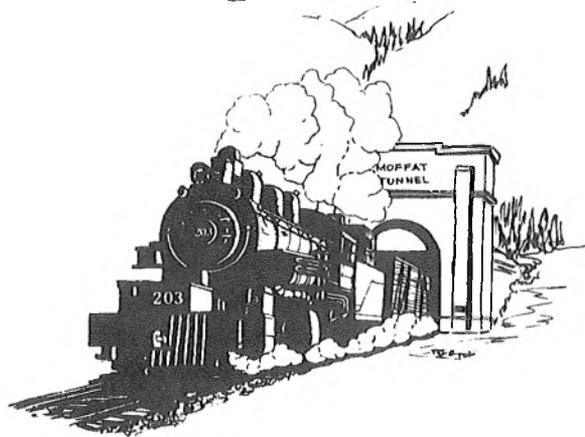


Rocky Mountain Rail Report



The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391
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Denver, Colorado 80201
No. 213

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

Editor - - - Darrell T. Arndt

MEETING NOTICE: Date . . . Tuesday, June 14, 1977
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: For the June meeting, our Program Chairman has arranged a "triple-header" showing of three fine movie films we are almost guaranteed to enjoy. The first movie is titled TOCCATA FOR TOYS, and explores the fascinating hobby of antique toy trains. We will then see the widely acclaimed, professionally produced MODEL RAILROADING UNLIMITED, a very enjoyable flick about the fast growing hobby of model railroading. The third film will be the Rayonier Lumber Company's END OF AN ERA, a 16mm color/sound movie showing the last days of steam on their tremendous lumber hauling railroad. The Rayonier logging lines employed a variety of steam power in their extensive operations, including 2-8-2's and 2-6-6-2's in their mainline service. These three films can easily be classified into the "don't miss" department, and have a quality that even a non-rail enthusiast can appreciate.

Chuck Weart's presentation at the May meeting on the "Blizzard of '77" railroad snow-fighting operations turned out to be all we could have asked for and more. Preceding the slide portion of the program, Maurice Pautz from the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Aurora, provided background information about the development and movement of the storm. He then projected old newspaper clippings about a previous storm that was similar to this recent one in scope and damage.

The task facing the railroads after the storm was enormous, and more involved than most people realize. Chuck's slide program, consisting of slides from a number of personal collections, along with his own, depicted many of the extra train movements on such roads as the UP, MP, C&NW, MILW, RI, ATSF, and BN. Impressive scenes of numerous freights stuck cab-deep in snow, were blended with unique action shots of rotaries and wedge plows, digging through mammoth drifts. The rotary views were certainly appealing, but the wedge plows rated many "ooohs" and "aaahs" also, especially the priceless shots of

RI plow No. 95583, and its pushing diesels literally burying itself in a cut near Genoa, Colorado, only to be dug out by determined RI crews. On the second high-speed attack, the train disappeared into a cloud of flying snow. When the white stuff settled back to earth, there was the plow, upside down in front of the derailed engines.

Complementing the slide portion were color/sound movies by Dave Rasmussen of the rotary clearing the Limon-Colorado Springs trackage.

Many thanks to Chuck and his friends for a fine evening's entertainment.

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THE NEW MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is included with this newsletter. In the roster is also included a summary of the Club's equipment maintained at the Colorado Railroad Museum.

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8444 CAN HANDLE IT!!! The Union Pacific Railroad has given the green light for excursion service with its famous steam locomotive No. 8444. So ... we are proceeding with arrangements for a trip behind the magnificent machine on Saturday, November 26, 1977. Further details will be forthcoming.

In the area of other activities ... On Saturday, July 16, the welcome mat will be rolled out for Rocky Mountain Railroad Club members and friends on the High Country Railroad at Heritage Square when the two-foot gauge railroad steams up a Shay locomotive, an 0-8-0 and its 0-4-0 No. 9 for a day of special operations and activities . . . August 6 is the date for the Platte Canyon Bunion Pounder as we walk over the old grade of the Denver South Park & Pacific . . . The September 2 - 5 trip to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, is proceeding well and is described in literature included with this newsletter. It's a trip almost impossible to beat. So note these dates on the calendar and try to include yourself in some of the fun.

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The Santa Fe's Director's Special, described in last month's newsletter, is shown here at Denver Union Station on April 26. Carl Carlson took these photos shortly before its departure.

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WEIRD AND UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER was the rule of the day on Pikes Peak, as the Club took its Spring outing on the Manitou and Pikes Peak Railway on May 14. Occasional storm clouds dropping rain, snow and hail passed through the region during the afternoon, but Mother Nature was kind enough to provide sunshine along the right-of-way. Above Windy Point near the top, blizzard conditions prevailed, however, which prohibited photo stops above that point, but encouraged passengers to scurry into the summit house at the top for refreshments. Following the trip, many chose to entertain their stomachs at Guisepe's Old Depot Restaurant.

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STEAM TAKES IT ON THE CHIN AGAIN - The diesel-powered rotary from Hinkle, Oregon has arrived in Cheyenne, and the No. 76 (used on the Denver-Limon-Colorado Springs clearing operation in March) will go to Hinkle. No. 75 rotary is scheduled to leave Cheyenne for Omaha at a future date to be dieselized.

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Zephyrs roll down Saudi rails

Editor's Note: Eugene H Blabey, UPI business manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa, is also a train buff. He spotted an old Burlington Zephyr running through the desert during a recent business trip to Saudi Arabia. His dispatch follows.

By Eugege H. Blabey

FORTY YEARS AFTER capturing the imagination of Depression era travelers in the United States, the famous Burlington Zephyr trains have begun a new career in Saudi Arabia.

The stainless steel streamliners, which set the style for a whole generation of railroad passenger equipment in North America when they were introduced in 1936, now run on a 350-mile line linking the Persian Gulf port of Damman with the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

Before their retirement by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy R.R. a decade ago the sleek cars often ran at speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour. However, track conditions here force the Saudi Government

Railway to maintain a speed limit of about 60 miles an hour. Temperature extremes in the desert can cause steel rails to kink due to heat expansion, and frequent sandstorms limit visibility.

WITH INTERMEDIATE stops at Abqaiq, Hofuf, Ain Hardah and Al-Kharj, the Saudi Zephyrs take about seven hours to make their run across the Eastern Province. Taking the train may not be as fast as flying, but it is hard to beat the price of a ticket - about \$4.50.

More than 170,000 passengers a year ride the railway, which was built for the late King Ibn Saud by the Arabian American Oil Company. Running through the Abqaiq and Ghawar oilfields, which contain some of the largest reserves of petroleum on earth, the land is generally flat and the scenery is uninteresting.

The Saudis take pride in their railroad. It is, after all, the sole example of this mode of transportation in the kingdom, the only other railroad having been so damaged by Lawrence of Arabia during his guerrilla campaign against the Turks in World War I that it was never rebuilt.

They are especially proud of

their new Zephyr rolling stock, which was completely refurbished at Kansas City before shipment here by sea. The rebuilt cars have modern interiors and spacious airplane-type seating. Microwave ovens have replaced the ranges in the dining cars - but the traditional names have been retained.

EVEN IN ARABIC translation, names like "Silver Flash," "Silver Slipper," "Silver Lining" and "Silver Screen" convey something of the sense of glamor that appealed to the public at the time a train was still the prestige way to get from Chicago to Omaha or Denver.

Bashawri was one of a team of Saudis that went to the United States two years ago to look over the Zephyr cars. The equipment was then the property of Alexander Barket, a Kansas City banker and railroad enthusiast.

AFTER FURTHER inspection by a French consultant it was decided that the trains were just what the Saudis needed to supplement a set of self-propelled Rail Diesel Cars (RDC's) that had been operating the majority of passenger services.

Ironically, the RDC's were built by the Budd Company of Philadelphia, Pa., the same manufacturer that had pioneered the process of stainless steel welding in its assembly of the Zephyrs many years before. It is estimated that it would cost more than a million dollars a car to recreate the cars today.

Before shipment, a successful test run was made between Kansas City, where the rebuilding job was carried out in a little-used part of the Union Station, and Emporia, Kans., a journey of 250 miles.

Accompanied by eight American technicians and 26 tons of spare parts, the 21 Zephyr cars were shipped from the port of Houston, Tex. They arrived here Christmas week on a ship, named, appropriately enough, the Eastern Wiseman.

IN REGULAR SERVICE, the cars are used to make up three separate train sets, each consisting of a pair of coaches, two first-class sleeping cars, a diner-observation car and a baggage car containing a generator set to supply power for lighting and air conditioning units. Other cars are used during times of heavy traffic such as the Hajj season, when Moslem pilgrims swell traffic on their way to Mecca and Medina.

Response to the new trains has been excellent. They have received extensive publicity in both the Arabic and English language press.

United Press International

Above is a recent news article on the old Zephyr equipment that had been stored in Kansas City. Since the story is rather interesting, we thought we'd reproduce it here, in case you missed it.

A STEAM WEEKEND AT THE COLORADO RAILROAD MUSEUM will be held on June 18th and 19th. The locomotive is due for inspection and repairs later in the summer, which will probably put the 346 out of service for an extended period. The museum decided to offer an opportunity to see the engine operating again while still possible.

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IF A VISIT TO THE MUSEUM on that June weekend will work into your plans, be sure to look over the Club's equipment on display, especially the Birney streetcar which recently had its celestory window frames and windows repaired to the tune of \$1,400. This is another necessary expense that must be accepted to keep the Club's equipment in top shape, and it did put quite a dent in the equipment fund. Donations to the fund are always welcome and are always put to good, discretionary use. Your contribution would be most appreciated.

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IT IS WITH DEEP REGRET we report the death of long-time club member and friend, Edward Ryan, who succumbed to a heart attack May 16, at the age of 60. Ed partook of many club activities and most meetings over the years, and had been with us on the May 14th cog trip. Our sympathy is extended to his two sisters.

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THE UNIQUE SCALE MODEL DOME CAR that sat for years on the stone foundation in Glenwood Canyon as part of the memorial to one of the more popular and successful innovations and railroad passenger equipment is now on display at the Colorado Railroad Museum. Due to abuse by vandals and other assorted knuckleheads, the car had to be removed by the railroad and stored for some time.

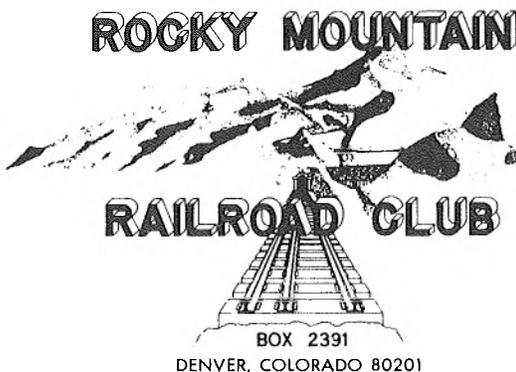
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