

The Northwest

# Electric Railway Review

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## OERHS OFFERS TO HELP RESTORE BROOKS DEPOT

The Brooks Historical Society has shown interest in a proposal by the OERHS to help restore the Brooks Depot into a local (Willamette Valley) railway museum. The depot is now located on Antique Powerland property west of Interstate 5 at exit 263, after having been moved from the Salem area by the Brooks Historical Society in November 1989. In an agreement with Antique Powerland, the depot was to have been restored by July 28th, 1990. However, as the end of May approached the Brooks Historical Society found they would not be able to complete the exterior restoration by the deadline without outside help. Since most of the treasury had been spent moving the building, the historical society recruited volunteers to pour a foundation and begin painting the building.

OERHS President Greg Bonn, BHS, President George Sturgiss, and board members from both groups, developed the joint venture concept, which was approved in June, 1990. By Fall the BHS had drafted a lease whereby the OERHS would operate one-half of the building, with management to be supervised by a joint Committee. The main cost would be sharing utilities. The BHS was interested in seeing the office restored to its historical appearance, while the freight area would be available for interpretive displays and a gift shop. An OERHS committee was formed to fine tune the plan and work with the BHS on implementation.

The Brooks Depot was built in the early 1870s by the Oregon and California Railroad (SP) and was used for both passengers and freight until Brooks service was discontinued in 1964. At one time Brooks was a fuel stop for Southern Pacific wood-burning steam



*A Vintage Trolley Council Crest car replica nears completion at the GOMACO plant in Ida Grove, Iowa on Feb. 12, 1991. (Bill Naito photograph)*

locomotives. Sixteen cords of wood were regularly stocked near the depot until SP's conversion to oil. In later years the ex depot was used as a diesel repair shop (not locomotives), and even as a hay barn, until it was moved and elevated to become the second floor of a building on Chemewa Road in Salem.

OERHS members John Nagy, Joyce Broulette, Ron Vandehey, Greg Bonn, Harvey Hilands, Glenn Eaton, Rod Cox and Mike Parker worked evenings and weekends rebuilding, scraping and painting the depot to make it presentable for the annual SteamUp. Because of its age and type of construction, the entire south end of the building had to be dismantled and rebuilt using similar rough-cut materials scrounged from storage at the Trolley Park. After two weeks of painful reconstruction the depot was ready to strip and prepare for paint (no easy task, since in 12 years approximately 13 coats of paint had been applied). As time was running short, it

was decided to pressure wash and paint with a minimum of scraping being done, to insure that the depot would be ready by deadline. Restoration was to continue at a more relaxed pace during the Winter, with emphasis upon interior work. For more information, or if you would like to help, contact Greg Bonn (642-5097) or John Nagy (652-2770).

## VINTAGE TROLLEY SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

At the February OERHS annual meeting guests Rick Gustafson and Bill Failing of Vintage Trolley, Inc. asked Society members to participate in plans to operate three replica streetcars through Old Town Portland. A group of Portland businessmen, assisted by Bill Naito and an UMTA grant, organized a local improvement district to fund Vintage Trolley. The Board of Directors of this "merchant-based organization" include Bill Naito, Bill Failing, Bill Troyer



(Lloyd Center Director) and others with business interests along the line.

Gustafson, who works for an Oldtown public relations firm, negotiated the operating agreement with Tri-Met. He explained that Vintage Trolley will use reproduction Council Crest streetcars (built by Gomaco in Iowa) because Tri-Met engineering requirements disallow use of existing historical trolleys. Union regulations also require Tri-Met operators, since the Brill-style cars will share a portion of MAX trackage. They will be stored in a new car barn recently built beneath the I-5 Freeway near Memorial Coliseum. It is expected that Tri-Met will undertake minor repairs and maintenance at that site.

If all goes as planned, Vintage Trolley will begin running from downtown to Lloyd Center in September 1991. Operation will be restricted to Lloyd Center on the East Side, and 11th Avenue on the West. But, a "Central City Trolley Plan" now being formulated may allow for extensions into Northwest Portland (on non-MAX tracks) in 1993 if Vintage Trolley is a success.

Vintage Trolley has approached the OERHS because they need volunteer conductors. Although the volunteers themselves would not be paid, the OERHS would receive both publicity and money for preservation projects. Operation will be on weekends and holidays throughout the year, so volunteers will be needed two days a week, eight hours (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) a day. Six four-hour, or three eight-hour, shifts are being considered. Revenue will be generated by the farebox (due to Fareless Square this will be a \$1.00 "contribution) and charters. Thirty-minute evening charters are planned, possibly including dinners catered by nearby hotels. Vintage Trolley volunteers will need to be "promoter/entertainers" with a knowledge of Portland history and its streetcars. Historical uniforms are being considered.

In addition to volunteers, Vintage Trolley may be interested in the loan of Council Crest car #503 for exhibit at the new car barn. Other artifacts could be displayed in a nearby kiosk. A "Vintage Fair" modeled after Art Quake is planned

for next Fall to get things off the ground.

## LAST MONTANA STEEPLECABS ARRIVE

Last Fall, citing declining health and a need for more space, Montana businessman Maurice Weisman contacted the OERHS to request that the Society remove his last three electric locomotives from Great Falls before the end of the calendar year. A motion approving the acquisition of this equipment was passed at the October board meeting, as was acceptance of attorney Charles Seims offer to write a grant proposal to the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust to pay for transporting the steeplecabs to Oregon. In the interim, the board gave new Treasurer John Nagy authorization to borrow \$8,000 to get the move underway while awaiting the grant. Nagy felt it would be a worthwhile investment, since two of these locomotives could be restored to operation in a very short time and many spare parts (armatures, etc.) were coming with the cars.

On November 16th a crew left Portland bound for Great Falls, Montana to load the last lot of vehicles. They arrived the next morning, and began the process of hauling and loading steeple cabs and parts onto two Burlington Northern flat cars and a gondola. The process was delayed when railroad officials said that the trucks had to be removed from the bodies and the bodies welded to the flats (they were finally allowed to proceed cabled down). Further delays were experienced upon arrival in Oregon, first on a siding in Beaverton (where seven headlight rings were stolen) and then at North Plains (awaiting off-loading crews from Metro Machine and Rigging). The last part of the move, from North Plains to the Trolley Park took two days and required two crane trips and four truck hauls. It was completed after nightfall. Final inventory of equipment moved was one 25 ton steeple cab, one 40 ton steeple cab, two 25 ton bodies, two armatures and a motor for the 40 ton car, four armatures for the 25 ton motors, as well as axles and spoked wheels

There are now six Montana steeple cabs at the Trolley Park, including two that

have been there for several years, and four recent arrivals. Two of the latter are car bodies, one in good condition, one not. Work has been progressing on both new and previously acquired Weisman steeplecabs. The 35 ton ex-Missoula locomotive already in the OERHS collection received a coat of red primer and the trolley pole and hand rails on the new 40 tonner were painted. An air test was also performed, showing that gauges on the 40 ton work, though a new governor is needed on the compressor.

## GALES CREEK ENTERPRISES BUILDS STORAGE YARD

The arrival of a new group of trams from Oporto and Melbourne last Winter precipitated overcrowding at the Trolley Park. Most of the cars were imported for a Memphis, Tennessee investor by Paul Class' Gales Creek Enterprises. Class bid on restoring them at the Park, which, in addition to taking up car barn and main line space, presented public relations problems for museum visitors (these vehicles are not in good repair and some feel they are "eyesores" that need to be hidden from view prior to operating season).

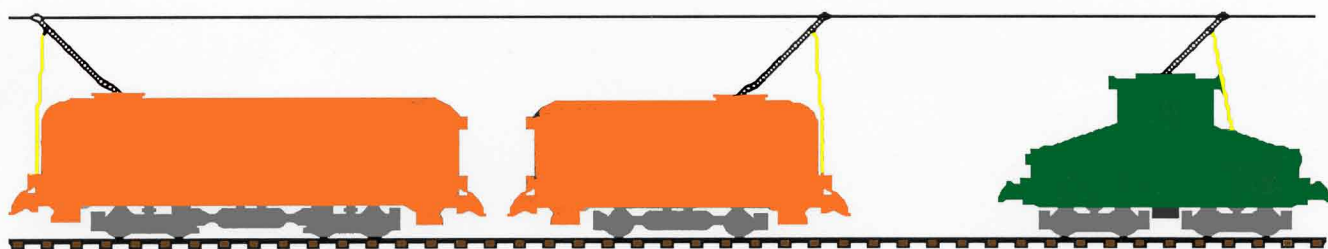
After discussion with the OERHS board, Mr. Class agreed to build new storage tracks on his property adjacent to the main line between the car barn and shop, and behind the powerhouse. Track and switch work was completed in April, including three yard tracks, a switch on Class' property adjacent to the powerhouse, and a temporary switch connecting the new yard to the mainline in front of the Class residence. There are currently ten Portuguese and two Aussie cars stored on these tracks.

## 1991 ELECTION RESULTS

Here are the results of mail-in balloting counted at the annual meeting (an\* indicates new officers).

- President: Greg Bonn
- Vice Pres.: George Inness
- Treasurer: John Nagy
- Secretary: Dick Thompson\*
- Trustee: Charles Seims\*
- Trustee: Jack Norton\*

The  
1991  
OPERATING  
SEASON



is now under way at the

# Trolley Park

Volunteers are needed for crews, gift shop, tours, restoration, etc. To sign up, call Jack Norton at 695-5620 (leave a message on the machine)



## Officers

President: Greg Bonn (642-5097)  
 Vice President: George Inness (281-3194)  
 Secretary/Editor: Dick Thompson (285-7936)  
 Treasurer: John Nagy (652-2770)

### *Trustees:*

Greg Bonn (642-5097)  
 Glenn Eaton (393-1399)  
 Larry Griffith (760-3887)  
 Paul Harvey, Chair (230-2319)  
 George Inness (281-3194)  
 John Nagy (652-2770)  
 Jack Norton (695-5620)  
 Mike Parker (235-7187)  
 Aloha Schade (222-1641)  
 Charles Seims (635-5541)  
 Tom Shelnutt (286-5325)  
 Dick Thompson (285-7936)

### *Honorary Trustees:*

Henry Brainard  
 Roy Bonn (642-5097)  
 Paul Class (357-3594)  
 Chuck Hayden (285-6904)

## Committee Chairs

Alternate Site: Glenn Eaton (393-1399)  
 Archive: Bill Hayes (255-5286)  
 Board: Paul Harvey (230-2319)  
 Brooks Depot: Greg Bonn (642-5097)  
 Bylaws: Tom Shelnutt (286-5325)  
 Crew Sign-up: Jack Norton (695-5620)  
 Elections: Glenn Eaton (393-1399)  
 Gift Shop: John Nagy (652-2770)  
 Membership: Dick Thompson (285-7936)  
 Museum: Greg Bonn (642-5097)  
 Newsletter: Dick Thompson (285-7936)  
 Public Relations: (open)  
 Restoration: Charlie Seims (635-5541)  
 Vintage Trolley: Carol Hansen



## The Northwest Electric Railway Review

is published bi-monthly by the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society and is available through membership. Please send requests for information and items for publication to the Editor: Dick Thompson, 1836 N. Emerson, Portland, OR 97217.

**Help! We need articles, letters or photos for the newsletter**

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