

# Louisville & Nashville Railroad Historical Society Electronic Newsletter

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## Newsletter Update

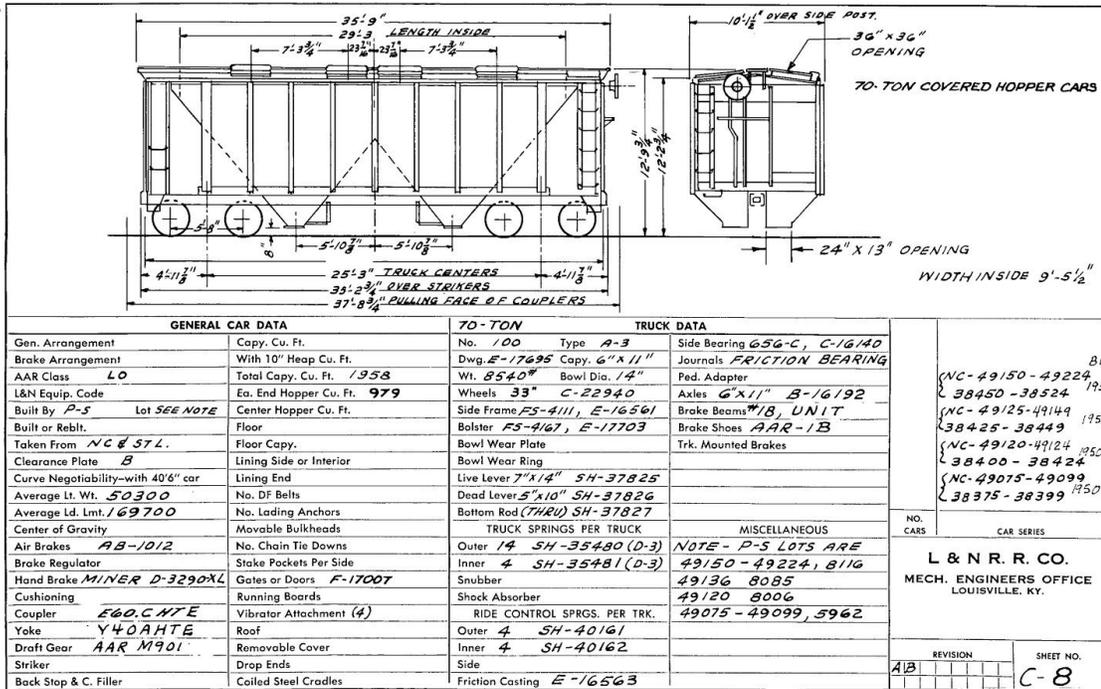
Welcome to the fourth regular edition of the L&N Historical Society newsletter. This marks the last issue of the newsletter that will be freely available to the public. Beginning with the February 2016 edition, the newsletter will only be available to current members of the historical society.

With that in mind, now is a good time to check your membership status and renew your membership as needed. Check the mailing label on your most recent L&N Magazine to determine your membership expiration date. If it reads 2015:4 or earlier, you will need to renew your membership to continue receiving the electronic newsletter and printed magazine.

You can renew online at: <http://lnrr.org/Members.aspx>

## Historical Society Offers L&N Company Drawings on CD

JAN. 1976



As part of an ongoing effort to provide access to the records in the historical society's collection, the society is offering four CDs containing high quality scans of L&N drawings and records:

- Freight Car Record 1-1977, 396 Images
- Locomotive Data Book 3-1-1976, INCL Wrecker & Crane Diagrams, 161 Images
- Pass Car Equip, Coaches, Baggage, Mail, Office, Dining, Tavern and Dormitory Cars, 126 Images
- Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis, Freight and Passenger Car Diagrams, 106 Images

Each CD is available for \$25 to members of the society (\$30/piece to non-members). The CDs can be ordered online at: <http://lnrr.org/CDs.aspx>



The society is also offering hats featuring the “old-style” L&N logo available online at: <http://lnrr.org/Apparel.aspx>

## Historic Birmingham Mineral Railroad Signs Project



*BMRR Red Gap Branch crossing Oporto Road (dirt street then, now a major 6-lane street)*

L&N Historical Society new member James Lowery made a presentation at the recent L&NHS convention in Birmingham about L&N’s historic Birmingham Mineral Railroad and the project he is doing to install signs throughout the Birmingham, Alabama, area where the historic

steam-train (and later diesel) L&N Birmingham Mineral Railroad (BMRR) ran and provided industrial rail service, as well as passenger service on some of the branches. This article explains that project and provides some of the history of that railroad. Additional information is available at the project's website [Bham-MRR.com](http://Bham-MRR.com). Lowery expresses his appreciation to the L&N Historical Society for providing the L&N logo and for approving its use in the project and on the signs.

The purpose of the signs project is to place signs in high-visibility areas in order to raise awareness among the general public, historians, teachers, students, tourists, etc., about the locations and extent of L&N's Birmingham Mineral Railroad. The signs project is progressing on schedule with 36 signs already installed in the Birmingham area as of late summer 2015, and more signs are scheduled for installation. The signs and the corresponding website already are educating the general public about the importance of this railroad in Birmingham's early history - it was one of the primary factors in Birmingham's economic development in the late 1800's and on into the 1900's as Birmingham became an iron industry giant during that period.

The BMRR provided railroad service in six Alabama counties. The total length of the BMRR mainline tracks with all its 31 branches was 253 miles long, which is equal to the distance from Birmingham to Mobile! Adding to that its various sidings and spurs to the mines, quarries, coke ovens, furnaces, etc., would put its length well over 300 miles. It was a major railroad within the L&N system.

The primary purpose of the BMRR was to transport iron ore and coal from local mines, limestone from local quarries, and coke from local coke oven facilities to the blast furnaces; pig-iron from those furnaces to processing facilities; and "products" from those facilities to other connecting railroads. The passenger service provided by the BMRR opened up a new era for many people in outlying areas who could then come to Birmingham for jobs, shopping, and entertainment. For many of them, it turned a three-day trip to get to Birmingham by wagon into a one-day roundtrip by rail.

Operation of the Birmingham Mineral Railroad covered decades of steam train freight and passenger service throughout the Birmingham area. The first rails were laid in 1884 in present-day Red Mountain Park and continued with additional branches being added and used until they were abandoned at various times. A portion of one branch continued to be used (by diesel trains) to handle light industrial materials until 1984, and one branch continued to be used to handle the movement of train cars until 1988. Even today over 130 years after its inception, some segments of the BMRR roadbed are still in use as active railroad lines in the Birmingham area.

One thing that has been created as part of this project and which already is reaching the general public are self-guided "Driving and Walking Tours" which a person can use to drive to, and see, the old roadbed or, in some cases, to walk on the old roadbed. (The driving and

walking tours are available on the project's website at [Bham-MRR.com](http://Bham-MRR.com).) Because the roadbed no longer is contiguous, it cannot be walked or bicycled as one complete trail; this is not a "rails to trails" project even though several walking trails in the Birmingham area use segments of the old roadbed. Because the roadbed is not contiguous, the project places signs at high-visibility locations for education of the general public.

### History Being Uncovered - Where the Past Meets the Present



*BMRR Red Gap Branch crossing other tracks in Irondale*

A significant aspect of this project is that "history is being uncovered" as part of the project. Because of the project, people are becoming more aware of the history that exists all around them.

As part of this project, as of mid-summer 2015, twenty beautiful, historic cut-stone culverts built as part of the BMRR roadbed and dating from 1888/1889/1901 have been documented (many of them previously "unknown"). These culverts still carry water through them, and photographs of the culverts can be seen on the project's Bham-MRR.com website.

The slogan for the project is "The BMRR Past and Present" which represents the educational aspects of this project for historians, the general public, tourists, students, teachers, etc. The "past" is the history that is coming out about this railroad and the significant role it played in the development of Birmingham and in the local iron industry history of Birmingham. The "present" is the fact that the project provides a way for people to see the old railroad roadbed where evidence of it exists today and, in some places, to actually walk on the old

railroad roadbed. The project's website at [Bham-MRR.com](http://Bham-MRR.com) includes "Then and Now" photographs that also tie the railroad's history to the present. That website also contains many historical resources that tell the story of the BMRR.

Oral histories (anecdotal stories) of people's remembrances of the BMRR are emerging and are being documented as part of this project. For many people alive today, having BMRR steam locomotives passing by their houses was part of their growing up and provided fascinating experiences which this project is helping them reminisce about and share with others through the website.

### Donations to BMRR Signs Project



*BMRR sign installed in Oneonta, Alabama*

Tax-deductible BMRR Signs Project contributions in any amount are appreciated, and a person or organization may "sponsor" a sign at the \$100 or above level. Donations for this project may be sent using the form that can be printed from the website at [http://bham-mrr.com/?page\\_id=94](http://bham-mrr.com/?page_id=94) or by using the following information:

Make check payable to "R&LHS"

Designate for "BMRR Signs Project"

Send to John Atherton, 16 Coachlight Drive, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-4241

*Contributed by James Lowery*

## L&N C420 1330 Meets the Scrapper's Torch

On October 16, 2015 poster "Bobby T" reported on the IlliniRail mailing list that MALX 1330 was recently scrapped on-site at Prairie Central Co-Op in Pontiac, Illinois after suffering a mechanical failure. This Alco C420--which was feature in the April special edition of this newsletter--was delivered as Monon 513 in August 1967. It became L&N 1330 after Monon merger. It was sold to Chrome Crankshaft in 1982. Its L&N nose herald was still discernible when last observed by this author in March of this year.

*Contributed by Jeffrey Carlyle*

## Trivia Time

Last quarter's trivia question was: What was the last regularly scheduled all Pullman passenger train to operate on the L&N? What was the date, route and train numbers?

Lyle Key submitted the only correct response: The *Jacksonian* which operated on April 7, 1942 from Montgomery to Louisville. The *Jacksonian* was train #6. This number was later reused for the *Humming Bird* in 1946.

This quarter's trivia question is: Name 3 locations on the L&N where the L&N crossed itself on a rigid crossing in 1975. E-mail your answer to [lnhsarchives@gmail.com](mailto:lnhsarchives@gmail.com). The first three replies with the correct answers will be published in the next newsletter.

## Historical Society Officers, Directors & Chairmen

Name	Title	Committee
Sid Johnson	President	
David Orr	Vice President	Modeling
Lee Gordon	Secretary	Company Store
John Landrum	Treasurer	Finance
Mike Dowell	Director	Bowling Green
Keith Kittinger	Director	Conventions
Al Oswald	Director	Membership Services
Lee Singletary	Director	Model Train Shows South
Stu Thayer	Director	Model Train Shows North

Ron Flanary

- Dave Oroszi
- Jeff Carlyle

Lyle Key

Chuck Peck

Communications

Website  
Electronic Newsletter

Legal and Archives

Rail Museum Liaison

The historical society's officers and directors can be reached at [lnhsarchives@gmail.com](mailto:lnhsarchives@gmail.com).

## L&N Marketplace

Future editions of the L&NHS electronic newsletter will include free classified ad space. Have an L&N-related item you just don't have space for anymore? Looking for some sort of hard-to-find item? Let the historical society membership know. Email the editor, Jeffrey Carlyle, at [jccarlyle@gmail.com](mailto:jccarlyle@gmail.com) with the contents of your ad.

## Call for Contributions

Have a short article, event, or other tidbit you would like to see published in the electronic newsletter? Please contact the newsletter's editor Jeffrey Carlyle at [jccarlyle@gmail.com](mailto:jccarlyle@gmail.com). The next newsletter will be published during the second week of February 2016.

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