

MAY 7 - SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

The drive to South Lake Tahoe this morning was interesting. We left Carson City (4,400') and we started to climb, and climb, and climb some more. We crested Spooner summit at 7,146' and dropped down into South Lake Tahoe.



You can see the low cloud cover which really made everything look grey.

A short while later we arrived in downtown South Lake Tahoe which is, although we haven't been to Whistler for a few years, a more spread out version. Hotels, casinos, motels, B&Bs dotted the landscape. And people were everywhere. We couldn't help imagining what the place will look like in the summer.



After turning around, we headed for a Starbucks we had seen on our way into town. There we met a most interesting couple - Loy Anne and Jerry were behind us in the lineup. Loy Anne turned around and "hit" me with her purse. She apologized profusely to which I answered "I thought I was being accosted and I was looking forward to it". We both laughed. We chatted in the lineup then with coffee in hand, Jen and I found the only table available - a table for 4. I motioned to Loy Anne and asked them to join us. Turns out these guys were just married - they are on their honeymoon, and unfortunately, last night, their hotel room was absolutely awful. They couldn't wait to leave this morning.

What a lovely couple. Jerry told his story about being drafted years ago. Pay for a PFC was \$26 a month, but if he wanted to join the paratroopers, he could triple his pay. So he did. Loy Anne worked as a flight attendant for American Airlines for 5 years, based out of NYC. We finished our coffees and the newlyweds headed off for breakfast. We wish them well; they were a lot of fun to be with for a few minutes in their new married life together.

As we left the Tahoe area, the weather began to improve.



Here we are heading back down the hill to the valley below.



On the way back from Tahoe we stopped at the Carson City library. The library in Dayton did not have the fastest wifi so I wanted to download a few movies if we want to watch one in the evening.

When we got back to camp, and after tea, we went for a walkabout. I found this explanation of the Pony Express very interesting. It lasted only 19 months!

The Pony Express

A Romantic Adventure in Business

- How long did it operate?
- Was it a profitable business?
- What ended the operation of the "pony"?
- The Pony Express, known as the "pony", traveled between where and where?

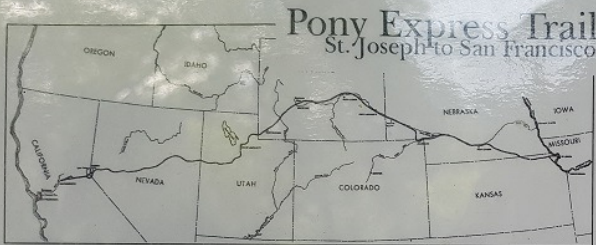


"Now she is to become the connecting link between the extremes of the continents. For the first time in the history of America, mail will go by an overland route from east to west."

Major M. Jeff Thompson, who later became a famous Confederate general, the day he initiated the Pony Express.

It lasted only 19 months, from April 1860 until October 1861, but the fascination with the Pony Express lives on. It took 80 experienced riders (paid \$25 per week), 500 horses and more than 190 stations to get the mail 2,000 miles between San Francisco and St. Joseph, Missouri.

The Pony Express was a fast, efficient organization with postage averaging \$1-\$5 but it was not a successful financial venture. During this same time period the trans-continental telegraph was being built. The telegraph was completed on October 24, 1862 and could send a message in minutes rather than weeks. It solved the communication needs that had created the Pony Express.



Mochila

Mail was carried in a mochila, a well-tailored leather vest that had four stiff leather boxes sewn to it and fit snugly over the saddle. Mail was wrapped in oiled silk and the pockets were locked for protection.



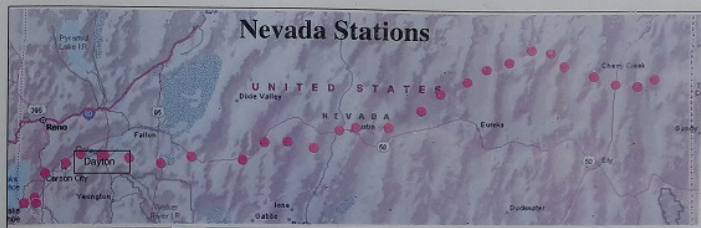
Mochila

The Telegraph meets the Pony

Four days after the completion of the transcontinental telegraph, on October 28, 1861, the colorful adventure that was the Pony Express ended.

The Rider's Oath

"While I am the employ of A. Majors, I agree not use profane language, not to get drunk, not to gamble, not to treat animals cruelly and not to do anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman. And I agree, if I violate any of the above conditions, to accept my discharge without any pay for my services."



Tomorrow we head south on Hwy 97 towards Walker Lake, NV and some BLM lands. See you there!