REPORT FROM THE FIREMAN
Charlie Crabb, Director

Many of the volunteers have heard me say that our number one priority is to keep the trains rolling. There is no better way to honor the memory of our founder, Al Smith, than to maintain the railroad and trains so people can enjoy the opportunity to ride on a train pulled by a steam locomotive.

With that said, I want to start by thanking those of you who responded to our reminder to renew your Society membership. We are pleased with your show of interest in our mission and are excited to see how many of you are keeping your membership active.

Now about keeping the trains rolling… This year nature is certainly testing our resolve. With the heavy rains this winter a small section of the track has been undermined and flowing water has removed ballast under some of the track at the wye. Even our ability to get to the railroad has been impacted when the heavy rains damaged a culvert under the main Swanton Road.

Given the condition and uncertainty concerning repair of Swanton Road, the Swanton Pacific Railroad Society Board made the difficult decision to cancel Al Smith Day this year. This decision was not made lightly. The Board realized given the condition of Swanton Road having a large public event would be irresponsible on our part.

I know there are a lot of people who will be disappointed that the event has been cancelled but we are optimistic that everything will be in order for Cal Poly Day, which is scheduled for Sunday, September 24th. We also have our “summer camp” work week scheduled to start on Saturday, July 22nd.

We have our work cut out for us to keep the trains rolling, but I have seen first-hand the great work that the volunteers do for the railroad. I look forward to working with many of you as we make the repairs and improvements necessary to be ready for Cal Poly Day.

In April we will go to two work weekends each month (starting on the second and fourth Saturday). I hope to see many of you at the Swanton Pacific Railroad.
DOWN BEHIND THE RAILWAY

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

My Fellow Swantoons:

We have some challenges ahead of us with Scott Creek meandering right under our railway. We have done this before, but there are a lot of agencies that must approve any work we might do.

For the foreseeable future, we will be the Swanton Short Line. If memory serves it took about two years for us to gain the necessary governmental permits and restore the washout. Our last permit expired on October 31st and we finished at about 2 PM that day.

As mentioned above, we cancelled Al Smith Day this year as storm damage to Swanton Road has severely restricted access to the railroad and it would be more than inconvenient for our guests and members to safely attend our celebration. Hopefully repairs will have been completed in time for Cal Poly Day.

With challenges come opportunities, (he says optimistically), as we have a plethora of projects that need may be completed as we wend our way through the permit process.

✓ Design and build a device that allows us to weigh railcars using our load cell.
✓ Extend the air line in the car shop over to the door to allow filling tires and such without having to drag a hose through the shop.
✓ Head up a committee to evaluate the condition of the Station in the meadow and make repairs or improvements as needed.
✓ Set up a permanent secure display of some of our historical archives in the Cal Barn.
✓ Set up a woodwork shop in the Cal Barn. Build workbench, cabinetry, roll-away cabinets to hold our woodworking tools including the table saw, radial arm saw, planer, joiner, a drill press and dust collector. May require installing a ceiling and dust barrier. Must also still be able to become a clear work space for festive gatherings.
✓ In the Machine Shop, build out the stub wall by the west doors to hold the AED, First Aid kit, eyewash station, mirror, and phone. Install cabinetry and wash facilities.
✓ Inventory the sand casting patterns and find a secure place to keep them. We may wish to display some of them.
✓ Design and install solar lighting for the turntable.
✓ Replace the storage shed at the BBQ with a mouse-proof one.
✓ Design and build an “Observation Car” speakers platform in the meadow.
✓ Cut and patch the damaged side of the Santa Fe Car.
✓ Sort out the ‘good stuff’ in Gaddis Flat and dispose of the trash.
✓ Repair the China crawler.
✓ Build a test stand for rail cars.

There are more projects if you are interested. I’d like to have a couple of passenger car trucks on hand as spares but that requires finishing some projects in the car shop first.

If you are a new member, or have received a complimentary copy of this newsletter, and come by for the first time please stay for lunch so we can get to know you – and you us. We may seem disorganized at first, however that is a result of many of us wearing multiple ‘hats’ and trying to set priorities for the day. Someone may ask you to
clean up some shop floor or equipment, and that’s because we may not know yet that you are an ace welder in another life. We want you to enjoy your experience here at the railway.

Come on by. We’ll have fun…  

Fitz

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY
Mary Ann Carnegie

After serving as the Publicity Events Chair-person for the last twenty-years, I feel it is time for new blood within the organization to take over. It is also due to other personal and pressing family commitments that I feel I cannot continue to volunteer the time necessary to this job with the thoroughness that I would like, and with what I expect from myself.

Therefore, I feel it was best for me to resign as Swanton Pacific’s Publicity Event Chair-person, effective as of January 2017. So, this will be my last article for the newsletter as Publicity Events Chair-person.

I have both appreciated and have been honored to serve in this capacity. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to thank all Swanton volunteers, guests to Swanton’s events/functions, and any others with which I have had the pleasure of sharing my passion and interest in Swanton over the years. I will always cherish the tremendous support that each have given to help our organization, as a team, carry out Al’s vision for the railroad, and in making Swanton Pacific’s events so successful. It certainly would not have been possible to continue doing this for twenty plus years without everyone’s support.

Even though I say “adieu” from this position, I will continue to volunteer and support Swanton in any way I can. Thanks for all the memories, but more will continue to be made.

MAC

Editor’s note: It will be difficult to imagine Swanton without the enabling and competent support from Mary Ann.

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD GOES TO SAN FRANCISCO

by Rhoda Fry

On March 4 and 5, 2017, Swanton Pacific Railroad volunteers headed to The Old Mint in San Francisco to share information about the railroad at the annual San Francisco History Days event. Over 75 local organizations joined together for this one weekend to create a pop-up museum that celebrated San Francisco’s unique history. Transportation by rail was well represented with the Cable Car Museum, the Western Railway Museum, the San Francisco MTA, the San Francisco Railway Museum as well as Swanton Pacific Railroad Society. We had the opportunity to tour The Old Mint, which opened in 1854 and at one time housed a third of our nation’s gold, visit other booths, and attend lectures. In addition to providing information about our railroad, we also learned from visitors
who had known our railroad’s founder, Al Smith, or had a grandparent who rode our trains when they were in San Francisco during the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. One of our guests, Edie Epps, shared a photo that she had recently acquired of one of our locomotives at 1915 PPIE with a young girl wearing a fur-edged coat and a white fur stole (complete with head) around her. Thank you Edie for adding to our railroad’s memorabilia collection.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

2017 DUES are now DUE!!!

Dues or membership renewals for 2017 are now due. The renewal/membership form is attached on last page of newsletter.

If you have any questions about dues, please contact ecarnegi@calpoly.edu or phone [805] 995-3659.

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

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

NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS

Dorothy Chittenden      Scotts Valley, CA
Tom Knapp               San Francisco, CA
Richard Piaseck         San Francisco, CA
Craig Williams          Scotts Valley, CA

On behalf of the entire organization, we welcome you into our "train family" and 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.