

## THE MANIFEST April 2015



The 2015 season has arrived. We open on April 12, 2015. The motorcar track extension is complete, although there is some work to be done to the station to finish it up. I will post more pictures regarding the track extension next month so that you all can see the progress and finished product.

Thanks to Ken, Jerry, Allen, Rick and Dan shown below.



## **Donation News**

### **By Tony Johnson**

Earlier this month Marjorie and I attended our annual visit to Winterail in Stockton, CA. Prior to leaving Oregon I heard from my longtime friend Mel Perry. Mel lives in South San Francisco and he is in failing health. Over the years Mel has donated numerous railroad artifacts to our Society's museum so he asked if we would stop by and pick up more items he wanted donated to SORHS, the Southern Oregon Live Steamers, and the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club.

So on Sunday, March 16 we stopped at Mel's place and together went to his self-storage locker. If it wasn't for Marjorie's expert packing capabilities, I doubt we could have brought everything home in one trip. Her car was loaded! For our club Mel donated approximately 75 different books on railroad history, with another 20 or so extra duplicate copies. Almost every book is in excellent condition and will greatly enhance our club's museum archives. If we already have a title in our collection, we'll keep the best copy and sell the other. (Most likely we'll be keeping Mel's copies!) As club curator and archivist I have already inventoried the books and placed on a database to be added to the museum's database in a few days. I'm still in the process of inventorying over one hundred HO-gauge car, locomotive, and building kits from Mel that will go to the model railroad club.

Thank you Mel for believing in the clubs that together operate the Medford Railroad Park. Your any donations over the years will benefit future generations for years to come.

**Winterail 2015**  
**By Tony Johnson**

Earlier this month at Winterail in Stockton, SORHS was invited to participate in an effort to raise funds and awareness of several railroad museums in the West. First of all I wish to publicly thank David Curlee of Altamont Press for personally stepping forward by creating more awareness in raising needed funds for various railroad museums in the West. This all came about literally a few days before Winterail when Dave approached our historical railway society with this offer of help.

He was willing to donate a free Altamont Press timetable for a donation on any amount to a railroad museum. Through our mutual friend Carol Voss, who suggested our museum to David, he added our group to these other museums -- Feather River Rail Society – Portola, CA., Niles Canyon Railway – Pacific Locomotive Association – Sunol, CA., Orange Empire Railway Museum – Perris, CA., Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation – Portland, OR., Pacific Railroad Society – San Dimas, CA., Southern Oregon Railway Historical Society – Medford Railroad Park – Medford, OR. (our group)

Arrangements were made with Vic Neves at Winterail to advertise the fundraiser between one of the afternoon media shows, plus have a table area where a representative for each railroad group would be present to explain (and show) a little about their museum's restoration efforts. Donation cans at the tables were available, and a ton of free Altamont Press timetables were stacked in boxes and on top the tables. Since this was somewhat of a last minute idea, an informational handout was given to all Winterail attendees. In it were these words from David.

“Thank you for your support of Altamont Press over the years. “Many railroad museums across the country are hurting very badly due to lack of funds and volunteer manpower. We can’t ignore this problem any longer – some museums are already disposing of equipment because nobody is willing to maintain or restore it. Please consider donations of your time and money to the preservation of railroad history before it’s too late.”

I asked one of our members (Jerry Hellinga) if he would represent our Medford Railroad Park, and he agreed. The plan was to open the foyer after the Winterail dinner break at 6:30pm. For the next 30 minutes attendees could make a donation to the groups and receive an Altamont Press timetable of their choice. I arrived around 6:40pm to document the fundraiser with photographs. It was not very busy; however there was a very long line of attendees waiting outside for the theater to open at 7:00pm for seats for the evening multi-media event. Well, it seemed most of the people waiting in line assumed they could make their donation after the doors opened, and that’s what they did. Big time! The foyer quickly was filled with lots of people making donations and picking up timetables. Surprisingly three of the museum groups failed to show, so the approximately \$2,100.00 in donations was equally divided between our group and the other two museums.

Jerry told me that a whole lot of timetables went home that evening. The museums were very grateful, and I am too. Thank you, David for helping in a big way.



*Due to missed month, I am reprinting Larry Mullaly's entire article, I apologize if my editing has caused any confusion on the pictures.*

**MONTHLY ARTICLE  
BY LARRY MULLALY**

**Ashland's Historic Southern Pacific Freight House:  
Past and Present**

In a quiet residential neighborhood of Ashland, hidden within a strange, barn-like structure are the mysterious remains of

large Southern Pacific structure “Barricaded behind weather-beaten boards...is the city's first train depot,” the January 2, 2015 issue of the *Portland Oregonian* reported. “Built in 1884...the structure's survival remained a secret until this summer, when the property was sold by representatives of the third generation of the family that lived inside it.” It is a fascinating story. But is this in fact, the early 1884 depot? And if this is not the case, what then is this building? This study, with the help of information gathered on a January 22, 2015, visit to the site, addresses these questions.

## 1. THE OREGON & CALIFORNIA RAILROAD

The Oregon & California Railroad was incorporated in 1869, and within four years had built as far south as Roseburg. In 1881, under strong German managerial influence, the company resumed building southward reaching the southern Oregon town of Ashland three years later.<sup>1</sup> When the Oregon & California was merged with the Southern Pacific System in 1887, the company had operated independently nearly two decades. Under the umbrella of the Southern Pacific [holding] Company, the O&C retained many of its original locomotives, rolling stock and much of its workforce. As late as 1900, the influence of the older O&C was evident when the decision was made to expand the Ashland Freight House. All of these elements play a part in the recently rediscovered Tolman Creek Road railroad structure .

But the origins of this structure trace back to Ashland's original depot of 1884, and it is here the story begins.

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<sup>1</sup> *Portland Morning Oregonian*, Dec. 7, 1871. The Ashland depot, described as “a handsome structure,” when into service on Sunday, May 4, 1884. *Ashland Tidings*, May 2 and May 9, 1884.

## The Original Ashland Depot SOHS #5258



On May 5, 1884, the Oregon & California Railroad dedicated a combination passenger and freight depot in Ashland marking the southern end of its tracks in Oregon. A photograph (figure #1 below) taken on May 5, 1884 shows the building still in the final stage of construction.<sup>2</sup> The pipeline bringing water to the depot has yet to be laid, and scaffolding is visible at the south end of the structure. A US Railroad Commissioner Report dated January 2, 1887 describes the depot as 24' by 60' in size, the same size as depots previously built in Grants Pass and Medford.<sup>3</sup> The Ashland depot remained a stage and wagon transfer point to California until tracks of the Southern Pacific System south reached the town in December 1887. Passenger activity was transferred to a nearby Railroad Hotel completed the following year, and for the next decade the depot was used as a freight house.

1. *"Have you found yourself in the picture of the crowd assembled to receive the first passenger train in Ashland?", the editor of the Ashland Tidings wrote on May 9, 1884. The*

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<sup>2</sup> The photo is often incorrectly dated as 1887 when the final spike was driven joining California and Oregon. The incomplete nature of the construction argues for the 1883 date.

<sup>3</sup> The bi-level Grants Pass, Medford, and Ashland depots were built in 1883-1884. The Central Point depot, of similar design, dates to 1888.

*depot, with its distinctive Oregon & California eaves, featured a waiting room, office, and operator's bay at one end and a freight room on the other.*

The design of the original Ashland depot can best be understood by examining photographs of the similar bi-level Medford depot erected during this same period that the Ashland depot was built. A distinctive feature of both structures is that the office and waiting room is at track ("ground") level, while the floor of the freight room is several feet higher. Typically a single upper window is found above the office area, while two upper windows at the opposite end of the structure bring light into the freight room. The overhead windows have been interpreted as evidence of an upstairs residence, although no stairway is shown in early floor plans.<sup>4</sup>



**SOHS #910**

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<sup>4</sup> Henry E. Bender, Jr. writes: "The Grants Pass, Central Point, and Medford depots had one or two windows centered high in each gable end, probably for living quarters up under the rafters for the agent, making each a one and a half story depot." *Standard Pacific Lines Standard-Design Depots* (Signature Press, Wilton CA, 2013), pp. 199, 208.



**2.** *The Medford Depot, though reversed in orientation, is similar to that of Ashland.*

*The ramp at rights leads to a freight platform.*

The roof with its steep pitch and wide overhang is a distinctive feature of these structures. The disposition of the interior rooms of the depot appears in an 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (figure #3) showing a bayed office area room approximately 24' wide x 20' long. Physical evidence from



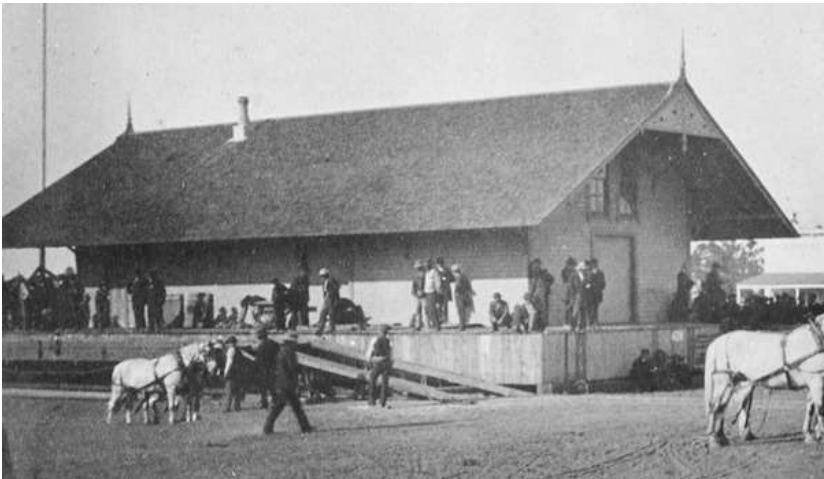
the remains of the original Oregon & California depot in Woodville (Rogue River) shows that such structures were pre-fabricated, labeled, and then shipped to the site for assembly. Apart from the distinction between larger bi-level depots (Grants Pass, Central Point, Medford, and Ashland) and smaller ones (Woodville, Gold Hill, Phoenix), the styling of O & C depots in Southern Oregon is remarkably uniform.

**3.** *An 1898 Sanborn Insurance map shows the Ashland freight depot with roof overhand indicated by dotted lines. The office and bay are at the north end of the structure and the numeral one indicates a 1-story structure.*

**SOHS #34061**



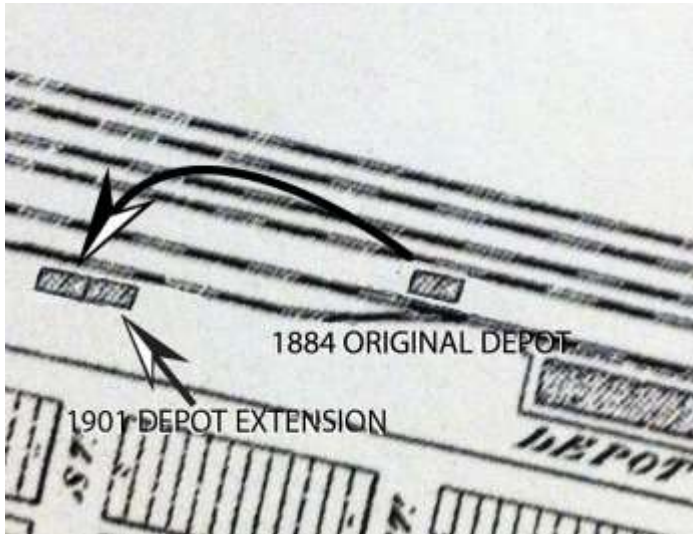
**4.** *The early Ashland Depot was a staging point for Northern California and the Klamath area. The upper windows at the south end of the freight house are the only source of light for the freight room of the original structure.*



**SOHS #7348**

**5.** *A long freight platform ran along the East side of the Medford Depot providing direct access to a freight track. A*

careful examination of this photo shows a “man” door at the left end of the building, and a freight door at both side center and end of the depot.



6. In 1901, the original 1884 depot was relocated and joined to the new depot extension. The original depot was dedicated solely to freight service in 1888, handling less-than-carload shipments in Ashland and overseeing freight car movements. It soon proved insufficient to handle the increasingly heavy volume of freight traffic handled at Ashland. In May 1900, the Southern Pacific announced its intent to double the size of the freight house by combining the original structure with a new building of similar size. It was said that when the new building was completed Ashland would possess “the most spacious yard and depot facilities...on the line between Sacramento and Portland”<sup>5</sup> On June 11, the *Ashland Tidings* reported that work on the enlarged freight house would begin “at an early date.” Construction material arrived at the end of August, but it was not until February 1901 that work got underway.<sup>6</sup> To maintain continuity of operations, the older depot was kept in service while the new “extension” at the edge of the yard was

<sup>5</sup> “The present freight depot...will be moved from its present position to the west side. An addition 60 feet long will be added and a commodious platform built.... These improvements will give Ashland the most spacious yard and depot facilities...on the line between Sacramento and Portland.” *Ashland Tidings*, May 7, 1900.

<sup>6</sup> *Ashland Tidings*, Aug. 27, 1900.

being built. The south end of the new freight house, comprising an office and 40 feet of freight shed went into service on April 11, 1901. Just prior to its opening, telegraphic apparatus and office furniture were moved into it from the older freight house depot.<sup>7</sup> The following week, the entire 1884 structure was dismantled and moved across the yard. The two structures then were joined into a single 120'-long unit.<sup>8</sup>

In the rebuilding process, considerable care was taken to preserve Oregon & California Railroad styling. The siding on the new structure was Oregon pine (Douglas fir) rather than the redwood typical of California depots of this era; the wide eaves were retained for the full length of the building as were the distinctive O&C style brackets. As a final touch, a filigree scrollwork panel and a finial (most likely taken from the south end of the original 1884 depot) were added to the new, south end of the structure.<sup>9</sup>

This was not the first time that the "Lines in Oregon" had made an effort to retain the O&C look when rebuilding its structures. In April 1900, similar steps were taken when the Gold Hill depot 20 miles north of Ashland, was moved across the tracks, and expanded. Beneath these cosmetic effects, however, the original structures were fundamentally altered. In Gold Hill, the interior of the new depot bore little resemblance to its predecessor. At Ashland, the waiting room and office of the 1884 structure were gutted of original floors, windows, and doors in the 1901 remodel.

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<sup>7</sup> "The office fixtures and telegraph apparatus have been removed from the old freight house to the new one just completed in this city, and the old building is being dismantled preparatory to its removal across the tracks next week." *Ashland Tidings*, April 11, 1901.

<sup>8</sup> "The old freight depot was moved across the track and joined to the north end of the new structure yesterday morning. The whole now makes accommodations of double the capacity of those heretofore existing." *Ashland Tidings*, April 18, 1901.

<sup>9</sup> The finials and filigree scrollwork were later removed and do not appear in the 1956 photograph of the freight house.



*Terry Skibby Collection*

7. Oregon and California Railroad styling is evident in this 1913 photograph of the Ashland Freight House. O&C brackets are uniform throughout the structure, and O & C filigree scrollwork and finial have been added to the new south end of the building. Also, the joint between the older structure and the extension is visible. Ashland historian Terry Skibby notes: "If you look closely at ...the photo ...you can see a change in the alignment of the exterior siding, covered with a trim board."<sup>10</sup>



*[Gold Hill  
Historical Society  
photo]*

7. The Gold Hill depot retained its Oregon & California look when the structure was rebuilt and

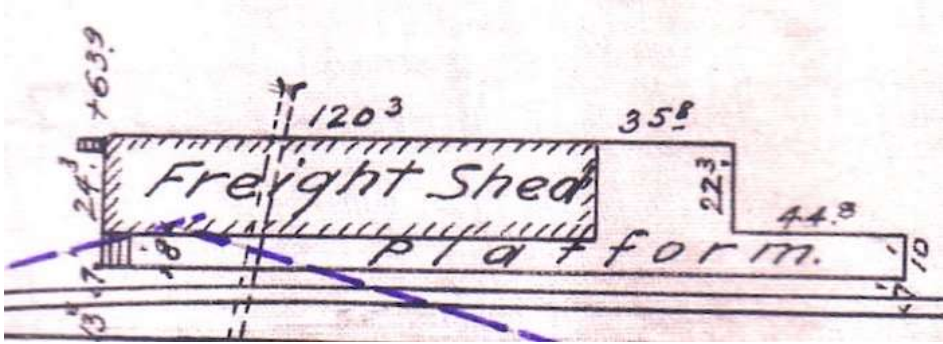
<sup>10</sup> Email: Terry Skibby to Victoria Law, 1/29/15.

expanded in 1900. Unlike the Ashland Freight House extension, it has O&C window molding. The photograph was taken about 1950.



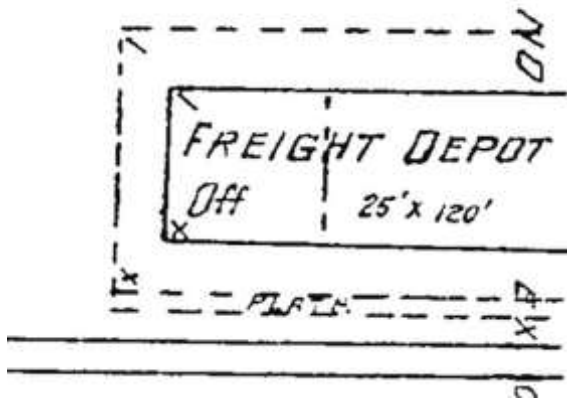
Terry Skibby Collection

8. Interior view of the new south-end office shows the high ceiling and tongue-and-groove wall sheathing still to be seen in the Tolman Creek Road structure. The outside door fronting the building is at far right. A counter separates the public area from the office area.



9. A detail of a 1907 Southern Pacific plat map shows the 120' Freight House. Like two dominoes placed end to end, the Freight House composed of two parts. The north half of the structure (at right) was the heavily rebuilt 1884 depot. The

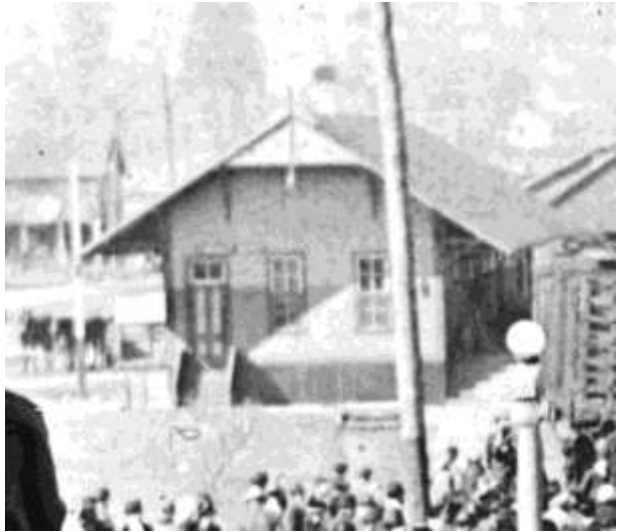
sound end (at left) of the structure was newly constructed in 1901 and included a high-ceilinged office.



10. A 1907 Sanborn map shows the new office at the south end of the building with a wall separating the one-story office from the warehouse. It was this portion of the Freight Depot that was moved to Tolman Creek Road about 1960.

Terry Skibby Collection





11. *Photo of the Ashland Yard circa 1902 shows remodeled freight house with its rebuilt north end. Apart from the single overhead window, all other evidence that this was once a waiting room and office has been covered over. (see photo #2).*

12. *Detail of the south end of extended freight station shown in 1918.*

*The 1901 depot had no overhead office window. This has the same*

*Configuration as the exterior end wall of the Tolman Creek Road structure.*





SOHS # 2714

*13. The south end of the Freight House in 1956, with filigree scrollwork removed.*

The Ashland Freight House was closed in 1959. Sometime thereafter it was cut in half, and a 51-foot section of the south end of the structure was move to private property on Tolman Creek Road in Ashland. It was placed on a new foundation and given a new floor, narrow porch floors were added on three sides of the building, and a new back wall was constructed. The entire building was then encased in a larger wooden envelope, giving the external appearance of a windowed shed, or barn.

*Current Condition of the Structure – The 51’ railroad structure within the Tolman Creek Road barn has seen extensive and crude remodeling. After removal to this site, the roof was replaced. As many as a dozen doors and window were cut through the walls, and the interior divided into two low-ceilinged floors. The walls of the rooms have been paneled or sheet-rocked.*



*L.Mullaly*

*14. Exterior view of the Tolman Creek Ave. structure encasing the remains of the Ashland Freight House.*



Fifty-one feet of external sidewalls of the office end of the 1901 freight house, together with its large roof brackets are still intact, painted in classic Southern Pacific colonial yellow with brown trim. Much of the molding, glazing, and some of the window frames of the 1901 structure still exist,

and a small area at the entry way still retains the full height of the office. None of the original floor or roof remains, although some whitewashed eaves are still visible. Although the structure has been badly disfigured, the south end of the depot is largely intact with the same entry door and the two windows shown in fig. #7.



*L. Mullaly*

*16. Photo of a second floor bedroom added into the office area. The rectangular window at right pierces the south face of the building. The windows at left pierce the north side of the building. None of these windows appear to have existed when the building was owned by the Southern Pacific.*

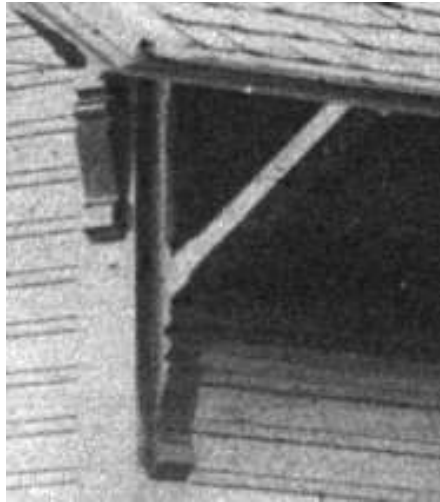


*L. Mullaly*  
*SOHS #1111*



*17. Window molding comparisons: all original windows are*

*of Southern Pacific Common Standard design and differ from molding found on early Oregon & California structures.*



L. Mullaly SOHS #1111

*18 and 19. A comparison of O & C style brackets of the Tolman Creek Road depot with those of the 1888 O & depot at Central Point depot. There are as many as ten of these large brackets still extent on the Tolman Creek Road structure.*

The 24' width of the Tolman Creek Road building is not a Southern Pacific Standard width. The external walls are Douglas fir rather than the redwood commonly used in Southern Pacific Depots in California during this period. Windows, moldings, and doors, on the other hand, appear to be standard Southern Pacific products of the company's Oakland, California, Planing Mill. Unlike the brackets, they are not reproductions of the more elaborate trim used in early O&C windows and doors.

#### *The Move to Tolman Creek Road*

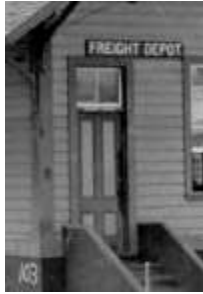
There has been much conjecture about how the depot came to Tolman Creek Avenue. A former Ashland resident provided the following account:

“Sometime after 1959, an Ashland man who lived in a small house with his wife at the back of a piece of property on Tolman Creek Road, acquired the old freight house from the Southern Pacific Railroad. He cut off the office end of the depot with a chainsaw and had it brought to his property by a house moving company. It is possible that the roof was removed to allow the depot to fit under power lines. He had the depot set up on blocks, and gave it a new, patched roof of tarpaper. He then hung exterior walls, composed largely of old windows he collected, from the eaves of the building. This hanging wall provided his wife a sunny porch area. The original depot had a high-ceilinged office area to the front. To this he added a stairway leading two a new second floor.”

L. Mullaly



*20. The doorway of the Tolman Creek Road structure appears to date to 1901. At right is the doorway of the former Gold Hill depot, used as a memorial at the Rogue Valley Square Dance Center on Table Rock Road in Central Point. Close examination shows the doorplate on the Gold Hill Depot door appears to be the style as that shown on in the Ashland depot (see detail of photo #7 at right.)*



### *Conclusion*

This 114 year-old building fascinates because of its re-appearance after being presumed lost since the 1960s. But its physical integrity has been sadly compromised. The details and configuration of the building clearly show it to be the south end of the freight house constructed in 1901. While architectural features of the building including brackets, doors, and even the entire front exterior wall may merit preservation, the full 51-foot long roofless, floorless structure has much less to recommend it.

*January 31, 2015*

### *Credits:*

This report would not have been possible without the assistance of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, The Shasta Division Archives, and the Gold Hill Historical Society. Individuals that contributed include were Victoria Law, Alice Mullaly, Jim Lewis, Terry Skibby, Henry Bender, Jr., Dan Wilkerson, and Bruce Petty. A special word of

appreciation is owed to the Zen Center of Ashland that hosted our January 22 visit to the Tolman Creek Road structure.

## MINUTES OF REGULAR/BOARD MEETING MARCH 10, 2015

### SORAIL 3/10/15 MEMBERSHIP/BOARD MEETING

- **Membership Meeting** was called to order at 7:02 p.m.
- **New Business** N/A
- **Entertainment:** Allen Dobney – Kodachrome video
- **Board Meeting** Called to order at 7:29 p.m.
- **New Business:**
- Minutes from last meeting accepted, not read.
- **Treasurer's Report** Accepted
- **MedCo 4:** Nothing new
- **Food Stand:** Chris and Larry will work on cleaning and getting ready for opening day.
- **Newsletter:** Vere Perry passed away in January, will make note of it in April newsletter.
- **Website:** N/A
- **Butte Falls:** Possibly still going to work. Ric said he is going to try to sit in on Butte Falls Council meeting in April, needs an Operations Plan within about a week. Jerry will draw up draft for same.

- **Track Extension:** Allen said it is going well and they will be ready for opening day. They will have another work party on Saturday.
- **Parking:** The construction was delayed, possibly sometime in May will begin and we will lose parking spots. No plan is yet in place for parking.
- **Old Business:** Donation of Caboose: Discussion on the caboose donation, was decided too much work and expense. Dan will let Tom Dill know we do not want it.
- **Good of Order:** Water turned on in park. (My notes had gotten dropped in rain and are blurred if this is not correct, I apologize.)

Jerry moved that we adjourn.  
 Seconded by Ric.

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### UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

*If you know of any other events that should be added to our newsletter, please email, ([c-manley@charter.net](mailto:c-manley@charter.net)), or call, (541-291-1705), with the details.*

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