

RAIL REPORT

November 2021

No. 733



Rocky Mountain Railroad Club • Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

**There Will Be A November Meeting In Barnes Hall
Due To COVID Regulations, Masks Are Required For Everyone**

1800s Trains In The 21st Century

Presented Live And Via The Internet by John Bush

November 9, 2021 • 7:30 PM

John will present a video program related to 19th century railroading in the 21st century. It will include the demise of the RGS, the resurrection of the Georgetown Loop, the development of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, the restoration of several pieces of 19th century equipment and the "Victorian Iron Horse Roundup."

See Page 14 For Information On How To Sign Up And Participate Online.

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 2021 Calendar

December 14th Annual Meeting and a 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 or 303 988-3456.

1800s Trains In The 21st Century – Victorian Iron Horse Roundup



On Tuesday, August 24, 2021, D&RG 168 and 425 ran double-headed from Antonito to Osier with the railroad's newly restored historic passenger cars. While 425 returned as light power, 168 and the train have been turned, watered, and are getting ready to start the return trip. – Photo © 2021 Nathan Holmes.



Eureka and Glenbrook, both 1875 Baldwin-built wood burners from Nevada, were the oldest locomotives to attend the Victorian Iron Horse Roundup. Here the two are seen leading a mixed train east near Big Horn on Wednesday, August 25, 2021. – Photo © 2021 Nathan Holmes.

The *Rail Report* masthead features New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad (NKP – Nickel Plate Railroad), locomotive 733 at Connaut, Ohio, in May 1957. – A. Patrick photo from the Tom Klinger Collection.

1800s Trains In The 21st Century – Victorian Iron Horse Roundup



On Friday, August 27, 2021, all four historic locomotives ran from Alamosa to Chama. Eureka and Glenbrook led with a small freight train, followed by 168 and 315 relettered as 425 double-heading with the historic passenger cars behind them. The passenger train is making the final climb to Cumbres Pass at Tanglefoot Curve in the last rays of sunlight. – Photo © 2021 Nathan Holmes.



After Eureka suffered a mechanical problem near Cresco and the train was unable to climb the grade to Cumbres, Eureka and Glenbrook returned to Chama in the early evening hours of Saturday, August 28, 2021. – Photo © 2021 Nathan Holmes.



The Lake City turntable on Denny's model Lake City and Ouray Railroad.
– Photo © 2021 Denny Leonard.



The turntable and round house at the Tiny Town Railroad.
– Photo © 2021 Denny Leonard.

November 2021 Brings Thanksgiving

By RMRRRC President Denny Leonard

Fall is moving to winter and I wish all our membership and families a Happy Thanksgiving.

On my model LC&O, turntables are invaluable in the close mountain spaces so the engines can be stored and headed the right direction. The first turntable was constructed in Derby, England, during 1839 by four different railroads. The early 1830s turntables were built to route single wagons from one line to another at coal mines and similar installations. The first turntables were made out of wood and very small, around 6 feet, compared to the ones built later into the century which could span up to 120 feet.

Three important pieces made up the locomotive turntable: a circular pit, a bridge (usually built out of steel), and a central pivot with wheels at each end.

Thousands of turntables in many sizes and designs were employed all over the world in the steam era. Smaller ones were manually turned and larger ones were powered. In this state, we still have operating turntables in Durango, Como, Denver, and Golden.

Remember that we help fund rail car and railroad site restorations. Help us fulfill our preservation mission and consider donations to our RMRRHF this fiscal year as every bit helps. The year end is approaching and donations or matching donations from corporations are possible.

We are asking for nominations for four officers and three board members for the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation for 2022. Please forward any nominations to an officer or

November 2021 Brings Thanksgiving

By RMRRC President Denny Leonard

board member. A member may nominate themselves! Serving is very rewarding and allows the club to tap the vast knowledge of members and to continue into the future. The time commitment is minimal.

Having spent some more time in Chama and Antonito and Golden recently, I continue to applaud the CRRM and the C&TS. We are blessed to have these entities plus the Durango and Silverton, the Leadville, Colorado and Southern, the Ridgway Museum, and the Georgetown Loop that keep the legacies of our railroad history alive and operating. The

Pikes Peak Cog Railroad adds some operation that few other states can claim!

The Polar Express is starting this month. It usually sells out and is a great Christmas tradition.

My winter plea – We have a few biographies on the club website and I am hoping several members will write more before we lose irreplaceable history. The new book by Dan Edwards is a gem.

As always feel free to contact me by email at denny@amerm.com or my cell (303) 809-9430.

Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation Donations

Donations should be by personal check made out to “Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation” and sent to: Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, PO Box 2391, Denver, CO 80201-2391

A Call For Nominations For The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

Elections are held every December at the annual business meeting.

Any member wanting to volunteer or nominate another member for either an officer or director position should con-

tact the nominating committee, Dave Schaaf, Nathan Holmes or Andy Dell at the November Club meeting or contact them through the Club website or by mail to the Club PO Box.

Notice Of Annual Meetings

The annual meetings of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation will be held on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 7:30 PM at Christ Church, 2950 South University Boulevard, Denver, Colorado, and virtually through Zoom. These meetings are called for the purpose of electing Officers and Directors for both organizations. At these meetings the Club or Foundation may conduct any other business as may properly come before these meetings.

Current Railroad Happenings



Chris Tome and Michael Bottlemy were the water tank primer painters on October 2, 2021. This was the last Denver, South Park & Pacific Historical Society scheduled work day for the 2021 season. Amazing accomplishments, partially funded by a Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation grant, were achieved at Como, Colorado, this year. – Photo © 2021 by Chip.



After a few quiet years, trains are again being loaded with metallurgical grade coal just west of Trinidad at Jansen, Colorado. – Photo © 2021 Dave Schaaf.

Membership Is Not Virtual However

This year the club will again send a renewal invoice to each member. Some households will receive more than one renewal. Expect to see the renewal invoices in your mailbox this month by November 10th. Each renewal form has spaces provided to correct any errors with your contact information. Members, if you have an email account please make sure we have the correct address. Please add your phone number if the space is blank.

Some members receive what appears to be a renewal invoice. The document is sent only for the confirmation and or collection of your correct contact information. There is no payment required but you can contribute to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation.

The club uses a company called MailChimp to email a notice with a link for a color version of the *Rail Report* and

key monthly notices. The club wants as many of you who can to use this delivery method. The invoice form has a check box. Use the check box to sign up for email delivery.

The membership year is January 1st through December 31st of each year. There will be an increase in the cost for delivery of the paper version of the *Rail Report* for Regular members as changed by Board. To keep membership in RMRRRC, your dues for the upcoming year are due by December 31st.

Multimember households should return each membership form, but a single payment for the household is desired.

The club will re-sequence the seniority numbers the week of January 10th and will mail the membership cards out the first week of February.

Railbiking In The Mountains

Railbiking is an exciting new way to experience nature and see the sights by riding the railroad tracks under your own power. It's a fun and safe outdoor activity for everyone of all ages on custom designed two-seat and four-seat railbikes manufactured in Vermont

Railbikers check-in at the South Fork Railroad Station at 97 Ponderosa Drive

in South Fork, CO 81154, and receive a short safety briefing. Tour guides will lead the railbikers on a 6-mile out-and-back trip along side the Rio Grande River. Information at www.revrail.com or 888.738.0123.

Costs:

Double Railbike – \$80

Quad Railbike – \$140

Online Content From The Colorado Railroad Museum

During the month of August, the Museum's staff created a full lineup of new programs that can be experienced from home. A recent "Small Wonders" episode

looks at Alpine Tunnel and some of the artifacts that remain from this famed but ill-fated bore. Online at:

coloradorailroadmuseum.org/news/

Seventy Years Ago on the Rio Grande Southern

By Dave Goss

It was seventy years ago that the Rio Grande Southern (RGS) turned its last operations. In the Club's archives is a letter dated November 1951 (begun on the 6th and completed on the 24th) from Philip Ronfor to Ed Haley. Phil was a Club member and a well known illustrator, known for his paintings of trains and locomotives as well as magazine and book covers. He was a World War II veteran who also did posters and paintings of that war. His painting "Photo Stop, 1947" graces the cover of the Club's history *Journey to Yesteryear*. In his letter to Ed Haley, Ronfor thanks Ed who hosted him on the Club's September 1st and 2nd excursion on the RGS. Phil notes:

I see by the Narrow Gauge news that the RGS may have had its last season of operations. The news fills me with desolation because I had hoped to repeat at least once more our Sept. jaunt. Now that I've had a real opportunity to photograph the RGS, I want to take all the pix I missed last time (and correct some of my mistakes). Is there any chance that the proposed mid-winter trip in the **Edna** will come off? Right now it doesn't look like I could possibly make it – but if there is a chance of its happening let me know. Such a trip could be the event of a lifetime (can't you imagine being snowbound on Lizard Head and having to live off K rations for a week or so heated on the Edna's old coal range). Brother! I think I could desert my family and all I hold dear for such a trip.

No, the trip on the **Edna** never took place and just seven months after Ronfor finished his letter, the Club purchased No. 20 from the RGS for \$2,000 and the **Rico** for an additional \$400. Ironically, in his November letter, Phil made an almost prophetic statement:

Mike Koch and I have a thing about buying a narrow gauge engine – if only to keep them from scrapping every last one in Colorado... Could you find out what the RGS would want in case they fold – for the 41 or the 20? There are at least several of us who are interested, and probably could scrape up at least the scrap price. What we'd do with it, I don't know; but the thing now is to keep at least one around. We can always figure out what to do with it later. You know the RMRRC should probably be the one to do this – sometimes I find it hard to understand how an outfit that is supposedly interested in preserving the old Colorado rail stuff can be so obtuse about this – particularly with the dough in the treasury. In five years – when there's nothing left – they'll probably be wailing and gnashing their gums about why didn't someone do something – too late.

It is unknown if Ed Haley shared this letter with others in the Club but the purchase of the No. 20 in June 1952 raises some speculation about Ronfor's influence. Phil, like Michael Koch (noted author of *The Shay Locomotive*), lived in the eastern US and were part of the Eastern Division of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club located in Boonton, New Jersey. In 1953, nineteen members were listed as part of the Eastern Division.

Seventy Years Ago on the Rio Grande Southern

Prior to the September excursion, Dick Kindig and Ed Haley alone rode the RGS June 5th and 7th, 1951. They prepared a detailed listing of the rolling stock and equipment they saw on the trip from Ridgway to Rico. The day started with RGS No. 455 (with a tender borrowed from D&RGW No. 452) and RGS No. 461 as a helper. The consist included two boxcars, two flatcars (lumber), two more boxcars, one gondola (filled with ties) and a caboose. Late in the day, past Meadow Creek Trestle, No. 461, running light, derailed while crossing Highway 451. After No. 455 arrived, both engines were left in the care of one fireman. The train's crews, Ed and Dick drove to Dolores for dinner and then to Durango for the night. After a day trip to Silverton on the 6th, they both left the morning of the 7th from Rico. The train again had RGS No. 455 (with the D&RGW tender from No. 452), two gondolas loaded with coal, four boxcars, then No. 461 as helper, followed by six boxcars and a caboose. There is no record of the cost for this trip, but the experience must have been unforgettable. In September, they recorded the train consist in as much detail as they had in June. As trip chairman, Ed left nothing to chance. He thoroughly researched his trips before planning each excursion.



Rio Grande Southern #20 visited the Cumbres & Toltec for a few weeks recently. On October 2, 2021, several Board members of the Club were invited by the CRRM to ride the last train pulled by #20 before it returned to Golden, Colorado. From left, Denny Leonard, Deb MacDonald, Dave Schaaf, past-president Jim Ehernberger, Ron Keiser, Steve Subber, and Pat Mauro at Chama, New Mexico. The second engine is #463, lettered as RGS #455. – Photo © 2021 Jim Barton.

Virtual Meeting And Program Access Instructions

To register ahead of time, please send an email to rmrrc-show@drwg.net asking for the RMRRRC virtual meeting address and password. Please send your request no later than the Monday night before the meeting and we will send you the meeting connection information. Please be patient as we all learn this new technology.

We will be holding the meeting via Zoom. Please ensure you have the Zoom client (<https://zoom.us/download>) installed on your computer, phone, or tablet before the event so that you're ready to go.

Zoom Meetings Will Also Be Live Streamed

As a view only option, Zoom supplies us the ability to live stream our meetings to YouTube. Those wishing to **only view** our meetings without the option to participate will not have to email us for a meeting ID and Password any longer. The club has our own YouTube channel. This channel is for posting our club meetings and significant events. After the live event you may still view the meeting any time at your convenience.

You can find our YouTube channel in several ways. The first is enter the URL shown below in your browser:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCPUDXhWLazlbsHFO9DUUeoA

For those whose typing skills are challenged by the URL above, a second method is search for "Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Channel" in the YouTube search bar or your search engine i.e. Google, Edge, etc. You may be surprised at all the items that come up. If you are familiar with YouTube and found the channel home page you can always subscribe. The third and last method is to browse our club web page. Right below the Facebook link is a new link to the YouTube live stream location.

The board believes live streaming may increase membership and make our meetings available to members who find it difficult to attend once we return to in person meetings.

Colorado Railroad Museum

A mask is required for Museum entry. They are currently operating at a reduced capacity. An advance admission purchase reserves entry at your desired time.

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

The chapter is starting to resume meetings and events.

For current meeting information email railbob@icloud.com or call 303-883-2435

Publishers Statement — Rocky Mountain Rail Report

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Please use this address for legal, commercial, Foundation donations, and general business: Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, PO Box 2391, Denver, CO 80201-2391

Club Information

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club
PO Box 620953
Littleton CO 80162-0953
Web: <http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org>
Email: rails@rockymtnrrclub.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/rockymtnrrclub

Club Officers

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

Club 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 online at www.rockymtnrrclub.org or by sending the annual dues to the Club membership address:

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club
PO Box 620953
Littleton CO 80162-0953

Regular membership dues are \$30.00 with email delivery of the *Rail Report* and \$45.00 if a printed, mailed *Rail Report* is desired.

International membership dues are \$45.00.
Contributing membership is \$50.00.
Sustaining membership is \$75.00.
Patron membership is \$100.00.

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

Members joining after June may send a payment for half of the dues level they wish to join at for the remainder of the year.

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

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 – Email: selectimag@aol.com

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

Items for the December *Rail Report* should be sent by November 8th.



PO Box 620953
Littleton, Colorado 80162-0953

FIRST CLASS MAIL



A New Book by Railroad Club Member Dan Edwards

(Written in 2020 but release delayed due to COVID-19!)

Chasing Railroad History: Correspondence of Five Charter Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

135 pages – 27 photos – Soft Cover – \$20
With introductions by Denny Leonard and Dave Goss

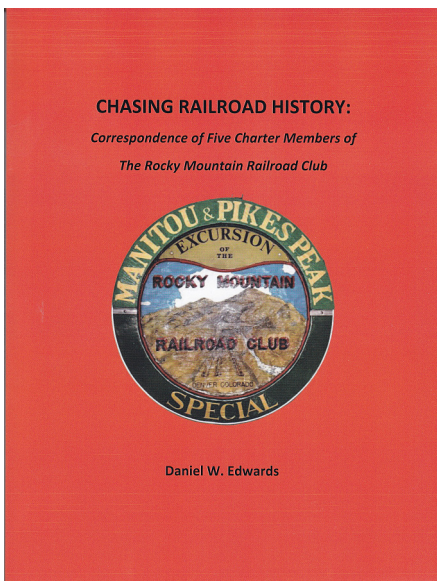
You all know about the remarkable railroad photos taken by Dick Kindig and Otto Perry. You probably know about the efforts former D&RGW officer Jack Thode made to rescue and preserve historical material the railroad was ready to discard. You probably know nothing about Jim Gwyn, who, over a 60-year period, wrote voluminous letters to my dad, Walker Edwards. All five men were 1938 charter members of our Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

This book, with excerpts of letters Kindig, Gwyn and Perry wrote to my dad—presents remarkable information regarding Colorado railroads primarily in the 1930s and 1940s (plus Gwyn's observations about Denver streetcars) and letters Thode wrote to many railroad researchers with whom he corresponded from the 1950s through the 1980s. Besides the detailed data given railroad equipment and operation, the letters also reveal the “human” side, the personalities, of the writers: Kindig undergoing basic training in Army camps during World War II before ending up in India; Gwyn working as a mid-level employee of the Rio Grande in the 1940s before leaving for a career with the Missouri Pacific; Perry trying to keep the Railroad Club alive when so many of its members were away from Denver during the War; and Thode focusing on his collection of cameras and printing paraphernalia and obsessively pursuing the history of the Rio Grande.

This book is written as a tribute to these five charter members of the Railroad Club, whose loyalties and efforts did so much to sustain the Club in its earlier years.

As Dave Goss, author of *Journeys to Yesteryear*, noted:

These letters provide us a glimpse of [the writers'] viewpoints, activities and interest in railroad equipment, places, people and current events—all of which to us today is historically significant. These men were not only friends, but they shared a willingness to keep detailed accounts of their travels and observations.



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Note: All 8 volumes of my Documentary History of the South Park Line are still available – \$20 each plus \$4 shipping.

Contact danedwardsdwe@aol.com for a description of the volumes.

Another book is also available: *Cases of Regulating Colorado Railroads, 1913-1953* – \$15 plus \$4 shipping.

Please send me:

\$20 + \$4 Shipping: *Chasing Railroad History*

\$20 + \$4 Shipping: For each volume of *A Documentary History of the South Park Line*

\$15 + \$4 Shipping: For *Cases of Regulating Colorado Railroads, 1913-1953*

— All copies will be signed —

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP (5+4) _____

Check Enclosed For \$ _____

Special Instructions _____

Email address _____

Call 303-815-9628 to arrange for pick-up at Railroad Club meeting and avoid postal charges.

Questions? Email to danedwardsdwe@aol.com

Please send this form with your check to:

Daniel W. Edwards, 2565 South University Blvd, Apt. 306, Denver, CO 80210