
FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025 MARCH, 2003

POINTS OF CONTACT:

Eastern Nebraska Chapter and Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR) - (402-727-0615) - 1835 N. Somers, Fremont, NE 68025 (www.fremontrailroad.com)

Fremont Dinner Train (402-727-8321 or 1-800-942-7245) - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025 (The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business for which the FEVR provides motive power and trackage)

THOMAS:

Tickets may be obtained by link from website www.fremontrailroad.com or by calling toll-free 1-866-468-7624, 9AM-8PM CST, Monday through Saturday, and 9AM- 7 PM Sunday. **Day Out With Thomas™** will be in Fremont **May 30-June 1 and June 6-8** with train rides, games, entertainment, and gift shop!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to assist with the community event- set up crews, greeters, ticket takers, train attendants, story tellers, maintenance- all to help accommodate the thousands of visitors (15000 last year!) Contact event coordinator Bobbi Jo Lang at 402-933-6435 or at fevr@radiks.net.

EXCURSION UPDATE:

The regular excursion travel season begins in May. New this year will be an option of travel in an **air-conditioned** passenger car. Brochures for the season are in preparation. Contact the FEVR office for copies to be sent after publication..

School charter travel reservations for both Spring and Fall are continuing. To secure an optimal choice of days and times for schools or other charter travel, Contact **Mr. Gene Zimmerman, Office Manager**, at the FEVR office soon. Best contact times are late mornings but phone messages may be left anytime.

PASSENGER CAR:

CORRECTION The passenger car in

the photo in the last issue was incorrectly identified as #469 - the correct # is 649. .

RULES AND SAFETY:

Operating personnel and interested members should be aware that a rules and safety class will be scheduled before the regular excursion season. Contact the depot office for date and more information.

WEBSITE:

Our website which was initiated in January has had over 20000 "hits" since. Links from this site provide information on the Fremont area, the Fremont Dinner Train, and on the railroad.

TELEGRAPH CLUB:

The art and practice of telegraphy will be re-visited at the 18th annual meeting of the Morse Telegraph Club, C.D. Combs Memorial Chapter "FN", April 26, 2003. The location is at the Saunders County Historical Society former CB&Q depot in Wahoo, Nebraska- south of the court house and just off Highway 77. All are welcome - 10AM- 4PM. For those wishing a lunch reservation, contact G.H. Zimmerman by leaving a message at the FEVR office - 402-727-0615. (See him in action- photograph this issue) For most of the first 100 years of railroad operation, telegraphy was the only means of communication. Perhaps the most famous example was the nationwide hookup at the driving of the Golden Spike on May10, 1869 at the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

RAIL SCHOOL:

In each issue, some facet of information about railroad operations is featured. This time, the use of "friction" and roller bearings on rail equipment is presented.

All bearings supporting a rotating mechanical part have some friction. In the case of one surface sliding over another with a lubricating film between, the friction or resistance to movement is much greater than in the rolling contact of roller (or ball) bearings-hence the

name "friction" for the former.

For about the first 100 years of operating railroad equipment, axle bearings on rail equipment were of the "friction" type- the technology and manufacturing processes available precluded anything else. The axle rotated inside a "box" - a space on the outside car truck assembly at the axle end which contained a brass bushing and a lubricant supply. The box had a cover hinged at the top for inspection and the addition of lubricant. Initially, the lubricant was fed to the bearing with packed cotton waste- later, spring loaded pads or wicks were used.. If the lubrication failed, the bearing would heat quickly and produce the infamous "hot box" which would soon lead to axle failure and derailment.

In the days of caboose use, an alert crew could spot the smoking "hot box" and stop the train in time to avoid disaster.

When roller bearings became available, they rapidly supplanted the friction bearing since they require no periodic maintenance. Today they are used exclusively in modern railroad equipment. The roller bearing can easily be spotted, since the rotating end can be seen and is not concealed in the "box". The friction bearing will only be found on historic tourist equipment.

The railroads employ the use of "hot box" detectors along trackside at intervals which can spot an overheated condition and notify the train crew. While still effective for heat from a dragging brake, they are not very effective for roller bearings which can fail rapidly and with a minimal amount of heat.

New detection systems are developed which use microphones near the track and by the use of computer technology can detect the sounds of roller bearing failure. Under development are bearings containing an internal defect sensor- but is an expensive option for the hundreds of thousands of applications.



RAILSCENE: Mini-motive power: Two of FEVR's small locomotives in the Hooper yard. 1942 General Electric 45 ton (left) and circa 1955 Baldwin 50 ton (right). These were retired by regional grain elevators and are in good condition.
