

# Snowshed

June 2015

Volume 8 Number 2

ANNUAL SOCIETY MEETING TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 30TH.

See President's Letter for further details



- ◆ Caboose Museum marks fifth anniversary
- ◆ TDRS to Partner with Historical Society to build Truckee History Museum
- ◆ Union Pacific goes high tech.

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## Caboose Museum Status

**Don Davis**

This quarter marks the fifth anniversary of the Caboose museum. Our museum effort got started when Teichert Construction offered us a caboose previously used as an office. It was decided to place it downtown to serve as an "interim" museum. Our goal was to gain experience in museum operations and to building public support for the idea of a permanent railroad museum.

We opened on May 8, 2010, with great fanfare; Serendipitously, Amtrak arrived just prior to our ceremony.

Over 26,000 visitors from around the world have visited the museum. Donations of more than \$15,000 have offset the operational expenses and financed some upgrades. The museum is much the same since opening, but we have added an interactive component to the logging display, a few small exhibits, and an introductory video.

Our highly visible location is important. The vast majority of our visitors see the caboose as they tour the town. Our largest demographic is families with children. Second are tourists on vacation or just in town for the afternoon to escape the heat in the valley. A third group is the "Rail Fans", folks looking to add to their often extensive knowledge of railroad history, practice and technology. Real stuff is important to this group and we often learn as much from them as they do from us.

All want to leave having learned something new. Displays must engage them intellectually, photos and models are generally less impactful than real items.

Attracting volunteers to act as docents remains our largest problem. Perhaps you can help with that. To be a successful docent one just needs to enjoy talking with visitors. Several of our docents have had no railroad or history knowledge when they first signed on. If interested in learning more and perhaps giving it a shot, please contact me at [ddavis@itol.com](mailto:ddavis@itol.com).

## TRUCKEE TRESTLE TOURS

The TRUCKEE DONNER RAILROAD SOCIETY

July 26 and/or September 26th

Come celebrate Truckee's logging history with a tour of the area's logging railroads. We'll travel north on highway 89, swing off the highway and see what's left of the Hobart Mill's locomotive shop, long abandoned logging car bodies, old trestles, and the traces of roadbeds of the Hobart Southern, the Hobart Estates, Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company, the Boca and Loyaltan Ry. (later the Clover Valley Lumber Co.), and the Verdi Lumber Co railroads.



We recommend hiking gear; good boots or hiking shoes are a must. This is a backwoods adventure, so come dressed comfortably. We will hike a couple of miles [broken into smaller segments], and the trip will cover 40-50 miles of paved highway, USFS system roads, some rather doubtful 4 wheel-drive trails, and several old railroad roadbed. It will be hot, dusty, and perhaps showery. Please bring whatever food and drink you'd like to have for a long afternoon.

Cameras are recommended. Meet at 9:30 AM at the Truckee RR Museum next to the Truckee Depot

Also, mark your calendars for the Incline Village Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber and the Carson Tahoe Lumber and Flume Railroad remains on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy these tours on the east side of Lake Tahoe. More details to follow.

### President's Letter

#### Jim Hood

We have some very exciting news regarding a permanent History Museum in Truckee. The Truckee Donner Historical Society and the Truckee Donner Railroad Society have agreed to work together to develop a Truckee Donner History Museum facility to preserve the rich history of the area. A joint working group has been formed to define the scope of the Museum and investigate possible locations. The McGlashan Family (presently represented by Bill McGlashan Sr.) is very supportive of the effort since the Donner Memorial State Park closed its museum and replaced it with a visitor center focused primarily on transportation.

We have continued to meet with Rick Holliday regarding the build out of the Railyard project

in Downtown Truckee. We are in discussion regarding a specific location within the Railyard where we could locate a new museum.

The Annual Meeting of the Truckee Donner Railroad Society will be held on August 30 at the home of Jim and Carey Hood. Anyone who would like to attend should contact Jim Hood by email at [jim.hood7914@att.net](mailto:jim.hood7914@att.net) or call at 530-550-1233. Details regarding agenda and directions will be provided to all who have responded. Please provide your name and the name of any guest(s) that you would like to bring with you. We will send out an evite as the date gets closer, but we do not have everyone's email address.

We want to thank Brewster West Foundation for their extremely generous contribution to the Truckee Donner Railroad Society that we received in June 2015. The funding that they provide allows us to continue to expand our presence in Truckee and plan for a permanent Museum to showcase our rich Railroad History. We greatly appreciate Barbara and Eric Johnson and their Brewster West Foundation for their continued support.

## The Union Pacific is Going Hi-Tech

### **Jerry Blackwill**

The UP is not your father's railroad anymore. Hi-tech devices like smart train inspectors, robotic un-couplers, ultrasonic wheel inspectors, motes, positive train control and the ancillary card cage were described by Dan Rubin, UP's General Director, System Engineering at a recent Truckee Silicon Mountain talk.

Smart train inspectors focus computerized line and area scan cameras on each of the train's cars to check improperly set brakes, open valves, and dragging equipment. They also ultrasonically check for failing wheels. This electronic inspection occurs 20 miles from the yard as the train moves past, and then the maintenance crew can go to the right car when it arrives at the yard.

Also, robotic equipment is being tested for the Baily rail yard hump to automatically uncouple cars just before they start rolling downhill.

Further, individual cars may be able to display their condition through motes. These are networks of wireless sensors that can feed data to the engineer, train dispatchers, and maintenance crews.

Finally, the ancillary card cage incorporates most of an existing onboard locomotive's electronics into a single box. It contains locomotive health indicators, Positive Train Control and GPS units, WIFI, Cell coverage and remote troubleshooting modules. UP developed it and it is being adopted as a nationwide standard.

Truckee Donner Railroad Society arranged the talk and was one of the sponsors.

**Society Mission:**

To preserve, interpret, and educate the public about rail-roading 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

Bob Bell—Executive Vice President/Treasurer

Don Davis—Vice President, Museum Operations

Jerry Blackwill—Vice President, Strategic Planning

Ed Czerwinski—Secretary

Nelson Van Gundy — Historian

Barbara Czerwinski

Steve Disbrow

Chip Huck

Bonnie Thompson (on leave)

**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 into 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 Interact
- ◆ A place to Enjoy

Truckee Donner Railroad Society  
P.O. Box 3838  
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www.truckeedonerrailroadsociety.com  
501(c) 3 non-profit organization

**Current Projects Seeking Support**

- ◆ Caboose Museum Interior
- ◆ Crane Rehabilitation
- ◆ Rotary Restoration
- ◆ Sleeper Restoration
- ◆ 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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