



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Arkansas Railroader



VOLUME 9 NUMBER 7 JULY 1978

FISH FRY AND PICNIC JULY 8TH

If you miss the above you will be missing one of the big events of our club for 1978. It will be held at Harry Coonley's "Whistle Stop" Cabin and Caboose located out Highway #10. Serving will start promptly at 1:30 PM; the cost per person is \$2.50 and you should bring some item or items of food such as pickles, potato chips, soft drinks, cakes, pies, etc. Also if you have folding chairs bring them too. The fish will be purchased and they will be fried on the premises. Just in case of inclement weather forecast it will be postponed until the following week. Just in case you are in doubt about the weather call the following: Bill Bailey at 224-6828; Harry Coonley at 663-4740, Walter Walker at 225-0826 or Bill Merck at 666-5621. We trust the weather will cooperate and for your information Page 3 contains a map with directions on how to get to Whistle Stop. Heres hoping we can have a good turnout; the last two or three picnics held at Scott were a total flop attendance wise. Theres plenty of shade at Whistle Stop so don't worry about the heat.

A VISIT TO THE PINE BLUFF ARSENAL - - - Thru the courtesy of our genial friend and secretary, Ross Holt, Bill Bailey and your editor were privileged to see and ride the government operated railroad inside the Pine Bluff Arsenal. Motive power on the line consists of Baldwin switchers, Numbers 4029 and 4020. Builders plates on both units show constructed by Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton in 1954. No. 4029 is lettered UNITED STATES ARMY; No. 4020 is lettered only U.S.ARMY. The day was cloudy (June 20th) and not good for photos; however also on hand with camera which was suitable for any kind of weather was a Mr. Bryan Griebenow, Sales Engineer for Mission Rubber Company, Inc., of Corona, California. Mr. Griebenow was visiting Arkansas to take photos of some of our rail lines and understand this gentleman furnished some material for the best seller, COTTON BELT LOCOMOTIVES now selling for twenty bucks and advertised in current rail publications. This railroad is not seen or visited by the general public; in fact it may be virtually unknown even to many rail fans. The line does all the switching inside the arsenal and delivers and picks up from both Cotton Belt and Missouri OPacific. Our thanks to Ross for arranging the visit for us which was one we will always remember. Might add that while in the Pine Bluff area Bill and your editor went by to see Mr. W.F. (Bill) Reed, Superintendent at Pine Bluff for Cotton Belt. Cotton Belt Business Car SAN JOSE was parked right outside Bill's Office and he was kind enough to take out from a busy work schedule to show us thru the car. It was a real treat to see it, particularly the silverware on the car. The Cotton Belt, along with many other lines, is experiencing a motive power shortage and you can see many foreign line units on Cotton Belt trains, some of them of course being units used on Cotton Belt run-thru trains. SP-SSW have new units on order which should be forthcoming in the near future to add to the big system's already huge motive power consist. If there is a business lag it is not noticeable on some of the state's rail lines.

AMTRAK - THE INTER-AMERICAN

Once again Arkansas' only passenger train, Amtrak's Inter-American is operating on a daily basis offering Amfleet service including an am-dinette car with tray meal and beverage service. Effective June 25th sleeping car service will be added to Trains 21/22 which will operate tri-weekly Chicago to Ft. Worth only. Effective dates and days of operation are as follows; Train 21 6/25 Chicago-Ft.Worth, Sun/Wed/Fri only, Train 22 6/27 Ft.Worth-Chicago Sun/Tues/Fri only. Efforts are being made to keep the Inter-American permanently, primarily by the newly formed Arkansas Chapter of the N.A.R.P. In fact, the N.A.R.P. ran advertising in the Arkansas Gazette on Sunday, June 11th regarding the Inter-American's new faster schedule and daily service. Also, hearings are now in progress by the Office of Rail Public Counsel to advise those interested in testifying before a hearing on passenger rail service in Arkansas. In connection with hearings we should have said that these meetings are to help persons to testify before the large hearing to be held at 9 AM on July 6th at the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Building in Little Rock on a Transportation Department report that recommends elimination of Amtrak service in Arkansas. This still leaves us in the dark as to whether our state will keep Amtrak service and Amtrak will do no advertising of their own in the state, neither do they intend to improve their station facilities in Little Rock until it is known whether the Inter-American will continue to operate. Lets hope for the best.

CIRCUS NEWS

Ringling Bros., Barnum & Bailey with their big beautiful silver train, arrived in Little Rock on June 12th for performances at Barton Colliseum on the 13th and 14th. The show arrived here from Huntsville, Alabama and departed here AM of the 15th for Memphis for performances in that city on June 16-18. After conclusion there schedule shows movement to Monroe, La., Baton Rouge and Mobile, Alabama. Their train (Red Unit) consisted of 37 cars with the usual baggage, sleeper, animal and tunnel cars. Your editor was advised by an employee of the show that RBB&B still plan to put a No. 3 show on the road but it will all move via truck; also Show No. 2 (Blue Unit) is scheduled to go to truck probably next season, leaving only the Red Unit to move via rail. Sounds rather sad doesn't it? We can only wonder how they can move this much equipment over our already congested highways. Will Royal American (Carnival) be next??

A BIT OF THIS AND THAT---Doyle McCormack, who became nationally famous with railfans as engineer of locomotive 4449 on its American Freedom Train travels, gave up his twelve years seniority on the Norfolk & Western, moved to Eugene, Oregon and hired on with the Southern Pacific as a fireman trainee. He is such a celebrity with trainmen that they almost always ask, "Aren't you the guy that....", etc. Only once has Doyle managed to maintain his anonymity on a student trip. (THE TRAINMASTER, Pacific Northwest Chapter, NRHS); Editor's note: Doyle apparently wants to be close to No. 4449. This loco is being kept in operating condition for future fan trips which we hope will materialize. Wish it could come this way again.

Another reminder to be sure and attend the fish fry-picnic. Harry Coonley has lots of rail "goodies" he will be glad to show you. In addition you will be treated to a deluxe feed. So--put on that appetite and be on hand.

THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB IS A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION. REGULAR MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE MOP OFFICE BUILDING IN NORTH LITTLE ROCK ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH. VISITORS ALWAYS WELCOME. COFFEE AND COOKIES USUALLY AVAILABLE. SEND EXCHANGE NEWSLETTERS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO EDITOR AT 5007 HAWTHORNE ROAD, LITTLE ROCK, AR. 72207.

Bill Merck - Editor