

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

Web Site: [WWW.RRVVHRS.ORG](http://WWW.RRVVHRS.ORG)

On Facebook: [Shreveport Railroad Museum](https://www.facebook.com/ShreveportRailroadMuseum)

Russell Pedro – President

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*August, 2017*

SHREVEPORT, LA

*Our 36<sup>th</sup> Year*

## Shreveport Union Station



Vintage postcards show Union Station in its original architectural form (top left) and after it was “modernized” (top right) under Couch management in the early 1940’s, when touches of art deco were added. The bottom photos by Langston McEachern show the depot in 1946. (Photos courtesy of LSU Shreveport Noel Memorial Library Archives and Special Collections)

The Union Station in Shreveport was owned by the Kansas City, Shreveport and Gulf Terminal Co., a subsidiary of the KCS. It opened in August 1897. Over the years, it was used by the KCS, Louisiana Railway & Navigation Co., Louisiana & Arkansas, Illinois Central, Cotton Belt and the Texas & Pacific railroads. In 1940, KCS/L&A operations were consolidated at Union Station, ending use of Central Station for passenger trains. In 1941, the Texas & Pacific Railway started using their new station on Market Street.

The last passenger train to use Union Station was the famous KCS Southern Belle. On Monday, November 3, 1969 the Southern Belle train from New Orleans to Kansas City passed through the Shreveport Union Station and the station closed to passenger traffic.

Two days later, at 4:12 pm on Wednesday November 5, the Shreveport Fire Department received an alarm that a fire had broken out in the basement of the station. The basement had been used for years as a storage area and contained a number of old mattresses used by train crews to sleep there during layovers, plus old invoices, manifests and bills of lading. Fire Chief Dallas Greene said the fire may have been started by a transient who could have been sleeping there, but an investigation showed no signs of anyone being in the building when the fire broke out. All utilities had been cut off after the departure of the last train. No repairs were made to the building and it was soon completely demolished, including the train sheds.



The above photos above were taken by *Shreveport Journal* photographer Bill Causey, Jr. and are printed courtesy of LSU Shreveport Noel Memorial Library Archives and Special Collections.

## **Abandoned Rails: Shreveport Union Station**

There is an interesting web site named [www.abandonedrails.com](http://www.abandonedrails.com) operated by Greg Harrison in Saginaw, Texas. It contains photos, information and comments about old and abandoned railroad sites all over the United States. Check it out!

See especially [http://www.abandonedrails.com/Shreveport Union Station](http://www.abandonedrails.com/Shreveport_Union_Station)

### **Upcoming Events**

August 18 – RRVRS Meeting – 7 p.m. - Shreveport Water Works Museum – 142 N. Common St. - Call (318) 458-3123 for information.

Sept. 1- First Friday Railroad Photography Meeting – 7:30 p.m. at the Shreveport Water Works Museum – 142 N. Common St. – Call (318) 458-3123 for information.

### **The President's Message**

Hello Railfans!

This month I would like to discuss a little known part of our hobby that I think everyone might be interested in. The subject is motor cars or putt-putts. We have a Union Pacific motor car in our collection (see photo below) that would be a source of fun for all of us. There is a national organization known as NARCOA. This stands for North American Railcar Operators Association. In their monthly magazine SETOFF, they list 61 excursions so far for this year. An excursion consists of riding privately owned rail cars on different railroads throughout the year. Membership in NARCOA is \$36 per year and the required insurance is about \$150 per year. The fee for riding on these excursions varies from \$25 to as high as \$450 depending on the length of the run. NARCOA requires that each operator take a written test on the rules book and some training. We could buy the insurance and get several people qualified to operate and take a guest on these runs. Our motor car could be placed in running condition very easily. I think we should look into this little known part of our hobby and make use of our motor car.

Well, let's talk more about this later.

Happy Railroading!

Russell



Motor car donated by the Union Pacific Railroad to the RRVRS

## **Are You Paid Up on Your Dues ?**

Please send a check or money order for \$20.00 with this membership form to Bill Hasheider at  
6813 Despot Road, Shreveport, LA 71108

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society  
3012 Nottingham Drive  
Shreveport, LA 71115

**Next Meeting**  
**August 18**