

# The Scrambler

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Volume 12, Number 7

February 1999

Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

Opinions expressed in the *Scrambler* are those of the Editor and contributors. They do not represent the official view of the Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, its members, officers or directors or the National Railway Historical Society, Inc. unless otherwise stated.

## MINUTES OF MEETING

January 21, 1999

The "Chapter" met for the regular monthly meeting at 7:00 PM on January 21, 1999 at the Shiloh Museum's "Old General Store. The meeting was called to order by President George Alison. There were fifteen members and two guests present.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as published in the *Scrambler*,

In the report from the officers:

National Director and Membership chairman Bob Oswald reported on the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad Fan Club. The only information was a flier he had received in the mail-, no other members had received a flier.

Vice-President Bill Merrifield reported on future programs, and on the need for future programs.

Treasurer Bill Ussery gave the treasurer's report and a copy of the report is on file with the secretary's records. He stated that anyone who has not paid their 1999 dues might do so. He also gave away a *Trains Unlimited* Calendar.

There were no reports from committees.

There was no old business to discuss.

Under new business, *Scrambler* editor Tom Duggan sent a proposed motion to renew the *Trains* Subscription for the area libraries. The motion to renew the subscriptions was tabled until the February meeting. Treasurer Bill Ussery will contact the publisher for a better subscription rate.

Vice-President Bill Merrifield agreed to serve as coffee host for the February meeting,

There was no further business to discuss and the meeting was adjourned for the program.

Ron Allen Secretary

University of Arkansas  
Libraries, Fayetteville  
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The Scrambler

**Amtrak**

**Financial Performance of Amtrak Routes**

(Fiscal Year ended September 30, 1997)

Name	Route	Operating ratio <sup>a</sup>	Profit or (loss) per passenger
Metroliners	New York, NY-Washington, D.C.	0.94	\$5
San Joaquins	Oakland, CA-Bakersfield, CA	1.23	(\$11)
Carolinian	New York, NY-Charlotte, NC	1.45	(\$27)
Piedmont	Raleigh, NC-Charlotte, NC	1.48	(\$42)
Capitols	Colfax, CA-San Jose, CA	1.52	(\$15)
Auto Train	Lorton, VA-Sanford, FL	1.56	(\$118)
Northeast Direct	Boston or Springfield, Newport News	1.65	(\$29)
Pacific NW Corridor	Eugene, OR-Seattle, WA, or Vancouver, Canada	1.76	(\$26)
Illini	Chicago, IL-Carbondale, IL	1.82	(\$47)
Kansas City-St. Louis	Kansas City, MO-St. Louis, MO	1.91	(\$45)
Southwest Chief	Chicago, IL-Los Angeles, CA	1.92	(\$180)
San Diegans	San Diego, CA-Los Angeles or Santa Barbara or San Luis Obispo	1.96	(\$23)
Vermont	Washington, D.C.-St. Albans, VT	2.00	(\$58)
Lake Shore Limited	Chicago, IL-Boston, MA/NYC	2.01	(\$90)
Empire	New York, NY-Albany or Niagara Falls, NY	2.03	(\$38)
Adirondack	New York, NY-Montreal, Canada	2.10	(\$57)
Philadelphia-Harrisburg	Philadelphia, PA-Harrisburg,	2.15	(\$22)
Three Rivers	New York, NY-Chicago, IL	2.18	(\$138)
Silver Meteor	New York, NY-Miami, FL	2.18	(\$120)
Empire Builder	Chicago, IL-Seattle, WA, or Portland, OR	2.20	(\$136)
Illinois Zephyr	Chicago, IL-Quincy, IL	2.21	(\$61)
International	Chicago, IL-Toronto, Canada	2.23	(\$47)
California Zephyr	Chicago, IL-Emerlyville (San Francisco), CA	2.24	(\$149)
Capitol Limited	Chicago, IL-Washington, D.C.	2.27	(\$133)
New York-Harrisburg	New York, NY-Harrisburg, PA	2.30	(\$37)
Pere Marquette	Chicago, IL-Grand Rapids, MI	2.43	(\$51)
Coast Starlight	Los Angeles, CA-Seattle, WA	2.43	(\$92)
Silver Star	New York, NY-Miami, FL	2.47	(\$143)
Silver Palm <sup>b</sup>	New York, NY-Miami, FL	2.48	(\$163)
Crescent	New York, NY-New Orleans, LA	2.56	(\$163)
Clockers	New York, NY-Philadelphia, PA	2.59	(\$11)
Pennsylvanian	New York, NY-Pittsburgh, PA	2.70	(\$53)
Chicago-St. Louis	Chicago, IL-St. Louis, MO	2.73	(\$64)
Empire-Ethan Allen Express <sup>c</sup>	New York, NY-Rutland, VT	2.75	(\$79)
City of New Orleans	Chicago, IL-New Orleans, LA	2.78	(\$130)
Hiawathas	Chicago, IL-Milwaukee, WI	2.92	(\$50)
Texas Eagle	Chicago, IL-San Antonio, TX, LAX	2.99	(\$201)
Sunset Limited	Los Angeles, CA-Orlando, FL	3.16	(\$284)
Cardinal	Chicago, IL-Washington, D.C.	3.29	(\$136)
Chicago-Pontiac	Chicago, IL-Detroit/Pontiac	3.66	(\$66)

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Total route system	1.86 \d	(\$47)
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Note: These financial performance data do not represent the cash impact on Amtrak's bottom line of operating each particular route because (1) they show each route's fully allocated costs in operating intercity passenger trains, including depreciation and overhead costs; (2) they do not account for the impact travel on one route has on the ridership and revenues of other routes; and (3) certain costs are shared among routes and would shift to other routes if a route were closed. These issues are discussed later in this report. The three routes that Amtrak closed during fiscal year 1997 are excluded.

\a A route's operating ratio is its expenses divided by its revenues. An operating ratio less than 1.0 means that the route was profitable while an operating ratio greater than 1.0 means that the route lost money. A ratio greater than 2.0 means that the route's expenses were at least 2 times greater than its revenues during the fiscal year.

\b Service was introduced in Nov. 1996.

\c Service was introduced in Dec. 1996.

\d Operating ratio for Amtrak's core intercity passenger services.

Amtrak's overall operating ratio, which includes commuter operations and other activities, was 1.46.

Source: Government Accounting Office analysis of Amtrak's data.

(*Scrambler* Editor comment: Since many railfans are Amtrak advocates it might be helpful to understand the nature of Amtrak's financial performance. One is struck by the fact that Amtrak does relatively well on the East and West coasts while most passenger services originating in Chicago appear to generate large losses. Even with the planned massive increase in mail-baggage-express revenues it is clear that Amtrak faces a huge challenge in becoming subsidy free by 2002)

<b>The Arkansas &amp; Missouri Railroad Company</b>
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**TV Cameras Installed on Locomotives**

The A & M recently held a media meeting in Springdale to announce the installation of TV cameras in their locomotives. The stated purpose of the camera installation is to

record instances of illegal grade crossings by cars and trucks. The video records can be used to record the license numbers of grade crossing violators. It will enable the railroad to have grade crossing violators receive citations. An incidental benefit will be

evidence that will establish blame more precisely in the event of lawsuits filed by parties involved in grade crossing accidents. The video will also help in the training on new engineers as they will be able to see problems and learn how to respond.

### **Graffiti Artists Target Springdale Yards**

The A & M yards in Springdale have been the target of graffiti artists recently. Both A & M and foreign line cars have been defaced with spray painted images. At least one individual has been arrested for involvement in the spray painting activity.

The graffiti takes a toll in at least three ways. There is the direct cost of repainting the affected box-cars at a cost of up to \$3,500 per car. Secondly there is an opportunity cost as the A & M loses per diem income while its own cars are out of service for repainting. If foreign line cars are involved the A&M is burdened with additional per diem charges. The railroad likely is incurring extra expense (night-time patrols) in seeking to thwart this problem.

Your Editor worked in New York City for many years. The subway was the target of graffiti artists in the 1980s and for several years almost every car was decorated. The subway authority finally ended the problem by using a special kind of expensive paint that resisted the artists. At least one of the artists became so well known that

his work was displayed in a Soho art gallery.

Northwest Arkansas, especially Springdale, recently has seen the arrival of youth gangs. Many of these gangs have roots in urban areas such as Southern California where the application of graffiti is part of the gang culture.

### **Passenger Service to Fort Smith Still a Possibility**

The railroad and the Fort Smith Convention and Visitors Bureau have had discussions concerning passenger service to the second largest city in Arkansas. The railroad is willing to provide such a service provided it can make a profit according to Larry Bouchet, EVP.

Passenger service to Fort Smith has been infrequent with the last being a railfan excursion that operated on March 28, 1998. It was billed as the final run to Fort Smith as the railroad had announced the end of all passenger service in 1998.

One obstacle to Fort Smith service has been the operation of the railroad bridge that crosses the Ar-

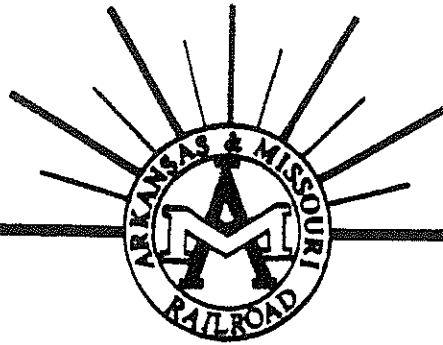
kansas River between Van Buren and Fort Smith.

The A & M did not control the bridge operation and had to wait hours for UPRR dispatchers in Waco, TX to respond. Recently the A & M obtained regulatory approval to operate the bridge without UP intervention. The new authority would require the railroad to install special on-board electronic equipment so that trainmen may control the bridge. The A & M has not set a date for installation of the new electronic equipment. (Source-AP-1-11-99)

### **1999 Tourist Season Brochure Delayed**

Your Editor has stopped by the A & M office to check on the 1999 tourist season brochure. I was told it would be ready in January, early February and finally March. This issue of the Scrambler contains the information sheet given to prospective riders. The discount schedule and payment procedure appears to be slightly different from 1998. (Please see next page for a copy of the sheet)

The tourist train operations for 1999 will be handled by the newly hired Lynn Bird.



## WELCOME ABOARD!!!!!!

Come and journey back to the Golden Age through our beautifully restored elegant & authentic turn-of-the-century passenger cars. We offer two different excursions through the Ozark Mountains. Both excursions take you through miles and miles of breathtaking scenery, through the Winslow Tunnel, and over three trestles.

### Excursion #1 – Springdale to Van Buren

2 ½ hour layover –  
Boards: 7:45a.m.      Departs: 8:00a.m.  
Returns: 4:00p.m.

### Excursion #2 – Van Buren to Winslow

Boards: 10:30a.m.      Departs: 10:45a.m.  
Returns: 1:00p.m.

### Regular Months

Weekday: \$29.00  
Weekend: \$34.00

### October Rates

Weekday: \$39.00  
Weekend: \$44.00

### Regular Months

Weekday: \$17.00  
Weekend: \$19.00

### October Rates

Weekday: \$22.00  
Weekend: \$25.00

### Group Rates for the 1999 Season are as follows on regularly scheduled trips:

15-49 People receive a 10% discount

50 or more receive a 15% discount

We generally give one complimentary ticket to every 40 people

(SORRY, NO DISCOUNTS IN OCTOBER)

Reservation Policy: A 10% deposit is required within seven (7) days of booking date.

The balance will be due in full, fourteen (14) days prior to the trip.

### Charters:

Available during our off season or days without normal scheduled excursions. Call for more information.

For Reservations or additional information, please call (800)687-8600 or (501)751-8600, Monday through Friday between 8:00a.m. and 5:00p.m.

### Hotel Referrals in the Springdale area:

Best Western (501)751-3100

Executive Inn (501)756-6101

### Hotel Referrals in the Van Buren area:

Super 8 (501)471-8888

Comfort Inn (501)474-2223

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING YOU AS OUR GUESTS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Thank you,

Arkansas & Missouri Railroad

## Surface Transportation Board ("STB")

The Arkansas & Missouri Railroad ("A & M") and the Kansas City Southern Railway ("KCS") are involved in a proceeding before the Surface Transportation Board that threatens the global supply of trees used to make paper. On October 20, 1998 A & M filed a waiver request with the STB that would allow the A & M to not file certain sensitive business information relating to a future adverse discontinuation proceeding against KCS. The transaction, as proposed by the A & M, would terminate overhead trackage rights enjoyed by KCS on about 5.5 miles of A & M trackage in Sebastian County, AR and Le Flore County, OK. The trackage runs from A&M MP 417(near the crossing of Navy Road in Fort Smith) to MP 422.5 located near Highway 540 in Fort Smith. The STB denied the waiver request as it lacked certain information. On November 5, 1998 KCS filed a petition requesting that the defective A & M waiver petition be denied. On November 17, 1998 the STB found that the A & M had not provided enough information to allow the STB to grant the requested waivers in full. The STB

directed the A & M to provide information as to the effect the substitution of A & M service for KCS would have on shippers located along the 5.5 mile segment. The KCS motion to dismiss the A & M petition was not granted and the A & M was directed to provide more information. On November 25, 1998 the A & M filed a petition for protective order covering sensitive commercial information (traffic data) in connection with the petition. The A & M protective order was approved by the STB on December 18, 1998. On November 30, 1998 the A & M actually filed the petition requesting termination of KCS overhead trackage rights. The A & M alleged that KCS had breached the terms of the trackage agreement by failing to properly maintain the line. The A & M further stated that there would be no adverse affect on shippers as A& M could provide the same level of bridge traffic service now furnished by KCS. The STB on December 14, 1998 then decided that the matter should be open to written comment from the public through January 14, 1999 with the A & M having an additional 15 days to respond

to written comments. On January 19, 1999 the STB denied a request by the A & M that would compel the KCS to respond to 46 interrogatories and 26 document production requests. The A & M demand that KCS pay expenses and legal fees was also denied. The earlier KCS request that an Administrative Law Judge be appointed to supervise the document production process was also denied by the STB.

This proceeding has yet to be decided by the Surface Transportation Board. The volume of paperwork and tone of the filings certainly suggests a strained relationship between the two railroads.

### IMPORTANT DUES REMINDER

As of February 8, 1999 some 22 members had paid their 1999 dues. Please note that all dues must be paid by March 1, 1999 to avoid suspension of your membership. This issue of the *Scrambler* will be the last for those folks who fail to pay their dues. Please send in your 1999 dues today. See the last page for dues details.

MOVIE OF THE MONTH

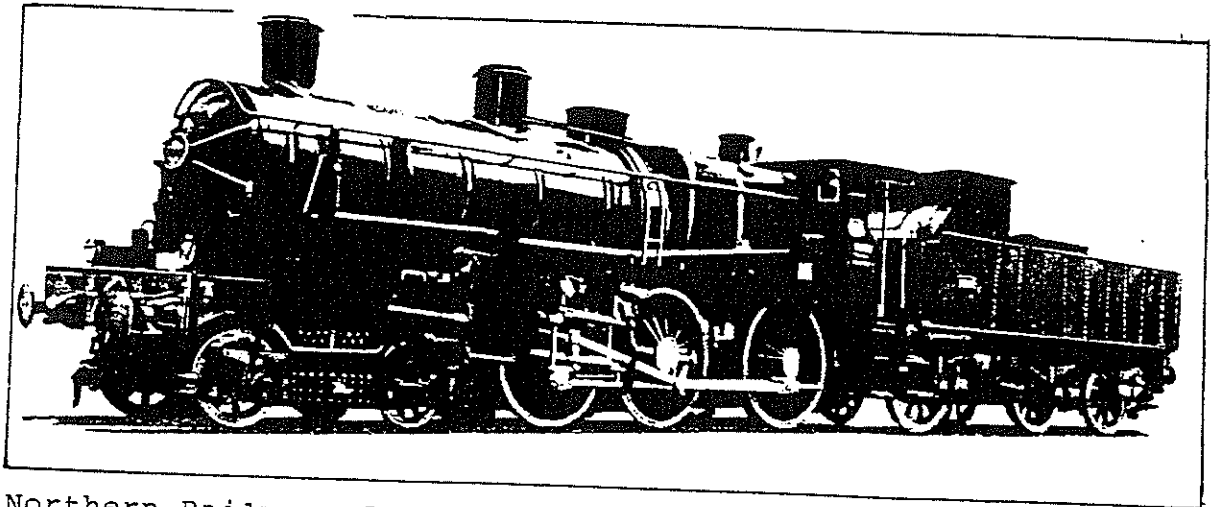
THE TRAIN

United Artists, 1964, 133 minutes, black & white

Burt Lancaster, Paul Schofield, Jeanne Moreau, Michael Simon, Wolfgang Preiss, Suzanne Flon

Early August, 1944. The Nazi occupiers are fleeing Paris with the approach of the Allied forces. A ruthless German colonel (Schofield) is trying to make off with a trainload of priceless French art treasures. And he almost succeeds save for efforts of the French civilian resistance, which includes many railroaders. Lancaster, apparently a division superintendent, can do just about anything from dispatching trains to casting and finishing main rod bearings to operating the locomotives. The railroad scenes are very good from main line to yards and shops--and with a couple of spectacular smash-ups of real locomotives. Underlying the whole are the selfless heroics of the resistance and the savage reprisals of some of the Germans.

The locomotives used were nearly obsolete Class 230 ten-wheelers. Note the French classified their steam locomotives by axle count rather than wheel count. Thus our 4-6-0 would be their 230. Below is illustrated a similar model to those in the movie.



Northern Railway of France superheated deGlehn-Bousquet compound (1908). Could take 100 tonne express trains up a 0.5% grade at 75 mph. The last was retired in 1968.

In 1923 Swiss composer Arthur Honegger (then living in Paris) wrote "Pacific 231" for symphony orchestra. It is quite evocative of a fast locomotive starting, running, and finally stopping. Some American writers (Freeman Hubbard, for one) thought this referred to the locomotive number, but we know better--- don't we?

**ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Chapter established November 1987

**1999 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

<b>President</b>	<b>GEORGE ALISON</b>	248-1269	21356 Bur Oak, Springdale, AR 72762
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>BILL MERRIFIELD</b>	751-7163	5278 Silent Grove Road, Springdale, AR 72762
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>RON ALLEN</b>	751-0761	2718 Jean Street, Springdale, AR 72762
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>BILL USSERY</b>	751-2873	112 Willella Place, Springdale, AR 72764
<b>National Director</b>	<b>BOB OSWALD</b>	521-9714	2511 Elizabeth Ave., Fayetteville, AR 72703
<b>Director</b>	<b>RAY TOLER</b>	751-7810	P.O. Box 6005, Springdale, AR 72766
<b>Director</b>	<b>LARRY CAIN</b>	751-1949	3413 Butterfield Coach, Springdale, AR 72764
<b>Director</b>	<b>GENE SCHMITZ</b>	443-4097	1645 Wedington Drive, Fayetteville, AR 72703
<b>Editor</b>	<b>TOM DUGGAN</b>	756-1901	15225 Lakewood Drive, Lowell, AR 72745

Meetings... ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS Chapter No. 158 (ABMT) Third Thursday of each month (except December dinner meeting). Meetings are held at the Shiloh Museum's General Store, 118 West Johnson, Springdale, Arkansas at 7:00 PM. Visitors are welcome at all meetings. Annual dues for 1999 are \$29 for individuals and \$31 for a family. 1999 dues are 50% less for members joining between June 1 and September 30. Please call 501-750-8165 for directions to the Shiloh Museum

Quiz for February 1999: The Narragansett Pier Railroad, a Rhode Island short line that lasted from 1876 to 1979, and the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad have a common characteristic. Can you name the characteristic?

**ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1303  
SPRINGDALE, AR 72765-1303  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Our February Meeting is on  
Thursday, **February 18**. Bob  
Oswald will present  
a program on the  
Railways of Scotland.  
Please plan on join-  
ing us.