

# Roundhouse Notes

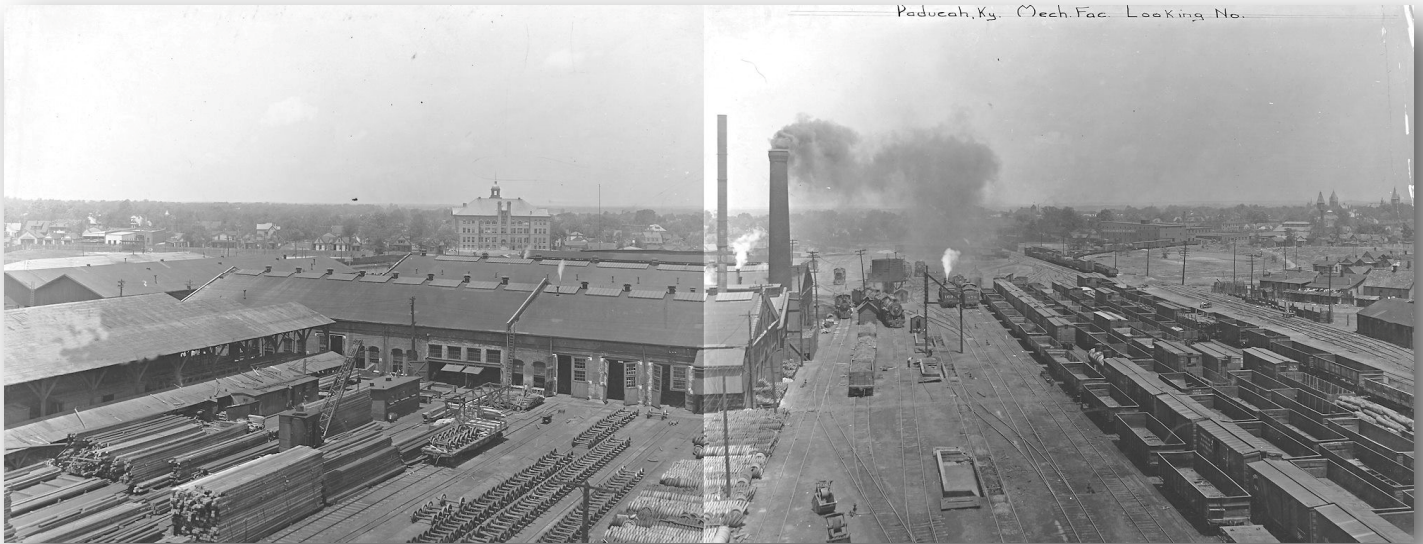
Paducah Chapter  
National Railway Historical Society  
April 2017

## Roundhouse notes returns.

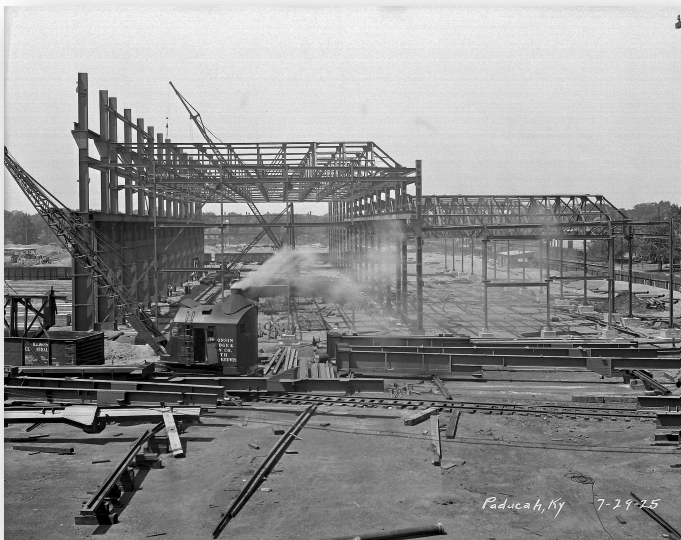
After a slight pause in publishing due to work schedules and other obligations, Roundhouse Notes is returning. Slightly Truncated, Slightly out of date.

## Paducah Shops

Here are some shots of the Shops at Paducah during various time periods.



*Panoramic view of Paducah's Original Shops. Taken from the coal tower looking north. The photo dates from May of 1918 Part of the Cliff Downey Collection.*



*Construction of the current Paducah shops July 1925  
Cliff Downey Collection*



*February 1937, The Paducah shops flooded with the Ohio river. Cliff Downey Collection.*

# NEWS AND VIEWS

*Bob Johnston*

*This version of News and views is from the last unpublished Round-house notes.*

*From August 2016 Newer versions will follow.*

**MIKE FAVRE:** Our friend and long-time chapter member suffered a fall on wet steps at his home on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, resulting in two broken ribs and a partially collapsed lung. After a few days in Baptist Health, Paducah, his lung re-inflated and he was dismissed and recuperated at home until he returned to his computer consulting work at P&L on July 19<sup>th</sup>. He still has to restrict his activities, but, we are glad to say, is on the road to full recovery

**P&L:** In an unprecedented event, the P&L Railway was shut down from July 7<sup>th</sup> to July 14<sup>th</sup> between Paducah and Calvert because of a wash-out at the Little Cypress Creek Bridge in Marshall County. Heavy rains during that week hit eastern Marshall County particularly hard causing Little Cypress Creek to become a surging river. The 1923 steel girder double track bridge over the creek had all the earth washed away from around and even under the concrete support pillars, as well as around the head wall, leaving the tracks with little or no support. Carloads of rock had to be brought in from Vulcan (Reed Crushed Stone) at Lake City and dumped and spread, which was, of course, time consuming. During the interval, attempts were made to detour loads from Paducah up the BNSF to the junction with the EVWR and then to Evansville and CSX back to Madisonville, but apparently because most loads were considered hazardous material, arrangements could not be made with BNSF. Details about whether the

CN's Fulton Turn continued to bring loads into Paducah daily are unclear, as were the effects on employment. It is safe to say, however, that the problem was very costly to P&L, and undoubtedly "lights burned late," in their headquarters." Trains finally began to run again on Thursday night, the 14<sup>th</sup>.

**NRE/VMV:** Outward signs remain fairly slow at the shops. Some interesting units observed include the P&L's SD 70 4522, in University of Kentucky colors with the slogan, "8 Times National Champions;" NREX 2775, an SD 40 in silver primer paint; I.C SD 40-3 6251, still in black & white; P&L GP 38-2 3812; and CN GP 40-2 9635 with "I.C." also stenciled on the cab.

**DALLAS TRAGEDY:** One of the officers killed in the Dallas massacre was a railroad policeman. Brent Thompson, 41, was a DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) officer. Three other DART officers were wounded as well and four Dallas Police officers were killed. The 25 year old shooter, Micah X. Johnson targeted white law enforcement officers from atop a parking garage in retaliation for a recent string of police shootings of blacks throughout the United States. After an exchange of gun fire, Johnson was killed by a police robot with a remotely detonated bomb. The shooting occurred less than two blocks from where President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963.

## **NASHVILLE SWAP OF FREIGHT FOR PASSENGER:**

The Nashville *Tennessean* has reported a suggestion to use CSX's Radnor Yard as a hub of a proposed mass transit system in the Nashville area.

In exchange CSX would relocate their terminal, which is one of the busiest in their system, to another site in central Tennessee where there would be room for expansion. The present site is constrained due to residential and industrial properties. The Tennessee Department of Transportation estimates the cost of relocating the yard to be \$ 750 million; it is believed that not only would congestion be relieved but also freight rail congestion in the region. So far there have been no formal discussions or proposals or about where the money would come from. However, the need is obvious, as Nashville is notorious for highway and road traffic congestion, and the only commuter service, the Music City Star, operates only over Nashville & Eastern right of way which is east & west, and provides no relief for north-south traffic.

**PROGRESS ON N.C. #576:** The June NEWS & VIEWS reported the proposal to move this 4-8-4 that has sat in Centennial Park for 60 years to the Tennessee Central Railroad yards for restoration and operation. The (Nashville) Metropolitan Board of Parks and Recreation on June 7 approved the proposal and it now has to go before the Nashville Metropolitan Council for three meetings. Meanwhile the Nashville Steam Preservation Society officials received a pleasant surprise when they opened the smoke box for the first time in years and found the superheated assembly to be in "new" condition with the original coating and shop tags still attached. Other components were also found to be in almost unused appearance with no carbon buildup. The roller bearing housings

on the drivers and trucks were found to be full of oil with no shavings, and ultrasonic testing on the firebox, crown sheet, and other locations found thicknesses to be as when delivered by Alco in 1942. All of this, of course, means that work will be less costly and progress faster than originally thought as the project hopefully moves ahead.

**FATAL MISTAKES:** On June 28<sup>th</sup> eastbound and westbound BNSF freights collided head-on near Amarillo, TX causing a massive fire and the death of three crew members (the westbound engineer jumped and survived). On July 14<sup>th</sup> the NTSB reported after preliminary review that the eastbound which was supposed to stop holding the main at a siding, instead ran both an approach and a stop signal and was still traveling at 62 mph when it hit the westbound, which had signals to enter the control point. Investigators believe the early morning sun may have been a factor "washing out" the signal, but railroad consultant Russ Quimby reached the obvious conclusion that the eastbound crew must have been asleep. At last reports two bodies were recovered, but that of Lara Gayle Taylor, 45, conductor of the westbound was not found, causing the tragic conclusions that it was consumed in the fire. Damage is estimated at \$ 16 million; further investigation continues....In Italy where two commuter trains had a head on collision causing the death of 23 people, a station master admitted to mistakenly giving one of the trains permission to leave the station when it should have been held. He told investigators that trains were running late at the time of the incident and three were in the area.

**GHOST SIGN AT THE RR MUSEUM:** On the July 26<sup>th</sup> late news, Paducah's Channel 6 did a story on the recent City Commission effort to preserve faded but visible signs on local buildings. The criteria is 50 years or older. One of the examples

shown was the GE sign on the south side of the railroad museum building. During the atomic plant building boom in the '50s, our building was a General Electric Distribution warehouse. Also on the rear are appliance signs from when it was a furniture store.

**STOP LOOK LISTEN:** On July 31<sup>st</sup> WPSD Channel 6 reported on the 10:00 o'clock news that the state of Illinois had strengthened its law regarding railroad/highway (grade) crossings to increase the fine for the first offense of failing to stop for flashing red signals to \$ 500.00 and the second offense, \$ 1,000.00.

**L&N 0-8-0 2132 RESTORATION:** The Corbin, KY Tourism and Convention Commission recently received a \$ 5000.00 contribution from the Louisville & Nashville Historical Society to kick start the restoration of L&N 0-8-0 2132 and tender, as well as steel bay caboose #2132 and Southern Railway's *French Broad River Pullman*. The equipment will be displayed at the Corbin depot and museum. L&N 2132 is one of only three L&N steam locomotives still extant and the sole survivor of the 400 locomotives manufactured at the South Louisville Shops.

**UP 844:** As predicted in the June NEWS AND VIEWS, this iconic locomotive did pull the Cheyenne Frontier Days Special from Denver to Cheyenne and return on July 23<sup>rd</sup> on time and without incident. In addition to the passengers on the train, hundreds followed by highway including one making a 1500 mile trip from Pennsylvania and another a 2500 mile round trip from California. Dense crowds also turned out at the display stops in Cheyenne and Greeley, CO.

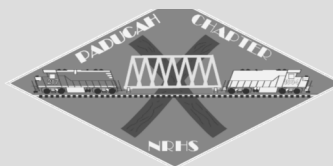
**BUSINESS DOWN:** To the surprise of almost no one, railroad traffic as announced by the Association of American Railroads was down by

a little over 7 percent in the first 26 weeks of 2016. Freight carloads alone were down over 12 percent, petroleum products 22 per cent and coal 16 percent, but intermodal only 2 per cent. These declines were partially off-set by miscellaneous carloads which were up almost 17 percent; waste and nonferrous scrap up the same, and grain up 14 percent.

**MUSEUM:** In June the museum had 224 visitors up from 198 in June 2015. In July thanks to the return of the boats, principally the American Queen, we had 619. This is a slight decrease from 744 last July, but still very good. It is unfortunate that we cannot get the Queen of the Mississippi to participate or even cooperate. It will be interesting to see how the new boats work out when they arrive later this summer. Toni Monroe's name has been added to the Memorial Plaque. Hopefully hers will be the last for a long time.

*As mentioned previously, in most editions of News and Views I use stories from Trains News Wire, but do not necessarily acknowledge each separately.*

## Roundhouse Notes



Published monthly by the Paducah Chapter, National Railway Historical Society. Send your news, photos to:

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*On the night of November 19, 1905, a crew was switching the yard with 0-6-0 199. Around 9:30 p.m. the crew went to spot three loaded freight cars on the incline. Alas, the air brakes on the cars were not connected, and the brakes on the small yard goat were not enough to keep the three cars, and number 199, from rolling off the end of the incline and into the water. Number 199 and one of the cars were photographed the next day waiting to be fished out of the water. Cliff Downey Collection.*

**Next Meeting  
May 9th  
7 PM  
At the  
Railroad Museum  
Paducah**

Roundhouse Notes  
P.O. Box 1194  
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