

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

March 2022 Newsletter

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This image was captured on our Applegate web-cam. See page 3 for a larger view and locomotive details. Courtesy of Bill Yoder

Scheduled Events & Notices



- Mar 22** PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM – See page 2 – Program: Kevin Knauss – Amos Catlin, Theodore Judah, and the Sacramento Area's Early Railroads.
- Apr 26** PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM – Program: Kyle Wyatt
- May 24** PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM – Program: Paul Helman

A friendly reminder to join PSRHS or renew your membership for 2022 if you have not already done so. See page 2 for details. Thank you for supporting PSRHS and our railroad history preservation activities.

Preserving Railroad History on the Donner Pass Route



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MARCH PSRHS MEETING

Tuesday, March 22, 7PM,
Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall

Program: Kevin Knauss will discuss **Amos Catlin, Theodore Judah, and the Sacramento Area's Early Railroads**. Amos Catlin was Theodore Judah's Attorney and close friend. Catlin was involved in several of Judah's early railroad efforts, including the Sacramento Valley Railroad, American River Railroad, and the California Central Railroad. After Judah's death in November of 1863, Catlin assisted Anna Judah with her legal affairs.

Kevin Knauss is a local historian who focuses on the historical events of the Gold Rush along the American River and development of the region from Sacramento to Auburn. His research has led to publishing books on water canals under Folsom Lake and biographies of Benjamin N. Bugbey and Amos P. Catlin.

February Program Recap: Chuck Spinks and Roger Staab presented **PSRHS – Where We've Been and What We Are**, honoring the club reaching its 20th year as a non-profit dedicated to preserving the rail history of the Donner Route. A slide show featuring past field trips highlighted where we've been, while a look at our web site's features addressed what we are today.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Our program director is building a calendar of future programs for our monthly meetings. Speakers that are lined up for April and May are listed below. Meanwhile program Chair Peter Diurni would like your ideas for future speakers and programs. You can email him at petediurni@hotmail.com

Kyle Wyatt will be speaker for our April meeting. His topic has not been set but Kyle is a well known railroad historian and has the inside scoop on many topics of regional railroad interest.

Paul Helman will be our May speaker. Paul has conducted extensive research on how the principal players financed construction of the transcontinental railroad.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

If you have not already done so, it's time to renew your membership in PSRHS. Member dues are our primary source of revenue for PSRHS field trips, restoration projects, purchase of historic photos and publication of our monthly newsletter and other documents covering local railroad history. You can renew by check payable to PSRHS, PO Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713, or using pay pal on our secure web site <https://www.psrhs.org/>

Thank you for your support of our PSRHS mission Preserving Railroad History on the Donner Pass Route.

TONGUE IN CHEEK RAILROAD HUMOR

In the 1920's and '30's Colfax was home to numerous Tuberculosis treatment centers or sanatoriums. Some of the patients published a monthly magazine called The Tea Bee that included information on treatment along with tidbits about and for the patients. Southern Pacific's tracks were not far from many of these Sans. This bit of humor appeared in the Jan. 1925 Tea Bee.

"After three engines had slipped through Colfax unheard in the dead of night during the last two months, the hospital patients took up a collection to buy louder whistles for the S.P. The division superintendent was very apologetic and craved their indulgence in that it was clearly a breach of orders as he, personally, had instructed all engineers to blow their whistles as often and as loud as possible while passing through Colfax.

– "Uncle Henry"

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The newsletter is normally emailed to members by the third Tuesday each month to be in your hands a week before the monthly meeting on the fourth Tuesday. The newsletter is also uploaded to our web site, with a link to the latest newsletter issue and monthly meeting notice posted on our home page, www.psrhs.org.





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Passing Scene – UP 1943 – The Spirit – Honoring US Armed Forces

This excellent photo of UP 1943, The Spirit, was captured by Bill Yoder from our Applegate web-cam on February 26, 2022. This locomotive was featured in our April 2018 newsletter, then leading the UP business train westbound near Tunnel 16.

Per the Union Pacific web site – “Union Pacific’s Locomotive No. 1943, The Spirit, was the company’s 16th commemorative locomotive. The Spirit honors the United States’ armed forces and the men and women filling their ranks... Every detail in The Spirit’s trade dress incorporates a piece of each U.S. armed forces branch. The Spirit’s front is symbolic of Air Force Silver, and the blue stripe is a reflection of the former Strategic Air Command’s “nose sash.” The lettering inside the sash is the original handdrawn font used on the B-17 (*also Christened the Spirit of Union Pacific in 1943*). It is followed by the Coast Guard’s “Racing Stripe” and the Navy’s Battleship Gray, which frames Union Pacific’s traditional American flag. The military camouflage is a nod to the Army and Marines. As the train passes by, the final message on the tail is dedicated to U.S. prisoners of war and those missing in action, featuring the POW/MIA symbol and its motto, You Are Not Forgotten.”



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

February Mystery Photo (right): Southern Pacific's San Francisco Overland #28, one of its premier passenger trains, is departing Colfax eastbound circa 1950. The primary power is two new diesels, with a cab-forward in helper service for the grades ahead. Cab-forwards used to provide primary power for SP passenger and freight trains over Donner. This image clearly shows diesels claiming the future on the route. *PSRHS Collection courtesy of Peter Diurni*



March Mystery Photo (left): Where was this photo taken, and what train is visible in the image? *Ken Yeo Collection. PSRHS*

Accidents/Other Incidents. *Auburn Journal*, 12 Sept. 1912 – **Railroad Ties Burned by Runaway Freight Train** – “Some remarkable facts regarding a runaway Southern Pacific gravel train from Auburn, which did no harm save the setting of several ties afire, delayed no trains, but broke speed records for speed through the lower end of Placer County were brought out at the hearing ... The hearing showed that the accident was caused by the fact that the cars were too heavily loaded and brakeage (*sic*) was not sufficient to hold the train when it reached the 2.7 percent grade just above Newcastle. The train started its terrific sprint in the Newcastle tunnel, and although the members of the crew realized they might soon face death, not one attempted to jump... the train reached a speed of sixty-five miles an hour ... the forty seven cars swayed and rocked around the curves and the locomotive ran a part of the time on the wheels of one side. While engineer Young remained at his post in the locomotive and kept the air brakes set, brakeman and fireman crept along the train in the dust and confusion and set thirty-five hand brakes before the train was stopped.”

Membership Information

Individual Members = \$25.00/yr
Each Additional Family Member = \$5.00/yr

- Monthly Meetings (4th Tuesday) 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

