



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
N.R.H.S.

# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 28 NUMBER 1 JANUARY 1997



**FIRST SP UNIT PAINTED IN UP COLORS** (more on top of page 3 - John Jones photos, November-December 1996)

Photo © 1966, 1996 by Jerry Appleman



**ROCK ISLAND 655 (E8A)** on a passenger train at St. Paul, Minnesota in January 1965. *(Photo © 1965, 1996 by Jerry Appleman - jerryapp@ix.netcom.com)*



**ARKANSAS RAILROAD MUSEUM** track work was progressing nicely in December 1996. New track was being laid on the west side of the Pine Bluff museum (home of Cotton Belt #819) for displaying the museum's increasing collection of equipment. *(John Jones photo)*

*Arkansas Railroader*

**COVER PHOTO** - The first Southern Pacific locomotive to be repainted in Union Pacific yellow was SW1500 road switcher No. 2662 (designated a 0-4-4-0, GM, built originally in July 1972 - builder's number 4608-72). The refurbished and repainted unit rolled out of the Downing B. Jenks shops in North Little Rock on Tuesday, December 10, and of course club photographer John Jones was present. The unit was renumbered to UP 1183 and will be the last one with the words "We will deliver" printed on the side.

Jack Jolley, director of the locomotive system shop, said "units will be repainted as part of the general overhaul process," not brought in for repainting only. He also said that a switcher was first because the system is "hungry for switchers." Plans were to paint eight more SP units by the end of the year at the shop. (As a sidelight, Mr. Jolley also said that the Jenks Shops painted a record 31 locomotives in North Little Rock in October).

UP now owns 6,400 locomotives, including the 2,385 acquired from the SP. (*John Jones photos, other information from UP Online*)

### 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)

**TREASURER** - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72207-5983 (501-225-0826)

**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** - Jonathan Royce, 4207 Wait St, Little Rock AR 72205-2041 (501-661-0292)

**PHOTOGRAPHER** - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729)

**BOARD '97** - Tom Shircliff, 129 Jessica Dr, Sherwood AR 72120-3429 (501-834-4914)

**BOARD '98** - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon St, N Little Rock AR 72117 (501-945-2128)

**BOARD '99** - Stanley Wozencraft, 108 N Palm, Little Rock AR 72205 (501-664-3301)

**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 Sunday, January 12, at the Mercantile Bank on Main Street in North Little Rock, just across the street from the Riverfront Hilton. The program will be presented by JOHN JONES, who will have videos of various subjects around the area. Refreshments will be served, as always, and the public is invited.

**NEW MEMBERS/ADDRESS CHANGES** - Welcome these new members, who joined because of our October trips:

WICK MARVIN, 3614 Garrison Rd, Little Rock AR 72211 (NRHS)

DAISY G DENHAM, 6118 Kenwood Rd, Little Rock AR 72207, 501-663-3697

JOHN ADAMS, 6409 Dove Lane, Little Rock AR 72206, 501-490-1131

HAROLD COOK, 3401 West 4th St, Fort Worth TX 76107, 817-338-4953 (NRHS)

MONTY MANN, 6209 Kavanaugh Blvd, Little Rock AR 72207-4252

ROGER K. CHISHOLM, 11 Hayfield Rd, Little Rock AR 72207-1601, 501-221-3433

**UPDATED WEB PAGE** - <http://www.netcom.com/~ken.z.rw/weather/trains.html>. I've added more links to my personal World Wide Web home page on the Internet. Not only will it include updated news of the Arkansas Railroad Club, I

now have computer links to the following: Reader Railroad home page, Amtrak, Union Pacific, plus links to a site that gives you the current addresses of any Congressman or Senator. There are weather links for the Little Rock doppler radar, updated once an hour, plus any radar in the country each hour (just click on the site); weather forecasts for any place in the country (just type in the town's name and state and you'll get the latest forecast from the National Weather Service); latest satellite picture, both visible and infrared; and a site from the US Postal Service that will give you the correct zip-plus-4 codes for any address in the U.S.

The address is: <http://www.netcom.com/~ken.z.rw/weather/trains.html> (the ~ is located on the upper left part of the keyboard, just to the left of the "1" key).

**RAILFAN TRIP TO TEXAS?** - Want to attend the Third Texas State Railroad's Railfan Weekend March 1 and 2, 1997? The trips, between Palestine and Rusk, in east Texas, will feature steam engine No. 500, an ex-Santa Fe Pacific 4-6-2, and Alco RS-2 No. 7. These two days will be geared to railfans with numerous photo runbys (especially on that Saturday with the steam engine). The fare is only \$85 for the full weekend. If you're interested in going, please contact Board member John Hodkin, Jr., 501-945-2128. We will get a van from North Little Rock if enough are interested. Sounds like fun.

**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.

**RPCA CONVENTION** - The 1997 joint convention of the Railroad Passenger Car Association and CUPS (Cab Unit Preservation Society) is scheduled for January 17-20 in Michigan. If anyone is interested and wants addresses, contact Chuck Crisler, PO Box 114, Ponchatoula, LA 70454-0114..

**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.

**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.

**BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES WANTED** - Please send me your birth dates (without year if you want) or anniversaries to be put in next year's calendar and in the newsletter. You can put this information on the renewal form in the space provided.

**CALENDARS FOR 1997** - 1997 Arkansas Railroad Club calendars are available for \$7.00 each, 2-9 are \$6.50 each and 10 or more are only \$6.00 each. Send check to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. You may use the form in the newsletter.

**1997 DUES ARE DUE BY JANUARY 1** - As you know, it's renewal time again for membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club and NRHS. Annual dues are \$20 for local and \$17 for national NRHS. If you join the NRHS through our club, total dues are \$37. Please use the membership form in this newsletter and mail it in.

### 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.

**FOR SALE** - "Cabooses of the Missouri

Pacific Lines" by G. J. Michels, Jr. To be released in early January. Hardbound 400-page book contains 400 black and white and color photos of MP cabooses, including rosters. Cost is \$75 plus \$4.50 shipping. Contact Missouri Pacific Historical Society, 2718 Hwy 38, Cabot AR 72023-8120.

**FOR SALE** - Sets of specially canceled bicentennial envelopes from the Tenn 2000 Spirit of Tennessee train, which rain across Tennessee last summer on a publicity tour using E-units, are for sale. This set consists of canceled envelopes from each of the 39 towns visited by the train and are for sale at \$38 per

set. Contact Marge Chesser, USPS Customer Service, 525 Royal Parkway, Nashville TN 37229. (Thanks to member Chuck Crisler for the above information)

## 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.

**IOWA - NORFOLK & WESTERN RAILWAY CO** - To abandon 1.21 miles of line between Station 422+69.9 and Station 486+64 in Clive, Iowa. Effective December 25, 1996. (FR November 25, 1996)

**INDIANA - CONRAIL** - To abandon a portion of the line known as the Honey Creek Secondary between m.p. 120.65 and m.p. 121.10 in the city of Anderson, Indiana. Effective January 4, 1997. (FR December 5, 1996)

**OHIO - WHEELING & LAKE ERIE RAILWAY CO** - To abandon 2.3 miles of line from m.p. 0.0 at Huron Junction in Norwalk to m.p. 2.3 near Milan, Ohio. Effective December 20, 1996. (FR December 5, 1996)

**WISCONSIN - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon 8.3 miles of line known as the Oconto Falls Industrial Lead from m.p. 54.4 near Oconto to the end of the line at m.p. 46.1 near Stiles Junction, Wisconsin. Effective January 10, 1997. (FR December 11, 1996)

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

### SANTA EXPRESS



(Hoxie) - BNSF's "Santa Claus Special" arrived in Hoxie at 6:50 p.m. December 5 with thousands waiting. Member Tom Shircliff said the train was every bit as pretty as recent photos in Pacific Railnews. Over 2,000 lights were strung on the engine and cars and there was a 20-foot Christmas tree aboard. Prior to its arrival, a new BNSF Dash 9 in new orange and green colors came through hauling a mixed freight.

### DEPOT PROJECT ON TRACK

(Camden) - The old Missouri Pacific depot in Camden got the green light in November to be renovated, the project being approved by the Camden City Council. Upon completion, the depot will be used as offices for the Camden Chamber of Commerce and there is

talk of putting it to use as a rail terminal for a tourist line (the line to Gurdon being up for abandonment). ISTEAFunds (\$160,000) will be available for this (editor's note...this law will come up for renewal in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, and talk is the Republican majority will not renew it). The city will lease the property around the depot for \$1200 a year for 30 years from Union Pacific. Main Street Camden already has raised the needed \$42,000 to qualify for the ISTEAF grant. Renovation work will begin as early as May 1997. (Camden News, November 13, 1996 via Carl E. Barnes, retired agent)



### STREETCAR DESIRES - II

(Little Rock) - The Hillcrest Trolley Committee is still

on track to buy and bring back to the Heights area a late 1940s streetcar, No. 305, from its current home on a farm in Enola, about 60 miles north of Little Rock. While the current owner, Bob Walker, used it to store feed bags while parked under a roof, the committee hopes to restore it and either use it as a museum or perhaps get it to run again on some of the same tracks it did in the 40s, which are still intact but buried under asphalt. Amazingly, the windows of the car are still in it.

### INTERMODAL SITE O.K.'D

(Ebony) - Two levels of Federal judges have agreed to let Union Pacific buy land and build a new intermodal facility in Ebony, near Marion, in east Arkansas. Landowners have been fighting this. Eminent domain allows railroads to take any land they deem necessary after going through courts. This

new yard, which would have four tracks 4,000 feet long, will be finished by early 1998, according to Mark Davis, UP's Public

Relations manager for this region. (*Via Don Weis*)

## GENERAL RAIL NEWS

### SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ACTIONS

The STB announced a 300-day timetable for both the CSX-Conrail merger plan and the NS-Conrail plan. CSX and Conrail will file their merger plan March 1 (the STB decision due by January 1998) and NS will file its plan May 1 (decision due March 1998).

The board will also seek comments as to how to give severance pay to railroaders who lose their jobs because a Class-II carrier buys another line. Congress in 1996 said a one-year payment must occur, but gave no instructions how to do it. (*Various sources via the Internet December 3*)

### NORTHEAST MEXICO LINE SOLD

Five companies started out bidding on Mexico's Ferrocarriles de Mexico railroad, which runs through northeast Mexico. The line is to be privatized. On November 30, two bidders backed out (Illinois Central and a Gec Alsthom group). That left three bidders, one from a Union Pacific led-group, one from Transportation Ferroviaria Mexicana (owned by a Mexican steamship line and Kansas City Southern Industries) and one from Grupo Ferroviario Mexicano, a Mexican mining company.



**THE WINNER** - Transportation Ferroviaria Mexicana (KCS). The bid: **\$1.4 BILLION**. This bid was over three times more than bid by the

other companies, including the Union Pacific group. The winner gets a 50-year contract to operate the line, which runs to Mexico's principal ports and from Mexico City to the Texas border near Laredo, including Mexico's lucrative auto manufacturing belt. This line will now represent a major portion

of Mexico's transportation system, over 40% of the country's rail cargo. Cargo shipped by rail in Mexico totaled 55 million tons in 1995, up from 40 million tons in 1991, but still lower than the 66 million tons shipped by rail in 1985. The FNM Railroad now employs 46,000, down from 86,000 in 1990. Buyouts of up to \$12,000 are being offered to Mexican rail workers, a fortune there. Also, the Mexican government is trying to relocate thousands of squatters living along the tracks (Bart, are you there?)

Some people are questioning how the new company can make money on such a large bid (the expected bid was at most \$400 million, and the accepted bid was a billion dollars more). TFM has said that it expects sizeable increases in intermodal loads and other freight due to the NAFTA agreement. It may take at least a year to prove a reliable service.

Union Pacific had no immediate comment. It recently spent \$35 million on its Laredo intermodal facility and was viewed as the favorite to win the Northeast Mexico line. Instead, it came in third, bidding about \$533 million. Whether UP will work with TFM or get its Mexico freight by truck remains to be seen. TFM will also have connections in Laredo with the KCS-acquired Texas Mexican Railway, which runs to Houston then over KCS to St. Louis, partly via the Gateway Western, newly acquired by KCS as well.

TFM agreed to purchase 180 locomotives in 10 years and repair the track. It expects a 15% growth every year in traffic over the line through 2006. It will invest \$615 million over the next 10 years. TFM must pay 40% by January 31, 1997 and the rest by July 1997. (*Via the Internet, December 9 Journal of Commerce, and The Houston Chronicle, December 5, via Dan Barr*)

### CSX/CONRAIL SUE NS

CSX and Conrail filed suit December 5

against Norfolk Southern claiming that NS interfered with the CSX/Conrail merger agreement and that NS did not intend to acquire Conrail, but wanted only to cripple the deal. A jury trial was asked. NS CEO David Goode said December 23rd's Conrail shareholder's vote to accept the CSX bid would be a turning point and NS was trying to persuade the Conrail shareholders that NS's bid was superior. NS will also try to buy the Florida East Coast Railroad, when it becomes available. (*Internet and Houston Chronicle, December 4, via Dan Barr*)

### CAUTION IN RAIL YARDS ADVISED

There is a group of people who call themselves the Freight Train Riders Association. They live on the rails and prey on the homeless and anyone else they find in the yards. The Port Terminal Railroad Association's Police Department of Houston, Texas said they've encountered this group three times this year. The FTRA consists of dopers, and are violent and don't mind killing their victims. They are armed. Be careful near the rails! (*Via the Internet*)

### MALBORO LIMITED NEWS

The famous Malboro Unlimited, that was supposed to carry passengers in luxury across the western states last August after running nationwide contests, has yet to make a first run. Its builder, Radar Railcar, Inc., said the project has been plagued with problems from the start. Initial construction estimates of \$50 million has now hit \$90 million. Meanwhile, Philip Morris has told the winners of the free trips that it won't happen at least until 1998. The company has spend nearly \$500 million to advertise the train.

*Reason to volunteer to help out on Arkansas Railroad Club and YMCA projects: men who do volunteer work at least once a week have half the death rate of others. (Men's Health,*

February 1994)

### KCS BUYS GATEWAY WESTERN

(Kansas City) - Kansas City Southern Industries announced December 2 that it would acquire the Gateway Western Railway Co., a Class II carrier which operates between Kansas City and East St. Louis. It would also obtain the trackage rights from Springfield to Chicago. The purchase of this line is subject to the Surface Transportation Board's approval. Should the purchase be approved, KCS would then have lines from Chicago to St. Louis to Texas to Mexico, since it already owns the Texas-Mexican Railway. It has trackage rights over UP's line between Beaumont and Corpus Christi, Texas as part of the UP/SP merger agreement. KCS is trying to become a big-time player, since it also won rights to operate FNM's line in northeast Mexico.

(via Internet mail-list)

### DANGEROUS FOR TRESPASSERS

Railroads have always been dangerous for trespassers and anyone who ignores rail crossing signals. Here's a few samples of what happened the last month or so: 11/20 - San Antonio - UP CSACD struck trespasser, lost legs; 11/21 - Fruitvale, CA - UP freight struck trespasser; 11/21 - Alpine, TX - Amtrak #1 struck pickup; 11/21 - Haymarket, VA - NS freight struck car, one dead; 11/21 - Fluhr, CA - Amtrak #716 struck, killed trespasser; 11/21 - Emeryville, CA - Amtrak #717 struck, killed trespasser; 11/22 - Kissimmee, FL - Amtrak #97 struck pickup; 11/23 - St. Cloud, MN - Amtrak #7 struck abandoned Jeep; 11/24 - Attleboro, MA - Amtrak #175 struck, killed trespasser; 11/24 - Gillespie, NC - Amtrak #92 struck

abandoned auto; 11/24 - Oceanside, CA - Amtrak #775 struck, killed trespasser; 11/25 - Midvale, UT - UP freight struck auto, one dead; 11/25 - Auburn, WA - Amtrak #751 struck auto, one dead; 11/26 - New Iberia, LA - UP AVSRQK struck sugar cane truck, derailed five cars; 11/27 - Secaucus, NJ - Amtrak #101 struck, killed employee; 11/27 - Charlotte, MI - GTW #555 struck beer truck; 11/28 - Merced, CA - Amtrak #713 struck, killed trespasser. (via Internet Newsgroup

### TEMPORARY SUSPENSION

(Oklahoma) - Union Pacific temporarily suspended service to Haywood, Holdenville, Seminole, Stuart, Tracy and Wewoka, Oklahoma in late November due to poor track conditions.

### MOFFAT TUNNEL SALE

The historic Moffat Tunnel through the Continental Divide went on sale November 13, 1996. The high bidder gets the 6.2 mile rail and water tunnel as well as a 33-year lease for a fiber optic cable route. (Via the Internet)

### SUICIDE

(Houston, Texas) - A 76-year old cancer victim committed suicide late last summer when he drove his pickup into the engines of Amtrak's "Sunset Limited" in the Houston area. He had failed in an earlier attempt to do the same thing. After getting out of the hospital after the first attempt, he bought a new pickup and drove it again into the path of the train, this time succeeding. (Chuck Crisler)

### RAILROAD TAXES

(Arizona) - The Supreme Court on December 9 let stand a lower court's ruling

allowing Arizona to impose an excise tax on rail carriers, while exempting motor carriers from such levies. The Arizona Central Railroad had asked the high court to disallow this taxation since it did not apply to trucks and constituted discrimination. Also, tax revenues collected go to the general fund of the state and are not used for railroad purposes. Railroads also must pay state taxes on out of state fuel purchases, while trucks do not. The state argued successfully that motor carriers pay higher fuel use taxes. It also maintained that railroads do not pay any sales taxes on interstate operations. (Via the Internet)

### MERGERS TO HELP RAILROADS COMPETE?

According to the trucking industry, 77% of communities are not served directly by a railroad (that is, trains don't stop there) but 100% are served by trucks. Conrail and CSX think their possible merger may start to take some business away from trucks since they'd be more efficient. In fact, a trucking union is fighting the merger because they fear it would lose 100,000 trucking jobs. Currently, trucks account for \$270 billion of intercity freight traffic while railroads only have \$30 billion. (Philadelphia Inquirer, December 9)

### ELECTRONIC BRAKING

Rockwell Technical Services has developed an electronic railroad braking system (EABS) that permits railroads to maintain higher speeds while stopping distances are reduced up to 70 percent. The brakes are applied simultaneously to every car in the train. (Via the Internet)

## AMTRAK NEWS



### "SUNSET" ON HIT LIST

Amtrak's *Sunset Limited*, the only true transcontinental rail route, may be the next train targeted for elimination.

According to Amtrak, it makes less money than the *Texas Eagle*, which was slated for cutting in 1996. Also, Amtrak has laid off about half of the maintenance crew at New Orleans and evidently targets the New Orleans base for elimination once the *Sunset Limited* ends. (Houston Chronicle, November 10, via Gilbert Ziegenbein and

Chuck Crisler)

### ILLINOIS STATE SUBSIDIES TO END?

It has been reported that the state of Illinois may end its subsidies to Amtrak, opening the routes to private bidding. A Chicago Metra spokesman has said that they would like to take over Amtrak's Chicago-St. Louis and

Chicago-Quincy lines. These lines carry about 300,000 passengers a year. Amtrak said that it is working on a plan with Illinois to operate 40 trains a day at a fixed price. (Craig O'Connell, *Friends of Amtrak*, [www.netcom.com/~crocon/amtrak.html](http://www.netcom.com/~crocon/amtrak.html))

#### WANT TO HELP AMTRAK?

According to the organization "Friends of Amtrak," there are three things you can do to help assure Amtrak's viability: 1) Write your Congressmen and President Clinton urging support of the half-penny gas tax for Amtrak's capital funding; 2) support giving states the choice to spend some of their federal transportation funds on passenger trains (they can spend it almost anywhere else now, even on bike paths!); 3) support Amtrak's request for \$245 million in operating funds for FY 1998.

#### AMTRAK/GREYHOUND

Amtrak announced in mid November that it is

was joining forces with Greyhound Bus Lines to provide seamless services between the two carriers in many parts of the country. Some cities long absent of rail service will now have direct Amtrak links through Greyhound, such as Macon, Georgia and Louisville, Kentucky. Amtrak may now also sell tickets on it's less-than-daily lines on Greyhound. Among the first new bus services offered November 10 was Macon to Atlanta, Laredo to San Antonio, and Melbourne to Cocoa, Florida. (Amtrak press release)

#### DROP DEAD

Or just plain drop. October 1<sup>st</sup> was the last day that Amtrak's passenger cars (or any other mainline cars) could legally operate direct-discharge toilets (those which discharge waist onto the tracks). (Cinders, December 1996)

#### GULF COAST LIMITED

Amtrak's #23/24, the *Gulf Coast Limited*,

has been doing quite well, according to member Chuck Crisler of Ponchatoula, Louisiana. He said that while the half-price special was going on the train had 6-7 coaches. He also said that CSX occasionally delays this train, one time holding it at Gentilly Yard to wait for a freight, whose crew wasn't scheduled to show up for 45 minutes. The *Limited* was also involved in two separate grade crossing fatal accidents in Mississippi. (Chuck Crisler)

#### FAST MAIL DERAILS

(Secaucus, New Jersey) - A 12-car mail/passenger train on the Northeast Corridor derailed November 23 after hitting a misaligned rail joint on the bridge over the Hackensack River. It was going 60 mph. NO DEATHS occurred, but there were 34 injuries. (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, November 24 via Jonathan Royce)

### EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

**ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI** - January 18, 1997 - Trainfair '97, a Show and Swap Meet located at the Saint Charles Exhibition Center, I-70 and 5th Street, Saint Charles, Missouri - to reserve tables or for more information, write to Chris Lewis, #23

Whinhill Ct, Saint Charles MO 63304, 314-298-8300, ext 59 (daytime).

**PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS** - April 5, 1997 - 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.

## BURNING TRESTLE ON THE COTTON BELT

*submitted by Lynn N. Gaines, Jr*

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1894, St. Louis Southwestern Rwy. (Cotton Belt) freight train No. 15 with Engineer Zacharias "Zackery" Joseph Ferguson at the throttle, was descending what was known as Negro Hill, just south of Lewisville, Arkansas at maximum speed. Suddenly, he looked ahead and saw that the trestle at the foot of the hill was afire. Perhaps, in that brief moment that he had left to apply the brakes, he momentarily thought back on his older times in Jackson, Tennessee, where he had fired some for the noted Casey Jones, of the Illinois Central Rwy. Also, perhaps to think of his wife, Eliza Jane They and his several children, who now lived with him in Pine Bluff.



Ferguson's efforts proved, however, to be in vain, as the engine, 28 cars and caboose all fell through the burning trestle, which gave way when occupied. Engineer Ferguson and Brakeman J. T. Richardson were instantly killed and Fireman O'Neal was dangerously scalded. It was speculated that sparks from the northbound passenger train set the trestle on fire.

Engineer Ferguson was the secretary of the local lodge of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Funeral services for Ferguson were conducted at the Catholic Church, on the morning of July 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the well known Father J. M. Lucey in charge. His remains were interred in St. Joseph's Catholic cemetery, Pine Bluff. Ferguson was only 42 at the time of his death.

(This author's father once said even at the time he went to work as a telegrapher in 1923, as he put it, "...there were some air brakes, some hand brakes and some NO brakes, and it was impossible to stop a train quickly....")

Newspapers sources: PINE BLUFF DAILY COMMERCIAL, Pine Bluff, July 2, 1894, PINE BLUFF DAILY GRAPHIC, Pine Bluff, July 2 and July 3, 1894. Interviews: Mrs. S. T. Songer (Engineer Ferguson's granddaughter). L. N. "Buddy" Gaines, Sr., Agent-telegrapher Cotton Belt Route. Other sources: tombstone of Z. J. Ferguson, St. Joseph's Cemetery, Pine Bluff.



## W. T. CARTER LUMBER CO. PRESERVED STEAMERS

*from Patrick Traubert via email*

W. T. Carter Lumber Company was an east-Texas lumber company which was abandoned in 1934, its rail line and town sold for scrap (the site is near Huntington, Texas today). However, this relatively small operation managed to have ten of its steam engines preserved until today. Here's a list of the engines and their locations:

#1, 2-6-0, Baldwin 1906, Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in operation

#1 (2<sup>nd</sup>), 2-8-2, Baldwin 1925, Teague, Texas

#2, 2-6-0, Baldwin 1907, Reader, Arkansas, under repair

#2 (3<sup>rd</sup>), 42-2 Shay, Lima 1907, Nacodoches, Texas, formerly #7

#3, 2-6-0, Baldwin 1908, Lufkin, Texas

#4, 2-6-2, Baldwin 1913, Reader, Arkansas, operable

#5, 4-6-0, Baldwin 1911, Livingston, Texas

#6, 2-8-0, Baldwin 1913, San Antonio, Texas

#14, 2-8-2, Baldwin 1906, Camden, Texas

#201, 2-6-0, Alco (Cook), Eureka Springs, Arkansas, operable, originally 5-foot gauge used in building the Panama Canal

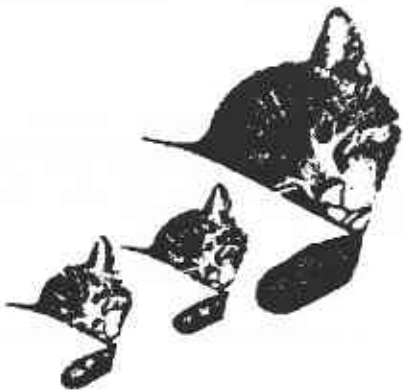


## THE GEORGE WASHINGTON REVIVING AMERICA'S PASSENGER TRAINS

by: Gene Hull

A small oval piece of metal stamped in the shape of a passenger train drumhead sign bearing a likeness of our first president symbolizes the resurrection of America's passenger trains.

By 1932 most of the nation's railroads were seeing revenues less than one-half what they had been in 1929, when the Great Depression began. But, the Chesapeake & Ohio had \$24 million left after all the bills were paid. This railroad was blessed by the fact that its rails penetrated the abundant fields of coal in Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky. Demand for coal continued through the depression years. At that time coal had to be moved by the nearest and most convenient railroad.



Strangely enough, the C&O did not follow the trend of other railroads, which regarded passengers in proportion to the amount of money it generated. This service provided only about 2.5 percent of the total revenues of the Chessie. Nevertheless, the road maintained a tremendous pride in its fine passenger service. The equipment was the most modern available, and the symbol of "Chessie", the sleeping kitten, advertised to the whole country the company's sense of pride.

Officials of the Chessie believed the traveling public deserved the finest amenities available. Instead of reducing service, they would offer something new. A new train!

The train would be created to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birthday of George Washington. It would coincide with the celebration planned by the Washington Bicentennial Commission. The railroad called upon the expertise of the Pullman Company to produce "The Most Wonderful train In The World." It would cater to the coach passenger as well as the sleeping car trade. It would show the patriotic faith in, and love for, America expressed by the C&O.

Of course, the train would be called the GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The train was known as the GEORGE, and it was a remarkable train, offering something in design and comfort. Washington's lasting influence on America was evident in every car. Each was given a name relating to the first president's part in the forming of the United States. All decorations carried out the same theme - there were paintings, colorful prints, and architectural details. A bust of George was presented by the Washington Bicentennial Commission. It graced the arch of a doorway in the "Commander-In-Chief" library-observation-sleeper-lounge car. On either side of the doorway were framed prints of famous paintings, "Crossing The Delaware" and "Signing the Declaration of Independence."

The dining car was designed as a Colonial tavern, and was named "Michie's Tavern," a patriotic point of rendezvous. It served a magnificent Mount Vernon Dinner for \$1.25, featuring Chesapeake Bay seafood and Colonial recipes. There were Duncan Phyfe

chairs, framed prints and Colonial patterned carpets. Patrons ate from specially made china bearing a reproduction of Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Washington. A medallion of the same likeness graced the front of the locomotive assigned to the train, and also as a drumhead sign on the brass railing of the observation car.

Coach passengers rode in comfort in Imperial Salon cars seating only 45 persons in almost parlor-like style. These cars, for the first time, abandoned the idea of two rows of seats on each side in favor of the "2 and 1" arrangement, thus reducing the usual load of 85 passengers for the sake of comfort. The train was advertised as the "world's first air-cooled and conditioned sleeping car train." This wasn't really true. The first completely air conditioned train in the world was the Baltimore & Ohio's "Columbian" between New York and Washington, which was put in service on 24 May 1931. The GEORGE made its inaugural run 11 months to the day later - 24 April 1932 - between Washington and Cincinnati.

The train ran over the rails of the Pennsylvania between New York and Washington, then over the C&O main line as far as Charlottesville, Va., where a Virginia section from Norfolk was picked up. At Cincinnati the train used the track of the Big Four (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis) to Chicago and St. Louis. At Ashland, Kentucky, a connection from Louisville was picked up.

Passengers had the opportunity to purchase pieces of the beautiful dining car china at 35 cents for a saucer, or \$5.00 for a gold trimmed service plate.

The railroad built luxurious hotels at the resort towns of Hot Springs, Virginia, and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. They were the Homestead and Greenbriar, respectively. The Greenbriar and the town of

White Sulphur Springs was served by a predecessor of the C&O, the Virginia Central Railroad, until a merger in August 1868, when the VC ceased to exist and the Chesapeake & Ohio was installed in its place. General Robert E. Lee arrived at the Greenbriar Hotel aboard the steamcars in 1867. The cuisine aboard the dining cars of the GEORGE was a foretaste of what travelers could expect at the excellent dining rooms of the hotels.

When the C&O announced the inauguration of the GEORGE WASHINGTON, it seemed to be a signal for other railroads of the country. It was the beginning of a campaign to woo the traveling public to ride the rails. The elegance and beauty of the comings and goings of the GEORGE are recalled by a small oval of metal in a large photo album. ~~XXXX~~



# 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.

## JONATHAN ROYCE

**Born August 18, 1924 - Died December 17, 1996**

Jonathan Franklin (Jack) Royce VIII was born in Pasadena, California August 18, 1924. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II for three years. After the war, he moved to his parent's farm near Gurdon, Arkansas. He attended Ouachita University and Henderson State University, graduating with a B.M.E. He then married Elenor Keeling, mother of his children.

He taught band in McCrory, Corning and East Side Junior High in Little Rock. He worked for the Arkansas Inspection and Rating Bureau, which eventually became I.S.O. Commercial Risk Services. He served as a Field Representative for 37 years, retiring in August 1992.

One of his great pleasures was volunteering at the Arkansas Opera Theater, where he served as stagehand and supernumery for 20 years. In retirement, he enjoyed traveling to Israel, Egypt, Greece (he once gave a slide show on Greek railways), Mediterranean Islands, Caribbean Islands, Canada and much of the U.S.

Jonathan was interested in trains and was an active member of the Arkansas Railroad Club and traveled as often as possible by train. (He was on both of our Union Pacific excursions last October).

In January 1995, he was diagnosed with colon cancer and had surgery and was on chemotherapy ever since. As a member of Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, he sang in the Sanctuary Choir and served as choir librarian. He was active in the Dialogue Class, the Cancer Friendship Group and Prime Timers.

He is survived by his wife, Fay Jean Barnes Royce, two daughters - Cassandra Barnett and Suzanne Carlisle, three sons - Jonathan David Royce, Garrett Franklin Royce, and Joseph Edward Royce. He has four grandchildren, four stepchildren, and nine step-grandchildren.

The funeral was at 11 a.m., Friday, December 20, 1996. Memorials may be made to Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church of Little Rock.

(Personal note - Jonathan was a regular contributor to the *Arkansas Railroader*. He sent in news clippings from newspapers every month. He was also the newly elected National Director to the NRHS. He was one of the nicest gentlemen I've ever met, always mild tempered. I don't think you could have made him mad if you tried. He will be sorely missed by the Arkansas Railroad Club).