

## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 168

Cal Poly

Sept. 2007

### ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

September, Fall and the coming of several busy run days are fast approaching. However, in order to prepare for these, many of our dedicated volunteers gave so much of their time and efforts this last August at work weekends and during the family fun week to accomplish many many tasks that always contribute to the betterment of Swanton Pacific Railroad and its facilities. These accomplishments, under the leadership of our various committee chairs included:

Roundhouse crew: successfully replaced the throttle rod on both the 1914, and 1915, as well as cleaned, greased, and packed these locomotives to make sure they would be functioning smoothly. In between these projects, several opportunities were made available for on-the-job training for brakeman, fireman, conductor, and engineer operators.

Machine crew: concentrated on cleaning up, re-arranging the tools, cabinets and other moving activities for better organization and to remove abrasive materials from the machine shop. The blast cabinet was moved to the car barn.

Car barn crew: likewise performed a major cleanup and re organization by installing cabinets, moveable shelves, and the removal of unwanted materials. Many old, or antique items from the early 40's were given to our neighbors, the McCrary's for their museum displays. After all the housekeeping tasks, and even with the addition of the blast cabinet, you will now observe that cars needing work done on them in this facility can now be turned over, under, and around, and still with room to spare!

Vehicle crew: taken on by our teenage volunteers, they were able to successfully get the boom car moving and running after a hiatus of several years of simply being a "grounds ornament". They removed a fuel tank that was discovered to be non repairable, of which they are currently on a search to find a new one; they also

replaced the throttle. The boom car will almost will be like new, except in years and body, perhaps much like many of us. We certainly do appreciate all the efforts of our young volunteers and their "hands-on" learning. Facility and Grounds Crew: continued to fight the never ending battle of weeds and the menacing gophers and moles. Seismic retrofitting was required, and completed on the fuel tank storage facility, as well as on the water tank. The grounds were augmented with new plantings, the reshaping via trimmings of bushes and removal of dead debris, and enjoying the prolific display of the daily new blooms of the variety of beautiful dahlias around the station.

Track and Right-a-way: a 500 hundred feet ditch was dug to bring power and lights to a signal light for the approach to the bridge. In addition, the crew cleaned, chipped and hauled out downed trees, and trimmed the right-a-way. They then leveled, ballasted and tamped over 700 ft. of track-using two truck and trailer loads of ballast—equivalent to over 50 tons! This was the real outdoor gym fitness center

The Christmas tree venture is getting closer to becoming reality—Colin, with other student interns, set in place two- 4,900 gallon storage tanks to supply water to the trees. Final details for the irrigation of the field are being worked out.

Special Activities: a special farewell train ride was held on Friday, Aug. 24, for the ranch interns. This was then followed with the annual BAGRS event for the weekend, chaired by SPRR and BAGR Bob Wilkinson. This event provides not only an outing for the BAGRS, but an opportunity for our SPRR operational crews to better hone their skills.

So—as you can all see, and read, much was accomplished, but many good times were also enjoyed. We all took time out to visit, watch videos and enjoy some delicious meals. On behalf of Mary Ann, myself and all the chairs of the various crews, we thank you all for your time and support devoted to Swanton in order to make it such a special place for many to enjoy.

## Down Behind the Railway

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

Reynold 'Fitz' FitzPatrick

RGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons:

The sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have inherited  
that good part;

But the Sons of Martha favour their Mother of the  
careful soul and the troubled heart.

And because she lost her temper once, and because she  
was rude to the Lord her Guest,

Her Sons must wait upon Mary's Sons, world without  
end, reprieve, or rest.

It is their care in all the ages to take the buffet and  
cushion the shock.

It is their care that the gear engages; it is their care that  
the switches lock.

It is their care that the wheels run truly; it is their care  
to embark and entrain,

Tally, transport, and deliver duly the Sons of Mary by  
land and main.

Raise ye the stone or cleave the wood to make a path  
more fair or flat -

Lo, it is black already with blood some Son of Martha  
spilled for that!

Not as a ladder from earth to Heaven, not as a witness  
to any creed,

But simple service simply given to his own kind in their  
common need.

And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessed - they  
know the Angels are on their side.

They know in them is the Grace confessed, and for  
them are the Mercies multiplied.

They sit at the Feet - they hear the Word - they see  
how truly the Promise runs.

They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and - the  
Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons!

Three stanzas from Kipling's "Sons of Martha" to start  
off September with the celebration of Labor Day which  
honors no man, battle or conquest but recognizes the  
endeavors of those who design, build, and maintain the  
mechanics of daily life – from soup to nuts and bolts.

And speaking of labor; we have two workdays  
(weekends) before the Land Trust event on the 30<sup>th</sup>  
followed by CalPoly Day on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and our  
General Meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Whew!

In accord with our by-laws the offices of the First  
and Third vice-presidents and Treasurer are open for  
nomination.

Lots to be done during a very busy end of summer.  
Fitz



Lunch break

### UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY

Mary Ann Carnegie

Sept. 08/09 volunteer work weekend

Sept. 22/23 volunteer work weekend

Sept. 30 Land Trust Run

Oct. 06 Get ready for Cal Poly Day Run

Oct. 07 CAL POLY DAY EVENT

Oct. 13/14 monthly volunteer SPRR weekend

***PLEASE: anyone staying overnight for work weekends, call or e-mail reservations in ASAP. Facilities are limited & we want to make sure we can accommodate all. Call (805) 995-3659 or e-mail [ecarnegi@calpoly.edu](mailto:ecarnegi@calpoly.edu). This helps in successfully planning our Sat. night dinner.***

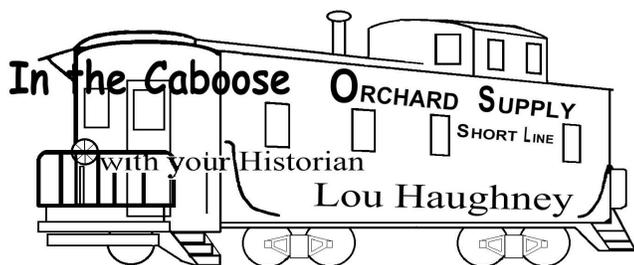
Almost a month was spent away from our very own paradise of Cayucos to be in Swanton's very own paradise. We truly have the best of both worlds and are ever so grateful. The family work week in August, was filled with fun, great train rides, completion of various projects and naturally the creation of others. The gourmet talents of many volunteers were shared nightly along with some fantastic evenings around the fire roasting marshmallows, observing shooting stars, and getting to know our volunteers/friends far better. We especially know, thanks to Pete, why the "big, blue, wet thing" is also known as the Pacific Ocean! If you missed the fun and activities this year, mark your calendars for next. We would also like to get input on what week during the summer might work out better or best so more might be able to participate, though we usually had an average of 12-15 daily this year. We thank all for your contributions in making some fun memories.

Fun, but busy times are still ahead with the annual Santa Cruz Land Trust event on Sunday Sept. 30, followed with Cal Poly Day the following Sunday. A separate invite is attached. Please note that attendance will be limited to 500 so be sure to get invites out to family and friends ASAP. In October we revert back to one SPRR weekend a month. Many projects will need to be taken care of to prepare for winter months, and work is moving forward on planning for a "time honored New Year's Eve" celebration. Details will be forth coming, so stay tuned to get "in the mood or swing" of things to come.

**SIDE TRACK**

**Volunteers Concerns:**

Recently, some volunteers have said that they have placed items—i.e., food or otherwise, specifically marked with their names on the items, only to discover upon their next visit that they have been eaten, used, or "borrowed" by others, but not replaced. While this "borrowing" can be somewhat accepted—it is more accepted that whatever one should use or "borrow" should DEFINITELY be replaced ASAP or at the very least a courtesy note left indicating one's usage of the item. We all leave items in the shed, frig., freezer, etc. but when specifically marked as being someone's, that individual returns with the understanding that the marked item will be there upon their return. If unmarked, it is usually considered fair game for all, since almost everyone contributes items for all to use. However, at times specific items are brought for specific reasons for specific people—let's all try to respect this and if it becomes necessary to "borrow", please be sure do the right thing--replace the item[s] and let the individual at least know that you will have it there for them the next time.



**HOW TO CALL A TRAIN CREW FOR DUTY**

Al Smith's first assignment with the Southern Pacific railroad appears to be as the crew callboy for the Dispatcher's Office in the San Luis Obispo Yard. This assumption comes from an examination of a small, wire

bound notebook, 3-1/2 by 6 inches, which was found among Al's files. All entries are hand written in a clear, distinct, easily legible style indicative of the A's earned in his earlier penmanship classes. The inscription on page 1 reads:

Property of  
**Al Smith**  
*Chase Hall*  
*California Polytechnic*  
*San Luis Obispo, Calif.*

The entries on page 2 appear to be examples of the roster for a freight train's crew.

71		3-13-41
4302		
W Hoogendyk	R A Peppers	004:20/P
		{ Nicholson
9 cars	004:20/P	{ G
Thompson		{ Ballard
X4338 West		
L Grieb L Crain	004 30/P	
2733		
G W. Hoskins	M A Sousa	004 10/P
(1st 8 hrs)		(1st 8 hrs)
		{ Pan
	004 30/P { Porter }	16 hrs up at
		{ Davis } 2 40/A
Swg to GR	{ Wheeler	
004 30/P {		
17 cars		

On page 3 are instructions for distribution of the paper work regarding the crews.

- 4 carbons at night
- 3 carbons during day
- Original to Chief Dispatcher
- 1st carbon East or West "
- 2nd carbon Operator book
- 3rd carbon - Yardmasters desk
- 4th carbon - Brakeman's room
  
- 3 bells - go to Dispatcher for messages
  
- take messages - operator to dispatcher
- messCONDUCTOR
- F O Justus
- 1520 Essex St.
- Phone 1228J
- 1-1/2 hour call on
- on short ring

The date of 3-14-41 on page 2 indicates that Al was then in his first year at Cal Poly and that this part-time work with the SP may have been his first experience with railroading work. His entry-level assignment was to call by phone or to contact in person the crews for impending freight train runs. In the latter case, the more usual situation, the callboy needed to go to the home or the lodging facility and arouse the crewman. Many of them lived in rooming houses or hotels. Reidy's, Bruce's, and the Park Hotel were popular lodging places for the railroaders. Al's notes for contacting those without phones are concise and detailed so that he would bother other occupants of the place.

The memo book indicates the standards of living in the early 1940's in a small town, especially for the railroad personnel. Not all private homes had telephones; those that did were probably on a "party" line with other subscribers. Residents of boarding houses or hotels did not have an in-room telephone. Necessary contacts with people often required direct, in-person contact. Using carbon paper sheets were the quickest method of making a few copies.

After the introductory pages, the memo book has 50 pages that contain the names, addresses, and, where applicable, the telephone numbers for individual crewmembers. There are three entries per page, for about 150 crew personnel at the San Luis Obispo Yard.

Here are a few examples.

**FIREMAN**

S F Bogner  
At Reidy's 1st door  
To right as you enter front

**ENGINEER**

J W Hoskins  
1947 Chorro St.  
Phone 1869  
2 hour call at all times

**CONDUCTOR**

F O Justus  
1520 Essex St.  
Phone 1228J  
1-1/2 hour call on  
on short ring

**BRAKEMAN**

P E Powelson  
1338 Pacific St.  
right side of house in back.

**FIREMAN**

H L Price  
1720 Morro St.  
Rm. upstairs

Around back of house in back screen door  
- Key to back door under oil cloth on table  
just inside of screen door. Open back door  
and go up stairs door to head of stairs.

**BRAKEMAN**

L D Overstreet  
1063 Ella St  
around side upstairs



Left: Overfair Railway tracks (2) leading out to main line along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. Back side of the Machinery Palace on the far left. Right: Overfair Railway Main yard, passenger car storage tracks

Right background: PPIE facility building.  
Far right background: Steamship at PPIE dock.