



THE GATEWAY RAILLETTER

St. Louis Chapter NRHS --- www.stlouisnrhs.org

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BNSF GP60M 104 peaks out between two tracks of freight cars in Spokane, Wash. on July 20, 2018. The 104 was built by EMD in July 1990 for the Santa Fe with the same number.

Photo by Rick Sprung

UPCOMING CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, June 3, 2026 7:00 pm
The National Museum of Transportation
Lindburg Automobile Center, 2nd Floor

President's Message

We had some great tours in the last month. A big thanks to Rick Sprung and Bill Schaberg for setting up the two tours. Also a big thanks to both our tour guides; Darlene and Amanda. If anyone has other suggestions for tours or activities, please let us know.

Its summer travel season. If any of you have any good rail related photos, consider sharing them in the newsletter, or as a monthly program.

St. Louis Chapter Local Spring Tours

The St. Louis Chapter NRHS conducted two local tours this spring. The first, on April 24, was to St. Louis Union Station for a behind the scenes tour. The second was to the National Building Arts Center in Sauget, Ill., on Saturday, May 2. Both were excellent tours. Eileen Weber reports on both tours.

St. Louis Union Station

On Friday, April 24, 17 St. Louis Chapter members and friends received a private tour of St. Louis Union Station. This tour was led by docent Darlene Menietti, a long-time Union Station employee and Historian. As our group was most interested in rail-related history, Darlene geared the tour toward that, and took us to some areas of the station not seen on most tours. Needless to say, the architects and engineers in the group really enjoyed the "behind the scenes" areas. The two-hour walking tour concluded with lunch in the Link Room, one of the private dining rooms off the Station Grille, and a special presentation of the Grand Hall Light Show.

St. Louis Union Station's primary architect was Theodore C. Link. The Station was opened on September 1, 1894, at a cost of \$6.5 million. The train shed was designed by George Pegram, a Washington University student. The structure is 606 feet wide and 75 feet tall at its highest. The shed was originally 700 feet long; it was extended to 810 feet in 1901. When built the train shed held 32 tracks; an additional 10 tracks were added in 1929.

Unlike other train stations at the time, trains backed into Union Station to allow passengers to get off close to the headhouse. Union Station was considered a TERMINAL station, with no through trains. Both long-distance and commuter trains used the station.

The heyday of trains in St. Louis was World War II when the station handled over 300 trains per day. By 1970, the Station had only six trains per day, and the last Amtrak train pulled out October 31, 1978.

National Building Arts Center in Sauget

Eleven members of the St. Louis Chapter NRHS visited the National Building Arts Center on Saturday, May 2. The center, located in Sauget, Illinois, promotes public awareness of the crucial roles of architecture, manufacturing, construction, and urban design in our built environment. Our tour's emphasis was their collection of street car related items plus any railroad items. Of course we learned about other artifacts as well. We spent additional time in their library after the tour. The engineers and architects in the group were amazed by the artifacts. Our tour was led by docent and historian Amanda Clark. She volunteers at NBAC, while professionally she is employed at the Missouri History Museum.

In terms of both artifacts and archives, the majority of what is directly railroad-related comes from United Railways, the St. Louis streetcar system. This includes machinery from streetcar shops, fare boxes, and technical drawings of tracks/stations/streetcars/etc. They have fragments of streetcar track, presumed to also be from St. Louis. The reference library contains some books about railroads, both streetcar and otherwise. Additionally, the foundry (Sterling Steel) that used to operate on their campus, and for which they have extensive papers, made wheels for mine carts and possibly other rail vehicles.

Most of the tour was outdoors or in buildings that lacked roofs and/or walls: facility-wise, it was somewhere in between "construction site" and "museum". About 15-20

minutes were spent fully indoors in the climate-controlled library stacks, but there is one step up into that room.

This was an opportunity to visit a place relatively few St. Louisans know about on a docent guided tour. For additional information, please see nationalbuildingarts.org.



Above: Union Station tour group on the west balcony overlooking the Grand Hall.

Below: The Grand Hall at St. Louis Union Station.



The tour group in the Union Station Bell Tower



Left and above: The area above the Union Station Grand Hall ceiling.



Lunch in the Link dining room



National Buildings Arts Center tour group. The bricks at left are samples of the many types of bricks made in St. Louis.



Above: Rich Chenault looks at crates of architectural details from the old St. Louis Police Court Building.

Below: Big Four Railway - The Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway - sign from St. Louis.



Above left: Bill Schaberg discusses a terrazzo sales sample with the depiction St. Louis. Above Right: The Center has several crates of fare boxes from St. Louis streetcars and buses.



Nurse figurines from the the old Deaconess Hospital /Forest Park

Tour photos courtesy of David Huelsing, Eileen Weber and Rick Sprung.

For additional pictures, please see the chapter web page:

<https://stlouisnrhs.org/NRHS-Stl-Web/pastevents/>

St. Louis Area History Showcase

The St. Louis Chapter NRHS will have a table at the HISTORY SHOWCASE at Jefferson Barracks Park on Saturday, June 6 (details below).

If you would like to help, contact David Huelsing - dhuelsing@stlouisnrhs.org

THE ST. LOUIS REGIONAL HISTORY ORGANIZATIONS
AND ST. LOUIS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION PRESENT

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SAINT LOUIS AREA

THE HISTORY SHOWCASE

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A CELEBRATION OF AMERICA 250

★ SATURDAY, JUNE 6 | 10:00AM - 4:00PM ★

LIVING HISTORY
DEMONSTRATIONS
HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES
AUTHORS
LOCAL HISTORIANS &
HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

FREE



FOOD ★ HISTORY ★ LIVE MUSIC

 **JEFFERSON BARRACKS PARK** 
345 NORTH ROAD, ST. LOUIS, MO

   

Parting Shots...



The RailCruise America train better known as the Green Train, rolls northbound through Godfrey, Illinois on its way to Chicago. Based at St. Louis Union Station, the eight car train made privately chartered trips in the area or across the country. It also ran regularly scheduled dinner train operations out of Union Station *Photographer unknown, Collection of Rick Sprung*

Minutes for the St Louis Chapter NRHS May Meeting

Date: May 6, 2026

The president called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Museum of Transport.

New members and guests: Amanda Ryman.

Need to approve the April Minutes. Motion to approve the April meeting minutes was made by Al Weber and seconded by Eileen Weber. The motion was approved. Correction was made to the Al Weber Tribute Fund. Motion was made to approve amended minutes. The minutes were declared approved.

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OFFICER REPORTS:

VP Program Director-Andy Sisk:Amanda Ryman will talk about grant projects that the NRHS has supported. Next month Bill Bergmann will give a program on a Porter Steam locomotive.

VP Trip Director – Rick Sprung:*Given by Dave Huelsing in Rick's absence. Mentioned trips to Union Station and Building Arts Center tour*

VP Membership - Eileen Weber: *No change to membership. We are always accepting membership*

Treasurer – Steve Siegerist: *We have money. See the treasurer's report.*

An Investment committee report was given by Ron Zimmer.

Secretary – Bill Heger:*No report was given.*

National Advisory Committee Representative - Cliff Kierstead: *No report was given.*

Railletter Editor: *Vacant*

Internet Media Administrator – Steve Binning:*Not present. No report.*

Librarian - Taylor: *See the back table for current library offerings.*

Parliamentarian - Ron Zimmer: *No action by parliamentarian. Committee reviewed Al Weber tribute fund. Will be brought up tonight during old business.*

President - David Huelsing: *No report given.*

OLD BUSINESS:

Bill Heger brought up the motion to create the Al Weber Tribute fund. Fred Blank was present. Al Weber Tribute Fund - Replacement Motion:

The St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society shall establish a special fund to be known as the Al Weber Tribute Fund.

This fund shall be a sub-account of the Chapter treasury for the purpose of aggregating voluntary contributions to be forwarded to The National Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, MO.

Upon approval of this action, the Executive Board of the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society shall that appropriate language is amended to the Chapter Bylaws, Policies and Procedures.

Motion to lift from table was made by Andy Sisk, seconded by Jim Gillespie. Motion carried. We discussed the substitution. Steve Siegeist brought up lack of donations to existing endowment fund. He questioned the need for the fund. Ron Zimmer said we are voting on language. Vote to change language of motion passed. A vote was taken on the revised motion. Motion as amended passed.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

NEWS ITEMS:

Jim Gillespie: Asked about UP 4014 coming to town.

Andy Sisk: Train show in Arnold on May 23,

Bill Schaburg is selling books.

Held 50/50

Meeting Adjourned: 7:19 PM

Submitted by: Bill Heger, Secretary

St. Louis Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

We Are (Still) Looking For An Editor

Want to be an editor of a periodical publication? Always wanted to put a newsletter together? Here's your chance...

The Chapter's *Gateway Railletter* Editor position is currently vacant. The job requires a few hours a month of putting articles, news and photos into the MailChimp format.

Without an editor the Gateway Railletter does not get published. We can't depend on temporary editors forever.

If you are interested in becoming the editor, please contact David Huelsing or any chapter officer. Until we find a new editor David and Rick Sprung will be filling the position. If you have anything that you would like to submit please e-mail it to newsletter.exchange@stlouisnrhs.org. Photos must have captions or an overall description included. Image and text file requirements can be found below.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO **THE GATEWAY RAILLETTER**, THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CONTENT IS THE 20TH OF THE MONTH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S ISSUE. **THE GATEWAY RAILLETTER** IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY ON OR BEFORE THE 25TH OF THE MONTH. SEND YOUR ARTICLE OR PHOTOS TO

NEWSLETTER.EXCHANGE@STLOUISNRHS.ORG.

PHOTOS MUST HAVE A CAPTION OR GENERAL DESCRIPTION. IMAGE FILES SHOULD BE jpg, gif, png, bmp or tif FORMAT. DOCUMENT FILES CAN BE doc, docx, or pdf.

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