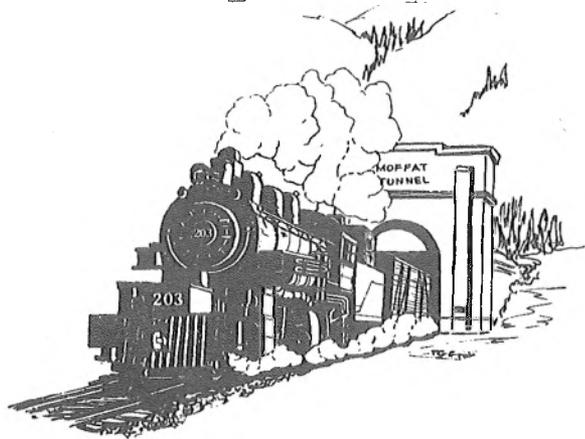


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391 Denver, Colorado 80201

April, 1978

No. 223

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 . . . April 11, 1978  
Time . . . 7:45 P.M.  
Place . . . Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church, 2900 So.  
University at Bates; off-street parking at rear (east)  
of meeting hall and north along Bates. Please use the  
west doors to enter the hall.

### PROGRAM NOTES: A BRITISH RAIL TOUR

Slides of the Fall 1977 British Rail Tour, taken by Tom Keeton and Gene Loftus will be shown at the April meeting. The tour was a circle trip starting and ending at London. It included sections of the old GWR, LMS and LNER lines using both mainline and branchline rail service. On-board and lineside views of trains, structures, bridges and equipment throughout the countryside of Cornwall, eastern and western England and much of Scotland are also included. This trip is scheduled to be repeated in October of this year.

March's program came in like a Lion with an unexpected "added attraction" when Jim Ranniger unleashed a not-soon-to-be-forgotten, but a soon-to-be-famous "Ranniger's Notorious Newsreel," the subject matter being the Moffat Tunnel Celebration on February 25. His roving team of one reporter managed to provide an excellent summary of the mid-morning events at the East Portal, with some additional candid shots of innocent bystanders, not realizing they were to become (in)famous on Ranniger's Notorious Newsreel. The excitement, suspense, thrill, intrigue, and earthshaking drama of the report was aptly enhanced by Jim's narration, and by "newsreel type" background music, some of which undoubtedly came from Jim's WW I WW II marching days!!

A great program by Byer Patton then began on what he encountered only a few years ago in South Africa, with the many steam trains that were still burnishing the standard and narrow gauge rails. It seemed like the early '50's and before to many of us with steam, and well-maintained steam at that, in every direction. The high speed action of their narrow gauge (down to two feet) was quite a surprise to many of us who only think of the slow moving Colorado trains of years ago, chugging slowly through the mountains. Byer had film from almost every angle; on the ground, on the trains and even from the cab. The eye popping "condensing tenders," longer than their 4-8-4 locomotives and with a bank of fans on top,

were a new education to many of us. The Garretts in action said it all for African steam. Complementing the movies were recordings of the steam on the screen, interspersed with native African music. Our thanks to Byer for a very enjoyable presentation.

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TRANSPORTATION TEST CENTER TRIP - Included with this newsletter is a flyer on the club's trip to the TTC near Pueblo. Please note the change in date from Saturday the 22nd to Friday, April 21. The Center does not presently give tours on the weekend, so Friday became the next choice. There was a good response at the March meeting for this trip, so those wishing to come along should send in their reservations immediately or obtain them at the April meeting. It should be a real fun trip. Incidentally, there will be only a minimal amount of walking involved.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE DRAWING FOR THE BOOKS "COLORADO MIDLAND" and "PICTORIAL SUPPLEMENT TO DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC" will be held at the April meeting. Chances are \$1.00 each; dues are \$6.00 of course. If you have not received a dues card, you have not paid up. Those who have not dropped their check in the trusty mail, will be dropped from the roster as of May 1.

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\* \* \* MT. POOR AND MT. HELMERS OFFICIALLY PROCLAIMED \* \* \*

In recognition of the many years of labor, love and dedication to the preservation and documenting of the history of the Denver South Park & Pacific Railroad by Mac Poor and Dow Helmers, the United States Board of Geographic Names in Reston, Virginia has officially named two mountain peaks in the vicinity of the Alpine Tunnel in their honor. Mac and Dow were two of Colorado's most dedicated railroad historians, as well as fondly remembered club members.

Both peaks are located 28 miles east-northeast of Gunnison in the Sawatch Range in Chaffee and Gunnison Counties, at one of the most historic rail crossings of the Continental Divide. Mt. Poor, named after Mac C. Poor (1902-1972), is 12,440 feet in elevation and has the Alpine Tunnel on its northwest slope. Mac authored the book DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC and co-authored the PICTORIAL SUPPLEMENT TO DENVER SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC, two of the most thoroughly researched, in-depth studies ever done on the railroad. His years of effort brought a part of Colorado's narrow gauge history into the reach of those of us who could not explore the DSP&P on our own, or who simply were not cognizant of the colorful rail history in the mountains west of Denver.

Mt. Helmers is named after Dow Helmers (1906-1976), and has an elevation of 12,858 feet. Alpine Tunnel is located on its northeast slope. Dow was, of course, an author and historian of the DSP&P, with his most popular work being HISTORIC ALPINE TUNNEL. He was an enthusiastic supporter for the preservation of the Gunnison region's rail history, and was a driving force in preserving what was left at the west portal of the Alpine Tunnel so that others could enjoy a part of the past.

The naming of these two peaks is rather an unusual event in that they had never been previously named. Most naming of peaks is usually the result of a change from one designation to another. These names became official on February 9, 1978. A great deal of thanks is due all who actively promoted this most appropriate form of recognition to these two individuals.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE D&RGW SKI TRAIN kicked the snow from its (brake) shoes and called it a season after its April 2nd run to Winter Park . . . The Silverton will start its season on May 27, and run until October 8. Round trip is \$12.00. Over on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, regularly scheduled service will begin on June 10, and run until October 15. Round trip fare is \$16.00.

\* \* \* \* \*

MIKE KOCH, a well-known eastern member of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, has just completed writing another great book about the logging railroads of the United States and Canada. Mike is well remembered as the author of the excellent book THE SHAY--TITAN OF THE TIMBER, published by World Press in 1971. World Press is also publishing Mike's new book, STEAM & THUNDER IN THE TIMBER--SAGA OF THE FOREST RAILROADS. It will be quite similar in format to the "Shay" book, with more than 500 pages, over 800 black and white photographs, and ten full-page four-color reproductions of Richard Ward paintings. Additional information and brochures may be obtained from World Press, 1215 Elati Street, Denver, Colorado 80204.

\* \* \* \* \*

WE REGRET TO REPORT the death of Bob Donahoe, who passed away from a heart attack on March 15, in Glenwood Springs, while driving between Silverton and Denver. He was 57 years old, an ardent UP and narrow gauge fan, and had just assumed the position of office manager for Sundance Books in Silverton. Burial was in his native West Virginia.

\* \* \* \* \*

OF INTEREST - A very informative article on the D&RGW-Santa Fe-C&S trackage between Denver and Pueblo can be found in the May, 1978 issue of RAILFAN magazine. Written by Robert Harmen and illustrated by Bob and also by Jerry Palmer, the ten-page story offers a concise run down on the history of the busy joint line plus a review of what railroads run what, when and where; radio frequencies in use, a description of the Denver and Pueblo terminals, maps, and how to explore the line by auto. It is a must issue for anyone with a "hangup" on the rail operations between the Mile High City and the Steel City.

A recent issue of another publication, PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL, (February, 1978), also has an article of particular interest to Colorado fans entitled "Winter on the Yampa Valley Mail." The seven-page look at riding over the Denver-Craig (Moffat Road) portion of the D&RGW in the waning days of the route's passenger train is written by Phillip R. Hastings and illustrated with his fine photography.

\* \* \* \* \*

DUE TO A FREIGHT DERAILMENT at Minden, Nebraska on March 7, both eastbound and westbound San Francisco Zephyrs were rerouted between Hastings and Denver on the Union Pacific via Grand Island and Julesburg, reports the Camerail Club. The club also reports that the UP was to have operated two Employee Specials this spring. The first, a Junior Old-Timer's Special (10 or more years of service) leaving Council Bluffs on March 18 for a six-day round trip to Las Vegas; the second, an Old Timer's Special (20 or more years of service) departing Council Bluffs on April 8 for another six-day run to Las Vegas. The UP's attitude towards its employees seems to match its reputation for the first-class care received by the company's physical plant.

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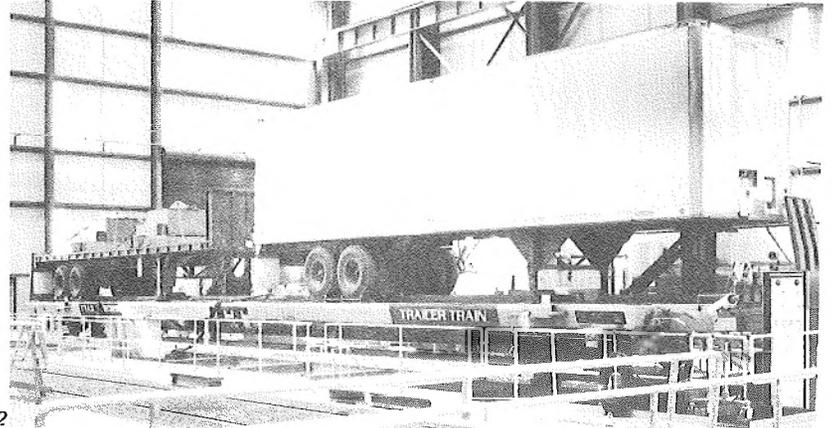
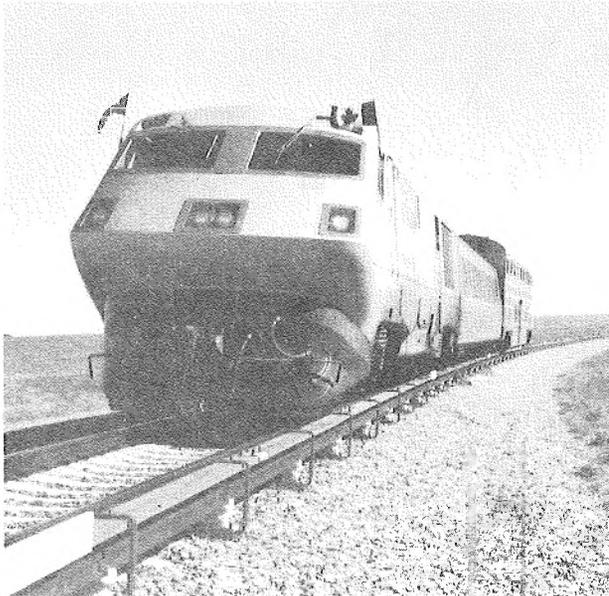
# THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

*invites you  
to*

## The Transportation Test Center

*Pueblo, Colorado*

On Friday, April 21, 1978, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will travel from Denver by charter bus to visit the world's most advanced railroad testing laboratory located near Pueblo, Colorado. Since ground was broken in 1970 at the 52 square-mile site, the Test Center has expanded to include numerous service and research buildings, 45 miles of track and guideways, and a variety of permanent and visiting motive power and rolling stock. The tour will include an indoor program at the visitors' center and a ride to various areas of the complex. Highlights of the center include the air cushion and linear induction guideways, the 9-mile Transit Test Track, the 14-mile long Railroad Test Track and the Rail Dynamics Laboratory.



1 Comparative ride quality characteristics are tested of the Canadian LRC (Light, Rapid, Comfortable) high-speed prototype coupled to a bi-level Amtrak coach.

2 A trailer train car loaded with highway trailers undergoes vertical shaking tests in the Rail Dynamics Laboratory.

The trip will depart from the southeast corner of the Villa Italia Shopping Center parking lot in Lakewood at 8:00 AM. Cars may be parked in the lot during the day. After stopping enroute for lunch, the group will proceed to the test center for a tour of the facility. A visit will also be made to the historic Pueblo Union Depot. Dinner will be at Giuseppe's Old Depot Restaurant in the former Rio Grande/Rock Island station in Colorado Springs, where a selection of reasonably priced dinners can be enjoyed in a relaxed atmosphere of various railroadiana.

The fare for this one-day outing is only \$10.00 per person, lunch and dinner not included. Space is very limited, so don't delay. Send for your reservations now!

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN**

**RAILROAD CLUB**

Check or Money Order for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB  
P.O. Box 2391, Denver, Colorado 80201

CLOSE CALL - A heavy, earth-moving machine being transported over a grade crossing in a south-Denver suburb, hooked the track and yanked a rail loose just as a BN freight was approaching at about 45 mph last month. The train was almost on top of the signal protecting that stretch of track, when it changed to red in the engineer's face, according to reports. The train was able to come to a safe halt. The driver of the machinery was located and ticketed for leaving the scene.

\* \* \* \* \*

BUMP! - A Union Pacific locomotive derailed and struck a column under the main viaduct connecting the north and south sections of the city of Cheyenne on March 12, causing a portion of the structure to collapse. There were no injuries, although it was reported that the yardmaster in the tower adjacent to the bridge was thrown from his chair. Several columns were damaged and the UP said repairs would begin immediately. The unfortunate accident was caused by an improperly thrown switch.

\* \* \* \* \*

ONLY A MEMORY - Scattered debris and neatly stacked piles of salvaged bricks are all that remain where the main C&S shop building stood at 7th Street in Denver. Five stalls of the roundhouse remain, the building being used by a private industry.

\* \* \* \* \*

RESERVATIONS PLEASE - The word "Amtrak" quickly became a household word at a Wheatridge, Colorado home last month, when the family was assigned a new phone number that was the same as Amtrak's nationwide toll-free number but without the 1-800 prefix. It wasn't long before the calls came pouring in at all hours of the day and night. The phone company finally agreed to change their number to a less popular one.

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SWAP 'N SHOP will be included next month.

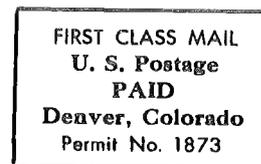
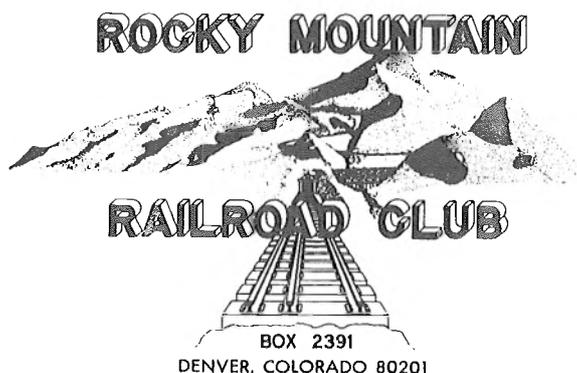
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JAMES R. TROWBRIDGE, President

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