

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

October 2021 Newsletter

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This image of an unusual movement on the Donner Route was captured on the PSRHS Applegate web cam. Read the story and see more photos on Page 3.

Scheduled Events & Notices



Oct 26 PSRHS Monthly Meeting 7PM LIVE + Zoom - Note New Day and Location
4th Tuesday at Auburn Veterans Hall; Program – Mike Haire
– Photographing Trains over Donner as a Hobby Since the 1980's

Nov 5,6,7 Northern Nevada Model Railroad Tour; For more information contact
Jim Petro at jpetro328@gmail.com

Nov 23 PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM – Program TBD

As we move on from the COVID trials of 2020-21, we encourage you to renew your membership in PSRHS for 2022 or join PSRHS as a paid member. As conditions permit, we will be hosting presentations on historic or contemporary operations along the Donner Route using Zoom and/or in-person meetings, offer field trips to regional sites, publish 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.



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OCTOBER PROGRAM

In-Person Presentation Tuesday October 26 at 7PM. Also available via Zoom.

The October program will be presented live starting at 7PM at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street for those who wish to attend in person. Directions to the meeting room can be found on our web site www.psrhs.org under the "Happenings" tab. The program will also be available via zoom for those who prefer the zoom format.

Program: PSRHS member **Mike Haire** will discuss his **hobby of photographing trains over Donner** (since the 80's), how he got interested, the tools he uses, what barriers he has come across etc. He plans to bring his books to have on the tables to leaf through for those who show up in person as well as selected digital pictures for program visuals.

To access the zoom presentation:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9324272808?pwd=L2ltVjdWYkg2ZjcwOE5qTTN6RUFWdz09>

Meeting ID: 932-427-2808

Passcode: 837480

September Program Recap: PSRHS founding members **Jim Wood and Roger Staab** presented the story of the **Pritchard Marble Quarry and Bear River Lime Kiln**. The program included a timeline for the quarry and lime kiln, a description of their operations, historic and current-day photos of the site, and uses for the products that were transported to market by rail. Finally Jim discussed what makes these sites unique compared with remains of similar sites elsewhere in California.

This was our first combined live/zoom program and it seemed to be well received by the in-person audience and zoom viewers.

A recording of the zoom program has been added to our web site as a Video Presentations link under the Happenings tab.

FIELD TRIP TO NCNG MUSEUM

PSRHS members were notified by email of a last-minute field trip opportunity on October 15. The NCNG Railroad Museum hosted a special day for railfans, including steaming the Porter narrow gauge locomotive and rides on the museum's railbus. A block of tickets for the railbus was set aside for PSRHS members. While news of the event was last minute, we hope some of our members were able to attend and enjoy the day touring the museum, shop and rolling stock.

Special thanks to Jim Wood and Bill Yoder for getting the word out about this field trip opportunity.

COLFAX RAILROAD DAYS

The 2021 version of Colfax Railroad Days was an apparent success except for one major glitch. On the Thursday before the event Union Pacific notified the event organizers that UP would not be sending any equipment from Roseville for display due to staffing shortages. While some event attendees expressed their disappointment at the lack of UP equipment to view and tour, most enjoyed many other activities including several model railroad layouts, food and craft vendors, 1840's reenactment camp, and car show.

PSRHS members helped staff the Colfax Caboose, which saw a steady stream of visitors for both days.

NEW DONNER CROSSINGS ISSUE

Colfax Passenger Depot – The Rest of the Story, a more complete history of the 1905 Colfax Southern Pacific passenger depot is the featured article in the Fall 2021 Donner Crossings issue #15. The article follows the evolution of the Colfax depot from its inception, through its many changes in use to its current status as Museum, Visitor Center, and waiting area for train passengers. **A printed copy of the Donner Crossings issue was mailed to paid PSRHS members.** At a later date it will be available to the general public as a low-resolution PDF download from our web site's "Publications" tab.



Passing Scene – Brightline Delivery on the Donner Route

A splash of color was noted on the Donner Route on October 4. Turns out it was a Siemens-produced train set destined for Florida to operate on Brightline's Miami-West Palm Beach line. Siemens reported that the train set would take at least 11 days to reach the West Palm Beach depot by rail from Sacramento. On September 29th the International Rail Journal provided the following information:

“SIEMENS unveiled the first of five additional trains for United States inter-city operator Brightline at its Sacramento factory in California on September 28. These are the second phase of an order first placed by Brightline with Siemens in 2014. Five push-pull trains, each formed of four coaches with a 3000kW Charger SBC-40 diesel-electric locomotive at each end will be delivered ready for the opening of the 273.6km Phase 2 extension from West Palm Beach – Orlando line next year. One additional spare Charger locomotive will also be delivered.”

After observing the train set traveling through Colfax, your editor located the segment when the train passed our PSRHS Applegate web cam. The two distance photos below were taken from my deck in Colfax. The close-up image is a screen shot of the web cam image. If you would like to observe the entire train passing the web cam, Bill Yoder provided this You Tube link to the web cam video clip – <https://youtu.be/kjYR91iR45A>



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

September Mystery Photo (right): This Alfred Hart image shows a partially completed snowshed at the west end of Tunnel 2, about a mile east of Emigrant Gap. Tunnel 2 was built in 1866, and the shed was erected in 1867. In fact it was not yet finished when Hart captured this image. Note the rock wall in the foreground, another example of early rock work to support the roadbed. This view was drastically changed when Tunnel 2 was day-lighted as part of double tracking in 1923-24. *PSRHS Collection*



October Mystery Photo (left): What was this structure and where was it located? What is there today? *PSRHS Collection*

Accidents/Other Incidents. *Colfax Record, October 9, 1942.*

“Locomotive Derailed – Emigrant Gap, Oct. 7 – A locomotive was derailed near here shortly after midnight, Sunday. The “Big Hook” from Roseville came up and placed the big locomotive back on the track.”

“Derailment at Applegate - Applegate, Oct. 7 – A freight car was derailed early Monday morning near the West Applegate station. Section crews from here and Colfax set the car back on the track without the aid of the “Big Hook” which was handling another derailment at Emigrant Gap.”

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 <https://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

DERAILMENT AT GOLD RUN

On September 24 a derailment occurred on UP's mainline near Gold Run. There was virtually no news coverage of the incident, but emails from railfans and postings on Train Orders provided some details. Carloads of lumber were on the ground, but much more significant was damage to several autoracks and their cargo of new Toyota SUV's destined for eastern US markets.

The damaged autoracks were brought to the Colfax yard, where the banged-up Toyotas were moved from the rail cars to highway auto transports, then returned to the Benicia receiving yard to be salvaged. Jim Wood captured the photos below of the damaged autoracks and the offloading process. Your editor took the photo of a highway transport load of new SUV's with varying body damage destined for salvage. No - you can't buy one - we asked..

