

## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 199

Cal Poly

Aug. - Sept. 2010

### ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

No you did not miss an August Newsletter, but with all the activities, it was decided to combine the Aug. and Sept. newsletters.

To bring you up to date the flurry of activities started with the first work weekend in July where Kyle Plaskett, SPRR volunteer hosted and organized, with assistance from his Scout Master and Scout Troop, his Eagle Scout project. The project was to acquire all the building materials, organize a work team, and build three additional picnic tables and benches. The tables add approximately fifty more seats to our picnic area. The next time you are at Swanton, please go down to College Park and see the three new picnic tables. The track crew elevated, tamped, leveled and ballasted approx. 200ft. of track. Semaphore work continued off and on under the direction of Pete. A Board Meeting was held on Sunday to organize activities planned for the upcoming SPRR Family Camp.

Family Camp kicked off on Friday, July 23, with activities concentrating on getting ready for the Golden Spikes Run the following day. This run day is also a great training day for all our operators. A special treat for those in attendance, was to listen and enjoy music from Pete's newly restored calliope that is operated by a computer. Sunday was one of our more productive days where we concentrated on clean up under the leadership of Fitz and Bruce. Arrangements were made to haul all the scrap metal off. Other tasks for the day included: working on the caboose; power washing all the picnic tables; and working on the semaphore.

These tasks continued to be worked on throughout the Family Camp Week, as well as other projects—i.e., trimming out a tree that was encroaching on a caboose; another 500ft. of track was improved; some picnic/serving tables were resealed; gardening improvements took place; and painting of a newly refurbished exterior wall on the north side of the roundhouse.

Family Camp was more than a great success. So much was accomplished; good times were shared by all, and at the end of each day a volunteer had prepared an excellent meal for all to enjoy. I would especially like to thank all of the following volunteers that came and helped make the camp so successful: Brendon, Ace, Marty, Randy, Bruce, John, Kyle, Scott, Pete, Greg, Fitz, Stan, Mark, Joe, Amy, Robert, Chris, Bob, Martha, Geoff, and Mary Ann.

The August work weekend's primary task was the refurbishing of College Station. Three full days were spent sanding and scraping in order to get the first coat of primer paint applied. The machine shop crew continued work on the forklift engine and finished the refurbishing of the power ditcher. The engine crew continued to clean and wash down the 1914.

September will see us on the first work weekend getting things in order to host our annual Cal Poly Day Run, which will be held on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010. Invites have been sent out—so I remind you to please return your filled out invitation. There will be lots of things to do to get ready to host the event. We hope to see you soon.



New picnic tables and benches built for us by the Boys Scouts of America

### Down Behind the Railway

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

My Fellow Swantoons:

Sweet September as summer, what we have had of it, comes to an end and the autumnal equinox approaches. September is the first of the remaining numbered months; seven- septem, eight - octo, nine - novem, and ten – decem, all left over from the days when the year started in March.

The simplest calendars are mark off days (solar), months (lunar), seasons and years (the sun once again). Lunar calendars, where the month starts at the same phase of the moon, are very handy for folk dependent on the sea for a living as you can easily predict the tides by the day of the month. Not so handy for farmers though, seasons defined by solstice and equinox are better predictors of when to plant and harvest.

The names of years often appear to be regnal, that is beginning at the succession of some notable person or establishment of a civic entity or based on the zodiac, or some combination thereof. Our 2010 anno Domini is gēngyín – year of the Metal Tiger in the Chinese calendar which has 12 year cycles based on ten Heavenly stems and twelve Earthly branches. I need to know more Chinese history to sort it all out, sixty year cycles and all. It all started with Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor (after the Yellow River) some 4707 years ago.

History is fuzzy over long spans of time as records are hard to keep, even rock is not that solid, however clay tablets and inscriptions on shells seem to last. If you found a spool of Webcor wire would you recognize it as a recording medium?

On to our calendar, after celebrating Labor Day we have our first workday of September on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Patriot’s Day. Fly your flags at half staff if you can. CalPoly Day is the 26<sup>th</sup> so we will be busy getting ready to host some five hundred of our closest friends. Housekeeping once again.

Our first General Meeting of the year is October 9<sup>th</sup>, noonish with the Special Order of Business of nominating officers for President - myself, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President- Andy, 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President- Randy, and Secretary-Pete. Also on the agenda is a motion to change the Society’s bylaws as follows.

#### Article IV. Membership

##### Section A Kinds

Membership shall be of two kinds: Active and Honorary

##### Section B Active Membership

Active (full) membership shall be open to all registered Cal Poly students, alumni, and Cal Poly friends. The Executive Board may grant lifetime active membership to persons in recognition of unusual service to the Society.

Active membership shall be classified, predicated upon annual donations to the Society, as follows:

Student	\$	15	
Gandy Dancer	\$	<del>25</del>	<b>\$35</b>
Attendant	\$	100	
Inspector	\$	500	
Conductor’s Club	\$	1,000	
Station Master	\$	5,000	
Engineer's Club	\$	10,000	

The minimum level of participation for non-student Active membership is a donation of ~~twenty five dollars (\$25)~~ thirty-five dollars (\$35) per year to the Society.

Elections will be held at our General Meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

As always you do not have to be present to nominate or vote, communication with any officer

will suffice, however we prefer that you address your desires to the Secretary or myself in writing or email so we have an official record.

Come on over, we'll have fun. Fitz



Scott and Stan after spreading a load of ballast



Painting College Station, from left to Rt. Ed, Pete, Jerry, Geoff, Bruce, and Bill



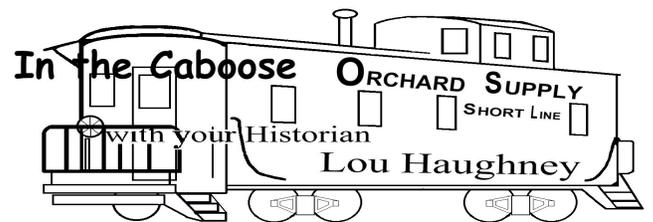
College Station Bench one of the next Projects

**UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY**

Mary Ann Carnegie

- Aug. 28/29 Work Weekend
- Sept. 11/12 Work Weekend
- Sept. 25 Workday to get ready for
- Sept. 26 Cal Poly Day Run

Golden Spikes, Summer Camp, and a few work weekends have been successfully completely. Time now to start preparing for the upcoming Cal Poly Day Run, Sun. Sept. 26. Invites have been snail and e-mailed out, so we hope you will RSVP ASAP. Remember attendance is limited to the first 500, and we do get 500 attendees rain or shine. Hopefully it won't be raining at our next event, though we successfully proved we can host such events in the rain! There will be lots of the usual tasks that need to be done for the event so don't hesitate to step right up and help out with any and all, i.e. parking, food prep, serving, train operations, clean-up, store sales, etc. etc. etc..



**FEEDBACK ABOUT RECENT ARTICLES**

Two recent article attracted quick replies regarding questions in the topics. Such responses are always welcome since they contribute to our material.

Thanks to Ken Lucas who identified two of the "unknowns" in an "Early Years" photo that appeared in the May 2010 issue (photo "Extra No, 3"). At that time, I had identified only Neil Vodden, who was looking directly at the camera (although I misspelled his name in the caption). Ken identifies the two persons bending over the track as Al Smith second from the left and Charlie Hoyle on the right in the photo. The person standing on the left is still unknown. (Figure 1 this issue). Ken was often at the Swanton Pacific Ranch in those very years of 1979-1980. He was one of the OSH store managers who met regularly with Al

Smith at the Al's hilltop house for discussions of business at the OSH stores. Ken is still associated with OSH stores as a district manager. He and his family "had a great day at the Al Smith Day, even with the rain".



Figure 1: Crew laying track ~1980+/-: unknown, Al Smith, Neil Vodden, Charlie Hole.

Doug Richter, an SPRS member and a veteran S.F. Bay area railroading historian, explains a "discrepancy", as I termed it, in the recent articles on the Decauville Mallets used at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris. One source I used, a French version of a Wikipedia article, describes the Mallets' type as 020-020 articulated trucks. A second source, which I quoted from a Canadian website, uses the phrase "the Decauville 0-4-4-0T Mallet". That "discrepancy" puzzled me. Doug quickly contacted me with the answer. In France, the locomotive classification scheme is based on the number of axles whereas the Whyte method, which is used in Great Britain and North America, counts the number of wheels. So, the two sources are both correct if one recognizes the national origin of each article. Further research reveals that Germany uses still another classification involving both numbers and letters. (See reference below.) For example, MacDermot's Overfair Pacific locomotives can be classified as 4-6-2, or 2-3-1, or 2-C-1; respectively, British/No. American, French, and German notations. Adding to the confusion is the omission of the hyphens in some versions. An old adage is appropriate for this situation: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do!"

Thanks to Doug for his clarifying that puzzle. As young men, Doug Richer and Bob Parkinson, also an SPRS member who contributes to our historical lore, were members of early railroading organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area that

included Louis MacDermot, Ralph Demoro, and Frederic Shaw. One such group was the California Nevada Railroad Historical Society (CNRHS), which met at MacDermot's mansion. Later, after WW II, that organization evolved into the Railroadians of America, San Francisco Chapter. Their many contributions are always welcome.

Thanks also to Martha Neilsen who provided background information for the "Early Times" photo.

A full list of "Steam Locomotive Wheel Arrangements" in the three notations is presented at the website: <http://www.railway-technical.com/st-clasif.shtml#TOP>

Here are a few more "old" photos from our archives. Comments will be welcomed.

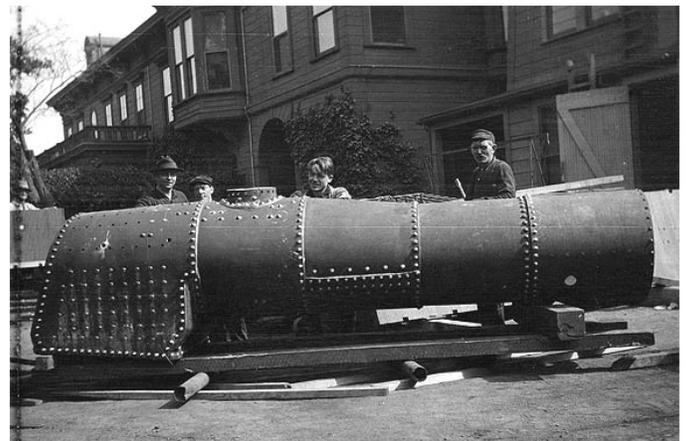


Figure 2: SPRS 1913-1915 LMM-0120, Workshop behind MacDermot mansion for building the Overfair Rwy. equipment delivery of a boiler for a Pacific 4-6-2 locomotive.



Figure 3: SPRS 1978-1991 AS-0264, Locomotives 1914 and 1500 after delivery to Swanton Pacific Ranch from Jervis Estate Sale March-April, 1983