

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 49

March 1997

All Aboard !!

Our workdays for March are Wednesday evening, **March 5th.** at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, **March 8th** and Saturday morning, **March 22nd.** starting @ 9:00 A. M.

On Track

with your Director,
Ed Carnegie

Just when you thought the creek problems were over. . . we were buried in mud again from a second mudslide a few hundred yards north of the wye. Then it rained some more and a few more trees came tumbling down—a total of thirteen trees now have fallen into the creek and had to be removed. We can't mess with mother nature—she has a mind of her own. It was so bad that we even had to get some help, so Bud and Lud McCrary, from Big Creek Lumber, sent a log skidder and crew to assist us. It certainly made the job a lot easier, in fact in just a few hours that machine did more than our crew were able to do in **two days, and the sore muscles were a lot less.** A huge thanks goes out to Big Creek Lumber.

Jerry Kurz and Ricardo of the Swanton farm crew, again helped with cutting out the log jams and other mess along the creek. A big thanks goes to the ranch for helping out again. Bill McNab spent two days coming down to the ranch to mow the meadow after all the winter rains. Once again it looks great. Thanks Bill for all your hard work.

The major work activity in February was working on the wash out along the track. Two trees, at mile marker two, were dug out using the back hoe from the farm, along with the railroad's loader. The bank west of the track bed was moved further west for re-alignment for the main line past the washout. The track bed is now ready for ties and rail to be re-laid for the March workday. When this task is completed we will then move down

the rail and start to work on the mud slides. Don't forget that in March and April we will be starting our two work weekends a month, i.e., the second and fourth **Saturdays.** These dates (2nd and 4th Saturdays) are confirmed and hopefully did not cause too much confusion in the last newsletter by having it indicated differently.

On the Sunday, following the last workday, Andy McLean and I worked on placing and then filling two large wire baskets welded together by Fitz and crew on Saturday's workday. Andy, Bill McNab, Jerry Kurz, Ricardo and I worked as a "rock pickup crew" on the Friday before. While filling the baskets, Andy and I discovered that we need to work on our basketball skills. But with all of our other good shots, they were filled and hopefully won't "travel down court". Sunday, we even drafted a passing-through grandfather and grandson fishing team to help fill the baskets. After their work-out they thought that they may even join our organization.

As many of you may know, the ranch does get its share of walk-through traffic—please be aware that this type of traffic is not to be encouraged, as they are all trespassing. Should you encounter any "wandering strangers" on the **ranch in the future,** please contact Wally, LaDonna or me to make us aware of their presence.

It was nice to have Hart down on the ranch after having his hip surgery. He isn't quite ready to gandy dance, but it was nice to see him out and about.

We look forward to seeing all of you for the March workdays. If any of you plan on staying overnight, be sure to let me know so that reservations can be made for the redhouse. It could also allow us to plan for potlucks, BBQ's or "Dutch oven" feasts. They are a lot of fun and it's a great way to get to know each other better. With the weather getting better now (at least hopefully so) and starting to have more daylight we can get lots done, and there are a lot of jobs that need to be completed before the first train run in April for Al's birthday.

As a result, Andy and I will be spending a week up at the ranch, March 17 - the work weekend (March 22). If anyone would like to come by that week we would certainly appreciate the extra help.

Hope to see you at one, if not both of the workdays, in March.

New memberships received over the last few months were as follows:

William Chris	Placerville
Marlene Turner, AKA Tony's Mom	Santa Cruz
David Birnbaum	San Ramon
Randal "Arky" Norton	Pittsburg,

Transferred from Student to regular	
Greg Duff	Orinda

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.

In the Caboose

with your Historian,
Lou Haughney

THE OVERFAIR RAILROAD'S YARDS AND TERMINALS

The Overfair Railroad had two yards at the Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE). The larger one was at the far western end of the Exposition's grounds; the smaller one was in the eastern section of the grounds, between the main exhibit area and the amusement region. A large MacDermot drawing, dated Sept. 5, 1914, shows the layout of the western yard. Details of the eastern terminal are well illustrated by two old photographs in Al Smith's Orchard Supply Hardware caboose. Finally, a map of the Exposition's ground plan found in "The Official History....of the PPIE" confirms, but on a very small scale, the overall plan of the two yards as detailed in the drawing and the photos.

The western terminal yard curved around the oval-shaped, western end of a large athletic and event field,

which was about 1/2 mile long and 700 feet wide. The rail yard consisted of a roundhouse with seven stalls 30 ft. deep, a turntable with a diameter of 30 feet, a three track car barn 100 feet long, and facilities for providing fuel (coal), sand, and water. The spur off the mainline into the yard fanned out into eight storage and bypass tracks, 300-500 feet long, before reducing back into single tracks leading to the turntable and the car barn. The main line continued about 500 feet along the bay shore to a station at the westernmost boundary of the Exposition's grounds. That station had two tracks beside a 500 ft. platform and then a small turntable at the end of the line.

The location of this station raises questions about its **convenience for the fairgoers**. In its immediate vicinity were the Exposition's storage yard and garbage incinerator. Passengers debarking to attend an event in the Athletic Field would have to walk 500 to 1000 feet back alongside the track, past the Fort Point Life Saving Station and the turn-off into the railroad yard in order to reach the Athletic Field; then, they would have to cross the field to the grandstands on the other side.

One explanation for putting a station in what turned out to be such a remote place may be that the outbreak of World War I caused a change in the expected participation of European countries in the Exposition. Germany intended to display and operate a dirigible as part of its participation. Perhaps the mooring area for the airship was to be at that end of the grounds, alongside the station in part of the "storage yard". (MacDermot's drawing indicates that some of that region was to be a "U. S. Marine Camp".) Well, if so, the start of the War on August 3, 1914 changed those plans as the Exposition's "Official History" says. "A concession had been let to the Parseval Airship Company of Berlin for the operation of a dirigible balloon. Nothing came of that." **Since** the western end of the Athletic Field was the airfield for the daily, daredevil airplane flights, it seems reasonable to assume that the dirigible would also have been based nearby. If so, then there would have been much more traffic carried to the end of the line, which was a little over 2 miles from the eastern terminal. (MacDermot's drawing shows a milepost marker of 107 (10,700 ft.) at the turn off into the yard.) Anyway, the station was inconveniently located for those going to the Athletic Field. A small scale map, difficult to read, suggests there may have been a dead-end spur with a station curving around the eastern end of the Athletic Field and adjacent to the large "Stock Exhibits". That latter location for a station would be much more convenient for the fairgoers.

So, the questions are: Why did MacDermot build a station at the line of the line in what turned out to be such a remote site? Was that another example of his "bad luck" with the Overfair Railroad?

The eastern terminal yard was a small complex for servicing the trains. The photographs in the OSH caboose show a **turntable**, a three track car and engine barn, and a two-story, square building, which looks like a yard control tower with windows on all sides of the second floor. Crews are busy preparing the #1912 and the #1913 engines for runs while the conductors and fare takers wait. The long panorama photograph shows where that yard was located. In the background are the **Machinery, the Southern Pacific Railroad, and the Panama Canal Buildings**. Thus, this terminal was located in a busy area between the industrial exhibits and the "The Zone" or "Amusement Congress", an area more conducive to generating passenger traffic than would the westernmost station.

The MacDermot drawing was obtained from the Library of the California State Railroad Museum. It is "Sheet 5" of a "Map of the 19" gauge railway at the PPIE". Drawn at a scale of 1" = 50', it is very legible. Unfortunately, the other four sheets have not yet been found. So, I must depend for now on small-scale, difficult to read, drawings for the rest of the track layout. Let's hope someone of you can find a larger scale map of the Exposition's grounds that indicates clearly where the stations were.

Thanks to Ms. Ellen Halteman, Librarian at the CSRM, for this and other drawings and for valuable material on the Overfair Railroad's history. For example, there is interesting information on the Quentin Jervis/Frederic Shaw "era" of owning #1914, #1915, and #1500. I hope to write about that soon. Thanks also to Randy Jones for his mentioning the **aborted appearance of the German dirigible at the Exposition with its probable effect on the Overfair Railroad's operation.**

Observation Car

While the "BIG BOYS" were down the track working on the washout area, the meadow flower planting area was undergoing the first steps of revival. Most of the work was in the weed be-gone category with people power provided by Martha Neilson and Mary Ann Carnegie. Some loose plans were formed for March workday so

lots of green thumbs can be put to work planting many flowers. Bring a trowel, work gloves, a friend or two, lunch and your CAN-DO attitude. Special touches for the meadow for Al Smiths Day, April 13 will also need to be formulated.

With great effort the meadow was mowed. Part of the lower area is a frog pond and the inhabitants had to be moved so machinery could proceed. Rumor has it that a riding lawn mower could be in the works. People will be standing in line to mow the lawn when that happens! If you like dandelion salad greens our meadow is overrun with supply.

Some metal screen large boxes were being **constructed to** protect areas from further erosion brought on by this years huge rains. The screen boxes will be placed in strategic areas and filled with rocks.

Trees, Trees, Trees - We're ready to plant the redwood trees you have at home. So bring them back any work day and we'll help you plant them. Don't forget your "Family Tree" signs. If you don't have a sign, we will mark your tree so that you can put up a sign beside it later.

Talking about trees – a few trees had to be cut up that had fallen or were in the path of the rail bed in the wash out area. No redwoods or logable trees were lost and the one alder tree was cut up into 8 ft lengths for possible use later. The railroad invested in a chain saw and it has been used extensively already. Greg Ackerman spent all of the Feb. workday clearing the downed trees, in the washout rail bed area. He sawed about as fast as the rest of us could haul the branches away. The footing was a bit tricky and a few photo type **plops were recorded mentally but not on film.**

Old friend Hart Fairclough wandered in on the Feb. workday, still in recuperation from hip replacement surgery. He brought along his cane for a non-work excuse. Says he's doing okay but has a ways to go yet. You know, Hart and Al Smith go way back to Boy Scouts at Swanton. Being a retired school teacher, you would think he would think he could put some "Al Smith short essays" together for the newsletters. Reports that there were many humorous moments when the two got together. Hart, your audience is waiting!

Editors note: The above was provided by a member of the SPRS. Wouldn't it be great if we had a number of short stories regarding Al Smith for the April newsletter?

As we mentioned in a past issue, members Walter Rice and Karl Hovanitz were preparing an article about the Overfair Railway and how it has become to end up at Swanton. They had planned to publish it in the Locomotive & Railway Preservation. All of the manuscripts and pictures were submitted and plans were to see it during the summer months of this year. Unfortunately the publication has stopped and the December issue was the last issue sent out. So... now there is this great article but no place to go with it. Walter has contacted Railfan & Railroad, Rail News, Trains and Live Steam with hopes of getting the article published. So far no definite plans have been made. This is a great article and we would really like to see it published. We are looking for publications that might be appropriate for this type of article. If you have any ideas where this article might be published please contact Walter Rice @ (805) 756-2285. Future plans are to put the article into a pamphlet or small book form for all of our SPRS members. Hopefully this can be done after we see the article in a major magazine.

Al Smith Day

The fourth annual Al Smith Day will be held on **Sunday, April 13**. This will be a fun time for all when we celebrate the dreams of our friend and will be one of the times of the year when we will have the opportunity to fire up the locomotives for a steam run. A time you do not want to miss. So tell all of your friends. Anyone who is interested in trains is invited. In this newsletter you will find a reservation form. If you plan on attending this event we need the information on this form. It is important that we know how many people are attending so we are asking that you get the information to us. Please send in the information on the form or if easier call the information in to 805-756-2620. or you can pass the information to Ed Carnegie at any work day. One way or another we need this information. Don't worry about the money now, we will collect it at the barbecue. In the past we have planned on a certain amount people and every year more people show up with out telling us in advance. This makes it hard for the people at the end of the barbecue line and if we order too much food we have wasted money. So please help us out by getting the information to us. Call right now. Operators (the answering machine) are standing by.

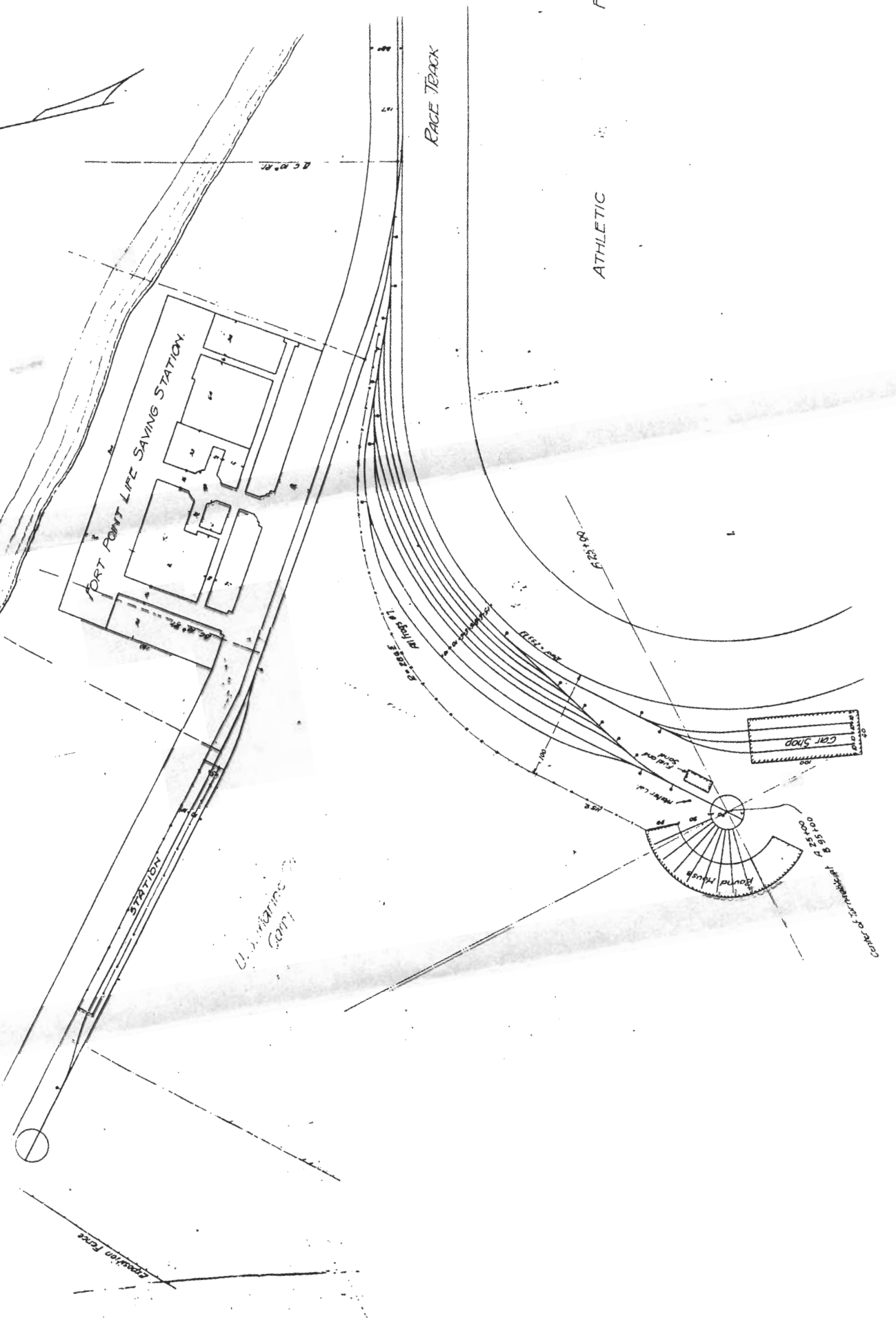
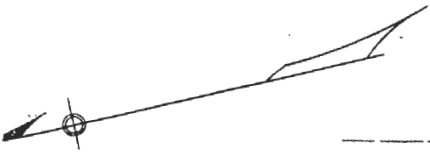
Out of Steam ?

This is the last reminder for you procrastinators to get your dues in. The majority of you have sent in your dues and we thank you for being prompt. For those of you that still haven't done so, we are asking you to please send in your dues. In fact save a stamp and include it in with your Al Smith reservation form. These dues will enable you to continue receiving this newsletter and staying informed about the activities of the railroad. Hopefully we will be able to provide a completed roster to every member sometime during the latter part of April. If you want to be included please send in your dues soon. We don't want you to run out of steam and be left out on the siding.

Calendar

- Mar. 5 Cal Poly work evening
- Mar. 8 SPRS workday
- Mar. 22 SPRS workday
- Apr. 9 Cal Poly work evening
- Apr. 12 SPRS workday
- Apr. 13 Al Smith Day (run)
- Apr. 26 SPRS workday
- May 7 Cal Poly work evening
- May. 10 SPRS workday
- May. 24 SPRS workday
- June. 7 Cal Poly Day (run)
- July 26 Golden Spikes (run)
- Sept. 28 Land Trust (run)
- Oct. 12 2472 (run)

Ed's phone at Cal Poly



ATHLETIC

FIG.

Gate of Entrance

U.S. MARINE CORPS

Gate Shop

Round House

Gate of Entrance 255.00

Gate of Exit

RACE TRACK

FORT POINT LIFE SAVING STATION

STATION

66° 52' 15"

1

All Aboard!

Come Join us for the Fourth Annual

Al Smith Day

A fun filled Sunday

to remember our Friend

Sunday, April 13, 1997

Train Rides	10:00 - 12:00
BBQ Lunch	12:00 - 2:00*
Train Rides	12:30 - 4:00

* A casual western style meal will be served; soft drinks provided;

To cover the cost of the BBQ and train rides:

Adults \$12.00

Child \$6.00

RSVP

Yes, I would love to attend: _____

Number attending: _____

Name : _____ Phone: _____