



Newsletter

Volume 3, No. 7

Summer Edition 2016

In This Issue

- A Letter From the President..... 1
- A Visit to Uhrich Steam Locomotive Works 2
- The Rock Island Bridges of Matheson, Colorado..... 4
- Exploring the San Luis Valley 6
- Colorado Mountain Brewery 8
- Hotel Eleganté 9
- Frontier Gallery 10
- Curecanti Needle Mug 11
- Membership Form 12



Water Tower in Sergeants, Colorado at base of Marshall Pass. Photo by Jim Jordan.



A Letter From the President: Jim Jordan

It doesn't seem like three years has passed since we had the organizational meeting, which gave birth to our society.

At that first meeting we had some very skilled and preservation oriented individuals representing some outstanding groups. John Olson from Historic Denver, Michelle Kempema from the then Greely Freight Station Museum, Bret Johnson of Bret Johnson Architectural, Doug Cohn and I from Englewood Historic preservation Society, and award winning writer Gary Goodson. From that meeting the Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society was born.

We have made a lot of progress on a

number of fronts. We were instrumental in putting together the Loveland Historical Society and the Moffat Road Interpretive Center in Granby to save the historic Great Western Depot in Loveland, Colorado. We have identified at least 20 railroad structures that need rescuing in Colorado and Wyoming.

We have been very fortunate to have some of the best historical societies, museums, and towns and companies join us as associate members, or sponsors including our newest associate member the Florence Historical Society of Florence, Colorado. We have seen our membership increase to over 120+ members, and interested parties in 15 states and 2 foreign nations. We have supplied information on possible ways for other societies to save their depots. One of which was saved in Missouri.

We have purchased two depots and a rare motorized rail truck (on a temporary basis until we can have the depots and the vehicle donated to the societies and town where they are located).

So as we begin moving into another year I want to thank each of you for your support and help. None of this would have happened if it wasn't for each of you. In particular Tom Van Wormer, Doug Cohn, Lindsey Runyan, Bret Johnson, Dave Sheridan, James D. Craig, Roy Thompson, Wayne Kemp, Doug Hesbol, Dave Christopherson, Chris Fox, Jennifer Jordan and Sue Edge and so many more individuals who have worked so hard.

Great job to all of you!



A Visit to Uhrich Steam Locomotive Works

By Jim Jordan, Wayne Kemp, Doug Cohn and Dave Christopherson

Recently a number of our members traveled to Strasburg, Colorado to visit the Uhrich Locomotive Works. Marlin Uhrich, the proud owner of this really fascinating company was kind enough to take us on a tour of this incredibly unique and interesting operation. There are very few like it in the United States.

The beginning of this wonderful operation started in 1945, when Marlin's father Virgil Uhrich decided he wanted to build a steam engine in 14 1/2 gauge. To accomplish this engines construction he set up a foundry and machine shop. Three years later in 1948 the engine was completed, and Virgil decided that he would start up a machine shop and welding business (he had owned the local movie theatre).

Today after 75 years the business has evolved into one of the few steam engine shops that can manufacture miniature or full scale steam engine locomotives, and everything in between. In addition they can and do evaluate

and perform inspections on existing steam engines, which have luckily escaped the cutters torch. Marlin can and does inspect and decide if an engine can be restored to operating condition.

In visiting this exciting facility, it is if you stepped back into time when steam power was king of transportation. Incorporated in 1961 the company has been keeping steam powered train engines running and alive and well in not only Colorado but other states also.

First we visited the foundry and casting room. This is where they produce the iron and steel castings of almost anything that is or was on a locomotive steam engine. Patterns of smoke stacks, or funnels were the order of the day when we visited. The men who work in this facility seem to really know their jobs very well producing some superb castings used on a number of railroad projects across the United States; including the Durango and Silverton,

Uhrich Locomotive Works. Photos by Wayne Kemp and Jim Jordan.



the Cumbres and Toltec and the Georgetown Loop.

From here we went to the machine shop. Most of the tools and machines used in the plant were made in the late 19th Century or the early 20th Century. A good portion of the equipment is driven by large leather belts as was the rule for most of the industrial age. A goodly portion of the machines are very rare and quite expensive as having been used by a number of manufacturers of railway equipment from over 70 years ago if not longer. A good example of this is the milling lathe which was obtained from a wheel wright and manufactured in 1910.

From the machine shop we next visited the wood working shop, and looked at "a work in progress" on a 15 gauge scale model of a Kansas Pacific Railroad, wooden side door caboose. This is a smaller scale version of a type of caboose which traveled through the area where the Town of Strasburg is currently; in the 1860's to 1870's.

This amusement park caboose that Marlin is having constructed will soon be hauling excited young passengers on the famous scale modeled "Tiny Town Railroad" in Morrison, Colorado. This caboose is incredibly well made and everything is made on the premises, from the wood paneling body to the cast steel trucks and couplers, using original blueprints which were then reduced to scale. It is without a doubt a finely built model, which when put into service will still be used in 50 years or more.

Stay Tuned: Comanche Crossing & the best little steam trains on the plains in the next issue.

Wood Working Shop at Uhrich Locomotive Works in Strasburg, CO
Photos by Jim Jordan.



ULCO – Uhrich Locomotive Company

P.O. Box 125
Strasburg, CO 80136
303.622.4431

Call for an appointment or tour





Rock Island Bridges in Matheson, Colorado.
Photo by Wayne Kemp.

The Rock Island Bridges at Matheson, Colorado

By Tom Van Wormer, Mike Walker & Wayne Kemp

The Rock Island Railroad built through the eastern Colorado area in 1886 on the way to Colorado Springs. West of Limon, Colorado they filed a town plat for a town to be called Matheson. However inadvertently it was misspelled and was incorrectly spelled "Mattison." A town plat was filed for Matheson on January 14, 1889, by the Rock Island town filer, C. F. Jilson. The name of the "Mattison" post office was finally renamed "Matheson" in 1915.

The bridge east of Matheson, a fine old style steel structure, replaced an earlier pile trestle that was regularly washed out over the Big Sandy Creek. In solving the problem, an old double track bridge over the Rock River near Colona, Illinois, was dismantled and

portions of it rebuilt into a single track structure which stands today as the Matheson Bridge. Other spans from the Rock River Bridge were used in several spots on the Rock Island Railroad. Most are thought to have been in the Texas-Oklahoma area, but all have since been scrapped.

In the early 1950s, the old Matheson depot and large water tank were removed. A small station, converted from a baggage building, was moved in for use as the freight office. In 1965, the small station was sold and moved away. In less than a year, the last passenger train sped through town.

The old smaller depot has been located on a farm south of the town.

Town of Matheson

Elevation	5787 ft.
Mile Post	548.9
Bridge #5489	a 2-span thru truss
Size	two 153' 7" spans
Year built	1902
Location	Big Sandy Creek

Comments:

The Matheson Bridge used concrete masonry for its construction in 1902. It was originally a double track 8-span thru truss bridge across the Rock River near Colona, Illinois. It was built by the American Bridge Company "Lassig Branch" in 1883. It was later taken apart and the eight sections were reused throughout the Rock Island system. Five of the sections went to the Southern Division, one section to the E&A Line, and the remaining two sections to Matheson. These two sections were rebuilt from double track to single track width and placed over Big Sandy Creek.

Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railway	1888-1891
Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway	1891-1980
Last passenger train from Colorado Springs to Chicago	October 1966
Last train on Colorado Springs branch	November 20, 1978
Last Rock Island train from Colorado	March 28, 1980



1983 – Colorado Springs branch used briefly by the Colorado and Eastern Railway to move power and rolling stock from Limon onto their property east of Colorado Springs

January 1981 – Howard Noble put in charge of the Colorado operations of the Cadillac and Lake City, which was granted permission to operate the Colorado Springs trackage as well as trackage from Limon west to Simla. It ran freight and co-existed with passenger business. The shutdown of the Cadillac and Lake City came in 1990.



Rock Island Bridges in Matheson, Colorado. Photos by Wayne Kemp.



Newsletter Design

by Lindsey Runyan

For contact info and online portfolio please visit: www.coroflot.com/lindseyrunyan



Exploring the San Luis Valley

By Jim Jordan & Doug Cohn

After eating a hearty breakfast at the Steam Train Hotel, Doug and I went over to the new station at Antonito. They were preparing an engine for that day's operation when we arrived and at the same time the railroad was loading and preparing to run a "Gallopig Goose." We got a few good pictures of the "goose" and the engine coupling up to the passenger cars.

Next stop Alamosa and the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad.

Stopping in at the yard office in Alamosa we spoke with a very nice and decent individual that we had met previously; Jason Trujillo the Assistant Superintendent. Having renewed our acquaintance and then receiving permission, we were able to walk around the yards and take photographs of the F unit that was being readied for the day's excursion.

As Iowa Pacific Holdings has a thing about the old Illinois Central colors, we were able to photograph the F unit it in all of its "splendor." In addition I counted at least three more F units in New Jersey Transit colors, plus an ex-heavy weight Pullman chair car, which when finished being restored

will be a great addition to whatever road that it is assigned to. Iowa Pacific Holdings owns and operates a vast amount of freight, tourist and regular rail service in the United States today. The Alamosa shops are the main repair and restoration facility in the United States for Iowa Pacific Holdings, cars restored here can end up in New York, Texas, Oregon anywhere that Iowa Pacific operates.

Crossing the street to the "East End" of the repair facility we spotted at least 2 heritage type dome cars being renovated, and a few super domes waiting to enter the shop. As we were still running on a schedule we walked around a bit and took a few pictures of some of the cars and the restored Alamosa Depot, which handles Iowa Pacific's Call Center for reservations.

Next Stop: South Fork

South Fork is the furthest town in the west "Valley" and is home to the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad; which runs from South Fork almost to Creede.

When we arrived at South Fork we didn't see anyone around so we just wandered a bit looking at some of the

San Luis Valley area of CO.
Photos by Wayne Kemp &
Jim Jordan.



San Luis Valley area of CO.
Photos by Jim Jordan.



equipment, about the time we were debating if we were going to journey on back to Alamosa and then return home, we were met by the owner and his very lovely wife.

Don Shank is a really nice person, a great and a very easy going fellow, who has forgotten more than most "authorities" on the history of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. He has a passionate love of the road and thus the name he chose for his operation.

His depot was built in 1893 to serve the new town of Garrison. It replaced the original depot built in 1890, which burned. The D&RG RR was experiencing problems with shipments being mixed up between Garrison and Gunnison, so in 1896, the railroad renamed Garrison to Hooper after Maj. Shadrack K. Hooper, the D&RG's General Passenger and Ticket Agent in Denver 1870's depot. It does have a great original station train board from this wonderfully preserved depot, and outside he has a couple of original 1880 D&RG Railroad benches.

He invited us into his 1903 Detroit and Mackinaw Railroad Private Car, which at one time was used by President Howard Taft. We spent a very pleasant 2 hours discussing both the men and women railroaders that we have known or still know. It was a thoroughly enjoyable conversation and Doug and I were enthralled to hear of Don's story of the

private car we were sitting in. Sadly the time past all too quickly and we had to head back to Denver. As I had explained to Don the Society's desire to obtain some rolling stock for Dumont's Depot and Calhan's Station, he suggested we look at some cars he has stored as we head on our way home.

Heading towards the north on Highway 285 we stopped at the location he asked us to visit north of Monte Vista. As happy as a kid with a new BB gun at Christmas, we found his yard. He had narrow gauge cars, both passenger and freight cars, standard gauge cars and a Pacific model steam engine that needed new fire tubes, but was in great shape; with a virtually new tender.

We found the cars he described to us, and I was able to get some pictures of the cars which we are going to see if we can obtain from him.

Both Doug and I had a quick lunch and headed back to the Front Range and home. It had been a very exciting and uplifting trip with seeing a lot of the history of the San Luis Valley, meeting some truly good and decent people, plus seeing some great railroad equipment. It was one of those trips that you remember for a long, long time. It is our hope to run a tour of the "Valley" sometime this year for our membership. If interested in going, watch for an email about it.





Colorado Mountain Brewery in CO Springs, CO. Photos by Wayne Kemp & Chris Fox.



Colorado Mountain Brewery By Jim Jordan

If you live in, or are visiting Colorado Springs and have a craving for some really good food, might I suggest that you visit the Colorado Mountain Brewery located at 600 South 21st Street (Highway 24 and 2st), located in the old Colorado Midland Roundhouse. One of our Society's top rated sponsors, who supports our mission and our society.

If you like railroads and railroad history this is the place for you. While the roundhouse no longer has the turntable in front or the engine stalls, you still can feel the history of the building when you walk in the front door.

In fact if you listen really closely you might hear the mournful sound of one of the train whistles as it starts to head up Ute Pass on its run to Aspen or Grand Junction; or somewhere in between. Or is that just the wind outside?

But you are here to have a good meal and soak in the historic surroundings,

and a good meal you will have. The menu has something for every appetite and very reasonable prices. The food is very plentiful and kitchen uses only fresh products, be it meat or vegetables, no day old left over lettuce or legumes; just fresh wholesome food. The wait staff is efficient and friendly without being phony, as is so often encounter in this day and age.

Recently and Chris Fox of the Hugo Roundhouse Association, and our Society had lunch here and we both were more than satisfied with the portion size and the taste. I had the Cobb Salad and it was without a doubt one of best salads I have had in a long while. Chris had a very large sandwich which he felt was more than good.

I would strongly urge you to visit this unique restaurant and find out for yourself what makes this a fun place to visit. If you ever have a problem or comments please ask for Chris the

manager who will take care of the problem, and would love to hear your compliment.

I can guarantee that you will enjoy it so much you will make it one of your favorite places to visit.

Colorado Mountain Brewery

600 S. 21st St,
Colorado Springs, CO 80904
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Hotel Eleganté in Colorado Springs, CO. Photos by Wayne Kemp.



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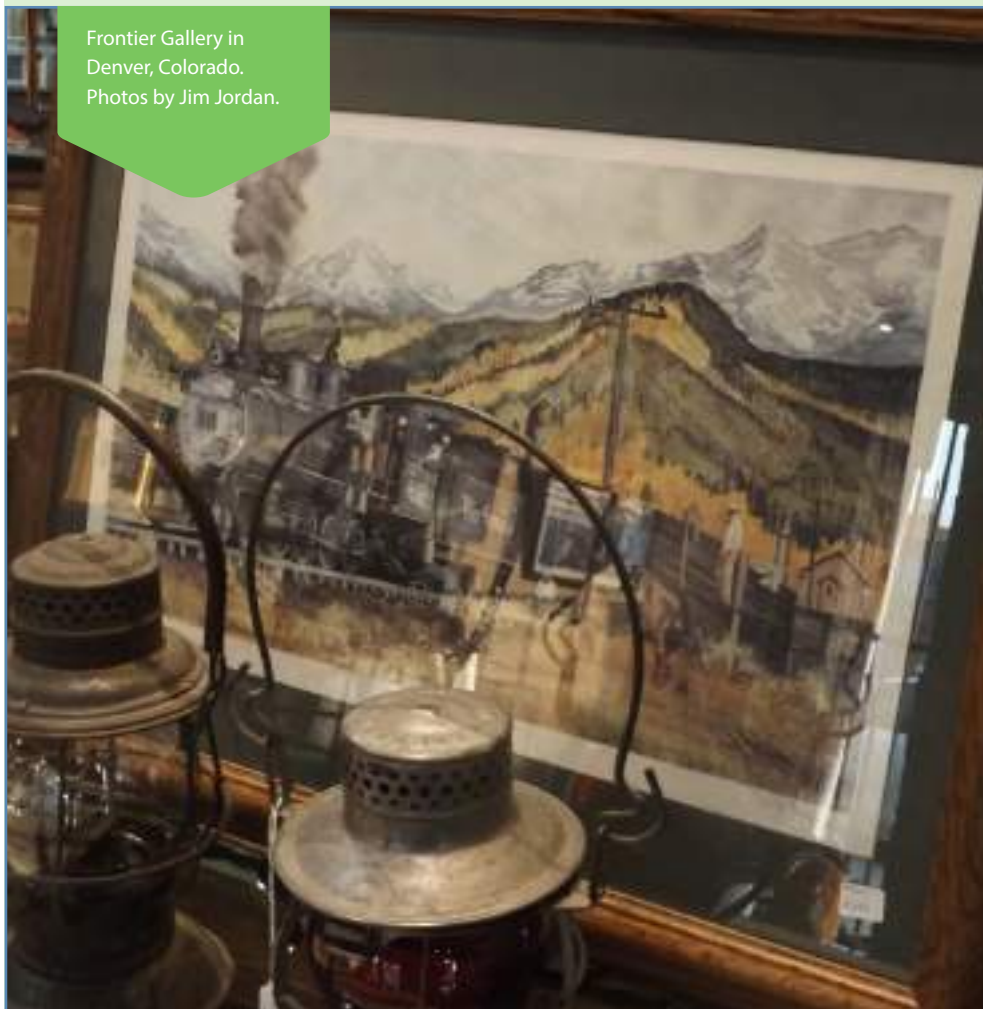
Frontier Gallery By Jim Jordan

If you are looking for something unusual of a historic nature related to railroading or an antique firearm, might I suggest that you pay a visit to the Frontier Gallery at 1452 South Broadway? This shop has some really amazing items, maybe you want an early 20th Century unused switch lantern, circa 1920 or possible a fine specimen of an 18th Century Blunderbuss. If so you can probably find it here.

How about a Howard Fogg railroad print or a 1865 Henry Rifle that was presented to the Hawaiian King Kamehameha V by the United States Military Attaché. Maybe a Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific railroad caboose stove coal scoop? Or a Union Pacific Railroad lock, it might be there waiting for you, his stock changes all the time and there are treasures just waiting for that special person to find. Dave Weddle who is the proprietor and a real nice and decent fellow who has a lot of not just neat things, but really neat items!

He is also one of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society's strongest supporters, and believes in our Mission Statement totally. He offers a discount of 15% to any member that buys something from him, however you must have your membership card available and present it at time of purchase. So when in Denver please stop by and say hello and make yourself acquainted with Dave.

Frontier Gallery in
Denver, Colorado.
Photos by Jim Jordan.



Frontier Gallery

1452 South Broadway
Denver, CO 80210
303-733-4200
frontiergallery.com
Hours: 11 am - 5 pm,
Tuesday - Saturday

Rio Grande Curecanti Needle Mug

ORDER TODAY!

The Curecanti emblem that was created for the Denver and Rio Grande railroad was the brainchild of the renowned General Passenger and Ticket Agent, Major Shadrack K. Hooper in 1884. The logo featured the Curecanti Needle which is in the stark relief as the sun is rising in the east and shining on the Canyon of the Gunnison was the first main line for the Denver and Rio Grande through the Rockies, prior to the opening of the Royal Gorge Route. The Curecanti Needle design was used on the china of the Denver and Rio Grande from 1884 through the 1920's. During that period it was modified several times.

The coffee cup that the Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society is reproducing is of the first pattern which was used on both narrow and standard gauge dining cars until 1922, when the first modification was made to the pattern.

Every effort has been made to capture the famous logo and place it on the best china that we can find. We certify that we will not reproduce this coffee mug again after the initial run of 250 units. This is a once in a lifetime chance to own a collectible and functional piece of dining car history, which will be a collectible item in its own right. One of eleven different coffee mugs from eleven separate railroads that ran in the Rocky Mountain Empire in the dim past.

\$30 Each - special membership pricing



Rio Grande Curecanti Needle Mug
Photo by Jim Jordan.



Stay Tuned:
Visiting
the Como
Roundhouse
the next issue!

Como Roundhouse in
Como, Colorado.
Photo by Greg Walz.





Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 969

Englewood, CO 80151

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