

## NGPF ASSISTS IN THE FINAL RESTORATION OF RGS #20

The NGPF is proudly leading the effort toward final restoration of this seminal narrow gauge engine, so prominent in the history of the narrow gauge lines of Colorado. The NGPF BOD authorized a challenge-matching grant of \$40,000 to cover the \$80,000 final cost to finish restoration and return the engine to its home at the Colorado Railroad Museum. Consistent with the policy of the NGPF, we offer matching grants in order to spur local fundraising and encourage private donors to participate. More than one recipient has noted with surprise, how effective these matching grants can be to encourage a new level of giving.

RGS #20 came from another fabled but short-lived Colorado narrow gauge line, the Florence and Cripple Creek (F&CC; see companion article, *infra*). Constructed by the Schenectady Locomotive Works in 1899, the class 85 4-6-0 (later class T-19), generally called a “ten-wheeler”, was popular for passenger service on the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The D&RG had a lighter class of ten-wheelers, T-12’s which operated as late as 1941 on the Chili Line.

F&CC #20 was sold to the always cash-strapped RGS in 1916 serving on that road until abandonment in 1952. When delivered, the engine was too heavy at 85,000 pounds for the 30 pound track of the RGS on its northern end. Consequently, it operated primarily between



Durango 1951

Photo by R. Kindig

Durango and Telluride. Eventually, 45 pound track was laid system wide allowing the engine to operate out of Ridgway.

#20 became a movie star in the 1949 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox movie, *A Ticket To Tomahawk*, cast as the sole engine on the mythical Tomahawk and Western Railroad. When the railroad faced potential disaster, #20 was towed by horse teams into town in order to satisfy the obligations of its charter and save the day. The studio constructed a prop stand-in for #20, also used on the TV series “Petticoat Junction” as a stand-in for Sierra #3, a standard gauge ten-wheeler. Interestingly, that prop was saved by the Durango Railroad Historical Society and is undergoing restoration.

For the movie, #20’s tender was embellished with a clipper ship logo, so effective that the RGS retained it after restoring the RGS road name. For many years, railfan photos showed that distinctive movie relic further endearing this attractive engine to the railfan community. It was only natural that as abandonment became evident, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club was able to purchase the engine for \$2,400 storing it at Robert Richardson’s Narrow Gauge Motel in Alamosa. Eventually, the engine was moved to the Colorado Railroad Museum and placed on static display. Over the years, RMRR Club members kept the engine painted and in good cosmetic shape. In 2006, they donated the engine to the CRRM.

The CRRM determined that restoration of this popular engine to operational status was feasible and contracted with Railroad Museum in Strasburg Pennsylvania for the work required. Over the past few years, that work has continued at a cost of over a million dollars. The NGPF was contacted by the CRRM for help as the CRRM had literally tapped out its contributor base and sought help to complete restoration and bring the engine back to Colorado. We were only too happy to help, funded in part by your membership dues.

Our next project may be yet another ten-wheeler restoration, D&RGW T-12 #168. You can bet the NGPF will be a part of that effort. Your membership helps to make all of these projects possible. We thank Mallory Hope Ferrell for the use of photos from his collection, which add so much to this newsletter.

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**Mission**

The Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation will preserve, exhibit and interpret significant prototype and model Narrow Gauge artifacts, as well as educate the public on the importance of Narrow Gauge railroading

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**BOB BROWN**

is editor and publisher of the Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette, the premier magazine devoted to Narrow Gauge. Since 1975, the Gazette has documented the history of narrow gauge in articles, plans, photos and has acted as a focus for the Narrow Gauge community. Bob Brown, a Master Model Railroader as recognized by the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), has been building narrow gauge models for over sixty five years and has a massed a collection of pioneer narrow gauge models reflecting his own interest in the history of Narrow Gauge. Bob also serves on the Museum Committee of the NMRA. Bob is the chairman of the Board.

**SAM FURUKAWA**

is a recognized photographer of Narrow Gauge, author and modeler. Retired from a long career at Microsoft Corporation, Sam is now a professor at Keio University in Tokyo, Japan. He is an author of three books on Colorado's preserved narrow gauge railroads. He has extensively photographed the operations of the surviving narrow gauge lines of Colorado and New Mexico and some of his videos have recently been released to the public by the NGPF.

**FRED HAMILTON**

was a long time employee for Kalmbach Publishing serving on the sales staff of both Trains and Model Railroader Magazines. Fred is also and avid On3 modeler and remains close to the model railroad industry. In the past, he has served as President and Executive Director of the industry's trade association and currently serves as the Treasurer of the NGPF.

**BOB HAYDEN**

is the author of numerous articles and books on narrow gauge topics and also was a long time employee at Kalmbach Publishing working on Model Railroader, Trains, Classic Toy Trains, Garden Railways and Fine Scale Modeler Magazines. Bob has also built narrow gauge models for over fifty years and currently works in the publication field. Bob serves as Secretary of the NGPF.

**FRED HILL**

is the owner of the original Whistle Stop in Pasadena, a major hobby shop in Southern California. He has long been active in railroad preservation for both narrow and standard gauges and is involved with two model companies, The Coach Yard and Thin Film Decals. He has served with distinction for many years as an officer and board member on several hobby trade associations.

**JIMMY BOOTH**

comes from a distinguished career as a principal at P-B-L or Peter Built Locomotives, a major supplier and importer of Sn3 locomotives and equipment. He also has dedicated much of his life researching the history of D&RGW narrow gauge equipment and has served as a historical advisor to both the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic and Durango and Silverton Railroads. Jimmy volunteers at a local museum as a steam locomotive engineer.

**RGS #20: A T-19 CLASS BOOMER**

As you can see from the lead article, the NGPF is a major player in the final restoration of this narrow gauge engine so popular amongst students of the narrow gauge lines of Colorado. In this companion piece, we would like to provide some additional information along with a listing of the numerous models produced of this locomotive over the years. We again thank Mallory Hope Ferrell for the use of photos from his collection.

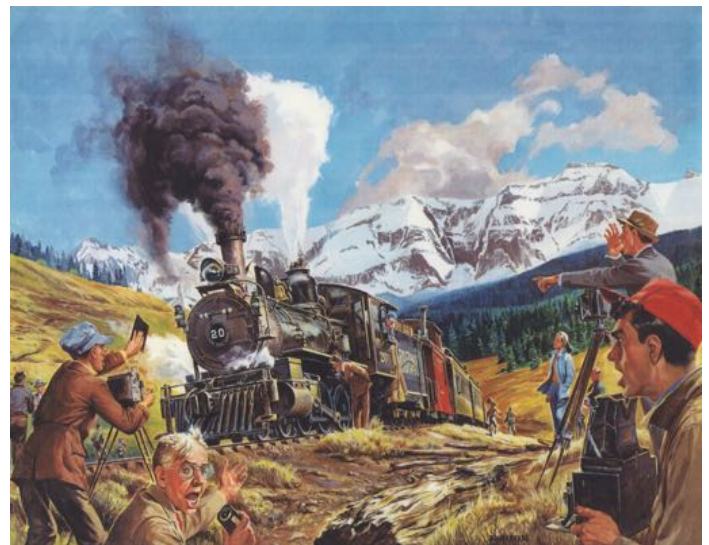


Ridgeway 1949

Photo by M. Ferrell

As noted in the lead article, the RGS was no stranger to buying used locomotives. Indeed, most of the engines used on the line were either bought second-hand or leased from the larger Denver and Rio Grande Western, especially as that line's narrow gauge operations began to constrict in the 1940's. Two of the RGS' last engines were ex-D&RGW often leased to the RGS. One could say the RGS got the opportunity to "test drive" the locomotives before purchasing.

As mentioned, RGS #20 came from another legendary Colorado narrow gauge line, the Florence and Cripple Creek. That road was well documented in the book, "Florence and Cripple Creek: 40 Miles to Fortune" by Allan Lewis (2002, Sundance Pub. Co., Denver CO), and operationally continued despite a devastating flood in Phantom Canyon in July 1912, which severed the line from its southern terminus, Florence Colorado, now home to Colorado's largest prison. In the late 19th century, Florence was the link with the D&RG and interchange point for the F&CC as it served the mines of Cripple Creek. With abandonment of the F&CC in 1916, the Midland Terminal was born from the narrow gauge F&CC lines in the Cripple Creek area widened to standard gauge, and the remnants of the standard gauge Colorado Midland, abandoned in 1921, which operated out of Colorado City, in proximity to Colorado Springs.



1947 Excursion by Phil Ronfor

F&CC #20 was sold to the always cash-strapped RGS in 1916 serving on that road until abandonment in 1952. But did you know that two other 4-6-0 F&CC engines also went to the RGS? Sister engines #22 and #25 also began service in mixed use but only #20 lasted until the end of

operations. According to the "RGS Story, Vol XII, by Ehernberger and Bradford, (2006, Sundance Pub. Co., Denver CO), #22 was dismantled in 1946 and #25 following an earlier wreck was dismantled in 1940. To complicate matters, all three engines replaced identically

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numbered predecessors that were scrapped in 1916, the year the ex-F&CC engines were acquired. Ironically, two of the three earlier numbered RGS engines were also ten-wheelers.

The ex-F&CC ten-wheelers were highly versatile and valued by the RGS. Although designed as passenger motive power, ten wheelers were really the GP-7's of the steam era. They were well suited for "general purpose" assignments and indeed used for that purpose on the RGS. After the rail was strengthened to support their heavier weight, these T-19 class engines hauled local freight system wide. So well used were they that two of the class had to be dismantled due to wear after donating tenders and parts to the survivors. Only #20 lasted until the end of operations and was in constant use.

An interesting unknown piece of history was an episode in the 1930's when the D&RGW borrowed RGS #20 for testing on its Marshall Pass lines. So impressed was the Grande with these T-19 engines as compared to their lighter T-12 versions, that the Rio Grande considered swapping three D&RGW K-27's for the three RGS T-19 engines. Apparently, the RGS was on the verge of accepting when a change of heart occurred by the Grande and the trade never happened.

RGS #20 was a true boomer. Consistent with RGS practice, its life did not end when the F&CC quit. It not only was purchased by the RGS but was refurbished by the D&RGW in Alamosa prior to service on the RGS. As part of that effort, the #20 hauled D&RGW trains to test it's capacity leading to subsequent testing by the Grande, as described above. Thus, the RGS #20 operated on three different narrow gauge railroads in Colorado, acquitting itself on all three. An enviable record matched by few engines. Add its turn at movie stardom in 1949, and you have one special engine.

RGS #20 has been well represented in model form. In HO3, PFM imported editions starting in 1963 with later editions also produced by PSC and Sunset. In On3, PFM imported a version as early as 1957, making it one of the first narrow gauge imports. RGS #'s 22 and 25 were also produced by PSC in both HO3 and in On3. But Sn3 modelers hit the jackpot as PBL produced many versions of all three T-19 engines representing different eras. It would not be surprising to see a hybrid version one day with DCC and sound, so popular is this engine.



Ridgeway 1947

Photo by P. Ronfor

### From The Executive Director

This issue highlights a good example of the NGPF making a big difference in narrow gauge restoration. After tapping out its customary sources of funding, the Colorado Railroad Museum approached us almost as a last resort to help them raise the final \$80,000 of literally over a million dollar budget to complete the restoration of RGS #20, one of the most beloved of the Colorado narrow gauge fleet. The prospect of bringing this engine back to life was just too important to ignore and we were very happy to help. The matching grant we provided has reinvigorated their fundraising efforts and a mention in a recent issue of *Trains* magazine along with a specialized fundraising letter should enable the CRRM to successfully meet their challenge. The result will be the dramatic return of RGS #20 and its steam-up will resurrect an artifact of Colorado's narrow gauge heritage. Without the NGPF, that day may have been delayed.

Our work is far from complete. We have been asked to play a role in restoring another 4-6-0, D&RGW T-12, #168, a sister to #169 in Alamosa, which is on display and undergoing very slow restoration. #168 on loan from the City of Colorado Springs is being "fast-tracked" for operation on the Cumbres & Toltec. With your continued help, these projects will be completed and we will all be a bit richer for the experience. Thanks for being a member and thanks for your help.

*Charlie Getz*

Since 1975, Charlie has written a column for the Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette and has been active in the NMRA, currently serving as its President. He has been Executive Director of the NGPF since its inception.

### Special Donation Request

Please consider an extra tax-deductible donation to help restore RGS #20 and D&RGW #168. What we do makes a big difference in preserving our narrow gauge heritage and your help is crucial.

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### UPCOMING ISSUES

- Rebuilding #169 and now #168
- The T-12 Class Locomotives on the Rio Grande
- EBT Hoppers – A Long Way From Home
- Preserving Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge steam



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### WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE DO AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation (NGPF) was first established as the Narrow Gauge Trust in 2000. It was the dream of one of our board members to help preserve Narrow Gauge in both its prototype and model form. In 2002, the Narrow Gauge Trust Fund was incorporated as the Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation, and acquired non-profit status both within the State of California and as recognized by the Federal government. As a non-profit public benefit corporation, our mission is to establish interactive exhibits where the public can learn of the significant history of Narrow Gauge railroading as well as to support preservation activities and projects wherever possible.

The foundation is administered by a board of directors, which does not receive compensation. The NGPF is proud that less than five percent of its funds are spent on administrative costs. Thus, ninety five percent of the funds raised go toward preservation efforts.

Our primary function is the creation of interactive exhibits where the public can be told the story of Narrow Gauge, such as the one at Chama. As with the Chama exhibit, each exhibit will include interactive video presentations and models as well as dioramas, photographs and other graphics to explain the significance of the Narrow Gauge railroading experience. As a secondary function, the NGPF assists Narrow Gauge preservation efforts across North America. These efforts to date have exceeded over one million dollars and in some cases have made the difference between preservation and loss of significant artifacts.

The foundation is also unique in supporting the efforts of Narrow Gauge Preservation projects throughout the United States rather than concentrating on one area or one particular project. To date, the organization has supported projects on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, Ardenwood Park in California, Friends of Denver and Rio Grande Engine #169, the Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge Railroad Foundation, The Colorado Railroad Museum, the Southeast Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum in North Carolina and the Durango Railroad Historical Society, among others. In addition, we have preserved the collections of prominent narrow gauge modelers, extensive libraries of books as well as important art pieces depicting narrow gauge scenes.

One of the unique aspects of the NGPF is the use of matching grants to encourage the receiving parties to reach out to the public for support. Many of our grants require that the receiving agency establish within a set time frame, an equal number of individual new donations from members of the public, which not only shows support for the particular project, but also provides new sources of funding for the organization. As a result of this policy, organizations receiving our grants have reported increased donations. Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible, acknowledged and appreciated. By donating, you support a variety of worthwhile projects and thereby enhance preservation of Narrow Gauge.