



C&TS Dispatch

Vol. 14 No. 4

WINTER 2001

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Historic Preservation – 2001

The August Volunteer Work Sessions

Compiled by Doris Akers, photographs by Tom Cardin, Art Nichols, Terri Shaw, Tim Smith, and George Swain

One hundred fifty-four Friends' members carried out historic preservation projects on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad during the two volunteer work sessions from August 6 to 17, 2001. The August volunteers pursued both ongoing and new projects before bringing the 2001 work sessions to a close.

What the Volunteers Accomplished

In Antonito . . .

Volunteers continued work on two ongoing projects—short caboose 0579 and flat car 6708.

During session C, the Caboose 0579 team continued the roof work that was done by volunteers in sessions A and B of this year. They peeled the canvas from the roof and re-coated it with Indocryl and finished installing the cupola windows. The volunteers also mounted the brake reservoir; installed the brake cylinder and mounting plate; built and installed running boards; mounted corner steps and side letterboards; built side window frames; and installed grab irons, brakes levers, and brake lever pivot brackets. They also installed bearing castings on the bolsters, and temporary trucks so that the caboose can be moved along the RIP track. During the 2002 work sessions, the team plans to finish the brakes, build caboose trucks, and install couplers . . . and maybe even paint and letter!

Also during session C, Flat Car 6708 volunteers removed a few deck boards in order to insert bolts in the frame.



Looking north in the Chama yard, work session C, August 8, 2001. The restoration of drop bottom gondola 727 is almost complete. (Photo by George Swain.)

They installed the rails under the side sills, the cut levers and other small parts, and then re-installed the deck boards. They also replaced one worn brake safety chain. The car painting crew applied a second coat of linseed oil to the

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C&TS Dispatch

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The C&TS Dispatch is published four times each year by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., 6005 Osuna Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., is a New Mexico nonprofit corporation.

The Friends is the official museum support group for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a 64-mile-long operating railroad and museum of railroad history and technology between Antonito, Colorado, and Chama, New Mexico. The railroad is owned by Colorado and New Mexico and is operated by the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation. As the museum support group, the Friends is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the railroad. The Friends is an Affiliate Member of ARM (Association of Railway Museums) and a Member of TRAIN (Tourist Railway Association).

Family membership in the Friends is \$25.00 per year; outside the USA membership is \$35.00. All contributions are fully tax deductible and will be gratefully accepted. Please write us in Albuquerque or call us at (505) 880-1311 for information about the Friends. The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is both a National and a State Registered Historic Site.

Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad



Denver & Rio Grande Railway—1880 to 1886
 Denver & Rio Grande Railroad—1886 to 1921
 Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad—1921 to 1970
 Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad—1970 to 2001
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



With this year's preservation program and operating season now completed and a winter season of planning and shop work underway, the thoughts of the Friends and the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation (RGRPC) Boards of Directors turn to an issue that has been with the railroad for some time.

The past operating season achieved increased patronage, record revenues, a return to reliable operation, and even produced a small operating "profit." There was much to be pleased about. Though small, the fact of an operating profit supports our belief that the railroad has a chance of becoming self-supporting on an operating basis.

But the need for capital investment is another matter. Through the efforts of the Friends and the Railroad Commission, state and Federal funding of over \$3 million has either been spent or is committed to future programs. This might seem like a large amount, but it is a relatively modest capital budget for a 64-mile mountain railroad, especially one that hasn't gotten much investment for over 40 years. Moreover, those government funds tend to be designated for specific programs and cannot be used flexibly.

The RGRPC has been forced to fix many things out of its own resources. The cost of fixing steam engines has exceeded available state funds by several hundred thousand dollars, the passenger cars are in deplorable condition, diesel 19 needed major expenditures on auxiliary generators and traction motors, the phone system in Chama needed replacement, the Chama water tank needed a new well, and parts, tools and materials inventories have needed to be replenished. These many things have added up to major expenditures. Much has been accomplished, but much more is needed to get the railroad into a "normalized" condition.

The net result is that RGRPC ended the season with much less cash in the bank than planned and needed to arrange loans to meet expenses through the start of next season. This is not unprecedented—during the Kyle Railways, Inc. years, it was common for the railroad to borrow money to make it through the winter, paying off the loan once the season was underway.

However, Kyle was a successful business that possessed a bank borrowing capacity that the Friends and RGRPC lack. RGRPC has been able to borrow the needed funds only through the extraordinary generosity of some members who agreed to guarantee a portion of the funds. The total to be borrowed will exceed \$350,000.

While this kind of borrowing to fund winter shop activities has been routine in the past, it is the kind of financial drain that over the past 40 years has prevented the railroad from fully arresting its downward spiral even in relatively good years.

So while the folks in Chama work hard to get as much done as they can with available funds, the Friends and RGRPC will be developing a strategy to change the pattern of winter funding. My view is that we should raise \$300,000 to \$500,000 as a fund to be borrowed from as necessary for winter work and then repaid during the operating season. As RGRPC is able to increase its net revenues to provide funding for the winter work program, this fund could be converted into an endowment such that it would provide financial support for the railroad for years to come.

—Terri Shaw 🐾

BUTLER NEW CHIEF MECHANICAL OFFICER

Steven Butler is the new Chief Mechanical Officer of the railroad. General Manager Dan Ranger announced his appointment effective December 10. Butler has served as General Manager and Chief Mechanical Officer at the Kettle Moraine Railway in North Lake, Wisconsin since 1994. He previously worked as an engineer, fireman, and machinist at the Ohio Central Railroad, the Roaring Camp & Big Trees Railroad in California, and the California State Railroad Museum Foundation. Butler has also served as a consultant to steam locomotive operators in the United States and Canada, inspecting, evaluating, and repairing steam locomotives.

Before assuming his new position, Butler worked with former acting CMO Bob Wright in effecting a transition to an aggressive winter shop program, focusing mainly on boiler inspections mandated by the Federal Railroad Administration. "Bob has been an invaluable asset to the property during the past year and a half. His knowledge and commitment to this railroad was desperately needed during this critical period," Ranger stated. Wright has returned to his home in Dayton, Nevada, where he lived before coming out of retirement when the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad took over the operation of the railroad in 2000.

ELECTION PROCEDURES

In accordance with our bylaws, in this issue of the C&TS Dispatch we are publishing a description of our Board of Directors election procedures. Article Six of the bylaws provides that our members shall elect directors.

Nominations for election to the board are made by the nominating committee or by petition. The five (5) member nominating committee is appointed by the board, and its duty is to nominate qualified candidates for as many seats as are vacant. Additional candidates may be nominated by petition. A petition for nomination shall contain the name of the nominee, the nominee's consent to serve, the seconding signatures of three (3) voting members, brief biographical information about the nominee, and the nominee's statement of candidacy.

Interested candidates should contact James Herron, vice president (801-485-7212, herron@bioiris.pharm.utah.edu) to express an interest in serving on the board. All nominations by petition must be received in our Albuquerque office by Friday, March 15, 2002. Elections shall take place by written ballots that will be mailed by Tuesday, May 7, 2002. To be counted, ballots must be received by our Albuquerque office by Thursday, June 6, 2002 (15 days before the annual meeting in Chama on Friday, June 21, 2002).

At its October 2001 meeting, the Board of Directors amended the bylaws to provide for the making of election rules and procedures. The board adopted a rule providing that the ballot for election of directors shall distinguish the slate of individuals nominated by the nominating committee from individuals nominated by petition.

More Than 56,000 Passengers Carried in 2001

The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad has completed the second season of operating the railroad through its subsidiary Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation (RGRPC). "We carried 56,044 riders this year," said General Manager Dan

Ranger. "By any measure, 2001 was an improvement over 2000—more riders, more revenue, fewer equipment failures, and only one derailment." In 1999 the railroad had 12 derailments and 5 in 2000. "Revenue was up 23 percent, reflecting the success of premium services like our Parlour Cars and Moonlight Trains."

RGRPC President Warren Smalley reinforced Ranger's assessment. "Dan and his employees have made major strides in returning the C&TS to top shape. And the financial support of the railroad's owners, the States of Colorado and New Mexico, has been essential in that effort. The repairs and capital improvements underway make it possible to foresee a day when the railroad is again self-sufficient."

RGRPC Treasurer Dick Cowles said that ridership and revenue figures were in line with predictions. "This year's budget was based on 55,000 riders, and revenue growth in the 20–25 percent range. For the second year in a row we've reached our goals. We are especially happy we did so in spite of a slowdown after the tragic events of September 11. . . ." The railroad's 2001 ticket revenue of \$2.35 million is exceeded only by revenues of \$2.4 million reported in 1998, when the railroad carried 70,000 riders.

Director of Marketing Kim Flowers reported that "over 3,600 people traveled in our new Parlour Cars, and 434 people rode a Moonlight Train and enjoyed dinner at Osier Station. And we operated 29 caboose charters and 4 special trains. In a year when tourism was down 10–15 percent all over the Southwest even before the terrorists attacks, we are delighted to have done so well."

The railroad's employees are prepared for a busy winter. In Chama, state funds will be used to bring four of the railroad's steam locomotives in compliance with Federal Railroad Administration regulations. A crew in Antonito will make major improvements to the railroad's passenger cars. Major track work will end before Christmas but begin again in the spring, funded by an Economic Development Administration grant.



Sharon McGee (l), Tom Casper, and Joyce Rumschlag use scrapers to remove old paint from the section men's car in the Chama yard during work session D. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



Pat Yarborough (l), Rita Puckett, Susan Dick, Sandy Bigsby, and John Esty paint the oil house, office of the Chief Mechanical Officer, in Chama during session C. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



Caroline Tower wire brushes the under carriage of cook car 053 in preparation for painting. Chama, session C. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)

August, continued from page 1

entire car to protect it over the winter. Railroad personnel will do some minor running gear work on the car and then move it to Chama. It will be ready for painting and lettering during the spring work sessions this coming year.

In Chama . . .

The Boxcar/Coach team during session C completed the conversion of boxcar 3605 from its coach 209 configuration back to its original 1924-1925 boxcar configuration. The volunteers installed new roof platforms, side doors, and various hardware, and the painting crew painted the car. All that remains to be done next year is lettering and wheel, brake, and air system work. In both C and D sessions the team began conversion work on coach 200, which was constructed in 1971 from boxcar 3339. Following removal of all interior portions, including the siding and floor and removal of the exterior siding, inspection of coach 200's frame showed major sill and above floor frame wood rot and damage. The roof and all supporting structures were thus removed. The team fabricated and installed two new outside sills, both oak end sills, and a new shiplap deck. All upper framing parts were remade and along with nearly all wood needed, the metal roof, bolts, and appliances were stored for use next year.

During session C, the Car Lettering team applied historically correct lettering to rotary snowplow OY, flanger OJ, and wheel and tie car 06092. During session D, they lettered refrigerator car 163 (long reefer) and applied a herald to the night watchman's house.

During sessions C and D, the Car Painting crew finished painting two cars, long reefer 163 and boxcar 3605, that had been primed during A and B sessions this year. They also primed and applied one coat of boxcar red latex to boxcar coaches 208, 212, and 214. They scraped, linseed

Bob Gotthelf (l) and George Swain attach a stencil to rotary snowplow OY. Dick Caldwell assists. Chama, session C. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



oiled, and applied one coat of primer and one coat of boxcar red to a bunk car. The volunteers also scraped and linseed oiled coach 504 (Sublette) in Antonito.

Following up on the documentation work done by the sessions A and B teams, the Cook Car 053 crew in session C removed the clerestory windows and screens and replaced the glass in seven of them. They removed and stripped the hardware on eight of the windows and added new glazing and glass-stops. During session D, volunteers painted the interior, reinstalled and caulked the windows, replaced the hardware, and re-oiled the stove. They hoped the car would be watertight before winter, but many roof leaks will need to be repaired in future sessions before this can be guaranteed.

Drop Bottom Gondola volunteers continued the work from sessions A and B on car 727. During session C, they installed the side boards and iron straps and installed the bolts to tie the side boards permanently to the car. They installed the ends, as well as shoulder blocks, end boards, and the corner support straps and B-end hardware. They also rebuilt and installed 7 of the 12 drop bottom doors. During D session, the volunteers constructed and installed the remaining five doors and added the final hardware. The car restoration is complete except for painting and lettering. The crew also began disassembling drop bottom gondola 791, which will be a 2002 rebuild project.

The Food Preparation team prepared over 800 lunches to feed the hungry workers of both sessions. They also made sure that coffee was brewing, sodas/teas/juices were kept on ice, and the snacks were there for all to enjoy.

The Refrigerator Car 55 (short reefer) team members worked on this ongoing project during session C. They straightened the car body and re-tightened the truss rods. Volunteers installed the brake shoes and some of the brake rods, levers, and supports. They installed coupler knuckles as well as the brake pipe, angle cocks, and branch pipe to the triple valve. ➔



Chuck Halaska (kneeling) and Les Clark check the inventory in bolt and nail car 3231. Chama, session D. (Photo by Art Nichols.)



It's noon and here they come—lunch is served! Today's sandwich is turkey and cream cheese with bacon bits and sprouts. Chama, session D. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



Peter Gillham (l) and Peter Christie, both from Hampshire, UK, work on drop bottom gondola 791 in the Chama yard, session D. (Photo by Terri Shaw.)



Drop bottom gondola 791 in the Chama yard before the volunteers begin disassembling it in session D. The car will be a 2002 restoration project. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



Volunteers painting the oil house. The short reefer, car 55, jacked up and placed on cribbing to take out the warp in the whole car. Chama, session C. (Photo by George Swain.)



New gates, posts, and headers in the Chama stock pens, session C. (Photo by Art Nichols.) Below, Jim Baker paints the trim while Bill Wolverson uses a roller to paint the ceiling of the Cumbres section house during session D. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



The Stock Pens volunteers continued work on this ongoing project. They built and hung three new gates and installed several new posts during session C. During session D, the team built three new gates and installed two of them, placed three new headers, and repaired a post and header. They also installed eight new fence posts.

The Structural Painting crew took on an abundance of tasks in sessions C and D, including weed removal and survey of the car body at the log bunkhouse site (initially used for storage by the section crew); weed removal and painting of the coal bin at the log bunkhouse site; hand scraping and repainting of the fire shed north of the coal tippie and the oil house; painting of the tin "fire" shed south of the water tank; weed removal and painting of the outhouse north of the log bunkhouse; the log bunkhouse itself; the night watchman's house; and the scale house. The crew found evidence of signage in several of the locations and hope to have these re-lettered during future work sessions.

During session C, volunteers began the new Telegraphphone Booths project. The team documented conditions at all eight telegraphphone booth sites. During session D, the Coxo booth was cleaned of debris, brush was cleared away from the booth, eave trim was replaced and painted, and a wood panel was placed in the window opening to keep out rain and snow. The Cresco booth was cleaned of debris, corner trim boards were replaced and painted, and a length of green mineral roofing was installed at the peak of the roof. A new roof was installed at the Mud Tunnel booth and at the Los Pinos East booth. The team is hoping to slow the rate of deterioration of these booths until more comprehensive repair and restoration can be done in the future.

The Tool Car crew not only distributed the usual tools and materials during both sessions, but also transferred the inventory of nails, bolts, and screws from car 04548 to car

Mary Cardin (left, holding clipboard) on the first morning of session D at Chama asks for a show of hands for all "first timers" at a work session. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



On the final day of session C at Chama, Bob Tully inspects boxcar 3339 (former coach 200) with side sills removed. (Photo by George Swain.)



John Manion (l) and Richard McLean prepare an oak end sill for boxcar 3339 in the Chama yard, session D. (Photo by Terri Shaw.) Below, Walt Sommer (l) and Dick Seelye work on the table saw while Ron Schmitt uses the miter box and saw in the Cumbres section house during session C. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)



3231; inventoried our supply of lumber, paint, bolts, nuts, and washers; and placed all the bolts in bins in order of diameter, length, and type.

The Yard and Train Hosts team was busy, as in past work sessions, greeting visitors and passengers and explaining the history and operation of the railroad.

The Administration and Registration, Chroniclers, Exhibit Planning and Design, and Machine Shop teams carried out their tasks, which were essential to the success of both work sessions.

At Cumbres . . .

The Cumbres Section House volunteers were busy during both C and D sessions. They textured all new drywalls and ceilings; filled and repaired wall, ceiling, and floor damage, as well as continued baseboard and trim installation throughout the entire building; laid new tile floor covering in the bathroom and machine room; refinished the bunk-room floor; repainted and restored two wood burning stoves and stove pipes; installed facade around one chimney; and scraped, washed, and repainted the entire interior of the building. Several of the crew members went to Sublette during D session and caulked cracks in the roof covering with roof cement and replaced shingles that had blown off the roof of the main building.

The team leaders and site leader contributed to this report.

Passengers wait for departure in Parlour Car Joseph C. "Joe" Vigil (car 511) from Chama on August 8, 2001, session C. (Photo by George Swain.)



FRIENDS RECEIVE TRAIN AWARD

The Tourist Railway Association (TRAIN) has given its most prestigious award to the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corp. for their actions in preserving the operation of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad from abandonment.

The award is the Crook-Freeman-O'Brien Award in honor of outstanding leaders in the history of the Association. It is given to recognize an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the tourist railroad industry. The award was made on November 10, 2001 at the closing

banquet of the 2001 joint meeting of TRAIN and the Association of Railway Museums in Salisbury, North Carolina. Present to receive it were Terri Shaw, President and Executive Director of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Warren Smalley, President of the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, both of Albuquerque, and Richard Cowles, Treasurer of the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation from Santa Fe.

George Crook was a member of TRAIN during the formative years of the Organization, serving as secretary

and helping to write the organization's bylaws. The award was originally named the "George Crook Award."

Sam Freeman was chairman of the TRAIN insurance committee. His dedicated efforts brought about the insurance program that serves the Association's member organizations. When Sam passed away, the TRAIN board renamed the award the Crook-Freeman Award.

Tom O'Brien was a TRAIN member and Board member for many years. His name was added to the award following his untimely death in 1999.



Volunteers work on the sign at Los Pinos—Bob Ross (l), Jim Gross, and John Mitchell (session B, 2001). (Photo by Keith Lemons, space was not available to include this photo in the fall issue—the editor.)



Flat car 6708 at the end of session C in the Antonito yard. (Photo by Tim Smith.)



Short caboose 0579 at the end of session C in the Antonito yard. (Photo by Tim Smith.)

VOLUNTEER ROSTER—AUGUST 2001 WORK SESSIONS

Work Sessions C and D.
Please notify the Albuquerque office of any errors or omissions.

team leader
* 5 years this year as a volunteer
** 10 years this year as a volunteer

ANTONITO

Caboose 0579
Tom Casper C
Kevin Corwin C
#Bill Kepner C
John Kimball C
Robert Mundis C
Dan Osetek C
Clyde R. Putman C
Jon Wallace C
Jim Willis C

Flat Car 6708
Thomas Garland III C
Robert E. Lucas C
Robert Meckley C
#Arthur Randall C
Albert Ruh C

CHAMA

Site Leader
Don Metzler C D

Administration & Registration
#Myrna E. Dross D
#Terri Shaw** C D

Boxcar/Coach Conversion
Terence Boardman* C D
Roger Briggs C D
Tim Bristow* C D
Richard Dunn, Jr. D
David Fencil C
Rod Fishburn D
James Graham* C
Jim Graham C
Allan Kirkpatrick D
John Manion D
Richard McLean C D
James Robichaux C
Daniel Thode C
Jackie Thode C
Mike Thode* C
#Bob Tully C D
Mike Wissler C D

Car Lettering
#Richard Caldwell** C
Robert Gotthelf C
Charles Hunter D
Jim Poston D
George Swain C

Car Painting
Robert Akers C
Steve Albin C
#John Blake C D
Tom Casper D
Bill Feldman C
Jack Hahn C
Mike Mahoney D
George Mattson C
Sharon McGee D
David Ploor C
Brian Rhoads C
Kenneth Rhoads C
Joyce Rumschlag D
Caroline Tower C

Chroniclers
Curtis Menefee D
Benjamin Rogers C D
#Terri Shaw** C D
Linda Smith C
Tim Smith C
Charles Stewart* C
Don Stewart* C

Cook Car 053
John Berges D
Kenneth Earle C
#Laura Evans C D

Drop Bottom Gondola
#Roy Blizzard** C D
Peter Christie D
Art Evans C D
Peter Gillham D
Scott Hardy D
Tony Kasson C D
Kenneth Madison C
Jim McGee D
Robert Mundis D
Jim Paules D
Bill Pratt C
Kevin Robertson C
Andy Ross C
Ron Ross C
Kathy Stewart C
Tom Stewart C
Greg Vigil C

Exhibit Planning & Design
Frank Martindell C
Richard Ross C
#Terri Shaw** C D

Food Preparation
Patricia Boardman* C D
#Mary Cardin C D
Nan Clark C D
Ellen Fishburn D
William Fishburn D
Nancy Gordon C
Judy Gotthelf C
Edna Reed C D
Mona Tully C D

Machine Shop
#John Smelser C D

Refrigerator Car 55
Charles Bigsby C
Matt Jameson C
Jay Samuels C
#Randy Worwag C
Steven Worwag C

Stock Pens
Goef Gordon C
Eric Reed C D
Mark Reed C D
Theodore Smith D
#Fred Springer** C D
Joe Thompson D

Structural Painting
Sandy Bigsby C
Doug Christensen C
Richard Dick C
Susan Dick C
Jon Esty C
Margrethe Feldman C
Jamie Herron D
#Jim Herron C D
Lynne Herron D
Jacquelyn Hirsch C
Roland Hirsch C
Edgar Mouritsen C
Elizabeth Mouritsen C
Gene Puckett C
Rita Puckett C
Patricia Yarborough C

Telegraphphone Booths
Con W. Slaviero D
Peter Barkmann D
Estelle Bergstrom C D
#Robert Bergstrom C D

Tool Car
Lewis H. Clark C D
Allen E. Dross D
Charles Halaska D
#Harold Jensen C D
#Joanne Jensen C D
Don Metzler C D
Robert Seller D

Yard & Train Hosts
Howard Bunté C D
Jim Grisenti D
Hilton Hagan C
Chuck Heroneme D
Robert Hey C D
Jim McKeel C
Chuck Templin D
John Wilke C
Spencer Wilson D
Frank Yockey C D

CUMBRES

Cumbres Section House
Jim Baker D
George Davies D
John DeRosa C
Tom Donovan C D
Gerald Gorzoch C
#Robert Ground C D
Alfred Judd** C
Dick Rasmussen D
Paul Rasmussen D
Don Richter* C
Judy Rosenberger C
Robert Rosenberger* C
Ron Schmitt C
Richard Seelye C D
Walt Sommer C
Bill Strathearn D
David Swindells D
Richard Tower C
William Wolverton D

PRESERVATION PERSPECTIVE: NO. 22

San Juan: Myth and Conundrum

by Keith E. Hayes, AIA

Before the rails reached Durango in 1881, the Denver and Rio Grande had instituted passenger service along the San Juan Extension. By the turn of the last century, the premier train had come to be known as the Colorado and New Mexico Express. At that time, passengers rode in coaches with open platforms. By the time of the Great Depression, the traveling public had come to expect more, and accordingly, in 1937, the D&RGW modified a number of cars with new seats, closed vestibules, steam heat, electric lights and new safety appliances. This equipment was assigned to the premier trains of the narrow gauge: the Shavano and the San Juan.

The Shavano provided daily passenger service between Salida and Gunnison, Colorado, while the San Juan traveled between Alamosa and Durango. Although Shavano service was discontinued on the eve of World War II, due to declining patronage, the San Juan continued daily operation until the winter of 1951. Robert Richardson contends that the end of the San Juan marked the beginning of the end of the narrow gauge. In his view this daily train kept the line clear year round in all but the worst winter storms.

The consist of the San Juan made for a picture-perfect train. Most always, a 470-class locomotive was assigned, although 480-class locomotives occasionally made a guest appearance. A railway post office car followed the locomotive, and behind this was an open-platform baggage car: the baggage cars never received enclosed vestibules, but did have a closet on one platform which contained a generator for electric power for the train. Behind the baggage car was a coach, seating 24, and the last car was the parlor car. Three parlor cars were regularly used on the San Juan: the Alamosa, the Durango and the Chama.



Otto Perry captured locomotive 476 and train 115, the westbound San Juan near Los Pinos on the east side of Cumbres Pass, on June 18, 1945. A classic view of a classic train. (Photo courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection.)

This last car featured swivel lounge seating, a dining table and galley. Occasionally, additional mail or less-than-car-load freight would justify inclusion of a baggage car ahead of the mail car or behind, and often a second coach would appear. There is no typical train, and photographs often show more than a four-car consist.

Although the San Juan had a brief life—14 years—it has become legendary among passenger trains. Stories abound of steak dinners in the parlor car, prepared by the ever-popular steward. This man was also good to the locals, as he reportedly dished up ice cream cones to children along the route, according to railroader John Norwood. Socialite and author Lucius Beebe wrote of the glorious scenery disappearing beyond the rear platform, no doubt made all the more dramatic by the tumbler of Scotch in his right hand. Although all of this is true, time has made the train mythical, perhaps bigger than it ever was.

During the 1950s vacationers discovered the last remnant of narrow gauge passenger service: The Silverton Mixed. Over the next 15 years, this train became so popular that the Rio

Grande had to both add sections and construct new passenger equipment for it. All passenger cars were assigned to Durango, and any maintenance equipment with passenger trucks was cannibalized for use on the new cars. This chain of events created a conundrum for the Cumbres and Toltec.

By 1970, the Silverton Train was so popular, that the D&RGW was reluctant to sell any passenger equipment to the C&TS. Only several mail cars that had been used in maintenance-of-way service were sold to the states, and all of these had lost their passenger trucks in the mid 1960s to new passenger cars built for The Silverton. Thus it was difficult for the Cumbres and Toltec to provide passenger service with true passenger cars until replica passenger cars were constructed in the early 1980s.

There is much discussion about the recreation of a San Juan train consist. How close can we get? That will be the focus of the next Preservation Perspective.

Keith is a long-time volunteer and a licensed architect residing in Denver, Colorado. 🐾



Osier taken from the parlor car of the westbound San Juan on May 16, 1950. The water tank is to the left and is painted a dark red. (Is the pumphouse the building next to the tank? Can someone identify it?) The Osier station is at the center of the photo, painted in the buff and brown standard D&RGW paint scheme. The Royal Gorge Route herald is on the west side of the building. Behind the station is the section house, in the same paint scheme as the station. To the right a work car sits on the house track. Note the shine of the rails reflecting the clouds in the sky! (Photo by Emery B. Smith, collection of Wayne D. Hills.)

WANTED!

Recipes for the Friends' Cookbook.

All proceeds to benefit the Friends.

Contact:

Nan Clark

1107 Eagle Creek Dr.

Floresville, TX 78114

email: cinerail@aol.com



As Seen From the San Juan

Friends' member Wayne D. Hills of Wilmington, Massachusetts, has donated to the Friends photographs of scenes along the D&RGW between Osier and Chama in 1947 and 1950. These photographs will be presented in this and future issues of the C&TS Dispatch. —the editor



View from the parlor car of the westbound San Juan after the train has pulled out of the Cumbres station on May 16, 1950, and showing the west elevation of the station. Note the string of high-side gondolas. (Photo by Donald G. Hills, collection of Wayne D. Hills.)



2002 Schedule of Friends' Events

Volunteer Work Sessions

May 13-17, Session A

May 20-24, Session B

June 17-21, Session C

June 24-28, Session D

August 5-9, Session E

August 12-16, Session F

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Volunteers talk with the engineer and fireman of 487 as they wait for departure from Chama on August 9, 2001, session C. Note the two gondolas of ballast between 487 and helper 497. Returning from Cumbres in the early afternoon, 497 with the gondolas distributed ballast at several track locations. (Photo by George Swain.)



**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec
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