

# ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

## NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



### 2010 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

President	Bob Stark
Vice President	David McDonald
Secretary	Malcolm Cleaveland
Treasurer	Bill Longston
Program Director	David McDonald
National Director	Chuck Girard
Board Director	Larry Cain
Editor	Bill Merrifield



Our website address is [www.arkrailfan.com](http://www.arkrailfan.com)

NRHS Chapter meets at 7:00 PM, October 18, 2012 at the Shiloh Museum Store.

## The Scrambler

Volume 26, No. 2

October, 2012

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

### CHAPTER MINUTES

Meeting of the Arkansas- Boston Mtn. Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society at the Shiloh Museum, Springdale, AR. September 20, 2012.

Meeting was called to order at 7:06PM by David McDonald in the absence of the President, Bob Stark. 22 members were present, 1 guest, Matt Condren. The minutes of the August meeting were approved.

Bill Longston, the Treasurer, reported that the money market account had \$13,008.68. The checking account current balance is \$1,383.47. Several checks have not cleared, including a large check for our 25th anniversary festivities.

Bill Merrifield, *Scrambler* editor, reported that the latest issue of the *Scrambler* was put on the website this afternoon.

Program Chair, Dave McDonald, said we're good to the end of the year. December will be the Christmas dinner train. Unfortunately, Chuck Girard was not able to attend this meeting and will not be able to attend the next couple of meetings. He was scheduled to present in October, so we need to fill in.

### OLD BUSINESS

Bill Longston announced that the Frisco Fest was successful, handing out about 210 certificates to young engineers.

Al Kaepfel signed up more people for the 25th anniversary celebration. At present we have 37 attendees and have not heard from a number of members. Al asked for volunteers to call those who have not responded and distributed lists to 3 volunteers.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mitch Marmel had a very successful Frisco Fest co-located with the Sugar Creek Model Railway Club in the Old Post Office, but needs a banner to identify him as representing the Boston Mountain Chapter of the NRHS. Also, the Old Post Office was off the main axis of the Frisco Fest, which meant many people missed it. We need to get signs directing people to the Old Post Office or get the Frisco Fest organizers to put them up.

Train Talk: There was discussion of a building that looks like a freight terminal south of Fayetteville on the St. Paul Branch. Apparently it was not a freight terminal because the current owner knows the history of the site and maintains that it never was a freight terminal. Mitch Marmel showed two Lionel AEC radioactive material cars, one a flat car with glow in the dark containers of radioactive material and the other a security car with a floodlight and machine guns. Tom Duggan talked about riding Amtrak from Springfield, MO to Chicago over track that is constructed for 110 mph running (still way below the 220 mph French TGV trains). Tom is working with the Shiloh Museum on a book about trains in NW Arkansas. It will be B&W and sell for about \$20. Tom wants to explore making a small color atlas that would complement the Shiloh offering.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 for refreshments and a PowerPoint presentation by Mike Condren, "Memphis, America's Distribution Center ( <http://condrenrails.com/railroad-pages.htm> ) . It featured the new large BNSF intermodal yard and intermodal operations of NS, CSX and UP in the area. The only intermodal yard in Arkansas is near Marion, a little north of West Memphis. Malcolm K. Cleaveland, Secretary

## **LOCALLY ON THE BEAM**

### **Stressful times for chapter members, Bill and Ernestine Ussery**

Our Chapter has been missing two of our chapter members, Bill Ussery, and his wife, Ernestine. Bill underwent heart surgery on September 21. Both Bill and Ernestine, who have been married 63 years, are residing at the Windcrest Health and Rehabilitation at 2455 N. Lowell Road, Springdale, AR 72764. We covet your prayers for both of these dear friends!

**New Members:** A hardy welcome to **Dan Griffin** and **Richard Wharry** both of Fayetteville!

### **Our Chapter's 25th Anniversary!**

The threat of stormy weather failed to dampen our celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our chapters founding in 1987. We enjoyed a wonderful dinner, great fellowship, recognition of our Chapter founders, the receiving of a silver medallion from the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad in recognition of our support for the A&M over the past 25 years, and a 25 year certificate from the NRHS. Each member also received a new silver name plate. Our thanks to Al Kaepfel for his great arrangements for the event.

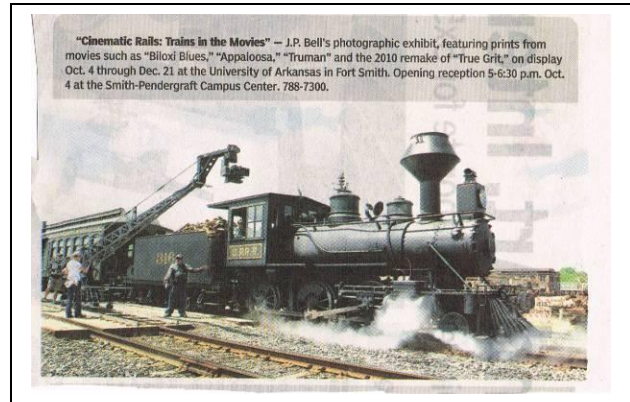
### **ABMT Chapter Christmas Dinner Train is a coming!**

On December 20<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate the season with a dinner trip in the A&M RR Parlor Car as in past years. The great buffet dinner will be catered at a cost of \$20.00 per person. Reservations are limited to 30 persons and must be firmed by submitting cash or check to Al Kaepfel at our regular November meeting or check mailed to Al Kaepfel, 3831 Tara St., Springdale, AR 72762. The earlier the

better since at our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary party more than 30 indicated they planned to attend. There will be an inexpensive gift exchange “Chinese” style.

**Chapter member Dr. J. P. Bell Photograph Exhibit at UAFS, Fort Smith.**

An Oct. 4 opening reception was held at the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith for Dr. J.P. Bell’s photographic exhibit “Cinematic Rails: Trains in the Movies.”  
**The exhibit will run through December 21**



The 36 photographic prints in the exhibit, which will hang through Dec. 21, span more than 30 years and tell the story of a few of the movies utilizing vintage trains in motion picture productions during that time. The show covers movies such as “Biloxi Blues,” “Appaloosa,” “Truman,” “The Tuskegee Airmen” and the 2010 remake of “True Grit.” Several of the photographs were made during movie productions in the Fort Smith area. Twenty-four prints are black and white, and 12 are color.

Bell, a retired emergency physician, is a Fort Smith native whose early years were spent on a farm along Clear Creek in the Ozark mountains of northwestern Arkansas. As a child, Bell and his family traveled by train in 1957 from Arkansas to northern California on Santa Fe’s San Francisco Chief. “From that time forward,” said Bell, “railroads and the American landscape through which these trains passed captured my imagination.”



Bell’s favorite print (left) in the collection is a photograph of a camera crew and a steam train at night at Chester, Ark., during the filming of “Biloxi Blues.”  
“That one print seems to capture the drama of trains used in movies, especially at night,”

The collection of photographic prints is a departure for Bell in that the black-and-white prints were all produced digitally using scanned negatives. Original color digital images were made with digital single-lens reflex cameras. All photographs were printed with an Epson 3880 printer on archival papers.

Bell, who has photographed professionally since 1987, has a photographic inventory that includes images from

the Ozark Mountains, western United States, Africa, the Middle East, South America and Europe.

Bell's special interests include transportation, landscapes and whitewater sports. His photographic prints are sold through Arm Form Gallery in Van Buren and the Cantrell Gallery in Little Rock. His photography has been included in fine art collections of banks, hospitals and corporate offices throughout the United States.

His photography and articles have appeared in Locomotive and Railway Preservation, Railfan and Railroad, the Arkansas Gazette, Arkansas Times, Washington Post, National Geographic maps, River magazine and Entertainment Fort Smith magazine.

Bell's book, "A Modern View of Yesterday's Railroads," has 23 photo essays and gives a broad canvas of steam railroading across the U.S. and Canada. The book was published in 2006.

Stacey Jones of Fort Smith, associate vice chancellor of campus and community events, said the current exhibit marks the second time Bell has exhibited at UAFS.

"Our first exhibit in the Smith-Pendergraft Campus Center was of his work," said Jones, "and we know this will also be a popular exhibit. Many people will be drawn to this particular exhibit because of the theme of trains in the movies. It's a unique exhibit."

Exhibit hours are 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Fridays.

For more information, contact the Campus and Community Events Office at UAFS, 479-788-7300.

## **HISTORICAL OPERATIONS**

### **Cumbres & Toltec Scenic commissioners to manage railroad next season**

**September 26, 2012**

ANTONITO, Colo. – The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission plans to operate the railroad itself next season, said Executive Director Leo Schmitz in an interview with Trains News Wire. The commission and the current operator of the railroad, American Heritage Railways, agreed at a recent meeting to terminate their agreement effective Oct. 31, 2012. After the departure of American Heritage, the commissioners will assume the management of the railroad. They are hoping to retain the current general manager after the departure of the rest of the American Heritage team from the property this fall.

The Cumbres & Toltec is owned jointly by the states of Colorado and New Mexico. The commission was set up in 1977 and each state's governor appoints two commissioners to oversee its interests in the railroad. Back on Sept. 4, Trains News Wire reported American Heritage Railways was seeking to end its relationship with the railroad as soon as possible. A letter by Chairman Allen C. Harper noted "We must be given the responsibility and authority to do things without constant second guessing and micro-management of an authority or commission. The governmental and political realities of the C&TSR do not lend themselves well for my company to be successful at that railroad."

Schmitz said the commissioners had a good relationship with American Heritage and there was great potential for success on both sides of the relationship. He also said the sides were parting on good terms.

## **Steam returns to Pike's Peak September 27, 2012**

MANITOU SPRINGS, Colo. – Steam will return to Pike's Peak today when the Manitou & Pikes Peak Cog Railway fires up 0-4-2 No. 4. Baldwin built the locomotive in January 1887, and it powered the last regular service steam train to the summit of Pike's Peak September 3, 1958. No. 4 underwent a complete overhaul in 1994-95 and it last ran in 2004. The Manitou & Pike's Peak (also known as the Pike's Peak Cog Railway) is an 8.9-mile rack system cog railway climbing the well-known mountain. It is the highest railroad in North America, and was built in 1889.

## **Milwaukee Road No. 261 fired up, moves under power for first time since 2008 By Steve Glischinski October 1, 2012**

MINNEAPOLIS – After a four-year rebuild effort, Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 steamed again on Sept. 29. The locomotive last operated on Sept. 14, 2008, when it pulled a round trip excursion from Minneapolis to La Crosse, Wis., on BNSF Railway and Canadian Pacific. That evening its fire was dropped, ending a run where the locomotive had operated at least once a year since 1993.

Dismantling work then began for its federally mandated 1,472-day inspection. The non-profit Friends of the 261, which leased the engine from owner National Railroad Museum of Green Bay, Wis., would conduct the work. The Milwaukee Road had donated the engine to the museum in 1956 as its first exhibit locomotive. However, in early 2009 a dispute between the museum and the Friends over increased lease payments nearly led to the engine being permanently sidelined. Work stopped on the rebuild while the two parties attempted to come to an agreement. Unable to reach an agreement, in November 2009 the Friends announced they were returning the locomotive to Green Bay for display.

The museum then put No. 261 up for sale for \$225,000, and found a taker in a California businessman who hoped to buy the engine and have the Friends overhaul and operate it. That deal fell through in March 2010. The museum then offered to sell 261 directly to the Friends, which finalized the purchase in May 2010. The rebuilding effort then went into high gear. Parts were stripped off the engine, and in July 2010 a crane lifted the 227,000-pound boiler off the driving wheels, which were shipped out for quartering and to have the tires turned. Various appliances were rebuilt, an ultrasound inspection of the boiler was conducted, and staybolts replaced as needed. In December 2011 the locomotive got its wheels back, and in July 2012 it passed a hydrostatic boiler test, paving the way for final reassembly and fire up.

At 6:41 a.m. on Sept. 29, a fire was lit in the boiler of the 1944 Alco for the first time since 2008. All day the crew of Friends employees and volunteers conducted static testing of various systems, tested the boiler under pressure, and set the safety valves. Finally, at 6:14 p.m., Friends of the 261 Chief Operating Officer Steve Sandberg pulled the throttle, and the locomotive moved again, making several runs back and forth on yard tracks outside the Friends shop to check 261's new spring rigging and side rod bearings.

There are no plans for No. 261 to pull public trips in 2012, but Sandberg said the organization hopes to operate an excursion with the locomotive in the spring of 2013. The Friends is also operating two diesel-powered fundraising excursions on Oct. 13-14 from Minneapolis to Superior, Wis., and Minneapolis to Winona and La Crescent, Minn.



At 6:14 p.m. on Saturday, September 28, Milwaukee 4-8-4 No. 261 moved under its own power for the first time in over four years.

## **Cumbres & Toltec groups seek designs for new roundhouse and museum October 11, 2012**

ANTONITO, Colo. – The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the bi-state C&TSRR Commission have issued a request for proposals for design services for a new combined roundhouse and visitor center at Chama, N.M. This is the first step toward the construction of such a structure. The new roundhouse and visitor center will include space for regular railroad maintenance and repairs, and facilities for the Friends' ongoing restoration work, including library and conference space.

Design and construction proposals will include concept development and schematic design, design development, construction plans, engineering estimates, and construction specifications. The firm selected will work with the Friends on the design of the structure, which must meet National Park Service reconstruction standards for historic properties. Once the selected design firm and the Friends have completed the design and engineering phase, the commission will take over the project to oversee its construction. The design and engineering phase of the project is funded by a Federal Highway Administration grant through the New Mexico Department

of Transportation's statewide transportation investment program. Both the commission and Friends are responsible for raising funds for construction when the project reaches that point.

**Our thanks to Trains Newswire for the preservation news items**

**TRAINS THROUGH MEMORY**

**Monte Ne Railroad Track Structure Found**

By Tom Duggan

The Labor Day sun had risen to the overhead position in the cloudless sky. The temperature and the humidity seemed to be stuck near the century mark. Steve Longacre, a 25-year Monte Ne resident and President of the Arkansas Archeology Association, led Chapter member Larry Cain and the writer down to the lakeside property of Johnny Dark that normally would be underwater. Our task was to examine a series of concrete blocks held together by old style square steel rebar.

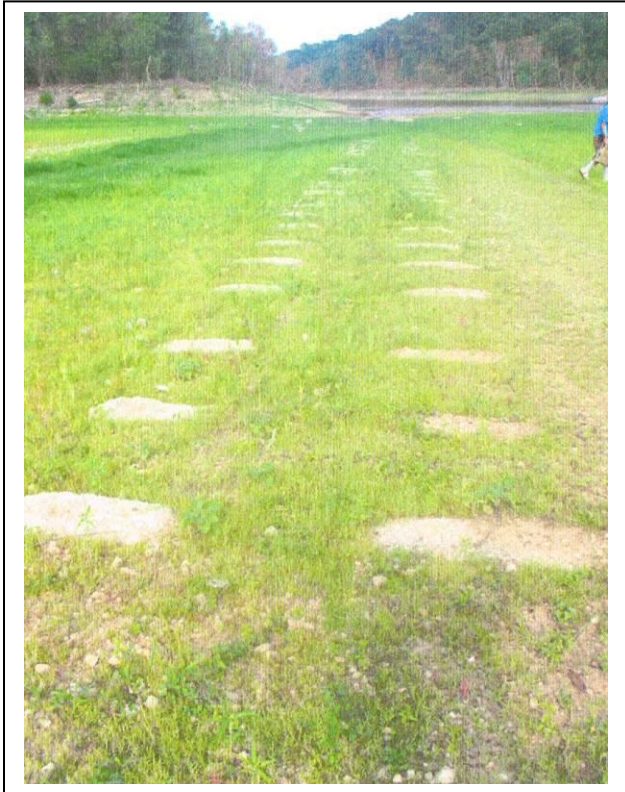
The area of interest was in a zone that likely was wet when the Monte Ne Railroad was built in May 1902 with substantial help from the Frisco. Men and horses labored to excavate the rocky fill on one side to create a modestly elevated dirt roadbed. Water must have been a constant concern as Larry Cain noted the existence of several seeps that created a modest but steady flow of lake bound water. Larry said the seeps were due to a geologic fault in the area.

To deal with the wet conditions the railroad builders used a series of concrete pads to anchor the ties. Most were connected by a single rebar with a few using two pieces of rebar. The first area consisted of a twelve evenly spaced series of concrete structures. Each side of the concrete supports had places where two small spikes, more suited for a mining railroad, were put into the wet concrete. The spikes were then bent so that they connected snug into the foot of the rail. The spikes in the concrete were likely lapped over the foot of the rail to create a permanent connection. We did not see any rust marks on the concrete so we speculated the track was laid without the benefit of tie plates.

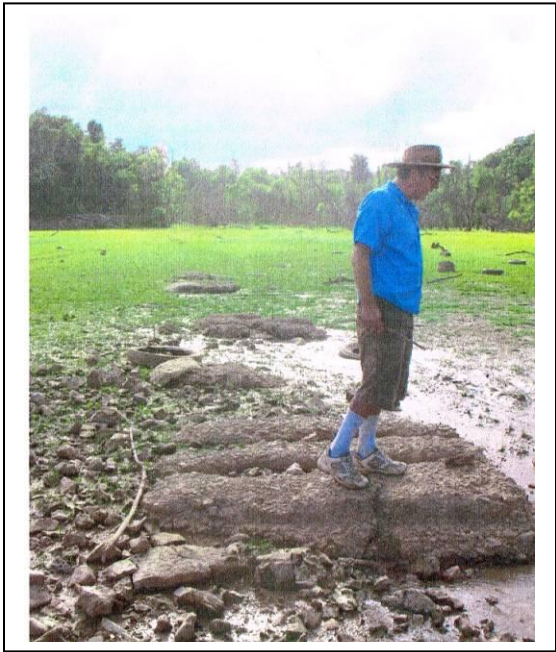
About sixteen feet from the first group of track supports was a series of seven all concrete blocks that had a recessed square opening that corresponded to an eight-inch width tie. The second group apparently had no rebar. Perhaps the builders opted for the all-concrete track support so they could avoid the expense of steel rebar found in the first group. William Hope "Coin" Harvey, proprietor of the Monte Ne resort and Monte Ne Railroad, was widely known for his aversion to spending money. Harvey was also an early proponent of using concrete for construction of buildings. The all-concrete track supports, unlike the rebar based track supports, had shifted out of position over the years.

All of the participants were excited that the line seemed to head directly east and west. The question is whether there are more concrete and rebar track supports. The area to the east is still covered by an inlet of Beaver Lake. It may be that track structure exists to the east but it may well be covered in water and silt. The segment to the west is a relatively dry area. Perhaps LIDAR (a ground penetrating laser system used by archeologists) would enable us to precisely track the route of the Monte Ne Railroad all the way west to Lowell. LIDAR, or perhaps a good metal detector, would also work for locating spikes that might have been left behind when the railroad was abandoned in 1919. The Monte Ne Railroad siding at Cross Hollows, the largest siding on the railroad, was explored in 2003 and yielded metal spikes. We should also consider bringing a shovel as the rebar separated concrete pads might extend some distance vertically into the earth. This might explain why they have retained their

original position. A special thanks goes to Allyn Lord of Chapter member Shiloh Museum for putting Larry Cain and the writer in contact with Steve Longacre.



Left: This shot faces east towards the Monte Ne depot. The rebar spaced track supports are in excellent condition and do not appear to have moved since the track was taken up in early 1919. The water in the background is a Beaver Lake estuary. Allyn Lord photo



Above: Steve Longacre stands on the all concrete tie supports. Note the deteriorated condition. Allyn Lord photo



Left: Detail of rebar connection. The photo has been rotated left 90°. Allyn Lord photo