

Crossties

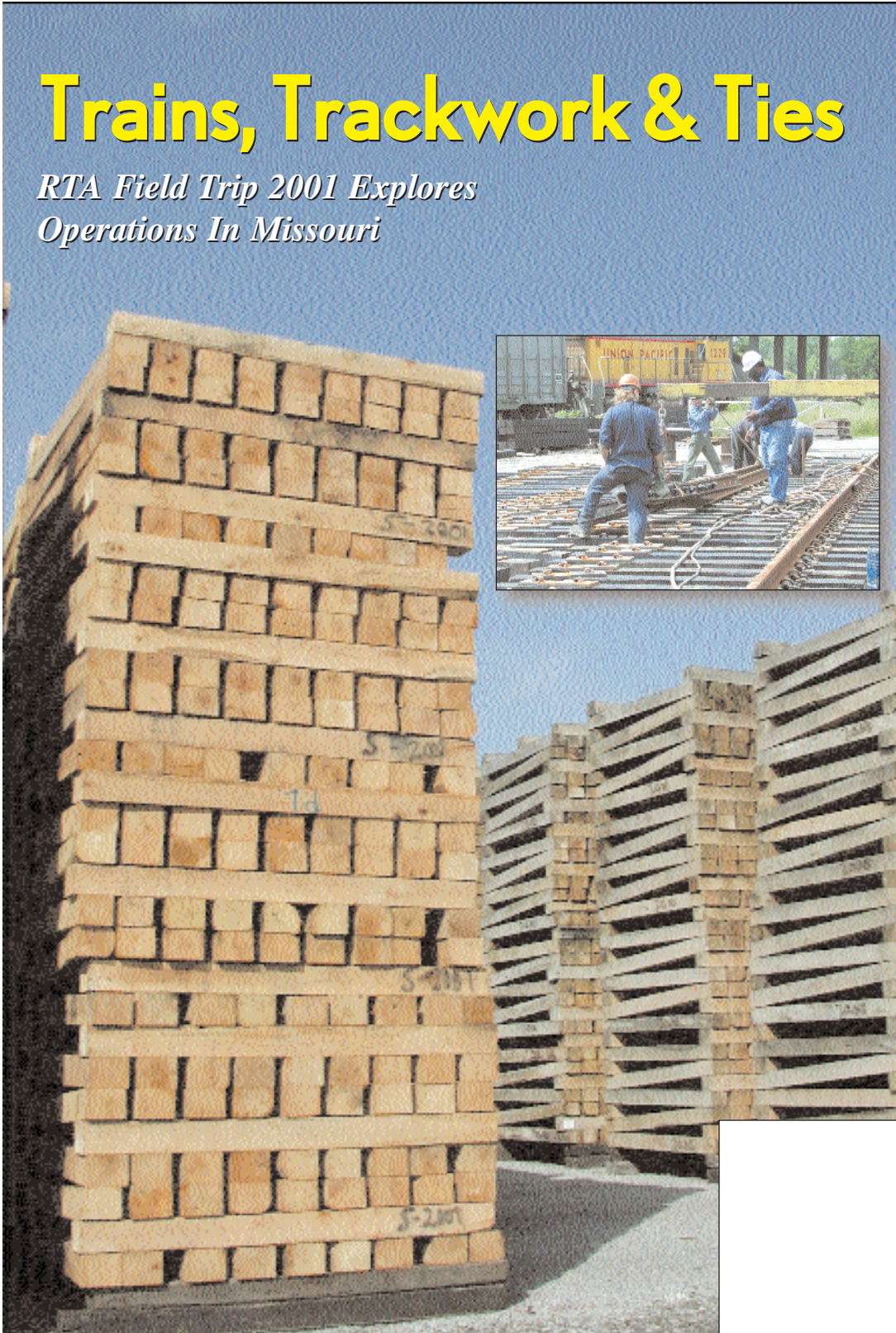
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July/August 2001

The Magazine For Producers And Users Of Treated Wood Crossties And Related Products.

Trains, Trackwork & Ties

*RTA Field Trip 2001 Explores
Operations In Missouri*



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Trains, Trackwork & Ties

RTA Field Trip 2001 Explores Operations In Missouri

Every year, the Railway Tie Association sponsors a manufacturing operations field trip for its members. This year, the trip took more than 25 railroad and producer members to Missouri for an exceptionally diverse look at tie production, end plate manufacturing, track panelization, and rail car maintenance and refurbishing. The story, retold in the following pictures, illustrates the value of this educational experience for all RTA members, no matter what their area of responsibility.



DAY 1

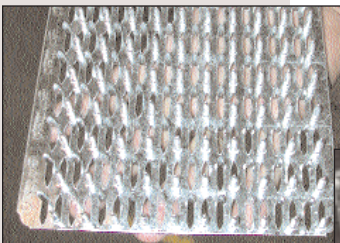
The first morning was hosted by MiTek Industries Inc. After a 7 a.m. roll call, the first stop was the Columbia, Mo., stamping plant where anti-split end plates are manufactured. Here, plant manager Todd Asche (third from right) gives (from left) Mike Garrett, Gary Renn, Gene Mall, Buddy Downey and Harry Bressler an overview of the operation.



20,000-pound coils of rolled steel are sheared into smaller width material for stamping the more than 350 stock products in the MiTek line. MiTek is one of the world's largest suppliers of engineered plates and systems for the roof and floor truss industries.



End-plates for ties come off the stamping line and are...



Crosstie end plates are engineered with single tooth stampings...and embossed with user information.



...packed in specially labeled boxes and palletized. The order being run in this shot is for 6.2" x 7" plates for Burke-Parsons-Bowlby in West Virginia.



The field trip moved on to MiTek's Earth City machinery manufacturing facility where plant manager and Vice President of Manufacturing Robert LePoire shows attendees the new auto-loading end plate pressing machine being manufactured for Ashcroft Treating, last year's host for the RTA field trip.



MiTek is also a world leader in automated sawing for construction prefabrication products. Cybersaw is an intuitive touch-screen behemoth that can make six complicated compound cuts at the push of a button. Software is engineered on site by a team of specialists including Doug Goins, shown here demonstrating the saw.

Many thanks to everyone at MiTek for hosting the trip. MiTek's Bill Howard (left, and shown with Doug Goins) served as this year's coordinator for the entire field trip. Thanks Bill!



The field trip moved on to the St. Louis-based Metrolink light transit operations center, where lectures on the operations and engineering involved in this diverse passenger rail service provider were presented.



Metrolink runs on wood ties west of the Mississippi. A new section recently opened in Illinois on alternative tie materials. The problems experienced in installing the concrete section and the Atlanta-based MARTA's recent replacement of thousands of 20-year-old concrete ties have made Metrolink rethink future alternative tie installations.



Then it was time for a ride. Along the way, the group stopped just past the Eade's bridge to view...

Robbins Engineering
 7 1/4 x 4 3/4
 2C
 pu May/June pg. 21



...timber bridge decking...and a great view of the Arch...



...from across the Mississippi River in Illinois.



On the way back to the hotel after a long day, the group learns even more about Metrolink from our guide.

DAY 2
 After another 7 a.m. start, the group visits Kerr-McGee's Madison operation. Manager John Falcone greets guests with opening remarks and much appreciated coffee and doughnuts.



Mellott Wood Preserving
 7 1/2 x 4 3/4
 BW
 pu May/June pg. 7



From the sorting and grading station...



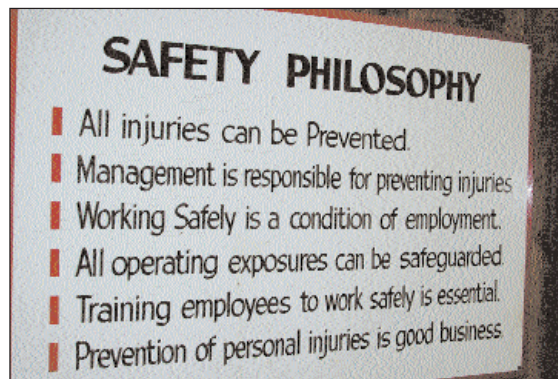
...to the stacks...



...to treatment...



...Kerr-McGee's Madison plant is a class act...



...and a safe one with a great record stemming from a strong management commitment to safety.

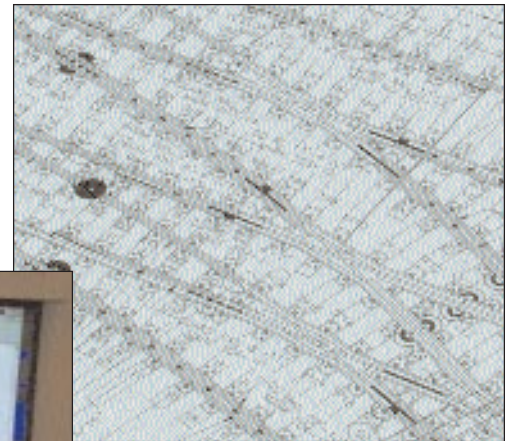
Northern Woods
 7 1/4 x 4 3/4
 2C
 pu May/June pg. 10



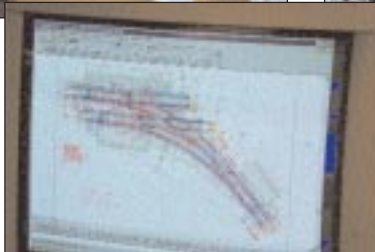
Then it was off to the Koppers trackwork manufacturing and remanufacturing facility plant in Alorton, Ill. Dedicated to the highest standards in quality, this facility makes complex track panels and a variety of special trackwork products. In the center of this photo, an example of rail that has been curved with the new rail bending machine can be seen.



Panels such as this one for SEPTA start as a series of drawings (above)... created on computer (right)...



...and then output as detailed working drawings...



...for final manufacture of components and assembly.



This 16-bit automatic drill is used for rail drilling (above). A frog radiused with a mill and hand-fitted is shown at right.



Shown above left are compromise bars, machined for specific application. Shown above right are AREMA-designed guard rails made with a metal planer. The Koppers plant has several highly specialized machines and operators.



Railworks

7 1/2 x 4 3/4

BW



Koppers' Industrial Track Work division also manufactures crossings. Seen above is a new 132RE 61° tangent/curve two rail bolted crossing for industrial track.



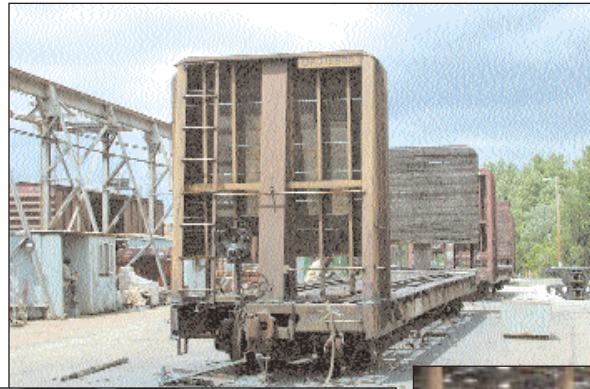
Our guide, Steve Basham shows a relay frog in which cracks and other material are cut out, and manganese is welded to the surface.



Our next stop was the Union Pacific Car Shop in De Soto, Mo. Along the way, we broke down. A few gallons of antifreeze later, and we were on our way.



Our host and plant manager Jim Ross of UP explains the tour.



Among the hundreds of fascinating procedures described was car refurbishing where old cars such as this...



...painted...

...are completely stripped...



...and retrofitted with a new deck...



...and lined with oak timbers to carry rolled steel coils. Remember the 20,000-pound rolls at MiTek? Only two such coils can travel on an 18-wheeler. Several more can be transported at one time on this newly refurbished/remanufactured rail car.



The field trip attendees gather for group photo on the porch of the old railroad hotel in De Soto. The hotel, now called the Arlington Bed & Breakfast, was where the group enjoyed lunch on Day 2.

The following members of the Railway Tie Association attended the field trip: Bob Cunningham; Josie Cunningham; Don Adamski, Ashcroft Treating; Marni Adamski; Harry Bressler, B-P-B; Buddy Downey, B-P-B; Mike Neidert, B-P-B; Guy Beaudoin, Canadian National; Gary Renn, CSX; Mike Carter, Gross & Janes Co.; Matt Clarke, Gross & Janes Co.; Gene Dodson, Kerr-McGee; Gene Mall, Kerr-McGee; Jim Smith, Kerr-McGee; Jim Baty, Koppers; Gary Williams, Koppers; Judy Menard, Lohoberg Lumber; Bill Howard, MiTek; Jim Gauntt, RTA; Rob Johnson, Seaman Timber Co.; Clayton Bryson, Thompson Industries; Dave Evans, Thompson Industries; Tony Helms, Thompson Industries; Steve Hanson, Webster Industries; Jan Hanson; Liz Russell, Webster Industries; and David Whitted, Webster Industries. **RTA extends our sincere thanks to all the sponsors and hosts of Field Trip 2001.**

SPECIAL OFFER Currently available through RTA for \$12 is a 200-photo CD portraying field trip members' adventure in St. Louis. Call RTA at 770-460-5553 for your copy.