

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

April 2021 Newsletter

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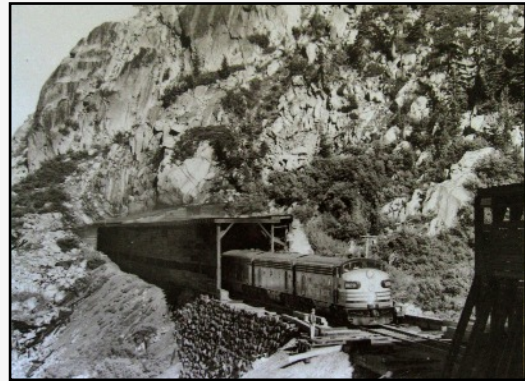
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History in many forms can be seen in this image. See page 4 for details PSRHS Collection courtesy of Jim Wood

Scheduled Events & Notices



Apr 22 PSRHS Zoom Meeting, 7PM. *Program: Bill Taylor – The Central Pacific/Southern Pacific and California Agriculture. See page 2*

May 27 PSRHS Zoom Meeting, 7PM. Program TBD

As we move on from the COVID trials of 2020, we encourage you to renew your membership in PSRHS for 2021 or join PSRHS as a paid member. As conditions permit, we will be hosting monthly presentations on historic or contemporary operations along the Donner Route using Zoom or in-person meetings, offer field trips to regional sites, continue publishing our monthly newsletter articles and historic photos, and expand resources on our web site. More web cams are planned so viewers can track rail operations over the route. Thanks for your past and continued support of PSRHS and regional railroad history.



Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

April 2021 Newsletter

MONTHLY MEETING

PSRHS MARCH BOARD MEETING

PSRHS ZOOM PROGRAM APRIL 22nd. 7pm.

Presenter: *Bill Taylor, CSRM Docent and Volunteer*
Topic: *The Central Pacific/Southern Pacific and California Agriculture:*

The railroad was instrumental in developing agriculture in California. The railroad quickly realized that "the future of the railroad was local," and so it began focusing on getting Land Grant holdings into the ownership of small-scale farmers. It then developed major programs to educate farmers in converting low-value cattle and cereal grain land uses to higher-value uses more suited to the climates and soils in California (and, of course, to provide more revenue for the railroad). The Southern Pacific partnered with the University of California and also hired its own scientists for these programs. CP/SP was also the "midwife at the birth of public irrigation" in California, having developed water supplies for both its own and public use.

Details on how to join the presentation are provided below and on our web site www.psrhs.org.

Topic: Placer-Sierra RR Heritage Society
Time: Apr 22, 2021 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9324272808?pwd=L2ltVjdwYkg2ZjcwOE5qTTN6RUFwdz09>

Meeting ID: 932-427-2808
Passcode: 837480

The PSRHS board met via zoom on March 25. The following items were discussed:

Late 2020 Election of Board Members. The terms for board members Chuck Spinks, Don Anderson and Shirley Racine expired at the end of 2020. An election should have been held at the November meeting which didn't happen due to Covid. **A board election will be held as part of the April Zoom meeting and presentation.**

Caboose Update: Jim Wood and Peter Hills provided an update on the repairs that were made to seal the roof of the caboose. This topic was covered in the March newsletter.

Articles for Newsletter: Roger Staab talked about efforts to add new articles and information to the monthly newsletter. One idea was to provide space for member activities (See page 3 of this newsletter). Ways to revisit past information generated by the club was discussed, leading to the article on past PSRHS activities that can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

Colfax Railroad Days 2021: PSRHS plans to have a table at Colfax Railroad Days, perhaps in the caboose. Tentative dates are Sept. 18-19.

Web Cam Update: The Applegate web cam is operational but with a few lingering problems. Board members agreed to pursue details on a possible second site for a web cam that will provide visibility of both eastbound and westbound tracks.

Future Program Topics: Ideas are needed for future programs to be presented via zoom until public meetings are deemed safe to resume. Please contact a board member if you have a program you could present or know of a good topic and source for future meetings.

See Page 5 for Past PSRHS Activities Article



Passing Scene – Not Their Finest Moment

This August 2000 photo was captured in Colfax. UP is giving an emergency assist to eastbound AMTRAK, but it appears UP did not provide their best-conditioned locomotive for the task. We must add that this smoky scene is unusual on the Donner Route, although the occasional smoker has been sighted (but few to match this one). The slight eastbound uphill grade departing the Colfax AMTRAK platform likely contributed to the smoky exhaust as the train is getting underway after picking up passengers. *Roger Staab photo*



Member Activities – Your Submitted Story Here

Page 3 of the PSRHS newsletter has been devoted to a photo of contemporary operations or equipment spotted on the Donner Route, or events such as Colfax Railroad Days. Another potential use of this page is to feature stories submitted by our members and readers on railroad-related activities they have participated in, preferably but not limited to the Donner Route or nearby regions. A photo or two and a few paragraphs with details are all that is needed. Please consider sharing your railroading adventures with our club members and newsletter readers.

Submit your input to roger.staab@psrhs.org.

Amazon Smile Fund Raising

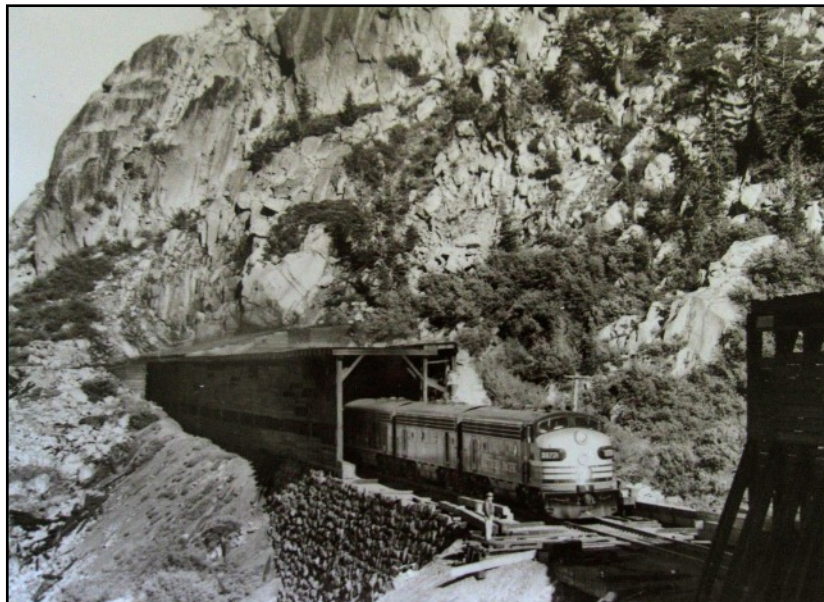
We are now part of the Amazon Smile fund raising campaign. We receive a donation to the society based on your purchases. Please feel free to copy and paste the link below and include it in all your emails.

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



From the Archives

March Mystery Photo (right): An early Southern Pacific diesel locomotive leads a westbound freight out of the sheds at the west portal of Tunnel 8 at Donner Summit. The shed for Tunnel 7 is at far right. Visible below the locomotive is the China Wall built of stone with no mortar that still exists today. At bottom right is the underpass that was once traversed by the Lincoln Highway. In the 1990's the tracks were removed from this portion of the original transcontinental route and westbound trains routed through Tunnel 41. *PSRHS Collection, courtesy of Jim Wood*



April Mystery Photo (left): This train layout has a significant connection to the Donner Route. You may not know the young man on the locomotive, but you likely know of the railroad owner. Where was the photo taken and who owned this layout? *PSRHS Collection, courtesy of John Morgan*

Accidents/Other Incidents. *Placer Herald, 20 Feb 1904*—**FATALITIES IN THE SNOW SHEDS.** Three men lost their lives on Friday last, February 12th, by reason of a landslide in the railroad company's snowsheds, between Lakeview and Truckee. A gang of forty-six men were shoveling snow, when they heard the slide coming, and all ran for their lives. Several were buried waist deep and were extracted by their companions. One young man was taken out dead from suffocation, and two others cannot be found... Most of the sheds in this section are new, and the railroad company keeps a large force of men constantly repairing them. A landslide, however, is like a cyclone or an earthquake; there is no stopping them when they get started.

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:

roger.staab@psrhs.org



PAST PSRHS ACTIVITIES AND PRESENTATIONS (Or what's on the psrhs.org web site)

A new member of PSRHS recently pointed out that many new members aren't aware of the many past monthly meeting presentations and activities of the group or historic information available in past issues of the newsletter or other club publications. He suggested we might repeat some of those topics if they are more than 5-10 years old. We will consider that for future meetings and field trips.

As to published information, there are several pages on our revamped web site that contain historical notes published in the past. Some provide thumb-through lists of topics; others are narratives on specific themes. If you have not already done so, check out these pages on our web site, www.psrhs.org.

Past Meeting Presentations and Field Trips. A chronological listing of meeting presentation topics and field trip locations from January 2002. This page is located under the **Events** tab.

Colfax Caboose Restoration and Colfax Passenger Depot Renovation located under the **Restoration Projects** tab. These pages provide photo and text summaries of the club's involvement in two major projects to preserve these pieces of railroad history, along with their significance in the story of the Donner Route.

Donner Crossings Issues under the **Society Info** tab. These documents published by PSRHS presented more detailed historical information on one or two topics in each issue. The web page provides a list of topics presented in each issue. A low-resolution PDF copy of an issue of interest can be downloaded from the web site.

Historic Timetable and Map of "The Hill" under the **On The Hill** tab. These pages contain listings of many of the historical place names along the Donner Route from Roseville to Sparks, along with routes of some of the connecting shortlines. The Historic Timetable can be downloaded as a PDF file. The place names highlighted in blue are hyperlinks that can be clicked on to bring up a page with details on that specific location.

CPRR/SP Donner Route Timeline, Donner Route Accidents/Other Incidents, and Archive Photos and Passing Scene, all under the **On the Hill** tab. These are short historical narratives or lists of historical and contemporary photos that were featured in a monthly newsletter issue. The Timeline page lists a chronology of major events in the construction and operation of the Central Pacific/Southern Pacific along the Donner Route from 1863 to the 1996 UP merger. The Accidents/Incidents page contains newspaper and other reports on incidents that have occurred on the line through the years. The archive photos page lists the subject of historic or contemporary photos that appeared in our monthly newsletter along with a link to that issue. To view any past newsletter issue visit the **Newsletters** page under the **Society Info** tab.

The **Safety** tab contains links to information on Operation Lifesaver and UP Safety news releases.

The **Exhibits** tab contains historic and contemporary railroad photos from three collections.

Hope this helps you navigate the extensive information that has been compiled by PSRHS members and made available to the public on our web site www.psrhs.org.

