



# Arkansas Railroader



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Arkansas Railroad Club is a non-profit organization. We meet the 2nd Sunday of each month at the Missouri Pacific building in North Little Rock. Bring those friends!

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There will be no regular meeting in October. Instead, lets all go to the 2nd Annual Railroadiana Sale and Show at the National Guard Armory in North Little Rock Saturday October 10. TIME - 8:30am - 3:30pm. ADMISSION - \$1.00, under 12 free. Contact Bill Bailey (224-6828 after 5pm), Paul Moon (758-0836) or W. A. Merck (666-5621) for more information (and to help out).

Set up time is Friday 6-8pm and Saturday 7-8:30am.

★ BUS TROUBLES? - Seems like the railroads of the 60's, but Trailways Bus Lines is trying to drop 15 routes in Arkansas in 1981. Among the ones being considered for abandonment are Little Rock to McGehee, some Little Rock to Pine Bluff, Little Rock to Hot Springs and Hot Springs to Fort Smith. Several communities along the way are protesting the discontinuances.

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★ The following article was given your editor by Bill Bailey:

### Commemorating FRISCO Steam Engine 65 and Arkansas Trackage

Today the Steam Engine is gone, along with the fabled "FRISCO" Railroad incorporated in 1876.

During the decade 1880-1890 the America's Golden Age of Steam Mighty Locomotives thundered across the land on FRISCO Rails.

FRISCO Steam Engine 65 was historically named "Captain C. W. Rogers". It was delivered new to the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad, an eight wheeler, built by Roger Locomotive and Machine Works - Patterson, New Jersey. The engine carried 2700 gallons of water and six tons of coal. Captain C. W. Rogers, before joining the FRISCO Railroad, was the owner of a merchant sailing ship and served as captain in the Union Navy during the Civil War.

The engine was commissioned in 1880 and named after a great 19th-century Railroad Builder. It was displayed at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 - The Columbian Exposition.

The "Captain C. W. Rogers" was the Flagship of the FRISCO Railroad's infant passenger fleet in the early 1880s. Few steam engines of the period were remembered more affectionately. In those days the FRISCO was called "The Tramp Royal and Cow Path." Train #1 consisted of three coaches, a small baggage car and a combination mail car and smoker. One of these coaches was somewhat finer than the other and was called "The Ladies Coach". All were lighted by coal oil lamp and heated by coal or wood stoves.

. . .CONTINUED ON BACK SIDE. . .

★ HISTORIC RAILROAD DATES: Oct 12 - Association of American RRs formed 1934; Oct 20 - first diesel locomotive placed in service (CNJ #1000) - 1925; Oct 25 - 1st run of G&Nw's locomotive "Pioneer" - 1848; Nov 1 - U.S. mail carried by rail for 1st time - 1831; Nov 18 - Standard time adopted throughout U.S., sponsored by the railroads - 1883.

The state of Arkansas was crossed in two years by the FRISCO, including a permanent iron span across the Arkansas River in 1882, and the highest point in Arkansas reached by rail - elevation of 2000 feet - over the top of Northwestern Arkansas's Boston Mountains through the opening of the 1,750 foot Winslow Tunnel in November 1882. An incredible performance for that day and age.

The most rugged and spectacular section of FRISCO scenery is the seven miles between the Winslow Tunnel and Schaberg, Arkansas along Frog Bayou. Within this seven miles distance are three bridges. Bridge number 1, about a mile south of the tunnel, is 120 feet above the stream below. On this road-bed the incline is an average of 113 feet per mile, other sections even steeper. I know, I walked between the tunnel and Schaberg taking color photos before writing this article.

This article is due greatly to the efforts and enthusiasm of Mrs. Elizabeth M. Farish of Springdale, Arkansas, who has lived in the area all of her life, along the FRISCO Railroad.

Bill B. Bailey  
X-President, Ark. R.R. Club

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★ COAL RECORD - According to "Locomotive Engineer", railroads broke a 55-year record in coal movements during the last week of August. For the week ending August 29, they moved 139,877 cars containing 12,588,930 tons. The previous record was 12.2 million tons carried on 250,000 cars back in 1926 (note, too, that fewer cars carried more coal in 1981 compared to 1926). Coal movements represented 35% of the total tonnage moved by rail in 1980.

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★ The Association of American Railroads reported that as of August 1, 1981, the total fleet of owned and leased diesel-electric locomotives in the U. S. totaled 27,937 compared with 28,615 on August 1, 1980.

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★ ANOTHER UP SPECIAL TRAIN? - While driving to Brenham, Texas the other day, I heard on the car radio that former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had chartered a special 17-car Union Pacific passenger train to take him across parts of the country. According to the report, the train was leaving Denver September 29 then going to Kansas City then down through Oklahoma to Ft Worth and on to Laredo. No specific dates were given except for leaving Denver.

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★ SAD DAY IN BRENHAM- Wednesday, Sep 30 marked the last northbound run of the "Inter-American" through Brenham, Texas and Thursday, Oct 1 was the final run of the southbound (THE final train through Brenham). While photographing the event, I began talking to an old retired Santa Fe employee about days past and found out that Brenham had daily passenger train service since at least 1879 (102 years!) and that today's exit of Amtrak was indeed historical. Not many people watched the final run, but it was indeed an event to be pondered by those who were there.

One lady wanted to ride to Temple and back just to be on the last run. She had been on the first run of the "Texas Chief" many years earlier. I just wanted to be there, since Brenham is close to where I grew up.

Amtrak added a Superliner Sightseer Lounge to the regular 2-car consist on the last northbound run, which was a good gesture.

The saddest part of the day was when the old Santa Fe conductor waved to all from the vestibule of the last coach as the train was pulling out. There was a gleam in his eye.

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★ SOUTHERN STEAM EXCURSIONS (Thanks to "The Memphis Buff"):

Oct 10 - Cincinnati OH to Danville KY and return; Oct 17 - Chattanooga to Crossville TN and return; Oct 18, 24, 25 - Same; Oct 31 - Atlanta to Toccoa GA and return; Nov 1, 7, 8 - Same; Nov 14 - Birmingham to Opelika AL and return.

Steam engine #2716 will be used on all moves. It is a 2-8-4, built in December 1943 at American Locomotive Works. Cylinder size - 28 x 34"; Engine weight - 230 tons; Tractive effort - 83,750 lbs; Driving wheels-69"

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★ AIRLINES AND BARGE OPERATORS TAKING THE GOVERNMENT FOR A RIDE -

During President Reagan's speech a couple of weeks ago, he stated that he wanted the airlines and users of our vast subsidized waterways to begin paying a users fee to help recoup some of the billions of dollars the Federal Government spends on them each year. It's about time! He stated a figure of \$2.4 billion a year that the airlines are subsidized by taxpayers and that they should begin paying it back.

I'm glad to see that someone in government finally admits that these forms of transportation are indeed subsidized. Up to now, railroads (especially Amtrak) have been bearing the entire burden of being the only transportation guys in town thought of as being subsidized.

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★ AMTRAK NEWS - So far, the "Inter-American" will continue through Arkansas 3 days a week with the thru cars to Los Angeles, although any more budget cuts will probably end the service.

In a bit of good news, Amtrak is going to change the name of the "Inter-American" to the "Eagle" soon to improve the train's reputation and make it more familiar to Arkansans.

Recently received a copy of the Congressional Record from Senator Bumpers stating the following about the "Inter-American" to the Senate:

"Two and a half years ago, when the Carter Administration wanted to substantially reduce the size of Amtrak's system I was inclined to go along. I had never heard anything but complaints about the Inter-American from all but the most ardent railroad buffs, and ridership was not high.

Since 1979 I have watched with amazement as ridership on the Inter-American has grown substantially despite major problems. The ridership figures alone are impressive: when other factors are taken into account, they are nothing short of unbelievable.

Ridership on the Inter-American increased 36.8% from fiscal year 1979 to fiscal year 1980, and through May of this year, ridership has increased 31.2% over fiscal year 1980. This latter increase is the largest among all long-distance routes in this fiscal year...."

It went on to say the average number of passengers on the train in April 1981 between Little Rock and St Louis was 252 and between Little Rock and Dallas was 221.

Now....that ridership is the main reason the "Inter-American" was kept on, not just because of lobbying, although lobbying by concerned Arkansans did draw attention to the need of keeping passenger trains in Arkansas.

In a related matter, the new Amtrak board on September 25th reappointed Amtrak President Alan Boyd and his team. That's good news, as the new board is made up of generally anti-Amtrak Dept of Transportation people.

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★ The car diagram on the last page of this newsletter, given to me by Jim Bennett, shows a car run in Arkansas in the early 50s on the former "Delta Eagle" schedule. Its history:

MOTORAILER 670 was built by the American Car and Foundry Co. in 1942 for the Missouri Pacific to run as a connection to the MISSOURI RIVER EAGLE between Union and Lincoln, Nebraska, shuttling back and fourth to the main line at Union from the state capitol at Lincoln. It was 'bi-directional', which meant it could run in either direction, the engineer simply changing ends for each end of the car had a control cab. The passenger seats were simply turned, the car sometimes running 'baggage-end' forward, and sometimes 'A' end, which might be considered the correct 'front' end. The coach seats and interior appointments were in keeping with the EAGLE, giving passengers the same kind of accomodations as the main-line streamliner. The exterior was in the EAGLE blue and cream (or blue and gray) 'EAGLE COLORS', and the ALUMINUM EAGLE INSIGNIA (like on the passenger diesels) adorned BOTH ends of the bi-directional car. After the streamlined DELTA EAGLE was removed from service in the early 1950s in Arkansas (on the Memphis-Helena-McGehee-Tallulah run), the 670 was re-engined at the Sedalia Shops and sent to Arkansas to run on the former DELTA EAGLE schedule between Helena and McGehee. It left McGehee in the morning, making the run to Helena, where it departed in the afternoon for the return trip to McGehee, layingover at McGehee all night. I saw it in the McGehee yards about 1956 or 57 and it still looked good! It then was scrapped at North Little Rock in 1960.

This is an official MISSOURI PACIFIC diagram, from my collection.

Jim Bennett

. . .COMING NEXT MONTH. . .the story of MO-PAC's buzz saw

