

RAIL REPORT

May 2017 • No. 681



Rocky Mountain Railroad Club • Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

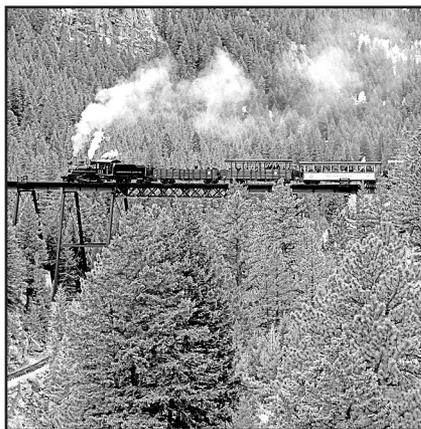
Georgetown Loop 2010 - 2016

Presented by Jeff Badger and Phil Johnson

May 9th, 2017 • 7:30 PM

Join Jeff and Phil for an update on happenings at the Georgetown Loop in the past six years. The acquisition and return to service of Shay #9 and the rebuilding of 2-8-0 #111 will be discussed.

Please join us for an enjoyable, educational evening at Christ Church at 2950 South University Boulevard (University Boulevard at Bates Avenue) where there is plenty of off street parking at the rear of the complex. Enter into Barnes Hall, where we hold the monthly meetings, on the mid-south side doors. Please bring a guest. **All programs are intended to provide an educational experience on railroading. The general public is welcome to attend. There is no charge for this meeting.**



Engine #111 on the High Bridge on October 2, 2016.

– Photo © 2016 Mark Graybill.

RMRRC 2017 Calendar

June 13th Monthly Meeting and Video Program, "Forging The West" by Jim Havey.

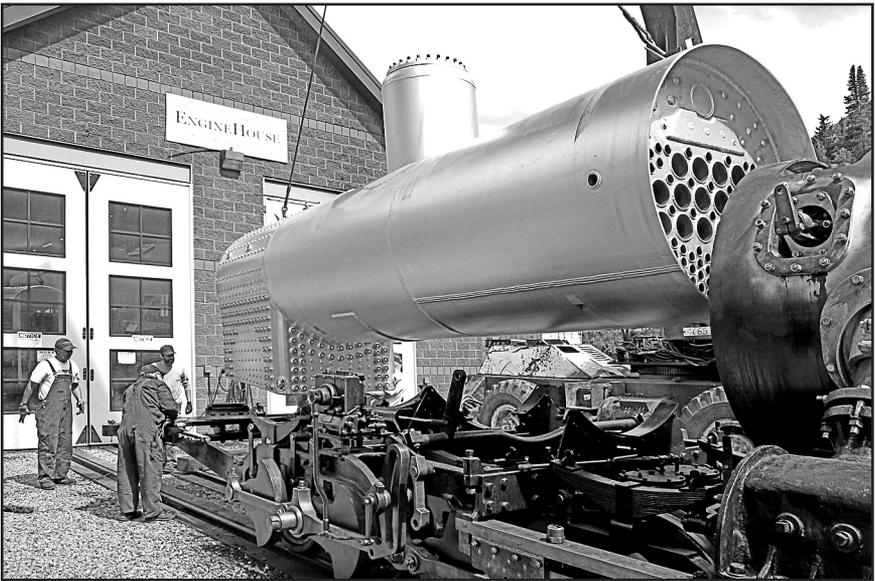
July There is no monthly meeting in July.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, programs and dates are subject to change without notice. Please contact Dave Schaaf with program ideas at ds5280@comcast.net or 303 988-3456.

Georgetown Loop 2010 - 2016



Locomotive #12 and Shay #9 at Silver Plume. – Photo © Phil Johnson.



A new boiler arrives at Silver Plume. – Photo © Phil Johnson.

For Rail Report 681, the masthead photo features Denver & Rio Grande 681 at Leadville, Colorado, on July 3, 1941.

– Richard H. Kindig photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.



The Club is known for interesting programs at the monthly meetings. The April presenter was Gary Emmons (third from left) who came in from Tacoma, Washington, for his presentation. – Photo © 2017 Nathan Holmes.

President's Report

By Steve Mason

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Board meeting this month will be Monday, May 15th.

Cheyenne Depot Days is May 20th. If you want to attend, I would suggest you set up a car pool at the May meeting and to avoid heavy traffic on I-25 take US-85. That way there is a chance you will see Union Pacific trains. Admission for Cheyenne Depot Days is \$10 which gets you into the model show at the Frontier Days convention center where parking is available. There are shuttle buses to the Cheyenne Depot and Back Shop/Roundhouse.

The Intermountain Chapter - NRHS and ColoRail is operating a Cheyenne Depot Days bus trip. The contact is Bob Brewster at 303-642-0555 or railbob@ecentral.com. Details are on page 14 of this *Rail Report*.

There is a lot going on this year:

The Union Pacific Historical Society will have their 2017 convention in Denver July 26 to 29. Jerry Davis will be keynote speaker. Their web site uphs.org has more details.

Trains magazine is running "Colorado Landscape by Rail" September 24 to October 2. Since they are advertising nationwide, space will sell out quickly. Tickets are available through trainsmag.com/coloradotrip2017.

"Animas Rails," the 2017 NMRA Rocky Mountain Region Convention in Durango, Colorado, will be June 8 to 11. Join them in a coach or open gondola for a trip along the Animas River on the Durango & Silverton Railroad. Layouts, shop & yard tours, model contest, clinics, board meeting, door prizes,

President's Report

photo opportunities & contest awards are scheduled. The Convention Hotel is the Durango Double Tree. See their website rnr-nmra.org for details.

The 37th National Narrow Gauge Convention will be in Denver August 30 to September 2. Go to their web site, 37nngc.com for more information and to register.

The Historic Westminster Model Train Show & Sale is Saturday, May 20th, 2017 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM at The Westminster Grange Hall, 3935 W. 73rd Avenue, Westminster, Colorado. There is a suggested donation of \$10.00. For information call 720-397-3600 or email: trainshoppe@gmail.com.

The Lionel Operating Technical Society National Convention, "Rio Grande" is July 8 to 15 at Radisson Hotel Denver Southeast, 3115 South Vaughn Way in Aurora, Colorado, which will incorporate the Denver Southeast Model Train Show on July 15 from 9 AM to 3 PM in the Grand Ballroom at the Radisson Hotel. You can also rent tables. For online reservations see: www.lots-trains.org.

I am easy to reach. The best way is by phone at 720-371-8536. My e-mail is stevemason647@gmail.com. If something is of concern or if you are pleased about something let me know. I am here for you. Many of you are my friends going back many years and it is a pleasure to serve you. – *All Good Wishes, Steve*

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club And Historical Foundation Board Meetings

The combined Board meetings are normally the Monday following the regular Club meeting in the meeting room at Nicolo's Pizza, 7847 West Jewell Avenue in Lakewood, Colorado. Those wanting to eat dinner arrive at 5:30 PM. The Club business meeting starts at 6:30 PM followed by the Historical Foundation meeting. Meetings typically end by 7:30 to 8:00 PM. Any member wanting to address the Board will be scheduled early in the meeting.

I personally urge any member to attend a Board meeting if you have any concerns you would like us to address. We want input from you, in fact, we earnestly solicit it. Sometimes during dinner and after the meetings we visit and it is more informal. Members are certainly welcome to attend that as well. You are always welcome.

Como 2017 Work Party Sessions

By Pat Mauro

We have six work days planned this year and the dates are listed in the next column. For those who are interested in assisting with the project, please contact Pat Mauro at 303-838-7740 (phone preferred) or pkmauro77@gmail.com. More details are on the South Park rail

website, southparkrail.com. Head up to Como, and watch the DSP&P and C&S come alive again!

Como Work Party Dates:

Saturdays: May 27, June 24, July 15
Sundays: June 11, July 2, July 30

Current Railroad Happenings



Private Varnish SILVER SOLARIUM at Denver Union Station on March 30, 2017, on Amtrak train 6, the California Zephyr, enroute to Charlotte, North Carolina, for N&W 611 steam excursions. – Photo © 2017 by Chip.

Built in 1948 by the Budd Manufacturing Company for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. SILVER SOLARIUM was one of six dome/sleeper/observation cars specifically built for the California Zephyr. Operating between Chicago and San Francisco for over 20 years, the car provided an elegant end to an elegant train. In 1970 ownership of the car transferred to Amtrak and the car was finally retired in 1980. Put in storage by Amtrak, time and the elements soon took their toll on this once magnificent car. Vandals broke out windows, nature began to reclaim what once belong to her as trees and mushrooms took root in the once

elegant lounge. A new life for this once grand car awaited just around the corner when Amtrak sold her to a private owner. Several years later, all new mechanical systems and a lot of elbow grease, the grand lady of the California Zephyr was reborn. The SILVER SOLARIUM now operates as a private car, delighting passengers with stunning views from her Vista Dome and observation lounge.

Member Interest Survey

The officers and the board want to provide the members the services you want. To help with this we are soliciting member participation in a short survey.

This month's *Rail Report* contains a blank survey form. Please complete the form and mail it back to the club at the address provided. If you are coming to the May or June meeting, we will have a drop box to collect completed surveys. We are interested in what you have to say. The survey was designed to take little of your time and the cost of a stamp is

a cheap way to have your voices heard.

For those who prefer the information age approach, a PDF version of the survey form is downloadable from the club website. The shaded in areas are text fields for you to enter your numbers, x's, and comments. The completed form can be Emailed back to the address provided saving on postage.

We are interested in what you have to say. Thank you for your participation – it is greatly appreciated.



A collection of railroad equipment was parked at the old Burnham Shop in Denver on April 19, 2017. The equipment has been assembled over the last 20 plus years and was intended to be a tribute to the American railroad worker. Several pieces are over 100 years old and over 15 are on the State Historic register. Included in the collection are two steam derricks, one DRG and the other D&SL. The lead engine covered in recent graffiti is Rio Grande GP30 No. 3006. The equipment is in danger of being scrapped. – Photo © 2017 Dave Schaaf.

Information For The Railroad Enthusiast

By Dave Schaaf

Denver's RTD commuter line to the airport carried nearly 5 million riders in its first year of operation, with an on-time performance rate of 89%. They are still working out some issues with Positive Train Control and crossing signals.

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad will begin the 2017 season on May 27th with two special double-headed trains. Locomotives 315 and 463 will pull the opening day train from Antonito to Chama; while a pair of K-36 locomotives will pull the first train from Chama to the summit of Cumbres Pass and then on to Antonito. Tickets can be booked through the railroad's web site at cumbrestoltec.com or by calling 888-286-2737. The annual Geology Train runs on June 18. More dates have been set for the running of D&RGW #315 on the C&TS. There will be a charter on August 28 to celebrate 10 years of 315's return

to steam in conjunction with the 37th National Narrow Gauge Convention. There will also be Rio Grande Southern re-creation events in early September that will include RGS Goose #5 and an engine lettered as RGS #455. Some of this action will benefit the restoration of D&RGW #168. Goose #5 will be making several trips in July as well.

Work continues on getting narrow gauge engine #476 back in service at Durango, Colorado. It might get to pull the D&S winter trains later this year.

In late April, the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad moved large numbers of stored railcars from its line west of Monte Vista, Colorado. These were transferred to Antonito and caused some traffic delays in Alamosa.

On July 8 in Wyoming, there will be

Information For The Railroad Enthusiast



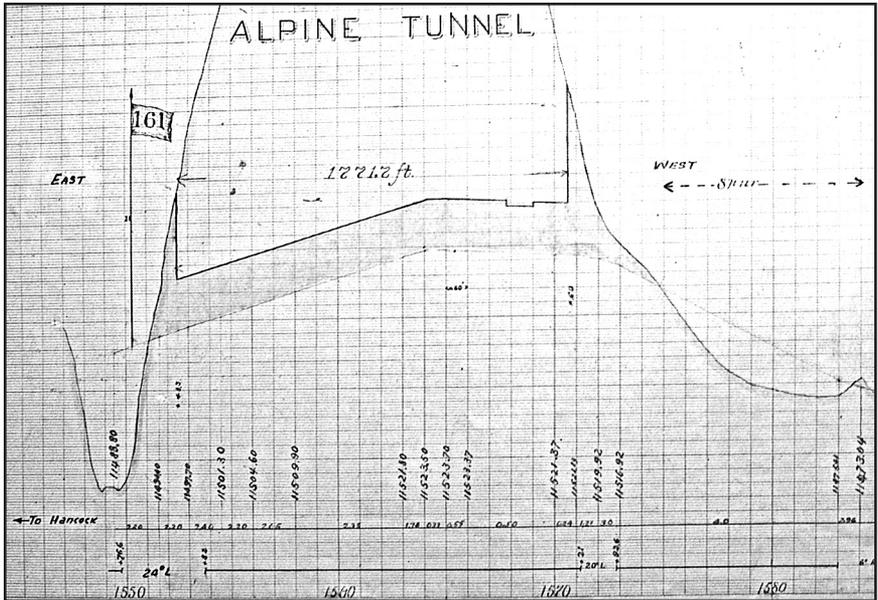
Kyle Railroad Phillipsburg, Kansas, shop forces are upgrading former Arizona & California (ARZC) 3892, GP40r, on April 12, 2017. Plans call for Kyle RR 3892 to become the Goodland, Kansas, yard unit. The shop force was installing all new electrical system (cable, wiring, contactors, nForce computer system) and will rebuild the trucks. The plan is to paint 3892 into Genesee & Wyoming colors. – Photo © 2017 by Chip.

a dedication of the Ames Monument as a national historic landmark. Completed in 1882 at a cost of \$64,000, the structure honors Oakes and Oliver Ames, financiers and politicians whose business skills were largely responsible for the completion of the transcontinental railroad. At an elevation of 8,247 feet near Sherman Hill, this monument stands at what once was the highest point on the route of the Union Pacific RR. The tracks were rerouted a few miles to the south in 1901, but the monument still looms over the surrounding plains and can be easily accessed from Interstate 80.

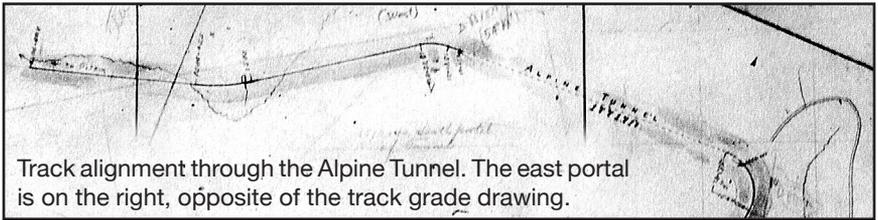
Officials with the National Railway Historical Society say they're awarding eight recipients a total of \$20,000 as part of their organization's annual Heritage Grants Program. The recipients are orga-

nizations such as historical societies, museums, and NRHS Chapters. Colorado's own South Park Rail Society will soon benefit from one of these grants.

The Rio Grande Modeling & Historical Society is sponsoring a 2017 Rio Grande convention in Denver this year just preceding the National Narrow Gauge Convention. This will be an opportunity to participate in both without any overlapping conflicts. The Rio Grande convention starts on Sunday, August 27 and ends on Wednesday, August 30 at noon just before the Narrow Gauge convention activities begin. It will include about 11 clinics and several layout visits as well as operating sessions. Registrations were opened to non-RGMHS members on April 1. Details have been a bit difficult to find.



The track grade through the Alpine Tunnel. The east portal is at left.



Track alignment through the Alpine Tunnel. The east portal is on the right, opposite of the track grade drawing.



The Alpine Tunnel west portal on July 13, 1951. – Photo © Bill Abbott.



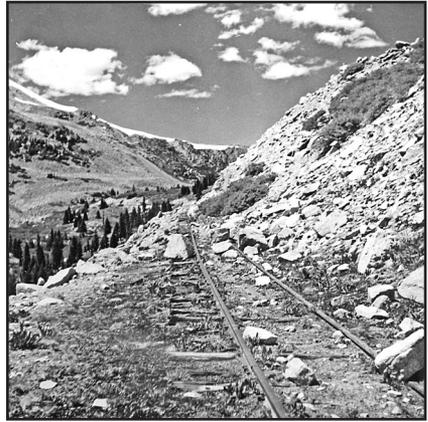
The Alpine Tunnel east portal on September 4, 1982. – Photo © Bruce Nall.

Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad Co.

Alpine Tunnel Historic District

The Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad (DSP&P) filed its incorporation papers on June 14, 1873. Its founders charted an ambitious future for the infant railroad. Plans called for a route to South Park via the Platte Canyon and the Arkansas River, from there to Salida, through Poncha Pass, across the San Luis Valley to the mining claims of the San Juan Mountains, and as was the goal of nearly every western railroad of the period, on to the Pacific.

The three-foot narrow gauge track laying began in 1874. Not long after the first rails received their first spikes, the emerging silver mining boom in Leadville caused company directors to redirect their planned route towards this new source of economic vitality. By 1879 track was advancing rapidly towards Leadville. At the same time, Jay Gould, financier and railroad accumulator, assumed control of both the DSP&P and its main competitor, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG). In a step designed to limit profit reducing competition between his two Colorado railroads, Gould forged what came to be known as the Joint Operating Agreement of 1879. Under its terms the Rio Grande would lay track from Buena Vista into Leadville with the DSP&P being granted equal traffic rights over the D&RG tracks. The DSP&P would build into the Gunnison Basin with equal traffic rights extended to the Rio Grande. The DSP&P turned away from the San Juans and Leadville and set its sights for the Continental Divide and the lucrative Gunnison mining district beyond.



Tracks west of Alpine on July 13, 1951.
– Photo © Bill Abbott.

As the DSP&P managers contemplated their westward expansion, they surveyed a number of possible routes over the Continental Divide. Many passes were already being utilized for trail and wagon routes. These included Otto Mear's Marshall Pass Toll Road, the Hancock Pass Wagon Road and the Alpine and South Park Toll Road over Williams Pass. The DSP&P chief engineers settled on the route up the Chalk Creek drainage, tunneling under 11,940 foot Altaian Pass (at the Continental Divide), and proceeding down the Quartz Creek drainage through Pitkin and on to Gunnison. The grade on both summit approaches could be kept from exceeding 4% and tunneling through the Continental Divide near the summit would reduce the maximum altitude that had to be achieved.

Work on the tunnel began in January, 1880. Plans called for completion of the

Alpine Tunnel Historic District – Boarding House



The grade approaching the railroad facilities downgrade from the west portal of the Alpine Tunnel on July 13, 1951. – Photo © Bill Abbott.



The interior of the boarding house, already leaning away from the tracks but still standing on July 31, 1951. – Photo © Bill Abbott.



The wooden 55' x 24' boarding house was constructed 10 feet south of the depot/telegraph office. The facility housed a dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms on the lower level and a private company bedroom and large open boarding room for regular railroad crew members on the second floor. The boarding house collapsed in the early 1960s. In September 4, 1982, the wooden boarding house was a pile of lumber and building materials. – Photo © Bruce Nail.

tunnel in six months. The Atlantic construction camp was established by the east portal and another camp soon took shape by the west portal.

Both the construction company and the railroad underestimated the difficul-

ties of construction under the adverse conditions of a typical high county Colorado winter. Laborers found the high altitude work difficult, particularly during the cold winter months. Temperatures of 40 degrees below zero were not unusual and blizzards, drifting snow and

Alpine Tunnel Historic District

avalanches were commonplace. Steady crews of 350 to 450 were needed and perhaps as many as 10,000 men worked on the tunnel as some point during its construction. Supplies were hauled in by mule and wagon from Hancock on the east and up Quartz Creek on the west.

The engineers not only underestimated the rigors of winter construction, they also failed to appreciate the nature of the geology at the summit. They anticipated boring through solid, self-supporting granite without the need for costly and time consuming timber bracing. What they encountered was unstable rubble and slide rock. Power tools did not work well in the crumbling, decomposed granite. Hand drilling became the standard method of excavation. Huge sections of rock fell from the sides and ceiling as the tunnel progressed, necessitating false timbering at a great loss of time and added expense. An estimated 1.5 million board feet of lumber were used in the temporary support of the tunnel.

California redwood timbers in a seven-segmented arch system was used for the permanent lining of the tunnel. Redwood was chosen due its strength, durability, resistance to decay, low flammability (an important consideration with spark producing coal fired locomotives), low cost, and ready availability. The *Engineering News* reported in January, 1882, that 500,000 board feet of redwood went into the tunnel lining.

In the summer of 1880 William Jackson Palmer regained control of the D&RG from Jay Gould. He quickly canceled the Joint Operating Agree-

ment and began laying rails from Salida via Mears Junction, over Marshall Pass towards Gunnison. Whichever railroad reached the Gunnison mining district first could establish itself as the preeminent line. The DSP&P redoubled its efforts to complete not only the Alpine Tunnel but the rest of the railbed on the eastern and western approaches. It is precisely this contest between lines that typifies the broad pattern of railroad expansion, operation, and often demise in Colorado during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

After working through the winter of 1880-81, the DSP&P rails finally reached Hancock on July 26, 1881. At nearly the same time the east and west tunnel crews broke through and met below the summit of Altaian Pass with a horizontal error of less than 1 inch. The track laying crews pushed the line to the east portal on August 11th and wagons began to haul rails through the unfinished tunnel so work could begin on the west side trackage toward Quartz. Much work remained to be done in the tunnel, and the first train would not roll through until December. But the D&RG had already won the race to Gunnison having reached the town 5 days before the DSP&P rails reached the Alpine's east portal. The DSP&P could now only hope to recover its construction costs by splitting the Gunnison Basin's freight and passenger business with its rival.

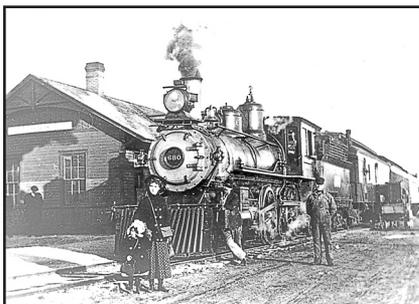
The Alpine Tunnel Historic District information presented here is from the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places 1996 Registration Form.

Ord Nebraska Notes

By Michael M. Bartels

The Union Pacific local passenger train pictured at Ord, Nebraska, on the April *Rail Report* cover would later be replaced by a motor, which made its last run on Saturday, December 6, 1941. Mixed-train service lasted until December 1959.

The Ord and Loup City branches would see the last use of UP steam in branch-line service in the fall of 1958, drawing many photographers, including the noted Otto Perry and Stan Kistler. The 2-8-0 used, No. 428, is now being restored at the Illinois Railway Museum. The Ord depot was closed upon inauguration of UP's first mobile agency on February 10, 1970, and was later torn down.



Union Pacific 680, a 4-4-0, at Ord, Nebraska, in 1914. – Photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

The Burlington also served Ord, on its branch from Palmer to Burwell, Nebraska, abandoned in February 1983. Ord still sees rail activity, although mainly southeast of town at a Cargill grain and fertilizer facility and a Green Plains ethanol plant. Since June 27, 1993, this line and four other UP branches have been operated by the Nebraska Central Railroad under lease. The town of 2,112 has enjoyed a resurgence in recent years.

In Remembrance

David F. Rodd

David Rodd, a 22-year member of the Club, passed away on April 15, 2017. He held seniority number 203 at the time of his death.

Dave came from Rutland, Vermont, and worked for Merrick as an electrical designer. Dave modeled the Rutland Railway in HO. He also had a large collection of railroad books,

In Remembrance

Eldon L. Elmore

Reverend Eldon L. Elmore, 66, a 30-year member of the Club, passed away on February 23, 2016, at Larned, Kansas. He held seniority number 166 at the time of his death.

Eldon was an American Baptist Minister, serving churches in Kansas and Iowa.

Events of Railroad History: Arrival of the First Midland Through Train at the Cloud City

Denver Republican, October 10, 1887

Contributed by Dan Edwards

The first through train over the Colorado Midland rolled into the Leadville Midland Depot at 6:30 this evening on time to the minute. A crowd of several hundred people was in waiting at the depot.

The train left Denver at 8 o'clock well-filled with passengers. The day was bright, and the grandeur of the scenery was the topic of conversation. The incident of the day was a spirited race between the Midland train and the Salt Lake express on the Rio Grande.

The race commenced a few miles out from Denver and continued many miles. The tracks of the Denver & Santa Fe, over which the Midland runs, and the Rio Grande paralleled the way from Denver to Colorado Springs, the distance apart varying from 200 feet to 200 yards, so that an unobstructed view could be had of the racing trains. It was exhilarating sport for the passengers, who crowded the platforms of the coaches on both trains and waved handkerchiefs and hats in the bracing air. The Rio Grande train consisted of eight cars and was running with a double-header. The Midland train had five cars and but one locomotive.

The smaller driving wheels of the narrow gauge did their best, but they were unable to hold their own with the big Midland drivers, and gradually the Midland passengers were enabled to turn their faces backward and wave their 'kerchiefs to the "Little Giant's" patrons, who speedily ceased their

demonstrations.

But the race was not over. The big Midland Mogul became temporarily disabled, and before the repairs could be made, the narrow gauge cars had gone by, and they were soon many miles in the lead.

It then seemed as if the race had turned to one against time, but in half an hour the Midland train was seen steaming along at a tremendous rate of speed. The gap gradually lessened, and it was plain to see that the best racing material was on the Midland track.

Both trains pulled into Castle Rock at the same time, the Midland passengers being in high glee in anticipation of the race continuing, but it was at an end. The termination was caused by reports received at Castle Rock of a collision between two freight trains south of Castle Rock. Several freight cars were telescoped, and merchandise was lying scattered about. The information received was that it would require ten hours to clear the track, so that it would be impossible for the [Rio Grande] train to proceed. Some of the Rio Grande passengers made a rush for the Midland train and were carried to their destinations.

Tonight's train which started to Denver went out with every berth in the sleeper occupied and with eighteen passengers bound for Denver. The friendship for the Midland among the people at Leadville amounts to almost a craze.

Bus Trip To Cheyenne Depot Days

The Intermountain Chapter - NRHS and the Colorado Rail Passenger Association (ColoRail) are organizing a bus trip to Cheyenne Depot Days. The bus will originate at the RTD Broadway & I-25 park and ride at 9 AM on Saturday, May 20, 2017, making a second stop at the RTD Wagon Road park and ride, 120th & I-25 at approximately 9:15 AM. The return trip will leave the Cheyenne Depot at 4 PM, arriving back in the Denver area between 5:30 and 6:00 PM.

Members of the Intermountain Chapter - NRHS and ColoRail will pay \$29 for bus and Depot Days wristband. Non-members including RMRRC members will pay \$39 for bus and wristband, plus they are entitled to complimentary memberships in the sponsoring groups through the end of the year. If additional trips are planned, the complimentary memberships will qualify for the member rate.

The wristband includes access to all Cheyenne Depot Days activities including:

- The Union Pacific Shop Complex (844 may be displayed outside).
- The Cheyenne Depot Museum.
- Sherman Hill Model Railroad Club train show, Frontier Park Exhibition Hall
- Free shuttle buses connecting the venues.

Payment, checks only made out to Intermountain Chapter - NRHS, should be mailed to: INTERMOUNTAIN CHAPTER - NRHS

c/o COLORAIL

PO Box 9613

Denver, CO 80209

All payments must be received by May 13, 2017. Please send name(s), address, phone number(s), email address, bus stop preference and note your organization.

Colorado Railroad Museum

For information call 303-279-4591 or <http://www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org/event-listings>

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Members in good standing, and upon presentation of a current membership card, are entitled to free admission. Members are invited to join the Colorado Railroad Museum (a Museum membership provides certain merchandise discounts), and members may participate in restoration or other maintenance programs as volunteers. Please contact the volunteer coordinator at the CRRM.

Intermountain Chapter, NRHS Events

For information call 303-883-2435 or see <http://www.cozx.com/nrhs>.

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Dinner Meeting at Red Lobster, 4455 Wadsworth Blvd., Wheat Ridge, Colorado

Dinner at 5:30 PM – Meeting begins at 7:00 PM

Program – Otto Perry's "First Generation Diesels"

Presented by Ron Vander Kooi

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Club Information

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Club and Foundation Officers

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Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Roger Sherman
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

Club and Foundation Directors

Andy Dell, Nathan Holmes, Dennis Leonard, Pat Mauro,
Debbie MacDonald, Michael Tinetti, Nick Valdez.

Membership Information

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending the annual dues to the Club address listed above.

Regular membership dues are \$35.00. Overseas regular membership dues are \$45.00.

Contributing membership is \$50.00. Sustaining membership is \$70.00.

Patron membership is \$100.00. Golden membership is \$500.00.

An associate membership for spouses and children is \$25.00 additional.

Members joining after April may send a payment of \$3.00 for each month remaining in the year. New members who join in-person at a meeting will be given a free copy of the Club history book

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

Board Meetings

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and location.

Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

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PO Box 620579
Littleton, CO 80162-0579

E-mail: selectimag@aol.com

Items for the June 2017 Rail Report should be sent by May 19th.



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