

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB  
P. O. BOX 1319  
DENVER 1, COLORADO

Newsletter #14

The regular monthly meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 1960, at the Farmers Union Auditorium, East 16th and Sherman, Denver, at 8:00 P.M. Our Effervescent European Explorer, Charlie Ryland of Golden, Colorado, will show slides taken on his recent trip east of the Atlantic. His program will include both sparks and cinders, and also scenes of general interest from the Baltic to the Adriatic, including Denmark, France, Germany, Switzerland, Yugoslavia and Italy.

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It is with pleasure that we can now announce the attainment of a goal toward which we began working some years ago--we have now paid the last of our obligations for our recent book, "Pictorial Supplement to Denver South Park & Pacific," by club members Kindig, Haley, and Poor. The three authors have agreed to donate all the profits from the sale of the remaining copies of this book to the treasury of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club--an amount that will eventually add several thousand dollars to the club's funds. New members or others who are interested in obtaining a copy of this book may still secure copies from the club, at 2561 South Cook Street, Denver, 10, Colorado. Free brochures describing the book are also available at this address.

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An interesting article in a recent issue of the Rio Grande's monthly newspaper, the "Green Light," presents some statistics on the "piggyback" operation of hauling highway trailers by train. Also known as trailers-on-flat-cars (abbreviated TOFC), this operation has provided an important source of traffic to the railroads in recent years. Largely a long-haul procedure, trailers are generally handled as part of the consist of hotshot freight trains, although some heavy-density traffic areas provide enough business to run solid TOFC trains of anywhere from 20 to 60 flatcars, with double that number of trailers securely fastened to the cars. Operated at speeds up to 60 miles an hour, these freight trains have schedules that would have been optimistic for passenger trains a couple of decades ago--and they generally live up to the schedule.

One obvious place where savings can be effected is in the number of men required to handle the train as it speeds between terminals--a 5-man freight crew provides the personnel to move a 30-car train, for instance, which will carry 60 of the van-like trailers. On the highway, each of these trailers would be coupled behind a tractor, and the same fleet would require 60 drivers.

The specific figure of \$924.00 is quoted in the "Green Light" article, for hauling a two-trailer flat car in one direction between Chicago and the Pacific Coast. Compared to this, a well-known truck company charges \$588.00 for each trailer between the same terminals, Chicago and the Pacific Coast--a total of \$1176.00 for the two trailers which could have taken the piggyback ride over the rails. While there are some additional costs for the train service, the total is still lower than the truck company's price, and to the average driver on the open highway, the elimination of large numbers of tractor-trailer combinations is a welcome dividend.

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Tickets are selling well for our excursion over the Colorado & Southern and the Great Western Railway, on Sunday, October 2, 1960. Excursion Chairman Haley reports numerous inquiries from persons located all over the country, indicating the growing interest in this fast-disappearing type of trip, the steam railroad excursion.

A. O. Clint, Treasurer

R. H. KINDIG, President