



THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



Spring 1982

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

Vol. 23, No. 1



SPRING GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 1982
PLACE: G-P BLDG., 900 S.W. FIFTH AVE., PORTLAND
ROOM: AUDITORIUM (ON CONCOURSE LEVEL OF G-P BLDG.)
TIME: 7:30 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M., TRUSTEE'S MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.
PROGRAM: "TRAMS OF GERMANY & LUXEMBURG" (1959 FILM)
 AND "THE NATIONAL CAPITAL TROLLEY MUSEUM (NEW SLIDES)

*Please join us for this final membership meeting prior to annual spring training and the opening of the Trolley Park for another season. We are returning to the G-P Building to avail ourselves of their fine auditorium while giving those who did not see the exhibit "Stump-town Streetcars," in the nearby Georgia-Pacific Historical Museum, a last chance to do so. Even those who have seen this special exhibit might like to take another look at it before it is taken down in mid-May. You will discover a number of changes since the January preview (for example, all artifacts and photographs now have carefully-researched captions). Members have been telling the Board that more general meetings are needed, so here is your chance to attend one. There will be a short business meeting preceding the general gathering and it is open to any member who wants to sit in. This will also kick-off our **membership drive**, so bring a friend...*

ANNUAL BANQUET REPORT

By Richard Thompson

This year's annual meeting was another rousing success, with more than 60 people in attendance at the downtown Portland event. The gathering convened at the Georgia-Pacific Historical Museum for a preview of the new exhibit "Stump-town Streetcars: The Trolleys That Built Portland." The unique display includes rare trolley artifacts borrowed from private collections and from the Oregon Historical Society and the OERHS. After the exhibit closes, G-P will donate many of the large images used to the Society for use in the Trolley Park Visitor's Center.



Display window outside the Georgia-Pacific Historical Museum announcing the current changing exhibit "Stump-town Streetcars," which will run through May 14, 1982. Many of the items on display here were loaned by OERHS members (Thompson photo).

The Trolley Park News is published monthly by the OERHS and is available through membership in the Society. Send requests for information, or items for publication, to the Corresponding Secretary, Richard Thompson, 1836 N. Emerson, Portland, OR 97217.

Also going to the Trolley Park when the G-P Museum display has ended is Dale Varner's 15' wide wall mural, a real highlight of the temporary exhibit. The mural, which will become part of a 3-dimensional diorama at Glenwood, depicts an 1895 Portland street corner bustling with open platform trolleys. Dale has meticulously based the scene on an old photograph taken at Southwest Third and Yamhill streets. The mural forms a perfect backdrop for the full-size trolley platform replica that was the centerpiece of the "Stumptown Streetcars" show. The platform was patterned after a PRL&P 1301-1315 class open car by Dale, and constructed by his father and brother. The 1300's began life as 1907 vintage American Car Company open trailers, but were motorized and enclosed during 1909-1920. They are fondly remembered as Oaks Park or Estacada excursion trains. Visitors to the G-P Historical Museum could get a "hands on" feel for what it is like to operate a trolley as they rang the conductor's bell or motorman's floor gong, moved the G.E. M.U. controller handle (a C-26e from a Portland steeplecab) or rotated the handbrake. All the equipment was authentic, and most of it came from Portland trolleys. It was borrowed from the Trolley Park, and the private collections of members Bill Hayes and Dick Thompson. Another section of this special exhibit featured a streetcar aisle scene illustrating the evolution of seating, from wooden horsecar seats to 1930's leather ones. Those who missed this informative display are reminded that it closes May 14th, so hurry in and take it in while you can!

The annual business meeting was conducted after dinner at the Royal Exchange Restaurant, located in the G-P Building. Officers elected are:

- Charles Hayden, President (1982)
- Al Nelson, Vice-President (1982)
- George Combs, Trustee (to 1986)
- Al Nelson, Trustee (to 1987)
- Dick Thompson, Trustee (to 1986)
- Lee Young, Trustee (to 1987)

The trustee positions occupied by Nelson and Young are new and must be approved at the next board meeting (i.e., expanding the board to 12 members). All other slots were filled by incumbents.

The lost part of the evening was given over to entertainment, as all adjourned to the G-P Auditorium for movies and slides. Al Haij showed three historic



Secretary Dick Thompson tries his hand at the controls of United Railways & Electric No. 3828 during a visit to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum last summer. (Nancy Thompson photograph).

"home" movies of Portland Traction 1948-61, that concluded with sad views on the rip track. Chuck Hayden gave an excellent slide-tape show on last summer's ARM convention in California, and, Dick Thompson reviewed a recent visit to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum. 🚃

A VISIT TO THE BALTIMORE STREETCAR MUSEUM

By Richard Thompson

Last summer, while attending a museum conference back East, I was able to visit the Baltimore Streetcar Museum in Maryland. I have set down my recollections, not just as a "What I Did on My Summer Vacation" story, but also in the hope that OERHS

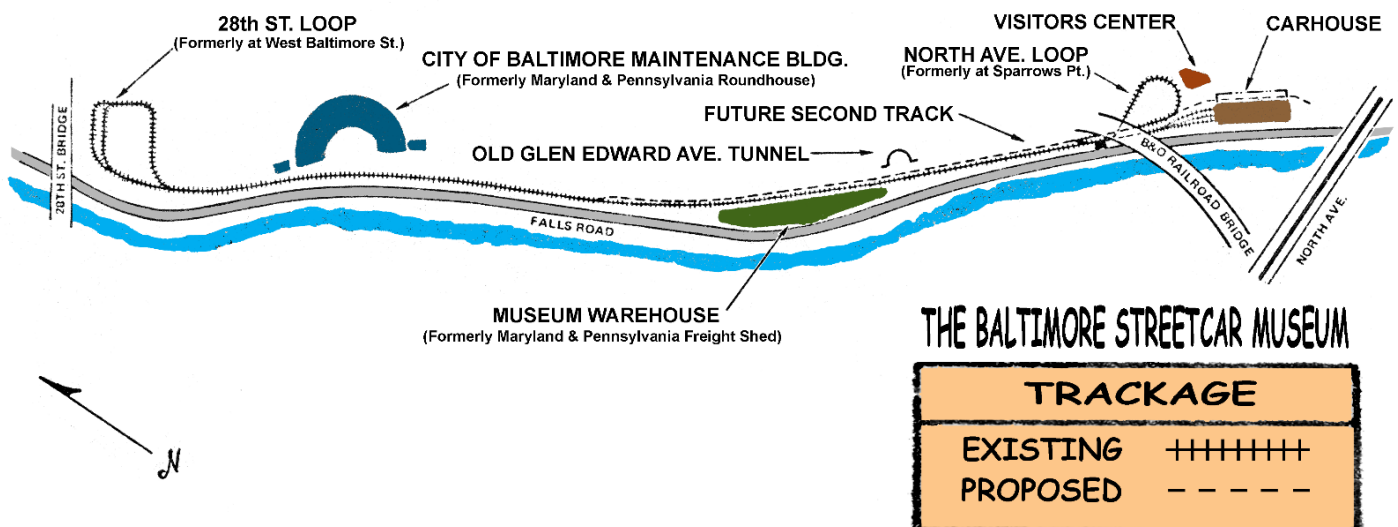
members will be interested in learning how things are done at other electric railway museums.

Baltimore's United Railways and Electric Company relied mainly on Brill cars painted in a familiar-looking red and cream livery. Volunteer operators at the Trolley Park would be no strangers to Baltimore's handbrake-equipped cars, which utilize classic S-shaped handles like those on our open car No. 1187. So, when Chief Dispatcher Ray Cannon gave me a chance to operate 80-year old No. 3828 after operations had closed on September 6th I felt right at home (in addition to the sensation of having died and gone to heaven). Control was the same, and the main difference in braking was the need to take up the slack when rounding tight radius curves so the maximum traction trucks would stay on the steel (such an understanding must have been part of the training for Portland Railway, Light & Power crews since most Portland cars were also equipped with maximum traction trucks). Operating rules were a bit stiffer than at the Trolley Park, with a complete safety stop required at all crossings and switches.

Other interesting comparisons between the Trolley Park and the BSM (Baltimore Streetcar Museum) can be made. Like us, they have a comparatively small roster comprising some 15 historic vehicles. These are kept in a single car barn, which incorporates a shop. But, nearly all of their cars are restored, so they can change vehicles every other trip during operating hours, which are from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays only, all year long! The dispatcher's comments on how tough it was to sign up an adequate number of volunteers for this schedule had a familiar ring.

Like the OERHS, the BSM has recently realized their dream of exhibit and gift shop space through the construction of a magnificent brick Visitors' Center. The early 1900s style center also can be converted into an auditorium for audio-visual presentations when chairs are set up at the opposite end of the exhibit hall. Tickets for trolley rides are sold in the gift shop. The museum itself is free. BSM's gift shop is stocked with many more traction books than ours, and there is also an ample selection of museum slide sets and postcards (although both the BSM and OERHS gift shops sell T-shirts and guidebooks, postcards and slides are still in the planning stage at the Trolley Park).

A ride over the Baltimore museum's tracks is shorter than ours, at just 5/8 mile, but every bit as interesting. It follows part of an old traction right-of-way. As a matter of fact, the BSM is the only trolley museum in the U.S. located in a downtown area. Their route does not pass conventional office buildings, however, because it is located along the waterfront more of a warehouse district. Whereas the Glenwood Electric Railway is shaped like a bent "eye" bolt, the BSM's resembles an elongated figure "8." Like other small railway museums with crowded carbarns they have no formal barn or shop tour. Instead, trolleys pause at the outer terminus on each trip so that one of the two uniformed crew members can deliver a brief lecture on the museum and its goals. It was interesting to notice that their uniforms are much like ours. Even the women volunteers wear an authentic uniform featuring a matching blue skirt. I want to thank Ray Cannon and his crew for showing me around this fine museum. 🚃





Conductor Kivett and Motorman Homesly pose with Mt. Tabor – Sunnyside car No. 546 at Southeast 69th Ave. and Belmont Street, circa 1913. (John Labbe photograph).

I REMEMBER THE MOUNT TABOR – SUNNYSIDE LINE

By Bill Hayes

I first used this line as a boy when I was "boarded out" with a family in the "country" on a small farm on Everglade Avenue near Buckley Avenue (now S.E. Market and 113th Avenue), One and one-half miles from the end of the Mt. Tabor Line at 88th and Yamhill.

A ride on this line had a lot to offer, going from the lush greenery of Mount Tabor, past the lovely large homes of the well-to-do (including the famous old Massachusetts Building from the Lewis and Clark Exposition, which had been moved and converted into a sanitarium and then a private home that, for a time, was the residence of S.S. Joselyn, President of the PRL&P Co.), down into the more workaday neighborhood of Sunnyside, then downhill to the river and across the old Morrison Bridge, with its swing draw span, and into the busy downtown of Portland 60 years ago. The trip beside Lone Fir Cemetery alone was worth the fare (a 4¢ school ticket for me).

Mount Tabor cars were usually of the 561-650 type, while the Sunnysides were the older 521-560 style. Occasionally, the really old 300's would show up as school or Rose Festival trippers. I remember so well the sound of the maximum traction trucks on the 500's and 600's going over the track work at crossings like Grand Avenue, Third, Fifth, Broadway and Tenth, a rhythm that to this day I catch myself drumming with my fingertips on a table or chair arm.

In the downtown area quite a few people transferred from MT and SS cars to the Sellwood Division lines at Southwest Second and Morrison. The Mount Tabor Line terminated at Southwest 11th and Yamhill, while the Sunnyside went on up to Southwest 13th and Hall and looped back on Montgomery. Incidentally, the Hall Street Loop has long since disappeared, another victim of the freeway system.

One evening in 1915 Sunnyside car No. 649, standing empty at the Southwest 13th and Hall terminus, slipped its brakes, and as the crew watched helplessly from the sidewalk it dashed down the hill, around turns and through switches, to Southwest 11th and Yamhill, where it telescoped waiting Mount Tabor car No. 659 with terrific force, seriously injuring several passengers. In a photo of the wreck the legend "Safety First: Help Prevent Accidents" stands out clearly on the side of the Sunnyside car. Oh well, back to the time machine until next time ...



This collision took place in 1915, when empty Sunnyside car No. 649 slipped its brakes during a layover at Southwest 13th and Hall streets, travelled several blocks downhill to Southwest 11th and Morrison, where it hit standing Mount Tabor car No. 659. Both trolleys rose in the air on impact and then crashed down on each other, seriously injuring several passengers. (Thompson collection).

Editor's Addendum: The Mount Tabor Line was begun as a steam motor service by the Willamette Bridge Railway Company in 1888. The route through the Sunnyside District to the top of Mount Tabor was completed the following year over the objections of Sunnyside residents who had subsidized the line. A car barn and shop was constructed at the Mount Tabor terminus at Southeast 69th Avenue and Belmont Street. Mount Tabor steam dummy trains ran as far west as Southeast Morrison Street and Grand Avenue, where they met a new trolley shuttle running across the Morrison Bridge to downtown. In 1892 the short-lived Portland, Mount Tabor & Eastern Railway

built a steam extension from Southeast 69th and Belmont to Southeast 102nd near Stark. The first Sunnyside trippers (i.e., not running to Mount Tabor) were part of a steam dummy service begun in 1891-92. In 1892 electric streetcar service was extended to Southeast 20th and Morrison by successor City & Suburban Railway. In 1893 electric service was extended to Sunnyside, and in 1896 the was electrified all the way to Mount Tabor. In 1912 an extension finally made the Eastside terminus of the MT line Southeast 88th and Yamhill. SS cars changed ends at Southeast 39th and Belmont during the PRL&P years, then, in the 1920s, PEPCO stretched the terminus to Southeast 48th and Belmont. In the early years the west side terminus for the Sunnyside Line was at Southwest 14th and Morrison. The 11th Avenue alignment, terminating at the Hall Street Loop (Hall, 13th, Montgomery to 11th) was added about 1910. The Westside terminus for MT cars was at the Lewis & Clark Fairground Loop during 1905-06 (Northwest Upshur between 27th and 25th). However, by 1907 PRL&P was experimenting with a loop on Southwest front, Yamhill, 3rd, and Morrison. There is evidence that part of the old 13th Street Line route may have been tried as a west MT terminus in 1908, running from Southwest Morrison, south on 13th to Montgomery, then west to 16th. By the 1920s PRL&P had again altered the MT Line's western end to the Southwest 11th and Yamhill location mentioned in Bill Hayes' article. Finally, during the mid-'30s, Portland Traction lumped both SS and MT together, until their 1948 demise. There is photographic evidence that SS cars were run as trippers on the MT Line in those last years. Various unanswered questions have arisen regarding these two lines. For example, some think the SS and MT cars may have shared a Westside terminus, using the Hall Street Loop, during the WW I years. And, what is an SS car doing at 69th and Southeast Belmont in the photograph that illustrates this story? In 1913 it should have changed ends at Southeast 39th and Belmont. It can't be waiting at the old Mt. Tabor Barn, because the photo shows a storefront where that building once stood! 🚃

RECORD NUMBER OF STREETCARS AT THE TROLLEY PARK

By Paul Class, Museum Director

With the arrival of Oporto trams No. 189 and 268 on March 10th, the number of electric vehicles at the Trolley Park hit an all-time high. Prior to the departure of tram No. 166 to Dallas, Texas on March 13th there were 21 vehicles on the property, including three car

bodies (Seattle Belt Line No. 523, PRL&P interurban No. 1067, and Oporto tram No. 268), two trolley buses, and 15 streetcars. And, two more cars are due this summer (the "Blackpool Belle" from England, and Oporto No. 181). Most of the new arrivals are part of the Oldtown Trolley Project for which restoration work is being conducted by Gales Creek Enterprises.

This count also includes the remains of Ballarat, Australia tram No. 30 which was donated to the OERHS on December 28, 1981 by the St. Paul Insurance Company following the unfortunate arson fire in Oldtown Portland. This represents a \$5000 contribution in spite of all the damage due to the 30's rare Brill 21-E truck. We have subsequently ordered the new controllers, vestibule doors, miscellaneous hardware, and woodwork from Melbourne needed to rebuild the car. The start of this project is not anticipated until 1985, since restoration must first be completed on cars No. 48 and No. 503 and repairs made on No. 4012.

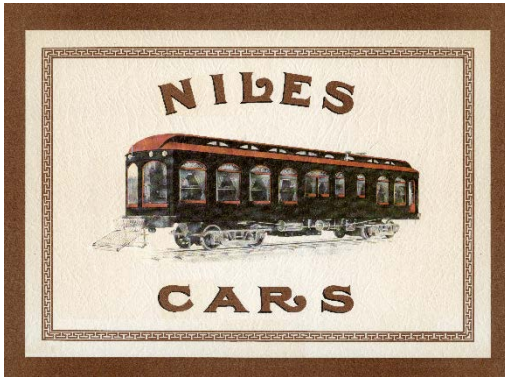
The increased population of Portuguese cars at Glenwood (to six) precipitated a flurry of car-moving activity. Additional track has been laid in the carbarn, the extension of the west bay has been completed, and work is well under way on the new barn (support poles are in place on concrete pads, trusses have been set with a crane, and nuts and bolts put in using a tower truck). One exciting aspect of shifting the cars was the moving of Los Angeles Railway No. 1318 under its own power. After overhauling the air compressor (the valves were frozen) and isolating one of the four motors No. 1318 trundled out of the barn for the first time in about 20 years! Time put in by member and non-member volunteers on these projects was wonderful. Thanks go to John Brady, Fred Haynes, Harry Ludowise, Diane and Tom Mendenhall, Al Nelson and Mike Parker. I should add that the Society stands to benefit in a variety of ways through storage of the Portuguese trams at the Park: We have gained a new extension of the carbarn at no cost; we will eventually acquire a new small carbarn; there are more vehicles at the Park for the public to look at; (it is hoped that one of the Oporto trams will be available for revenue operation this Summer - probably No. 181, which is to arrive in running condition); and we now have more tracks in the barn and yard and a new switch.

It is interesting to note that 1/8th of all the cars remaining in Oporto will have been restored at the Park. Two went to Yakima, Washington in 1975, Dallas, Texas just got one, Portland is to receive six, and Richmond, Virginia (site of the first successful trolley line in the U.S.) is currently negotiating for one. 🚃

BOOK REVIEW

By Richard Thompson

Author and historian John Labbe has assisted Caxton Printers with the reprinting of a classic Niles Car catalog. "Niles Cars" is a reproduction of an original catalog, except for the cover design and Labbe's historical notes on the back cover. The only alteration in format is that the 41 originally loose-leaf pages have been enlarged



approximately 20% to create an oversize 10" x 14" book. Mr. Labbe tells us that they were copied from an antique catalog belonging to Salem author Ed Culp (whose new book "Oregon the Way it Was," also published by Caxton, includes a dozen interesting trolley photos from all over the state). The change in size may be unfortunate, but the halftone illustrations have not suffered, and it does make things easier to read.

Niles cars are of interest to local traction enthusiasts because the Mt. Hood Railway & Power Company and the Oregon Electric Railway Company included Niles cars on their rosters. Cars of the Mt. Hood type, which became PRL&P's most attractive interurbans, were possibly too recent (1912) to appear in this catalog, but three OE cars are used as examples. They are express combine No. 58 (OE series 58-60, 1910), coach No. 103 (OE series 103-05, 1908), and the parlor car *Champoeg* (OE series 100-01, 1910), which, by the way, used to reside at the Trolley Park.

The Ohio-based

Niles Car & Mfg. Company only lasted from 1901 to 1917, but quickly established a reputation as a leader in the production of interurban cars. So "Niles Cars" should be a welcome addition to traction libraries whether you are a local fan or not. The softcover book features numerous car photographs from lines all over the country, as well as accurate floor plans (of particular interest to modelers) and full specifications. Interior finish and furnishings are usually illustrated with a photograph (such as the beautifully upholstered wicker armchairs in the *Champoeg*), in addition to being described in the detailed text. All in all the book compares favorably with other catalog reprints, and is reasonably priced at \$9.95. 🚃

DOWNTOWN LIGHT RAIL APPROVED

By Richard Thompson

The plan for construction of the downtown portion of the Banfield light rail line was approved by the Portland City Council March 17th. Design considerations included track alignment, station locations, traffic patterns, and reconstruction of portions of the street and sidewalks. The important question of how many bus lines would share Southwest Morrison and Yamhill Streets with the LRVs was tabled until July. TriMet wants to leave only two bus lines on these streets in order to reduce the congestion anticipated when two-car (four articulated vehicles) rush hour trains begin operation. Streetcar traffic on these streets will not be unprecedented. As many OERHS members may realize, over the years parts of Southwest Morrison and Yamhill streets were used by the Alberta, Ankeny, Broadway, Brooklyn, Council Crest, Montgomery, Mount Tabor, Richmond, Rose City, Sunnyside, 23rd and Willamette Heights streetcar lines. 🚃

