

DARDANELLE AND RUSSELVILLE

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Arkansas Railroader

DELTA VALLEY & SOUTHERN



COTTON PLANT-FARGO RAILWAY

WARREN & SALINE RIVER



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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FEBRUARY 1977

At our January meeting held on the 16th which was held in place of our postponed meeting of January 9th, the following are the new officers of our club for 1977:

- PRESIDENT.....WAITER WALKER
- VICE PRESIDENT.....BILL BAILEY
- SECRETARY.....ROSS HOIT
- TREASURER.....DICK BYRD
- N.R.H.S. DIRECTOR...GENE HULL

Know you will agree this is an excellent slate of officers to guide the club during this year and lets all stay behind them to make 1977 one of the best years ever. Our January meeting went over with a bang and the attendance was one of the best. Also, we had two new members; Mr. Harry Coenley and Mr. Alessi. Harry, several years ago, worked for the Ill. Central (now ICG) at Centralia, Illinois. Mr. Alessi is a contractor located in North Little Rock and a real rail fan. We welcome these new members.

Our February meeting will be held on Sunday, February 13th starting at 2 PM at the Missouri Pacific Office Building, 1000 West 4th Street in North Little Rock. Our program will be in charge of Ken Ziegenbein. Ken was to have the program at the postponed meeting on January 9th. We are looking forward to hearing Ken bring us his program on passenger trains. Trust our attendance will again be good. Bring in these new members and visitors. We need them and they need us.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the club held on January 15th, a Museum Fund Committee was organized and will consist of Stanley Wezencraft, Chairman and members Harry Coenley, John Corbett, Dick Byrd, Pratt Rasmel and your editor. More on this in a later issue.

We have recently received the following information from Mr. Gerten T.H. Wilms, Associate Editor, RAILROAD MAGAZINE, New York: Quote - You, the officers, and members of your chapter will be interested in knowing that March, 1977 issue of Railroad Magazine, will carry picture of, and article on, the new president of National Railway Historical Society, V. Allan Vaughn. End of quote.

Some of you may not know that due to frozen switches, broken water pipes in cars, busted steam lines and everything else that goes with cold weather rail miseries, AMTRAK discontinued, along with several other of their trains, the INTER-AMERICAN thru Little Rock on January 19th. Am sure this was good cause for discontinuance but this was unheard of during the railroad operated passenger train days. They either operated them one way or the other or else they heard from the I.C.C. in no uncertain manner. A call to AMTRAK reservation headquarters for information

725
\$7.50

as to when our train would be restored to service, your editor was advised the date would be February 15th. On the good side, AMTRAK is now using SD40s thru Little Rock. They are indeed a powerful and very good looking engine.

In the January news letter we reported information on another steam excursion to be operated out of Memphis this year. Now we have additional information from the MEMPHIS CHAPTER, N.H.S. who publish THE MEMPHIS BUFF, to the effect that the Sentimental Journey Committee will again handle the arrangements for the trip and it looks as though dates for the trip will be May 7th and 8th, and that power on the smoky end will again be the ever popular No. 4501. Also, Southern Ry. has obtained T&P No. 610 and that this engine will be moved to Birmingham, Alabama latter part of this month. Almost forget, the trip out of Memphis would again be to Corinth, Miss. and return. Thanks follows with the MEMPHIS BUFF and this sounds like very good news. Your editor had a thought of sometime working up a joint meeting between the Memphis club and the Little Rock club. The two cities are so close and it would be no great effort to go to Memphis sometime for their meeting and they come to Little Rock for ours. They hold their meetings every fourth Saturday of each month in the conference room of The Memphis Bank & Trust Building starting at 8 PM. We might even be able to "solve some problems" so to speak and we could certainly have a great "Shoot The Breeze" session. Its food for thought.

DUES, DUES, DUES-----At the meeting of the Board Of Directors on January 16th, it was voted to increase our dues to \$7.50 for regular members and \$5.00 for associate members. This is certainly not out of line with inflation closing in on all sides. Now is the time to pay your dues and you can send your check to Treasurer , Dick Byrd at 12 Flintwood Drive, Little Rock, 72207.

The MOBERLY MONITOR-INDEX, the newspaper at your editor's hometown of Moberly, Missouri, recently ran an article written by your editor entitled, "Train Watching In Steam Days At Moberly". Made me feel pretty good and who knows, The New York Times, the St. Louis Globe Democrat, The Washington Post and others may soon be calling me----HaHaHaHa. It was an amateur writing effort but I do feel proud of it.

Our Membership Chairman and new V.P. of our club, Bill Bailey, has worked up a very good looking membership application blank for new members. It has just about every rail emblem in the state on it including our tourist lines, Scott and Bearskin Lake and the Reader. Very nice Bill and congratulations.

FROM: NRHS NEWS EXTRA (QUIPS)

What do you suppose God thinks of a man (created in His own image) putting on his pants in an upper berth??

"Faster than a pay-car passing a tramp".



"My, this looks delicious! Mind if I try a bite before ordering?"

THE NERVY DINING CAR PATRON

FROM: NRHS NEWS EXTRA

"If the trucks on our highways got much bigger it won't make much difference if they do beat the trains to railroad crossings"

AN ARKANSAS RAILROAD DEFEATS A PRESIDENT
By: CLIFTON E. HULL

An insignificant uncompleted railroad in the comparative wilderness of Arkansas was the primary defeat of an adroit politician who was energetically seeking the Republican nomination as President of the United States.

This was not the result of any deliberate action by anyone connected with the railroad, but by the devious manipulations of politicians and the financiers-contractors of the railroad.

The railroad-building craze which had such a strong hold on much of the country in the 1800's resulted in the federal government making a grant of land to aid in the construction of a railroad from near Cairo, Ill. to Fulton, Ark. Included in this grant were two branch lines, one from Little Rock to some point in Arkansas on the Mississippi River, and one to Ft. Smith. The latter is the subject of our story.

The Little Rock & Fort Smith Branch of the Cairo & Fulton Railroad received its charter from the state in November, 1853. Through a bit of maneuvering, the branch line was separated from the parent Cairo & Fulton and in January, 1855, the state granted a charter to the Little Rock & Ft. Smith Railroad. This road was granted 550,000 acres of public lands to aid in its construction in 1858.

Before any real work could begin, the Civil War engulfed the nation and the project was forgotten for several years. After the war, a new beginning was necessary. In 1869 a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives in Washington to renew the land grant for the railroad in Arkansas. This was the very beginning of the political shenanigans which were to have national repercussions.

It was during the session of March, 1869, and Representative James G. Blaine, from Maine, was serving his first term as Speaker of the House of Representatives. The bill was introduced on the last day of March and there were quite a few empty seats.

Rep. Logan Holt Reets, from Arkansas, with several friends, was doing everything in his power to get the bill approved and sent to the Senate. George Washington Julian from Indiana, was chairman of the Public Lands Committee, and he attempted to attach an amendment to the Arkansas bill. The Senate was very hostile to this particular amendment and Reets knew the entire bill would be in jeopardy if the amendment was attached.

He, and his friends quickly made their way to Blaine and inquired what was the best manner in which to combat this grave attempt to subvert his bill. Blaine advised them the amendment was entirely out of order and not germane. Reets said he was not sufficiently familiar with the rules of the House to make his point understood, so Blaine called on John Alexander Logan of Illinois for help. The bill was freed of the controversial amendment, and the bill passed without objection.

(To be continued)

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization that meets the second Sunday of each month in the Missouri Pacific Office Building, 1000 West 4th St. North Little Rock, Ark. Visitors always welcome. For information about the club address ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, P.O. BOX 5584, LITTLE ROCK, ARK. 72215.
