

C&TS Dispatch

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION—2003

The May, June, and August Volunteer Work Sessions

Two hundred seventy-four Friends carried out historic preservation projects during the six volunteer work sessions from May 5–16, June 16–27, and August 4–15, 2003. In this issue we present summaries, rosters, and photographs documenting the accomplishments of the dedicated volunteers on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

CARS

Concession Car 450

In the early 1970s, D&RGW boxcar 3591 was converted to 450, one of two concession cars used for nearly 25 years. During the June and August work sessions, volunteers in Chama returned it to its original configuration as a boxcar. The team removed shelving, cabinets, and windows, as well as the siding on each side, the deteriorated roof walk, and platforms. After inspecting the sills, framing, and floor, they replaced two floor planks and five upper angle braces. They rebuilt both platforms and the walkway and reframed and closed both ends of the car. The volunteers repaired and replaced the interior siding, replaced the fascia on both sides and ends, and constructed and installed two new, large, boxcar, side doors and a small, end, grain door.

Boxcar Doors

During session E in August, the team members in Chama completely rebuilt

three large steel-framed boxcar doors. A door with broken and splintered wood was removed from boxcar 3422, rebuilt, and hung on 3254, the Friends' tool and stencil car. The door was then rebuilt and hung on 3231, the bolt and nail car. Volunteers then rebuilt the old door and placed it on 3216, the primary tool car. The old door from 3216 was hung back on 3422. This door shifting left only one car open during the week. A similar project may be carried out next year to replace three more doors that are in worse shape than the rest of the boxcars involved.

Caboose 0579

During session D in June, the Antonito team built interior bunks, mounted the

cut levers, and installed the A-end coupler to short (16 feet) caboose 0579. During the August sessions, a larger team worked on the short caboose, and among other things, built and installed brake rods and mounted air hoses, brake beams, and shoes. The brakes now work! They also installed the stove, piping, and smoke stack; built interior storage compartments; installed cupola seats and awnings on cupola windows; built and mounted ladders on end sills; painted all railings, steps, and grab irons; and installed temporary brasses in trucks so the caboose can be moved around the Antonito yard. The team expects this

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Looking south over the Chama railyard during session D in June. Volunteers are working on pipe gondola 1557 in the foreground. Behind 1557 is high-side gondola 1648. Both cars will be part of a restored pipe train. In the background volunteers are converting concession car 450 back to boxcar 3591. (All photos by Tom Cardin except where noted.)

C&TS Dispatch

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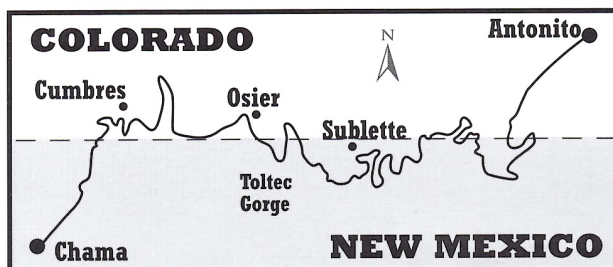
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The Friends is the official museum support group for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a 64-mile-long operating railroad and museum of railroad history and technology between Antonito, Colorado, and Chama, New Mexico. The railroad is owned by Colorado 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 2003

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



A Living Museum: Fulfilling the Promise

The interstate compact between Colorado and New Mexico that created the C&TS Commission states it clearly: the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is to serve as a "living museum." This implies three things. First, it implies that the railroad must run passenger trains. It can never be merely a static museum.

Second, the living museum mandate means that the railroad is not just about steam locomotives, rolling stock, and structures. It's about people as well. Neither the railroad nor

*A living museum is nothing if not
a participatory enterprise.*

the geography of the San Juan Mountains and high desert of the San Luis Valley can be separated from the human element. This includes those men and women that run the railroad, the residents of the region served by the line since 1880, and even the visitors who come to ride the trains and tour the yards. A living museum is nothing if not a participatory enterprise.

The third implication is that the C&TS must provide a historical experience. This requires a dogged commitment to authenticity on the part of its stewards. It is what distinguishes the C&TS from tourist railroads. It's also why steam locomotives will always remain the motive power of choice on the climb up Cumbres Pass. And it's also why such care is taken by the Friends' restoration activities to ensure the historic integrity of the buildings and equipment is maintained.

But the interstate compact added one more charge to those who would be stewards of the railroad: that this living museum shall also serve as an economic stimulus to the surrounding region. While this doesn't mean that the railroad should be expected to deliver tourists to the front doors of every shop, restaurant, and motel in town, it does imply that its stewards have a duty to provide a high quality and reliable service for visitors. The railroad should be an anchor around which other enterprises can grow and prosper.

To fulfill its promise as a living museum, the C&TS must do all of this well. It has the potential to achieve national class, indeed, world class status as a heritage railroad and as a historic destination in general. But it will not be easy. Above all, this will require the highest level of coordination and planning between the three members of the Triad—the Commission, the Friends, and the RGRPC.

For more than a decade, the Triad agreement—a formal document that spells out how the Commission, the Friends, and the operator will cooperatively oversee the train service, restoration efforts, and historic interpretation activities—has served the railroad well. But the growing complexity of all this (not to mention the increasing demands of fundraising, strategic planning, and governmental affairs) may demand a greater level of integration of the activities and resources of the three organizations, perhaps even including the staff.

The C&TS is the most demanding of any heritage or tourist railroad in North America, given its length, remoteness, grades, mission, and its promise. Its mission, in my view, is a much more complicated one than that of the original San Juan Extension that William Jackson Palmer built in 1880. General Palmer sought simply to create shareholder wealth by building a conduit to tap the precious metals in the San Juan Mountains using the cheapest technology available—a narrow gauge railroad. The C&TS, on the other hand, must use that same narrow gauge railroad to balance the interests of historic preservation, tourism, economic growth, and

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museum services. To fulfill his narrower purpose, Palmer had but one organization to manage—the D&RG Railroad. The more demanding, multi-faceted mission of the C&TS is dependent on the ability of the leadership of three separate organizations to coordinate their efforts. A tall order.

It is understandable and appropriate that most of the strategic focus of late has been on infrastructure, locomotives, and rolling stock which all translate into the need for sufficient capital investment. These matters have suffered from neglect and we are faced with the pressing need to catch up. But, we need to pay equal attention to what I would term strategic execution. By this, I mean posing crucial questions regarding our performance. How we can best coordinate all the essential functions of this living museum in the long term? How can we operate more effectively? Are there efficiencies to be gained in the overall operation that can optimize how we best deploy our managers, employees, volunteers, and resources over the next five years? What other national and international organizations can provide us with the highest benchmarks to strive for in areas that we need to improve?

The answers to these questions can provide a blueprint for the kind of organizational structure required in the future. And it must be one that allows the C&TS Railroad to fulfill its promise of a true, world-class living museum that this jewel so richly deserves.

—Brian Shoup

Shari Hamblin

Shari Hamblin, wife of Jim Hamblin, died on August 14, 2003. She, along with her husband, was a five-year volunteer, most often on the Osier projects. You may write Jim at 5935 Oak Grove Ct., Liberty Township, Ohio 45011.



Bill Lock receives the first General Palmer Award from Friends President Brian Shoup at the 2003 Annual Meeting. This new award honors members of the Friends who as builders of the organization have exemplified the entrepreneurial spirit of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway founder, General William Jackson Palmer. The awards will be numbered in the sequence that they are conferred.



Terri Shaw, former President and CEO of the Friends, and Howard Bunté, former Membership Committee Chair, with their General Palmer Awards. The second and third awards were made to Terri and Howard, respectively, at the 2003 Annual Meeting. (Photos by Tom Cardin.)

Work Sessions, continued from page 1

project to be finished in 2004. More details of the crew's work can be found at <http://drgw0579.home.comcast.net>.

Metal Fabrication for Caboose 0579

Volunteers in Chama fabricated two brake staffs for short caboose 0579, one from a salvaged boxcar staff, the other from a section of truss rod found



In Chama during session C, crew members convert concession car 450 back to boxcar 3591.



In Antonito during session E, Kevin Pyle (l) and Lou Houck, on the ground, check the fit of a ladder while Ben Sargent watches. Peter Dulong (l) and Bill Kepner work on the roof.

in a scrap bin. They also shaped top-of-cupola grab irons, as well as center support brackets, but final completion by forge or welding will be next spring when the team will make four inside corner grab irons.

Car Painting

During the June sessions, Chama volunteers painted many cars, some of them had been vandalized. They retouched rotary OM and rotary OY and touched up boxcar coaches 202, 204, 211, and 213; boxcars 3254, 3016, and 3592; and sleeper-outfit 4258. They also painted five passenger cars, as well as various other rolling stock. Projects for 2004 will include repainting all oil tank cars.

Car Lettering

Team members in Chama relettered two drop-bottom gondolas, 791 and 811, and six boxcars during the two August sessions. Boxcars 3073, 3331, 3339, and 3484 (Friends' kitchen storage car), 3585 (Friends' kitchen car), and 3605 were either touched up to improve their appearance or totally relettered if the car had been repainted. The crew also replaced decals on four passenger cars used in regular service.



Robin Kumler, Sean Calderon, and Don Storm build a new door for boxcar 3591 (session C).

Pipe Train Restoration

As a step toward developing a historic oil-field pipe hauling train, team members in Chama dismantled high-side gondola 1648 and pipe gondola 1557 in the June work sessions. In August's session E, they replaced about 10 feet of the B end center sills of 1557 with new sills. The team also made new oak end sills, installed 20 new oak stakes, and installed several side boards on both the left and right. The team found 1648 to be in worse shape than 1557, only one side sill and one intermediate sill were reusable. By the end of the August sessions, however, the team had installed new sills and decking.

Flat Car 6314

During session C in Chama, the flat car 6314 team completed the mortises in the end sills of the car. They drilled holes for the truss rods, coupler pockets, and hand brake parts. With railroad personnel help, equipment was moved allowing the team to begin frame assembly of the flat car in the field east of the engine house. During session D, the crew discovered that the original measurements defining length of the car had not allowed for end sills, requiring that the center sill be shortened and redrilled for splice bolts. The crew laid a crib of ties so that the frame could be level in spite of the slope of the track, and they assembled the frame. By the end of the session, the basic frame was complete; all sills in place; and the needle beams, truss rods, coupler pockets, and body bolsters fitted and in place. In 2004, the team plans to complete assembly of the frame, install couplers and brake rigging and, time permitting, redeck the car.

Flat Car 6636

The steel-framed flat car 6636, purchased at the 2002 Sundown and Southern Railroad disposal auction, was delivered to Antonito last summer on a flatbed trailer. The frame brake system, couplers, trucks with wheels, and all metal parts were in excellent condition, but all wood was severely deteriorated. During session C, the Antonito crew removed and disposed of all wood, then replaced the deck, nailing stringers using bolts to fasten