

PENNYRAIL

February 2009

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 2



Chapter Chatter

**Next Meeting Monday,
February 23**

**7:00 pm, The Center, (Former L&N Depot)
Madisonville, KY**

Program by Jim Pearson

BNSF adds 3rd Main to Cajon Pass Main

**A 54-minute DVD tour of Jim's
trip to Cajon Pass**

**Bring a guest and
something for
Show and Tell**

Western Kentucky
Chapter, NRHS, Inc.

111 Reed Place
Madisonville, KY 42431

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President
Rich Hane

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Wallace Henderson

Director at Large
Bill Thomas

“PENNYRAIL” is the
official publication of
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Chapter, NRHS.
Send news notes,
historical notes and
other rail information
to:

Editor
Bill Thomas

1025 Lakewood Drive
Madisonville, KY 42431
(270) 825-4623 Home
(270) 339-9482 Cell
e-mail:
bill@fbcmadisonville.com

Visit the
Chapter's
Website!



WWW.WESTKENTUCKYNRHS.ORG

From from our President *Rich's Ramblings*

I hope that all of you have been able to recover from the once in a lifetime ice storm that we had. It was trying but it was a great example of everyone pulling together. We had a very nice meeting in January and the weather cooperated by holding off long enough for us to have a complete meeting and get home before the snow came in. I checked the weather outside several times during the meeting and was happy to report no activity.

I came across an interesting article in Trains Magazine the other day in the Feb. 2009 issue about this group of railfans in the United Kingdom that built a brand new 4-6-2 Pacific type steam locomotive. It was the first new mainline steam engine built there since 1960 and the first ever to be built without a fully staffed and equipped locomotive works. They started saving money and getting donations in 1990 and the engine was completed and tested to 75 mph in Nov. 2008. It will go into excursion service this spring. The group had 2000 individuals donating and they started out by asking for the amount of a pint of ale each week to have a steady income. They say that this engine is not a replica but actually the 50th engine in the line and has the next number in line after the last one was built a half century ago. It is equipped with more water capacity and incorporates many improvements in metallurgy, safety, and electronics. This is a truly beautiful locomotive with a certain grace and class that British engines seemed to exude. These folks are to be applauded for their hard work and perseverance. If you would like more information or to donate to their cause check out their website at www.A1STEAM.com.

I am hoping to see all of your smiling faces at the next meeting at 7pm on February 23, 2009 at the Center in beautiful downtown Madisonville.



Not railroad-related, but I just love the poignant message on the red sign... LOL!

(laughing out loud in computer short hand)

Crossing of Union and Hall streets, Madisonville, January 28, 2009.

Links of Interest

National Railway Historical Society

www.nrhs.com

Railway Preservation News

www.rypn.org/

Kentucky Railway Museum

www.kyrail.org/

Indiana Railway Museum and French Lick Scenic Railway

www.indianarailwaymuseum.org

Indiana Transportation Museum

www.itm.org/

Illinois Railway Museum

www.irm.org/

Tennessee Central Railway Museum

www.tcry.org/

PENNYRAIL” is your publication. If you have photographs or other material of current or historical interest that you would like to share with Chapter members, your editor would appreciate hearing from you. Your material will receive the best of care while being readied for publication. Your help is appreciated. *Bill Thomas, editor*

bill@fbcmadisonville.com

**SEND YOUR ARTICLES AND PHOTOS TO:
BILL THOMAS
bill@fbcmadisonville.com**

AS RAILFANS WE ARE OFTEN AT TRACKSIDE AND IN POSITION TO OBSERVE EMERGENCY CONDITIONS THAT COULD AFFECT RAILROAD SAFETY OR SECURITY. KEEP THESE NUMBERS HANDY TO REPORT INCIDENTS.

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Nebraska, U.S. 30 and the Interceptor.

By Rick Bivins

March of 1986 was a moment of great expectation for me. Madisonville KY at that time had a Honda Motorcycle store on East Center St. For several months I had been going to Madisonville Honda to make payments on my new, not yet ridden motorcycle, a Honda VF 500F Interceptor. I opted for the smaller 500cc motorcycle as opposed to the much larger (read that as faster) VF 1100 F. I new I would come closer to killing myself on the “big” bike than I would on a smaller one. This really does not make any sense...a crash at 80 mph is deadly regardless the size motorcycle. However, my reasoning was sound: the 1100cc bike would “do” 180mph off the show room floor, faster if one pulls the leads from the rpm limiter. As for the 500cc bike, well only 135mph!!!

It was 27 degrees when I pick up the bike and rode it home...cold. The salesman said if I change the oil every 1000 miles and leave the rpm limiter hooked up, it would last forever. I did, some weeks during the summers I changed the oil twice, I rode it that much.

The little bike was quick, nimble and a blast to ride. I was often times riding in and out of the dashed lines of a two way road...at 80 mph, any faster and I could not cut each line. And of course the back wheel was on the ground a lot more than the front. Soon I tired of “just tooling” around town and began to make a few long trips. One was on hwy 62 from Nortonville to Louisville KY. I made it as far east as Leitchfield KY when I came upon a derailed IC/P&L train at the viaduct just east of town. I stopped to photograph and soon realized it was late. I needed to get home. It was about dark when I hit the West Kentucky Parkway westbound. For once I was not prepared. I always had a few tools, camera and a jacket in my tank bag. That day I left the jacket behind for some reason. Needless to say after the sun went down it was cool, very cool and I do not like to be cold. Well my theory was: the sooner I get home the sooner I will be warm again. From the Leitchfield exit to the Dawson Springs exit...27 minutes.

I have many stories such as that trip to tell but the one to tell is the great Nebraska trip.

In 1989 I was still working for Cimarron Coal Company in their parts department as a parts chaser. A great job it was. I had a new Ford one ton truck every two years and I drove around town picking up parts for the coal company. My hours were 4:00 AM to 12:00 noon on day shift, 12:00 noon to 8:00 PM on nights. I rotated shifts every two weeks. Now those are some great hours. The best part was ever other two weeks I worked off at noon on Friday, and returned at noon on Monday.

It was on one of these long weekends in 1989 that I decided to go to Nebraska and see my buddy Kelly Martin. I have written about Kelly before, we met on a Frisco 1522 trip in 1988. He lived in Kearney NE and I visited him several times. Well I set out for Nebraska with Kearney as my destination. After one rides long enough his butt becomes numb as does his brain! At Kearney I find Kelly is not home and I wasn't about to just “sit”. I headed west on U.S. 30. Hwy 30 across Nebraska is the railroader's dream as most of the highway parallels the Union Pacific Mainline from Columbus NE to Cheyenne Wyoming. After leaving Kearney I began to build an idea in my head. (Danger signs for sure). I calculated how much time I had before I had to be at work, how far I had ridden, and at what time I would have to turn around. With this formula in my head I decided I could make it to Cheyenne. Well best made plans be as they are I forgot to include the intake of fuel, food and the obligatory calls of nature. Thirty minutes before my turn around time I was in Chappell Nebraska 126 miles east of my goal of Cheyenne, at a road side picnic table watching UP trains go by. At the magic thirty minute mark I turned east to retrace my steps. More times and figures in my head. If I ride fast enough on U.S. 30 which again is a two lane road, I will get home and stay off the I-80 four lane. The goal of all this, I will see more trains. If I get behind I can jump over on to the parallel I-80 and “go”.

Then it happened, possibly the dumbest idea to date, (very little sleep and a very tired butt/brain did not help this). If I do this not only will I make up time, but I will be able to stay on U.S. 30 the whole way to Lincoln NE. Lincoln is where Highway 30 turns north east and I-80 continues due east to Omaha NE. At Lincoln I would have change roads and start my southerly trek to Kansas City. This idea was: to ride

(Continued on page 4)

Nebraska Continued

100mph for 100 miles.

I did just that. I had to slow down for a few towns but as soon as I was on the “other side” I pulled the wick back on the bike and right to 100mph again. I honestly do not remember much else of that trip. I did stop at a DQ in Ogallala NE for a bite to eat. I remember watching for the Cozad NE. passenger station and the big grain elevator with COZAD spelled out across the bins, but little else. I did make it to work and I proved to my coworkers once again: when I get on a motorcycle, I get a bad case of “Super Stupid”. Unlike a few friends and acquaintances, I managed to see a lot of what I wanted to see, trains

NRHS Mission Statement

National Railway Historical Society, Inc.
Mission Statement - The National Railway Historical Society promotes railway heritage preservation and educates its members and the public about rail transportation, its history and impact, with a focus on North America.

Objectives

1. To foster the experience of rail transportation
2. To develop and expand educational services and programs
3. To build and maintain archives, to encourage and to support archival activities, and to disseminate information in archives
 - A. To increase collaboration between existing archives
 - B. To develop listing of National and Chapter archives
4. To support preservation of memorabilia and artifacts
5. To facilitate association and networking

Rex Easterly caught Amtrak at the regular station stop in Bloomington last week. See more from Rex on page 5.



Next Month

Follow-up from David Millen on the photographs of L&N steam locomotive 2068, pictures in the January 2009 issue of the PennyRail. It's a great story!

-Editor.

Please send your digital photos and story material to bill@fbcmadisonville.com or mail to Bill Thomas, First Baptist Church, PO Box 607, Madisonville, KY 42431.

Photo Section



Left: Rex Easterly sent in this shot of a bold-nosed CN freight. Not sure of the location.

Below: *The Empire Builder* came face to face with a flock of geese, explaining the blood-stained plow and pilot. Photo submitted by Rex Easterly.



January 2009 Minutes Summary

Western Kentucky Chapter, NRHS

The Center (Former L&N Depot),
Madisonville, KY

November Treasurer's Report was approved.

Beginning Balance \$3,043.61

Income

Nat. Dues	\$148.00
Ch. Dues	\$156.00
Donations	\$2.00
Raffle	\$00.00
Video	\$7.50
Other	\$00.00
TOTAL	\$313.50

Adjusted Balance \$3,357.11

Expenses

Nat. Dues	\$00.00
Postage	\$21.00
Printing	\$51.56
Video	\$00.00
Supplies	\$00.00
Other	\$00.00
TOTAL	\$72.56

Ending Balance \$3,284.55

MEMBERSHIP Total - 64

DIRECTORS REPORT: No report.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS: Rick Bivins brought up the matter of the possibility of a separate organization, removed from the NRHS and the Chapter, similar to what Owensboro has done. They called theirs "Owensboro And Elsewhere Railroad Club." He felt, as no doubt some others did, with the increasing dues, there are many who do not feel the increase in dues is worth the investment due to the tightening economy, and he also felt he was not getting anything from National. He made a strong statement to which some agreed that the only reason he was in the chapter, was for the camaraderie of the local group. Lengthy discussion was held on the matter, and pro and con discussion was held. No action was taken, but it is indicated further discussion will probably be held. Ricky pointed out the decrease in membership in our chapter, and Wallace Henderson in an earlier meeting, that the NRHS continued to lose some 5 to 6% annually. Our chapter has decreased from a high of 59 full members, and 19 Chapter-only members in 2006 to 39 full members having renewed and only 13 chapter-only members having renewed as of this writing on February 16, 2009. Ricky felt a dual members organization, as Owensboro has would probably help in increasing member-

(Continued on page 8)

Mystery Photo Revealed!



This photo which appeared in *Trains* magazine was shot from the Hwy 41 bridge at Arklow, (North Madisonville, KY) looking north on the Henderson Subdivision.

Extreme Trains!



TUESDAYS,
10PM/9C
On the History Channel

Photo Section Continued



Ice Storm Pics!

A cold CSX crew works to get a highrail vehicle on the tracks at West Broadway crossing in Madisonville, Wednesday, January 28, day two of the storm.



Meeting Minutes Continued

ship and retain what we have. There was no other new business brought forth. The meeting was adjourned for delightful refreshments and then a program by our president Rich Hane.

Members Present: Wally Watts, Rick Bivins, Rich Hane, Dennis Carnal, Steve Miller, Bill Thomas, Liam Thomas, Keith Kittinger, Tom Steiner, and guest Joe Thomas.

TIMETABLE #110

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF RAILFANS ONLY

- Mid-Winter Garden RR Gathering at home of Bill and Angela Thomas, 1025 Lakewood Drive, Madisonville, will be re-scheduled after debris removal is complete. This may be a Spring event.
- sHOW Modular Railroad Club Train Show, Bowling Green, KY - March 7, Bowling Green, KY L&N Depot, 10 am to 3 pm.



This very nice RJ Corman mobile station appeared in the Madisonville Lowes parking lot soon after the ice storm struck the Ohio Valley. It is speculated that the Corman crew was installing and maintaining generators for CSX.

VISIT THE CHAPTER WEB SITE: <http://www.westkentuckynrhs.org>

PENNYRAIL

% Bill Thomas, Editor
1025 Lakewood Drive
Madisonville, KY 42431