The colorful history of the Sumpter Valley Railway begins in 1890, when construction of the narrow-gauge steam-powered line began in Baker City. Built mainly to haul timber, the tracks reached McEwen in 1892, and on to the gold mining town of Sumpter in 1896. At its height the original Sumpter Valley Railway stretched over 80 miles to Prairie City and was a vital part of the settlement and development of the Eastern Oregon region it served. However, business declined in the 1930’s and by 1947 most of the railway had been abandoned.

In 1971, a small group of dedicated volunteers set out to save what was left of this beloved icon of Eastern Oregon. For over forty years the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. has been dedicated to rebuilding this remnant of the past for the enjoyment and education of future generations. Since the first excursion train pulled out of McEwen station in 1976, an almost all volunteer staff has rebuilt over six miles of rail line, fully restored two original steam locomotives, refurbished numerous pieces of rolling stock, and constructed all the facilities it takes to run a railroad.

Today this rich history comes to life aboard the vintage trains as you travel through the heart of gold and timber country in the scenic Sumpter Valley. Running on the reconstructed “gold rush extension” between McEwen and the historic mining town of Sumpter, it’s a guarantee that the whole family will enjoy this relaxing trip back without having to leave the comfort of the present. Round trips range between two and two and a half hours with layovers at either end. One-way trips take about forty-five minutes.

Well behaved pets are welcome with a restraint for their safety, and can ride the train on a leash or lap.