

# The Donner Summit

# Heirloom

History and stories of the Donner Summit Historical Society

July, 2018 issue #119



## ACROSS THE SIERRA NEVADAS, THE FIRST RAILWAY PASSENGER TRAIN FROM SACRAMENTO OVER THE MOUNTAINS

Shoveling a Pathway Through Monster Snow.  
Drifts in Midsummer – Description of the  
Scenery Along the Route – Incidents  
Of the Trip – Accomplishment of the Grandest  
Engineering Feat Ever Attempted  
By Man – Etc., etc.

[FROM THE SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT TO THE ALTA.]

150 years ago the first passenger train crossed the Sierra signaling the conquering of the Sierra on " the grandest highway yet created for the march of commerce and civilization around the globe." The author of the article headlined above describes the trip over the Sierra to Reno. 19<sup>th</sup> Century writing was sometimes wordy by modern standards where we have much more competition for our time, so this has been edited for modern sensibilities by the Heirloom prose truncating staff.

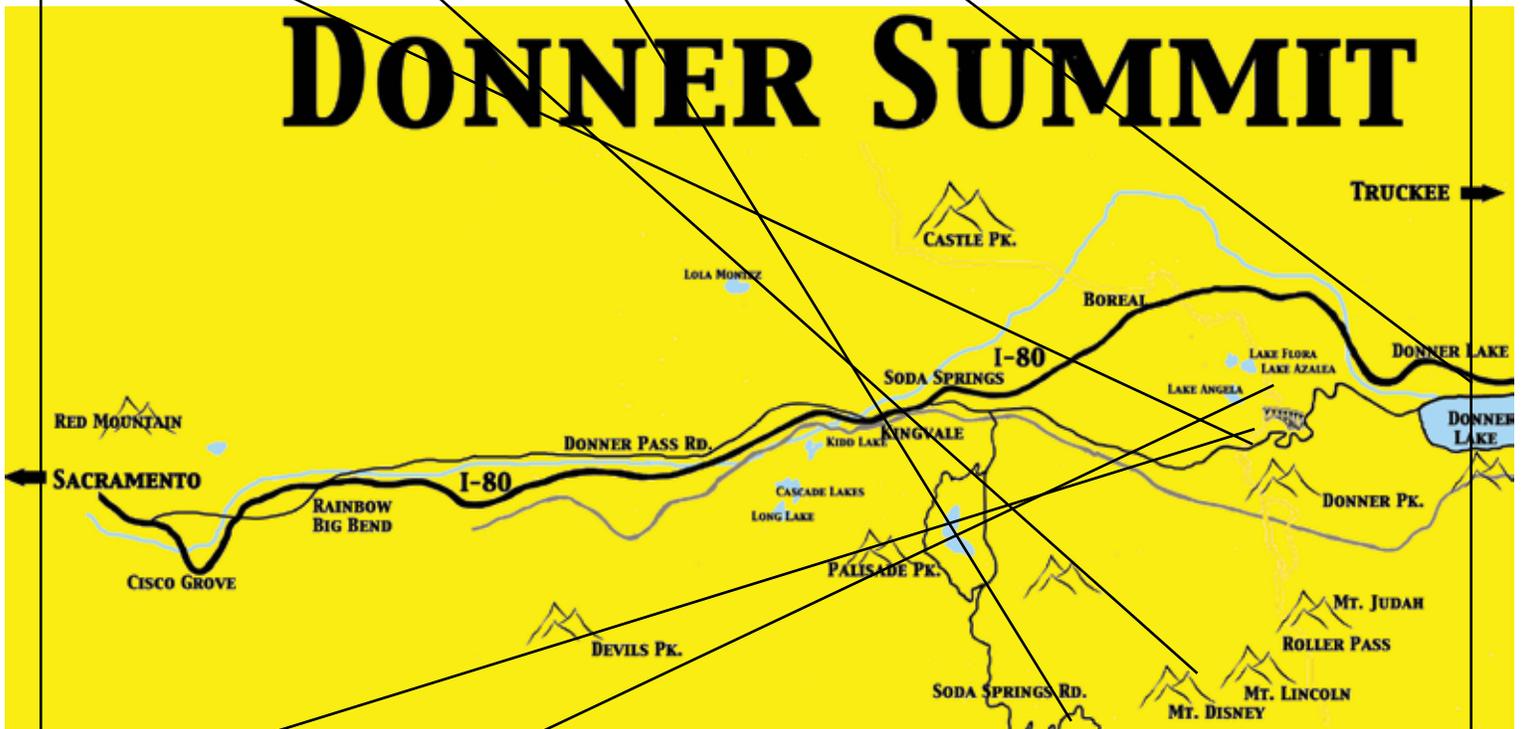
The author of the article wanted to be among the first to cross the Sierra by train so he took the steamer, Yosemite, from San Francisco on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1868 "bound for silver land" [which would be the route to Virginia City]. Mark Twain didn't say the coldest winter he ever spent was a summer in San Francisco but you know the idea. The writer here said it was not until they'd gotten some distance from San Francisco that "passengers began to come out from behind the shelter of the cabin" and the "sharp and chill" summer winds and temperature had moderated somewhat. Arriving in Sacramento long after midnight the passengers had some hours to walk around Sacramento pending their departure on "the cars" [railroad] at 6:30 AM.

As the train approached the foothills "the mighty Sierra looms up, like a gigantic cloud-bank, against the eastern horizon. The mountains, for a long way upward from their base, are enveloped in a dim, blue haze, which contracts beautifully with the snow-fields on their summits, flashing against the blue sky and lighted up by the glory of the summer morning sun. One distant peak sparkles like an iceberg, with all the hues of the opal; another is tinged with delicate pink like the inner surface of a sea-shell; and a third is of a pure brilliant white, like frosted silver."

Before Rocklyn [sic] the train passed a few herds of horses "and now and then the residence of some small ranchman or herder..."

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Unless otherwise noted, the photographs and other historical ephemera in The Heirloom's pages come from the Norm Saylor collection at the Donner Summit Historical Society

The country is poor, uncultivated, and for the most part unfenced and uninhabited." "Rocklyn" stone quarries were the source for "an unlimited supply of building material for Sacramento and San Francisco.

As the train approached Newcastle and Auburn "the engine blows and wheezes with short, sharp aspirations" and passengers could feel, as they were pushed back into their seats "that we are ascending a steep and increasing grade." Three and a half hours after leaving Sacramento they'd passed a number of "more or less important" mining and trading posts as well as "a pretty little village and somewhat active place," Auburn.

Not long after Colfax the train came upon Cape Horn. Passengers were nervous looking with "evident trepidation down into the depths below."

"Up, up, and onwards, ever climbing steadily skywards." "The atmosphere is gloriously exhilarating and our spirits rise as our corporeal substance rises heavenwards." They passed Alta. Roofs on houses began to have peaks to shed the snow. The mountains were covered by "Magnificent pines."

"The stream, far down at the bottom of a deeper cañon, is now a saffron colored thread, and we cling to the side of the mountains as a swallow clings to a cliff." Passengers start to see the snow and "sharp-roofed sheds of heavy timbers," the snowsheds protecting the tracks.

"Still up, up;" the "noble pines" were replaced by smaller trees. "Grey granite rocks" grew thicker. Mountain peaks began to show "bald heads." "We are in the heart of the Sierra - a barren, dreary, desolate country." The train arrived at Cisco, "a town of shanties."

By 6,000 feet in elevation the "pines have almost entirely disappeared." The train passed long cuts blasted through solid granite, continual snow fields and "immense drifts, through which the road has been cut with shovels for the passing of the trains." A few hours before they'd been among flowers and ripe fruits, singing birds and they were sweating under the summer sun. "Now we are in the midst of dazzling snow fields." Streams come off of every precipice "and dash in foamy torrents down every cañon... Chinamen are swarming all along the road." By the time they reached Summit Valley "the snow banks rise high above the road on either side" and then they reached the "great tunnel, 1659 feet in length."

"We have scaled the great Sierra at last, and ne plus ultra might be written on the granite walls of the great tunnel before us." The ice and snow, and rocks, and white, fleecy, curling clouds are all here." "The snow lies piled in immense banks above the tunnel, and rises in sold banks, with sheer precipitous sides, on either side of the tracks. A swarm of Chinamen are busy at the other end of the tunnel shoveling away the snow, which has come down in great slides, bringing with it huge granite

rocks upon the track. The water pours down in torrents from numberless crevices and seams in the granite walls..." The track was blocked and the passengers "struggle[d] through on foot" to anxiously inquire about getting through. Clearing the track took a few hours. Then the locomotive whistle blew and "all aboard" was shouted. The "first passenger train across the mountains" moved slowly on. The snow banks were so close that the eaves of the car roofs "raked them on either side." As they passed through the following tunnels "we see great masses of solid blue ice, hanging down from the walls like stalactites and stalagmites..."

The conductor exclaimed, "...we are over the mountains!" and the author responds, "It is true, indeed... Words fail us to describe our sensations..."

Then it was down the other side to Truckee. The train moved faster. The steam was shut off and the brakes put on "and as the eagle sets his wings and floats noiselessly down... we slide swiftly and smoothly down... Donner Lake, as lovely a sheet of water as is to be found on earth, lies far below us... its bosom unruffled by a breath of breeze, and as blue and calm as the heavens above it." They descended rapidly "on one of the most beautifully smooth and solid roads on the continent, into the romantic valley of The Truckee." "the timber here is immense." The train passed sawmills "by the dozen, driving by the rushing river." Laborers swarmed the hillsides harvesting the trees for the railroad.

As the first passenger train swept past "John [generic name for Chinese workers], comprehending fully the importance of the event, loses his natural appearance of stolidity and indifference, and welcomes with the swinging of his broad-brimmed hat and loud uncouth shouts..."

Nature had placed the Sierra as a great barrier dividing the country but "John with his patient toil, directed by American energy and backed by American capital, has broken it down at last, and opened over it the grandest highway yet created for the march of commerce and civilization around the globe." The train arrived in Truckee. Until that day the trip over the summit had to be made by stagecoach. The author looked at the stage horses and thought they looked joyously at the "swift-speeding train; their weary toil through mountain-snows and mud" being over.

Not long after the "joyous shriek of the locomotive" announced their arrival in Reno, a town of stores, hotels, saloons, gambling houses, and stables, which has sprung up like magic within a month. The whole population, men, women and children, rush out to meet and welcome us. Thus ends the story of the trip of the first passenger train over the Sierra Nevada."

Daily Alta California

June 20, 1868

# Party Sees Wonders of Lake Tahoe

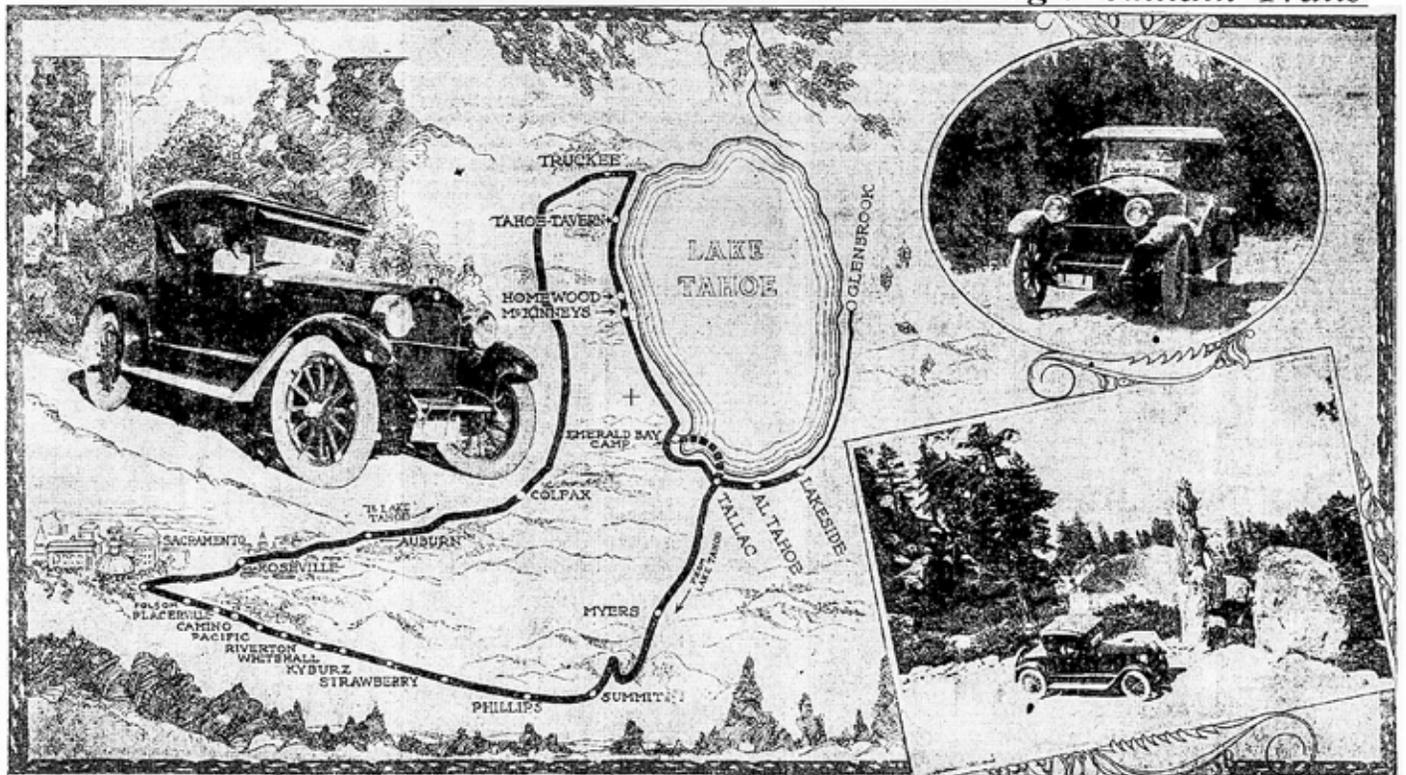
Once automobiles arrived popularity was assured. People could travel when and where they wanted. They were not hampered by stage or train routes or schedules. To meet the interest newspapers carried articles about automobiles, endurance contests, races, and destinations. Here is one from the Sacramento Union on July 23, 1922 highlighting a trip to Tahoe over Donner Summit in a Mitchell Roadster (see the graphic at the page bottom).

Trips to Tahoe were not taken lightly in the old days (before automobiles). "It was a long, tiresome journey, an uncomfortable one in stuffy railroad car, over heat radiating rails and through smoke laden snowsheds, a journey that was only repaid by at least a fortnight's stay." The automobile changed all that. It opened new territory and even if "he" is trapped by work until Saturday noon "he" can still enjoy a weekend in the high Sierras.

The loop trip to Tahoe and back was 195 miles. The travelers stopped in Colfax and then at "look out Point [Emigrant Gap - today the spot is on the north side of the freeway] [where] the hands of both God and man have combined to work wonders [that would be seeing Spaulding Dam]."

On Donner Summit, "Donner Lake burst forth into view unexpectedly at a return of the road, its silver sheet against a background of trees purpled in the setting sun..." Perhaps the view in the photograph on the next page is what the travelers saw. They stayed in Truckee for the night and the next day discovered that the bridge out of town was out. A line of automobiles was waiting for each automobile to be pulled across the river by a team of horses. They followed the river to Tahoe City and the Tahoe Tavern. There they saw the steamer that plied the waters from resort to resort. There was a new rustic dance pavilion at Homewood. They arrived at McKinney's (today's Chambers) in time for lunch "after driving through vistas of murmuring pines and soft green brakes." At McKinney's there was lots for diversion besides the lake. Next it was on to Al-Tahoe (at So. Lake Tahoe) where the hotel "is most inviting and the place boasts one of the real bathing beaches of the lake." They also visited Bijou and Tallac before heading home where they arrived after midnight "on the end of a trip that had been replete with thrills and almost bewildering in the wonder of its scenery."

## *New Mitchell Roadster Carries Autoists Over Enchanting Mountain Trails*





## Ski Jumping in July? At Sugar Bowl?

### SKI SET FOR HOLIDAY

AUBURN, June 28. – Sigurd Vettestad, for three years champion of California ski jumpers, announced today the complete program arranged for the Auburn Ski Club midsummer champion ski tournament to be held July 4. It will be as complete in all respects as a midwinter event and staged on snow ten feet deep, he said.

The Fourth of July ski tournament will be held in the easily accessible "Sugarbowl" at Summit, in Donner pass, on the Auburn Lake Tahoe highway where the deep snow of the Sugarbowl offers a spectacular setting for the first California midsummer ski event.

Three classes of ski jumpers will ride the ski jump from the slide under the bluffs of the Sugarbowl for the competition in classes A, B and C. Among the riders entered in the Class A ski jumping are famous jumpers from the east and California including Roy Mikkelsen (right), whose great jump of 226 feet at Lake Placid was the longest of any member of the American Olympic team; Rolf Wigard, a star rider of the Middle West; Sig Vettestad, for three years the state champion of California; Orrin Ellinson, Hans Haldesen and other California experts.

The meet will include jumping in class A, B and Junior, Slalom and downhill races, a cross country race and women's cross country race. Judge of the ski tourney will be Wendell Robie of Auburn, vice-president of the National Ski Association of America; Olav Blodjer, Sacramento, and J. G. Hansen, Los Angeles.

### IN SKI MEET



Oakland Tribune June 28, 1932

# Looking for somewhere to go in July?

## THE SUMMIT SODA SPRINGS

### LIFE AT THE HIGHEST OF ALL RESORTS

A veritable Summer Paradise in the Very Heart of the Sierra Nevada

A correspondent of the "Record Union," writing from the Summit Soda Springs says: "This delightful resort, in the very heart of the Sierra Nevada, is again the scene of a large gathering of health and pleasure seekers from the cities and valleys who have come here to escape the heat of summer, drink the health-giving mineral waters, and by rational recreation counteract the effect of a long season of close application to business or the demands of society.

"The weather here is simply perfect, and the guests are enjoying life as it can only be enjoyed in the delightful retreat like Summit Soda Springs, at an elevation of many thousands feet above the valley.

"In no former year have the arrangements for the accommodation and comfort of guests been better than they are this season, and somehow the people that come to this Alpine paradise seem to get along better with one another than is usually the case at summer resorts. A sort of fellow-feeling seems to animate all the guests. Every one enjoys himself individually, and all enjoy themselves together.

"The fishing is excellent, and many well filled creels are brought in daily by devotees of the rod. Every day parties are formed to go fishing down the picturesque stream that dashes and splashes past the hotel and through the pine-covered mountains to the gorge, some miles below, where the biggest and sauciest of the trout are found. Other parties go mountain climbing, and old bald-headed 'Tinker's Knob' is frequently visited.

"These daily outings, with lunches in the woods, and never a care about business or other sordid considerations, are better than 'poppy or mandragora or all the drowsy syrups of this world' to bring health and buoyancy of spirit to those whose energies have become impaired in the long chase after the nimble and elusive dollar. There is none of 'that tired feeling' here."

"then there are all sorts of outdoor pastimes for those who are not able to climb mountains or go a-fishing, so that never a day nor an hour drags. Many of the guests drive back and forth between the springs and the Summit Hotel [which sat almost at the top of Donner Pass, across the road from today's Donner Ski Ranch - see the [Heirlooms](#) of July, '13, February, '11, April, '11, and May, '11], twelve miles distant and others still engage saddle horses and explore the regions for miles about."

*Sacramento Union* July 16, 1898



## SUMMIT SODA SPRINGS

### MOTEL,

Situated on the American River, in the High Sierras.

THIRTEEN MILES FROM SUMMIT station, C. P. R. R.

Numerous improvements have been made this year.

### LARGE LOG CABIN

Set apart for Dancing Hall and Social Purposes.

This unrivaled Summer Resort is now open to guests.

GOULDEN & JACOBS Proprietors, Donner P. O.

Summit Soda Springs was a resort that grew up near the Mark Hopkins estate on the No. Fork of the American River about eight miles down Soda Springs Rd. from the current Soda Springs.

Having found the article above we thought some illustration would be in order so we delved into the DSHS archives for an old ad for the Summit Soda Springs Hotel (ca. 1880) and a picture from 1874 of the hotel and guests ready for an outing. One day we will do the history of the original Soda Springs but apparently not yet.

These two short articles from the [San Francisco Call](#) actually tell us a lot about Donner Summit and the old days – 1911. Automobiles were new and the public was hungry for stories of “automobilists” adventures. Snow was a problem in 1911 even in July. The roads were not very good and despite that adventurers were out to pit themselves and their machines against the Sierra. Perhaps too, this shows they could not believe there would still be snow blocking the way in July. Finally, the high Sierra valleys were summer destinations for cattle and sheep just like they were for tourists. Here cattle have ruined the road, or actually the “hard snow” which had been drivable until the cattle’s arrival.

Perhaps the first article led to the second.

## Highway Can Be Traversed by Any Machine

[Special Dispatch to the Call]

SACRAMENTO, June 30. – The road from Sacramento to Lake Tahoe is now open to automobiles. A message today from Manager Gowling of the Summit hotel [sic] says that road over the summit is now clear and that the highway can be traversed by any kind of a machine. Several automobiles have crossed the Sierras [sic], but all had to travel in snow.

[San Francisco Call](#) July 1, 1911

## Five Automobiles are Stuck in Summit Snow

### Road Across Mountains Cut Up by Cattle.

[Special Dispatch to the Call]

TRUCKEE, July 3.--- Five automobiles from Sacramento and valley towns were stuck in snow and mud between the summit and the incline this side most of Sunday and today. The road from the valley to the lake is in good condition except for a stretch this side of the summit and this was in fair condition, being covered with hard snow until Sunday. A drove of cattle crossed the summit Sunday, cutting up the road and making it almost impassable. State Engineer Ellery has a gang of men at work repairing the bad stretches.

[San Francisco Call](#) July 4, 1911

**BEARS AND SNAKES.** – Soda Springs, near Summit Valley, is a delightful place in which to rusticate, but the country round-about there is not wholly free from dangerous “varmints” and serpents. Charles M. Chapman, of White Rock, Mr. Comstock of Yolo, and Thomas Harper, of this city, came down yesterday from the Springs, and Chapman reports the loss of one of his horses, the result of a too sudden appearance of a member of the Bruin family. He states that recently a horse was bitten by a rattlesnake and died in the neighborhood of the principal trout stream. Two or three days ago Chapman and his friends rode his three horses down into the gorge and picketed one of them closely by the dead animal referred to. It appears that there is an unusual number of bears thereabouts this year, and while the men were fishing one of these chaps came down out of the brush to feast upon the carrion. Chapman’s horse took one look at the bear and then started at full speed. The rope was strong, however, and the horse was thrown against a tree and had his back broken. Chapman went to his ranch last night for another horse, which he will ride back to Soda Springs, and says he shall not leave there until he bags some of those bears.

[Sacramento Record Union](#) July 30, 1885

## Oakland-Reno Airway

The Donner Summit radio range on the Oakland-Reno airway will be located 8000 feet high atop [sic] the Sierra “hump.” Airway engineers for the department of commerce have selected a site for the mountain range near the airways weather reporting station at the Summit. This range will guide flyers over the Sierra on the western division of the transcontinental airway.”

[Oakland Tribune](#) June 12, 1930

(See the "Odds & Ends" page at the end of this issue for a picture of the weather station and contemporary views.)

## A Snowshed Solution

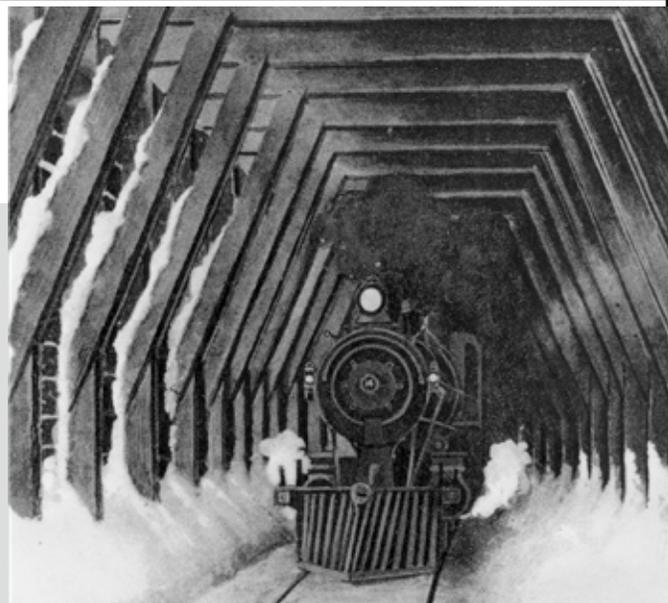
Editor The Chronicle - Sir: I have an ambition to appear in the "valve, and here is my suggestion to the Southern Pacific R. R."

For many years the snowsheds have been a drawback and an abomination - "Fire in Snowsheds Makes Trains Late," "Wreck in Snowsheds Stops Traffic for Hours." They ruin eyesight and make breathing a "choky" process. Now, Mr. Sproul, I'll give you this suggestion: Take away all your forty-two miles of snowsheds and hang a metal awning over the tracks. At intervals of a few miles

should be steam plants and, just under the awning, place a coil of pipes. When the snow comes, turn on the steam and, presto! - just water running off the awning. No sore eyes, no stifling smoke. Cost? Oh, yes, but no more than the wrecks and lost travel the past forty years. I think this a wonderful scheme. Please pass it along to the president of the Southern Pacific.

F. L. C.

Tahoe, July 12, 1920.



San Francisco Chronicle July 14, 1920

[Unfortunately the author did not include any illustrations of his suggestion but the Norm Saylor Collection at the DSHS provides an illustration. Traveling in smoky dark snowsheds was not comfortable especially since some of the best scenery in the world was just on the other side of the snowshed walls. - ed]

## From Crofutt's New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide, 1879

"We are on the dividing ridges which separate the head-waters of several mountain rivers, which, by different and tortuous courses, find at last the same common receptacle for their snow-fed waters -the Sacramento River. Close to our right, far down in that fir-clad gorge, the waters of the South Yuba leap and dance along, amid dense and gloomy forests, and over almost countless rapids, cascades and waterfalls. This stream heads against and far up the Summit, one branch crossing the road at the next station, Cascade. After passing Cisco, the head waters of Bear River can be seen lying between the Divide and the Yuba, which winds away beyond, out of sight, behind another mountain ridge. Farther on still, and we find the American River on our left. These streams reach the same ending as the Sacramento River but are far apart, here they mingle with that stream. There is no grander scenery in the Sierras, of towering mountains, deep gorges, lofty precipices, sparkling waterfalls and crystal lakes, than abound within an easy distance of this place. The tourist can find scenes of the deepest interest and grandest beauty; the scholar and philosopher, objects of rare value for scientific investigation; the hunter and the angler can find an almost unlimited field for his amusement; the former in the gorges of the mountains, where the timid deer and fierce grizzly bear make their homes; the latter among the mountain lakes and streams, where the speckled trout leaps in its joyous freedom, while around all, is the music of snow fed mountain torrent and mountain breeze, and over all is the clear blue sky of a sunny clime, tempered and softened by the shadows of the everlasting hills."

# From the DSHS Archives

Last month, to go with Pioneer Monument's Centennial at the Donner State Park we covered the monument. For that story we were searching through Norm Saylor's collection of monument pictures and came across the one on the next page. There was a story to tell too. It is the story of Mrs. Graves' money. Mrs. Graves had been a member of the Donner Party camped at Donner Lake. In March, 1847 she was rescued. Before leaving the lake she opened the secret compartment of the family wagon and retrieved the money hidden there. She carried it along Donner Lake but when some of the rescuers talked about playing euchre to see who got her money, Mrs. Graves decided something else had to be done. After the rest of the group left the next morning, Mrs. Graves went off and buried the money. She died at what became called "Starved Camp" somewhere on Donner Summit a few days later. The money remained in its hiding place until 1891. There were 116 silver coins worth between \$300.00 to \$500.00 at the time. There continue to be conflicting stories about what happened to the money. The article below tells the story.

## **THE DONNER TREASURE** **Claim Made That the Money** **Has Been Found**

### **A MINER ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERS THE HIDING PLACE**

**The Spot in Plain Sight of the Wagon Road on the Margin of Donner Lake – The Coins Found are Dated Prior to 1845, and Comprise the Markings of America, France, Spain, Bolivia, and Argentine Republic – Truckee Excited Over the Discovery**

#### **Special to the Record-Union**

Truckee is feverish with excitement over the discovery of a portion of the treasure buried by the Donner party in 1846—47. There is not a doubt about the authenticity of the find or the identity of the money.

Mrs. Graves was rescued from Donner Lake by the second relief party. She had taken with her a large amount of money in coins that had been hidden in the Graves' wagon. The Sacramento Union said, "The sum is variously stated at from \$300 to \$500 [\$15,691 today]

The rescued and rescuers camped at the west end of Donner Lake where Mrs. Graves heard some of the rescuers talking about playing euchre to see who would get Mrs. Graves' money. Taking no chances, Mrs. Graves was late catching up to the group the next morning (March 3, 1847) because she was burying her money behind a large rock on the north side of the lake. Mrs. Graves died three days later somewhere over Donner Summit and the money was lost.

Stewart McKay hired a stable hand, Amos Lane, to take him to Donner Lake (May 15, 1891) and he brought along his friend Edward Reynolds. McKay went fishing but Reynolds, who was a miner, went up the hill looking for quartz. Lying in plain sight on the ground, Reynolds saw some old coins. Picking one up and scratching away the dirt he discovered the coins were silver. He covered up his find. He could not wait for night, though, and returned later with Lane in the afternoon with a pick, shovel, and two barley sacks. They found silver coins scattered around but also "the main deposit" which was a hatful of coins. The two then took McKay and C.F. McGlashan into their confidence. Returning to the sight they found more money. A fallen tree's roots had apparently pulled up the earth and scattered the coins. A tent and fence were erected and a guard posted to protect the treasure that might remain.

Sacramento Union May 16, 1891  
Daily Alta California May 16, 1891

# From the DSHS Archives



Left: presumably this is a re-enactment of finding Mrs. Graves' money at Donner Lake. This postcard is in the Norm Saylor collection.

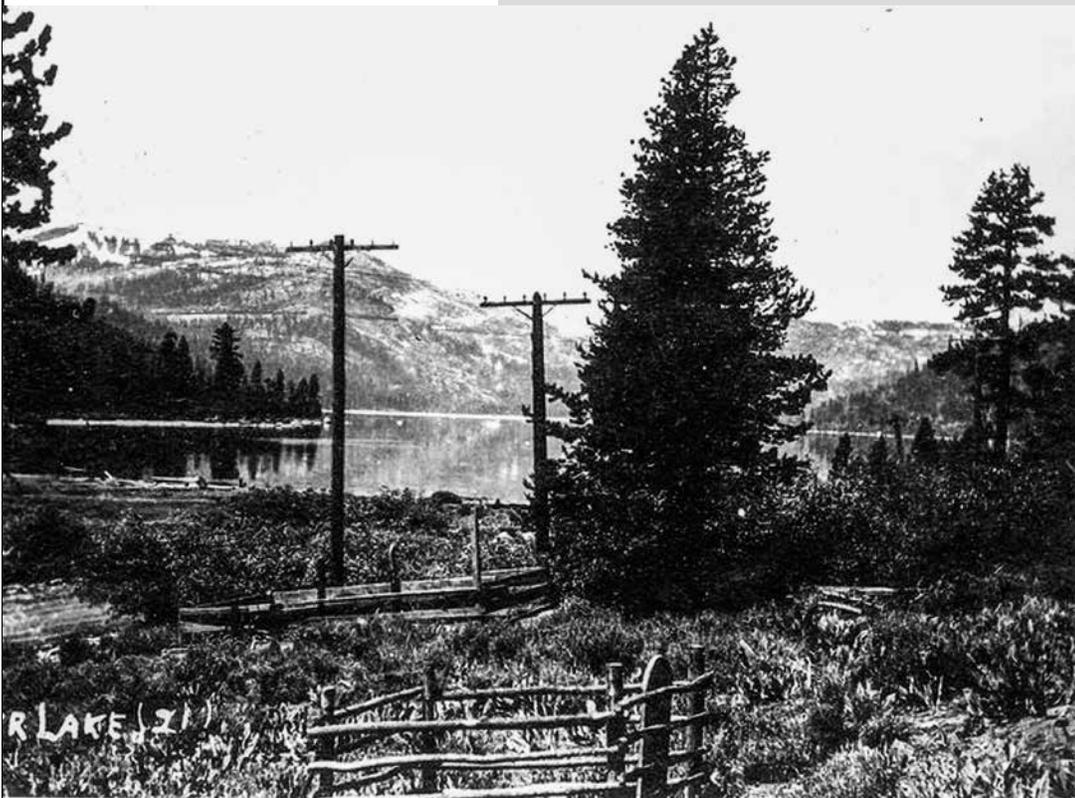
## DONNER TREASURE

Claim Made That the Money Has Been Found

### A MINER ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERS THE HIDING PLACE

The Spot in Plain Sight of the Wagon Road Close to Margin of Donner Lake-The Coins Found are of Date Prior to 1845, and comprise the Marking of America, France, Spain, Bolivia and the Argentine Republic-Truckee Excited Over the Discovery

Sacramento Union  
May 16, 1891



Here is an interesting old postcard in the Norm Saylor Collection at the Donner Summit Historical Society. The lake is Donner Lake looking west to Donner Pk. The telephone poles sit along the Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Rd., The Lincoln Highway. The fenced area in the foreground is an old grave. To whom does the grave belong? What was its age? Where is it now - covered by some building?

# Book Review

Here is a story of some fellows traveling around the world in 1899, and over Donner Summit, by bicycle. This story is a teaser for an article coming in a couple of months about the "Greatest Thing of Its Kind Every Undertaken," the Hearst newspapers' transcontinental bicycle relay of 1896. Here's a quote: "Nowhere on the continent is there a wilder bit of road than the three-mile descent from Summit to Donner Lake." You can hardly wait no doubt.

## **Round the World on a Wheel** 1899

John Foster Fraser 532 pages

There are a number of books about people riding their bicycles long distances in the 19th Century. There are a couple about riding around the world. Bicycling was terribly popular in those days and the public was apparently hungry for the stories so they could vicariously live the experiences. Then along came automobiles and that was the end of the bicycle mania and bicycle books.

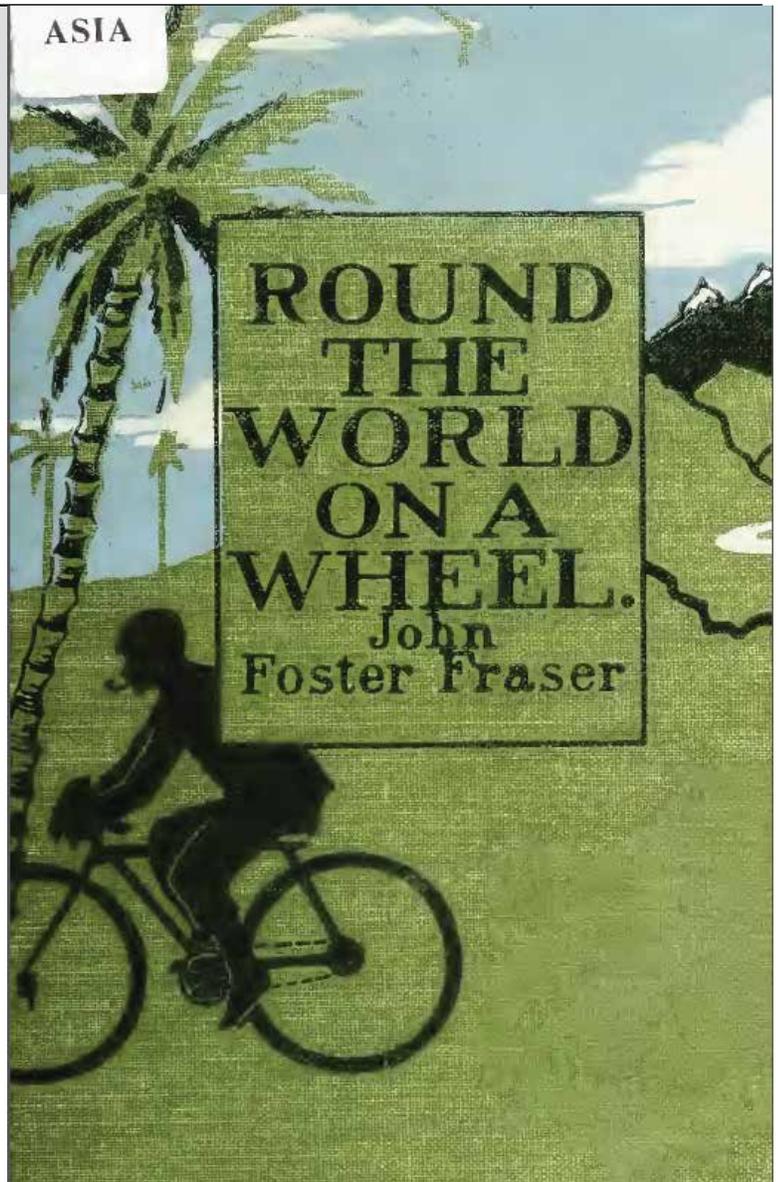
The 19th Century was a different time from today. There was not much competition for people's attention and so prose could be quite lengthy and descriptive. The prose is quite lengthy in this book and so it's a good example. Round the World on a Wheel reports on almost every town and group the riders met and meeting all those people and visiting all those towns can get tedious, even if it's all vicarious. Read just the parts of the world you are interested in but when you do, enjoy the humor and the cultures described. John Foster Fraser, who was a journalist, had a "funny bone" and a clever wit. Sometimes his prose evokes Mark Twain.

In his preface Mr. Fraser says he and his friends embarked on their "round the world" journey because they "are more or less conceited, and like to be talked about, and see our names in the newspapers." They took it easy taking two years to travel the world and were a great disappointment to their friends when they returned. They were not haggard. They had not been scalped, been tortured or had their "eyes gouged." They'd not been rescued at any time and had not "killed a man." "It was evident we were not real travelers."

Still, they were proud having "accomplished the longest bicycle ride every attempted... 19,237 miles..." "Our adventures... were of a humdrum sort. If only one of us had been killed, or if we had ridden back to London each minus a limb, some excitement would have been caused. As it was we came home quietly." That's a bit tongue in cheek since Fraser also described being stoned by Mohammedans, pelted by Chinese, sleeping in wet clothes, going hungry, only having eggs to eat (30 in one day – "a man begins to be epicure enough to desire a change"), forced to be teetotalers, coming down with small-pox and fever, having less than a dozen fights with Chinese mobs, not shaving for five months, and "only occasionally" washing.

The three riders went through Belgium (they met the king), France Germany, Hungary, Russia, Iran (they met the Shah), India, Burma, China, Japan, and finally the United States.

They started their trip in 1896 on black "roadsters" that all loaded weighed about 75 lbs. They carried leather bags "stuffed with repairing materials." They had luggage carriers on the backs which carried bags of underclothing. They wore woolen garb and



each wore “big, bell-shaped helmets.”

They left England and headed across Europe. Fraser’s wit and descriptions make the trip interesting to follow as they ran into excited towns that had heard of their approach. They got flowers and autograph requests in one town and in “Buda-Pesth” the locals decorated the bikes “so that we looked quite festive.”

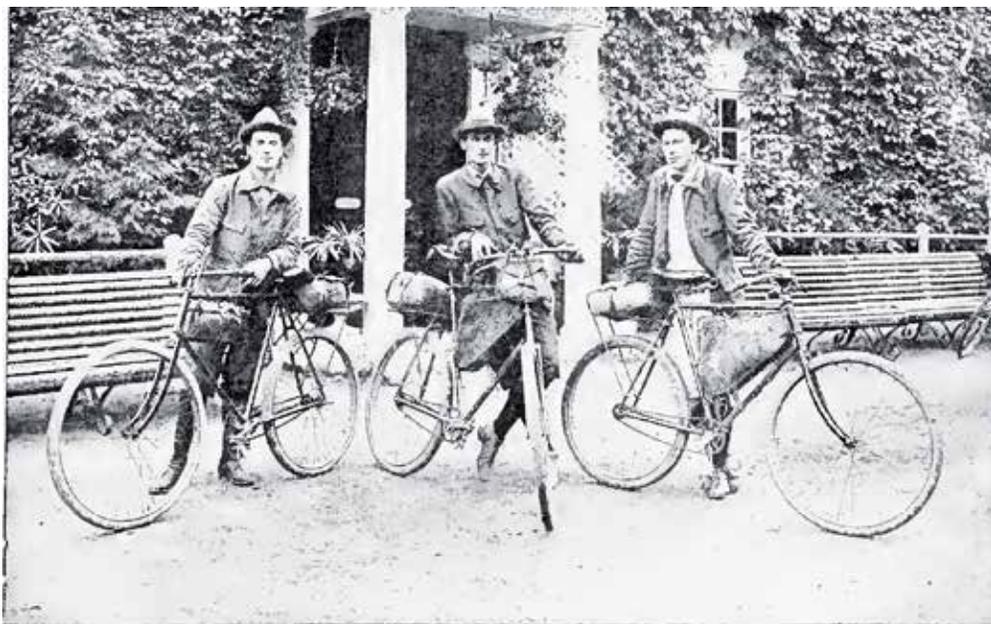
In other places where bicycles were not common the riders were taken for imps from the “nether regions” before the locals went shrieking off. There were strange customs rules at some borders, bureaucracy to be dealt with, and they had to walk through Cologne because their machines did not have numbers. The descriptions of the towns and citizens are interesting before the numbers encouraged skimming. Today the world is fairly homogenized. There are McDonalds all over the world. In 1896 many parts of the world were isolated and there were great differences not just from country to country but from town to town. In one town the bicyclists wanted to experience Hungarian music but the band insisted on playing first, English tunes and then, “Yankee Doodle Dandy” for their guests. When finally the switch was made to Hungarian music, “...at last we got the real article, how wild and how torrent-like it was! It was like Wagner in delirium tremens.” The descriptions of towns are just as evocative.

Language could be a problem such as when they were greeted in Hungary by expectant citizens and then treated to long speeches and dinner. In turn the Hungarians heard Fraser say he and his friends were deeply touched, would never forget their hospitality, etc. The Englishmen and the Hungarians had no idea what the other was saying. These kinds of humorous vignettes make interesting reading as do humorous observations: the man who laid out the roads around Yalta must have been paid by the mile because they were so windy.

Some of the countryside and towns were charming and quaint. Others not so good: “We had to stay in inns dirty and dingy, the food unpalatable, and the sleeping accommodations vile. Ignorant of the language we ate anything brought to us. The land was inhabited by peasants who live in wretched hovels...”

It was hard work bicycling around the world: scorching heat, deep sand, spiked seeds that flattened tires, bad roads, misunderstandings, inhospitable locals, hunger, torrential rain, sometimes not changing clothes for days, carrying their bicycles for miles, mud (“We gathered dirt as quickly as a rolling snowball gathers snow”), extortion of high prices, sand storms, having money that was worthless because it could not be changed, interactions with Cossacks, a wild Persian wedding, being stoned in Kum (Iran), meeting bears, visiting cultural treasures like the Taj Mahal (“Nothing in this world is so beautiful”), earthquake, and various kinds of welcomes (“flurried scurrying of hobbling women, screaming of affrighted youngsters, and bawling of men wedged in a crowd against the walls,” As well as being pelted by eggs and rotten fruit at one town in China)

They also took a lot of photographs on the trip and they are interesting. The one below shows the three friends.



From photograph by

LUNN.

LOWE.

FRASER.

Fraser and Young

The Author and his companions on the afternoon they returned to London after an absence of 774 days.

Round the World on a Wheel has lots of interesting vignettes. Along with the vignettes Fraser has some interesting observations.

In Russia

Everybody reviles everybody else until the vilification of female ancestors begins ; then sticks fly and the meeting is adjourned.

In Russia

Britishers, to put it plainly, must be a dirty set, else why should they desire to wash all over at least once a day? A Russian never needs more than a little can of water poured about his hands, and the brush of a damp towel across his features.

In Persia

We got on our bicycles and tore ahead till promiscuous snow-drifts provided diversion by upsetting us. But we did not appreciate the fun.

In Agra, India

One day we got mixed up with a wedding procession, of decorated camels and caparisoned steeds, and folk in circus-ring finery, and thirty men thrashing and thumping their tom-toms unmercifully. We were in the thick of it, and seemed to be regarded as part of the show.

In Persia

The Shah came along on horseback, and a bevy of ministers followed on foot. We all salaamed to the very ground. What other could we do when there was riding past "The King of Kings, the Shadow of God, the Centre of the Universe, the Sublime Sovereign whose Standard is the Sun, whose Splendour is that of the Firmament, the Monarch of Armies numerous as the Stars"? How we managed to breathe in the presence of such accumulated omnipotence will remain a wonder to my dying day.

In India

The palaces of the Moguls in the fort showed that these gentlemen took life with artistic voluptuousness. To write glowingly of the marvels savours of exaggeration to the easy chair Briton, and yet the difficulty is not to restrain admiration but to induce one's pen to be sufficiently prolific in dazzling, jewelled words. Now that I am home, and returned to civilization and starched shirts, I sometimes ask myself whether we really did see the glories of the Moguls, whether they were not the outcome of dreamy fancy, good dinners, and green chartreuse? The scene sails by like a surpassingly elegant picture, and a rhapsody dances in the mind.

# ROUND THE WORLD ON A WHEEL

BEING THE NARRATIVE OF A  
BICYCLE RIDE OF NINETEEN  
THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND  
THIRTY-SEVEN MILES THROUGH  
SEVENTEEN COUNTRIES AND  
ACROSS THREE CONTINENTS BY  
JOHN FOSTER FRASER  
S. EDWARD LUNN, AND  
F. H. LOWE

WRITTEN BY  
JOHN FOSTER FRASER

WITH ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS

FIFTH EDITION

METHUEN & CO.  
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.  
LONDON  
&

In Russia

We did not find this region attractive. Squalidness, dejection, and hopelessness were everywhere. The houses were dirty hovels, thatched with black twigs, and in front was generally a sickening pool of slime in which grunting hogs wallowed. The people were sullen, as though they knew their lot was misery and semi-starvation, and recognized the futility of attempting to put things straight.

In Crimea

But there was beauty too: "and far down in the hollow shone the waters of an arm of the sea—a sylvan, romantic vale, where one might be on one's back and doze the lazy day through; the very spot for idleness and holidaying. Yes, it was very beautiful, and the birds carolled sweetly. We were on the field of Balaclava, cycling over the ground where charged the Light Brigade!"

At the "Roumanian" border

Then a horde of brigand-looking ruffians, unkempt, unshaven, their clothes in tatters, their sandal-shoes exposing their toes, their astrakhan hats greasy, rushed forward and stopped the way. Affecting ignorance, we wanted to ride on but on second thoughts agreed that a bullet in the small of the back might prove uncomfortable. We hesitated. A pompous official, aroused from sleep, gazed with great deliberation at our passports, though he could not read one word of them. Then he said we must pay duty. It was no good our fuming at such a monstrous proposition.

We lost patience.

It was no good talking to us about Job ; Job never attempted to cycle across Nebraska mud. We did, and we made progress. We slithered and pushed our way through the mire whenever there was an hour or two of fine weather.

Humor in Persia

The shah had returned from a tour into Western Civilization and brought a mandate that all post-houses had to be furnished with alarm clocks and tooth-brushes. Fraser noted that in a post-house "The tooth-brush, however, did not appear to have been much used."

Classic Mark Twain - like observation:

Poor Red Man ! There are no happy hunting grounds left to him. He is being civilized off the face of the earth. The Pilgrim Fathers have much to answer for. I have read that when they landed in America they fell upon their knees; then they fell upon the aborigines.

---

## Crossing the Sierra

It is unfortunate that some people who crossed Donner Summit did not particularly notice the fact in their writings. For example, Hattie Boyer McIlrath was 22 when she and her husband, H. Darwin McIlrath ([Around the World on Wheels](#), 1898) rode partly around the world and went over Donner Summit in 1895. Hattie noted that they left Truckee and rode 160 miles to Sacramento, "We left Truckee July 23 in the morning, making the 160 miles to Sacramento [sic] shortly after dusk." It's really inexcusable not to mention Donner Summit even though the McIlraths were going pretty fast and diligently.

Mr. Fraser and his friends in [Round the World on a Wheel](#), however, did pay attention to their crossing of the Sierra a couple of years later.

They'd arrived in San Francisco from Asia. Mr. Fraser thought San Francisco a "disappointing town, and the killing of Bret Harte is necessary to soothe my feelings." Knowing that 5% of the "folks died from heaven-provided causes, and the others died from differences of opinion" he cleaned and loaded his six-shooter and practiced on beer bottles. A fellow ship passenger had told him, "I've seen a man shot stark dead every morning before breakfast for a fortnight in 'Frisco, and two on Sunday. Never put your hand under your coat-tail when talking to a man. The other may be quicker'n you." Fraser went on for a paragraph describing what he "knew" of 'Frisco (see the sidebar on the next page).

It turned out that San Francisco was "much too respectable."

There were frock-coats and silk hats not red shirts. There were manners, no one broke the necks off bottles before swigging at the bar. No one was killed. No one was lynched. Fraser had "learned" about 'Frisco from Bret Hart's stories. Bret Harte needed killing for deception.

They left San Francisco for Sacramento accompanied by "boys" (slang for wheelmen which is slang for bicycle riders) and then met more wheelmen in Sacramento. The road got too bad and hilly so they "took to the railway" (meaning they rode along the tracks). Their travel in Western America was the "durnedest, blamedest, cussedest... bit of riding in the world, the worst in the world." Fraser was trying out American language.

They met "lanky-cheeked goat-bearded farmers, gangs of Chinese coolies, and tramps. Their ride over the Sierra was tough and hard. One day they "wheeled fifty miles... and rose 4000 feet."

"High we got among the pines, jolting and bumping over those railway sleepers. We climbed from the warm, sensuous valleys into the hills where snow lay. Where the precipices were ledges we wheeled through small snow sheds. So we reached the heights where the snow was one, two, and three feet deep.

"We entered the shed that climbed to the summit of the Sierra Nevada and ran down the other side, a shed forty miles long. It was some time before our eyes were accustomed to the gloom. There was a cold, vault-like air. The shed closed over darkly. Little streams of snow had forced a way through the chinks and lay blackened with

engine smoke. The drift on the roofs was thawing, and there was constant dripping. Often the shed top leaned against the rock face. When a stone was dislodged and clattered down, the noise that echoed through the wooden cavern was like an impatient horse prancing in the stall. Water from melted snow had streamed down the rocks and frozen. For miles while on one side were the boards of the shed and the slushy, grimy snow, and above the teeming water, making the track a mass of slush, on the other side was a wall of knobby, rotten ice.

It was dark. Sometimes the silence was awful. The stillness was accentuated by the dribble from the icicles.

Suddenly there would be a roar. Off our machines we jumped, splashed into the foul snow, and crushed ourselves against the massive chunks of ice, squeezing into the smallest limits to escape the coming train. However, it was only the wild roar of a mountain torrent.

In time we differentiated between a torrent and a train. When a train did come there was an exciting twenty seconds. There was only a single line. The sheds are narrow. A passenger could easily touch the walls from one of the cars.

Therefore conceive one's predicament. Imprisoned in a narrow, dark tube, plodding on diligently, riding fifty yards, walking ten, wet and dirty, there booms on the ear a thunderous uproar, like the rending of hills. The roar comes like an avalanche. You feel the earth is shaking. Round a curve surges the train. You notice the surge in those five seconds. The engine isn't running as a respectable engine should do. It is jumping and swaying, hanging over on one side, then on the other, and then springing forward, with the great lamp glaring frightfully, and the cow-catcher coming straight at you.

What a mighty, air-tearing, earth-crashing din! There is a sensation of pieces of sharp stick probing into your ears. A kind of kinoscope panorama of all your wrong-doings sweeps through your mind, and you wish you had been a better man. Then with a lurch backwards you make a dent in the ice, and, being an arrant coward, you close your eyes as the proper way to meet your fate. There is a hot rush of air, oily and sickly; you know you are being choked, that an earthquake is on, that the end of your small strut on this earth's stage is near.

Gingerly you raise your eyelids. The air is full of sulphur and small stones. The cars are tearing and rumbling by with deafening din. You realize how perilously near they are. Also you notice that the rail metals sink beneath the weight of every wheel. You are certain that it takes three-quarters of an hour for that train to roll past. You wonder why you have not been killed.

Then through the murky, smoky atmosphere you crawl, splash through the dirt, and ride gently till a big sleeper pitches you into the mire, and so on hour by hour.

Now and then we climbed outside the sheds. The great silent hills lay wrapped in snow and sunshine. The only vegetation was the sullen pine. The stillness was absolute. The great white silent world was very beautiful.

That first afternoon in the sheds we raised our altitude thousands of feet, and we stopped for the night at a town called Cisco. It consists of a station, a telegraph office, and one house. We were over 6000 feet up. The snowfall in Cisco in the winter months varies from fourteen to nineteen feet.

Early in the morning we went back- to the shelter of the snowsheds. Between the metals was ice, and riding was done cautiously. It was cold. Right on the top of the Sierra Nevada is a station appropriately called Summit. Here the snow was three feet. Men were wrapped in furs and going about on snow-shoes.

We went on, but slowly. The caked ice was treacherous, and there were one or two nasty spills. From the roof the water spurted in torrents, drenching us.

Worst of all was nearly three miles of tunnel. As a matter of fact, there were seven tunnels in this short distance, and they nearly all curved. We went through them in pitch darkness. The horrors of the snowsheds were increased a hundredfold. Before entering we waited a second, listening for a coming train. As there was no sound, in we went. The understanding was that if a train came along we were to throw ourselves on one side and lie down. Of course we walked. It was impossible to see. We knew where

### **What Fraser thought he knew about San Francisco**

I knew before—from Bret Harte—that one's life wasn't worth twopence in San Francisco; I knew that the men always wore buckskin trousers and top boots, and their shirts were glaringly red, that on their heads were slouch hats, and that a long-nosed revolver always rested above the right hip; I knew that the cowboys rode on horseback into the saloons, pointed their pistols over the bar, reckoned they 'd have a bottle of that, and then knocked off the neck with a bullet ; I knew that it was a favourite amusement among Californians to make strangers dance by firing at their feet. In a word, I knew all about the place, what a dare-devil corner of the earth it was. Being of that temperament myself, I was glad, and I practised with a revolver.

we were by progressing with one foot on the metals. No trains, however, worried us.

Reaching the sheds again, we could tell by the way our bicycles ran that we were spinning downhill. Soon we left the ice. The air became warm. Then out into the open we bumped, the beautiful open air with the country around still cloaked in snow, but the railway track clear and dry. And we had finished our forty miles' ride through the snowsheds. It was something.

All the rest of the day we rode over the railway track winding among the mountains and by the side of the noisy Truckee river. It was a gaunt land. Night saw us in a tiny French colony called Verdi. The little inn was French, even to having no spoons to the salt-cellars ; and the emigrant sons of Normandy and Brittany were sitting round little tables playing dominoes and drinking absinthe.

A rough and dusty wagon road, running through a country that appeared to grow nothing but sagebrush, led us early the next day to Reno. It was just what a far western Nevada town should be. It was a jumble of wooden shanties in all stages of prosperity and decay planted on an immensity of sand. There was a general appearance of makeshift about the buildings; they were just boards knocked together anyhow. What streets there were, were wide and fearfully dusty. The sun beat down with a white heat, and all the world around was parched. There wasn't a linen collar in the town.

Everybody wore flannel shirts, not red, but dark blue or black. The slouch hat was universal, not dented a la Hamburg, but high-crowned and perched far back on the head. The young men swaggered about and blasphemed and chewed tobacco and salivated ; the old men, droop-shouldered and bearded, ambled about on sorry little horses, looking as though the sun had baked all the life out of them.

## **Bicycling around the world in case you want to go**

John Foster Fraser

Here is the sort of paraphernalia I carried : In the frame bag was a package containing blocks of writing paper upon which adventures were to be recorded ; there were three stiff notebooks, pens, pencils, and ink; there was a medicine chest, charged chiefly with quinine and chlorodyne ; there was a little parcel of repairing material, a pouch of tobacco and a pipe (essentials), handkerchiefs, sun spectacles, comb, soap-box, tooth-brush, a reticule filled with buttons, needles and thread, darning needles, two balls of wool, and a spare inner tube.

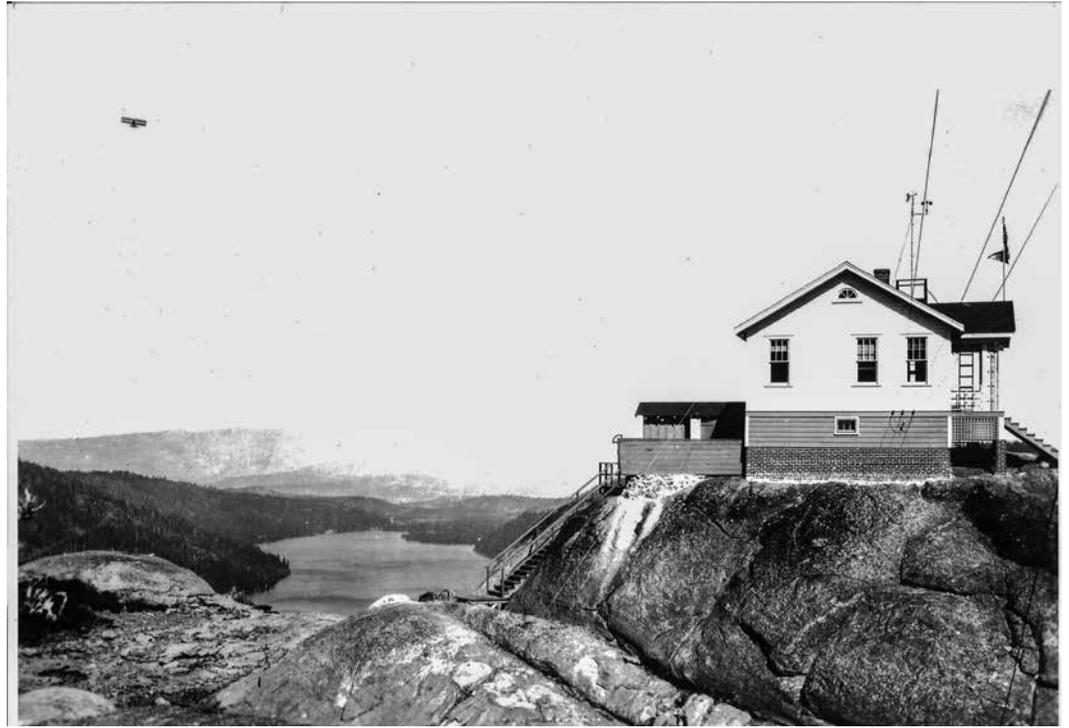
In the bag fastened on the special carriage over the back wheel was an extra shirt, two extra pairs of stockings, two extra pairs of drawers, a cloth cap to sleep in, a pair of pyjamas, a towel, and a pair of heavy hob-nailed jungle boots for use when cycling was impossible. On the handle-bar was a carrier for a coat and mackintosh, and while on one side hung a water bottle, on the other was fastened a revolver case. In the front hung another bag. In the smaller compartment was a volume of Shakespeare, and in the larger a plate, a collapsible cup, knife, fork, and spoon ; the odd corners to be filled up with food. Altogether the bicycle so loaded weighed seventy pounds; and as my riding weight was 160 pounds, altogether the machine with cyclist turned the scale at 236 pounds.

### **Note:**

You have noticed our monthly book reviews. You might want to do some reading of your own. Stop in at the DSHS. Norm Saylor has a large collection of books for perusing, buying, or checking out. You might even want to do a review for us.

# Odds & Ends on Donner Summit

One stop on the Margie Powell Hike this year (see page 19) will be the site of the transcontinental air route's weather station on Donner Summit. Here is a picture of the station when it sat above Donner Lake. The other pictures here and on the next page show the site today and the magnificent views there.





Bolt in the granite to which steel cable was attached to prevent the station from blowing away.

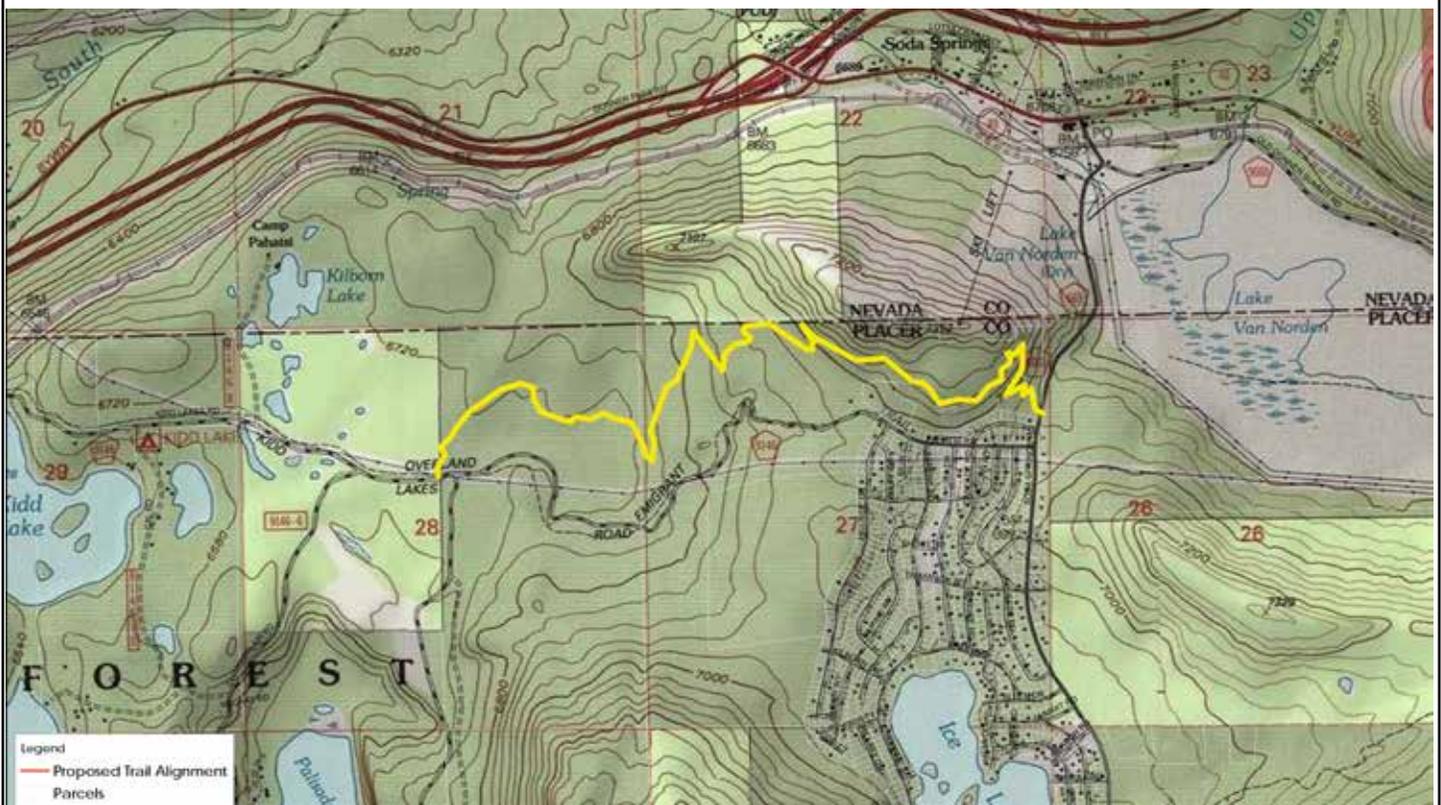
In the pictures above and below note the steel posts that were part of the walk way up to the station from Highway 40.



This is part of a series of miscellaneous history, “Odds & Ends” of Donner Summit. There are a lot of big stories on Donner Summit making it the most important historical square mile in California. All of those episodes\* left behind obvious traces. As one explores Donner Summit, though, one comes across a lot of other things related to the rich history. All of those things have stories too and we’ve been collecting them. Now they’re making appearances in the [Heirloom](#).

\*Native Americans; first wagon trains to California; the first transcontinental railroad, highway, air route, and telephone line, etc.

# Overland Emigrant Trail



In August of this year Placer County will break ground on a new project, the Memorial Overland Emigrant Trail. The initial vision will take the multi-use trail from the Donner State Park at Donner Lake down to Kingvale. Longer range it may even go on down to Auburn.

Although it's called the Emigrant Trail it will not try to reprise the exact route of the historic trail. Rather, it will parallel it and so preserve remnants of the original trail and any artifacts.

The project has been in the works for years and last year the flagging was finally done on the first phase which is the yellow (or light colored route in the map above for those of you seeing this in black and white). That basically is Soda Springs Rd. above Soda Springs Ski Area (where, incidentally the DSHS has a 20 Mile Museum sign about the Emigrant Trail) to maybe a mile from Kidd Lake. You can try to walk the flagged section - just follow the little flags - but some of the terrain is very rough on the backside of the Soda Springs ski hill.

To get to actual trail building there were a lot of details that needed attention: agreement with the State Park, USFS permitting, Sugar Bowl easements, easements over Royal Gorge land owned by the Land Trust and agreements with the land trust for construction, and money for environmental studies and conducting the environmental studies.

Placer County has applied to the Placer County Transit Occupancy Tax committee for funds to move on to Stage II for 2019.

If you want to know more, see additional maps, keep track of progress, or even participate, you can go to [lacerparksplan.com](http://lacerparksplan.com).

# Clair Tappaan Lodge

Clair Tappaan Lodge is an institution on Donner Summit. (see the Heirlooms for September, 2011 and April and May, 2017) rich in history. They asked us to note their latest issue of the Goshawk, their newsletter\* because their annual fundraiser is coming up on July 8-9. It sounds fun: "There will be plenty of good food, with vegetarian options, congenial company, music, art, and great hikes. Meet 100-year-old Milton Hildebrand, who helped build the Lodge when he was just 16, and his son Ross." That sounds good.

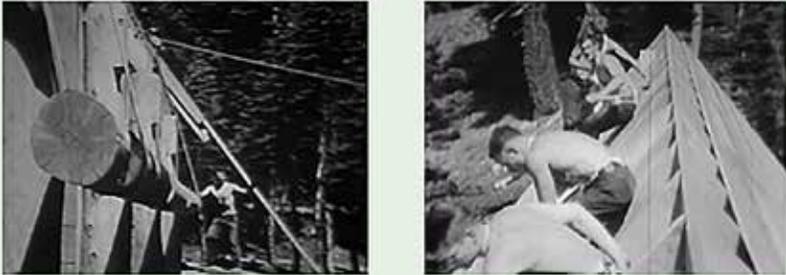


This issue of the Goshawk contains an issue of the Sierra Club Bulletin from 1935 written by Joel Hildebrand, Milton's father, and illustrated by Milton. The issue includes pictures of the 1934 building of the lodge and a history of how the project got started.

When Milton was 16 in 1934 he helped build Clair Tappaan. They'll be showing a video of the building of the lodge on Saturday, July 7.

\* <http://clairtappaanlodge.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/May-2018-Clair-Tappaan-Lodge-Newsletter-Goshawk-2.pdf>

*Builders of the Future*  
SIERRA CLUB'S  
**CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE**  
FUNDRAISER WEEKEND RETREAT  
**JULY 6 – 8, 2018**



**Meet Milton Hildebrand, age 100, who helped build the Lodge in 1934, and the students today who benefit from environmental education at the Lodge.**

# Margie Powell Hike, 2018 August 11&12



Margie Powell was the inspiration for the Donner Summit Historical Society. She was also the energy behind the founding. In her memory we've held annual Margie Powell hikes in August. Our hikes have gone down Summit Canyon, up to Roller Pass, around Van Norden, and around Serene Lakes. We've covered the Lincoln Highway, the Emigrant Trail, Native Americans and what they've left behind, the 1914 underpass, Tunnel 6, snowsheds, Van Norden Dam, Soda Springs (the original and Soda Springs Station), ice harvesting

On this, our seventh year, we're going to tour mostly on the north side of Old Highway 40, Donner Pass Rd. Of course the walk will be illustrated with dozens of historic photographs and lots of stories.

On this, our seventh year, we're going to tour mostly on the north side of Old Highway 40, Donner Pass Rd. Of course the walk will be illustrated with dozens of historic photographs and lots of stories.

This year will be very ambitious for the number of stories to tell. We'll be starting at the Donner Ski Ranch parking lot and talking about Tunnel 6, the Summit Hotel and the railroad facilities right there. Then we'll cross Donner Pass Rd. and talk about Sierra Junipers, the transcontinental air route (and the remains of the weather station buildings where there is a GREAT view), the Catfish Pond or Maiden's Retreat (above), the idea that the north side of Old 40 was the Emigrant Trail and possible proof, the recent report of cadaver dogs and Donner Party, down and around to Old 40, Donner Pass Rd. to see a possible entry for wagons up to the top, back along the PCT to the Sugar Bowl Academy building to visit our newest 20 Mile Museum signs and see the "best square yard" in the "most historically significant square mile" in California.

***Do not consider going on this hike unless you are nimble because there are parts where we'll have to scramble over some rocks since there is no trail.***

The dates: August 11,12 9:30 AM each day. Meet at the Donner Ski Ranch parking lot.

## **Bring:**

comfortable shoes - no flip flops  
water  
sunscreen  
insect repellent  
camera  
hat

Lunch

Both photos  
by George



DONNER SUMMIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org](http://www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org)

I/we would like to join The Donner Summit Historical Society and share in the Summit's rich history.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ New Membership

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Renewing Membership

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership - \$30

(Please mail this card with your check payable to DSHS to Donner Summit Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Norden, CA 95724)

\_\_\_\_ Family Membership - \$50

\_\_\_\_ Friend Membership - \$100

\_\_\_\_ Sponsor - \$250

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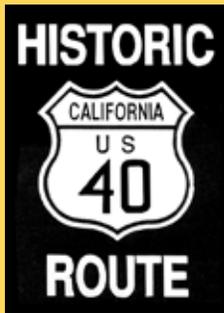
Donner Summit Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

If you would like monthly newsletter announcements, please write your email address below VERY neatly.

\_\_\_\_\_



## Take the Scenic Route: Donner Summit's Old Highway 40



Pick up or download the brochure at the DSHS at <http://www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org/pages/brochures.html>



Pick up or download the brochure

**46 interpretive signs along Old 40**  
<http://www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org/pages/20MileMuseum.html>

# New Book about Donner Summit History

Stories of crossing Donner Summit - people in the old days were lots tougher than we are today. Stories, pictures, quotes, and the human spirit

222 pages ©2018

## Purchase a Copy:

[www.donnersummithistoricalsociety/pages/store.org](http://www.donnersummithistoricalsociety/pages/store.org)

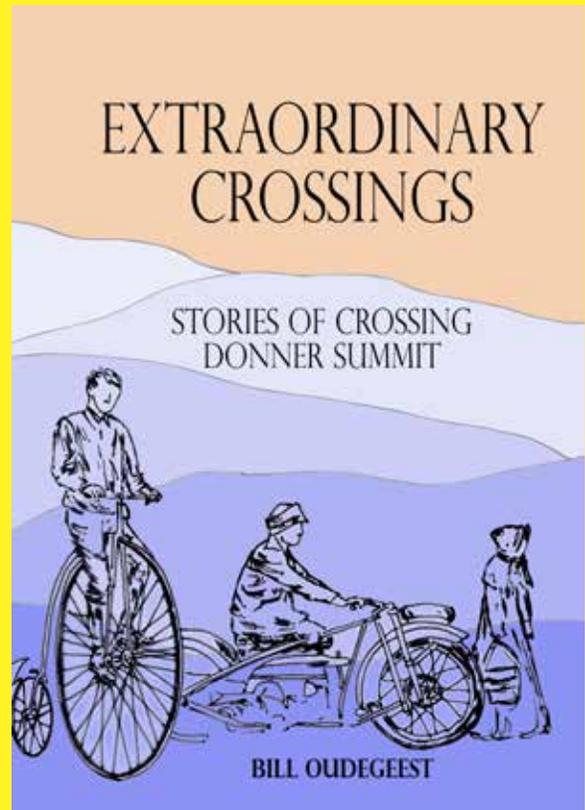
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Historical Society

**\$25** includes S/H and sales tax.



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## From the Introduction

The Sierra is a great barrier and there are only a few passes through the great barrier to connect California with the rest of the country. One of those passes is Donner Pass, the area colloquially known as Donner Summit. Through that pass have funneled many stories – stories of heroism, adventure, excitement, pathos, courage, and tenacity. Those stories encompass the very best of the human spirit.

Couple that with Donner Summit being the most historically significant square mile in California and maybe the entire Western United States, and that most of the stories have almost been forgotten, their resurrections ought to be really interesting. They are.

# Donner Party Hike, 2018

The Donner Party Hike will be held this year on September 15 & 16. You get to choose among seven different hikes on Saturday, each led by a leader armed with historical photographs and history knowledge. There will be music during lunch at the Judah Lodge at Sugar Bowl followed by an afternoon presentation on the Lincoln Highway by Jim Bonar. The hike menu will include a new hike.

In the evening at the State Park Heidi Sproat and Barbara Czerwinski of the Truckee Donner Historical Society will speak on C.F. McGlashan and the coming of winter sports to Truckee.

On Sunday there will be a walk around Donner Party sites at the State Park and Alder Creek OR a bus tour of Donner Summit.

For details see [donnerpartyhike.com](http://donnerpartyhike.com)

A promotional graphic for the Donner Party Hike 2018. The background is a photograph of a hiker on a trail in a mountainous area with pine trees. In the foreground, there is a large, stylized white starburst graphic. The text is arranged as follows: a circular logo with a hiker on a yellow background is in the upper left; the title 'DONNER PARTY HIKE' is in large white letters in the upper right; the dates 'September 15 & 16, 2018' are below the title; the main text 'Learn secrets of the Sierra as you hike with local historians.' is in the lower left; and contact information 'FOR MORE INFORMATION: info@donnerpartyhike.com' and 'donnerpartyhike.com' is in the lower right.

**DONNER  
PARTY HIKE**

September 15 & 16, 2018

**Learn secrets  
of the Sierra  
as you hike with  
local historians.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
info@donnerpartyhike.com  
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