

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB  
P. O. BOX 2391  
DENVER 1, COLORADO

September, 1962

Newsletter No. 37

The September meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held on Wednesday, September 12, 1962, at the Farmers Union Auditorium, East 16th Avenue and Sherman Street, Denver, at 8:00 p.m. Gary Balliett and Fred Worthy will present a program featuring steam operations of the Great Western Railway. Their program will include both slides and sounds of GW freight action during the entire sugar beet campaign--including winter operations.

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The Denver area once again resounds to the efforts of a coal-burning narrow-gauge locomotive under steam! Congratulations certainly are due Club member Bob Richardson and his crew at the Colorado Railroad Museum, whose rebuilding efforts, unaided by heavy shop machinery or tools, were rewarded on the evening of July 29th, when steam once again surged from the pop valves of engine 346 after an absence of more than 14 years.

According to issue No. 26 of the Iron Horse News, September 23rd is the day scheduled for homage to the oldest engine in Colorado. Railroad Hobbyists Picnic Day will be celebrated at the Museum at that time, with admission free to paid up Railroad Club members and their families. Bring your own food and cameras -- the Museum will furnish coffee and coal-fired, narrow-gauge live steam in the 346!

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At a meeting on August 17th the Board of Directors and Officers, after thorough consideration and discussion, concluded that the Club should refrain from sponsoring an excursion over the Union Pacific to Rawlins this year. Regrettably, this was done primarily because of the Railroad's requirements as to fares and guarantees, viewed in the light of current commitments and the results of other excursion operations in 1962 on Club finances. However, the Intermountain Chapter, N.R.H.S., Box 921, Golden, has expressed a willingness to operate such an excursion sometime during the last two weeks of October. Members interested in such a trip should contact the Chapter at the above address for information and details.

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One last reminder -- if you haven't yet arranged to ride the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club's all-steam excursion over the Colorado & Southern - Great Western, tickets will be available on the train, leaving Denver at 8:00 a.m. Sunday, September 9th. \$4.00 for children 11 and under; \$7.00 full fare. Food will be available at all times at reasonable prices. Come, and bring your friends!

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The first railroad postal car in America went into operation 100 years ago. Operated between Hannibal and St. Joseph, Mo., the car was part of a transcontinental service that included Pony Express and stagecoach. In the hundred years since, the Railway Mail Service has grown to include a railroad investment of more than a billion dollars in mail-handling equipment -- a part of the assets upon which they pay property taxes each year.

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The ICC has denied the American Trucking Association's petition asking the Commission to modify its report on the grade-crossing accident involving a school bus near Greeley, Colorado, December 14, 1961.

The ATA sought to eliminate the finding that "the Union Pacific train involved was being operated properly." The Commission's denial order said the ATA "has not shown substantial or material reasons for reopening the proceedings for reconsideration or modification of the report."

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Plans currently are in progress in Denver covering the Second Conference on the History of Western America, to be headquartered at the Albany Hotel October 11th, 12th and 13th, and expected to attract 400-500 people prominent in the field of western history. As part of this conference, Club member Fred Rosenstock is holding open house at his new specialty book store featuring Western History and located at 1228 East Colfax Avenue, between Marion and Lafayette.

He hereby extends a cordial invitation to all Rocky Mountain Railroad Club members to attend the "special doings" between 4 and 6 p.m. Thursday, October 11th, providing a splendid opportunity for interested members to meet some of these distinguished western historians in person. Professor Bob Athearn of the University of Colorado also will be on hand to autograph copies of his "Rebel of the Rockies" -- the new history of the Rio Grande mentioned earlier this year.

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The Union Pacific has ordered 300 flat car underframes and 425 car sets of cast steel box car underframe ends, costing more than \$3 million, from General Steel Industries. The castings will be produced at the Commonwealth Division of GSI, Granite City, Ill.

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A 40-car freight train recently rolled out of the former ghost town of Atlantic City, Wyoming, with the first shipment of up-graded iron ore ever shipped from Wyoming. Destination of the iron ore shipment was the blast furnaces of U. S. Steel's Geneva Works near Provo, Utah, some 355 miles away. The string of ore cars left Atlantic City over U.S. Steel's spur line to the main Union Pacific tracks near Rock Springs, Wyoming.

The shipment marked near-completion of a multi-million dollar project begun by U.S. Steel in June, 1960. Business Week magazine said an "educated guess" of the cost of the project would be between \$50 million and \$70 million. The new facility concentrates the low-grade taconite ore and turns it into marble-size pellets ready for the blast furnaces. The operation is predicted to provide Wyoming with one of its biggest payrolls.

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Passenger service deficits of the ICC's "35 selected large railroads" last year ranged from Katy's loss of \$2.3 million to Santa Fe's \$30.3 million. Runners-up on the high-deficit side were: Pennsylvania, \$29.5 million; Union Pacific, \$26.6 million; Southern Pacific, \$23.4 million. Freight operations, as well as passenger services, were unprofitable in 1961 for five of the 35 roads on the Commission's list. Freight losses ranged from Grand Trunk Western's \$1.2 million to New Haven's \$7.2 million. Dining service also proved more expensive last year. The ratio of diner and buffet expenses to revenues from those services was 1.43 : 1. The expense figures do not include costs of hauling and maintaining diners, or overhead.

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Observers noticed a special-purpose car in Denver recently. The car is to be used to transport nuclear fuel wastes from both the Dresden nuclear power station of Commonwealth Edison Co. near Morris, Ill., and the N. S. Savannah, first nuclear-powered merchant vessel. The car was in Denver for the installation by the Stearns-Roger Manufacturing Co. of a cask to hold the nuclear wastes. The cask, designed and built by Stearns-Roger Co., is 11 ft. high, 5 ft. wide, weighs 55 tons, and has 10-inch thick lead walls.

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Our May Newsletter (No. 33) reported the dismantling of the C&S roundhouse here in Denver. Now the D&RGW has also reached that stage of "progress". The blacksmith shop at Burnham is being torn down, and plans are for the old Store Department building east of the blacksmith shop to be removed in the near future. Both structures were built about 1883. The blacksmith shop originally was the machine shop-erecting shop. The building's roof timbers are one-foot thick, solid oak, and reinforced with iron. Heavy steam drop hammers at one time were operated here.

The blacksmith shop is being removed to make room for a modern diesel locomotive repair shop. When completed, the new multi-level, all-steel building will be east of the present backshop and north of the 8th Avenue Overpass. Present plans are to remove most service facilities now located south of the overpass. This includes the roundhouse. Only the turntable, oil house, diesel fuel storage tanks and research laboratory will remain south of the overpass. The washrack will be brought nearer to 8th Avenue.

Burnham, at D&RGW Milepost 2, is reportedly named for George Burnham, onetime partner in the Baldwin Locomotive Works.

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Two secretaries were discussing their problems over a cup of coffee. One of them said, "All I asked the boss was, 'Do you want the carbon copy double-spaced too?'"

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