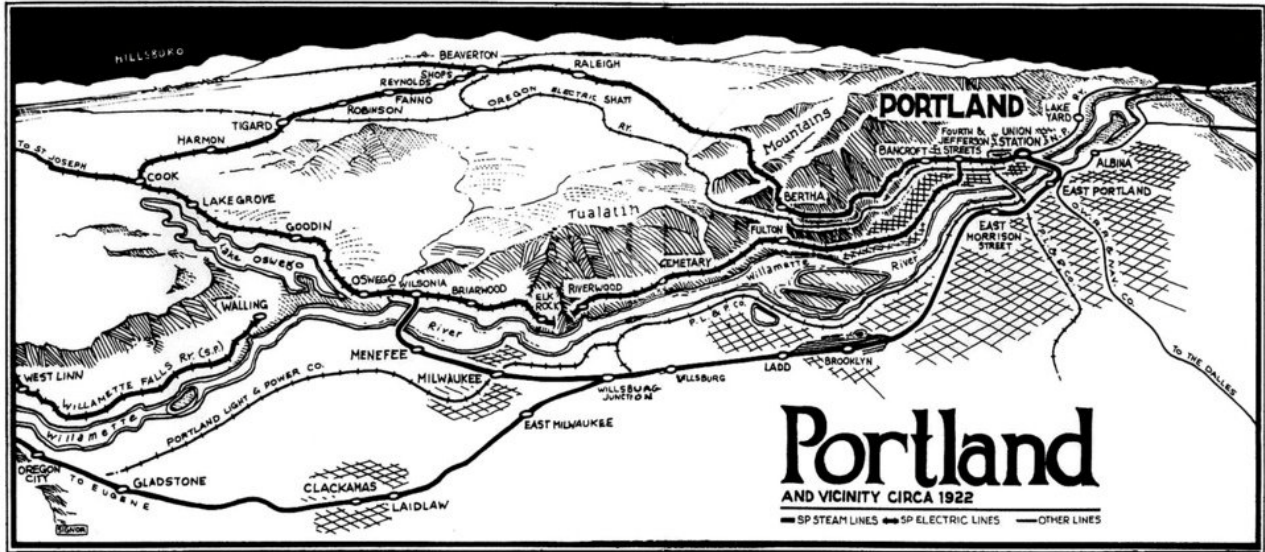


**The Decline and Return of the Portland Streetcar**  
by the students of Southwest Charter School, Sarah Anderson, teacher



**PLAYERS**

THEO, played by Theo  
LEAH, played by Leah  
MONNER, played by Theo  
JACK, played by Jack

**THE DECLINE AND RETURN OF THE PORTLAND STREETCAR**

THEO: Hello, I am Theo Ketronas, and welcome to the “decline and return” presentation by Southwest Charter School. Today we will hear reports on the Mount Tabor trolley line being replaced by buses. We will also hear about Oregon Iron Works making trolley cars today.

Now, let’s go to Leah’s report on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1948.

LEAH: hey, everyone! Here we are at Mount Tabor to look at the line of buses here to replace the Mt. Tabor trolley line. Before me I see a new, gleaming modern twin coach standing proudly on the road. Next to it there is a 40 year old trolley looking quite dull next to this miraculous machine. Standing in front of them is none other than George Monner, 20 year driver of the Mt. Tabor trolley line. Let’s give him a hand folks.

Talking to him is H.M. Gerard who was running the test run of the bus. Let’s go over and talk to them.

LEAH: Now tell me Mr. Monner, how do you feel about the new line of buses on Mt. Tabor.?

MONNER: Well, to tell you the truth, the new line of buses ain’t really growing on me.

LEAH: Tell us Mr. Monner, what don’t you like about this snazzy new line of the buses?

MONNER: Well, I thought that the trolley was just fine, but then there comes Mister Fancy Pants telling me ‘it’s time to move on.’ What does that mean anyway? I don’t want no dirty, noisy buses in my neighborhood.

LEAH: Well, looks like they have some talking to do! Back to you Theo!

THEO: (eating lunch) Mmmmm, hamburger-- oh- sorry! Here’s the long story of the decline of the streetcar in Portland.

In 1918, after World War I, street cars began to lose popularity because of the automobile.

In 1920, Trolley's began to slow because less money was going into trolleys. Man, the streetcars had a hard life!

In the 1930s, with the Great Depression tightening, buses and trolley buses began to take over. In case you're wondering, trolley buses are buses with wires.

From 1941-1949, Portland's transit ridership increased to an all-time high during WWII because of the lack of automobiles, but by the 1950s, the last few streetcars retired, including the cars on Mount Tabor (as Leah reported).

In 1950, many streetcar lines stopped their operations as ridership dropped sharply shortly after WWII and the old transit network became dependent on automobiles and many street cars were burned for scrap metal. Ouch!

In 1958 the last rail lines died out and were completely replaced by buses.

There you have it, folks- the sad story of the decline of the streetcar! But don't despair! Now we go over to Jack's report on the return of the streetcar.

JACK: Yo, yo, yo, people! Just so you know, I'm not your stereotypical teenager. I'm here to talk to you about how Oregon Ironworks made some streetcars for Tucson Arizona in 2007. The company made seven streetcars for the city of Tucson. The city has the option of buying seven more cars. Chandra Brown, United Streetcar president, is highly excited to be working on this project.

OIW is the only modern streetcar manufacturer in the U.S. Very exciting. Very exciting, indeed! So far, Portland is the only city in the U.S. that makes the streetcars. That means we could be responsible for the return of the streetcar! That's all for now! Back to you, Theo.

THEO: Thank you, Jack. Now that just about wraps it up for the decline and return of the street car in Portland. Now here's a special presentation.

THEO and JACK (singing) :

Yo, yo, yo  
The streetcar's back on the menu  
I ride downtown, uptown, in every town  
The streetcar was declined buy now it is back  
Oregon Iron Works on the track  
Now let's hear it for my man Jack- Yo, Homie!  
If you ride the streetcar, you're on the road to fame  
because you're helping the environment all the same. Yo.

LEAH: Thank you for listening.