

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

---



[www.psrhs.org](http://www.psrhs.org)

## September 2019 Newsletter

### In this issue:

**No September meeting.** Page 2

**Colfax Railroad Days Booth.** Page 2

**Rocklin Roundhouse Tours.** Page 2

**Fall Field Trip to Donner Summit.** Page 2

**Passing Scene.** Page 3

**Amazon Smile Fund Raising.** Page 3

**From the Archives.** Page 4

**SP Historical Research Center.** Page 5



*The trains and tracks are gone but there is still plenty of railroad history to see at Donner Summit. This postcard view shows a westbound SP freight exiting Tunnel 7 heading toward Tunnel 6. See page 2 for field trip info and page 3 for prior Donner Summit photos.*

### Scheduled Events & Notices



- Sep 21-22 Colfax Railroad Days – Caboose open 10-4 each day with PSRHS booth at the Caboose. Volunteers needed to help staff caboose and booth. See Page 2**
- Sep 21 Free Guided Tours of Rocklin Roundhouse Site and Plans for World-Class Railroad History Center 10am-3pm. See page 2.**
- Sep 26 NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO SEPTEMBER MEETING**
- Sep 26 California State RR Museum Gold Spike Lecture Series**  
– David Bain, Author of *The Empire Express - Building the Nation's First Transcontinental Railroad*  
– <http://sachistorymuseum.org/programs-events/gold-spike-lecture-series/>
- Oct 19 PSRHS Fall Field Trip – Donner Summit - Details on pages 2 & 3**
- Oct 24 PSRHS Monthly Meeting – 7pm – Program to be announced**
- Nov 9-10 International Rail Fair – Roseville – [www.internationalrailfair.com](http://www.internationalrailfair.com)**



# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

## September 2019 Newsletter

### **\*\*No PSRHS Meeting in September\*\***

Due to several conflicts in September, there will be no PSRHS meeting that month. Monthly meetings will resume in October.

**August BBQ Gathering:** We had a nice turnout for the BBQ in lieu of our August meeting. Members, family and friends enjoyed hot dogs and hamburgers, a variety of side dishes and yummy desserts along with their conversations. Thanks to all who contributed by bringing dishes to share. Special thanks to BBQ-chef in charge Chuck Spinks, and to Don and Mona Anderson for providing overall coordination of the event.

### **Colfax Railroad Days Booth Volunteers needed Sept. 21-22**

Your PSRHS board voted to limit our involvement in this year's Colfax Railroad days. We will staff the caboose for visitors, and set up a PSRHS booth at the caboose to provide information on our club and local railroad history. We anticipate having the caboose open from 10am-4pm each day.

If you can **help out by volunteering time at the caboose and our PSRHS booth**, please notify me at [rsrr@exwire.com](mailto:rsrr@exwire.com). **Indicate which day you can help and whether you prefer 10am-1pm or 1pm-4pm.** Thanks in advance for being willing to help.

NOTE: No special skills or caboose knowledge are needed. A big part of the caboose job is assisting kids and sharing their delight as they climb into the cupola and get to be inside a real train.

### **Rocklin Roundhouse Tours Event Sept. 21**

**Scott Inman provided the following item:**

Our first big event in Rocklin to promote the Southern Pacific Railroad History Center will be on 9/21 for a Chili Cookoff with the Rocklin Historical Society and the Chamber of Commerce. Jim Elliot and I will be there to pass out information, sell hats, and meet local

business owners. Come join us if you can make it and help meet the Chamber! The Roseville Roundhouse Club will be there to promote their ideas as well, so please help spread the word to other organizations.

Free guided tours of the Rocklin Roundhouse site will be offered at 10am, noon and 2pm. The layout of the proposed history center can be found on page 5 of this newsletter. The roundhouse and history center are NE of the Rocklin Road crossing of the UP tracks.

### **Fall Field Trip**

**Place: Donner Summit Tunnels and Norden**  
**Date: Saturday, October 19, 2019 at 9AM**  
**Meeting Place: Parking area across Donner Pass**  
**Road (old US40) from Donner Ski Ranch.**  
**Led by Jim Wood**

At long last, we will repeat a trip we last made in 2007 to visit a most interesting area for the history of the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad completed in 1869, 150 years ago this last May. Our primary place of interest will be the Summit Tunnel No 6 and the others further east. We will walk through No 6, 7 and explore No 8 as well as the China Wall built to hold up the grade between Tunnel 7 and 8.

In addition, we will visit the sites of three historic locomotive turntables that were built to accommodate ever increasing sizes and lengths of locomotives beginning with the wood burning 4-4-0's up to the culmination of the steam era locomotives, the famous Cab-Forwards. Historic photos of the early day scenes will be presented for viewing. Rumor has it that Donner Summit historian Norm Saylor will accompany us to share photos as well.

We will assemble at the informal parking area at the entrance of Tunnel 6 at 9am. We will initially stroll through the Summit Tunnel looking at construction techniques and move on to the east. Following the tunnel explorations, we can take lunch at the adjacent Donner Ski Ranch café on their deck or inside if chilly. The café has an assortment of lunch items, beverages and facilities.

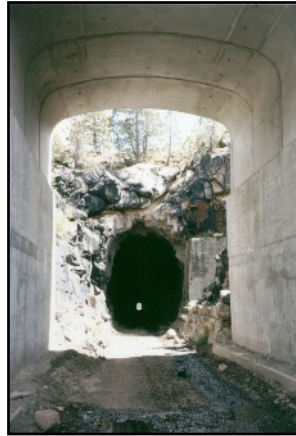
(Text continues at top of page 3)



### **Passing Scene – Donner Summit Field Trip Oct. 19** – (field trip info continued from page 2)

Following the lunch break, we'll move on to the west to intersect some of the historic sites at Norden. Plan on sturdy walking shoes, possible sun precautions. Snacks and water are recommended as we'll be on foot for a couple of hours before the lunch break. Carpooling is encouraged. Email me at [greenstonemaker@gmail.com](mailto:greenstonemaker@gmail.com) to RSVP, get a head count and hook up with carpool possibilities if you wish. Our field trips typically wrap by 3pm.

Below are photos by Jim Wood and Roger Staab from past field trips to Donner Summit.



Clockwise from top left: (1) Tunnel 8 West Portal, China Wall and Road Underpass; (2) Tunnel 6 East Portal from Tunnel 7; (3) Cover over Vertical Access Shaft used in Tunnel 6 Construction; (4) Road Underpass and Railroad Bed Between Tunnel 7 and Tunnel 8; (5) Plaque Commemorating Completion of the 1659-Foot Summit Tunnel; (6) Back Wall of Pit for Second Summit Turntable; (7) Spur Track and Norden Sheds on Abandoned Mainline



### **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

**August Mystery Photo (right):** This building at Midas was a staff station located half-way between Alta and Blue Canyon. It was part of the staff system of train control put in place in 1905. Midas was also a day/night telegraph office. Prior to 1905 this location was known as Shady Run which first appeared in timetables or station books in 1867. *Photo courtesy of Art Sommers*



**September Mystery Photo (left):** What is shown in this image and what was its significance to the railroad? Answer in next month's newsletter or join us on the Oct. 19th field trip to learn more. *Photo by Jim Wood*



**Accidents/Other Incidents.** Last month's entry reported an attempted sabotage near Towle in Feb. 1941. A week later the following appeared in the *Feb. 21, 1941 Colfax Record*. **Three Youths Arrested Confess To R.R. Sabotage.** Quick work on the part of the F.B.I., Southern Pacific special agents and the police, brought about the arrest last Thursday night of three Sacramento youths, who immediately confessed they were responsible for the attempted train derailment near Towle on Saturday, Feb. 8th. The men ... are being held under \$50,000 bond each for a session of the grand jury March 10. At that time indictments will be asked charging the three with attempt to wreck a train, attempted extortion, conspiracy and interference with a national defense industry. ... Officers said the three had confessed to plans of extorting \$50,000 from the S.P. with threats of sabotage, had considered kidnapping a Sacramentan and had also laid plans to get money from the Pacific Gas And Electric Company by threatening to blow up transformers. Earlier questioning failed to produce any connection between the three and a train wreck near Harney, Nev., in 1939, or with any communistic or fifth column group, agents said.

#### 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)





Southern Pacific Railroad History Center  
9462 Middlesboro Way  
Elk Grove, CA 95758  
[www.splives.org](http://www.splives.org)

## Overview of Rocklin Property Proposal



- Fiber Optic Cable
- Continuation of Stone Roundhouse Wall
- Proposed History Center
- Proposed Shared Parking
- Proposed Outdoor Display Trackage, Garden
- Proposed Continuation of Driveway

*The Southern Pacific Railroad History Center is a non-profit charitable educational organization and is exempt from Federal Income Tax as defined under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please consult your tax advisor for the proper application of any donation.*