



THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



Fall 1985

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

Vol. 26, No. 4



OERHS volunteer Harvey Hilands crawled beneath Council Crest car No. 503 last March to build new sanders for San Francisco service. (Bud Statton photo)

During the month of November, the museum provided hot lunches to members volunteering on work parties at the Park. Scheduled work activities began at 10 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m., with a 45 minute break for lunch, looking at trolley pictures, or whatever. Activities included maintenance of track and installation of overhead on newly planted poles. Indoor activities such as car maintenance and restoration, shop and barn cleanup, and construction of new restrooms in the museum interpretive building were planned for rainy days. Harvey Hilands had three bad contactors replaced beneath the floor in No. 1304, and its operation in series is smooth for the first time in months. Work in the interpretive center gained priority before the Holidays however, when a burst pipe hastened removal of the old bathroom. Now, we need donations of sheetrock and 2x4's to complete the new remodeling.

Lots more needs to be done before the 1986 operating season, and we're now signing up volunteers for Spring projects. If you can help please give me a call (after 7 p.m.) at (503) 642-5097.

Election Announcement

The following candidates will be running for office at the annual meeting on January 25th:

For President - Bud Statton & Allan Plunkett

For V P - Greg Bonn

For Trustee - Harvey Hilands, Tom Mendenhall and Dick Thompson

If you know of other qualified members who are interested in having their names placed on the ballot please call Election Chairman Greg Bonn after 7 p.m. at (503) 642-5097. 📞

Museum Director's Report

By Greg Bonn

Fred Meyer Project

Operations at the Trolley Park ended two weeks earlier than intended this season to allow for pouring and proper curing of a new concrete crossing at the Power House. The work had to be completed before the Council Crest car returned from San Francisco. The concrete crossing will enable cars to be loaded and unloaded much faster and easier than the previous gravel crossing. The Council Crest car was delayed in returning, by the way, finally arriving back at the Park on Dec. 31st. It was covered with a coat of road grime (due to all the ice, snow and rain encountered in travelling through the passes at this time of year) but otherwise seems to be o.k.

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.

Meeting Reports

By Dick Thompson

AUGUST:

Treasurer Larry Griffith explained that after several months of good cash flow, the Society's treasury was shrinking. With the Fred Meyer Project ending and the need to save funds to pay for the return of No. 503 from San Francisco, only some \$605 remains clear as summer's end approaches.

Two recent publications in which the OERHS received prominent mention were: "Museums of the Willamette Valley," a brochure published by the Marion County Historical Society, and the Historic Preservation League of Oregon Newsletter, which featured the Trolley Park on its cover.

Paul Class explained that a San Francisco cable car previously used at The Hideaway in Hillsboro would soon be on display at the Park. A two-year storage agreement is being worked out with owner Dick Earl, who is interested in selling the car. It was hoped that we might convince him to donate the car, since it would fit perfectly into our exhibits. Portland had similar cable cars from 1890 to 1904.

There have been several car moves at the Park. Pizza "trolley" No. 526 has been moved out of the barn to make room for the cable car. Another car moved into the carbarn is OWP Division interurban No. 1067, the last surviving Portland-built interurban. It will be equipped with MCB-type trucks from Anaconda steeplecab No. L254. The OERHS has begun salvaging parts from this locomotive, whose body remains in Montana.

SEPTEMBER:

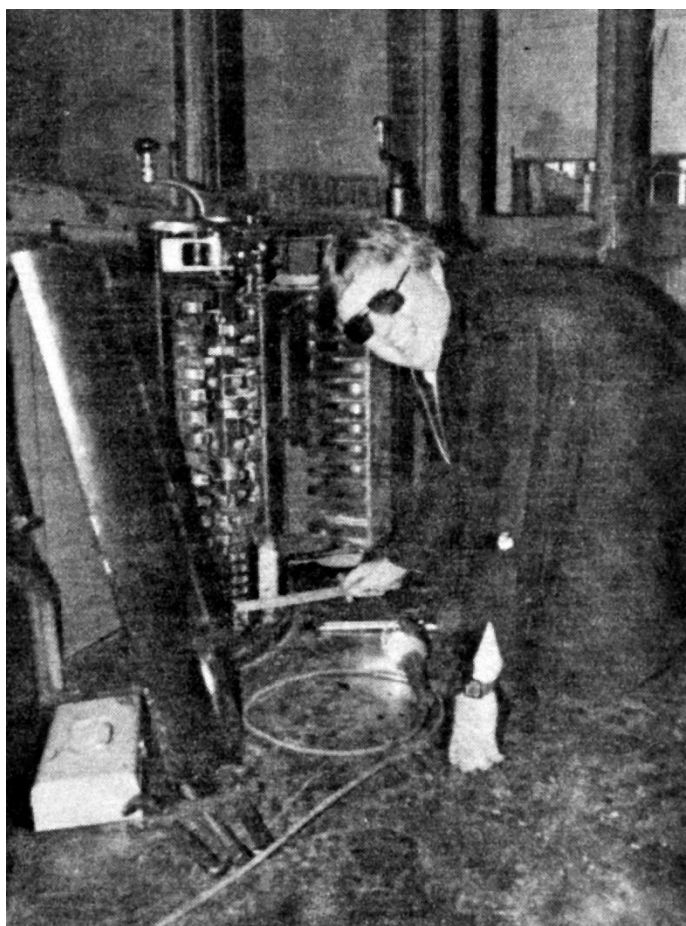
New member Don Huber spoke of his desire to start a model train club at the Trolley Park. He feels there is need for such a club in Washington county, and thinks it would be an excellent addition to the Park. He is willing to donate \$100 toward a building fund. Various options were discussed, and Don was given an o. k. to promote the idea. Several trustees felt that, if a model layout is built at Glenwood it should have a traction emphasis.

Vice President Greg Bonn distributed copies of the August 29 issue of the *Hillsboro Argus* newspaper, in which the Trolley Park was featured. Greg and Mike Parker were quoted in the article, and there was a photo of member Gordon Trousdale and his son.

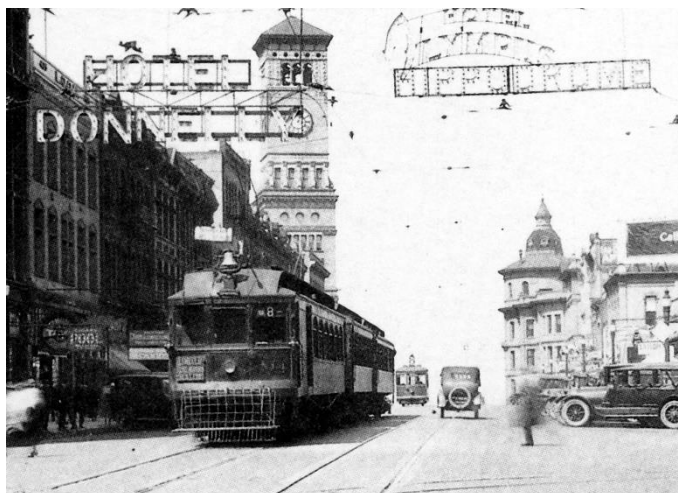
The board approved a \$200 stipend toward sending Greg Bonn to the Association of Railway Museums annual convention to be held September 26-27 in Union, Illinois. Greg will give a detailed presentation to the board when he returns.

Paul class reported on the final restoration work being carried out with Fred Meyer Project funds. For Council Crest No. 503, Blackpool No. 731 (the "Blackpool Belle") and Sydney open No. 1187 most of the remaining work will involve painting. However, new member Eugene Fabryka wants to locate additional funding for cleaning and buffing of the brass hand rails on the open breezer.

Due to budget constraints, President Bud Statton has reinstated a \$50 maximum expenditure by officers. Any purchase greater than this amount will need to be accompanied by a purchase order from Treasurer Larry Griffith.



Member Allan Plunkett installing newly-machined controller segments in car No. 503 last spring before it left for San Francisco (Bud Station photo).



A Tacoma Railway and Power Birney is following Puget Sound Electric Railway interurban No. 514 as it heads north on Pacific Avenue with a three-car train. (Warren Wing Collection)

OCTOBER:

Treasurer Larry Griffith reported escalating bills on the Trolley Park telephone following the recent installation of a phone extension at the car barn. It was agreed that the line was essential for employees working on the Fred Meyer project, but a phone log will need to be kept.

A motion was passed authorizing a concrete pad at the powerhouse crossing to assist in off-loading of rolling stock from the new trailer (the previous trailer utilized a leveling pit at the depot end of the main line).

Approval was given for a loan to cover winter expenses in light of the unscheduled shortfall brought on by acquisition of the Montana steeplecabs last Spring.

The board accepted donation of the body of ex-Tacoma Birney No. 326. The car is in excellent shape, except for a portion of one side, where a deck was attached. It had been used as a summer cabin near a lake in Kent, Washington, where owner Howard Brown lives.

NOVEMBER:

An expense of \$200 was approved to cover hauling of donated Birney No. 326 from Tacoma. The car arrived at the Trolley Park in late October.

In an update on the steeplecabs project, it was determined that the Society must find a method of recouping \$4000 spent on acquiring these locomotives. The possibility of selling one of them was discussed but no action taken. A request by Greg Bonn for funds to purchase gift shop inventory prior to next operating season was tabled.

Don Huber showed drawings and a model for a proposed building to house a model railroad at the Park. He suggested it be located adjacent to the power house and said a club would be formed to organize the project. The site and concept were approved.

DECEMBER:

Secretary Larry Griffith reported that the Society would have to tighten its belt in light of exhausted grant funds and a weak local economy. Among other things, he suggested that a contingency fund be set up to cover things like insurance. Dr. Griffith projected fixed expenses for 1986 at \$891 per month. The Society earns an average of \$771 a month from operations and memberships, so, unless the sale of duplicate rolling stock, or some other source of income, is found, there won't be funds for restorations next year. The purchase order system will remain in effect, and all bills will need prior approval.

V. P. Greg Bonn reported on a communication from the Oregon committee for Expo 86, the world's fair that will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia next summer. The committee inquired about the possibility of sending B.C. Electric interurban No. 1304 to Vancouver for exhibit during the Exposition. It was suggested that a bond would need to be posted and various other precautions taken before we could agree to such a plan since, we do not hold title to the car. Some thought Council Crest car No. 503 would better represent the state at the Expo, and result in fewer complications. Action on the matter was postponed. 🚃



Tacoma Railway and Power Birney No. 326 was built by American Car and Foundry in 1917. After retirement in 1938 it was used as a cabin near Kent, Washington. (contemporary picture taken at Antique Powerland in 2007 by Robert West)

I Remember PEPCO's Electric Signal System

By Phil Hedene

The PRL&P Co. (PEPCO, et al) rather proudly proclaimed that all of their single track (bi-directional, of course) was signaled, which was true, except for some short stretches where one could easily see to the far switch. Kenton Traction was not signaled, but, then, it was not PRL&P. And, during times, such as the Pacific International Livestock Exposition, when Mississippi Avenue streetcars ran through to Kenton, supervisors were added to avoid any embarrassing "meets."

In two-man days one of the conductor's duties (not always performed) was to see that signals cleared as their car exited a signaled section of track. After the advent of one-man service in 1932, this responsibility fell to the motorman. Homemade wooden boxes with a red roundel (E in the illustration below) were added at the exit of a section to help. Because the bulb for the roundel was in series with the red light for opposing movements, the motorman was (effectively) running a red signal if the signal didn't clear when his car exited.

A car passing the entry contactor when the signal was red had no effect upon the signal. Thus, in the event of a "cornfield" meet there would be no evidence of who had run a signal. I don't know what would've happened if two cars tried to activate signals simultaneously from opposite ends of a section. I suspect the lights would have just flashed, but the relays would not have stuck.

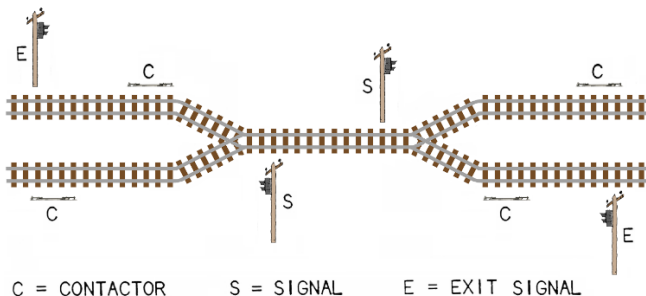


ILLUSTRATION #1

The contactors, which looked somewhat like wire brushes, made contact with passing trolley wheels. In some instances, it was necessary for the contactor to be directionally sensitive, in which case a pendulous switch

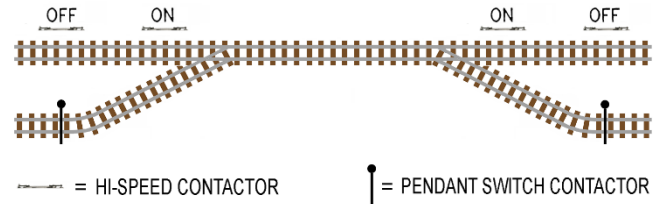


ILLUSTRATION #2

was used to detect both the passing trolley wheels and their direction. This was of benefit especially on the interurban lines, where many sidings were seldom used and service on the main line was bi-directional.

There could be more than one entry to a signaled section. At Jantzen Beach, for example, the loop upon which the trestle repair car was stored had contactors and signals tied in with the main passenger service signals to protect each from the other. In connection therewith, note that since the signals used standard 120 volt bulbs five were needed in series (or equivalent resistors) for 600 volt operation.

After a couple of Mount Tabor cars met head on, early in WWII, on the stretch of private right-of-way on the east side of Mt. Tabor, a couple of repeaters were added at the mid-point of that block. The repeaters were wooden boxes, each with a red and a green roundel. One possible reason for trouble on this particular section of track might have been trippers turning back at 68th Street but not reversing at the proper location for signal control.

The biggest difference between the electric signals on city and interurban lines was due to the speed of the cars. The contactors on the city lines were designed for the slow speeds which prevailed on sidings where city cars actuated the signals. Many of the interurban mainline switches had sprung wing rails, which meant that cars could go through at full speed (unless trailing through a spring switch with points set against the move). The signal contactors were unreliable at full speed (about 45 mph) however, so the company developed a special contactor for use at "full speed" locations. I remember those 54-inch 2x4s with three trolley wire ears.

As shown in the second illustration, the typical interurban installation for the main line at the end of a siding was an "off" contactor, followed by an "on." At the opposite end of the block the contactors would be in reverse sequence. Because the "on" contactor was for reverse direction it would be locked out by the previous "on" operation, and the departing train would clear the block in a normal manner. 🚃



This is your invitation to the



OERHS ANNUAL BANQUET



Saturday, Jan. 25th, 1986



**The Crossing Restaurant
900 W. 7th, Vancouver, WA
Roast beef buffet with shrimp
\$11 all include payable at door**



SCHEDULE:



6:00-7:00 social hour & exhibits

7:00-8:00 Dinner & meeting

8:00-10:00 program:

"Europe '85 Trolley Tour"

Trolley Park "Year in Review"

"Open Reel" slideshow

Raffle and gift shop

Operators wear your uniforms



RSVP Bill Hayes - 255-5286

