

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

October, 1963

Newsletter No. 50

The October, 1963, meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held on Wednesday, October 9, 1963, in the basement meeting room of the Western Federal Savings sky-scraper, 718 - 17th Street, Denver, at 8:00 p.m. One of our members from England -- Mr. Henry Rishbeth, temporarily (and fortunately for us) residing in Boulder -- will favour us with an entertaining and unusual colored slide show entitled, "Steam in Three Continents.

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As of this writing, our track gang working on the new trackage for the Club's operating trolley line at the Colorado Railroad Museum, has spent five Saturdays installing the switch, jointing and spiking rail, and lining the track in preparation for ballasting and tamping. Additional angle bars and track and guard rail bolts were found to be necessary, and with the gracious assistance of C&S and D&RGW store department folks, the material was acquired without any delay.

At the same time, repair work on one side of the Club's Rio Grande Southern narrow gauge business car "Rico" has been in progress. Weathering of the paint has made it necessary to strip off all the old coating to the bare wood before repainting, and Bill Gordon, Bryant McFadden, Gerrit Barnes and Herb O'Hanlon, who have started this work, will welcome any and all assistance in finishing this job before winter sets in. Please contact Bill Gordon for working days and time.

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A program of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club to re-label all equipment on display at the Colorado Railroad Museum, both that owned by our organization and by the Museum itself, has to date resulted in production and installation of some very distinctive and attractive 4 x 5-inch metal labels on the items exhibited by the Club.

Reproduced photographically, in the manner of offset printing plates, these new descriptive plates are the work of Ed Haley, Dick Kindig and Bill Gordon, and are expected to be more weatherproof and durable than any other plan so far devised. Labeling of the remaining equipment will proceed as quickly as possible.

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Further information from Club member David P. Morgan, Editor of Trains magazine, regarding a future article in Trains concerning our organization, is expected momentarily. Director Ted McKee advises that arrangements for the contest mentioned last month are nearly complete, and information will be disseminated to all members in the near future.

In this connection, we find that the list of the Club's special excursions, which was prepared to accompany last month's newsletter, inadvertently omitted three trips. These are listed separately on the enclosed half sheet so that they may be attached as a supplement to the original list. Thanks to John Maxwell for bringing these omissions to our attention.

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Sorrowful news, indeed, to railfans is the decision of the Great Western Railway to begin abandoning their fleet of steam locomotives. One of our members, John M. Birmingham, of Boulder, has purchased GW #51; the #60 was sold to Carl Conover for service on the Black River & Western at Flemington, N. J. This leaves only Consolidation #75 and Decapod #90 remaining in the enginehouse at Loveland.

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The westbound California Zephyr was derailed last month by a washout on single line trackage in Ruby Canon, 26 miles west of Grand Junction, Colorado. There were no injuries reported among the 300 passengers and crewmen on the 14-car train. Four engine units, a baggage car, a deadhead Pullman, and three coaches went off the track, but all of them remained upright since the train was moving slowly because of troublesome water conditions along the Colorado River in this area. Four other passenger trains and 12 freight trains were halted by the rail damage. An emergency crew of 65, working throughout the Labor Day weekend, succeeded in getting the trains moving again within 24 hours.

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A speed of 151.88 mph was reached recently in a test run by a Japanese express train. A 4-coach electric train held the top speed for one minute on a model section of the new standard gauge line between Tokyo and Osaka. The 315-mile line is scheduled to be in use next year. Hourly trains will make the run in three hours -- an average speed of 105 mph.

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Railroad travel last year was 15 times safer than traveling on the highways and over twice as safe as travel by domestic airlines, according to recently released AAR statistics.

U. S. railroads carried nearly 312 million passengers a total of 19.9 billion miles in 1962. On a per-100-million-passenger-mile basis, the fatality rate for railroads was .15; for buses it was .16; the rate for domestic airlines was .35 (excluding bomb explosion fatalities); and for auto travel it was 2.3.

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Analysis of a \$27,000,000 road test shows that heavy axle load damage to highways is substantially greater than had previously been acknowledged. Results of the test, conducted by the American Association of State Highway Officials, showed that an 18,000-lb. single-axle load (found on semi-trailer trucks) caused 5,000 times as much pavement deterioration as a 2,000-lb. single-axle load (as found on the average automobile).

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The Burlington has just completed 100 box cars with foamed-in-place insulation. The cars will be used principally to haul coiled tin plate, bottled goods, canned goods, and any processed foods that require protection from heat or cold without use of mechanical refrigeration or heat. Each of the \$19,000 RBL bunkerless 50-ft., 70-ton box cars was insulated with polyurethane foam. According to the "Q", the foamed-in-place insulation is twice as efficient as conventional insulation, will not absorb moisture, and produces a stronger and more rigid car. The material will not support combustion, is non-porous, and provides a completely airtight, waterproof car. The road plans to foam-insulate another 150 RBL cars, to be followed by 100 50-ft. mechanical refrigerator cars. The latter will cost \$30,000 each and will have the capacity for 70 tons of frozen food.

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The last of 45 new light-weight head-end cars has just been placed in service by the U.P. The cars, built by the St. Louis Car Division of General Steel Industries, cost \$6.5 million. Over the past 7 years the U.P. has put 180 new main-line passenger-train cars in service. Included have been 40 coaches, 5 dome coaches, 10 lunch-counter cafe-lounge cars, and 125 head-end cars. An additional 9 mail-storage cars are on order. Superstructures of the new cars -- 35 postal-storage and 10 baggage cars -- are made of aluminum from the floor up, except for the collision and bolster posts. The cars have low-alloy, high-tensile steel underframes with GSI's one-piece cast steel platforms and double body bolsters. Light weight of the postal-storage cars is 126,200 lbs.

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The Missouri Pacific has built 50 of what it believes to be the largest box car type BX cars ever constructed. The cars, for head-end passenger train service, are called high-revenue economy models. Built in the MP's DeSoto, MO., shops, the cars have cross-sections similar to those in the road's new streamlined passenger equipment. They replace 50 50-1/2 ft., 50-ton double-door box cars converted to BX cars in 1950. The new cars, with a light weight of 67,000 lbs., are 1,000 lb. heavier than the old converted cars. Each new car has 34% more floor area than the old units.

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Union Pacific Railroad has again won the coveted E. H. Harriman Memorial Award Gold Medal for its outstanding safety record during 1962.

This year's citations mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the E. H. Harriman Memorial Awards. It is the 16th time Union Pacific has won the Gold Medal in the past 39 years under a presentation system that stipulates a winning road cannot compete for the award the following year.

Safety ratings on which the Harriman Awards are based include casualties to passengers in train and train-service accidents and casualties to employes on duty in train, train-service and non-train accidents. Union Pacific competes with other Class 1 railroads operating at least 20 million locomotive-miles annually and carrying at least 1,000 passengers per year.

The Union Pacific also has been named by the National Safety Council as winner of the 1962 Railroad Employes National Safety Award. UP was singled out for first place honors among railroads whose employes worked 40 million man-hours or more. The road won with a casualty rate of 4.73 based on the number of employees killed and injured per million man-hours of work. The 1962 award marks the 19th win for UP in 40 years of safety competition. The road has actually held the low casualty rate 28 times during the 40 years but according to National Safety Council rules a railroad is eligible to receive the award only every other year.

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Some people will stop at nothing when it comes to doing things for others.

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J. C. Thode, President

E. R. Lewandowski, Secretary

R. A. Ronzio, Vice-President

Ane O. Clint, Treasurer