



Arkansas Railroader



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

If you do not already know it, our new officers for 1980 are as follows:

President - Dr. Bill Pellard
Vice President - Bill Alessi
Secretary - Ross Helt

Treasurer - G. R. "Dick" Byrd
N.R.H.S. Director - Gene Null

Am sure all of us will give our new officers our wholehearted cooperation. After all, officers can do very little without the cooperation of the membership. We certainly had one of our best years in 1979 under the leadership of Bill Bailey.

DUES - DUES - DUES

Its that time again for paying dues for the new year. Your dues are what keeps the club going. They remain the same; \$7.50 for resident membership and \$5.00 for nonresident. Please get them in as soon as possible and you may give them to our Treasurer, Dick Byrd at the meeting or mail your check to his home address at 12 Flintwood Drive, Little Rock, Ark. 72207. Please do not send them to your editor as this only makes for double handling.

LAST CALL FOR ENVELOPES: Many of you have given or sent your editor a supply of long self addressed stamped envelopes to mail the newsletter, which is very much appreciated. Those of you who have not can give me a supply at the meeting or mail them to me at my home address. Please be assured that those of you who do not send me envelopes will still continue to receive the newsletter, provided you are a dues paying member. However, every little bit helps. Our club, as you know, is not in the "ships" so to speak as some of our sister clubs are. The price of postage and printing gets no cheaper and it is expected to go even higher in the future. Thanks very much.

FIRST NEW MEMBER FOR 1980: Keith White, formerly news editor for the MEMPHIS BUFF, NRHS, Memphis, Tenn. called your editor long distance a few days ago stating he would like to join our club and will send in his dues the first of the year. It seems account some internal dissension in the Memphis Club, Keith more or less severed his association with that group and desires to join with us. Glad to have you Keith and Welcome Aboard. It seems to your editor that Memphis should have a strong rail group since the city is very ideal for train watchers, train chasers or any other thing pertaining to the hobby. The city boasts nine railroads which includes Amtrak and the Union Railroad. We just wish our two fair cities; North Little Rock and Little Rock had that many lines. We could have real ball over here.

THE ROCK: We read many items in the local newspapers about the Rock Island situation. It remains in limbo and we would not want to put in print anything that is not actually true. However we understand that Otten Belt

has I.C.O. authority to operate The Reck south from Little Rock thru Benton, Ferdyce, El Derada and on to Alexandria, La. Reck formerly used Cotten Belt trackage from Ferdyce to Camden but C.B. is now handling their business at Camden. The branch running from Mesa over to Stuttgart has been declared unsafe for future operation and Cotten Belt brought in a Reck switcher for the line to switch at Stuttgart. We also understand that Southern Pacific-Cotten Belt is now operating trains over the old Golden State route but does not yet have full I.C.O. authority to purchase this line. What traffic the Reck is handling on their own is still under the jurisdiction of the Kansas City Terminal.

1980 EXCURSION? Its beginning to get in our blood already; thinking about some steam excursion trips for the coming spring and summer season. Have already been advised that the Sentimental Journey trip from Memphis, Tenn. to Corinth, Miss. (date unknown at this time) will be powered by Royal Hudson No. 2839. We still love you No. 4501 but it will be nice to see another engine on this trip. It should make for even a greater number of riders. When and if we get the Southern Railway excursion schedule for the coming season will pass it on in future issues of the newsletter. Speaking of excursions, we quote a paragraph from the NRHS News Extra for December, 1979: Quote: The word from Louisville is that ex-B&O 2-8-4 Number 2716, recently returned from an ill-fated move to the SCL will soon be leaving for the Southern where will be renovated and added to the "Southern stable of iron horses". Unquote. Sounds great; don't you agree??

Do you know what an enraged Amtrak passenger is called? AMRAGED -(Oh brother)

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TRANSPORT: (From The Bulletin Board, Trinity Valley, R.R. Club, Fort Worth, Texas)

"The NMOT has been leased to St. Louis County for a period of three years. This lease is renewable pending future acceptance by the St. Louis County Council. The museum will be administered by the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation. The National Museum of Transport closed on 9/4 for extensive renovation projects. It is expected to reopen early in the Spring of 1980". Editor's Note: Anything that happens to the NMOT is of interest to our group here since St. Louis is not that faraway from our fair cities and many of our members have visited it many times and have come home with many "goodies". We are just happy to know that it will remain where it is.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLE: Our good friend, Jim Bennett of Stuttgart, recently sent your editor a copy of the Harrison, Ark. DAILY TIMES, for February 20, 1979, entitled, "TRAGEDY AT TIPTON FORD". The article carries several photos of the old M&NA R.R. meter train tragedy at Tipton Ford, Mo. on August 5, 1914. Will not go into detail on this as most of you already knew what happened in the head on crash of an M&NA meter train and a KCS passenger train. If you need minute details of the wreck read Dr. Jim Fair's excellent book (if you can find it-new out of print) THE NORTH ARKANSAS LINE - Hewell North Books. This tragedy just about ruined the already financially strapped M&NA.

Received a note from our friend, Pratt O. Rummel a few days ago and I quote below last paragraph of his note: Quote "Sometime during the summer I'm sure we can work out a date for the Arkansas Railroad Club to visit the car". The car in question, as many of you knew, is the MAGNOLIA, which was used by Mr. Rummel's father-in-law, the late Harvey O. Couch, President of the L&A and later the combined L&A-KCS. The car sits on trackage at COUCHWOOD, palatial estate of the late Mr. Couch and now Mr. Rummel's. What better way to spend the day than go over and see the car. Lets really give it some thought.

COME BACK AGAIN MR. KIRKMAN: A very interesting exchange newsletter comes to your editor in the form of TURNTABLE TIMES, Reaneke Chapter, NRHS, Reaneke, Virginia. In the December issue was a very interesting article on an Amtrak trip made by a Mr. Kenneth Kirkman which began on Labor Day last September. I am quoting two paragraphs by Mr. Kirkman regarding his ride on the INTER-AMERICAN. Quote: The evening ride on the Inter-American along the MOPac through Ark. proved to be rather dull scenery much of the way as for miles only swamp and weeded area reflected the light from a full moon. At Texarkana, my sleeping car porter was caught napping and only the quick action by yours truly kept a passenger from missing the train since the station had already closed for the day. Train activity was heavy here though as Southern Pacific and CottonBelt freights provided the action in an adjoining yard. I was awakened rather "abruptly" when we got to Little Rock about 1:30 a.m. There another sleeping car was placed on the rear to be deadheaded to Chicago. The crowd boarding here was small despite what had to be one of the most lit-up stations I had seen anywhere. The depot and the adjoining parking lot looked more like a 24-hour shopping center by the number of lights around". (Editor's note) Mr. Kirkman we are glad that you came thru Arkansas even though you did not get to see much. As for swamps; we would hazard a guess that most states have a few swamps. Arkansas has some of the best scenery around but unfortunately Amtrak does not run any trains to where the beautiful scenery is. The station at Little Rock that you saw so lit up was formerly the Mo. Pacific passenger terminal which, at one time, was one of the busiest in the nation. Amtrak has their ticket office in the old waiting room of the station and they, Amtrak, we understand, have plans to construct a new station at Little Rock to better accommodate their needs. The station building is leased out to several ventures; one of them a railroad motif restaurant. Also, several offices are located on the upper floors of the old station. So please, Mr. Kirkman come back to Arkansas and perhaps you might be able to see some real beauty spots in the state. We thank you.

Amtrak's Superliners went into service on the EMPIRE BUILDER with inaugural trips from Chicago to Seattle on October 28 and from Seattle to Chicago on October 29th. The EMPIRE BUILDER is the first Amtrak train to feature full Superliner service. The first EMPIRE BUILDER with Superliners left Chicago's Union Station at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 28th.

President W. L. Thornton of the Florida East Coast has a motto for his road. It is simply "We dared to be different!" How true. Running 100 car trains with two man crews and no caboose. The FED has got to be the dream of every other railroad executive in these United States. Either this or automation might come one of these days. Its nice to live in the old days but as the old saying goes "Time Marches On". Most of us prefer the old steam days; that too could come back with the Sheiks of Araby putting the screws to us. Incredible you say---it certainly is and if some of these environmental guys could go out and make an honest living (The Environmental Protection Agency, just another government beaucratic agency), we could get our coal reserves in high gear again. It is coming into its own again however; the Burlington Northern is hauling coal likes its never been hauled before. More unit coal trains are being operated every year. No telling what 1980 will see.

Sign Of The Future? - The Cotton Belt has opened a brand new traffic office in North Little Rock in an office complex in the vicinity of the McCain Mall. They recently moved out of their office at the Cotton Belt yard where your editor was working when he retired. Several additional traffic people are now working out of this office. Will the Cotton Belt take over a good bit of the Rock Island in Arkansas? Remains to be seen. It is a fact however what whoever gets that part of The Rock from Little Rock into Oklahoma is going to have to "drop a bundle" and we don't mean hay.

FROM: THE GOOD OLD DAYS

SCENIC ROUTES

GO ON ONE - RETURN ON ANOTHER

GOLDEN STATE ROUTE
CHICAGO - LOS ANGELES

SUNSET ROUTE
NEW ORLEANS - SAN FRANCISCO

OVERLAND ROUTE
CHICAGO - SAN FRANCISCO

SHASTA ROUTE
SAN FRANCISCO - PORTLAND

Front Of Southern Pacific Ticket Envelope. Agent's stamp shows dated Tucson, Arizona, Sep. 28, 1939.

When I was a teenager I had an uncle up in Missouri who was a passenger conductor on the old Wabash. He ran the Omaha Limited from Meberly to Omaha, Nebraska. One day while visiting him I hit him up for a job firing on the Wabash; or at least I thought he might help me get such a job. He took one look at my skinny frame and remarked "You would not last 6 miles". How true.

PROGRAM FOR JANUARY; Date for our January meeting is the 13th. Meeting will be held at our usual fine place, the Missouri Pacific building and will start at 2 PM. As far as we know now the program will be given by Ken Combs and will feature his photo and slide contest. There may be a change but as of now this is what it looks like. Lets start the New Year with a good attendance and make an even greater effort this year to get more new members. We need them and they need us. Our area is filled with potential new interested railroad members.

Your editor had a nice Christmas card and note from our former fine resident members, Edgar and Helen Cenkle who now live in Aiken, South Carolina. We miss this fine couple and wish they were still living in our area. They are real rail boosters and we need more like them.

Congratulations to the Arkansas Valley Model Railroad Club. At their recent open house people were seen standing in line to see the exhibits all the way out the door to the building. This club has a fine model display.

HOPE TO SEE ALL OF YOU AT OUR JANUARY MEETING.

The Arkansas Railroad Club is a non-profit organization. Regular meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month with exception of July and December. Visitors are always welcome and refreshments are usually available. Send all news items and exchange newsletters to Editor at 5007 Hawthorne Rd. Little Rock, Ark. 72207.

HOG TRAIN - RAZORBACKS VS. CRIMSON TIDE

Its hard to believe but an honest to goodness passenger extra left Little Rock on the evening of December 31, 1979 for New Orleans for the Sugar Bowl game where the Arkansas Razorbacks will play the Alabama Crimson Tide. All Class I rail lines in Arkansas often operate passenger specials carrying directors and officials of the line but the Razorback special is the first true passenger special to operate in Arkansas in many years. Your editor cannot remember when the last one operated. This one operated by AMTRAK and HOG TRAIN and was routed via MOP to Memphis thence IOG to destination. Equipment on the train consisted of the following: Front to rear;

Amtrak lead diesel??? When I get the consist at the station this diesel was in North Little Rock at MOP facilities being serviced and I was unable to get the number.

Amtrak Diesel No. 247 (Presumably an F40PH. Not listed in Amtrak Car & Loco Spotter Revised Third Edition)

No. 1158 - Baggage (Ex ATSF 3670)

No. 21206 - AmCoach

No. 21111 - "

No. 20031 - AmCafe

No. 21117 - AmCoach

No. 20012 - AmCafe

No. 21156 - AmCoach

No. 21072 - "

Private Car CYNTHIA (Hog Heaven), Also lettered Pullman 211 (Ex Michigan R.R. Club Cynthia, Ex IO same, Ex NKP 211 City Of Lima.) This car owned by our new club president, Dr. Bill Pellard and Amtrak Agent at Little Rock, Randy Coekus; also a third party unknown to your editor. Car is a 10 Roomette, 6 Double Bedroom sleeper and your editor had the pleasure of going thru the car not too long ago and it brought back many memories of train riding and made me wish I could do it again.

This train was in charge of one of our old friends, Mr. John Mills, District Supervisor, Service, St. Louis District for Amtrak. John is stationed at Topeka, Kansas and formerly lived in Little Rock. John is well known to most members of our club and is a real fine fellow. It was nice to run into him again.

Berry cannot give you the schedule, departures, arrivals, etc.; repeated efforts to reach Amtrak ticket office by phone were not successful. As of this writing the train has returned to Little Rock and even though 'Bama beat the Hogs it was a very fine trip. Hope there will be many more such trips in the future.

P.S . Now learn that 525 people rode the HOG TRAIN special.