



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Arkansas Railroader



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NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION. SEND EXCHANGE NEWS LETTERS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO  
EDITOR AT 5007 HAWTHORNE RD. LITTLE ROCK AR. 72207. VISITORS WELCOME AT ALL MEETINGS.

I believe that I remember what all of you look like--sorry had to miss another meeting but a certain grandson graduated from high school in the city across the Mississippi from Arkansas and he was insistent that I be there, which I was. I most certainly will be at the June meeting. At this writing do not know what our program will be or whether or not we will meet at the MOP building or at our club house. Before this comes to an end hope to be able to tell you.

On June 13th and 14th the Big One will be here again--none other than Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus with 38 cars full of circus delights. At this time do not know schedule, etc. or whether Blue Unit or Red Unit.

Attention you shutter bugs who might be heading into the state of Oklahoma this summer: The Business Section of the TULSA WORLD, Tulsa, Oklahoma for April 9th, announces that the following lines of railroad in that state have either been approved for abandonment since February, 1976, potentially subject to abandonment within three years and others under study for possible abandonment at a later date:

- MK&T - Bartesville to Tulsa
- " - N. McAlester to Bishop
- " - Altus to Red River
- MP - Barnsdall to Pawhuska
- " - Tulsa to Barnsdall
- ATSF - Curking to Shawnee
- " - Ardmore to Ringling-Healdton
- " - Clinton to Texas border
- " - Waynoka to Buffalo
- RI - West of Enid
- SLSF - Poteau to Hugo
- FSVB - Coal Creek to McCurtain
- ARW - Heavener to Bates, ark.

The Poteau to Hugo line is interesting in that it would seem this would cut that southern part of the Frisco running out of Fort Smith. The KCS now uses Frisco from Poteau to Fort Smith. Will KCS purchase this part of the Frisco?? This line contains the only tunnel in the state of Oklahoma. All railroads are anxious to abandon unprofitable branch lines and some main lines as well. Arkansas also has its share of low revenue branch lines.

Congratulations are in order for one of our good out of state members; Wayne Porter of the Frisco Mechanical Department at Hugo, Oklahoma has been named Safety Officer-Mechanical Shops, Headquarters, Springfield, Mo. Wish you could visit us sometime Wayne and we wish you the best.

What Most Railroads Dream Of---To be able to operate a railroad like the Florida East Coast with 125 car freights with no caboose and a two man crew. Also, some switchers are operated by remote control, no crew on them at all. This might happen someday but if it does it will be a long, long time coming.

At part of National Transportation Week in May, The "Queen", APT 4449 was on display

in Portland, Oregon May 19-20. Also, AFG hogger, Doyle McCormack was on hand to answer questions on the engine and provide security. (NRHS NEWS EXTRA)

NEW HEAD MAN FOR AMTRAK: Alan S. Boyd who was the first U.S. Secretary of Transportation and formerly president of the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad was elected the new president and chief executive officer of Amtrak on April 25th. Mr. Boyd will succeed Paul H. Reistrup and will take office on June 1, 1978. We wonder if change of leadership will improve Amtrak any? It remains to be seen. Also, will our state lose the INTER-AMERICAN; this also is another sixty four thousand dollar question. With no Arkansas congressional support since the death of late Senator John McClellan its very doubtful. The INTER-AMERICAN route as well as several others which were scheduled to get the axe have been frozen by Congress for an indefinite length of time. We rail buffs naturally would like to keep the train; however our Uncle Sammie is not going to run trains for the benefit of rail buffs. If by chance the train continues to operate we trust that some improvements will be made.

This newsletter seldom if ever is used to sell or trade R.R. items; however as the old saying goes, "Nothing Asked, Nothing Gained", so here goes: Wanted: by your Editor;

1. SSW (Cotton Belt) public timetables, any issue, for years 1932, 33 and 34.
2. MK&T (KATY) dining car menu. If any of you have or know where I might obtain any of the above please write or call me. Will offer fair price.

The date set for our annual picnic is July 8th and will be held at Harry Coonley's WHISTLE STOP RANCH located out Highway 10 near Perryville, Ark. It will be to your advantage to see Harry's abode as it is a real railroad "Goodie" place. More on this as well as directions to the ranch will be in the July newsletter. Please mark your calendar accordingly.

Another WHISTLE STOP RANCH is featured in the Spring, 1978 issue of TEXAS RAILWAYS. The article is in color and features a story and photos of Mr. B.B. Garrett's WHISTLE STOP RANCH which is located about eight miles south of Tyler, Texas (Post Office Flint, Texas). If you happen to be in Tyler or vicinity call Mr. Garrett and he will be happy to give you a tour of this famous ranch. Your editor can vouch for it since he was there in 1976. Bryan Garrett is a Cotton Belt official and long time personal friend of your editor.

Page 3 of this newsletter contains an amateur writing effort by your editor entitled, "Railroad Train Watching in Steam Days At Moberly". Moberly, Mo. is a city of some 13 to 14 thousand population and was formerly a division point on the WABASH R.R. Its still a division point on the N&W which line still uses the old passenger station for Moberly Division operating personnel. The south end of the station which was formerly the baggage room is now used to house the WABASH MUSEUM. The MOBERLY MONITOR INDEX AND EVENING DEMOCRAT ran it in their issue of January 10, 1977. Hope you like it.

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JUNE PROGRAM

The program for June will really not be a program but will be a "Work Day" at our club house on River Road in North Little Rock. Date is Sunday, June 11th and come about 1 or 1:30 PM with work clothes, brooms and mops for a clean up session. There will also be a short business meeting after which we will listen to train sound recordings so, bring any sound recordings you might have. Understand stereo equipment will be furnished. All members are needed to put our club house in order. See you on June 11th.

Bill Merck - Editor

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FROM: MOBERLY MONITOR INDEX AND EVENING DEMOCRAT JANUARY 10, 1977

### RAILROAD TRAIN WATCHING IN STEAM DAYS AT MOBERLY

By: W.A. (Bill) Merck

As a train buff all of my life and now a retired railroader, I look back and find that some of the happiest days of my life as a young boy and later as a teenager were spent watching trains arrive and depart at the Wabash station at Moberly. The city was my birthplace and I always made at least one trip per year to the city to visit my many relatives. My grandmother's house at 110 South Clark Street was only one block from the station and many's the time my relatives accused me of spending more time watching the trains than I did visiting them, which was partly true.

In the twenties and thirties Moberly was truly a train watcher's paradise. Some 22 passenger trains arrived and departed from that city; some were through trains, others originated and terminated there. The line fanned out in all directions from Moberly; one line going to St. Louis, one to Kansas City, one to Des Moines, Iowa and another to Hannibal, Mo. and Decatur, Ill.

Just about any time of the day or night you could see a Wabash train at the station; if not a passenger, then a freight or a switch engine working in the area. The largest passenger engines were used on the St. Louis-Kansas City trains and although I cannot remember the wheel arrangements of these engines, they were big and powerful and had deep throated whistles that sounded like a steamboat. In my memory I can still hear them whistling for the Moberly station. Also, the finest equipment was used on the St. Louis-Kansas City line which consisted of heavyweight coaches, chair cars, Pullman sleepers, dining cars and parlor cars, many of the parlor cars having an observation end.

One particular Wabash passenger train that stands out in my memory was Train No. 8, which ran through from Kansas City to Detroit via Moberly, Hannibal and Decatur. Although it did not carry the name "Cannonball" it ran like one and I can attest to its fast operation since I rode it several times between Kansas City and Moberly. What made this train different than the others at Moberly was the fact that it headed into the station from Kansas City and, when departing it backed out. When it was ready for departure the brakeman threw a switch behind the rear car and the train backed out across one of the busy streets in downtown Moberly onto the Des Moines main line. The porter who rode the pilot step of the locomotive from the station threw another switch in front of the engine and the train then headed around a very sharp curve within view of the passenger station and out onto the Hannibal-Decatur main line eastward. I'm sure this type of operation was used at many other cities and towns but it was unique for Moberly.

During this same period of time, the MK&T Railroad (Katy) also operated passenger trains into and out of Moberly, the line coming into the city on a branch from New Franklin. During a period of several years the Katy used the Wabash station which made it a Union Station. All trains were operated with steam power until passenger traffic dwindled to the point that the Katy used a gas-electric motor train, which it used until passenger traffic ended on the line into and out of Moberly.

All of the above is still fresh in my memory and it seems only yesterday that I stood at the station watching all of those trains.

-----THE END-----