

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

MARCH, 2010

SHREVEPORT, LA

OUR 29<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

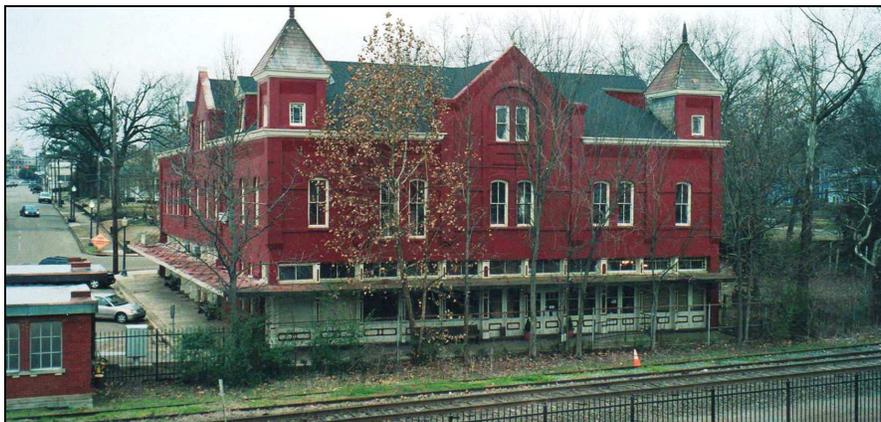
---

## Railroad Hotels



When people traveled by rail there were often times that train schedules forced them to spend the night in hotels along the way. The alternative was to spend the night in the train station sleeping on a hard wooden bench ! (which many folks on a limited budget did) Every city had a hotel within walking distance of the station. In Marshall, that was the Ginocchio Hotel built in 1896 directly across the tracks from the depot. The photo above, taken by your editor in 1988, shows the close proximity of the two facilities. At the time of the photo the future of the T&P Depot was in doubt. We are all very thankful that the depot was restored and now houses the T&P Museum and serves as the Amtrak station.

The Ginocchio was restored in 1988 as a bed & breakfast hotel. After it closed, the building has housed the Harrison County Historical Museum which is being moved to the restored Harrison County courthouse. The photo below was taken in 2005 from the balcony of the T&P Depot.





In Shreveport, the closest place to stay was the Jefferson Hotel on Louisiana Ave., directly across the street from Union Station. The hotel was built in 1923 and was the third largest hotel in the city with 150 rooms. It was the first completely fireproof building in Shreveport and one of the first to use copper plumbing throughout. It was also one of the first hotels in the area to furnish basement parking for customers' cars. It was not elaborate, but served the purpose. According to the 1948 Shreveport City Directory, the rates were "\$2.00 up including a bath".

In addition to being a railroad hotel, many baseball fans used the hotel and it was a center of activity during Texas League baseball seasons. The departure of baseball from Shreveport in 1961 along with decreased passenger train business caused the hotel to close in 1962. It has been used for various purposes since then including a mission and low income housing. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **UP 844 Steam Engine Schedule & Route**

The last steam locomotive built for Union Pacific, 4-8-4 Northern No. 844, will be returning to Texas April 2 – April 29 as *The Valley Eagle*, one of Union Pacific's scheduled 2010 excursions. Rides on the excursion are not available to the public according to UP. The plan now is to go east from Cheyenne to Kansas City and then down south through McAlester, Fort Worth, on to Houston and then on down to Harlingen, Texas. Sources say it is planned to come back through Palestine on the way home and should be there the night of April 19th, leave for Longview on the 20<sup>th</sup> and be in North Little Rock on the night of April 21<sup>st</sup>, layover in North Little Rock on April 22nd and then leave April 23rd. That is the plan now and of course that is always subject to change. An update will be printed in the April Newsletter.

If anyone has information pertaining to the schedule and route, please let your editor know (Dave Bland [DDBlund@aol.com](mailto:DDBlund@aol.com) or 318- 470-5933)

## **Next RRVRS Meeting on March 19 at the Glen**

The meeting will be held on Friday, **March 19** 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. A program will be presented after the business discussion. Suggestions and assistance with future programs are needed, so bring your ideas to the meeting. 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.

## **Program for March 19 - Hotel La Posada**

La Posada Hotel, the “last great railroad hotel,” was built in 1929 for the Santa Fe Railway. La Posada embodies the visions of both Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, the hotel’s renowned architect, and Allan Affeldt, its current owner. But the story really begins with Fred Harvey, who “civilized the west” by introducing linen, silverware, china, crystal, and impeccable service to railroad travel. (He was so legendary that MGM made a movie called *The Harvey Girls* starring Judy Garland.) Harvey developed and ran all the hotels and restaurants of the Santa Fe Railway, eventually controlling a hospitality empire that spanned the continent.

In the 1920s, Harvey decided to build a major hotel in the center of northern Arizona. “La Posada”—the Resting Place—was to be the finest in the Southwest. Construction costs alone exceeded \$1 million in 1929. Total budget with grounds and furnishings was rumored at \$2 million (about \$40 million in today’s dollars). They chose Winslow, then (as now) the Arizona headquarters for the Santa Fe Railway. Winslow was ideally situated for a resort hotel since everything to see and do in northern Arizona is a comfortable day’s drive.

## **North Louisiana Historical Association**

The North Louisiana Historical Association [NLHA] is organized to encourage an appreciation and understanding of the history of North Louisiana. For purposes of the organization, “North Louisiana” is considered to include all of Louisiana from approximately Alexandria northwards.

An excellent journal, *North Louisiana History*, is published two times a year by the association. The Editor is one of our long-time members, Gay Griffith Means. Over the years it has contained many excellent railroad articles, such as: *The 'Natchitoches Tap'*, *North Louisiana's Strategic Railroad*, *Shreveport and the Railroads*, *William Edenborn: A Robber Baron in La.* and *Railroad Consolidation and the Short Line Railroads*. A complete set of the journals is available at the LSUS Archives. For more information about the NLHA see [www.northlouisianahistory.org](http://www.northlouisianahistory.org)

## **Upcoming Events**

March 19	RRVRS Monthly Meeting at the Glen
March 20-21	Longview Train Show
April 11	Texas State Railroad Photo Excursion
April 20	Marshall Depot – 7 p.m. - “Who is Bozo Texino?” video and discussion
April 20-21(?)	UP 844 from Palestine to Longview to Texarkana to North Little Rock
May 1	Southern Forest Museum Heritage Day, Longleaf, LA (RRVRS trip)
June 12	Marshall Depot – 7 p.m. - “Talkin’ to the T & P” panel discussion

## The President's Message – March 2010

Hello Railfans:

Spring has arrived and good weather will be returning soon. I am looking forward to Society activities the next few months. We will be promoting several trips this spring. The first one will be on May 1<sup>st</sup> to the Southern Forest Museum in Longleaf. They have a restored rail car that will be interesting to see and ride. If you have not been to this forestry museum you are in for a real treat. Another trip will be planned to the Texas State Railroad in Rusk, Texas. I urge all of you to plan on traveling to this almost local railroad where you can see steam locomotives in action. Those of us who have been in the past have always enjoyed ourselves very much. We are planning on reserving the caboose again for the Society to ride in.

I am hoping that 2010 will be our year to move into a museum home. I think that it is very possible to achieve this goal. On Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> a group of 6 members including Dave Bland, Jennifer Brunet, Gary Fox, Bill Hashieder, Paul Hoge and myself met at the McNeill Street Pump Station and worked at pointing up the brick on the outside of the building. One more work session will finish the brick work and we will be ready to install new windows, which will finish the outside of the building. If the weather is good on Saturday, March 13 we will have another work session.

Those of you who missed the last meeting missed another very good program. The topic was O. Winston Link and his photography. Conway Link, his son, was present and added some interesting information to the video. Well done, Dave and Conway! The March program will be presented by Paul Hoge and promises to be another good one. In the near future Dave and I will do a program on Walt Disney, who was an avid Railfan.

Before I finish this article I would like to thank a certain member of our Society who has been contributing money for our museum project. I think that he does not want to be conspicuous because of the way the money is given to us. I hope I am not reading this wrong. If so, I apologize and will make known this wonderful person and friend.

Happy Railroading!  
Russell

### **RED RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

2424 Lakecrest Drive Shreveport, LA 71109

[www.rvrhs.org](http://www.rvrhs.org)

Russell Pedro – President      Dave Bland – Vice President

Mark Brunettin – Secretary      Bill Hasheider – Treasurer

Dave Bland – Newsletter Editor – 797-8008 – [DDBland@aol.com](mailto:DDBland@aol.com)

---

### **It is time to pay your 2010 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 \_\_\_\_\_