



Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society

Newsletter

Summer Edition 2021, No. 28

Editor: Jim Jordan, Layout: Jamie Foster



Denver Zephyr, photo by Marty Bernard

President's Letter

In this letter I will be discussing the need to renew your membership and a few developments that have occurred.

First, we cannot maintain the society without funds. It costs \$58 a month for the telephone bill. We have to set aside \$199 a month for the Director and Officers Insurance. That price also includes our million dollar plus liability insurance. With the dearth of train shows the operating funds have to come from memberships, donations and sales of our merchandise. So please send in your renewal membership fee today.

There are a number of shows coming later in the year, and we will send heads up notices for these events.

Also, we need to have some help to clean out the Calhan station on the 24th. We will be there from 1000 to 1430 hours on Saturday the 24th.

In addition we will be painting the logos on the caboose and the car number. We shall be removing a lot of paint from the grab irons and repainting them.

Eian will be starting to rewire the passenger area in the depot. Plus we will be removing the rotted telegraph pole that is almost to the point of collapse. I have arranged for Sturgeon Electric to transport two poles from the CSPU lot to our project so we can replace those who pose a danger to the general public.

On September 22nd we will need two persons beside Bruce to "film" a Symposium that we are co-sponsoring in Englewood, with the City of Englewood's Departments of Recreation, Parks and Library. This Symposium will give us much needed public relations, and we can have tables to sell our products and recruit new members.

This Symposium meets our Mission Statement for community involvement. It will be free and lunch will be served also gratis. So if you have a good video camera and would like to help we need you.

We are working on a number of things and if they bare fruit I will send out updates. Thank you for your support and being a member.

Jim



Mill Creek Valley Historical Society

Saving the past for the future

Written by Larrice Sell, President MCVHS



In 1959 the Clear Creek County School District decided to consolidate all the schools into one District. This meant that most of the smaller school districts no longer existed, and the school buildings no longer were needed. The Dumont School building was one of those emptied and no longer used. The building was used for a time by the community for get-togethers, but the District sold off most of the contents and began using it for storage. The building was beginning to leak, and the district had no intentions to repair it. Joan Drury a resident of Lawson was serving on the school board at the time. It was decided in 1980 that the Lawson school and the Dumont School buildings would be sold to private parties. Joan was unable to save the Lawson school, but she fought for the Dumont School. She got some friends together and formed a non-profit historical society to buy the building from the school board. Because of this, Mill Creek Valley Historical Society was formed in 1981 and is still active today. Mill Creek Valley was decided on as the title because our organization covers the "tri-cities" of Dumont, Downieville, and Lawson.

We have never had to ask for grants to do the work on the Dumont School, as we always had volunteers to do the work or cash to pay for it. We have replaced the roof, refinished the floors, and wainscoting inside. The electrical wiring was replaced and brought up to code and insulation was added to the attic space. When our outhouse was condemned, we added bathrooms and a kitchen to the building which has helped us to use the building for more events than just our meeting space. We do rent it out for special events, public events, and even use it for the occasional funeral. Of course we also use it for our meetings and fund raising such as dinners and our yearly melodrama.

In 1984 we were given the Coburn Cabin which was Joan Drury's great grandmother's home. This cabin was moved from Lawson to Georgetown and then onto our school ground. We have placed it on a foundation, and have chinked and daubed it. We need to put in windows and then plans are to make it look like it did when Mrs. Coburn lived there.

In 1981 we were also deeded the Mill City House, an original road house, pony express stop, and boarding house. (see attached photo) We are in hopes of obtaining grants for restoration on this building. After many many years of fund raising, we have finally raised enough money to match grants if necessary. We are very excited to get started on this building. This is an expensive undertaking and not something we can do without financial help. The building needs total restoration which requires much more than we have money, nor volunteers to do.

In June 2014 the Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society stepped up to purchase, move and restore the old Dumont Depot. We were in the discussion stages of this building when RMRHS stepped forward with the idea they would purchase, move and restore it. This was a godsend to us. We had discussed the moving of it to several locations, including the County Fire Authority property by the school or perhaps down closer to the original site which is now Clear Creek. We would love to have it moved to a safer locale and are hoping to see it be turned into a museum which would acknowledge the vital role the railroad had in the formation of our area. RMRHS as are all non-profits, in need of funding, donations and grants to move forward on this project.

We urge all history and railroad buffs out there to help save this wonderful old piece of history. Donate your time and money to aide this group in their endeavor. If you have a little extra, you are welcome to join us in our quest to save our beloved Mill City House. For info, write Mill Creek Valley Historical Society, Box 84, Dumont Colorado, 80436.





We hope that you will join with us this year or help us by renewing your membership. We value your participation.



I Want You to Renew Your Membership!

Join today it's only \$25.00 individual and \$45.00 Family. Now we have individual young person 12-17 for \$10.00. We have some great bonus surprises for our members coming this year. Rail trip and expeditions to railroad historic sites. So renew for a great year of fun. Help us restore and preserve depots, railroad cars and engines. Get your hands on history!
For information: Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society 303-961-5929 RMRHS.org

Upcoming Events

July 24, 2021

Work Day at Calhan. Please come and help.

August 21, 2021

Boreas Pass Railroad Day, 9am-6pm, Como, CO.

September 5, 2021

UP #4014 stops at Hugo.

September 11-12, 2021

Colorado Rail Fair, Pueblo Union Depot.

September 22, 2021

Symposium at Englewood.

November 13-14, 2021

TECO Model Train Swap Meet, Colorado Springs, Chapel Hills Mall Event Center, Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

A (Feeding) Frenzy on the Silver Crescent

(Author?)

Some of you may remember that before Jolly Rancher Candy was sold, and moved from Wheat Ridge that there was a dome car located behind their plant in Wheat Ridge. That car was the Silver Crescent. It was one of the Dome-Bedroom-Lounge-Bar cars that always ran at the rear of the original California Zephyr. Numbered as WP 881, it was part of the original six train sets produced by the Budd Company for the Zephyr.



The car "disappeared" from Wheat Ridge in the later 1970's, when Bill Harmsen (founder of Jolly Rancher) donated the car to the Gold Coast Railroad Museum in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, prior to his sale of the company.

Needless to say, those of us at the museum were quite pleased to have this car "dropped" into our laps, and could not wait to start restoration. While most of the car was intact, and the work primarily related to mechanical (plumbing, electrical, air conditioning, etc.), we "despaired" at the condition of the bar/lounge under the dome. The original bar front (carved and painted by Pierre Bourdell) was covered by a rather poor example of a Navajo Blanket, and the western murals (painted by Russel Patterson) was covered by cheap paneling (such as you purchase at Home Depot, in the style of "Early American Trailer Park"). The tables were covered by the "traditional" walnut brown wood-grained formica.

So, after we'd had the car for about a year, with most of the mechanical work finished, three of us were sitting, having drinks in the bar (soda pop only – you have an evil mind!) discussing what to do next. The question was raised "What if the original bar décor is still under this stuff?" So, we peeled back a tiny portion of the blanket, and found it had been glued over yellow laminate. Remembering that during the interior redecoration of the 1960's, that the bar (continued on page 10...)

An RMRHS Photographer: Wayne Kemp

Here's some background on my interests in railroading, photography, and history. I grew up in the southern suburbs of Chicago, to the west of Hammond, Indiana from late 1949 into the mid-1960's. I lived with my family in three small, adjacent towns/villages over those years ... Dolton(1949-55), Riverdale (Ivanhoe)(1955-1963) and South Holland, Illinois (1963-1966). Railroads were a big part of daily life back in those days. While in Dolton and Riverdale we lived close to Dolton Junction and to the then Chicago and Eastern Illinois Dolton yard, an active hump yard back then. Now, it's a UP/CSX intermodal facility. While in Ivanhoe we were only blocks away from the Illinois Central electrified commuter line that served downtown Chicago and other southern suburbs. A few blocks north of us was a very active Indiana Harbor Belt RR line that seemed to be shuttling freight cars continuously.

My dad worked at US Steel (South Chicago Complex) and then for the Elgin, Joliet, & Eastern Railroad as a train foreman for about a year and a half prior to his entering the Army (1942), and then serving in the Pacific during WWII. That short rail legacy stayed with him over the years. He would often take me over to watch trains at the C&E yard.

My folks instilled in me a sense of wonder for nature and the joy of travel (they were avid rockhounds), took me and my younger brother on annual summer vacations to numerous national parks and historic sites, and on summer weekend field trips to rock and fossil collecting areas. My dad always had a camera with him when travelling. On top of that, the suburbs where we lived had a wealth of nearby history including famous roads/highways like the Lincoln and Dixie Highways and Route 66. Then there were the nearby industrial sites such as the south Chicago steel mills and the Pullman rail car complex that we passed every time we drove into Chicago. The history of those facilities is a pretty amazing chapter in the development of America.

It didn't take long after high school for me to start focusing on a career in geology (mineral exploration). That was the start of my evolution as an amateur photographer with interests in capturing nature and documenting transportation and historic features in my travels as a geologist in the western US. Those interests are still with me today. I began more serious railroad photography after watching the UP 844 and UP 3985 as a steam double header climb west bound on their way over Donner Summit and eventually to the 1999 Railfair in Sacramento. Unfortunately, on that serendipitous opportunity ... no camera! Since then I have followed/photographed many steam excursions, ridden several steam and heritage diesel locomotive charters, and have attended several photo charter events focused again on active heritage steam and diesel railroads. On my travels now in retirement I have tried to combine my interests in railroad photography with the history still displayed along the

backroads and in the small towns of America.

Working with the RMRHS has given me the chance to share my photographic skills with you all. It's a privilege to document and share what the RMRHS has accomplished at Calhan, as well as other preservation opportunities, and just good "ole train" pix!

The following images highlight several locomotives that rank pretty high on my favorite's list. The Eureka & Palisade #4 (4-4-0) was a guest locomotive on the Durango & Silverton NGRR at their Western Days celebration in August 2012. It was built in 1875 at the Baldwin Locomotive works and ran on the Eureka and Palisade RR (NV) until 1896. It was restored in the late 1980's.



Eureka & Palisade #4 on the "Highline" (above).
#4 Crossing High Bridge (below).



The Rio Grande Scenic Railroad #18 (2-8-0) ran excursions from Alamosa to Fir and occasionally on to La Veta, CO. The #18 was built in 1910 by the American Locomotive Co. for the Lake Superior and Ishpheming RR (Marquette, MI), a class SC-4 (2-8-0) "Consolidation" locomotive. It was restored in the early 2000's. It is currently not operable, and for sale.



Rio Grande Scenic RR#18-Horeshoe Curve below Fir, CO (June 2008) (above). #18 at Fort Garland CO (August 2012) (below).



In August 2017 the UP ran a special passenger excursion train celebrating the 150th year of Nebraska Statehood from Omaha along the UP Mainline to Pine Bluffs WY and then north to Scotts Bluff and Gering, Nebraska. The lead locomotive was the E-9 Streamliner UP#949. It was built by GE (EMD) in 1955 for UP passenger service. I was surprised that the sister unit, UP#951 was not part of the consist, but the 949 did a great job. Apparently the 951 had mechanical issues and has not run since 2017.



UP#949 at Point of Rocks just East of Potter, NE (previous column at the bottom). UP#949 and the Nebraska150 Express approaching Albin Tunnel north of Albin, WY (below).



UP#949 and Chimney Rock, headed back to North Platte (below).



I had no clue at the time, but this could have been the last excursion pulled by an UP E-9 locomotive. The E-9's appear to be in a state of retirement (not official to my knowledge)

The last set of images are special. They were taken in September and October of 2010, long before the RMRHS was formed and long before I met a very talented guy named Ken Kafka who is also a member of RMRHS. He has a keen interest in restoring historic trucks. Ken had conveniently parked one of his restorations, a 1919 Nash stake truck near the UP mainline and County Road 88 just south of Pierce, CO.

Continued next page...

(Continued from previous page...)

I just happened to pull off US 85 in order to “catch” the northbound UP3985 Challenger. It was pure serendipity to be in the right place and at the right time to capture the image.



The next day the Challenger was east bound on the Missouri River Eagle Tour, and it overnighted in North Platte. The eastbound morning departure was another amazing photo-op. The US Highway 30 bridge crossing the UP mainline provides a great view. The UP3985, the morning light, and overnight coolness did not disappoint. The 3985 put on a spectacular steam show.



Just shooting in the other direction provided a view of sunrise light and the interaction of steam railroading with the North Platte River and its wetlands.



The east bound Challenger excursion crossing the North Platte River (October 1, 2010).

At the time, this last image was just an attempt to catch the interaction of the early morning light and the 3985. I certainly had no clue, and I suspect the 3985 steam crew also wasn't thinking that the Missouri River Eagle Tour would be the 3985's last free run on the rails. The image is ironic ... you never know if it'll be the last sunrise to embrace ... that's why I do try to document nature, historic transportation icons, and railroads in general. It's all pretty fleeting in today's technology charged and hyper world. Thanks for looking!



Membership Application

Name _____

Birth Month _____

Organization (Associates Only)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Interests: please attached separately

Interested in serving on a committee: Y / N

New / Renewal (circle one)

Individual \$25/yr Associate \$45/yr

Family \$45/yr Lifetime \$500

Youth \$10/yr

Mail check or money order to address on last page. Call 303.269.9768 for credit cards.

Work Day at Calhan Depot

April 11, 2021

About 20 RMRHS folks gathered at the old Rock Island Depot in Calhan, CO for a good old-fashioned work day. And lunch! Projects included stenciling the cabooses with "Rock Island," sealing the coach roof, attaching a new set of stairs to the cabooses, signal circuit board, hanging a new cabooses door, and filming a new RMRHS promotional video. More: RMRHS.org/210411.html



An RMRHS Photographer: Jamie Foster

Thanks to a Christmas camera present a few decades ago, Jamie Foster's been an amateur event photographer ever since. In addition to all manner of family activities and outings, railroad events have been numerous for not only his personal/family trips and events, but events for multiple railroading organizations such as the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, the Santa Maria Valley Railroad (a California short line), Friends of the SMVRR, the Central Coast Railroad Festival, Bitter Creek Western Railroad (7.5" gauge), Motorcar Operators West (speeders), the California Short Line Railroad Association, and three of his own G-scale railroads. Having moved to Colorado Springs in 2017, he's taken advantage of many railroading opportunities in the Rockies and has gotten involved with the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Society. More photos: jamie-foster-photography.com



150th Golden Spike Celebration at Promontory, UT



Pacific Coast Railroad in Santa Margarita, CA



Cumbres and Toltec Railroad's Geology Special



Royal Gorge Route Railroad



Speeder Excursion: Leadville, Colorado and Southern Railroad



Santa Maria Valley Railroad (California)

M300—"The Toaster"

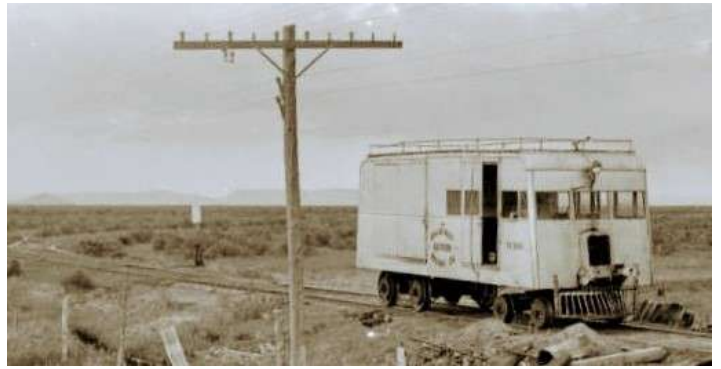
By Jim Jordan

Back in 2013, I was on eBay and discovered an unusual train engine for sale. I bid \$49.95 and was surprised that I won.

Well at the time I wasn't quite sure what the society would do with it. What I purchased didn't look like an engine or a bus on flanged wheels. It looked like a toaster that someone built as a practical joke.

When I called the Oklahoma State Railroad Museum to find out about this strange vehicle was told that it had been the San Luis Valley Railroad's M-300 ("M" meaning motor vehicle, and 300 for the third engine that the railway possessed). They thought it had been built by Tempte in the 1920's. It had no motor that had been long removed. The major part of the sheet metal was missing, windows were out of it. The controls were missing, and it had been converted to a ballast car.

Well I did some digging and found out it had been built in Denver at the Winter Weiss. Company manufacturing site in 1924, for the SLV&S RR. Winter - Weiss built motorcycle side cars, buses, trailers, and trucks. This "train" engine was the only one



The M-300 went into service and from the first it was obvious why the Winter Weiss Company didn't build railroad equipment.

While it had flanged wheels, the sand box was way too small. So the railroad decided to put rubber tires in place of two flanged wheels. Great idea! One problem though. The rubber tires ran as they were supposed to, except they over heated about 24 miles out and had to be replaced to continue on the run to Jaroso which was still 14 miles away. Needless to say there was probably a large amount of cursing each time they had to stop and change tires. They tried to move the axle that the tire wheels were on, but that only gave them a few miles before those tires also burned. This of course wouldn't work and the M-300 was used in various duties where long distances were out of the question. Finally they railroad converted it into a ballast car, putting couplers front and aft so that in effect it was a small gondola car.

How it got to Oklahoma, there are a number of stories from drunken Oklahoma hunters to a donation from the railroad.

Now the society owns it and we will be deciding here within the next 10 weeks if it has any chance of being restored, and if so how are we going to move it here. Stand by as we will let all the members know.

members know.

For a more complete history of the San Luis Valley Southern Railroad read: *Colorado's Loneliest Railroad, the San Luis Southern* by the late Bob Griswold.



they ever built in their history. It had a Pierce Arrow engine not unlike the Galloping Goose of the Rio Grande Southern fame. Was composed of sheet metal and had seats so that it could if necessary carry passengers.



Cog Railway at Pikes Peak is Up and Running

Way up! After several years and about \$100 million, the Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway is taking passengers up to the Summit and back down again! Their first trips were at the end of May. For a recent talk about this railway and its re-opening, see this 45-minute video: RMRHS.org/cog.html. The Railway's website: CogRailway.com



(Silver Crescent, continued from page 3) fronts were “modernized” with yellow laminate, we started wondering how the laminate was attached. Seeing a row of pop rivets across the edges of the bar, we carefully pulled back a corner of the laminate, and found it had been glued to ¼ inch plywood, which had been pop-riveted to the bar. We peeled



back a bit of plywood and found a bit of carved turkey feather, turning our attention to that ugly paneling on the wall. Again, it had been attached with a bare amount of furring strips, again pop-riveted.

It was at this point that things went crazy! Have you ever watched “Shark Week” on TV? Particularly when they drop some chum in the water and the sharks go into a “feeding frenzy”? Well, that’s exactly how the bar looked that day. There were bits and pieces of paneling, formica, and blanket wool just flying through the air. By the time we were done, it took almost two hours to clean the nail-studded boards and other debris out of the bar. We found that the original bar front was fully intact, requiring only some paint touch up. The oil mural was almost 7/8 complete, and one of our volunteers, a talented painter, was able to recreate the missing pieces well enough that it was difficult to spot his work, if you didn’t know where to look.

Finally, we discovered that the formica tops of the tables were just screwed over the originals. Removing the “new” tops, we found the original tables (again with linoleum) intact, with very little refinishing work required.

It was a very satisfying day. About the only time an “orgy” of destruction actually resulted in restoring 95% of the original appearance of a room!

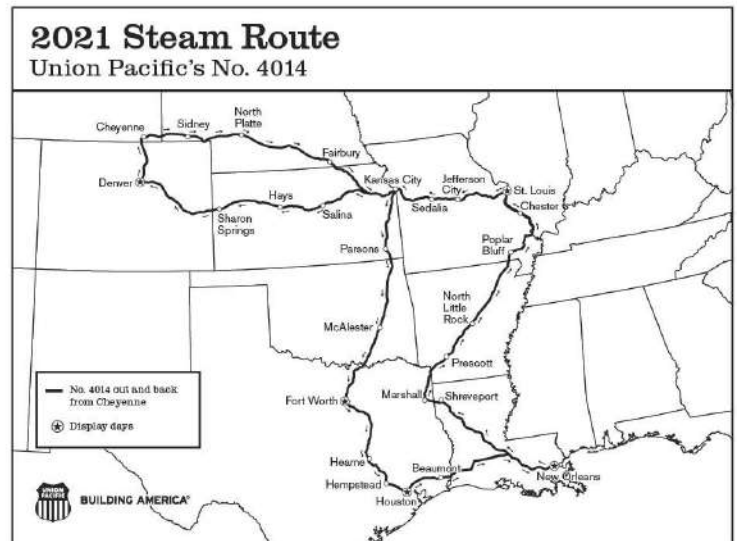


UP Steam #4014 Coming to Denver on Labor Day

The detailed schedule is not available yet, but this preliminary highlights map has just recently been released.

For details and updates, see: <https://www.up.com/heritage/steam/schedule/index.htm>

Map at right Courtesy Union Pacific Railroad



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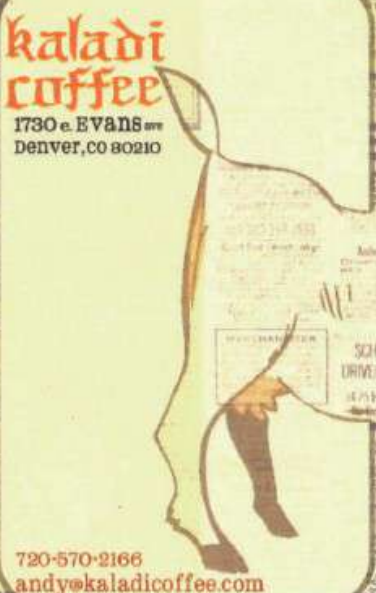
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The cost to run an business card sized ad (2 x 3.5 in) is \$10 per issue or \$35.00 for a year - 4 issues total. Space is limited so if you would like to advertise please call 303-961-5929. Digital files are encouraged, high resolution pdf or jpg or we can scan existing business cards. Ads will be due by Friday, February 19th.



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Director

Museum of the Mountain West

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"Where the West Becomes Alive"



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- Buy Cheese

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