

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

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## January 2016 Newsletter

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*Maintenance of Way equipment is essential for keeping trains moving on the Donner route. See page 3 for a description of this piece of equipment spotted in Colfax. Roger Staab Photo*

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### Scheduled Events & Notices



- Jan 28**     **PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm**  
              – Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg  
              – Program - Dr. Charley Kurlinkus – Base Jumping with wing suit
- Feb 9**      **Colfax Caboose Committee Meeting – 7 pm**  
              – Colfax City Hall Council Chambers
- Feb 25**     **PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm**  
              – Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg  
              – Program TBA

**\*\*\*Reminder – Don't Forget to Renew your PSRHS Membership\*\*\***

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### Monthly meeting 7PM, Thursday, Jan 28th Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg

**\*\*NOTE:** Access to parking in front of building has changed. Turn right at sign for Arbotec Body Shop or continue to parking lot at rear of building.\*\*

**Program:** Dr. Charley Kurlinkus will talk about his experiences base jumping and flying with a wing suit. This a departure from our normal railroad-related topics but Walt Wilson heard Charley's presentation and thought it would be of interest to railroad fans.

### PSRHS Fall 2015 Fieldtrip November 21

The railroad Society fieldtrip to Newcastle and its surrounds was well attended with an excess of 20 people attending by both members and invited guests. The group gathered initially at the site of the Newcastle depot and temporary turntable established during the 1864 construction period. This gave a good vantage point overlooking the modern railroad bridge to envision the location of the early railroad infrastructure including the original trestle and track alignments.



The remainder of the day was spent on walking excursions both east and west of the town to compare modern track alignments following double tracking with the initial Central Pacific Railroad alignments which now deviate by several hundred feet in specific locations. A collection of historic photos and maps were provided to attendees to assist visualizing the changes to the railroad in these locations.

The day provided the perfect weather to spend walking on abandoned CPRR railroad grades and studying history!

Submitted by Jim Wood

### Colfax Caboose Committee Meeting

At the October 2015 board meeting, the PSRHS board voted to form a committee to lay out a suggested plan of action for the future of the Colfax Caboose. That committee held its first meeting on January 12, chaired by Lonnie Dickson.

Tony Hesch provided a brief history of the caboose, and went over items that need to be completed on the renovation portion of the project. The City of Colfax owns the caboose, but would likely be open to a proposal for its use so long as it was also maintained.

Tasks remaining to complete the caboose renovation were discussed, among them a watertight roof, roof catwalks, final painting inside and out, site cleanup and weedeating, and stenciled lettering on the outside. Volunteers signed up for some of the tasks.

Discussion was then opened up for suggestions for its use. Ideas put forth include an interpretive museum that tells the unique story of this caboose and the role the caboose played in railroad operations, along with other aspects of local railroad history, ideally tied to school lesson plans for elementary school students. Another idea suggested was a setup for staged photo ops.

Fund raising would also be needed to create a funding stream to maintain the caboose in the future, along with docent staffing to open the caboose for visitors.

The group agreed to meet monthly until a plan of action is put together to present to the PSRHS board and to the City of Colfax. **Next meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 9, at 7pm at Colfax City Council Chambers.** All interested in the caboose's future are invited.

### Board Member Elections

At the November meeting, elections were held for board members whose terms expire at the end of 2015. Current board members Peter Hills, Walt Wilson and Bill Yoder were all elected to new 3-year terms. In addition, Chuck Spinks was elected to fill the remaining term of Mike Haire who resigned his position.





### Passing Scene



**Maintenance of Way.** While working on renovating the Colfax Passenger Depot, we saw numerous and varied pieces of maintenance of way equipment working the tracks nearby or merely passing through. This photo from 2007 shows the Passer American K-355-SSW mobile flash butt rail welding machine. It boasted high travel speed and high production rate providing greater track availability and reducing train delays. Its rail pulling capability allowed bent rail sections to be removed, the rail gap closed and the rail welded together all in one process. *Photo by Roger Staab*

### **Amazon Smile Fund Raising**

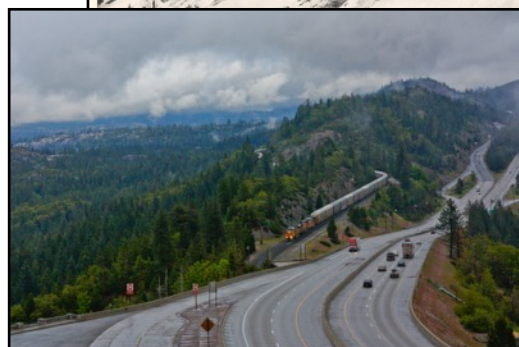
We are now part of the Amazon Smile fund raising campaign. We receive a donation to the society based on your purchases. Please feel free to copy and past the link below and include it in all your emails.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0488569>



### From the Archives

**November Mystery Photo:** The photo at right from the Ken Yeo collection shows eastbound US Hwy 40 as it crossed under the railroad tracks just east of Emigrant Gap. The photo below it shows a more recent view of I-80 crossing over the tracks at the same location. Did you know that in earlier years the predecessor to US 40 crossed the tracks at grade? The crossing was especially tricky when the railroad tracks were still covered with snow sheds.



**January Mystery Photo:** What was happening in the photo at left, and what is seen at this location today? *Photo courtesy of Dave Ferreira*

**CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: 1910-15 Double Tracking.** The new second track between Colfax and Blue Canyon was inspected and put into service in early 1915. Several of the staff stations along this route were abandoned as they were no longer needed to control train traffic on what was formerly a single track, but some stations remained as telegraph stations. Meanwhile double track work between Reno and Truckee was also completed in 1915. However, double-tracking between Truckee and Blue Canyon would not get underway for nearly a decade, with the future of the line held up by ongoing government lawsuits over whether the Central Pacific should be controlled by SP or UP, or be a separate entity. That issue was finally decided in SP's favor in June 1923.

#### Membership Information

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

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

PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713  
or join/renew online at [www.psrhs.org](http://www.psrhs.org)

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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