

GREAT PLAINS DISPATCH

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

JANUARY 2013

Volume X II

Number I



LOOKING BACK

By Michael M. Bartels



20 YEARS AGO

Central Kansas Railway began operation of 887 miles of former Santa Fe trackage in Kansas and Oklahoma on Jan. 1, 1993. It was owned by Broe Cos. of Denver, whose Chicago West Pullman Transportation Co. operated the Kansas Southwestern Railway on 298 miles of leased Missouri Pacific trackage. KSW was merged into the Central Kansas Railway in April 2000. Watco Cos. acquired the 890-mile road and began operating it as the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad June 30, 2001. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 5, 1993)

40 YEARS AGO

Katy abandoned 225.3 miles from Altus to Forgan, Okla., and its 105-mile Beaver, Meade & Englewood subsidiary out to Keyes, Okla. Stations were closed and an embargo was effective Jan. 15, 1973. The last BM&E run was Jan. 10th and the last cleanup train reached Altus Jan. 26, 1973. ("Katy Northwest," by Don Hofsommer)

The Jan. 21, 1973, Wichita Eagle-Beacon had an article about Leonida's Restaurant in the Newton depot, formerly the Harvey House. Fred Harvey ceased operating it in 1957. Dennis Leonida has operated it the past nine years.

70 YEARS AGO

The Victory "skip stop" system will go into effect on the West Douglas bus route Jan. 11th. It's already in effect on College Hill and East Kellogg. It took effect on East Central and South Main Jan. 18th. A.J. Cleary, vice president and general manager, announced Jan. 9th that bus tokens will be replaced with a 5-cent cash fare. Tokens will not be sold after mid-

night Jan. 10th but will be accepted as long as any are outstanding. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 10, 17, 1943)

The city traffic commission recommended the number of passengers per bus be limited, some safety device be installed to prevent passengers from crowding around the driver and obscuring his vision and loaders be assigned to loading zones in the business district during rush hours to ensure orderly loading and limit the number of passengers per bus. About 20 buses were idle due to lack of drivers. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 20, 1943)

Effective Feb. 1st, the monthly mileage permitted by the Office of Defense Transportation for buses purchased in late 1941 and early 1942 will be increased from 2,000 miles to 3,000 miles. The new buses carry the letters "O.D.T." and identifying number. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 31, 1943)

80 YEARS AGO

Work is to begin this month on an overpass over the Santa Fe tracks north of Wichita, eliminating Dead Man's Crossing. Estimated cost is \$150,000, half to be borne by the Santa Fe and the remainder by federal aid funds for relief work. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 14, 1933)

Missouri Pacific announced yesterday the consolidation of the Joplin and White River divisions with the Wichita Division Feb. 1st, with headquarters in Wichita. At 1,632 miles it will be the largest MoPac division. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 29, 1933)

A "friendly receivership" was appointed for the Arkansas Valley Interurban Jan. 28, 1933, on petition of John Nicholson of Newton, a stockholder. Receivers are War-

ren E. Brown, first vice president of the company, and Charles H. Smyth, second vice president. The road will be operated the same as it has been. On Dec. 1, 1932, it defaulted on interest payments on outstanding bonds, subjecting them to foreclosure in 90 days. The year 1932 was the first to show a loss in operation. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 29, 1933; Wichita Beacon, Jan. 28, 29, 1933)

90 YEARS AGO

Attorneys for the Wichita Union Terminal Railroad said construction of train sheds at Union Station was not financially feasible at this time. The three lines using the station are paying \$135,000 annually on \$2.3 million worth of bonds issued to finance construction of the terminal system. Provision was made for the sheds in the original plans, but the rise in cost of materials consumed the amount available in building the station and elevated tracks, and the train sheds could not be built. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 17, 1923)

Replacement of 80-pound rails with 90-pound on the Rock Island from Wichita to Peabody will be completed within a week. Work started from Cline yards in Wichita Oct. 23rd. Tracks from Caldwell to Wichita were replaced last year. Work will probably be continued as far as Herington. (Wichita Eagle, Wichita Beacon, Jan. 18, 1923)

Six new heavy-duty Baldwin locomotives and two new switch engines are to be delivered here for service on MoPac's Wichita Division before Feb. 15th. The 1400-class 2-8-2 freight engines cost \$70,000 each. Stalls at the Wichita roundhouse are to be enlarged for them. One switch

(Continued on page 2)



**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

**JANUARY
NRHS PROGRAM**

The program for January will include two vintage videos illustrating railroad action of the past. One is a video originating from the Association of American Railroads. In this video we will see fallen flags such as the New York Central and other eastern railroads, Great Northern, Rio Grande, Santa Fe, Rock Island, and others. The second video will be on the Santa Fe route from Kansas City to Chicago in the 1950s.

The meeting will be held Fri., January 18, at the *Great Plains Transportation Museum*, 700 E. Douglas, Wichita. Meeting time is 7:00 pm.

There will be the 5:30 p.m. informal dinner gathering at the Riverside Cafe, 739 W. 13th before the meeting.

The starting time for NRHS meetings has been changed to 7:00 PM.

NRHS PROGRAMS FOR 2013

February: GPTM Annual Meeting at WTTTC, 130 S. Laura
March: *Santa Fe Steam Locomotive Development* by Bob Walz
April: Topeka Chapter Exchange Program
May: Open.
June: Open.
July: Annual Platform Meeting
August: Open
September: Chapter Annual Picnic
October: Kansas City Chapter Exchange Program
November: Confederate Railroads Generalship by Chris Gabel
December: Annual Slide Free-for-All

OTHER EVENTS

Feb. 9-10, 2013 - Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet; 9-6 Sat., 11-4 Sun. Cessna Activity Center. Info: Phil Aylward, 316-830-3498.

Feb. 16: Lawrence Model Railroad Club Train Show & Swap Meet, Douglas Co. Fairgrounds.

Mar. 16-17. Great Train Expo, Wichita Century II.

LOOKING BACK

(Continued from page 1)

engine will stay here and one will go to Durand. (Wichita Eagle, Jan. 19, 1923)

100 YEARS AGO

A story from Hutchinson dated Jan. 11, 1913, said Santa Fe's weekly De Luxe passenger train had only one passenger on its last trip from Los Angeles last week. H.S. Rolliford, a Chicago grain broker, had the train to himself, at least to the time it arrived in Hutchinson. The crew of 16, including the manicurist, all did their best to entertain the lonesome passenger. Rolliford wired ahead from Hutchinson to a Kansas City friend, begging him to join him for the rest of the journey. (Sunday State Journal (Lincoln, Neb.), Jan. 12, 1913).

**THE ROCK ISLAND
ENTERS SALINA**

Jan. 5, 1888, Saline County Journal

The first passenger train came in last night and consisted of an engine, coach and baggage car. Regular trips will hereafter be made, trains arriving at 8:25 p.m. and departing at 8:25 a.m.

Freight trains have been running on the road now about ten days.

A telegraph office has been opened and an operator is on the ground.

Mr. King will arrive to-morrow from McPherson to be agent for the company at Salina. He has been connected with the company at that place and comes with the highest recommendations.

A two-stall round house of the Rock Island is being raised to-day. It is situated east of First street.

A large force of workers are engaged building up the road bed in the city.

**WICHITA CHAPTER NRHS
OFFICERS**

David Meek, President
Vacant, Vice-president
Gale Meek, Secretary
Wes Helena, Treasurer
J. Harvey Koehn, National Director

**50 YEARS AGO
IN THE DISPATCHER
JANUARY 1963**

Edited by J. Harvey Koehn

The January 1963 issue began with: "The following is taken from the December 1962 issue of Santa Fe Magazine." The DS then went on to quote an article from the October 3, 1962 issue of the Syracuse Journal of Syracuse, Kansas. The 'Journal' had taken information from the Scott City News Chronicle. So what you will be reading amounts to third-hand information but none the less is worthy to note. For me this triggers some memories of my childhood and my mother's making some comments about the railroad's checking on the school's expenditures and monitoring how the school district spent the money. I went to a McPherson County country school located ½ mile from the Rock Island's Golden State Route and the Florence to Ellinwood branch of the Santa Fe. My father was on the school board for a number of years and, in that capacity, served as treasurer.

"This newspaper always has been a staunch friend of the railroads. Now we expect this statement to bring a storm of protest from truckers, but hear us out. For Pete's sake, we have no brief against

trucks - - they are as American as apple pie, and they can run where there are no rails. But for the railroads there is a soft spot in this old heart.

"For instance, we can remember back in the depression day, when few of us could pay our taxes, the railroad taxes practically supported every school in the county. For years, the rails educated our kids.

"And today they do a pretty good job of it. In Scott County the Missouri Pacific and Santa Fe paid \$55,486 in taxes last year, of which \$37,632 went to various schools. This is a considerable hunk of the total school taxes, so in a large measure the railroads are doing a pretty good job of supporting the schools.

"Add to this a payroll of \$48,058 annually to nine employees, and the whole thing adds up to a pretty good thing for the community.

"There are lots of things wrong with the railroads, but they are in integral part of our economy, and we just simply can't afford to be without them"

The next, and final, paragraph from the magazine is Santa Fe's own contribution to the article in which it outlines its financial contributions to Hamilton County.

"In Hamilton County the Santa Fe Railroad has 11 employees, with a payroll of \$67,903 in 1961. During 1961, the

Santa Fe paid \$73,811 in taxes to Hamilton County treasurer, of which \$48,492 went to the schools and \$7,242 to help build county, city and township roads and bridges. These figures exceed those mentioned for Scott County, so if the Scott City editor finds it appropriate to express his appreciation, such words of thanks are even more appropriate here."

In the present day neither the Missouri Pacific nor the Santa Fe service Scott County. The K & O (Kansas & Oklahoma) operate both the former Santa Fe and Missouri Pacific rails. In Hamilton County it is the BNSF which passes through. It would be interesting to know what each railroad pays in taxes now. And the number of employees in each county will certainly be different.

Another item from the Santa Fe Magazine. The DS does not say if it is from the same issue as above. "At a fire drill held not long ago in a large office, the city's fire chief and his top assistants were invited to be on hand to witness the operation. With the ringing of the first alarm, the 600 employees evacuated the building in a little more than three minutes. Everyone was impressed until quitting time came around. At the time, the building was cleared in two minutes flat! - - It figures!"

A westbound Cotton Belt local with two GP9E locomotives, no cars, and one caboose is immediately west of the former Rock Island depot in McPherson, Kansas on January 15, 1983. The GP9s are the 3363 and the 3429. The caboose is #1879. International Car built this caboose in 1972. It is one of 55 of the C-50-4 class of Southern Pacific cabooses.

The operations of the St. Louis Southwestern Rwy., a Southern Pacific subsidiary, over the former Rock Island's Golden State Route from Kansas City to Tucumcari, New Mexico, are approaching the three-year anniversary at the date of this photo. The number plate on the signal reads 2168, which indicates that the signal location is 216.8 railroad miles from St. Joseph, MO at a time when the Rock Island had continuous trackage from St. Joseph westward.

Photo by J. H. Koehn



A Frisco GP15-1, displaying Burlington Northern number 1392, powers a northbound freight train out of Wichita on the Ellsworth sub on December 30, 1982. The days on this subdivision are numbered as the BN abandoned this line in segments over the years. The first two were from Medora to Lyons and Lorraine to Ellsworth in 1985; then Valley Center to Medora in 1994. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad abandoned the 8.0-mile segment from Wichita to Valley Center in 2003.

The Kansas Midland Railway constructed the line from Wichita North Junction to Ellsworth in 1888, a distance of 102.8 miles. The Frisco absorbed this line in 1900.

Photo by J. H. Koehn

RAILROADING IN WICHITA JANUARY 1913

By Fred Tefft

January 4

Article about money being spent on the Orient Railroad receivership. Includes \$1000 per month for J. O. Davidson, receiver and same amount for other receivers, M. L. Turner and Edward Dickinson, plus \$400 per month for Chester I. Long, attorney.

Article says the Frisco and Rock Island are considering purchase of the old Burton Car Works property from the American Warehouse Company as a location for their railroad yards.

January 19

Article about possible complaint to state public utilities commission because of refusal of Wichita Railroad and Light company to extend South Emporia car line three blocks south of the present end of the line at Zimmerly street, as requested by petition signed by over 500 residents of the area.

January 20

The Arkansas Valley Interurban Railway will build two miles of new track early this year if the voters of Newton amend the franchise in that town. It is proposed to build a trolley line from Newton to Bethel College, a distance of two miles. A special election will be held in Newton January 23 to enable the voters to amend the franchise.

January 21

Six new coaches for the southern division of the Orient were received in Wichita Monday. They are strictly modern, steam heated, with vestibules and other improvements of standard coaches.

January 26

Street car company is installing trolley wire guards at railroad crossings, so that if trolley pole jumps the wire it will still be in contact with the V shaped netting which also carries current and will furnish power so the car will not be stalled on the railroad tracks. All twelve crossings in the city should be protected before the winter is over, says superintendent of transportation, C. R. Lewis.

January 28

The Santa Fe Saturday filed a deed for 13.79 acres of land east of Lawrence avenue, north of Amwaco, for which it paid Samuel and A. H. Goldstein, formerly of Wichita but now of Joplin, Missouri, \$1250 an acre. The road secured a quit claim deed to 34 acres from Mr. Goldstein, and it is expected that construction of a round house and new yards will be started in the spring.

January 31

Report of a rumor that the Wichita-Ft. Scott division of the Missouri Pacific will be enlarged to include Missouri Pacific lines from Coffeyville to Larned, the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic division, and from Coffeyville to Osawatomis through Yates Center. No definite confirmation.

Dr. Edward N. Tihen's Notes from Wichita Newspapers, Special Collections and University Archives, Wichita State University Libraries

CARGILL REFINERY

By Sam Andrews

The Cargill oilseed refinery in Wichita sits at the historic corner of 13th & Santa Fe. This 24/7 operation is served by Wichita Terminal Association and is one of the biggest accounts for that railroad. The plant is switched every night by the WTA 3rd shift job.

Cargill obtained the property from Ralston Purina in 1979 and construction then followed on the refinery with production starting in 1981. Inbound tankcar loads of soybean oil are unloaded then refined into vegetable oil which is used to make salad dressing, mayonnaise and margarine. The finished product is filled in Cargill tankcars and shipped to locations across the nation.

Prior to when Cargill arrived on the scene, the property was the site of the Otto Weiss feed mill built in 1906. Most of the property was destroyed in a 1909 fire but was rebuilt. In 1934 Ralston Purina bought the mill operating it until 1979 when a new feed plant was built several blocks to the north and still remains in operation.

EFFORTS TO BRING HEARTLAND FLYER RAIL SERVICE THROUGH WICHITA GAIN SPEED

By Bill Wilson

The Wichita Eagle

Posted on Sun, Jan. 06, 2013

Wichita's pursuit of the Heartland Flyer passenger rail system has gained momentum, with state support, City Council support and a possible train station in downtown Wichita.

With an initial planning study for expanded rail service in hand, the Kansas Department of Transportation has joined the city's ongoing pursuit of the Amtrak passenger route that runs from Dallas to Oklahoma City, with expansion possibilities from Fort Worth to Kansas City. Officials from KDOT, Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration have told the architect of the city's passenger rail effort, council member Pete Meitzner, that his first goal has been met.

"We're at a point where they have confirmed independently that the (initial planning) study done a year ago is a good first step that gets us in the game," Meitzner said.

"We were afraid we weren't in the classroom as a state, but we've got a chair now."

The Wichita City Council has signed on to efforts launched nine months ago by Meitzner to pursue the rail service, making funding more passenger rail studies a lobbying priority for the upcoming legislative session.

The effort is supported by Wichita commercial developer Gary Oborny, who has a letter of intent to buy the city's downtown rail hub, Union Station, and convert it into key hospitality, office and retail space. Oborny said a rail terminal is in his plans for the building. If he lands Union Station from its owner, Cox Communications, Oborny said, he'll save space for the Flyer. The reason? Bringing people to Wichita, he said.

"The key isn't just passenger rail," Oborny said. "That's a nice component, but the whole rail story is really about access to Wichita. If we want to drive commerce in our city, our gates and doors have to be open 24/7 every way we can think of." That commerce effort, launched by the

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HEARTLAND FLYER

(Continued from page 4)

Wichita Metro Chamber, where Oborny sits on the board, can be enhanced by rail passengers stopping in downtown Wichita. "That's why this effort is crucial," he said. "The one thing we have to do right now is make sure we're on the field and ready to play."

Meitzner's effort has landed critical allies in KDOT Secretary Mike King, a Hesston native, and his governmental affairs chief, Lindsay Douglas. King is continuing talks with Oklahoma officials who are more interested — today — in a more northeast route for the Heartland Flyer toward Tulsa that could be a roadblock to the Wichita effort, Douglas said. "They have indicated to us at this point in time they're interested in funding additional work," she said. "They are interested in offering new service, but the towns north of Oklahoma City along the Heartland line are interested in service there, too. So there might be a sort of competing interest there."

Douglas said the next step to move the Kansas Heartland line along is an environmental study, costing \$3 million from Kansas and \$2.3 million from Oklahoma, less with federal assistance.

And there are plans for a regional passenger rail workshop with the Federal Railroad Administration, a significant outreach to the feds showing that Kansas and Oklahoma are serious enough about passenger rail to need federal funds, Douglas said.

But, the immediate key toward the Heartland Flyer's future in Wichita may lie in Gov. Sam Brownback's budget proposal, which will be released on Jan. 16, and in the willingness of the federal government to provide grant funding, Douglas said, for future studies and for a project

with an uncertain price tag. The latest project estimates, from 2011, are a little more than \$87 million to run from Newton into Texas, although that number is fluid as the project develops and as time passes, officials said.

"Right now, there are a lot of demands on funds at the state level," Douglas said.

"Depending on the governor's budget that comes out on the 16th, we're all trying to figure out where our resources are and prioritize our investments.

There are opportunities for federal funds, and we're making sure that if federal funds become available, we can apply and be competitive.

"If funding becomes available, we're in a good position to apply with the service development plan done."

It's all because Meitzner keeps pushing the passenger rail issue, Douglas said.

"It's really opened from my standpoint our eyes to Wichita as a willing partner in this initiative," she said. "They've really opened our eyes to different economic development opportunities there and what having that line through Wichita would do for the area. It's been a good thing, working through these discussions."

WICHITA TRAIN SHOW & SWAP MEET

The train show for 2013 will be at Cessna Activity Center located at 2744 George Washington Blvd. in Wichita Kansas on Saturday February 9th and Sunday February 10, 2013. Two full days of fun, with operating layouts and over 100 tables full of model train items to choose from.

Modular Layouts, Vendors, Switching & Modeling Contests and Modeling Clinics! Admission is \$6 for both days.

**THE GREAT PLAINS
TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM
Membership and Volunteer Application**

Membership Categories

Regular Memberships

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35

Supporting Memberships

<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$50
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- Add me to your special activities mail list
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- Cash
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Please remit to:

Great Plains Transportation Museum
Membership Coordinator
700 E. Douglas Ave
Wichita, KS 67202-3506

January 2013

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

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