

## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 152

Cal Poly

Apr. 2006

### ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

Unable to attend the official work weekend, because Mary Ann and I were both under the weather, we were kept informed by many of all the good work performed by our volunteers. Suffering badly from Swanton DT's, Mary Ann and I came up on the fourth weekend, where Pete, Fitz, Richard, Matt, Robert, Marty, Carol, and Martha kept us company. A good time was had by all, and it was a very productive weekend with cleanup, track work, gardening and other general things were accomplished to get ready for Al Smith Day.

I am also very happy to report that the team of students in the Bio-Resource Agricultural Engineering [BRAE] machine design class at Cal Poly, SLO, finished the design and construction of a wheel grinder for the railroad. This piece of equipment will allow us to re-surface and "true-up" the wheels on most of our rolling stock that have developed flat spots or from original misalignments, and, should, soon provide a smoother ride. Most of our wheels are made from chilled-cast-iron which is too hard of a material to be turned on a lathe and must be ground. My sincere thanks goes to the students of the BRAE Dept. for a job well done. This piece of equipment, along with other past class projects, will be on display for all to view on Al Smith Day.

As many of you know Al Smith Day is the opening of our railroad season and from here through October we will be staying pretty busy. I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks, for all the assistance, encouragement, and contributions, of all sorts, given by our dedicated volunteers to make Swanton Pacific Railroad such a

special place. I truly believe that Al would be pleased with what has taken place.

On behalf of the organization to Al on his day

"HAIL TO THE CHIEF!!"

### Down Behind the Railway

With your President, air monkey, & car-barnist.

Reynold 'Fitz' FitzPatrick

RGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons:

Al Smith Day. April 9<sup>th</sup>

What can you do to make our annual celebration once again a successful event?

As always we need folks to assist in directing guests to parking, set-up and knock down of displays, docents and general go-fers.

Double duty in this article as Ed and MaryAnn were unable to attend the last workday and will attempt to recount the accomplishments.

The weekend started early with Bill, Bob, EdSki, Pete, and Rick arriving Friday. Dennis and Geoff may have been there as well. I understand Pete and a select crew surveyed the railway and found a rather large tree across the track near Cosgrove. Rick and Bob completed repairs on the chipper making it ready for Saturday.

Saturday, a fine spring day, found a track crew, of Dennis, Pete, Randy, Robert, and Stan, tree trimming and chipping. Carol and Martha spent some time in the "Garden of Weed'n", cleaning up in the Redhouse after some inconsiderate folk who left quite a mess and inventorying supplies for Al Smith Day. Geoff, with his trusty laptop, worked on the design of the brake plan for the Keystone

passenger trucks as well as performing maintenance in the machine shop. Rick disassembled the Keystone truck as a start of the inspection, clean, paint, and reassemble process.

Bob made an initial survey of the Ranch's log splitter, seems the engine will not turn. The old Patch-a-Na-Promise repair shop seems to have become a small engine shop as well. Dick Toulson tidied up and posted some signs Marty kindly made. Marty and Frank worked on the 1912 getting her ready for Al Smith Day.

Saturday afternoon saw the corned beef in the pot, FitzPatrick's one pot cooking – makes clean up easier, with Martha and Carol cutting up the cabbage and praties (them's spuds). Special thanks to Martha for kneading the soda bread dough.

Dinner was the typical American Irish affair and was well received as there wasn't much in the way of leftovers.

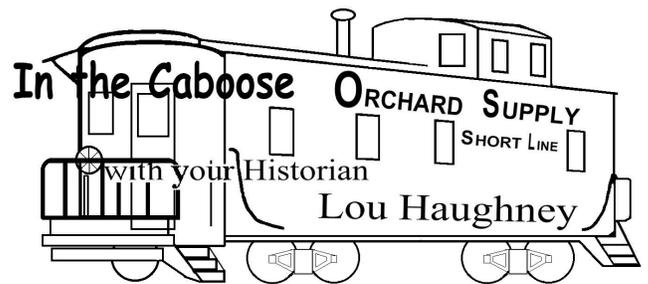
Sunday morning brought the rain once again, so it was well we had scheduled an Executive Board meeting. Following the meeting and lunch, repairs were made to the roundhouse wood stove stack and inside work, such as cleaning and 'putting-away'.

And now on to Al Smith Day.

We have openings for parking attendants, docents, food service, and helping hands. Come on over Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> and we'll find a duty that meets your desires and our needs.



Track brush finishing up ballasting track



EARLY YEARS AT THE SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD 1

Southern Pacific RR Links



New wheel grinder



Laying New Track in the meadow approaching the Wye, probably in early 1980's. L to R: Elmer Stone, Neil Vodden (bending down), Frances Stone, Charlie Hoyle. SPRS Archive No. 1978-1991 AS-0012

**REMINDER:** Anyone wanting to have an article/photo printed in the SPRR newsletter should have copy sent to [ecarnegi@calpoly.edu](mailto:ecarnegi@calpoly.edu) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Many of the persons who helped Al Smith build the Swanton Pacific Railroad in the late 1970's and the early 1980's were veteran Southern Pacific (SP) railroaders. When he was attending Cal Poly in the early 1940's, Al had worked in the SP's yard at San Luis Obispo. An accident while switching cars prematurely ended his professional railroading career but not his life long devotion to railroading. He maintained close association with many SP personnel; such as, Billy Jones, the SP's *Daylight* engineer, who started the Wildcat RR in 1943 at his prune ranch in Los Gatos, near Al's home. Al was a certified engineer for the Wildcat's 17-inch gauge locomotive, Venice 2.

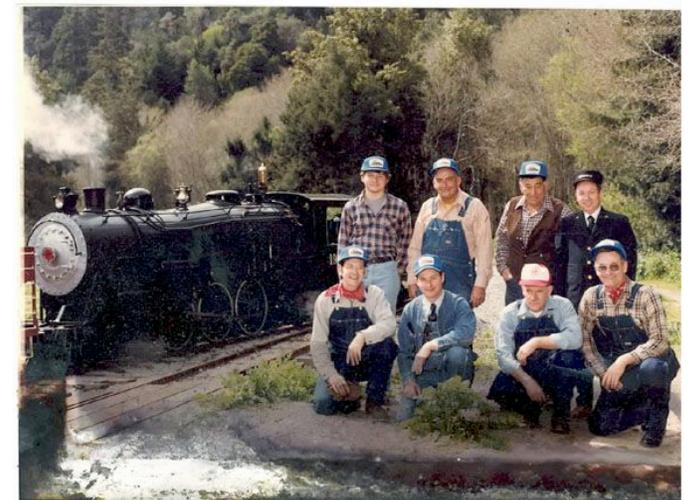


Charlie Hoyle refurbishing the 1500 after its delivery from the Jervis Estate sale, 1984. SPRS Archive No. 1978-1991 AS-0018



Moving the 1914 engine after delivery from the Jervis Estate sale in 1983. L to R: unknown, Al Smith (?) SPRS Archive No. 1978-1991 AS-0016

The SP core of the initial Swanton Pacific complement included Neil Vodden, Charlie Hoyle, and Elmer Stone. Neil was engineer on SP's 4-6-2 Pacific locomotives; he helped in many aspects of the Swanton Pacific's operations. Charlie was the hostler for the SP's Pacific locomotives; he took care of the Overfair 1913 as his special responsibility. Elmer, who had been the Supervisor of Tracks for the SP's San Jose Division, devoted his talents and experience to overseeing the layout of the Swanton Pacific's trackage and the training of the maintenance crews.



Engine 1913 & train crew, mid 1980's  
L. to R.: Front: Randy Jones, Severin Edmonds, Charlie Hoyle, Neil Vodden; Back: Robie Sinclair, Al Smith, George Dela Torr , ??? SPRS Archive No. 1978-1991 AS-0035

**UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY**

Mary Ann Carnegie

April	8	last minute prep work for run
April	9	AL SMITH RUN DAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY AL
May	13	work day
May	14	Mother's Day—go home!
May	27-29	3 day work-weekend

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE—REMEMBER: **anyone wanting to stay overnight for work weekends should call or e-mail reservations in ASAP.** Facilities are limited & we want to make sure we can accommodate everyone. Call (805) 995-3659 or e-mail [ecarnegi@calpoly.edu](mailto:ecarnegi@calpoly.edu). *It also helps in trying to successfully plan for how many people are staying for a Sat. night dinner!*

Well, since the Carnegies were a seein' green last month in the ways of being sick-er than dogs, we wish to thank the other Irish/Scott folks for steppin' in to bring ye all a corn-beef n' cabbage dinner. Leprechauns are a blessing!

Al Smith Day is Sunday, April 9; this would be Al's actual birthday. As a re-reminder—& as many of you know, Al always liked to end a meal with a taste of something sweet be it a cookie, cake, pie, candy, etc.. He would say "YES! to all of the above." So, as custom goes, we would like to ask that all of our volunteers honor his wish by bringing something sweet to top off the great meal to be served to all on April 9.

Also, as usual, we will be asking everyone of our volunteers to help out with various tasks throughout the day—parking, serving, selling SP products, directing our guests, acting as hosts, etc. etc, and then, last but not least with the much needed clean up.

Please note, too, that in May our traditional two work weekends a month begin. However, the first work weekend of may [2<sup>nd</sup> Sat.]. is typically followed on the Sunday with Mother's Day. Usually very few are here on Sunday (go home to Mom)—but Sat. brings a full- house. The second work weekend (4<sup>th</sup> Sat.) coincides with the three-day Memorial Day weekend & we usually get a great turnout where much is accomplished both with projects and just plain fun. This is especially so since the weather has also greatly improved there are longer daylight hours. This Summer we will see many projects on the "to do list", so we hope many of you will be able to come to one, if not both of the work weekends to share in and enjoy all the fun and comraderie that we excel in at Swanton via Dutch-oven, bbqing, camping out, campfires, watching special rail movies, family fun days, etc., etc. etc. and etc. Come join in on all the fun.