



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Arkansas Railroader



W. A. (BILL) MERCK - EDITOR

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AUGUST 1978



NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION REGULAR MEETINGS HELD SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT MISSOURI PACIFIC OFFICE BUILDING IN NORTH LITTLE ROCK. REFRESHMENTS USUALLY AVAILABLE. EDITOR'S ADDRESS 5007 HAWTHORNE RD. LITTLE ROCK, ARK. 72207.

Can you believe that it is almost August and the summer is slipping away. Amid a jumble of furniture and other household items am trying to put together this news letter. With some remodeling going on at your editor's home its a job trying to find a place to work; anyway here goes.

JULY FISH FRY-PICNIC----This just had to be our best one yet. 35 people showed up at Harry Coonley's Whistle Stop Ranch for this event. Attendance included four guests who were Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Gurner & Son from Water Valley, Mississippi. Bruce, as you will remember addressed our club some one year ago. He is a former ICG engineer and author of the best paper back seller, "Casey Jones And The Wreck At Vaughn". Another guest was Mrs. Jean Saunders, Wife of our deceased member Earl Saunders. A good time was enjoyed by all and all of that food was something else. Thanks again Harry Coonley.

AUGUST MEETING----In August we will have our second swap meet of the year. We will open with a short business meeting and then we can get in to the swapping session. The date is Sunday, August 13th starting at 2 PM at the MOP Office Building in North Little Rock. So, bring those "goodies" that you want to swap or sell. This promises to be another interesting meeting. Also, bring visitors. They are always welcome.

FREIGHT TRAFFIC INCREASE---Freight traffic on major U.S. railroads during week ending July 1st totaled an estimated 17.6 billion ton miles, 7.6 per cent more than the same week a year ago. This information from the Association of American Railroads.

AMTRAK - THE INTER-AMERICAN

Will Arkansas keep its one and only passenger train? More than 20 persons, including United States Senator Dale Bumpers and United States Representative Jim Guy Tucker of Little Rock, testified at an I.C.C. hearing held in Little Rock on July 6th on the federal Transportation Department's proposed elimination of Amtrak rail passenger service through Arkansas. Most of those who were present said the service should be improved and continued. One of those present was Dr. Bill Pollard of Conway and who is one of our good members. There was also present two bus company executives who said they were for discontinuing the service (naturally). These bus people seem to believe that Amtrak is the only form of transportation that is subsidized when in reality the tax payers foot the bill for our highways that the bus companies use. Its been a "dog eat dog" fight from the very start between Amtrak and these bus companies. As for Senator Bumpers; we cannot understand his thinking. He says he has serious mixed emotions about the future of the service; on the other hand, as you know, he advocates gas rationing. What gives Senator? At any rate due to the House passing the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1978, we will keep the Inter-American at its current level for a full year. The system cannot be modified or restructured before October 1, 1979.

Thinking it may be of interest to you am showing below the railroads now designated by the I.C.C. as Class 1 carriers; In the interest of space will only show initials:

AT&SF	CMSTP	FEC	MOP	SOUTHERN
B&O	CRI&P	GTW	N&W	UP
B&LE	CLINCHFIELD	ICG	P&LE	WM
E&M	CON RAIL	KCS	SLSF	WP
BN	D&H	LONG ISLAND	STLSW	AUTO TRAIN *
CofG	DT&I	L&A	SCL	AMTRAK *
C&O	DM&IR	L&N	SOC LINE	(*Passenger service only)
C&NW	EJ&E	MK&T	SPT	

Several lines formerly designated Class 1 are now Class 11 or Class 111. With the many mergers in the making this list could be shortened considerably in the future and it probably will be.

Your editor has received another exchange newsletter for the first time; it is called "All Aboard" and is the official publication of the Y&MV Chapter NRHS, Vicksburg, Miss. Congratulations on a fine newsletter and we will be happy to reciprocate. Mississippi is rich in railroad history and we welcome anything railroading from that state, as well as all other states. (Editor's note) a feature story on the new Columbus and Greenville Railroad is way past due; am wondering when something will be forthcoming on it. Have never had a chance to get down to see it but I have a good friend who lives in Greenville; a trip to that city may be on my agenda sometime this summer)

The possibility of our club making a rail excursion this year is rapidly fading away. Correspondence with P&NW and AD&N has been to no avail. If by chance one of you happens to be either in Prescott or Crossett sometime soon will appreciate your taking the time to make an inquiry at their respective offices. The L&NW at least answered my letter to the effect that they could not take care of us but invited us to come down their way and take all the photos that we want. We wish all lines were like the SOUTHERN who really want passengers and are willing to run excursions for them. The rail fan is the best publicity the railroads can get but most of them do not seem to realize it.

LETS GET WITH IT MR. WELK---The Lawrence Welk Program (not one of your editor's favorites) has twice featured this year a song entitled, "No One Thinks Of The Railroads Any More". Mr. Welk we have news for you--more people are thinking about the railroads now than ever before. Its true the song is only a little ditty; however with Welk's nationwide TV audience songs like this do not do the railroads any good and if any industry now needs favorable publicity it is our railroads. So it would be our suggestion Mr. Welk that if you cannot feature some music favorable to the railroads just don't feature anything at all. (May even send a copy of this to Mr. Welk if I can get his address) It would of course be put in File 3 (wastebasket).

EX-SP SLEEPER IN NORTH LITTLE ROCK---Mr. Henry Ketcher of Ketcher & Company, Roofing Contractors of North Little Rock, has acquired EX SP Sleeper No. 9044 which car is spotted on Ketcher & Company siding. Car painted in SP Daylight colors; however all lettering is now off the car and we do not know the name carried by the sleeper nor do we know the configuration of the car. It is being renovated by Mr. Ketcher and will be made into a business car with an observation platform. When additional information can be secure will pass it along ATTENTION; Mr. Dave Briggs of "Spike and Tie", Joliet, Ill. who may have full information about this particular car.

We wish to tell Gene Hull that we intend to run the rest of his article in the next issue of the newsletter. with my house torn apart by remodeling am doing well to get out what is in this letter. Am in a little cubby hole surrounded by chairs, tables, clock, pictures and what have you. Not the best position to try and get out a letter.

BRING CARD TABLE SEE ALL OF YOU AT THE AUGUST SWAP MEETING. BRING CARD TABLE
***** BRING THOSE GOODIES *****

MAKING TRACKS AND TELEGRAPH LINES

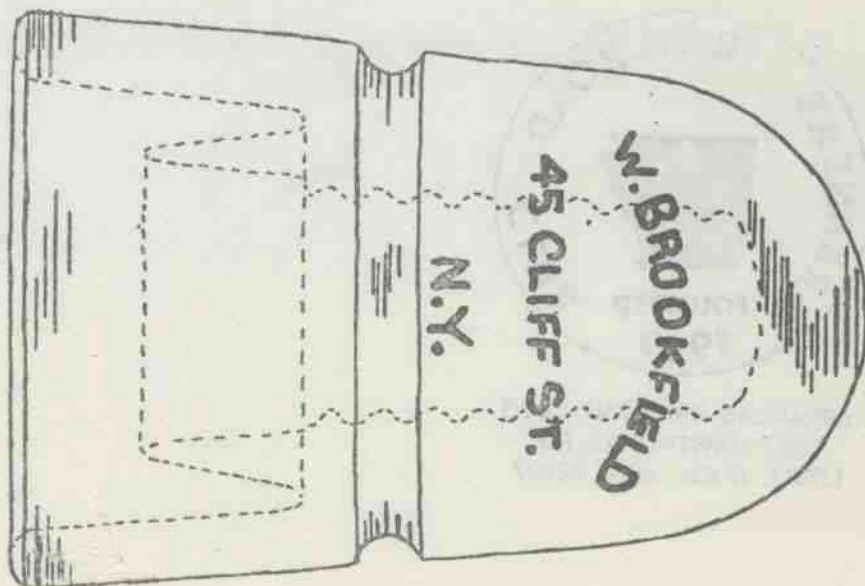
By Bill B. Bailey

The 1875 Western pioneers considered the magnetic telegraph as an important link expanding civilization in our country. Sometimes it was called the "Singing Wire" and the "Talking Wire" as the Indians did. Built along with the railroads was the telegraph and the beginning test of nature elements on the lines and the insulators attached to the poles.

As an example, we know that the insulator named "Wade" was used in 1861 in the construction of the first transcontinental telegraph line built from Omaha to Salt Lake City 955 miles along the Oregon Trail. Within two years after being installed in that location, the portion from Salt Lake City to Julesburg, Colorado was abandoned and was rebuilt on the Overland Trail through Fort Morgan, Colorado; Fort Collins, Colorado; Fort Sanders, Wyoming and across the Great Laramie Plains to Salt Lake City. The insulator used in this construction was a wood-covered "Wade" insulator. The primary purpose of the wood covering was to protect the glass from the elements. The glass portion sometimes exploded on the poles when a sudden change of ambient temperature happened in Nebraska's and Wyoming's brutal winter environment. The construction contract called for twenty-five poles per mile and one insulator per pole. There must have been hundreds of thousands of them used. "Where are they today?" They did their part in carrying the very first message that was sent from coast to coast.

Identification with the past lends so much to the hobby of railroading. I will share my knowledge of one such insulator that I have obtained over the past years. An aqua green colored insulator that I found along the Frisco Main Line at Winslow, Arkansas is historical to our state and railroad building. The Frisco Main Line was completed in 1882 when the Winslow tunnel was opened for train use. This W. Brookfield Insulator, "commonly known as the Beehive", shown in the detailed drawing has a patent date of January 25, 1870. The plant address where these insulators were manufactured by the Brookfield Glass Company from 1868 until 1882 was 55 Fulton Street. From 1882 until 1890 their address was 45 Cliff Street; all in the city of New York. Most of these insulators were so marked by the mold that cast them. This W. Brookfield insulator was made between 1883 and 1884, noting mold Number 3 on Dome. This type insulator was recognized as a standard for Telegraph Lines in North America at that time. As the "Wade" insulator was first used on the Transcontinental Telegraph line, this W. Brookfield was also one of the first used, "maybe the first", in the construction of the Telegraph lines along the Frisco Railroad through Winslow, Arkansas.

This is the front view.
On the back is printed "Pat.
Jan. 25, 1870." On the
dome 3.
There are other variations
of this insulator.



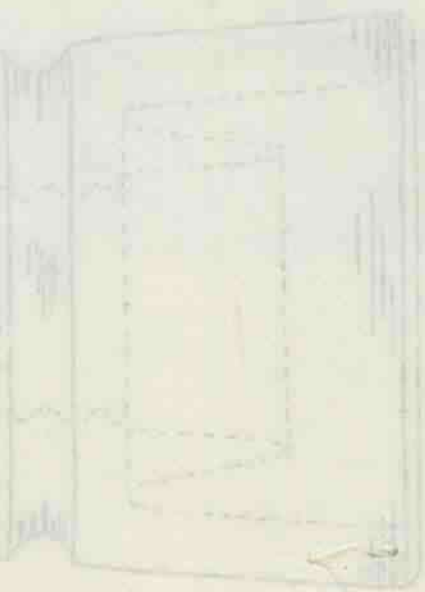
The 1875 Webster project... this... was the... insulators attached to the poles.

As an example, we have... The primary purpose of the... The construction cost... They are... only a cost.

Identification with the... after my knowledge of the... An... is... was... has a... from 1882 until... Most of these... insulator was... this... list of the...



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This is the... in the... Jan 25, 1875... Done J... There are other... of this...