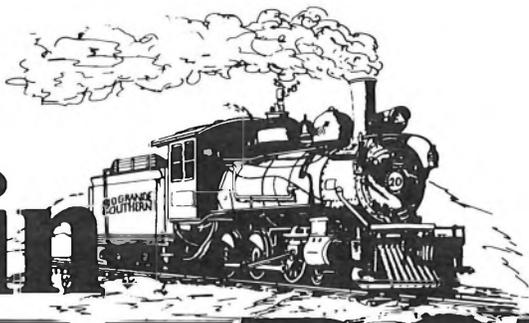


# Rocky Mountain RAIL REPORT



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB

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## MEETING SCHEDULE:

November 12, 1991 -- 7:30 p.m.

Southeast wing of Christ Episcopal Church,  
2950 South University at Bates. Off-street  
parking at rear (east) of meeting hall.  
Please use the building's south entrance.

Jim Trowbridge..... Editor  
Les Grenz..... Associate Editor  
David W. Salter..... President  
Joe Priselac..... Vice President  
Bill Gordon..... Secretary  
Bert Bidwell..... Treasurer

Send all items for publication to: Rocky Mountain Rail Report, c/o Jim Trowbridge, Editor, 502 South Cody Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80226.

**COPY DEADLINE** ALL copy for publication in the December, 1991 Rail Report is due no later than November 12, 1991!!

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## MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES

Please refer address changes, new memberships, lost newsletters, missing newsletter pages, etc. to:

Tom Lawry, Membership Chairman  
c/o Rocky Mountain Railroad Club  
P. O. Box 2391  
Denver, Colorado 80201

November, 1991..... No. 386  
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.

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## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending \$19.00 (\$15.00 annual dues plus enrollment fee of \$4.00) to: ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB, P. O. Box 2391, Denver, Colorado 80201. An Associate Membership for Spouses and Children is also available for a yearly rate of \$7.50. On regular memberships, new members joining after April of each year may obtain membership for a payment of \$4.00 enrollment fee plus \$1.25 for each month remaining in the calendar year. Dues for the next year are solicited in November of the current year.

## NOVEMBER 12 MEETING

Neal Miller, long-time Club member, will host the November program with his "oldies, but goodies."

His program is entitled "Old Railroad Serials;" a collection of old 16mm black and white silent movies shot before "talkies."

This is a change of pace and should bring much laughter, compounded by Neal's witty, slapstick routine.

Something different!! With Neal Miller...  
you bet! (Joe Priselac)

## **PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT**

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## **OCTOBER MEETING — ANNUAL BANQUET**

Approximately 125 Club members and guests attended this year's annual banquet at the Denver Athletic Club.

It was a delightful evening and everyone enjoyed a fine dinner over good conversation before progressing into the evening's special feature. Prior to the program, door prizes were awarded to the following folks:

L. Wilson Ruid / An original 1904 promotional photo of the Denver, Northwest & Pacific showing a train "Crossing the Continent" above Yankee Doodle Lake. The photo was in an antique frame.

Brian Gould / America's Colorful Railroads

Mike Johnson / John Fielder's Colorado Calendar--1992

Mary Jane Butler / Union Pacific Wall Plaque

David Salter / April, 1941, Official Guide to Railroads

Carl Hambergren / RMRRC #25 Interurban Print by Joe Priselac

Jim Bratton / The Cripple Creek Road

Gerri Slezak / Georgetown & The Loop

Bill Youder / Matted Print: #71 in Central City

Ron Ruhoff / Memorial Edition: Denver, South Park & Pacific

Ruth Youder / Logging Along the D&RG

Finally, what everyone had been waiting for...the Irv August Program!!

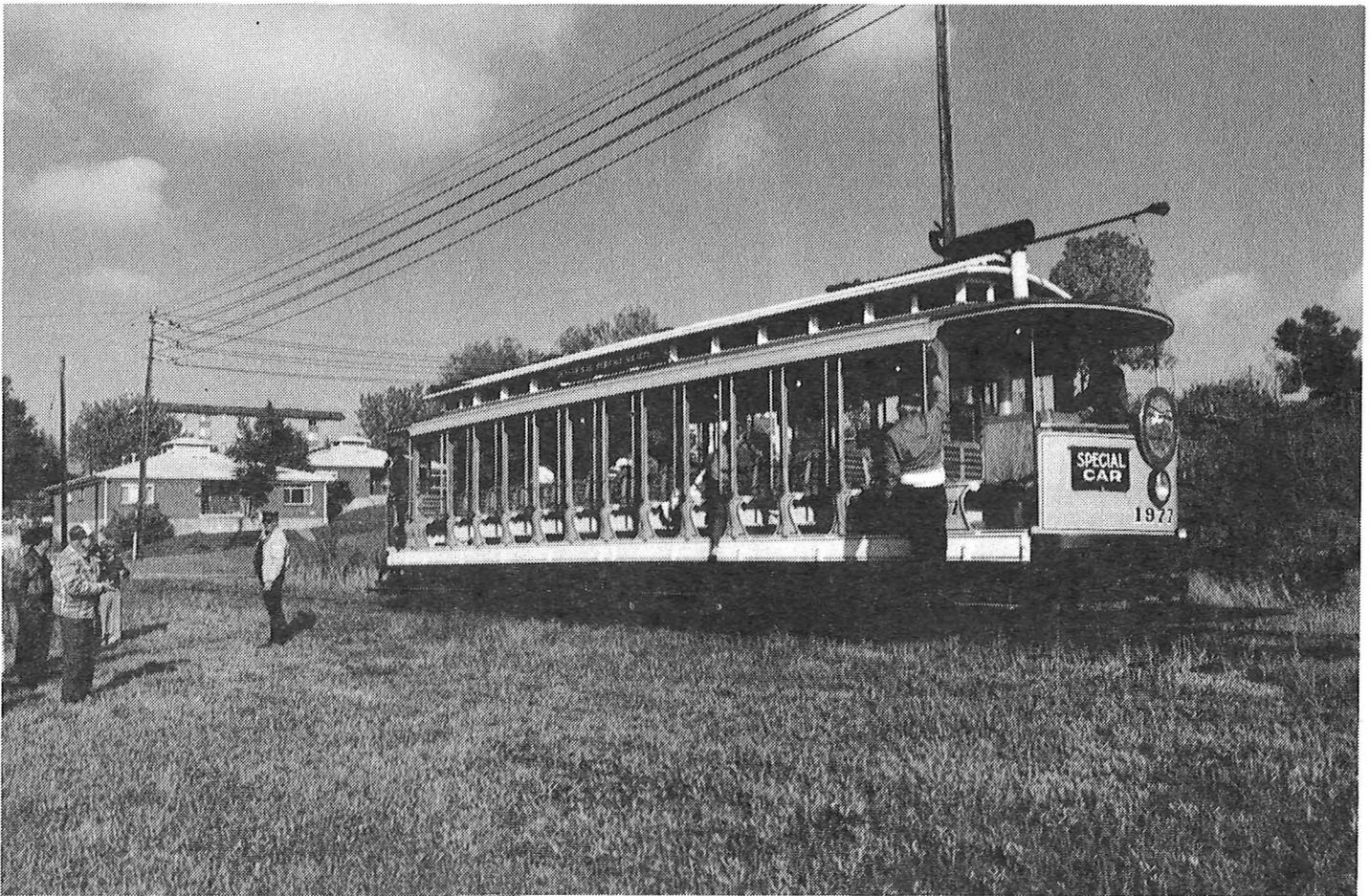
Irv's program was divided into three parts. The first third featured Denver & Rio Grande's Tennessee Pass. Time was running out for steam and on August 15, 1954, Irv, along with long-time Club member Al Patten, spent the day there filming what was to be the last three steam freights over the Pass. The sight of those mighty 2-8-8-2 Mallets, spewing smoke to the Heavens was a thrilling spectacle.

The middle third took us to the June 1, 1957 Club excursion to Durango and then on to Farmington, New Mexico. It was only by chance that the trip included this one-time standard gauge branch. The night before the intended trip to Silverton, heavy rains in the Animas Canon washed out a portion of the track, shifting our destination to Farmington instead. The film then shifted to the double-headed train over Cumbres Pass.

The final third took us to the famed Union Pacific. In past programs, Irv has shown films of trains on the old line over Sherman Hill. This time, the focus of the action was at Speer and then over portions of the new line to Dale Creek. At both places, there was, at times, two or more trains in the picture. Seeing those mighty "Big Boys" was to bring to memory what once was.

Our thanks to Irv for presenting this outstanding program and our congratulations to him and his lovely wife, Elna, on celebrating fifty-four years of marriage at the time of the banquet.

[Editor's note: If you could not attend the annual banquet and would like to view Irv's films, the Club has arranged for all this footage and more to be placed on video tape by WB Video Productions, 6447 South Heritage Place West, Englewood, CO 80111. These feature authentic dubbed-in sound. A complete description of these films may be obtained by contacting WB Video. The Club realizes some income from these videos and uses that income to publish additional material.]



*After unloading trolley fans, "Platte Valley Trolley" No. 1977 prepares to back up as the conductor, Club member Bill Gordon, gives the motorman, Club member Erwin Chaim, the "High Ball." The Club's drumhead is mounted above the headlight to the right of the "Special Car" designation sign as fans form a photo line during the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club's special excursion on October 5, 1991. The location is just east of the Knox Court crossing on the old interurban route No. 84 where the Club's No. 25 roamed between Denver and Golden. (Joe Priselac) (John Holzman Photograph)*

## **REPORT ON THE PLATTE VALLEY TROLLEY EXCURSION OF OCTOBER 5th**

Although a cold front the day before dropped warm temperatures, approximately 60 members and their guests boarded the "Platte River Trolley" at Confluence Park Station, Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m.. October 5th, for a wonderful trolley excursion along the South Platte River, connecting with the historic old Route 84 line of the Denver & Intermountain line west to Sheridan Boulevard.

The hardy trolley fans were greeted by clear blue, sunny skies accompanied by a rather brisk early morning temperature. However, this did not seem to dampen their

enthusiasm for hopping on and off the trolley for photo runbys. Riders were treated to an array of trolley operations as it crossed old Colfax Avenue with a "green light," proceeded across Lakewood Gulch via trestle, traveled on original right-of-way past the site of the old interurban shops on the east bank of the river where the railroad bridge was washed out by the 1965 flood and not replaced and continued across Decatur Street (an historic part of the old Morrison Road), climbing out of the valley under Federal Blvd., through the old Denver Tramway "Barnum Junction" where the route 75 streetcars crossed over the gulch, and, then westward to Sheridan Blvd. on the grade to Golden which was the original Denver, Lakewood



*Rocky Mountain Railroad Club excursionists prepare to reboard the "Platte Valley Trolley" on 12th Avenue, just west of Newton Street, after a photo runby. The trolley operates on city streets at this location which was the old interurban route No. 84, between Newton and Perry streets. (Joe Priselac) (John Holzman Photograph)*

and Golden Railroad, built in 1890.

Between Newton and Perry Streets on 12th Avenue, the trolley travels on city streets and this excursion allowed riders to relive what it must have been like for turn-of-the-century passengers to also ride open-sided, bench-seating-type trolleys on this same trackage via "Seeing Denver" Denver streetcars. After crossing Perry Street, it was non-stop, wide-open running at top speed of 15 to 17 mph westward to Sheridan Blvd., crossing the many gulches on wooden and concrete trestles, through wooded areas and open countryside. Photo runbys completed, our professional crew of Club members Erwin Chaim (Motorman), Bill Gordon (Conductor), and John Dolan (Flagman) brought the diesel-electric powered trolley No. 1977 back to Confluence Park Station with a very satisfied group of rail fans.

Our thanks to Erwin, Bill, John, Rick McNeal and the Denver Rail Heritage Society (completing their third year of operation) for a wonderful time. Also, our thanks to the hardy trolley fans who braved the cold temperatures to join the Club for this old fashioned trolley transportation experience. (Joe Priselac)



## ELECTIONS

The nominating committee has been quite busy and will have a slate of officers and board members ready for publication in the December Rail Report.

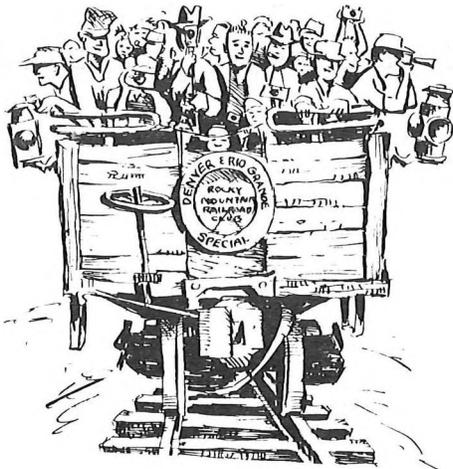
## NEW MEMBERS

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club wishes to enthusiastically welcome the following new members:

Walter O. Cass	Denver, CO
Ronald E. Dawson	El Paso, TX
Russell Kaufman	Aurora, CO
James Norwood	Ft. Worth, TX

Associate Member:

Mary Norwood	Ft. Worth, TX
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## 1991 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

November 12	Regular Monthly Meeting
December 10	ELECTIONS and Regular Monthly Meeting

## 1992 PROPOSED EVENTS

The trip committee has yet to announce the final dates for individual trips, but the following list will give members an idea of what to expect in 1992:

- Colorado Midland Field Trip (continuing west from Ute Pass)
- Mt. Pleasant, Iowa Steam Extravaganza
- Pueblo-Alamosa Trip on the D&RGW Ski Train
- Wyoming/Colorado RR Trip
- Georgetown Loop Railroad Excursion
- Burlington Northern Shop Tour
- Colorado RR Museum Picnic
- High Country RR Outing



## NEWS FROM THE C&TS AND D&SNG

The week of October 6, 1991 will long be remembered for an historic event between the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. The two narrow gauge railroads traded engines!!

The D&SNG sent K-37, No. 497 (a workhorse for the railroad the past few years) to the C&TS in even trade for K-36, No. 482 which will be completely rebuilt this winter in the D&SNG shops.

Both parties are happy with the swap. The C&TS gets a running engine that will bring its roster to five operating locomotives and give the C&TS some extra pulling power up the 4% grade of Cumbres Pass. The D&SNG will have a third K-36 on their roster that will better travel their sharp-curved track. The K-37, with its extra-foot-long frame and different trailing truck assembly did not want to follow the rails as one would like it to so do. It will enjoy the larger curves on the C&TS.

As if this wasn't enough good news from narrow gauge country, the C&TS received outstanding news from two fronts regarding equipment in addition to the No. 497. First, the C&TS will be getting a Federal appropriation of some \$550,000 with which to rebuild the Gene Autry engine, a K-27, No. 463, and, four new passenger cars along the lines of the newest Chama cars, from the ground up. Second, the C&TS will be receiving five ex-D&RGW-route Gramps tank cars from the White Pass & Yukon Railroad. These cars were used by the White Pass for transportation of gasoline right up until regular operations ceased a few years back. They are all set to roll except to replace the three-quarter couplers with full-size couplers as originally equipped on the D&RGW.

Finally, while we do not have the exact figures as this date, we do know that both railroads showed increases in ridership. We hope to have more details later, along with photographs.



*Some famous RMRRC members at the Westall Monument, preparing to mount the bronze plaque. From left to right, we see Mac Poor, Bill Gordon, Dick Kindig and Irv August. The photo was taken by the fifth member of the group, Ed Haley.*

## **A RAILFAN'S NOSTALGIA OF PLAQUES AND MONUMENTS**

by Irv August

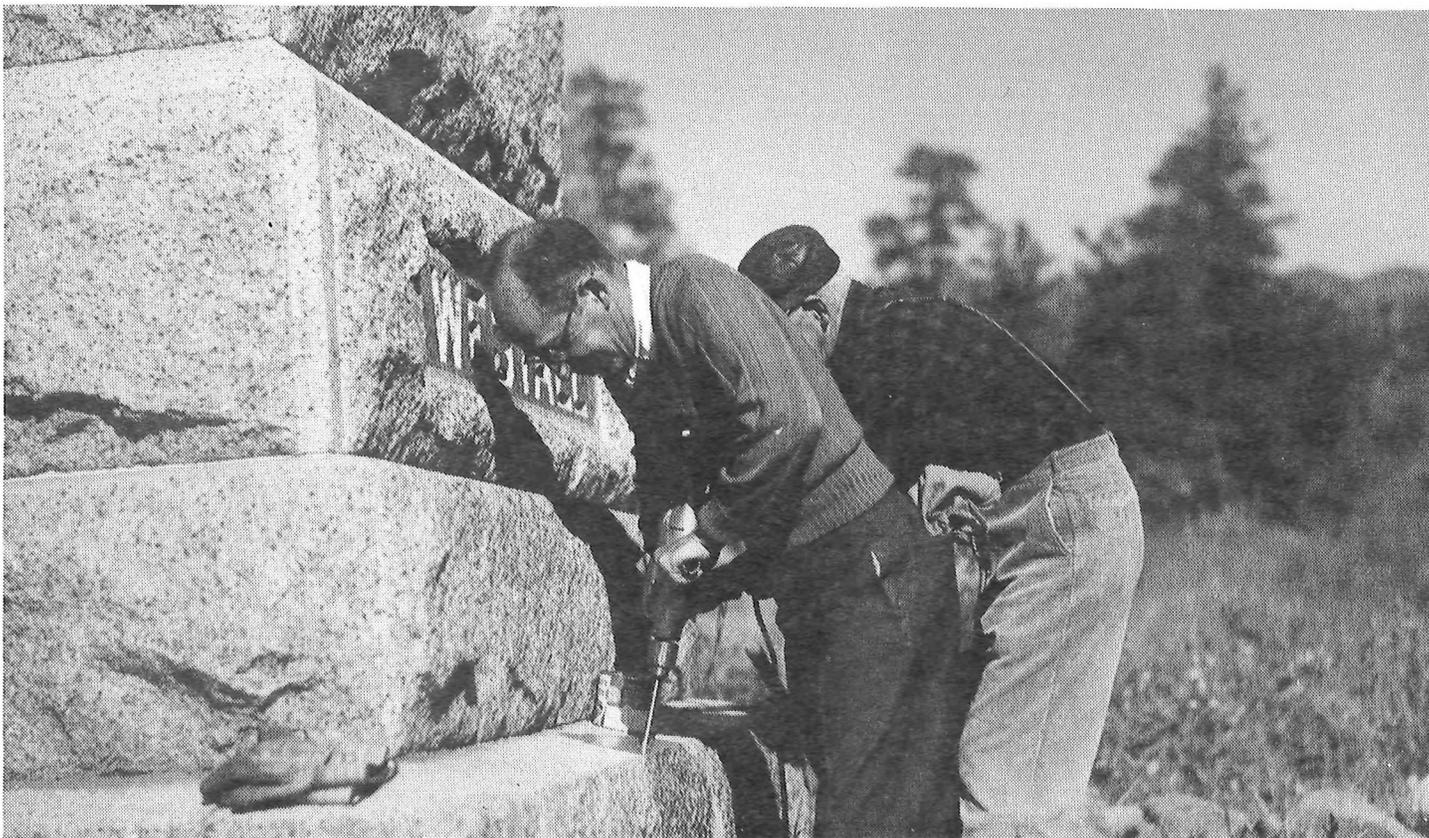
On a Colorado by-way in Platte Canon, there stands a granite monument with a single word, WESTALL, boldly carved into the pink Pike's Peak granite. Who or what was Westall? No marker told a by-stander what event took place in the past that would warrant such an impressive monument. Standing some 10 feet tall and weighing 34,000 pounds, it is indeed a sight to inspire a lot of questions about its origin and the events leading up to its creation. Arousing further curiosity, there is a polished oval engraved with the letters A.O.U.W. (American Order of United Workmen) and their emblem. Underneath, in small letters, is a line that says "Tell my wife I died thinking of her".

In the fall of 1962, after a series of letters to the editor of the Denver Post

and a small article in the paper in response, a group of Rocky Mountain Railroad Club members decided to do something about marking this piece of Colorado history so that others could better appreciate this impressive marker. Mac Poor, Dick Kindig, Ed Haley, Bill Gordon and myself made up this motley crew.

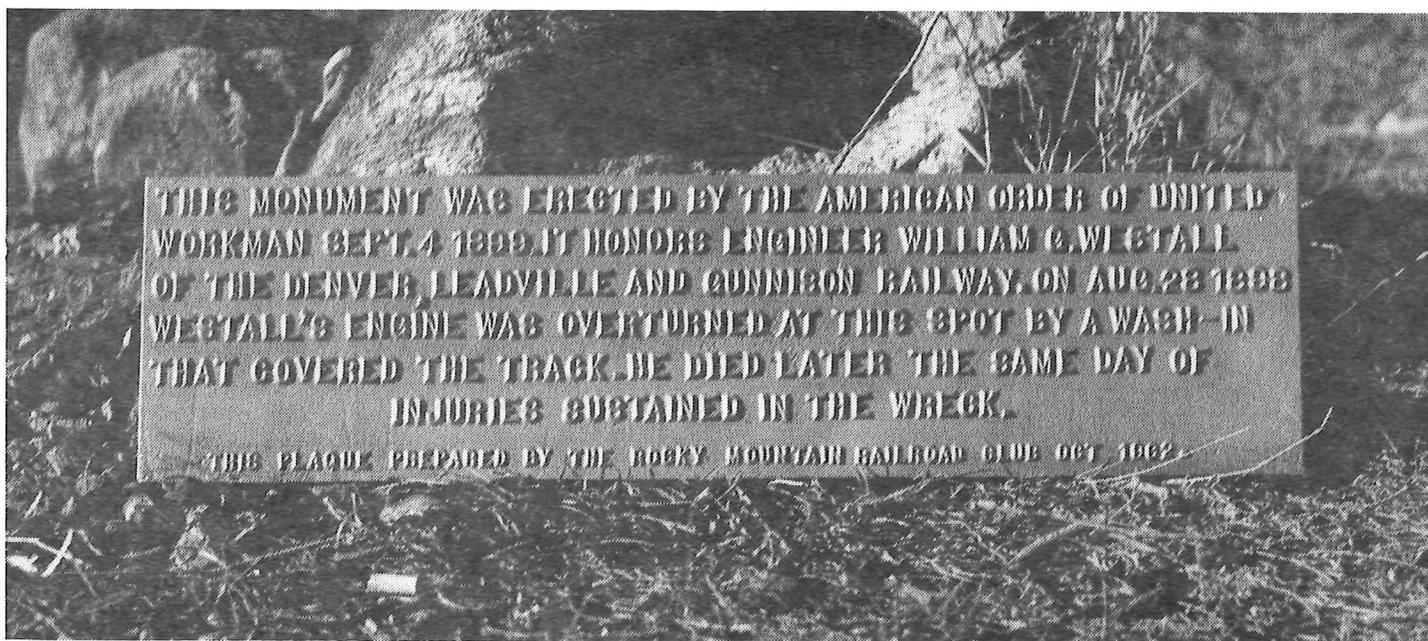
The first order of business was to determine the state of affairs at the site. A trip determined that the brush and weeds nearly engulfed the monument, and it was leaning slightly. We measured the position where we would mount a plaque and made a date to execute the work. It should be mentioned here that all this would not have been possible were it not for the help of a number of civic minded industrial firms in Denver.

On the appointed day, we mounted the offensive. Armed with the tools of the trade--picks, shovels, heavy duty electric drill and an electric generator to drive it, a template to mark the holes for the marker

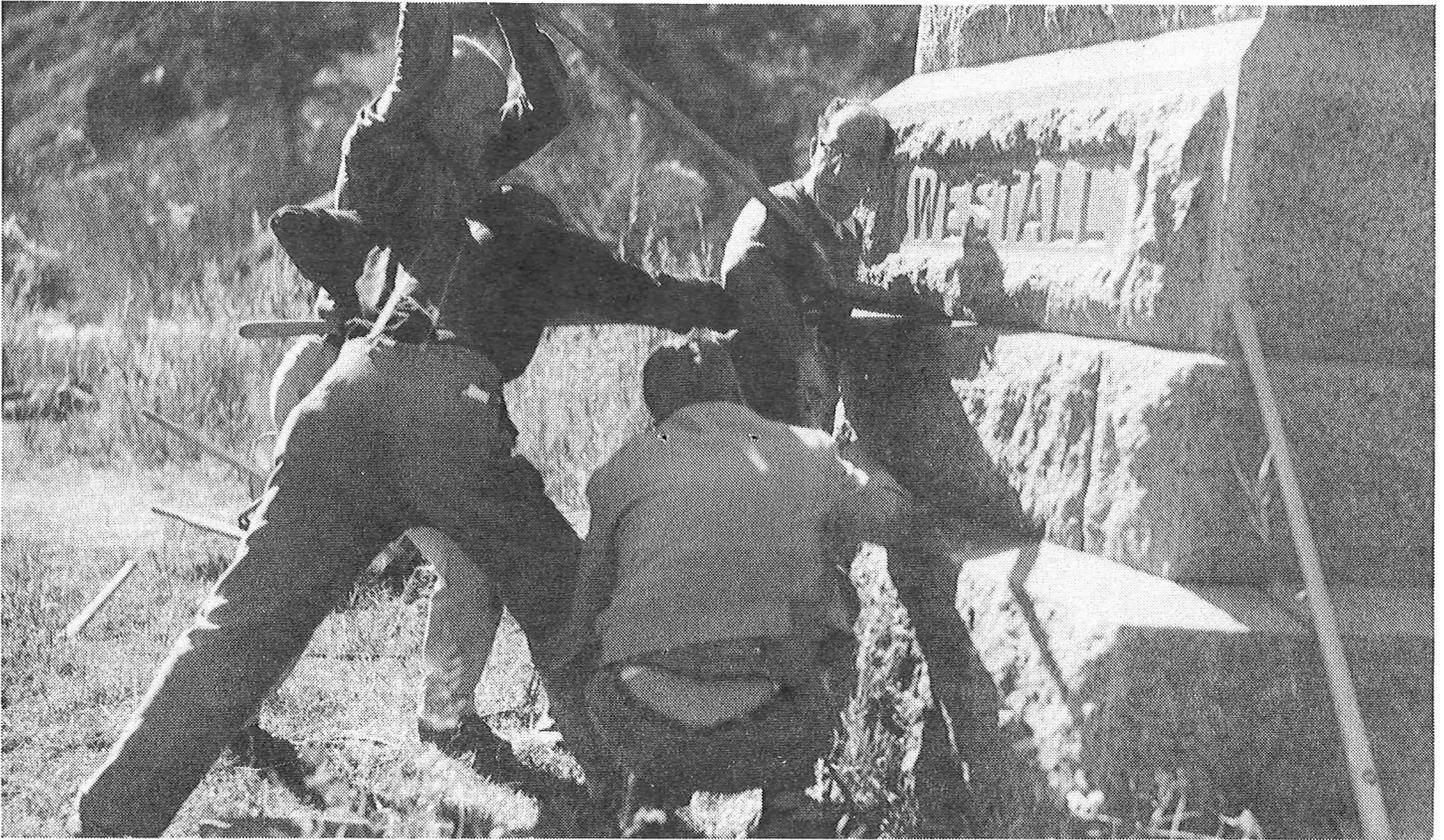


Irv August is drilling mounting holes in the granite base of the Westall Monument on this 21st day of October, 1962. Mac Poor was helping to cool the drill bit by pouring water into the hole occasionally.

(R. H. Kindig Photograph)



A close-up of the plaque cast by Irv August for the Westall Monument (Dick Kindig Photo)



*The granite base was very hard and drilling went slowly. Ed Haley is using a shovel to apply maximum downward pressure on the drill which Irv August is operating. Mac Poor (back to the camera) is helping by holding a second shovel while Bill Gordon pours water into the drill hole to cool the drill bit.* (R. H. Kindig Photograph)

and other miscellaneous items such as a good supply of Coors, we had at it. Cutting the weeds and brush was easy. Building a small retaining wall of stone and filling in around it was a little more strenuous. But the real test of our endurance was in drilling the four holes in that granite! It was hard, and in spite of the especially ground carbide drills and lots of pressure brought to bear as the photo shows, it was slow going. Bill Gordon made numerous trips to the river for water to cool the drill. Eventually, all four holes were deep enough, and, using special cement, we secured the plaque. It looked just great and we packed up the tools and made for home, confident in a job well done.

Several months later, realizing that I had neglected to take a photo of the finished job, I went back up there. In amazement and mounting anger, I realized that vandals had succeeded in tearing the plaque

from its place and made off with it. I drove back home in silence, contemplating that perverse side of human nature.

Oh, yes! William "Billy" G. Westall was an engineer on the Denver, Leadville and Gunnison Railroad. He was killed at this spot on August 28, 1898 when his train struck a wash-in and overturned, pinning him beneath the locomotive. The text for the plaque was written by Ed Haley and is pictured here. For a more complete story of this wreck, see the Club's book, DENVER, SOUTH PARK AND PACIFIC.

The Westall Monument episode is not the only example of vandalism of historical markers that I had personal experience with. On August 1, 1948, Colorado Day, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club journeyed to the ghost town of Waldorf, up above Georgetown. The occasion was the naming of a mountain in the area for the builder of

the Argentine Central Railway, Edward John Wilcox. It was a festive time, a cloudless Colorado day, and there were lots of the old-time buildings still standing to explore, including the massive mill. In attendance were the Governor, John Vivian, a representative from the Board of Geographic Place Names, Benjamin Draper, who sparked the project, and others. After the obligatory speeches and other formalities, radio contact was made with members of the Colorado Mountain Club who had made it to the summit of what would thereafter be known as Mt. Wilcox, the ceremony was over. We then could examine, in detail, the plaque that had been fastened to a large block of granite. It measured about 20"x30" and told the story, in brief, of the Argentine Central Ry.

It was some years before I again visited Waldorf and I was amazed that not a single

building remained standing. I hurried over to the granite stone on which the plaque had been fastened and, yes, you guessed it, it had been torn off and carted away. Once again, I drove away in silence, sad to think that there is such perverse nature in mankind.

I don't know, of course, if any of these plaques are still in existence. The most likely fate was that they were sold as scrap for a mere pittance of their true value, and, wiping out forever the pleasure of any future visitor to the spot.



*Benjamin Draper, holding papers, makes the opening dedication remarks while Governor John C. Vivian, with arms folded, contemplates the festive occasion on that long-ago day in the Colorado Mountains.*

*(Irv August Photograph)*



*The ceremony over, the spectators can now step up and examine the handsome bronze plaque fastened, we thought forever, to that massive slab of Colorado granite. One of the many buildings still then standing can be seen upper right. (Irv August Photograph)*

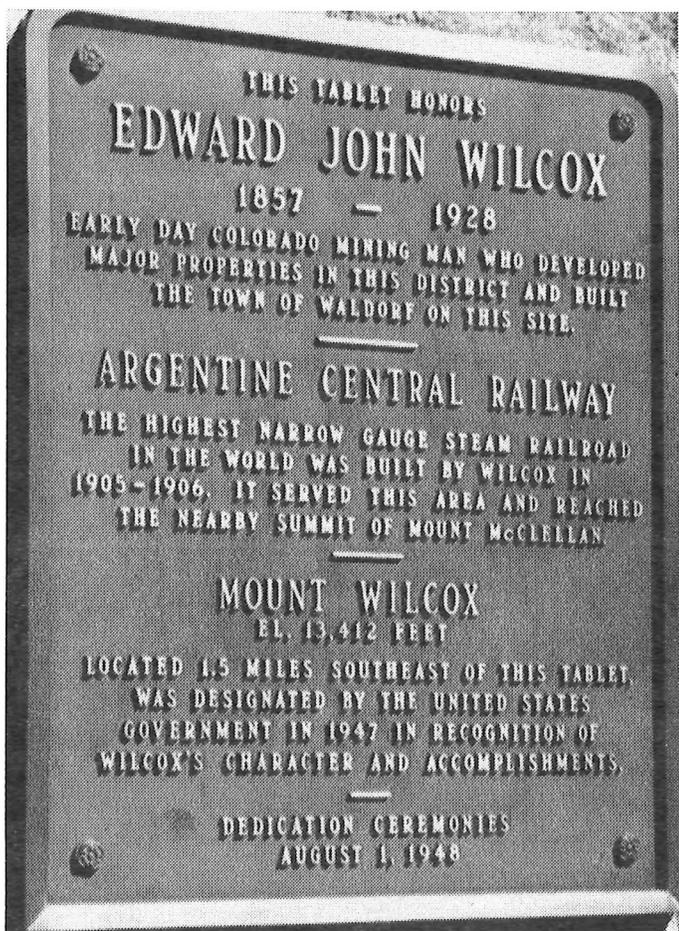
## **BOARD ACTION — RMRRRC**

At the last meeting of the Board of Directors and Officers, it was felt that it would be appropriate to give a brief synopsis of action taken at these meetings in our monthly newsletter as they might be of interest to the membership. We will publish this information following each meeting for a trial period and would appreciate "feedback" on whether or not it is of interest to membership. Also, once members are appraised of the inside activities of the Club, perhaps it will spur others to actively participate in these activities.

Our "Board Meetings" are held the fourth Friday evening of each month and are nor-

mally held in the Conference Room at the Union Station. Our September 27th meeting was held at the Denver Federal Center aboard Car 25 in an effort for the Board and Officers to view at first-hand what was transpiring on the restoration of the car.

Car 25 is still a long way from being completed, however, once it is finished it will be a treasure and something that the Club can display with pride. People are needed to help work on the car on Saturdays during the fall and winter months and on other days, someone is usually available if anyone can give time other than Saturdays. There is some speculation as to our tenure at DFC, but for the time being, this



*This close-up of the plaque, some 20"x30", faces to the southeast, looking towards the 13,412-foot mountain to be known henceforth as Mt. Wilcox. (Irv August Photo)*

is secure, and the building in which the car is housed is heated, lighted, and a telephone has been installed. All of the committed budget for the restoration of the car has not been spent, and the possibility of hiring outside help for some of the work is being considered. Of interest is the fact that Denver's new light rail system is being designed to handle "antique trolleys."

It was decided to publish a brief financial statement once a year in the newsletter, and this will probably be after our FYE statement of October 31st each year.

Application for a Raffle License from the State of Colorado has been submitted in order to hold a raffle of the miniature "G" scale trolleys that were donated to the Club by Caboose Hobbies. These trolleys were displayed at our March Club meeting.

Proceeds from this raffle is to go towards the restoration of Car 25.

The Club is looking at the possibility of publishing a couple of additional books as we have less than 200 copies of the "Georgetown Loop" book in our inventory. Membership will be appraised of these plans once the topics are "firm." Also, it has been recommended that an additional printing of the "Loop" book be considered in the future with an updating that reflects the recent happenings in Georgetown with regards to the depot and locomotive/equipment display.

We are also looking into the possibility of doing a calendar, probably a smaller desk size, utilizing the many photos that we have in our archives and/or donations from members. Bob Griswold is in charge of publications and any ideas that you have might be passed on to him.

Bill Gould had graciously agreed to be the Committee Chairman of our movies and videos and will appreciate any ideas that you might have on these topics. We have an absolute "treasure trove" in our movies and negatives, and, our first interest is in the preservation of this material.

We are considering a second "annual" work day on our equipment stored at the Colorado Railroad Museum. This would be a date scheduled in the fall to complement the one normally scheduled in late May or early June.

The Club is in need of an Archivist, and Bob Griswold had tentatively agreed to assume this responsibility--until it was decided to look into the publication of additional books and possibly a calendar. These will occupy his time and now we need someone to assume this responsibility. Anyone that has interest in this type of work, including cataloging, etc., of our materials at "World Headquarters" (our space on the second floor at the Union Station), will find their efforts certainly appreciated. The Board and Officers have agreed to a work day this fall at our space in Union Station in an effort to clean and organize the area.

The Club has loaned our radios to the Denver Rail Heritage Society for use in the operation of the Denver Trolley. The Rail

Heritage Society is responsible for the maintenance of this equipment and recently had them cleaned and in for a maintenance check at Motorola. Also, they are replacing one of the chargers that was lost in a theft.

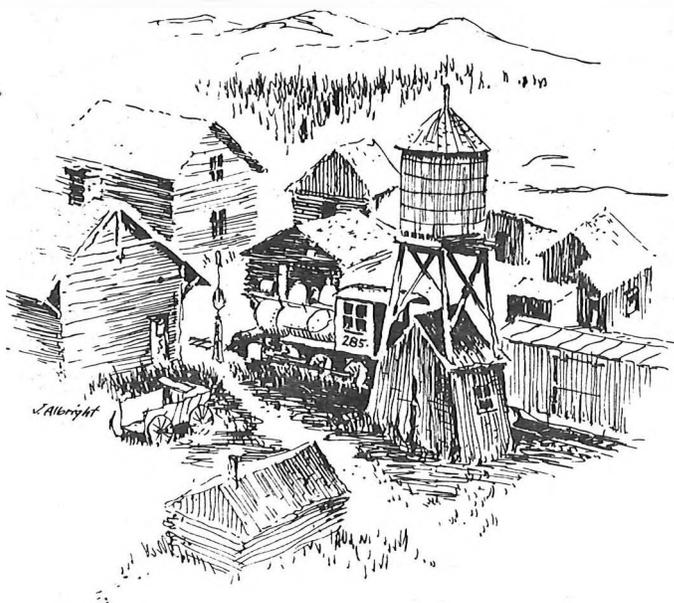
Some of the details have not been cleared on our proposed "major" trip for 1992. Once these are firmed, concrete plans can be made for this trip and the membership will be advised. (Dave Salter)



## 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 them.

FOR SALE: "Grandpa" is selling over 100 pieces of his sheet music collection: Railroad theme or railroad cover art, 1853-1953, including railroad wrecks, famous trains, pullman porters, etc. Send 29¢ stamp for list to "Grandpa" (John White), 1701 Wynkoop, Denver, CO 80202.



## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We are always happy to receive information about railroading in the Rocky Mountain region and, very often, as space permits, use other regional data. We encourage our members to participate in the newsletter. Should you have something you wish to share with fellow members, please send it to the attention of the editor, **ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAIL REPORT**, 502 South Cody St., Lakewood, Colorado 80226.

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## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

SECOND CLASS



RAILROAD CLUB

BOX 2391

DENVER, COLORADO 80201

DATED MATERIAL