

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 1776

Colfax, CA 95713

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July 2009



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To:

PSRHS Activities & Events...

Editor's Comments:

NOTE:

Tentative date for our fall fieldtrip is **October 3**, to the Cape Horn area.

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>

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Monthly Meeting...

The next PSRHS meeting will be held at 7:00PM Thursday, July 23rd. in the Multi-purpose Senior Citizen Center on D Ave. at the Dewitt Complex in Auburn. 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

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

Monthly Newsletter – July 2009

June 2009 Meeting Minutes

New Business and Announcements:

The PSRHS Board Members have unanimously approved the appointment of four additional Museum directors when our efforts reach success and we get an arrangement set with UP. The new directors are Jim Mahon, Jim Dobbas, Lonnie Dickson, and Greg Todd.

Ron Peterson is withdrawing as a PSRHS Board Member. Ron has been our Treasurer in years past. We thank Ron for his past service in this position.

Nominations for a new Board Member are open. Forward all nominations to Jim Wood, for action to be taken at the July meeting. Currently, Walt Wilson has been nominated.

March Program:

We had the pleasure of listening to Jim Mahon recount numerous experiences from his career with the railroad. Jim (also known as “The Bear” Mahon) worked for the SP / UP Railroad from 1952 – 1998, in various capacities including Manager of Operations out of Truckee. During his tenure, he dedicated his crews to keeping the mountain open during the winter season over Donner Summit, and was very successful in doing so. He became very adept at and invented new ways of using dynamite for avalanche control and icicle removal at the tunnel portals.

Jim was supervisor of operations in 1973 when the freight cars containing bombs exploded in the Roseville Yard.

One of his more exciting assignments was to separate the burning cars from the rest of the train. He relates how another explosion occurred when he was just 2 cars away from the fire. As he dived for cover under a boxcar (full of bombs), the door from another boxcar sailed through the air and landed next to him. He was able to accomplish his mission of detaching the burning cars, and high tailed it away from the conflagration. He described this experience as “a thrill”, which sounds like quite an understatement.

We also were entertained with stories from his days working in Utah, rebuilding the track across the Great Salt Lake. He supervised a crew of 200 people, and brought the project in early, taking just 5 months even though it was predicted that it would take 13 – 14 months.

Jim’s crews were always the best, and they worked hard for their boss. They always got the job done, and it was done right.

Thank you Jim for sharing your stories with us. We look forward to hearing more at future meetings.

Fall Field Trip:

Tentative date for our fall fieldtrip is October 3, to the Cape Horn area. More details to follow.

