



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Arkansas Railroader



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NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION. EDITOR'S ADDRESS: 5007 HAWTHORNE RD. LITTLE ROCK, AR. 722 07

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DUES

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1978 dues are now due and payable. Your dues are the only source of income for our club and if you have not already done so please get them in NOW. Send all checks to C.R. (Dick) Byrd at 12 Flintwood Drive, Little Rock, 72207, or give them to him at our February meeting.

The program for February will be announced at another spot in the newsletter so, keep on reading. Our January meeting attendance was 22 including speaker.

A few further words about our wonderful Antiques & Artifacts show at the Worthen Bank which concluded in December. For the information of our non-resident members and those who were not in attendance at the January meeting; the rail line most asked about at the show was not the MOP, SSW, RI, KCS or FRISCO but it was (you would never guess) the M&NA (MISSOURI & NORTH ARKANSAS) that long abandoned but not forgotten Ozark Mountain carrier which ran from Joplin, Missouri to Helena, Arkansas. The line had its general office at Harrison, Arkansas and most of its mileage was in this state so it could truly be called an Arkansas Institution. Wish we still had it.

Tentative dates for our show at Worthen this year are September 18th thru October 20th. These dates are of course tentative and subject to change.

Rail merger news is going strong and you of course are already familiar with the proposed BN-FRISCO marriage. We now learn that two more systems are talking; namely giant SOUTHERN PACIFIC and SEABOARD (Family Lines). S.P. would reach Family Lines L&N at Memphis and St. Louis (thru the SSW) and BN-FRISCO and SP-SEABOARD would create the largest systems in the country. With about 27,000 miles of track in each system, both lines would easily outrank the mileage of CONRAIL which has about 24,000 track miles. With all of this announced no doubt MOP-SOUTHERN will resume marriage plans. Speaking of mergers your editor is inclined to go along with Mr. Louis Menk, Chairman of Burlington Northern who recently said --Quote---If we're going to have a viable rail system, there will have to be fewer railroads--End Quote. Isn't that what we all want? Strong Railroads? Giant mergers should not affect the nation's short lines too much, especially those that are owned by large industries. However many of our short pikes have disappeared in recent years.

Recently received a very nice letter from one of our fine non-resident members; Bill Pollard of Memphis, Tenn. Am sure many of you know Bill. His letter was about the future of the INTER-AMERICAN. Space will not permit quoting Bill's letter but thinking you may be interested am quoting a few excerpts from it; "When Amtrak arbitrarily dropped sleeper service from the Inter-American last August, the Chicago-Laredo route became the longest route to be denied the passenger amenities of sleeper service and adequate dining service. The ICC ruling (Finance Docket 28522) on November 3, 1977 denied Amtrak's request to permanently exempt Nos. 21-22 from the ICC sleeping car requirement (Regulation 20a). As a result of this ruling Amtrak must restore sleeper service to this train. I wrote to Pres. Reistrup inquiring about a start up date for the sleeper, and received the following reply, dated Dec. 14, 1977" Currently the Cardinal (J.W Riley) and Panama Limited have been equipped with rebuilt sleepers, and the Pioneer will receive this equipment in March. Although we are unable to give you any date for the restoration of this service to the Inter-American, it will be after the Pioneer". As usual, the Inter-American receives the least priority from Amtrak. Although most cuts will be restored by this March 1st, the Inter-American will not return to daily service until-- "Approximately" May 30, 1978; and will supposedly run daily through next summer on an 'experimental basis'. The Inter-American will thus be the last of the service cuts to be restored, and could conceivably be discontinued before the date it is to resume daily service. Both Senator Bumpers and Representative Tucker seem to support rail passenger service through Arkansas. I suspect that Senator Hodges from Newport would be sympathetic towards Amtrak--the Newport Chamber of Commerce was one of the other 3 protestors in the sleeper hearings before the ICC. I hope that you will continue to keep the plight of the Inter-American before the club members (through the Arkansas Railroader). and perhaps the return of Arkansas to the ranks of the freight-only states can be prevented". End of quotes. Thanks very much Bill and we shall certainly keep happenings of the Inter-American before the club. We stated in the January News letter that our Inter-American was probably the "stepchild" of the entire Amtrak System. Understand the "Lone Star" is not too far behind and the "Panama" was also sadly neglected for a long period of time but now understand this train is considered one of the best in the Amtrak System. Sometimes we "Arkies" receive the blunt end of everything; we certainly have when it comes to Amtrak. Nuf said before my blood gets to boiling again.

While writing this newsletter and now and then gazing out the window at the bleak wintry raw day cannot but think of things to come; particularly the Southern Ry. steam excursions this summer. Have not yet received the steam schedule for 1978 but it should be forthcoming in the near future. Hope that plans materialize for Ex 42 610 to pull the excursion out of Memphis. Looking forward to it and will even settle ^{for} our old and faithful standby-No. 4501 if No. 610 cannot be used.

We can report (with credit due Pacific Northwest Chapter, Portland, Oregon and Blackhawk Chapter (Spike & Tie) Joliet, Ill. Ex SP and American Freedom Train Queen, No. 4449 is in good mechanical condition and is kept in a safe, undercover storage facility. To operate in excursion service again however is another problem. Most railroads will not handle the 4449 unless it is insured for a minimum of \$10,000,000. You read it right--ten million dollars. Also a railroad is needed to agree to handle the engine. 4449 is a mainline engine and cannot be operated on just any short line or branch line. Most railroads in the Northwest do not need the problems associated with running a steam engine on their mainline. Editor's Note--It will be too bad and a darn shame if the "Queen" is not used again. Its too pretty just to sit in a park or in a storage shed or what have you. We hope there is some way it may run again.

Meal Service

Meal service on the Santa Fe is under management of Fred Harvey.

Dining rooms and lunch counters are maintained at the following stations on the G. C. & S. F. Ry.

Galveston	Brownwood
Houston	Cleburne
Somerville	Fort Worth
Silsbee	Gainesville
Temple	Purcell

Lunch counter only

Stop of twenty-five minutes is made at meal stations affording one an opportunity for a short walk and rest in their journey.

The above ad was contained in a joint pocket size timetable issued by the GC&SF (SANTA FE) and TEXAS MIDLAND RAILROADS during World War 1, dated February, 1919, when these and all railroads were under United States Railroad Administration. The words Fred Harvey always make my appetite greater. Without a doubt he was the world's greatest restaurant man and no one yet has come along to take his place. (And they say we are making progress? We sometimes wonder)

Not long ago while browsing in a flea market I picked up an old pocket size joke book and began thumbing thru it. One joke caught my eye; it was a railroad joke. Since the book was probably dated back some 50 years ago the joke is probably stale by now. Thinking you may be interested it goes something like this---A lady and her young son were riding in the coach on a passenger train, having come a considerable distance. Several crew changes have been made enroute. Now about the fourth conductor on the trip comes down the aisle collecting the tickets. The rhetoric goes something like this;

- Conductor to Lady: - Tickets please (he eyes the son very closely)
- Lady to Conductor: - Here they are Sir
- Conductor to Lady: - Lady how old is your son?
- Lady to Conductor: - He is twelve years old Sir
- Conductor to Lady: - Lady don't you know that anyone twelve years and older must have a full fare ticket?
- Lady to Conductor: - But Sir he was under twelve when we started.
(Nuf said on this one)

Will there be other "Fallen Flags"? No doubt there will be and the Frisco may well be one of them soon. Although not yet classified as fallen flags, two of our Arkansas lines have lost their old emblems. The Cotton Belt "gin saw" has all but disappeared, and the familiar Rock Island emblem is about gone. Cotton Belt freight cars and their cabooses have only the words COTTON BELT on them. Almost all Rock Island cars and locos now have "The Rock" on them. In recent years we have seen a lot of fallen flags which we hated to see disappear. With mergers in the wind there will be no doubt a lot of "New Flags", new emblems that will have to be created when the lines merge. Wonder what BN-FRISCO will be called? And SP-FAMILY LINES? All collectors must know by now that Cotton Belt items are already very scarce; Frisco items are becoming that way. If you want them now is the time to get going. Just try and find Cotton Belt and Frisco dining car china and find out what luck you have. I should know, have been hunting for the last several years for china from both roads with no success at all.

On Page 4 is an article by our own Mike Adams which ties in nicely with the Razorbacks victory in the Orange Bowl.

THOSE RAZORBACKS

By: W. M. "Mike" Adams

In addition to eating acorns, hickory nuts, rattlesnakes, Aggies, Mustangs and SOONERS, razorback hogs have been known to literally eat up a railroad. When the White River Division of the old St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern (now the Missouri Pacific) was built between Cotter, Arkansas and Crane, Missouri in the early part of the century it was built largely around a rocky side hill - or burrowing through a ridge or jumping a deep ravine (in Ozarkase a "holler") on a spidery timber trestle. Between these two points less than 100 miles apart there was a total of 57 timber trestles ranging up to 122 feet in height and spanning a total distance of over four miles.

Within ten years after construction it was decided to either rebuild these timber spans with steel and concrete or fill them in with dirt and this work went on for many years until the project was completed in the mid-1930's. The longest of these bridges, the 1900 foot affair spanning George's Creek, a few miles west of Yellville, Arkansas was filled in the fall of 1924. When a fill was finished the bridge stringers were cut off and the earth embankment allowed to carry the load of the trains - but it was necessary to put out a slow order on the track for several weeks, sometimes months, until the fill compacted and stabilized and there was not any further danger of the track settling. On Christmas Eve of 1924 the last thing the bridge and building foreman did on the George's Creek trestle was to cut the stringers. Actually this should have been his next to last duty - in his rush to get home and celebrate he completely overlooked putting out a slow order;

That night the southward redball with Engineer M. F. McNabb at the throttle of Consolidation No. 128 came pouncing up the hill from Turkey Spur at about 25 mph when "boing" a rail broke and the 128 layed over on her side as did several cars, one of which was a load of shelled corn. Although Engineer McNabb rolled all the way to the bottom of the fill, neither he or his fireman, nor the head brakeman for that matter were hurt - except possibly to their dignity. The corn, however, spilled down the high fill also, and within 24 hours, long before they got the 128 back on her feet, the razorbacks came swarming in out of the Crooked Creet and George's Creek bottoms and the neighboring hills and hollers and had their Christmas dinner.

They rooted up the fill so badly in their natural exuberance that heavy rains the next few days washed and eroded the fill away so badly it took over a week's labor with a work train to correct. Those razorbacks hung around the right of way for several weeks waiting for another shower of manna but they were doomed to disappointment - the replacement bridge and building foreman kept a slow order out until nearly the next Christmas.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Our program for February will be given by our member and Amtrak Relief Ticket Clerk, John Martin. John is a Rock Island fan and will show slides of Rock Island Freight and Passenger both steam and diesel. This should be an interesting program and trust we will have a good attendance. Bring those visitors. Our meeting will be on the date of February 12th and at the usual place, the MOP Office Bldg. 1000 West 4th Avenue, North Little Rock starting at 2:00 PM.
