

# The

November  
2003



# Trainmaster

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



## Traction Photos Contributed



**Portland Traction car in Gladstone in the mid-1950's, from collection.**  
Gary Colins of Boulder, Colorado recently contributed a CD-ROM with a collection of his photos to add to the chapter's photo archives. These photos include 25 photos of the Portland Traction Company from 1953 to 1956. The disk also contains some 1953 photos of the British Columbia Electric system.

### Chapter Nominations for 2004

The following nominations are submitted for election at our December 19<sup>th</sup> membership meeting:

**President** = Ron McCoy      **Vice President** = David Van Sickle  
**Treasurer** = Ed Berntsen      **Secretary** = James Long  
**Director 2004-2006** (two 3 year positions) = Keith Fleschner, Bill Hyde, Ralph Johnson

Our Elections Committee, Jim Loomis and Kent Hutchens, will be conducting the December election. A space for a write-in candidate for each position will be included in the ballot.

### Timetable #495

**Membership Meetings:** Nov 21, Dec 19, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5415 S.E. Powell Blvd. 7:30 PM **PLEASE ARRIVE AT OR BEFORE 7:30 AT OUR MEETINGS** If you arrive after 7:30 the parking lot door will be locked. You will need use the basement door on the West side of the building.

**November Program:** Fourteen Days Across Russia by Dick Mather

**December Program:** Christmas potluck (before meeting starts) and chapter elections.

**Board of Directors Meetings:** Nov 13, Dec 11, Room 208, Union Station, 7:30 PM

**Lending Library:** 1:30 to 4 pm Nov 22 and 29, check-out subject to **loan agreement**.

## \$\$\$ NEEDED

### Spreader - Flanger Move Fund

Your tax-deductable donations are needed to help fund the move to Antique Powerland.

#### Send to:

PNWC-NRHS  
Alan Viewig - MOW Exhibit  
800 NW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue room 1  
Portland OR 97209-3794

## President's Update, by Arlen L. Sheldrake

ODOT owned railroad right of way includes: Tongue Point to Willbridge in Northwest Portland (A-Line) and United Junction (west of Linnton) over Cornelius Pass to Quinaby in Marion County (Oregon Electric Line).

Steam may be returning to some of the **Montana Rockies Rail Tour** trips in 2004. Watch their web site: [www.montanarailtours.com](http://www.montanarailtours.com) and/or get on their mailing list 800.519.7245.

After multiple manufacturing rejections, the metal tile roof installation began on the **Union Station Annex** on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Installation is going slowly due to the manufacturer only producing 1000 tile per week. As of October 15<sup>th</sup> the manufacturer has been asked to up production to 3000 per week. A dry rainy season is promised for our office in room 1 and archives in room 1A!

If you want some good brief histories of Oregon railroads and reference books, a great place to look is our own Chapter's web site. Thanks to Glenn Laubaugh our web site is a rich information resource. [www.pnwc-nrhs.org](http://www.pnwc-nrhs.org)

On September 20<sup>th</sup> Pete Rodabaugh and George and Kimberly Hickok made another trip to Tillamook to work on the failing 6800 coach power plant. With a helpful drawing and notes from Pete on the Detroit 3-71 power plant controls the problem was finally isolated to a failing 36-volt continuous duty relay switch. On a long shot the repair crew went to a Tillamook NAPA store hoping to find a replacement. After a long catalog search the correct part number was found and, *believe it or not*, the NAPA store had one in stock. Pete's comment to the clerk, "We're in Pullman country!". Seems 36-volt systems are unique to old passenger railroad cars, some mine equipment, and some marine equipment.

Sometimes one wonders if anyone is reading *The Trainmaster* then a conversation comes along from member Dan Block (1999) who indicated that he very much appreciates our Chapter publication. Thanks Dan for your words of encouragement. Remember, articles of interest to our members are encouraged.

Watch in 2004 for a membership meeting program by member Mark Reynolds (2003) on Germany's new **TRANSRAPID Maglev** (magnetically levitated) rail system being developed in part by Siemens. Seems Mark will be getting a first hand view thanks to an invitation from a friend the in the arm of Siemens doing the development.

**Lewis & Clark Explorer** train statistics are outstanding. For the initial 2003 68-day operating season, May – September, a total of 17,890 paying passengers were carried between Portland and Astoria. On-time performance was 97.8%. For the season 83% of seats were filled. After July 14<sup>th</sup> ridership was not less than 87%, pretty darn good for the first year. On September 15<sup>th</sup> the Explorer met a High Iron Special at Clatskanie siding, probably the first passenger-to-passenger meet on the A-Line since passenger service was discontinued in January 1952. 2004 service is expected to run May 21<sup>st</sup> through September 13<sup>th</sup>, Friday through Monday.

After the many, many hours spent by our **2005 NRHS Convention** Hotel Selection committee members Al Hall and Chuck Bukowsky along with the members of the NRHS Convention Committee, the contract was signed with the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Hotel for the week of July 4, 2005. Special thanks to Carl Jensen, NRHS NCC Chair for his quick trip 10/6-7 to Portland from his home in Virginia to help with the final contract discussions. If you haven't yet volunteered, please do. We will have our first organizing meeting in early December.

McMenamins has done an excellent job of preserving the 1912 ex-SP Roseburg Depot as the **Roseburg Station Pub & Brewery**. Located in downtown Roseburg at 700 SE Sheridan and open daily 11 to 11, except Sunday noon to 10. Lots and lots of interesting railroad pictures and light fixtures in the well preserved building. Also good brew and grub right next to the CORP rails.

The "*front yard*" of **Portland's Union Station** is rapidly being re-constructed, as is the extension of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue under the Steel Bridge approach. Check it out.

Sorry for the late arriving October *Trainmaster*, mine arrived October 17<sup>th</sup> and many still weren't delivered. As this goes to press we believe the delay was not due to our hard working volunteers but was a printer delay.

Don't forget to send in your much-needed **donation** to help cover the cost of moving the Chapter's Jordan Spreader and Flanger to Antique Powerland. Send to: PNWC-NRHS, Alan Viewig – MOW Exhibit, 800 NW Sixth room 1, Portland OR 97209-3794.

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## **The Birth of the Oregon Railroad Association**

On this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of November, 1934, Alfred A. Hampson as General Attorney for Southern Pacific Company lines in Oregon, Charles A. Hart as General Counsel for Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway

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Company and A.C. Spencer as General Solicitor for Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company met in conference at Portland, Oregon, to form an association in the State of Oregon of the railroads represented by them respectively under the name of Oregon Railroad Association.

Mr. Spencer acted as Chairman of the meeting, and after some discussion and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the following resolution was unanimously adopted, to-wit:

RESOLVED, that the following named railroads operating in the State of Oregon do hereby associate themselves together under the name of the Oregon Railroad Association, to wit:

Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company,

Southern Pacific Company,

Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Company,

RESOLVED further that:

1. Any other railroad in Oregon may become a member of said association. Each member railroad to name and but one representative.
2. Each of the railroads above names shall be deemed to stand for and represent the railroad companies and railroad mileage of its affiliated, subsidiary or related companies operating in the State of Oregon, and said companies so represented shall not be entitled to other or separate representation.
3. The objects of the Association are to promote the interests of the Railroads in Oregon by placing before the public the problems confronting the railroads and the relationship of these problems to the general public welfare, thereby creating a public opinion in favor of fair and just Congressional and State legislation affecting the railroads, and fair treatment by regulatory Commissions; and the presentation to the Oregon representatives in the National Congress and the members of the legislative assembly of Oregon facts and arguments which will result in better understanding and a more intelligent consideration of and action upon proposed legislation affecting the railroads.
4. The officers of the Association to consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
5. All expenses incurred to be apportioned among the member railroads on the basis of mileage operated in the State of Oregon. The Chairman thereupon announced that the selection of officers was in order. A.C. Spencer was nominated and elected permanent Chairman.  
Alfred A. Hampson was nominated and elected Vice Chairman.  
Charles A. Hart was nominated and elected Treasurer.

After some discussion it was moved, seconded and carried that Mr. T.B. Collins, effective December 1, 1934 be engaged as secretary at \$350.00 per month and expenses; that Harold J. Turner be employed as assistant to Mr. Collins at \$250.00 per month and expenses. Said employments to obtain during the pleasure of the Association.

It was moved, seconded and carried that Oswald West be employed as Special Counsel, effective Dec. 1, 1934, at the rate of \$700.00 per month, said employment to continue for period of five months.

Representatives of the several member railroads to this Association are, for the present as follows:

Mr. Alfred A. Hampson for the Southern Pacific Company

Mr. Charles A. Hart for the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Company

Mr. A.C. Spencer for the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company.

It was moved, seconded and carried that the Association call upon said member roads for \$9,000.00 as a fund from which to pay the payroll and expenses of the association, and that the Treasurer shall forthwith call upon said member railroads to contribute said fund on basis of mileage operated to-wit:

Southern Pacific Company	42.7261%
Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company	35.7265%
Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Company	21.5474%

It was moved, seconded and carried that all disbursements be made upon voucher drawn by the Secretary upon the Treasurer of the Association, said voucher to be valid only when approved by the signatures of at least two of the representatives of the member railroads.

It was moved, seconded and carried that this Association continue for a period of at least five months and that same may thereafter be dissolved upon thirty days notice in writing by any member railroad served upon the other members, said service to be made in person or by mail upon the representatives of the other member railroads.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

/s/ Alfred A. Hampson /s/ Arthur C. Spencer /s/ Charles A. Hart

*The original photocopy of these meeting minutes was donated to the PNWC by Everett Cutter, ORA Manager, on October 17, 2003. Everett is retiring and the ORA, after almost 70 years, is closing. Note: in two places 5 months is mentioned which was the anticipated length of the 1934 Oregon Legislature session. The percentages of "contribution" will be of interest to Oregon railroad mileage historians. Oswald West, 1873-1960, was appointed the Oregon State Land Agent in 1903, was appointed to a 4-year term on the Oregon Railroad Commission in 1907, was elected Governor in 1910 and had many other notable achievements. Keyboarding by Arlen.*



## Mail Bag and Off The Wire



### Just Married

Judy (Dodge) and Richard Ordway were married on Saturday 10/11 at the Crossroads Church in Vancouver, WA. They are trying to get everything in "order" to leave here in the motorhome in time to be in Tucson on 11/15.

### Information on Railroad Auctions Sought

I have an item that was bought at a railroad auction in Portland, Oregon around 1940. Does anyone have information about these kinds of auctions?

MH, Eugene, Oregon

### Information About John Eastwood Sought:

**E-Mail message to PNWC-NRHS from Barbara Wolcott:**

I'm looking for information about the Pacific Northwest Railroad which was surveyed and began construction some time in the 1870s. Of particular interest is the work of construction engineer/surveyor John Eastwood. Can you direct me to a book or website that can help me?

**E-Mail message to Barbara Wolcott and PNWC-NRHS from Robert I. Melbo:**

Pacific Northwest Railroad and John Eastwood are not names I recognize. A cursory review of some of the rail history available does not turn up anything.

Railroading was just getting started in Oregon in the early 1870s. The Oregon & California had graded as far south as Lake Labish by 1868 but didn't have the first 10 miles of rail laid south from Portland until November of

1869. The railroad reached Salem and Albany in 1870 and Eugene in 1871. Not until December 1887 was the O&C completed as a through route between San Francisco and Portland.

The Oregon Central, later the Western Oregon Railroad, was building out of Portland westward through Beaverton, reaching Hillsboro in 1871 and St. Joseph in 1872. By 1879 it had reached Corvallis.

The Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Railroad was incorporated in 1872 but didn't do anything. Two years later the Willamette Valley and Coast Railroad Company was incorporated (by the same person as did the C&YB) to build a narrow gauge line in the same area. In 1878-79 they finally got the first 10 miles of track laid west of Corvallis.

Toward the end of the decade, 1877, the first rails of what was to become the short lived narrow gauge Oregonian Railway were being put down between Dayton (on the Willamette River) via "Whites" (Whiteson today) to Smithfield and Sheridan. This was built as the Dayton Sheridan & Grande Ronde Railroad Company. This 30 miles of railroad was completed in 1879.

Track laying began on the Northern Pacific in May 1871, at Kalama Washington, building toward Tacoma and reaching Tenino in 1872. Connections to Portland were made by steamboat until NP completed a Portland to Goble line in 1883, utilizing a ferry to get trains across the Columbia to Kalama.

As the 1870s progressed into the 1880s railroad building became much more intense but I still do not find any reference to a Pacific Northwest Railroad or John Eastwood. I'll keep looking but I have come across a lot of railroads that were incorporated during this period (most of which were never built) but none with a name that is even close to Pacific Northwest Railroad.

**Email message from Barbara Wolcott to Robert I. Melbo:**

Thank you for this information. The man I mentioned, John Eastwood, likely would not have been in your archives because he was not the person in charge over all. He was an engineer who took a job with the railroad and I'm trying to get a timeline on his coming from Minnesota, working on the Pacific Northwest Railroad and then ending up in Fresno when the rail company fell on some financial hard times about three years later.

**Email message to Barbara Wolcott from Robert I. Melbo:**

I've had an interest in railroad history for about 45 years (started when I was a teenager). Although I have seen hundreds of different railroad names over the years I have yet to run across a railway by the name of Pacific Northwest Railroad.

The first transcontinental railroad, completed May 10, 1869 at Promontory Utah by the joining of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads, was known as the Pacific Railroad in authorizing legislation by the Congress and often was referred to as such in printed media of the day.

There were plans at one time to build a "branch" off the Pacific Railroad from Winnemucca Nevada into Oregon but this didn't happen. However, I understand considerable preliminary surveying was accomplished.

There also was a Pacific Coast Railway Co., a narrow gauge (3 feet between the rails versus 56.5 inches comprising "standard" gauge) that operated in California (in your area actually) and also in Washington State but the two operations were not physically connected.

The railroad name that comes closest to Pacific Northwest is the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, a California line that ran in its heyday from Sausalito on San Francisco Bay to Trinidad, north of Eureka.

Major portions of this railroad still exist although much of it is not in service. Most of what remains, perhaps all of it, is now owned by public bodies. The future of the line out-of-service is very much in doubt as some \$60 million is said to be needed to restore it to working order and that is a big-ticket item in cash-starved California government.

The history of the NWP is well documented although I do not have any of my books on the subject at hand. According to the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society website, the road was created in 1907 out of an amalgamation of some 60 different railroads that existed at one time or another. Obviously, all of these had to exist prior to 1907 and some may well date back considerably into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

I note the Library at the NWPRRHS will entertain inquiries and perhaps you can ask them about John Eastwood. The link: [www.nwprrhs.org](http://www.nwprrhs.org).

**Email message to Barbara Wolcott from Ed Bernsten:**

Regret to advise I have no information on a Pacific Northwest Railroad in any of my books and documents listing corporate names of railroads in Washington and Oregon.

The Northern Pacific Railroad Co., chartered by Congress with a bill signed by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1864, was finally completed on September 8, 1883, with a golden spike driven at Gold Creek Montana.

The original route under its charter was completed from Duluth Minnesota (*"head of navigation on the Great Lakes"*) and St. Paul (*"head of navigation on the Mississippi River"*) to Portland (*"head of navigation on the Columbia River"*) and Tacoma (*"head of navigation on the Puget Sound"*). The original route in the Pacific Northwest was via Sandpoint Idaho, Spokane, Pasco, Wallula (car ferry over the Snake River), Ainsworth Junction, then down the south side of the Columbia River (now Union Pacific) to Portland; car ferry across the Willamette River about where the Steel Bridge is now; up the south side of the Columbia to Goble; car ferry across the Columbia to Kalama, thence via Centralia, Tenino and Yelm to Tacoma.

The first Stampede Pass line Pasco to Yakima, Easton, Lester, Enumclaw, Orting, and Puyallup to Tacoma was with switchbacks opened in 1887, followed by the present Stampede Tunnel in 1888.

The completion of the first Northern Transcontinental railroad (Northern Pacific) was a very big deal in the Pacific Northwest in the 1880s and that may be what Mr. Eastwood was involved with, but I have no records to help you.

The Congressionally-chartered Northern Pacific Railroad of 1864 fell into financial trouble and was re-incorporated as the Northern Pacific Railway Company, a Wisconsin Corporation, about 1897, and that company survived into the Burlington Northern Inc. merger of March 3, 1970, as a direct predecessor of today's Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway Company.

**Email message to Barbara Wolcott and Ed Bernsten from Robert I. Melbo:**

My observation from reading Mr. Bernsten's nicely done summation is that the time frame certainly makes a good fit with the chronology you have for John Eastwood. Completion of the Northern Pacific in September of 1883 would have allowed Mr. Eastwood to move to Fresno that year. In fact, he could have done so before September as I

suspect NP was scaling down construction forces at least several weeks before the final spike was driven, just as you would expect might happen with any major project requiring much manpower.

Hopefully Ed noted that Mr. Eastwood was born and reared in Minnesota and may have joined NP construction work from that venue. Ed, can you add anything about the railroad's progress across the northern tier states 1879-1883? Was the construction work more or less continuous during that period? Is it possible that Mr. Eastwood could have signed on in 1879-1880, worked his way west with

the building of the line, and then split for the Golden State when the task was at or near completion?

*If you have information about the Pacific Northwest Railroad and/or John Eastwood, please send to Barbara Wolcott, 663 Pismo Street, San Luis Obispo CA 93401 or [hwolcott1@charter.net](mailto:hwolcott1@charter.net). These messages were interchanged during September 2003. Many thanks to Bob Melbo and Ed Bernsten for their expertise and willingness to share their wealth of historical information.*

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## **PNWC-NRHS Membership meeting**

### **October 17, 7:30 pm**

Chapter President Arlen Sheldrake called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, and led the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. No guests were present.

Due to late mailing of the October Trainmaster, approval of the published membership meeting minutes was tabled until the November meeting.

Treasurer Alan Viewig was unable to attend, so there was no Treasurer's report.

Arlen reminded the members that more nominees are needed for the 2004 officer and board positions.

As of October 17, the following candidates were seeking office:

Vice President: Dave Van Sickle

Secretary: Jim Long

Board of directors: Keith Fleschner, Ralph Johnson, Ron McCoy

After Arlen asked the membership to consider nominating candidates for President and Treasurer, past Chapter President George Hickok gave a brief description of the duties required of the President. After a bit more discussion, Kerrigan Gray nominated Ron McCoy to run for President. Ron gave it some consideration, and spoke briefly about how he envisioned filling the role, before accepting the nomination.

Arlen account that at long last, the Chapter has finalized a hotel contract with the Lloyd Center Doubletree hotel for the **2005 NRHS Convention**. The convention dates will be July 5-9, with excellent rates for rooms and ban-quet functions, plus a great location right on the MAX light rail line.

Thanks to Carl Jensen from the NRHS National Convention Committee for flying out to help finalize the contract. Arlen said that he has passed those dates on to Steve Lee of the Union Pacific steam program, so cross your fingers that UP can fit our convention into their schedule. The next meeting for convention planners is slated for December 6.

The Chapter will be **moving its Jordan Spreader** from Portland & Western's Hopmere siding to the Antique Powerland grounds soon. George Hickok is working to try to get the Chapter's flanger positioned in Hopmere also, so that both pieces can be moved at once. Ken Peterson asked about the weather and slippery ground conditions, but George said the contractor isn't worried about that this early in the fall. Regardless whether both are moved or only the spreader, the Chapter is soliciting funds to pay for the project. Donations of any amount will be greatly appreciated. Checks can be made payable to PNWC-NRHS and mailed to: PNWC-NRHS, Attn: Al Viewig-MOW Exhibit, Room 1, Union Station, 800 NW 6th Ave., Portland OR 97209. In addition to all the time George has put in on this project, he presented Arlen with a generous check to get the ball rolling. Thank you, George!

Ron McCoy presented an Activities Committee report, announcing that Jim Davis, owner of the Mission Santa Ynez, has invited the Chapter to send a small group of folks out to see what Mr. Davis has done with the Chapter's former car and a lot of volunteer labor. Ron said that the invitation was limited to ten members, and that interested folks should contact Ron right away, preferably that night at the meeting. If there is sufficient interest, a second trip might be scheduled for a later date.

Roger White presented a brief update of APMA activities, especially the annual membership meeting and potluck, scheduled for November 8 at noon on the APMA grounds in Brooks. The 2004 Steam-Up dates are July 31 and August 1, and August 7-8.

Jim Loomis said that he will be staffing the lending library on October 18 from 1:00 to 4:00 in Room 1.

George Hickok provided an update on the Chapter's rolling stock. The most activity in that department has been George's numerous long days traveling to Tillamook to service the rolling stock on lease to the Port of Tillamook Bay for its excursion schedule. George is usually the first on the scene in the morning, getting the cars opened up, running the heat to take the chill off, riding along during the excursions to take care of in-route problems, and then servicing and watering the cars at the

end of the day, usually leaving even after the POTB crews have left. POTB passengers seem to be enjoying the excursions through the fall foliage. Go to <http://www.potb.org> for more excursion information. Arlen noted that while the daily rate for the POTB's use of the cars is very reasonable, the POTB will be providing another free pull for the Chapter to operate an excursion on the Tillamook line. Arlen thanked George for all his hard work to make the POTB lease a mutually successful arrangement. As a freight railroad, the POTB has been very appreciative of the Chapter's passenger car expertise.

Pete Rodabaugh and George have also done some repairs on Bob Melbo's baggage car, and Mr. Melbo thanked them by granting the Chapter the use of the car in the future. In other news, the 3300's windows have been boarded to reduce leakage, and other work remains to identify and patch a couple remaining leaks. Other rolling stock is generally sound and dry, and is being prepared for winter storage.

Bill Hyde of the Archives Committee is busy inventorying a large volume of materials donated by long-time member Chuck Storz (1964). Chuck donated hundreds of rare and valuable books and other items. Chuck himself is a great source of local rail history and stories, and would appreciate visits. See the September 2003 *Trainmaster* for contact information. Other information shared at the meeting:

- ODOT released ridership figures for the recently-concluded Lewis & Clark Explorer season. 17,890 revenue passengers enjoyed 97.8% on-time performance, filling approximately 83% of the available capacity. On September 15, the Astoria line saw its first passenger train meet since 1955, by most estimates.

- Carolyn McCoy said she saw a nice note in the Oregonian's "Back Fence" column from someone who had enjoyed seeing the 4449 at the Oregon State Fair.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31. After everyone had enjoyed Cora and Ted Ahlberg's refreshments, Mr. Everett Cutter gave an informal but very interesting and historical look back at the history of the Oregon Railroad Association. The ORA is a lobbyist organization which represented the interests of the major railroads which operated in Oregon, from its founding by the SP, SP&S, and OR&N in 1934 to the present. With most member railroads taking their lobbying efforts in-house, the future of the ORA is uncertain. Mr. Cutter has kindly donated many historical artifacts from the ORA to the PNWC Archives.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Long

**Be sure to help  
spread the word  
about the NRHS. For each  
person who joins and takes part in the  
work of helping to accomplish our  
goals, the accomplishing becomes all  
that much more easy and complete.  
Membership doesn't have to be just  
about paying annual dues and  
receiving the monthly newsletter.  
Membership is far more meaningful to  
those who actively participate in  
preservation and restoration activities.**



**The Trainmaster** is the official newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. It is published monthly for the benefit of its members. Articles which appear in the *Trainmaster* do not express the official position of the organization on any subject unless specifically noted as such. Material from the *Trainmaster* may be reprinted in other publications provided credit is given as to the source. Please address contributions, correspondence, and exchange copies of newsletters to:

**Attn.: Trainmaster Editor**

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**<http://www.pnwc-nrhs.org>**

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**T-M Deadline:** 20<sup>th</sup> of previous month on most months. Was 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for August Issue due to absence of Editor.

**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**

**Committee Chairs**

**Activities:** Ron McCoy 503.244.4315  
**Archives:** Chuck McGaffey 503.223.2227  
**Meeting Programs:** See *Vice President*  
**Concessions:** Al Hall (interim) 503.699.5042  
**Car #76 Restoration:** Keith Fleschner, 503.632.0267  
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Janet Larson 503. 253.7436  
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**Finance:** See *Vice President*  
**Library:** Irv Ewen 503.232-2441  
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**Museum:** Glenn Laubaugh, 503. 655.5466  
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**2005 NRHS Convention Chair:**  
Arlen Sheldrake 503.223.7006

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**Address Service Requested**

**MEMO**

Pacific Northwest Chapter - National Railway Historical Society

November 1, 2003

**TO:** Chapter Members & Supporters

**FR:** Arlen L. Sheldrake, President



**RE:** Update on Spreader & Flanger Move

I am pleased to report that our selected mover, Wayne Grippen Construction & Building Moving has submitted a bid of \$3,500 to move the Chapter's Flanger from the Hopmere siding to Antique Powerland Museum. In addition to this good news we have the added good news that Portland & Western Railroad has agreed to special move the Flanger from the long-time storage location in Beaverton to Hopmere to satisfy the June 2003 coach lease to PNWR for their Albany to Toledo company trip.

These items of good news now mean that we are able to move both the Jordan Spreader and Flanger to their permanent home at Antique Powerland Museum this fall for a total move cost of \$7,500. In addition to this dollar cost we will have many hours devoted by our move team of Pete Rodabaugh, Keith Fleschner, and George Hickok to ensure that all aspects of the move of these friction bearing artifacts is successful.

On the back of this insert is an interesting first person article on the operation of a Southern Pacific Railroad Flanger. I hope you are enjoying as much as I the many contributions Bob has made to *The Trainmaster*. I have said it many times before but will again, we are very lucky to have Bob as a Chapter friend and resident Oregon rail historian.

A big thanks you to those that have already sent in your tax deductible donations to help with this move. For those that haven't yet, please do. This is an extraordinary expense that we need your donations to cover. Any funds received that exceed the move costs will be devoted to developing the Antique Powerland Museum interpretive MofW exhibit. We still need volunteers to develop the interpretive exhibit and preserve our two artifacts.

Please make checks out to PNWC-NRHS and send your tax-deductible donations to:

PNWC-NRHS

Alan Viewig - MofW Exhibit

800 NW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue room 1

Portland OR 97209-3794

**Thank You !**

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## Operating a Flanger by Robert I. Melbo

In 1971 I was transferred from the City of Industry, where I was Assistant Trainmaster, to Sacramento, where I became a full Trainmaster but one that roved without an assigned territory. I filled in for other Trainmasters who were on vacation and spent a great deal of time with maintenance of way activities that required operating department involvement. One of those duties was to ride snow equipment across Donner Pass. That included flangers and spreaders. I did not ride a rotary plow until years later on the Oregon Division.

The year I arrived on the Sacramento Division was the year that all of the flangers assigned to Roseville, Colfax and Truckee were rebuilt at the Sacramento General Shops into what was called the "Robinson" design. R.R. Robinson was the rather crusty long-serving Superintendent headquartered at Sacramento. He is credited with the new design of the flangers, which entailed replacing the wood cabin with a roomier all steel "box" with more comfortable caboose chairs, a caboose oil stove and sliding baggage car doors on both sides about one-third of the way back from the head end. These were touted to be a big improvement and would allow for easier dispensing of MofW equipment and personnel under adverse conditions in the territory. They also aided in the changing of the blades on the plow as there was an air-operated wrench (like a lug nut wrench) on a hose that could be fed out the side doors for use below the car to tighten the breakaway bolts used to secure the blades. The former front platform was eliminated and the space thus freed was added to the interior; the rear access platform was retained.

During my time on the Sacramento Division, I rode inside flangers and on the locomotives pulling them, and the latter was the preferred place to be. I was fortunate (?) enough to have ridden the maiden voyage of the Robinson flanger out of Roseville in early winter of 1971. In place of spring clusters on the trucks, the old flangers had wooden blocks or hard rubber blocks to prevent the vehicle from excessively bouncing (a bad thing when plowing snow). The Robinson flanger used shop-manufactured welded steel cubes in place of springs. This was a huge mistake as it created the roughest riding most vibration-prone vehicle you'd ever care to experience. My teeth were almost rattling, it was so bad. After running about 75 miles or so to get into snow country we began flanging above Emigrant Gap. Before we got to Norden, however, the vibration caused one of the welded seams of the wall-mounted 112-gallon stove oil tank to split and the floor of the flanger was soon awash in fuel. I opened the back door and was sweeping it out with a broom. The fumes were bad and we all had to vacate the flanger and abort the mission. That experience led to a rapid modification of the spring block with hard rubber.

Flanger plows, left and right, were raised and lowered from the cab of the locomotive using a toggle switch on an electrical outlet box that was plugged into a special receptacle on the back of the control stand. Usually the

conductor, brakeman or fireman, if one was employed, operated the blade but I did so also on a number of occasions. When throwing snow left, a crewmember inside the flanger would block up the right plow so it couldn't be lowered. Vice versa when throwing snow right. The idea being you didn't want the wrong blade down at the wrong time, so the locking devices were like the safety on a gun. The plows had to be raised at road crossings and while passing over turnouts. In the Sierra Nevadas, SP "half-soled" the motorcar turnouts (the wooded platforms provided for placing and removing speeders on the track) so that the plow blades, which cut to about two inches below the top of rail, could safely pass over the platforms without ripping them out. In spring, the upper layer wood would be restored for normal activity.

That's about all there was to "operating" a flanger. Raising and lowering the plow just required the flick of a switch—and the right timing in response to flanger boards alongside the track.

As to the Brooklyn flanger (*the Chapter's*), I'd have to look it over and see if it was operated the same way. I never worked with one of the older wooden flangers—just the then "brand new" flangers. I came to Oregon in 1972 and the Oregon Division also had received some of the newly designed plows for use in the Cascades. The Brooklyn flanger never operated that I can recall.

SP generally limited the speed of flangers to 35 MPH but at 35 you could throw snow quite a distance. I seem to recall there were some places on the Sacramento Division where 40 was permitted to hurl snow further. This was in areas where snow accumulation was problematic. Spreaders and rotaries were slow movers because the wings needed frequent adjustment on account of the ever-changing conditions along the railroad.

I referred to the flanger as the "Brooklyn" flanger because I thought it was the flanger assigned to Brooklyn. When I came to Oregon in 1972 there was a flanger stationed or kept at Brooklyn. To my recollection it was never used from 1972 onward although we did operate a spreader occasionally on the Tillamook Branch. So my assumption was that this was the flanger (SPMW 328) donated to the Chapter. It makes sense, as SP would not have wanted to move something like that any great distance if it could be donated locally.