

# ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

## NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



### 2013 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

President	Bob Stark
Vice President	Al Kaeppl
Secretary	Malcolm Cleaveland
Treasurer	Tom Duggan
Program Director	open
National Director	Ken Eddy
Board Director	Larry Cain
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Our website address is [www.arkrailfan](http://www.arkrailfan)

NRHS Chapter meets at 7:00 PM, January 21, 2016 at the  
J. Reilly McCarren Transportation Museum at the A&M Depot.

## The Scrambler

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

### CHAPTER MINUTES

No official business took place during our annual Christmas Train Party in December. Our annual chapter Christmas went off very well. Our thanks to Al, Brenda, and the entire A&M crew for an excellent event.

### LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

**Chapter members are reminded that our bad weather policy for chapter meetings is keyed to the Springdale Public Schools: If the Springdale Public Schools cancel classes due to weather on the third Thursday of the month, the day of our normal meeting, we will not meet that night.**

#### **Disposition of old equipment at Shiloh General Store:**

We're doing some first-of-the-year cleaning, including the General Store, and see that the Boston Mt. Chapter has the TV/VCR/stand and a small tabletop podium in the closet there. If the group wants these, they need to move them to A&M within the next week, preferably. If they're not wanted, just let us know and we'll recycle them. Thanks – much appreciated!" Kindly advise desired disposition of these items.

Thomas S. Duggan

## February train show in Springdale

Chapter members be alerted to our annual participation in the Sugar Creek Great NWA Model Train Show on Saturday February 27.

We need a good turnout for the event.



## St Paul Pioneer Days September 2016

In early September 2016 St. Paul, Arkansas will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding. The town, for whom the Frisco's St Paul branch is named, has a railroad (1887-1937) and lumbering history of great interest. During the lumber boom period the virgin red and white oak forests were felled to produce huge quantities of lumber. In 1887 Hugh McDaniel, the man who started the railroad before selling out to the Frisco, shipped more than \$2 million in forest products. To put this in perspective a railroad tie was worth 25 cents in 1887.. Many of the ties from St Paul were purchased by the AT & SF during its western expansion.

Our Chapter can play a role in St Paul Days -2016. We could offer attendees the chance to drive a spike into a tie. Chapter member George Allison has a vintage rail saw that was a big draw at rail events some years ago. We could also prepare historical exhibits documenting the rail linkage of St. Paul. We could also prepare short historical handouts on the Frisco and the branch and offer model train runs to attendees.

Let's add the 2016 edition of St. Paul days to the Chapter calendar. We should create a working group to re-search our participation at this event perhaps with along with the South Madison County History Society and the Huntsville based Madison County Historical and Genealogical Society. Tom Duggan /Larry Cain

## HISTORICAL OPERATIONS

### Durango & Silverton posts strong 2015

January 13, 2016

DURANGO, Colo. – Thanks to increased media coverage, strong ridership on fall trains, and more efficiency, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad had its best financial year in 2015.

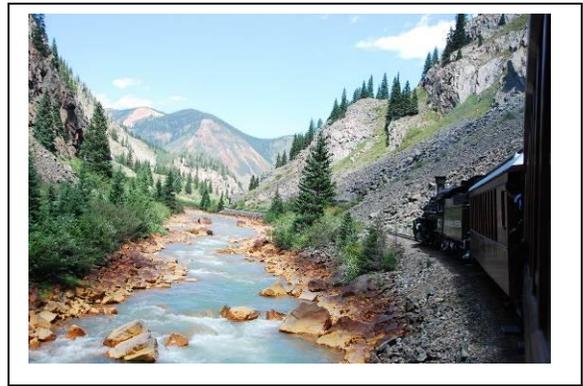
The narrow gauge tourist hauler saw an increase of about 10 percent in non-special event ridership of 136,000 in 2014 to 149,000 in 2015. Trains that featured special events increased 3 percent during the same time period to a total of 31,000 in 2015.

“Operationally, it was challenging,” railroad spokesman Christian Robbins told the Durango Herald. “We were pushing our locomotive power to its max.”

While this past year was not a record in the number of riders, the line is running more efficiently than before, Robbins says. July was less strong than the previous year, but leaf peepers in the fall had helped make up for the slacking number. The spokesman noted that there were several weekend trains that were really strong.

New special events also helped draw in passengers. This past December was the first time that the railroad had hosted a Christmas Tree Train, which saw people coming as far as Grand Junction and Phoenix. Robbins said that media coverage in the most populated portions of Colorado had raised awareness of the winter schedule.

This year it is hoped that the railroad and the town can be seen as a year-round vacation destination for those living in the state. “If the economy stays generally where it is we should have another great year,” Robbins said.



Durango & Silverton train heads toward Silverton, Colo.

## St. Louis Union Station will get renovations

January 13, 2016



ST. LOUIS – Renovations to St. Louis Union Station could make it a hub of activity again. That’s because starting next month the owners of the 1894 station, Lodging Hospitality Management, will start renovating it. Plans for the revamped station will include a 200-foot tall Ferris wheel that will have 42 enclosed cars. Outside a greenspace will feature food stands located in old railroad cars, and hotel rooms will be locomotive themed as well.

According to the station’s website, the building was one of the largest and most beautiful terminals in the nation, built at a cost of \$6.5 million. The Grand Hall featured gold leaf, Romanesque arches, a 65-foot barrel vaulted ceiling, and stained glass windows. The most magnificent of these stained glass windows is the “Allegorical Window” which is majestically framed by the famous “Whispering Arch.”

At the height of rail passenger travel, more than 100,000 passengers a day passed across the platforms, covered by an enormous single-span shed.

The station served Amtrak passengers until 1978, when it was closed to make way for renovations that would turn it into a hotel and shopping center. When it opened again in 1985, it was a destination for tourist and locals, seeing 2.5 million people yearly at the peak of its popularity. But over the past several years visitation sank to 500,000 annually.

“Retail has never really done well downtown,” Bob O’Loughlin chairman and CEO of Lodging Hospitality Management told radio station KWMU. O’Loughlin first changed the station’s Grand Hall in 2014 into a bar with a light and sound show. The next phase, which starts in February, will include illuminating the archway, a fire show on a lake, and using 3-D animation on the side of the hotel. Another feature will be announced this spring that will take up 75,000 square feet inside the building and would be a family attraction. All the renovation work is expected to be completed by summer of 2017.

Our thanks to TRAINS Newswire for the historical news items. Editor

## TRAINS FROM MEMORY

### **Unusual Frisco Railroad Property**

**Mark** Submitted by Tom Duggan

The Frisco, in common with many railroads, liked to mark company property. This is an image of a Frisco Special toilet still extant at the former Frisco depot in Hugo, OK. Incidentally the same marking was found in the ladies room.

An odd piece to mark for security. I can’t imagine it being used for advertising! Editor

