

# The Scrambler

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Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

pinions 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

August 19, 1999

The Chapter met for the regular monthly meeting at the Shiloh Museum's Old General Store at 7:00 on August 19, 1999. The meeting was called to order by President George Alison and the members and guests were welcomed. There were 16 members and one guest present.

The minutes of the last meeting as published in the "Scrambler" were approved as published.

In the report from officers, National Director/Membership Chairman Bob Oswald reported on a new member presented for membership. The membership was voted on and accepted for membership. The new member's name is not available to the secretary at this time.

Vice-President Bill Merrifield reported on the up-coming program for September and the need for programs for the October and November meetings.

Treasurer Bill Ussery gave the treasurer's report. A copy is on file with the secretary's records.

Editor Tom Duggan reported the need for articles for the "Scrambler". No special committee reports.

Tom reported on progress on working with A&M gift shop

Ray reported at the Business Expo that the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad plans to continue running the excursion trains. Ray reported on the "Tired Iron" show on Saturday, September 11, 1999. A motion was made and seconded to have a booth at the show. The motion was voted on and passed.

Tom Duggan reported on a Railroad Timetable show and sale at Little Rock on Saturday 21st of August.

The Chapter agreed to have the annual Christmas dinner at Fred's Hickory House on December 16.

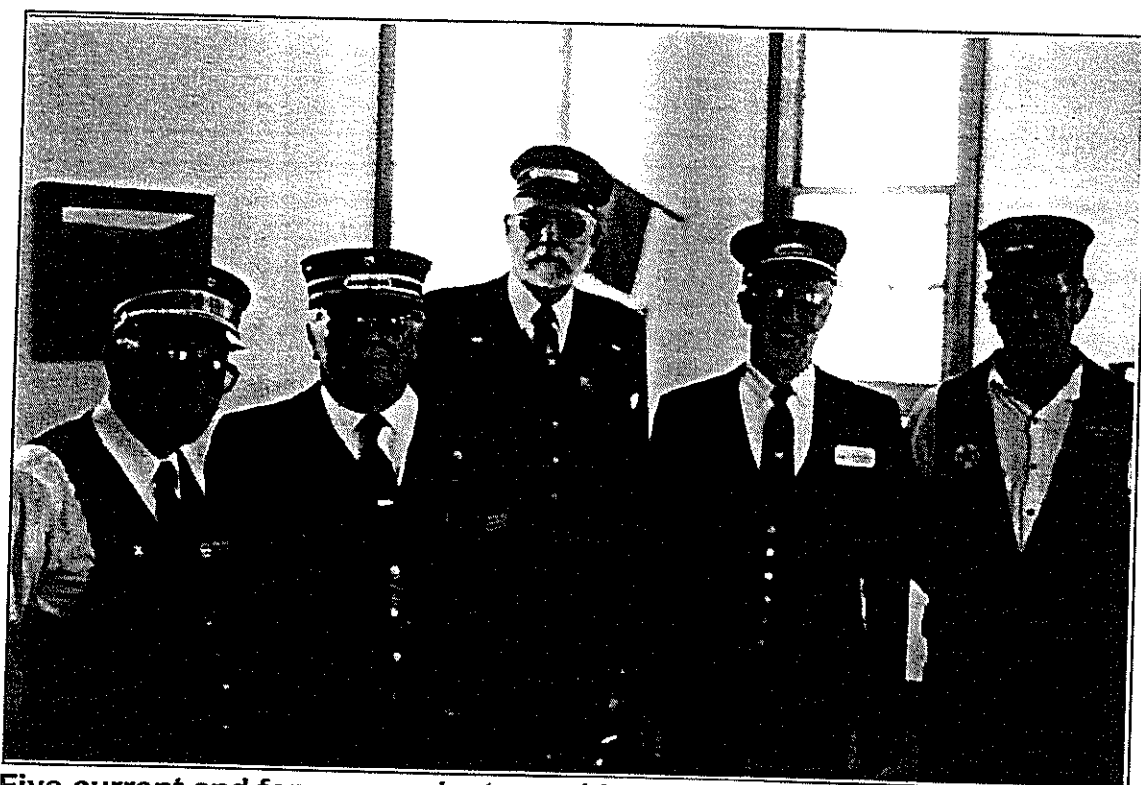
The meeting adjourned and Bob Oswald presented an interesting and informative program on his recent trip to Switzerland.

Ron Allen  
Secretary  
Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter  
National Railway Historical Society

Opening of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad Gift Shop  
and Museum on June 15, 1999



Passenger Service Manager Lynn Bird prepares to cut the ribbon opening the new facility. Chapter member Eugene Schmitz stands in the middle. (Editor photo)



Five current and former conductors added style to the opening ceremony. They are (left to right) Tom Ross, Chapter members Eugene Schmitz, Bob Oswald, and Bill Ussery, and Gary Wellnitz. (Editor photo)

## Two Collisions in One Day

### **Arkansas & Missouri Railroad**

Saturday, August 28 was observed as Frisco Festival day in Rogers, Arkansas. The A & M offered excursion rides from Rogers to Springdale as part of its marketing plan. The day was not without incident as the train was involved in two accidents. The first accident took place at about 11:00 AM when the train struck the trailer of a tractor trailer at the Post Road crossing in southern Rogers. The truck had stopped on the train tracks as there is a stop sign at the intersection of Post Road and Route 71B. The distance between the stop sign and the tracks is not great and any large vehicle will end up on the tracks if stopped for the stop sign. The train, pulling two cars, hit the back of the trailer truck. No injuries were recorded. No citations were given at the scene of the accident.

A reporter from radio station KURM-790 was covering the Frisco Festival. He went to the Post Road accident scene and spoke to several individuals including a person who said he was the engineer. The engineer then told the reporter he was on private property and told him to leave the area. The reporter apparently was annoyed by the response as he broadcast the engineer's tape recorded comments on the KURM news reports throughout the day.

The Post Road incident was an accident waiting to happen. Your Editor, a Rogers School District driver, is not allowed to cross Post Road in a bus, loaded or empty, because of the short distance between the tracks and the stop sign. The only solution for westbound long vehicles on Post would be a stop line some 50 feet from the tracks.

The second accident took place in

downtown Lowell at about 1:30 PM at the Monroe Street intersection. A young man in a pickup pulled out in front of the southbound train. The impact caused the truck to strike another vehicle. Of the four truck passengers involved three went to the emergency room in the Northwest Medical Center in nearby Springdale. A third vehicle was struck by debris from the pickup. The injuries were not thought to be serious. The pickup driver received a ticket for failure to yield at a stop sign. He was lucky to have had nothing more than a ticket and an injury.

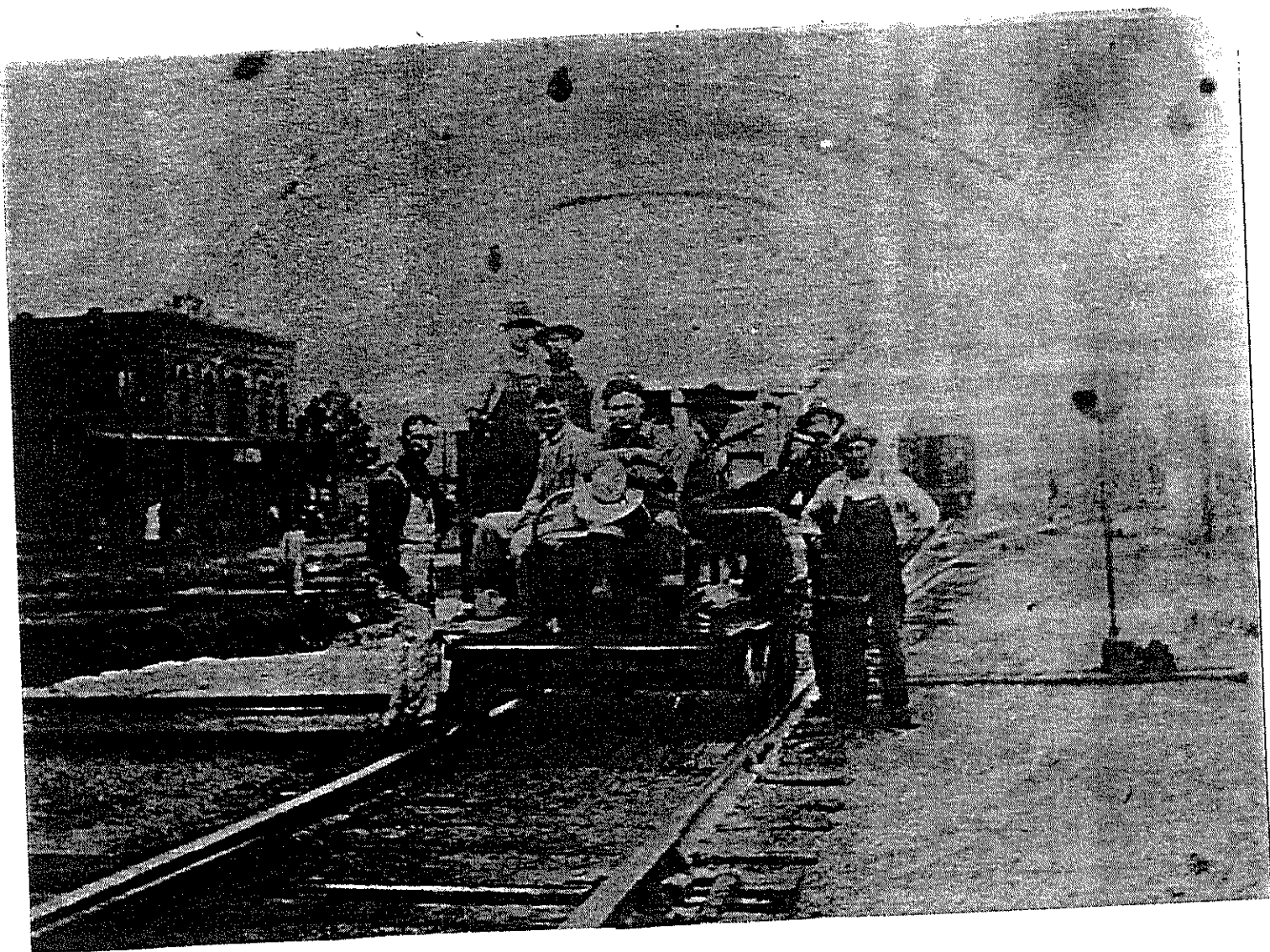
KFSM-TV later sent a crew to the Monroe Street area to obtain neighborhood reaction to the accident. One woman reported that she was upset by the trains operating through Lowell at 70 miles an hour! I do hope the TV crew had a chance to speak with someone from the railroad about the incorrect information. I believe the Lowell segment has a track limit of 40 miles an hour. A well-informed Chapter member advises that the maximum allowed speed on the A & M is 49 miles an hour.

### **Sunday Excursions business very slow**

As of mid-August the A & M had operated a grand total of two Sunday excursions according to Lynne Bird, Passenger Service Manager. The service has been slow to catch on and the limited advertising budget may be a factor.

### **Kansas City Chapter to ride A & M**

The Topeka Chapter newsletter reports that the KC Chapter will ride the A & M on Saturday, October 16 as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kansas City Chapter.

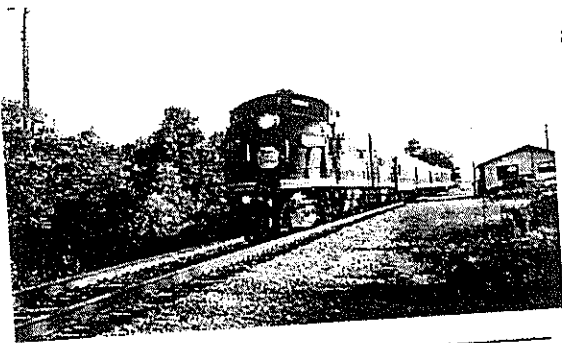


This photo comes to us by courtesy of Dorothy Duggin of Chester, Arkansas. The man standing behind is Robert Duggin, Dorothy's grandfather who died in 1948. This picture shows a Frisco track maintenance gang at Chester, Arkansas sometime in the 1920s-1930s. Your Editor cannot see any sign of protection as there is a passenger car in the rear of the picture.

The building on the left, built 1887-1888, still stands today. The Chester House is today an antique shop and a bed and breakfast. Chester was a helper engine station on the Frisco and at one time had a turntable and roundhouse for the helper engines. In 1927 Chester saw six passenger trains daily as the Frisco's mainline between St. Louis and Texas ran between Monett, MO and Paris TX. Sometime in 1927/1928 the Frisco made arrangements to operate its Texas bound trains over the easier and faster track of the MKT. Passenger train service declined to one southbound and one northbound train that prevailed until the cessation of passenger service in 1965. Dorothy Duggin told me that the Chester roundhouse ceased operations in 1948 as the father of a friend lost his job due to the discontinuance.

Thanks to Dorothy Duggin (no relation to the Editor) for sharing this photo with the ABMT members.

# 2000 ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB CALENDAR



The Arkansas Railroad Club's calendars for 2000 are ready for shipping and if you buy two or more, you'll receive a reduction in price (\$7 for one, \$6 each for two or more). This year the calendar includes 14 black and white photos on glossy paper. Railroads in the calendar and the people who donated the photos include: St. Louis & North Arkansas, 1901 (Gene Hull); White River Railway, 1998 (John Jones); Warren & Saline River, 1985 (Peter Smykla, Jr); Little Rock & Western (Carl Lancaster); Union Pacific, 1997 (John Jones); Missouri Pacific PA, 1955 (Gene Hull); L&N on the MoPac, 1980 (Keith R. White); Ashley, Drew & Northern, 1946 (Russell Tedder); Kansas City Southern, 1996 (P. L. Moseley); Rock Island camelback, unknown date (Gene Hull); Cotton Belt, 1938 (P. B. Wooldridge); Reader Railroad, 1968 (Gene Hull); Burlington Northern, 1995 (Tom Shircliff); Arkansas Midland Christmas Train, 1998 (Arkansas Midland Railroad, Brian Holtz).

Mail the coupon below to: Calendar, Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. Calendars are \$7 for one, \$6 for two or more, which includes postage.

July 2000							1
2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						

## ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB MEMBERSHIP/CALENDAR ORDER FORM

Membership renewal  New Member  Change of Address  2000 Calendar (how many? \_\_\_\_\_)

Send membership renewal, calendar order, application, change of address, etc. to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151 North Little Rock AR 72119. Phone: 501-758-1340; Fax: 501-758-4301. e-mail: [ken.z.rw@ix.netcom.com](mailto:ken.z.rw@ix.netcom.com)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Your birthday (optional - no year needed) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: (last) \_\_\_\_\_ (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (init) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership dues information:

Membership: \$20.00 per year, Arkansas Railroad Club only; \$37.00 per year if you join or renew National Railway Historical Society membership through our Club. Dues are payable/due by January 1 of each year. If we don't have your dues by March 1, you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

Membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club entitles you to a membership card and the monthly *ARKANSAS RAILROADER* newsletter. Meetings are held monthly, except December, on the second Sunday of the month. We usually meet at 2 p.m. Interesting programs are presented each month and refreshments (cookies, sandwiches) are served. We are a non-profit organization and member of the NRHS. Officers are listed in each newsletter.

ACELA Delayed:

**CONSORTIUM NOTIFIES  
AMTRAK OF MANUFACTURING  
DELAY ON HIGH-SPEED  
TRAIN**

WASHINGTON, D.C --The Consortium of Bombardier and ALSTOM -manufacturers of the Acela Express high-speed trains - recently informed Amtrak that they will be unable to provide a thoroughly tested trainset and high-horsepower locomotive in the fall of 1999 to ensure high-speed rail revenue service by the end of this year.

The Consortium attributes the delay in part to the need for additional testing and refinements. Excessive wheel wear has been exhibited during testing of the equipment at the Transportation Technology Center in Pueblo, Colorado. However, the train has demonstrated its ability to achieve top speed.

"This delay is unfortunate but not unusual when new technology, although proven, is being introduced in a new environment," said Jacques Lapar, President of Bombardier Transportation, North America. "The trainset needs additional testing to validate the high-speed rail system, which will benefit the whole program on the long term," he added.

Amtrak has been working on an aggressive schedule to complete the three major elements of the high-speed rail program - upgrading the Northeast Corridor's infrastructure, installing a catenary system to electrify the New York to Boston route, as well as introducing the new high-speed trainsets. The infrastructure work will be substantially complete and the complex electrification work and catenary testing is on target for December.

"Nobody wants delays, and we've worked hard to avoid them," said Amtrak President and CEO, George Warrington. "We are faced with a choice - cut corners to get the train out, or get it right the first time. I am absolutely committed to making sure this train is right, and meets our standards of excellence. We will not disappoint our customers. In fact, we plan to take advantage of the other completed improvements to introduce faster service, more seats, and refurbished trains in January between New York and Boston as part of our Acela Regional service."

This delay will prevent the introduction of the high-speed trainsets as originally planned. The Consortium has set a revised, tentative delivery timeframe of spring 2000. However, Amtrak will not announce a final service launch date for 60 days, when the manufacturers will be in a position to commit to a new delivery schedule.

Both Amtrak and the Consortium are concentrating their efforts on solutions for resolving the outstanding issues and meeting Amtrak's standards of excellence in the most timely manner.

Amtrak also announced today that the corporation will launch new Acela Regional electric service between New York and Boston in January. With two roundtrips daily, Acela Regional will offer travel times of less than four hours and refurbished trains with interior designs similar to Acela Express. Amtrak will add 800 more seats to the route between Boston and New York, and offer improved travel times on all trains on the route of up to an hour and 40 minutes better than today's schedules.

Source: Amtrak Press Release *via Friends of Amtrak*

MOVIE OF THE MONTH

FRANK AND JESSE

Trimark Pictures 1995 106 minutes

Rob Lowe, Bill Paxton, Randy Travis, Dana Wheeler-Nicholson,  
Alexis Arquette, William Atherton.

This is a bad movie. I mean BAAAD! It's not really a railroad movie, but it was filmed here in northwest Arkansas and has a few railroad scenes. The acting is mediocre and the production values even worse. A couple of examples: Chester, on the A&M RR, was dolled up to look like Gallatin, Missouri, on December 7, 1869, where the James gang held up the Davies County Bank. The boys run out of the bank after murdering cashier John W. Sheets, hop on their horses and gallop down the (A&M) track. As the camera pans around, low and behold, we see wires, poles and step-down transformers! Their first actual train robbery was of a CRIP express at Adair, Iowa, where they gleaned only \$2,000 but managed to kill engineer John Rafferty. In the film the railroad is identified as the Rock Island Central, but the 2-6-0 locomotive clearly shows "ES&NA" and later the letterboards on the coaches read "Arkansas & Missouri Railroad"! There is more, but that's enough. In one scene the gang is supposed to overcome the conductor and steal his uniform to gain access to the coaches. For eight marvelous seconds one of my favorite A&M conductors is seen writhing on the baggage room floor, clad in boots, cap, and long-handled underwear! "Frank and Jesse" never made it to the big screen, but has been available in the video stores. Don't waste your money!

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THE JAMES GANG TRAIN ROBBERIES

7-21-73	Adair, Iowa (CRIP)	\$ 2,000	Engineer killed (derailment)
1-31-74	Gadshill, Missouri (SLIM&S)	22,000	
12-12-74	Muncie, Kansas (UP)	25,000	
7- 7-75	Otterville, Missouri (MoP)	75,000	
10- 7-79	Glendale, Missouri (C&A)	35,000	
7-15-81	Winston, Missouri (CRIP)	600	Passenger, engineer killed
8- 7-81	Glendale, Missouri(C&A)	1,500	
	Total from trains:	\$161,100	And three lives

RCO 9-99

**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
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<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

**1999 Chapter Christmas Dinner**

Dinner Chairman Bob Hofer has reserved a room at Fred's Hickory Inn in Bentonville for the Chapter Christmas dinner. The date is Thursday, December 16 and the time is 6:00 PM. Bob advises that this year's menu will include options for vegetarians. Please be sure to mark your calendar now. Please watch this space for more dinner news.

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

**The September Meeting takes place on  
Thursday, September 17 at 7:00 PM.  
Bill Merrifield will present the program.**

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