

14 Bonner History Roundtable: Local Railroad History

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<https://youtu.be/1ASyRycr22w?si=Ghd3Aa2aOCTFs6HV>

Dennis Sain

Bob Bateman

Bill Taylor

This program has been edited for clarity.

(Intro music and credits)

[00:00:58] **Dennis Sain:** (Dennis Sain, Bob Bateman, and Bill Taylor sit at roundtable) I guess we're about ready to start. We're here to give a history on railroad history in the Missoula area, and we have our distinguished publishers Bill and Jan Taylor here who have written several books on railroad history. We have an experienced railroad engineer, Bob Bateman, who is a Milwaukee engineer to Burlington Northern to MRL [Montana Rail Link]. We'll let Bob tell a few stories about Milwaukee history, and then we'll let Bill show his slides and give a little talk on the rest of it.

Bob Bateman: What kind of history?

Dennis Sain: Give a talk. Just a talk.

Bob Bateman: You didn't say I had to give a talk. (audience laughter)

Bill Taylor: You didn't tell me I had to give a talk.

Bob Bateman: He knows more about the Milwaukee than I do.

Dennis Sain: But you were an engineer.

Bob Bateman: Oh yeah. The only thing that saved us, Alan Burns and Jimmy Young. We didn't have to steer.

Dennis Sain: You said the other day you'd tell the story about Milwaukee and then

Bob Bateman: You want stories, just stories?

Dennis Sain: Yeah.

Bob Bateman: Other than just running the engines, stuff like that. Now, let's see, the very first time I made a student trip was Three Forks in 1972. Engineer's name was Julian Degidio. And the very first time I'd ever been on a Little Joe electric engine. That was pretty cool, being a rail fan guy, and I was, what, 23 years old. I climbed up on that engine and introduced myself and sat down over in the fireman seat against the window and opened up and was looking out, and he jumped on me like I was a five year old kid. He chewed me out somethin' horrible for sittin' in that fireman seat because I wasn't a fireman yet. I had to sit in the middle seat where the brakeman sat. So for the next seven years, Julian Degidio and I, we didn't get along very well. We had a lot of fun on the Milwaukee it was a little bit easier working. Even though the track was getting bad and it was deteriorating, the people there were great. We were just like a big family, everybody. And we had some incidents. Being a trainee, I sort of hit the box cab electric helpers into the train at Piedmont a little hard and broke the water bottle on the engine. And the engineer, his name was Red Pryor, he was in the substation and letting me do my own thing, and well I messed it up big time. He comes screaming up in that engine, and he was just laying into me. Well, there was a fireman on that job. What was his name, Jimmy?

Jim Younkin: Del Hart.

Bob Bateman: Del Hart, and he was restricted. He couldn't work the main line 'cause he had a big wreck in 16 Mile Canyon. Yeah, he couldn't work as an engineer. He was a fireman on the switch engine at Butte or the helpers at Butte. He was sittin' in the back of the rear unit and watched me make this hard joint on the train, and, of course, when I made the joint, the gallon water jug tipped over, broke all over the floor. Water, glass, and that Red Pryor come up there. He was already, he was sort of heavy set and he was bald, and he was already had a red complexion and stuff. Man, he was mad. Oh, he said, "I've worked here for 25 years and I've never made a joint that hard. You probably broke every frame on all of these engines."

[00:05:05] So then Del Hart, he came up, he was standin' in the cab and he looked around and he had a handlebar mustache and he was just standin' there twisting his handlebar mustache. Red Pryor just jumped on him horrible because he didn't dump the air and stop the engine so I wouldn't hit that train so hard. But then after

he got all settled down, he went back to the second unit and let me run the box cabs up the hill as a helper. So that was the first time I got to run the engines by myself, well kind of, up there.

Jim Younkin: Do you remember what Del Hart's nickname was?

Bob Bateman: Spook.

Jim Younkin: There you go.

Bob Bateman: I don't know why. I don't know why they called him Spook.

Jim Younkin: Well, he was kind of quiet and he was always (unclear) around the engine, and he'd sneak up behind you a lot of times.

Bob Bateman: Yeah, I remember that now. He just would sneak around sorta. Uncle Willie [Bateman], he was a rock hound. He had a rock shop on the east side of the Pipestone Pass about halfway down the canyon towards White Hall. He had all kinds of stuff in there, and that's all gone now when he passed away. I don't know. It's just the building isn't there or anything?

Unknown speaker: No.

Bob Bateman: There's a lot of stories like that. Jim and I were just talking, I worked for an engineer Hayden Levesque, and he'd been there a long, long time.

Jim Younkin: Frenchman.

Bob Bateman: Huh?

Jim Younkin: The old Frenchman.

Bob Bateman: Yeah, and he had a heart attack in Harlowton. We were laying over in Harlow, and I was a fireman for an engineer named Hank Rowe, and they called me in the middle of the night and took me off my fireman turn and set me up as engineer on his job back to Three Forks. I had to work that job, and then when he came back to work a couple months later, they wouldn't let him come back to work unless he had someone in the cab with him, a fireman that had to be qualified engineer. So they assigned me to him because I was the youngest fireman at Three Forks. He was kinda cranky, I guess maybe where you learn your crankiness, I guess. But he was kind of cranky, so we got along okay. Well, one night.. this is the weirdest thing in 35 years that ever happened to me on the railroad. He always had a thermos with a cup of coffee like everyone did, and a little bit before this, I'll say that in his grip, he carried a hammer. Just a little hammer. On the Milwaukee we got what we called initial terminal delay. When you went to work, say at noon, and let's say you left at one o'clock in the afternoon, you got paid for that hour, and then you got paid for whatever the miles were for your regular trip. So he had this hammer and just when you were getting ready to go and you were supposed to pull out, he would get down off the engine, take his little hammer, and he would hit every sander, every sandin' pipe on every engine. He figured that made an extra \$2,000 to \$3,000 for him a year in initial terminal delay. (audience laughter)

So now to get back, we were leaving Harlow two or three o'clock in the morning on a Little Joe and diesels behind. Like I said, he had the habit of - open his thermos cup of coffee, just like engineers do, put it on the controller on a Joe. It's kind of weird, but you set it up there and his thermos and his grip. So he did that a couple times, and then we're on our way up towards Loweth and coming down into Ringling. He gets out and he pours a cup of coffee, he turns his light on, pours a cup of coffee, puts the lid on it, opens the window and throws it out. Throws his thermos out the window. (audience laughter) I'm 24 by now, 25, and you're scared of these guys, these guys are old heads. So he had closed the window and turned his light off, and I didn't say anything. Not one word. (audience laughter) Oh, I'll tell you. I didn't say anything. We went half an hour, 40 minutes later, he goes to get another cup of coffee, so he turns on his light, he reaches down and he can't find his thermos. He's rummaging around and he looks over at me and he says, "Bateman. You see my thermos?" (audience laughter) It's one of those times in your life, you know, you don't want to say anything. You don't want to say anything.

[00:10:01] So I told him, "Hayden," I said, "last time you poured your cup of coffee you threw it out the window." (audience laughter) And he looked at me like I was just plum insane. So he looked down again. He looked and looked, and he couldn't find it. Finally he must have realized, or I guess he realized that he had done that. So he turned his light off and sat.. we're going along. Pretty soon he turned his light on again. He reaches in his grip and he gets that little hammer, and he beat the inside of that Little Joe to death. He broke every glass in all the gauges. He hit the windows, he hit the top of the roof. He just threw a temper tantrum that you just...was beyond belief. Puts his hammer back in and turns his light off and never said another word all the way to Three Forks. That was the weirdest thing that ever happened to me in all those years. When he threw his thermos.

Jim Younkin: The word is that Hayden's got a story like that.

Bob Bateman: Oh yeah. This gentleman I'm talking to, (referring to audience member) his name is Jim Younkin. He was a brakeman engineer, and he's been a railroader just as long as I have. He's got a better memory than I do, but they were on a work train out of Butte and the Milwaukee only had a couple of Tupelo cabooses. They were all bay windows. I had a brakeman working with me and I was the engineer on an eastbound with brand new diesels, brand new SD 40 - 2s. They just stunk like a new car. In 1973 they were brand new. So we're dragging up the hill. We're not going very fast, of course, and I can see him up there. He was standing up on top of that caboose with a big bowl of water. It's August. It's hot. You're running with your window open. He was going to soak me when we went by. He was going to throw that thing of water in the cab and soak me. Well, the brakeman that had been working with me had been bugging me the whole trip. He wanted to run the engine. His name was Gordon Lane. Well, you could see this coming, you know? (audience laughter) So I told him, "Gordon", I says, "you know, why don't you take her? We're not doin' anything, we're just draggin' along and use the sander when you want to and blow at the crossings and stuff." So I went over there and sat. The two seats on the engine, there's the brakeman's and the fireman's and then the engineer. I sat up in the front right next to the window, because I knew when that water came flyin' through, it'd go cockeyed through the cab.

So we're draggin' by there. He pops out and he just soaked him. I mean, he just soaked him and he turned to me, he knew right away then what I'd done. (audience laughter). There was so much water in there, that controller of that diesel was just soaked. You'd have thought that we'd blown fuses or the thing that went to ground or something. There's a lot of stories like that. And most of 'em, I remember on the Milwaukee there was a lot of BN (Burlington Northern Railway) stories also. Well, you just wanted Milwaukee stuff?

Dennis Sain: Anything, your career.. You've got an exceptional career.

Bob Bateman: Some folks around here might remember the Quinlan family. I know Uncle Willie does. Quinlan. Barney Quinlan and his folks, they had the Dew Drop Inn down here, the restaurant down here in West Riverside. And he, when I came to Missoula, he kind of took a liking to me because years ago he had dated my Aunt Louise, my Uncle Willie's older sister, and so he kind of liked me and, but he was always doing stuff to me. He was a big man. I mean, his hands, you put your hand up there (opens palms to demonstrate), a normal person. His hands were just big.

A couple times over the years that I worked for him most of the time on the Polson Local to Polson and back from Missoula. I'd have a new pair of gloves. Well, he'd grab those gloves and he'd put them on. "Well then these are pretty nice gloves. Bateman," he'd say and he'd go like that. (opens hand) Well then they're a whole size too big. He'd done that to me a couple times. Once in summer, we're switching around Polson and I was the fireman. The brakeman, you'd get out there and you'd help him, you know help stand and throw a switch for him or something so they wouldn't have to walk so far and things. I told Barney that day that I forgot my gloves. "Can I borrow his gloves?" This is really cool. He liked it.

[00:05:02] Anyway, so we're switching out there, and so I got on the fireman side of the engine opposite of where he was, and I laid his gloves on the track, on the rail and let the engine run over them about two or three times. (audience laughter) Cut all the fingers off. We got all done and I get up there and I says, "Here's your gloves back." He looked at those and he put them on just like your motorcycle gloves or something. There were no fingers left in them, so I got yelled at for that. He sat there one time I was coming down out of Evaro into Missoula on the local. Again, I was running and I see Mr. Glenn Hove here. He was the road foreman of engines at that time, so I probably shouldn't be telling these stories.

Unknown speaker: Retired.

Bob Bateman: Yeah, he's retired. Barney was sittin' in the fireman seat over there reading the paper. He was sittin' like this (mimes holding newspaper in front of face), and so I'm running the engine. The brakeman's sitting here.. no, the brakeman, he would be in the second, third unit, so just two of us up there. In your grip, you always carried Band-Aid and matches. Just a little, tiny first aid kit thing. And so I - and why he didn't smell the sulfur, I'll never know - but he's sitting there with the paper like this. So I struck that match and hit the bottom of that paper and you'd think that paper was soaked in gasoline. It just went whoof! Like that. Here he's sittin' there holding the two sides of the paper with smoke and ashes going everywhere, and I got yelled at for that one.

Let's see. A BN [Burlington Northern] story. Let's see, coming into Bonner on the Bonner local. Gary Larson, he's retired now too. He's been here a long time. I think it was his grandpa, Fred Larson, [who] ran the #5 and the #7 here. I got a newspaper article on him. He was telling me about that here at the mill and up in the woods. So I was the fireman, he was the engineer. Two times I got him really good. Going across the bridge right here when you come underneath the freeway (I-90), you know how that is. You got the trestle and then the Harold's

Club crossing and then the switch to go up to the mill. Just as we come across the curve, and at that time, before MRL [Montana Rail Link], the switches were 12 miles an hour. Now they're 30. You go in there 12, 15 miles an hour and then you have to set the air about the time you get to the bridge, because you have a whole bunch of logs behind you and empty chip cars and pretty good little train for a local. Just before he goes to set the air, I'd taken in my grip, extra handles. So just before he gets there, I reach over and I grabbed the independent, which is the engine brakes, and I grabbed the automatic, and I took them off and threw them in the river. (audience laughter) Right through that, they're still out there. As soon as we get permission people to float [river closed to recreation for Superfund cleanup], because now the river's only that deep there. I'm going to go wading out there, and see if I can find those handles and take him back to him. Of course, I got at yelled for that, and we just waited until he got close to the switch, and then dumps the air so we could get stopped. But I had extra handles in my grip so I gave him new ones and he still remembers that.

If a lot of you remember Harold's Club, there used to be a restaurant there. They had hamburgers, I don't know, they still have chicken or stuff like that. They had hamburgers. So we're switchin' the mill and that's, I can't remember what the grade is, down, was it 3% or 4% coming down in there? Down into the plywood? Pretty steep in there, and you had to get ahold of him to make your spot and make sure you didn't hit the end of the building, which happened one time. A box car kind of went through and people sitting at their desks and the box car. (makes zipping noise, audience laughter) We were talkin' about getting' some lunch. I was runnin' the engine, he's sittin' over there. We started down and with, I think you could put 8 or 12 cars or something there in that shed. I said, "Well, I'm gonna go get some hamburgers." So I just got up out of the seat and went out the back door, and he looked over and there's nobody running the engine and we're going down into the thing. I went over, I waved at him and went over and got some hamburgers and then when I got back; I got yelled at for that.

[00:19:58]So there's a lot of things. He did a lot of stuff and there's a lot of engineers who did a lot of stuff to me too, and I'm sure Mr. Younkin and Allen Burns, he's sitting back there, he's an engineer. Mr. Hovey is a full-time engineer, Missoula road foreman engines. There's just a lot of stories like that. It's a lot of hard work. It's a lifestyle that you either want to do or you don't want to do. You are gone all the time. You sit down to Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas dinner, and the phone rings and you're gone. You think you're going to be home and you're gone. You think you're going to go to work at five in the evening, you go to work at midnight, or just turn it around, something like that. It's a lifestyle that's different. You had to make your own fun. I'll just say one more and then I'll give it to Bill. This one here's good too. This was done to me too. On the Milwaukee, this Red **Pryor**, He smoked big cigars, and we're coming down off Pipestone Pass coming into White Hall and Piedmont in the middle of the night. He's sitting over there, of course, being against the rules, he's sitting over there sleeping. I'm running and that cigar just stunk. I'd complained to him about it and he said, if I didn't like it, I could go sit outside, because these guys, they were old head Milwaukee guys. You didn't really mess with them. I noticed over there he was, I mean, he was snoring away. He was sound asleep, which you're not supposed to be doing, by the way, so don't remember any of this. (audience laughter) Anyway, but that cigar was just, oh, it was killing me. Well, what he'd done, he smoked it down about that far (demonstrates with fingertips) and then unbeknownst to me, he flipped it underneath my seat. So it just smoldered there while he's asleep.

Another time, one more story I'll tell you. Coming down on the local with two Burlington Northern GP-9s, we had them switch engines, road switchers coming down out of Garrison, and it was the 4th of July within a couple of days. We only had a couple of three cars, and, of course, that time you had cabooses. There was a rear brakeman. This guy's name is Ron Stickney. He's now a retired engineer from MRL too, and he was the rear brakeman at that time. We're coming in to Piltzville, into Milltown, and all of a sudden I see this *swoosh* go by my window. Then pretty soon there's another one, and I couldn't figure out what in the heck is that. He was shooting bottle rockets from the caboose and they were goin' faster than we were. (audience laughter) I don't know why, but I mean, they were goin' the three cars, the two engine lights, they were goin' right by my window. Bottle rockets, you know, so he thought that was really cool too. Like I say, there's a lot of stories. It wasn't just a lot of work, which it was, and a lot of headaches a lot of times, but a lot of fun too. There's a hundred more stories I could tell, but Bill, he's getting anxious. (audience laughter)

Dennis Sain: Over to Mr. Taylor now then.

Bob Bateman: Besides I have a cold. (fake coughs, audience laughter)

Unknown speaker: What hard act follow, how do you follow stories of bottle rockets?

Bill Taylor: Well, I'm not a railroader. I have no particular connections to Bonner. I've lived in Missoula since 1964, but I'm a Helena boy. But I did marry a girl who had connections to Bonner. My wife Jan's sitting back there in the green and blue vest, and her family worked at the mill here before World War II. Then when the war broke out, her dad enlisted in the Marines, came home on a two-week furlough, met her mother who was taking

tickets at the Wilma Theater and they got married, and they've been very happily for quite a number of years and produced a daughter. In fact, her uncle, I think his name is on one of those beams over here in the mill plant.

So she has connections. If you want to know about mill relevance, she's the one to talk about rather than me. Dennis, in his persuasive way, asked me to participate in this and you may or may not know, Jan and I are rail historians. We've published some books on railroads in Montana, but nothing specific about Bonner. But I've been a photo collector for most of my life and I keep probably somewhere around 6,000 photos in a collection that pertains to railroading in the state.

[00:25:12]**Dennis Sain:** How can you keep a big collection without selling them?

Bill Taylor: Only if somebody will buy them?

Dennis Sain: I don't think you can do that.

[00:25:20]**Bill Taylor:** Only if someone will buy them can we sell them. Anyway (audience laughter) Anyway, I went to my collection and I came up with all of the Bonner-relevant photos I could come up with for this. There's only 26 of them, so don't be alarmed Any stories I tell may or may not be true. That's all I'll say about that. Without any other prologue, let's get going here.

(starts slideshow)

Bill Taylor: My real connection. (first slide introduces Bill) I'm a retired school teacher. I worked 35 years in Montana secondary schools. I came out of college with two degrees, one in history, one in English. I worked the English my whole life and history's always been kind of my hobby, and that evolved through a long, complicated set of circumstances into rail histories. Won't bore you with all the details. My railroad connections. Well, I worked on a passenger train for four years.

That's a picture of us there, and I own my own little speeder, and we do about 2000 miles a year on railroad tracks. A lot of here in Montana. I get a lot of enjoyment out of looking at engineering and asking myself why the railroad went here and seeing what evidence that you can of that.

(new slide introduces the railroads) I never know when I talk to a group how much you know about the railroads locally and this, I always try to tailor these things to be very local. Pardon the pun on Taylor. You got laughs. I didn't get any laughs. (audience laughter) Anyway, here's a quick review of the railroads that came through Bonner over its history, and then we'll move specifically to the NP (Northern Pacific), the first one. As I was looting my photo collection, I came up with something. (slide of NP routes between Bonner and Missoula) How many people know that NP went on three different routes between here in Missoula? A lot of people don't know that. When the railroad was built in 1883, it crossed the river right here coming in from Bonner, and then it pretty much followed the loop around that the road does today across Bandmann Flats. Then it crossed over into what would become East Missoula over here, just about the end of Speedway, just above the Bandmann bridge.

Used to be, you could see the old bridge abutments and things there, but I think there's been so much development in there the last few years that there's very little evidence of it left. That lasted from 1883 until 1888 and then rather than rebuild the wooden bridges, the NP moved their line around onto Marshall Grade, which is where the old highway goes today. That lasted until 1908, but Marshall Grade did then what it does now, it sloughs rock pretty bad, and I'll show you a picture of that in just a minute. And so in 1908, during another big remodel of the NP, when they made it into a double track mainline and made room for the Milwaukee on the same grade, they moved it back over on Bandmann Flats where MRL still is today.

(new slide aerial photo of Bandmann Flats) This is a 1937 aerial photograph from the US Forest Service showing Bandmann Flats, Bonner's over here, Missoula's over there. This is Marshall Grade, and you can see that old grade across Bandmann here. Again, that's roughly the route of the road that's there these days. Of course, at that time the highway was using the grade on Marshall Grade, and then you can see the new NP line down there. Yes.

Kim Briggeman: The golf course, Canyon River put there, the black tee, I think it's #5.

Bill Taylor: Oh really?

Kim Briggeman: On the eastern approach, right there by the river of that 1883. So it's still there.

Bill Taylor: The last time I looked here, there was a house built right on it. On the Bonner side. Yes, on the east side, and over here there's a whole line of Canyon Village housing in there now that's pretty much eradicated that, and I haven't checked out to see what's happened there, but I know you can still see down here closer to the

new main line, there's a power line runs right along the old grade there, and you can still see some of the old black cinder ballast along there. Which was both used in 1883 and in 1888 when they moved over to Marshall.

[00:30:09] **Mac Palmer:** And the street car used the grade north of the river.

Bill Taylor: That is correct. Mac points out the street car used the grade, Marshall Grade, until 1932.

Bob Bateman: January 28th. Hey Bill, did the Milwaukee pay for that move over?

Bill Taylor: (new slide scenes of trains passing through the area) The question is, did the Milwaukee move pay for the move? When the Milwaukee and the NP rebuilt out through the thing here, they had a two-thirds, one-third arrangement. Where you see those double tunnels or the big cuts the Milwaukee would pay one-third of that. The NP would pay two-thirds on the idea that the NP was a double track and the Milwaukee was a one track.

Bob Bateman: I wonder if because they moved their bridge right there the Milwaukee was coming at the same time. If they sort of enabled the Milwaukee to say, "If you want to come through here, then we need to pay for this bridge."

Bill Taylor: I don't know that. I don't know that for sure, Bob. I do know that the NP prior to the Milwaukee to the 1908 rebuild wound around the canyon, avoiding tunnels and crossings of the river. The Milwaukee to build through there would've had to cross grade several times, which is not something you want to do in a mainline railroad, and so the Milwaukee's coming was a big impetus to shorten that up. They shortened this line between here and Drummond by almost three miles when they did the double track and went through hills instead of going around them. So it was a big thing. A lot of people don't know Winston Brothers contracting firms built both grades. They had the contract for both. They brought supplies out on the NP and built the Milwaukee. Coincidentally, when the big 1908 flood hit and washed everything out between here and Drummond, it was decided that it was easier to build the NP first to get supplies through, which they did. They left the Milwaukee pretty much washed out until later that year, and that's why the Milwaukee's last spike ceremony doesn't happen until the following year, because they were getting to Missoula. I'll show you a picture of that in just a minute, but they got here via the NP. They came in on trackage rights from Garrison on the NP into Missoula until May of 1909. So the reason for that is a legal court case that happened way back. The Supreme Court decided that one railroad couldn't show a greater need for terrain than another and so they had to share. That meant you even had to give them trackage rights if they needed it. Pictures. Pictures out there on Bandmann are few and far between. This one's interesting up here. It started out as a photograph and then it's been heavily retouched by artists as was the style those days. This is Bonner, and this is a train on the Marshall Grade line pretty much where the highway is, but then there's this one over here, which is kind of interesting. Not at all where the first NP line went across Bandmann, but what it tells me is the artist had some lingering knowledge that it once did, and so he penciled it in. Never went that close to the river. This one here is 1890. Train hit a rock at Marshall Grade. That's the entrance to Marshall Canyon right there. There sits the engine and the rest of the train, and it's interesting to look at this photograph in some detail, because all those people are out just for a Sunday lark looking at this destroyed train out there at Marshall Grade.

And then this is a picture taken from the top of Marshall Grade looking towards East Missoula. Brickyard Hill up there with a train coming along the river here. Bateman, is that about where you live, right there?

Bob Bateman: Yes.

Bill Taylor: Bob and I went swimming in the river one time. I gotta tell a story. Years ago we'd seen this photograph, and we decided we'd go swim in the Clark Fork to see what we could find. I mean, who knows, maybe there's an engine bell down there or a headlight or heaven only knows what. I think all we found was a few old suckers and some rusty break rigging, but it was a fun day.

(new slide map) This is a 1909 Northern Pacific yard plat. The occasion for this was the realignment of their main, so this is 1909, and they're building the new bridge across the Blackfoot which is the same one MRL used today, but here's the old grade that was headed off for Marshall Grade and the old railroad bridge crossed the river right where the highway bridge does now.

[00:35:00] In fact, until they built this last bridge, you could see some evidence of the old railroad bridge supports underneath it when the water was low. These tracks up here, which they're calling the high line, are still there. That's those two tracks that are just across the street over here that BN used to use for some storage. Then you can see the Y track that went from there into the mill. It shows where the depot was located originally inside the legs of the Y and that's this depot which still exists, and then it got moved down east where we all remember it right over here where the orange caboos is today, and then it got moved again across the tracks, and this is a private storehouse now.

(new slide photos of the Big Blackfoot Mill) If we look at Bonner Mill, sometime in the same time, 1909. It's nowhere near as large as it was going to be a lot later, but the dam's in place. This might explain why all those sunken logs were out here when they removed the dam, but it had a partner. A lot of people don't realize that there was another Big Blackfoot Mill at St. Regis, which sat on a peninsula in the river. Kind of hard to see. Down behind where Tricon Lumber is now. A little bit to the east of that, and it was every bit as big as Bonner. This is the St. Regis mill. A couple of views of that looking out onto.. This is that peninsula the river's actually wrapping around behind the photographer here. When the Milwaukee came there was an interesting corporate connection between the Milwaukee Road and the ACM [Anaconda Copper Mining] Company. Daly was dead by this time. Amalgamated Copper had gotten ahold of most of the mining properties in Butte, including the timberlands, and it was being operated as a huge industrial incorporation. One of the major officers was a guy by the name of Rockefeller, not the same guy with Standard Oil, but similar. He was head of the Milwaukee and they became corporate cousins, so to speak. When the Milwaukee built through there was a lot of motivation for them to build to these two mills to service the mills rather than the NP, and so at St. Regis the Milwaukee built a four mile stub off the main line, crossing the Clark Fork on a four tier bridge to get into the St. Regis mill. Then they did the same thing here at Bonner to reach into this mill, and most of the switching operations at both mills were given over to the Milwaukee until the Milwaukee folded.

(new slide pictures of engines) They also ran their own timberlands uh logging railroads, and this is where I get into trouble because I haven't done a lot of research into logging railroads, so there's probably people in this room that know a whole lot more about what they're looking at than I do. But just a sampler here. This is a picture taken, I think somewhere near Woodworth, which is up here in the upper reaches of the Blackfoot.

Dennis Sain: No, McNamara's landing.

Bill Taylor: McNamara's Landing. Okay. See, I told you. So where's the river?

Dennis Sain: Behind the tree.

Bill Taylor: Okay. Has to be after 1913 because that's a Milwaukee caboose, and tracks didn't reach up that far until after 1913. Out at Trout Creek in western Montana, ACM also had timber holdings. Dennis tells me this is actually not an ACM engine. It's probably Western Lumber, but ACM had similar operations out there around Trout Creek, Montana. They ran up the Nine Mile, interchanged with the Milwaukee at Sudan. There's #2 working up the Nine Mile hauling logs out. And then this one, I just couldn't resist. Years ago I heard this story. It might have been from you. I heard this story about if you put on scuba tanks and you dive down in the lower reaches of Seeley Lake, there's with an old Shay locomotive sittin' on the bottom down there. I've heard similar stories 10 billion times, and I've yet to find any of these locomotives, and believe me, I've looked.

[00:39:51] What they did do is they would haul this Shay in there for the season. I believe this was probably Stolze out of Columbia Falls that was doing this and work up there and then in the winter, sometimes they would build track out across the ice to get it back out again, and this is the only evidence I barely ever found of that effort up there. Can you imagine the labor of putting that shay locomotive onto a barge in those days and towing it across Seeley Lake? I have a friend who is a scuba diver, who scuba dived out there in the bay of Swan Lake, and he tells me what is out there are piles of garbage, because apparently in the good old days in the wintertime people would take their garbage out there and stack it up, and then when the ice went out, it just went away.

(new slide photos of logging railroads) If we look at the Blackfoot up here, which is what we're most interested in here in Missoula, pictures up there are hard to find. I probably have maybe a dozen. Most of them are a much newer era and almost none of Big Blackfoot Railroad, which was centered out of Potomac, but here's a couple. This comes out of Darla Hands' collection. This is, it might even be her, swimming up at McNamara's Landing, looking down river where the highway bridge crosses now. Here's the old wooden trestle, which after when the Milwaukee built up the Blackfoot, they built a connection with Big Blackfoot to get across the river. This is looking at it the other way in a very bad photograph, but it's the only ones I've ever seen of that connection up there at McNamara's Landing. The highway is here now but you can still see these two old wagon road abutments in the river up there, which locates you to this photograph. And then here's a picture of much later. This is a [Rollin H.] McKay photograph probably in the 1920s of the Blackfoot branch at McNamara's Landing, and there's a loading platform right there, which I found interesting, probably taken from these cliffs. Then this is over near probably to Elk Creek. CM (Chicago Milwaukee) and STP (St. Paul) is what is penciled on here. Looks like it's probably #7 up there with a set of log flats and an old loader up there. If anybody knows more about these things, please chime in because I frankly don't.

Dennis Sain: It's referred to as a slide ass.

Bill Taylor: Slide ass loader. I was going to say that, but you know. (audience laughter)

Dennis Sain: The upper picture with the kids up in the very left hand corner. I have that picture. You can see the crane boom of Milwaukee crane sticking out through the trees.

Bill Taylor: I've looked at that too, Dennis. My thought is they're tearing it down because that bridge is in pretty tough shape, so it must have been right at the end of service.

Dennis Sain: 1916 is when the company left Potomac.

Bill Taylor: Okay. Yeah. You have to see a better rendering of it, but anyway, they're rare pictures.

(new slide photos of Bonner Dam) Coming back to Bonner between [William A.] Clark and building the Milltown Dam and the Milwaukee Road, that river's been remodeled a lot out there. I always get a chuckle when the EPA talks about putting it back into its original condition, like anybody knows what in the heck that is, because I have yet to see a photograph taken out there from before the dam. Has anybody else ever seen a photograph out there? So I think it's somebody's imagination what that river's supposed to look like, but be that as it may. Clark built the dam in 1908 to provide electric power for his Western Lumber Company, which was over here across the Blackfoot, and this has always been an odd tunnel. This is the Milwaukee Road, and if you look at the portal to this very day, it says tunnel 16 and a half, 16.5. Now the Milwaukee numbered their tunnels all the way from Chicago to the West Coast consecutively. Tunnel 1 is in Wisconsin, tunnel 2 is in Montana, lets you know what North Dakota's like, doesn't it? (audience laughter) This is tunnel 16.5, and that tells me that when they were building out here they didn't intend to put a tunnel there. There is no other half tunnel anywhere on the system, and so between the 1908 flood which really put a volume of water through there, and played havoc with that dam as well as that cliff face. If you go out and look at that cliff face today, it looks a lot different than that photograph. The Milwaukee at some point decided to scrap their grade, which went out around the face and instead go through it in tunnel 16.5.

[00:45:04] Here's another view of it down here after it's finished, and this is a picture I took of the east portal of it in 1980.

(new slide the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul) Here's a couple pictures of the Milwaukee building into Missoula in 1909. This is after the big flood. By this time you can see the work train building to the tunnel, tunnel's under construction there. They've got a little dinky and some dollies in there, hauling material out of there, using it for fill. Before the EPA remediated that there used to be that big fill through there with a little turtle pond behind it where kids used to go swimming. And the grade initially went out around the cliff face, Milltown Dam being off to the right.

This is a picture here of the Milwaukee steel layers coming into Missoula. This was in March of 1909 when they arrived in town, and come to find out there was a last spike celebration when they arrived in Missoula in March of 1909. It was quite a deal. Kim Briggeman's newspaper featured the story of driving the last spike and so forth. The problem is they didn't get into Missoula on their own rails yet. The flood had washed out their grade, and they were switching over to the NP this side of Garrison, and coming in on the NP until they got out here to Clinton, and then they switched back onto their own rails to get in this far. The Milwaukee access to Bonner was at Bonner Junction. Here's Bonner Junction at the west switch. This track went down and formed what we call a Y-track, which led out here. Where's this Duck Bridge come from? I keep hearing about Duck Bridge which is the old Milwaukee Bridge, right? Where does that come from?

Glenn Max Smith: I think it was the cutoff. It was a duck refuge down here. You couldn't shoot ducks on the dam side.

Bill Taylor: Okay. Where'd Duck Bridge come from? Why's it called Duck bridge?

Willie Bateman: Well, it was partially covered bridge, and years ago when I was trapping, I'd go down through there, it was along in the morning, and the kids would be lined up there at the Duck Bridge. One of them would say, "Well, are you gonna going to run your traps down there in the reserve?"

"Yeah." I'd go underneath the bridge and start down through there, and there'd be ducks all over heck down in there. Going through there with a boat and everything, I'd start spooking them ducks out and the kids would be lined up along the railroad track up there by the bridge. Pretty soon you'd hear bang, bang, pop, pop, pop, pop.

unknown speaker: One of them would yell, "Duck!" (audience laughter)

Willie Bateman: Yeah, yeah. Okay. I'd go through there and start spooking them ducks out. Well they'd circle around and start going up river and them kids would start lettin' go on the ducks up there. So that was the Duck Bridge.

Bill Taylor: Thank you. Now I know where Duck Bridge comes from. I always called it the Milwaukee Bonner Bridge, but you know what the heck. When I was out there, everything on that bridge was shot full of holes. (audience laughter) So I was a little suspicious that that "duck" came from, "watch out we're shooting."

Of course, during the [19]30s when there was a big campaign to eliminate the odd grade crossings with the highways, they built this underpass out there to get up to Clearwater Yard here in Bonner which it pretty much marks the end of track after the remediation project. These are pictures I took in 1980 when the railroad was being scrapped out.

(new slide aerial map) This is another one of those 1937 aerial views of Bonner. I think the airplane was flying upside down or something when he took this photo. He must have had turbulence out there, but just to orient you, here's the Milwaukee grade coming through and there's the dam and tunnel 16 1/2, and here's the Bonner Y. [track] There were people that lived there, that was the little town of Bonner Junction. There's still people over there and some of those old section houses. This is the bridge going across the river and up underneath the highway in the Clearwater Yard, which the Milwaukee used to switch the mill and also to go up river. There's the track, just the beginnings of the track here, which MRL still uses this day to reach into the mill. Then the Milwaukee crossed over the river and went up the other side on its journey up the Big Blackfoot. Much bigger place in 1937 than the last picture we saw in 1909.

[00:50:20] (new slide views of the Milwaukee near Bonner) Bob was talking about his experiences on a Little Joe. In 1916, the Milwaukee put in an overhead electrical system to run electric engines, and that's a whole different story. Most people who think about the Milwaukee think of it as an electric powered railroad but the truth is branch lines, including the Blackfoot, were steam powered. There was no electricity that reached into there at all and they would run a local out of Missoula throughout most of its history. Here's the local coming back into Missoula. They'd come out to Bonner and switch Clearwater Yard, and all the work they had to do at the mill, and then they'd come back to town. Here's another picture of a similar (unclear) up, I'm thinking that's probably at the unloading tracks over here with the river behind it. Across the river was the big unloading area here where they would dump logs into the river after they quit floating them down the river. Again, this is an explanation of why all those sunken logs are out there to this very day. I was appalled when I read the number of logs that they found out there buried in that sand. You [would have] thought it would've been worthwhile for ACM to go out there and recover them at some point, but apparently not.

(new slide Timberjack poster) The big event, of course, I guess, is *Timberjack*. We all know about *Timberjack* and Dennis and the group have made a DVD version of it, which is great. It's horribly corny but it does have some great shots of our area as well as Polson and of the steam engines running.

(new slide views of Walter Miller's photos) Years ago I was in Spokane in a junk store and here sat a beer flat full of photographs. And come to find out that the old boy who served as a conductor out here when they shot the movie had retired in Spokane and at some point there'd been an estate sale. Here were all of his photographs including pictures he'd taken of shooting *Timberjack*. And then some of the lobby shots were in the collection as well. Probably 30 to 40 photographs altogether in this bunch of beer flats. So guess what? They're mine. (audience laughter) This is the one we've all seen. This was the publicity still that was made into a postcard and dished up on a lot of movie posters around the country with all the stars up there on the walkway. They've very carefully in this one put on the Milwaukee Road banners, which weren't in the movie if you notice. It was just #17. But then the crew shot their own picture. Here's the picture that old Walter Miller shot of the Milwaukee crew that helped them out with #7 behind him, the Willamette during the shooting of that film. And then this is the engine crew over here. You guys probably know all those names.

(new slide) Here's a picture that Miller took up at Gold Creek across from McNamara's.

Dennis Sain: Belmont.

Bill Taylor: Belmont Creek, thank you. But that is McNamara's Landing down there, right? And the old shops were right over there?

Dennis Sain: Nope.

Bill Taylor: Nope. Are we higher up the river than that?

Dennis Sain: The Belmont water tower is just out of sight behind the log cars. They had quite a filming at Belmont.

Bill Taylor: Okay. I told you I don't know about all this, but anyway you can see all the people there that are getting ready to make the shoot as they do their action scene up there.

(new slide) Here's another picture holding up the big reflector so they get the right light on the stars up there in the cab, with the locomotive doing their thing.

(new slide) Here's a couple of resulting publicity stills that were shot up there that served as lobby cards when the movie came out in 1956.

Unknown speaker: That bottom picture is at McNamara with the hand cart?

Dennis Sain: Right. The big fight.

Unknown speaker: Right. Okay.

Bob Bateman: I stopped it.

Bill Taylor: You stopped it? How'd you do that?

Bob Bateman: I was just a little kid. My brother and I went running out there right in the middle of that scene. That's true. They had to start over yelled at that time. (laughter)

[00:55:13] **Bill Taylor:** And you're still being yelled at.

Bob Bateman: My mom, my folks and everybody took us out there to watch that. I dunno what they did. Mom always said we got out there far enough when they had to cut...

Bill Taylor: (new slide crowd watching filming) We'll come back to this in just a minute. All right, I'll take a stab at this. This is probably right here at Clearwater Yard somewhere with a mountain behind us here at Bonner. Right?

Dennis Sain: No, that's right here at Milltown.

Bill Taylor: Yeah I think it is, because they had a lot of folks out there watching the filming of this including some school groups. Some of you probably can find yourselves in there if you've been in Bonner since 1955. And here's the scary part. I was looking at this photograph and I'm thinking, "Well, yeah, those kids are what? Seven to nine years old? Let me think how old... my God, that's the same age I am!" I was born in 1946. I was nine in 1955. So some of you who are in your mid sixties probably can find yourself in this photograph. Are you one? Alright, alright we have to see it. Come on up here.

(inaudible response from audience member)

Bill Taylor: Oh, you're not in there, okay. I have to believe this is a group of Bonner School kids. I would guess third or fourth grade maybe who've come out to watch the filming of this movie.

(new slide of school group) Look at the expressions on the faces. Are we having fun? (audience laughter) Look at this little gal over here. Now I'm a retired school teacher. I can read kids' expressions. These kids are not having fun. Somebody's just yelled at them for doing something. They probably said "Everybody get up on the hill and I don't want you doing that ever again," right? I bet these two people back here, which is probably the teacher and the administrator had a hand in that. This is the resulting fun time everybody had looking at them shoot the movie today.

Mac Palmer: There's lots of waiting when you're watching a movie theater shot.

Bill Taylor: Yes. It would it would be interesting, Dennis, to hang that picture up and have people see if they can find themselves in it.

Dennis Sain: Yeah, that would be.

Bill Taylor: Because they're around, you know they are.

(new slide skiers getting off the train) I just threw this one in. For a while they ran ski trains up to Blanchard Creek on the branch up here. They would haul skiers up there, I think this is in the 1930s, and they would ski up there. There was another little ski area years ago there below Potomac on the hillside. Anybody ever make this trip? I don't know much of the context, but somebody snapped a photograph and it's mine now.

(new slide unloading logs at the mill) Here's much later photographs. Old Dwight Rittenhouse who is a retired Milwaukee hogger gave me these. He worked for many years switching in the Milwaukee switcher out here at the mill. I put these in just because for until about 1982, they ran the Thompson Falls logger down here, and they would run it around on the river side on a big loop track, and they'd unload all those log cars from Thompson Falls down here at Bonner, so it is railroad related. Here's a couple of other pictures of the equipment that are working out there, and so I'm going to say this is in the early eighties.

Dennis Sain: Right. That Wagner in that picture is the very first Wagner Bonner bought. They had it in Bonner when they bought the next size up. That one went to Thompson Falls.

Bill Taylor: This one over here is interesting. I think it's a little earlier. I'm going to guess that's probably out of the seventies, because of the collection it was in. Those are mine stulls. Those are mining timbers loaded up on that flat car. Probably bound for the ACM mines in Butte. The underground mines for Berkeley Pit.

[00:59:35] (new slide showing locomotives) Now we can deal with some survivors. Up on the left is #5 on the turntable in Missoula. This one's interesting for a lot of reasons, not only because of #5. But #5 has been sold at this point, and it's on its way to Great Falls. A gentleman by the name of Jack Hoover had bought it and he was an interesting guy who had connections. To put it briefly, his father was the last president of Anaconda Company and so, miraculously, NP and GN [Great Northern] agreed to move this shay to Great Falls for him free of charge. It sat for years at Mehmke's Steam Museum out there east of Great Falls on the way to Belt. And it's been sold again and it now is in Williams, Arizona on the Grand Canyon Railroad. They have some hopes of restoring it, but it still exists.

This photograph is also interesting, because it comes out of the R.V. Nixon collection, but there's Ron standing there. So whoever took it wasn't Ron. Ron did a lot of work with a guy by the name of Bamford Dodge, and so this is, I suspect, one of Dodge's photographs. He's up on the roof of the roundhouse because he was a chief mechanic at the roundhouse and had access to it. What I find interesting is that they're tearing down the first third of the west side of the roundhouse in 1961. This is the roundhouse that was built in 1923. And then over here out of the same collection is #7, the Willamette that's out at Fort Missoula now sort of sitting there neglected in the back lot here at the ACM mill all covered with snow and rusty. And when did they move it over into the park over here?

Unknown speaker: '62.

Bill Taylor: 1962. This is just before it moved then. When it's up there. And then it sat here until Rail Link moved it into where it sits now. Those are survivors, and that brings me kind of to the end of what I want to do this afternoon.

(new slide Milwaukee line) I want to show you this picture again, because that's exactly the same location as this picture, and I always like to deal with beginnings and endings. We have the Milwaukee arriving in Missoula, and that was some of the first rail to be torn out in 1980, in exactly the same location. I was bracketing 71 years of history here around Bonner and Missoula. So thank you. Any questions? (applause)

Bob Bateman: I have one question. I've never ever heard this yard Clearwater.

Bill Taylor: I've seen that written somewhere. Bob. Clearwater Yard. Am I the only one that's seen that?

Unknown speaker: Yeah. I never heard it.

Bill Taylor: Okay. Well, I might have it wrong. I warned you.

Unknown speaker: But, Bill. (Bill Taylor: yes.) They tied up the engine over there at some time, at least before World War II.

Bill Taylor: The old engine house survived a long time. I remember the old engine house sitting out there pretty derelict. And here about 10 years ago when the EPA business started they came in there and they found out that underneath that old engine house was the old grease pits. There was a cleanup effort to clean up those old grease pits, so evidence of it survived up until 2000, and one of my acquaintances worked on that crew. Down in the bottom of the old well, was this old Stilson wrench. (shows wrench) It says on the side of it here, CM and STPRY. Someone either dropped it or threw it into the tank and nobody was going to go after it, that's for sure, and so he brought it to work one day and he says, "You like railroad stuff. Here, you can have it." and told me the story. It's sort of sat around in my basement now for about 10 years, but since it does have a Bonner connection I'm gonna give it to Dennis as part of their collection here, and Dennis can either use it as a boat anchor or for something really big. (audience applause)

Willie Bateman: I've got another one at home. Do you want it? (audience laughter)

Unknown speaker: Does it say Milwaukee on it?

Willie Bateman: NP. NPRY.

Bob Bateman: NPRY. What Dad used to tell me, he used to go sit down in and smoke (unclear) lunch. He couldn't smoke on there, and for a lot of years, and I don't know whatever came of it, when Dad died. But Dad had the water glass off #7. He took it. He borrowed it. And I lost it. (audience laughter) I can remember in Dad's wood shop, that water glass off the back end of that steam engine was about so long and so wide and real thick

corrugated glass, like a steam pressure water glass. When we moved the house or went through the house after he passed away, we never, I never could find it. I don't know whether it's still tucked away somewhere out there and somebody in the future might find it, but anyway, I was always hoping I could find it. Kinda neat to have.

[01:05:28] **Unknown speaker:** Did they replace it?

Bob Bateman: I don't know whether they ever did or not.

Bill Taylor: So #5, when it got sold and went to Great Falls was missing linkage.

Bob Bateman: Yeah, but they dropped off the #7, right?

Bill Taylor: They had robbed linkage off of #5 for something to do something else, and when Jack bought it they gave him some other linkage, which didn't ever fit. Jack always tried to find the correct linkage to put on it because he had dreams of steaming it up again. Apparently it was in pretty good shape and now the story out of Arizona is that they have found the correct linkage for it, and they are going to steam it up again. So we might see another ACM engine run in live steam at some point. They go on. I also out of Jack's stuff have his collection of Shay stuff. He was given a lot of the paperwork when he got #5, including the operator's manuals and parts lists and some company correspondence where they tried to order parts for it. I've showed those to Dennis and Dennis will probably end up with them at some point.

Mac Palmer: On #7, the Willamette, all of the water glass mechanisms, all the clamps are still there in the cab. The only thing that's not there is the glass itself, but the housing, the clamps are all there.

Bob Bateman: The glass is somewhere at Piltzville. That's all I can (unclear) somewhere in the old Bateman house at Piltzville is the glass.

Kim Briggeman: I have a question for Bob. I've been meaning to ask you about this having to do with Tunnel 16 1/2. Before they closed it down for the EPA cleanup, I used to run and ride my bike through there quite a bit. There's probably, like a lot of tunnels, there's all kinds of street art that decorates the tunnel now in these last 20 years, but on this end of it, on the east end of it, a lot of people used to etch their names and initials in the tunnel. It's almost like a litany of Bonner families that are all up and down the tunnel, including there's a Bob Bateman, and I believe-

Bob Bateman: Linda Felton. Don Felton, he's sitting right over there. She was my first girlfriend in grade school.

Kim Briggeman: Yeah, this was actually etched somehow. How did you do that?

Bob Bateman: We just found a spike and then a rock and then just worked it around.

Kim Briggeman: Okay, and I think you put the year on it.

Bob Bateman: I don't remember. That probably would've been grade school. Sixth, seventh, eighth grade, probably sixth or seventh grade out here. They used to take our, first it was bicycles and then it was our little motor scooters. We come from Piltzville, and then, of course, the truck stop wasn't there then. We come across there and then the old double track NP bridge that was then single tracked, had ties all the way across it. So we cross that. I did it once in my Jeep. Anyway, we cross that and then we go pop the NP and then go over. This is one of the dumbest things, but everybody in Piltzville did it, and Don can attest to this. We'd either take our bicycles or walk our motor scooters and we'd go right down the middle of the Milwaukee tracks through that tunnel, and then we'd go over there in the summer and go swimming in Tunnel Lake. When we got done, we'd go the other way. We'd come out of there, and go down and then cross the Duck Bridge and then go back to Piltzville.

There's a big heart up there. It says BB + LF. That's just one. But everybody in Bonner for years and years, you'd go over there and put your initials or you and your girlfriend's initials or whatever it would be. You carve them the in the side of the tunnel side, but now I think, isn't that all painted over with all graffiti?

Kim Briggeman: Some of it is, a lot of it, but you can still see yours. (laughter) I don't know if you know this, but right below yours, I think it says, Bob Bateman 1953 maybe, or '55?

[01:09:59] **Bob Bateman:** No, I was born '49. It had to been '60 something.

Kim Briggeman: Oh, okay. But right below it now it says Tom Bateman. 1983. (audience laughter)

Bob Bateman: I took him over there. Well, the tracks were gone, so this would've been... Bill, when did they, when was that dirt road over there? About 1981 or so?

Bill Taylor: Yeah, they tore the tracks up in '81 up there.

Bob Bateman: Tom was, I don't know, five or six years old or something like that, So we drove him over there and walked him through the tunnel because there weren't any tracks there then. We found a spike in a rock and we chiseled his name in there too. So that's why that's there.

Unknown speaker: Kim, if you look harder, you'll find a lot of university students' names in that tunnel too. I know there's at least one. (audience laughter)

Bob Bateman: That was always scary to go through that tunnel. There's two. Well you'd look down there to the west and you could see a signal. We were smart enough to know if that signal was green that there wasn't anything coming. We weren't smart enough to realize that something could be coming from the east, coming against that green signal. (audience laughter) I don't know, nobody ever got zinged or hit or something. That tunnel had three or four indentations on the inside of the curve where if something came along you could step up and stand in there so the train wouldn't get you.

Dennis Sain: Well, we have one other thing here. We have the *Big Blackfoot Railway* book, which is out of print and basically non-existent, but we did have a spare copy and we have had the author Bob Bateman autograph our book, and we're donating this to the Bonner Milltown History Center (audience applause)

Unknown speaker: (unclear – something about reprinting the book)

Bob Bateman: Well we thought about it. I took it down a couple places, couple printers. They said it's cost prohibitive. You'd have to make so many of them, you'd never sell them all. You'd have to make somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 of them to make it. When we made that, that book sold for \$4.95 and I made \$1.50, I think, off every copy. Now it costs over \$25, \$30 bucks just to do something that big, so you'd have to sell it for, \$20 bucks and nobody's going to buy it. When I first sold it, I got one back with a nasty letter. Lady told me that \$4.95 was way too much for that skinny little book, so I sent it back to her and told her she could keep it for free.

Dennis Sain: I do have an order blank for ordering his book from when he was living in Three Forks. I think it was \$4.95. You can order there.

Bob Bateman: I sold a lot of them. We sold 2,000 and then we had to have another thousand made so we sold 3,000.

Bill Taylor: Is it two editions isn't there, or first?

Bob Bateman: Yeah, there's a first edition..

Dennis Sain: These are all first edition,

Bob Bateman: and the picture on the front is from Dyke Rittenhouse collection, and then there's a second one that shows after the Blackfoot line was abandoned in 1977. It shows some pictures of the right of way gone.

Dennis Sain: They got a picture of your second edition at Twin Creeks. We dozed the railroad grade out and put the chain link fence in.

Bob Bateman: Yeah.

Dennis Sain: My wife has a little story she wants to tell here. A little advertisement. (hands microphone to Anna Sain)

Anna Sain: If any of you guys are interested in experiencing a railroad trip, what it was like in the Milwaukee era. Milwaukee built a huge, over 26 million dollars in five years, to build tunnels and trestles over the Montana-Idaho border, and it's now called the Hiawatha Trail. You can go through these tunnels. One is as long as 1.7 miles and you can bring your own bicycles, your own helmets and lights or you can rent them at the Lookout Ski Area at the top of the pass. Then you can also buy meals there if you want. You can also take the shuttle, but it's downhill. In other words you don't have to pant, but you can take your bike down this 15 miles through tunnels and trestles. It's like nothing else. I'll show you a little about the brochure, (displays brochure) but if you want to experience trestles and tunnels and a unique experience through 15 miles of the old railroad that Milwaukee had, call and make your reservations or things like that through the Lookout Ski Area. Thank you.

[01:15:20] **Mac Palmer:** You can also drive the lower part of it between Pearson and Avery. You get through two or three tunnels and two or three of the trestles.

Anna Sain: Yes, and that was Mac Palmer. He has some books on the Milwaukee for sale. A couple of them left at a discount, so you can see Mac Palmer if you'd like to buy some of those early Milwaukee Road books. Also in passing, did you guys hear that they're changing the Super Bowl location next year? The problems that

they had, they decided, "Eh, we're not gonna do that. We're gonna have it at the Motel Six." You know why? Because Motel Six keeps the light on for you." (audience groans)

Bob Bateman: (shaking head) That was bad.

Dennis Sain: That comes from the lady whose Motel Six was Motel Six of the Year for the United States out of 400 or 500 and some motels. Anybody have any questions or anything they'd like to add while we're doing this?

Unknown speaker: I have a question about the Milwaukee. My uncle was master electrician down in the Billings, Bozeman, and Three Forks area. Manhattan. I just wondered if anybody knows anything about the master electricians down there.

Bob Bateman: What was his name?

Unknown speaker: Paul Shimmer.

Bob Bateman: Jim, you know anything?

Jim Younkin: I don't remember the, don't know the name or anything. He used to work that job.

Unknown speaker: Some of my other relations, Burdettes.

Jim Younkin: I know the Burdettes. I went to school with Terry Burdette. He's a signal maintainer over at Hope.

Several speakers: My cousin. Yeah. Forget that. Okay.

Mac Palmer: Anybody wants to actually get inside the cab of the Willamette out at Fort Missoula get hold of me. I have the keys to it, and I can open it up and take people into the cab of that locomotive anytime that it's mutually agreeable, as far as schedule is concerned.

Unknown speaker: Another thing on that. We live out in Clinton and when the Milwaukee come through there, we had a dog whose name was Rufus. We knew when they were coming through because Rufus would go out there and bark at it. I said, "I hope you don't bring one home." (audience laughter)

Unknown speaker 2: I could add a little story about mixing airplanes with logging trains. I used to fly in 1950, 1956 and '57. flew air patrol for the Forest Service out of Missoula on the Lolo Forest, and that involved flying in a little Cessna 180 airplane and going around all over and spotting forest fires and calling them in. We had a radio in the in the airplane and we'd make this trip numerous times up the Blackfoot and to Seeley Lake and around. Then we used to, in the spring, we'd work with a lot of different cooperators, and of course one of them was Les Talbot out here who ran the Blackfoot Forest Protective Association. They protected all the forest land and the Anaconda Company forest lands. They had one of our radios, so when I found a fire on their lands, I could call and talk to them. One day, I think this had to be about August 1957, and I was headed out in Missoula, and I see a smoke up here on the Milwaukee track, the log railroad on up between Bonner and McNamara Landing up there. When you go to find a smoke, you gotta fly around it for a while, while you get your bearings and get it at the location. I got that located and I called that one in down to Les and no more got that done and I could see another one right up the tracks a ways, so I go up and do the same thing, and I fly around there and give him that location. Then a little while later here's a third one on up the tracks, and so I got that far with Les and he says, "Hey can you just leave that fire, go and go see if you can stop that train up there," he says, "That train's got a hot box or something like that, and it's dropping hot metal and it's starting these fires. If you could stop that train."

[01:20:24] Well, I happened to be flying with an old Johnson pilot out here, a guy by the name of Gil Musgrove and he was an old World War II Bonner fighter pilot. So I talked it over with him and said, "You think we could stop that?" And hey, that was just right up his alley, man. (audience laughter) That is what he wanted to do. We got up there and the train was just coming into, I think it was into that McNamara's Landing flat up there, and he came down there and we were in this airplane, and I thought the wheels of the plane were going to hit the top of the cab of that thing. He just zoomed right over it there, and he'd wagging his wings, and we'd go up and we'd go around and he's doing it again. We're just right over the top of that engine, you know. About the third time we did that finally he stopped. The train stopped there. So I had one of these, well we used to call them a streamer message, and I wrote a little note in there about him setting fires and could drop the streamer and it was a little envelope thing with a bunch of orange crepe paper on it. You had to know what you're doing in order to get that pretty close to the train. I'd done a lot of that because I used to drop newspapers to all the lookouts and all that kind of thing along the way, but here we go and we come right down there and Gill says, "Let her go." And I did. I throw, you open up the window of the airplane and you throw that out and we got it there, right? Just a few yards ahead of the head of the train and just a bit off the side. As we pulled up away, we could see,

here comes the engineer out of the train. He run down there and got the message and he waved it like this, so we wiggled our wings at him and away we went. Just a little tale.

Several speakers: That's pretty cool. Sort of like a scraping mission. (inaudible conversation)

Dennis Sain: Anybody have any more questions or any suggestions? Anything else? Willie.

Willie Bateman: I don't think there's anything mentioned about any wrecks. Well, of course I went to school here at Bonner, but I grew up the line up there at Turah. We lived at the old Joe Terriault place for quite a while and also lived in a section house right there at Turah. My dad was an engineer for a long time for the Northern Pacific. I think it was about 1938 or 1939, we heard of an engine blowing up here at Ravenna, and I believe there's some pictures of that too. Anyway, my dad heard about that engine blowin' up and he made the remark, well he says, "Old Ernie made his last run." And the engineer's name was Ernie Weston. When he went out through the tunnel up there at Ravenna, there was a low spot in the tracks, and this Ernie Weston was what they called a water hog. Dad said he fired for him for quite a number of runs and he had the belief that the lower the water, the hotter the steam. Well, when he went out and hit that low spot, all the water ran to the head end of the engine in the boiler, and then when they come out of that low spot, it come back onto the crown sheet. It created too much steam and blew up. They found the headlight out in the Wills' hayfield there about 300 yards out in the hayfield, and then again and I think Bob showed me a picture here a while back. I thought it was in the summertime, but up there at Turah when on the highway when they were cutting down the old Turah hill in there and there's a train come down, and they used to set these torpedoes on the rails up above as warning.

[01:25:13] If I got this right, I think one was for caution, two was for slow, and three was for stop. They'd made a shop over on the hill and they had some big rock that had come down on the railroad tracks. So they moved this big besider series shovel down there to clear the rocks. Well, this train come through and the watchman up there didn't set his torpedoes up the line up there far enough, and this other young fella and I were real good friends. Billy Walker and I, we were over there on the railroad track watching this shovel over there clear the big boulders off the tracks.

We heard the torpedoes and everything and looked up the line and this train was well on his way yet. So about that time he hit the shovel. That's when Walker and I went over to the bank, headed for the riverbank. And then again over at Thelma, there used to be a siding right across from where I lived there, and they had a wreck there in 1939, I believe it was. What had happened, it burned off a journal off of one of the cars and it went in the ditch and scattered. And one other time I was coming back off the trap line and the snow was deep coming down from Allen Creek and I got snowshoes off, walked down the railroad track and decided to take a shortcut for home. So I went up the bank, heard this train coming over on the Milwaukee, and this was 1949, winter of '49, and I just got up on the bank, put the snowshoes back on and started for home. I heard some noise behind me. I turned around and looked and there was box cars and everything else going end over end. If I'd have stayed on the track, well I'd have been ground up right in the middle of it. But they had had two wrecks there, right at Thelma. There was a siding on there and I've thought of that later on that a lot of times walking down the railroad tracks, you hear a train coming, you just stepped over on the other side and let it go by, but this time I took a shortcut for home, so that's why I'm still here.

Unknown speaker: Where is Thelma?

Willie Bateman: Thelma is what we used to call Thelma Flats. It's right up there at Turah. After you cross the bridge and go up and then you cross the old Milwaukee right of way. There was a siding right in there that's pretty close. I got a 1939 map that shows it on there as, by that name, Thelma. So actually, I live at Thelma Flats instead of Turah.

Bob Bateman: We never did find out who Thelma was though, did we? Why it named that?

Willie Bateman: No, no. Never did.

Dennis Sain: Well, we have coffee and cookies and goodies back there, and we have some pieces on display there, and anybody have questions about any of this stuff or willing to answer the questions? There's photographs of the 700 steam train and the 4449, which Mr. Bateman was a part of that crew, so any questions you're welcome to have at it.

(Outro music and credits)



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