

# **ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER**

**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



## **2010 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS**

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>President</b>         | <b>Bob Stark</b>       |
| <b>Vice President</b>    | <b>David McDonald</b>  |
| <b>Secretary</b>         | <b>Tom Duggan</b>      |
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| <b>Board Director</b>    | <b>Larry Cain</b>      |
| <b>Editor</b>            | <b>Bill Merrifield</b> |

**NRHS Chapter meets at 7:00 PM, March 19, 2010 at the Shiloh Museum Store.**

**Tom Duggan will present a program on the Kansas City and Memphis Railway**

**ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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# The Scrambler

Volume 23, No. 6

March, 2010

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

## CHAPTER MINUTES February 18, 2010

Vice President David MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Eighteen members were present. He asked members to remember Chapter President Bob Stark in their prayers as he copes with the loss of his Chapter member son, Tom Stark.

The January minutes as printed in the January Scrambler newsletter were approved by voice vote. Membership Chair Chuck Girard announced he had a supply of 2010 membership forms for use at the February 27 Train Show. He mentioned NRHS National dues had increased by \$3.00 this year. He will notify National of the passing of members Ruth Lewis and Tom Stark.

The upcoming program lineup includes Kansas City & Memphis Railway (March) by Tom Duggan, Retro Slides (April) by Bob Oswald, Rock Island in Western Arkansas (May) by Tom Stark and David MacDonald, Show and Tell (June) by Chapter members.

Scrambler Editor Bill Merrifield mentioned he is looking for articles from Chapter members to augment his current sources. He also confirmed that several members still had not received the February newsletter due to inexplicable Post Office delays.

**Old Business** - (1) Tom Duggan mentioned the success the Railway & Locomotive History Society had recruiting new members at the Oklahoma City Train Show in December 2009. Upon a motion duly seconded and approved the members authorized Tom Duggan to spend up to \$200 of Chapter funds for the purchase of a 7 ft by 5 ft promotional banner.

(2) Chuck Girard, Sign Committee Manager, reported destruction of our trackside sign at Greenland. He will order two replacement signs for Greenland.

(3) Information Technology expert Mike Sypult reported the \$523 purchase of a Dell laptop computer. The purchase, previously approved by the membership, will permit Chapter members to enter the digital presentation world. At the suggestion of Bill Merrifield, it was agreed Mike Sypult would try to organize a digital media training program outside of the regular monthly meetings.

**New Business** - Mike Sypult suggested that the Chapter sponsor a reunion of Frisco Central Division employees. The objective would be gather the memories and oral history of the railroaders so as to preserve the memory of a railroad three decades integrated into the BN/BNSF corporate complex. Mike Sypult will chair the event assisted by Chuck Girard and Tom Duggan.

Vice President Mac Donald adjourned the business meeting at 7:35 PM. Mike Sypult presented a program on the Rock Island in Arkansas. Tom Duggan, Secretary

## VIEW FROM THE ANGEL'S SEAT

It is not so hard to explain why one of us older Chapter members passes on - we just rust out; but, it is always inexplicable when one of our youngest members has climbed aboard and left with that last *Unscheduled Special* and we are ones at the station looking down that empty track.

One thing that will always shape our memories of Tom Stark was the father and son Combine that enjoyed the love and lore of trains together. Many of us could have wished for the same with our own grown children.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to our Chapter president Bob Stark and his family in this untimely loss. Editor

## LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

### **Interesting e-mail from Barbara and Travis:**

We are still in Atlanta-back next week. Going to big train show here this weekend and are bringing lots of ideas from the NMRA Piedmont Division which has been very friendly to us during our visit. They have a lending library and a lending tape/CD library. They also do an auction where everyone brings in train items they no longer want with a minimum price that they will accept for each item. Then club members bid on the items in a live auction w/ auctioneer (club member). The club keeps a percentage of the sale. Their roster is way over 100 and it seems like they're all very serious about their hobby. Lots of them are working on the NMRA Achievement Program and they've started a Yahoo group to help others on the program. Their power point programs are shown on 3 different screens across the room and there are wires running everywhere. They also have show and tell at each meeting and have a camera and staging area so it can be seen on all three screens. The Sunday before each monthly meeting, they have homes open with layouts you can visit. We've seen some very complicated expensive layouts.

They sell soft drinks at each meeting for \$.50. They also take up a collection at every meeting to pay for the rental space they're using.

We went to a separate luncheon last week and met 6 modelers who specifically run circus trains. One member in Canton Ga. has his own trailer (painted with circus scenes) with an 80' x 20' modular circus stored on stacked racks ready to travel. He is part owner in a new company manufacturing metal circus kits. I have an ad for it somewhere.

Last weekend we visited Chattanooga and saw a 110' x 30' HO layout in the old train station which is now a hotel. You can even sleep in one of many passenger cars. We were taken behind the scenes to see how things worked. You could walk on the rivers and some areas were hinged so they would drop for easy repair access. Stairs led to the highest viewpoint. Lots of humorous things going on like a children's tree-house, people in the outhouses and an old barn with lots of weathered and hand painted signage where a summer stock theatre performance was in progress....working spotlights and all.

We also visited **Mystic Mountain** in Blairsville, GA....a **BIG** in all directions **O** scale layout where you walked on the rivers at times and under the bridges. It had mountains taller than us and river valleys with sunken pirate ships under the water (lots of high gloss polyurethane). See you soon. Barbara Gavron

David Denman and I came across this freshly painted caboose during a July 2009 visit to Joplin, MO. It has an air conditioner and is not set up for actual operation. The reporting mark corresponds to Railroad Salvage and Restoration Company. The Joplin-based company, owned by women, had a very active salvage yard on the day of our visit. Tom Duggan





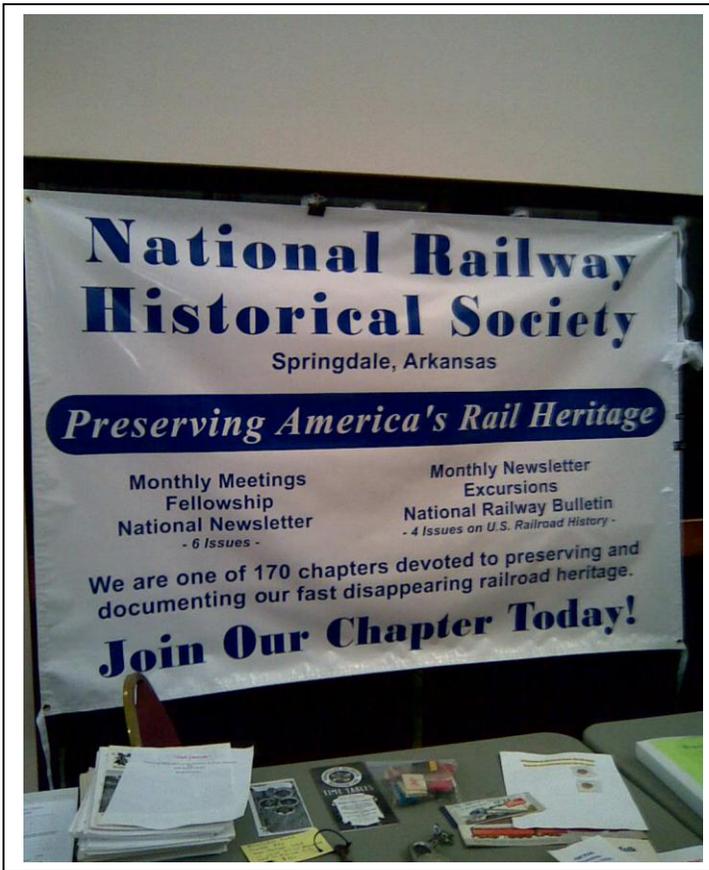
Photo by: Electro-Motive

Our program last month by Mike Sypult featured the Rock Island and we could not pass up these photographs from January 2010 Trains Newswire. Editor

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Iowa Interstate ES44AC No. 513 has emerged from the paint shop at Mid-America Car wearing Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific colors. The unit will serve on Interstate's ex-Rock Island route between Blue Island, Ill., and Council Bluffs, Iowa.



**Sugar Creek Train Show again allows us to put our best pilot forward!**



Our chapter's new promotional banner gave a much better profile of our activities to the hundreds of Train Show attendees.



Kids and accompanying adults kept us very busy all day during the show! Thank you working Chapter members!

## **HISTORICAL OPERATIONS**

**A century later, Wellington avalanche remains deadliest in U.S.**

March 01, 2010

WELLINGTON, Wash. — A century to the day after its occurrence, the avalanche that destroyed two Great Northern Railway trains remains the nation's deadliest, the *Seattle Times* has reported. The slide left 96 passengers and workers dead on the west slope of GN's Cascade Mountain crossing at Stevens Pass.

As author Gary Krist profile in his 2007 book, "The White Cascade," a westbound passenger train and a westbound mail train became stranded atop the pass on Feb. 23, 1910. GN forces stopped the trains as heavy snowfall fouled the route. The railroad's rotary plows were unable to reopen the pass in subsequent days as three massive blizzards buried the mountains.

On the night of Feb. 28, warmer weather led the falling snow to change over to rain, saturating a 14-foot wall of snow above the railroad town of Wellington, where the two trains were snowbound. At 1:42 a.m., the wall let loose, sideswiping the two trains and knocking them 150 feet down into the ravine below. Sixty-one railroad workers and 35 passengers died.

The event led GN to explore options that would enable it to eliminate the treacherous loops leading up to Wellington. The railroad eventually retired them with the 1929 opening of a 7.79-mile tunnel beneath the pass.

## Canada marks centennial of deadliest avalanche

March 04, 2010

REVELSTOKE, B.C. — A century to the day after the event, an avalanche that buried a track crew, steam locomotive, and rotary plow remains the deadliest in Canada's history, the *Calgary Herald* [Alta.] has reported. The slide, which killed 58 men, led to the development of new techniques and technologies that would prevent a repeat.

The slide occurred on Rogers Pass, CP's crossing of the Selkirk Mountains in British Columbia, just three days after an avalanche in Washington's Cascade Mountains destroyed two Great Northern trains and killed 96. At the time of the slide, a CP track crew was working to dig out a stretch of track that had become buried by an avalanche earlier in the day.

Duncan McRae, a worker on the crew, related his tale to a local newspaper reporter. "I heard trees cracking above us and knew the worst — that we were in the wake of a big slide coming down upon us. I shouted, 'Everybody lookout.' I was in a pit about six feet deep and climbed out to run, but the fresh, soft, and deep snow made running impossible. No sooner had I got out than the wind of the slide caught me and pushed me on."

The disaster led to the construction of the Connaught Tunnel, opened in 1916, which bypasses 10 miles of what the right-of-way had been. And today, Parks Canada conducts avalanche control by firing artillery shells into the mountains to cause controlled slides. Outside Glacier National Park, CP contracts with Ava Terra Services to conduct avalanche control.

## Money raised for restoration of 'Lindbergh Engine'

March 09, 2010

STRASBURG, Pa. — The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will receive a \$50,000 check in matching funds for restoration of a historic steam locomotive March 16. The funds will come from the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society.

The "Lindbergh Engine" is PRR E6 4-4-2 Atlantic No. 460. In May 1927, the engine pulled a special train for the International News Reel Co. Company employees processed, edited, and copied newsreel footage of the Washington reception for pilot Charles Lindbergh following his operation of the first successful trans-Atlantic flight. When the special train arrived in New York, it was shown to audiences in Manhattan's theater district.

PRR retired No. 460 on Jan. 11, 1956, and it was sent to join the museum's collection, then in Northumberland, Pa. The money raised will fund total cosmetic renovation of the locomotive.

## Railroad Days move from Fullerton to Brea, Calif.

March 10, 2010

BREA, Calif. — After being staged in Fullerton for 10 years, the annual Railroad Days will take place May 1 and 2 in downtown Brea on Birch Street at Brea Boulevard, according to a story in the *Orange County Register*.

Organized by the Southern California Railway Plaza Association, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the region's railway history, the free, two-day festival will feature railroad memorabilia, model-train layouts and rail-related displays. Railroad Days drew crowds of up to 30,000 each year when it was held at the Fullerton Amtrak station from 1999 to 2008. The event was not held in 2009.

According to the newspaper, the SCRPA, formerly called the Fullerton Railway Plaza Association, held Railroad Days in Fullerton each year, in part, to gain support for a permanent railroad museum. But in December 2008, when the Fullerton City Council defeated a proposal to include the \$35 million rail attraction in the transportation center master plan, Railroad Days' organizers opted to look elsewhere for a location.

"We weren't asking for money," SCRPA spokesperson Donna Johnson said. "We were asking that it be part of the whole project. That way, we would have a base to go out and raise money for it."

## 'Flying Scotsman' restoration date moves back

February 26, 2010

YORK, U.K. — National Railway Museum officials say earlier plans to return the famed Flying Scotsman steam locomotive to the rails this year won't happen, the BBC has reported. Instead, the engine is slated to make its debut next summer.

"It's been a lot more replacement and refurbishment work than we thought there would be originally," said Helen Ashby, the museum's chief of knowledge and communications. "Some of the components that we've now had the opportunity to strip and check ready for replacement, we've found to be more worn than we anticipated."

The museum bought the locomotive in 2004, and began a £250,000 restoration process (about \$380,000). So far, it's raised £140,000, and work is ongoing.

This Class A3 Pacific, built in 1923, gained fame as the first locomotive in the world to officially be recorded at a speed of more than 100 mph. The locomotive ran across the United States between 1969 and 1972 in a promotional tour, and in 1988 traveled to Australia for exhibition.

## Four steamers to headline Steamfest II

February 25, 2010

SUNOL, Calif. — The Pacific Locomotive Association has provided additional details of its Steamfest II coming up next month. The association's Niles Canyon Railway will offer two steam powered photo trains on March 14 using Golden Gate Railroad Museum's Southern Pacific 4-6-2 No. 2472 on a passenger consist and double-headed tank engines on a freight.

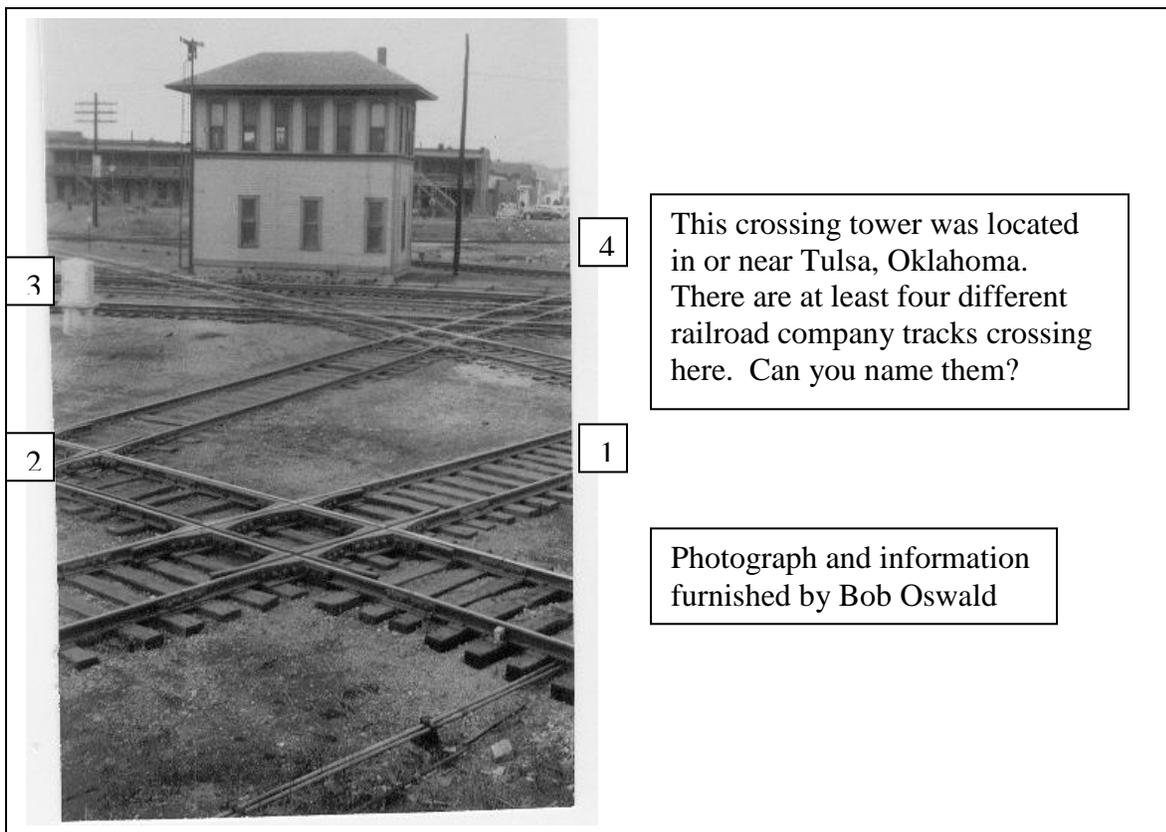
The two tank engines are Roost of Motive Power/Chris Baldo's Mason County Logging Co. 2-6-2T No. 7 and the association's own 2-6-2T, Robert Dollar Co. No. 3.

Then, on March 20, the association will bring in California State Railroad Museum's 0-6-0T, Granite Rock No. 10, and fire up its own 2-6-2T, Quincy Railroad No. 2, for a four-locomotive event utilizing two trains. The association bills this as the biggest gathering of steam locomotives since Railfair '99.

For ticket info and reservations, see <http://www.ncry.org/>. Questions can be emailed to [plasteam@yahoo.com](mailto:plasteam@yahoo.com) or call Henry Luna at (925) 944-5883.

Our thanks to TRAINS Newswire

## **SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT RAILROADS?**



3

2

4

1

This crossing tower was located in or near Tulsa, Oklahoma. There are at least four different railroad company tracks crossing here. Can you name them?

Photograph and information furnished by Bob Oswald

### **SCALE RAILROADING**

**Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society Train Show at the Arkansas Railroad Museum, 1700 Port Road, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Saturday April 10, 2010. 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

**Adults \$5.00. Children 6-12 \$2.00. Children under 6 free.**

**Railroad Memorabilia, Model Trains, Track and Accessories, All Scales N, HO, O, and G.**

**Door Prizes Awarded Hourly, Working Modular Layouts.**

**We are having trouble with the US Postal Service damaging the mailed *Scrambler* and holding some of them for more postage (they are clearly under the weight limit)! Let us know if you are missing an issue.**