

# RAIL REPORT

January 2019

No. 700



## Mines, Mears, and the Railroads of Silverton

By Bill Jones

January 8, 2019 • 7:30 PM

Bill will present an in-depth look at the four railroads radiating from Silverton, Colorado, using over 100 historic photos. Bill's grandfather and longtime Club member Morris W. Abbott collected photos of the "Mears Lines" in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Morris made several trips to Silverton starting in 1944 and became acquainted with Bob Pitcher, Otto Mears' eldest grandson, as well as several former employees of the Silverton Northern. Many of these photos appeared in the book *The Rainbow Route* By Robert Sloan & Carl Skowronski. Bill also added a number of never before published photos taken in the 1904 – 1910 period by a young mining engineer Warren C. Prosser, a native of Silverton.

— Continued on Page 2 —

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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. 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.**

### RMRRRC 2019 Calendar

February 12: Meeting and Program, "Adventure Trails on Colorado Rails" by Ron Ruhoff.

March 12: Meeting and Program.

April 9: Meeting and Program.

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](mailto:ds5280@comcast.net) or 303 988-3456.

## Mines, Mears, and the Railroads of Silverton



The Corkscrew Gulch covered turntable, an unusual solution on the mainline of the Silverton Railroad. – W. J. Carpenter photo.

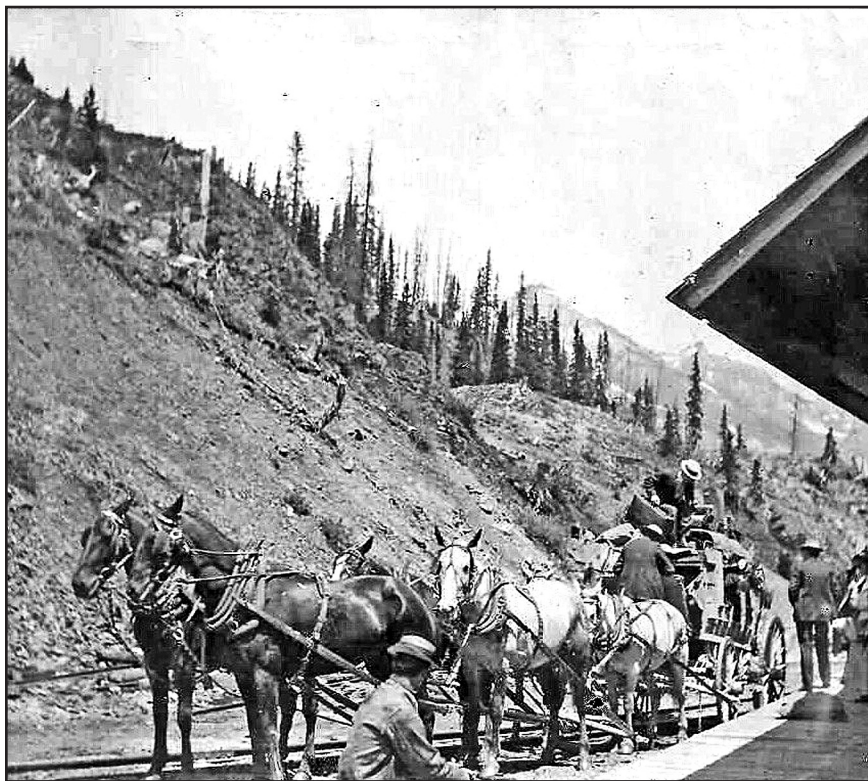
Prosser worked at the Champion and Detroit mines just south of Silverton and took unique photos of the mines which graphically show how the narrow gauge supported their operation.

Railroads discussed include the two Mears-built lines, the Silverton Railroad extending to Chattanooga, Red Mountain Town and Ironton Park, and the Silverton Northern Railroad extending to Eureka, and Animas Forks. The Gold King Mine built its own railroad, the

Silverton, Gladstone and Northerly to their mine and mill in Gladstone (later operated by Mears), while the D&RG operated some little known mine and industrial trackage off their Silverton branch.

Coal and mining supplies were brought into the mines by the narrow gauge, and ores and concentrates hauled out to the smelters in Durango and Leadville providing the lifeblood to the town of Silverton and surrounding “camps.”

For Rail Report 700, the masthead features C&IM #700.  
– Photo from the Tom Klinger Collection.



The six team stagecoach at the Silverton Railroad's Red Mountain Town depot after the slow, rough trip up the Ouray and Red Mountain Toll road.  
– Warren C. Prosser photo from the Bill Jones collection.

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## **Train Time at Red Mountain Town**

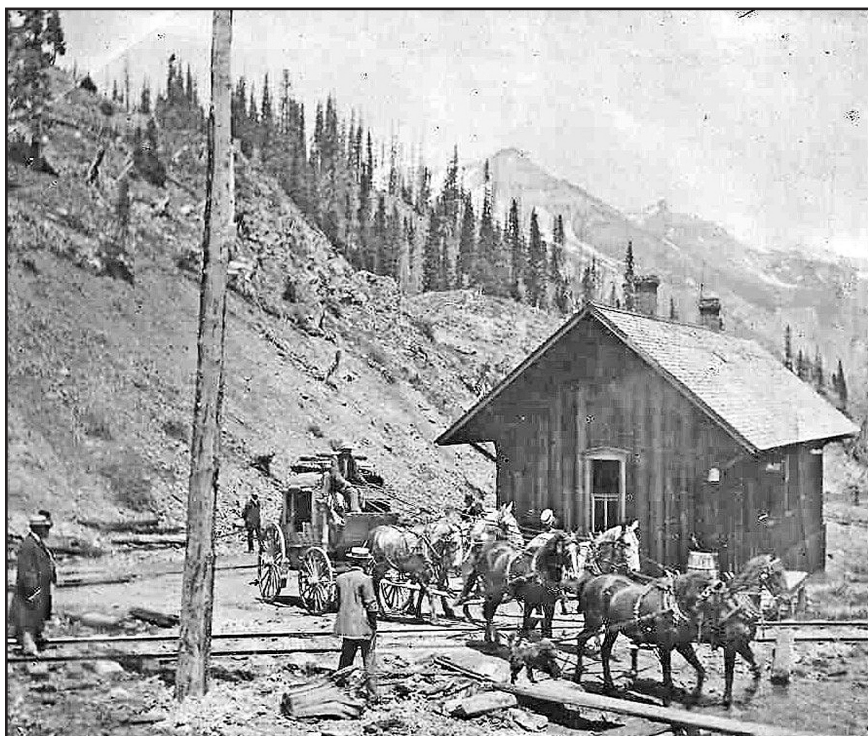
By Bill Jones

On a beautiful early summer day around 1904, recent Colorado School of Mines graduate mining engineer Warren C. Prosser boarded the Silverton Railroad's 12:35 PM train heading for Red Mountain to meet friends coming in from Denver via Ouray. Prosser was an avid photographer who could often be seen carrying his bulky dry plate camera up the trails to the Detroit Mine south of Silverton where he recorded progress on the new mine, his first job out of college.

Meanwhile, early that morning in Ouray, Mr. & Mrs. Hays boarded a six team stagecoach with several others for the slow, rough trip up the Ouray and Red Mountain Toll road which had been built by Otto Mears in the late 1880's to access Red Mountain town and the rich silver mines. But the silver boom was long over, and only a single daily stage was needed to take folks up the pass to connect with the train for Silverton.

Around 1:30 PM, the one-car Silverton

## Train Time at Red Mountain Town



After unloading, the stagecoach from Ouray pulling across the wye track and onto the main street of Red Mountain Town.

– Warren C. Prosser photo from the Bill Jones collection.

Railroad train arrived in Red Mountain town, unloaded at the tiny depot platform, turned on the wye, and backed onto the main leg to wait for the Ouray stage.

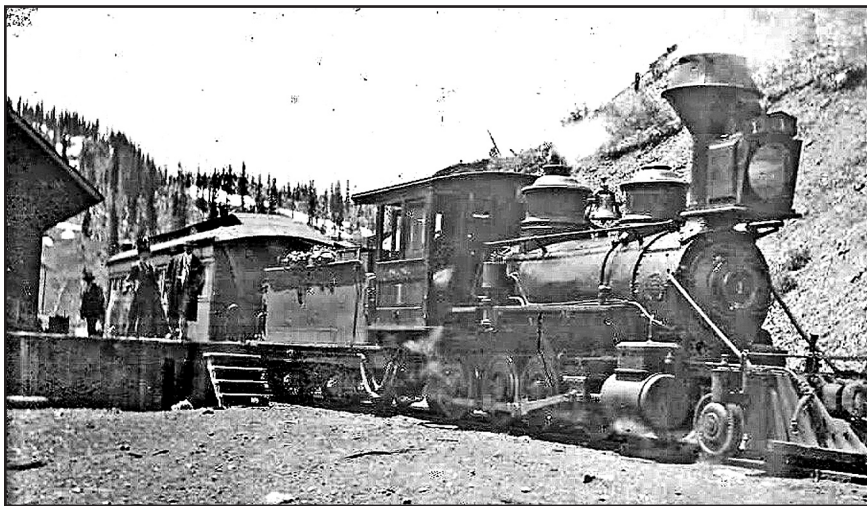
Warren photographed the stage as it parked on the house track siding to off load passengers right onto the depot platform. Luggage was removed and any Ouray bound passengers boarded. In the next photo he catches the stage pulling across the wye track and onto the main street of Red Mountain town.

Around 2:00 PM, the train drops down

to the platform siding, and is making ready to depart for Silverton. Silverton Northern locomotive #1 with coach #11 (the former “Yankee Girl”) waits for a highball while Warren snaps a picture of Mr. & Mrs. Hays standing on the platform ready for the hour long ride down to Silverton, undoubtedly looking forward to a smoother ride!

These three remarkable photos offer a rare snapshot of an ordinary “day in the life” of the narrow gauge railroad and its role in connecting the mountain towns of Colorado.

## Train Time at Red Mountain Town



Silverton Northern locomotive #1 with coach #11 turned and ready for the trip back to Silverton. – Warren C. Prosser photo from the Bill Jones collection.

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### January: Reprieve for Late Renewing Members

The membership renewal invoices were sent to you in November. January is the extension period month. If you cannot find your invoice please contact us by sending an email to [rails@rockymtnrrclub.org](mailto:rails@rockymtnrrclub.org) and request a replacement. A new invoice will be sent by email to you. If you do not use digital media you can send a request for a new invoice to the club post box: Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, Membership Renewal, PO Box 2391, Denver, CO 80201-2391. You may also renew in person at the upcoming club meeting, or renew electronically at our club website [www.rockymtnrrclub.org](http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org).

The renewal forms provide spaces to correct any errors with your contact information. Members if you have an email account please make sure your correct or preferred address is listed. We are using an email notification service now.

Every five years the club publishes a directory, mailed to your residence. If you do not want your contact information published, contact us through the club email [rails@rockymtnrrclub.org](mailto:rails@rockymtnrrclub.org) informing us that your contact information should not be listed in a future directory.

The club greatly appreciates all members that renewed by December 31 of last year. This month is our allowance period and time is running out. The re-sequencing of seniority numbers takes place the first week in February. **To keep your seniority** please make sure we have your renewal by then. It takes a several weeks to print and mail out the new year's cards.

Your membership card(s) will be mailed to you during the month of March. Additional information about this mailing will be provided in the February *Rail Report*.

## Outgoing President's Report

By Steve Mason

It has come to my attention that Beyer Patton died of a stroke on November 30th. Beyer's health had not been the best of late. He volunteered at the Colorado Railroad Museum for a number of years and was a member with us for a long time.

Around here at North Yard on the Union Pacific they have started implementation of a form of E. Hunter Harrison's Precision Scheduled Railroading. Perhaps you have read about this in the December *Trains*. The Superintendent and other management people have been laid off and the functions transferred to North Platte as well as other areas tangential to Denver.

Harrison installed PSR first on Canadian National, then Canadian Pacific and last on CSX. Some of the salient outlines of Precision Scheduled Railroading is extra long trains, precise schedules with no exceptions. With Union Pacific's double track main on the Overland Route this should present little problems. Information we have here is lay-offs and at least 800 engines in storage. Trains longer than 120 cars should present few problems with distributed power.

The other big story here is a confirmation from the Colorado Springs *Gazette-Telegraph* that the Manitou & Pike's Peak Cog Railway will be rebuilt and will reopen in 2020. The date for that reopening is uncertain as of now. Some of the older cars will be taken out of service and new cars will be purchased. The track and rack will be rebuilt. The depot in Manitou will be updated. There will

be a better parking situation in Manitou. The city of Manitou has issued long term tax breaks to M&PPCRy and the railway has promised \$100 million dollar investment in these coming two years.

It is a relief to know that one of the signature tourist attractions in the Pike's Peak Region will be with us for many more years. There are two companies who own the Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway and through them the money will come. They are owned by the Broadmoor. The Broadmoor is owned by Phillip Anshutz. This will be a win-win for all concerned.

The big celebration in 2019 will be at Promontory Summit on May 10, 2019, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the driving of the gold spike. This will be the biggest event in all railroading. A Union Pacific train will go behind Big Boy 4014 from Cheyenne to Ogden. UP 844 and 4014 will be on display in Ogden. If you go you must have confirmed reservations by now at a hotel. Many railfan organizations will have their national conventions in Ogden or Salt Lake City.

Your board wanted us to participate in this. We were unable to do so. We tried to do this in 2017 and set up some sort of trip. Nonetheless you have a much better chance going solo or attaching yourself to one of these organizations: Union Pacific Historical Technical Society, Southern Pacific Historic and Technical Society, Railway & Locomotive Historic Society among those I know have conventions in conjunction with Promontory. Good Luck!



Club and Foundation officers and directors, from left (back): director Steve Subber, 2019 secretary Andy Dell, 2018 president Steve Mason, directors Michael Tinetti and Nathan Holmes. From left (front) director Pat Mauro, treasurer Keith Jensen, 2019 president Dennis Leonard, director Debbie MacDonald, and Vice-President Dave Schaaf. Director Ron Keiser is not shown. – Photo © 2018 Bruce Nall.

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## Election Results From The Annual Meetings

The annual election was held during the annual meetings of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation on Tuesday, December 11, 2018, 7:30 PM, at Christ Church, 2950 South University Boulevard in Denver.

Current secretary, Dennis Leonard, was elected President and current director, Andy Dell, was elected Secretary.

Ron Keiser, Steve Subber, and Michael Tinetti were elected as directors.

Current officers Dave Schaaf (Vice-President), and Keith Jensen (Treasurer) were re-elected.

Nathan Holmes, Pat Mauro, and Debbie MacDonald will continue as directors.

*In Remembrance*  
**Robert Eugene Relf, III**

Robert E. Relf, III passed away on September 18, 2018. He was a 43-year member of the club and held seniority number 73 at the time of his passing.

## Current Railroad Happenings



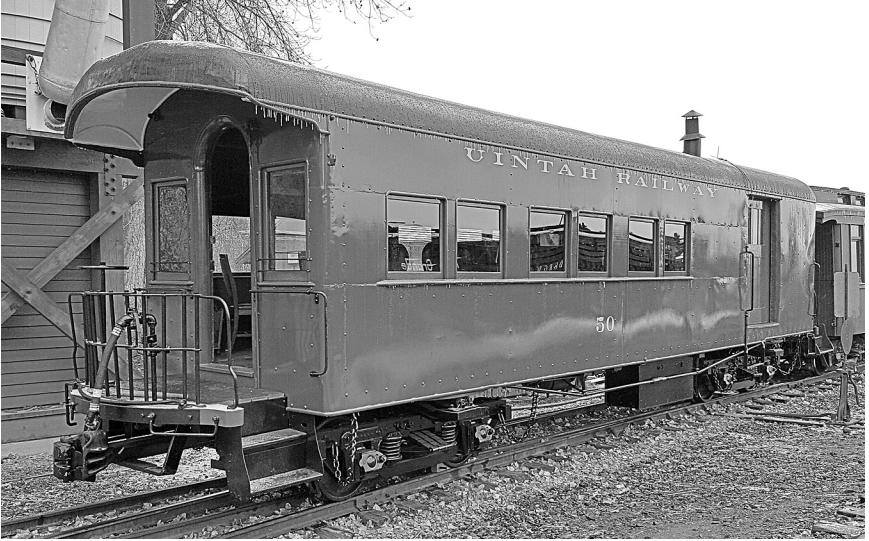
On November 24, 2015, EMDX 1503 & 1502 were moved westbound at Kinsley, Kansas, via BNSF to the Transportation Technology Center at Avondale, Colorado, for tests. Union Pacific is sending the Progress Rail (A Caterpillar Company) built SD70ACE-T4 (Tier 4 EMD 12-Cylinder 1010 Engine) units into storage at North Platte, Nebraska, during December 2018. – Photo © 2018 by Chip.



Union Pacific 1995, Chicago & North Western Heritage unit, led Roseville, California, to North Platte, Nebraska, train up Archer Hill east of Cheyenne, Wyoming on the Sidney Subdivision on November 8, 2018. – Photo © 2018 by Chip.



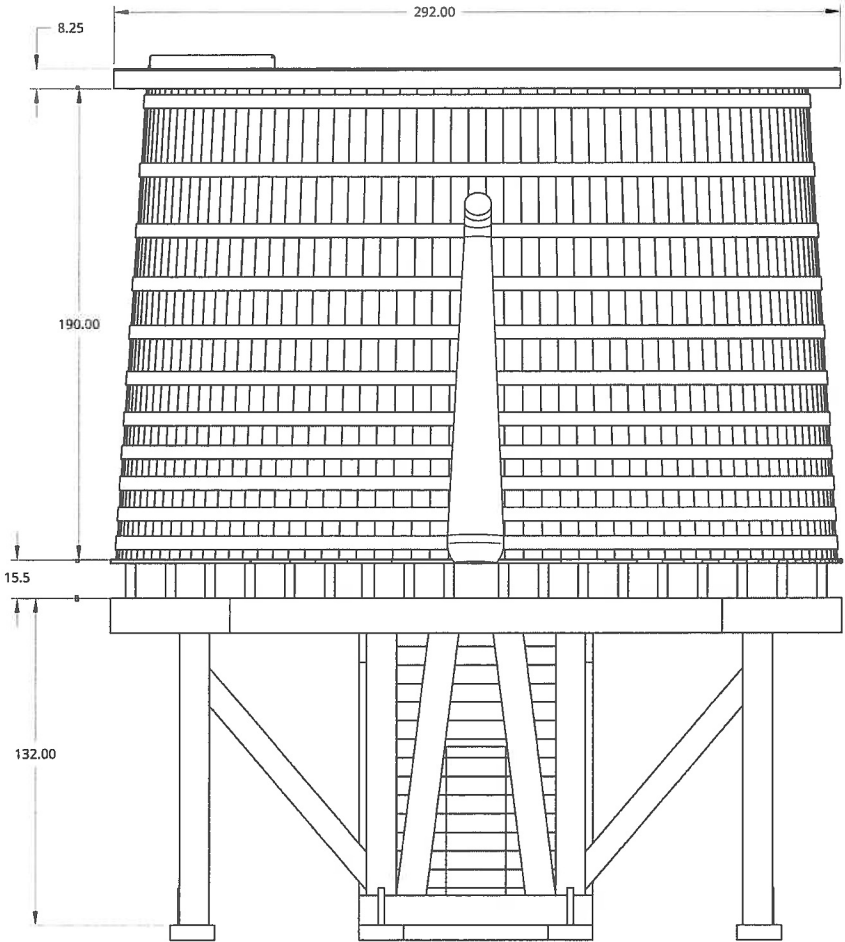
## Restored Uintah Railway Combine Car No. 50



Uintah Railway No. 50, a baggage-coach combine car has been restored and is operating at the Colorado Railroad Museum. The car originally ran on the narrow gauge Uintah Railway, which ran between Mack, Colorado, and Watson, Utah.

The new interior plywood paneling was stained to match the finish from 1935. New window frames were fabricated and installed and the carbody has been painted. The baggage compartment walls and ceiling have been restored and freight doors reconstructed reusing as much of the existing material as possible.

The combine reportedly started life in 1881 as the Rio Grande Pullman ANTONITO, went to the Uintah in 1904, was rebuilt as a combine in 1924 and steel sheathed in 1934. – Two photos © 2018 Dave Schaaf.



A front elevation design drawing of the new Como water tank.  
 – Drawing by Phil Carney.

## Como Water Tank Reconstruction

By Tim Bain

The recent return of steam to Como has also brought with it the need to return a water tank to the reconstructed Como Railway Yard. Currently we are very fortunate to have the support of the Jefferson Como Fire District to supply water for Klondike Mines #4 but we do not want to take advantage of their generosity. We need to establish our own

locomotive water supply.

Building a new water tank in the same location as the original is part of our mission to preserve what currently remains of the Como Railyards and reconstruct what has been removed over the years. This new water tank also fits our needs and our overall mission. Along with

## Como Water Tank Reconstruction

supplying water for the Como locomotives, the tank will also supply water to the roundhouse for fire protection and be made available to the local Fire District when the need arises.

Water tanks were a critical piece of infrastructure for railways ever since the beginning, and Como is no exception. The Como railyard had at least four different water tanks that we know of over the years with the last one being removed by the Colorado & Southern Railway shortly after it abandoned Como in 1938.

It is true that we need a new water tank in Como but considering the historic nature of the original surviving structures still in Como, we don't want to just put up any old barrel that will hold some water. Instead, we want to try and replicate what was there in the 1930s. We are planning to reconstruct the new water tank as a "close" replica of the Colorado & Southern's standard design 50,000 gallon tank.

The new water tank will not be an exact replica because we are using the original water tank footings that are still in place today. The problem is these are not the same footings that were used for the C&S Flat Top water tank that we want to replicate. We are making a few adjustments to the new base to make everything fit together. The adjustments are not too major and we feel the new design is reasonably true to the flat roofed Colorado & Southern water tank that most C&S fans are familiar with.

With a locomotive in the roundhouse and the turntable completed, this new water tank has become our next major project in Como along with the continued rebuilding of track.

If you would like to help with the Como Water Tank Project, Please consider a donation and mark your donation "Water Tank." Checks or money orders can be sent to:

South Park Rail Society  
2253 N. Downing St.  
Denver, CO 80205

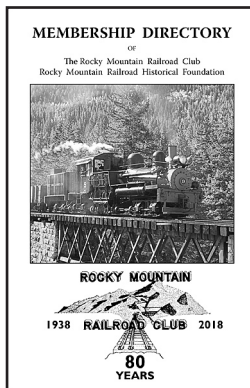
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## 80th Anniversary Membership Directories Mailed

The 80th Anniversary Membership Directories were mailed to all members in December.

The Club typically publishes a directory of members every five years. For the 80th anniversary, the roster returns to the style that was done in 2003.



The cover features a color photo from Dave Schaaf of Ex-West Side Lumber Company Shay locomotive #9 on the Club's 80th anniversary Georgetown Loop excursion.

Thanks to Directors Debbie MacDonald and Steve Subber for handling the mailing.

## The Trip to Aspen that Wasn't

By Dave Goss

In January, 1965, Trip Chairman Ed Haley sent a letter to Mr. H. F. Eno, Passenger Traffic Manager of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad. In his letter, Ed says:

The officers and directors of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, in discussing future trips for our organization, have reached the conclusion that we must make an occasional diesel powered trip if we are to stay in business as an excursion operating group. Because of our past excellent relationship with your company and also because of its monopoly on scenic operations, we turn to you. Would you please quote us a round trip fare and minimum guarantee for a two day excursion out of Denver via the Moffat Tunnel to Aspen with the return routed through the Royal Gorge?

The following week, Ed received a quick reply from Mr. Eno referring to the Club's request for the trip to Aspen:

I strike out on this request before I even pick up my bat. For the past seven or eight years I have been prohibited by our Engineering Department from operating passenger service into the town of Aspen. They tell me that our railroad from Carbondale to Aspen has not been adequately maintained for several years to permit the safe handling of long wheelbase passenger equipment, so I have had to tell a number of people who have inquired that we cannot go to Aspen.

If the Club would be interested in an operation over the diverse route between Denver and Glenwood Springs, that could be readily arranged. We could operate on a schedule of five hours and thirty-five minutes Denver to Glenwood Springs via Bond and nine hours and forty minutes Glenwood Springs to Denver via the Royal Gorge... The coach fare for such an operation, round trip, would be \$15.48 per capita and we would require a minimum of 300 passengers at this rate. This seems to be a little high at the outset, but it is necessary by the geographical location of Glenwood Springs – Glenwood is not a Division point or a crew terminal and, therefore, we have a cost penalty involved as our operating expenses actually are based on the Denver-Grand Junction operation.

The Club did not operate a trip to Glenwood Springs in 1965, but did enjoy a diesel powered trip behind an Alco PA and a GP-35 (with a steam generator car) on the 26th of June. This was the annual banquet held at the Hochlandhof in Winter Park. The seven-car special carried 267 members and guests through the Moffat Tunnel. Five cars were light-weight coaches and two were dome cars. The trip (including dinner) was just \$7.00. The Club lost \$266 as the meals were \$3.50 per person and the railroad's guarantee was 300 passengers. Still – what an adventure!

# Events of Railroad History: Irate Bombay Commuters Target Trains

From the *Rising Nepal*, August 14, 1994

Research by Dan Edwards

*Note: I came across this article during my recent stay in Nepal.*

After enduring overcrowded conditions on Bombay's suburban trains, the city's long-suffering railroad commuters have finally run out of patience with a system that is unable to stay on schedule.

Railway stations have been vandalized and signaling systems and train coaches smashed and burned in the past two weeks by commuters incensed by frequent peak-hour disruptions on the network.

Friday saw the latest outburst of public anger across five suburban rail stations on the northern outskirts of the city, India's commercial hub.

Commuters wrecked the stations, damaged train carriages, ticketing and food counters and tore down signals in a fury against the delay in services during rush hour.

Some 100,000 commuters failed to reach their offices in Bombay because of the disruption. Friday's violence was the second incident this week.

On Tuesday a freight train derailed, blocking two of four tracks during the morning rush hour. Office-bound commuters blocked the remaining two tracks and damaged railway property.

Commuters further north, angry at not being told why their trains had been delayed, also went on the rampage and smashed up signals on the 1.5 kilometer stretch of the railway line.

Last month was a particularly bad one for Bombay's five million suburban rail-

way commuters after several trains ran hours late or scheduled journeys were cancelled. The worst day was July 26 when irate stranded commuters smashed everything in sight. One commuter was killed in police gunfire in Dombivili and several railway stations resembled battle zones.

But the railways have drawn little sympathy in the city, where newspapers have written critical editorials backing the angry commuters.

"Commuter violence is the only way to keep the railways on their toes. They take commuters for granted," said the assistant editor of *The Daily* newspaper.

The state-run central and western railway suburban services are the lifeline connecting the metropolis of nearly 12 million people with distant suburbs. The western railway runs 948 trains and the central 1,139 daily. Each train is meant to carry 876 passengers, but at peak hour they are crammed with 4,000 people who tolerate suffocating conditions to report to work on time. Men can be seen clinging to window bars and even on train roofs. With most offices located in the southern part of the city, commuters spend an average of four hours daily travelling between home and work.

Bhatt, who spends five hours a day commuting, said, "If you are late to work three days in a month, you lose a day's leave. How long can commuters keep patient? We are not asking the railways to provide us seating space in the trains. All we say is run them on time."

## Irate Bombay Commuters Target Trains

Western railway spokeswoman Mohini Shroff says the criticism is unfair and that the protests are counter-productive. "We are stretched to the limits with massive growth of passenger traffic. We do not get any pleasure in delaying trains. We are doing our best. Violence and damage to railway property only delays trains more."

The railways have their problems in ensuring trains run on time. Grade-level crossings have to be periodically opened to let bumper-to-bumper traffic across.

"Then there are people who walk on the railway lines and get killed by speeding trains," said Shroff. "Trains get

delayed as it takes time to remove the bodies."

Sociologists say the commuter violence reflects the increasing pressure of urban life.

"An average office-goer here works eight hours, commutes four hours, sleeps eight hours and has just four hours left to spend with his family," said sociologist Mani Mistry. "With real estate prices shooting up, more and more working people are being pushed to the distant suburbs. Life then becomes so mindless and frustrating that people take to violence at the first opportunity," she said.

### *In Remembrance* Beyer R. Patton

Beyer R. Patton passed away on November 30, 2018. He was a 62-year member of the club and held seniority number 9 at the time of his passing.

### *In Remembrance* Stephen "Steve" Pahs

Steve Pahs passed away on March 29, 2018. At the time of his passing he held seniority number 126.

### Colorado Railroad Museum 2018 Special Events

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

#### **Colorado Railroad Museum Admission**

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.

#### **Intermountain Chapter, NRHS Events**

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

## **Publishers Statement — Rocky Mountain Rail Report**

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### **Club Information**

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club  
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Web: <http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org>  
Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/rockymtnrrclub](http://www.facebook.com/rockymtnrrclub)

### **Club and Foundation Officers**

President	Dennis Leonard
Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Andy Dell
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

### **Club and Foundation Directors**

Nathan Holmes, Ron Keiser, Pat Mauro,  
Debbie MacDonald, Steve Subber, Michael Tinetti.

### **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:

Bruce Nall, Editor  
Rocky Mountain Rail Report  
PO Box 620579  
Littleton, CO 80162-0579

E-mail: [selectimag@aol.com](mailto:selectimag@aol.com)

**Items for the February 2019 Rail Report should be sent by January 18th.**



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