

## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 229

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### ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

Slowly I feel I am beginning to get my strength back, and as a result, feel I am more or less starting to get into somewhat of a normal pace of things. This has all been made easier with the generous support and help from all of you. So again, my many thanks to all of you for stepping right in and lending such supportive help in just getting “things” done in and around Swanton. So much has been, and is being taken care of by all of you, all the time. Many projects, from the past few months, have been detailed out in Randy’s write-up. Continuation of such tasks, along with added tasks are also described by Randy. In Fitz’s article, many new projects that still need to be taken up are listed for volunteers to take ownership of. Pick and choose while the getting is good. See you at the February workday. We would also like to discuss important plans and the organizing of Swanton participation in this month’s PPIE events scheduled in San Francisco.

### Down Behind the Railway

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

My Fellow Swantons:

Well here we are nearly a century following the opening of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, 1915. As you know our steam locomotives were built for the fair’s Overfair Railway. You may wish to look at the Centennial celebration web site at <http://www.ppie100.org>.

For the last few decades it has been our pleasure to maintain and operate the locomotives and equipment as an operating museum. At this time we have not ‘nailed down’ what our level of participation in the celebration will be.

Notice the ‘maintain’ portion above. That is where we spend most of our time, not the fun stuff of running the locomotives, although there is a certain satisfaction in keeping this railway operating.

To that end the following is a partial list of projects that we have determined will either ease the maintenance tasks, or keep equipment running. Not all are directly associated with working on railroad equipment, but all support keeping the railway and equipment running.

I’ll start with **our current high priority items**:

Complete the restoration of the last original MacDermot passenger car and place it back in service or on display. We were going to give the car a light makeover until we found the buffer and sill on one end to be in sore shape. Matt Zemny has been working on, along with Geoff, and who ever else they can round up. Once the sill, buffer, and deck boards are replaced the car will need to be cleaned and painted. There are a lot of parts here so more than one may work on it at a time.

Randy is steadily working on the 1913 and could probably find something for you to do – usually in the clean and paint department. I’m working on the 1913’s tender: there is wiring to be done, rebuilding trucks, grinding brake levers, making brake hangers... Come see me.

**Next are some RR equipment projects that need to be done as we can:**

Ed is working on the **Keystone passenger car**, after all these many years, and could use help in painting, cleaning, wiring, pipe fitting. Once this one is completed we have two more. Job security!

Geoff has the material and plans for **balancing the Handi-car** with a steel plate. All it needs now is to have the old side removed, holes drilled, plate installed, and finished off. All of these are separate projects in theme selves. Additionally the ramp release cylinder needs to be replaced.

Our Maintenance-of-Way folks, (that is Pete) really would like to have a **new long steel frame**

**work car with adequate seating and storage for tools and material.** This could be your project.

We do **need another flat-car and that entails building some trucks.** I like to have an extra set of four-wheel trucks on hand, much like having a spare tire. Be a champion – make this project yours.

Once we have a new flat car we can **return one flat car to passenger service.** Quite a bit of wood working here, as once the deck is replaced the sides and seats will all have to be fabricated.

We are transitioning to an electric break-away safety system and need to **have a test board built.** If you are interested please see Randy.

We intend to **replace all the friction bearings on the railcars with roller bearings.** There is quite a bit of machining required and until the machine shop has time to set up to do the work it is not a high priority.

However, we can do the **foundry work** if time is available. We have several dozen journal boxes and the material on hand. The first part of the process is to pour molten aluminum into the journal boxes using our own little furnace. As all the forces on the aluminum are compressive we are not too concerned which type of aluminum we use, but prefer Pistalloy (made from old pistons) and Casealloy (from casings); although we can use Lawnalloy (from patio furniture). This is an outside job on a dry day.

Finally, on the rolling stock list, is **rebuilding the old boxcar.**

On to **facilities**, those projects allow for all this to happen, and provides a pleasant ambiance for our guests.

If you are a **woodworker**, there are several **projects** in the Cal Barn that could use your attention and skills. We would like to have **enclosed display cases** for some of our historical items, as well as secure storage for various casting patterns that are currently occupying work space in the roundhouse.

Also, we wish to use the south side of the barn as a **woodworking shop** where the machinery could be put away when the building is used for meetings. The thought is to have a workbench along the south wall with roll-out cabinets underneath to hold various tools. The radial arm saw and band saw would be the only machinery taller than the work bench and would have their own covers. Everything else would fit under the workbench, leaving it available for parties.

The **station needs some paint**, and the **benches need to be repaired** where necessary, and **varnished.**

The **pump house needs to have the eaves painted** – we never did quite get that finished.

Once we get the materials in, **the doors in the machine shop need to be finished** – see Bruce.

The machine shop also needs **air-piping run to the new machines, and the side door replaced.**

We have a **jib crane** for the “Rose Bush” which **needs to be cleaned and painted.** It’s partially done and does not need to be taken down to bare metal. Once cleaned up we can set in place.

The **Santa Fe caboose needs to have some of the floor replaced and generally spiffed up.**

The **73 caboose needs to have the ceiling insulated and drywall installed** and than have storage shelves set up.

Pete has a **bill-board** he would like erected by San Vicente.

Robert could use some help is **establishing a Christmas tree nursery.**

There are **many more individual projects, and always track maintenance and housekeeping.**

Come on down, we’ll have fun, and bring a friend.  
Fitz



Moving Keystone car to be worked on



Replacing the roll up door in the machine shop with new sliding doors

**In the Roundhouse**  
With Randy Jones

Since the last column in the April/May '14 Newsletter, we've made progress on many projects.

The Machine Shop door renewal/remodel is just about done, with only the inside door coverings and weather-stripping yet to be installed. The results are very nice, with improved access and weather resistance. The worn out roll-up door was replaced with two sliders and one hinged section, all two inches thick and insulated. We can now easily move the rolling gantry hoist inside when needed, as well as drive the forklift and loader inside. We also re-worked the main compressed air supply near the doors to include a three-stage drying system, and we are seeing a marked decrease in condensate in the whole air system. By New Year's Eve, we had improved the electrical service to the fuel dock, including outside lights there and on the Machine Shop wall. Geoff, Bill, Fitz, Tony, Peter, Dave, Dan, Matt, and someone I'm sure I've forgotten all pitched in on this.

The railroad crane received attention from Ed, Pete, Fitz, and Dave, and they were able to resuscitate the engine! Several other issues were tackled as well, and the crane is back in service.

During the "Summer Camp", the Haz-mat shed got completely emptied, cleaned, re-organized and re-stocked. The new storage arrangement works really well and is much appreciated.

Ed has jump-started the Keystone car rebuilding project. This car was selected for work many years ago, as it was the most deteriorated of the three cars originally from Pennsylvania, with service in Mobile, Alabama, and a "thrill ride" through hurricane Camille, with the associated corrosion. The car was disassembled down to its steel skeleton, and sent out for sandblasting and painting. Edski spent many hours on the car during that period, and made a good start on the replacement wood parts of the car. Fitz worked installing the brake piping, and Geoff, Fitz, and I collaborated on a re-design of Keystone's truck-mounted brakes. We finished and tested the prototype truck, and made all the brake parts for all three cars. And that's when the project ground to a halt. Other urgent needs pressed in on us, and space in the car shop became ever more scarce, to the point Edski couldn't make further meaningful progress. So now Ed has things moving again, with some help from Fitz and Bill Fry.

The 502 received some adjustments, but besides that the work we did last winter has proven to be a robust success. Bill Engelman was out from Colorado in August and made some belt tensioner adjusters that are the icing on that cake.

We had successful runs for Swanton "summer camp" (training only), CalPoly Day, and New Year's Eve. We have been working on a new oil burner set for the 1913, and had tested it on the 1914, but it was not ready in time for New Year.

In the Fall, we got word we might get to display a locomotive and car at the centennial of the PPIE. Work was begun on our last remaining original Overfair car to prep it for paint. We found a lot of dry rot, and have removed most of the bad wood and scraped and sanded the exterior. While it has turned out there isn't enough room for us to put equipment on display at the centennial, at least we have a good start on a much needed repair. A lot of research is being done on materials and techniques to help us keep as much of the original material as we can. Repair if possible, replace if necessary. The usual suspects include Fitz, Geoff, Pete, Matt, Lloyd, Mary, Bill and Justin, and maybe more.

On the 1913, Fitz is making progress on the tender trucks and brakes, including analysis of the braking forces. We have modified some of the rigging for more uniform braking, while finding the overall amount of force applied was about right for the tender's weight. The Passenger Car brakes, conversely, are about three times more powerful than optimum, and that is why the train brake operation is so "touchy" for our engineers. More on that later. The cab repairs were completed in August, and it was taken in to be painted at the same shop that did the tender tank. It is back on the engine, and is really beautiful! Thanks go out to Brian Deutscher at AA Auto for some very nice work and a sweetheart deal as well. Something we have discovered on this engine is that some things were changed after being done once or twice. Dealing with these alterations has sometimes held up our work to a frustrating degree. Since this was the first pacific finished, we hope the crew learned from this one and got the others right the first time. Regarding our progress, the steam piping to the cylinders is installed for the last time, including all packings and rings. The back cylinder heads are also on and torqued down, painted, and their covers painted and installed. Precision fittings were made some time ago to facilitate aligning the main crosshead guides, and we have started fitting them up as well. The running boards have been leveled and aligned with the cab, and now we can add the air piping that mounts to them. The air brake cylinders are bolted up permanently, and a large auxiliary air reservoir has been added (a shoehorn job, that one was). The repaired sander pipes are almost done and ready to go on. The bottom bracket for the Johnson bar (reverse lever) has been machined, and its mount to the cab designed. Some cuttin' and weldin' and it will go on as well. Basically, things are moving right along, with more things going on for the last time, and fewer things coming back off for more work. Many thanks to all who have helped, and to those who have offered kind words of encouragement.



Fitz working on the 1913 tender

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS:**

***DUES-DUES-DUES are now DUE!!!***

Our organization is still accepting new memberships, or renewals for the year 2015. For a mere \$35/year you become a full-fledged Swanton Pacific Volunteer. Dues need to be submitted ASAP. Deadline for being in the 2015 Membership Roster will be March 15—The Ides of March. are soon approaching so get'em submitted!

**Make your check out to Swanton Pacific Railroad,** and then mail to:

Ed Carnegie;  
BRAE Dept. Cal Poly  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

*Swanton Pacific Railroad Society Nametags are available from Bob Wilkinson, [wilkie@pacbell.net](mailto:wilkie@pacbell.net) Please contact him for new or replacements cards.*

**NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS**

Douglas Larkin      San Francisco CA

On behalf of the entire organization, we welcome 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.

**TRAINING, SAFETY,  
CONDUCTOR/BRAKEMAN COURSE**

*Pete Mc Fall*

Have you done your safety course and turned it in? If you need a copy and need to turn in the test see Pete and get your copy.

We also have the conductor brakeman course. If you need a copy see Pete. We will offer time for training during the work weekends, assembling the work train is a good time to learn and practice your skills.

The list of members who have passed their tests is posted in the machine bulletin board.

**UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY**

*Mary Ann Carnegie*

Feb. 14/15      Valentine's Day & work weekend  
Feb. 20



Feb. 21      100 yr. PPIE celebration-Palace of Fine Arts-San Francisco

Feb. 27/28-      Setup, host, and teardown SPRR  
March 1      *Display at the Old Mint in San Francisco*

Mar. 14/15      Ides of March & work weekend

April 11      Workday-get ready for Al Smith Day

**April 12      AL SMITH DAY RUN/EVENT**

May 9      work week day

May 10      Mother's Day-

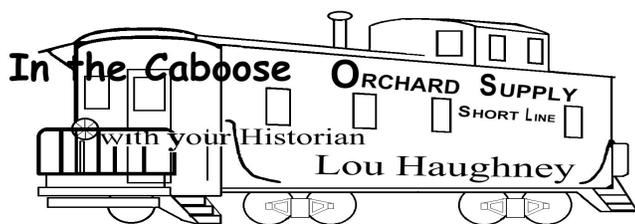
May 23/24      Work weekend

Already into February of the New Year, and a flood of activities is before us. Rhoda and Amy have been busy worker bees behind the scenes getting display boards, photos, and various articles written along with contacts made for having the Swanton Pacific Railroad have a very visible spot in the 100 year celebration for the Panama-Pacific International Expedition [see dates above]. The Palace of Fine Arts will have a year long celebration, that kicks off with a Community Day on Sat. Feb. 21. We will need volunteers to help set up the day before, and then be on-site for both Saturday and Sunday. This is a GREAT opportunity to promote both SPRR, and its connection to PPIE. We are likewise being listed in the California Historical Society's Program, and will be hosting another display table the following weekend at the Old Mint on 5<sup>th</sup> and Taylor St. in downtown San Francisco. Again, we will need some volunteers for this event. These two events will provide an excellent avenue to make thousands aware of our special and unique living, operational museum at SWANTON. Who knows what benefits, and especially in the way of gaining potential new members we might gain. So let's all try to fit some time in to participate and assist in this great opportunity for the society.

Please note too, that at the last Board Meeting, Al Smith Day was approved for Sunday, April 12. This change allowed for more of our volunteers to be present. Invites for the event will be going out the end Feb., first week in March, so

get us names, addresses of any guests you may wish to invite. With Al Smith Day being held earlier in April, Feb.'s flurry of weekend activities, the two work weekends a month, will not start until May. Remember it will be the second and fourth Saturdays of months May-September.

With all the workdays, longer daylight, and lists of projects to keep everyone busily involved we know growlings of hunger pains will come from the stomachs of all at the end of a Saturday workday. The honor of showcasing your culinary skills will always be appreciated and allows for all that stay for the delectable dinners a great time to socialize and get to know each other better. All that stay for dinner are asked to contribute five-dollars each. This is to help pay back some of the costs to who ever cooks for the night. That is why we ask for a confirmation—for better meal planning and to confirm lodging reservations. Currently all Saturday night dinners are available to choose from, so one has top choices right now.



#### NEWLY PUBLISHED BOOKS ABOUT THE PPIE

Two complementary books about the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) have been recently published, just in time for the Centennial Celebrations.

One book is *San Francisco's Jewel City / the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* by Laura A. Ackley. The second book is *Panorama / Tales from San Francisco's 1915+ Panama Pacific International Exposition* by Lee Bruno. Both are artfully designed, oversized, heavy books,

Laura A. Ashley's book is predominately text, but with many photographs. A recognized authority on the PPIE, she has graduate degrees from Harvard University and UC Berkeley. Her graduate thesis at UCB was about the PPIE. Her book tells in detail the PPIE's history from the first suggestion to the end of the Exposition; "*The first public inkling of the PPIE came on Christmas Day 1891...*" After years of deliberation, however, earnest planning started in in early 1910. The book's text is easy to read with historic photographs interspaced at appropriate places in the text. The Overfair Railway is mentioned twice.

First, she recounts the frenzy efforts of the construction workers in the last month before the

Exposition's opening on Feb. 20, 1915. The weather was rainy almost every day. "*The tracks of the miniature Overfair Railway, a concession designed to carry fairgoers along the northern waterfront, were washed out and replaced with a sturdy trestle.*" (Page 60). I have not seen any other reference to this problem. Further research is needed about this.

Her second mention of the Overfair Railway is on pages 142 and 143. On the former page is a color photograph of an Overfair train with the Agriculture Palace (?) in the background. This picture is not in our archives. On page 143, she describes the financial outcome of MacDermont's concession. As we, heirs of MacDermont's legacy, unfortunately realize, "*A much more successful and ingenious 'train' was the Faggl Auto Train.*"

Lee Bruno's *Panorama* features a photographic record of the PPIE. Almost all the pictures span the entire page. Bruno is a great grandson of Reuben Brooks Hale, who was a director and vice president of the PPIE's board. Thus, he has a personal interest in writing this version of the Exposition. He presents photos from the files of "Official Photographers", libraries, etc. An example is the two-page spread of "Photograph of San Francisco in Ruins [after the 1906 Earthquake] from a captive airship 2000 feet above San Francisco Bay". The book has 13 chapters; such as, The Performers, The Artists, The Visitors, etc. Each chapter opens with a one or two page description of the chapter's theme; the rest of a chapter is devoted to many pages of pertinent photos. This a book through which you may browse at any part. However, you will need a sturdy bookstand or a tablet to hold the book.

Each book is a worthy addition to any one interested in San Francisco history, particularly about the PPIE. Two copies of *Panorama* are at the South San Francisco Public Library. Patrons of other branches of the San Mateo County Public Library system may borrow a copy by requesting a "hold" through one's branch library.

Details about the books are as follows.

*San Francisco's Jewel City / the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* by Laura A. Ackley;

Publishers: Heyday Books and The California Historical Society: 2015, \$40, 392 pages.

*Panorama / Tales from San Francisco's 1918 Panama Pacific International Exposition* by Lee Bruno:

Publisher: Cameron + Company: 2015, \$29.95, 193 pages.