



2nd Annual St. Louis Chapter NRHS Railroad Station Tour - March 29, 2014

Compiled by David Huelsing

BONNE TERRE: The Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway was chartered in 1888 as a subsidiary of the St. Joe Lead Co. It was originally designed as a narrow gauge line to carry lead from the mines, but as business expanded it was converted to standard gauge. The first depot was built in 1898. In 1909 a fire destroyed the original structure and this depot was built to replace it.

In addition to handling all freight for the Company, the depot was the shipping point for supplies and produce of the Bonne Terre Freight and Cattle Company, a subsidiary

of the St. Joe Lead Company, which controlled all Company property in Bonne Terre, including the Company Store, farms, housing, cattle and merchandise. At its height, the Depot saw 12 passenger trains a day. Special excursions for its employees were often arranged by the Company, including yearly visits to the Veiled Prophet Parade. For many years, meeting trains at the Depot was a highlight of Sunday afternoon for the townspeople.

In 1929, the Missouri-Pacific acquired controlling interest in the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railway and incorporated it with the Missouri-Illinois line. Passenger service from Bonne Terre was discontinued in 1939. The last train was operated between Bonne Terre and Riverside in 1964, and the Missouri-Pacific abandoned the line in 1969 at the time the St. Joe Lead Company suspended operations there. An agent of the railroad, however, remained at the Bonne Terre Depot until 1976, though his duties consisted only of delivery to local shippers.



BONNE TERRE MISSOURI DEPOT

Bonne Terre, MO—Built by the Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway (MR&BT) in 1909. MR&BT became part of Missouri Pacific in 1929. Passenger service on this line stopped in 1939. Photo courtesy of MPHS Archives



M. R. & B. T. DEPOT, FLAT RIVER, MO.

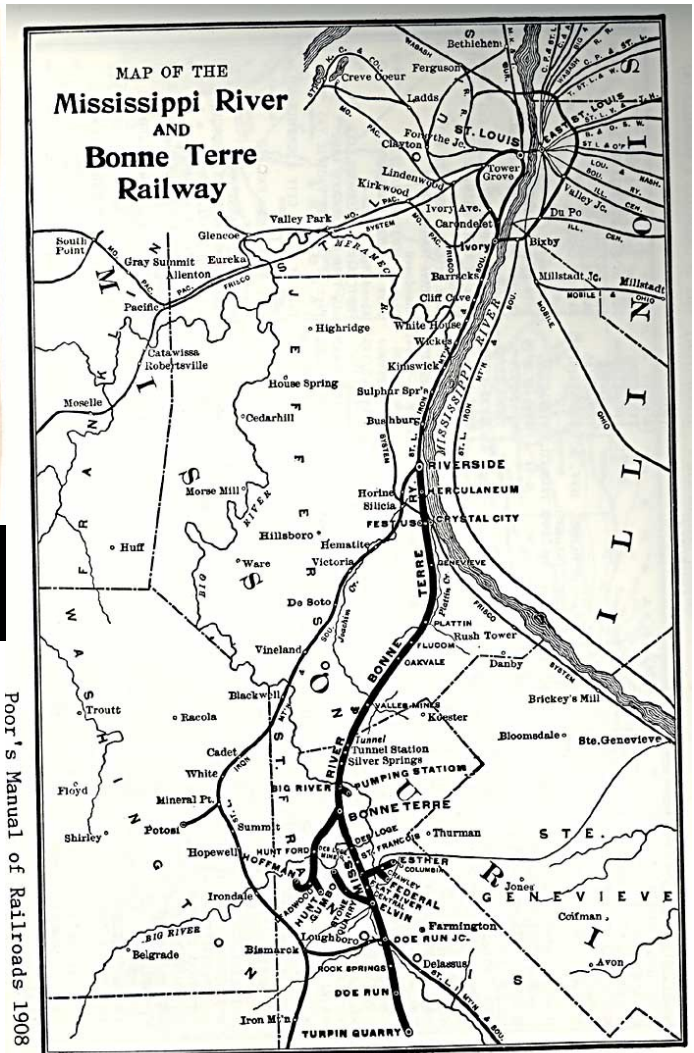
Flat River, MO (now Park Hills, MO) - MR&BT RR—later MP—Construction date unknown. photo courtesy MPHS Archives



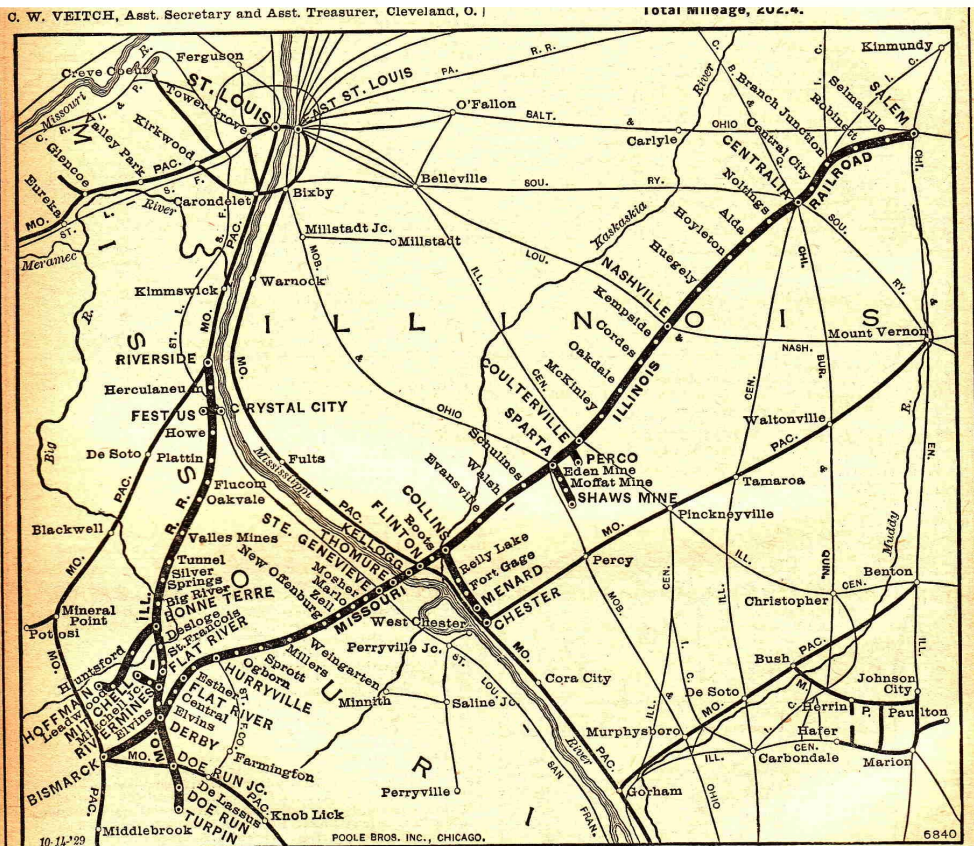
The Flat River Train Depot, like it was back when this picture was taken in 1908, will be one of the many themes exhibited in the Heritage Museum when it opens this spring. The picture was provided by Pam Weiss, a Heritage Committee Chairperson.

Original Flat River Train Depot—this was replaced with the current structure.

FLAT RIVER, MO: Brick depot built by the MR&BTRR in the 1920's, replacing an earlier wooden depot. It would become part of the Missouri & Illinois RR in 1929 and eventually part of Missouri Pacific. The tracks are still used by Union Pacific. This had been used as a community center/museum. The town of Flat River is now known as Park Hills, MO.



Poor's Manual of Railroads 1908



MISSOURI PACIFIC DAY
Thursday, Sept. 11th
 at the
Arcadia Valley Fall Festival

Dedication of the new
IRONTON-ARCADIA RAILROAD STATION
 3:30 P. M.

Music by the Poplar Bluff High School Band and the Ironton High School Band

Be there when the "Texan" pulls in. It will be the first train to stop at the new station.

Following the Dedication the Bands will lead a parade to the Fall Festival grounds.

ARCADIA-IRONTON, MO:

The St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad first reached the Arcadia Valley in 1858 with the completion of the railroad as far south as Pilot Knob. Iron County had only recently been formed in February 1857 and Ironton had been selected as the county seat in September 1857. It was thought at the time that the supply of iron being mined at Pilot Knob and nearby Iron Mountain was inexhaustible. It was the iron that initially brought the railroad to the area. The coming of the Civil War saw the railroad being used to quickly move Union forces along the line, but no action was taken to extend the line to the south until after the war had ended. The line was finally completed to Arkansas in 1873.

The combined Arcadia-Ironton depot wasn't completed until 1941. It replaced the depot at Arcadia that had been in use since 1900 and the depot at Ironton that had been in use since 1908. Prior to the completion of the new combined depot only south bound trains stopped at Ironton and only north bound trains stopped at Arcadia.

In 1939, the railroad announced that a new central station was to be built and bickering between the towns along the line quickly ensued. Those in Ironton applied a literal interpretation to the word "central" and argued for it to be located in Ironton as Ironton was located in between Pilot Knob and Arcadia. In the end, a location between the existing Ironton and Arcadia depots was selected, though the location itself was in Arcadia.

The new depot was constructed of locally quarried Missouri Red Granite. Among its features were the red granite fireplace in the waiting room and exposed granite walls in the freight room. Dedication day was September 11, 1941 which was also the day of the local school's fall festival. Included in the crowd were 200 persons, including the Missouri Pacific Choral Club of St. Louis, a local band, and a band from Poplar Bluff. Dignitaries on hand for the event included a number of Missouri Pacific Railroad officials and local officials as well. The dedicatory address was delivered by P. J. Neff, assistant chief traffic officer – passenger of the Missouri Pacific Railroad.



Arcadia-Ironton Missouri Pacific Depot. Photo courtesy of Iron County Historical Society



Arcadia-Ironton—Arrival of first train—September 11, 1941. Courtesy of Iron County Historical Society

The last passenger train stopped at the depot in 1965 and the depot itself ceased operations in 1969. Between that time and its reopening as the home of the Whistle Junction Visitors Center and Museum, the depot has served as many things including an art gallery, a used car lot, an antiques shop, a restaurant, and a gift shop. The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce and the museum of the Iron County Historical Society have been operating from the depot since 2008. Now, things may be coming full circle as the citizens of Iron County and surrounding communities anxiously await the news for the finalization of plans for the Amtrak stop at the depot. Hopefully, passengers will soon once again be using the depot's waiting room for the only stop between St. Louis and Poplar Bluff.

Arcadia article & photos courtesy of John Abney—Iron County Historical Society



Piedmont, MO—built by Missouri Pacific around 1940. Photo courtesy of the John Barriger Railroad Library

PIEDMONT, MO: The St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad arrived in Piedmont in 1871. The current depot was built by Missouri Pacific in the early 1940's, replacing the wooden depot. This building is still owned and used by Union Pacific Railroad.

FREDERICKTOWN, MO was founded in 1818. The St. Louis & Iron Mountain first arrived in 1869. Mining, timber, and agriculture were the primary industries served by the railroad. Eventually a turntable and engine service facility would be built as well.

The original St. Louis & Iron Mountain wooden depot was built in 1869 and expanded with a freight house and other modifications in 1908. It was extensively modified during its 1908 expansion. Its typical style of depots of that period. While passenger service moved to the new depot in 1917, this building continued as a freight house for the Missouri Pacific Railroad and the Railway Express Agency into the 1960's.

The 2nd Fredericktown Missouri Pacific Railroad depot is a one-story rectangular brick building. Constructed in 1917, the Fredericktown depot occupies its original trackside location at 406 Villar Street, north of the town square. The combination interior, consisting of a waiting room and baggage room flanking an office for the ticket agent or dispatcher, is largely unchanged. The depot is well preserved..



Fredericktown, MO. Built in 1917 by Missouri Pacific. Photo courtesy of MPHS Archives

BISMARCK, MO: Founded in 1868 at the junction of the Iron Mountain Railroad's originally projected line southeast to Belmont, MO. On the Mississippi River opposite Columbus, Ky. (later to be the Belmont branch), and what instead became the road's main line south to Poplar Bluff and Arkansas. Bismarck was also the western terminus of the Missouri-Illinois Railroad, created in 1920 from predecessors Illinois Southern Railroad, Southern Missouri Railway, and Mississippi River & Bonne Terre. The M-I crossed the Mississippi via a well-known ferry between Thomure, near St. Genevieve, Mo., and Kellogg, IL. M-I predecessor Southern Missouri Railway reached Bismarck from the river to the east in August 1903. In 1929 the MoPac acquired controlling interest of the Missouri-Illinois of 1920 and combined it with the Mississippi River & Bonne Terre, forming a new Missouri-Illinois. It existed as a controlled subsidiary into the 1980s. Today the Union Pacific still uses the former M-I between here and Bonne Terre.



Bismarck, MO—Built by Missouri Pacific in 1916. Photo courtesy of the John Barriger Railroad Library



St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Depot Fredericktown (Madison County)

The first railroad depot to be built in Fredericktown, the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad Depot (1869) served as the town's only freight and passenger depot for nearly sixty years. Fredericktown incorporated as a village in 1868 and served as the railroad's "division point." Numerous locomotives made their connections at Fredericktown, which supported a turntable and train repair shops. In addition to the production of iron ore, the community also shipped local agricultural products and livestock via rail. The railroad put Fredericktown on the main line of traffic and made this county seat town a place of considerable importance. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad Depot, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005, is in a state of severe neglect. The roof is falling in, doors are missing, there is no plumbing, heating/cooling or electrical service to the building. Decay is visible in the supports and foundations as well.

The exterior envelope of the building is board and batten, and curving arches support the wide roof overhang. Some of these arches are missing or broken. The current owners of the depot have used the building for farm supply storage for many years. Vandals have done extensive damage to the interior, including the setting of a fire. In addition, a May 2009 storm has caused considerable damage to the roof. (from - 2009 list of Missouri's Most Endangered Structures)

DEMOCRAT NEWS

Depot is actually 'on the move'

AUGUST 07, 2013 1:18 PM • [SHAWNNA ROBINSON](#)

The original Fredericktown Train Depot is making tracks to a new location. This is a clarification to a photo spread in last week's edition of the Democrat News. It seems what appeared to be a demolition is, in fact, a dismantling. Art and Brenda Randall contacted the office on Thursday morning to let the community know the depot is not going away. Instead, it has been taken apart-board by board, piece by piece-and will be rebuilt on property the couple own north of Fredericktown. The couple are entrepreneurs from the St. Louis area. They admit they are history buffs and believe in preserving the past. Projects the couple have undertaken include a home on West Columbia Street in Farmington, where they now reside. They are also in the process of restoring what is known as the "Ice House", dating back to the 1880s, in downtown St. Louis near Busch Stadium. "It was a storm shelter for many during the Great Cyclone of 1896," said Art.

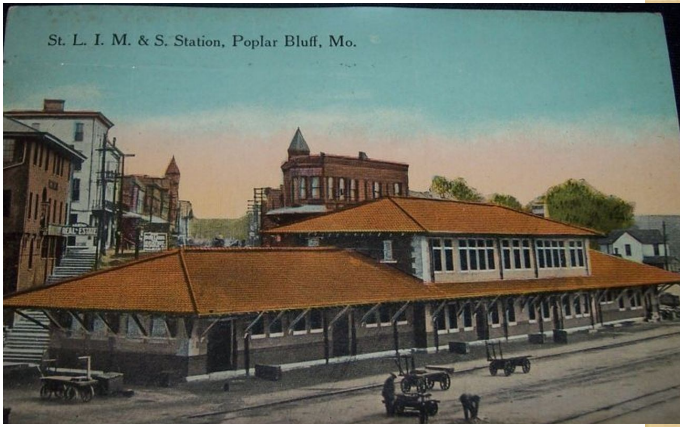
The way they came upon the old depot, which dates back to 1867, was by coincidence. Art first came to Fredericktown for an auction being held at the former location of Gifford Lumber. The depot caught his eye and he could not forget about it. "I saw the 'condemned' sign on the side of the building. I started attending (Fredericktown) city council meetings," he recalled. At that time, Art said the city was weighing options on what to do with the structure. It had fallen into disrepair over time. The couple had purchased 50 acres located on Highway 67 north of Fredericktown. One of the main reasons they wanted to purchase the depot is because of the history of the land they now own. "We have the St. Francois River running through the property. The quarry used for the cobblestones for the streets of St. Louis is on the other side of the river. They would railcar it up to the main drag between Farmington, Fredericktown and Pilot Knob. The rail line ran right through the property," he said.

They've researched and found photographs of the depot in its original state. In addition to the depot, they plan to reconstruct the water tower that sat next to the depot at one time. To complete the project, they hope to fill the depot with period-correct items-bringing the depot back to its original glory. It's also a goal of the couple to bring items that were once in the depot back to their original home. The Randalls have the clock that once stood in the depot-something they are very thankful to have acquired. "If anyone has anything from the old depot, I would happily buy that from them," said Art.

They also have a cabin from the original Murphy's Settlement-which would later become known as Farmington. They hope to establish a place where visitors can take a walk back into the history of Fredericktown, Murphy's Settlement and the railroad on their property. During the work on the depot project, they've discovered hand-forged square head nails, graffiti on the boards dating back to 1870 and a spot where someone wrote in Latin. They plan to preserve those sections for when they reconstruct and to not plane those areas of the boards. "The future is going to be here-there's no stopping it. But the future of the past you can take into the future," Art said. As he pointed to the location of the depot, he added, "that's the past and you have a choice. It's either going to go away or you do something to preserve it."



St. L. I. M. & S. Station, Poplar Bluff, Mo.



POPLAR BLUFF, MO

The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Depot is located at 400 S. Main Street in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. The depot is located adjacent to the present right-of-way of the Union Pacific Railroad beneath a slight bluff from the commercial area, and is connected to Main Street via Cedar Street by a reinforced 1910 concrete staircase. The property consists of a contributing building, the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Depot building itself, and a contributing structure, the Iron Mountain Staircase. The depot was constructed in 1910, designed by an unknown architect who worked for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad. The building was built in accordance with standardized railroad depot plans of the period which emphasized hipped roofs and wide eaves to shelter passengers and freight.

The St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad was the first railroad completed through Poplar Bluff. Built in 1872, this line connected the city with Little Rock, Arkansas and Cairo, Illinois. The railroad had a major impact on the growth and development of Poplar Bluff by connecting the region to major markets throughout the country. Butler County and adjacent counties retained extensive forests and the railroad provided ready transportation for the shipping of raw lumber and lumber products. Due to its rail connections, Poplar Bluff became a center for wood related products during the late 19th century and its population grew from a few hundred residents in 1870 to over 4,000 in 1900.

The station is currently being restored. The Grand Staircase will be replaced with an exact replica in 2014. Part of this building is still used by Amtrak.



Poplar Bluff, MO—St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad Station. —
courtesy MPHS Archives



Steps to SL&IM RR Station, Poplar Bluff, MO. —photo courtesy
MPHS Archives



Poplar Bluff, MO—St. Louis & Iron Mountain Station—photo
courtesy John Barriger Library

POPLAR BLUFF FRISCO STATION

The St. Louis-San Francisco Depot is located at 303 Moran Street in downtown Poplar Bluff, Missouri. The building was constructed in 1928 and is sited adjacent to the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad right-of-way. The St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad line has been abandoned in Poplar Bluff and the tracks have been removed. The building is presently occupied as a railroad museum.

The St. Louis-San Francisco Depot is a one-story Spanish Mission style building with a concrete foundation and two interior brick and stucco chimneys. The north

section of the building originally housed a waiting room, agent's office and restrooms. The south section of the building originally housed the freight room.

The Southern Missouri and Arkansas Railroad built a line through the city in 1901. This same year the railroad company was acquired by the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad, also referred to as the "Frisco" line. This railroad right-of-way extended in a north/south direction through the city between Broadway and Fifth Street in the downtown area. The railroad built a brick depot building for passenger and freight traffic in 1901. This building was used by the railroad until it was badly damaged by the tornado of May, 1927. The remnants of this building were razed and the present depot was built on its site. This building currently houses the MOARK Railroad Museum and model railroad.

Sources:

National Park Service-National Register of Historic Places Form—St. Louis & Iron Mountain Depot, Fredericktown, MO

National Park Service-National Register of Historic Places Form—Missouri Pacific Depot, Fredericktown, MO

National Park Service-National Register of Historic Places Form— Bonne Terre, MO Depot

National Park Service-National Register of Historic Places Form—Missouri Pacific Depot—Poplar Bluff, MO

National Park Service-National Register of Historic Places Form—St. Louis & San Francisco Depot—Poplar Bluff, MO

Democrat News (Farmington, MO) - Depot Is Actually On The Move by Shawna Robinson—August 7, 2013

Iron County Historical Society—John Abney (President)

Midwest Challenger Route Guide, by Rick Sprung / St. Louis Chapter NRHS—1992

Railroad Station Historical Society website www.rrshs.org

Photos courtesy of John Barriger III Railroad Library and Missouri Pacific Historical Society Archives,



Poplar Bluff, MO—St. Louis & San Francisco Railway (Frisco). Built in 1928. Brick & Stucco mission style design.