

Sundial at Royal Gorge Bridge and Park
Sun, 21 July 2024

Dear Roger,

I want to reiterate what a beautiful job you and Brandy did painting her new modern design for the sundial. I also appreciate how you used your expert knowledge of sundials to correct the angle and accuracy of the new design.

Since our original exchange in 2021, I discovered that the sundial is unique in another way. For a few years, it was in a building! It was like a watch without its battery.

Before the 2013 Royal Gorge Fire, the sundial's primary function was as a counterweight (bollard) for the aerial tram. The steel cables that carried the tram passed through bronze saddles and around the bollard. Between the cables and the concrete bollard were boards made of 1.5-2.0 inch thick purple heart wood chosen to resist decay and insects.

The Colorado Passenger Tramway Safety Board (CPTSB) requires the inspection of cables twice a year. In 2011, they discovered that the wood was rotten on the back from moisture. The Royal Gorge Bridge & Park constructed a metal building over the sundial to reduce exposure to the elements. The sun didn't shine on the sundial again until after the 2013 Royal Gorge Fire when the building was removed.

The photo (taken at sunrise in March 2014) shows the damaged building covering the sundial. The rest of the buildings and tram towers on the south side of the park had already been removed.



Take care,

Eve Nagode
Photographer, Author & Historian