

RAIL REPORT

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rocky Mountain Railroad
Historical Foundation

March 2023

Issue 747



Fifteen-year-old Blair poses next to the A-unit of UP's GTEL #14 set, awaiting disposition at Salt Lake City in 1975. Image courtesy of Blair Kooistra.

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 free 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. Our next meeting is on March 14th at 7:30pm Mountain Time.

To join the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86251105134?pwd=VWRwRUVCbVoyTzlwMWhYbm5scTlqdz09>

Blair Kooistra will present his program “Initial Exposures,” which is a personal look at how he became a railfan photographer in the mid-1970s, when he was an impressionable teenager living in Utah. This show was originally presented for the Union Pacific Historical Society convention in 2021, so it concentrates on Union Pacific in what’s commonly referred to as the “late classic era” shortly before the big UP/WP/MP merger in 1982.

Blair will join us via the internet from his home on March 14, 2023 for this Club meeting.

Upcoming Programs:

March 14 – program with Blair Kooistra

April 11 - program by Michael Pannell of Cheyenne

May 14 - Probable Club picnic and steam event at the Colorado RR Museum in Golden, Colorado. This would take the place of the monthly meeting. More details to come regarding this Mother's Day gathering.

Upcoming Events:

Possible Club visit to Colorado Live Steamers in September.

August 30 - September 2; National Narrow Gauge Convention at Crown Plaza Hotel in Aurora, CO

President's Column

Hard to believe it is March already. This year is flying by but has also been a colder and snowier one than we have had in some time for the Denver area. This has made for some great winter photos by those that are able to get out and take them along the freight and passenger lines.

This is the third month for our official transition from the traditional Rail Report to the email-style Rail Report. Printouts of the email format will be mailed to those that have renewed their dues and paid for the mailed report in 2023.

We are nearly finished with updating our records for dues renewal for 2023 and will sequence the member numbers for 2023. Once that is completed,

we will print up the new membership cards and get them in the mail. Thank you for your patience with this as we struggle to take over the tasks of the Rail Report and membership processing from the exceptional jobs done by Bruce Nall and Michael Tinetti.

2023 Mini Grant Applications

Do you have a railroad history-related project that could use a small financial grant for this summer? The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation is looking for up to five individuals or organizations who have a summer project that could use up to \$1000. Full details and the application form can be found on our website:

www.rockymtnrrclub.org/index.htm

Applications must be received by USPS or email no later than April 30, 2023.

The board will review applications at the May board meeting, and the 2023 recipients will be announced in the June 2023 Rail Report.

Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation Donations

PayPal is not an option for 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

Schnabel Car KWUX 301 Moved Generator to Texas



Rare Move – A Schnabel car is a specialized car designed to carry heavy and over-sized loads so that the load makes up part of the car. The load is suspended between the two ends of the cars by lifting arms; the lifting arms are connected to an assembly of span bolsters that distribute the weight of the load and the lifting arm over many wheels. Car KWUX 301 was built in September 1973. Seen here west of Sidney, Nebraska, on January 23, 2023. ©2023 Chip

Schnabel car KWUX 301 was used by NRG Energy to move a generator from Centralia Steam Plant at Centralia, Washington, to the W. A. Parrish Generating Station at Smithers Lake, Texas, near Houston.

One of the two coal-fired generator units at the Centralia Steam Plant was shut down in 2020 due to legislation forcing the shutdown. The other half of the combined 1340MW base load plant is slated to be shut down in 2025.

Union Pacific 2578 East moved across Wyoming and Nebraska January 20-24, 2023. Train speed was limited to 25 MPH with frequent stops to shift the load to clear obstacles and close clearances. The high / wide special arrived at the W.A. Parish Generating Station on Sunday, January 28, 2023.

The W.A. Parish Generating Station is a 3.65-gigawatt (3,653MW), dual-fired power plant located near Thompsons, Texas. The station occupies a 4,664-acre site near Smithers Lake southwest of Houston in Fort Bend County and consists of two four-unit plants; one natural gas and the other coal (2,697 MW). With a total installed capacity of 3,653 MW, it is the second largest conventional power station in the US, and supplies about fifteen percent of the energy in the Houston area.



Union Pacific crews had a job briefing next to UP 2578, ET45AH, west of Sidney, NE, January 23, 2023. The train had a covered hopper spacer car, the KWUX 301 Schnabel car, and caboose Fracht LBR 551794 where technicians could operate the Schnabel car to avoid close clearances and objects. ©2023 Chip

Denver, South Park & Pacific RR book published by the RMRR in 1948 - Letters to Trains Magazine

Interesting Correspondence – Part 1 & 2

Note: This multi-piece article is based on Club correspondence saved by Jimmy Blouch and generously donated to the Club archives in early 2022. It has been almost seventy-four years since the first edition of the Club's **'Denver, South Park & Pacific RR'** book was written. Although dated 1948, the book was not received from the publisher until March 1949. The Club's Board was very concerned about the impact the project could have on the Club's limited finances. Costs were estimated to be nearly \$9,000 including printing, advertising and shipping. Fortunately, pre-publication orders raised \$5,500 and the balance was guaranteed by members Robert Le Massena, John Maxwell, Dick Kindig and Irv August.

However, to ensure success, the Club needed to sell all 1,000 copies and President Ed Haley reached out to Kalmbach Publishing to see if *Trains* magazine would print an excerpt from the book along with some photos. Unfortunately, in December 1948 Kalmbach's reply (from Wayne Lincoln) was very disappointing. He answered:

"I'm extremely sorry to say that Mac's excerpt won't appear in *Trains*. As soon as Johnny (Maxwell) wrote that it would be sent I began a propaganda campaign to get it in. They even saved space for it. Dave Morgan, one of their editors, is as enthusiastic about the book as I am, but when I presented the work to Andy Anderson, and he read it through, he turned it down cold."

"Sure, the facts are interesting, and for such a South Park enthusiast as Morgan and me, facts are enough. But the readers want the facts presented in a form that's readable, too. As you may realize, Mac Poor, while a top researcher, is no writer, and the narrative is dry as sawdust when viewed from the entertainment angle. I took the whole thing to Al Kalmbach to see if he would override Andy's decision but after getting into it he seconded the veto."

"They say the space it takes up would be wasted on any but the most rabid DSP&P fans. A book review is, of course another thing. They will review it from a purely historical standpoint as a monumental work, but will undoubtedly comment on it's tough reading."

"The point is Ed, that Mac writes like an Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) report and they were never considered light reading. Unfortunately, to quote ACK, the style of reading will materially affect the sale of the book. You know there are many who will not buy until they have glanced through a book (that's what I did with Mixed Train Daily) and the writing will scare a lot of them away."

Mr. Lincoln offered a solution to his criticism of Mac Poor's writing, as follows:

Now I have a remedy. It's going to be a hard nut to crack, but the book should be rewritten. This can be done with absolutely NO deletion of the facts. Morgan and I talked this over, and he's now rewriting all or part of the chapter to see what you think of it. You'll find his writing in Trains is very readable.

Now for the facts: Morgan will undertake to rewrite the whole thing for well under \$500. Probably nearer to \$300, depending on the time it takes to do this part. If you'll check the price, you'll find it's ridiculously low.

As you can imagine, Ed Haley's reply to Kalmbach was strongly supportive of Mac Poor and the Club's plans for going forward. After all, Mac had spent more than ten years researching the railroad and many legal, financial and technical aspects that he addressed in the book. In his own words as printed in The Denver Westerner Monthly Round updated June 1965:

I also quickly learned that to produce such a history one needs the services of a Philadelphia lawyer to interpret the legal aspects of the road's corporate history; a Certified Public Accountant to untangle and explain all the financial ramifications; a statistician to count ties, spikes, telegraph poles, bridges, etc.; an engineer to report on curvature, grades, and weights of rail; a motive-power man who never looks at equipment behind the locomotive and tender; a rolling-stock addict who never looks at a train until the engine has passed; and a cartographer to draw fine maps."

In his reply to Wayne Lincoln's "solution" Ed Haley was very strong:

All of us were very disappointed to learn from your letter that the article will not appear in Trains. We made a mistake, I guess, in sending you the article we did. It is really not much of Mac's writing but more excerpts from

publications of the 1890's. The reason we chose this particular article was that we had more good pictures on this particular incident than any other.

We certainly will have to disagree with you on your opinion of Mac's style of writing. We like it.

If Kalmbach's review of the book would do it more harm than good I think perhaps we better just forget all about any help from him. I have read a good part of the manuscript and I found it so interesting that it was hard to put down. Perhaps I am prejudiced, being a South Park fan for many years, however I think I know interesting reading material when I come across it.

The Club decided to proceed with the book project despite the criticism.

Interesting Correspondence – Part 3

In two previous issues, we described the optimism the Club had when they sent an excerpt from Mac Poor's yet-to-be published history of the Denver South Park and Pacific to Kalmbach Publishing. To be turned down by the premier railroad magazine in 1948 must have been a bitter blow to the Club's board who was entering into this publishing venture for the first time and at great expense. Ed Haley continued to explain to Kalmbach why he felt they had erred:

You can definitely forget about rewriting it. We appreciate Mr. Morgan's very generous offer to help out and he would be taking on a lot of work for the price he is asking. However, the board agrees 100% that the book will be published as is.

We are doing quite well so far. I expect the orders to fall off now that Christmas is approaching but so far we are averaging 10 paid orders per day. Have over 170 now. The mail is awfully slow in reaching some sections because of the Christmas rush.

...Thanks a lot to you Wayne and to Dave Morgan for all your efforts on our part. Sorry it was fruitless.

To put the Club's concerns in context, remember that in 1948 this was the very first time the Club decided to write a definitive, historical account of a well-loved railroad. The membership numbered less than 100. The estimated costs in 1948 of \$8,000 had the same purchasing power as would \$99,000 today. The \$10 pre-publication price was raised to \$12.50 in 1949. By 1950, the book had sold out, despite Kalmbach's concerns.

Since World Press was a small company, it could only print the first half of the book before they had to melt down and recast the lead type for the remainder. Therefore, it was not possible to reprint the first edition. Sellers were asking prices of more than \$200 per copy a few years after it sold out. It was not until 1976 with the publication of the Memorial Edition of Denver South Park and Pacific that the public could again buy a slightly updated copy of the book with additional photos and information for \$24.50. Eventually the 6,000 copies of the reprinted version also sold out. We have no knowledge of Kalmbach's reaction to the book's long and successful sales history.

Fortunately, the Club's relationship with Kalmbach was not seriously damaged and David Morgan gave the Club's trips and photographers good coverage throughout the years. It was not until we discovered correspondence from seventy years ago that we can really appreciate how much the Denver, South Park and Pacific meant to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. (Thanks to Dave Goss for this research)

UP Moved Heavy Metal in January and February 2023



Union Pacific moved four unit U.S. Army trains across Colorado in January 2023. Equipment returning from the Defender Europe 2022 exercise. Trains originated at Beaumont, Texas, moved to Fort Carson, CO. This train passed Denver RTD's A Line which goes to Denver International Airport. Aurora, CO, January 31, 2023 RTD flyover. ©2023 Chip



Defender Europe 2022 Army equipment returning to the USA by rail to Fort Carson, CO. Lower right; Army M109A7Paladin 155mm howitzer tank on DODX 40070 flatcar rolled **through** CO, to UP's North Yard January 31, 2023. ©2023 Chip

Fort Carson Planning New Rail Spur



Union Pacific moved a unit Army train across Fountain Creek January 19, 2023 into The Mountain Post - Fort Carson, south of Colorado Springs, CO. Train originated at Beaumont, Texas. ©2023 Chip

The Edw. C. Levy Company, a Michigan-based business, is planning the \$12 million rail spur that will extend from an existing rail line serving

Colorado Springs Utilities' Ray Nixon Power Plant and extend across private property to Fort Carson, said Steve Mulliken, an attorney for the company.

Fort Carson could then extend the line onto its property to serve a new rail yard, providing an alternative to its existing rail yard near South Academy Boulevard. Rail allows the Army to move heavy military vehicles and equipment to the country's coasts where they can be shipped overseas.

The proposed area will get a new Interstate 25 interchange north of the current underpass servicing the power station. That would be south end access. Charter Oak Road and the Fountain interchange will provide access to the north.

Current access to Fort Carson Railhead (railroad yard) is at Kelker. Trains sometimes have to perform a back-up move (shoving move) from Bijou in Colorado Springs (about 4-miles!) all the way into the Army railhead.

Rail access could be provided by both Union Pacific and BNSF. At the current time UP can reach the site north and southbound via the north and south switches at Nixon on the northbound mainline. BNSF is somewhat more limited as it currently only has access southbound of the southbound main. (Thanks - additional info by Larry Green)

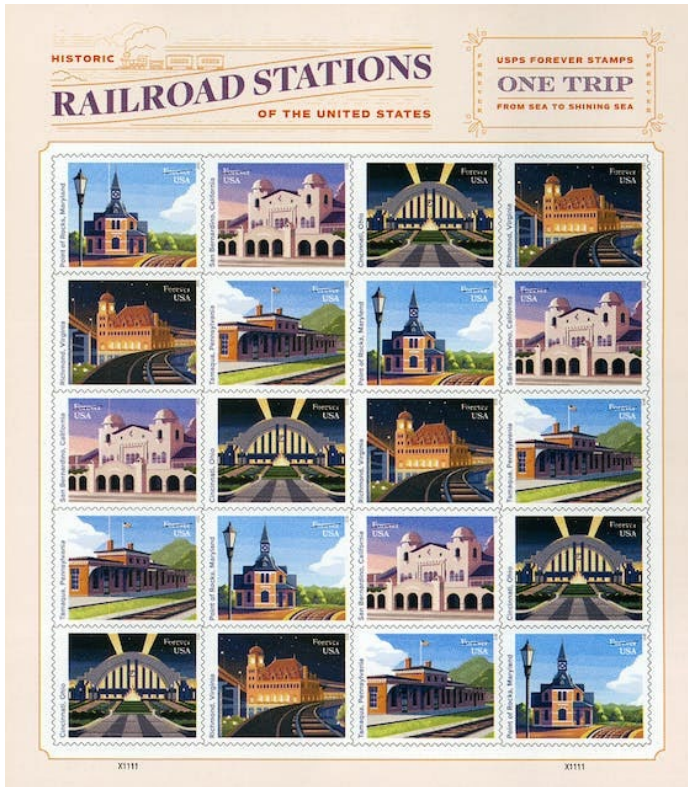
New Stamps

The US Postal Service is releasing a sheet of "Railroad Station" Forever stamps on March 9, 2023. The sheet of 20 stamps will cost \$12.60.

Also available from the USPS is a "Stamp Portfolio" with additional information on the series, a set of "FIELDNOTES®" notebooks, and a ready-to-frame "Matted Stamps" set.

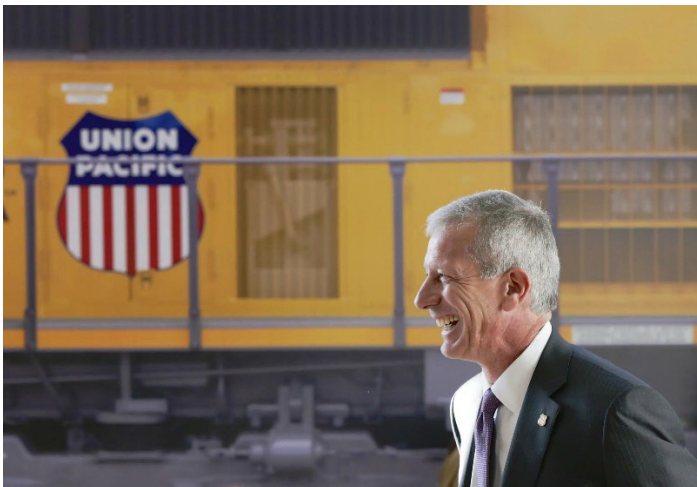
These are, to the best of my knowledge, the first "new" train stamps since the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike stamps.





Union Pacific News

Union Pacific has announced that CEO Lance Fritz will be stepping down soon. His replacement has not been named.



Durango & Silverton Flanger January 2023



The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge (D&SNG) ran a snow plow / flanger train on January 4, 2023. Jerry got lots of photos chasing. Amazing that a coal fired ex-D&RGW 481 narrow gauge engine, flanger, and caboose were plowing deep snow in 2023. Over 24-inches fell in three days at Durango, CO, mid-January. ©2023 Jerry Day



Durango & Silverton Flanger March 2023



The Durango & Silverton ran the 5th snowplow/flanger train the morning of March 1st. These are real working trains, not photographer specials or charters. They are clearing the snow for the Cascade passenger trains this weekend. ©2023 Jerry Day

Union Pacific Removes Old Structures at Speer



The last full week of February 2023 several un-used structures were taken down by the Union Pacific at Speer, Wyoming. Some of the buildings may date back to the late 19th century. Many people had hoped to salvage some of the markings and historic features of them. Maybe the most recognized piece to be demolished was the water tank, which was a landmark that was visible for quite a distance from its hilltop location just north of the Colorado border. This sunset image is from early May of 2019, made while I waited for a test run of the Big Boy #4014. ©2023 Dave SchAAF



A Rocky Club Facebook member named Ana Huezo posted the above two images of the historic water tower at sunset after being demolished.

©2023 Ana Huezo

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Information

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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 address:

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Membership

PO Box 2391

Denver, CO 80201-2391

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 Zoom meeting information.

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rail Report

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