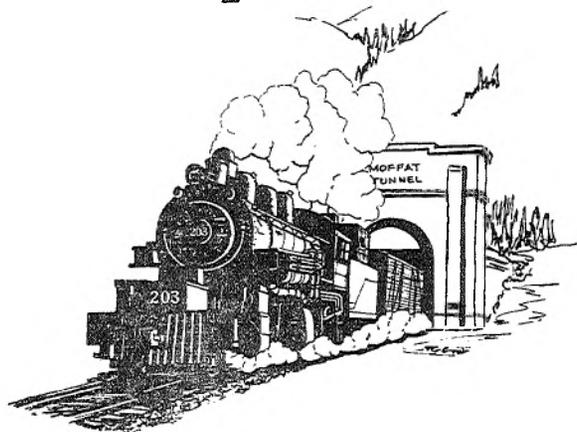


# Rocky Mountain Rail Report



## The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

P.O. Box 2391 Denver, Colorado 80201

MAY 1974

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

Editor - - - - Darrell Arndt

MEETING NOTICE: Date . . . . . Wednesday, May 8, 1974  
Time . . . . . 7:45 p.m.  
Place . . . . . Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church,  
2900 S. University at Bates; offstreet parking  
at rear (east) of meeting hall.

### PROGRAM FOR THE MAY MEETING OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB,

Dave Digerness, who has been a member of the club since 1959, will present his slide show entitled "Over the Sierra Madres of Mexico to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans". In the fall of 1971, Dave, who is an excellent freelance photographer, travelled through Old Mexico by rail and toured her cities by many modes of travel including, bus, cab, horse drawn carriage, trolley bus, trolley car, subway and on foot. Dave is a native of Georgetown, Colorado, being the fifth generation of the family from the famous old silver mining town high in the mountains west of Denver. In fact, his interest in railroads stemmed from watching the narrow gauge Colorado & Southern trains in Clear Creek Canyon and has grown until today his interest in railroads has become national.

Dave's greatgrandfather was the founder and publisher of the well-known Georgetown Courier and he wrote and recorded not only the early annals of Georgetown and Clear Creek County but of the other mining counties as well, resulting in valuable historic records. Dave has been employed for almost 20 years by the United States Geological Survey and his photographic work is renowned not only nationally but around the world, having appeared on the cover of Empire Magazine, Christmas cards and calendars.

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A SIGHTSEEING VISIT to a foreign nation need not be confined to just its' routine tourist sights and attractions. For the inquisitive railfan a variety of interesting and unique railroad operations are most likely just around the corner. John Robinson's views and comments at the April meeting about his visits to tourist and authentic narrow gauge operations in Wales, New Zealand and South Africa attest to this statement. As is the case on the American scene, time seems to be against most narrow gauge operations and the preservation of their heritage and story is becoming the duty of the museum. John's program of a few foreign "Silvertons" and "East Broad Tops" along with the real McCoy as is still found in South Africa made for a very enjoyable evening.

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THE COLORADO RAILROAD MUSEUM will again fire up Engine 346 for a weekend operation, barring inclement weather. The days to circle on the calendar are May 11th and 12th. The engine will begin running Saturday morning as soon as steaming up and other normal preparations are completed. Last February when the engine was run the museum grounds were wall to wall with happy people. If you missed that first chance to visit the museum with coal smoke scenting the air, here is a second opportunity.

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COLORADO'S STEAM LOCOMOTIVE POPULATION increased by one with arrival at Central City of Camino, Cable & Northern No. 4 (ex-West Side Lumber Co.) on Saturday, April 27. Three days were required to move the three foot gauge Shay and its' tender aboard two trucks from Camino, California. Crossing of the Continental Divide was done via Berthoud Pass. Plans are to put the old logging engine in operating condition for use on the Colorado Central Narrow Gauge at Central City.

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JUST OVER A FEW MOUNTAINS to the southwest on that same day activity was beginning to pick up on the Georgetown Loop restoration project. Navy Reserve Seebecs were fulfilling their once a month duty obligation preparing the site for this summer's work. Another weekend visit by them in May will be followed by a six week stay beginning in June. Much work still remains to be done, including finishing touches on the two bridges, tracklaying, and setting the station at Silver Plume on a foundation. It is hoped to have some revenue operations underway by late summer. There is one rumor about the loop that needs to be squelched, a rumor reportedly to be circulating particularly among UP fans. It is absolutely untrue that a test section of a quarter mile of electric overhead is being installed from Silver Plume down toward the first big curve to study the feasibility of electrifying the historic line.

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AMTRAK NEWS - A number of equipment and scheduling changes are to be made soon on the San Francisco Zephyr. Effective May 19th Slumbercoach service will be reinstated between Chicago and Denver. Schedule changes have been made that will result in a longer running time between Chicago and Denver; 30 minutes westbound and 55 minutes eastbound. Chever-Oakland time remains unchanged. Chicago-Denver running time is now about two hours longer than it was in 1960. 15 minutes have also been added to the lay-over time in Denver. Westbound No. 5 arrives 9:15 am, departs 10:00 am, eastbound No. 6 arrives 4:00 pm, departs 4:45 pm. For you equipment enthusiasts the consist will be as follows: baggage or baggage dorm, seven coaches, dome lounge, diner, 11 bdr sleeper, two 10-6 sleepers. Additional equipment will be operated Chicago-Denver only: diner counter, coach, dome coach, Slumber coach and 10-6 sleeper. Slumbercoaches will also be added to the North Coast Hiawatha on May 19th, the same day that train changes to a daily operation.

June 9th is the effective date of that 20% fare increase on most western roads, that in addition to the 5% systemwide increase effective Apr 16. Children half fares which in the past were for ages 5-11 will also be changed to include ages 2-11 on May 19. Amtrak fully intends to take advantage of increased summer business. Reservations are running well into the summer already.

Out east an individual in early April attempted to obtain reservations for sleeping accommodations on the Auto-Train in July, only to be informed none were available.

Much has been said about the many equipment defects Amtrak is experiencing with its' passenger car fleet. A good example of this problem exists now right here in the Mile High City where extra equipment is seldom seen sitting around except that which is turned for the Chicago-Denver portion of the SFZ. Since last March cars removed for the SFZ have been parked in the BN yards awaiting replacement wheels. At one point there were two sleepers, three coaches, a lounge, a diner, five baggage dorms and one baggage out of service in want of wheels, an item that has been very difficult to obtain. About ten cars are there at present.

The Colorado Association of RR Passengers will meet on Thursday, May 9th to discuss potential additions to Colorado's Passenger Train Routes, and to review other related activities. Guest speaker will be William Schmidt, Ass't Chief of the Test Center & Demonstrations Division, F.R.A., D.O.T. in Washington, D. C. Mr. Schmidt, whose Division is responsible for the high speed ground Test Center at Pueblo, will give a talk on "The Impact of High Speed Surface Transportation in the U.S." The meeting will be held at 7:30 pm, University of Denver Speech & Hearing Center,

2450 S. Vine St., Denver, Colorado

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SAVE THE LAST PART OF JUNE for a possible excursion on the Black Hills Central of South Dakota. Your Board of Directors are working on plans for an excursion, details will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

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THAT UNIT COAL TRAIN WRECK on the BN near Wiggins last March was reportedly caused by malfunction in the speed control system for the un-manned mid-train helper units. The lead units and forward portion of the train had slowed down, but the engines in the middle continued working against the empty cars ahead. The result was a spectacular pileup and fire in the middle of a long bridge.

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A BRAND NEW 84 MILE RAILROAD has just been formed in Nebraska, operating over a former C&NW line between Seward and Superior, Neb. Much work will be necessary however, to put the line known as the Great Plains Railway Co. into operating condition. Enthusiastic local support along the right of way is the primary reason for the new roads existence.

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SWAP 'N SHOP - Personal ads are accepted from members for items to be listed for sale or trade or wanted. We cannot enter into any correspondence, nor will we appraise items.

FOR SALE - 10 RR lanterns from Colorado RR's, 2 oil cans, other hardware. SSAE for details.  
ROBERT R. HARMEN, 1510 Crestmoor Dr., Pueblo, Colo. 81001

SEEKING information on the Rocky Mountain Ry Club of about 1907, M. M. Currier was Secretary. What was the Private Section Pullman operated by SP between L.A. and S.F. Cal. in early '30s. For Sale, King, Alfred C. Mountain Idylls & Other Poems, has 16 half-tone ills from Ouray, San Juan & San Miguel Counties, Colo., 1901. \$7.50, WPA. Guide on Colorado. \$ 7.50.  
A. VON BLON, Box 6422, Waco, Texas

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Charles Max, President

Bill Gordon, Secretary

E. J. Haley, Vice-President

Carl E. C. Carlson, Treas.