

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

February 2016 Newsletter

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*One of the vintage locomotives that can be seen at the Portola Western Pacific Railroad Museum the subject of our February meeting program
Roger Staab Photo*

Scheduled Events & Notices



- Feb 18** PSRHS Engineering Committee Kickoff Meeting – 10am
– Colfax Passenger Depot – see page 2 for details
- Feb 25** PSRHS Board Meeting – 5:30 pm
PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm
– Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg
– Program - Dave McClain – Portola Western Pacific RR Museum
- Mar 8** Colfax Caboose Committee Meeting – 7 pm
– Colfax City Hall Council Chambers
- Mar 24** PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm
– Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg
– Program – Willie Burroughs – Snow Removal over the Sierra



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Monthly meeting 7PM, Thursday, Feb 25th Auburn Airport Terminal Bldg

February Program: PSRHS Member **Dave McClain** will talk about the Portola Railroad Museum.

January Program: Our scheduled speaker, **Dr. Charley Kurlinkus** was assisting with a surgery and unable to attend. **Jim Wood** and **Roger Staab** showed photos of the remnants of a rock slide west of the Clipper Gap road crossing that nearly derailed a westbound freight. Jim discussed the geology of the area.

PSRHS Engineering Committee

The newly formed PSRHS Engineering Committee will **meet this Thursday, February 18 at 10am at the Colfax Passenger Depot**. We will discuss potential research projects on the design and construction of the CPRR over Donner. Potential projects include:

- Mapping Judah's original route to the summit.
- Mapping Judah's reconnaissance of the four optional routes across the Sierra.
- The use of Nitroglycerine at the summit.
- The design of the CPRR bridges.
- Design of the summit tunnels.

The goal is to prepare brief pamphlets with appropriate graphics that can be printed and sold by the Society. Anyone interested in the history and engineering of the Donner route is invited to attend. *By Chuck Spinks*

Colfax Caboose Committee

The Colfax caboose committee held its second meeting on February 9. Ken Young volunteered to serve as co-chair of the committee with Lonnie Dickson. Tony Hesch will record minutes of the meetings. The group agreed to work on the assumption that the caboose will stay where it is presently located. Other actions:

- Discussed historical exemption to handicap access
- Pavers to replace gravel access to caboose steps
- Potential fundraising sources
- Meet at the caboose Saturday, Feb. 13 at 9am to go over actions remaining to be completed on exterior and interior renovations

- Draft a proposal to the City of Colfax for control and operation of the caboose in exchange for fund raising and ongoing maintenance

At the Saturday, Feb. 13 meeting at the caboose, possible work schedules for completing the renovation were discussed, along with ways to attract volunteers. The attendees also agreed to shift future committee meetings after the March 8 meeting to the Saturday mornings before work sessions are scheduled. Finally, a straw-man for the proposal to be submitted to the City was drafted. It will be polished and presented at the next meeting.

Next committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 8, at 7pm at Colfax City Council Chambers. All interested in the caboose's future are invited.

Board Meeting January 28

A board meeting was held at 5:30 at the Auburn Airport meeting room prior to the PSRHS monthly meeting. Items discussed include:

- Web Cam internet service cancelled until camera moved and set up in new location. Need to hire someone to remove the camera from the tree. Source of affordable high speed internet service in Colfax being sought to relocate web cam in town.
- Caboose committee actions were reported by chair Lonnie Dickson. See previous article.
- Participation in Big Day of Giving is being considered again. It would help to identify a specific project as the focus of fundraising
- Malcolm is developing job descriptions for board members that emphasize expectations vice duties.
- There has been interest expressed in hosting a modular railroad event at the Colfax community center to replace the region's loss of Winterrail.
- Peter offered to put a straw man together for the board on strategic planning to help define the club's future direction.
- The club may have access to some surplus railroad displays by the Colfax Freight Depot. Jim Wood will explore and report back to the board.



Passing Scene



Portola's Western Pacific Railroad Museum. Portola has provided displays of railroad equipment to several regional events, including Colfax Railroad Days. In this 2002 photo, a string of Portola's vintage equipment passes through Colfax on the way to Truckee's Railroad Days celebration. The Portola museum is the subject of our featured presentation at the February PSRHS meeting. *Photo by Roger Staab*

**Please remember to renew your PSRHS membership
if you have not already done so. Thanks**

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>

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From the Archives

January Mystery Photo: The photo at right shows piers being placed circa 1909 that would soon support the Auburn Ravine Trestle on the new second track. Today this railroad trestle spans Interstate 80 at the west edge of Auburn. *Photo courtesy of Dave Ferreira*



February Mystery Photo: We are supposedly in the midst of the snow season on the Donner route. What are we looking at in the serious winter scene at left? For extra credit, where was this located relative to present-day landmarks? *AP Wire Photo, PSRHS collection*

CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline: 1923-25 Double Tracking. In 1923, with control of Central Pacific safely under its wing once again, SP secured funding to continue double tracking of the Donner Route. By August a second track was laid from Blue Canyon to Emigrant Gap. Included at Emigrant Gap were a center siding and 80 foot turntable. Also in August a second track was completed from Truckee to Andover. But building a second track from Andover to Emigrant Gap presented major challenges. The new track was adjacent to the operating track much of the way and often in snowsheds. Some sheds had to be temporarily removed to allow access for construction equipment. The 10,322 foot Tunnel 41 at the summit was holed through in August 1925, and the second track was in use by September of that year.

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

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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