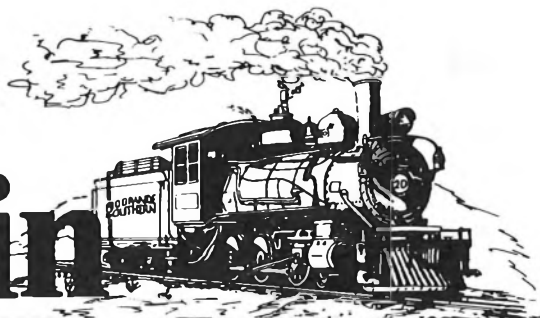


# Rocky Mountain RAIL REPORT



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

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## MEETING SCHEDULE:

November 11, 1986 -- 7:30 p.m.

Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church, 2950 South University at Bates. Off-street parking at rear (east) of meeting hall. Please use the building's south entrance.

Jim Trowbridge..... Editor  
Les Grenz..... Associate Editor  
Keith Kirby..... President  
Erwin Chaim..... Vice President  
Bill Gordon..... Secretary  
Elbert E. Bidwell..... Treasurer

Send all items for publication to: Rocky Mountain Rail Report, c/o Jim Trowbridge, Editor, 502 South Cody Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80226.

**COPY DEADLINE** -- ALL copy for publication is due no later than the 15th of the month prior to month of publication.

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## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending \$19.00 (\$15.00 annual dues plus enrollment fee of \$4.00) to: ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB, P. O. Box 2391, Denver, Colorado 80201. After April of each year, new members may join for a payment of \$4.00 enrollment fee plus \$1.25 for each month remaining in the calendar year. Dues for the next year are solicited in December of the current year. Membership covers the immediate family unit.

November, 1986..... No. 326  
Club Telephone..... (303) 431-4354  
P. O. Box 2391..... Denver, Colorado 80201

CURRENT NEWS AND HISTORICAL NOTES OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROADING PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR ITS MEMBERS BY THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB.

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## MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES AND HELP

Chuck & Chicky Morison, Co-Chairmen,  
Membership Committee  
3550 South Kendall, #8-301  
Denver, Colorado 80235 -- (303) 980-6698

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## NOVEMBER 11 PROGRAM

We look forward to a return visit by Jim Ozment this meeting. Jim's program is entitled "Selected Views of Railways in the British Isles and Ireland."

Jim and his wife visited the British Isles in the summer of 1981 and, as a result, are bringing us a selection of photographs from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN



RAILROAD CLUB

## SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

Due to the Narrow Gauge Convention and related C&TS trips, the October newsletter was prepared prior to the September meeting and so a review of the September program was omitted.

We owe a great deal of thanks to Kip Coulter and Ken Kirschling of K.K.B.N.A., Inc., consulting engineers to the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. Their program was a memorable one!

We were treated to views of overall inspection of physical property of the D&SNG RR, but the coverage of the reinforcing and rebuilding of the High Line Wall and the High Line Bridge and Silverton Animas Trestle was outstanding. Club members were enthralled with the presentation and the information gleaned from that presentation. Modelers were particularly impressed and came away with a lot of stimulation.

Our thanks to Kip and Ken and also our invitation to come back and let us know what's happening on the D&S.



## ANNUAL BANQUET & PROGRAM

A fine time was had by all at the Annual Banquet. A good meal, excellent company, fine conversation and a surprise program were some of the things experienced on October 11th. Our thanks to all who made this evening so pleasant, especially Alan Greene, who made arrangements at the Sheraton.

The surprise program came as a result of the 16mm copy of the Titfield Thunderbolt being ruined by the previous group--their projector's gate malfunctioning and splitting the three (yes, all three!) reels of film in half!!! Well...maybe next year!

Our substitute film was just as good as

Erwin Chaim came through and secured a copy of the Great Train Robbery, starring Sean Connery, Donald Sutherland and Lesley-Anne Down. These three make a perfectly charming trio of felons in this 1979 adventure-comedy, stylishly adapted for the screen (from his own novel) and directed by Michael Crichton. 19th-century master criminal Connery enlists his mistress (Down) and a skilled pickpocket (Sutherland) to help him relieve a steam train of its gold-bar cargo. Doing that is no easy chore, especially when Connery has to race over the roofs of the locomotive's various cars. Much to the actor's credit--and to the producer's worry, undoubtedly--he performed the dangerous and complicated stuntwork himself. Even when he isn't playing 007, then, Connery obviously retains much of the character's bravado.

Thanks, Erwin, you done good!!!

## NEW MEMBERS

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club wishes to enthusiastically welcome the following new members:

John Ray Bishop	Lovington, NM
Jerry Braet	East Moline, IL
Daniel R. Clapp	Shreveport, LA
Jim Haggard	Aurora, CO
Geoffrey H. Hamway	Dallas, TX
Robert R. Kanard	Cheyenne, WY
R. Vernon Lunsford	Littleton, CO
Michael J. Martin	Manasquan, NJ
Paul D. Maynard	LindLexington, PA
Erick R. Nelson	Boulder, CO
Ross Nelson	Denver, CO
William R. Station	Commerce City, CO
Tom Todd, Jr.	Ruidoso, NM

## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTION

We are always happy to receive information about railroading in the Rocky Mountain Region and, very often, as space permits, use other regional data. We encourage our members to participate in the newsletter. Should you have something you wish to share with fellow members, please send it to the attention of the editor, ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAIL REPORT, 502 South Cody St., Lakewood, Colorado 80226.

## ELECTIONS

The December meeting is primarily held for election of new officers and board members. It has been our custom to announce candidates in the November newsletter so as to familiarize members with the slate of candidates. This will not be the case this year. While a slate has been selected, the nominating committee of hold-over board members has decided not to announce their selections until December, presumably at the December meeting. To your editor's knowledge, no one has been given this information.

## SWAP 'N SHOP

Personal ads are accepted from members for items to be listed for sale or trade or wanted. We cannot enter into any correspondence, nor will we appraise them.

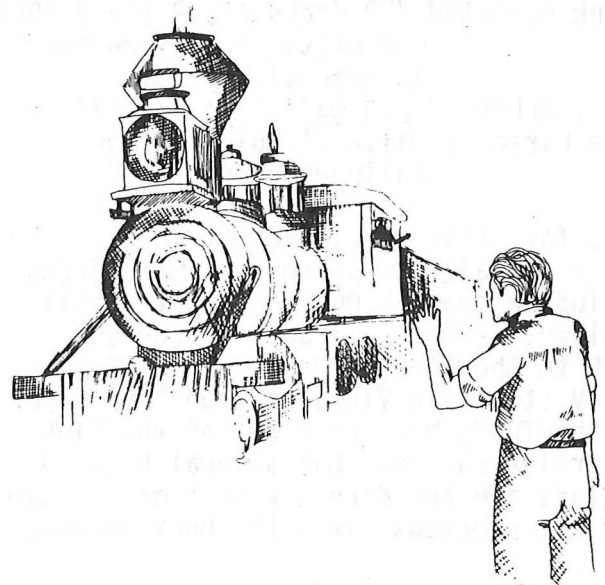
FOR SALE: Autographed copy #383, Colorado Midland by Morris Cafky, \$200.00, mint. Autographed copy #261, Great Railroad Photographs, U.S.A. by Beebe & Clegg, \$300.00, mint condition. The Trains We Rode by Beebe & Clegg, Volumes I and II, \$70.00 each, excellent condition. Contact Lillian Stewart, 1335 Pearl St., Denver, Colorado 80203. (303) 832-1204.

FOR SALE: ALL excellent condition/Switzerland Trail of America, signed book #612; Pictorial Supplement to DSP&P, signed book #2179; DSP&P, Memorial Edition; Rails Around Gold Hill, signed book #1408; Colorado Midland, signed book #2166; Silver San Juan (1st Edition); The Colorado Road; ALL TO BE SOLD AS ONE GROUP/ Bids accepted. Frank Max, 33 Loughberry, M. H. Pk., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. (518) 584-2807.

FOR SALE: By Silent Auction, total collection of RR books and RR passes. A great chance to build up your collection! Send #10 SSAE for list. Jim Williamson, C-13, 1030 Scott Dr., Prescott, AZ 86301-1741.

## PROPOSED TRIP SCHEDULE FOR 1987

March 29	Ski Train
May 2 & 3	North Platte/tour of UP yard
May 24	UP Steam trip (unofficial)
June 13-28	Pennsylvania Trip
June 21	High Country/Father's Day
August 15	Hagerman Tunnel Hike
Labor Day	
Weekend	Amtrak to Flagstaff & Grand Canyon
Oct ???	RTD trip to Denver Tramway sights
?????	Denver Union Station Tour



## RAILROAD SCANNERS A THING OF THE PAST?

The National Association of North America Radio Clubs has provided the following information as picked up through the newsletter of the 20th Century RR Club.

Legislation that may prohibit entirely the use of railroad scanners by fans passed the full house as HR-4952. The bill is apparently designed to get scanners out of the hands of criminals who dial up the local police department during a crime, but the Senate version, S-2575, would allow railroad buffs to scan railroad frequencies. A conference committee must reconcile the two measures before final passage and signature by the President. (Carl Carlson)

## PRESERVATION FUND AND BOOK DRAWING

Our book drawing continues to raise funds for the Preservation Fund. Winners of books or other related railroad items at the September meeting include:

Jim Blouch / Mineral Belt, Vol. III  
Gene Martin / Trails Among the Columbine  
Tim Box / 2 decks of UP (1869-1969 Commemorative) Playing Cards  
Frank Braisted /

Jim Blouch / Mineral Belt III  
Gene Martin / Trails Among the Columbine  
Frank Braisted / 2 decks of UP (1869-1969 Commemorative) Playing Cards in special Tin Box  
Larry McDonald / 3 Rail Classics, 74-76  
Olie Larsen / Official Guide to the Railways, August '72

Thus far, this year, over \$1400 has been given to railroad preservation projects including over \$1,000 to the Ft. Collins Trolley, \$200 to the Como Roundhouse, \$100 to the Fleming Depot and \$100 to the Victor-Alta Vista Station. The majority of the funds have been out of the Club's general treasury, but several hundred dollars are the direct result of donations and net proceeds from the book drawing.

If you have not yet donated to the Preservation Fund, why not send in a few dollars today. Your gift could be instrumental in repairing and preserving a railroad treasure in the Rocky Mountain Region.

## OTTO MEARS PASS STOLEN

Club member Doug Ramsey advises us that an Otto Mears Silverton Railroad Company silver pass was stolen from the Ouray County Historical Museum recently. The pass, of the 1889 Type B, was number 519 issued to George R. Todd.

Spokesman for the Society, David Koch, told the Silverton Standard that the pass is valued between \$2000 and \$5000 by various

authorities. The pass was displayed in an upstairs room in the society's museum, the former St. Joseph's Hospital in Telluride. It was taken between August 29 and September 5, according to Koch, who discovered the theft during a routine cleaning of the room.

The thief apparently removed screws which secured the showcase in which the pass was displayed. The museum has barricades, but the pass was displayed in a room with many other smaller items which could be appreciated only by close-up viewing.

This is apparently the most serious theft the museum has had in the past several years. Other missing items cited include an 1850 Bible and three woodworking planes.

A plea from museum personnel asks that anyone being approached to buy the pass or having knowledge of its whereabouts contact the Ouray County Historical Society at (303) 325-4576.

In other news of a related nature, the Standard also reported that in Silverton, a Mears pass belonging to the chamber of commerce has been put on display this year. San Juan County Historical Society Chairman, Beverly Rich, says she is confident about the security since it is displayed in the room in which the attendant is located.

Both museums report attendance this year is up about 10 percent over last year. As of September 1, the Ouray Museum had 9,406 admissions while Silverton passed the 10,000 mark recently.

(Doug Ramsey & Silverton Standard)



## OMAHA TRIP REPORT

Labor Day weekend found 19 RMRRC members enjoying Omaha, Nebraska and a surprisingly action-packed itinerary. Our arrival by Amtrak on Saturday morning had us an hour late and had our trip leader, Keith Kirby, anxiously juggling the schedule. However, with a shortened breakfast, we were back on schedule immediately. After checking out the two vans which were our transportation, our first stop was a visit to the Union Pacific shops. As the shops were closed for the day, we were able to tour at a more relaxed pace. A highlight was photographing the "Big Boy" No. 4023 which is on display at the shops. This engine is not normally accessible to the public.

Next came a tour of the small, but very well done Union Pacific Historical Museum in the Union Pacific main offices. The museum, founded in 1921, includes many railroad artifacts and models, highlighted by a model of Lincoln's funeral car. The UPRR gift store was opened especially for us and after certain of our members were through, they were very glad they did!

Afternoon included a tour of the Western Heritage Museum in the beautifully restored Union Pacific station. We enjoyed a slide show and a personal tour guided by a local club member. After the tour, we visited the soda fountain in the station for an old-fashioned treat.

The next morning, we visited the Strategic Air Command Museum in Bellevue. The museum has many aircraft on display and interesting exhibits inside. They also had another gift shop where the clerk was happy to see our club members.

After a quick visit to the Sarpy County Museum in the vicinity, we had lunch in a delightful restaurant beside the Missouri River. After, lunch, it was off to visit the home of General Grenville Dodge in Council Bluffs. This beautifully restored home was owned by General Dodge and lived in at the time he was chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad. We then visited Dodge Park in Council Bluffs where another club member had arranged to open the gates at the equipment display. This equipment

included a business car and UPRR No. 814. When we finally managed to part from the equipment, it was off for a quick tour of Boys Town, back in Omaha. On the way, one van stopped for pop and ice cream while the other sweated over a flat on the freeway.

All too soon it was time to return to our hotel for another great dinner and to check out for our return trip to Denver via Amtrak. This was a typical RMRRC trip in that it had plenty of action and especially nice people to share it with.  
(Tom Lawry)



## NEWS ABOUT THE RIO GRANDE

The ICC recently rejected the merger plans of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads. The Rio Grande has been a longtime opponent of the accord and was instrumental in the ICC's decision. But things change and a recent story in the Rocky Mountain news indicates that the Rio Grande now has dropped opposition to the ATSF/SP merger, having negotiated an agreement for track-age rights over 2400 miles of Southern Pacific track to Roseville, California and Klamath Falls, Oregon, if and when the merger becomes effective. The tentative agreement was reached between the Grande and Santa Fe Southern Pacific Corporation.

Through exercise of these rights, D&RGW would retain access to markets it was concerned about losing as a result of the proposed merger, and provide a competitive rail alternative to nearly all California.

The ICC had rejected the merger on the grounds it was not in the public interest. The regulatory agency has until October 17th to rule on reopening the case and the D&RGW's agreement with ATSF/SP could be a positive factor in gaining approval of the merger

## A HISTORY OF THE RMRRRC

### MEMORIES OF THE NARROW GAUGE

by

IRV AUGUST

"At this rate we'll never get to Salida," Ed Haley, Club President remarked dourly. "No, and no photographs either," I replied. It was September 18, 1948, and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club's Black Canon narrow gauge excursion train was stopped at Sargent. We had taken on water and the helper engine had coupled on for the 17-mile pull to the top of Marshall Pass, most of it steam-consuming, slugging 4%. We waited. No one seemed to know why. Our dreams of photo run-bys on the west side of Marshall Pass were down the drain. What luck! But then, was it an ill wind or what, when the 361 slipped an eccentric as we emerged from the Black Canon and approached Sapinero only to come to a grinding halt? Waiting at Sargent that long ago evening, little did we know what a ride we were to have blasting our way to the top of the Pass.

In the late 1940's, I remember well Ed Haley often remarking that we should make all the narrow gauge steam trips that we could because they would soon be history. What irony that in the late 1980's steam still lives on the narrow gauge and steam on the main line standard gauge is virtually nonexistent. So we did Marshall Pass, Monarch, Villa Grove, Black Canon, Crested Butte, Rideway, Telluride and Lizard Head just to name a few. And then, the perennial Alamosa-Durango Memorial Day week-end trips. Once to Farmington, too, because of a freak storm in the San Juans that caused the Animas River to go on a rampage, washing out some track north of Durango.

The Club made two trips to the Black Canon. Both only to Cimarron. Railroad management refused to go all the way to Montrose. Soft track at Cedar Creek they said. We even volunteered to walk past the soft spot, but no go! Cimarron was as far as we ever got.

And so it was that on September 18, 1948, the Club Special was poised at Salida for a two-day trip over Marshall Pass to Gunnison, Crested Butte and the Black Canon. The aspen had turned early that year and the hills were ablaze with color. What excitement and anticipation of a two-day fall trip on the narrow gauge. We were to experience both exhilaration and despair before we got back to Salida after midnight the next day. That was the trip John Ryland missed the departure at Salida. He raced the train to the highway crossing just east of Mears Junction in his Model A, left it there and joined us on the train. Where else could something like that happen?

After several run-bys on the west side of Marshall Pass we reached Gunnison, and left at once for Crested Butte...the Crested Butte before Bo Callaway. There we spent an hour or so to look around the town and turn the engine. As we left, a beautiful rainbow arched over the Crested Butte. Was this an omen of things to come? Spending the night at Gunnison gave us an opportunity, after a splendid dinner, to visit with fellow passengers or look over the equipment in the roundhouse as our whims dictated.

The next morning dawned clear and crisp and as we walked to the station we could smell that soft coal smoke from the 361 that was to take us to Cimarron and back. Oh, Happy Day! Leaving Gunnison, we glided on a somewhat less than 1% downgrade alongside the Gunnison River. We could see an occasional fisherman hip deep in water seeking an elusive trout. Why would anyone waste time fishing when riding the narrow gauge was possible? Oh, well! At Sapinero, a brief stop before entering the Canon where the Gunnison River and the tracks vied for space to pass. An occasional whistle echoed off the sheer Canon walls and then the famous Currecanti Needle. A photo stop here and then on to Cimarron where the tracks climbed out of the Canon, as beyond, the River takes command of any and all space between the forbidding walls of pre-Cambrian granite. Here we turned the train and group photos were taken to record for all time that trains did pass that way.

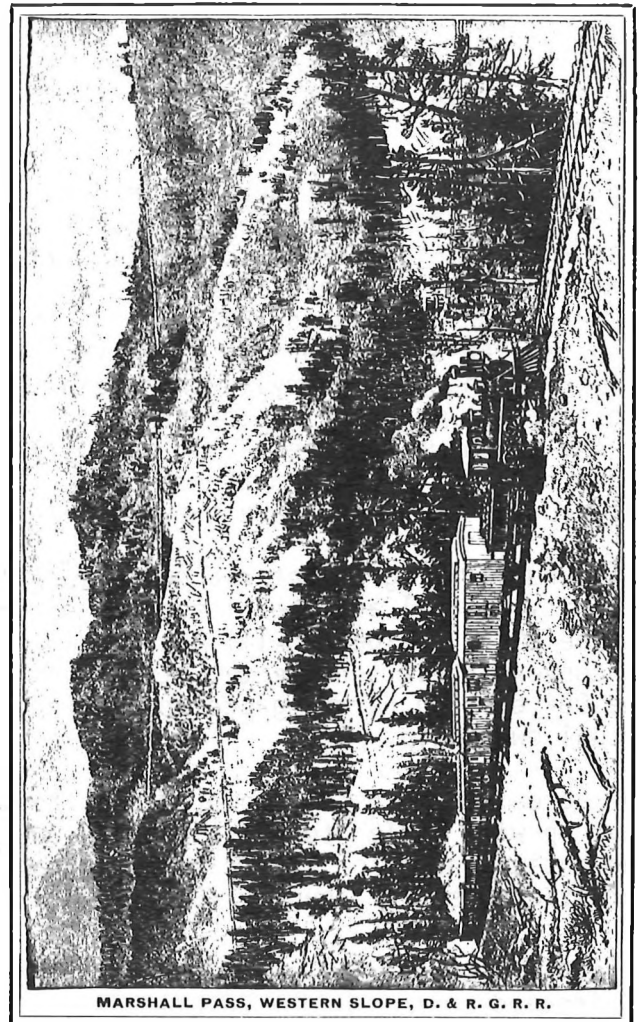
Returning to Gunnison, all went well until we were almost to the highway crossing at Sapinero. Then, without warning, a sudden stop! Of course, we all had to detrain to learn what had happened, only to find the engine crew shaking their heads and gravely nodding in the direction of the engine. It seemed that one of the eccentrics had slipped out of place and so the only solution was another engine. Fortunately, the Sapinero general store was only several hundred yards distant where a phone call was made for the 360 to come to our rescue. In the meantime, appetites were being sharpened and just about every candy bar, box of crackers and piece of cheese soon disappeared from the store shelves. Waiting there for the relief engine, who could have thought that in less than 20 years the entire scene would be under some 200 feet of water? I thought again of the rainbow at Crested Butte.

Leaving Gunnison, we all knew that Marshall Pass in the daylight was out of the question, and all was gloom. But, had not we made Marshall Pass the year before? Well, if one trip is good, two is better, isn't it?

At last, the high-ball at Sargent! The Silver Vista, on the rear of the train, was crowded. At least if there was no light for photos, we could all enjoy the cool night air and smell the soft coal smoke. A near-full moon was rising and the contrasting color of the golden aspen and the green of the pines and spruce was striking. As we left Buxton and gained the 4%, the heavy exhaust of the K-36's sharpened, now in step and then out. Rounding the first 24° curve, a cheer went up! Periodically, the glow from an open fire-door would turn the trailing smoke plume a bright orange. To the top, we went without slackening the pace, where the helper was cut off and ran light to Salida. After testing the air, and turning up the retainers, we drifted down Marshall Pass in the moonlight, the silence broken only by the grind of brakes and the hiss of air upon release. The moon was well up, shining on the aspen and way up above we could see Mt. Ouray standing as a sort of sentinel for all to see. Leaving Mears Junction, we were back to reality. The spell was broken. Soon Salida, and the long trip home.

Was this the best Club trip ever? Certainly the answer for each would be a subjective one. As for me, if I had but one more trip to take, this would be the one. I still think of the rainbow over the Crested Butte.

[Thanks Irv, for writing such a wonderful story about a bit of Club history! If any other Club members have a favorite story about the Club, its equipment acquisition, trips or other activities, why not take some time to put it down on paper. The only way we are going to get a history of the Club compiled is through membership contribution--we relatively new-comers cannot create what we did not experience!]



## C & S EQUIPMENT MOVED FROM CENTRAL CITY

On Friday, October 17th, the Colorado State Historical Society arranged to move its most recent purchase for the Georgetown Loop Restoration Project, C&S engine No. 71 and the gondola and combine-coach that had been on display since 1942 in Central City.

Engine #71, gondola #4319 and combination car #20 were owned by the Central City Opera House Association and not the town of Central City, which came as a surprise to the citizens of Central City and, as a consequence, created quite a scene in Central City as the moving crews tried to get out of town.

As a result, it is possible that the engine and cars will return to Central City under an agreement reached on Monday, the 20th. The story goes this way.....

If citizens of Central City dig deep enough into their pockets, residents may be able to turn what some local rail buffs dubbed a train robbery into a refurbished round trip.

Central City residents were up in arms Friday, the 17th, when the Colorado Historical Society tried to move No. 71 from the hillside where it has resided since put on display in 1942. Despite a 40-auto effort to block the flat-bed truck that was carrying the train, there wasn't much the residents could do as the train wasn't theirs. It was only under threat of arrest that residents allowed the truck to leave though!

But, under an agreement reached between the city council and the historical society on the 20th, residents will get a chance to convert their sentimental attachment to the 90-year-old narrow gauge engine into actual ownership.

The agreement gives the town 30 days to come up with a plan to raise the \$25,000 the society paid for the train plus transportation costs of roughly \$5,000.

Meanwhile, the society will refurbish the engine and cars still at Central City at

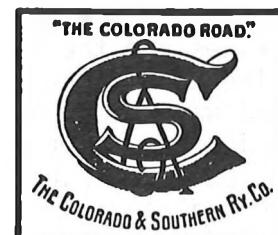
its Georgetown Loop and Historic Mining and Railroad Park in Silver Plume--at no cost to Central City!

Barbara Sudler, president of the State Historical Society was quoted as saying: "It's (No. 71) in bad shape" citing damage done to the train by weather and vandalism. "It really needs some tender loving care," Sudler said in interviews with local newspeople.

The Society bought the train from the Central City Opera House Association for use as rolling stock on the Georgetown Loop Railroad. When "steamed-up" residents of Central City rallied around the train, the society reconsidered its plan.

Sudler said there "were no hard-edged figures" on how long the residents had to raise the money, but said six to twelve months would be a reasonable amount of time.

The city council of Central City is dedicated to use no public funds, but, rather to raise the needed monies through private fund-raising. Residents are confident that they can raise the cash, but time will tell the tale. It has been obvious to anyone who has been up to Central City recently that the equipment has not received the enthusiastic concern from residents that they now display. While tourism, the main revenue source, is down in Central City, it wasn't but a few years ago that these same citizens were doing, what seemed to be their best efforts, to thwart the train operation that brought many tourists to Central City to spend their dollars. One can only wonder if the train is restored and returned to Central City, just how long before things are back to the present condition with no concern being showed. It is somewhat exciting to consider the No. 71 and consist on the Georgetown Loop Railroad with the possibility of running over the Loop!





## REPORT ON THE ALPINE TUNNEL FIELD TRIP

On Saturday and Sunday, August 9th and 19th, 75 Rocky Mountain Railroad Club members and guests from six different states visited the historic Alpine Tunnel on a field trip led by club members Rich Dais and Tom Lawry. The 1,772-foot tunnel, located high in the Colorado Rockies, served the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad from 1881 until 1910. It was the first ever to cross the Continental Divide and the highest in the world at the time at 11,500-feet above sea level. It was a monumental engineering feat and still continues to fascinate railroad history buffs.

The group met at Johnson Village near Buena Vista and proceeded up Chalk Creek Canyon to Saint Elmo and then south to the townsite of Hancock where Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary served coffee and sweet rolls. After this boost of sugar and caffeine, most of the group then headed on up the grade to visit the East Portal of the tunnel, a healthy morning stroll of a little over 3-miles one-way with an elevation gain from 11,000 to 11,500-feet.

Loose rock has filled in the cut leading into the East Portal, but there is still one small area where it is possible to view the redwood timbers that form the top of the tunnel. The timbers appear to be in surprisingly good shape after over 100 years of enduring the stress of their job. Although there is very little of the tunnel to see, one only has to use some imagination to appreciate the tremendous accomplishment of building the tunnel which provided access to the vast mineral wealth of Colorado's western slope.

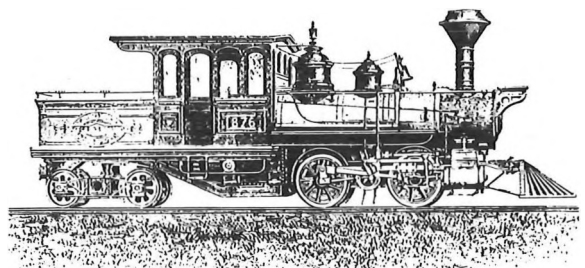
The leisurely walk back down the grade provided the hikers with time to enjoy the spectacular wildflowers and mountain vistas. Upon arrival back at Hancock, a surprise awaited in the form of ice cream, cookies and coffee--once again provided by Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary. The group then disbursed to their respective motels and campsites to await Sunday's adventure to the West Portal.

The old railroad town of Pitkin was the meeting place Sunday morning for the assault on the West Portal. A caravan of jeeps, cars and pickups was organized and the group made its way slowly up the grade past old townsites, and the sheer rock walls of the Palisades with its sections of spectacular rock cribbing which support the ledge for the railroad right-a-way. Arrival at the West Portal found much to explore including the remains of the turntable and part of the walls of the old stone enginehouse. The little station and telegraph office is still in tact, thanks to the preservation efforts of Francis Trudgeon of Denver.

Here, as at the East Portal, rock slides prevent access to the tunnel itself. However, exploration of the area once again gives a person an appreciation for the incredible human sacrifice which went into the construction project.

After proceeding back downgrade to Woodstock, scene of a killer snowslide in 1884, the group once again reconvened at Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary for an excellent lunch which would have done justice to even the hungriest hardrock miner. Fellowship and the weekend's adventures were shared before everyone headed on downgrade to home. (Roger Callender)

### MASON - BOGIE



## ASPEN TO VOTE ON RAILROAD PROPOSAL

Roaring Fork Railroad.....not exactly the Colorado Midland or the Rio Grande, but if things go well on a referendum included on this November's ballot, train service may return to Aspen.

In order to build the railroad, the first of many hurdles to be overcome is getting pass the referendum as over 700 people have signed petitions opposing the Roaring Fork Railroad proposal of last March by Houston oilmen Randy Parten and Noel McGaughy. The petitions particularly oppose extending existing train track from Woody Creek, four miles west of Aspen, to the edge of the ski town's commercial core because the new track would be laid on a popular hiking and biking trail following the old Rio Grande right-of-way into Aspen.

Meanwhile, the railroad company has been operating full-steam-ahead and has now purchased 39 vintage railroad cars. Should the proposal be voted down, the Roaring Fork Railroad could be left holding the world's largest private train collection!

The eight-month-old railroad company hopes to begin service by November, 1987. Should the vote go the RFRR's way, they have promised to move the hiking trail, although locals opposed to the railroad claim that relaying track along the Rio Grande right-of-way would "devastate virgin forest." [Editor's note. It's interesting that "virgin forest" has come about since 1974 when the Rio Grande tracks were torn up and the hiking trail established] The opposition has suggested that the railroad end its trackage at the current end-of-track at Woody Creek.

Railroad officials refuse to consider the opposition's proposal of ending service at Woody Creek. They feel that for this project to work, they must come all the way into Aspen's downtown area.

In addition to the Aspen station and trackage, plans call for a modest Denver station on Smith Road near Stapleton International Airport. Train passengers would be bused to the station from the airport. A train would leave Denver at

noon each day, arriving in Aspen about 7 hours later. Departure time from Aspen is set for 8:00 a.m.

There would be three restaurant and five bar cars on each 18-car train, with service in three classes: coach, Vistadome and first class. At least one dining car would be elegantly appointed with crystal and service service. Mohogany panels would line the inside walls of stainless-steel cars.

Tickets would range from \$55 one-way in coach to \$75 in the Vistadome cars, and \$99 to \$129 in first-class. With advance bookings or a family or group rate, the price could come down to \$40.

The railroad hopes to break even in five years. Total initial investment would be \$18 million. About \$4.3 million would go for cars, of which 39 have already been purchased. Another \$3.5 million is for stations in Denver and Aspen, and the rest for tracks, promotion and a reservations system.

Most interest is expected from people who fly into Stapleton or live on the front range. The train's projected fares compare favorably with the airlines whose tickets to Aspen average \$65 one-way during the tourist season.

We eagerly await the November 4th results!

## AMTRAK CHANGES

Effective October 26th, Amtrak has a number of changes nationwide. The changes we will see in the Rocky Mountain Region include: 1) The Seattle-Salt Lake City "Pioneer" is reduced from daily to tri-weekly operation through April 4, 1987: dp. Seattle Tue./Fri./Sun.; dp. SLC Tue./Thu./Sat. (through cars dp. from Chicago Mon./Wed./Fri.). 2) Chicago-Oakland "California Zephyr" schedule is shortened by :30 as train moves from Union Pacific to Rio Grande station in Salt Lake City. Los Angeles-SLC "Desert Wind" and Seattle-SLC "Pioneer" also move and are rescheduled: dp. Chicago 3:15 pm, ar. Oakland 3:35 pm, ar. L.A. 2:45 pm, ar. Seattle 9:20 pm;

dp. Oakland 11:40 am, dp. L.A. 1:50 pm, dp. Seattle 7:00 am, ar. Chicago 3:35 pm. "Zephyr" carries "Pioneer" and "Desert Wind" through cars to/from Chicago.

Amtrak is spending \$1.8 million to build a track connection and to renovate the Rio Grande station, South 3rd and Rio Grande Streets, where previous passenger service ended in 1983. Location is downtown, three blocks south of the Union Pacific depot.

For those who travel Amtrak, the closing of the Union Pacific Depot in Salt Lake City is a real loss. Hopefully, this beautiful edifice will be put to some type of Public use. (Carl E. C. Carlson)

## REPORT ON THE NEEDLE'S EYE TUNNEL

Bud Lehrer recently sent in this newspaper account from the Weekly Register-Call, Central City: Boulder--The Forest Service (during the week of 14, 1986) has reaffirmed its intent to permit a continuous route along the 34-mile Moffat Road over Rollins Pass in a decision notice signed by Raymond O. Benton, Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests supervisor.

"After partial cave-ins and safety hazards required closing parts of the Moffat Road in the Rollins Pass area, the Forest Service stated its desire to re-open the route," Benton stated. "This week we are able to describe in detail who we see taking responsibility for various parts of the restoration work and what process needs to be followed to get things started."

The original Moffat Road, located on the Rollins Pass Route, has been closed because of cave-ins in the Needle's Eye Tunnel and unsafe conditions on the Devil's Slide trestles. In 1980, the Forest Service studied various alternatives to re-opening the route and agreed to pursue repair of the tunnel and trestles. Since that time, various government and private sector organizations have sought funding to restore the facilities. Progress was slowed because several groups raised some of the funds needed for restoration, but no one had enough to do the total job.

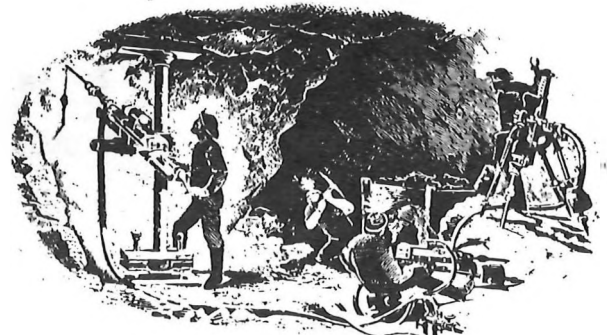
In the new decision notice, the agency will look to other sources, mainly county road departments, to complete repairs and maintenance for the Needle's Eye Tunnel. Since the cost of restoring the Devil's Slide trestles may be prohibitively high, the Forest Service has agreed to complete a bypass road around the trestles. This road will allow crossing the pass in a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

"We have a number of passes on the forest," Benton said, "but (unlike) Berthoud Pass (US Highway 40) and Cameron Pass (Colorado Highway 14), they are maintained by groups with a transportation mission. We see this as the logical way to get the pass re-opened." He indicated that problem solving meetings with Boulder, Grand and Gilpin counties, facilitated by Accord Association of Boulder, helped develop the Forest Service position.

Since the route was closed in 1979, damage has occurred to resources in the Rollins Pass area caused by individuals attempting to cross the pass by other means. "Wheel tracks across the tundra," will be rehabilitated and closed by the Forest Service. In addition, most roads in the Rollins Pass area will be closed to motorized use until repairs can be completed to the tunnel and a suitable bypass.

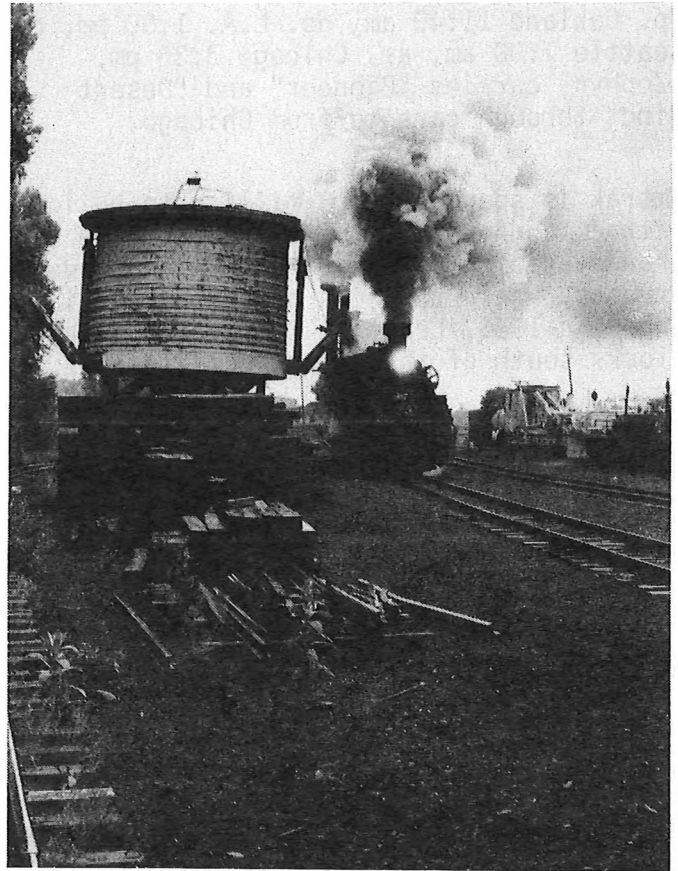
Repairs to the Needle's Eye Tunnel may begin when plans for the restoration work are approved by the Forest Service. The requirement plans must include the following: safety for visitors, preserving the historical facilities, and avoiding wasted expenditures from insufficient efforts that must be subsequently replaced.

(Bud Lehrer & Weekly Register-Call)



# EXTRA!

COLORADO NARROW GAUGE TRAIN TO RETURN TO COLORADO.....The Colorado Historical Society has been busy with narrow gauge equipment acquisition. Besides the purchase of the equipment at Central City, the Society has announced that the engine and cars now on display at Hill City, South Dakota will soon be returned to Colorado for display at Georgetown. The equipment is still owned by the Burlington Northern Railroad and has been on loan to the tourist railroad operation, the Black Hills Central. Funds are already in hand to pay for the movement, and the plan is to move the engine and three cars early this winter. The engine is ex-C&S #9, a 2-6-0 of Cooke Locomotive design, 1884. Details on the cars (especially where the three? are coming from) were not mentioned. This could be an interesting year at the Loop!



*K-36, #487 charges out of Chama to scale the 4% grades of Cumbres Pass on a rainy July morning. What year? The beauty of the C&TS is its unspoiled yards in Chama as elsewhere on the railroad. Have you ridden the C&TS lately? The date is Sunday, July 20, 1986! (Jim Trowbridge Photograph)*



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