



Meet the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.

Who are we? What do we do? Why do we do it?



A Little History



The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. is a **nonprofit** organization based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad was bought by the states of Colorado and New Mexico in 1970. By the early 1980s, much of the property was falling into disrepair. Our founder, Bill Lock, noticed this and approached the railroad about establishing a volunteer-based **historic preservation** organization. In 1988, the group of volunteers was **incorporated** as the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.

Since then, our organization has grown to roughly 2,000 members. We host seven annual week-long work sessions on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, where volunteers come from around the world to help preserve the railroad.

Left: Founder Bill Lock, works on a stock car in 2021.

Right: Founder Bill Lock poses for a photo.

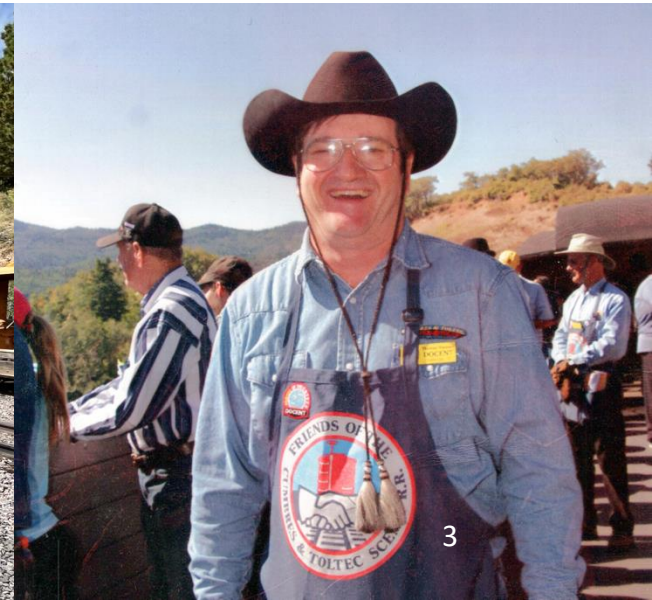


Our Mission



We are actively dedicated to:

1. The preservation of the railroad's rich history and the railroad itself as a living museum.
2. The interpretation of its history and assets and providing scenic tours.
3. The restoration of its assets, which include buildings and property, track right-of-ways, signs, and rolling stock.





Nonprofit

The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. A nonprofit is an organization that is not conducted for the purpose of making money.

The Friends bring in money through grants, donations, and sales. All the money we receive is used to support our mission. This money helps us buy supplies to restore historic railroad equipment and structures, create educational materials such as brochures and Junior Engineer booklets, make interpretive signs, and pay for our small staff.

We are based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and can be found on the New Mexico nonprofit list.










Members

Active members of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad pay annual dues to retain their membership status. Annual dues help fund our mission.

Member benefits include:

-  A printed copy of our quarterly "C&TS Dispatch"
-  Discounts at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad
-  Access to the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Forums
-  Invitations to special events
-  Exclusive member-only volunteer opportunities

Volunteers



Our organization could not exist without volunteers. Most of the work we do is done by volunteers who give their time each year. Volunteers participate in projects from food preparation and landscaping to restoring historic railroad cars, reconstructing historic buildings, and more. Volunteers also work as docents onboard the trains and in the railyards, create educational materials, take photographs and videos, and more.

During 2023, our dedicated volunteers spent over 12,200 hours volunteering with the Friends.



Work Sessions A **work session** is a week-long event where members come together to work on a variety of projects. We host roughly seven work sessions each year between May and September.

Projects include reconstructing historic buildings, restoring historic freight cars, repairing historic signs, and much more. We have volunteer opportunities for ages 10+ and you do not need any prior experience to work with us.

Members travel from around the world to participate in our work sessions. Each volunteer must be registered as a member of the Friends to participate. Some of them have come from Australia and Germany.



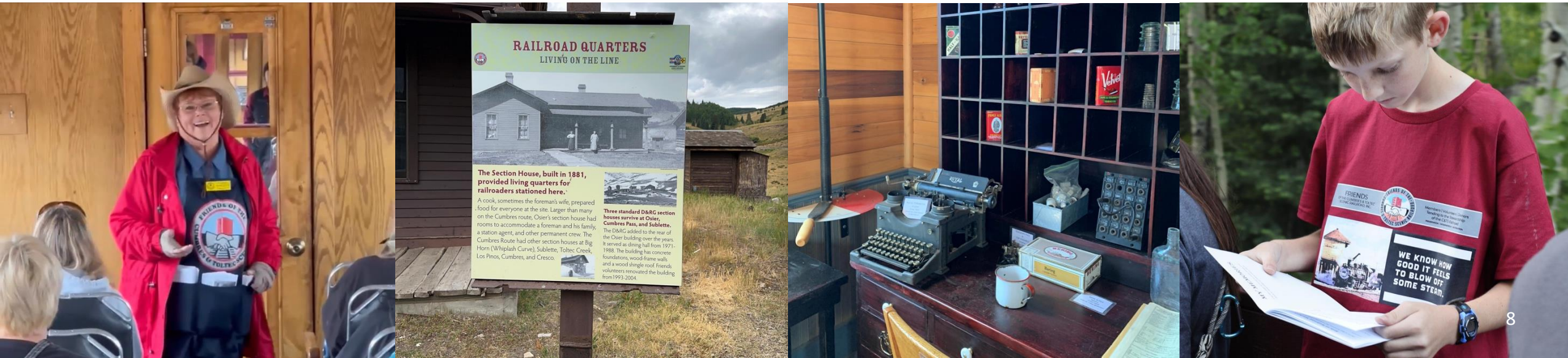
Interpretation

The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec are also responsible for the **interpretation** of history along the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.



How do we interpret History?

1. **Docents**
2. **Interpretive Signs** and Brochures
3. Museums and **Interpretive Exhibits**
4. Educational Initiatives



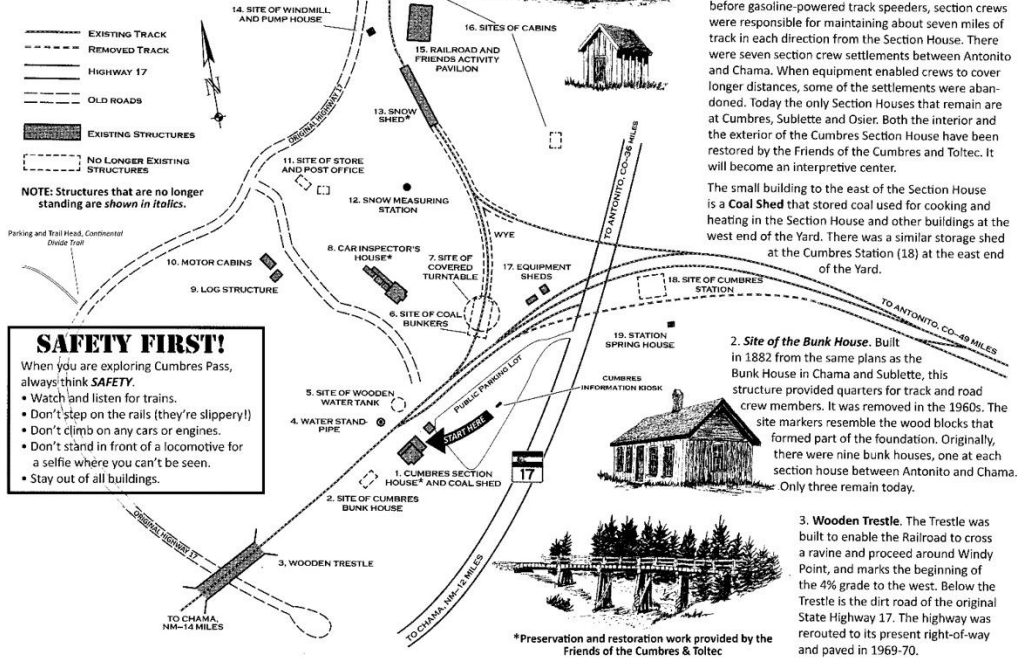
Docents



Docents are volunteers who share information and stories about the railroad and surrounding area with visitors at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. Docents are most often found onboard the train. They are also sometimes found in the railyards at Chama and Antonito.

These volunteers share their knowledge of railroad history, geography, plants, and animals, as well as stories about what it was like along the railroad in days gone by.

CUMBRES PASS, COLORADO
ELEVATION 10,015 FEET
CUMBRES & TOLTEC
SCENIC RAILROAD
NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK



Interpretive Signs and Brochures

Interpretive Signs can be found in the Sign Garden in Chama, at Cumbres Pass, and at the Osier lunch stop. These signs explain what you are seeing at those locations.

Interpretive Brochures are available for Chama and Antonito, Cumbres, and for the train ride. These brochures have maps and brief information about historic points of interest.





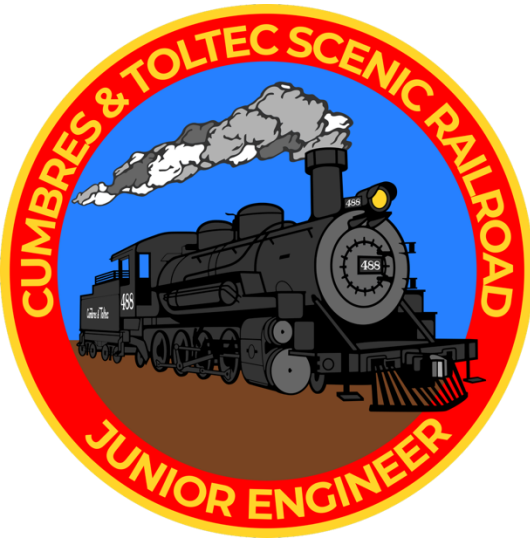
Museums and Interpretive Exhibits



The Friends developed and maintain the Depot Museum in Osier, Colorado. This museum is opened during lunch at Osier. This historic structure houses **artifacts** and equipment that would have been in a historic depot.

The Friends also maintain a museum boxcar that can be found on the Three-Rail Track in Antonito. Inside the museum boxcar, you will find a variety of artifacts from the **D&RG** and **D&RGW**.

The Friends also have an exhibit we call the Sign Garden. This exhibit shares the signs and sounds you might find on your railroad journey. It can be found in the Chama Railyard, at the foot of the stairs that lead up to Terrace Avenue.



Educational Initiatives

The Friends create a variety of Educational Materials, including a Junior Engineer Program for youth ages 5-18 and virtual education materials for people of all ages. The Junior Engineer Program is available on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and on our website.

The Virtual Education Program is available to download from our website. This program will have new releases periodically, so please check back for more units.



Outreach

The *C&TS Dispatch* is a quarterly **publication** that is mailed directly to Friends' Members. In addition to our printed quarterly magazine, we also send out monthly updates via our *Dispatch Extra* emails.

The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad also attends train shows across the country to share the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Friends' mission. Our train shows are staffed by volunteers who share videos, photos, brochures, and who love to talk to people about our work.





How can you help?

1. Donate
2. Become a Member
3. Volunteer
4. Share our mission



Volunteer Positions for Youth:

Junior Volunteers (Ages 10-12) must be cleared through our pre-approval process. There is a limited capacity for Junior Volunteers and parental consent and supervision are required.

Teenage Volunteers (Ages 13-17) must be accompanied and/or supervised by an adult who has been designated as the responsible adult or is a parent or guardian.



Glossary

Artifacts: A manmade object of cultural or historical significance.

D&RG: Denver & Rio Grande

D&RGW: Denver & Rio Grande Western

Docent: A person acting as a guide, usually a volunteer, at a museum, art gallery, or zoo.

Incorporated: To become a company as a legal corporation.

Interpretation: The action of explaining the meaning of something.

Interpretive Signs: Signs that enhance a visitor's experience at a site. They may share a story that visitors do not already know, providing a more meaningful experience.

Interpretive Exhibits: Exhibits designed to make the topic come to life through active visitor involvement.

Historic Preservation: Any activity that identifies, protects, rehabilitates, or enhances historic resources.

Nonprofit: An organization that is not conducted to make money.

Publication: A book, journal, or magazine made available publicly.

Work Session: A week-long event where volunteers from the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad come together to work on projects to preserve and restore historical assets at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.



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Prepared by the **Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad
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