

PENNYRAIL

January 2015

Volume 19 Number 1



Next Meeting

Monday January 19, 2015 @ 7:00pm
Former L&N Depot
38 W. Arch St. Madisonville, KY

Program by: Bill Farrell

Refreshments by: Bill Farrell

**Don't forget to bring something
for Show & Tell!**

NRHS 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
6. To maintain and grow the organization

In this issue...

- **The Spill with President Bill**
- **Tom Johnson's Rail Flicks**
- **Photos**
- **Chasing a BNSF Special**

Western Kentucky
Chapter, NRHS, Inc.

111 Reed Pl.
Madisonville, KY 42431

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

Editor
Matt Gentry

email:
info@westkentuckynrhs.org

January Preview

Our program for the January meeting will be Butch Vanderveer, a retired engineer. Butch started with the L&N Railroad out of high school and retired with CSX about 4 years ago. I believe he is going to talk about How to Roll a Locomotive Over in a Tunnel, or How to get a train off a burning bridge

Please send your digital photos and stories to info@westkentuckynrhs.org

The Spill with President Bill

President Bill Farrell

Well, the New Year is finally here and I have had several members already working hard on new and old projects. I would like to take this time to thank Tommy Johnson for his Presidency and leaving our organization in good shape. I would also like to thank everyone who attended the Christmas Party in December. We had the numbers we needed for the room at Brother's BBQ, and everyone seemed to have a good time.



By the time you read this club bulletin we will have placed railroad artifacts in a display case at the Parkway Plaza Mall. Please stop by the Mall, and take a look. In a few months we can

change out the display and involve other members in providing railroad artifacts for display.

I would like to put an emphasis on membership for the year of 2015. I think a reasonable number would be eight (8) new members for our organization this year. I have talked

to three of our members and they have agreed to serve on the membership committee. We will have one each for Henderson, Madisonville, and Hopkinsville. If we retain the numbers we had last year then I know we are up one new member. All we need is another seven prospects in order to meet the set goal. If any members know of a person who likes trains or model railroading, please invite them to our next meeting on January 19th, 2015.

I would like to say that Matt does a good job with our bulletin but he is at a disadvantage with two thousand miles between the Madisonville and the west coast. He really needs our help providing information and pictures for the bulletin. If you have anything of interest please forward it on to Matt, you can email him at, info@westkentuckynrhs.org. Remember the only way we can have a good bulletin is that the membership provides Matt with the information.

I have several other new projects in mind and will bring them up at the January meeting or in due time.

Bill Farrell



Above: Southbound coal train U-101 led by SD40-3 #4031 rebuilt by CSX from SD40-2 #8143 with new cab and short hood. (There are only 50 of these and they are hard to catch in a lash up and especially on the point.)

-Wallace Henderson

Above Right: Southbound coal train T-102 at South Latham siding led by BNSF SD70ACE #9179 with 2nd unit UP #6236, ex SP AC4400CW #189 still in SP paint and lettering.

-Wallace Henderson

Right: Chiles Jct. (West Paducah) Southbound NS coal train on CN trackage rights led by the Wabash Heritage unit. SD70ACE #1070

-Wallace Henderson



Tom Johnson Presents: RAIL FLICKS

Union Pacific's Bailey Yard

Producer: Highball Productions

Purchased From : TrainVideoDepot.com

Format: Widescreen DVD

Date Purchased: 11/23/14

Playing Time: 1 Hr. 50 Min.

List Price: \$19.95

This review will be short and sweet. Well, short and not so sweet.

If you are thinking about buying this one, my advice is to save your money.

The first part of the video we are riding along on a tour bus with a UP employee describing what we are supposed to be seeing, but the problem is we are NOT seeing the things he is talking about. I guess the people on the bus might be able to see what he is talking about but the viewer of the video is not able to see it.

Too much of the video is shot at ground level and the viewer can only see what is in the foreground. The second part of the video is virtually devoid of narration. The image quality is not very good.

I was very anxious to learn some things about Bailey Yard, but I learned almost nothing from watching this video. I had a hard time watching the whole thing and I kept checking to see how much more was left. Skip this one!

Minutes Summary of November 2014

- MINUTES: Approved of the October meeting.
- TREASURERS REPORT: Approved
- DIRECTORS REPORT: None.
- ACTIVITIES REPORT: None
- OLD BUSINESS: Arrangements for our Christmas dinner discussed. It will not be at Keith's as he first suggested due to heating situation in his train room and other situations that came up. Plan A discussed as being at a restaurant and Plan B at the depot. Bill Ferrell volunteered to organize and it was decided we have it on the 15th Dec. at 6PM. Several locations discussed and Brother's Barbecue was agreed upon.
- NEW BUSINESS: Final vote held for election of officers and they are:
 - PRESIDENT: Bill Farrell
 - VICE PRESIDENT: Steve Miller
 - SECY. TREAS: Wally Watts
 - NATIONAL REP: Wallace Henderson elected in absentia. Ricky Bivins agreed to serve if Wallace felt he was unable due to health reasons.
 - OFFICER AT LARGE: Thomas Bryanson
- SHOW & TELL: None
- ANNOUNCEMENTS: None
- NEXT MEETING: Monday January 19th at 7PM
- Those present were:

1. Wally Watts	6. Donny Knight	11. Rich Hane
2. David Millen	7. Betty Knight	12. Tony Clark
3. Rick Bivins	8. Steve Miller	13. Keith Kittenger
4. Thomas Bryan	9. Bill Farrell	14. Bill Thomas
5. Tom Johnson	10. Bill Heaton	

Financial Statement of November 2014

Beginning Balance	\$2217.73
Income:	
Nat. Dues Rec.	0.00
Chpt. dues Rec.	0.00
Donations	0.00
Other/Raffle	0.00
Total Income	0.00
Expenditures	
Nat. Dues Paid	0.00
Postage	0.00
Supplies	0.00
Other	0.00
Total Expenditures	\$0.00
	\$2217.73
	<u>\$0.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$2217.73
Membership Stats:	
Beginning Membership	40
National Members Added	0
National Members Deleted	0
Chapter Only Members Added	0
Chapter Only Members Deleted	0
Ending Membership	40

Presented by Wally Watts, Treasurer

Photos!



Above: Loram rail grinder at the Hwy 1337 crossing in Richland KY. NB (towards Louisville) right in front of Jim Pearson's house.
- Rick Bivins



Taken over the Holidays while visiting family, Bill Thomas remarks that NorrisYard, in Irondale, AL (Birmingham) is starting to look more and more like the switches are made by Lionel! Editor's note; West ColtonYard has lights like this as well.
- Bill Thomas



December 30, 2014 - A Paducah and Louisville manifest train, with engine 4503 on point, heads north toward WestYards in Madisonville, Ky with FURX engines 3036 & 3033 on the end of the consist.
- Jim Pearson



Above: Amtrak's northbound Pacific Surfliner prepares to stop at the new Anaheim transit center on December 6, 2014.
- Matt Gentry



3 SD40-2s lead Q647 through Hopkinsville, KY.
- Wallace Henderson

Here's a sneak preview of a slide show I'll be doing this Spring for the chapter. Location: Wishram, WA. The Spokane, Portland & Seattle RR built this bridge to access Eastern Oregon. Eventually became key to the Inside Gateway to California, and now an important segment of the BNSF. That's Oregon on the other side. The river runs from left to right, and the impoundment is from the Dalles Dam, which buried Celilo Falls. The falls was the site of historic fishing for the indians, using hand held nets, while standing on rickety platforms.

The train was Northbound now heading West for Vancouver, Washington, about a hundred miles downstream. If you look close, you can see bridge pillars that could have allowed the train to swung to the right or East and enter Wishram Yard, or continued on to Pasco, Washington and points East. -Gary Ostlund



January 4, 2015 - A Norfolk Southern ribbon rail train sits in the yard next to Paducah and Louisville's 4511 at West Yard in Madisonville, Ky.
-Jim Pearson



Another busy day on Saturday December 6, 2014 at UP's West Colton Yard in Bloomington, CA.
-Matt Gentry

Chasing a BNSF Special

by Matt Gentry

I believe that I can honestly say that I have never actually chased a train before. I know there was an attempt the first time

I went to Gorham, IL with Rick, Wally and Thomas when I also first met Gary Ostlund. But that was short lived. That story goes that a Union Pacific special move came down to Gorham with one heritage locomotive on each end and three passenger cars between. Arrived at Gorham, stopped for a brief moment and promptly raced back to St. Louis. After we got our photos and decided to try and catch it up at Jacob, it was long gone. So no, not a true chase in my mind.

Well, once again my co-worker, Craig, was in the know about a special BNSF passenger move that was to happen on December 13th. It did help that he knew about it because he would actually be on the train. Its route of travel would be to leave San Bernardino and head up to Summit in Cajon Pass. Once there it would reverse down (once again having one locomotive on each end) back to San Bernardino where it would unload its first patrons and load again for a second trip.

A little note to what this special was; this train was brought down from Washington state as it is used up there as an annual Holiday train for kids of Military Families. So it's really a pretty cool deal. I'm not sure who manages to bring the train down to San Bernardino but it is brought down and essentially used for the same purpose, but I believe this is just for under privileged kids and not specific to Military Families. Sunday December 14th, the train picked up kids battling cancer and other life threatening diseases from City of Hope, a cancer hospital, for a short excursion and Monday December 15th, the train picked up preschool kids from Victorville, CA and

made a run all the way to Barstow, CA. I would have really liked to chase it that day as both locomotives were on point.



BNSF ES44C4 #8169 pulls into San Bernardino station with its special train in tow on the morning of Saturday, December 13, 2014.

December 13th was a Saturday and as luck would have it, I had an open schedule. Let's face it, my Saturday's have been whatever I want them to be since I've moved out here. It's pretty nice. So I figured what the heck, I'm going to chase a train!

The trick to this was that I had never really been up in Cajon pass before so I had no idea where I needed to go for photos or even where I could go since I don't have an SUV or a truck. So Saturday December 6th I made a day of going up into Cajon just to see where I could and should go. So this day I made a couple stops but the first problem was there were no trains! I was in the pass for about four hours and there were no trains! NONE! I couldn't believe it!

The second problem? Well, as luck would have it, while



One of the trains that was stacked up outside San Bernardino along Cajon Boulevard. It was stopped in decent light and I had time, so...photo!

I am up in the pass scouting things out, I notice a white truck start approaching me while I was standing trackside, but it wasn't a railroad truck, so I thought nothing of it. Well, the guy drives up and I notice its some security firm. He asks if everything is ok and I reply that everything is good. His demeanor quickly changes telling me I have to be 60 feet away from the track at all time. Yea, I know what that means, you will be watching me no matter where I go now. So luckily it was getting dark and I just decided to head back to Anaheim. But, I did get an idea for where I needed to be the next weekend, so it wasn't a total waste.

Well, December 13th came and I find myself standing on the platform awaiting the arrival of this special excursion train. The weird part I first noticed was that trains were



Another BNSF freight heads through Blue Cut on its way through the pass. I still can't get over how clear it was this day. My Fuji digital camera takes good pics, but these photos turned out spectacular.



With BNSF #8179 now the lead locomotive, the BNSF special makes its way down grade, heading back to San Bernardino.

EVERYWHERE which I have never witnessed at San Bernardino before, but I just passed it off and continued to wait. Not long after, I see a sparkling clean ES44C4 peek into the sun approaching the platform. I take my pics, watch the commotion for a bit and head up Cajon Boulevard to find my first stop.

was happening on the Union Pacific. My thinking was that if Cajon Pass was this busy, surely San Timoteo Canyon would be! WRONG I camped out here for about 2.5 hours and only caught four trains. But, the last train was laying rail along the roadbed for replacement, so at least I found out why there wasn't much traffic. And of course my camera batteries were dead, so I got to just watch the trains for the evening.

All in all, a successful Saturday and a successful chase. If I continue to do this sort of thing, I will most likely be looking into a better equipped vehicle for the task. As much as I like the Maxima, it's getting along in age and miles, 240K actually. So who knows what the future holds there. But, until next month, I leave you with the photos of the chase. Enjoy!



BNSF #8179, with special train in tow, passes under one of the signal bridges in San Bernardino CA. Next stop; San Bernardino Amtrak & Metrolink station.



After just changing direction, the BNSF special is starting back towards San Bernardino at Summit in Cajon Pass.

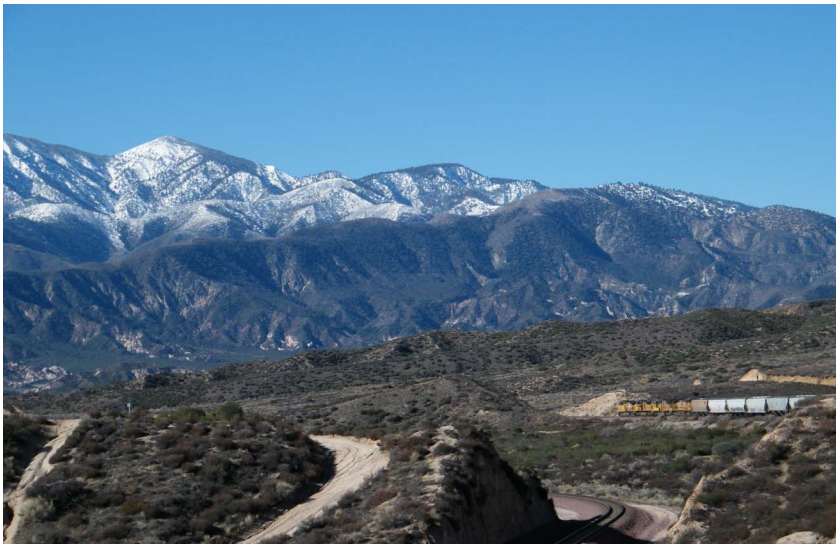
I soon found out why there were trains everywhere at the station, there were trains moving and held up everywhere "east" of the station! Within a mile I saw four trains, two moving and two waiting. This might be a great day after all! And the best part I noticed on my drive to San Bernardino was how brilliantly clear the day was. Yes, this would make for some great photos!

I make my stops at the spots I had found the previous Saturday and get some good photos of the BNSF special as well as various other BNSF and Union Pacific trains. I notice that I'm not the only one chasing this train, which is refreshing to witness; I'm not the only one running around with a camera getting looks of "why are you taking photos of a train?"

After getting back to San Bernardino five hours later, which turns out was over an hour behind schedule, I had the thought of going back over to San Timoteo Canyon to see what



Union Pacific even made the day entertaining by overtaking the special train on its way down grade. This is when I wish I had more hands so I could've operated a video camera at the same time!



There is a train in the photo, honest! I just wanted to share how beautiful the day was while on the chase in Cajon Pass.



A Union Pacific stack train can be seen in the background making its way ultimately toward West Colton Yard as the passenger train heads down grade as well.

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.

Matt Gentry, editor

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.

BNSF	800-832-5452
CN/IC	800-465-9239
CSX	800-232-0144
NS	800-453-2530
UP	888-877-7267
Amtrak	800-331-0008

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

Illinois Rr Historical Society

<http://icrrhistorical.org/>

Illinois Railway Museum

www.irm.org/

Tennessee Central Railway Museum

www.tcry.org/

<http://www.westkentuckynrhs.org/>

PENNYRAIL

Matt Gentry; editor



ROOSTING REDBIRDS – FORMER BN C30-7 LOCOMOTIVES IN GM&O INSPIRED PAINT ROOST AT THE ISELIN YARD IN JACKSON, TN. (PHOTO BY TERRY REDEKER – RAILPICTURES.NET)

Jackson, Tennessee – a town long tied to the railroad industry and home to rockabilly legend Carl Perkins.

NC&StL, IC, and GM&O lines once branched out in all directions from this west Tennessee town to the cities of Memphis, Dyersburg, Water Valley, Middleton, Corinth, Lexington, Kenton, and Fulton. GM&O constructed its large Iselin shops on the southeast side of town to serve as the railroad's heavy repair facility for the southern half of The Rebel Route. And one of west Kentucky's favorite sons, Casey Jones, lived and called Jackson home base up until his fateful trip behind the throttle of IC Engine 382 that immortalized him in song.

Some of my favorite railroad memories come from Jackson and my early childhood. My mom had family in Jackson that she enjoyed visiting often. This resulted in a combined Civil War history trip to Shiloh Battlefield near Corinth with a stop at cousin Evellyn's in Jackson. Dad enjoyed the trips due to the area being the locale for Sheriff Buford Pusser of Walking Tall fame.

My teenage years resulted in multiple trips to the ICG Birmingham Division as part of the Marshall County High School Marching Marshals, competing in marching competitions at Jackson, Martin, and Milan. Big orange and white SD40As (modified SD40's with huge fuel tanks) throttled north and south hauling endless cuts of pulpwood

flats, woodchip cars, and covered hoppers on trains SE-1 and BC-4.

Finally a weekend trip to Dyersburg and Trenton in 1986 would introduce me to a small short line that would eventually become the operator of the ICG Birmingham Division – the West Tennessee Railroad.

Beer & No Whiskey

Mention the name Isaac Tigrett in railroad circles and you'll soon learn that "Ike" was the most famous president of The Rebel Route, the Gulf Mobile & Ohio. What most people don't know is that he got his railroad start in Jackson working for the Birmingham & Northwestern Railroad.

The Birmingham & Northwestern (B&NW) had constructed a branch line from Jackson northwest to Dyersburg. The two companies that eventually formed the Gulf Mobile & Ohio had a major interest in the B&NW, and soon folded it into the GM&O bringing its young president, Ike, with it.

The B&NW made money due to Ike's leadership, and locals knew the three daily passenger trains between Jackson and Dyersburg as the "Beer & No Whiskey" route. At the time, Jackson was a dry city (beer only) and Dyersburg was wet (all the hard liquor you could want) – in terms of alcohol

The Rockabilly Rebel Route

A two-part special feature tells the story of how the West Tennessee Railroad is keeping portions of the IC, GM&O and NC&StL alive in 2015



GUEST FEATURE AUTHOR: CHRIS DEES

sales. Stories tell of passengers leaving Jackson with empty suitcases, only to return from Dyersburg "fully loaded" – and we're not just talking about the suitcases...

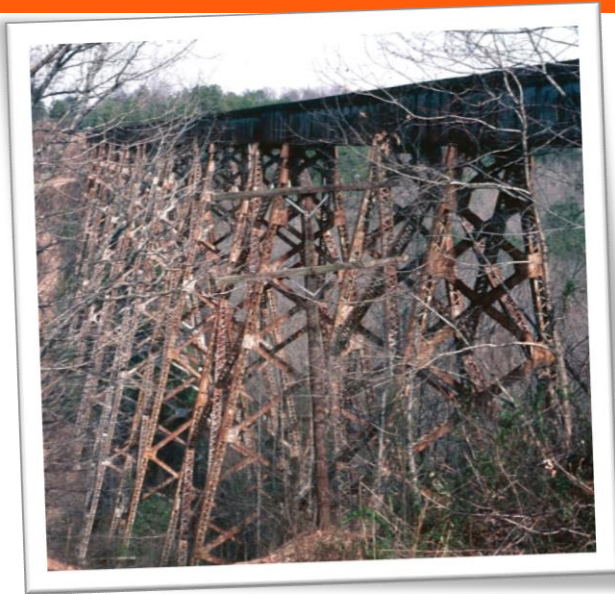
Today the route of the B&NW only extends to near the University of Tennessee experimental farm northwest of Jackson at Poplar Corner.

No Little Bridge

Being from western Kentucky, railroad trestles on the ICG were fairly common to me. Muldraugh was just one of many large bridges that were quite impressive to observe multiple-unit lashups of Paducah rebuilds thunder across. To the north in Indiana is the famed Tulip Trestle near Bloomington, now operated by the Indiana Railroad.

But what most ICG fans don't realize is that the largest trestle on the railroad was actually on the Birmingham line in rural northwest Alabama forests, near a town called Hackleburg – Brushy Creek Viaduct.

The trestle and the line between Redbay and Haleyville were abandoned in the mid 1990s, but it would have been nice to see West Tennessee's "rebirds" thunder across this enroute to Birmingham. See page 2 for details of this historic structure.



Brushy Creek Viaduct Specifications & History

Total length, face to face of parapets: 1,230ft 7 1/4 in
 Maximum height, base of rail to masonry: 171ft 2in
 Total weight of structure: 1,943 tons
 Total amount of masonry: 1,550 yds

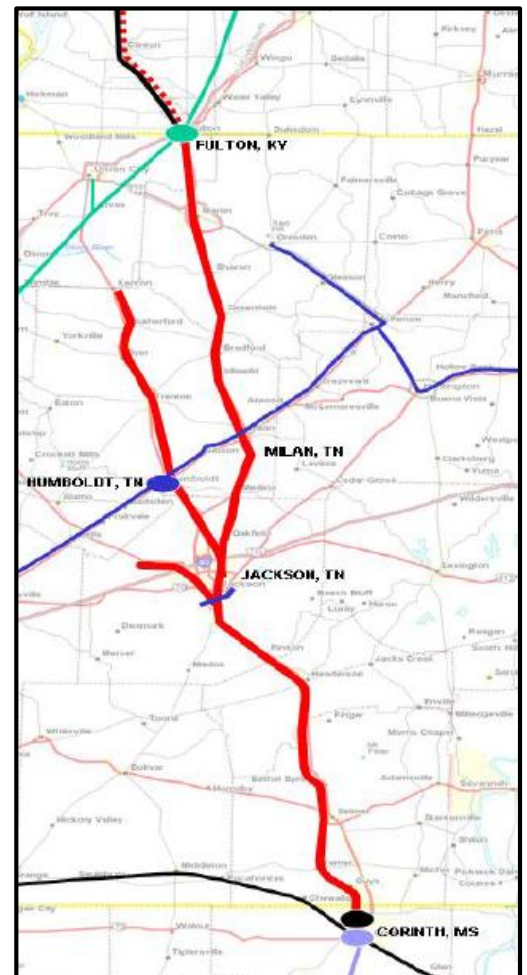
Ten 75-foot plate girder spans, nine towers with 40-foot deck plate girders, and two 60-foot deck plate girder approaches.

Construction time – 40 days in 1908 (amazing by even current standards).

WTNN Locomotive Fleet

Road #	Model
564	B40-8W
580	B40-8W
3111	B23-7
3172	B23-7
4070	B23-7
4071	B23-7
4072	B23-7
4081	B23-7
5517	C30-7
5543	C30-7
7855	B30-7
483	GP20

Rockabilly Rebel Route



HISTORICAL OPERATIONS ALONG THE WEST TENNESSEE RAILROAD



South of Corinth
Redmont Railway
Operates To Red Bay, AL

West Tennessee – Listening In

For Railfanning the WTNN line, tune to:

160.2900	Road Channel
160.5600	Dispatcher
161.3100	Switching
161.0700	Jackson Yard
161.0400	Repeater In – North
161.5650	Repeater In – South
160.2300	Redmont Railway
160.2600	Redmont Railway

Rebel Route Reborn



West Tennessee started out with two ex-IC GP28 locomotives painted in (what-else) original Norfolk Southern orange – little did railfans know that eventually the “new” Norfolk Southern would replace ICG, and eventually be replaced by West Tennessee. Here the first WTNN arrives at Iselin in 1984.



In Martin, the West Tennessee operates a small section of non-ICG related trackage. Originally part of the NC&StL line to Union City, this small spur extends east of town about three miles to serve a scrap dealer and farmers’ cooperative.



In western Tennessee, several business owners in the Gibson County area banded together to form the Gibson County Railroad Authority to prevent their local portion of the former Gulf Mobile & Ohio from being cut-up and hauled away. The resulting rail line from Kenton south through Trenton and Humboldt to Jackson started operations as

the West Tennessee Railroad, operating two former GP28s in the original Norfolk Southern orange scheme. Grain was (and still is) the major commodity hauled, and soon WTNN added an eclectic number of Alco locomotives to its roster. Railfans flocked to Trenton to see 251-powered RSD12’s haul tons of grain south to the CSX interchange at Humboldt and ICG at Jackson.

In 1988, connections would change – as ICG (by now ICRR) sold the Fulton-Jackson-Corinth line to Norfolk Southern for \$38 million in June of that year.

June 1988 brought aggressive changes to the Fulton-Jackson-Corinth-Haleyville line. Some were good, others resulted in loss of railroad service.

Norfolk Southern had started with big plans for the Jackson line, but those plans relied heavily on 154 miles of trackage rights on Illinois Central from Fulton north to Centralia, where NS trains would swing west on the Louisville-Princeton-St Louis line to connect. Manifests originated and terminated on the south end at Sheffield, Alabama, leaving the line south of Corinth as an insignificant branch. The massive Brushy Creek Viaduct was idled south of Corinth and several miles of welded rail removed for re-use elsewhere.

On the Fulton-Corinth segment, trains 119, 120, 123, and 124 were implemented between East St Louis and Sheffield, although most operations occurred in the cover of darkness (resulting in little photographs of the NS era available).

Local trains were established as follows:
 T89 – Corinth Road Switcher
 T90 – Jackson Yard Switcher
 T91 – Poplar Corner Job
 T92 – Jackson to Fulton Turn
 T93 – Jackson to Corinth Turn

Delays on the IC trackage rights north of Fulton soon hit NS with a harsh reality – the manifests just didn't make sense or save time. 119/120 were abolished, and 123/124 were switched to their still current routing via Princeton, Indiana, and Louisville, Kentucky.

The line from Corinth to Red Bay, AL was sold to Redmont Railway in 1995 to haul pet food products and Tiffin RV-frames along the line using a single CF-7 locomotive. This line is now operated as part of Pioneer's Mississippi Central.

South of Red Bay, the line was abandoned and Brush Creek Viaduct removed in 1996 after a well-publicized lawsuit from a teenager who fell from the bridge while on his four wheeler (i.e. trespassing).

In 2001, Norfolk Southern looked to lease the line – and West Tennessee expanded operations, relocated its base of operations to Iselin Yard in Jackson, and obtained state-of-the-art secondhand GE locomotives to power the new "Rebel Route" in West Tennessee.

Current operations reflect the local train service Norfolk Southern implemented, in addition to the Jackson to Kenton Turn on the original WTNN route.

In yet another still-born effort by NS and CN, several millions of dollars were invested in the WTNN as part of a CN/NS joint MidAmerica Corridor in 2010. Track was upgraded, although the de-activated ABS signals were not returned to service. Despite the effort, the MidAmerica corridor has not developed into what it could be.

Still WTNN ranks as the top grain hauling railroad in the Volunteer State, using GM&O inspired red/white C30-7s to keep "The Rebel Route" alive in West Tennessee!

Rockabilly Rebel Rousers

Although folded into the Illinois Central Gulf in 1972, the Gulf Mobile & Ohio paint scheme and/or logo has survived in various incarnations for 40+ years, including unrepainted units and lots of PAL-restenciled GP30/35's

Clockwise from upper right:

- Gulf & Ohio Railways logo adorns Yadkin Valley 3615
- Gulf & Mississippi GP10 8069 made GM&O fans cheer
- WTNN's two "Redbirds" depart Fulton for Jackson



Next Up...

Join us again next month for a station-by-station tour of the West Tennessee routes and trivia about the towns served by the West Tennessee Railroad. We'll be Walking Tall as we drive along the Rockabilly Highway. We hope you enjoyed this first part of a special feature edition.



WILL WEST TENNESSEE TAKE A HINT AND PAINT ONE OF THE DASH 8 UNITS INTO "WTNN ORIGINAL HERITAGE PAINT" TO MATCH THE NS HERITAGE UNIT? OR PERHAPS FULL GM&O STYLE RED? RAILFANS CAN ONLY HOPE...

Note regarding Author & This Article

On many occasions, past editors of The Penny rail asked, requested, and sometimes even begged for news stories and articles for the newsletter.

We've been blessed with great writers, editors, and photographers over the years since I joined the Western Kentucky Chapter NRHS in 1993. I've often felt the old ICG Birmingham Line never got the attention it deserved in the railfan community. It just didn't make sense that this rail line never turned into an ICG regional spinoff like P&L or Chicago Central. Perhaps it did with the West Tennessee Railroad, just in a different way and on a different timetable – without the fleet of second-hand GP10s like other ICG regionals.

In July 2012 and again in December 2014, I visited the WTNN route and presented the idea of a "feature edition" to our editor Matt Gentry. He graciously accepted this type of "guest project" for those of us who aspire to write a Trains-like article but might not be certain of their publishing abilities. Got a special railroad or article you'd like to share? Why not consider writing a "feature edition" like this one.

About The Author

Chris Dees grew up in Calvert City, Kentucky, near the Illinois Central Gulf Kentucky Division. His first memories of the ICG Kentucky Division were from a red wagon, pulled by his Granny Clemmie who lived a block south of the ICG main in Calvert – the early days of the ICG and Paducah rebuilds.

He is a 1992 graduate of Murray State University (BS Electrical Engineering Technology with a minor in Physics), having worked in quality assurance engineering with Siemens, Honeywell, Kimball Electronics, Harman/Becker Automotive, Hella Electronics, and TRW Automotive. Chris is currently a Senior Electrical Engineer with Panasonic Automotive Systems in Peachtree City, Georgia.

When not railfanning or planning a HO scale layout based on the West Tennessee Railroad, Chris enjoys amateur radio and public safety communications monitoring. He is a Global Administrator for www.radioreference.com and holds an Extra Class FCC Amateur Radio license under callsign KD4YGG. Chris has been a member of the Western Kentucky Chapter NRHS since 1993.