



THE WEBFOOTER

**SINCE 1966 - THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
WEBFOOTERS POST CARD CLUB IN PORTLAND, OREGON**

"Every subject known to man can be found on a post card" – Club Motto

www.thewebfooters.com

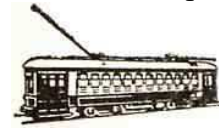
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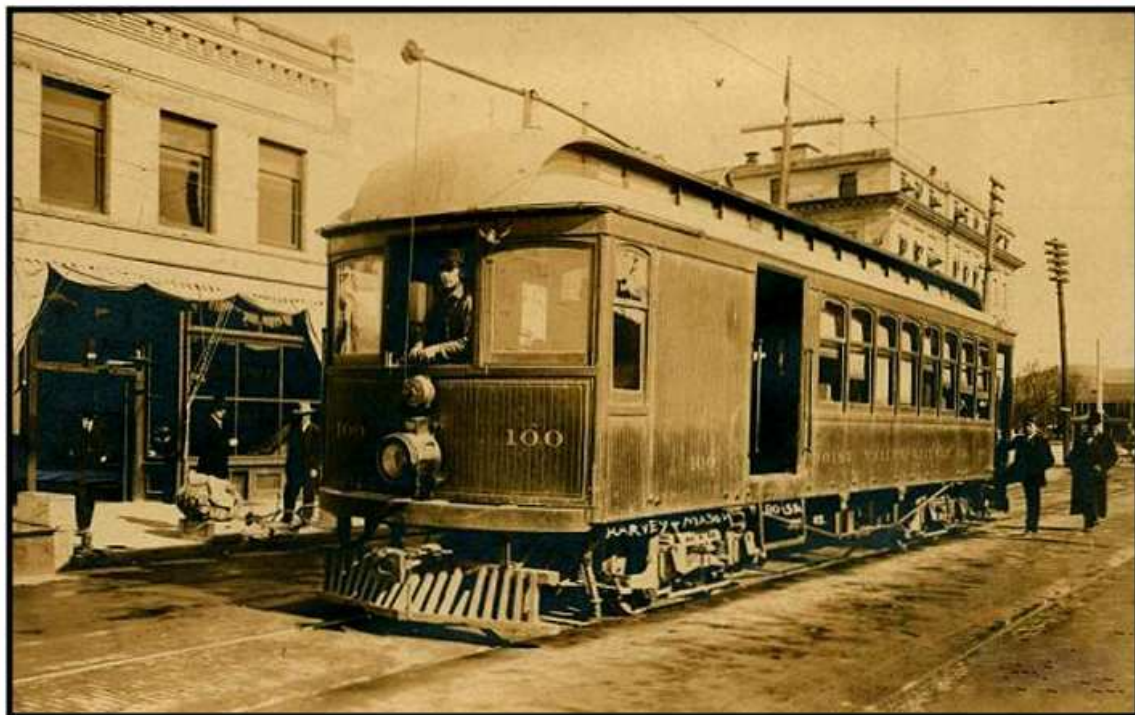
August 2009



Boise Valley



Streetcars and Interurbans



Boise Valley Railway Car No. 100.

- ◆ See Page 3: Remembering the Boise Valley Streetcars and Interurbans.
- ◆ Member News on Page 8 – Board Meeting Minutes on Page 9

Next Meeting – August 15, 2009

At Russellville Grange – 12105 NE Prescott Street

10 am to 3:30 pm

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BOISE VALLEY STREETCARS and INTERURBANS

By Mark Moore

The name *Boise* comes from the French word *boisé*, which means "wooded." Many people assume that it means "tree", but the French word for "tree" is *arbre*, whereas the word *bois* means "wood" or "woods."

One legend claims that the land that would become Boise, Idaho was discovered by a group of French-Canadian fur trappers in the early 1800s. When the trappers came over the mountains and looked down from Bonneville Point upon the Boise River Valley, they exclaimed "Les bois!" (the woods!). Today, the city is still commonly referred to as "*The City of Trees.*"

The Oregon Trail, a popular route running from Missouri to Oregon, brought many travelers through the area, increasing the need for trade and services in the town. A new fort in the Boise Valley was located adjacent to the settlement named Boise shortly after gold was discovered in the area in 1862.

Boise was incorporated as a city within the Idaho Territory in 1864. Idaho became a state in 1890 and a streetcar system opened in 1891. At that time, the area's population was about 88,000.

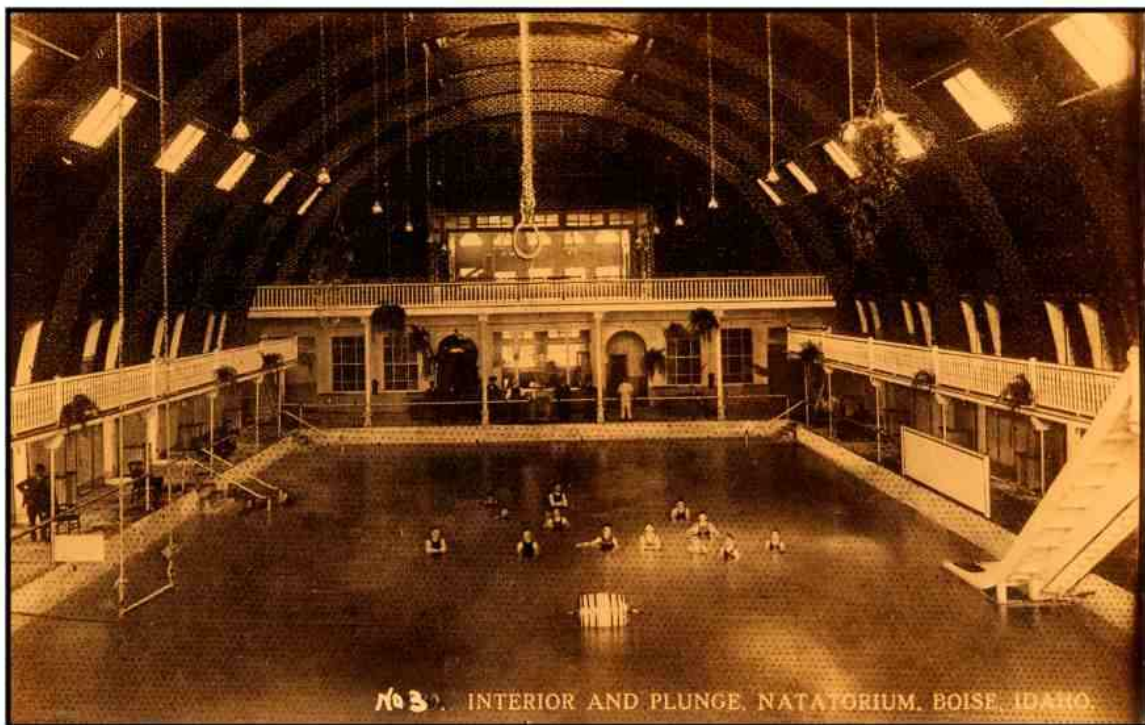


Streetcars on Main Street looking west toward the twin towers of the famous Idanha Hotel.



Exterior view of Boise's Natatorium.

The Boise City Rapid Transit Company opened one streetcar line on Main Street in 1891 with a passing track in front of the Belgravia. For a nickel, one could take the streetcar out Warm Springs Avenue to the Natatorium.



Interior view of the Natatorium.

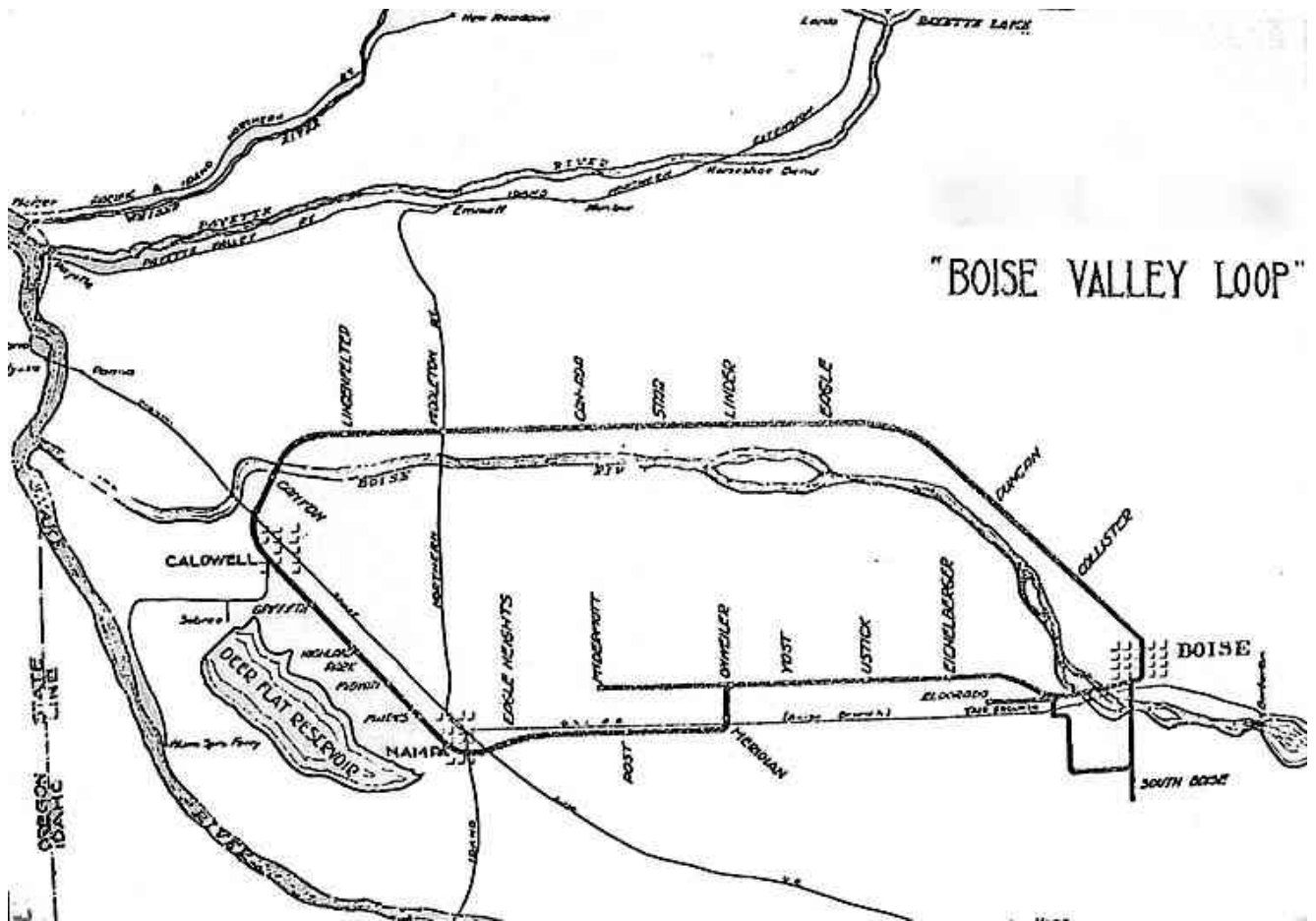
Boise began to grow and new subdivisions sprang up around town. Additional miles of track were laid to reach the newer parts of town. Then in 1905, construction began on two new lines designed to connect Boise, Nampa, Caldwell and the surrounding areas. The Boise Interurban Railway, which was the northern extension of this loop system, connected the towns of Eagle, Star and Middleton along the Boise River. Service to Caldwell began on August 16, 1907.



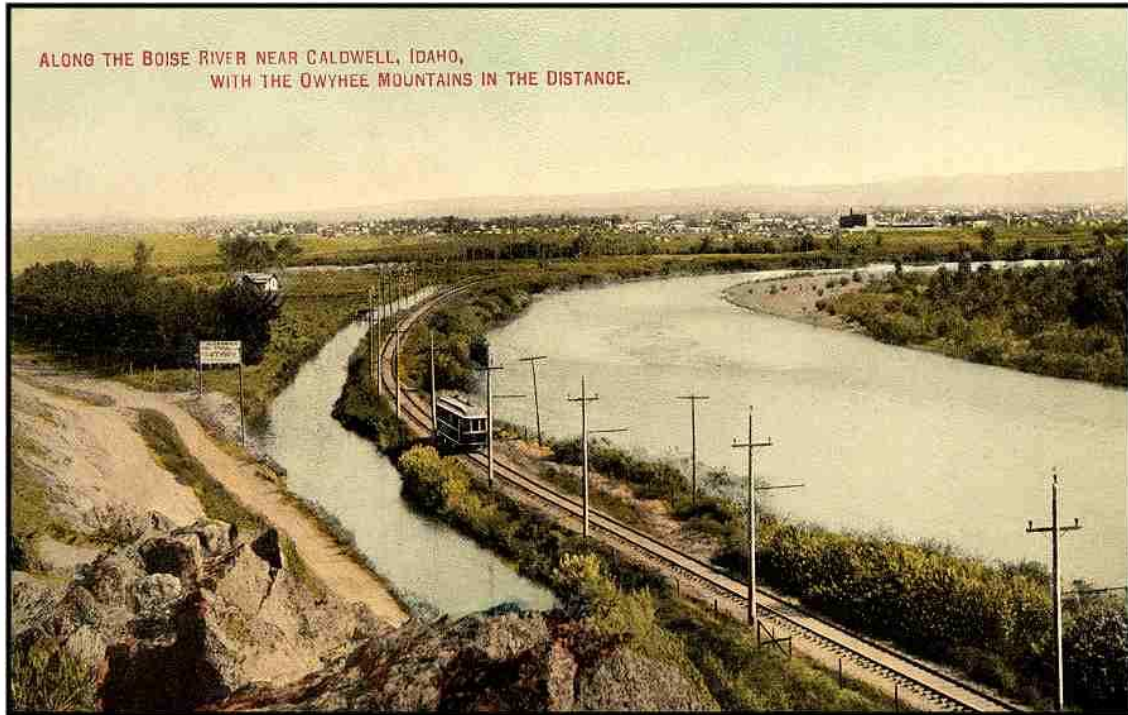
6920 Street Scene, Caldwell, Idaho,

Inaugural run of the Boise-Caldwell interurban car at Caldwell in 1907.

Meanwhile, Boise Valley Railway was laying tracks up Fairview to Ustick Road, which it followed until the rail line curved south into Nampa. This line was later relocated through Meridian. A national financial panic halted construction in 1908, but local passenger service was added along Fairview to Cole School. Another branch went to Hillcrest and South Boise, where carbarns were located on Rossi, one block west of Broadway. A new depot was built in Boise at Seventh & Bannock.



The interurban loop was completed through Meridian in July of 1908. Tracks in Meridian went west from the corner of Meridian and Pine Streets south to Broadway, east to East Third, north to Pine and west to the intersection of Meridian and Pine, forming a turnaround. A spur ran from Broadway and East Third Streets enabling the transfer from the Oregon Short Line (later Union Pacific) to Boise via the Boise Valley Railway Company. In 1912, the Boise Valley Loop was completed, allowing passengers to ride the 70-mile loop between Boise and Caldwell. Both systems became part of the Idaho Railway Light & Power Company in 1912. Students at the College of Idaho were frequent passengers on the line.



Early view of an interurban car along the Boise River near Caldwell, Idaho.

One of the builders of the Boise Hotel, Walter Pierce, a pioneer real estate developer, established a recreation area at the western terminus of the Loop which he named Pierce Park. City dwellers in Boise could take the interurban loop for a weekend excursion to Pierce Park which later became Boise's Plantation Golf Course.

Facilities on the Loop included power substations at Pierce Park and Middleton, a large carbarn at Pierce Park, depots in Caldwell and Boise and many small stations and shelters at one to two-mile intervals along the route. City streetcars were added in Boise on a loop called the "belt line" which ran north on Tenth and Fifteenth Streets to Dewey and back on Eighteenth.

The Caldwell Traction Company began operation in 1913. It operated about 27 miles of track on two routes; south to Huston and McNeil, on to the Snake River at Marsing's Ferry with a branch to Lake Lowell (formerly known as Deer Flat Reservoir) and west to Wilder where it leased another branch of the Oregon Short Line and electrified the route. The operation included both freight and passenger service, but the railroad had a very hard time staying profitable. When Caldwell Traction failed in 1920, the lease was cancelled and Union Pacific retained ownership of the lines. The bankrupt operation was abandoned in 1924.

Meanwhile, the Idaho Power Company became the parent of the Boise Valley Traction Company and in 1916 there were 39 passenger and service cars with 70 miles of track west of Boise and 13 miles of track in Boise.



An interurban car pulls into the Nampa Depot, circa 1915.



An interurban car at the Ballantine Depot near Nampa.

In 1920, the Boise Valley Traction Company had its best year. The cars had logged over a million car miles and they carried more than two and a half million passengers. Over the next few years, passenger and freight service declined and on May 17, 1928, all operations ceased. The rolling stock was scrapped.

The Boise Valley has continued to grow, located in the center between Salt Lake City and Portland. The Boise area is now the third largest metropolitan area in the Northwest and as it grows, it is again considering bringing streetcars to Boise streets with a planned 2-mile stretch of track downtown and a later extension to Boise State University. There is talk of extending quick, efficient light rail transportation to Meridian, Nampa and Caldwell in the coming years.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Webfooters: Ben Collins of Eagle, Idaho and Steve & Janet Schmale of Outwest Paper for contributing photos and information for this article.

Note from Judy Nagle

We would like to thank the following folks who supported our Webfooters Post Card Club Baseball Cap Fundraiser with the purchase of a cap at our last meeting: Laurie Alcocer bought two, Max Bortnick and Frank Tyrrell each bought one. This brings our total to 21 hats sold for a sum of \$415.00 deposited into our treasury.

These caps were donated by AB Emblem in Western North Carolina, the same factory that creates and embroiders the patches and emblems for the space program (NASA), as well as the US military and many civic organizations and businesses throughout the world.

Judy Nagle will continue to be responsible for selling the caps and should anyone desire to purchase one, she can be contacted at either 541-994-9502 in Lincoln City or at dutsum60@mac.com. Additionally, she'll be bringing them to club meetings when she and Bruce are able to come in from the coast.

Members in the News

Webfooter Art Larrance, member 1717, of the Raccoon Lodge & Brew Pub at 7424 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy, was recently featured in the local television news for organizing the 22nd Annual Oregon Brewers Festival which was recently held in Waterfront Park in Portland.

Member Needs & Wants

Wanted: Chinese Macerated Stamp Art postcards. Top prices paid. Write to: Bertram Cohen, 455 Clinton Road, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467. Or phone Bert at: 617-487-5808. Email: marblebert@aol.com.

Bert also sends word of the 30th Anniversary of the Northeast Marble Meet 2009 to be held October 10th & 11th 2009 at The Marriott Courtyard, 75 Felton Street in Marlborough, Massachusetts. For more information contact Bert at the above address or visit his Web site at www.marblebert.com

With the increases in printing and postage costs, we cannot guarantee that we will have room to print Member Needs & Wants or Classified Advertising. However, we will make every effort to include all paid advertising.

See the full color version of this newsletter at www.thewebfooters.com

Board Meeting Minutes

Attending the July 15th, 2009 Webfooter's Board Meeting, held at Elmer's Restaurant were: Mark Moore (President), Tony Roberts (Vice President), Irene Adams (Director) and Maggie Parypa (Secretary). After a call to order at approximately 6:45 PM, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as published.

Report of Standing Committees

Membership – Chair Krissy Durden reported via e-mail that there are 227 Active Members (98 individual members, 98 Family Members, 22 Patron Members, 6 Honor Members). Club members voted to extend Bill White's Honorary Membership for two more years.

Refreshments – Janice Ahl & Steve Bieler are signed up for the August meeting. If you are providing refreshments don't forget to save your receipts for Arne.

Auction – We hope to have another auction next year.

Show – There are contracts available for next year's show. Mark designed wonderful new Show Advertising Cards with a horse drawn milk wagon in Sellwood. Please feel free to take these cards around to your neighborhood shops to help promote this interesting hobby. There will be more discussion about an auction in the future.

New Business

At our September meeting, we will announce candidates for officers for next year. If you have an interest in helping lead our group into the future, please join our meeting or let us know.

For our Annual Meeting in November, Mark suggested that we focus on how to repair damaged postcards. We are the stewards of these treasures and enhancing their images will benefit all of us, if done properly. We ask our members to bring damaged cards that could be "repaired." We will show you how to remove the silver oxide that damages the images on real photo postcards and we would like to show you how to remove the black album paper that is frequently glued to the back of the cards. We can also show you a few tricks to improve printed cards as well.

For our December Meeting, when we hold our annual indoor picnic, Tony Roberts volunteered to bring his collection of Wartime Christmas Postcards from World Wars I and II.

The Board members voted to purchase a new computer program, "Adobe Acrobat", which is used to format the Newsletters for the printing company and for use on our Web site. The old version we had been using quit working.

At our membership meeting, Phyllis Palmer suggested that we order pin back buttons for The Club. She and Al Powers requested that we use the original artwork of Webster the Duck. The Club created pin backs about 15 years ago that featured a frog. It was agreed that we accept designs for a button and allow the membership to choose their favorite. Frank suggested that we get in touch with the promoters of Expo to see what company they use.

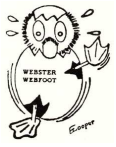
The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 16th, 2009 at Elmer's Restaurant at 10001 NE Sandy Blvd at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Parypa, Secretary





Club Officers

President/Editor.....Mark Moore
Vice President.....Tony Roberts
Secretary.....Maggie Parypa
Treasurer.....Arne Soland
Membership Chairman.....Krissy Durden
Directors.....Irene Adams and Phyllis Palmer
Historian.....Joe Macdonald
Librarian.....Steve Kuryk



Calendar

**August 15 – Webfooters Post Card Club Meeting at Russellville Grange
12105 NE Prescott St near 122nd & Sandy Blvd – 10:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**September 16 – Webfooters Board Meeting at Elmer’s Restaurant (no host)
10001 NE Sandy Blvd – 6:30 pm (Board Meetings held every other month)**

**September 19 – Webfooters Post Card Club Meeting at Russellville Grange
12105 NE Prescott St near 122nd & Sandy Blvd – 10:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**October 17 – Webfooters Post Card Club Meeting at Russellville Grange
12105 NE Prescott St near 122nd & Sandy Blvd – 10:00 am to 3:30 pm**

For the latest news, visit our website:



www.thewebfooters.com



WEBFOOTERS POST CARD CLUB

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