



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
N.R.H.S.

ARKANSAS RAILROADER



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Denver & Rio Grande Western diesels Nos. 3006 and 3008 with a southbound coal train near Winter Park (Moffat Tunnel), Colorado, September 1993. *(Clifton E. Hull photo)*

A RAILROAD ON STILTS

by: Gene Hull

This story combines two innovations - elevated railroads and pictures before photography. As the city of New York grew larger and larger it became more congested. Surface traffic became a real pain in the neck. To relieve the situation Charles Thompson Harvey built an elevated railroad on Greenwich Street in downtown New York in 1867. It was only a quarter-mile long, but it was the granddaddy of an extensive system of railroads on stilts.

Before the widespread use of disseminating the news across famous publications was Frank Newspaper. The illustrations from sketches by a large staff

One of several elevated Gilbert Elevated Railway Avenue. It was chartered in surgeon, Dr. Rufus H. Gilbert. trains by compressed air.

"I can blow the cars through miles an hour!"

The city officials refused to railroad above the ground. In Sixth Avenue at 42nd Street supports for his elevated

On 29 April 1878 New York celebrated a red-letter day - the Sixth Avenue El ran its first train. A tiny steam locomotive pulled four little wood cars filled with city officials, newspaper reporters, bankers, clergymen, and Dr. Gilbert. New York had an elevated railroad free from the mass confusion on the ground below.



Needless to say, this was a short-lived affair.

In 1867 Charles Thomas Harvey, the bushy-bearded chief engineer of the Lake Superior Ship Canal, built a quarter-mile of elevated railroad along Greenwich Street in downtown New York as



photography was perfected for America, one of the most Leslie's Illustrated Weekly were steel engravings made of talented artists.

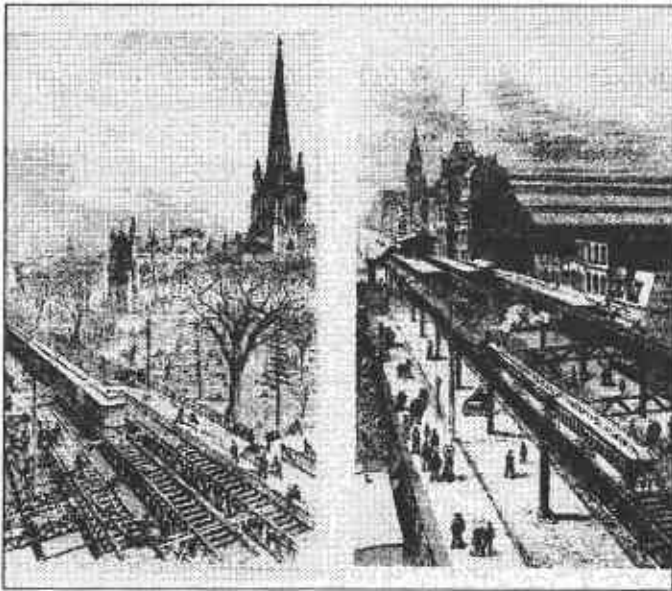
railroads in New York was the Company track on Sixth 1876 by a former Civil War His first idea was to move

the big metal tubes at 15 or 20

listen to him. So, he lifted his 1876 ground was broken on for erection of the steel railroad on stilts.

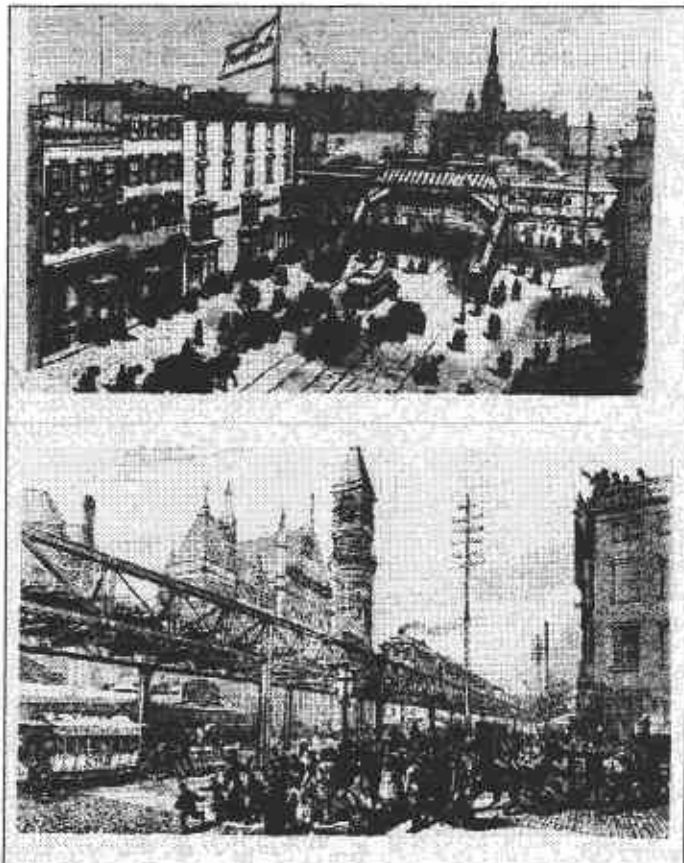
On the Second Avenue Railroad the steam engines used by the Gilbert line were far too heavy. They soon were abandoned in favor of a unique type of street car invented by a pair of Scotsmen, Hardy and James. Cylindrical tanks were mounted beneath the floor of the car, and these were filled with compressed air as a source of power. This contraption required frequent recharging. It ran at speeds from a slow walk to about 20 miles an hour at a cost of \$10 a day.

a demonstration. The city fathers were impressed and as a result the West Side & Yonkers Patent Railway Company was incorporated to provide the city with its first elevated line.



The New York Elevated Railroad Company was formed to build on Third Avenue. It began at the waterfront on the lower end of Manhattan Island, running through the slums of Bowery, along Third Avenue in the East Side slums, and terminated at the opulence of Cornelius Vanderbilt's Grand Central Station. The first ground breaking was on 1 November 1877, at Chatham Square in the midst of the hectic market-pushcart area. The Third Avenue line was the final segment of the vast system of elevated lines in New York City. Many of the locomotives were Forney types built by Baldwin.

On 15 August 1878 the first train on the East Side Elevated Railroad in New York City arrived at Grand Central Station to inaugurate service. It became part of the famous Third Avenue El. ~~1878~~



1997 OFFICERS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Craig Gerard, 2011 Aztec Dr, Bldg 16 #6, N Little Rock AR 72116-4470(501-835-4057)
VICE-PRESIDENT - Leonard L. Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)
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SECRETARY - Carole Sue Schafer, 103 Thayer St, Little Rock AR 72205-5951 (501-371-0034)
EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 905 Valerie Dr, N Little Rock AR 72118-3160 (501-758-1340)
NRHS DIRECTOR - Jim Bennett, 1002 South Leslie St, Stuttgart AR 72160 (501)-673-6753)
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729)
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BOARD '00 - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington #31, North Little Rock AR 72114-6455 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '01 - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr. Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)

NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

The next meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be on **SUNDAY, APRIL 13** at the usual place, the Mercantile Bank on Main Street in North Little Rock, just across the street from the Riverfront Hilton. It begins at 2 p.m.

The program will be given by **ALAN WAGONER**, who is General Manager for the Little Rock & Western RR. He is a former Rock Island employee and was a member of our club a few years ago.

Also, our vice president Leonard L. Thalmueller is asking for anyone to volunteer for future programs. Most of the year is open. If interested, contact him at 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 or call him at 501-562-8231.

MEETING NEWS - **BILL CHURCH** has been moved, under contract with the VA Medical Center in North Little Rock, to Golden Years Manor, 1010 Barnes Street, in Lonoke, about 28 miles east of Little Rock. The contract with the VA is for 90 days.

ANOTHER STREAM EXCURSION - PART 2 - Union Pacific will probably run a steam excursion between Houston and Little Rock this Fall, using the 844 steam engine. The train will be in Texas for Bush Library dedication functions and run public trips out of Dallas, Houston then north to Tyler and from **Tyler to North Little Rock through Pine Bluff**. Should these trips occur, we would join the Houston Chapter in sponsoring trips on the various segments, ours being Tyler to North Little Rock. We may also work with the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society of Pine Bluff and Tyler. Dates would be late October and early November, the Tyler segment on November 8 or 9. We'll keep you posted (check my web site, <http://www.netcom.com/~ken.z.rw/weather/trains.html>, for latest information, plus we'll mail out flyers whenever and if things get organized.)

RAILROADER ON THE 'NET - I now put the text portion of the *Arkansas Railroader* on the Internet, along with the latest railroad abandonment news and latest weather maps. I'll include any news of the possible 844 trip next November on this web page as well. The address is: <http://www.netcom.com/~ken.z.rw/weather/trains.html>

PHOTOS WANTED - I need photos that can be used in the newsletter, both on the cover and on the inside pages. They can be any size, black and white or color. Slides are O.K., but I'll have to send them off to make prints for our purposes. Please put a caption on them and date, along with who took the picture. Send them to our club address. Thanks a lot.

ARKANSAS RAILROADER

1997 SHOW AND SALE of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be held in conjunction with the NMRA Regional Meeting on **June 21, 1997**. The NMRA's convention begins on June 19 and lasts through the 21st. Location will be the Robinson Convention Center in Little Rock. Our Railroadiana Show & Sale will be on the 21st. For information, contact Walter Walker, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 or call 501-663-8901.

NMRA INFORMATION - If you want information on the National Model Railroad Association convention in Little Rock June 19-21, contact Tom Shook, PO Box 7650, Little Rock AR 72217.

REQUEST FOR NEWS - Thanks to all of you who have been sending news in to me. I need consistent sources of news from various parts of the state to keep the newsletter "newsy." Mainly, I need news from your LOCAL PAPER. Please keep sending the articles in.

CALENDARS FOR 1998 -The 1998 calendar has gone to the printers. It'll include black & white photos of various railroads in Arkansas, some by Peter Smykla, Tom Shircliff, Mike Adams, Harold Vollrath and others. More details will be in the May issue. We hope to have these ready by the June Show & Sale. Prices are expected to be the same.

RAILROAD DECOR - Member Dr. WILLIAM L. SCHMIDT of Hot Springs is a true railfan. He recently sent me his past three-years worth of Christmas cards, each one with family pictures with real trains in the background. Their office is done with railroad decor. His address is: 316 St. Louis Place, Hot Springs AR 71913.

BILL VOGEL

Born Dec 13, 1923 - Died August 11, 1996

Bill was from Orland Park, Illinois, and his wife said he kept ALL the *ARKANSAS RAILROADERS* over the years. He enjoyed riding steam excursions and had an affinity for finding old depots. He owned lots of books and had taken many pictures over the years, as well as commissioned several art paintings of railroad subjects.

TORNADOES IN ARKANSAS - As many of you know, I've been a meteorologist at the National Weather Service (known 25 years ago as the Weather Bureau) for over 27 years. I recently had the most memorial day of my career - the March 1 tornado outbreak that killed 25 in Arkansas. It so happened that I was called out that day to work the Doppler weather radar and its complicated computer system. As a result, I was the person that put out all those tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings, some 50+. Since ALL the radio and TV stations used our warnings, those were the warnings you heard and the reasons the sirens were blown.

After looking at the damage and asking when the tornados hit a particular area, a storm survey team determined that the warnings were issued 15 to 32 minutes before the tornadoes occurred, hopefully saving many lives. (One person interviewed on TV said she had enough time to get in her car and pick up her grandparents and take them back to her basement - the grandparents mobile home was destroyed later). Unfortunately, people still died, like the two men near Velvet Ridge and Possum Grape, who got out of their mobile home and laid in a ditch. Sad to say, a large oak tree fell on them in the ditch, killing both.

A retired lady near Bailey had gone outside her mobile home and gotten in her car to retrieve something. Before she knew it, all the windows in her car were smashed out, but the car didn't turn over - she was O.K., but her mobile home remnants were strewn out over the next half mile. Two of her dogs were carried over the dirt road in front of her house, and were last seen running in the woods. Her washing machine was a mangled mess. She kept a sense of humor, though, and offered us anything we wanted for 50¢. She said that God had been her storm shelter.

The biggest tornado, the one that hit Arkadelphia, started south of Prescott, Arkansas and stayed on the ground until it hit the southern part of Little Rock, the College Station area. At the same time this one was moving up along

Interstate 30, at least 5 others were shown on radar, strewn out from northwest to central to northeast Arkansas. These also caused much damage. The tornadoes were at times up to eight tenths of a mile wide, very large for a tornado (F4) and had winds up to 260 miles an hour, more powerful than the strongest hurricane (usually topping out at 200 miles an hour).

Being responsible for issuing the warnings was very tense, as you can imagine, but at least I was off duty the next day, when it was still raining. However, continuous storm surveys kept me from attending the March 9 meeting. Also, I hadn't heard of any damage the Union Pacific or other railroads obtained in these storms. If anybody knows, let me know and I'll put that in our large storm report.

The storms brought out the very best in people around the state. It even upstaged political infighting news, which was refreshing for a change. Too bad we can't be this friendly in normal times, right?

Anyone have any storm or tornado railroad stories they'd like to relay? Maybe a washout or trees across the tracks in years past. Send them in and I'll print them.

The following was received at our office's Web page by a CNN meteorologist:

Date: 3/4/97 1:09 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: NWS Little Rock

Subject:

----- Message Contents -----

As a fellow meteorologist, my compliments to your office on your great work over the weekend!!! I don't ever remember seeing so many tornado warnings coming out of one office in that short amount of time. I noticed your warning for Arkadelphia was issued with over a half hour lead time. Your swift work probably saved numerous lives.

Dave Hennen

CNN Meteorologist/Anchor

WANTED:FOR SALE OR TRADE

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

WANTED - Film, photos, personal stories

related to the 1975-76 AMERICAN FREEDOM TRAIN for the making of a documentary. Film and photos of the various engines and cars, the crews and crowds needed. Also seeking related souvenirs. Any leads appreciated. Contact Todd Schannuth, 229 S Barrington Ave #2, Los Angeles, CA 90049, 310-472-7417 (collect) or E-mail at Hinoj@aol.com.

WANTED - Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma area employees timetables. I have for trade Texas, Oklahoma & Eastern-DeQueen & Eastern timetables. Contact P. L. MOSELEY, 6621 Springlake Cir, Shreveport LA 71107-8778.

RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

These are railroad abandonment notices that have been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER during the past couple of months. Effective abandonment dates are valid UNLESS stayed OR an offer of financial assistance is received OR trail use/rail banking requests are filed OR environmental issues are raised. They are presented generally in chronological order of being published. The states will be listed first, then the railroad. The "FR" stands for Federal Register.

- ARIZONA - SWKR OPERATING CO** - To abandon the stub end of its Douglas Branch between m.p. 1055.8 near Charleston and the end of the line at m.p. 1097.3 near Paul Spur, a distance of 41.5 miles, in Cochise County, Arizona. Effective March 16, 1997. (FR February 14, 1997)
- MARYLAND - CONRAIL** - To abandon a portion of the Mardella Industrial Track extending from m.p. 40.80 to the junction with Conrail's Delmarva Secondary at m.p. 42.00, near Salisbury, Maryland. AND to abandon the Mill Street Industrial Track extending from the connection with the Mardella Industrial Track at m.p. 0.00 to m.p. 0.60 near Salisbury, Maryland. Effective March 21, 1997. (FR February 19, 1997)
- INDIANA - CSX** - To abandon 2.6 miles of line known as the Saxton Branch along the Chicago Service Lane, CE&D Subdivision, between m.p. ZY-0.00 at Dewey and m.p. ZY-2.6 near Terre Haute, Indiana. Effective March 24, 1997. (FR February 20, 1997)
- CALIFORNIA - TULARE VALLEY RAILROAD CO** - To abandon 18.5 miles of line between m.p. 47.2 near Lindsay and m.p. 66.0 near Ultra, California and to discontinue trackage rights over 25.7 miles of line owned by San Joaquin Valley Railroad from SP m.p. 287.1 near Ducor and m.p. 308.7 near Famoso, California. This includes the branch line from SP m.p. 295.0 near Richgrove to SP m.p. 299.1 near Jovista, California. Effective March 23, 1997. (FR February 21, 1997)
- NEBRASKA - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon service on the Gilmore Industrial Lead from m.p. 11.76 to m.p. 12.23 near Gilmore, Nebraska, 0.47 miles. Effective March 27, 1997. (FR February 25, 1997)
- WASHINGTON/IDAHO - BLUE MOUNTAIN RAILROAD, INC.** - To abandon three segments of line located between m.p. 19.0 at Kamiaken Street and m.p. 19.30 at Pullman, Washington; between m.p. 19.75 at Pullman and m.p. 25.50 near Moscow, Idaho; and between m.p. 26.10 near Moscow and m.p. 27.50 at Line Street in Moscow, Idaho, totaling 7.45 miles. Effective March 4, 1997 unless petitions to reopen are filed by March 31. (FR March 4, 1997)
- WEST VIRGINIA - CSX** - To abandon 14.1 miles of line between m.p. 2.1 at Clarksburg and m.p. 16.2 at McWhorter, West Virginia. Effective April 5, 1997. (FR March 6, 1997)
- CALIFORNIA - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon 1.845 miles of line known as the Port Chicago Industrial Lead from the end of the line at m.p. 37.06 near Clyde to m.p. 38.905 near Port Chicago, California. Effective April 10, 1997. (FR March 11, 1997)

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

RIVERFRONT RAIL SYSTEM

(Little Rock) - \$3 million has been earmarked for designing and building a one-mile light-rail line connecting Little Rock's Statehouse Convention Center, the River Market and North Little Rock, using existing tracks and bridges (Union Pacific's). Local officials have to ask for the money from Congress, but the money would be there. Officials are considering buying five slow-moving trolley cars, which may have to share the line at times with UP's rare freights (mainly woodchip trains at night). (Gee, where else in the country would trolleys share tracks with mainline freights? I'm sure UP would jump for joy at this!). UP officials apparently may allow some sort of joint operations in return for getting the tracks

upgraded. Startup date of this line would be 1999, when the new arena would open, with 1998 being an active year for construction. (*Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, February 20, by Tracie Dungan*)

MUSEUM VISITORS

(Pine Bluff) - The Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff, hosted by the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society, NRHS, had 15,952 visitors in 1996 through November.

KIAMICHI RR NEWS

Western Farmer's Electric Cooperative ceased hauling their coal over the Kiamichi Railroad as of January 1, 1997, thereby causing a loss of income to the Kiamichi and the railroad's first layoffs in that company's

history. The Kiamichi hauled 1.8 million tons of coal for the utility yearly. WFEC decided to build 14 miles of its own railroad to the plant in Ft. Towson, Oklahoma, thereby creating a more competitive situation between the Burlington Northern and Union Pacific (see other story in General Rail News).

Otherwise, 1996 was a banner year for the Kiamichi, hauling 56,886 carloads, an increase of 12.2 percent over 1995. It is now owned by StatesRail, which also owns many other lines across the country and in Hawaii. StatesRail has 400 employees, 100 locomotives and handles about 125,000 carloads yearly (about half of which were hauled by the Kiamichi).

The following rolling stock are owned/leased by the Kiamichi:

Owned - 4 GP35M's, 7 GP9M's, 1 GP9, 3 GP7's, 1 F3A. Leased - 7 GP38's, 6 GP10's, 2 GP35's

Owned: 16 woodracks, 67 boxcars, 118 polecars, 120 cement hoppers, 4 ballast cars.

Leased: 55 woodchip hoppers, 10 ballast cars, 10 air dump cars, 14 boxcars, 4 tank cars. (*Kiamichi Korner newsletter, Feb 1997*)

D&E DEPOT RAZED

(*DeQueen*) - The old DeQueen & Eastern Railroad depot in DeQueen was burned for practice by the DeQueen fire department around February 13 by request of the DQ&E Railroad. The building had been in bad shape and the railroad wanted it burned. It only took 20 minutes for the old pine building to burn. It was originally built in 1902, greatly burned in 1927 and rebuilt to remain as it was up to now. (*Via P. L. Moseley*)

WHITE RIVER RAILWAY WOES

(*Mountain Home*) - The popular White River Railway is being sued for \$100,000 in back rent by the company that owns the track, the Missouri and Northern Arkansas. The M&NA terminated the train's contract for use of its tracks effective December 1, 1996 and filed a federal lawsuit for back payments, according to the Harrison Daily Times. The suit was filed February 10 and include

monthly back payments for track rental of \$12,500 each month for several months and for salaries of the M&NA crew.

Meanwhile, two local businessmen, Peter Peitz and Benny Magness, are trying to take over the lease for the tracks. Peitz said that if all goes well, the tourist line may reopen in mid April and offer excursions between Flippin and Norfolk and Norfolk-Sylamore-Mountain View. (*Mountain Home Baxter Bulletin, March 11, via William Eldridge*)

NEW UP INTERMODAL SITE

(*Ebony*) - Union Pacific announced on March 1 that it plans to spend \$70 million on a state of the art intermodal terminal in east Arkansas near Marion. UP acquired the acreage (about 600) using eminent domain. Some in Marion opposed this site. The facility will include 4 tracks, totaling 29,000 feet, which will have the capacity to handle 95 doublestack cars at one time. There will be 2,600 spaces for trailer parking. Trucks will be able to move in and out of the facility in 15 to 20 minutes as opposed to 45 minutes nationally. The facility will open early in 1998. (*Evening Times, March 1, 1997 via Don Weis*)

UP TO SPEND \$120 MILLION IN ARKANSAS



Union Pacific's \$2.25 billion capital-spending plan for 1997 includes about \$120 million in Arkansas projects, spokesman Mark Davis said in early March. \$70 million

of this will be spent on the new intermodal facility at Ebony. Rail replacement of over 100 miles (mostly of the ex-Southern Pacific/Cotton Belt line from Dexter, Missouri to Fair Oaks, Arkansas) will cost another \$35.7 million, and replacing 100,000 crossties will cost another \$10.4 million. The railroad will also spend \$5.1 million upgrading yards in North Little Rock, Pine Bluff and Brinkley.

UP SPECIAL?

A Union Pacific business special may be run April 14 (estimate) for the Western Farmers Electric Coop from Little Rock to Hope, then over the rare-mileage Nashville Branch to Perkins-DeQueen & Eastern interchange, which will then go on to Ft Towson, Oklahoma over the D&E/T O&E. (This special may have been canceled)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

LIGHT RAIL FOR MEMPHIS?

A study released January 22 recommends that three light-rail train routes linking downtown Memphis with Millington, Collierville and Southaven be studied further. City officials must ask for federal funds in the \$1 billion plan. The study was done by ICF Kaiser. The three lines would cover about 61 miles, most of which would follow existing freight tracks but include new track parallel to the existing ones. (*Memphis Commercial-Appeal, January 23, 1997*)

CONRAIL TO BREAK UP

Persistence pays. At least when it came to Norfolk Southern's persistent pressure to prevent Conrail from merging with CSX. It now appears that Conrail will be split up,

with NS getting a piece and CSX the other piece. Conrail's board now believes that its goal of maintaining the Conrail franchise may not be attainable.

Apparently, NS will buy about half of Conrail's 11,000 miles of track with the other half going to CSX. This would result in two railroads in the east that compete, according to NS Chairman David R. Goode. Goode's proposal would have NS getting the old Penn Central line west of Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and Chicago while CSX would get the old New York Central line from New York to Albany and west to Buffalo, Cleveland, Indianapolis and St. Louis. NS would also get the old Reading as well as the line from Washington to New York. (*The Virginian-Pilot, March 3, 1997 via G. W. Schmidt*)

PULLMAN PORTER ORAL HISTORY

In mid-February, David Perata ran a special train carrying former Pullman Porters from Oakland to Chicago, behind various Amtrak trains. His intention was to record an oral history called *Pullman Blues: An Oral History of the African-American Railroad Attendant*. (It was a neat idea, but I did a similar story on a Little Rock porter several years back in the *Railroader* - in this interview, I taped the man's conversation and transcribed it to paper - it was a living history and very interesting). One of the men interviewed by Mr. Perata said he'd "never believed that one day he'd be in a Parlor Car being served by white people." (*Dallas Morning News, February 17, 1997 via Dan Barr*)

ARKANSAS RAILROADER

A-OK NOTES

(*McAlester, Oklahoma*) - From David E Crotts, via the Internet, comes the following rumors about the A-OK Railroad of Wilburton, Oklahoma (the A-OK is a paid member of the Arkansas Railroad Club). 1) The A-OK is closing a deal with the UP to take over McAlester switching; 2) the A-OK is negotiating with the state of Oklahoma to re-open the OKC;

NEW COAL CONTRACT

(*Ft. Towson, Oklahoma*) - Union Pacific will haul coal from Wyoming to Kansas City, where it will be interchanged with the KCS and go to DeQueen, Arkansas, where it will then go over the DeQueen and Eastern, TO&E to the Western Farmer's Electric generation plant at Ft. Towson. WFEC will build its own 14 mile spur off the TO&E from Valliant, Oklahoma to the plant. (This meant the loss of 1.8 million tons of coal the Kiamichi used to haul).

TOO MANY TRAINS

(*Wichita, Kansas*) - Wichita residents are complaining that up to a dozen freights a day run through the city, blocking traffic (UP). They complain that the trains don't stop there, just pass through and cause congestion. They are looking to Washington for \$100 million to build overpasses and underpasses (ala Pine Bluff?). Many of the trains moving through Wichita haul coal. BNSF has refused to allow UP to run its coal trains on its main line outside the city. (*Tulsa World, March 2, 1997 via Bob Oswald*)

NEW FRA REGULATIONS

The Federal Railroad Administration has proposed new regulations that would require extensive emergency training for hosts on passenger trains, written emergency evacuation plans for each bridge and tunnel crossed, upgrades in passenger car standards, like emergency escape windows, and other

things. The report apparently would exclude tourist lines and occasional excursions, but how it would effect main line excursions like UP's is uncertain. (If we indeed have a trip next November, it could be the last before these regulations take effect).

KELLY AFB SOLD

(*San Antonio*) - Rail Car Texas, Inc. will take over the old Kelly Air Force Base near San Antonio in early April. Rail Car Texas repairs rail cars. (*San Antonio Express News, March 6*)

KCS TO MOVE MAIN LINE

(*Vicksburg, Mississippi*) - Kansas City Southern has plans to move its main line out of downtown Vicksburg to avoid many curves and hills the trains must climb to get in and out of the city. It would build 10 miles of track east of the city. In order to do this, the KCS needs about \$50 million. (*Jackson Clarion-Ledger, February 28*)

RAILROAD'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

America's freight railroads contributed more than \$18 billion directly to the nation's economy in 1995 through wages and retirement benefits, according to the Association of American Railroads. Payrolls for the active 212,440 freight railroad employees totaled \$9.9 billion in 1995. Average salary is \$46,794. The Railroad Retirement System paid out \$7.9 billion to 783,800 retirees and their families. And, unlike the highway and waterway modes of transportation, railroads pay property taxes to state and local governments. During 1995, railroads moved 1.8 billion tons of goods over 146,785 miles of line, about 41% of all intercity freight ton-miles.

Railroads move a ton of freight more than three times as far as a truck using the same

amount of fuel. Railroad accident rates were reduced 68% since 1980. (*AAR Press Release, March 5*)

UP RELOCATION

On March 18, Union Pacific Corporation announced it was restructuring its holding company that will result in a relocation of corporate headquarters from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania to either Dallas-Fort Worth or St. Louis. Employees at the headquarters would be reduced from 120 to 45. UP wants to move closer to its primary business areas. (*UP Press Release*)

SLOWER TRAINS NOT SAFER AT CROSSINGS

The reason people die at railroad crossings is not the speed of trains, but foolish or careless human behavior by auto drivers, according to an editorial in the March 18 *Chicago Tribune*. Two Illinois state agencies recently recommended against reducing train speeds through Fox Grove, Illinois, where seven children were killed at a crossing in October 1995. The agencies, as well as the Department of Transportation, determined that speed was NOT a factor in the crash. In fact, they said that reducing train speeds would have the OPPOSITE effect and cause more accidents since more drivers might be tempted to take chances with slower-moving trains.

According to the FRA, 87 percent of all crossing accidents in 1995 occurred with trains traveling less than 50 mph. The best remedies involve stopping people from taking chances with trains, including public education and crackdowns on crossing violators.

AMTRAK NEWS



NEW FOUNDATION STARTED

Amtrak helped seed a new station renovation project called the Great American Station Foundation. It donated \$2 million and hopes to attract matching funds to help restore stations across the country. Among groups backing Amtrak are Disney Consumer Products and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. (*USA Today*, March 4, via Dan Barr)

AMTRAK COALITION

Senators Roth and Biden from Delaware formed a bipartisan intercity passenger rail coalition to support adequate operational funding for Amtrak and a secure source of capital funding. The new coalition will speak for Amtrak and passenger rail during the appropriations processes. If you want your senator to join this coalition, call the Capitol Hill switchboard at 800-962-3524.

BUSY WEEK FOR AMTRAK SUPPORTERS

On March 14, the National Association of

Railroad Passengers issued a statement thanking Senators Bill Roth (R-Delaware) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-New York) for introducing S. 436, the Intercity Rail Trust Fund Act of 1997, which aims to ensure that Amtrak has a secure source of funding for capital improvements for five years. One percent of the bill's funds are earmarked for states without Amtrak service. The bill would provide about \$750 million a year, funded by one-half cent of the 4.3 cents of federal gasoline tax now devoted to deficit reduction.

In addition, NARP liked the Clinton Administration's replacement bill for ISTEA, called NEXTEA (National Economic Crossroads Transportation and Efficiency Act), which contains dedicated "contract authority" funding for Amtrak.

Also, the American Trucking Association now supports the time-limited half-cent for Amtrak proposal. In May 1995, a poll showed that 63% of Americans supported the half-cent idea as well.

TEXAS EAGLE FIGHT

On March 14, Texas Legislator Bill Ratcliff of Mount Pleasant filed a bill to authorize the state to bail out the *Texas Eagle* for a short time. The *Eagle* is scheduled to be terminated May 10 without any outside sources of funding from states along the route (Arkansas probably isn't enlightened enough to do the same - Arkansans are generally asphalt huggers, similar to tree huggers in the environmental circuit). Texas Governor Bush said he would sign such legislation if the legislator approved it. The loan to Amtrak must be paid back in two years (in the meantime, states over the country just keep building roads and improve airports without this payback feature).

On March 19, I heard on the local CBS affiliate that the *Eagle* has been saved through at least next September, as Texas approved a \$5.5 million loan to keep the train running (*Via the Internet, TV news and Bill Pollard*)

TEXAS EAGLE RIDERSHIP - 1996

Here are station-by-station boardings/deboardings for various cities along the route in 1996, plus the promised airline ridership comparison, prorated to 6 flights a week:

Walnut Ridge (740 on, 807 off); Little Rock (4,319 on, 4,383 off); Malvern (473 on, 510 off); Newport (104 on, 121 off); Arkadelphia (239 on, 425 off); Texarkana (2,010 on, 1,874 off).

In Texas, Longview (9,120 on, 9,177 off); Dallas (11,495 on, 11,806 off); Fort Worth (4,652 on, 4,991 off); Temple (1,377 on, 1,361 off); Austin (5,412 on, 4,700 off); San Antonio (16,401 on, 15,801 off)

Total of both on and off for Arkansas in 1996 was 14,063 and Texas 106,882.

How does this compare in Arkansas with air travel? Well, if you look at ALL flights, there is no comparison. Of course, the airlines would have more passengers. However, it wouldn't be fair to compare dozens of flights a day to only six trains a week (three-times a week in each direction). So, I picked some airlines and prorated it so that only six flights a week came to Little Rock. Here's what I found (I used boardings only, since that's all I had for the airlines):

ARKANSAS RAILROADER

Amtrak Little Rock Boardings 1996 (six trains/week): 4,319
 American Airlines Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 13,104
 Southwest Airlines Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 23,088
 Delta Airlines Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 18,720
 Continental Express Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 6,864
 TWA Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 21,528
 Northwest Airlines Little Rock Boardings 1996 (prorated to 6 flights/week): 21,528

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS - April 5 - Second Annual Railroadiana and Model Train Meet in the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff. The 819 will be steamed up. For more information, call Robert Worlow, 21515 No. Mill Rd, Little Rock AR 72206, 501-888-5655 or Mike Selligman, 5 Rockwood Dr, Conway AR 72032-2906, 501-327-5933.

COOKEVILLE, TENNESSEE - April 25, 26 - The Tennessee Railway Museum will run excursions from Cookeville to Buffalo

Valley, Tennessee, the first public trips over this line in over 40 years. Trips will be over former Tennessee Central, now Nashville & Eastern tracks. Tickets: TCRM, 709 N Lake Circle, Brentwood TN 37027 (\$25 on April 25, \$12 April 26). Call 615-781-0262.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA - June 12-15 - Kansas City Southern Historical Society convention at the Metairie Quality Hotel - Call 504-833-8211 or write KCSHS, PO Box 5332, Shreveport LA 71135-5332.

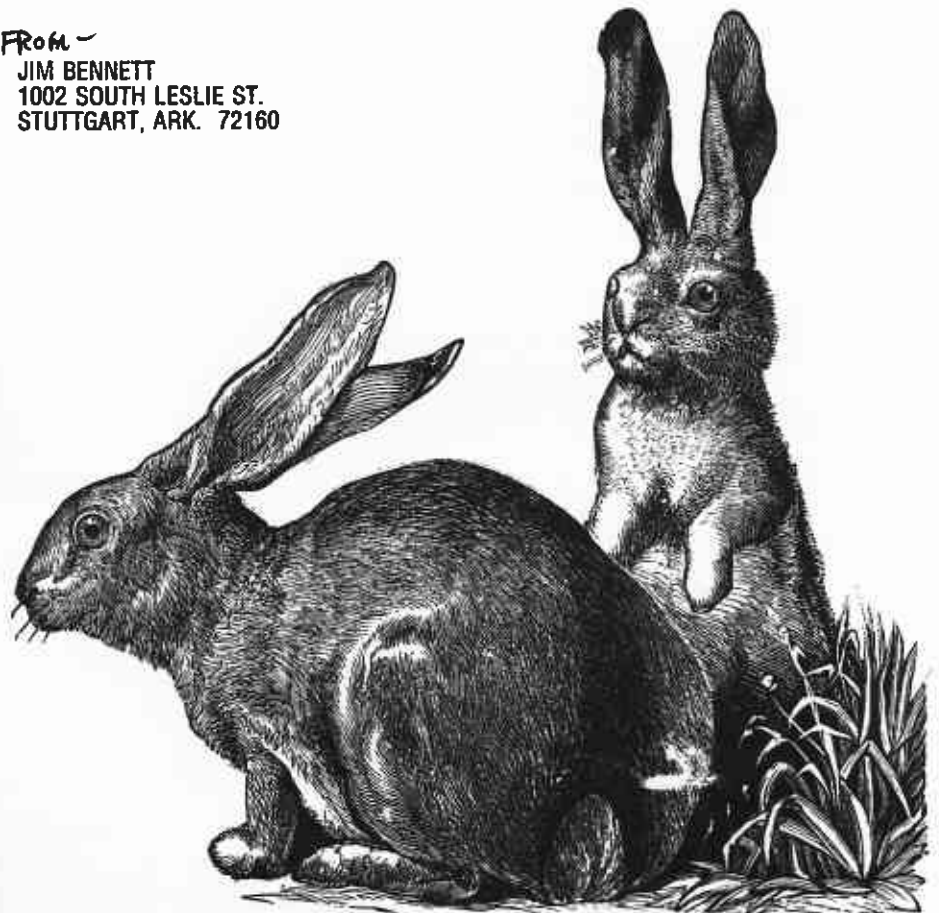
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS - June 19-21 - Arkansas Railroad Club's Annual Show and Sale will be held on June 21 in conjunction with the Mid-Continent Region's Annual NMRA Convention, which will begin on June 19. There will also be activities with the local Rock Island Technical Society's chapter. For information, contact Walter Walker, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 or call 501-663-8901.

*The Girl
 In
 The White Coat
 On
 The DELTA EAGLE*

I was twelve. We had been to a picture show in McGehee. The **DELTA EAGLE** only had two long cars, so it passed by very quickly. I see it now, plain as day, always will, the long rows of lighted windows flashing past, and the girl in a white coat framed in one of them. I loved her as soon as I saw her, and my head spun to follow the vanishing train, and the girl was gone as soon as I loved her.....

*"A girl in a white coat on the Delta Eagle
 Sped by in the lonesome night,
 And I loved her at once and forever;
 The Delta Eagle tore the heart from in me out
 And down the tracks".*

From ~
 JIM BENNETT
 1002 SOUTH LESLIE ST.
 STUTTGART, ARK. 72160



ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY FORM

Membership renewal New Member Change of Address Information update
(See dues information at bottom of this sheet)

Send membership renewal, application, change of address, etc. to:



Arkansas Railroad Club
PO Box 9151
North Little Rock AR 72119
501-758-1340 (phone/fax)
E-mail: ken.z.rw@ix.netcom.com

Please fill out the following questions after checking the appropriate box above.



Date: _____ Your birthday (optional - no year needed) _____

Name: (last) _____ (first) _____ (init) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail address: _____

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

Interests: Early Steam Era: Late Steam Era: Train chasing:
Early Diesel Era: Contemporary: Excursions:
History: Models: Photography: Artifacts:

Railroad of interest: Missouri Pacific: Rock Island: Kansas City Southern:
Cotton Belt: Amtrak: M&NA: Frisco: Southern Pacific:
Union Pacific: Burlington-Northern: Shortline (specify) _____
 Other (specify) _____

Other comments: _____

Membership dues information:

Membership: **\$20.00** per year, Arkansas Railroad Club only; **\$37.00** per year if you join or renew National Railway Historical Society membership through our Club. Dues are payable/due by January 1 of each year. If we don't have your dues by March 1, you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

Membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club entitles you to a membership card and the monthly *ARKANSAS RAILROADER* newsletter. Meetings are held monthly, except December, on the second Sunday of the month. We usually meet at 2 p.m. in the Mercantile Bank main building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just north of the Arkansas River. Interesting programs are presented each month and refreshments (cookies, sandwiches) are served. We are a non-profit organization and member of the NRHS. Officers are listed in each newsletter.