

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 124

Cal Poly

September 2003

ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

With Fall fast approaching, it has been nice these past few workdays to have such nice warm weather at Swanton. In fact, at times it had been a little bit too warm to work out on the track, so, we concentrated on working on the cars inside the shops. Much of the progress and projects worked on these past weekends have been acknowledged in other articles in this edition, so my comments will be brief or put mostly in pictures—which are worth a 1000 words.

Sept. will be a busy month with one workday followed by two operational days in Sept., & then one in Oct. We have a lot of little maintenance things to take care of during the workday in Sept. so bring your gloves & workshoes. With three operational days this will provide a great opportunity for practical “hands-on” operating experiences. We will team up new trainees with experienced operators to provide a meaningful one-on-one training. For those of you just starting, please review the brakeman/conductor training manual because it is important to rely on clear, distinct hand signals during training operations.

Looking forward to meeting with many of you. Hopefully some of you that have not been able to regularly attend will find some time to lend a hand during the upcoming events. Cal Poly Day was established to recognize students, faculty, staff, alumni & friends of Cal Poly. I especially like to recognize alumni at this gathering. So if you know any alumni that have not received an invite, please feel free to copy & distribute the enclosed invitation.

Down Behind the Railway

With your president, air monkey, and carbarnist;
Reynold "Fitz" FitzPatrick
RGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons

In case you haven't noticed, Mars is at its closest in its 60,000 year cycle (I don't recall Ares so bright in the sky, but my grand kids think I should.), so it falls to us to harvest some great pictures. Did that sentence included all the current topics? OK. Ever consider a steam-powered spacecraft? Come to think of it, liquid hydrogen and oxygen as shuttle fuel - hmmm.

Back down to Earth; Geoff has a new TIG welder over in the machine shop and it sure do look pretty, he says if you are a good gas welder you should be a great TIG welder. I do like the thought of restoring historical parts with modern technology. Come on over and check it out.

Over in the carbarn, EdSki., your Keystone passenger car specialist, has come to the conclusion that this first restoration is just for practice. As individual pieces were removed and inspected, it became obvious that the remaining cars should be stripped down to their bare bones before attempting any repairs. It seems that the damage caused by being submerged is more extensive than thought, and while mostly cosmetic if left uncorrected could become a structural concern. EdSki is close to getting the first one out the door to be cleaned and painted. A few gussets need to be made and welded in place. Rich kindly donated his scarfing tip for the Oxy-Acetylene torch. This allows for cutting off offending pieces without cutting into the base metal.

Ed, Director and engineer, has converted the ballast car chutes to pneumatically operation and by Crom you should see the copper tube, it's a work of industrial art. Bruce, you have to come by and see the end result.

Bob has been cleaning parts and pieces of the 1913 to the point of distraction and he gets a big gold star for his efforts. Randy, your VP for Engines and Rolling Stock, is working on a PERT type chart for the work to be accomplished to restore the 1913 to operating condition. Once that chart is posted it would be grand if you claim a defined task as your own. If you don't know how to accomplish a particular task, come talk with Randy, Ed, or me and we will arrange some training. Remember, that is one of our functions - teach what you know, learn what you don't.

Housekeeping, that's what industrial folks call maintenance, is an indispensable part of our operation. And it doesn't require heavy lifting, that's you Don. Come on over and lend a hand, tell a few stories and hear a few new ones.

And here's The McLean, cleaning up the right-of-way and initiating a couple of new projects (just when we slowed Ed down). That old tank car, which used to reside near San Vicente Junction, is to become a water car for the redwood groves, and the other frame - stay tuned. The water car will probably require the three axle trucks we have stashed away and need a handful of work.

So...things to do. Help on the up coming run days - Land Trust, Cal Poly, RMC Lone Star. Housekeeping, cleaning,

painting, oiling. semi-major tasks in rebuilding the 1500 and 1913. Become a conductor, fireman, and engineer. Find a niche that suits your need. We've got them all.

And if your knees need help consider a poleyn (poh-lahn)



Train crew for the day

Observation Car From our members

In The Roundhouse

The last several months have seen much progress in the Mechanical Dept. of our railroad. The new ballast car is really shaping up due to the continuing efforts of Ed, Fitz, Richard, Pete, and Andy. A bit more "tweaking" and it should be ready to paint. Mark and Corinne spent the entire Aug. workday cleaning more grime, loose paint, and rust off of the 1913's frame. The "old girl" is quite close to the start of re-assembly. Some sub-projects that could use the attention of dedicated volunteers are cleaning and painting of trailing truck parts, fitting and alignment of those parts, thorough cleaning and painting of the drivers and then fitting in the frames. And that's just for starters!



Corrin working on the locomotive 1500

The 1500 was given a rest last month, but we anticipate not neglecting her for long. Out on the right-of-way, the gandy dancers continue to level and align the rough spots in the track--please see Ed's column for the list of "the usual suspects". I anticipate replacing some switch ties soon,

and this should be a great chance for some of our "young bucks" to pick up lots of tricks-of-the-trade from the "old heads".

In the Stores Dept., we took inventory of the many pipe fittings and nipples we were lacking, and placed a rather massive order to re-stock. I'm presently dipping these in rust-proofing before placing them in storage. Also trying to enhance the organization of things by placing all 300 psi items in yellow bins, and keeping the red bins for 150 psi rated stock.

I hope this gives you all some idea of where we're headed in the near term. Please feel free to call or E-mail me with questions or to join in the fun. (831) 425-5065 or JRJ1914@cs.com

Yours in Training, Randy



BAGER set up



BAGER demo
BAGER Day at SPRR

Hi folks

Many thanks to you all for making it another great outing at Swanton Pacific. The final count was 92 people. Great job by Bruce, the Shortline, and Harlan with the Live Steam. Many thanks also to my barbecue crew including Marti, Arleen, Melinda, Barb, Debbie, George B. and Larry (the meat man). We even had a few strangers who were traveling down Swanton Rd and were stopped by Arleen and were invited in. Also noticed the new Station Master, Matt Cunningham, who

did a bang up job. Many thanks to Ed Carnegie and his train crew who were great hosts providing train rides all day. Thanks also to Catherine (wife) and Martha at the reception table. Hope I didn't forget anyone but it was a great team effort. Bob



1914 approaching the turntable

REMINDER: BEFORE LEAVING SWANTON'S PREMISES, PLEASE, BE SURE TO FILL OUT & SIGN THE WORK LOG FOR HOURS YOU WORKED. THE WORK LOG IS IN THE MACHINE SHOP NEXT TO THE PHONE.

IMPORTANT news re: Redhouse: Right now we do not have access for overnight accommodations in the Redhouse. If you are so inclined to stay over, I suggest that you consider a tent to campout for the weekend. Please keep me informed of your plans.

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY

Mary Ann Carnegie

Sept.	13/14	Sat./Sun	WorkDay Weekend
Sept.	21	Sun.	LAND TRUST RUN
Sept.	27	Sat.	pre event prep day
Sept.	28	Sun.	CAL POLY DAY RUN
Oct.	04	Sat.	RMC/Lonestar./RUN

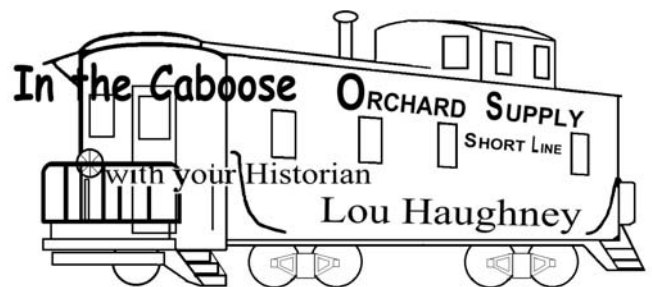
What a busy few weeks we have had in Aug., but the busiest are yet to come. Sept. will be a month filled with many activities. The second Sat. (9/13) will be our regular work day for the month which will continue on through 'til Sun. (9/14). Most projects will center on getting things tidied up & ready for our guests attending the upcoming runs for the following three consecutive weekends.

The first Run, Sun. 9/21, is when the Santa Cruz Land Conservancy hosts their fund raising event. For those of you new to Swanton & to this event—it is something you won't want to miss. We provide the facilities, train rides all day, & are avail-able as hosts to answer questions or concerns re: the RR & ranch. They bring in entertainment, host a BBQ for a fee, & usually have anywhere from 600-1000 guests

filter through the grounds during the course of the day. It's a fun filled day & an amazing experience.

The following weekend, which is also our scheduled second work weekend, we host our very own Cal Poly Day. See the enclosed invitation—photocopy & share this with friends, but be sure to fill out & send in one for yourself. As hosts, we will be calling on as many of our volunteers that we can to assist in making this day successful. As usual we will need cooks for the BBQ, servers for food, parking directors, SPRR sales, ticket takers, cleanup crew, engineers, conductors, fireman, etc. etc. We're not finished yet. The following weekend, which is the first weekend in Oct. (Sat. 10/4) is when our special neighbor—RMC formerly Lonestar Cement Plant will have their company picnic . They provide a BBQ, etc. We provide rides & showcase the railroad..

Because we have three consecutive weeks in Sept. & then the first week in Oct., a "WEEKEND PASS" for a little R&R is warranted for all to observe for the normally scheduled second Sat. weekend in Oct.. Hope to see you during the next few weeks somewhere on the trails and rails.



Louis M. MacDermot and his steam launch *PETREL*

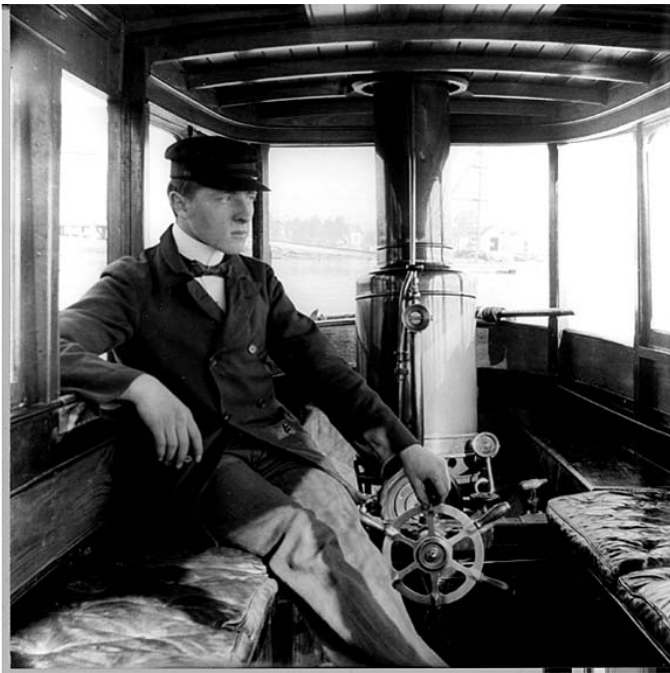
An informative set of early MacDermot photographs was found in Al Smith's collections of Overfair Railway items; namely, ten sepia prints, some with negatives, in an old trade envelope of the Gabriel Moulin Studios, then at 153 Kearney Street, San Francisco. A penciled inscription on the envelope read "Prints and Films [negatives] of Launch *PETREL*". These pictures depict MacDermot as a young man at a waterfront with his steam launch.

The first photo, (SPRS Archive No. 1890-1910 LMM-0008), is a close-up view of Louis MacDermot outfitted in the proper yachting blazer and cap and seated inside the cabin of the boat. A vertical boiler is located in the center of the cabin. No date is given on the photo nor on the envelope. MacDermot is definitely a young man, probably in his twenties. Since the U. S. Census records indicate that he was born in late 1877 or early 1878, this photo may have been taken between 1905 and 1910.

Did he design and build this boat? No positive evidence is available. The inventory of existing MacDermot drawings at the CSRM Library lists only two drawings pertaining to a

boat, an unidentified "20-horsepower boat engine". Those drawings are dated in June and July 1909; but, the name of the intended boat is not given in the drawings' titles. The earliest drawing in the CSRM Library is dated Mar. 1909; that drawing is entitled "New Shop for Louis M. MacDermot". Incomplete pages from his shop ledger indicate that he started operations of his machine shop in 1909 or early 1910. So whether or not he designed and built PETREL is a matter of speculation. The exterior and the interior views of the launch suggest that it may well have been a small-scale version of a larger passenger ferry boat; for example, the use of big windows to enclose the cabin.

This photograph of MacDermot inside the boat shows clearly a small vertical boiler with shining metal casings. The interior with its fittings and machinery reflect the neatness and the precision of MacDermot's style. The smoke stack extends about a foot through the ceiling. Painted white with a dark band around its top, the exterior part of the smoke stack is difficult to make out in exterior views of the launch.



Louis M. MacDermot inside his steam launch "Petrel", early 1900's

NOTES:

The Gabriel Moulin Studio, one of the "official photographers of the Panama Pacific International Exposition", still exists in San Francisco under the direction of Gabriel's descendants. Using the original negative, they expertly processed the portrait style photograph of MacDermot inside the launch.

From the Oxford American Dictionary:

"petrel - a kind of seabird that flies far from land."



MacDERMOT's LAUNCH *PETREL* in the early 1900's

View from the front of MacDermot's launch. Note the large tank in the front of the cabin. The mechanism barely visible against the rear window is probably the upper part of what is shown in the previous picture of MacDermot seated inside.

The reproduction of these photographs is one of the first results of a project to digitize our collection of historical photographs and documents. Over 100 old photographs have been scanned so far. Thanks to Peggy Kirby and Pete McFall for transferring the original material to digitized CD files. These digitized files and images will help the History Committee to organize and catalog more easily the material without disturbing repeatedly the original photos and documents, many of which are fragile or unique.

=====

B&W print from a copy negative of the original negative, processed by Gabriel Moulin Studios, San Francisco.

This pose is one of three in the same setting; compare 1890-1910 LMM-0005 and -0006.

Negatives and prints from the Al Smith collection.