

The weekend of June 18-19, 1994, was an exciting time in the history of The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. In cooperation with the St. Louis Chapter National Railway Historical Society and the St. Louis Steam Train Association, we had our first steam excursion trip, the *Southland*, between Springfield and West Plains, MO. As part of the Peach Blossom Special trip from St. Louis to Atlanta, GA, the train featured 1940's-50's era passenger coaches and was powered by Frisco 1522. It was the first train to operate out of Springfield on the Southern Division in over twenty-five years. The last Frisco passenger train, the *Southland 101*, departed the Springfield Depot on December 9, 1967.

To commemorate the event, we are reprinting our trip book, excerpts from a letter from Frisco Folk Jim Quarles describing the event, and a photo essay by Frisco Folk Ray Wells!

# All Aboard!

The

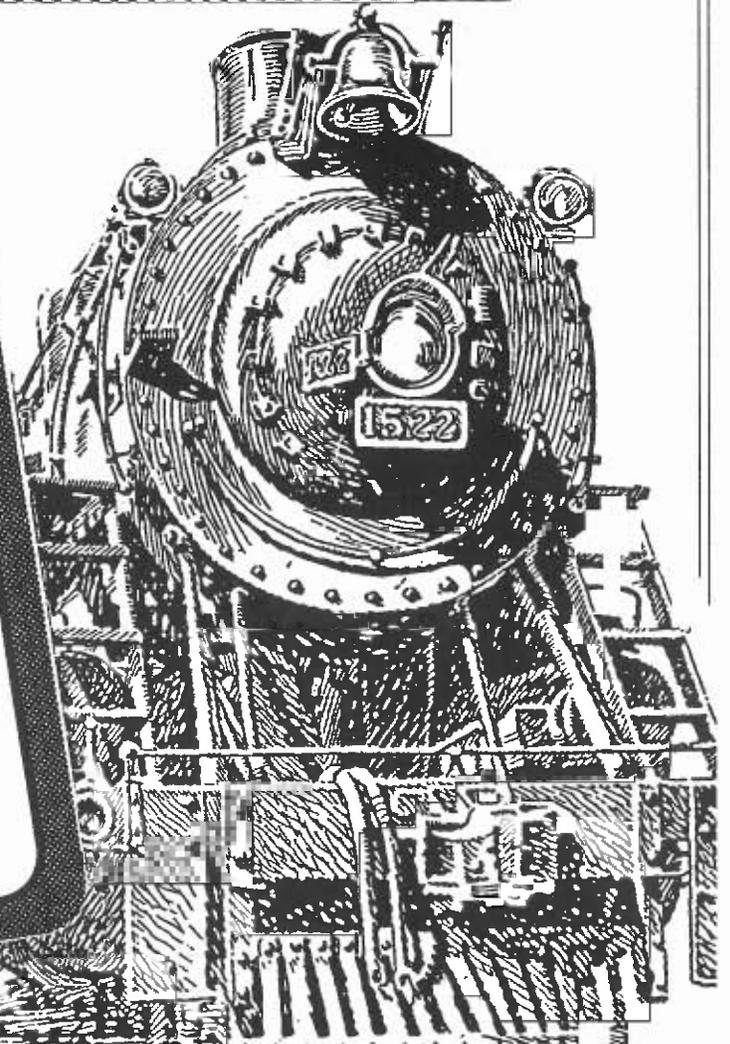


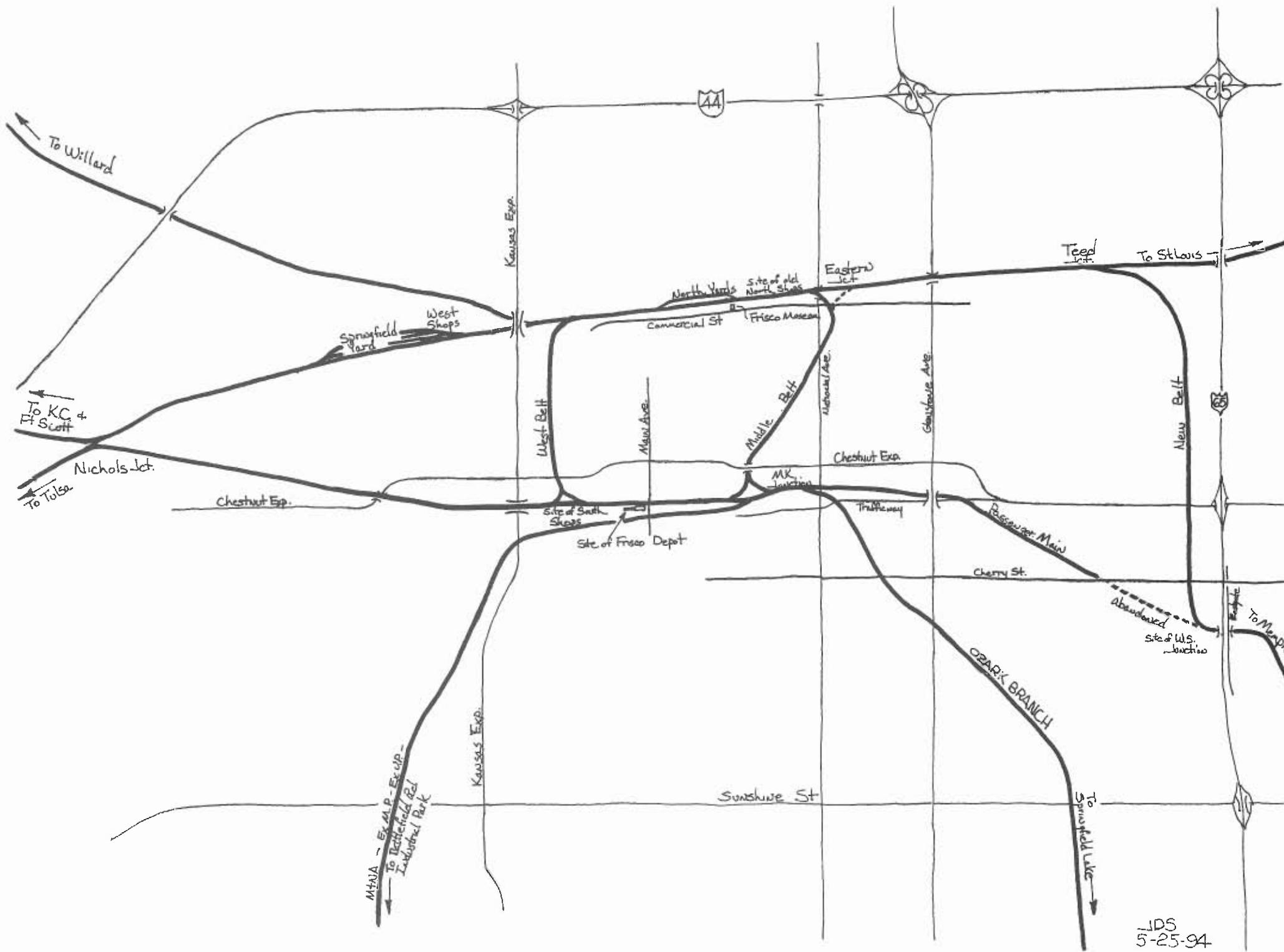
**Railroad Museum Inc.**

The  
**Southland**  
Steam  
Excursion Train

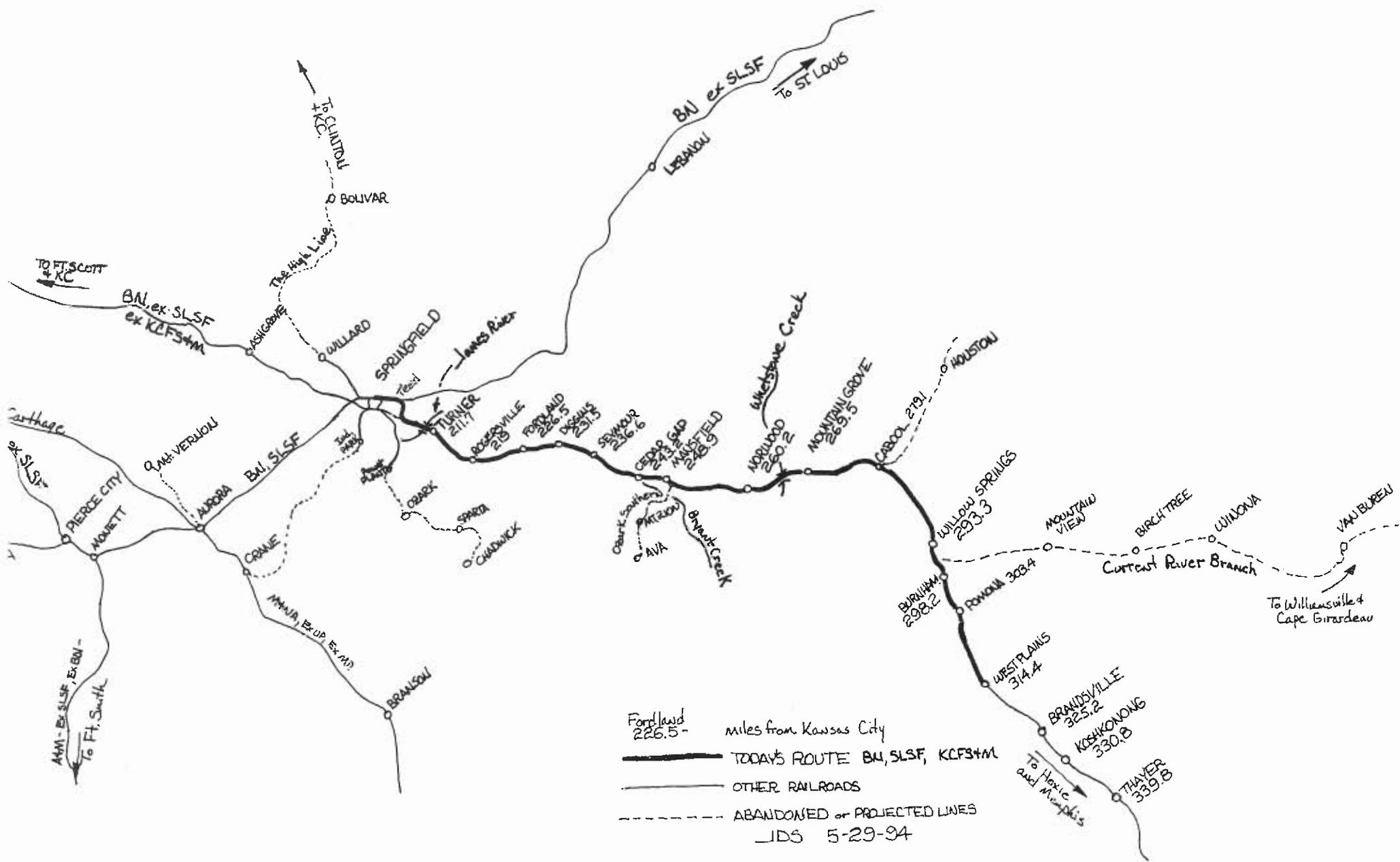
Springfield  
to  
West Plains

June 19, 1994





LDS  
5-25-94



Fordland 226.5 - miles from Kansas City  
 ————— TODAY'S ROUTE BAI, SLSF, KCFB+M  
 ————— OTHER RAILROADS  
 - - - - - ABANDONED or PROJECTED LINES  
 JDS 5-29-94

**SOUTHWARD**

**SOUTHERN DIVISION — WILLOW SPRINGS SUB-DIVISION**

Third Class	SECOND CLASS			Distance from Kansas City Miles	Supplement A to TIME TABLE No. 32 May 3, 1942	Telesraph Office	FIRST CLASS	
	237 Springfield Mdse. Leave Daily	135 Memphis- Birmingham Fast Freight Leave Daily	131 The Dixie Flush Leave Daily				107 Sunnyland Leave Daily	105 Kansas City- Florida Special Leave Daily
	PM 11 00	PM 7 00	AM 5 30	202.0	SPRINGFIELD	DN	AM 8 00	PM 11 10
					NORTH SPRINGFIELD	DN		
					0.5 PACIFIC STREET JCT.			
					1.2 PINE STREET JCT.			
					0.3 M. P. CROSSING			
	PM 11 20	PM 7 20	AM 5 50	202.9	0.1 SOUTHERN JCT.	DN	8 05	11 15
				203.0	2.7 HAYS		8 08	11 19
	11 25	7 25	5 55	205.7	3.0 TURNER	T	f 8 17	11 27
	11 40	7 35	6 05	211.7	7.3 ROGERSVILLE	2S	s 8 29	11 38
	11 59	7 55	6 22 136	219.0	7.5 FORDLAND		f 8 41	11 48
	AM 12 20	8 07 232	6 34	226.5	5.0 DIGGINS		f 8 47	11 54
	12 30	8 16	6 42	231.5	5.1 SEYMOUR	D	s 8 56	11 59
	12 40	8 24	6 50	236.6	3.6 CEDAR GAP		f 9 05	AM 12 07
	12 50	8 34	6 59	243.2	5.7 MANSFIELD	DN	s 9 17	s 12 17
	1 05	8 44	7 09	248.9	6.3 MACOMB	T	f 9 26	12 26
	1 36 106	8 55	7 19	255.2	5.0 NORWOOD	D	s 9 35	12 32
	2 05	9 03	7 27	260.2	0.3 MOUNTAIN GROVE	DN	s 9 55	s 12 48
	2 25	9 29	7 52	269.5	4.1 DUNN		10 02	12 58 106
	2 35	9 36	7 58	273.6	5.5 CABOOL	2S	s 10 13	s 1 08
	2 45	9 44	8 06	279.1	6.5 SARGENT	T	10 22	1 20
	2 58	9 54	8 15	285.6	3.4 STERLING		10 27	1 25
	3 15	10 02	8 22	289.0	4.3 WILLOW SPRINGS	DN	s 10 38	s 1 40
	3 50 136	10 10	8 29	293.3	4.9 BURNHAM		f 10 46	1 48
	4 10	10 18	8 37	298.2	5.2 POMONA		f 10 54	
				303.4	2.7 OLDEN		f 10 59	1 58
	4 30	10 29	8 48	306.1	8.3 WEST PLAINS	2S	s 11 14	s 2 13
	4 55	10 41	9 00	314.4	5.2			

**TABLE OF SPEEDS**

Miles per Hour	1 Mile In		Miles per Hour	1 Mile In		Miles per Hour	1 Mile In	
	Min.	Sec.		Min.	Sec.		Min.	Sec.
6	10		28	2	8	45	1	20
8	7	30	29	2	4	46	1	18
10	6		30	2		47	1	16
12	5		31	1	56	48	1	15
15	4		32	1	52	49	1	13
16	3	45	33	1	49	50	1	12
17	3	31	34	1	45	51	1	10
18	3	20	35	1	42	52	1	9
19	3	9	36	1	40	53	1	7
20	3		37	1	37	54	1	6
21	2	51	38	1	34	55	1	5
22	2	43	39	1	33	56	1	4
23	2	36	40	1	30	57	1	3
24	2	30	41	1	27	58	1	2
25	2	24	42	1	25	59	1	1
26	2	18	43	1	23	60	1	
27	2	13	44	1	21			

*Frisco Employee Timetable,  
May 3, 1942*



# The Southland Excursion

Springfield to West Plains

June 19, 1994

The train ride you are taking today has not been available to the general public since December 1967 when the Kansas City to Birmingham train, the *Southland* (trains 101 & 102), was discontinued. The steam motive power (1522) is a special treat as we believe this is the first steam powered train to run this line since 1951. Our portion of the trip will cover most of the Willow Springs subdivision which extended from Springfield to Thayer. Today's trip will end at West Plains because sufficient room in Thayer to load the return tour buses.

This train is representative of a Frisco passenger train of the late 1940's. The train is hauled by ex-Frisco locomotive 1522 which routinely ran on this line in the 1930's and 1940's. While the streamlined passenger cars are not former Frisco, they are similar to cars purchased by the Frisco after World War II to modernize it's passenger fleet.

The Springfield to Memphis line was built during 1882 and 1883 by a subsidiary of the Kansas City, Ft. Scott, & Gulf. The subsidiary, the Kansas City, Springfield, & Memphis Railroad, reached Fordland in May 1882, West Plains on January 22, 1883, and the west bank of the Mississippi River opposite Memphis in July, 1883. Upon completion the line was accepted by the parent company and operated as a division of the Kansas City, Ft. Scott, & Gulf Railroad. In 1888 the railroad was renamed the Kansas City, Ft. Scott, & Memphis Railroad. In 1901 the Frisco leased the line and merged the operations of the two roads together. Although operations were merged into the Frisco, the K.C.F.S. & M. remained a wholly held corporate entity until 1928.

Our route to the outskirts of Springfield is different than was used by the regular K.C to Birmingham trains. From the 1880's until 1967, southbound (trains to Memphis and Birmingham) passenger trains entered Springfield's terminal trackage at Nichols Junction west of town and proceeded to the downtown depot (Main Ave. and Mill St.). After a stop at the depot the train continued east on Mill St. ran along the Jordan Creek valley, crossed National Ave., slipped under the Glenstone viaduct, crossed Trafficway, Cherry St. and on to W.S. (Willow Springs) Junction where the line ducked under Eastgate Ave. and US 65.

This route is impossible to take today. The passenger main was severed in the mid-1970's because it was no longer needed as a passenger route, nor as a freight route. From the late 1940's to the late 1950's southbound freight trains departed the west yards, or the old north yards, eastbound, turned south on the middle belt at Eastern Junction and then turned east onto the passenger main near M.K. Junction. Due to unfavorable grades, curves, and street crossings on the middle belt Frisco built a new route in the late 1950's parallel to the present route of US 65. In addition to providing a much better route for freight, the new belt also opened up new industrial park areas to rail service. With the end of passenger

service and a better freight route available by way of Teed Junction, the passenger main was removed from Cherry St. to W.S. Junction. We are following the route that Memphis bound freights have taken since the late 1950's. As a bonus to the rare mileage collectors, this is possibly the first passenger train to run over the new belt.

Along our route you will see numerals on posts, signal line poles, and signal boxes. These are mileage markers which identify locations from a fixed point. South of Teed Junction the markers are measured from Kansas City. Our starting point (North Yards) to Teed Junction was part of the St. Louis - Oklahoma mainline and so the posts show the distance from St. Louis. Our speed can be found by using the enclosed table (p. 9). Measure the time elapsed between the one-mile intervals and look at the table to find the average speed traveled in that mile.

The following is a brief description of the towns and landmarks along our route, including photos of some of the depots that served the respective communities.

### **Teed Junction MP 203**

Our train takes the route to the right which is the beginning of the new belt line built in the late 1950's. The track to the left is the route to St. Louis.

### **James River Bridge MP 210.5**

The railroad crosses the largest river in the area on a combination through plate girder and I-beam span bridge. The James River valley crossing is also the lowest elevation, about 1183 ft., this side of Cabool.



### **Turners (Turner, Frisco spelling) MP 211.7**

The location of Turners Station Mercantile, a general store & post office. Turners was at one time the location of a water tank (for steam locomotives), living quarters and tool house for section men, and until the late 1950's, a depot.



**Rogersville MP 219.0**

Near the top of the long grade out of the James River Valley. The train will climb approximately 250 ft. from the James River bridge to Rogersville. US 60 becomes visible on the right side of the train and parallels the track just east of town.



**Fordland MP 226.5**

US 60 crosses over the track east of town. Visible on the left side of the train are broadcasting towers of Springfield television stations.

**Diggins MP 231.5**

A long passing siding is a frequent meeting point for current day freight trains. The four lane expansion of US 60 demolished a parallel row of houses that backed up to the tracks. Some of the houses had impressive back yard livestock collections visible from the train.

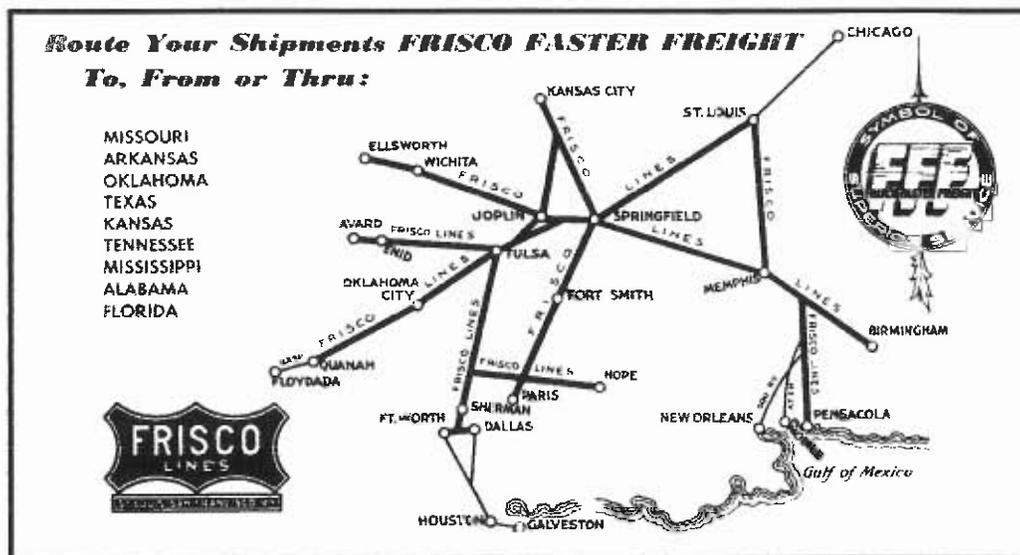


**Seymour MP 236.6**

The area between Diggins and Seymour has been settled by the Amish in recent years. Their farms are worked by manual labor and animal power. The farms are characterized by gray two story houses and operating windmills. Horse drawn buddies traveling along the shoulder of US 60 are a common sight.

**Cedar Gap MP 243.2**

This point is the highest elevation on our trip today with the track reaching an elevation of 1689 ft. Approximately one mile beyond Cedar Gap, on the left side of the train, is a peak known as Lead Hill. Lead Hill has an elevation of 1744 which is the second highest point in Missouri, second only to Taum Sauk Mountain in eastern Missouri (elevation 1772 ft.). Cedar Gap had a water tank for the locomotives which was fed by Cedar Gap Lake northwest of town. This lake was filled-in in the early 1980's. At the south end of Cedar Gap the train will enter the northern edge of the Bryant Creek valley. Visible some ten miles to the south are landmarks such as Pilot Knob and the water tower and some buildings near Ava.





### **Mansfield MP 248.9**

Mansfield was the northern end of a short line railroad known as the Kansas City, Ozark, & Southern. First conceived as a electric interurban (*an inter-city trolley line*) to Ava 15 miles to the south, construction started in Mansfield in 1908 and reached Ava in February 1910. The intention was to electrify the road by building a power house on the Bryant Creek 18 miles southeast of Ava and an order for two electric passenger cars was placed with the St. Louis Car Co. Apparently financial trouble prevented electrification and the line limped along using a variety of steam locomotives and gasoline rail buses. Reorganized as the Ozark Southern in 1919 the railroad suffered from competition from cars and trucks and was abandoned in 1935.



### **Norwood MP 260.2**

The beginning of the most severe grade on our route. Before larger steam locomotives were bought in the 1920's, freight trains from Springfield were split into two parts at Norwood and run as two separate trains to Thayer. Heavy passenger trains required two locomotives (*1050 & 1060 class Pacifics*) the entire distance from Springfield to Thayer. Delivery of the second and third lot of 1500's (*1522 is a member of the third batch*) allowed them to be used on the line and a single 1500 could handle most trains of that era alone. A "Y" for turning locomotives was located here until at least 1928.

### Whetstone Creek Bridge MP 264.7

Whetstone Creek is a tributary of the Gasconade River. The bridge is at the base of the hardest grade on today's trip. The 1522 will be working hard all the way to Mountain Grove.



### Mountain Grove MP 269.5

Located at the top of Whetstone Creek grade. A water tank was here in the days of steam locomotives. Mountain Grove's depot survived until the mid-1980's.



### Cabool MP 279.1

The railroad passes under US 60 on the west end of town. A Mid-America Dairymen's plant will appear on the right side of the train as we pass through Cabool's business district. On the east end of town the railroad passes under US 63. Cabool was the southern end of a projected railroad that would have passed through Houston and connected with the Frisco at Salem. Some work was done on the roadbed and a depot was completed at Houston. Financial problems stopped the project before any rail was laid.



**Willow Springs MP 293.3**

At Willow Springs the Current River Branch joined the mainline. This branch connected with logging and mining railroads early in the century, but lack of business lead to abandonment in the late 1970's. Willow Springs had water and coaling facilities for steam locomotives and a turntable for the branch line locomotives. The railroad passes under US 63 at the south end of town and passes the site of the "Y" that connected with the Current River Branch.



**Burnham MP 298.2**

A logging railroad once extended west from Burnham into what is now the Mark Twain National Forest.



**Pomona MP 303.4**

The railroad crosses over US 63 at Pomona.



**West Plains MP 314.4**

The train will stop here and transfer the Frisco Museum's passengers to busses for the return trip to Springfield. The West Plains depot was dismantled a few years ago and moved to a city park in the north part of town. The depot now serves as a community building for the city.

Compiled by  
John Sanders, Director of Resource Development  
**The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc.**  
Photos courtesy of H.D. Connor & Allen Johnson