



SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 41

July 1996

Reminder

Our workdays for July are Wednesday evening, July 10th. at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, July 13th. starting @ 9:00A. M.

On Track

with your Director,
Ed Carnegie

Well, since our last newsletter for June--seems like I just finished writing my little blurb for that edition yesterday and its already time to write the next one for July. Part of this could be that it has been an exceedingly busy time at Swanton, and otherwise, for all of us. Since the last newsletter SPRR has hosted a very successful workday and the following week a very well attended "Cal Poly Train Day". In-between some of these events--yes--there is life outside or away from Swanton, and many of you may have had graduations, etc. to attend--a special congratulations goes out for former SPRR club member, Matt Nicholas. **Rumor has it that he has finally graduated from Cal Poly and is now earning those big bucks on his own!!**

As mentioned earlier, the month of June was exceptionally busy for getting things done for the SPRR Society. The Wednesday evening work night at Cal Poly had a few of our members come down to the shop to work on the 1913. There we got the frame loaded on a shop cart to transport over to the steam cleaner for a "spring cleaning"--it was still spring. The crew that night also made a switch stand along with making plans for the upcoming Cal Poly Day.

The following Saturday, June 8, saw several of you come & join in all the fun with working and getting things ready for the next weekend's train run. During the Saturday workday the lush "weedy" (at least its green, and keeps the dust to a minimum) meadow got mowed and inspected by our former President Dave Stupi. We

haven't seen him in quite sometime--guess he felt like he was put out to pasture so that's why he volunteered so graciously to mow the lawn! Anyway it looked great for the run day. Looking it over this last weekend (June 24) it is fast approaching a need for another haircut. Still very little sign of buffalo grass, but a few buffaloes have been spotted out in the meadow; hopefully the herd will increase in size to choke out the weeds eventually.

Other accomplishments of the June workday from the following work crews were:

- Track crew--replaced every forth tie for about 400 feet on the main line under the supervision of Elmer. Then on Sunday, Andy McLean and I leveled some track and replacied a few ties.
- Roundhouse crew--worked on the 1914 and the 502. Air and steam lines were replaced in the 1914, and a seal was replaced in the 502.
- Landscaping crew--Martha and Francis continued to weed and water the flower beds in front of the two cabooses. The Sweet Williams in that area have sure come back this year to greet everyone entering the meadow area with lots of color. Other plants have also been planted in the area to add additional color and yard appeal. Lou Haughney continued volunteering his yard maintenance duties up and around the roundhouse and car barn area. He has brought in a few transplants that hopefully will take off and add additional color in time. Bill McNab's Sweet Pea patch around the backside of the roundhouse heading down the track has done exceptionally well in providing color and bouquets to all the picnic tables for the past few events.

Cal Poly Day was on June 15--talk about a big success! However, before we present the positive side of the day's cash flow for meals and shirts sold I want to thank all of you that participated in helping to make the day so successful. As a volunteer organization we do pretty darn good--when there is a need to get a job done, you, the volunteers step right up to the calling. We were a little short handed this last time to handle the estimated crowd of a little over 220, especially when we only

received RSVP's for about 130!!

The train rides were all successful, no mishaps—our "in-house training crews" are really operating the train rides quite smoothly. The BBQ team, under the leadership of Tom Midgley, cooked over 120 pounds of tri-tip and served over 220 people. We heard no complaints about the food. A special thanks goes out to Phil and Vera Gould for hauling the food up to Swanton since Jim Matheny who usually handles the entire BBQ (purchasing, hauling, cooking, etc.) was unable to attend due to other obligations. Shirt, hat and pin sales did quite well by bringing in a little over \$500.00. Bill McNab and Vera McLean's project of establishing new family lineage lines via Swanton redwood seedlings was also quite successful. They had a total of 23 family trees to sell and 14 were sold. Hopefully next year the "family trees" sold will all be returned to us as much larger plants to plant on the property with their family's identity. This was a great idea.

The "Father's Day Special" Crew—the day following the train run. Some of us guys just can't get enough of the train bonding thing I guess. The few fathers that hung around for some additional work or fun on Sunday were Andy, Randy, Bill E. and me. We moved the cutout switch from the old carbarn and aligned it to the new carbarn. By 10:0AM Monday morning all of the cars were undercover in the new carbarn!

The following weekend (June 22), five members of the 2472 crew came over to Swanton to help Bill McNab, Bob Nichol and myself work on installing the first switch to the car shop and barns. All of us also helped to remove all of the existing track leading into the original car barn. Some new ties were also replaced.

New memberships received in May and June were as follows:

May:
 Walter Rice San Luis Obispo
 Ken Newburg Santa Cruz
 Philip Gould Cayucos

June:
 John Matisse, San Ramon
 Ken Foreman San Jose
 Alfred Carlson Capitola
 Ken Parks Los Osos
 Warren Miller El Cerrito
 Robert Perry San Carlos
 Ken Middlebrook Campbell

On behalf of the entire organization we welcome each of you into our "train family" and we certainly look forward to seeing you at some of our next events. Many of our members may not recognize you right away so please introduce yourselves so that we can get to better know you and vice versa.

Items that will be coming up either for the July workday or for August and beyond that you will want to mark on your calendar are as follows:

- Track crew will work on replacing ties. If enough people show up we will have more than one crew working on the track. A good size crew would be about 6 people. Four removing and cleaning out the ballast, and two placing ties and spiking.
- Car Barn crew; lower the ground level in the old car barn, make two sets of switch points, and grade for new track.
- Roundhouse crew has a lot of brake work to do and detail work on the 502.

So business as usual, there are lots of "projects" to do; we look forward to seeing you at any of the next workdays in either July or August. August will have a general meeting, as well as a special hike up to the waterfalls. Read about this further in the newsletter from Bill McNab.

See ya soon and thanks again for all your help these last few months.



Cars being placed into the new car barn

Behind the Throttle

with your President,
Bill McNab

After the June workday we had a meeting of the officers and the director of the railroad to review how things are going and what we might do to keep things moving forward.

At present, the RR track contingent is in the process of replacing at least every fourth tie along the track. Pulling spikes, removing the old tie, shoveling out ballast to fit the new tie in, pounding spikes and then **applying and tamping the ballast is a young man's work and some of us aren't that young!** Work can be made easier by having a bigger crew so that the jobs rotate and each worker gets short breaks every few minutes so production moves rapidly along and we don't go home so tired. Another way is to figure out some mechanization of the job to make the process less hand-labor intensive.

There are other concerns in the roadbed area such as should rail curves be flat or super elevated (i.e., the outside curve of the rail elevated), to enable engines to round the curves without extra stress on rail spikes, or do the trains run slow enough that we do not need to be concerned about spikes loosening if the rails are flat on the curves?

How do we hold the gauge? Do we need tie rods or tie plates in certain areas? Do we need more spikes per tie, etc., etc.?

Regarding tie spacing — Should it be 16 inches or 18, or **even 20 inches? What is the cost benefit factor?**

Also, we have a roundhouse perplexity. What is the best and the most economical way to keep the humidity low in the roundhouse, thus preventing much of the engine parts rust that is prevalent from the situation as it stands today? Do we **insulate, and if so, what materials should we use? — Dehumidifiers, fans, heaters, cover the engines, false ceilings, air space walls, and on and on.** The problem exists, **the question is--how best to cope with it??**

With all these questions, **we thought it would be good to have an open meeting with the whole railroad group and talk over ideas and see how we can come to workable conclusions about these and or other subjects.**

The Saturday, August 10, workday we will schedule as follows:

Work	0900 - 1:00
Lunch	1300 - 1:30
Open Meeting	1:30 - 2:30
Hike to waterfalls	2:30 - 4:15

With permission from the McCrary family, we have scheduled a walk to the waterfalls on Big Creek. This will take about a leisurely one to two hours, so we should be heading for home about four to four-fifteen.

The falls are spectacular, and are well worth the effort. **This will be a good trip for families as we can all help out on the few places that are difficult on the trail.** More in the August newsletter.

Meanwhile, think about the track work and the roundhouse rust problem and what ever else needs to be thought through and talked over at the open membership meeting.

In the Caboose

with your Historian,
Lou Haughey

LOGGING AND RAILROADING OPERATIONS of the SAN VICENTE LUMBER AND MILL COMPANY

Four pictures that hung in the Red House show the logging and the railroad operations of the San Vicente Lumber and Mill Company in the first decade of the 1900's. **The company built a 2.5 mile, standard gauge line along Little Creek Canyon from Swanton to the creek's headwaters near the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains.** Shay locomotives (how many?) were used to pull the log cars. The lower end of the line at Swanton was also the northern terminus of the Ocean Shore's southern branch. The site of that terminal is now marked by a historical plaque in a large stone on the west side of Swanton Road, about a quarter-mile north of the entrance to the Swanton Pacific Ranch; Little Creek passes under the road just a hundred feet north of the entrance. At the Swanton terminus, the logs were transferred to the Ocean Shore Railroad, which carried them on its 16.5 mile, **standard gauge line to the company's mill at the north end of the city of Santa Cruz.**

The brief captions on the backs of the photos and the frames provide a few intriguing clues about the location of the San Vicente's roadbed. One photo shows the "curved trestle at headwaters of North Fork of Little Creek, 1909", a spectacular view of a long, high, wooden trestle across a canyon between clear-cut slopes. The North Fork of Little Creek is marked on the USGS's topographical map of the Davenport section. The map shows that the fork begins at about 1400 feet elevation.

Another photo presents an intriguing puzzle in regards to its captions. The caption on the back of the print reads, "No. Two Engine crossing upper Woodwardia Gulch Trestle/replaced by fill in later years". A second caption of the back cover of the frame says, "Above Woodwardia cabin/silent movie train/ trestle is being demolished/ replaced by fill". A cloud of smoke is visible at the bottom of the trestle and behind a logging train charging across the trestle. However, a group of workers seem to be standing nonchalantly at the far end on the trestle. No date is given for this photo. Was the trestle actually being demolished for a movie scene? Or, was it just a simulated event? If the former were the case, wouldn't that be an historical movie to be transferred to video tape, if one could find the movie? Woodwardia Gulch/Cabin is not marked on the topographical map. Does anyone know where that was?

The third photo shows "No. 2 engine taking water near the top of Deadman's Pass/Three donkey engines at work" (in the background). The topographical map designates "Deadman's Gulch" as an upper fork of Big Creek between 1200 and 2200 feet, far above the site of the Big Creek Powerhouse. Again, the landscape is clear-cut. These pictures were taken in the years 1906-1910 when the Santa Cruz Mountains were being heavily logged to provide lumber for rebuilding after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

The fourth picture in the set depicts "the logging crew" of about 55 men in 1906. It is not evident whether they are the crew in the field operations above Swanton or the crew at the Santa Cruz mill. Was there also a mill at Swanton?

Looking at these photos leads to speculation as to the exact routes of the San Vicente and the Ocean Shore Railroads as compared to the present sites of the Swanton Pacific Ranch and Railroad. Perhaps, some of you may have old maps that show the track lines of those earlier railroads. Then, we could plot those routes and the Swanton Pacific's line on the topographical map. That would make an interesting and informative chart of

railroading in the Swanton area.

Recently, I have found that the color copier machines now in use at copying and quick printing shops make very good reproductions in both color and black-and-white of old photographs. So, I will be making copies of more pictures and photos in Al Smith's collection so that they can be easily and safely displayed in Al's caboose and on poster boards outside the cabooses. The reproductions of the logging operations have already been mounted and framed.

Your comments on this method of showing such photographs and charts will be appreciated. Also, any corrections, additions, and comments about the above history of the San Vicente Lumber Company will be gratefully received since a few of my remarks are assumptions or deductions from the little information I found.

Observation Car

It has been suggested that a membership list is desired by all the members. We will be publishing a list with addresses and telephone numbers in the near future. If you are opposed to having this information about you published (i.e., telephone number and address please let us know ASAP so that it does not go to the printers). To help defray mailing costs of this book, we will start to issue the booklets out in August hopefully.

This is your part of the newsletter! Hello Observation Car #54--where are you.. I know we have some really good observationists, as well as what ever else you may want to call yourselves--but we would really like to hear from you. Good, bad, or indifferent we want to hear from you. You can make yourself known or you can remain incognito--but this is your newsletter and your organization--so speak up. Your words will be heard via the Observation Car.

Please submit ideas, suggestions, and/or general comments that you would like to see published in the newsletter. All "observations" must be submitted by the 25th of each month in order to make the printing press deadline. Please submit your "observations" to Jim Matheny, c/o Ag. Engineering Dept., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

Magazine Article

The Swanton Pacific Railroad Society is about to become recognized world wide. Members Karl Hovanitz and Walter Rice are in the process of preparing an article about the Overfair Railway and how it's equipment has ended up at Swanton. This article will be published in the Locomotive & Railway Preservation Magazine. Currently they are requesting photos of any Overfair equipment and if you have any desire to share then it would be appreciated. If L&RP publishes them, you would receive proper credit. In particular they are looking for shots of:

- Overfair equipment at MacDermot's Oakland estate, both before and after the Fair.
- 1915 Fair
- Mountain Lion Railway
- Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad
- Calistoga Steam Railroad
- The equipment while in storage at any location. (your photos)

You can reach Karl Hovanitz @ (805) 544-7658 and Walter Rice @ (805) 544-6480. Time is of the essence, so if you can help, please contact them immediately

Calendar

July 10	Cal Poly work evening
July 13	SPRS workday
July 27	"Golden Spikes" (steam run)
Aug. 7	Cal Poly work evening
Aug. 10	SPRS workday
Aug. 24	Possible run
Sept. 11	Cal Poly work evening
Sept. 14	SPRS workday
Sept. 29	"Land Trust Days" (steam run)
Oct. 13	"2472" (steam run)

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.

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 93407

(805) 756-2620
 (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

**Swanton Pacific Railroad Society
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