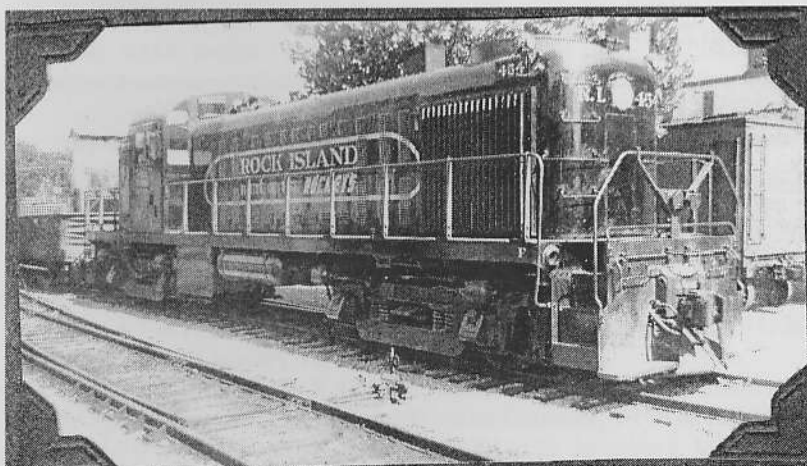


ARKANSAS RAILROADER



Little Rock Chapter
NRHS

VOLUME 35 NUMBER 3 MARCH 2004



TOP – “Little Rockette” was the Rock Island’s *Hot Springs Special* with motor 9009 and Rocket cars at Hot Springs, Arkansas, August 1948. **BOTTOM** – New Rock Island switcher #454, also in Hot Springs, August 1948. (Randy Tardy photos)



2004 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)
V-PRESIDENT - Peter Smykla, Jr., 2800 W 37th Ave, Pine Bluff AR 71603-5661 (870-535-4724), p.smykla@worldnet.att.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 '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
BOARD '08 - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2030), shay473@cei.net

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 program/meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be **SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2004** at 2 p.m. at our usual site, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, 4401 Woodlawn Drive, Little Rock. The program will be given by **Chuck Laggan** of the Arkansas Midland Railroad. Chuck is Vice President and General Manager of the Arkansas Midland Railroad, headquartered at Jones Mill, Arkansas. The public is invited and refreshments will be there like always.

Future Programs include: APRIL – John Hodkin, Jr. will give a rail photo presentation; MAY or AUGUST – Possibly a speaker from the Little Rock Port Railroad; JULY – Darin T. Archer, Special Agent of the Union Pacific Police, will give a talk on railroad police and Operation Lifesaver.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS – I have a large list of email addresses of Railroad Club members (nearing 90 email addresses at the present time) that I occasionally send emails to regarding club news or local rail events. In January I sent out several emails regarding the UP 3985 steam train that was to come through Pine Bluff and Little Rock for the Super Bowl. If you'd like to be on this list, I need your correct email address (if you didn't get any notification via email of the train's delay, then I don't have your address). Like always, I never share this list with anybody and will only send email when needed, sometimes weeks apart (I may start sending out meeting notices as well, just to remind you of the meeting date and program). The return address will indicate Arkansas Railroad Club. Send me your updated email address to: trains@trainweather.com and I'll put you on my list. Here are some that are having their email bounce: Dan Barr, Cary Nettles, Daryl Stout. Thanks. (Ken Ziegenbein, editor)

WANTED : FOR SALE OR TRADE

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

ATTENTION EXCURSION TRAIN DEVELOPERS - OWNERS/OPERATORS - MANAGERS

The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division, is soliciting an expression of interest and qualifications from interested parties for a contract to **own, operate and maintain** an excursion train on existing rail at the Delta Heritage Trail State Park between Snow Lake and Cypress Bend (approximately 31.71 miles), Arkansas.

It should be understood that this solicitation is a request to determine private sector interest in the above project. Information in the response may also be used in formulating a strategy to enter into negotiations with a qualified private sector group or individual for operating and maintaining an excursion train railway and the right-of-way at the referenced site. It should be explicitly understood that no contract will be awarded based solely on the response to this initial solicitation.

For follow-up information contact:

Mr. Rex Friedman, Chief Planner
Arkansas State Parks
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Telephone: (501) 682-6939
E-Mail: rex.friedman@mail.state.ar.us

In order to be considered, interested parties must submit a written Expression of Interest letter along with a Statement of Qualifications postmarked not later than (NLT) March 26, 2004 to the above address or access and download the necessary documents to submit by going to <http://www.ArkansasStateParks.com> before the above date.

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.

WEST VIRGINIA – CSX - To abandon a line of railroad. The 14.3-mile line extends from milepost BAJ 0.0 at Rowlesburg to milepost BAJ 14.3 near Albright in Preston County, WV. The line includes the stations of Manheim, Stoer, Patriot Presentation Plant, Preston, Morgans Run, Caddell, and Albright. A final decision will be issued by April 9, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 625X, decided December 31, 2003, served January 9, 2004)

PENNSYLVANIA – PENNSYLVANIA LINES LLC - To abandon a .34-mile line of railroad, extending from milepost 34.51 to milepost 34.85 at Coatesville, in Chester County, PA. Effective on February 8, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-859X, decided January 6, served January 9, 2004)

NORTH CAROLINA – NORFOLK SOUTHERN - To abandon a segment at the end of its line of railroad known as the old R-Line. The 1.95-mile segment extends from Milepost old R-3.00 to Milepost old R-4.95, in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC. A final decision will be issued by April 9, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 247X, decided January 6, served January 12, 2004)

ALABAMA – ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD CO. - To abandon a 1.03-mile line of railroad between milepost 3.67 and milepost 4.7 in Prichard, Mobile County, AL. effective on February 11, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-43 (Sub-No. 175X, decided January 6, served January 12, 2004)

VERMONT – LAMOILLE VALLEY RAILROAD CO. - To abandon approximately 96.78 miles of rail line in Caledonia, Washington, Orleans, Lamoille, and Franklin Counties, VT. The rail lines to be abandoned are: (1) Between approximately milepost 0.057 (SJLC valuation station 3+00) in St. Johnsbury, VT, and approximately milepost 95.324 (SJLC valuation station

5033+10) in Swanton, VT, a distance of Approximately 95.26 miles; and (2) the Hardwick and Woodbury Connecting Track (H&W) between approximately H&W valuation station 0+00 (Granite Junction) and approximately H&W valuation station 80+48 (Buffalo Road), a distance of approximately 1.52 miles, in Hardwick, VT (collectively, the line). LVRC also seeks to discontinue trackage rights over the former Central Vermont Railway, Inc. (CVR) line between approximately milepost 9.9 at the north abutment of the Missisquoi River Bridge at Sheldon Junction and approximately milepost 27.4 at Richford (the Richford Subdivision), in Franklin County, VT. The line is owned by the State of Vermont (State) by and through the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Effective on February 17, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-444 (Sub-No. 1X, decided January 12, served January 16, 2004)

KENTUCKY – NORFOLK SOUTHERN - To abandon a 8.74-mile line of railroad between milepost WP-2.20 at Toler and milepost WP-10.94 at Peg, in Pike County, KY. Effective on February 26, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 244X, decided January 20, served January 27, 2004)

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

FORT SMITH SERVICE TO START

(Springdale) - Fort Smith will get Sunday passenger train excursion, on a test market basis, starting April 4, Arkansas-Missouri Railroad Passenger Train Manager Brenda Brown said in January. The Palm Sunday kick-off will be followed with an Easter Sunday run, featuring the Easter Bunny. Plans are to run A&M's vintage passenger train from Springdale to Fort Smith with stops in Van Buren coming and going, every Sunday from April to August, Brown said. Because returning by train to Springdale would make for a very long day, A&M plans to motor coach those passengers back to Springdale after a 2 1/2- to 3-hour stay in Fort Smith, she said. Passengers will board at the old Frisco Depot at the Fort Smith National Historic Site, Brown said. The A&M will keep their regular Friday and Saturday runs to Van Buren like always.

Contact them: ARKANSAS-MISSOURI RAILROAD, 306 East Emma Springdale, AR 72764, 1-800-687-8600. email: info@arkansasmissouri-rr.com

UPDATE TO ARKANSAS SHORTLINES

Thanks to Alan Wagoner of the Little Rock & Western for the following update on the shortline railroads in Arkansas list in the February Arkansas Railroader. These were not on that list, probably because they are not members of the Shortline Railroad Association.

Caddo Valley Railroad Co., P. O. Box 2118, Glenwood, AR 71943, 870 356-4600

Delta Southern Railroad, P. O. Box 1709, Tallulah, LA 71282, 318 574-5420

Fort Smith Railroad Co., (Pioneer Railcorp), 1318 South Johanson Road, Peoria, IL 61607, 309 697-1400

El Dorado & Wesson Railway, P. O. Box 46, El Dorado, AR 71731, 870 863-7100.

CADDO VALLEY RR TO GET BALDWINS

According to Randy Keller on the Yahoo list called Railspot said he had heard that RLIX 126 & 130 (ex-MKT) have been sold to Caddo Valley Railroad in Arkansas (Caddo Valley Railroad Co., P. O. Box 2118, Glenwood, AR 71943, 870 356-4600).

Here's a history of those locomotives:

RLIX 126 DS44-1000m (BLW 72799, 8/46, ex-MKT 26, nee-MKT 1004); RLIX 130 DS44-1000m (BLW 72836, 2/47, ex-MKT 30, nee-MKT 1008)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

L.B. FOSTER/DME

The Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad, which runs through Minnesota and South Dakota, has received a Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Loan in the amount of \$233 million from the Federal Railroad Administration. Funding will be used to refinance debt and upgrade infrastructure along parts of its existing route. L. B. Foster owns about 15 percent of the DM&E.

(Remember L.B. Foster? It was the company that obtained the Rock Island in western Arkansas in the early 1980s) (L. B. Foster news release, February 9, 2004)

UNION PACIFIC HIRING

In mid January, Union Pacific announced it was hiring about 1,000 new conductors around the country. A high volume of retirements and increased business demands resulted in this action.

Salaries start at \$30,000-\$40,000 a year. Applicants need to be at least 18 years old. They must first complete a 14-week training program and then pass a medical exam, drug test and background investigation. Applicants should visit Union Pacific's Web site at www.up.com and click on the "Jobs at UP" section and then click on "Union Pacific Railroad: View Positions." Click on "Train Service" for the conductor positions. Applications must be completed and

submitted online for the job at the specific location of interest. Those without computers should visit their local job service, public library or copy center. Union Pacific has about 47,000 employees. Union Pacific will also transfer more than 1,000 workers from St. Louis to its new headquarters building in Omaha, Neb. (*UP News Release*)

TULSA UNION DEPOT NEWS

(Tulsa, Oklahoma) – The Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame will be moving into the Tulsa Union Depot. Besides a performance hall, the Depot will give the Jazz Hall some much needed meeting and office space, as well as room for a computer center for community use. There was no date mentioned as to when it will be complete, but the news story was in early January 2004.

IC DEPOT TO GET RENOVATED

(Vicksburg, MS) - Work began in early January restoring a 96-year-old freight and passenger depot (former Illinois Central) that will serve as a visitor center and railroad museum in Vicksburg. The work is supposed to be over by June 2004. The City of Vicksburg purchased the depot at the foot of Grove Street for \$215,000 in 2003. The depot building was declared a Mississippi Landmark, and that allows the city to seek certain grants for work on it. The city is also seeking a grant from the Great American Station Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps communities revitalize old railroad stations.

The depot was a center for north-south rail activity in the first part of the last century. In 1931, much business moved to the Holly Street Depot. The downtown depot was used by Illinois Central Railroad for offices until 1974 and has been used for a variety of purposes since, including as a kidney dialysis center and as a restaurant.

SNOWBIRDS RAIL EXPRESS

(Phoenix, Arizona) - Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Autolog Corp. announced in January they were launching car-rail service from Phoenix to Chicago, Minneapolis and New York City starting March 4. The service will

cost around \$450 and will get the vehicles to their spring destinations in 7-10 days, rather than the more-than-two weeks needed by auto-hauling trucks. BNSF estimates that 250,000 people from northern states move to the Phoenix-Tucson area every winter with their vehicles. (*BNSF*)

RAILAMERICA SELLS CHILE RR

RailAmerica said in late January that it plans to sell its interest in its Chilean railroad for \$18.1 million.

SOME RAILROAD PROFITS UP - SOME DOWN

Union Pacific profit rose 46 percent in the fourth quarter of 2003, helped by the sale of its trucking business, Overnite. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. said quarterly profit climbed 12 percent, boosted by higher cargo volumes. After putting aside \$21 million for potential claims, Kansas City Southern reported an 80 percent decline in earnings in 2003 compared with 2002. However, KCS fourth-quarter revenue increased, from \$144.2 million to \$148.5 million. Norfolk Southern Corp. said quarterly earnings fell 60 percent as the company wrote down the value of a four-year-old fiber-optic investment and had costs for job cuts.

CUMBRES & TOLTEC RUNNING

After a year of barely operating because of finances and forest fires, new management and new financing in 2004 have officials hopeful that ridership will double this year and plan to have three vintage steam locomotives on line when the season opens May 29. The 64-mile narrow-gauge line, built in the 1880s, crosses the remote, mountainous New Mexico-Colorado border 11 times on each trip between Antonito and Chama, N.M. over 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass.

The railroad will operate every day of the week except Friday through Oct. 17. On Mondays and Wednesdays, one train departs from Antonito at 10 a.m. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, one train departs from Chama at 10 a.m. On Saturdays and Sundays, trains depart from both Chama and Antonito. All trains stop at Osier, Colo. - roughly midway between the towns - for lunch.

A hot lunch is included. There is also an all-railroad roundtrip between Chama and Osier, or Antonito and Osier.

Tickets may be purchased at the train's stations; via a secure website, www.cumbrestoltec.com; or by calling 1-888-CUMBRES (1-888-286-2737). Prices vary depending on the day and whether you want return transportation provided; call or check the website to find out about prices for the trip you want. Because of high demand, tickets for opening weekend, May 29 and 30 can be purchased only by phone. Tickets for all other dates may be purchased via the website.

T&P STATION RENOVATION

(Fort Worth, Texas) - Construction could begin this spring on redevelopment of the old Texas & Pacific railroad terminal in Fort Worth after sitting vacant for four years. The \$26 million development plan calls for turning the upper floors of the art-deco T&P building into 130 apartments. The bottom floor has already been converted into a station for the Trinity Railway Express. Up to 100 apartments and a parking garage are planned on an adjacent lot. (*Wouldn't that be a great place to live? - via Fort Worth Star Telegram*)

TOWER 17 DECOMMISSIONED

(Rosenberg, Texas) - Union Pacific decommissioned Tower 17 in Rosenberg, Texas on February 10, 2004, the last manned interlocking tower in Texas, built in 1903. Tower 17 is the "last" traditional manned interlocking tower in the State of Texas. Tower 16 in Sherman and Tower 47 in El Paso both closed in 2001 leaving Tower 17 as the last holdout. The Rosenberg Railroad Museum has raised sufficient funds to move the tower to its grounds once the tower is officially decommissioned.

Here's the official Union Pacific General Order:

UNION PACIFIC RR COMPANY,
GLIDDEN SUBDIVISION GENERAL
ORDER NO. 8. PURPOSE:

Effective 0800, February 10, 2004, CP SA035 will be removed from service and the control operator for Tower 17 will be the Glidden Subdivision train dispatcher.

Information and instructions for this subdivision that are not specifically modified by this general order remain in effect. Effective: February 4, 2004

CANCELLATIONS - This order cancels all previous orders for the Glidden Subdivision. (*Via the Internet*)

RAIL CENTER CONSTRUCTION

(*Dallas, Texas*) - Union Pacific is planning to build a large rail/intermodal center that will be one of the largest businesses ever built on the Interstate 45 corridor south of Dallas. The big industrial facility will be in the towns of Wilmer and Hutchins. The 350-acre project will be on I-45 at Wintergreen Road south of Interstate 20. The Wilmer-

Hutchins complex will cover more acres and have almost as many facilities as Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp.'s intermodal complex at Alliance Airport.

QUESTION: *When the power goes out, would the flashing red lights still come on at a railroad crossing if a train is approaching?*

AMTRAK NEWS

RAIL FUNDING PROPOSAL

Senators Tom Carper and Joe Biden want Congress to support a \$42 billion plan they said would end battles over Amtrak funding and improve federal support of freight and passenger railroad projects. The plan, called the American Railroad Revitalization Investment and Enhancement Act or ARRIVE-21, would get most of its money through a bond issue, private investment instead of tax dollars. A non-profit, public-private corporation would oversee the fund, Carper said. Amtrak, state governments and private rail freight companies could apply for grants to improve tracks, bridges and purchase new equipment.

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

◆ **ARKANSAS - PINE BLUFF**— April 3, 2004 – The 9th Annual Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society's Show and Sale will be held at the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff on April 3, 2004, a Saturday. Contact Gerald Cooper, Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society, PO Box 2044, Pine Bluff AR 71613-2044 for table and show information.

◆ **TENNESSEE – EXCURSIONS NATIONWIDE** – Southern Appalachia Railway Museum, PO Box 5870, Knoxville TN 37928, runs rare-mileage train excursions nationwide and on a regular basis operates the Secret City Scenic Excursion between the former K-25 Manhattan Project facility plant to the community of Blair, Tennessee. You can contact them by calling 865-241-2140 or go their website at www.southernappalachia.railway.museum. Membership is \$30 for the first year and \$20 a year thereafter.

The organizer of these rare-mileage excursions is Club member Bart Jennings. He will have excursions at the end of May 2004 in Oregon, Idaho and Montana and is selling tickets. Here is the planned schedule:

Oregon Joseph Branch (Saturday, May 22) - This trip is almost sold out!; **Idaho Grangeville Branch (Sunday, May 23); Central Montana Rail (Monday and Tuesday, May 24 and 25)** - Tickets are now on sale. Includes lunch and/or dinner. Check out the ticket and trip info at "www.southernappalachia.railway.museum".

◆ **OREGON – May 21, 2004** - Peter Smykla, Jr. of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, is looking at sponsoring a photo freight day on the Sumpter Valley near Baker, Oregon, on May 21, 2004, the day before the Oregon Joseph Branch trip above. The train would use 2-8-2 #19 and freight cars, probably a cabooses for passengers. They have quoted a price of \$1500 for the event. It will go enough are interested. Contact Peter for more details at 870-535-4724. He needs a certain amount of riders to run the train.

◆ **ARKANSAS – CONWAY** – The Central Arkansas Model Railroad Club meets monthly on the first Monday of the month, usually at the Faulkner County Library, 1900 Tyler St, in Conway, Arkansas in the large meeting room on the left side of the library. Time is 7:00 p.m. on those Mondays. Programs vary, but include videos, layouts, general train talk, seminars, etc.

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.

THE EAGLES ROOST AT LITTLE ROCK

by: Gene Hull

It was 12:05 a.m. on Sunday, 16 July 1967. Train No. 1, the streamlined TEXAS EAGLE, rolled to a gentle stop at Missouri Pacific Union Depot at Little Rock on her way from St. Louis, Missouri to San Antonio, Texas. There were **586** passengers aboard and everyone of them climbed the cast iron stairway to reach the concrete concourse and made their way into the marble and tile waiting room of the station.

Oh, what an echoing bedlam!

The big diesel locomotive and the empty cars sat silent and quiet.

One hour and forty-five minutes later an identical train arrived from the opposite direction. It was 1:50 a.m. and train No. 2, the northbound TEXAS EAGLE from San Antonio to St. Louis, discharged **480** passengers, who also climbed the old iron stairway to the concourse.

The big waiting room now was vibrating!



ELECTRO-MOTIVE DIVISION - General Motors 2000 h.p. E7-A No. 26 (renumbered from No. 7017 in 1962) was tied up near the Colonial Bakery. (Gene Hull photo)



Four tracks at Little Rock Union Depot were filled with passenger cars during the strike. (Gene Hull photo)

At 7:40 a.m. Train No. 4, with its string of coaches arrived from Ft. Worth, Texas bound for St. Louis, arrived on time. More passengers joined the noisy, restless crowd.

The SOUTHERNER, southbound from St. Louis to Texarkana, made her way into the crowded yard at Union Depot at 10:00 a.m. The upstairs waiting room was a veritable "can of sardines."



A combination baggage-mail car sits beside the fueling stand pipes. Even the rubber tired baggage trucks sat idle, waiting for a "highball." (Gene Hull photo)



EMD-GM 1953 model GP-7 number 324 (ex-number 4258) got caught in the tie-up. (Gene Hull photo)

Some weary passengers were actually trying to lie on the massive oak benches. People were swirling about rather aimlessly, like the sluggish current in a rocky stream. Some were frustratingly kicking heavy luggage. A few were even philosophically calm.

One elderly woman was fuming with indignation. She had been on her way to the teeming city of Mineral Wells, Texas when she and her luggage were de-trained at Little Rock. How was she supposed to visit her grandchildren in Texas?

She displayed a leather folder, saying to no one in particular, but to everyone in general, "Just look at this. I'm the proud owner of the most worthless piece of paper in the world!"

She was displaying a lifetime pass issued to her husband, who was actually an ENGINEER at St. Louis. It seemed she thought a free ride was her constitutional right.

One fellow actually was enjoying himself. He was Naranjan Singh Gill, India's ambassador to Mexico. He and his wife, granddaughter (three years old) and two servants were on their way to the Exposition '67 at Montreal, Canada and then a month in Europe, while on their way to India.

He was going to take advantage of the interruption of his journey to tour the grounds of our beautiful state capitol.

"Every cloud has a silver lining," he said.

A sweating Redcap wiped his gleaming black face. "They ain't been nuthin like this since the war!" Presumably he meant World War II.

What was causing the furious uproar at the Union Depot?

At midnight Saturday, 15 June 1967, members of the International Association of Machinists began a nationwide strike, not just on the railroads. Railroad employees would not cross a union picket line. Trains, freight and passenger, halted at the nearest terminal.

There was more confusion at the station. A young woman from Iowa was on her way to Mexico to teach school. She also was trying to shepherd seven members of a Mexican family who spoke no English.

One woman finally made her way to the window in front of a harried ticket agent. She was demanding a refund of money she had paid a porter for the use of three pillows she never had a chance to use.

Missouri Pacific officials frantically made arrangements with Continental Trailways Bus System to honor the unused portions of all tickets. There is no mention of how the 1200 passengers got to

the bus terminal.

Of course, Murphy's Law was in full force. Passengers were directed to the bus station at Markham and Louisiana streets. Lines of passengers, two abreast, extended outside and down the sidewalk along Markham Street. The Mo.P. officials forgot about the OTHER Trailways bus station one block further east - at Markham and Main, where there was very little increase in traffic.

The crowd around the bus station at Louisiana made it almost impossible for bus drivers and porters to get into the building. There were two buses scheduled for St. Louis on Sunday, but this time eight were on the road. No buses were scheduled for Houston, Texas, but five were dispatched.

This event would be remembered a long time by a lot of people. A young fellow in an army uniform said he had to be at Fort Hood, Texas by noon and it already was 3:30 a.m. He was muttering that Little Rock was even worse than Fort Polk, Louisiana.

A disheveled woman was desperately trying to control four young children. One already had gotten lost in the crowd four times. "The next time he can just stay here!"

At 2:30 a.m. a raspy voice over the loudspeaker was paging Mrs. Perlie Mae Parnell. Twenty minutes later she still had not answered. Perhaps that was because a group was at the concession stand listening to country music on a radio.


The attendant at the concession stand was really busy dispensing coffee, Coca-Cola, hot dogs and comic books.

The loudspeaker began calling Perlie Mae Parnell again.

At 3:30 a.m. the crowd began crowding around the ticket window when the agent announced he was ready to stamp tickets for use on the buses. As the crowd thinned out, the pandemonium subsided and relative quiet returned.

It was 7:00 a.m. when Mrs. Perlie Mae Parnell arrived at the ticket window. She had been on the train sound asleep and missed everything.

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed emergency legislation to end the strike. At 2:50 p.m. Tuesday 18 July 1967 Missouri Pacific workers began reporting for duty.

The first nationwide strike in 20 years was over. 

CHOCTAW ROCKET
BETWEEN
MEMPHIS-LITTLE ROCK-OKLAHOMA CITY-AMARILLO

Leaves Memphis early afternoon
Arrives Amarillo early morning

Smooth, quiet Diesel-electric power with through Sleeping Car, reclining seat Coaches and Dining-Parlor-Observation Car between Memphis and Amarillo. Convenient connections for regular travelers and vacationists bound to and from the West.

DAILY
Westbound SCHEDULE Eastbound

1:45 pm	Lv. Memphis	Ar. 11:45 am
2:30 pm	Ar. Forrest City	Lv. 10:47 am
3:01 pm	Ar. Bristley	Lv. 10:23 am
4:05 pm	Ar. Little Rock	Lv. 9:10 am
4:15 pm	Lv. Little Rock	Ar. 9:05 am
6:56 pm	Ar. Bonaville	Lv. 6:20 am
7:46 pm	Ar. Howe	Lv. 5:19 am
(A) 8:32 pm	Ar. Wilburton	Lv. 4:35 am (A)
8:35 pm	Ar. McAlester	Lv. 3:53 am
10:16 pm	Ar. Holdenville	Lv. 2:50 am
10:27 pm	Ar. Wauka	Lv. 2:34 am
10:44 pm	Ar. Seminole	Lv. 2:17 am
11:11 pm	Ar. Shawnee	Lv. 1:51 am
12:15 am	Ar. Oklahoma City	Lv. 12:05 am
12:25 am	Lv. Oklahoma City	Ar. 12:45 am
1:56 am	Ar. El Reno	Lv. 12:04 am
(A) 2:02 pm	Ar. Weatherford	Lv. 11:00 pm (A)
7:26 am	Ar. Clinton Jet. (Clinton)	Lv. 10:35 pm
3:07 am	Ar. Elk City	Lv. 10:04 pm
3:51 am	Ar. Sayre	Lv. 9:38 pm
(A) 3:52 am	Ar. Erick	Lv. 8:21 pm (A)
4:30 am	Ar. Shamrock	Lv. 8:05 pm
(A) 4:51 am	Ar. McKean	Lv. 8:27 pm (A)
(A) 5:56 am	Ar. Conway	Lv. 7:55 pm (A)
6:20 am	Ar. Amarillo	Lv. 7:10 pm

(A) Conditional Stop

For reservations, tickets and information, write or call:

Rock Island
C. J. GINSEY,
District Passenger Agent
70 Monroe, Memphis 3, Tenn.
Phone 8-6237

ROCK ISLAND LINES
The Road of Planned Progress



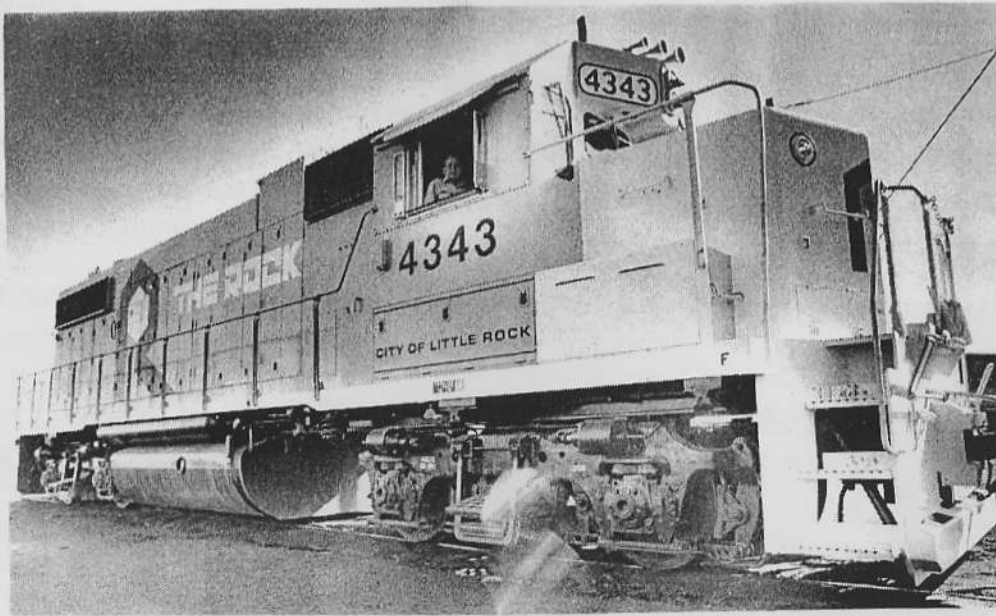
LEFT - Choctaw Rocket schedule, about 1948. ABOVE - Randy Tardy and Walter Walker next to the Rock Island car 'Amarillo' at the Rock Island depot in Hot Springs, Arkansas in August 1946. BELOW - Rock Island depot and tracks, Hot Springs, August 1949. (Randy Tardy collection)





"Hercules," the Rock Island Lines' new Diesel electric locomotive, is among the largest and most powerful in the world. This giant, first of nine to be delivered to the Rock Island Lines, has 5400 horsepower, is 190 feet long and is geared for speeds up to 70 miles per hour in freight service.

"Hercules" is on its first assignment left Chicago pulling 125 loaded freight cars, a train a mile and one-quarter long, carrying 4600 tons of vital war freight.. (Public Relations Department, Rock Island Lines, Chicago, April 25, 1944. Randy Tardy collection)



Rock Island #4343, "City of Little Rock," unknown location. (Randy Tardy collection)