

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD

Number 76

Cal Poly

September 1999

On Track

With your director,

Ed Carnegie



The month of August was very busy and productive. First we partied and then we worked. August 7 was the surprise party for Tom Vertel's 30th birthday. It was very interesting to watch Tom's facial expressions change as many people started arriving and I kept trying to keep him busy. When Fred and John (Tom's brother) arrived he started to believe that something was up.

A very enjoyable day was had by all with Marty and Geoff operating the steam engines, and all that wanted to operate were able to take their turn as either a fireman or as an engineer. Jim Scott was the head chef with a full crew of volunteers. Many hands made the activity go well and a good time was enjoyed by all that attended. Quite a few of the out of town guests stayed at the Cash Store's Davenport Inn and one couple even stayed in the 'Swanton Room'.

August 8 part of the MESA group met at College Park and served up goat meat from the ranch. The next week, on Friday the thirteenth, eight cubic yards of concrete arrived two hours late so our crew sat around and listened to humorous antidotes from Anthony and Tony Pratkanis. This pour consisted of the floor and walls for the future locomotive inspection pit. The week before Pete McFall helped me with laying it all out. On the day of the pour the Swanton Pacific Ranch supplied two hard workers, Adrian Cuzick and Melanie Petersen to assist the SPRR crew consisting



of Winfred Burriss, Matt Zemny, Fitz FitzPatrick, Anthony and Tony Pratkanis, Mary Ann and myself.

Then came the work weekend where we began to get ready for the next pour. We also worked on a dump site and eight new RV hook-up sites. After digging eight feet of ditch by hand and finding all the 'known' water and electrical pipes, I thought it was safe to get in the backhoe and begin digging. True to form,



the first pass I made with the backhoe, water starting gushing out of the ground! We repaired the line, but could never find where it went.

Fitz, Andy, Matt Zemny and Ed-ski worked on cleaning and re-arranging supplies in the carbarn and storage building. . Bruce Sherman helped with some of the welding. The following week work continued on one of the covered cars and doing some planning on the new hopper.

On the second work weekend, Aug. 28, final preparation for the second concrete pour was finished, along with setting water and electrical conduits for the RV sites. The only thing left now to do for the sites is to pull in the electrical wires. Bill Floyd, Ken Peterson, Tom Vertel, Art Laidlaw and myself either dug ditches, planted pipes or pulled wires on this project. Along with the RV sites getting updated, we 'christened' the new Swanton RV dumpsite.

The gardening crew got a delivery from the Soquel High School's Ag. Dept. by Matt Zemny



of approximately 26 plants in one and five gallon containers to improve Swanton's landscaping. Some have already been planted, but a few still need to find a spot.

On Monday, Aug. 30, also the Carnegie's

anniversary, 17 yards of concrete were poured to provide a covered area from the machine shop to the roundhouse. This obviously sets our marriage in a firm foundation of concrete.

This event was celebrated with Anthony and



Tony Pratkanis, Winnfred Burris, Bill McNab (traveled the furthest, from Boston), Bob Wilkinson, Tom Vertel, Art Laidlaw, Mary Ann, Barney, and myself. Yes even our dog walked



through it to help out.

The following day Art Laidlaw, Tom Vertel and myself stripped the forms, set the posts, and

cleaned the area. After that was completed Art volunteered to stay and mow the lawn. As you can see it will sure make it nice when the entire area is finished.

NEW MEMBERS

New membership received over the last month were as follows:

Mark Shelton San Luis Obispo

Hugh Miller San Jose

Joe Scardino San Ramon

Agricultural Education Cal Poly
& Communication

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



**PUBLICITY
AND
EVENT COORDINATION**

Mary Ann Carnegie

Please mark your calendar for the two upcoming big events. We will need some help for the Santa Cruz Landtrust event, Sunday, Sept. 26.

We will need all the help we can muster for our annual Cal Poly Day on Sunday, October 10. Please find enclosed in the newsletter an invitation for the October event.

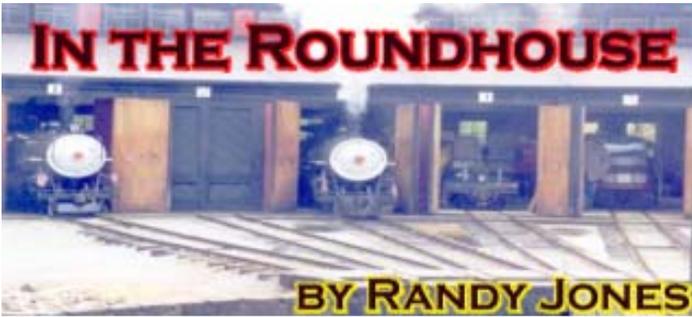
If you have friends who would like to attend feel free to copy the invitation and distribute as you wish. Please all remember that RSVP's are gratefully appreciated in planning appropriately for ordering food and supplies.

Calendar of events

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----|------------------------------------|
| Saturday | Septembe | 11 | Work weekend |
| Sunday | Septembe | 12 | Continuation of work weekend |
| | r | | |
| Saturday | Septembe | 25 | Workday/prep for Land Trust Event |
| | r | | |
| Sunday | Septembe | 26 | Land Trust/train |
| Sunday | October | 03 | Lonestar Company Picnic & Run |
| Saturday | October | 09 | Work day and prep for Cal Poly Day |
| Sunday | October | 10 | Cal Poly Day |

Be prepared to sign up for jobs that you would like to assist on for both Landtrust Day and Cal Poly Day. Sign up sheets will be available at the next workdays in September.

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Help Wanted | Position Available |
| MANAGER OF MATERIALS | |
| <p>Seeking a highly motivated individual to join the SPRR Tools and Materials Department. This person would be in charge of creating an inventory system (with help if needed), and ordering and stocking materials and supplies used in the day-to-day operation of our Railroad. In other words, this individual would be at the heart of everything we do, and have the very pulse of a vibrant and dynamic organization at his fingertips. Such an esteemed Tools and Materials Department team member would receive the accolades and notoriety of being among the SPRR Management Elite, with salary and benefits befitting such elevated status, and commensurate with other SPRR Volunteers. After cleaning your shoes, send inquiries of interest to Mark Cooper, Manager of Tools, 805-756-2571, mcooper@calpoly.edu</p> | |



As I've been going through my slides of the "early days" of the SP in an effort to resuscitate a failing memory, I've found that some of my slides are missing. So if I make a mistake in some dates, perhaps someone will catch it and correct it in future editions.

As I recall, we had been working at Swanton for about a year (Summer or Fall '80) when one of the guys (Neil Vodden, Charley Hoyle, Severn Edmonds, Robbie Sinclair, or Warren King) brought in a RR magazine (Trains?) with an ad for a 19" gauge diesel and cars for sale in Pennsylvania. All of us thought this had to be a mistake. Nobody but MacDermot would build in 19" gauge. These people must not know how to measure gauge - perhaps it's 18" and they're measuring over the rails, or 15" or 16" and they're measuring over the outside of the wheels. Anything but 19"! We were all intrigued, though, especially Al, so he called and was assured it was 19" gauge.

Still skeptical, Charley said he wanted to go with Al to investigate, so it was off to Pennsylvania for the both of them where they found an incredibly good scale reproduction of a GE U25B in 19" gauge, along with 3 passenger cars and a steel hopper car! Al was told the engine had been rolled into its shed and not moved for a "couple of years." (Al observed that there were trees growing up between the rails 3 or 4" in diameter.) He was also assured it ran into the shed under its own power, but when they tried to roll it, it wouldn't budge.

A hydraulic jack was employed, and they proceeded to jack the back wall of the building off the slab while the engine still wouldn't move! Undaunted, Al returned home, talked it over with the guys who would have to do the work, and negotiated a pur-

chase.

Then he and Charley returned to Pennsylvania, where they loaded everything into a boxcar for the move west.

The oral history that accompanied the equipment says that it was built in the early 60's. The diesel's journal covers have prototypical details cast on them as follows:

Keystone Lt. Rwy. Prod. Co. 1963 Pittsburgh.

We were told it had run for awhile somewhere in Kentucky, but its principal use had been at a theme park in Mobile, Alabama, where it had been flooded out in a hurricane. We have seen pictures wherein the passenger cars carry the name "Alabama & Historama", and we surmised the storm was Hurricane Camille.

When Robbie and Severn began opening the locomotive up, they found a muddy water mark halfway up on the diesel's fly wheel! So the story that the engine had run afterward and even powered itself into its storage shed in Pennsylvania is hard to believe.

Once here in Swanton, the equipment itself answered the question of, "why 19" gauge?" Among the extra parts was a MacDermot passenger car truck, partly modified to carry a truck-mounted brake cylinder.

While planning their RR, the Pennsylvania group must have purchased the truck from either the group in Southern California, who had the 1914, 1915, and 1500, or from Billy Jones.

They had followed MacDermot's prototypical design, modified slightly to fit their needs for their drop-center, covered passenger cars. The freight car trucks also followed MacDermot and prototype practices, except for truck-mounted brake cylinders.

A time-line note here: I have slides showing a freshly painted hopper car in use in the spring of '83.

As Severn and Robbie dug into the unit to begin restoration, a pattern of what I would call mechanical

and engineering schizophrenia emerged.

The architecture of the unit was exquisite and masterful - a real scale gem! The trucks themselves are a wonder, every detail and shape painstakingly re-produced in heavy-duty glory.

However, the mechanical details were the other side of the coin. The gear cases fitted to the in-board axles were equipped with shielded rather than sealed bearings. With no way to add oil seals on the axles, gear lube ran out as fast as it was poured in! During the hurricane, the cases thus filled with salt water and were left that way to corrode beyond any hope of use.

A couple of wheel tires had been machined too large for a proper shrink fit, so they were just tack-welded onto the wheels - one had already broken loose and could just fall off.

The brake rigging, faithfully reproduced in all its complexity, had sintered bronze bushings installed wherever pins fit through levers. These had mostly disintegrated, the material being totally unsuited to that service. Dozens of steel bushings would be made to replace them.

Severn enlisted the help of a volunteer new to the area, Ken Reiter, and together they tackled the trucks while Robbie concentrated on the body and major power components.

Severn searched for about a year for the manufacturer of the differential gear cases for the trucks (there were no identifying marks anywhere), and was about to give up and have straight gears custom cut when someone dropped by and recognized them as Towmotor Forklift parts.

Al was able to buy whole new cases and hypoid gears for the same cost as custom-cut straight gears only, about \$600 each back then.

I have slides showing one truck nearly complete in

April '84, with work proceeding on the second one.

Simultaneously, the trucks for the hopper car and two passenger cars were overhauled including all new bearings, and several Overfair couplers were machined to fit into the Keystone draft gear for use at Swanton.

Robbie found that the Continental Diesel engine had cracks in the head and was beyond rebuilding, so Al had a new four-cylinder Ford industrial diesel set up with a special adapter to mate to the torque converter. The identification plate even says "Special Build for Al Smith."

A great deal of time and effort was spent cleaning mud and corrosion out of the nooks and crannies of the frame and body sections, then sandblasting and painting them.

The main gear case offered mysteries of its own, some still unsolved. It is configured like a transfer case in a four-wheel-drive truck, receiving power on an input shaft up high, and delivering power down below on a shaft that extends both forward and rearward, and then via u-jointed drive shafts to the differentials on the axles. The gear case has two speed ranges (very common) and forward and reverse, a most rare feature.

We surmised that it was probably made originally for a piece of four-wheel-drive equipment such as a loader, or log skidder or such, where two speed ranges would suffice when used with a torque converter. But we have never found any marks on it indicating the manufacturer, nor anyone who recognizes it.

Part of the rebuilding, of course, was all new electrical wiring and air plumbing. The engine had even originally had air conditioning, but this was not restored for Swanton.

Robbie designed and built an eight position, air actuated throttle that was really trick, as well as custom-turning and polishing reflectors for halogen-lamped headlights to fit the miniature housings on the diesel's body. They really light up the track at night, and

are impressive works of design.

The frame with cab was back on the trucks at Swanton in July of '85, at the same time the Roundhouse was being built.

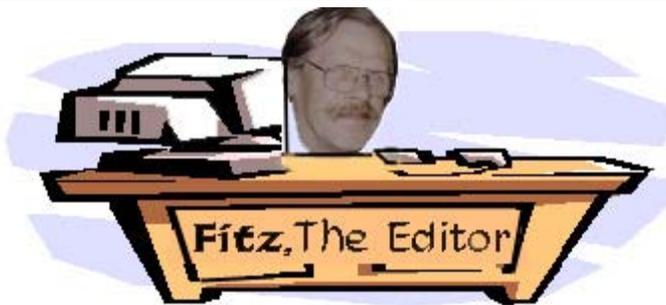
By that Fall, Robbie had the rear hood mounted over the air compressor and radiator. Shake-down runs and switching commenced.

The engine performed beautifully, even though we had to shift between forward and reverse using a monkey wrench on the linkage! The diesel was actu-

ally used to move the 1915 from storage in the Butler Building (now the car shop) to the new roundhouse.

Sometime soon after this, Charlie remarked in his own inimitable, half-hoarse, medium-high volume voice, "J. C. __, Smith, that thing runs so well you could run it drunk."

The discussion continued and Charlie soon suggested the unit be numbered the 502, after the old DMV code number for drunken driving, and that's just how it happened.



My Fellow Swantons!

Election of Society officers is nearly upon us. President Bill Engelman has appointed Mary Ann Carnegie, Fred Vertel, and Randy Jones to the Nominating Committee charged with developing a slate of candidates for office. The elected officers, collectively known as the Executive Board, currently are:

- President Bill Engelman
- First Vice President Bob Morehouse
- Second Vice President Andy McLean
- Secretary 'Fitz' FitzPatrick
- Treasurer Ed Carnegie
(He's also the Director)

Article V., Section K of the Society's ByLaws reads:

Officers shall be elected for a period of one (1) year, commencing the first of the year. Elections shall be held in November. Nominations are to close in October. Should no candidate receive a simple majority vote for their office, the top two vote recipients will be placed in a run-off election.

The President does presidential things, runs meetings and such like. The first VP assists the Prez and is responsible for the scheduling, organizing and conduct of work days and "steam up" events. The second VP assists the Prez and 1st VP and is responsible for the scheduling, organizing, and conduct of Society meetings and arranges publicity. (Some of these duties are handed off to committees.)

The Secretary records and keeps minutes of Society and Executive Board meetings; handles correspondence; publishes and distributes the newsletter; keeps the roster of members, friends of the Society, and neighbors; and maintains current copies of the General Code of Operating Rules and Book of Signals.

The Treasurer handles all Society funds in accordance with Cal Poly Foundation requirements, reports the balance summary at general meetings and provides a balance sheet to the Executive Board.

Our next General Meeting, for the purpose of open nominations and the report of the Nominating Committee, will be on the Saturday work day, October 9th around noon when we break for lunch.

If you have a candidate for office, or would like to be an officer of the Society, that is the time to be heard. You may also contact one of the Nominating Committee members or the Secretary at the address on the cover sheet of the newsletter.

To : Special Friends Date: Sept. 10, 1999
Cal Poly
College of Agriculture

From : E. J. Carnegie and Walter Mark
Arrangements Committee

Subject : **Cal Poly's Swanton Pacific Ranch Railroad Day**
Cal Poly Swanton Pacific Ranch
Sunday, Oct. 10, 1999

The College of Agriculture is pleased to invite you and your friends to our annual day of train rides, barbecue and view of the Swanton Pacific Ranch in Davenport on **Sunday, Oct. 10, 1999**. Even though this year we have not been able to work on last year's washout, we have been spending a lot of effort on our infrastructure. Come and see the changes. Dr. Walter Mark, Director of Swanton Pacific Ranch, will also present an update of the College's activities at the ranch.

Those who wish to watch the firing of an authentic and historic live steam locomotive should arrive between 9 & 10 a.m. The first train run will be at approximately 11 a.m.. Train rides will continue until barbecue time, which is scheduled around 12:30 p.m. A typical Santa Maria style BBQ will be served for lunch. Rides will resume after lunch until approximately 4:00 PM.

If you haven't visited the Swanton Ranch or Railroad before, be assured that you will enjoy seeing the steam engines, a diesel engine, a crane car, the roundhouse and turntable, a machine shop, and a Swanton historical memorabilia display.

In addition, various tours of the ranch will be conducted. You won't want to miss the spectacular view of the ranch from the high ground. There will also be sheep dog demonstrations. Don't miss out on the fun, the activities, as well as seeing long time friends or making new acquaintances. **WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR VISIT!**

A chartered tour bus to bring visitors (approx. 40) from SLO to Swanton has been arranged. The price is \$15 a person/round trip. However, reservations will be "first-come, first-served", so please let Ed Carnegie know ASAP at (805) 995-3659 if you would like to take advantage of this offer. The bus will leave San Luis Obispo at the Food-4-Less on lower Higuera around 6:30 AM; for north county residents there will be a 7:00 AM departure from the Target parking lot, near Carl's Jr. off of Theater Drive in Atascadero. Return to SLO will be between 7:00 & 8:00 PM.

**SWANTON PACIFIC RANCH RAILROAD DAY
Oct. 10, 1999**

DIRECTIONS

The small village of Davenport is just nine miles north of Santa Cruz on Highway 1. Drive 1-1/2 miles north of Davenport on Highway 1 and turn right on Swanton Road. The headquarters for the trains is three miles up twisting-and-turning Swanton Road (all paved). Another clue: It is the first place on the left past the CDF station on Swanton Road.

We will need an accurate head count for the barbecue, as well as for bus transportation by Friday, October 4. Please return the bottom portion of this invitation, along with a check (\$12/adult and \$6/child) to cover expenses for the barbecue and refreshments, plus \$15.00 per person (if applicable) for round-trip ticket to take the bus from SLO to Swanton. Submit payment to:

Ed Carnegie
BioResource & Agricultural Engineering Department
Cal Poly State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

Tickets will be held for you at the Swanton Ranch. If you have any questions, please call Ed Carnegie at (805) 756-2620 or (805) 995-3659.

**Hope to see you at Swanton!
Event will be held come rain or shine!**

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|--|---------------------|---|
| SWANTON PACIFIC RANCH RAILROAD DAY | | Oct. 10, |
| 1999 | | |
| Full Name (s) | _____ | |
| Please indicate Child (C) or Adult (A) | _____ | |
| Address & Phone | _____ | |
| Please identify if you are an alumni of Cal Poly, along with the year you graduated and department. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni, Graduated _____ Department: _____ | | |
| BBQ | Number of adults- | _____ at \$12.00 = \$ _____ |
| BBQ | Number of children- | _____ at \$ 6.00 = \$ _____ (12 years or younger) |
| Number of Round-trip bus tickets | | _____ at \$15.00 = \$ _____ |