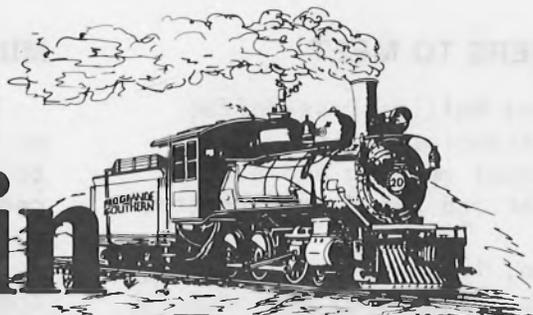


# Rocky Mountain RAIL REPORT



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

## MEETING SCHEDULE:

May 10, 1983; 7:45 p.m.

Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church, 2900 South University at Bates. Off-street parking at rear (east) of meeting hall. Please use the building's south entrance.

Les Grenz ..... Editor  
 Steve McCormic ..... Associate Editor  
 Darrell Arndt ..... President  
 Erwin Chaim ..... Vice President  
 Bill Gordon ..... Secretary  
 Ardie Schoeninger ..... Treasurer

Send all items for publication to: ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAIL REPORT; Les Grenz, Editor; 6288 Vance Street, Arvada, Colorado 80003.

**COPY DEADLINE**--All copy for publication is due no later than the 18th of the month prior to month of publication.

## NOTICE OF MEETING CHANGE—RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR PROGRAM

Due to the recent interest in the Rio Grande Zephyr a change has been made in the May meeting schedule.

Dave Shumacher will present a program telling the history of the Rio Grande Zephyr, the early, middle and late years. This will be an exciting program which should be of specific interest to every one attending the meeting. **DO NOT MISS** this program.

The POTPOURRI PROGRAM will be rescheduled to the June 14th meeting. If you have

May, 1983 ..... No. 284  
 Club Telephone ..... (303) 431-4354  
 P.O. Box 2391 ..... Denver, Colorado 80201

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

## NEW MEMBERS

The following is a list of new members for March and April. WELCOME!

Wesley W. Nelson	Denver, CO
Michael Watkins	Denver, CO
John House	Boulder, CO
Byron A. Linden	Sparks, NE
Lyle Templeton	Overland Park, KS
Wayne C. Cerovich	Overland Park, KS
Larry Laspina	San Ramon, CA
Ronald O. Gabel	Littleton, CO
John L. Sistrunk	Vandenberg AFB, CA
John C. Leyerle	Aurora, CO
George Hinds	Lead, SD
Gary Collins	Boulder, CO
Mrs. James McCaffery	Colorado Springs, CO
Thomas Insall, Jr.	El Paso, TX
Anita D. Bowlby	San Ramon, CA
Joe M. Chaffee	Denver, CO
Diana LaCazette	Littleton, CO

not yet submitted your slides to Erwin Chaim, please do so at the May 10 meeting or deliver to his home at 560 Emerson, Denver. Erwin can still use more slides. The earliest delivery to Erwin is important so that he has time to create a title slide. Please submit slides which are correctly focused and exposed.

## TUNNEL RESTORERS TO MEET

The newly formed Rollins Pass-Moffat Road Restoration Association Inc. will hold its first annual meeting and elect its first president and board of directors May 10.

The association, incorporated in March, was set up to help raise money and organize the restoration of the historic Needle's Eye Tunnel and the trestles near Rollins Pass in southwest Boulder county.

Organizers estimate that it will take between \$400,000 and \$1 million to restore the 120-foot tunnel and the two wooden trestles. The tunnel was closed in 1979 because of repeated cave-ins.

The May 10 meeting will begin at 7 p.m. It will be in the National Bureau of Standards auditorium at 325 Broadway, Boulder.

## LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM

Despite a persistent snowfall and less than ideal road conditions, a full house was on hand at the March meeting to enjoy another one of Irv August's exceptional programs with 16MM movies and color slides. Irv took us back some 30 years with an intriguing visit to the Alpine Tunnel area and showed us what it looked like 40 years after its abandonment. Amazingly, much remained from the railroad operation including buildings, snowshed remains, stonework, and other artifacts. Among other subjects was a Club trip on the Rio Grande over the incredible Monarch Branch and a trip out to Villa Grove. Great movies of steam in action on the Canadian Pacific in the Canadian Rockies with footage of operations through the Spiral Tunnels was a real highlight of the evening. Closer to home, Union Pacific action across Sherman Hill and spectacular footage of helper engines working out of Tabernash in sub-zero temperatures brought back memories of the Age of Steam at its best.

## PLEASE SPECIFY

The Rocky Mountain Rail Report Editor, Les Grenz requests that since he edits more than one railroad oriented publication, all material submitted for the Rail Report be labeled as such. This will help to avoid publishing material intended for the Rail Report in the wrong publication.

## MUSEUM WORK DAY—MAY 14

After the late winter foul weather that we have been enduring, it is a nice change to be experiencing these more pleasant conditions of recent weeks. The coming of warmer weather directs one's thoughts to outdoor activities and to an important one that the Club engages in every Spring, and that is a formal workday at the Colorado Railroad Museum. This year we will gather at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 14 at the museum and embark upon several painting and general cleanup projects on the Club's rolling stock. Equipment Chairman, Bill Gould, has a number of important chores that need accomplishing, so the more who come...the more that gets done. Jim and Lil Ranniger will have Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary fired up for its first function of the season and will provide a tasty and filling lunch to all volunteers.

So mark the day on your calendar and come on out, even if only half the day. Rain date is the following Saturday, May 21. If the skies look bad call the Club phone. See you on the 14th.

## BOOK DRAWING

Among items of business accomplished at the March meeting was the drawing of names for the winners of this year's book drawing. It turned out that, for a change, we had a high percentage of winners from Colorado. First prize, "Pictorial Supplement to Denver South Park & Pacific", went to Sister Mary Borgia of Denver. Sister Borgia was in attendance at the meeting and happily took possession of the publication. She was literally, or was it figuratively, in Seventh Heaven over the news.

Leon Lindner of Fort Worth, Texas won a copy of "Memorial Edition--Denver South Park and Pacific." Recipients of "Union Pacific--100 Years" were John Dolan of Denver, Norman Hogg of Arvada, and Paul Kotarba of Denver.

Bill Gould, Equipment Chairman, would like to thank all who participated and showed their support to this activity. Although you may not have had your name drawn, you can feel satisfied that your dollars will be put to good use on the Club's equipment.

## MORE RAILROAD RESTAURANTS

A letter from Albert Merritt, Colorado Springs, informs us that there are a number of other railroad related restaurants in addition to those listed in the February "Report."

The Fossil Inn is located at Florissant on the highway. While they are not in an old railroad depot, they are located in a 1890 Colorado Springs trolley car.

Giuseppe's, Colorado Springs, are housed in the former Rio Grande Railroad Station. In addition to a restaurant, there are several shops.

A restaurant is also housed in the Santa Fe Railroad Station in Colorado Springs. The restaurant's name is not known.

## MAKING A MOLE HILL ...

A potential source of additional revenue and freight traffic on the Rio Grande is being planned by Flatiron Companies of Boulder at a location near Crescent. A rock quarry east of Crescent could provide the company with 2 million to 3 million tons of rock each year, or as much as 100 million tons over a period of 30 to 50 years. Material removed from the 250 acre site would be shipped out of the area by rail, eliminating the need for heavy truck traffic near the adjacent Crescent Park subdivision. The rock would be crushed into stone for roads, bridges, and other construction projects. Nearby residents are concerned with the projects visual impact, noise and blasting consequences and have been much opposed to the idea.

## J. FOSTER ADAMS PHOTO COLLECTION

To introduce our members to the J. Foster Adams Railroad Photograph Collection, we are reproducing this beautiful photo of O.R.&N. Co. 4-4-0 #46. This picture is typical of the more than five hundred excellent photos dating back to the 1860's in the collection. The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club has had this collection for more than 20 years. Although the quality of the photos is superb, many of these fine photographs have no captions. This one, for instance, has a Colorado Central box car in the background, but where and when was this picture taken? Perhaps our members can tell us something about this locomotive and picture.

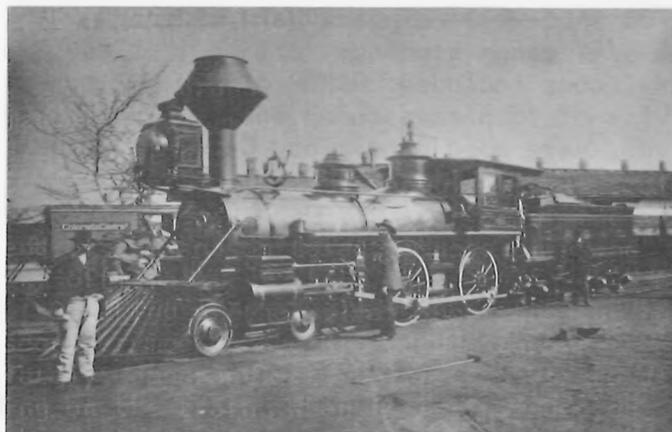
## ANOTHER SEASON ENDED

The Rio Grande Ski Train to Winter Park made its last run of the season on March 27. On March 19 the Silver Shop and a Dome Coach were added to the regular consist of ex-NP coaches, as is customary near the end of the season to accommodate city and ski officials.

Speaking of the Silver Shop, the car has seen service on the Rio Grande Zephyr lately, apparently to help ease overcrowding on the train. When it is included on the weekend the result is a 10 car train with six being domes.

## LONGMONT ZEPHYR???

When the news of the impending demise of the Rio Grande Zephyr began circulating, a board member of Denver's Regional Transportation District had the inspiration to propose an RTD operated commuter train between Denver and Longmont with the Rio Grande Zephyr equipment. The local news media immediately picked up on it and had a field day. Most of us are aware of the many problems to be surmounted for such an operation, so we won't get into that here. But the most expected ones turned out to be labor problems, cost, and the fact that the Burlington Northern didn't exactly do handsprings over the idea of a commuter train on their line. The most interesting reason given by the BN for rejecting the proposal was that "the passenger service would overcrowd the tracks at Union Station".



## SWAP 'N SHOP

Personal ads are accepted from club members for items to be listed for sale, trade, or wanted. We cannot enter into any correspondence, nor will we appraise items. Listings are on a space-available basis only.

FOR SALE--Large locomotive bell from D&RGW diesel mounted on UP steam engine yoke. Also 2 electrified BN switchstand lights. William Kanz, 3385 Independence Ct., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033. (303) 238-2976

FOR SALE--35mm RR slide sets. Plastic mounts. RR activities and action photos. Set mixed steam & diesel. 20 slides-\$7.00. 40 slides \$12.00. 20 slides, all Katy or all ATSF-\$7.00. 40 slides, Railfair-\$12.00. Mike Bledsoe, Box 604, Manchaca, TX 78652. Sample and list upon request.

FOR SALE--Approx. 750 Vanishing Vista RR card collection. Many out of print-\$100. Collection USGS topographic maps, most Colorado, some Utah. Many out of print-\$75. Poor's Railroad Manual 1901. Expertly rebuilt-\$25. Picture Maker of the Old West by Jackson-\$25. Postage extra on everything. Bob LeMassena, 1795 S. Sheridan Blvd., Denver, CO 80226.

INFO NEEDED--on Narrow Gauge RRs in Colorado. Dimensional data or prints for C&S #15 and #65 locomotives, flats, gons, tank cars, cabooses, especially on NG arch bar trucks plus any other information. George Clapp, 454 West Gray Street, Elmira, NY 14905.

FOR SALE--140' of back yard RR track, 4-3/4# gauge aluminum rail on 1" ties. Two switches included. D&RGW dining car service of 78 pieces china and 52 pieces silver, very good condition. Call Les Nelson (303) 422-0691.

TRADE OR SELL--Colorado State Firemens Convention, 1918-Georgetown. Contains history of Fire Dept., illustrations, ads, 64 pages. Worn with rear cover partially missing.; Dyer, Snow-shoe Itinerant, 1891; Lee, Cripple Creek Days. Trade for RR items, tokens, post cards, etc. A. F. Von Blon, 1111 Colcord, Waco, TX 76707.

## LARAMIE TIE PLANT CLOSES

After almost 100 years of providing ties to the Union Pacific Railroad, the company's tie treatment plant on the south side of Laramie was scheduled to close the first of May. The facility has been the center of a controversy between the railroad and the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality over seepage from waste water evaporation ponds on the plant grounds. Federal and state officials claimed that a variety of chemicals have been leaking into the nearby Laramie river and ground water supplies, although extensive studies by the railroad could find no contamination in the river or on nearby wells. The plant is one of some 400 sites targeted by Federal officials as eligible to be cleaned up with EPA Superfund money, but the railroad essentially said "We can handle it" and will accomplish whatever cleanup is necessary and will do so at Union Pacific expense.

## 20 YEARS AGO IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAIL REPORT...

Preparations were underway for an excursion to Colorado Springs behind CB&Q steamer No. 4960 to celebrate the Club's Silver Anniversary. Two new narrow gauge passenger cars were being constructed by the Rio Grande's Burnham Shop crews. The additional all steel cars will increase the railroad's roster of passenger cars to 12, not including the business car. Formal dedication ceremonies of Engine 638 took place in Pueblo. The Rio Grande Ski Train was setting new passenger records with over 2,000 people riding the train each weekend.

## LOOKING FOR INFORMATION

Members of the Longmont Pioneer Museum are looking for data and photographs about railroads that served the Boulder County area. Information obtained will be used in a book that the museum plans to publish. Profits from the sale will help support their museum. Anyone who could provide pertinent information is asked to contact the museum at 375 Kimbark St., Longmont, Colorado 80501, 776-6050, ext. 71.

## CHALLENGING TIMES FOR RIO GRANDE

Recent weeks have not been good for our area railroads as far as mishaps are concerned, and certainly not for the Denver & Rio Grande Western. In late March a Missouri Pacific freight jumped the tracks a few miles east of Eads and several cars plowed into a Rio Grande freight waiting on a passing siding. Only minor injuries were reported. On March 30th a freight derailed south of Castle Rock and made quite a mess. Then on Easter Sunday morning a tank car with 18,000 gallons of nitric acid was punctured in the end during a switching move in the Rio Grande's North Yard not too far from the yard office and tower. The acid immediately began vaporizing and drifted over North Denver, resulting in the evacuation of an estimated 5,000 people from nearby neighborhoods, the closing of I-25 and I-70, and prevention of the San Francisco Zephyr from entering the city. Fortunately the weather conditions were favorable and with soda ash from the Union Pacific spread onto the spill with snowblowers from the airport, the acid was neutralized and controlled in a timely manner. Amazingly no serious injuries were incurred.

On Friday, April 15th, the roof, or rather mountain, fell in between Spanish Fork and Thistle, Utah. Millions of tons of mud and rock slid down a mountain side into the narrow canyon north of Thistle and covered the Rio Grande's mainline, Highway 89, and dammed the waters of the Spanish Fork River. As with other areas in Utah, the mountains around Thistle have received extraordinarily heavy rains and snowfall this winter, and the ground is saturated with moisture, creating many slide hazards and potential flooding problems for this spring. This particular mountainside had shown signs of instability the preceeding Wednesday, and on Thursday the tracks became buckled and twisted. Quick work by Rio Grande crews made repairs so that freight traffic was resumed and the westbound Rio Grande Zephyr could gingerly move over the unstable ground. But additional problems on Friday completely closed down the line and caused rerouting of Rio Grande traffic over the Union Pacific in Wyoming. The Rio Grande Zephyr, with only four more runs remaining was rerouted over the foreign territory of

the Union Pacific to Denver on Friday.

As late as that day, railroad officials expressed confidence that the line would be restored for freight service and the last run of the Rio Grande Zephyr on April 23 and 24. But that was not to be as conditions continued to deteriorate and the slide turned into one of Utah's most serious natural catastrophies. The mountain continued to slide and the waters of the Spanish Fork River backed up behind the slide-built dam until a lake formed 3 miles long and flooded out the 22 homes of Thistle. As of this writing the slide was adding two feet of earth per hour to the dam and a 1 foot per hour rise to the level of the lake. Round the clock efforts by state and railroad crews with heavy earthmoving equipment have been unable to control the situation. With heavy spring runoff just beginning, the outcome is unknown but the concern is that should the 1½ mile long, 600 foot wide dam give way, dire consequences could be in store for the town of Spanish Fork at the mouth of the canyon.

Since the Rio Grande line was closed, all affected freight traffic on the Rio Grande has been routed over the Union Pacific, creating quite an impact on the Denver-Cheyenne single track line. With the waters back into Thistle, not only is the Rio Grande's transcontinental connection broken, but the Marysville line is cut from the rest of the system.

And the Rio Grande Zephyr...Beginning Saturday, April 16, the Zephyr's western terminus became Grand Junction, with connecting bus service over a circuitous detour to Salt Lake City. This situation will be in effect through the last run on April 24th. It is certainly a disappointment and incredibly untimely that after faithfully serving Utah since the beginning of Amtrak, the Rio Grande Zephyr in the final days of operation will not be able to complete its historic last trip to the Beehive State. That is the least of the railroad's worries of course and hopefully by the time this newsletter is in the mail a solution to the Utah disaster will be eminent.

### FINAL DUES NOTICE

This will be the last newsletter you will receive if your membership dues are not paid before June 1, 1983.

## 45 YEARS AGO

The April meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club was the auspicious beginning of the Club's 46th year! It was on the second Tuesday of April in 1938, 45 years ago, that a small group of railfans organized the Club. The first formal meeting of the group was held in the basement room of the Union Pacific's freight house on lower 19th Street just east of the Union Station. Among those charter members were Carl Hewett (the sparkplug), Forest Crossen, Walker Edwards, John Heatwole, Dick Kindig, Les Logue, Otto Perry and Jackson Thode. Dear old John Heatwole was a locomotive engineer for the Rio Grande and, by dint of seniority even then handled trains 1 and 2, the "Scenic Limited," between Denver and Pueblo as his regular run.

Our interests in forming a club had come about through our frequent, unorganized participation in train watching at Denver Union Terminal. Union Pacific 0-6-0 4400's and the Burlington's low slung 560 series switchers were constantly busy, moving cars and trains into and out of the depot. The often spectacular departures of the eastbound main line passenger trains, with heavy, modern steamers, during the late afternoon and early evening each day, were of great attraction, and some of us always seemed to be on hand to witness the proceedings.

There was never a thought among those early members, I'm sure, that the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club would burgeon into one of the leading railfan organizations in the United States. The activities and

## NARROW GAUGE BUS PACKAGE

A bus and lodging package for the "Narrow Gauge Weekend" is available from Dick Lawrence. For detailed information on this trip to Chama and Durango from Denver write: Dick Lawrence, 9769 West Cornell Place, Lakewood, CO 80227. A self-addressed envelope would be appreciated. Please include your phone number with your information request. Alternately, you may contact Dick by phone evenings at (303) 987-3610.

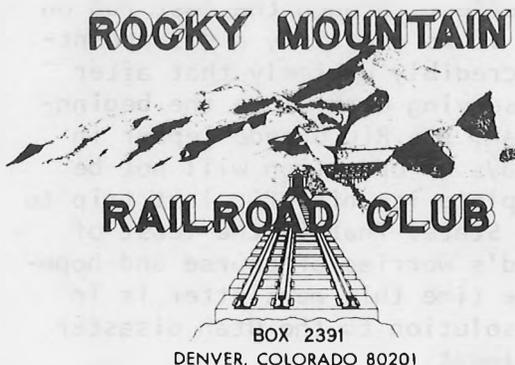
This package is being offered to excursion participants by Dick Lawrence; it is not a Rocky Mountain Railroad Club activity. Tickets for the train trips must be purchased separately from the Club.

## A NEW NAME

When the San Francisco Zephyr finally starts traversing the rails of the Rio Grande, the name of the train is to be changed to....California Zephyr. With the blockage of tracks in Utah it appears that it may be several months before Amtrak will be able to carry their passengers "Through the Rockies - Not Around Them" however.

depth of development of the Club in the 45 years since that first meeting are a source of much gratification to those of us who still survive. The uncounted host of enthusiastic and dedicated members who have done, and continue to do, so much to promote and carry on the interests of our members must not go unremarked.

We thank you all.  
Jackson Thode, Membership #4



Erwin Chaim  
560 Emerson St.  
Denver, CO 80218

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