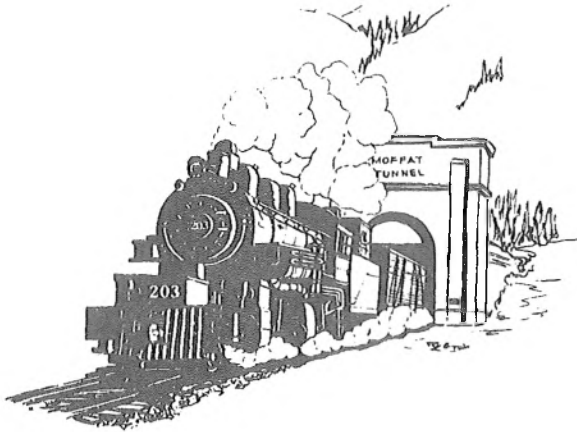


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391      Denver, Colorado 80201  
July, 1979                  No. 238

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, July 10, 1979  
Time . . . 7:45 P.M.  
Place . . . Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church, 2900  
South University at Bates; off-street parking at  
rear (east) of meeting hall. Please use build-  
ing's south entrance.

### PROGRAM NOTES:

The program for the July meeting will be "Rocky Rails '77 - Two Years Later." In the summer of 1977, the National Convention of the National Model Railroad Association was held in Denver, the largest NMRA convention in its history. As an indication of its size, to accommodate the nearly 260 commercial exhibitors, 3,500 delegates, and a banquet attended by 2,600 people, all of Denver's Currigan Hall was used. When it was all over, 20,213 visitors had passed through the exhibition areas.

The program will review the convention in two parts. The first will be the very exciting promotional slide show that was created to interest and inform people coming to the convention. It is a multi-media, sound-slide show, conceived and presented by Alex Asbridge. Following Alex, Irwin Chaim will show the official photographs of the entire convention from the planning stage to the work party that culminated their efforts to make the convention a success.

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If Henry Flagler thought he had problems with water during the construction of the Florida East Coast's Key West Extension, he should have been up at Heritage Square the last few months! Generous amounts of precipitation this spring stymied efforts to complete the relocation of the High Country

Railroad, but three days of continuous rain, ending only a few hours before the June meeting, derailed our plans for the afternoon steam operations. The meeting and entertainment went on as intended, however, and we had the distinction of being the very first group to be served by the Apex Mining Company. The barbeque beef dinner went quite well, and was followed by "The Mother Lode," a fine five-piece band that played a selection of popular hits spanning the 20th century. Rounding out the evening was John Dillavou's program, "Ghosts of Colorado." John's slide-sound presentation reviewed a sampling of surviving and vanished towns in Colorado, touching on the reasons for their existence and their current status. Since many of Colorado's towns and railroads developed for the same reasons, it was easy to appreciate and understand their legacy in the state's history and understand why their remains should be respected.

\* \* \* \* \*

A REMINDER - July 28, the 8444 will roll northwest from Denver through the Platte River Valley to Sterling, Colorado for the club's annual Union Pacific Steam trip. The all-day excursion offers the opportunity to photograph the train at numerous photo stops, and also provides a chance to "cut yourself off" from the world for the day. Tell your friends about it. These excursions will operate only as long as there is support for them, or until the engine is no longer available. \$42.00 round trip.

\* \* \* \* \*

RAILFAIR takes place on Saturday and Sunday, July 7 and 8, at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. Admission - \$1.00, under 12 - 50¢. Jim Trowbridge would still like to hear from anyone who would like to help with the club's booth at the fair. An hour or two of your time would be a big help and all that is required on either day. Give Jim a ring at 988-2267.

\* \* \* \* \*

A PORTION of one of Colorado's most colorful narrow gauge lines will be the subject of the club's August field trip as we explore the Breckenridge-Como grade of the DSP&P. The 20-mile grade over Boreas Pass has not heard the exhaust of a steam locomotive since the late 1930's, but most of the route is still intact, and a few relics of the railroad's past are still evident. The field trip will start at the east end of the Villa Italia Shopping Center in Lakewood near the Joslins store. Departing from there at 8:00 A.M. on Saturday, August 18, we will proceed to Breckenridge and the beginning of the grade. There will be a number of "wandering" stops along the way, such as at Baker's Tank and the summit, but only one very short walk during the day. Just about anyone could make this trip, and the road is passable for autos. Ed Haley, Dick Kindig, and George Champion will be along to answer questions on the line, and describe points of interest relating to some of their experiences in riding the line back in the "good old days'?" We will stop

along the way for lunch. We ask everyone to bring their own picnic lunch and beverages, and perhaps a blanket to throw on the ground. Upon arrival at Como, we will take a look at the site of the rail yards, including the station and roundhouse. George, who is intimately familiar with Como, will explain the yards and answer questions and show photos of the facilities as they once were. Supper will be served in the old Como Eating House by Keith Hodges, who is renovating the structure for use, once again. After supper, we will go up to the old school house and enjoy a slide program by Ed Haley and Dick Kindig on their experiences in riding the passenger train from Denver to Leadville by way of Como and Boreas Pass.

The fare for this all-day outing, which will cover the handout, dinner and program, is \$7.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children under 12. Tickets MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE, and will be sold on a first-come first-served basis. Please send orders to the club's post office box. Please use the order blank at the end of the newsletter, or forward the same information.

\* \* \* \* \*

COLORADO RAILROAD MUSEUM'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY - The museum's 20th will be celebrated on July 14 and 15, with steamup of the 318, and possibly the 346, on which repairs are not being completed. The Galloping Goose will also be galloping and equipment on display will be open for inspection. (Donation of a little time to watch the club's equipment would be appreciated. Contact Bill Gordon.) On July 14, a banquet will be held in the Georgetown Room of the Brown Palace Hotel, in commemoration of the anniversary. Social hour to begin at 6:15 P.M., with dinner at 7:00 P.M. Tickets are \$12.50, and space is limited. Orders should be sent to the museum, Attention: Charles Albi, P.O. Box 10, Golden, Colorado 80401.

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RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR REPIREVE - The ICC refused to allow the discontinuance of the Rio Grande Zephyr from Grand Junction to Salt Lake City. One of the main factors in the decision was increased passenger use in recent months. Total ridership during the months of January through April increased from 11,321 in 1978, to 20,390 in 1979. Comparing April alone, 3,013 rode in 1978 compared with 7,287 this year. The railroad maintained that the train would still lose money even if the train were filled to capacity every trip. However, the commission stated that the "economic well being and vitality" of the railroad was "not being undermined," that the railroad and its parent company are "healthy and profitable." Another factor in the decision was the high degree of public interest demonstrated during the series of public hearings. Out of 104 public witnesses, only three spoke in favor of discontinuance. Many letters were also received, opposing the discontinuance. The commission criticized the railroad for not attempting to attract more passengers, stating that "the Rio Grande has failed to experiment with innovative pricing schemes that could help to attract riders to off-peak days . . . it is likely that ridership would be even higher if the carrier adopted

modern marketing methods." The report mentioned that the railroad has spent no money for advertising the train since 1971. The railroad also contended that ridership has increased lately because of the desire of many passengers to ride it "one last time." The ICC, however, stated that increased ridership started before the discontinuance notice was filed. The order for continuance is effective for one year, although the railroad can appeal the decision, a move it has not yet made.

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THE GREAT FREIGHT '79 is "on", with a satisfactory number of people showing their support by purchasing tickets for the event to make it possible. Participants should obtain their tickets in advance for \$20.00.

\* \* \* \* \*

ON THE BLOCK - The D&RGW has agreed to "contract for the sale" of the Silverton to C. E. Bradshaw, a Florida citrus grower, who owns two citrus operations and an agricultural chemical company near Orlando, Florida. The two parties agreed that no comment would be made on the sale until the contract has been finalized.

\* \* \* \* \*

AMTRAK is doing an excellent business out of Denver on the San Francisco Zephyr lately. Not just on the weekends, but every day. A customer recently inquired about space on the train next August 17, and found that it was all sold out. Incredibly, our "leadership" back in Washington still wants to chop up the already skeletonized national passenger train system.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILWAY started off their season on June 9, with an 18-car train, engine 487 providing power, and No. 488 assisting to Cambres Pass. The West's weird weather for 1979 was doing its usual thing, providing fresh snow on the ground between Cresco Tank and Cumbres, with light snow falling at Osier. The 270 people on board seemed to "weather" the trip well. A few days prior, on Wednesday the 6th, a work train consisting of Engine 487, and two cabooses, plowed snow off the track and removed rocks from Chama as far east as Rock Tunnel.

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A WELCOME ADDITION to just about anyone's railroad library, who relishes Colorado's narrow-gauge history, is a relatively new book now available entitled COLORADO MEMORIES OF THE NARROW GAUGE CIRCLE, by John Krause and Ross Grenard. The 11 x 8½, 130-page publication is primarily a photographic review of the last days of the RGS and D&RGW narrow-gauge lines and includes well over 200 photographs covering the entire narrow-gauge "circle." There are quite a number of photos taken on Rocky Mountain Railroad Club excursions, plus other freight and passenger

operations that certainly would be of interest to those who can say "I was there" or to those of us not fortunate enough to make the trips or otherwise visit the lines, but appreciate the history. Adequate descriptions and historical overviews complement the photos and make for pleasant reading. A nice feature in these days of high priced everything is the cost, \$12.00. The book is available at the Colorado Railroad Museum, or can be ordered from Carstens Publications, P.O. Box 700, Newton, New Jersey 07860.

GONE - A few more reminders of the past disappeared in Cheyenne with the recent demolition of the north end of the backshop and part of the roundhouse. Only six stalls of the roundhouse remain. A small shop building that housed air compressors and the boiler house are also scheduled to come down.

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GONE NORTH - Dr. James Arneill's ex-GW steam locomotive No. 75, along with several cars from the Forney Museum were moved to Idaho in early May for motion picture filming, and may venture into Montana before returning to Denver in mid-summer.

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IN NEED OF ATTENTION - The Grand County Commissioners have joined the Gilpin County Commissioners in asking that the old Moffat Road railroad bed over Rollins Pass be designated a National Historic Landmark. Such status would permit them to seek funds for restoration of the road and its trestles. The Commissioners are considering forming an organization to help preserve the scenic and historic road.

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ANOTHER SUNSET - Time appears to be running out for the D&RGW's Monarch Branch. Limestone shipments from the mountain near the top of Monarch Pass are the sole reason for the line's existence, and deposits are expected to be exhausted in 5 to 8 years. Originally narrow-gauge, the line was converted to standard gauge in the 50's, and is well known for its steep grades and switchbacks. But who knows, perhaps after the quarry is finished, the Grande might decide to start a steam tourist operation between Salida and Garfield. Ahem!'

\* \* \* \* \*

THE U.P. CHALLENGER NO 3985, displayed near the Cheyenne passenger station, has undergone a mechanical check and hydrostatic testing. There has been some thought to returning the locomotive to service for special operations. A decision has not yet been made by the railroad's management and the engine remains on display.

\* \* \* \* \*

ROAMING THE RAILS - The 8444 will represent the Union Pacific at functions all across the system this year. On May 15 and 16, it operated to Omaha with a staff car and business car, returning to Cheyenne on the 22nd. On September 8 and 9, it will pull a special Boise, ID-Weiser train. The Company's passenger and business equipment continues to be used quite frequently as indicated by the Camerail Club. The Oregon Historical Society Board Special will operate Portland-LaGrande, Oregon on September 14 and 15. A U.P. Old Timer's Special will operate Fox Park-Seattle, Washington, leaving September 16 and returning the 23rd. On March 17-22, an Old Timer's Special operated Fox Park-Las Vegas, and also on April 15-22, between Portland and Las Vegas. On April 26, two "E" units pulled a coach and lounge between Valley, Nebraska and Grand Island for the Omaha Chamber of Commerce. A U.P. special operated April 1-6 for Amtrak officials, inspecting the U.P. for the proposed Amtrak rout restructuring. It ran Council Bluffs, Kansas City, Denver, Ogden, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles. Occasional Director Specials also are scheduled over the system.

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Yes, I would like to join in the fun of exploring Boreas Pass and Como on August 18. Enclosed is my check or money order for: \_\_\_\_\_ adult tickets at \$7.00 each, and \_\_\_\_\_ kids tickets at \$3.00 each.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Swap 'N Shop will be included next month.

\* \* \* \* \*

An Optimist: A 90-year old man who marries a 20 year old woman, and buys a house near a school!

\* \* \* \* \*

ED GERLITS, President  
ERWIN CHAIM, Vice-President

BILL GORDON, Secretary  
ARDIE SCHOENINGER, Treasurer

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN**



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