

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

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## April 2019 Newsletter

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*The snow fighting equipment was out on the Donner route in February and March. See page 3 for more on this and another image  
Photo by Roger Staab*

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## Scheduled Events & Notices



- Apr 25** PSRHS Monthly Meeting & Presentation  
– Program – Tom Shook – Siemens Sacramento, Past, Present & Future
- May 10** Sesquicentennial Ceremony for Completion of Transcontinental Railroad  
– Golden Spike National Historic Site, Promontory Summit Utah  
– See pages 5-6 for list of other events taking place before & after May 10
- May 16** PSRHS Spring Field Trip to Siemens Sacramento - 2-4pm  
-- Paid Members Only – See page 2
- May 23** PSRHS Monthly Meeting & Presentation – Program – Paul Greenfield
- Jun 27** PSRHS Monthly Meeting & Presentation – Program TBA
- Sep 4-7** 39th National Narrow Gauge Convention – Sacramento [www.nngc2019.org/](http://www.nngc2019.org/)



# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

## April 2019 Newsletter

### **PSRHS Monthly Meeting 7PM Thursday, Apr. 25th, Auburn Airport Meeting Room**

**April Program:** Tom Shook will discuss Siemens' past projects/vehicles, the current projects/vehicles in manufacturing today and what is on the horizon. Tom is supplier quality engineer and travels around the world qualifying new suppliers, performing first article inspections, and supporting factory operations in Sacramento for light rail vehicles, locomotives, and passenger coaches by resolving supplier quality issues.

**March Program:** Roger Staab presented a slide show titled **Railroad Scenes Then and Now Along the Donner Pass Route**. Historic photos were paired with contemporary photos showing nearly the same locations as they appear today.

### **Golden Spike 150th Transcontinental Railroad Sesquicentennial Celebration**

Progress is continuing on getting UP's #4014 Big Boy steam locomotive ready to appear under its own power at Ogden in May. The UP Steam Team reports that for the first time in 60 years a UP 4000 class locomotive has fire in its firebox in Cheyenne ... an oil fire. On April 9 a fire was successfully lit in the firebox of UP 4014, in preparation for additional testing of the modified oil conversion for Big Boy 4014.

On Thursday, May 9, at 10:30 am MDT, Union Pacific will host a celebration marking the 150th anniversary of the transcontinental railroad's completion. The ceremony will be held at Ogden Union Station a day ahead of Utah's celebration at Promontory Summit where the Golden Spike was originally tapped into place. The May 9 ceremony will feature Living Legend No. 844 and Big Boy No. 4014. The two will meet, recreating the historic image taken at Promontory Summit on May 10, 1869.

Promontory Summit in Utah will be host to a ceremony on May 10, along with other activities and celebrations

through May 12. The web site for the heritage locomotive movements to the Utah celebration is

<https://www.up.com/heritage/steam/schedule>

This April newsletter contains additional pages 5 & 6 listing the many events, meetings and conventions planned in conjunction with the golden spike celebration. The list was compiled by Chuck Spinks, and updated by Chuck and Roger Staab.

A special UP exhibit car and train will give visitors a walk-through look at the history of the Transcontinental Railroad and Union Pacific. The latest on-line schedule shows it in Sacramento April 19-22, Roseville on April 23 from 9-3, Sparks April 24 from 9-3, and Ogden April 27, April 29, May 4, May 6, & May 8-11.

The web site for the special train and exhibit car is

<https://www.up.com/heritage/experience-up>

Web site for more information on the steam locomotives and their movements can be found at

<https://www.up.com/heritage/steam/>

### **Donner Crossings Issue Mailed**

The Spring 2019 issue of Donner Crossings has been mailed to paid members. If you have not received your copy and believe you have paid for 2019, let us know by return email and we will check your status.

### **Spring Field Trip to Siemens Thursday, May 16, from 2 to 4pm**

Fieldtrip spots are now filled for our spring trip to Siemens rail systems in South Sacramento. Fieldtrip details will be emailed to those who signed up to attend.





### Passing Scene – Playing in the Snow

The late February storms brought snowy visitors to Colfax. The flanger was photographed on February 28 on the Colfax siding near the fruit sheds. Much of the snow had already fallen off when this image was captured. The flanger sat in Colfax for over a day before receiving new orders to either rejoin the battle or return to Roseville. The rotary image was captured March 5 with the Colfax depot in the background. Rotary #207, the rebuild of a few years ago, held up to the Sierra snow, unlike the recent rebuild #222 that lasted less than a day. The rotary set stopped in Colfax for a crew change before heading to Roseville. *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>



### From the Archives

**March Mystery Photo (right):** The concrete in this image is part of the foundation of the Colfax engine house and the only remaining evidence of the 7-stall facility that existed in the Colfax yard from 1912-1951. It housed Colfax-based helper locomotives that provided extra power for the steep grades between Colfax and Emigrant Gap. *Photo by Roger Staab*



**April Mystery Photo (left):** Approximately what year was this photo taken of Colfax tracks? What clues help determine the year? *PSRHS Collection.*



**Accidents/Other Incidents.** *Sacramento Daily Union, 20 March 1899 – KILLED IN A TRAIN WRECK – A LOCOMOTIVE PLUNGES SEVENTY-FIVE FEET – Engineer Witham and Fireman Gray Meet Death in a Clipper Gap Disaster* – A special westbound freight train was wrecked near Clipper Gap Station at an early hour yesterday morning. Engineer Fred M. Witham and Fireman Edward Gray were killed, assistant Fireman P. De Souza and Brakeman G. L. Beeler were slightly hurt, and many cars and the head locomotive were wrecked. The latter plunged down a 75-foot embankment, but the second one did not leave the roadbed. ... The engine struck a horse at a point a quarter of a mile beyond Clipper Gap, but I doubt whether the engineer ever knew it. The horse had broken from a shed to which it had been tied ... It dragged a plank after it, which was tied to the halter, and when it attempted to cross the track the animal was held fast there by the plank, which caught on the rail ... The two front guide wheels of the large twelve wheel locomotive were thrown off the track, the other pair remaining all right, but when the train came to the Clipper Gap switch the front guide wheels did not take the rods, and the forward locomotive was ditched and thrown down a 75-foot embankment.

#### 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:

Roger Staab (530) 346-6722 [roger.staab@psrhs.org](mailto:roger.staab@psrhs.org)



### 2019 Golden Spike Sesquicentennial Activities

#### **Through May 26 Salt Lake City, Utah**

Utah Museum of Fine Arts    *Union Pacific Railroad "Race to Promontory" exhibit*

#### **Through Aug 30 Sacramento Sierra-Sacramento Valley Medical Society**

Museum of Medical History    *History of Railroad Hospitals*

#### **Apr 18 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series Sacramento History Museum**

*A Legacy in Brick & Iron: Sacramento's Central & Southern Pacific Shops*    Mary Helmich

#### **Apr 19 – 22 Sacramento Special Union Pacific Train with "Experience the UP" Exhibit Car**

**Apr 23 Roseville**                      "                      "

**Apr 24 Sparks**                        "                        "

**Apr 27 - May 11 Ogden**                "                        "

#### **Apr 24 – 27 Sacramento California State Railroad Museum**

Heritage Rail Alliance Conference

#### **Apr 24 – May 31 Sacramento California State Railroad Museum**

Special Exhibit in the museum of Original 66' long 1861 Theodore Judah Map of Central Pacific Railroad  
From California State Archives

#### **Date and Location to be determined**

Chinese Historical Society of America    *Chinese Railroad Worker Memorial Monument Dedication*

#### **May 1 – 5 Sacramento**

NMRA Pacific Coast Region Joint Convention with Feather River Rail Society

#### **May 5 – 11 Ogden, Utah**

Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society joint Conference with Union Pacific Historical Society

#### **May 6 Sacramento Sacramento Convention Center American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)**

Golden Spike Sesquicentennial Railroad History Symposium    Keynote Speaker: David Haward Bain

#### **May 7 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series California State Railroad Museum**

*The Creation of the Transcontinental Railroad From 1842 to Completion*    David Haward Bain

#### **May 7 – 12 Salt Lake City, Utah**

National Railway Historical Society Conference

#### **May 8 Sacramento Sesquicentennial Community Day Special Events in Old Sacramento**

- Recreation of Historic Parade
- Complimentary Sacramento Southern Train Rides
- Melodrama Performances at the Historic Eagle Theater
- Community Picnic with Live Music



### **2019 Golden Spike Sesquicentennial Activities (cont'd)**

**May 8 – 12 Ogden, Utah** Railway & Locomotive Historical Society Conference

**May 9 Ogden, Utah** UP 844 & UP 4014 Reenact Transcontinental Completion Photo

**May 10 – 12 Promontory Summit** Golden Spike National Historic Site Ceremony, National Park Service

**May 10-11 Ogden, Utah** UP 4104 and UP 844 on display

**May 11 Sacramento** California State Railroad Museum Foundation  
Sesquicentennial VIP Banquet at the Museum

**May 11 Rocklin** Plaque Ceremony for Historic Rocklin Station

**May 23 – 25 Santa Clara** O Scale National Convention

**May 25 – 27 Sacramento** Old Sacramento Gold Rush & Railroad Days

**Jun 23 Sacramento** Crocker Art Museum 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Festival

**Jun 23 – Sep 29 Sacramento** Crocker Art Museum  
Union Pacific Railroad Historic Photographs Exhibit  
*“Race to Promontory: The Transcontinental Railroad and the American West”*

**Jun 27 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series** California State Railroad Museum  
*The Transcontinental as a Business Venture and How it Shaped the American West* Richard White

**Jul 2 – 13 Salt Lake City** NMRA National Convention

**Jul 25 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series** California State Railroad Museum  
*California's Complicated Relationship with the Railroad* William Deverell

**Aug 22 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series** California State Railroad Museum  
*The Recovery and Interpretation of the Experience of Chinese Railroad Workers in America* Gordon H. Chang

**Sep 4 – 7 Sacramento** National Narrow-Gauge Convention

**Sep 6 Niles** Niles Canyon Railway Museum  
Celebration of completion of Western Pacific Railroad Extending the Transcontinental Railroad to the Bay

**Sep 7 Sacramento Gold Spike Lecture Series** Crocker Art Museum  
*Photographing the Transcontinental Railroad* Glenn Willumson

**Sep 21 – 22 Colfax** Colfax Railroad Days