

Truckee Donner Railroad Society—Newsletter

Keeping Truckee Railroads Alive!

June, 2011

Volume 4 Number 2

Snowshed



News Flash!

- Sierra hit with major winter snowfall
- Endowment exceeds initial goal
- Truckee and the Civil War

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Vice Presidents Report

Bob Bell

The news continues positive as the Truckee Railroad Museum impresses locals and visitors with our presentation of local railroad history (coupled with our location adjacent to the original route of the Transcontinental Railroad) and our aggressive strategic planning leading us toward the future museum. We had a big winter snow but it has not slowed us down. Members continue to be busy on all kinds of work projects and future activity planning. Please come and join the fun.

Our endowment fund at the Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation is now over \$12,500. The dollars this fund generates will forever produce income for our Society's operations and projects. We recently received contributions from several members, so please keep **YOUR** Truckee Donner Railroad Society in mind for tax deductible contributions and estate planned giving. Thank you John Cray, Steve Disbrow and Eddie Hunt for your recent contributions to the Society.

Now for a little Truckee and the American Civil War history:

What does the

American Civil War

Have to do with

Truckee

Beginning April 2011 thru April 2015 we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the four years of the American Civil War. In the years before the start of this great conflict, debates raged in Congress as to where the Transcontinental Railroad should be built as it was clear that wherever the railroad expanded, statehood and prosperity were sure to follow. The Southern States pressed for a southerly route to assist in the expansion of their plantation way of life. The Northern States wanted the Railroad to run on a northerly route to increase industrial

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Civil war Continued:

production and trade with future northern states. Once the war began, the Confederacy did not have the financial ability to pursue their plans, while the north did. Thus, after the Civil War began the United States Congress, absent Southern States representation, passed the necessary legislation and in July 1862 President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the first (of four) Pacific Railway Acts authorizing the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad with the western terminus to be Sacramento, California. Accordingly, the stage was set for the Transcontinental Railroad to be routed over Donner Summit in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, resulting in the founding of the Town of Truckee.

We Need Your Help!

Spring has finally come to Truckee, the snow has melted, the tourists are beginning to arrive and the first Truckee Thursday event is behind us.

The "Caboose" has been an outstanding success in its first year hosting over 6000 visitors and attracting the attention of numerous newspaper, magazine and television articles. To keep this momentum building and to bring the future museum to reality, WE NEED YOUR HELP! We have outgrown what the few active members can do.

Following in this issue of Snowshed you will find a "Help Wanted" section listing some specific tasks that need doing and there are many more. Our problem is that no one has stepped forward to analyze the problems, define the tasks, recruit and organize the volunteers, then follow through to make sure things happen. While we appreciate your financial support through memberships and contributions, what we also need is a bit of your time and talent.

Help Wanted

Repair the deck

Several deck boards have warped and deck screws have broken over the winter season. This creates a minor trip hazard and interferes with the operation of the entrance door. We need a volunteer to carefully examine the deck and replace the broken screws and the boards that do not pull down. (Estimated time required: 2 afternoons)

Paint the Deck

After the winter's storms, and the repairs mentioned above, the museum's deck and entry ramp need a fresh coat of paint. In addition, the railing has a few spots of rust showing through. We need a volunteer to power wash the wood and wire brush the rust spots then roll/brush on some paint. We can supply the paint and power wash equipment but need a volunteer to apply. (Estimated time required: 3 afternoons)

Touch up the Caboose

This winter, a snowplow scraped the side of the caboose below the bay window. No structural damage occurred but the scrapes need to be scraped, sanded or wire brushed, then primed and repainted. Also there are a few spots around the entrance needing touchup. We have the paint but not the volunteer. (Estimated time: 2 hours)

Graphics Design

The museum has several new displays planned and underway. We need a creative, computer literate, graphics designer to join the display design team to create labels that effectively interpret display stories. Schedules are flexible; most of the work can be accomplished working alone and via e-mail with occasional eye-to-eye meetings. Prior knowledge of display content is not required. Should have Adobe Illustrator or similar application program. Need is ongoing.

Property Control

The museum has a growing collection of donated material. We need someone to document, inventory, and catalog the collection so that we know what we have, where it is and that it is being properly cared for. Some knowledge of railroad history is helpful but not required. Access to a digital camera and familiarity with database systems will be useful. Schedule is flexible and ongoing.

Museum Docent

If you like talking to people, this is for you. Greet museum visitors and answer their questions about the museum and its exhibits. Training is provided so prior knowledge of Truckee railroad history is not required. The museum is open weekends and major holidays with two three-hour shifts a day. We ask docents to work at least one shift per month, more if desired. Our on-line based signup system makes it easy to find a shift that suits your personal schedule. Best of all, we have parking arrangements.

If you can help with any of these tasks, please contact Don Davis at ddavis@litol.com

Lecture Notice

Don Davis

TDRS has been lucky enough to schedule a noted rail historian and author, Henry Bender, for a talk in July. Henry is the author of *The Uintah Railway*, several *SP Trainline* articles and soon to be released *Southern Pacific Standard-Design Depots*. He has graciously agreed to discuss *Truckee's SP Depots - and More*, the evening of July 23rd at 7:00 PM. in the Truckee Donner PUD Boardroom 11570 Donner Pass Road.

Henry's talk will contain a brief history of the Transcontinental Railroad through Truckee, the history of the depots, and a discussion of several of the industries that developed as the result of the railroad coming to Truckee. There will be time for questions afterwards. It should be an entertaining evening for both Rail and History fans

Your Input Please

We are always looking for input for Snowshed articles. If you have ideas, photographs or articles you would like to see included in the newsletter, please send your thoughts to Steve Disbrow at sjdisbrow@yahoo.com

Society Mission:

To preserve, interpret, and educate the public about railroading life and history in the Truckee region including its contribution to Truckee and the Nation. Specifically, depict railroad involvement in local industry through the acquisition, preservation, and restoration of relevant equipment, documents, and artifacts all to be part of a permanent museum facility in downtown Truckee.

Board of Directors:

Jim Hood—President

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Jerry Blackwill

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Don Davis

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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 the blasting of black powder in the granite over Donner Lake, to the hissing of the first steam coming in to town, to whistles of lumberjacks in the mountains, to the crack of ice being loaded in the reefers, and tourists flocking to share the beauty of the area, the Truckee Railroad Museum tells the story.

- ◆ A place to Discover
- ◆ A place to Enjoy
- ◆ A place to Interact

Truckee Donner Railroad Society
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www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com
501(c) 3 non-profit organization

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.