



Arkansas Railroader



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Arkansas Railroad Club is a non-profit organization. We usually meet the 2nd Sunday of each month at the MOPAC building in NLR at 2PM. However, this month we will have a Christmas Open House instead.

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The Annual Club Christmas Open House will be held Sunday night, DECEMBER 13, 6:30PM at the North Hills Country Club in North Little Rock (north on JFK, past Indian Hills, past the stoplight in Sherwood - stay in left lane of JFK here- then just past the Golf Course turn right into country club.)

We need 50 people to hold the cost down to \$5 per person, payable at the door. (If less than 50 show up, cost will be slightly higher).

Need to let Bill Alessi know how many are coming by December 5th. Call Bill at 225-2098. He will also answer any questions about location.

The Model Club is invited! (will send every member of that club a complimentary copy of this newsletter.)

Let's all have a good time! Tis the season.

★ NEW OFFICERS NOMINATED FOR 1982:

President - Jim Bennett Vice-President - Bill Merck
Secretary - George Holt Treasurer - Dick Byrd

★ SUMMARY OF OCTOBER CLUB SHOW:

<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Attendance - 238	Attendance - 271
Tables - - - 37	Tables - - - 51
Total Income - \$585.50	Total Income - \$862.00
Expenses - - - \$265.44	Expenses - - - \$677.31
Profit - - - \$319.86	Profit - - - \$184.69
	Club Sales - - \$345.70
	Total Profit - \$530.39



★ The following was given me at the November meeting:

FOR SALE - Miscellaneous Railroad items - Books, Bulletins, Magazines, etc. Dates range from 1913 to 1951. Call 666 - 1454.

★ Out of 90 on the ARKANSAS RAILROADER mailing list, 21 (23.3%) live in North Little Rock, 31 (34.4%) in Little Rock, 19 (21.1%) in other Arkansas cities and 19 (21.1%) out of state. By the way, anyone who wishes to could send self-addressed stamped envelopes to your editor to mail the Newsletter in. This would save the club the cost of postage. Send to Ken Ziegenbein, 905 Valerie Dr, North Little Rock, AR 72118 or bring to meetings. Thanks.

★ Model Club postponed their November Open House until the Spring.

★ As most of you know, A. C. Kalmbach died October 14 at the age of 71. He was founder of Kalmbach Publishing Co. which publishes such magazines as Trains and Model Railroader. He did a great service to us railfans.

★ Club President Bill Alessi said the old Rock Island Choctaw Terminal in Little Rock was in the National Historical Register since 1975. The 4-story house there was the first Plantation House on the river bank in Little Rock. The Belfort Tower warned of boats coming.

Apparently, owners of the building, the Arkansas Gazette, wants it to become a restaurant someday. There are no plans to destroy any of these buildings.

RAILROADS

★ Oklahoma buys Rock Island Track Segment - The Oklahoma Dept of Transportation bought a segment of the abandoned Rock Island Line in the western part of Oklahoma between Elk City and Hydro for \$3.1 million. Governor Nigh, the state's governor, said the line was vital to energy and agricultural interests in that part of Oklahoma. Meanwhile, it appears Arkansas doesn't think the western part of its state is worth the trouble.

Due to extensive lobbying from Missouri Pacific and the Cotton Belt Railroads, the Arkansas Legislature failed to approve the needed legislation to allow the state to purchase this line (from Memphis to the Oklahoma border). True, both the Cotton Belt and MOPAC want to operate parts of this line that would be profitable for them, and there's nothing wrong with this. However, you shouldn't throw out a part of Arkansas just on the basis of lack of profit.

True, also, for two profitable railroads, a new competitor (i.e., Santa Fe) might hurt their own bottom line. But competition (even somewhat subsidized) is good for the Free Enterprise system. (After all, didn't most railroads get their start by getting right-of-ways provided by the state to encourage them to build in the area? Why shouldn't the state do this today?).

At any rate, it's sad to see part of a former great railroad go to scrap, which will probably happen now.

★ MISSOURI PACIFIC to Build New \$40 Million Repair Complex - The MOPAC announced in early November that it will build a new locomotive repair complex in North Little Rock large enough to hold four football fields. President of the railroad, James Gessner said construction would begin next January and be completed by October 1983. He said the new shop would result in a significant number of new railroad shopcraft jobs.

MOPAC currently employs 430 persons at its existing locomotive repair shop in North Little Rock. The new shop will be built just north of the present one. It will be 678 feet long, 334 to 469 feet wide and from 58 to 70 feet in height.

★ EUREKA SPRINGS - A hearing has been set for December 7 to determine action needed in connection with a suit involving both local steam railroads (the Eureka Springs & North Arkansas Railroad Co, Inc. and the Eureka Springs Railroad, Inc.). As you know, there is a dispute along a section of right-of-way north of Eureka Springs with both railroads claiming the area.

Meanwhile, both railroads are alive and well and operating successfully I was up there October 10 and had a great time riding the rails.

Ernie Deane (club member) from Fayetteville wrote and said that Columbia Pictures will be filming part of the movie "The Blue and The Gray" along the ES & NA RR near the Eureka Springs station in early December. Some modifications have been made to locomotives for the movie. (the movie stars Gregory Peck and will be shown on CBS-TV in Fall 1982).

★ Historic Railroad Dates for December:

Dec 9 - First steam locomotive operated west of Mississippi (Pacific RR) - 1852.

Dec 25 - Southern RR's "Best Friend of Charleston" enters regular service - 1830.



ROCK ISLAND LINES

NAMED GP 38-2 DIESELS

APRIL 1977

<u>ROAD NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ROAD NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ROAD NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME</u>
4300	THE ROCK ISLANDER	4319	ILLINOIS	4338	CITY OF MOLINE
4301	JOHN L. MC CLELLAN	4320	ARKANSAS	4339	CITY OF ENID
4302	DEWEY F. BARTLETT	4321	TEXAS	4340	NEAL SMITH
4303	IOWA	4322	CITY OF HERINGTON	4341	MODERN RAILROADS
4304	THE LOYAL SHIPPER	4323	CITY OF EL RENO	4342	ALLEN E. ARNOLD
4305	CITY OF MUSCATINE	4324	JERRY L. LITTON	4343	CITY OF LITTLE ROCK
4306	CITY OF ATLANTIC	4325	NEBRASKA	4344	FRED MC KIM
4307	RAILWAY AGE	4326	MISSOURI	4345	IVAN THE TERRIBLE
4308	OKLAHOMA	4327	MINNESOTA	4346	NAVAJO NATION
4309	KANSAS	4328	CITY OF SILVIS	4347	TOM RAILSBACK
4310	THE AMERICAN RAILFAN	4329	CITY OF BLUE ISLAND	4348	TOM FOSTER
4311	RICHARD F. DRAKE	4330	CARL B. ALBERT	4349	ROBERT KRAUSE
4312	JAMES H. WINDSOR III	4331	ROBERT RAY	4350	MIKE LEMKE
4313	GLENN ENGLISH	4332	THE INDIANOLA	4351	CITY OF ALBERT LEA
4314	MARTIN A. RUSSO	4333	AUDUBON BRANCH	4352	JOHN W. INGRAM
4315	DAVID P. MORGAN	4334	IOWA FALLS SHIPPERS ASSOCIATION	4353	NICHOLAS G. MANOS
4316	GARLAND L. RUCKER	4335	DAVID PRYOR	4354	FRANK J. MC GARR
4317	CHARLES O. LAVERTY	4336	CITY OF ROCK ISLAND	4355	WILLIAM M. GIBBONS
4318	DAVID L. BOREN	4337	CITY OF DAVENPORT		

NOTE: ENGINES 4300-4351 BECAME MISSOURI PACIFIC 2238-2289

Jim Bennett
Stuttgart, Ark. 11-10-81

HO HO HO
STUCK
AGAIN



MERRY CHRISTMAS !

Weather Facts:

Probability of getting snow on Christmas in Little Rock only 9%.

WINTER BEGINS 4:51PM
December 21.

For December 1:
Avg High - 55; Low - 37

For December 31:
Avg High - 50; Low - 32

★ Thanks to Bill Merck for the copy of the special train dining car menu pictured below. The story behind the menu is as follows:

Every year the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce made a good will tour visiting various cities in the southwest and southeast. This particular trip was to Houston and Galveston, Texas. The special train originated in Little Rock on the Rock Island and was routed via RI-Fordyce-COTTON BELT-Shreveport-S.P. The train departed Little Rock on the 12th so as to reach Fordyce around noon where train was turned over to the Cotton Belt and Diner #194 was coupled into the train. Cotton Belt motive power was also coupled to train at Fordyce; however I do not have engine number. Train continued from Fordyce and the group had luncheon in Diner 194. The group visited Shreveport, Houston and Galveston, Texas before returning to Little Rock via Rock Island long haul thru Oklahoma and back into Little Rock over the now abandoned west line of the Rock Island.

I do not have the balance of consist of the train but it consisted of a baggage car set up to serve all types of beverages; three or four coaches and a parlor car. No Pullman sleeping car equipment was used since the group spent the night in hotels in Houston and in another city enroute back to Little Rock; believe it was a city in Oklahoma.

BILL MERCK

LITTLE ROCK
Chamber of Commerce
Spring Tour

WE HOPE YOUR TRIP WILL MAKE
LITTLE ROCK GREATER THAN EVER

Luncheon

Chilled Crisp Celery Stuffed Olives
Vegetable Soup, Aux Crouton

**

Choice:

Prime Roast Beef—au Jus
Veal Cutlet—Paprika Sauce
Fried Young Chicken—Corn Fritter
Omelette with Sausage

**

Au Gratin Potatoes Escalloped Asparagus
Fruit Salad—French Dressing
Head Lettuce—Mayonnaise

**

Hot Rolls with Butter
Cheese with Toasted Wafer Crackers

Peach Cobbler Vanilla Ice Cream
Custard Sauce with Cookies
Coffee Tea Milk

Diner 194 D. Burnside, Steward
\$2.00

April 12, 1950



LITTLE ROCK'S FIRST PASSENGER DEPOT

by: W. M. "Mike" Adams

Although preceded in construction in Arkansas annals by both the Memphis and Little Rock and the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroads, the Cairo and Fulton was the first railroad to erect a depot within the corporate limits of the city of Little Rock. Both the M&LR and the LR&FS started a few short blocks apart in what was soon to become the town of Argenta, now North Little Rock. The Cairo and Fulton started construction northward out of Argenta and initially leased station and yard facilities from the Little Rock and Fort Smith.

On May 5, 1872, Thomas Allen, president of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain, broke ground on the site of the present passenger station at Markham and Victory, and grading started on the Cairo and Fulton south toward Texas. Work was then started on the hugh, wooden monstrosity that was called, optimistically, the UNION DEPOT. Just east of and behind the depot a fine three story brick office building was erected. The second floor of this building was occupied by the land department under Thomas Essex, land commissioner, and for this reason the building was called, during it's lifetime, the "Land Office Building". G. A. A. Deane and in turn, D. L. Phillips, successors to Essex, maintained their offices in this building until they moved uptown in 1900. At that time the general superintendent, W. T. Tyler, moved his forces from St. Louis and occupied the second floor. The left side of the third floor was used by the claim agents and on the right was found the relay telegraph office - CF Office. It is alledged that literally hundreds of boomer telegraph operators worked tricks in this office during the 36 years the building stood. The telegraph call, "CF" remained in use for a full century, until late 20th century communications precluded relay offices. The superintendent of the Arkansas Division and his clerks were on the right side of the first floor while the left housed the trainmasters and the dispatchers office. Surrounded by a luxurious lawn and stately magnolia trees, the building was in a beautiful setting.

While the Land Office building was more or less conventional in appearance the station the Cairo and Fulton erected was of a peculiar ugliness, that so prevalent in the shingle nail and scrollwork period. Actually, according to one astute critic, it looked like it had first been built and then the plans drafted - if indeed it was planned. At first look the observer had to gaze long and hard before he could believe what he saw. It was adorned with gables and with towers and with turrets. Even the chimneys at first had little tin inverted pants. In it's erection, wherever there was danger that a smooth, simple line or surface might remain, a gable or an ugly, timbered trimming was hastily applied. The thing that was so amazing about this edifice was how so much concentrated ugliness could be concocted from ordinary shortleaf pine boards. After it was finished public opinion was unanimous that it's looks could not be greatly changed - for better or worse.

The entire building, except the space for a ticket office, waiting room and telegraph office, was leased to C. A. Pratt who operated a hotel, lunchroom and, probably most important, a saloon. Pratt was a Missouri Pacific conductor from Sedalia, Missouri and paid just one dollar a year lease on the structure. Such a generous arrangement worked so heavily in his favor that in a few short years he owned the First National Bank in Little Rock and sufficient stock in the Iron Mountain to qualify as a director. At the time of completion of the Union Depot in 1873 the railroad extended just 62 miles to the southwest, ending at the town of Arkadelphia. The Baring Cross Bridge was opened for service in late 1873 and through passenger trains began operating between Little Rock and St. Louis via the Cairo and Fulton and the St. Louis and Iron Mountain. Track was laid into Texarkana, 145 miles away, on January 15, 1874 and when the Red River Bridge at Fulton was completed on March 20, 1874, trains began running between St. Louis and Texarkana, 491 miles. On May 4, 1874 the Cairo and Fulton, the Cairo, Arkansas and Texas and the St. Louis and Iron Mountain were welded into the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern under the leadership of Thomas Allen.

In 1879 the Iron Mountain narrowed their track gauge from 5 foot to the prevailing standard of 4 foot 8½ inches in a notable feat of railroad engineering. In 1880 the Memphis and Little Rock followed suit and then

built an extension from their facilities in Argenta westward across Main Street, on between Fourth and Fifth Streets and through the present Concrete Products Yard of the Missouri Pacific to connect with the Iron Mountain a short distance north of the Baring Cross Bridge. The M&LR started operating their passenger trains out of the IM&S depot and it became, loosely speaking, a true Union Depot. Enter into the picture then, one Jay Gould. Gould started forging what he liked to call his "Southwest System" and by the end of 1881 had secured firm control of both the Iron Mountain, extending from St. Louis to the southwest but also the Missouri Pacific, extending from St. Louis to Kansas City and on beyond. That same year a shortline had built into Little Rock from Pine Bluff, known as the Little Rock, Mississippi River and Texas their passenger depot was located about the foot of Commerce Street on the levee. By 1886 Gould had secured control of the LR MR & T and extended their main line on up into the Union Depot, which by this time must have been taking on airs.

In 1887 the Little Rock and Eastern, a branch of the Texas and St. Louis, later the St. Louis Southwestern and more familiarly known as the Cotton Belt, built into Argenta from Altheimer and connected with the Iron Mountain about a half mile east of the Fort Smith Crossing. The Cotton Belt then started operating passenger service into the Union Depot, via the Baring Cross Bridge. Then, in 1888, Gould entered into a long term lease of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad. A connection was built just north and west of the Fort Smith Crossing and on November 15, 1888 the LR & FS passenger trains started operating out of the Union Depot. Our old wooden palace is now serving five railroads, albeit three of them would eventually become as one. Contemporary timetables reveal the old depot now hosting nearly two dozen trains daily!

It is said that Jay Gould made a routine trip into Little Rock soon after the M&LR entered the scene and was chagrined to see the morning train from Texas discharge literally scores of passengers on the platform, all destined to points in the east and southeast via the Memphis gateway. He immediately set out to gain control of the M&LR and, for once, was bested. He did not give up though but built his own connecting line from Bald Knob to Memphis and started giving the M&LR fits. Since the route from Little Rock to Bald Knob and Memphis is about 18 miles longer than the direct line

of the M&LR the latter line gleefully advertised themselves far and wide as the "Short Line". Finally taken in by larger interests, first the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf which evolved into the Rock Island, the M&LR pulled out of the Union Depot in 1899. In 1902 the CO&G built their own Little Rock station on east Second Street, which building is still standing. In the early 1900's the Cotton Belt constructed a fine brick passenger station on South Maple Street in Argenta and moved their operations out of the Union Depot. Probably this was a God-send to the Iron Mountain because their passenger traffic was climbing and new railroad connections had opened up between Texas and Mexico creating an international clientele. It became necessary to double track the Arkansas Division from Bald Knob to Argenta and from Little Rock to Cypress Junction and eventually all the way to Benton. Whether the Iron Mountain was content with this rather poor excuse of a passenger station, especially one in an important state capitol, is not known. The City of Little Rock was evidently not so proud of it for in 1908 the old frame building was condemned by city authorities and the Iron Mountain given an ultimatum.

Construction was then started on the present brick structure just to the west of the old building. This beautiful edifice was completed and opened to the public October 9, 1909. The Land Office building was torn down and the location filled in to a height of twenty feet and became the still existing Union Station plaza. On October 24, 1909 President Taft visited Little Rock and addressed an assemblage of citizens on this plaza. On the same day the new station was opened a wrecking crew was put to work tearing down the old shell. The workers started removing doors and windows when suddenly the old building started swaying and cracking and then, emulating the wonderful one horse shay, tottered and collapsed, falling flat with a resound^{ful} crash and an enormous cloud of dust. Luckily the workmen were able to rush out and escaped being crushed as did the Fort Smith morning passenger train which had just pulled away from the platform in front. The new station was a model of railroad efficiency and served the Missouri Pacific - Iron Mountain well for many years. But then - that is another story.