



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 38 NUMBER 5 MAY 2007



KCSM GE ES44AC No. 4679, newly heritage-painted locomotive, slowly pulls a train into the Mexico, Missouri KCS yard limit over East Liberty Street on April 4, 2007. KCSM plans to purchase 30 EMD SD70Ace and 30 GETS ES44AC locomotives with this paint scheme, according to *Progressive Railroading*. Then they plan to purchase 70 more from EMD and 80 from GETS with the same heritage paint scheme. KCS also plans to purchase 1,050 covered hoppers and 150 covered-coil rail cars, which will sport a paint scheme complementary to the heritage theme (see hopper photos when they were in North Little Rock on the next page). (Gary Hall photo, used with permission)

To view this and other photos in full color, go online and download/view the PDF version of the *Railroader* at: <http://www.trainweather.com/road.html> (click on the May issue)



This was one of the first batches of KCS heritage-painted hoppers built in the plant at the MRI plant in Paragould, Arkansas. This string of 20 in the Union Pacific yards in North Little Rock on March 29, 2007, was on their way to East St. Louis, Missouri. More came through on following days. KCS plans on building 1,050 of these to match their heritage locomotive paint (see cover). *(Photos by Ken Ziegenbein, with help getting into the yard by John C. Jones)*

2007 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon North Little Rock AR 72117-4713 (501-945-2128), nlrrailfan@sbcglobal.net
V-PRESIDENT - Mark Silverberg, 10524 Helm Drive, Mabelvale AR 72103-1638 (501-455-5050), onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com
TREASURER - David Hoge, PO Box 1679, Little Rock AR 72203-1679 (501-397-2552), davidhoge@mac.com
SECRETARY - David Hoge, PO Box 1679, Little Rock AR 72203-1679 (501-397-2552), davidhoge@mac.com
EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, N Little Rock AR 72116-3728 (501-758-1340), ken@trainweather.com
NRHS DIRECTOR - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729), johnphotonut@aristotle.net
HISTORIAN - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington Ave #31, N Little Rock AR 72114 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '07 - Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116 (501-758-1340), ken@trainweather.com
BOARD '08 - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2030), caboose25552@centurytel.net
BOARD '09 - Douglas Harley, 840 Horseshoe Mountain Rd, Paris AR 72855-5543 (479)-963-2800, dharley2@cswnet.com
BOARD '10 - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)
BOARD '11 - Jim Wakefield, 316 Auburn Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769 (501-664-0232)

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sundays of most months at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in trains is welcome!

Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently \$20 a year, which includes the monthly Arkansas Railroader newsletter. If you'd like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay \$22 a year more, bringing the total to \$42 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st of each year, but you may pay at any time (membership will extend through the following year).

To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information. The newsletter editor's email address is: trains@trainweather.com The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be **SUNDAY, MAY 20, 2007** (*NOTE that this is the THIRD Sunday since the usual second Sunday of May is Mother's Day – The Club has always moved the date because of this*). It will be held at Curtis H. Stout, Inc. off Cantrell in Little Rock, in the same complex that has Cajun's Wharf. Time will be 2 p.m. May's program will be given by **Brian Holtz**, a former Arkansas Midland employee. His program is titled: "Looking back at my tracks – slides from 47 years of railroading."

FUTURE PROGRAMS: John Hodkin, Jr. will give the June program.

DEADLINE FOR JUNE 2007 RAILROADER is May 20, 2007, our next meeting date.

WANT TO SEE THE RAILROADERS IN COLOR? – Then go online to download the Adobe PDF version (<http://www.trainweather.com/road.html>). Also, current and past train pictures are here: <http://www.trainweather.com/sunday.html>

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2007 ARC MEETING – Meeting started at 2 p.m. We started the day with UP Special Agent Darin Archer giving his UP Safety presentation, which was very interesting. He mentioned that the week of May 15 there would be several Operation Lifesaver trains around the state OPEN TO THE PUBLIC for riding. This operation is called "Care Week" and is officially the Governor's Grade Crossing Safety Week ** David Hoge, our Treasurer/Secretary, wasn't able to attend, so Ken Ziegenbein took the minutes. The business meeting started at 3:33 p.m. Peter Smykla, Jr. mentioned that an upcoming NRHS Board of Director's meeting will discuss the future of the NRHS. He also said that the Pine Bluff Show and Sale held on the previous day, April 14, had a record 101 vendor tables sold and there was good attendance. He mentioned that the Friday before the show, UP heritage units 1988 (Katy) and 1982 (MoPac) passed the Arkansas Railroad Museum (home of the show).

President John Hodkin reminded everyone that the Arkansas & Missouri special trip sponsored by the Boston Mountains Chapter NRHS will be held in June. Jim Wakefield will give a presentation on the Missouri & North Arkansas RR at the Ozark Heritage Museum in Leslie, Arkansas on April 21. ** Fred Fillers and others said how much fun everyone had on the recent trip to view the abandoned M&NA in northern Arkansas. He said it was a long but enjoyable day. ** David Hoge will have an open house at Red Door Gallery in North Little Rock April 21. His abandoned railroad and other photos will be on display. His photos will be on display there through June 1. ** Randy Tardy talked about the restoration of the Clarksdale, Mississippi 1918 depot, which houses the Delta Blues Museum.

Meeting adjourned about 4 p.m.

WANTED - FOR SALE OR TRADE

WANTED: I am trying to get a picture of the depot that used to be in Ledwidge, Arkansas. My great-grandfather, Isaac Johnson, worked for the railroad there. His job was to keep the tracks clear of rocks and trees so that the trains could go through. He was killed by a train on the morning of April 1, 1932 when he was caught in tunnel on a hand car and couldn't get off the track. I have gotten some information from a Bill Pollard that the name of the railroad was the Rock Island Railroad. He said that the depot was very small but I would really like a picture of it. If you or someone you know may have one I would really appreciate a copy of it. Please email me and I will send a self address stamped envelope.

Thank you, Teresa (thunt1157@yahoo.com)

WANTED: Photographs of MP passenger and freight trains pausing or passing the Russellville depot for the purpose of creating postcards for sale in the restored Russellville depot. We can use slides or prints (color or b/w) and would prefer images taken prior to the depot's restoration. Please contact Gerald Hook, 2102 West 8th St, Russellville, AR 72801. His phone number is 479-857-1096. E-mail is gah333br@suddenlink.net

FOR SALE - ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB BOOKS STILL AVAILABLE – Our reprint of Gene Hull's book *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas* and *Railroad Stations and Trains through Arkansas and the Southwest*, are still available. They cost \$20 each plus \$2 postage (total \$22). Send orders to Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 and say which book you want.

~~**FOR SALE - COTTON BELT MEMORIES**~~ – **SOLD OUT!** Thanks to all who bought one. If I get at least 30 more requests for a copy, I'll reprint, but otherwise I have no plans to reprint the publication at this time. They were \$10 each. (*Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116*, ken@trainweather.com)

RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete listings. Also remember that there are sometimes many follow-ups on these first-time notices so if you want to keep up with any particular abandonment, check the Surface Transportation Board's site and use the Docket Numbers to search.

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register or have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met. Even though approval is granted for the railroads to abandon, it may be months or years before track is actually taken up.

OHIO - NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY – To discontinue service over a 15.70-mile line of railroad between milepost RZ 20.20 near North Jackson and milepost RZ 35.90 near Sebring, in Mahoning County, OH. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 44451, 44609, and 44672, and includes the stations of Ellsworth, Berlin Center, Berl, Snodes, Ring, and N. Sebring. Effective on April 14, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 292X), decided February 28, served March 15, 2007)

WASHINGTON – BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY - To abandon a 0.86-mile line of railroad that extends between Engineering Station 476+09 and Engineering Station 521+42 near Olympia, in Thurston County, WA. Effective on April 17, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 448X, decided March 8, served March 16, 2007)

NEW JERSEY - NEW YORK & GREENWOOD LAKE RAILWAY - To abandon an approximately .7-mile line of railroad between milepost 1.1, near the intersection of South and Fourth Streets, and the end of the line at milepost 1.8, near the intersection of Canal and Monroe Streets, in Passaic, Passaic County, NJ. Effective on April 24, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-1006X, decided March 16, served March 23, 2007)

RHODE ISLAND AND MASSACHUSETTS - PROVIDENCE AND WORCESTER RAILROAD COMPANY - To abandon a portion of the Slatersville Secondary Track located in Woonsocket, Providence County, RI, extending from milepost 0.85 +/- at the north side of Boyden Street and continuing to a point that is 1,480 +/- feet northerly of the end of the track at milepost 0.0 in Blackstone, Worcester County, MA, a total distance of approximately 1.1 miles. Effective on April 25, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-254 (Sub-No. 9X, decided March 16, served March 26, 2007)

FLORIDA - CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC – To abandon a 0.66-mile line of railroad on its Southern Region, Jacksonville Division, Palmetto Subdivision, from milepost SWC 871.0 to the end of track at milepost 871.66, known as the west end of the Parrish Spur, City of Palmetto, in Manatee County, FL. Effective on April 28, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 672X, decided March 20, served March 29, 2007)

TENNESSEE - THE CINCINNATI, NEW ORLEANS AND TEXAS PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY - The Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific Railway Company (CNOTP), a wholly owned subsidiary of Norfolk Southern Railway Company, to abandon a 12.44-mile line of railroad between milepost NR 0.00 at New River and milepost NR 12.44 at Sterling, in Scott County, TN.[2] The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 37841, and includes the former stations of Highway Jct., Pemberton, Hunter, Slick Rock, Brimstone, and Sterling. Effective on May 2, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 279X, decided March 27, served April 2, 2007)

MINNESOTA – BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY - To abandon a rail line between Engineering Stations 0 + 00 and 28 + 61, near Appleton, in Swift County, MN, a distance of 0.54 miles. Effective on May 4, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 449X, decided March 23, served April 4, 2007)

NORTH CAROLINA - CALDWELL COUNTY RAILROAD COMPANY – To discontinue service over a 5.2-mile segment of the rail line known as the HG Line, extending from milepost 107.5, near Lenoir, to the end of the line at milepost 112.7, near Valmead, in Caldwell County, NC. A final decision will be issued by July 9, 2007. (STB Docket No. AB-999X, decided April 2, served April 10, 2007)

MODEL NEWS MODEL RAILROAD CORNER

By: Joe Musgrove

Servicing and Switching Industries

Switching and servicing industries can be a fun part of layout operations. In this article I will discuss how you can make this task more interesting and challenging.

A good place to start is to do research on industries you are modeling or industries you plan on modeling. If possible visit the location or use the web to do research. Look at types of products received or shipped, types of railcars used, how product is loaded/unloaded, and track layout of the industry.

I want to talk a little more about track layout. In the real world track installation and maintenance is expensive. Railroads also like to keep switching and servicing industries as efficient as possible. Basically, time is money to both the railroad and industry.

So, for the most part, track used by industries serves a purpose. The same logic should apply to your layout. Avoid installing industry track with no purpose or logic. Also try to keep track layout for you industry simple and efficient.

Okay, you have your industries or have an idea of what industries you want to model. The next step is to look at industry operations for your layout.

Giving your model railroad a job to do can keep things interesting and this is especially true for servicing your industries. First, to get a feel for prototypical industry operations, railcars servicing your industry need an origination and destination point. This can be another industry on your layout or fictional industry off your layout. If the destination or origination point is off your layout, having a hidden staging yard or a modeled train yard will give your railcars someplace to go.

Servicing industries is more than just moving railcars; you also need to keep track of the railcar and its freight. A system of order sheets, switch lists, car cards, and other systems to keep track of your railcars can add realism to your operation. For PC users, you can use spreadsheets or databases to track railcars and freight electronically.

In the real world servicing industries does not always go smoothly. Scheduling delays, track problems, and railcar problems are just some of the issues railroads face. A headache for railroads but added fun for layout operations!

To simulate unforeseen problems railroads face, you can use a card system with possible random scenarios such as having to separate a damaged car. Draw a card before operating your layout to see if fate has dealt your railroad a real life problem!

Remember, servicing industries can be much more than parking a few railroad cars next to a building! By doing a little research, staying with a good track design, and adopting actual railroad practices servicing industries can be fun and challenging. Have fun and keep railroading!

MODEL RAILROADING INTEREST:

Kalmbach Publishing, *Great Model Railroads 2007*, features a model railroader with a network of friends around the country who have developed a unique operation.

An industry on a friend's layout in Chicago might need to place an order from an industry on another layout located in California. The railcar is ordered from the yard, loaded at the California industry, and run on the layout.

The railcar, along with others, is placed in a box and mailed to another friend in the network. After arriving in the mail, the railcar is run on this layout for a while and then mailed to the next layout all representing the cars journey across country on different systems. The car finally arrives at the layout in Chicago to deliver its cargo.

Talk about prototypical operation!



NOMINATED FOR REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Twenty-three properties were nominated for the National Register of Historic Places April 4, including the following (*I highlighted those I though especially interesting*):

South Main Street Commercial Historic District at Little Rock in Pulaski County, with commercial structures dating to 1905 ** South Main Street Residential Historic District at Little Rock in Pulaski County, featuring buildings built between 1880 and 1940. ** **St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Work Train, featuring a crane, boom car, generator car, kitchen car, tool car and sleeper built around 1940** ** **Wabash Alloys Locomotive, a diesel-powered General Electric switch engine built around 1940** ** **Central Texas Gravel Locomotive #210, a diesel-powered General Electric switch engine built in 1953.**

DODX Guard Car #G-56, built around 1942 by American Car and Foundry ** Stuttgart Commercial Historic District at Stuttgart, featuring buildings erected between 1889 and 1957 ** **Old Gillett Jail at Gillett in Arkansas County, a small-town jail constructed in 1922** ** **Mickles Bridge at Mickles in Yell County, 1880 bowspring-arch bridge** ** Walter Patterson House at Clinton in Van Buren County, a ca. 1946 Craftsman-style house with Mixed-Masonry veneer by Silas Owens Sr. ** Ruddell Mill Site in Independence County, featuring the remains of a nineteenth-century mill and dam **

Tuckerman Water Tower at Tuckerman in Jackson County, built with help from the Public Works Administration (PWA) in 1935.

Castleberry-Harrington Historic District at Republican in Faulkner County, a group of 1946-1950 buildings with Mixed-Masonry veneers by stonemason Silas Owens Sr. **

Dumas Commercial Historic District at Dumas in Desha County, with buildings erected between 1905 and 1957 ** **Camden Water Battery in Ouachita County, the remains of Confederate fortifications built in 1864** ** Parkdale Methodist Church at Parkdale in Ashley County, a 1926 structure exhibiting the Plain Traditional and Classical Revival architectural styles ** Mineral Springs Waterworks at Mineral Springs in Howard County, built ca. 1936 with PWA assistance.

Old Arkansas 22-Barling Segment at Barling in Sebastian County, a two-lane concrete highway constructed in 1928 ** Waldo Water Tower at Waldo in Columbia County, a ca. 1936 PWA project ** Beech Street Brick Street at Texarkana in Miller County, a stretch of ca. 1904 brick-paved road ** Green Forest Water Tower at Green Forest in Carroll County, built in 1937 with PWA funding ** Beely-Johnson American Legion Post #139 at Springdale in Washington County, a fieldstone building constructed around 1934 by the Civil Works Administration.

Pea Ridge Commercial Historic District at Pea Ridge in Benton County, featuring buildings constructed between 1910 and 1957 ** **The board also listed the Charcoal Gap Tunnel near Eureka Springs in Carroll County and Crash Site AC 41-7441 near Mautelle in Pulaski County** in the Arkansas Register of Historic Places. The Arkansas Register recognizes historically significant properties that for various reasons do not meet the more stringent requirements of National Register listing.

For more information on the National Register of Historic Places program, write the AHPP at 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center St., Little Rock, AR 72201, call the agency at (501) 324-9880 [TDD 501-324-9811], send e-mail to info@arkansaspreservation.org or visit the AHPP's Internet web site at www.arkansaspreservation.org

GOVERNOR'S GRADE CROSSING SAFETY WEEK

The week of May 14, Union Pacific will have several Operation Lifesaver trips around the state, and the public is invited to ride (*according to UP Special Agent Darin Archer, who told us it was open to the public*). Conway will be one of the sites, but it's wasn't know who the other cities

RECORD INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING ON CLASS I'S

In 2007, the Class I's' capital spending will total a record \$9.4 billion, up more than 9 percent from 2006's record \$8.6 billion, according to the Association of American Railroads (AAR). During the past four years, the large roads' spending has increased about 60 percent.

Over the past 10 years, railroads have spent an average of 17.2 percent of revenues on capital expenditures compared with an average of 3.4 percent for manufacturing, putting railroads at or near the top among all U.S. industries.

WARREN BUFFETT PURCHASES LOTS OF BNSF STOCK

The world's second-richest man disclosed April 6, 2007 that his Berkshire Hathaway company has acquired a 10.9 percent stake, valued at \$3.2 billion, in Fort Worth-based Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. He has also acquired large stakes in two other large railroad companies, according to a report on CNBC, which Berkshire Hathaway confirmed. The CNBC report cited a recent interview with Buffett, who said his company spent \$700 million on another rail company and slightly less than that on a third railroad company. Industry experts said Buffett, known for making strategic long-term buying decisions, has sniffed out a good investment, even though rail company stocks are near all-time highs.

BLIZZARD IN WYOMING IN EARLY APRIL

(April 5, 2005 – BNSF News Release) - Blizzard conditions in the Powder River Basin (PRB) of Wyoming and Montana resulted in the loss of about 170 coal train loadings on BNSF Railway March 27-April 4, 2007. Daily BNSF trains originating in the PRB bot-tomed out on March 30 at three, approximately 5 percent of the usual daily total. Throughout that period, BNSF had empty trains available, but mines were unable to load due to the blizzard's effect on mine employee availability and mine pit conditions.

Train loadings have been increasing since then as mines continue to work toward normal operations, although moisture in the mine pits continues to reduce loadings at some Wyoming mines. BNSF has been informed that mines believe they will be able to resume normal operations by the beginning of next week.

Thanks to the cooperation of utilities and connecting railroads, BNSF has been able to balance loaded and empty trains while maintaining a steady flow of empty trains back toward the PRB. BNSF will have empty trains available for loading as mines resume normal loading levels.

These storms also affected Union Pacific coal trains.

RECORD TRAIN SPEED IN FRANCE

(France) - A black and chrome train with three double-decker cars, named the V150, bettered the previous speed record of 320.2 mph on April 3, 2007, but fell just short of the ultimate record set by Japan's magnetically levitated train, which sped to 361 mph in 2003.

HISTORIC PEKIN, ILLINOIS DEPOT MAY BE RENOVATION/MOVED

The historic Chicago & Alton depot in Pekin, Illinois may have to be moved. The Pekin Park District has looked at the old depot, which stands on property that will soon have a new Walgreens on it. The owners, Dave and Louise Milam, have agreed to donate the depot to the park district. History abounds in the old depot - the old ticket window, the waiting room with benches, the old communications system for example.

The park district is looking at what role the depot might play in its park system. As it considered the possibilities, the depot, the park district found several obstacles, for which it is seeking the public's help and expertise. The depot will have to be moved from the current location and placed on a cement foundation. Among other things, It will have to be cleaned thoroughly to remove all the lead-based paint common to the era it represents.

"Before a final decision whether the depot can play a role in the park (is made), we need to find out if the community can help reduce the costs through volunteer work and expertise," said Bob Blackwell, Park District director. "Or perhaps people could donate money to have some of these projects done. A final decision will be made at the April meeting of the park board. *(Thanks to Jim Johnson)*

INCREASING HIGH SPEED RAIL OPTIONS IN EUROPE – BUT NO MORE ORIENT EXPRESS

Europe is on a high-speed rail building binge. Starting this summer, several newly completed high-speed lines will be finished between such cities as London and Paris. Many new lines will be greater than 155 miles long. Many of these lines will turn out faster than flying and be more environmentally friendly, which is one reason say they will ride the systems. Also, in late March 2007, a high-speed French TGV train broke the world speed record for conventional trains running on rails, going faster than 354 mph. *(That means that you could travel from Little Rock to Memphis in roughly 20 minutes)*

One casualty of high-speed trains such as the TGV is the demise of traditional trains in their wake. One such casualty is the famous overnight Paris-Vienna "Orient Express" which will stop running in June this year after the TGV high-speed line opens.

All in all, trains are not subject to delays caused by bad weather, crowded runways and crowded highways so they are a better option than flying or driving shorter distances, at least in Europe. An official of the TGV said "If you take an airline, every trip has the same experience. If you take the train, however, every journey is different...there's more to travel than the destination. It used to be called a journey." *(USA Today, March 30, 2007 via Dan Barr with some comments from your editor).*

Mississippi: Clarksdale — The Delta Blues Museum will use a \$1.5 million grant from the Mississippi Department of Transportation to fund an expansion. The museum, housed in the former Clarksdale railroad depot since 1999, will add 2,700 square feet of permanent exhibition space. Part of the space likely will be used to house Muddy Waters' cabin, which was too tall to display in the current building, the museum director said.

Via Randy Tardy.

AMTRAK NEWS

BIG DELAY ON TEXAS EAGLE ON APRIL 5, 2007

Amtrak's Texas Eagle got to Little Rock at 11:25 a.m. on April 5, almost 12 hours late. It left Dallas almost on time. What happened? Here's what I gathered from the Internet and other sources. To keep this in perspective, the Eagle has been running relatively close to on-time recently and UP is doing a better job of moving it over the railroad compared to earlier years. Things just happen.

Texas Eagle, Train 22(04), with NPCU 90229 and AMTK 205 was delayed at Lawrence, between Dallas and Mineola TX, with HEP (Head End Power) problems. The train went into siding there and the AMTK 205 was put into standby, which was the only way it would generate HEP. Mechanical couldn't fix it and the Ft. Worth standby unit, AMTK 155, was sent, and added behind the AMTK 205.

After a delay of 5 hr 03 min., the train was underway. But three miles out of Lawrence, the train started having more electrical problems and the AMTK 155 quit. The train stopped again, blocking the main line. Union Pacific had the crew of freight train SDDA, which was six miles ahead, cut off its lead unit UP5022. It went to the rescue of the stranded Amtraker and tied onto the head end after a delay of 1 hr 45 min.

But then, Train 22(04) developed air problems and could not move. While the crew were trying to fix the air problems, their Hours of Service expired at 145am (*remember, this train was due in Little Rock around midnight*). Fortunately somebody had figured this out already and a relief crew was on its way, arriving in only a few minutes. After a delay of 2 hr 05 min, the train was moved at slow speed five miles to Terrell, since an air problem still wasn't fixed.

Due to the slow speed it lost another ten minutes in those five miles. At Terrell it took siding to let a fleet of backed-up UP freight trains pass. UP Mechanical finally arrived and fixed the air problem. After a further delay of 20 minutes, the train was on the move again at 220am toward Mineola, pulled only by the UP freight unit, with the AMTK 155 providing HEP. After that it suffered more delays (imagine that!). Train 22(04) finally departed Marshall at 642am on April 5, 11 hr 11 min late.

NOTE: Why the cab car and one engine instead of two units? AMTK 130 and 49, which had brought the train from San Antonio to Ft. Worth, were removed at Ft. Worth; the 90229/205 were scheduled to go to the shops for scheduled maintenance, and replaced them.

Train arrived in Chicago 545 a.m. April 6, 15 hours, 30 minutes late.

Consist of the train when it arrived in Little Rock by Bruce Hitchens: UP 5022, Amtrak 90229, Amtrak 205, Amtrak 155, 6 cars.

WHISTLE STOP COMMUNITY WEBSITE

(*April 12, 2007 Amtrak press release*) - Seeking an outlet to share the numerous, heart-warming stories it regularly receives from passengers, Amtrak has launched a new website for travelers to share their train travel experiences. Christened Whistle Stop, the site, found at whistlestop.amtrak.com, includes feature stories on Amtrak routes with photos taken from the train along those routes.

The first three feature stories on Whistle Stop focus on three of Amtrak's most popular long-distance routes: the Adirondack (Montreal - New York), the Empire Builder (Chicago -

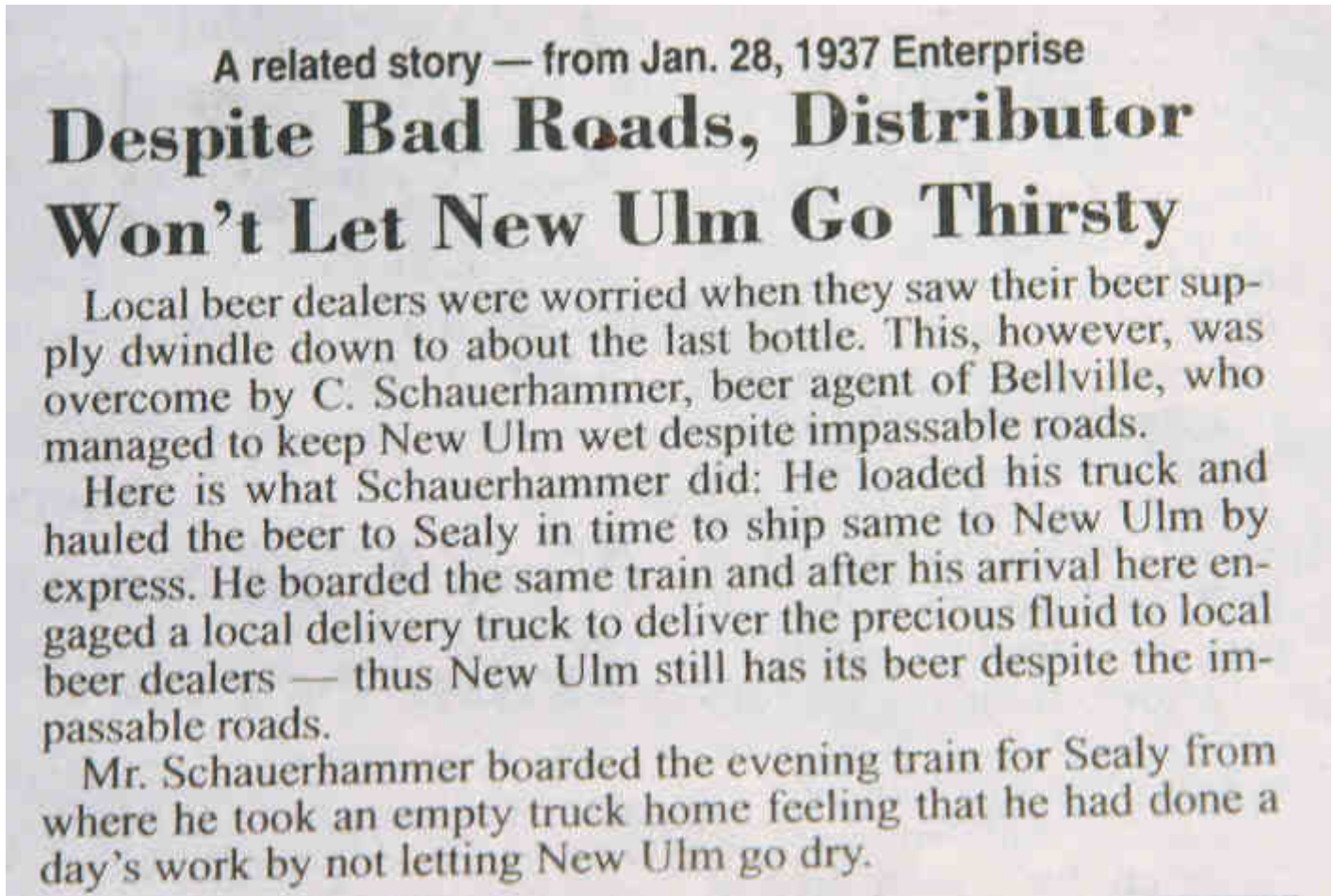
Portland/Seattle) and the Southwest Chief (Chicago - Los Angeles). These features are first-person travelogues by professional writers that provide readers with detailed descriptions of what passengers may experience when traveling on these trains. The first-hand accounts of life on board include descriptions of the sights to be seen from the train as well as activities on board the train.

For those wishing to share their own stories of rail travel, the Rider Memories section allows users to post their own accounts of adventures on the rails with the ability to also attach pictures. The best stories submitted will be posted on the Whistle Stop site for others to read.

"This new site provides customers an opportunity to communicate with Amtrak, sharing not only their travel stories, but also suggestions for types of content they find useful and interesting," said Kathleen Gordon, Amtrak's Senior Director, E-Commerce. "This will allow us to see the Amtrak experience from the customer's perspective."

The Whistle Stop site will also include articles that highlight Amtrak's environmental initiatives, demonstrating Amtrak's efforts to protect the environment and the positive impact of train travel.

Other tidbits and trivia will also be included, and future plans call for the development of travel tips, activities for family travel and expanded destination information. New ideas for the site will be welcomed, allowing the site to grow and evolve based primarily on input from users.



This 1937 article was taken from the April 5, 2007 *New Ulm (Texas) Enterprise*, my (Ken Ziegenbein's) hometown weekly. The town is still crazy about beer, as are most towns in Texas and elsewhere. It shows life when railroads were the king of transportation. The railroad was the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (KATY) and the busy tracks are still there, now owned by Union Pacific. UP hauls mostly crushed stone and rock to the Houston area. (*I don't imagine UP will haul beer to New Ulm, though*).

The last Katy passenger train ran through New Ulm on November 23, 1957, but my family were in Brenham shopping for groceries when it came through. Back then I didn't take pictures of trains anyway.

The Houston Chapter (Gulf Coast Chapter) NRHS ran a special excursion between Houston and Smithville in 1994 that ran through New Ulm and I rode that. In fact, I videotaped the segment from Sealy to LaGrange from the dome car.

EVENTS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

FORT SMITH-WINSLOW EXCURSION - JUNE 23, 24, 2007. This mixed Arkansas & Missouri trip is part of the Arkansas-Boston Mountain Chapter NRHS Quad Chapter convention in Fort Smith. Several classes of trip services are available (parlor car, coach or caboose). Write to: Quad Chapter Event, PO Box 1303, Springdale AR 72765-1303. Tickets range in price from \$80 to \$110.

DAVID HOGE PHOTO EXHIBIT - NORTH LITTLE ROCK - David Hoge will be displaying his photos of abandoned rights-of-way and other photos at the Red Door Gallery through June 1. It's located at 3715 JFK Blvd in North Little Rock.

HOBBY SHOPS IN ARKANSAS - Here are a few Arkansas hobby shops that you might use when ordering any commercial books or commercial railroad stuff that you see listed in these Want Ads. Here, in plain text form, are those hobby shops: **ONE TRACK MIND**, 10524 Helm Dr, Mabelvale, AR 72103, 501-455-5050, onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com, <http://www.arkansasweb.com/onetrackmind/> ** **ARKANSAS TRAVELER HOBBIES**, 400 East Market Street, Bald Knob, AR 72010, 501-Railfan (724-5326) ** **MICKEY'S MODEL WORKS**, Village Mall, 759 Hwy 62 E Ste 77, Mountain Home, AR 72653, 870-424-5765 ** **HOBBY SHOP DELUXE**, 119 North Front St, Dardanelle AR 72834, 479-229-5126, hsd@cox.net ** **HOBBY SHACK**, 1200 John Harden Dr, Jacksonville, AR 72076, 501-982-6836 ** **TRACTIVE EFFORT HOBBIES**, 3061 N. Market Ave. #7, Fayetteville, AR 72703, (479) 571-8722 ** **EUREKA SPRINGS MODEL RAILROAD COMPANY**, 127 Spring St., Eureka Springs, AR 72632 479-253-2525, <http://www.railroadtrain.com/>

REMEMBERING 15

P.B. Wooldridge

I've just returned from a visit to the old Wilson Cemetery at Old Lewisville, Ark. There under the protection of a lone pine tree is the grave of David H. Beasley, who was a lineman for the Cotton Belt Railway. His job was to keep all those telegraph and phone lines operational. He was subject to call 24 hours a day, whenever those lines failed. Born January 4, 1880, his life ended abruptly on June 1, 1943.

On that fateful day "Uncle Dave" as he was affectionately known, had stopped at the telegraph office at Waldo, Ark for a line up to Lewisville. The Cotton Belt Dispatcher was tied up with trains and train orders. Uncle Dave, impatient with the delay, left Waldo without a line up. He had an assistant with him, a motor car operator.

Four miles south of Waldo, on a curve at Lumber, a blind siding in piney woods, they encountered a speeding caboose-hop, an 800 engine pulling only a caboose, hurrying to Pine Bluff to pull a southbound freight. According to Uncle Dave's daughter-in-law, the motor car driver abandoned the motor car, leaving Uncle Dave alone to remove it from the speeding train. Uncle Dave lacked less than 5 seconds removing the motor car into the clear, but those few seconds cost him his life. He faced death, because he knew if he lost his motor car, he would be fired.

Back in the late 1930s I was on second trick at Lewisville when I first met Dave Bagby, Jr. and his beautiful young wife, who was obviously expecting. Dave's dad was Roadmaster for the Cotton Belt, operating out of Malden, Mo., and when I was learning to telegraph at Idalia, Mo., I'd seen him often as he covered the Illmo Sub-Division on motor car.

Imagine my shock a short time later when I learned that young Dave's motor car had been struck by a log truck on a country road crossing near Stephens, and he had lost his life.

Milner is a blind siding in solitary piney woods, five miles south of Stephens. During WW II a northbound freight took siding there to meet No 1, the Lone Star passenger. The swing brakeman walked his train, then set down on a main line rail. The night was absolutely quiet, and the brakeman must have been sleepy, as it was around 4 a.m. At any rate he apparently fell asleep on the main line, and was killed by No 1.

From one end of the railroad to the other, there are stories at every siding, at every crossing.

In fact, EVERYWHERE!

OBSCURE ANCESTOR OF THE MISSOURI PACIFIC

Gene Hull

During the past few weeks I have found sufficient items of historical information to prepare the following interesting story. It isn't technically complete, but I think it is worth preserving.

In the far south of Texas, after the Republic fought its way free of domination by Mexico and became one of the United States on 29 December 1845, General Zachary Taylor established Fort Brown on the north side of the Rio Grande to confirm that the "great river" was the boundary between Mexico and the United States. This caused the U.S.-Mexican War of 1846-1848. It was on this reservation that the City of Brownsville, Texas had its beginning. Several buildings of Fort Brown are part of Texas Southmost College; the administration building was the fort's hospital.

Another place of importance was relatively nearby. Just 20 miles northeast of the fort was the supply base, on the shore of Laguna Madre, an area of salt water, rather shallow, separated from the Gulf of Mexico by long, narrow Padre Island.

The supply base was at Point Isabel, later Port Isabel. It was named for Spanish Queen Isabella who financed the voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1492. Port Isabel developed into a small, picturesque village which saw a stream of gold seekers from the East to begin their overland trek to California in 1849.

Before the Civil War, Point Isabel was one of the leading ports in Texas, but it was under a great handicap-the long, narrow island barrier (Padre Island) had a shallow passage called Brazos Santiago Pass. Ships had to weigh anchor and cargoes were transferred to lighters (small vessels) and ferried across Laguna Madre to Point Isabel. From there, cargoes went by wagon to Brownsville. Access to Brownsville from the Gulf of Mexico was via slow steam river boats up the Rio Grande.

This is the background to our story.

Influential people at Brownsville had dreams and visions of a railroad. On 20 January 1850 a charter was secured for the Rio Grande Railway & Turnpike Company. This was the fourth charter by the state of Texas. The road was to be built from some point on the Gulf between the mouths of the Colorado River and the Rio Grande to some point on the Rio Grande no farther west than El Paso del Norte.

The project died.

In 1853 a charter was granted for the Brownsville & Rio Grande Railway Company. It also died.

On 1 October 1866 another group of wealthy and influential men acquired a charter for a railroad from Brazos de Santiago (another name for Point Isabel) to Brownsville. It had a state land grant of 16 sections for each mile of track, about 235,000 acres. The name was Rio Grande Railway.

This third railroad also died.

In August 1870, a very wealthy Spaniard named Simon Celaya of Brownsville got another charter for a railroad titled THE RIO GRAND RAILROAD. He hired a chief engineer named H.N. Field, an American.

The fourth attempt was successful.

A gauge of 3' 6" was chosen for the 26.28-mile road from Brownsville to Point Isabel in a nearly "straight as a crow flies" alignment. Twenty-three miles of the road was on dry land and was no problem. An elevation of 25 feet would have been a comparative mountain. At the northern end the track crossed 18,000 feet of low, wet, boggy swampy land near the Gulf.

This three-mile section of the road was built on timber piling, which was of ebony wood, hard, heavy, dark and durable, native to tropical Africa or Asia, especially suitable for furniture and decorative woodwork. This timber was brought in aboard sailing vessels and dumped in the lagoon to float ashore across the sand barriers (Padre Island).

The road was put in operation in February 1871 with diminutive steam locomotives and side-door passenger coaches from Spain. Four little narrow gauge engines were kept busy night and day moving cattle, minerals and horses to Port Isabel for export. Fish and all kinds of manufactured goods came to Brownsville by rail.

Many shipments of gold and silver traveled on the little road for export. There were reports of one raid in which bandits got away with \$160,000 in gold and silver bullion.

Coastal storms in 1873 and 1875 severely damaged the railroad. In 1886 a vicious storm forced the road into receivership.

Brownsville grew and prospered, but, for some reason, the little railroad did not share in the prosperity. The St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico railroad built to Brownsville in July 1904. In 1909, the Rio Grande Railroad was acquired by people associated with the St. LB & M. Soon it was reported the little shortline would be abandoned. Mayor Browne of Brownsville acquired the railroad and citizens raised a fund of \$100,000 to be paid when the line was rebuilt and a 10-foot deep channel was dug across Laguna Madre to Port Isabel.

Nothing happened.

People at Port Isabel took over and rebuilt the road to avoid the marshy area. The rails on the three miles of piling was moved westward to dry ground. The road was reorganized as the PORT ISABEL & RIO GRANDE VALLEY RAILWAY on 14 August 1928. The track gauge was changed to 4' 8 1/2". The Federal Government formed the Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District and spent \$2,600,000 to dredge a channel and rebuild the wharfs at Port Isabel, which opened for service in October 1934.

This latter effort seems foolish because six years earlier (1928) the Brownsville Navigation District was formed. The Federal Government appropriated \$2,700,00 to make the lower Rio Grade navigable with a channel 100 feet wide, 25 feet deep and 17 miles long to reach a ship turning basin five miles downstream from Brownsville. This facility was served by the little railroad. Most of the import, export and coastal shipping was diverted to Brownsville.

It seemed the railroad could no longer exist, but it did. The 75-year old master mechanic, Jose Ayala, was its savior. He was the engineer on the one train running each day. He also was the section crew and its boss. During the daily trip, if he found something that needed repair, he stopped and took care of it. He worked at night getting the engine ready for the next day. The end was drawing near. The two ports - Isabel and Brownsville - would be without rail service.

The Interstate Commerce Commission authorized abandonment 14 October 1940. When the Port Isabel & Rio Grande Valley ceased to exist 2 January 1941, the Missouri Pacific took over. Nine and one-half miles of the north end was connected by a northward addition to the San Benito-Abney branch. Port Isabel still had service. At Brownsville the Mo. Pac. Made connection with the 6.4 miles of track serving the Brownsville Navigation District to serve the dock, transfer sheds and warehouses.

Thus, both ports had rail service. The remaining ten miles of the unfortunate Port Isabel & Rio Grande Valley were ripped out.

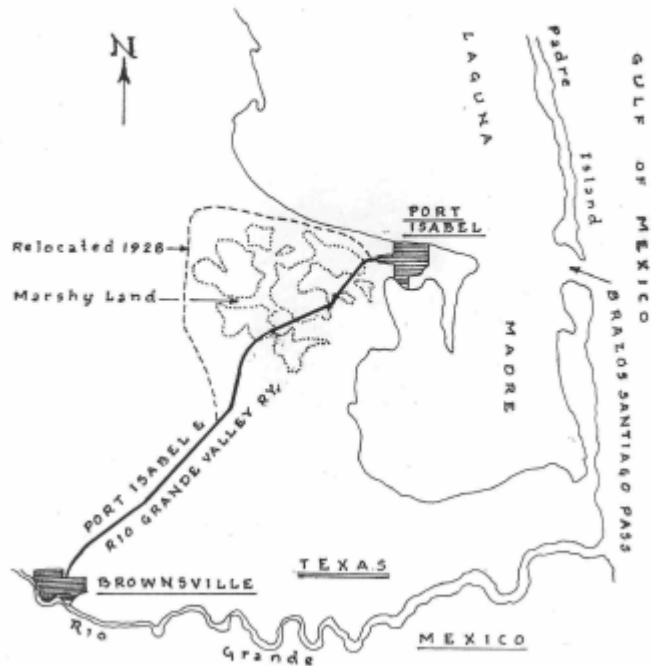
The photograph above shows the remains of the first engine of the Rio Grande Valley. It was built as a 2-4-2 T by Baldwin in 1871. It later was rebuilt as a tender engine and the wheels under the cab were removed. In 1917 it was out of service and the photo shows it in the Chamber of Commerce Park at Brownsville, Texas.

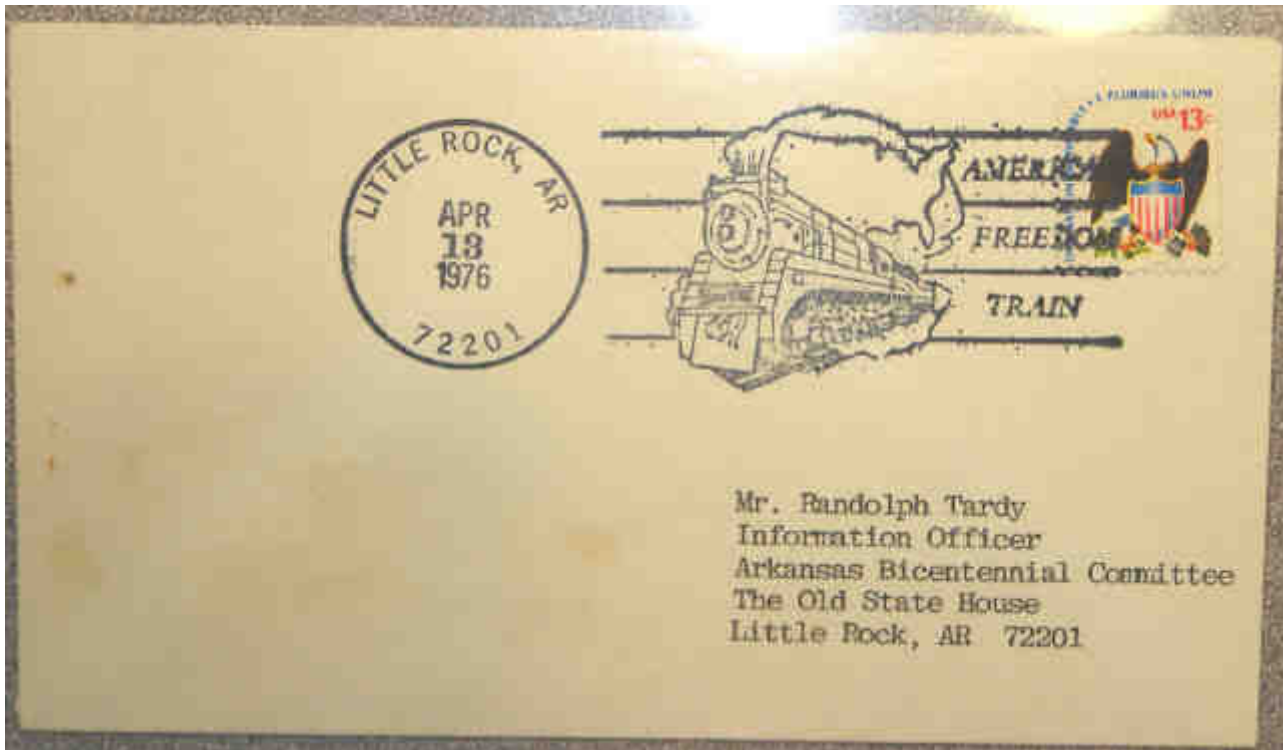
P.S. There was a report that when the three miles of track built on the wood piling was relocated in 1928, a furniture manufacturer wanted to buy the piling because of the fine ebony wood.

P.P.S. I am sorry, but this is all the information on this railroad I can locate.



PORT ISABEL & RIO GRANDE
VALLEY RAILWAY
No Scale





Here is that 1976 post card with the American Freedom Train postmark that Randy Tardy showed me. I had to block out this address on the previous Railroader since the USPS's postage scanners may have used this address accidentally instead of member's address.



A scene from the April 14 Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society's Annual Show and Sale at the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff. Peter Smykla, Jr said they sold a record 101 vendor tables and the crowd was good and steady. It was in the 40s outside.



UP 182, the MoPac Heritage Unit, passes Union Station in Little Rock about 8 a.m. April 1, 2007, the single unit of a mixed freight. This unit usually is on a fast intermodal train between Houston and Chicago. *(Photo by Joe Roddy)*



GN&A #51 is an S-3 built in 1951. Taken in 1972. *(Photo and caption by Terry A. Kirkland sent to the Railroader by Ed*



Reader Railroad's steamer No. 1702 somewhere between Reader and Waterloo, Arkansas in 1972. *(Terry A. Kirkland color photo, sent to the Railroader by Ed Cooper - I will have more of Mr. Kirkland's photos in future Railroaders, including early 1970s photos of other shortlines like DQ&E, ADN, D&R, W&SR, EACH, El Dorado & Wesson, more. These are all in color)*

**Arkansas Railroad Club
Little Rock Chapter NRHS
PO Box 9151
North Little Rock AR 72119**

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