

## Carson City Historical Society

1207 North Carson Street, Carson City, NV

Mailing address: 112 North Curry, Carson City, NV 89703

August 2021



### A Message from Sue Ballew, President:

Welcome August! The months seems to go by so swiftly. We have great news. We have a new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Liz Leisek Cain. She has many wonderful, innovative and fresh ideas. If you were at the open house last month, Liz is the one who brought in flowers from her garden. Please see the above image.

This weekend the **Carson City Historical Society is hosting the "Open Studios" Stop (one of 11 stops) #4 at the Carriage House on August 21 and 22.**

The artist, Ronnie Rector who painted artwork for two of the "Women of Eagle Valley," will be there with her other paintings and will do a demonstration. Open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be music by Mylo McCormick from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. both days. I hope you can join us.

**The Foreman-Roberts House** will be open those two days from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. for tours. There is no cost for these events. Donations are accepted at the Foreman-Roberts House. COVID restrictions apply. Please wear a mask.

Also in this issue is an article, "**Here Comes the Train,**" that I wrote for the Nevada Appeal at the time of Carson City's Sesquicentennial.

### Upcoming events:

**Open Studios Tour**, sponsored by Jazz and Beyond. At the Carriage House, 1207 North Carson, will be Ronnie Rector, artist, and Mylo McCormick, solo acoustic guitar (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.). It is stop No. 4. Hours are **10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., August 21-22.**

**Zoom Lecture.** 9/16/21, 7:30 p.m. - Samantha Szesciorka - "Long Riding." Samantha is the Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations at American Discovery Trail; the Nevada State Coordinator; Assistant Curator at the Wilbur D. May Center; and a Long Rider at Nevada Discovery Ride. She is a former Army journalist and moved to Nevada in 2007. She fell in love with the wild horses and the Silver State. To encourage people to consider wild horse adoption, she set out of the first "Nevada Discovery Ride." The public can follow her progress on [NevadaDiscoveryRide.com](http://NevadaDiscoveryRide.com). The lecture is free and open to the public. For information about attending, please send an email to [Dbugli@aol.com](mailto:Dbugli@aol.com) or contact David Bugli at 775-883-4154, and he will provide you with a meeting link (or a meeting ID with passcode).

**Board Meeting** - September 13 in the Carriage House at 3:45 p.m. Please comply with COVID guidelines and wear a mask.

**Carriage House Events - The “Notable Women of Eagle Valley”** exhibit will be held the last Sunday of each month (except August) from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. through Nevada Day.

**Open House:** The Foreman-Roberts House will be open the last Sunday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

### **Donate Through AmazonSmile**

**Help fund the Carson City Historical Society through your purchases on Amazon.com.** Simply type in the name: **smile.amazon.com**

in the browser bar when you make an Amazon purchase, then search and/or select

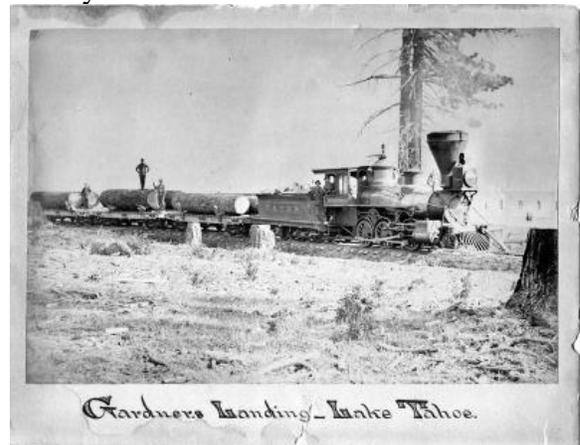
**Carson City Historical Society** as your nonprofit, and you’re all set! A percentage of your purchases automatically comes back to help fund CCHS. Every little bit helps. Because of the COVID pandemic we have not been able to do fundraisers and have not had income other than dues. I would like to thank our Treasurer Kiyoshi Nishikawa for setting up AmazonSmile for us.

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#### **2021 Officers:**

Sue Ballew, President  
Liz Cain, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Travis Legatzke, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
David Bugli, Secretary  
Kiyoshi Nishikawa, Treasurer  
Andi Fant, Membership  
Kat Long, Exhibits  
Donna McLaren, Facilities

**The Virginia and Truckee will be open and running again.** If you want to do a little time travelling, it would be the perfect event. After 18 months since the last excursion roundtrip, rides from Carson City to Virginia City will start Saturday, August 28 at 10 a.m. There will be a ceremony and festivities at the Eastgate Depot. Trips will run through October 1, followed by the return of the Polar Express. For more information on tickets go to [VTrailway.com](http://VTrailway.com) or call (775) 686-9037. Here is a little history.



The Ormsby  
(courtesy wnhpc.com)

### **Here Comes the Virginia & Truckee...**

By Sue Ballew

The beginning of the railroad in Carson City was the time that everyone had waited for. It meant freedom to travel within the state and across the United States. Our community was excited; businesses could work quickly in transporting needed goods, hauling ore, wood and supplies for the Comstock. The V & T right-of-way had been graded by February of 1869 and so by September 28, 1869, it was ready for the rail.

On September 28, 1869, the Carson Daily Appeal reports on the laying of the first rail:

*This morning at 7 o'clock, the first rail of the Virginia and Carson Railway will be laid. This commencement of the actual construction of the iron road will take place on that part of the grade, near the Mint, where the company's first locomotive is standing. We suggested to Superintendent Yerington that 7 o'clock was a pretty early hour for this important ceremony, but he seems to think that business comes before pleasure and that it won't pay to keep the rail layers idle to suit the convenience of a later rising public. So be on hand early, all ye who want to see this part of the performance.*

To those in the once quiet Carson City, it must have been a strange site, but nonetheless, very exciting. On September 30, 1869, the Appeal reports with pride that it seems the locomotive has always belonged here:

*The Steam Horse goes snorting over the track, up and down, past the Mint and out toward the sagebrush, just as naturally as if he were here when the Washoe first camped in this valley. It looks a good deal like earnest to see the locomotive puffing along through the town. Must be now that the kingdom's coming.*

Our Governor in 1869 was Henry G. Blasdel. He and his wife were taking advantage of the new mode of transportation. There was still no rail connection between Carson City and Reno so the Governor would have had to taken a stage to Reno from Carson City:

*We understand now that Governor Blasdel and his wife will leave here this morning for a visit to the Atlantic States. They will go by the Pacific Railway.*

Once the V & T was started, there was continuous progress with Superintendent Yerington in charge. On October 24, 1869, the progress of the track is noted:

*The progress of our railroad—There have been twelve miles of track laid on the V. & T. R.R., including the two miles from Carson street up to the end of the tie and wood sluice. This is about half the length of the entire road. Superintendent Yerington expects to lay, to-morrow, the mile and a half of track. This will take the work some distance beyond the Mound House. He also expects to reach the mouth of the big tunnel by the 1st of November. All the iron for the main road is already there so that there is no probability of the completion of the track being delayed beyond the middle of next month. The iron for the tracks is on the way—from England—we believe.*

Perhaps as if to celebrate the birthday of Nevada on October 31, 1869, the announcement is made that, “*The V. & T. R. Co.'s new locomotive ‘Ormsby’ has arrived here and will be set up and put in running order very soon.*”

On November 12, 1869, Alf Doten's diary reflects the celebration in Virginia City as completion of the rail continues there ... *at 1 p.m. the track layers finished the railroad to Crown Point Ravine, & at 5 p.m. in presence of big crowd the two construction trains passed over the big trestle bridge--Brass band playing on first locomotive--flags flying everywhere--big gun of Fort Homestead firing, whistles all blowing, people, cheering, and hell of a noise generally--After both trains passed over, speeches were made by J.P. Jones, Wm. Sharon and lot of cheers were given for RR...*

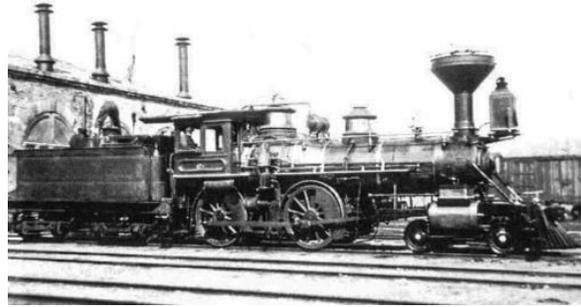
The people in Carson were celebrating the advent of the V. & T. to Carson, whether it be getting a new job or going on excursions as is reported on November 23, 1869:

*The Virginia and Truckee Railroad is a fixed fact. Personal—Mr. P. B. Campbell, master machinist and chief engineer of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, was presented on Sunday evening with a massive gold watch and an engineer's torch by his friends. The presentation took place at J. M. Daniels saloon, in Virginia City, and was a very happy affair.*

*Excursion party: This city was visited yesterday by a party of gentlemen consisting of D. O. Mills, of California, Messrs. Sharon, Tritle, Gillig, Requa, and others who came from Virginia City over the railroad which now connects the said city with our own town. The train which brought these gentlemen was, in fact, the first passenger train which has passed over the road. So the completion of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad is a fixed fact.*

Not everyone was happy with the trains, especially those running the stage. On December 8, 1869, this becomes apparent as fares are reduced: *Billy Wilson has no notion of being "telescoped" by the V.&T.R.R. locomotive—and he has put down his stage fare, as will be seen by looking at our advertising columns, to three dollars.*

The Virginia & Truckee ran in Carson City from September 1869 and ended service May 1950. Many of the locomotives were sold to the Hollywood studios for western movies.



The Inyo, #22 in front of the Carson City engine house. (courtesy Wnhpc.com)