

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

January 2014 Newsletter

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*What is the significance of the locomotives in this photo?
See page 4 for details.*

Scheduled Events & Notices



- Jan. 23 Monthly Meeting & Program – 7:00 pm**
 – Phil Smith presentation on New England Railroads
 – **NOTE LOCATION - Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg**
- Feb. 24 2014 Colfax Railroad Days Planning Meeting**
- Feb. 27 Monthly Meeting – Program TBA**

*****Don't forget to renew your PSRHS membership for 2014*****
(see bottom of page 3 for renewal information)

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Next member meeting 7 PM, January 23, Auburn Airport Terminal Building

Program: Presentation by newly elected PSRHS board member **Phil Smith** on New England Railroads. Phil was an SP Sacramento Division engineer for 27 years, then went East and worked as engineer on tourist and short line railroads in New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut. Phil will be highlighting the differences between East and West. He may also include info on some of Theodore Judah's early work in New England.

President's Message

Happy New Year! This year does have the potential to be great. Our November Membership Meeting set the stage for our coming year.

We elected Phil Smith to the Board and LeeAnn Dickson has stepped up to be Membership Committee Chair. It is already apparent me that Phil brings a quiet leadership to our board along with his vast railroading experience. And LeeAnn is just who we need to organize and make our membership process successful.

On January 6th the Board held its first meeting. Another reason I am excited about this year is that we have set some lofty goals and they appear to be in reach.

The Board has decided to work toward gaining Stewardship of the Colfax Caboose. We feel that with the commitment the Society has made to its restoration both financially and with man hours we should have some say in its use and future.

We also continue to get closer to having a web cam on Cape Horn. Many of you saw the camera and Brendan is working hard to find the best location. Our first choice out on Hwy 174 proved inadequate. Brendan has made a list of alternate sites.

Perhaps our most important decision was setting the date for this year's Railroad Days. The 2014 Colfax Railroad Days will be held on September 13 & 14. We

wanted to move the event to September because it is National Railroad Safety Month. The dates were chosen to minimize conflict with other local events.

We are also looking to put on an event on May 10th for National Train Day.

As you can see this can be a very busy and satisfying year. I hope you will join in . . . we could use the help.

See you soon Malcolm Frost

Member Potluck Meeting Nov. 21

Presiding over the meeting was President Malcolm Frost. There were 23 attendees.

Highlights of Colfax Railroad Days 2013 included success of the web page, positive response to the UP equipment with employees and retirees on hand to explain the operations, corporate sponsorships and donated raffle prizes, t-shirt sales, and estimated 5000 guests attending.

PSRHS Board Members elected for 3 year term:
Malcolm Frost, Dave Ferreira, and Phil Smith.

Goals for next year:

Stewardship of Colfax caboose.

Webcam for Cape Horn

Membership coordinator volunteer to track
PSRHS membership and renewals

A Lifetime Membership Award and plaque were presented in absentia to Ken Yeo who could not attend the meeting.

November Program: Peter Hills shared photos he took during his trip to England this summer. He visited a number of historic rail lines that have been restored by volunteers. The National Railway Museum in York was celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Mallard with a gathering of the 6 surviving engines.

Shirley Belleville, Secretary

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Passing Scene – The “GrandLuxe Express” under AMTRAK power rounds Cape Horn on its journey East in 2007. Many of the GrandLuxe cars formerly served on the American Orient Express, which operated from the 1990’s until declaring bankruptcy in 2006. The operation resurfaced under the name GrandLuxe Express until it was sold in 2008. More on these luxury trains can be found at <http://www.trainweb.com/aoe.html> *Photo by Roger Staab.*

NOTE: PSRHS will soon activate its first web cam that will provide live views of this Cape Horn scene. Watch for the web cam debut on our web site www.psrhs.org

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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Reader comments, additional details, etc., are invited on any newsletter items or photos. Please forward comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter to:

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From the Archives



January Photo: This photo from Ken Yeo's collection shows what turned out to be a brief moment in local railroad history. The locomotives were built by Krauss-Maffei of Munich, Germany, and Ken says this photo shows them on a test run over Donner which dates the photo as late 1961. The German locomotives were styled somewhat similar to F-units, but their operation was vastly different. According to John Signor in his book, Donner Pass, they "employed two high-compression 12-cylinder diesel engines coupled to hydraulic transmissions to develop tractive effort. Reversing was accomplished by an air-actuated mechanism." Testing showed the locomotives could be rated at nearly twice the F-units, but problems encountered by the crews in daily operation soon limited the use of these locomotives to service on the San Joaquin route where there were no significant grades, tunnels or sheds.

CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: When the Long Ravine trestle was filled in 1876, CPRR briefly considered filling in the bridge portion as well, and NCNG Railroad began making plans to build an arch where their line crossed under what was to become fill to replace Long Ravine Bridge. However, the wooden Howe Truss bridge remained in place until 1890 when the Dept. of Interior's Report of the Commissioner of Railroads stated "Long Ravine: An Iron bridge was built to replace the wooden structure", the first of two steel railroad bridges that today span Long Ravine on the Donner Pass Route.