

ARKANSAS RAILROADER  
The Arkansas Railroad Club Newsletter  
Vol. 3, No. 9-10      Sept.-Oct., 1972

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK\*

\*I don't really have a desk, but it sounds good anyway. READER RAILROAD - The Reader is now operating regularly on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. It will operate until November 30th, at least. There will be a train on the 30th even though it is not a regularly scheduled day. ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB SPECIALS - The special on the Reader on September 10th was a huge success. It was a sellout, with standing room only. The weather was good and everything went so well that a second run was scheduled for the 24th. It, too, was a success. The weather was not quite as good and the crowd was just a little smaller, but this gave people a little more elbow room and some of the retired Reader employees went along to reminisce. The 108 had a leaky super-heater tube and the 1702 was substituted for this second run.

There were a few misunderstandings about the first trip, but they all worked out. One was about the charge for the train, but had any of us read the published tariff, it plainly states that it takes a minimum of 70 adult fares (\$315). Mr. Long was very fair with us and we still added a little to the treasury. I hope our treasurer will give us a report at the next meeting and I will give details of how it happened. I believe that all our misunderstandings stemmed from the fact that none of us really believed that we could interest 70 people in riding a steam train.

Boy! Were we wrong. Of course, the front page story in the Arkansas Gazette about 10 days before the trip helped. But, I believe that we proved that, even in Arkansas, people will turn out to ride a steam train. I believe it so much that I recommend that we schedule a double headed "Autumn Leaf Special" for October 29th. How about it? Come to the meeting and let me know. And volunteer to help.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who made the trips a success. I would especially like to single out Jim Wakefield and Bill Pollard, who both worked very long and hard and did a fine job.

I would like to share a few pix I took on the 10th. (See photo page.) I submitted several to magazines in hopes that I could get a little publicity for the Arkansas Railroad Club and the Reader.

I don't know how many of you know, but Mr. Barksdale, recently retired Assistant General Manager, brought us the train order semaphores from Fredericktown, Mo. and an ancient wooden insulated joint from the Frisco-MoP crossing near there. This is on the line from Bismarck to Charleston, Mo. The rail on this line was removed from the original Cairo & Fulton when heavier rail was relaid there.

While I was on vacation in August, I visited the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. I was treated to a motor car ride of their trackage, which includes a fifth of a mile tunnel through Missionary Ridge. They operate on Sunday afternoons. If you are in Chattanooga, drop by and pay them a visit.

J. Harlen Wilson

## OVER 500 PEOPLE RIDE TWO ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB SPECIALS ON READER RR.

Our first fantrip proved far more successful than any of us ever imagined it would, although probably for different reasons than we would have expected. After the news coverage given to the Reader's application for abandonment, ticket orders for our trip really poured in, so many of them that the September 10 trip was sold out by the preceding Wednesday, with a large number of additional orders left over. The club's ticket agents, Bill Pollard and yours truly, being soft-hearted and perhaps soft-headed, decided to schedule a second section to handle the overflow. Without any additional publicity except word of mouth, we sold over two hundred tickets for this second trip.

Mr. Long and the entire Reader crew did a fine job for us on both runs. On the September 10 trip, No. 108 did the honors, making photo runs at Dills Mill, Waterloc and Reader. The water stop at Ames proved very popular with photographers and daisy-pickers alike. We had more people than seats because some people with reservations did not show up until just before train time and their unclaimed tickets had been sold to the few people who came expecting to buy tickets at Reader. But everybody who came to Reader to ride the train that day got to ride it, and everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves. Mr. Halliburton of the Democrat wrote a nice article about the trip which appeared in that newspaper on Tuesday, September 12.

For the September 24 trip, No. 1702 filled in for the ailing No. 108. Since she could not pick up water, we had extra photo runs to make up for that cancelled feature. The first was at Lackland Crossing on the southbound run. For a really outstanding finale, Engineer Dale McBride backed the train up about three-fourths of a mile and then came storming up Dewoody Hill, evoking many pleased comments from the photographers on the ground and those passengers who had stayed aboard the train.

Porter Johnnie Walters, as always, looked after the needs of the passengers very well and Fireman Gerald Raines and Brakeman Dale Martin handled their positions with their usual fine skill.

Add my vote to Jim Wilson's in favoring the operation of a double-header. Perhaps if some of the Reader's freight equipment is suitable, we can have a double-headed mixed train.

OCTOBER 8 MEETING TO HAVE A VARIED PROGRAM. . . Jim Wilson has promised a repeat of Buster Keaton's "The General" which everybody enjoyed so much a year or so ago. Your editor and several others should have some film from our Reader specials. Also some film shot recently on the Prescott & Northwestern for you dieselized shortline fans. Time is 2:00 p.m. in MoP Union Station. For this meeting we will move back up to Room 305.

THE ARKANSAS RAILROADER is the monthly publication of the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, Inc., a non-profit organization. Annual dues for the club are: Regular (Arkansas residents) - \$5.00; Associate (outside Arkansas) - \$3.00. Payable to C. R. Byrd, Treasurer, 12 Flintwood, Little Rock, Arkansas 72207.

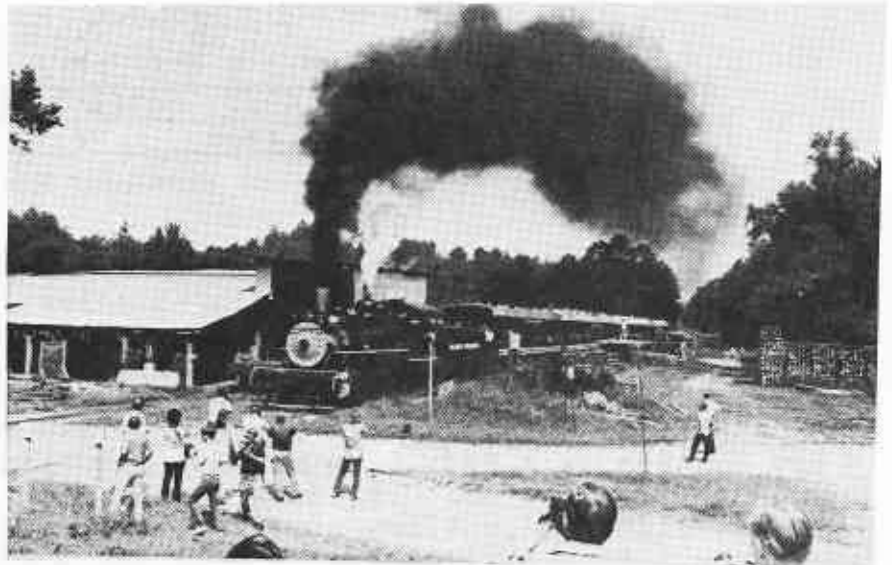


Photo run at Dill's Mill ↑  
 A passenger, Sue Johnson of  
 Bald Knob. ←

Caney Creek water stop. →  
 Back at Reader after a  
 fun day. ↓

