

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAILROAD ARCHIVE

## NORTHWEST NEWS

This quarterly progress report is published to summarize the activities at the Archive for the *Friends of PNRA*. This edition covers Quarter 4 of 2015.

### Facility Improvements

Since mid-2011, we have been reporting on the work done to convert our 7,500 sq-ft. building into a *World-Class Railroad Archive*. This quarter, we happily completed a major milestone in that effort when we completed the inspections and the city of Burien issued our occupancy permit at the end of December 2015. This marked the end of a concerted effort in 2015 to complete the improvements to the Archive building listed in our permit first issued at the start of 2011. The facility passed city all the inspections without a hitch.

To reach this important milestone, we completed the following projects this last quarter:

- A contract crew insulated the ceiling of the lower floor's west side, hung drywall on the ceiling and taped all the joints; finished the ceiling of the Receiving area; and covered the five framed steel-support poles throughout the building.
- The new ceiling was painted and new light fixtures installed on the west side of the lower floor to improve lighting and our ability to read items when working in the mobile-shelving areas.
- Two additional steel handrails were added to the stairs to the lower floor. They were custom fabricated by Don Larson and Rod Olson to meet the requirements on the narrow stairs.
- Bob Kelly installed wood handrails on the stairs to the upper floor.
- The required Exit signs and emergency lighting were installed on each floor along with tactile Exit signs.

There are more building improvements planned to finish the Archive, but they were not part of the occupancy permit requirements. These projects include: applying drywall to the upper floor; installing climate control to each floor; adding a dumb-waiter between the main and lower floors; install additional mobile shelving on lower floor;



*Steel handrails were fabricated and installed on all three walls of the stairs to the lower floor. Also note the lighted and tactile exit signs at the bottom of the stairs.*

and add the fire-suppression system.

### Community Outreach

PNRA recruited new volunteers from a table at the annual swap meet at Kent Commons on November 14, 2015, sponsored by the Boeing Employees Model Railroad Club, a member-organization of PNRA. We spoke with many attendees and recruited some to join our work crews. In the first quarter of 2016 we plan to attend the SP&SRHS Swap Meet in Portland and the annual railroad show in Monroe, Washington.

### PNRA Board

Two directors retired from PNRA's Board at the Annual Membership Meeting in November. The entire PNRA community thanks them for their valued service and help in making PNRA a success!

- Ed Sherry has represented the NPRHA on the Board since the building was purchased in 2010. Ed was instrumental in helping the Boeing Employees Model Railroad Club become a founding-organizational member of PNRA. He also edits the NPRHA's *Mainstreeter* magazine.



*A view of the finished ceiling in the west-bay of the lower floor, the new lighting and the painted concrete floor.*

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- Brian Kaehler became PNRA's treasurer in 2010 and has served the Archive faithfully throughout the subsequent years. Through Brian's efforts, our 2012 financial audit produced a clean opinion from the outside audit firm, a stellar result for a new nonprofit corporation with volunteer management.

We are honored to have two individuals from the railroad history community become PNRA directors in November:

- Craig Reese will represent the NPRHA on the Board and assume PNRA's treasurer's duties. Craig volunteers regularly with the Tuesday crew and lays out the *Mainstreeter* magazine. Craig's career has included writing and editing in the newspaper and high-technology industries. He completed the certificate program in Museum Studies at the University of Washington in 2015.
- David Sprau joins the PNRA Board as an at-large director. Dave is a career railroader and a serious railroad historian, having hired on with the Northern Pacific in 1960 as a telegrapher and later a dispatcher until he joined the Great Northern as a fireman and dispatcher before the Burlington Northern merger. Later he became superintendent of Tacoma Eastern, a former branch line of the Milwaukee Road. Dave recently co-authored *19 East, Copy Three*, a book explaining timetable and train order operations.

Development of our Digital Archive Plan and associated processes to manage our digital data and improve the online finding aids has progressed where we will begin evaluations of available software system. This project is partially funded by a grant from 4Culture, the cultural services agency for King County, Washington.

## Help Preserve Collections

New collections of Pacific Northwest railroads documents, maps or photos continue to arrive each week. We know there are still many people who have railroad collections which will need a new home in the future. In most cases the owners or their families don't know of PNRA, our preservation mission and our significant Archive space where collections will be honored and preserved. It is critical that we talk with these people or their families before the collections are discarded. **If you know of such a collection, please contact us.**

Gary Tarbox,  
PNRA Executive Director  
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## Web Site Update

The internet service provider has hosted the PNRA web site servers since 2003 plans to close its business during the next quarter. We are reviewing our options of either moving our servers to a new server hosting facility, or moving our web sites to virtual servers in "the Cloud." Both alternatives are expected to maintain our current level of service while allowing us to increase the storage of historic railroad material.

## Preservation Activities

All four of our current scheduled work sessions are active and productive with new volunteers joining the crews. The output from these crews consists of sorted and reboxed collections; scanned photographs and maps; and cataloged collections which can be posted on a web site. We have room for more volunteers in each of our crews which work every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; the first and third Thursday evenings of each month from 6:30 to 10:00 PM; and the second and fourth Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Contact me at the phone or email below if you have any questions.



*PNRA's Occupancy Certificate issued by the City of Burien near the end of December 2015.*