Over 50 years ago, the property that the museum occupies today was originally a farming homestead. The view above was taken in 1958 looking south over the corn field that would one day have locomotives and cars. South Table Mountain in the background.

One of the first buildings on the site was the Iron Horse Motel (middle). After the construction of the motel, the main museum building was started in 1958 (bottom). The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club’s two streetcars were moved in from a Golden lumber yard.
The construction of the main building continued through the winter of 1958-59 (top). The museum opened its doors in July 1959 for the public. RGS No. 20 was moved from Alamosa and placed on track west of the building (middle). The two bottom photos show the gift shop and display room in the museum building.
The top view shows the ever-expanding yard west of the main building. The tank locomotive *Lulu Belle*, was located in the yard area before being moved to the picnic area.

Below is an aerial view of the museum grounds in the 1980s. The future roundhouse would be located on the site of the motel in the lower center of the photo. Over the years, the track and equipment would be moved around just like a model railroad.
Above, the water tank takes shape as workers work on the sieves. Next to the water tank is the No Agua pump house (above and right). The end of track was only a few feet east of the water tank and pump house. (below).

Above right are samples of Mile Post signs from the D&RGW narrow gauge.
The octagonal structure on the left above is a Denver & Salt Lake Railroad telephone booth from Mile Post 97.8. (right above) One of the early spurs constructed at the museum was the Table Mountain Spur from No Agua. Walking between the rails near the motor cars was one of the museum cats, which followed museum founder Bob Richardson around the property. The museum didn’t have a mouse problem in the pump house! The museum is always laying track. The view to the left below shows the main yard construction after the arrival of D&RGW No. 491. (below right) The new tank was named Headington Tank, after George Headington, who was a master mechanic on the Rio Grande.
The track crew is hard at work laying new rails and ties. For many years the tall sign drew visitors and volunteers to the museum and motel.

The Vista Dome Monument, which was located in Glenwood Canyon, was moved onto the museum grounds by the Colorado Highway Department in 1985. For many years, the metal dome car on top of the monument was mounted backwards. A wind storm knocked the car off but was later remounted correctly.

The Robert W. Richardson Railroad Library was opened on April 12, 1997. (Mervin Smith photo)
For many years, the working shop for the museum was located in and around these boxcars. All work was done outside and in any weather. In 2000, funds were raised to construct a roundhouse, named the Cornelius Hauck Restoration Facility. (below) It has five stalls, and its large doors came from the D&RGW roundhouse at Alamosa, Colorado.

The narrow gauge loop around the perimeter of the museum grounds was completed in 1999. It was named after board member Alexis McKinney and his wife Irene. A plaque was unveiled in June of 2001 in honor of the McKinney's many contributions to the museum. (right)

A real roundhouse should have a turntable, and the museum's 74-foot armstrong turntable came from the former Chicago Burlington & Quincy roundhouse at St. Francis, Kansas in 1999. (Robert Jensen photo)
Railroading in the area predates the establishment of the museum. Above, Denver Tramway narrow gauge car No. .04 is shown arriving at the Rockdale station in 1948. This wooden shelter was originally located south of the museum. (Ed Haley collection)

Track work is a never ending job for the volunteers. These are some of the early tracks in the museum yard. The yard was named after museum board member and benefactor Ane O. Clint. (Neal Miller photo)

Colorado Railroad Museum
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All photos are from the museum collection unless so marked. Most of the photos were taken by Robert W. Richardson.
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