franklin Corp. The contract will allow the Port to quickly respond to emergency repairs in the future.
- Six severely deteriorated posts on the North Bend Swing Span bridge will be replaced on spans 6 and 7.
- CBRL has 18 employees and 6 locomotives on property.
- The official publication of the North American Railcar Operators Association newsletter *The Setoff* November/December 2020 issue had a nice article on the recent trip on CBRL and was included in the Board packet.
- And a January 15<sup>th</sup> facebook posting: Heavy rain and wind the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> resulted in 32 trees falling along the CBRL. The largest tree was 5-foot in diameter.

▶ The Seattle-South Bellevue segment of the East Link Extension includes adding light rail to the I-90 bridge over Lake Washington. The bridge follows two that have been lost during storms, the Hood Canal floating bridge in 1979 and the old I-90 floating bridge during the Thanksgiving weekend in 1990. The bridge is the longest post-tensioning bridge in history. The tracks are located on the inside lanes of the westbound span. Pontoons, which are bolted together, serve as the building blocks of the floating structure, and each of them are 360 feet long. All together the series of pontoons required approximately 3,600 feet of post-tensioning. Twenty tendons were used, with each one carrying 615,000 lb. of force. The floating part of the bridge is essentially a living, breathing structure. Approach structures are fixed, but the transition span is the hinge that moves up, down, to the left and to the right... essentially the motion of the water underneath the floating pontoons. **Railway Track & Structures Rail Brief 12/30/2020.**



▶ Eastrail is being built on a historic railroad line and will run 42 miles on the east side of Lake Washington – from Renton to Snohomish County. Eastrail Partners brings together the diverse communities, governments, the private sector, and nonprofits of Lake Washington's Eastside to make the vision for the completed Eastrail to realty and improve equity through access. More information: [eastrailpartners.org](http://eastrailpartners.org).



▶ As I re-watch the member Joe Harper produced *Go By Train* 2005 PNWC sponsored NRHS convention video, I am reminded of this very successful major chapter undertaking and volunteer effort. It has been 15+ years and there are multiple events that are no longer possible: Mt. Rainier Scenic Railway, rail trips to Astoria, the Brooklyn Roundhouse, and the Port of

Tillamook Bay Railroad. And one could add a steam double-header (700 & 4449) to Wishram and back as BNSF continues to prioritize the North Bank as primarily their westbound route. Thanks Joe, for letting me relive 2005.



► The rescheduled March 20 & 21, 2021 **Winterail** at Corvallis High School has been cancelled. Winterail will return in 2022. More information: [www.winterrail.com](http://www.winterrail.com).

► A very sad statistic from our 2020 is the approximate death count from the COVID-19 virus. Washington = 3,500, Oregon = 1,520., Idaho = 1,471, British Columbia = 954. My condolences to these families. These numbers while horrendous don't tell the complete story of the pandemic's impacts to our normal daily lives.

► The investigation continues into the cause of the December 22<sup>nd</sup> BNSF Railway derailment in Custer. The 108-car train was carrying Bakken crude oil from North Dakota to Ferndale refineries when what officials now say was 10 cars derailed in the 7500 block of Portal Way of the community of Custer, Washington. Five of the cars burned. **The Northern Light 12/30/2021.**

► Early on January 6<sup>th</sup> UP manifest train MPDWC-05 hit a large tree and derailed three locomotives and some 10 cars mostly centerbeams. The derailment occurred just south of Coalca at New Era south of Oregon City on the Brooklyn Subdivision. [One of the photos clearly shows one of the derailed centerbeams loaded with Mt. Hood lumber from the MHRR Odell reload.] **Dick Samuels 1/6/2021 Trainorders.com posting.** A drive-by the derailment site on January 14<sup>th</sup> found clean-up crews busily working the site with a LOT of work still to be done.



**BUILDING AMERICA**

► January 4<sup>th</sup> evening a UP manifest train derailed 21 empty autoracks between Durkee and Pleasant Valley in Eastern Oregon, no injuries. **Elkhorn Media Group 1/6/2021.**

► ORHC Update:

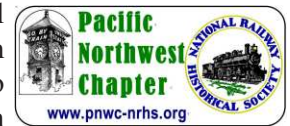
- The track 2 extension by RFC awaits the removal of the turntable tent as it is fouling the track area.
- It is amazing the amount of metal fatigue and loss that was evident on the turntable cross braces that are being replaced. On January 26<sup>th</sup>, a *YouTube* video was posted showing the work to date on the turntable bridge. The just under 3 minute very well done video was developed by Dale Birkholz. On the [www.orhf.org](http://www.orhf.org) facebook page.
- The Exhibits Committee is moving forward to recommend acquiring ownership of the former SP&S 866 FA-1 for cosmetic restoration and display at ORHC. The 866 is owned by the Northwest Rail Museum.
- The set of AFT development slides was received (January TM) from Anker Winther and have been scanned by Dale Birkholz. Archive quality scans have gone to the chapter archives. Expect to be hearing more about these gems.
- The night of January 10<sup>th</sup> an extension cord was found under the chain link fence next to the UP main line. . . . upon further investigation the cord ran from a ORHC outlet, under the fence, under BOTH Union Pacific mainline tracks and into one of the many homeless camps on Division Street. No fence breach was found. The Portland Police disconnected the cord from the homeless camp but declined to do anything else saying "the DA won't prosecute". This is also being reported to UP Response Management Communication Center as a railroad trespass incident. Railroad trespassing, ORS 164.255, is a class A misdemeanor in Oregon.
- ORHF Stan Pine inquiry part 2: As a reminder, Stan is writing a book about historic Jefferson County and asked about two stations on the Deschutes, Coleman and Truman. On January 13<sup>th</sup>, Bob Melbo sent this to Stan: TRUMAN was a station on the Des Chutes Railroad at milepost 84.2. According to *The Railroad Station of Oregon*, published in 1996. TRUMAN first appeared in Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Co, Timetable No. 22, issued March 5, 1916. That probably means that Timetable No. 22 was the first appearance of TRUMAN among the stations listed in the station column on the line to Bend. I don't have a copy of Timetable No. 22. However, in the preceding timetable, No. 21 effective January 16, 1916. I found a footnote reference to TRUMAN: "Trains 35 and 36 will stop on flag at Truman, Sherars Bridge, Ketchum and Harris." Great research Bob, a member of our ground pounder crew.
- And from Bob Weaver, PNWC archives manager, to Stan on January 16<sup>th</sup>: Coleman and Truman did exist as railroad stations in Wasco and Jefferson counties. They were a reality, and not fake news. According to information in the PNWC library, Coleman was a station on the Oregon Truck Railway (OT) between mileposts 88 and 89. There was a short siding and a small stock yard there. It existed from 1911? when the line to Bend opened until 1924?, when that section of the OT was abandoned. The OT Right of Way and Track map of valuation section 3, sheet 2, shows the station. Truman was a station on the Des Chutes Railroad at milepost 84.2. It straddled the Wasco-Jefferson county border along Trout Creek. The right of way map, valuation section DC-1a, sheet 20, shows the station location, but no siding. It showed up in employee timetable as a named station but apparently lacked any facilities. SP&S also listed it as a station when it began operating over the UP line in 1923.



- Some important actions from the ORHF Board of Directors meeting January 18<sup>th</sup> :
  - ◆ Rick Franklin was appointed to a Board position.
  - ◆ Long time board member Mark Kramer retires.
  - ◆ All officers will continue another year; existing committee chairs re-confirmed.
  - ◆ A deposit for Holiday Express 2021 was provided to Oregon Pacific Railroad in December.
  - ◆ The Paycheck Protection Program loan provided mid-2020 has been forgiven; round two being investigated.
  - ◆ Building permit for the turntable was submitted in December pending are responses from city departments.
  - ◆ Turntable bridge welding will continue for about 2 more weeks, then PetroChem will return and paint.
  - ◆ Dale Birkholz has developed a slideshow showing turntable rehabilitation progress to date.
- The January 20<sup>th</sup> *Around the Enginehouse* covered some excellent topics including the Turntable progress, the LED re-lighting project, spotlight on volunteer John Holloway, and What Started All This – SP4449. This monthly electronic newsletter is free. The beautiful picture of the Turntable builder's plates shows the excellent restoration efforts of Mike Warren.
- At the December 20<sup>th</sup> Special Board meeting Laurie McCormack announced she was retiring from the Holiday Express lead position.
- On January 23<sup>rd</sup> a major reshuffling of the rail cars occurred moving the 96 and PA inside; 2955 (aka Round End/James J. Gilmore) and caboose on display (future turntable site) track.
- With a COVID-19 required re-designed of the Portland Winter Light Festival, ORHC will not participate.
- A special ORHF board of directors meeting has been called for February 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the potential to bring the Friends of SP4449's recently purchased chair car the 2395 *Stanilus* on site at ORHC. The 2395 was built in 1949 for the Shasta Daylight.

▶ PNWC-NRHS Update:

- One of the many unique features of Keith Fleschner's work on the 6800 coach is that the structural cancer repair work requires the rail car to be attached to the rail for support. Movement restriction signs include text signs and red flagging the track. The project took a time out late in January to rock the 'swamp' near the car with 12 yards of ballast size rock and 12 yards of ¾" with Ed Bohm doing the tractor work.
- The archives continue to receive historical information from ORHF as file cleaning progresses...a memo of understanding is being developed.
- A visit to the Union Station Annex January 12<sup>th</sup> found multiple sidewalks around Union Station now walkable after removal of many homeless campers; but on January 21<sup>st</sup> they were back.
- Last month's *Trainmaster* lead article by member Kenneth G. Johnson, **Fresno Mallets**, has triggered distribution of the issue to the Friends of 1727, multiple Trainorders.com members and the NRHS News. Thanks Ken.



- ▶ The Museum of the American Railroad in Fresno, Texas reports major progress in the restoration of their Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway PA-1 #59. This is one of the two that came out of Mexico via the efforts of the Smithsonian and Doyle McCormack. The Ohio Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad is in the process of scrapping a MLW FPA-4 which has an intact cab roof that they are donating to the Museum. With the help of Rapido Trains Inc. it was determined that the roofs of the FPA-4 and PA are identical. Once the roof is installed during the first quarter of 2021, cosmetic restoration of the 59 is expected to move forward into Santa Fe livery....and long-term operation. More information: [pa59.org](http://pa59.org). **Railfan & Railroad January 2021**



magazine.

- ▶ G3 opening three new elevators in Alberta. G3 Wetaskiwin and G3 Stettler County are in full operation, and G3 Irricana will begin receiving grain shortly. G3 has 6 new elevators in Alberta. Trucks can unload grain in less than 5 minutes. Trains up to 150 cars can load in continuous motion on the loop track in a matter of hours. G3 Carmangay and G3 Morinville opened earlier this year; G3 Vermilion is under construction and due to open in 2021. In Saskatchewan, G3 Swift Current is under construction and due to open in 2021. G3 Terminal Vancouver is a state-of-the-art export facility on the West Coast. **G3 12/18/2020 news release.**



- ▶ Dynamic train testing on the Point Defiance Bypass occurred January 16-17 between Tacoma Dome station and the Nisqually Junction. To ensure public safety, local police officers controlled each at-grade railroad signal intersection during the two days testing period. **Point Defiance Bypass Update 1/11/2021.** [Suggestion: 1) COVID-19 shots, 2) Amtrak Cascades trip Seattle-Portland before summer.]



▶ The Northwest Railroad Museum in Snoqualmie began train rides January 16<sup>th</sup> on Saturdays through March 27<sup>th</sup> and the Saturdays and Sundays April through December. The train ride goes through the upper Snoqualmie Valley. Tickets are sold online only. More information: [www.trainmuseum.org](http://www.trainmuseum.org).



▶ If your travel plans include the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City and ride their train, you may have former Portlander Chris Fussell as the locomotive engineer. Chris reports they run 7 days a week from 8 am to 9 pm. The line is the original one built for ferrying supplies to the Hoover Dam. You may remember that Chris was instrumental in saving former Amtrak F40 #231 and former Amtrak SDP40F #644 that are included in the Dynamic Rail Preservation, [dynarail.org](http://dynarail.org), that has both locomotives operating. Also see March 2014 *Trainmaster* article Historic 231 & 644 Locomotives Utah Bound.



▶ A *Trainorders.com* January 1<sup>st</sup> posting, Albina Yard UP Neon Sign, asked if the sign still existed and what happened to the large neon Union Pacific sign that was on the Albina freight house. My memory is that we tried to get it for the Oregon Rail Heritage Center but Steve Lee, pre-empted us and took it to the UP steam shop in Cheyenne, WY. Chris Fussell says it is there as of a conversation with Ed Dickens last year. The large letters, UNION PACIFIC, that were also on the building were saved during the demolition but subsequently it is believed were dumped.

▶ The U.S. Department of Transportation announced \$40 million in grants will be awarded to five states seeking to improve safety at grade crossings. Awarded in the PNW: \$1,421,500 for Sound Transit to install new crossing gate arms, pedestrian signals, elevated concrete pedestrian pads and detectable warning devices and improve flashing light signals at 7<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest and 5<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest in Puyallup. **Progressive Railroading 1/14/2021.**



▶ Sound Transit awarded Advanced Rail Management Corp. (ARM) a five-year, \$24-million contract for rail grinding, polishing and engineering inspection services on the Link light-rail service in Seattle. ARM officials said the contract is the first of its kind in North America to require rail polishing that adheres to customized acoustic requirements that are based on the ISO 3095 standard. That standard is more demanding than the EN 13231-3 standard that North American railroads and transit systems typically grind to. **Progressive Railroading**



**1/14/2021.**

▶ Last month I reported in this column that Sound Transit is now running on 100% carbon free electricity via a contact with Puget Sound Energy (PSE). Reader, member, ORHC Volunteer Coordinator and Consulting Meteorologist Ron Nierenberg on January 16<sup>th</sup> responded: "The Puget Sound Energy electricity they buy is from a windfarm near Ellensburg that I worked on for about a decade with local Portland based windfarm developer EDP Renewables (formerly Horizon Wind) when this project was built. There are several windfarms in Oregon and Washington that PSE buys electricity from that I worked on."



▶ The HeritageRail Alliance will be holding the 2021 Virtual Spring Conference March 23-25 powered by CrowdCompass and Zoom. Each day will begin at 1 pm with interactive sessions on days 2 and 3. More information: [heritagerail.org](http://heritagerail.org).



▶ It is interesting to see what slips by the editing process....earlier I mentioned the Union Pacific's 1915 spelling of Skeeing....on January 16<sup>th</sup> a reader's phone call noted that the 2021 BNSF calendar captioned the November picture as being close to Bingers, Washington. There is a Rowland Lake that is 4 miles east of Bingen, and that is clearly the Columbia River. The member thinks Bingen is the appropriate town. (This author has fond memories of a family 1950s trip east on the Empire Builder with boarding at a flagged stop in Bingen.) And speaking of editing, our Editor T.Trent Stetz passes this publication past a couple of keen eyes one set being member Jean Hickok.

▶ Starting January 18<sup>th</sup>, light rail test trains are operating on the new elevated light rail tracks in Northgate as crews prepare for the on-time and on-budget opening of passenger service to Northgate in September. When finished, the 4.3-mile regional light rail extension will offer reliable travel between Northgate and downtown Seattle in just 14 minutes. Trains traveling in 3.5-mile twin tunnels north to and from the University of Washington Station at Husky Stadium will stop at underground stations in the U District and Roosevelt neighborhoods, exit the tunnels at First Avenue Northeast and Northeast 95<sup>th</sup> and transition to a 0.8-mile elevated guideway to reach the station. Construction on Northgate Link began in 2012 with a baseline budget of \$1.9 billion and a projected opening date of 2021. **Sound Transit 1/18/2021 newsrelease.**

▶ Member Jim Fitzgerald has determined that his vast collection of rail related photographs is destined for the Chapter archives. Jim, as some know, has many of his photos on his web site, **Fitz's Old Railfan Page**, [members.pioneer.net/~fitzrr/index.html](http://members.pioneer.net/~fitzrr/index.html). Take a look, Jim has organized his photos into various trips with captions. Many, many outstanding pictures! Many, many outstanding memories. Thank you Jim for preserving this history and donating the contents of your web site to the Chapter for future generations.



► One of my favorite daily reads are some of the posts on Trainorders.com.. An ongoing series of posts are being done by SR Bush, a member of the American Freedom Train setup crew. These are the fellows that got the display cars ready for the public after being spotted on the display track by the engine crew. SR does his posting on the Steam & Excursion page and he does two postings: *AFT Confidential* and *AFT Move Notes* with map. A very interesting read and insights that include occasional comments by Ross Rowland and Wes Camp. Many thanks SR for sharing these memories of your and the country's epic journey



► The Riverkeeper groups for the Willamette and Columbia rivers announced their intentions to sue Zenith Energy Terminal Holdings, which operates the oil train unloading facility at 5501 NW Front Avenue in Portland for “impermissibly discharging pollutants” since at least last April. The formal 18-page notice of intent to sue starts the clock on a 60-day period required by the Clean Water Act giving Zenith the chance to clean up the alleged violation before the lawsuit is filed in federal court. The pollution allegedly happens every time rail flows off the property into the river, about 90 times a year. The riverkeepers believe that Zenith primarily ships Baaken crude oil to refineries. **The Portland Tribune 1/20/2021.**



► BNSF January 20<sup>th</sup> announced their 2021 capital investment plan of \$2.99 billion. Much like the 2020 plan of \$3.08 billion, much of the money will be spent on maintenance. \$2.41 billion will be spent replacing and upgrading rail as well as track infrastructure like ballast and rail ties. Included are nearly 11,000 miles of track surfacing and/or undercutting work and the replacement of 428 miles of rail and approximately 2.6 million rail ties. **BNSF 1/20/2021 news release.**



► The Brooks Historical Society January 2021 Newsletter reports that the Brooks Depot Museum and the other museums of Powerland Heritage Park provided an alternate celebration for Christmas, a Christmas drive through event. In spite of rain and cold weather, 751 cars passed through the gate over six evenings to see the museums and vehicles lit up for Christmas. The attendees were very generous, and a check for \$3,500 was sent to the Santiam Canyon Wildfire Relief Fund, recognizing all 15 of the museums at Powerland.



► On February 2, 1916, heavy snows in Western Washington stop most transcontinental railroad service and disrupted other services. Snow began falling on the morning of January 31<sup>st</sup> and continued unabated until more than three feet had accumulated on level land. Schools closed and streetcars halted in their tracks. A snow slide closed the western portal of the Northern Pacific's Stampede Tunnel, suspending rail service over the Cascades. The railroad loaded 300 miners from its mines in Roslyn onto a train and took them to the tunnel to remove the snow. Excepted from **HistoryLink.org Essay 2872.**

► BNSF will host its 22<sup>nd</sup> Technology Awareness Day celebration through a series of events February 23-26, 2021. BNSF's Technology Awareness Day is part of the National Black Family Technology Awareness Week. Technology Awareness Day at BNSF is a local version of the campaign that aims to educate local minority youths about careers in technology and encourages attendees to design and develop their own technological solutions to real-world challenges that are judged at the event. The 2021 theme is “*Living in a Virtual World.*” [www.bnsf.com/in-the-community/technology-awareness-day/](http://www.bnsf.com/in-the-community/technology-awareness-day/) Registration deadline is February 11, 2021.



► For some very interesting facts about the Yakima trolley system, get on the Yakima Valley Trolley (YVT) facebook page, [www.facebook.com/yakimavalleytrolleys](https://www.facebook.com/yakimavalleytrolleys). There are four history posts since early January. YVT is also raising matching funds to restore streetcar #160, more information: [www.yakimavalleytrolley.org](http://www.yakimavalleytrolley.org)



► One of the many items in the donation to ORHF from Susan Hayden, widow of Charles Hayden, was a VHS tape of the **1989 Oregon Symphony Steam Tour**, a visual and musical reminiscence. Jim Hokinson kindly transferred the VHS tape to DVD. The 10+ minute video shows the highlights both on board, from the air and from the ground of the May 21-22, 1989 trip with the Union Pacific Executive cars pulled by the 8444 from Portland to Bend and back. Lots of aerial shots, on board and in cab footage including engineer Steve Lee and a trip drumhead on the rear. The VHS tape and DVD are going to the chapter archive. [My parents chased the 8444 up the Gorge to Hood River with some May 21<sup>st</sup> pictures.]



► Santiam Excursion Trains, Lebanon Oregon, kicked off their 2021 season with a Sunday Brunch run on January 24<sup>th</sup>. 2021 trips include: Valentines Day, St. Patricks Dinner ride, Sunday Brunches, Monthly Dinner rides, Wine Trains, Growler N Grub, Lunch Box Rides, Mother's Day and Father's Day rides, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Ride, Brewfest Ride, Veteran's Day Ride, Halloween Rides....and many more. More information and tickets: [www.santiamexcursiontrains.com](http://www.santiamexcursiontrains.com).



► As of January 19<sup>th</sup> still no word on what caused the December 22<sup>nd</sup> derailment of 8 cars of a 108-car BNSF oil train in

Custer, Washington. The Bakken loaded tank cars derailed while the train was traveling 7 miles per hour (track speed restricted to 10 MPH) on straight track; three tank cars caught fire. The Federal Railroad Administration expects to complete their investigation in April. **KUOW 1/19/2021.**



► The Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority has been formed by a coalition of local governments from North Dakota to Idaho have banned together to get passenger rail service re-instituted in Southern Montana. The idea is to get passenger trains rolling on track that runs from Spokane to Missoula to Bozeman to Billings to Miles City. The Authority is also looking at the feasibility of north-south service between Denver and Billings and Salt Lake City and Butte. To sign up for the newsletter and more information: [montanapassengerrailsummit.org/big-sky-passenger-rail-authority](http://montanapassengerrailsummit.org/big-sky-passenger-rail-authority). **The Missoulian 1/24/2021.**



[Passenger rail is going to get a lot of attention with the change in our national leadership... maybe even the Pioneer.]

► Word from Martin E. Hansen is that author's advance copies of the **Timber Titans**, *Baldwin's Articulated Logging Locomotives* book began arriving January 25<sup>th</sup>. See December 2020 *Trainmaster* insert for book details. [Rumor says that Santa has my copy on a boat with delivery expected in March.]

► A *Trainorders.com* January 25<sup>th</sup> posting noted a Midwest Locomotive reconditioned SD 38-2 is on the way to the Waste Management Columbia Ridge Landfill in GN inspired green livery. The Arlington, Oregon landfill handles Oregon waste delivered by truck and Seattle area waste delivered by rail. The locomotive is lettered Waste Management GMTX 3306. The landfill opened in 1990 with a facility acreage of 12,000 acres and a permitted footprint of 700 acres; they process 2 million tons of waste annually.



► On January 26<sup>th</sup>, Friends of SP 4449 webmaster ([www.4449.com](http://www.4449.com)) Bruce Miller added my article **What Started All This – SP4449** that relates Wes Camp's purchasing in 1970 the Richard Wright book *Southern Pacific Daylight Train 98-99*. The older I get the more I am amazed at the number of pivotal moments in our history... this being one.

► TriMet earlier this month began deploying staff at transit centers to distribute masks and educate rail riders about the system's mask requirement as COVID-19 cases continue to spike in Portland. Staff will also educate riders how to properly wear a mask, and where to find masks and hand sanitizer dispensers on trains. TriMet staff will continue mask distribution and education efforts through February 6<sup>th</sup>. TriMet has distributed 3.7 million masks since May 2020. **Progressive Railroading 1/26/2021.**



► Work resumed on the second bridges over Lake Pend Oreille and Bridge Street as well as the new bridge over Sand Creek at the marina entrance. Work includes additional pile installations at all work sites. Steel and precast fabrication for the three new bridges is under way at regional businesses. **Sandpoint Junction Connector Project Updates 1/27/2021.**



► As we view pictures of the American Freedom Train, one can clearly see the PNWC 76 tool car as it is the only clerestory car in the consist. The 76 was pulled by all three of the AFT used steam locomotives, used as the locomotive tool car. The 1917 Pullman built car was acquired by the Chapter in May 1971. My most recent AFT consist viewing was on *Trainorders.com* 1/27/2021 with two pictures clearly showing the 76 on July 16, 1976 running between Williamsport and Corning, New York. One of the unique features of these photos is that they also show a gondola loaded with coal behind the 76 as the train is being pulled by the 2101.

► The American Bridge Company was acquired September 30, 2020 by Southland Holdings LLC. Southland is based in Grapevine, Texas and is the parent company of Johnson Bros. Corporation, Oscar Renda Contracting, Southland Contracting, Mole Contractors, and Heritage Materials with a focus on infrastructure construction. It is a family-owned organization with an approximate annual revenues of \$1.58 billion. **Southland Holdings 10/1/2020 news release.** [American Bridge constructed the Brooklyn Turntable.]



# As I close up January, I join you in the hope that our needle sticks are coming soon... mask up and stay well.

## BROOKLYN BIKE-PED BRIDGE OPENS



The \$15 million Gideon Overcrossing opened November 10th. The bridge crosses the double track mainline of Union Pacific Railroad and the two MAX Orange line tracks in SE Portland. The bridge was built with Federal funds left over from the building of the Orange line to Milwaukie. The bridge provides a north-south link from Southeast 14th Avenue north of the tracks to Southeast 13th Place at Gideon Street. The bridge is near the MAX station at Clinton Street/SE 12th Avenue. The bridge is very significant as it will now allow safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the tracks as Union Pacific intermodal trains quite often tie up the area as they switch the intermodal yard just south at Brooklyn. The bridge provides some excellent views of both the railroad and MAX. The City of Portland will now manage, own and maintain the bridge. Text and photos by Arlen L. Sheldrake. Source: Business Tribune 12/6/2020

# WHAT ARE THE TOP TEN OREGON RAIL HISTORY EVENTS?

by T. Trent Stetz

I am wanting to do "Top Ten Countdown" style collection of articles for future publication in *The Trainmaster* (and potentially for a future Special Edition handout and/or potentially for a future historical exhibit) describing the Top 10 significant "Connection" events in Oregon's Rail History.

I am asking for your input on nominations for "candidates" for this rail-related historical list.

Would these significant connections be: A particular one-time historical event? Maybe the completion of a link in the Oregon's and the national railroad network? Possibly a completion of a significant station? The introduction of a new rail technology use in the state? A significant business related to the Oregon Railroads? Possibly a service introduction that had a widespread impact to rail passengers? A person or company who made a large contribution? An infrastructure improvement? Meeting a previously un-filled rail transportation need? Opening up commerce of a product to a portion of the state previously isolated? A major company expansion or merger? Intercity or rural accessibility? Enable the development of suburbia?

These nominees should be chosen with respect to their rail-related influence to Oregon's transportation and derived impacts to area communities and the regional economy.

Review your favorite parts of Oregon Rail History! I would very much like to have your contributions by Feb 14th, 2021. (Hint: that is the date of Portland Union Station's 125th Anniversary!)

Thank you very much for your input. It is most appreciated. Send ideas to [trainmaster@pnwc-nrhs.org](mailto:trainmaster@pnwc-nrhs.org).

## Bill of Lading

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### Chapter Officers

|                |                 |              |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| President      | Mark Reynolds   | 503.638.7411 |
| Vice President | George Hickok   | 503.649.5762 |
| Treasurer      | Keith Fleschner | 503.516.9272 |
| Secretary      | Jim Hokinson    | 503.635.4826 |
| National Rep.  | Al Baker        | 503.645.9079 |

### Chapter Directors-at-Large

|                             |           |              |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Don Klopfenstein (1st Term) | 2019-2021 | 503.777.8209 |
| Chuck Fagan (2nd Term)      | 2019-2021 |              |
| Bob Jackson (1st Term)      | 2021-2023 |              |
| Pete Rodabaugh (1st Term)   | 2021-2023 |              |
| Rolf Schuler (2nd Term)     | 2020-2022 | 503.285.7941 |
| Bruce Strange (2nd Term)    | 2020-2022 | 503.901.7815 |

### Committee Chairs

|   |                 |              |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Activities  | Ron McCoy       | 503.310.4811 |
| Archives  | Ed Berntsen     | 253.383.2626 |
| Auditor   | Bob McCoy       | 360.459.3251 |
| Car Host  | Mark Reynolds   | 503.638.7411 |
| Concessions   | Grant Carson    |              |
| Chapter Rep., Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation Board |                 |              |
|   | Mark Reynolds   | 503.638.7411 |
| Chapter Rep. Powerland                              | Mark Reynolds   | 503.638.7411 |
| Elections   | Jim Loomis      | 503.253.3926 |
| Flanger Restoration                                 | Phil Barney     | 503.706.0498 |
| Library   | Bruce Strange   | 503.901.7815 |
| Operations Manager<br>Library & Archives            | Bob Weaver      | 503.806.4955 |
| Meeting Programs                                    | Al Baker        | 503.645.9079 |
| Membership  | Lila Stephens   | 503.246.2165 |
| Rolling Stock                                       | George Hickok   | 503.649.5762 |
|   | Keith Fleschner | 503.516.9272 |
| Chief Mech. Officer                                 | Peter Rodabaugh | 503.701.7040 |
| Car Rental Agt.                                     | Bob Jackson     | 503.231.4808 |
| Safety Officer                                      | Keith Fleschner | 503.516.9272 |
| S-2 Restoration                                     | Mark Reynolds   | 503.638.7411 |
| Webmasters  | Jim Long        | 360.228.5523 |
|   | Mark Whitson    | 503.533.7005 |

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# **PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER TIMETABLE N<sup>o</sup>. 703**

**Feb. 11: Chapter Board Meeting:** Open to all Chapter Members. Contact Mark Reynolds at [mark.reynolds@powereng.com](mailto:mark.reynolds@powereng.com) or (503) 523-9740 for Call-In participation information.

**Feb. 19: Call in Chapter Meeting. Updates and Questions & Answers** Join us! The instructions are simple: If you have a PC, download the free **Zoom** application and use the Meeting ID that we show in *The Trainmaster* every issue (please note that the number changes every month!). For the next meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>, use computer/tablet/smartphone connect info sent via email. If you just want to use your telephone/cell phone, just call (Toll) +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma), followed by the (Meeting ID) **886 5636 6878**, followed by (Passcode): **96084**. So please call in and join in the information sharing! **NOTE:** We are beginning to share photos and videos during these virtual meetings! Try connecting to the meeting via computer or tablet or smartphone!

**Mar. 19: Chapter Meeting TBD.**

**Check [www.PNWC-NRHS.org](http://www.PNWC-NRHS.org) for updates**

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## **January Membership Call-In Meeting Minutes**

**Pacific Northwest Chapter - National Railway Historical Society**

**Held on January 15, 2021**

The first meeting of the NRHS-PNWC of 2021 was called to order by President Mark Reynolds at 7:34pm. It was attended by 25 members via WebEx and Skype.

The minutes of the December meeting were called, Doug Auburg made a motion to approve the minutes, the membership agreed and the minutes were approved.

The Treasurers report was given by Treasurer Keith Fleschner. He said the full report is not complete as the new dues checks have not all been deposited yet, but the accounts all balance and bills are paid. He reported that the 2021 budget was passed by the membership.

President Reynolds announced that the chapter recognizes George and Jean Hickok for their time and effort in handling the Train Toys For Tots program. Three thousand dollars was collected in donations and toys were purchased and delivered. President Reynolds also said the mail-in balloting for officers was successful, with one hundred thirty seven ballots received, and also passed the budget request.

Keith Fleschner reported that work was done on the 55 railcar to make it more waterproof, and work continues on the 6800 car to repair the body deterioration, at the side sill. Mark Reynolds said also the seat repair for the 6800 car goes forward, a seat from the car will be sent to the company in Chicago for them to do a test build and give a cost estimate for refinishing all of the seats in the car. The plan is to have the seats refinished in Naugahyde. Bryan Ackler will head a committee to pick the seat color, send him an e-mail if you wish to be part of the committee.

Mark Reynolds reported that the Willow Creek Railroad has sent a letter stating an interest in our Union Pacific caboose for display in their area at Powerland Heritage Park. First we need to empty our 'stuff' from the caboose, then they would have the responsibility to move it. They will then restore it to original working condition. Also the Yaquina Pacific Railroad Historical Society has indicated an interest in our boxcar, and talks will continue.

President Reynolds reported that the turntable work continues at ORHC. It has been fully sandblasted, so metal replacement may start. He said he is working with Siemens Corporation to design and possibly donate electric motors to operate the turntable.

Ed Berntsen reported that the Library and Archives group continues to meet electronically on Mondays. He said much material has been moved to storage to make more work room at Union Station. He said good safety protocols are being followed by the workers. He said parking is scarce at Union Station and due to safety concerns about the building, the search goes on for a new home for our Library and Archives. There is a building being investigated for a new home in S.E. Portland.

President Reynolds reported that ORHF has paid Dick Samuels for lease of the Oregon Pacific Railroad for Holiday Express 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Mark Reynolds and Trent Stetz programed a short video feature for the members, titled Steams Trains Galore 6.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Hokinson, Secretary.

### **PNWC – NRHS MISSION**

To preserve and interpret Pacific Northwest railroad history and historical artifacts for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations.