

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB  
P. O. BOX 2391  
DENVER, COLORADO 80201

August, 1964

Newsletter No. 60

The August, 1964 meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held on the customary second Wednesday of the month - August 12th - in the lower level meeting room of the Western Federal Savings skyscraper building, 718 - 17th Street, Denver, at 8:00 PM. The program: two of the 16mm sound color movies scheduled once before this year, but which didn't quite make it at that time. World famous, heavy construction contractors Morrison-Knudsen are making special arrangements to assure that "Jungle Railroad" and "Tequepala" will be on hand for this meeting.

The first of these unique films describes M-K's part in rehabilitating a railroad through the jungles of Brazil; the second covers construction of a new railroad in Chile which, in its 125-mile length, rises from sea level to 11,000 feet! All members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and their friends are invited to join in viewing these films.

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At last month's meeting, through the courtesy of Club members Francis Rizzari and Dick Ronzio, we were taken on an interesting and entertaining journey down memory lane. Departing from Denver's early-day Union Station (before construction of train sheds, no less), the tour took us -- and our inevitable peanut butter sandwich and fresh fruit picnic lunch packed away in the old shoebox -- on rides over the narrow gauge through Golden and Clear Creek Canon to Forks of the Creek, Idaho Springs, the Georgetown Loop and Silver Plume. Short side trips to Mt. McClellan on the Argentine Central, and to Black Hawk and Central City over the switch-back on the return journey, prepared us for another excursion over the long-gone Switzerland Trail beside rushing Boulder and Four-Mile Creeks to Sunset, Mt. Alto Park, Ward and Lake Eldora.

Francis' narration outdid that of any news butch, and his description of that hot summer picnic lunch, which somehow had encountered some "rough handling" during our trip, finding the water cooler down at the end of our coach completely dry after we consumed those peanut butter sandwiches, had us all running for the water fountain! The slides, projected by Dick Ronzio, were excellent copies of many of the old photos in the extensive collections of these two members. Thank you, fellows, for this memorable evening - and for allowing us time to get to that water fountain!

A totally unexpected dividend also was presented: Francis' copy slides of original photos made in 1867-1873 of the Central of Peru. The equipment duplicated almost exactly what we have seen in early day photos of construction of the Union Pacific, and the stark, primitive and inhospitable character of the Peruvian landscape in those years was indeed startling.

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Accompanying this issue of the Newsletter is the brochure announcing the second steam-powered excursion to be sponsored this year by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. Scheduled for Sunday, September 13th, this special train (operating diesel out of Denver) will be powered for 173 miles in each direction between Cheyenne and Rawlins, Wyoming, by Union Pacific's mighty Northern #8444. We will carry the renowned "Las Vegas Diner," open and serving during the entire trip. No additional outlay will be required since ALL food service is included in the price of your ticket!

Arrangements have been made by the Club with operators of the parking concession at Denver Union Station for accommodating, at the northeast (19th Street) end of the parking lot, automobiles of our excursionists for the entire day at a cost of \$1.00 per car, to be paid to the parking lot attendant that morning. Since the public also will be invited to participate in this notable event, we recommend that you order tickets right away. Treasurer Ane Clint is ready to give each of your orders her usual prompt and efficient attention.

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We were happy to learn from Club members Stuart and Audrey Anderson of Boulder that one of two narrow gauge engines that recently arrived in Denver from old Mexico is now being rehabilitated in the machine shed at the Anderson ranch. This engine is a saddle-tank built by Porter, and was accompanied to Colorado by a two-foot gauge 0-4-4-0 Mallet which is now on temporary display outside Denver's Wax Museum on Bannock Street just north of Speer Boulevard. These two engines were purchased by a group of three local men, including Club member John W. Birmingham of Boulder, who acquired Great Western consolidation #51 when it was made available by the sugar company last year.

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Regular railway mail service began 100 years ago August 28th, when George B. Armstrong, assistant postmaster at Chicago, put the first mail car into service between Chicago and Clinton, Iowa. To mark this event the Glen Ellyn Philatelic Club will sponsor a set of three commemorative envelopes. Collectors may send units of three stamped and addressed envelopes, with 25 cents for each set desired, to W. Lee Fergus, Cachet Chairman, Glen Ellyn Philatelic Club, 166 Forest Avenue, Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

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Long-time Club Member Morris W. Abbott of 25 Carrington Avenue, Milford, Connecticut 06460, is assembling material for a history of the Manitou & Pike's Peak Railway. He is particularly interested in photos of the last-spike ceremony, construction scenes, and

the first train to the summit, but suggests that interested persons write him before sending any pictures. Also of interest to Morris is "precisely when Master Mechanic Davy Jones altered the rod arrangement of the six steam locomotives (probably in the late teens)," and he wants information on the work.

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All exterior lettering on the Club's narrow gauge business car "Rico" was completed by Club member Wilson Ruid on Saturday July 11th. Done in gold, on a background of shiny Pullman Green, the lettering which Mr. Ruid has done gives the little car a more pleasing appearance than it probably has had since its original conversion to office car service long ago.

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As promised in last month's Newsletter the attractive brochure, prepared by Club members Ed Haley and Dick Kindig, announcing publication by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club of its fourth railroad history -- COLORADO MIDLAND -- is being mailed as this is written. Bryant McFadden is busy enlisting the assistance of local members in addressing and preparing for mail over 7,000 additional copies of this striking announcement, and will be glad to accept the helping hand of any others in the Denver area who care to contact him at 2561 S. Cook Street, Denver 80210, or by phone in the evenings at 757-0698.

And we repeat -- extra copies of the brochure are available to any Club member who would like them for friends or other interested persons. Please let us know.

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In this same vein, Treasurer Ane Clint asks that Club members who have not received a copy of the 1964 membership roster advise of this so that we can send you one.

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Other publications pertaining to railroad history continue to appear. Of interest to Club members is a large volume containing a detailed study devoted entirely to the famous Alpine Tunnel of the old Denver, South Park and Pacific. The volume is the work of Club member Dow Helmers of Pueblo and published by Sage Books of Denver. The second "Colorado Annual" (Colorado Railroad Museum publication) is an interesting 16-page booklet containing well illustrated, well-researched and well written articles on the Silverton Branch, on the line relocation around Navajo Dam on the narrow gauge east of Durango, and on the San Luis Valley Southern out of Blanca, Colorado, in the San Luis Valley. Available from the Museum at Box 641, Golden, Colorado, for 50 cents postpaid.

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The recent demise and abandonment of the highspeed electric interurban Chicago, North Shore and Milwaukee -- route of the Electroliners -- between Chicago and Milwaukee, received much publicity. Not so well known, perhaps, is the assumption by Chicago Transit Authority of service over portions of the abandoned line in the Chicago suburbs. Club member Alexander L. H. Darragh of Wilmette, Illinois, advises us that "CTA's 'Skokie Swift' is going far beyond expectations. Newspapers stated that CTA looked for 8,000 patrons in the first two weeks -- patronage actually totaled 74,000! Skokie's Dempster Street parking lot is being expanded, and in addition to the five 75 mph cars, CTA has had to 'borrow' three or four cars fitted with trolleys from the Wilmette-Evanston service." A vivid demonstration that volume-handling rapid rail transit continues to play a vital part in the life of metropolitan centers.

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The results of the TRAINS magazine-Rocky Mountain Railroad Club photo contest, held earlier this year as part of the activities celebrating the 25th Anniversary of our organization, will appear in the magazine's September issue. According to a recent letter received from TRAINS Editor and Club member David P. Morgan - and as publicized at the top of page 51 in the August issue - this photo story will illustrate the variety of excursions sponsored and operated by the Club during its first quarter century of existence.

It is extremely gratifying, of course, that the work of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club is of enough significance to warrant such attention from the dean of all railfan publications. We urge you to be on the lookout for the September issue of TRAINS Magazine, on the stands between August 15th and 20th.

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Overheard on the Santa Fe: "What do you think of the Grand Canyon?"  
"Just gorges."

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Ted S. McKee, President  
Herbert O'Hanlon, Vice President

Fay L. McKee, Secretary  
Ane O. Clint, Treasurer