

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAILROAD ARCHIVE

## **NORTHWEST NEWS**

This progress report is published for the *Friends of PNRA* and summarizes the activities at the Archive during the fourth quarter of 2017.

### **Community Outreach**

This year's PNRA-BEMRRC Holiday Open House was a great success. It was held for the first time on the Thanksgiving weekend Nov. 24-26, 2017. BEMRRC operated their modular layout built to Free-Mo standards, on the Archive's main floor. They also had their permanent layout operating in their dedicated space. In addition, PNRA volunteers gave tours of the Archive space. Local Burien businesses passed out flyers for the Open House, and Discover Burien advertised our event on their Facebook page resulting in a total of 185 people from the community visiting during the three days. The event also yielded new members for BEMRRC and volunteers for PNRA.

PNRA donated four boxes of extra Burlington Northern timetables to Northwest Railway Museum in Snoqualmie. We try place duplicate items from our collections with other railroad heritage organizations that can use them to fill out their collections.

Geologist, Garrett Bayrd received copies of 1930 construction drawings and reports for a drainage tunnel at Milepost 8.3 on the Point Defiance line in Tacoma. The information is being used for a BNSF study of the area.

Merrill Gardens, a new assisted living complex in downtown Burien, is interested in having PNRA volunteers present railroad history programs to their residents in 2018.

The following 2018 events provide public benefits to the people and heritage organizations of King County:

- NRHS Tacoma Chapter meeting at PNRA, January 6
- SP&S Swap Meet, Vancouver WA, February 17
- UNW Train Show, Monroe WA, February 24-25
- Spring Milwaukee Road Meet at PNRA, March 3
- First GN/SP&S Meet at PNRA, March 17
- PRRT&HS meetings at PNRA, March 31, July 21, & Oct. 20
- NW Santa Fe Meet at PNRA, April 21
- SP&SRHS Convention in Chehalis WA, Sept. 9-11
- RHO Conventions Open House at PNRA, Sept. 9-14
- NPRHA Convention, Centralia-Chehalis WA, Sept. 11-15
- GNRHS Convention in Bellingham WA, Sept. 15-19
- PNRA-BEMRRC Holiday Open House, Nov. 23-25

### **Preservation Activities**

On Nov. 14, 2017, PNRA's Digital Archive Team (DAT) held a training session at the Archive led by Rachael Cristine Woody, our Digital Archive consultant. Rachael reviewed the *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS), our guide as we create multilevel descriptions for the collections preserved at PNRA. While the created data will populate PNRA's *Access-to-Memory* (AtoM) platform, the Team members will initially create the data records on



Families from the South King County community enjoy the trains operating on BEMRRC's modular layout on the Archive's main floor at the **2017 Holiday Open House** held Nov. 24-26.

Excel worksheets which can be uploaded to AtoM. Bill Petryk became the leader of DAT this quarter and plans to start initial cataloging after the first of 2018. When this phase of the work is completed PNRA will share the results and demonstrate the system with the heritage organizations of King County.

PNRA member, Kurt Armbruster is finishing a book on the history of the *Pacific Coast Railroad* which hauled coal to the Seattle waterfront from Renton, Newcastle and Black Diamond WA. PNRA and the Maple Valley Historical Society shared their photo collections totaling nearly 1,000 PCR images from which to choose for the book. The PCR photos may be accessed on the [PNRArchive.org](http://PNRArchive.org) website. In addition, PNRA has an extensive collection of PCR maps, train sheets and operating reports which have augmented research for the book.

With the passing of Bob Heirman, an NP engineer and historian from Snohomish WA, preservation activity started when much of his railroad collection was donated to the NPRHA. Kent Sullivan is curating a large amount of Max King's writings, which were donated to Bob when Max passed away.

**Special Preservation Request** to our friends: PNRA has over 25 boxes of additional Burlington Northern material. As we build this collection please assist us by identifying additional BN materials that may be available.

Other preservation projects include:

- Completed scanning 3,366 GN steam locomotive photos from the Ainsworth Collection and starting to scan the diesel locomotive slides from the collection.
- Providing a 1941 photo of the suspension, foot-bridge at Umtanum WA to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management for registration of the bridge as a National Historic Place.
- Repackaging Wade Stevenson's NP negatives into individual, acid-free envelopes and storage boxes.

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- Cataloging over 300 Alden Raney slides of SP&S operations for posting on the [SPSHS.org](http://SPSHS.org) research site.
- Conversion of scanned train sheets using the Zoomify software to retain full resolution zooming in on image details.

## Help Preserve Collections

The Archive continues to receive collections at a rate of five to eight each month with the total of 408 collections received at the end of 2017. An important part of PNRA's mission is to gather the many collections of railroad documents, maps and photos from the Pacific Northwest region into a facility where they can be preserved and made available to the general public over the internet. We know many collections need a new home now and in the future. However, many of the owners or their families don't know of PNRA and our preservation mission. It is critical that we talk with these people before the collections are discarded. **If you know of such a collection, please contact us.**



*PNRA and Cascade Rail Foundation volunteers staff tables at the Nov. 11, 2017, Boeing Swap Meet in Kent WA. These volunteers are also active at regular PNRA work sessions.*

## Facilities

Installation of the Box Lift system between the lower and main floors of the Archive building is planned for early 2018. It is a critical safety improvement to keep our volunteers from carrying boxes between the floors. Our contractor, Olympic Home Modification of Gig Harbor, will build the hoistway and then install the mechanical system of the box lift.

Our \$51,821 Heritage Capital Project grant application and the rest of Washington States Capital budget will be a topic for the January 2018 special session of the legislature. The grant would fund our climate control system, replace all single-pane windows and extend the porches on the north and south sides of the building to route the rain away and improve the Archive's preservation environment.

## PNRA Headlight Society

PNRA formed its Headlight Society to honor individuals who commit to a planned gift to PNRA in a will, regardless of the gift's size. We now have five PNRA members who have indicated that they have included PNRA in their will, with others expressing interest in making a planned gift. These planned gifts are intended to fund the financial foundation of the Archive and ensure PNRA's preservation mission continues into the future. Please contact us if you made such a commitment.

## Administration

PNRA received the donation of two high-processing-power computers to further upgrade our twelve workstations on the main floor of the Archive.

During 2017, 85 volunteers worked a total of 17,222 hours at the Archive. This is an 11.6% increase over the hours worked during 2016.

At PNRA's Annual Membership Meeting, Director Dan Mathews retired and was replaced on the Board by Chris Craig, economic development specialist for the City of Burien.

Seattle Foundation's eighth GiveBIG campaign will be Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

## Become a *Friend of PNRA*

Our members, *Friends of PNRA* support the Archive and our mission to preserve the history of our region's railroads and make it available on our internet web sites. Our members live throughout the United States, as-well-as in the Puget Sound area. There are two ways they became a member and you too can become a *Friend of PNRA* by:

- **Joining a work crew** at one of regularly scheduled weekly sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays evenings or Saturdays. Email us to get started working on a collection that interests you at a time you are available.
- **Contributing funds** each year to help cover PNRA's operating costs. You can join the hundreds of contributors that regularly support PNRA online at [PNRArchive.org](http://PNRArchive.org), or mail a check to the address below.

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