

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



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August 2013 Newsletter

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UP to move Big Boy 4014 from Pomona, CA to Cheyenne and rebuild it to operational status. See p.3. Eric Schenk photo

Scheduled Events & Notices



- Aug. 22 **Monthly Meeting & Program – 7 pm**
 – Norm Lucas will speak on the CSRM Docent Program – see p. 2
 – NOTE NEW LOCATION - Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg
- Sep. 26 **Monthly Meeting & Program – 7 pm – Colfax RR Days Final Plans**
- Oct. 5-6 **Colfax Railroad Days**

 Fall Field Trip – Siemens Sacramento – dates TBD

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August Meeting –Thurs. , 22 August, 7:00PM
Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg, New Airport Rd.

August Program: Norm Lucas, Head of Docents for the California State Railroad Museum, will talk to us about the CSRM and its docent programs.

Recap of July Meeting

July Program: Colfax Derailment Demystified

At our July Membership Meeting, Mark Fagley (Manager of Operations, Union Pacific Railroad) provided insight as to what happened on Sunday January 20th around 10:30 AM in downtown Colfax.

A westbound container train experienced catastrophic failure of a wheel set on the 3-car set as it approached Colfax. The train remained on the tracks and upright until it reached the Grass Valley Street grade crossing, at which point several cars derailed and knocked down one of the crossing signals. A container was breach setting off a hazardous spill response by local authorities. After determining the spill was non-toxic brine for preserving hides, clean up began. Union Pacific officials overcame an enormous mess and with contractor Jim Dobbas were able to open the line at about 7:00 PM.

Mark explained the physical events of accidents as it is currently understood from an operations perspective. He went on to explained the forensics of determining the cause or causes. He included insight into current operating practices and helped us understand the complexities of train handling on “the Hill”. The investigation analyzed contributing factors such as train composition, dynamic brake use, engineer knowledge on how and when to stop a long train, and need for additional training.

The entire membership would like to thank Mark for taking the time to educate us on the details of the situation. We also appreciate Mark reminding us of the dangerous environment for people around the railroad right of way. He is extremely committed to making safety everyone’s responsibility. Thank you from all of us, Mark.

Fall Field Trip to Siemens Sacramento

Jim Wood is working on arrangements for a return visit to Siemens Sacramento to view construction of the new AMTRAK electric locomotives. Attendance will be limited. Details will be sent out as soon as we have a firm date for the trip.

2013 Colfax Railroad Days Planning

Planning for the Oct. 5-6 Colfax Railroad Days is underway. Your board members and other interested persons have been meeting weekly to lay out an organization and assign responsibilities to pull this event together. There are many opportunities for you to participate, either as part of the advance planning team, or volunteering time on the days of the event, or both.

For this year’s event, Union Pacific has pledged to bring snow removal equipment, including a spreader and a rotary plow if rebuild is completed in time. In addition, retired UP employees will display some maintenance of way equipment. We have commitments from three different model railroad groups and the ride-on live steamers. Brendan will be screening railroad films of the Donner region. The caboose will be open to display status of our club-managed renovation.

Other potential displays include California State Railroad Museum and the Mountain Quarries locomotive.

This promises to be a great event and will hopefully build a good foundation for future years, eventually leading to the establishment of an outdoor rail museum in Colfax.

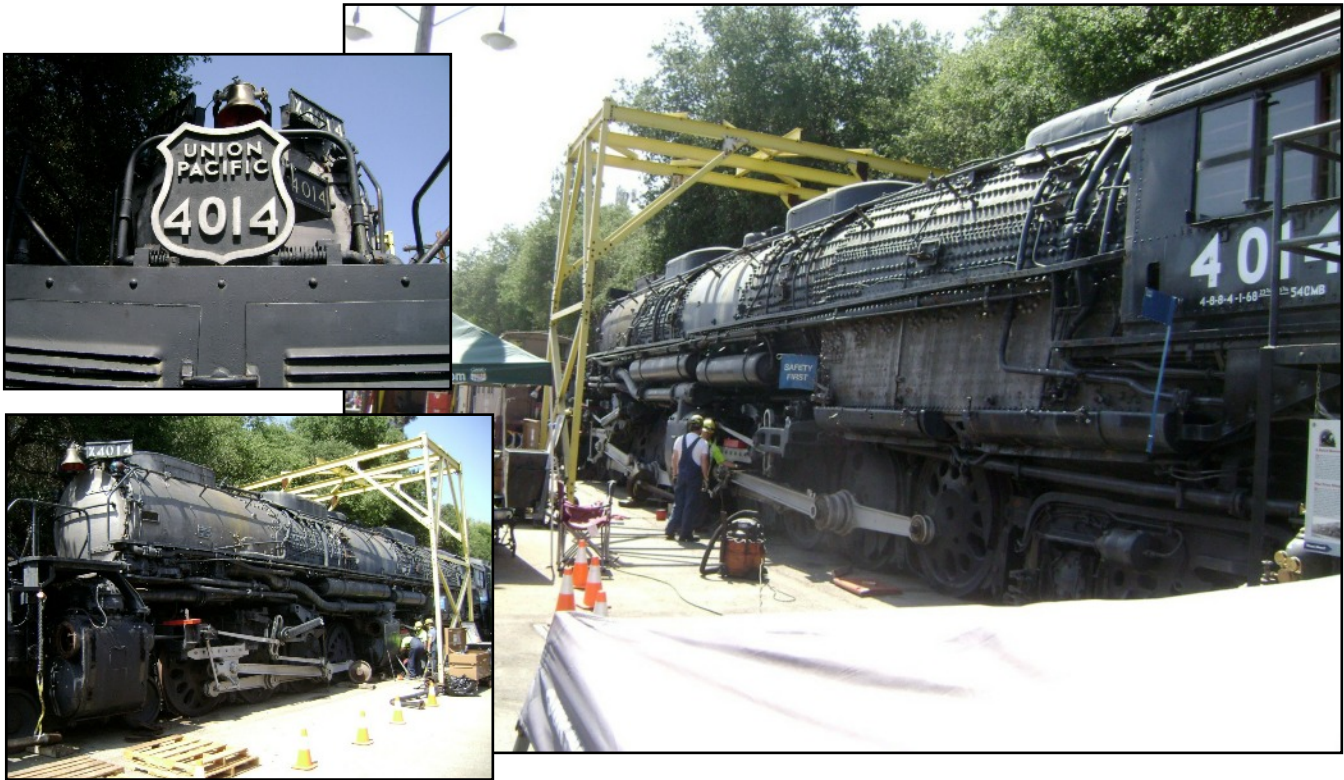
Please get involved in making this year’s Railroad Days the best ever. You can help by suggesting and securing additional displays, providing your time to help pull the many planning details together, and volunteering to staff the venues on the days of the event.

Editor’s Note: Reader comments, additional details, etc., are invited on any newsletter items or photos. See contact information at the bottom of page 3.

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Passing Scene in the Future?? – Union Pacific has announced that agreement has been reached with the Southern California Chapter, Railroad & Locomotive Historical Society, to transfer ownership of “Big Boy” 4014 back to UP. The engine has been on display at Pomona, CA for many years.

UP will relocate the massive 4-8-8-4 locomotive to its shops in Cheyenne, WY, where it will be restored to operating condition. Hope is to operate UP 4014 in 2019 as part of the 150th anniversary of the completion of the nation’s first transcontinental railroad.

While “Big Boys” never operated on the Donner portion of the Transcontinental Route, we can always hope that we will see UP 4014 leading an excursion over Donner Pass at some time in the future.

Thanks to Eric Schenk for providing photos of UP 4014 at Pomona.

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

PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713
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Please forward comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter.

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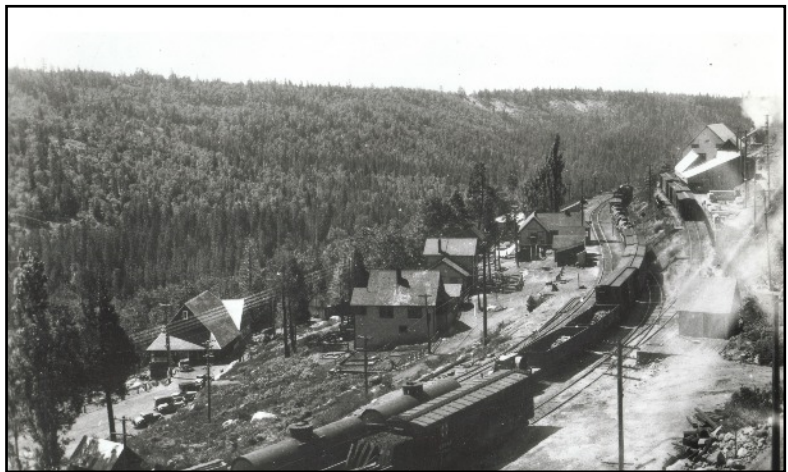
From the Archives

July Photo: The photo at right shows the Dutch Flat station in later years. Signboard behind the bench shows arrival and departure information. This structure was likely built in the 1920's, about the time SP started operating the depot on a seasonal schedule, shutting it down each winter. SP proposed closing the Dutch Flat depot in the 1930's, but withdrew the application. The depot was finally abandoned in 1955, and torn down in 1956. *Photo at right courtesy of Jim Wood. Depot history courtesy of Doug Ferrier.*



The photo at left shows the same location today. This picture was taken from the grade crossing where the road into Dutch Flat crosses the mainline tracks. The present-day UP signal cabinet stands near where the depot was located. *Photo at left by Roger Staab.*

August Photo: This should be an easy one. Where was this photo taken, and what is notably absent in the photo? Answers in the September newsletter.



CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: On June 23, 1870, Central Pacific was consolidated with the Western Pacific Railroad (1862-1870) and San Francisco Bay Railroad Co. to form the "Central Pacific Railroad Co." (of June, 1870). On August 22, 1870, Central Pacific Railroad Co. was consolidated with the California & Oregon; San Francisco, Oakland & Alameda; and San Joaquin Valley Railroad; to form the "Central Pacific Railroad Co.", a new corporation.