



Reminder to members: Please be sure your dues are up to date. 2013 dues were due Jan 1, 2013. If it has been longer than one year since you renewed, go to our website: [oerhs.org](http://oerhs.org) and download an application by clicking: *Become a Member*

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## Willamette Shore Trolley ....back on track!



Hal Rosene at the controls of 514 on a training run emerging from the Elk Rock Tunnel on the Willamette Shore line.

Wayne Jones photo

After a several-year hiatus, the Willamette Shore Trolley is just about ready to roll. Last minute electrical and mechanical details and regulatory compliance testing are nearing completion. With many stakeholders involved and many technical issues that had to be overcome, it has been a challenge to get the system to the 100% state. Dave Rowe and his team have been working long hours to overcome the obstacles of getting Gomaco built Vintage Trolley #514, its tag-along generator, track work, electrical systems, crew training, safety compliance issues, propulsion, braking, and so many other details to a satisfactory state to begin revenue service.

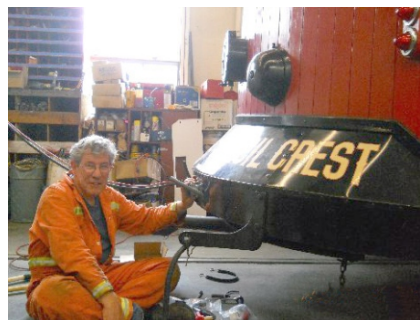
After a successful effort from multiple groups including Lake Oswego, Portland, Clackamas County, Multnomah County, TriMet, Metro and the Oregon Department of Transportation, funds were obtained to cover rolling stock movement, line updates, and operation. Rod Cox, General Manager of WST expects the line to be operational before summer. Vintage Trolley #513 will join its sister 514 later this summer.

Before WST stopped operation in 2010, the line went from Lake Oswego to Portland Riverfront area. Construction on the new Sellwood Bridge has cut the right of way in two segments so initially, operation will be approximately 1.5

See this issue in color on line  
at [oerhs.org/transfer](http://oerhs.org/transfer)

miles from Lake Oswego to Riverwood Crossing with an ultimate plan to extend to Portland.

Also see the article on page 3 on the history of the cars of Vintage Trolley.



Dave Rowe installing wires from Generator to Trolley.

Gage Giest painting the front of Trolley.

The Flume car in background will be our emergency tow vehicle if the Trolley breaks down on the mainline.



Doug Allen removing old stickers from side of Trolley

Chris Arnesen brings the Trolley out of the WST Barn.



## Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society

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### Membership

If you have overlooked paying your dues for 2013 or did not realize that dues are based on a calendar year, this is your reminder that your dues are due. Memberships should be renewed on January 1st each year. New members joining

after July 1st should renew on December 31st of the following year. The OERHS is a non-profit 501-C-3 corporation, the benefits of a donation should be discussed with your tax advisor.

Active	\$ 30	Sustaining	\$ 250
Family	\$ 40	Life	\$ 500
Contributing	\$ 50	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 fulfil 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. Operator of the *Willamette Shore Trolley* line between Lake Oswego and Portland and a demonstration trolley line at the railway museum in Brooks.

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@waynejones.net](mailto:transfer@waynejones.net) or postal mail to the museum address following.

Please send address changes to the museum address following or email to Mark Kavanagh, secretary [subwaymark@gmail.com](mailto:subwaymark@gmail.com)

Please your dues and donations to the Treasurer

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[www.oregonelectricrailway.org](http://www.oregonelectricrailway.org)

### Do you want to be a Motorman?

Volunteers are needed at the museum in Brooks to be trained as Motormen, Conductors, Ticket sellers and Car Barn Tour guides. Saturdays from 10am to 4pm, motorman training on Sydney 1187 and later, other cars. The Museum will again be open to the public in early May 2013 on Saturdays and Sundays. For the weekday projects, contact Bill Binns or Charlie Philpot.

Please come out to the museum and lend a hand. For more information, contact Bob Terkelsen at 503.399.1882.

If you wish to volunteer for the *Willamette Shore Trolley*, call Rod Cox or Hal Rosene at 503.697.7436 for information about the many volunteer positions that may interest you.

## Interpretive Center Update

As hard as we tried to get as much done as possible so we would be able to occupy the new building during Steam Up, there is just too many things to be done to satisfy the county's requirements to grant an occupation permit.

Work has continued on the exterior, painting is nearly completed and the old fashion exterior lights have been installed. The electrical boxes for the lights were mounted too low but not detected until the first fixture was installed and found that once the walkways were to be poured, a tall person would have to duck to avoid a headache.

Charlie Philpot devised a solution that appealed to everyone and the boxes were moved.

Just as progress was being made on the interior trim, our master



carpenter/woodworker, Tom, took a spill and broke his arm, putting him out of action until after Steam Up. A small section of baseboard and wainscot was installed in the office. Materials for the trim have been milled and readied for filling, sanding and priming when manpower again becomes available.

Gene and Vicki Fabryka have been installing the interior doors and frames in the second floor apartment and the remaining interior lights have been wired and hung. Permanent lighting is completed in all but the display area.

Quotes have been received for the flooring materials for both levels, excluding the display area. Plans for the exterior landscaping are being prepared.

Except for the exterior painting, most of the work on the building will be put on hold until Steam Up has passed.

Volunteers should contact Greg Bonn, John Nagy or Charlie Philpot if you are interested in helping with the completion of the building.

*Greg Bonn*

## How we deliver *The Transfer*

The Transfer is delivered both electronically and by postal mail. With the electronic copy, you can see all the pictures in full high-resolution color, a big improvement over the black and white appearance in the printed version.

We have established a web site where you can view and download copies of The Transfer. We have set it up so it is also easy to print on your color or black & white printer if you prefer hard copy.

If you wish, we will send you notification when the next issue is available and a link to the web site where you can view the issue or download and print a copy. Please send an email to: [transfer@waynejones.net](mailto:transfer@waynejones.net) with your name (as shown on the OERHS membership list) and the email address you would like us to send the notification to. Of course, we will respect your privacy and we will only use your email address to send a

single notification that a new The Transfer is ready and a link where you can get it. We will never send promotional material or give or sell your email address to any other person or organization. You can see this issue and the previous issues by going to this web site: [oerhs.org/transfer](http://oerhs.org/transfer).

We also mail black & white copies of the newsletter to all members of record. Not as clear as the color version available at the web site but some members have stated that they prefer physical copies.

The electronic copy that you can get on the web site can be printed in full color (or black and white of course) on your printer at home if you prefer to read The Transfer the traditional way. We are also archiving back issues on the OERHS web site so in the future you will always be able to refer back to previous issues. We believe you will appreciate the higher quality pictures that this process will provide to all the interesting photos that accompany our articles.



# Vintage Trolley: 20 Years of Operation, 40 Years of History

By Richard Thompson

The re-opening of the Willamette Shore Trolley line this summer using a Vintage Trolley car provides an appropriate moment in which to take a retrospective look at Vintage Trolley, Inc. and its predecessors, as well as its relationship with the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society. I was there from the start of operations, having become VT Crew Coordinator Twenty years ago this summer.

Vintage Trolley returned traditionally-styled streetcars to Portland streets at 10 a.m. on November 29, 1991, after a 41 year hiatus. The new trolleys shared tracks with TriMet's Metropolitan Area Express (MAX) yet, since the VT cars had been meticulously patterned after Portland Traction Company's beloved "Council Crest" streetcars, few would confuse them with light rail vehicles.

Vintage Trolley was the brainchild of the late William "Bill" Naito, a prominent Japanese-American business leader who owned several properties in Northwest Portland's historic Old Town, but the idea for a heritage streetcar line that would connect the Old Town historic districts with downtown got started in the mid 1970's, long before Vintage Trolley.

In January, 1976 radio station owner Bill Failing, transportation activist Betty Merten (who helped kill the Mt. Hood Freeway), and the OERHS' own Larry Griffith, formed a non-profit citizen's group known as Willamette Traction Ltd. to help publicize the heritage trolley concept. Their brochure "Let's Get Portland Back on Track" was designed to interest business people in developing a Neighborhood Improvement District that could fund a streetcar line. Bill Naito was a key figure in that effort and he became so enthusiastic that he began searching for old streetcars.

As local government and business figures, including young Oregon state legislator and TriMet planner Rick Gustafson, and Lloyd Center Director Larry Troyer, became involved, the Old Town Streetcar gained official support and grew in scope. A vintage trolley line became part of Portland's Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan and was endorsed by the Old Town/Skidmore and Yamhill Historic District advisory councils. In August 1976 the Portland Bureau of Planning and the Historic Landmarks Commission published an 82-page feasibility study entitled "Old Town/Central Business District Streetcar."

On Dec. 12, 1979 the Old Town Trolley moved one step closer to realization, when the Historic Landmarks Commission officially approved its half of an agreement with TriMet. Their proposal called for a streetcar "shuttle" on NW/SW First Avenue, from the Steel Bridge to a loop on SW Morrison and Yamhill Streets between SW First and Eleventh Avenues. This route would utilize part of the future light rail system, with vintage streetcars sharing TriMet tracks during off peak hours and on weekends. The transit agency remained skeptical.

This bureaucratic lack of support did not slow Bill Naito who, with his brother Sam, had been searching for period streetcars. They planned to put the first one on public display to heighten interest in the heritage trolley idea. Suitable vehicles had proven elusive in the U.S. but, with the help of international trolley broker Paul Class, several likely

candidates were located abroad. OERHS co-founder Class was well-placed, since his company, Gales Creek Enterprises, had provided Portuguese trolleys for Yakima in 1975 and Aspen in 1978, and Australian trolleys for Seattle in 1978-79. Efforts on behalf of Bill Naito were well under way when an arson fire set things back.



*Single truck tram #30 from Ballarat, Australia in Waterfront Park at a commemorative ceremony on May 12, 1980. Bill Naito can be seen in the far left corner.*

On May 12, 1980 Bill Naito introduced Portlanders to his first trolley. No. 30, a 1917 single truck tram (as streetcars are known throughout much of the world) from Ballarat, Australia, was put on display in Waterfront Park. It was during Historic Preservation Week, and this writer joined Portland Mayor Connie McCreedy in commemorating the event. After Preservation Week the tram was moved into a fenced alley adjacent to a Naito-owned building between NW Couch and Davis streets in Old Town. A year later, on October 6, 1981, No. 30 was destroyed in a fire started by a homeless man. Newspapers reported that Bill and Sam, while disappointed by the loss, had additional trolleys en route from Portugal. It is interesting to note that, after the Trolley Park was sold in 1995, Paul Class moved the Ballarat car remains (mainly trucks) to his new home in Willits, California, where he began rebuilding it to its original appearance as Melbourne No. 183. Current plans are to use No. 183 on the planned Petaluma Trolley in California.

The Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society first became involved with Bill Naito in 1980, when he was looking for a place to restore streetcars. A joint arrangement was worked out with the OERHS and Gales Creek Enterprises, and in July, 1981 the first of six Naito cars (No.'s 114, 122, 166, 178, 181 and 189) from Porto, Portugal arrived at the Trolley Park in Glenwood, Oregon. That fall Bill donated money for the construction of a new car barn at the Park in which to store his cars.

It is a bit off topic, but I want to mention that three Australian trams, Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board cars 482, 512 and 518 came through the Trolley Park in 1978 and 1979, on their way to the Seattle Waterfront Streetcar. I was one of the OERHS volunteers who got a

## Vintage Trolley: 20 Years of Operation, 40 Years of History *continued*



122 Oporto and 1220 Muni at first San Francisco Trolley Festival summer 1983

Doug Richter photo

chance at the controls when these cars were tested on the Park tracks and I certainly miss seeing them on visits to Seattle. Vintage Trolley's kindred heritage trolley line, the Seattle Waterfront Streetcar, ceased in 2005, one year after the death of founder George Benson.

Bill Naito's Porto trolleys No. 122 and 189 made history when they accompanied Council Crest car 503 to the 1983 San Francisco Trolley Festival. That first festival demonstrated the viability of heritage street railways and helped start one of the best known, Market Street Railway's F-Line. The success of that venture obviously made an impact on Naito as he planned Vintage Trolley.



189 Porto tram at San Francisco Trolley Festival 1983

Doug Richter photo

During the 1984 operating season Bill agreed to the use of restored Porto streetcars for revenue service at the Trolley Park (these cars were referred to as having come from "Oporto," a common English misinterpretation of "o Porto," which means "the port" in Portuguese). Plans for one of them to become part of the OERHS collection were not realized, (tram No. 210 came from another source in 2006), but the Society did acquire another car that Bill Naito had stored in Portland for many years. Sam Naito kindly donated Hong Kong Tramways No. 12 to the OERHS after his brother's untimely death of cancer on May 8, 1996.



June 1985, Porto car No. 178 on display on the MAX tracks then under construction alongside the Galleria Mall in downtown Portland.

KPTV News photo

In June 1985, Porto car No. 178 finally went on display on the MAX tracks then under construction alongside the Galleria Mall in downtown Portland (a building owned by the Naito family). The Portuguese cars seemed natural choices for use here since they had been built to a Brill design reminiscent of the Council Crest cars. Bill and Sam Naito launched a fund-raising effort to modify them so they could operate over the new light rail system. Yet, opposition from TriMet and Bechtel engineers, who cited incompatibilities including gauge and operating voltage (600 volt DC), would result in the Porto cars being dropped from the vintage trolley plan. By the end of 1992 the last of them had left the Trolley Park. They were moved to one of the historic blimp hangars in Tillamook, where Gales Creek Enterprises continued restoration work for new buyers.

Bill Naito did not abandon his vision. Holding the long view of things, he patiently modified his scheme to accommodate changing conditions, including new streetcars and a longer route. The revamped plan gained TriMet support in time to be included in the planning for the Banfield Light Rail Project, as the Metropolitan Area Express, or MAX, was known at first. Always lukewarm to the heritage rail scheme, TriMet may have decided its cooperation would help procure a route through Portland's historic districts.

Vintage Trolley was organized in 1987 as a nonprofit corporation to manage the heritage streetcar operation. Bill Naito, who played a vital role in obtaining support from major businesses along the route, was named President. Eighty percent of the original funding for Vintage Trolley, including the streetcars, a car barn under the I-5 freeway near the Oregon Convention Center, and a spur track and station on NE 11th Avenue at Lloyd Center, came from an Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA) grant. However, money for actual operation was provided by local improvement district taxes, interest from a trust fund, \$1.00 fares (until VT went fareless in 1995) and sponsorship from businesses along the line. US Bank, Zell Brothers Jewelers, Portland General Electric, and Lloyd Center pledged \$100,000 apiece for the right to advertise on a trolley. Eight other businesses paid \$30,000 each to have stations named for them. VT employees attended "Trolley University" sessions to learn how to work sponsor



## Vintage Trolley: 20 Years of Operation, 40 Years of History *continued*

promotions into the historical narratives they delivered aboard the cars. In addition to the station sponsors VT was actively involved in enterprises like Saturday Market and Art Quake.



*The first three Vintage Trolleys under construction at Gomaco factory in Ida Grove Iowa in 1991.*

Gomaco photo

Vintage Trolley replaced the historic Portuguese cars with replica streetcars. Bidding in 1989 for the initial three cars (another was added later) was won by the Godbersen Manufacturing Company (GOMACO) of Ida Grove, Iowa, also known as the Gomaco Trolley Company. GOMACO had won acclaim in 1982 for building two classic open streetcars for the Lowell Historical National Park in Massachusetts. Cost for the VT cars, before final engineering modifications, was \$421,250 each.

The Vintage Trolley cars were patterned after surviving Council Crest cars 503 and 506 at the Trolley Park, including rattan walk-over seating, carved wood molding, and a Brill semi-convertible style body sporting omnibus sides and a clerestory roof. Modern details such as steel underframes, automatic train stop, electronic vehicle tagging (V-Tag) and Cineston controllers, were hidden beneath the classic 1904 design. Unlike the original cars, the GOMACO reproductions used PCC trucks from Boston and Chicago (with motors rewound for 750 volts) and European-style bow trolley collectors. They were numbered 511-514, a continuation of the Council Crest series 501-510.

A dedication ceremony was held on June 26, 1991, as construction of the Vintage Trolley Car barn, stations, and spur track, neared completion. OERHS Council Crest car No. 503 stood in for the replica trolleys, which had not yet arrived. No. 511 came on August 16, 1991, No. 514 on November 5, and cars 513 and 512 followed on January 24 and April 30, 1992. OERHS volunteers had spruced No. 503 up for the occasion inside the empty VT Car barn. It was towed up to the new Lloyd Center Red Lion Station for the event, which was attended by dignitaries from VT, TriMet, Lloyd Center, and the city and federal governments. Sadly, no one attended the removal of this same station last year after it ceased to be a terminus. But, that's getting ahead of the story.

Vintage Trolley first approached the OERHS about providing crew members for their new line in February 1991, when Manager Rick Gustafson, and board member Bill Failing, spoke at an annual meeting. They suggested that, if Vintage Trolley was a success, streetcar extensions might be



*Council Crest 503 at dedication of VT Line June 26 1991*

Richard Thompson photo

added in Northwest Portland, Riverplace and the East Side.

As a matter of fact, planning for more non-MAX operations had already begun. In May, 1990 Bill Naito and City Commissioner (now U.S. Representative) Earl Blumenauer had created the Central City Trolley Advisory Committee. Their proposal, "Central City Trolley, Portland's Streetcar Renaissance," was published by the City of Portland in January, 1992. It recommended streetcars that would "replicate those that once operated in Portland," and suggested the Portland Department of Transportation contract with Vintage Trolley for project management and operations planning.

The Central City Trolley morphed into Portland Streetcar, which started running in 2001. Streetcars from Vintage Trolley did, in fact, operate over the new line for a few years, and Rick Gustafson was named Portland Streetcar Executive Director. But, the Portland Streetcar story is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that Bill Naito and Vintage Trolley were instrumental in its creation.

Since VT cars shared tracks with MAX, union regulations stipulated that they have TriMet operators. Additional crews on the two-man streetcars were provided by VT. These employees, referred to as "hosts" by TriMet, fulfilled the duties of what is traditionally called a conductor.



*Car 512 was last trolley to arrive at VT Car barn towed in by Unimog at 5 am May 1 1992*

Richard Thompson photo



## Vintage Trolley: 20 Years of Operation, 40 Years of History *continued*



Car 514 passing Central Library January 1992

Richard Thompson photo

Hosts open and close doors and windows, reverse seats at the end of a line, assist with boarding and deboarding, announce stations, and comment on historic points of interest. At first they also collected fares.

Vintage Trolley began with 14 hosts recruited from the ranks of the OERHS, the Amalgamated Transit Union's retiree group, and the Train Collectors Association. Five of them, John Carmony, Chuck Hayden, Al Nelson, Everett Phipps, and Gene Watson were veteran motormen. The first three were also very active OERHS members. They brought a real sense of history to VT. For example, Al Nelson remembered being stuck all night on a Portland Traction Company streetcar during a World War II snowstorm, and Gene Watson recalled the rerouting of trolleys during the 1948 Vanport Flood. Hayden, Nelson and Watson were featured in a 1992 AARP Magazine article called "A Desire Named Streetcar." I think that is a desire most readers share.

During the peak years, the VT crew roster grew to 33. Vintage Trolley provided them with period uniforms and a



Car 514 with Gene Watson, Al Nelson and Chuck Hayden posing for AARP in 1992

Richard Thompson photo



Car 514 with Gene Watson at Red Lion Station in early 1990s  
Richard Thompson photo

salary of \$6.00/hour (increased over the years), payable either by pay check or donation to a chosen nonprofit. The largest OERHS contributor was, and still is, Bill Binns. Other important OERHS participants included past president George Combs, who was remembered with a plaque on a VT trolley when he died in 1992, and trolley enthusiast Larry "Doc" Griffith, who the VT carbarn was dedicated to.

Vintage Trolley hosts attended regular sign up meetings, during which they bid for five hour shifts. In later years, as operation increased, shifts of up to eight hours were assigned. At the start these meetings were held in the Red Lion Hotel at Lloyd Center (now DoubleTree), where Vintage Trolley-labeled wine was occasionally served along with other refreshments. More recently, sign-ups were held in the Portland Streetcar Carbarn.

A grant from the Meier and Frank department store provided for free daily operation in 1991, after which the trolleys ran on weekends and holidays, except during December 1992 and 1993, when daily service was offered to facilitate holiday shopping. Throughout its history VT shut down during January and February. From 1994 through 1999 Vintage Trolley offered daily service from May through December and weekend service in March and April. Beginning in 2000, by which time TriMet was running two MAX lines, VT operation was reduced to Sundays only. Then, in 2011, it was drastically cut to just seven days a year, the bare minimum required by the original UMTA grant.

Vintage Trolley routes also changed over the years. From 1991 through 2009 two Vintage trolleys at a time served a 2.3 mile line, from downtown to Lloyd Center. In mid-2001 an additional, single trolley, weekend service was added on the new Portland Streetcar, running from Northwest Portland to Portland State University. VT operation on that route was dropped in 2005 after the Riverplace extension opened. Portland Streetcar was concerned with potential braking problems associated with running the vintage cars down the hill on SW Harrison Street (a slightly steeper grade than on the Steel Bridge ramps). "Short lining" VT cars with a turn back at Portland State was not seen as practical. So, between November 2005 and mid-2009 VT reverted to its original Downtown/Lloyd Center route, although with a single trolley



## Vintage Trolley: 20 Years of Operation, 40 Years of History *continued*



*Car 511 passing Pioneer Court House on SW Morrison dressed for Christmas service in a snow in 1995.*

Jack Goetz photo

this time. On December 13, 2009 Vintage Trolley's Lloyd Center Line was replaced by an entirely different 1.5 mile route on the Portland Transit Mall. The former Red Lion station on NE 11th Avenue was quietly removed by TriMet. Throughout the 1990's Vintage trolleys were also available for private charter, a practice later discouraged by TriMet.

What had begun as an Old Town trolley had evolved into a longer line traversing Portland's historic districts, as it ran from downtown to the Lloyd Center. It would attract shoppers, who were increasingly abandoning the city for suburban shopping malls, but Bill Naito's dream was grand as well as practical; he wanted the long-delayed Vintage Trolley to become a tourist attraction similar to San Francisco's cable cars or F-Line.

Indeed, VT seemed to be headed in that direction during the 1990's. A support group known as the Friends of Vintage Trolley was organized and ridership continued to climb. Ridership, which averaged 546 daily riders during the first year, reached nearly 1,300 a day in 1997, with a peak of 37,548 during August of that year. In contrast, service reductions have resulted in ridership levels dropping to one-tenth of that in recent years.

In 2000 financial considerations resulted in a plan to split

the Vintage Trolley fleet in half. Under the terms of the original UMTA grant TriMet owned the Vintage Trolley streetcars, while VT paid for their operation and maintenance. When VT's dwindling trust fund made this increasingly more difficult a program was worked out whereby TriMet would cover operational costs for cars 511 and 512, while title to 513 and 514 would be transferred to Vintage Trolley, Inc. for operation on non-MAX tracks.

So, in 2001 No.'s 511 and 512 remained in the VT Car barn and continued to serve the traditional Lloyd Center run, and No.'s 513 and 514 were sent to the yard south of the new Portland Streetcar Car barn for use on the new Portland Streetcar line. After VT operation on the Portland Streetcar ceased in 2005 the cars languished in that yard beneath the I-405 freeway for several years.

Today all four VT trolleys remain in the Portland area, where they continue to be available for heritage operations, yet two nearly left the state in 2006 when TriMet proposed to sell them for use on Sacramento's Riverfront Streetcar. Fortunately, through the efforts of Rick Gustafson, Sam Adams (then with the Portland Office of Transportation), and others, they were recognized as an irreplaceable historic resource and retained.

Last year Vintage Trolley offered its cars to Portland Streetcar for temporary service on the Central Loop Line, which was facing a shortage of rolling stock due to delays in the delivery of streetcars from United Streetcar in Clackamas, Oregon. As it turned out, schedule changes (with increased headways) were implemented instead. Worries about braking on the flyover at OMSI Station plagued the GOMACO cars, as they had earlier on SW Harrison Street. The lack of wheel chair access on the Vintage Trolleys was also considered, although a compromise could have been worked out for temporary use. At any rate, the VT cars continue to operate for just seven or eight days a year.

This summer No. 514 will begin a new career on the Willamette Shore Trolley, where it will be enjoyed by more members of the riding public than its sisters will on the Portland Transit Mall. Car 513 will also be available when needed. Of one thing I am certain; these "faux vintage streetcars" now wear the patina of history.



*Car 514 Vintage Trolley at Red Lion Lloyd Ctr Station early 1992*

Richard Thompson photo



*Car 511 leaving VT Car barn with the late Bill Wegesend at the helm early 1992*

Richard Thompson photo



## Pacific Northwest Transit Updates *By Roy Bonn*

### Seattle Transit Updates



Car #518 of the Seattle Waterfront Streetcar at the Jackson St. terminus across from Union St.

Dick Harrison photo

### Seattle Waterfront Streetcar line

Will the Waterfront Streetcar line ever be returned to service? That question is being asked by many people but no one has an answer.

Seattle lost the last of its original streetcar lines on April 12, 1941 and were replaced by electric trolley coaches. Seattle had purchased the streetcar lines from Puget Sound Traction in 1919, one of the first municipal owned systems in the US, and was operated at a loss until 1940. The system became so run-down that the federal government paid off their debt and financed the modernization which an outside consultant recommended the change to trolley coaches and buses, Seattle City Light had power dams on the Skagit River that provided electric power to the city. Trolley coaches were selected as the city would be furnishing their own power. It was a logical move in that the trolley coaches would cost less to operate and the routes would be covered much faster than gas buses.

George Benson, a long time city councilman and a rail fan, visited Melbourne and loved the streetcars. He purchased one for \$5,000 and after returning home persuaded the city to start a waterfront streetcar line. The BN had a former NP double track line along the Alaskan Way that once served the docks and one track was no longer needed. A deal was made for the western most track which was then electrified across from the Washington State Ferry Terminal to Broad Street, a distance of 1.6 miles. The line began operation on May 29, 1982 and was called "Benson's Folly". It was a hit with tourists but had low ridership during the winter months. A 0.4 mile extension was opened on June 23, 1990 built east from Alaskan Way on Main St. south on 5th Ave. to a terminus at Jackson St., across the street from Union Station.

Operation of the Waterfront Streetcar was suspended on November 18, 2005 replaced by a specially painted bus.



Waterfront Streetcar car barn and maintenance facility

Dick Harrison photo

Ridership dropped dramatically so the bus was changed to 1st Ave and repainted to the regular paint colors. The car barn was torn down and the tracks removed from Vine to Broad St and a section where tunnel construction is now starting. The 5 Melbourne cars #482, 512, 518, 272 and 605 were stored in a warehouse in the SoDo district. The Seattle Art Museum Sculpture Park was built from the site of the Broad St. station north requiring the removal of the barn and tracks. Since then several of the car stop loading areas have been removed.

So, what is happening now? The Seattle central waterfront is in the beginning stages of a complete rebuilding of the infrastructure that could take up to a decade to complete. Construction of the State Route 99 tunnel to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct is underway and is scheduled to open in 2018. The viaduct will then be razed to clear the way for construction of new pedestrian promenades. Work on rebuilding of the seawall is underway starting with infrastructure replacement. The actual construction to rebuild the seawall is scheduled to begin in September. A new Washington State Ferry Terminal will be built to replace the present terminal. The preliminary design of the Waterfront Development Project

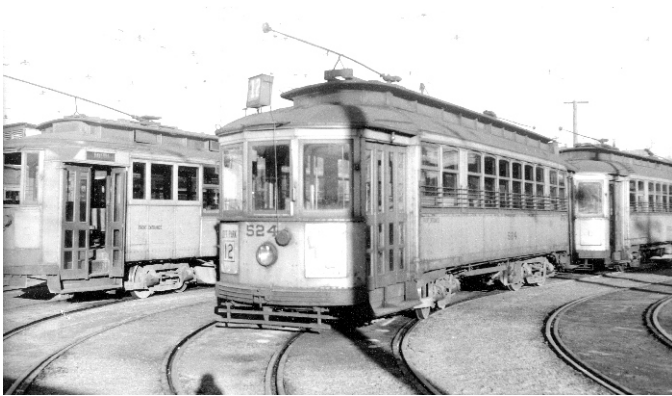


Waterfront streetcars posing on South Main Street.

Dick Harrison photo



## Pacific Northwest Transit Updates *continued*



Seattle. St. Louis built double-ender streetcar that ran around 1908 until ending in 1941.

Dick Harrison collection



Trolley coaches that would replace streetcars in 1950s at the old streetcar barns

Dick Harrison collection

was presented to the city council in July 2012 but did not include the “George Benson” streetcar line. Earlier this year the city commissioned a study to see if the streetcar line could be included. The cost of re-establishing the line ranges from \$10.3 to \$12.7 million depending upon relaying the line north to the sculpture park and extending the line to serve CenturyLink and Safeco Fields.

While Seattle has mixed feelings about operating antique streetcars, several cities have shown an interest in purchasing the cars required for their proposed plans but so far they remain in storage.

Compare the San Francisco waterfront back when the elevated Embarcadero existed and how it has been transformed after it was removed after the earthquake. The waterfront is a big tourist attraction with its antique streetcars, and likewise, when the Alaskan Way Viaduct is removed and the rebuilding of the waterfront is complete, I believe that the entire area east to 1st Ave. will undergo a surge of construction that will revitalize the entire area that will attract thousands of tourists.. A streetcar line is an essential part of the attraction.



Waterfront streetcar on South Main St with high-level platform loading.

Dick Harrison photo

### First Hill Streetcar

The beginning week of June found construction in various stages along the line. Track work on Broadway Av., on Yesler Way through 14th Av. and the maintenance and lead line on S.8th to Dearborn has been completed. Work is underway on the maintenance facility located on the south side of Dearborn between S. 7th & 8th Av.

Track work on E. Jackson St. from 5th to 14th is underway and is scheduled for completion in May 2014. Track work from Occidental to 5th Av. on Jackson should be finished in September, 2013. Overhead utilities are underway along various sections of the streetcar line.

The Broadway Streetcar Extension from Denny Way north to either E. Aloha St. or E. Prospect St. is undergoing the Environmental Review and Design & Engineering process. Construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2015 with operations scheduled for mid-2016.

Seattle Mayor Michael McGinn announced recently that the city should build a downtown connector streetcar line between the South Lake Union Streetcar line and the First Hill line on Jackson St. He proposes two options, build south from Westlake Center to First Av. then south to Jackson.

The second option would be south on Fifth Av. and north on Fourth Ave. The preferred alternative will be announced in November.

Six streetcars for the First Hill streetcar line have been ordered and one new streetcar for the South Lake Union Streetcar line. These cars are being assembled in Seattle and deliveries will begin in 2014. Amazon is funding the purchase of the new South Lake Union streetcar. Amazon has thousands of employees in the South Lake Union area served by the streetcar.



## Pacific Northwest Transit Updates *continued*

### Portland Transit Update

#### MAX

Construction of the Milwaukie extension is making great changes in the landscape along its route. A new bridge, several overpasses and several businesses have relocated to new and larger facilities. Siemens is constructing new LRV's at its plant in Sacramento which after delivery will bring the fleet to 145 cars.



*Looking South from Bybee Blvd overpass toward Milwaukie. Note Tacoma St overpass in center of photo. Also, notice rail stacked in center of photo and concrete ties stacked to the right.*

Louis Bowerman photo.

Siemens is installing the first regenerative energy storage unit in the U.S. which feeds power back into the system during braking.

An interesting historical note, the Milwaukee Railroad used a similar version on their electric locomotives in the electrified division of the railroad. Milwaukee Railroad would schedule their trains so when one was descending the mountains, another was ascending so in effect, one train helped to power the other train. There was quite a saving in power costs.

#### *Some stats about the Milwaukie line:*

7.3 miles, 10 stations starting in S.W. Portland near Portland State University, crossing the Willamette River just south of OMSI, going under McLoughlin Blvd then heading South parallel to the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way and McLoughlin Blvd. through downtown Milwaukie OR to city limits at SE Park Ave.

The new line opens in September 2015 and extends the MAX system to 60 miles and 97 stations.



*Looking North toward Portland from Bybee overpass.*

Louis Bowerman photo.



*Twin towers of Milwaukie MAX line take shape near OMSI in Willamette River in S.E. Portland. The first of its kind, is this multi-mode bridge over the Willamette River that will carry busses, bikes, light rail, pedestrians and a future Portland streetcar extension. Cars will not be able to use this bridge.*

Louis Bowerman photo



## Spotlight on Members: Charlie Philpot

*We spotlight an individual OERHS member in each issue of The Transfer, with a focus on their memory of Oregon Electric and Portland transit.*



*Charlie takes a break during the Great Oregon Steam Up.*

Charlie Philpot was born and raised in California. Like many of his generation, hearing steam locomotive whistles from his bedroom—especially at night—evoked visions of travel or escape to far-away places. Actually, he grew up interested in all things mechanical and electrical. This led to building models of all types: crystal sets, radios, and things with motors. When he was only 14, he replaced the freeze-out plug behind the flywheel on the family's '41 Chevy. And that was without a manual or advice from others.

His other strong interests were gardening and landscaping. Combining these activities with an attraction to both the physical and biological sciences led to bachelors and masters degrees in Forest Management and Forest Science.

He spent the first 20 years of his professional career as a fire scientist at two national forest fire laboratories in California and Montana. Specializing in studying the factors that influence how forests burn led to a PhD in Plant Chemistry. He eventually became the Research and Development Director for the Forest Service overseeing programs on all aspects of natural resources. He moved to Portland in 1988 and retired in 1995.

Within a few months of retiring, he responded to a magazine ad seeking volunteers for the Oregon Electric



*At the grand opening of the "911" museum shop.*

Railway Historical Society. He contacted Bill Binns and that began his OERHS career. He started out two evenings a week helping to restore Car 813, the 1932 Brill Master unit. This quickly became a full time activity and the car was placed in service on the Willamette Shore Trolley about a year later.

Charlie then got involved in moving the trolley museum to Powerland. After being elected to the OEHRHS board, he secured a loan for the new car barn and was able to get a grant to complete Phase I of the OEHRHS Museum. He was also able to get a shop facility funded and constructed. Other activities he worked on included installing underground utilities, building roads, landscaping, and adding sprinkler systems.



*Next to car 813 which had just been placed in service on the Willamette Shore Trolley*



## Charlie Philpot, *continued*

Charlie has volunteered basically full-time or more at Powerland since 1996. His time is now divided between OERHS business, including as project leader for the new Interpretive Center, and duties as president of Antique Powerland Museum Association. Since he believes the partner museums at Powerland cannot be sustainable as completely independent entities, he considers his work for APMA—indeed everyone's work for APMA—as critical to the future of OERHS.

Charlie also continues to work on Willamette Shore Trolley management and issues. The WST has consumed many hours over the past three years as OERHS converts to operators and tries to get back in business after the failure of 813 (which is now back in the museum).

What does the future of OERHS look like? Charlie hopes to see the loop, restoration shop building and welcoming center with the ticket counter completed. He wants to see the WST back into full operation along the complete right-of-way. Charlie says he has always been impressed by the amount of work accomplished by the relatively small number of OERHS volunteers. They have been highly skilled and committed to working hard. "A bunch of really nice people." Still, he believes there is much more work to do and hopes there will be a significant addition of volunteers willing and able to fill the growing void in OERHS management, fund raising, operations, and maintenance.

"I have really enjoyed working for OERHS these past 16 years," he says. "There's a lot of fun stuff still to do so I don't plan on quitting any time soon!"



Charlie at Prineville Rail Road

## Line Department Installs New Poles on West Side

In order for the new storm water retention pond to be constructed along the western property line at Powerland, eight of the overhead support poles had to be removed from the west side of the railway line and replaced with new poles on the east side of the track. The hole boring was contracted out as our auger truck has not yet arrived on the property but eight perfectly placed holes were quickly filled with five thirty-five foot poles and two thirty foot poles from stock, with the final pole being salvaged from the eight being removed. The first two days were spent dropping the new poles in the holes, setting the proper angle and filling the remaining space with gravel and dirt, this being accomplished by Bob Terkelsen, Bob Franklin, Ron Vandehey and myself. The final two very hot days, John Nagy and I were transferring the support hardware and trolley wire from the old poles to the new poles and finally the removal of the old poles from the construction area, while the trolley was operating, shutting down the power for a short time between runs. Special thanks to Bill Binns and Rich Neva for not allowing any electrocutions.

Unfortunately for the occupants of a few of the old poles, they will have to find housing elsewhere



Greg Bonn and Ron Vandehey setting new poles on the west side. Bob Franklin and Bob Terkelsen not in the picture also involved in the project.



## OERHS Special Request to Our Members

# *Help Bring a Piece of Italy to Oregon!*



Today many railroad museums are working together to help each other succeed. In the spirit of this cooperation, the OERHS is finalizing an agreement with Issaquah Valley Trolley (IVT) to give them our spare generator and cart in exchange for their 1931 ex-Milan interurban trolley #96. This generator is too small for our needs and the Milan car is too big for their operation so both organizations benefit from the trade. The car needs restoration but is complete and the running gear is in good order. While the current Oregon Electric Railway Museum collection is fairly representative of the history of streetcars, this car could help fill one of the gaps in the interurban collection. In addition, since this is a steel-bodied, standard gauge car with 33" wheels it will work well at our operation.

The bid to move the car from Issaquah, Washington to the Oregon Electric Railway Museum at Brooks is approximately \$4,500. While this is a great opportunity to add an interurban car to our collection, it is an unexpected expense. To that end we are asking your help to defray the cost of transporting this historic car. Should funds be received that exceed the transportation cost, the remainder will be put into the Car Restoration Fund.

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**Yes, I would like to donate OERHS Milan Car Project. (Donations to the OERHS are tax-deductible)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a gift on behalf of someone? If so, please list their name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount   \$50\_\_\_\_   \$100\_\_\_\_   \$150\_\_\_\_   \$200\_\_\_\_   \$250\_\_\_\_   Other\_\_\_\_\_

Payment can be made by check or cash.

Please make checks payable to **OERHS** and list **Milan Car** in the comment line.

OERHS -Milan Car Project  
3995 Brooklake Rd NE  
Brooks, OR 97303-9732