Down Behind the Railway

With your President, air monkey, & car-barnist.\nReynold ‘Fitz’ FitzPatrick\nRGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantooners:

Spring cleaning in July’s Summer Camp didn’t get quite finished. There is some shelving to be installed in the Car Shop, material to be put away, and installing the new blast cabinet filter/vacuum. Charlie suggested we have a shed near the wig-wag to house maintenance-of-way materials which will free up a lot of shop space. I believe an old boxcar would serve quite well and Randy said that that is what railroads do – the MoW folks pull the trucks from under an old car and set it on ties near the track. As we don’t have an old box car we’ll have to make a new ‘old’ car and have it in place before Cal Poly Day.

Our first General Meeting of the year is at noon on Saturday October 8th with a Special Order of Business – nominations for office. The Offices up for election this year are President, Second Vice-President – Operations & Safety, Fourth Vice-President – Engines & Rolling Stock, and Secretary. Following nominations the meeting is open to all members for comment, presenting motions, reporting on projects, etc. We sometimes have this meeting while eating lunch and are likely to do so this year as Cal Poly Day is Sunday. October is also the month where we go back to having one work day a month.

The next General Meeting is on Saturday November 12th when we elect the various Officers. On Sunday the 13th we will have our last Executive Board Meeting of the year from 10:00 AM to Noon. All members are invited to attend, but only Officers and Committee Chairs have a say unless otherwise requested by the President or Director.

In addition to the new ‘old’ boxcar there are a few things (aside from the ever-present track work) that would be nice to complete.

- Finishing the sliding doors in the Machine Shop and building the Safety/Medical center near the sink.
- Cleaning up the materials in Gaddis Flat – what we sometimes refer to as the Corporation Yard.
- Finish preparing the 1912 for transportation.

Additionally, as you enter the Machine Shop there is a white board, which may have a ‘soonest’ project posted.

Well folks, two work weekends before Cal Poly Day. Come on over, we’ll have some fun. \textit{Fitz}
There has been a great deal of activity at the RR these past few months. We had a very successful Al Smith Day run, with our equipment performing well and also being able to once again operate around the rebuilt Folger wye in “traditional” fashion. We continue to acquire experience with boiler water treatment and chemistry, but it keeps us very busy on run days with the testing and chemical adds.

The old motorcar engine proved to be too worn out to save, and a new Kohler engine has been purchased to replace it. The car has been steam cleaned and rebuilding is under way.

The diesel fuel supply pump at our storage tanks became clogged with algae and debris, so the “usual suspects” plus Kyle removed and cleaned it, replaced the filter, and put it back in service.

Lloyd and Mary Yoshida tackled a project for the track gang, adding two standard passenger car compartments to the work train’s gray flatcar. For quite a while we have wanted safer seating than plastic buckets for our guys (so far) going down the line to work track. Lloyd and Mary generously took time away from their own project to build these seats. This could easily become the first step toward another MacDermot passenger car, as the gray flat car is actually an unfinished passenger car frame originally made for Calistoga. Also in the car department, specially milled wood siding has been acquired to match the original, 102 year-old MacDermot car being restored by Matt Zemny, Geoff Tobin, and others in Roundhouse stall 5. Work is ongoing there, lately concentrating on filling voids in parts that are still serviceable.

Fitz has been making great progress on the 1913’s tender, and it is very near to having the original water tank installed. He has devoted a lot of time to refining and building the electrical emergency brake system for best operation with the locomotive, as well as refining the air brakes to have proper braking force. For quite some time now, we have realized that the Overfair Railway’s car brakes are much more powerful than best practice would dictate, and Fitz, together with Geoff, has taken a leading role in designing appropriate changes that will be made to the cars as they come in for maintenance.

The summer Work Week saw a flurry of work on the 1912 to make her ready to go back to Cheyenne for her new boiler. In a thoughtful, organized, careful FRENZY, parts were almost flying off the loco. Bill and Molly Engleman and Dennis and Eric Johnson worked long, hard hours removing the rods and motion work, pistons and main valves, reversing shaft (a feat in itself), cylinder heads and crosshead guides, and many smaller parts. Some of the boiler jacket and most of the piping was removed with help from Bill and Justin Fry, Geoff, Dennis, Bill, Kyle and Molly. Kyle and Molly also tackled emptying and removing the sand dome. All parts removed were carefully labeled and put away.

To anyone I’ve forgotten or missed in the photos, I apologize.

 Barely four weeks later, Bill and Dennis returned (from Colorado and Oregon respectively!) to help finish the job. During the “break”, I had pulled some troublesome parts off, including the throttle frame, cylinder cocks and linkage, Johnson Bar fulcrum, and sanders. With Bill and Dennis here, they took on the dirtiest job of removing the steam pipes from the smokebox. They also removed the pilot and front coupler, and moved the front shipping drawbar-pocket weldment from the 1913...
to the 1912, and replaced the (back) chafing plate with a similar shipping fixture. We worked together to remove the rest of the jacket, a complicated process with spring rigging in the way, but now the locomotive is about ready to ship!

Bill, Dennis, and I were also able to work on the 1913 for a day (or two?). We hydro tested the air reservoirs and some connecting piping, a process both necessary and almost impossible to perform with the parts installed on the locomotive. Then we attached the tanks to the running boards and put them on the loco – both things that are almost impossible for me to do alone. Many thanks to all who participated – you all deserve big gold stars on your lockers (if only we had lockers).

Also on the 1913 – the last few months have seen the injector piping straightened, adjusted, and installed with new brackets where necessary. The crosshead guides were installed after many hours of fitting, including sorting and testing 16 original special bolts for best (or just workable) fit. The bottom guides needed additional machining to make them fit without warping the guide bearing casting. Apparently a hundred years ago the motto sometimes was “If it don’t fit, get a bigger hammer”. Now, at least, they are where they belong, ready for final alignment and shimming. The Johnson Bar fulcrum is permanently mounted, and repairs are being made to the blast (exhaust) nozzle and blower ring, which both go in the smokebox under the stack.

I sincerely thank all of you who have worked so hard these last few months, in all the different aspects of our railroad. It is an honor to work with you all.

Randy

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY
Mary Ann Carnegie

Upcoming events at Swanton, mark your calendars:

- **Sept. 24-25**  Work Weekend
- **Oct. 8**     Preparing for Run Tomorrow
- **Oct. 9**     Cal Poly Day Run Day
- **Nov. 12-13**  Work Weekend
- **Dec. 10-11**  Work Weekend

Swanton has been a beehive of activity all summer long. However, Summer Camp, with having an entire week of staying focused on specific projects, once again provided much success in getting many projects completed, sharing lots of fun times together with our Swanton Family, and enjoying several delicious culinary delights. It was especially nice to have long time members Bill and Molly Engleman roll in from Colorado, and the Johnson family of Dennis, Debbie and Eric drive down from Oregon. We likewise appreciate all our other California volunteers that traveled from various distances to get to Swanton as well. Every volunteer’s time devoted to Swanton is ALWAYS GREATLY appreciated, without our volunteers, it wouldn’t be, so thank you all.

**A brief summary for the week’s activities were:**
- A most informative tour of the Big Creek Sawmill
- Completing the fence enclosure for the Christmas Tree Nursery in the meadow area
- Removing the entire interior of the 73 caboose and then getting it completely sandblasted, welded, and readied for painting, to be followed with a foam spray insulation
- Painting some of the signal lights, semaphores, milepost markers, and porcelain tubs
• Wire brushing, priming and repainting all the lamp-posts in the meadow
• Getting an evaluation for work to be done on the roundhouse
• Organizing Swanton’s collection of its stored items
• Working on track maintenance
• MUCH progress was made on the 1912, to get it ready to send back to Watstach for a new boiler, along with reassembling the 1913
• Work continued on the passenger car, and the “crew’s booth” to bring each closer to completion
• Having a most informative educational and participatory blacksmithing display. ALL of which made for…
• A very successful, well attended Open-House for all that attended, along with providing GREAT “hands-on” training for all aspects of railroad operations for our volunteers

We are now moving forward with getting ready for the Annual Cal Poly Day Run, on Sunday, October 9. The invitation can be found on the SPRR website. sprr.calpoly.edu

Remember, if you are actively participating in the organization and will be volunteering on that day—please RSVP ASAP. That way we can make assignments for various hosting tasks for the day. We need everyone that can help on October 9 to VOLUNTEER. There are lots of “jobs” available.

On Sunday, Sept. 25, we will have a special group of railroad buffs from Arizona visiting Swanton. We will be providing a diesel-train-ride for them, along with facility tours, and sharing the history of Swanton. This will provide an excellent training day for total train crew operations. So come get in some “hands-on” training. You, too might get certified, as was recently, successfully accomplished by volunteer Bill Fry! Congratulations Bill. Now to maybe work on becoming a certified engineer!

So, as you can see, our volunteers continually stay very busy with all sorts of tasks. Following the hosting of the small group in September, and Cal Poly Day in October, a general meeting will be held in October, with elections of new officers in November, and then it’s New Years! Hard to think it will soon be 2017!! It will, we are sure, prove to be a new year filled with many new ideas and more projects. All of which continually make Swanton Railroad a very special place, and what we call, the “Crown Jewel” of Cal Poly.

Come up, down, over, or around to take part in all the activities in any way you can, and bring a friend to share in all the fun. We are pretty sure we can, and will find some project that will spark one’s interest. After all, volunteering is giving one’s time to a good cause. You won’t get paid, but YOU DO get to use your talents, develop new skills, and experience the pleasure that comes from making a real difference.

Look forward to seeing you at Swanton for the next few work weekends, and especially on Sunday, October 9 for the Cal Poly Day.  

THREE GIFTS FOR SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD  
by Rhoda Fry and Randy Jones

During “Summer Camp,” Jeanine Scaramozzino, College of Science & Mathematics and Data Services Librarian since 2008, came up from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and presented three gifts: a copy of her Master’s thesis and two locomotive builder’s plates cast in bronze. She recently obtained her Master’s Degree in Public History (with honors, by the way) and wrote her thesis about Swanton, a fascinating story that begins 2500 to 5000 years ago and also contains quite a bit of history about the Swanton Pacific Railroad.
The 169-page thesis manuscript, titled *Una Legua Cuadrada: Exploring the History of Swanton Pacific Ranch and Environs*, provides answers to the thorny question of whether the creek that is crossed by the Ed Carnegie Bridge is called Scott’s Creek or Scott Creek or Scotts Creek. Chapter 3 is a biography of Albert B. Smith, who purchased 3200 acres of ranchland on Swanton Road and founded the Swanton Pacific Railroad. Appendix D contains a timeline of the Swanton Pacific Railroad with information not readily found elsewhere as it came from interviews with Swanton’s most senior railroad volunteer, Randy Jones. You can find an online copy here: [http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/theses/1522](http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/theses/1522)

While Jeanine was doing her research, she became fascinated by a small wooden object among our historic relics stored in the Southern Pacific Railroad caboose. Randy Jones identified it for her as pattern for a builder’s plate - one of our many century-old original patterns used to cast locomotive parts. A pattern is a replica of an object to be cast; it is used to create cavities in a mold. A mold is a container into which a material is poured to create an object.

American locomotive builders attached Builders Plates to their products, usually one on each side of the smokebox, that contained their name, location, date (month and year), and a unique number for each locomotive. This number is commonly referred to as the “Builder’s Number” (same as a Serial Number), and allowed for reliable identification of each loco, from contract signing through construction, delivery, and beyond, no matter what operating number a railroad might put on that loco. The numbers themselves were separate pieces added to the master pattern, then changed for subsequent castings. Perfect examples of this are visible on the front center of the locomotives' cylinder blocks, where the numbers are different on each engine. Our pattern was missing these numbers. Instead of “Builder’s Number”, Louis Mac Dermot used the term “Shop Number” on his drawings and larger parts, although to this date we don't know why.

Since none of our locomotives have traditional builder’s plates and we have no photographic record of them, we can infer that, in Louis M. MacDermot’s rush to get the locomotives ready for the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the builder’s plates were never cast. In addition, old newspaper articles provide clues to MacDermot’s stresses in completing the locomotives and cars for his “Overfair Railway.” In fact, one of the locomotives was never completed, the #1915, which Al Smith, our railroad’s founder, donated to the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. That locomotive, now restored for display, is the first thing visitors see upon entering the museum.

**Jeanine Scaramozzino, Cal Poly Librarian**

*Louis MacDermot observes his engines during their construction. Engine on the right is marked with shop number ”702” today’s #1914*

Jeanine had two builder’s plates cast in bronze (originally they probably would have been cast in iron): one for the #1913 locomotive (shop number #703) and one for the #1914 locomotive (shop number #702). Surprisingly, the shop number for the #1913 is greater than the shop number for the #1914. The table below shows MacDermot’s unusual non-sequential assignment of locomotive numbers to the shop numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shop Number</th>
<th>Locomotive Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#650</td>
<td>#1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#701</td>
<td>#1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#702</td>
<td>#1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#703</td>
<td>#1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#704</td>
<td>#1915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While we knew the shop numbers for our locomotives from the cylinder blocks and various stamped parts, we did not have a pattern for the numbers themselves. So Jeanine leveraged her multi-disciplinary Cal Poly connections for a solution. She tapped the talents of Graphic Communication Department Associate Professor Brian P. Lawler to identify an appropriate font and create computer models. Then she called upon staff in the Biology Department to print the numbers in 3D for placement in the master pattern for casting.

Jeanine presented the #1913 locomotive builder’s plates to Ed Carnegie to recognize his dedication, foresight, and planning to replace the locomotive’s boiler. And she also recognized the volunteers who assisted her with her thesis with plates for our only in-service locomotive, the #1914. These builder’s plates will make a fine finishing touch to our locomotives and are a valued contribution to the railroad’s living history.

Thanks Jeanine!

NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS

Jack Lee          San Ramon, CA
Nick Loey        Danville, CA
Ross McClenahan Davenport, CA
Kua Patten      Moraga, CA
Donald Ray      Belmont, CA
Ron Warren      Greenfield, 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.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

Due-Dues-Dues are now DUE!!!

Our organization is ALWAYS accepting new memberships. Dues or membership renewals for the year 2016, are definitely due ASAP. Currently we have 80 paid members, and historically, at this time we have usually had over 100 paid members. So if you have not paid your membership to SPRR, please do so. If you are not sure if you have paid, or do not remember receiving a dues reminder message, please contact me, ecarnegi@calpoly.edu or phone [805] 995-3659. If mailing a check, see address below.

For a mere $35/year you become a full-fledged Swanton Pacific Volunteer.

Make your check out to Swanton Pacific Railroad; mail to:

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