

GREAT PLAINS DISPATCH

The Official Newsletter of the Great Plains Transportation Museum
and the Wichita Chapter National Railway Historical Society

JULY 2011

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LOOKING BACK

By Michael M. Bartels



40 YEARS AGO

The July 2, 1971, Wichita Eagle-Beacon pictured old brick pavement with scars of streetcar tracks on North Market Street, which is being taken out prior to repaving. The July 8, 1971, issue had an article on early electric lights, with a photo of a streetcar in the snow near Main and Douglas in the winter of 1893-94. July 17th's had a feature on the Wichita Model Railroad Club. July 24th's looked at rough railroad crossings in the city.

60 YEARS AGO

County commissioners approved construction of a railroad crossing across Oliver in the vicinity of the Boeing plants to serve the new air base. (Wichita Eagle, July 15, 1951)

70 YEARS AGO

The July 27, 1941, Wichita Beacon had an ad for the Arkansas Valley Railway, with a picture of diesel No. 92. (*AVI 92 now sits unused in Youngstown, OH - Editor*)

Effective Aug. 3, 1941, running time of the Rock Island Rocket between Kansas City and Dallas will be shortened approximately two hours. (The side trip from El Reno to Oklahoma City was eliminated, replaced by

through coaches handled on a connecting train.) (Wichita Beacon, July 31, 1941)

Twenty-five new buses were coming to the Wichita Transportation Co., 15 Twin Coach and 10 GM, making a total fleet of 110 coaches. (Wichita Beacon, July 31, 1941)

80 YEARS AGO

Howard W. Patten, manager of the Wichita Transportation Co. and former superintendent of the Wichita Railroad & Light Co., resigned to take a position in Salina with a gas line owned by Illinois Power & Light Co., former owner of the Wichita Railroad & Light Co. (Wichita Eagle, July 2, 1931)

New streetcar route combinations and faster schedules took effect July 19, 1931. (Wichita Eagle, July 5, 19, 1931; Wichita Beacon, July 19, 1931)

Rock Island announced July 7, 1931, it planned to convert all 231 locomotives on lines south and west of Kansas City to oil. (Wichita Eagle, July 8, 1931)

Missouri Pacific put new 1900-class 2-8-4 freight engines in use last week between Wichita and Fort Scott, the heaviest ever used on the Wichita Division. (Wichita Eagle, July 12, 1931)

The July 13, 1931, Beacon pictured a special train leaving the MoPac depot with Midian Shrine members en route to Cleveland.

The new \$2 million Frisco-Rock Island passenger station at Oklahoma City was dedicated July 15, 1931. (Frisco Employee's Magazine, August 1931)

90 YEARS AGO

The local streetcar barns are busy this week overhauling four open air cars for service in the Park district. Besides this, they are just completing the job of repainting the Birney Safety Cars. Also in the shop was a streetcar heavily damaged in a collision with a MoPac switcher. (Wichita Beacon, July 3, 1921)

An unusual accident occurred July 6, 1921, when a Fairmount streetcar deposited itself directly across the junction of tracks at Main and Douglas and tied up the entire system. Twenty-one cars were kept waiting. (Wichita Eagle, July 7, 1921)

The Orient shops, closed since June 14th, will reopen July 5th. (Wichita Beacon, July 3, 1921)

The July 17, 1921, Beacon said the Orient shops were working at full ca-

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**JULY 29 IS THE DATE FOR THE NRHS CHAPTER MEETING.
ED CONRAD WILL PRESENT A PROGRAM ON THE ROCK ISLAND.**



**THE MISSION OF
THE GREAT PLAINS
TRANSPORTATION
MUSEUM**

To be *THE* Railroad Museum
Of Kansas.

Dedicated to record and exhibit the importance of railroad transportation in the human, agricultural, commercial and industrial heritage of Wichita, Kansas and the Great Plains.

To showcase that heritage with an "Action Display" of rail equipment operation. Giving visitors an exciting learning experience through motion, set in a unique, historic and scenic urban location.

To enhance the action display with significant and appropriate railroad locomotives, rolling stock, equipment and structures; through interpretive displays, dioramas, exhibits and media; and educational and community programs.



The GREAT PLAINS DISPATCHER is the official monthly newsletter of the Wichita Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. and the Great Plains Transportation Museum, Inc. Members receive the DISPATCHER as part of their membership. All material submitted for publication should be submitted by the 25th of the month for publication in the next months DISPATCHER. Submissions may be sent to the editor at: editor@gptm.us, 316-744-7259 or 700 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67202-3506

JULY NRHS MEETING

The regular meeting of the Wichita Chapter NRHS will not be this Friday, the 15th. It will be on the last Friday, the 29th.

This will be the Kansas City Chapter exchange program and the topic will be on the Rock Island. Ed Conrad will be the presenter.

FUTURE MEETINGS

July 29: KC Ch. Exchange Program about the Rock Island on July 29. *Please note that this is a change from the normal third Friday.*

August: Platform Meeting, location TBA

September: Annual Banquet Please contact Harvey for suggestions about where to hold the banquet. Some possibilities to consider: Wichita: Newton; or Florence at the Harvey House Museum.

October: Sam Andrews, presenter. "Trackside At The Mill 1981-1998". This would cover while Sam worked for the Cargill Mill in Newton.

November: Bob Walz, presenter. The title is "The title is Santa Fe Depots: Form and Function."

December: Annual Slide-Free-for-All
If you have a presentation you would like to assist with, contact Harvey Koehn.

OTHER EVENTS

July 21-24 – Shawnee Co. 4-H Fair, KS Expo Center, Topeka. No admission, Thurs 12-9, Fri-Sat. 9-9, Sun. 9-4

Aug. 6 – Turkey Creek Division, MCoR NMRA Meet, Lenexa Community Center, 13420 Oak, Lenexa, 8-3, model & photo contests, swap tables, railroad groups; 3:30-9:00 layout tours. Info: Robert Jefferis, jeffbobj@everestkc.net

Aug. 20 – Topeka Model Railroad at Great Overland Station, 701 N. Kansas, Topeka, 9:30-4:30

Sept. 17 – Frisco Convention, Frisco Bldg, Springfield, MO. Info: Ron Williams, rjwilliams1@mchsi.com

Sept. 24-25 – Western Kansas Train Show, Ellis Co. Fairgrounds, Hays. Sat. 9-5, Sun. 11-4. Info: Kevin Keeler, klk@mchsi.com

Oct. 22-23 - Two Depot Model Train show, Kingman Armory. Sat. 9-5, Sun. 11-4. Info: Anita Cheatum, sfdepot@sbcglobal.net

**FROM THE JULY 1961 ISSUE
OF THE DISPATCHER:**

"26 members and guests made the Dodge City excursion over the Santa Fe Railway last July 1. A special car, No. 3001, was put on train no. 7 at Newton and pulled to Dodge City in high fashion. A hundred & fifty three miles in two hours and five minutes gave the railfans on board a real thrill."

SANTA FE CREW ARRESTED

By Sam Andrews

Wichita police responded to a report of lawless activity of a Santa Fe track crew in September, 1888 and placed them under arrest for the violation of working on a Sunday. The trackmen were working on a industry spur in north Wichita when confronted by the law and were taken to police headquarters to explain their actions.

After pleading that the work was an emergency and needed to be finished as soon as possible, the men were released without bail and allowed to return to work and complete the project.

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capacity. No. 503 had been rebuilt and sent to Texas and 10 other engines awaited work. Private car No. 100 was being put in commission for a trip to Kansas City.

A new engine, No. 2320, was at the MoPac roundhouse. After being fixed up it will be sent to Conway Springs. (Wichita Beacon, July 10, 1921)

An ordinance was passed July 12, 1931, banning jitney buses from car line streets. Superintendent H.W. Patten of the Wichita Railroad & Light Co. said because of the jitneys it had to lay off 30 percent of its former working force. The 25 bus owners organized to fight it. (Wichita Eagle, July 9, 10, 12, 13, 1921)

The July 17, 1921, Eagle had a long article about Wichita's transportation problems. The first bus appeared in Wichita in 1916. There were now 25 different proprietors with 36 buses in service and more than 50 men in the business. The Wichita Railroad & Light Co. is said to operate 57 cars and

employ around 200. For the year ending June 30, 1920, streetcars averaged 35,600 passengers a day. Jitney operators estimate local buses now carry about 15,000 a day.

R.B. Campbell says the estimated cost of the proposed Arkansas Valley Interurban extension to Salina is \$40,000 per mile or a total of over \$2 million. (Wichita Eagle, July 12, 1921)

Some wholesalers have urged the Orient to return to its former freight and passenger depot on East Douglas, but General Manager A. DeBernardi says this is unlikely, as its contract with the Midland Valley has two years to run. The Orient uses the Midland Valley passenger and freight office while the Midland Valley uses the Orient roundhouse and shops and the Orient handles all switching and repairs to rolling stock. (Wichita Eagle, July 15, 1921)

Rock Island was making improvements at Cline, including installation of a new tank at the roundhouse for storing treated water and laying a new

base for the turntable. (Wichita Beacon, July 31, 1921)

TRAIN CARRYING BOEING 737 FUSELAGES DERAILED BY TORNADO

By Fred Tefft

On Monday, June 21, BNSF train H-KCKPAS9 was hit by a tornado and derailed near Hamilton, Nebraska. The train included fuselage and part cars from Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita to Boeing's Renton, Washington facility. There were 3 737 fuselages with idler cars and two cars with 747 parts.

Damage to the fuselages was minor. One showed no visible damage, one minimal, and the third had been punctured by a coupler from an adjoining idler car. The cars were forwarded to Renton for evaluation and repair. The 747 parts did not fare as well. They went to the Everett plant for salvage.

On June 3, 2011 John Cook spotted this train for the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run. Engine UP2001 and UP4924 had the honor of carrying the torch from McConnell AFB to Wichita Union Station, where runners from Wichita PD and Sedgwick County Sheriff carried the torch on the next leg. *Photo by John Cook*



With wildfires having closed the line over Raton, Amtrak Train #4 passes through Wellington, Ks on June 13, 2011. *Photo by Keel Middleton*

July 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Museum Open Work Day
3 Museum Open	4	5 Evening Work Session	6	7	8	9 Museum Open Work Day
10 Museum Open	11	12 Evening Work Session	13	14	15	16 Museum Open Work Day
17 Museum Open	18	19 Evening Work Session	20 GPTM BOD	21	22	23 Museum Open Work Day
24 Museum Open	25	26 Evening Work Session	27	28	29 June NRHS Meeting	30 Museum Open Work Day
31 Museum Open						

GREAT PLAINS
DISPATCHER
 Great Plains Transportation
 Museum
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 Return Service Requested