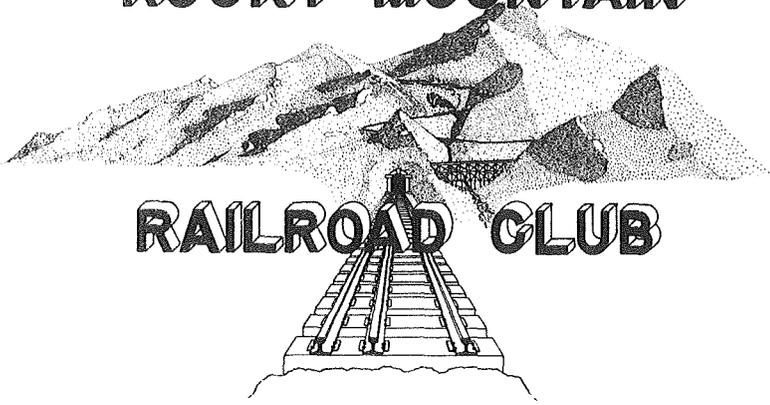


# ROCKY MOUNTAIN

May, 1965

Newsletter No. 69



P. O. BOX 2391  
Denver, Colorado 80201

The May meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12, 1965, in the basement meeting room of the Western Federal Savings Building, 718 - 17th Street, in downtown Denver. The program will be presented by one of our long-time and well-known members -- M. C. "Mac" Poor -- the one who perhaps is most responsible for the Club's successful ventures into the field of railroad historical publications. As author of DENVER, SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC, the first (1949) volume published by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club detailing the history of one of

Colorado's legendary railroad systems, Mac has prepared a paper divulging the little-known story behind this highly regarded work. For a "flatlander" Oklahoman, who became a long-time resident of Chicago, to research and tell the story of a no-longer existent railroad a thousand miles away from his home is indeed an intriguing matter, and Mac will tell us "How Come, Why, and How I Wrote Denver South Park & Pacific" at our May meeting. Don't miss it!

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The meeting held in April was highlighted by the interesting and amusing illustrated story of the life of Chalk Creek Canon and St. Elmo, prepared and related by Club member Don Smith. With appropriate tape-recorded music as background, Don introduced to us the present and recent occupants of the valley, then led us into the story of the Stark family of St. Elmo, and the eccentricities of the last survivors -- Annabelle and Tony -- whose confidences and friendship he came to value and enjoy during the last few years of their lives. Don's scenes of the living conditions of this remarkable pair in their "Home Comfort Hotel" and Stark Bros. General Store cannot be described, but their impact upon the large audience was noticeable.

Don has kindly consented to present this same program in the Strater Hotel's "Diamond Circle Theatre" at Durango on Sunday evening, May 30, for the entertainment of passengers returning from the day's journey to Silverton during the traditional three-day Memorial Day weekend excursion sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club over the Rio Grande's narrow gauge lines on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 29, 30 and 31.

In connection with this operation, we have been advised that the First Christian Church of Alamosa, Rev. Charles Patchen, Pastor, is arranging to serve a real western buffalo barbecue dinner at the church, First Street and State Avenue, on Friday night, May 28th, from 5:00 until 9:00 p.m. Since this is the evening before departure of the Club's three-day trip, many passengers will have arrived in the town, and may be interested in this unusual meal featuring an 8-ounce serving of buffalo meat, together with vegetable, salad, bread and drink. Tickets are \$5.00 (tax deductible) per person, and must be ordered from the church before May 15. Only a limited number will be sold.

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Another Club-sponsored excursion is coming in June -- this one to be our annual Banquet Special -- scheduled for operation from Denver to Winter Park and return on Saturday afternoon, June 26. Since steam power of adequate capacity to handle the crowd expected is not available, negotiations are in progress with the Rio Grande for an unusual combination of diesel units, together with the last vestige of standard gauge steam now remaining on the railroad: steam generator car #250 or #251, converted from tenders of the 3700 series 4-6-6-4's which operated over the line from 1938 to 1955. Dinner will be served at the Hochlandhoff, one of Winter Park's better-known eateries, and a special

program is being arranged. Announcements and ticket order blanks will be in the mail to members in the near future.

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Also at the April meeting, Mr. "Phil" Phillips of Cripple Creek acquainted us with the work being done by his organization operating electric cars in that area. By June 1 Mr Phillips expects to have five miles of track laid and to be operating his 3'6" gauge ex-Los Angeles Street Railway PCC cars from Cripple Creek to Victor. He anticipates, later in the summer, completion of a 19-mile round trip route utilizing portions of the old interurban "High Line" and Midland Terminal rights-of-way in the District, and invites all persons interested in trolleys to visit his operating display at Cripple Creek this summer.

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Club member Rev. Ed Bollinger announced to the group at the April meeting that the Museum of the State Historical Society of Colorado has completed an enlargement and modernization of its facilities. The Society's extensive library collection now includes space in the Museum for a railroad history display. In surveying the tremendous quantity of railroad items which have been acquired by the Society over a period of many years, Ed has uncovered a surprising variety of rare material. With his enthusiasm and extensive knowledge of the Moffat and other roads for guidance, the exhibits which are being prepared should provide much of interest to all Museum visitors.

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World premiere of the new movie "Cat Ballou" is scheduled for the Centre Theatre in Denver on Friday, May 7. Many of the scenes of this off-beat color film, a spoof on the traditional Western movie, were made along the Rio Grande main line at Texas Creek near the Royal Gorge, using John Birmingham's #51. As part of the premiere celebration, we understand, it is planned to run the engine and some of the cars used for the film on Thursday, May 6th, using part of the remaining Denver & New Orleans original line which extends southeast from the South Denver interlocking tower across Broadway and along Buchtel Drive past Denver University Stadium to Colorado Boulevard. Time of day for this operation is unknown at this time, but additional information presumably will appear in local papers, affording members an opportunity to take pictures of steam power once again in the Denver area.

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Sales of the Club's newest book -- COLORADO MIDLAND, by Morris Cafky -- continue at a brisk pace, with more than half the 6,000 copy print order having been forwarded to purchasers. Nearly all the remaining bound copies have been packed in shipping boxes by a volunteer crew working nightly at the binder's shop, where the ready-to-mail books will be stored until the entire printing has been sold. In this connection, members will be interested to learn that extra copies of the four beautiful color plates reproduced in this new book were printed on large separate sheets, and are available.

The set includes a large print in full color of the following: Colorado Midland's famous trademark -- a Ute Indian warrior mounted on a white stallion, Phil Ronfor's magnificent painting of double-headed train #3 thundering upgrade over Hagerman Trestle, and two of Howard Fogg's masterful compositions -- one a meet of C.M. engine #7 with Denver, Leadville & Gunnison Mason bogie #57 at the overpass on the summit of Trout Creek Pass; the other of a two-engine Midland freight struggling up the 3% grade past Hell Gate. The set of four illustrations will be sent in a mailing tube at a cost of only \$2.00. Make checks payable to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and mail to Morris Cafky at 2500 Cherry Street, Denver, Colorado 80207. The supply is limited.

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Officers, members of the Club Board of Directors and committee chairmen met April 9 at the home of Board member Jack Morison. Business considered at the meeting covered the excursions mentioned above, and appointment to the Board, in accordance with terms of our by-laws, of Club member E. E. (Ed) Schneider to complete the unexpired term through the

calendar year 1965 of our late Director, Bert Fullman. Negotiations and contract terms developed during the past year in connection with possible operation at the Colorado Railroad Museum of the Birney trolley car acquired by the Club from the Fort Collins Municipal Railway also were given lengthy consideration and discussion by the board.

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Recognition on a national scale recently was accorded one of the Charter members of our organization, with publication in Railroad Magazine for April, 1965, of his reminiscences about the handling of old-time "Silk Trains" by Club member E. F. "Matt" Matthieson of Boulder. Matt was a runner with six years' experience on the Missouri Pacific in 1912 when he was called for a Silk Special running as an extra east. As reported in the article: "Our engine was a 4-6-2, No. 6433. We coupled up that fine spring Sunday and after inspection the conductor, Bruce Tyler, came over with the orders and told me that we had 13 cars of raw silk under bond with a deadhead Pullman on the rear for the train crew. The silk was valued at about \$4 million, he said, and would I turn on the steam heat so that his crew would be cozy in the Pullman?"

"The car-whacker gave me a signal and said all 14 cars were working. We started out 55 minutes late on our schedule, and after a running test we settled down to business. For 150 miles the track we ran on was as level as a billiard table with a water grade. As the other trains were in the hole, all we had to do was go. At La Crosse we stopped for water, 32 miles from our terminal. We made 172 miles in two hours and 40 minutes, running around 13 chain-gang crews, and we felt it was a good day."

When questioned about this experience at our last meeting, Matt advised, "We were on a pretty tight schedule and we had to keep her wound up, but we had a fine wheeling train and a fine piece of machinery, and all I had to do was to guide her down the railroad track. At the tail end we had two hard hills to pull, but we leveled them in good fashion.

"I didn't work as long as most of the old timers, but I did fire and run the old diamond stacks. We had four of them on our division that Jay Gould stole from the M.K.& T., and they were funny little mills."

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And there are other mementoes of those "good old days" still in existence. On Saturday, April 17, culminating several months of negotiations by Club member Charles Ryland, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club was granted custody, and took possession of, a 4-4-0 steam locomotive.

Through the interest of Mr. Gordon Clayson, President of Wm. Ainsworth & Sons, Inc., in whose shop the engine has been stored for many years, an agreement was prepared whereby Mrs. Joan Humphrey, owner of this elegant machine and daughter of the late A. W. Ainsworth, a charter member of the Club, placed the locomotive with our organization for maintenance and display. Carrying the number 210 on the front plate, this locomotive is a 9-inch gauge live-steamer which was built for service at Elitch's Zoological Gardens in north Denver.

One of the accompanying photos shows the engine and tender on the day it was delivered to the Club's custody. Shown in the other photo (Made available from the tremendous collection of the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library) which carries both the dates of 1902 and 1906, is this same little locomotive in service at Elitch's on a long-ago day. Club member Ed Haley, who has an intense interest and wide knowledge of early rail transportation in Denver, prepared the following information:

According to Caroline Lawrence Dier, who wrote "The Lady of the Gardens, Mary Elitch Long," published in 1932, an 1895 issue of the NEW PENNY MAGAZINE of London included an article about the Elitch train which read as follows:

"Our illustration shows a very fine model railway at a zoo (Elitch's Zoological

Gardens) in Denver, a beautiful little town in the state of Colorado, USA. It runs on a miniature track a mile in length on the grounds of Mrs. John Elitch, Jr., Mrs. Elitch once declared to the writer that her lilliputian train was one of the chief attractions in her Gardens, a wonder to grown-up people and a delight to children.

"The engine is a beautiful model of an American locomotive, and took the driver, who is seen on the car behind the tender, two years to construct. It weighs 450 pounds, burns coal, and can run either forward or backward. The size of the driving wheel is 8 inches and the length of the engine and tender is 6 feet, 7½ inches. The prettily constructed cars are 42 inches long, 14 inches wide and are designed to carry three or four children or two adults. Eight cars make up the full train, and the full load drawn by the engine is eighteen people, with no sign of being overloaded."

Frank H. Root, of Denver, installed the miniature railroad at Elitch's Zoological Gardens in 1893, one year after the Gardens had been opened by Mary and John Elitch. He owned and operated this tiny railroad from that time until his death in 1935 at the age of 63 from a heart attack. Engine 210, which apparently was built by Mr. Root, was the smallest of the three steam locomotives and one gasoline-powered engine that operated on his railroad.

All through the summer season Mr. Root operated the train with the aid of one assistant, and then during the winter months worked on his engines and constructed other locomotives for small railroads. He worked in a small shop on West 38th Avenue next to the Denver Tramway's West End Car House across the avenue from Elitch's. In addition to the 210 he owned and operated another 4-4-0, No. 1201, as well as the 348, a gasoline-powered locomotive that looked like a steam engine and was maintained for standby service. Other photos also show a 4-6-0, numbered 1600 and lettered Denver & Rio Grande Western, operating on his trackage in 1928.

At his death in 1935, his nephew inherited the railroad, which was appraised at \$1,500. This was the valuation placed on ten cars, two steam locomotives, one gasoline-powered locomotive, and 4,000 feet of 8-pound rail. Elitch's offered \$600 for the lot, but the line and equipment were sold to Virgil C. Hardy for \$700 on April 21, 1936. Tracks were ripped up and taken away shortly afterward.

In another photograph, also dated 1928, the 210 is shown in service doubleheading with the 1600, so the little engine now in the Club's possession was in operation as late as that date.

Upon delivery to our organization, engine 210 was transported to the Club's "Shop Car" on the ground of the Colorado Railroad Museum, where it will be cleaned and refurbished before being placed on display.

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Rollinsville, Colo. - 4/18/65 - A man who hitched a ride on a Denver and Rio Grande Western freight train was so disgusted it didn't stop in Denver he lit a fire on the tracks, Gilpin County Sheriff Charles M. Smith reported Saturday. The transient's fire stopped the next eastbound train.

Smith didn't get the man's name, but he said he boarded the freight at Lincoln, Neb., heading for Denver. When he found himself at Rollinsville instead Friday, high in the mountains west of Denver, he got off, built the fire to keep warm and lay down between the rails. That brought the next train to an emergency halt and Sheriff Smith was summoned.

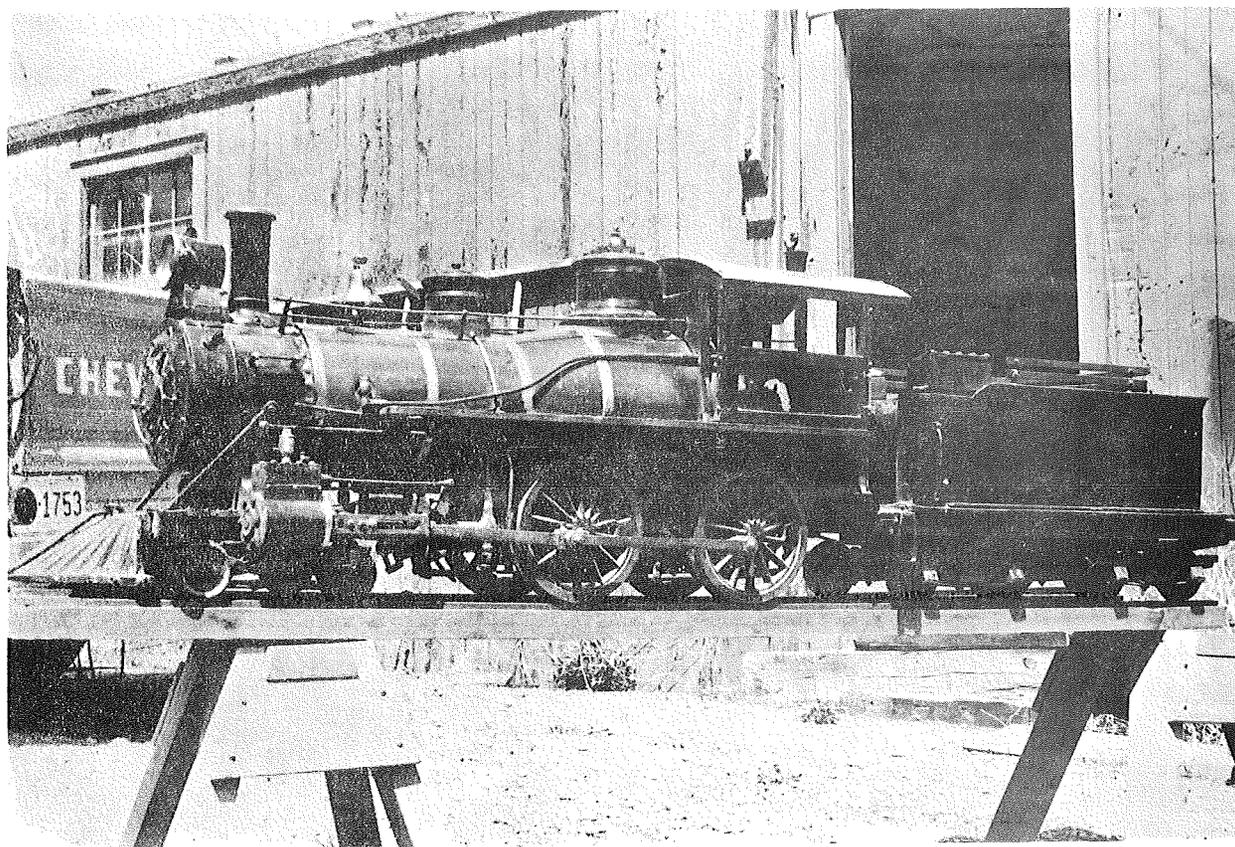
"He was courteous and very polite," Smith said. "So we just took him down to the highway so he could catch the next bus for Denver."

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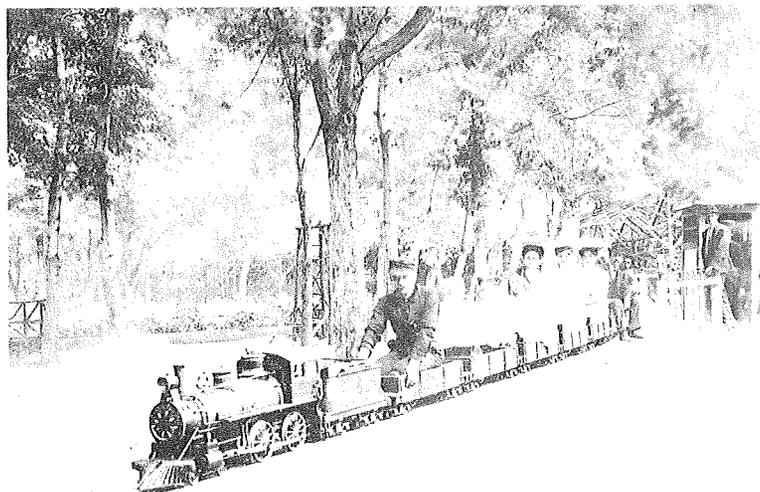
Ted S. McKee, President  
Herbert O'Hanlon, Vice President

Richard H. Kindig, Secretary  
Ane O. Clint, Treasurer  
Jackson C. Thode, Newsletter Editor

#210, a 4-4-0 9-inch gauge live steam locomotive



April 17, 1965



*Paul H. Botto*

1902 or 1906 - in service