

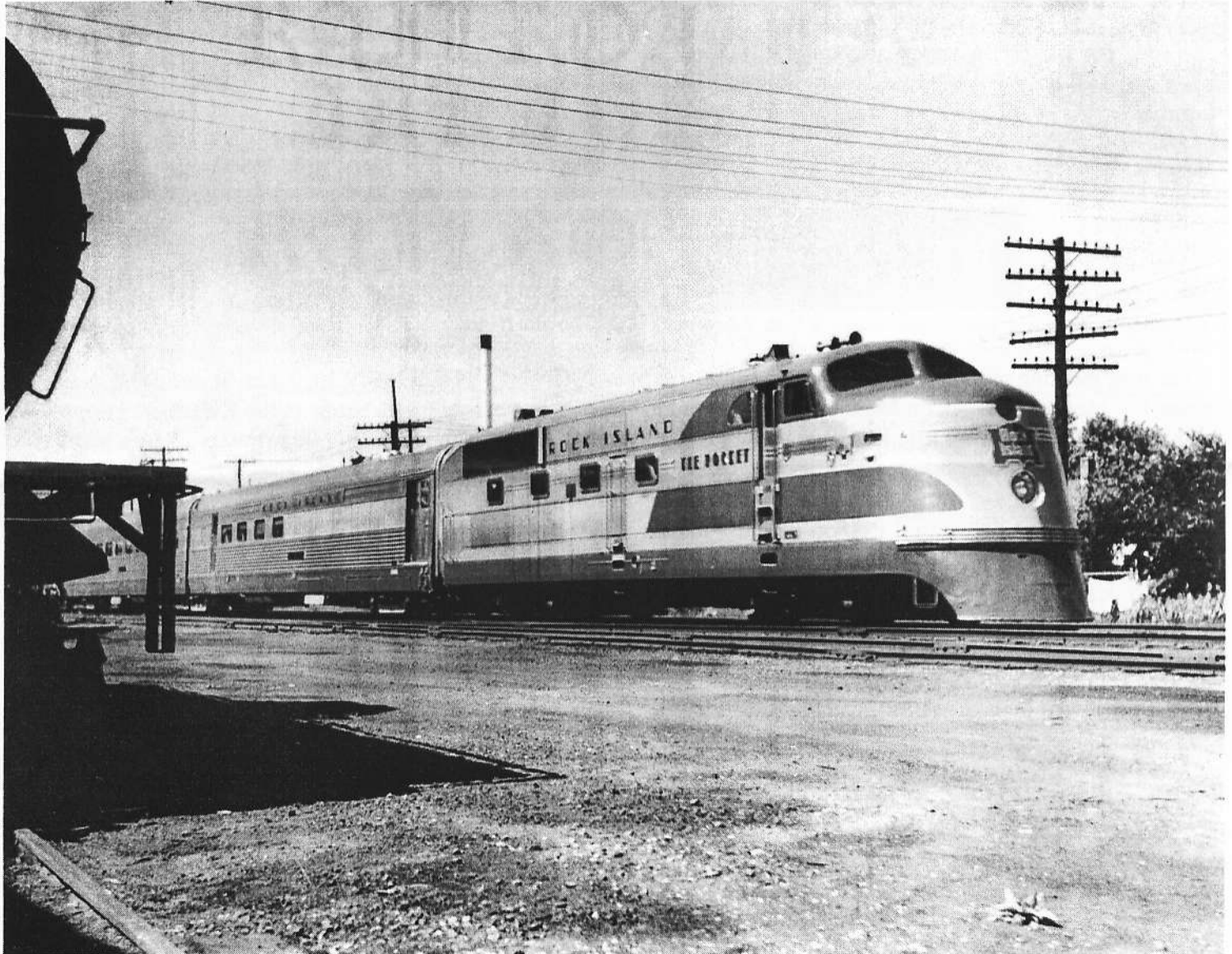


LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
N.R.H.S.

# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 30 NUMBER 1 JANUARY 1999



Rock Island's original *Twin Cities Rocket* in Minneapolis, 55 years ago (around 1943?). This train ran from Minneapolis to Kansas City. The occasion for making this photo was for a contest an oil firm held to show the connection between petroleum products and place of use. Eldon Behr, who took the photo, included the side of a tank car on a siding along the Milwaukee Road tracks, Deep Rock Refining Company, to indicate oil. That is why the whole train is not shown.

(Eldon Behr photo)

### 1999 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Leonard L. Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)  
VICE-PRESIDENT - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon St, N Little Rock AR 72117 (501-945-2128)  
TREASURER - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826)  
SECRETARY - Carole Sue Schafer, 103 Thayer St, Little Rock AR 72205-5951 (501-371-0034)  
EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, N Little Rock AR 72116-3728 (501-758-1340)  
NRHS DIRECTOR - Jim Bennett, 1002 South Leslie St, Stuttgart AR 72160 (870)-673-6753)  
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729)  
TRIP ADVERTISING - David P. Hoge, 3721 Idlewild, N Little Rock AR 72116 (501-771-1025)  
BOARD '99 - Stanley Wozencraft, 108 N Palm, Little Rock AR 72205 (501-664-3301)  
BOARD '00 - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington #31, North Little Rock AR 72114-6455 (501-945-7386)  
BOARD '01 - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr. Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)  
BOARD '02 - Bill Bailey, 8318 Reymere Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3944 (501-224-6828)  
BOARD '03 - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412

## NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

The next meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be on SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2 p.m. at our usual meeting place, the Mercantile Bank on Main Street in North Little Rock, just across the street from the Riverfront Hilton and across the river from Little Rock. At present, no program has been confirmed, but be sure there'll be a good presentation about railroads anyway.

WINNER of the first annual Person of the Year award of the Arkansas Railroad Club was Gene & Naomi Hull. They sent a letter of appreciation to the group. Gene has written many railroad historical stories in both book form and in newsletters for many years. He's considered the resident expert on railroads in Arkansas. CONGRATULATIONS! (Photos in a future issue)

OUR SYMPATHIES to Naomi Hull on the loss of her sister, Ida Grigsby of Russellville. Ida died December 13. She was born June 11, 1927 at London, Arkansas and was a nurse at St. Vincent's for over 30 years. The funeral was December 16. Memorials may be made to the American Lung Association.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - Deadline for the February *Railroader* is January 15.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS: LELAND R ROLL (1/10); BILL CHURCH (1/10); GERALD HOOK (1/10); POLLY HAMILTON (1/19); MIKE ROLAND (1/20); DUSTY RHODES (1/22); GEORGE W SCHMIDT (1/23); JOHN M. TOLER (1/24); DAVID L TREADAWAY (1/26); JOE POLLARD (1/27).

### WANTED : FOR SALE OR TRADE

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse

listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

**WANTED** - The Steam Department of the Illinois Railway Museum pressure tested the boiler on GNA #26 in early December to see if the locomotive can be rebuilt. The

locomotive needs all its exterior woodwork replaced as much of the woodwork is missing. They need information on the cab woodwork, the cab windows, cab doors and any drawings, pictures or diagrams of this locomotive. They are willing to pay costs of reproduction. If you can help, contact Jim Opolony at [jopolony@hotmail.com](mailto:jopolony@hotmail.com). (Sorry, no other address available, but you can mail any information you may have to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 or call me at 501-758-1340).

**WANTED** - Photos, newspaper clippings, newsletters, magazines, historical information on the old Cotton Belt Hospital and railroad. Write to Wanza Good, 1501 Quentana Rd, Morro Bay, CA 93442, 805-772-6770.

**WANTED** - Will purchase or trade train orders from various railroads - worldwide -

and employee timetables. Dr. Edward Metz, PO Box 523, Crawford NE 69339, 303-665-1546.

**FOR SALE** - Amtrak's 1999 calendar, which has a watercolor of the **Texas Eagle** in Fort Worth on the front, can now be bought for \$6 each or two for \$10. It is a single, wall-hanging calendar with all the months on the front. Order from: Amtrak Calendar, PO Box 7717, Itasca IL 60143.

**WANTED** - Standard gauge hand car. Advise price, condition and location. Peter Smykla, PO Box 1892, Pine Bluff AR 71613 or call 870-535-4724.

**FOR SALE** - The Arkansas Railroad Club's hardbound, 120-page book called *Railroad Stations and Trains through Arkansas and the Southwest* is ready for mailing. It was written by Clifton Hull with help from Tom Shook, among other club

members. Kevin EuDaly of White River Productions did the graphic design and artwork. You can order from White River Productions, 24632 Anchor Ave, Bucklin MO 64631. Cost is \$29.95 plus \$4.50 postage and handling (total of \$34.45 if you're having it mailed). MasterCard or Visa accepted. You can call White River Productions at 816-695-4433.

**FOR SALE** - James R. Fair's new book *The Louisiana & Arkansas Railway*. This 176-page clothbound book has 80 black and white illustrations and covers the Louisiana & Arkansas Railway from its beginning to the modern era. YOU CAN NOW ORDER DIRECTLY FROM MR. FAIR. He'll even autograph it for you. Cost directly from him is only \$34. His address is: James R. Fair, 2804 Northwood Rd, Austin, TX 78703-1630. Call 512-451-6194 or 512-471-3689. James Fair is and has been an Arkansas Railroad Club member for years.

## RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete listings.

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register or have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met. Even though approval is granted for the railroads to abandon, it may be months or years before track is actually taken up.

**PENNSYLVANIA - CSX** - To abandon a line known as the Lower Allegheny Branch extending from m.p. 0.00 to m.p. 0.85 in Pittsburgh, together with a 0.15 segment of connecting track that joins the Lower Allegheny Branch to a nearby line of Conrail, a total of 1.00 miles. Final decision by February 12, 1999. (STB Docket No. AB-55, Sub No. 567X, decided November 6, served November 13, 1998)

**MINNESOTA - BNSF** - To abandon 2.43 miles of line between m.p. 0.00 near East Minneapolis to m.p. 2.43 near Rollins Oil, Minnesota. Effective December 30, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-6, Sub No. 381X, decided November 23, 1998, served December 1, 1998)



**PENNSYLVANIA - CSX** - To abandon the line known as the Baltimore Service Lane, Lurgan Subdivision, from m.p. BAV-20.5 at 4th St to m.p. BAV-22.4 at Commerce St in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, a distance of 1.9 miles. Final decision by March 5, 1999. (STB Docket No. AB-55, Sub No. 568X, decided November 23, 1998, served December 4, 1998)

**NORTH DAKOTA - RED RIVER VALLEY & WESTERN RR CO.** - To abandon about 59.70 miles of line from m.p. 21.55 west of Woolworth to m.p. 81.25 in Regan, North Dakota. Effective January 8, 1999. (STB Docket No. AB-391, Sub No. 5X, decided December 1, served December 9, 1998)

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

### KIAMICHI TRIP ROSTER

(*Ashdown*) - The roster used for the December 5-6, 1998 trip on the Kiamichi Railroad from Jim Hurt:

KRR 3803 (GP35m, built as T&P 614, the last unit to be lettered for the T&P. MoP rebuilt it to a GP38 in the interim) - KRR 3811 (GP38, built as Katy 300, later to be UP 1975. It's still in Armor yellow and harbor mist gray) - Two of the coaches were originally N&W streamlined equipment, later used in commuter service in former Wabash territory. The third coach was a newly acquired ex-commuter coach with 3

& 2 seating. - Power car was KRR 80010. Numerous GP7s and 9s at Hugo engine terminal. Included was BN 2819.

### READER NO. 4 FIRED UP

According to George Jones, Reader Railroad No. 4 steam engine has been fired up on the D&R in Russellville. It sometimes can be seen from the Highway 7 approach to the Arkansas River Bridge. He can occasionally hear the steam whistle from his home in Pottsville, about 8 miles away. The D&R obtained the Reader steam engine

October 24 because the Reader was losing its connection with other rail lines at its site at Reader.

*NEWS FROM THE PAST* - *Arkansas Gazette*, 27 January 1880 - The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad proposes to build a branch from Gurdon, Clark County, east to Camden, Ouachita County and El Dorado, Union County (Arkansas). (This line has been approved for abandonment in 1998). -*Gene Hull*

## GENERAL RAIL NEWS

### NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC HALTED

(*Eureka, California*) - The FRA has ordered closed the historic Northwestern Pacific Railroad because of safety risks. This line runs from Humboldt to Napa, California and passes through the pristine Eel River canyon and totals 286 miles. Freight operations were the only trains there at this time. The FRA says that flood-damaged bridges and roadbed would pose a hazard to the public if allowed to remain open without extensive renovations.

### BLE/UTU UNITE

On November 23, 1998, the United Transportation Union and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers agreed to become one union if everything goes well. The bond should be complete by October 1, 1999 with members voting on ratification.

### ENDANGERED SITE

(*Alabama*) - In a recent survey, the Western Railway of Alabama's car and engine shops in downtown Montgomery was said to be on the endangered list of lost historical sites. The Western Railway ran from Selma, Alabama to West Point, Georgia and was chartered in 1832, making it one of the oldest railroads and one of the longest lived in the country. Today, the site covers 38 acres, including 8 buildings with many other foundations.

### TRAIN ROBBERY DEATH

(*Mexico*) - A Swis tourist was killed during a train robbery in Chuhuahua, Mexico in early November, after being shot three times. This line runs through the Copper Canyon. This was the first train robbery on the line in three years. (*Fox*

*News*)

### UP RAISED SPEED

Union Pacific raised speed limits on its trains through Arlington, Texas to 60 mph in early December. Even though some protested, many were glad that trains would not block crossings as long. Also, Operation Lifesaver says that 87 percent of all train-crossing accidents occur with train speeds of less than 50 mph (because people are less likely to try to beat a train knowing it's going faster). (*UP News release*)

### DIESEL RAILCAR COMEBACK?

Growth in commuter rail has triggered fresh interest in diesel railcars (RDCs) with nearly a dozen new services being considered. (*Reed Business Information via the Internet*)

**"CORNAGE"**

(Plevna, Washington) - 120,000 bushels of corn spilled over an eighth of a mile near Plevna, Washington on November 14 after a derailment of a BNSF freight.

**CHRISTMAS TRAIN CUT BACK**

BNSF's annual Christmas train through the Ozarks will make just 13 stops this year compared with 63 last year. They said that its the busiest time of the year and it can't afford to delay freights with so many stops.

**HISTORIC PULLMAN PLANT DESTROYED**

(Chicago) - The historic Pullman Manufacturing Plant at 111<sup>th</sup> and Cottage-Grove in Chicago was destroyed by fire the night of December 1. A drunk man was arrested for starting the fire. At the height of the fire, the famous clock tower fell to the ground. The building was being readied to house the Chicago Transportation Museum. It was build in 1903 and served as

headquarters for George M. Pullman's rail car factory. With large arched windows and skylights, the building was crowned by a beautiful clock tower, which was destroyed. The factor whole complex was used in the late 1800's and early 1900's to produce the ornate Pullman Palace passenger cars. (Chicago RailNews)

**CHRISTMAS TREES HAULED**

Union Pacific estimated that it will haul more than 1,000 truck trailers loaded with more than 675,000 Christmas trees on its intermodal trains from Portland, Oregon to Los Angeles. UP put together three special Christmas tree trains along with its regular intermodal trains.

**COMMUTER RAIL IN KANSAS**

(Olathe, Kansas) - Prospects for new commuter rail between Olathe, Kansas and Kansas City are still alive, but freight congestion on the BNSF line being considered for commuters is a real problem.

A two year feasibility study is underway. A recent article had planners saying that commuters would ride in three passenger cars **hooked to BNSF freight trains!** Can you imagine? A modern mixed freight! (Of course, this would be impossible, but people talking about this line don't know the problems - can you imagine three passenger cars behind a 100-car coal train? People trying to drink coffee would lose more than their coffee en route.) (Olathe Daily News, via Jim Johnson - comments from your editor).

**NEW RAIL LINE APPROVED**

(Minnesota) - The Surface Transportation Board gave the go-ahead for the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad to renovate and build a new 278-mile line from Minnesota to Wyoming, mainly to haul coal. (Houston Chronicle, December 12, 1998 via Dan Barr)

**AMTRAK NEWS****CENTRAL STATION**

(Memphis) - The ongoing renovation of Memphis' Central Station has already boosted Amtrak ridership on the City of New Orleans. For FY1998, Amtrak boarded and departed 42,200 riders there, up 4,600 from 1997 and up 6,900 from 1996. The \$24 million renovation of the 85-year old station should be completed by September 1999. The first floor will have commercial space. The mezzanine will have the new Amtrak ticket office and a police precinct. (Memphis Business Journal, November 23, 1998)

**FY1998 AMTRAK RESULTS**

Ridership in millions 21.09 (1997 = 20.19); Passenger miles in millions 5304.23 (1997 5166.20); Seat miles in millions 11425.61 (1997 11093.95); Load factor 46.4% - 51.5% Intercity (1997 46.6% - 51.7% Intercity); Train miles in millions 32.76 (1997 32.03); Ticket yield \$0.178 (1997 \$0.177); Average ticket price \$44.86 (1997 \$45.37); Operating ratio 1.48 ((1997 1.46); Core revenue per seat mile \$0.113 ((1997 \$0.111); Core expenses per seat mile \$0.188 (1997 \$0.189); Maintenance cost per car mile \$0.632 (1997 \$0.626);

Maintenance cost per locomotive mile \$1.115 (1997 \$1.409); Equipment availability in unit-days 1,037,422 (1997 865,613) (Amtrak Fourth Quarter report)

**REVENUE TOPS \$1 BILLION FIRST TIME EVER**

Amtrak's revenues topped the \$1 billion mark for the first time in Amtrak's 27-year history in FY1998. And its ridership had the steepest gain since 1988, up 4.5% to 21.09 million.

**EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS**

Nothing this month.

## THE GEORGE WASHINGTON REVIVING AMERICA'S PASSENGER TRAINS

by: Gene Hull

A small oval piece of metal stamped in the shape of a passenger train drumhead sign bearing a likeness of our first president symbolizes the resurrection of America's passenger trains.

By 1932 most of the nation's railroads were seeing revenues less than one-half what they had been in 1929, when the Great Depression began. But, the Chesapeake & Ohio had \$24 million left after all the bills were paid. This railroad was blessed by the fact that its rails penetrated the abundant fields of coal in Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky. Demand for coal continued through the depression years. At that time coal had to be moved by the nearest and most convenient railroad.



Strangely enough, the C&O did not follow the trend of other railroads, which regarded passengers in proportion to the amount of money it generated. This service provided only about 2.5 percent of the total revenues of the Chessie. Nevertheless, the road maintained a tremendous pride in its fine passenger service. The equipment was the most modern available, and the symbol of "Chessie", the sleeping kitten, advertised to the whole country the company's sense of pride.

Officials of the Chessie believed the traveling

public deserved the finest amenities available. Instead of reducing service, they would offer something new. A new train!

The train would be created to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birthday of George Washington. It would coincide with the celebration planned by the Washington Bicentennial Commission. The railroad called upon the expertise of the Pullman Company to produce "The Most Wonderful train In The World." It would cater to the coach passenger as well as the sleeping car trade. It would show the patriotic faith in, and love for, America expressed by the C&O.

Of course, the train would be called the GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The train was known as the GEORGE, and it was a remarkable train, offering something in design and comfort. Washington's lasting influence on America was evident in every car. Each was given a name relating to the first president's part in the forming of the United States. All decorations carried out the same theme - there were paintings, colorful prints, and architectural details. A bust of George was presented by the Washington Bicentennial Commission. It graced the arch of a doorway in the "Commander-In-Chief" library-observation-sleeper-lounge car. On either side of the doorway were framed prints of famous paintings, "Crossing The Delaware" and "Signing the Declaration of Independence."

The dining car was designed as a Colonial tavern, and was named "Michie's Tavern," a patriotic point of rendezvous. It served a magnificent Mount Vernon Dinner for \$1.25, featuring Chesapeake Bay seafood and Colonial recipes. There were Duncan Phyfe chairs, framed prints and Colonial patterned carpets. Patrons ate from specially made china bearing a reproduction of Gilbert Stuart's



portrait of Washington. A medallion of the same likeness graced the front of the locomotive assigned to the train, and also as a drumhead sign on the brass railing of the observation car.

Coach passengers rode in comfort in Imperial Salon cars seating only 45 persons in almost parlor-like style. These cars, for the first time, abandoned the idea of two rows of seats on each side in favor of the "2 and 1" arrangement, thus reducing the usual load of 85 passengers for the sake of comfort. The train was advertised as the "world's first air-cooled and conditioned sleeping car train." This wasn't really true. The first completely air conditioned train in the world was the Baltimore & Ohio's "Columbian" between New York and Washington, which was put in service on 24 May 1931. The GEORGE made its inaugural run 11 months to the day later - 24 April 1932 - between Washington and Cincinnati.

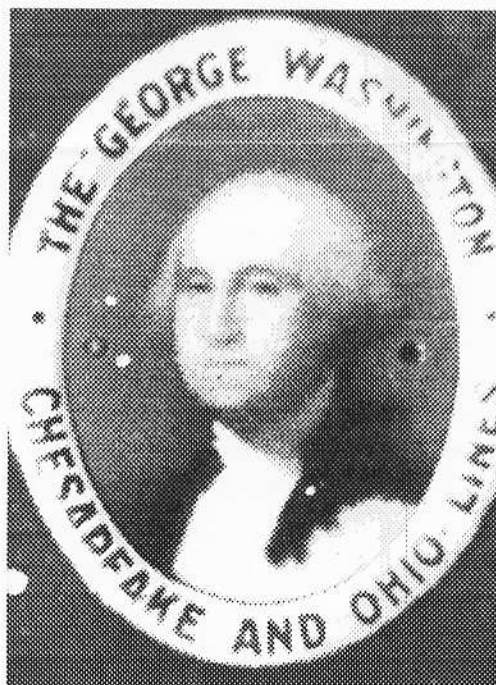
The train ran over the rails of the Pennsylvania between New York and Washington, then over the C&O main line as far as Charlottesville, Va., where a Virginia section from Norfolk was picked up. At Cincinnati the train used the track of the Big Four (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis) to Chicago and St. Louis. At Ashland, Kentucky, a connection from Louisville was picked up.

Passengers had the opportunity to purchase pieces of the beautiful dining car china at 35 cents for a saucer, or \$5.00 for a gold trimmed service plate.

The railroad built luxurious hotels at the resort towns of Hot Springs, Virginia, and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. They were the Homestead and Greenbriar, respectively. The Greenbriar and the town of White Sulphur Springs was served by a

predecessor of the C&O, the Virginia Central Railroad, until a merger in August 1868, when the VC ceased to exist and the Chesapeake & Ohio was installed in its place. General Robert E. Lee arrived at the Greenbriar Hotel aboard the steamcars in 1867. The cuisine aboard the dining cars of the GEORGE was a foretaste of what travelers could expect at the excellent dining rooms of the hotels.

When the C&O announced the inauguration of the GEORGE WASHINGTON, it seemed to be a signal for other railroads of the country. It was the beginning of a campaign to woo the traveling public to ride the rails. The elegance and beauty of the comings and goings of the GEORGE are recalled by a small oval of metal in a large photo album. ~~4000~~



ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

[ ] Membership renewal [ ] New Member [ ] Change of Address

Send membership renewal, application, change of address, etc. to:



Arkansas Railroad Club
PO Box 9151
North Little Rock AR 72119
501-758-1340 (phone/fax)
e-mail: ken.z.rw@ix.netcom.com



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Your birthday (optional - no year needed) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: (last) \_\_\_\_\_ (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (init) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: \$20.00 per year, Arkansas Railroad Club only; \$37.00 per year if you join or renew National Railway Historical Society membership through our Club. Dues are payable/due by January 1 of each year. If we don't have your dues by March 1, you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

Membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club entitles you to a membership card and the monthly ARKANSAS RAILROADER newsletter. Meetings are held monthly, except December, on the second Sunday of the month. We usually meet at 2 p.m. in the Mercantile Bank main building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just north of the Arkansas River. Interesting programs are presented each month and refreshments (cookies, sandwiches) are served. We are a non-profit organization and member of the NRHS. Officers are listed in each newsletter.

The Arkansas Railroad Club's 1999 calendar is Ready! It consists of 14 B&W photos of trains in Arkansas over the years - from modern locomotives to past steam. There's one photo for each month, plus a front and back cover photo.

Railroads included are: Ashley, Drew & Northern, Southern Pacific, Missouri Pacific, Kansas City Southern, Arkansas Midland, Louisiana & Northwest, BNSF, Rock Island, Warren & Saline River, Union Pacific, Amtrak, and the Arkansas & Missouri. Plus, there's a railroad map of Arkansas in the back of the calendar. Day of month numbers are large, and the calendar includes Arkansas Railroad Club member's birthdays.

LAST YEAR'S CALENDAR SOLD OUT, so order your 1999 calendar soon. As before, discounts apply for ordering more than one and price includes postage.

MAIL TO: Arkansas Railroad Club Calendar, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me:

- 1 Calendar @ \$7.00 each .....
Calendars (2-9) @ \$6.50 each ...
Calendars (10 or more) @ \$6.00 each ...
(Calendars are Postage Paid)

TOTAL ENCLOSED .....