

PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAILROAD ARCHIVE

NORTHWEST NEWS

The *Friends of PNRA* receive this summary of the activities at the Archive during the third quarter of 2020.

Annual Membership Zoom Meeting

PNRA's Annual Membership Meeting will be held **Nov. 4, 2020**, starting at 7:00 PST as a Zoom Meeting of our members, aka, *Friends of PNRA*. Our *Friends* volunteer their time at Archive work sessions, or contribute funds to help cover PNRA's operating costs. If you 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. **Please plan to attend the Zoom meeting.** Please sign in 5 minutes early so we can start on time. Start by downloading the Zoom application and then click the following meeting link: <https://zoom.us/j/9745840962>

Archive's Response to Covid-19

We are holding bi-weekly Zoom meetings with the active Archive volunteers to keep in touch, share stories and review processes which can be used in their remote work. Nineteen PNRA volunteers are currently working on PNRA projects from their homes. We are using our SharePoint web servers to deliver spreadsheets and the digital materials to the volunteers throughout the United States. Single person work sessions are being scheduled most days at the PNRA facility and building security is checked by leadership during multiple visits each week. Call Gary Tarbox if you want to schedule an individual work session.

While at PNRA masks are required and frequent hand washing is necessary. Cleaning supplies are available in the workroom.

The BEMRRC is holding limited layout work and operating sessions for a scheduled number of members with masks. The members are selected to work or operate in different parts of the layout to maintain proper distancing.

Preservation Activities

Bill Zidel and Kent Sullivan drove to St. Paul, Minn. in early September to load Larry Schrenk's collection into a trailer and drive it back to Burien. This collection includes the material used to write his five books on NP locomotives.

Mike Bergman is working at home on cataloging PNRA's large Ainsworth streetcar photo collection of the Seattle Municipal Railway.

The software coding phase of the development of our user-friendly search interface for the Access to Memory (AtoM) system has been completed by Kerkhoff Technologies and was tested this quarter. The next step is loading collection data into the AtoM catalog using a batch process of data developed for our current SharePoint web sites.

Work has started at the GN-NP Joint Archive office at the Jackson Street Roundhouse (JSRH) in St Paul to clean up their Access database used for cataloging East-End materials. The Database was moved to the Cloud to provide greater accessibility to the volunteer work crews. Once the processes are stable, volunteers at PNRA will be able to login and enter new collection data and assist with additional work.

Brian Ferris asked for an explanation of why the SP&S collection at PNRA contains many files from the GN and NP. Rich Wilkens provided that: "After the BN merger the former



The trailer loaded with Larry Schrenk's donation and items loaded at Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul.

SP&S engineering offices at Hoyt Street in Portland took over the responsibility for GN and NP engineering from Centralia southward, westward out to Moclips, eastward from Vancouver, Wash. to near Toppenish, and the former Great Northern line from Bend to Bieber, CA. The noted files are for general matters that pertain to the assigned lines and date from the 1920's into the early days of the BN."

The large Ainsworth NP Location photo collection was scanned and cataloged by Chuck Soule and has been posted on the NPRHA.org website. Chuck now working on cataloging the Ainsworth aerial photo collection which includes images mainly from Washington State.

The James Turner GN photo collection was scanned and cataloged by Andrew Kalamka and has been posted on the Joint Archive site.

Walt Ainsworth reviewed the posted NP Steam collection and found gaps where books of photo prints apparently were not scanned along with the current 102 books. One of the missing books was found, but the two other books were separated when the collection was being unpacked in 2013 and are likely in a box on the shelving.

The *Camas Prairie - Idaho's Panhandle Railroad* book has been released and contains photos from PNRA's Ainsworth and Fredrickson collections along with information from AFE files and drawings moved west to PNRA in 2019.

Kurt Armbruster is compiling a comprehensive database of the railroad paintings of Jack Christensen who is a regular volunteer at PNRA.

Community Outreach

David Lotz, *Burlington Bulletin* Editor received permission to use three images from the Eugene T. Hawk collection in their article titled *Aurora and its Shops 1900-1974*.

Sue Boggs of the Mountain View Funeral Home in Lakewood Wash. requested information on John Wiley, the first burial in December 1915 by the company. With the 105th anniversary

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sary of his death coming up this year, Mount View is seeking information about Mr. Wiley, who was killed while part of a Milwaukee Road excavation crew in Sumner.

Noah Thompson asked for information on the McHenry Railroad Loop (McHenry, ND) which he wants to recreate on his layout. The loop was constructed in 1899 as a way to turn an entire train at the end of the Cooperstown Branch.

The BEMRRC is looking for photos of the town of Concrete WA and the cement plants located nearby to help with the Club's permanent layout.

On August 13th, Mike Bergman presented via Zoom to 110 people, the lecture: *To West Seattle by Streetcar, 1916 – 1940* for the *Southwest Seattle Historical Society* to explain how streetcars operated between West Seattle and downtown. Lee Corbin was provided with maps of the spurs and stations that served the 1909 *Alaska-Yukon-Pacific-Exposition* in Seattle.

Northwest Railway Museum steamed NP 924 for a second time on its way to restoring the 0-6-0 to service on their track from Snoqualmie Falls to North Bend, Wash. There are still tests to be completed, but this trial run was very successful.

Olaf Danielson is working with a local non-profit to compile a book on the History of Grantsburg, Wisconsin. His assignment is to cover the railroad branchline that served his hometown and was granted permission to include a 1991 *Main-streeter* article on the branchline.

Lynda C. Dostal's uncle, Warren Pratt Upham was described as "a cruiser for the Northern Pacific in 1944." Lynda wanted to understand what he did. It turns out that her uncle worked for the Resources Division of the railroad and evaluated the value of timber on the railroad-owned land granted by its original charter.

Dennis Bryant was looking for passenger train consists from the 1914-20 period. He was told the consist information was recorded on Dispatcher's Train Sheets, and normally discarded after seven years, so it is doubtful any exist from that period. However, public timetables will often indicate the types of cars expected to be used in a railroad's name trains.

Eleanor Boba received a high-resolution file of Pacific Coast locomotive #16 in north Renton for use in her up-coming book, *Around Lake Washington* with credit to PNRA's PCR photo collection.

A diner and baggage car purchased from Amtrak were delivered to the Railroad Museum in Toppenish WA in August.

Carl Trieshmann requested information on the Loewy paint-scheme for the North Coast Limited and was sent the Painting & Lettering drawing.

Robert Scott is writing an article for *Trains Magazine* on the two swing bridges over the Chehalis River in Aberdeen, Wash. and requested information from PNRA's AFE and bridge collections.

Thad Allen working with a Bellingham Public Access Television program on the Wellington Avalanche that occurred on March 1, 1910. Bob Kelly has done extensive research and worked with the authors of two books on the disaster and is helping Thad.

Kent Sullivan has been working with the Cross-Kirkland Corridor Park task force to commemorate the railroad history with some structures and signage along the bike trail on the eastside of Lake Washington. The task force has been given plans for the Kirkland depot and another small depot.



Sean and Kyle Sullivan and Dean O'Neill unload the trailer from St. Paul, MN at the Archive in Burien, WA.

John Curtright of Canton, Michigan requested a copy of the 1979 BN Train Briefs which details the scheduled trains which ran across the system. He had used the earlier Briefs on the NPRHA.org website and wanted to review a post-merger version.

Facilities

The Archive's file server, PNRA45 is backed up each month on two new self-contained units using software that only copies new and modified files.

Because of the instability of the Comcast internet service, the Archive's network connection has been going down every three to four days, requiring a trip to the Archive to reboot the network to give remote access to our volunteers. On August 8th, a phone-activated power switch was added to the system to allow a remote reboot of the network.

Both the GNRHS and NPRHA Stores now provide some back issues as digital files which are downloaded to the customer's computer after the purchase is completed.

Administration

The manuscript Mike Bergman wrote on the *Seattle Municipal Railway* which included photos from PNRA's Ainsworth Collection is being reviewed for publication by the Washington State University Press.

The City of Burien has formed a committee to investigate forming a Creative District which would include 153rd Street. A Creative District is a clearly identified area that contains a high concentration of cultural facilities and programs, acting as a visible and attractive element in a city. PNRA plans to participate in the District when created.

Gary Tarbox
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