

PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAILROAD ARCHIVE

NORTHWEST NEWS

This progress report summarizes the activities at the Archive during the third quarter of 2016 for the *Friends of PNRA*.

Annual Membership Meeting

Each November we hold PNRA's Annual Membership Meeting at the Archive which is preceded by a Pizza Supper to celebrate our *Friends of PNRA*. Our *Friends* volunteer their time to work at the Archive, or Contribute Funds to help cover PNRA's operating costs. If you have worked more than 30 hours or contributed \$50 or more in the last twelve months, you are a *Friend of PNRA* and entitled to vote at our Annual Meeting.

This year the **Pizza Celebration will be on November 9th starting at 6:00 PM** and followed by PNRA's Annual Membership Meeting and Quarterly Board Meeting.

All Friends of PNRA are invited to attend!!

Facilities

PNRA took a major step this quarter toward "Establishing a World-Class Railroad Archive" in the Pacific Northwest with the installation of additional mobile shelving on the lower floor. The East-Bay now has seven new shelving units and the Mid-Bay has five. This means



New mobile shelving installed in the east-bay.

we no longer have any boxes stored on pallets or temporary shelving, which has been the case on the lower floor since the Archive started operation in 2012. We now have permanent shelf space and accessibility for all the collection materials. This installation was partially funded by \$5,000 grants from BNSF Foundation and from *4Culture*, which receives its funding from the King County hotel-motel tax. After paying the deposit and the grant proceeds, we need \$14,521 to complete the purchase of the installation.

A second important project in August was sealing of the east exterior wall of the Archive building which showed some water incursion this last winter. Our painting contractor stripped the previous paint from the wall using an aerial lift to reach the wall surface. Then they applied a primer



An elastomeric coating being applied to seal the east wall of the Archive after the old paint was removed.

and an elastomeric coating to seal the concrete brick wall. This project was partially funded by *4Culture* from the King County hotel-motel tax. Now that the brick is sealed, interior side of the east wall on the third floor can be furred out and drywalled to allow stationary shelving to be installed.

Preservation Activities

Digital Archive Project – Last quarter, PNRA received a \$6,000 grant from *4Culture* from the King County hotel-motel tax to partially fund the Phase 2 of the Digital Archive Project. The project calls for us to: 1) Configure a server to run the *Access-to-Memory* (AtoM) software; 2) Confirm that the system meets our Phase 1 specifications; 3) Configure the system to handle descriptive-data characterizing PNRA's collections; 4) Train the PNRA volunteers to catalog the col-



An aisle in the mid-bay mobile shelving shows the photo print cabinets located at the rear of the installation.

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lections; and 5) Configure a test PNRA web site using the AtoM platform. Phase 2 will be under the guidance of Elizabeth Knight, our certified digital archive consultant, who completed the Phase 1 Digital Archive Plan on schedule in June 2016.

This Phase 1 Plan provides PNRA with a roadmap to improve and standardize the handling, description, and management of the digital assets our volunteers generate. It provides a foundation upon which the Archive can be fully developed as a sustainable and secure digital repository, and increase the worldwide discoverability of PNRA collections. The Phase 1 Plan can be downloaded from the www.PNRArchive.org web site.



Gary Tarbox, John Tucker and Cosmo Francesco of the Wednesday crew inspect the ten file cabinets filled with NP AFEs donated by Montana Rail Link.

New Collections – PNRA received five notable collections this last quarter, which included: 1) An indexed set of NP AFEs from the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone divisions filling ten, four-draw file cabinets donated by Montana Rail Link; 2) A complete set of 1989 condensed profiles for BN's North Dakota Division; 3) Approximately 5,400 slides taken between 1972 and 2006 of Pacific Northwest railroad operations; 4) Complete documentation packages for Union Pacific trains running between Seattle and Portland and from Portland and Hinkle over nine years; and 5) A large collection of GN paperwork and photographs from the Spokane area.

Become a Friend of PNRA

Our *Friends* power the Archive and allow us to fulfill our mission of providing a facility to preserve the region's railroad history and make that history accessible to everyone over the internet. There are two ways you can become a *Friend of PNRA*:

Join a work crew at one of regularly scheduled weekly sessions. Send us an email and we will get you started working on a collection that interests you.

Contribute funds each year to help cover PNRA's operating costs. Currently 212 contributors regularly support PNRA. Call or email us for more details on becoming a *Friend of PNRA*!!

Community Outreach

PNRA volunteer, Mike Bergman has a strong interest in streetcars and interurban operations in the Pacific Northwest. He has started to assemble an exhibit of the *Highland Park & Lake Burien Railroad* which is a joint project with the *High-line Heritage Museum* in Burien. PNRA has many photos of the line from Walt Ainsworth's collection which will be augmented by photos from the *Museum of History & Industry* and the *University of Washington Library* in Seattle, and from historic records from the *Seattle Municipal Archives*.

The railroad was a streetcar line that went from Spokane Street and Iowa Avenue in West Seattle to 152nd street in Seahurst which is few blocks west of today's downtown Burien. The line was built in 1913 by land developers in the Lake Burien area who needed a way to get access to Seattle for people who purchased their land. The Museum would like to include a permanent exhibit of the Railroad in their current building remodel, and plans temporary exhibits in the Burien Community Center and SeaTac City Hall.

In September, PNRA members reported on Archive activities and collections at the annual conventions of the: *Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Historical Society* during an Archive tour of PNRA on September 9th; *Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association* convention at Wallace, Idaho, on September 15th; and the *Great Northern Railway Historical Society* convention at Spokane, Washington, on September 20th.

During the next quarter, PNRA will host the *Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society*, Pacific Northwest Chapter on October 15th between 12:30 and 5:00 PM. Everyone interested in the PRR is invited to attend.

On October 25th, the PNRA will host the monthly meeting of the *Association of King County Heritage Organizations* (AKCHO) to present our Phase 1 Digital Archive Plan. Digital copies of the plan are available on the PNRA's web site to those organizations interested in long-term preservation of the digital collections. The attendees will then tour the Archive and learn about the materials in our collections.

Help Preserve Collections

PNRA was founded on the desire to gather all 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 have had great success in pursuit of this goal, as we receive collections at a rate of five to eight each month with the total now at 293 collections. However, we know many more collections will still need a new home in the future. Most of the owners or their families don't know of PNRA and our preservation mission. 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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