THE TRAINMASTER

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November Meeting

The November meeting will be held on Friday, November 18th, at 8 pm in room 208 of the Union Station. Mr. Art Hamilton, who is attending school at Pacific University in Forest Grove, will show colored slides that he has taken of railroading in the Pacific Northwest. Art was a guest at our October meeting. He is a resident of Seattle and is a member of the Puget Sound Railway Historical Society.

Members should be thinking about whether they want a meeting in December. Last year our attendance was poor at our December meeting because of members working and shopping. Also we should be thinking about officers for the coming year. A nominating committee will be selected at this meeting to prepare a slate of officers for the coming year.

We had about 45 people in attendance at our October meeting for the showing of the new UP movie "Last of the Giants." Everyone seemed to enjoy the movie very much. We had a number of visitors from PNERA and WVERA.

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Many railfans in this area were saddened by the recent unexpected death of Ron Wicke. Ron's main interest was in model railroading but he also took part in the construction of the locomotive for the Zoo Railroad. We would like to quote from the Oregon Journal editorial of October 15, 1960: "Farewall to Locomotive Painter--Every man desires to leave something, when he departs from this world, to prove that his life has added to the well being of humanity. Not all achieve their goal, but in the great majority of cases, even the humblest man's contribution does not go overlooked by his fellows. Once in a while some man contributes something above and beyond the standard. Such a man was Ron Wicke, who died unexpected recently while working at his drawing board. Wicke was a commercial artist, but he was better known as a railroad enthusiast. More than a year ago, when volunteers were laboring mightily to construct an authentic steam locomotive for use first at the Centennial, then on the Zoo Line, Wicke donated untold hours. He painted the tender and adorned it with letters in a style popular in 1876, then he mixed his colors and produced almost photographic views of Mount Hood and Crater Lake, one on either side of the headlight. Old-timers who have seen early day locomotives said Wicke's paintings matched those of railway artists of a bygone era. So we say farewell to Ron and wave a highball as he rolls over the highiron into the unknown."

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Old soldiers, they say, never die. Old locomotives are sometimes that way, too. Take the old Heisler that occasionally chuffs from Nat Wills' shingle mill at Mill City over less than a mile of track to the Espee railhead. This mill run is the shortest short line in Oregon. It's a private line without common carrier status. Take a look at the old Heisler--Old' Two Spot if you please. The engine's cylinders are beneath the boiler and placed at an angle to drive a crank just like a V-type automobile. Now Old Two Spot burns oil. But there was a time, years ago, when a horny-handed bakehead tossed wood into the greedy firebox. Weight of this old-time logging engine is said to be 68 tons. Hammond Logging Co. acquired Old Two Spot back in 1911 to chuff logs out of Breitenbush and Rock Creek areas in the era of railroad logging. When Hammond quit, the dinky passed along to Vancouver Plywood and was used to haul logs from their mill pond to Espee's railhead. This remained the dinky's work-a-day job until 1956 when boiler infirmities developed. For quite some time Old Two Spot was retired to rust on a siding

and beside her water tank. Came a day when Nat Wills decided to patch the old chuffer up and steam her again for the car haul from his shingle mill to the big carrier's railhead. When the writer came to look Old Two Spot over, Nat was out hunting and not available for comment. But shiny rails indicate that the ancient Heisler gets pretty steady usage." From a feature article by Ben Maxwell in the Salem Capital Journal of Nov. 5, 1960. (Submitted by Miln Gillespie)

"For five years Deep River Logging Co. No. 7 lay on its side in Pacific County, Washington, rusting in peace. The 2-4-4-2 type locomotive tipped over Feb. 22, 1955 while backing a string of cars across a small bridge five miles north of Naselle. The cars were pulled out, but the locomotive was left because the logging company was going out of business. Charles Morrow of Seattle bought the locomotive "as is" for its scrap value, \$1200, in June, 1955. Soon afterward the logging company quit and the rails were removed. Morrow, an avid railroad fan, said he was going to take the locomotive out of there and put it in running order. Most people thought it couldn't be done. One rail fan, a telephone company lineman, was going to remove a 60-foot-long locomotive and tender that weighed 96 tons in operating order-and with the track gone. Well-the locomotive is now on the Puget Sound Railway Historical Assn's land in the Snoqualmie Valley, and the tender will follow. The locomotive is in pieces but it will be reassembled. The salvaging chore appears to be an excellent example of how will power, derived from a consuming interest, can accomplish anything. The job was not done single-handed but, with two exceptions, everybody who pitched in also was a rail hobbyist. They descended on the locomotive like a detachment of ants. The assault was begun in July, when Morrow and a friend, Dick Thrash, each began a three week vacation. With them went Thrash's mother, as the cook; Morrow's son, George, 14, and Tom Lasham, also 14. A trailer coach furnished the kitchen. An abandoned building near the locomotive became an additional "dormitory". Access to the site was gained, by permission, through a farmer's field. Thrash took in his truck, rigged with power winch and derrick, and Morrow rented a gasoline-powered generator. The generator supplied electricity for tools and for camp lights. Work could go on after dark. A rented water pump, tapping the stream under the bridge, was set up as fire protection. It was summer in the brush, and the work required acetylene torches to loosen rusty nuts. The Baldwin-made locomotive was the 2-4-4-2 type, which meant it was a double locomotive under one boiler. The back set of drivers was fixed to the frame while the front set could turn with curves. The two men and the boys began disengaging the trucks from the boiler. Getting at the under side took jacks and some tunneling. When they got even a small wheel and axle loose, it still weighed 1,850 pounds. Some of the parts were managed by the truck and winch. Heavier work was turned over to a logger with a bulldozer. Skidding out and loading pieces of locomotive were not the logger's usual business, but the weight problems were not much different. To him, the boiler was a log 22 feet long and 7 feet through, big but no record for Douglas Fir. The logger and a highway trucker were the only paid help. Meanwhile, especially on week-ends, other rail fans arrived and went. All together, about two dozen participated. The locomotive will be reassembled next spring at the Puget Sound and Snoqualmie Valley Railroad site east of Seattle off of Highway 10." From an article in the Seattle Times, Nov. 8, 1960, by Bryon Fish. (Submitted by Al Haij).

This and That. . . . "Rails West" by George Abdill is now available in Portland book stores but we haven't had a chance to examine it closely. . . . The Georgia Pacific #9 which was dropped into the Wynoochie River in Washington has been giving the salmon in the stream a bad time. Heavy rains brought debris which started piling up behind the locomotive blocking passage of the fish, and bringing protests from fisherman. . . . Last of the SPS steam locomotives have gone to Oregon Steel Mills- - 905 on Sept. 20th, 900 on Sept. 30th, and 902 on Oct. 14th. . . .

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