



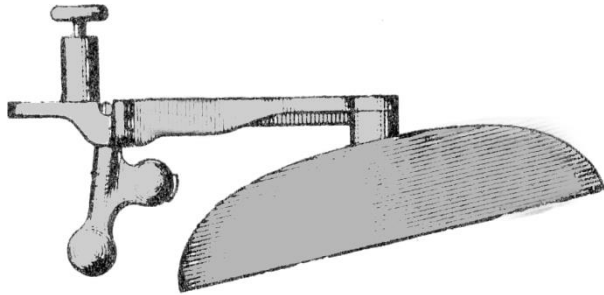
THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



July-Aug. 1979

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The next trustee's meeting will convene at 7:30 pm on July 30, 1979. A general members' meeting will follow at 8:30 pm. Location is the childhood home of new President George Combs, 2136 Lake Road, Milwaukie. Directions: Drive south on McLoughlin through Milwaukie, turn left on Washington, right on 21st Ave., left on Lake Road. The home stands behind a white lattice fence. George is arranging streetcar slides/films for post meeting entertainment.

Another Wedding Takes Place at the Trolley Park

History repeated itself on June 30th, when guests witnessed the second wedding to be held at the Trolley Park. They were whisked efficiently up to the Eldorado camp site station (on the forest loop track) by open car No. 1187, which had been spruced up for the occasion with new paint. Several carloads were transported before the approximately 150 guests were all on hand for ceremonies uniting Carolyn Bateman (whose parents operate Bateman's Store in nearby Glenwood) and George Hartman. The service took place in the woods surrounding the Eldorado camp site.

The nuptial atmosphere of this open air "chapel" was enhanced by the distant pealing of a bell, an effect provided by crewmen Chuck Hayden and George Combs who solemnly tromped on the floor gong pedals in car 1187 as it waited back on the loop. The crew, and Paul and Sonja Class, who painted the car, are due a vote of thanks for ensuring that the Trolley Park successfully completed another unique streetcar wedding. 

landscaping for the new museum interpretive center. The chain link fence across the end-of-rail has been installed, and paving between the rails started (as a base for the brick). A third rail has been placed between the other two adjacent to the station so that dual-gauge operation can be added in the future. Up in the Park the CETA workers have built a new dam so that the Ol' Swimming Hole will be deeper this season. And, they have cleared brush for the installation of "Evergreen Station" near the beginning of the forest loop track.

Meanwhile, various projects continue in the shop. Chuck Hayden and CETA employee Tom Jenkins have continued work on the babbitt form begun by Don Burkhart in his home workshop. The result is that the frame and mandrel are now ready for the pouring. However, imperfections discovered in the bearing itself have delayed things.

Our new President, George Combs donated \$150 so that the metal seat frames from double-deck Blackpool car No. 48 could be sandblasted. He will then work on the crew painting and reinstalling them.

Work at the Park

This summer's CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) crews have been busy at work cleaning up the grounds at Glenwood and doing

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Outbound Montavilla line car 470 seems out of place as it rolls along East Burnside at Seventh Avenue on June 10, 1948 during Vanport Flood rerouting. (courtesy Walter Mendenhall)

Vanport Flood was a High-Water Mark for Streetcars

During late May and early June 1948 Portland residents experienced the worst flood since the record 33-foot deluge of 1894 (during which trolley and horsecars were stranded but cable cars kept running). Historians remember the event as the Vanport Flood, since the most damage caused by the high water was the inundation of the city of that name north of Portland. It was Sunday afternoon, May 30th, at about 4:30 that the six-foot high wave swept disastrously through the barracks-like village of 18,700. With no warning flood waters breached an area some 500 feet wide in the SP&S Railroad fill known as the Smith Lake Dike. The waters crested at around 30 feet during that fateful summer; well above the flood stage of 18 feet.

Attempting to hold back the rampant waters and carry on their lives as best as possible sorely taxed the efforts of hundreds of people. A wall of sandbags erected atop the Willamette Seawall kept the flood from downtown Portland, but water did reach both Northwest Portland (Union Depot had to be sandbagged), and the east side of town, where waves lapped as far as Southeast Third Avenue.

Although much has been written over the years about what happened during that snow runoff-caused flood, few remember the effect it had upon the Portland Traction Company's eight remaining streetcar and interurban lines. One person who does recall the transit aspect of the Vanport Flood is member Chuck Bukowsky, who was

then 16 years of age. For traction fans like Chuck the two weeks of high water during that fateful summer brought rare riding and picture-taking opportunities.

Trolleys on some lines were assigned to temporary flood routes. As the flood reached the East Side and Oaks Bottom standard gauge interurban service to Oregon City and Bellrose was cut back from the downtown Portland to a temporary terminus at Golf Junction on Southeast Thirteenth Avenue and Ochoco Street. At the same time, the traction company began transferring all its standard gauge equipment from the East Portland Yard. By May 28 the police were allowing only a few trucks into the east side warehouse district.

On May 30th the river loomed ominously close to the old Morrison Bridge, resulting in its closure and the rerouting of the narrow gauge Montavilla and Mount Tabor streetcar lines via the Burnside Bridge and Grand Avenue. It should be noted that the old bridge was much lower than the current one.

The real fun for Chuck was out at Golf Junction. His family lived just a few blocks from the former Sellwood carbarns, so he was close at hand when cars from the East



Mount Tabor car 431 is on East Burnside at Grand Avenue a temporary route caused by the closure of the Morrison Bridge during the aftermath of the Vanport Flood. (courtesy Walter Mendenhall)

Portland Yard were moved to tracks near the old barn. In fact, a portion of the interurban line was close enough to Chuck's house for him to watch sparks fly on the overhead as trolleys rattled past his bedroom window each night.

Young Bukowsky was among the first to know as scores of electric vehicles rumbled into the area for storage

during the flood. He hurried over to watch and was thrilled when his offer to help pull down poles was accepted by weary operators. Soon, he was a part of the crew and was given the task of regularly changing poles and reversing seats on cars whose terminus had suddenly become the curve just beyond the old carbarns. Best of all, he vividly recalls, was his final reward; a chance to ride free in several of those cars when they were moved back to the East Portland Yard again after the flood waters had receded.

Bukowsky can still remember the location of most of Portland Traction's standard gauge cars during the flood. The steeplecabs were parked by the old PRL&P clubhouse west of the barns. The fire car, a boxcab, and line car No.

1058 were placed next to the now-privately-owned carbarns. The locally built 1090 class wooden interurbans stood on the abandoned portion of Southeast Thirteenth Avenue south of Ochoco Street. Those tracks had been part of the main line to Oregon City prior to the opening of the Oaks Park cut-off in 1903. The newer metal passenger equipment was stored about 200 feet east of Southeast Thirteenth on a spur next to the OWP substation. They included the ex-Indiana and ex-Yakima cars.

Oh yes, and last, and certainly least, was the establishment of a temporary bus service from the terminus at Golf Junction into town. Chuck thinks the buses used were Macks fitted with longitudinal seats. 🚍



Montavilla No. 485 has just passed a Mount Tabor line car as it heads east through the Art Deco poles on the Burnside Bridge during the Vanport Flood rerouting. (McClellan photograph)



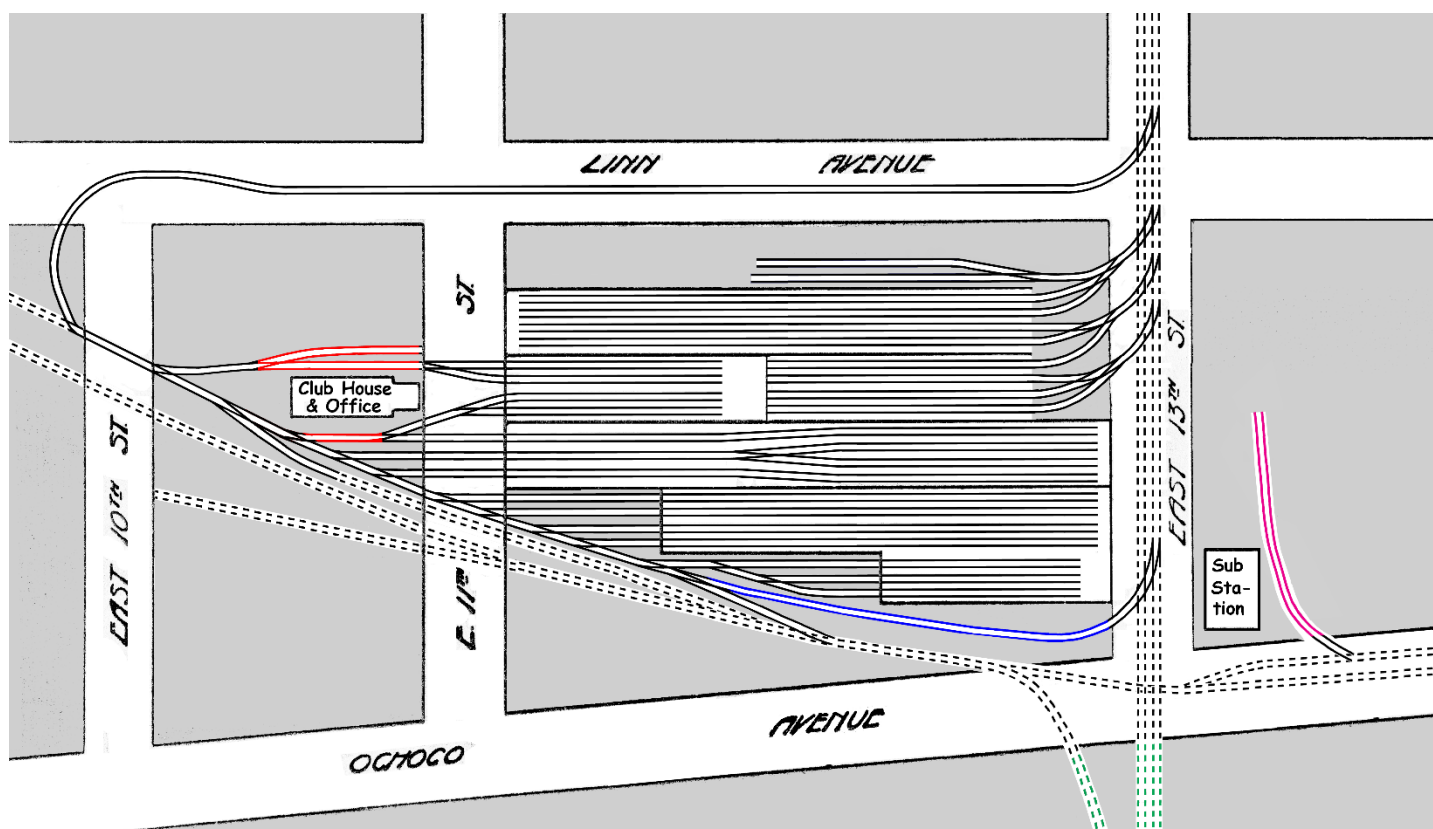
Mt. Hood Railway veteran No. 1125 heads a string of locally-built 1090s class wooden interurbans in high water storage at Golf Junction on abandoned Oregon City line tracks. (Charles Hayden Collection)



Mount Tabor line car 59 is in rush hour tripper service on Southeast Grand Ave. at Stark Street during the 1948 Vanport Flood. (Bill Hayes Collection)



Ex Yakima No. 4010 and ex-Indiana car 4001 are stored on spur tracks behind the OWP substation at Golf Junction, waiting for Vanport Flood waters to recede. (Charles Bukowsky Collection)



Vanport Flood Storage

- Steeplecabs 1405-1413
- Firecar 1190, boxcab 1415 & linecar 1058
- Interurbans 1092-1102 & 1125
- Lightweight interurbans 4000-4005, 4006-4007, & 4008-4010.

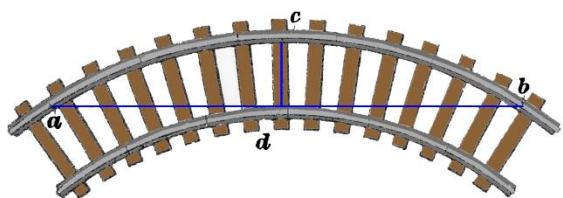
Work Day to Precede Rescheduled Members' Day

The rush of events has not allowed enough preparation time for the members' day originally planned for the end of July. However, if all goes well, a formal members' day will be held in late September. It will include the rolling out of all working equipment from the car barn, possibly even old No. 1455, the "broom." There may also be a potluck picnic and a swap meet. Bill Hayes

has agreed to provide a tape of 1920's band music from his famous collection to add the right atmosphere.

A special workday, on July 28th, will precede the Members' Day. The idea is to provide enough time and manpower to complete several important projects that will need to be finished before the Members' Day. The workday itself should be fun, and the work will go quickly with all those extra hands pitching in.

Tasks will vary depending on turnout, but may include: installation of automatic block signals (Chuck Hayden and George Hickok have already put up one signal); extension of the boarding area adjacent to the shop to allow cars to await the clear signal without blocking the other line (i.e., at the "Y" formed by the loop switch); building a platform at the newly cleared Evergreen Station site (please bring any used or surplus lumber that you might have); and the painting of signs for projected stops at Evergreen, Pavilion, Crystal Springs, and Eldorado.



Work parties will form during the late morning, with extra people added as the day proceeds. Call Superintendent Hayden at 285-6961 if you have suggestions or questions. Please plan on coming out if you can. After all, a volunteer organization can function only if it has volunteers. 🚃

Meeting Notes

At the important July 2, 1979 trustees' meeting George Combs was confirmed as Acting President and agreed to complete outgoing President Walt Mason's term of office through the annual banquet, which is expected to be held in early 1980. Past Vice President Bill Lieberman was appointed, once again, to that post.

Following a presentation on the interpretive center project, which begins this summer at the Trolley Park, an official project committee was formed. They will work closely with Paul Class and his staff in implementing the project. Their primary objective will be to ensure that the provisions of the grant received through the National Endowment for the Humanities be properly carried out. Don MacDonald was named as temporary chairman until the new committee has a chance to meet.

Superintendent of Operations Chuck Hayden spoke briefly on work progress at the Park. As a result of the concern he expressed over the condition of the new Forest Loop trackage a ballast fund was begun. The purpose of the fund is to purchase gravel for installation on the loop. The most important aspect of this work will be the leveling of rails. At present the irregular iron is felt to be subjecting trolleys to a high level of torquing and twisting with resultant loosening of screws. The eloquence of Mr. Hayden's plea inspired immediate donations of approximately \$80. Subsequent contributions at the Trolley Park have raised the ballast fund to \$120. Members are encouraged to join in this effort and help smooth out rides. Contact Chuck or Treasurer Roy Bonn. 🚃

New Members

We want to welcome nine new members who joined the OERHS this summer. They are: Doug Allen, Don Bucklin, Chuck Bukowsky, Glenn Eaton, Richard Ginsburg, John Jarrett, Al Phillips, John Ritchie, and Lee Young. Several of these new people have already come out to the Trolley Park to operate streetcars or help with projects.

