



SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

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Cal Poly

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On Track

with your Director, Ed Carnegie

Life on the railroad has been hard this month, but very productive! Both the north and south revetments are finally finished. A total of 65 yards of concrete were required and the "wall building task" was completed in just five pours. The concrete block laying was a back breaking job, in that each block weighed fifty-five pounds! After a day of placing those blocks, one was certainly ready for the shower and a good nights rest. None of us felt like going to the gym to work out!

On July 30, the work really commenced. An excavator was hired to do the preliminary site prep for the north revetment wall. I'm sure glad though that the rest of the job did not go like the first day of excavating -- it was a true calamity. The equipment was to arrive on Thursday. However, when we came in late Wednesday night, the excavator was already here, but parked across the street from the redhouse, rather than near College Park. Thursday morning, the operator arrived late, he then proceeded to walk back and forth between his truck and the excavator and finally remarked, "This is not going to be a good day!". Unfortunately, his words marked the truth. He soon discovered he had left the keys for the excavator at home, in San Jose. He got in his truck and drove back home -- three hours later. . . he was back at the site to finally begin the work. The saga of calamities continues. First, the bucket on the excavator had to be changed. This meant that the hinge pins had to be driven out. I stood there and watched in total amazement as he took a mighty swing with the sledge hammer. That was all fine and well, the bad part was that he forgot to remove his thumb in front of the pin.

Without a flinch, or other signs of pain, he went and got some grease and smeared it on the end of his thumb! Forty-five minutes later, and after two more tries of swinging the sledge hammer (minus the thumb smashing) the 65 pound pins were in place with the proper bucket. A lot of soil was then removed -- unfortunately not all of it in the right place. The next day the site work was corrected and completed with our backhoe, and the form work was started.

Water at the bottom of the forms was at least 8 to 10 inches deep, and in some places it even went over your boot tops. Bill McNab braved it and finally just went in -- boots and all, and really went at it, along with Tom, Winfred, and myself. The two foot diameter columns that are under the foundation footing had to be dug with the backhoe, and by the time you were down three feet below the footing, the top of the hole was eight feet in diameter. Plastic pipe was placed in the hole to act as a frame for the ballast that was placed on the outside of the pipe to form the two foot diameter columns. Next, approximately 9,000 pounds of rebar were placed in the forms and we were finally ready for the pours.

The first footing required 22 yards of concrete. It was over two feet deep and over five feet wide. The day after the footing was poured, the building of the block wall started. At first, it took us a day to do a little over one row., we thought we'd be doing this forever. After a few days however, we had it mastered -- we were able to do a row in an hour!



On August 27, less than a month later, our mission was accomplished, and the north and south revetments were completed. I want to express my sincere thanks to all of you who helped with the



revetment walls -- Tom Vertel, Bill McNab, Matt Zemny, Winfred Morris, Bob Morehouse, Cosmo DeFrancesco, Hart Fairclough, the entire Engelman family, Geoff Tobin, Fitz Fitzpatrick, and Bill Gaston. We also appreciated Elmer's coming down one day to get his motor home and to oversee all the work as it had progressed at that time. It met with his approval, so we knew we were moving on the "right track"!

Immediately following the last pour, work commenced on assembling the bridge. Three sections are now up and the bridge is definitely starting to take shape. If you have a chance, you should stroll on down to the creek area, and view the assembling of the "big erector set! I am hoping that a professional sandblaster will arrive this Saturday to take over and speed up the tedious prepwork of preparing the steel for painting.



While having some of the pours done for the revetment walls, any excess concrete was used to provide a slab around the fire-pit.

The "puzzle pieces" are not completed yet, but in time will be. We think this has made a big improvement -- as well as a safety feature for this area.

I know other work has actively been progressing in different areas within the railroad, but I will leave that detailed reporting to those who have been actively involved in those activities. However, while living up here for the past two months - I have noticed a few changes taking place between the bridge building project. Fred Vertel has been steadily working away on repainting the station. It is really beginning to look

"polished". Fred has also been very busy "walking the track" between all the projects going on right now at SPRR. He wears his "press badge" at all times to make sure that all current projects are being documented or recorded. The picnic tables, serving tables, and at least one waiting bench at College Station have all been refinished by Mary Ann. It was also noted that Matt Zemny thought that Mary Ann perhaps needed a few other things to do while living at Swanton these last two months. So he dropped off several plants for her to plant. She has, and the hills are coming alive with plants. We thank you Matt. Mary Ann, along with Martha, Carol, Tom, Fred, Bill, Linda & Molly, have all added a beautiful touch to College Park for all of us to enjoy.

Also, during the month of August, Swanton became the vacation destination for two of our members -- Marty and Carol Campbell, as well as Randy and Robyn Jones. Each came here for their vacations, but worked on specific tasks while here -- mainly on the 502 so that work would progress on getting that engine up and running for the benefit of all. Is that dedication or what -- to take one's vacation at Swanton. It's through our truly dedicated volunteers that we have a society that "can do" just about anything.

Following our first workday weekend in August, we had a Board Meeting on Sunday, August 11. Immediately following the meeting, Wally, LaDonna, and several of the interns hosted all those present from the RR to an overall tour of the Swanton Ranch. It was a very informative and good tour, I know that all of us appreciated the in-depth tour. If some of you missed this tour, you need to mark your calendar for October 18 -- as tours of the ranch will be given that day in conjunction with the bridge dedication.

At this time, I would like to remind you that the dedication of our new bridge will be on Sunday, October 18 -- CAL POLY DAY. We would like to make this a historical and gala event. Invitations will be sent out very soon. If you have any individuals you would like to invite, please send their name and address to us and we will make sure they get an invitation. Or as an alternative, you may copy your invitation for your guests.

OUT IN THE WORLD

Publicity and Events

Fred Vertel

Mary Ann Carnegie

Dates to mark on your calendar:

September 12 Work Weekend
 September 26 Work Weekend
 September 27 Land Trust
 October 3 Staff Day for Cal Poly
 October 4 Lone Star Picnic
 October 11 2472 RR Group
 October 18 CAL POLY DAY-Bridge Dedication

Although the summer months are almost over, and they have been busy, hectic is more like it, we still, as a society, have much ahead of us. Our scheduled work weekends will continue to be on the second and fourth Saturdays. Yet with so many different projects presently going, there usually is at least one or more of our members up at Swanton all the time. So, should you be able to come to Swanton and share in all this fun, we always appreciate the extra help and camaraderie that develops. However, you may want to call in advance and make sure that someone will be there to work with you.

If you weren't here on Sunday, August 9, you missed out on a real treat. Swanton Pacific Railroad Society members were given "limousine" tours of the Swanton Ranch. Wally, LaDonna, and two of the ranch's interns drove several of us to the highest, as well as the lowest, peaks of Swanton Ranch. The views were spectacular, the information about the ranch and its programs were informative, as was the history of some of the buildings, along with the update on plans for the educational center. Tom Midgely, and his crew of dogs, provided us with a "hands-on" demonstration of how the border collies herd and how they are "employed" at the ranch. Yes, the dogs do more than what we usually see them do of endlessly fetching sticks! If some of you missed this wonderful tour, mark your calendar for October 18. More tours will be offered at the Cal Poly Day/Bridge Dedication Event.

The following weekend in August a few of us were enjoying our lunches and visiting, when some special guests arrived at College Park. They introduced themselves as being the former residents of Swanton's "redhouse"--Irene Terrini Bianconi. She and other members of her family were bused over here from Stockton, and other parts of California. They were here for a small family reunion and to take a stroll down memory lane. She shared many of her fond memories with us, as well as numerous photographs from the past. We have often thought that if the Swanton house could talk, oh what stories it would tell. And on this particular Saturday it did come alive with some very vivid and interesting tales. We also had the pleasure of meeting her sister-in-law who had lived in the small house above the redhouse and taught for many years at the one room Seaside School just down the road. This particular day really was a real treat for those of us who were here.

In September, we will be having our first big event in quite some time, and in which we are the hosts. This means we put on the whole show -- train rides, BBQ, hosting, selling of Swanton products, etc. etc. We will need to have each of you help make this event most memorable to our guests by providing them with a fun-filled day. To make sure all tasks get handled properly we will be having a sign up sheet circulating for you to volunteer for specific tasks to be done that day. You will want to sign up as soon as possible for what you want to do first, as we will be calling later to make assignments and fill in where help will be needed in order to make these things happen. Remember -- they don't just happen, we have to make them happen.

In the Roundhouse

with Randy Jones Engines and Rolling Stock

The last two months have seen much progress on our railroad's rolling stock. The 502's overhaul is moving ahead steadily. The air tanks have been hydro-tested and re-installed, and the new train air brake line has been installed from new valves in the cab to the rear of the locomotive. A new air horn valve has also been plumbed into the cab where it will offer better control. The radiator was boiled out and found to be full of holes sealed with Bars Leaks. We didn't want to skimp on this part of the job because there is a cooling coil in the bottom tank for the torque converter fluid, and the t.c. seals may have been originally damaged by overheating, sooo....several hundred dollars later we have the restored radiator with new core back on the engine.

Marty Campbell and Jim Scott got the torque converter fitted up to the diesel again, and cleaned out the hydraulic reservoir of accumulated grime and crud. The aux. power shaft that goes to the back of the unit to run the air compressor has been replaced. The old one was over-heavy, out of balance, had a worn-out flex coupling and bearings to match. The new one will drive the alternator as well as the air compressor. This gets the alternator away from the engine heat while spinning it faster for proper operation.



The new forward/reverse lever has been mounted, but the linkage to the gearbox has yet to be fabricated. New gears had to be custom-cut and are being heat treated now. We feel we are finally getting into the home stretch.

Members present and mostly accounted for have been Marty, Jim, Mark Cooper, Bill Engleman, Mark #1 and Mark #2 at Central Hydraulics, and myself. I fear I've forgotten someone so please let me know so the record can include you.

Fitz and Andy have kept the car shop hopping with the hopper car re-build. One truck has been completely re-built, both trucks have gotten new truck-mounted brakes, and properly sized air lines have been installed. Matt Zemny helped out, along with the ever popular "I-forgot-you-and-I'm-sorry". This paragraph is really waaayy too short to properly reflect how much work this has been! Perhaps a peek into the car shop next time you're at the railroad is in order- these guys are really enthused with their work!

Hope to see many of you at the next workday.

In the Caboose

with your historian, Lou Haughney



THE COLLEGE PARK STATION

The origin of the name College Park for the Swanton Pacific's passenger depot was explained at the recent Executive Board meeting. Elmer Stone and Randy Jones told the history of how Al Smith chose that name for his station. When Al was installing the tracks in the early 1980's, he decided to put a platform for loading passengers along the east side of the large meadow below the roundhouse. His Southern Pacific cohorts suggested that he call it College Park after the similarly named and long standing station on the SP's mainline between downtown San Jose and Santa Clara.

According to an SP 1933 timetable, the Santa Clara station was 44.3 miles from San Francisco; the College Park station, 45.7 miles, and, the main San Jose station, 46.9 miles. The SP's use of the name came about because it was located at the southeast corner of what was then the campus of the College of the Pacific. (The College of the Pacific was started in 1851 at a site along Winchester Boulevard in San Jose, according to Andy and Vera McLean.) About 1925, the College moved to Stockton, where it grew steadily and became the University of the Pacific. Its former campus in San Jose was taken over by Bellarmine Preparatory School, which had been on the grounds of Santa Clara University. The Caltrain commuter trains still stop at College Park before and after school hours to drop off and pick up the many Bellarmine students who come from points as far north as San Mateo.

A photograph, taken in May 1947, of the San Jose College Park station appears in Holmes' book, Prune Country Railroading, p. 130. It shows a hip-roofed structure supported by 10 perimeter posts and open on all four sides. The roof covers a long, conventional, station bench. A sign on the roof reads "College Park". Elmer says that this station was later enclosed on three sides. A current Bellarmine student reports that is now enclosed only on two sides, the north and the west (back) sides. A Bellarmine alumnus who passed "through" the station for four years in the early 1980's stated positively that the Swanton Pacific's College Park station, which he has visited, is much more imposing than the College Park structure at Bellarmine in San Jose.

Perhaps, in the early 1980's, when Al selected the name College Park, he may have been looking forward to the time when the railroad and the ranch would be used for the benefit and the education of college students. Certainly, the Swanton Pacific's College Park station shows the handiwork of Cal Poly students and staff. As Cal Poly became involved with the ranch and the railroad at Al's invitation, the design and the building of the present station was undertaken about 1990 as a "senior project" by engineering students at Cal Poly. This summer, the station is being cleaned of mildew and being carefully and painstakingly repainted by the hands of Fred and Tom Vertel.

A further note about the Southern Pacific's use of the College Park name for two other facilities. The SP applied the name to its large railroad yard in San Jose, the College Park yard, located in the bowl of the "Y" where the SP mainline branched off to Santa Clara/San Francisco and to Milpitas/Oakland. This yard was located on the east side of Stockton Avenue between Lenzen Avenue and West Taylor Street. The College Park Control Tower was on the east side of the mainline tracks, just above W. Taylor St.; and, the College Park Station was a block or two farther north at Stockton and Emery Streets. Maps of the College Park Yard and other San Jose facilities are in Holmes' book.

Thanks to Elmer and Andy for their recollections, and to the anonymous Bellarmine alumnus and to Justin Perkins, the current Bellarmine student, who gave their reports on the status of the College Park station in San Jose. (Justin's parents are graduates of Cal Poly.)



Marvelous Matt Zemny, that famous pistilero, loaned Mary Ann his digital camera on the day of the south foundation pour. Here are some of the pix.



Ed's 55 pound block pile

