

# SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD

Number 81

Cal Poly

February 2000

## On Track

With your director,

Ed Carnegie



**H**appy New Year and a Y2K 2U2 we won't have to be using that phrase much more! I'm happy to report that we went through the New Year's Eve celebration with no power losses, no calamities and a great crowd of well over 200 came to ride the "starlight express" to bid bon voyage to 1999 and welcome in the year 2000.

The SPRR had a very enjoyable New Year's Eve dinner in our newly remodeled, warm machine shop. What a pleasant way to celebrate the accomplishments of our volunteers in remodeling one of our buildings. Who'd a thought a machine shop under candlelight and real tablecloths would provide such ambience for a fine dinner, served with an excellent peach punch provided by Ken and Maureen Peterson? We served about 40 plus people before we all ventured down to College Station to begin the real celebration.

As the evening progressed more and more visitors arrived to celebrate in the festivities. The majority that joined our membership are our neighbors from up and down Swanton Rd. and then a few more arrived from the great metropolis of nearby Davenport. All in all we estimated that approximately 200 or a little bit more arrived to help us celebrate. As usual, Ken McCrary supplied copious amounts of his special recipe of hot cider, and the warmth from the bonfire and the clear pleasant evening made for a very enjoyable evening. Our train for the evening consisted of our diesel, pulling a consist of seven cars south and the 1912 steam engine pulling the train north. The engineers for the evening were Marty, Randy, and Tom. Fireman were: Ken Fisher, Geoff Tobin.

Conductor/

brakeman which alternated task each way were Bill Engelman, Pete McFall, Cosmo, with assistance from Elmer Stone and myself. Our public dispatcher for the evening sounded so professional--in fact several comments heard were "and where do I fasten my seat belt?" Bill Engelman thanks for a great job on the PA system. Not to mention we also thank you for the radio system installed in the 1912. Our engineers say it really worked good.

After finally getting everything put away around 3am, everyone was ready to retire. New Year's Day was very pleasant with only a slight activity in and around the remodel of the Cal Barn. On Thursday and Friday--Jan. 6 & 7, Ron, Tom and myself commenced work on the north wall of the Cal Barn. As work has progressed on this structure stories keep emerging as to the historical significance of this building. After showing our neighbor Bud McCrary of what we were doing he commented on how this really brought back memories. In fact he stated that when he was about four years old he could remember his mother doing a hula dance in this building as it was then used as a community meeting and dancehall. I'm sure, as time goes on we will hear more stories about this building. Any of you that may have information about the use and/or history of this building please let us know so that we can preserve an accurate historical record of this building to the Swanton Valley. As an example, scattered throughout the roof structure is the name BB Swanton. Who or what is BB Swanton? When was this building built? Why is the outside of one building, attached to the inside of this building? --Inquiring minds want to know!

For the first workday of the New Year, Jan. 9-10, three crews were working on various projects. In the car barn under Fitz's leadership the side

panels were installed and welded in place in the hopper car. The inspection rack was put to use to look under the 502. In the machine shop, the south wall was cleaned off and insulation and paneling were beginning to get installed. And in the Cal Barn, finishing touches were accomplished on the foundation forms for the north wall. Bright and early Monday morning, seven yards of concrete arrived on site, where Ron, Tom, Fitz, myself and three eager interns from the Swanton Ranch worked the concrete and finished pouring the track extension into the



**PUBLICITY  
AND  
EVENT COORDINATION**  
Mary Ann Carnegie

**Calendar of events**

Saturday	Februar	12	Workday
Sunday	Februar	13	Board Meeting
Saturday	March	13	Workday
Saturday	April	08	Workday in preparation
Sunday	April	09	Al Smith's Day/Run
Saturday	May	13	Workday
Saturday	June	10	Workday

**D**epending on the weather, and projects that we may undertake, we will hopefully start having our two work weekends a month beginning in May/June. That means the second and fourth Saturday/Sunday of each month. We will keep you posted. However, if any of you want to contribute time other than on the work weekends you are more than welcome to come when it best fits your schedule. Just be sure to let the Director, Ed Carnegie know that you will be on the premises.

April is not that far around the corner and our "Opening" railroad event of the year will be Al Smith Day. Mark your calendar for April 9--Sunday. There will be lots of sprucing up pre-preparations to do the day before at our scheduled workday.

Safety Simon Says:

**Informed is better than  
deformed .**

**Don't get side tracked**

**No Dues?                      No news!**

**Notes from the Secretary  
Vera McLean**

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**W**e have received word this month that two of our members have died. On behalf of the members of the railroad society, I would like to extend our sincere sympathy to the families of Ray Murphy and Elmer Stone.

Ray was a student of Al Smith's at Campbell High School and especially enjoyed reliving old days with Al at the open houses. He became involved with the railroad when his son attended Cal Poly. We are grateful to Mrs. Murphy for her generous donation to the Society in Ray's name. Thank you for thinking of us. He will be missed.

Elmer Stone will also be missed by his many friends not only at Swanton but also at the other railroad groups to which he belonged. Even after his retirement, he was always willing to share his expertise on track matters and the skills he shared will be passed on by those who benefited from his teaching. On many occasions, more time was spent in listening to Elmer's stories than in working on the tracks. Even during several years of poor health, Elmer would make a point of coming to Swanton to be with his friends.

Since he died just before the newsletter was put to bed, we had very little time to do anything more than make a short announcement. If anyone has any stories of Elmer that they would like to send in to us, we will be happy to share them in future newsletters.

## Down Behind the Railway

With your president, air monkey, and carbarnist;

Reynold 'Fitz' FitzPatrick

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**Opportunity!** As the permit process to repair the washout of 1998 winds its way through various agencies we have the time to attend to the house-keeping chores that had been deferred due maintenance-of-way demands.

You may have noticed the OSH caboose, which houses most of our historical artifacts, and the Santa Fe caboose need cleaning, paint, and repair. Jesse Bregman and his son Jonathen are taking the lead on painting the OSH caboose, but I'm sure they could use some help. Any woodworkers out there? The wood casement windows are badly in need of repair. Bring your tape measure and look it over. Lou Haughney, our Historian, spends much more time than just the workdays in research and organization and we can't ask him to do more. If your knack is related to things historical, Lou's your man to see.

The machine shop is getting a long overdue face-lift. Not a major reconstruction, but rather a good cleaning and painting, adding insulation to the walls, new shelving - - all that housekeeping that hasn't happened in a while. It will need paint by next workday. We've have the paint, brushes and rollers; all we need now are your hands. And then there is the labeling and reshelving of locomotive parts. Want to learn what all those parts and pieces are? What better way than to get your hands on an injector that isn't attached to an engine. Come see Geoff Tobin, he'll set you square.

And did you read the proposed changes to the bylaws? What do you think?

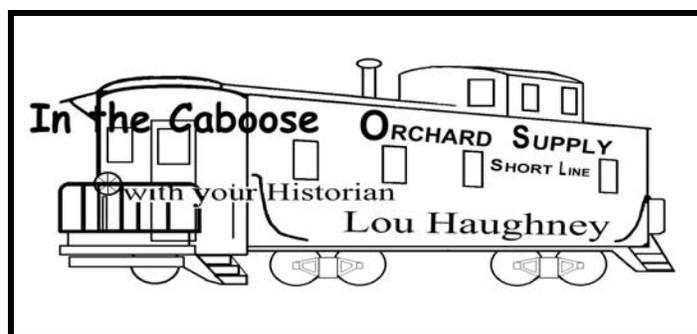
I believe it reflects the needs and desires of the members of our evolving Society. I welcome any comment regarding the proposed changes. Send me, the Secretary, or any other officer your thoughts and we'll share them with the rest of the membership.

Your new Executive Board will meet for their first time Sunday, February 13th. You are wel-

come to attend the meeting. We hope to have some priorities attached to the various projects that are necessary to the operation of the railway (Mission Critical -- even though I've been retired for a while some of the buzz hangs on.) and in March enlist you as a champion of a project.

Notice a trend here? We need you to become active members - - it's what keeps the railroad alive. Dues ( which, by the way, are due by March) only slightly exceed the cost of publishing the newsletter, it's participation of members that maintains and operates this historic railway.

As quoted by David McLean, "Share what you know, learn what you don't."



### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Readers have responded to questions I raised in recent articles about the layout of the Overfair Railroad and about the English-built locomotive Gwen owned successively by Billy Jones and Quentin Jervis. Thanks to all for contributing this information. Your comments, clarifications, and corrections are always welcomed and encouraged.

### Maps of the Overfair Railway at the Panama Pacific International Exposition

In the December 1999 SPRS newsletter, I mentioned the need for a large-scale map of the PPIE grounds that shows clearly the Overfair Railway's track layout and, particularly, any passenger loading platforms interspersed between the three terminals. Two SPRS members quickly responded. Bob Parkinson found a large-scale map published in the San Francisco Chronicle on February 21, 1915, the day after the Exposition opened. Then, Pete McFall brought in copies of a similar map and some contemporary newspaper accounts about the Overfair Railway.

Both sets of maps seem to be enlarged, modified versions of the map appearing in Todd's "Official History of the P.P.I.E...."; the map in that book is too small to be legible in regard to details. The former maps show plainly the location of three platforms for loading passengers throughout the grounds. They are placed about ½ mile apart along the waterfront between terminals at the southeast corner of the Machinery Palace and at the southeast corner of the huge, multi-purpose aviation, drill, athletic, and polo field.

Included in this group of maps is a detailed sectional map of the facilities and exhibits at the "Department of Livestock". This map shows clearly that this terminal allowed easy access to both the grandstands along the south side of the multi-purpose fields and to the Livestock exhibits. So, this terminal would have been quite busy. The sectional map identifies a building next to the terminal and turntable as a "Depot and Restaurant". Earlier, I had thought that the track leading to that terminal was just a spur line while the mainline track continued along the waterfront to the distant western end of the drill field where a second railway yard was placed, but nothing of interest to the Exposition's visitors. Now, with this new information, the layout of the Overfair Railway can be redefined. The eastern terminus of the Overfair railway was located at the southeast corner of the Machinery Palace and just to the north of the Panama Canal building.

The mainline went north to the waterfront, then west along the waterfront for about 1½ miles, past the three intermediate passenger "stops", and turned south to the terminus between the athletic field and the stockyards. A spur line continued west along the waterfront side of the athletic field and turned inland to its western terminus and yard at the far end of the Exposition's grounds. There would be little need for the visitors to go to that distant westernmost terminus because there was, besides the railway's yard, only the Exposition's storage yard, garbage incinerator, and the Fort Point Lifesaving Station.

We could test this hypothesis if we could find a schedule, brochure, or flyer distributed at the Expedition by the Overfair Railway. Does any collector of PPIE material have or know of such an item?

### **More on the Locomotive "Gwen"**

#### **Redhouse Reservations**

The Ranch Director has been working with the Railroad to ensure that we have some space available at the Redhouse for our workdays. However, I do need to know at least one week in advance whether room reservations are needed or not. That way I can better coordinate with Wally Mark to make sure that things move smoothly. If you do not call in to reserve a room you may not have a place to stay.

The article in the January 2000 issue about the Jervis Estate's sale mentioned that a English built tank locomotive, Gwen, was sold to a buyer not identified by Al Smith in his notes on the sale's inventory list. I asked, "What happened to Gwen"? Vera and Andy McLean immediately replied. They saw Gwen at the Railfair99 in June last year and talked briefly to its current owners. That clue led the three of us onto more information about Gwen. The Railfair's roster of "Visiting Railroad Equipment..." has this entry:

*John Knowles 0-4-0T Gwen (1920 Hunslet) from Richard & Patty Farmer, Northridge, California, 18" gauge.*

Then we found an entry about Gwen in the Steam Locomotive Directory of North America, Vol. 2, (1988 edition). Gwen was built by the Hunslet Engine Co., Ltd., for the John Knowles & Co., Ltd, Woodville, England. It was sold about 1958 to Billy Jones at Los Gatos, California, then again in 1960 to the Overfair Corp. (i.e., Shaw, Franklin, and Jervis). Finally, it was sold in 3/83 to Richard Farmer.

Andy and Vera reported that Gwen was run on a short section of track at Railfair99, next to "kiddyland" near the grandstands. Two Farmer brothers were present, plus a couple of retirees from Hunslet. One of them said that Gwen was used in England at a clay mining operation. Andy adds that Billy Jones thought he could use Gwen on his 18" gauge track because it would need only a quick startup and shutdown. Its rigid wheel base, however, was not compatible with the tight curves on Jones' original Wildcat RR layout.

What would have happened to Gwen if it had a 19" gauge? Would it have ended up at the Swanton Pacific Railroad? Some of Billy Jones/ Wildcat RR associates may be able to recall more information about the Gwen at Los Gatos.

*Notes: The maps mentioned above and photographs of Gwen are available in the SPRS archives located in Al Smith's OSH caboose. MacDermot's engineering drawing of the loading platform is also on hand.*

NOTICE: If you didn't receive an e-mail message this month please send me your e-mail address.

Thanks, Vera

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