

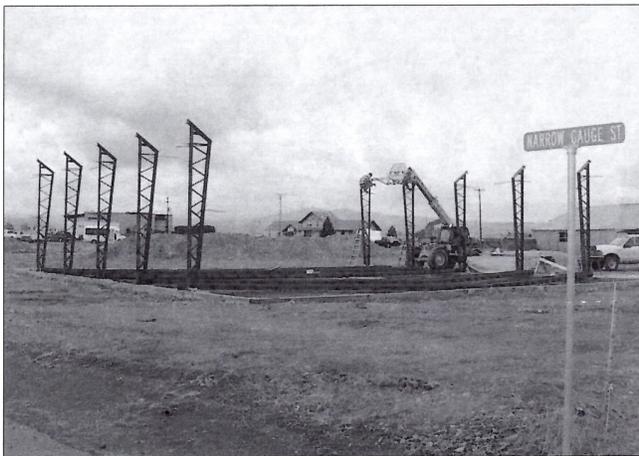
## ANTONITO CAR RESTORATION FACILITY

by Dan Pyzel and Bill Lock  
Photographs by Ed Lowrance

Since the founding of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad in 1988, one of our organization's most important priorities has been the construction of a car restoration facility (CRF). This is needed to provide covered work space for maintenance and restoration of our historic fleet of passenger, freight, and maintenance of way equipment and for protection of the needed tools and materials. A CRF Task Force composed of Jerry Sahn, Bill Kepner, Bill Lock, Warren Ringer, Brian Shoup, and Cal Smith was convened to determine the specific needs for such a facility, the types of projects to be undertaken therein, and the design parameters to best accommodate those tasks.

Several fundamental issues involving location, design, and purpose arose in planning a CRF in Chama, which led to the project being postponed; however, because of the generosity of donors and the availability of land, we have been able to build an excellent facility in Antonito. In 1989 the Friends were able to purchase lots 4 and 5 of a five-lot strip of land contiguous to the east edge of the C&TS property. We were able to secure donations that covered the entire purchase price of the two lots. The CRF Task Force recommended that a permanent car restoration facility be constructed on one of these two lots.

Since the Antonito C&TS property has not been designated a historic site, few architectural restrictions had to be placed on the design. The task force determined that a steel



*The side columns have been erected, the roof trusses assembled and laid out inside the foundation, and the wood perlins are going into place.*

structure would be the most cost effective. The facility envisioned was an enclosed steel structure sixty feet wide by up to 120 feet long with sixteen-foot-high walls and a twenty-four-foot height at the peak. Two roll-up doors twelve feet wide and fourteen feet high with a three-foot-wide service door between them were planned for the west end of the structure, and a single ten- by ten-foot roll-up door and another three-foot service door were planned for the east end. An inspection pit between the rails of one of the two tracks inside was also planned, along with skylights to take advantage of the natural light. An adjoining shop building would be constructed along the north wall of the building.

At this stage, after initial estimates to determine the final size that the Friends could afford, quotes for a sixty- by seventy-two-foot building which would hold four freight cars were sought from several vendors. Miracle Truss, a division of Miracle Steel Structures of Minneapolis, submitted the most satisfactory bid at \$54,728 for the



*The CRF with the view to the east. The steel and wood perlins are complete.*

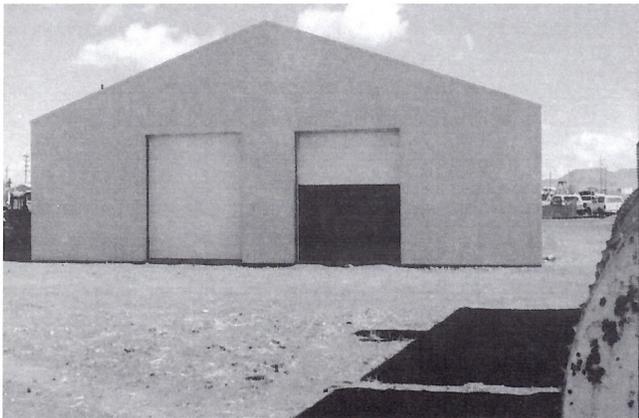
necessary materials and their delivery to Antonito. This bid was presented to the Friends board members at the March 2004 meeting. The board members accepted the proposal, with delivery and construction to be done during 2004.

The town of Antonito has been extremely helpful and supportive in this endeavor. Several minor details with zoning and utilities went very smoothly with the help of the Town Board. Marvin Casias, the RGRPC Assistant Manager, along with his Antonito crew, helped with the excavation and foundation work.

Board member Ed Lowrance of Pagosa Springs, Colorado, was appointed team leader for the actual erection of the building. A special Friends work session was set to erect the building. As it turned out, the uncertainties of time and weather made it necessary to budget more than a one-week



*The interior of the CRF.*



*The exterior of the CRF.*

time frame to erect the building. Therefore, the foundation and erection phases of the construction were done by ALCON contractors of Alamosa during September and October of 2004.

Although the building itself is completed, it still needs track, floor, and utilities installed to be ready for use. The RGRPC has already begun work on the design and construction of the turnout and tracks to the building. It is planned to have these things completed in time for the work sessions during the summer of 2005.

— Dan Pyzel is a long-time member of the Friends. Bill Lock is a director and founder of the Friends. Ed Lowrance is a member of the Friends' board of directors.

### **FROM THE EDITOR...**

We always welcome articles, long or short, for the C&TS Dispatch. Have you been thinking of writing an article about the narrow gauge either pre- or post-1970? The topic could be a historical incident along the line. It might be about a person whose contributions to the railroad have made a difference. Perhaps you have a photograph that tells a story. Let me know if you are interested in writing for the Dispatch.

Art Nichols, 12209 Manitoba Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111; asn1307@aol.com

## **LETTERS**

### **Locomotive Identified**

In response to the photo of the worker-draped engine on page nine in the Fall 2004 issue, it appears to be a Santa Fe 3800-class 2-10-2, probably one of the ten numbered 3800-3809 based on the barely visible number plate in the photo. All of these 63-inch drivered engines were built by Baldwin in 1919 as oil burners with Walschaerts valve gear and Elesco feedwater heaters. The main drivers on all engines of this class were "blind," that is, without flanges, to allow them to better negotiate a shorter-radius curve. The engines originally operated at 220 psi boiler pressure, but by 1930 had been downgraded to 210 and after 1946 to 195, with a corresponding reduction in rated tractive effort. A number of this class worked over Raton Pass, and all of the first ten engines of this class, apparently including the one in the photo, were scrapped between 1949 and 1955.

*Richard E. "Dick" Pennick  
Locomotive engineer, SD&A Ry.  
Spring Valley, CA*

## THE MOONLIGHT TRAIN RETURNS IN JUNE

The Friends is pleased to announce that this year there will be a Moonlight Train.

After a hiatus of three years, the railroad now has sufficient equipment to allow us to run the train on Saturday June 18, 2005. The departure will be in the afternoon from Chama and will include a steak dinner and return train ride under the almost-full moon.

Brochures will be mailed to Friends members, and as always members will receive a discount on the fare. Invite friends and relatives to experience the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad under unique and beautiful conditions.



Locomotives 484 and 489 leaving Chama with the east-bound train, July 27, 1996. (Photo by Art Nichols.)

## Railroad Gatherings Staffed by Friends

January

“The Big E” Amherst Railway Society

West Springfield, MA

Jim O’Keefe and Cal Smith. Cal reports 17,000 visitors attended and they handed out all 475 Friends brochures in their possession

February

Mad City Model Railroad Show & Sale

Madison, WI

Bob Hey

March 12th

Winterail

33 West Alpine St. - Stockton, CA

Dick Seelye

June

The Big Train Show

Long Beach, CA

Brooks Wilson, John & Joanie Cole

July

National Railway Historical Society Convention

Portland, OR

Not presently staffed

Upcoming conventions in Kansas

TBA

Phil Miller

## PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

*Do you have photographs from the 1980s showing the construction in Antonito of the seven “second generation” coaches known as the Chama cars—numbers 510-516? Do you have photographs of the completed cars? If you have such photographs, I would like to hear from you. An article about these cars will appear in the C&TS Dispatch in the near future, and photographs of these coaches are needed. If you can help, please e-mail or telephone Art Nichols, editor, at [asn1307@aol.com](mailto:asn1307@aol.com) or (505) 296-7448.*

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## Friends Library Responds to Inquiry

The on-going expansion of the Friends Library is adding many items related to steam locomotive and railroad operation. Some of this detailed information found a use recently. The shop force at the Nevada Northern Railway Museum, Ely, Nevada, was seeking documentation regarding maintenance intervals for No. 6-ET engine and tender brakes and for the long-obsolete K-type freight car brakes. Like the C&TS, the Nevada Northern operates very old rolling stock using old-style brake equipment.

The answer was found in two small books on the shelves of the Friends Library. These books were in the collection donated to the library by Joseph Calek, long time New Mexico resident and railroad enthusiast (see p.8 of the Winter 2004 issue). One book was an Association of American Railroads (AAR) manual on air brake maintenance, adopted in 1925. The other book was a Westinghouse Air Brake Company handbook for maintaining and overhauling K-type brake valves and equipment. These two items are only two of many similar volumes about air brakes now on the shelves. Copies of the relevant pages were made and sent on their way.

Amounting to almost 1500 items, the Calek collection includes not only the group of railroad and locomotive technical works, some a century old and reflecting steam railroading of the early 1900s, but

railroad history books published over the past sixty years. Books and pamphlets from the collection are placed on the now groaning shelves of the library as rapidly as they are cataloged. Materials address steam locomotive operations and maintenance to a fascinating level of detail. Of particular interest are enginemens' handbooks describing common road failures and giving instructions for bringing disabled steam locomotives back to their terminal.

Similar items now available cover a broad range of railroad technology and practice. Examples include regulations and maintenance manuals for obsolete air brake systems now found only on historic railroads, such as for the No. 6-ET engine and tender brakes or K-type freight car brakes. Details extend to the level of maintenance intervals and instructions for overhauling brake valves and cylinders.

In addition, the Friends Library contains a rich collection of C&TS materials of all kinds as well as many well-known railfan and history volumes.

The library is open to Friends members and is located in the offices of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, 6005 Osuna Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. Although the office is usually open weekdays, it is best to call in advance of a visit to be sure at (505) 830-1311. Materi-

als are not circulated, but are readily available for reading and review.

— *Vernon J. Glover, Library Volunteer*



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## Friends Buddy System

In the winter issue of the Dispatch, the new buddy system of the Friends was introduced. We pointed out that each time the Friends send a postal mailing to our 2000 members, the organization is spending dollars that could go toward preservation/interpretation work for the railroad. In a continuing effort to provide information to our members and encourage use of the Web site for news items, work session registration materials, or the like, we have initiated a Friends buddy system. With the help of member Lyla Howell, the Friends will connect a web user with a postal user by pairing them. If the postal member chooses

to do so, he or she would send self-addressed, stamped envelopes to the Web user. Each time a news item appears on the Friends Web site, a copy would be printed by the buddy and mailed. When the last envelope is used, the buddy will advise to send more. So, if you are willing to be a "sending buddy," let Lyla know by e-mail, lehowell@cybermesa.com. If you want to be a "receiving buddy," write to Lyla and she will make the connection—41 Owens Rd, Silver City, NM 88061.

— *Nan Clark*

## 2005 Schedule of Friends' Events

### Volunteer Work Sessions

May 9—13, Session A

May 16—20, Session B

June 13—17, Session C

June 20—24, Session D

August 1—5, Session E

August 8—12, Session F

### Opening Day

May 28

### Annual Meeting

June 17

### Moonlight Train

June 18



*On December 4, 2004, Santa Claus (Tom Cardin) greeting Chama author Jill Lane on the Christmas Train from Antonito. Looking on from their seats are Claire and Jamie English. Santa boarded the train at Lava Tank. (Photo by Warren Smalley.)*



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

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Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

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