

ARKANSAS RAILROADER  
The Arkansas Railroad Club Newsletter  
Vol. 1, No. 7 July, 1970

TOUR OF COUCHWOOD ARRANGED FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 2,

BY Stanley Wozencraft

During the years that Mr. Harvey C. Couch was President of the Kansas City Southern Railway, he was active in many other business affairs. Mr. Couch was born near McNeil, Arkansas, and began working his way up in the business world in that area. One of his first interests was in public telephone systems, several of which he acquired. After selling these interests, he moved to the Pine Bluff area where he became involved in the development of Arkansas Power & Light Co. He served as President of AP&L for many years. He also held an interest in and served as President of Union National Bank in Little Rock. But it is his railroad interests that we are chiefly concerned with.

In keeping with the needs and social standing of his day, Mr. Couch owned and operated a private railroad car. During the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt Mr. Couch served as head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. During this time he was successful in obtaining for the state the dams that form the lakes around Hot Springs. Two of these lakes bear names of his associates. Lake Hamilton for C. Hamilton Moses, who succeeded Mr. Couch as head of AP&L, and Lake Catherine after Mr. Couch's daughter.

Mr. Couch built for himself and his family a resort location on Lake Catherine which he named "Couchwood". Here he entertained many dignitaries, including President Roosevelt, as well as providing homesites for his children. Mr. Couch became ill and spent his last days at Couchwood.

The private car owned by Mr. Couch was recently found in a scrap yard in Louisiana by a family friend. When contacted, they readily agreed that the car should be saved. It was moved to Jones Mill by rail and transported by truck to Couchwood where it was restored to its original glory. It now rests on a permanent section of track and is used as a guest house.

Mr. Pratt Rempel, who married Catherine Couch, has arranged for the Arkansas Railroad Club to visit and inspect the car. More information will be available at Couchwood. We are indebted to Mr. Rempel and his family for their hospitality. The date is Sunday, August 2. Time is 2 to 4 p.m. To get there, Take I-30 to Malvern, turn West on Ark. 270 for 1 mile, then left onto Arkansas 51 for about 2 miles, then left to Couchwood. We will try to have signs at the turns.

REMEMBER--BUTTERFIELD PICNIC ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 8--More details in about one week in the next regular newsletter.