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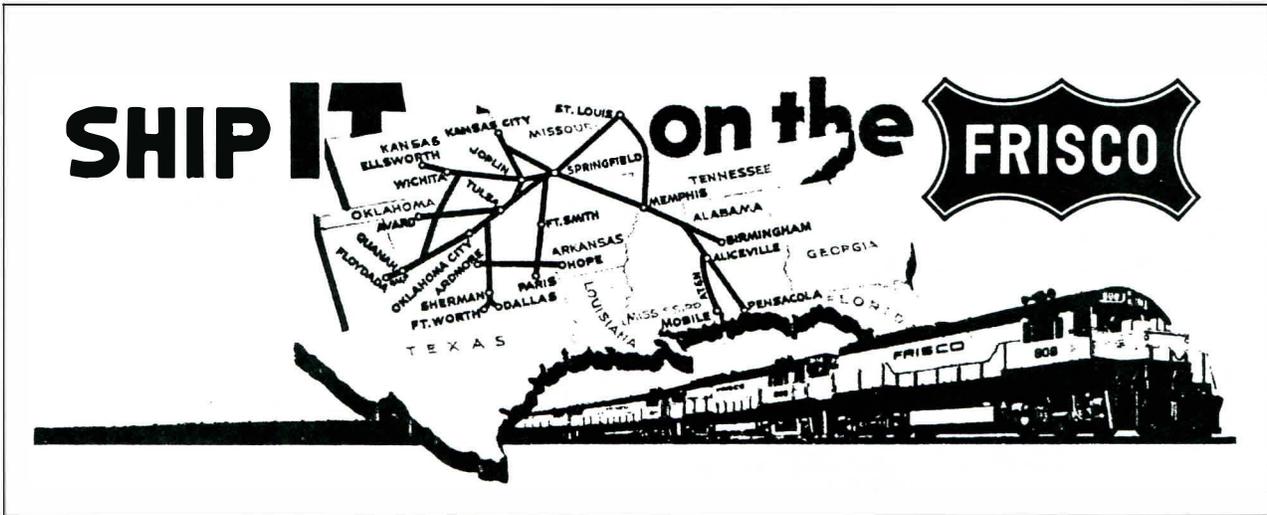
TRAINMASTER



Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society.

FEBRUARY 1992

Atomic Trains



The night was sultry and the star-filled summer sky with a full moon made it seem like daylight. At the East end of Biddle Yards a very short but important train led by GP-40 #393 eased down the lead and wound deep into the yard's #19 rail. Easing to a stop along a paved driveway, soldiers sprang to the ground from the coaches at each end of the train and began to walk the length of the train. Carmen approached and inspected and train crews changed. Soon, again, it was time to roll. Everyone climbed aboard and the movement began for Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the destination of this clandestine operation.

One of my fond memories of unusual special trains were "Atomic Trains" which the Rock Island operated for the Armed Forces and the Atomic Energy Commission. They were an elusive movement which even the railroads had little advance notice of due to the extreme security precautions surrounding the movements. I did have the good fortune to see three on the Rock Island and a fourth on a 'chance' happening on the Frisco, while working for Amtrak as their Memphis agent.

The only daylight move I ever saw and photographed was the Frisco movement, the Rock Island trains usually passing through Biddle in the middle of the night. The sight of an empty Louisville and Nashville Guard car was not as unusual and more easily photographed.

Being the son of a Rock Island Employee, and very interested in trains, sometimes allowed me advance notice on when one would be run. I would wait into the wee hours of the morning to chance the brief passing of one.

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The TRAINMASTER

is the official newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, published monthly for the benefit of its members. Articles which appear in *The Trainmaster* do not express the official National Railway Historical Society position 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:**

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MEMBERSHIP in the PNWC-NRHS is available as follows:

Regular...\$27/yr.
Joint...\$32/yr.

For more information contact the Membership Chairman, at the above address.

DEADLINES

are terrible things, but they pop up every month without fail. **The deadline for each issue of *The Trainmaster* is the 20th of the previous month.** I always try to squeeze in late material, but I can't guarantee that anything received after the 20th will make it—be warned!

—MC

CHAPTER TIMETABLE NO. 353

REGULAR RUNS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday, February 13, 7:00pm, at the Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club on the corner of N. Vancouver Ave. and Russell Street. All Chapter members are welcome.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING Friday, February 21, 7:30pm, at Portland General Electric auditorium on SE 17th Avenue between Powell and Holgate. The business meeting will start promptly at 7:30, with the newsreel and program following after a short break. Refreshments will be available; please bring some money to feed the "kitty" so Kitty can continue to feed you. The program is listed below.

WEEKLY NO-HOST LUNCHEON every Saturday, 12:00 noon, at the Semaphore Restaurant at SE 17th Avenue and Holgate Blvd. Our group sits in the back. Come on down!

ROLLING STOCK WORK SESSIONS every Tuesday and Saturday, at the Chapter's tracks in Brooklyn Yards. Working hours are 9am to 3-4pm on Tuesday, 10am to late afternoon on Saturday. There's a lot of work of all kinds to be done. Contact Richard Gray (656-0260) or Bob Hoffman (236-7710) to see what you can do.

ARCHIVES WORK SESSION Thursday, February 13, 1 to 4pm at Room 1, Union Station. Help is needed to get things organized and catalogued. Contact Bob Weaver at 654-4274 for more information—or just show up! There's lots of work to do.

CHAPTER LIBRARY OPEN HOURS Saturday, February 22 & 29, 1 to 4pm at Room 1, Union Station.

EXTRA BOARD

ANNUAL SWAP MEET March 14, 10 am-4pm at Jackson Armory

REDDING EXCURSION on AMTRAK. April 25-26, Keep this weekend open

SP&S 700 STEAM TRAIN ADVENTURE Excursion up the Columbia Gorge scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, May 1992. PRPA (503)-283-3444

SUMPTER VALLEY INVASION Mid - August stay tuned for more details

BEND CIRCLE TRIP September 12 - 13, overnight in Bend

FEBRUARY MEETING PROGRAM

to be announced

Program begins after business meeting

Notice: Programs are needed for future meetings. Anyone who is willing to present a program (slides, film, etc.) at a Chapter meeting, please contact Chuck Bukowsky 284-7277

*a friend is
someone who
doesn't buy
your boy a drum
for Christmas*

We are running a series of Burma Shave slogans which come to us by way of *The Keystone* newsletter, Pittsburgh Chapter NRHS.
The one this month is 1951 vintage.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

from the President

Holidays are past and a new year begun. Lots of exciting things scheduled for the year. The Annual Banquet will have past and planning for the excursion trip to redding is firming up; 25-26 April. Still lots of work to be done. Amtrak has confirmed our Deschutes/Bend trip for 12-13 September. Work is under way for that.

Don't forget the NRHS convention, 22-26 July in San Jose.

For chapter members, the Sumpter Valley trip is tentatively set for the middle to end of August. May have to set two 5 day trips - They can accommodate comfortably 10 people at a time to learn to operate a steam locomotive; fire it up, learn to switch, etc. We are exploring two options:

- 1] Roundtrip PDX-Baker City via Amtrak
- 2] Renting a van here & going up.

Amtrak would give us a terrific ride through some great scenery and railroading - get us into the swing of things!!

Our financial picture should hopefully improve with our two excursions. It will be a hard sell with the economy as it is - but we can do it.

We welcome the new members and beckon them to do some volunteer work with the chapter. Plenty of things to do. Look over the various committees and contact the chairperson of those you are interested in.

—Chuck Bukowsky

Committee Reports

MEMBERSHIP

Tammy Auburg, Chair

Thank you to the 100 or so members who have sent in their membership renewals so early. We are slightly ahead of last years renewal figures. If you usually attend monthly business meetings, I will bring your cards there.

If they are not picked up then I will mail them out as my time permits.

In processing these renewals I have noticed a couple of errors that are fairly common. Several people have sent in only enough money for their chapter dues. They have not included the National dues portion. You can not belong to a chapter unless you pay National dues. It is \$27.00 for a single and \$32.00 for a couple. If PNWC is not your home chapter you need to indicate what your home chapter is.

The second common error and I hope it isn't intentional, is that the previous membership is for a couple but you are only sending in money for a single.

If we (Maxine Rodabaugh and myself) believe you may have fallen into this category - you may receive a note from one of us.

Please welcome the following new members to the chapter:

Steven Coons
Drain, Oregon

Philip Kresek
Edmonds, Washington

Warren Leach & Teddi Carbonneau
Portland, Oregon

William & Donna Olson
Corvallis, Oregon

Rodney & Rose Sedlacek
Bend, Oregon

Deryl Zumwalt
Tualatin, Oregon

LIBRARY

Jerry Webb, Chair

A warm thank you to a Chapter and Library Committee member seldom seen, if ever, at Chapter meetings. Jim Loomis, employed by TV Channel 2 works every Friday night, but nevertheless has contributed much work to the Library Committee and has served as a Car Host from time to time.

His most recent outstanding effort is composing and

Train Wrecks Few

CHAPTER BUSINESS

sending a letter to people whose name appear last on checkout cards of books in the Chapter's library. Some of these date back several years. On the Saturday following January's Chapter meeting, more than a half-dozen books were returned. The members saying they had forgotten they had the book. There is no intention to embarrass anyone, only to remind that their name appears last on the card and for them to search their library of books for any that may have the "Property of Pacific Northwest Chapter" stamp. To those who did return the books, many thanks. They also discovered the Chapter does not impose a "fine" for any overdue books.

If anyone who received a letter cannot find the book referred to, it would be appreciated if you would tell us. Then we would acknowledge that the book is permanently gone, we would destroy the card, thus clearing up "loose ends" in the Library. Thank you for your understanding on what the Committee is trying to do.

The Committee is working on "Silent Auctions" for books and maybe selected groups of magazines, but there may not be anything for the February meeting.

Our editor says he has many items for this Trainmaster, so more next week *[next month maybe?]*.

-Jerry Webb

SUMMARY OF MINUTES - BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - JANUARY 9, 1992

The meeting was called to order by President Chuck Bukowsky at 7:05 PM.

Treasurer Maxine Rodabaugh reported a balance of \$11,820.26 in the Chapter's checking account as of 12/31/91. Mrs. Jay Blair has sent a check for \$80.00 in the memory of her late husband for the purchase of books for the Chapter library. Maxine also reported that about \$4700 worth of car improvement bonds have been paid off.

The Chapter board passed the following motions at its January meeting: 1) Established a board policy that the Chapter's excursion mailing list shall not be given to other organizations without the express permission of the board of directors. 2) Authorized acceptance of a check from the Chapter's insurance company to be used only as seed money to begin the process of inspection and repair of the three damaged Chapter cars. Additional expenditures for repair of the cars are to be approved by the board and the membership after receipt of inspection reports.

Concessions: Marilyn Edgar reported gross concessions sales of \$6185.00 for 1991. Fred Dorsett reported for the ad hoc committee of concessions inventory that

very little stock is left if room 1A. The board instructed Marilyn to recall the 4449 merchandise being stored for the Chapter by Gordon Zimmerman.

Excursions: Jerry Schuler reported for the excursion committee that preparations for the April 25-26 trip to Redding are under way. Al McCready reported that Amtrak has agreed to operate a Bend circle trip on Sept. 12 and 13 with a 750 seat train to be furnished.

Rolling Stock: Peter Rodabaugh reported that the Chapter's insurance company will provide seed money to begin the repair of cars Mt. Hood, 76 and 3300. The S.P. has now agreed that the Chapter can handle repair of car 3300. The rolling stock committee has agreed that the three cars should be brought back to Portland for repair, with outside labor or services to be used where necessary.

Motion by Russ Schoof to Sell Cars: The board discussed the status of all the Chapter's cars with regard to readiness to rent. Regarding the proposed sale of cars the consensus of the board is as follows: The board has given Russ Schoof's motion to sell Chapter cars a tremendous amount of consideration. The board agrees with Russ that the Chapter doesn't have the resources, both financial and physical, to restore and maintain our fleet of passenger cars. The board has discussed in great depth with the rolling stock committee the list of priority as to which cars to sell. Based on local historic value and possible lease for profit, the board's initial recommendation is to sell the two RDC cars. The sale price will be determined by the rolling stock committee with the intent to make a profit from these cars. It is the consensus of the board that we maintain fewer cars in better condition.

Library: Jerry Webb requested authority to spend funds dedicated to library use. The board agreed informally that money given to the Chapter to buy books can be spent for that purpose.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES - REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING - JANUARY 17, 1992

The meeting was called to order by President Chuck Bukowsky at 7:44 PM.

Reasons Clear

CHAPTER BUSINESS

Treasurer Maxine Rodabaugh reported the following balances in the Chapter's accounts as of 12/31/91:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Checking | \$12,135.61 |
| Bond Repayment | 4,233.94 |
| Car Restoration | 2,972.01 |
| CDIC Bond Account | 3,422.48 |
| CDIC Savings | 28,403.25 |
| Far West CD's (3) (Emergency Reserve) | 25,282.05 |

After the recent repayment of bonds there are still \$39,300 worth outstanding.

The membership passed the following motion at the January meeting: Approved the 1992 Chapter budget of \$38,850.

Russ Schoof Motion: The motion by Russ Schoof to dispose of most of the Chapter's cars was taken from the table. Russ moved substitution of new wording which authorized soliciting bids to sell the Chapter's two RDC's if the Chapter's finances require their sale with the proceeds to go toward meeting the Chapter's general obligations. Following this a motion to postpone further consideration was made and passed, the postponement to be until the committee making recommendations for the Chapter's future made its report. (Secretary's note: According to Roberts Rules of Order there is definite postponement and indefinite postponement. Definite postponement usually requires naming a specific time or meeting for reconsideration. While the committee's report is not scheduled for a particular time the postponement can be considered to be of the definite type.)

Excursions: John Von Gaertner reported that the brochure for the April 25/26 trip to Redding is being printed and that a mailing party will be held on Sat., Jan. 25. Prices for Redding are \$340 single and \$320 double. The contract from Amtrak for the Sept. 12/13 trip to Bend is expected shortly. John announced that the excursion committee will be meeting on the first Monday of each month at room 208.

Chapter Finances: Board member Ray Myer and President Chuck Bukowsky both spoke to the meeting to emphasize the serious state of the Chapter's finances and stated that sale of any cars would have to be approved by a vote of the membership.

Rolling Stock: Peter Rodabaugh reported that the three damaged cars now at Tillamook, OR will be brought back to Portland as soon as possible. Labor for the necessary truck and draft gear inspection on the cars will be done by the Chapter assisting an outside inspector. Car rentals in prospect for 1992 include the SP&S 700 trip in June, the G.N. Historical Soc. convention in Seattle and the 4449 trip to the NRHS convention in San Jose. Locomotive in Hines, OR: Peter reported estimated costs of at least \$7200 to move it to Portland. In answer to a question from the floor Peter estimated car rental revenues for 1992 to be about \$13,000.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary

CAR HOST STANDINGS

as of January 17, 1992

SENIORS

Fred Dorsett
 Chuck Storz
 Bob Hoffman
 Robert Slover
 John Willworth
 Jack Pfeifer
 Gerald Schuler
 Esther Rosu
 Kerrigan C. Gray
 Kyrian Gray
 Terry Parker
 Michael Ackley
 Michael Rosu
 Richard Gray
 Kenneth Peters
 John Von Gaertner
 Noel Nelson
 Ellie Nelson
 Roger White
 Marilyn Edgar
 Alfred Hajj
 Ray Myer
 George Mickelson
 Kent Hutchens
 Janet Larson
 Russel Schoof
 Richard A. Carlson
 James A. Loomis
 Doug Auburg
 Albert McCready
 Connie McCready

JUNIORS

Bill Carter
 Nicholas White
 Gerald K. Webb Sr
 Richard Parks Jr
 Richard Gross
 Chuck Bukowsky
 Steven Howes
 Peter Rodabaugh
 Rockford Regula
 Tammy Auburg
 Michael Callanan
 Barbara Dougherty
 John Rosu
 Ralph E. Jack
 Helen I. Jack
 Pat Barbour
 Gordon Zimmerman
 Dale Miller
 Robert E. Fornoff
 Barbara Von Gaertner
 Sara Ackerman
 Rosemary Scheel
 Neil Mckie
 Ed Ackerman
 Freda M. Webb
 Alan Viewig
 Naomi Gray
 Irv Ewen

**Fireman Never
 Hugs**

NEWS—HISTORY—TRAVEL

Atomic Trains

continued from page one

A bit of history and technical information is in order. The United States Atomic Energy Commission purchased 97 specially equipped cars, A.A.R. mechanical designation "LO" (gondola) which were assigned reporting marks of "ATMX" and numbered 500-582 and 601-614. All cars were controlled by the Albuquerque, N.M. A.E.C. Operations office. The cars were classified as gondola but were actually flat cars with passenger express type trucks and tanks fitted to the beds. The tank cars filled with water and atomic bombs, warheads and materials, are suspended in the cushioning water tank. Yes, Atomic Bombs, Artillery shells, high explosives, and other atomic materials were transported in this manner safely and silently.

In addition to the occasional Louisville and Nashville guard cars (old combines fitted with communications, instrumentation and bunks), the U.S. A.E.C. operated a fleet of sixteen coaches (formerly U.S. Army Hospital cars) numbered USAX G-20 thru G-29 and USA G-31 thru G-37.

The trains were "precision routed" and no deviation was allowed without clearance. The movements were constantly monitored. No car could be separated from the train and each time the train stopped, guards would ascend from the cars and stand watch and walk the train. Naturally this type of important movement demanded a Road Foreman riding the head end with the crew.

If a mechanical problem developed A.E.C. instruction required: "Shipment must be placed in such a location to provide:

- a. Maximum safety to shipment, the couriers and the general public.
- b. Placement in an inconspicuous location."

Forty-eight hours advance notice was given to railroad carriers of a shipment. The carrier would then furnish the origin, connecting lines, destination, number of loaded cars and coaches, engine and train numbers to the Distribution and traffic branch of the A.E.C.

Speeds were restricted to 35 miles per hour or 5 m.p.h. under a more restrictive speed. A buffer car was authorized between the lead and trailing guard car and the first load (although I never saw one) but this car could only be a flat or gondola not exceeding a maximum height of 100 inches above the rail and was required in first-class mechanical condition. A special train was required to have a rear end railroad full crew and a caboose. Carriers were remanded to take safety precautions against fire, bad order cars and accidents!

Yes, Atomic Bombs, Artillery shells, high explosives, and other atomic materials were transported in this manner safely and silently.

No "unnecessary" switching or handling of loaded cars and coaches were permitted and they could not be separated from the guard coaches at any time without permission of the courier in charge of the shipment.

To ease your concerns in case of an accident, the A.E.C. emergency instruction defined the major hazards as:

"Conventional high explosives and plutonium, if plutonium is present and becomes involved in a fire or explosion. There is *almost* (my italic) no possibility of a nuclear detonation resulting from an accident. This means that there is *almost* no possibility that the presence of nuclear material will create a more disastrous explosion than one resulting from detonation of conventional high explosives alone."

After leaving work for Amtrak (an all night job at Memphis) I decided to observe and photograph the morning rush traffic on Broadway. I went to the south end of Grand Central Station where the six tracks of the Arkansas and Memphis Bridge and Terminal Railway and the Frisco cross the IC leads to G.C.S. My intentions were to catch the morning parade of southbound Frisco freights, however, between the

long freights slipped the short special. I rushed to the south end of Tennessee Yard and after the brief stop there for a crew change, I watched it leave Memphis. This was an empty train returning to Huntsville, Ala. as only a sparse crew was aboard. But it was exciting to see a rare and elusive train and finally get to photograph one.

—by John Martin (Arkansas Railroader)

Portland's Vintage Trolley

Those of you who aren't frequent visitors to the City of Roses might not realize there is a new addition to the MAX line.

Portland Vintage Trolley began operation on November 29, in time for the Holiday season. The company currently operates two Council Crest-type cars from downtown to Lloyd Center. Members of local rail historical societies are on board as conductors while Tri-Met provides motormen.

The car barn is located on the east end of the Steel bridge, offering a full length window for viewing.

Engineer

Give A Hoot

—by Tammy Auburg

It is officially 1992 today so it is time to start thinking about the 14th Annual Swap meet on March 14, 1992. There will be plenty of things to do and we will be needing a large number of people to help out in various capacities and for varying lengths of time. People are going to be needed to help set up the kitchen on Friday night. There is also going to be a big need for help on the day of the event to staff the NRHS table, help keep the floor area organized, and especially in the kitchen.

The help in the Kitchen to serve all of those hungry people is the focus of this article. The success of the "Little Toot" is very dependent of a large number of volunteers to help out in the kitchen and surrounding area. For those who are wondering what the "Little Toot" is, let me enlighten you. "Little Toot" was the name the food concession sent by last year under the management of Chris Schoof and Nita Reghitto. It was a real money maker for the Chapter and we would like to see it continue this year.

Nita Reghitto is doing most of the preplanning and procurement of the food needed this year. Most of this will be done ahead of time. Freda Webb and myself will also be doing whatever Nita deems necessary for us to do. We can do a lot of planning and organizing beforehand, but we still need a lot of you Chapter members out there to help make this a success for the Chapter.

We are going to be needing people to keep the hot food going, food from the storage containers onto the display area, serving food to customers, and people to man the cash drawer. There is also a need for people help keep the tables clean, and the garbage cans clean. We could also use some volunteers to do some baking for us.

Not all of the jobs require that you be able to stand for long periods of time. Last year we had some people sitting down to make



SHIP AND TRAVEL SANTA FE ALL THE WAY

Chapter member William O. Gibson has written two books about being a telegraph lineman for the railroad.

His first, *Twister*, is available in its second printing. It contains a new map and better cover photo. 135 pages, softcover, \$22.50 postpaid.

His Second book, *Journal of a Santa Fe Wire Twister - Final Entries*, is on the market. 36 pages, softcover, \$16.50 postpaid.

for more information contact:

William O. Gibson
311 NE "C" Street
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

sandwiches, etc. So if you have some physical limitations, or don't feel you can stand for very long periods, please come to help us out for a short period of time.

We are also hoping that we can borrow a few chairs and card tables to provide seating for customers. So-o-o, if you happen to have a table and chairs that the Chapter could borrow please call Nita at (503)650-8080. Call that number also to volunteer your time and efforts.

We will have sign up sheets at the January meeting. This will not make it into the January Trainmaster, but will make the February issue. So if this is the first you have heard of our need, please give Nita a call right of way.

*Success
covers a
multitude of
blunders*

Downtown Trolley

reprinted from *The Oregonian*
submitted by Rich Carlson

There are plans in the making for a new trolley line in downtown Portland. The proposed alignment will start at Riverplace and run along the old Harbor Drive right of way, turn west on SW Columbia Street and run north along the Park Blocks to NW Hoyt Street.

A public meeting for discussion of the plan is scheduled at 2:00pm February 22 in the Chetwynd Staplyton Gallery, 422 NW 8th Avenue.

Sponsors of the meetings are the Downtown Community Association, Portland Office of Transportation and Vintage Trolley Inc.

Burma Shave

See the USA . . . the Amtrak way . . .

Phase Two - LA to DC

After enjoying a beautiful run from Portland south on the Coast Starlight, and joining Carol's brother and wife at Oxnard, CA., we arrive in Los Angeles in the early evening. (About an hour late in schedule).

Since we have a two hour layover, and we haven't had dinner as yet, (the normal 7pm arrival doesn't have a dinner service), we decide to walk over to Olvera St. for a taste of Mexico. It's an easy 5 minute stroll, and although we were a little nervous about walking the LA streets after sundown, we enjoy a nice meal with Mariachi entertainment.

Presently the LA station is undergoing a face lift, so there is considerable construction on the passenger concourses as well as the interior of the Amtrak area. The main building is extremely beautiful with its southwest style tile floor and the tall Hollywood type ceiling. There is a clock tower on the street side of the mission styled station with its typical courtyard.

It was about 9:30 pm when we boarded the Sunset Limited for our southwest cross country leg. Again our economy bedroom was ready for us and we slept through a smooth evening of travel before we reached the outskirts of the Phoenix, Arizona, suburbs.

After spending a few minutes at the Phoenix station (again another clean, southwest design) we arrive at Tempe, AZ, where we have a short stop at a small but very well appointed brick station. We particularly enjoyed this occasion because of the collection of cabooses that have been preserved in their original colors. We leave Tempe, and begin our desert tracking, passing, Puma, Az., with its airplane bone yard and the S.A.C. Air Force Base. We pass a stand of Saguaro cactus and wind our way across the flat land.

To our most pleasant surprise, the recent rains that the southwest has been deluged with, has resulted in a desert that is nothing what we expected. The tumble weeds were still green, and the Barrel Cactus were in bloom. Big yellow, orange, and red blossoms dotted the landscape along boundary fences. Tall spidery cactus were green and even the grasses provided us with an unusual look at what could have been a dismal journey.

The weather cooperated with all the camera buffs as we crowded the lounge car with its large panoramic windows. Shots of the mountain range with its profile of an indian (supposedly it was Cochise); the castle that was built in the desert (it even had its own dungeon); and an extinct volcano, were complimented with blue skies and rising cumulus clouds, promising a continuance of the most needed rains.

Tucson, with its adobe architecture, begins what might be considered as the boring part of the southwest connection. The land really flattens out and the monotony is occasionally broken up by the bus stop type

pickups at Benson, Lordsburg, and Deming. As we approach El Paso, N.M., Amtrak engages us in a Trivia Game and a history lesson of the railroad in this area. We see some shantys on the Mexican border and a white post marker that shows us the closest we will come to our southern neighbor.

In El Paso we get a leg stretcher, so we disembark for a few minutes. The station and area has been nicely preserved, but needs some highlighting to spruce up its all brick station and tower. The interior could use some attention too, with its all grey decorations. This stop also gave me the first opportunity to take some pictures of our train. We were pulled by a new GM engine. As the rains came, I had to duck for cover and get ready for departure. We have a great Amtrak dinner, and settle into our bedrooms for the first of two nights across Texas. We traveled across Texas all that night, and awoke in San Antonio around 6:30 in the morning. I jumped out hoping to get a few shots to keep the video record going. This was a medium sized station with a typical southwest type exterior and an interior with a grand staircase at one end and a unique honeycomb ceiling with many lights. Not too far away from the station stood the San Antonio needle all lit up: almost shades of Seattle.

We spent half of the day watching the Texas scenery passing (yawn) and visiting, and eating. Carol even won a prize in a trivia contest. The highlight of the trip were the joyous diner stewards, especially Jerome. He sang the meal announcements and sang a good night song at bedtime. We even had a sing-a-long at the end of the lunch time!

At about noon we arrived at Houston. This was the first stop that we saw a beautifully restored Pullman car that was in private ownership. The Amtrak station was very plain compared to the downtown of tall glass buildings. In fact it was tucked under a freeway.

On down the rails we went to Louisiana. Just past the Louisiana-Texas border the scenery really started to change. We passed swamps galore, with their cypress trees sittin' in the quiet waters, and every so often, passed a real live bayou. I even saw a turtle sunning itself on a log. It was so picturesque.

The train came to a stop about an hour west of New Orleans, for a problem on the private car that we picked up in L.A. The passengers didn't seem to mind, as we were having a good time visiting. As we approached "N'Orlins", we elevated up the highest railway bridge in the U.S., The Huey Long Bridge. It reminded me of going across the Astoria (Oregon) Bridge, only higher. This bridge spans the Mississippi and rises to 180 feet above its waters. Trains and cars travel on this bridge and at night you have the feeling of taking off in an airplane.

We spent a week in the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama states. We rented a car and saw bayous, southern plantations, and drove through the civil war

memorial at Vicksburg. I highly recommend that you take this in if you are in the area. In Vicksburg I found a beautifully restored train station that was converted into a restaurant and boutique.

In Natchez, we stayed in the magnificent Monmouth Plantation, and we saw the mighty "Mississippi Queen" River boat as it prepared for its trip down the Mother of All Rivers. Also at Natchez I found the old rail station, converted to shops. They even transformed the old yard to a shopping mall. After spending a great week with Carol's brother and wife, we spent our last evening traditionally with a walk down Bourbon Street, having our final refreshment at the Court of Two Sisters.

The next morning we were up at 5:30 to catch the 7 am Crescent train to Washington, D.C. We traveled all day (Coach) through Mississippi, Alabama, and into Georgia. The country was fairly flat, but the wind breaker rows of tree provided a pleasant scenery. Along the tracks in various places we could see the troublesome kidzo vines that were planted by the southern states to provide green carpets along the highways. These vines have literally invaded the countryside and covered every thing in their path, tress and all. A real control mess. We arrived in Atlanta about 7:30 pm where we picked up slumber coaches, a mail car and a couple other cars. At this point we had a 15 or 16 car Amtrak train, the longest I have ever seen! This was our introduction to the east coast slumber coach sleeper. We had envisioned newer conditions. The cars were well maintained, but they had many years on them. We had our own lav. with sink and toilet, but the sitting leg room proved to be a challenge, since I'm a little long-legged. At Atlanta we also got acquainted with the under the station Amtrak Penn Station stops.

After a restless evening of sleep, we pulled into Culpepper, VA. During an early breakfast we enjoyed seeing hills again and scattered farms. In Alexandria, a tall tower pierced the sky, on what was the Capitol of Virginia. Its the tal-

lest capitol in the US. Even taller than the capitol in Washington, D.C.

About 9 AM, we arrived at the nation's capitol and Union Station. Of all the architectural beauties I have seen on this trip, this handsomely restored station is rated as magnificent. The restoration took several years and a couple million dollars, as I was told. The exterior was marbled, with statues along the roof line, separating many Bible quoting panels. A beautiful brick plaza completed the extraordinary visual treat on Massachusetts Avenue.

The interior of the station is divided into three sections. When you disembark from the train, you walk up to the passenger waiting

area that has a glass sky dome. The next section is the ticketing area where they also had a variety of restaurants on the lower level that had many ethnic cuisines. This section had a high domed ceiling and an upper floor. But the main hall was truly a sight to behold. The polished marble floor with its pleasing fountain and natural wood concession stand and bar, was richly adored with statues ringing the hall between the high arched, may paned windows, which was topped off with a spectacular honey-combed domed ceiling. I'm not sure if there are enough words to express my adoration.

This ends Phase Two: Next, ON TO NEW ENGLAND.

—by John & Carol Lukens

Saturday, March 14, 1992

Portland's Fourteenth Annual Railroadiana & Model Railroad Swap Meet

ADMISSION:

Adults \$2.00
Children under 12 FREE

TABLE RENTAL:

\$13.00 each
\$1.00 extra for electricity &/or
tables against a wall.

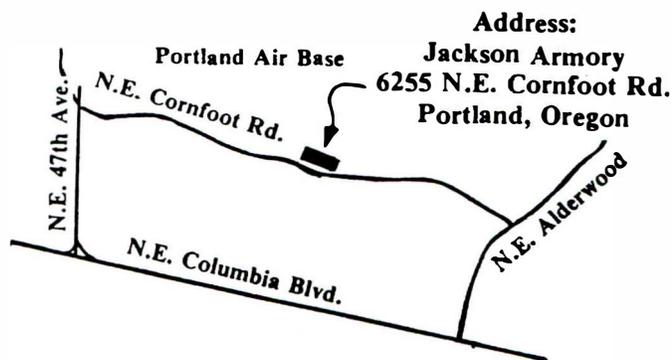
Payment required in advance

HOURS:

General Public 10am to 4pm
Sellers 8am to 4pm

FOR INFORMATION WRITE:

Swap Meet Chairman
c/o CGMRC
2505 N. Vancouver Avenue
Portland, OR 97227
or Call (206)694-7769 and leave a
message (Please indicate that you
will accept a collect return call.)



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National Railway Historical Society

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