

The History of the Willamette Shore Line
by the students of Southwest Charter School, Sarah Anderson, teacher



Train #311 at Oswego Depot, 1915

SETTING

A gift shop in Oregon

PLAYERS

NONNA, played by Zoe

FOAMER, played by Julian

MEMORY ANNOUNCER, played by Tim

YOUNG FOAMER, played by Tim

FOAMER'S MOM, played by Zoe

Note: During our research, we heard an interview in which people who were obsessed with trains called themselves "foamers" because they foam at the mouth when they think about trains.

INTRODUCTION

Kevin: On a nice day in Oregon, Nonna Thin goes into a gift shop to buy her kiddies some mittens...

THE HISTORY OF THE WILLAMETTE SHORE LINE

NONNA: Why hello! I'm looking for some m- Oh my! Look at these beautiful train ornaments!

FOAMER: Thank you! I made them. I know a heck of a lot about trains. Especially Red Electrics.

NONNA: That's cool, I guess. Oh, can you tell me where the gloves ar- Oh my gosh! You're foaming at the mouth!

FOAMER: Oops! I foam at the mouth sometimes. I forgot to tell you my name. I am Foamer Simpson. I am obsessed with trains so much I foam at the mouth. Hee hee.

NONNA: Uh huh. Uh...

FOAMER: I'm sorry?

NONNA: Oh, sorry. That's just a little strange.

FOAMER: Silence! I love trains! In fact, I'll tell you everything that happened in the last 146 years on the Willamette Shore Line.... In 1863, the tracks were built by the Oregonian railway. It was first used for transporting freight. Isn't that interesting?

NONNA: Yeah.

FOAMER: And in 1863, the line was taken over by the Southern Pacific Line. Passengers started to ride the line.

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Back in Foamer's memory...

YOUNG FOAMER: Mommy, why is the train stopping? Are we in Portland?

FOAMER'S MOM: We are going on a boat the rest of the way. It will be fun!

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Returning from Foamer's memory

FOAMER: And in 1870, a trestle was built along a sheer rock cliff along the Willamette.

NONNA: Oh, cool.

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Back in Foamer's memory...

YOUNG FOAMER: Why is it on a trestle, Mommy? I liked the boat- I really did!

FOAMER'S MOM: They made it faster with the new trestle!

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Returning from Foamer's memory

FOAMER: Yeah, so tha- Wait! So then in 1914, the Southern Pacific line switches from steam powered engines to electric and...



Original trestle, circa 1914, before electrification

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Back in Foamer's memory...

YOUNG FOAMER: Mommy, why is it quiet now? I loved the loud noises!

FOAMER'S MOM: They changed to diesel -electric so it can be fast and efficient!

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Returning from Foamer's memory

NONNA: Foamer, are you there?

FOAMER: Then, in 1921 a tunnel was build and was opened on the fifth of December.

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Back in Foamer's memory...

YOUNG FOAMER: Mommy, why is the train in a tunnel?

FOAMER'S MOM: The trestle was expensive. Remember that poor man's wife? Oh, that poor woman! That rock just punched through the roof and hit her on the head!

MEMORY ANNOUNCER: Returning from Foamer's memory

NONNA: Great. Uh, I have to-

FOAMER: No! I forgot when, but the trolley stopped running on this line.

NONNA: Please, the foam is covering the counter...

FOAMER: And in 1950, most of Portland's streetcars were discontinued.

NONNA: I really have to—

FOAMER: Wait! One last fact! In 1987, antique trolleys began running again on the Willamette Shore Line. Isn't that so interesting?

NONNA: Foamer, you are foaming again. Now I've really got to go. And thanks again for your help.



First train #301 through Elk Rock Tunnel Dec 5, 1921