

Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass

Truckee Roundhouse



History

“Needed to house and maintain the engines of the Central Pacific Railroad during construction of the trans-Sierra crossing, an enclosed wooden round house was constructed here in 1868. It was razed by fire in March of 1869. A 16 stall wooden structure

was built that year as the maintenance facility of the C.P.R.R., Truckee Division. Another fire in 1876 resulted in construction of a 22 stall granite and wooden structure. This served thru 1942, when it was officially retired, a victim of the end of the steam era and consolidation of maintenance at other locations. The round houses were home to helper engines, fire trains and the first rotary snow plow in the Sierra.**

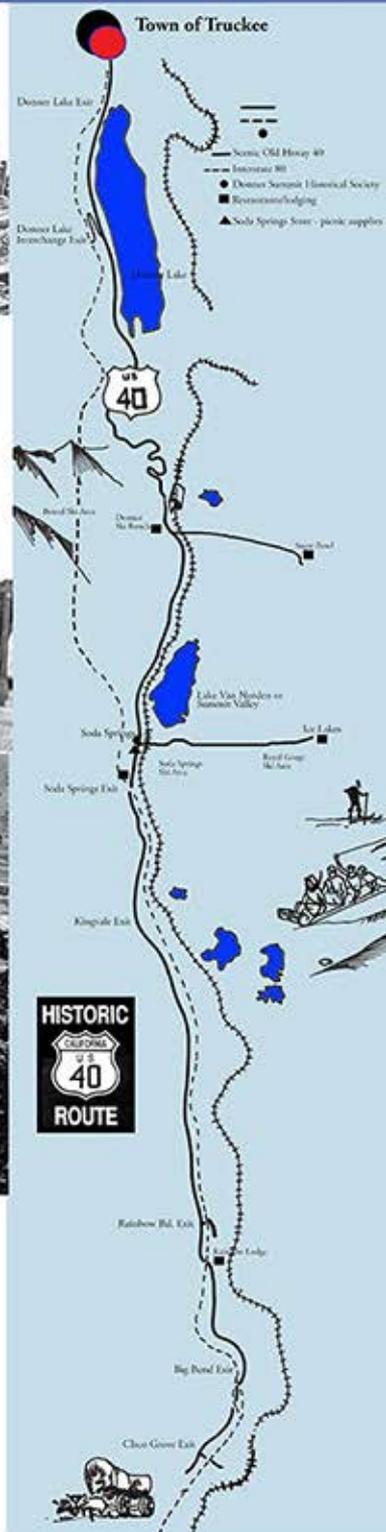


A Good Story

At 5 A.M. on May 2, 1904 the Norris and Rowe circus train was climbing to the summit when some circus wagons got snagged as the train entered a tunnel and

fell off the train. Newspaper headlines reported the result: “Ferocious Animals are Free”, “Wreck Liberates Circus Animals” and “beasts... were liberated.” At the summit the missing cages were discovered. A special train was sent back to retrieve the circus wagons and a posse formed to gather up the animals. Most animals were gathered with no problem although a snake charmer had to be employed to get a boa down from the snowshed rafters. A tiger scared some tramps but he was locked up in the summit depot waiting room. Some monkeys were left behind, having scampered off.

The Truckee Republican reported on May 4 that two monkeys had apparently found the snow on the summit too cold and found the warmest place nearby, under the locomotive. The stowaways traveled to Rocklin and then back to the summit and down to Truckee where they were discovered. The monkeys refused to come out and “They were finally taken out in the local Round House by a liberal application of smoke.” Presumably the simians were given tickets to join their friends who had gone off to Marysville.



Things to do right here

around Truckee. The snowplow was used to keep the tracks open during Truckee’s heavy snow years. The wrecking crane was used to clear wrecks from Truckee on east past Sparks into Nevada.

Explore the Railyard, take a walking tour of downtown Truckee, visit the Truckee Donner Historical Society. Go to the Pocket Park just east of here and see the rotary snowplow and the railroad wrecking crane. Both were used

*Original wording of the commemorative plaque placed by Chief Truckee, E. Clampus Vitus Chapter No. 3691, August 10, 1991.