

## Winter Shop Work 2000-2001

*It might seem a little late to report on winter shop work in August but much of the work on locomotives and passenger cars in Antonito and Chama was still ongoing after the deadline for the Spring 2001 issue. In this report, Mark Yates describes the inspections, repairs, and maintenance on the locomotives, for the most part in Chama, and John Craft covers the work in Antonito on the passenger cars. Photographs are by Tom Cardin except where noted.*

### Locomotives

Over the winter, the shop crews in Antonito and Chama were busy preparing passenger cars and locomotives for the 2001 season. After the 2000 season, the passenger cars in Chama were shuttled to Antonito and the locomotives remained in Chama, where work began immediately on preparing locomotives 463, 484, 489, and 497 for their flue extension inspections (487 did not need a flue extension). The locomotives were ready by the 15<sup>th</sup> of November, and the inspections by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) occurred on November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Included in these inspections were the parts of the new CFR 49 Part 230 Steam Locomotive Inspection and Maintenance Standards that had to be completed by January 18, 2001. (The new steam rules are being phased in over a two-year period and the last opportunity for flue extensions will be prior to January 18, 2002.) The four locomotives passed with minor notations for repairs. Locomotives 463 and 489 required the most work: 463 required an additional water glass under the



*In the Chama enginehouse, the shop crew puts on a new tire for engine 463. The tire is heated with a "ring of fire" so it will expand enough to fit on the driver, with only a little coaxing from 15-lb sledge hammers. Left to right: Steve Montano, Toby Vigil, Orlando Uliberri, and Bob Wright. (March 2001.)*

new Part 230 regulations, and 489 had several fire-cracked flues at the rear sheet that required changing.

### 463

Thirty tubes needed replacing on the rear sheet. A new center grate support was cast and installed. The crew also replaced the spring rigging pins and bushings because some of them gave us problems last season and, in general, they were worn out since being rebuilt seven years ago. New side rod bushings were made and installed, and the air pump bracket, which gave us fits last season, was repaired. We mounted the independent

valve (which controls the locomotive's brakes) on the right cab wall, and modified the throttle lever with a dogleg to accommodate this change. New boards replaced the worn-out deck flooring in the cab.

The crew replaced the sharp-flanged tires on the front drivers with two new tires. This was a first for the Chama shop crew—until this year shrinking on tires was usually jobbed out to the Durango & Silverton. In order to cut the inside of the tires to shrink fit onto the driver centers, the Niles vertical turret lathe that the railroad obtained a

## C&TS Dispatch

*Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad*  
William Lock, Founder

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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



**A**t the Friends' Annual Meeting this year, I presented financial and statistical information about the growth of the Friends and the impact of assuming the responsibilities for operating the railroad. I prepared a series of charts to accompany my presentation, which we include in this issue.

### Membership and Volunteer Hours

In the year of incorporation, the Friends had 110 members. The chart on page 3 shows you how our membership has grown. At mid year 2001, we had about 1775 members. The volunteer hours donated in our work sessions have grown even more spectacularly. The number of members who come to donate their time at the railroad each summer has grown steadily. In addition, the length of each work session has grown from the two days of the early sessions to the five days of our present program. As our capabilities have grown, we have also increased the number of sessions per year. The cumulative effect of all this is phenomenal! And, this year we anticipate a record 350+ participants in six sessions, and the number of hours donated looks like it will be 20% higher than last year.

These charts illustrate another important point. In 1988, volunteers made up 75% of our membership. Over the next three years, as membership grew, it supported volunteer workers totaling 20–25% of the total membership. Since 1992, the number of members volunteering has been 14–16% of the total membership. From time to time, I hear people say they are reluctant to become members because they can't come to the work sessions. But we need their support, very much. The achievements of our organization are as much a product of those who have given us monetary contributions and their good wishes as those who come to the railroad to participate in the preservation and interpretation programs.

You might say that for every new volunteer who comes to a work session we need seven new members to support him or her. This year our goal is to exceed 2000 members. We'd like your help in getting there. A membership application is on our web site and membership forms are available from our office. If you sponsor our 2001<sup>st</sup> member, we'd like to thank you with a complimentary trip in the parlour car (the new 2001<sup>st</sup> member will get one, too.)

### The Financial Perspective

Some important steps have also occurred along the path of managing our financial resources. Robin Kumler, an accountant, brought our record keeping and reporting into conformity with standard accounting procedures when she

served as treasurer from 1994 to 1999. And she donated her time to keep our books and be responsible for preparation of budgets and reports to the board of directors. It was a big job and her help was invaluable. But as the Friends' activities increased over the years, the need for timely information and the difficulties of record keeping from a distance (Robin lives in California) told us it was time for a change.

In the summer of 1999, Robin and newly elected treasurer, Dick Cowles, decided on a course of action: to hire a contract bookkeeper and start keeping Friends' records in a commercially available software program that would make information more readily accessible to the president and other directors for planning and reporting and to our accounting firm, Reynolds & Hix, for the preparation of tax returns and audited financial statements. Dick worked with our bookkeeper, Katharina Root, to establish a program tailored to our needs and to make sure all the information was properly entered into the system. When Dick resigned earlier this year to concentrate his volunteer efforts as treasurer for Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation (RGRPC), the operating arm of the Friends, he left a well-functioning system to his successor as treasurer, Dennis Sterosky. We are grateful to Dick for this superb contribution to the Friends.

This preparation helped us when in the fall of 1999 the future operation of the railroad was placed in doubt by the

*Continued on page 5*

### Friends' Membership and Volunteer Commitments\*

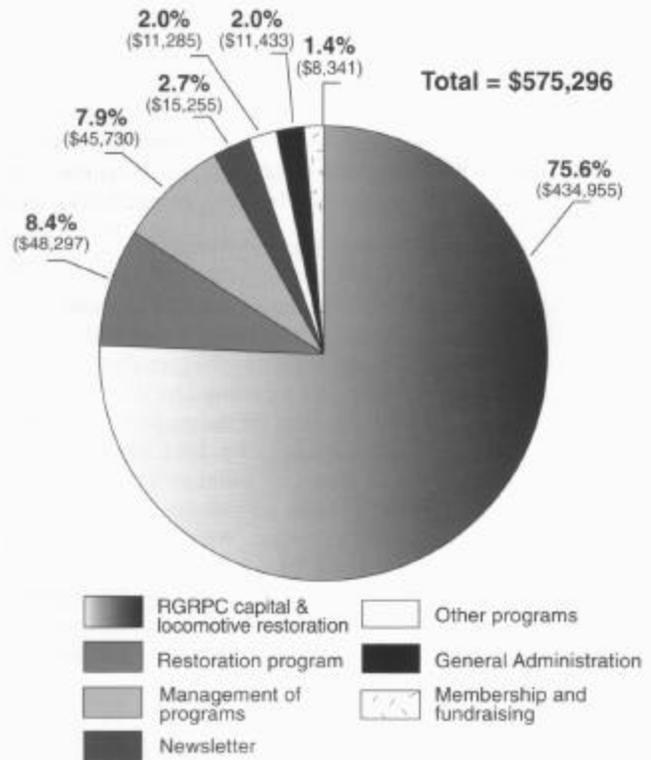
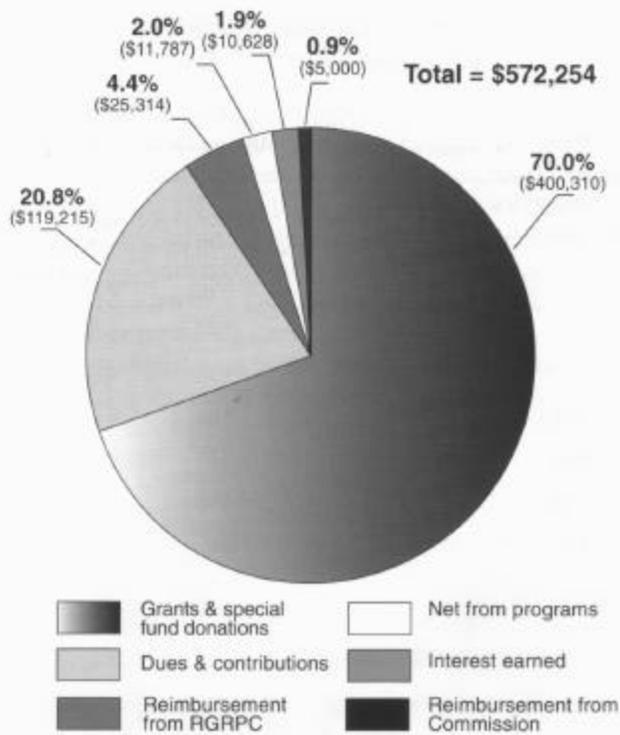
Year	Total Members	Work Sessions	Individual Volunteers	Hours Donated
1988	110	1	75	1,200
1989	300	1	75	1,200
1990	442	2	116	3,360
1991	763	2	149	4,536
1992	889	2	135	4,008
1993	1001	2	144	5,088
1994	1146	2	119	4,584
1995	1125	2	166	5,088
1996	1263	3	189	7,356
1997	1386	3	195	9,792
1998	1421	4	215	10,692
1999	1498	5	252	12,540
2000	1698	6	261	15,756
2001	**1775	6	350+	18,352+

\* Does not include time donated at Colorado Springs or decent hours outside of work sessions

\*\* Estimate only to mid year

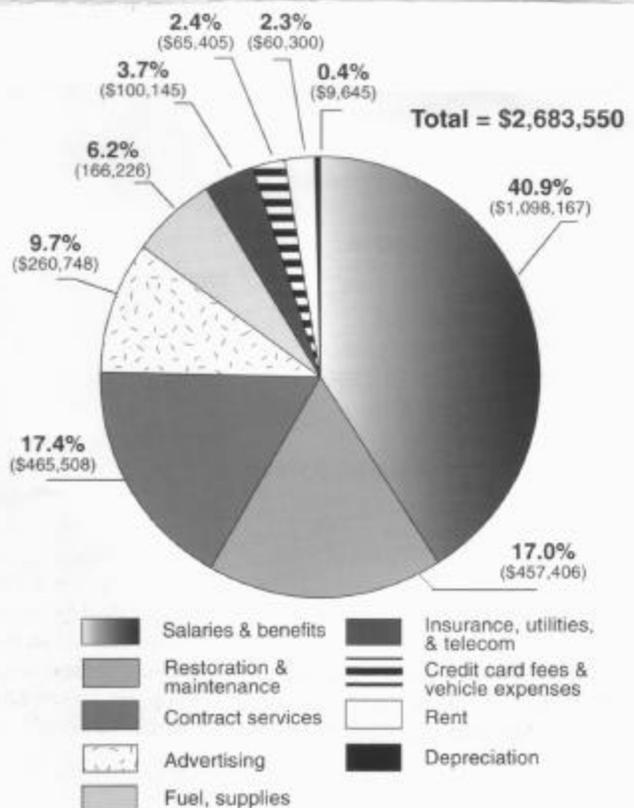
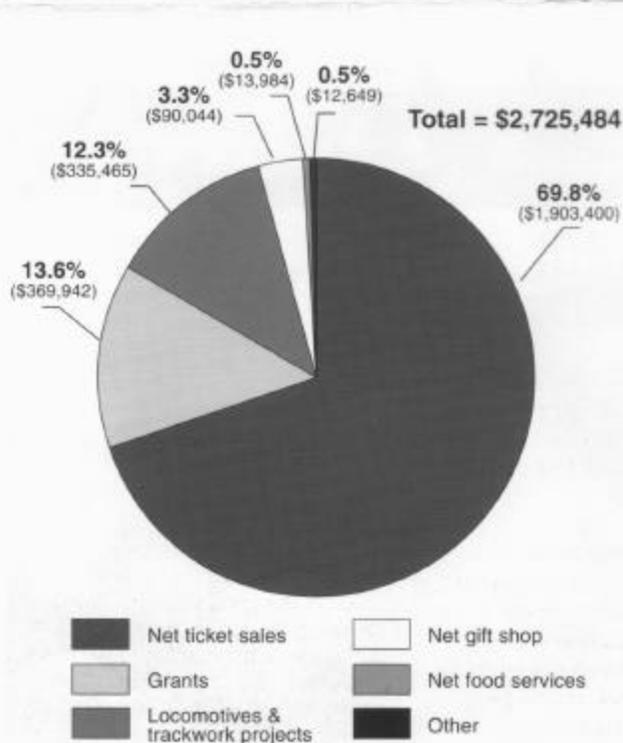
### Three-Year Comparison of Friends' Financials The Impact of RGRPC

	2000	1999	1998
<b>Support &amp; Revenue</b>			
Contributions, grants, etc. for Friends activities	\$162,267	\$ 99,226	\$120,363
Interest	\$ 10,628	\$ 5,842	\$ 3,873
Net from programs	\$ 11,787	\$ 21,248	\$ 18,343
	<u>\$184,682</u>	<u>\$126,316</u>	<u>\$142,579</u>
Funds raised for locomotive restoration (Commission in 1999; RGRPC in 2000)	\$387,572	\$ 69,114	-----
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue:</b>	<u>\$572,254</u>	<u>\$195,430</u>	<u>\$142,579</u>
<b>Expense</b>			
Friends' programs	\$ 74,837	\$ 77,805	\$ 72,320
Management	\$ 57,163	\$ 17,669	\$ 21,441
Membership & fundraising	\$ 8,341	\$ 12,827	\$ 8,480
	<u>\$140,341</u>	<u>\$108,301</u>	<u>\$102,241</u>
Grants for locomotive restoration (Commission 1999; RGRPC 2000) and other RGRPC needs	\$434,955	\$ 22,302	-----
<b>Total Expense:</b>	<u>\$575,296</u>	<u>\$130,603</u>	<u>\$ 102,241</u>
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	\$ (3,042)	\$ 64,827	\$ 40,338



**Friends' Support and Revenue Operating Year 2000**

**Friends' Expenses Operating Year 2000**



**RGRPC Support and Revenue Operating Year 2000**

**RGRPC Expenses Operating Year 2000**

### *President's Column continued*

Railroad Commission's termination of the designated operator's lease for breach of contract.

Responding to this crisis changed the Friends' financial landscape. We began raising funds to support the winter locomotive program, and by the end of the year the fund was nearly \$70,000. It was a significant increase in the amount of funds in a usual budget. In 2000, we continued to raise funds for locomotive rehabilitation, but another change was in store. To ensure the continued operation of the railroad we responded to the dearth of applicants to become the next contract operator of the railroad by making our own proposal to the commission. Our fundraising increased to raise operating capital for the RGRPC. The financial impact of these events can be seen in the chart comparing Friends revenue and expenses between 1998 and 2000.

The twin aspects of our programs at the railroad—preservation and operations—are summarized in the pie charts for the Friends and the RGRPC on page 4.

From the Friends Support and Revenue chart, you can see that grants and special fund donations to assist the RGRPC amounted to 70% of the Friends' 2000 budget. Contributions from our members for Friends' programs was 20.8% of the overall budget, but about 69% of the inflows not destined for RGRPC. Reimbursement received from RGRPC for purchases of 2000 season advertising, superheater tubes, and materials to refurbish passenger coaches was 4.4% of the total budget but 15% of the inflows not destined for RGRPC.

The Friends Expenses chart for 2000 shows that the grants to RGRPC were about 75% of the total budget. About \$48,000 was spent in our restoration/interpretation program. This is about 8% of the total budget, but it is about 34% of the outflows not directed to RGRPC; and it is about 65% of the amount spent on all programs.

In 2000, RGRPC managed \$2.7 million. Ticket sales represented about 70% of this. Other revenue sources

were grants from the Friends, payments for locomotive and track improvement work (done under contract with the commission and funded by state appropriations and the US Economic Development Agency, respectively), and the food service (independent contractor) and gift shop (in-house) operations.

The top expense of the railroad was salaries and benefits. The railroad employed 75 people during the season and 15 for the winter shop work. The total payroll for the railroad exceeded \$1 million for the first time ever. The RGRPC Expenses chart shows the other operating expenses. Some categories were grouped to make some of the pie segments easier to see. If you would like to see the complete RGRPC 2000 financials, the audited statements are posted on the Internet at <[www.cumbrestoltec.com](http://www.cumbrestoltec.com)> in the corporate information section.

The Friends audited 2000 financial statements are also posted on the internet at our home Web site <[www.cumbrestoltec.org](http://www.cumbrestoltec.org)>.

—Terri Shaw

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## FRIENDS RECEIVE GRANTS

The Friends have recently received three grants. The Narrow Gauge Trust Fund's grant of \$100,000 is in support of the Friends' affiliated organization, the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, the operator of the railroad. The grant is to be used in part for locomotive rehabilitation and in part to improve communication equipment and back-shop support through the purchase of tools, materials, and spare parts. The Narrow Gauge Trust Fund is a small group of private individuals who are all modelers. They have formed an association to pool resources and seek out opportunities to support preservation of narrow gauge artifacts, models, and art.

The Amherst Railway Society, sponsor of the annual train show in Springfield, Massachusetts, has awarded the

Friends \$2,000 toward the repair of locomotive 487's side connecting rods. This grant is supplemented with funds from the Flowers Fund. Member Cal Smith was instrumental in obtaining this award.

The Friends have also received a \$2,000 "small grant" from the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division for the publication of a Spanish version of our new walking tour brochure (see page 11 of the Winter 2000 issue). These small grants are awarded to projects meant to "benefit or involve underserved rural New Mexico areas or communities of 50,000 or less."

## Johnson Named New Executive Director

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission has selected Robert Johnson of Alamosa, Colorado, as the commission's new Executive Director. He replaces Leo Schmitz, who resigned in March after 24 years with the commission to become the chief financial officer for Wright Valley Oil of Alamosa. Johnson is a graduate of the University of Florida with a degree in Business Administration and a master's degree in Logistics Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology. He is retired from the Air Force and has been the Chairman of the University of New Mexico Department of Aerospace Studies and Commander of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps. His last position was Associate Director of the University of New Mexico Parking and Transportation Department.

## C&TS Featured in *Trains* Magazine

The May 2001 *Trains* magazine featured the C&TS on the cover and in a 12-page article. The story covers the period from the events following the commission's termination of its contract with the previous operator in the fall of 1999 to the selection of the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, a Friends' affiliated company, as contract operator, and the 2000 season.

## Winter Shop Work *continued*

couple of years ago from the Roaring Camp & Big Trees Railroad was moved into the enginehouse and made operational. On the second cut of the first tire, the old DC main-drive motor gave out and an AC replacement motor finished the tires of both 463 and 484.

### 484

Since the derailment of locomotive 484 on April 25, 1999, little work had been done on it until this past winter. During the winter of 1999, a preliminary inspection was performed to determine the amount of damage caused by the derailling and rerailling of the locomotive. This past winter the crew removed the spring rigging and dropped out the drivers. An outside firm fabricated narrow-gauge shop trucks from the old Alamosa standard-gauge ones that sat rusting over by the coal pile. These were installed to support the locomotive. The pony truck was removed for inspection, and several cracks previously unknown were detected—they will be welded. Parts of the spring rigging, upon removal,



*Engine 463 in the Chama enginehouse. The drivers have been removed and the smoke box door has been removed for access to the flues. (February 2001.)*

were also found to be defective and will be repaired. The rest of the spring rigging will receive new pins and bushings. The drivers have already received new tires, the old ones had sharp flanges and were not thick enough to be turned. The valves and pistons are being reworked along with the valve cages, which were removed to have new ones made by a machine shop in Farmington, New Mexico. New valve and piston rings will also be made, and the jacket and lagging will be removed to allow a thorough inspection of the boiler barrel.

### 487

While on a work train from Antonito to Lava Tank on November 2, 2000, locomotive 487 developed a loose crank pin in the lead set of drivers. It returned to Antonito, and the shop crew dropped out the driver set and sent it to the Grand Canyon Railway for outfitting with new crank pins. To avoid interrupting the work on the parlour cars being done in the

Antonito shop, most of the crew from Chama, under the leadership of Donald "Ducky" Martinez, commuted to Antonito to perform an exterior inspection of the 487's boiler. This involved removing the jacket and lagging and removing the staybolt caps around the firebox and installing new gaskets (these inspections were required by Part 230 of the FRA regulations). The Chama crew reinstalled the first set of drivers and the side rods.



*The new narrow-gauge shop trucks fabricated from standard-gauge ones. The shop trucks allow the engine to be moved while the lead and trailing trucks are being refurbished. (March 2001.)*

### 488

Upon inspection last year, we found that the front and rear flue sheets were warped and also thin in areas. The bottom two-thirds of the front and the top half of the rear sheets were cut out. New sheets required that a knuckle be bent in them around the outside edges in order to reattach them. The sheets were sent to the Grand Canyon Railway; they have a bending machine to do this work. When the sheets were returned, the many tube and flue holes were laid out and cut, and the rear sheet was welded in place. The front sheet will be riveted to the boiler barrel and welded at the seam. The spring rigging was removed and the crew will install new pins and bushings. The valves, valve cages, and pistons will also be reworked or renewed and new valve and piston rings will be installed. To comply with the new Part 230 Form 4, Boiler Specification Card, the locomotive needs a new, thicker, dome cap.

### 489

As mentioned above, locomotive 489 needed some new flues because of fire cracks. After those tubes were removed, radial cracks were detected on the sheet itself. The sheet containing the lower bundle of small tubes was thin in some areas (the upper half of the sheet had been replaced in 1990). It was decided to replace the lower half of the sheet rather than to weld up the cracks or to risk further cracking, even though previous hydrostatic tests of the boiler did not indicate any leaks. Rather than spending an inordinate amount of time descaling and safe-ending the existing tubes, the crew replaced the 98 tubes.

497

Locomotive 497 received a flue extension. Last season, much work was done on 497, and it did not come out of the shop until late August 2000. This past winter it did receive an annual inspection, and new rear grates were cast and installed.

19

The crew replaced the front traction motors twice on diesel 19. Since its repairs, 19 has been seeing service on work trains for the EDA track project. Also for the track project, the Antonito crew retrofitted one of the standard-gauge flat cars in the Antonito yard with trucks from D&RGW flat car 6613 to haul a track hoe and rail.

### Passenger Cars

When the Friends assumed operation of the railroad, the passenger cars were in sad shape. During the six work sessions in 2000, members pitched in and restored the siding on three coaches, prepped and painted fourteen coaches, repaired seats and windows, and installed new floors in two cars. At the end of the season, 11 of the 12 coaches based in Chama were hauled to Cumbres by a doubleheader, where Marvin Casias was waiting with 487 to move them to Antonito for the winter. The next week Marvin and his winter crew (Sam Ruybal, a 20+ year veteran of the railroad, and Ronnie Lopez, a relative newcomer) quickly got to work.

Starting with the Chama-based coaches, each car was jacked up and the underframes and trucks inspected. Repairs were made as needed, and the car was lubricated. Once the car was back on its wheels interior repairs to paneling, window latches, and upholstery were done, and the car was prepped for painting, if needed. One car got a new floor as well. Restrooms got lots of attention, with all-new toilets and repairs to leaky water supply lines. By the end of February, eight cars were complete. The crew then turned its attention to cars 510 and 511, which have become parlour cars. The interiors were stripped, and each car got a restroom, beadboard paneling and moulding, and carpet. (These will be truly cosmopolitan cars: the mouldings and carpet come from my home town of Atlanta, and the restroom sinks are coming from England.) The crew has installed new concession counters and iceboxes for cars 512 and 502. We're already planning next winter's work: new interiors for several cars, more new floors, generators for the parlour cars, and additional restrooms.

### The Shop Crews

The vast amount of work that was piled on our plate this winter would not have been accomplished without the dedication of the shop crews in Antonito and Chama. Those who worked in Antonito all winter were Marvin Casias (Road Foreman of Engines and Shop Foreman), Ronnie Lopez, and Sammy Ruybal. In mid March, Carlos Llamas and Angelo Lopez joined the Antonito crew. The Chama crew included Bob Wright (Chief Mechanical Officer), Ed Beard (Machinist, Shop Foreman), Tommy Garcia, Donald Martinez, Steve Montano, Michael Rivas, Nathan Rivas, Ricky Rivas, Jose Torrez, Juan Torrez, Robert Trigg, Orlando Ulibarri, Toby Vigil, and Mark Yates.



Members of the Antonito shop crew in parlour car Clarence Quinlan. Left to right: Marvin Casias, Sammy Ruybal, Ronnie Lopez, Teresa Martinez, and Angelo Lopez. (May 2001. Photo by John Craft.)



Engine 497 leaves the enginehouse in August 2000 after extensive work on it was completed by the shop crew. (August 2000.)

Mark Yates is Purchasing Agent for the C&TS and Chama Shop Clerk. John Craft is a Director of the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation.

## 2001 HISTORIC PRESERVATION: The May Pre-Season Volunteer Work Sessions

by Alta Berkstresser, Art Randall, Don Richter, Jerry Sahnd, Jack Salisbury, and Marshall Smith. Photographs by Tom Cardin.

Twenty-two volunteers came to Chama from May 7 to 18 to work on a variety of projects in preparation for the 2001 season. Virtually all of the volunteers worked as one team during the first week to start a huge cleanup of the entire yard area. They used a lot of muscle power, a bucket loader, and an 8-ton, 4x4 forklift to move the heavier items. Two semi-flatbed trucks from Russom Trucking of Chama and a 45-ton hydra crane from Adcon Crane service of Alamosa were pressed into service to move components of the turntable (acquired in 1997 from Elitch Gardens in Denver) to the field south and east of the enginehouse. Volunteers also relocated the 20-ton gantry crane that has been tying up flat car 6649 for many years. They removed trash and moved potentially usable or historically interesting items below the enginehouse to the area where the sheep dip facility was located. Team members grouped, as much as possible, like things together on pallets. They organized ties and rails and stacked them in the north end of the yard. They tidied up between the boiler room and the oil house (the area the Friends use for lunch breaks), cleaned up behind the night watchman's house, pulled and trimmed unwanted trees about the yard, and moved two large piles of construction trash piled against the tracks in the south yard, thus eliminating a potential fire danger to all the cars in the yard.

During the second week, the structural carpentry repair team worked on several reroofing and repair projects. They moved, repaired, decked, and roofed the coal shed; reroofed the carbody bunkhouse, outhouse, and fire shed; and, after these projects in the north end of the yard, moved south to repair and reroof the scale house. Volunteers also made minor repairs: reglazing windows in the depot and log bunkhouse, repairing the roof on the night watchman's house, and refurbishing the railing on the pedestrian walkway to Terrace Avenue.

The car shop conversion team's specific project in week two was to convert the space in the north end of the Chama yard warehouse, opposite the sandhouse, to a functional shop space. The team cleaned the interior, hung new lights, built and installed saw tables and work benches, organized shop tools, and inventoried and stacked all wood on shelves.

During week two, the running gear team removed a bolster from a 20-ton truck in order to begin building up a suitable truck with which to begin a swapping process; that is, otherwise grounded cars with good wheel sets would be donors for roadable cars. For the same purpose, the team started the removal of a cheek plate from steel-frame flat car 6649.

The landscaping team's project in week two was to clean up the accumulation of dead plants and trash from the beds near the Chama depot and to add plants (some donated from local flower beds). They also prepared pots around the depot. The

team members acted as good-will ambassadors and shared information about the railroad and the Friends with visitors to the railyard. ✎



*The Chama railyard, looking north, all cleaned up. The turntable components have been moved to the field south and east of the enginehouse, and only a small pile of trash remains to be hauled away.*



*Above, Art Randall uses a high-lift fork to move car and engine parts in the yard cleanup. Parts were sorted and stacked for future use. At left, wheel sets are now stored on track in the field below the enginehouse.*

## VOLUNTEER ROSTER—MAY 2001 WORK SESSIONS

The 22 volunteers listed below attended one or both of the May work sessions. I would like to commend the entire group and express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved for a job very well done. The work performed by our dedicated volunteers again illustrates their dedication to accomplish a task far and beyond the "call for duty." The clean-up project was not a very glamorous job, but the knowledge that their efforts would make the property a better experience for the public was displayed in the pride of volunteers. Although the individuals are recognized as working on a specific project, it is important to note that all team members participated in the clean-up effort to some degree and made themselves available as required by our daily needs. The quality and quantity of work accomplished in this two-week period is amazing. Many thanks to everyone.

—Jerry Sahnd

- (1) May 7–11
- (2) May 14–18

**Chama Site Leader**  
Jerry Sahnd (1,2)

**Car Shop Conversion**  
Roger Briggs (1,2)  
Steve Fowler (1)  
Jerry Sahnd, Team Leader (1,2)  
Marshall Smith (1,2)

**Coffee & Snack**  
Linda Irvin (1,2)  
Mary Jane Smith (1,2)  
Mona Tully (1)

**Landscaping**  
Dorothy Baker (2)  
Alta Berkstresser, Team Leader (2)  
Linda Irvin (2)  
Mary Jane Smith (2)

**Running Gear**  
Tim Bristow (1,2)  
Charlie Irvin (1,2)  
Art Randall, Team Leader (1,2)

**Structural Carpentry Repair**  
George Berkstresser (2)  
Rich Casford (2)  
Dan Sheerin (2)  
Marshall Smith, Team Leader (2)

**Rail Yard Cleanup**  
George Berkstresser (2)  
John Campbell (1)  
Rich Casford (2)  
Peter DuLong (1)  
Steve Fowler (1)  
Jim Phelps (1,2)  
Don Richter (2)  
Jack Salisbury, Team Leader (1,2)  
Marshall Smith (1)  
Mike Thode (2)  
Bob Tully (1)



*The landscaping team along the pedestrian walkway to Terrace Avenue. Left to right: Dorothy Baker, Alta Berkstresser, Linda Irving, and Mary Jane Smith.*

## THE FRIENDS' LIBRARY

The Friends' Library/Archive/Museum is established as a repository of railroad-related materials and publications. These materials and publications specialize in the general railroad history of New Mexico and Colorado with a major emphasis on the narrow gauge railroads of the two states and narrow gauge elsewhere. Materials and publications include documents, letters, photographs, magazines, books, and other media on those topics.

The library is envisioned as a reference and research institution. This means the collections are open to interested members of the Friends. Non-members might be allowed access under specific and approved conditions. The librarian will respond to written requests for information and, in some cases, will provide copies made from materials in the collection, depending on the condition of the item. The librarian will open the collection to researchers upon request and at the convenience of the librarian and the requesting parties.

The Library is not a circulating library. No materials will be loaned.

*Approved by the Board of Directors, March 24, 2001.*

### Departures

We sadly note the passing of five of our members whom we came to know at work sessions. We will miss seeing them at the railroad but their presence has made a lasting impression. The C&TS is a better place for their efforts. We thank them and honor their contributions:

Martha Mackey participated in 1989–1990 and 1992–2000

Kip Merker participated in 1996–1999

Fred Rice participated in 1991–1997 and 1999

Hawley Seely participated in 1988–1990

Wayne Thurston participated in 1992–1994 and 1996–1997

## A Cumbres Tunnel?

by Roger Breeding and Noreen Breeding

*In this fictional story, Roger and Noreen look back to the early years of the twentieth century and speculate about a tunnel to bypass Cumbres Pass. They suggest that if the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad had considered such a project a 10- to 12-mile tunnel would have been necessary. Other railroads, among them the Boston & Maine, Great Northern, and the Milwaukee Road, had built tunnels several miles long by 1915. But only the Simplon Tunnel (1906) in Europe would have matched the length needed for a Cumbres tunnel. Bypassing Cumbres Pass with a tunnel was considered technically feasible by many people, in fact, in 1920 proponents of the Moffat Tunnel developed a tri-tunnel plan that also included tunnels through Monarch Pass and Cumbres Pass. The plan would have been financed with an 18.5 million dollar bond issue, but was rejected by Colorado voters. Roger and Noreen invite the reader to use his or her imagination about a Cumbres tunnel, just as they have done in this story—the editor.*

### A Discovery?

The early afternoon heat was shimmering in the air as we trudged down the narrow rocky animal trail. It was late June 1990 and we were out exploring the back country east of Pinorealosa Ridge with our dog, Scamp. During our lunch break atop the ridge we had watched the C&TS eastbound train wind its way slowly around the curves below the Los Pinos water tank. Now we were headed in the other direction, down Sheep Creek where we had earlier seen a herd of elk. The trail was out in the open with no shade, so when it descended to cross the creek we stopped to let the dog splash around, get a drink, and cool her feet. We followed the creek and were almost down to the flood plain of the Conejos River when Scamp veered off to the south following her nose. She was soon out of sight, but, when we called, reappeared in front of a rock fall overgrown with shrubs, then darted back into the bushes. As she seemed intent on something in there, we decided to investigate.

We scrambled up a short, steep slope of relatively fresh rock to where we had last seen Scamp. Suddenly her head poked out around a boulder to our left. As we got closer, we could see that she was standing in the entrance to a cave. Reasoning that the dog running in and out would have frightened off any wild animals, we ventured slowly farther in as our eyes adjusted to the darkness. The cave started looking more like a tunnel with walls that had obviously been drilled and blasted out. Old mine holes can be found all over the mountains in southern Colorado, but the rock here was obviously sedimentary—an unlikely place to look for gold or silver. Further, the roof extended well above our heads—quite high for a mine tunnel. From what we could see in the semi-darkness, the tunnel roof appeared to have collapsed about 20 yards from the entrance, completely closing the passageway. Scamp was nosing around what looked like a pack rat nest off in a corner. As we took her collar and started back toward the light, I tripped over something loose

on the floor. I picked it up and it turned out to be a piece of wood about 4 x 1/2 x 24 inches. When we got back out into the light, we could read, stenciled on one side in faded black paint, "From: Dupont Co., Wilmington, Del., To: D&RG RR, Alamosa, Colo."

It was getting late, time to head back to our campsite. Without a flashlight, it would be hopeless to try to find the rest of the box. So, I stuck the piece of wood in my pack and we slid back down to the creek and headed back uphill. Later that evening, Noreen and I consulted the maps of the area and discussed our find. The tunnel was in a sedimentary conglomerate, which appeared to be mostly made up of extrusive volcanic rocks. This pretty much rules out an exploratory mine tunnel. The other possibility was that the tunnel represented the start of a railroad tunnel. Certainly, if one were going to dig a tunnel under Cumbres Pass, the mouth of Sheep Creek would be a likely place to start. Was this the aborted start of a railroad tunnel to avoid the winter snows and steep grades of Cumbres Pass? Why was there no record of the start of such a tunnel? Was there a start of the other end of this tunnel on the west side of Cumbres Pass? We had quite a few hours of research ahead of us to find the answers. After investigation, here is what we surmise had occurred.

### The Surveys

Sometime around 1917, when the railroad was relatively prosperous, surveys were commissioned to locate the best route for a tunnel bypassing Cumbres Pass and the 4% grade out of Chama. Construction on the best alternative was begun, then abandoned when the financial situation turned sour. The surveys most likely showed that there are three suitable locations for a tunnel mouth on the east side of the mountains and two on the west. On the east, the first is in the Los Pinos River Valley just downstream from Toltec Gorge; the second is on Sheep Creek, just upstream from its junction with the Conejos River; and the third is on La Manga Creek just upstream from its junction with Elk Creek at the foot of La Manga Pass. On the west, the Wolf Creek Valley and the upper basin of the Chama River are the only feasible possibilities. Out of the six possible combinations of the two westside tunnel mouths and the three eastside tunnel mouths, only four tunnels are worthy of consideration.

Tunnel Location	Length (miles)	Grade (%)
Wolf Creek to Los Pinos River	11.1	0.1 W
Wolf Creek to Sheep Creek	12.4	0.2 W
Wolf Creek to La Manga Creek	11.2	0.2 E
Upper Rio Chama to La Manga Creek	9.8	0.3 W

The letter following the grade indicates whether it is uphill eastbound or westbound.

### The West Entrances

*Wolf Creek:* The Wolf Creek tunnel entrance would be in the valley below Cresco siding at an elevation of about 8700 feet. It would be south of Wolf Creek where the creek's

grade decreases dramatically as it leaves the gorge below Hamilton's Point. The approach to this location would involve about 4.2 miles of new grade and track from milepost (MP) 340.5 on the existing line. The grade for this section would be the standard main-line maximum of 2.2%. The current bridge location could be maintained and the grade to it from the west could be kept around 2% by means of a large cut and fill that would eliminate the steep climb to Lobato siding and the level stretch at the siding. The track would head east from the (track) east end of the bridge along the north side of the steep little canyon containing Wolf Creek until the flats near the tunnel mouth where this canyon has disappeared.

*Upper Rio Chama:* The other tunnel mouth on the west side would be in the upper Chama River Valley at an elevation of about 8950 feet. Extensive rock work and at least two crossings of the Chama River in the first two miles and above the confluence with Wolf Creek would be required to keep the grade reasonable. A new bridge over Wolf Creek would be required as well. This approach would require about 8.5 miles of new grade from MP 340.5, but the average grade could be kept down to 1.7%.

#### The East Entrances

*Los Pinos River:* On the east side, the tunnel mouth on the Los Pinos River would be at an elevation of about 8650 feet. The Los Pinos River Valley east from Toltec Gorge offers a low grade route toward Antonito. But the flats on either side of the river are not far above the river level and flooding would have been a serious concern. The canyon is too narrow and the sides are too steep to locate the railroad grade away from and above the river for several miles downstream from the tunnel mouth. Also, a tunnel about 400 feet long would be required through a rib that juts out from the south side of the valley in order to avoid a very sharp bend in the river canyon, with a bridge on each side of the tunnel. A completely new roadbed 22.6 miles long from Antonito to the tunnel entrance would be required. The grade from Antonito to the tunnel mouth could be kept below 1% except for the last three miles, where it would be about 1.2%.

*Sheep Creek:* The approach to the Sheep Creek location (at about 8600 feet) appears more suitable for a railroad. The Conejos valley is much wider than the Los Pinos Valley and it would be relatively easy to get the railroad grade 20 or 30 feet above the river level. The grade could be kept below 1%, and the approach from Antonito, at 17.6 miles, is five miles shorter than the approach to the Los Pinos location.

*La Manga Creek:* The La Manga Creek location for the east tunnel mouth is another 7 miles up the Conejos River Canyon from Sheep Creek, but only 200 feet higher. The grade from Antonito to La Manga Creek could also be kept below 1%. As for Sheep Creek, a completely new grade would be required from Antonito.

#### The Tunnel Routes

The nature of the approaches on each side are just as important as the length of the tunnels. The four routes may be summarized as follows (the total length is from Antonito to Chama in miles):

Location	Tunnel Length	West App.	East App.	Total Length	Grade (%)
Wolf Creek to Los Pinos River	11.1	7.9	22.6	41.6	2.3 E
Wolf Creek to Sheep Creek	12.4	7.9	17.6	37.9	2.3 E
Wolf Creek to La Manga Creek	11.2	7.9	24.2	43.3	2.3 E
Upper Rio Chama to La Manga Creek	9.8	12.1	24.2	46.1	1.8 E
Current Line				64.2	4.2 E
Airline Distance				33.7	

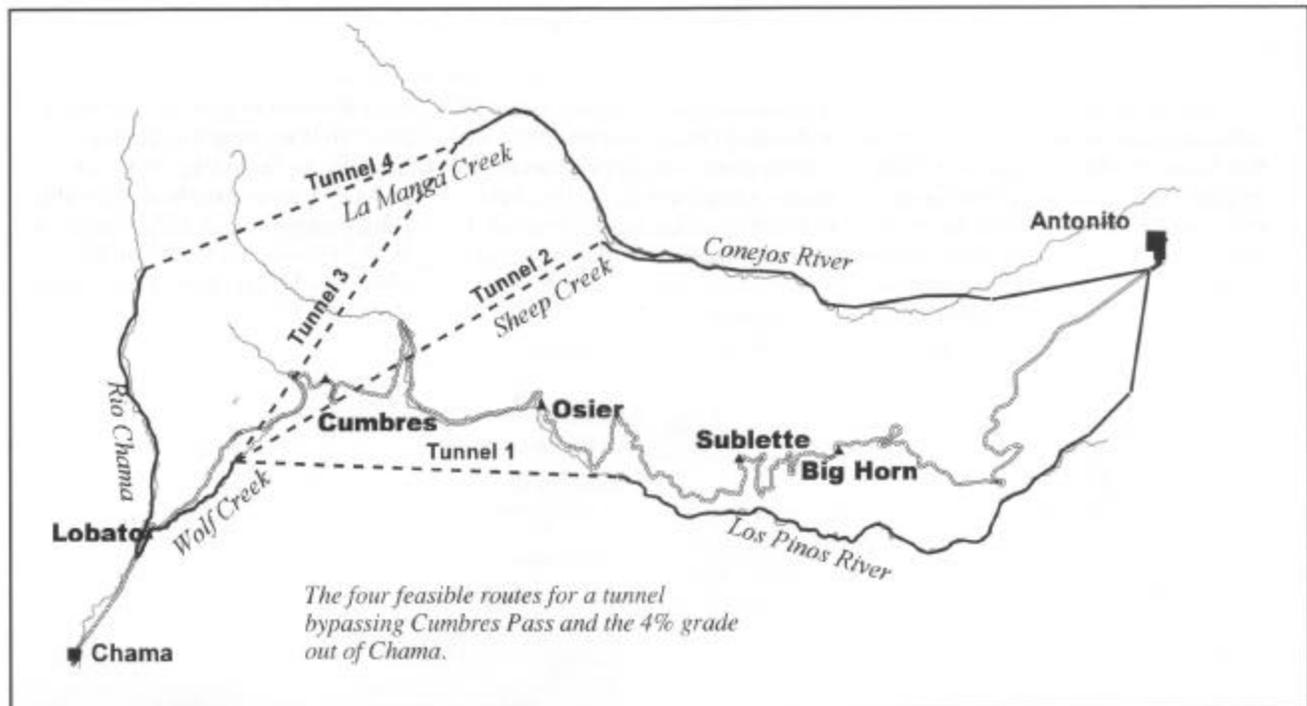
The tunnel from Wolf Creek to Sheep Creek, although the longest of the four tunnels, provides the shortest overall route from Antonito to Chama—only four miles longer than the airline distance between the two towns. The tunnel from Wolf Creek to the Los Pinos River is over a mile shorter, but the overall route is almost four miles longer and the location in the Los Pinos River Valley would be subject to flooding. The tunnel from the Upper Rio Chama to La Manga Creek is the shortest of the four, but the total route is the longest overall and expensive rock work would be required in the Chama River Canyon around the mouth of Wolf Creek. Whether the shorter tunnel would compensate for the cost of the extensive rock work in the Chama River Canyon would require a detailed location survey.

In summary, a tunnel route is possible that would take 18 to 26 miles off the existing route, reduce the ruling grade to the main-line standard or less, and reduce the highest point on the line by 1000 to 1300 feet, depending on which option was selected. The cost, of course, is a tunnel 10 to 12 miles long—a substantial undertaking in 1917!

#### Snow and Drainage

The topography of the Cumbres Pass area is responsible for the "long tunnel or no tunnel at all" outcome. The gentle slope on the east side of Cumbres Pass means that a fairly lengthy tunnel would be required to save the last few hundred feet of climb to the pass. A route with a tunnel of almost any length desired could be laid out, but to eliminate the 4% grade on the west side would require a new route that winds about north or south of Wolf Creek. And the shorter the tunnel the higher it had to be, and the worse the snow problems would be. The four tunnel options above should eliminate almost all the snow problems.





Water drainage is a problem in any tunnel. Many tunnels deliberately have an apex placed somewhere near the midpoint of the tunnel to enhance water drainage. This would probably be required in the four tunnels as the grades through the tunnels are less than that desirable for drainage.

### Electrification

Of course, the steeper the grade through the tunnel, the harder the steam locomotive must work and the worse the exhaust problems. For the tunnels of the lengths discussed here, electrification would need to be considered. The longest tunnel in the US in 1917 was the Boston & Maine's Hoosac Tunnel (4.75 miles long, completed in 1875), and it had been electrified as soon as it became feasible. There were three tunnels about two miles long in the US at this time: two had been electrified when built (Great Northern, Stevens Pass, 2.5 miles, 1900; Milwaukee Road, Snoqualmie Pass, 2.25 miles, 1915), but Northern Pacific's Stampede Pass tunnel (1.8 miles, 1888) was never electrified even though the smoke problems were severe. The three tunnels in Europe of a length comparable to those needed to avoid Cumbres Pass (Mont Cenis, 8 miles, 1871; Gotthard, 9.0 miles, 1882; and Simplon, 12.0 miles, 1906) were all electrified.

The D&RG actually had considered several electrification schemes. Engineering and cost studies were done in 1907 and 1908 for the electrification of four sections to the railroad. The first was for the 54 miles from Walsenburg to Pueblo where the heavy coal traffic from the Raton coal fields to the CF&I steel mill was overwhelming the small locomotives of the day on the original roller-coaster alignment. The second location was a steep, curvy branch serving the Bingham copper mine southwest of Salt Lake

City. The most ambitious proposal was to electrify the 80 miles from Glenwood Springs to Tennessee Pass, including the 21 miles of 3% grade from Minturn to the summit. The fourth location was the 50 miles over Soldier Summit in Utah, which had 7 miles of 4% grade. Nothing came of these electrification proposals although they would have solved a lot of operational headaches.

### Feasible But Extravagant

Any one of the four Cumbres Pass tunnels, if built, would still be the longest in North America. The Denver & Salt Lake's Moffat Tunnel finished in 1926 is only 6.2 miles long. The two long Great Northern tunnels, the second Stevens Pass Tunnel (completed in 1929) and the Flathead Tunnel (completed in 1970) are both 8.0 miles long. And the Mt. MacDonald Tunnel on the Canadian Pacific (completed in 1989) is 9.1 miles long.

When work started on the Hoosac Tunnel in 1851, neither pneumatic drills nor dynamite were available, and nitroglycerin, freshly made in a nearby chemical plant, was needed to shatter the hard rock. By 1917, the technology for a 10- to 12-mile tunnel was clearly available. And, for a busy main line on a profitable railroad it might have been justified. For a marginally profitable branch line on a financially troubled regional railroad, a tunnel of this length was clearly extravagant. And the Rio Grande was not a railroad that embarked on extravagant projects. In fact, bankruptcy was just around the corner in 1918, due to George Gould's siphoning off all of the D&RG's resources to build the Western Pacific.

A railroad project of the magnitude of a 10- to 12-mile tunnel under Cumbres Pass would have been built to standard gauge. The conversion of the Denver to Pueblo

section to 3-rail in 1881—the same year the narrow-gauge track reached Durango and Silverton—was a harbinger of things to come. The standard-gauge Tennessee Pass route to Salt Lake City was completed in 1890, and the Farmington branch had been built standard gauge in 1905. So, even though the line from Villa Grove south to Alamosa was built narrow gauge in 1890, the trend to standard gauge was clear. In 1923, the D&RGW, apparently having given up ever getting a standard-gauge connection to the outside world for the Farmington branch, converted it to narrow gauge.

### The Missing Tunnel Mouth

In any event, a 10- to 12-mile, electrified tunnel under Cumbres Pass was never built. In the 1920s, the Rio Grande did upgrade the line with heavier rail and new and heavier locomotives, but even a longer route on the west side of Cumbres Pass to reduce the grade to 2.2% was not constructed. Perhaps it is just as well none of these tunnel options was built; who would pay now for a scenic ride through a 10- to 12-mile tunnel in the dark?

Returning to the questions posed at the beginning of this article: we could find no sign of any tunnel mouth on the west side of Cumbres Pass. The Wolf Creek location is on private land, but the site where the tunnel mouth would be located is in the open and any workings would be clearly visible. The Upper Rio Chama location is on National Forest land, and we found no trace of a tunnel mouth in the appropriate locations. In fact, when we revisited the site of the tunnel mouth at Sheep Creek a few years ago, we were unable to find it again. And the board from the dynamite box, which we had carefully saved, was nowhere to be found.

Perhaps we had imagined the whole thing! It was awfully hot that day.

Final note: with the closing of the Tennessee Pass line (10,212 ft), Cumbres Pass (10,015 ft) will be the highest point reached by a railroad in North America. All the higher summits have had the rails pulled up, most of them long ago. These summits are:

Rollins Pass (11,680 ft), Hagerman Pass (11,528 ft, original route), Alpine Tunnel (11,524 ft), Fremont Pass (11,318 ft), Marshall Pass (10,858 ft), and Lizard Head Pass (10,250 ft). The highest point reached by a standard-gauge railroad will be La Veta Pass (9,413 ft), and the highest point on a main line will be the Moffat Tunnel (9,239 ft). All these passes, by the way, are in Colorado.

*Roger and Noreen Breeding are long-time volunteers at the summer work sessions. Roger is a director of the Friends and co-chair of the Project Planning Committee.* ♣

## BOOK REVIEW

***Nothing Like It In the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad, 1863-1869***, by Stephen E. Ambrose (Simon & Schuster, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020, \$28.00 U.S., \$41.50 Canada, hardback, maps, photographs, 431 pp.)

In the spring 2000 edition of the C&TS Dispatch, I reviewed the monumental book by David Howard Bain, *Empire Express*, on the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Shortly after the publication of that excellent work, a second book came out on the same subject. This latter work is by the famous American historian Stephen E. Ambrose, who is well known for his works on World War II, the Civil War, and his wonderful book on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

This current study is very readable and covers the subject very well. The book was reviewed by Walter P. Gray III of the California Archives and formerly of the California State Railroad Museum in the December 2000 issue of *Trains* magazine. John Gruber also featured the book in the January 2001 issue of the same journal. Gray praised the work with some exceptions, and Gruber hoped it would serve to encourage the railroad preservation movement as the Lewis and Clark book had brought so much attention to sites along that route across the continent. In short a very good book.

There is one matter, however, in this Ambrose book that should be corrected. This has nothing to do with railroads, then or now. It has to do with the Civil War, another Ambrose specialty. In describing the use of codes by various members of the Big Four, Ambrose (page 292) refers to an incident during the Civil War. He writes that Union General McClellan should have used codes because his, McClellan's, orders fell into Confederate hands prior to the Battle of Antietam in September 1962. In fact, it was just the reverse. A still unknown Southern officer or courier lost Lee's general orders. The copy of those orders was wrapped around some cigars and found by a tobacco-hungry Union trooper. In a very short time those lost orders were delivered to General McClellan in person, and they were not encoded. McClellan had a great advantage over Lee, but he had "the slows" as Lincoln once said, and barely made a draw of the bloody battle. So much for the historic facts of the matter.

—Spencer Wilson ♣

### Election Results

Six hundred and eighty-seven ballots were cast in this year's election for nine directors of the corporation. The following seven directors were reelected to two-year terms (votes for each candidate are also given). Howard Bunté, 660; Geoffrey Gordon, 654; James Herron, 653; Spencer Wilson, 650; William Lock, 646; Arthur Randall, 624; and Jerry Sahn, 619. The two new directors elected for two-year terms were Chris Krahling, 587, and Dennis Sterosky, 534. A tenth candidate, John Pritchard, received 370 votes. The board of directors have elected the following officers of the corporation for 2001-2002: Theresa Shaw, president; James Herron, vice president; Dennis Sterosky, treasurer; and Curt Bianchi, secretary.

## Premium Service Parlour Cars Dedicated in Antonito and Chama

On Friday, May 25, 2001, dedication ceremonies were held in Antonito and Chama for the railroad's new premium service Parlour Cars. The cars have been named for two men instrumental in saving the railroad from abandonment in 1970—Clarence Quinlan of Antonito and Joe Vigil of Chama. Clarence Quinlan served as a Colorado State Representative from 1958 to 1977, and introduced the legislation in the Colorado Legislature authorizing the purchase of the railroad. He later

served as a member of the Railroad Commission from 1970 until his death in 1987. Joe Vigil played a leading role in the "Colorado-New Mexico Citizen's Committee to Save the Railroad." He later served as General Manager of the railroad and as a founding director of the Friends. He currently serves as a Director of the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, the affiliated organization of the Friends which operates the railroad under contract to the States.



*Shown here in Antonito, left to right, Dan Ranger, Dick Cowles, Warren Smalley, Terri Shaw, Wayne Quinlan, and Lewis Entz.*



*Shown here in Chama are Joe Vigil, his wife, Lollie, and their family. (Photos by John Craft.)*

## LETTERS

### **Greetings from Singapore!**

*The following letter was received by Membership Committee Chair Howard Bunté.*

My wife and I would like to thank you for the kind notes on the membership renewal letters of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. We really appreciate the personal touch. We would also like to express our appreciation to all members and staff for the wonderful effort that has been done, and it is hoped will continue to be done, to save the railroad for future generations. This railroad, perhaps more than any other, represents a very important piece of American history. We feel sure that all members and many non-members alike share our belief that this railroad must continue to operate.

I am British and have been interested in railways, and in particular steam locomotion, since as far back as I can remember. I have been active in one form or another in various preservation societies for more than 30 years in different countries. I am one of the earliest members of a British preservation society with purposes similar to that of the Friends—to preserve the now almost extinct British countryside railway scene in the form of a live museum. I learned to fire and drive a standard gauge steam locomotive for that society when I was 18, as well as how to correctly preserve, maintain, repair, and renovate rolling stock, equipment, and buildings.

My wife and I have been all over Europe, chasing locomotives and visiting far-flung depots and museums. We experienced standard and narrow gauge operations, steam operated mountain (rack and pinion) railways, main-line and preserved railways, and static exhibits. Even today, we often

joke about two lonely souls, standing in the middle of a deserted and open field, mud over our ankles, shivering in below-freezing temperatures and extremely high winds, waiting for hours on end to witness the Flying Scotsman rush past in a matter of seconds. My wife is a Singaporean of Indian origin, and has memories of the glory of steam operated railways.

I first visited the C&TS in the early 1980s after having read a great deal about the Denver and Rio Grande and American railroading in general. The C&TS impressed me very much. I can remember attempting to find out whether there was some form of society that I could join. There were a number of volunteers on hand to explain the railroad but unfortunately the Friends was yet to be born. I revisited the railroad on a number of occasions during the 1980s. In 1995 my wife and I visited America, and the C&TS was on the top of the list of places we just had to see. We spent several days riding and watching and were delighted to hear about the Friends. Since joining the Friends, we have visited the railroad three times. We would dearly love to join a work session, but any vacation that we do manage to arrange is almost always in September or early October. But we will continue to try.

The Friends have made such a great impact upon the realism and quality of this "happy railroad." The C&TS, more than any other railroad, truly brings back an era that so many people over so many years took for granted. We are sure that General Palmer would be very happy to know that there is a group of enthusiastic people out there keeping a little part of his dream alive. If there is anything that we can do for the Friends from such a remote place as Singapore, please do let us know.

*Ross and Farida Davis  
Singapore  
Republic of Singapore*

### **New Address**

Members please note the Friends' new office address:

6005 Osuna Rd. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

The phone number remains

(505) 880-1311.

The new fax number is

(505) 856-7543.

### **e-mail addresses of office personnel:**

terrishaw@cumbrestoltec.org  
judylock@cumbrestoltec.org  
howardbunte@cumbrestoltec.org  
spencerwilson@cumbrestoltec.org

### **Corporate Donations**

This year we've received \$1300 from companies who match our members' donations to the Friends. Won't you look into whether your company will do the same?

Companies that have made matching donations to the Friends are

AMEX  
Boeing  
BP Amoco  
Houghton Mifflin  
IBM  
Kemper Insurance  
Lucent Technologies  
Mobil Oil  
Nabisco  
Telecordia  
Union Pacific



## 2001 Schedule of Friends' Events

August 4, Saturday  
Thirteenth Annual Moonlight Train

August 6-10, Monday-Friday  
Volunteer Work Session C

August 13-17, Monday-Friday  
Volunteer Work Session D

October 21, Sunday  
Planned Closing Day

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## 2002 Schedule of Friends' Events

Volunteer Work Sessions

May 13-17, 2002 - Session A

May 20-24, 2002 - Session B

June 17-21, 2002 - Session C

June 24-28, 2002 - Session D

August 5-9, 2002 - Session E

August 12-16, 2002 - Session F



*Interior of parlor car Joseph C. "Joe" Vigil. The parlor cars have carpeted floors, new woodwork, and movable wicker furniture. Passengers in these first-class cars have their own attendant, and free snacks are provided throughout the journey. (Photo by Tom Cardin.)*



Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec  
Scenic Railroad, Inc.

6005 Osuna Road NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

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