



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 16

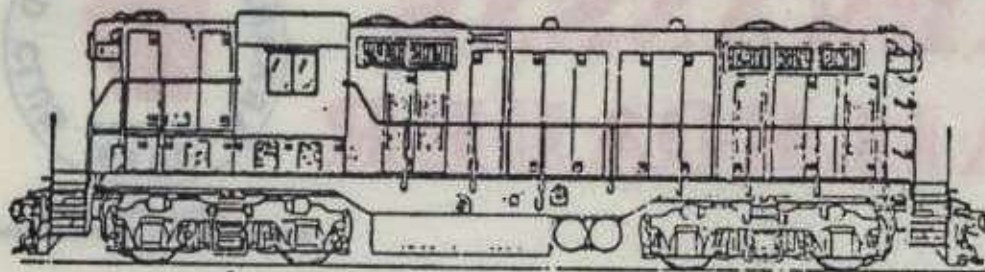
NUMBER 12

DECEMBER 1985



A bitterly cold snow-laden morning greeted this Missouri Pacific local as it eased by Little Rock's Union Station in February, 1985. Most people were warm and snug at home on this cold morning, but the railroad continued to roll and hearty men continued to work. MERRY CHRISTMAS!





GENERAL NEWS

NEW OFFICERS FOR 1986 - The following will be the new 1986 officers of the Arkansas Railroad Club: PRESIDENT - Jim Wakefield; VICE-PRESIDENT - Peter Smykla; TREASURER - Richard Byrd; SECRETARY - Ross Holt.

Board members are: Bill Bailey (expires December 1985); Bill Pollard (expires December 1986); Walter Walker (expires December 1987); Gene Hull (expires December 1988); Randy Tardy (expires December 1989); and newly elected Dusty Rhodes (expires December 1990).

PROGRAMS NEEDED - New Club President Jim Wakefield says he needs people to sign up to give programs for the club meetings next year. We all know that most if not all of our members have some sort of program they could give, so let's all help out and make your ideas known to Jim.

CHRISTMAS PARTY SET - The annual Arkansas Railroad Club Christmas party will be held December 6, a Friday, at 7:00 PM at the Coachman's Inn in Little Rock (take the 6th street exit from I-30). Turkey and dressing and all the trimmings will be had. A cost of \$9.55 each (includes tip and tax) will be collected at the door, if you have not already paid. Let our current club President know as soon as possible if you can attend. Fred Filler's number is 821-2026. The Christmas Party will take the place of our regular club meeting in December.

POSTAL PROBLEMS IN PINE BLUFF - I understand that many of you in the Pine Bluff area are not receiving your RAILROADERS very timely, sometimes taking 2½ weeks to be delivered. At the same time, other parts of the state, such as Prescott, gets them one or two days after mailing. Elizabeth Gaines and I have taken some steps to remedy this situation, as the cause is definitely in the local Pine Bluff office. Be patient. If you haven't gotten your newsletters by one or two days before the scheduled meetings on the second Sunday of each month, call me, Ken Ziegenbein at 501-758-1340.

PERFECT RECORD - Coming across some old documents from Bill Church, it was found that Bill's grandfather, W.H. Church, had a perfect record in the Order of Railway Conductors of America. No suspensions were ever recorded against his membership in the order. He was a railroad conductor for the Cotton Belt and a member of the Order of Railway Conductors until his death in 1930.

WANT TO LEARN TELEGRAPHER'S SKILLS? - If so, contact L.R. Kieth at Coastal Telegraph Ltd, S. 303 "E" Street, Spokane, WA 99204.

MAN BLAMES COTTON BELT FOR HEART ATTACK - In October, a Pine Bluff man sought \$1 million in damages from the Cotton Belt Railway claiming his heart attack in March was the result of insufficient manpower and inadequate tools during his work as a machinist at Pine Bluff. He claims the railroad was negligent in failing to provide a reasonably safe work place, sufficient manpower, safe methods of work and adequate tools.

ROCK ISLAND BEING DISMANTLED - Well, it finally happened. L.B. Foster has begun the nasty work of ripping up the famous Rock Island "Sunbelt" line from Howe, Oklahoma to perhaps as far as Perry, Arkansas. During a personal drive to western Arkansas on November 19, I saw the Foster crew (of 3 men) rapidly taking the rail up and laying it to one side. On this day, they were at the road crossing in Hartford, Arkansas. One of the Foster men told me they could take up 8 miles a day, and that they were doing 40 miles in each work order. It was amazing to me just how fast they could make a 100-year old railroad disappear. The people of Hartford seemed oblivious to the railroad being gone. (Pictures elsewhere in this issue)

LAST TRAIN LEAVES HELENA - On October 18, 1985, the last Union Pacific freight left Helena, Arkansas, ending a 100-year old tradition, and on the following Monday, the operation of the railroad line opened in a brand new depot in Lexa. Lexa is an old railroad switching station. The Helena depot is located at the end of a 12-mile spur off the main line. (HELENA-WEST HELENA WORLD)

TRAIN DERAILS AT FULTON - A Union Pacific freight train derailed at Fulton, Arkansas (near Texarkana) on Friday, November 2, causing the temporary evacuation of a number of homes in the area. However, it was later determined that no hazardous materials were aboard. No one was injured. Amtrak's "EAGLE" passenger train was detoured that night via the Cotton Belt from Texarkana to Pine Bluff, thence northward to Little Rock via Biddle Yards. The "EAGLE"'s arrival in Little Rock was 6 hours late, arriving at 6:45 AM on November 3, just minutes ahead of the southbound "EAGLE"

WOMAN KILLED ATTEMPTING TO CROSS A COLT, ARKANSAS RAIL CROSSING - The woman was killed attempting to cross the tracks and was hit by a Missouri Pacific freight. She died from head injuries received upon impact. The 1976 Olds was carried about 750 feet from the point of impact. She apparently didn't see the train coming.

MORE ON GRADE ACCIDENTS - Did you know that there were 7,161 crossing accidents in the U.S. in 1983, injuring 2,623 people and killing 575. Sixty-five percent of these auto-train collisions involved trains moving at less than 40 MPH. A 150-car train moving at 40 MPH needs one mile to stop. **DON'T TAKE CHANCES - DON'T BE A DEAD FOOL!**

TIES REPLACED - Union Pacific replaced most ties along the tracks from Mountain Pine to the Mountain Pine Junction, just east of Hot Springs, Arkansas, in October of this year. They replaced about 1,000 ties per day. (THE SENTINEL RECORD)

SLOW DOWN - Lewisville, Arkansas City Marshall Sam Pierson issued a warning to the Cotton Belt headquarters in Pine Bluff to have trains slow down when they come through Lewisville. The warning was issued around 7:45 AM October 15 when a train flew through Lewisville at a speed of 63 MPH. Pierson said the ordinance regulates the speed of trains going through town at 45 MPH. (LAFAYETTE COUNTY DEMOCRAT)

ENGINE 819 TO REPRESENT PINE BLUFF IN CELEBRATION - Engine 819 will represent Pine Bluff in the Sesquicentennial celebration as a traveling historical and education exhibit, according to a spokesman for the Historical Railroad Preservation Commission. Also, according to Bill Bailey, the SLSW 819 will be ready sometimes in the Spring. They still need money, and reminds every member of the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society that their 1986 dues are now due. Also, anyone reading this newsletter from around the country (it goes to 23 states) are welcome to contribute to help insure that the 819 will steam again. Mail your dues, contributions, questions, etc. to: COTTON BELT RAIL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC, P.O. Box 2044, Pine Bluff, AR 71613.

NEW STEAM RAILROAD IN ARKANSAS?? - Hope, Arkansas Fair Park Director Paul Henley has been working two years on a project to establish a steam locomotive system between Hope and Washington, Arkansas in Washington State Park. The plan is to transfer the original Reader Railroad Depot which is now at Fair Park to a site next to the Hope water tower adjacent to Interstate 30. There is already a railroad between Hope and Washington (the Union Pacific) that passes right by the Hope water tower and they are working on getting permission from Union Pacific to make use of their tracks. "If everything goes perfectly, we will have a steam-powered locomotive with open-air passenger cars going right to the old restored cotton gin in Old Washington", Henley said. (TEXARKANA GAZETTE)

TRACK WORK BEGUN - Construction work on consolidating the Third and Fourth Avenue railroad tracks through Pine Bluff, Arkansas started November 12. It is estimated that the first phase of the project - including laying new track - would be done by the end of May. (PINE BLUFF COMMERCIAL)

MODULAR RAILROAD SHOW HELD - Southwest Independent Modular Railroaders had a show October 12 and 13 at Southwest Mall in Little Rock. Two NMRA award-winning modules were displayed at the show, the state's first all public HO modular show. The organization for modular railroaders was organized in January 1985 and includes members living in Southwest Little Rock, Hensley and Benton. (BENTON COURIER)

24 CARS DERAIL ON MEMPHIS BRANCH - The Union Pacific freight derailed on the Memphis Branch at Rio Vista, Arkansas early on October 31. No one was injured.

SHRINKING - According to the NRHS NEWS, the Illinois Central Gulf is planning to reduce it's trackage from about 5,500 miles in 1985 to under 3,000 miles in 1988. Most of the surplus track will be sold to other operators. The ICG would then be a mainly north-south line from Chicago to New Orleans.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC AT VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE - In March, 1986, the Space Shuttle will be launched into Polar Orbit for the first time. Both the launch and recovery will be staged at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Over a typical 24-hour period, about 10 trains, including Amtrak, move through the 98,400 acrs base north of Santa Barbara. During launches, SP cooperates with Vandenberg by minimizing train movement through the "hazard area". On a launch day, three hours prior to lift-off, an SP officer takes a position at Quadalupe on a hotline to the communications center at Vandenberg. An SP signal maintainer at the opposite end of the hazard area assists in train control. In event of an emergency, they are empowered to override the decisions of Los Angeles dispatchers. (SP BULLETIN)

ATLANTA CHAPTER TRYING TO RESTORE LOCOMOTIVE - The Atlanta Chapter, NRHS, is beginning to take on the task of restoring Atlanta & West Point No. 290 (a 4-6-2) to operating condition. If anyone would like to help out in this attempt, contact the Georgia Building Authority-Restoration Fund, 1 Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30334.

STEAM EXPO 86 - TRAINLINE Magazine (via report in the Central Oklahoma Chapter's DISPATCHER) reports that all steam locomotives will time their arrival at Vancouver for the evening of May 22, 1986. According to the report, the following engines are committed to attend this World's Fair: 1) British Columbia No. 2860 (Hudson 4-6-4); 2) BC 3716 (Consolidation 2-8-0); BC 1077 (Prairie 2-6-2); 4) Canadian Pacific 136 (American 4-4-0); 5) CP 1072 (10-Wheeler 4-6-0); 6) CP 374 (American); Southern Pacific 4449 (Northern 4-8-4); 8) Nickle Plate 765 (Berkshire 2-8-4); 9) Santa Fe 1010 (Prairie); N&W 611 (Northern); Virginia & Truckee J.W. Bowler (Columbia 2-4-0); V&T INYO (American); JOHN MOLSON 2-2-2; 14) SP 2472 (Pacific); 15) Western Pacific 94 (10-Wheeler); 16) Northern Pacific 1070 (switcher 0-6-0); 17) Fort Steele 114 (geared Shay); 18) Alberni Pacific 2 (geared Shay); 19) Condon Kinzua & Southern 91 (geared Hiesler); 20) Bear Harbour Lumber (Gypsy); 21) Ohio Crane (steam crane); 22) Bronwhoist Steam Crane (crane); 23) UP 8444 (Northern); 23) Canadian National 6060 (Mountain 4-8-2).

There's a chance that these following will also attend: SP 2479 (Pacific); Santa Fe 3751 (Northern); Prairie Dog Central 3 (American); Dominion of Canada A4 (Pacific); CP 29 (American); Florida East Coast 153 (Pacific).

INCOME OF RAILROADS - Nine months income for the nation's largest railroad holding companies including non-railroad earnings through September are:

-- Burlington Northern	\$501.7 million
-- Norfolk Southern	380.1
-- Union Pacific	366.0
-- SFSP	332.3
-- CSX	332.0
-- Kansas City Southern Industries	44.5
-- Soo Line	-5.0
-- CNW	-8.7

(SP UPDATE)

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR - The U.S. Supreme Court agreed the week of October 6 to review two cases brought by shippers who claim railroads should not be granted antitrust immunity when involved in collective rate-making.

JUDGE HALTS DRUG TESTS FOR RAIL WORKERS - A federal judge halted a new drug and alcohol testing program for 200,000 railroad workers, saying on November 1 there was a reasonable probability that the tests violated workers rights. The program, which requires testing after major accidents and authorizes testing on a railroad supervisor's "reasonable suspicion" that a worker has been drinking, is the first of its kind in a federally regulated transportation industry. (PINE BLUFF COMMERCIAL)

ABANDONED RAILROAD TRACKS TO BE USED AS PARK? - Ron Forster wants to turn some of America's 45,000 miles of abandoned railroad tracks into parks where disabled people, including the blind, could use his invention, the PEDAL POWERED RAIL CAR. The chain-driven 5-foot machines require no agility and little strength to operate. The cars ride on rails using four 17-inch aluminum wheels, coated with cloth to muffle them. They can reach a speed of 12 MPH. (RUSSELLVILLE COURIER DEMOCRAT)

DOWNWARD TREND - At their high point, U.S. railroads in 1916 carried 98 percent of the nation's intercity travelers and 77 percent of domestic freight. By the early 1970's, railroads carried fewer than 1 percent of intercity passengers and less than 40 percent of the freight. (DISPATCHER)

DALLAS SUBWAY - Officials have approved a 1.3 million dollar underground subway system in Dallas, Texas that should be completed by the year 2010. The rail system, approved by the Dallas Area Rapid Transit board on August 27 will include three downtown subways and another beneath North Central Expressway. The first lines would be expected to open in 1995. (DISPATCHER)

ABANDONED - The Interstate Commerce Commission approved Southern Pacific's application to abandon the 21 mile NAPA branch, which winds its way through one of northern California's famed wine producing regions. For years, train loads of wine were shipped out of the regions but vintners gradually switched to trucks. A group of buyers wants to purchase the line to operate a luxury wine train. (SP UPDATE)

MAILING DATE - Expected mailing date of this issue is Wednesday, November 27. Remember that Thursday, November 28 is a holiday.



FALL HERE MOVE ON

by: E. Harris, August 1985

*There's a chill on the wind tonight,
Geese cross the moon in Southward flight,
It's Fall again and sure as sin,
The urge is here to move on again.*

II

*Lonesome whistles on the keening wind,
Tell me it's time to move on again,
Three month yard job heres not bad,
Work steady, a gal, fair pay, I must be mad.*

III

*Got wanderlust again in my shoes,
To settle here I must refuse,
Spring & Summer's now past and gone,
A voice in the wind says move on.*

IV

*The far off plumes of smoke now beckon
Migratory geese & their lonesome call,
Their message to this wanderer,
Time to move on, it's Fall.*

V

*Call me a fool, or demented if you will,
To leave all of this behind me,
To witness a Southern loco climb a hill,
At the thought I feel a thrill.*

VI

*A voice in the clicking rail joints,
The cry of flanges on steel,
All join in a restless song,
Fall is here once more, move on.*

VII

*At the depot grip's all packed,
Flyer's headlight pierces the black,
She stops, I swing aboard, no looking back,
Rail joints, click out the song, Fall again, move on.*

- END -

(The preceding poem was relayed to me by Bill Church)

THE SIXTY-MINUTE RULE

by: William Church

No where else but on the railroad that old axiom, "necessity is the mother of invention", is truer. It was out of a necessity that the timetable was born, and from the timetable, rules that govern its' use. Then out of these rules came the train orders, and sometimes for the lack of them, the sixty-minute rule was born.

The first timetables were crude affairs. Trains being indentified by their conductors instead of numbers and all meeting points were positive. That is, if Church was to meet Jackson at Hays City, neither train could proceed until the other arrived. This caused considerable delay, especially in the days of frequent breakdowns. The necessity of eliminating such delays came the rule of superior direction to move regardless of the tardiness of the other train running opposite it.

The superiority of train rule did eliminate unnecessary delays to the superior train at meeting points, but did nothing or very little for the inferior train who had to wait for the tardy superior train.

This problem was solved in a matter of months by an addition to the rule that allowed an inferior train, after a specified time waiting at a timetable meeting point, to proceed under the protection of a flagman to the next station, or until the delayed train was met.

While the flagging rule improved train operations greatly, the slow movement behind a flagman left much to be desired, so through a necessity, the train order was born.

By 1851, a telegraph line had been constructed along the Erie Railroad between New York, New York and Port Jervis, New Jersey, the telegraphers being located in Erie depots. One day in the Fall of 1851, the westbound Day Express took a siding at Turner to meet the Eastbound Express. After a considerable delay, Charles Minot, the Superintendent, who was a passenger on the Westbound, went into the depot at Turner and being a telegrapher, he called the operator at Goshen, the next station west, and asked if the Eastbound Express had departed there.

Receiving a negative reply from Goshen, Minot sent a wire to the operator at Goshen, "Hold Eastbound Express at Goshen until the Westbound Express arrives." Then he wrote out a message to Conductor Turner and Engineer Lewis of the Westbound Express, "Run to Goshen regardless of Eastbound Express". Thus, the train-order came into being out of a necessity to eliminate delays.

But even with the train order rapidly coming into vogue, necessity, because of lack of telegraphers on some railroads, gave birth to the sixty-minute rule, which for a brief season held sway on the "Arkansas Branch" of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad in 1873.

After the St. Louis and Iron Mountain completed its Belmont Branch from Bismarck, Missouri to Belmont on the Mississippi River in 1868, they acquired the charter of the Cairo and Fulton RR of Missouri, a line that was projected from Birds Point, MO., across the Mississippi River from Cairo, Illinois to Fulton, Arkansas. They then reorganized the C&F into the Cairo, Arkansas and Texas RR and built through Poplar Bluff, Missouri to the Arkansas state line where they connected with the Cairo and Fulton RR being built north out of Little Rock, Arkansas. All these lines were later consolidated into the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern, later the Missouri Pacific and now the Union Pacific Railroad.

With through service established to Little Rock, via Belmont, the Iron Mountain sought a shorter route to Poplar Bluff. A line was surveyed over the Ozark Mountains from end of track in Arcadia, Missouri to the Black River Valley and Poplar Bluff and was put into service in June of 1873 as the "Arkansas Branch" of the St. Louis Iron Mountain Railroad.

The "Arkansas Branch" initially opened with two passenger and two freight trains daily between Bismarck, MO and Moark, AR, named Little Rock Freight and Little Rock Passenger.

At the time the "Arkansas Branch" was put into service the Ozark Mountain region between Arcadia and Poplar Bluff was sparsely settled, and few if any towns warranted an agent with a telegraph. So because of the lack of telegraphers to inform the train dispatcher of train movements and delays so he could move his trains between Bismarck and Moark without time-consuming delays, the sixty-minute rule was adopted to govern the two passenger trains on the branch.

The sixty-minute rule was nothing more than the exchange of superiority between the two passenger trains when one train became more than one hour late.

(continued on next page)

In the event the superior train, the North Little Rock Passenger, fell behind schedule and became one hour late, it lost its' right of the road over the South Little Rock Express, and cleared the main line and waited for the South Little Rock Express.

The South Little Rock Passenger, being the inferior train by direction between Bismarck and Moark, by the rules was required to clear the time at stations shown on the timetable for the North Little Rock Train. If the North train failed to arrive after a one hour delay, the South Little Rock Train had the right of road over the North Little Rock Train until they met, or the South Little Rock Train became two hours late, in which event it lost the right of the road to the North Little Rock train. After another hour delay to the South Little Rock Train, it could proceed if the North Little Rock Train had not arrived, running three hours late. This swapping back and forth of rights continued until the two trains met.

An additional clause was attached to the sixty-minute rule restricting the North Train to an additional ten-minute delay at the timetable meeting point in the event the South Little Rock train was not met. The crew of the North Train had to wait for ten minutes after the departure time of the South Train and run ten minutes late until it met the South Train or became one hour late. This was to prevent a difference in watches to cause a wreck.

So, the sixty-minute rule became a train dispatcher's helper in territory where he could not reach a delayed train by train orders, and it relieved a conductor of walking a flag ahead like the old rule prior to train orders.

But alas, the poor old freight crews were not allowed such leeways. Once delayed, they stayed delayed, especially the inferior train, who by the rule had to stay in the clear of the main track at its timetable meeting point until its' counterpart arrived. The North Freight was only restricted to a ten-minute wait at the meeting point before he could proceed in the event the South Train failed to arrive.

When better communications were installed on the Iron Mountain, the Sixty-Minute Rule followed the older rules into history. But somehow, the old clumsy rules that made railroading a raw-hiding life, with their passing, took some of the spice out of railroading by the seat on your pants.

THE END

(Written for the ARKANSAS RAILROADER by William Church in September 1985)



LEXINGTON GROUP IN TRANSPORTATION HISTORY

SP SSW

SPECIAL TRAIN OPERATED BY SOUTHERN PACIFIC-COTTON BELT
MEMPHIS TO PINE BLUFF AND RETURN-SEPT. 28-1985

CONSIST:

NUMBER	TYPE	BUILDER	DATE	REMARKS:
SP-3201	SDP-45 DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE	EMD	1967	BOILER EQUIPPED
SP-3207	SDP-45 DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE	EMD	1967	BOILER EQUIPPED
SP-295	BAGGAGE/GENERATOR CAR	PC&P	1962	EX-SP 6700-SERIES BAGGAGE CAR
SP-292	10/6 SLEEPER (CREW CAR)	BUELL	1950	EX-SP 9009 'SUNSET LIMITED' 10/6 SLEEPER
SP-290	DINING CAR	BUELL	1950	EX-SP 10214 'SUNSET LIMITED' (AUDUBON DINING ROOM)
SP-291	LOUNGE CAR	BUELL	1950	EX-SP 2987 'SUNSET LIMITED' (FRENCH QUARTER LOUNGE)
SP-289	'CITY OF ANGELS' LOUNGE	P-S	1969	EX-SP 2986 CLUB-LOUNGE FOR JOHN 'CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO'
SP-293	18-SEAT CHAIR CAR	P-S	1954	EX-SP 2356 'COAST DAYLIGHT' CHAIR CAR
SP-151	'PINE BLUFF' BUSINESS CAR	PULLMAN	1911	EX-SP 104 'SAN JOSE'. BUILT AS COACH 677, THEN EP&SW COACH 1054 BEFORE CONV. TO BUSINESS CAR
SP-99	'HOUSTON' BUSINESS CAR	PULLMAN	1926	BUILT AS SP-99 BUSINESS CAR



COMPILED BY:

JIM BENNETT
1602 STRAIT PLACE
Stuttgart, Arkansas 72160
(REVISED 10-10-85)

NIGHT TRAIN TO GUNNISON

by: E. J. Haley

(Submitted by Gene Hull)

Up the canyon of Chalk Creek, so lonely and white
The little train to Gunnison climbs through the night
The Mason Bogie* barks as the grade grows steeper
For she's trailing a combo, a coach, and a sleeper

As I ride, cozy and snug, in a lower berth
My mind's filled with thoughts of home and of "Peace on Earth"
'Tis the night before Christmas and I'm on my way
Back home to Gunnison to spend that happy day

Pullman windows present an ever-changing view
And an occasional glimpse of the Bogie too
When the firebox is opened, there's a bright red glow
And squares of yellow coach light flicker 'cross the snow

The Bogie noisily struggles to hoist her train
Along Tunnel Gulch's bleak and rocky terrain
Her Congdon stack gushing a bituminous plume
Boiling upward to blot out the pale winter moon

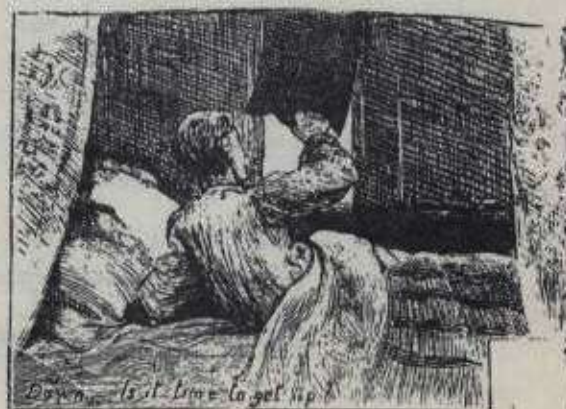
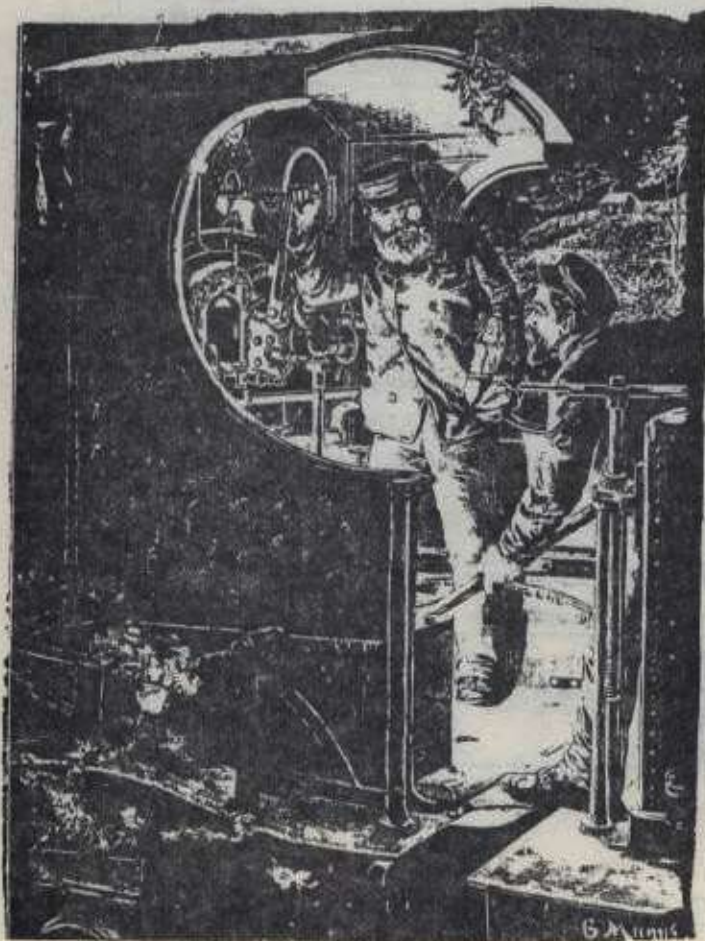
A warning shriek from the whistle, a muffled roar
Our little train plunges into Alpine's black bore
Coach lights illuminate tunnel sides slipping by
'Cross the Divide, then out under the starlit sky

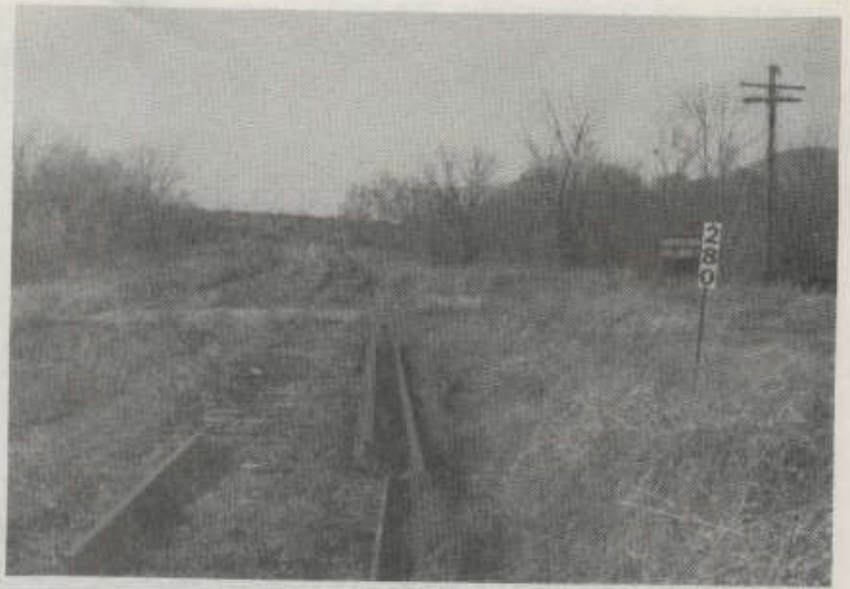
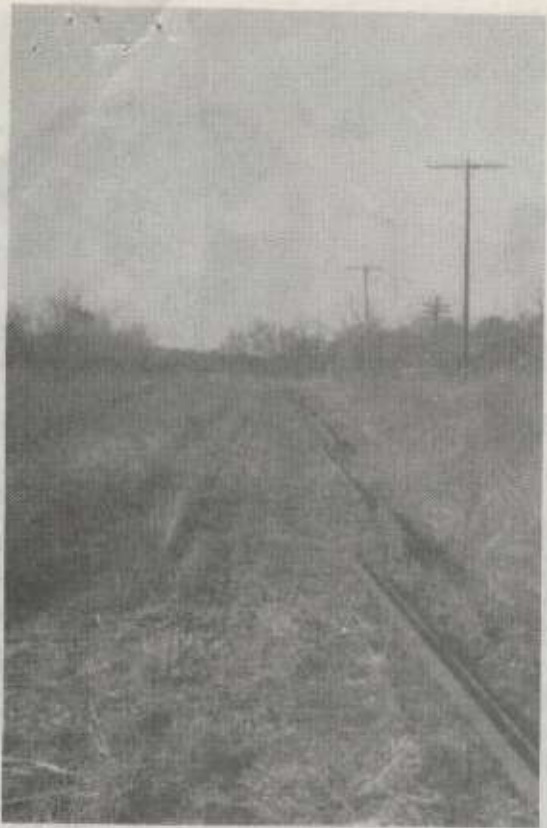
One long blast announces Alpine Station's ahead
Though I can't see it I know the order board's red
For the Bogie's stack is mute and the brake shoes growl
While round the snow-layden depot the cold winds howl

Down Tunnel Creek, along the Palisades great wall
Around Sherrod's sharp curve, on through Woodstock we crawl
Down Quartz Canyon we drift, with the night almost gone
Along Tomichi's broad valley we race the dawn

To Gunnison at last, and so my journey ends
As I step to the platform midst fam'ly and friends
Down the years to you, old friend, I send at long last
This hearty Christmas greeting from out of the past

* A type of locomotive built by Wm. Mason Locomotive Works
in Taunton, Mass. in the 1870's





END OF THE LINE FOR THE ROCK - Milepost 280 at Hartford, Arkansas looking west on November 19, 1985. A crew from L.B. Foster had just completed taking up the rails. This scene, in extreme western Arkansas, will be repeated along other parts of the Sunbelt Route before the winter is over.



ABOVE LEFT - While one crew loosens the rail, another picks the rail up with this magnet and stacks the pieces neatly along the side. ABOVE - Rails are broken and bent at road crossings before the dozers get there, as at this crossing east of Hartford. LEFT AND BELOW LEFT - A 2-man crew moves along at about 8 miles a day undoing a railroad that's been there for 100 years. The dark storm clouds were befitting to the occasion. (Photos by Ken Ziegenbein, November 19, 1985)





The Little Rock Port Authority Railroad's No. RE1017 pushes a boxcar toward the General Electric facilities at the Port of Little Rock in August of 1985. (Photo by Ken Ziegenbein)

CLASS III RAILROADS OF ARKANSAS

Part 5 - The Little Rock Port Authority Railroad

The beginning of the Little Rock Port Railroad occurred in 1967 when a contract was awarded to construct the roadbed of its main line from the wharf to the Missouri Pacific line. In 1968, a contract was awarded for \$373,000 to construct about 4 miles of rail on the roadbed prepared in 1967. In 1971 the Port Railroad main line was extended across the Missouri Pacific to the Rock Island, giving the Port direct access with two main line carriers. At the same time, an interchange siding and an extension to the special bulk unloading terminal for bauxite was constructed. This rail work was paid for by the Ohio River Company in exchange for a rent-free ten year lease of their bauxite off-loading premises.

The Railroad Marshalling Yard and industrial spurs to serve General Electric and industries east of Fourche Dam Pike were constructed in 1974 at a cost of \$837,000. General Electric Company reimbursed the Port Authority \$179,000 for their portion of the construction. A crew was hired and full-time operations began in October, 1974. They actually activated their certificate in June of 1972 but only operated on a part-time basis until October, 1974.

A \$51,000 engine storage and maintenance facility was completed in 1978. In December of 1979 the East Industrial Spur Extension south of Frazier Pike to serve the O'Neal Steel, North American Metals and Weyerhaeuser sites was constructed. The rail siding for the Foreign Trade Zone Building was also completed in 1979.

In 1982, extension of rail to Arkla Industries and south along General Electric's east boundary line was laid.

Is future extension now possible since Little Rock voters recently (November 5) approved the construction of a new slack-water harbor? Some speculate that up to 3,000 new jobs may be created by the new harbor. Profits of the Railroad exceeded \$50,000 in 1984 with a bright future ahead. They moved 6,159 tons last year while handling 5,669 revenue cars, up from 4,993 in 1983. The railroad operates 5 days a week.

According to Mary Jo Rainey, the railroad's agent, the small switching Port Railroad is unique since very few cities or government entities operate their own railroads. Unencumbered by restrictions found in the operations of large line-haul railroads, the Port Railroad crew members are able to do whatever is required when a need arises, such as immediately fix a broken rail or put a derailed wheel back on track without having to wait for a specialized crew to do it.

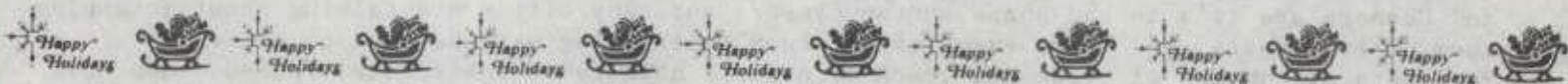
The Port Railroad has increased its workload steadily, topping the 600-car mark handled in a single month in the fall of 1984. On July 16, 1984, the crew handled 100 cars in one 24-hour period, but normally move about 20 cars per day. Users include: General Electric (largest user), Best Foods, Little Rock Terminal Co., AFCO Metals, Democrat Printing & Litho Co., Weyerhaeuser Company, O'Neal Steel and Little Rock Distributing Company.

PASSENGER TRAIN OF THE MONTH



Dozens of holiday passengers await the arrival of the regular Rock Island varnish on this cold winter's day at Little Rock's Choctaw Station. The train will be taking travelers to such places as Lonoke, Brinkley and Memphis to visit friends and relatives during the Yuletide season...Alas, but it's only wishful reminiscence as the station is now closed and the Rock Island abandoned. But we can still remember...MERRY CHRISTMAS - HAVE A HAPPY 1986!

(Actual photo taken February 4, 1985 by Ken Ziegenbein)



Former Reader Railroad's #1702 is seen here being towed at the end of a Missouri Pacific freight heading toward Fort Smith through North Little Rock, November 13, 1985. It was sold to a firm in Fremont, Nebraska for hauling freight and passengers. The locomotive was sold by the Reader to Long Distributing Company in 1975, where it was stored all these years. (Thanks to Richard Grigsby for the above information and to Bill Eldridge for telling me it was in town and to John Martin for his relaying to me the train's schedule that morning. Photo by Ken Ziegenbein)

MORE NEWS

OKLAHOMA PORTION OF ROCK SAVED - Red-Ark Development Authority of Oklahoma announced November 15 that they have acquired about 75 miles of the Rock Island between McAlester and Howe, Oklahoma for \$2.6 million. They intend to make the line into a profitable shortline railroad by next year, calling it a key element in the economic development of the area.

AMTRAK NEWS - Amtrak lowered its All Aboard America fares in early October. Zone two dropped to \$225 while Zone 3 dropped to \$275. Also, round trips now cost only \$7 more than one-way systemwide. -- The Department of Transportation budget has been passed by both houses of Congress. The House's budget has \$603.5 million for Amtrak while the Senate's has \$606 million.

MORE 1702 NEWS - The picture of the 1702 steam locomotive being hauled on a MOPAC freight through North Little Rock on the previous page should have this added to its caption: The new shortline which bought it was the Fremont & Elkhorn Valley. Apparently, this locomotive was used in the movie "THIS PROPERTY IS CONDEMNED" in 1965 while it was in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. (THE MIXED TRAIN)

LAYOFFS ENCOURAGED - Southern Pacific announced on November 19, 1985 that, in an effort to reduce expenses during the slow holiday season, it will allow employees in the administrative, engine service, clerical, exempt and officer ranks to lay off without pay until January 2, 1986 with certain restrictions. The layoff period must be a minimum of five consecutive days.

HARD FACTS - Southern Pacific carloadings are down 33% over the last 10 years, labor costs have risen 200% while the cost of living has gone up only 90%. SP has 2.3 employees per mile, the highest in the industry. According to SP Vice President Mike Mohan, "The key to survival is productive work rules that will allow SP to invest, grow and survive against competition. This means: only the labor needed to do the job, compensation based on present day operating conditions, and an end to pay for work not performed. We believe these objectives can be achieved...an alternative would be a 30% pay cut for existing employees". (SP UPDATE)

ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB RAILROADIANA SHOW & SALE - MARCH 29, 1986 - This annual show will be held at the Fisher National Guard Armory in North Little Rock from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Tables cost \$17 each. For more information, send a large stamped, addressed envelope to Bill Pollard, 32 Fair Oaks, Conway, AR 72032 - phone 501-327-7083, 7-10PM.

HAVE YOU HUGGED YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD STEAM LOCOMOTIVE LATELY??

BY: Eric S. Fellows from THE TRAINMASTER

Have you checked your city park recently to see what shape the steam locomotive is in? Chances are it's in bad shape and an eyesore and many cities are talking about scrapping them. Thirty years ago, these examples of steam railroading were donated to cities as reminders of the era of steam but years of neglect have taken their toll. Indeed, some have been preserved, such as SLSW 819, SP 4449, UP 3985, T&P 610, NKP 765 and N&W 611. But many more are sitting cold in parks where vandals steal anything they want from them.

Unless something is done now, many of these neglected locomotives will soon be beyond all hope of repair, and may be scrapped on site. Can the railway historians in your community be mobilized to show city officials that some people do care about the locomotive? Or, will a scrap dealer arrive first, with cash in hand, ready to relieve the city of that hunk of metal in the park?

Many hard-pressed local governments would appreciate an offer by a handful of fans to fix up their display over a few weekends. They may even be willing to provide the paint and liability insurance. Relatively little money, time, or skill is needed. Just be sure that you have the manpower and the will to properly finish the job you start.

- END -

☆☆☆ PROGRAM ☆☆☆

There will be no formal program in December. Instead, all are invited to attend the Annual Christmas Party on Friday night, December 6 at 7:00 PM at the Coachman's Inn in Little Rock (take the 6th Street exit off Interstate 30). Cost will be \$9.55 per person, including tax and tip. If you plan to attend, you should call club president Fred Fillers as soon as possible at 821-2026. Turkey and dressing will be served.

DUES ARE DUE - January 1st is always the due date for dues and 1986 won't be an exception. Dues are \$10/year for Arkansas residents and \$7.50/year for out of state. In past years, I have been very lenient on sending out the Railroaders if someone hasn't paid their dues by a certain time, but this year I'll try to be more enforceful of the rules. So, please get those dues in as soon as possible. Thanks.



JOIN THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

Dues are \$10/year for Arkansas residents and \$7.50/year for out-of-state. Add \$9.00 additional if you wish to also join the National Railway Historical Society through the Club.

Membership entitles you to a year's subscription to the ARKANSAS RAILROADER.

RENEWAL

NEW SUBSCRIPTION

YOUR NAME _____

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Make your check out to the "Arkansas Railroad Club" and mail to:

Dick Byrd, Treasurer
12 Flintwood Drive
Little Rock, Arkansas 72207

For more information, call ARKANSAS RAILROADER editor Ken Ziegenbein at 501-758-1340. Call this number also if you have questions about your subscription, address, etc.

NOTE -- Dues are normally due January 1st of each year, but you may join anytime. You will be put on the mailing list as soon as possible.

WELCOME ABOARD!!!

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train lovers who meet once a month on the second Sunday of the month. This month's meeting place is listed under the "PROGRAM" notice elsewhere in this newsletter. We are a chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

The ARKANSAS RAILROADER is the monthly publication of the Arkansas Railroad Club and is generally mailed about 1½ weeks before the meeting takes place. In order for you to receive this monthly newsletter, you must be a member of the Arkansas Railroad Club. Current dues are \$10/year for Arkansas residents and \$7.50/year for out of state. The publication is mailed to all members automatically.

If you would like to join, send your check made payable to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB to the club's treasurer: Dick Byrd, 12 Flintwood Drive, Little Rock, AR 72207. You may also join the National Railway Historical Society through our club by paying \$9.00/year more.

Editor of the ARKANSAS RAILROADER is Ken Ziegenbein. Stories, pictures (both color and black and white, any size), poems, diagrams, news, etc., are all welcome! Send all correspondence regarding the ARKANSAS RAILROADER and all material contributions to:

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