

At 5:45 P.M., August 8, 1973, 484 dropped its fire for what is probably the last time for some time. It brought the regular west-bound train into Chama from Antonito that day. 483 was already under steam and ready to take out the Toltec Thursday Special on the 9th. 484 will be retired, probably until facilities exist to shop the running gear of the locomotives. Old 484 has quite a history behind it and will certainly be missed. 484 pulled the last east-bound San Juan from Durango to Chama and served as helper engine with 488 to help it up the 4-percent grade over Cumbres on a cold January 31st in 1951. In October, 1966, 484 pulled the last D&RGW excursion from Alamosa to Cumbres and return. In August, 1968, 484 participated in the last D&RGW freight operation ever run. Then in 1971, 484 had the honor of pulling the first public C&TS excursion. Last year it helped 483 pull the first C&TS "freight" train up Cumbres. This year, fitted with a large pilot plow, which it still wears, it bucked snow drifts on the point of the first flanger operation on the pass in years.

Even as 484 was pulling its last eastbound train, there was a new engine under steam in the Chama yards. On August 7th, 487 was steamed up and ran from the enginehouse to the ash-pit and back. Not much until one considers that this engine hasn't seen service since late 1967; six long years ago. 487 is nearing completion of its overhaul. It has received new flues and should be entering service soon if not already. It will be equipped with a plow pilot however it might use the tender from 484 as 487's own tender was found to leak badly. 483 is presently making the runs and will do so until 487 takes over its duties. 483 will then be used as spare engine until 488 enters service. The shop forces will start to work on 488 as soon as 487 is operating. 488 was last used in 1966.

Engine 463, which is presently in Chama will need to have its flues removed before the condition of the boiler can be determined. This will probably not occur soon as there are many other things which need to be accomplished first.

Another project underway at Chama is the restoration of ex- San Juan RPO car X-65. Scenic Railways crews under the direction of Doug Cheany, have removed all of the old MW gray paint; and applied a coat of primer gray, and two coats of glossy Pullman green. The Pullman green was matched to original D&RGW colors by the Colorado Railroad Museum. Lettering will be done in gold paint. Due to the fact that the underbody was damaged by vandals, the car is not sound enough to carry passengers; as a result nine restrooms will be installed inside the car and it will be placed in Antonito. It is somewhat of an understatement to say the present facilities there are inadequate.

All of the ex-D&RGW freight cars stored on trackage west of the Chama wye, and owned by the scrapper, have been sold to various parties. Scenic Railways purchased approximately half of the stock cars. Other cars are going to Denver, Silver Plume, Nebraska and to a campground being built at Chama. On July 5th engine 483 brought the first string of the C&TS' "newest" cars into the main yards, producing a scene reminiscent of "the good old days!"

Contrary to what was reported in the last issue, it looks as though the D&RGW will not place 481 in service on the Silverton Branch. 476 was repaired and placed back in service. 481 was removed from the roundhouse and returned to its familiar spot beside the roundhouse.

Meanwhile back on the C&TS, we have this report supplied by NGRRA member Herb Kelsey:

On Saturday, July 21st, 1973, several firsts occurred on the C&TS. For the first time since the railroad has been in service a scheduled run had to be cancelled due to a breakdown. The air compressor on K-36 #483 (formerly mounted on K-37 #492) gave up the ghost that morning and the 10:00 AM departure from Antonito had to be annulled. Quickly the emergency wheels began to turn. Tours were arranged for the passengers by "Swede" Johnson. A fast call went out of Chama for a rescue locomotive and the fire was lit in old 484. Rich Braden, fireman on the 483 caught a bus for Chama and in a couple of hours he left Chama on the 484, with Gary Getman firing, for a near record run over the C&ts. The passengers were told that the train would leave Antonito at about 6:00 PM for all those who did not mind a midnite

arrival in Chama. If they chose not to ride that evening their tickets would be honored on the following day's train.

So now there was nothing to do but wait for the 484. Not on your life! The C&TS shop force, enterprising as always, rushed to Antonito to tend to the ailing 483. It was decided to remove the '83's old pump and replace it with the pump from the display engine 495. A fork lift was borrowed and with that piece of machinery and much elbow grease the pumps were juggled with the '95's ending up on the 483 and '83's ending up in the back of the C&TS's venerable old Ford pickup.

After all the piping and lubricating devices were hooked up came the moment of truth. Would the old pump, which had been idle since 1962, still respond to steam pressure or would the afternoon's work be futile? The steam line was opened and after a few struggling pounds of the air ram and amid cheers from crew and onlookers the old cross compound began to pump air into the reservoirs. Seems it's about the best pump the C&TS owns!

Repairs were completed by 4:30 PM and the 484 arrived about 5:30 PM.

So here we are in Antonito with two good engines. What to do with the second engine? You guessed it. C&TS's first westbound double-header! On the C&TS's first unscheduled night run!

The train departed at 6:00 PM with the 484 and 483 on the point in that order and did they put on a show. The train was doubleheaded until dark, just for effect. At Osier the 484 proceeded westward light after the crew had eaten. After dinner the 483 headed for Chama with the train, providing the approximately 100 good spirited and happy passengers with a dramatic night time spectacle of steam railroading in the Rockies.

484 waited at Cumbres for the train, just in case, and then preceded us down the pass.

The train arrived in Chama at 12:30 AM Sunday morning with its consist of cold tired passengers and not an unhappy word was heard despite the temperature or the hour. It was a trio of firsts that added up to be an experience to be long remembered.

Many thanks to Herb Kelsey for this fine article!

NGRRA volunteers, working in coordination with Scenic Railways, have completed restoration of mileposts from Chama to Sublette, and from Milepost 289 to Antonito. On Saturday August 4th, Bob Smith and Harry Sage numbered posts out of Antonito to Milepost 289. On August 7th, Herb Kelsey, Harry Sage, and Ed Osterwald walked from Milepost 316 to Sublette and lettered all mileposts needing attention. There are a few posts missing and unpainted, it is hoped that within a few weeks they will receive the needed white and black paint.

We want to express our appreciation to Ed Osterwald and Jim Demlow for supplying so much of this information!

We are all grieved to hear of the death of Jim Rupley, the first Telltale editor. Jim was killed Saturday, Aug. 11 in an accident where he worked at the Dept. of Transportation High Speed Ground Test Center in Pueblo, Colorado. It was Jim who was responsible for those fantastic Telltales of last year. He will certainly be missed by us all. He is survived by his wife and two children.

TELEGRAPH SHACKS-Work on the restoration of the various shacks along the line has begun. Often heard are the comments about how delapidated the shacks look. Hopefully this will soon change. The work on the Coxo shack has already been completed. Bob Smith and Carl Osterwald applied new roof and paint to it on the weekend of the 11th. If you would like to help in this project contact Bob Smith, 321 Cornell S.E., Albuquerque, N.M., 1-505-266-3886. Or if you are in Chama there should be materials and instructions on what has been done and what needs to be done in the volunteer shack.

MILEPOSTS- As you have read, the milepost refurbishing project is well along, however much remains to be done. If you would like to help contact Bill Luxford, P.O. Box 549, Bernalillo, N.M. 1-505-867-5363. If you are in Chama there should be a list of what needs to be done to each milepost, in other words replacement, repainting or renumbering. Paint and replacement posts are available in the volunteer shack. Stencils will be there soon.

CAR ATTENDANTS-The feeling is that requesting members to write or call if they plan to work as Car Attendant may be holding some people back who would otherwise be Car Attendants. This should not be the case. The NGRRA will accept all of you who want to work as will Scenic. So far we have had only one time when we had more Car Attendants than cars, but, most of the time the train operates with zero to two NGRRA members on board. If you arrive in Chama and don't know what to do, go to the Chama Station Lodge and ask to see Jim Demlow. He will be glad to help you. Chief car attendants for the month of September are as follows:

All are from Albuquerque, N.M.
 Week of Sept. 1st: Bill Wood, 11205 Prospect N.E., 299-4078
 Week of Sept. 8th: Ernie Robart, 1919 Coal Pl. S.E., 243 7633
 Week of Sept. 15th: Bill Wood, same as above
 Week of Sept. 22nd: Ted & Ester Reed, 7617 Summer Ave. N.E.
 266-6972
 Week of Sept. 29th: Russell Smith, 920 Louisiana Blvd. S.E.
 266-7341

GENERAL MEETING- A general meeting will be held Monday September 17th at the Albuquerque Federal Savings and Loan, 4901 Central Ave. N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hope to see you all there!

LAST TELLTALE- Last Telltale that is for people who have not paid their 1973 dues. Dues are the same as last year. Also PLEASE send in any address changes or corrections.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY by BILL LUXFORD, NGRRA NAT'L EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

August 2, 1973 NGRRA Board Meeting:

7 board members present, 3 proxy votes held and visitors present.

NGRRA members in Chama, New Mexico submitted their petition for a charter. The second chapter in the NGRRA will be known as the Chama Valley Chapter of the NGRRA. Upon election of a Chapter Vice-president and Recording Secretary a Charter will be presented to the group.

Discussion was held on the problems with the present car attendant program (see note elsewhere in this issue) and the lack of present member participation. You members can do better than that!!

Restoration of On-line phone chacks was approved as an NGRRA project under the direction of Bob Smith.

Caboose 0503 repair is awaiting an accurate cost and repair estimate before work begins.

Three additional projects have been suggested for any members interested in taking them on:

1. repair of damaged track in the car shop area below the engine house. Track 3 has a spread rail and is twisted over.
2. A project for Albuquerque members is reassembling and repainting the Association's speeder donated by Ken Pruitt and Dan Pyzel; and construction of a trailer to haul the speeder to and from its storage place.
3. Painting and placement of C&TS heralds on all tanks, stations, section houses, etc. where necessary. Persons interested should contact Ernie Robart because he has the tin and the stencil to do the job.

Deadline for information to be in for the Telltale has been moved up to 5 days after the monthly board meetings which are held on the first Thursday of every month.

Mr. Jim Demlow, Chairman of the Chama Bi-centennial Committee presented Chama's plans which include a park, bridge, and snowmobile path, swimming pool and a Chama Railroad Museum.

The proposal requests that the NGRRA manage the museum. Ken Pruitt was appointed to follow through checking those possibilities from the NGRRA end of the proposal. Those of you with collections, photos, etc. which you have been "packratting" all these years will maybe get a chance to share their historical treasures with Chama visitors.

Former NGRRA Treasurer, Jack LaMunyon submitted his resignation from the board due to pressing home activities and Jim Demlow of Chama was elected to fill the position. Also Jim case of Los Alamos, N.M. was elected to fill the other opening

on the board.

One of our fellow NGRRA members from Colorado, Mr. Puntz, Has generously offered to donate materials and time to rewiring to bunkhouse area for those of us who like light at night and those who wished the electric heater put out more heat (remember last year's Rattler trip??) and even a few outlets for those of us who bring in our campers and motorhomes and have need of an outlet for lights. Our THANKS to Mr. Puntz for this help.

The next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Sept. 6th at the home of Ken Pruitt in Albuquerque, 7:30 PM. All members are welcome.

A few members living in areas not so accessible to Chama as some of us in the surrounding area have been reading about the slide shows shown at different general and chapter meetings and have been asking where they might obtain copies for showing or their own use. In an attempt to make some of these slides available to the membership, the NGRRA is asking the help of members who have slides to come forth. You can do this one of two ways. (1) If you have slide sets of C&TS operations which you will make available to others please let us know the type, content and cost and the number of slides in a set. This information will be printed up and made available by writing the Nat'l Secy. (2) Go through your slides and pick out one to five good slides and have good copies made and send them along with your name, address and slide description, to the Secretary. A Committee will review the slides submitted and these will be made into sets that will be available to members at copy and mailing costs only. Slides will be of four areas. (1) Regular passenger runs, (2) Toltec Rattler, (3) Work train and flanger runs, and (4) stations and buildings on the C&TS. All slides not used will be returned to the owner. All slides kept will belong to the Association and the owner will receive no reimbursement for them except photo credit on the information sheets sent with each set. Slide sets will be made up of from five to fifteen slides to a set. If you are interested in letting other members see our railroad let me know so we can get started making up the lists and checking slides. We would like to have this information ready for the December Telltale at the latest so don't delay, check through your slides today and send them (copies only) to NGRRA Nat'l Secy., Bill Luxford. P.S., if this is successful maybe we can run a series on former D&RGW operations and each annual Rattler (if they run). How about it?? We have members in Mexico, Canada, Europe, Asia, and South America that may never have a chance to see or ride the C&TS in person but would like to see where their interest and support is going in something more than a Telltale. Will you help? Please do!!

And before tagging on the caboose for this month let me remind you that the Nat'l office has several membership accessories available to members. Write for a complete list and prices and we will get a list off to you by return mail.

Article by:
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NGRRA National Executive Secretary

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