

come in contact with a passenger. But it was nerve-racking to a person sitting next to the window; not to mention if a tropical rainstorm was pounding down!

When I began to design the second generation cars for the C&TS, I naturally borrowed some concepts from the Maui experience. As time went on, and I got further along with the design it became apparent that at some point the idea of these cars had to be put on the table so the C&TS Railroad Commission, and their engineering consultant Ted Gordon of Santa Fe, could pass judgment. But first I needed to broach the concept to someone who could help that process along. My pick was Carl Turner, one of the two New Mexico commissioners.

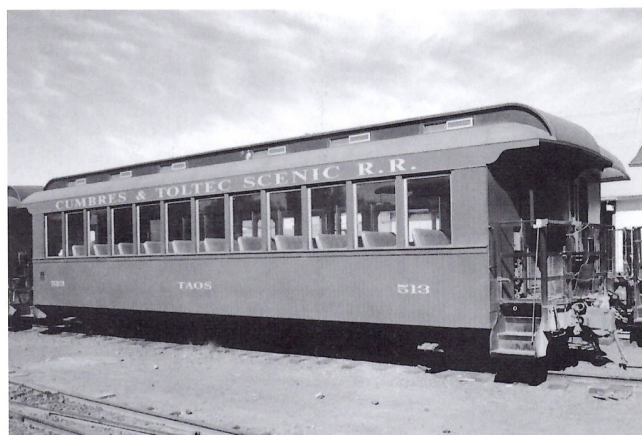
As I recall it, there had been a commission meeting in Antonito. Since I had driven Willis Kyle, President of Kyle Railways, from Chama to the meeting, and because he had a meeting in Albuquerque later in the day it was arranged that I ride back to Chama with Carl Turner. There was just the two of us and we spoke of many things on the drive back. I think it was about the time we went over Coxo crossing that I decided I had better get my dog and pony show on the road. I asked Carl what he thought the chances of the commission and the engineer considering a new coach design? I explained that it could be possible to design and construct a lighter weight car with the turn of the century look to it, along with better windows, better seats and lower maintenance costs. Carl puffed his pipe a couple of times and said something like "Well, I don't know, but I suppose you are going to show me the plans when we get to Chama?" We spent time looking at the drawings I had done, talking about the construction and the materials and the idea that these cars would look like old cars yet be very durable due to the fibreglass and the steel (vs the wood framed first generation cars), as well as the window design and the fact they would have steel roofs, not wood and canvas that sprung leaks. Carl allowed how it looked good to him and go with the idea.

Over the months that followed, many of the materials, engineering and basic construction details were hammered out. Fibreglass was one of the first problems—was it still available? The panels for the Maui cars had been made by Century Plastics in Southern California. I had been in contact with their Senior Vice President, George Turner, three years before to have them make more panels for the Maui cars. After several calls and a visit to California, Century Plastics presented an estimate for the patterns and the panels. The exterior panels would incorporate the look of vertical tongue and groove siding and would also integrate the windowsill in the same casting. The interior of the clerestory ceiling was to be done in four pieces, thus cutting down on the number of seams to detail.

The next real challenge was to get rid of the fish belly side frames, but come up with what was going to take their place. Cutting the old side sills off was the easy part, the replacement was a different problem. Because all of the car body framing above the side and end sills and the floor was to be fabricated in Durango by Telluride Iron Works and shipped to Antonito for final assembly on the basic car frame, all the sills had to be exactly the same. The old 6500s were pretty beat up, no two sills were the same—not even on the same car! The fix was to run strong rectangular box steel members down each side and across the ends to the inside of the step wells. These were squared up and then the cross braces and body bolsters were cut with a torch far enough back so that steel framing pieces could be welded in to bridge the differences. Difficult and precise layout, fitting and welding had to be the normal procedure.

During the design/engineering process, it was discovered that Westinghouse Air Brake was horrified that anyone even thought about, let alone was going to install, K brakes on the cars. Well, why not? They were on everything else, and they had worked just fine for decades. Nope, no way! So AB schedule equipment was imported from a sister Kyle operation that had a freight car repair shop and had surplus AB equipment. And now it was back to the drawing board to design different fixtures and leverages to suit the ABs. And I wonder why I have gray hair?

All the finish work was done in Antonito by C&TS employees: Marvin Casias, James (Jim) Shawcroft and his son, Bret "Charlie" Shawcroft, Sam Ruybal, Henry Gallegos, Gilbert "Bino" Gallegos, Donald Duran, Brian Glynn and Gerald Blea. From below the interior windowsill line the paneling was wood put in over sheet steel "belts" that were welded to



*Second generation coach 513, as built lettered Conejos, shown here lettered Taos. (Copyright 1995 Rupley Collection. Used with permission.)*



the vertical steel frame members. The windows were a nearly off-the-shelf transit grade aluminum framed laminated safety glass. While accepted safety glass of this type will not shatter, it cracks instead and the clear plastic laminate keeps the glass from falling out. The seats were acquired from the Indiana Railway Museum in Noblesville, Indiana. These seats had been taken out of surplus Erie Lackawanna commuter passenger equipment. I do not recall exactly, but I think we “stole” them for something between \$15.00 and \$25.00 each! It almost cost more in freight to Antonito than the cost of the seats. These seats were old Hale & Kilburn walkover seats, so the passengers could set them up to face forward regardless of the direction of the train. The bases bolted into the floor and the outside brackets fastened into the sheet steel “belts.”

During the design/engineering process the consulting engineer made changes to the steel materials that I had originally called out. Everything became heavier, the end result was the cars weighed several thousand pounds more than the original concept. It was felt that the lightweight

cars would not be as durable as the heavier product. I still disagree with this notion.

Lastly was the color of paint. I was criticized on my choice of Pullman Green or as close as I could get to it (there were two Pullman Greens—on the eastern and coal burning lines it was darker than on the western, dustier lines). There are those that feel the green color tends to “lose” the train in the greens of the mountains. To me that is just fine, better than yellow and silver or boxcar red and cream. In my eyes it should look like a train.

The second generation coaches are usually referred to as the Chama cars. The seven coaches were numbered and named as built: 510, Tres Piedras; 511, Santa Fe; 512, Osier; 513, Conejos; 514, Pagosa Springs; 515, Coxo; and 516, Lobato.

*Dan Ranger is the Executive Director of the Tourist Railway Association (TRAIN) and co-editor with Karen Ranger of TrainLine, the association's publication. Dan is past General Manager of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.*

## BOOK REVIEW

*Dining by Rail: The History and Recipes of America's Golden Age of Railroad Cuisine*, St. Martin's Griffin, New York, 1993, 384 pp. including index and bibliography.

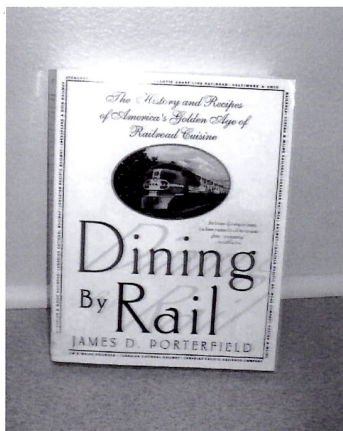
The author, James D. Porterfield, has done a wonderful job of researching and writing about the evolution of dining cars and their demise. The book is in two sections. Section I is titled “From Soot to Soufflé: Eating on the Train.” As the title seems to say, the very earliest “hotel cars” served up locomotive soot along with marginal service of meals. Before the dining cars, of course, there were the eating houses usually located in towns along the railroad—a chapter the author entitles “A Half Hour to Indigestion.” Then along came Fred Harvey to make things much better. As the rails were pushed west from the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, the stopping places were farther and farther apart—hence the evolution of restaurant cars on the rails. The interesting tidbits provided in this book include the evolution of the term “diner” as applied to the cars. A “diner” was originally the person eating a meal but it later evolved into the title of the restaurant car. In this first section, the author goes on to describe how the railroads ultimately took over the Pullman Company, which operated those first cars. Each major railroad then began

operating its own “Commissary Department.” He also writes about the personnel in those commissaries: the evolution of using Black waiters, the advantages to them in money (from tips), travel and more permanent employment. He also addresses the advantage to the individual railroad companies in serving the best cuisine and providing the best service, the best table settings, and the like, as the best kind of advertising. The commissary departments all operated at a loss, but the assumption was that it was worth the deficit in order to attract the riding public. For many a traveler, he writes, this was a first experience, not unlike a fancy city hotel. “Service Second to None” is part of one chapter.

Section II is “The Railroads and Their Cuisines”—the menus of twenty major roads, plus dishes from 24 other roads. This latter list includes the Denver and Rio Grande Western specialties such as Boiled Black-Eyed Peas, Islander Shrimp Luau, and Old Fashioned Navy Bean Soup-Rio Grande Style. There are also special short sections on various items, including the Idaho Baked Potato. The B&O served seafood on the westbound trains and meat from the Chicago stock yards on the eastbound trains. As a

postscript, the author goes into the decline of railroads in general, and the dining car in particular, and Amtrak taking over the long haul, intercity, trains. Read this book and the recipes and salivate!

— Spencer Wilson, *Friends Librarian and Archivist*



## Schedule of Friends' Events

### 2005 Volunteer Work Sessions

August 1-5, Session E  
August 8-12, Session F

### 2006 Volunteer Work Sessions

May 15-19, Session A  
May 22-26, Session B  
June 12-16, Session C  
June 19-23, Session D  
August 7-11, Session E  
August 14-18, Session F

### Annual Meeting

June 16



*At Chama in 1954, locomotives 492 and 493 at the coal tippie and over the ash pit.  
(Courtesy of Cornelius Hauck)*



**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec  
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