



C&TS DISPATCH

VOLUME 38
FALL

NO. 3
2025



HOLLYWOOD

Rides the Rails on the Cumbres & Toltec

Feature Films

Music Videos

Infomercials

Documentaries



plus:

The New C&TS Movie Car Project

Work Sessions C and D

More Progress on Express Car 163





C&TS DISPATCH

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

William Lock, Founder-1988

Vol. 38, No. 3 🍂 Fall, 2025

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C&TS DISPATCH

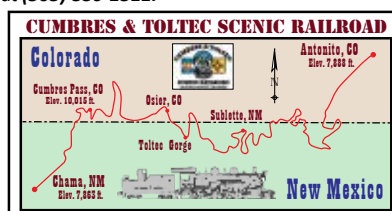
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The *C&TS Dispatch* is published four times each year by *The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Inc.*, a New Mexico nonprofit corporation. The Friends is the official museum arm for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a sixty-four mile-long 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 \$40.00 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.

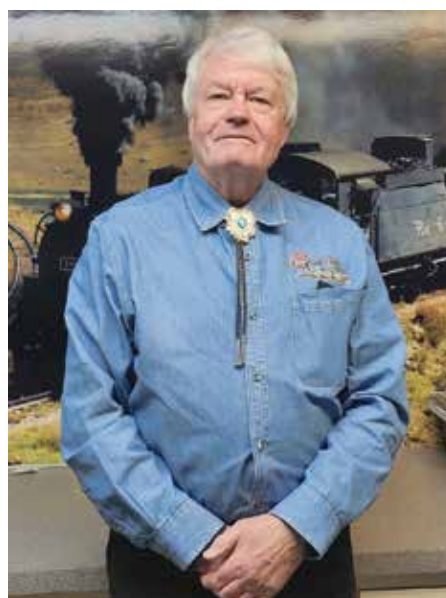


Denver & Rio Grande Railway: 1880-1886
Denver & Rio Grande Railroad: 1886-1921
Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad: 1921-1970
Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad: 1970-today

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

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President's FORUM



The View from the Cab

Welcome to Fall edition of the *Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Dispatch*!

Our Moonlight and Wine Train held on August 2nd was a huge success with 108 guests. We were treated to a perfectly clear sky for the trip to Osier and enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner with a generous sampling of regional New Mexico wines!

On August 13th, 14th, and 15th, the Friends collaborated with the C&TS to help them celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the D&RGW K-36 Mikado locomotives! For three days the Railroad and the Friends hosted events and much-anticipated Chama yard tours where visitors were treated with behind-the-scenes access to areas normally off-limits. Cameras and questions were welcomed! The Railroad also treated visitors to a display of three of their K-36 locomotives, hot and steaming, on the tracks near the depot, with opportunities for visitors to get a chance to get up into the locomotive cab and pull the whistle! We thank the Railroad for

this limited-access event showcasing the historic steam equipment and the Friends' role in preserving history for all that attended!

The next scheduled Friends Charter will be our two-day Fall Photo Special Charter on October 26th from Chama to Antonito, with a return to Chama the following day. This will be a two-K-36 locomotive freight car photographic event, with numerous locations and run-bys scheduled! Please see the Friends web site for specific information and to purchase your tickets.

Our Friends Fall meetings are scheduled for November 5th, 6th and 7th at the Colorado Springs Airport Holiday Inn. Purchase tickets through the Friends office.

The Friends 2026 Calendars are in production and should be available for purchase by mid-October. This year's selected images from our volunteer photographers capture both the majesty of the century-old Mikado locomotives and the grandeur of the Railroad's vast operating terrain.

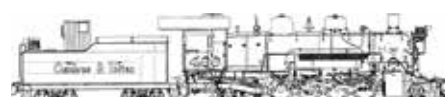
Great news! Our webcams are all back up and running in the Chama Yard with improved fiber optic feeds that make your viewing of our Railroad activities better than ever.

The Friends Resource Library and photographic archives have received several large new donations. Our collections can be viewed through our web site:

<https://friendsofcumbrestoltec.org/collections>

As always thank you for your generous physical and financial support, and to all our staff, volunteers and docents that make the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec possible.

 Rick Marsden



On the cover:

The grave-robbing gang of bad guys have caught up with young Indiana Jones who hopped onto the Dunn & Duffy Circus Train on the Pueblo & Chama Railroad, headed for Antonito. The cover image, a single frame from *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, used with permission of Lucasfilm, Ltd. LLC™ © 1989. See a few more stories from *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* on page 11.



Friends of the C&TS: TELEGRAPH



WHERE'S FIDO?

Abbreviated FIDO for Session G, Sept. 22 - 28

Support Services

Proj. No.	Proj. Descrip	Team Leader & Crew
231	Lunch Prep - Antonito	J. E. Mitchell +1
245	Tool & Bold Operation - Antonito	M. Smith + 1

Projects - Antonito

Proj. No.	Proj. Descrip	Team Leader & Crew
701	Landscape	T L Needed + 1
1246	Restore UTLX Tank Caer 11050	Trunk & Worewang +1
1332	Restore UTLX Tank Caer 11056	Trunk & Worewang +1
1354	Restore MW02 Speeder	J. McGee +1
1369	Repair & Paint Telegraphphone Booths on ROW	D. Atkinson + 2
1390	RPO 54 - continuing painting	D. Atkinson +1
1410	Reconditioning Eisting Trucks	I. Kewilly + 1
1417	Repair Water Sysem in caboose 05635 and Consessioin/Potty Car 3244	TL Needed + 2 S. Joegenon +3
1389	Rebuild Boxcar 3263 as Stencil Car	

Chama, NM

Proj. No.	Proj. Descrip	Team Leader & Crew
1403	Replace Roof on Cumbres Section IHouse	TL Needed

Along Right of Way

Proj. No.	Proj. Descrip	Team Leader & Crew
750	Maintain RR Signage	L. Marquess & P. Davenport +2

Session J - Any location

Proj. No.	Proj. Descrip	Team Leader & Crew
1394	Socil Media Volunteer Assitance	K. Walser + 5
1395	Education Programs	M Sellers & K Walser = 25

FIDO has gone to the vet! But don't fret over our favorite pooch! FIDO will be back, maybe with a new name, in 2026 as a part of the new online registration system currently under development by our crack tech team. We will roll out an announcement when it's ready! "Woof!"

In the meantime, here's an abbreviated view of the Session G Work Sessions. To save space only the leaders and sessions that need additional volunteers (as of this printing) are shown.

DON'T WAIT! JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE C&TS!



2026 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 \$40 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 and cultural heritage that is the Cumbres & Toltec!

Only \$40 per year for a basic 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 _____

Email _____

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!**

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501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.
All contributions are deductible to the fullest extent
of the law. IRS# 85-036487

Happy 100th Birthday K-36 Locomotives!



Not everyone gets a three-day birthday party, but then not everyone is a one-hundred-year-old locomotive that has proudly served the Denver & Rio Grande and the Cumbres & Toltec since 1925. This birthday bash, August 13th-15th, was a "Grande" success with opening ceremonies, cake and ice cream (of course!), and evening whistle salutes that could be heard three miles away! Included in the celebration were day and evening photographic events, three photo-freight excursions between Chama, Osier and Antonito, including helper locomotive demonstrations. There were also tours of normally off-limits locations such as the workshop facilities and the Chama Coaling Tipple.

HOLLYWOOD

RIDES THE RAILS ON THE C&TS

BY CHRIS JAMES

The wild West! Mountains, deserts, rivers, yes. But also cowboys, outlaws, lawmen, horses, ranches, schoolmarms and...railroads. During the beginning of the Twentieth century, many films, including those with a railroad at center stage, were shot on the studios' "back lot," usually under California's sunny skies. But soon the back lots of Hollywood weren't vast enough. They were great for love scenes in the ranch house and gun battles in the dusty streets. But as time and cinematography progressed, movie companies traveled farther from Hollywood to find more scenic locations around the world to create their complex cinema masterpieces. While many movies today are still shot in a constructed set on a soundstage, they may also be shot "on location" and doctored on a computer with CGI (Computer-Generated Imagery) where the talent can be placed... well...anywhere.

Some of the earliest movies, short films consisting of a single long shot to tell a story, were made far from the western skies. Edwin S. Porter's classic 1903 film, *The Great Train Robbery*, changed all that. It was the first American film not shot in chronological order and edited from those multiple shots and angles to tell their story. While *The Great Train Robbery* represented the West, it was shot in New York and New Jersey, close to Thomas Edison's studio where Porter worked. Still, far from Hollywood, it set the stage of multi-shot storytelling used in just about every movie

since then, including realistic railroad-related movies like *Emperor of the North* (1973, shot in Oregon), *Unstoppable*, (2010, shot in Ohio and West Virginia) and two different versions of *Silver Streak* (first in 1934 Chicago and Montana) and in 1976 (Canada, one a drama, one a drama-comedy) shot on existing railroads.

But these were all standard gauge railroads.

Back in the 1930s the studios began looking for the best "on location" western scenery with stories to tell, banks to rob and bad hombres to encounter, accompanied by puffing steam locomotives and period-looking rolling stock, i.e. the real West. For that,

Hollywood turned to the Rockies. They had already shot many a covered wagon or cavalry vs. Indians movies in the deserts of Arizona and Utah. Looking farther afield for good western scenery and realistic railroading, Hollywood turned to Colorado and New Mexico.

However, by then, even in those two western states, the Railroads were rapidly modernizing with massive steam or diesel locomotives and steel freight and passenger cars, not something you would find in a 19th or early 20th century town on the edge of the not-so-civilized West.

Looking deeper into those two states, the movie moguls found places



The Great Train Robbery, Edwin S. Porter, 1903
Library of Congress Collection, Public Domain



Butch and Sundance used just a little too much dynamite to open the safe on the Union Pacific Flier. The explosion was even a little larger than the special effects crew expected, too. Shot September 21, 1968 near Florida, Colorado.

Photo by Andy M. Payne
FCTS Dorman Collection AMP06-138



where their scripts and storyboards all came together to make the perfect location for western movies: tall mountains and big skies, small towns with western flavor that could easily represent the 19th Century West, lots of horses for the good guys and bad guys and old steam railroads with wooden rolling stock that could be ridden, robbed or wrecked on scenic branch lines, sites that wouldn't complicate big main line traffic, schedules that would allow movie crews, and lots of equipment logistics to pit good against evil.

It didn't matter that some of those cinematic railroads were "narrow" gauge; most movie-goers had never even heard of narrow gauge railroads. In the theater, trains were trains and all they needed to see to show the West in their imagination was smoke and steam.

Enter the Denver & Rio Grande Western and its later counterparts, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad and the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad; by 1935, the big studios found southwestern Colorado and northern New Mexico had all the perfect ingredients to create an exciting story of an long-gone era with a perfect backdrop of magnificent mountains, western towns (even if they had to build parts of them), and steam locomotives pulling period rolling stock. [See *The Texas Rangers*, page 6.] According to Larry Jensen's book, *Hollywood's Railroads, Vol. 3, Narrow Gauge Country*¹, between 1935 and the founding of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad in 1971, the 244 miles of the Denver and Rio Grande Western's Southwest Extension to Silverton, along with the forty-seven miles of the Farmington Branch (abandoned in 1970) and the Chili Line to Santa Fe (abandoned in 1941), served as backdrops (or at least bit players) in twenty-one films. These included some fairly well-known feature films, including *Ticket to Tomahawk* (1950), *Denver & Rio Grande* (1952), *Around the*

World in 80 Days (1956), and of course, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *The Good Guys and the Bad Guys* (both shot 1969) and *Support Your Local Gunfighter* (1972). In 1972, the D&RGW ended all Hollywood film production on the Silverton Branch as it was interfering with the Railroad's growing tourist operation.²

By 1971, film production had shifted east to the newly organized Cumbres & Toltec, sixty-four miles of the remaining Southwest Extension. With less traffic, a variety of spectacular scenery and antique rolling stock, the C&TS became the site for at least twenty-eight more films since 1971 including theatrical releases, TV movies, documentaries, and a new genre, music videos.

While there isn't room here to show all twenty-eight-plus productions, you can follow along with some movie stills and basic information—where possible—about the Railroad's role in the more notable films shot along the C&TS in the last fifty-five years. Included are shortened URL links to movie trailers and some full-length movies, much easier to enter into your browser than <https://www.yThe> (almost) complete list of films, in all genres shot on or around the narrow gauge railroads (up through 2014) is available in Jensen's *Hollywood's Railroads, Vol. 3*. Since its publication, there have been several additional feature films created with the help of the C&TS, along with infomercials, documentaries and music videos.

The title and dates of other Hollywood productions may not be listed in *Hollywood's Railroads*, may be too short to count or simply unknown. Still, the C&TS and the scenery between Chama and Antonito remains, waiting to be discovered for the next movie!

¹ *Hollywood's Railroads, Vol. 3, Narrow Gauge Country* by Larry Jensen, ©2014, Cochetopa Press [ISBN 978-0-692-31350-0]. The book appears to be out of print but rumors are that it may be reissued in the future. It is available through used book sources such as abebooks.com and addall.com.

² Feature films, DVD releases, documentaries and short film production returned to the D&S in 1981 after the D&RGW sold the Railroad to Charles Bradshaw. It is open to debate that Roger Ebert's 1972 review of *Support Your Local Gunfighter*, "...possibly the worst Western comedy of modern times..." influenced the Railroad to get out of the movie business, at least until 1981.



***Bite the Bullet* (1975) PG**

Directed by Richard Brooks
Columbia Pictures
Gene Hackman
James Coburn
Candice Bergen

A disparate group of individuals enter a horse race through 700 miles of the Wild West to win a large cash prize. The contestants include two ex-Rough Riders, an aging cowboy, a youth, an Englishman, a Mexican and a woman. Over the course of the event, the riders begin to shed their biases against race, gender and nationality, and appreciate one another.

On the C&TS: You can tell this image was shot near the Los Pinos Water Tank. Look closely and you might see Colorado Highway 17 in the background.

Watch the film (trailer only): <https://tinyurl.com/bitebullet>

LIGHTS! CAMERA! LOCOMOTIVE 168!

BY CHRIS JAMES

WITH A SUPPORTING CAST FROM *THE TEXAS RANGERS*!

Originally published in the Fall, 2020 C&TS Dispatch

We've all seen Butch and Sundance blow up the express car, and we know about the accidental burning of Ferguson's Trestle during the shooting of *Where the Hell is the Gold*. And we've marveled at the spectacular, pre-CGI, head-on collision (with some assistance from high explosives) in *Denver & Rio Grande*. All these, and many more cinematic spectaculars were filmed in the mid-20th Century, the Golden Age of Western cinema, which often included scenes shot along the narrow gauge lines of the Denver & Rio Grande, including the Silverton Branch, the rails between Chama and Durango, the Chili Line and the Cumbres & Toltec. Like John Huston's westerns shot in southern Utah, the scenery of southwestern Colorado and northern New Mexico captured the "true" West, or at least what the theater audiences in Ohio and New Jersey thought the "true West" looked like. And what better way to add to the scenic reality than to include a steam locomotive or two?

But it wasn't always that way. Other than 1903's *The Great Train Robbery*, most early westerns only featured horses that weren't iron. But in 1936, there was a film that began the western narrow gauge railroad craze that featured our own (*drum roll, please*) Locomotive 168, built in 1883 and now fully restored and plying the rails of the C&TS and elsewhere.

According to Larry Jensen's book, *Hollywood's Railroads, Vol. 3: Narrow Gauge Country*, cinema's first use of Colorado's narrow gauge system was for segments of *The Texas Rangers*, starring Fred MacMurray, an actor that you may remember from high drama films such as *Double Indemnity*, *The Caine Mutiny*, and the 1960's TV comedy show, *My Three Sons*.

The Texas Rangers was your typical horse opera that, of course, needed a train robbery or two. At the time, the D&RGW's Chili Line was still running south out of Antonito, albeit infrequently. Thus, it provided a great combination of southwestern scenery and not much rail traffic, the perfect place to shoot scenes with a steam locomotive, high mesas and blazing guns.

Enter D&RGW Locomotive 168.

The six-coupled Ten Wheeler had already been retired from service but answered the casting call for several short scenes that gave credence to the western flavor

of the film: smoke, steam and a phony diamond stack, despite the fact that she always was a coal-burner, along with some passenger cars, also furnished by the D&RGW. Renamed and numbered as "Montezuma #1," 168's on-screen time was limited to several cameo appearances but they still added to the otherwise fairly typical shoot-'em-up Hollywood Western.

Most of the film was shot in and around Española and Buckman, a tiny village south of Española along the Rio Grande River. If C&TS photographer Ernie Robart was alive today, he could probably identify the exact location of the shots along the right-of-way.

The film naturally ends with good vanquishing evil and, thanks to the Texas Rangers, the West will live on with Truth, Justice and the American Way. In 1937, the film won an Academy Award for Best Sound Recording.

The success of the *Rangers*, however, did not extend to Locomotive 168. Following the filming, she was returned

to Alamosa, still adorned with the wood-burning diamond stack and still lettered with No. 1 on her cab.

She remained there, along with her sister 169, her cab windows boarded up, in the dead line of locomotives at the Alamosa shop, awaiting the scrapper's torch. While Fred MacMurray has a star embedded along Hollywood's "Walk of Fame," 168 does not; her appearance on the Chili Line apparently didn't make the grade, even if she did make the 4% grade between Embudo and Barranca. But like many a faded actress, she was nonetheless honored and placed on display in Colorado Springs for the next 77 years.

But today her star status has risen once again. While few can remember her Hollywood experience, 168 remains the first narrow gauge locomotive to appear on the silver screen and was the progenitor of many narrow and standard gauge railroad movies to follow. And now, newly restored and even more beautiful than her 1936 screen debut when she was but a fading starlet on the D&RGW, she has emerged from the Antonito shop worthy of the Oscar she deserved after *The Texas Rangers* 1936 release:

Best Supporting Locomotive.

Welcome home, 168! Your audience awaits!

You can watch 168 in *The Texas Rangers* on YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/texasrangers-1936> between 0:59:15 and 1:10:00.



Townspeople and extras admire D&RGW 168, now the Montezuma #1, during the 1936 filming of *The Texas Rangers*.

FCTS Dorman Collection, RD088-015

Butch and Sundance: The Early Days (1979) PG

Directed by Richard Lester
20th Century Fox
William Katt
Tom Berenger
Candice Bergen

Butch Cassidy: The Early Days was created to be a "prequel" to the famous 1969 Butch and Sundance film. The film explores their initial encounter and the formation of the outlaw duo before the events of the later film. Gene Siskel gave it only 2.5 stars, saying, "Fox failed to provide them with a really fine script."

On the C&TS: Cars and Locomotive 484, as always modified with a diamond stack, were relettered for the Central Pacific Railroad. Movie stills show the outlaws on top of a passenger car along the flats outside of Antonito.



Photo by Ernie Robart, May 30, 1978
FCTS Dorman Collection ERNG19780530-0030.jpg

Watch the film trailer, 1:45: <https://tinyurl.com/earlybutch>
(Note: Each web link also has a matching QR code).



The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez (1982) PG

Directed by Robert M. Young
TV Movie, Embassy Pictures
Edward James Olmos
James Gannon

Based on a 1901 true story, Gregorio Cortez was a Tejano vaquero (Texas rancher) who was wrongly accused of stealing a horse and, in the process of an attempted arrest, killed a sheriff in self-defense. Chased by a hoard of Texas Rangers, the film has some fabulous train sequences in it. The original story is also the basis for a Mexican-American folk song, La Balada (or Canción) de Gregorio.

On the C&TS: The prairie west of Antonito is always a good backdrop for rural Texas. There are several wonderful railroad scenes in this film at the opening, a chase scene on the prairie and the yard at Chama in the closing sequence. The *La Balada de Gregorio* folk song/ballad is still sung today in parts of Texas with great reverence for Gregorio Cortez.

Watch the trailer,(2:53):
<https://tinyurl.com/gregorio1982>

(Above left): Screenshot, Embassy Pictures
(Left): Photo by Ernie Robart, October 14, 1981
FCTS Dorman Collection
ERNG19811014-0100.jpg



Screenshots: Embassy Production © 1988, Company dissolved 1988, Fair Use



Where the Hell's That Gold?
(also called "*Gold and Dynamite*")
(1988) PG

Directed by Bert Kennedy
Brigade Productions
Willie Nelson
Jack Elem
Delta Burke

In 1895, a pair of outlaws and a madam are caught up in the Mexican Revolution. They agree to transport a trainload of dynamite to escape execution, all while various Mexican rebels, Native Americans, and Wells Fargo agents pursue them for their hidden gold.

On the C&TS: This was filmed almost entirely on the Cumbres & Toltec and nearby settings in 1988. It has many interesting train scenes throughout the film, all along the C&TS right-of-way, including bathing and showers at Lava Tank.

(The late historian Vern Glover quipped at the time, "Whenever they needed a little extra filler, they put in another scene on the Railroad!")

Among the C&TS folks, the film is probably most famous for the movie company accidentally setting the Ferguson (Hangman's) Trestle on fire during the filming. Like blowing up the baggage car in Butch Cassidy, the special effects people went a little overboard with their explosives. The resulting fire shut down the Railroad for three days!

According to the Summer 1988 C&TS *Dispatch*, "We were in Antonito doing some special effects," said the Production Coordinator. On the second explosion...the wind picked up from 10 mph to 40 mph and blew sparks onto the wooden trestle. The movie company has contracted to build a temporary trestle and will replace the wooden one when replacement bents and parts arrive."

The crew did a better job in the closing scene where they "blew up" the Mud Tunnel with an un-numbered C&TS locomotive inside filled with dynamite. Fortunately, both the Mud Tunnel and the locomotive survived the filming.

Watch the full movie, (1:26:23)
<https://tinyurl.com/williegold>



Screenshots: Brigade Productions/Konigsberg/Sanitsky, Used with permission © 1988

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969) PG

Directed by George Roy Hill
20th Century Fox
Paul Newman
Robert Redford
Katharine Ross

No need to explain the plot and storyline here. It's impossible to know the exact number of people who have watched Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, but it was a massive box office success, earning over \$100 million in the US alone. 'Nuf said?

On the C&TS: OK, I admit it, none of the film was shot on Cumbres & Toltec. But the best railroad scene, blowing up the Express Car, was near Florida, Colorado, (MP 436) only ninety-three miles west of Chama. Is that close enough?



Photo: Andy M. Payne, September 21, 1968
FCTS Dorman Collection AMP06-138

Brotherhood of the Gun (1991)

TV Movie, North Road productions
Directed by Vern Gillup
20th Century Fox
Brian Bloom
Jamie Rose

After the Civil War, sharpshooter Zack Hollister joins an outlaw gang led by a man named Weir. After a train robbery goes wrong, Zack is double-crossed, his brother is killed, and he is wounded in his right arm. Zack must then learn to shoot left-handed to take his revenge.

On the C&TS: You'll recognize the water tank and standpipe from *The Last Crusade*. The snow scenes are fabulous.

The only version of the film that I could find was in French. C'est la vie.

Movie clip only: (0:29) <https://tinyurl.com/butchupflier>



Screenshot: North Road Productions, © 1991 Posted as Fair Use

Watch the full movie, (1:34:14 in French)
<https://tinyurl.com/cumbresloco>

A Million Ways to Die in the West (2014) PG

Distributed by Universal Pictures
Seth McFarland
Charlize Theron

Million Ways is about a cowardly sheep farmer who, after losing his girlfriend, finds new courage with the help of a mysterious woman. When her notorious outlaw husband arrives in town, the farmer must face his fears and engage in a final showdown.

On the C&TS: We're back on the plains west of Antonito again, with some pretty spectacular train vs. horse footage. Compare this horse chase with the almost identical footage of the horse chase in *The Last Crusade* as Indy approaches the circus train.



Screenshot: MCA Television

Watch the movie clip,(2:20)
<https://tinyurl.com/toltectrain>

INDIANA JONES AND THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC ...in 1988

by Ian Kelly
Friends of the Cumbre & Toltec

Whilst the art department was busy prepping the circus train and building sets in Chama, I was half a world away in Europe with the Main Unit on location. Once we wrapped there after a 12-week-long shoot, the main crew returned to the UK and a small group of us Brits traveled to the U.S. to work on the opening sequence. I was part of the advance crew, flying to Denver where we hired a car and drove down to Chama with the Production Manager.

Second Units usually are, without the pressures of big-name directors and stars to worry about. We began shooting the chase sequence with the train just outside of Antonito. The Grip Department, responsible for camera rigs, rigged a flat car so things didn't fall off but they couldn't get the crane stable enough to be usable. We were using a first-generation remote-controlled camera mount called a Hot Head. It didn't have any gyro stabilization and the flat car on 3-foot gauge track wobbled...a lot. Rigging the camera directly to 484 solved the problem.*

Once the Main, or First Unit, arrived the pressure was on. Our director, Steven Spielberg, had no patience so once he had planned the shot, it is done in his mind and he was anxious to move on to the next shot.



PHOTO: IAN KELLY, 1988

My job, as video engineer, was to ensure that the video taps on the cameras worked so the camera crew and director could see what was being captured on film, particularly when the cameras were rigged remotely on a crane to record the day's takes for immediate playback. Without video, it could be days before we would get to see any processed film. In the past these quick film prints were called the "dailies." With video, these prints were basically instantaneous.

My first sight of the Railroad was the eastbound train at Windy Point. My first thought was "how does that thing stay on the rails?" I was used to the UK's narrow gauge where the width of the rolling stock is in proportion to the gauge of the track.

The Second Unit shoot was fun as

Our only scene that didn't involve the Railroad was where young Indiana runs home to his father, played by Sean Connery. We used a house in Antonito for the exterior but the interior was actually a set built on the edge of town, as Steven wanted a view of the fields through the window. Today the secondary set is gone but the house remains as the *Indiana Jones House Bed and Breakfast*.

The Main Unit wrapped shooting on the Friday and everyone flew off to the next location in Green River, Utah, whilst a small splinter unit, including myself, stayed behind to shoot inserts and run-bys on Saturday. This was a

*A single frame from that shot as used in the final production is shown on the cover of this issue of the Dispatch and, used with the permission of Lucasfilm, Ltd, LLC, ©1989.

really fun day, the only proviso being that we had to retire to a siding to let the daily trains go past. We shot all day and got lots of great shots of the train, front, back and sides with close-ups of the 484's running gear. As usual with this kind of footage, it's unlikely that any of these shots actually appeared in the finished film.

Then we wrapped and flew to join the rest of the crew in Green River to shoot the scene at Arches National Park. Then it was back to Los Angeles for the studio interiors. Twenty five years later I returned to Antonito as a member of the Friends.

But that's another story.

In 1988, Steven Spielberg brought his crew to the C&TS to film the opening sequence of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Along with the crew was Ian Kelly, a skilled machinist with railroad experience in Britain as well as a video engineer. He has been an active Friends member since 2010. He can be found most summers at the Ed Lowrance Car Repair Facility in Antonito. He lives in California.



"The film (*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*) was released in the spring of 1989 and we all got invited to the premier at the Rialto Theater in Alamosa.

"I should mention that Lucasfilm's contract with Kyle Railways (managing company at the time) stipulated they would restore everything to its original appearance after the shoot was done. That they did and they did a great job, too. Their guys spent nearly two weeks replacing the Murphy roofs on the boxcars, repainting everything and lettering all the cars. 484 got a complete paint job, right down to the tri-colored herald."

Earl Knoob
C&TS Engineer, 1988

(Originally published in the Winter, 2018 Dispatch, available in the Friends Forum.)

BUT THERE'S MORE TO THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC THAN FEATURE FILMS!

Back in the heyday of Hollywood, when popcorn only cost 50¢, movie-goers packed the movie houses and drive-in theaters in towns, big and small, for the big feature films and the Saturday matinees. But in the 1950s, television exploded onto the scene and the movie business had to adapt to the new medium; the small town movie houses and drive-ins closed down to be replaced by megaplex theaters in major cities showing mega movies.

But television also helped keep the movie business alive. Looking for a means of survival, movie companies gravitated to TV for smaller features, reruns of major films, "made for TV" movies, DVDs and the web. The big studios still cranked out celluloid blockbusters but they were no longer the only game in town. TV didn't steal all the thunder from Hollywood but with television nipping at their heels, it forced the movie industry to make even bigger blockbusters. And some of those films, big and small, still included railroads in their storylines.

Many of the later films were stuck with runaway diesel locomotives and on-board murder mysteries where you never saw any locomotive at all. Film productions about

the Old West, once a mainstay of the early years of cinema began to diminish; by then about the only place you could find the Old West and a supporting cast of steam was in Colorado and New Mexico, thanks to the Cumbres & Toltec and the Durango & Silverton. Movie companies flocked to these lines and, while the cowboy flicks had largely fallen out of favor, the movie companies still showed up when they needed a western backdrop and trains to ride and rob.

But other media forms have taken to the West as well with music videos, DVDs, streaming-only films by small production companies, documentaries, and infomercials using railroads as a cornerstone for their message. Steam railroad still held sway and production companies knew it.

Some of those more recent productions are shown here. There are certainly many others, on or off the mainstream media radar. What follows are some of the smaller films shot on and around the C&TS, equal to, and perhaps better than, some of the railroad movies of the past. As before, shortened URL links to movie trailers and some full-length movies are shown.

Heartbreak Station

Cinderella

<https://tinyurl.com/cinderella1990>



Music Videos

There may have been other music videos shot around the Cumbres & Toltec, however these two productions show the Railroad with superb cinematography worthy of some of the many Hollywood productions in the past.

Heartbreak Station

Shot between Chama and Cumbres in November, 1990, the video features the American rock band Cinderella with vocalist Tom Kiefer. The band produced a series of multi-platinum studio albums with a heavy MTV presence. The song was released on their third album of the same name. More ballad than rock music, Tim Kiefer laments the loss of his love who "took the last train out of my heart."

Dreaming of Rachmaninov on a Train

Not your typical "music video," beautifully-created by the Deutsche Gramophone label, it features the brilliant young Russia pianist Daniil Trifinov playing the opening movement of Rachmaninov's Fourth Piano Concerto. In his dream, he finds himself on a ghost-like train (on the C&TS, of course) and plays the concerto on a paper keyboard in an abandoned passenger car. His dream then morphs into a real piano in an adjacent luxury car and he plays until he's awakened by the conductor, played by the C&TS's own Ed Beaudette, who demands a ticket. When Daniil shows he has neither a ticket nor cash, the conductor tosses him off the train in his dreams. This was shot in the summer of 2018 during the Durango 416 fire which resulted in beautiful, if unfortunate, skies.

Dreaming of Rachmaninov on a Train

Daniil Trifinov

<https://tinyurl.com/NPRdreaming>



Infomercial

Building Steam

Kobalt Tools

<https://tinyurl.com/kobalt168>



More than Music!

Both of these short films (originally shot on video, not on “film”) not only show the C&TS with spectacular videography and editing, but also tell important stories.

Building Steam (2019) is one of a series of productions made to showcase the wide variety of Kobalt Tools, sold almost exclusively at Lowes Home Improvement stores. The Kobalt videos, such as Building Steam, are generally shown as infomercials on the Lowes website and Youtube. Many of the videos are simply demonstrations, showing Kobalt tool features. What makes Building Steam unique is that it is one of several productions that focuses not so much what the tools are but how they are used on the job on wide-ranging projects.

Here, “on the job” is the restoration of Locomotive 168 and several passenger cars as they prepare to travel on the C&TS between Antonito and Osier. While most of the restoration had already been completed in Antonito, the video demonstrates the variety of tools that an average craftsman might buy at their local Lowes store for sanding, cutting and drilling in their home shop.

But only a small portion of the video shows the Kobalt tools in use; the majority of the production features the C&TS, the 168 and its crew on its trip over the D&RGW after nearly one hundred years and some of the problems and subsequent success on their run to Osier.

It's not only a great infomercial for Kobalt tools, it is beautifully produced and does a great job showing off the Railroad and how working together can bring history back to life.

The Railroader isn't so much a documentary as a film that Rose Bush describes as “a deep passion for what is in our heart, the rich environment of landscape and spirit.” In The Railroader, (2019) one of Bush's many films, the landscape of the C&TS combines with the environment—physical, cultural and societal—that surrounds the Railroad.

Rose's father, John Bush, former President of the Cumbres & Toltec, may be the central figure in the eleven-minute production but he is not the central focus. The Railroader is more about what Rose calls “the imagination of what is possible,” whether it is restoring a railroad, opening the West or dreaming of who you are and where you want to be. John Bush's eloquent narration matches Rose's spectacular cinematography, presenting why preserving the history and technology of a 140-year-old railroad matters to all of us.

While many documentaries present their story on the surface—“this is what we did”—The Railroader looks behind the curtain to show not only the “what we did,” but, more importantly, “why it matters.”

Filmed over six days, The Railroader captures some of the vision of the railroad, and its spiritual role in that vision.

Rose Bush studied film, first in University of California, Riverside, then received a Master of Arts degree at the University of Texas and has worked as a Videographer, Editor, Director of Cinematography and Film Director. One recent production, **Colette**, with Rose Bush as the Director of Cinematography, won the Oscar for Best Documentary Short Subject in 2020.

Documentary

The Railroader

Rose Bush, National Geographic

<https://tinyurl.com/shortbush>



BY JOHN FERRELL

COMING SOON! FRIENDS OF THE C&TS "HOLLYWOOD BOXCAR" CINEMA EXHIBIT!

Proj. 1376/1411: Rebuild Boxcar 3566 as the "Hollywood Movie Car," Chama, Sessions C and D

The Cumbres & Toltec has a decades-long presence in cinema that should be familiar with anyone who enjoys movies and is a member of the Friends of the C&TS. From the obvious *Indiana Jones* and *The Last Crusade* to the more obscure entries like *Where the Hell's That Gold*, the route and equipment of the Railroad have made their mark on screens, big and small. Audiences have enjoyed many of these movies simply because they present our beloved Railroad. However, a prominent part of the C&TS's cinema story has remained somewhat secluded from the public eye.

This exhibit, currently under construction and tentatively known as the "Hollywood Movie Boxcar," aims to remediate this by telling at least a small portion of the cinema history associated with the



Turning a boxcar into display space takes a lot of planning and hard work by the Friends' Hollywood Boxcar team.

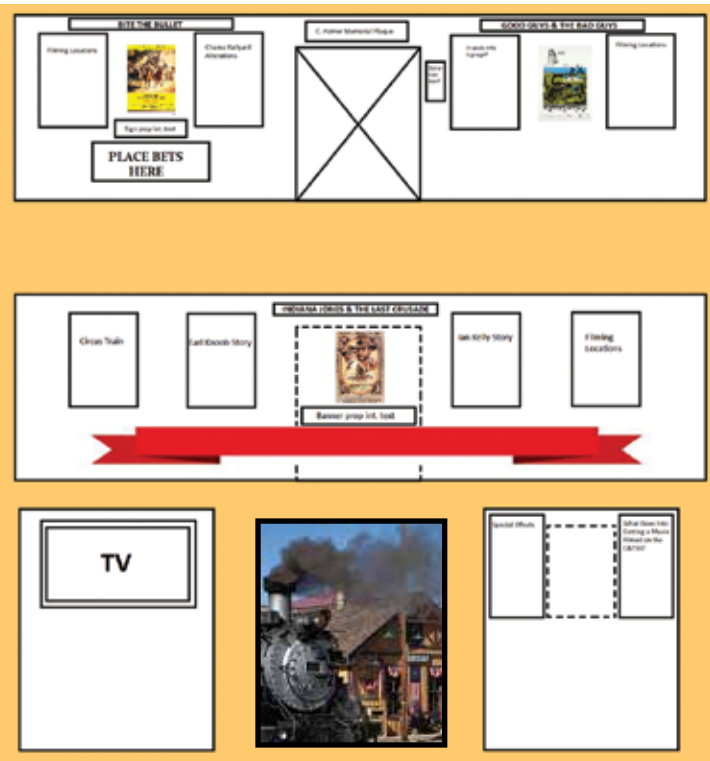
Railroad. The restored D&RGW boxcar will focus on three films; *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*, *Bite the Bullet*, and *Good Guys & The Bad Guys*.

Interpretive signage mounted inside the car will tell the story of how the C&TS was featured in these movies, along with supplemental materials, a look behind the scenes of filming on the Railroad, special effects used, first-hand accounts, posters and even a few preserved movie props. There will also be a video display showing a short film that



will give guests an audiovisual take on the topic.

The ultimate goal of the Hollywood Car is to grab the attention of the public and draw them in to learn more about this often-overlooked but undeniably far reaching aspect of the C&TS. A special shout-out to **Randy Young** and his Friends team who have done so much to not only restore this formerly-dilapidated boxcar Number 3566, but also make it ready for housing this exhibit!



The tentative layout for the interior displays including on-the-ground stories of the filming of *Indiana Jones* and the *Last Crusade* by Engineer Earl Knoob and movie crew member Ian Kelly, a map of some of the various shooting locations, a video display of various C&TS movies, details of amazing special effects, and a synopsis of how movies are made.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ON THE C&TS, 2025

SESSION C (JUNE 16-20) AND SESSION D (JUNE 23-27)

PLUS: AN UPDATE ON EXPRESS CAR 163 RESTORATION IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Photos by Michael Mee, Paul Davenport, and Don Atkinson. Reports are based on Team Leader submissions to FIDO. Reports are edited due to space considerations. Team Leaders and project members are shown as listed in the Team Leader report in FIDO. Reports not submitted to FIDO use archival information or are omitted. The Editor regrets any errors in content.

WORK SESSION C & D JUNE 16-20, 2025

Proj. 0200: Site Leaders, Chama and Antonito, Sessions C and D



Don Stewart led both C and D Sessions in Chama. **Don Atkinson** led both Sessions at Antonito but stayed behind his camera.

Proj. 0210/0222: Work Session Sign-in and Merchandise Sales Chama, Sessions C and D



Jim Davenport signed in most of the Work Session C and D participants and peddled Friends merchandise. He also wrote up summary reports on attendance for Rick Marsden.

Proj. 0231: Meals and Snacks, Chama and Antonito, Sessions C and D



The Friends “works on its stomach.” **Rick and Marsha Marsden, Sigi Horner and Lynn Aldrich** were the restaurateurs in Chama and Antonito.



Not all meals were at “The Chef’s Table.” Remote crews like the RoW and signage crews had lunches prepared from them at the beginning of the day. Call it a picnic.

Proj. 0240: Tool Car Supervision Chama, Session C and D

The Tool Car Supervisors, **Craig McMullen** and **Jim Davenport**, check out (and in) and inventory the vast number and variety of tools needed for each project. Wednesday, June 18th must have been a busy day as over 56 different tools were checked out. Upon return, each tool is inspected. Bad drills and other electric tools are “culled for disposal.”



Proj. 0241: Bolt Car Supervision Chama, Session C

Rob Brigham, assisted by **Greg Coit** went nuts over the Nuts and Bolts Car of Session C, assisting the teams

with all types of fasteners, cutting and threading bolts and tie rods. They also arrange orders for any special kind of fasteners.



Proj. 0246: Paint Cars Supervision, Sessions C and D

For both sessions **Frank Higgins** and **Lance Godfrey** operated the Paint Car as a self-service store for the teams. Paint, Lettering and MOW Team paints and supplies are all housed and labeled for easy location by consistent placement of products.

Proj. 0248: Stencil Car-Lettering Coordinator, Sessions C and D



Steve Jorgensen planned and directed lettering of Idler Flats 6746 and 6755, and Box Cars 3570 and 3605.. He also redesigned and submitted plans for vinyl lettering to a contractor in Pagosa Springs, Design-A-Sign for delivery during Work Session F. He also inventoried available 1/16" Mylar stencils, and plans to convert smaller stencils to be recut by the Criscut 3 Stencil Machine in 7.5 mil Mylar stencils.

Proj. 0294: Hauling and Vehicle Operation, Session C and D



Stuff needs to move (or be moved) and the Hauling and Vehicle Operation team, led by **Bob Reib**, are the guys to call to haul. Chama, Antonito or anywhere in between is OK with them!



Proj. 0701: Landscaping, Chama, Sessions C and D



There's a reason why **LuEllen Schoen** is wearing a "Master Gardener" t-shirt. And **Becky Robbins** needs one, too! Both help keep the grounds around the Railroad in tip-top shape, keeping the flowers growing and the weeds under control.



Proj. 0710: ROW Vegetation Control, Session D

Speaking of weeds...



...the Friend's Right-of-Way safety team co-led by **Paul Davenport** and **Alan Green**, along with Ben Wight, Mike Mahoney, Gregory Pringle and Natalie Davenport worked in a number of locations along the line, including in The Narrows, halting encroaching growth between Coxo and Cresco, Cumbres Pass and the Chama Yard. All of this work (done in one session!) improved photography, made for better sight lines for engineers and crews on curves and for vehicular traffic at the grade crossings, as well as improved wildfire mitigation.



Proj. 0720-0722: Rolling Stock Painting, Chama and Antonito, Sessions C and D

Frank Higgins supervised the crews in both locations over both sessions. The teams included Jill Stewart, Doug Hayworth, Joe Kanocz, Melissa Sellers, Richard Breed and others. Much of the focus was on painting RPO 54. (See Project 1354.)



A number of other cars were scraped, primed and painted including Box 3750, Idler Flat 6746, Pipe Gondola 1557, Idler Flat 6755, the Hollywood Boxcar (3566) and Boxcars 3041, 3973 and 3605. It was quite a collection of rolling stock for the crew!

Proj. 0730: Rolling Stock Lettering, Chama and Antonito, Session D

In Chama, the lettering team, under the direction of **Steve Jorgensen**, considered or completed the lettering on newly-painted Pipe Gondola 1557, Idler Flats 6746 and 6755, High Side Gondola 1000 and five Box Cars; 3014, 3073, 3570, 3566 and 3605.



The team then moved to Antonito for lettering Flat Car 6649.



Proj. 0750: Sign Maintenance on the Right-of-Way, Session C

Co-leaders **Mike Mahoney** and **Paul Davenport** and the sign crew, Terry Woolsey, Ben Wight, George Weeks and Keith Dameron, worked with both station signage and mileposts.



Mike Wissler supervised the inspection and approval of the mechanical components of specifically assigned freight cars in the Chama yard. This included inspection and testing of air brake systems.



Other miscellaneous bits of work included the every-three-year straightening of the Los Pinos station sign, finally straightening and realigning MP 326, installation of MP 332 and installation of a new west-bound whistle board at Coxo crossing.



This also includes preparation of new mileposts and signs for future installation. Drying time of green lumber for new posts and signs is two years.



Proj. 1005: Reconstruction and Restoration of Car Inspectors House, Cumbres, Session C and D

John Pierce, Vance Behr, Bob Conry and "Conry's Cumbres Compadres" crew continued work on the interior of the Car Inspectors.



(Below) Team C2: Conry's Cumbres Compadres



Proj. 1186: Cosmetic Restoration of D&RGW Locomotive 483, Chama, Session C

There is always work to be done on D&RGW 483, even if it's just little stuff. **Bob Schoen** and **Ben Sargent** have co-led this project for many years. Still, there's always more to do.



Proj. 0780: Mechanical Maintenance of In-Service Rolling Stock, Chama, Sessions C and D

Session C brought out the crew consisting of Marc and Lukas Opperman, Kailey Sellers, Larry Springer and Dave and Eileen Shannon. Like a well-oiled machine, they accomplished a lot in one session.



This included assembly of the pre-built doghouse for the tender, measuring and photographing parts for future castings and work on the cab and the cab floor apron. The crew also completed the lettering on the rear of the tender.



And of course 483's headlight, always stored away for safety during the off-season, had to be replaced for display.



483 may not grace the rails of the Cumbres & Toltec in the future but there isn't a more beautiful locomotive in the entire fleet. The many volunteers over the years deserve high praise for their efforts.

Proj. 1312: Rebuilding and Restoration of High Side Gondola 1000, Chama, Session C

Marcus Hagerman returned once again from his home in Germany to continue his work on "his" project, High Side 1000. This is a special car because it was the first in the series of High Side Gondolas on the D&RG.



Marcus and Richard Wisnesaki prepared and installed posts on the side wall and U-bolts for the side enforcements.



Salvaged brake beams provided guide pins and eyebolts as well as safety chains.



New pipe segments for the retainer valve were also made and installed.

Proj. 1365: Cumbres Scouts and Informational Signage, Session D

John Engs and **Tom Stewart** led a team of Scouts, along with the Interpretation Committee, building trails and placing signage at Cumbres and the Car Inspectors House.



Proj. 1369: Rebuild Telephone Booths along the Right-of-Way, Antonito, Sessions C and D

Don Atkinson supervised Don Surruler, Kevin Pyle and Lynn Aldrich. In Session C, work began on the booth from Toltec. The steel roof was removed and repaired by brazing a hole closed. Several pieces of siding were replaced and doors were removed. In Session D, roof repair work on the Toltec Booth was completed at the Antonto CRF.



The structure was painted but because of "historic" graffiti inside, it was decided not to paint the interior.

Proj. 1376: Rebuild Boxcar 3566 as the "Hollywood Movie Car," Chama, Sessions C and D

In Session C, the four-person team, including co-leaders **Randy Young** and **David Sowell**, along with Patricia Sandt and Tim Baxter completed the car exterior work in 3.5 days, which

included the new roof walk, installing the brake wheel and gear, trimming all exterior hardware and tweaking of various operational components prior to painting.



For a closer look at the Hollywood Movie Car, see Page 13.

Proj. 0250: Supervision and Operation of Carpentry Shop, Antonito, Sessions C and D



Craig McMullen, of course.

Proj. 1409: Replace Roofing on Flammable Materials Shed, Chama, Session C

Terry Rider, Gavin DeBerry and Dan Osetek replaced the rolled roofing of the Chama Flammable Storage Building and the Los Pinos Storage Building with new two-part rolled roofing.



Proj. 1379: Rebuilding and Restoration of Double-Deck Stock Car 5000, Chama, Session D

"The Usual Suspects," (along with a number of unusual ones) showed up in Session D to assist **Bill Lock** on the restoration of Double-Deck Stock Car 5000.



Proj. 1390: Continued Restoration and Repainting of RPO 54, Antonito, Sessions C and D

RPO 54 was prepped and ready for the paint crew on Wednesday of C session. All sides were sanded. The remaining paint on the letterboards on both ends were stripped and sanded smooth. The rounded corners were filled using marine grade epoxy putty and sanded smooth. The paint crew arrived on Monday of D session and masked off the doors on the RPO and came out again on Wednesday to prime the car.

On Thursday, the paint crew returned to paint the car. Thursday morning everything went smoothly, and both ends and the west side were painted. In the afternoon, the wind picked up, resulting in the spray pattern from the airless sprayer to cause numerous



significant paint runs and orange peel. The result was an unacceptable first coat. The paint runs and orange peel will need to be sanded smooth once the paint cures sufficiently. Two additional coats of paint will be required. The paint crew will not be available until C and/or D session of 2026.

Proj. 1354: Rebuild MW 02 to Operational Condition, Antonito

MW02 was returned from the off-site body shop and painting the body began at the Antonito CRF.



D&RG EXPRESS CAR 163 RESTORATION AT THE COLORADO SPRINGS CRF

Text and photos by **Don Atkinson** and **Glenn Butcher** from the June through August at the Colorado Springs Trolley Barn Work Sessions

It was a busy summer at both on the Railroad and the Express 163 Project in Colorado Springs. While the 163 Project photos may look fairly similar throughout the summer, a lot of work was accomplished.

The shop space was HOT in July which limited a lot of the crew's afternoon work. The car has come a long way toward restoration in the last few months. They removed 150 years of Denver & Rio Grande dirt between the top clearstory roof and the interior ceiling of the car.



They also discovered the amount of damage to the roof carlines was too severe to keep them in place so the decision was made to remove the ceiling and restore the carlines. One carline was given as a sample to Craig McMullen to manufacture twenty-two (yes, *twenty-two*) new ones.



In August, a lot of cleanup work was done and a thirty-yard dumpster was filled with 150 year-old wood debris.



The west-end roof structure received new carlines, and removal of interior paint began with a heat gun. Installation of a new tongue-and-groove interior ceiling began on the north side of the lower clearstory roof.



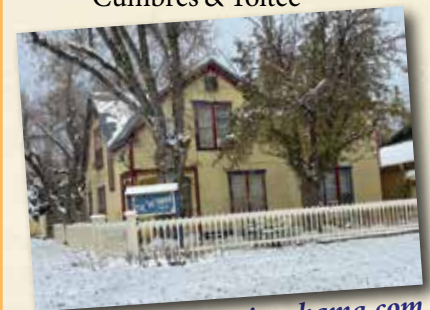
Progress! Work will continue through the fall and visitors to the *Be a Friend, Bring a Friend* event on September 20th will be get a close-up view of the progress!



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Willie Nelson might know. It must be somewhere along the Cumbres & Toltec, because that's where they made the movie! For more cinema wonders on the C&TS, see page 4.

