ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

As we welcome in the new year, 2016 will undoubtedly bring changes. One big change that will be forthcoming is the transition of Swanton Pacific’s Director’s position. A position I have proudly held since 1993, but it is time now change and currently, Charlie Crabb has been designated to potentially step in as the new director. We are currently discussing the scope and involvement of his role. In time, as he understands it more and takes on more of the tasks, I will gradually be stepping back to allow for a smooth transition for both the organization and its volunteers.

I will now briefly introduce you all to Charlie Crabb. He is currently Interim Dept. Head of Bio Recourse and Agriculture Engineering [same dept. I came from]. His roots have been in California’s dairy industry. He received his BS degree from UC Davis in Wildlife & Fisheries Biology [1973], Masters of Science Biology from Bowling Green, Ohio, and then back to UCD for his PhD in Ecology [1991]. He then taught at Davis before coming to Cal Poly, where he stayed for the next 17 years [1978-1995]. At Cal Poly he was an assistant professor in Crop Science [same department that Al Smith graduated from], then became a full professor, served as interim associate Dean for Agriculture, and then as associate VP for Academic Affairs, he has also been Associate Dean in the College of Agriculture. In 1995, after leaving Poly, Charlie became director of the UC division of Ag & Natural Resources So. Central Region and Kearney Ag. Research Center. In 1999, he served as Dean of Agriculture for Chico State. In 2006, he left higher education to serve agriculture in different ways, i.e., manager of Gov’t Affairs Division for CA Farm Bureau Foundation., assistant to Provost of Academic Facilities at Cal Poly-SLO. He has also served on several other boards and associations.

Swanton is not completely new to Charlie in that he did know Al, and was at Cal Poly when Swanton was being gifted to Cal Poly.

Charlie is a proven leader who focuses on strategic planning and decision support. Through his broad based experiences and vast networking, I certainly feel most confident that the future of Swanton Pacific Railroad will be ensured to continue to move forward in a direction that Al would also be most acceptable of and “Cal Poly Proud.”

As you read Fitz’s article below, you will see that though I am transitioning out as the Director, I will still stay actively involved, and will serve as the elected Treasurer to the Society.

It has certainly been my honor, and pleasure to have been the Director of Swanton Pacific Railroad over the past many years and I continue to look forward to seeing and volunteering with many of you on the future work weekends.

NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS

Lee Martin Howell San Mateo, 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.
Down Behind the Railway

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

My Fellow Swantoons:
Happy New Year! Recent election results have: Geoff, First Vice-President; Bruce-Third Vice-President, and Ed-Treasurer.

As part of our January Executive Board meeting we reviewed the many projects on the “to-do” list and will at our next meeting, March 13, establish priorities, as well as capital and maintenance expenditures for the coming fiscal year.

Board meetings are open to all volunteers and invited guests. You are quite welcome to attend, and while we may include you in a discussion, we normally restrict discussion of a topic to members of the Board. Should you wish to become a more active member, there are some committee chairs that are vacant. We have elections of officers every year – four in even numbered years, and three in odd years. If you are interested, please see me.

We have a revised General Safety and Work Rules course that reflects some safety concerns that were not addressed in the previous course, in part HazMat (Hazardous Material) awareness and response, changes in First-Aid, working near hydraulic equipment, and some minor changes that reflect how we work together, and changes in University procedures. If you are an active ‘hands-on’ volunteer, we expect you to take the course as a refresher. This is so we are all current and on the same page. Otherwise, I suggest that you request a copy from Pete, myself, or any officer so that you are made aware of the changes.

It’s that time of the year, once again, that we ask for your donations. Thirty-five dollars keeps you on the active roster. Thanks.

Come on over to the railway, we’ll have some fun, learn something and teach something.  Fitz
Since the last newsletter, we have had two successful runs, one for our Christmas Tree sales, and the other our traditional New Year’s Eve celebration. All of our equipment ran well, and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

We have continued our annual car inspections, finding no defects. Some shop time has been spent providing suitable rails for the track crew. The track work at the Folger wye continued right up to New Years’ Eve, with the result that we could operate all the way down the main track into the Hog Wallow switch. This location got its’ name from a genuine wild pig wallow that was present alongside the track there for many years, until the drought, and the drop in the wild pig population. After all the hard work, it is very gratifying to run on such smooth track.

Work on the 1912’s replacement boiler is going well in Cheyenne, with time spent on our part measuring, planning, and conferencing about details. Tear-down of the 1912 continues here to ready her for shipment back there.

Work on the 1913 includes finishing the welding on the cab base, along with cleaning and painting. The back of the frame also got stripped and painted, and we are nearing the point where the cab can be mounted on the loco for the last time. Air brake piping continues as well.

The engine on the motor car #00 (the “Double-naught”), continues to cause us problems. The new carburetor had the engine running perfectly for almost two hours, and then it went “sour” again. There may be a fuel supply problem, but we aren’t sure that’s the only problem. We are investigating the wisdom of pursuing a remedy for this old engine, versus buying something entirely new. Whether or not a new engine might require a more extensive re-build of the car itself is under review. We are all aware we don’t need more “Projects”.

A wobble in the front wheel-set of the track broom/ballast regulator has been noted for some time now. Brendon Hilton corrected this over New Years’ by turning the wheels in the shop, and the car runs very nicely now.

A slight correction to the last newsletter about the 1913 at the Oakland Zoo is in order. MacDermot was not able to finish his own scale-air pumps in time for the fair, and apparently did not pursue that project any further. He had to buy full size pumps from Westinghouse to supply the air brakes. The much smaller, scale pumps were first applied to the 1913 by Erich Thomsen’s shop for service on Bob Maxfield’s Calistoga Steam Railroad in 1975. Some re-design work and more modern casting materials were necessary to make them function. Two of the big pumps are still with us, in use on the tenders of the 1912 and 1914. The sand domes (some call them sand boxes) were always on the locomotives, but were also never finished. The sand pipes and sanders themselves were never applied, hence the need to “sand” by hand. Sanders were first applied to the 1913 at Calistoga, and to the 1912, and 1914, during restoration at Swanton. Their necessity, here on a mountain railroad, has been demonstrated over and over again. In fact, operating sanders for the 502 are on our project list.

We hope you are all having a good new year thus far, and can only advise “Stay dry”.

What is left of the logjam at the South end of the old washout

New logjam forming North of the last photo
Track Work
With Pete McFall

Gandy Dancer is a slang term used for early railroad workers who laid and maintained railroad tracks in the years before the work was done by machines.

The track crew has only 90 feet to go, rails are being rolled. With two-work weekends, [February and March], many hands will certainly make short work of this. For those die hard ones, we do offer Tuesday and Thursday work days in between, provided no rain. Be sure to call, and tell us what day you wish to come over and help.

Spiking, bolting, and tamping—we have job for everyone. For those that want a sit-down job, we have the forks for holding the ties in place while spiking.

Our recent culvert work at the wye was given a test by Mother Nature, and so far has passed with flying “wet” colors.

So bring gloves, warm clothes, and lunch, and we can get this completed for the upcoming Al Smith Day Run—Sunday, April 24.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:
DUES-DUES-DUES are now DUE!!!

Our organization is now accepting new memberships, or renewals for the year 2016. For a mere $35/year you become a full-fledged Swanton Pacific Volunteer. To be included in the membership roster—dues need to be submitted by mid-March. Make your check out to Swanton Pacific Railroad; mail to

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

News-flash:
Review and read the revised General Safety and Work Rules Course. There are NEW safety concerns that were not addressed before!!!

Society is looking for some new committee chairs: newsletter editor; photographer; If interested, see Fitz or Ed

Notes from Kyle

Ernie and I have been replacing old plants around the station area, horseshoe pits, and next to the machine shop, with roses, and new deer fencing. We have been clearing the hillside, below Gordon’s house, from all the dead trees and other stuff we find buried there—history has that it was an in-house collection site for whatever.

The rains, from some of the past storms, have been coming in really good, and have made the creek do some wild things. We think it is going to start flowing on the south side of the bridge or other side of the fixed abutment. The new drainage box, the Cal Poly students made, is working wonderfully well as it catches the silt before it goes down the pipe. The Cal Barn has been having weird leaks, (with heavy rains, we have one leak, then when it’s a light rain, or trying to find it with a hose running down the roof, there are no leaks at all). So makes it a tough one to solve, but leaks are marked with caution tape to know where they originated.
still have a railroad from these storms and haven't had many trees down, but a few have fallen and were cleared out of the way. Trying to stay dry and warm with the rains. Kyle

Swanton Pacific Railroad goes to San Francisco
by Rhoda Fry

On March 5 and 6, 2016, the Swanton Pacific Railroad will have a booth at the "San Francisco History Days" event at the Old Mint. This event, sponsored by the City of San Francisco, marks the grand reopening of the Old Mint, built in 1874. By 1880, the Old Mint produced sixty percent of our nation's silver and gold coins, no doubt some of it coming from Louis M. MacDermot's millionaire mining father, Charles Francis MacDermot! The Swanton Pacific Railroad will likely share a room with the San Francisco Railway Museum and the Cable Car Museum. Our Overfair Railway locomotives have connections to both, through their inventor Louis M. MacDermot. San Francisco's Railways and Cable Cars provided transportation to the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and the Overfair Railway provided transportation within the 635-acre fairgrounds. In addition, Louis' father, C. F. MacDermot, and grandfather, Charles Main, were franchise owners of the Geary Street Park & Ocean Railroad, one of early adopters of the Eppelsheimer grip, which is still used today. Learn more about San Francisco History Days at the Old Mint here: http://sfhistorydays.org/

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY
Mary Ann Carnegie

Upcoming events at Swanton, mark your calendars:

Feb 13/14 Work Weekend
March 12/13 Work Weekend—Board Mtg
April 9/10 Work Weekend
April 23 Run Day Prep
April 24 Al Smith Day Run

Happy New Year to all—and already the first month is history—time keeps fleeting by, and now we need to focus on getting the many projects to completion, as well as to get ready for our annual Al Smith Day, scheduled for Sunday, April 24. Mark your calendars. Note it is later this year to accommodate various schedules—volunteers,

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University, El Nino predictions, etc.. Again, we will host the Orchard Supply [OSH] Calendar artist, Ken Muramoto. He will personally autograph OSH calendars that individuals bring to him. If you have not received or looked at the calendar—go to April and see that he featured Swanton Pacific and in honor of Al’s birthday month!!

Between now and the April run day, we have just 3-work weekends scheduled. After the storms, winds, rains, winter hibernation of things, much needs to get done to put our best track, grounds and facilities forward for all to enjoy. So come up, down, over, or around to be a part of it all, and maybe even take “pride in ownership” of a project or two.

We would also hope if you do participate for whatever amount of time, on either a Sat., Sun., or other days that Pete mentioned for track work, you remember to sign the work-log. If you are staying over on one of the Saturday work-days—we do offer rooms at the inn, just confirm with Ed. Then group dinners are also planned for Sat. nights. Anyone staying can volunteer to be the chef that evening to prepare their culinary specialty. A donation of $5.00 is usually asked of those staying in order to help defray meal costs for the chef.

For additional 2016 dates/schedules, go to sprr.calpoly.edu then click on calendar/membership form. Hope to see many of you at the upcoming February work weekend. . . Feb. 13 and/or 14.

PRIZE BULL ATTACKS TRAIN AT P.P.I.E
A Short Story
From Justin Fry

During the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a crazed bull went on an escapade over 2 miles across the fairgrounds and attacked an Overfair Railway train, causing its passengers to flee. Could this event have caused the dent on the air compressor jacket of the #1913 locomotive? We will never know, but it sure makes for a good story! Here is the story from the June 26, 1915 Oakland Tribune:

BULL PUT VISITORS AT EXPOSITION TO FLIGHT King Toro a prize bull in the exposition livestock section, jumped the pen fence at 3:10 o’clock yesterday afternoon, galloped down the Avenue of States up to the porch of The Netherlands pavilion and over to the California building verandas. The bull found an open road everywhere, visitors giving way with frantic haste.

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He plunged into the Palace of Transportation, butting over several wagons and pumps. Out he rushed, bellowing around the Court of the Universe, than heading for the Palace of Machinery. The animal rushed at one side of the miniature train as the passengers dashed out the other. In the Machinery Hall he paused to drink at one of the fountains. There the keepers overtook him. After a chase around the building they lassoed Toro."

Note that our locomotives have since moved the air compressor from the side of the locomotive to the rear of the tender so that the locomotive looks better and fits through the doors of our roundhouse.

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