



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



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This is a photo of newly purchased Prescott & Northwestern (PNW) 26, a SW1200. The PNW will be keeping two of their GE units and discarding one. This photo was made January 2, 2007 after PNW 26 had made a run out to the UP at Prescott. *(David Hoge)*



UP CEO Dick Davidson (left) and Arkansas Railroad Club photographer John C. Jones (right) with a special train in North Little Rock on December 18, 2006. The train was powered by UP Heritage Locomotives 1982 (MoPac unit) and 1988 (Katy unit). *(Ken Ziegenbein photo)*



Arkansas Midland Santa Train, December 2, 2006, on the overpass of Interstate-30 between Malvern and Butterfield, Arkansas. *(John P. Gill)*



Missouri Pacific dormitory car at Helena, Arkansas, November 30, 1980. These cars were there in relation to the ribbon-rail work on the line from McGehee through Lexa, Arkansas in 1980. Note that the Mo-Pac locomotive in the picture is No. 1982, the same as the current UP Heritage MoPac unit.

As we all know, this line was used very little after the new rail was laid and was taken up just a few years later after Union Pacific merged with MoPac and decided this line wasn't necessary. *(Randy Tardy photo)*

2007 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

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The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sundays of most months at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in trains is welcome!

Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently \$20 a year, which includes the monthly Arkansas Railroader newsletter. If you'd like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay \$22 a year more, bringing the total to \$42 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st of each year, but you may pay at any time (membership will extend through the following year).

To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information. The newsletter editor's email address is: trains@trainweather.com The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2007**. It will be held at Curtis H. Stout, Inc. off Cantrell in Little Rock, in the same complex that has Cajun's Wharf. Time will be 2 p.m. **The February 11, 2007 program will be given by Peter Smykla, Jr** and will be slides of his 2006 rail adventures around the world and in the U.S. **This will be Peter's 21ST YEAR of giving this annual program.**

Our new meeting place is located off Cantrell Road in Little Rock in the row of buildings that has Cajun's Wharf Restaurant. To get there: 1) Turn right off Cantrell and cross the LRWN tracks. 2) Curve slightly right, then left, and go straight between Buildings 2 and 3 to the Cajun's Wharf parking lot. 3) Go right through the parking lot to the end of the row of buildings. 4) Our meeting place is located in Building 4. Park to the right (east) of this building. You'll see the Arkansas River and you'll be right in front of the entrance.

If you have trouble, call John Hodkin on his cell phone: 501-993-0616. I put some maps below. The physical address is 2400 Cantrell Rd Suite 100, Little Rock.

DEADLINE FOR MARCH 2007 RAILROADER is February 11, 2007, our next meeting date.

P. B. WOOLDRIDGE BOOKLET IS READY! - I've put together a 62-page booklet of many short Cotton Belt stories written by the late P. B. Wooldridge. It is in a spiral binder-type booklet and include a few of his photos from the 1930s through 1970s (Mr. Wooldridge didn't take that many photos and some are not that good a quality since his print sizes were 2 x 3, but still rare). The booklet will be mostly text and photos will be black and white. Many of his stories are his familiar "Remembering" series that have been published in the *Arkansas Railroader* for years.

The cost will only be \$10 per booklet if you pick them up in person. If you want it mailed, add \$3 postage. I'm paying for it entirely myself so make payment out to Ken Ziegenbein, NOT the Arkansas Railroad Club, and mail to 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116.

RAILROADERS ONLINE - The monthly *Arkansas Railroaders* are online in Adobe PDF format at: <http://www.trainweather.com/road.html>. My current and past train pictures are here: <http://www.trainweather.com/sunday.html>

Those of you reading the issues online but are not members are urged to join our club (\$20 a year local, \$22 additional if you want to join the NRHS too). The *Arkansas Railroaders* are expensive to produce since they have photos and 16 to 20 pages. They will be put online only after the mailed copies are distributed.

DAVID HOGE'S DISPLAY OF THE REMAINS OF LONG-AGO RAILROADS – Our treasurer, David Hoge, had a display of his abandoned railroad road photographs at the Ozarks Heritage Arts Center & Museum in Leslie, Arkansas in December, 2006. Here's his write-up of the project:

"This project - photographing the remains of long-ago railroads - took root in the fall of 2002, while returning from a weekend family trip to Yellville. Until then, my hobby had been to photograph existing railroads and museum trains.

On that journey from Yellville, I hunted down the old Missouri & North Arkansas Railway depots at Bellefonte, St. Joe and Leslie. My family looked for traces of the old right-of-way throughout the countryside. We would see a too-level-to-be-natural mound going straight across a cow pasture and imagine an M&NA train traveling across it. I began to wonder what one would find along the forgotten right-of-ways of other railroads across the state.

Finding good information about the past can be difficult. By studying old maps, visiting local museums and libraries and asking a lot of questions, I've learned about more railroads than I had imagined existed.

The first railroad in Arkansas was completed before the Civil War between Little Rock and DeValls Bluff by the Memphis & Little Rock. By 1910, more than 5,000 miles of track reached every corner of the state. The railroads hauled everything from raw materials to people to those special Christmas packages. The tracks created towns and doomed the bypassed ones. Dozens of logging and lumber railroads harvested the state's timber.

But the 1920s, the state began building highways to accommodate the growing number of autos. Passenger railroad traffic began to fall, followed by declining freight traffic. Many miles of track were torn up and sold for scrap, but you can still find the paths taken by long-gone railroads. They may be in farm fields, alongside highways or used as walking paths. Surviving depots may be museums, visitor centers, homes or warehouses. The hardware is out there too: bolts, bridge piers, signals, signs. Some are right under your nose in town but others can be seen only by hiking for miles. Many of these remnants are endangered.

The best way to show my appreciation of their past significance was to capture them in photographs. But I wanted to do more than to take a photo for the historical record: I wanted a visually pleasing, artistic photo.

Even though I have photographed more than 100 places in Arkansas, I feel that I have just touched the surface. I continue to research these old railroads and take their photographs, because the clock goes on ticking. Some of my subjects no longer exist. (*David Hoge*)

The following is a short history of some of the railroads that I have photographed:

Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific

The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific gained access to Arkansas with the hostile takeover of the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad in 1902. The Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf had built the line from North Little Rock west to Howe, Oklahoma, to gain access to coal deposits in the area. It also purchased the Little Rock & Memphis (formerly the Memphis & Little Rock) which had operated the first train in Arkansas between Little Rock and DeValls Bluff, later extending the line to Memphis after the Civil War.

The Rock Island expanded across Arkansas by purchasing or building lines across the state.

However, by the 1970s, the once "mighty fine line" was sinking slowly into oblivion. Having declared bankruptcy in the late 1970s, the line ceased operations in March 1980 with the strike of its operating employees.

Much of the Rock Island is abandoned in the state but several small sections survive under the ownership and operation of other railroads.

Dardanelle, Ola & Southern

Dardanelle, Ola & Southern was built to provide a better access to Dardanelle by connecting the town with the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific in Ola. Finished in 1907, the railroad was soon running 12 passenger trains a day.

Like many railroads, the Dardanelle, Ola & Southern was saddled with large construction costs and limited on-line traffic. The line was in bankruptcy by 1911 and leased to the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific. After another round of different ownership, the line from Ola to Dardanelle was torn up, beginning in March 1938.

Little Rock, Maumelle & Western

A.J. Neimeyer built the Little Rock, Maumelle & Western to tap 80,000 acres of timber land in west Pulaski, Perry and Saline counties. The line was begun in 1907 and ran from a connection with the Missouri Pacific and passed through what is now west Little Rock. The railroad passed through Ferndale before terminating near Paron.

The timber only lasted until about 1921. Neimeyer in an attempt to capitalize on his land holdings, started a subdivision named West Little Rock. The idea didn't take off then? Neimeyer was just a little bit before his time.

Missouri Pacific

Combined in 1917 with the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern, the MoPac dominated railroading in Arkansas, operating 35 percent of the total trackage in the state in 1927.

The railroad in Arkansas began with the Cairo & Fulton, which was chartered in 1853 to build a railroad from Bird's Point, Missouri, to Fulton, Arkansas, on the Red River. The Civil War interrupted construction, which was completed in 1873.

Several other railroads in the state merged into the system or were bought by it, including the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern; Arkansas Midland; the Little Rock & Fort Smith; and the Little Rock, Mississippi River & Texas.

A large shop complex first begun by the Cairo & Fulton in North Little Rock continues operating today under the ownership of the Union Pacific. The name Missouri Pacific disappeared in 1982 with its merger with Union Pacific, but much of the track, including the original route to Fulton on the Red River, forms the backbone of the Union Pacific in Arkansas today.

Missouri & North Arkansas

Begun as the 18-mile Eureka Springs Railway to connect the resort town of Eureka Springs by rail to the outside world, the Missouri & North Arkansas eventually reached Helena, Arkansas.

Labor strikes and poor traffic doomed the railroad, which was abandoned in 1946 after a labor strike. Some portions of the railroad struggled on under new ownership into the 1960s, but most of the railroad was torn up and abandoned in the 1950s. Today only a small section of track in Helena is in use and the tourist line at Eureka Springs uses the depot and short section of right-of-way for an excursion train.

Reader Railroad

Although the Reader Railroad traces its heritage to lumber mill operations in the area, the Reader was begun in 1925 to access oil. Oil at Waterloo, Arkansas, was thick, like asphalt. The only way to haul the goeey oil out was rail tank car.

Twenty-two miles of track were built between Reader and Waterloo to haul out the oil.

By 1956, the Mansfield Lumber Company was looking to rid itself of the Reader. A man named Tom Long took over the railroad and kept it going. The allure of the road's steam locomotives (the road having eschewed diesels) brought railfans from all over the country. A passenger/tourist service was begun that would last until the 1970s, when most of the railroad was scrapped.

A short section survives today but has not seen tourist trains since the 1980s.

St. Louis Southwestern

Known better by its nickname the "Cotton Belt", this road started as a narrow gauge railroad cutting a diagonal route across Arkansas from Jonesboro to Texarkana. The road built a large shop complex in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, which was able to assemble 10 large locomotives in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The Cotton Belt at one time operated branch lines to North Little Rock and Gillette, along with a web of branches in the St. Francis River basin in northeast Arkansas. In 1930, the Cotton Belt started one of the fastest scheduled freight trains in the country, the "Blue Streak". The train offered overnight package service between St. Louis, Missouri, and Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

Today the mainline of the Cotton Belt is an important part of the Union Pacific, which merged with the Cotton Belt's parent company, Southern Pacific, in 1996." (David Hoge)

JANUARY 14, 2007 MINUTES - *The January 14, 2007 meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club began at 2 p.m. with John Hodkin, Jr. presiding. David Hoge gave the treasurer's report . There was no NRHS report, but it was mentioned that the upcoming national NRHS convention this summer will be in Chattanooga, Tennessee and should be close enough for some here in Arkansas to attend. *** Peter Smykla, Jr. gave a report on the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society. He stated that new tracks were being put across the transfer pit at the Arkansas Railroad Museum's site. *** John C. Jones gave his report on Union Pacific. UP is putting new ties and doing other work on the Van Buren Sub including undercutting work and crossing upgrades. UP's Dick Davidson was on a special UP train that came to North Little Rock December 18, 2006 on Davidson's farewell tour of the system. *** Jones showed some cable from Central Arkansas Transit's River Rail Streetcar system on their almost complete new line to the Clinton Library and Heifer Project. He said the extension may be ready for test runs by Wednesday, January 17 if all goes well. In the meantime, the streetcars are only running the North Little Rock loop since power is off on the line in Little Rock due to this construction. *** John C. Jones and Ken Ziegenbein both have photos in the 2007 River Rail calendar. *** Jones received two recognition awards recently for his great photography, one from North Little Rock and one from the USS Razorback Submarine people. *** There was no old business. *** Members health: It was reported that Naomi Hull is still doing the same after years in the Sherwood, Arkansas nursing home. Naomi is the wife of Club historian and frequent railroad writer Gene Hull. *** New Business: Tom Stuart showed some Rock Island memorabilia from his father's service on the CRI&P. Jim Wakefield reported that the last known M&NA passenger car at Searcy would possibly be rescued and restored and moved to Bald Knob. Ken Ziegenbein brought 1930 Arkansas Railroad Commission railroad maps and Wooldridge Cotton Belt booklets to sell. *** Meeting adjourned. Following the meeting, Mr. Strickland of the Butler Center at the Central Arkansas Library System gave a talk on donating historic railroad things to the center.*

WANTED - FOR SALE OR TRADE

WANTED – “I’m researching for a book. Could you tell me the most logical rails (working or not) that one would take from Devalls Bluff or Georgetown, Arkansas to Yellville, Arkansas. Also is the spur that runs through Yellville still used? Any help is greatly appreciated. - S.D. Gatlin, D2GPB@aol.com (or mail your answer to the Arkansas Railroad Club)

WANTED (to purchase or copy): Dispatcher train sheets for Missouri Pacific or Rock Island trackage in Arkansas, pre-1970. Also want to buy or copy pre-1970 conductor timebooks from MP and RI. Bill Pollard, 3005 Baxter Dr, Conway, AR 72034. <arkrail@arkansas.net> or 501-327-7083.

FOR SALE - ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB BOOKS STILL AVAILABLE – Our reprint of Gene Hull’s book *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas* and *Railroad Stations and Trains through Arkansas and the Southwest*, are still available. They cost \$20 each plus \$2 postage (total \$22). Send orders to Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 and say which book you want.

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. Also remember that there are sometimes many follow-ups on these first-time notices so if you want to keep up with any particular abandonment, check the Surface Transportation Board’s site and use the Docket Numbers to search.

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.

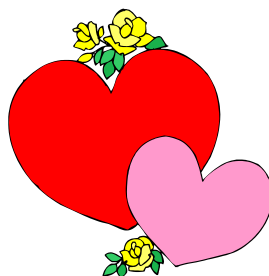
NORTH CAROLINA - HIGH POINT, RANDLEMAN, ASHEBORO AND SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY (NORFOLK SOUTHERN) – To abandon, 1.5 miles of railroad between milepost M 0.0 and milepost M 1.5 in High Point, Guilford County, NC. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 27260, and includes the former station of High Point. Effective on January 20, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 276X), decided December 11, served December 21, 2006)

ALABAMA - BIRMINGHAM SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY - To abandon a 0.18-mile line of railroad known as the Old Port Branch, extending from Survey Station 936+04.07 of Turnout P-63 A, over Trestle 17.9, to a connection with Ergon Terminaling, Inc.’s (Ergon) rail line at Survey Station 945+52.55 in Jefferson County, AL. Effective on January 23, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-192 (Sub-No. 2X), decided December 14, 2006, served December 22, 2006)

WEST VIRGINIA - NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY – To abandon a 2.5-mile line of railroad between milepost CB 0.0 and milepost CB 2.5, in Caretta, in McDowell County, WV. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 24892 and includes the former station of Juno. Effective on January 25, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 272X), decided December 18, served December 26, 2006)

TEXAS – UNION PACIFIC - ALAMO GULF COAST RAILROAD COMPANY - UP seeks to abandon and AGCR seeks to discontinue service over a line of railroad extending between milepost 253.26 and milepost 256.0 on UP’s Kerrville Subdivision, a distance of 2.74 miles in Bexar County, TX. A final decision will be issued by April 4, 2007. ([STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 236X, and STB Docket No. AB-576 (Sub-No. 2X), decided December 28, 2006, served January 4, 2007)

MINNESOTA – BNSF – To abandon a 5.29-mile line of railroad between milepost 90.87 and milepost 95.15, including the 1.01-mile depot spur between milepost 94.78 and milepost 93.77, near Bemidji in Beltrami County, MN. Effective on February 14, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 446X, decided January 4, served January 12, 2007)





“3:10 TO YUMA” MOVIE USING READER LOCOMOTIVE/CARS

John Reagon sent the following information to me about the Reader Railroad on December 16: “I went to Reader AR today to see what was going on. Turns out Reader is indeed doing another project for a movie (*called the “3:10 to Yuma, a remake of the famous classic*). They are painting the coaches in the V&T (Virginia and Truckee) Scheme and the "working" steam engine is getting painted into a light blue with yellow stripes.” UPDATE by David Hoge: On December 30, WT Carter 2 was painted as SP 13, "Savage" for the movie "3:10 to Yuma". The locomotive, a caboose and combine were going to New Mexico for the movie. (*David's and John's photos elsewhere in this newsletter*)

The following is an interesting story about trains, model trains and retirement planning. It brought back memories of my own Christmas as a child with trainsets being a real part of that (mine were from Sears and made by Marx - Ken Ziegenbein):

RETIREMENT 'TRAIN' NEEDS ENGINEER – “When I was a kid, probably about 5 or 6, my Dad came home one cold December night with a shiny new Lionel O gauge train set. It was a silver Santa Fe passenger set with two diesel engines, one facing forward and one backward. I watched for hours as it went around in circles, lights flickering.

In my pre- and early teens, I built my own model train layout. It was in the garage on an elaborate set of ropes and pulleys so that I could hoist it up the ceiling to let the car in. It mostly stayed up. Although by high school I had outgrown my railroading days, I never really got over it. Every Christmas, I envisioned that gleaming Santa Fe model passenger train roaring around under the tree.

A few years ago, I bit the bullet and bought an O gauge Santa Fe train set. And once again, I can just sit and watch that train circle the Christmas tree. And the piano. And the love seat. I've added a few extra pieces of track.

For some reason I've always loved trains. I can remember taking the train from a Chicago suburb into the Loop. Standing on the station platform I would look far down the tracks, waiting until I could see first the smoke and then the light of the steam locomotive. Kind of dates me, doesn't it?

For me, trains are rather stress-less. You get on and it takes you where you want to go. There is something mesmerizing and relaxing about watching the scenery fly past as the train goes clickety-clack down the tracks. Somebody else has the responsibility and makes the decisions. Sort of like when I was a child.

I wish adult life were like that. Many people approach retirement as if it were like boarding a train and letting it take them to their destination. The problem with that is that they assume the train knows where it is going and how to get there. In reality however, you need an engineer. Otherwise, the train might just go round and round in circles, if it even leaves the station. Fine for model trains. Not good for retirement trains.

It's up to you to engineer your retirement. Social Security will be a part of it, but not the whole thing. Have a look at www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2. It will help you arrive at your retirement destination with a minimum of stress. (*Written by Paul Greene, a public affairs specialist for the Social Security Administration*).

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

NEW ORLEANS ST. CHARLES AVE LINE

(*New Orleans, Dec 19, 2006*) – New Orleans's famous St. Charles Avenue streetcar line returned to partial service December 19, 2006 for the first time since Hurricane Katrina, but it has a long way to go before serving the full length of its old route. The Regional Transit Agency put cars back on track between Canal Street and Lee Circle.

RECORD FREIGHT VOLUME

According to the Association of American Railroads, U.S. railroads have broken their freight volume record for the ninth-straight year in 2006. Through 51 weeks, the railroads' volume totaled 1.71 trillion ton-miles, besting the previous record of 1.69 trillion ton-miles set in 2005 and increasing 2.6 percent on a year-over-year basis, according to Association of American Railroads data. During the same period, the roads' carloads totaled 17.1 million units, up 1.4 percent, and intermodal volume totaled 12.1 million units, up 5.2 percent compared with similar 2005 data. (*Via Don Weis*)

RECORD SNOW IN DENVER

The Denver area was hammered by over 35 inches of snow in most areas in the last two weeks of December 2006 by two blizzards that were separated by less than a week. The eastern plains of Colorado and western plains of Kansas may have had it worse. In addition to the multiple feet of snow, high speed winds have resulted in the formation of many drifts. UP's Kansas Pacific line (Limon Subdivision) had several trains that are actually snowed in with crews still on board. To make matters worse, I-70 was shut down due to the weather as well. Union Pacific brought its Cheyenne-based rotary plow down into Denver to help clear the tracks. It then headed for the KP Line.

BNSF also had snow problems. Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* had to detour via a rarely used passenger line through Amarillo, Texas because the main passenger line through New Mexico was blocked by ice, snow, and downed power lines.

AMTRAK NEWS



Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* detouring on the BNSF's line through Amarillo, Texas on December 31, 2006, 10:15 a.m. It was detoured because of a severe winter storm over its normal route through Raton Pass, New Mexico where up to 10-foot snow drifts were blocking trains. (Nathan Herring photo)

The photo above shows the *Southwest Chief* going through Amarillo, Texas (taken by Nathan Herring on December 31, 2006). This detour was made because of a severe winter storm on its normal route through Raton Pass, New Mexico, where 10-foot snow drifts were blocking trains. Mr. Herring noted that this was not the station used by the Santa Fe at Amarillo, it is about 5-10 blocks north of here. He said: "This just the crew change point. Amtrak arrived at about 10:15 a.m. and was gone by 10:30, BTW it was cold. You can tell of the cold by the way of the cameras bouncing, I was trying to get feeling back in my right hand, and start when the Amtrak was arriving I couldn't get the camera back on the tripod."

Here are some various reports he condensed from people: "It is more than snow that has affected the Raton, New Mexico routing of the *Southwest Chief*. An inspection locomotive ran from Dodge City to La Junta yesterday (December 30). At least 20 miles of railroad pole lines are down (I believe this is between Garden City and in the direction of the Colorado line) and if Amtrak runs, it will be over un-signalized territory according to one report. Power lines are down across the tracks as well. It seems to be a real mess.

Rotary Snow Plow encountered ten foot drifts as of 9:00am December 31 out of La Junta, CO for the snow plow headed for Amarillo. Snow Plow crews changed crews at Boise City, OK with de-icing of the rotary taking 5 hours. Amarillo was reached Monday morning January 1st at sunrise. The train left for Trinidad on the Twin Peaks Subs at 9:00am January 1st. The Rotary Plow is to continue today from La Junta to Trinidad where it will be set out, ready to clear from Trinidad to Pueblo. It will then be towed back to La Junta at that point and set out to clear Raton Pass."

"Even after the tracks are cleared to Albuquerque it is believed that the detour will continue due to the damaged signaling system. Signal crews are being sent from all over the BNSF system to repair the downed lines.

"Interestingly, the *Southwest Chief* is running on to Albuquerque, turning there, and returning to the Transcontinental BNSF mainline. This is a round trip stub off of that route of 35 miles to Belen and about 15 miles back to Isleta, NM where it rejoins the mainline."

AMTRAK PRESIDENT'S YEAR END STATEMENT

On December 23, 2006, Amtrak's new President Alexander K. Kummant said Amtrak could see a ridership growth of 50 percent in the next five to 10 years, but it would require billions of state and federal dollars invested in the tracks of other railroads, and millions more of private investment in passenger rail cars, the new president of the railroad said in an interview. "The stars may be aligning" for a renaissance of rail, both passenger and freight," he said.

Mr. Kummant indicated that Amtrak was backing away from some ideas that had upset Amtrak supporters, including putting the Washington-to-Boston corridor under separate ownership. He also said he did not intend to slash the long-distance network because it **was a national asset** that, once lost, would probably never be recovered. Mr. Kummant appeared to rule out much-discussed plans to privatize major parts of Amtrak's unionized work force, instead saying it would make better sense to expand passenger service, and with it union jobs, while outsourcing only peripheral functions, like tree trimming.

Amtrak reported record revenue of \$131.2 million in November, the highest of any month. For the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, ticket revenue was \$1.37 billion, up 11 percent over the 2005 fiscal year. Its flagship Acela train, which runs between Washington and Boston, was sidelined for months with brake problems in 2005, but now is running well, and national ridership is up.

Mr. Kummant, a former freight rail executive, said that the rail network nationally was overloaded, but that strong growth in freight traffic, and the interest in rail as a solution to congestion and energy problems, opened the possibility for government investment in private freight railroad lines that Amtrak used. He said the additional money needed - perhaps \$1 billion a year for 10 years - was modest compared with what Washington spent on other modes of transportation. He said that track improvements for "the cost of four or five highway interchanges" would allow corridors of several hundred miles with passenger service at over 100 miles an hour.

The cost of cross-country trains comes to about a dollar and a half per American per year, he said, and they are irreplaceable. He compared trains like the Empire Builder and the City of New Orleans to assets like national parks. "I haven't had the opportunity to go to Glacier National Park since 1976, but I pay taxes every year in the hope that I have the option to go back," Mr. Kummant said.

Mr. Kummant said Amtrak was looking into a new way to buy rail cars for its aging fleet: allying with commuter lines and ordering cars by the hundreds, instead of the dozens, cutting the cost to manufacture new models.

EVENTS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

PINE BLUFF – ANNUAL RAILRODIANA SHOW AND SALE APRIL 14, 2007 – It will be held at the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff as usual. It includes railroad memorabilia and model trains of all scales. Admission is \$5, children 6-12 \$2. For information on reserving tables, call the museum at 870-535-8819

INDIANA – APRIL 14, 15, 2006 - LIMAS, BALDWINS, ALCOS, EMDS and MORE!

THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIA RAILWAY MUSEUM announces our 2007 Photo Freight Weekend, this year on the WHITEWATER VALLEY RAILROAD and INDIANA TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM, both in INDIANA! Saturday, April 14, and Sunday, April 15, 2007. Come ride with us on these two railroads as we operate two days of diesel freight trips, each designed with the railroad photographer in mind.

Saturday, April 14, 2007 - We will be operating on the 20-mile long Whitewater Valley Railroad. We plan on having a Lima diesel and a NYC Alco, each pulling vintage freight and passenger cars over the line. The route was once the Whitewater Canal, built along the Whitewater River around 1840. By 1865, the canal was dead and the railroad took over. Once operated by NYC's "Big Four" - Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railway - today the line between Connersville and Metamora is operated by the Whitewater Valley Railroad. An added feature this year is the ability to operate to the end of track south of Metamora with runbys planned for the restored canal lock at this location.

Saturday night we will hold a night photo session at the Indiana Transportation Museum using NKP 426, a GP7 built in 1953. Steve Barry of Railfan & Railroad Magazine will be there to provide the lighting.

Sunday, April 15, 2007 - Riders will see NP 426 pulling a photo freight southward over the entire ITM property, covering the line from Tipton to near the fairgrounds in Indianapolis. These 38 miles of track were once known as the Indianapolis & Peru, and more recently, as the Nickel Plate Road.

The Southern Appalachia Railway Museum is based in the Knoxville-Oak Ridge, Tennessee, area and operates the Secret City Scenic Excursion Train through the former K-25 Manhattan Project facility. Check out our website at "<http://www.southernappalachia.railway.museum>" for information on our organization and on our many other events that we operate nationwide.

REMEMBERING 13

REVISED

P.B. Wooldridge

I've always been a railroad fan. I was raised in a large white house, on a high hill, just back of the Missouri Pacific passenger station in Camden, Ark. Standing on that high hill from a very early age, I watched thousand of trains, especially the northbound MP freights, as they struggled up the mile long grade, with their exhausts rattling the windows. I could also view trains on the Cotton Belt, less than a quarter mile away, as their trains passed a large cotton compress on the Ouachita River, where steamboats came up the Quachita River and were loaded down with bales of cotton. In 1922 I also stood on that hill and saw the "Prosperity Special" pass on the Cotton Belt enroute from East St Louis, Ills to Corsicana, Texas, with 20 new steam engines for the Southern Pacific. Seven years of age, I wondered why it took so many engines to pull a caboose.

Back in the 1920s I'd spend a month during the summer school vacation visiting with relatives at or near Idalia, Mo. During the White River flood of 1927 on a Northbound Cotton Belt passenger we edged our way at about 5 mph across the long, high trestle and the White River bridge, with water over the wheels of the passenger coaches. It appeared we were floating out to sea. At that time, long before air condition, if you were strong enough, you were allowed to raise the window and stick your head out, to be greeted with cinders from the engine. We passed the depot at Clarendon, Ark., and the telegraph table in the station was under water.

For a time during the early 1930s, during the Great Depression, the Cotton Belt dispensed with steam passenger trains, in favor of rail-bus service. Passenger buses from the Cotton Belt subsidiary, Southwestern Transportation Co, equipped with flanged wheels, were substituted instead. It was a queer sight, and very innovative to see a highway passenger bus riding the rails. I entrained on one of those rail-bus trains at Camden. The bus was crowded. It had a veteran Conductor, and a veteran steam engineer as driver, a crew of only two. I remember that we were headed in the siding by a southbound freight that was holding the main track at Bearden, Ark.

The steam engines are gone, and so are the railroad telegraphers. On August 4, 1991 Alton Hare passed away at Shreveport, La at the age of 96. When he hired out to the Cotton Belt at Pine Bluff, Ark in 1917 the Superintendent had addressed him as "Rabbit" and the name stuck. He had given me his semi-automatic telegraph key, called a "bug", shortly before his death, the same key he had used since 1917. I looked at that old key and thought of the untold thousands of train orders and messages and Western Union telegrams it had transmitted, now silent. If only it could talk, it would fill volumes. Today it resides in the Cotton Belt Museum at Pine Bluff.

Naturally, having been infected by the railroad bug at an early age, I gravitated to the railroad. About 1934 I tried riding freights as an uninvited guest, as a hobo. One night I rode from Texarkana to Camden, Ark atop the first car in the train, a box car coupled to an 800 class steam engine, and got the ride of my life. Hugging the cat-walk on top of the car, we rocked and rolled, and swayed and bounced, with flanges screaming as we crossed switches and rounded curves. I hung on for my life. That lonesome whistle, sounding often for the many road crossings, was music to my ears. The 800 ahead was capable of 90 mph with a train, and from my vantage point I could only admire it and the brave men who rode her.

I was never kicked off a Cotton Belt freight. But I cannot say the same for the Missouri Pacific. On a beautiful spring day back in the 1930s, with 8 other hoboes, I rode north out of Poplar Bluff, Mo in a gondola car, in a local freight. The scenery was magnificent and all 9 of us rushed from side to side of the car, admiring the beautiful Ozarks. It was a local, a mixed train with a passenger coach instead of a caboose, and it stopped at a small station to unload freight. All 9 of us hunkered down in a corner of the car to escape detection. Suddenly a head appeared above the rim of the gon, and viewed us with disdain. Then the irritated voice of the Brakeman said: "What do you guys think this is, an excursion? Get off!"

Another guy and I ran up the opposite side of the train, found a box car with the door open, and jumped inside, hiding behind a stack of lumber. The train pulled out, but it was inevitable that we would stop again, which we shortly did. This time the same Brakeman appeared at the box car door and said with finality: "I saw you climb in there. For the last time, get off!"

I looked around and could see no sign of civilization. We appeared to be in the middle of nowhere. Preciously I'd hoboed broke, or nearly broke. On one occasion, enroute hobo to Little Rock, Ark, waiting for a Missouri Pacific freight, I had slept on the ground at the MP crossing at Pine Bluff. I had 10¢ on that occasion. Another hobo and I went to a nearby grocery and purchased a loaf of bread which I broke into and shared.

But this time I was prepared. I had pinned a one dollar bill in my shirt pocket. Now one dollar was a lot of money in 1934. I had previously worked in a Dr Pepper bottling plant for 5¢ and hour, 50¢ for a ten hour day. So I ran after the train as it was leaving, waving my one dollar bill. The Conductor was riding on the bottom step on the rear of the passenger coach, and I shouted that I wanted a ticket to the next town. He motioned me aboard. Passenger fares were then 3¢ a mile, so I had most of my dollar returned. The next station happened to be Annapolis, Mo. I loafed around Annapolis, waiting for a freight back to Poplar Bluff. Late that afternoon a southbound freight took siding there, and I climbed aboard, atop a box car, only thing available. It was dark before we left, and a Brakeman, or Special Agent, walked the length of the train, flashing a spotlight, searching for transients. I laid flat on the opposite side of the cat-walk, and he failed to locate me. Needless to say, I was glad to get back on the dear old Cotton Belt. I never bothered the Missouri Pacific again.



A UP special 13-car train passed Union Station in Little Rock, Arkansas December 18, 2006. It was headed by UP Heritage locomotives 1982 (MoPac) and 1988 (Katy) and carried UP CEO Dick Davidson. *(Ken Ziegenbein photo on a dark afternoon at 4:30 p.m.)*

The introduction of this story was taken from ARKANSAS RIVER -BORN IN THE SHINING MOUNTAINS, which I wrote and Naomi typed - 2,500 pages of history of the river. Cost of publication was prohibitive. (Gene Hull)

THE BALLOON TURNAROUND

Gene Hull

Yes, I know! We are back in Colorado! What makes that place so interesting for railroaders? I doubt there is a definite, precise reason. More than likely it is an amalgamation, a coalescence, a combination of several things.

It is smack-dab in the middle of an indefinable area of our country we call the WEST. America was a new, raw nation, with two fringes of civilization, along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The interior was the land of mystery. The first “westerling” adventurers soon labeled this interior land as THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT (which it wasn’t); UNINHABITABLE (which it wasn’t; thousands of native people had lived there thousands of years); UNFIT FOR AGRICULTURE (which it wasn’t; it only needed water. It still produces magnificent crops of many kinds.

It just was unknown. Early explorers soon were following the rivers, avoiding the danger of losing their way. One of these was a young Frenchman, Pierre Gaullier de Varennes. Among the native people he met was one Ochagach. For the young visitor he drew a crude map upon a strip of birchbark.

Far to the west of the great north – south river (the Mississippi) in the land of the Assiniboins there was shown the “Montagnes de pierres brillantes” – the “Mountains of Shining Stones”.

Upon further exploration this beckoning land proved to be the “Land of the Shining Mountains” (the awesome Rocky Mountains). In the midst of this land of imagination was the headwaters of the Rio De Napestle – it became the ARKANSAS RIVER and the headwaters was in the Land of Shining Mountains in the place called Colorado.

The early railroads in this area were built with a narrow gauge (3'-0") because of economic restrictions and ease of construction with sharp curves to follow the mountainous terrain.

In the midst of this land of magic and mystery is the San Juan (St. John) Range of mountains, claiming most of the southwestern one-quarter of the state of Colorado. In the midst of the San Juans is the famous gold-silver mining camp called Silverton. The name came from a local miner in 1873. “We ain’t got much gold, but we’ve got silver by the ton!”

The one critical element demanded by every mining venture was -economical transportation. Fate decreed that a man of prophetic vision would arrive on the scene in the San Juan area to satisfy this critical need.

Otto Mears left Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1865, and with a friend, Isaac Gotthelf, established a general store at Conejos (co-NAY-hos), near the present town of Antonito, Colorado. The fascinating story of how Otto Mears came from his homeland at Kurland, Russia to San Francisco, California in 1851 and made his way to Colorado would require many pages. It would be well worth the research effort. He soon earned the nickname “Pathfinder of the San Juans”.

As time passed, Mears became more and more involved in transportation in this beautiful up-and-down land. His means was the incorporation and construction of toll roads. Later it was said that anyone who traveled in the San Juan country had to pay Otto Mears.

In July 1875 he built a wagon toll road between Silverton and Animas Forks. It followed the wiggling stream called RIO DE LAS ANIMAS PERDIDAS (Spanish for River of Lost Souls), the same stream which flowed south through Durango. Three small streams joined to form the headwaters and the place was called Animas Forks, 12 miles north of Silverton. Several mines were begun and the Gold Prince Mill was built to process the ore. The camp of Animas Forks was established in 1873.

Eight miles up the river from Silverton a gold mining camp was settled in the 1870s and it was called Eureka. Transportation of ores and supplies soon made a railroad necessary. Otto Mears, Fred Walsen (for whom the town of Walsenburg, 37 miles north of Trinidad, was named), Alexander Anderson, Jerome Frank, Thomas Wiswall and Moses Liverman incorporated the SILVERTON NORTHERN RAILROAD on 20 September 1895. The charter was granted 4 November. The Silverton & Animas Forks Toll Road was purchased from Otto Mears as right of way for the railroad. The road lay along

the east side of the Animas river in the narrow valley varying in width from 200 feet to nearly 2,000 feet for the eight miles between Silverton and Eureka. In the last four miles the mountains squeezed together, leaving only room for the little stream and the road on a steep grade. The river spread during storms and periods of snow melt, leaving very little room for the road and causing a washout once in a while.

Construction began in the fall of 1895 with 30-pound rail and ties of green cottonwood and fir. Eight miles of track at an average grade of 1.4 percent. At Eureka the flood plain of the river widened and the foot of the mountains left little space for the track. Crown Mountain and Middle Mountain squeezed in from the east, while Eureka Mountain and Dome Mountain pushed in on the west.

As Motive power, Mears transferred Consolidation No. 101 on the Silverton Railroad (Silverton to Red Mountain mines) to the Silverton Northern as No. 1. The lack of guiding wheels under the cab made this type of engine subject to derailment when running in reverse. Turning the engine at Eureka was necessary. A turntable was too expensive and there was not room for a wye track. The problem was solved by building a balloon turnaround beside the track one-half mile south of Eureka. (See map for details).

Mining activities in the Animas Forks area, four miles north of Eureka, called for the rails to be extended. Work began in mid-summer with 40-pound rails on an average grade of 5.77 percent and a maximum of 7 PERCENT! The rails reached Animas Forks in November 1904. At that time the Denver & Rio Grande removed a 50-foot turntable from Marshall Pass (Salida to Montrose route) and it was purchased and installed at Animas Forks.

Otto Mears retired in November 1911 and moved to Pasadena, California, where he died 24 June 1931. His ashes were scattered on Engineer Mountain, elevation 12,972 feet, about 12 miles southwest of Silverton.

The camp of Animas Forks was abandoned in the early 1920s and, after the stock market crash of 1929, the mines closed. No trains ran in 1933 or 1934. In 1936 the Silverton Northern directors offered the road between Eureka and the Forks to San Juan County if the county paid the cost of removing the rails. The offer was accepted.

There was a temporary revival of rail service to Eureka in September 1937. In the spring of 1938 a snow slide blocked the railroad and in July the Sunnyside Mill at Eureka, which opened in mid-May 1899, closed.

On 31 August 1942 the Interstate Commerce Commission granted permission for the Silverton Northern to abandon the road. The office, depot and engine house at Silverton still are standing.

The photo with this story was made 6 October 1975, 37 years after service ended. Naomi Hull is shown walking along the rough hewn ties of the balloon turnaround facing south toward Silverton. The main line was on the right. Directly ahead is the slope of Middle Mountain, elevation 12,984 feet. In the mid-distance is the mouth of Maggie Gulch, where the little community of Middleton was settled in the late 1870s. The peak beyond the gulch is Galena Mountain, elevation 13,278 feet.

This was a very enjoyable vacation.





Naomi Hull is walking along the rough ties of the balloon turnaround of the Silverton Northern, 1/2 mile south of Eureka, Colorado, 6 October 1975. Road was dismantled in 1942. *(Gene Hull Photo)*



LEFT-Magma, Arizona 2-8-0 No. 5 rolling 30 m.p.h. through cholla cactus to Superior, Arizona. Easter Day 1960. *(Gene Hull collecton)*

STEAM AMONG THE CACTUS

Gene Hull

On Easter day 1960, 2-8-0 No. 5 of the Magma Arizona Railroad, with a short train of freight cars, was running about 30 miles an hour northeastward to the terminal at Superior. The train had originated at Magma, the other terminal 28 miles southwest of Superior. Magma was a station on the Southern Pacific. The little Consolidation seems to be carefully tip-toeing her way through a field of cholla (cho-yah) cactus, a jointed plant literally covered with sharp, tough spines. Each joint, 4" – 6" long, break off very easily and are difficult to remove. They sort of "stick with you".

The railroad was built in 1914 as a narrow gauge, which was changed to standard in April 1923. The stock is owned by Magma Copper Company.



This coach was painted for the movie "3:10 to Yuma" at Reader, Arkansas and is seen at Reader on December 26, 2006. The locomotive is WT Carter 2, also being redone for the movie. (*John Reagon photos*)



These photos were taken at Reader, Arkansas and are of WT Carter 2 now painted as SP 13, "Savage" for the movie "3:10 to Yuma". Locomotive, a caboose and combine were going to New Mexico for the movie. The one on the trailer was made on Hwy 24 as the locomotive was leaving Reader.
(These were made December 30, 2006. - David Hoge photos)

