



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



Little Rock Chapter
NRHS

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Rock Island accident investigation photo, no date (estimated early 1950s) or location given. It shows vividly what happens when someone tries to beat a train to a crossing and loses. The car in the photo was also made of heavier material than those made today.
(L. T. Walker collection)

2003 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

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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>

THE NEXT MEETING of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be Sunday, March 9, 2003 at 2 p.m. at our usual site, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, 4401 Woodlawn Drive in Little Rock (just a few blocks off Markham Street). According to VP Russell Tedder, the March program will be a mystery guest with a mystery program. All he is privileged to say about it is that the guest is a railroad author, photographer and historian and will be traveling over 300 miles to be with us. I would like to encourage as many as possible to attend what I believe will be a high quality and most interesting program. As always, there will be snacks and drinks available and the public is invited.

Future programs lined up by our Vice President Russell Tedder include: John C Jones in April, Mike Condren in May, and our annual outing at Peter Smykla's Paperton Junction Southern Railroad in Pine Bluff in September.

EMAIL ADDRESSES NEEDED – If you didn't give us your email address when you joined or renewed and would like to, please email them to: trains@trainweather.com I will occasionally email members notices of special events and programs. These email addresses will be strictly kept in-house.

2003 DUES ARE DUE - The 2003 dues for the Arkansas Railroad Club are due. Please get them in as soon as you can. Dues are \$20 club-only, \$40 local and NRHS. To: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. I had renewal forms in the January issue.

ARAKNSAS RAILROAD CLUB PAST CALENDARS FOR SALE – While going through some stuff in my home office, I found a few Arkansas Railroad Club black & white photo Calendars of past years 1997 through 2001. We had annual calendars from 1994 through 2001, but I don't have any 1994, 1995 or 1996 calendars left. All the photos were taken in Arkansas.

If you want any, send \$1 for each plus \$2 postage (total \$3) to Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. I'll also bring some to the next meeting and you can save the postage. Here are the years we still have available along with the photos in each:

1997 (29 left) - Arkansas Central in Paris, Arkansas - 1915; Cotton Belt Blue Streak in Camden, Arkansas - 1937; UP 8444 on World's Fair Special in Little Rock - 1984; Missouri Pacific freight near Pine Bluff - 1980; American Orient Express 'Branson Special' at Little Rock - 1995; Rock Island 4-6-2 #888 in Hot Springs - 1938; Cotton Belt Caboose in Pine Bluff - 1986; El Dorado & Wesson 2-8-0 #15 in Wesson - 1957; Southern Pacific freight Pine Bluff - 1979; White River Railway train near Cotter - 1995; Fordyce & Princeton in Crossett - 1987; Kansas City Southern 'Southern Belle' in Siloam Springs - 1968.

1998 (6 left) – D&R #4 on excursion in Dardanelle in 1994; Reader RR 2-8-0 #108 on trip - 1965; UP and SP consist just after merger in North Little Rock - 1997; BNSF mixed freight in Pine Bluff -1997; BNSF in Hoxie - 1997; Arkansas & Missouri #22 south of Winslow Tunnel - 1994; Olympic Torch train at Union Station Little Rock – 1996; Warren & Saline River 2-8-0 #1702 Hermitage – 1960; Frisco fast freight B. R. Junction – 1980; Missouri Pacific 4-6-2 #6624 with passenger extra Union Station in Little Rock – 1951; Helena Southwestern #300 at West Helena – 1981; UP excursion by Pacific Limited and the Arkansas Railroad Club from dome car on the White River line – 1996; Missouri Pacific 4-4-2 #5534 in Van Buren – 1923; Amtrak Texas Eagle Little Rock – 1996.

1999 (15 left) – Louisiana & Northwest F7 and caboose at McNeil – 1979; Southern Pacific freight leaving Pine Bluff – 1997; BNSF freight at Pine Bluff – 1998; Rock Island #4428 during last days of the Rock at Fordyce – 1980; No. 1702 steam engine on the Warren & Saline River at Warren – 1961; KCS freight south of Ogden – 1980s; Arkansas Midland between Malvern and Mountain Pine – 1990s; Ashley, Drew & Northern 2-8-0 #115 near Crossett – 1946; UP freight past Union Station in Little Rock – 1997; KCS 'J' Class steam #905 during World War II at DeQueen; Arkansas & Missouri at Chester – 1994; Missouri Pacific E7's with passenger #219 at Little Rock – 1961; Missouri Pacific 4-6-2 #6629 at Mabelvale – 1947; Amtrak in the snow at Little Rock at night – mid 1980s.

2000 (4 left) – St Louis & North Arkansas 4-4-0 #2 at Freeman – 1901; White River Railway excursion near Norfolk – 1998; Warren & Saline River at Warren – 1985; UP freight at Pine Bluff – 1997; Missouri Pacific PA #8032 at Little Rock – 1955; L&N on the Missouri Pacific in Briark – 1980; Ashley, Drew & Northern #125 at Monticello – 1946; KCS special passenger train at DeQueen – 1996; Rock Island 2-8-0 #1888 at Little Rock – unknown date; Cotton Belt 'Blue Streak' at Camden – 1938; Reader RR special at Waterloo – 1968; BN freight at West Memphis – 1995; Arkansas Midland Santa Train – 1999.

2001 (our last calendar, 3 left – four extra pictures) – KCS freight at Rich Mountain – 2000; BNSF leaving Marion – 1995; Missouri Pacific train #3 at Beebe – 1932; Louisiana & Northwest F7 at McNeil – 1979; MoPac freight at Russellville – 1971; UP freight in snow at Little Rock – 2000; Rock Island F7 with 'Choctaw Rocket' at Pulaski – 1951; Arkansas Midland at Jones Mill – 2000; Cotton Belt #819 with freight at Texarkana – 1951; MoPac 'Delta Eagle' in Helena – 1950; DeQueen & Eastern freight near Dierks – 1979; MoPac engineer oiling wheels of steam engine #6608 – 1941; SP special train through Rison – 1979; Transitanak Porter at Fordyce – 1987; Missouri & Arkansas at Green Forest – 1943; Ashley, Drew & Northern 70-tonners at Crossett – 1964; MoPac freight at Hope – 1979; Amtrak 'Texas Eagle' in Little Rock in snow – 2000.

T. D. DAVIS DIES – T. D. Davis was instrumental in the restoration and operation of Cotton Belt 819 out of Pine Bluff. He died Friday, January 24, 2003 at 83. He was engineer on many of the 819's excursions.

Thomas David "T.D." Davis Jr. of Little Rock grew up with the Cotton Belt railroad. His father, grandfather and brother also were railroadmen. From 1937 to 1942, he helped build and maintain Engines 810 and 819 of the old Cotton Belt Railroad at Pine Bluff, which at that time was operated by the St. Louis-Southwestern Railroad Co. Engine 819 and its caboose were put on display at the Cotton Belt Museum in Pine Bluff. The engine operated public excursions out of Pine Bluff in the 1980s.

Davis, who retired from the railroad in 1984, after 44 years of service, died from complications from Alzheimer's disease at Woodland Hills Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Little Rock. He was 83.

Davis was born on June 20, 1919, at Pine Bluff to Thomas David Davis Sr. and Bonnie Burnett Davis. He had two brothers and a sister. His father was a Cotton Belt engineer. His grandfather was a conductor the Pine Bluff-based railroad. Also, his brother, Jack Davis, was a Cotton Belt conductor. He graduated from Pine Bluff High School in 1939.

In 1940, Davis started work with the railroad as a fireman. After two years, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. During World War II, he was a locomotive engineer with the 745th Railway Operating Battalion in the China-Burma-India theater.

He married Gwyneth Francis of Pine Bluff in 1940. She died in 1994. They had a daughter.

After the war, he resumed his career with the Cotton Belt and was subsequently promoted to engineer. In 1933, the Southern Pacific Railroad took control of the Cotton Belt.

His daughter, Diane Elizabeth Davis, said her father often told stories about cows getting hit by trains or other accidents. In the 1960s, Davis helped move old Engine 819 from Townsend Park to Oakland Park in Pine Bluff. In the early 1980s, it was moved to and restored in the same facility in which it was built in the 1940s.

Davis loved woodworking and building things. He was a Mason, a member of the Sahara Shrine Temple in Pine Bluff, and a longtime member of Hawley Memorial United Methodist Church in Pine Bluff. "Railroad people will remember him as having worked on the old 819 engine, but the rest of the people will remember him as just a wonderful man," his daughter said.

(Some of this preceding story was obtained from a story printed in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette by Emmett George)

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 – Club member Chuck Crisler has a few former Amtrak F40 parts available for sale. The fleet of 63 remaining units was sold for scrap late last year. A handful were resold to other buyers, but the majority were cut. There might still be one or two decent units left. Anyone interested in the care and feeding of an F40 for \$35,000 or so give Mr. Crisler an email (p42@4rr.com). The speed controllers, speedometers, and cab control signal aspect repeaters I have are \$75 each. The tri-color marker lights from the front of the units are \$50. The red cast iron marker light from the top of the nose, and the headlights are \$100. I also have some number boards for \$25. I really didn't know what to ask for these items, but it goes to a good cause, the upkeep of my website (<http://www.4rr.com>)

WANTED – The Missouri Pacific Historical Society wants to know if there were any MoPac steam engines numbered above 2403. Several MPHS members have been working on an article covering Missouri Pacific's Passenger train operations on the Eastern division to be printed in the Missouri

Pacific Historical Societies newsletter, *The Eagle*. We were lucky enough to obtain an engineer's time (pay) book from 1924 covering the trains he operated between St. Louis & Jefferson City, Missouri. One item of particular interest were a few of the engines he operated. In his book he listed engine numbers of 2406, 2408, 2432 & 2435. But in all the published rosters and information I can find, Missouri Pacific's 2400 series locomotives only went as high as engine #2403. The engineer's penmanship is excellent, so the numbers are not being confused. For example, mistaking a nine for a four, etc. Any suggestions, leads or comments from your membership are welcome. I can be contacted via e-mail at etc@classicnet.net or by mail at: Gene Semon, 11500 Maybelline Road, North Little Rock, AR 72117-1886.

WANTED – Does anyone want to buy a 1927 Santa Fe Pullman lower berth/seat set with end panels, lights, and porter's table? These are in original red Santa Fe upholstery. They are from the Santa Fe car Dell Lake. I also have two or three Manitou & Pike's Peak Cog Ry seats

from car No. 9. These seats have their original upholstery and are built to sit level on a 16% grade. They have backs that move forward and back, depending on the direction of travel. Any suggestions who I might contact? Email me (galloping_goose@prodigy.net) or phone 1-303-425-3586. (Sig Benson, Denver, Colorado)

WANTED – An 8x10 (or any size) COLOR photo of the Stuttgart depot. Contact Bill Bailey, 8318 Reymere Drive, Little Rock AR 72227-3944, 501-224-6828.

FOR SALE - Remember that The Arkansas Railroad Club has the following books for sale: Reprint of GeneHull'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.

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 and discontinue service over a segment of line, known as the Eldora Junction Line, extending from milepost 5.10 to milepost 6.22, a distance of 1.12 miles, in Hardin County, IA. A final decision will be issued by April 8, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 168X, decided December 31, 2002, served January 8, 2003)

WEST VIRGINIA – NORFOLK SOUTHERN - To abandon a 2.5-mile line of railroad between milepost FG-0.0 at Williamson and milepost FG-2.5 at Cinderella, in Mingo County, WV. Effective on February 8, 2003. ([STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 215X, decided January 2, served January 9, 2003)

- WISCONSIN – UNION PACIFIC** – To abandon a 2.00-mile line of railroad, known as the Menomonie Industrial Lead, extending from milepost 0.90 near Stout Oak Street to milepost 2.90 near 12th Avenue West, in Dunn County, WI. Effective on February 9, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 190X, decided January 3, served January 10, 2003)
- WASHINGTON – BNSF** – To abandon and discontinue service over a 0.17-mile line of railroad between Station 258 + 07 and Station 267 + 00, in Seattle, King County, WA. Effective on February 15, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 402X, decided January 9, served January 16, 2003)
- WASHINGTON – BNSF** – To abandon a 0.24-mile line of railroad between milepost 28.10 and milepost 28.34 near McMillan, in Pierce County, WA. Effective on February 27, 2003. ([STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 397X, decided January 15, served January 28, 2003)
- TEXAS – MID-MICHIGAN RAILROAD, INC, TEXAS NORTHEASTERN DIVISION** - To discontinue service over 10.51 miles of railroad between milepost 662.54 in Denison and milepost 673.05 in Sherman, in Grayson County, TX. The KATY railroad had apparently been given the right to abandon this line when MKT merged with MP but it had not been consummated. Effective on February 28, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-364 (Sub-No. 7X, decided January 24, served January 29, 2003)
- KENTUCKY – CSX** - To abandon an approximately 13.4-mile line of railroad between milepost CON 3.1 at Salisbury and milepost CON 16.5 near Clear Creek Junction in Floyd County, KY. Effective on March 13, 2003. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 627X, decided February 5, served February 11, 2003)

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

BARING AUTOMATED LOCOMOTIVES?

(Pine Bluff) - Pine Bluff officials postponed a resolution in January barring automated Union Pacific locomotives from operating within city limits until a further study by a City Council committee.

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

TOURIST LINE QUILTS

(Mount Dora, Florida) – Last runs were made February 15 and 22, 2003 of the Orlando & Mount Dora Railway Company, a tourist line between Orlando and Mount Dora, Florida. The company also operated the Dora Doodlebug, a restored gasoline-powered passenger car that made short runs to Tavares. Signs of trouble appeared in August, 2002 when the railroad brought in the children's attraction, Thomas the Tank Engine. The engine attracted 29,600 passengers over nine days, but the railroad's owners said their expenses outpaced the \$414,000 gross. Also, the railroad lost of the train's movie-star steam engine, which failed in March. Engine No. 4 had appeared in *Rosewood* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* The railroad is for sale.

FRISCO 4500 FOR SALE?

(Tulsa, Oklahoma) - The City of Tulsa, Oklahoma is attempting to sell Frisco #4500 (a 4-8-4 Northern) with its

original tender car. The locomotive was donated in August of 1954 by the Frisco RR to the City. It was placed within the City's zoo and was protected by a fence and a roof until 1985. Reportedly, it has been repainted with the original paint scheme and key equipment were periodically oiled during the 30 years that it remained in the zoo. Reportedly before its delivery to the City the Frisco RR had replaced the boiler flue pipes, firebox bricks, wheel rims, friction bearings and brake pads. It was also reported that the Frisco RR made the donation with a stipulation that it could take the engine back in the time of war, if it was needed; hence the reason for the replacements. The engine was delivered with some minor parts removed and some identifying plates removed as well.

When the city's zoo decided to enlarge its exhibits the train was in the way, and scrapping the engine was being considered. Former railroad employees and enthusiasts, organized the **Sunbelt RR Historical Trust**, and approached

the City in 1984 about preserving this engine. The group wanted to restore the engine and eventually make it a tourist attraction with short rides. This endeavor eventually failed due to lack of community support and limited fund raising success. It has to be noted that the efforts of the Sunbelt group back in 1984 probably preserved the 4500's existence today.

The engine cab instrumentation has all been removed for restoration as well as many other major components; however, many of the parts still remain un-restored as of this date. The Sunbelt group has around 98-99% of all the parts removed and safely stored and recently were shown to exist to City representatives on 11/22/02.

Prior to delivery to the City, apparently the Frisco RR had removed the asbestos jacket from the boiler, and it appears that asbestos in the cab has been removed as well. The engine is currently sitting on a railroad spur owned by SK&O RR in

Owasso, OK – less than 10 miles from Tulsa.

Reportedly this engine is only one of four that still exist in the USA. Back in the late 80's it was declared as being one of two that existed then which could actually be restored to operational condition.

The Sunbelt group indicated that that it has an automatic reverser. It was built in 1942 by Baldwin Locomotive Works at Eddingstone, PA and Granville, IL. It was placed into service in November 1942 by the SLSF RR. It was mainly used from St. Louis to Oklahoma City between 1942 to 1947 for passenger train service. After 1947, it was mainly used for freight pulling and then retired in 1950. (Note: A railroad museum in Dallas has the Frisco RR unit 4501, which is the sister engine to the 4500).

Specifications:

4-8-4 Northern wheel pattern; Standard Gauge; Builder Plate # 64449; Oil-fueled boiler (Bunker C type); 405 tons when operational (with water and fuel oil Driver wheels had sander pipes in front of each wheel; Overall length with tender car is approx 105 feet; Cab roof from rails is 16 feet; Engine width about 10½ feet; 5400 HP; Cruising speed of 90 mph (reportedly could attain 100 MPH); Booster engine equipped; Coffin Superheater; Water heated tender car; Automatic Wheel Reverser; Boiler: 255PSI; Cylinders: 28" Bore/31" Stroke; Tender Car Capacities: 18K gallons for Water; 6.5K for fuel oil; DC powered generator for electrical needs; Handles

20 degree turns under normal power and 12 degree turns under slower conditions; Asbestos boiler jacket had been removed prior to be given to the City; Asbestos in engineer's cab appears to have been removed.

It is strongly recommended that any serious potential bidders for this train actually check it out in person prior to submitting a bid. The City hoped to send out a weighted **Request For Bids** in December or January. There will probably be some special stipulations set forth in the RFB.

More specific information on the engine can be directed to Pete Butz, current Sunbelt President, at 918-227-2995 or to Don Skorvaga, Executive Board Member, at 918-299-3824. Other questions can be addressed to Mike Reel, City's Purchasing Services Coordinator, at 918-596-7233, FAX 918-596-7224, or E-mail: mikereel@ci.tulsa.ok.us.

RECORD YEAR FOR UP

Union Pacific Corp. posted its fourth straight year of earnings improvements in 2002, with net income increasing by 39% to a record \$1.34 billion, compared to \$966 million in 2001. Union Pacific posted \$11.16 billion in operating revenues in 2002, a 3% increase over 2001's \$10.83 billion. Operating expenses were \$8.91 billion, a 1% increase over 2001's \$8.81 billion. Railroad employee productivity rose 6.7% to an all-time record of 21 million gross ton-miles per employee.

At the same time (something I can't fully understand), UP planned to cut 1,000 jobs across its system. The company plans to lay off up to 300 people by March and said 700 more positions will not be filled in 2003 as people leave or retire. Union Pacific employs about 48,000 people.

Union Pacific wants to cut costs by up to 20 percent in 2003, because of concerns about higher wages, increased health care costs, higher fuel prices and soaring insurance costs.

Employee productivity increased 6.7 percent for the year 2002, to a record 21 million gross-ton miles moved per employee, Union Pacific said. Union Pacific also said it was putting remote control devices in its locomotives that will be used in rail yards. The move will eliminate the need for engineers as trains are parked and put together in the yards. More than 200 engineers will no longer be needed in the yards, but no direct layoffs were expected.

BNSF CUTS JOBS

Citing improved efficiencies in maintaining and overhauling its 4,862-unit locomotive fleet, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe has furloughed 332 employees at three different shop locations in early January 2003: the locomotive shops at West Burlington, Iowa, and Topeka, Kansas and at BNSF's Interbay Locomotive Shop in Seattle, Washington.

AMTRAK NEWS

71 MONTHS IN JAIL

A federal judge on January 23, 2003 sentenced Deborah Theresa Meeks to 71 months in jail and three years of supervised release for her filing of a wrongful death lawsuit involving the 1993 derailment of Amtrak's Sunset Limited passenger train. U.S. District Court Judge Henry Wingate in Jackson, Mississippi also ordered Meeks to pay \$1,060,000 restitution, the amount she received in settlement of a fraudulently filed wrongful death lawsuit.

Forty-seven people died in the Sunset Limited passenger train derailment outside of Mobile, Ala., on Sept. 22, 1993. The government proved at trial that Meeks prepared and filed false marriage documents which stated that she had married an Amtrak employee five weeks before he was killed in the Sunset Limited crash. The employee died without a will, and within a week of his death, Meeks successfully petitioned to be designated administrator of the estate and then filed a wrongful death lawsuit against Amtrak and others. Meeks perpetuated her scheme with the assistance of others who falsely claimed that the marriage had been performed.

Meeks received a settlement for \$1,060,000 from Warrior and Gulf Navigation, the owner of the river barge involved in the derailment and a defendant in her wrongful death action. She received approximately \$523,000 after attorneys fees and expenses, and used the proceeds of her scheme to purchase a home and gifts for family members. Meeks' conviction was the result of an investigation spanning several years by agents from the Amtrak Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations. (*Amtrak News Release*)

When a passenger was asked aboard the Sunset Limited what he would do should the train be discontinued, he gave this response: "What would you do if you didn't have this train?" he said. "Take the bus? Can you sleep in a bed on the bus? Can you get out of your seat and go to a central place where you can meet new friends and play cards or have conversations with them? Can you eat a complete meal on the bus? Do you have more than a dozen professionals looking out for your comfort and well-being?"

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

KENTUCKY – BARTHELL – March 28-30, 2003 – Ride, photograph and explore the Kentucky & Tennessee Railway in the mountains and valleys of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area in Kentucky. This area was once the home of the Stearns Coal & Lumber Company and its many coal and logging activities. We will operate our special photo freight on all of the useable track between the mill town of Stearns and the coal mine encampment at Blue Heron. Passengers will ride in the K&T caboose or on one of the freight cars. In 2002, we conducted runbys at more than a dozen locations in half a day. In 2003, with a full day, we plan on also getting those locations that we had to pass up in 2002.

Registration is \$59, and includes a morning and afternoon photo freight over the K&T on Saturday, night photo sessions on both Friday and Saturday (Steve Barry of Railfan & Railroad Magazine in planning to conduct these sessions), evening slide and video shows, Saturday evening dinner, and tours of the restored Barthell coal mining camp. All events are based at Barthell, Kentucky, a restored former coal company town. Cabins are available in the town (\$95 per night) by calling the Koger family at 888-550-5748 (the family responsible for restoring the town). Tickets for the weekend are available only through the SOUTHERN APPALACHIA RAILWAY MUSEUM, PO Box 5870, Knoxville TN 37928. The schedule is also available here. Bart Jennings will be in charge of the event.

ARKANSAS – PINE BLUFF – Saturday, April 5, 2003 – Annual Railroadians 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.

OKLAHOMA – CLINTON – Beginning in April 2003, Farmrail is slated to begin weekend train excursions to the Quartz Mountain Resort in Western Oklahoma. A few excursions will also take place in the January through March timeframe. The 90-minute excursions will cost \$12 for adults. Farmrail will use the same coaches and engines it did in November 2002 when excursions were run in and out of Clinton. Farmrail is also considering Route 66 themed trips from Clinton to Elk City, Oklahoma. Contact Farmrail System, Inc., PO Box 1750, Clinton OK 73601. (*Article in the Dallas Morning News via Randy Tardy*)

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

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). Send to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

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.

OUR TOWN : Trains a'comin' ©2003 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
by Richard Allin

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THERE'S NOTHING I'd rather do than get on Amtrak's Texas Eagle and go to Chicago. The bedrooms are comfortable and the food is good. The staff is always pleasant and helpful. But the Texas Eagle is scheduled to arrive in Little Rock at 1:25 a.m. That's way past my bedtime.

It wasn't always that way. Our Town once had train schedules convenient for the potential passengers of central Arkansas. And even the 1:25 a.m. arrival time would be manageable if the passenger could depend on the time. But the Texas Eagle too often runs tardy. Sometimes it's an hour or more late, for reasons that only Amtrak and the Union Pacific know. That means the passenger might have to wait an hour or more in red-eyed misery in Amtrak's austere waiting room at Little Rock.

That's not an option for most people. It's not an option for me. I'll look for other ways to get to Chicago. IT'S THE SAME STORY traveling south. The train that's headed for Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin and San Antonio arrives in Our Town at 4:50 a.m., if it's on time. We can ask: What kind of schedule is that?

We suspect that Amtrak's management has padded out its time to accommodate the Eagle's notorious practice of running late. We think that it's time that our schedules be reconsidered and that Amtrak trains be scheduled to arrive and depart Little Rock at more convenient hours. We need a northbound train arriving in Our Town between 10 and 11 p.m. And southbound Eagles should arrive and depart between 6 and 7 a.m. Arkansans should not be inconvenienced as much as they are by Amtrak. IT'S ADMITTED that Amtrak in its present form represents an old system that will have to die before a new system can take its place.

One day trains will crisscross the United States at speeds approaching 200 miles per hour. They will run on tracks as smooth as pool tables, and they will give our nation the proper form of mass transit it needs. But that's going to be a long time away. Our nation, the richest and most advanced in the world, has one of the world's most inadequate mass transit systems. Our love affair with the automobile and its marriage to the interstate roadway system is creating traffic nightmares.

Hindsight is too easy a tool to use for explaining away our problems. But if we had spent on public rail transportation what we spend trying to make commercial aviation the end all in moving passengers, we would have an efficient means of getting about in this country.

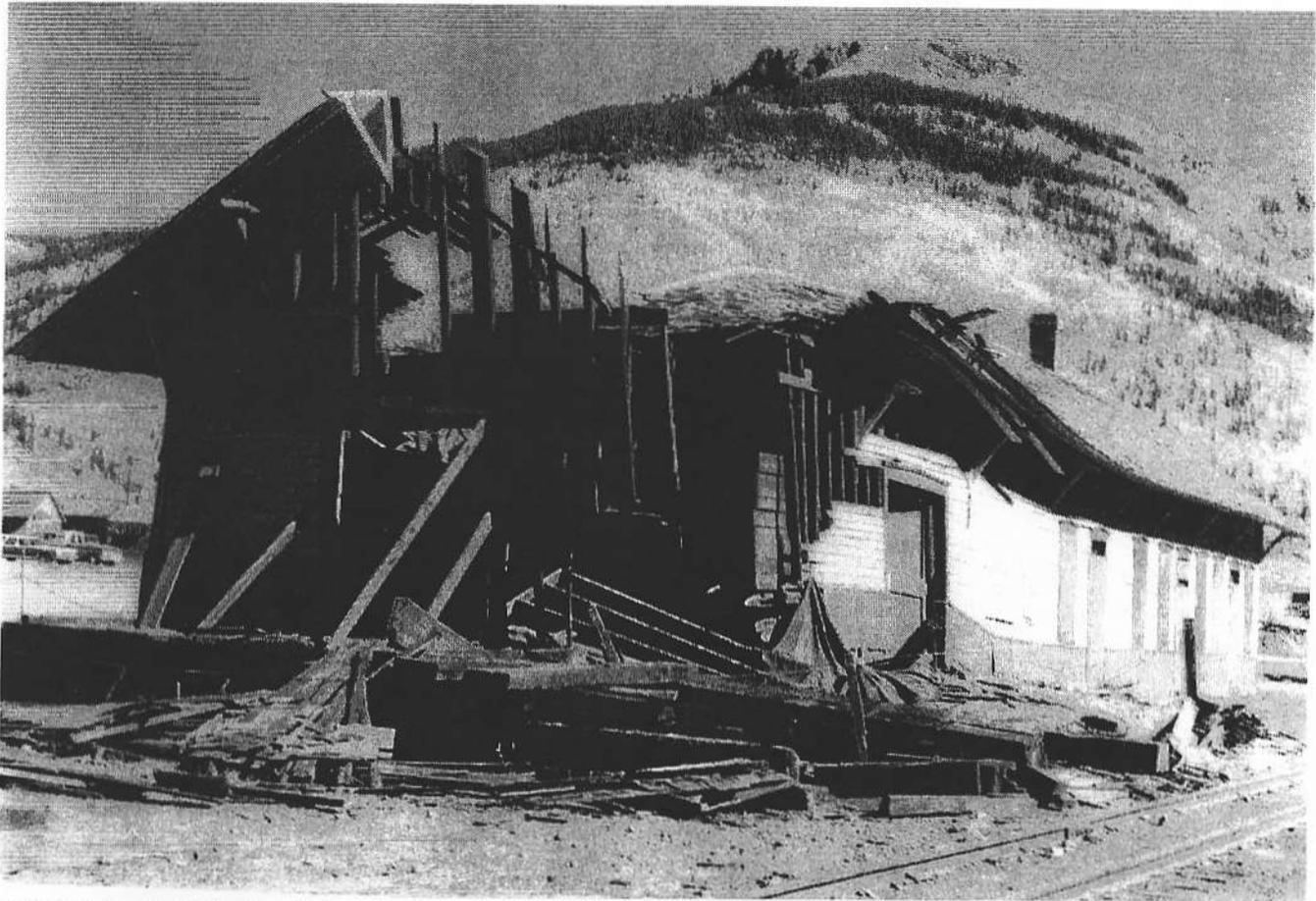
And what did the airlines do for us? Well, we can get from Little Rock to Chicago and New York quickly. We can't, as we did in the old days, get to Searcy or McGehee or Memphis unless we drive. All those towns were once connected to Little Rock by train.

It's no longer a question of whether widespread rail transportation is coming back to the United States. The question is when? One day in the indeterminate future Our Town will be connected by super-fast trains to St. Louis, Memphis, Dallas and New Orleans. A dwindling supply of oil and the need for moving masses of people economically and efficiently will make rail transportation an absolute necessity. CONSIDER HOW EXPENSIVE and uneconomical air travel is. Look at a map of the city of Little Rock. The land occupied by Adams Field is as big, or bigger, than Little Rock's entire downtown. LaGuardia Airport in New York would occupy a large part of Manhattan Island.

Rail terminals, on the other hand, occupy a compact space in the centers of cities. Passengers can often walk to their destinations from their trains. Not so with airplanes, which often are 10, 20 or 30 miles from where a passenger wants to be.

It'll happen one day. Most of us will be gone when it does. But a fast, efficient rail system is inevitable. If you're around, remember what I said.

(Richard Allin's Our Town column appears Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and alternate Sundays.)



D&RGW depot at Silverton, Colorado, dynamited five minutes before the narrow gauge train arrived from Durango on Friday, 12 September, 1975. Boulder Mountain is in the background. (*Gene Hull photo*)

UNSOLVED MYSTERY!
OR
WHO BLOWED UP THE DEPOT?
GENE HULL

Please excuse the broken English in the title, it is for shock effect. In September 1975, Naomi and I decided to make another journey to Colorado; something we had done often, since our 30-day honeymoon at Colorado Springs in October 1944.

The magnificent groves of aspen (birch) trees were promising a grand and glorious display of their famous colouring; as if liquid gold had been poured on mountain peaks and allowed to trickle down the slopes. In addition, the remnant of the once vast domain of narrow gauge railroading still was active between Durango and Silverton, 45 miles up the amazing canyon of the RIO de los ANIMAS (Spanish for River of the Lost Souls)

Who could resist such a siren call? We answered this call and many more during the following years.

We arrived at Durango and reserved a motel room a block east of the depot. Unfortunately, there were no tickets available aboard the train to Silverton for several days. I spent a large portion of the day photographing the D&RGW yards.

The next morning we leisurely drove the 49 miles of the fabulous U.S. Highway 550 to Silverton. We stopped for a few minutes to enjoy the view of Silverton from above, high on Sultan Mountain. At the Grand Imperial Hotel we turned east and drove to the D&RGW depot, just four blocks.

What a shock!

It laid there like a huge dead animal with much of its skeleton exposed. The south end of the depot (the baggage room) was in a shambles. I made the photo shown with this article. A clerk in the newspaper office told me what had happened.

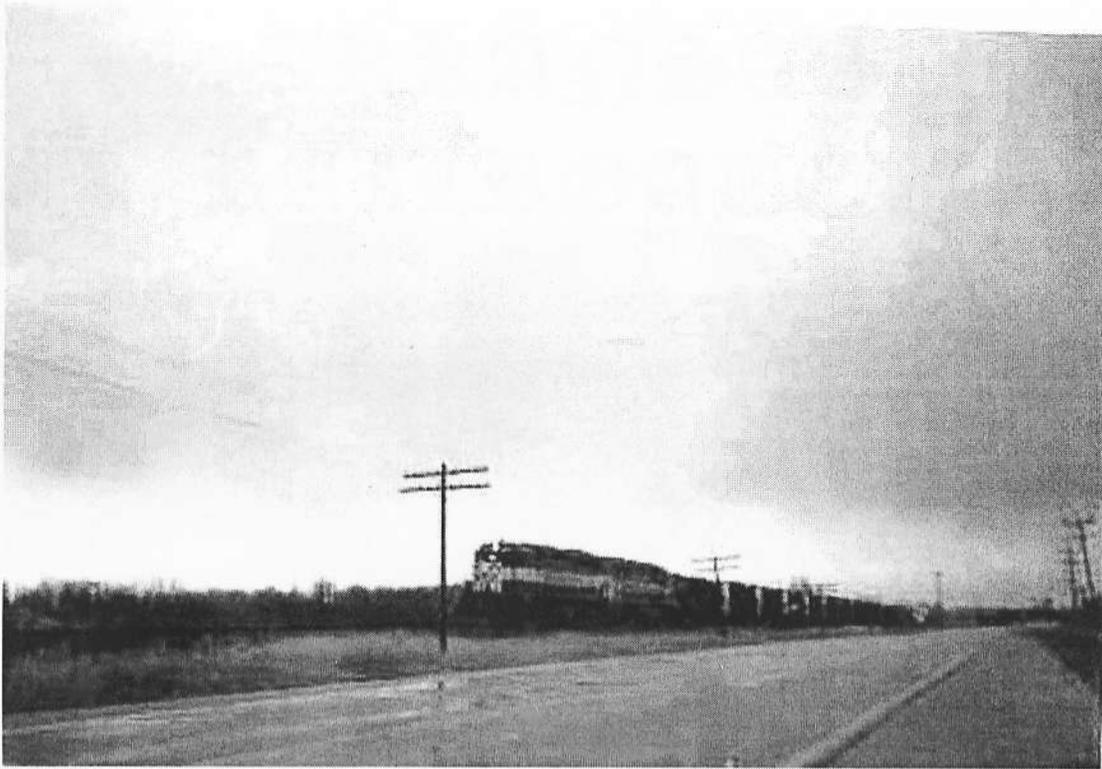
At the same time the "Silverton" train was scheduled to arrive, the depot was badly damaged by a violent explosion on Friday, 12 September 1975. The police investigation revealed that a seven-minute length of fuse had exploded a charge of dynamite under the south end of the depot, scattering debris across the track. The fickle hand of fate decreed that the train would be five minutes late that day. I am very glad I was unable to get tickets for the train.

Two days before, two men were arrested for rolling a boulder down a steep slope, striking the motor car following the train to extinguish any fires that may have been caused by sparks from the locomotive.

Rewards totaling \$2,000 were offered for apprehension and conviction of the ones responsible for the explosion. There was no known reason for such hatred for the railroad. Much of the town's economy depends upon the passengers. No arrests were made, and there was no repeat of the incident.

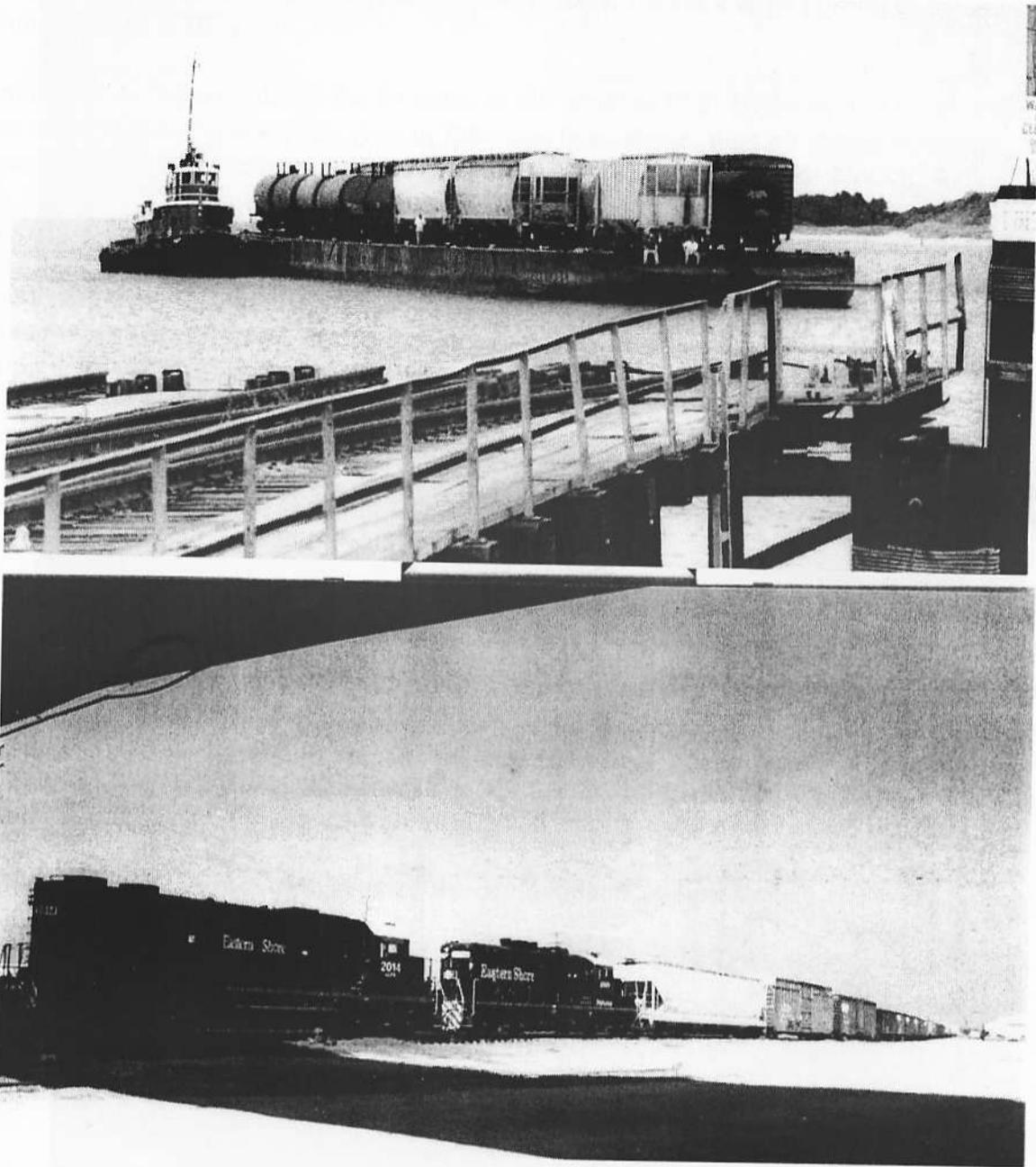
The D&RGW, several years earlier, had given the depot to the San Juan County Historical Society for preservation. The structure was rebuilt. ♪





TOP-Wisconsin Central westbound freight north of Duplain, Wisconsin in a storm in 2000. (*Ricky Shuttleworth photo*).

BOTTOM-Snow was falling as this southbound Union Pacific freight passed Union Station in Little Rock January 12, 2003. (*Ken Ziegenbein photo*)



TOP PHOTO – Eastern Shore Railroad float/ferry operation! Arriving in Little Creek, Virginia Beach, Virginia, after crossing mouth of Chesapeake Bay from Cape Charles, Virginia. The Ferry barge will mate with “bridge” and tracks in foreground. Barge is 300 feet long and 4 tracks wide! Tug is ex-Pennsy!” **PHOTO JUST ABOVE** – Eastern Shore Railroad train in Little Creek Yard. Train will leave for Portlock (NS’s marsheling yard for Norfolk, Virginia – Tidewater) as soon as crew gets back from lunch and orders in yard master’s office (white building at right). Ferry loading is at far end of yard.
(Photos taken in August 2002 by club member Joe Webb)