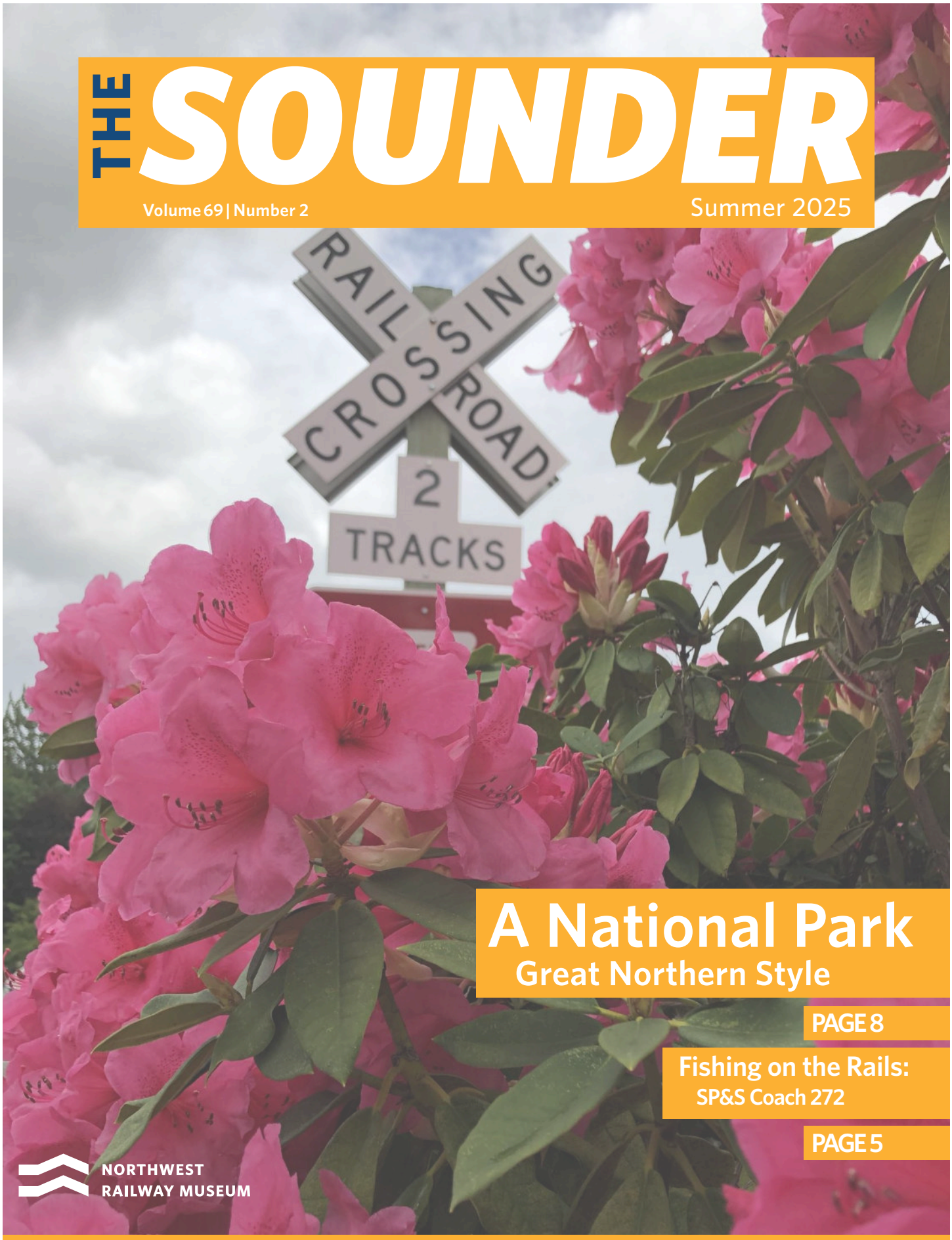
THE SOUNDER

Volume 69 | Number 2

Summer 2025



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NORTHWEST
RAILWAY MUSEUM

Preserving Railway History Since 1957

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The Northwest Railway Museum acknowledges it is built on the traditional lands of the Snoqualmie Tribe and other Coast Salish peoples. The Museum's railway runs through land and features considered sacred to the beliefs, values, and heritage of the Snoqualmie Tribe and other First Nations.

Summer Train Schedule

Saturdays & Sundays — April 2025 - October 2025

North Bend

10:30am	**12:30pm**	**2:30pm**

Snoqualmie

11:00am	**1:00pm**	**3:00pm**

** Prices and schedule may vary on special event dates, visit TrainMuseum.org for more details.*

CONTACT US

Have questions or feedback? We'd love to hear from you.

You may contact us at: info@TrainMuseum.org or 425-888-3030 ext. 7202.

The Museum gratefully acknowledges funding and support received from:

Snoqualmie Tribe · 4Culture King County Lodging Tax · City of Snoqualmie Lodging Tax Fund · King County · Washington Trust for Historic Preservation · dahp

and the many individuals and businesses who give generously each year.

If you wish to give a gift, please visit TrainMuseum.org/Support

THE SOUNDER

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THE NORTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM MISSION

To operate a nationally significant museum and heritage railway where the public experiences captivating exhibits and educational programs that confront the impactful and challenging history of railways in shaping the Pacific Northwest, actively engaging the community and inspiring future generations to preserve this transformative heritage.

The railway changed everything

NORTHWEST
RAILWAY MUSEUM

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Can you dig it? Building infrastructure to support the Northwest Railway Museum requires years of research, planning, and extensive fundraising efforts. The Museum is entering a building phase, with planning and fundraising ramping up. On Tuesday, May 27 North Fork Enterprises began preparing the site of the parking lot expansion, part of the **Tracks to the Future** campaign for the Roundhouse Exhibit Gallery and turntable. The parking lot is being constructed right across the tracks from the Train Shed on the Railway History Campus in Snoqualmie, and will add 37 stalls. Total costs will top $600,000 and are being funded with grants and private contributions.

Why start with a parking lot? The Train Shed is open six days a week from April through December. During peak visitation, it already presents challenges in finding parking. Larger groups and visitors attending major programs will continue to arrive by train. Still, development and growth of programs, including the *Story Time* and *Trackside Field Trip* programs, has been limited by lack of parking spaces.

The parking lot is expected to be completed this summer. The next construction phase for **Tracks to the Future** will include some of the safety improvements planned at nine of the Museum's public crossings, which are scheduled to begin later this summer.

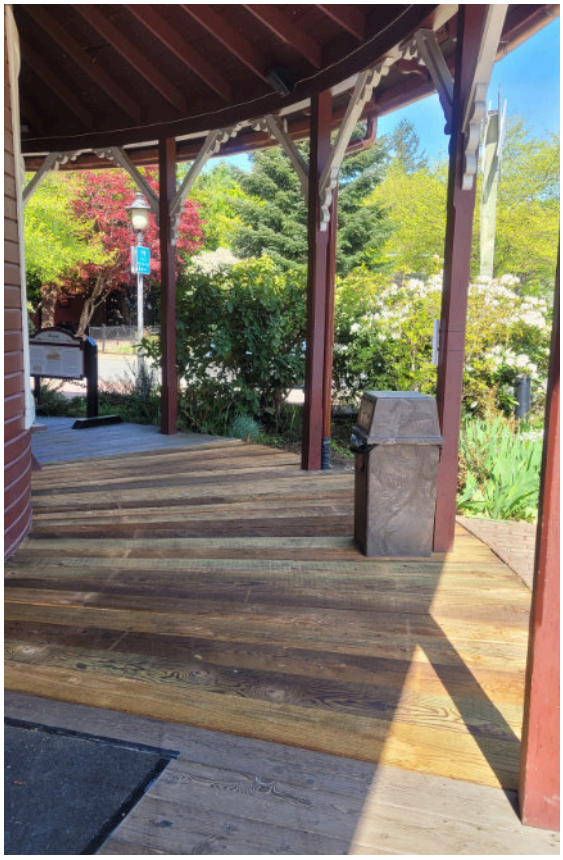
Congratulations Cristy! I have worked with Deputy Director Cristy Lake for nearly fifteen years and am grateful for her many contributions to the Museum's growth and success. May 31st was her last day working for the Museum, but we all expect to see her regularly: in June, she begins work as the full-time executive director of the Snoqualmie Valley History Museum in North Bend, just two blocks from the North Bend Depot. Our two museums already have plenty of cooperative ventures, so Cristy and I will be continuing to work together on several fronts.

Cristy held many different positions at the Museum, including volunteer coordinator and registrar. Some of her notable initiatives have included the redesign of the Train Shed visitor experience, implemented during the pandemic-era closure, and changes in the train schedule to facilitate the Train Shed experience better. Thank you and best wishes to Cristy!

Richard R Anderson
Executive Director

PRESERVING HISTORY

Rising to the Challenges



The first section of the Depot boardwalk replaced! Each board has to be carefully cut to form the tapered shape that allows the boardwalk to fit the round end of the historic building.

The Northwest Railway Museum has long recognized that raising funds for the Roundhouse Exhibit Gallery—while simultaneously advancing other capital campaign initiatives—would present a significant challenge. Recent developments have further complicated these efforts. Escalating material costs, disruptions in the availability of commonly sourced supplies, and concerns about the reliability of previously pledged funding are among the difficulties now faced.

In response, the Museum has implemented innovative strategies to mitigate these obstacles. These include procuring high-quality, recently decommissioned equipment; aligning projects with the existing skillsets of the Museum's dedicated volunteers; and pursuing every grant opportunity for which the Museum is eligible.

One visible outcome of these efforts can be seen at the Snoqualmie Depot, where long-overdue repairs to the boardwalk are now underway. Thanks to a grant from 4Culture funding the necessary materials and the skilled craftsmanship of woodworking volunteer Floyd V., the project has officially begun. To ensure visitor safety during ongoing weekend railway operations, the work will proceed in phases. Once completed, the upgraded boardwalk will provide a safer experience for all and enable improvements to previously inaccessible utilities located beneath the boardwalk.

As production expenses continue to rise, the Museum is fortunate to have a robust inventory of custom retail merchandise. This allows the Museum store to maintain stable pricing on most items, even in the face of market fluctuations.

As a nonprofit institution, the Museum is committed to supporting small and local businesses whenever possible—just as it is committed to supporting its own community. In turn, the Museum invites and appreciates your support. Whether through a store purchase, a financial contribution to one of its fundraising campaigns, or the generous donation of your time and expertise, your involvement helps sustain and strengthen both the Museum and the heritage railway for future generations.

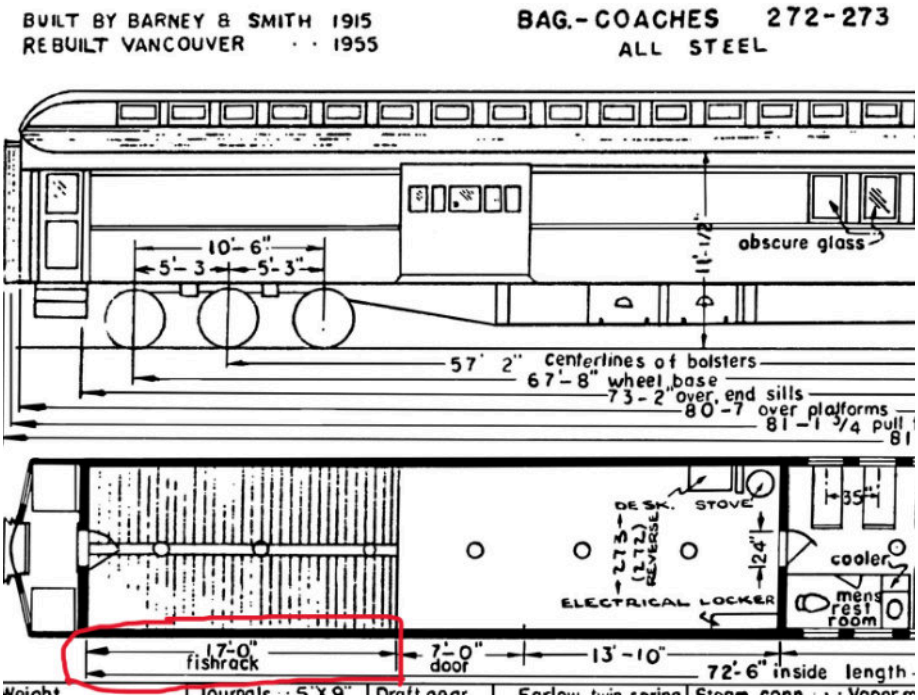
HISTORIC CONTENT

Fishing on the Rails: SP&S Coach 272

Mary H., Educator

Looking at blueprints for the rail cars in the Northwest Railway Museum's archives can lead to fun discoveries: The 1962 blueprint for Spokane, Portland & Seattle Baggage Coach 272 revealed a section of the car devoted to fish racks. Yes, you read that correctly.

In the 1950s, railways were mixing passenger and freight services together in order to save money and increase revenue. One half of the car, as you can see in the diagram, was now devoted to freight. Sometimes this freight would be perishable goods like freshly caught fish, which were packed in ice and stored on the designated racks.



A cropped look at the blueprint for SP&S Coach 272 with the fishrack's label and dimensions circled in red.

A basket load of fish. Photo courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Museum.

Where did the fish come from? This coach ran on the Oregon Trunk Line as a caboose between Wishram, WA and Bend OR. Sport fishermen would ask the conductor to stop at remote places along the Deschutes River in the morning and then pick them back up on the way back. To keep the fish fresh, iced fish racks were built into the car.

This summer, when you head out on the water, just think that you and your catch could have rode on a 'combine' car like 272!

FROM THE ARCHIVES

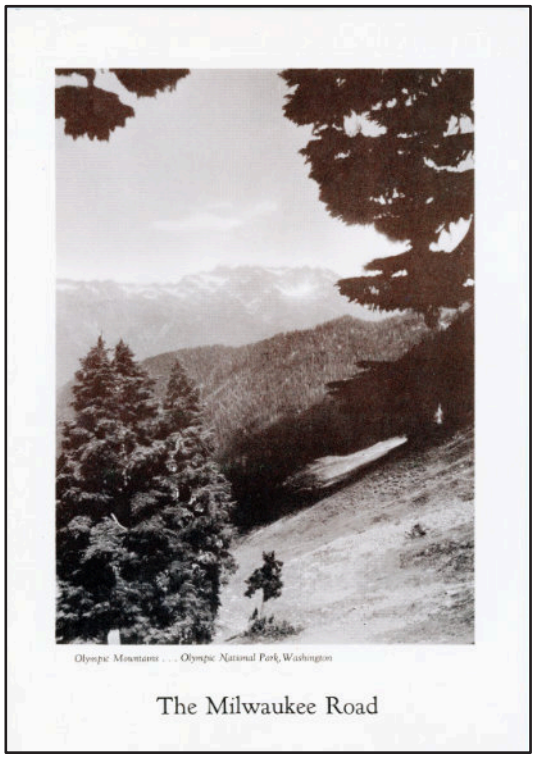
WWII Breakfast Menu

Dining on the Milwaukee Road

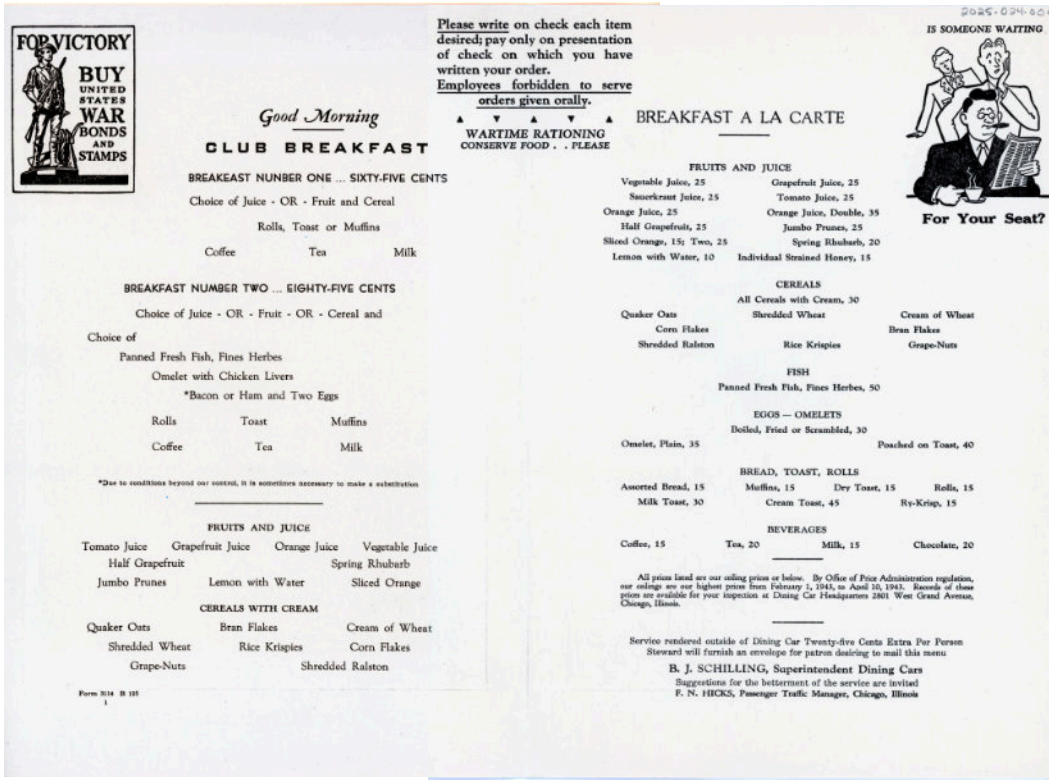
Emily B., Collections Registrar

Traveling by train can be a fun, relaxing experience complete with dining service. Passengers may spend a few nights on board and, therefore, need something to eat from the dining or café car. The Museum has several menus from various railway companies, including Northern Pacific and the Milwaukee Road. Some menus list luxurious dishes, and others offer simpler options, depending on the time period and rail line.

Before the 1850s, full meal service was not provided aboard trains. Passengers would bring their own food to eat, or they would buy food at stations en route to their destinations. The food served at these establishments was prepared ahead of time and by the time travelers acquired their meal, the quality had decreased. After the 1860s, dining cars enhanced the experience of train travel, providing full-service, several course meals. Pullman Company provided high-quality dining to passengers on its dining car, Delmonico. Rail lines would compete to offer luxurious dining experiences.



Milwaukee Road menu, 2025.024.004



During World War II, dining cars offered simpler fare due to wartime rationing. After the war, fancy meals served in the dining car transitioned to casual convenience dining.

This is the breakfast menu for the Milwaukee Road from the 1940s. Notice the image on the front of Olympic National Park, a point along the route. Inside the menu is an advertisement to buy war bonds and stamps and mention of wartime rationing and eliminating food waste.

Latest on Interurban PSER 523

Puget Sound Electric Railway Interurban 523 inside the Train Shed Exhibit Hall. It was moved into the Conservation and Restoration Workshop as part of an exhibit hall reorganization.

Saxon B., Collections Care Manager

Earlier this year, restoration work resumed on the Museum's interurban coach-parlor car 523, the last known survivor of the Puget Sound Electric Railway. The interurban carbody is approximately 55-feet long and is an all-wood structure built in 1908. It is in fair condition for its age and various uses as a storage shed, cottage, and previous attempts at restoration in California. New wood of appropriate species and sizes for repairs to the structural members has been ordered. The Museum's shipwright, Glenn W., expects to begin work on the carbody now that it has been moved into the Conservation and Restoration Workshop.

Meanwhile, reassembly of the brake rigging on the two Baldwin trucks is progressing. These trucks, one motorized and one unmotorized, were restored earlier in the project, but further assembly is required, including brake rigging, journal bearings, bolsters, and other small items. Additional electrical testing of the motorized front truck will also occur before fitting it to the carbody. Simultaneously, an outside vendor experienced in historic window restoration is fabricating replacement elliptical art glass windows for the main passenger space while another vendor specializing in historic furniture restoration is fabricating replica parlor chairs.

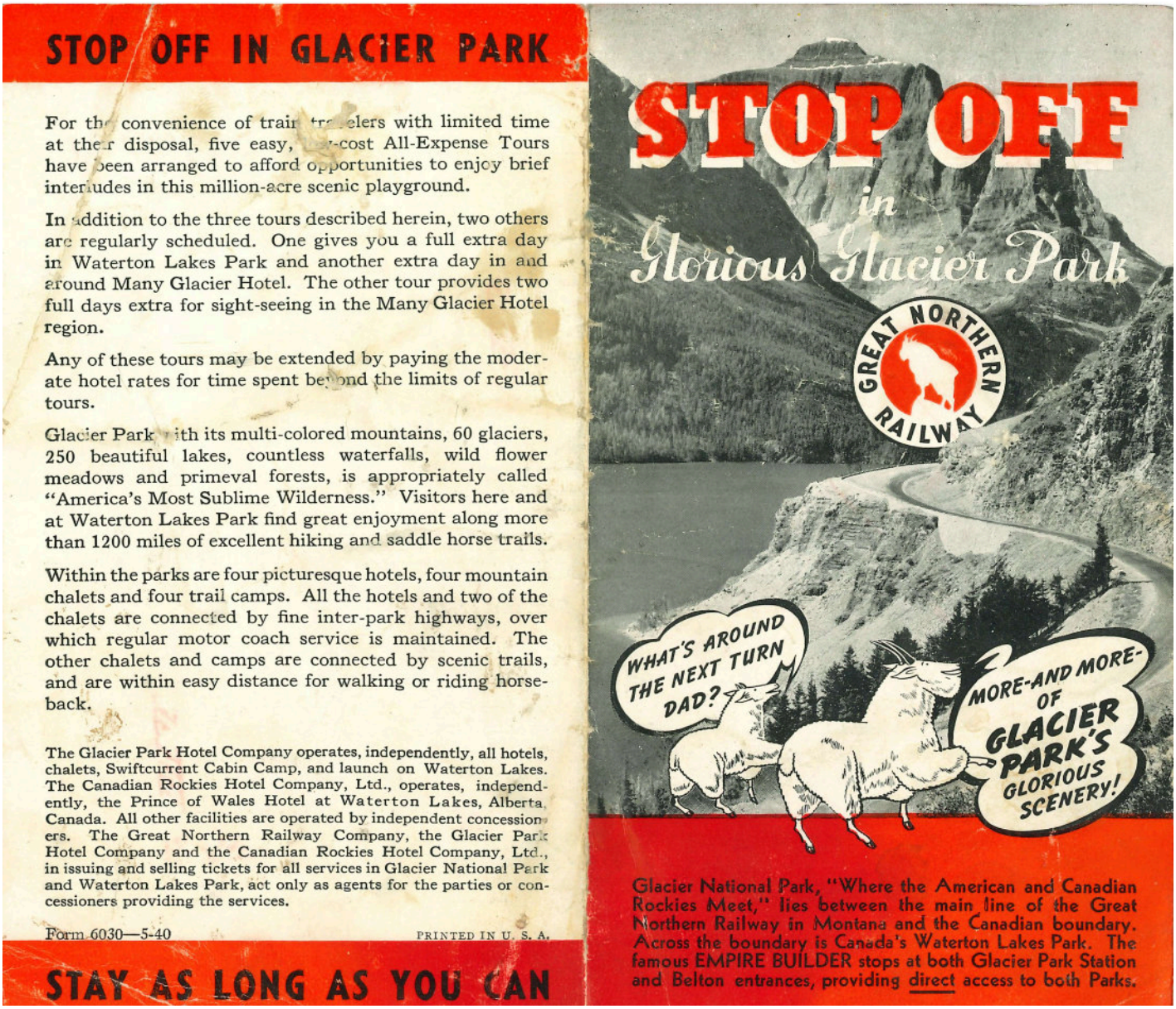
The interurban's motorized front truck towed by the Museum's Pettibone. The trucks were acquired separately and rebuilt by an outside vendor. They are not from Interurban 523 but are a newer model of the same trucks produced for the Chicago Transit Authority circa 1918.

A National Park
Great Northern Style

Michael H., Education Assistant

Few American national parks were more influenced by a railway than Glacier National Park, which shared a border with the mainline of the Great Northern Railway.

Located along the northern edge of western Montana, the mountains of Glacier are part of the ancestral homelands of the Blackfeet Confederation which they call the "Backbone of the World." Their original reservation land included these mountains, but following years of starvation they were pressured to sell the mountains. Congress authorized the creation of Glacier NP on May 11, 1910, due in part to the work of naturalist George Bird Grinnell and GN President Louis Hill (son of James J. Hill).



Great Northern published brochures advertising tours through the parks, complete with hotel accommodations and meals. This version was published in 1940. (Author's collection)

Railways and National Parks were interconnected from the start, but few were more connected than Great Northern and Glacier National Park.

Louis Hill quickly created the Glacier Park Hotel Company (the word Hotel was dropped in 1943) to construct and operate lodging across the park. Several large hotels were built, with back-country chalets a day's horseback ride apart between them. Great Northern even took on the image of a mountain goat as part of their emblem in 1921.

To this day, the mark Great Northern left on the park remains. GNRy is set in stone in the Sperry Chalet. (P. Hughes photo, Author's collection.)

Guests would ride the train to Glacier Park station at the eastern foot of the mountains, spend the night in the massive timbered Glacier Park Hotel, and then set off into the park. At each chalet, guests could stay more than one night so they could enjoy nearby trails or fish at lakes which were stocked by the National Park Service. These parties would slowly make their way to Belton on the west side of the park, where trains were waiting to take them home.

However, the Great Depression and the rise of automobiles changed Glacier. Two auto camps were built by the Glacier Park Company in 1935 and 1941. Automobiles bypassed the chalets and by 1950, most chalets closed. Faced with declining revenue, Great Northern sold off the Glacier Park Co. in 1960, ending their 50-year connection with the park.

Over 100 years after Louis Hill developed the visitor experience in Glacier, his vision still lives on. The stately hotels still provide a welcome retreat. Two of the chalets reward those who are lucky to secure a room with the chance to be enveloped by nature. And the two rustic depots at Glacier Park and Belton, today known as East and West Glacier respectively, still welcome guests stepping off Amtrak's Empire Builder just as Hill intended!

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Destination: Snoqualmie

Mary H., Educator

Summer signals vacation and vacationers need lodging, especially if you travel by train. Throughout Snoqualmie and North Bend's history, there have been several different hotels and lodges.

The Hotel Kinsey circa 1902. Photo courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Museum.

The first hotel in Snoqualmie, known then as Snoqualmie Falls, was the Hotel Kinsey. The Hotel Kinsey was owned by famous Snoqualmie Valley photographers Darius and Clark Kinsey's parents.

Another hotel was the Meadowbrook Hotel, which operated from 1884 to 1904. This hotel was part of a larger tourism push by the Hops Growers Association. The Hops Growers Association promoted their farm, hotel, and on-site attractions, as well as views of Snoqualmie Falls to make Snoqualmie a tourist destination. Visitors soon flocked to see the World's Largest Hop farm, the natural beauty of the Falls, and surrounding environment.

Of course, the most famous hotel was the Snoqualmie Falls Lodge, built in 1919. That 8-room lodge did not stand the passage of time, but in the same location today is the Salish Lodge, as seen in the 1990s television show, Twin Peaks.

Now, you may ask, how did these visitors get to Snoqualmie? Why, the train of course!

The Meadowbrook Hotel with Mount Si in the background circa 1915. Photo courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Museum.

Day Out With Thomas

Three weekends in July!

Train times are already starting to fill up. If you plan to come celebrate with Thomas for this extra special birthday year, be sure to reserve your tickets before they are gone. There will be food, fun, and so much to do!

Learn more at:
https://TrainMuseum.org/Thomas/

Wine Train

June 19, August 8 & 28, October 31

Join the Museum for another wine train excursion, featuring wineries from the region! Enjoy scenic views, learn about the history of the railway, and of course, sample wine from participating wineries.

Tickets and information available on the Musuem's ticketing website.

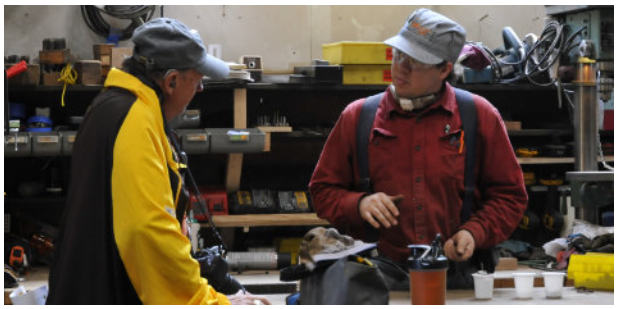
Story Time

1st, 3rd, & 5th Wednesdays at 11am

Visit the Snoqualmie Depot for the rest of the summer Story Times: Listen to 1-3 stories together, experience a hands-on craft, and take the time to explore what this Museum location has to offer. As always, Story Time is completely free and still includes Train Shed Exhibit Hall Admission!

Story Time will take a summer break during July so the staff can focus on Day Out With Thomas. Come celebrate with us!

Guided Tours



Saturdays at 9am

The Museum is delighted to offer the return of its tour packages. Enjoy an educator-led tour of the Train Shed Exhibit Hall and the Conservation & Restoration Workshop and a train ride all in one convenient package.

Available every Saturday, excluding Thomas weekends, through Labor Day Weekend!

BOOKSTORE HIGHLIGHT

Come See What's New in the Museum Store

Visit the Depot Bookstore in the Historic Snoqualmie Depot or the Museum Gift Shop inside the foyer of the Train Shed Exhibit Hall to see these new arrivals and so much more!

Pin-Back Buttons

Enamel pins are individually hand-colored works of art, but the medium comes with its own limitations. They are a common collectible souvenir at many destinations, but so too is the quintessential pin-back button.

The Northwest Railway Museum is happy to announce that it recently added button sets to the Museum Store! This set was designed using photos taken around the Museum and features objects both large and small. It is a much more affordable wearable souvenir of your visit, $5 plus tax for all six buttons!

Turning Tables

While the Musuem eagerly awaits the start of construction on the Roundhouse Exhibit Gallery, it already has one small turntable for visitors to enjoy. This metal keychain features a "working" turntable with steam locomotive NP 924 riding on top. It spins easily and makes for a wonderful fidget toy in addition to being a great souvenir to bring home from a visit to the Northwest Railway Museum.

Museum Updates

New Exhibit Progress

Work continues on the new exhibit interpreting the railway's impact on food and farming in the Pacific Northwest. Staff and volunteers have installed lighting and projection screens and are in the process of installing the intricately detailed dioramas.

Roundhouse Project

The Museum's long-planned Roundhouse Exhibit Gallery and Turntable project got off to a start with the "prebuild" of a new parking lot, which will add 37 parking stalls and will immediately support Train Shed visitation, especially Story Time visitors.

CRW Crossing

The Conservation and Restoration Workshop got a new concrete apron for the main roll-up door entry. This will make it much easier to transfer materials in and out of the facility with a forklift.

Locomotive 924

The 924 is temporarily out of service due to issues with one of its bearings. The Museum does not know when it will be returned to service, but values the safety of its visitors and equipment above all else and does not make this decision lightly.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteers contribute in so many different ways at the Northwest Railway Museum, sometimes for many years. This Sounder features the Museum's volunteers and their stories of connection with and passion for the Museum.

David O.

David O. volunteers as both a diesel and steam engineer, a conductor, and is a member of the Museum's Board of Directors. He has volunteered with the Northwest Railway Museum since 1999.

"Turns out that my first visit to the Museum was probably in the spring of 1992, a year or so after I graduated from college and moved up to the PNW. My then future spouse took a picture of me smiling from my seat on one of the wooden park benches in SP&S 213 as we were, I expect, awaiting departure from the historic Snoqualmie Depot.

About seven years later, my brother-in-law, who was perusing the Woodinville Weekly that we'd just received in our postal mail (yes, actual paper!), mentioned to me that he'd seen an advertisement placed by the Museum seeking volunteers for its Running Trades program. I don't recall the exact wording, but it was something along the lines of (I'm paraphrasing here...) "Come learn to be a switchman, conductor or engineer at the Northwest Railway Museum! No prior experience necessary!" And I was like "Volunteer? Wait. I don't have to PAY to learn how to do that??"

I think I started as a volunteer when I showed up, possibly for the first time, at an annual "Training Bash" where in one amazing day I got to learn about the Rules and the Timetable and Special Instructions and how to hook and unhook air hoses and get on and off moving equipment! I was hooked (to use a bad pun) and the rest, as they say, is history."

"My favorite part of volunteering has changed over the years as I have. At first, having been a model railroader as a teenager, with the scale growing as I did, it was the "12 inches to the foot scale" of operations and, to some extent, of restoration that was the immediate draw for me. But later as I started to interact with more families visiting with their young kids, it became as much about those families having a great experience. I'd never been particularly "good" at remembering facts, so the actual history aspect never much caught on - until the steam program started at the Museum. Since then it has been my privilege and passion to try to learn as much as I can about the safe and efficient historical operation, maintenance, and evolution of the steam locomotive and, as a member of a small, but multi-generational, community of practitioners of the art in the modern era, demonstrate and be able to convey that for curious visitors who, until their visit to the Museum, may never have seen one in living, breathing operation."

Summer Road Trip Boredom Buster: Paper Spinners

Summer road trips mean long rides in a plane, car, or a train! Imagine you are kid riding the train in 1900. Without a cellphone, a video game, or Spotify, what are you going to do? Children would bring paper dolls, Jacob's Ladder toys, card games, or other simple toys to pass the time. Using household supplies, let's make a paper spinner to help pass those long hours!

Supplies:

- Markers, Crayons, or Colored Pencils
- Printer Paper or Construction Paper
- Cardboard (like an old cereal box or tissue box)
- Scissors
- String or Yarn
- Glue
- Ruler/Measuring tape

1. Draw two equal sized circles on your Printer Paper. Decorate them with the markers. Perhaps a locomotive? Cut them out when finished.
2. Using the paper circles as a guide, trace 1 circle on the cardboard. Cut the cardboard circle out and glue the paper on either side.
3. Carefully poke two small holes in the center of the circle. The hole should be big enough to get your string/yarn through.
4. Cut your yarn or rope to 30 inches. Then, thread the yarn through one hole. Thread the other end of the string through the other hole. Both loose ends of the string should be out on the same side. Tie the ends in a knot.
5. With the circle in the middle of your string, roll the circle forward several times to twist the rope. When the rope is twisted pull on the ends, then relax, then pull again! It should make a small humming noise. See if you can repeat the motions to keep the sound going!

This is a simplified version of a historic toy called a buzzsaw or whirligig! Typically fashioned out of wood, the circle usually has a gear shape carved into the edges. The air moving between the teeth of the gear shape is what makes the distinctive buzzing or humming sound when the strings are pulled.

Image from Cooperman Historical Toys

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