

FRISCO

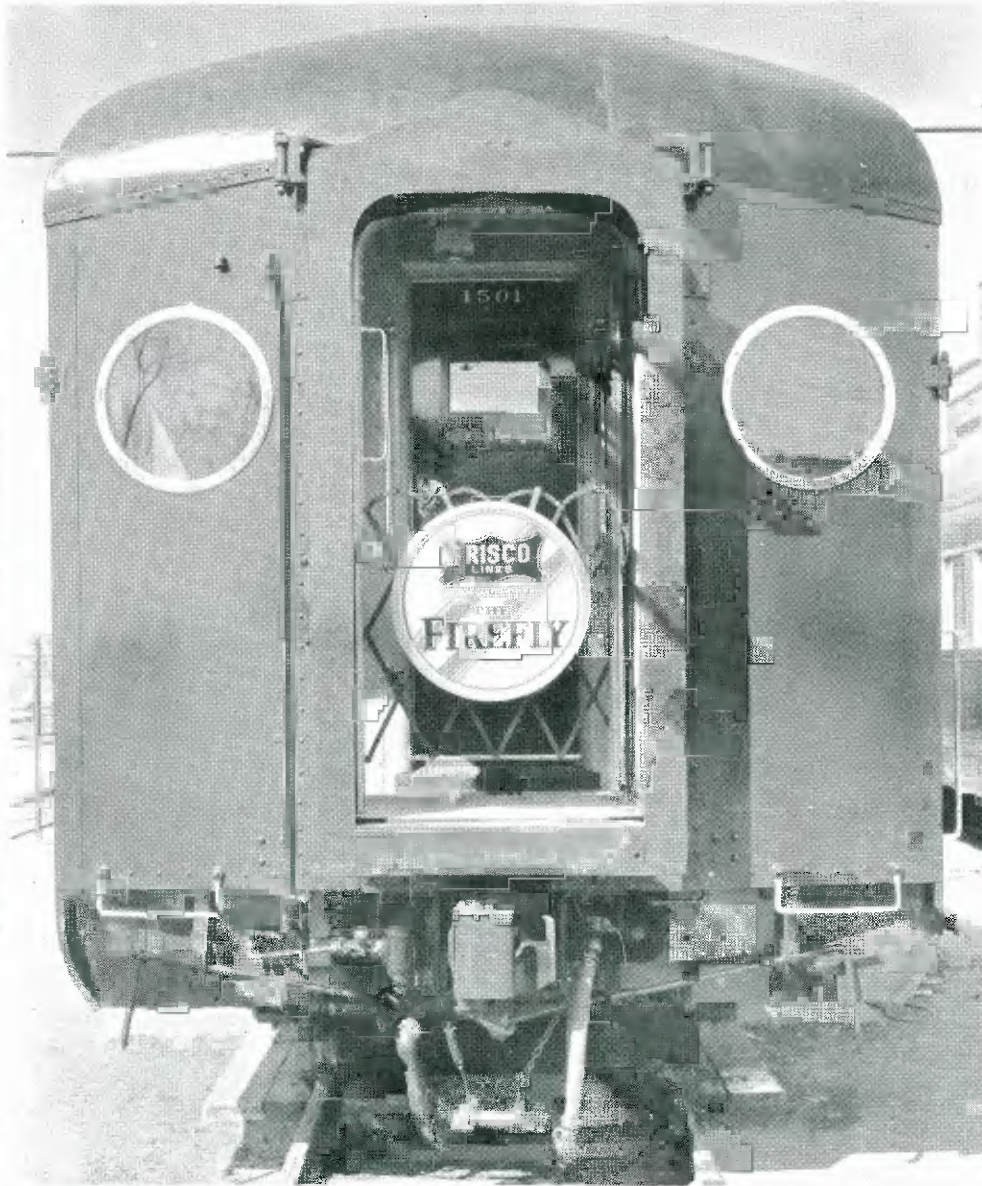
# All Aboard

FRISCO

June, 1989

NUMBER 1

## THE Firefly



# FRISCO All Aboard FRISCO

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF

THE



## RAILROAD MUSEUM INC.

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The ALL ABOARD Newsletter is published monthly for members of the FRISCO FOLKS, a support organization of The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. The museum facility is located at 500 Walker St. in Ash Grove, MO. All correspondence should be addressed to P.O. Box 276, Ash Grove, MO 65604. All material in the newsletter is copyrighted by The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. and may not be reproduced in any manner without the expressed written consent of the museum President. The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. is not affiliated with the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Co., the Burlington Northern Railroad Co., or any of its subsidiaries.

THE



## RAILROAD MUSEUM INC.

P.O. Box 276  
 Ash Grove, MO 65604  
 417-672-3110

## ABOUT THE COVER

"The Firefly" Cafe-Lounge #1501 on the ready line at the Springfield, MO, West Coach Shops, March 22, 1940. Story and more photos on pages 2-3.



## MUSEUM DISPATCH

Beginning June 7, the museum will be observing Summer hours of operation. They are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. The museum will be closed on Monday and Tuesday. Other times are available by appointment.



THE  
**FRISCO**  
 RAILROAD MUSEUM INC.

Amateur FRISCO modelers! Photos, Diagrams, Historical and Technical information available for Frisco equipment and facilities. Over 1,500 items of Frisco memorabilia on display. Memberships available. Call or write P.O. Box 276, Ash Grove, MO 65604 (417) 672-3110

In our on-going program to provide photographic, historical, and technical information to Frisco modelers, the museum is pleased to announce that as of the June, 1989 issue, we are now advertising in MODEL RAILROADER Magazine. ☐



LOOKING BACKWARD is a monthly feature of the ALL ABOARD that takes a look back through our files at the people and events that were a part of the Frisco 25, 50, and 75 years ago.

## 25 YEARS - 1964

In 1964, a unique graduation party aboard a Frisco train was held by the graduating class of Carthage Missouri High School. A special train consist of two chair cars and two baggage cars carried 150 members of the senior class from Carthage, MO to Cherryvale, KS, and back. The special train departed Carthage at 11:00 p.m. on May 21 and arrived back at 6:00 a.m. on May 22. The baggage cars, appropriately decorated, were used for dancing, serving refreshments, and other recreational activities.

## 50 YEARS - 1939

In 1939, the Frisco operated eleven named passenger trains and three freight counterparts. The passenger roster included the following:

Meteor, Will Rogers, Texas Special, Bluebonnet, Kansas City-Florida Special, Sunnyland, Memphian, Firefly, Oklahoman, The Black Gold, and The Tulsa Texan.



The Frisco Faster Freight fleet of freight flashes included:

Texas Flash, Oklahoma Flash, and the Dixie Flash.

## 75 YEARS - 1914

In 1914, the Frisco operated a weekend-only train between St. Louis and the Gasconade River at Jerome, MO, called "The Fisherman." Train #17 departed St. Louis on Saturday at 2:45 p.m. and arrived in Jerome at 7:35 p.m. The return trip on Sunday would leave Jerome, via #18, at 4:35 p.m. and arrive in St. Louis at 9:25 p.m. ☐



The Museum is pleased to acknowledge the following membership renewals in the FRISCO FOLKS:

- Don Niewald.....Brakeman Missouri
- J.W. Jordan.....Switchman Arkansas
- Marshall Napper.....Switchman Kansas
- James Martin.....Switchman Missouri
- Kenneth McElreath....Switchman Iowa
- Emil Eskengren.....Switchman Missouri

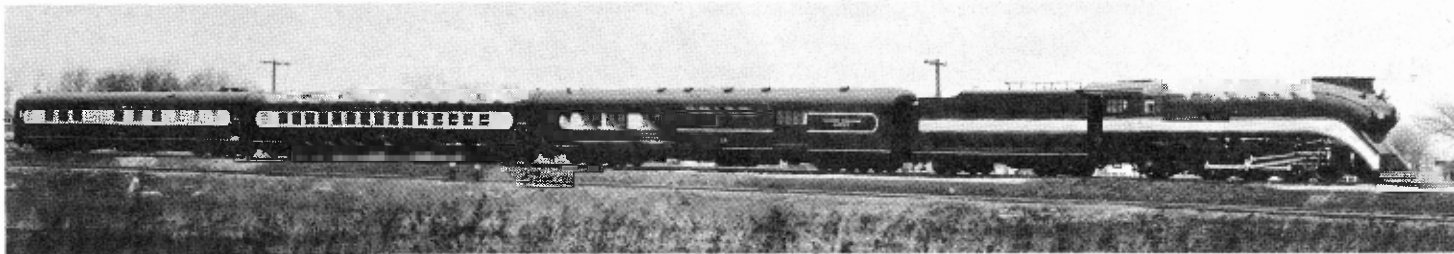
The Museum is pleased to welcome the following new members to the FRISCO FOLKS:

- H.Y. Walker.....Engineer Texas
- Richard Hall.....Fireman Illinois
- Robert Chadderdon....Conductor Oklahoma
- Frank Birkhead, Jr...Conductor Texas
- L.A. Reed.....Switchman Wisconsin
- Rodney Zona.....Switchman Minnesota
- Frederick Clem.....Switchman Wisconsin

New Electric Lighted Train  
 "The Meteor"



# PRIDE OF THE Firefly



Friday, March 29, 1940, marked the beginning of a new era in Frisco passenger service when the new streamlined "Firefly" made its maiden revenue run from Tulsa, OK to Kansas City, MO. Named after Charles Friml's 1912 operetta, "The Firefly," the new train was the first streamliner on the Frisco, the first streamliner to be designed and built in the southwest, and, at the time, one of only three such trains in the U.S. While heavier than the typical lightweight streamliners of the diesel era, the "Firefly" was equipped with every modern aerodynamic feature of its time including a torpedo type jacket on the locomotive, enclosed articulated vestibules, and lower panel skirting on the tender and cars.

Construction on the first set of "Firefly" equipment started in November, 1939, and the inaugural consist included engine #1026, Mail-Coach Combination #82, Chair Car #754, and Cafe-Lounge #1501. All three cars were painted Zephyr Blue with a center band and sash of Silver Gray. The trucks, roof, and underbody equipment boxes were Dove Gray and the underframe and diaphragms were black. Exterior lettering on some of the cars was imitation gold Duco and others were imitation gold enamel. They were the first of what would become a fleet of eighty-nine passenger cars painted in the blue and gray livery.

NOTE: A complete 1945 roster of the blue and gray cars is available from the Frisco Research Service for \$1.00.

While the Chair Car and Coach were tastefully decorated with tan walls, ceilings, and seats of dark rose in the Chair Car and medium brown in the Coach, the

PRIDE of the inaugural Firefly consist was Cafe-Lounge #1501. The car was originally built in May, 1912, at the American Car & Foundry Company's St. Charles, MO. plant as Cafe-Club Car #1801. It was one of three such cars built for the Frisco in Lot #6368 at a cost of \$19,267.00 each. The car was all steel, 82' long, 10'3" wide, weighed 206,800 lbs., and had a Turtle Back roof design. Number 1801 was rebuilt and renumbered to #1501 in September, 1930. Nine years later, November, 1939, it was once again remodeled this time as a streamlined Cafe-Lounge.



March 23, 1940 Frisco Photo

The dining room was trimmed in light green with deep nap carpet, and venetian blinds. Three tables seating four persons and three tables seating two, provided facilities for eighteen diners at one time. The initial dining compliments included Frisco's then standard Blue Denmark china, etched water glasses, and a combination of Cromwell and

March 13, 1940 Frisco Photo  
Chester pattern silverware. There is strong evidence to suggest that a special "Thistle" pattern of china was used on the Firefly, possibly at a later date. The china was white with a light green "Thistle" border.

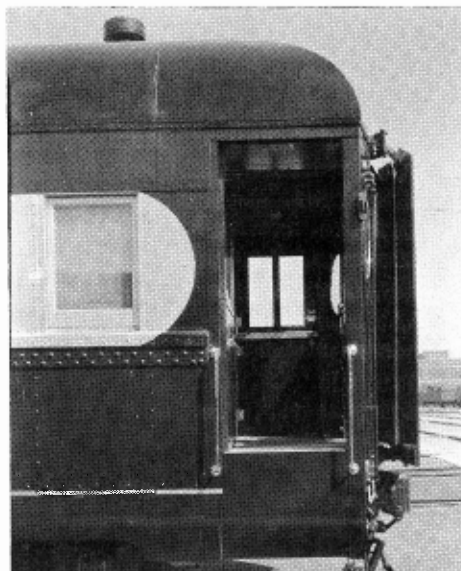


March 23, 1940 Frisco Photo

The lounge section of the car initially featured large, overstuffed chairs, card tables, and ample magazine racks. The chairs were highlighted by the distinctive "Firefly" embroidered in red on white headrest covers. The lounge section was later equipped with seventeen Frisco "Sleepy Hollow" seats.

Two distinctive features of the car were the red-white-black "Firefly" drumhead (cover photo) and the Imperial Prismatic Plate Glass windows in the restrooms. Manufactured by the Pressed Prism Plate Glass Co. of Chicago, the glass in fluid form was rolled in flat sheets approximately 1/2" thick. While still hot the upper surface of the sheet was brought into contact with a steel die,

forming the entire surface at once into the pattern desired. The end result on #1501 was a unique, leaded glass style window with the distinctive Frisco logo in the middle.



March 22, 1940 Frisco Photo

A companion set of equipment went into service on April 30, 1940, and included locomotive #1018, Mail-Coach Combination #83, Chair Car #757, and Cafe-Lounge #1502. It should be noted that in addition to other cars built and painted for use on the Firefly, a third streamlined locomotive, #1031, was also in service.

Cafe-Lounge #1501 was reconditioned in 1951 and repainted standard Pullman green. In May, 1959, it was removed from active service and on April 20, 1961, it was dismantled at the Springfield reclamation plant. The Firefly train made its final run on May 22, 1960. ☐

**EFFECTIVE  
MAY 23, 1960  
THE FRISCO RAILWAY**

Has been authorized by the Interstate Commerce Commission in Finance Docket 20934 to discontinue its Passenger Trains Nos. 117 and 118, "The Firefly" between Fort Scott, Kan. and Tulsa, Okla. The last through trains will leave both Fort Scott and Tulsa on **MAY 23, 1960.**

These trains have been sustaining an annual out-of-pocket loss of approximately \$100,000.00 because of lack of patronage. So, in the interest of good business, the Frisco has no alternative except to discontinue them.

There was a time when these trains served a transportation need, but the development of fine highways and the expansion of competing forms of transportation have combined to cut down the need for them.

Absolutely not! The Frisco will continue to maintain the same fine freight service it now offers through this Territory, but it will be relieved of the burden of operating passenger trains that are an absolute economic loss to the Company.

## FRISCO TUNNELS

### Part 1

At one time the Frisco operated over 5,200 miles of mainline track, in nine states, .60 miles of which were underground! There were three tunnels on the Frisco System with one in Arkansas, one in Missouri, and one in Oklahoma. Combined, the three accounted for approximately 3,200 ft. of trackage. Built between 1882 and 1886, two are still in service. One is currently owned and operated by the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad Co. and the other is in service on the Kansas City Southern Railroad. This is the first in a series of three articles profiling **FRISCO TUNNELS.**

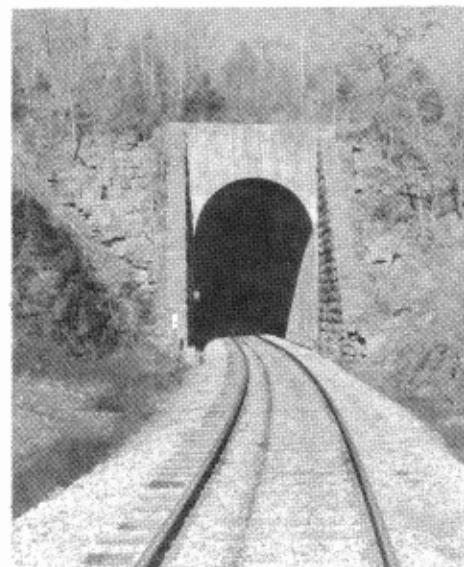


North Portal July 9, 1988  
R.E. Napper Photo

The oldest and possibly most well known Frisco tunnel was located at mile posts 375-375.3 on the Ft. Smith Subdivision, Central Division, just south of the town of Winslow, AR. While known by some as the "Boston Mountain Tunnel," both the tunnel and the town were named for Edward F. Winslow, President of the Frisco between 1880 and 1889. They also have the added distinctions of being located at the highest point on the entire Frisco System, 1,731.6 ft. above sea level, and the highest incorporated town and rail point between the Appalachians and the plateaus approaching the Rockies to the west.

According to our records, it was the Missouri, Arkansas, and Southern Railway Co. who made the initial decision to cut through the top of an Arkansas mountain rather than go miles around it. When the Frisco acquired the line in 1882, it completed the tunnel linking the Ft. Smith, AR area with Frisco's main line at Monett.

Winslow Tunnel lies twenty-five miles south of Fayetteville and approximately forty-miles north of Ft. Smith. When first put into service, the 1,726 ft. tunnel sides and ceilings were not walled. Consequently, chunks of dirt and rocks would occasionally fall on the tracks creating a safety hazard for passing trains. For many years, a guard would follow every train through the tunnel checking for debris on the tracks. To remedy the problem, two shifts of Frisco workman spent over two years meticulously lining the full length of the tunnel with bricks, in some places as thick as four feet. When the brick lining was installed indentions, called "man-holes," were placed at certain intervals. Their purpose was to provide a protective shelter for anyone unfortunate enough to be in the tunnel at the same time a train was passing through.



South Portal December 25, 1988  
R.E. Napper Photo

In August, 1967, the Frisco initiated "Operation Big Bore," a nine-month project to enlarge and strengthen Winslow Tunnel. The height was increased from 19 ft.

to 24 ft. and the width was enlarged from 14 ft. to 18 ft. In addition, eight inch steel ribs were installed on four-foot centers along the roof and a new lining of concrete was installed three to four feet thick. "Operation Big Bore" was completed in April, 1968, at an estimated cost of 1.5 million dollars.

On September 1, 1986, the Monett to Ft. Smith line was purchased from the BN and is now operated, Winslow Tunnel included, by the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad. ☐

Next month... "Big Ben Tunnel."



COVERED HOPPER #31072

In 1969, the Frisco leased 295 54 ft. covered hopper cars from United States Railway Equipment Co., number series 31000 to 31307. The cars were built by American Car & Foundry Co. in 1967. They were all steel with a capacity of 4,427 cu ft, and were equipped with Through Type Hatches. Between 1970 and 1975, Nos. 31000-31057 were equipped with combination pneumatic and gravity feed outlets and were renumbered 131000-131057.

In May, 1980, 193 of the cars were still on the Frisco roster, 142 in series 31058-31211 and 51 in series 131000-131057. When the Frisco/BN merger was completed, Nos. 31058-31211 were renumbered BN 439600-439740 and units 131000-131051 were changed to 439749-439799.

To model the car, begin with an Athearn undecorated 55' covered hopper #140-1900. There is photographic evidence that the cars in the series were painted both yellow and gray. For the yellow cars, use Floquil Reefer Yellow #110031. SP Letter Grey #110130 will be a close match for the gray units. The correct decals are available from Micro Scale #87-149. Good Luck! ☐

### THE MAIL CAR



The MAIL CAR is a regular feature of the ALL ABOARD in which we attempt to answer some of the many questions that are mailed to our RESEARCH SERVICE.

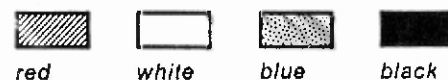
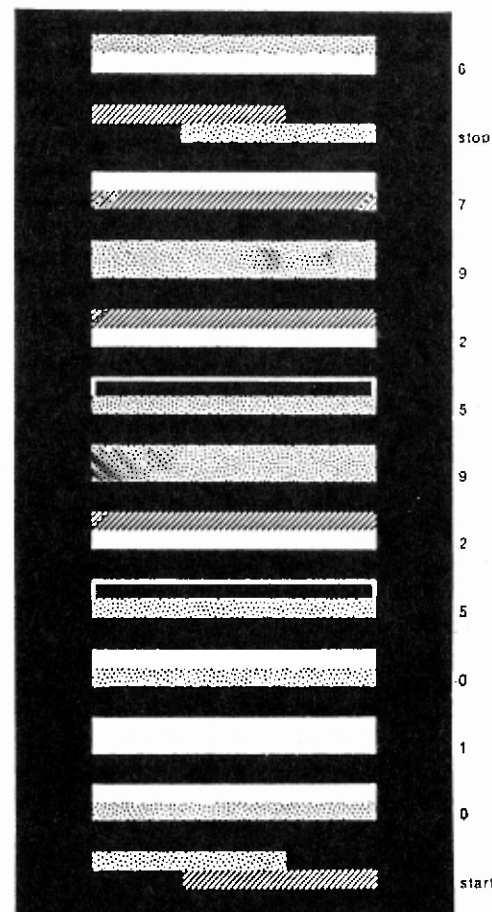
If you have a question about the equipment, facilities, or operation of the Frisco, please send them to the RESEARCH SERVICE. All requests are answered individually and selected questions will appear in the MAIL CAR feature.

QUESTION: What are those colored stripes of red, white, and blue on the sides of freight cars?

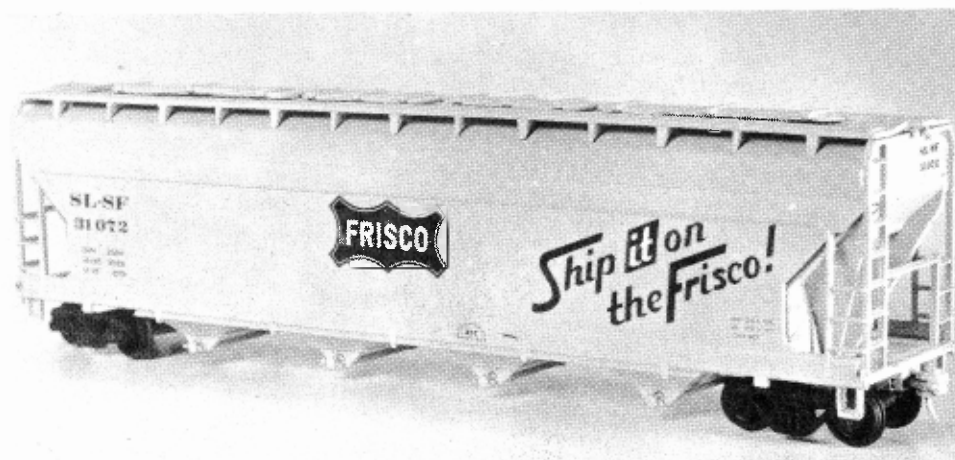
ANSWER: They are ACI labels (Automatic Car Identification)

that were first applied to Frisco cars in 1969. They were part of an industry-wide Automatic Car Identification System for monitoring freight car movements throughout the country.

The system consist of special plastic labels placed on each side of a car, plus electronic devices that can scan the cars at any speed and transform the information into printed lists. Each label, 11"x 22", has thirteen separate coded reflective tapes arranged to denote the type of car, container, or trailer and its number.

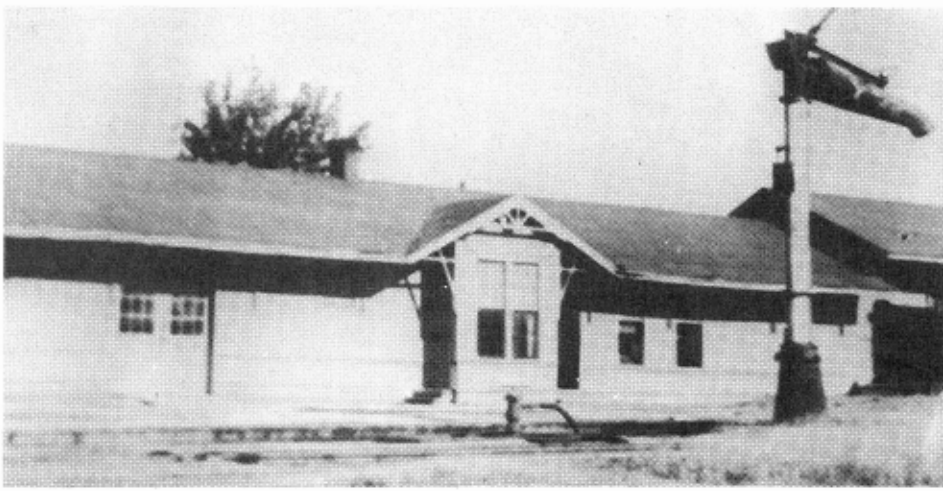


The scanner reads the panel from bottom to top: Start (red-blue), 0 (blue-white), 1 (white-white), 0 (blue-white), 2 (white-red), 9 (blue-blue), 5 (blue-black), 2 (white-red), 9 (blue-blue), 7 (red-white), stop (blue-red), 6 (white-blue). Translation: car is type 0 (freight car), belongs to railway 105, it is car No. 295297; its validity check is number 6. ☐

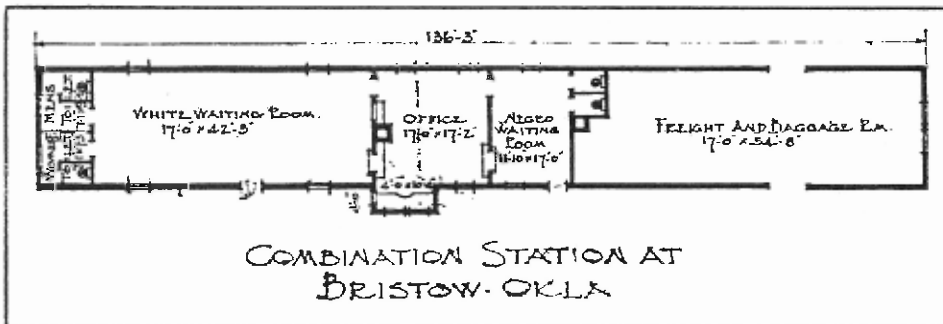








From the collection of H.D. Conner



and baggage room to handle the large volume of cotton, peanuts, general merchantile, and oil related equipment and parts for the Bristow area. The platform was gravel with a concrete curb. This depot served the freight and passenger needs of the community for twenty-five years.

In 1923, a new depot was built north of the original station, between sixth and seventh streets. The first depot was converted into a freight-only depot. The new 121'6" x 24'8" station, which opened for business on April 17, 1923, was all brick and stucco with a tile roof and featured a large general (white) waiting room, centrally located ticket office, negro waiting room, and small baggage room. The platform was brick with a concrete curb.

This modern station provided passenger facilities for the residents of Bristow for over forty-four years. During its tenure of operation, as many as six daily trains served the depot including the Will Rogers, Meteor, Texas Special, Blue Bonnet, The Firefly, and the Oklahoman. Passenger service to Bristow was discontinued on May 13, 1967, when the Oklahoman, trains 1 & 2,

made its final run between St. Louis and Oklahoma City.

Following the end of service to Bristow, the depot gradually fell into a sad state of existence and repair typical of many of its Frisco counterparts. In 1975, however, the City of Bristow

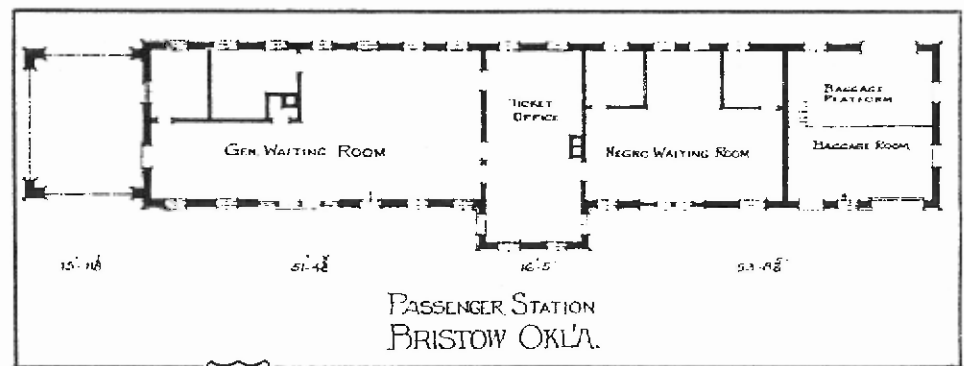
passed a resolution in an attempt to acquire the depot from the Frisco. Their initial efforts were unsuccessful due in part to the merger negotiations with the BN. In 1982, an effort by local citizens to save the depot was once again initiated and it too was met with railroad opposition. In 1984, the station had deteriorated to the point that it was placed on the BN's "hit list" for demolition. Not willing to accept defeat, on October 18, 1984, a lawsuit was filed by a group of die-hard citizens seeking a restraining order to prevent the BN from destroying the station. After what the BN promised would be a long and costly legal battle, the citizens dropped their lawsuit.

Negotiations did not end, however, and after many additional months of intense conversation by local citizens, politicians, and "friends in high places," the BN finally agreed to the transfer of the depot to the City of Bristow. In July, 1987, after twelve years of determination and hard work, the citizens of Bristow were successful in their efforts and the BN gave the city a bill of sale for the depot for the price of \$1.00.

Currently, the depot is in the



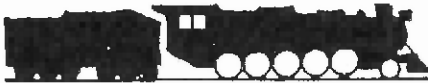
From the collection of H.D. Conner



hands of the Bristow Historical Society, who has a twenty year lease it. Restoration is expected to take nine months to a year and will be completed with private funds, with the total cost now expected to exceed \$300,000.00 The facility will be used by the Chamber of Commerce and as a Museum.

For more information about the restoration project, contact Frisco Folk Robert G. Chadderdon, P.O. Box 1218, Bristow, OK 74010.

The Officers and Board of Directors of the Frisco Railroad Museum Inc., along with Frisco fans across the country, salute the efforts of the folks at Bristow and give a hearty tip of the Frisco hat for your determination and success in preserving yet another Frisco Survivor! 🚂



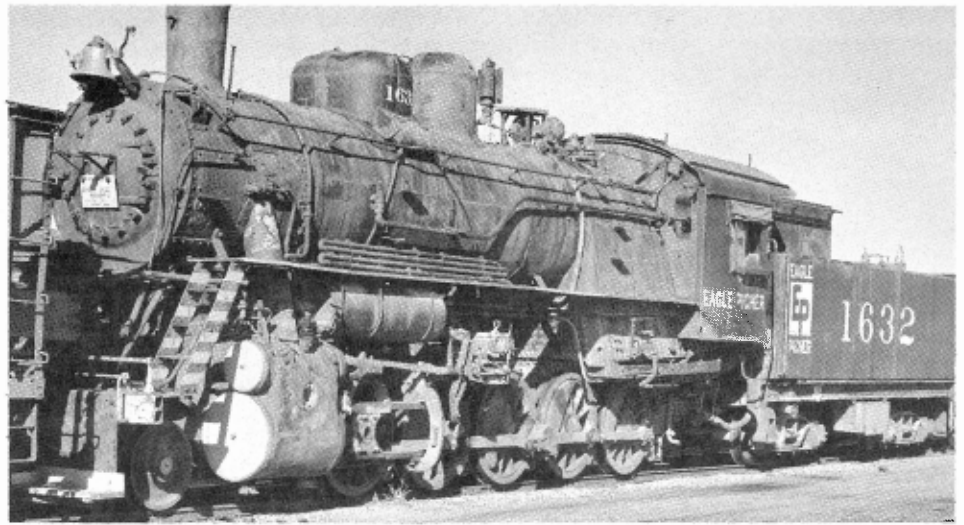
### THE WHYTE SYSTEM

In the late 1800's, an engineer named Frederic M. Whyte developed a system for classifying the many types of steam locomotives that were being produced. His system was based on the total number of wheels. The first number indicated the number of wheels in the leading truck, the second number listed the driving wheels, and the third number was for the wheels on the trailing axle.

This is Part 2 of the fifth in a series of articles profiling the engine types of the Whyte system that were in service on the Frisco.

When placed in service, the 1600's were used on the Pensacola line out of Amory, the Western Division out of Oklahoma City, and occasionally on the "High Line" and "Leaky Roof" routes between Springfield and Kansas City. Two of the engines, 1617 and 1628, were assigned to Frisco's western subsidiary line the Quanah, Acme, and Pacific.

It should be noted that there were in reality twenty-one engines that carried the 1600 designation. On June 14, 1921, a mysterious explosion at a Wallerville, MS, coal field



completely destroyed No. 1621. In need of a replacement, the Frisco negotiated a trade. In exchange for No. 614, a former 4-6-0 Kansas City, Ft. Scott, and Memphis engine, the Frisco acquired No. 101, the only 2-10-0 "Decapod" on the roster of the Ft. Smith, Sublaco, and Rock Island Railroad, a short line operation in northwest Arkansas. Engine 101 thus became the second Frisco 1621.

By September, 1951, eleven of the 1600's were still on the Frisco roster. By the end of the year, only six remained. (1613, 1615, 1621, 1625, 1630, 1632). No. 1613, the last "Decapod" in active service on the Frisco, was scrapped on October 28, 1952. The other five 1600's found salvation from the scrapper's torch when they were purchased by

Date & Photo Credit Unknown  
the Eagle Picher Mining Co., at Miami, OK., between October and December, 1951. When the company closed down its operation in 1957, the engines were placed in storage. Seven years later, they entered the ranks of Frisco Survivors when the Eagle Picher Co. donated them to the following locations:

1615.....	Altus, OK
1621.....	St. Louis, MO
1625.....	Dallas, TX
1630.....	Union, IL
1632.....	Ottawa, KS

### NEXT MONTH IN THE ALL ABOARD

Frisco Tunnels - Part 2, The Whyte System 2-8-2 "Mikado," Water Treatment on the Frisco, NEW CAR SHOP: GP-38-2 & VO 1000, plus much, much, more!

