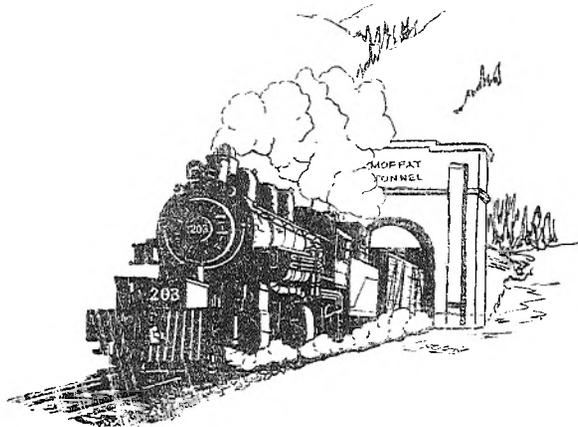


Rocky Mountain Rail Report



The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391 Denver, Colorado 80201

OCTOBER 1973

No. 169

CURRENT NEWS AND HISTORICAL NOTES OF
ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROADING PUBLISHED
MONTHLY FOR ITS MEMBERS BY THE ROCKY
MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

Editor - - - Darrell Arndt

MEETING NOTICE: Date Wednesday, October 10, 1973
Time 7:45 p.m.
Place Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church,
2900 S. University at Bates; offstreet parking
at rear (east) of meeting hall.

PROGRAM NOTES: Mel Patrick, a traffic representative for the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad in Denver and a new member of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will present an outstanding program at this month's meeting. His show is entitled CHICAGO UNION STATION - A PHOTOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE, 23 minutes of sound and slides showing the people, buildings and trains of the Windy City's largest passenger station. Produced in early 1969 when most of the passenger operations still had their own identities, the program uses narration, music and size 220 slides shown with two projectors to present the moods of the pre-Amtrak era. Shown in detail are the Burlington's commuter trains, the Milwaukee's Hiawathas and everyone's favorite - the California Zephyr. In addition Mel will show some other recent slides of the Denver area and more on Chicago too.

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LOOP UPDATE - Work is proceeding well on the Georgetown Loop. Both bridges at the upper end of the loop have been set in place. The first crossing of the creek on the descent from Silver Plume is over the truss bridge, which was obtained from the Black Hollow Branch of the C&S out of Fort Collins. A short distance from that, the track immediately swings back over the second bridge, which is substantially higher than the first, due to the rapid fall of the creek in that area. This bridge is the same structure that was in place when the line was dismantled. It had been removed to a location south of Denver where it remained until recently. This bridge is of particular interest in that it was originally a turntable for a Denver area narrow gauge line. It replaced the original bridge installed when the loop was constructed.

Tracklaying has begun at the bridge and will proceed upgrade to Silver Plume. Only minor grading work was necessary to return the roadbed to acceptable condition. A second track has been laid in front of the station to help accomodate the 17 freight cars now at the location. Construction work is being handled by two groups of Naval Reserve Seabees as a summer camp training exercise. The second group took over when the first was finished.

On September 18th, Engine No. 44 and its tender were trucked to Silver Plume from Central City. When the engine was fired up on Friday the 21st, it had been nearly 35 years since narrow gauge steam had departed from the valley.

In recent weeks old man Winter has indicated his coming arrival with some snow and rain in the mountains. Hopefully he will keep his nose out of Colorado until work is completed at the site.

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KNOW WHO YOU ARE - The club now has available to the membership a pin-on badge which identifies you as a member of the RMRRC and shows your name. The 2"x3" steel badge displays the clubs logo in a size slightly smaller than it appears on the front of the newsletter envelope. A clear plastic window is along the bottom, behind which your name can be inserted from the back. Cost is one dollar. Please address orders to the clubs post office box.

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RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY'S CIRCUS TRAIN rolled into Denver last month for a five day pause in its annual ten month nationwide tour. The unique train arrived the evening of the 18th after completing a trip over UP rails from its last stop in San Diego. The following morning equipment and animals were moved a block to the Denver Coliseum to prepare for the first performance later that day. The train consisted of six piggyback flat cars, two open end baggage cars for vehicles and equipment, four or five baggage cars for the animals, two generator cars used for supplying electrical power for the trains heat, light, and airconditioning systems, a dining car (pie car in circus jargon), a shop car, and of course the passenger cars. The train is one of two the circus has in operation.

As each act was finished Sunday evening, equipment and animals were immediately loaded aboard the train and secured. By the time the first rays of the Monday morning sun streaked across the Denver skies, the 32 car train with its animals and reportedly 360 residents was several hours into its journey to a Wednesday show in Cincinnati.

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ALL BUSINESS - In mid-September Union Pacific Railroad officials took their semi-annual inspection trip over a major portion of the system. Two E units pulled the seven car special which consisted of a Pullman staff car and six business cars. Business cars used were car 100 for the RR President, car 101 for the V.P. of Operations, car 105 for the Chief Engineer, car 104 for the Chief Mechanical Officer, car 110 for the General Manager, and car 114 as a general observation car. The train traveled from Kansas City to Topeka, up to North Platte, west through Cheyenne, Green River to Seattle. From there it returned by way of Pocatello to Salt Lake, where 8444 had steamed to earlier, and was present for a Chamber of Commerce activity in which UP officials had participated. The 8444 ran back to Cheyenne, as did the business special, which continued east to Omaha.

About the same time another special carrying the UP's corporation president and his party went from Seattle to Kansas City, traveling behind Amtrak's train between Ogden and Denver. This four car train consisted of a Pullman, business car Arden, and business cars 102 and 103.

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CLOSE-CALL - The lead unit of Amtrak's California bound San Francisco Zephyr had her face messed up on Sept. 20 in an altercation with a 30 ton oil drilling rig at a road crossing near Gilcrest, Colo. Local newspaper reports stated the engineer saw the derrick blocking the road about half a mile away, applied the emergency brakes, and went with the fireman to the rear of the unit for safety. The news photo of the cab indicates this was a good move on their part. The lead units cab area was heavily damaged, and one set of trucks were derailed. The other locomotives and several passenger cars were also badly damaged. Only a few minor injuries were reported among the 160 passengers and crewmen aboard the eleven car train, which was moving at close to 80 mph. The drilling rig was demolished.

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FUN, FUN, FUN - For the 13th straight year the Reno Fun Train will take happy-go-lucky passengers between San Francisco and Reno, Nevada. Several mid-week trips are planned along with the regular weekend trips. A total of fifteen trips will run from October through May. Ticket includes rail fare, buffet meal on train both ways, two nights lodging, music aboard train, and discount coupons for various meals and attractions in the Reno area.

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GOOD OMEN - Due to unexpected patronage, the San Francisco Zephyr will continue to run daily through the winter. Also remaining in daily service is the

Coast Daylight-Starlight between Oakland and Seattle.

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AMTRAK AUTO-TRAIN - A recent news report stated Amtrak plans to initiate its own auto carrying train this winter between Chicago and Florida. A lot of flak is expected because of the conflict with Auto-Train Corporation who also proposes to begin similar Florida service, only tapping the midwestern market from a Louisville, Ky terminal. On Amtrak, autos will probably be hauled behind the Floridan, which connects Chicago and Miami. More detailed information on the proposal is sketchy. It had been rumored that an auto train from an eastern point to Denver is also under consideration.

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BACK HOME AGAIN - Remember those three Vista-Dome round end observation parlor cars the Rio Grande obtained from the C&O in 1949 for use in the consist of the Royal Gorge? Their ends were modified by Rio Grande shop forces with a passageway and door for mid-train use. One of these cars has returned to the Mile High City to serve as a standby car for Amtrak. The car, named Linoma, is ready for use on the daily train should equipment failure or shortage of equipment require it. Altho in Amtrak colors, lack of lettering on the exterior, other than the name and no. AUT 200, indicates the car may be leased from Auto-Liner Corporation of Omaha, who refurbished the car.

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NEXT BEST THING TO MILE HIGH TROLLEYS? - In early September Denver area voters approved a \$1.56-billion mass transit system to be built over a ten year period, with construction not scheduled to begin before 1976. The system, proposed by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) in Denver, will be based upon a 100 mile network of elevated 12 passenger Personal Rapid Transit vehicles (PRT) integrated into an extensive system of local, express, and regional bus service. The PRT system is quite revolutionary, with vehicles traveling on a steel and concrete fixed guideway system that would serve the Denver, Boulder, and Greeley areas. It is the nations first large scale PRT plan and dwarfs all other PRT systems now in existence or proposed. Some authorities are apprehensive in planning such a large project based on a system that has not yet been thoroughly tested and evaluated. To help finance construction, residents of the district will begin paying an additional 1/2% sales tax in January.

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YOU'D-BETTER-BE-SITTING-DOWN-WHEN-YOU-READ-THIS DEPT. - In keeping with the current spirit of expanding and modernizing Denver's public transportation system, the D&RGW has offered to run commuter service between Union Station and Littleton. The idea was suggested by a member of the Rio Grande management, who is also one of the RTD directors. As it is doubtful the service would pay its own way, it would be necessary for the RTD to subsidize the service to prevent any loss to the railroad. If the test service proves successful, the rail line said it could be expanded to other lines.

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A HISTORY OF THE HILL - Club members Jim Ehernberger and Francis Gschwind have just completed a book that will undoubtedly find great appeal among western railroad fans and Union Pacific fans in particular. It's the story of Sherman Hill, from its inception to the present. A complete history is given of the building and subsequent rebuilding of the line, and of the magnificent motive power and their trains that have roared over this famous railroad division. Informative maps and numerous photos are used to enhance the story. The book will be available in about another month.

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D&IM CABOOSE No. 902 was received on the property of the Colorado Railroad Museum in August. The car had been wasting away in a scrap yard for a number of years. Arrival of the car heralded the first time in 15 years that the Museum has no plans for further additions to its collection of rolling stock. The museum announced it has 53 engines and cars of different gauges now on exhibit. Not to be overlooked either is their excellent indoor collections on display and the comprehensive railroadiana store.

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THE TEXAS ZEPHYR CARS have been removed to the Black Hills Central at Hill City, South Dakota. The train had suffered heavy damage while sitting in a Denver scrap yard. Two of the articulated units had been scrapped, and the remainder thoroughly vandalized.

Reconstruction of the Keystone Branch is complete. The track now terminates about half a mile from Keystone, as costs of replacing a large trestle lost in the floods were prohibitive. The BHC tourist runs will be the only business the line sees now.

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THE SALIDA DEPOT is to be closed as a result of a change in work rules which allows train crews to run from Pueblo through to Minturn.

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ENGINE No. 476 has a new side rod installed and was back to work for the Silverton before the end of the season.

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THE REMAINING COPIES of A CENTURY OF PASSENGER TRAINS by Jackson Thode have been sold. Thank you for your orders.

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SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW - An Ohio railway supply firm has recently been advertising a new patented "snow switch", a device that could be quite useful to the northern railroads. The company states that the switch will not clog with snow, greatly reduces snow shoveling, and eliminates expensive switch heaters. This new "invention" sounds like something that should have been thought up a long time ago, Right?? Well hang on to your hat. Because what the creation boils down to, with no apparent changes in design, is a simple stub switch of the type that was in wide spread use by the railroads many years ago. HOORAY for a progressive leap backward!!!!

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SWAP 'N SHOP - Personal ads are accepted from members for items to be listed for sale or trade or wanted. We cannot enter into any correspondence, nor will we appraise items.

WANTED: Mears Pass - any kind; gold, silver, brass, cardboard, paper or what have you? L. R. ORTON, 2724 Concord, Colo. Spgs., Colo. 80907 636-3630

DOW HELMERS, 3030 Leslie Drive, Colo. Springs, Colo. 80909 would like to purchase one copy each of "Picture Maker of the Old West" and "Time Exposure" by Wm. H. Jackson and "The Search for the Holy Cross" by Clarence Jackson.

WANT 78 rpm records of a rr theme, Edison 5" cyl. records or the thin Edison that were used on 78's. Offer Robertson, Slow Train to Yesterday, June, 1937 Ry Guide, Rails Through the Hill Country, account about the Fredericksburg & Northern RR, this was one of the four rrs in Tex. to have a tunnel on the rr. A. VON BLON, Box 6422 Waco, Texas.

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Charles Max, President Bill Gordon, Secretary
E. J. Haley, Vice-President Carl E. C. Carlson, Treasurer