

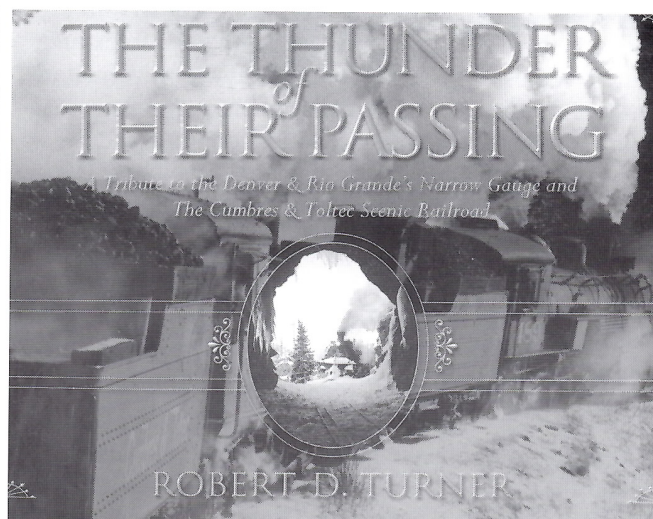
numerous. They include the Cumbres Pass walking tour and interpretive center—both preparing exhibits and staffing—described above. They also include the Train Host/Docent program, creation of interpretive plans for Chama, Cumbres, Osier, Sublette, Antonito, and locations where historic structures have been removed (Big Horn, Toltec, etc.), planning interpretive use for historic cars that will not be in charter service, developing exhibits, installing interpretive signs, conducting research, gathering reference materials like photos and maps, writing comprehensive studies on the historic structures and cars, collecting oral histories, and writing school curricula.

We are looking for volunteers to help us realize these ideas. Some of what we want to do can be scheduled into regular work sessions. Other projects can be done away from the railroad and at any time of the year. The 2004 work session schedule includes projects I requested: at Cumbres Pass, restoration of the spring house that served the depot, repair of the pump house, placement of historical markers for missing historic structures, archaeological investigation of sites of defunct historic structures, including the ones neighboring the former Lively general store. We are also looking for volunteers to design and rebuild a period kitchen in the section house and to build the models and exhibits for the inauguration of the visitor's center at Cumbres. In Chama, clearing vegetation, rocks, coal, etc. will enable us to make clearer pathways to the scale house and the structures in the north yard. Creating an easier path to the north yard will enable us to exhibit restored cars on the tracks near the oil loading dock and encourage us to plan for restoration of the interior of the log bunkhouse.

If you would like to participate in any of the Interpretation Committee activities, please return the yellow flyer included in the membership renewal mailing to the Friends' office. If you didn't get it or mislaid it, please contact the Friends' office by e-mail, letter, phone, or fax.

## Book Review

*The Thunder of Their Passing: A Tribute to the Denver & Rio Grande's Narrow Gauge and the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad*, Turner, Robert D. (Sono Nis Press, PO Box 160, Winlaw, BC VOG 2JO, Canada, [www.sononis.com](http://www.sononis.com), [sononis@netidea.com](mailto:sononis@netidea.com), hb., 288 pp., photographs, maps, bibliography.)



This is a superb book! The author, a member of the Friends, has written several other books on railroads and related subjects and has received the Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. The book covers the history of the narrow gauge from General Palmer's first idea for a narrow gauge to the purchase by the states of Colorado and New Mexico, to the various operators, and finally to operations under the auspices of the Friends. The photography of both historic and modern photographs is first rate with excellent reproductions. The Dedication, in both English and Spanish, is "to all those who have made the Cumbres & Toltec possible, yesterday, and today, and who will continue its traditions in the future." In the Epilogue, *Narrow Gauge Reflections*, the author says: "The end that seemed palpable in the late 1960s was not so much an ending as it was a pause before a beginning again, with

roots going back nearly a century on the narrow gauge that was, and still is, the *Scenic Line of the World*. And so the narrow gauge has come full circle. It is no less a railroad now than it was in 1880—it has fallen back on its roots as a passenger-carrying, mountain railroad that brought people from all over the world to see Toltec Gorge and the vistas of Cumbres."

Part 1 is "Narrow Gauge Through the Rockies" and brings the story down to the early 1920s. In Part 2, "Along the Rio Grande Narrow Gauge," the story continues with World War I, the Depression, and operations into the last years.

Finally, in Part 3, Turner relates the story of the volunteers saving the railroad, the

purchase by the two states, and the emergence of the Friends. Then the already mentioned Epilogue puts the story into the context of operating the historic railroad.

Turner is an excellent story teller. The text is very readable, informative, accurate, and accompanied with sidebars of both modern and historic interviews, notes, and more photographs. This is a must book for anyone interested in the C&TS, the narrow gauge in general, and railroad history. It is also noteworthy to point out that getting railfan books published by mainline presses can be very difficult. In this case the publisher "most gratefully acknowledges the support for our publishing program provided by the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP), The Canada Council for the Arts, and the British Columbia Arts Council."

—Spencer Wilson



### *History Makes a Good Story*

by Keith E. Hayes, AIA

At the beginning of a recent meeting, a colleague asked me if I was going to work on the railroad again this year? Before I could respond, several others asked me what this was all about? Needless to say, before I had uttered a word, I was suddenly responding to about six different questions. Folks—even those who are not apt to be fond of railroads—are often fascinated to hear that my father and I journey to a distant place and work on 19<sup>th</sup> century railroad equipment. In those terms it does sound quite exotic, doesn't it?

But where to start? There are so many stories to tell about the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. There is the history of the line: how it came to be, the history of the land, the railroad and the people who worked along the line. There is the history of the building of the line, the structures and the equipment. All these stories are so easy to mingle, and it is easy to be knee-deep in a tale and realize you have lost your audience because the story has gotten too complicated.

And some stories about the Cumbres & Toltec are complicated. Like who owns and operates the railroad? Best steer clear of that one. Or, another question heard often, "is that the train in Durango?" Not exactly, but.... Sometimes the details are not as important as capturing the imagination of the person who asked the question in the first place. Keeping the story simple is a big idea.

One theme that is quite compelling is the people. We have members from all over the United States and

in over a dozen foreign countries: I have met folks who journeyed from Australia to work on the railroad.

Wow! I have worked with physicists, mechanics, engineers, accountants, cops, acousticians, teachers, auctioneers, moms, dads and college students. We work on buildings, railroad cars, track and signs. Some of us mobilize materials and equipment to points across the railroad and others make a hundred lunches for a week. We get stuff done and have fun doing it!

Think about it—when someone asks you what you did last summer, what do you say? How do you describe the Cumbres & Toltec? Discover your story and practice it. Practice it on your spouse, if he or she is willing. Keep your answers short, direct, simple and to the point—and be sure and make a point.

A member of the Friends was recently interviewed on a local radio show. Listening to the interview, I was reminded how important it is to tell a good story—a compelling story that captures the imagination of the listener and leaves them asking for more. This is particularly true as the Friends begin to pursue significant funding initiatives such as *Another Century of Narrow Gauge Steam* and matching funds for track upgrades and locomotive repairs. Hyperbole is not lost here: the longest and highest narrow gauge railroad must be something to see and even more worthwhile of a donation. Who knows how many folks heard the radio interview; maybe not a millionaire donor, but if it caused 100 more families to ride the line, isn't that just as important?

Spreading the word and getting new folks—especially families—excited about the railroad is key to keeping the Friends organization growing and vital. Ours is a graying nation, and trends indicate that young adults are less likely to join organizations. Time is becoming precious as young families with two incomes struggle to manage both free time and spare dollars. Thus the folks who used to flock to ride the Cumbres & Toltec likely have less time and less money for a family vacation to ride the train than families of even a decade ago.

Several years ago, a consultant noticed a picture of a train on my desk. He asked me about it in passing, and was impressed enough with my enthusiasm for the railroad and the Friends that he asked for a membership application. I never checked to see if he sent the application in, or even rode the train, but he was certainly struck by my avid description of the railroad and the experience of working on it. At the very least, he told a friend about it. I have a Friends' pin on my jacket, and folks are always leaning down and squinting at it—it is a real conversation starter. Let me tell you a story....

*Keith's column appears regularly in the C&TS Dispatch.*

#### **Moving or Have Moved?**

If you will be moving or have moved, please notify the Albuquerque office of your change of address. The office address is 6005 Osuna Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109; the telephone number is (505) 880-1311, or e-mail to: [brianshoup@cumbrestoltec.org](mailto:brianshoup@cumbrestoltec.org).



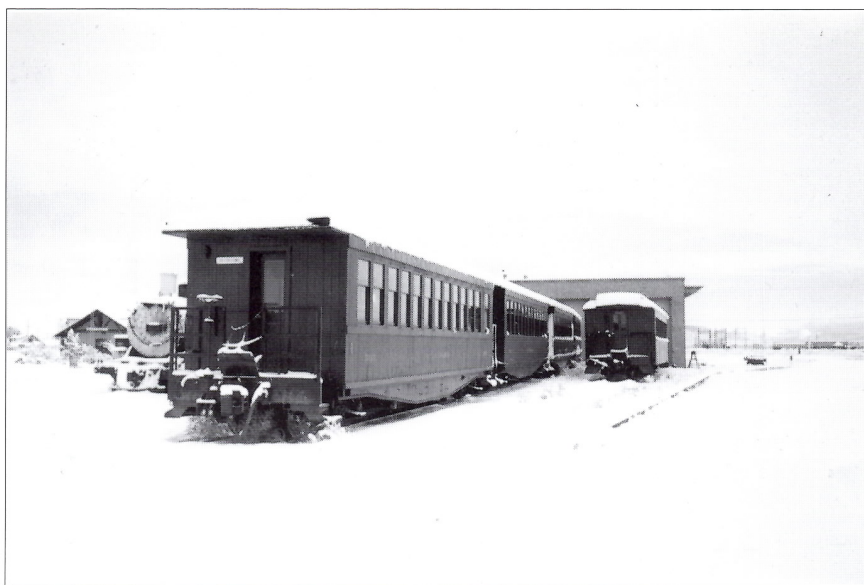
## An Improved Fort Knox

by Warren Ringer

If you haven't visited Antonito in the past two years, you'll be impressed by the improvements in Fort Knox, the building just south of the parking area, which is the Friends' shop with tools, supplies, and work areas. Under the leadership of Jack Salisbury, starting in May 2002 and continuing through this year, volunteers have improved the usefulness of the facility. The Friends were aided by members of the local community, as well as by railroad staff.

The team removed the old material stored in Fort Knox and packed all useful materials on pallets for relocation to places where they could be used. Scrap was taken for recycling and trash went to the dump. The team gave the facility a good cleaning and then new electrical service was added to upgrade the lighting and provide 220v outlets. Storage racks, machine tools, hand tools, and hardware, donated by the Holman Cement Company with member Grant Hall facilitating the donation, have been incorporated. These included an arc welder, drill press, bench grinder, vertical sander, table saw and jointer, and heavy duty storage racks. In addition, a vertical mill and lathe were provided to the railroad's shop. One rack was converted into an enclosed tool crib while the others were used to organize and store lumber and car parts for current repair projects as well as material left over from previous projects. Rotating bins have been installed to help organize all the bolts and other hardware. A very heavy duty work bench was built out of left over material. The result is more space, more tools and more capability for the Friends' restoration work. Current projects include the restoration of short caboose 0579 and the rebuilding of drop-bottom gondola 859. A number of ideas for additional projects are being considered. You'll be impressed when you visit or spend a work session there.

*Warren is a long-time volunteer and former director of the Friends.*



*First generation ("Antonito") coaches (left) parked outside the Antonito engine house. A second generation ("Chama") coach is parked next to them, November 1993. (Photo by Art Nichols.)*

## Corrections

In the Fall 2003 issue the lower right-hand photo on page 10 was printed in error. The oil storage walkway shown below is the correct photo. This walkway is south of the engine house on track 5 and is at ground level, overlooking the river area.

Also, Sharon and Jim McGee should be included in the 5-year Volunteer Service Recognition list given on page 19 in the Fall issue.



*(Photo by Tom Cardin.)*



## 2004 Schedule of Friends' Events

### Volunteer Work Sessions

May 10–14, Session A

May 17–21, Session B

June 14–18, Session C

June 18, Annual Meeting

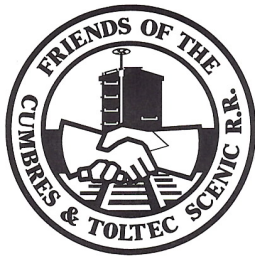
June 21–25, Session D

August 2–6, Session E

August 9–13, Session F



*Antonito depot, November 1993. (Photo by Art Nichols.)*



**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec  
Scenic Railroad, Inc.**

6005 Osuna Road NE  
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