

C&TS DISPATCH

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C&TS DISPATCH

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.

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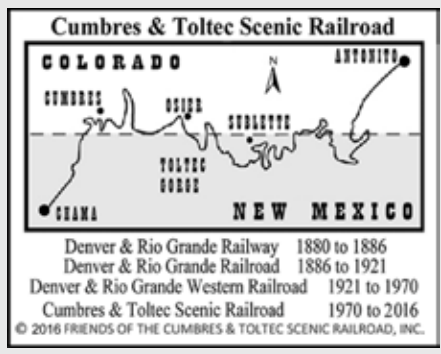
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The C&TS Dispatch is published four times each year by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Inc., 4421 McLeod Rd. NE, Suite F, Albuquerque, NM 87109. The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Inc., is a New Mexico nonprofit corporation. The Friends is the official museum arm 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. As the museum arm, 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 \$30.00 per year, outside the USA membership is \$40.00. 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.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Historic Preservation at its Finest

If one sums up in a nutshell what the Friends organization does, simply stated we can say that we are involved in the preservation and interpretation of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and its predecessor the Denver & Rio Grande Western.

As the museum arm of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad our members passionately give of their resources and many volunteer via participation in the annual work sessions held in Antonito, Chama, Cumbres and Osier plus ongoing efforts on the Tourist Sleeper in Colorado Springs. Docents staff regularly scheduled passenger trains and we also have a very dedicated library and photo collection crew based here in Albuquerque.

During my time as President of the organization we've had some huge accomplishments. We raised \$1.3 million and oversaw the rebuild of K27 Locomotive 463 to operational condition and authored the case for making the Cumbres & Toltec (San Juan Extension) a National Historic Landmark and it was added to the National registry a few years ago.. Our crews also brought Pile Driver OB back to life!

Over the course of six months, the Friends offered and operated two photo freight charters over the railroad. Last October we ran a Maintenance of Way train from Antonito to Osier and return, capturing the beauty of the fall colors through the San Juan Mountains. This single day charter provided some unique photo opportunities for the approximately 40 passengers we had onboard. The following day our Pile Driver OB and Derrick OP crews ran demonstrations to cap off a truly successful weekend. From this charter the organization did receive some very positive feedback from the participants aboard the train.

Just a few weeks ago in mid-March we operated a Flanger charter out of Antonito over a two-day period and actually ended up making it beyond Sublette. Although we were a bit shy on snow for that weekend, our charter did eventually run into some snow to plow west of Big Horn. The weather was very favorable and again we had forty avid photographers who showed for the event. I might add

Cover photo by Don Atkinson

that they came from as far away as Great Britain and Australia!

A great deal of work goes into such charters and the Friends use these as fundraising events with the profits being plowed right back into support of our overall mission of interpretation and preservation of the C&TS. An enormous amount of appreciation must go to those who had a direct hand in making these charters such a success. The key is paying attention to detail so as to ensure that we put as historically accurate train together as possible. We ended up with a pretty representative train.

The front cover of the Dispatch features a photo taken by Friends member Don Atkinson on Sunday March 13, 2016. On the back cover is a Robert Richardson photo taken February 20, 1956 at the same location. Although there are a few differences the resemblance is pretty remarkable!

I have looked at these photos many times over and made it a point to pass them around at the spring banquet a week after the charter ran. These photos bring a smile to my face and I believe it is all about the sense of accomplishment for our organization. Because of the efforts of so many within the Friends we recreated a Denver & Rio Grande Western flanger train from sixty years ago! Now....how cool is that?

I think this is as good as it gets. The fruits of our collective labor as an organization being showcased and although there have been numerous photo charters over the years this one was very satisfying and rewarding. Thanks again to all of you who make this possible and yes, your work is noticed!



ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END

Sometime in early 2012 Tim Tennant asked if I would be willing to assume the editor's position for the Friends' "Dispatch" newsletter. I saw the offer as a way to contribute even from about 2000 miles away and agreed to give it a shot. The experience has been much more fulfilling than I could have ever imagined and these past four years will be cherished when I look back on them. I have been honored to get to know many more members than would have otherwise been possible. I don't use "honored" lightly. The dedication, knowledge and skills of the people I've come to know demands, at the least, the use of that word.

Now, however, life has dictated that I move on and it was with regret that I informed Tim this would be my last issue.

To all of those I have worked with over the past four years, thank you! Your input, articles, assistance and encouragement, is the fuel that kept my fire going. I trust that your co-operation will continue.



We want to pass along that Tim "Shellback" Smith has identified photos from the 2016 work sessions that are now in the gallery section of the Friends' web site. Please enjoy as you view them at your leisure. If you ever note any errors feel free to call the Albuquerque Office at 505-880-1311 as the Shellback volunteers on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 3:30-5:00pm MDT.

On May 23, 2016, Friends from around the world will gather for a meeting, a meeting far more compelling and meaningful than any high school or college reunion could be. Many of these men and women have worked together for years, some for decades. This is a homecoming and a chance to reconnect. This is another opportunity to make a difference, to do something truly meaningful. Deep bonds have been forged in the fires of railroad preservation and restoration, a passion shared by all who call themselves Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

This brotherhood is not exclusive. At each of the seven week-long Work Sessions in 2016, new (and often far younger) members will be welcomed aboard with open arms. Greenhorns are shown the ropes and can make lasting contributions on their first day at work. The vast database of knowledge earned through decades of hard work is carefully and deliberately passed down to the next generation of Friends to ensure the long-term survival of the priceless historic artifacts that abound on the C&TS.

Director Ed Lowrance has described the Friends as “set decorators” in a Hollywood movie. The myriad of track-side structures, signage, support buildings, and the fleet of historic cars are the tapestry, or “wallpaper,” that completes the visitors’ immersion into the mid-20th century. Without these, the magic and mystique of the Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge is largely lost, and the Cumbres and Toltec becomes a simple train ride.

Project Leader and Director John Eng has said, “We are saving something that won't be here if we don't save it. This is much better than donating cash; we’re a part of it. We realize that what we had as children has gone away and we need to save what is left for future generations. The work is very enjoyable; it gives you a good feeling inside and keeps you coming back.”

There are never enough people to do the work, it seems. Projects can take multiple sessions, stretching over years to accomplish. Other projects are simply shelved until more people are available. Our current economic climate has exacerbated this situation. Critical work is still accomplished, of course, but so much more could be done under different circumstances. In short, the Friends need more friends to come out and contribute.

Many come during vacations from their regular jobs, giving up rest to work on the railroad, knowing that they’re making a difference. Members are able to work at their own pace. The work is important, but no one is pushed by the leadership. For most people the adjustment to the 7-to-10,000-foot altitude is a major feat in itself. The work environment is relaxed and easy-going, but focused on the task at hand.

The range of job types and skills needed is such that anyone with an interest can get involved and contribute. This isn’t just for railroad fans and students of history. Gardeners, woodworkers, cooks, painters, metal workers, computer specialists, electricians, researchers, and many other professions and hobbies are needed at every Work Session. Husbands and wives, parents and children, and brothers and sisters are common sights. The work of preserving this priceless treasure of American history is for all of us to tend to. Who else will?

The Work Sessions run through late September. Please consider joining the efforts. Your labors will not be in vain, and you’re certain to return home with a feeling of accomplishment... and many new Friends.

Jason Rose

Dispatch Deadlines

To establish a dependable schedule for mailing the C&TS Dispatch, The following deadlines for material to be received at the Friends’ office will be observed:

Summer Issue Mail on June 31, 2016 All materials must be received by May . 27, 2016

Fall Issue 2015 Mail on Sept 30, 2016 All materials must be received by Aug 31, 2016

Dorman Collection Quicker and Easier

Quite recently, the Dorman Narrow Gauge Photo Collection has emerged on a new website that you will find is much, much faster and easier to use than our original site <http://www.cumbrestoltec.org>

The address for the new site is: <http://ngtrainpics.photoshelter.com/>

The photos are searchable by keywords and multiple keywords separated by commas may be used.

You may select photos by moving them to the “Lightbox” which is just a holding area for further review. Should you wish to purchase and download the photos, move them to the “Cart” which works like many shopping carts you have encountered on the web. Any image may be downloaded and purchased for \$4.95 using PayPal. These are .jpeg images of about 2 MB in size, but still of high quality.

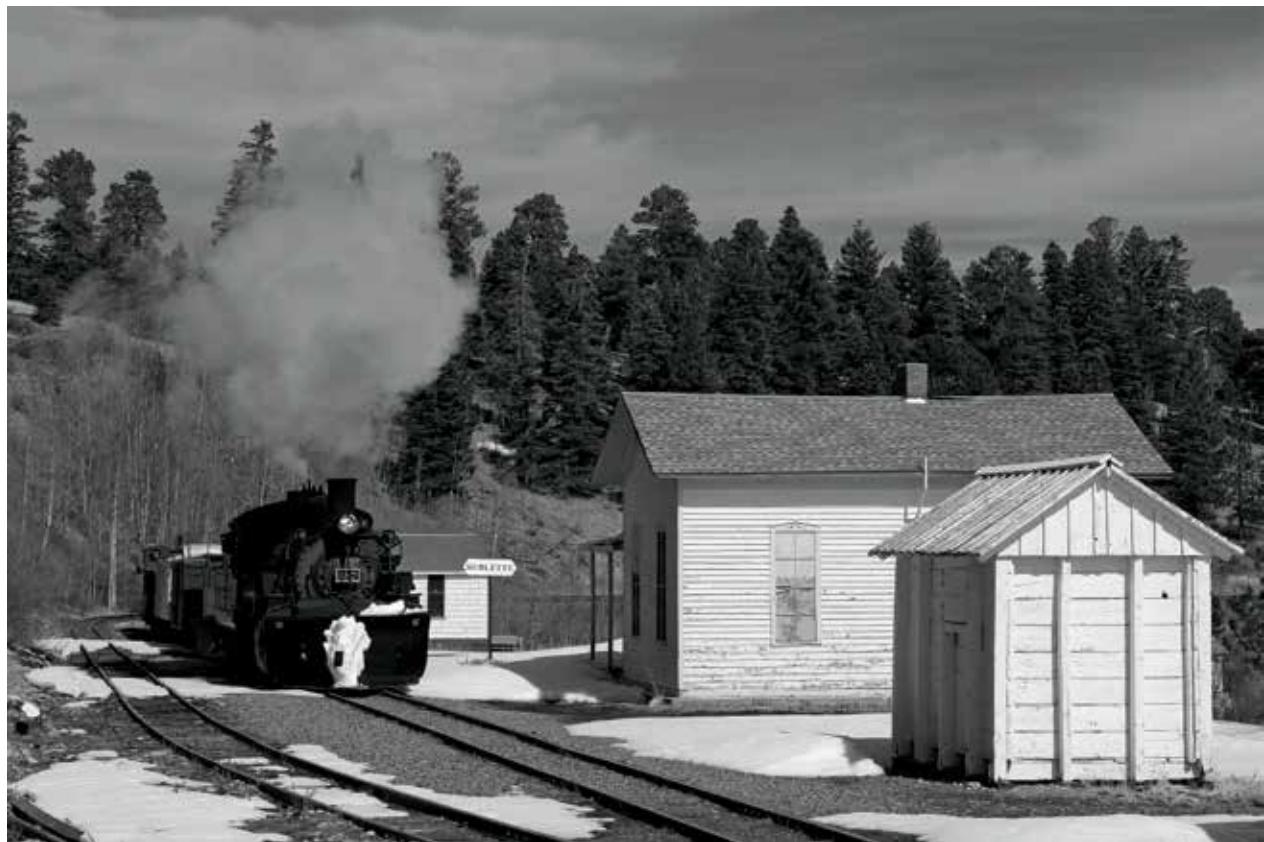
Friends’ members can still get images of the highest .tiff (20 MB) quality for \$2.50 on a CD-ROM at the original Dorman site. The new site will make your searching and selection much quicker – just make a list of the catalog numbers and email them to DormanCollection@CumbresToltec.org for rapid processing. Allow about a week to have them in hand.

Tim in his column wrote a bit about the Friends’ flanger charter back in March. The following photos were taken by Don Atkinson and he graciously offered them to us for use in the Dispatch.











Notes from a Volunteer

I've known about the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad for nearly thirty years. I'm a freelance video engineer working on feature films and first encountered the delights of the railroad at the tail end of a massive shoot on the film "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" after filming in Spain, the UK, Germany, Italy and Jordan. The opening of the film takes place on a circus train which we shot just outside of Antonito and subsequently over several miles of track including the fake water tower we built near the Lobato trestle. The only deal was that we had to wait for the daily train to pass by (in those days there was just the one) before we could continue filming. I liked what I saw and many years later, having relocated to the USA, I joined the Friends. As it happened, I had a few days off in 2013 so I volunteered for session G and had a lot of fun working on the construction of new passenger trucks in the CRF in Antonito.



I finished a big Disney film in 2015 and with time to spare, I thought I would make a further visit to the railroad so volunteered for sessions E and F. I also signed up for the fireman's course that took place the week before which is run by the railroad. This is a 4-day course and was great fun but was also really hard work. It makes you appreciate what it takes to run a steam locomotive, particularly on the 14 miles of 4% grade from Chama at 7,000ft up to the top of Cumbres Pass at 10,000ft. I live on the coast in California so the transition from sea level to even 7,000ft was a real shock to the system!

Session E in Antonito was fairly quiet –

just a dozen or so volunteers working on the Gramps tank car, the drop-bottom gondola and the passenger trucks, the project I had once again volunteered to work on. The Team Leader on this project is Russ Hanscom who is a truly multi-talented engineer. He also cooks a pretty mean burger. In the two years since I had last been to Antonito, the passenger truck project had made good progress and the first pair of the trucks was now ready for assembly from what was now a kit of parts so Russ, Leon Beier and I set to work and assembled the frames.

This particular pair of trucks is constructed from white oak sandwiched between steel plates with angled cast reinforcing brackets. The design of these trucks dates back to 1880's and are destined to go under a 3rd class Pullman sleeper being worked on at the Friend's Colorado Springs workshop. In just over a day, we had one truck assembled and by the Wednesday morning, both frames were assembled. All we need now are wheelsets, bearings and brakes and we are good to go!

Session F was much busier, with nearly 40 volunteers, so the CRF was a real hive of activity. Many years ago, I had worked at British Railway's Doncaster locomotive works in the UK and this week really reminded me of the days of my miss-spent youth even down to the whistle that blows when it is time to break for lunch. One thing was different though – the food is much better in the CRF! And the cooks are much better looking! More progress was made on parts for the passenger trucks and the railroad did some shunting for us – taking out the fin-



Our Family Tradition- The C&TS RR

Story and photos by Larry Gibson

Most every family seems to have a meaningful place or activity over the course of time that is treasured by each individual. It is a place that evokes fond memories and at the same time causes dreams of perhaps more to come. Such is the Cumbres and Toltec scenic RR to our family for the last 45 years.

The world of the Colorado Narrow Gauge came to my attention in far away Michigan during the mid 1960's through a travelogue program at Michigan State University. By 1965 I had my own copies of Lucius Beebe's great railroad books: Rio Grande and Mixed Train Daily. The seed had been planted in the mind that the world of the narrow gauge out west must be seen first hand!!

During the summer of my senior year of High School, a trip with my parents to see the narrow gauge first hand came to pass. My father, who had been in the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and had ridden the D&RGW to his camp in Utah, was ready to return and explore. For me fortunately, it was also the last year of narrow gauge operation by the D&RGW across the Alamosa-Durango route. Again in 1970 my father and I returned to see Chama and Cumbres Pass during the "long night" when no trains ran over the mainline as the new highway 17 was being put through over Cumbres Pass.



That year we also rode the Silverton branch of the D&RGW just before the 1970 disastrous flood. 1973 rolled around and the third trip to the new C&TS RR would become the charm and linchpin to what has followed since.

As a recently married couple, my wife, Nancy and I headed out for our first trip together in the west. K-36 483 and those rider boxcars took us out over the line. Lunch time in the open meadow picnic grounds at Osier, primitive and at the same idyllic, made the railroad so very special to us as a couple. This trip was the one that launched the many which have followed right up to the present. When our boys, John and Keith, were old enough to understand and remember the railroad we started coming back on a regular basis during their elementary through high school years. This became our family tradition- to travel west, to ride the narrow gauge trains, while exploring the abandoned narrow gauge grades and mining operations in Colorado and New Mexico. Each of us looked forward to these summer explorations as a family.



The last trip we all had out together came in the mid 1990s as the boys were graduating High School and moving on

with their own lives and careers. Nancy and I then continued to visit and enjoy the railroad as in the past as often as we could.



In the meantime our oldest son, John, married and took a trip to ride the railroad as part of his honeymoon in a similar way as we had done about 25 years before. Our youngest son Keith's career path took him up to the Blackhills and Rapid City. On trips to visit him we took advantage of the short distance to Colorado and New Mexico to take side trips down to

visit the Cumbres and Toltec with him. In the fall of 2014 John was able to get away for a few days and come with me to ride the trains again. We had a very special time riding, chasing, and exploring the old narrow gauge grades in Colorado and New Mexico.



All of these trips led up to 2015 when both boys de-

ecided to bring dad back to the RR for a glorious 5 day fling in the fall. The planets were in perfect alignment. Vacation time, work commitments, and health issues, worked out for this very special time together. This trip became one of those life comes full circle moments as the boys drove Dad west one more time to relive our family tradition.

Over these 5 extraordinary days we witnessed a 34 car freight made up of most the restored cars of the FOCTS, rode across the full line on Train 216 in perfect fall weather and foliage, enjoyed a day to chase, a tremendous ride on RGS Galloping Goose #5 to Osier and return to Chama, and the MoW work train equipment demonstration in Antonito on the last day. It truly turned out to be a trip of a lifetime capping off the many that came before.

Just a perfect time to enjoy the Railroad at its fullest in the most colorful season of the year.

All who read this article will undoubtedly have their own special memories of being on these 64 miles of narrow gauge railroad over the years. You can't help but smile inside when the railroad comes to mind for its truly a treasure to be enjoyed by all generations. For our family the C&TS will always be that one destination that we've shared and will be a fabric in our lives as time rolls on.

As with all family traditions we look forward to that next adventure out on the railroad! Can't wait!

An Enjoyable Journey to New Orleans

The Friends ran another successful fundraising private car charter from Los Angeles to New Orleans and return February 12th-19th. Our charter of four private cars consisted of; ex-Santa Fe Lounge Acoma, ex-Santa Fe 10-6 Sleeper Palm Leaf, ex-Pennsylvania 10-6 Sleeper Silver Rapids and ex-CB&Q Round End Observation Dome Car Sliver Solarium.

Our charter ran behind Amtrak's Sunset Limited and upon arrival in New Orleans we spent three nights in the Big Easy. The weather was grand during our stay so the group could enjoy the sights plus all the wonderful food New Orleans has to offer. The group of forty-six was treated to some great cuisine aboard the train along with some nice scenery and fantastic ambiance. It was a great way to spent Valentine's Day and the days around it.

We'll continue to work on future charters and if you are interested please note the information contained in this Dispatch about our autumn color "circle" charter that will take us from Los Angeles to Portland then onto Chicago via the Empire Builder route and back to L.A. This multiple day journey will offer numerous day-tripper segments to choose from plus a limited number of overnight bedroom accommodations.





*"All roads, it is said, lead to Rome.
All railroads in Colorado try to lead to Leadville!"*

— A. A. Hayes, Harper's New Monthly Magazine, February, 1880

Silver Rails

THE RAILROADS OF LEADVILLE, COLORADO

BY CHRISTOPHER JAMES

Hardbound, 288 pages
Over 400 photographs
(inc. many never published before)
in black & white and color
18 route maps
7 historic maps
Bibliography
Notes
1860-present Timeline
Comprehensive Index

"A visual and factual feast that fills a long overdue void on the history of Colorado standard and narrow gauge railroading... A thoroughly informative and enjoyable read. Books of this quality are seldom seen and certainly all-too-rare these days."

— Bob Schoppe, President, Denver South Park & Pacific Historical Society

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Silver Rails: THE RAILROADS OF LEADVILLE, COLORADO is the story of the *Denver & Rio Grande*, the *Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe*, the *Colorado Midland* and the *Denver South Park & Pacific* as they battled the mountains, weather, finances and each other to access the wealth that was pouring from Leadville's mines. This is also the story of the laborers, railroaders and empire builders who endured avalanches, fires, accidents, angry stockholders, financial ruin and even murder to build and operate the railroads that helped put the magic in the "Magic City" of Leadville.

Review the complete Table of Contents and download a FREE chapter
for your pre-purchase consideration at:
<http://www.silverrailsleadville.com>

For each copy of Silver Rails ordered through the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, the author donates \$23.98 (40% of the purchase price) to the Friends for preservation and restoration of the C&TS, a National Historic Landmark! To order through the Friends, call Gwen @ 505-880-1311.

Sierra Grande Press



**Private Railcar Circle Trip
Los Angeles-Portland-Chicago-Los Angeles
Day Segments and Overnight Options
September 24-October 3, 2016**

There's no better way to enjoy the wonders of Fall foliage than aboard a private railcar. Our Fall charter journey emphasizes affordable day trips as our consist makes a circle trip over three of Amtrak's most scenic long distance routes. We've paired two exceptionally restored private railcars: the ex-Milwaukee Road Business Car *Montana* and ex-Santa Fe Buffet Lounge Car *Acoma*. You'll enjoy private-car travel at its best.

Limited day-trip space is available on eleven segments. If you've longed to experience private-car travel but found it unaffordable, here's a unique opportunity to enjoy the excitement and ambiance of rail travel in times past. The number of passengers will be limited, so riders will have sufficient lounge space to relax, view the passing countryside, and enjoy their time onboard. Fares include snacks, soft drinks, wine, beer and meals as specified.



Overnight space is offered for three separate legs of the charter in two bedrooms on the *Montana*. One is a double bedroom, the other a master bedroom with a double bed that folds back into the wall, creating private daytime seating. Meals are included, as are snacks, soft drinks, wine and beer.



Scenery, scenery and more scenery is our theme! Our journey will take us over the *Coast Starlight* route from Los Angeles to Portland, eastbound on the *Empire Builder* to the Windy City, and finally back west on the *Southwest Chief*. Day trip segments will afford passengers the opportunity to view the Pacific Ocean along the California Coast, the majestic mountains and forests of Oregon, the Columbia River Gorge, Glacier National Park, the mighty Mississippi south of the Twin Cities, and Raton Pass in northern New Mexico.



Day Segments – One Way, Fares Per Person

DATE	STATION/ Departure	STATION/ Arrival	MEALS Enroute	Friends of C&TS Fare*	Regular Fare
Coast Starlight					
9-24-16	Los Angeles, CA 10:10am	Oakland, CA 9:24pm	Lunch, Dinner	\$290	\$315
9-25-16	Klamath Falls, OR 8:17am	Eugene, OR 12:36pm	Bkfst.	\$250	\$275
9-25-16	Eugene, OR 12:36pm	Portland, OR 3:32pm	Lunch	\$250	\$275
9-26-16	Portland, OR 4:45pm	Spokane, WA 12:13am	Dinner	\$290	\$315
Empire Builder					
9-27-16	Whitefish, MT 7:36am	Havre, MT 12:57pm	Bkfst, Lunch	\$290	\$315
9-27-16	Havre, MT 1:07pm	Minot, ND 9:22pm	Dinner	\$250	\$275
9-28-16	Saint Cloud, MN 5:14am	St.Paul/Minn,MN 7:43am		\$150	\$175
9-28-16	St. Paul/Minn, MN 8:00am	Chicago, IL 3:55pm	Bkfst, Lunch	\$290	\$315
Southwest Chief					
10-1-16	Chicago, IL 3:00pm	Kansas Cty,MO 10:11pm	Dinner	\$290	\$315
10-2-16	Dodge City, KS 5:25am	Las Vegas, NM 12:38pm	Breakfast	\$250	\$275
10-3-16	Las Vegas, NM 12:38pm	Flagstaff, AZ 8:51pm	Lunch, Dinner	\$290	\$315

* Join the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad for as little as \$30/year.

Bedroom Accommodations aboard the Montana

Fares are per-person, double occupancy, one way

Coast Starlight

Los Angeles, CA-Portland, OR 1 night

Depart LAX 9-24-16 at 10:19am Arrive PDX 9-25-16 at 3:55pm

Master Bedroom	\$1,950/person	Double
Bedroom	\$1,700/person	

Empire Builder

Portland, OR-Chicago, IL 2 nights

Depart PDX 9-26-16 at 4:45pm Arrive CHI 9-28-16 at 3:55pm

Master Bedroom	\$2,400/person
Double Bedroom	\$2,050/person

Southwest Chief

Chicago, IL-Los Angeles 2nights

Depart CHI 10-1-16 at 3:00pm Arrive LAX 10-3-16 at 8:15am

Master Bedroom	\$2,400/person
Double Bedroom	\$2,050/person



This charter is sponsored by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. and serves as a fundraiser that supports the organization’s ongoing mission of preservation and interpretation. Reserve your space now as we expect both the day-trip segments and the bedroom accommodations to go quickly. Payment for day-trip passage will require full payment upon reservation. Bedroom reservations will require a \$250/person deposit.

Please contact Tim Tennant at 505-880-1311 or e-mail timtennant@cumbrestoltec.org for information or reservations.

Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. 4421 McLeod Road NE, Suite F, Albuquerque, NM 87109

Yard and Train Hosts: A Vital Update

by Spencer Wilson

In the spring 1999 issue of the C&TS Dispatch, we described the Yard and Train Host Program as "An Idea Whose Time Has Come!" Now we are embarked on an expanded, functioning, program of volunteers riding the trains and working the yards to reach as many of the visitors and passengers as possible. And we are reaching them, with more volunteer train hosts and many more new members for the Friends as a result of the volunteers' enthusiasm. Since 1997, Howard Bunté, founder of the program, has led us into a new dimension.

In those first few years, the train hosts were active only during the work sessions or on opening day. During the 2000 season, however, the program expanded dramatically. We covered about 60 to 70 per cent of the scheduled trains, with some other special moments thrown in. This was a very impressive contribution in light of the "Crisis of Year 2000." Perhaps it was because of the crisis that so many more volunteers came forward to work the trains and yards.

One very significant contribution in 2000 was in the numbers of new members signed up on the trains or in the yards by the hosts. There was a flurry of new members enlisting—an estimated 300 plus—as reported by Judy Lock in the home office. The hosts, of course, were handed a major drawing card in July when the new Walking Tour Brochure was published. The enthusiastic reaction of visitors was a joy to behold upon their opening the brochure. As an additional benefit, our continued "open door policy" added to that universal comment—"We can walk around and even go into buildings?" Needless to say, the hosts offered cautionary words about being careful and "Do not argue with the locomotives—they will win!" In addition, speaking from personal experience, accompanying the folks with a guided tour produced marked effects—and not a few of those became new members.



Train Hosts Frank Yockey, Joanne Yockey, and Carol Salisbury ready to greet the passengers on the morning train out of Chama, June 16, 1999. (Photo by Tom Cardin)

A case in point is the brochures in the hands of the train hosts. A young Swiss couple who visited the C&TS, Herr Doktor Professor (biology) und Herren Robert Furrer of Sempach, Switzerland, joined the Friends after returning home. We sent them one of the new brochures; it hadn't been published when they visited the railroad. Robert promptly offered to translate the brochure into German. He has done so and the German edition should be available by next season. The brochure is being translated into Spanish, and we have hopes for a Japanese edition. These are the three most popular languages according to the New Mexico Visitor Center on Interstate 25 south of Santa Fe.

There are a "host" of similar stories (no pun intended) from the train hosts as we meet and talk with our public. Last September, Bruce Williams of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, sent Howard Bunté his manuscript "Reflections of a Train Docent [Host] During Training." Here are some of his observations.

At the orientation meeting on Sunday afternoon, Frank Yockey stressed being positive. I suspect we can add polite and courteous since long after they forget that Cascade

Trestle is 137 feet high or that 487's tender holds 5000 gallons of water, passengers will remember if the staff was friendly.

Humor can be a quick and pleasurable way to connect with strangers. Yet I don't want to come off as flip. So I hope I didn't offend the retired IBM gentleman who referred to "real trains out of Denver" as a preface to his question when I corrected him by noting [that] he was on a real train. I think he intended standard gauge or non-tourist when he said "real." He and his traveling companions did take my suggestion about riding the entire line rather than merely an Osier turn in order to experience the variety offered by the whole route. By mid-afternoon there were smiles and laughs when I mentioned REAL cinders, REAL rain, and REAL wet, so I think things were cool between us but one never knows for sure. My parting comment was: "It's been a real pleasure having you ride today." I hope he knew I meant it.

While passing between cars I notice a middle-aged couple on the vestibule doing some prolonged and serious swapping of chewing gum from close range. Although they are oblivious to the surrounding scenery or the historical significance of what we just passed, no need to ask them if they are

enjoying the trip. That would only demonstrate my inability to grasp the obvious.

One trip I met a fellow who could be the Marlboro Man's older brother. Given his weathered face, it appears that for every hour I have spent in the office, he's spent five out on the range. [He] told me he wanted to see from the train what he had heretofore only viewed from the saddle as he used to bring cattle to Osier on horseback. He also told me he became a widower in January after 40 years of marriage. It's obviously a tender topic, so I express my sympathy and let him choose the direction for our conversation. For a man who has known outdoor work in rugged conditions, he is very soft-spoken, considerate, and humble, though he's quite knowledgeable about the area, its weather, and livestock.

What happens if I don't get certified as a docent [Host]? Do I get bumped to freight service?

Upon learning I am from Iowa, some passengers ask if we have these back home as they point to the nearby mountains. "Yes." I reply and then quickly add, "except ours are all flat!"

Bruce ended with thanks to members of the Friends and the employees "who greatly contributed to the efforts to try and train me. Their knowledge, friendliness, patience, openness, concern for safety, good-naturedness, and humor delightfully enhanced a unique and memorable week for me. Now, was it Mud Tunnel or Rock Tunnel that is 360 feet long? Hmm... where are those fact sheets?"

Memorable comments for the memorable experience of being a Yard and Train Host on the C&TS. Come join us! Howard Bunté would like to hear from you if you're interested in joining or would like more information about the Yard and Train Host team. Training sessions can be scheduled at times other than during the volunteer work sessions. Write Howard at the Friends office: 5732 Osuna Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

Spencer is past-president of the Historical Society of New Mexico and a former member of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission. He is a Friends director. 🍀

BOOK REVIEW

by Spencer Wilson

Riding the Rails: Teenagers on the Move During the Great Depression, by Errol Lincoln Uys, TV Books, New York, NY, 1999.

Perhaps the two dominant events in American, if not world, history in the 20th Century were World War II and the Great Depression. This book is about the Depression and the effect it had on the youth during the 1930s. This work is the outgrowth of a television documentary "Riding the Rails," which drew primarily on letters and oral histories of three thousand men and women who hopped freight trains in search of jobs, food, shelter, and, in a few instances, adventure. These three thousand were only a fraction of the estimated two hundred and fifty thousand teenage "hoboes" who roamed America between 1929 and the outbreak of World War II. Of course, it was that war which ended the Depression.

These are first-hand accounts drawn from the mass of information collected by the producers of the documentary and this companion book.

Most of the stories are of youngsters from ten years onward, driven from home by the mass unemployment caused by the stock market crash and failed businesses nationwide and worldwide. Poignant accounts of young boys, some girls who traveled incognito, and African-Americans, all facing the dangers of riding freight trains with strangers, especially the African-Americans. Some were killed and never identified. Almost all left home without a word beforehand, and some finally did return after federal-state programs alleviated the worst of the effects of the Depression. The Civilian Conservation Corps was one of the best such programs. Many survivors later went on to distinguished careers, feeling that the experience had strengthened them to the rigors of life and, especially, military service. Almost all claimed to retain their faith in the future—and most proved it in later life. There was even one African-American who ultimately attended the University of New Mexico Anderson Business School.

A beautifully researched book reminding us of a dark period in our history.

Reprinted from the April 2000 issue of "Book Talk," the newsletter of the New Mexico Book League. ☞

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February 12, 2001

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