



THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



Spring 1983

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

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SAN FRANCISCO BOUND!:

This is how car 503 looked when new (builder's date was 1904). The photo was taken during the car's first three years, at the end of the Portland Heights Line near present S.W. Vista and Patton Road. The class that came to be known as "Council Crest" cars were numbered in the 200s until 1906. No. 503 will return to the rails in June after 33 years of retirement!

MEMBERS DAY AT THE PARK

Mark your calendars: Saturday, June 4th has been chosen for a meeting of the OERHS general membership at Glenwood. The event will include a potluck picnic, so please bring your choice of either a salad, main course, dessert, or beverage. We will begin at 11:00 a.m., just prior to regular park operation. The purpose of this get together will be to inspect the rolling stock and facilities, and schedule platform crews and other volunteers for the 1983 season. Preliminary training sessions/reviews will be offered as time allows. This will mark an official opening for 1983, although the Park will have actually begun full operation on the previous week-end (Memorial Day). Volunteers from the Board of Trustees will get things rolling at that time (there was not time to schedule a member's "opening" day prior to the long Memorial Day Weekend). However, the June 4th meeting should provide an excellent opportunity to meet new members and renew acquaintances, so please plan to attend. This will, in addition, be an essential session for Trolley Park volunteers.

The highlight of the opening ceremonies will be a parting tribute to Council Crest car No. 503, which will be leaving

for five months of operation in San Francisco. Details of Muni's "Cavalcade of Trolleys" are included in the meeting reports elsewhere in this bulletin. The historic thing will be that car 503 will be able to operate (for the first time in more than 30 years) due to the installation of new secondhand standard gauge trucks from Australia.

ANNUAL BANQUET REPORT

This year's annual banquet set an attendance record, with over 70 members guests on hand at "The Crossing" Restaurant in Vancouver, Washington. The traditional displays of memorabilia and artifacts were enjoyed during the social hour, and then all were seated for a brief business meeting, the presentation of awards, and voting. The second half of the evening was then taken up with what most people really came for: the entertainment. Guest speaker Ron Higbee, from Tri-Met, gave a slide presentation on the Banfield Light Rail Project. Additional slides shows, and period traction movies, ended the evening.

A vote of gratitude was extended to outgoing President Chuck Hayden and Vice President Al Nelson, and the following new officers were welcomed:

- Roy Bonn, President (1984)
- Charles (Bud) Statton, V.P. (1984)
- Dale Bartel, Recording Secretary (1984)
- Larry Griffith, Treasurer (1984)
- Glenn Eaton, Trustee (1987)
- Tom Mendenhall, Trustee (1986)

Dick Thompson (who has also been acting recording secretary) will continue as Corresponding Secretary.

The Trolley Park News is published bi-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.

MEETING REPORTS

By Dick Thompson

January: (see annual banquet report on page one).

OERHS May Join the Cavalcade of Trolleys.

At the February board meeting Museum Director Paul Class informed the trustees that the Society had been contacted by San Francisco "Muni" Transit to inquire about the availability of streetcars for lease this summer for use in San Francisco. The Chamber of Commerce there has put into motion a plan whereby a "Cavalcade of Trolleys" would be operated over the now-abandoned Market Street surface trackage to promote tourism and make up for the lack of cable cars during shut-down and overhaul of that venerable system. Expenses are to be underwritten by private business.

This idea was seen as an excellent opportunity for the OERHS, since \$5,000 plus all transportation expenses will be paid on each car accepted by Muni. Such an arrangement would allow us to complete restoration on any vehicles involved. It would also provide us with much needed publicity since the event would attract attention from local and Bay Area media. The Board authorized Mr. Class to offer cars 503 (Council Crest) and 1187 (Australian open) to San Francisco for use this summer. Paul indicated that Bill Naito had also agreed to offer two of his Portuguese trams now under restoration at the Park.

In addition, Dr. Griffith volunteered to contact local Portland businesses and the Visitors Association about purchasing advertising space on each dash board promoting Oregon and the Rose City. Funds not utilized for bringing accepted vehicles up to Muni standards will be used for whatever vehicles are slated for regular operation at the Trolley Park this year (in the anticipated absence of No. 1187).

The following committee chairmen were appointed at this meeting and a motion was passed directing the Secretary to publish their names and phone numbers so that members interested in these various aspects of Park operation could easily contact the officers involved:

- Gift Shop = John Sawyer (666-4767)
- Grounds = Roy Bonn (639-0784)
- Overhead Line = Mike Porker (235-7187)
- Operations Supt. = Chuck Hayden (285-6904)
- Equip. Maintenance = P. Class (357-3574)
- Maint .of Way = Don MacDonald (227-2031)
- Exhibits = Bill Hayes (255-5286)

- Publicity = Larry Griffith (760-3887)
- Shop Foreman = Bud Statton (357-6304)
- Structures = Glenn Eaton (393-1399)
- Bulletin = Dick Thompson (248-7529)

Please note that most of these numbers are for home (i.e., evening) phones. Also, a few are long distance from the Portland area.

March: (minutes not yet received from the recording secretary).

Insurance Policy for Trolley Park

At the April board meeting it was reported that, after months of discussion and research the OERHS insurance committee, chaired by President Roy Bonn, has found a reasonable insurance policy for operation at the Park. The plan covers both personal liability and damage to rolling stock. \$500,000 coverage is available for a premium of less than \$400 annually, with a very low deductible. It is hoped that this will answer long-standing concerns of many of our volunteers and officers. We have never had a serious accident at the Park, and no visitor has been injured. But, as we grow in size and professionalism an insurance coverage has become a must. Members should note that this new policy covers visitors only, not volunteer crews. Also, fire coverage has not yet been obtained. But extension of the policy to include fire is being studied.

Paul Class announced that San Francisco had agreed to lease Council Crest car 503 this summer, but not 1187. They were apparently worried about safety and fare collection on an open cross-bench car. However, that means No. 1187 will continue to be available for use at the Trolley Park. A crew, including new members John Sawyer and Jim Multner, has been hired to complete restoration work on No. 503. It should be ready for shipping to San Francisco in early June, and will remain there through October. Two of Bill Naito's Portuguese trams will also be going south.

Finally, a plan was discussed in which pre and post season operation might be offered in the form of one ride for half-fare (no tours). Any staff on hand would operate.

May: The May trustee's meeting was held at new President Roy Bonn's home in Tigard. It was felt that alternating meeting places between the east and west sides of town would encourage attendance by those who might find it difficult to reach a single location.

Museum Director Paul Class discussed various trolleys available in Alexandria, Egypt and Vera Cruz, Mexico. He

indicated he would request additional information about the vehicles and is searching for sponsors. Paul also announced that he had received a contract to haul several streetcars to San Francisco for the upcoming "Cavalcade of Trolleys." He is having a new trailer constructed in Forest Grove for such projects.

Lease Between the OERHS and Paul Class.

Treasurer Larry Griffith reported that the Society had received its check for lease of No. 503 this summer in San Francisco. Larry also moved that a committee be formed to research the writing of a lease agreement between the OERHS and Paul Class. Paul owns the land at Glenwood because the Society long ago failed to come up with sufficient funds to make mortgage payments, and he pays yearly taxes of nearly \$2000 for land that is used by the OERHS as well as his company Gales Creek Enterprises. It was suggested that a lease of around \$100 per month would be fair.

In discussing operation this summer Supt. Chuck Hayden expressed concern that pre-season training had not yet been held. The lack of bulletins and poor weather were blamed for the lack of regular spring training. In response the board proposed that one hour before scheduled operation each Saturday in June (11 a.m.) be set aside for refresher training for all volunteers who come out.

Maintenance of Equipment

New brake shoes for No. 1187 have been cast through the assistance of Portland's Benson High School, and will be installed soon. But the rebuilding of a damaged platform has been delayed due to work on the cars heading to San Francisco. Installation of end posts and a new floor are critical. An extraordinary session of the board will visit the Park May 28th to see to Memorial Day operations and insure that cars 1187, 1159, and 1304 are ready for the summer operating season. The museum exhibit will also be inspected.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Roy Bonn

With the advent of spring weather, which brought temperatures in the mid-70s, the Park opened for pre-season operation on Sunday, April 17th. The day was warm and sunny and thousands had flocked to the beach to soak up Old Sol's rays. Numerous cars stopped at the Park. Several couples had seen the "Faces & Places" news magazine feature on KATU Ch. 2 in Portland featuring the Trolley Park and decided to find where we were located



while doing a little scouting for a good picnic site later in the season.

Greg Bonn, John Sawyer, and I started off the day operating S. F. Muni PCC No. 1159. In mid-afternoon B.C.E. Ry. interurban No. 1304 was placed in operation for the rest of the day.

While waiting for the trolley customers browsed in the gift shop, which had been rearranged by John Sawyer. Relocation of the ticket counter has resulted in considerably more waiting area inside the depot.

The first-day trio undertook a cleanup in the Interpretive Center, setting up displays and removing the accumulation of material from the winter months. Considerable work remains, such as the installation of the diorama and adjustment of track lighting. Reinstallation of caption signs has been made necessary by glue failing during the damp season. Burned out lights need to be replaced, and there are other miscellaneous exhibit-related chores. We welcome your volunteer help with this, and other, projects as the Trolley Park is readied for a new operating season.

New brochures are being designed for the Park and for distribution to the public. The design work is being undertaken by Metamorphics Design as a public service, with no cost to the Society. There will be a printing expense, of course, unless we can find a printing company willing to donate their time as well.

John Sawyer was instrumental in obtaining the donation of 28 ties from McCormick and Baxter in St. Johns. These were ties were made available to the OERHS because did not meet the exacting standards required for Tri-Met's light rail project. They are 7" x 9" x 8' and a lot easier to handle than U. P. ties, which are 8" x 9" x 9'.

Ancil Sheet Metal donated the use of a truck to haul these ties to Glenwood, and they have been placed along the railway in places that are in need of tie replacement. This will be a job for the track department.

COUNCIL CREST CAR READIED

By Paul Class

Council Crest Car No. 503 is being readied for shipment to San Francisco next month. The lighting system has been completely rewired with coated wire donated by the Atomic Energy Commission! Fuses have been added to the system where there were none previously. Full 4-wire rubber-loomed harnesses are being installed in place of the old "fire hose" type harness which was hung from leather straps. New higher bolsters are being made for the car so that the standard gauge trucks obtained from Australia will clear the platform and steps on curves. Once the trucks are in place the car will be moved into the shop for painting.

Machinery in the shop has been rewired and overhauled wherever necessary for use in restoring cars for the San Francisco project. Extra lighting (fluorescent) has also been installed throughout the shop.

Thanks are due volunteers Dale Bartel, Clark Blake, Jake Mulbank (who is 76 years old), Larry Griffith, the Bonn and Mendenhall families, as well as our regular crew composed of John Sawyer, Mike Parker, and Jim Multner.

GREG BONN IS APPEALING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO WORK ON BLACKPOOL TRAM NO. 48.

GROUNDS CLEAN UP

By Roy Bonn

The winter months allowed Greg Bonn, myself, and others to remove numerous dead and dying trees in the picnic and camping areas. More logging debris was cut and removed, which added to the trails through the forest.

Tom Mendenhall has been placing fertilizer on the grassy areas around the interpretive center. Plans are to odd top soil on this to bring the ground level up to the sidewalk and to replant with new grass.

Between customers on the first Sunday I began cutting the blackberry patch next to the depot tracks. A large pile accumulated and was burned.

Plans are to remove the dog house and out house and keep this area mowed. Grass will then be planted and benches installed to give visitors an additional place to wait for trolley rides.

The main burn area in the Park has been moved from the area near the new carbarn to the old saw location. This new location is out of sight and has no vegetation growing nearby. There are also plans to relocate the scrap pile near this spot so that campers can use the road past the old sites more easily. Finally, eight old logging cables have been pulled away from the old scrap pile. The only remaining cable is laying alongside the main line. Several of these old cables might be used as fences. We ask your help in continuing landscaping work as well donating shrubs, etc.

OERHS CHAIRMAN TO DEPART

By Dick Thompson

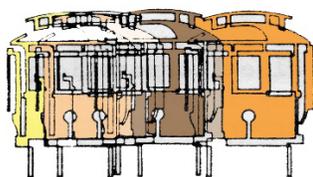
Board Chairman Donald MacDonald has officially announced his retirement from Tri-Met . As most members know, Don has been manager of the Banfield Light Rail Project since 1979, and a consultant to Tri-Met prior to that. He has also been a very active member of our Society for more than five years.

Members were first introduced to Mr. MacDonald in March of 1978 when he gave a presentation on light rail at one of our meetings. He soon joined the Society, and was elected trustee in January, 1979, becoming board Chairman in 1981.

Donald lent a great deal of prestige to the OERHS in this position, since he is one of the few light rail experts in North America. He served his native city of Edmonton, Alberta for 31 years as an employee of the transit system, becoming General Superintendent in 1951. His crowning achievement came as head of the team that built the first new North American streetcar system in over 25 years. Edmonton's 4 ½ mile light rail system opened in 1978, just after Don came to Portland.

Now that planning on the Banfield Light Rail Project is complete MacDonald says, "It is time to go home". He explains that, "As long as we were working on the design phases of the Banfield system, I could make excuses to my family that my skills were needed here. But now that we are finally into actual construction I can't effectively make that argument any longer."

Don was never a passive "armchair" member of the OERHS. He was always available to lend a hand for important projects. I'll never forget the sight of MacDonald on his hands and knees laying carpet during the construction of the depot interpretive center at The Trolley Park. And, he seldom missed a late evening, mid-week board meeting. He will certainly be missed by our organization, and we wish him the very best retirement back in Canada.



ARM 83

The 1983 ARM Convention will be held over the weekend of October 1 and 2, 1983 at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine. Delegates will be picked up at Logan Airport in Boston on Friday, Sept. 30th, and taken to Cliff House, the convention hotel in Ogunquit, Maine. The hotel is located 15 miles south of the trolley museum and 75 miles from Boston. Highlights of this year's meeting will include: a first-day-of-issue ceremony for the new U.S. postage stamps commemorating the evolution of the streetcar; workshops and rail fan tours of the Seashore Trolley Museum; a cookout at the museum; a special women's program on Friday; operation of selected cars; movies and other entertainment. Registration is \$55.00, with a \$5.00 discount available prior to July 31st. The registration fee includes registration package, museum admission, convention reprints, Saturday box lunch, first day cover, a group photo, and bus transportation. Meals are extra. Lodging will be \$30.15 per person double and \$45.15



One of the vintage trolleys on display during the convention at the Seashore Trolley museum will be Biddeford & Saco No. 31. Delegates will have an opportunity to operate some of the 146 cars on hand!

single. Interested members are advised to contact past President Chuck Hayden at World Travel for low air fares. Chuck can also answer questions about the event. His work number is 231-1600, and home 285-6904.

REVIEWS

By Dick Thompson

The Trolley Park was featured in two newspaper articles this winter. "Land of Lost Trolleys" appeared in the Living section of *The Times* (Tigard) on September 7, 1982, complete with six large photographs and a map giving directions to Glenwood.

This was followed by a half-page spread on page C4 of *The Seattle Times* Travel Section on March 29, 1983, entitled "Oregon Trolley Museum." The article included two photographs, plus a "teaser" on the bottom of the front page.

Pre-season publicity was capped off via a seven-minute segment on the Trolley park that appeared on KATU-2's "Faces & Places" magazine in March. This was the second trolley feature Channel 2 has done (the first one was inspired by John Labbe's new book "Fares, Please").

On February 15, 1983 *The Times* continued to publicize trolleys with an Ellis Lucia commentary on, "The Interurbans: Commuter Trains of Yesteryear." The story was about the Oregon Electric and Southern Pacific.



When Portland's Birney cars rolled out of the Center Street Shops in 1919 they bore standard dark red and yellow-cream PRL&P colors. In later years these trolleys were painted gray, green and cream, and equipped with simple Portland Railway type fenders rather than the Nelson Safety Fender seen here. Rear doors were added in 1926. (Polhemus Collection photograph, University of Oregon)

I REMEMBER PORTLAND'S BIRNEYS

By Bill Hayes

If you are over 50 years old, and have lived in Portland most of your life, chances are you have ridden the little single-truck streetcars known as "Birneys," on the Willamette Heights or 16th Street lines. But, your memory of them may be dim, for, according to company records, the last of the original 25 cars were taken out of use May 23, 1937 after 18 years of faithful service.

The brain child of Charles O. Birney (an engineer with the Stone & Webster traction systems), these little cars were built by a number of manufacturers in both single and double-truck versions. But, it was the single-truck type that caught on around the world in the late teens and 1920s. Really the first one-man car, it helped delay oblivion for many traction operations in the U.S. Birneys featured dead-man control, air-operated doors, steel construction, compact size, and maneuverability, plus lower operating cost.

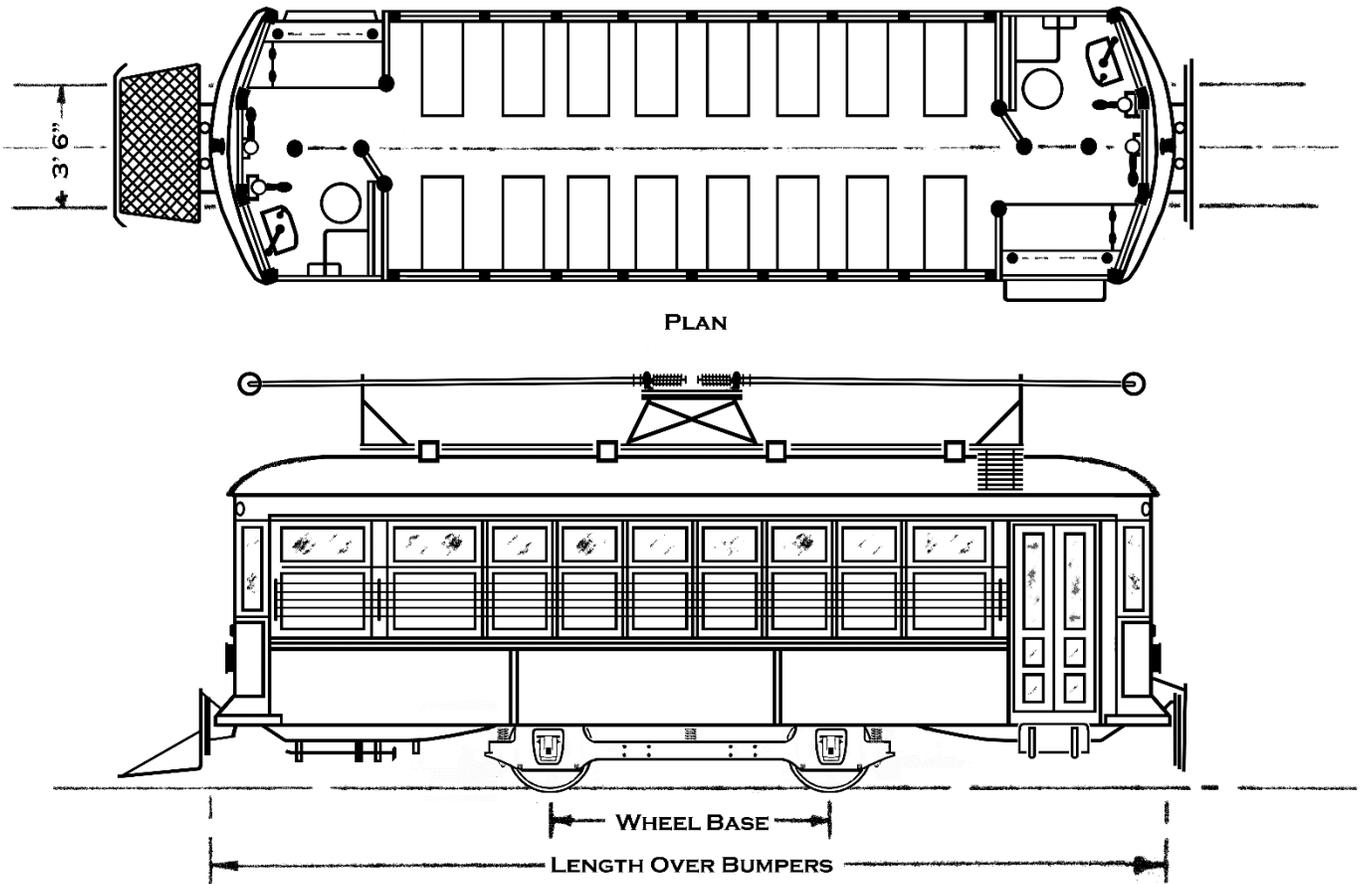
Portland's Birneys were built in 1918 by the American Car Company in St. Louis, for the Emergency Fleet Corporation. The Emergency Fleet

Corporation was a WW I government agency in charge of the vast ship-building program. Portland had several shipyards, and the Birneys were leased to the Portland Railway, Light & Power Company to aid in the transportation of war workers. However, the war had been over for two months when Portland's Birneys were put into service on January 16, 1919. They were purchased by PRL&P in 1922. The Birneys were assigned to the Savier and Piedmont Divisions, except for two standard gauge vehicles that were sent to Sellwood. The first line to use them was the Russell-Shaver, followed soon by 16th Street, Fulton, Irvington, Williams Avenue and Depot-Morrison (which would later become the Willamette Heights Line).

Their main operation was shortly limited to 16th Street and Depot-Morrison, with the addition of stub lines 13th Street Eastmoreland and Murraymead (the last two being standard gauge lines). My memory says that a Birney was also used for a time on the Parkrose line out of Ankeny Division. This would have been during the mid-20s, but my memory has been known to be wrong.

The PRL&P Birneys were numbered 1 to 23 for 42 inch gauge, and 801 and 802 for the two standard gauge units. These last two were renumbered 24 and 25 with the advent of the new "Broadway" cars in 1932. No. 25 was converted to 42 inch gauge November 6, 1936.

A training program was instituted under Inspector Gus W. Bucholz to make motormen and conductors into Birney "operators." When qualified, they received a wage differential of 5 cents an hour for main line operation. This was well-earned, for, at the outset, the little car suffered from poor ventilation, front end crowding, burned out resistance grids, door damage (caused by parking in the barns with the door left open), waste of sand, and operators' lady friends riding up front in the seat next to their boyfriends (we all know what that leads to). The company cracked down heavily on this last item.



LENTH OVER BUMPERS 27'-9"
 TRUCK CENTERS -
 WHEEL BASE 8'-0"
 BUILDER AMERICAN CAR Co., St. Louis, 1918
 PLATFORM LENGTH 4'-0" INSIDE
 TYPE MOTORS 2 - GE Co. 258
 TRUCK BRILL 78-M
 AIR BRAKES W.H. STRAIGHT AIR
 WIDTH OF CAR 7'-8" OVER SIDE PLATES
 SEAT WIDTH 35"
 AISLE WIDTH 22"
 RAIL TO STEP 15 ⁷/₈"
 STEP TO PLATFORM 12 ¹/₁₆"

PINION 13
 GEAR 74
 COMPRESSOR 1 - CP-21
 CONTROLLERS 2 - K10A

**BIRNEY ONE MAN CLOSED CAR
CLASS H- CARS NOS 1 TO 23 INCL.**

PORTLAND ELECTRIC POWER CO.
 Scale 3/16" = 1 Foot Date 1-15-29
 Drawn AA Traced AA Ch'd
 Approved No. **EH-130**



Portland Traction Company Birney No. 19 is at the end of the Willamette Heights Line on Northwest Thurman at Gordon in the mid-30s. During the Birney period the southern terminus for the WH line was Southwest Sherman Street, as indicated by the window sign seen here. Portland Traction's gray, green and cream livery was painted on these cars c. 1932. (Richardson photograph).

The little cars had one serious drawback that was not easily cured; all loading and unloading of passengers was through one narrow front door, which created much "push and shove" in a crowded car. This was remedied in 1926 when all but cars 13 and 25 received rear doors opened from the front by the operator. Birneys 13 and 25 were stub line cars and did not generate enough fares to warrant installation of an extra door.

From 1923 until 1926 I rode to Sunday school on the Willamette Heights Birneys. After church there would be a line of trippers waiting at Northwest 19th and Everett streets for worshippers to board for downtown or transfer to other lines. But, it was not until 1927 that I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. We had moved to New York, and in that year, at the tender age of 14, I was allowed to operate a Birney car of the New York and Stamford Railway one rainy night between New Rochelle and Mamaroneck!

Although retired in 1937, it wasn't until September 18, 1941 that the bulk of Portland's Birneys were sold to Schnitzer & Wolf for scrap. Four had already been disposed of in 1933, and one in 1938. The body of one survives today in Portland's Old Spaghetti Factory Restaurant.

WASHINGTON COUNTY LIGHT RAIL

By Dick Thompson

On January 31, 1983 the Tri-Met Board indicated its preference for the light rail alternative on the Westside Corridor Transit Project, a \$227.6 million proposed line along the Sunset Highway (U.S. 26) linking Portland and Washington County. \$400,000 preliminary engineering study is scheduled for May, however, the Metropolitan Service district has cautioned that this does not represent a commitment to build. With declining ridership and revenues of late, Tri-Met is being very cautious about the proposed 12.2 mile rail project.

Last winter Tri-Met announced that, although the 26 light rail cars ordered from Bombardier Ltd., would be arriving here later than planned, no delay in operation of the Banfield Line is expected. Originally, the cars were to begin arriving in September, 1983. Now, the first vehicle is scheduled for January or February of 1984, with all on site by the end of the year.

The first light rail cab "mock-ups" have already arrived, and were utilized for initial prototype demonstrations for Tri-Met operators held December 14-16. Bombardier's Bob Halperin was on hand to assist with the exercise.

Construction of the \$7.8 million Ruby Junction Light Rail Operations Facility is now 80% complete, with a mid-July deadline set. The concrete shell of the three-story building is done, and the roof is now being completed. The two operations staff managers, Rudy Luepke and Bob Douglas plan to move into their new Ruby Junction headquarters in September. Meanwhile, a contract for building the Gresham part of the light rail line has been awarded.

