

PACIFIC NORTHWEST RAIL NEWS

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D.J. Cooley: His Books Show You Where The Trains Are Going

BY BILL VIRGIN
Editor/Publisher

Whether it's a researcher tracing railroads' development and their influence on the nation's growth and history, a traveler interpreting the view out the window of a train or a railfan trying to make sense of a spaghetti tangle of intersecting lines, maps are hugely useful tools.

A longtime railroad-map fan has carved out a business niche in the production of those tools, in the form of slim books (designed to slip into a coat pocket or camera bag), detailing not just where the rail lines are, where they've been and where they're going but what they pass along the way.

Through his Sonrisa Publishing, D.J. Cooley has compiled a library of such map books recording sections of the country and specific train routes.

An example of the latter is his latest, "Amtrak's Coast Starlight Route Map," chronicling the Seattle-to-Los-Angeles journey of one of the Northwest's two long-distance trains. He'd previously done a book on the Seattle-to-Chicago route of the Empire Builder.

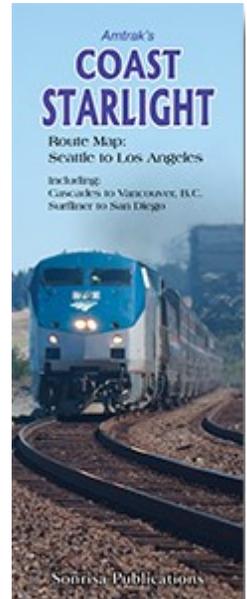
Each page of the book (46 pages, coil-bound, \$15) covers 50 miles of track in Washington, Oregon and California, list-

ing passenger and host railroad's freight stops (and their GPS coordinates), frequencies of railroad radio channels and detector and tunnel locations.

With that book done, Cooley, a resident of the southwestern Washington town of Raymond, is at work on his next, a rail-map book of the state of Wisconsin. So far he's done rail-map guides to 17 other states. He hopes to have the new one ready for the Winterail show in Oregon in March.

Mapping wasn't Cooley's prime occupation. For many years he worked in the fastener business (nuts, bolts and screws).

But maps have long been a fascination. "I've always loved poring over maps," he says. "My inspiration was the maps found in Trains and Model Railroader from when I was a kid. I've tried to maintain their clarity and simplicity in my own work. I figured there were others



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What Happened In 2016, What's Ahead For 2017

2016 was an eventful year on the Northwest rail scene. For the major freight operations, there was news over slumps in freight traffic, and controversy over oil and coal transport by rail (highlighted by a derailment and fire on a Union Pacific line in the Columbia Gorge). Alaska Railroad experimented with liquid-LNG transport by rail.

On the transit scene, Seattle got a new streetcar line and the opening of a light-rail extension between downtown and the University of Washington. For tourism rail, the big news was the acquisition of Mt. Rainier Railroad, and the end of service on Idaho's Thunder Mountain Line and the North Pend Oreille Lions Club excursions in northeastern Washington.

Rail history and preservation fans got a new museum to visit, in Reardan, Wash., but there were some losses as well, such as three vintage Seattle-waterfront trolleys headed to St. Louis. A huge loss was the passing of legendary railroad photographer and author Jim Fredrickson.

How much news is 2017 going to generate, and in what form?

A big annual question for many railfans is whether they'll see more steam operations. It's been a while since the region has seen mainline steam, but at least one trip is set for 2017: Southern Pacific 4449 will be pulling a two-day excursion from its home in Portland along the Columbia River Gorge and the Deschutes River canyon June 24-25. Details and ticket information will be released through 4449.com.

One regularly scheduled non-steam excursion operation in Portland will get a late start in 2017. Oregon Pacific Railroad is delaying its winter excursions from January until March due to weather, construction projects and the line's freight operations. OPR said it hopes to resume Saturday operation March 4 and continue through fall. The excursions operate from the Oregon Rail Heritage Center.

Transit riders will see the start of construction on some

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COVERING WASHINGTON, OREGON, IDAHO, MONTANA, ALASKA AND B.C.

D.J. Cooley: More Regional Map Books Coming As He Heads East

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that had the same interest and began producing railroad maps in book form.”

His first book was “Western Washington Railroad Maps,” published in 1998 (today Washington and Northern Idaho are combined in one volume); a few, like a guide to Stampede Pass, are now out of print. His first dealer was Jim Nichols' Express Station Hobbies in Tukwila.

Cooley's mapping starts with U.S. Geological Survey topographical maps. “At first I was physically tracing and plotting on paper, then transferring to computer manually,” he says. “Then I traced scanned paper maps directly to a computer file. Now the USGS has their complete inventory scanned and available on the web, which is much quicker and more accurate than stitching together manual scans. I still ‘trace’ by hand, but on the screen instead of paper.”

While there are other computer-based mapping approaches, “I prefer the hand-drawn look. And though its not impossible to teach an old dog new tricks, I find I'm much pickier about which ones I spend time learning (or paying for).”

The books are particularly valuable for tracking the proliferation of short-line operations in the Northwest. The Washington-Idaho guide, for example, notes that it covers BNSF and Union Pacific, as well as Camas Prairie Railnet, Cascade & Columbia River, Columbia Basin, Meeker Southern, Montana Rail Link, Palouse River and Coulee City, Pend Oreille Valley, Puget Sound & Pacific, St. Maries River, Tacoma Rail and Toppenish, Simcoe & Western.

Cooley says the amount of fieldwork he does for map-research purposes is “very little. When I have the opportunity, I field check my work, but you can see very little of the railroad from the ground. I do rely on others for their expertise in areas I've never been to. Most ‘field’ checking is done now with recent aerial photos.”

What he's aiming for is a map that combines information and readability, which he considers an art form. “I view map-making from an illustrator's viewpoint instead of drafting, since a good-looking and readable map requires as much art

as technical accuracy,” he says. “Just as important are railroad data such as employee timetables and track charts. Without them it's hard to correlate maps and photos with railroad points such as stations, which are little more than a sign post today.”

Cooley says his overall strategy is to “continue to push eastward, which exposes the books to entirely new audiences.” He previously crossed the Mississippi River with guides to Minnesota and Illinois. He's also working on updates to earlier editions, needed to keep up with constant change on the shortline scene, as well as route-map books for Amtrak trains. “It all depends on how long my eyes and drawing arm hold out.”

All that leaves a limited amount of time for his own rail-fan activities; when he does, it's primarily of freight operations in non-urban settings. “But since moving to an area that pulled up its rails in the '90s I don't get out as much as I used to,” he says.

Order map-books at djcooley.com

A 1901 Parlor Car Could Be Moving

Northwest Railway Museum in Snoqualmie, Wash., is hoping to raise money to move a 1901 wooden Pullman parlor car from its current location on an island to the museum's heated and covered exhibit building. The parlor car operated on the Northern Pacific Railway with limited alterations (electric lights were added in 1914) until it was retired in 1940. The car has since served as a cottage on an island in the Puget Sound.

The museum says Parlor Car 1799 is almost completely intact and has nearly all of its original interior hardware. With wheels and couplers reinstalled the car could be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and similar listings, qualifying it for restoration and conservation grants.

Moving the car from the island to Snoqualmie could cost \$67,000, while another \$125,000 will be needed for basic rehab measures including restoration of the air brake system and placing trucks under the car. Donation information can be found at the website (trainmuseum.org).

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TIMETABLE

Jan. 14-16	Seattle	Pacific Science Center 43rd annual train show, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. each day, included with museum admission: Information: pacsci.org.
Jan. 21	Portland	Spokane Portland & Seattle Railway Historical Society railroad swap meet, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Holiday Inn Portland Airport. Admission: Adults \$5, children under 12 free. Information: spshs.org.
Jan. 21-22	Puyallup, WA	World’s Greatest Hobby model train show, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, Washington State Fairgrounds. Admission: Adults \$15 a door, discounts available for advance purchase, children under 16 free. Information: wgh.trains.com.
Jan. 28-29	Portland	Great Train Show, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Portland Expo Center. Admission: Adults \$10 for both days, \$9 Sunday, discount coupons available on website, children 11 and under free. Information: greattrainshow.com.
Feb. 25-26	Monroe, WA	United NorthWest Model Railroad Club 26th annual Washington State Model Train Show and Marketplace, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, Evergreen State Fairgrounds. Admission: Adults \$8, juniors (10-18) and seniors \$6, children 9 and under free with paid adult. Information: unwclub.org.

2017 Outlook: Multiple Steam-Locomotive Restoration Projects In The Northwest

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major projects. The city of Seattle has already started utility location work for the Center City Connector streetcar project linking two existing lines, in the South Lake Union and First Hill neighborhoods. The new line will run along First Avenue. Full construction is scheduled to launch in the second half of 2017.

With voters approving a massive funding package for light-rail expansion, Sound Transit is getting to work on those projects. The U.S. Department of Transportation has approved a \$1.99 billion loan agreement with Sound Transit under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act for Northgate Link, a 4.3-mile extension from the University of Washington Station at Husky Stadium to Northgate Mall, opening in 2021, with a loan amount of \$615.3 million; Lynnwood Link, 8.5-miles from Northgate to the Lynnwood Transit Center, opening in 2023, \$657.9 million; Federal Way Link Extension, 7.5-miles from South 200th Street in SeaTac to the Federal Way Transit Center, opening in 2024, \$629.5 million; and a new operations and maintenance facility, \$87.7 million.

On the restoration scene, several projects are advancing, including Northwest Railway Museum’s plan to return a long-time static-display locomotive to steam. Oregon Scenic is working on a steam restoration project as well as building replica of a Southern Pacific depot at Garibaldi. Fraser Valley Heritage Railway in B.C. plans to have its 1911 BCER interurban car 1304, the Connaught, ready in August. And work

continues on the boiler rebuild for SP&S 700 in Portland.

Willamette Shore Trolley, part of the Oregon Electric Railway Museum, has been operating a limited excursion service from Lake Oswego, but it hasn’t been able to go as far as the Portland waterfront because of construction work on the Sellwood Bridge. With that done, the trolley rides could be extended this year.

One preservation project that doesn’t directly involve trains operating today is the John Wayne Pioneer Trail, running on the former right of way of the Milwaukee Road. A legislative effort to close down the eastern part of the trail, operated as a state park, spurred supporters to action, lobbying not only to preserve it but to bridge some gaps in the line.

Cascade Rail Foundation, an organization devoted to Milwaukee Road history which has taken on the cause of the trail, says a Washington State Parks budget request for 2017-2019 “includes funding for planning work that will address the gap left by the removal of the Cow Creek Trestle, lay the groundwork needed to reopen tunnels 43 and 44 and trestles EE-128 and EE-130 along Rock Lake (between Malden and Ewan), and design trailheads at Kenova, Rock Lake, Revere, Marengo, Ralston and Lind.”

Washington State Parks is also seeking grants for improving the Renslow Trestle over I-90 and the Tekoa Trestle. One other proposal: discarding the John Wayne Pioneer Trail name and replacing it with something more identifiable with the trail.

ON THE WIRE: THE LATEST RAIL NEWS FROM AROUND THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST



“each carry considerable costs that do not align with the city’s current fiscal reality.” Proponents of the project have argued that the roundhouse could be used as a base for a train excursion service, and have organized a Facebook group, Save the Simpson Roundhouse. **Photo from Artifacts Consulting Inc.**

SHELTON, Wash.: Shelton’s city commissioners have voted to decline donation of the former Simpson roundhouse (PNW Rail News June 2016), citing the cost of the project. Commissioners did vote to accept a rail line in the city that could be used as a trail. “A trail holds potential for significant quality of life improvements to downtown residents and visitors,” said a memo from city staff. Other options including taking over and restoring the roundhouse

VANCOUVER, B.C.: Winnipeg-based G3 plans to build a grain handling and export facility to be constructed at the Port of Vancouver, the first new grain terminal constructed there since the 1960s. G3’s Vancouver terminal will feature a rail loop track that will be capable of holding three 134-car trains.

WALLULA, Wash. Union Pacific has acquired Railex LLC’s refrigerated and cold storage distribution facilities in Wallula, east of the Tri-Cities, and in California and New York state. UP Food Trains move fruits, vegetables and other temperature-sensitive cargo from Washington and California to the Midwest via Chicago, and to the Northeast on CSX. The deal does not include Railex Wine Services LLC, which operates a 500,000-square-foot wine distribution center in Wallula.

Railroad Bookshelf: Four Titles Of Regional Interest From Arcadia

Arcadia Publishing is known for its pictorial histories of all aspects of and places in American life, including its Images of Rail series. It also publishes picture compilations of modern subjects, including rail scenes. It’s been busy recently with books of both types on rail subjects in the Northwest.

Portland-area author D.C. Jesse Burkhardt produced a book in 2004 for Arcadia on the historic “Railroads of the Columbia River Gorge.” In 2016 he put together a look at the modern railroading scene in the gorge, **“Columbia River Gorge Railroads,”** (paperback, \$22.99) a 96-page book with 161 color images.

From Arcadia’s Images Through Time series comes **“Eastern Oregon Shortline Railroads”** (176 pages, paperback, \$32.95) by Jeff Moore, featuring 174 images of such lines as Big Creek & Telocaset; City of Prineville; Condon, Kinzua & Southern; Idaho, Northern & Pacific; Klamath Northern; Oregon & Northwestern; Oregon, California & Eastern; Oregon Eastern Division of the Wyoming/Colorado; Sumpter Valley; Union Rail-

road of Oregon; and Wallowa Union.

The Northern Pacific and its boom-and-bust proprietor Henry Villard were responsible for some amazing architecture in the region, **“Railway Palaces of Portland, Oregon: The Architectural Legacy of Henry Villard”** (The History Press, paperback, 120 pages, 85 images, \$21.95) by Alexander Benjamin Craghead details that history in such buildings as the original Portland Hotel, and Villard’s role in preserving Union Station.

Richard Thompson has written multiple books for Arcadia on Portland and Willamette Valley streetcars and interurbans (PNW Rail News December 2012). His latest, **“Lost Oregon Streetcars,”** (The History Press, 58 images, 76 pages) tells some of the forgotten stories of the state’s electric railway legacy, such as the 1922 fire that scorched Astoria’s plank-road railways and put a halt to its once-thriving streetcar network, the white horse named Old Charlie that pulled Albany’s streetcar, and the special “drunk express” trains delivering university students back to their dormitories.

