

# Snowshed

March 2010

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#### News Flash!

- Caboose nears completion
- Donated time and material amazing
- Endowment effort scores early success
- May 8, National Railroad Day, Museum opening announced

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## Why An Endowment? President's Report

"We are too small, why do we need to establish an Endowment?" Reasonable question, simple answer - it not only provides the society with a dependable revenue stream, it also demonstrates to perspective donors and grant providers that we are a serious, for real organization deserving of their support. Our initial goal is \$10,000. Please support this challenge and give what you can, it does matter!

Thank you,  
Ed.

## Caboose Project

Don Davis

It's actually beginning to look like the museum we envisioned!

Most of the cabinetry is installed, Jim Hood's effort to reconstruct a sleeper roomette is on track, the Tourist RR display is complete and awaiting installation of glass in the window and Keith has the Transcontinental display ready for installation. The Hobart Mills display suffered a setback when the mock standard and narrow gauge wheels self destructed on the lathe. An alternative has been developed and this display is back on target. Ron has completed the logging Railroad diorama which awaits installation after the rough work in the caboose is complete.

The bay section of the caboose has been restored to a prototypical design by Andrew Esler and George Zaffle, two local artisans.

Our planned museum opening remains Saturday, May 8, National Train Day. This is an important day for our society and your presence will add to its impact, so please plan on attending if you can. Opening day details will be sent in April.

We have received \$3,500 to date in our drive to establish an endowment with several pledges we hope to receive once the caboose is open. An endowment is important as it provides a continuing stream of income for Society operation and projects. It is the gift that keeps on giving.

Once again I must thank the many member and community volunteers that have put in over 2000 hours of effort to construct and outfit our caboose museum. The generosity of our community never ceases to amaze me!

Now it is on to museum operation, permanent museum strategic planning, equipment restoration and educational outreach to the Truckee community.

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically. You can reach me at [bellbob@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bellbob@sbcglobal.net).

Hope to see you at the opening,

Bob Bell, President



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## Caboose Project continued

Bob Bell and I are nearly finished installing the ADA railing on the entry ramp and deck. The next activity will be having the railing painted and Kelley Brothers Painting has volunteered to help with this task.

Bottom line, we will make our targeted grand opening on National Train Day, May 8!

The most rewarding aspect experienced while working on the caboose, is the anticipation expressed by the public. Several people a day, including many families with children, want to know "when will you be open". Like them, I can't wait!

## Narrow versus Standard Gauge Railroading

Nelson Van Gundy

Actually, everything is related to, begins with and ends with dollars. The original railroad lines in Wales, serving coal and slate mines, were narrow gauge due to less expense in both construction and operation [some being human-and mule-powered]. Being aware of that, General Palmer built the D&RG Ry. in NG because it was so much cheaper, beginning with the much smaller base profile [reducing earth-moving costs] of the sub-grade, right on up through less ballast, smaller rail, ties, and spikes, smaller rolling stock on smaller wheels [he did use full-sized trainmen]. And that RR, like many others, ended up standard-gauging the heavier-trafficked lines, when the NG did so well that it exceeded its capacities, and couldn't handle the volumes of either freight or passengers. Also, converting to SG removed the re-loading problem; no more off-loading the NG freight and passengers onto SG equipment. Before these conversions, the need for such transfers created large facilities, such as the Rio Grande's at Alamosa, CO; Carlin, NV, where the Eureka and Palisade Ry. transferred to the SP [and vice-versa, with loads/passengers inbound]; Mt. Union, PA, where the East Broad Top RR not only transferred loads, but lifted entire cars and placed them on the other gauged trucks.

Regionally, many Sierra Nevada logging lines were NG for hauling logs from the woods to the mill, and then the mill

was served by SG to haul the finished lumber to the rest of the world. Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Co. at Hobart Mills is a local example of this, with hundreds of miles of NG leading into the mill at Hobart Mills, and the SG Hobart Southern carrying lumber into Truckee to connect with the SP. West Side Lumber Co. in Tuolumne County is one of the most famous logs in on NG, and lumber out on the Sierra RR SG. The Diamond and Caldor brought logs into the Diamond Springs mill on NG, and the SP hauled the lumber out. A few miles up the road, the Michigan-California Company did the same. In Butte county, Diamond Match had both meter-gauge and SG lines, trans-loading where necessary.

Locally, our own LTR&T co was built in NG; when leased to SP in '25, the SP Standard-Gauged it before opening the '26 season on May 1. The SP thus eliminated the trans-loading problem [getting the passengers off the SG and onto the NG in Truckee]; the SG cars ran right on through to Tahoe City [this probably cost the Truckee bars some in income]. This kept the line going into 1943, when competition from automobiles eliminated the need for the line and scrap rail was a premium for the war effort.



Three rail track. Outer rails are Standard while right two are Narrow Gauge.



Narrow gauge Shay engines similar to those used at Hobart Mills

## Strategic Plan for Truckee Donner Railroad Society

### Keith Pattison

#### *What is a strategic plan?*

A strategic plan is a chronological listing of activities and resources required to make major change and/or improvement to an organization, and all the analysis and rationale for doing so. The process starts with a wide variety of inputs of fairly “soft” objectives and data that are analyzed and refined down to the critical activities and investments required to obtain the desired results.

#### *Why now and how long has the team been working on this?*

In early 2008, the Society acquired four pieces of rolling stock from the California State Railroad Museum. That equipment provided the spark that was needed to start working on the TDRS Mission of creating a railroad museum in downtown Truckee. The strategic planning committee was established to provide the planning necessary to achieve that goal.

Since May of 2008, a group of eight board members and other involved society members have been engaged in a strategic planning process for the Truckee Donner Railroad Society. The group meets for two hours every two or so months to review work that has gone on, and decide what needs to happen next. Outside of the meetings, team members meet with key partners, develop pieces of the plan, or work on projects.

#### *What parts of the plan have been developed?*

- Mission, Vision and Scope defined and pending board approval.
- Key strategies have been defined.
- Roadmap of activities to achieve the plan has been developed.
- Key projects defined and executed.

Go to the TDRS website at <http://www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com/about/about.htm> to see more detail.

## Rotary & Pullman Restoration

### Ron Mason & Jim Hood

Now that the work on the caboose is winding down, it is time to re-focus our efforts on stabilizing and restoring our existing equipment. One of our first priorities will be the Rotary. Ron’s plan for 2010 includes cleaning the interior of years of accumulated “stuff” ensuring that anything of importance is preserved. Once cleaned, we can better assess follow on activities such as removal of the metal plates and replacement of the windows.

These activities will require both manpower and capital. If you can help with either, please let Ron, Bob or Steve know.

The Pullman Car is in reasonable condition on the inside, although a complete renovation is in planning. The roof and sides of the car however are in urgent need of painting to prevent further deterioration. The picture below right

shows the roof. While it is currently water tight, most of the paint is gone and there is substantial rust. The objective will be to restore it to its original color and ensure it remains water tight.

The sides of the car, while not in as bad a condition as the roof, have numerous areas of rust that need repair. Resources remaining after the roof has been painted, will be used in restoring the sides and ends of the car. We have made an agreement in principle with a professional body restorer to work with volunteers to accomplish the required tasks. The front end of the car needs major metal restoration work that will not be addressed this year.

Bob Bell and Jim Hood requested and were awarded \$4,250 in grant money from the National Railroad Society. For work on the sleeper. These funds must be matched by TDRS but will be a substantial help in our restoration efforts.

If you are available to help with this project, please contact Jim Hood at [jim.hood7914@att.net](mailto:jim.hood7914@att.net)



## Society Mission:

### Board of Directors:

Bob Bell—President  
Jim Hood—Vice President  
Don Davis—Secretary  
Nelson Van Gundy—  
Treasurer and Historian  
Sandy Coots  
Steve Disbrow  
Dean Dvoracek  
Rick McConn  
Frank Ross  
Dale Fowler

To discover, preserve, and showcase the history of railroading in the Truckee area to include the transcontinental, logging, tourist and narrow gauge lines and the community facilities supporting those activities. This will be accomplished through the acquisition, preservation, education, community outreach, and display of equipment, memorabilia, and documents relevant to the area railroading in a permanent facility located within the Town of Truckee.

Truckee Donner Railroad Society  
P.O. Box 3838  
Truckee, Ca 96160

[www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com](http://www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com)  
501(c) 3 non-profit organization

## Truckee Railroad museum Vision:

*Keeping Truckee railroads alive!*

Railroads of the Truckee area played a significant role in founding and developing the town of Truckee. From blasting black powder in the granite over Donner Lake, to hissing of the first steam coming to town, to lumberjack whistles in the mountains, to ice cracking as it loads in reefers, and tourists flocking to share the beauty of the area, The Truckee Railroad Museum tells the story.

- ◆ A place to Learn
- ◆ A place to Interact
- ◆ A place to Enjoy

## Current Projects Seeking Support

- ◆ Caboose Museum Interior
- ◆ Crane Rehabilitation
- ◆ Rotary Restoration
- ◆ Sleeper Restoration
- ◆ Switcher Operational repair
- ◆ Internet Book Sales

If you are able to support any of these projects with your time, talent or dollars, please contact us.

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