



THE TROLLEY PARK NEWS



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Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society Bulletin

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BW - BROADWAY
CC - COUNCIL CREST
F - N&S PORTLAND (to Fulton)
FREMONT (turnback on BW line)
HA - HAWTHORNE
IJ - IRVINGTON-JEFFERSON
IV - IRVINGTON (after I-J line ceased)
JANTZEN BEACH (turnback on VC)
MA - MISSISSIPPI AV
MS - MT SCOTT
MT - MT TABOR
MV - MONTAVILLA
NR - (turnback on 23rd line)
NS - N&S PORTLAND (turnback. F)
PATTON ROAD (turnback CC = PH)
PH - PORTLAND HEIGHTS
PLYMOUTH (turnback on SJ line)
RC - ROSE CITY
RL - (later turnback on 23rd line)
RM - RICHMOND
RS - RUSSELL-SHAVER
SJ - ST JOHNS
SS - SUNNYSIDE
SW - SELLWOOD
VC - VANCOUVER
WA - WILLIAMS AV
WH - WILLAMETTE HTS
WL - WOODLAWN
WO - WESTOVER
WS - WOODSTOCK
13 - THIRTEENTH ST
16 - SIXTEENTH ST
23 - TWENTY-THIRD ST
68 - (turnback for RC, MV and MT)

PORTLAND STREETCAR DASH SIGNS

By Phil Hedene

As a result of many requests (all self-generated, naturally), herewith are more reminiscences about Portland's streetcars. This time, dash signs.

First, with the exception of THIRTEENTH STREET, which (logically enough) used '13', no stub line served by a single car ever carried a dash sign. At least certainly not when I was around.

The following is a, hopefully complete, listing of dash signs used on regular Portland streetcars:

AB - ALBERTA
ALBERTA 30 (turnback on AB line)
BL - BROOKLYN
BM - BEAUMONT
BT - BRIDGE TRANSFER
BUSH (in lieu of BL, and used instead of ET, as long as service went to SE 21 & Bush)

During 1929-32 dash signs were supplemented by a "FRONT ENTRANCE" or a "REAR ENTRANCE" sign as appropriate. And MONTAVILLA signs would be "MV 90" or "MV Stark" to differentiate between the two branches.

John Labbe's book *Fares, Please* has a picture of a SUNNYSIDE destination sign on a car at SW 13 & Hall. The dash sign is "68 Hall"

a sign used sometime after 1940. All the time I was in the city, no self-respecting car with a SUNNYSIDE destination sign ever went east of SE 48th, but things do change.

Mr. Labbe's book also shows some rather fancy dash signs; even dash signs on the left hand side of the car. Neither characteristic lasted into the mid-twenties. In fact, by the mid-twenties, the left hand dash spot was strictly for advertising.

By the mid-twenties, none of the interurban cars carried dash signs. The company was a bit ambivalent about VC (after all it did go between two cities - in different states at that), but it was treated as a somewhat special city line (limited for most of the city running) rather than as an interurban. Restricted right-of-way might have caused a more interurban-like treatment. But there was no restricted right-of-way within the city limits, period. When the amusement park was open VANCOUVER cars had "JANTZEN BEACH -VC" on the dash sign.

With the rebuilding of the Baldock Freeway through Sullivan's Gulch in preparation for the Gresham LRV service, the evidence has disappeared, but from NE 82nd Ave. to NE Sandy (inclusive) those overpasses of the UPRR all had provision for four tracks. At the time of the construction of the overpasses (circa 1917), it was still believed possible that the "Mt. Hood" Line would be extended into the city center from Montavilla (at 90th & Glisan). Thus the provision with the two inner tracks, for UP and the outer tracks for an interurban/commuter service. West of Sandy (at 97th) the Gulch gets deep enough so that any bridge naturally provides all the necessary room.

The route into the city center was somewhat indefinite (to say the least), but one proposal was to use Broadway Blvd. and the Broadway Bridge. Therefore, until it was redecked about 1930, the Broadway Bridge was also equipped with standard gauge rails as were the crossings at Broadway and NE Union, NW Glisan, and W Burnside.

Until the mid-twenties, double track on (now SW) Broadway ended midway between Yamhill and Taylor with the MISSISSIPPI cars turning back at that point. The BROADWAY cars continued on to Jefferson. Double track was then extended south to midway between Main and Madison with both BW and MA cars thereafter turning back at Madison.

As an aside, it might be noted that the concave vertical curve on the south side of SW Madison was sharp enough that any 800 would scrape its lifeguard when going through it (one would occasionally).

Before initiating service with the 800s on the BROADWAY run, they were sent all over the system (hill and standard gauge lines excepted, naturally) to check clearances. Apparently some of the criteria used in determining which line would get the 800s were: a line giving maximum exposure, a line with few curves (less clearance problems for passing cars), a line where the 15 cars could give most of the base and tripper service (precluded RC, MT), and a line where the performance capabilities could be used to best advantage (which precluded 23 and WH). Much of the criteria is rumor, but it is logical.

But, enough drivel for the nonce!

NEW TROLLEY PARK HOURS

Following a trial early opening during June, which showed an increase in ridership and gift shop sales, Supervisor of Operations Jack Norton has lengthened operating hours at the Trolley Park. He reports that this is to accommodate an expected increase in the flow of visitor traffic, both before and after the previous operating schedule.

The new hours will be: Saturday, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

GIVE IT A BRAKE!

By Dick Thompson

At a recent board meeting OERHS past president Walt Mason raised the idea of reinstalling air brakes on Australian tram No. 1187. He has brought up this matter several times, and continues to feel strongly that air brakes are a necessary safety feature for this car.

Willamette Shore Line Superintendent George Inness took an opposing stance, arguing that the car was not originally fitted with air brakes. He cited evidence that the brakes may have been added sometime after No. 1187 was built in 1911. So, reinstalling air brakes would impair the car's value as an historically accurate exhibit.

In addition to the historical preservation aspect, some have argued that the low operating speeds at the Trolley Park mean car 1187 can be stopped safely using just hand brakes.

Paul Class provided background regarding the deactivation of the air brake system on No. 1187 several years ago. He believes that their use actually posed a safety hazard in itself. During the period in which the Australian trolley was operated at the Trolley Park with air brakes the old-fashioned brake handle was occasionally kicked loose while under pressure. The result was that the large brake handle would swing rapidly around, threatening platform crew members with bodily harm, and the possibility of being thrown out of the vestibule.

Even so, most board members agreed with Mason that air brakes would be desirable. It was decided that the matter will be studied further to see if they can be installed in a manner that would not be dangerous for operators. At the same time, the incorporation of air brakes would not detract from the "Breezer's" historical appearance; it would merely restore the car to a different historical period of its long working life.

REMEMBERING THE 1097

By Mike Parker

The time has finally come, in this on-going series, for some recollections of Portland Traction Co. interurban car 1097, a 1090 with its own unique story.

Number 1097 was the last car to be built in the first batch of Portland Railway Light & Power Co. 1090's. Constructed locally during 1910-11, it was identical to the rest, with train doors, Edwardian pin-striped red and yellow paint scheme and a high clerestory roof. The coach style was "generic."

The first series of 1090's can be identified by the curved covers on the first version of Sprague-G.E. underfloor switch gear (if you are lucky enough to find a photo of that side of the car). They were located on the lefthand side when looking out the front windows of end no. 1. Square switchgear covers were used on the second series 1090's starting with car 1098.



"Illustrious" OERHS member, and new PTC motorman, Chuck Hayden was motorman on a 1952 fan trip. Note the curved switch gear covers underneath the car.

Apparently, 1097 lived a sheltered life, as I can find no accounts of it being involved in any major accidents, such as the "log truck massacre" repeated several times in Milwaukie, or the Rupert Curve head-on collision south of Oak Grove.

In the late 1940's and early 50's car 1097 was used on limited late afternoon runs, or "trippers." In 1952, I was taking weekly piano lessons in Portland after school, and would catch an inbound Oregon City car next to my school in Oak Grove. Upon arrival in Portland I would transfer to the Hawthorne trolley bus, get off at SE Twenty-Second Avenue and Hawthorne, and walk over to Don Tooley's house, where I was learning "popular piano." Afterward, I would catch a trolley bus downtown and have time to browse the Goodwill, Union Gospel Mission and other junk shops. Old 78 rpm records were a nickel each and a wind-up record player could be had for \$1.50. I have that player today, but it's worth more now!

After that, I would walk down SW Second Avenue to the interurban station at First and Washington (an adventure into the seamier side of life) and, standing tall before me, would be a mighty 1090, with a "Limited to Oak Grove" sign on the front.

The 1090s were big, but they were usually full to standing room only at that time of day, and I would end up standing, like a privileged character, against the bulkhead wall to the left of the motorman. This was a forbidden spot for passengers, but the operators I knew didn't mind and the ones I didn't know tolerated it. Youth had its privileges.



Mike Parker took this mouse-eye-view inside 1097. It looks past the Hale & Kilburn walkover seats into the vestibule, where we can see the GE K-6 controller, Westinghouse airbrake, and the ceiling-mounted GE circuit breaker.



Portland Traction Company Shop Foreman Roy E. Reinke, seen leaning against No. 1097 at the East Portland Shop, told Mike Parker and his friends that the car might be saved for "you rail fans." (Vonderahe Collection photo)

As decrepit as the 1090s were, I'm surprised that they never collapsed from the weight of all those commuters. But, 1097 was the best of the bunch, and I remember the good condition inside and a feeling of solidarity when riding in it (unlike some of the others).

All good things must come to an end and so it was with the 1090's. In 1952 we heard of a fan trip to be run on the Estacada line using the old 1090's. After that, they were to be retired and replaced by some strange cars from California.

My streetcar fan buddy Jon Busch and I made plans to ride on this fan trip. The day arrived and lo and behold, the car was 1097. We boarded the car, resplendent in a "new" red and cream paint job (the previous orange paint had become so faded that some numbers were unreadable). It looked good, and we felt even better.

We headed out the Bellrose line, strange territory to me, and eventually forced our way, under wire, to the bustling town of Boring. With tree branches slapping the car from Gresham on, it was rough going.

Later, I found out one of the motormen was our illustrious member, Charles Hayden, and he had installed a roof-mounted "Estacada" destination sign for the occasion. Just the right touch, Chuck! Those metal stencil signs hadn't been used in revenue service since the early years.

Other cars used on fan trips included 1092, 1101 and 4002 (an ex-Indiana Railroad car). The line via Ruby Junction to Gresham was also explored. Riding the last train to Gresham in 1990, before the rails were taken out, brought back memories of old fan trips

Then came the fateful day in May, 1953, when all of the 1090s, except 1097, were taken out to the burn track north of The Oaks. After watching that pitiful event we found 1097 sitting alone in the Water Street Yards, the only "hi-topper" left.

We asked our pal Roy Reinke, the shop foreman, what was going on. "We're going to save it for you rail fans" was his reply. Wow! We jumped for joy all the way home.

Later, we found out the 1097 was going to be saved for the City of Portland, which, true to form, turned the idea down.

A rumor was going around that 1097 could be traded for a case of whiskey. And, knowing some of the PR&T Division officials, this may have been true. Anyway, we frantically wondered, as 12 year olds would, how on earth we could come up with a case of whiskey.

Sadly, in no time at all, the 1097, finest of the fleet, was taken out and burned for scrap like the rest of them. I'm sure glad that I didn't witness that event.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SPECIAL

By Phil Hedene

The late David Stearns told the following story. In the 1920's PEPCO (later PGE) was building the Oak Grove hydro-electric plant on the Upper Clackamas River and to show its progress (and do a little bragging) arranged to run a SPECIAL train to the construction site for the Portland Chamber of Commerce. It would be electric to the end of wire at Cazadero and then steam-hauled the additional twenty or so miles to the dam site.

The train consisted of a couple of PEPCO interurbans (probably former Mt. Hood Railway cars) which would be running without lights or heat beyond Cazadero. David was one of the passengers who, being a rail-fan even in those days, had arranged to be in the right place at the right time.

The Chamber of Commerce is a powerful organization in any city, so, in addition to the crew, PEPCO's trainmaster was on board. It was felt that he could correct any glitches on the spot.

Some place beyond Boring, they were waiting for an inbound Estacada train when, in substance, the motorman and the trainmaster had the following conversation:

TM, "Can we make the next passing and meet the inbound?"

MM, "Not legally, but they know we are on the line and they'll be on the alert.

TM, "Let's go!"

So, off they went. But, about a mile from the next passing track, they started the dadgumdest whistling David had ever heard. They made it, and found the inbound train waiting meekly in the siding.

The rest of the trip was quite routine, and the Chamber members saved about 15 minutes on the outbound trip. Of course, they weren't told how.

CAR 503 WILL BE DISPLAYED AT WASHINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM

Council Crest car No. 503 will be loaned to the Washington County Museum this summer as part of their new exhibit "Darkness to Dawn: Electricity Takes Charge." The PGE-sponsored event will tell the history of electric power development and will include a published guide. The car will be on display in front of the Museum, which is located next to the Portland Community College Rock Creek campus.

RAILWAY MAINTENANCE-OF-WAY SUPPLY WAGONS

By Phil Hedene

While thinking back about Portland's electric railways, I am reminded of the fact that I have never seen any references to M.O.W. (maintenance-of-way) supply

The quarterly OERHS newsletter is now called **The Transfer**. Please send articles, photos, letters, or requests for information, to Wayne Jones, Editor, Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society, 3995 Brooklake Rd. NE, Brooks, OR 97303 or email to transfer@waynejones.net.



Shay No. 1, still lettered for PRL&P, is towing former Mt. Hood Railway motor 1126 and OWP trailers 1121 and 1119 alongside the Clackamas River during Oak Grove Dam construction in 1924. The right-of-way above Cazadero was temporary track with no overhead, as described in the David Stearns story, so a locomotive was necessary.

wagons. Into the mid-1920's, all track repair and paving work appears to have been handled with rail M.O.W. equipment. A work motor (double cab in narrow gauge, single cab in standard gauge) would come out to a work site ("sight" to this wide-eyed tyke) loaded with rails, bricks (or cobble stones) sand, and other bulky materials. These would be rapidly unloaded to minimize delays to the streetcars, and then the work motor would skedaddle back to wherever it came from.

Trailing behind the work motor would be an erstwhile, horse-drawn, wagon with sold rubber tires. This wagon would contain spikes, track bolts, fish plates, and other small, good things. However, the wagon was not always pulled by a horse. Instead, the wagon tongue was often connected to the work motor coupler so that the vehicle would dutifully "follow its master."

At the job site the wagon would be uncoupled from the motor and pushed to the curb. At the end of the job, the process would be repeated in reverse, with the work

motor returning to skedaddle-land for a rapid reloading.

As noted at the beginning, I have never seen any pictures, or other references, to these wagons. I remember them as being green and about 20 feet long. I also remember quite a few relatively small bins, with long, hinged common covers. Does anyone have any further information about, or a photograph of, these wagons?

NOTE TO READERS

By Dick Thompson

You are reading a "bonus" issue of the *Trolley Park News* containing material submitted to this editor, but never published. Due to a lack of volunteers and time no newsletters were produced between March 1988 and December 1989. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity for these articles to finally appear in digital form on the OERHS website.