

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

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ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

Now that we have started a new year we have a lot to look forward to and a lot to be proud of. This past year we had more volunteers contribute time and funds toward our efforts than ever before. 46 different individuals directed over 5,000 hours of volunteer efforts toward maintaining, operating, and improving the rolling stock, grounds, and buildings of the Swanton Pacific Railroad. A wide assortment of projects have been accomplished from pouring concrete in front of the round house, to installing a new septic tank and drain field, from repairing steam engines, to building new cars, and from track repair, to planting a new redwood grove. This has been a very productive year with many of our volunteers seeing something that needs to be done and stepping up and doing it. My hat goes off to all of you that have made this a banner year. Over the past 10 years, that we have been keeping records, 32,337 hours have been logged by 101 different individuals. Over 470 individuals have donated close to \$70,000 in cash toward the operation and maintenance of the Swanton Pacific Railroad. Our newsletter goes out to close to 300 people each month and to a few organizations that include Swanton News in their publications. I am amazed when I receive E-Mails and letters from people that want information about Swanton from all over the world.

This January the track crew stayed close to home and spent most of their time on a complete rebuild of the turntable. Some of the wood on the deck of the turntable was working loose and didn't look that good, so it was decided that it needed to be replaced. While the timbers were off it was a good time to clean and repaint the steel parts. Randy Jones took on the responsibility to see that all the materials were ready and to lead the refurbishing project. A decision was made to make the deck on both sides of the track wider in order to make it easier to walk past a locomotive when it is being turned.

The Car Barn crew was busy trying to finish up some projects. Progress was made on the water tank car by finishing the brake linkage and installing a hand brake. Marty volunteered to paint the water tank, as he wants to make it look like a firewater car that he painted in "G" scale. We will all be impressed when this project is completed. The February work weekend should see final details on this project. Also, the passenger car is getting ready to be sandblasted; and final touches (lettering) were placed on the hopper car.

The Machine Shop crew reworked some brake cylinders. Pete wants to have a couple of spare brake cylinders on hand for new projects, and for replacement if needed. Measuring on the driver bearings of 1913 was done to decide the next step in the assembly of that engine.

Our grounds crew did some much needed winter pruning and the never ending battle with the weeds. And then there are our Saturday night dinners that are turning into regular gourmet delights. So as you can see, there are many tasks for a variety of talents to be tapped into every weekend. No matter what your talents are (discovered or yet to be discovered) there is something that will challenge us all.

NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS received over the last month were as follows:

Chuck Andersen	Rio Del Mar
Carmen Gurule	Rio Del Mar
Harry Kenney	San Jose
John Niedziela	Hayward
Ernie Ortiz	Mt. View

On behalf of the entire organization, we welcome each of you into our "train family" & we certainly look forward to seeing you at some of our next events. Many of our supporters may not recognize you right away so please introduce yourselves so that we can get to better know you & vice versa.

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY

Mary Ann Carnegie

Feb.	14/15	Valentine's Day work weekend
	16	Presidents Day 3-day-weekend
March	13/14	St. Patrick's Day work weekend
April	3	Work Day getting ready for Sunday
April	4	AL SMITH DAY RUN [Palm Sun]
April	13/14	Easter weekend—

NO WORKDAY SCHEDULED

Time is flying by! Just think only 11 more months until Christmas—so start preparing. Until then let's just look a month or two ahead for some planning. Namely AL SMITH DAY scheduled for Sunday, April 4. This is also the FIRST weekend in the month—NOT the second. Because Easter Sunday falls on the second Sunday of the month this year we **WILL NOT HAVE A REGULARLY SCHEDULED WORK WEEKEND.** However, because Al's birthday is April 9 we will be celebrating the beginning of our "train running season" AKA AL SMITH DAY on Sunday, April 4—the next closest Sun. to what would have been his birthday. Sun., April 4. This also marks the beginning of daylight savings – we loose an hour, but gain more daylight! On Sat., April 3, we will be getting everything spruced up for the run. Mark your calendars.

Remember, too, that if any of you would like to entertain—feed that is, the gandy dancers after a Sat. work day, your generosity would be greatly appreciated. We are open for ideas of themed dinners, or just plain ole dinners—it all works for us. The upcoming 3-day weekend is Presidents and Valentines Day. Word has it that Martie Way will be providing the fixings for a nice dinner of sorts, but would very much like to know how many will be participating to better plan for the gala event. So please RSVP to her (510) 537-6152 or email m.way@comcast.net March will show a bit o' luck from the Irish with our annual corn beef dinner. We certainly hope that many of you will be able to participate in these gourmet delights. We always look forward to the fellowship and good conversations we share around the dinner table.

MAC

Culverts on the SPRR

By E. J. Carnegie

Over the past few years the track crew has installed numerous open culverts to divert drain water away from the rail bed. During the winter

one can really see the benefits from these culverts. In the past, when we have heavy rains, the track would be flooded by the moving waters. This would move a great amount soil and debris. Much of the soil was deposited on and in our track bed. This would produce mud track, which in a short time would cause the ties to rot out.



Andy looking at the track during a storm, Jan. 2, 2002



Flow through Daffodil Culvert, Jan. 1, 2004

The heavy rains two years ago washed over the tracks at the wye. The following Spring, the track at the wye was raised, and a culvert was installed at both ends of the wye. This year when the heavy rains came, the flooding waters had a path through the culvert, and did not cover the track. The flow through the culvert reduced the water height and stopped the rail bed from acting as a damn. The two photos were taken at almost the same spot, but two years apart.

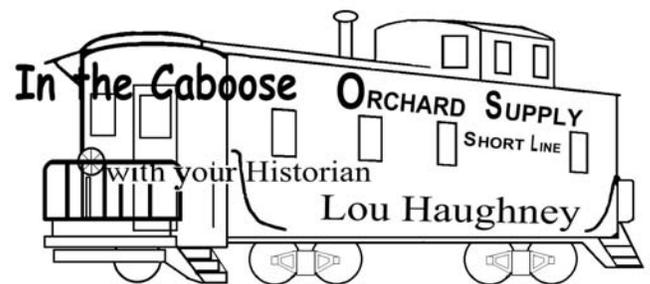


Andy observing the flow from the McNab Grove.

Culverts have also been constructed along the track to convey the runoff from the hills, past the track, and into an open field. Much of this flow will also flow through the Daffodil Culvert. The open culverts have been constructed so the track section over the culvert can be removed. This will allow a tractor to pass through the culvert to remove any sediment that may build up.



Lettering added the final touches



MacDERMOT AND THE OVERFAIR RAILWAY AT THE ALAMEDA COUNTY ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, part 2.

By Lou Haughney

Here are more photographs of the move of the Overfair Railway equipment and its subsequent operation by MacDermot at the Alameda County Zoological Gardens (now known as the Oakland Zoo) in the early 1940's.



Rebuilding underway on turntable

IMPORTANT news re: Redhouse: Right now we have minimum access for overnight accommodations. Please keep me informed of your plans.



Loading passengers, Nov. 1940

The first photo is another view of preparing the passenger cars for transfer to the new location in

early November 1940. This picture shows how the passenger cars were stored in the open on the estate's grounds. The MacDermot mansion in the background has signs of neglected, old age.

The second photo was prominently displayed in the *Oakland Tribune* of Nov. 10, 1940. It accompanied a lengthy article on the transfer of the rolling stock to the Oakland Zoo. The picture's caption in the newspaper reads:

"Do you remember the 'elephant trains' of the 1915 fair? The builder and engineer, L. M. MacDermot, is shown at the throttle [of the 1500 switcher]...with Sid Stone, Director of the Alameda County Zoological Gardens, where they will go back into service. The same engines will pull their cars over a one-mile course at the Gardens."



Louis M. MacDermot in the cab of the Overfair 1500 switcher and Sid Snow, Director of the Alameda County Zoological Gardens, discussing the move of the Overfair equipment to the Gardens. Nov. 1940.

Note. The *Oakland Tribune* photo of MacDermot and Snow was the impetus for tracking down historical material about MacDermot and the Overfair Railway. SPRS member Geoff Tobin had found the newspaper clipping in his family's "archives". Then searching for an original print of the photo led to our accumulating many, many more photos and articles, which await proper cataloging.

In the photo below, the train is highballing through the woods at the Gardens on a spring day in May 1942. The No. 1913 locomotive was modified by MacDermot to run as a 0-6-2 variant of the Pacific 4-6-2 type. He removed the leading truck

wheels to negotiate safely the sharp curve on the Gardens' track.



1913, at the Alameda County Zoological Gardens)

The next photo shows three young men in the "Overfair Steam RR Car 4003, stored at Oakland Durant Park". That inscription was put on the back of the photo by Warren R. Mitchell. He and his friends had visited the Park on May 17, 1942 to ride the train just before they entered military service for WW II. Notice that the stored passenger cars are still in their original Overfair configuration with tops and side windows; whereas, the passenger cars used for the train at the Gardens are open cars, without tops. This is another modification MacDermot made to the equipment used at the Oakland Zoo.



Warren R. Mitchell and two friends in the Overfair Railway passenger cars stored at the Oakland Zoo, 1943.

Note. "The Alameda County Zoological Gardens" was the official name of the place in the 1940's. However, many people of that era referred to it, and still do, as "Durant Park"; e.g. Mitchell's inscription on his photographs. At this time, the name is "Oakland Zoo at Knowland Park", commonly shortened to "Oakland Zoo". The latter is certainly an easier title to use.