



ARKANSAS RAILROADER

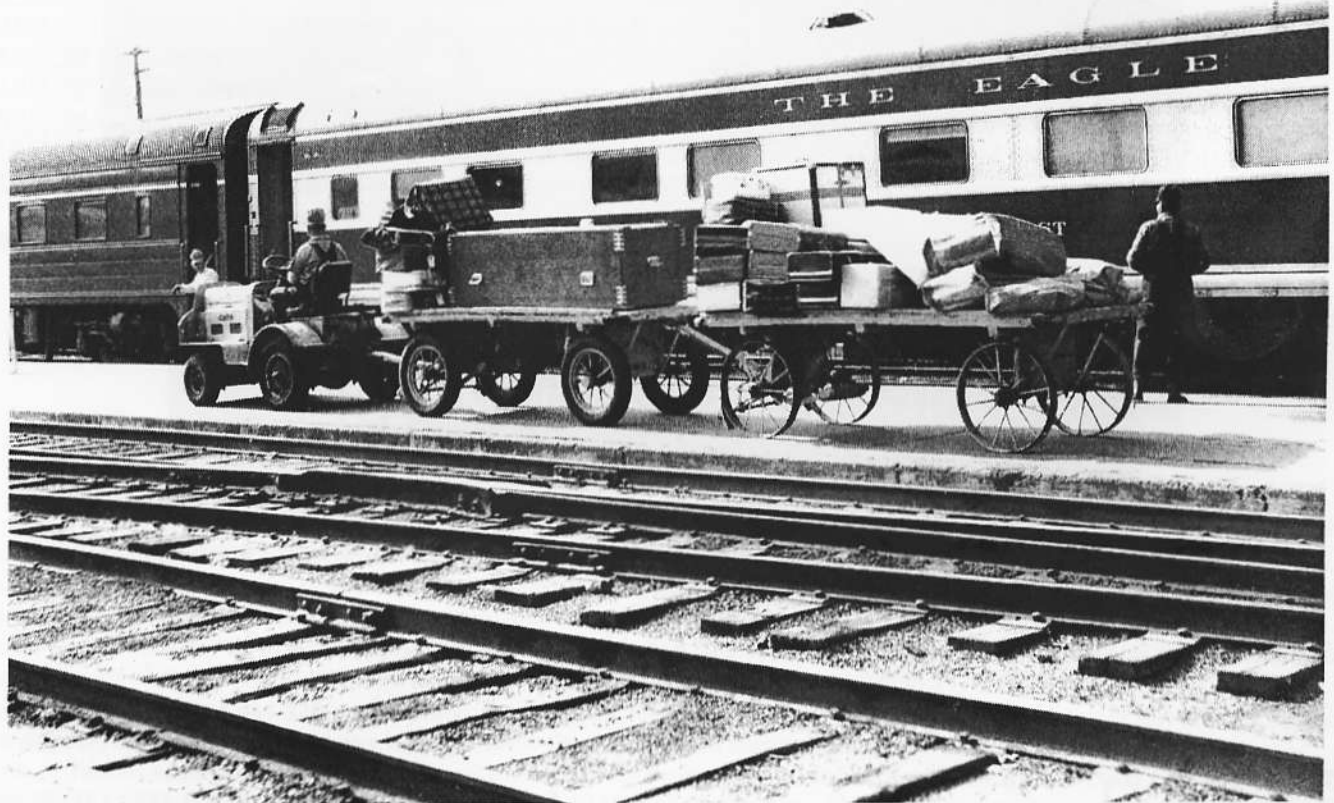


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NRHS

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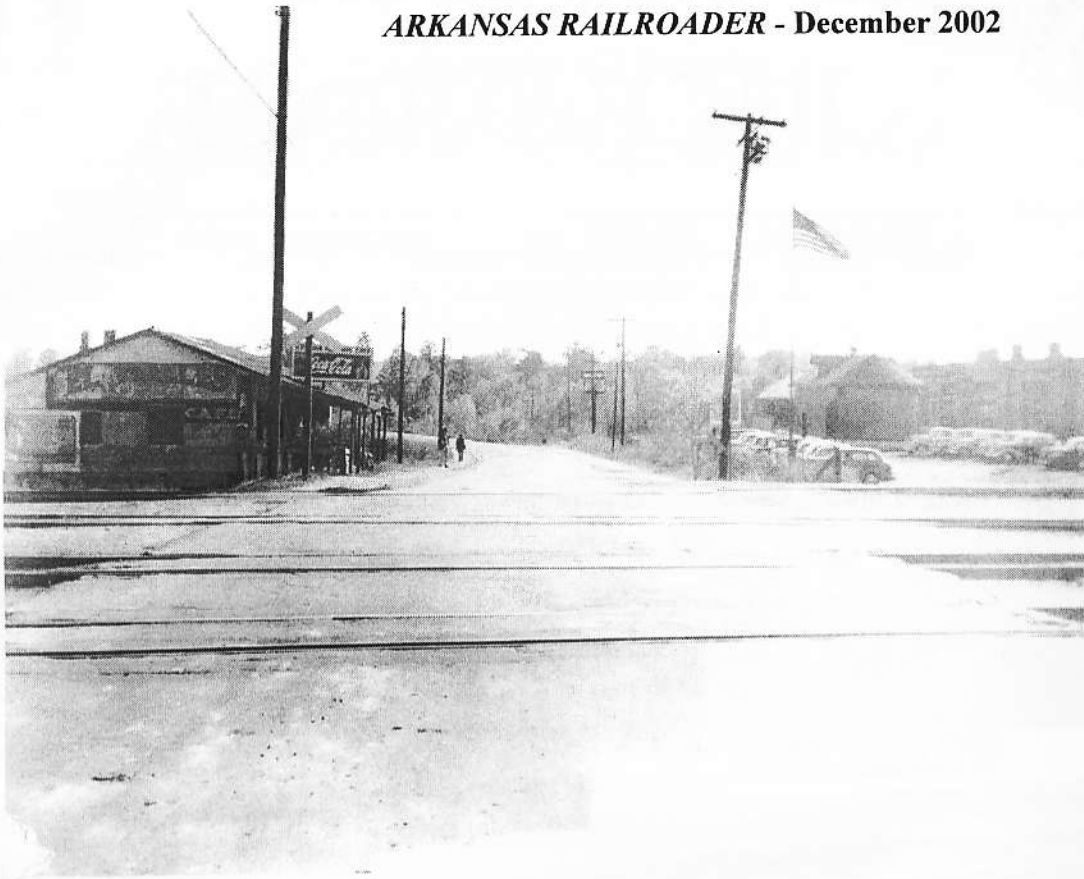
DECEMBER 2002



In sharp contrast to the earlier frantic days around Little Rock Union Station is this scene in April 1963. The Official Guide reveals the steady decline of passenger trains through Little Rock, as well as cities all over America. As shown here, shortly before the departure of Train No. 8 for St. Louis, this was a time of demise not only for trains, but also for patrons - the rubber-tired baggage cart bears the remains of a passenger taking his (her) last ride. *(Photo by Clifton E. Hull)*



ARKANSAS RAILROADER - December 2002



A Rock Island accident investigation photo taken at Biddle Crossing, Little Rock, November 3, 1942 between 3 and 4 p.m. Notice the Rock Island roundhouse about 200 feet to the right (west) of the crossing and the 1940s cars. The track most distant from the camera was the roundhouse lead. They were investigation a crossing accident involving a car hitting a light engine moving on the south track toward the camera (accident occurred November 1, 1942). (*L. T. Walker collection*)



A Rock Island accident investigation photo in Poyen, Arkansas, date and incident unknown (no caption on photo), but probably in the 1940s since other accident photos in this series were from that era. (*L. T. Walker collection*)

2002 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Fred Fillers, 29009 Bandy Rd, Little Rock AR 72223-9720 (501-821-2026), cfillers@aol.com
VICE-PRESIDENT - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2030), shay473@cei.net
TREASURER - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826), wwalker@aristotle.net
SECRETARY - Tammy Hodkin, 506 Gordon St., N Little Rock AR 72117-4713 (501-945-2128)
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
TRIP ADVERTISING - David P. Hoge, 3721 Idlewild, N Little Rock AR 72116 (501-771-1025)
HISTORIAN - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington Ave #31, N Little Rock AR 72114 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '02 - Bill Bailey, 8318 Reymere Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3944 (501-224-6828)
BOARD '03 - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412
BOARD '04 - Stanley Wozencraft, 108 N Palm St, Little Rock AR 72205-3827 (501-664-3301)
BOARD '05 - Leonard Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)
BOARD '06 - Jim Wakefield, 316 Auburn Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769 (501-664-0232)

NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

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 \$20 a year more, bringing the total to \$40 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>

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY will be **Saturday, December 14** at University Park Adult Leisure Center, 6401 West 12th Street, Little Rock (west of University Drive). We have the room from 5 to 8 p.m. and we are planning to start the meal at 6. Plan now to attend. The cost will be \$15 per person (down from last year). Write or call Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826), wwalker@aristotle.net, if you plan to attend. You can pay him the \$15 in advance or pay him at the party.

2003 DUES ARE DUE - The 2003 dues for the Arkansas Railroad Club are due January 1 (all NRHS chapters have dues becoming due on January 1, by the way). They remain at \$20 a year for local dues, which includes the *Arkansas Railroader*, and if you want to renew or join the national National Railway Historical Society at the same time, you need to send in \$20 more (\$40 for both local and national dues). I've enclosed a renewal/application form.

If you originally paid in the middle of the year, I usually made you a member through that year PLUS the year after so that you could renew in the future on January 1. So please renew on January 1 if you can. Check the labels to see when your membership expires and if it's in the NRHS as well as local. Thanks.

OFFICERS FOR 2003 - Here are the four 2003 officers for our club: PRESIDENT: Ron Esserman; VICE PRESIDENT: Russell Tedder; TREASURER: Walter B. Walker; SECRETARY: Jackie Roach. The other positions are: EDITOR: Ken Ziegenbein; NRHS DIRECTOR: Tom Shook; HISTORIAN: Gene Hull. The five Board of Director members, elected by the membership, are: 2003-Robin Thomas; 2004-Stanley Wozencraft; 2005-Leonard Thalmueller; 2006-Jim Wakefield; 2007-Fred Fillers.

RAILCAMP/NRHS CONVENTION - The Board voted November 10 to send John C. Jones to the national NRHS convention in Maryland next summer. Also, we are looking for someone under 18 who'd like to be sent to the NRHS's great Railcamp next summer in Pennsylvania. The club would pay the costs.

Speaking of next year's national NRHS convention, here's some details sent in by the Washington, DC Chapter (host chapter) in case you want to get started early on your planning:

The National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) and the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, Inc. (R&LHS) invite you to attend a joint convention, named **Star Spangled Rails**, in Baltimore, Maryland July 1 - 6, 2003. Hosted by the Washington, DC Chapter of the NRHS and the R&LHS, the convention highlights are expected to include exciting mainline excursion trains, other fun rail oriented trips, educational seminars, a railroaders flea market, along with the annual banquet. And of course, there will be a spectacular 4th of July fireworks show, courtesy of the City of Baltimore. There will also be non-rail excursions to see the historic, the cultural, and the fun parts of Chesapeake Bay area of Maryland.

The Star Spangled Rails event will coincide with the 175th Anniversary of Railroading in the United States and will occur at the height of the B&O Railroad Museum's America on Track Celebration. The highlight of the Museum's celebration will be a recreation of the 1927 "Fair of the Iron Horse". The fair will include special exhibits at the museum and Baltimore's Carroll Park. Railroad equipment of all kinds and vintages will be on display, something special no one will want to miss. Besides all of the exciting public events of the Fair, special private events for Star Spangled Rails attendees only are being planned in conjunction with the museum.

Along with planned convention activities, Baltimore offers many attractions. You can spend the day exploring Baltimore's Inner Harbor, the Maryland Science Center, the Baltimore Zoo and the National Aquarium. See historical mansions and monuments. Visit Fort McHenry where the national anthem was written. Catch a ball game or Broadway show. Enjoy cool jazz or summer concerts. And, of course, shop, shop, shop in the 200+ specialty shops at The Inner Harbor. To delight the epicureans, Baltimore offers everything from Crabs to Caviar, as well as a fantastic variety in dining experiences. The city has everything from Chesapeake Bay cuisine to Italian delights, traditional fares and everything in between. Then sit back at your hotel or stroll down to the Inner Harbor and enjoy the 4th of July fireworks spectacle.

This convention is definitely something both railfans and non-railfans will not want to miss! For more information, check the official convention website at www.starspangledrails.org. Pre-registration is now OPEN for members of both NRHS and the R&LHS.

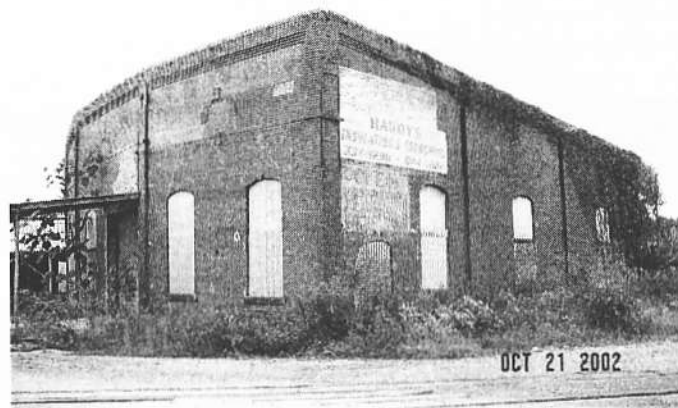
MALVERN ROUNDHOUSE ON NATIONAL HISTORIC LIST? - Arkansas Railroad Club members Ken Ziegenbein and Bill Pollard have been getting historical information collected on the Hot Springs Railroad roundhouse in Malvern in order to get it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Member Tom Shook has also gathered a lot of information and photos of this structure for a report to the NRHS and a story to be published in the *Arkansas Railroader*. John Martin also has a lot of historical information on this building. The owner of the building, Rusty Hardy, has given permission to us to get it listed and he also seems interested in renovating the 100-plus year old structure, located in Malvern, Arkansas close to the intersection of the Arkansas Midland and UP railroads.

According to historical documents, the building is somewhere between 105 and 127 years old, probably built as a narrow gauge roundhouse (but tax forms have it as wooden in 1884, then it shows up as a different footprint and brick in 1897 and 'in use'). It has survived all these years mainly because it has been in private ownership since (we believe) before 1910 (Tom's story will elaborate on this).

On Saturday, November 16, 2002, a group of Arkansas Railroad Club members visited the roundhouse. It was graciously opened for us by owner Rusty Hardy so we all got to see the inside of this historic structure, as well as got to go outside its' five-stall north side. Present were Ken Ziegenbein, Bill Pollard, Joe Pollard, John Martin, John Hodkin, Jr., John C. Jones, Tom Shook, Ralph Wilcox of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, who are helping getting it listed on the

Register, and Rusty Hardy. The building is complete, although it has been shored up in spots.

Below is a photo of the roundhouse today and the group that was there taking pictures and getting measurements.



ROCK ISLAND RECORDS RELOCATED- The Biddle (Little Rock) paper records of the Rock Island, obtained by the club in the early 1980s during the bankruptcy proceedings of the Rock Island, have been moved to a secure storage facility for safekeeping. Bill Pollard, Jim Wakefield, John Hodkin, Jr., and Krysti Hodkin helped move them to their new location on November 14. They had to be moved from a room in a building at Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church because that room had been leased to another group. There were 119, 25-30 pound boxes, of paper records. They will all be documented by various club members and eventually listed in a public form, such as a web page. A lot of the boxes contain blank forms, some have locomotive repair forms (filled out), some have personnel records, train movements, waybills, etc.

HOUSECLEANING - DELAYED STORIES - I'm in the process of going through many, many articles and stories sent in my several people over the months and years. Sorry that I can't print all of them in a timely basis, but most will see the light of print at some time in the future. I ask that you be patient if you send in articles or news or photos. Some months, like this one starting the holiday season, my time is even shorter. But thanks for sending in the articles/stories. We are lucky to have so many historical writers.

One great story coming next month was sent in by Randy Tardy regarding the 1982 upgrading of the Missouri Pacific line through east Arkansas (the Wynne Subdivision) in order to take the many chemical trains out of densely populated areas and run them through the sparsely populated Delta of east Arkansas. MoPac even used 115 pound welded rail on the upgrade, but when Union Pacific merged with the MoPac in a few years, the line was abandoned. What a waste! Today it is the Delta Heritage Trail State Park, which was dedicated October 25, 2002. (*Ken Ziegenbein - editor*)

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: Relative of conductor is

seeking current extended family members in Arkansas. Picture of him taken next to Rock Island steam engine 427 was circa 1914. Conductor's last name was Sanders. Please call Jackie in KY with any info at 1-888-817-9449. My grandfather, Mr. Sanders, was a native of Little Rock, Arkansas. He was born Oct. 31, 1914. A postcard showing Rock Island 427 is from

that time period.

FOR SALE - Steve Goen's new book "Down South" on the Rock Island, Volume One, 1940-1969, featuring over 300 rare color photos covering Rock Island operations in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Tennessee from 1940 through 1969. It was

scheduled to be published in September 2002. Price is \$59.95 plus \$4.00 postage. Send orders to Steve Goen, 1519 Sweetbriar Drive, Wichita Falls, TX 76302-2911, or call 940-767-4843.

FOR SALE - Remember that The Arkansas Railroad Club also has the following books for sale: Reprint of Gene

Hull's classic *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas*, hardbound for \$24.95 plus \$5 shipping and the club's 120-page book *Railroad Stations and Trains Through Arkansas and the Southwest*, for \$29.95 plus \$4.50 shipping. Order through White River Productions, 24632 Anchor Ave, Bucklin MO 64631, 877-787-2467. We have a few left locally as well.

FOR SALE - Actually free is the 2002-2003 Alabama Rail Map, containing railroad history, depots, rail museums, rail maps. It's put out by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism. If you'd like a free copy, call 800-ALABAMA or go online at www.touralabama.org.

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.

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.

- IOWA - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon a 12.2-mile line of railroad known as the Ankeny Subdivision, between milepost 341.1 near Slater and milepost 353.5 near Woodward (Equation 346.4=346.6) in Boone and Dallas Counties, Iowa. A final decision will be issued by January 13, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 187X, decided October 7, served October 15, 2002)
- INDIANA - CSX** - To abandon a 0.47-mile line of railroad between milepost OOQ-189.18 (north side of Grant Street) and the end of track at milepost OOQ-189.65, in Cloverdale, Putnam County, IN. Effective on November 15, 2002. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 623X, decided October 8, served October 16, 2002)
- KANSAS - SOUTH KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon a 0.4-mile line of railroad between milepost 134.3 and milepost 134.7, within the city of Pittsburg, in Crawford County, KS. Effective on November 15, 2002. (STB Docket No. AB-471 (Sub-No. 6X, decided October 8, served October 16, 2002)
- NEW YORK - CANADA SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO.** - To abandon a 0.15-mile line of railroad between milepost 0.0 and milepost 0.15, in the city of Niagara Falls, in Niagara County, NY. effective on November 21, 2002. (STB Docket No. AB-584 (Sub-No. 1X, decided October 15, served October 22, 2002)
- OHIO - NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES, LLC** - To abandon and CSXT seeks to discontinue service over a line of railroad in the Western Region, Great Lakes Division, Chicago Line Subdivision, extending from the former B&O Valuation Station 2535+40 to the end of the track at former Conrail Valuation Station 45+01, between Painesville and Grand River, a distance of 2.56 miles in Lake County, OH. A final decision will be issued by January 31, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-565 (Sub-No. 11X, AB-55 (Sub-No. 617X, decided October 29, served November 4, 2002)

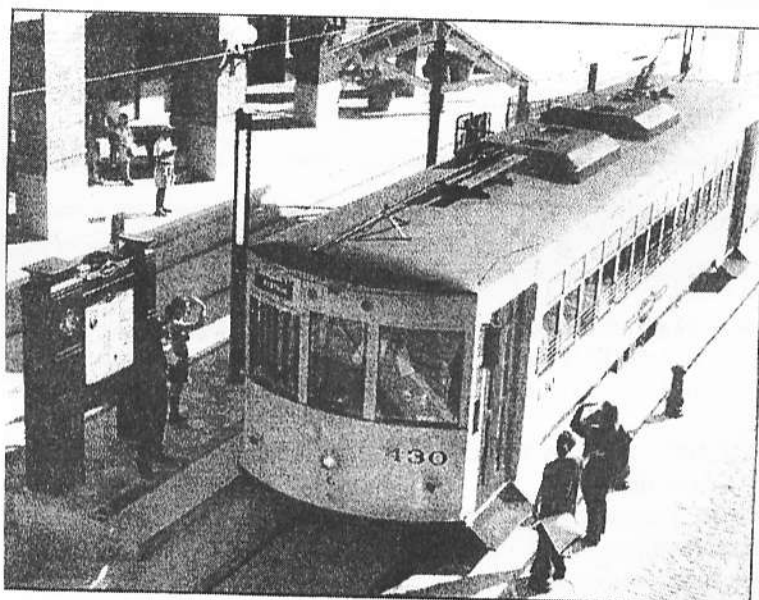
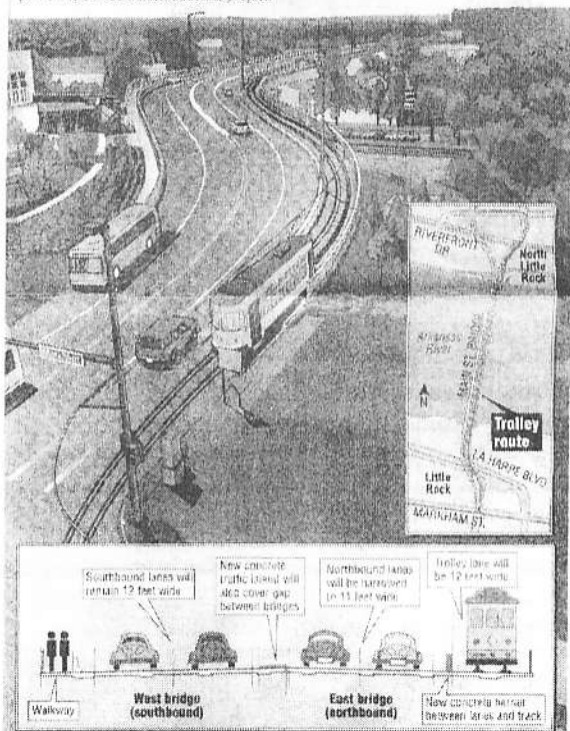
ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

RIVER RAIL CONSTRUCTION

(Little Rock) - On November 4, 2002, construction began on a street car system running through downtown Little Rock and North Little Rock. A major bridge project also started over the Arkansas river for this streetcar system. The bridge work will cost \$18.35 million. The rail system will cross the Main St. bridge to connect Little Rock and North Little Rock a distance of 2.2 miles. The transportation project is called "River Rail" and is expected to boost tourism and economic development in both down towns. Expansion of the system is expected in later years. A 7.5 million second phase is already planned to extend River Rail to the new Clinton Presidential Library in east Little Rock. More extensions are possible to the Little Rock airport and eventually to a regional rail system for Central Arkansas. Vintage-looking, but new streetcars will be used. Below are some photos depicting the new system. *(Thanks to Randy Tardy and others for the articles)*

Rails across the river

Work will soon begin on modifications to the Main Street Bridge for the River Rail streetcar line. Changes to the bridge will be the most complex part of the \$18.35 million streetcar project.



The drawing at left by Matt Haney of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, source: Central Arkansas Transit Authority, Kimley-Horn Associates, Inc., shows how the line will run across the Main Street Bridge over the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little Rock. The one lane in each direction is now closed for the

work and will remain so for 10 months. Walls will separate the streetcars from motorists and a barrier will be on the outside edge to prevent the streetcars from falling into the river should they derail. The cars will be like the one at right, taken from GomacoTrolley.com. It is a replica Birney Trolley in Tampa, Florida.

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

ACCIDENT AVERTED?

(Nashville, Tennessee) - On October 26, a railroad engineer stopped a sightseeing train after noticing tampered-with tracks that could have sent the train and its 400

passengers off a bridge, officials said. Nashville & Eastern Railroad engineer Brent Thompson was in the cab of the fall-foliage excursion train when he spotted extra tie plates wedged against the rails, the company

said. Officials said the plates -- which are normally used to stabilize tracks -- could have plunged the train into the river below. Craig Wade, vice president and general manager of the rail company said, "There's

no doubt in our mind that it was a deliberate try to derail the train." No one has been arrested in the incident in rural Smith County, about 45 miles east of Nashville.

WILD CAMELS KILLED BY TRAINS

(ADELAIDE, Australia) - Australian Outback trains are killing thirsty wild camels that have been licking early morning dew off railroad tracks during a prolonged drought, residents said November 12. The camels are descended from animals brought from the Middle East to Australia by colonial explorers and pioneers in the 19th century. Many have been killed near the tiny desert outpost of Cook on the Trans-Australia railroad that links the east and west coasts

and cuts across the treeless Nullabor Plain, 900 kilometers (560 miles) west of Adelaide, said resident and former train station master Iva Holberton. The camels, which are also eating weeds growing on along the tracks, often fail to get out of the way of trains that blow warning horns but are unable to stop in time. "They get on the line and run down the line. And, a train can outrun a camel," Holberton said. Much of Australia is suffering its worst drought in years.

KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN BENEFITTING FROM LOCKOUT?

Can the Kansas City Southern Railroad benefit from the recent lockout at West

Coast ports? Some think the can since KCS has a north-south corridor into Mexico. The only thing keeping them from expanding their shipments faster is the condition of the Mexican west coast ports. They need a lot of improvements to begin competing with ports in California and Washington/Oregon. But analysts think the KCS is poised for future growth in this area, especially if there's another shutdown of west coast ports. And should the U.S. go to war with Iraq, even air freight would be cut as a backup to shippers since about half of those air freight carriers would be involved in military shipments. (Kansas City Star, November 5, 2002 via Jim Johnson)

AMTRAK NEWS

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

ARKANSAS - PINE BLUFF - APRIL 5, 2003 - Annual Railroadiana and Model Train Show at the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff. Admission is \$4.00. If you'd like to rent a table (8-foot, \$15 each), contact Joe McCullough, CBRHS, PO Box 2044, Pine Bluff AR 71613-2044, 870-535-8819.

ENGLAND - STEAM TRAINS OF ENGLAND AND WALES - This is a comprehensive tour of England and Wales via steam trains for 11 days, June 19-30, 2003. There will be 14 private railway rides and visits, 3 railway museums, all breakfasts plus 7 dinners included. You overnight in Longon, Betws-y-Coed, North Wales, Tunbridge Wells, New Forest, Somerset, the Costwolds and Gloucester. Cost, double occupancy, is \$2699.00 not counting airfare. For reservations, call 800-266-3476 (Carefree Vacations of San Diego), email: Dbenning@sdtg.com

To join/renew membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club (Little Rock Chapter National Railway Historical Society), fill out the form below. **Annual dues are \$20** for local dues (plus \$20 for the national NRHS dues if you want to join the NRHS through our chapter, a total of \$40 for both local and national dues).

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Send check, made out to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for more information or visit us on the web at <http://www.trainweather.com> and click on *Arkansas Railroader*. Our email is trains@trainweather.com.

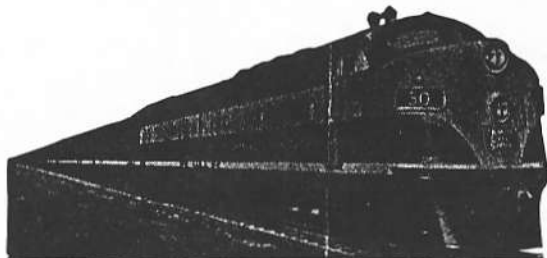
Phil Moseley sent in the these copies of a ticket envelop that was issued by the KCS when the "Southern Belle" was first put on and of old baggage checks from the KCS depot at Ashdown, Arkansas, off of the old Memphis, Dallas & Gulf Railroad Company, which was later the GN&A and now is the Nashville Branch of the KCS.

^{THE NEW} Southern Belle

STREAMLINED HOSPITALITY



between
KANSAS CITY AND
FIVE GULF PORTS —
NEW ORLEANS, BATON ROUGE,
LAKE CHARLES, BEAUMONT,
PORT ARTHUR



Mr. _____

Leave at _____ M.

Ticket _____ \$ _____

Ticket _____ \$ _____

Insurance Ticket _____ \$ _____

Other Costs _____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

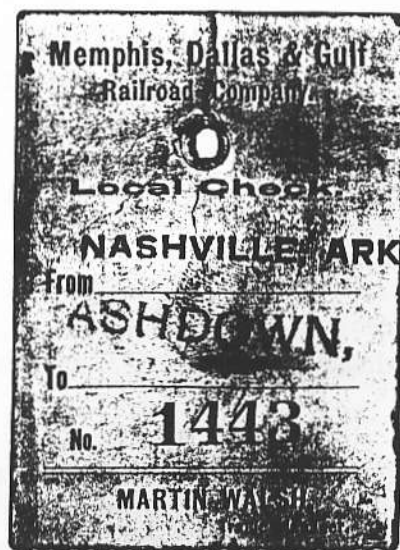
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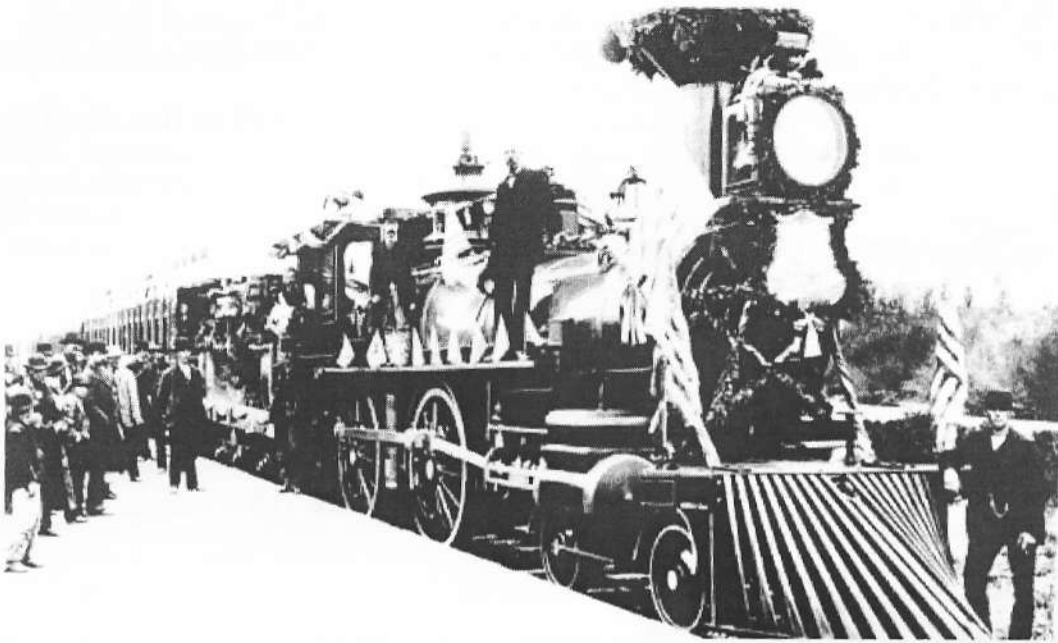
_____ \$ _____

Total \$ _____

FORM 1125

*Ask the Ticket Agent
for an Insurance Ticket*





Northern Pacific 4-4-0 No. 15 with one of four trains of celebrities at final spike driving at Gold Creek, Montana, 8 September 1883. (*Gene Hull collection*)

THE FINAL RUSTY SPIKE

by: Gene Hull

In the days when light iron rails were the first fragile sinews to begin binding the northern territory of America into a solid nation, it was customary to drive a fine gold or silver spike to celebrate the completion of a line of rails. The most famous such event was at Promontory, Utah, on 10 May, 1869, when the Central Pacific and Union Pacific were joined. Not all such occasions were as auspicious, even though just as significant.

After the successful completion of the UP-CP, there was growing agitation for a similar line of rails to link the Pacific Northwest country to the Union. As a result, President Abraham Lincoln signed a charter 2 July 1864 to create the Northern Pacific Railroad. The incorporators included General U. S. Grant and financier Jay Cooke.

Because of the Civil War construction was delayed until 16 February 1870, when ground was broken and the first spike was driven at Carlton, Minnesota, near the west end of Lake Superior. The other terminal created a bit of controversy, so in December 1870 construction was begun at a little town called Kalama, Washington, on the Columbia River 30 miles north of Vancouver, Washington. A terminal location was finally decided upon at Tacoma, Washington, and the last

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spike there was driven 16 December 1873.

Most of the continent separated the two terminals. Just as work was to begin, the nationwide financial panic of 1873 caused Jay Cooke's firm to go bankrupt, and the Northern Pacific went into receivership. Frederick Billings became NP president, and the road was reorganized in 1875. Work soon was resumed.

In 1881, Henry Villard entered the picture. Two years previously he had put together the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company. It was a consolidation of the Oregon Steamship Company and the Oregon Steam Navigation Company, as well as the little railroads for portaging the rapids of the mighty Columbia River. Villard was operating steamboats on the Columbia.

With the Northern Pacific invading the area, he was afraid they would lay rails through the Columbia River gorge and destroy his lucrative steamboat traffic. He persuaded some of his friends to invest \$8 million in a "blind pool." They didn't know what the money was for, but they trusted Villard. He bought control of the Northern Pacific. There would be no interference with his river traffic.

Construction crews were busy at both ends of the Northern Pacific. The eastbound and westbound crews met 22 August 1883 at Gold Creek, Montana Territory, 58 miles west of Helena. This was near where gold was first discovered in the territory. Villard planned a great celebration for the occasion.

Invitations were sent to prominent politicians, financial and transportation tycoons, as well as members of the "blind pool." Several guests would come across the Atlantic from Europe. Special trains would run from Portland and St. Paul. Four trains were to come 1,200 miles from St. Paul, but folks from Portland would get only an 850-mile ride.

Descriptions of the final-spike ceremony differ quite a bit. One report was written by George Hillman, who was hired by W.P. Clough, chief attorney of the Northern Pacific at St. Paul. He described the occasion as a glorious event of great dignity.

Other, and later, historical accounts describe the event quite differently, and probably much more as it actually was.

Mr. Hillman has preserved the names of the more distinguished members of the party - General U.S. Grant; Honorable Wm. M. Evarts, ex-Secretary of State, and the greatest orator of that time; Honorable Carl Schurz; General Phil Sheridan; L. Sackville West, British Minister; Baron Von Eisendecker, Imperial German Minister; H. M. Teller, Secretary of Interior; General A. H. Terry; Lucius F. Hubbard, Governor of Minnesota; and James J. Hill, the "Empire Builder" of St. Paul.

Out of St. Paul, Mr. Villard, Mr. Evarts, and the German and English guests were aboard the first train. On the second train were Gen. Grant, Frederick Billings (for whom the town of Billings, Montana was named), plus other guests. The third and fourth trains were filled with newspaper men, associated press agents, and many American guests. All trains had dining cars serving the choicest foods, cigars, wines, and champagnes. Each train had ten cars and was preceded by a pilot engine to keep the track clear of obstructions, and to help the trains over heavy

mountain grades. They all left St. Paul the evening of 3 September 1883.

The travelers enjoyed many wonderful scenes of western America in its early development. Several stops were made for local celebrations, including a war dance by 1,500 Crow Indians at Gray Cliff, Montana.

On the morning of 8 September the trains arrived at Gold Creek. A large roofed pavilion had been constructed, as well as platforms for photographers with huge glass-plate negative cameras. A quarter-mile long gap had been left in the track. A gang of track layers was stationed at each end of this gap, and at a signal the race began. Which gang would reach the mid-point first? The pace was furious for a few minutes, but the gang from the west derailed the push car loaded with rails and lost the race by 10 seconds.

A huge crowd had gathered, including 1,500 cowboys, miners, Crow Indians, many soldiers, and the military band from Fort Keogh, Montana. The long-winded speeches began. Before long the crowd was getting restless, and began calling for Gen. U.S. Grant, their Civil War hero, but to no avail. William Evarts talked without ceasing for 2 1/2 hours!

The fellows had soaked up a lot of whiskey, and calls for Grant were loud and insistent. Someone said the general had indicated he didn't want to make a speech. The crowd could not be denied, so Grant talked a few minutes.

Finally the speeches were over. Everyone crowded around the site of the last-spike driving. The spike was presented, but it was not a gold one. Neither was it a silver one. It was the original spike driven at Carlton, Minnesota, in 1870, and it was very rusty!

Henry Villard was to drive the final spike, but he couldn't force his way through the "well oiled" crowd. The shadows of night were closing in quickly. Two well decorated engines sat facing each other. There was no time for delay. H. C. Davis, an employee from the railroad traffic department, swung the maul and the rusty old spike made the Northern Pacific complete.

