

ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



2007 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

President	Gary McCullah
Vice President	Mitch Marmel
Secretary	Clare McCullah
Treasurer	Katherine Mindoro
Editor	Bill Merrifield
National Director	Chuck Girard
Board Director	Mike Sypult

NRHS Chapter Meets 7:00 PM Thursday, April 19, 2007 at the Shiloh Museum's General Store. Chapter meetings are cancelled due to inclement weather on days when the Springdale Public Schools are closed due to weather conditions.

Gary and Clare McCullah will present a program on the Kentucky Railroad Museum.

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NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1303
SPRINGDALE, AR 72765-1303
Address Service Requested**

The Scrambler

Volume 20, No. 8

April 2007

Monthly News letter of the
Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

CHAPTER MINUTES March 15, 2007

The regular scheduled meeting of the Arkansas-Boston Mountain Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 15, 2007 by President Gary McCullah, at the Shiloh Museum General Store in Springdale, AR. There were 17 members present.

Secretary Clare McCullah's minutes from the February 2007 meeting were approved as stated in the *Scrambler* dated March 2007. One correction was made: The show table was \$12 instead of \$15.

National Director, Chuck Girard, was absent. President Gary McCullah stated that the National Board of Directors would need to be notified of the local Chapter's newly elected National Director. Written authorization will be needed from the local Chapter's president and sent to the National Headquarters. He discussed a note from the National office discussing the Board of Directors meeting on April 22, 2007 in Greenville, SC. We need to notify them of our new national director. He reminded members of the National Meeting on August 20-25, 2007 in Chattanooga, TN.

Scrambler Editor, Bill Merrifield, stated that the March *Scrambler* was delayed by mailing processes. Please contact Mr. Merrifield if you have any articles or photographs you would like to submit to the *Scrambler*. They can be submitted by sending them by mail to his home address at 133 San Jose Dr, Springdale, AR 72764 or send them by e-mail at wmerrif@sbcglobal.net.

Treasurer, Katherine Mindoro, read the financial report. The report was approved as read.

Membership Chairman, Chuck Girard, was absent. Al Kaepfel spoke on behalf of Mr. Girard and stated that three members have not renewed their memberships in the local Chapter.

Special Events Chairman, Al Kaepfel, stated that the Chapter had an excellent turnout to the train show in February. It is estimated that the gross attendance for the show was over 1000 people. The Chapter gave out 240 certificates to children. The Chapter had plenty of room and so did the other vendors. The Sugar Creek Model Railroad Club did a very good job in planning and advertising the show this year. A lot of the Chapter's members brought donations that were sold and the proceeds donated to the Chapter. The Chapter paid \$12.00 the rental of a table and received \$312.00 in donations. Our next event is the Springdale Feather Fest, the first weekend in June, 2007.

Programs and Activities Chairman, Mitch Marmel, reported the program presenters and their topics for the rest of the year are as follows: In April, Clare and Gary McCullah will give a presentation on the "Kentucky Railroad Museum". In May, Travis Wall has the presentation. In June, Steve Thorp gives the presentation on "Conrail at Gary, Indiana". In July, the presentation will be by Dallas Hale, a former Station agent. In August, the presentation will be by Bob Stark on "What Happened when the Train left Town". In September, Bill Merrifield's presentation

will be on "Signals, Signals, and Signals". In October, a Pot Luck dinner is planned at the Bob Stark residence. In November, the presentation will be from Mitch Marmel, a DVD on "The Silver Streak". In December, the annual Christmas party is planned.

Archivist, Al Kaepfel, stated he found our original charter, dated November 6, 1987, stored in a Shiloh Museum closet. He is going refurbish it and have it ready for display.

Map Committee Chairman, Travis Walls was absent from the meeting. President McCullah stated that only a few maps were sold at the train show. A better way to display them was discussed. Mr. Kaepfel stated that he thought Tom Duggan had some ideas to assist with the problem. The membership discussed laminating the maps.

Marker Sign Committee Chairman, Chuck Girard, was absent and no news was available on the project. Member illness has prevented the last of the marker signs from being completed.

Old Business:

Flyers have been mailed out for the Quad Chapters meet on June 23-24, 2007 in Ft. Smith, AR. The handsome flyers were made by Tom Duggan and have been sent out to 30 Chapters and museums in the area. They have been placed on the Internet, in camera shops, in train shops, and any place else that might attract interest. It was suggested that the Chapter membership give out flyers to anyone who

might be interested in the trip. It was pointed out that the flyer appeared on the back of the March *Arkansas Railroader* this month. An advertisement is to appear in the publication *Trains* and on their web site.

Bob Stark stated that Chapter member Bob Oswald is feeling better since doctors have changed some of his medications. Mr. Stark wants to get a group together to search for the old Ozark and Cherokee Railroad line in Northwest Arkansas. He stated he saw a new lift car at the A&M and wanted to know if anyone knew its use. Car 104 on was blocks and the railroad was putting new trucks on it.

Al Kaepfel informed the membership that Ray Getty wants to donate his G scale collection to the Chapter, but the Chapter members felt the Chapter didn't have an adequate location to store the equipment. Several ideas were discussed for possible storage.

A motion was presented by Bob Stark to form a committee to resolve the state tax status issue for the Chapter. It was decided the committee would consist of Bill Ussery, Tom Duggan, and Katherine Mindoro. President McCullah asked the committee members to keep him informed of their progress.

President McCullah adjourned the meeting. He reminded the membership to donate to the coffee kit. Tonight's multimedia presentation was by JP Bell on a steam locomotive excursion along the Columbia River. Clare McCullah, Secretary

FROM THE HEAD END

Our editor has asked me to write a column for inclusion in the *Scrambler*. In spite of what you may hear to the contrary, writing is often a difficult process. There are few people who are truly gifted in that they can sit down at a typewriter or computer and dash off a column at a moments notice. I have thought a lot about what I was going to write about

for this premier column since the editor made this request at the last meeting.

In this first column, I want to focus on that ever-present malady: **CHANGE!**

In the last year, we, as a chapter and the NRHS as a whole, have undergone many changes.

First of all, changes in the NRHS. The NRHS now offers the NRHS Newsletter via E-mail as well as postal mail. This has made the newsletter timelier. The Bulletin is now in a magazine format, making it more readable for most of us. Lastly, the membership tracking and renewal has been contracted out to a company that does this type of thing as a business. Whether these changes are for the better only time can tell. Likely, there will be other, less noticeable changes.

Secondly, our own chapter has undergone several changes itself. Bill Merrifield has succeeded Tom Duggan as *Scrambler* editor. We note sadly the passing of Juanita Toler, the serious illness of Bob Oswald, Fred Lewis's surgery for a fractured hip, and Bob Stark's from a fall and his long recovery

which caused changes in our May meeting and limited his activities. These are just a few to mention that have come our way. Changes occur and we go forward, sometimes with joy, sometimes with sorrow.

What will our chapter look like a year from now? What other changes will occur? I honestly don't know. But, we can face the changes together. I've heard it said that getting there is half the fun.

All I ask of you is to enjoy the time you have and to share the historical information you have. Far too much history (railroad and otherwise) has already been lost because it was not recorded for posterity.

Gary McCullah,
ABMT NRHS President

LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

Charter member, Ray Toler is the author of a 90-page book entitled The Searcy I Remember 1922-1942 that recounts his childhood and adolescence growing up in the White County town. Some of the stories have been published in previous issues of the *White County Historical Society Newsletter*. The stories are fond recollections of a wonderful time long past.

Ray Getty is relocating to Fort Worth, Texas and will have completed the move by the time the *Scrambler* is in your mailbox. His new address is 4505 Wheatland Dr., Fort Worth, TX 76179.

Chuck Girard is depicted in the April 2007 issue of Rural Arkansas, published by the Arkansas Rural

Electric Cooperatives. He appears in an article on the excursion train service of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad.

The current May edition of *Trains* has a small advertisement for the chapter sponsored Quad Chapter Mixed Train and Photo Shoot in Fort Smith on June 23-24, 2007. As of early April, twenty seats have been sold including two to New Hampshire railfans and one to an Illinois railfan. Inquiries have come from New Mexico, New Jersey, Minnesota, and several other states.

Twenty five year member, Ken Eddy, sends his thanks for the recognition and regrets as having to miss so many of the chapter meetings since moving so far away.

IN THE YARDS

Fred Lewis continues to heal slowly from a devastating fall when a ladder he was working on collapsed.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ANGEL'S SEAT

How I have regretted not attending an NRHS Convention when the event was closer to home. It seemed something always came up, expense, family matters, lack of time, or just plain lack of commit-

ment (a nice way to say lazy). This year is different! The Lord willing, Ruth and I are going! We have already sent in our names and fees for pre-registration and received a confirmation. As soon

as they send the registration and reservation forms we plan to fill them out and return them the same day. I am taking to heart the things that I have heard from you about being ready for any contingency that might arise. Our cameras will be ready, our spare batteries will be charged, and our tickets

to the train excursions will be in our wallets. Chattanooga Choo Choo, we're coming! Now that you know some of my excuses for not going to past national conventions when they were closer, what's your excuse? Editor

BRASS POUNDING DOWN THE LINE

Arkansas: The 2007 excursion season has begun for the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad. Work continues on the newly acquired cabooses. Roller bearing modifications to one of the passenger cars, paint touchups, and general inspections have been apart of their road-general readiness. Source: March *A&M Express*.

West Virginia: The New River Train Tickets are on sale now. They have sold 1450 of 4000 tickets already. Never before have these many tickets been sold by this date. The New River Train is operating on October 20, 21, 27 and 28, 2007. Source: *Gondola Gazette* (Collis P Huntington RHS). Members may recall the Editor's film presentation on the New River Train several years ago.

Membership in the Fort Smith Trolley Museum is only \$10.00 for individual and \$15.00 family. Forms will be available at April's meeting. Source: *Fort Smith Trolley Museum Report*.

Two runaway boys, ages 16 and 13, decided to joy ride the one time Chesapeake & Ohio 1950's vintage 125 ton diesel locomotive belonging to the Hocking Valley Scenic Railway near Nelsonville,

Ohio last January. The older boy had some railroad experience through relatives and knew what buttons and levers to work. They used a pipe to pry a car barn door open, opened an overhead door, and fired up the locomotive. They tried to head towards Athens, Ohio, but the tracks dead-ended nearby. They backed up, only to find the tracks to Logan, Ohio blocked by passenger cars and a caboose. They then coupled the cars to the engine and breaking the locks off rail switches, maneuvered the cars onto a side rail and then headed out. It was then that they apparently pressed the air horn button twice in triumph, which awakened Hocking Valley Scenic Railway President, Bill Evans in his nearby home. Realizing that at 1:15 AM was no time that one of his engines should be running, he alerted Hocking County authorities. A county sheriff's sergeant gave chase on nearby rural roads. Finally, 12 miles down the track, just short of Logan, Ohio the youths stopped the locomotive and surrendered. Fortunately, the Logan rail yards were prepared to derail the locomotive otherwise a head on collision with an Indiana & Ohio train due to arrive at 3:00 AM might have occurred. Source: *The Local* (Kansas City Chapter).

TRAINS THROUGH MEMORY

THE KCS DISASTER AT NOEL, MISSOURI

For most of us, who are passionate about railroading, can and do get carried away by the romance and excitement of its history. But ever so often we need to reflect on the fact that railroading is a very serious business and at times can be exceptionally hazardous. Then too, sharing space with a railroad also can be equally dangerous as illustrated in the account below. On August 3, 1969, a car carrying a rocket fuel component on a Kansas City Southern Railroad freight ignited and produced a series of events that led to a massive explosion,

which threatened the lives of nearly one thousand residents of Noel, Missouri. The following is the third and last of a three part series on that disaster:

As word spread about this railroad related disaster, the community of Noel experienced quick and decisive attention from a number of governmental and private organizations both instate and out of state. Fire and police assistance came from ten nearby Missouri communities, three Kansas communities, six Arkansas communities, and two Oklahoma communities. Ordinary people of the surrounding area offered many forms of assistance. They offered homes and trailers to the homeless as well as food clothing, bedding, and equipment for cleaning up the debris.

State Police and other law officials coordinated efforts with the Missouri Governor's office to alert Missouri National Guard units from Neosho and Anderson. A representative from the National Guard's Adjutant General, determined that the troops were needed at least to the following Tuesday. One hundred twenty five guardsmen were alerted and late Sunday began patrolling the streets. Their principal duties were to prevent looting. The mayor of Noel later requested at least 15 state troopers to fill in after the guard was recalled. The people of Noel established an emergency information center in the city hall and assisted in locating people and families as well as assisting people to find shelter or make repairs. Most citizens were seeking to cover damaged homes and possessions until help was more organized. Even among the

ruins, a number of business tried to open on Monday. One problem that had to be dealt with constantly was the bumper-to-bumper traffic of the inevitable sightseers who constantly interfered with recovery operations and kept the State Police very busy.

As soon as it could, Kansas City Southern Railroad began to assure the citizens that claims would be handled in a swift and equitable manner. It took about 12 days to set up some systematic procedures for

handling claims and establishing priorities. It was complicated because homeowners first had to settle with their own insurance adjustors. Along with the frustration of insurance claims came the federal relief with its inevitable red tape. The Small Business Administration, HUD, FHA, and the IRS offered various forms of valuable assistance but they all required time and paper work, which frustrated residents. If this wasn't enough, added to this was a number of nationally known law firms that descended on the city. Along with regulatory and investigative agencies, both federal and state, it was obvious that its was going to take years for the people of Noel to erase the scars of that August 3, 1969 railroad disaster.

We wish to credit The McDonald County Press, The Neosho Daily News, The Joplin Globe, and the Tulsa Daily World as sources and to thank Donna Camp and Ray Toler of Springdale who furnished these sources. Editor.

ELEPHANTS AND THE WINSLOW TUNNEL

Some forty-five or fifty years before the Winslow Tunnel was expanded in 1969/1970, Beth Innis Rogers spotted elephants, *yes elephants*, on top of the hill through which the Winslow Tunnel passed. Tom Duggan found this delightful article while browsing through files at the Shiloh Museum.

One fall day (I guess it must have been 45 or 50 years ago- mercy!!) I was sitting on the front porch at Grandpa McClendon's house at the top of the hill when I became aware of something coming into my

view that was hard to believe! An elephant coming up McClendon Hill? I sat up, rubbed my eyes and stared at the scene unfolding before me. Yes, it was not only one elephant but two! In utter amazement

I watched them plod slowly by, swinging their trunks from side to side. Some sort of explanation for this phenomenon was certainly called for. It turned out in this wise: Ringling Bros. Circus was headed south on the Frisco when they discovered that the elephant cages were too tall to go through the tunnel so there was nothing else for it but to unload the huge creatures and walk them over the mountain to Chester. You can imagine the excitement this episode caused in our town! One little boy was so excited that he broke up Sunday School

as he ran in with the announcement that he had just seen some elephants off the train and that the "littlest one was the biggest one he had ever seen." Needless to say, there was a general exodus toward town after this amazing news. For myself, I would not have been more surprised that lazy Sunday morning if I had seen a camel caravan or a bunch of "hippogriffs" coming up McClendon Hill. More exciting even than when the gypsies came to town.

Next month the May edition of the *Scrambler* will feature a new series on what it was like to live in a town at the turn of the last century, where *everything* needed had to be brought in by the railroad and the only *sure* way to come into or leave town was by rail.

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT RAILROADING?

Answers to last month's questions:

QUESTION: What is the American name given to a 4-6-2 steam locomotive configuration?

ANSWER: PACIFIC (Too Easy!)

QUESTION: If you received a train order typed on that Missouri Pacific Railroad typewriter shown last month, what would be unusual about it?

ANSWER: The message would be in UPPER CASE letters. Standard railroad typewriters had no lower case letters and no shift key!

QUESTION: In the early days of railroading after the Civil War, every station agent was familiar with an essential piece of equipment known as a crow's foot. In fact, every station had two of them; but, they were different. What in the world were crow's feet and what were they used for? (OK, that's two questions!) Yes, Virginia, this is a hard railroad question! However, I will give you a hint: a chemist would recognize them instantly and know why they were different. Editor.

SCALE RAILROADING

Future Model Train Shows of interest to us:

MAY 5, 2007 The NW Arkansas Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet at Ramay Junior High School, Fayetteville, Arkansas 9am to 3pm Admission \$3.00-under 16 free.

May 6, 2007 Mid-America Train and Toy Show BTC Exhibit Hall, I-435 and Front Street, Kansas City MO, 9 am-2pm Admission \$5.00 12 and under free 7am Early Bird Admission \$10.00.

May 11-13, 2007 Garden Railroad Heart of America show Overland Park Convention Center, 6000 College Blvd, Overland Park, KS One day pass 10.00 or three day pass \$25.00.

May 26, 2007 7th Annual Parsons Katy Days Model Railroad Meet and Show Labette Community College, Multipurpose Bldg, NW corner of Heacock and Broadway Streets, Parson, KS Sat: 8am to 4pm, Sun: 12 noon to 3pm Admission free.

It may surprise you to know that over 1400 persons attended the Sugar Creek model railroad show in Bentonville. We wonder what the attendance would have been had not the weather been so horrendous!

For what it provided for children, the hard work was well worth it!