

FEATURED ENGINE: Article contributed by Ray Toler

In the forty years I worked at Arkansas Power & Light Company (AP&L), I made many trips to New Orleans, Louisiana, on company business. On one of those trips I visited a steam electric generating station operated by New Orleans Public Service, Inc. (NOPSI), a sister company of AP&L. It was located at the foot of Market Street on the Mississippi River. I observed two 35 horse power vertical bottle type steam engines driving pumps busily unloading number six oil from a tanker moored at the power plant. Some time later the ancient plant was shut down. I inquired whether I could obtain one of the steam engines. The answer was yes, conditionally. I was required to advertise in the Times Picayune newspaper that the engines were for sale. When there was no response to the ad, I was allowed to buy one of the engines for scrap value, which was about fifty dollars.

I borrowed a trailer from AP&L and drove it behind my pick-up to New Orleans. NOPSI employees unhooked piping to the engine, uncoupled the pump, loaded the engine on the trailer, and tied it down for the trip to Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

After a trip to a monument works for sand blasting, the engine received fresh coats of primer and paint.

When I retired from AP&L in 1987, I decided to donate the engine to Forrest Williams of Cabot, Arkansas. He was glad to have the addition to his large collection.

The engine now resides in Harrison, Arkansas, at the Rusty Wheels tractor club show grounds adjacent to the club's tractor pulling strip.

