

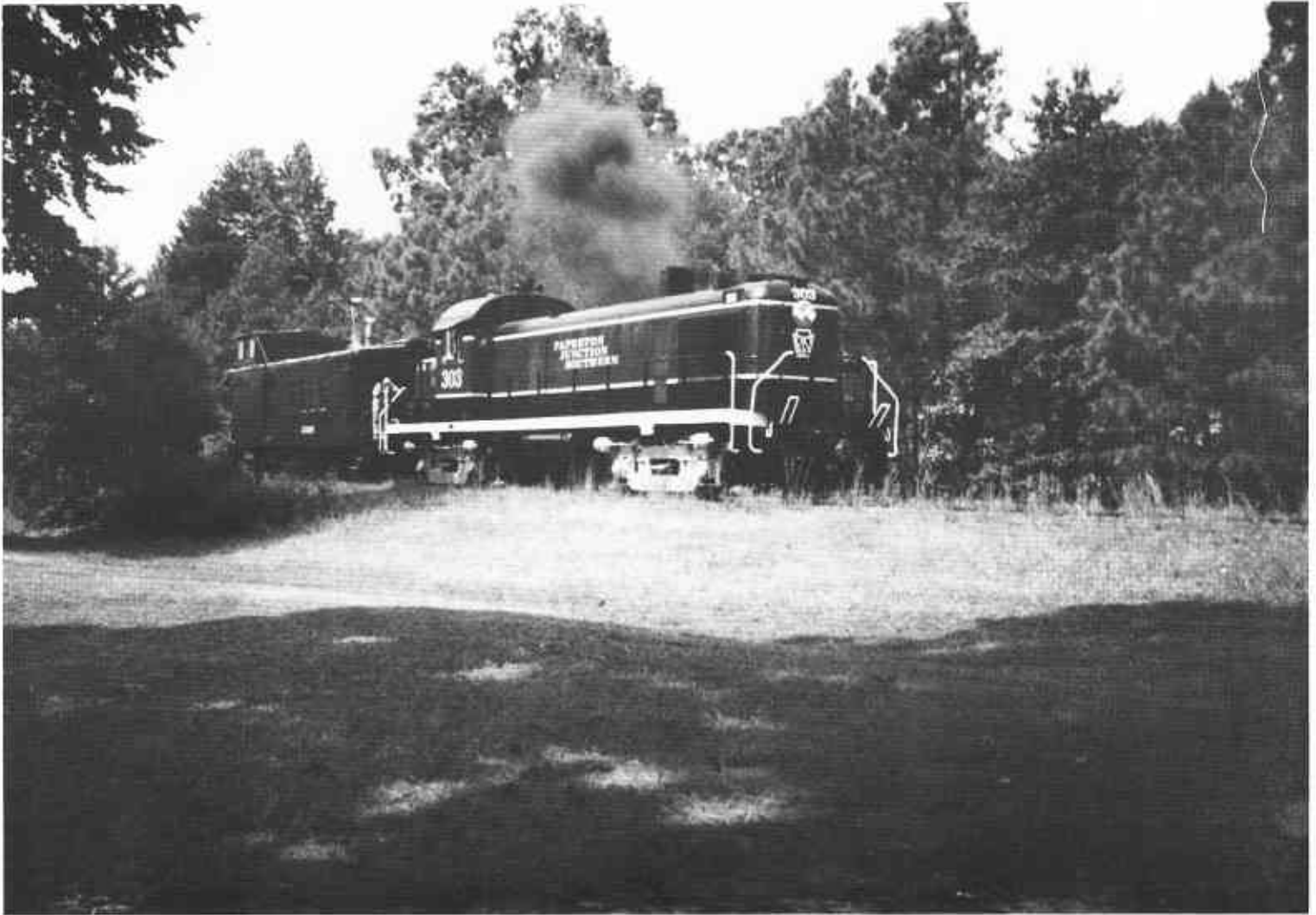


LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
N.R.H.S.

# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 27 NUMBER 11 NOVEMBER 1996



**Paperton Junction Southern** (owned by member Peter Smykla, Jr) excursion by the Arkansas Railroad Club on Saturday, September 7, 1996. The train is being pulled by Alco PJS 303, an RS-3, built in 1956, the last RS-3 built and the last Alco locomotive built with model 244 prime movers. It is painted in bright red and black and was acquired from Michigan Northern in 1984. The caboose, carrying our members, is SSW 2325, built at the Pine Bluff shops in July 1920 at a cost of \$3,488.75. It spent most of its life on a mixed train on the Paragould & Southeastern between Paragould and Blytheville, Arkansas. It was assigned to the grandfather of T. D. Davis, engineer of the 819 in the 1980s, and then to Bill Church's dad. It was acquired by PJS in 1979. *(Photo by Krysti Hodkin)*



Members of the Arkansas Railroad Club pose for this photo next to Peter Smykla, Jr.'s *Paperton Junction Southern* Alco 303 during the club's excursion September 7, 1996. (Ken Ziegenbein photo)



**Missouri Pacific No. 5534**, a 4-4-2 Atlantic type. One of 40 built for MoPac-Iron Mountain from April 1904 to April 1907 by Alco-Brooks Works. Strictly fast passenger power, the 5534 was in the last class built and here rests at Van Buren, Arkansas August 1953. The 5534 was later modernized (not when this picture was taken) to include boosters on trailing trucks. Up to and during World War II they were used everywhere but were all gone by 1946. (Mike Adams collection)

### 1996 OFFICERS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Tom Shook , 1716 Alberta Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)  
VICE-PRESIDENT - Craig Gerard, 2011 Aztec Dr, Bldg 16 #6, N Little Rock AR 72116-4470 (501-835-4057)  
TREASURER - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72207-5983 (501-225-0826)  
SECRETARY - Carole Sue Schafer, 103 Thayer St, Little Rock AR 72205-5951 (501-371-0034)  
EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 905 Valerie Dr, N Little Rock AR 72118-3160 (501-758-1340)  
NATIONAL NRHS DIR -Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)  
HISTORIAN - R. W. McGuire, 114 Rice St, Little Rock AR 72205 (501-375-1738)  
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729)  
BOARD '96 - Peter Smykla, 2800 West 37th, Pine Bluff AR 71603 (501-535-4724)  
BOARD '97 - Tom Shircliff, 129 Jessica Dr, Sherwood AR 72120-3429 (501-834-4914)  
BOARD '98 - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon St, N Little Rock AR 72117 (501-945-2128)  
BOARD '99 - Stanley Wozencraft, 108 N Palm, Little Rock AR 72205 (501-664-3301)  
BOARD '00 - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington #31, North Little Rock AR 72114-6455 (501-945-7386)

### NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

The next meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will meet Sunday, November 10 at 2 p.m. at the Mercantile Bank's main building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just across the river from Little Rock. The program will be given by BILL BAILEY and will be on various railroad topics, mainly the KCS.

In December, our Annual Christmas Party will feature a visual/audio talk by Peter Ehrlich of the Northern California Railroad Club. He'll talk about "Arkansas Railroading, as Seen Through a Californian's Eyes." (See Christmas details below).

**CLUB TO SPONSOR "GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS"** - The Arkansas Railroad Club will be the sole sponsor of the NEW series of "Great Railway Journeys," to air on PBS this November and December. As the sponsor, we will have a full-screen announcement harping our club at the beginning and ending of the programs (six in all), our "ad" will be in the AETN Program Guide, and we'll be on the Arkansas Educational Television Network's homepage on the World Wide Web.

The programs will air on AETN on Thursday nights beginning at 9 p.m. (very prime time) starting November 7 and last six weeks. Here are the names of the programs: 1) **From Crewe to Crewe** (northern England and Scotland); 2) **From Halifax to Porteau Cove** (in Canada from Nova Scotia to British Columbia); 3) **From Zimbabwe to Tanzania** (through the Tanzanian bush country); 4) **From London to Arcadia** (London to Greece); 5) **From Aleppo to Aqaba** (Arabia); 6) **From the High Andes to Patagonia** (Argentina).

**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** - Our Annual Christmas Dinner will be held Saturday, December 7 at the Ramada Inn in North Little Rock at 6 p.m. We'll all go through the buffet. We'll have a presentation by Peter D. Ehrlich of the Northern California Railroad Club (and member of our club as well). He'll talk about Arkansas railroading as seen through a Californian's eyes.

The thrust of his program will cover Union Pacific's ex-MoPac lines in Arkansas and shortlines, featuring Alcos operating on the Caddo, Antoine and Little River (CALM), Arkansas & Missouri, Little Rock & Western, Paperton Junction Southern, etc. Mr. Ehrlich will also have slides of San Francisco's new F-Market streetcar line, on which he's a motorman, and Memphis's Main Street Trolley, plus a 7-year tribute to UP *Challenger 3985*. He's been to Arkansas 4 times since 1990. Prices will be \$16.95, including tax. Call Craig Gerard if you're going at 501-835-4057.

**OFFICER NOMINATIONS FOR 1997** - President: CRAIG GERARD; Vice-President: LEONARD THALMUELLER; Secretary: CAROLE SUE SCHAFER; Treasurer: WALTER WALKER; Board of Director through 2001: TOM SHOOK; NRHS National Director: OPEN (volunteers, please!) The following were recommended FOR continuance, but are not official officer positions: Newsletter Editor: KEN ZIEGENBEIN; Photographer: JOHN C. JONES. The nominating committee consisted of Naomi and Gene Hull and John Jones.

**PAST/PRESENT RR WORKERS WANTED** - The NRHS is compiling a list of members who either currently works for or used to work for the railroad industry. If you fit the bill, send a card to Dick Davis, PO Box 278, Strasburg PA 17579-0278.

**1997 SHOW AND SALE** of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be held in conjunction with the NMRA Regional Meeting on June 21, 1997. The NMRA's convention begins on June 19 and lasts through the 21st. Location will be the Robinson Convention Center in Little Rock. Model railroad clinics, auctions, shows, displays will be there. Our Railroadiana Show & Sale will be on the 21st, so we should have a LOT of people through the doors in 1997. FOR information, contact Walter Walker, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119 or call 501-663-8901. Dealers should make a special effort to be there, since the NMRA usually brings in many conventioners who buy things.

**REQUEST FOR NEWS** - Thanks to all of you who have been sending news in to me. I need consistent sources of news from various parts of the state to keep the newsletter "newsy." Mainly, I need news from your LOCAL PAPER. That is the only way we can get it. That news will then be put in the *Arkansas Railroader*, where it will be preserved for future rail historians. As you know, the *Railroader* is sent to several libraries, both in and out of Arkansas, and some, like the Arkansas History Commission, microfilm them. Thanks in advance. You WILL be credited for sending the news.

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

**CALENDARS FOR 1997** - 1997 Arkansas Railroad Club calendars are available for \$7.00 each, 2-9 are \$6.50 each and 10 or more are only \$6.00 each. Remember that the holiday season is just around the corner and these would make great gifts. Send check to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. You may use the form in the newsletter.

*Look To This Day  
Yesterday is a Dream  
Tomorrow is a Vision*

**NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM** - The "new" membership form has been revised a little to add a few railroads I had missed on the original, such as the Rock Island and KCS. Please fill out your preferences when you renew. I'll compile a list of what our club members' favorite railroads and railroad pastimes are after all renewals are in. You can copy the sheet and give to prospective members. With this in mind...

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

**DEADLINE** for the December *Railroader* is NOVEMBER 10. If you have any news, get it to me before then, as the newsletter will go to the printer November 11. Thanks. News in this issue is updated through October 7 (earlier than normal due to the October excursions, being that I'm in charge of trip reservations and mailings). This issue mailed on or about October 21.

**REGULAR TRAIN EXCURSIONS OF SURROUNDING STATES** - Taken from the book "Steam Passenger Service Directory, 31st Annual Edition," published by Kalmbach Books.

This month we'll list public excursions in Missouri:

- Smoky Hill Railway** - Belton, Missouri - operates weekend trips over about 5 miles of former Frisco track south of Belton, using a GP-9 and a 1920 open-window coach. Several pieces of static displayed equipment, including a Rock Island E-6 and antique freight cars. Contact them at 502 Walnut Street, Belton MO 64012-2516, recorded phone 816-331-0630.
- Branson Scenic Railway** - Branson, Missouri - Runs every few hours south of Branson into the mountains and tunnels of northwest Arkansas. Contact them at 206 East Main Street, Branson MO 65616, 417-334-6110.
- Wabash, Frisco and Pacific Railway - 12" gauge** - Glencoe, Missouri - Founded in 1939, this small railroad operates authentically, with standard crossing signals and meets. Runs Sundays only on a 2-mile line, on a former Missouri Pacific right-of-way. Contact them at 1569 Ville Angela Lane, Hazelwood MO 63042-1630, 314-587-3538.
- St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway** - Jackson, Missouri - Runs steam-powered trips of various lengths, some dinner trains. Uses a Porter 2-4-2, the former Crab Orchard & Egyptian steam engine, plus three others. Has candlelight dinner runs. Address is PO Box 244, Jackson MO 63755, 573-243-1688.
- Patee House Museum** - St. Joseph, Missouri - Houses a Baldwin 4-4-0 built in 1860 plus other rail and transportation pieces, including Pony Express mementos. Contact the museum at Box 1622, St. Joseph MO 64502, 816-232-8206.
- Museum of Transportation** - St. Louis - Has one of the largest and best collections of transportation vehicles in the world. Has over 70 locomotives, 35 of them steam, and 23 passenger cars. Address: 3015 Barrett Station Rd, St. Louis MO 63122, 314-965-7998.
- St. Louis Steam Train Association** - St. Louis - Operates the famous 1522 on excursions at various times. Contact them at 1901 Mistflower Glen Ct., Chesterfield MO 63005-4317.
- Frisco Railroad Museum** - Springfield, Missouri - the only facility in the country dedicated to the Frisco Railway. Address: 543 East Commerce Street, Springfield MO 65803, 417-866-7573.

## 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** - A special TRRA/SSW issue in production highlighting the TRRA/SSW relationship and operations. Need photos of SSW passenger trains and freight trains - steam or diesel, near towers or depots, especially welcomed. Editor, Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, PO Box 1688, St. Louis MO 63188, 314-535-3101.

**WANTED** - MoPac toilet locks, M.P. tall globe lanterns with embossed logo. MoPac silver & china especially Sunshine Special Service plate. Contact Robert Worlow, 21515 N Mill Rd, Little Rock AR 72206 or call 501-888-5655.

**WANTED** - Cotton Belt tall globe lantern with embossed logo. StL S W silver, china or other items. Contact Robert Worlow, 21515

N Mill Rd, Little Rock AR 72206 or call 501-888-5655.

**FOR SALE** - DARDANELLE & RUSSELLVILLE RAILROAD, 536 pages, 8 1/2" x 11", hard cover, photos, maps, etc. \$47.00 postage paid. Send orders to Clifton E. Hull, 3507 East Washington #31, North Little Rock AR 72114.

**FOR TRADE** - Passes, tickets, old photographs of KCS, Frisco, etc and wax sealers for trade. Contact P. L. Moseley, 6621 Springlake Circle, Shreveport LA 71107-8778 or call 318-929-2433 for copy of current list.

**FOR SALE** - Record of Locomotives Nos. 1 to 605 owned by St. Louis Southwestern

Railway Lines and Predecessor Companies from date organized and disposition thereof, researched by Gene Hull, \$5.00 per copy. Contact Gene Hull, 3507 East Washington, #831, North Little Rock AR 72114.

**FOR SALE** - "Southern Railway: from Stevenson to Memphis" by Jack Daniels of the Memphis Chapter, NRHS. Covers 1830 to 1984, with 360 pages and 420 B&W photos. Cost is \$24.95 plus \$3.50 postage. Jack Daniels, 3467 Alfred Drive, Memphis TN 38133, 901-386-3604.

**FOR SALE** - Jim Leuders of the Houston Gulf Coast Chapter has several years worth of Cotton Belt Annual Reports he's selling for \$75. If interested, call John Hodkin, 501-945-2128.

## RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

These are railroad abandonment notices that have been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER during the past couple of months. Effective abandonment dates are valid UNLESS stayed OR an offer of financial assistance is received OR trail use/rail banking requests are filed OR environmental issues are raised. They are presented generally in chronological order of being published. The states will be listed first, then the railroad. The "FR" stands for Federal Register.

- NEBRASKA - MISSOURI PACIFIC** - To abandon a 0.61 mile of the Omaha Belt Line between m.p. 485.55 and the end of the line at m.p.486.16 near Omaha, Nebraska. Effective October 3, 1996. (FR September 3, 1996)
- IDAHO - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon 5.7 miles of line known as the Grace Industrial Lead from m.p. 0.1 near Alexander to the end of the line at m.p. 5.8 near Grace, Idaho. Effective October 9, 1996. (FR September 9, 1996)
- IOWA - NORFOLK SOUTHERN** - To abandon 1.1 miles of line between m.p. SD-339.7 and SD-340.6 in Des Moines, Iowa. Effective October 10, 1996. (FR September 10, 1996)
- ILLINOIS - SOO LINE** - To discontinue trackage rights over 104.9 miles of Conrail between m.p. 4.3 at Gibson, Indiana and m.p. 109.2 at Danville, Illinois. Effective October 15, 1996. (FR September 13, 1996)
- WYOMING - WYOMING AND COLORADO RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon 66.16 miles segment of the Coalmont Branch from m.p. 67.47 at the Colorado/Wyoming line to m.p. 1.31 near Laramie, Wyoming. Effective October 16, 1996. (FR September 16, 1996)
- INDIANA - CONRAIL** - To abandon a 1.55 mile portion of the Arlington Avenue Industrial Track between m.p. -0.90 and m.p. 0.65 in Marion County, Indiana. Effective October 17, 1996. (FR September 17, 1996)
- INDIANA - CONRAIL** - To abandon a 2.0 mile segment of the Plymouth Industrial Track between m.p. 179.00 and m.p. 181.00 in St. Joseph, Indiana. Effective October 17, 1996. (FR September 17, 1996)
- VERMONT - LAMOILLE VALLEY RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon 44.4 miles of line from m.p. 95.324 in Swanton to m.p. 94.288 in Swanton and from m.p. 92.000 in Highgate to m.p. 48.614 in Morrisville, Vermont. Effective October 18, 1996. (FR September 18, 1996)
- SOUTH DAKOTA - DAKOTA, MINNESOTA & EASTERN RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon 0.55 miles of line known as the Aberdeen Line of the Aberdeen to Oakes Subdivision from m.p. 83.15 to m.p. 82.61 in Brown County, South Dakota. Effective October 31, 1996. (FR October 1, 1996)

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

### EAGLE WILL CONTINUE

Due to a great deal of public support (yes, the GENERAL public, not just railfans) which prompted a Senate hearing September 10, Amtrak will continue running the *Texas Eagle* and four other trains through at least May 10. Congress appropriated an additional \$22.5 million to be used for this purpose only. As of October 3, these trains were back in the reservation system. There was bipartisan support in Congress for these trains, and thanks should be given especially to Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R), 283 Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington DC 20510 for holding the hearings (the sight

of Texas Senator Phil Gramm (R) sitting next to Arkansas Senator Dale Bumpers (D) and AGREEING on this topic must have brought chills to Amtrak personnel at the hearing!)

Of course, thanks should also be given to our Arkansas Senators (Dale Bumpers, 229 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington DC 20510 and David Pryor, 267 Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington DC 20510) and Arkansas Congresspersons Blanche Lambert Lincoln, 1204 Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington DC 20515; Ray Thornton, 1214 Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington DC 20515; Tim Hutchinson (who made a special appearance at the hearing introducing

the Little Rock mayor), 1005 Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington DC 20515, and Jay Dickey, 230 Cannon Bldg, Washington DC 20515. Again, have of these are Democrats and half Republicans.

In order to keep the trains running past May 10, the state may have to come up with some money. It is doubtful whether the "asphalt hugging" legislature (editor's term and opinion, only) in Arkansas would do this. However, we all could be surprised. (More on this under ""AMTRAK NEWS")

## GENERAL RAIL NEWS

### NEW RAILROAD

(Whitewood, South Dakota) - The Cosner brothers (Dan and Kevin, of movie fame) got an old CNW right-of-way in southwestern South Dakota and will help finance, along with tax-exempt bonds issued by the Northern Hills Regional Rail Authority, a 12.7 mile rail construction to connect Whitewood with Deadwood, South Dakota. The Cosner's own Dunbar Resort, which will be connected with the new railroad. The line will loop over itself to gain height and two trestles will be built, one a wooden trestle, 960 feet long, the largest trestle of its kind built in 50 years. (*Midwest Rail Scene, via The Gateway Railletter, St. Louis Chapter,*

*October 1996)*

### ICC LIBRARY

According to a newsgroup on the Internet called misc.transport.rail.americas, the old Interstate Commerce Commission library was shipped to the University of Denver in September. According to the Denver Post, the university will open the reports, such as accident, to the public.

### FRISCO-SANTA FE LINE BROKEN

(Paris, Texas) - The former St. Louis to Texas Frisco-Santa Fe through service line has been broken, to become a 56-mile recreation trail between Farmersville and

Paris, Texas. It will be called the Chaparral Rail Trail. The path will link nine towns with construction starting in 1998. (The Kiamichi Railroad - Chaparral Railroad - once owned this segment and abandoned it in the summer of 1995). This line was originally part of the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railway, built in 1887. It has 51 bridges, 11 of which are stone arch. It is estimated that over 200,000 people will use this trail each year, which is only an hour's drive from Dallas. The Farmersville-Dallas section of line is still quite active as a railroad with KCS giving it heavy usage. (*Dallas Morning News, September 30, 1996 via James Fair)*

## WHY THE PULLMAN COMPANY WENT BELLY UP

*Taken from the Internet.*

A traveler informed a Pullman agent that he wanted a Pullman berth. "Upper or lower" asked the agent. "What's the difference?" he asked. "A difference of two dollars," replied the agent. "The lower is higher than the upper. The higher price is for the lower. If you want the lower, you'll have to go higher. We sell the upper lower than the lower. In other words, the higher the lower. Most people don't like the upper, although it is lower of account of being higher. When you occupy an upper you have to get up to go the bed and get down to get up. You can have the lower if you pay higher. The upper is lower than the lower because it is higher. If you are willing to go higher it will be lower."

At this point, the traveler took a taxi to the airport!

### MERGER CONSUMMATED

The Union Pacific and Southern Pacific consummated their merger September 11, 1996 at 10 a.m. CDT. Administrative functions will be combined shortly, with total implementation, including operations, taking at least two years. The combined system will operate in 24 states (4 fewer than the Arkansas Railroader is mailed to), have 31,000 miles of track and run 2,000 trains

each day, using 6,400 locomotives and more than 142,000 freight cars. UP's online daily newsletter also began operation September 11, replacing SP's famous "Update" (formerly edited by Jim Johnson of SP). Another end of an era. (*Southern Pacific Update #742, the final issue, September 11, 1996 via Dan H. Barr, Jr.*)

### PASSENGER MAGAZINES GONE

Pentrex has announced that it will cease publication of *Passenger Train Journal* and *Locomotive & Railway Preservation* magazines in January of 1997. In their place will be a new national magazine called *Railnews*, which will also take the place of the old *Pacific RailNews*.

## AMTRAK NEWS

### "REVISED" BUSINESS PLAN

After Congress gave Amtrak \$22.5 million more to keep the Eagle and 4 other trains running through May 10, Amtrak came out

with a revised business plan October 3. Among the changes are a deferral to make some other trains daily until May 11 due to equipment shortages (or so Amtrak says - see

a differing opinion below) , including the *Empire Builder*, *California Zephyr*, and *City of New Orleans*. However, Amtrak will go ahead with a new New York-Florida daily

### ARKANSAS RAILROADER

train, the *Silver Palm*. A lot of the other plans remained unchanged. (*Amtrak press release, October 3*)

#### AMTRAK MISMANAGEMENT?

Well known Amtrak watcher and club member Bill Pollard is arguing that Amtrak COULD make the trains daily that were originally proposed despite keeping the *Eagle*

and other trains running. He maintains that Amtrak is trying to create civil war between rail advocates across the country, pitting one region against another. Pollard says that Amtrak has a 60+ car equipment pool it could use to make these trains daily and could continue to use the Santa Fe highlevels awhile longer until new cars are on line. He also says that Amtrak is guilty of bad car

utilization (cars held back from service to "protect" trains). Amtrak has its "favored" routes and considers the *Eagle* and some other routes "parasites," according to Pollard. He advocates the resignation of Amtrak President Tom Downs and long-distance manager Cane. (*via email*)

### EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

**MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI** - October 26, 1996 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. - Railroad Collectibles and Model Train Show sponsored by Southeastern Railroadiana Collectors in conjunction with the joint national convention of the GM&O Historical Society and Southern Railway Association - Frank Cochran Center, Highland Park - \$2.00 - Call 404-233-7991 for more details.

**ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI** - January 18, 1997 - Trainfair '97, a Show and Swap Meet located at the Saint Charles Exhibition Center, I-70 and 5th Street, Saint Charles,

Missouri - to reserve tables or for more information, write to Chris Lewis, #23 Whinhill Ct, Saint Charles MO 63304, 314-298-8300, ext 59 (daytime).

**PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS** - April 5, 1997 - Second Annual Railroadiana and Model Train Meet in the Arkansas Railroad Museum in Pine Bluff. The 819 will be steamed up. For more information, call Robert Worlow, 21515 No. Mill Rd, Little Rock AR 72206, 501-888-5655.

**FLIPPIN, ARKANSAS** - Frequent trips most of year, including dinner trains - White River Railway excursions - leaves Flippin 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and Calico Rock 10:50 a.m. on roundtrips - runs on the scenic White River line of the Missouri & Northern Arkansas (nc. Missouri Pacific) - prices are \$22 adults, \$14 child, \$20 senior - call 800-305-6527 for reservations, or write White River Railway, L.C., PO Box 1093, Flippin AR 72634.

### WHY 4 FT. 8½ INCHES?

(The following was printed in the October 1996 edition of The Gateway Railletter of the St. Louis Chapter, NRHS. They got it from the Northstar News, Northstar Chapter NRHS)

The U.S. standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 ft. 8½ inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and U.S. railroads were built by English expatriates. Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did they use that gauge? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools as they used for building wagons, which used the same wheel spacing.

OK! Why did the wagons use that wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the ruts.

So, who built the old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of breaking their wagons, were first made by the Roman war chariots. Since chariots were made by or for Imperial Rome they were made all alike in the manner of wheel spacing (ruts).

Thus, we have the answer to the original question. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 ft 8½ inches derives from the original military specifications (MilSpec) for an Imperial Roman army chariot. MilSpecs (and bureaucracies) live forever! ~~~~~~~~~



## THE NIGHT I FOUND A MAN SEALED IN A BOXCAR

by: L. T. Walker, retired Rock Island conductor

I was called one night for Rock Island's extra west. We had a 100-car train. We had to find a siding that would hold our train or have to "saw" a train we met. This night we made it to Roland, Arkansas, about 20 miles west of Biddle Yard. We headed in for the "Los Angeles," which was called the "Cherokee" coming east. I cut the crossing and was walking up to the head in and looking the train over for hotboxes or brake beams down. I was moving along the train when I heard a voice from one of the sealed cars.

As I got closer, I called out, "Is there some one there?" A voice called back, "get me out." Both sides were sealed, so I took the number of the car and went to the caboose and told the conductor, Guy Bailey. Guy got another seal and we went to the car and opened the door.

As we shined our lights in the car, there sat a man. He was sitting against the other door. He was dressed in a suit, wearing a necktie and was holding a bottle of whiskey. An empty bottle of whiskey lay beside him. He said he got in the car to rest and then was going home.

The car was 50 feet long, loaded with hardwood lumber, not in bundles, but loose. It had been sealed three days before at Fordyce. We removed the man from the car, still clutching the bottle of whiskey. He said, "I never saw a bunch of railroad men. You just knocked me around in the old box car, wonder you hadn't killed me."



Conductor Bailey told him, "you have been drunk for three days, that whiskey was the thing that kept you alive." I flagged the passenger extra and told the engineer to pull up to the first coach. We stopped the passenger conductor as the passenger coach came up to the door. Conductor Bailey told him to take the drunk back to Little Rock and turn him over to the special agent or the Little Rock police. The passenger conductor told us to load him on. The drunk was still trying to hold on to the bottle of whiskey. The passenger conductor told him to throw the bottle away. "I'm not throwing away what good whiskey is left," the drunk said. Then the drunk drank what was left and threw away the bottle. He then called back to Mr. Bailey and me and said, "this is a lots better than your train."

We later found out that the man lived in Fordyce and worked for the sawmill there.

So ended another adventure working on the Rock Island Line. ~~████~~

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## RAILROAD TO SHERIDAN?

In September, the editor of the *Redfield Update*, Ken Parsons, visited Elwin Goolsby at the Grant County Museum and asked the question: "Did the railroad that was built west from Kearney ever reach Sheridan?" Here's Mr. Goolsby's reply:

I do know that in 1909 a line identified as the Pine Bluff, Oklahoma and Texas Railroad ran from Kearney in Jefferson County to a point about two or three miles northeast of Sheridan. At that time the route remaining into Sheridan was only proposed, as was a line from Leola to Pine Bluff. If these lines were ever completed, little record was handed down of the events.

PBO&T did operate lines connecting Benton, Sheridan and Pine Bluff, and from Millersville south of Sheridan to Clio near Rison. The Millersville site in Grant County was eventually connected to Sheridan by the PBO&T and I have walked on this tram which is still visible within the Sheridan city limits. This left only a few miles to connect northeast of the city. This connection "if completed" would have linked Kearney to Sheridan and Millersville to Clio, Rison and Fordyce. I still am not sure if this happened.

The Millersville to Sheridan route was in use prior to World War I but not before 1909. I am told that much of this track was removed and re-used in France by the military during the war. The route in

1915 was called the Erin, Missouri Pacific and Iron Mountain Railroad, and in 1917 the Pine Bluff, Southern and Sheridan Railroad. Erin was another name for Millersville.

When the time is right, I might try to locate that little two or three mile section of Kearney tram, if it exists, between Sheridan and Hurricane Creek. If I do, perhaps you can print news of my discovery.

Visit us when you can. I can pick you up at Hurricane Creek if you take the PBO&T that far!

Elvin L. Goolsby, Museum Director, Grant County Museum (*Article sent in by Lynn Gaines*)

The following poem is from the collection of Gene Hull. He writes:

"This little poem recalled an incident long forgotten. I had made my brakeman student trips in December 1940 and January 1941. About mid-January my name was placed on the extra board at North Little Rock, and I was ready for service on the Missouri Pacific Central Division.

I was given a heavy brass switch key, an employee's timetable, and a shiny, new electric lantern. But, there was one problem. The MOP didn't have any batteries for the lantern!

Luckily, there was an old Adlake oil-burner hanging in the garage at home. I filled the font with kerosene, and wiped the globe clean. This old "hayburner" did a credible job of passing signals for about a month, until a shipment of lantern batteries came in."

### FAREWELL, OLD LANTERN!

(The oil-burning lantern has recently been banned from all railroads in Illinois, on orders from the state's commerce commission. Trainmen claim it is hazardous; engineers on high-speed trains find its light insufficient. The electric lanterns guide train movements at night. The following dirge was written by Tom Rooney, 4651 N. Laramie Avenue, Chicago, a switchman on the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern.)

*Old lamp, this parting brings the tears,  
You've stood with me throughout the  
years.*

*In nights of rain and sleet and snow,  
With fortitude you've tried to glow.*

*Forgive the curses which I fired  
At you when winds your flame expired.  
My hands were numb; 'twas hard to scratch  
A light from out the dampened match.*

*Your glow grew black from reeking oil -  
But 'twas a mark of honest toil.  
From boxcar tops to death-trap leads,  
You filled each trick with noble deeds.*

*How I recall the distant day  
When, bright and new, you came my way.  
With eager grip I swung you high:  
A happy railroad man was I.*

*Alas, that Time must roll away!  
Lamps get rusty, men get gray.  
The junk heap soon will claim your cage,  
The relic of a great old age.*





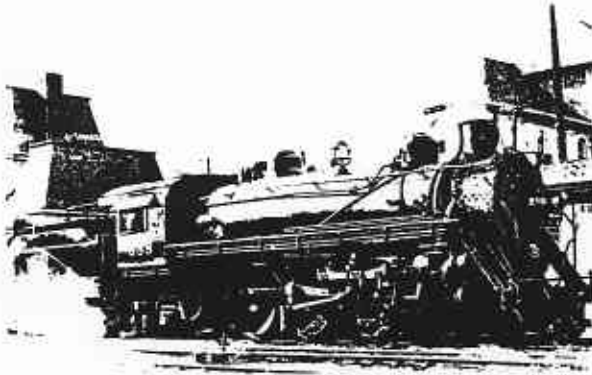
Arkansas Railroad Club  
 Little Rock Chapter - NRHS  
 PO Box 9151  
 North Little Rock AR 72119



501-758-1340

The Little Rock Chapter NRHS

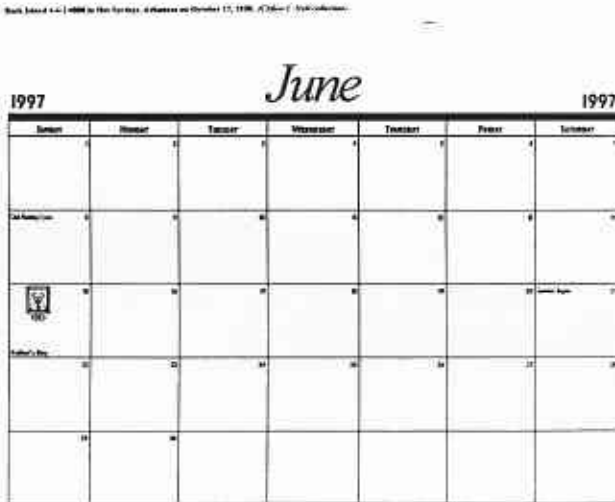
# RAILROAD CALENDAR 1997



The Arkansas Railroad Club's 1997 calendar consists of 12 B&W photos of trains in Arkansas over the years - from modern locomotives to past steam. There's one photo for each month and a cover shot.

Railroads included are: Arkansas Central Passenger train in Paris, 1915; Cotton Belt's Blue Streak leaving Camden, 1937; Union Pacific steam #8444 in Little Rock, 1984; Missouri Pacific, Pine Bluff, 1980; "Branson Special", Little Rock, 1995; Rock Island 4-6-2 #888, Hot Springs, 1938; Cotton Belt caboose, Pine Bluff, 1986; El Dorado & Wesson 2-8-0 #15, Wesson, 1957; Southern Pacific #7611, Pine Bluff, 1979; White River Railway near Cotter, over trestle, 1995; Fordyce & Princeton #1805, Crossett, 1987; Kansas City Southern passenger train, Siloam Springs, 1968. Plus, there's a railroad map of Arkansas in the back of the calendar.

Our calendar (format and sample picture shown at left) will make a great and unique Christmas or special occasion gift. There's a discount for ordering more than one and all include postage.



Make checks payable to: Arkansas Railroad Club

MAIL TO: Arkansas Railroad Club  
 PO Box 9151  
 North Little Rock AR 72119

Please send me:

- Calendar @ \$7.00 each .....
  - Calendars (2-9) @ \$6.50 each .....
  - Calendars (10 or more) @ \$6.00 each .....
- (Calendars are Postage Paid)

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# ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY FORM

Membership renewal  New Member  Change of Address  Information update  
(See dues information at bottom of this sheet)

Send membership renewal, application, change of address, etc. to:



**Arkansas Railroad Club**  
**PO Box 9151**  
**North Little Rock AR 72119**  
501-758-1340 (phone/fax)  
E-mail: ken.z.rw@ix.netcom.com

Please fill out the following questions after checking the appropriate box above.



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Your birthday (optional - no year needed) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: (last) \_\_\_\_\_ (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (init) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

Interests: Early Steam Era:  Late Steam Era:  Train chasing:   
Early Diesel Era:  Contemporary:  Excursions:   
History:  Models:  Photography:  Artifacts:   
**Railroad of interest:** Missouri Pacific:  Rock Island:  Kansas City Southern:   
Cotton Belt:  Amtrak:  M&NA:  Frisco:  Southern Pacific:   
Union Pacific:  Burlington-Northern:  Shortline (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership dues information:

Membership: **\$20.00** per year, Arkansas Railroad Club only; **\$37.00** per year if you join or renew National Railway Historical Society membership through our Club. Dues are payable/due by January 1 of each year. If we don't have your dues by March 1, you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

Membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club entitles you to a membership card and the monthly *ARKANSAS RAILROADER* newsletter. Meetings are held monthly, except December, on the second Sunday of the month. We usually meet at 2 p.m. in the Mercantile Bank main building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just north of the Arkansas River. Interesting programs are presented each month and refreshments (cookies, sandwiches) are served. We are a non-profit organization and member of the NRHS. Officers are listed in each newsletter.