

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 1776

Colfax, CA 95713

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May 2008



[www.psrhs.org](http://www.psrhs.org)

To:

## *PSRHS Activities & Events...*

Editor's Comments

### *Scheduled Events:*

May-Field Trip to Newcastle.

See details herein for the Spring Field Trip to the Newcastle area. There will be no regular May meeting.

The next regular meeting is June 26<sup>th</sup>. and will feature a presentation by Jim "The Bear" Mahon, of his days of snow fighting over Donner Summit.

Please forward any comments, suggestions or ideas for trips or other activities to me for consideration and information.

Editor: Lyle Brown, (530) 885-6997  
<2lebrown@wavecable.com>

## *In this Issue...*

### *Monthly Meeting...*

The next PSRHS meeting will be held in June. The May meeting is the field trip to Newcastle at 9:00AM on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Call (530) 346-9607 for more info.

### Membership Information

Individual Members = \$20.00

Family Membership = \$25.00

- Monthly Newsletter
  - Member Activities, Presentations and Field Trips
  - Display & Restoration Projects
- PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776  
Colfax, CA 95713

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## Monthly Newsletter ---May 2008

### **April Meeting Minutes & Info:**

**May Meeting:** No regular May meeting; instead, we will be going on a field trip Saturday May 31 to Newcastle area.

**Dates to Remember:** May 17 & 18. The Sacramento Valley Live Steamers Railroad Organization is having a Spring Meet in Hagan Community Park, Rancho Cordova. Call (916) 361-7140 for more information or visit web site [info@svlsrm.org](mailto:info@svlsrm.org). SVLSR is a family organization dedicated to preserving the lore and history of American steam railroading with a large scale fully functioning steam engine and a railroad for children and adults alike to ride on and enjoy.

**July 24:** At our regular meeting, the scheduled program will be given by Jim "Bear" Mahon. He will entertain us with stories about his years with the railroad on the Donner Summit route.

**Niles Canyon Summer Steam Trip:** The Pacific Locomotive Association will be sponsoring a steam train trip with engine #2472 sometime this summer over the historic Niles canyon Railway. More details to follow, as the information becomes available. Visit web site [ncry.org](http://ncry.org) for more information about the historic Niles Canyon route out of Sunol.

**September 27 & 28:** Colfax Railroad Days. PSHRS will be participating in the summer celebration in Colfax. More information to follow.

**Historical Photo Purchase:** The club has purchased from eBay a historical postcard showing the diesel Overland Ltd #28 leaving the Colfax station with a cab forward steam helper. A limited number of 8X10 reproductions will be made for interested parties.

**Email Newsletter:** In order to save some of the cost of stamps and printing the newsletter, we are asking members to

receive the newsletter by email, if possible. Please send your email address to Editor Lyle Brown at [2lebrown@wavecable.com](mailto:2lebrown@wavecable.com) if you have not already done so and you wish to receive the newsletter online. We will continue to mail out the newsletter to those who do not have computer email.

### **Program**

George Lay, a long time resident of Meadow Vista and past president of the Placer County Historical Society gave an interesting presentation with slides and photos on the history of the Clipper Gap and Applegate area. The Donner Summit railroad route traveled through these small towns and was the main reason for their coming into existence, with the demand for wood products and the establishment of lumber mills. During the late 1800's, Clipper Gap was a major station stop with a large Wells Fargo office. The Giant Powder Company (1889 – 1917) was located in Clipper Gap, and manufactured black powder and explosives. There was a history of explosions at the plant, resulting in the death of many people during its years of operation. You can still see some of the concrete bunkers used to store explosives.

Applegate was named after the family that originally settled in the area. A gold prospector named Applegate came to California to make his fortune. This didn't materialize, and he returned to Kentucky. But his son stayed on and became a prosperous merchant with fruit orchards. Applegate went on to become a spot known for its cultural events, healthy living, and a book publishing company.

Thanks to George for an informative and entertaining talk.  
Shirley Belleville, Secretary

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## Monthly Newsletter ---May 2008

### Newcastle—Spring Fieldtrip on May 31<sup>st</sup>

The historic town of Newcastle and its environs is the location of our Spring 2008 fieldtrip in lieu of our May monthly meeting. Those attending the trip should plan on meeting at 9AM in the large parking lot of the “Blocker Building” which is a warehouse building just to the west of the Main St. railroad crossing in Newcastle. Once you find the area of the Fruit Sheds in Newcastle, cross over the tracks and turn left into the parking lot. Remember, with the weather heating up, bring sunscreen and a hat. We’ll have extra water. A bag lunch or snacks would be good too.

We’ll conduct our outing in 3 sections to accommodate people with either time constraints or walking challenges. We’ll start our visit by looking at the historic track alignments, turntable, and depot locations in and around the fruit sheds. Walking in this area will be minimal. The next two portions of the trip will be an easy stroll along two abandoned sections of the original Central Pacific Railroad grade. These abandoned grades were left to be forgotten to history in the 1910 era when the SP upgraded the

mainline with double tracking. They are both approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to 1 mile in length so the round trip is about 2 miles for each on fairly flat ground in pleasant forested surroundings.

Trip participants can leave the group at the end of any section depending on their ambition for the outing. The visit will break up about 2pm.

As usual we will bring along historic photos of the locations to compare “then and now” scenes. This should be an interesting outing. Call 530 346-9607 for more details.