



## SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 39

May 1996

### Reminder

Our workdays for May are Wednesday evening, May 8th. at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, May 11th. starting @ 9:00A. M.

### On Track

with your Director,  
Ed Carnegie

I am happy to report that Al's Day was well attended and came off without a hitch. It was very nice to see and visit with a lot of Al's friends; some of whom we haven't seen for some time. We were all very pleased to see Elmer and Frances, but we had to make sure that Elmer took it easy. Get a railroad man back on the tracks and it's hard for them to remember that they still need to stay on the siding until given the O.K. to proceed further. We all know how Elmer likes to take charge--but we do want him to fully recover. The weather couldn't have been better. Not too hot, very clear, and no wind. I want to thank all of the volunteers who came to Swanton and spent a day or more cleaning to make the railroad look great. The locomotives never looked better. Marty and his crew had the 1912 and the 502 sparkling and running like a clock. The track crew under the leadership of Andy and Cosmos took care of some track problems so we had no problems there. I want to express my special thanks to Marty Campbell for all the work and extra time that he exerted before the event. My hat comes off to the BBQ team, under the leadership of Jim Matheny. The food, as always, was great.

Some of the items that were completed before Al's Smith Day:

- Track work; some ties were replaced and the right-a-way cleaned.
- The hand rails on the Scott Creek Bridge were finished.

- The picnic meadow was mowed and cleaned up. Sunday after the last guest left, the meadow was ripped, disked, compost added, leveled and planted.
- The car barn and round house grounds were all spruced up. [I'm happy to report at least this time it wasn't me who burst the water pipes!]

Our next event is Cal Poly Day which will be held Saturday, June 15th--please mark your calendar. This will give us two work days to make everything ready, and get committees set up for work schedules to organize events for the Cal Poly Day. We still have some track work to do and the siding to the car barn can be worked on. The weather should be good, not to mention longer daylight hours, so come on out to work, talk railroad, and just have fun. Afterall, where else can you have so much fun with such good people?

During the last workday, and/or prior to Al Smith Day it was noticed how much this volunteer organization really does to make an event successful. Members of all ages came from near and far to donate their time and energy to just help in getting things done. Bill Hoey and Brandon came the furthest from the southern part of the state--Orange County, and the furthest from the North & out-of-state was Ken Fischer from Beaverton, Oregon. Younger members were the Sutherlin children who helped plant flowers around the station and cleanup railroad cars; Randy Smith's family helped paint the toolbox. A special thanks goes to Martha for adding an extra festive touch to the event with the colorful flowers and tablecloths for all the tables. We all especially thank everyone that brought "sweets" for some great desserts to top the fantastic meal cooked by Jim Matheny, Greg Duff, Bob Nicholas, Jed Dunn. Behind the scene cooks that deserve a special thanks are: Wendy Morehouse, Vera McLean, and Linda and Molly Engleman--they cleaned, cooked, and prepared the beans and mushrooms up in the redhouse. Additional thanks to Bill McNab for mowing the meadow, spraying weeds, Bill Engleman for helping get the engine ready, Martha

and crew for making sure the cars were cleaned up so that no one had dusty butts. And then there was the entire train crew---Marty Campbell, Ed Carnegie, Art Laidlaw (as engineers), Jeff Tobin, Ken Fischer, Andrew Martin (the firemen), Bob Morehouse, Bill Engleman, Jim Scott, Cosmo DiFrancesco, and Andy McLean (conductor-brakeman), without them there would be no train rides!. A special thanks is also in order for Lou Haughney and the great historical display he always puts together for all to see and enjoy.

Then there were those very informative tours of the ranch--we hope some of you were able to partake in them. These were provided to everyone by ranch employees LaDonna, Tom, Ed and Jerry. Bud McCrary gave a really special tour of the falls and hatchery. This observer, I am sure has left out some names to give special thanks and recognition to, but please don't be offended if your name was not mentioned. We know that without each of your contributions, events such as these would not be successful. A great big thanks goes out to all of you that helped -- but most of all a continual thanks goes to Al Smith for sharing his dreams and toys with all of us.

---

### Behind the Throttle

with your President,  
Bill McNab

Al Smith's birthday and life celebration train run and BBQ April 14, had the weather cooperating in all its glory. Shirt sleeve weather, no wind, lots of conversation, train runs both steam and diesel, good BBQ and desserts aplenty made by lot of the wives. Jim Matheny needs a round of thanks for overseeing, procuring, serving, and cleanup of the BBQ. Jim had a lot of helpers too and thanks go to them also.

We rolled out the hand pumper car and a few brave souls tried it out. I think more as photo subjects than a travel mode. It was setup to run north of the caboose and across Little Creek bridge.

Saturday before Al Smith day there was work going on in all directions. The Scott Creek bridge has a finished safety railing for walkers, much cleanup of materials around the car barn, weed cutting, planting border and flowers around the College RR station. There was much work that went on prior to Saturday as some of the group came over early and put in 2 to 3 days. We have an answering machine, and now maybe some of the

people will be asking for mail delivery next for these long extended work times. The roundhouse was open and crew working from Wednesday on.

One of the highlights of Sunday was a van trip up Big Creek arranged by Bud and Ken McCrary and their families. This is part of the McCrary Big Creek Lumber property and such a pristine area. To hike with Bud, you've got to get with it because he puts one foot in front of the other and keeps moving. We passed the fish hatchery which had been full a week earlier but is now drained; and then hiked from there, paused at the site of what was a hydro electric plant generating electricity way back in the late 1800's for Santa Cruz and Watsonville area. It was abandoned in the 1940's and dismantled in the 1950's. The water was flumed and piped with a drop of about 900 ft. to turn the Pelton wheel generator.

On up the creek the trail narrows to a precarious foot slipping, root grabbing, balancing act that should only be attempted in a group situation. The end result was looking up at a stupendous vertical waterfall where Big Creek cascades white water down a rock face of about 200 feet. The fine mist generated a cooling effect on sweaty brows. What a treat!

On the way back from the waterfall, Bud showed us some of his "seedlings". These consisted of 4 ft to 6 ft diameter redwoods that tower above and create a canopy that filters the sun to about a 30 sun block. Bud pointed out some of the different growth habits of the trees. They definitely do not have all the same characteristics. Some are odd and others are downright bazaar.

The McCrary family house where Bud grew up was pointed out. It sits in a meadow, and would do as a western movie set. It is a large house built of logs and stone and in which his mother lived until passing a few years ago.

Our thanks for the hike to the McCrary family.

As the Sun was heading west at the end of the day, Ed Carnegie was aboard the bucket-scraper tractor, tearing up the lower portion of the picnic meadow and horseshoe area. It got disked, mushroom compost intermixed, scraped to somewhat level, and grass seed planted. Wally Mark jumped on the tractor at dark with all of the new lighting standards turned on and pulled a weighted screen rig across the seeded area to help cover the seed. The grass seed planted is "buffalo grass" so I

guess the proof of success or failure will be in the number of buffalo that show up.

Oh yes, I almost forgot. Bob Nichols "disturbed" the main water supply line Saturday while scraping some of the parking area above the red house. Can you believe that it wasn't "one scoop" Ed Carnegie this time? Our plumbing repair "experts" are getting a lot of hands on experience.

Good to see Elmer Stone wandering around and getting some health back after heart by-pass surgery. I think Francis was happy to be out of their house and cabin fever, for the day also.

### Observation Car

This will be a new addition to the monthly newsletter. Its purpose will be to have anyone submit ideas, thank-you's, suggestions, and/or general comments that they would like to see published in the newsletter. You can either submit it anonymously or attach your name. However, all submissions must be submitted by the 25th of each month in order to make the printing press deadline. Please submit your "words of wisdom" to Jim Matheny, c/o Ag. Engineering Dept., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

### Name Tags

Name tags have been made for all members who have paid dues. These tags have been brought to most of the workdays for you to pick up. If you are a member and for some reason you can not find your tag or if you are unable to stop by and would like to have your name tag mailed, give a call to (805) 756-2432 and leave a message.

### Calendar

- May 8 ..... Cal Poly work evening
- May 11 ..... SPRS workday
- June 5 ..... Cal Poly work evening
- June 8 ..... SPRS workday
- June 15 ..... "Cal Poly Days" (steam run)

Martha Neilsen would like to remind individuals and groups who are planning any activity with the SPRS to contact her as soon as possible with any dates. This way we can plan ahead and have a full crew and the necessary equipment operational. You can contact Martha @ (408) 257-2683.

### Membership

Annual dues to the society is \$25.00 per person. Dues are collected during the first of each year. Any correspondence to this newsletter or change of address and/or phone number should be sent to:

Swanton Pacific Railroad Society  
Agricultural Engineering Department  
Cal Poly State University  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

(805) 756-2378  
(805) 756-2626 FAX  
<http://www.calpoly.edu:80/~ae/swanton/sprs.html>

Workdays are held at the Swanton Pacific Ranch near Davenport, CA., the second Saturday of the month and the Wednesday evening, prior to that Saturday at the Agricultural Engineering Department, Cal Poly State University. Anyone and everyone is welcome at these workdays. The phone number at the Swanton Pacific Railroad for messages is: (408) 423-8204

**Memorandum**

To : Special Friends  
Cal Poly  
College of Agriculture

From : E. J. Carnegie and Walter Mark  
Arrangements Committee

Subject : **Swanton Pacific Ranch Railroad Day**  
**Swanton Pacific Ranch**  
**Saturday, June 15, 1996**

Date : April 26, 1996

The College of Agriculture is pleased to invite you to our annual train ride, barbecue and view of the Swanton Pacific Ranch in Davenport on **Saturday, June 15, 1996**. Dr. Walter Mark, Associate Dean, will present an update of the College's activities at the ranch.

Those who wish to do roundhouse railroading involved in firing up a steam locomotive (or who wish to just watch) should arrive about 9 a.m. The first train run will be at approximately 11 a.m. and runs will continue until barbecue time, which is scheduled at 12:30 p.m.

If you haven't visited the Swanton Ranch before, be assured that you will enjoy seeing the steam engines, diesel engine, crane car, roundhouse, turntable, machine shop, and beautifully laid-out 1-1/2 miles of track, AND experience an exciting train ride.

Van tours will be conducted so you will be able to see the spectacular view of the ranch from the high ground and witness the development of the Cal Poly beef cattle program, forests and crop land being used for instruction by departments within the College of Agriculture. (The number of completed student internships conducted at the ranch is now up to 305.)

-----  
Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address  
& Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I (we) will attend

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of adults

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of children

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed - Payable to Swanton Pacific Railroad

\_\_\_\_\_ Sorry, we are unable to attend, but please keep our name on the mailing list.