



# C&TS Dispatch

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## Friends Receive Tribute

The New Mexico House of Representatives on February 10, 2004, unanimously passed by voice vote the following memorial as tribute to the Friends.

### HOUSE MEMORIAL 17

46th legislature—State of New Mexico—second session, 2004

Sponsored by Representatives Ben Lujan, Nick L. Salazar and Debbie A. Rodella

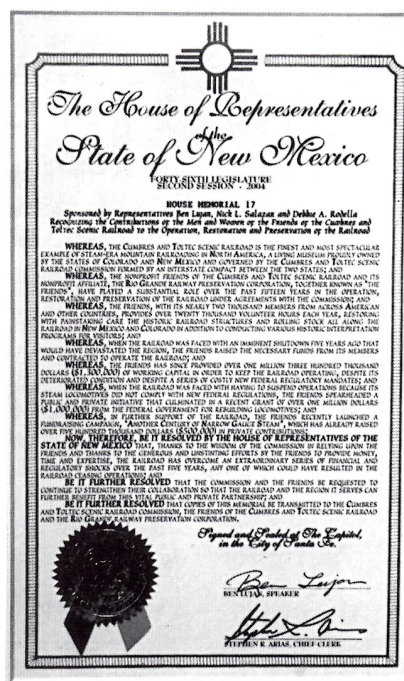
Introduced by Ben Lujan, Speaker of the House

*Recognizing the Contributions of the Men and Women of the Friends of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad to the Operation, Restoration and Preservation of the Railroad.*

**WHEREAS** the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad is the finest and most spectacular example of steam-era mountain railroading in North America, a living museum proudly owned by the states of Colorado and New Mexico and governed by the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission formed by an interstate compact between the two states; and

**WHEREAS**, the nonprofit Friends of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad and its nonprofit affiliate, the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, together known as "The Friends," have played a substantial role over the past fifteen years in the operation, restoration and preservation of the railroad under agreements with the Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the Friends, with its nearly two thousand members from across America and other countries, provides over twenty thousand volunteer hours each year, restoring with painstaking care the historic railroad structures and rolling stock all



along the railroad in New Mexico and Colorado in addition to conducting various historic interpretation programs for visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, when the railroad was faced with an imminent shutdown five years ago that would have devastated the region, the Friends raised the necessary funds from its members and contracted to operate the railroad; and

**WHEREAS**, the Friends has since provided over one million three hundred thousand dollars (\$1,300,000) of working capital in order to keep the railroad operating, despite its deteriorated condition and despite a series of costly new federal regulatory mandates; and

**WHEREAS**, when the railroad was faced with having to suspend operations because its steam locomotives did not comply with new federal regulations, the Friends spearheaded a public and private initiative that culminated in a recent grant of over one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the federal government for rebuilding locomotives; and

**WHEREAS**, in further support of the railroad, the Friends recently launched a fundraising campaign, "Another Century of Narrow Gauge Steam," which has already raised over five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in private contributions;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO** that, thanks to the wisdom of the Commission in relying upon the Friends and thanks to the generous and unstinting efforts by the Friends to provide money, time and expertise, the railroad has overcome an extraordinary series of financial and regulatory shocks over the past five years, any one of which could have resulted in the railroad ceasing operations; and

See Memorial, page 3



## C&TS Dispatch

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

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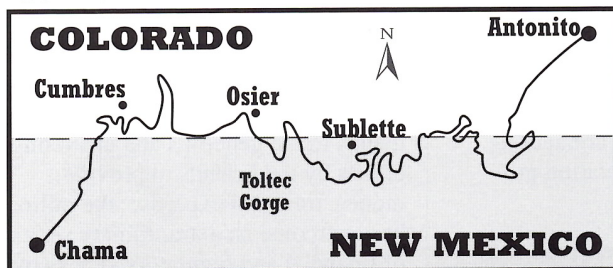
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The C&TS Dispatch is published four times each year by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., 6005 Osuna Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., is a New Mexico nonprofit corporation.

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 2004

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



### The Hidden Places

Last summer, during an August work session, I accompanied Jim Herron, Chairman of the Board of the Friends, to a location on the C&TS east of Cumbres Pass to assist his volunteer work team in setting a newly restored telegraphophone booth on a freshly prepared foundation. We hiked in a short distance from the road to where the track turned to head

north into the Los Pinos Valley. With his able project crew at the ready, we made short work of positioning the booth properly on its foundation.

As Jim and his volunteers attended to other matters, I stood in the booth looking out its window to the east. I took in the sweep of high country where in the distance the track turned east again towards Osier after making its loop at Los Pinos. The obvious thoughts occurred to me, as they would to most volunteers within the ranks in our organization: *this is the same timeless scene that the crewmen of the Denver & Rio Grande Western saw for over 80 years.*

Jim caught me gazing out the window and commented on its view. "From what we can figure out," he said, "The window was put there to allow a trainman a clear line of sight on any traffic several miles to the east as he made his call."

*Makes sense*, I thought to myself, *but it also might have been just a good excuse to have a great view and a Pall Mall on a cold winter day, out of the wind.* Railroading on the narrow gauge was a hard life. As with the midwestern farmers in my family, the nature of their work probably didn't often allow time for such aesthetic compensations. Yet I suspect there were moments such as the time I stood in a freshly mown hay field at dusk with my grandfather, a dairy farmer. He'd just finished his chores. "Look at that view and smell that sweet alfalfa," he said to me.

If a farmer in the flatlands of northern Indiana could pause on occasion to find beauty in 30 acres of hay, I'd imagine the men that ran freight trains over Cumbres through the rugged San Juans might have done the same as they plied their trade. The landscape compels it and our souls require it.

There are countless spots on the railroad like this telegraphophone booth near Los Pinos that are hidden away from the rest of the more popular locations. The Chama yard is a treasure land of historic riches, with the remnant two stalls of the original roundhouse, the coal tipple, the fascinating equipment and rolling stock, and certainly the steam locomotives, serviceable as well as dormant. It's Mecca for most visitors possessing at least a casual interest in railroads or western history.



For me, however, it's the hidden places of the C&TS that best capture the feel of what it once was and, for moments, still is. They are the places that quickly pass by, even at 12 miles per hour as you ride the train. Passengers see Sublette for 10 minutes as their train stops for water and find it intriguing. Yet, other more spectacular sights they will soon see—Phantom Curve, Toltec Gorge, and Windy Point—will render places such as Sublette as faint echoes when they return home.

But the day after they ride the train, let them drive in from Highway 17 from Megote on the Forest Service roads over the ridgelines to the north of the tracks. Let them park their car on the last level ground before an unimproved lane drops off into the stands of ponderosa and aspen. And then let them walk the final hundred yards down into Sublette and they will see it for the first time. A ghost town. They will walk along the tracks and explore around the buildings and the standpipe. It will be quiet except for the aspen leaves. Then in the distance, they will hear a steam whistle as it echoes off the canyon walls, and that will stay with them until they return.

There are other hidden places that most who come to ride the C&TS never come to know and appreciate. Cresco is one. It's tucked into the woods below the highway on the climb up Cumbres Pass. The water tank and trestle come upon you as a surprise as you walk in. There's always a strong smell of spruce and fir in the air. The narrow gauge track, the grade, the heavy foliage, and the wooden trestle all come together to convey a sense of remoteness and hint at the struggle of diminutive machines pitted against great mountains.

I could go on about such places—Hamilton's Point, the distant view of the eastern portal of Rock tunnel from high on a Forest Service road, and even the sight of Osier driving in from the north. Many of you who've photographed the railroad extensively or who have come to work sessions know of these places and more. You understand the adventure of discovering these places anew when you come to them on foot or by car. It's all about the difference in perspective. But even more, it's about learning to appreciate more of the richness of the C&TS.

The challenge for the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is to educate visitors about these added opportunities to explore this living museum. I believe these hidden places offer great untapped potential for historic interpretation and, just as important, a reason for visitors to stay longer *after* they ride the train. We've yet to fully exploit the many opportunities for economic development that historic preservation can offer. This might be a place to start.

—Brian Shoup



*Gwen Lotz has joined the Friends office staff in Albuquerque, assuming the position of Administrative Assistant to President and CEO Brian Shoup. Judy Lock held this position from 1994 until retiring shortly after the first of this year. Best wishes, Judy, and welcome Gwen!*

#### **Carol Goin**

Carol Goin died on December 21, 2003. She and her husband, Bob, were two-year Friends members. They would have been married 45 years on December 23, 2003. Carol's first work session was in 2002, when she helped sell Friend's cookbooks in the Chama yard. This past summer she assisted with registration and helped with the dinner banquets each week.

#### *Memorial, continued*

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission and the Friends be requested to continue to strengthen their collaboration so that the railroad and the region it serves can further benefit from this vital public and private partnership; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission, the Friends of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation.



On behalf of the Friends of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., I want to express my deep appreciation to the New Mexico House of Representatives and, in particular, to Speaker Lujan and Representative Debbie Rodella of the 41<sup>st</sup> District, which includes Chama. I also wish to thank Commissioner Carl Turner for his role in this memorial, a memorial that is a tribute to every one of the nearly 2,000 members of the Friends across North America and overseas that support this historic treasure through their financial contributions and through their labor.

—Brian Shoup, President and CEO



# THE FFESTINIOG RAILWAY IN 2003

by John L. Dobson

*Friends member John L. Dobson is the Editor of the Ffestiniog Railway Magazine published by the Ffestiniog Railway Society. With over 5,000 members, the Society was established in 1954 to aid in the restoration and operation of the narrow gauge railway in North Wales. As John points out, there are historical ties between the Cumbres & Toltec and the Ffestiniog, and the mission of the Society is carried out, as is the mission of the Friends, by volunteers. I thank John for this article and look forward, as I know our readers will, to more from him about the Ffestiniog Railway. Also, it may interest our readers to know that the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad has memberships in all 50 states and 65 memberships in eight other countries—Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Thirty-one of the 65 are in the UK.*  
—the editor.

Some time ago, Arthur Nichols, editor of the C&TS Dispatch, was good enough to send me a copy of the Summer 1997 issue in which Guy Combe reported on his 1995 visit to Britain, during which he visited the Ffestiniog Railway and various other preserved lines. This may not seem to have much relevance to the C&TS, but the Ffestiniog is the line which was largely responsible for starting the 'Narrow Gauge Mania' back in the 1870s, a circumstance which makes the FR a direct antecedent of the C&TS.

Situated in mountainous country in North Wales (the bit of Britain between England and the Irish Sea into which the Celts were driven by the Saxons, and where the first language is still Welsh rather than English) the FR was originally built in the 1830s to carry roofing slates from the quarries

at Blaenau Ffestiniog to the seaport of Porthmadog. As completed it had a continuous gradient which allowed loaded trains to run by gravity all the way from the quarries (700 feet above sea level) to the coast, the empty trains being hauled back by horsepower. By its nature as a horse tramway in rough country it had narrow gauge track (two feet between rail centres) and a very limited structure gauge. All very normal for the 1830s.



**Prince at Minffordd:** Double-heading with Linda on 3 August 2003. The headboard and flags are to mark 140 years of steam power on the FR. Compared with Palmerston, Prince has suffered elephantiasis since the 1950s, the smokebox, tanks and cab all having been enlarged to meet modern needs and the frames strengthened. Known affectionately as 'The Old Gent' Prince is now oil-fired and superheated and can haul up to 6 carriages with relative ease. (Photo by Chris Jones.)

The fun started in the early 1860s when, driven by demand for slates from cities growing rapidly bigger as a result of the Industrial Revolution, traffic began to exceed line capacity. The answer was, despite a great deal of head-wagging from experts such as George Stephenson, to introduce steam power in the form of a series of small 4-wheeled tank locomotives which were so successful and rugged that four of the six still exist almost 150 years later. However, traffic continued to rise so that, by the late 1860s, double-tracking of the entire line was a serious option. At this point Robert Fairlie, the

inventor of a patent double-ended locomotive, entered the picture and persuaded the FR to try one of his engines. The result was a massive increase in capacity and efficiency, as the new locomotive could haul much heavier trains, and dividends rose to heights which attracted the attention of both the technical and financial press—the FR was paying up to 30% at a time when some of the largest British standard gauge systems were paying no more than single-figure dividends. The fame of the railway grew to the point that, in 1870, an international

commission comprising representatives from as far afield as Russia, France, Hungary, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Mexico and India attended trials at Porthmadog during which the capabilities of the narrow gauge and the Fairlie locomotive were fully explored. The result was an explosion of interest in narrow gauge railways around the world and, in 1871, the FR was visited by one General William Jackson Palmer, whilst he was on honeymoon in Britain. The discussions which Palmer had with the FR's Engineer, James Spooner, and Robert Fairlie were a major factor in his decision to construct his proposed Denver & Rio Grande Railway to 3-foot gauge—Robert Fairlie having advised that the 2-foot gauge was too narrow

for lengthy narrow gauge lines. The rest, as they say, is history.

The FR remained in the forefront of narrow gauge railway development for many years, introducing Britain's first iron-framed bogie carriages in 1872 and continuing to make good profits. However, from the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the slate industry began to decline, a trend accelerated by the loss of German markets during WW1. Passenger traffic, mainly tourists by the 1930s, ceased in 1939 at the outbreak of WW2; slate traffic dwindled to a trickle during the war and the railway closed entirely in 1946. Fortunately, being a statutory