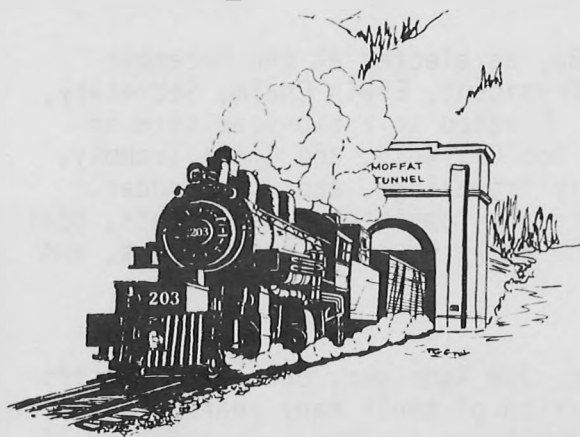


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391  
January, 1983

Denver, Colorado 80201  
No. 280

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

Editor - - - - - Neal Reich  
Associate Editor - - - - Steve McCormick

MEETING NOTICE: Date - - - Tuesday, January 11, 1983  
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: NEITHER GONE NOR FORGOTTEN

For an increasing number of railfans, the memory of regular mainline steam simply does not exist. And while locomotives such as Union Pacific 8444 have worked in excursion service for over 20 years, the images of steam railroading's past are often confined to films or publications. However, in museums throughout America and Europe, the glories of railroading's classic eras have been preserved. At the January 11 club meeting, Keith Kirby will conduct a slide program tour of displays in such locales as Golden, Promintory, St. Louis, Sacramento, Strausburg, Munich, and York. While much of the equipment now stands silent, it still remains preserved, for all to see, to touch, and even if it is only in our mind's eye, to relive for a moment what it was like in railroading's Golden Years.

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The December meeting featured a full evening of activities, including the election of officers for 1983, and two very entertaining films. As has become custom, it was moved and almost unanimously approved by those in attendance, to dispense with the required formalities prior to the annual election. Following the business end of the agenda, an excellent 16mm motion picture of railroads in the mid-1940's was shown. Filmed by Billy Bowen, and narrated by Ed Haley, the movie featured several scenes taken on excursions of the National Model Railroaders Association. And there were some impressive scenes, like the Santa Fe on Cajon Pass, a triple-header on Raton Pass, UP steam at Cheyenne, the D&RGW on Tennessee Pass, and the Western Pacific in Feather River Canyon. In addition, the audience enjoyed some beautiful shots of the club's Engine No. 20, Galloping goose No. 4, and a freight train on the Rio Grande Southern. D&RGW narrow gauge trains were shown on Marshall Pass, around Sedalia, and on the Alamosa-Durango-Silverton lines. A film showing some hilarious sports bloopers was followed by the traditional serving of holiday goodies. Many thanks to the ladies who provided the delicious assortment of cookies, cakes, punch, and coffee that rounded out the evening and the club members, as well.

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OFFICERS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB FOR 1983, as elected at the December meeting, are: President, Darrell Arndt; Vice-President, Erwin Chaim; Secretary, Bill Gordon; and Treasurer, Ardie Schoeninger. Elected to a two-year term on the club's Board of Directors were Ed Gerlits, Bob Griswold, and Cyndi Trombly, who join hold-over Board members Kurt Penny, Jim Trowbridge, and Bill Youder. While President, Darrell Arndt, did not announce any committee appointments, Neal Reich is relinquishing his post as Editor of the Rocky Mountain Rail Report, and will be replaced by Les Grebbs.

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MEMBERS HONORED - At the December meeting, President, Jim Ranniger, presented Certificates of Merit to three club members in recognition of their many years of service to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. BRYANT MC FADDEN was awarded a Certificate of Merit for his work with the Publications Committee in the inventory and distribution of the club's books. The holder of Membership Card No. 7, Bryant started handling book distribution in 1949, with the club's first publication, DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC. A Certificate of Merit was presented to BOB GRISWOLD, who, for 14 years, has had one of the most important and least glamorous jobs in the organization. Each month, Bob has addressed and sent out to each member, the club newsletter and other mailings, such as trip notices. And, NEAL REICH was given a Certificate of Merit for his work as Editor of the Rocky Mountain Rail Report for the past three years. Congratulations to Bryant, Bob and Neal!!

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB dues of \$12 for 1983 are now being accepted by the Treasurer. Members are encouraged to return the entire dues flier, along with their remittances, indicating any corrections necessary. Send yours in now and avoid the rush! And, don't forget the big book drawing. First prize is a copy of PICTORIAL SUPPLEMENT TO DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC; second prize, MEMORIAL EDITION OF DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC; third prizes, UNION PACIFIC - 100 YEARS. Chances are only \$2 each, with proceeds from the big book drawing going to the Equipment Fund.

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FILM MAKERS AWARDED - Industrial Photography magazine gave the Union Pacific Railroad's Public Relations Department first place in the Angenieux Award for Creative Cinematography. The award was for the film, "Eighty Four Forty Four," the story of Union Pacific's beloved steam locomotive, steamed up several times a year for excursions. The film "humanizes" the engine using stirring pictorials with 8444 as the actor, and spoken recollections from the men who ran it and restored it. "'Eighty Four Forty Four' reminds audiences that Union Pacific has been around for 100 years, and will be here for the next century," say Joe McCartney, general director, public relations and advertising, "A stable business with a glorious past and a promising future."  
(INFO MAGAZINE)

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ANOTHER WESTERN RAILROAD NAME DISAPPEARED on January 1, 1983, when the Ft. Worth and Denver Railway was merged into the Burlington Northern Railroad. The wholly owned subsidiary of BN operated more than 1,500 miles of mainline track from Denver to Galveston, Texas, with about 1,180 miles of that track owned by the FW&D in Texas and New Mexico. Between Texline, on the Texas-New Mexico border, and Denver, the FW&D operated on track leased from the Santa Fe and Denver & Rio Grande Western railroads. The FW&D began in 1873, as the Ft. Worth & Denver City Railway, and in 1898, was acquired by the Colorado & Southern Railway. In 1908, both the FW&D

and the C&S were acquired by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, one of the BN's predecessor lines.

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CIRCLE APRIL 23 AND 24 ON YOUR CALENDAR, and keep those dates free, because ya' won't want anything to interfere with the club's 1983 excursion to Glenwood Springs via the incomparable Rio Grande Zephyr. A flyer on this perennially popular event has not yet been issued because the railroad has not posted its 1983 passenger tariffs. Watch for formal announcement in next month's newsletter. As in the past, reservations will be limited to two carloads (approximately ninety folks), so plan early to avoid being left out.

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GOOD NEWS FOR OLD ROUNDHOUSE - From Aurora, Illinois comes word that preservation efforts are under way on the Burlington Northern (ex-CB&Q) roundhouse, which has been a landmark in that city for well over a century. Alleged to be the oldest existing full-circle roundhouse in the United States, the structure was, in recent years, being used as a locomotive component repair facility until various regional organizations moved these activities to St. Paul, leaving the building to sit empty. In 1977, the BN attempted to tear down the limestone structure, but was stopped by the city who cited the railroad for not having a valid demolition permit. While bureaucratic red tape stalled the wrecker's ball, preservation-minded local citizens were able to have the roundhouse placed on the National Roster of Historic Places, thus assuring its continued existence. Several plans are currently in the works to put this rare example of railroad architecture to good use. One plan would see the circular structure become an intermodal passenger terminal, serving bus, taxi, and commuter train riders.

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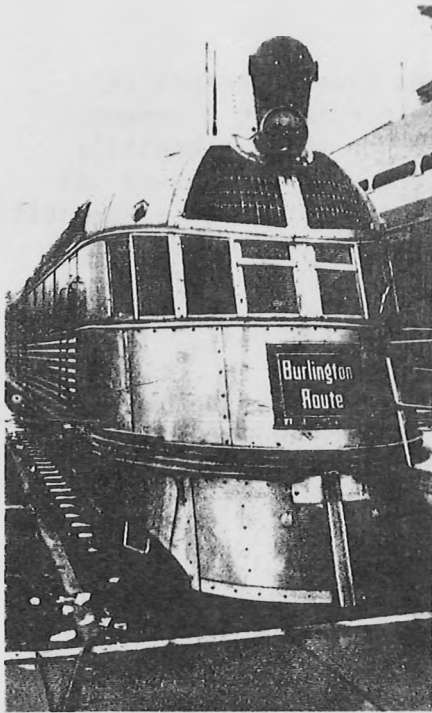
DOMES . . . . EAST OF THE BIG RIVER!!! - Folks in the east and midwest will no longer have to come to the Rocky Mountains to ride the Rio Grande Zephyr, if they want to experience the pleasure of the dome car. Amtrak has announced its plans to rebuild seven dome cars for use on the Chicago-Washington, D.C. "Capitol Limited" and the Chicago-New Orleans "City of New Orleans." The cars were originally built for the Northern Pacific in 1954. The first car should be ready by Spring. They will certainly be a plus for those who ride those trains. There is even some talk of eventually adding dome service to the Chicago-Boston run of the "Lake Shore Limited."

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ANOTHER LINK WITH THE PAST IS GONE - The old Sutton Mill, located along the Million Dollar Highway, south of Ouray, is no more. Viewed by many thousands of travelers who stopped at the Bear Creek Falls overlook, the structure added much to the view as one looked up the canyon at the highway and toward Mt. Abrams. Unfortunately, as has happened to more than one old structure in the state, vandals burned it to the ground late last summer. Although this news item is not railroad-related, we thought we would make mention of it because numerous members have, undoubtedly, enjoyed and perhaps photographed the scene, including those on the return bus ride from the club excursion on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad this past winter.

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# Stories of our times



Remember this silver beauty? It's the Pioneer Zephyr, our country's first streamlined passenger train.

## AMERICA'S FIRST STREAMLINED TRAIN

In 1929, with the Great Depression barely beginning, America's railroads already had lost one-third of their earlier revenues from passenger travel. By 1933, the decline in passenger traffic had worsened to a staggering 61 percent. Fast, luxurious passenger trains had long been part of the grand tradition in America. Now they were being supplanted by a jerking, bouncing and backfiring horde of 45-miles-per-hour family automobiles. Americans appeared willing to sacrifice the greater speed, comfort and safety of rail travel for life's vagaries on the open highway.

Then, on May 26, 1934, a new, amazingly innovative passenger train made its debut in Denver. Named for the Greek god of the west winds, it was the Burlington Railroad's *Pioneer Zephyr*. This ultramodern king of the rails completed a record-shattering dawn-to-dusk run from Denver to Chicago. Built of glistening stainless steel and air-conditioned throughout, the new train reached a sizzling top speed of 112½ miles an hour. It covered the entire 1,015 miles

in 13 hours 5 minutes, an average speed of 77.6 miles an hour.

Following this brilliant debut performance the *Zephyr* was sent on a cross-country tour of 200 cities. More than a million curious visitors walked through the 196-foot-long train. They admired its fluted silver exterior, said to be three times as strong as ordinary steel. It was lightweight yet almost impervious to wear. This would guarantee the railroad tremendous savings in car maintenance.

The complete three-unit *Zephyr*, powered by a 600-horsepower diesel engine, weighed only 97½ tons. (The cumbersome steam locomotives then in passenger service often weighed as much as or more than this entire train.) The *Zephyr's* fuel oil also weighed less. It required only half as much space for storage and was more economical than coal. A resulting ratio of less weight per horsepower greatly reduced the cost of passenger train operation.

Burlington's *Pioneer Zephyr* inaugurated a new era in passenger train design. Its power unit housed the engineer's cab, diesel engine, a compact railway post office and a small baggage space. A second car carried a larger compartment for baggage, a buffet-grill and a 16-foot smoking section with seats for 20 passengers. The train's third car held seats for 40 plus a solarium-lounge with comfortable chairs for 12 more rail travelers.

Passengers accustomed to gloomy Victorian railroad interiors were pleasantly surprised by the *Zephyr's* pastel wall colors, its stainless steel strips above the windows and along the ceilings. Each compartment had color-coordinated walls, window drapes, upholstery and carpeting.

Passengers' seats were upholstered in deep-pile gray-green mohair woven into a geometric pattern against a tasteful gold background. There were silk drapes at each window, wall-to-wall taupe carpeting and soft indirect lighting.

The *Zephyr's* buffet-grill featured hot foods, ice cream and a choice of hot or cold drinks. Its design incorporated electric grills for cooking, a spacious electric refrigerator, electric urns for coffee and hot water, and storage space for food, china and

utensils needed for counter service.

Following an appearance at Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition in 1934, the *Pioneer Zephyr* starred briefly on several radio programs and in a hit movie called *The Silver Streak*. On Armistice Day the train was assigned to daily round-trip service on the Burlington's Lincoln, Nebraska, to Kansas City, Missouri, run. Traveling via Omaha and St. Joseph, it replaced two conventional steam-powered passenger trains.

In 1938 a new fourth car was added to the original historic three-car train. The new car was a dinette-coach. In 1949 the *Zephyr* was exhibited once more, this time at the Chicago Railroad Fair. Its outstanding performance record had already made it the forerunner of an entire fleet of fast, modern, streamlined passenger trains. When the *Pioneer Zephyr* first entered service in 1934, the nation's railroads were operating around 50,000 smoke-and-cinder-belching steam locomotives. By the end of its quarter century in operation, 28,500 diesel-powered locomotives had replaced virtually all of them. The diesels were racking up twice as many ton-miles in both freight and passenger service, all at substantial savings. Diesel engines had revitalized the railroad industry.

On February 20, 1960, Burlington retired its *Pioneer Zephyr*. During almost 26 years of railroading the train had traveled 3.2 million miles, equivalent to seven round trips to the moon! More than a million excited passengers had watched the nation's mountains, forests and prairies flash by outside its broad picture windows. Today you'll find the original train on permanent exhibit outside Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.

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ANOTHER OF AMERICA'S BEAUTIFUL OLD TRAIN STATIONS, the Burlington Northern Depot, at Livingston, Montana, has been, at least temporarily, saved from demolition. The railroad has donated the building to the City of Livingston, which plans to reuse the station as the centerpiece for the commercial district. Built in 1902, the Livingston Depot was designed by the firm of Reed and Stern, which went on to collaborate on New York's Grand Central Terminal in 1913. When Amtrak's HIAWATHA ceased to run in 1980, the BN began looking at disposing of the elaborate stone structure. In 1981, Livingston city officials went to the railroad to plead that the station be saved until reuse possibilities were explored. After a reuse study was submitted, Burlington Northern gave the City the station, which is worth at least \$100,000. Proposals for redevelopment of the depot include conversion into a headquarters for a national angling group, such as Trout Unlimited; combining public and private uses such as a bank, shops, and a restaurant with governmental offices; or converting the station into a convention center. The City faces some severe challenges. First, it must reuse the building within two years, or ownership reverts to the Burlington Northern. Second, the station, although in good condition, cost about \$2,500 per month to heat before its 1980 closing. And third, the City will have to raise many thousands of dollars to implement any of the conversion schemes. Once known as the Gateway to Yellowstone, Livingston Station could soon be recognized as the focus for revitalizing a city.

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THE JAPANESE HIGH-SPEED "BULLET TRAIN" CONCEPT of passenger service continues to generate interest in this country. Recently, California Governor, Edmund Brown, Jr. signed a bill which gives the green light to the development of 160 mph electric train service between Los Angeles and San Diego. Meanwhile, businessmen from five nations presented their ideas for a proposed high-speed passenger train linking Miami, Orlando, and Tampa, Florida. In Ohio, voters were being asked to O.K. a one-cent increase in the sales tax, to finance an eight-billion-dollar, high-speed passenger train system that would serve Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati. And not to be outdone, the City of Las Vegas, Nevada has received opinions from a private consultant and the U. S. Department of Transportation that a high-speed passenger system between that city and Los Angeles could be operating in the next decade.

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THE WHITE PASS & YUKON ROUTE SUSPENDED SERVICE on its historic, narrow gauge railroad between Skagway and Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, in October, and company officials were pessimistic about the future of the line. The superintendent of the company's rail division stated, "We're not calling it a closure, we're calling it a suspension." But the company President said rail service will not be resumed next summer if the only business is tourist traffic. The line has lost much of its business due to the shutdown of mines in Canada, because of falling mineral prices, and unless ore shipments over the 110-mile line to tidewater at Skagway resume, the closure could be permanent. While the WP&Y has carried some 55,000 passengers each summer for the past two years, officials say the railroad cannot operate successfully with revenues received from passenger traffic. The suspension will affect the jobs of about two hundred employees, one hundred fifty in Alaska, and fifty in Yukon Territory.

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AMTRAK HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO UPGRADE ITS FOOD SERVICE, which has been under critical attack from passengers and even Amtrak President, W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

Among the changes announced, were the replacing of plastic knives and forks with stainless steel utensils, and the use of toaster ovens instead of microwave ovens to heat sandwiches. And Amtrak will bring back the made-to-order breakfasts of eggs, sausage, and pancakes, while offering a dinner menu of "freshly prepared" entrees. Previously, these meals had been cooked beforehand, and reheated as needed. Mr. Claytor, who was known as a supporter of good dining service while chief executive of the Southern Railway, was quoted as saying, "In trying to make food service cheap, we made some of it inedible."

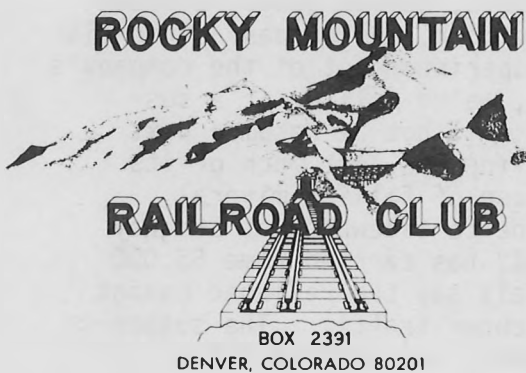
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