United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking “x” in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter “N/A” for “not applicable.” For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Beaumont St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Water Tank

other names/site number 015-0000-0250, Frisco Water Tank

2. Location

street & number Third and D Streets

□ not for publication

city or town Beaumont

county Butler

state Kansas code KS county Butler code 015 zip code 67012

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this □ nomination □ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant □ nationally □ statewide □ locally. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

State Historic Preservation Officer, July 7, 1993

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

□ entered in the National Register.

□ See continuation sheet.

□ determined eligible for the National Register.

□ See continuation sheet.

□ determined not eligible for the National Register.

□ removed from the National Register.

□ other, (explain:)

____________________________

____________________________

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing Noncontributing


1

1

0

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: rail-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/ Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: water tank

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Wood: Weatherboard
roof Wood: Shingle
other Metal: Steel

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance
1886 - 1943

Significant Dates
1886

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
St. Louis, Wichita, and Western Railway Co.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Primary location of additional data:
☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: Frisco Railroad Museum, Inc.
Ash Grove, Missouri

Butler County Historical Society, El Dorado,
Beaumont St. and San Francisco Railroad Water Tank
Butler County, Kansas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than 1 acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Zone | Easting | Northing
--- | --- | ---
1   | 4    | 7   | 170 2
1   | 4    | 1   | 71 0
4   | 2    | 11 0

Verteal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Martha Hagedorn-Krass, Architectural Historian
organization: Kansas State Historical Society
date: July 7, 1993
street & number: 120 West 10th
telephone: 913-296-5264
city or town: Topeka
state: Kansas
zip code: 66612

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name: Burlington Northern Railroad Co., Property Management
street & number: 2680 Continental Plaza, 777 Main Street
telephone:
city or town: Fort Worth
state: Texas
zip code: 76102

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 479 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
The Beaumont St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad (Frisco) Water Tank (c. 1886) is of cypress, stave construction, and represents one of the few remaining examples of this type in Kansas. The tank stands at the foot of Third Street along D Street in Beaumont, Butler County, Kansas (pop. 80). The dimensions of the water tank are 14 feet high by 22 feet in diameter, the tank is supported by a superstructure that is 14 feet high. The water tank has a 50,000 gallon capacity. The water tank's spout was removed in the 1950s. The tank has a six-sided, wooden shingled roof. The remnants of the Frisco olive green color scheme are barely visible on the tank, the Frisco logo can no longer be seen.

The water tank is constructed from large, saw cut and milled cypress staves that are bound by steel bands with nut and bolt fastenings. Eight wooden pillars support the tank. The pillars stand on concrete footings and are cross-braced with wooden timbers. A wooden, cylindrical core supports the center of the tank. The core measures 10 feet in diameter and 14 feet high, it stands on a concrete footing. The core contains an access door. The concrete footings and heavy timber support structure are twentieth century modifications.

Late nineteenth century photographs and line drawings show various designs for water tanks. Many tanks were supported by a cylindrical central core and limited exterior bracing. On many designs, the water spout was attached to the bottom of the tank. The water tank at Beaumont very likely employed a lighter support bracing than is in place today, and used a low projecting spout. The Frisco design employed at Beaumont was probably typical of what the line built elsewhere, as designs for railroad structures were often standardized.

In providing a contextual description of water tanks Berg writes:

Circular tanks are made of 14, 15, or 16 ft. staves, and the diameters most generally in use are 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, and 30 ft. According to the selected combination of height and depth, the capacities vary from about 20,000 gallons to 80,000 gallons. The floor of a tank is usually set about 12 to 15 feet above the track, unless a high-pressure service for other purposes is desired besides the delivery of water to engines. The foundations are usually wooden trestle-bents on mud-sills or on small stone foundation-walls. On some of the large roads in the country iron-beams resting on wrought- or cast-iron columns with substantial stone foundations have been extensively introduced. (Berg, c. 1885, p. 117)

For filling engine-tanks the water....is stored in water-tanks located near the tracks and drawn from them, as required, by gravity, either through a goose-neck delivery-spout attached to the tank and projecting over the track, or through stand-pipes located along or between tracks either adjacent to or some distance from the water-tanks. (Berg, c. 1885, p. 116)
A November 1992 structural evaluation of the water tank by KHPO recorded the following: the wooden shingle roof needs to be replaced, the roof structure and sheathing may need partial replacement or supplementation, many fascia boards are missing and should be replaced, the cypress staves have shrunk and loosened the steel bands, the steel bands need to be repositioned, the wooden supports have some rotted areas that may need partial replacement or repair with epoxy, all wood components may need to be treated with a wood preservative, the concrete bases below the wood supports have some cracking and spalling that should be repaired to prolong their existence and structural capacity.
The Beaumont St. Louis and San Francisco (Frisco) Railroad Water Tank (c. 1886) is being nominated to the National Register under criteria A and C for its historical association with the growth and development of Beaumont and for its architectural significance as an example of a utilitarian structure essential in the running of steam locomotives. The water tank is of cypress, stave construction, and represents one of the few remaining examples of this type in Kansas.

The Beaumont station was a junction point on the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad: designated as Station F458 on the Beaumont Sub-Division, Western Division and as Station F458 on the Wichita Sub-Division, Northern Division. (Frisco Railroad Museum, 1991) "All the steam trains took on water and fuel at Beaumont....Train crews changed at Beaumont since it was a terminal on the Frisco Railroad....Most of the railroad workers stayed in Beaumont....The town's population was 600 then...." (El Dorado Times, 31 May 1989)

The Frisco was established 1879, with the vision of linking St. Louis with San Francisco. Santa Fe controlled the company's stock from 1879 to 1896, quelling the intended Frisco link. The Frisco became an independent railroad in 1916, but failed in 1932. The company re-emerged from court protection 1947, and began to modernize its system. In 1980 the Frisco was absorbed into the Burlington Northern Railroad system. (Grant, 1990, pp. 84, 88)

The St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad, more commonly known as the Frisco, completed its route to Wichita through Beaumont in 1880. The subsidiary line, the St. Louis, Wichita, and Western Railway Co., was conveyed to the Frisco in 1882. At the time of conveyance, the line included 142 miles of standard gauge, single track railroad, extending from Oswego to Wichita. The Oswego to New Albany portion (61 miles) was completed in 1879, and from New Albany to Wichita (81 miles) was placed in service in 1880. This line became known as the Wichita Sub-Division, Northern Division. (Frisco Railroad Museum, 1991)

In 1884 the Frisco began construction of its line to Arkansas City from Beaumont, using a subsidiary, the Kansas City and Southwestern Railway Co., to complete the construction. When the line was conveyed to the Frisco in 1885 it included 62 miles of standard gauge, single track railroad, extending from a connection with the tracks of the Frisco at Beaumont Junction in a southerly direction through Arkansas City to a point on the Kansas-Oklahoma state line near Cale, Kansas. By 1907 the line was finally extended through to Enid, Oklahoma and became known as the Beaumont Sub-Division, Western Division. (Frisco Railroad Museum, 1991)

The 7 January 1887 Walnut Valley Times provides a glimpse into Beaumont's early growth and development. Beaumont's first building was a small Frisco depot, which was constructed in 1880. In 1882 Beaumont's first drug store and general store were constructed. The completion of the Kansas City and Southwestern Railway line to Arkansas City in 1886 stimulated a general construction and population boom in Beaumont. Two additions to the town were platted that year, the round house was built, and twenty-eight businesses were established.
"The freight and express business at this place is something enormous, there being more freight and express received and transferred at this point than at any other along the 'Frisco line in the state outside of Wichita....The 'Frisco branch is now complete to Bluff City, which place will be the terminus for some time, and the railroad employees who have heretofore resided in Arkansas City and other points along the line are moving to Beaumont....In another year Beaumont will have a population of 1000." (Walnut Valley Times, 7 January 1887)

"Beaumont was one of the most important cattle shipping points in the Flint Hills during the first half of this century.....each spring, thousands of cattle were shipped in by rail to pasture on the bluestem grass. Most of the cattle came from Texas.....Beaumont had stockyards that could handle 3,000 head of cattle at a time. There was also a depot, with a night telegrapher and a day telegrapher, and an agent.....The roundhouse had six engine stalls, with pits underneath for inspection and repairs. Eight workers staffed the roundhouse." (El Dorado Times, 31 May 1989)

Using the currently available records to identify the exact year that the wooden stave water tank at Beaumont Junction was constructed has proved frustrating. The first time that a water tank is identified in available records occurs in 1905, when the tank appears on the George A. Ogle Standard Atlas of Butler County, Kansas. The date of 1905 is a compatible date for the water tower to have been in place, but it is curious that the water tower does not appear on any of the earlier maps, and is not mentioned in any newspaper accounts of Beaumont's growth and development. The Frisco's AFE records on all improvements, repairs and construction, including work orders for new construction or rebuilding, prior to 1916, have largely disappeared. (Schmitt, 6 June 1993)

The 1905 Ogle map shows the plat of Beaumont, the Frisco lines, the depot, the stock yards, the round house, and the tank. The tank is located at its present location, standing at the foot of Third Street along D Street. The stock yards were located on D Street at Second Street and the round house was located on D Street at Fourth Street. In 1905, a separate line jogged up north from the main line, providing access to the round house, the tank, and the stock yards. The depot stood south of this service line, in between the main east-west line and several short feeder lines. The line heading southeast to Arkansas City is shown on this map. Of all of these lines, only the main east-west line, once known as the Wichita Sub-Division, Northern Division, remains in place today.

The Beaumont Frisco yard and the town of Beaumont are shown on both the Walter F. McGinnis and I. C. Thomas Historical Atlas of Butler County, Kansas, published in 1885, and the L. H. Everts The Official State Atlas of Kansas, published in 1887. The 1885 McGinnis map shows two east-west lines separating the stock yards, section house, and turn table from the depot. A switch line is shown south of the depot. On this map, the stock yards are located on D Street at Third Street, the section house is located on D Street at Fourth Street, and the turn table is located on D Street beyond Fourth Street. The depot stands south of the section house,
across two sets of tracks. The line to Arkansas City is shown on this map. The 1887 Everts map mirrors the earlier map but does not include the section house. Neither map indicates a location for the water tank.

Discrepancies between the Walnut Valley Times, 7 January 1887 statement that a round house was built in 1886, and the turn table that appears on the 1887 Everts map, as well as the section house which appears on the 1885 McGinnis map but not the 1887 Everts map, indicate that the construction and completion of certain structures was not always taken into consideration when a map was drawn.

Although the water tank does not appear on the known and available maps of Beaumont until 1905, the 1886 construction of the round house combined with fact that Beaumont became a junction for two lines in that same year provides plausibility to the theory that the water tank dates from 1886.

Berg writes that, "Water stations are required on a railroad to supply water for locomotives, and are usually located from five to twenty miles apart, according to the importance and nature of the traffic on the road, ten miles being a fair average spacing. The water-supply for feeding stationary boilers, washing cars and floors, cleaning out boilers, cooling ashes, fire protection, and similar purposes, at shops, engine-houses, station buildings, etc., is very frequently connected with the water service for road engines at the same point." (Berg, c. 1885, p. 113)

Cypress, stave construction water tanks were built by the Frisco between 1880 and 1920, and typically repaired rather than replaced during and after this forty-year period. (Schmitt, 6 June 1993) Cypress was commonly selected by the railroads for wood stave water tank construction due to its strength and durability, resistance to insects, and fine, close grain. The Frisco may have used cypress, stave construction for its water tanks longer than other railroads. As an example, the Santa Fe used a standard plan for a 24 foot high wooden water tank in 1896, by 1913 the Santa Fe was using steel water tanks. (ATSF Collection, KSHS)

Late nineteenth century photographs and line drawings show various designs for water tanks. Many tanks were supported by a cylindrical central core and limited exterior bracing. On many designs, the water spout was attached to the bottom of the tank. The water tank at Beaumont very likely employed a lighter support bracing than is in place today, and used a low projecting spout. The Frisco design employed at Beaumont was probably typical of what the line built elsewhere, as designs for railroad structures were often standardized.

In providing a contextual description of water tanks Berg writes:

Wooden water-tanks are probably in universal use in this country, and they form a distinctive feature of American railroading as compared with European practice, where
iron tanks are preferred. Wooden tanks are generally built circular in shape, and the staves and sundry parts are turned out to a large extent by machinery and kept in stock, so that repairs and renewals can be made very cheaply and quickly. In addition to these features, and the cheapness of the first cost, wooden tubs afford, when roofed over, in themselves a certain protection against cold, which could not be obtained in an iron tank construction without a special building or lining around it. With a view to making repairs, cleaning out sediments, and similar causes for interruption of the service, several smaller tubs are preferable to one very large one, although the first cost of a large tank is less than that of several smaller ones offering combined the same storage capacity. (Berg, c. 1885, p. 117)

Circular tanks are made of 14, 15, or 16 ft. staves, and the diameters most generally in use are 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, and 30 ft. According to the selected combination of height and depth, the capacities vary from about 20,000 gallons to 80,000 gallons. The floor of a tank is usually set about 12 to 15 feet above the track, unless a high-pressure service for other purposes is desired besides the delivery of water to engines. The foundations are usually wooden trestle-bents on mud-sills or on small stone foundation-walls. On some of the large roads in the country iron-beams resting on wrought- or cast-iron columns with substantial stone foundations have been extensively introduced. (Berg, c. 1885, p. 117)

For filling engine-tanks the water...is stored in water-tanks located near the tracks and drawn from them, as required, by gravity, either through a goose-neck delivery-spout attached to the tank and projecting over the track, or through stand-pipes located along or between tracks either adjacent to or some distance from the water-tanks. (Berg, c. 1885, p. 116)

The existence of the Beaumont Junction water tank is implied in the 1909 Frisco "Water Supplies and Water Treatment Report and Recommendations, Beaumont, Kansas." The report noted that 11 engines were watered at Beaumont Junction daily, consuming 35,000 gallons of water. The report recommended that the reservoir dam be raised and a 50,000 gallon water treating plant be erected. The proposed treating plant included two cypress water tanks measuring 16 feet high by 24 feet in diameter, to be placed on concrete foundations. Work on the reservoir did begin, but was suspended in 1909 due to wet conditions. It does not appear that the proposed water treating plant was built then, but by 1950 a water treating plant that incorporated the existing c. 1886 water tank had been erected. (St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Co., 1909; Frisco Lines, 1950)

The dimensions of the extant water tank are shown on the 1917 Frisco engineering drawing of the complex at Beaumont Junction. The water tank is shown in its current location, measuring 14 feet high by 22 feet in diameter and standing 14 feet over the track. The drawing maintains the track configuration shown on earlier maps, with two tracks separating the depot from the
structures along D Street and four tracks running south of the depot. The section house, round house, turntable, and register house are shown progressively east of the water tank along D Street. The bunk house is shown west of the water tank along D Street. The depot and car chute stand south of the double tracks. The depot is located roughly in between the water tank and the section house. The car chute is located west of the depot, between the water tank and the bunk house. Two feeder tracks terminate at the car chute. (Frisco Lines, 1917)

A c. 1900 photograph of Beaumont Junction supports the configuration shown on the 1917 Frisco engineering drawing. The view is taken trackside, looking west. Five tracks with cars on them are in the foreground of the image. The brick round house, the frame depot, the two-story car chute, the water tank, and telegraph lines are all visible in the picture. The original photograph is owned by Beaumont resident Marc Brewer, negatives and copies of the image were made from the original.

The Frisco’s 1950 Combined Insurance Schedule for fixed property at Beaumont Junction includes ten structures: the round house, the fuel oil tank, the round house foreman’s office, ice house, combination station, water treating plant, water tank, coaling station, pumper’s dwelling, and pump house. The water tank was listed as having a 50,000 gallon capacity, and a value of $1,875. The ten structures at Beaumont Junction were assessed at $27,730 in 1950. (Frisco Lines, 1950)

In 1917, 10 freight and passenger trains were scheduled daily on the Wichita Sub-Division, Northern Division. The 1927 timetable listed 4 daily passenger trains and 3 daily freight trains on the Wichita line, and one daily passenger train and two daily freight trains on the Beaumont Sub-Division, Western Division to Enid. A tri-weekly local freight train ran from Beaumont to Enid and tri-weekly locals ran from Beaumont to both Neodesha and Wichita in 1927. By 1954 the Beaumont Sub-Division offered only a mixed train each way, and the Wichita line had dwindled to a daily passenger and freight train in each direction. The Burlington Northern’s tri-weekly Neodesha-Wichita local freight is the only train serving Beaumont today.

The Frisco dieselized its operations in 1950s, and having no further use for the water tank, leased it and the reservoir to the proprietors of the Summit (Beaumont) Hotel for the hotel’s water supply. The water tank continued to fulfill this function until the completion of the rural water district in the mid-1960s. The water tank’s spout was removed when the tank began serving the needs of the hotel. (Bailey, 1991)

In 1976, the Beaumont Sub-Division, Western Division was abandoned and ripped out, the yard tracks save one siding were torn up at this time. The main east-west line, once known as the Wichita Sub-Division, Northern Division, remains in place today. The depot, round house, and all other structures at Beaumont Junction, with the exception of the water tank, vanished over the years. (Bailey, 1991) Only the depot and water tank are located on the U. S. Geological
Survey map of Beaumont, which was last updated in 1964.

The water tank is owned by the Burlington Northern Railroad Co. (Property Management, 2680 Continental Plaza, 777 Main Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102), but no longer serves the needs of the hotel or the railroad. The Friends of the Beaumont Water Tower is a locally organized group that seeks to preserve the water tank. The Friends of the Beaumont Water Tower began its preservation efforts in 1989.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Frisco Lines. Northern Division- Wichita Sub-Division. Timetable; 2 September 1917, 16 October 1927, 1 June 1942, 10 October 1954.

Frisco Lines. Western Division- Beaumont Sub-Division. Timetable; 10 October 1927, 9 May 1954.

Frisco Railroad Museum, letter to Kevin Bailey, Butler County Historical Society. 4 July 1991.


*Walnut Valley Times*, 7 January 1887.
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is located on the NE 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, SE 1/4, S. 33, T. 28, R. 8, in Beaumont, Butler County, Kansas. The property is bounded to the north by D Street, to the south by the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks, and to the east and west by adjacent property lines. The nominated property stands in the center of a 60’ by 60’ square, whose northeast corner is 25’ directly northeast of the northeast point on the water tank. Beginning at the northeast corner of the parcel, the boundary proceeds 60’ south, 60’ west, 60’ north, and 60’ east to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property stands in the center of a 60’ by 60’ square. The water tank’s overall dimensions are 22’ wide by 28’ high. All other structures associated with the water tank have been destroyed, with the exception of one line of active track.