

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

SEPTEMBER, 2009

SHREVEPORT, LA

OUR 28TH YEAR

As you know, the Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society has been invited to set up a Railroad Exhibit in one of the buildings at the Shreveport Water Works Museum (SWWM) on N. Common Street in Shreveport. The SWWM is part of the Louisiana State museum system under Secretary of State Jay Dardenne, and is supported locally by the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society headed up by Dale Ward. Several RRVRS members have been working diligently over the last few months to renovate the building, and more information about the project is found later in the Newsletter. Just in case you are not familiar with this historic facility, I would like to share with you information about its historical significance. We are honored that they want to have us there to complement their museum. The information below is from their website at www.mcneillstreet.org



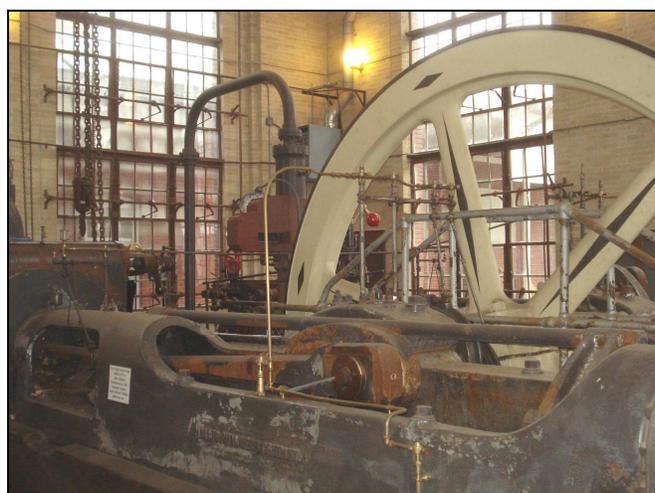
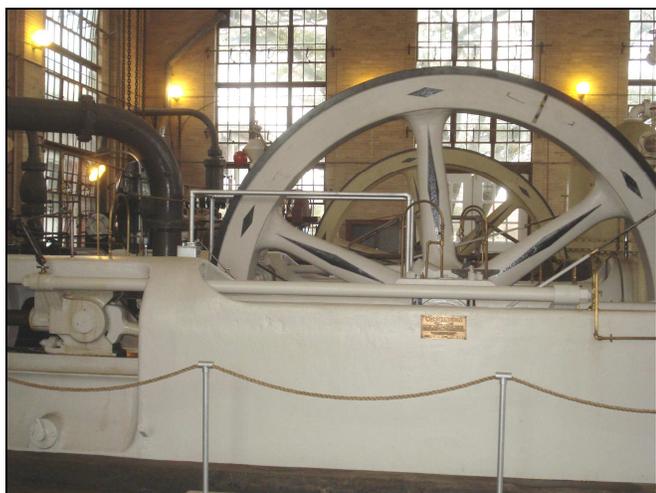
History of the McNeill Street Pumping Station

The McNeill Street Pumping Station, located near downtown Shreveport on the banks of Cross Bayou, is Shreveport's original waterworks. The first water plant facilities, including steam-driven pumps, were installed on the site in 1887 as part of the construction of Shreveport's first municipal water system, which was only the second such municipal system in the entire state. Portions of that original installation, along with major additions from the 1899-1921 time frame, continued to operate until 1994, although the steam pumps were finally retired in 1980.

The McNeill plant is typical of waterworks from the turn of the last century that were once common throughout the United States, but which have long since disappeared from the landscape. Through a combination of circumstances, McNeill not only survived intact beyond its era, but actually remained in operation using antique steam-powered machinery dating from the late 1800's and early 1900's. These exceedingly rare examples of bygone technology can not only be found at McNeill, but are still intact in their original historic location and are in an operable configuration thanks to meticulous maintenance by water department personnel before final retirement in 1980. Robert Vogel, former Curator of Heavy Machinery and Civil Engineering at the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of History and Technology, visited McNeill in 1980 and commented at that time that two of the Worthington pumps there may be the sole survivors of their types.

McNeill is historically noteworthy in other areas of early water treatment technology, as well. Water filtration was begun at McNeill in 1890 when fewer than 10% of the nation's water plants were providing filtered water. McNeill adopted reinforced concrete construction for filter tanks only two years after this innovation was first applied at a New Jersey plant. McNeill was even quicker to implement chlorine to disinfect water when Shreveport bought one of the country's first chlorinating machines in 1914, only one year after the first use of liquid chlorine in 1913.

The historic significance of McNeill has been recognized by a number of national organizations. It is on the register of National Historic Sites and is also a National Historic Landmark (the only one in Shreveport or Northwest Louisiana until recently joined by the Municipal Auditorium). The American Waterworks Association has designated it an Historic American Water Landmark. In 1999, the American Society of Civil Engineers designated McNeill a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Only the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse were also accorded this distinction in 1999.



Two steam-driven crank-and-flywheel high service engines that drove Worthington water pumps at McNeill Street. Each one could pump 5,000,000 gallons of water per day.

Work Is Ongoing at the McNeill Street Pumping Station



Interior cleaning of the railroad exhibit building has continued so that painting, window replacement and ceiling installment can be done. The exterior of the building is shown in the top left photo, and Paul Hoge is seen “cleaning up” in the top right photo. In the bottom photo, Russell Pedro is standing in the area where we want to eventually move steam locomotive D&R No. 10 (now at Ford Park). The combination of a railroad exhibit and a steam locomotive will be great additions to the Shreveport Water Works Museum site. Additional opportunities will be pursued after the first two objectives are in place. Some of the Society members that have worked on the project so far are Gary Fox, Paul Hoge, Mark Brunnetin, Russell Pedro, Bill Hasheider, Eric Schonfarber, Jared Schonfarber and your Editor. Please get involved and help! Call Gary Fox at 631-9164 for work dates and information.

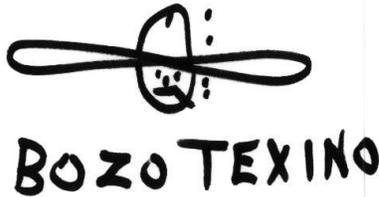
The site is located at 142 N. Common Street. This is on the east side of the street 1/4 mile north of the intersection of Common with Caddo St. There is a "Shreveport Water Works Museum" sign in the front yard, as well as a large blue and white sign marking the driveway entrance.

Society Meeting at the Glen Retirement Village

The next meeting will be held on Friday, **September 18** at **7 p.m.** in the auditorium at the Glen Retirement Village, 403 East Flournoy Lucas Road. The Glen Retirement Village is located on the south side of Flournoy Lucas Road between Ellerbe Road and Youree Drive (Highway 1). (Please do not confuse it with the Live Oak Retirement Home located on the north side of Flournoy Lucas Road.)

We will discuss renovation work at the McNeill Street Pumping Station (Shreveport Water Works Museum), moving D&R No. 10 and other activities. An entertaining program will be presented. For information or directions call Dave Bland at (318) 470-5933.

Who Is Bozo Texino ?



Come to the September meeting and see a movie made by a hobo about hobos and boxcar “art” !

Upcoming Events

- Oct. 10 Pioneer Heritage Day at LSUS
- Oct. ?? RRVrHS Fall Banquet (Date to be determined at September Meeting)
- Oct. 31-Nov. 1 Train Show in Marshall
- Nov. 8 Fall Photo Excursion at the Texas State RR (see www.texasstaterr.com)

Langston McEachern Photo Exhibit

An exhibition of photographs titled “Fame: The Portraiture of Langston McEachern” is now on display at LSU Shreveport. The exhibition features selections from the Henry Langston McEachern (1918-2004) Photograph Collection held by LSUS Archives and Special Collections.

Langston McEachern, Shreveport *Times* photo editor for nearly forty years, photographed a broad spectrum of subjects in his long career. This exhibition brings together examples of his work on the subject of fame, combining some familiar images with unpublished photographs from his personal collection. The exhibition aims to represent Langston McEachern’s remarkable ability to capture spontaneously glimpses of what lay beyond the famous exterior of his subjects. It is curated by LSUS Archives staff, Shawn Bohannon and Laura McLemore, with assistance from Adjunct Instructor of Fine Arts, Michael Graham with Studio of Visual Arts.

The exhibition will be on display through October 2, 2009, on the third floor of Noel Memorial Library. Exhibit hours are Monday, 7:30 am to 9:00 pm, and Tuesday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.

RRVRHS on the Internet

Be sure to check out our own website at www.rvrhs.org where you can see the newsletters in living color! Thanks to Tommy Crenshaw for setting it up and updating it.

The President's Message – September 2009

Hello Railfans:

Well its time for another newsletter, another banquet, another election, another meeting and another year.

At our next meeting we need to discuss our annual Fall Banquet. Be thinking about what you would like. We can have the same thing that we had the last few years or go back to Bar-B-Q or try something different. Think about it and come to the next meeting to let us know.

Another thing that usually happens this time of year is the election of officers for the coming year. The election will be held at our November meeting. Nominations will be taken in October so be thinking about who you would like to nominate.

If you have not been able to attend our meetings lately you have been missing some good programs. In the past we have had some long, boring business meetings and a lot of you have lost interest because of this. Lately our business meetings have been very short and the programs put on by our vice president have taken up the majority of the time and have been very interesting and informative. At some of our recent meetings Conway Link, son of O. Winston Link, has brought some interesting information and articles to share with us.

Work on the Railroad Exhibit building is progressing and we should be nearing the point of painting. By the time you read this newsletter Dave will have met with the window and ceiling people to get a price on their part of the work. I know that a lot of you have not been able to help because of the dirt and heat but that is about all behind us and things should be easier.

Dave and I have been working on the necessary information that we need to give the National Guard regarding the move of engine D&R No. 10.

Well that is about all I can think of at this moment so I will close for now. Hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Happy Railroading!
Russell

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

It is time to pay your 2009 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 _____