

RAIL REPORT

August 2020
No. 718



Rocky Mountain Railroad Club • Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

There Will Not Be An August Meeting In Barnes Hall

Enjoy Another Online Virtual Meeting And Program

Como / South Park Update

Presented By South Park Rail Society Board Members

August 11, 2020 • 7:30 PM

The South Park Rail Society and the Denver South Park & Pacific Historical Society will jointly cover the history of Como, the restoration efforts that began with the Como roundhouse in the 1980s and up to the present. They will also outline future plans followed by answering any questions members may have.

See Page Two For Information On How To Sign Up And Participate.

RMRRC 2020 Calendar

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| September 8, 2020 | Virtual monthly meeting and program. |
| October 13, 2020 | Monthly meeting and program. |
| October 2020 | The Annual Banquet is Canceled. |
| November 10, 2020 | Monthly meeting and program. |
| December 8, 2020 | Annual meeting and program. |

Due to circumstances beyond our control, programs and dates are subject to change without notice. Please contact Dave Schaaf with program ideas at ds5280@comcast.net or 303 988-3456.

Virtual Meeting And Program Access Instructions

In order to plan for the number of attendees and ensure our meeting runs smoothly, we need everyone to register ahead of time. Please send an email to rmrrc-show@drwg.net asking for the August RMRRC virtual meeting address and password. Please send your request no later than Monday night, August 10th, and we will send you the meeting connection information. Please be patient as we all learn this new technology.

We will be holding the meeting via Zoom. Please ensure you have the Zoom client (<https://zoom.us/download>) installed on your computer, phone, or tablet before the event so that you're ready to go.



The Como Roundhouse was built by Italian stonemasons in 1881. The railroad ceased operations in 1937 and the original stone structure was used for various purposes including a Sawmill in the 1950s. The roundhouse was bought by Mr. Bill Kazel in 1984. During his ownership, the roof was replaced, windows were installed, and the engine bay doors were repaired or replaced. In 2001 Dr. Chuck and Kathy Brantigan became the new owners of the roundhouse. During their ownership, it has been repainted and additional masonry work has been done. The roundhouse is currently leased to the South Park Rail Society.

– Photo © 2020 JW Stephens.

For *Rail Report* 718, the masthead features Rio Grande Southern locomotive No. 20 at Golden, Colorado, returning after a 14-year restoration.

– Photo © 2020 Dave Schaaf.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROADER

DENVER, COLO.

Edited by
Carl Hewett

No. 1

June, 1939

Published by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club for those who are interested in railroads, past and present, of the Rocky Mountains.

CLEAR BOARD! The brains and the hoghead have compared time; the cartoids have taken down the blue flags; the air has been tested, and the bell is ringing. ALL ABOARD, and we're off on our first run. As we steam out of the station for the first time, we may seem somewhat jerkwater in our dimensions, but we ask your indulgence, good passengers, and beg to remind you that we hope we'll be able to fill up a few more coaches next trip. Who knows? We might even need a helper engine.

Carl Hewett edited the first issue of the *Rocky Mountain Railroader*, the first newsletter for the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

Summer Trails of RMRRRC President Denny Leonard

Summer is in its height and your board is still meeting via web conferencing to do club business. We did our first Zoom general meeting in July and we had a great presenter! We hope all who joined into the Zoom general meeting enjoyed Paul Hammond's presentation on the CRRM. This also was the first meeting that out of state and foreign members could share in from home. There will be more! We will open for in-person meetings as soon as it is safe, but with technology we may be able to share meeting content with more members which is great for all. Stay tuned!

This is the third *Rail Report* that is sent to many members via email. We have had very positive feedback on the emailed *Rail Report*. This enhanced digital medium is adding higher quality and greater availability of the *Rail Report* of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. The digital issues are a big improvement from the first mimeographed issue. The header from that first issue is at the top of this page.

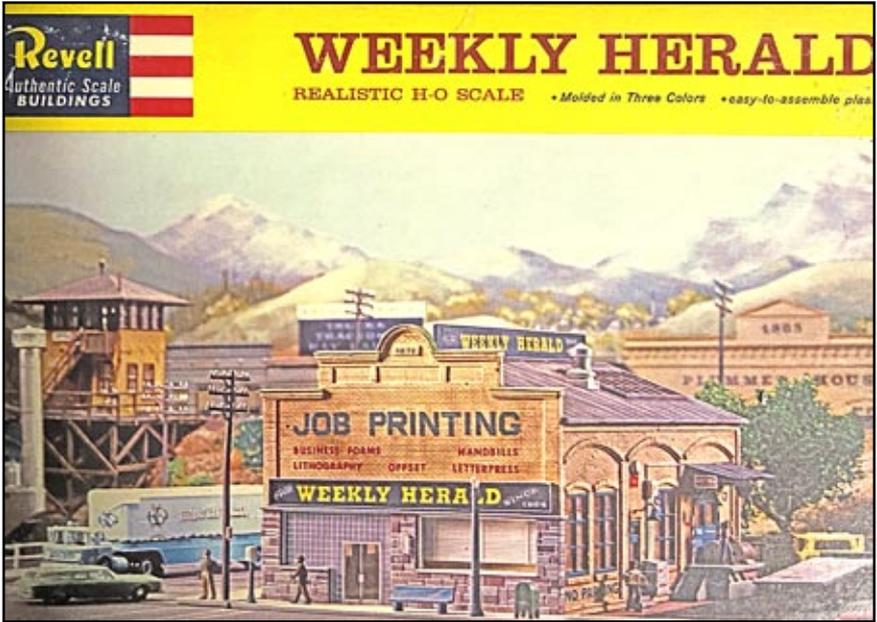
For everyone's information, the above header and the complete newsletter along

with copies of most of the published *Rail Report* copies and other club history is available on drgw.net. This site is generated and maintained by Past President Nathan Holmes (thanks much). Check it out. Dave Goss and other members have supplied the newsletters and many other club trip flyers etc. They (we, the club) are always looking for historical items to scan and add.

We again ask all members who are able, to receive the *Rail Report* by email. We will continue to mail a Rocky Mountain Railroad Club *Rail Report* to those who lack emails. For some time we intend to continue the availability of both formats but we will propose a difference in dues for next year. So, printing will continue and books will live on, but the new mediums present many opportunities. My model LC&O will soon have a new print shop and publisher.

As of this writing, Rio Grande Southern Number 20 is scheduled to run on July 31st and August 1st for its opening debut. We hope to have a club steam up later this year or early next. As most know, the club originally purchased the

Summer Trails of RMRRC President Denny Leonard



A future printer and publisher for Denny's model Lake City and Ouray Railroad.

engine and the RICO car from the RGS and saved them in 1952. One of the benefits of RMRRC membership is free entrance to the CRRM.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 issues, the Club officers and board have decided to cancel the annual banquet.

I enjoy sharing about our club and what I know about Colorado railroad history and travels but I really enjoy

hearing your stories and remembrances. I think it is important to share them. As you have noticed, we have published several recently. We also have several biographies on the club website. We are looking for more. Any chance someone could write one on Erwin? So, please send articles to me for consideration for publication in the *Rail Report*. As always feel free to contact me by email at denny@amerm.com or my cell (303) 809-9430.

In Remembrance James Bower

James (Jim) Bower passed away on April 25, 2020. He was a 46 year member of the club, joining in 1974, with a seniority number of 56.

Boxcars in Como



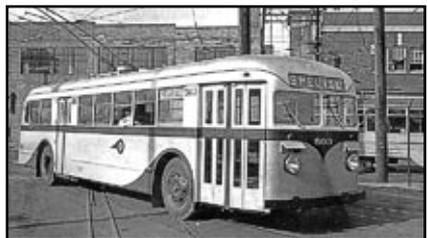
The Denver, South Park & Pacific Historical Society successfully moved Colorado & Southern (C&S) type 3 Boxcar #8311 from Boreas Pass to the Como yard. A Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation grant provided the funding for the move. The car is on loan from the U.S. Forest Service and will be restored for use and display as part of the Como project.

The only known example of a C&S type 1 boxcar was restored for display at the Como Roundhouse. A full restoration of C&S car #8027 to operational status is ongoing. – Photo 2020 by Dave Schaaf.

One of the primary goals of the South Park Rail Society is to preserve, restore and exhibit surviving rolling stock of the C&S. Three different types of boxcars were used by the C&S between 1899 and 1941, commonly referred to in the preservation community as type 1, type 2 and type 3 cars. They are actively working to move and restore a type 2 C&S boxcar to complete the display.

Thanks to Charles Albi for additional information on the photo on page 7 of the July *Rail Report*:

The photo of the trolley coach in the July issue was actually taken in 1940 when these replaced streetcars on route 11 – East 11th/West 29th and route 13 – East 13th/West 38th. Seven additional routes were converted from 1946 to 1950, route 14 – Aurora being the last one. The idea was that they were quiet, odorless, accelerated quickly and utilized the existing electrical infrastructure.



A Stock Car For Como



The South Park Rail Society, as part of The Como Project, plan to preserve and restore a D&RGW stock car in support of their 2020 stock car restoration & training project. – Photo © 2020 JW Stephens.

Why a Rio Grande stock car on the South Park? The Colorado & Southern and its predecessors all operated stock cars on the South Park Line, the C&S rostered over 100 such cars and they were frequent visitors to Como. As such, it is important to have a stock car in Como to help interpret and convey an idea of the types of cars that were used on the line.

Denver & Rio Grande Western 5743 was built by American Car & Foundry's St. Louis, Missouri plant in 1904. As part of an order for 350 stock cars, numbered 5500 to 5849. Twenty years later, the D&RGW elected to rebuild its narrow-gauge freight cars rather than invest in new ones and the 5500 series stock cars were rebuilt at the Alamosa, Colorado shops in 1926.

No. 5743 will be restored to its 1926 appearance, immediately after it was rebuilt. The car will receive a new roof, new floor and new doors, along with repairs to its frame and walls. The completed car will be painted "boxcar red" and lettered in a 1926 D&RGW lettering scheme.

No. 5743 remained in service until the D&RGW ended narrow gauge freight operations in 1968. No. 5743 was one of 103 stock cars that the D&RGW sold for scrap to the American Pressed Steel Corporation of New Jersey in September of 1970. American Pressed Steel then resold many of the cars to a local scrapper, Floyd Reed of Alamosa, who was responsible for actually dismantling the cars. Reed was willing to sell intact cars to interested buyers and this is where many of the surviving Rio Grande narrow gauge cars still around today came from.

A New Locomotive For Como



The South Park Rail Society acquired a 20-ton Plymouth Locomotive for use in the expanding Como railyard. This locomotive was originally built in 1927 for the Coleman Creosoting Company located in Seattle, Washington. The company changed names a few times but this little Plymouth worked continually in the Tie Plant until it closed in 1994. When the Wyckoff Tie Plant closed in Seattle, the Plymouth was offered to the Railway Museum at Snoqualmie Falls. However, since it was three-foot gauge, they suggested sending it to the narrow gauge Sumpter Valley Railway in Oregon.

After ten years of sitting in the SVRy's railyard in McEwen, Oregon, the locomotive went to two different private collectors until Mr. Ed Carl donated it the South Park Rail Society in 2019. Mr. Smitty Smith was generous enough to store the Plymouth on his property near Baker City, Oregon, until enough funding was raised to ship the locomotive and a new replacement motor to Como.

– Photo © 2020 JW Stephens.

The 12-ton Plymouth #5, previously at Como, was hoped to become a permanent resident of Como but the South Park Rail Society was unable to reach a deal with the current owner to purchase it.

Trackwork Extended North In Como

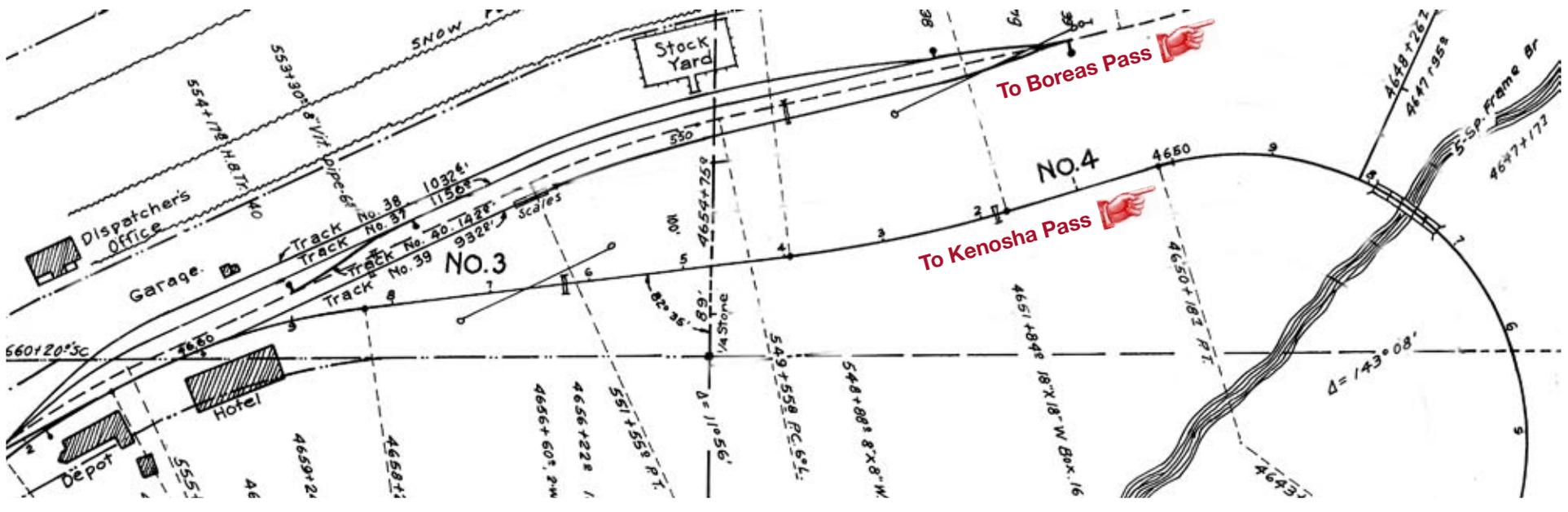


Denver, South Park & Pacific Historical Society volunteers built additional narrow gauge track on the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad right of way June 27, 2020, north of the Como Hotel in Como, Colorado. This track was originally abandoned in 1938 during the Great Depression.– Photo © 2020 by Chip.

Trackwork Extended North In Como



Narrow gauge track construction on June 27, 2020 included a new culvert at lower left. The right of way at left led to Boreas Pass and Breckenridge, Colorado, (Track No. 39 on map below). The track to the right led to Kenosha Pass and Denver. The grade is visible at upper center going right. – Photo © 2020 by Chip.



Notable Contributions

By Dave Goss

We sometimes forget how influential the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club's membership has been to published histories of U.S. railroading. While going through a recently received set of documents that are being included in the Club's "archives" we discovered a few letters that point to the expertise held by many previous members. Clearly, the Club's publication of books on the Denver South Park & Pacific, the Colorado Midland, the Georgetown Loop and passenger trains of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway (not to mention many others) speak for themselves as authoritative sources of information provided by our own authors. Yet, there are a number of examples of non-Club authors seeking the expertise of our members in manuscripts being prepared for publication by other organizations.

One example that recently came to light is correspondence between Professor George W. Hilton at the University of Southern California and Ed Haley. Professor Hilton was assembling information for his book (to be published in 1990) titled *American Narrow Gauge Railroads*. Ed attempted to unravel for Professor Hilton the sometimes-confusing names that Colorado narrow gauge railroads held over the passage of time. He points out that the Argentine Central Railway was also known as the Georgetown & Gray's Peak Railroad, and later as the Argentine & Gray's Peak Railway. He also corrects several errors where the professor's list of railroads inadvertently combined two separate railroads under a single title (such as the Aspen & Western Railway combined with the Crystal

River Railroad). Ed very tactfully clarified information on nearly three dozen separate railroads that operated Colorado that met the author's intentions of being included in his book listing more than 350 U.S. common carrier narrow gauge lines.

The professor's response thanked Ed for pointing out the potential errors and also recognized Jack Thode's review of the manuscript's information on the Denver & Rio Grande and the Denver South Park & Pacific. Jack provided five single-spaced, typewritten comments to aid Hilton's description of locations and mileages for these two railroads as well as additional information on narrow gauge lines in Utah.

In 1985, George Drury, Project Editor for Kalmbach Publication's pending *The Historical Guide to North American Railroads* asked Ed Haley and Jack Thode both to review the draft manuscript. Both provided comments that enabled the final version to be accurate when discussing railroads in Colorado. A third example is a letter that Ed Haley wrote to Stephen Rasmussen describing a trip that he, Dick Kindig and Robert Richardson took over La Veta Pass in 1953. The letter is quoted in its entirety (page 132) in Rasmussen's book *The Rio Grande's La Veta Pass Route*. There are many more examples of our members, some authors, some photographers and some historians that have contributed to noteworthy publications on both historical and modern railroading. Fortunately, many of these types of letters are included in the Club's "archives." As

Notable Contributions

one reads recent books about Colorado railroading, you will often find current members recognized for their contributions just like so many previous mem-

bers were for earlier books and publications. We are most fortunate to have recognized experts among us and their original documents in our files.

Journeys to Yesteryear - Eratta

I owe an apology to Ed Haley. When the Club published our history *Journeys to Yesteryear* in 2005, we failed to credit Ed for photo of his. At the top of page 62 we printed a photo that Ed took from the last run of Locomotive 638 in December of 1962, but incorrectly identified it as a Darrell Arndt photo dated May 28, 1972 of a Union Pacific excursion. The

error was just recently identified when the material that Jimmy Blouch gave to the Club “archives” included the exact same color-photo with Ed Haley’s stamp on the reverse and the December date. We apologize to both Ed and Darrell for incorrectly recognizing you in this photograph.

– *Dave Goss*

Fort Collins Trolley Cars



For the first time in 69 years, trolley cars (plural) operated on the streets of Fort Collins. They ran down Mountain Avenue to the end of track and back several times on the Fourth of July, but due to the Covid-19, did not carry passengers. Car No. 21 was restored back into operation in 1983 and Car No. 25 was restored just this year. Car No. 21 is a Birney Safety Car and Car No. 25 was built in 1922 by Brill and is slightly longer. – Photo © 2020 Kenneth Jessen.

Events of Railroad History:

Rio Grande Southern Railfans: A Photo Story Being an Account of an Excursion by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club – Part 1

By S.L. [Les] Logue and J.C. [Jack] Thode, July 13-14, 1946

Contributed by Dan Edwards

[Note: I recently acquired a photocopy of this rare document, illustrated with 54 photographs by Logue and Thode, who were charter members of the Club. Now, 74 years later, we too can accompany them on a “virtual” excursion on the RGS! An asterisk (*) in the text indicates a photo taken either by Les or Jack.]

Thru the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, we have made arrangements with Mr. Cass M. Herrington, Receiver of the Southern, for a weekend trip from Ridgway to Durango, Colorado, and return, with a side trip to Telluride.

Friday afternoon arrives at last; we head for the Western Slope without delay. On the way we talk of previous trips we have made through this historic railroad country—of watching Rio Grande 361, formerly Crystal River Railroad 3101, working her way up Cerro summit with seven cars just a few weeks ago**, of photographing Rio Grande 765, among the last D&RGW ten-wheelers, resting at Montrose before returning the Mountaineer to Grand Junction.*

We lay over at Montrose late Friday night, and Saturday morning before driving on to Ridgway, check the Rio Grande’s roundhouse at this far western terminus of the narrow gauge. We’re in luck! There, with steam up and in beautiful morning light, stand D&RGS 456* and the 318*, old Florence & Cripple Creek No. 8 before the Grande bought her in 1917.

Ridgway! And there in front of

the joint D&RGW–RGS depot sit the 3- and 5-spots [Galloping Geese] in all their rejuvenated glory.* We think of the 5 the last time we saw her—back before the war* [Thode photo of #5 approaching Dallas Divide, June 30, 1939]

It is a long trip ahead of us so General Superintendent R.R. Boucher, after meeting the gang [20 Club members made this trip], calls, “Board” and we hurry to load.

This is no main-line railroad—the Dispatcher send us out as Extras 3 and 5 West. No first and second sections here, with ten minutes clearance between trains. We work on ‘smoke orders’ the whole distance—not often out of each other’s sight.

Heading west over Dallas Divide, whose east-side 4% grade is the heaviest on the main line, we gain occasional glimpses of the 3 as she dodges in and out perhaps a quarter of a mile ahead of us. Then, as we swing around a curve, the first of many trestles appears. It makes a pretty pictured, framed through the windshield.* Higher and higher, we grind up the east face of Dallas Divide, watching Mt. Sneffels (14,143 feet in elevation) dominate the other peaks of the Uncompahgre Range to the south.* It is a beautiful sight—this ever-changing panorama.

Soon we come upon a strange scene—the green foliage has been wiped out and the area is covered with broken rock and bits of umber. Our suspicions are confirmed when Superintendent Boucher tells us that on this curve, in

Events of Railroad History

October of 1944, Engine 455 and 28 cars going east down the hill broke loose and piled up here.* We can well imagine the mess that must have been!

Approaching Peak, the top of Dallas Divide, we glimpse No. 3 crossing the road and disappearing over the other side ahead of us.* We whistle for the sheep grazing near the track and start down the 'chute' along Leopard Creek toward Placerville ourselves. Only a few times do we spot No. 3 ahead of us, but we manage a photo of her as she races down the opposite side of one of the numerous draws.*

Near Placerville the strenuous climb just completed over Dallas Divide makes it necessary for us to stop and take on water.* The original cooling systems on the Geese proved insufficient for the heavy grades, we are told in answer to our questions, and each car now carries a 30-gallon tank under the roof of the freight compartment. An ingenious system of pipes and petcocks carries water from the tank and drains it through the motor and radiator to the ground. A five-minute stop at Placerville* while Mr. Boucher phones the Dispatcher, and we continue.

We pull into Vance Junction over a siding, since the main is completely blocked with freight cars, and take

the turnout for the 7.3-mile Telluride Branch.* Here, of course, the track is crooked, but it's level! On a spur near the lower wye sits the 02—an old narrow-gauge wing snow plow.

We cross over the Lake Fork of the San Miguel river, reverse our direction, and again it is necessary for Roadmaster Dick Murphy, our train crew, to shift to second gear for the grade. Vance Junction is across the valley now and far below us.* We pick up speed as we cross the meadows below Telluride, for the grade is almost flat again, and soon we reach the depot, detrain, and start another round of picture taking.* To the south, directly before us, stands magnificent Telluride Peak, with Ingram Creek making a thin white ribbon as it gaily splashes down the mountain side.*

As we prepare to return to Vance Junction, Superintendent Boucher, with a quizzical smile, informs us that a slight mechanical difficulty has developed. "The 5 burned out a connecting rod pulling in here."

"Holy smokes!" "What'll we do now?" "Can we continue our trip?" "We won't have to go back to Placerville, will we?" We crowd around Mr. Boucher, anxiety written on every face.

The account of this Rio Grande Southern excursion will be continued next month.

Help Fund The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

Donations to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation provide annual, ongoing funds for educational, preservation, and restoration projects.

Up to five individuals or organizations who have a summer project that

could use up to \$1000 for a railroad history-related project are awarded a small grant.

To support funding for these grants, please send donations to: Rocky Mountain RR Historical Foundation, PO Box 2391, Denver, CO 80201-2391

Colorado Railroad Museum

Rio Grande Southern Locomotive No. 20

In the midst of this unusual year, the Museum has announced a major accomplishment: Rio Grande Southern 4-6-0 steam locomotive No. 20 will be returning to operation. The 14-year, \$1.5M project is finally wrapping up, with the locomotive's return to steam.

Day Out With Thomas

Day Out With Thomas will be returning to the Colorado Railroad Museum for three weekends in September. Tickets will go on sale in early August. With the recent resurgence of Covid-19 around the U.S., the Colorado Railroad Museum is carefully planning for reduced capacities to allow for a family-friendly experience that keeps social distancing and guest safety in mind.

The Colorado Rails & Cocktails Lecture Series For 2020 Has Been Cancelled

NEW TO THE MUSEUM

Masks Required — Closed On Mondays — Train Ride Tickets Purchased In Advance

Mask Requirement: All guests and staff must have a mask in order to be granted entry into the Museum. If you do not have one with you, we will have limited quantities of masks available for sale. This requirement applies to ALL persons ages 2 and older, and is in place because adequate social distancing may not be possible within certain Museum facilities and programs (specifically rest rooms and indoor exhibit galleries, and train rides).

Closed on Mondays: The museum will be closed on Monday. The museum will be open six days each week: Tuesday through Sunday, from 9 AM to 5 PM. Starting Thursday, June 4, train rides will be offered every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday – through August. Train rides will depart every 30 minutes between 10 AM and 3 PM on these days except there will not be a 12:30 PM train ride.

Purchase Train Ride Tickets in Advance: To help ensure public safety and avoid crowds, capacity aboard the open-air gondolas and coaches is reduced. Timed Train Ride ticket purchases will be required. It is strongly recommended that visitors pre-purchase Train Ride tickets online, in advance.

For information call 303-279-4591 or visit <http://www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org>

Colorado Railroad Museum Admission

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Members in good standing, and upon presentation of a current membership card, are entitled to free admission. Members are invited to join the Colorado Railroad Museum (a Museum membership provides certain merchandise discounts), and members may participate in restoration or other maintenance programs as volunteers.

Intermountain Chapter, NRHS Events

For current meeting information email railbob@icloud.com or call 303-883-2435

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Club Information

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Club and Foundation Officers

President	Dennis Leonard
Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Andy Dell
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

Club and Foundation Directors

Nathan Holmes, Ron Keiser, Pat Mauro,
Debbie MacDonald, Steve Subber, Michael Tinetti.

Membership Information

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending the annual dues to the Club address listed above.

Regular membership dues are \$35.00. Overseas regular membership dues are \$45.00.

Contributing membership is \$50.00. Sustaining membership is \$70.00.

Patron membership is \$100.00.

An associate membership for spouses and children is \$25.00 additional.

Members joining after April may send a payment of \$3.00 for each month remaining in the year. New members who join in-person at a meeting will be given a free copy of the Club history book

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

Board Meetings

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and location.

Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

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E-mail: selectimag@aol.com

Items for the September *Rail Report* should be sent by August 7th.