

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

July 2011 Newsletter



www.psrhs.org

In this issue:



Dunsmuir RR Days/Colfax RR Days. Some of our members attended the recent Railroad Days celebration in Dunsmuir. At our June meeting, a slide show was presented of that event and two trains of vintage rolling stock that traveled to Dunsmuir. Our club has begun the initial planning for bringing vintage rolling stock and other railroad related displays to the Colfax Railroad Days celebration which is scheduled for Oct. 1-2.



Tony Hesch presents the second of a two-part look at the Colfax Caboose reconstruction project. Part 1 in the previous issue focused on the history of the caboose, and how our club came to be involved in rescuing it from its slow decline. In this issue, Tony summarizes the work that has been accomplished to date, and outlines plans for completing the project.

Scheduled Events



- | | | |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| July 20 | Caboose Work Party | 9am at the Colfax caboose (weather permitting) |
| July 23 | Caboose Work Party | |
| July 28 | Monthly Meeting – | Program to be determined (see note on Page 2) |
| Aug 3 | Caboose Work Party | |
| Aug 6 | Caboose Work Party | |
| Aug 17 | Caboose Work Party | |
| Aug 20 | Caboose Work Party | |
| Aug 25 | Monthly Meeting | |
| Oct 1-2 | Colfax Railroad Days | |

Check out our updated web site

www.psrhs.org

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July 28 Meeting Presentation: TBD Planned Program To Be Rescheduled

Jim Wood had planned to give his first ever "official" presentation as the newly trained presenter for the Operation Lifesaver (OL) Program, but due to an OL conflict, Jim's presentation has to be postponed. OL is the organization that promotes and disseminates the railroad safety message to the public. Jim recently took the OL Presenter's class designed to train folks interested in delivering the railroad crossing safety message to various audiences.

The OL program has a message important to anyone who crosses railroad tracks or spends time near them. This presentation will be rescheduled for a future PSRHS meeting.

June Meeting.

Colfax Railroad Days Discussion: PSRHS is teaming with the Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce, Union Pacific, Operation Lifesaver, and the Portola Railroad Museum to bring vintage rolling stock from the Portola Museum to Colfax Railroad Days. Plans include having the rolling stock and motor car rides available on Friday, Sept. 30, for visits by school children and presentations by Operation Lifesaver. Motor cars and rolling stock will be available for the general public on Oct. 1-2. Our web site features a new page with details on the event.



Volunteers will be needed to help staff the event, the caboose, and movie presentations in the Colfax theater. Money also needs to be raised to pay the per diem expenses of the 15 volunteers who will accompany the Portola train to Colfax.

Members are encouraged to help with this major event. Please contact Jim Wood at (530) 320-1276 to sign up.

Meeting Presentation: Dunsmuir celebrated its railroad days on June 10-12. The Feather River Rail Society sent

vintage rolling stock to Dunsmuir for display, and Trains and Travel International offered a daylight excursion from the Bay Area to Dunsmuir on former California Zephyr cars.



PSRHS members Paul Lanyi and Roger Staab captured photos of the trains en-route, the Dunsmuir celebration, and the excursion ride from Dunsmuir to the Black Butte Wye and back. Also included in the slide show were scenes at Dunsmuir's caboose motel, and the recently refurbished depot at Live Oak.

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Colfax Caboose Reconstruction, Part 2 – Tony Hesch

Let the work begin!

Volunteers from our club led by Jim Wood started the Caboose project. Before actual caboose work could begin, the electrical service to the caboose and the small electrical panel mounted on the caboose had to be removed, and the electrical service both to the area and the caboose needed to be upgraded. Demolition of the original system was completed and trenching began. New conduit and lines were brought to the caboose. The new lines are all underground. Before the trenching could be covered the City Inspector granted extensive inspection and approvals. This was a long and difficult period of many months to achieve this dramatic improvement that would serve the caboose project, local service organizations and the City. This service now provides all electrical needs for Roy Toms Plaza and the surrounding area.

While the electrical panel work was being done new lower windows were constructed. This required cabinet worker skills and the windows are now completed and await installation later in the project.



Left and below left – Greg Olender and Roger Staab remove the old electrical service from the track side of the caboose before the siding could be stripped off. Below, Jim Wood cuts through the asphalt to lay buried conduit from the new electrical pedestal beyond the fence to the caboose.



Jim Wood needed to devote more of his time to club activities both as president and with future planning of even bigger projects. I stepped in as project manager in November 2010. Attention could now be turned to the caboose itself. The first order of business was to clean out everything not directly needed in the caboose and move it to storage. Exterior metal components such as handrails, steps and brackets were removed and are waiting for refinishing and painting. The oil-fired furnace was removed and will be replaced with an original stove from the period. The cupola seating needed to be replaced and re-upholstered. This work was completed and the new seats wait in storage for installation.



Demolition of the exterior siding of the side facing the track began at the same time. This side was selected

Barry Duck and Ken Yeo

because it was the side in the poorest condition. This would be the slowest side due to the anticipated amount of damaged wood and the lack of any real blue prints to guide the way. Once the first side is completed the remaining portions of the work will be completed more quickly with the knowledge learned from the initial work.

As the wood siding was pulled off the caboose, it became clear that dry rot and decay had seriously destroyed a large part of the



support wood framework. It proved to be a slow process to remove and replace the interior supports.

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The most concern was the damage done to the lower horizontal floor joist and horizontal base plate for the entire caboose. More than eight feet

The caboose is almost ready for the new siding to be applied to the track side. The siding has been selected and will be delivered once a check is issued from caboose funds held by the city of Colfax. Some mill-work will be required prior to preparing the siding for sealing and painting. As with any project pride is always a reward for hard work. Our team of volunteers will experience this pride as the first side is completed.

of this 4x8 inch, 30-foot long member needed to be replaced. No small task but the volunteers rose to the occasion. The caboose was jacked up and steel tension ties were cut to allow for removal of the damaged section. A new section of beam was milled to match the original dimensions and inserted.



Tension ties were reinstalled and as much as possible a sag in the middle of the caboose was corrected.

The project was proceeding when it became obvious this would not be a normal fall and winter weather cycle. The storms continued to stop work on the project. Even attempts to reschedule the project work-days, were met with more storms. While some work could be done inside, little could be accomplished.



Most of the interior painting and repair work can only be done once the exterior is completed due to the original construction methods.



Budget is always a concern on a project. When I originally looked at the caboose I had built a budget around \$25,000. When we started this project we had approximately \$11,000 available. Some of this money was used for upgrading the electrical service to the site. The purchase of ½ of the total siding and the new doors and remaining upper windows will deplete the start up budget. That will take us to having half of the caboose finished – the side we are working on now and one end.

The good news is that the largest expenditures will be behind us. The notable exceptions being the purchase of the remaining ½ of the siding, new roofing, new door and the remaining upper windows along with the interior finishing. Timing for the project is difficult to project accurately due to all the variables. I would hope to have the first side and one end of the caboose completed by October 1 when Colfax celebrates Railroad Days. Regardless, we will have the caboose open for public tours for Railroad Days.

Work will continue through the summer and well into the fall. During that time we will continue fund raising and exploring grant possibilities.

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How You Can Help: Tax-deductible donations can be made directly to PSRHS, a 501c3 organization that is responsible for completing this project. Mailing address P.O. Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713

To obtain further information on the caboose project, volunteer for work sessions or assist with fundraising activities, contact Tony Hesch at 530-346-9179 or email Tony at Tonyhesch@colfaxnet.com

The PROJECT TEAM

PSRHS Volunteers

Tony Hesch, Proj. Mgr
Jim Wood
Teri Andrews-Murch
Barry Duck
Tim Fagan
Dave Ferreira
Peter Hills
Erik Schenk
Roger Staab
Walt Wilson
Ken Yeo

Community Volunteers

Ken Armstrong
John Cooper
Ron Friesen
Calvin Kulas
Arnie Lund
Cloyd O'Dell
Jim Pustizi

Professional Services

John Matos - fire extinguishers
Thomas Potts - upholstery
Fred Tuttle - windows
Greg Olender - electrical

**Thanks for the generous Wharton donation that has made much of this work possible.
Thanks also to Soroptimists of Colfax for their early fund-raising efforts.**



Barry Duck



Ken Armstrong



Dave Ferreira



Erik Schenk and Tim Fagan



Peter Hills



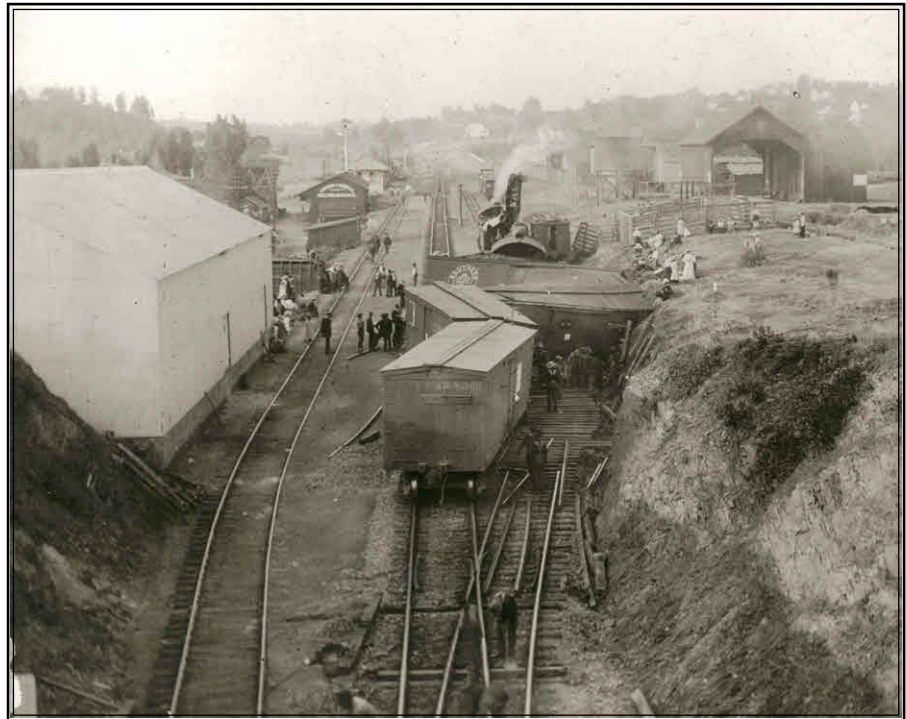
Tim Fagan

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

July Mystery Photo: While we are on the subject of wrecks and other mishaps, where did this derailment take place? What railroad building is visible in this scene, and what present-day structure provides a view of this same location?
PSRHS collection.



Last Month's Mystery Photo: The Colfax Wye was only a few months old in February 1912 when this cab-forward passenger engine (built the previous year) ran off the end of the wye after its brakes failed.

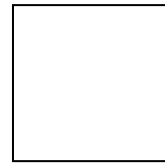


With some difficulty the engine was returned to the track, and was back in service a few weeks later. A more modern diesel also took the plunge at the Colfax wye, as shown in the photo at right from the Bob DeCarlo collection. The sign on today's Sierra Market is in the foreground.

CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: The CP unveiled its second operating locomotive, the Pacific, in March 1864. Also in March, two tank engines, the CP Huntington and TD Judah, arrived unassembled by ship at San Francisco, and were added to the active roster in April 1864. Also arriving by sea were a supply of rails, fifteen boxcars, thirty-five platform cars, and two passenger cars, all knocked down but ready for assembly.

Please forward any comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter. Next Issue Deadline – August 15
Editor: Roger Staab,
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Placer-Sierra RR Heritage Society
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To:



Monthly Meeting...

The next PSRHS meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on **Thursday, July 28th** in the Multi-purpose Senior Citizen Center at the Dewitt Complex in Auburn (enter on D Ave.). See Extra Board section on web site for map and directions.

Membership Information

Individual Members = \$20.00/yr
Family Membership = \$25.00/yr

- Monthly Meetings (4th Thursday) and Newsletter
- Member Activities, Presentations and Field Trips
- Display and Restoration Projects

PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713
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