

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAILROAD ARCHIVE

## NORTHWEST NEWS

This progress report details the activities at the Archive during Q1 of 2020 for the *Friends of PNRA*.

### Covid-19 Closes Archive

On March 5th, the Health Officer of Washington State issued building use and cleaning rules to better protect our community from exposure to the virus causing Covid-19. Three days later, all meetings at PNRA's building were cancelled for the coming week based on further advisories from King County and the State of Washington. PNRA leadership conducts a situation review each Sunday and extending the cancellations as required. Check the status of the Archive closure at the top of the home page on [www.PNRArchive.org](http://www.PNRArchive.org). Fortunately, some of our volunteers are able to work on their projects at home during this Stay-At-Home period.

### GiveBIG Is May 5-6, 2020

The annual *GiveBIG* campaign promotes community support of non-profit organizations throughout Washington State and has grown into one of the largest giving campaigns in the nation. We thank the many *Friends of PNRA* who contributed nearly half of our individual contributions during last year's *GiveBIG* campaign, and encourage you to support the Archive again in time of uncertainty. We ask our *Friends of PNRA* (aka: members) for donations only once each year and your contribution during *GiveBIG* will renew your membership for 2020.

Contributions can be made easily at the Archive's website, [www.PNRArchive.org](http://www.PNRArchive.org) by clicking the **Donate Now** link near the top of the Home page. This takes you to the PNRA page on the *GiveBIG* website where you can make your donation securely using a credit card from April 15th through May 6th and have your donation counted as a *GiveBIG* contribution. If you would rather contribute by check, mail it to the address at the bottom of this page. Either way, you will be a *Friend of PNRA* for 2020.

### Community Outreach

Harry Nicholls, a researcher at the DeGolyer Library at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, asked for help finding information on EWD&W Company of Seattle. The initials stand for *East Waterway Dock & Warehouse Company* a switching operation that handled traffic for a large food-oil storage operation with a single 0-6-0 locomotive on Harbor Island in Seattle's Elliott Bay.



EWD&W No. 2 switching cars on Seattle's Harbor Island in 1937.  
(Harold Hill Photo, Ainsworth Collection WWASL-0588)



Dan Kerlee, a historian of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition toured the Archive on March 3rd and discussed the role the railroads played in promoting and facilitating the Exposition which organized Seattle's University of Washington campus and ran from June to mid-October 1909. Dan has conducted a world-wide search for Exposition-era photos.

Our first book, *Pacific Coast: Seattle's Own Railroad* book continues to sell well through the GNRHS.org Online Store. The book has increased the visibility of PNRA by reaching new communities with our railroad history message. On Jan 6th, Kurt Armbruster, the book's author presented the PCR history to 67 people at Judson Park Senior Living Des Moines, Washington.

Diane Leist requested photos and plans for the NP depot on the mainline at Kiona, which is now within Benton City, Washington. The depot was closed in 1920s and apparently not a favorite of photographers as only one photo has been found to date. If you know of any Kiona Depot photos or plans, please let us know.

Mark Entze, the UPHS editor of their quarterly *Mainliner* history journal, called to discuss the SharePoint operating system used on our website servers to display photos.

With the early planning stages of the Portland Union Station refurbishment underway, the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (PNWC-NRHS) asked for a PNRA visit to review of facility options, processes and methods they could consider implementing in Portland in the future. Bob Kelly visited the Portland Oregon Chapter on Feb. 3rd in preparation for their leadership's planned PNRA visit on Feb. 15th. The ensuing six-hour PNRA visit by ten Chapter members included an Archive tour and a complete review of the processes we used to establish the Archive in Burien, followed by an open-ended discussion of their many questions.

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Ruth Pickering of the Fall City Historical Society has been given permission to republish the “Raging River Trestle Collapse” article from the Winter 2018 issue of the *Mainstreeter*. She received the high resolution photos from the Jim Fredrickson Collection that illustrated the article.

Clay Eals, who recently took over Paul Dorpat’s long-running *Then & Now* column in the Sunday *Seattle Times* newspaper, visited PNRA on Feb. 5th for a tour and discussion of our photo collections. Clay is very interested in locating “Then Photos” with interesting stories that he can use in future columns.

In February, Board member, Dave Sprau was in Moclips, Washington, and met with Kelly Calhoun, executive Director of the “Museum of the North Beach.” The station at Moclips is the furthest west any U.S. Class 1 railroad served. Their museum has a good collection of photos and archival material from the NP Grays Harbor, and they are interested in working with the Archive to scan and catalog their collections. Volunteer Kurt Armbruster followed up with Kelly and they hope to start a joint project after the quarantine is lifted.

Ken House has been asked to help organize the archives of a local grange and remembered from his tour of the Archive that we had manuals to guide our volunteers’ work on our collections. Ken has been sent our Collection Management Policy and discussions have started on the other issues he is handling.

## Preservation Activities

John Mantle completed scanning of the Union Pacific steam locomotives from the Ainsworth print collection. When the images have been cataloged, the collection will be posted on the PNRA website.

Greg Overton donated a large box of BN drawings created in the 1970s and 1980s from the yard office in Missoula, Montana. The drawings describe projects on the Rocky Mountain Division involving bridge replacements, highway grade crossing realignments, private grade crossings, removal of spur tracks, and removal of buildings.

Jonathan Fischer has begun arranging and scanning black & white Milwaukee Road negatives from the John Henderson collection on loan from Mike Faletti to prepare them for post the collection on the Cascade Rail Foundation website.

Work on the Digital Archive Project Phase 3 continues with the delivery of the production server by Dean O’Neill on Feb. 29. Two incidences the Access-To-Memory (AtoM) software has been installed on the server providing a test and a production platform. The graphical search pages have been developed by Bill Petryk and consultant Ryan Zimbelman to make it easier to search the AtoM databases. The Project’s Phase 4 will complete the software design of PNRA’s new user-friendly front-end for AtoM which will begin when the Phase 4 funding is received mid-2020. In the meantime, the writing of the collection descriptions for the AtoM databases will continue.

Glen Comstock of Battle Ground, Washington, who compiled a major collection of logging photos and information, passed away on Feb. 20, 2020. In 2016, Glen gave copies of many of his logging industry files to PNRA. He will be missed.

Lissa McKee donated photos her grandfather, Albert M. Nash took while he served on a 1915 ICC Valuation crew working on the Great Northern in the Pacific Northwest when he was 18 years old.

## Facilities

In 2019 we received a Washington State Heritage Capital Projects (HCP) grant to install three new mobile shelving carriages on the Archive’s lower floor to fill the remaining space for such shelving. While the three new carriages were installed in December 2019, the final parts needed to extend the height of the four existing SpaceSaver carriages located in the Mid-Bay arrived in February. Those extenders were installed on Feb. 18, 2020, to complete our 2019 HCP project.



The mobile shelving carriages in the Archive’s mid-bay have now been extended to the full 88-inch allowed height.

Our new file server, PNRA45 installed last quarter, has been loaded with 7.7 terabytes of data produced by the scanning of photos, maps and technical drawings from the collections preserved at the Archive. That data is being backed up to a “cloud computing service” which also required upgrading the Archive’s internet connection.

## Administration

The Covid-19 pandemic impacts in the community are being monitored for any effect on PNRA’s financial health. With reduced activity in the closed building, some savings in utility costs will be realized and our fixed costs are manageable with the current level of our revenue. Phase 3 of the AtoM Project is wrapping up and the expenses appear to be within the \$7,000 raised for the project. The revenue generated by the *GiveBIG* campaign accounts for about half of our yearly individual contributions and will be important to the Archive’s recovery this year.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the GNRHS online Store fulfilled by PNRA switched to Shopify software for their order processes. This new software incorporates the printing of the postage for orders and improves the Store site inventory management. In recent months, the GNRHS Store has nearly doubled the number of products offered on their website.

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