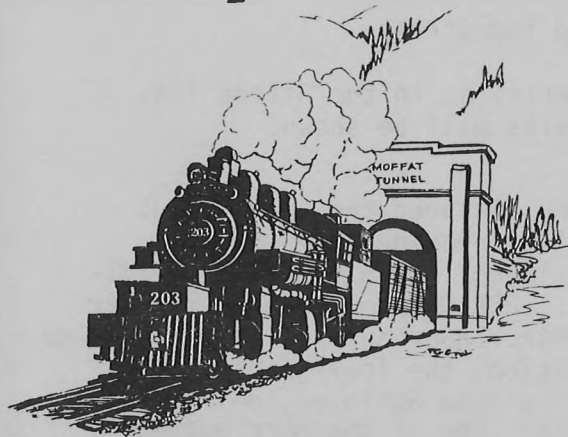


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

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No. 251

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

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Contributing Editor .. Darrell T. Arndt

MEETING NOTICE: Date . . Tuesday, August 12, 1980  
Time . . 7:45 P.M.  
Place . . Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church, 2900 South  
University at Bates. Off-street parking at rear (east)  
of meeting hall. Please use building's south entrance.

### PROGRAM NOTES: LAST RUN OF ENGINE #9

One of Colorado's most popular narrow gauge railroad lines will be featured at the club's August meeting. LAST RUN OF ENGINE #9 will present views of the last years of operations on the South Park Division of the Colorado & Southern Railway. Helen McGraw Tatum, long-time member of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, will show her films of freight operations on the South Park from 1933 to 1937. Also to be shown will be a nostalgic look at the last passenger train run from Denver to Leadville on April 9, 1937, with the venerable mogul #9 on the point.

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A look at the luxury passenger train in the world was presented at the July club meeting, with the showing of the film, THE BLUE TRAIN. Produced in color and sound by South African Railways, this movie followed the development of this magnificent train from the drawing board to actual operations. Billed as a "five star hotel on wheels," the BLUE TRAIN boasts such amenities as gourmet dining and suites featuring hotel-style beds and tub or shower bath. A second film, RAILROADIN' was also shown, offering a delightful contrast in subject matter to the Blue Train. Produced in the 1940's, RAILROADIN' covered a wide range of railroad operations around the United States, with many fine shots of steam locomotives in action, as well as a variety of diesel and streamline passenger trains.

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THE TRIP COMMITTEE has scrapped plans for a September 6 excursion on the Manitou & Pikes Peak Railway as Steam Locomotive #4 will not be available at that time. However, negotiations are under way with the cog line for a trip in late October using #4 at least a portion of the way up the mountain. Watch the September newsletter for details!

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COMING EVENTS - August 9 - Club hike and field trip on a portion of the grade of the Gilpin Tram between Black Hawk and Central City.

September 19, 20, & 21 - Rocky Mountain Railroad Club excursion to Green River, Wyoming, via Amtrak's San Francisco Zephyr, with

visits to area ghost towns, mines, and industries.

October 11 - Club's annual dinner at Henrici's, in the Hilton Inn, I-70 at Peoria Street. Otto Perry movies will be shown.

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PERFECT WEATHER, fine food, and lots of steam railroading featured the annual club Heritage Square Outing on Sunday, June 22. Ed Gerlits provided the weather, Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary served the delicious lunch, and High Country Railroad offered a variety of two-foot gauge equipment. HCR Henchel #9 made regular passenger runs while the Shay locomotive owned by Marc Lamoreaux pulled the baggage car and coach to accommodate club members. In addition, the four-wheel "Tom Thumb" type engine, beautifully designed and built by John Robinson, delighted riders and on-lookers with its precision performance. One of the more popular activities of the day was making a tour of the HCR main line on the High Country Railroad handcar. Fortunately there were no serious mishaps on runs with the nicely restored Speeder #1, with the exception of a few sore and aching muscles.

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A GOOD DAY - With Mother Nature smiling on Golden, the second attempt to schedule a work day at the Colorado Railroad Museum on June 28 went off without a hitch. The volunteers who gave their time really went at it, no doubt inspired in part by members like Bill Gordon, who literally threw himself into his work to do a bang-up job. The walkway on the shop car was removed and the steel roof was scraped, wire-brushed and cleaned prior to the application of paint. The club's caboose 0578 also had patching completed on its roof and a new coat of paint applied to it also. Attention was given to the RICO as well. Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary made sure that no one went hungry as a tasty "all you can eat" lunch of Ballast-burgers and condiments were provided. Many thanks to those who gave a bit of their time for the benefit of the club.

Work on the ex-Rio Grande Southern narrow gauge business car, RICO, continues with the rebuilding phase of the car's platform now beginning. The entire platform, coupler, support rods and beams have been removed, the hardware is being stripped and repainted, and new parts are being fabricated. Steel plate will reinforce and strengthen the car body end, and removal of the interior walls, seats and part of the floor on the car end will allow additional supporting steel to be installed in the car walls. This restoration project on the one hundred-year-old car is going to require a substantial amount of time and money. The volunteers on this undertaking would always welcome additional help, even if it's just a one-time visit, or once a month, etc. Anyone who would be interested in joining in the "action", please get in touch with the Equipment Chairman, Darrell Arndt.

\* \* \* \* \*

AT THE MOVIES - In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Paramount Theater in downtown Denver, the Intermountain Chapter of the NRHS is sponsoring a one-night showing of two historic motion pictures that feature both famous stars and a wealth of railroading. GO WEST is a 1940 production in which the Marx Brothers "go west" with lots of laughs and railroading. The second movie will be THE GREAT K & A TRAIN ROBBERY, starring Tom Mix. This silent classic, filmed on location in the Royal Gorge, will be accompanied by Bob Castle on the Paramount's Wurlitzer organ. The date to remember is Thursday, September 4, at 7:30 P.M. Tickets are \$3.50 each, and should be ordered from the Intermountain Chapter, NRHS, P.O. Box 5181, Denver, CO 80217, Attention: Cinema Department.

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STEAM AT THE COLORADO RAILROAD MUSEUM - Engine 346 is scheduled to be fired up and operated at the Colorado Railroad Museum on Saturday & Sunday, August 9-10.

Another operation is being planned for October 4-5, and a Santa Claus train with the 99 year old locomotive will take place on November 29 and 30.

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THE RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR is sold out on the weekends until the early part of November (as of mid-July). Mid-week trips are also filling up about six weeks in advance. The heavy patronage seems to be due in part to a Christian Science Monitor story that appeared in newspapers across the country recently.

In other Rio Grande news, the railroad took delivery this spring of a Rock Island derrick outfit, including a 160-ton derrick, boom car and work diner. The outfit had been stationed at El Reno, Oklahoma. Also acquired by the Rio Grande, was an ex-Rock Island stainless steel passenger car No. 96510, for maintenance of way use. It appears to have been in MW service on the RI and prior to that an RPO car. With the downturn in business, dozens of locomotives were put into storage at the Burnham Shops this summer. Another victim of belt tightening appears to be that ex-UP Diner, acquired for use on the RGZ. Rehabilitation work on it has been halted and indications are that it will not enter service this year.

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THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD has had an interesting variety of operations on its line this year. In preparation for the season's business, Rotary OY and Engines 487 and 488 were called out to clear the tracks of snow. On May 28, 29, and 30, the plow train operated from Chama as far east as Rock Tunnel. On June 7 through the 14th, Engine 484 and four passenger cars were used for filming of "Lone Ranger Movie" sequences, and on June 16 through the 21st, a Winston cigarette commercial was shot using the diesel. June 21 turned out to be a rather busy day for the railroad, operational-wise, as it had two regular passenger trains out on the line, the Winston commercial in progress at the Toltec Gorge, and a special "Wedding Train", operating from Antonito Toltec with the wedding taking place at Sublette ... A grant for the railroad is in progress to finance the beginning of construction of new passenger cars for the C&TS. If all goes well, construction would begin this fall at the Antonito shop. The number to be built is unknown and appearance and configuration is now being discussed. The cars are to look similar to "Silverton" type cars although because of cost, they may not have a celestary roof.

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OFFICIALS OF THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN Railroad and the City of Denver have held preliminary discussions on a proposal by the railroad for commercial-residential development of the city's South Platte River Valley. Called "Centura Two," the plan calls for construction of a residential neighborhood, shopping area, office and hotel complex, athletic facility and park. Not included in this plan are the relocating of interchanges on I-25, tearing down viaducts, or moving the BN tracks from the east side to the west side of the river, as proposed by the railroad in 1975.

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THE GREAT WESTERN SUGAR COMPANY has filed suit to block the alleged plans of the Interail System to cease operation of the 58-mile Great Western Railway. The sugar company sold the railroad line to Interail in 1978, and now claims that Interail plans to discontinue serving the line's customers, sell off a number of the railway's boxcars, and has not met financial obligations to Great Western Sugar Co. or a number of connecting railroad carriers. Officials of the Interail System and the Great Western Railway Company deny these allegations, citing plans to discontinue the current car-leasing program while continuing operation of the railroad.

Meanwhile, the Great Western Railway has redecorated its fleet of box cars in eye-catching new paint schemes. One series of box cars is painted bright orange, with black lettering, while other cars are now bright yellow, adorned with an orange diamond on which appears the familiar GW logo. What a shame that there are no black and silver steam locomotives operating on the Great Western Railway to provide color-coordinated freight train consists.

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HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT the origin of the locomotive whistle or who invented it? In 1825, the Stockton and Darlington Railway was opened for traffic in England, with one of Stephenson's famous locomotives, the "Sampson" running on it. A man on horseback preceded the train to warn of its approach, but that was not practical, and was soon discontinued. With speeds reaching 15 miles per hour, it was 1830 before a serious accident took place, when a cabinet minister was struck and killed. When in 1833, a train collided with a farmer's wagon at a railroad crossing, it was time to take action to prevent such mishaps. Stephenson suggested use of the steam whistle, and a musical instrument maker in the town of Leicester was engaged to make it. The trumpet, or horn as it was called, was about 18 inches long and six inches across the bell. It must have had a weird and effective sound for a Reverend said that "Stephenson's whistle always reminded him of the squeal of a lawyer when the devil first got hold of him."

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BILL MAY, C&S ROUNDHOUSE FOREMAN at Leadville, is offering a substantial reward for the elimination of the pesky muskrats responsible for the recent upsetting of C&S Engine 6223, on the Leadville-Climax Branch. Seems as how these villainous critters tunneled around the culvert in the fill at French Gulch on the high country rail line, causing spring run-off waters to wash out said fill and leave the C&S track hanging high and dry. Imagine the surprise of the crew on the return trip to Leadville, when they approached French Gulch and found these conditions. Fortunately, the engineer and brakeman were able to unload in time to avoid injury, but Engine 6223 was not so fortunate and plunged 60 feet down the mountain. None of the cars in the short train chose to follow the engine. All of this excitement took place on June 23, and it was not until June 29 that the 6223 was hauled back up the bank and onto the rails. A new fill has been constructed and the branch is back in operation with Engine 6219 handling the work. Now, if I can just find that old musket . . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

AMTRAK'S NEW SUPERLINER equipment made its first appearance in Denver on the west-bound San Francisco Zephyr on Tuesday, July 8. During the train's stop in Denver, the public was invited to tour the cars, and folks were impressed with their design and construction. Included in the train consist were three Superliner coaches, diner, two sleepers, and two dormitory cars, with two Union Pacific diesel units added to the regular Amtrak power. This set of equipment made the return run through Denver on Friday, July 11, and will now be in service on the Zephyr on a regular basis. Additional Superliner equipment is scheduled to be running on the San Francisco Zephyr early in August.

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A LONG-TIME FRIEND of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, Mr. Frank D. Acord, has retired as Chief Mechanical Officer of the Union Pacific Railroad. An avid devotee of the steam locomotive, Mr. Acord has enjoyed many club excursions with UP 8444, and has been a familiar figure at the throttle of the big 4-8-4. Mr. Acord has been succeeded as Chief Mechanical Officer, by Mr. Jack F. McDonough.

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ANOTHER LANDMARK is disappearing from the historic Colorado mining country. The

large dredge boat that has been moored for nearly 30 years in the South Platte River near Fairplay is being dismantled for shipment to South America. Built by the Yuma Boat Building Company in San Francisco, the 1500 ton craft was trucked to Fairplay in sections in 1939. Construction of the dredge took almost a year, and the boat operated in the area until 1952, when rising operating costs and the low price of gold forced a shutdown. Now it is to be sent to an area about 100 miles from Bogota, Columbia, to be reassembled and join a fleet of dredges in search of the precious gold.

Although a newcomer, the dredge near Fairplay is the last of a number of boats that operated in Colorado during the great mining boom. Introduced by Ben Stanley Revett before the turn of the century, a dozen or more of the dredges could be found operating at times in the waters of the Blue, Swan and South Platte Rivers. The dredges worked along the rivers in self-made lakes, digging out the river bed ahead and filling it in behind. The dredge was controlled by four winch cables, which ran from each corner of the boat to the shore. A long boom holding about a hundred ore-digging buckets, protruded from the front of the dredge. Gravel dug from the stream bed by these buckets was carried back to the dredge where it was washed in giant "sluice boxes" and the gold extracted. The waste gravel was then deposited back into the stream behind the dredge or dumped in neat piles along the bank. Now these long piles of rock along the rivers near Fairplay and Breckenridge will be our only reminder of this fascinating chapter in Colorado's mining history.

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THE CADILLAC & LAKE CITY RAILWAY has taken over rail service to 52 shippers in the Denver area which were formerly served by the Rock Island Railroad. The C&LC applied for permission to assume service after the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad announced it would discontinue interim switching operations on Rock Island industrial lines in Denver and Colorado Springs. Based in Colorado Springs, the C&LC is negotiating to purchase Rock Island spur and industrial tracks as well as main lines that served eastern Colorado agricultural communities.

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UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD AND THE UNITED TRANSPORTATION UNION have reached a tentative agreement concerning the reduction in the number of train crewmen required in both yard and road service under specific conditions. Patterned after agreements reached between the UTU and the Milwaukee Road, Conrail and the Missouri Pacific Railroad, the pact authorizes a reduction in crew size from one conductor and two brakemen to one conductor and one brakeman on trains of 70 cars or less, and on trains between 71 and 120 cars that do no switching between terminals, such as coal trains. The railroad will benefit in savings on labor costs as well as improved productivity as the number of protected employees is reduced by attrition. Employees will share in the savings through company contributions to an Employee Productivity Fund based on the number of reduced crew runs. Payments from this fund will be made at the end of each year to protected crewmen, based on the number of reduced crew runs made by each during that year.

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ONE OF THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC RAILFANS in the country today, is Sarah Purdie, wife of Mr. W. J. Purdie, Jr., Master Mechanic of the Steam Division of the Southern Railway. Mr. Purdie has the only position of its kind on any railroad in the United States, watching over the seven steam locomotives headquartered by the Southern in its Birmingham, Alabama rail yard. While Mr. and Mrs. Purdie call East Point, Georgia, home, they spend about ten months a year traveling the states served by the Southern - and it is a life that Sarah Purdie loves. While many women would not tolerate living on trains, in motels or on business cars,

Sarah loves the travel, the steam locomotives, and visiting with the railfans from all over. And she says that their theme song is "I'll be Home for Christmas - Maybe."

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THE HISTORIC CHERRLYN HORSE CAR that is on display in front of the Englewood City Hall has received a new lease on life after a six month renovation. Rotted wood was replaced, holes patched and the wood treated. Windows received plexiglass, seats were re-covered and the front platform strengthened. The car was painted, using the original colors of tan with red and black trim. The horse drawn car once ran up Broadway from Hampden to Quincy, and gained fame because the horse that pulled it would be unhitched and brought around onto the rear platform where it would receive a free ride on the downhill part of the trip.

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PRODUCTION of 35,000 net tons of steel rail ordered by the Mexican National Railway System has started at the CF&I Steel Corporation plant in Pueblo.

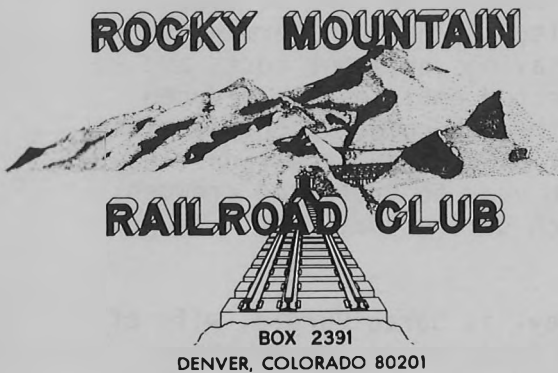
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