

## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 189

Cal Poly

Aug. – Sept. 2009

### **ON TRACK with your Director** Ed Carnegie:

I know what has been on all of our minds during the last couple of weeks is the fire that has consumed so much of the Swanton Property. The good news is that nothing west of Swanton Road was affected. So the railroad was left untouched. Even as we write this article the fire fighter crews are still attending to backfires and mop-up duties in trying to return it to a safe sustainable state. The bad news is that the Swanton Ranch did have approximately 1000 of its 3200 acres burn. The fire crews did save the old school house, and Al's House. They put in a Herculean effort and were able to save the Staub House and the Yurts, as it did come very close to consuming those structures. Much credit goes to Cal Poly Staff, Brian, Steve, Gordon and all the students for assisting fire crews in saving the livestock, providing vast information on roads and access, and general knowledge of the area. Unfortunately, Al's family—Steve Spafford and Susie Spafford-England's families [also long time members of SPRR] didn't fair as well. They did lose their cabins up at Little Creek. No other permanent residents structures were lost as fire crews stayed nearby to protect them all. We in fact had a fireman, railroad enthusiast, that had attended a past railroad event at Swanton, call us from the valley to say, "He was waiting for the call to come over so he and crew would do whatever they could do to protect the Swanton Railroad!" A huge thanks goes to all that protected Swanton.

In addition, to all the other projects accomplished at Family Camp [summarized later in newsletter] I started work on getting the last caboose upgraded with lights, insulation and siding.

The next few work weekends will be busy getting ready for Land Trust and Cal Poly Day and to then "winterize" for the Winter. Lots to do, but always fun. Hope to see you soon.

### **Down Behind the Railway**

With your President, air monkey, & car-barnist.  
Reynold 'Fitz' FitzPatrick  
RGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons:

On Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August Rich and I managed to get down to the railway to see if any mishaps had occurred as a result of the Lockheed fire. I am happy to report the fire didn't extend west of Swanton Road and therefore did not threaten any of our facilities. We didn't go north on Swanton to the Old Red School House as crews were still heavy in the area and we didn't want to be in their way should something untoward occur.

Our own Andy and Vera were back doing all the Andy and Vera things that keep the railway and facilities looking just grand.

Thank you Cal Fire and others in containing the blaze.

As you know we are approaching our busy run season with the Land Trust run on September 27<sup>th</sup> and CalPoly Day on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, the fire evacuations and restrictions delayed our preparations of the 1913 for transport so there is a lot to be done at the next workday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>.

We can expect Ed, Randy, Geoff and Bruce to be busy working with the 1913's preparations. That leaves the rest of us a day or two to prepare for Land Trust: some cleanup around the right of way, more cleanups around the Car Shop and behind the

Roundhouse and by the BBQ area. What can I say; housekeeping is ninety percent of what we do.

The signal controller box by the house switch needs paint as does the side of the storage box next to the Car Shop. Scott did a fine job but ran out of paint as I didn't buy enough.

The Santa Fe caboose need some help; cleaning would be a good start. Some drywall would finish off some open electrical plumbing and the floor of one toilet needs fixin'.

Anyone interested in helping Andy move the sprinkler system wiring from the semaphore base to the new electrical box?

That is the list off the top of my head, there's more to be done so if your fancy doesn't include housekeeping there are other things to be done – come on over and make a project your own.

Our first General Meeting of the membership will be Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, noonish with a Special Order of Business to hold nominations for Officers. This being an odd numbered year we will elect the First and Third Vice-Presidents, (Geoff and Bruce incumbent) and Treasurer (Ed).

Come on over, we'll have fun.

Fitz



Smith Cabin up little creek

With summer ending and school starting, regular routines begin to set back in and we at Swanton will see busy, busy times ahead. There is much to do about a whole lot of things: cleaning, getting things ready for run days, sending out invites, etc., etc.. So mark your calendars for the run/workdays and if you have special friends, guests that you would like to invite and share Swanton with, get them out and over to Swanton for ANY day/event. We can and will surely show them how much fun we have. Runs in Sept. and Oct.. November beginning to get things buttoned up for the winter ahead. Dec. our usual wreath making, finalized with the New Year's Eve run. Keep thinking of that theme and outfit ya'll be donning for the festive annual party.

The fires did not knock out the electricity so the freezer food selection is still plentiful for our Saturday work night dinners. Though Summer Camp put a good dent into the supply, I am still trying to get it emptied as much as possible before Cal Poly Day. Though I won't need much response time for meals, we will need to know if you are planning on staying overnight so that requests can be met for sleep over accommodations. Remember to call or email us if you are planning to stay overnight. Hopefully see you at the next work weekend



Cargo container arrives at SPRR

**UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY**

		Mary Ann Carnegie
Sept.	12/13	work weekend
Sept.	26	work day, and prepare for
Sept.	27	Land Trust Day Run
Oct.	10	work day and prepare for
Oct.	11	CAL POLY DAY RUN

**SideCar News:**

Accomplishments of Swanton Work Camp as submitted by various volunteers:

Summer seems like it just started, and yet it is fast approaching its end. What a busy time it has

been and so much accomplished. Time has gone so quickly, and we have been so busy that we decided to combine the August and September newsletters. The last work weekend in July started out with Ed and Mary Ann meeting Fitz up at the Oakland boatyard on Friday, to haul away the recently purchased cargo container for sending SPRR's locomotive back to Wyoming. Unfortunately we were told Oakland was not the right place, but would need to be obtained over at Alameda instead. So the three of us motored over there with trailer in tow through some really good parts of town. We arrived safe and sound at the Alameda yard, loaded the 23 ft. container on the trailer and headed back down to Swanton.

Saturday morning it was like a bevy of bees working all around Swanton. All were getting ready to host the Golden Spikes Event, as well as move the container off the trailer onto a flatbed via the boom truck, and haul it down behind the bbq pits. Geoff, Pete, Amy, Scott, and Robert worked on putting a consist together, and on firing up the steam engine. Andy started the day early by removing the electric fence, and acted as main turntable spinner for the engine crews. Geoff supervised the firing up of the 1914 for all; while Pete, Robert, Amy and Scott gained valuable experience in being engineers, firemen, conductors and/or brakemen. Martha Nielsen, carried out Al's tradition of hosting the Golden Spikes, all retired Southern Pacific employees. She fed the entire train crew a wonderful lunch of hamburgers, and a well organized potluck provided by many others. Long time member MacGaddis was in attendance, as was Robert Morehouse who was the main "bar-b-quer" for all. The event provided a good training day for our new train crew members. A job well done by all. This event then kicked off the beginning of the annual Swanton Family Camp Week. Several volunteers participated all week long, either coming for the entire week, or coming and going at different times. Several projects were tackled and accomplished. For example:

- Pete, Geoff and others worked on the valve packing of the 1914, as it was found to be intermittently spitting.
- It was also discovered that the whistle on the 1914 needed a better polishing. So when it was disassembled for the task it looked more and more

like a shell casing—which it turned out to actually be, but it was now a brightly polished "whistle", aka a 70mm shell casing

- Two safety tractor videos were viewed
- Moved railroad ties from behind the roundhouse to be closer to a track loading access in the curve behind the cabooses, and to also clear the area to survey for the upcoming cement pour
- Numerous discussions occurred on the mechanics of how to load or not to load, secure, and move the locomotive into the newly acquired container for safe shipping.
- Extreme cleaning modes took place within the roundhouse, machine, carbarn/shops, and the cabooses
- Weeding and disking of the Christmas Tree Field
- Randy acted as purchasing agent for the ballast, rebar, and concrete needed for proposed loading dock; also replaced the original water glass valves with new ones with safety shut-offs.
- Ed and Fitz surveyed, bent and laid rebar, and did other form work necessary for finishing the foundation work in order to get it ready for the upcoming cement pour. Scheduled on Thursday, July 30. This pad will be for the new loading dock needed to load the locomotives. Pete, Scott, Kyle, and Bruce also assisted with tying of rebar floating, edging, finishing the cement, as well as finalizing with dates and signatures in the cement.
- Mark Cooper did calibrations for new bushings for the asphalt compactor and the machining on brake links, as well as work on trying to stop the air leak in the 502's diesel fuel system
- Geoff worked on obtaining trucking quotes to move the loaded container with our locomotive from Davenport to Cheyenne, as well as traveling around the area to obtain replacement parts for Swanton equipment
- Pete and Fitz worked on the water manifold at the Julio Water tank used for the fruit orchard and Christmas Tree Farm, also welded the ladder rack to hold the piping for the pump and manifold
- Andy mowed the lawn, chased gophers, fed the last meal to many of the weeds; did general maintenance work on the mower; continued to water the lawn's brown spots, assisted with

cleaning all the stalls in the roundhouse, and clearing wall space to access the rear doors for the loading dock

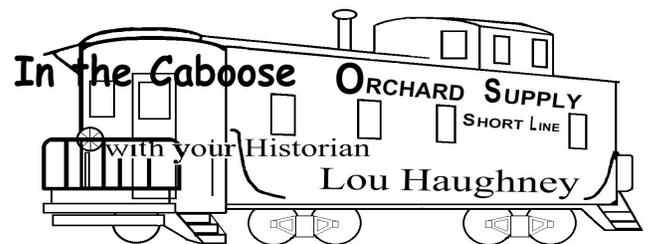
- Bruce machined parts for the Keystone cars brakes, as well as served as errand runner for the many items needed. Living nearby and commuting daily to Swanton he generously would pickup and bring many needed things to us on a daily basis.
- Kyle and Scott pressure washed the container, along with a claw foot bathtub that they also helped move down to BBQ area
- Scott painted the storage container adjacent to the Car Shop.
- Kyle learns how to drive a tractor trailer rig. As a reward for his being able to drive the rig he learned how to repair the frozen landing gear on the trailer.
- Endless amount of gardening, straightening, filing, cleaning also occurred
- Enjoying all the meals provided by all from freezer de-jour, Dutch-Oven, etc. along with great Swanton story telling and fun times together

A huge thank you to all that were able to participate—so much was accomplished. Thanks to:

Mark Cooper, Bruce Campiano, Randy Jones, Stan Matsumoto, Fitz, Pete, Bill Mc Nab, Andy and Vera, Estelle Turner, Dick Toulson, Lou Haughney, Geoff, Robert, Kyle, Amy, Scott, Martha, Mary Ann and Ed.



Working concrete for new loading ramp behind roundhouse



HISTORIC P.P.I.E. POST CARD of the 1913

An historic post card featuring the Over air No. 1913 locomotive was sent recently to Ed by Judy Cash of Olympia, Washington. Her message reads:

"Thought you would enjoy seeing a rare real photo postcard from my collection - engine no. 1913 at work at the fair."



Working on ceiling in a caboose

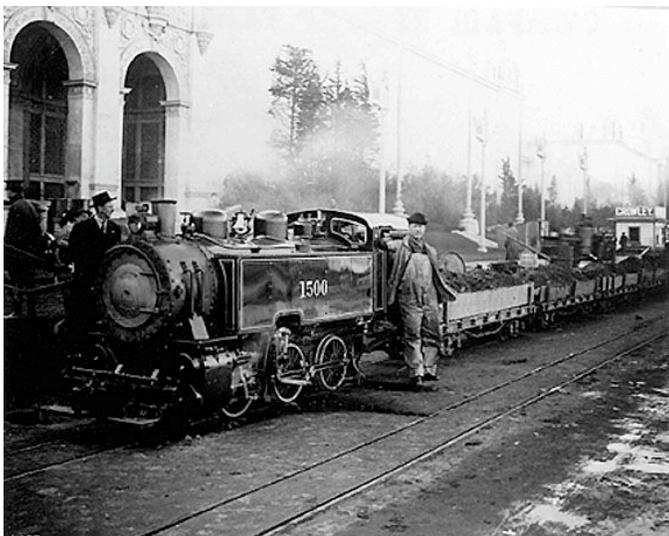


Post Card picture of Overfair locomotive 1913 at the P.P.I.E., by permission of Judy Cash

This is indeed a rare addition to our collection, our first post card of a MacDermot/Overfair locomotive at the P.P.I.E. Our thanks to Judy for sharing this with us and for allowing us to reproduce it. Are there any such postcards in other collections?

### OVERFAIR RAILWAY WORK CAR 32644

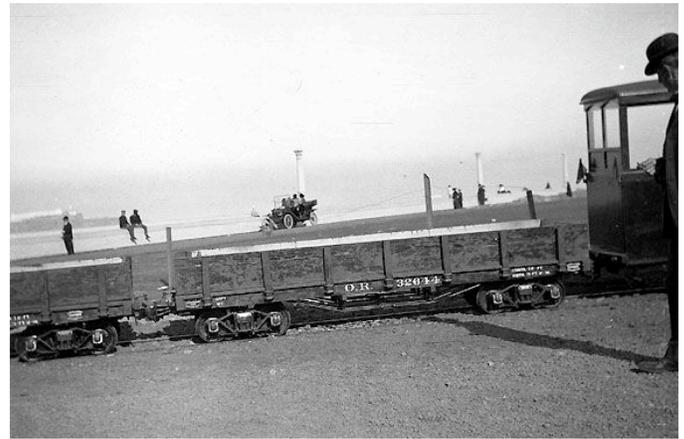
At the lunch table recently, the question was asked whether or not there are any photos of the Overfair Railway's work cars, particularly pictures that include the markings and the number of the car. At least two are in our files. One photo (1913-1915 LMM-0018) shows a work train that consists of the 1500 locomotive with five work cars. No markings on the cars are visible due to the line of sight in the photo. While the cars appear to be filled with dirt and soil, the locomotive, however, shines brightly as though it had been put on its best appearance for the picture.



SPRS 1913-1915 LMM-0018 OVERFAIR 1500  
(0-6-0T) with work cars

The second photo (1913-1915 LMM-0129) does provide an excellent side view of an Overfair work car.

Enlargement of that photo (1913-1915 LMM-0129A) presents not only a good view of the trucks and the undercarriage rigging, but also it allows interpretation of the notations that are inscribed on the car's flatbed.



Overfair railway work train on tracks along the P.P.I.E. North Gardens; Pedestrian & auto promenade in mid background. SPRS 1913-1915 LMM-0129



Enlarged view of Overfair railway work car 32644 at the P.P.I.E. track along North Gardens; SPRS 1913-1915 LMM-0129A

They read as follows from left to right in the sections denoted by the vertical posts:

- No. 1: L. M. MACDERMOT / (illegible) / OAKLAND CALIF
- No. 2: CAPY / WEIGHT (no values given)
- No. 3: blank
- Nos. 4 & 5: O. R. 32644
- No. 6: blank
- No. 7: LENGTH - 12 FT. / WIDTH. 3 - FT. 2 - IN.
- No. 8: L. M. MACDERMOT / OWNER / OAKLAND CALIF

Other interesting features of this photo are the pedestrians and the 1910's automobile on the Promenade in the middle background. This scene suggests that the site of the track is along the edge of the P.P.I.E.'s North Gardens, which is now the Mariana Green in San Francisco. Note also that this train has a mixed consist of work and passenger cars.