



# THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



Jan.-Feb. 1985

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

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## Museum Director's Report

By Greg Bonn

Activities at the Park continued through the winter. Something was accomplished almost every weekend despite the foot of snow that seemed to never go away. The double-decker is beginning to look like a streetcar again. The support posts on the east end are in place and await finish sanding and priming. Bud Statton has been shaping new window sills and dash supports for the end sheet. Mike Parker has completed the control and lighting wiring and will be installing resistor grids and controllers after the vestibules have been painted. Mike also spent several weekends installing the new fluorescent lighting in the crane bay. Bare wood is beginning to show in the upper deck under the hands of Jay Bush, Caroline Novak and son, Bud Statton, Paul Class, Harvey Hilands, John Plunkett and Ron Vandehey. The newly purchased heat guns have made the task of paint stripping much easier, cleaner and warmer than the brush-on stripper that was used before.

Propane heat has been installed in the crane bay and provides enough warmth to make winter work bearable. Participating in the installation were: Greg Bonn, Roy Bonn, Paul Class, Harvey Hilands, and Mike Parker. The heater was donated by the Weller Co. and Ancil Sheet Metal, and the propane and use of the tank, by Abbott and Simpson Roofing Co.




*Museum Director Greg Bonn is seen installing support posts on No. 48 during the Fall of 1984. Metal pieces have been bored and counter sunk for placement on the car side and interior and exterior priming begun on this double-deck tram from Blackpool, England. (Bud Statton photo)*

Harvey Hilands has rebuilt the sanders in No. 503 in preparation for the 1985 Trolley Festival in San Francisco. Mike Parker and Alan Plunkett have designed a reliable circuit breaker for the car and will be installing it soon. A lightning arrester and choke have also been installed. The 503 is scheduled to leave on the 6th of May for the Bay Area.

Paul Class has been busy jacking up No. 506 to remove a twist in the body. He noted that at some time before coming to the Park the truss rod built into the side of the car had been cut out, causing the twist. A counter-

twist will be applied before blocking up the car for display.

Other projects have taken place this winter, and are noticeable as one walks around the Park. I wish to thank everyone who participated in winter activities for their support and dedication. 

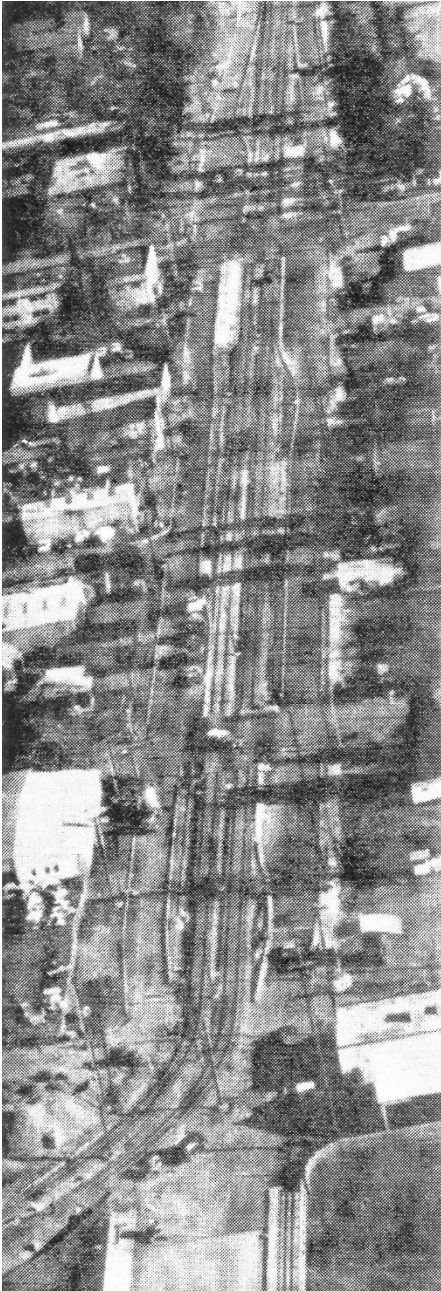
## Light Rail Update

By Dick Thompson

Construction on the 34-block downtown portion of Tri-Met's Banfield Light Rail Line, which started last July and was halted briefly during the Christmas Shopping Season, is now well underway again (a fact many who have attempted to negotiate muddy downtown streets can attest to).

Utility relocation began a year ago and continues along parts of SW First and Yamhill. Track and paving work is now proceeding on SW Morrison between First and Eleventh. Morrison and Yamhill will be resurfaced at intersections to resemble the existing brick-covered Transit Mall. The track itself will be set between authentic cobblestones. Some 500,000 of these

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The new Tri-Met light rail tracks stretch eastward on E. Burnside from I-205 in this aerial view. (Oregonian photo)

"Belgian Blocks" saved from Portland streets during the last few years, should blend well with the historic districts through which the LRVs will travel. Their rough surface will also serve as a warning to automobiles that stray over onto the light rail right-of-way. A good vantage point for inspecting this work is the skybridge connecting the Morrison West parking structure with the Galleria. Looking east from there

one can see how the tracks will run along the south side of the street, with a single lane for automobile traffic along the north side. The rail and auto lanes will each be 12 feet wide. There will also be widened brick-lined sidewalks, landscaping and benches. The goal is to have most of the street construction done by August, with installation of overhead, passenger stations, and landscaping continuing through mid-1986.

The light rail connection between downtown and the East Side is the Steel Bridge, which has been closed for several months while rebuilding of its upper deck and the adding of new ramps goes forward. It will reopen for automobile traffic in September.

On the other side of the river, work rebuilding Holladay Street and installing tracks from Thirteenth to the Steel Bridge should be done by April. The contract to lay tracks and build three stations between Thirteenth and Eighty-Seventh avenues was awarded in December. Track laying on that portion of the line (Section 3) will begin April 15th, but construction of stations will not start until late 1985 or early 1986 in order to avoid months of potential vandalism before the start of service. Trackage adjacent to the I-84 Freeway is to be completed by the Spring of 1986. By the time you read this bulletin, work will be in progress all along the entire 15-mile line, rather than just at the two ends.

Meanwhile, track work in East Multnomah County is also advancing on schedule. The first five miles of rail (in the Gresham and Rockwood sections), running from Gresham to SE 146th Avenue is complete except for some landscaping and sidewalks. The Hazelwood-Gateway section, from 146th to the I-205 Freeway, is about three-fourths complete. The

light rail overpass across both I-84 and I-205 is finished and waiting.

A dozen of the 26 LRVs ordered for Portland have been built by Bombardier. The first car to roll out of their Barre, Vermont plant was, appropriately, No. 101. It was sent to the government test facility at Pueblo, Colorado in 1983 and has not yet made it to Portland (in fact, it may go back to Vermont for modifications). A second vehicle, No. 103, also went to Pueblo for testing and was then shipped to Portland. Those who attended the Ruby Junction grand opening last year will recall this first LRV on the property. No. 102 arrived next, and is the car Tri-Met has set up for extensive testing along the E. Burnside route. Nine more cars have arrived, sporadically, since mid-1984. They are coming one-at-a-time and in no numerical order. Ironically, they are delivered via flatcar by Portland Traction, the last company to operate streetcars in Portland. The eleven LRVs now at Ruby Junction include: 102, 103, 106, and 107-114. 🚃

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## Message from the Veep

By Greg Bonn

*(Greg volunteered to write this column for President Bud Statton who is doing a tour of duty in Korea with the Navy Reserve -Ed.)*

With opening day at the Park drawing near (Sat., May 4th) it is again time to think about the preparations necessary for public operation. Due to the Fred Meyer grant, most volunteer time this year has been given to car restoration. Because of this, there are many small "house cleaning" jobs that need to be done to ready the Museum and grounds for the start of the operating season.



They include: replacing broken windows in the Museum, window washing, dusting and vacuuming of cars, and some minor landscaping around the museum building (depot) and parking area.

Your participation in these pre-season activities could make 1985 our best year yet. If you can help, please call me evenings to schedule activities that interest you, at:

(503) 642-5097 📞

## Meeting Reports

*By Dick Thompson*

**Annual Banquet:** The annual banquet, which was held at "The Crossing" in Vancouver, Washington on January 19th was a success, as always. The event began with the traditional social hour, during which the 56 members and guests in attendance had a chance to browse past historical displays arranged by Larry Griffith, Chuck Hayden, Bill Hayes and Dick Thompson, or purchase traction goodies from the gift shop table set up by Greg Bonn. While Susan and Chuck Hayden checked registration at the door, Treasurer Griffith did a brisk job selling membership renewals. Elections were held during the buffet dinner with the following results:

President - Charles Statton  
 Vice-Pres.- Greg Bonn  
 Treasurer - Larry Griffith  
 Corr. Sec. - Dick Thompson  
 Rec. Sec. - Walt Mason

Trustees renewed for five-year terms:

Greg Bonn  
 Bill Hayes  
 Dick Thompson

In addition, the following new trustees were elected to fill the

unexpired terms of Lee Young and Charles Bukowsky:

Mike Parker (expires 1989)  
 Allan Plunkett (exp. 1987)

The evenings' entertainment began on an unusually high note (literally) with a short concert by the Vancouver Chamber Singers. Among other things, this event acquainted members with the musical skills of Banquet Chairman Chuck Hayden, who is a member of the group (whoever said former interurban motormen lacked culture?). After the usual "Year in Review" open projector program organized by Dick Thompson, member Ron Walker provided those gathered with an interesting and artistic slide tour of the current East Coast traction scene, with stops in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Toronto.

**January:** (there was no December meeting due to inclement weather) The board agreed to a loan of \$2,650 to cover unexpected expenses, some \$2,000 of which remain from last year's Trolley Festival in San Francisco. Although a Society vehicle was not actually used on Market Street last summer, we were involved in a transportation arrangement whereby we would acquire steeple cabs and trucks in Montana when Paul Class (for Gales Creek Enterprises) returned from moving a Festival car back to Wisconsin. The shortage arose when San Francisco's budget fell \$2,000 short on freight expenses connected with that move. They have agreed to reimburse us this year (when they pay for next summer's use of No. 503). In the meantime, we had to solve the cash flow shortage.

Paul Class suggested we seek grant funding for installation of automatic rail greasers on the Trolley Park loop track. However, after discussion, it was decided there were more

pressing priorities and we would stick to hand greasing for now.

**February:** Greg Bonn reported that the gift shop made over \$100 at the annual banquet.

Dick Earle, owner of the old Damon's Hideaway restaurant, told the board that he was quitting the catering business and thought we might be interested in purchasing some of his stoves, tables, etc., which will otherwise be sold at auction. The trustees thanked him for the offer, but indicated that present priorities and budget did not allow for catering at the Trolley Park.

Paul Class explained that the first portion of the Weissman Collection, three steeple cab trucks, have now arrived at the Park. Their transfer was not accomplished without difficulty, however, since their MCB type interurban trucks turned out to be heavier than expected (about nine tons each) and caused some damage to the trailer.

Mike Parker and Harvey Hilands reported that the effort to get Council Crest car **503 ready for San Francisco** is progressing. The car has been rewired from the lightning arrester on down with wire purchased for \$35 from Zidell Corp. Next, a line breaker is to be installed in the controller circuits to cut down on arcing (that is, if problems in getting breakers to work with the British ratcheting controllers now in No. 503 can be overcome). Over currents will be confined beneath the floor and the resulting current sent out an "arc chute." Such overloads are apparently caused by rapid acceleration or pausing too long on low points. Mike commented that planning this work would be easier in the future because the original 1904 wiring diagram used previously is being copied by (continued on page 5)



*Grim-looking City & Suburban Railway platform men pose alongside two "White and Gold" Pullmans at the Waverly-Woodstock Car barn on SE 26<sup>th</sup> and Powell. (Bill Hayes Collection)*

## I Remember the Guys Who Made the Wheels Turn

By Bill Hayes

Most of us lose sight of a most important element while pursuing our interest in the trolleys "that built America;" the humans who made it all possible. Much has been said and written about the inventors, engineers, designers, car builders, financiers, and other pioneers in the top echelons of the business, but little has been written of the hundreds of thousands of people at the other end of the ladder; the horsecar drivers, hostlers, motormen, grip men, conductors, mechanics, electricians, carpenters, clerks, and track workers. I, too, was mainly concerned with equipment, including pictures, books, memories of cars, etc. But, then the photographs of the men, some taken 100 years ago, began to fascinate me. I tried to imagine what their lives were like, how their families and

homes looked, and what finally became of them all.

Portland Railway, Light & Power Co. (PRL&P) and their predecessors and successors were probably the largest employers in the area for many years. As some of you know, I have put together an 1890 to 1950 roster listing thousands of these traction company employees, using my collection of over 60 R. L. Polk Portland City Directories. I have conducted a line by line search for the names and addresses of these people. Although not complete, I feel that it is nearly so, and it gives an idea of how and where they lived and what became of some of them.

The years of the horse, cable, steam and early electric cars saw many immigrants (heavily Irish carmen and Italian laborers) employed in low-paying jobs for the local traction firms. Some worked 12 hours a day, six days a week for a handsome \$12.00 total. The work was hard, cold and wet, as most cars had open vestibules before the turn of the

century. Pictures from that era show men in soiled, wrinkled, ill-fitting uniforms, for it rained then just as it does now in the Rose City. In many photos of crews and groups of carmen of the time, one can hardly find a smiling face, and small wonder.

Very few men who worked on the cars in the 1890s were still around in 1900. They had gone on to day labor jobs, back to the farm, or left the area. I could find only 20 who were still carmen. From 1900 on it was a different story. More men made streetcar work their lifetime career, although there were some who became policemen, fire fighters and letter carriers after a few years on the cars.

The majority lived as close to the barn as possible, usually in small rented houses, some of which are still standing today. OERHS member, and former President, George Combs and his wife Susan are restoring one of these typical 100-year-old cottages.

The carmen of that period were among the minimum wage, poverty-level families of the time. It was not until unionization, marked by bloody strikes in many parts of the country, that their pay was raised to a decent level. Of course, fares rose with the wages.

In Portland pay was 21 cents to 27 cents per hour in 1906, depending on length of service. In 1917, after the eight-hour day was inaugurated, pay was 46 cents to 50 cents an hour. By 1920, wages had risen to between 58 and 62 cents and extra board crews were guaranteed \$120 per month. Pay dropped somewhat during the Great Depression, but the World War II years brought a marked increase, and, from then on, a steady rise. By the end of the 1950s the rate was \$2.42 an hour. Incidentally, pensions were very small in those days.

During the 1920s carmen began to move their families to suburban areas where they could own a home with room to live. It was usually near a city or interurban carline, so they could commute at no cost (few had "motor cars"). I knew a number of carmen through the years, and I don't remember a wealthy one. But, most took their jobs seriously, and abided by the company rules, which, by today's standards, were quite strict.

It was not uncommon for fathers, sons and brothers of the same family to all be carmen. There were the Dotys, Lakins, Lecuyers, Loves, Snipleys, Vonder Der Werths (who later became well-known boat builders), Whitneys, and many other families.

There were some interesting names as well: Body, Bustard, Butcher, Coffin, Driver, Early, Glasscock, Woodcock, Grabhorn, Hooker, Lovely, Needles, Pottage, Pye, Sly, Tye, Sinner, Roach, Millions, and A. Reck, to name a few. One conductor was Honesty Whitney. Very apropos.

Today, local transit employees enjoy a standard of working and living undreamed of a century ago. Perhaps in another article we can explore further the life of yesterday's streetcar people. We should not forget that without their dedication and devotion to their work we would have no traction hobby to enjoy today. Pray for their souls. Amen (Sermon over).



## Meeting Reports

(continued from page 3)

the Oregon Historical Society, which will save the original from further dog-earring, while yielding much more readable copy. Harvey is working on the car's sanders, which

require some welding and tubing replacement. He hopes that a radiator hose might do the trick. All should be in readiness for inspectors from San Francisco, who will be coming up in March. As before, we must overcome their concern over regenerative braking, which is not favored by Muni crews.

**Greg Bonn was elected Museum Director.** The position had been vacated by Paul Class, who desired more time, both for Gales Creek Enterprises and non-traction business ideas. The primary responsibility of the Director is to maintain the depot exhibits.

**March:** Greg Bonn proposed amendments to the by-laws requiring that all officers be elected from the Board of Trustees. That will be voted on at the next general meeting. By way of clearing up present discrepancies, the board also made President Bud Statton a trustee.

Mike Parker and Chuck Hayden reported that the Broadway Car restoration committee had been working on a **plan to move No. 4012 into Portland**, where it would be more accessible to work parties. They approached Portland Traction Company with a proposal to keep the car in part of PTC's old Water Street Shop. This site would, of course, have added appeal, since it is adjacent to the East Portland Yards, where car 4012 resided during its last eight years of service. Tentative approval had been obtained from Portland Traction Company and the Union Pacific R.R. But, joint owner Southern Pacific R.R. seems to want to wait until the Water Street shed is no longer needed. Two diesel locomotives are kept there at present, and rumor has it that one of them is up for sale.

Line Dept. Superintendent Mike Parker said that around 18 poles need



*Portland Traction No. 4012 (formerly No. 813) is seen in the East Portland Yard during the 1950s. In 1950, two "Broadways," cars 800 and 813, were regauged for use on the interurban lines. (Bill Hayes Collection)*

to be replaced on the main line due to rot. In addition, the overhead is below height on several poles and must be raised before No. 48 is placed in service.

Greg Bonn, Harvey Hilands and Mike Kowaleski have rebuilt the shop loading dock at the Trolley Park, and plans are afoot to begin staking out the location for a proposed third carbarn.

Finally, the board has approved

**SATURDAY MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>  
OFFICIAL OPENING DAY  
FOR THE  
1985 OPERATING SEASON.**

Volunteer operators please take note!

