



SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

All Aboard !!

Our workdays for July are Wednesday evening, July 9th. at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, July 12th. and Saturday morning, July 26th. starting @ 9:00 A. M.

On Track

with your Director,
Ed Carnegie

This has been one fast month--seems like I just finished writing my little blurb yesterday and its already time to write the next one for July. Since the last newsletter SPRR hosted a very successful "Cal Poly Train Day", a fund raiser for the Red Cross, two work days, and a train ride for a Davenport summer student program.

The month of June was exceptionally busy for getting things done for the SPRR. The Wednesday evening work night at Cal Poly had a few of our members come down to the shop to work on trucks. Marty Campbell spent a week's vacation working on the railroad. Elmer Stone spent most of the week and Fitz FitzPatrick came down the day of the pour. The first few days were spent making forms, leveling track, and getting ready for the concrete pour. Tuesday, June 24th the Swanton Pacific Farm supplied 3 student interns, Steve Dilley, Steve Auten, and Tammy Blayney, and Jerry Kurz a full time employee to help with the pour. Eleven yards of concrete arrived at 2:00 PM and by 5:00 we had a new road crossing, a foundation for a wig-wag, and new slab next to the turntable leading into the machine shop. The next time you see Elmer, Fitz, Marty, Mary Ann, Jerry, Steve, Steve, or Tammy---thank them for a job well done.

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

- Track crew- replaced all the ties through the mainline at Cosgrove
- Roundhouse crew- worked on the turntable leveling and replacing the rotting ties under the turntable rail. They also removed some of the bad ties on the lead to the machine shop and added the third lead rail that was never installed.
- Car barn crew- worked on car brakes
- Landscaping crew---tended to the garden areas and

mowed the lawns.

Cal Poly Day was on June 7, and was a great success! 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 help. The BBQ team, under the leadership of Jim Matheny, fed a crowd of a little over 200. We heard no complaints about the food. A special thanks goes out to Phil and Vera Gould for hauling the food up to Swanton.

The train rides were all successful, no mishaps--our "in-house training crews" are really operating the train rides quite smoothly. We had two "family trees" returned. A special tree planting train ride and dedication of the McNab Redwood Grove was conducted on the first train ride in the afternoon. Our thanks go out to the James Murphy Family and the Paul and Dave Wissler of Cuesta Equipment who brought "their" trees back to us as much larger plants to plant on the property. It was obvious that the trees had loving care as Myra Murphy kissed her tree good-bye and told it to do well here. John Hayashi and family, purchased ten trees last year to plant on the ranch but were planted earlier this Spring. The "adopt a tree" planting was a great idea and will probably be done again next year.

New memberships received in May and June were as follows:

May:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Liz Allison | Half Moon Bay |
| John Turrill | San Luis Obispo |

June

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| James Anderson | San Luis Obispo |
| George Johnsen | Burbank |
| Tom Midgley | Davenport |
| Robert Parkinson | Berkeley |
| Fred Vertel | Los Altos |
| Tom Vertel | Los Altos |

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 can split up the crew. Two or three could be elevating the track, removing old ties, leveling the old ballast and spreading the underlayment. Three or four could then place ties and spike them. If we have three more they could spread ballast level and tamp. Eight to ten track people sure could make the job move faster.
- The roundhouse crew will be leveling the turntable.

**Board Meeting
Sunday, July 27, 1997
Swanton Pacific
Redhouse
0800**

In the Caboose
with your Historian,
Lou Haughney

THE PANAMA PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION TERMINAL RAILWAY COMPANY

The Overfair Railroad was not the only railroad to operate on the grounds of the Panama Pacific International Exposition. A full-scale, standard gauge railroad was laid down on the grounds very early in the exposition's construction phase. The purpose of the Exposition Terminal Railway was to provide access by rail to every major exhibit hall and building so that construction materials and, later, heavy exhibit items could be delivered directly to the buildings. Eleven and a half miles of standard gauge track, 70 switches, and 17 acres of railway yards were built. Wharves and docks were built on the waterfront so that the rail car ferries and floats bringing freight cars across the San Francisco Bay from the Oakland terminals and yards could unload onto a 3-track apron at the foot of Fillmore Street, at the northeast corner of the exposition grounds. From that point, the freight cars could be shunted directly to the various buildings and exhibit halls around the grounds. The tracks ran throughout the grounds so that every large exhibit hall and building was accessible to a track. Moreover, three miles of track were extended inside the largest buildings for unloading. A switch yard that held 200 cars was built adjacent to the car ferry dock, and four warehouses with total capacity of 50,000 sq. ft. were erected beside the switch yard. Later in the construction phase, the San Francisco Belt Railway completed a tunnel through the Fort Mason bluffs; this portal allowed

direct rail connection between the exposition grounds and the railroad servicing the San Francisco waterfront. With the opening of that connection, the exposition's car ferry slips were no longer used. The switch yard and the warehouses were on the shoreward part of the east side of the long Machinery Building whereas the eastern terminal of the Overfair Railroad was placed towards the inland end of the Machinery Building's east side. The track routes and yards of the two railways are shown on a small-scale map that is displayed in the OSH caboose.

The Exposition's official historian presents an interesting commentary on the effectiveness of the Exposition Terminal Railway.

"The railway was not so serviceable as had been expected, and it may be that the next exposition will find itself able to dispense with any thing more than a track to the Palace of Transportation. Twenty times as much construction material was handled by truck. The railway was very valuable for moving the exhibits for the Machinery and the Transportation Palaces, but aside that the motor truck could probably have done all the work. At the time the Exposition was planned, however, and during the early days of its development, the motor truck had hardly emerged from the experimental stage. It began to assert itself as a serious factor of transportation during the Exposition year."

The writer commented in similar manner when he discussed the competing roles of the Overfair Railroad versus the Fadgl automobile trains in transporting visitors around the grounds. He was equally optimistic and prophetic about the future dominance of the motor vehicles.

The tracks of the Exposition Terminal Railway were paved over just before the Exposition was opened to the public. So, how were the heavy machinery and transportation exhibits removed after the close of the Exposition? The historian does not tell, at least in this section from which all this information has been taken. (The index for the five, big volumes is not too complete.) Nor does he identify the type of locomotives used. The book, *California Railroads, An Encyclopedia of ... Railroads in California*, by A. A. Fickewirth, states that the Exposition Railway "was proposed to build an electric railway". However, an electric railroad on such a busy construction site for only one or two years does not seem practical, economical, nor safe. Perhaps some other resource about the Exposition tells more about the kind of locomotion used by the Terminal Railway.

Note: All of the above information and details, except the brief quote from Fickewirth's book, are taken from Frank Todd Morton's *The Story of the Exposition, An Official History...*, Vol. 1, pp. 340-341.

Observation Car

Smith, Swanton and Bygone Days
by Hart Fairclough

While involved in home life and Scouting, Al's fascination for trains kept growing throughout his younger years. Undoubtedly, it started with his proximity to the Southern Pacific tracks running through Vasona Junction right on the family's orchard property. However, he still had his own electric train set from his youth, and continued to enjoy it even during his teen years. This I know because he brought his Lionel engine and various equipment over to my house once. Along with my American Flyer train, track and switches, we concocted a grand layout all over our large living room floor with both engines running simultaneously.

The electric trains of his youth were fun, but Al's attraction to the real thing, the big steam locomotives, grew stronger with time. Vasona Junction was the spot where SP trains from Santa Cruz and Los Gatos branched off to San Francisco or kept on to San Jose. The location of the Smith family 27 acre ranch was such that the trains either passed in front of their property or actually ran right through part of their orchard.

Vasona Junction was not very busy, but there was always the morning and evening commuter trains from Los Gatos to SF as well as special trains to Santa Cruz. Occasional freight trains came by, particularly after nearby Permanente Cement went into operation. Because of the turns and the switches involved, the trains proceeded more slowly through the Junction.

Since birth, Al was in an ideal spot to become an avid big steam locomotive enthusiast, if he had a natural inclination in that direction - - which he did. Gradually he built up knowledge of the various trains, their schedules, destinations, as well as many of the SP personnel. In time, this led to opportunities for Al to catch some informal jaunts on parts of the more local runs between his home, Los Gatos, Campbell, and San Jose.

Behind the Smith family house was a fairly large two story "tank house." During the sixties Al gradually built a rather extensive "HO" train setup on the second floor. His setup was in less space than our larger one on our living room back in the thirties, but it was more elaborate.

Most of you know that the OSH Short Line caboose now parked in the meadow of the Swanton Pacific RR, was a pet project of Al's during his years with Orchard Supply Hardware. He procured the caboose, set it on rails behind the San Jose store and then fixed it up as his outside office. Those of us who got a 1973 Christmas greeting from Al, received a postcard size photo of that caboose with Al standing outside by the back door and waving a greeting of "Holiday Joy."

When opportunity was available, he experienced different trains in various parts of our country and abroad. He created the now well-known OSH yearly calendars by hiring special artists for the drawings of unique trains of all types and ages.

From the brief paragraphs presented in this article, one can readily understand how natural it was for Al Smith when he retired with money, time, energy and opportunity, to establish the Swanton Pacific Railroad.

--to be continued

Buckles

A chance to own a piece of SPRR history has just become available. The Swanton Pacific Railroad now has their very own brass belt buckles. These buckles are all individually cast and each has its own serial number. Each buckle show the words Swanton Pacific Railroad with the lazy SP in the center on a textured background. They are oval in shape and measure approximately 2-1/4 inches by 3 inches. So by purchasing a belt buckle you will have the only one with a specific number assigned to it. A one of a kind. Think what they will be worth in the future. You'll be able to pass them down to family members. Also what a great gift. Each buckle is only \$10.00 to SPRS members and \$15.00 to non-members. There were only 150 made so get your belt buckles with your special number now. These will be available at the workday in July and the following work days. For those not able to attend a workday and would like one mailed to them, there will be an additional \$3.50 for shipping.

Barbecue

Another barbecue and run has been requested by the Big Creek Trout Farm as a fund raiser for them. This will happen on Sunday, August 10, 1997. We will need help to run the train and also to barbecue. For those at the regular August workday this will be a perfect time to stay over night and help the following day.

We hope that you will be able to stay and help on Sunday and support this worthy cause.

Calendar

- July 9 Cal Poly work evening
- July 12 SPRS workday
- July 26 Golden Spikes (run)
- Aug 6 Cal Poly work evening
- Aug 9 SPRS workday
- Aug 10 Big Creek Trout Farm (run)
- Aug 23 SPRS workday
- Sept. 28 Land Trust (run)
- Oct. 12 2472 (run)

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
BioResource and 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 and fourth Saturdays of the month and the Wednesday evening, prior to the second Saturday at the BioResource and Agricultural Engineering Department, Cal Poly State University. Anyone and everyone is welcome at these workdays.

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