



The Northwest

Electric Railway Review

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George Combs oversees the dedication of the new depot museum in June 1980 (Dick Thompson photo).

A Tribute to George Combs

By Dick Thompson

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing away of member George Combs on September 13, 1992. Cancer cut short the adventures of this extraordinary traction enthusiast at the age of 58.

George came by his enthusiasm for trolleys naturally; he grew up in Milwaukie and, except for a tour of duty during the Korean War, rode Portland Traction every chance he got. His family's historic home was located on Milwaukie Lake, not far from Island Station.

George's special character becomes all the more evident with his passing. I never heard him speak unkindly of others. The secret of his leadership was that he was above political squabbling. And, no matter how tough things were, he always greeted people with a warm smile and an encouraging comment.

George Combs' active membership in the OERHS endures as a model for others. He served as president through two particularly challenging terms, 1979 and 1980, during which the Society weathered a bylaws crisis, the mainline loop was completed, and the depot converted into a Museum with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. During this time we also acquired our first modern car (Muni PCC 1159) and sent "ambassador" car 503 on its first trip away from the Park (to Portland for Tri-Met's 10th anniversary display). George also served a term as gift shop chairman (1981), and trustee (1982). All of this was exciting, but, George Combs' most important legacy to the OERHS was probably his negotiation of a proper insurance policy for the Park.

George was personally involved in OERHS projects, including the restoration of Blackpool No. 48 (he put up his own money to sandblast the seats), and the replacement of faulty electrical equipment in 1159.

Though traction was his favorite, Combs' dedication spread to an amazing variety of other causes and organizations. He was a Royal Rosarian, a Mason, a member of the

University Club, past president of the Historical Automobile Club of Oregon (his recently expanded garage accommodated a '26 Model T and a '60 Austin Healy), a member of the Train Collectors Association, and a saltwater sailor (venturing down to California from time to time on a 50' boat). His hobbies meant a different club obligation every week!

On a personal note, the Trolley Park was a romantic setting for George and his wife Susan during their courtship. Member Al Nelson recalls that when he and George volunteered for duty at the Trolley Park in the early '80s George had a dual goal in mind. He brought Susan along so that they could be alone together whenever Al took runs up to the Meadows.

Romantic, railfan, friend. Those who worked with him will not forget. As we consider ways to commemorate George Combs' contributions to the society, member input is welcome. Please let us hear from you.



Punch Anyone?

By Barbara Scherr

Visitor Lou Becker donated the ticket punch now on display in our museum. It belonged to a friend who worked for the Oregon Electric. Lou started working for PRL&P in 1929, becoming a motorman at Ankeny, and then Piedmont Barns. By the time he retired from Tri-Met in 1970 he was 3rd in seniority, and his own punches were worn out.



Snow Sweeper Nearing Completion

By Greg Bonn

Restoration of the sweeper has progressed rapidly during the last couple of months, with the removal and replacement of deteriorated side sheathing. New cedar tongue and groove siding is being used to replace badly rotted or cracked fir sheathing with as much of the existing sheathing being re-used as possible. The original square iron nails will be re-used wherever possible as well. During removal it was noticed that some sheathing was painted on the back side, suggesting that some of the repairs made to the car during its career were done with materials salvaged from other cars or structures.

Both sides of the car are nearly completed. New siding has been cut to exactly match the pieces being replaced. New end posts were shaped from old growth fir and mortised into the new frame sections. Existing bulkhead members were reinstalled and the roof ends reattached.

New flooring has been cut and installed to the end of the car, extending beyond the end of the cab to the coupler pin. All new flooring is clear fir that has been primed or treated with preservatives on the bottom side, as have all new frame members and existing framework that was exposed during re-sheathing.

The truss rod on the west end of the car was adjusted to eliminate a sag in the corner that gave the car the appearance of "leaning over". The end of the cab was squared to the frame and new oak vestibule ribs were treated and installed. New end



Snow sweeper no. 1455, "The Broom," sits ready for duty in the East Portland Yard during a 1940s snow storm (Miller photo).

sheathing will be used as existing material is badly deteriorated.

All of the existing interior lining has been salvaged and will be reinstalled in the original positions, as will the bulkhead and end post trim pieces. The interior lining will probably be cleaned and given a clear coat to preserve handwriting relating to car maintenance and repairs made while in active service.

Members responsible for the above restoration work include Gene and Vicki Fabryka, George Anderson, Roy Bonn and Greg Bonn.



Bank Donates Office Equipment

By Greg Bonn

Through the efforts of Roy Bonn, Greg Bonn and John Nagy, the Society has received the donation of three filing cabinets

and an IBM Selectric typewriter from the U.S. Bancorp's annual surplus furniture donation program.

Over five hundred non-profit groups were assigned numbers that determined when they would be allowed into the warehouse to select items from "wish lists" mailed in September. Fortunately, our number was eighty-six, and we were allowed in with the fifth group. However, all of the standard file cabinets had already been taken and we settled on two large card files and one small letter file that should be useful in sorting and storing photos, timetables, tickets and other small archival items.

After the items were selected and checked we moved John Nagy's truck into a two-block-long line for loading, then headed for the Trolley Park to unload the files into the museum building. Roy Bonn hopes to use the IBM typewriter to apply for grants and material donations.





A chain drive Sterling log truck makes easy work of hauling recently retired interurban 1094 to an unknown new home in this 1946 snapshot taken by member Jack MacDougal near Estacada (Jack MacDougal photo).

Where Did Number 1094 Go?

By Mike Parker

In my last article, "I Don't Remember 1094, 1095 and 1096," (see NWERR Vol. 33, No. 3) I mentioned that I knew very little about car 1094. PEPCO had quit running this car during World War II due to an accident and had disposed of it in 1946.

Well, I guess statements like that get results, as I soon heard from OERHS member Jack MacDougal, who said that he had taken some photos of 1094 in 1946 near Estacada!

The car in the two photos printed here is clearly 1094 and I guess it is heading for a new resting place somewhere in the woods, perhaps as a logger's bunkhouse or a fishing cabin.

The exact location of this carbody has never been known to any of us present day "trolley historians." We

have accounted for the disposition of all of the 1090's, and most of the

PRL&P veteran 1094, sagging but proud, seems to have attracted the interest of a boy on a Schwinn in this second 1946 photo. Note that most exterior hardware is still in place. (Jack MacDougal photo)



1060's, with the exception of 1094.

Jack has added quite a big piece to this puzzle of history and is to be commended for his tireless research into the lives of PRL&P, PEPCO, and PTCO interurban cars. He has acquired much valuable information over the years by collecting original documents concerning these cars.

The truck hauling 1094 is quite a relic itself. Jack says it is a Sterling chain drive vehicle and it definitely looks like it can handle the load.

I welcome any further authentic information concerning the 1090s and would like to hear from anyone, especially non-members or Estacada area historians, who have seen an old streetcar body out in the woods, or weeds, behind a barn, or an old logging operation site, etc.

The next article in the series will cover car 1097, which is a story in itself. Car 1097 played a significant role in several notable Portland "juicefan" events of the past. 🚲

Oporto Cars Leave Trolley Park

By Greg Bonn

During the weekend of October 16th the two remaining Oporto Cars stored in the carbarns were readied for shipment to Tillamook for restoration. No. 181 and No. 114, were purchased by Bill Naito in the early '80s with a group of Oporto cars that eventually moved on to other homes. The cars were initially purchased with the hope that they would be operated on the Vintage Trolley route.

Removing the cars from their resting places was no easy task, as No. 114 was setting on a very short length of track that ended under the east vestibule. Temporary track was laid, using 30 lb. mine rail spiked to six foot 4x4s, extending out over the lead track to the pole barn. A tow cable was attached to the fork lift, and the car was eased out into the daylight.

Prior to moving No. 114, car No. 181, resting on the end of track seven in the pole barn, was coupled to Council Crest No. 503 (the good end) and moved to track two. Muni PCC No. 1118 was then moved to the end of track seven, followed by No. 503. No. 181 was then coupled to the open car and moved to the crossing for loading on Monday.

Thanks for all the effort goes to, John Nagy, Jack Norton, Greg Bonn, Paul Class, Dick Shipley, Ken Peters, and new member Jack Phillips.



Marla Garza was one of several Tri-Met Vintage Trolley operators who came to the Park last summer to experience the original CC car, No. 503, first hand (Bill Binns photo).

OERHS ANNUAL BANQUET
January 16, 1993

THE CROSSING
 900 W. 7th, Vancouver, WA

6:00 - 7:00 Social Hr.
 7:00 - 8:00 Dinner
 8:00 - 10:00 Program

Tri-Met Westside Light Rail Line
Trolley Trivia Quiz (with prizes)
"Open Reel" Slide Show

\$12.50 dinner inc. tax and gratuity
Baked chicken teriyaki, capon or roast beef

RSVP John Nagy 652-2770

Vintage Trolley Celebrates 1st Anniversary

By Dick Thompson



At the November 16th crew meeting Vintage Trolley celebrated its one year anniversary. Since it began regular service on November 29, 1991 VTI has carried 72,992 riders. Service was limited to weekends, except during the Christmas season, Rose Festival (June) and Art Quake (September). There were also eight charters, including the precedent-setting Electric Railroaders Association tour to the end of the line in Gresham.

Half of Vintage Trolley's 24 conductors are OERHS members, most of whom donated their earnings to the Society. Of the \$3,730 earned for the restoration fund so far, \$1,137 came from Bill Binns who was named "Host of the Year" at the November meeting and awarded a Vintage Trolley watch. Professor Binns has put in 187 volunteer hours.



Blackpool "Double Decker" No. 48 Sports New Look

By Charles Seims

The restoration department's summer project has been to expend more than 200 hours of painting and cosmetic work to complete and touch-up the double-decker's original 1987 restoration.

This car was obtained by the Society in the early 1960's after having been retired from the Blackpool tramway system, the last such electric railway operation in England. Pictures taken at the time of its arrival at the Trolley Park show the car to have been in poor shape cosmetically.

No. 1187 was restored in time to inaugurate service on the Willamette Shore Railway in the Fall of 1987. After the Society's operation of the Willamette Shore Railway ceased in December of that year the double decker remained under the Marquam Bridge in Portland and was exposed to weather for over a year before being returned to the Park. The paint covering much of its exterior woodwork had peeled and it was time that the car received a facelift.

The project was under the general direction of Charles Seims. Beginning in June of this year, electrical equipment that had been installed to accommodate the generator car on the Willamette Shore line was removed. All exterior woodwork on the lower floor of the no. 48 was sanded,

many years were various step and bumper guards designed to protect pedestrians from being dragged under the car. All of this hardware had to be stripped, primed and refinished in the original dark green.

Inside, the 48 was still in good shape, but the entrance vestibules

required touch-up paint due to weather and heavy use during "Shore Line" operations. Several seat handles, missing for years, were duplicated & reinstalled.

Still on the list of things to be done is a protective coat of paint on the canvas roof of the car. Volunteer help and contributions are needed to finish this, and a host of pending restoration projects.



Blackpool Corporation Tramways No. 48 sports a fresh new look as it poses with sister cars British Columbia Electric Railway 1304 (at right) and Sydney Tramways Board 1187 (on mainline at far right) on the occasion of the Electric Railroader's Association Convention tour of the Trolley Park, July 21, 1992. Superintendent Jack Norton is just walking out of the picture at left after having set up this splendid shot for the ERA railfans (Dick Thompson photo).

primed, and refinished. Metal panels were touched up as necessary. The car's front and rear bumpers were stripped of many layers of old paint and refinished in the original cream color. Trucks and metal work under the body were also repainted.

Reinstalled after being off the car for

Thanks to the following Society members who have spent the Summer working so hard to make No. 48 the Society's crown jewel: Chris Larson, Jack Norton, Barbara Sherr, Pius Scherr, and Charles Seims.



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