

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 130

Cal Poly

April 2004

ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

March's work weekend brought beautiful weather and a surprise to our volunteers when we discovered that the week prior, a flash rain and wind storm came through Scott Creek knocking branches down and causing a slide next to the track at our 1998 wash-out. Inspecting the site, everything seemed sound, except that a lot of soil was removed near the buried trestle that was constructed during the repair on the washout in 2000. The track was right at the edge of the slide. It was decided to move the track two feet east, in order to put it on a more stable bearing base, and to make for a safer operation. Only a small amount of soil had to be removed in order to move the track. The realignment was accomplished by decreasing a curve at the south end and moving the curve at the north end, such that no track had to be added or removed in order to accomplish the task. This task was accomplished in a few hours with the help of some very good volunteers. The track was moved by attaching a length of chain to a tree and using a "come-a-long" to move the track westward. The rest of the crew proceeded up and down the track with bars to align and smooth the curve. Once this was done, the ballast car was moved in to settle the track and then apply ballast to finish off the job.

During this time the engine crews were working on the 1500, under the leadership of Mark Cooper and Pete McFall. Our young volunteers, Logan, Aaron, Clinton, and Eric, were installing brake rigging. Slowly, but surely, progress is being made on the 1500.

In the past, we have had discussions about the weight on some of our cars, so in order to answer that question, I borrowed a large scale from the BioResource and Agricultural Engineering Dept. [BRAE] that would allow us to suspend a car in order to determine its weight. A recently finished hopper car weighed in empty at 3,100 pounds; its calculated loaded (gross) weight would be 13,400 pounds. The new tank car weighed in empty at 3,705 pounds, and with the gross weight of 7,445 pounds.

On Saturday night, Martie Way, Bob Wilkinson, and Martha Neilsen put on a "bit-of-the ole-Irish" by serving a wonderful meal of corn-beef, cabbage, carrots, potatoes and lots of green. Everyone really enjoyed the fine feast.

Sunday we worked on finishing some of the details for the fire brigade car. Our grounds crew, worked on weeding, sanding & varnishing of tables, etc. This work is always appreciated in that it adds to the overall looks of the facilities that people usually notice right away.

After many years of hard work, our old trusty John Deere riding lawnmower has just about given up the ghost. It was at a point that it was just about using as much oil, as it was gasoline. So, we decided to replace the engine and then look into the purchase of a new lawnmower.

I hope to see all of you at our thirteenth annual Al Smith Day, Sunday, April 4. This event kicks off our annual train activities for the year, and it is always a good occasion to meet and see friends again. We also hope the daffodils at the end of the run will be in bloom for all to enjoy.



A slide next to the washout



Track alignment after moving

Down Behind the Railway

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

My Fellow Swantoons:

Ah Spring, cleaning that is, in preparation for Al Smith Day, our first daylight run of the year.

And this is the year of the Monkey. I was told, it may have been before written history, that 'monkey' was a term of endearment given to those who worked with things mechanical, consider the monkey wrench if you will.

Aside from clearing the track of windblown trees and debris we have some house keeping in and

about yard and several projects that would be nice to have completed by Al Smith Day.

The Swanton Pacific Fire Brigade water car is mechanically complete and need reassembly upon final coat of paint - Marty may show you how to apply that paint if you are willing.

Edski's Keystone car needs a little grinding of rough edges so we may get it loaded on a trailer, and out of the carbarn, and off to be cleaned and painted.

Randy would like to see, as would we all, the drivers under the 1913's frame and to that end Bob sure could use some help cleaning, painting, finishing, and such.

The switch at San Vicente Junction is now level, however, that required about a foot of ballast and now requires some garden-variety dirt next to the ballast to keep it from weeping away. Bring your gloves, we have the shovels. Once again please consider how you may help on Al Smith Day.

Fitz



Our young volunteers at work

Observation Car

Congratulations to Ernie Ortiz for the successful completion of the Swanton Pacific Railroad safety course!

Anthony & Tony Pratkanis



Weighing the hopper car

Swanton passenger car trucks. This meant that the frame would need to be leathered over 17' at both ends to accommodate the longer trucks.

As work progress on the conversion it was noticed that the supports that the tank rested on were bent up.

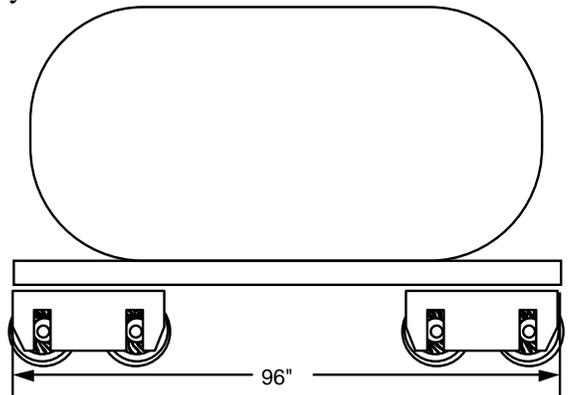


Bent tank support member



St. Patrick Dinner

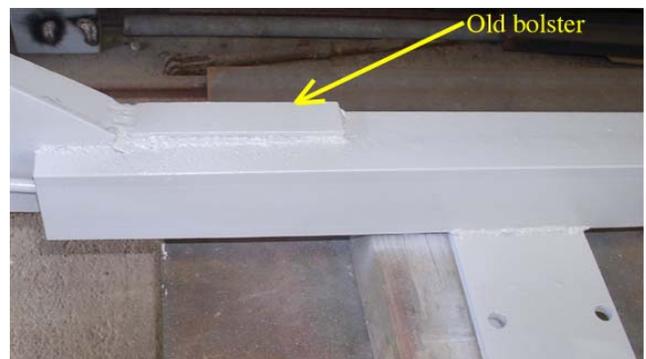
How could that be? The load was down not up. Oh! The frame is now upside down now from where it was originally built, see drawing below. The combination of the high center of gravity and the short trucks made for an unstable car that was easily derailed.



The BOMB CAR as originally built

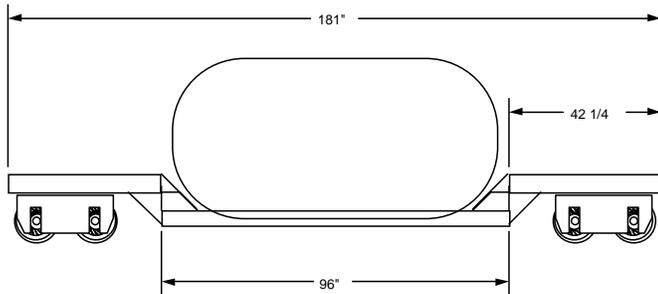
The History of Our Bomb Car By Ed Carnegie

For years, in our back storage area has been a tank car. It came to Swanton with the equipment that Al purchased from Southern California. The car was dubbed the BOMB CAR as the tank was used to supply propane to the 1500 when it operated at the Orange County Fair. The propane tank was old and would need to be tested to be used here and the car had very odd trucks that had a tendency to derail. So it was not used. The last few years we have been using a 300-gallon tank on one of our flat cars to water trees and other uses around the track. This past fall it was decided to rebuild the BOMB CAR into a water car. The frame had a drop center, which made for a low center of gravity and easy loading. Sense the original trucks were so short it was decided that the rebuilt car would use standard



Remains of the original bolster

This is confirmed by looking at the photo above where you can see what is left from the original bolster after it was cut off. The bolster than was welded on the opposite side of the frame when it was converted to a drop center car. The drawing below shows what the BOMB CAR looked like when it arrived at Swanton



BOMB CAR as used it the Orange County Fair



The new Fire Brigade Car taking shape

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY

Mary Ann Carnegie

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| April 3 | Work Day getting ready for Sunday |
| April 4 | AL SMITH DAY RUN [Palm Sun] |
| April 13/14 | Easter weekend— |
| | <u>NO WORKDAY SCHEDULED</u> |
| May 8 | work day— |
| Sun May 9- | Mother's Day-go home to Mom's |
| May 22-23 | start of 2nd work weekends/month |



Old and new bolsters in place on the rebuilt car

The BOMB CAR is now the Swanton Pacific's new Fire Brigade Car. This multi use car will carry 500-gallons of water a pump to deliver the water, brackets for the back-hoe and room for various tools or components as needed

This year for Al Smith Day, Martie Way and Bob Wilkinson will be the co-chairs. So if you have not signed up for various tasks for this event, please see them. I am sure there are still numerous slots to be filled in re: to helping with parking, registration, sales, operation, serving, and especially clean-up.

Please notice too that May brings us back to having two work weekends each month. Last month I looked at the calendar wrong for the second work weekend in May—it does NOT fall on Memorial Day but rather the weekend before so please note the correction, my apologies for any inconveniences. We hope to be able to catch you at one or maybe even both of the work weekends.