



# Donner Summit Historical Society

December, 2010 issue #28

# Newsletter

## They Came for the Same Reasons

"The air has a fresh crispness about it that gives a new life to the visitor whether he has come from the fertile plains or the foggy city. And no wonder, for though this be called Summit Valley, there are seven thousand feet between you and sea level. Seven thousand feet nearer heaven and so much nearer purity. It is a relief to....look up to the starts, nowhere brighter than here, with only the dark pines closing in the distance... The air redolent with the perfume of fresh grass and wild flowers; and aromatic with pine needles. It is a physical pleasure to breathe, a 'delight to exist'... It is small wonder that a millionaire [Mark Hopkins]... should confess to be happier and healthier here than in the handsomest house on California Street. Nob Hill, to the sierras indeed."

California Spirit of the Times magazine June 13, 1885 pg 3-4

## The Real Turkey Story

When the Historical Society was first starting, more than 28 months and issues ago, our staff sat down with local raconteur Norm Saylor. He's been on the Summit for almost sixty years and has a wealth of stories to tell. We've printed many of those in the newsletters including one about the turkey truck that went off Old 40. I've heard some different versions of the story and there are many versions because it's a good story often told. We had a class of fourth and fifth graders come up to the Summit with their teacher Julie Brisbin. One of her charges raised her hand excitedly when we talked about Summit stories. Then at the Chamber of Commerce Fall hikes in October one of the guides mentioned the turkey story when talking about Old 40 and the Lincoln Highway.

As stories get passed around, they have a way of diverging from the truth. That can be good because often stories can get more interesting.

In the quest of truth though, the Historical Society feels, in honor of the Thanksgiving just passed, we should look into the truth of the turkey story.

go to page 8

**CARE—COURTESY DRIVE SAFELY**  
PAGE FOURTEEN  
RENO, NEVADA, FRIDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 4, 1933

### 2,500 Law Breakers Steal 28,600 Lbs. of Turkeys

More Than 16 Tons Of Thanksgiving Fare Lost

An estimated 2,500 law breakers were credited yesterday with a truck and trailer loaded with frozen turkeys plucked over Donner Summit last above the observation point.

The truck "virtually" disappeared at its destination, down a 200-foot granite cliff, according to a report received from a local resident.

The truck, which was loaded with 28,600 lbs. of turkeys, was reported to have been seen at 4:30 a.m. and disappeared at 5:30 a.m. The truck was reported to have been seen at 5:30 a.m. and disappeared at 5:30 a.m.

The truck was reported to have been seen at 5:30 a.m. and disappeared at 5:30 a.m.

### Freight Truck Plummets Over 200-Foot Cliff

More Than 16 Tons Of Thanksgiving Fare Lost

An estimated 2,500 law breakers were credited yesterday with a truck and trailer loaded with frozen turkeys plucked over Donner Summit last above the observation point.

### Three Dist. Courts Mark Up Lively Day

Jubilee Burglars Plead Guilty; Women Sentenced; Probation Revoked

Washoe County's district court may have set some kind of a record yesterday in handling criminal cases. In all, ten persons appeared before three judges during the day.

### Bids Are Opened For Cave Rock Approach Work

Marysville Company Is Lowest, With \$216,904

Proposed contractor C. H. Baker, of Marysville, was the lowest bidder for the approach to Cave Rock, near Marysville, Calif. It was announced yesterday.

### Accused Looter Of Sen. Malone's Car Is Arrested

Suspect From Gallup Is Right-Handed And Active

Police in Gallup, N. M., yesterday arrested a suspect in the looting of a car belonging to Senator George Malone. The suspect was arrested by Sheriff J. C. Galt.

### Nevada's Mental Health Project Is Bugged Down

Questionnaires Not Answered, Says Psychologist

Mental health project in Nevada has bogged down through lack of response to questionnaires, says a psychologist.

# Historical Society News

## web Improvements

The Donner Summit Historical Society's website has been improved. Our web development team's old authoring software was discontinued some years ago and so the DSHS website could not take advantage of new web options and it could only be updated from an old laptop and not any newer computers.

So new software was acquired and learned. The entire site was moved to the new software and uploaded. There are some improvements: historical maps and more pictures. Newsletters are easier to get to and the indices are available on a number of pages. There have been some new pages added and some new galleries of pictures.

As time permits more will be added.

Our newsletters are still the best source for Donner Summit history. Our indices list all the topics and photographs that have been printed in our newsletters. In addition summaries accompany each newsletter's entry on our web pages. Someday the website may be the best source but not yet.

## Highway 40 Text

We were surprised and happily so, that our brochure touting the joys of traveling Old 40 rather than I-80 from Rocklin to Truckee was so well received this summer.

Like the other brochures we'd have like to put it in PDF form on our website but it's 25 by 11 inch size made that unwieldy. So, the website was redone, the text and pictures from the brochure have been uploaded in PDF form. If you cannot stop in for the original you can still download the turn by turn direction so you can enjoy an "old fashioned Sunday drive" just like Grandpa used to.

The free brochures are just one of our projects which costs money. If you'd like to help the initiative, feel free to make a tax-deductible donation to the DSHS.

<http://www.donnertsummithistoricalsociety.org/pages/Highway40.html>

editor:  
Bill Oudegeest  
209-606-6859  
[info@donnertsummithistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@donnertsummithistoricalsociety.com)

## Robert Frohlich

Robert Frohlich, prolific local writer, passed away in late October. At the memorial service Keoki Flagg, one of Robert's friends, came up to Norm Saylor and gave him a hug. "Fro told me to do that."

Norm has known Robert "Fro" Frohlich for decades.

"Fro" came to Donner Summit with his journalism training from North Carolina after college at the behest of his friend, Mark Baldwin. This was bad news to his family who did not want him to become a "ski bum writer." It was the writing, though, that immersed him in the local culture and brought him success. His success was due to his nature. He was a "wonderful, awesome, friendly, robust...a real people person," said Norm Saylor about "Fro." "Fro" loved all sports but it was for skiing that he had a particular affinity. He loved to interview people and write about skiing and winter activities and it was in the interviewing that he had a particular gift. He had a knack of getting people to talk and talk so he could mine their memories and experiences.

Robert Frohlich wrote for all of the local publications and authored two books, Mountain Dreamers and Sugar Bowl 60 Years commemorating Sugar Bowl's 60th anniversary.

More than 500 people attended his Squaw Valley memorial service. That too is a measure of his success.

Robert Frohlich's memorial service and life are news for the Donner Summit Historical Society because it was to Norm Saylor that Mr. Frohlich bequeathed all of his ski memorabilia, notes, research materials, and binders of articles. It arrived at the Historical Society in many boxes. Norm had promised "Fro" that he would keep everything together and make it available to people who want to use the materials for research.

# More About Catfish

## Letter to the Editor

Last month you will remember Milli Martin wrote about her uncle Herb Frederick, fishing, and catfish ponds. For good measure we added a piece about the Chinese, catfish and the railroad and included pictures of a lovely little Donner Summit pond and its catfish.

One reader, Jim White, added to the catfish story in the Sierra with the following,

You folks are having so much fun with wondering about the local Catfish ( they are White Catfish) I ought to keep my nose out of it. But, I am having a weak moment right now and have to add some Fish and Game facts to your story. According to Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game history ( it is all in my head) the catfish were planted by the railroad to entice tourists to come up to the resorts and have something to fish for. A number of history books I have read also talk about fish planting by the railroad for tourists. The Shebley family lived on a ranch 1/2 mile south of the Storms Ranch, now Chicago Park) near the Bear River and started the first fish hatchery in California. It is now under the water of Rollins Lake. Ed Johnson, who worked for me as a DFG Warden in Placerville told me stories about picking up fish (trout) from the railroad at Emigrant Gap and planting many of the streams and lakes of the area in the 1930's. Bill Vail ... and the Donner Summit Sportsmen Club ( Bill and other locals were members in the 1930's to 1941) planted more fish in more waters in the Donner Pass area than any other group. He was my neighbor in Auburn when I was the DFG Patrol Captain) and told me many stories of their fish planting activities. The Donner Summit Sportsmen got some of the Shebley hatchery fish according to Bill. Bill installed the first fish screen in California not far from the east bound rest area. They were trying to keep the fish from draining out of one of the 5 lakes ponds. .... I skied over that screen many times but it is now gone. In the 1950's when I was the local DFG Warden I took my 3 kids up to Lake Van Norden to night-fish for Catfish. We will never forget how much fun they had. Lights were to be seen all over the lake with people fishing for Catfish. There was no limit and we often brought home a huge pile in a gunny sack.

Read more about the Shebley's ranch and their hatchery in my piece " The Picnic Train" which was in the Nov. 2009 issue of Sierra Heritage magazine.

Jim White

Jim White gives permission to copy part of his article from the November, 09 Sierra Heritage, "The Picnic Train", page 60.

"Joseph Shebley had worked in hydraulic gold mining prior to settling on the ranch where he conducted early experiments in fish culture. He had his trout eggs sent form Shasta Count by train to Colfax where he picked them up in the early days by horse drawn wagon, and then took them to the ranch to hatch. The hatching of fish accomplished was limited in those days due to lack of money and the cost of transporting fish to waters that needed to be stocked.

"Years later, Ed Johnson a Fish and Game Warden stationed at Placerville, worked as a fish hatchery assistant for the.... Division of Fish and Game in the 1930's. He planted trout fry that was raised at the Shebley hatchery. The trout fry were put into large mile cans that were covered with wet burlap to keep them cool. They were hauled to the Chicago Park Nevada County Narrow Gauge station by a Shebley family member where the cans were then put on the train and taken to Colfax. After being transferred to a Southern Pacific train, they were transport up the hill to Emigrant Gap. Ed and others in the planning crew would meet the train, unload the milk cans of trout fry and put them on pack horses to plant the nearby backcountry in such areas as Fulda Creek, the North Fork of the American River and Monumental Creek.

Joseph Shebley had built the first fish hatchery in the state on his ranch....."

[ed. note: you can read about what was probably the first Sierra fish stocking the Fall of 1866 in our "Ice Booklet" PDF, available on the "Stories" page of our website.



# Norden Station

Until automobiles became ubiquitous people traveled to Donner Summit on the train. If the train was on schedule passengers could flag it down to get on or get off where there were no stations. At various times there were stations on the Summit at the Summit, at Norden and at Soda Springs (station - the current Soda Springs as opposed to the actual Soda Springs which will be in a future newsletter).

Today if you head up to the old Norden Store building, the last one, traveling east, on the north side of Old 40 just before the lodges (Hutchinson, Clair Tappaan, Cal, Heidelman) there is nothing but the old building there. In the old days, in the 1930's and 40's there was the store and cabins there. Over the other side of the highway there was the Norden Station. Today there is nothing but concrete snowsheds down there, but look at the picture above. When the railroad was the major Summit industry and trains required more labor to keep them running, there was quite a community.

At the top of the picture is the Norden Store and its gas station to the left. To the right is the garage that is still there. At the bottom of the picture note all the houses for railroad workers and the wooden snowsheds. It took a lot of labor to keep the railroads running over Donner Summit. There were track and tunnel watchers looking for fires, maintenance people, snow shovelers, turntable operators, locomotive engineers for the extra locomotives needed to get trains over the Summit, etc. There were also all of the support the workers and their families would require. Before the Donner Trail School was built Summit students went to school in a school building below the Sugar Bowl Magic Carpet parking structure. There were stores and restaurants. In a future article Jim White will write about "Fong the Famous Snow Shed Cook."

# The Mole People of Norden Station

Although a number of movies have been made on Donner Summit, The Mole People of Norden Station is not one of them. Now that the title is in print though, it does sound like it has possibilities.

There is probably a formula for those horror stories. Teen girl sneaks out of the house to be with her boyfriend of whom her parents don't approve. They don't have a car so go walking by moonlight along a deserted section of track where the Norden Station used to be. It's a warm summer evening. They are in love and so impervious to the mosquitoes. The moon is bright but then becomes occluded (don't you like to use words like that?) by clouds. It darkens. There are noises, no not noises – they're footsteps, footsteps.... coming closer. The boy and girl forget romance and walk faster. The steps come faster. The teenagers begin running. The footsteps are running along behind. They sound like large feet slapping as they hit the ground with each step... closer, closer the steps come. No matter how fast the kids run, the steps get closer, then the steps are beside them, then...

But that's not the story here. This story comes along because of the picture you see. The picture is the railroad complex at Norden in the 1930's. Today, driving along old Highway 40 and peaking over the edge down towards Van Norden there's not much to see between the bottom of the hill and the meadow. Even if you stop and get out and walk the most you will see is a stretch of concrete snowsheds.

As the picture shows though there was a complex of buildings: houses for the workers, a restaurant, a train station, and even up towards the Summit, a school. The second largest American turntable was also at Norden (in addition to two more further up the hill). It turned the helper engines around that helped the trains up to the Summit.

Norden gets the largest amount of snowfall of any residential area in the Continental U.S., about 35 feet of snow annually. That's why there are snowsheds on Donner Summit and why the stretch of sheds used to be about 40 miles long. That of course creates tremendous maintenance challenges for the railroad. You will remember, for example from previous editions of this newsletter, that the wooden sheds were a big fire danger (check out our indices on the website). Sheds also would collapse and of course there is the memorable occasion when the sheds hosted some runaway circus animals (check out the indices again).

The snow and the sheds affected the lives of the dozens of railroad families and workers as well. The snowsheds were interconnected and additional sheds/tunnels ran from the houses to the train sheds and to the school. Kids would walk in the sheds to get to school. Skiers coming to enjoy the Summit would disembark in the snowsheds and one reason the Snowball Express ceased. The liability of many skiers wandering the snowsheds after disembarking was too much.

The families were what one newspaper called the Mole People of Donner Summit. Once snow fell and piled up in drifts the families were reduced to traveling from place to place through the snowsheds. Unless they climbed out they did not see the sun or the outside for long periods of time. That hearkens back to the building of the line over the Summit too. The Chinese laborers who worked on Tunnel 6 for two years could go long periods of time without seeing the sun either. Their shacks were encapsulated in snow and they traveled from their shacks to the work faces in the tunnel using tunnels through the snow.

Donner Summit snowblower,  
circa 1930's



# Donner Summit Historical Rendezvous

You can stand in one spot on Donner Summit and see the parade of history. You can see the path of the Native Americans who left petroglyphs and grinding stones. You can see the trails of the wagon trains that brought the people who would transform and develop California. You can see the bed of the first transcontinental railroad that would bring more people and take California products to the rest of the nation. You can see the route of the Lincoln Highway which would enable tourism and further emigration. You can see Interstate 80, one of California's major arteries. Donner Summit is also the source of three California rivers: the American, Yuba, and Truckee and it's the Sierra Divide.

Arguably, Donner Summit and the pass across it is the most important square mile in California.

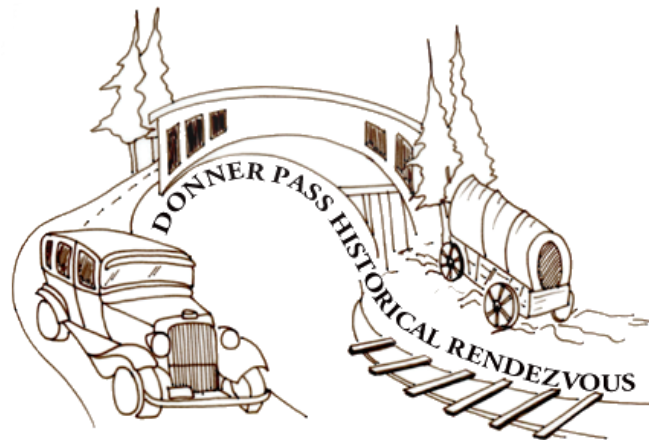
The Donner Pass Historical Rendezvous, August 13-14, will celebrate the most important square mile in California.

Venues will be scattered all over the Summit where families can see and do. Some venues will be: wagon train re-enactment, old cars (Lincoln Highway and Highway 40 connection), sheepherder encampment and BBQ (Donner Summit was a major sheep shipping center in California), etc. There will be a crafts show and local organizations and businesses can set up booths.

Families will enjoy the displays and activities. Businesses and other participating groups will get publicity, fun will be had, and the local economy will be helped.

The Donner Pass Historical Rendezvous will become an annual signature event.

Many dozens of letters have gone out inviting representatives of old car clubs, civic groups, etc. to participate in a planning meeting on Tuesday, December 14 at 4 P.M. If you would like to participate, please contact us for the location, [info@donnersummithistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@donnersummithistoricalsociety.org)



## Walking Up Lincoln - for fun

Sherman Chickering, one of the founders of Sugar Bowl and owner of one of the first four houses there, was not excited by the new ski lift that went up Mt. Lincoln beginning in 1956. For the next twelve years or so he preferred to put skins on his skis and hike up Lincoln in order to ski down just like they did in the old days.

He used to start the Silver Belt races which started from the top of Lincoln, mostly because no one else except skiers wanted to hike up or boot pack the slope as it was called.

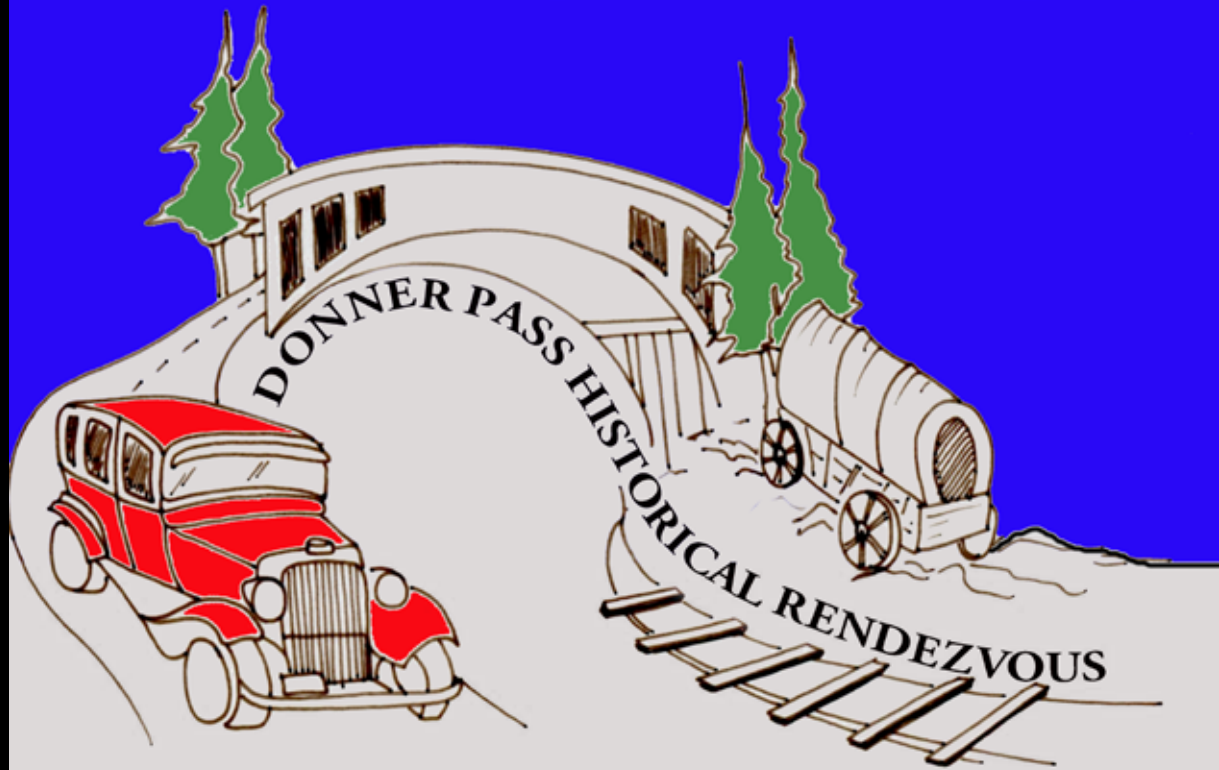
Sherman would stand at the top with a flag topped bamboo pole. He would count down the start, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, by raising the pole a little and bringing the pole down sharply to start each skier. At the bottom officials watched with binoculars and started the stop watch when the pole went down.

This story was supplied by Sherman's son, Nick.

## National Geographic Accepts DSHS sites.

Geo-Tourism is National Geographic's initiative to encourage sustainable tourism. They have been accepting nominations and write-ups for Sierra sites. The DSHS's sites were accepted by the approval committee: Old Highway 40, the 20 Mile Museum, Red Mountain, and the Historical Society.

# Donner Pass



## Historical Rendezvous

**August 13-14, 2011**

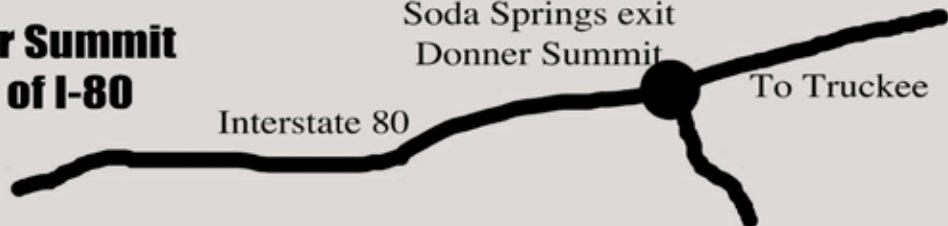
**on Donner Summit  
at the top of I-80**

Soda Springs exit  
Donner Summit

To Truckee

Sacramento

Interstate 80



Herewith is the true account of the turkeys, Thanksgiving, 1955.

On November 5, 1955, very early in the morning, a truck had trouble negotiating the steep downhill on Old Highway 40 which in those days was really a fairly middle aged Highway 40. The interstate would not come along for another few years. Wait until next month to read about the traffic on the old two lane road, but we digress.

As the truck came down the hill, its brakes failed and it went over the edge of the road taking 30,000 pounds of frozen turkeys with it. The 19 year old driver jumped from the cab as the truck started down the 175 foot drop. As the truck fell it split open scattering the celophane wrapped birds everywhere, "There were frozen turkeys roosting in every tree when I arrived at the scene at 7 o'clock yesterday morning," said CHP officer Carroll Maynard.

**Thanksgiving Comes Early  
Turkeys on Mountainside  
Grabbed by Motorists**

Thanksgiving Day came prematurely atop Donner Summit Thursday when a large trailer-tractor unit, loaded with an estimated 30,000 pounds of frozen turkeys, plunged off Highway 40 over a 200 foot cliff.

The driver, 19-year-old Robert Rotnow of Whittier, Calif., leaped to safety as the truck started over the embankment, but the turkeys were scattered all over the snow-capped mountainside. The tractor-trailer came to rest about 175 feet from the roadway, highway patrolmen said today.

**HORN OF PLENTY**

The impromptu "horn of plenty" was soon noticed by passing motorists, who, as a highway patrolman put it, "swarmed over the hillside like ants," to pack away the celophane-packed holiday delicacies.

Patrolmen, faced with the almost hopeless task of protecting the spilled cargo, deputized help to prevent the looting, but they were unable to stop the wholesale assault on the wrecked Thanksgiving cargo.

The wanton looting prompted a verbal blast from a spokesman for the California highway patrol today. He said the action of the people was the "most disgusting, degrading thing I have ever seen." He continued, "It made me almost ashamed at being a member

By nightfall, patrolmen and deputy help admitted defeat. The patrolman in charge had deputized a constable, deputy sheriff and two patrolmen to save as much of the cargo as possible. What was left was turned over to a Reno insurance adjuster.

**NOT MUCH LEFT**

"But there wasn't much left," the patrolman concluded. It was estimated that all but 1,200 pounds of the cargo had been taken by motorists who stopped at the scene from 6:30 a. m. to dusk on Thursday.

Later last night, insurance investigators reportedly "grubstaked" their way through the wreckage, attempting to salvage what was left of the shipment and hoping darkness would keep passing drivers from seeing what was left of the hoard.

No immediate estimate was made of the loss, although the new tractor-trailer unit, which was totally wrecked, is valued in excess of \$20,000.

Air brakes on the large unit, owned by Roy Peterson, of El Monte, Calif., failed, driver Rotnow told investigating officers.

Officers also noted that the shipment was in interstate commerce and that each of the estimated 2,500 persons who helped themselves could be subject to federal prosecution, an estimate

People soon found out about the scattered turkeys and more than two thousand people converged on the site to pick up some dinner. Highway patrolmen were called to the scene to protect the cargo but to no avail. One spokesman for the CHP said what people did was the "most disgusting, degrading thing I have ever seen." When the cargo was released to the insurance company only 1200 pounds of turkey remained. Since the truck was headed for Nevada it was interstate commerce and the turkey thieves could be prosecuted under federal law.

That's the real story and it accords with Norm Saylor's version. Norm said he was traveling up the highway when he saw the truck go over the side. He immediately grabbed two turkeys and headed for Donner Ski Ranch to put them in the freezer. He then began calling friends to tell them of the turkey bonanza. Friends told friends and apparently most of Truckee and passersby helped themselves despite the presence of law enforcement.

reno evening gazette 11/4/55

## Skiing on Donner Summit circa 1930

This video link will take you to some action scenes from 1930's Donner Summit. You will see:

- scenes of Donner Summit Hotel
- how to carry skis on your car in the old days
- Van Norden
- graceful telemarking
- going from Soda Springs to Tahoe across Needle Peak
- sweeping panoramas
- Castle Peak which looks a lot like it does today.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVazhu1\\_B-g&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVazhu1_B-g&feature=related)



Cisco Boat Tow circa 1930

The above picture of a Boat Tow is a picture of what ski lifts looked like at the beginning of modern skiing. Skiers had to removed their skis and sit backwards (so they would not fall over). This one is from Cisco. There was also one at Soda Springs and at Lake Mary on Donner Summit. They were not convenient and so rope tows replaced them.



# Searching for Sierra Skiways with Art Clark

Art Clark, an avid hiker and back-country skier, first noticed an orange metal sign with the markings “Sierra Skiway Castle Peak-Norden” while he was hiking near Castle Pass. Naturally curious, he asked around to see if anyone knew about the markers. Several



members of the Nordic Skiers of Nevada County mentioned that they had seen one or two of the signs while out skiing but didn't know much about them. Art began to look for the signs when he was out and found a few more signs in the Big Bend area over the next year. Some of the signs were similar orange triangles, but there were also larger wooden triangular signs. The wooden signs were deteriorating and some of the trees that they were nailed to were falling over. Noting the urgency to discover something about this bit of skiing



history before it disappeared completely, he began to traverse the Sierras near Donner Summit in search of Skiway signs. Art saw that first sign in the fall of 2007. He has now found 110 sign locations.

But finding the Skiway signs may not have been as difficult as finding some information about them. An afternoon at the Western SkiSport Museum at Boreal, though fascinating, yielded no information about the Skiway. Then during an internet search, Art came across the Donner Summit Historical Society's extensive website. In their newsletter archive for April 2009 he found a copy of a 1936 “Tahoe National Forest Service - Donner Trail Recreation” map. A short time later Bill Oudegeest recalled a Serene Lakes newsletter he had written years before. It described “large triangular orange and black signs” in the Donner Trail Area system of 34 miles. And Janet McMartin found mention of the trails in a Sierra Club Bulletin from the 1930s. Armed with the 1936 map, Art now had an idea about where the trails were located and he began to actively search the routes that were indicated on the map.



By making slight alterations along ski routes they had used for years, Art and his ski companions began to see more of the old signs. Art carried his GPS and camera so that he could accurately identify each location and photograph each sign. It became common to find 4 or 5 signs in a day of skiing. And then on a trip to Fisher Lake a record-breaking 10 signs were found. Norm Saylor mentioned seeing signs near Clair Tappaan Lodge and that led to a hike toward Lytton Lake where several signs were found. But other days were disappointing. Art would find no signs whatsoever, even though he was adhering closely to the map route. Had signs been there at one time? There were any number of explanations for the absence of signs in certain areas: severe mountain weather, lumbering, fires. And sometimes signs were found that just didn't seem to be on the map route. A second map was located which had slight variations from the 1936 version. This prompted new searches.



The 1936 map has revealed that the trail system is much more extensive than originally thought. Certain areas such as the route from Big Bend toward McIntosh Hill and the trail near Loch Leven Lakes are well represented by signs. In other areas, however, sign coverage is quite sparse. To find the 110 signs, Art has logged in 230 miles and countless





feet of elevation gain. One thing is certain, though. Art will be out there skiing this winter and he'll be searching for Skiway signs!

To see three pages of pictures of the signs that Art has found, go to the Historical Society's website, click on the "project" link and then "Sierra Ski Ways." There you can link to the PDF of the pictures and the 1936 map noted above.



Janet and Betty McMartin checking out one of the oldest Skiway signs in April, 2010.

## Winter Sports Trails in Donner Area Undergoing Improvement by Service

A new 40 foot wide trail called the Sierra Crest Ski Trail had been constructed on the summit for \$1800 by the WPA. "Large triangular orange and black signs guide skiers from Hiway 40 along Lake Mary to a rope up ski. At 1 1/2 miles from the highway Emigrant Valley is reached, offering some of the finest skiing slopes in the Sierra. These slopes are claimed by some to excel those found in the Sugar Bowl...it is ... the finest ski trail in the Donner Trail Area system of some 34 miles."

"Since there has been a 30% increase of skiers over last year there will be even greater overcrowding. Too many people on a hill mean higher injuries and the up skis have limited capacity with some people waiting 1/2 hour for rides." The paper also mentioned that trails built with emergency money by WPA and CCC were in need of repair so "there is a need to give the forest service an increase in money" to keep it all up. A forest supervisor suggested that when it gets crowded skiers should move to another hill. "it is amazing how many people insist on doing their skiing all on one hill." Signs were provided every 200 feet as well as maps and folders so people could navigate the Donner Trail System.

Sierra Sun 1/16/40

**DONNER SUMMIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
[www.donnersummithistorical.org](http://www.donnersummithistorical.org)

**Membership 2010**

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

New Membership

Renewing Membership

Individual Membership - \$30

Family Membership - \$50

Patron - \$500

Benefactor - \$1000

Business - \$250

Business Sponsor - \$1000

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

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

Friend Membership - \$100     Sponsor - \$250

Sierra Sun January 18, 1940.

Note the headline, "Proposal Made To Mark Trails Down Donner"

and then "Thousands At Summit Over Last Weekend" as 5000 cars "crowded the... highway..."



## New Ski Trail

The article reports a new ski trail in Emigrant Valley from Mt. Lincoln. It will be part of the Sierra Crest Trail with orange and black markers every 200 feet. The trail is 40 feet wide.

The chief purpose of the trail is "safe route of travel back to highway 40. Any skier foolishly caught out late or in a blizzard can follow the wide well-marked route back to Donner Summit Maintenance Station with safety."

The WPA is spending \$1800 dollars on the trail. In the estimate of the forest ranger in charge of construction, its is "the finest ski trail in the Donner Trail Area system of some 34 miles."

Sierra Sun 2/29/40