

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



<https://www.psrhs.org>

October 2026 Newsletter

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See page 3 for details on this Private Varnish that passed through Colfax at Colfax RR Days. *Roger Staab photo*

Scheduled Events & Notices



Oct 27 PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM - Program: Jim Wood – Rocket – First of the Modern Steam Locomotives – Jim's visit to England's Locomotion RR Museum

Nov 24 PSRHS Monthly Meeting, 7PM – Program under development

**** No Meeting in December ****

Watch our website and newsletter for monthly program details

**** Please Consider Becoming a PSRHS Member for 2027 ****

**** New Member Dues paid in September or Later Include 2027 ****

Annual membership renewals pay for publishing railroad history documents, purchasing and posting historic photos, arranging field trips, & other historic preservation activities.

Preserving Railroad History on the Donner Pass Route



Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

October 2026 Newsletter

PSRHS MONTHLY MEETING

October 27, 7PM

AUBURN VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL

Our meetings are open to all who are interested. See our web site for updates on meeting topics and directions to the meeting location.

October Program: **Rocket - First of the Modern Steam Locomotives and the Beginning of Intercity Railroads – Jim Wood’s Visit to the Locomotion Railroad Museum in Shildon, England.** To follow up on the presentation that Jim gave last year to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the first public railroad in Britain, he will give a slide show of his recent visit to the Locomotion Railroad Museum. This is the satellite museum of the National Railroad Museum of Britain that is the home of the operating replica of Rocket. The presentation will also include images of Flying Scotsman that happened to be visiting the museum at the time of Jim’s visit. These are two of the most important locomotives in the railway world for milestones in railroad technology.

August Program Lives On: The William Wauters collection of railroad postcards and Al Phelps photos continues to provide fodder for this and future newsletter issues. See the photo and story on pages 4-5 that was featured briefly in the August program but presented here in more detail with a newspaper description of a rail accident in Auburn and the events that led up to it. Next month’s newsletter will feature another accident in Auburn and the story behind it.

PSRHS PROGRAM TOPICS NEEDED

PSRHS strives to present interesting topics at our monthly meetings, preferably about our primary area of interest - the Donner Pass Route from Roseville to Truckee. However, we often stray into interesting topics from nearby areas, such as rail journeys taken by PSRHS members to points of railroad history or interest in nearby states, and occasionally to include experi-

ences by our members on overseas explorations. We have featured model railroad layouts as well as speeder runs and rail excursions. We have also featured paper documents such as old maps and articles about major incidents that have occurred in our extended area.

So we ask each of our readers to suggest topics for future presentations. We can help put photo sets together into a cohesive presentation, or you can wing it with a story or two that you care to tell. One of the more interesting programs we presented in the past was giving three retired railroad employees microphones and inviting them to relate their experiences.

Get on board and help your railroad heritage society keep presenting interesting railroading information at our meetings. Also see the next section for other ways you can help.

IF YOU LIKE WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN SEEING - THEN GET INVOLVED

Like many non-profits, PSRHS depends on the work of volunteers to prepare and give historical presentations, scan & upload historic documents to our web site to make them accessible to all, prepare & mail a monthly newsletter, plan & lead field trips, etc., etc., etc.

If you enjoy these programs and find postings on our web site to be informative and interesting, consider contributing some of your time or talents to PSRHS and our mission. Some tasks require only a few hours of your time each month, possibly performed at home.

RR BOOKS FOR SALE AT MEETING

At our October meeting we will offer duplicate copies of railroad books for sale to members and meeting attendees at bargain prices. Example titles include High Road to Promontory; Pacific Slope Railroads; Tragic Train - The City of San Francisco; and The Overland Limited. Bring cash and take home some good reads.





Passing Scene - Private Varnish Northern Sky at Colfax Railroad Days

In the midst of the festivities at this year's Colfax Railroad Days, Amtrak served up private varnish on Saturday's eastbound Train 6. Northern Sky Charter Tours "Northern Sky" was built by ACF in 1955 as Union Pacific 9003. Assigned to "City of Los Angeles." Sold to original Auto-Train in 1973. Rebuilt and redecorated by current owner. Has been in deluxe charter service since 1992 and was redecorated in 2013. Based in Chicago. "The Best of the Best." One master bedroom, three double bedrooms, three showers, kitchen, full meal service, observation lounge with rear-facing windows on lower level, dome-lounge on upper level, stereo, TV/VCR/DVD, surround-sound home theater and Wi-Fi. Push-pull equipped. *Text from www.aaprco.com/northernsky. Photos by Roger Staab*



Reader comments, additional details, questions, etc., are invited on any newsletter items or photos. Please forward comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter to:

editor@psrhs.org

Membership Information

Annual Family Membership = \$30.00/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/>





From the Archives - Wreck at Auburn Depot - Jan. 12, 1907

This postcard image from the William Wauters collection was featured in the PSRHS August program. The wreck occurred on a siding in front of the Auburn depot in January 1907. A handwritten note on the card referred to a switch being left open. Some sleuthing by your editor revealed “The Rest of the Story”, which can be found in the news article at the bottom of this page. The double-headed eastbound passenger train collided head-on with a stopped westbound freight train, with the impact pushing the tender of the westbound train into a wooden boxcar, likely lessening the severity of the incident. A switch left open put the eastbound train, which was not scheduled to stop at Auburn, onto the siding which was occupied by the westbound freight.



Accidents/Other Incidents. *Auburn Journal*, 17 Jan 1907. “**RAILROAD COLLISION Three Engines Smashed up in Auburn Yard.** A terrific collision occurred at the Auburn depot on Saturday afternoon between the eastbound Overland Limited and freight train No. 211 bound west. The freight train, with engine No. 2717, O.C. Shannon engineer and Will Tuttle fireman, had pulled in on the siding alongside of the depot. Brakeman Gary had thrown a switch just south of the depot and had left it open...”

Ed note - Definitely sounds like an accident waiting to happen, and indeed it does. Read the complete newspaper account of the accident on page 5.



Wreck at Auburn Depot - Jan. 12, 1907

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The Overland Limited does not stop at Auburn and came in at a great rate of speed. She had two big engines, No. 2579 in the lead, manned by L.E. Jerdeau engineer and A.I. Priest fireman and No. 2310, in charge of W.A. Shiells, engineer and G.S. Ward, fireman. The engineers had no thought of danger, when suddenly the great machines turned from the main line into the siding. In an instant there was a tremendous crash that aroused the whole neighborhood. The three engines were terribly smashed up, great pieces of iron and timber falling on the depot platform. The engine crews stuck to their posts and escaped most miraculously with only a few bruises, except fireman Priest who sustained a badly sprained knee. The passengers on the Limited were given a lively shaking up, but none were injured. All of the dishes in the dining car were smashed to atoms. It is simply marvelous that no one was killed or seriously injured.

Conductor J.W. Wright was in charge of the Overland Limited and Conductor J.A. Lemay of the freight. Crowds of people soon gathered to view the wreck, and wonder how any one escaped.

The accident happened at 4 p.m. At 5:20 two engines arrived from Rocklin, took all the cars of the Overland and proceeded east, the main line being open. The wrecker came up from Sacramento and cleared the siding. The engines had all remained on their trucks, with the exception of the tank of No. 2717, which was jammed back into the middle of a freight car. All of the cowcatchers and front parts of the engines were crushed.