

The BN Expediter

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BNSF 1703

by Darrell Wendt

BNSF 1703 has a somewhat colorful history since being built in 1954 by EMD in La Grange, Ill. She's gone from a cab unit to a "B" unit, then modified for remote control usage and then finally a makeshift cab on one side added for outdoor all-weather shop switching. This girl's been through a lot in her years of service and is still operating (as of February of 2012).

Number 1703, a class GP9, was built in March of 1954 as GN 666 by EMD. She became BN 1818 in 1970, rebuilt in 1982 and renumbered 604, then shortly thereafter renumbered to BN 904.

In 2001 she was involved in a wreck, rebuilt and converted to a "B" unit, losing her cab in the process. At that time she was renumbered to 1703 while retaining her original BN paint. A short time later a makeshift cab on one side was installed for remote

and hands-on operation for shop switching at BNSF's "Havelock Car Shops" in north-east Lincoln. Most of 1703's duties at "Havelock" have been replaced by trackmobile operation, and she now resides on the west side of Lincoln in the locomotive service and repair facility at "Hobson Yard". Recently 1703 received large GN stenciling on her cab sides and in the number board area. At this time that remains a mystery (to this photographer). Could she be resorting back to her original GN status? One only knows for the time being.

These two photos show the front and rear 3-quarter angle views. Both photos taken on February 18, 2012.



Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad

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A Not-For-Profit Corporation
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The Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad (FOBNR) was formed to gather, preserve, and share information about the history, current operations, and future development of the Burlington Northern Railroad and its successors. It follows the evolution of the railroad from its inception in 1970 with the merger of the Great Northern; Northern Pacific; Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy; and the Spokane Portland and Seattle Railroads, along with the 1980 acquisition of the Frisco. We are a 501c(3) non-profit corporation.

The purpose of the FOBNR is educational. We wish to perpetuate the history of the Burlington Northern Railroad and its successors. We seek to collect and preserve any materials which help establish or illustrate the life, conditions, events, and activities of the railroad. We will disseminate this information through the publication of a newsletter, establishment of a web site, by maintaining an archive, and by conducting an annual convention somewhere along the lines operated by the railroad. We may also publish information in other media and may restore and operate historical railway equipment.

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The BN Expediter

The BN Expediter is published four times a year and is included with membership in the Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad. Manuscripts, photographs and information are welcomed for publication. Materials are submitted with the understanding that no monetary compensation will be paid upon publication. Items will be returned only if requested. Otherwise they will go into the archives.

Anything published in *The BN Expediter* (including the classifieds), must be focused on the Burlington Northern Railroad, from the 1970 merger on. Information and/or pictures that give historical perspective or context are acceptable (e.g., pre-merger road numbers). The disposition of a locomotive, other piece of equipment or property is also acceptable. Further information is available from the Editor.

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BN Executive Paint Scheme

I was hoping you could settle a question I have had for a while. There is an artist by the name of Andrew Fletcher who claims to have designed the executive scheme on the SD70MACS in 1992.

But, my issue with this is that the scheme was already in use on the BN1 & BN2 and business cars. Is there any truth to his claims? Thanks for your help.

Andrew Gillette

Sumter, SC

Book for Sale

Frank Christopherson, An Oral History by Earl J. Currie is an oral history given by Mr. Christopherson, a locomotive engineer of the GN, BN and BNSF with 53 years of service. Frank worked mainly on the lines serving the Minnesota Iron Range and the Superior and Allouez terminals.

Copies may be obtained through the Lake Superior Railroad Museum. Price is \$37.50, which includes shipping.

Contact Buehler at kenbuehler@aol.com

Front Cover

There's a six-mile uphill climb into Amarillo on the Dalhart Subdivision. This photo from the 1980s shows a nice collection of C30-7's and SD40-2's in Cascade Green. They're pulling hard on the coal loads to get them into town and onto the more gentle Red River Valley Subdivision.

-Photo by Jerry Michaels

In This Issue

Former BNSF 1703	2
2011 FOBNR Expense Report	4
Amarillo, TX	5
BNSF 793	12

FOBNR Expense Report

For period ending December 31, 2011

Balance on hand, beginning January 1 st	11,367.52
Revenue:	9,607.95
Expenses:	9,739.63
Balance on hand, end:	11,235.84

Revenue Year To Date

Dues	
Regular:	3,950.00
Sustaining:	2,900.00
Youth:	10.00
Donations:	1,016.12
Company Store:	388.78
Single Issue Sales:	112.00
Convention:	1,231.00
Misc.:	0.05
Total:	9,607.95

Expenses

Expediter	
Printing:	5,352.34
Postage:	1,262.73
Honorarium:	800.00
Misc.	130.32
Board of Directors	
Meeting:	34.20
General	
Printing:	314.04
Postage:	88.81
Box Rent:	70.00
Misc.:	6.99
Supplies:	498.06
Company Store:	91.41
Election:	22.15
Convention:	790.08
PayPal Fees:	166.65
Website Provider:	111.85
Total:	9,739.63

Assets

Cash:	13,720.22
Office Equipment:	243.64

Liabilities

Unearned 2012 dues:	2,475.00
Unearned 2013 dues:	200.00
Unearned 2014 dues:	25.00
Society Equity:	11,263.86
Jeff Hendricks, Treasurer	

SOUTHWARD	Length of Siding (Feet)	Station Nos.	Mile Post	Boise City Subdivision MAIN LINE STATIONS	Rule 4.3	Type of Oper.	Line Segment	Miles to Next Stn.	NORTHWARD
		56700	554.9	LA JUNTA	BCPT X(2)Y	2MT ABS ATS	7300	0.9	
			554.0	CP 5540	Y	2MT CTC ATS		3.3	
			550.7	CASA				14.7	
8,300	58060	536.0		LAS ANIMAS		CTC ATS		2.4	
		533.6 235.5		LAS ANIMAS JCT.	J			38.9	
7,700	40525	196.6		FRICK			7105	23.5	
	40500	173.1		SPRINGFIELD				2.9	
7,700		170.2		SOUTH JCT.		TWC		18.6	
7,450	40430	151.6		CAMPO				29.0	
7,100	40400	122.6		BOISE CITY	P			22.5	
8,200	40342	100.1		KERRICK				14.4	
3,168	40324	85.7		STRATFORD				0.2	
		85.5		UP RRX	JM	CTC		21.5	
	53330	64.0		ETTER	T		7105	5.7	
7,920	53320	58.3		MACHOVEC				6.2	
	53300	52.1		DUMAS	P	TWC		10.8	
	53270	41.3		BAUTISTA				14.1	
	53250	27.2		MARSH				19.0	
8,300	53220	8.2		JUILLIARD				7.2	
		1.0		DUMAS JCT.	JRT			1.0	
		0.0		BC JCT.	JM	CTC		256.8	

New Members

Elliot Haycock 12-004
21991 Creamery Road
Chassell, MI 49916

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5 Clematis Road
Brewster, NY 10509

Alan Matchett 12-007
28 Harbour Ridge Green NW
Calgary, Alberta T3G 4B1
Canada

Amarillo, Texas: A Very Busy BNSF Node

by Dave Poplawski

Amarillo has evolved, through a sequence of mergers, into a major focal point of operations for the BNSF, with upwards of 100 trains passing through, originating or terminated here every day. This traffic occupies five separate subdivisions that enter the city of Amarillo, with another subdivision connecting just a few miles southwest of town. Two separate yards, a historical remnant, handle all the switching and train originations and terminations.

Imagine Amarillo as the hub of a wheel with the subdivisions being the spokes. From the east enters the Panhandle Subdivision, connecting with Hereford Subdivision, which comes in from the south, at a location called Eastern about two miles east of downtown. From the north the Boise City Subdivision enters the scene, and from the west the Dalhart Subdivision. From the southeast the Red River Valley subdivision comes into town, with a connection to the Boise City line near Eastern and the Hereford Sub downtown. The Plainfield Subdivision connects with the Hereford Subdivision at

Lubbock Jct., about 15 miles southwest of Amarillo near the city of Canyon.

Traffic in Amarillo is heavy. Busiest is the Transcon (Panhandle/Hereford Subs), with all sorts of high speed, high priority intermodal, stack and vehicle traffic moving between the Midwest and the West Coast, plus the occasional manifest and grain train. A lot of coal trains (loaded and empty) pass through town, but not on the Transcon. Instead, coal loads come down the Boise City line, and most duck under the Transcon at Eastern to get to the fuel pads on the Red River Valley line and then eventually to power plants in other parts of the state. Many empties return via a completely different route, coming up the Plainfield Sub, onto the Hereford Sub at

The fuel pads east of the city were busy in the late 80's with all the coal loads coming to Texas from the Powder River basin and empties going back. Oakways occasionally broke up the endless parade of green power.

Photo by Jerry Michaels



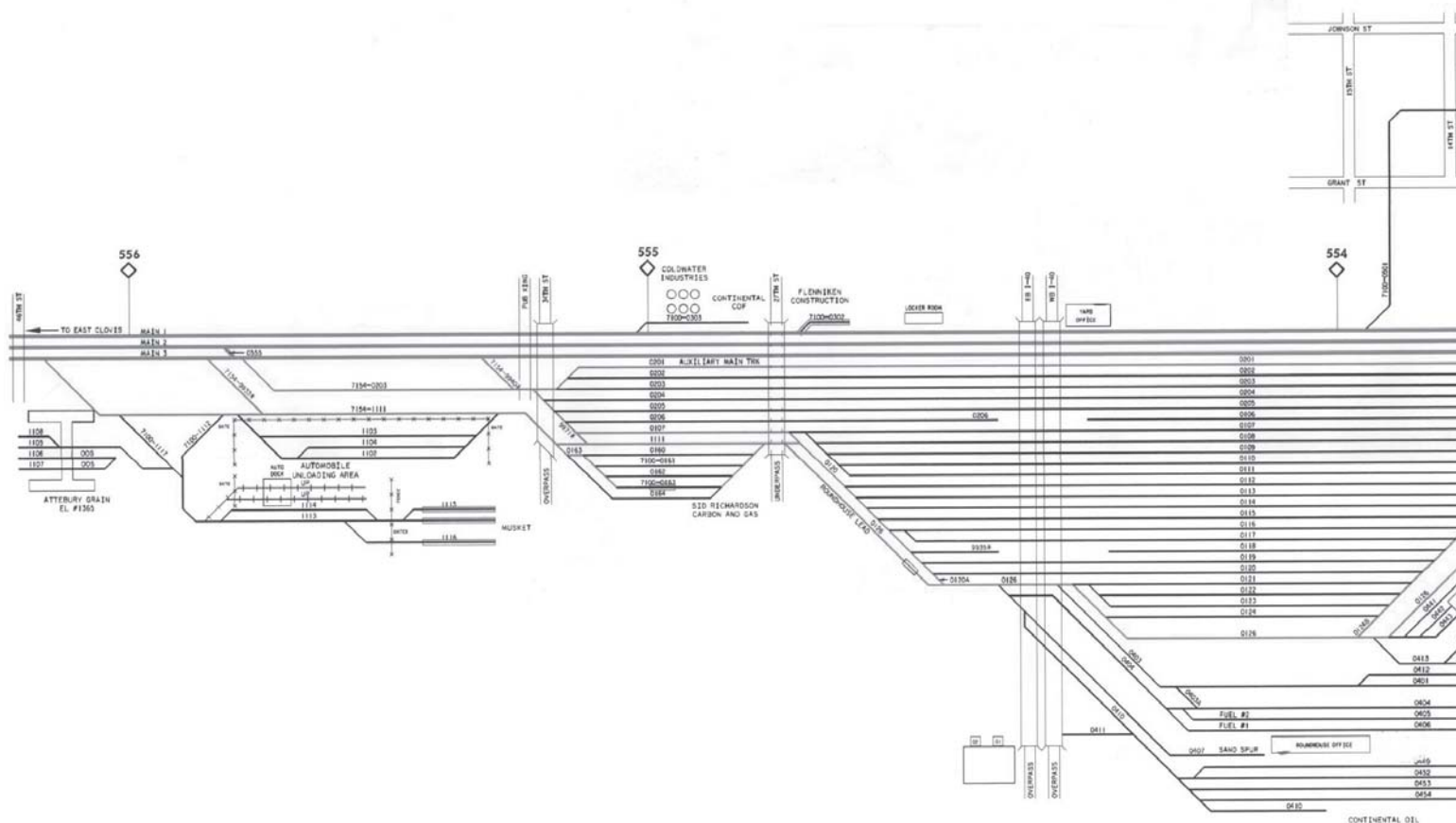
Legend

- Meeting Location
- Storm Shelter
- Buildings

Meeting Point #

Meeting Point #

Meeting Point #



Lubbock Jct., and then onto the Dalhart Sub for the return to the coal fields up in Wyoming. The Red River Sub is also busy with a mix of hot intermodals and stacks and coal, grain and manifest trains. Amarillo is also a crew change point for most trains, which combined with the heavy traffic means that there is hardly a moment when a train isn't parked at one crew change point or another.

For an idea of the volume of traffic, here's what came through Amarillo on Sunday, February 26, 2012:

- 29 Z trains (stack trains number 1 priority)
19 Q trains (stack trains high priority domestic)
14 S trains (stack trains with medium priority)
5 V trains (vehicles)
12 M/H trains (manifests)

- 9 loaded coal trains
8 empty coal trains
4 loaded grain trains
6 empty grain trains

This is the usual volume of traffic from Wednesday – Monday. Traffic is slow on Tuesdays. In four weeks prior to the 26th, the Amarillo complex ran 2,341 through trains and originated 119 more. This is an average of almost 84 through trains and more than four originating trains per day. Amarillo wasn't always like this. If you go back to M-Day (March 3, 1970), the first official day of operation of the Burlington Northern Railroad, the FW&D wasn't even technically included and remained a separate entity, but was from an operational point of view part of the BN anyway. Business on the FW&D wasn't very

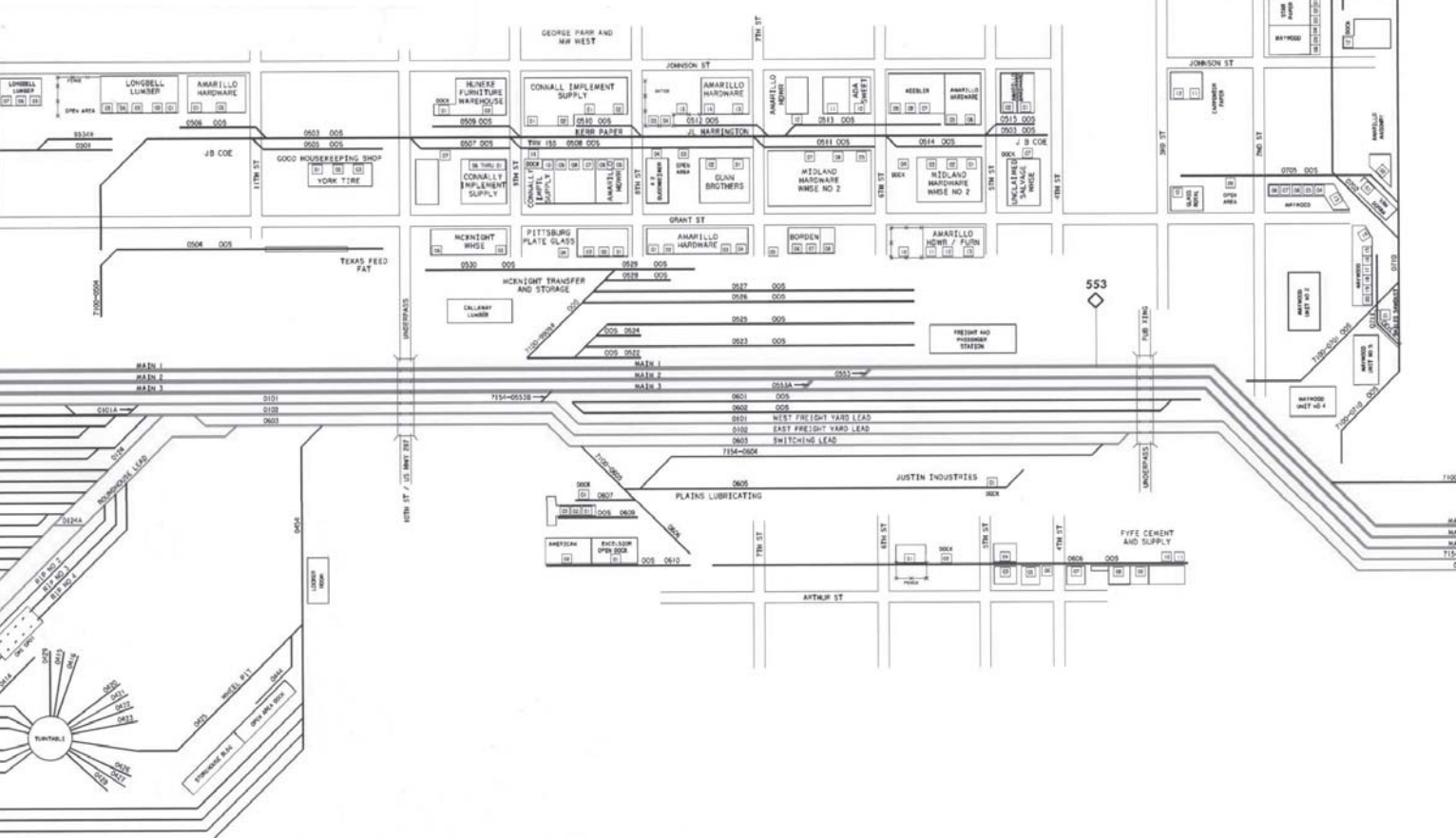
Meeting Locations

South Yard

1 = 1901 S Johnson (Junior Tower)

2 = 34th and Air Park (34th Street)

3 = 11th and Garfield (10th Street Entrance)



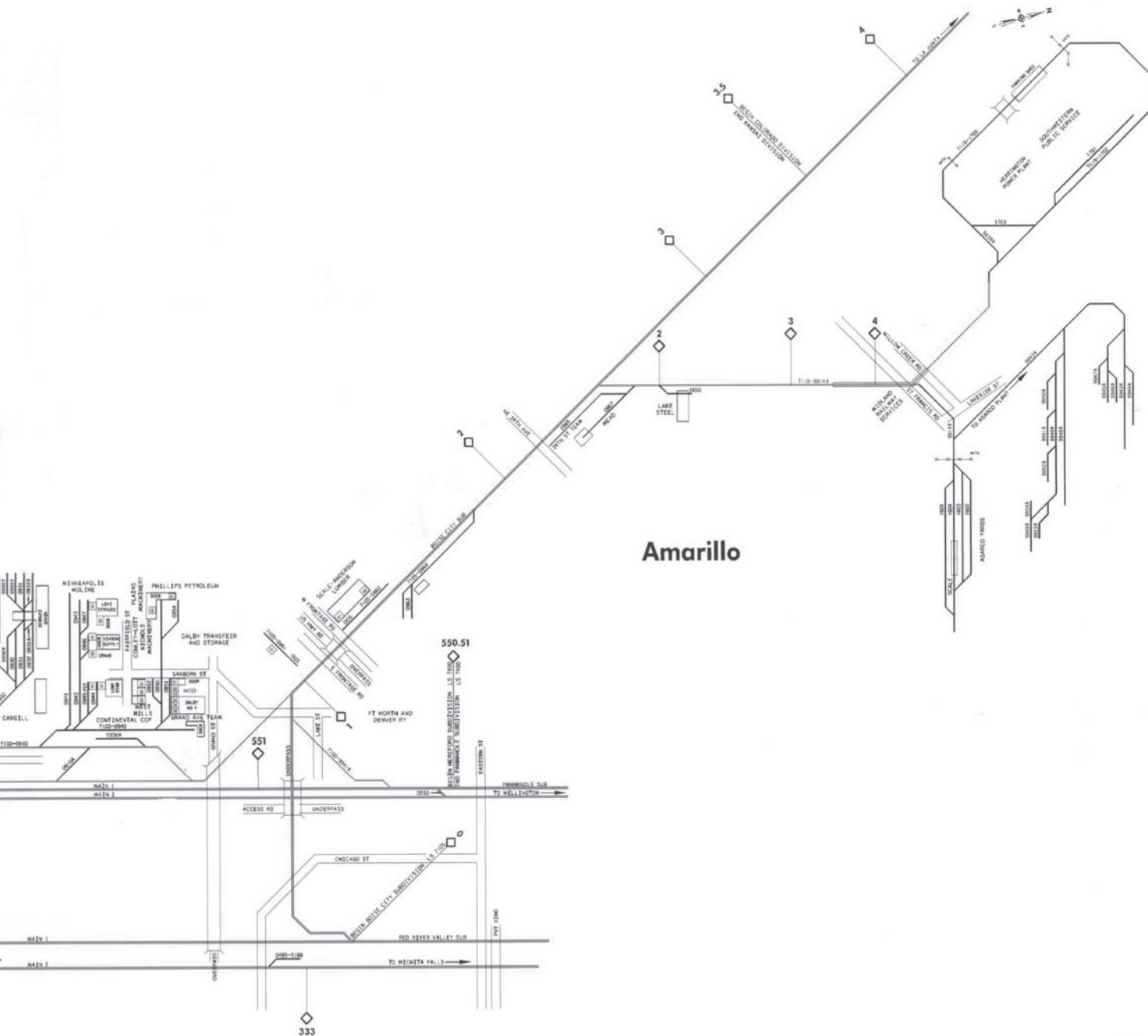
heavy as the low sulfur coal revolution had barely begun and the legions of coal trains emanating in every direction from Wyoming, and especially to power plants in southeastern Texas, were yet to come. And even though the FW&D wasn't technically part of the BN, locomotives painted the CB&Q paint scheme started turning Cascade Green with a BN logo and FW&D or C&S lettering. Amarillo was simply in the middle of FW&D's Second Subdivision, which ran from Childress to Texline, on the border of Texas and New Mexico. On the Santa Fe, intermodal trains were still a concept but not a significant reality, and stack trains hadn't been invented yet. The 1970 Clean Air Act started an era of change on the FW&D. Low sulfur coal, mined in Wyoming, became the savior of coal-fired electrical generating plants all over the country, and especially in

southeastern Texas, and the shortest and most convenient way to transport it was over the FW&D. Coal traffic starting ramping up, and has been steadily increasing to this day.

In 1982 the FW&D ceased to exist, being merged into the BN. This was mostly a formality, and had little effect on day to day operations. However locomotive numbers were merged into the BN scheme and FW&D lettering was removed.

Of interest to timetable buffs is how the trackage through Amarillo has changed timetable designation over the years as BN continually reorganized its management:

1970 – 1982: Fort Worth and Denver, 3rd Subdivision
1982 – 1985: Denver Region, Fort Worth Division, 3rd



REVISED 05/04/2010

name of the old BN Panhandle Sub to the Dalhart Sub (named for the town of Dalhart about 80 miles up the line).

A new possibility was a seamless connection for freight traffic, and especially intermodal and stacks, between southeastern Texas (Dallas, etc.) and points west using the Panhandle and Hereford Subs. It wasn't long before trains like the ZALTLAC1, ZALTNBY9 and ZALTSBD9 (westbound) and counterparts ZLACALT1 and ZSBDALT1 (eastbound) starting running through town. Several Z, Q, and S trains are common sights

most days, as well as a few manifests and baretables.

A second operational optimization brought about by the merger were two separate parallel routes for coal loads and coal empties. Prior to 2003, almost all loaded and empty coal trains traversed the old BN Dalhart and Red River Subs (primarily the old FW&D). This caused operational problem on the Dalhart Sub because it was single track and dispatched with track warrants. But the addition of the ex-Santa Fe Boise City line gave an alternate route for trains between Amarillo and Pueblo, Colorado, and on September 3rd, 2003, BNSF began



directional running. Coal loads from Wyoming, through Denver and down the joint line would hang a left out of Pueblo and head east over to La Junta and Las Animas Jct., then turn south onto the Boise City Sub for a virtually unopposed trip to Amarillo. Empties would head up the Dalhart sub from Amarillo, again virtually unopposed all the way to Pueblo. Grain loads and empties were handled the same way. It was a dispatcher's dream – no meets!

A new connection between the Boise City Sub and the Red River Sub made movement from the Boise City Sub to the Red River Sub simple. The connector track goes under the Transcon at Eastern, eliminating the need to make an at-grade crossing of the Transcon downtown. More importantly, it removed the need to reverse the direction of these trains, thereby saving time and congestion. A new refueling and inspection facility was also built at Eastern to enable coal trains to change crews, get 1000-mile inspections, and be serviced without disrupting operations on the Transcon and the yards downtown.

Directional running north and west of town was so successful that it was extended east and south of town. Coal loads still head east on the Red River Subdivision, but many empty trains return via the Plainfield Subdivision, connecting with the Hereford Sub south of town, and then taking a new connector between the Hereford and Dalhart Subs before heading west and north back to Wyoming.

Major changes have occurred on the Transcon too. At the time of the BN/SF merger, the Hereford Sub had two mainline tracks with CTC from Amarillo 15 miles to Canyon, then single track CTC most of the rest of the way to Clovis, New Mexico. There are now two mains (CTC) all the way, with about six miles of three track main line around the congested areas around the south yard in Amarillo. The Panhandle Sub was two main CTC and then single track CTC for another 150 miles to Waynoka, OK. Now it is almost entirely two main lines under CTC. These improvements are what make it possible to run the amazing number of trains seen just about every day in this busy node on the BNSF system.

Amarillo has no regular, scheduled Amtrak service, but over the years Amtrak has detoured the *Southwest Chief* through town when weather or track conditions up north across Kansas and over Raton Pass make passenger train operation impossible. Now that BNSF no longer runs any trains over Raton Pass, Amtrak may one day decide that maintaining the line solely for running one eastbound and one westbound passenger train a day too costly and look for an alternative that involves a route through Amarillo.

The author thanks Jason McBride of BNSF for information used in this article.



(page 10) Four big GE's bring an eastbound stack train around the big curve in Amarillo on the Hereford Subdivision. The Dalhart Subdivision branches off to the right just before the modern and impressive signal bridge.

(top) An westbound manifest is lead by one of BNSF early C44-9Ws past East Tower in Amarillo. This train just left the Panhandle Subdivision about two miles back and is now on the Hereford Sub. The Red River Subdivision splits off here and heads southeast toward Fort Worth on the old FW&D.

(bottom) Coal loads and coal empties alike stop for fuel at the pads east of town on the Red River Subdivision. In this view from SE 3rd Avenue two Grinstein green SD70MACs are the DPUs for an eastbound coal train heading down the Red River Sub, while ES44AC 6311 is on the point of a westbound empties ready to head through Amarillo and onto the Dalhart Subdivision toward Denver and eventually the Powder River coal fields. Three photos by Jerry Michaels



BNSF 793

by Darrell Wendt

On November 7th, 2010, BNSF 793 was involved in a collision, as it struck the rear of another train that was shoving onto the main (St. Joe Sub at East Armour, MO) from a siding.

The crew wasn't injured in the incident but the cab had sustained major damage, which was sent to Topeka, KS for repairs.

After number 793 was eventually rebuilt with a new fabricated cab, it was then sent to Kansas City, MO for the new Wedge/Swoosh BNSF paint scheme, and released to service in the Fall of 2011.

