



Arkansas Railroader



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JUNE 1979 W. A. "Bill" MERCK EDITOR

10TH ANNIVERSARY

JUNE PROGRAM: In June we will have both a swap meet and a program. The program will be given first and then we will go into the swap meet. Program will be given by Gene Hull who will present a slide presentation on the M&NA/M&A. Looks like an interesting meeting is shaping up and here's hoping we will have a good attendance. Bring your items that you want to swap and sell. Date is June 10th, starting time is 2 PM and the place is the Missouri Pacific office building in North Little Rock. Thanks to Jim Wilson for that wonderful Bi-Centennial diesel slide presentation at our May meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER: A hearty welcome is extended to another new member, and who is a rail fan deluxe; Jim Bennett of Stuttgart, Ark. Jim has one of the finest rail item collections in the state and he has promised to give a program for us, which will possibly be sometime in the fall. We are looking forward to it.

Mr. & Mrs. Gene Tiener of Pine Bluff were guests at our May meeting. Gene is a Cotton Belt engineer and we learn from that a group of Cotton Belt employees as well as other rail fans at Pine Bluff and surrounding area are endeavoring to have ex-Cotton Belt steam loco No. 819 moved from its present display site in Oakland Park to a site in downtown Pine Bluff opposite the old Pine Bluff Union Station which once served passenger trains of the Cotton Belt and Missouri Pacific. If this is accomplished plans are to establish a rail museum in the station. The proud ex-Cotton Belt 4-8-4 has been badly vandalized at the present site; among other things the theft of the bell. Good luck Gene on these plans.

The sales of railroad items and private display collection which was to have been held at El Dorado on June 2nd in one of the large malls there has been called off by Prez Bill Bailey due to the fact that attendance from our club was lacking. It will possibly be scheduled for a date later in the year.

Although not official yet, from articles in the local newspapers and from word of mouth, it looks like Bob Dortch will move his Scott & Bearskin Lake Railroad to north Arkansas and after obtaining needed property, etc. will rehabilitate a section of the old M&NA/M&A for a tourist operation, which will include running thru the tunnel. Scott & Bearskin Lake will not operate this summer at Scott. We wish Bob lots of luck in this new venture and a ride thru this section of the state again should really be something.

Look for an interesting article in future newsletter by Prez Bill Bailey on railroad marked insulators. Also, there may be another (do not know how interesting) by your editor entitled "A Very Unusual Train". It was just that.

We hope to have our annual picnic again in July. More on this later. At this writing looks like we will again go to Harry Coonley's Whistle Stop Ranch. A very wonderful place.



THE SUNSHINE SPECIAL
St. Louis and Memphis to
Louisiana, Texas, California and Mexico



"A Service Institution"

Does the above look familiar? Insofar as passenger service is concerned both are now "Fallen Flags". In their time both were on fast schedules and well patronized as well as having fine equipment. With the present energy shortage you can almost bet that if we had them today they would be running full. Have we made progress thru the years in passenger transportation? What do you think.

In the May issue of the newsletter we ran the Southern Railway excursion schedule thru August. Remainder of the schedule for this season will be run in a future issue. In this connection Bill Bailey reported that the Sentimental Journey trip from Memphis to Corinth with No. 4501 was just great, especially getting to ride in that dome car.

Although the trip will be over by the time you receive this newsletter and, did not get it in time to report in May letter; HOGTRAIN will operate, in connection with Amtrak, a fun filled weekend in St. Louis on June 2 & 3. Included in the trip will be reserved box seats at Busch Stadium to see the St. Louis Cardinals (alias the gas house gang), tickets to the Top of the Arch, admission to Sports Hall Of Fame. The famous Bel Air Hilton will be utilized for the party. Aboard the Inter-American on June 1st, (attached to would be a better phrase) private car "BIG JOHN", which we learn is owned by a Mr. John Brigham of Plano, Texas and who keeps this car stored at Ft. Worth when not in use. The car is an ex-NYC round end observation. The group enroute to St. Louis will use this car for bar-lounge use and other entertainment. Sounds interesting and we wish to congratulate HOGTRAIN. Just hope the Inter-American is still around after October 1st. It is better that I do not comment on the energy situation on how it is being handled, etc. as I might "blow my stack". So, lets hope for the best. Let me say however that it is a foregone conclusion that residents of Los Angeles and the many other cities in surrounding areas of L.A. wish they now had the former great Pacific Electric system which was one of, if not the greatest of our country's interurban railways. Yes, shortsightedness certainly abounded in the days when this system and many others were torn up only to be replaced by the gas buggy. Now we are paying for it thru the nose. Enough said.

A short lived strike on Cotton Belt this past week end was over in a hurry. It seems it involved crew assignment on a new switcher job to start operating at Lewisville, Ark. Not certain about reason for strike but this would seem to be it from article carried in the Little Rock newspapers. X

The Arkansas Railroad Club is a non-profit organization. Regular meetings held second Sunday of each month at MOP office building in North Little Rock. We extend a cordial welcome to all visitors and refreshments are usually available (coffee-cookies-cokes). Send all news items and exchange newsletters to Editor at 5007 Hawthorne Rd., LITTLE ROCK, ARK. 72207.

X - Weekend of May 19th (See Page 3 for additional news)

Adios Amigos

HILLS OF ARKANSAS (Author Unknown)
FROM: OAK LEAVES - EUREKA SPRINGS R.R. BEAVER, ARK.

The night was damp and chilly, the dawn broke cold and raw
To find a freight train battlin The hills of Arkansas
All night they'd fought and struggled and now into the day
And still that Harrison terminal was forty miles away.

The hoghead dropped 'er down a notch, fire belched from out
the stack, the head shack groaned, the bakehead cursed, and
bent his achin back. The Captain in the penthouse was thinkin
of the law, that soon would tie them up for rest in the hills
of Arkansas.

A line blew out, the brakes clamped on; loud curses filled the
air. It sounded like some poor lost souls a-wailin' in despair
The hog law had 'em by the neck, they had fought it to a draw,
but now they 'll have to stop and rest in the hills of Arkansas.

The above was, without a doubt, either the M&NA or the M&A

Thru the courtesy of Harry Coonley am showing below brief summary which was
taken from a Simmons-Boardman publication of late 1951. In the article in
Simmons-Boardman some 127 railroads were identified; however in order to be
brief will only show figures for Class I lines in Arkansas.

1950 R R	Locos		Dining & Buffet	
	STEAM	DIESEL	REVENUE	COST
MOP	568	295	1,122,649	1,289,371
CRIP	405	255	1,822,862	2,485,921
FRISCO	363	288	551,138	769,953
COTTON BELT	102	74	38,073	71,590
KCS	84	93	140,759	234,831
ILL.CENTRAL	1,129	133	1,187,380	2,205,711
T&P	134	97	466,995	597,236

Figures shown above readily show that the railroads never did make a profit on
dining and buffet car service; but wasn't it nice to eat in those dining cars?
Nothing has emerged yet to take its place and Amtrak will never equal it.

WANTED BY EDITOR; Cotton Belt china and silverware; also Cotton Belt public
timetable for year 1933.

We note in local papers a big Memorial Day weekend coming up on the Reader
Railroad. Lots of luck to the Reader who of course do not have the likes
of No. 1702, No. 108 and No. 11. There were rumors that the line had in
mind running a big one some weekend with Mr. Tom Long's permission to fire
up No. 1702 and use it again. Understand this loco still has not been sold
and is on hand at Reader. It would really be something to see 1702 operate
again. There is no doubt that Southern Railway would like to have it for
excursion service; for example in double-header service.

Glad to see Annette Walker, Wife of Walter Walker, recovering so nicely from
recent surgery. Also, congratulations to Gene Hull on his recent retirement
from the Corps Of Engineers and, by the time you receive this newsletter
believe you will find Paul Moon has retired. Plenty of retirees in our club.
Nothing like retirement--ask your editor, he should know.

SEE ALL OF YOU AT THE JUNE SWAP MEET