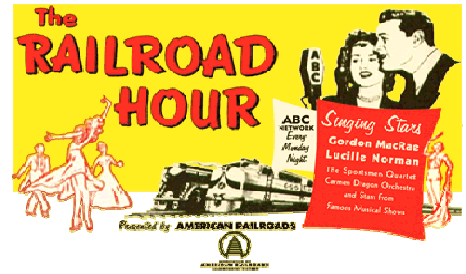


Roundhouse Notes

Paducah Chapter
National Railway Historical Society
February 2012



New Editor

Greetings, This is my first edition as newsletter editor and I want to take time to thank Mike Favre for doing a great job as editor of *Roundhouse Notes* over the past few years.

I want to remind everyone that this is your publication as well. If you have any railroad stories, pictures, news, tall tales, don't hesitate to share. Email them to me at oldradiorepair@bellsouth.net.

Radio and The Railroads

Some of you may already know that I am a collector and restorer of old radios and have been for many years. Now how do old radios tie into railroads you ask? As a restorer of old radios I also have a collection of old radio programs that were originally broadcast in the 30's 40's and 50's. One of those shows was called *The Railroad Hour*. It was sponsored by the American Association of Railroads. The show was a series that featured music and comedy and a variety of actors. It started in 1948 on the ABC network as a 45 minute program billed as the "World's Greatest Musical Comedies" and had *I've Been Working on the Railroad* as its theme song. Strangely enough the show had nothing to do with railroads other than the sponsor and the theme song.



For a taut and thrilling half hour of entertainment journey into the realm of mystery and the unknown with THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER, heard weekly over the world's largest network... the Mutual Broadcasting System.

Railroads crisscrossed their way through the "Theatre of the Mind" for many years. *The Mysterious Traveler* always rode and met up with you on the

train as he told you his strange suspenseful stories.



A 1930's program, *Cavalcade of America*, which featured stories on figures and events of American history, had a program on the pioneers and building of America's railroads.

Comedy shows were not strangers to trains and railroads. One of the favorite sketches on the *Jack Benny Program* was for Jack to travel by train or visit the train station. A running gag that plagued Jack for years was anytime he set foot in a train station a certain announcer, usually voiced by Mel Blanc would announce a train boarding for "Anaheim, Azusa and Cucamonga" He would drag out the word "Cu-ca-monga", pausing between the syllables.



There was one episode that the announcer did not call the train. Jack mentioned this as his train departed.

The train however made a station stop and Jack got off to buy a magazine to read on the rest of his trip. When he stepped off the train there was an announcement for "Train now leaving on track five for Anaheim, Azusa and Cucamonga!" Jack could never escape it even if he was in New York. During another episode Jack left the station and the announcer cut off at "Cuu Caa..." because the door shut. Then a entirely different comedy skit was presented. Ten to fifteen minutes later Jack's phone rang and when Jack answered it you could hear Mel Blanc's voice saying "AMONGA!!, you thought I forgot didn't you?" Indeed, Santa Fe offered passenger service to Azusa and Cucamonga but Anaheim was not on that line.



Santa Fe Azusa, CA Station

I have found that there were over 85 shows that featured railroads or trains either as the subject or were just used as a means of transportation. For those of you that have internet access you can listen to a lot of these for free online at www.archive.org and search for radio programs, of course they sound better on an old radio.



NEWS AND VIEWS

Bob Johnston

EDITORIAL CHANGE: With this issue of ROUND HOUSE NOTES, we have a new Editor, Charles Gibbons, who has graciously accepted this challenging position with the resignation of Mike Favre. Mike will soon be retiring from P&L, who has been considerate to him and the club by allowing him to use their computer and internet. Mike does not have internet service available at his home in rural Massac County. I want to express my appreciation to him for the cooperative and patient way he has worked with me as I have written this column. His computer skills and unparalleled railroad knowledge have made RH NOTES highly regarded both by our own members and to recipients all over the country to whom it has been sent. Charles will be the third editor I have worked with, beginning with Paul Frye. Most of our members probably fail to fully realize the time and skill the Editor's job requires. My thanks to Paul and Mike, and I look forward to working with Charles.

CORRECTION: In the January NEWS AND VIEWS I referred to the north bound, "City of New Orleans," as number 59, it is, of course, number 58. I.C. passenger trains were always odd numbers south and even numbers north.

ADDITION: An interesting footnote to my last month's story about Roy Duncan that I forgot to mention was he told me many years ago, that he recalled going home from school at Heath one day and seeing the I.C.'s first streamliner, "The Green Diamond," westbound on the Mud Line, near Kevil. The book, "I.C. Streamliners," shows this was April 20, 1936; it had arrived Paducah earlier that day from Fulton, on its exhibition tour before going into regular service between Chicago and St. Louis. I remember my parents taking me to tour it while it was spotted on the city lead between Broadway and Kentucky Ave.

TOM GARRETT AT PADUCAH CHAPTER MEETING: On January 10th, the Paducah Chapter, NRHS, at their

regular monthly meeting, was privileged to hear a very interesting view on the current state of the Paducah & Louisville, and its two associated railroads, by Tom Garrett, the P&L President. In "breaking news," he said that the previously announced change in the name of the holding company from Four Rivers Transportation to P&L Rail Group, had hit a legal snag, (it is a Delaware corporation) and the name is now slated to be P&L Transportation, Inc....P&L's association with CSX, which has an equity interest, was cited by Garrett as very advantageous, pointing out the recently announced CSX Intermodal Center to be built at Winter Haven, FL under the auspices of Evansville Western as one profit center. He went on to say that it is unlikely that EVW would ever have been sold by CSX to P&L, if the former had been able to foresee the explosive growth that has occurred on that line since the sale. One reason is the switch by power plants from Appalachian coal to Illinois Basin coal and the consequential new mines opening on the EVW. One, operated by the Cline interests, has built at their own expense, a 15 mile spur to the EVW, although they were already on the CN, because they did not want to be "captive." Also, that company is building a new port on the Ohio at Mt. Vernon, IN, which is also on the EVW. There is another new large mine opening at McLeansboro, IL. As a result of this & other business, the EVW is building a new interchange with the NS. Interestingly, in 2011, despite all the coal business, the EVW, received more revenue from grain than coal, because of an ethanol plant on line that has received numerous unit grain trains from BNSF, interchanged at Woodlawn. This, however, Garrett pointed out is unlikely to reoccur, because of the reduction of government subsidies for ethanol....On P&L, in 2011, 7 1/2 million tons of coal was interchanged at the CCT terminal from rail to barge, and that terminal plans an expansion to be able to also transload from barge to rail....The move by P&L to its large new building between Clark and Adams St. in Paducah is slated to occur in March. The new facility was necessary

because of the growth of the three railroads (and probable additions in the future), and the fact they are all managed and dispatched from Paducah. The old I.C. headquarters at 1500 KY Ave. is outmoded as well as too small. Another reason is the necessity to get the dispatching center out of its present location in North Yard (which is subject to interruptions of service because of chemical leaks or other emergencies in the yards) and adjacent to customer service and other offices. Completely new and modern communication, signaling, and dispatching equipment will be installed in the new building.

In response to various questions, Garrett said the Mid-American (NS) Corridor is operating over the P&I bridge despite opposition from owner railroad BNSF, by the fact that CN crews operate the NS trains over that portion, then NS crews reboard, at least that is NS's story. P&L also would like to get operating rights over the bridge. In regard to the P&I, he said that the switching agreement specifies a requirement to have a 30 car train for P&L or BNSF to serve an industry on the P&IIn response to a question about new power, Garrett said that beginning this year the P&L would receive around 30 'used' SD 70's on lease from CSX. They will not need "rebuilding," but will be upgraded and repainted for use. Again, the club was privileged to have such an informative and personal talk from Mr. Garrett.

PAL: The P&L Business cars were recently sent to Frankfort for a reception for legislators at the Kentucky General Assembly; John Deming was one of the hosts. R.J. Corman Rail Group also had cars present at the event; There has been discussion among management at the P&L to send Bluegrass State I to a shop in Lancaster, S.C. where it would be converted into a more open car that would be better for receptions, similar to the one used by Rick Corman. However, no final deal has been made and as this is written, it is still on hand at North Yard, Paducah. ... It looks like it will be March before the move to the new building will take place.

VMV: A few of the sightings at VMV this month: The QUBE 1102, mentioned last month is still there; Quebec & Gatineau 2045, SD-40 (Q&G is part of the Genesee & Wyoming Group and the locomotive lettering including several labels in French); Winchester & Wyoming GP 38-2, #2689, (the WW is a road going back to 1917 that operates in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and southern New Jersey and is owned by a company with quarry interests.); a red, blue, and grey switcher, 1430, stenciled "Paducahbilt;" several GMTX SD 60'S, (these are part of the group of Oakways leased to BN for many years that were stored at Paducah for a number of months before going back on lease to NS.

PROGRESS/EMD: In last month's column I mentioned the belief among workers at EMD's London, Ontario plant, that they would be locked out to force large wage and benefit cuts and/or force closure of the operation there and its transfer to the Progress plants in Muncie, IN and Mayfield, KY. On January 1, the lockout occurred and pickets were set, and at one point, an SD 70 Ac(e) (the last out of the plant) was temporarily blocked from delivery, by Canadian Auto Workers Union members. On February 3, EMD announced to the Canadian government and the union, that the plant would be permanently closed, stating that it had become impossible to negotiate a contract that would enable the company to be competitive in the global locomotive market. The London plant had been EMD's primary manufacturing facility after their famous plant at LaGrange, IL was closed in 1992. At that time it was still a division of General Motors. It is still early to determine the full effect of this action on the plants in Muncie and Mayfield, but it seems obvious that bad news for the Canadians will be good news for the Americans. (Some of this information is from TRAINS NEWS WIRE).

NASHVILLE & EASTERN: N&E, the railroad that runs over the old Tennessee Central 130 miles east from Nashville to Monterey, TN, on January 20, christened a newly painted B40-8W locomotive, "The City of Nashville." The Mayor of Nashville and the President of the railroad were on hand. The N&E also hosts the "Nashville Star," commuter trains, and excursion trains operated by the Tennessee Central Railroad Museum. (Former

Santa Fe B-40s are also frequently used on the BNSF local to Paducah).

FRISCO 1352 RESURFACES: Some of the older members of the Paducah Chapter will remember a trip we made several years ago to Taylorville, IL to view the open air restoration efforts on former Frisco Mikado 1352, which had been moved there from a park in Kansas City. That effort failed and the dismantled 2-8-2 has been stored there. (I think there's still a 1352 mug in the conference room). Now TRAINS NEWS WIRE reveals that it has been purchased by the Columbus (Ohio) American Steam Railroad Preservation Society who plan to move smaller parts to Ohio, and hopes to raise money to have a rigging company transport the locomotive. Their plan (dream) is to operate it on the 12 mile Hocking Valley Scenic Railroad at Nelsonville, OH.

BIG STEAM NEAR HERE: On March 28th the iconic UP 844 4-8-4 will have a one hour layover at Dexter, MO, 89 miles from Paducah, from 11:35 a.m. to 12:35 a.m. It will be on its way from Kansas City to Memphis on a Civil War Re-Enactors excursion. If you have not seen this great engine in person, this is your chance.

MORE RECORD PROFITS: Major freight railroads continue to report record earnings. UP says 2011, was the most profitable year in its 150 year history with revenue up 15% and an operating ratio of 70.7%; CSX a record 4th quarter with earning up 13% and an operating ratio of 70.9%; NS reported record earnings in 2011 with an operation ratio of 71.4%; CP reported earning up in the 4th quarter with an operating ratio of 78.5%, but lower total earnings than 2010, a decrease which they blame on record snows in the west and record floods in the Midwest, in 2011.


MUSEUM: Museum work is progressing at a furious, albeit somewhat irregular, rate at the closed museum. John Maxfield has enclosed the cab to keep out light; the N gauge display has been partially enclosed and raised, additional new lighting has been installed (with approval by the city electrical inspector who required some additional emergency lighting); and considerable painting has been done by James Hartsfield. Much work remains to be done before the March 2nd

opening and "Little Obie," on the 3rd. including installation of partitions John Deming and Jack Johnston,, and more work on the simulator by the Max-fields....The museum has received a donation of \$ 200.00 from NBC's "Who do You Think You Are?" for the use of the facility in filming on December 4th. We have also received a generous donation from member (and river business man), Dave Dewey.

LITTLE OBIE: By the time this issue of ROUNDHOUSE NOTES is delivered, I hope to have begun arrangements with the news media for advertising and also begun other publicity such as news web sites, etc. Any suggestions of help anyone can give me will be appreciated. We will again have fliers which will need to be distributed. Please come to the meeting on February 14th (Bring you Valentine) for more discussion and information.

PROGRAM: Dick Kastas has another interesting railroad program lined up for the February meeting. The speaker will be a representative from Tack Tech of Calvert City. Track Tech is a builder and maintainer of railroad tracks and yards. They built the Calvert Coal Terminal tracks, and have built and maintain many industrial and terminal tracks in this area. This is your chance to learn all about railroad construction.

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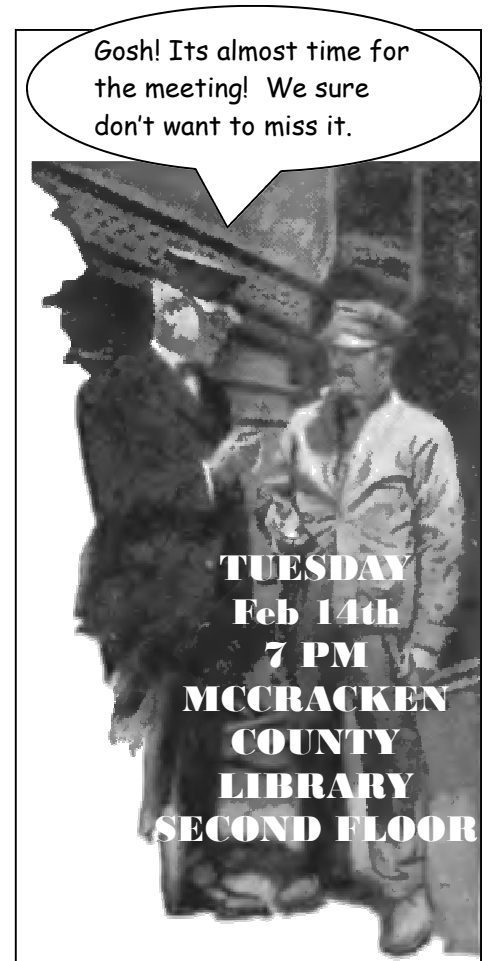
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An Advertisement for the Lux Radio Theater, one of many old time radio show that involved the railroads.



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