



Reminder to members: Please be sure your dues are up to date. They are due on Jan 1. If you have not renewed you can pay online, or download a membership form, at <http://oregonrolley.com/join>

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Bill Binns, 1925-2022

By Richard Thompson



Bill Binns is seen here with Vintage Trolley No. 512 in the Vintage Trolley Car barn c. 1992. Bill was one of the most active volunteers for Vintage Trolley, Inc. and the OERHS' Electric Railway Museum, both at the old Glenwood location and in Brooks.

It has been a privilege to have considered Bill Binns a friend and colleague and it is with great sadness that I note his passing away on January 26, 2022, at the age of 96. I met Bill shortly after he moved to Oregon from Philadelphia in 1989, when I attended a slide presentation he gave at Bill Hayes' home in Southeast Portland. Years later, I confessed to having fallen asleep not long after the lights were dimmed. I was embarrassed at this admission, but Bill only laughed and replied, "I know."

I got to know Bill well in my capacity as Crew Coordinator for Vintage Trolley, Inc. I hired him as a "host" (we were not allowed to call employees conductors due to union requirements) soon after VTI began running through downtown Portland in November 1991 and he continued to work on the trolleys until operation ceased in July 2014. A little-known fact is that Bill donated his entire salary (about \$15,000) during this 23-year period to the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society. *Continued on page 3*

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society

Officers

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| President | Eugene Fabryka |
| Vice President | Richard Thompson |
| Secretary | Mark Kavanagh |
| Treasurer | John Ballentine |

Trustees

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| John Ballentine | Gene Fabryka |
| David Harold | Suzi Jones |
| Mark Kavanagh | John Nagy |
| Richard Thompson | Joe Tracy |

Other Positions

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Board Chairman | John Nagy |
| WST Manager | David Harold |
| Newsletter Editor | Richard Thompson |
| Newsletter Publisher | Wayne Jones |
| Gift Shop Manager | Suzi Jones |
| Webmaster | Mark Kavanagh |

Membership

If you have overlooked paying your dues for 2020 or did not realize that 2021 dues come due on Jan. 1 this is your reminder. Memberships should be renewed on January 1st each year. The OERHS is a non-profit 501-C-3 corporation, so dues are tax deductible.

| Categories | | | |
|--------------|-------|------------|---------|
| Active | \$ 30 | Sustaining | \$ 250 |
| Family | \$ 60 | Life | \$ 500 |
| Contributing | \$ 75 | Benefactor | \$ 1000 |
| Supporting | \$100 | | |

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society, Inc. is to preserve the regional heritage of electric railway transportation as a living resource for the benefit of the present and future generations.

To fulfill this mission the Society will promote:

- The study of electric railways, their physical equipment, properties, and operations, devoting special attention to the electric railways of western Oregon.
- The procurement and preservation of historic electric railway equipment, materials and property.
- The display, interpretation and operation of surviving historic equipment, materials and properties.

By Laws, Article II, 9/14/93

Official Notice

The Transfer is published quarterly as the official publication of the OERHS, a state and federally recognized not-for-profit institution and operator of the Oregon Electric Railway Museum at Brooks, Oregon and the Willamette Shore Trolley between Lake Oswego and Portland.

The views expressed herein are solely those of the individual writers identified and of the editor only, and may not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Society, its Board of Trustees, Officers or Members.

Articles, photos and letters for publication are always welcome. Please email to transfer@oerhs.org or postal mail to the museum address below.

Please send any change of address, your dues, and donations to:

Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society
3995 Brooklake Rd. NE
Brooks, OR 97303
Phone: 971-701-6327
www.oregontrolley.com

Do you want to drive a trolley?

You can be a Motorman, Conductor, Tour Guide, help restore trolleys or participate in more great activities. Want to learn to operate a 100-year-old trolley or an electric locomotive? If you are interested in training to be a motorman, conductor, or station agent at the museum contact Greg Bonn at (971) 344-0755. If you wish to volunteer for the Willamette Shore Trolley, call David Harold or Jan Zweekerts at (503) 697-7436. No experience is necessary just a passion for trolleys! We can train you in any volunteer position that meets your interest.

Volunteers are also needed for weekday or Saturday projects at the museum in Brooks. Please come out to the museum and lend a hand. Call Greg Bonn for details at (971) 344-0755.

How we deliver *The Transfer* and *The Monthly Pass*

Our quarterly newsletter *The Transfer* is published electronically in full high-resolution color. Members can view and download current and previous issues at the OERHS website: oregontrolley.com/transfer. You will also find an archive here of previous issues going back to the 1970s. It is easy to print copies on your personal color or black & white printer. By default, members receive email notification as soon as an issue is available. We believe you will appreciate the higher quality pictures that this process will provide to all the interesting photos that accompany our articles.

For those who prefer a printed copy of *The Transfer* a black and white version will be mailed to your home address by request. Please send this preference to Secretary Mark Kavanagh, Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society, 3995 Brooklake Rd. NE, Brooks, OR 97303 or send him an email at mark@oerhs.org.

When needed, the OERHS also updates members on events at the Oregon Electric Museum and the Willamette Shore Trolley in a short email newsletter called *The Monthly Pass*. We must have your correct email address for distribution of both newsletters. We respect your privacy and will only use your email address to send a single notification when the latest issue of *The Transfer* is ready. We do not send promotional material or advertising.

Bill Binns from p. 1

In addition to his Vintage Trolley work, which ran daily from 1994 through 1999, and on weekends thereafter, Bill was a motorman and conductor on the Willamette Shore Trolley and at the OERHS Museum! He was the consummate volunteer, always cheerful, encouraging, and ready to lend an ear to any story. As noted in the dedication to my most recent book, his “tireless devotion to the cause of railway history and the operation of restored streetcars has inspired a generation of volunteers at the Oregon Electric Railway Museum.” I was pleased when his wife Elouise told me that, during a visit to his hospice a couple of days before he passed, she let him know about the book dedication and it brought a smile to his face.

Continued on page 4



Bill Binns is taking a break with his favorite operator Neal Berlin and Crew Coordinator Dick Thompson on private right-of-way near SW 5th and Market Dec. 22, 2013 (Wayne Jones photo)



No matter where he lived or worked Bill Binns always organized a musical group. Here he leads the OERHS Chowder and Marching Society on Members' Day at the Trolley Park in Glenwood, Oregon, September 19, 1992. (Richard Thompson photograph)



Bill Binns poses with restored Broadway Car 813 at Oak Grove Elementary School during the opening celebration for the Trolley Trail in Milwaukie, July 2015. (Tracy Brown photograph)

I cherish 31 years of friendship with Bill and will miss him. His hand-printed Christmas cards were always appreciated as were his invitations to join him at Oregon Symphony concerts following my divorce. Like Bill Hayes, he became a mentor and encouraged my writing. My only regret was not succumbing to Bill's efforts to recruit me back into the ranks of active OERHS members. Perhaps that guilt played a role in my willingness to resume editing the OERHS bulletin after a hiatus of 28 years. Let us honor his memory and passion for streetcar preservation.

Since Bill spoke very little about his years in Pennsylvania the following details are gleaned from his obituary in *The Oregonian*: William H. Binns, Jr. was born April 14, 1925, in Philadelphia. He attended Olney High School and Temple University, from which he received his bachelor's and dental degrees. He later earned an M.S. from the University of Illinois with a focus on pediatric dentistry.

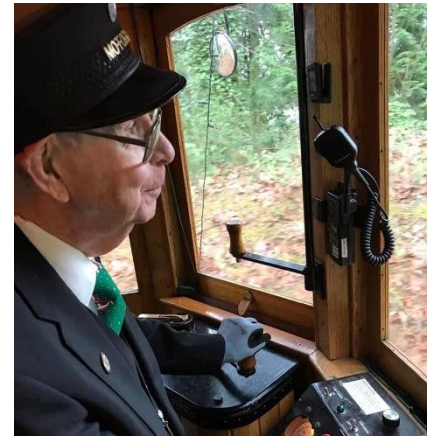
Bill entered the Navy at the age of 18 and served as a sonarman on the destroyer escort *U.S.S. Stockdale* (DE 399) from 1943 to 1946. The

Stockdale's career coincided with Bill's service since she was launched in 1943 and decommissioned in 1946. I wish that Bill, the great story teller, would have shared his Navy experiences with me. They would have been amazing, because the *Stockdale* saw action in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean theaters.

Bill was a professor at Temple University School of Dentistry from 1954 to 1989. He also served as Chief of Dental Services at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children.

He often talked about his family back east, which included a sister and sons David and Bruce. Bill was predeceased by his first wife, sons John and Paul, and brother Donald. 🚲

A memorial service for Bill Binns will be held at the Truck Museum at Powerland Heritage Park on Sunday, April 24, 2022, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. It will be live as well as via Zoom and will include the sharing of photos and stories along with the singing of his favorite song "O Strassenbahn." Light refreshments will be served.



Bill explains streetcar history to Barbara Fraser during the party celebrating the publication of "Sunnyside Streetcars" April 27, 2019. (Richard Thompson photograph)

The Long Career of OE No. 65

Dan Haneckow

A color slide of an Oregon Electric combine, taken in Portland on October 8 1961, brought forth questions.

What car was it? Could it be possible that it was still in original paint and lettering 28 years after passenger service ended? Was it really in Portland? What became of the car?

There were enough clues to establish it was the former Oregon Electric No. 65, one of six combines built by the American Car Company of St. Louis Missouri for the railroad in 1912. Throughout their careers on the “Willamette Valley Route” this car class drew a wide variety of assignments. A number of photographs show them leading three or four car limiteds with the deluxe parlor-observation cars *Champogeg* or *Sacajawea* bringing up the rear.



This photograph of Oregon Electric combine No.61 shows it in original Pullman green livery. Car 61 featured a larger express section and smaller passenger accommodation than sister No. 65. Both were built by the American Car Company. (Richard Thompson Collection)

After passenger service ended No. 65 was acquired by Harmer Steel Products and Supply, a railroad equipment dealer in Portland. In July 1934 it was sold along with five other

Oregon Electric interurbans to the Skagit River Railroad north of Seattle. Before going into service their motors were removed and the cars were
Continued on page 6



Oregon Electric combine No 65 had been repainted in an approximation of her original colors when this photograph was taken in Portland OR, Oct 8, 1961. The yellow car at right is former OE passenger motor No. 133, a 1913 product of the American Car Company. (Dan Haneckow collection)

painted a golden yellow color. The former No. 65 was renumbered to Skagit River's No. 16.

In 1955 No. 16 and 20 (the former OE coach No. 133) were purchased by the Willamette Valley Electric Railway Association, a Portland-based group that pre-dated the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society. On October 23 that year the two cars, still in Skagit River paint and numbers, were placed at the end of a 12-car excursion train that ran from Portland to Salem and back. It was the last time passengers rode on the Oregon Electric in interurban cars.

Five years later, on October 8th, 1961, the two were photographed in Portland on industrial track near Lake Yard. At some point car 65 had been painted to an approximation of its original color and lettering. The former No. 133 (visible behind it) remained in Skagit River paint.

In 1966 both were acquired by the Vernonia, South Park and Sunset Railroad, a steam-powered tourist line operating out of Banks on the former SP&S Vernonia branch. There, they were reunited with eight former Oregon Electric cars sold in the 1930s to the Pacific Great Eastern in British Columbia. Each were returned to their former Oregon Electric numbers and given a yellow paint scheme similar to that of the Skagit River Railroad's.

The VSP&S folded in 1970 and its cars were sold to the Black Hills Central out of Hill City South Dakota. Today, 110 years after it came off the American Car Company's shop floor, the former Oregon Electric No. 65 still operates there, named the *Edward Gillette*, with its original number. 🚃



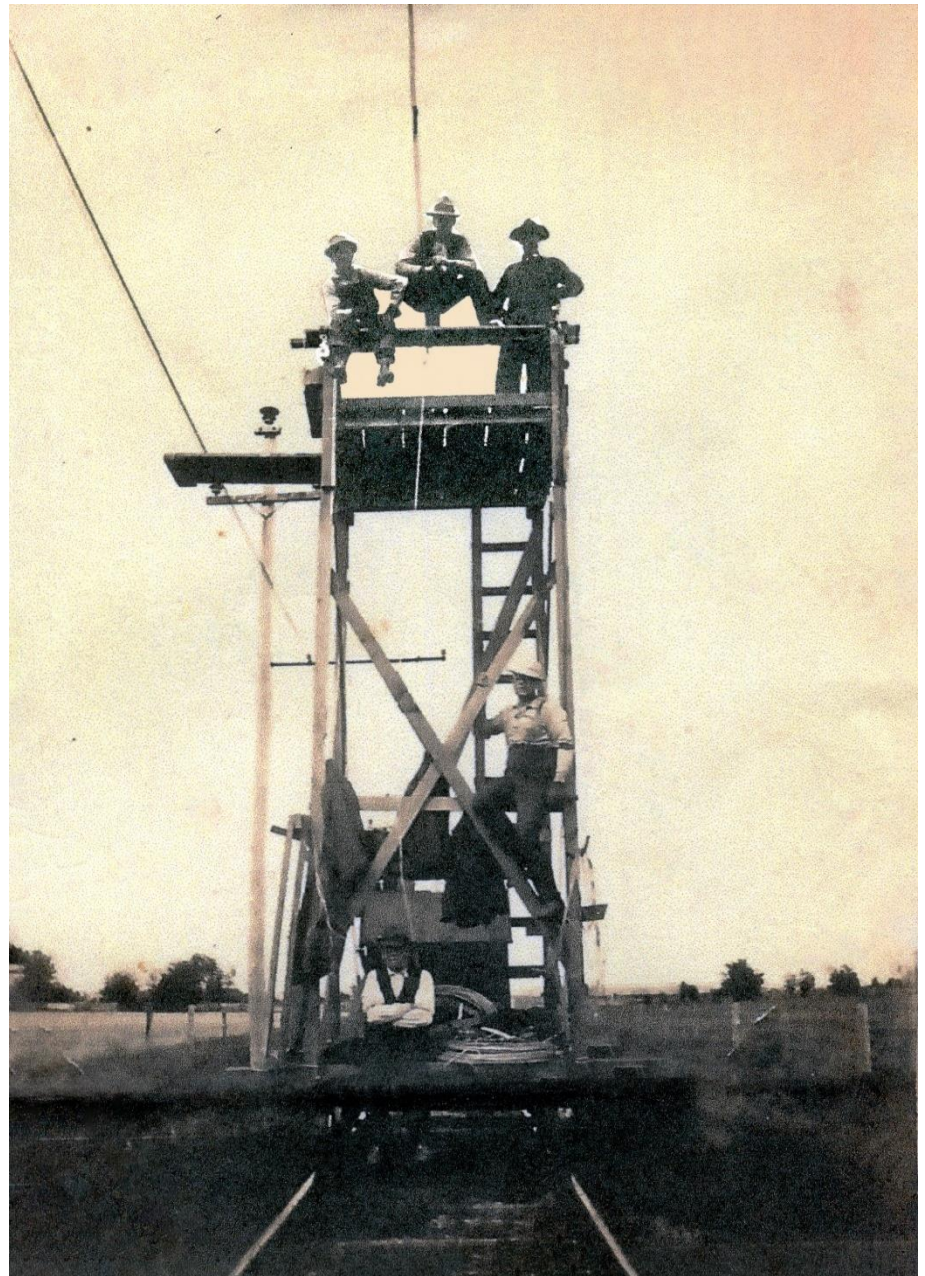
Linemen Were Unsung Heroes

Janice Becker

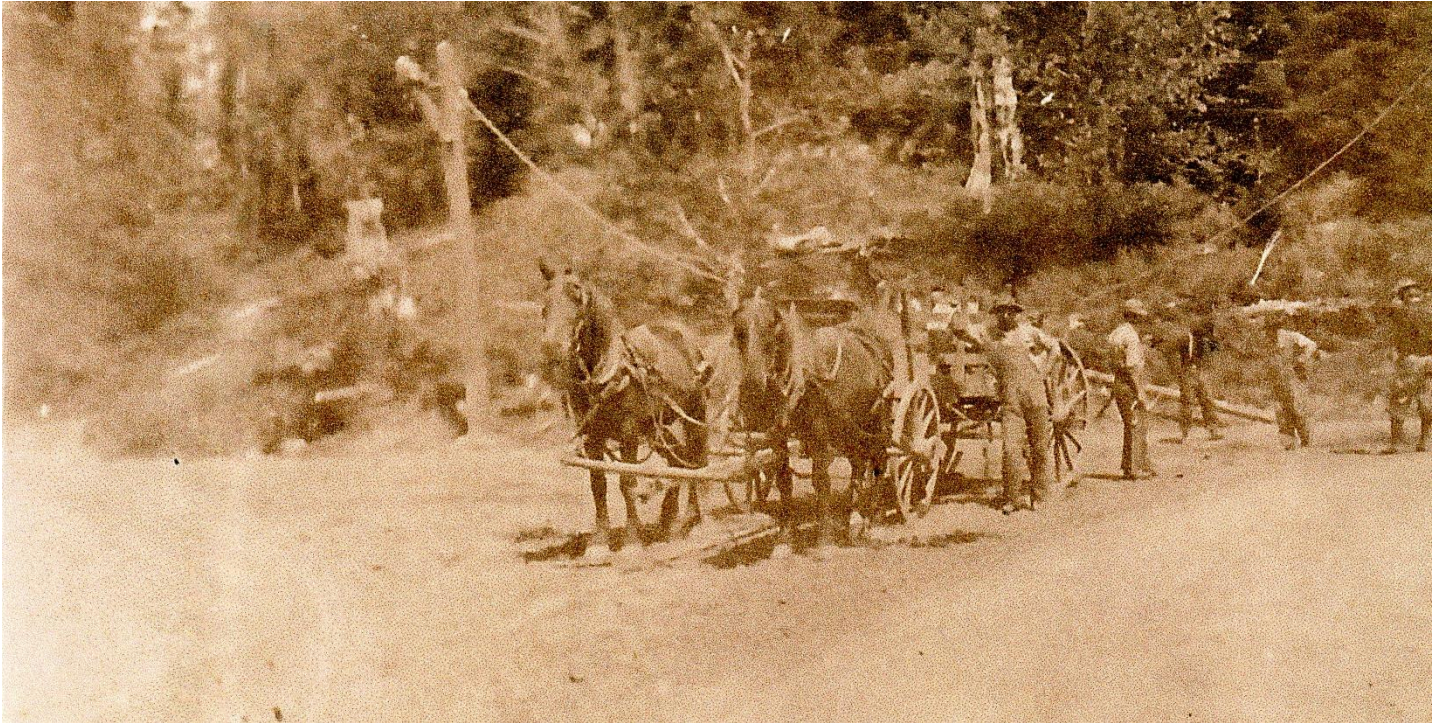
On a visit to your museum years ago I mentioned that I had some old photographs of my grandfather Charles E. Chaney as a lineman. Well, I found them in a box in the garage recently and wanted to share them.

My grandfather was an electrician by trade. He worked for various streetcar companies throughout his entire career. His connection with Oregon came in 1918 when he and his bride moved to Oswego.

These pictures are obviously very old. The smaller ones are postcards. I hope they are of interest to OERHS members. 🚃



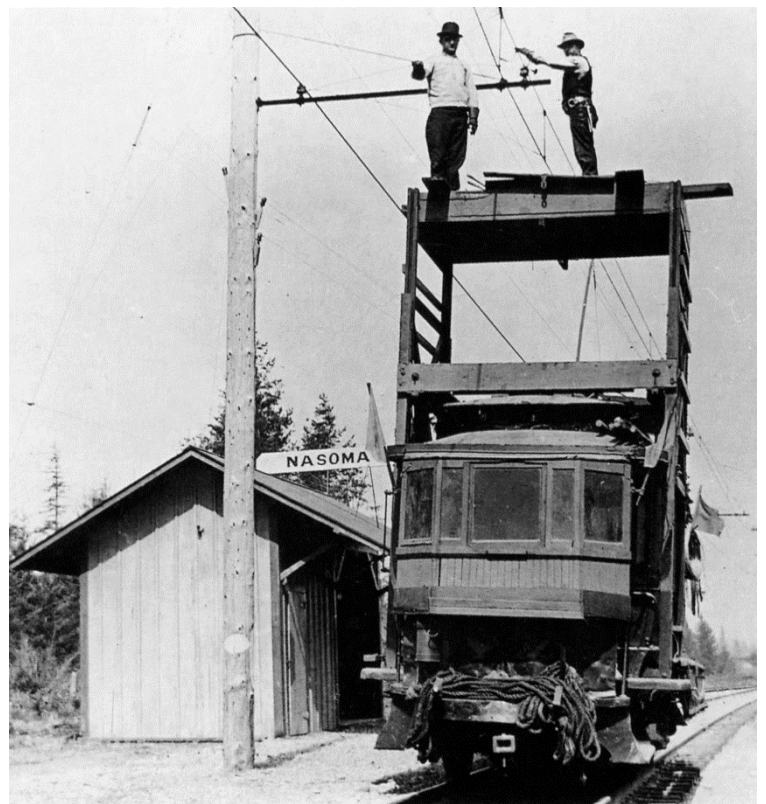
In addition to mechanics, hostlers, carpenters and track workers, railway company maintenance staff included electricians and linemen who sometimes relied on rickety-looking overhead repair cars like the one Charles Chaney is seen on in this family heirloom picture.



At the turn of the 20th century trolley poles along new electric railway lines were often installed by construction crews using horse-drawn equipment. (Janice Becker Collection)



In this view of Charles Chaney and fellow line workers high atop a pole it is easy to see why the job of lineman was considered one of most dangerous professions. Between 1890 and 1930 one in three linemen were killed on the job. (Janice Becker)



An old streetcar has been converted to a line car in this scene of two men working on the catenary at Nasoma station. Nasoma was on the Oregon Electric Railway 15 miles south of Portland between Tualatin and Tonquin. (Walter Grande)



Greg Bonn and new member Rick Lucia testing the repaired high lift at the end of track near the Willow Creek RR. The vehicle in the background is our surplus 25-ton diesel locomotive. The high lift will be put to work transferring overhead wire to new poles. (Joe Tracy photograph)

transferring the overhead wire to the new poles we planted a couple years ago. This will enable us to get the wire tensioned and back up to optimal height and position for operation. The high lift replaces our old ladder truck and bucket truck so crews recently emptied those of

overhead hardware so that they could be sold for scrap or traded for services.

Since it was too cold in the barn over the winter to work on the snow sweeper, Pete Manuele has been diligently leading an effort to clean and organize the woodshop. This not only will make it easier to use, it also has started making space for us to bring out equipment that has been in storage. A large vintage bandsaw, a wood lathe and other pieces are now being installed. As this machinery is placed it is getting cleaned and serviced so that it will be ready when needed.

As always, help is needed to continue and complete all these projects. I encourage everyone to volunteer so that we can accomplish great things at the museum this season! 🏠

Resuming Operation After Covid

John Nagy

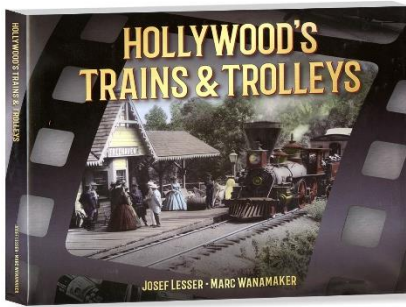
Volunteers have been busy at the museum over the Winter. Susan Jones, Roy Bonn, Greg Bonn, and John Nagy have been sorting boxes and boxes (and boxes and boxes and boxes) of old Society paperwork. As a founding member, Roy's knowledge has been invaluable in understanding some of the documents. There is a lot more to go but good progress has been made.

Suzi and her gift shop team have inventoried the gift shop items at both operations and are exploring new items to offer for sale. The repairs from the fire

sprinkler leak in the museum gift shop are proceeding and are hoped to be complete in the next month or so.

There is a lot of lawn and field at the museum to mow but one of our two lawn mowers is so worn out that putting more money into it is not worth it. So, President Gene Fabryka arranged for the donation of a used mower in good condition as a replacement. It works well and Gene and Vicki Fabryka have been busy using it to mow the grounds to get ready for opening day.

With the help of Scott Johnson of the Willow Creek Railroad (the scale trains that operate at Powerland), a mechanic was found to repair our high lift for just the cost of parts. It is working like a champ now and last weekend volunteers began



Hollywood's Trains & Trolleys

Richard Thompson

Josef Lesser and Marc Wanamaker.
*Los Angeles Railroad Heritage
Foundation, 2019. 216 pp. 220
images. \$30.50. Hardcover.*

When this book appeared prior to the start of Covid pandemic lockdowns it naturally piqued my interest. I was hoping it would include a comprehensive list of Hollywood films containing streetcar or train scenes but I quickly discovered that was not exactly the book's focus.

Hollywood's Trains & Trolleys explains how streetcar lines influenced the location of Hollywood film studios as well as where train and trolley scenes were shot. Early studios and backlots took advantage of existing trolley lines because it saved them money. It was more economical to build sets near available sources of transportation than to haul production crews to distant locales. Convenient local transit was also important to struggling film stars who commuted to studios each day.

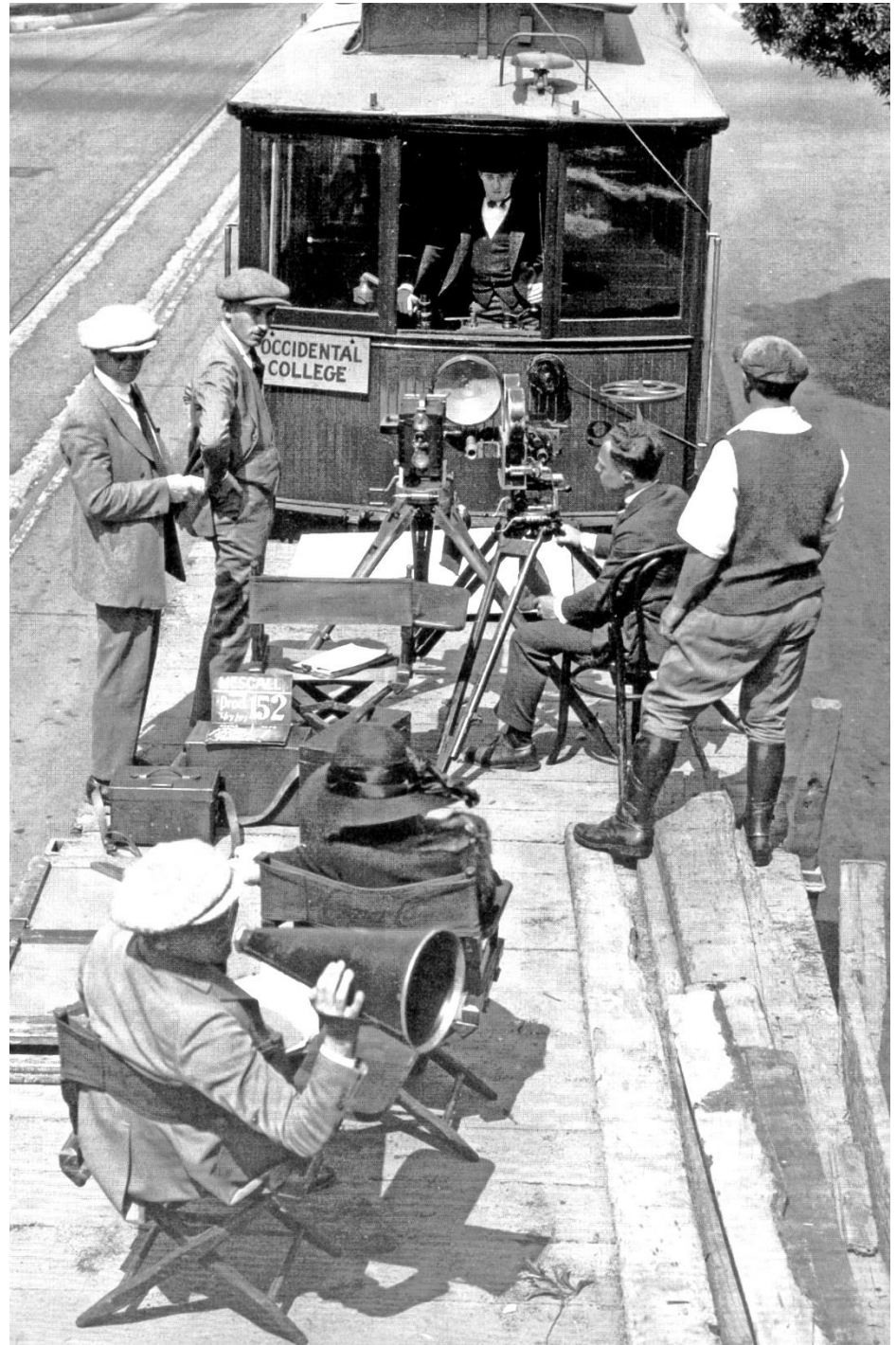
All the motion pictures described in this volume, as well as the train and trolley scenes, were made within a 30-mile radius of Los Angeles. Studio locations are illustrated on a detailed map of greater Los Angeles. The lines of the Pacific Electric Railroad and Los Angeles Railway on this color map are a clear indication of the

important role played by the streetcar in motion picture history.

Subjects covered in the book's nine chapters include the influence of the weather, the Pacific Electric empire, the suitability of surrounding

terrain for westerns, and studio history.

Although not meant as a reference work this book is an enjoyable read and contains many fine photographs on a favorite subject. 🚃



Popular silent movie actor Richard Dix operates a chartered Pacific Electric streetcar while director E. Mason Hopper and crew film from a boxcar in a scene from the Goldwyn Company's 1922 film, "The Glorious Fool." (Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation)

DONATION REQUEST (Tax deductible receipt will be mailed to you)

Remember the OERHS in your Will or Trust. Even a small bequest can help the museum grow!

Did You Know?

Members 70.5 years and older can make tax free donations to the OERHS from their 401(k) that count towards the mandatory percentage 2.5% that they need to take out of their IRA anyway. Consider making a donation today!

Donation Opportunities

| Endowment Fund | <u>Items</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|---|----------------------|--|------------------------|
| | Endowment Fund | <i>Helps create an endowment fund to support operations, staff (future) and general projects</i> | \$ _____ |
| Board Fund | Unrestricted Funds | <i>Allows Board to allocate funds as needed (Projects, events, car acquisition, etc.)</i> | \$ _____ |
| Capital Projects | Phase 1 Yard Project | <i>Build a permanent switch yard (~11k)</i> | \$ _____ |
| | Carbarn #2 | <i>Build the 2nd carbarn (will also be the temporary restoration shop) – (~\$450k)</i> | \$ _____ |
| | Mainline Loop | <i>Complete the loop for multiple car operation and operate single-ended cars. Adding ~ 2000 additional feet will complete the loop. (~\$45k)</i> | \$ _____ |
| | Interpretive Center | <i>Flooring, archives, displays, and exterior landscaping (sidewalks, platforms, etc.)</i> | \$ _____ |
| | Buy A Tie | <i>\$55 buys us a new fir tie to replace worn out ones (we need about 2000 of them so every single tie is a great help)</i> | \$ _____ |
| Restoration Projects | Buy Concrete | <i>~\$120/yd³ for track, curbs, platforms, etc.</i> | \$ _____ |
| | PRL&P #1067 | <i>Help refurbish the running gear we obtained the NWRM to restore this car</i> | \$ _____ |
| | Car Restoration | <i>All our cars need love & care and many are awaiting restoration. Donate to the car fund or specify a car. Some of the projects underway are: 813 (Broadway car), 1159 (PCC), 1455 (snowsweeper) & locos 254 & 401</i> | \$ _____ Car: _____ |
| Specific Items: <i>(Donate items or \$)</i> | Uniform Parts | <i>Hats, pants, vests & jackets for volunteers</i> | \$ _____ |
| Name Your Project | | <i>Do you have an idea you would like to see done? Tell us about it!</i> | \$ _____ |
| TOTAL | | | \$ _____ |

To: OERHS, 3995 Brooklake Rd, Brooks, Oregon 97303

Name _____ Date _____ Cash \$ _____ Check \$ _____

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THANK YOU!