



Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass

Donner Lake West End ●

History

The Donner Lake area is not only an exciting place to live and adventure, but also has lots of interesting history. The story of the Donner Party crossing over this amazing and majestic mountain range (1847) has spread through the area. The

Donner Lake area, however, started out as a railroad stop, not a place to live. During the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad (1869), the Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Rd. followed the approximate route of the emigrant wagons and was used to transport materials for the building of the railroad and as a toll road. Later, this trail became the Lincoln Highway (1913) and then Highway 40 and was used for tourists crossing over the Sierra Nevada Mountains to get to Donner Lake and Truckee, not just for transporting materials or goods. Eventually, this little railroad stop became more and more populated and with more people visiting and staying, it came to be a bigger town. As the town grew, and more people started to visit, the Donner area became a town that is now known as Truckee, California.

A Good Story

During her rescue from Donner Lake in March, 1847, Mrs. Graves, a member of the Donner Party, couldn't carry her family's money anymore. She was just too tired. She buried her money near this spot and three days later she died on Donner Summit at what became named "Starved Camp."

In 1891 the money was found by a prospector. There were 116 silver coins worth between \$300.00 to \$500.00. There continue to be conflict-

ing stories about what happened to the money.

Things to do right here

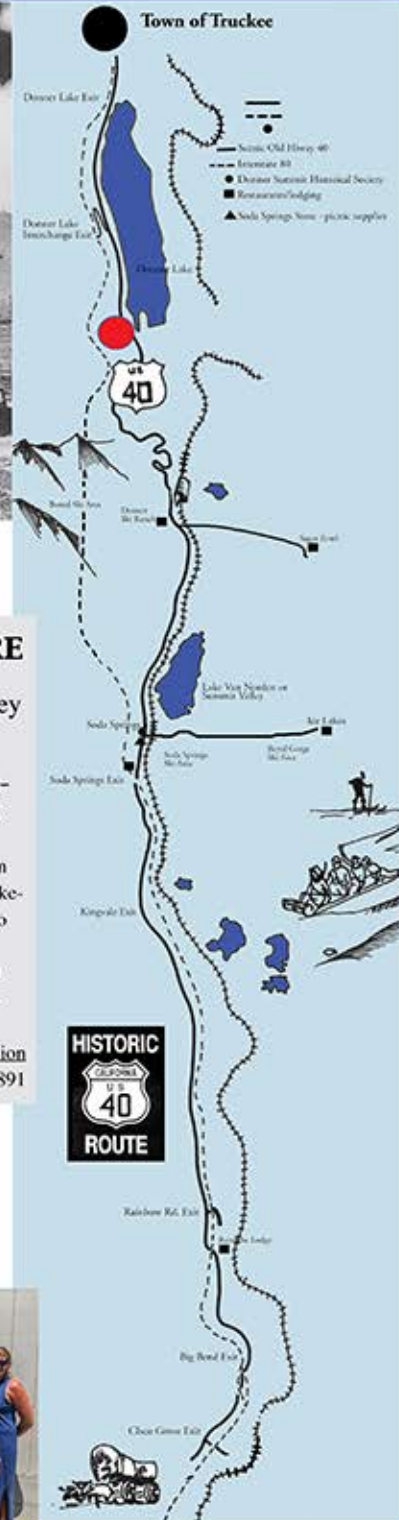
A Long Time Ago:

Donner Lake has long been a tourist destination and once there were many resorts along the lake like the Donner Camp, above, which was right at the west end of the lake. There was fine trout fishing in the river and in the lake. In fact, at the New Whitney Hotel's pond in Truckee, they had 10,000 trout ready for fly fishing! Resorts had log cabins, boat rentals, dances, carriage rides, buffets, and lots of activities so that people would have great stays. For a while there was even a steamer on Donner Lake.

Today:

Please keep in mind to respect the beautiful land surrounding Donner Lake.

Swimming in the emerald green waters of the Donner Lake is always refreshing. Kayaking, boating and jet skiing through glassy blue waters and paddle boarding under the full moon are the best. Walking to Rainbow Bridge or hiking to the train tunnels and seeing the beautiful scenic overlook is incredible; the sights will amaze you. Putting one foot in front of the other while exploring the forests of Donner Lake, biking on the rock mountains above Donner Lake, and catching big fish are always a blast. Fourth of July fireworks are a treat, seeing the beautiful colors explode over Donner Lake. Smelling the scent of sizzling hamburgers in the breeze is nice when you're on the beach, and camping in the warm summer weather is a blast. Playing on the beach is always enjoyable and feeling hot sand in your toes is pleasant. Playing with your family and friends is fun every time. All of these adventures await you; you should definitely visit again.



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

Sign sponsored by the Allen family in memory of Oliver Allen

and the Truckee Rotary



Picture above courtesy of the Norm Saylor Collection at the Donner Summit Historical Society
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Sign designed and written by the Brisbin and Akeers Crew 4th and 5th Grade Sierra Expeditionary Learning School

