

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

June 2013 Newsletter

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An 11x14 print of this Mike Haire photo will be raffled off at the June membership meeting. See page 2 for details.

Scheduled Events & Notices



Jun 18-21 Sierra Narrow Gauge Conference – NCNG Museum, Nevada City, CA
– <http://www.ncngmuseum.org/> ‘Sierra NG Conference’ Tab for info

June 27 Monthly Meeting & Program – 7 pm
– Mike Haire will show video clips of UP 844 traversing Donner Pass and photos of his recent trip to view coal trains operating in Montana and Wyoming.
– **NOTE NEW LOCATION - Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg – see p. 2**

Ongoing Colfax Caboose Work Sessions – Caboose work sessions have resumed.
Contact Tony at 346-9179 if you can contribute some time to this project.

July 6 or 7 Spring field trip – Niles Canyon Railway
– See page 2 for details and your vote on date for the trip

July 25 Monthly Meeting & Program – 7 pm – Program to be announced

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June Meeting – Thursday, 27 June, 7:00PM
Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg (old restaurant)
on New Airport Rd.

June Program: Mike Haire will show video clips of UP 844 traversing Donner Pass in both directions on its recent trips West. Mike may also include some photos of his recent trip to view coal trains operating in Montana and Wyoming.

Fundraising Raffle of Mike Haire's UP 844 photograph at Long Ravine Bridge

In conjunction with Mike's presentation this month, he has donated a framed 11x14 inch copy of his attractive UP 844 photograph to raffle off as a club fundraiser. This photograph shows the 844 and the trailing UP Yellow Train as it crosses Long Ravine Bridge east of Colfax in 2012 as it left the Train Town USA stop in Colfax. A thumbnail of the photo is shown on page 1.

This attractive photograph will be raffled at this month's meeting following Mike's slide show. Tickets are \$1 each with the proceeds to benefit the Society. Thanks, Mike.

July Field Trip to Niles Canyon Railway

Our first field trip this year will be a visit to the Niles Canyon Railway for their steam train weekend on July 6th or 7th. The NCRY.org website lists the specific locomotives running for that event. **We need to decide between now and the June monthly meeting which date, Saturday July 6 or Sunday July 7, the group wishes to attend. Make your wish known to Jim Wood by email by Monday June 24, to weigh in on your preference for the specific date of the trip.** The group's choice will be chosen by the preponderance of votes, and announced both at the meeting and by email. Those wishing to attend the alternate date can do so on their own or as a smaller group.

We will plan on assembling the group at Sonol Depot at about 10am for the earliest train departure. Specific

time will be announced by our June meeting. Lunch options are available at the local cafes. Doug Debs of the Niles group will organize shop tours for our group. He informs us that Saturday is the best day for tours as a full work crew is on hand working on the various projects.

The cost for the train trip is \$12 adults, \$10 seniors, \$7 children. Spouses and Guests are welcome to join us. We'll try to pair those people that would like to carpool.

Email Jim to make your date choice or other info at greenstonemaker@gmail.com

Recap of May Meeting Presentation

Roger Staab gave a slideshow with highlights from his book on **Towle Brothers** recently published by PSRHS. Towle Brothers operated a narrow gauge logging railroad in Placer and Nevada counties that eventually reached over 30 miles into Nevada county timberland. They also founded the town of Towle to support their logging and lumber operations. Roger's presentation described the evolution of their railroad, town, and family businesses that made up the company. The book includes newspaper quotes providing first-hand accounts of rides on their railroad and other equipment, and operations of their mills and factories.

Book sales to date have yielded over \$400 for PSRHS historic preservation and education projects. Copies of the book can be purchased on line – see the Store tab on the www.psrhs.org web site. Help spread the word and contribute to this PSRHS fund-raising effort.

Summary of May 28 Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Malcolm Frost. Malcolm reported that the caboos account has a balance of about \$6100, and the club's quicken account has a balance of \$2570.

Web Site: The club's web page now has live twitter feeds of the most recent trains through Colfax.

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Railroad Days: No real news. We have a commitment from UP to participate but no commitment on what specific equipment they will bring this year. One suggestion was to request that they bring the 9900 Clean Air engine and tout UP's environmental efforts.

Motor cars will not run again this year. Insurance is too costly to make it practical.

The event will be promoted at the state fair with a flyer.

Ideas to get more people to the Sierra Vista center activities included a tethered hot air balloon ride with ads, better signs on I-80, and improved maps.

Web Cams: Brendan is proceeding with plans to install up to 3 web cams in Colfax in conjunction with Wave Broadband. Costs and line-of-site connections are being weighed to decide if the first trial camera will show the tracks through town or Cape Horn. Ads to offset costs of operating the web cams may be easier to sell if the camera shows Colfax, but a Cape Horn camera might generate more viewer interest.

Rotary Film: Brendan's rotary snowplow film will air on PBS in October. PBS will offer it for national distribution to member stations. PSRHS will be able to offer sales of the video after it airs.



Passing Scene – Recent newspaper reports noted that Siemens in South Sacramento is delivering new electric locomotives for use on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor. Railfans then announced that the locomotives would be included in AMTRAK consists for shipment to the east coast. Your editor caught this view of one of the new locomotives in Colfax on June 6 on the eastbound #6 California Zephyr. PSRHS members enjoyed a field trip to the Siemens plant in May 2011 and saw prototype drawings of the new locomotives.



Photo by Roger Staab

Membership Information

Individual Members = \$25.00/yr
Each Additional Member Card = \$5.00/yr

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

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Please forward comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter.

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From the Archives

May Photo: The train in the photo at right was on the Lake Tahoe pier at Tahoe City. Originally built using the Bliss family's logging railroad track and equipment, the Lake Tahoe branch line began operation as a narrow gauge railroad in 1900, connecting the SP mainline in Truckee with Lake Tahoe steamers at the pier in Tahoe City. The line operated seasonally from May 15-Nov. 15. The photo below taken from the pier shows the train arriving at Tahoe City.



The line was leased to SP in 1925. SP converted it to standard gauge and operated it for the next two decades. Today a bike path follows the old right-of-way from Squaw Valley to Tahoe City. *Information on the railroad is from Signor's book Donner Pass. Photo above courtesy of Tony Hesch. Photo at left courtesy of Jim Wood.*

June Photo: This building and location have significance to a subject that was recently discussed at club meetings and in the monthly newsletter. Where was this building located, and approximately when was the photo taken? Answers in July newsletter.



CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: In November 1869, UP sold 48.5 miles of its track east of Promontory Summit to the CP and leased another 5.5 miles. This allowed the CP to operate its trains from Sacramento to Ogden. The official junction between the two railroads was formally changed to Ogden from Promontory in December 1869. The CP rebuilt some 10 miles of the original UP grade east of Promontory Summit (on grade CP had surveyed) in 1870, replacing some of the UP's steep grades and tight curves.