



# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



Little Rock Chapter  
NRHS

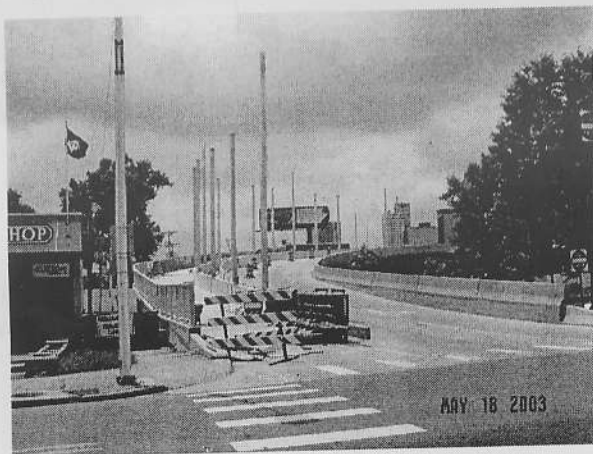
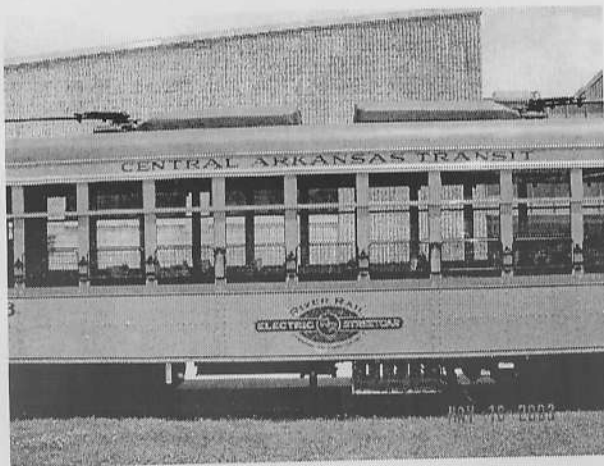
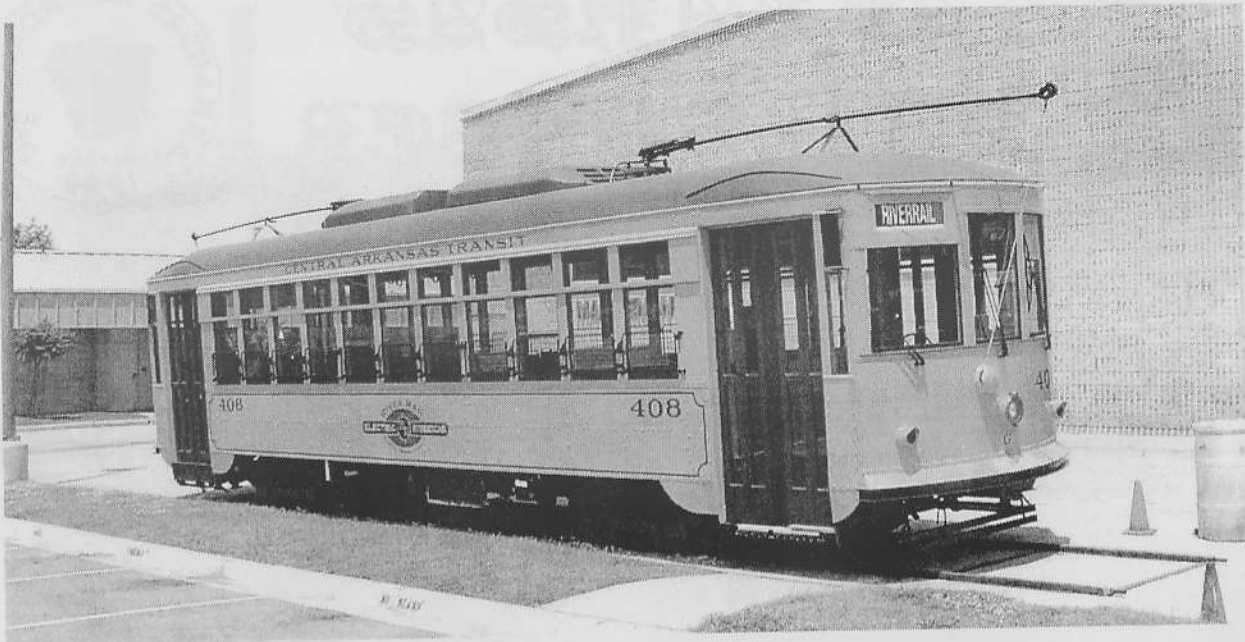
VOLUME 34 NUMBER 6 JUNE 2003



**YESTERDAY MEETS TOMORROW** – It was a hazy day 15 October 1953 at Stuttgart, Arkansas. Electro-Motive Division diesel-electric locomotive No. 919, with 4,050 horsepower, sits on the passing track. A Cotton Belt passenger train behind 4-8-2 No. 677 comes roaring down the main line.

Just seven years later the Official Guide for 1960 shows schedules for “freight-only” traffic. Passengers and steam power were on their way into history. “Blue Streak” freight trains and internal combustion power were taking over.

Yesterday and tomorrow met at Stuttgart that hazy day 50 years ago. *(Gene Hull)*



**PREVIOUS PAGE** – The new \$800,000 Central Arkansas Transit streetcar is sitting in front of the CAT bus barn in North Little Rock awaiting deployment in the under-construction Little Rock River Rail system. The side of the streetcar reads “River Rail Electric Streetcar.” The new streetcar barn is also being constructed. The bottom two photos on the previous page show the Main Street highway bridge where the rails will be laid. All the poles are already up. It was stated at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club that the money has been found to continue and complete the project. It was rumored before that funding would run out. *(Ken Ziegenbein photos May 18, 2003)*



**LEFT**-The old Rock Island bridge to the left will be part of the under-construction Clinton Presidential Library in east Little Rock. **RIGHT**- The library also will include the 100-plus year old Choctaw (Rock Island) Passenger Station, as seen to the right in this photo. It will be a school of some sort. The 1899 Choctaw Freight House, which until November 2001 had stood inside the old May Construction sheds across the tracks behind the passenger station, was torn down for library construction. You might remember that some of us tried to save it. *(Just thought some of you might like to see where these old Rock Island structures are in relation to the library – Ken Ziegenbein photos May 18, 2003)*



We had a large turnout, 45+, at the May 18 meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club. Mike Condren had a slide show of Rock Island trains from the 1960s through 1970s.

### 2003 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

**PRESIDENT** - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2030), shay473@cei.net  
**V-PRESIDENT** - Russell Tedder, 5019 Timber Creek Cir, N Little Rock AR 72116-6432 (501-771-9040), srtdeder@arkansas.net  
**TREASURER** - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826), wwalker@aristotle.net  
**SECRETARY** - Jackie Roach, 4023 S Shackelford #142, Little Rock AR 72204 (501-225-6818)  
**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  
**HISTORIAN** - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington Ave #31, N Little Rock AR 72114 (501-945-7386)  
**BOARD '03** - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)  
**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)  
**BOARD '07** - Fred Fillers, 29009 Bandy Rd, Little Rock AR 72223-9720 (501-821-2026), ccfillers@aol.com

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:trains@trainweather.com) The *Arkansas Railroader* is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

**JUNE MEETING NOTES/CHANGES** – Since so few of us are going on the A&M Trip June 8 out of Springdale, it was decided at the last meeting to indeed have a meeting in June after all, but move it to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday instead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. SO...the next program/meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be held on **SUNDAY, JUNE 15** at the usual place, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, 4401 Woodlawn Drive in Little Rock (just a few blocks off Markham Street). Refreshments will be served as always.

The **June 15** program will be given by **TOM SHOOK**. He'll have a video and other material on the Rock Island.

**Future programs include:** July - Charley Scarbrough's Train Travels - Charley Scarbrough, a native of Pine Bluff, now of Little Rock, likes trains and has traveled extensively for many years, including England, Scotland, Germany, etc., as well as the more familiar Cotton Belt and Missouri Pacific in their heyday. He has also made many trips on Amtrak. Charley has not narrowed down the scope of the program yet, but we feel it will be a very interesting presentation. He does not have slides, but will bring many photos for the occasion. This program was recommended by Randy Tardy.

August - Bruce Stockbridge/Garden Railways; September - Peter Smykla's Paperton Junction Southern outing in Pine Bluff.; October – North Little Rock History Commission on railroad's in Arkansas; November – Open; December - Christmas Party (We will try to have the Christmas Party on Saturday, December 13 - pending. This year we'll have it at our usual meeting place at Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church and will have it catered by Franke's Cafeteria).

**ARKANSAS RIVER HALL OF FAME RECENT INDUCTEE** – Arkansas Railroad Club member **Randy Tardy** was inducted into the Arkansas River Hall of Fame on April 24, 2003, along with three others (Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Sr, an Oklahoma newspaperman, the late Harley W. Ladd, former commander of the Tulsa Engineer District, and Scott McGeorge, president of Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel Company). This award was given to those who promoted and helped develop the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

Randy, now retired from the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, covered air, marine and rail transportation in the state for decades. According to Jack Story, Chairman of the Hall of Fame committee, said Tardy "has made significant contributions to the development of the McClellan-Kerr System as a newspaper business and transportation writer, staff member of the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce and a news team member of KTHV-TV."

"This role was extremely important in obtaining public support and subsequently Congressional funding for the \$1.2 billion project that was at the time the largest project ever undertaken by the Corps of Engineers. Tardy excelled in

describing the complexity and magnitude of the project ... He stands out among his peers with his ability to grasp the vision defined by the project originators. His consistently accurate reporting of the faces is legendary."

Randy replied with a more humble view of his work: "I spent years asking people questions and writing what they said. I am awed to be in the company of the people who answered my phone calls over the years and helped me tell your story and hopefully helping the public to better understand your problems."

Tardy previously received the Arkansas Waterways Association's Business Leadership "Award in 1997, was awarded a National Waterways Conference 'steamboat whistle' in 1995 in recognition of his years of support to that group and attendance at its annual meetings and received the Arkansas tourism Henry Award in 1990 for media support. (*The Waterways Journal* by Bill Evans, May 12, 2003)

## IVAN AVANCE

Died in February 2003.

## 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** – Information on the whereabouts of the old 15-inch gauge 4-4-2 steam locomotive that used to be in the basement of the state capitol in the 1930s and 1940s. Does anybody know where it is today or where it was moved? Contact David McDonald, 2222 S 25<sup>th</sup> St, Fort Smith AR 72901, 479-785-1177.

**WANTED** – Film footage of the Cotton Belt in the 1950s and 1960s. Contact Charlie Harris in New Zealand via email – [techj@inspire.net.nz](mailto:techj@inspire.net.nz)

## 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.

**OHIO – CSX** – To abandon a line of railroad, known as the Lumber Lead, extending from former Conrail milepost 11.49 to a point at or near former Conrail milepost 11.56, a distance of approximately 0.07 of a mile, in Summit County, OH. effective on May 15, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 631X, decided April 4, served April 15, 2003)

**VIRGINIA – NORFOLK SOUTHERN** – to abandon a 2.9-mile line of railroad between milepost CH-3.6 at Hurricane Junction and milepost CH-6.5 at Clinchfield, Russell County, VA. Effective on May 18, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 227X, decided April 8, served April 18, 2003)

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

See story on Little Rock's new streetcar system being built elsewhere in this newsletter.

## GENERAL RAIL NEWS

### NAFTA RAIL CREATED

Kansas City Southern will pay \$200 million to take over Mexico's largest railroad and create a company called NAFTA Rail that would seek to speed rail traffic between the U.S. and Mexico. This new service should bring in \$1.3 billion in annual revenue with the railroad reaching from the middle of the U.S. to the middle of Mexico. KCS would take over TCM, which would double its track mileage to 6,000 miles. In addition to KCS and TFM, NAFTA Rail would include the Texas Mexican Railway. Rail now accounts for 15% of U.S.-Mexico trade, or more than \$30 billion a year. (*Dallas News, April 22, 2003 via Dan Barr and Randy Tardy*)

### POLICE TICKET 30 DRIVERS

(*Arlington, Texas*) – On May 8, Arlington, Texas police rode in the cab of a Union Pacific train as it crisscrossed Arlington streets in an Operation Lifesaver operation. They handed out 30 crossing violation citations in only one hour. (*Via Jerry Nunn*)

### RAILROAD GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Late in 2002, the Railroad Genealogical Society was formed to help collect and archive known records of all historic US railroads and are actively seeking more sources of records. They would like for us to refer inquiries about past railroad employees to them. This organization recently obtained for \$100,000 the MKT records that were stored in several truck trailers. Their website is: <http://www.rrgs.org/home.htm> The contact is Douglas Carter, [dcarter500@tds.net](mailto:dcarter500@tds.net)

## AMTRAK NEWS

### EAGLE RISING

Bill Pollard stated at the last club meeting on May 18 that the *Texas Eagle* has had ridership increases of 35 to 40 percent during March and April.

### PASSENGERS PER MILE STATS

According to Dennis Larson, a passenger rail advocate, the Texas Eagle had an average load of 169.8 passengers per mile in 1999, compared with the average airline's load per mile of 95. Most say passengers per mile is a much more reliable figure than simply overall load numbers.

### SUBSIDIES FOR AIRPORTS?

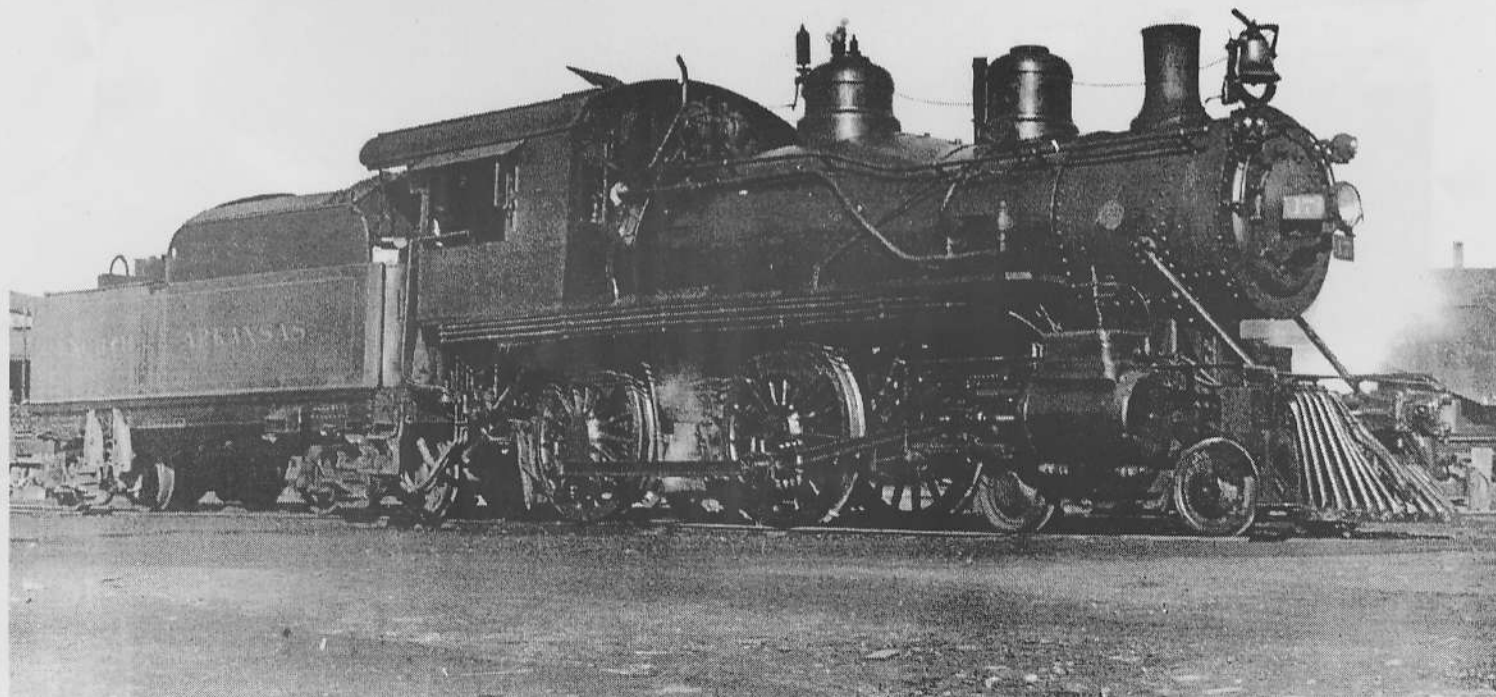
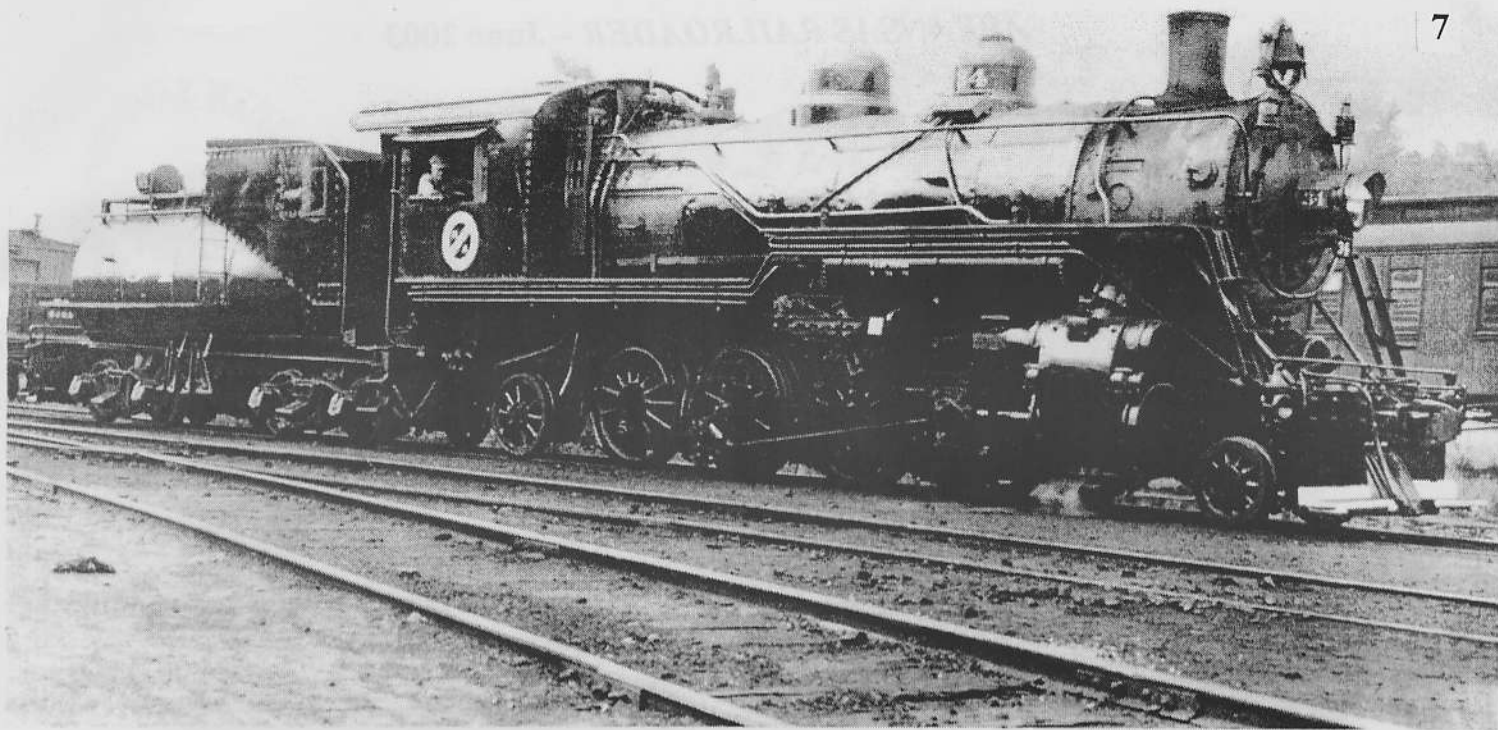
According to a January 16, 2003, 725 pm cst speech by Senator Luttenburg during Amtrak hearings (which I saw), airports got \$3 billion from General Fund federal taxes in 2002. This was the amount not covered by user fees and fuel taxes, etc. And according to the January 13, 2003 *Federal Times*, the Congressional Research Service reported that per capita federal spending amounted to \$79 for highways, \$44 for rural air service and only \$27 for passenger rail.

## EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

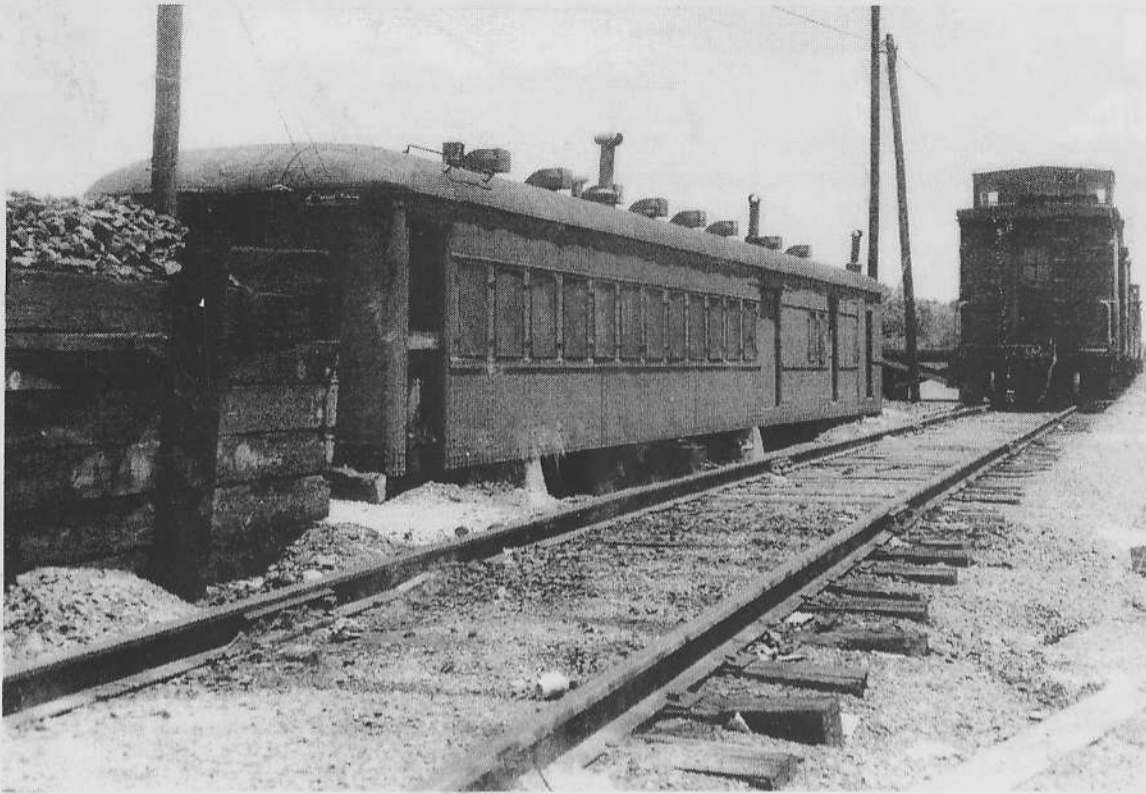
**ARKANSAS – JACKSONVILLE – Saturday, October 4, 2003** – The Arkansas Valley Model Railroad Club's Fifth Annual Show and Sale at the Jacksonville Community Center starting at 930 a.m. Rental tables are \$12 each. For table rental information, write to: Arkansas Valley Model Railroad Club, PO Box 471, North Little Rock AR 72115, 501-454-7119, [arkansasvalleylines@yahoo.com](mailto:arkansasvalleylines@yahoo.com)

**WYOMING/NEBRASKA - Saturday, July 12, 2003** - The Sherman Hill Model Railroad Club is sponsoring an excursion behind the UP 3985 between Cheyenne and Joyce, NE, returning over the Yoder Branch. **This is the first ever UP steam excursion over this route.** Ticket information: Sherman Hill Model Railroad Club, 307-638-8535 307-638-6178 (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. MST) or [www.shermanhillmrrc.org](http://www.shermanhillmrrc.org)

To join/renew membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club (Little Rock Chapter National Railway Historical Society), **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). Send to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.



**TOP** - Missouri & North Arkansas No. 34, a 2-8-2, at Harrison, Arkansas, August 1939. **BOTTOM** - Missouri & North Arkansas No. 17, a 4-4-0, also at Harrison, Arkansas, August 1929. (Both photos collection of Harold K. Vollrath, Ken Ziegenbein collection)



## THE END HAS COME

By: Gene Hull

The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific gas-electric car No. 9104 was built in February 1929 by Cummins-Mack with builders number 16100. The 240 horsepower car was converted to a passenger-baggage-caboose No. 51 in April 1943. Then in July 1954 the car was scrapped. The body was converted to a switchmen's shanty and put on concrete supports at Biddle Yard in Little Rock, Arkansas.

