

# Rocky Mountain Express

Where preserving railroading in the Rocky Mountain States begins and will never end...

December 2014

Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society

Volume 2014, Issue 10

## A LOOK AT ROUNDHOUSES NOW SERVING OTHER PURPOSES

### Former Tucson Roundhouse

Photos by Ron Dawson, Editor, EP&SW Flyer

The El Paso & Southwestern roundhouse in Tucson, Arizona, survives! Built in 1912, it eventually served a succession of railroads that ultimately grew into the Class I El Paso & Southwestern (EP&SW).

The earliest railroad was the Arizona & Southeastern (A&S), which was chartered in May of 1888. It was owned and built by the Phelps Dodge company to transport copper from the mines in southern Arizona to the smelter in Bisbee.

The railroads, in order to succeed, needed a connection with either the Santa Fe or the Southern Pacific. In 1901, the A&S was taken over by EP&SW, which interestingly was also a Phelps Dodge company.



The combined railroads had two major centers of operation: Tucson and El Paso, which was Phelps Dodge headquarters. The size of the Tucson roundhouse reflects the need for servicing the number of locomotives that were in operation in the area.

In 1924, the Southern Pacific Railroad (SP) purchased the EP&SW. Subsequently, the Denver & Rio Grande bought the SP, which later merged with the Union Pacific Railroad. The roundhouse is now owned by a building supply company and is along the route of the proposed EP&SW Greenway project.

### Spencer NC Shops Roundhouse

North Carolina is making full use of a 57 acre site which was once Southern Railroad's largest steam locomotive repair facility on the east coast. Dating back to 1896, it now serves as the site of the North Carolina Transportation Museum.



In recent years, the museum has hosted two noteworthy events: in 2012 a display of locomotives painted in the historic color schemes of Norfolk Southern predecessor railroads and in 2014 twenty-six vintage Streamliner locomotives, all from the 1930s-1950s, came together at the museum for a railfan extravaganza.



Norfolk & Western's J611 is currently being restored to operating condition at Spencer.

Four large exhibit buildings represent the remaining structures of the historic Spencer Shops: the Back Shop (built in 1905), the Flue Shop, the Master Mechanic's Office, and the 37-stall Bob Julian Roundhouse. The first exhibit area opened in 1983. The Spencer Shops preservation and renovation activities have spilled over into the town, inspiring a renewed sense of pride.

### Former Las Vegas NM Roundhouse

Constructed in 1917 by the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, this roundhouse is the only true Santa Fe roundhouse known to survive. The 34 stall structure was a typical "low-type" roundhouse built to plans drawn in 1916. A 100-foot through plate girder turntable provided access to the stalls. At some unknown date, the roundhouse was apparently sold for use as a wool warehouse, and the turntable and all tracks were removed.



Las Vegas NM Roundhouse historic photo

The Santa Fe Railroad arrived in Las Vegas in 1879, and like many railroad boom towns it thrived in the late 1800's. But the Great Depression hit the community hard, followed by the eventual decline of the railroad industry. Ironically, because no one had the money to tear them down, Las Vegas boasts over 900 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

Insert current photo of Las Vegas roundhouse here

Las Vegas' Santa Fe roundhouse is still standing and is being used for grain storage by its owner, \_\_\_\_\_ . It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



*The Colorado Midland Roundhouse.* Built in 1887 for the Colorado Midland Railway, it served as a light maintenance and storage facility. The railway was the first standard gauge railroad built over the Continental Divide in Colorado. It ran from Colorado Springs to Leadville and through the divide at Hagerman Pass to Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction. In 1955, the Roundhouse was sold to the Van Briggles Pottery. The current owners purchased the building in 2009 and remodeled it into an upscale shopping and office complex, including a local brew pub.

Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society
PO Box 969
Englewood CO 80151-0969
303-269-9768

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Iconic Nashville Union Station Hotel for sale

Newsletter Volunteer Staff
Editor: Sigi Walker
Photographer: Mike Walker

Note: All submissions may be edited for content, grammar, and space allocation, and become the property of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society unless other arrangements have been made. Digital text submissions in .doc or .docx; photos in jpg, please. Submit articles and photos to the following address.

Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society publishes this newsletter at
PO Box 969
Englewood CO 80151-0969
303-269-9768
rockymountainrailroad@yahoo.com

RMRHS has applied for Federal 501(c)(3) status.



Moline (IL) historic preservationists are searching for a new owner and location to move the 114-year-old former Davenport, Rock Island Northwestern passenger depot sitting in the path of the future Interstate 74 bridge.

Contributors to this edition:
Ron Dawson Jim Jordan
Tom VanWormer
Mike and Sigi Walker

PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP:

First, I would like to invite all RMRHS supporters to stop by our tables at the TCA show being held on November 29th and 30th at the Merchandise Mart. In October's newsletter, I asked for volunteers to help. If you have not already done so, please call me at 303-269-9768.

Following our annual meeting in October, Roundhouse Preservation, Inc. of Hugo, Colorado, joined our society. Their efforts are one of the restoration projects highlighted on the front page. Also featured about at the annual luncheon of the R their efforts.

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Finally, The RMRHS poster will be for sale at the Toy Train Show and the TECO show; it has been tweaked and upgraded a bit. It will be a limited run of 100. Members price is \$5.00, and non-members is \$10.00, they will be signed and numbered.

Reminder: if you haven't renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible so that you can participate in some of the exciting things we are planning for our membership, hint railroad tours, and our own coffee mug with our logo on it.

With much appreciation, Jim



Above: Santa Fe Depot in Las Vegas NM, built in 1899, ca 1915 photo



Above: Current photo of Santa Fe Depot, now an Amtrak Station and Visitors Center

If you are receiving this newsletter via e-mail, a membership form is also attached to your email. If you are receiving this newsletter by US mail, a copy of the membership form is enclosed.

Please ✂
or provide the information requested on a plain sheet of paper and mail with payment.

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PO Box 969
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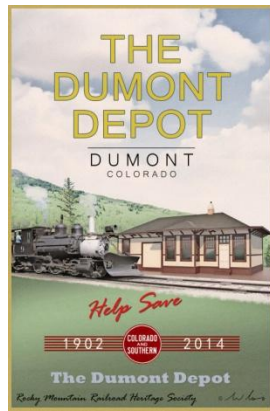
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Venue:

## 2014 Summary of Historic Depots and Buildings RMRHS is working to preserve

### Dumont Depot Update

The 1900s saw the advent of the railroad, and Dumont was one of the few Clear Creek County communities to have a fine depot. The Dumont Depot was built in 1902 by the Colorado & Southern RR to serve the area between Idaho Springs and Georgetown. The area, known as Mill Creek Valley, had numerous ore mills needing rail service. When constructed, the depot was both a railroad station and a post office.

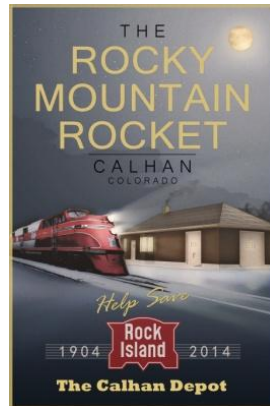
**Status:** The Purchase Agreement for the depot building (not land) has been signed. The RMRHS now needs to raise \$10,000, after which the building will be donated to the Mill Creek Valley Historical Society and moved.



### Calhan Depot Update

This 1906 depot in Calhan served the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad on its route between Kansas and Colorado Springs. The Calhan depot is one of only two surviving Rock Island Railroad depots remaining on their original sites. The Rock Island slipped into bankruptcy in the early 1970s and in 1993-94 the rails were pulled up and sold for scrap. The depot was listed on the National Register in 1995 (5EP2173).

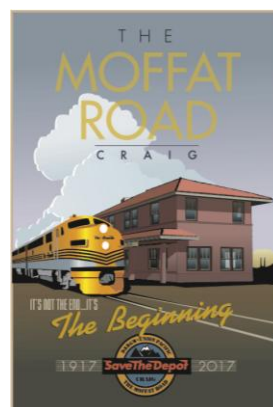
**Status:** Structure evaluation has been completed. Awaiting notification of grant request approval.



### Craig Depot Update

Built in 1917, the Craig Depot is an example of early 1900s architectural style. The Moffat Line and the Craig Depot served as the hub of activity for transportation of livestock, coal, supplies, and people to and from an isolated area. It was the end of the Moffat Line; loss of financial backing forced David Moffat to end his dream to run from Denver to Salt Lake City there. In 1985, the D&RG RR shut down the depot. Current owner UPRR is pushing to demolish the building unless it can be moved.

**Status:** Awaiting approval for delay of the demolition, currently in the hands of UP's General Superintendent



**Loveland Great Western Rwy Depot:** OmniTrax has put the contract on hold although Granby and Dave Naples have signed it.

**Brighton Great Western Rwy scale and freight house:** The land on which this building sits will soon have a new owner. The RMRHS may be given the building, along with some rail and switch stands.

**Hugo Union Pacific Roundhouse:** The restoration of doors and windows is in progress. Future interior plans include a large dining hall, kitchen, visitor's center, and museum. Bay eight will be restored to resemble the original engine facility.

### Kit Carson (CO) Pumphouse Update

This Kit Carson structure, built in the style of most buildings in the 1860-1870's, is slated for demolition if it is not moved.

The stone engine house and attached well house are perhaps the last remaining structures of the Kansas Pacific Railway. Collectively, the structures are referred to as the Kit Carson Pumphouse. The site was listed on the Colorado Register of Historic Properties (5CH114) in 1995. Colorado Preservation, Inc. also lists it as one of Colorado's most endangered structures.

**Status:** Building donated to Kit Carson Historical Society but land is owned by the UPRR. Grant request from the state for an evaluation in progress. Need funding to move the building.



### Grand Junction Depot News

Designed by Henry J. Schlack and constructed in 1905 by the William Simpson Construction Company, this two-story brick depot, with terra cotta detailing, features elements of the Italian Renaissance style. The depot contributed to the development of the western portion of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad system as well as to the growth of Grand Junction. Listed on the National Register 9/8/1992 (5ME.4163). It is currently privately-owned and the attached freight house is being used to fabricate zip line hardware.

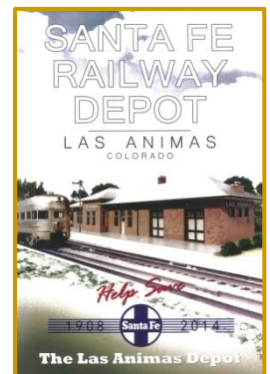
**Status:** Serious meetings to develop plans to preserve Grand Junction's "finest depot of its kind in the West" are in progress.



**Las Animas Depot:** State Register 5/14/1997, 5BN.415

Built in 1908, the Las Animas depot is a good intact example of the Santa Fe Railroad's *Brick Standard Plan* depot design frequently erected in Kansas and Colorado in the first decade of the 20th century. The depot is slightly different in that the front bay window is rectangular instead of half-hexagonal. The rear of the depot features a "carriage porch." It is associated with both passenger and freight railroad transportation. It is owned by the BNSF Railroad and has been leased to Bent County for the past three years.

**Status:** Clean-up of the property by volunteers has been ongoing. Bent County and Las Animas have made numerous offers to purchase the building and the land.



**Trinchere Freight House (now a museum):** No news to report.

**Como Depot:** Don't forget to mark your calendar for August 22, 2015, the grand opening and dedication of the depot to be held in conjunction with the 20th annual Boreas Pass Railroad Days.

**Castle Rock Santa Fe Depot:** The building has been boarded up to protect it from further deterioration. It may be moved in the future.

**Midland Depot at Divide:** Grant applications are in progress to fund the next phase of the restoration. The building has been raised and leveled, and a permanent foundation is in place.

### Train Treks with Mike and Sigi Walker: From Cumberland to Frostburg

In October of this year, we had a chance to ride the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. We had ridden it once before, in 2003, and were curious to learn how things were now.



Western Maryland Scenic Railroad photo

The 32-mile round trip begins in Cumberland at the restored 1913 Western Maryland Railway station. During the 19th century, it was a major transportation hub; The National Road, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal either began or ended here. Today, the four-story depot



serves as the WMSR headquarters, the Canal Preservation Authority headquarters, a newly-opened C&O Canal National Historic Park exhibit and visitor's center, and has numerous office tenants. An update to the building added an elevator wing - a nice addition since the passenger waiting room and gift shop are on the third floor!

In Frostburg, on the other end of the line, is the former Cumberland & Pennsylvania Railroad Company station, built in 1891. The C&P RR was a small but important local railroad, serving Cumberland, MD, and Piedmont, WV, via Frostburg. It connected these communities to the B&O, the Western Maryland, and the Pennsylvania railroads.



Service was discontinued in 1942, and the depot was abandoned in 1973. A grant enabled restoration in 1989, and the depot was fitted with a restaurant and shops. At present the restaurant is not in operation.

There is a two-hour layover in Frostburg, and visitors have a number of things they can do. To visit the Main Street District of Frostburg requires a visitor to climb a steep 88-step staircase or walk up a steep sidewalk, so you must be in great condition.

The Thrasher Carriage Museum has one of the top collections of horse-drawn vehicles. Why a museum to commemorate this mode of transportation? Frostburg was on The National Road (Route 40), which saw every walk of life from the milkman to the wealthy. Pleasure vehicles, funeral wagons, sleighs, carts, and more are on display in the renovated 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse.



But for Mike, the most interesting activity in Frostburg was watching the steam locomotive being turned on the turntable for the return trip to Cumberland.



Mike commented that the Western Maryland RR is unique; it provides a "whole" steam railroading experience - from the fully functioning turntable and water pipes (see below) to the two well-preserved depots.



During our visit, we learned that the WMSR has acquired Chesapeake & Ohio H6 2-6-6-2 No. 1309. It will be restored to operating condition by the end of 2015. The Baldwin-built Mallet is widely recognized as the last steam locomotive by a commercial builder delivered for service in the United States. Once restored, it will be one of only three Mallets operating in the U.S.

All photos by Mike Walker except as noted



Pueblo Railway Museum's ATSF #2912 in Christmas splendor for the holidays



Mike and Sigi's "speeder" decorated for Pueblo Parade of Lights



Colorado Railroad Museum's Goose #7 after a winter snowfall CRRM photo



Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Museum's PCC car in the snow

# And the best of New Years in 2015!