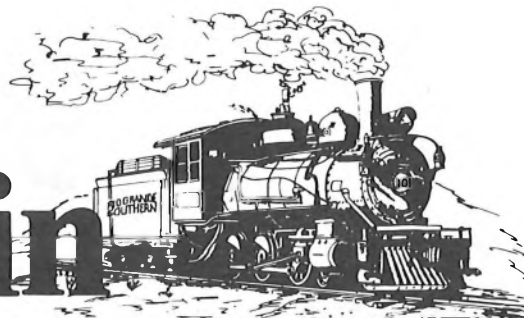


# Rocky Mountain RAIL REPORT



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

## MEETING SCHEDULE:

March 11, 1997 -- 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  
Jim Blouch..... President  
Walter Weart..... Vice President  
Carolyn Blouch..... Secretary  
David Goss..... Treasurer

Send all items for publication to: Rocky Mountain Rail Report, c/o Jim Trowbridge, Editor, 502 South Cody Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80226-3048.

**COPY DEADLINE** ALL copy for publication in the April, 1997 Rail Report is due no later than March 11, 1997!!



## MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES

Please refer address changes, new memberships, dues payments, lost newsletters, missing newsletter pages, and, any other membership related matters to:

Linda Johnson, Membership Chairperson  
1935 Independence  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80920-3705

March, 1997..... No. 450  
Club Telephone..... (303) 431-4354  
P. O. Box 2391..... Denver, CO 80201-2391

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

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending \$20.00 annual dues to: ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB, c/o Linda Johnson, Membership Chairperson, 1935 Independence, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80920-3705. An Associate Membership for Spouses and Children is also available for a yearly rate of \$10.00. On regular memberships, new members joining after April of each year may obtain membership for a payment of \$1.75 for each month remaining in the calendar year. Dues for the next year are solicited in November of the current year.

## MARCH 11 MEETING & PROGRAM

As of the writing of this newsletter, the program information for March was not available. We expect to announce the March program at the February meeting.



## PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

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## SOME REGULAR FEATURES OF THE RAIL REPORT PUT OFF TO APRIL ISSUE DUE TO FEBRUARY MEETING CHANGE

The change of our regular monthly meeting in February from the 11th to the 18th did not allow enough time to prepare the March newsletter after the regular meeting. So, such regular features as NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (February, 1997), NEW MEMBERS, PRESERVATION FUND AND BOOK DRAWING, etc. will be put off until the April, 1997 issue of the Rail Report!

## RECENT DEATHS

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club regretfully announces the passing away of the following member:

John Maxwell                                      Wheat Ridge, CO  
(#4, Member since 1940?)

John was a well known rail fan through his photographs and, especially, his drawings of narrow gauge rolling stock and structures. John served as President of the RMRR Club in 1946 after serving four years in the military during WW II. John worked for the Bureau of Reclamation until retirement as a civil engineer, receiving his degree in 1939 from Aggies (Colorado State U.). It was during John's presidency that the Club held its first railroad excursion on the Rio Grande Southern. John will be missed by his friends in the Club and the Rail Community. John's last appearance to give a program of his narrow gauge slides was at the 16th National Narrow Gauge Convention in Durango in September of 1996. John passed away on Saturday, February 8, 1997.

# LAST CHANCE!

Previous newsletters have carried full details on dues and the annual book drawing. Please refer to these issues for information and coupons for dues renewals and book drawing entries. REMEMBER...If you have not renewed your membership by March 31, 1997, you will be dropped from the rolls and you will lose your membership number!

## RAILROADING IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

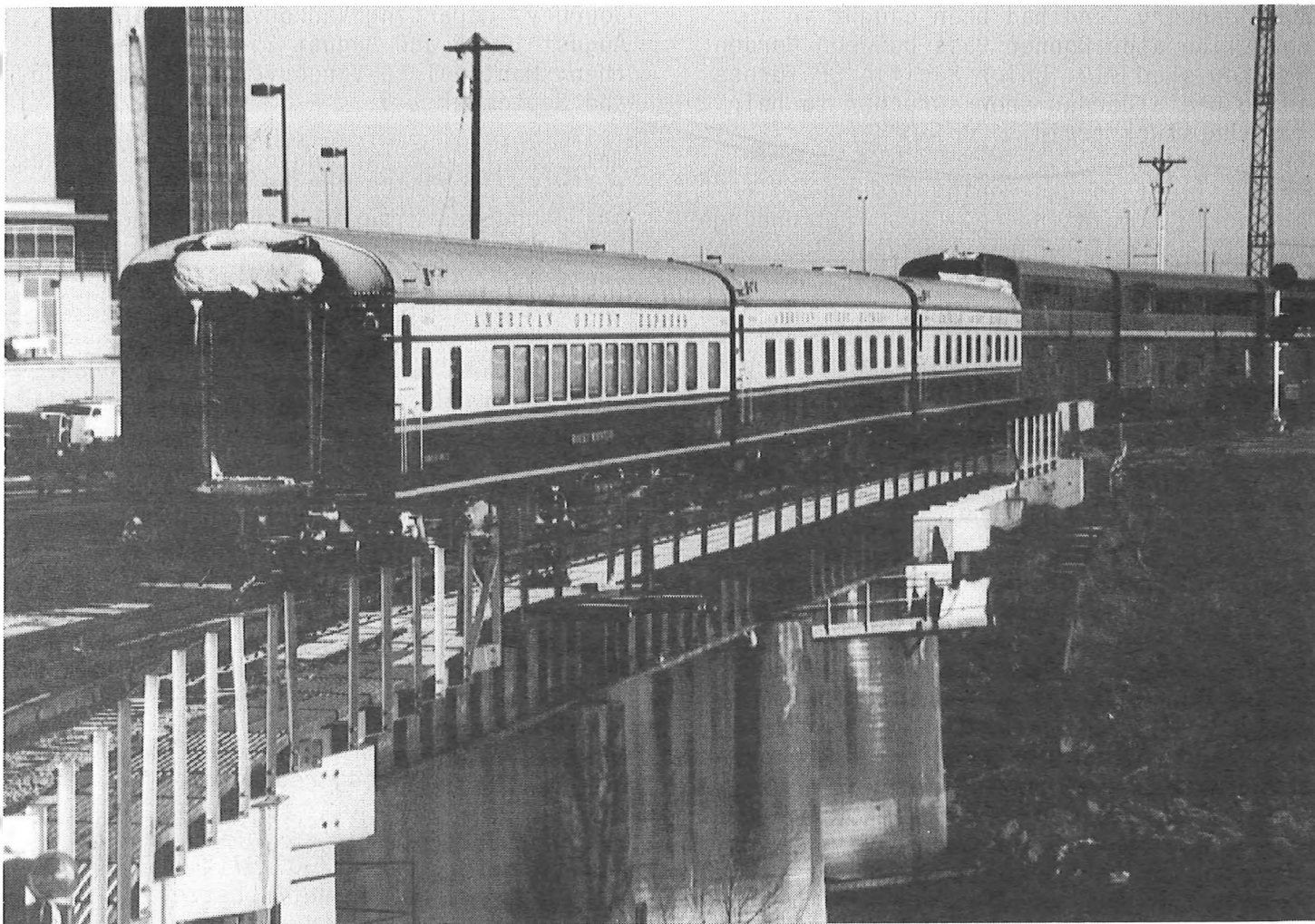
Mark your calendar on July 19, 1997 for the annual Denver Post/Cheyenne Frontier Days special train and events. The Club will again reserve a car aboard this train with additional arrangements for Rodeo, food, and entertainment. Full details will be forthcoming in the April issue of the Rail Report.

# Memo!

## MEMBERSHIP CARDS INCLUDED WITH THIS ISSUE OF THE RAIL REPORT

This newsletter arrived in your mail in an envelope, stamped "Membership Card Enclosed." Be sure to look for your 1997 Membership Card!! If you do not find it, then there should be a notice stating that you have not paid your 1997 dues. You have only one more month (March) to renew your membership before you are taken off the rolls and lose your membership number, requiring you to start at the highest number once again should you renew after March 31st!!

You will note that there is no Events/Calendar card this year. A schedule of events has not been developed by the trip committee to date, and, by the time we could send out a Calendar/Events card, half of the year would have passed by. Hopefully, we can return to this handy card next year.



January 24, 1997, found three American Orient Express cars arriving on the rear end of Amtrak Train #6. The rear car is club/lounge ROCKY MOUNTAIN and the two cars ahead of ROCKY MOUNTAIN are sleepers PARIS and ISTANBUL. These cars are among the first of AOE's fleet to arrive at Denver Railway Services car shop for maintenance and upgrading.

(Chip Sherman Photograph)

## THE COMBUSTION CORNER— CURRENT RAILROAD HAPPENINGS

by Chip Sherman

DENVER RAILWAY SERVICES OPENS CAR SHOP IN ENGLEWOOD, CO, WORKING ON AMERICAN ORIENT EXPRESS FLEET. Denver Railway Services, under Brett Hall's management, opened for business in January, 1997, at the old General Iron Works site in Englewood, CO. Located adjacent to the BNSF/Union Pacific Joint Line, the site has BNSF rail service.

Denver Railway Services is equipped to perform repairs, upgrades, truck rebuilds/ replacement, interior modifications and custom work on passenger equipment. HEP service,

27-pin, PC-2 inspections car painting and air conditioning work is also available. The site has a 20- and 35-ton overhead crane for car lifting. The company specializes in privately owned passenger equipment.

Their first clients are the American Orient Express, operated by TCS Expeditions, and Pacific Overland Express private varnish. The AOE fleet was moved from Oakland, CA, to Denver via Amtrak's California Zephyr, train #6, during January and early February, 1997.

January 24th found three AOE cars, club/lounge ROCKY MOUNTAIN, and, sleepers PARIS and ISTANBUL, deadheaded on the rear of a 12-hour-plus late Amtrak train #6. Train

#6 of January 22nd had been caught in a snow slide atop Donner Pass between Norden and snow shed #10. Union Pacific/SP forces had to use a Jordan snow spreader to help free the stuck train.

The AOE fleet is undergoing its annual "drydocking" maintenance. Cars will undergo inspections, maintenance and upgrades. Projects include repainting and refinishing the grand piano aboard club/lounge car SEATTLE. Presidential suite sleeper accommodations are being installed aboard sleeping cars PARIS and INSTANBUL, bringing presidential suite offerings up to 12 aboard the train. A presidential suite offers double-size cabin with two lower berths, two single sofa seats and a private shower.

Other classes of sleeping accommodations offered are superior sleeper (upper and lower berths, full-size couch), single sleeper (lower berth and single sofa seat), and parlor suite (larger cabin with two lower berths and an extra upper berth, full couch and single sofa seat, accommodating up to three passengers). Shower compartments are located at the ends of each sleeping carriage (car).

According to AOE's Mechanical Superintendent Gabriel Flores, the train will be in tip-top shape for its first 1997 journey in April; The Great Transcontinental Journey from Los Angeles, CA, to Washington, D.C. The train departs Los Angeles on April 9th and travels the southern BNSF (ex-Santa Fe) route via Williams, AZ, east to Albuquerque, NM, then south to El Paso, TX. Now on the Union Pacific's ex-Southern Pacific Sunset Route, it'll roll east through San Antonio and Houston, TX, onto New Orleans, LA. There, it's onto Norfolk Southern rails and northeast into Washington, D.C. Call 800-727-7477, Monday--Saturday, 8:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. PST, for tickets and information.

Other trips planned for the AOE include: The Great Southwest, May 13-17; National Parks of the West, May 17-25; May 25-June 3 (departs from Denver, CO); June 4-12, and October 11-19, departing from Denver. The Rockies & Yellowstone trip departs from Denver, June 12-17, and Portland to Denver, October 6-11. The AOE will also travel to Canada with its The Great Trans-Canada Rail

Journey, departing Vancouver to Montreal, August 11-19 and August 25-September 2, then, Montreal to Vancouver, August 18-26 and September 1-9.

This train's outstanding equipment includes two diners: ZURICH AND CHICAGO. The cars are decorated with rich inlaid paneling. High quality meals are prepared by expert chefs and varied menus reflect the best cuisine of the regions toured.

Private cars currently undergoing truck work and interior upgrades include Pacific Overland Express' business car YERBA BUENA, sleeper MONTEREY and sleeper-lounge BELLA VISTA. The BELLA VISTA features eight double bedrooms, shower and dressing room, retention toilets, diesel generator, lounge with galley for full beverage and limited meal service, complete audio-visual equipment and cellular phone. The car was originally built by Pullman in 1950 as C&O sleeper HOMESTEAD. Later owners were Seaboard Coast Line, Amtrak and the Genesee & Wyoming. It was rebuilt as a sleeper-lounge in 1987, and, redecorated in 1990.

Denver Railway Services can be reached at 303-592-0106, FAX at 303-571-5217, or, web site [www.denver.net/nbretzel](http://www.denver.net/nbretzel).

UNION PACIFIC EXCURSION VIA ROYAL GORGE ROUTE FOR NRHS 1997 CONVENTION SOLD OUT. The Central Coast Chapter, NRHS, has received written confirmation from the Union Pacific that they will operate a Denver to Salt Lake City, UT, excursion via UP, ex-Denver & Rio Grande Western RR Royal Gorge Route, June 21-23, 1997. Layovers are at Canon City and Grand Junction, CO, for the three-day excursion. The UP E-9A's, 951, 963B and 949, along with steamer 844, are requested to power the train. The NRHS is holding its 1997 convention in Salt Lake City, UT, June 25-29, 1997.

The trip is sold out as of January 28, 1997, with most people getting word via the Internet before printed material could be distributed. To add your name to a waiting list, call: 510-455-5017, or, FAX 408-997-6762. Their web site is at <http://www.wavenet.com/~dhanley/ccx.html> Prices are quoted by the Central Coast Chapter as starting with river-view-class at \$419 and going up to high-country-dome-



*Union Pacific AC4400CW #7050, working pusher/helper service on Tennessee Pass, ducks into Tennessee Pass Tunnel in January, 1997. The complete set of helpers included: UP 7050, SP 250, UP 7057, and SP 254. (Chip Sherman Photograph)*

class at \$599. Motels and meals ARE NOT included, not to mention your return trip from Salt Lake City, in these prices.

RADER RAILCAR BOWS OUT OF PHILIP MORRIS MARLBORO TRAIN CONSTRUCTION. Rader Railcar announced to its employees on January 31, 1997, that they would be laid off and the Marlboro train project terminated at its Aurora, CO, site. This left some 249 electricians, plumbers and carpenters looking for work. Rader will give them eight weeks pay, and, held a job fair at the Holiday Inn at Chambers Road and I-70 in February, 1997, in an effort to find them jobs.

Philip Morris and Rader have been building a new 20-car passenger train, but, it had fallen behind schedule. The Marlboro train was supposed to have operated in the sum-

mer of 1996, but was now pushed back to 1998.

Some 2,000 sweepstakes winners were to have toured "Marlboro country" between Denver and Billings, MT, on six-day, five night trips. Due to construction delays, Philip Morris began offering winners \$6,000 checks in lieu of the trip. The majority reportedly accepted the cash, but others are still awaiting the train journey.

Philip Morris is arranging to have the cars moved to the Transportation Transit Association in Bath, NY, for completion. The train will be reduced from the 18-20 car consist to 13-15. One sleeper, SC-1, is almost ready to move once trucks are built to carry the heavy sleeper. Eight sleepers with luxury "cabins" were once envisioned for this ultimate train ex-



A team of "warbonnets" heads up train 01-194-28 for the BNSF on January 29, 1997. BNSF GP-60 #122 heads up the lashup with ATSF FP-45 #95 and BNSF GP-60 #140 following behind at Cheyenne, Wyoming, preparing to head for Denver. (Chip Sherman Photograph)

perience. (Rocky Mtn. News, 2/4/97 and The Colorado Zephyr)

DENVER TO STOCKTON BNSF TRACKAGE RIGHTS TRAIN DETOURING OVER EX-SOUTHERN PACIFIC DONNER PASS WHILE FEATHER RIVER CANYON ROUTE REBUILT. The heavy rain and snow-falls during late December, 1996, and into January, 1997, flooded the Feather River in northern California and heavily damaged Union Pacific's rail line through the canyon. This route is used by BNSF's track-age rights train DVSTJ (Denver, CO, to Stockton, CA, Joint Train, also called by BNSF crews as the Riverside Train). The UP's Feather River Canyon line was closed January 2, 1997. UP had seven employees stranded in their vehicles on Highway 70 when the road slipped out on either side of them. UP hired a helicopter to airlift them out of the canyon.

UP diverted trains and their maintenance-of-way forces to keeping the Donner Pass Line opened, which was closed by mudslides, water over the track, and the flooding Truckee River through Reno, between Truckee, CA, and Sparks, NV.

The UP is rebuilding the Feather River Canyon Line at a cost of some \$35 million dollars. Reopening of the line is targeted for March 3, 1997. (Flimsies and The Itchy Foamer)

UNION PACIFIC REROUTES TACONITE TRAFFIC OFF TENNESSEE PASS LINE ONTO WYOMING MAIN LINE. "We have rerouted some of the taconite traffic temporarily to an all-Union Pacific routing to speed up taconite deliveries to Geneva Steel in Provo, UT. The cycle times on this traffic were interrupted by frozen coal which was unloaded in

Illinois only with difficulty. That cut down on the number of empties available to go north for the taconite backhaul and Geneva Steel was running very low on the product. We also put extra equipment into this pool."

"Once their taconite stockpile is back up, we'll return the taconite trains to Tennessee Pass until labor relations has finished its agreements with the unions to permanently shift traffic off the pass."

"We plan to begin diverting trains off the pass during the second quarter (of 1997), finishing up by the end of the third quarter of this year. Meantime, train counts, including taconite trains, should average about 12-a-day" stated UP's spokesman John Bromley.

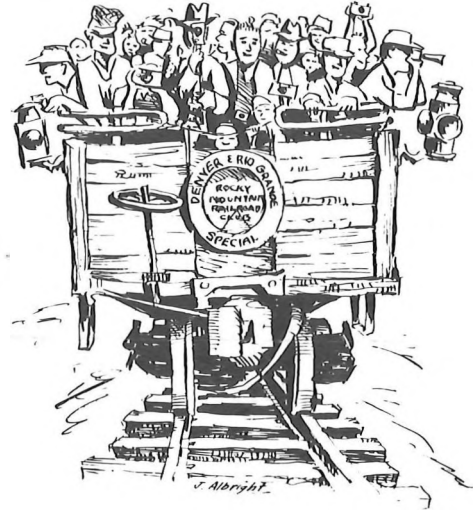
UP's symbol for the taconite on its Nebraska-Wyoming Sherman Hill routing is OMIGV. The last taconite train over Tennessee Pass in January, 1997, was symbol 1MNGVC 24 which arrived in Grand Junction, CO, early on January 27th. (The Itchy Foamer and Joe M)

UNION PACIFIC POWER DOMINATES TENNESSEE PASS HELPERS AT MINTURN. Southern Pacific AC4400CW's have been the dominate helper power on Tennessee Pass in 1996. That isn't the case in 1997 as UP has moved in their AC4400CW's. Joe McMillan's trip on February 1, 1997, found nine UP and three SP units in the two-and four-unit helper sets. Units found were UP 7022, 7036, 7037, 7039, 7041, 7050, 7058, 7062 and 7066; SP 250, 309, and 314.

Traffic is down on Tennessee Pass, with no trains operating that sunny Saturday, February 1st. (Joe M.)

BNSF WARBONNETS AND FP-45 ROLL UP THE JOINT LINE AND C&S. BNSF's Houston, TX, to Laurel, MT, via Denver train 01-195-22 had BNSF GP-60 #140, ATSF FP-45 #95 and BNSF GP-60 #122, all in the classic Santa Fe warbonnet scheme on January 25, 1997. The train was stopped next to the Denver Light Rail South Broadway Street station that morning prior to moving through Denver. The train then continued north on the old Colorado & Southern line via Boulder, CO, and Cheyenne, WY.

This power lashup with BNSF #122, now on the point, returned south from Laurel, WY, on January 29th between Cheyenne, WY, and Denver on train 01-194-28. (Steve R.)



## 1997 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February 18	Regular Monthly Meeting
March 11	Regular Monthly Meeting
March 23	Annual Ski Train Trip
April 8	Regular Monthly Meeting
May 13	Regular Monthly Meeting
June 10	Regular Monthly Meeting
June 14 & 15	Annual Workdays: Club's Equipment at the Colorado RR Museum
July 8	Regular Monthly Meeting
July 19*	Denver Post/Cheyenne Frontier Days Special Train Excursion
August 12	Regular Monthly Meeting
September 9	Regular Monthly Meeting
October 18	ANNUAL BANQUET
November 11	Regular Monthly Meeting
December 9	ELECTIONS and Regular Monthly Meeting

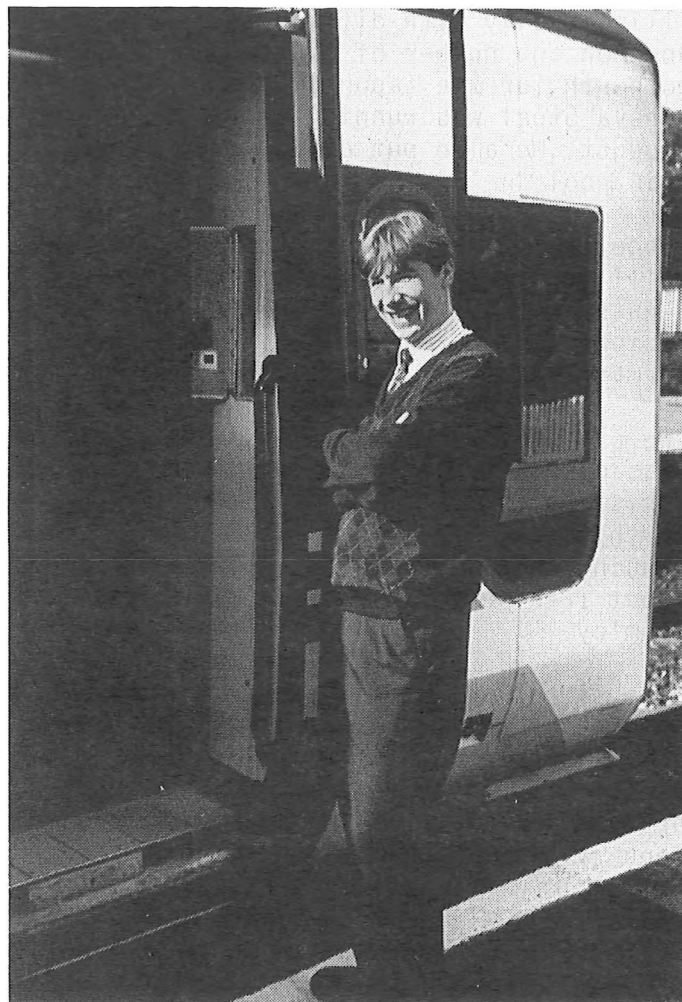
\*Additions, deletions and corrections will be made in the Rail Report throughout the year. Be sure to look for details monthly!

## GREAT BRITAIN AND MORE!—PART 3

by Keith Kirby

At Leeds we switched to a four car diesel powered self contained train, a Class 156 type. The line from Leeds to Carlisle is perhaps the most scenically spectacular rail line in Great Britain. The line climbs up a steep grade. There are beautiful small stations that have been lovingly restored. This line is a favorite for rail excursions powered by steam. Located on this line is the highest station in Great Britain. Its elevation is over 1,400 feet in elevation. The weather was ideal. Early on there were patches of fog, penetrated by shafts of bright sunlight. As the trip progressed, it grew sunnier. There were still cloudy patches. Some clouds almost looked like thunderheads, thought they weren't. At each stop Darrell jumped off the train for a "photo opportunity," only to dash back just in time to catch the departing train. At one stop, John Phipps, a person who has visited the RMRRC Club in Denver, and a friend of Bud Lehrer, joined us for the ride to Carlisle. He gave us special highlights of things along the route. In addition we were lucky to have a conductor who was a railfan. Between John Phipps, the conductor, and John Flowers, we had excellent tour guides. At one place the track ran 300 to 500 feet above the valley floor. It was one of the most spectacular train rides I've ever taken.

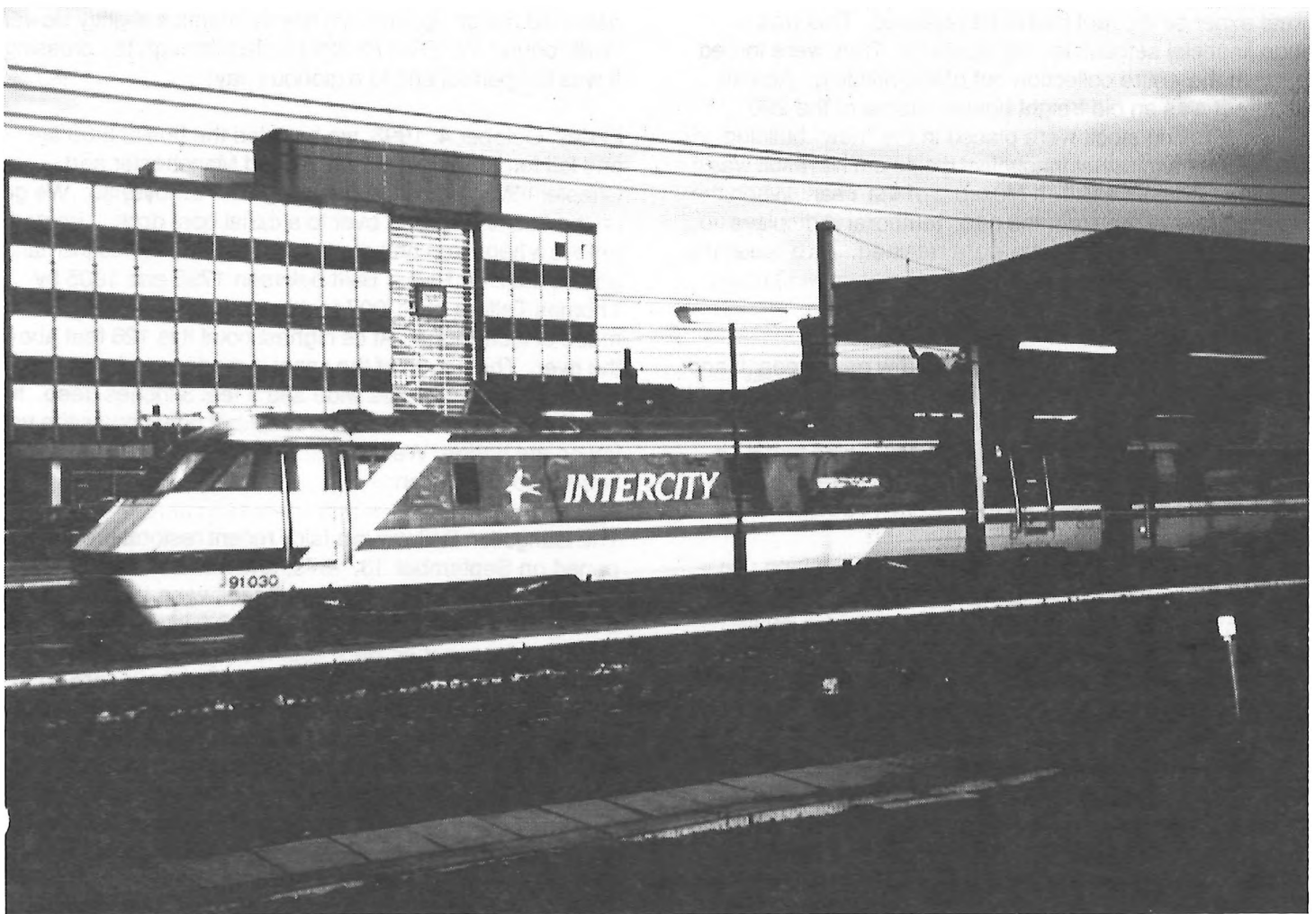
At Carlisle we took a bridge across the tracks and saw a Royal Mail train. They sort the mail en route. What a concept! It will never catch on in the U.S. It was pulled by a brand new locomotive. It and the cars were painted a bright red. We caught an *INTERCITY* train, *The Scotsman*, for Haymarket, a suburb of Edinburgh. There were no intermediate stops on our one hour and twenty minute ride. *The Scotsman* was pulled by a Class 87 electric locomotive and had six cars. It really moved along smartly! On our way into Haymarket, we caught brief glimpses of the Forth Bridges, both rail and highway. We got off in Haymarket. After about twenty minutes a four car train came for us. It was a simple cross platform change. On the way out we were treated to one of the real high points in a day filled with high points. We crossed over the huge Forth Bridge. From it we could see the impressive suspension highway bridge which parallels the railway structure. As we traveled on we could look back on the two bridges. The ride from Haymarket to Inverness took three hours and twenty minutes. It was mile after mile of spectacular scenery. Some of it looked surprisingly like the Colorado Rockies. After a fifty minute layover in Inverness, a charming city with fascinating old buildings, we boarded another two car RDC type train, Class 156. There was a slight drizzle, but as we climbed into the mountains, it stopped and cleared. At twilight, the beautiful pink and silvery clouds were reflected by the still waters of the several lochs we glided by. The effect was breath taking. At 8:20 pm, a few minutes early, we pulled into the Kyle of Lochalsh station.



*Club members were befriended by ScotRail conductor Chris Fraser as they headed back to Carlisle. Chris provided a great deal of information that members found most interesting.*  
(Keith Kirby Photograph)

The next morning we walked back to the station and caught the same two car train back to Inverness. The vistas were even more spectacular than they were going. We retraced the line we came on crossing the Forth Bridge again. Before we got there, we made friends with the conductor, Chris Fraser. He was a delightful young man about 30 years of age. He has a wife and a three year old child. He has worked for ScotRail for about eight years. He loves his job, though he's frustrated with the direction the management is taking. He told us about the Class 158 multiple units we were riding on. He was not pleased with them. He said that they were too highly computerized. For example, if the passengers complain that the coach is too hot, the crew can shut down the air conditioning unit and open the windows. But when they do, the toilets stop flushing. He also pointed out how they failed to train the crews how to operate the features of the cars. I asked him if he wanted to be an engineer. He said, "No." He said he was contented to just let life wash over him - just go with the flow. His job





*INTERCITY 225 is shown at Doncaster after Club members had experienced a wonderful ride on the train, at times pushing speeds approaching 135 miles per hour. (Keith Kirby Photograph)*

mainly involves a circle route west and north of Edinburgh. He allowed us to ride in the back cab of the train. The view of the scenery was great, but best of all was the journey across the Forth Bridge. The view was unbelievable! This is a remarkable bridge which was opened in 1890. It features 3 cantilevers, and is 8,298 feet long. Its double tracks are 156 feet above the water. The top of the bridge is 361 feet high. Next to it is a twenty year old suspension highway bridge. The pair are most impressive. At 4:30 pm after some time for some individual site seeing, the group met at the Edinburgh Waverley Station. At 4:58 the train pulled in. It was an *INTERCITY 225* **pushed** by a Class 92 electric locomotive. On the way south we went through Darlington, where in 1825 the Stockton and Darlington Railway was started. This was one of the very first rail lines built. The ride to Doncaster was very swift and very comfortable. The *INTERCITY 225* traveled at speeds up to 135 miles per hour.

At 8:30 am the next day, we boarded the bus and drove to York. After passing the city gate and wall, we parked at the National Railway Museum in York. At the museum we were

met by Richard Gibbon, who gave us a spirited lecture about the Museum, its collection, and its purpose. He was very animated and suggested that a museum should do more than just preserve old locomotives. It should be a place in which the general public can be educated, rather than railfan be entertained. The NRM, as it is called, contains the world's largest collection of railway artifacts. The museum is 21 years old now. It is based on a collection started by British Rail. In 1968 BR decided collecting Railway artifacts was no longer appropriate, so they stopped. The government decided to establish a Railway Museum at York. This was the first national museum not to be located in London, a decision which caused some controversy. The location chosen was an old London & Northeastern Railway steam shed. It had two turntables inside. The collection was moved inside, and the museum began. In the middle 1980's the roof, which was made of quick hardening aluminate concrete, began to disintegrate. The deteriorating concrete caused the steel rods to separate from the concrete due to the formation of an acid. Flakes first, then chunks of concrete began to fall on the exhibits and patrons. Finally the whole building was condemned and at

great expense the roof had to be replaced. This was a huge financial setback for the Museum. They were forced to move the entire collection out of the building. Across the street was an old freight house. Some of the 290 pieces of rolling stock were placed in the "new" building, in a temporary and rather innovative display. The result was it was selected as the British Museum of the Year. When the new roof was completed, the new "temporary" displays housed in the Freight House were retained. As a result the museum is vastly bigger and the displays vastly improved from when I visited it in 1982.

Richard showed us an unrestored narrow gauge coach and posed the question: From a museum point of view, should it be restored? This would mean a process that would have replaced most of it. Or should it be left as it was found. It was used for 50 years as a summer home. It was a railway coach for only 30 years.

Richard stated that 87% of the visitor are not railfans. To them, the museum is attempting to bring the romance of the rails with the newer exhibits. To prosper, he implied that we must reach beyond the dying triangle of people who remember steam. We must highlight the exciting technology that the railways represented in the past and today.

Later Fuzz and I walked through the streets of old York, to a cash machine (They work just as fast here as they do in Denver), past Yorkminster, and to the station. Immediately an *INTERCITY 225* arrived. The loco was the *Terence Cuneo*, named after one of the most famous British Railway artists. Fuzz raced me over the bridge to the other side of the locomotive. Painted on the side of it, about 5 inches high, was a mouse. Cuneo always put a small mouse somewhere in his paintings. When this locomotive was named for him, he came to the dedication, paints in hand, and painted the mouse on it. No sooner did the *INTERCITY 225* leave than an *INTERCITY 125* (an older, diesel powered train) arrived. We photographed it from the overhead bridge. York has a long, gently curved platform. This is the third station built here from 1871-1877. We returned to the museum, so I could use up what was left on my credit limit at the Museum shop.

That evening we ate with David Charlesworth, a local artist who is known for his railway paintings. He proved to be a fascinating conversationalist. He described his artistic style, preference of media and the type of work he did. It was all very interesting. About 10 pm we returned to the hotel. On the way back, as we approached one of the rare at grade railroad crossings, the gates went down, the lights flashed and a horn sounded. Darrell immediately bolted for the door, almost not waiting for Fuzz to open it so he could get out. Even though it was pitch black, Darrell was determined to get the picture. Suddenly an *INTERCITY 225* exploded across the grade crossing. Fuzz estimated that it was traveling at about 130 mph. It was moving so fast, that all I could see was literally a gray, white, and red blur. The

gates did not go up, and in a few moments a slightly slower north bound *INTERCITY 225* blasted through the crossing. It was the perfect end to a glorious day!

Friday, October 4, 1996, we boarded the bus at 8:30 am and left for Wales. Our route skirted Manchester and Chester. We stopped at the village of Pontcysyllte. We got off the bus and walked over to a canal boat dock. Located here is a huge iron and stone aqueduct that takes the canal across the Dee River. Built between 1795 and 1805 by Thomas Telford it is 1,007 feet long. It contains 18 piers made of local stone. At its highest point it is 126 feet above the river. The trough of the canal is made out of cast iron, and is 11 feet 10 inches wide and 5 feet 3 inches deep. It cost £47,000. We watched a couple of boats cross the valley on the bridge. We then returned to the bus and proceeded to Llangollen.

The Llangollen Railway is a fairly recent restoration. It reopened on September 13, 1975, and has been gradually expanding ever since. It now runs between Llangollen and Carrog. Our train was pulled by an 0-6-0 LMS steam locomotive. The coaches were suburban types where each compartment held 12 people and had its own doors on either side of the compartment. After traveling the length of the line, we changed trains to a two unit DMU or diesel multiple unit train. This was a mechanical diesel train. I was able to sit in the First Class section right behind the driver, who looked as if he might start shaving any day. While not steam engine, the large windows and forward view made for great vistas. After the ride, we reboarded the bus for the drive to Porthmadog. The ride was over a beautiful high pass. We passed by the nearly empty reservoir which serves Liverpool. It was a very dry summer and water was in short supply. The country side was very dry. So much so, that many steam excursion trips were canceled.

Soon the Ffestiniog Railway came into view, as well as vistas of the Irish Sea. The weather ranged from cloudy, to clouds with shafts of brilliant sunlight, to rain squalls off the sea. We stopped at the Boston Lodge Works of the Ffestiniog Railway for a tour. The tour was led by Ian Rudd and Kevin Heywood, the second son of the General Manager of the Ffestiniog. The Boston Lodge Works are where they build and maintain the locomotives and carriages. We saw *Prince*, a locomotive built in 1863, and is the world's oldest, continuously operating steam locomotive. We saw two Fairlie locomotives. These are double locomotives built to operate on the Ffestiniog's two foot gauge line. Also there was the *Mountaineer*, an American built Alco locomotive.

The railroad was originally begun in 1836 to haul slate from the mines at Blaenau Ffestiniog. The line used gravity to take the carts loaded with slate to Porthmadog. Horses were used to haul the carts back up to the quarries. Slate was used world wide as a roof covering. At that time it was thought that the gauge was too narrow (23 1/2") for steam locomotives to operate on. But finally in 1864 steam

engines did arrive. By the 1870's the Fairlie double engines arrived. By the 1920's new roofing materials and a series of labor strikes caused a decline in the demand for slate. By the end of World War II the line was exhausted and worn out. On August 1, 1946, the line was closed down.

We headed for Porthmadog and dinner at Ian's restaurant, the Grapevine Bistro. There we were joined by Alan Pegler. He is a charming man who is the President of the Ffestiniog Railway Company. Fuzz, Peter Jordan, is the Chairman of the Ffestiniog Railway Society Limited. Alan Pegler, 46 years ago, was a key figure in saving the Ffestiniog Railway. He told us how on an excursion he was talking to a rail enthusiast. The enthusiast said he was pleased that they had saved this line. He said the line that really deserved to be saved was the Ffestiniog. Alan stated that at that point, he had not even heard of the Ffestiniog.

Eighteen months after the fan trip, a group called Alan and asked him if he could spearhead the drive to save this narrow gauge railway in Wales. He said he had not been familiar with the Railway or Wales, but he remembered what the enthusiast said, and agreed to help. In 1954 Alan Pegler acquired a controlling interest in the company, and the long process of restoring the Railway began. That was the beginning of the revitalization of the railway. He told about some other railroad adventures, perhaps misadventures would be a better term. He told about his adventures bringing *The Flying Scotsman* to America. He said he had a marvelous time doing it.

In the morning we had a special surprise arranged for Darrell. Fuzz had arranged for a sign to be placed on the window of the door to the Ffestiniog station. It stated that photography of the railway was not permitted, and that slides were available for purchase in the gift shop. Previously I had informed everyone about our surprise, so they were eagerly awaiting Darrell's reaction. When I guided Darrell to the door and pointed out the sign, he was surprised, to say the least. Stunned might be a better term. As the strobes flashed and the video cameras rolled, slowly the dawn gradually rose over Darrell. He realized that he'd been set up. He took the joke at his expense with grace and good humor. He even did a "photo run by" complete with exaggerated reaction for the assembled photographers.

We then waited for the engine to be brought to the station. Our locomotive was the Earl of Merioneth built in 1979, using the same plans of locomotives built 100 years earlier. Darrell arranged us in front of the locomotive for an exposure. After two shots we were off to the coach to begin our trip. Tom Lawry got the first foot plate (cab) ride. He got to ride the cab across the Cob, a 21 foot high embankment built in 1811 as part of land reclamation project. We went past the Boston Lodge, the Ffestiniog shops, and stopped at Minffordd. There Darrell got his foot plate ride, riding to Penrhyn. When Tom returned to our car after his foot plate ride, it was as if he was in a daze. As Ian said, he was not

nine, but nineteen feet off the ground. At Penrhyn I traded places with Darrell and rode to Tan-y-Bwlch. Space on the foot plate was very tight. I shared the foot plate with Nick Pinder, the fireman. On the other side were engineer John Orm and engineer trainee Steve Murfitt. As most view points were on the engineer's side, I did not get a clear view, but the ability to look down the boiler and around the stack was more than enough compensation. It was toasty warm, as warm as I had been in Wales. The locomotive rode quite smoothly and the staff was very professional and friendly, pointing out attractions along the way. It was absolutely thrilling. The train clings to the side of the mountain, high above the valley floor at this point. I was followed in the cab by Bob Kanard, then Eva Hoffman and finally Tom Toft. Our reactions were all pretty similar, "We not in Kansas, or even Colorado, anymore, Toto!"

In 1963 a pumped storage power station was built at Llyn Ystradau. The dam for this project flooded the original 1842 line. A line relocation was needed. It was completed in 1978. This relocation necessitated the construction of a loop, similar to the one at Georgetown, at Dduallt. From here it was but a short way to the station at Blaenau Ffestiniog. After a tour of the slate mine, we boarded our train for the return. This time the train was hauled by a diesel. When we returned to Porthmadog, we were met by Fuzz and the bus.

We were joined by Tony Smare from the Rheilffordd Eryri, the Welsh Highland Railway. He described to us how they are going to completely rebuild this narrow gauge line. He then took us on an incredibly beautiful tour over the route proposed for the 25 miles of this railway. The line originally ran from Caernarfon to Porthmadog. It was a short lived line lasting from 1922 to 1937 when the track was pulled up. The Welsh Highland Railway has received £4,300,000 to restore the line from the Millennium Commission. They promise to have a section of it up and running by 1997 and finished to Porthmadog by perhaps 2005. The motive power for these trains is going to be two NGG16 Beyer-Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 locomotives from South Africa. We walked to the portal of a 900 foot tunnel, used today by hikers, saw several original bridges and lots of roadbed left over from the old line.

The next day when we arrived at Tywyn, terminal of the Talylyn Railway, we were given a tour of the loco works at Pendre. In the shop was a locomotive fixed up like one of the characters from *Thomas the Tank Engine*. Thomas the Tank Engine days have been a very important source of revenue for tourist railways in Great Britain. The railways use these celebrations to bring in families who might not usually visit tourist railways. This will help keep interest in railroads alive in future generations. The Talylyn Railway was another narrow gauge slate railway. The first slate was carried in 1866. By 1947 trains were only run three days a week during the summer. By 1950 it looked like the railway was finished, but a group of enthusiasts refused to let it die.

In 1970 construction was begun to extend the line from Abergynolwyn to Nant Gwernol. Our train was pulled by No. 6, *Douglass*, an 0-4-0 tank engine built in 1918. On this route Morley Hudson, Russ Stuska, Bud Lehrer, Bob Schaeffer, Jim Hurt, Tom and Isabel Abbott got foot plate rides.

After the train ride we reboarded the bus at Abergynolwyn and headed for Aberystwyth and a ride on the Vale of Rheidol Railway. After a brief shop tour, we boarded our train. It was hauled by locomotive No. 8. This tank type locomotive was built by the Great Western Railway in 1923. The railway uses a 1 foot, 11 1/2 inch gauge. The line was opened in 1902 to serve the local farms and lead mines. The line was included when British Rail was formed in 1948. It was going to be closed in 1950, but a campaign was mounted and it was saved. In 1989 the line was extensively reconditioned and today serves as a tourist line. Sue Stuska, and James Hill got cab rides. We rode the train to the end of the line at Devil's Bridge, where Fuzz and the bus were waiting.

TO BE CONTINUED...

# EXTRA!

Your editor was able to catch his negative service in time to insert the program information for March in the Rail Report! We will be taken on a tour with our fellow Club members who participated in the Great Britain excursion. I'm sure you have seen through Keith's article that they certainly had a wonderful time and saw a great many things!

## FROM THE EDITOR

Past President, Mike Johnson made mention of a few specific persons along with general "Thank Yous" in the February Rail Report. One person who was left out, and should have been specifically mentioned, in my opinion, is Linda Johnson, our membership chairperson. Linda handles all the new memberships, renewals, number changes each (and every) year, typing up the membership cards, stuffing them into envelopes, and many other jobs associated with membership.

This is a huge job with little recognition. So, Linda...in behalf of the Club, please accept our "THANKS" for a job well done!!

## NEWS FROM THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD

### THE CLASSIC "AMERICAN" 4-4-0 EUREKA TO VISIT THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is planning to operate rotary snowplow 0Y to clear the line of the winter's snow in early May, 1997. Unlike past operations, this year's operation will be more sympathetic to the desires of the railroad community in terms of scheduling, etc. Also planned is a passenger train following the rotary from Cumbres down to Osier and return. For complete schedules, fares information, maps and video tape of past rotary operations, send \$35.00 to: C&TS RR, P. O. Box 789, Chama, NM 87520.

Even more exciting, the C&TS is planning for a visit of the Eureka & Palisade RR #4 in mid-June, 1997! The Eureka is an 1875 4-4-0 that has been painstakingly restored to its late 1870's appearance by its current owner, Dan Markoff, of Las Vegas, NV. The Eureka has made a couple of visits to the D&SNG in the past, and, now its going to run on the narrow gauge mainline over Cumbres Pass. The C&TS is planning an extensive schedule of trips with the Eureka as well as other events. For complete information, schedules, fares, etc., send \$50.00 to: C&TS RR, P. O. Box 789, Chama, NM 87520.

The only way to get official information on these trips is through the C&TS RR. NO INFORMATION will be given over the telephone, except to those who sign up and contribute. The new management of the C&TS wishes to start a program of special operations on the railroad. The only way that these programs will continue in the future will be if the railfan community supports these events. So, even if you only intend on watching and photographing these events, please support them by contributing--it will be made worth your while! (Earl Knoob)

Earl also sent some extensive information about shop work and such; however, space ran out for this month's newsletter. We will include this informative material in the April issue of the Rail Report. (Editor)