



The Mid-South Flyer

January 2010



A publication of the Mid-South Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc

Inside this issue

November 2009 Program Highlights.....Page 2

By the Board.....Page 3
The Year in Review

Golden Era Classics.....Page 5
'Birmingham in the Industrial Age'
Chapter News & Events....Page 5

Observation Platform...Page 6
Chairman's column

Where Are We?.....Page 6
The UP playing in somebody's yard

January meeting highlight

Chapter to host first annual membership meeting, election of officers for 2010

The New Year is a time for new beginnings, and to begin 2010 the Mid-South Chapter will host our first annual meeting of the general membership and election of officers.

The General Membership Meeting and Election will be held on Saturday, January 9 at 2 p.m. at the Leeds Depot.

Departing from our usual meeting agenda, the January meeting provides an opportunity for the chapter leadership to propose plans and programs for the coming year. It also serves as a forum for members to discuss issues and concerns related to the chapter's operation and activities.

According to chapter by-laws, the annual meeting will include the election of officers to serve during the coming calendar year. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer comprise the Executive Committee and are elected to one-year terms. Board members are in turn appointed by the Executive Committee.

The Board of Directors has nominated the following slate for re-election: Marvin Clemons, Chairman; Ron Mele, Vice-Chairman; and Stan Burnett, Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the meeting. Any member in good standing may be nominated (or self-nominate) for election.

Member support and involvement is essential to the development of a strong and vital chapter. Your leadership is working hard to build a chapter worthy of your membership. Please show your support by attending the January meeting and contributing your ideas and suggestions for the betterment of your chapter.

Newsletter sports new look for the New Year

We hope you've noticed, but in case you haven't, the *Mid-South News Bulletin* has a new look and a new name.

Beginning with this issue, *The Mid-South Flyer* will land on your desk by the first Saturday of each meeting month (January, March, May, July, September, and November). Members with email will continue to receive the newsletter with your meeting notice as an attached Adobe PDF file. Those without email will receive a printed copy in the mail with their meeting reminder.

This issue also marks the official introduction of our new chapter logo. Our thanks to members Tim Smith and Allen Tuten for their excellent design work!

Have you renewed your membership for 2010?

November program

The sojourn of Frisco Locomotive #4018

Our November program was presented by Mountain Brook Mayor Terry Oden who spearheaded the effort to rescue Frisco locomotive No. 4018 from the scrappers torch.

Mayor Oden, whose main railroading interest is the steam locomotive and its contribution to American history, showed and narrated a video depicting 4018's move from the fairgrounds to Sloss Furnace. Relocating a 150-ton locomotive is no easy task and the gargantuan task was well documented in the video.

Mayor Oden coordinated the effort which could not have been accomplished without the assistance of several individuals and companies. First came cooperation from the City of Birmingham which owns and manages the fairgrounds but did not see 4018 fitting into the park's renovation plans. Heavy moving equipment and cranes were provided through Wayne Cornelius with Crane Works. The Emergency Management Agency also provided manpower as part of a heavy lifting exercise. Getting 4018 from the fairgrounds to Sloss Furnace could not have been accomplished without the help of Congressman Spencer Bachus who enlisted the help of CSX to transport the locomotive.



Mid-South Chair Marvin Clemons (right) presents a 1935 Birmingham District railroad map to Terry Oden in recognition of Terry's contribution to the preservation of Frisco #4018. *(Photo by Ken Smith)*

The Mid-South Flyer

January 2010

The Mid-South Flyer is published bi-monthly by the Mid-South Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society (R&LHS), Inc. The R&LHS is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the study of railroad history.

Regular chapter membership dues of \$10 (\$15 for couples and families), both which include a subscription to ***The Mid-South Flyer***, may be submitted along with your name and address to:

Mid-South Chapter, R&LHS
c/o Stan Burnett, Secretary-Treasurer
115 Hendrix Street
Oneonta, AL 35121

Editorial materials and comments may be sent to the editor at the following address/email:

Marvin Clemons, Editor
412 Balcourt Drive
Birmingham, AL 35206
mclemons@bham.rr.com

No. 4018 was loaded onto a heavy duty depressed center flatcar and was transported eastward on the Elyton Subdivision (former Atlantic Coast Line trackage) to 13th Street Interlocking and CSX's S&NA Sub. After passing the Amtrak Station, 4018 continued past Sloss Furnace to the switch connecting CSX to the Alabama & Tennessee River Railroad (ATN) where it moved a short distance parallel to 32nd Street on the east side of Sloss Furnace. From there it was off loaded and lifted onto a specially constructed track within the confines of Sloss Furnace. The Auburn University School of Architecture will design a shed to protect 4018 from the elements. Future cosmetic restoration and repair is also planned.

The Mid-South Chapter wishes to thank Mayor Oden for his fine presentation and to especially thank him for his efforts to preserve a locomotive which once played a role in transporting goods in and around the Birmingham area.

(Editor's note: Thanks to Program Chair Ron Mele for the excellent write-up, and to Eddie Cook for arranging for Mayor Oden's presentation).

By the Board

Board members take stock, look ahead to 2010

*(Editor's note: **The Flyer** recently asked the Mid-South Chapter officers and board to contribute their thoughts regarding the chapter's accomplishments in 2009 and their aspirations for 2010. Following are their individual comments, which will be the basis for the board's presentation at the General Membership Meeting. The Chairman's comments will appear in the "Observation Platform" column in this issue).*

Ron Mele, Vice-Chairman/Program Chair:

"2009 was our first full year as a chapter. As such, we needed to make our presence known among local rail fans and the historically minded community at large. I believe we accomplished that goal. Our programs garnered a fair amount of attention even though attendance waxed and waned a bit. The agent/operator room project is off to a good start but much is left to be accomplished. Finally, the link between Leeds and the John Henry "legend" has been more firmly established.

Chapter goals for 2010 should include substantial completion of the agent/operator room, further gathering of local railroad exhibits and artifacts, and a continued effort to gain new members and secure sources of project funding.

As program chair, I would like to continue bringing in programs which will satisfy our interest in local railroad history as well as local mining and industrial history. As always, suggestions and program recommendations from the membership are always welcome."

Stan Burnett, Secretary-Treasurer/Membership Chair:

"The Mid-South Chapter of the RLHS has had a good first year. The second year should likewise be good for the Chapter as we celebrate rail history in Birmingham and the 'Mid-South' area.

We need to keep as many of our original members as we can. In order to attract new members we need to continue getting out our meeting notices to all sources possible. To the extent possible during 2010, we need to have a presence at local model shows, the twice-yearly railroad show in Atlanta, and any other local and/or regional rail-related venues.

To promote membership, we need to reach people who have other local historical interests that can be related to railroad history, such as members of the Leeds Historical Society, Birmingham Historical Society, and other area historical groups. If you have any thoughts about membership, feel free to discuss them with me."

Eddie Cook, Board Member/Community Relations Chair:

"I feel we have laid groundwork for the future by the recognition of some of our efforts by the Leeds Historical Society, the Leeds City government, and the community at large.

I see top goals for the Chapter being completion of the agent-operator's office (with security needed), and the John Henry Room well on its way by Folk Festival time, and with continued good programs for the membership and guests.

The top goals as far as my area is concerned will be continuing work toward depot security and the maintenance of our good association with the Leeds Historical Society, Leeds City government, and others."

By The Board (continued)

Dan Ferris, Board Member/Strategic Planning & Marketing Chair:

“Accomplishments: Pulling together a group of people with a common purpose to develop and grow the interest in railroading. Developing a home site for the organization. Building a relationship with the City of Leeds in restoring the Depot to its rightful position, not only for Leeds, but the Birmingham area as a whole. Laying the foundation for a strong and permanent organization to be successful for many years to come.

Future Plans: 2010 goals to follow the action plans that have been outlined in past board meetings. Promotion, strong and interesting programs, continued recruitment, developing the John Henry Room and any outside help from organizations and or grants through government actions.

Very important that the accomplishments and 2010 goals be very well defined to place in front of the membership. All facets need to be presented and receive some indications from the membership if they see a priority in these goals, or would like to contribute any additional ideas to be acted upon.”

Lee Singletary, Board Member/Grants & Fundraising Chair:

“I have belonged to at least six other rail-related organizations in my life and every one is different. What the Mid-South Chapter really has going for it are the people who are tied in to the local rail history. We have a great group and a board that is really “on track” to help preserve this important part of the history of our area.

We are just beginning. We still have a ways to go. Getting the word out, increasing the membership, and becoming more visible in the community are things we need to strive for in the next year. One opportunity we have is going to be our display room at the Leeds Depot. Here we will have the ability to show the railroad history of Leeds and the Birmingham area.

One way to help finance the development of the display room and other projects will be through grants. We hope that once the plans are finalized for the room, we'll be able to identify the agencies that would best be able to help fund it and file the necessary applications. If the grant process isn't feasible or productive we'll look into other alternatives.

The Birmingham area has a rich and diverse railroad history (I know of one book in particular that illustrates this!). It's a story that needs to be told and preserved. And let's not forget that history is being made every day, so it's important that we keep our eyes and cameras open!”

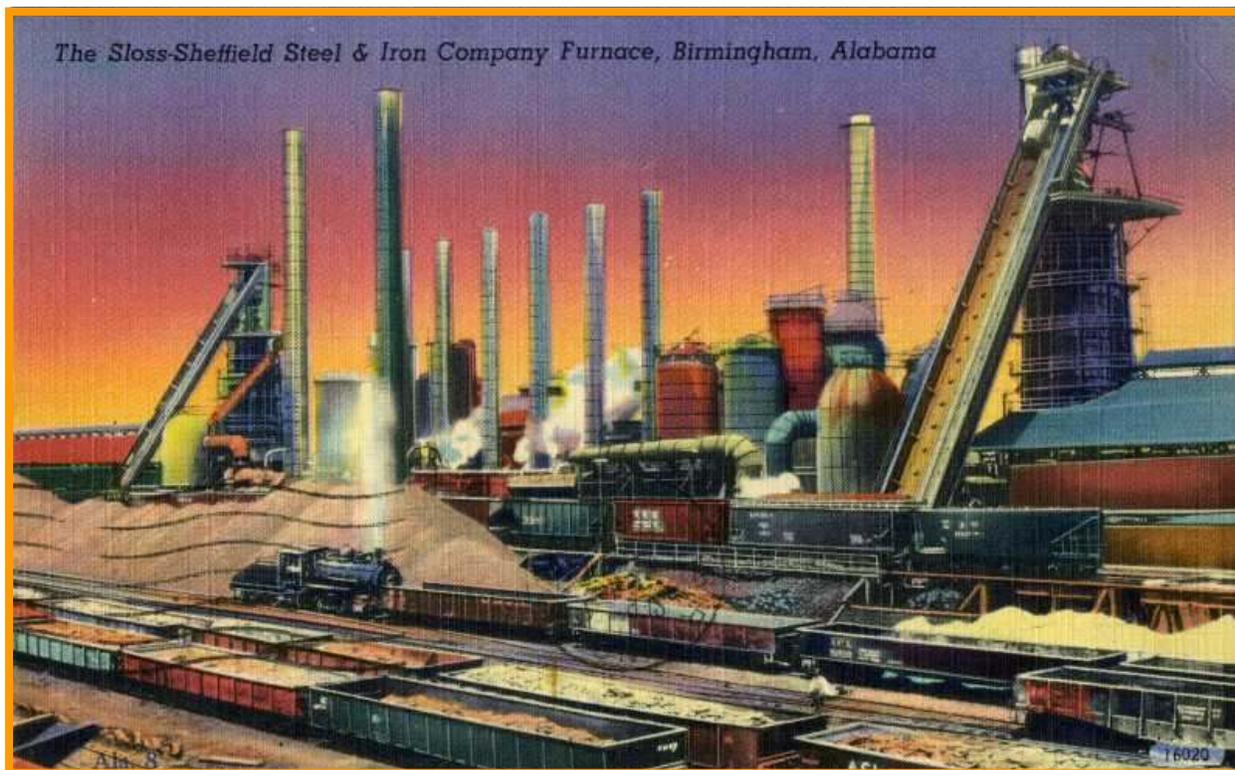
Tim Smith, Board Member/Exhibits Chair:

“We need \$\$\$ plus a lot of volunteers. I'd like to canvas such groups as Alabama Rails (Yahoo news-group) for talent and recruit some of those train buffs that are dying to do train-related stuff, as they'd do a great job and would have the enthusiasm to finish what they start.

I plan to meet with the curator of the new Birmingham-Jefferson Historical Society museum and tour some other railroad-themed museums for ideas. Also, we need to choose carefully the artist for the proposed John Henry Room mural. Talent and the ability to do a very stylized mural are important. We already have identified an artist who wants to do the Terminal Station, so that is good. Once we have some kind of budget we can move on ahead.

As a side project, I'd like eventually to move into having us begin the Rail/Industrial Site and Exhibit Trail, to get us all better press and notice among the general populace.”

Golden Era Classics



Birmingham in the Industrial Age — Postcards of railroad scenes provide a valuable reference to the rail historian. This colorized scene of Sloss Furnace is typical of the matte finished postcards from the early and mid-1900's. The deep glow of a sunset provides a vibrant backdrop to the smokestacks of Sloss in its hey-day. (Marvin Clemons collection)

Chapter News & Events



Chapter débuts at the Smokey City Rail Show
In early December the Mid-South Chapter made its' début at Birmingham's rail show. From left to right, members Tim Smith, Ron Mele (standing), Marv Clemons and Dan Ferris appear surprised and slightly vexed as chapter member James Simms grabs a candid photo of the guys hard (*a-hem*) at work.



Exhibit area display proposal unveiled — At the November chapter meeting, Exhibit Chair Tim Smith presented a preliminary sketch of his design concept for the John Henry Room. The sketch illustrates four unique displays, one for each wall space in the room. Tim's sketch will be available at the January membership meeting for all to see. Good work, Tim!

From the Observation Platform by Marvin Clemons, Chairman

New Year's is traditionally a time of reflection and renewal, of making promises and taking vows. As a chapter, it's a good time to consider where we've come from and what we wish to accomplish in the coming year and beyond. In that regard, I've asked each of our officers and board members to offer a personal summary of their activities in 2009 and their aspirations for 2010. You'll find their responses printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

In the last newsletter I enumerated the chapter's accomplishments for the past year. In all modesty, I would like to add "effective leadership" to the list. Strong leadership is vital to the success of any organization, and our chapter owes whatever success we've achieved to the handful of members who volunteer their time and talent to serve on our board and generally doing what needs to be done.



It's a fact that in most volunteer groups, a few dedicated members usually wind up doing most of the work until they burn out and drop out. That creates a leadership vacuum, followed by a loss of enthusiasm and dwindling participation, leaving behind a moribund, do-nothing organization. We're far from taking that road with our present leadership, but we need to seriously consider what we as individual members will contribute to keep the Mid-South Chapter viable and growing in 2010 and beyond.

Your board has come forward with goals for the chapter, and now it's your turn to voice your opinion and learn how you can help. We'll begin the conversation at the general membership meeting on January 9th. It's your chapter. Please attend and be involved.

Where Are We?

North Platte on the UP? Don't let the brace of UP F-units fool you. This 1968 shot from the Birmingham District shows UP power off one of the earliest run-through's on the _____. And so, folks, where are we?

Congratulations to Eddie Cook for correctly identifying the last location as the west end of Irondale siding looking east. Eddie ought to know, since he passed through Irondale many times on the old Seaboard!



What? General Membership Meeting and Election of Officers

When? Saturday, January 9 at 2 p.m.

Where? The Historic Leeds Depot at Leeds, Alabama

Who? All Members and Guests