

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

January 2012 Newsletter

In this issue:

January Meeting Presentation – **Bill George** will show his new film, "The Hidden Wonder of the World, the Transcontinental Railroad from Sacramento to Donner Summit". Further details on page 2.

UP Track Upgrades. In another aspect of contemporary railroad operations & maintenance, UP has an impressive array of equipment at work on the Donner mainline replacing wood ties with concrete and laying new track between Rocklin and Colfax. On page 2 we take a brief look at this work, and hope to have a future meeting presentation focusing on this topic.



Election of PSRHS Board Members and Approval of Amended By-Laws. Page 2 for details.

Colfax Caboose Reconstruction Update. Status from project manager Tony Hesch on page 2.

From the Archives. Page 3

Scheduled Events



- Jan 26 Monthly Meeting, Election of Board Members and Presentation – **Bill George** will show and narrate his new film on construction of the transcontinental railroad to Donner summit. This film made its debut at Colfax Railroad Days.
- Feb 23 Monthly Meeting and Presentation – Topic to be announced.

Check out our updated web site at www.psrhs.org We continue to add content, and welcome your ideas and input.

If you have not already done so, please remember to renew your annual PSRHS membership.

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January Meeting – Thursday, 26 January, 7:00PM - DeWitt Senior Center

Election of Board Members and Approval of Amended By-Laws: see details below.

January Program: "The Hidden Wonder of the World, the Transcontinental Railroad from Sacramento to Donner Summit," a newly released film by **Bill George and Brendan Compton.** For the first time the hidden wonders of one of America's greatest construction and engineering feats are revealed on camera. Come along and visit the abandoned granite tunnels, stunning trestles, gigantic cuts and breathtaking scenery traversed by the Transcontinental Railroad. Now you can travel to the summit of the Sierra Nevada and marvel at how the master engineers and builders of the 1860s accomplished this heroic deed. This film made its debut at Colfax Railroad Days.

Election of Board Members

As noted in the November newsletter, each year PSRHS members will elect 3 board members for 3-year terms. The board will then elect officers for that year. For 2012 the election of three board members will take place at the January meeting.

2011 officers and board members with terms shown are:

Jim Wood - President -2011	Malcolm Frost - 2013
Brendan Compton - VP -2011	Tony Hesch - 2013
Shirley Belleville - Secy -2011	Ken Yeo - 2013
Peter Hills - Treasurer -2012	Bill Yoder - 2012
	Walt Wilson - 2012

Jim Wood, Brendan Compton and Shirley Belleville are seeking re-election to the board. Others who are interested in throwing their hat in the ring should notify a board member or be nominated at the meeting prior to the vote being taken.

Club By-Laws and Elections

The by-laws have been amended to reflect the modified election procedures for board members and officers. The by-laws must now be approved by the membership. A copy is attached for those receiving the newsletter by email, and copies will be available at the meeting for review prior to taking a vote to adopt the changes.

Caboose Reconstruction Status and Funding

Project manager Tony Hesch reports that the Colfax caboose project is taking a winter break. New wood siding has been primed and first-coat applied to enough boards to cover the exposed side of the caboose. Materials have been moved into the caboose and the rental garage unit vacated. After the break, work will be scheduled as weather permits. Additional funds need to be raised to complete the project. If you can help with fund-raising, contact Tony or club treasurer Peter Hills.

UP Track Work

Over the past months UP has been replacing wood ties with concrete ties along the Donner route. Initial work was on the #1 track between Bowman and Rocklin. In January the action shifted to Colfax. Beginning at the crossover just east of the Grass Valley St. crossing, major pieces of equipment could be viewed working westward on the #1 track from Colfax to Bowman. The road crossing in Colfax and other crossings along the way were also replaced. The AMTRAK platform in Colfax provided ringside seats to the action as the various pieces of specialized equipment and work crews made their way along the rapidly reconstructed mainline. *See photo of TRT-900 in action on page 4.*



This large trencher removed ballast at each end of the old ties. The TRT-900 then pulled up old ties and placed new concrete ties.
Photos by Roger Staab

Three tie-haulers ran along the line of cars, removing wood ties that had been pulled up by the TRT-900, and feeding a steady stream of concrete ties to be installed.



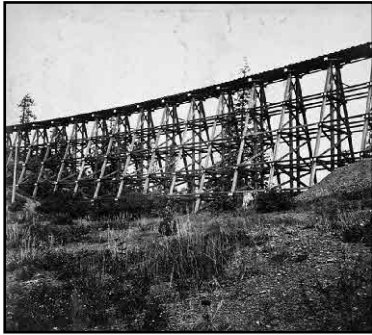
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

November's Mystery Photo: The photo shown below from the November issue is the wooden trestle portion of the original Long Ravine crossing east of Colfax. The aerial photo at right shows the curved trestle portion at upper center, with the wooden bridge portion below it. The trestle and bridge were completed in 1866; by 1876 the trestle portion had been filled in. *Photos courtesy of Jack Duncan.*



The photo at right shows the first steel bridge at Long Ravine, which replaced the wooden bridge around 1890. The curved fill beyond the bridge is where the trestle existed prior to being filled in. A second steel bridge was completed in 1915. Today the railroad bridges are easily seen from I-80 as it crosses under the two bridges east of Colfax. *Photo courtesy of Jim Wood.*



January Photo – Our scene this month is a tranquil one, with snow covering the ground amid a cluster of buildings. What is the name of this settlement, where was it located along the mainline, and what was its claim to fame?

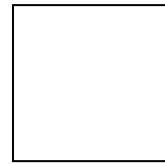
Answers in the February newsletter. *Photo from the Ken Yeo collection.*



CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: June 1864: Shortly after the rails reached Newcastle, the associates opened their wagon toll pike, the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Road. Teamsters could travel between the Newcastle railhead and the mining camps near Virginia City, saving three days over the route through Folsom and Placerville. Passengers could travel by train from Sacramento to Newcastle, then by coaches of the California Stage Company to Virginia City, in about 17 hours.

Please forward any comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter. Next Issue Deadline – February 13
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To:

This amazing piece of equipment provided quite a show in Colfax as ties and rail on the number one track through town were replaced last week. The TRT-909 spreads the existing rail, removes old wood ties, puts down concrete ties, and pulls the new welded rail into place as it progresses slowly along the track. Several videos of its operation have been posted on YouTube.

Roger Staab photo



Monthly Meeting...

The next PSRHS meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on **Thursday, January 26th** 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

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