

The Ottaway Steam Train

By Jerry Ottaway

About 1932 my Dad, Herb Ottaway, purchased a steam train from a popular recreation area located on South Meridian. He rebuilt the engine and coaches the following winter. In the spring, he set the train up in Manitou, Colorado. The train did very well.

My Grandfather, Gerald Chance, built four gasoline powered cars and a kiddie auto ride which were added to the mix. They played Manitou every summer until the war started in 1941.

In 1946, my Dad and Grandfather, L.A. Ottaway, decided to build two new trains. Several people wanted to purchase them so they started taking orders. The first trains sold for \$2,500.00 which included an engine, tender, three coaches, 300ft of track and a ticket box. The trains operated in city parks and carnivals.

In late 1948, the train business was sold to Harold Chance who continued to build them until about 1958. A total of 99 trains were built. The company name was changed to Chance Manufacturing Company. Chance is the largest ride builder in the world. Our AMCA member, Dick Chance operates the company today.

Most of the trains have survived and are in the hands of collectors. Three of our AMCA members own Ottaway trains, Dick Chance, Roger Nelson and myself.