

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

August 2016 Newsletter

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This month's mystery photo needs your input. See page 4 for details. PSRHS collection

Scheduled Events & Notices



Aug 25 PSRHS Board meeting – 5:30 pm prior to member meeting

Aug 25 PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm
– Auburn Airport Pilots' Lounge – Program - Scott Inman
– Photos of the Sac Division from Roseville to Sparks
– Southern Pacific Railroad History Center planned for Rocklin

Sept 22 PSRHS Meeting and Presentation – 7 pm
– Auburn Airport Pilot's Lounge – Dennis Magures - Rebuilding Snow Equip.

Regional Items of Potential Interest

Sept 21-24 Southern Pacific Hist & Tech Society National Convention, Palm Springs
www.sphts.org

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Monthly meeting 7PM Thursday, August 25th, Auburn Airport Pilots' Lounge

August Program: **Scott Inman** will present a double feature at our August meeting. He will show photos of the Donner Route between Roseville and Sparks, and discuss the Southern Pacific Railroad History Center planned for Rocklin and sponsored jointly by the SP Historical and Technical Society and the Pacific Coast Chapter, R&LHS. There may be opportunities for PSRHS to be involved in this venture, so come to the meeting and see what it is all about.

July Program Recap: **Paul Greenfield** gave a presentation on the Milwaukee Road in the Pacific Northwest. He showed scanned images of his slides taken in the late 1970s, covering the line from Tideflats Yard in Tacoma through Western Montana. He also discussed some of the early history, a comparison of grades with other transcontinental railroads (including our own Donner Pass route), and a brief description of what led up to the Road's bankruptcy filing and later abandonment west of Miles City, Montana.

Recent Railroad Equipment Acquisitions

Through efforts led by **Jim Wood** PSRHS has taken possession of three new items of historical railroad equipment, donated by Penny Todd from Gary Todd's collection. The items include a wig-wag crossing signal, concrete phone booth and an SP maintenance of way motor car. These are currently displayed next to the Colfax freight depot near the caboose. Assuming PSRHS obtains operational control of the Colfax caboose from the City of Colfax, plans are to relocate the wig wag and phone booth inside the caboose fenced enclosure. The motor car will be restored, potentially to operating condition. It has been left unprotected by the freight depot and many parts have disappeared.

Tentative plans include making the wig wag operational to attract people to the caboose corner. The newly acquired items are consistent with plans to make the Colfax caboose an interpretive and interactive display of historic railroad operations.

Gold Country Fair Booth

PSRHS has been invited to staff a booth at the Gold Country Fair in Auburn, Sept. 8-11. This will be an excellent opportunity to inform the community about our group and solicit new members. Displays and staffing plans will be discussed at the PSRHS board meeting scheduled for 5:30 pm on August 25th prior to the member meeting.

We would like to have our booth staffed during most of the hours of the fair, so be thinking about when you could help. Hours of operation for the fair are:

Thursday, September 8, 2016: 4:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Friday, September 9, 2016: 4:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 10, 2016: 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 11, 2016: 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Volunteers will get free admission to the fair.

Siemens Field Trip

Jim Wood has a tentative date of Nov. 2 for our repeat field trip to Siemens in South Sacramento. There is a lot happening at Siemens these days with the building of both light rail trains and diesel-electric locomotives. Because of limited group size for Siemens tours, this field trip will be limited to **currently paid members only**. Further details including how to sign up will be provided in next month's newsletter and an email notice to paid members.



Passing Scene



The westbound siding in Colfax was filled end-to-end with maintenance of way equipment in these scenes from April 2016. For several weeks crews were hard at work replacing wooden ties and performing other track maintenance east of Colfax. They used the westbound siding to store their fleet of equipment in the off-hours. *Photos 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 paste the link below and include it in all your emails.

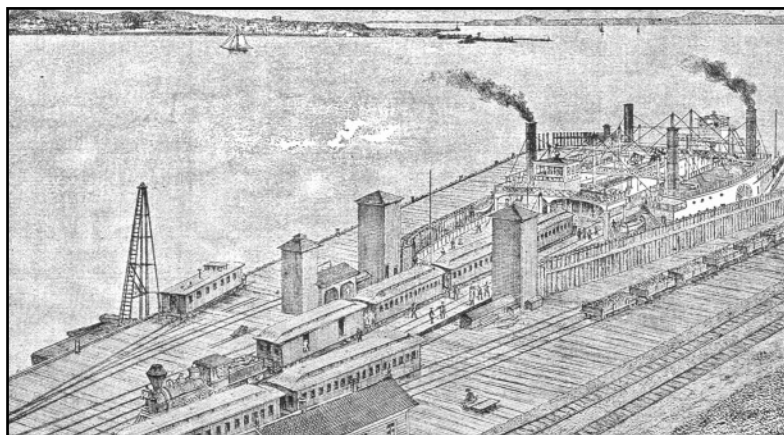
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0488569>

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From the Archives

July Mystery Photo: This image shows the ferry Solano that transported train cars and passengers across the Carquinez Strait between Port Costa and Benicia until the Benicia-Martinez bridge opened in 1930. Four tracks ran the entire length of the 424-foot-long deck with capacity for 48 cars with locomotive or 24 large passenger coaches. Four tracks at the slips at Benicia and Port Costa allowed trains to be run aboard without uncoupling the locomotive. *Brochure image and info courtesy of Jim Wood*



August Mystery Photo: This newly acquired postcard photo shows what appears to be an SP fire train with water tank cars attached to the locomotive and tender. The locomotive displays hoses and other equipment consistent with fire train service. Note what appears to be the beginning of a snowshed structure at far right, and a crew car on the siding in the background.

Any thoughts on where this photo was taken and when? *PSRHS Collection*



CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline. The 1940's war years saw extra trains added to move troops and equipment to coastal ports, and to return troops home at the end of the war. Steam locomotives were still in their prime, but more passenger and some freight diesels were appearing by the late 1940's. Use of Colfax steam helpers was discontinued and in 1949 the Colfax engine house was closed for good. As more diesels were delivered steam locomotives including cab forwards were soon relegated to helper service. The decision was made in 1955 to curtail steam locomotive use on Donner, but they persisted into 1956. The last run of a cab-forward (#4274) occurred on a special excursion run in late 1957, and the last official steam-powered run over Donner was GS 4-8-4 #4460 on another excursion in October 1958.

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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