

Then and now: Tahoe area rails 100+ years ago

Upon finding more historic photos of trains at Lake Tahoe, I contacted my friend Jeff Browne who is quite the railroad historian.



The lumber train operated in the 1800s in Lake Tahoe. Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

“The Carson and Tahoe Lumber and Fluming Company (aka Lake Tahoe narrow gauge RR) went from Glenbrook on the Tahoe East Shore and ended at Spooner Summit where a giant log flume sent the lumber down to a mill south of Carson City. You can’t hike it from Glenbrook due to the gated golfing community, but you can access the right-of-way by hiking down toward Skunk Harbor,” Browne said.

I did this in 1977 and found bits and pieces of the old railroad, including some interesting old square nails.

The track was removed in 1899.



Trains common over mountain passes used to be common in this area.
Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

The steam engine Glenbrook is on display at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City. More about its colorful history is available **online**.



Flumes were used as one form of transport of logs harvested in Tahoe.

Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical
Society

The flume went from Spooner Summit down toward about where Costco stands today.



Remnants of trestles and other railroad parts were found decades after they were dismantled. Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Milled lumber was hauled by train from Carson City to Virginia City.



Sierra Nevada Wood & Lumber Co. headquartered in Overton was also known as Hobart Mills. Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society



That rail bed now is the popular bike path from Tahoe City. Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

“The railroad was a bridge line between Truckee (the SP) and Tahoe City, and roughly paralleled the Truckee River,” Browne said.

– *Bill Kingman*