



ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



3175 Katherine Ave
Fayetteville AR 72703

Issue # 14

September 15, 1988

Let's roll ABMT's meeting is set for Thursday, September 15th, 7:30 PM, Shiloh Museum's, "General Store" building on N. Main Str., near corner 118 W. Johnson St., Springdale, AR.

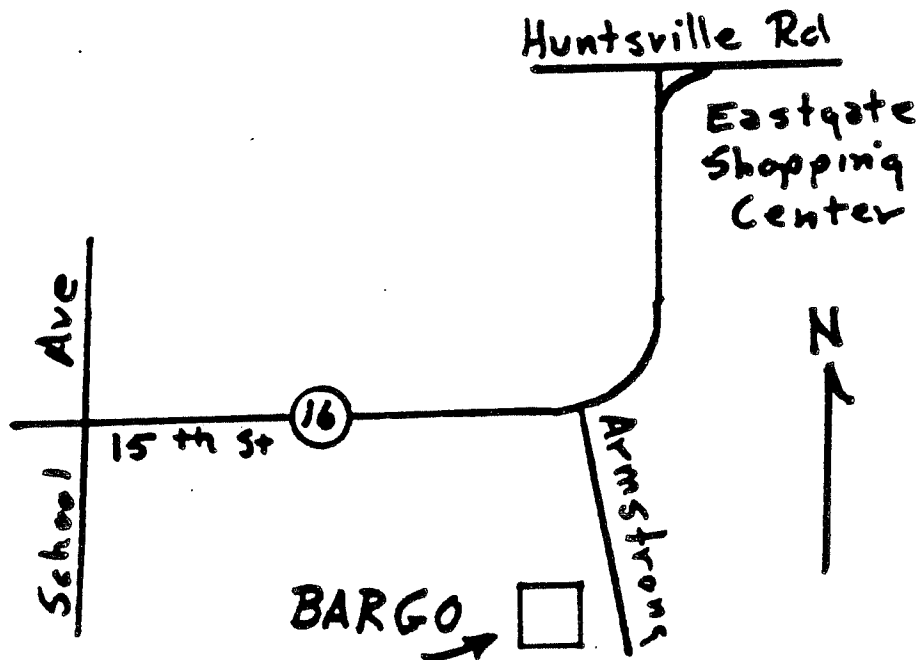
Our speaker is Bob Oswald. His subject; building and operating the St. Paul Branch of the Frisco (1887-1937) and the traces of it to be found today. The program will be the background for the field trip.

FIELD TRIP, September 17, 1988, 9:00 AM

"Traces--In Search of the St. Paul Branch" Co-sponsored by ABMT & Shiloh Museum.
Co-leaders: Joe Neal and Bob Oswald.

Retrace the right-of-way of the St. Paul Branch and relate its rise and fall to the lumber industry.

Assemble at 9:00 AM at Bargo Engineering, 1755 Armstrong, Fayetteville Industrial Park (see map). Stops at Elkins, Combs, St. Paul, Pettigrew. Then follows a picnic (bring your own food and drink) at the park in St. Paul.



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ROGERS and ROGERS HISTORICAL MUSEUM EVENTS

First, the annual Main Street Festival in downtown Rogers, will be Saturday, September 24. This is the first year that the festival will be called "Frisco Days". There are lots of activities planned, including a "Great Train Robbery". Plus the usual races, games, crafts, and barbequed chicken for sale.

The Rogers Historical Museum will help celebrate "Frisco Days" in several ways. The exhibit, "The Frisco", will be on display at the museum. This exhibit includes Frisco lanterns, model trains, photographs, and other railroad memorabilia. A traveling exhibit from the Minnesota Historical Society, entitled "Railroad Standard: Building Plans 1884 - 1916" will also be on display for the month of September. This exhibit consists of original architectural drawings from the files of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern Railroads.

A special "Frisco Days" event will also take place at the museum on Saturday, September 24. Planned is a demonstration of railroad telegraphy. Former railroad telegraph operators from the Frisco, the Kansas City Southern, and others will be on hand to recreate the days of the telegraph. The demonstration is set for 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the museum at 322 South Second Street in Rogers. Other telegraph operators are encouraged to attend.

On May 18th the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the merger of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas with the Union Pacific. The Katy is a 3100-mile regional railroad connecting the Midwest with the Texas Gulf Coast. The UP agreement with Katy Industries in 1986 to acquire the MKT for about \$110 million plus assumption of MKT's \$250 million debt. An agreement had to be reached by the UP with the KCS on traffic solicitation and trackage rights, between a number of midwestern towns as a condition of UP acquiring the Katy. Effective date of acquisition was August 12 1988. * * Information from "Rail News Update", Aug 31 1988 & "Pacific Rail News", Sept 1988.

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Steve Roberts has again written: "You have motivated me to add my two cents worth in choosing a name for the newsletter. I like the name "Rusty Rails". If we need to identify the newsletter in relation to a locale, why not call it the 'Ozark Mountain Rusty Rails'. It is a bit wordy, but it is the best suggestion that I can come up with."

"Mike Condren was correct. There was a Frisco local headquartered in Springdale in the late 70's that the train crews nicknamed the 'Arkansas Scrambler'. I think the official name was the #3711. I'll try to confirm the number. It operated much like the A&M's nightly Monett train. Evidently, there was too much switching for train #731 (Springfield to Ft. Smith) to perform enroute and stay within the hours of service law [12 hrs]. I think Frisco either set the Rogers/Springdale block out at Monett with a mainline train or they ran it down to Monett with another local. Anyway, the #731 did not carry all the blocks of cars for northwest Arkansas and the Scrambler ran a nightly turn to pick up these cars. For a time, it originated out of Fayetteville also. My facts may not be perfectly accurate. I was living in N. Carolina, in the military at the time and only saw the local operation when home on leave. The train crew that operated the local used caboose #1440. They placed small decals on both sides of the caboose, identifying it as the Scrambler. I've been told that this series of caboose was built from kits by the Frisco. I do know that they did not have a cushion suspension, insulation in the walls, and they were not equiped with a radio. BN did not have much use for them after the merger, so they were disposed of very quickly. I can remember talking with a frozen conductor after he had ridden one of these cabooses from LaCrosse, Wisc. to Galesburg my first winter in Galesburg. I've enclosed 3 slides taken in Jan. or Feb. of 1980. They show the Scrambler equipment sitting at Springdale. The power was used on the Springdale job during the day. A friend living in Batesville, AR. sent me a shot of caboose #1440 taken in Amory AL. It was enroute to a scrap dealer near Birmingham (Alliceville?). The steps were all cut off with a torch."

"EMD will be testing some experimental AC traction motors on some of their loco's on our Chicago 2nd Sub next week [postmark was Aug 20 '88]. I have no idea which locomotives have been fitted with these traction motors."

"The ex-BN NW5 #992 was sitting at the Diesel Shop this morning. I think it has been shipped in by some short line to have the trucks worked on."

"P.S. The two damaged LMX units that were sent back to GE have been rebuilt and returned to the BN as GECX 8000 and 8001. These were the two locomotives that were derailed on the night of the initial start up of the Montana Rail Link. I rode the #8000 on train #051 last month. I have no idea why they have been passed back by GECX."

Thanks for your information on the "Scrambler" and other reports Steve, we all enjoy hearing from you. Info inside () brackets is Steve's, that inside [] is your acting editor's.

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This month's member article. By-line Bill Ussery

Hi! I'm Bill Ussery. I wanted to share with you my interest in railroads and why I wanted to be involved with the NRHS. My father, my grandfather, uncle and several other relatives were all railroad men. My Dad was a brakeman, flagman, and conductor on the Columbus and Greenville Railroad. As a kid, I have many fond memories of going thru the depot, dispatcher's office, roundhouse and yards as well as the cabooses and engines of the C&G. As a young teenager, I sold morning newspapers on the C&G and Southern passenger trains before they left the Columbus depot.

Southern used the big (to me) Pacifics on this Columbus to Birmingham run. The Frisco and the M&O (later GM&O) also served Columbus making four railroads in this small Mississippi town.

During the war years, 1942-45, because of gas and tire rationing, the football team and band would travel by special train to towns on the C&G route for their games. These train trips were quite exciting to most of the kids, but I enjoyed the train ride the most, including all of the smoke and cinders and all of the smells and sounds that go with it. One summer, I made several trips to Moorehead Junior College on the C&G's Doodlebug, a gas-electric unit with one coach. A close friend, whose Dad worked in the C&G shops, made several trips to Memphis on the Frisco and to Birmingham on the Southern.

After my Navy duty, I went into electronics and got away from railroads for awhile. My wife, who was from Kansas City, and I made a good many trips to KC on the KCS's Southern Belle. It was not uncommon to clock the speed at 75-80 mph between K.C. and Pittsburg. The only time I rode in a Pullman was when my flight out of Cincinnati was snow-bound and I had to take a Pullman to St. Louis.

Several years later, I spent about four hours going through the National Museum of Transport at St. Louis. I could have spent two weeks there! Some of the slides taken there will be shown to the Chapter later. Of course, the Eureka Springs Railway is a favorite local stop for steam units. This past July, memories were really brought back when we rode the Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge. I have a few slides of this also.

Railroads have played a very important part in the development, growth and life of our nation. To preserve our railroad history and heritage for generations ahead is the main reason for my being a part of NRHS.

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Those of you willing to help with Restoration and Preservation of some of the older equipment.....the Combination Baggage/Coach, the Business Car, and any other old cars.....the group is working Sunday afternoons, as of 11 September, starting about 1 PM until about 5 PM. Don't worry if you can't make it at 1 o'clock, just come when you can. Regular workers will get extra perks.

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Next month's meeting is Thursday Oct. 20th, speaker: Lewis Brown

See you all Thursday 15th, 19:30

Martin Post

ABMT Chapter of NRHS
3175 Katherin Ave
Fayetteville AR 72703