

The Donner Summit

Heirloom



History and stories of the Donner Summit Historical Society and the most historically significant square mile in California.

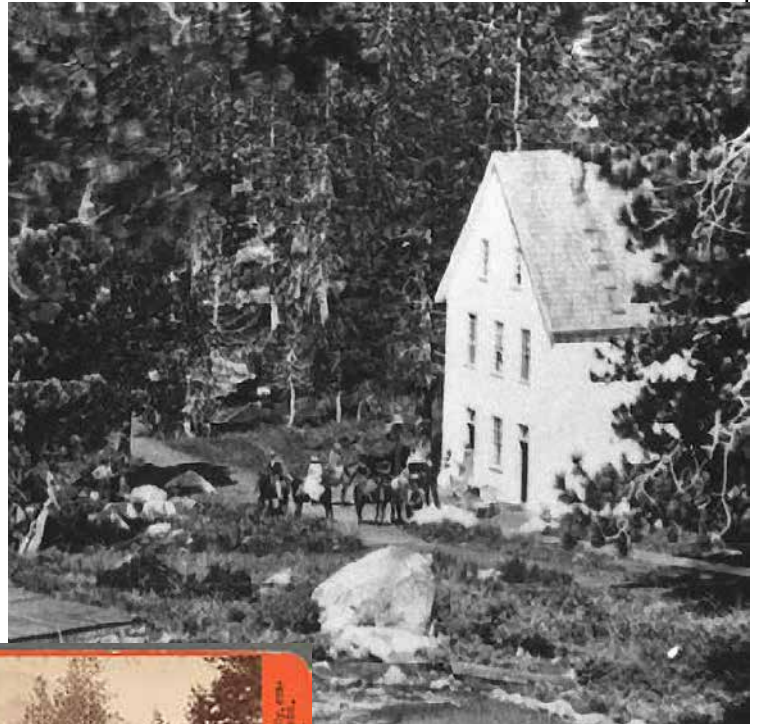
June, 2023 issue #178

Just a Bit More About Soda Springs

In the April and May Heirlooms we covered quite a bit about Summit Soda Springs, the actual soda springs on Donner Summit. Not everything fit though. There are just a couple of more things and here we have them.

The "first up" is the old hotel register from Summit Soda Springs. Here for illustration's sake we include a couple of Carleton Watkins photographs of the old hotel. They were used in the April Heirloom as well.

It was sometime over the years in various email chats with Nick Chickering that DSHS learned that Nick Chickering, whose family is the owner of what was the Hopkins Estate and Summit Soda Springs, possessed the hotel register for the Summit Soda Springs hotel. Given that the Summit Soda Springs was a high society hangout in the late 19th Century, until it burned and was not rebuilt in 1898, there ought to be a trove of signatures of long past society figures.



Eventually we prevailed on Nick to let us open the register and see what was there. And so, on a nice summer day many years ago, on a deck overlooking Serene Lakes, six or so miles up the road from the Hopkins Estate, from the site of the Summit Soda Springs hotel, we paged through the register.

The following is only a partial

Story Locations in this Issue

Summit Soda Springs

DONNER SUMMIT



Finding Your Way Through Donner Summit History

We've closing in on two hundred issues of the Heirloom: thousands of pages, thousands of pictures, and hundreds of subjects. You've probably begun to realize that you cannot keep all the history in your head. Even if you remember it all, retrieval is difficult.

Fortunately one of the choices we made back at the birth of the DSHS was to index all our Heirloom articles and pictures. We've diligently kept up the indices so that they are many pages long, full of alphabetized titles and subjects. Go to our website and to any of the Heirloom pages (one for each year) and you'll find links to the Heirloom indices.

One of the strengths of the DSHS is the incomparable historical photograph collection. The collection is thousands of pictures and again the sheer number makes finding anything in particular, difficult. Avoid the long URL by going to our website and clicking on the "photographs" link and then to the "historic photo collection link." A third link, to the Flickr URL will take you to those thousands of searchable historical photographs of Donner Summit. Have fun.

Find us on the the DSHS YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJenAxPCb47Y14agmVGI-zA>
Find us on FaceBook where we place a new historical picture daily.

Find us on 

 YouTube

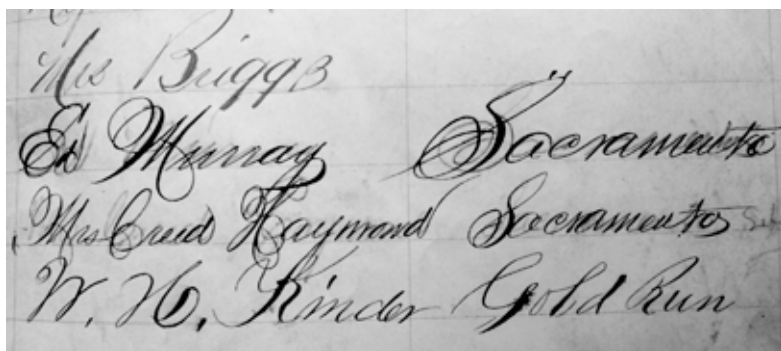
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Please note that the site of Summit Soda Springs, the original Soda Springs is on private patrolled property.

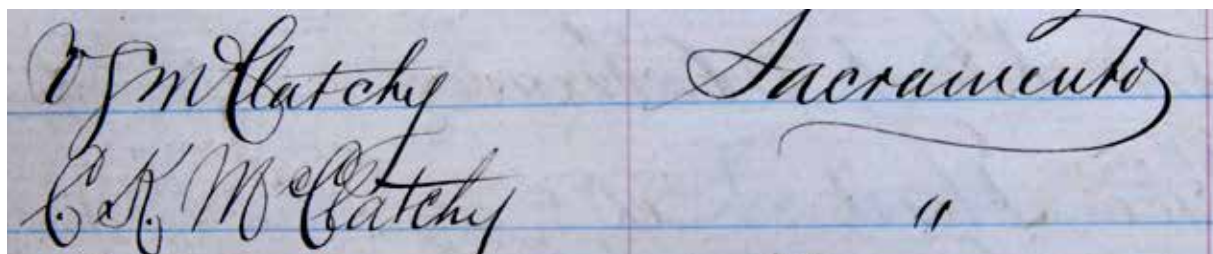
list of guests at Summit Soda Springs over a couple of decades. There are many hundreds of other names inscribed on the guest registry pages, names whose importance to California has now been forgotten. Here we'll just print a few. Along with looking at the names, note the penmanship.

We can note too, how different life was in those days with guests registering not only themselves and their wives, but also the nurse for the children. The entries are always in the man's name, followed by "and wife," and maybe some children. One entry for Timothy Hopkins includes "five servants." One page lists twenty one people from Hollywood. It would be interesting to see which now unknown people were stars and involved with what production. We would happily forward the page to anyone willing to do that investigation. Some people, like today, have no time for pedestrian tasks and so scrawl unreadable signatures. There are some interesting comments like a Mr. Wakefield who arrived in 1881 and said his place of residence was Soda Springs and Tinker's Knob. Albert Gallatin, a secretary of the treasury, listed his residence as Tinkers Station. The preponderance of people came from San Francisco and the Bay Area. Others came from nearby, some even listing Summit Valley or the Cedars as their places of residence.



No one writes like this anymore.

C.K. McClatchy - Sacramento Bee





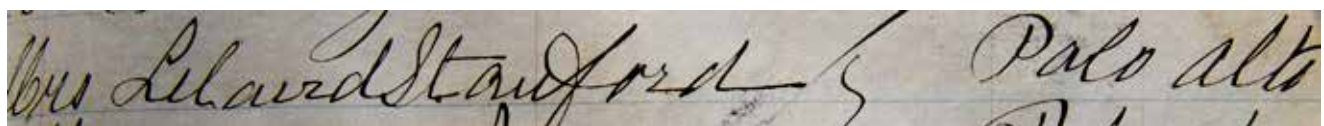
hotel register covers and stationery logo.

Examples of some hotel register names

- Mrs. George Hearst and servant Dwinelle (Dwinelle Hall at UC Berkeley)
- Guggenheim
- Sather (Sather Gate at U.C. Berkeley)
- Mills (College)
- Ghirardelli (the elixir of life)
- Folger (coffee)
- Searls (library in Nevada City)
- Albert Gallatin (Secretary of the Treasury)
- Flood
- Sproul (Sproul Hall U.C. Berkeley)
- Bidwell (Chico and descendant of first wagon train to California – but without wagons)
- McAllister (street in S.F.)
- B.B. Redding (California Secretary of State, State Printer, RR land agent, ice company at Serene Lakes along with his ice harvesting partner, Jacob Hoehn.
- Wendell Robie (Auburn, founder of the Auburn Ski Club and pioneer of Sierra winter sports.



Alexi Von Schmidt - among other things wanted to dig a tunnel to take Lake Tahoe water to San Francisco. See the [Heirlooms](#) of May and September 2011 and February, 2021



Mrs. Leland Stanford

Please note that the site of Summit Soda Springs, the original Soda Springs is on private patrolled property.

B. B. Redding ~ San Francisco

Mark Hopkins's wife San Francisco
Mar. 14. 1871

Albert Gallatin Tinkers Station

Above: Benjamin Bernard Redding - see the May, 2011 [Heirloom](#). Among other things Secretary of State for California, first state printer, Central Pacific land agent.

Mark Hopkins and wife. He was one of the transcontinental railroad's Big Four

Albert Gallatin - President and manager of the Huntington Hopkins hardware store. He was also the person that asked architect Goodall to design a house for him. The house was built in 1877, sold to Joseph Steffens (the father of Lincoln Steffens) who sold it to the state (1903) to be used as the Governor's home. It is located on 16th street in Sacramento, the historic Governor's mansion. (corrected by Rodi Lee (Retired state park interpreter) and then Donald Scott (author of George R. Stewart biography) following original printing.



Norton Bush Soda Springs. In the background Anderson Pk., left and Tinker Knob, right.

The other thing left to talk about regarding Summit Soda Springs is the art. Famous artists visited the springs memorialized the site. Here, from the [Daily Alta California](#) we have an article about Norton Bush's painting on the previous page and then some of the art of Summit Soda Springs.

[From the Daily Alta California](#) about Norton Bush's painting, Soda Springs on the previous page. This is from a time when famous artists' paintings would be advertised by art galleries inviting people to come and visit.

Spot of Wild Magnificence and Beauty – the Future Saratoga of the Pacific – Fine Painting – Etc.

"There is now on exhibition, in the window of a picture store on Kearny street, a large oil painting of the Summit Soda Springs. These springs are situated about seven miles south of the Central Pacific Railroad line in Summit Valley. Excepting Yosemite, there is not in all the Sierra a spot of wilder magnificence or beauty. The road over to it runs through a continuous succession of natural beauties of mountains, forest, river, natural lawns and modest shrubs. The springs are close to the headwaters of the American River – one of the most beautiful of our mountain streams, which leaps over many waterfalls near its source. The painting is the work of Mr. N. Bush, one of our best landscape painters. Mr. Bush made his sketches in October, when the frost had begun to tinge the leaves with the beautiful hectic flush of decay, when the streams were low, and when the modest brown was the prevailing color upon the grounds. Two of the loftiest peaks of the Sierra turn up behind the springs. The only house (a rough cabin) is shown in the foreground of Mr. Bush's picture. The house has a natural setting of lofty evergreen trees. Two of the precipitous canons for which the locality is famous are shown in the picture. These springs, we are told, possess great medicinal virtues in the cure of affections of the kidneys, dysentery and dyspepsis. The water is most agreeable and appetizing. The surroundings are positively magnificent, and, unlike Yosemite, a lady or an invalid can reach the place without fatigue, via the Pacific Railroad. There is a first-class road from the railroad line to the springs and a hotel is about to be erected by the Railroad Company. The springs are situated about half way between Donner Lake and Lake Tahoe, in an oblique direction. Those who have tasted the water and seen the surroundings say that the Summit Springs are destined to become the Saratoga of the Pacific, and that they will be thronged with pleasure seekers next summer.

"There are over forty well-defined unworked gold and silver quartz ledges and beds of valuable iron ore near the Springs. The quartz, like that of Grass Valley, is of a dark, iron-grey color in the croppings and chimneys, and white in the ledges. These ledges are on the western slope of the Sierra, near the Summits. According to Dans, the richest mines in Mexico, Chile and Peru are always found in the Andes and Cordilleras in the western slope of the mountains, near the Summits. Vitreous silver ore has been found in some of the ledges near the Summit Springs – the first of that kind found, we are told, north of Mexico. The iron ore yields 80 per cent. pure iron. Grey copper ore has also been found near the Springs, which yields 82 per cent. of copper, \$12 in gold and \$9 in silver to the ton.

Mr. Bush has done the State a service in illustrating the marvelous beauties of this wild region upon canvas. The eye can form a better idea of it from an inspection of his picture than can be given by any description from the pen. We believe that this painting is one of a number which Mr. Bush is engaged upon for one of the managers of the Central Pacific Railroad Company."

January 24, 1869 pg 1



Wm. Keith was a famous 19th Century artist. Here is a drawing of the North Fork of the American River



Wm. Jackson

General's Pool Soda Springs



Wm. Jackson Soda Springs



Wm. Jackson Trout Stream
near Soda Springs

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private patrolled
property.

What's in Your Closet?

You can imagine the excitement in the DSHS historical photos department (HPD) when we received an email from Gary Simon. He had obtained some photographs from a retired conductor friend of his of the City of San Francisco Streamliner captured by the snow near Yuba Gap in January 1952. The retired conductor didn't know where he'd gotten the pictures and fortunately he'd saved them. When we placed these on our FaceBook page at the end of December, 2022, they went viral with over 100,000 hits.



Here we have color pictures of the Streamliner stuck in the Donner Summit snow for days. All of our previous pictures come from books or newspapers and all we have are in black and white.

The photographer apparently didn't like people because only two had people in them.

We should note that the [Heirloom](#) covered the City of San Francisco's travails in our November, '08 and November, '21 editions.





Why the picture collection only shows the train, captured by the snow and none of the rescue aftermaths, we have no idea. Why there are no photographs of the passengers' experiences we also have no idea.

The color pictures do tell a bit more of the story.

Aren't you glad you subscribe to the [Heirloom!](#)





History Lesson

We can learn from history and in this case we have an object lesson from history, from the archives of the DSHS.

Last summer, in 2022, when The South Yuba Citizen's League (SYRCL) and the Forest Service were rehabilitating Van Norden (or Summit Valley) we visited from time to time to see progress in the project to restore Van Norden to what it was like before the coming of civilization. A major job was the filling of the Yuba River channel. There will be other dirt movements too with the object of slowing the movement of water down the valley. Keeping the water longer in the valley will increase percolation and keep the valley wetter, longer. That will prevent the further encroachments of the Lodgepoles, which will be removed from the periphery of the valley, and allow re-establishment of native plants and make for a healthier meadow. The old small bridge has been removed and a new larger one constructed at the east end of the valley. The Van Norden Dam berm has been mostly removed with the soil used to fill the Yuba River channel. That's the gist of things. Recreational amenity planning (bathrooms for example), will come in 2024.

One day, Serene Lakes resident Noel Charranet circulated some historic photographs of Summit Valley. They've been in the [Heirloom](#) and you can find them in the picture index. You can also look below.

It struck the DSHS editorial team, that although the pictures were interesting and had been in the [Heirloom](#) before, and so not ripe for printing again, there was a lesson to be learned with a little study. Forest fires are a big topic in the Sierra in summer and it's an article of faith that today's unhealthy forests are nothing like what the forests were like before civilization. Today we couldn't contemplate taking a wagon train through the forests but in the 19th Century trees didn't get in the way. It was said you could gallop through the forests. Today there are dense stands of lodgepole pines where you can't even walk. The unhealthy forests surrounding the meadow support only lodgepoles now. Before civilization the forests were diverse with many different kinds of coniferous trees.

So we looked at Noel's pictures and then ran through Carleton Watkins' New Series photographic collection from 1875 looking for some forest pictures. Then we went into George Lamson's collection of contemporary Donner Summit pictures hoping for a



match. It took some doing but we did find a panorama of George's taken from the Soda Springs ski hill looking east that was close to the view the two Watkins photographs, "Summit Valley, Castle Peak and snowsheds" and "Summit Valley and Donner Peak."

Study the panorama and the two Watkins photos. Note the difference in tree density most obvious on the left. You can see the rail line in the Watkins photos but not in the Lamson photo (it's in the trees below the freeway). On the viewer's side of the railroad you can also see the Dutch Flat Rd. in the Watkins photo but not in the Lamson one. Looking along the edge of the forest in the Lamson photo you can see the mass of encroaching lodgepole pines that have grown since the 1976 draining of the lake and are so dense that "thicket" comes to mind. Look at the trees in the foreground and compare them to the Watkins photos. There's no wagon train room today and the fire danger is much greater.

The increasingly dense forests are unhealthy as the trees try to compete with each other. They are stressed and weak and so subject to beetle infestation. They also provide huge amounts of fuel should there ever be a fire. One part of the Van Norden restoration is removal of the unhealthy forest lands.

From the DSHS Archives



Here is a picture from the Truckee Donner Land Trust people, Heidi Sproat in particular. This is how people got into Sugar Bowl from the highway and the train before the Magic Carpet gondola was built.

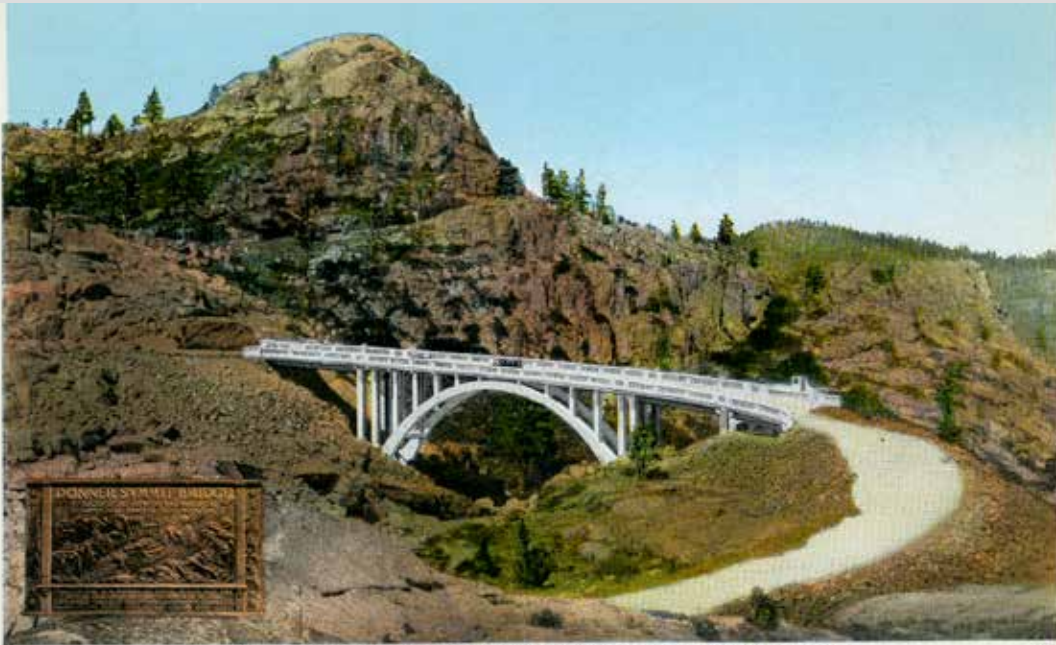
This occasions an interesting story. Trains used to stop at Norden and people disembarked heading for Sugar Bowl and fun in the snow. They traveled in horse drawn sleighs. One night the drive stopped for a beer in the lodge and the horses decided to head for the barn in Soda Springs. They made the mistake of traveling on the railroad bed with the dire results we'll leave it to you to imagine. Tractors were a better replacement.

From Heidi Sproat at the Truckee Donner Historical Society It's good to have friends <https://www.truckee-history.org>



Given that it's in color and there's a blue tarp in the picture this is probably of a newer vintage. There's been a lot of inflation over the years.

From the DSHS Archives



#4 DONNER SUMMIT BRIDGE ON VICTORY HIGHWAY, CALIFORNIA.

63080

sent to the DSHS by
Chaun Owens-Mortier
of the Truckee Donner
Historical Society, a fun
group to join: [https://
www.truckeehistory.org](https://www.truckeehistory.org)



This also comes from the Truckee Donner Historical Society via Heidi Sproat. This is Red Rockholm (See the 11/09 [Heirloom](#)) with a friend. This is interesting because if you look in the center background there's the Donner Summit weather station for the transcontinental air route. On the right is the garage for highway 40 maintenance vehicles. It collapsed in the 1980's. For a reference the picture on the left shows the building looking down from what's now the PCT on Donner Pk. That's Donner Ski Ranch's Signal Hill in the background. Red and his friend are standing about where the Donner Ski Ranch's front side lifts are today.

Book Review

The Great Air Race

Glory, Tragedy, and the dawn of American Aviation

John Lancaster

270 pages 344 w/notes

We should note at the start that the book jacket says in two places that the race was significant but “has until now been all but forgotten” and that “the book brings a long overlooked episode in the history of American aviation to vibrant life.” The book does that and is an interesting read. We should also note that the Heirloom addressed the race in the May’18 issue in “Flyers Cross Continent” (pg 7). We should further note that there’s a map of the race at the very beginning and the route goes right over Donner Summit. That was because the racers mostly followed the transcontinental railroad, but also shows the good taste of the race planners.

There were many contestants, some leaving from San Francisco and heading for New York and some doing the opposite. Both sets of pilots, who finished the race, went in both directions. The race had pilots leaving San Francisco and New York vying for the least elapsed and fastest flying times. This was an endurance run, being officially named the “reliability and endurance test,” for pilots and planes. This was much like auto runs and races that the auto industry was sponsoring at the same time and which the Heirloom has covered when they related to Donner Summit. In this case it was not industry doing the sponsoring, but the Federal Government with advocates of the Army air corps and the Postal Service using the publicity to advance their causes in the public’s and then Congress’ minds. The race would prove the usefulness of airplanes.

With all those pilots there are a lot of stories and backgrounds and John Lancaster, the author, tells lots of stories. He must have spent days in the newspaper archives pulling out the stories. The public’s attention had been captured by the race and the new technology and so the newspapers covered the race well. Airplanes were not all that reliable in 1919 and that sets up many stories too and people like that kind of thing.

The book starts by setting up the background of the race with descriptions of 1919 New York’s Aeronautical exposition. Then it goes into Billy Mitchell, World War I and aviation, the aftermath of World War I, aviation’s effect on air mail, and then separate chapters of pilots’ race experiences. All of that is told with stories that personalize the subjects and personalities, for example Billy Mitchell who had the audacious idea that submarines and airplanes were the weapons of the future. He was an outspoken and sometimes obnoxious advocate for aeronautics. Towards the end of the book that future envisioned by Billy Mitchell is illustrated with the bombing of a captured “unsinkable” German war ship by bombs dropped from airplanes. The naysayers are proved wrong and Mitchell flies off in triumph.

Chapter 7 brings us to the Great Air Race in the summer of 1919. Given the state of aeronautics the race was “bold, attention getting, and borderline reckless.” As a “reliability” test it “would reveal both the limits and capabilities of aviation technology as it existed in 1919.” The race would also serve as a “maneuver problem” challenging the air service as it would be in war to maneuver men and equipment.” It would be a “field exercise on a country wide scale.” Then, above all, “it was a competition among men – a test of skill, courage, and endurance that was sure to be greeted as such by the press and public.”

An anonymous author said, “the reports of these early exploration flights will make quaint and almost incredible reading.” Indeed, reading about the early days of flying; the lack of air fields; bad gas; surging crowds trying to get close to the heroic pilots and their machines; and government, both local and Federal, not wanting to spend money on facilities the need for which was a classical “chicken and egg” puzzle is kind of quaint. Imagine a time when airplanes were not central to our economy and some people couldn’t ever envisage a change. So the job of the early pioneers and advocates was hard and the race was



supposed to help solve the problem. In the telling of the many stories there is “quaintness” but also amazement that people actually did those things.

For example, the only American made plane in the race was the DH-4 which had an interesting nickname, the “flaming coffin.” It had some good qualities and some bad. It was a bit nose heavy so sometimes the occupant of the rear cockpit would pull himself out of the cockpit and straddling the fuselage, work his way back to the tail while in flight. This would be a good counterbalance during landing. In that same vein if something went wrong with the engine someone might work his way out of the cockpit and up to the engine, straddling the fuselage and then walking on the wing, while in flight, to do what needed doing. Lancaster relates one of a couple of stories of a mechanic in the rear cockpit climbing out and onto the fuselage to counter balance during landing. His weight was not enough and the plane tipped anyway, nose down, stopping the plane. The abrupt stop catapulted the mechanic into the air so he landed in front of the plane. The mechanic survived. He offered the advice for others that they wear spurs so they could remain attached to the plane while straddling the fuselage. A paragraph later, another mechanic was not so lucky.

The book is full of little stories like that which show the courage and sometimes foolhardiness of the aviators as they dealt with the state of 1919 aeronautics. These stories provide good advice in case you are ever piloting a DH-4. If the engine catches fire, go into a steep dive hoping the increased wind will put out the fire. In the DH-4 the pilot sat between the engine and the fuel tank. To prevent being crushed by the fuel tank in a crash landing, the advice was to push the rudder left or right so the plane would strike the ground at an angle which might deflect the fuel tank.

Along with those stories, some from the race and most from other sources given as background, there are many discussions such as the fact that pilots did not have parachutes, even though they were available and why some pilots carried guns. Then there are stories about accidents, lost pilots, crashes, mechanical problems, equipment malfunctions, souvenir hunters (the public’s quest to steal pieces of the planes), the lack of maps, the lack and quality of airfields, route finding, weather information, and mountains. One point of discussion was the characteristics needed by flyers: athleticism, particularly as horsemen; well educated; young; and single. In terms of personality the ideal pilot should be alert, cheerful, optimistic, happy-go-lucky, generally a good fellow, and lack-

ing in imagination.

All of that would help the pilot deal with things like snow hurricanes. One pilot ran into a snow hurricane “which reduced visibility to 200 or 300 yards. Spaatz [Carl Spaatz, one of the pilots] feared that he might lose sight of the ground and descended to just fifty feet above the tracks, swerving to avoid water towers that appeared suddenly out of the swirling snow... he had no choice but to thread his way through the treacherous maze, banking sharply with every twist and turn of the rails.” That ought to add to the list of characteristics

“Death was at our elbows.”

Lowell Smith after setting down in Cheyenne in 50-60 mile an hour winds.

pilots needed.

In addition to the general stories there are the back stories of many of the contestants. John Donaldson, for example, escaped from the Germans twice after crashing during World War I.

Then there are little facts. For example the propellers were made of wood but their high rotating speed could have the tips going 400 miles an hour. At that speed even rain drops could eat away the wood and reduce flying capability. So the leading edges were coated in metal. One pilot, John O. Donaldson, arrived in Cleveland in the rain having lost two inches from the propeller tips and one inch from the leading edges.

“Flying is a safe means of travel and it is a lot of fun.”

Belvin Maynard, one of the pilots

The little stories are a strength of the book but also a weakness. There are so many that they can be tedious and they get in the way of the overall narrative.

What’s going on in the race might have been interjected rather than just moving from one flyer’s experience at one point to another’s. Nevertheless there is a lot of research here and a lot of stories about early aviation. So, overall, it’s a good story.

The race was good publicity for the flying service. It also developed a 35 page report advocating the adoption of technology, design changes, radio direction finders, more and a safer landing fields, better weather forecasting, etc. Most or all were eventually enacted. Another outcome was an expanded postal air mail service eventually spanning coast to coast. It paved the way for the airplane to become “a practical feature of every day life.”

“The airplane business will never amount to much.”

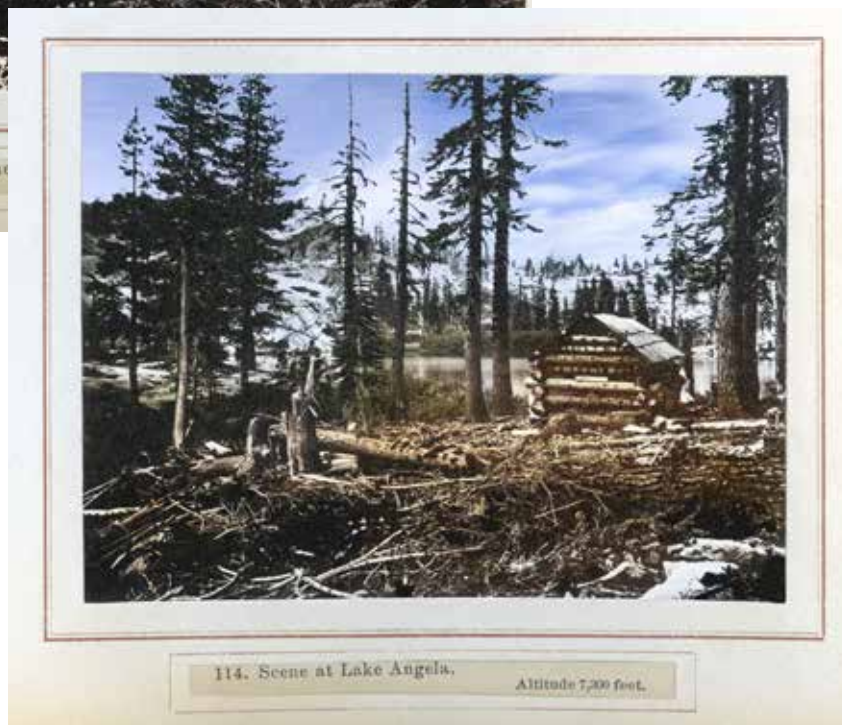
Jerome Hunsaker (17)
Taught the first aeronautical engineering course at MIT

The cost was great too: nine dead pilots and 54 crashes.

Making History Colorful



"Scene at Lake Angela" by Alfred A. Hart (#114). Using the background the exact spot is easy to find but there are no remnants of the log cabin and we have no idea who might have been living there.



Today, due to advances in computer graphics technology, there may be a solution to the color limitations of our historical black & white images. Computers are remarkably adept at manipulating photographic images. Algorithms developed for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning have been adapted to image technology to give almost magical results such as the colorization of black & white images. Algorithms are "trained" by looking at millions of color and black & white

versions of photos to "learn" how to add back colors to a black & white image. The algorithms learn how to find a sky and make it blue, find a face and make it flesh colored, find a tree and make the leaves green. They develop highly sophisticated models that can do amazing transformations. Amazingly this technology is now available on desktop computers.

George Lamson

Fan Mail

Good Evening,

I wanted to say thank you to all of you for the great website you have and all of the information!

I am enjoying it all!

It is amazing how things can change naturally or man-caused, over about 100 years, or so.

Thanks again, Jeff Roche

Odds & Ends on Donner Summit

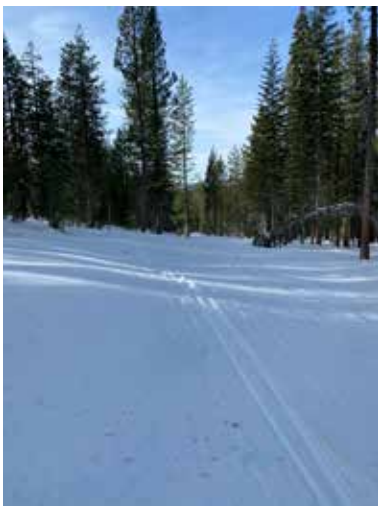


Skiing on the lower flank of Rowton Pk. late last November, I found this sign posted on a tree. Unfortunately it's too far gone to have any hope of deciphering it. Fortunately, we in the DSHS's Mobile Historical Research Team, know about the area on the east side of Serene (formerly Ice) Lakes.

The original developers had some big plans for the whole area and they had a rope tow in mind for this area. In fact, that's where my wife and I learned to cross country ski in 1975 (no rope tows). The area had been clear cut in the late 1950's to make way for the ski run. In 1975 some feet of snow on smallish trees left a wide open space to us to learn cross country skiing. Over the decades since, the trees grew back into an impenetrable forest. The Land Trust bought 3,000 acres which included this area and did selective cutting to improve forest health and reduce fire danger.

There's other detritus: parts of the rope tow, wooden pieces of this and that, cabling, rusted barrels, etc.

Look closely as you explore Donner Summit and you'll find lots of other odds and ends.

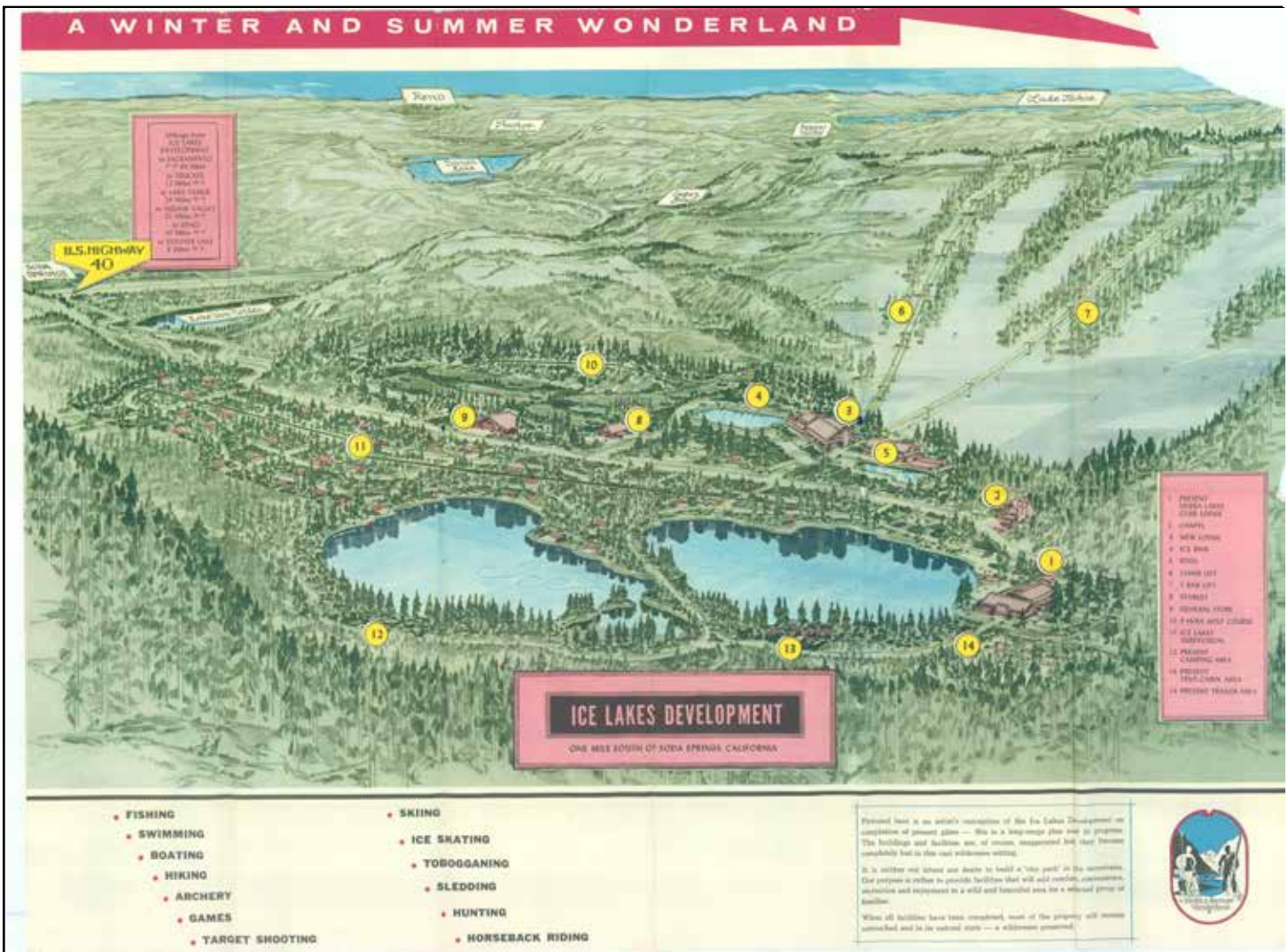


Left: looking down what would have been the ski run. The right hand picture is looking up from the bottom. The trees in the center/right are where the ski run would have been had the trees not grown up to hide it.

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](#).

If you find any "Odds & Ends" you'd like to share pass them on to the editor - see page 2

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



Above: from some of the early publicity for the Ice Lakes development. You can see the proposed ski run (chair lift and "T" bar in this version) on the right which is where the pictures on the previous page were taken.

Here's an added bonus in this [Heirloom](#). I've skied down Mt. Lincoln an uncountable number of times. On this day in December of last year, I happened to look at an adjacent tree at the top of "Bill Klein's Schuss" and saw the Emigrant Trail marker. That's Mt. Judah in the background. There's another one at Harriet's Hollow.

Check out our [Heirloom](#) article index to read about Bill Klein.





DONNER PARTY HIKE

September 9 & 10, 2023

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



© ERSKINEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
info@donnerpartyhike.com
donnerpartyhike.com

Old Time Sunday Drive

**Next Time
Take Scenic
Old Hwy 40
instead of I-80**



Historic Towns
Interesting Scenery
Fascinating History
Picnic Spots
A Slower Pace



Take a look at our guide to Old Highway 40: turn by turn instructions from Bucklin to Truckee, broken into four legs and including pictures and history. Available on line on the brochure page of donnersummithistoricalsociety.org, at the DSHS (at the blinking light in "downtown" Soda Springs, or the visitors' centers in Truckee and Auburn).



And while you are at it, check out the 20 Mile Museum - interpretive signs from Nyack to below Donner Summit on Old 40. Information at www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Membership

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 \$40
- Family Membership \$60
- Friend \$100
- Sponsor \$250
- Patron \$500
- Patron \$500
- Benefactor \$1000

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

Donner Summit Historical Society

www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

You can also go to our website and use PayPal or a credit card.

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



Donner Summit Historical Society



P.O. 1 Norden, CA 95724

www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

info@donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

June 1, 2023

Pledge Break.

Other high quality organizations interrupt their regular programming for quarterly pledge breaks. The DSHS doesn't do that. We don't ever interrupt regular programming. The Heirloom comes out once a month full of Donner Summit history. Now we're up to issue #178 with this month's issue (and another four ready to go). That's thousands of pages of high quality historical journalism.

Besides the regular Heirloom programming our robust publications wing has a large collection of brochures about various aspects of Donner Summit. Brochures are available on-line, on our website, or at various purveyors of fine literature (such as the State Park, the Welcome Center in Truckee, the Soda Springs General Store, Colfax visitors' center, etc.). We also have several dozen exhibits in poster form and on our website. Our DSHS website is robust with hundreds of pages. Then there are the FaceBook and YouTube pages too. Our FaceBook page is refreshed each day with a new picture of Donner Summit history by Trey Pitsenberger.

The DSHS also organizes and runs the Donner Party Hike event (page 18 of this issue). Registrants choose among seven different hikes, each led by historians with lots of stories to tell. This year that's September 9 & 10. See donnerpartyhike.com for information and to sign up.

We've also been working with the Donner Summit Association on the Lamson-Cashion Donner Summit Hub at the top of Old 40. There are twelve exhibits, each four feet square, touting the most historically significant square mile in California and other things. You can get DSHS brochures there too. It's a marvelous addition to the summit.

Then, we're dipping our toes into videos which will supply content to your YouTube page. We'll be putting it together this summer. The first one will be about the Chinese railroad workers which will complement our relationship with the 1882.org people who are working to have Tunnel 6 declared an historical landmark.

To continue our work we need your annual help. We have insurance to pay, brochures to print and we've started to replace our 20 Mile Museum signs. Some of those signs are thirteen years old and colors are fading.

To renew your membership or send a donation you can go to our website membership page or simply use the U.S. Mail (see the address above).

Thank you for your help,