

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

July 2019 Newsletter

In this issue:

July Meeting and Presentation. Page 2

August BBQ Preview. Page 2

Golden Spike 150th. Page 2

Colfax Caboose Update. Page 3

Fall Field Trip. Page 2

Passing Scene. Page 3

Amazon Smile Fund Raising. Page 3

From the Archives. Page 4



*See Page 3 for the interesting description of this piece of AMTRAK equipment spotted in Colfax in 2014
Photo by Roger Staab*

Scheduled Events & Notices



**Jul 25 PSRHS Monthly Meeting & Presentation – 7pm – Eric Walker
– California Operation Lifesaver – Program on Rail Safety**

Aug 22 PSRHS Monthly Meeting – BBQ and Social Gathering – 5:30 Start Time

Sep 4-7 39th National Narrow Gauge Convention – Sacramento www.nngc2019.org/

Sep 21-22 Colfax Railroad Days – Caboose open with PSRHS booth at the Caboose

Sep 26 PSRHS Monthly Meeting & Presentation – Program TBA



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PSRHS Monthly Meeting 7PM Thursday, July 25th, Auburn Airport Meeting Room

July Program: Eric Walker of California Operation Lifesaver will speak about rail safety. Walker's interest in trains began when he took his first train ride from California to Louisiana in 1966. Safety has also been among his long-time priorities and CAOL gives him an opportunity to continue to keep others safe while on or around railroad tracks. He is passionate about safety and has a goal to reduce the number of incidents involving pedestrians and vehicles with rail safety education.

Walker was in law enforcement for 30 years. He retired as a Sergeant from the Sacramento Police Department and has been with CAOL since 2014. He is currently a Grade Crossing Inspector for the Federal Railroad Administration.

June Program Recap: Keith Pattison spoke about mapmaking with a focus on maps of early logging railroads and flumes to support mines in the Tahoe area. He discussed mapmaking tips and tricks he has learned along the way, and ideas for sources for finding old railroad grades and planning trips to the field.

Keith has created several dozen maps of old logging railroads, water systems and flumes. He displayed many of them at the meeting and offered copies for sale to those who were interested.

August Meeting BBQ

PSRHS members! The board is planning something new for the THURSDAY, AUGUST 22 MEETING ... a barbeque/potluck social evening, at our usual Airport Terminal Building location, but **starting at 5:30 p.m.** for a social time and **dinner at about 6:15.** THIS IS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO BRING FAMILY AND FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY IF THEY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN JOINING PSRHS AND COMING TO FUTURE MEETINGS.

There won't be a program but we plan to have great visuals of train videos running throughout the

evening ... visuals only, no sound, so we can continue to socialize.

The board will supply hot dogs, hamburgers, buns and all the fixin's to go with them, plus paper plates, napkins, plasticware, waters and sodas. Any other beverages are BYO.

MEMBERS, WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU TO BRING SIDE DISHES OR DESSERTS TO SHARE. And remember to bring serving spoons or forks with your potluck dishes, please! Also, two guys are needed to help grill the dogs and burgers and anyone willing to bring their train videos should arrive about 5-5:15 p.m. to set up.

We hope this casual meeting will result in an enjoyable evening and a chance to know each other and each other's families and friends. See you there!

Golden Spike 150th Transcontinental Railroad Sesquicentennial Celebration

There are still some events and exhibits taking place as part of the Golden Spike 150th anniversary celebration. See the May newsletter for a listing of events.

Colfax Caboose Update

The Colfax caboose was open for the City's July 3 event. Thanks to Jim Wood and Peter and Sam Hills for helping me staff the caboose for the event. We plan to have the caboose open for Colfax Railroad Days Sept. 21-22, and will likely set up a table for our club at the caboose. Your board voted to make this our only involvement in the event this year. Be thinking of when you can volunteer a few hours to help get the word out about PSRHS and local railroad history.

Fall Field Trip

A return visit to the many historic sites at or near Donner Summit is being planned for our fall field trip tentatively set for October 19. Watch for details in future issues of the newsletter.





Passing Scene – AMTRAK Modified Equipment

In dusting off old photos I ran across this one I took in May 2014 in Colfax. The train configuration seemed odd along with knowing that style of locomotive hadn't been used by AMTRAK for several years. Further research on AMTRAK #90229 yielded some interesting information. These EMD F40PH cowl-bodied diesel locomotives were built for AMTRAK in the 1980's. When they were replaced by the Genesis locomotives in the late 1990's, some of these F40PH units including #90229 were rebuilt by AMTRAK into non-powered "Cabbage" cars (Control cab/baggage car, or NPCU). NPCU's can be identified from the standard F40PH by the lack of grills and rooftop fans as the baggage area has now replaced the standard engine room. NPCUs were commonly seen on Amtrak's "Downeaster" leading southbound trains, and were also seen on Amtrak's "Pere Marquette", "Wolverine", "Blue Water", "Cascades", "Pacific Surfliner", and "San Joaquin".

Further trivia for this car: AMTRAK #90229 was the last NPCU in Phase 4 paint, but was overhauled and repainted in Phase 5 paint in May 2014. 90229 was also the only NPCU to be equipped with a *Nathan Airchime* P5A horn, but during overhaul it was re-equipped with a K5LA. *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 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

June Mystery Photo (right): This image shows the old road from Donner Lake to Donner Pass with the railroad's wood snowsheds traversing the hillside in the background. The auto defines the image as early 1900's. Most of these sheds were replaced by concrete, and are now abandoned, with all rail traffic passing through Tunnel 41. *Postcard image courtesy of Jim Wood*



July Mystery Photo (left): What is happening in this image and where was the photo taken? Extra credit for the approximate year. *CAHS collection.*



Accidents/Other Incidents. *San Francisco Chronicle, Apr 16, 1895. Planned to Rob Dead.* Full details of the attempt to wreck the east-bound passenger train at Colfax last night were received at the division headquarters here today. The two tramps who warned the agent at Colfax of the attempted wreck were taken into custody by Sheriff Conroy. They gave their names as Connally and Thompson. They had been put off the train at Gold Run yesterday and failing to catch another train, decided to walk to Sacramento. When a mile west of Colfax they say they found three men at work on the rails and the wreckers immediately fled when the tramps appeared. The train was due at that point at 1:50 o'clock this morning, and if it had gone over the embankment it would have fallen into a deep canyon, and the loss of life would have been terrible.... The railroad officials are of the opinion that it was the intention of the wreckers to rob the dead and injured after the train had been buried down the mountainside. There is also the opinion that the two men who carried the news into Colfax had themselves withdrawn the spikes and bolts and then notified the agent in the hopes of being liberally rewarded by the railroad company. Such things have been done before.

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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