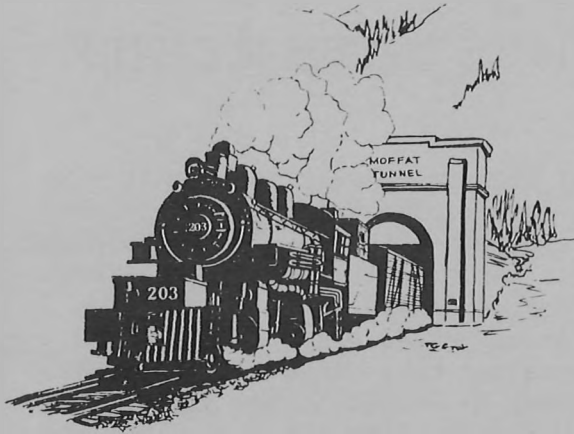


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391      Denver, Colorado 80201  
November, 1980      No. 254

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

Editor ----- Neal A. Reich  
Contributing Editor -- Darrell T. Arndt

MEETING NOTICE:    Date ... Tuesday, November 11, 1980  
                            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 building's south entrance.

PROGRAM NOTES:   RAILROADING IN EUROPE

The presentation at the November meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be a little different, to say the least. Gary Ratay will entertain with his pictures on RAILROADING IN EUROPE. This will be a multi-media show with six slide projectors being used.

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The beautiful facilities of Henrici's Restaurant in the Hilton Inn provided an attractive setting for the annual banquet of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, which was held on Saturday evening, October 11. The delicious dinner, served by the very capable staff at Henrici's, highlighted the full evening of activities. Door prizes were awarded to lucky ticket holders following the meal. Winners were presented a wide range of gifts, from railroad books and pictures to railroad uniform buttons, old club excursion tickets, and paper weights of twelve pound rail from the Gold King Mine at Cripple Creek, Colorado. An outstanding selection of railroad moving pictures from the club's Otto Perry collection, rounded out a most delightful evening. Scenes from the Perry movies included Rio Grande standard and narrow gauge trains, big steam and streamliners on the Union Pacific, plus shots of the Burlington, D&SL, D&IM, Western Pacific, and many others. The sequence of pictures that drew the most appreciative response from the audience showed Burlington steam locomotive 919, as it shoved a wedge snow plow through the drifted cuts of the Sterling-Cheyenne Branch Line in 1955.

From all the folks who attended the annual banquet, may we send along a great big "Thank you" to Jim Trowbridge and all the other people who worked so hard to make the dinner meeting a success. And our thanks go also to Duane Sole, who entertained at the piano during the cocktail hour and throughout the meal. And everyone certainly enjoyed the videotape of the club's recent excursion on the Manitou & Pikes Peak Railway, which was provided by Wayne Todd. And last, but not least, to projectionist Ed Haley, and narrator Dick Kindig, our thanks for a most professional showing of the marvelous selection of pictures from the camera of Otto Perry.

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1981 DUES INFORMATION WILL BE FORTHCOMING IN THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER.

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A GOOD MIX OF RAILROADING and Wyoming history, plus the fun of experiencing it with fellow members, all added up to a great three-day trip to Wyoming in September. The San Francisco Zephyr had just been fully equipped with Superliner equipment and provided many in the group with their first taste of the new bi-level cars. UP's mainline had much traffic on it, and helped demonstrate how a railroad should really be operated! On Saturday, the group headed north by chartered bus, stopping to see several abandoned and operating coal mines along the way. Upon arriving at the Atlantic City Ore operations of United States Steel, a company official joined the group as the bus went down into the open pit mine. A lunch stop was made at the Atlantic City Mercantile, where the restaurant in the historic structure was opened just for the club. Proceeding to South Pass City, ample time was allowed to explore the remote mining town and observe the restoration work in progress. With departure timed to coincide with the U.S. Steel's ore train returning from Winton Junction near Rock Springs, the group "set up shop" at an appropriate spot along the 76-mile private railroad, not too far from South Pass City. After a short wait, the long train and its impressive lashup of "F" units, came roaring upgrade and undoubtedly provided the crew with one of the few photo lines they've ever experienced. An excellent dinner was enjoyed that evening, near Rock Springs, with a little levity thrown in during the review of the UP quiz on the trip and the awarding of prizes. The last day began with a breakfast in Green River that could be surpassed by few other establishments in Denver, or probably anywhere else. There was plenty of rail activity across the street at the depot, and when it was found that the SFZ had fallen behind schedule that morning, the group and its amiable bus driver, headed back out of town to drive through another mining operation west of town. Once aboard Amtrak, fast running and deft manipulation by the dispatcher put the train into Denver only a few minutes late.

All in all, it turned out to be a swell trip, and a great "escape." Next year, we plan on going to the Midwest Settlers & Old Threshers Reunion at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, over Labor Day - something to keep in mind when planning your activities for next year!!!

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THE RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR has been running with the dining car up forward just behind the combine, lately - trying to avoid the traffic passing through to the lounge car. Work on the ex-UP Diner is progressing slowly, and it will not see service on the RGZ before next spring, at the earliest. Business on the train continues to be good.

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AT THE ANNUAL BANQUET of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, John Bohner of Cheyenne, presented a report on the restoration work being done on Union Pacific 3985. Some 42 Union Pacific employees have put in over 2,200 hours, working in their spare time on the Challenger and its tender, with completion of the project expected in 1981. John emphasized in his remarks that the locomotive is still owned by the UP, and that the railroad will determine when and where the engine will operate.

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A WORD TO THE WISE - The Wyoming Division of the Union Pacific Railroad has issued a bulletin directing UP employees to ask unauthorized visitors to leave company property. On Sunday, October 5, a group of railfans photographing the return of UP 8444 to the Cheyenne roundhouse, was asked to vacate the premises by a local UP official, and it is expected that, in the future, the UP, along with other area railroads, will take more positive action to discourage trespassing.

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DON'T FORGET THE STEAM-UP OF ex-Denver and Rio Grande Engine #346, on Saturday and Sunday, November 29 and 30, at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden, for operation on the annual Santa Claus Train.

\* \* \* \* \*

A FELLOW WE KNOW has come up with quite a tongue-in-cheek description of the new Amtrak Superliner equipment now in service on the San Francisco Zephyr. Alluding to their high profile and Amtrak paint scheme, he said the cars "Look like a cross between a Greyhound bus and a three-deck auto rack."

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THE RANKS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB'S well known railroad historians were again thinned by the loss of Michael Koch, who succumbed to a heart attack on Saturday, October 4, 1980, at age 65. The officers and members of the club offer their condolences to his wife, Wanda, and two sons, Mitchell and Richard.

Mike Koch was a long-time member of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club (1948) and ranked very highly among the country's foremost railroad authors for his two excellent works on logging railroads - "The Shay Locomotive, Titan of the Timber," (1971), and his recently published "Steam & Thunder in the Timber, Saga of the Forest Railroads."

Mike was a charter member of the eastern division of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, and the Railroadians of America. He also belonged to the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, the National Railway Historical Society, the Westerners, the State Historical Society, and the Railroad Club of New Mexico. At the time of his death, he was engaged in research and writing for a supplement to his much sought after book on the Shay geared steam locomotive on which he was regarded as the country's leading authority. He also had plans for another book, collaborating with artist, Richard Ward, illustrating by means of color paintings, the early railroads of Colorado. Mike was the proud possessor of one of the greatest collections of railroad paintings in the country, including many Philip Ronfor and Richard Ward originals. Mike will be sorely missed by his many friends in this organization, and all the other groups with which he was associated.

(Ed Haley)

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WITH RISING FUEL COSTS AND increasing operating and maintenance expenses, many of America's railroads are looking to alternate sources of diesel locomotive power. One of these is the Sulzer engine, named after its Swiss designer and manufacturer. The Union Pacific Railroad is now testing the Sulzer engine, which offers improved fuel efficiency, increased reliability, and reduced maintenance expenses.

while the Sulzer engine promises a seven percent savings in fuel consumption, UP's mechanical department hopes it will give them a locomotive engine that goes a million miles between major overhauls. That might be an optimistic goal as the SD-45 locomotive now in service, gets about 500,000 miles between visits to the shop.

The Union Pacific will soon have six SD-45 locomotives, numbered 60 through 65, in service testing the Sulzer engine. These SD-45 locomotives are normally equipped with an EMD 2-stroke cycle, 20-cylinder, V-type turbocharged engine, rated at 3,600 horsepower. The Sulzer powered locomotives will also be rated at 3,600 horsepower, with a 4-stroke cycle, 16-cylinder, V-type, turbocharged arrangement. While the longer in-service periods between overhauls would result in great savings, the seven percent savings in fuel efficiency cannot be ignored. Based on an average of 100,000 miles of service annually, each SD-45 locomotive equipped with the Sulzer engine would save the railroad 25,900 gallons of fuel each year.

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THOMAS J. LAMPHIER, President of Burlington Northern's Transportation Division, says that the BN is again examining electrification as a means of offsetting rising fuel costs. Power to run the electrified lines would be generated by coal. While the costs of new cars, tracks and facilities needed for electrification would involve an investment of over \$780 million for some 740 miles of line, electrified lines present "an attractive return on investment," according to Lamphier.

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TRAINS FOR SALE - The September 20 edition of the United Transportation Union News reports that Amtrak is offering to sell three aluminum turboliner trains. Two of the permanently coupled trains have two power cars and two coaches; the third has two power cars and three coaches. The trains were built by United Technologies Corp., and ran mainly on the Boston-New York runs in the 1970's. They were taken out of service because they proved to be costly and difficult to run and maintain, Amtrak said. The trains have been stored in Philadelphia.

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DO YOU KNOW OF ANY HIGHER TONNAGE trains in service in the United States, than those being moved by the Burlington Northern Railroad from its taconite pellet loading facility at Superior, Wisconsin? These giant trains are made up of 180 of the 35-foot iron ore cars, are over 6,300 feet in length, and weigh in at over 20,000 tons!

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THE ENGINEER'S PRAYER - O Lord, look with a forgiving eye, we beseech Thee, on the roundhouse foremen who tell us about the work they claim was done on our locomotives. Lord, soften the hearts of the fuel supervisors and the master mechanics, that they will not expect us to get over fifty miles with a ton of coal with full tonnage. Teach us not to complain of some of the teapots they give us, and expect us to make up time with.

Toughen our hides, that we may be able to ride some of the galloping iron horses they are giving us to pull a train with. Cause us to look with charitable eye at the conductors and the trainmen. Lord, soften the hearts of the round-house foremen, that they will render us in full the very little valve oil that we are supposed to get.

O Lord, teach our wives not to expect our wages until we get them. We beseech Thee to overlook our absent-mindedness when we get away from home, and in conclusion, we beg Thee, when we have made our last trip, please don't send us below. We have had our share of that place here on this earth. Amen.  
(The D&RGW Magazine, April, 1925)

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THE DURANGO-SILVERTON LINE OF THE D&RGW RAILROAD, completed a most frantic year of operations, limping through the final weeks of the season. On September 7, a mud slide, 17 miles south of Silverton, forced the train to turn on the wye at Rockwood and return to Durango. Normal service was resumed the next day. Then Engines 476 and 478 suffered the indignity of dropping side rods while working the train, and Engine 473 made the last run of the year, leaky flues and all. Rumors continued to run rampant concerning the pending sale of the narrow gauge line, to Charles Bradshaw. Some of the stories even suggested that this was to be the last year of operation for the Silverton train.

Engine 484 will be set aside this fall by the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, due to badly worn tires and other mechanical needs. Next year will see Engines 487, 488, and 489 handling trains on the former D&RGW narrow gauge line. The C&TS operated trains daily the final two weeks of the season, with riders being greeted by perfect fall weather and a blanket of brilliant colors covering the San Juan mountains. The glorious colors and lovely weather of September and October throughout Colorado, brought out hoards of sightseers, with the Georgetown Loop Railroad hauling a record 1,400 passengers on Sunday, September 28.

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"HOW ABOUT THAT?" DEPARTMENT - A Wall Street Journal story says that the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) has just issued a glowing press release about spending 1.3 million dollars for a new train-control modification. That modification is allowing the train operator or engineer, to run the train by hand at speeds in excess of 25 miles per hour, when the automated control system fails. And it does fail about twenty times per week. In the past, engineers monitored the automated system, but were held to a speed of 25 MPH after taking control following a failure. Naturally, the automated 80-mile-per-hour trains behind the slow-moving cripple, backed up for miles. Next thing you know, those radical BART officials will be proposing a plan whereby they will allow the engineer to run the train by himself all the time.

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SAN DIEGO'S METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD has under construction, a light rail commuter line connecting the city of San Diego with San Ysidro at the Mexican border. Work on the 16-mile line commenced after the Board purchased the old San Diego & Eastern Railway from the Southern Pacific in 1976. Scheduled for completion by mid-1981, the electrically powered line will utilize fourteen

modern rail vehicles purchased from West Germany at a cost of \$650,000 each. These units will operate in two-car trains, carrying up to 200 passengers, with service planned every 15 minutes during rush hours, and every 30 minutes at other times. The San Ysidro-Tijuana area expects a tremendous growth in population with approximately 95,000 persons a day now crossing the border to commute for work, shopping or visiting. Daily ridership on the 30 minute run from the border to the center of San Diego, has been estimated at 30,000 by 1995, with freight service utilizing diesel locomotives being added as needed.

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ED GERLITS, President

BILL GORDON, Secretary

ERWIN CHAIM, Vice-President

ARDIE SCHOENINGER, Treasurer

\* \* \* \* \*

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN**



**RAILROAD CLUB**



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