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IN THIS ISSUE:

Mike Adams remembers the old time "Op fist".

John Martin reports on the introduction of new equipment on Amtrak's "Inter American".

Plus regular features...Motive Power News, and we look back on railroad events of the past.

JUNE MEETING:

The June meeting will be held on the second Sunday in June, at the Missouri-Pacific building in North Little Rock (14 June). Time is, as usual 2 pm.

The speaker was re-scheduled from the May meeting, Mr. Fernandez of the Electromotive Division of General Motors. He was regretably unable to attend the May meeting.

Also don't forget the additional meeting of the club to work on the clubhouse and railroad cars. See May Arkansas Railroader for details.

LATE AMTRAK NEWS:

Bill Pollard reported at the May meeting, the cautious optimism of the delegation from Arkansas who campaigned in Washington for the continued government support of Amtrak.

SPECIAL REQUEST:

As noted in last month's issue, plans are going forward to add one or two pages of photographs to the Arkansas Railroader. If nothing unexpected happens, this should occur in the July or August issue.

Photographs of all kinds are needed for use in the Arkansas Railroader. Of especially great interest are older pictures, including almost any steam and early diesel. Also needed are recent photographs to illustrate continuing features. Photographs submitted can be returned if requested, as copy facilities are available.

AMTRAK NOTES:

First note, Amtrak is spelled correctly..... hopefully for good.

John Martin reports the superliner equipment arrived on the Inter American on 26 April 1981. The regular consist is:

- 2 F40ph locomotives
- 1 Superliner sleeper
- 1 Superliner full diner
- 1 Baggage coach (superliner)
- 1 Superliner coach
- 1 Superliner Snack Coach
- 1 Superliner Baggage coach.

John adds additional coaches may be added as required. For information, the consist of the last Heritage/Amfleet run was:

- F40ph locomotives # 242 & 255
- Baggage car # 1167
- Sleeper (Heritage fleet) 2885
- AmDiner/Lounge # 28304
- Heritage Coach # 4741
- AmCoach # 21845
- AmCafe #20046
- AmCoach # 21832

The inaugural consist of Superliner service was:

- F40ph # 359 & 360
- Sleeper # 32050
- Diner # 38009
- Baggage Coach # 31032
- Coach # 34046
- Coach # 34025
- Baggage Coach # 31026

The Superliner equipment is designed for long-distance service. It has large windows, and is roomy. It is 't at all like the airplane type accommodations on the AmFleet equipment, which was intended for use on the "Northeast Corridor".

Also from John Martin, is the note that the discontinuance of the North Star (trains # 9 & #10) between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Duluth have been funded until at least 31 May. After that time the continued operation of the trains is contingent upon additional funding.

MOTIVE POWER NEWS:

Bill Pollard inquired about an ex-Cheswich & Harmar #7, a GE off-center cab ex U.S. Army #7503. This diesel is reported to have been sold to someone in Arkansas. If anyone knows the location, or details of this unit the information would be most welcome.

Also from Bill Pollard, the Little Rock and Western has several new (rebuilt) GP-9's on the way to replace the GN&W #305 and #307. Reports indicate, that during a meeting of the Little Rock "Riverfest" committee, an employee of the LR&W stated they would have new, freshly painted power in the event Amtrak does supply the four cars wanted for a shuttle run between Murray Park and the old Razorback drive-in theater.

The Missouri Pacific still is the scene of action for lots of foreign power.

Also reported, but not confirmed is the order by the MoP of 50 3500 h.p. SD-50 diesel units from EMD. If anyone has further info on this order please let me know. No other details of the order are known at this time.

SOUTHERN STEAM EXCURSION:

The steam excursion was planned for 2 & 3 May 81, but was run with two Southern GP-30's rather than the 4501. At the last minute the 4501 developed mechanical problems, and was replaced by SR #s 2610 and 2525. The diesels were very attractive, clean and in fresh paint..... Southern was clearly doing it's best to make up for the absence of the steam power.

OF PENS AND INK AND BLOTTERS AND SUCH.... By W.M. Mike Adams

In his "Our Town" column in the Arkansas Gazette, Richard Allin frequently bemoans the almost universal use of the ball-point pen, and the disappearance from use, and necessity of the ordinary blotter. To this I might add the increasing use of the so-called felt tip or soft point pen, and other substitutes for the old-time fountain pen, or for that matter, the even more archaic steel pen point firmly shanked in a wooden shaft, and fueled by frequent dips in a heavy moulded glass ink well. In any event the writings of Richard have brought back memories of the use of pens and ink, and blotters on the railroads.

The first memory dredged up from the mire, and muck of the past is that of the late Charles F. "Uncle Bud" Emrich who at the time I entered the service of the Missouri-Pacific just after World War II was the assistant general yardmaster at North Little Rock. Switch shanty gossip had it that Uncle Bud was water boy on the first track gang laying steel out of Argenta on the old Cairo and Fulton. This was a dastardly lie..... Uncle Bud didn't enter service until 1894, and then as a yard clerk. The AGYM at North Little Rock in those unenlightened days was strictly an office man. The GYM stayed out on the ground knowing on engine foremen, and hostlers, while the AGYM kept a running record in a large ledger book of all activities of the terminal. He worked closely with the chief dispatcher, and kept everybody advised of trains enroute, trains to be called..... and just what we were expected to do with all trains. He also kept a stack of train orders on his desk for engine foremen, and hostlers, orders which gave these hired hands the

the time on first class trains to enable them to stay out of the way. Bud used the old company issue steel spencerian pen point with wooden stock, and the indelible ink issued by the company in one quart bottles made of an opaque, vitereous material. He eschewed the company issue blotter, and every morning when he hit the office..... with a bang, I might add.... he grabbed up three or four blank scale tickets from the file room. These were pre-printed forms about 1½ x 3 inches and the last copy was of a soft cardboard about the consistency of ordinary blotting paper. This is all Bud would use, the three or four tickets would last him all day. Now I have used, out of necessity, those damnable steel pens, and never did conquer them. Bud did.....he wrote a beautiful hand, and I only wish I had preserved some of those old records he made. Uncle Bud finally retired after well over half a century of service and, as I recall lived exactly one month!

One of the most repeated legends of old-time railroading is that the telegraph operator-dispatcher wrote a beautiful, flowing looping script, commonly known as "op fist". For the most part this was true, and I can recall many old-timers with a beautiful, graceful handwriting. I can also recall many whose handwriting even before it was blotted, would defy the best efforts of a Rhodes scholar to decipher. As a matter of fact I knew several that didn't write at all....they printed. Ted Potter, Sr., long time dispatcher on the Joplin-White River Division printed everything, as did his son Ted Jr., who followed in his fathers footsteps as operator, and dispatcher on the same Division. Then Mr. William A. Anderson, of whom I have had so much to say

the years, always printed, and a more beautiful example of calligraphy you never saw. In former days the train sheet was required to be kept in indelible ink. As mentioned, this evil smelling concoction was issued by the company in quart bottles, and was very hard on fountain pens. As I remember, most of the early day dispatchers used the steel point, and wooden handle, but in later years dispatchers on the Arkansas Division used the Esterbrook fountain pen which had graded replaceable points. They were relatively inexpensive, and when corrosion finally got the better of them, they could be replaced with no undue financial burden. As a matter of fact I carried one myself for several years, I never learned to like a ball-point, and to this day use an ordinary fountain pen. Recalling some of the veteran dispatchers on the Arkansas Division I especially remember Sid Gordon with a beautiful handwriting, as well as Fletcher Neel. Fletcher wrote a small neat, very precise, rather elegant hand. Jim Sloan, and Charlie Gathings had readable handwriting, but Harry Raef, and Bob Russell wrote a sprawling, barely discernible script. There were others.... I can't remember them all.. but a study of train sheets was a course in graphology.

Your operator/dispatcher, however did not have a monopoly on penmanship and the old-time yard clerks oftentimes turned out handsome, legible records. I can recall to mind several. Houston Batte for one, and Ferd Kaczka, Coy McCormick, and Harold Walls, and for that matter, my father who practiced the art for over 47 years. One thing about your old-time yard clerk, he learned to write and practiced his penmanship under conditions that would have caused most of your telegraph operators to give up in disgust. Try checking the Great Train some day when one of those

toad-strangling rains is beating down your collar! I worked for about five years across the desk from the late Chester Aldridge in the old general car foreman's office in the shops over on Pike Ave. Chester wrote a beautiful hand and using the company issue ink and pen. I believe he finally did go the ball-point but only because he had to make so many copies of various reports. Chester told me he was hired as a messenger boy by the late Joseph P. "Bull" Whalen, then Master Mechanic at North Little Rock. Chester was hard pressed to produce a legible hand but Mr. Whalen told him that if he would practice, and develop a passable handwriting he would hire him as a clerk. Chester told me he used literally ream after ream of paper until he developed his handsome penmanship. Mr. Whalen was true to his word, and Chester worked for many years as clerk in the car department, and when he died was chief clerk to the shop superintendent.

They tell the story of Jay Gould, and his dismal graphic ability. He had written out a receipt for a farmer along the line of the old broad gauge Erie Railroad and one day this hayseed boarded the daily local and, by error presented this note to the conductor. The skipper couldn't read it but recognized Gould's signature so he carried the rube where he wanted to go, figuring it was a pass signed by the old man himself. This farmer wasn't so dumb, he rode the Erie at will for several months until his "free pass" disintegrated from overwork.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Mike Adams contribution to this issue of the Arkansas Railroader is very much appreciated, especially in light of the fact his writing is very "marketable" elsewhere.

MISSOURI-PACIFIC ROSTER 1981

compiled by
Charles W. McDonald
Switchers

Combination Road Switchers

<u>ROAD NUMBERS:</u>	<u>MODEL:</u>	<u>QUNTY</u>	<u>H.P.</u>
1530-1554	MP15	25	1500
1555-1644	GP15-1	90	1500
1647	GP-7	1	1600
1651,1652	GP-7	2	1600
1656-1662	GP-7	6	1600
1664,1669-1673	GP-7	5	1600
1674-1687	GP-7	12	1600
1690,1691	GP-7		1600
1693,1694	GP-7	2	1600
1698-1710	GP-7	12	1600
1713-1714	GP-7	2	1600
1716	GP-7	1	1600
1718-1723	GP-7	7	1600
1726-1728	GP-7	3	1600
1730-1735	GP-7	5	1600
1737-1749	GP-7	12	1600
1750-1827	GP-9	63	1800
1837-1849	GP-9	12	1800
1850-1853	GP-18	4	1800
1878	GP-18	1	1900
1879-1883	GP-18	5	2000
1884-1896	GP-18	13	1800
1900-1994	GP-18	95	1800
2000-2001	GP-28	2	2000
2002-2007	GP-38	6	2000
2009-2237	GP38-2	229	2000
2238-2330	GP38-2	93	2000
2500-2522	GP-35	23	2500
2524-2546	GP-38	23	2000
2547-2564	GP-38	18	2000
2600-2616	GP-35m	17	2000
2965-2999	U30C	35	3000
3000-3089	SD-40	90	3000
3090-3321	SD40-2	232	3000
3500-3529	GP-50	30	3500
4500-4537	U23B	38	2250
4600-4669	B23-7	70	2250
6000-6073	SD40-2c	74	3000

<u>ROAD #s</u>	<u>MODEL:</u>	<u>QNTY:</u>	<u>H.F.</u>
1100-1166	SW-12	67	1200
1175-1199	SW-12	25	1200
1204	SW-7	1	1200
1210-1215	SW-7	7	1200
1216-1251	SW-9	36	1200
1253-1274	SW-12	22	1200
1275	SW-12m	1	1500
1276-1299	SW-12	24	1200
1400-1413	SL-1	14	slug
1518-1521	SW1500	4	1500

Notes:

Many of the early GP-7s have been traded in on new units. Not all of the lower numbered Geeps still exist.

SW-8s have been converted in to SL-1 slugs at Pike Ave in North Little Rock.

GP38-2s 2238-2289 are former Rock Island numbers 4300-4351. Numbers 4500-4537 were re-numbered from 2250-2288. Numbers 4600-4649 renumbered from 2289-2338.

Numbers 6000-6073 have dynamic brakes.

Comments and corrections to this roster are welcome and will be appreciated.

Eleven Years Ago:

Railroads were advertising..... you guessed it....passenger service. The Milwaukee was seeking inclusion in the proposed merger between the Rock Island and the Union-Pacific.

The Norfolk & Western's 1969 annual report predicted merger with the Chesapeake & Ohio.

The Penn Central was awaiting approval from the ICC to discontinue 35 passenger trains. The request included all passenger service west of Buffalo, and Harrisburg.

Fifteen Years Ago:

General Motors EMD was advertising the new SD-45.

The Missouri-Pacific opposed the purchase by the Cotton Belt of the 22.5 mile Alton & Southern, from Alcoa.

The MoPac proposed to keep the line independant, and invited other roads to participate in the transaction.

The railroad industry gave tentative support to a proposal by then President Johnson for a separate cabinet level department of transportation.

THIRTY FIVE YEARS AGO:

Railroad Magazine for June 1946 comments "Are diesels crowding out steam power? The present trends favor diesels, but there is no reason to believe steam will ever be entirely supplanted." (Note in 1946 diesed was spelled with a capitol "D")

Does anyone remember the hobo drawing " Monahan's cat"? The same issue of "Railroad" reports the cartoon was drawn by Harry M Groves of Chicago, ILL. Groves retired from the Rio Grande in Dec. 1944.

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