

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

March, 2011

SHREVEPORT, LA

Our 30th Year

Streetcar Tracks to Nowhere



In 1955 repairs were being made to the Traffic (Street) Bridge over Red River between Shreveport and Bossier. While preparing to lay new concrete, workmen uncovered these street car tracks. Officials of the Shreveport Railways Co., operators of the public transportation system in Shreveport at the time, said the tracks were laid when the bridge was constructed in 1914 but the company never had any plans to run street cars to Bossier City. In fact, there were never any connecting lines at the bridge approaches on either side of the river.

This bridge was the third one across Red River connecting Shreveport and Bossier, and the first one built specifically for vehicle and pedestrian use. It linked Barksdale Boulevard in Bossier City with Lake Street in Shreveport. The first bridge (Vicksburg, Shreveport & Pacific Railroad Bridge) allowed vehicles and pedestrians to use it only when a train was not on it. The second bridge was the Cotton Belt Railroad Bridge, built specifically for railroad use.

In order to pay for the Traffic Bridge, tolls were taken on both sides of the river. The highest toll was 20 cents for a “vehicle and driver drawn by six animals”. Other tolls were 5 cents for pedestrians, 5 cents for “loose horses and mules”, 3 cents for “other stock such as goats, sheep, etc”. School children, policemen and Confederate veterans drawing a pension were allowed to cross free.

The Traffic Bridge was demolished in 1968 after it was essentially replaced by the I-20 Bridge. Thanks to the LSU Shreveport Noel Memorial Library Archives & Special collections for providing the above photo by Langston McEachern.

“Engineer for a Day” Program in Jefferson



The photos on the previous page were taken at the Historic Jefferson Railway in Jefferson, Texas during their “Engineer for a Day” program on February 19th. The students were Tim Blackwell (Cowcatcher Magazine editor & publisher), Roy Richie (Roy’s Toys & Trains), Jerry Lentz and your editor. Joe Hedl was the Instructor and was assisted by Kenda Hayes, Director of Operations for the railroad. It was an informative and enjoyable day for your editor and the other participants. The program is offered to anyone (over 18) who wants to spend a day learning about steam railroading and then actually operating a steam locomotive. Their locomotive, a 4-4-0 American similar to those used in the late 1800s, was built in 1964 for a tourist railroad. Instead of being a wood-burner like those built in the nineteenth century, its boiler is heated by propane which makes it much easier and practical to operate. If you would like more information, call Joe at 903-938-5615 or check their website www.jeffersonrailway.com

Next RRVrHS Meeting on March 18 at the Glen

The meeting will be held on Friday, **March 18** at **7 p.m.** in the auditorium at the Glen Retirement Village, 403 East Flournoy Lucas Road. **Please be on time** for the beginning of the meeting so you won’t miss anything. The Glen Retirement Village is located on the south side of Flournoy Lucas Road between Ellerbe Road and Youree Drive (Highway 1). For information or directions call Dave Bland at (318) 470-5933.

Upcoming Events

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| March 18 | RRVRHS Meeting at the Glen – 7 p.m. |
| March 19-20 | Longview Train Show |
| March 22 | T&P Depot Museum in Marshall – 6 p.m. - T&P Family Ties Meeting |
| April 12 | T&P Depot Museum in Marshall – 6 p.m. – “Boogie Woogie and the T&P Railway” |
| April 15 | RRVRHS Meeting at the Glen – 7 p.m. |
| Apr 30 | Southern Forest Heritage Museum Heritage Day – Longleaf, LA |
| May 21 | RRVRHS Fish Fry at McNeill Street Pumping Station – 3 to 7 p.m. |

McNeill Street Pumping Station (Shreveport Water Works Museum)

Call (318) 221-3388 for information and directions.

Texas & Pacific Depot Museum in Marshall

Call (903) 938-9495 for information about their ongoing programs.

See Current and Previous Newsletters in **COLOR at our website**

(Thanks to Tommy Crenshaw)

www.rrvrhs.org

The President's Message – March 2011

Hello Railfans:

It's time for another article from yours truly. Dave tells me that we have now published sixty-plus newsletters since he began as editor. We all have enjoyed reading the new format and all agree that Dave is doing an awesome job assembling, printing and getting out the newsletter. Thanks Dave.

Since our last visit we had our day in court with the Justice of Peace in Greenwood. We won the battle but lost the war. Several of us spoke as witnesses and were questioned by the J. O. P. Mr. Ware of the Rose Center was the only person for the opposing side. The J. O. P. awarded us the rail that is stored at the Rose Center and \$80.00 to cover the court cost. The Rose Center got to keep the red diesel (gasoline) engine and the passenger cars. We will discuss this at the next meeting.

Last Saturday several members met at the museum site and worked tracing the old wire and conduit leading out of the main fuse box through the floor. All of this wire was found to be out of use and will be abandoned. Also, all of the original light fixtures were taken down to be cleaned up and re-used after the new wire and conduit are installed.

Work is progressing on the model of the museum and should be ready to present to the mayor next month. I received a copy of "The Flight of the Phoenix", the newsletter of the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society, and they reported our progress on the museum building. RRVrHS member Conway Link was elected president of that society and Dale Ward was elected executive director. Congratulations Conway and Dale !

Your president will be attending the re-organizational meeting of the Shreveport Historic Preservation Society as a representative of the RRVrHS.

Well, that's all for now. See you at the meeting next Friday at 7:00 p. m.

Happy Railroading!
Russell

**RED RIVER VALLEY
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
Shreveport, LA
www.rrvrhs.org**

Russell Pedro – President Kelly Jo Brunettin – Vice President
Gary Fox – Secretary Bill Hasheider – Treasurer
Dave Bland – Newsletter Editor – 797-8008 – DDBland@aol.com

It is time to pay your 2011 Annual Dues

Please send a check or money order for \$16.50 with this membership form to Bill Hasheider at 6813 Despot Road, Shreveport, LA 71108

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____