

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 1776

Colfax, CA 95713

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August 2010



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To:

PSRHS Activities & Events...

Editor's Comments

Items of interest:

Sept 11 and 12: Willits, CA, Roots of Motive Power Steam Up.

Sept 25 and 26: Colfax Railroad Days.

Fall Field trip: another look at the Towle Brothers railroad is proposed. The date has not been determined.

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 at 7:00PM Thursday, Aug. 26th. 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 – August 2010

August Announcements:

Calendar items:

Sept 11 and 12: Willits, CA, “Roots of Motive Power Steam Up.”

Nearly every piece of operable steam equipment in the museum collection will operate. This is not a PSRHS event so you are on your own.

Sept 25 and 26: Colfax Railroad Days. PSRHS will be participating along with Operation Lifesaver to assist with that event. Call Jim Wood if you can volunteer a couple of hours of your time.

Fall Field Trip, Exploration of the history of the Towle Brothers Railroad.

Recent Events and Field Trips:

June 19 Roseville Railyard Trip:

About 20 members of PSRHS were treated to a tour of Union Pacific’s JR Davis yard in Roseville. Lonnie Dickson, manager-operating practices for UP and member of SPRHS, served as tour guide. We started at the heart of the Roseville operations, the yard office, where we were given an overview of the yard, and viewed the training simulator and the command center that controls train movements.

We then drove past the “One spot” car repair facility to the hump or classification yard. We watched UP employees remotely controlling movement of an incoming train as it cars were identified, uncoupled at the hump, and aligned into one of 55 classification tracks, where they are made up into new trains.

Next we drove to the north end of the yard where we had a detailed look at two recently renovated spreaders, a major project

that was documented in a video produced by PSRHS member Brendan Compton.

Finally we were given an up-close view of Flangers and Spreaders that were modified and repaired by railyard crews, and the fleet of Rotaries stored at Roseville.

A big thanks goes to Lonnie Dickson and Union Pacific for an excellent and informative field trip. Another thanks to our president, Jim Wood, who set up this trip.

July 3 Colfax Celebration:

The Colfax July 3rd Independence Day event was a success for PSRHS. We had an open house at the caboose as well as hosted motor car rides on the UP spur track in conjunction with the Operation Lifesaver organization. Thanks to Dave McClain and Malcom Frost for bringing their motor cars out for the event.

Other PSRHS volunteers that came out to assist with the event included Shirley Bellville, Ken Yeo, Ron Wong, Paul Lanyi, Tim Fagan, Dave Ferreira, and Jim Wood. Thanks to all for this successful showing.
Jim Wood

VIRGINIA & TRUCKEE FIELD TRIP

On a warm Sunday, this past July 11th, a group of about 25 of our members and guests made their way to Virginia City. We were to be treated to a guided tour of the newly revived but historic portion of the V&T Railroad. Our trip leader was Gary Luce, the project engineer for the newly rebuilt roadbed. We met at the old school house just outside of town, then proceeded in high clearance vehicles to retrace the newly finished right of way back down towards the end of track at Eastgate station, near Carson City.

The narrative provided by Gary was primarily construction related. He spoke of

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the many geological as well as natural obstacles that needed to be overcome to both realign, relay and to bring the roadbed up to current FRA standards for passenger carrying tourist railroads. Needless to say, the resulting roadbed and track are pristine in comparison to what you would expect from a rail line originally built in 1869. Never the less, seeing V&T #29 steaming up grade, pulling two beautifully restored coaches full of revenue passengers some 141 years later was quite a sight.

Gary took us to many somewhat remote spots along the line and related stories and events that he and his modern day crew encountered along the historic path that has been abandoned for the last 72 years. Some of you may recall that Bob Gray and his son Tom resurrected a small 1.9 mile portion of the line back in 1976. Now with the latest extension, the rails run a continuous 18.6 miles with plans to extend another 4 miles in the future.

Our group had a picnic lunch along the Carson River among the cotton woods. We explored the still uncompleted old right of way that is planned for future extension of the railroad past Eastgate station. We then gathered at Eastgate station to board the train for an hour long trip back up the hill to Virginia City.

Our train consist was fully restored to like new splendor. We rode in two, beautifully restored 1914 built steel coaches of Lackawanna heritage. Pulling our consist up the 2.2 percent grade was V&T #29, looking like she just came out of the shops yesterday. No. 29 is a former Longview, Portland & Northern 2-8-0. McCloud River 2-8-2 No. 18 is also on the property.

Many thanks to all the folks responsible for the rebirth of this piece of history. With their continued efforts, proper management,

and support from rail fans and tourist alike, this historic railroad will be around for many future generations to experience *'the queen of the short line railroads'*.

If you were not able to go with us on this trip, it would be a great weekend get a way. If you choose to ride one way as opposed to a round trip, I strongly suggest you board at Eastgate, near the railroad overpass on highway 50, and ride to Virginia City. The ride, sounds and feeling are best when being pulled up grade by a steam locomotive. Be sure to check in advance if you really want the steam experience for the train is not always pulled by steam.

(Report by Shelton Campbell, PSRHS)

Program:

Motor Car Slide Presentation

Peter Hill will provide a slide presentation from several motor car events held this year. Program will include photographs from the run two April runs on the Grand Canyon RR from Williams to the snow covered Rim, and the run down the Copper Basin RR from Hayden to Florence. Addition excursion trips include the Sierra RR from Oakdale to Jamestown (and the 1897 turntable/roundhouse) held in May, and the Mendocino Railway Co. (The Skunk) run from Willits to Fort Bragg.

