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# The Scrambler

Volume 12, Number 8

March 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

February 18, 1999

The CHAPTER met for the regular monthly meeting at the Shiloh Museum's "Old General Store" at 7:00 PM on February 18, 1999. The meeting was called to order and President George Alison welcomed the members and guests. There was one guest present.

In the report from the officers, National Director/Membership Chairman Bob Oswald reported on NRHS grant applications (of which we have none pending), discounts on the White River Excursion Line to NRHS members. He also announced the scheduled Spring National Director's board meeting in Chicago. Bob stated he will not be able to attend the Chicago meeting due to future plans, and that anyone who would like to attend in his place may do so. Bob also reminded everyone that Carol Stark is in the Intensive Care Unit at Washington Regional Medical Center in Fayetteville. A Get-Well card will be passed around for signatures.

Vice-President Bill Merrifield reported that there is no program scheduled for March, Ron Allen agreed to present a program on train wrecks.

Treasurer Bill Ussery gave the treasurer's report. He also gave an updated report on the "Trains" magazine subscription for three area libraries. A motion was made to discontinue the three-year subscription to the area libraries because the Bella Vista library had not been included. A motion was made and seconded to subscribe to "Trains" for one year to include Bella Vista library. The motion was voted on and passed.

Scrambler Editor Tom Duggan had nothing to report for the editor's report.

Secretary Ron Allen had a letter from Clifton "Gene" Hull of the Arkansas Chapter in Little Rock concerning the old train bridge east of Monte Ne. The letter was passed to Bob Oswald to collect information for a reply.

The work of the special committee on "Trains" subscriptions was taken care of earlier. No other committees are active.

There was no old business to discuss.

Under new business the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad will run a special excursion train to Van Buren on Saturday March 27th. For more information, contact the A & M.

Bob Oswald announced that a free concert would be given by the Ozark Mountains British Brass Band at the First Methodist Church on February 28th at 3:00 PM.

Ray Toler announced the Tired Iron of the Ozarks Spring crank up on Apr 17-18 at the Gentry location. The admission to the Spring affair is free. The chapter has no plans for a booth at this meet. For more information contact Ray.

The Chapter will not have a booth at the annual Springfest. In the past we have not had much success at this event.

The Chapter will have a booth at the Featherfest; a [Springdale] Chamber of Commerce sponsored event scheduled for April 30 to May 2. The Chapter will order items to sell at this event. Help will be needed to set up and operate the booth during this period of time. If interested contact Tom Duggan or George Alison.

Some outside activities suggested for the Chapter included trips to the Fort Smith Trolley Museum, the Spoke Plant Railroad and field trips to other NRHS Chapters who operate excursion lines. These trips could be scheduled for Spring, early Summer or Fall.

The Chapter received a letter from Bob Terhune, Regional NRHS VP, thanking the Chapter for the donation to the Fort Smith Trolley Museum for assistance in saving and moving Frisco locomotive 4003.

Ray Toler reported on Chris Lord, formrrly of this Chapter but now with the Leatherstocking Chapter in Upstate New York. That Chapter has acquired an ALCO RS-1 similar to Arkansas & Missouri RR nos. 20 and 22. They plan to operate excursion trains on an abandoned section of line that their Chapter has acquired.

The business meeting was adjourned and Bob Oswald presented an interesting and informative program on the Railways of Scotland.

Ron Allen  
Secretary

### President's Observations for February Meeting

We had a good gathering for our February meeting at the General Store. Bob Oswald presented another of his outstanding programs on the Railways of Scotland

I was glad to see our Chapter renew the *Trains* library subscriptions for another year and also for including Bella Vista to the three we already donate to. Tom has worked hard on contacting the libraries for feedback on the magazine readership.

Although we are passing on Fayetteville Springfest again, we are going to attend Springdale Featherfest. It will be April 30, May 1-2 in downtown Springdale. The Featherfest Parade will be Saturday morning and I would like to see as many of our members join in, in conductor, engineer or whatever comes to mind. Anyone interested in manning the booth from 9 AM to 8 PM Saturday or 10 AM to 4 PM Sunday, or any parts in between please keep this on your agenda.

Ray's Tired Iron is April 17/18.

Ron Allen will have the March program and Uni and I will provide refreshments. A big thanks to Bill and Helen for the refreshments at the February meeting.

A last note, and one of sorrow, as our Chapter was greatly saddened upon hearing of the death of Carol Stark. I know we will help out Bob in any way that he should desire.

Your President

## Northwest Arkansas Railroad History-W.A. Hardister

W.A. Hardister was born in Vaughan in western Benton County in 1923. As a young man he and a friend attended a junior college located in Chillicothe, MO. He majored in business and took a course in Morse code. Upon graduation in 1942 he contacted the Frisco Division Superintendent in Fort Smith for an interview. An interview was subsequently held at the Rogers, Arkansas depot on a Sunday afternoon. Shortly thereafter he was offered a job as a relief operator to cover absences caused by sickness and vacation. His first job was at the Albion, OK depot where he relieved the agent for vacation. When W.A. arrived in Albion he found that the town had no hotel and ended up living in the agent's house. Albion did not have telegraph service but there was much to do handling the books and small package business. The Frisco had no training program for relief agents so everything was learned on the job. He then worked as a relief operator at several depots. While working at the Hackett depot (it originated 20-30 cars of coal a day) he learned that he had been called for a

pre-induction physical in Little Rock. He passed the physical and subsequently worked in Army Air Force communications until discharged in 1946.

In 1946 "Hardy"- his railroad name-returned to the Frisco as a relief operator. He and his new wife lived out of suitcases because he was the most junior employee on the relief operator extra board. He worked at numerous locations including the large division point at Hugo, OK. Hardy finally settled down in Fayetteville and got an apartment. A typical work week of six days might find Hardy working in nearby places such as Seligman, Fayetteville and Rogers with additional time spent in towns such as Wister, OK and Washburn, MO. When returning from Seligman on a southbound freight W.A. suffered a broken shoulder. As the train neared the depot in Fayetteville it failed to slow down so that Hardy could get off. The conductor urged Hardy to jump from the caboose on to the station platform. He jumped and hit the platform so hard that his shoulder was dislocated.

With the passage of time Hardy slowly climbed up the operator roster. He bid on an opening in Rogers that lasted six months. One big customer was a nursery that shipped large quantities of trees. Hardy had to count every one of the thousands and thousands of trees destined for shipment. Sometime in 1947-48 Hardy began work in Springdale as second trick operator. The job began at 2:00 PM and lasted until 10:00 PM. Springdale was a major depot as it had an agent, three operators and a clerk. By the late 1940s trains between Fort Smith and Monett, MO were dispatched from Fort Smith in nearby places such as Seligman, Fayetteville and Rogers with additional time spent in towns such as Wister, OK and Washburn, MO. When returning from Seligman on a southbound freight W.A. suffered a broken shoulder. As the train neared the depot in Fayetteville it failed to slow down so that Hardy could get off. The conductor urged Hardy to jump from the caboose on to the station platform. He jumped and hit the platform so hard that his shoulder was dislocated.

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Much of the operator's work was clerical. Detailed records had to be prepared

Northwest Arkansas Railroad History- W.A. Hardister (Continued)

on freight cars sent and received. Demurrage, the charge for using a railroad car beyond the grace period, had to be calculated and billed to shippers. Many operators and agents hated to do demurrage reports but Hardy found that he excelled in this important activity. The largest source of business was incoming shipment of feed grains used by the poultry industry. Springdale also received fall shipments of grapes from Cuba, MO and Rosetta, MO that were processed in the Welch plant. By the time Hardy worked in Springdale the huge shipments of strawberries were but a memory. Springdale in July and August originated a large volume of green wrapped tomatoes that were shipped in refrigerator cars. During the peak season up to twelve cars a day left Springdale. The shipments entailed a lot of work as the cars had to be iced at the Springdale Cold Storage facility before being shipped. Hardy also mentioned that the shipping platforms served as sleeping places for the Mexican crop harvest labor. He recalled picking his way down the shipping platform at night being careful to avoid stepping on sleeping bodies. Hardy's

hard work and loyalty earned him a promotion to Springdale agent in 1956-57.

During the postwar period Northwest Arkansas saw one round trip passenger train daily between Monett, MO and Fort Smith. The southbound train arrived in Springdale after 4:00 AM and Hardy recalled that he often unloaded the train's Railway Post Office car. He recalled that passenger business south of Springdale was sparse as there was little to stimulate passenger traffic bound for the Fort Smith area. Northbound passenger business remained stronger as many business men booked Pullman space for trips to St. Louis, Chicago and Westfield, NY (home office of Welch's).

The Railway Express Agency in Springdale had an office in the Springdale depot but operated separately from the railroad. The Western Union telegraph business was located away from the station. In smaller stations, for example Winslow or West Fork, the agent would handle the Western Union business on a commission basis.

The St. Paul, MN based Burlington Northern acquired the Frisco in November 1980. Relations between the Frisco employees in Northwest Arkansas and the new bosses initially were strained. However over time the people in St. Paul began to understand better the local ways of doing things. However the new management soon decided to close all depots in Northwest Arkansas. Springdale was selected to be the center from which employees would travel to shuttered depots in other towns. Hardy became the BN General Agent for Northwest Arkansas. In May 1985 Hardy retired. By that time there were computers and female operators at the BN's Springdale depot.

Hardy said that his secret was that he always enjoyed his work. This positive attitude made difficult tasks easier. Hardy's career began in the age of steam and ended in the computer age. Even today Mr. Hardister's home is filled with artifacts that reflect a man who loved and enjoyed his work. *(Interview by Scrambler Editor on February 23, 1999)*

# TIME TABLE.

## ARKANSAS & OKLAHOMA R. R.

In effect on and after Monday,  
March 20, 1899.

**EAST BOUND.**

**WEST BOUND.**

NO. 1	STATIONS	NO 2
5:30 a m	Lv Gravett.....	.....
5:50 a m	Ar Hiwassee.....	.....
6:00 a m	Ar Rice.....	.....
6:20 a m	Ar Bentonville. ....	.....
6:50 a m	Lv Bentonville..	Ar 8:10 a m
7:10 a m	Ar Rogers.....	Lv 7:45 a m
NO. 3	STATIONS	NO 4
10:30 a m	Lv Bentonville. .	Ar 11:45 a m
11:55 a m	Ar Rogers.....	Lv 11:20 a m
NO 5	STATIONS	NO 6
.....	Gravett .....Ar	7:30 p m
.....	Hiwassee.....Ar	7:10 p m
.....	Rice .....Ar	7:00 p m
.....	Bentonville. ....Lv	6:40 p m
4:15 p m	Lv Bentonville..	Ar 5:20 p m
4:35 p m	Ar Rogers. ....Lv	5:00 p m

Trains number 1, 2, 5 and 6 run daily; trains number 3 and 4 run daily, except Sunday

W. R. FELKER, G. P. A.  
J. M. BAYLESS, Gen'l Manager

This March 1899 Arkansas & Oklahoma Railroad (A & O) timetable is interesting for a number of reasons. The A & O reached Gravett in November 1898 but no service is shown beyond Gravett even though the line had crossed the Arkansas-Missouri line. A second mystery relates to the Rice station stop. Benton County never had a post office called Rice. However a Bentonville banker by the name of J.A. Rice was associated with both the Arkansas & Oklahoma RR and its predecessor the Bentonville Railroad that connected its namesake town to the Frisco at Rogers. It was common for railroads of this era to honor friends and benefactors by naming places for them.

Passengers taking No. 3 from Bentonville to Rogers must have been advised to bring a lunch as the schedule indicates a time of one hour and 25 minutes for the 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> mile run. This works out to a speed of 3.7 mile an hour. It appears to be a typographical error as the run normally took twenty minutes. The A & O trains operating to Rogers were timed so that they would connect with the three northbound and three southbound Frisco passenger trains. (Editor)



\$10 SHUTTLE RIDE - ROGERS - 4/30/99			
	DEPARTURE		ARRIVAL
ROGERS	7:00 PM	SPDL	7:30 PM
SPDL	11:00 PM	ROGERS	11:30 PM

\$10 SHUTTLE RIDES - ROGERS - 5/1/99				RETURN TIMES		
ROGERS	BOARDING	DEPART	SPDL-ARRIVAL	BOARDING	DEPART	RGS-ARRIVAL
#1	8:15 AM	8:30 AM	9:00 AM	11:45 AM	12:00 PM	12:30 PM
#2	10:45 AM	11:00 AM	11:30 AM	1:45 PM	2:00 PM	2:30 PM
#3	12:45 PM	1:00 PM	1:30 PM	3:45 PM	4:00 PM	4:30 PM
#4	2:45 PM	3:00 PM	3:30 PM	5:45 PM	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
#5	4:45 PM	5:00 PM	5:30 PM	7:45 PM	8:00 PM	8:30 PM
#6	6:45 PM	7:00 PM	7:30 PM	9:45 PM	10:00 PM	10:30 PM
#7	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:30 PM	11:15 PM	11:30 PM	12:00 AM

\$10 SHUTTLE RIDGES - ROGERS - 5/2/99				RETURN TIMES		
ROGERS	BOARDING	DEPART	SPDL-ARRIVAL	BOARDING	DEPART	RGS-ARRIVAL
#1	8:15 AM	8:30 AM	9:00 AM	9:15 AM	9:30 AM	10:00 AM
#2	10:15 AM	10:30 AM	11:00 AM	11:15 AM	11:30 AM	12:00 PM
#3	12:00 PM	12:30 PM	1:00 PM	1:15 PM	1:30 PM	2:00 PM

ROUND TRIP \$5 RIDES - SPRINGDALE - 5/1/99			
SPDL	BOARDING	DEPART	ARRIVAL-SPDL
#1	9:45 AM	10:00 AM	11:30 AM
#2	11:45 AM	12:00 PM	1:30 PM
#3	1:45 PM	2:00 PM	3:30 PM
#4	3:45 PM	4:00 PM	5:30 PM
#5	5:45 PM	6:00 PM	7:30 PM
#6	7:45 PM	8:00 PM	9:30 PM

ROUND TRIP \$5 RIDES - SPRINGDALE - 5/2/99			
SPDL	BOARDING	DEPART	ARRIVAL-SPDL
#1	9:45 AM	9:30 AM	11:00 AM
#2	11:45 AM	11:30 AM	1:00 PM
#3	1:45 PM	1:30 PM	3:00 PM

This is the schedule for train rides during the FeatherFest in Springdale. Of interest is the use of Rogers as a boarding point for many trains and late night service on May 1, 1999. (Editor)

MOVIE OF THE MONTH

RAILS INTO LARAMIE

Universal-International, 1964, 81 minutes

John Payne, Dan Duryea, Mari Blanchard, Barton McClain, Harry Shannon, Lee VanCleaf

Back in the days of double features at the neighborhood cinema, this would have been a Saturday afternoon second feature. It is a rootin', tootin', gun-slingin' Western with its share of barroom brawls, bushwacking, and a mushy ending. The difference is that we see a lot more horses of iron than of flesh and blood.

Entrepreneur Duryea, proprietor of the town's hotel, saloon, and gambling palace, keeps sabotaging the railroad so as to maintain a large clientele of track builders. Enter trouble-shooter Payne (predictably an old army buddy of Duryea's) to put a stop to the troubles and get construction restarted. When the town fathers ask why only one marshal has been sent,

Payne's response is "There's only one town, isn't there?" (Lifted from Texas Ranger lore: "One riot, one Ranger!" attributed to Ranger Captain W. J. McDonald.)

The railroad was the K. T. & C. (for what?). If it was Laramie, it was the Union Pacific, of course. The Technicolor looks like it was shot through a blue filter. "Rails into Laramie" rates a slightly enthusiastic "Ho hum."

At left is the cover of Union Pacific Time Table No. 22 of Dec. 5, 1869. Express No. 1 took 27 hours, 45 minutes from Omaha to Laramie (11 hours, 52 minutes in December 1969). And the fare was \$43.00 in 1869.

Also in 1869 all Omaha-Laramie trains ran on "Omaha Time", Laramie-Ogden trains ran on "Laramie time", and the Central Pacific's Ogden-Sacramento trains ran on "Sacramento time". This was before Standard Time was introduced (by the railroads) on November 18, 1883.

RC0

1869 **UNION PACIFIC** 1870

**RAIL ROAD**


SHORTEST ROUTE  
CALIFORNIA  
CHINA  
JAPAN

**UNION PACIFIC**  
RAILROAD

BRANCHES  
PLATTE VALLEY  
OMAHA

C. G. HAMMOND, Gen'l Superinten't, OMAHA, NEBRASKA	S. H. H. CLARK, Supt. Platte Divis'n, OMAHA, NEBRASKA
C. W. MEAD, Ass't Gen'l Superinten't, OMAHA, NEBRASKA	C. H. CHAPPEL, Supt. Lodge Pole Div. CHICKEN W. T.
J. R. NICHOLS, Assistant Superinten't, OMAHA, NEBRASKA	L. FILLMORE, Supt. Laramie Divis'n, LARAMIE, W. T.
F. COLTON, General Ticket Agent, OMAHA, NEBRASKA	E. W. WEED, Supt. Utah Division, WASATCH, UTEHA
H. BROWNSON, Gen'l Freight Agent, Omaha, Neb.	

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carry passengers from the  
**PACIFIC TO THE ATLANTIC COAST IN 5-9 DAYS!**

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

Chapter established November 1987

**1999 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President	<b>GEORGE ALISON</b>	248-1269	21356 Bur Oak, Springdale, AR 72762
Vice President	<b>BILL MERRIFIELD</b>	751-7163	5278 Silent Grove Road, Springdale, AR 72762
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National Director	<b>BOB OSWALD</b>	521-9714	2511 Elizabeth Ave., Fayetteville, AR 72703
Director	<b>RAY TOLER</b>	751-7810	P.O. Box 6005, Springdale, AR 72766
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Editor	<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

Answer for February 1999 Quiz: The Narragansett Pier Railroad, a Rhode Island short line that lasted from 1876 to 1979, and the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad have a common characteristic. The Narragansett Pier Railroad was purchased in 1966 by J. Anthony Hannold. In 1986 an investor group led by Tony Hannold purchased the former Frisco Fort Smith subdivision and renamed it the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad.

**ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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SPRINGDALE, AR 72765-1303  
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The Scrambler

The Thursday, **March 18** meeting features a video from Ron Allen on train wrecks. Ron assures members and guests that they will have a smashing good time with this program.