

In The Trench

For Railfans, Model Railroaders, (Video) Camera Nuts and Historians

Mailing list: info@renorailfans.com

October-November 2007

The Newsletter of Reno Railfans

Colfax Railroad Days Starts Out on a Familiar Track: Camp 20 to 2010

I know our group is called Reno Railfans, but I have to tell you about the recent Railroad Day in Colfax, CA. On September 29, 2007 Colfax revived Railroad Day as part of the annual Founders Day celebration. It was a great start on the road to 2010, when Colfax will celebrate its Centennial. The last Colfax Railroad Day was in 1997.

Locals turned out in droves to see members of the Colfax Chamber of Commerce in a vendor's

fair. The Northwestern Pacific caboose was open, as was the Colfax Heritage Museum at the Amtrak station. Witnesses shared stories about the Great Colfax Bank Robbery from the 1970's. During the filming of a movie, bank robbers hit the local bank. When they made their escape, the townspeople assumed it was part of the movie.

Colfax was once known as Camp 20, a railroad camp during the construction of the Transconti-

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Huffman Railroad Lecture Well Attended

On September 25, 2007, Wendell Huffman gave a talk to a packed room on the UNR Campus. He spoke for nearly 90 minutes with an easy style, fielding questions along the way. Wendell Huffman is Curator of

“Once the railroad crews got past Cisco Grove, they named the difficult granite area 'New Hampshire Rocks' after similar rocks in New England,” said Huffman

History and Collections Manager at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City. Don't miss the live steam action October 21 & 28, November 23 & 24, and December

15 & 16. The schedule is subject to change, call ahead at 775 687-6953.

Mella Harmon Gives October Lecture: Reno and the Railroad, at UNR Oct 26

Harmon & the Railroad

Mella Harmon is the next speaker at the Nevada Historical Society Museum at the UNR campus. She is now the Curator of the museum and used to work at the State Historical Preservation Office in Carson City. Mella is also an External Member of the City of Reno Historic Resource Commission.

While the overall title of the lecture is “Reno and the Railroad,” Ms. Harmon has decided on a great subject, “Land Development, Architecture and the Railroad in the 19th Century.” She will talk about Reno's transition from a sleepy pioneer town to a thriving city.

RENO HISTORY: see page 2

See the UNR History Museum Display Through December; V&T Seeks Bids

*If you haven't done so yet, be sure to visit the temporary exhibit **The Central Pacific Railroad and the Comstock** in the Changing Gallery at the Nevada Historical Society at UNR, through Dec. 14.*

A local treasure, the Historical Society museum is across North Virginia Street from the Little Waldorf.

You can see my favorite photo from the gallery showing the famous day when the Central Pacific Railroad laid ten miles of track on April 28th, 1869. The

exhibit is loaded with great photos like this, plus a CPRR wheelset and more.



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Colfax Restarts Railroad Days Ten Years Later

COLFAX: Continued from page 1

mental Railroad over the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The 2007 Founders Day included a plaque dedication for the Mendenhall Family, one of Colfax's founding families.

There were old-fashioned cookie recipes, sack races, quilting, Chinese camp, and of course, the usual Amtrak and

Union Pacific trains running through downtown Colfax.

Nancy Hagman, museum volunteer and one of the event organizers said, "We're already gearing up for next year and hope to have even more railroad folks. Everyone is excited to see another successful Railroad Day in 2008!" Ya'll come down.

RENO HISTORY from page 1



Old photo from state archives with NCO-RY sign and tracks

Reno's NCO Depot

My favorite Reno Railroad artifact is the Nevada-California-Oregon Railway Depot at 325 E. 4th Street, a state and federal historic landmark by San Francisco architect Delongchamps, who also designed the Reno Post Office.

Near the Depot, east on 4th street, is an even older attraction – the NCO locomotive shop from 1873. It represents the NCO (and later Western Pacific's) presence in Reno since the 1800's.

The building is undergoing interior renovations by owner Kevin Verlander. The rumors are that a brewpub is going in, or that a new owner is being sought for the historic landmark.

The NCO Depot is not currently on the Reno Redevelopment radar screen, but it may come up for review during an upcoming look at the Re-Trac redevelopment corridor. The City of Reno says the Depot is in the Re-Trac plan area.

The NCO Depot is easy to spot – it's the historic building with the construction fence around it. The Union Pacific spur line to Reno Junction runs east of the depot, while the original passenger line stopped on the west side. The Depot was once part of an informal plan by Reno transportation officials. According to a letter on file in the state offices, an informal request was made to move the NCO building and make it part of the downtown transit terminal across from the bowling stadium.

This plan fizzled -- the Depot stands in its original location. Look around the site for old tracks and the original traces on the locomotive shop.

The last use for the NCO Depot was as a home to Sierra Wine and Liquor. Reno Rails looked at relocating there, but it didn't happen.

Reno Railfans tried to get a look inside before interior demolition; the owner never returned our calls.



NCO Locomotive Shop and Crew

Question: Why is Yerington called Yerington? Answer: Next Issue

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Reno Rail Exhibit ends in December; V&T Seeks Bids for Project

EXHIBIT: Continued from page 1

Bidding Opens for Second Phase

From a 9/11/07 article in the Nevada Appeal, the V&T Commission will soon open bids for construction of a 4.5 mile section of track between American Flat and Mound House.

No action was taken on the contentious issue of who will run the railroad from Carson City to Virginia City.

The contract was originally to be given to the current operator of the tourist steam train from Virginia City to Gold Hill, the V&T Railroad Company. At some point the Commission stated the project was too big for the company and gave the contract to CA-based Sierra Railroad Company of Oakdale. The V&T Co. is not happy with this development.

CALENDAR OCT-NOV, 2007...

Ongoing Railroad Exhibits:

Sparks Heritage Museum

7pm Carson City State RR Museum Weds. Eve. Lecture Series

10/10 Northern Nevada Railroads Then and Now by Chris McMahon

11/14 Keeping Them Apart: The Evolution of RR Signaling by Peter Barton

7pm 10/26 – Nevada Historical Society at UNR Lecture Series

Land Development, Architecture and the Railroad in the 19th Century by M. Harmon

Ends 12/14: Central Pacific RR and the Comstock Exhibit at the

UNR / Nevada Historical Society