

THE TRAINMASTER  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JANUARY MEETING

The January meeting will be on Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, at 8 pm at the home of Walt Grande, 4243 SW Admiral St, Portland, in the Glencullen district off of Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway (Route 10) at SW 39<sup>th</sup> Drive. Beth Russell, who has just recently returned from the Orient, will show colored slides taken in Japan, including both railway and travel scenes. If other members of your family would like to see these slides, they are cordially invited. We will also have election of officers for 1962.

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Dues for the year 1962 are now payable to our Secretary-Treasurer. National Dues are \$3.50 per year and local dues are only \$1.00 per year, or a total of \$4.50.

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In an era which has seen many logging railroads torn up and abandoned the Weyerhaeuser Company is working in the opposite direction as construction proceeds to ready a new 21-mile logging railroad through the Modawck Valley. Expected to be in operation early in 1962, the railroad will tap a large stand of old growth timber in the Cascade foothills for its Springfield lumber, plywood and containerboard production. The old and new railroading are mixed in this new line, formed by extending a former SP grade ten miles up the Mohawk valley. The old SP track includes a 150-foot covered wooden bridge over the Mohawk River—one of 28 remaining on a rail line. The roof has been replaced but the structural timbers are as sound as when the bridge was built in 1911. A pair of 138,000 lb diesel locomotives purchased from the SP will pull 50 or 60 car trains to the mill pond. One round trip will be made each day. Del Hilliard, Weyerhaeuser logging engineer at Springfield, is in charge of the railroad construction project. Task Force Harmon, Oakridge, has the contract. Hilliard reports that all stream crossings have been completed along with the clearing of right-of-way and grading. Two 60-foot steel girder bridges from the SP&S line at Vernonia are also in place. Half of the old SP branch line had 60 lb rails. These are replaced with 80 lb rail from Weyerhaeuser's Klamath Falls line. Other rail of 72 lb size came from Weyerhaeuser's line at Sutherlin which was shut down last year when log hauling in that location was switched to trucks. Railroads were once the prime means of hauling logs from forest to mill but have been on the decline in recent years. Except for two dozen or so surviving examples in the West, trucks have taken over. Loggers believe that Weyerhaeuser's Calapooya line is the only major log-hauling road to be built in the last decade, and could well be the last for all time. The pioneer timber products firm is not turning back the clock for sentimental reasons. The new railroad is being built because long hauls of large quantities of logs are more economical by rail than by truck over public roads. Among other disadvantages, log trucks using public highways are subject to weight restrictions. Along with the two locomotives, the new railroad will have about 150 log cars. Men working in the recently completed car shop at Springfield have been renovating the cars to handle larger loads than were handled on the Weyerhaeuser rail line at Sutherlin. Each rail car will hold one load from an off-the-highway truck. The trucks will come from the hillside forests to the reloading center 21 miles northeast of Springfield. Here a big transfer machine, built to company specifications in Portland, will lift up an entire truck load and transfer it in a single operation, to a rail car. Grades on the 11 miles

of new railroad are favorable, Hilliard said. The old SP track has one adverse grade of only .7 of one per cent. Curves also are gentle. The line was built to harvest old-growth timber, but the trainmen each day will pass through healthy stands of second growth timber. These will be ready for harvest within the lifetime of the younger men. (From the Springfield News—11-20-61)

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The ICC by a certificate and order in Finance Docket #21687, Sumpter Valley Railway Co., Abandonment of Entire Line, has authorized the Sumpter Valley to abandon its entire remaining line of railroad extending from the Edward Hines Lumber Co, planing mill at Baker to a connection with the Union Pacific Railroad Co. at Baker, about one and one-half miles, together with sidings and switch tracks, all in Baker County, Oregon. The ICC said that the lumber company, the sole source of traffic for the line, ceased operations on or about October 1, 1961 and that all movements of lumber from the mill would be completed on about Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. The ICC said the line would serve no transportation purpose, adding that its continued operation would impose an undue and unnecessary burden on the the Sumpter Valley. The line has been owned by the Edward Hines Lumber Co. of Chicago since they took over the property of the Oregon Lumber Co. several years ago. The line was started in 1890 and at one time ran all the way from Baker to Prairie City, Oregon. The line from Prairie City to Bates was abandoned in 1933 and the line from Bates to Baker, other than the trackage in Baker itself, was abandoned in 1947. The line was narrow gauge.

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The Southern California Chapter of R&LHS is about to take delivery of UP Big-Boy 4014 for display at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds in Pomona, Calif. The locomotive is due in Pomona about Jan, 10<sup>th</sup>, where it will join the other locomotives belonging to this group. The fairgrounds are open to visitors all year.

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The ICC has approved the petition of the SP and UP to take over the Portland Traction Co. It is expected that the purchase will be consumated within a year. The PTCO is to be operated as a separate company, with the SP and UP alternating each year as the controlling company.

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The Georgia Pacific Corp. #10 is still resting peacefully in the Zidell scrap yard under the Ross Island Bridge.

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Al Hajj will have copies of PRJ 1962 calendars at the January meeting. Also copies of United Railway of Oregon, Night Train and Pacific Electric.

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