

ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



2013 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

President	Bob Stark
Vice President	Al Kaepfel
Secretary	Malcolm Cleaveland
Treasurer	Tom Duggan
Program Director	open
National Director	Ken Eddy
Board Director	Larry Cain
Editor	Bill Merrifield



Our website address is www.arkrailfan.com

NRHS Chapter leaves at 6:30 on the Christmas Diner Train December 15, 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

Meeting of the Arkansas-Boston Mtn. Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society at the Reilly McCarren Transportation Museum, A&M Depot, Springdale, AR. November 17, 2016. Meeting was called to order at 7:09 PM by the President, Bob Stark. Seventeen members were present and one guest, Don Steiger of Tahlequah. Minutes of the October meeting were approved.

Tom Duggan, the Treasurer, said that our total assets were \$11,118.40, checking acct \$875.33, Investment acct \$10,243.07. Asked what chapter membership only cost, he said that dues were \$12/year, paid directly to the chapter. **Chuck Girard**, local membership, was not present. **Ken Eddy**, the National Representative, was still out in Oregon after attending the NRHS Fall meeting in Portland, poor guy.

Old Business: **Bill Merrifield**, *Scrambler* editor, in reference to distributing the newsletter by email only, said that although the printed copies are expensive, but no one could say how many members do not have email or do not have a computer. **Jim Gattis** said that he had specified email only, but suddenly started getting the printed copy. It was pointed out that people without a computer can go to any library and use a library computer to read the *Scrambler* on our website. We are also sending paper copies to four museums, as well as the UA Library and five chapters (three no longer reciprocate). A motion was made and passed that we would do one more *Scrambler* mailing and include a slip of paper saying, "If you wish to continue receiving a paper copy, you must return this." Bill is retiring from the editorship after the next issue and **Mike Sypult** volunteered to become the editor. The members expressed appreciation for Bill's service.

V-P, Al Kaepfel: Children's Xmas Train is Dec. 3, 8AM-4PM and we have enough volunteers if everybody shows up. Our dinner train is Thursday, Dec. 15, at \$10/person. Bring a friend.

New Business: Officers for 2017: Present officers volunteered to continue in service, but any others who wish to serve in some capacity would be welcome. Programs: Show-and-Tell; December: Christmas Diner Train; January: Mike Sypult TBA; February Dick Hovey TBA.

Train Talk: Steve Tharp: KCS had a switch out of service on the main line, failed to fix it expeditiously and backed up trains. **Dick Hovey** had beautiful photos of UP steam and other RR scenes. He recommends a railfan hotspot in Missouri from Carrolton to Camden, especially a bridge at Henrietta. **Malcolm Cleaveland** had an email from the Midwest Hi-Speed Rail Assoc. about additions to the British hi-speed rail network. Discussion ensued about why the U.S. has no true hi-speed rail. Steve said that work has been going on for at least a decade trying to get hi-speed rail from St. Louis to Chicago and one obstacle was the sheer number of highway crossings that have to be over- or under-passed. **Mike Sypult** described a Dominican Republic sugar cane RR with 17 GE 70-ton locomotives that he saw on a mission trip.

Show-and-Tell: Al Kaepfel showed a thorny vine that impedes scouting RR right-of-way. He was told it is a "briar", no scientific name. **Barbara Gavin** passed around some new circus train model items. **Jim Gattis** showed a replica of a publication of the M&NA describing the towns the RR went through. **Mitch Marmel** showed some Peter Witt designed trolleys. **Al Kaepfel** brought a switch stand lantern housing and samples of slag found in ballast. **Travis Walls** demonstrated hand signals trainmen used before advent of small portable radios

Malcolm K. Cleaveland , Secretary

LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

IMPORTANT: Chapter members are reminded that the NRHS no longer handles local chapter dues. Your local dues are \$12 each year. If you have not paid your dues you can do so by check to Chuck Girard, our Chapter membership chairman, at our chapter meetings or by mail to Chuck Girard, 7510 Westminster Place, Fort Smith, AR 72903-4253.

The local dues will help to offset the annual cost of the website (\$250), the Post Office box (\$82), model railroad engineer train Certificates (\$60) and the \$10 per person subsidy for the annual Christmas Dinner Train.

Children's Christmas Train:

We had a good turnout of members for our model train activities for the children. So many children earned our engineer certificates that we ran out of them. Despite the cold weather, we had a lot of fun with both kids and their parents.

Christmas Dinner Train: LAST CALL

Our annual chapter Christmas party will happen on the regular third Thursday meeting night on December 15 at 6:30 PM. Our party will take place on the A&M's streamlined dining car with his new and handsome interior. The party will feature a tasty supper followed by the traditional selection and involuntary swapping of presence.

New *Scrambler* Editor

Bill Merrifield has retired from editorship of the *Scrambler*. Mike Sypult has agreed to become our newsletter Editor.

Our chapter's newsletter, the *Scrambler* is changing its means of distribution to e-mail only.

Due to rising costs of printing and mailing, our chapter newsletter will be distributed to members through email. If you must have a hard copy instead please send the notice on the bottom of page 4 to the retiring editor, Bill Merrifield. His mailing address is 133 San Jose Dr. Springdale, AR 72764 or notify him by phone 479-751-7163 or by email: wmerrif@sbcglobal.net He will pass your request on to Mike Sypult, the new editor.

Other NRHS chapters can access our newsletter from our website: www.arkrailfan.com or submit your editor's email address to the addresses above.

HISTORICAL OPERATIONS

Railroad operations little affected by Southern forest fires

By David C. Lester | November 18, 2016

ATLANTA — Railroads operating in the southeastern United States seem to be mostly unaffected by the more than 30 wildfires burning in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky. This area is experiencing severe drought conditions, with the last rainfall occurring in mid-October. Hundreds of people have been hospitalized with respiratory problems caused by the smoke, and states of emergency have been declared in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Kentucky.



Southern Railway 2-8-0 No. 630 and 2-8-2 No. 4501 teamed up for doubleheaded steam excursions in Tennessee and Georgia the weekend of Nov. 12. The haze of burning forest fires tempered an otherwise picturesque weekend. The excursions operated with a water crew trailing the locomotives that were prepared to douse any blaze that coal embers might spark.

Norfolk Southern and CSX, the two largest railroads in the region, have not issued service alerts associated with the fires, although air quality in many areas is poor. Officials with the Blue Ridge Southern, a Watco property that operates the former Norfolk Southern Murphy branch in North Carolina say that certain on-line customers who rely on river water for their operations have had to slow production due to the drought, affecting the railroad's traffic volume.

The Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum ran a double-header excursion behind ex-Southern Railway steam engines Nos. 630 and 4501 on Nov. 12 and 13 from Chattanooga, Tenn., to northwest Georgia. As a precautionary measure, railroad personnel rode behind the train on a hi-rail vehicle loaded with water in case sparks from the engines started a blaze, but this did not happen. Our thanks to *Trains* newswire.

TRAINS FROM MEMORY

From the File By Tom Duggan

On Friday, June 30, 1950, the same month the last steam engine operated in Fayetteville, the Northwest Arkansas Times ran the following article:

“Menk Superintendent of Frisco Division

L.W Menk of Memphis , who has served as terminal trainmaster for the Frisco Railroad there, has been made Superintendent of the Central Division for the railroad, with headquarters in Fort Smith succeeding Paul Schmitz who goes to Fort Scott, Kan., as Superintendent of the Northern Division. The changes were announced by Frisco officials today”

Menk, known to passenger train fans as “Lou the Fink” for his ruthless elimination of loss-making passenger trains, was President of the Frisco in 1965 when the Monett –Fort Smith train 709-710 was removed in September . Perhaps he acquired his distaste for loss-making trains when Central Division trains 772-773 (Hugo-Hope motorcar) left the schedule on September 8, 1951 while Menk was Central Division Superintendent..

Menk's stay in Fort Smith was relatively short as by September 1952 the Central Division employee timetable showed that Menk was no longer Central Division Superintendent. Menk attended a Harvard Business School program in 1953 that propelled him to the top of four railroads including the BN at the time it acquired the Frisco in November 1980.

Send the notice below to Bill Merrifield, Editor. 133 San Jose Dr. Springdale, AR 72764 or notify him by phone 479-751-7163 or by email: wmerrif@sbcglobal.net He will pass your request on to Mike Sypult, the new editor.

Other NRHS chapters can access our newsletter from our website: www.arkrailfan or submit your editors email address to the addresses above.

I wish to receive a hard copy of our Chapter's newsletter each month.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

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