



## President's Letter

I hope that all of you are well during this very unique and stressful time. We weren't sure about putting a newsletter out, but

as we haven't missed a quarterly newsletter in seven years I feel we shouldn't miss one now. No bug of indeterminate origin is going to cause us to miss one at this time. We need to give Jamie Foster a big thanks for laying this issue out.

Speaking of thanks we have a number of persons who have worked very, very hard since December last year to move the society forward. Elizabeth Maline, John Emmot, Doug Cohn, and a couple of other members who wish anonymity have put together a great power point of the depot. It shows what we need to repair. Richard Luckin, author, film producer, railroad historian, friend and supporter helped us with a lot of great suggestions to improve the power point to where it has gotten a lot of positive reviews. We are putting a new second smaller power point together that we will use to explain what we are trying to do at Calhan. Doug Cohn has been working on that one using bits and pieces of the first one, plus photographs from our archives. It gets the idea across really well.

In addition we owe a great deal of gratitude to Greg Roberts and John Emmot for constructing the new caboose doors, and frames for them. Fantastic work by both these great craftsmen. (continued page 7)

## Barrel Donation to the Colorado Model Railroad Museum

September 18, 2020

Recently we were given two 50-gallon barrels that date from around 1900 to 1910. One was used by the Union Pacific Railroad and the other by the Oregon, Washington Railroad and Navigation Company which was absorbed by the Union Pacific in 1910. They are unique to say the least. They are steel that was coated with zinc. They are heavily soldered, not welded.

As the Colorado Model Railroad Museum are Associate Members and have helped us out over the last seven years, it was thought that we should donate the Union Pacific barrel to that group. So on September 17th the barrel was loaded on Wayne's pickup truck and taken up to Greeley and to its new home.

At the museum, Michelle Kempama met with us and accepted the barrel on behalf of that great and utterly fantastic museum. Michelle is one of the sharpest museum directors in the Rocky Mountain Empire by any stretch of the imagination. Always cheerful, smiling and very knowledgeable about the history of the UPRR.

We deeply appreciate our relationship with the Colorado Model Railroad Museum and are pleased that they can use the barrel.



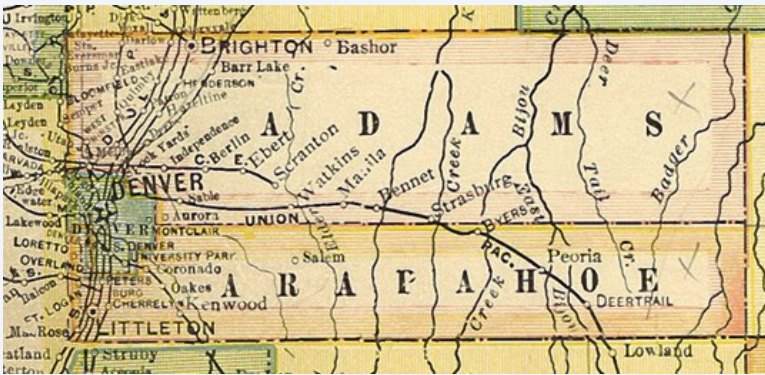
# Colorado and Eastern Railroad

By Doug Cohn

This is a story about some people with a vision who almost became famous.

In the 1870s and 80s Colorado was a booming place. Gold and silver were being found all over the mountains. People were getting rich. Silver at Leadville was found in 1879. The Union Pacific and Kansas Pacific Railroad had come to Denver. They had thousands of acres of land along the tracks they wanted to sell. They wanted new cities and ranches and farms.

The year was 1886. The whole world ran on coal. It powered the trains, provided heat in the buildings, and was used in the area smelters to refine the precious metals. In January of 1886, a seam of coal was discovered and a claim made by Wm. Anderson way out in the prairie east of Denver. It was located about one half mile west of Monaghan Road between 26th and 56th Avenues. Anderson was convinced he had found a way to make a fortune and join the rest of



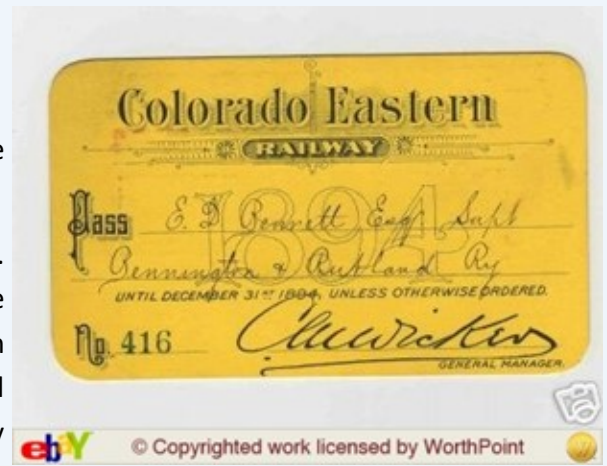
the rich guys. He called the place was called Scranton since he was from the coal mining area of Pennsylvania. It was in the SW ¼ section 16 T3S, R65W. The mine is about a mile south of the terminal at DIA. He had found an estimated 1.5 million tons of coal. The problem was it was 17 miles from anywhere. There was no way to get the coal from there to Denver.

Enter the Colorado Eastern Railroad. The Colorado Eastern was the only narrow gauge to run east of Denver.

There were several incorporations before it actually got off the ground. A group of investors finally got the job done and created the railroad in 1886 to deliver the coal. The railroad was built to deliver coal to the Omaha and Grant smelter at 57th and Washington in Denver. The railroad was built in about 6 months and made the first deliveries to the Omaha Grant smelter by the end of 1886. The line was 17 miles long and went from the Denver Coliseum to 1 mile south of DIA. The Railroad also got access to Union Station in downtown Denver. The track was laid and coal shipped before the end of 1886. The first year 11,700 tons was delivered. The second year produces 16,000 tons.

Then the bottom fell out. The coal was very low quality and straw had to be put with it to make it burn. Though they mined chunk coal, by the time it got to the smelter, much of it had disintegrated to dust. Anderson had found lignite coal which was soft and did not burn well. It was quickly determined the coal was no good for the smelter or for much of anything else at that time. The contract to deliver the coal was cancelled after less than two years. (There are 4 grades of coal: anthracite-the best, bituminous which was pretty good, sub-bituminous which was OK and lignite which at that time had no value at all.) Today, lignite coal has a lot of value. It is nature's best water purifier, the coal powder creates great heat if blown into the furnace. They also found oil and natural gas neither of which had any value in 1886.

The rolling stock: D&RG #6 the Ute was purchased as the locomotive. They had one combination car used to transport people, mail and freight. They had 100 4 wheel mine cars to transport the coal. They





made an early mistake with the rail they bought. Narrow gauge rail is 40#, they used 18# rail. That size rail was used inside the mines. This would create problems in the future. They also used small ties more like fence posts than the 6x8's used everywhere else.



With the coal contract cancelled, what would they do? They came up with the idea of creating towns and providing farms with water. One of the principals in the Colorado Eastern was Edward Reser. He was also a principal in the Highline Canal Company. Jay Gould, owner of the Kansas Pacific Railroad wanted to develop the farm land along the tracks. Irrigated farming was a new idea and these guys thought a canal could be built to bring water from the South Platte River to this area. They built the High Line Canal which was 71 miles long. It was a good idea except they did not have senior water rights and many years the canal was empty. In the wet years, they had water, but the farmers did not need it. In the dry years, they had none.



Another plan was to make coke from the low grade coal for smelting and use the clay soil to make bricks for the fast growing City of Denver. In 1908, they dreamed of an electricity generating station using the coal. Denver had become electrified. None of these ideas worked. They kept trying new ideas, knowing if they got the right one, they would all be rich.

In the end, the RR ran one route per day from Denver to Scranton and back... There was a little bit of freight and a few flag customers, but not enough to make a profit. An example: in 1911, passenger revenue was \$4.90 freight \$15.25 and rental income \$78.00 for a total of \$98.15. The railroad kept going because a New York investor kept putting money in.

The road lasted for 28 years. The road was able to get a gate at the newly built Union Station in downtown Denver. As the years went by, the access to the station was its biggest asset. Many speculate that was a major reason for the company from the first day. There was a hope one of the big railroads would buy their space. One newspaper writer suggested the whole point of the railroad was to have a gate at Union station. This author thinks there was a group of investors with big ideas and the desire to become wealthy and the gate at Union Station would have been a little frosting on the cake. When the railroad went out of business in 1915, there is no record that anyone bought the rights into Union Station.

An interesting footnote came from the New York Times. Jay Gould was interested in buying the line and made a visit in 1902.

#### GOULD WANTED MORE SPEED,

The engineer got a tip. He knew his rolling stock was light and that the rails weighed but eighteen pounds. There was only one thing to do if he wanted to avoid a wreck and give Gould a good impression of the road, and that was to run his train not much faster than a horse car.

The officials of the road and the then great railroad king got aboard. But a few miles had been covered when Mr. Gould, who stood on the flat car not far from the engine, asked the engineer to run faster, but there was no change in the rate of speed. Two or three times Mr. Gould asked that the train be run faster, but the engineer, knowing what the result would be, kept the even tenor of his way.

"Pull that throttle wide open and let her go!" demanded Gould, and the engineer obeyed. The engine shot along the track at a fearful rate. Sometimes the flat car was a foot from the rails, and then again it was high up in the air.

From that day until the day he died he never said another word about buying the Colorado and Eastern.

#### Sources:

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Narrow Gauge East from Denver: The Colorado Eastern Railroad

# 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 re-named “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.



Elevation: 5787 feet. Mile Post 548.9. Bridge #5489, a 2-span through 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 Summer Edition 5 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.

# Lake Station - Colorado Ghost Town

By John LaBorde

Located on the Union Pacific Right of Way is Lake Station-Colorado Ghost Town. This forgotten train town is probably the most inaccessible of the little towns the Kansas Pacific RR built in Lincoln County. Lake Station stretches across a variety of property lines.

South on CR 23 one comes to a railroad crossing. To the west about a mile is a stand of cotton wood trees and shrubs. This is roughly where Lake Station was.

This lost town is where the last major Indian attack in Eastern Colorado began. The spring of 1870 the rails of the Kansas Pacific had reached Kit Carson, Colorado. From here west the chief engineer and survey party had laid out the grade for the right of way. The engineer and survey crew had reached Lake Station and was camping there preparing to push on west. Behind them were work crews, building bridges and grading. Some crews were over 100 men.

On a cool spring morning a group of Cheyenne Indians launched a series of attacks on the railroad crews from Lake Station all the way back to Kit Carson. Most of the Indian raids were 10-12 warriors. The chief engineer at Lake Station was killed along with several other workers. Many were injured and most were scared. The railroad crews beat a hasty retreat back to Kit Carson.

General Palmer, the construction manager for the railroad, did not like having his crews running like they did. General Palmer got on the telegraph to Washington DC demanding some kind of protection. The military responded by sending out Colonel Custer. Custer and Reno went to Eastern Colorado and patrolled along the Kansas Pacific railroad looking for Indian trouble.

By the time Custer and his troops arrived the Cheyenne had moved north, to join up with the Sioux, to meet Custer on another day. After the arrival of the troops, the Indian attacks in the area ceased.

The railroad got more workers and another chief engineer. Westward the tracks continued. Today the monster coal trains roll by, blowing their horns for the grade crossing ahead. Nearby can be seen a detachment of mounted blue coats watching. The depot no longer stands by the rails, section houses are gone, and no tinkling of glasses from the saloon and the shops are but a memory.

*Story featured on the website: [www.seelincolncounty.com/lake-stationcolorado-ghost-town/](http://www.seelincolncounty.com/lake-stationcolorado-ghost-town/)*

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# MIL GRACIAS, DOSCIENTOS

## another Guatemalan rail adventure - Part II

by Sammy King

The FEGUA traffic department in Guatemala City was run by a fellow I had never seen or spoken to before, a Sr. Lopez. I made an appointment, but first my buddies in the roundhouse gave me their impressions of Sr. Lopez - he was not well liked. We were proposing to fire up an engine and do various video shots in the area of the Guatemala City yards, with maybe a little bit of running in the countryside near town, using perhaps four hours of locomotive effective time and using whatever equipment was first out on the yard tracks. We had enough cash to pay for the fuel. Even though the Mechanical Department had recommended us, he wanted us to pay the same rate per day as a commercial tour operator. I tried to talk him down a bit, saying that we weren't selling tickets and weren't going very far, so we didn't need the same level of equipment, services or scheduling as an occupied passenger train. And, my video would be available for official use gratis. None of this did any good. Perhaps a few US greenbacks, which I couldn't afford, slid into his desk drawer would have helped, but I didn't much like Sr. Lopez.

So, Bernardo and I gave up on the idea of seeing a FEGUA steam engine running during this visit and decided we could throw a "hell of a party" for our friends with the money that four barrels of oil was going to cost us. We walked back to the roundhouse and told the fellas about our meeting with Sr. Lopez, which they thought was funny. We grabbed a cup of wonderful Guatemalan coffee, sweetened with equally wonderful Guatemalan brown sugar, and got comfortable on the leather chairs in the CMO's office. It wasn't long before a secretary came in and said I needed to go see Sr. Jaime DeLaPena, second in command of FEGUA, about our steam engine. I replied that we didn't want to bother our hosts, who had treated us so wonderfully for two weeks. Their friendship mattered more to us than train pictures, and we had made some plans for a fiesta before we left Guatemala. The secretary grabbed my hand and dragged me up to Sr. DeLaPena's office in the old IRCA headquarters above the trainshed. The mysterious fire of 1997 destroyed this grand official suite from IRCA days, but fortunately the nice antiques had mysteriously been removed to a safe location first.

Sr. DeLaPena was as much the opposite of Sr. Lopez as it was

possible to be. He asked what he could do for us. We tried to make our request a minimum nuisance proposition. While we couldn't really afford what it was worth, we could pay costs. He asked what we could afford, and agreed that would be fine. The agreement was for \$200 US, paid in cash to Sr. Lopez. We were provided with an official letter to this effect, which we were to present to Sr. Lopez IN PERSON.

When we went returned to the roundhouse, our friends already knew all about what had just happened. We had gone back to see Sr. Lopez to deliver the letter from his superior along with our payment. The secretaries had already told every juicy detail of the breaking news story while we were walking from one office to another. It was a golden opportunity for his underlings to torment the most universally unpopular Sr. Lopez.

Honestly, Bernardo and I were enjoying this as much as the locals were, although we were trying not to be too obvious about it. Sr. Lopez was about to explode, and he furiously tried to think of a way to get even with us. You have to expect these sorts of things, so we didn't argue when he decided to charge us 3% tax on top of our \$200 fee. We knew it was a made-up deal and that he was going to try and have the last laugh. Much to Bernardo's credit, he immediately asked me to get a receipt for the extra \$6! Sr. Lopez had to give it to us, but our train orders were issued in such a way as to restrict us to the Guatemala City yard area only, without allowing use of the main line. He was still trying to get even, but I let it go.

We could hear the laughter as we got closer to the roundhouse. They said it was very unusual for anybody, particularly a gringo, to beat Lopez out of his graft money and to then get what they wanted. That's why they were laughing so hard. For him to have to issue us a receipt for that \$6 not only meant he couldn't steal a single centavo, but it also gave us written proof that he had made us pay a nonexistent tax. While we weren't going to bother the Intervenor about \$6, it gave Sr. Lopez something to worry about and all the FEGUA employees something else to laugh about. To this day, people still laugh whenever this incident is mentioned. It was the secretaries who had fixed this for us; they had called Lic. Leal in Florida without telling anyone, and he had called Sr. DeLaPena, who had squished Sr. Lopez like a pimple.

It was handled before we had a chance to finish our coffee. It pays to be nice to people.

We figured that we had things under control, but as usual we hadn't figured on all the unknowns. Things weren't settled until Friday afternoon about quitting time. By then, there was no time to buy oil before the weekend, so engine #200 was our only possibility. My friend Chucho was then lead man in the air shop, and he was instructed to fire up the engine on Saturday to have her ready for us on Sunday morning at 8am.

Bernardo and I showed up at the appointed time on Sunday morning, and Chucho gave us the washout sign. He shrugged; he had stayed up until after midnight before shutting down, and this morning he had 30 pounds of steam and no water in the sight glass. This was of course a bad sign, but Sergio said to put cold water into the boiler through the blow down valve and light her anyway. They tried to keep the fire going, but the fuel wouldn't warm up enough to flow until we got steam, and we weren't getting steam without any fuel. We took turns baling beer cans full of diesel fuel into the firebox through the open fire door, but this crude method produced only very low pressure before the water again fell out of the sight glass. We had to kill the fire then. There was hissing and water in the smokebox, and we all knew what was the matter.

It was almost noon when Sergio said to me that tomorrow would be better for this. I answered that Bernardo had to leave the next day, and maybe we should just forget the whole thing. He wouldn't hear of it and immediately hooked up a hose to the blow down and gave poor #200 another shot of cold water. This time it didn't take much to raise the level to a safe point; Chucho lit her off again and she started to steam for us. Not long after that, we had enough pressure to use the injectors to maintain a safe water level, so we began planning what we were going to do now that we had a steam engine running at last. Originally, my scheme was to start with some run byes in the three track trainshed. There were passenger cars in there already, and it would have only taken a few minutes to tie onto a few and pull them out. But the light had shifted while we were trying to get up steam, so that idea was no longer so great. The yard crew gathered in a circle around me while I scratched my head. It was a good time for me to have a good idea.

## Live Train Show in the Springs!

*Photos by Paul Hindenburg*

The first train enthusiasts gathering since the shutdown was the TECO swap meet in Colorado Springs on September 26th. Good attendance, well organized for a first time open-air event.

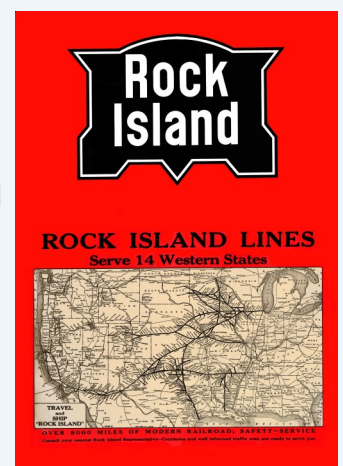
Many thanks to Elizabeth Maline, Mike Peck and the great TECO members for breaking the train show drought.



*Continued from President's Letter...*

Greg also has contributed a vast amount of time and effort in cleaning up a 1939 Rock Island calendar, we are going to sell to raise funds to continue our moving forward with the Calhan Project. We will be offering the calendar in either the original 1939 issue or 2021. These are the old style calendar with a cardboard backing and individual months which you can tear off. We are negotiating with a printer for a good rate. The price we are planning on charging is \$20.00 each plus S&H. There will only be 500 made for nationwide distribution. So it might be a collectors item in 70 years or so.

I will be sending updates as new developments occur. So until the next issue, stay safe, and thank you so very much for your support and being a member.



## All Aboard Westcliffe

As we grow as a society we are gaining new Associate Members. Among these are the "All Aboard Westcliffe." Their society has really done some great things. They have a restored Denver and Rio Grande depot, an engine house that rates as one of the best in Colorado. They have three cars that are standard gauge, a wooden D&RG caboose, a wooden box car that was converted to a Maintenance of Way lunch car and an 1880 D&RG wooden caboose that is desperate need of repair and restoration.

Recently Doug Cohn and I traveled to Westcliffe to see their great depot and efforts at preserving their railroad history. While there, Joe Tosh and his charming wife Sherry did a yeoman's job of showing the great railroad heritage site that has been preserved.

Joe asked us if we had a use for a very nice table which has a thick glass top and would make a very nice conference table for our group. Of course we can use it. It was offered gratis which included delivery making it a very attractive opportunity. .

Well this Saturday Joe and Sherry delivered it to Calhan, and with the assistance of Alvin Torrence of Tumbleweed Welding, who used his fork lift to move it, along with the needed assistance of Greg Roberts, John Emmot, Steve Wadle and Lester, it was moved very carefully into the depot. It is a great addition to our collection.



## Calhan Patch Board

An interesting artifact that remains in the Calhan Rock Island depot is the communications patch board adjacent to the train order operator's desk. This wall mounted box was installed and wired in 1926, according to the print that still remains on the inside cover



of the Western Electric manufactured product. Installed are approximately 50 Western Electric brass communications jacks that interfaced various telegraph and telephone circuits. Patch cords would have been utilized to allow the operator/ clerk to "patch" and open circuits when working with the Wire Chief or Lineman to aid in testing and restoring service to communication circuits that were carried on the pole line that served the line. Possibly two telephone circuits were available: a Dispatcher's circuit and a message phone. The ringing of the station was accomplished by Western Electric "selectors" that were bridged on the appropriate line pairs. The telegraph circuits were interfaced with keys and sounders that were associated with the proper wire lines by way of a table installed "shorting plug".

The wiring within the box reflects excellent craftsmanship in cabling and bussing the various circuits within the box. Circuits were cross-connected and surge protected and cabled out to the pole line for interfacing with the open wire that existed on the communications pole line.

This box is a classic example of an artifact that will be retained to reflect the operation of the Calhan Depot during past railroading days.





Arson caused old MOP / D&RGW trestle fire 2016. Otero Sheriff's Office picture.

Railcars at Cimmaron, Colorado 2017. Paul Hindenburg photo. Entrance to Black Canyon.



C&S Train # 68 coming of Kenosha Pass in a rain storm R. Kindig photo. September 18th, 1938

C&S # 73 at Dumont. Picking up car outside of photo. R. H. Kindig photo. May 13, 1948.



# Progress on the Caboose at Calhan

The new door is in place! John Emmot and Greg Roberts finished building the end doors for the caboose. The original doors disappeared from the time the Rock Island Railroad declared it obsolete to the

time we received it. Both of our hard working wood crafters did a splendid build of the type of door which would have been original to the car.



## Thank You, QED

On behalf of the Directors, Members, and Associate Members we would like to thank you for your very generous donation of miscellaneous electric goods for our project in Calhan, Colorado. As we are a small 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation, donations such as your company's help us toward achieving our goal of the restoration of the 1905 Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Depot in Calhan, Colorado.

Our organization is dedicated to trying to save what little history there is left of the historic role that the railroads played in the development of the United States and in particular the Rocky Mountain West. We feel that the sacrifices the men and women made to build the railroads in the 1800's thru the 20th Century need to be recognized and preserved for posterity. The fact that your company cared enough to facilitate the delivery of these much needed electrical supplies speaks volumes of the quality of your organization.



They are being put to use and hopefully we can send you pictures of their installation. Calhan is a small community locate in far Eastern El Paso County. It is an economically depressed area as is most of Eastern Colorado. It is hoped, as stated in our Mission Statement, that the building of a Railroad Heritage Center and Park will draw visitors to Calhan and create a revenue stream that will help the town economically. Again, thank you.

Sincerely  
Jim Jordan, President  
Rocky Mountain Railroad Heritage Society

## Railroading Chats Online

By Jamie Foster

Your RMRHS.org webmaster also is webmaster and supporter of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum in San Luis Obispo, CA (SLORRM.com). Through that organization, Jamie has been doing what he calls Parlor Car Chats since soon after the pandemic lockdowns began. Several of the sessions thus far have been on topics near and dear to our Society: Colorado Fall Color Speeder Excursion, 150th at Strasburg, Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, the 150th Golden Spike Anniversary (at Promontory), and the Royal Gorge Route Railroad. Other general and California-specific topics may interest you as well. Video recordings of completed sessions are available to watch any time. Since these are free and online, anyone is welcome to participate.

Details are here: [SLORRM.com/parlor-car-chats.html](http://SLORRM.com/parlor-car-chats.html)



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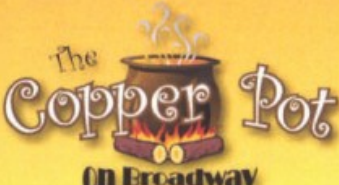


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**The Copper Pot**  
On Broadway

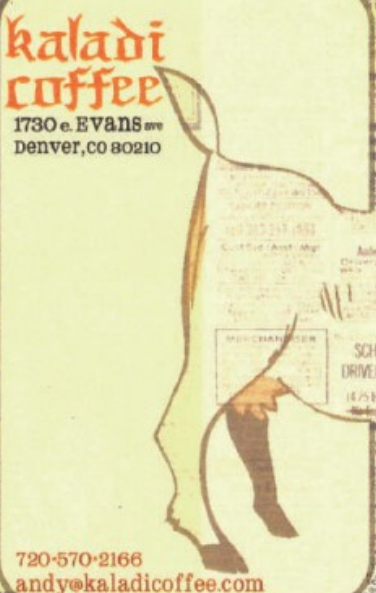
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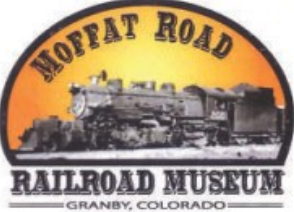
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**"Where the West Becomes Alive"**



**MY TO-DO LIST:**

- Wash the Cat
- Sell Jeff my old TOYS
- Buy Cheese

307.920.2225  
*Jeff Alley*  
jeff.alley@comcast.net

**I ALSO BUY COMIC BOOKS**

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