



SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

All Aboard !!

Our workdays for August are Wednesday evening, August 6 at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, August 9, and Saturday morning, August 23, starting @ 9:00 A. M.

On Track

with your Director,
Ed Carnegie

Hi, here we are again, another month has come and gone and we still have work to be done. As usual the track crew has been working hard, replacing all the ties as they move forward. This month all the ties were replaced on the Cosgrove siding and on the main line almost to Windy Point. The roundhouse crew, working under Randy Jones, continued on the turntable leveling and replacing the rotting ties under the turntable rail.

John Tomlin held the first class on Conductor/General Safety on the Saturday workday of 12 July. Twelve members and two families attended the 4 hour course. The reviews were outstanding and the attendees were seen after the class practicing what they covered in class. In attendance were: Cosmo DiFrancesco, Greg Duff, Bill Engleman, Fitz Fitzpatrick, Steve Huffstetter, Bob Kubiawicz, Andy McLean, Bill McNab, Bob Morehouse, Anthony Turner, and Tom Vertel.

Congratulations to Elmer and Francis for 51 years of bliss! To help celebrate the day, the Golden Spikes (retired SP RR workers) had a potluck/ BBQ and train ride on Saturday the 26th of July.

We took this opportunity to gain "hands-on" experience in all aspects of our train operation and had a very successful operational experience. Transporting the 100 plus Golden Spike attendees. Runs were recorded and timed, signals were checked, and safety was emphasized. A good job was done by all.

As many of you are aware the Swanton RR belt buckles are in and sales have been brisk. Fifty have already been purchased, but we're not about to run out-one hundred are still available—they make a great Christmas gift!!

New membership received in July was as follows:

July:

Gina Long

Half Moon Bay

On behalf of the entire organization we welcome 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.

The Sunday following the Golden Spike's run, a Board Mtg. for Swanton Pacific RR was held in the redhouse—further details of the meeting to follow in the newsletter.

So "business as usual" there are lots of "projects" to do; we look forward to seeing you at any of the next workdays in August.

See ya soon and thanks again for all your help.

Calendar

- Aug 6..... Cal Poly work evening
- Aug 9 SPRS workday
- Aug 10 Big Creek Trout Farm (run)
- Aug 23 SPRS workday
- Sept. 10..... Cal Poly work evening
- Sept. 13 SPRS workday
- Sept. 27 SPRS workday
- Sept. 28 Land Trust (run)
- Oct. 12 2472 (run)

In the Caboose

with your Historian,
Lou Haughney

THE OVERFAIR RAILROAD IN ORANGE COUNTY, 1960-1983

After Billy Jones acquired the Overfair Railroad rolling stock upon MacDermot's death in 1948, he stored the locomotives in car barns at his Wildcat Railroad in Los Gatos because he could not operate them on the sharp curves of his track layout. Frederic Shaw, the author of several railroading books including *The Little Railways of the World*, was a friend both of MacDermot and of Jones. Shaw had kept a careful watch over the MacDermot equipment. As reported earlier, Shaw had tried to participate in whatever negotiations Jones and Disney may have had in regards to Disney's using the Overfair equipment for his projected Disneyland. Also, Shaw devoted a lengthy, detailed, and informative chapter about MacDermot and the Overfair Railroad in his *LROTW* book. Apparently during the 1950's, Shaw was considering how to put the equipment back into operation.

On November 1, 1959, Shaw and two associates from Southern California bought three Overfair locomotives from Billy Jones. The engines were two of the Pacific type, nos. 1914 and 1915, and the 0-4-0T tank switcher. The group had also bought from Billy Jones his British 0-4-0 switcher "Gwen". The other two partners were Quentin B. Jervis and S. Franklin. According to an article in the *Orange County Register* of July 15, 1977, Jervis was, in 1977, vice-president of the Charles Lowe Co. (not otherwise identified). No information is available about the third partner, S. Franklin; he seemed to drop out of the picture quickly. Jervis had never been actively involved in railroading. Earlier in his work career, he had flown throughout the world as "a flier for the Air Transportation Command".

In January 1960, the locomotives were trucked to a warehouse in Wilmington, next to Long Beach, in the Los Angeles Harbor District. The partners were "hopeful of setting up a considerable length of line in the L.A. area some time this summer (1960) and of operating two trains simultaneously in opposite directions". (Correspondence of Shaw in January and February, 1960). Once they had acquired an operating area, they hoped to erect their own buildings at the site. They planned also to refurbish the "Gwen" switcher and change its 18 inch gauge to match the 19 inch gauge of MacDermot's engines. The Overfair Corporation was formed to promote their plans for establishing and operating a miniature railroad that, in their opinion, would not be "just another amusement ride". The letterheads give an address of 32333 Phantom Drive,

Palos Verde, California 90274, telephone (213) 541-1914.

No further information is available, at present, as to what they did with the equipment during the 1960's. Apparently, it remained in storage in the Wilmington warehouse. Shaw died sometime in the 1960's. Franklin seems to have dropped out of the picture rather early in the association. During the 1960's and up to 1975, Quentin Jervis, and Shaw while he was still alive, had tried unsuccessfully to operate the locomotives and cars at various cities and amusement areas, according to the *Register* story. We have learned of two such attempts to promote the Overfair Corporation.

Probably in the early 1970's, Jervis attended a meeting in San Bernadino to discuss a plan to run the Overfair trains from the San Bernadino Sante Fe depot along the Redlands branch to Redlands near the San Bernadino County Museum. Nothing concrete developed from that meeting.

In July 1973, Jervis sent a brief letter to the Director of Parks and Recreation, William P. Mott, State of California. He wrote:

"The enclosed brochure covers Overfair steam railroad equipment which would be an original historical attraction, and will make a outstanding attraction at Sacramento Old Town"

The CSRM's archives do not contain any further correspondence or material on this proposal. Obviously, Jervis' offer was not accepted. However, it is ironic that this "hope" of the Jervis-Shaw association to be an "attraction at Sacramento Old Town" has been realized in a way unexpected by the partners; namely that MacDermot's engine No. 1915, which they possessed, now sits splendidly and conspicuously in the entrance lobby of the California State Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento, courtesy of Al Smith.

Finally, after 15 years of plans, dreams, and proposals, Jervis was able to set up and operate part of the Overfair stock. This was a half-mile layout at the Orange County Fairgrounds in Contra Mesa, where he would operate the "Overfair Express" for the annual Orange County Fair celebration. The 1977 newspaper article states that Jervis had operated there for about two weeks each summer in 1975, 1976, and 1977. (Or, did it run there at other times of the year? Perhaps, some of our Southern California friends can provide more information on this operation.) Jervis used the no. 1500 switcher, which was converted to use propane instead of coal to heat the boiler. Bill Fish, a Honeywell shop foreman, was the engineer. Bill had worked briefly in the early 1940's for the Union Pacific Railroad in Nebraska, and he had continued his interest in railroading with a large

collection of model engines and cars.

The July 1977 newspaper article told a short history of Jervis' operation and of the equipment as follows:

"The fairground steam engine has had held high appeal. Some 19,000 passengers were hauled during the fair last year. Jervis, who sells the tickets for the train's excursion, purchased the locomotive from a San Francisco railroad man, who agreed to sell after Jervis repeatedly went to see the train over a two-year period".

"The engine hauls seven passenger cars, which were originally pulled by a similar locomotive at a Denver city park in 1936. It is an authentic steam engine in all respects but one - it runs on propane instead of coal. "I didn't think the Environmental Protective Agency would let us burn coal", Jervis explained. The Overfair is modeled after the Pennsylvania railroad". [Has anyone heard of 'a similar locomotive' in a Denver City park in 1936? Did Jervis use MacDermot's passenger cars?]

The operation at the Orange County Fairgrounds in 1975-1977 seems to be the only run under the auspices of the Overfair Corporation organized by Shaw, Jervis, and Franklin. I do not know whether or not Jervis ran the trains at the Fairgrounds after 1977. It was during those same years of 1975-1977 that Bob Maxfield was operating the Calistoga Steam Railroad with MacDermot's Pacific type engine no. 1913 on a year-round basis over a three mile track. [Were the two operators aware of each other's concurrent use of Overfair equipment?]

Jervis died March 23, 1982. His estate passed into the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator of Los Angeles County, who scheduled a public auction on March 12, 1983 to sell all of Jervis' collection of rolling stock, parts, and supplies. A future chapter will tell of Al Smith and Neil Vodden's attendance at that sale and the consequences.

This chapter is based almost entirely on material found in the archives of the California State Railroad Museum's Library. The one exception, about the proposed San Bernadino-Redlands line, was reported to us by Carol Robertson of the San Bernadino Railroad Historical Society. Any additional information or corrections on this period of Overfair utilization will be appreciated.

Observation Car

Smith, Swanton and Bygone Days
by Hart Fairclough

As the decade of the thirties ended, Al was finishing

high school and his more active Scouting years. When the forties came along we saw Al usually only at summer camp, for during the year he was involved in college life. He started at San Jose State, but soon switched to Cal Poly for a better Ag program - - and the added attraction of the proximity of the campus to the Southern Pacific train tracks. Most of us know what big event came along in 1941. Pearl Harbor happened and with it the call of military duty. As Al approached this period, his student off-campus job was as a part-timer with the SP freight trains to and from San Luis Obispo. It was supposedly his last run before a military physical exam, when the tragedy of losing a leg below the knee occurred. A faulty step in the ladder at the end of one of the cars, and the subsequent fall beneath the wheels on one side of the freight train, provided evidence of Al's personal courage and strength. In spite of his severe injury, he made a conscious effort to attract someone in the caboose as it passed by. It worked. The train was signaled to stop. By the time it actually came to a stop, backed up, and help arrived, Al had already taken his belt and applied a tourniquet at the right spot on the upper part of his leg. This action stopped the life-threatening flow of blood. A technique he had learned in Scouting really paid off.

Al returned to school after months involving operations and the fittings of a wooden leg below the knee. He graduated from Cal Poly in June 1944, got a teaching credential and a job at Manteca High School in the San Joaquin Valley, teaching Ag classes. By 1946 he was back at his alma mater high school in Campbell.

During Al's years at Cal Poly and his early teaching years, my life had gone in a different direction. High school graduation right after Pearl Harbor, one semester at UC Berkeley, then my 3 years in the Army, kept us apart. However, Al's world and mine were still connected, but only by mail. We wrote frequently during the war years. He made no reference to his accident, but just signed his letters "Peg-leg Al." The details of his accident I got only in letters from my parents. Throughout WW II, besides any interesting news, our letters carried on a popular war game of the time called, "Battleship." Ask around if you haven't heard of it. In one of the letters, we agreed on a Walking Liberty Silver Half Dollar as a bet on the outcome of our personal war game. Just recently I received a letter from Al's sister Lois Spafford in Davis, CA. She mailed several old stateside cards and letters of mine that she had found in some of Al's belongings. When I was in Europe, Al kept up the Battleship game by "V-Mail" letters, of which I have a few in my old army locker.

Who won the Battleship contest?

-- to be continued

Observation

by Bill McNab

DEDICATION: The roundtable and the track connections to the machine shop are undergoing major repairs and improvements. The first step was to prepare to concrete in the rail abutments. This involved taking out ties, ballast and clearing the apron area. To hold the track at the proper height to meet the huge beast the size of a refrigerator across the way at the car barn with one of a kind electric plug the size of a peach and the receptacle, grapefruit dimensions. **SOLUTION:** Battery jump cables strung across the driveway. some of the guys have cables that could carry enough load to start a battleship. Others were connected both ends to the same cable to carry the power. It took all the jumper cables available and as darkness fell and the welding continued - not one of the cable owners was willing to say they had to leave as they knew that their cable gone, meant work had to stop. There were explanations due when the members reached home much later that night. That's DEDICATION.

It's nice to read Hart Faircloughs items on Al Smith and the early days. Hart puts a lot of effort into "filtered recall" and a word of appreciation from members to him is in order.

2472 Steam Locomotive Group picnic is scheduled for October. As a thought - Randy Jones has some great film of the 2472 heading to San Luis Obispo. Then Cuesta Grade heading back north with 2472 working up the grade. Maybe Randy could be persuaded to show his film at the picnic. How to darken an area to show it could be a problem—everyone talk to Randy! [Maybe the caboose??]

The Boss, Ed Carnegie, when suggested 2 more work days would see new ties installed to Windy Point - replied "One good workday would do it." Oh man, let's hope for a huge group to show up for August workdays.

A work crew was in attendance a few days before the July Golden Spikes picnic hosted by Elmer and Francis Stone so that the area was in good shape early and last minute things to do were kept to a minimum.

Training Classes

Train Crew classes are now being offered at Swanton Pacific Railroad.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the "Train Crew" (Conductor, Fireman, or Engineer) at the Swanton Pacific Railroad, please let a member of the SPRR Executive Board (listed at the end of this newsletter) know of your interest. The roster of current Train Crew members and supervisors is posted on the cork board above the sink in the machine shop.

Here's how the training program works. Periodically, the SPRR Executive Board will review the candidates for Train Crew and determine who is eligible for the next Conductor/General Safety class. This is the required entry level class in which students receive training in railroad safety regulations, hand signals, radio communications, and the duties of the Conductor.

Successful completion of the class gets your name on the Train Crew roster classified as Conductor - IN TRAINING. At this point, you are allowed to perform the duties of Conductor with a qualified Conductor in close attendance. When you feel you are ready, ask one of the Conductor Supervisors for a test. When you pass the test (written and practical) and are accepted by the SPRR Executive Board you will be promoted to a qualified Conductor (complete with seniority date).

After attaining the rank of Conductor - QUALIFIED and the SPRR Executive Board's approval, you may progress to the next training course - Motorcar Operator. Students must finish their current training course (from IN TRAINING to QUALIFIED) before being eligible to take the next course. Generally, classes and skills are mastered in the order listed below.

Class	# in class	Length
Conductor/General Safety	up to 6	1 day
Motorcar operation	2-4	1 day
Diesel Engineer	2-4	1 day
Steam Locomotive Fireman	2	2 days
Steam Locomotive Engineer	2	2 days

Class sizes are limited so that everyone in the class gets a chance to participate in the "hands-on" portion of the class.

Conductor, Motorcar Operator, and Diesel Engineer classes will be offered on scheduled Swanton workdays. The Steam Locomotive classes will be scheduled by special arrangement.

Buckles

A chance to own a piece of SPRR history is still 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 shows 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 \$10.75 to SPRS members and \$16.00 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.

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.

**Swanton Pacific Railroad Society
Executive Board**

- Director:** Ed Carnegie
(805) 995-3695
- President:** Marty Campbell
(707) 996-0942
- First Vice President:** Andy McLean
(415) 427-3088
- Second Vice President:** Geoffrey Tobin
(805) 544-7927
- Secretary/ Editor:** Jim Matheny
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- Treasurer:** Ed Carnegie
(805) 995-3695
- Engine & Rolling Stock:** Randy Jones
(408) 425-5065
- Facilities & Grounds:** Bob Nichols
(408) 356-5203
- History:** Lou Haughney
(415) 592-2517
- Safety Engineer:** Andy McLean
(415) 427-3088
- Track:** Elmer Stone
(510) 537-8781
- Operations:** Vince Cipolla
(818) 799-9636
- Social & Publicity:** Martha Neilsen
(408) 257-2683

MINUTES
Meeting No.7

Swanton Pacific Railroad Society
July 27, 1997

Executive Board:

Present: Marty Campbell, Ed Carnegie, Randy Jones, Elmer Stone, Geoff Tobin,
John Tomlin

Absent: Vince Cipolla, Lou Haughney, Jim Matheny, Andy McLean, Martha Neilsen,
Bob Nichols,

Guests: Mary Ann Carnegie, Art Laidlaw

The seventh meeting of the Swanton Pacific Railroad Society Executive Board was called to order by President Marty Campbell on July 27, 1997, 8:45 A.M., at the Red House. The following committee reports were given:

Treasurer's Report was given by Ed Carnegie:

Swanton's RR account has earned for the fiscal year 96/97, \$317,000
The balance in the endowment as of June 1997 is \$1.82 million
Investments on the endowment brought in 20.1% interest
Expenditures ran below original budget in 96/97

As of July 1997 the organization had \$25,000 left in it's account, therefore did not take a draw, however we can draw on it anytime it is deemed necessary as the funds are on ready reserve, just need to give the Foundation a ten day notice.

As of right now we have 100 paid members; 35 paid members from last year have not paid their dues as of yet this year, but the secretary is sending out a reminder note of their possible "derailment as they sit on the siding".

Update on Projects and Other Items: (EJ Carnegie)

A concrete RR crossing, and foundation for the wigwag have been completed. John Sutherlin was looking for additional work to do on weekdays other than workdays-- suggested that he could brush the wigwag to get it ready for a new coat of paint. Elmer is to contact Jim Holmes to help get it properly wired and set up on the ranch for operation.

Discussion on BBQ prices for members on rundays was discussed and was approved to charge half price to all members. This equates to charging \$6.00 for ALL Swanton RR members--it basically covers for the cost of the food when we are doing the BBQ ourselves. This may be subject to change down the road, but for right now holds. If another organization does the BBQ a limited number of tickets will be obtained to provide meals for the train crew.

The water system is still being worked on as we wait for similar bids to come in.

Upcoming Train Runs:

The next scheduled run is tentatively set for August 10, to be hosted by the Santa Cruz Fish Hatchery. They are to confirm within the next couple of days. Should their attendance be between 50-90 they will have the diesel engine run, if more than 90 we will operate the steam engine.

June 1998-a family reunion for the McCrary family. Last weekend in June.

Equipment Reports:

- a) Milling machine:
Discussion about the possibility of repairing our milling machine. Conclusion was that it just needs lubrication, and perhaps just invest in a new boring head that is adjustable.
- b) 1912 Locomotive
Was pulled out of service because the right front axle and #1 driver was found to have brass dust all over it after the Golden Spike Day run. After some discussion, it was recommended that NO air hoses or high pressure washings be done around the drivers of the engines. A group will check it out ASAP to see what was causing the brass dust.
- c) Diesel torch converter was discussed as it needed to be repaired--Marty Campbell to take it to Sacramento to fix for approx. \$200-\$250
- d) 1913 Locomotive
A work order board should be set up to prioritize the work schedule on this engine (i.e., coat all rust spots with oil to prevent further rusting, cover it to protect it from bats and their droppings, work to be done on the boiler, turn the drivers, check driving boxes
- e) 1914 Locomotive needs boiler pressure washing

Track Report: (Elmer Stone)

Work is continual, but special attention needs to be done in the area just past the bridge where it appears like a roller coaster. A concern for jumping the track exists. Ed Carnegie said that he would take care of this matter. Elmer then mentioned that "**No more oil will be used on the switches--graphite will be used from now on as it helps minimize the amount of dirt that collects. It will be diluted with kerosene or diesel fuel in order to work better.**" As usual there is track to line and raise as well as siding.

Operating Classes: (refer to hand out given by John Tomlin)

Other Discussion:

Possibility of a "hands-on demonstration day" was discussed
Status of the old barn across from the redhouse on Swanton property

Adjournment: 10:45

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Carnegie
Acting Secretary