



C&TS DISPATCH

VOLUME 35
SUMMER

NO. 2
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From Chama to Durango: Traveling along the *Tracks Across Borders Byway*

**D&RG Baggage Express Car 163 Moves to Colorado Springs
Meet Kathy Walser, the Friends' New Social Media Coordinator
*Plus: Photos from 2022 Work Sessions A, B, C and D***





C&TS DISPATCH

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec
Scenic Railroad, Inc.

William Lock, Founder—1988

Vol. 35, No. 2 ☞ Summer, 2022

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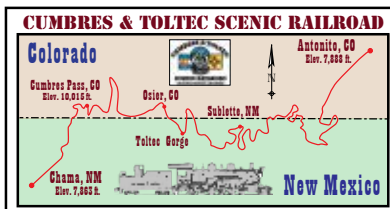
Assistant Editor — Jan Wright

Forum & Yard Cam Administrator — Jason Rose

Editor Emeritus — Rich Murray

Email — cjames.nm@gmail.com

The C&TS Dispatch is published four times each year by The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Inc., a New Mexico nonprofit corporation. The Friends is the official museum arm for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a sixty-four mile-long Railroad and museum of railroad history and technology, operating between Antonito, Colorado, and Chama, New Mexico. The Railroad is owned jointly by the States of Colorado and New Mexico. As the museum arm, the Friends is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the Railroad. The Friends is an Affiliate Member of the *Heritage Rail Alliance (HRA)*. Family membership in the Friends is \$35.00 per year; outside the USA membership is \$50.00. All contributions are fully tax deductible and will be gratefully accepted. For information, please write us in Albuquerque at the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., 4421 McLeod Rd. NE, Suite F, Albuquerque, NM, 87109, or call us at (505) 880-1311.



Denver & Rio Grande Railway: 1880–1886
Denver & Rio Grande Railroad: 1886–1921
Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad: 1921–1970
Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad: 1970–today

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is both a
National Historic Landmark and a
State Registered Historic Site.

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President's FORUM



Fire Restrictions and Water Issues: The Summer of '22

Over the years, the Railroad and Friends have faced many challenges: derailments, fire closers, a trestle fire, financial crises and changes in operational management. Still, both the Railroad and the Friends have persevered. This summer was no exception. We were hit with both barrels of another fire closure and a malfunctioning water system in Chama. In all fairness, it's the residents of the Village of Chama who were impacted the most but it also affected the Railroad, as well as some of the Friends' work session efforts.

Initially, our traditional Memorial Day opening was pushed to June 11th because of the fire at the Osier Dinning Hall. Then, dry conditions and forest closures pushed it further to July 1st. It obviously wasn't prudent to begin running trains under those conditions. On a positive note, the National Forest Service was predicting a good monsoon season and it finally

started to rain! Unfortunately, with the loss of seventeen operating days, the C&TS lost a substantial amount of revenue from cancellations.

Then on Sunday night, June 19th, the Village of Chama ran out of water. They had been struggling with leaks that the Chama Water Department employees were unable to locate for, by some accounts, roughly six weeks. We decided to shut down Work Session D in Chama, and Friends either went home or looked for work in Antonito. Fortunately the work session attendees in Antonito were unaffected by the Chama closure.

Work Session C went off without a hitch with excellent participation at both Antonito and Chama. With the National Forest closed because of high fire danger, some projects were scrapped due to continued fire restrictions. There was a small Friday evening gathering in Chama for those attendees.

As the week of Work Session D unfolded, the Friends' *Moonlight and Wine Tasting Train* was slated for Saturday July 9th. The water crisis in Chama continued. Will the Moonlight train go or not? We had to work through many scheduling scenarios and follow the progress of water repairs in Chama. Negative press surrounding the water outage was hurting reservations from the general public. One option was to move the train over to Antonito and operate to Osier from there. I was working with Scott Gibbs and the Railroad's staff to have motorcoaches shuttle pas-



Photo by Chris James

It's mid-summer atop Cumbres Pass. The last westbound train passed through several hours ago and now even the whistle is but a memory. The light is fading and one can almost feel the silence as the air begins to chill. It's been this way for 142 years. Thanks to the Friends and the Railroad, that will never change.



sengers between motels in Alamosa to/from Antonito.

It wasn't just the Moonlight Train scheduling we had to contend with but upcoming Work Sessions E & F. Those sessions would be coming up in mid-July. John Eng began watching those dates closely. When there is uncertainty about circumstances beyond one's control, planning is difficult. Our members want to accomplish work during our sessions but we also have to ensure a safe work environment and safety for those volunteers.

And what did the residents of Chama have to deal with? There was no running water to their homes and businesses unless you lived outside of the Village water system and had your own well. 20,000 gallons of potable water were being trucked in daily but that was a fraction of the community's requirements. Normal daily lives were interrupted and businesses lost money.

So in addition to what Chama residents were enduring, the Railroad's staff still had to look toward the July 1st Opening Day. What would the status of the water situation be? Would the C&TS be forced to just operate an Antonito-Osier train until water service was restored in Chama? Between the initial fire restrictions and then water issues, the Railroad's management was faced with considerable obstacles. Reservation agents had to take and make calls with explanations, an arduous and time-consuming task.

As of this writing in early July, the Chama water situation is more positive. On Monday, June 27th, two leaks were discovered and repaired, and water was restored to the Village. Restaurants were opening and providing take-out orders. There is still a boil-your-water order in place, but at least the July 1st Opening Day was not in

doubt. This was great news, plus the rains around New Mexico have been steady and National Forest restrictions are being lifted.

Do all these challenges go with the territory? As the Denver & Rio Grande Western found, operating the narrow gauge was a painstaking task; maybe it's just the nature of the beast. Mountain railroading is not for the faint of heart. Residing in a rural mountainous region is vastly different to living in most urban areas. There are challenges and sometimes rural life hits a few speed bumps.

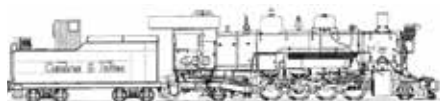
People work through these challenges. The Railroad opened on July 1st after the delay, the Friends ran its *Moonlight and Wine Tasting Train* on July 9th and our remaining work sessions will take place with no major obstacles. As I said at the onset, both the Railroad and the Friends persevered and prevailed. Again.

In closing, I must pass on some very sad news. Friends members Chuck and Linda Dueker from Albuquerque were killed in an automobile accident in western Nebraska on June 14th. They had traveled to Nebraska for Linda's class reunion. I had just seen them in Antonito at the start of Session A. Chuck and Linda were wonderful people and very devoted to work sessions in Antonito. We will really miss them both. Additional Friends' thoughts and memories of Chuck and Linda are found on Page 4 of this issue of the *Dispatch*. Donations in their memory can be made to the Friends by phone through the Friends' office, via our website or by mail. They will be sorely missed.

Have a safe summer and thank you all for your overwhelming support of the Friends through these difficult times.



Tim Tennant



DON'T WAIT! JOIN US THIS YEAR ON THE C&TS



2022 is going to be a great year for the Railroad and the Friends!

If you love trains, history and volunteer activities, JOIN US as we help preserve the "Living History" of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

For \$35 a year, you and your family can become Friends and receive the quarterly *C&TS Dispatch*, train ride discounts, invitations to special events and the opportunity to participate in restoration projects each summer, along with the satisfaction of supporting and investing in the historic cultural heritage that is the Cumbres & Toltec!

Only \$35 per year for a basic Family Membership! Foreign: \$50

to join, send us this application (or a facsimile):

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed,
or

Charge my Visa / MC / Discover
[circle one] for \$ _____

Card # _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Mail to:

Friends of the C&TSRR, Inc.
4421 McLeod Road NE, Suite F
Albuquerque, NM 87109
505-880-1311

www.friendsofcumbrestoltec.org

**Already a Member?
Give this to a friend!**

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.

All contributions are deductible to the fullest extent of the law. IRS# 85-036487



C&TS Friends Telegraph: NEWS

Chuck and Linda Dueker

As some of you are aware, we lost two wonderful and valuable Friends members this summer to a tragic vehicle accident. Chuck and Linda Dueker were killed on Tuesday, June 14th in western Nebraska. Their son Bruce was with them but survived the crash.

Chuck was born November 3, 1942, in Bayard, Nebraska.

He attended Milford College in Milford, Nebraska, receiving an Associate's Degree in Diesel Mechanics. Chuck and Linda were married on February 23, 1963, and moved to Albuquerque in 1964. Chuck worked for Rust Tractor/Wagner Equipment for 45 years.

Chuck volunteered with the Friends for thirteen years. With his excellent mechanical skills, he could solve just about any problem that arose. His vast experience and positive attitude were just a few of the attributes that made him an invaluable asset to the Friends organization.

He worked on a vast number of projects, many as Team Leader, and was always willing to jump in and help others. Here are a few of the projects Chuck was directly involved with over the last few years:

Installed the north wall sheeting for the Car Storage Facility.

Restored the Jordan Spreader OU to operational condition.

Extended the concrete pads for the west end of the Car Repair Facility.

Engineered and installed the foundation forms for the CRF Tool Room addition.

Installed two flag poles at the Osier Kitchen facility.

Upgraded the electrical system in Caboose 05635 and added upgrades to the water system.

Reassembled tank car truck sets to include installation on Tank Car 11036.

Serviced and inspected Pile Driver OB and Derrick OP for demonstrations during the C&TS celebration in 2021.

Repaired Section Car 04407 to provide sleeping accommodations for volunteers coming to work at the CRF.

Linda volunteered with the Friends for thirteen years. Linda was born on May 18, 1944, the third of



three children born to Bruce and Mary (Lee) Lesoing in Alliance, Nebraska. Linda grew up on a farm outside of Alliance and graduated from Alliance High School in 1962. She retired from Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Albuquerque, where she worked for 23 years and enjoyed spending

time with her family, sewing, country western dancing, interior design, crafting, cooking and baking. With the Friends, she worked on chronicling projects, registration, sales merchandise, and most of all with Food Preparation. She served as a Kitchen Crew Team Leader in Antonito for several years, where she planned daily lunch menus, ordered, and purchased food and kitchen supplies. She organized the preparation and serving of the lunch to the volunteers. She would also assist in other projects as needed, from painting to sorting materials.

Linda was very devoted to Chuck and her family. She supported Chuck and his wishes to be a volunteer of the Friends organization and joined him in the work sessions. She also supported and assisted him with construction and upkeep of the condos and buildings they owned.

Friend's volunteers always enjoyed working, visiting, and sharing life stories with her.

Chuck and Linda enjoyed traveling, camping, yearly family reunions back in Nebraska, trips to Germany and Mongolia, and cruises to Alaska, the Caribbean, Northern Europe and along the East Coast of the United States. Chuck also enjoyed carpentry, country western dancing, photography, brewing beer, camping, hiking and sailing.

It was a joy, pleasure and fun to work with both of them. Chuck and Linda will be missed by all of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

Tim Tennant, John Engs and Mary Jane Smith



Donations to the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad can be made in their memory through the Friend's office via phone, check, card or through the Friends website.

Meet Kathy Walsler, our facebook Correspondent!

I am Kathy Walsler. In April of this year, I began working as the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. Social Media Coordinator. I have been a fan of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad since I was in kindergarten. On vacation, we stumbled across the Railroad as we drove by and saw the *Indiana Jones* and *the Last Crusade* cars.



That's enough to hook my dad so, throughout my childhood, we came out and rode the train at least once almost every year.

When I graduated high school my mom asked what I wanted for graduation and I said I wanted to skip graduation and go to a Work

Session. Needless to say I did not get my wish, but we came out later that summer and my dad and I helped rebuild a drop bottom gondola.

The Railroad and the Friends have always fueled my passion for history and historic preservation. I went on to get a degree in history and have continued to enjoy history no matter where I live. I have renewed my membership annually even though I have not been able to come volunteer in years.

As an adult I have watched modern technology change the way people communicate. Using social media allows the Friends to reach new people. Since I began my work, our Facebook posts have been viewed by over 70,000 people across the globe. Our Instagram began in May 2022, and our following has grown in the last several months. Using Facebook and Instagram allows us to share photos and videos with the world daily.

As time goes by, the majority of our members are now retiring. In order to continue our mission of preserving the Railroad and educating the public, we need to reach out to younger generations. By reaching out to the public online we can interest them in our work and encourage their participation. Utilizing social media allows us to connect to far more people in younger generations than print ads; very few young people subscribe to print publications.

Each week our Facebook and Instagram followers can find posts that take them back in time to the days when steam trains were everywhere. They can also find updates on current projects, notices of future projects, railroad trivia questions, how to become a member (and why you should), and short

stories and biographies from our members. If you would like to contribute photos or stories, please contact me at kwalsler@fctsrr.org or send me a private message via Facebook or Instagram. We would love to hear from you!

Don't forget to follow us by scanning any or all of the QR codes on the front cover or page 2!



Fuel Stipend for Work Session Attendees!

The Friends Board of Directors would like to help offset the higher cost of fuel to get to work sessions. To that end, we will provide a stipend of five (5) cents per mile, up to \$100.00 per year, for those traveling to work at a session. You just need to fill out an application and the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad will mail you a check.



Locomotive 425 Fall Photo Charter September 24, 2022

Join us for a spectacular fall color photo freight featuring Locomotive 315 renumbered as 425, pulling a 1918-1922 period freight consist plus D&RG Caboose 0579. This charter will depart Antonito heading west to Cumbres Pass with a motorcoach return back to Antonito.

The day will be filled with numerous run-by locations.



The scenic highlights of this charter include Lava Tank, Whip-lash Curve, Sub-lette, Rock Tunnel, Toltec Gorge, Phantom Curve, Cascade Trestle, Los Pinos Tank and Tanglefoot Curve.

There will be a fifty passenger limit. A go/no-go decision will be made by August 24, 2022. If we don't have enough riders to break even the charter will be cancelled. If the charter is a "GO" on August 24th there will no ticket refunds after that date.

Depart Antonito:

10:15 AM MDT

Arrive Cumbres:

6:10 PM MDT

Bus Departs Cumbres:

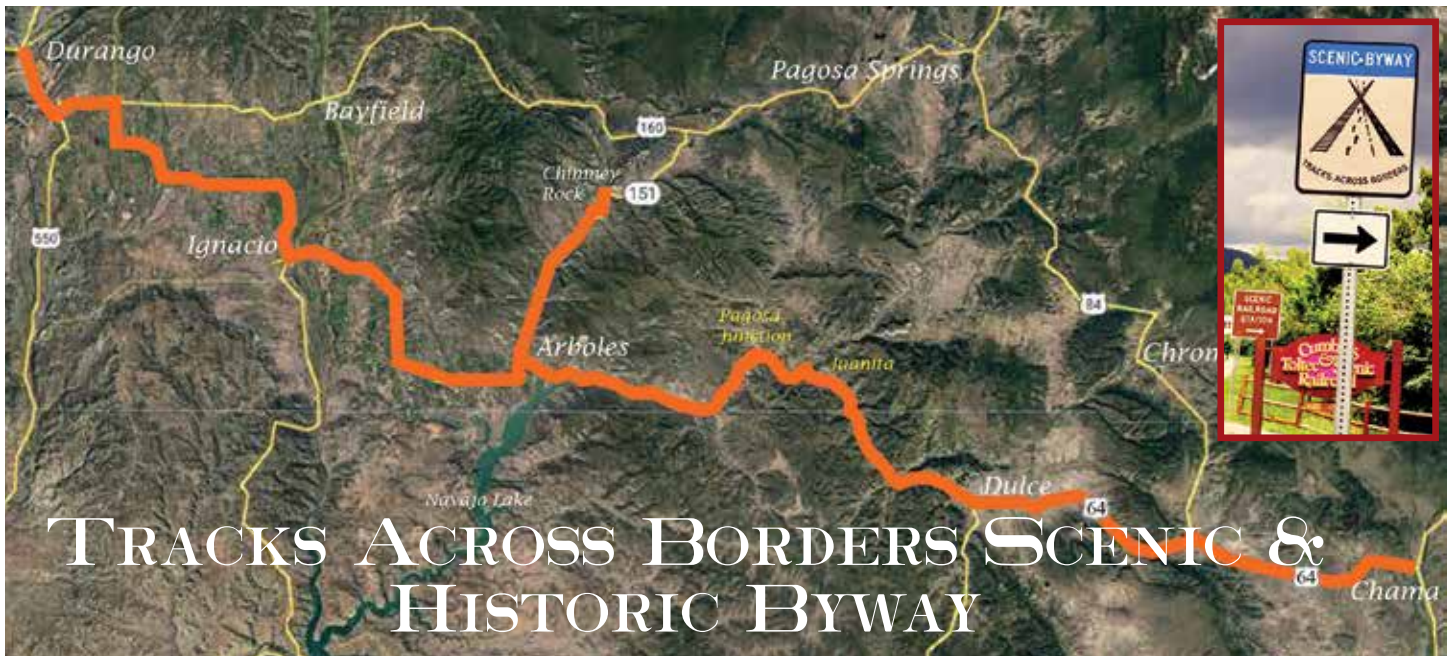
6:40 PM MDT

Return Antonito:

7:40 PM MDT:

Fare: \$320 (Includes 7% Historic Preservation Fee, lunch and water onboard train.)

Call 505-880-1311 for reservations or questions or email: timtenant@cumbrestoltec.org



TRACKS ACROSS BORDERS SCENIC & HISTORIC BYWAY

Any fan of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad (D&RGW) narrow gauge lines should plan a trip on the **Tracks Across Borders Scenic and Historic Byway (TABB)**. The 128-mile, bi-state Byway route closely follows the abandoned right-of-way of the D&RGW between Chama and Durango. This line was part of the D&RGW's San Juan Extension connecting Alamosa, Colorado, and Silverton, Colorado, with branches to Farmington, New Mexico, and Pagosa Springs, Colorado. The scenic railroads at each end of the Byway are all that remains of this once-significant transportation link. The Byway's primary feature is one of Colorado's greatest stories: the creation and development of the state's first, and ultimately the nation's largest, narrow gauge railroad system. Prominent sections of the Byway corridor are located on, or adjacent to, the original railroad grade. Taking a drive along this backcountry byway is to step back in time and see the little-changed western landscape and learn about the deep, rich transportation and cultural history of this part of the American west.

TABB is the newest of the official byways in Colorado and New Mexico, designated by the two states in 2015 and one of hundreds of federal and state byways around the nation. There are layers and layers of history along the byway—in fact it was named “Tracks Across Borders Byway” because it is a unique, authentic journey through time where travelers can re-trace the tracks and pathways of the past—from seasonal big game migration trails, native American footpaths, routes of 17th century Spanish missionaries and 19th century Anglos migrating to the west and, of course, the tracks of the D&RGW, which supported the mining, ranching and logging industries in the region and opened Southwest Colorado to settlers.

The Byway takes travelers on a journey across the border between two states, across two Native American Nations, the Jicarilla Apaches and Southern Utes, through breathtaking, remote countryside rich in history, past Navajo Lake State Park and through the varied communities of the present day. It features one of America's newest National Monuments, the archaeoastronomy sites of Chimney Rock National Monument.

So, let's take a trip on the Byway and discover some of the historic and scenic adventures a traveler will encounter along the way.



In the east, the byway starts at the historic **Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Depot** and travels west along US 64/84.



Photo: John Porco

About seven miles west of Chama, the Byway crosses the Continental Divide at a thrilling 7,275 feet. If there wasn't a historical marker there, one might never realize that water flows to the Pacific Ocean to the west and Atlantic Ocean on the east. The grade of the Railroad is clearly visible at several locations on

the north side of the highway.

Through this area, you will notice thousands of stumps. At one time, this portion of the route was heavily forested but the forests were clearcut during the 1920s to feed the large sawmills in the region. Unfortunately, the loggers didn't leave any trees behind to reseed, so the forests did not regenerate. You can follow the grade to where it crosses the highway.



At the junction of Highways 64 and 84, the Byway route turns west onto Highway 64. (Highway 84 continues on toward Pagosa Springs.)



The first location of interest to railfans is the abandoned village of **Monero**, about seventeen miles west of Chama. The village was established by Italian coal miners in 1884, who gave the town the name of the Italian word for money.

Up through the end of railroad service, Monero was an important source of coal for locomotives from several nearby mines. Coal was transported to the town



Photo: John Krause, FCTS RD009-030



D&RGW #498 taking on coal at Monero coal chute. Photo: Ernie Robart, 7/18/1968
FCTS ERNG19680718-0106

by aerial trams, precursors to today's modern ski lifts. A tippie that served the D&RGW trains stood until the mid-1980s. The town had a depot located in the middle of a sharp curve in the grade that included a general store, a church and a depot. Today, an abandoned general store can be seen on the north side of US 64. The site of the tippie

and coal piles still exist in the valley.

Please respect the fact that the site of Monero is located on private property.



The Monero General Store Today. Photo: John Porco



Continuing west, we arrive at the village of **Lumberton**, about twenty-two miles west of Chama. Not much remains of the Railroad, but in its day, the village was an important rail junction. Narrow gauge lumber lines ran north toward Edith, site of a huge lumber mill, and Chromo. A lumber line also ran south to a large mill at El Vado, a village now submerged under El Vado Lake.



By the 1920s, when the forests in the region were depleted to provide lumber in the growing towns and mining camps, the crude lumbering railroads were abandoned and their equipment was moved to other timberlands.



D&RGW #262 at Halfway Tank on the Rio Grande & Southwestern RR between Lumberton & El Vado. FCTS RD094-012

The Lumberton depot was moved west to become a portion of a Mexican restaurant near Dulce.



Dulce, originally named *Agua Dulce*, Spanish for “sweet water” because of good springs in the area, was founded in 1877. The Jicarilla Apache reservation was established in 1887 and Dulce became the Headquarters of the Jicarilla Apache Nation.



Lumberton Depot from the west. FCTS RD009-070



Photo: John Porco



Four miles west of Dulce is **Navajo**, named for the Navajo River, which the Railroad crossed on a steel truss bridge built in 1924 that still exists. A well-preserved D&RGW water tank is also present. These remnants of the Railroad are on reservation land, so trespassing is prohibited. However, good views can be achieved from the road.



There is a tribal arts and crafts shop, but the Jicarilla Cultural Center is currently closed as major repairs are being made on the building. The casino and hotel closed during COVID-19 and have yet to reopen. On the west end of Dulce stand two D&RGW double-deck sheep stock cars in disrepair, located on a short section of the original track. These were abandoned by the Railroad when the line was scrapped in the early 1970s.



FCTS RDS053-009



FCTS RDS060-018



Looking closely, you will see the remains of a siding switch under one of the cars. The Dulce depot is long gone but was located across the street from the stockcars, approximately where the EMS building sits today. The Byway continues west on Narrow Gauge Street.

From Navajo, the Byway continues north on a dirt road built mostly on the old railroad grade. This road receives limited maintenance, so it should be avoided in wet or snowy weather. The route traverses the beautiful canyon of the Navajo River with rock outcrops and tall pines looming overhead, soon crossing the

border into Colorado. Along the way, the road crosses a short steel truss bridge, a relic of the rail line.

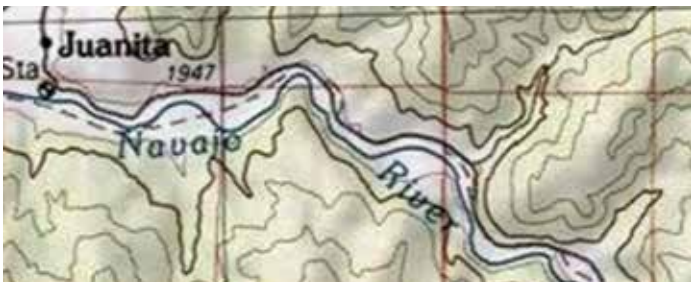


Photo: John Porco

It crosses the borders into both Colorado and the border between the Jicarilla Apache and Southern Ute Indian Reservations.



Four miles past the border is the ghost town of **Juanita**. Prior to the arrival of the Railroad, timber companies reportedly floated logs down the San Juan River to Juanita for the Railroad's construction. The D&RG constructed a section house, bunkhouse, tool house, a small station fashioned from a boxcar, and a siding, located on the south side of the Navajo River. Some of the remains of these structures are visible today.



The townsite also includes the ruins of the adobe **San Andres Avelino Church** built in 1925. The old wooden Juanita school building is located to the north of the church. The building was in use as a school by 1920 and it is likely classes were discontinued in the early 1960s. Finally, a fascinating Hispano cemetery is located near the school with the oldest grave dating from 1904.



Photo: John Porco



Leaving Juanita, the Byway turns west onto Archuleta County Road 500 and meets the San Juan River and will follow it for the next twenty miles.



The road climbs to an overlook where the traveler will see one of the true gems of the Byway, a 360-foot-long bridge over the San Juan River that includes three spans, two steel through trusses and a deck truss. When the line was abandoned, it was decided that it not economical to remove such a large structure.



Photo: John Porco

Please use caution: the overlook is steep. The bridge itself is on private property so enjoy it from afar.



Continuing west, we reach **Pagosa Junction**, also called **Gato**. Mostly abandoned today, Pagosa Junction was the southern terminus of the branch north to Pagosa Springs, which lasted until 1936.



Once that branch was abandoned, the name reverted to “Gato,” Spanish for cat, referring to the nearby Cat Creek route of the Pagosa Springs Branch.

When the D&RG scrapped this portion of the San Juan Extension in 1970, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe refused to allow removal of the Railroad’s holdings from its Tribal lands. Today, pieces of the Railroad remain including about 1,000 feet of track, the through-truss bridge across Cat Creek, the now-collapsed water tank and its associated stone pump house, a gondola filled with ties, a drop bottom gondola and the section house, all vestiges of the D&RGW.



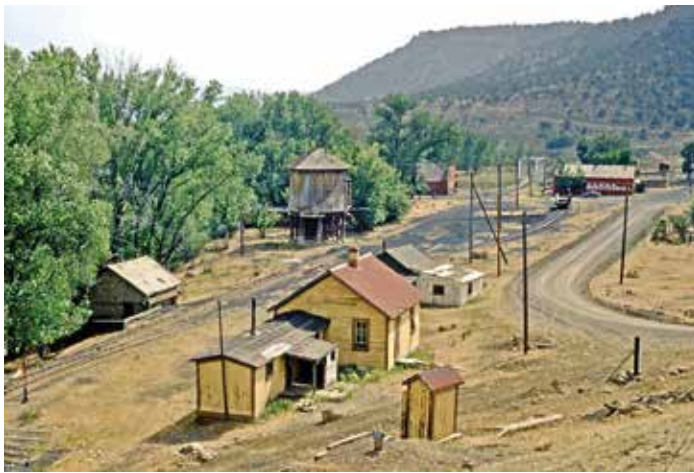
Photo: FCTS SR09-155

Diocese of Pueblo, this historic and sacred place provides a hillside pullout, affording a stunning overlook of the former riverside settlement, and is an ideal spot for a picnic and photo opportunities. This building is still in use for special occasions.

Note: All of Pagosa Junction is Southern Ute land and trespassing is forbidden.



From Pagosa Junction west to Durango, the Byway follows closely the path of the **Northern Route of the Old Spanish Trail**. Up until 1848, southern Colorado was still part of Mexico. Traders in Santa Fe, the capital of Nuevo Mexico, needed a route to reach the then remote Mexican settlement of Los Angeles (yes, *that* Los Angeles!) The 700-mile Northern Route, also called the Main Route, was first traveled in 1830. Commerce usually consisted of one annual mule pack train from Santa Fe with up to 200 men, with roughly twice as many mules, bringing handwoven New Mexican goods, such as serapes and blankets, to California. California had almost no wool-processing industry and few weavers, so woven products were a welcome commodity. California had many wild horses and mules with no local market so the livestock was readily traded for handwoven wool products. The trading party usually left New Mexico in early November to take advantage of winter rains to cross the deserts on the trail and would arrive in California in early February. The return party would usually leave California for New Mexico in early April to get over the trail before the water holes dried up and the melting snow raised the rivers too high. The return party often drove anywhere from several hundred to a few thousand horses and mules east. Use of the Spanish Trail lapsed after the War with Mexico ended in 1848 and Colorado became part of the United States. There was no longer any need to link Santa Fe with Los Angeles by this difficult mule trail and other wagon-friendly routes were opened.



Gato, New Mexico, 1972. Photo: FCTS, Ernie Robart Collection

In 1972, Ernie Robart photographed the abandoned structures that, at the time, looked complete and active, though abandoned and silent.



Photo: John Porco

Today, very little is left at Pagosa Junction/Gato itself. The old Gomez store, prominent in many Pagosa Junction photographs, was moved to Pagosa Springs and is being restored at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds.

The village’s church, *Iglesia de San Juan*, built in 1927 with a distinctive pink roof, was located up on the hillside out of flood danger. Owned by the



Twelve miles west of Pagosa Junction/Gato is a state park sign for **Arboles Point**. This point provides the first good view of Navajo Lake. About 1/2 mile south of this point is the submerged remains of the original town of **Arboles**. *Los Arboles*, Spanish for “the trees,” was established in 1881 with the coming of the Railroad.



The town grew into a shipping center for cattle and sheep. Over the years, several mercantile stores, a post office, the San Pedro Catholic Church, and a school were established. Railroad facilities included a depot and water tank. The water tank was originally a standard wooden tank but was later replaced with an unusual tank fashioned from an old locomotive tender. It was later moved down the road to “new” Arboles (See Page 12.)



Arboles, Colorado. Photo: FCTS SR09-155

In 1958, residents of Los Arboles were notified that a new dam would be constructed on the San Juan River and their town would be inundated by Navajo Lake. By late 1961, the town was no more. Two other small settlements, Rosa and Los Martinez, were also inundated by the new lake. The Railroad was relocated north along today’s CR 500 and remnants of the grade and one bridge can still be seen along the road. A new railroad bridge and grade can also be seen at the **Watchable Wildlife Area** further down the road. If you venture south of the main road at Arboles Point, you will be in Navajo Lake State

Park and a pass is required. There is a campground at Arboles Point.



A few more miles and the Byway once again reaches pavement at Colorado Highway 151. Here an eleven-mile side trip north takes us to **Chimney Rock National Monument**.



This undiscovered gem is an intimate, off-the-beat-en-path archaeological site located at the southern edge of the San Juan Mountains. Visitors walk in the footsteps of the fascinating and enigmatic Ancestral

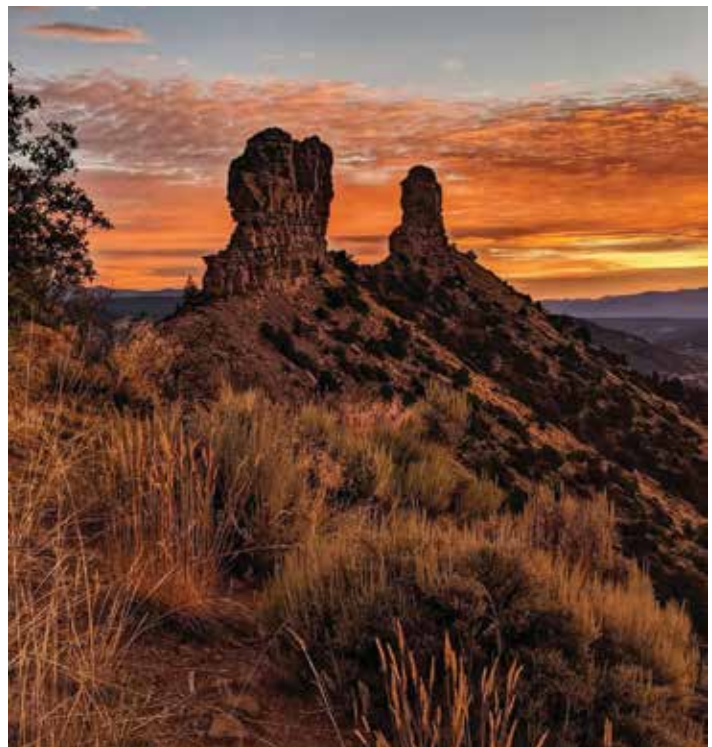


Photo by Mary Rose. Chimney Rock Interpretive Association

Puebloans of Chaco Canyon, following primitive pathways that haven't changed for 1,000 years. The Ancestral Puebloans also used Chimney Rock as an archaeoastronomy site, watching the night sky to predict seasons, planting and spiritual ceremonies.

Chimney Rock covers seven square miles and preserves 200 ancient homes and ceremonial buildings, some of which have been excavated for viewing and exploration, including a great kiva, a pit house, a multi-family dwelling, and a Chacoan-style great house pueblo.



Photo: Chimney Rock Interpretive Association

Chimney Rock is the highest in elevation of all the Chacoan sites, at about 7,000 feet above sea level. From the base, the hike to the top is just a half mile and it's rewarded with dramatic 360-degree views of Colorado and New Mexico. The U.S. Forest Service opened a new visitor's center at the Monument this year. A \$20 per vehicle fee is charged. Entry is free if you have one of the federal park passes.



Returning south from Chimney Rock, just after crossing the Piedra River, is the **Watchable Wildlife Area** on the east side of the highway. An excellent birding trail has been developed in conjunction with the State Park and the local Audubon chapter. The trail though the area first crosses an old railroad girder bridge and then follows the railroad grade for several miles. The bridge and grade were built in 1961 when the D&RGW line had to be relocated to make way for Navajo Lake. Ironically, the whole line was abandoned only eight years later. A State Park pass is not required to use the trail.



Continuing south on the Byway, we reach the turnoff for **Navajo Lake State Park**, considered

Colorado's answer to Lake Powell. The 2,100-acre park offers boating, fishing, trails, wildlife viewing, 138 camp sites, and three cabins. It attracts more than 300,000 visitors every year. The park's Visitor's Center offers information, displays about wildlife and the Railroad, and restrooms.

Navajo Lake extends for twenty miles south into New Mexico, totalling 15,600 acres, with about 3,000 acres on the Colorado side, and supplies water for agriculture, industrial, municipal and recreational uses.



Photo: John Porco

Just off the access road to the state park is the very unique water tank that once stood at the aforementioned submerged village of Arboles, now standing on the site of "new" Arboles. It was moved to its current location as Navajo Lake was filling.

The tank was crafted from the tender of standard gauge Steam Locomotive #1603. Careful observation of the faded sides of the tank will reveal a painted over D&RGW herald. Also at the tank is a small building which served some unknown Railroad purpose, as it originally had the Arboles station sign. Finally, there are two old drop bottom gondolas restored by a Boy Scout troop.



Moving west, we reach the small hamlet of **Allison**, just south of the main byway. Allison has several historic buildings including the 1920 Mount Allison Grange and the 1930 Allison Community Church, both still in use.



At the west end of town is a wonderful example of a classic 1920s gas station, abandoned in the 1950s. Across from the gas station is the site of the long-gone 1881 D&RGW depot.

Just south of the depot site on Railroad Avenue is the surviving Turkey Packers Coop warehouse. Many farmers in the area raised turkeys. Once or twice a year, they would gather at the warehouse, where live turkeys would be packed in crates and loaded onto D&RGW boxcars. Although the warehouse is off limits to visitors, we have been told that there are still turkey packing crates inside the building.

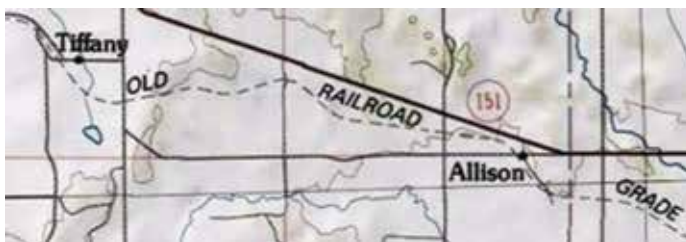


Allison Turkey Packing COOP. FCTS RD008-016

Further along Railroad Avenue are the abandoned St. Patrick's Catholic Church from 1925 with a very unique plaster siding and the foundation of the Railroad's section house.



Returning to the main Byway route and driving west four miles, will reach the turn-off to the town of **Tiffany**, about a mile south of CO151. The Railroad depot is long gone, but a railroad warehouse still exists.



Of particular note in Tiffany is the *Iglesia de San Antonio* Catholic Church, built in 1928. The church operated as a mission church from the largely Hispano Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Durango and was served by a visiting pastor. Regular services were held there until 1972. An annual Mass continues to be held each June to honor Saint Anthony.

Although the exterior of the church has deteriorated, the interior is very well preserved. A loft contains the organ that is original to the church and is still



Photo: John Porco

operable. The vestry is behind the altar and contains the original wood stove, historic vestments, and old Latin books containing certificates and records. Local families serve as caretakers for the church.

In 2019, the church was placed on Colorado's Most Endangered Places List and listed on the La Plata County Register of Historical Places. In 2020, a grant project was undertaken to assess the condition of the church and develop construction documents to address the needed repairs. The goal is to restore the church by 2028 for the 100-year celebration Mass.



From Tiffany, the D&RGW route went southwest through an area with only primitive roads. So, here the byway leaves the right of way, meeting it again in the town of **Ignacio**.



Ignacio was incorporated in 1913 and named for Ute Chief Ignacio (1828-1913), leader of the Weeminuchi Ute people and is the location of the Headquarters of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. The Southern Ute Indian Agency was established in 1877. The D&RGW built to Ignacio in 1881 and a depot was

built at the south end of town where the recycling center stands today. The depot was used in the filming of the 1950s movie “Around the World in Eighty Days.” It is reported that the depot was moved and still exists as a bed and breakfast somewhere in La Plata County.



eral William Jackson Palmer and the D&RG.

Today, Durango offers literally dozens of hotels, restaurants, stores, and all other manner of tourist amenities. Bypassed by the D&RG, Animas City faded away.



Photo: FCTS JW01-213.jpg



Durango, January, 1960. Photo: John West, FCTS JW01-002

Ignacio is the site of the architecturally spectacular Southern Ute Cultural Center. Timber and steel rise sixty feet toward a medicine wheel ceiling, offering a view of the sky. The Center features permanent and temporary exhibits celebrating the history and culture of the Southern Ute People. The Permanent Gallery tells the story of Ute people through large photographic curtains, life size replicas, video, audio, touchscreen equipment, and the “Circle of Life”, a multi-screen short film.

From Durango, the Railroad built a branch north to Silverton, today’s Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. In 1905, the Railroad also built a branch south to Farmington, New Mexico. The Railroad was concerned about a competitive threat that the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad might build a standard gauge branch from the south. At the time, the Railroad expected that the entire San Juan Extension would eventually be standard gauge. To forego competition from the Santa Fe, the Farmington branch was originally built as standard gauge. Of course, neither of these things happened, so the Farmington Branch was converted to narrow gauge in 1923. The discovery of oil and gas in the Farmington area in the 1950s kept the San Juan Extension alive into the 1960s. The Railroad hauled massive quantities of pipe and other drilling materials from over Cumbres Pass between Alamosa and Farmington.



Photo: Southern Ute Cultural Center

Adjacent to the Cultural Center is the equally striking Sky Ute Casino and Hotel, offering hotel services, four restaurants, an event venue, a bowling alley, and an RV park.



From Ignacio, the Byway departs again from the D&RGW right of way and heads west, then north to the western terminus at **Durango**.

The city of Durango was created by the D&RGW in 1881, after the city officials in nearby Animas City refused the demand of the Railroad for free land for a yard and depot, typical of the hardball tactics of Gen-

The Tracks Across the Border Byway offers many unique New Mexico and Colorado stories related to the Railroad, Native American and Hispano culture and prehistory that are not offered by the other byways in the United States. No other byway focuses as thoroughly on the economic and engineering heritage of the D&RGW. The route expands on the history and

culture of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and offers access to premier recreational and natural features. A free cell phone app providing an interactive tour guide is available from the Google and Apple stores in conjunction with the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad. Once downloaded in advance of a trip, the app “pings” at sites along the Byway with a description of the sites and photographs. A cell phone signal is not required during the tour.

The Byway website is tracksacrossborders.com. We hope you take the time to travel through history and culture on the Tracks Across the Border Byway!

John Porco is Executive Director of the Tracks Across Borders Byway Commission. He has been a member of the Friends for over thirty years and has served as a Friends Docent for more than twenty years since moving to Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

Since retiring as the President and General Manager of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, **John Bush** has been active in promoting the Track Across Borders Scenic Byway. He also deals on railroad matters as Bush Railroad Consulting, included locomotive restoration, passenger car building and rebuilding processes and management organization.

Opening Day, July 1, 2022 (Hallelujah!)

It was a long time coming, way too long. Last year’s fire at the Osier Dining Hall was the first of several disasters that threw the 2022 Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad schedule out the window. Because of lack of winter access, all post-fire reconstruction work at Osier ground to a stop in December. It was clear that it would not be ready by the traditional Memorial Day opening date, so opening was delayed until June 11th.

Then high fire danger in the southwest necessitated the closure of the National Forests along the Railroad’s right-of-way and Opening Day was again postponed. This was followed by the failure of the Chama water system and you can’t run a steam locomotive without water.

Finally, with water mostly restored, the beginning of the monsoon season and a green light from the Forest Service, Opening Day was rescheduled for

July 1st, the Friday before the Fourth of July weekend

As expected, “Wacky” Roger Hogan was there in Chama with his drone and cameras and captured the long awaited beginning of the 2022 season.



Photos: Roger Hogan

Moonlight, Wine and Steam! What could be better?

Photos by Don Atkinson and Dave Jenkins

If you didn’t make the Moonlight Train July 11th, you missed a great ride. With the rain we have recently experienced, the scenery was lush and green. We spotted lots of deer and the most “bovines” ever seen grazing along the tracks. There was lots of wine from Black Mesa Winery to the delight of many.



While the Osier Dining Hall restoration was still a work-in-progress, the food was terrific, despite the unfinished sheetrock walls. The trip featured a great run-by at Cascade Creek with the whistle echoing off the canyon and hillsides. And, we even saw the moon—several times—on the way back to Chama.

Dave Jenkins

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ON THE C&TS, 2022

WORK SESSION A, B, C, AND D PLUS SPECIAL SESSIONS

MAY 16-JUNE 24, 2022

A Note from the Editor: This has been a awkward year, not only for the Friends but also for the Railroad and the Village of Chama. Last fall there was the fire at the Osier Dining Hall. Due to the high fire danger, the Railroad was not running during Sessions A through D. There was no Session A in Chama and Session D in Chama was cut short due to the failure of the Chama water system. Still, Session C and two work days were photographed by Chronicle staffer Michael Mee. There was also a lack of Chronicle volunteers through much of the Chama sessions and, with the exception of Don Atkinson and Sharon McGee, the volunteers in Antonito were too busy working to take many photographs during Session B though D. Work session projects are represented here, grouped by project name and number, though due to lack of photos and information, not all projects are shown.

Antonito, Colorado

0732: Lettering Boxcar 3159

Team Leader: Fred Pittroff
Crew: Dale Jacobs, Vance Benson, Mike Fitzpatrick, Kathy Bargsten



0741: Annual Caboose Maintenance

Team Leader: Don Atkinson



1118: Restore UTLX Tank Cars 1036 and 11037; 1246: Restore 11050 Tank Car to Original GRAMPS car; 1332: Restore GRAMPS Tank 11056 Car to operational condition

Team Leaders: Chris Trunk
Assistant: Randy Worwag



1317: Reconstruction of Drop Bottom Gondola 371

Team Leader: Bill Kepner
Assistant: Warren Ringer



1352: Repair Bunk Car 04407 for use as Volunteer Sleeping Quarters

Team Leader: Chuck Dueker





1384: Dismantle Drop Bottom Gondola for Parts

Team Leader: Don Atkinson



1115: Restoration of MOW 0252 (1889 Tourist Sleeper Car 470)

Team Leader: Ian Kelly

Assistant Leader: Don Atkinson



1354: Maintain and Repair MW02 to Operational Condition

Team Leader: Jim McGee



0701: Landscaping Antonito Yard and Friends' Ed Lowrance CRF / CSF Complex

Team Leader: Cathy Rheinberger

Assistant Leader: Kathy Bargsten



1197: Construct Period Trucks for Passenger Coaches
Team Leader: Ian Kelly



Repair and Painting of Highside Gondola



Cumbres, Colorado

1005: SHPO Reconstruction of Car Inspectors House
Team Leaders: Bob Conry, John Pierce
Assistant: Vance Behr



C&TS Right of Way

0750: Maintain All Railroad Signage Along ROW
Team Leader: Mike Mahoney



Chama, New Mexico

0720: Car Painting, Chama-Based
Team Leader: Don Stewart



0730: Car Lettering, Chama-Based

Team Leaders: L. Jennings and Stephen. Jorgensen



1186: Cosmetic Restoration Engine 483 and Tender for Static Display

Team Leader: Robert Schoen





1286: Construction of Friends Storage Building (off-site)
Team Leaders: Bob Conry, John Sutkus, Bob Reib
Assistant: Robert Horejsi



1336: Maintenance and Repair of Deteriorated Cattle Car 5691
Team Leader: Bill Lock



1312: Reconstruct High Side Gondola 1000
Team Leader: Markus Hagemann



1285: Repair Boxcar 3073 and Correct Deficiencies
Team Leader: Terry Rider



1351: Reconvert P-Box 207 to Rider Box Car 3414
Team Leader: Andrew Hackmeyer





PLUS: A special shout-out to the many volunteers who provide the support that keeps the work running smoothly, including:

The Kitchen Staff in both Chama and Antonito



The registration and merchandise sales staff.



The Site Leaders who coordinate the projects along the line.

**0740: Mechanical Maintenance, Chama-Based
Team Leader: Roy Lorentz**



The folks who organize and maintain our tools, equipment and supplies.



And especially to YOU, the volunteers who do the heavy lifting, hammer swinging, power tool operation, painting, lettering, weeding, trimming, planning, problem-solving and so much more that keeps both the Friends and the Railroad rolling. Thank you!

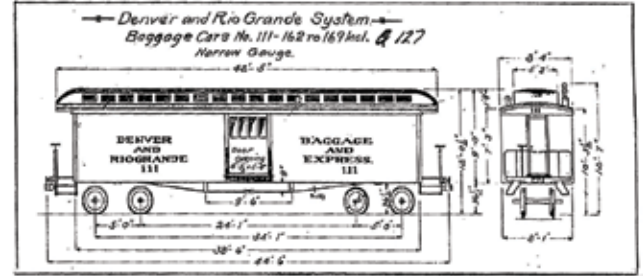


The Chronicling Staff who record our progress and provide photos for the *Dispatch*, Facebook, the Friends' website, other social media outlets and advertising and promotional materials.



RESTORATION OF D&RG EXPRESS BAGGAGE CAR 163

JUNE 19, 2022: TRANSPORT TO COLORADO SPRINGS



D&RGW No. 163 is a railroad express car of the type known as a “BE,” a baggage express car. The type came into use in the late 19th century to provide transfer of baggage for passengers and express shipments, later known as REA, the Railway Express Agency. Constructed in 1881 by the D&RG, it was originally numbered 15. In 1885, it was renumbered 163. The Car was in regular passenger service until passenger service was discontinued on January 31, 1951. During the later years it ran as part of the *San Juan* consist between Alamosa and Durango, Colorado.

The Car no longer has its original narrow gauge trucks or under-car mechanical equipment. During salvage in November 1951, all steel under the car was cut

off, leaving the car’s wooden shell, which was then sold.

Baggage Express Car 163 is historically significant. As an Express Car, No. 163 was one of nineteen cars of that series in service in 1886 and was among the newest cars constructed in 1883. By 1942, most of the older baggage cars were sold to the National Railways of Mexico.

As shown here, on June 19th, 2022, the Car was relocated from the Friends Car Storage Facility in Antonito, Colorado, to the Friends’ Colorado Springs Restoration Facility located at the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum.

The restoration of Express Baggage Car 162 is expected to take between five to seven years to complete.

Photos by Don Atkinson, Michael Mee and Bill Lowes







Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.
4421 McLeod Rd. NE, Suite F
Albuquerque, NM 87109
www.friendsofcumbrestoltec.org
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Photo by Michael Mee, Session C, June 16, 2022