

THE TRAINMASTER  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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April 19, 1963    APRIL MEETING    8:00 pm

The April meeting will be held on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 P.M. at the Salem Federal Savings & Loan, 580 State Street. The location is across the street from the Salem Court House and Post Office. The door prize will be a book "The Early History of Transportation in Oregon" by Henry Villard. The speaker of the evening will be the Editor of the Woodburn Independent, Mr. Eugene Staller, who will also show his sound railroad pictures. Refreshments will be served!

Southern Pacific-Cascade-Train #11 leaves Portland at 4:30 P.M. and arrives in Salem at 5:42 P.M. Arrangements have been made for transportation from the depot to the meeting place. The northbound train #10 the Shasta Daylight leaves Salem at 10:01 P.M. and arrives in Portland at 11:25 P.M. Round trip fare is \$3.75 including seat charge.

FUTURE MEETING

On May 18 we are planning a field trip to the L P & N at Grand Ronde, Oregon, where they still have a steam locomotive in reserve. Remember this date May 18<sup>th</sup>. More details next month.

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Alph B. Clancy, retired S. P. engineer, who ran live steam models at Shady Dell for many years died March 27<sup>th</sup> of a stroke. Alf was a personal friend of a number of our members. He will be sorely missed

ABOUT THE MARCH MEETING

The March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting featured Jack Jones of the N. P. Terminal Co. of Oregon. The former Oregon Electric parlor car "Champoeg" (now named "Bridge River") was the location of our very successful meeting. We are indebted to our host, Frank J. Weiler, Pres. Of WVERA for providing the place for our meeting in the Guild's Lake Yard. Frank had to miss much of the program as he was kept busy operating the electric generator to provide light and keeping the stove hot for coffee. Mr. & Mrs. J. H. (Jack) Jones were our honored guests. Jack is the manager of the Northern Pacific Terminal Co., and is in charge of all operations at the Union Station including the extensive tracks and yards. Jack told us of some of the early history of the company and then told us a lot of interesting incidents in his rise from messenger to the top job as manager. In appreciation of the many favors of our organization and for the use of Room 208, Union Station, for our meeting place, Jack was presented with a 1963 Chapter and National Membership in the NRHS. Frank Weiler presented him with a ball point pen inscribed with his name and initials WVERA on behalf of their organization.

REMEMBER THE NRHS CONVENTION IN DENVER OVER LABOR DAY WEEKEND WITH  
TRIPS ON INTERMOUNTAIN LIMITED

THE RAILROAD BACKGROUND OF MILN GILLESPIE

For as long as I can remember (since 1918) I have been fascinated by any vehicle running on rails. Having been born in 1916, my early childhood in Portland (and one year spent in Eugene) was during the latter days of the interurban and streetcar era, and it was my fortunate pleasure to have ridden to many destinations now reached only by bus, or not served by any public transportation whatsoever. Highlights of my early childhood include riding open trolleys in regular summer service on the famous Council Crest line, open trailer cars (behind trolley motors) on the long-abandoned Bull Run line of PRL & P Co., and the local S. P. owned streetcars in Eugene and between Eugene and Springfield, Oregon.

My railroad interests have always been with the historical-business-personality side of railroading rather than the mechanical. In 1928 a family friend gave me the December, 1928 issue of the "OFFICIAL GUIDE". This opened a "Pandora's Box" of pleasures through page after page of time-tables and schedules in a pre-depression age when nearly all lines, both long and short, offered passenger service to most everywhere in the U. S. A., Canada and Mexico, and railroad maps were shown in plenteous quantity. Since then (1928) a hobby of reading the "OFFICIAL GUIDE" at regular intervals throughout the years has given me a living history of the railroad passenger business up to the present time.

Due to the many other interest both during high school (Lincoln High of Portland) and college (Pomona College, Claremont, California) and afterwards my railroad fan enthusiamers have "blown hot and blown cold". I guess all of us have pangues of regret regarding the picture taking we did not do and the riding of trains we did not take. However, I have many memories to carry me through my lifetime, and many pictures and momentos to last beyond. Among my most cherished railfan experiences are these:

- (1) Riding the very last S. P. "WEST SIDE LINE" RED ELECTRIC (PORTLAND) to MCMINNVILLE VIA FOREST GROVE JULY 1929  
(Cameras clicked.....Spectators lined the route and held up their children to see the train.....)
- (2) Riding the last OREGON ELECTRIC RAILWAY PASSENGER TRAIN-May 13, 1933 BETWEEN PORTLAND AND EUGENE AND RETURN  
(An even greater emotional "Binge" than No. 1 above....The conductor was near tears.)
- (3) Riding as a "Drover" with a trainload of cattle from Prairie City to Baker, Oregon on the famous NARROW-GAUGE SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY IN AUGUST, 1932.  
(This was last year of operating via switchback over Dixie Mt. That Fall the last 20 miles of line (to Prairie City) were abandoned. Returned with free permit "on the cushions"---regular passenger fare was five cents per mile!
- (4) Spending all day in Nov., 1941 with the train and engine crew of the NARROW GAUGE PACIFIC COAST RAILWAY covering Main Line and Branches South of San Luis Obispo, California. We went 44 miles south to Orcutt. (First train there in four months!!) and picked up all movable equiment to be returned to San Luis Obispo prior to abandonment of the Main Line three months later. Trains ran as far as Santa Maria, California about once a week until final abandonment.

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- (5) Riding trains in 1936-37 in SIAM (NOW THAILAND), FRENCH INDO-CHINA (NOW VIETNAM), CHINA, MANCHURIA, KOREA, AND JAPAN, INCLUDING FIRST PASSENGER TRAIN WHICH THE JAPANESE MILITARY ALLOWED TO LEAVE PEKING AFTER THEIR CAPTURE OF THAT CITY IN AUG-1937.

After working for S. P. prior to WORLD WAR II in the Salinas-Monterey area both in the freight and ticket work, I enlisted in the Army in November, 1942 and was assigned to the Railway Operating Battalion, an Illinois Central sponsored outfit, which trained at Camp Shelby, near Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I was trained as a station-agent, train order operator, including the rudiments of telegraphy. Six (6) months later we were sent overseas to Oran, Algeria, then put aboard "40 and 8" box cars for the three day rail trip of 900 miles to SOUK AHRAS, near the Tunisian border. Eight months later we were transferred to Italy where we operated railroads starting near Naples and ending at Bologna when the war ended. Our outfit ran the first Allied train into Rome and the first Allied train through the 113/4 mile Apenine Tunnel into Bologna. I worked in the very middle of that tunnel and had the thrill of handing up train orders and clearance to these historic "first trains", as well as all Allied trains entering Rome.

To me the poetry of motion of the steel wheel on the steel rail is the finest of literature, and the wail of an engine whistle in the night (be it steam or diesel) is the siren's call to adventure of the highest order. What other hobby or interest has 125 years of stirring history behind it and a future still to be decided? What other hobby has so changed the economic and political future of mankind in every continent of the world? The steel rails reach in continuous line from the 5<sup>th</sup> cataract of the Nile in lower Egypt via Siberia and China to Singapore, and from Prince Rupert, B. C. in North America to San Jose, Costa Rica in Central America. It is a hobby both static and dynamic—static in the countless lonely stations and two-ribboned rails throughout the world, and dynamic in the motion, of whirling wheels along these rails to each railfan's personal Valhalla of railroad glory. Miln Gillespie 4/12/63

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It has been suggested by our President, E. D. (Ed) Culp that each month we have a report from one of our members regarding his railroad background. Please respond when you are asked. Thanks to Miln for his contribution for this month.

THIS AND THAT

At Miles City Montana last March 25<sup>th</sup> - twenty eight witnesses representing - Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota voiced opposition to the Milwaukee Railroad plans to curtail passenger service between Deer Lodge, Montana and Aberdeen, S. D. Several complained that the Milwaukee Road passengers volume was dropping off because the trains were dirty, the food poor and the service shoddy. . . . .

Part form Spokane Spokesman Review

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Membership list next issue.