

# SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD

Number 79

Cal Poly

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## On Track

With your director,

Ed Carnegie



A lot of work was accomplished in November with only one official work weekend. The work weekend started off early with early birds showing up on Friday evening. They were Marty and Carol Campbell, Bill McNab, Ken Peterson, Mary Ann and myself. McNab came and helped in the morning to clear the building site for the new storage shed. Lots of rail and other "stuff" were forklifted down to the lower meadow next to the old bridge. Ken Peterson arrived later and jumped right in to assist with the final cleanup.

Bill journeyed down to tend to the McNab redwood grove. He found it pretty well overrun with poison oak and weeds, but was happy to report that the majority of the trees are surviving.

Work commenced with building the second wall for the storage shed, and making sure that all materials were available for the work weekend and its crew. Appetites were filled with an impromptu meal of tri-tip steaks at the Redhouse.

On Saturday we had a great turnout of hearty souls to help out. The building crew, which was made up mostly of our track crew, installed the west wall of the storage shed and placed the roof timbers in place. Our members that wear many different hats Tom Vertel, Ken Peterson, Dennis Johnson, Butch Floyd, the Pratkanis/Turner family, Cosmo and an anonymous "passer-by" interested in the Swanton Pacific RR jumped right in to help.

This storage will be used to protect our tractor and new forklift from the weather. This coming weekend we will finish this project as the roofing, corrugated galvanized iron, arrived about a week ago.



A special thanks goes to San Jose Forklift, owners, Ken and Maureen Peterson, who recently donated an eight thousand pound Yale forklift, a new paint job and all. It was put to good use and saved many hours of hard backbreaking labor.

Marty Campbell supervised the work in the roundhouse and the cleaning out of the machine shop to get it ready for the upcoming remodel job. Those helping out there were Mark Cooper, Bob Wilkerson, "Ed-ski", Randy Jones, Bill Engelman, and Bill Floyd.

Fitz and the carbarn crew, Andy McLean, Mac Gaddis, "Ed-ski" and Bob Wilkerson, worked primarily on the hopper car.

The weather was so good, in that we had no rain on the workday but some prior to the work weekend, that it was perfect for weeding. Many of the volunteers pulled weeds between tasks as they worked alongside the grounds crew of Martha, Carol and Mary Ann.

Butch Floyd was checked out by Tom Vertel and is

now an "official" lawnmower operator.

A short board meeting was held at noontime, during lunch. Ballots for the slate of officers presented were turned in and verified by Anthony Pratkanis and Bill McNab. Results are given further in the newsletter.

On our continuing saga on the washout; our second submittal to the County Planning Dept. was presented mid-November. It consisted of a flood capacity analysis provided by Dr. Joe Glass, a Cal Poly Professor in the BioResource Agricultural Engineering Dept. An additional construction narrative, prepared by myself, along with a stream bank stabilization and sedimentation control plan was attached. In addition, a report on the red legged frog, an endangered species located on the ranch, had to be submitted. This report was prepared by a hired professional biologist.

Gary Greene, who attended one of our recent events in October and saw the washout, graciously volunteered to assist in our efforts on the project. He prepared the required geological report, for which all of us in the organization are very thankful for. Many of us volunteer in various ways to make the Swanton Pacific RR a success, so on behalf of the entire organization we thank Gary Greene for his assistance.

After a hard, but successful day of working on the railroad, a Dutch oven cookout was provided. Four Dutch ovens provided a delicious variety of wholesome foods for the hungry crew. Randy Jones showed movies from the early days of Swanton. A grand time was had by all.

Sunday was spent clearing out the machine shop and getting ready for its remodel. In the morning, Tom Vertel, Pete McFall, Bill McNab and I set up and installed two new "W" trusses. With the new trusses in place, the old existing trusses next to them could then be removed. The "W" trusses allow for an additional four and one half feet of overhead clearance in the center of the machine shop.

That afternoon our professional carpenter, Ron,



**Old and new**

showed up and Fitz and Andy came over to lend a hand. Fitz asked if we needed help for the next couple of days. A resounding YES was heard from myself.

So a special work detail of Fitz, our professional



**Last of the W Truss**

carpenter, and myself started in to remodel the machine shop. By Wednesday noon, 24 new "W" trusses were installed and the building looked much larger.

After a few days of rest, the following Sunday construction started on installing insulation and plywood ceiling. The Pratkanis family, Ron and I cleaned up some of the debris left over from the construction the week before. Monday morning Fitz,

Ron, and I started in earnest and installed insulation and ceiling to about one third of the machine shop. Thanks to the assistance of Tony and Anthony who came out and helped that afternoon.

Tuesday work continued and progressed enough that Mary Ann could begin to paint the ceiling. By Wednesday all construction was complete and a new stove chimney was installed. In fact a fire was actually started and heated up the machine shop. It also allowed for the completed paint job to dry faster and to make for warmer working conditions. The shop will need a second coat, but will be done at the next workday, along with starting the new electrical work. The remodel of the machine shop makes it



Sealing the Ceiling

look larger, definitely brighter, and much warmer. On Wednesday evening we had the fire going while finishing up painting and checking in on Thursday morning it was still nice and warm in the shop.

As all of you can read and observe, the last few days were thought to be very successful. With all this work being completed in a brief time we were all more than ready for a big Turkey dinner. On behalf of Mary Ann and myself we hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and had much to be thankful for. We certainly appreciate all the volunteers who give so



**PUBLICITY  
and  
EVENT COORDINATION**

Mary Ann Carnegie

Calendar of events

Sat./Sun. Dec 11/12 Work Weekend

Fri. Dec 31 New Year's Eve-THE

Sat./Sun. Jan. 08/09 Work Weekend

Please note we have returned to just one scheduled work weekend a month. However, if a committee, or individual wishes to continue a project please contact me or an officer to make arrangements and we will try to accommodate you.

We are looking and asking for volunteers to work on the New Year's Eve party. With all the hype for the new Millennium, if you want to make this event extra special step up to the plate and volunteer to work on making it so. As of right now we will be inviting all Swanton Road neighbors to a potluck and train rides. If you want to have additional festivities, decorations, events, etc. let those wishes be known. Please call or e-mail me ASAP so that we can work on them together and make this an evening to remember.

I would also like to ask each of you to try and remember to encourage our members to participate. Maybe some just need to be reminded of our events. We all get busy, or maybe misplace our newsletter, and fail to mark the dates of events. If each of you could just call a member or a friend to come and participate our circle of friendship would only grow.

After all, who has more fun than all of us at

**Redhouse Reservations**

The Ranch Director has been working with the Railroad to ensure that we have some space available at the Redhouse for our workdays. However, I do need to know at least one week in advance whether room reservations are needed or not. That way I can better coordinate with Wally Mark to make sure that things move smoothly. If you do not call in to reserve a room you may not have a

Safety Simon Says:

Best wishes for a safe and joyous new year.

**NEW MEMBERS**

New memberships received last month:

Winferd Burris                      Watsonville  
 Edward Kelley                    Los Gatos

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 yourself so that we can get to better know you



My fellow Swantoons:

The election results are in and the millennium is nigh, within a year or so - depending on who is counting, a time of anticipation hard on the heels of reflection.

We are anticipating; a washout repaired, a ballast car finished, fun, a bat free machine shop, a restored 1913, fun, train rides, BBQ's, Al Smith Day, fun, new bylaws, and more fun.

In reflection I see thanks and praise are due:

To all of you who have helped me put the monthly newsletter together through your articles, pictures, suggestions, and comments. I think it has turned out quite nice and am sure we will see further improvements as Vera McLean takes on the editor's duties as Secretary.

To those of you who have made financial contribution to the railroad but have been unable join in on the workdays, your continued support provides the means to preserve and expand the railroad.

To you seemingly tireless volunteers who; lay track, work on train crews, maintain the locomotives, and perform all the other endless maintenance tasks. We'd be hip deep in weeds pushing railcars over broken ties without you.

To those of you who share your love of railroads, knowledge and skills. You are the folks that keep the knowledge alive.

To the students, faculty, and staff at Cal Poly and at the Ranch. Your support and student projects are greatly appreciated.

Mary Ann gets a special mention for the care and feeding of Ed. The Swanton Pacific Railroad of today is the result of his direction and labor, and we wouldn't have Ed without Mary Ann. Can I

**Society officers for the year 2000**

President	Reynold "Fitz" FitzPatrick
First Vice President	Geoff Tobin
Second Vice President	Bill Floyd
Secretary	Vera McLean
Treasurer	Ed Carnegie

**The Observation Car**

**TREES**

The area just north of the bridge and east of the track could use 5 to 7 redwood trees to improve the landscape.

There are about that many young Swanton trees being cared for by various members at home. The trees by now should be in the 3 to 4 foot category. If you haven't absconded with them (we know your names) and planted them elsewhere, please bring them to the December workday or New Year's Eve and we'll lend a hand planting them.

Since we haven't been able to get the train past the washout for the past 2 years this gives us an area we can plant and care for now and use our tank car to water during the dry months.

O.K. If you are using them for Christmas trees this year, bring them New Year's Eve with or without decorations.

Redwood Glen down at the end of the tracks is doing fairly well. About 55 trees from 18 inches on up except a few the deer keep pruned to the ground. Hope this year the washout gets repaired and we can get water to them so they can carry on by themselves.

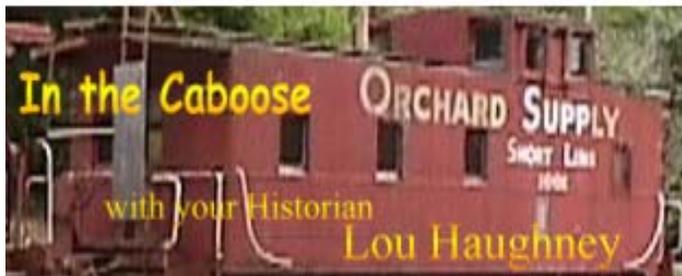
Bill McNab

nominate her for Wife of the Year award?

I'm pretty sure I want to thank my friend Andy for introducing me to railroading in general and Swanton in particular. When I retired from PG&E after thirty and some odd (and some were very odd) years, he decided I had more time on my hands than was good for me. I now know more about railcars, brake foundation plans, air brakes, triple valves, the General Code of Operating Rules, hand signals, and other stuff than I thought I ever wanted to know. Two years ago I was nominated (Andy again) for and elected Secretary when I began learning how to publish a newsletter. Thanks Andy.

And finally, what should have been first, to my wife Pat for supporting me as I go out and play 'down upon the railway.'

Our best wishes for the season and new year. May the most you wish for be the least you receive.



### 1915 Descriptions of the Overfair Railway

The Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) received much attention in the contemporary newspapers, magazines, and professional journals not only because of its artistic and architectural qualities but also because of its application of many branches of engineering. In particular, the engineering details were described fully and continuously in such professional journals as Engineering News, which contained a series of articles in 1915 about the construction and the operation of the Exposition. Bob Parkinson, an SPRS member in Berkeley, has searched through the old files of that journal that are contained in the Engineering Library at the University of California in Berkeley. He found two articles about the

Overfair Railway that are reprinted below.

The first article, a short one, is excerpted from a longer one by A. H. Markwart, Assistant Director of Works, PPIE. (Engineering News, vol. 73, Feb. 18, 1915, p. 335)

#### Passenger Transportation

"Passenger transportation within the grounds will be accomplished by the use of automobiles, storage-battery chairs, and a miniature steam railway. The miniature railway will run from a point to the east of the south end of the Machinery Building, thence along the Marina to the westerly end of the grounds. No other means of transportation will be provided".

*There were two other means of transportation not mentioned by Markwart, probably because they carried only two passengers and a "driver" or pedaler; namely, push chairs and pedicycle chairs.*  
LCH

The second article, much longer, contains good technical details about the Overfair Railway. The author is not named. (Engineering News, vol. 74, pp. 770-1, Oct. 17, 1915)

#### Carrying the Panama-Pacific Exposition Visitors

"Transportation facilities around the grounds of the Panama-Pacific Exposition at San Francisco, Calif., are furnished by a miniature railway and trackless automobile trains operating on the roadways.

The Overfair Ry. is a double-track line 7 mi. long. It is of 19-in. gage, with 20-lb. rails laid on sawed spruce ties in rock ballast, except that along the water front the track is laid upon the sand beach. Timber trestling aggregating nearly 1,000 ft. in length is used at one point to carry the line above the level of high tide. The maximum grades are 2-1/2%, and the sharpest curves are of about 120-ft. radius. One of the trains is shown in Fig. 1.

*Figs. 1 and 2 of this article are not reproduced here. Photos similar to them are displayed in Al Smith's caboose.*  
LCH

There are numerous grade crossings with the standard-gage tracks of the exposition terminal system, and at the various roadway crossings the rails are laid flush with the surface. The switches, frogs and crossovers are of standard types in miniature. At three terminals there are turntables of steel-girder construction revolving on center castings and operated by hand. Another terminal has a Y-track for reversing the trains. Numerous stopping points, with platforms, are provided along the line. The yards and roundhouse are located at the Fort Point terminal.

The equipment consists of four steam locomotives, one six-wheel tank engine for switching, 65 passenger and 10 freight cars. During construction a work train was used, consisting of the six-wheel engine and 10 flat cars 14 ft. long. The passenger trains have 6 to 12 cars and run at an average speed of 15 mil per hr.

The passenger locomotives are of the 4:6:2 type, 5-1/2 ft. high from rail to top of stack and 25 ft. long overall, with a weight of 29,000 lb. The cylinders are 8x9 in., and the driving wheels are 26 in. in diameter, with a rigid wheelbase of 4 ft. 10 in. The boiler has 430 sq. ft. of heating surface (tubes and firebox) and carries 200 lb. pressure. The tender is 8 ft. long, carrying a supply of anthracite and 375 gal. of water. A Walschaerts valve gear is used. The air-brakes and couplers are of special design. The cab is made disproportionately large, in order to accommodate the two men. In appearance, as Fig. 1 shows, the locomotives resemble the large passenger engines used in main-line traffic.

The cars are of wood, mounted on low trucks and having fixed cross-seats set back-to-back, with open sides and a canopy roof. The cars are 22 ft. long and 3-1/2 ft. wide, with capacity for 16 passengers per car. The locomotives and cars were built by L. M. MacDermott (sic) of Oakland, Calif., who also owns and operates the railway.

A more novel means of transportation is that afforded by trackless trains operated on the driveways, each consisting of an automobile and trail cars. This system was invented by R. B. Fageol, of Oakland, Calif., and is operated by the Fadgl Auto Train Co., of San Francisco. One of the trains is shown in Fig. 2.

The automobile, or tractor, is of special design, weighing 6,000 lb. and having 20-in. wheels with

solid rubber tires. It carries four passengers. The tractor hauls three trailers, each weighing 1,500 lb. and carrying 20 passengers. These cars have 24-in. wheels and 12-ft. wheelbase. They have side seats back to back, with a passage between for the use of the conductor. At the ends the seats are raised to clear the wheels. The coupling are of special design, causing the trailers to track with the automobile. A shoe brake is operated in connection with the couplings, being lowered to contact with the ground when the couplings are slackened by reduction of speed. The speed limit is 12 mi. per hr."

*Comments by LCH.*

The second article mentions that the yards and roundhouse are located at the Fort Point terminal. That may indicate the yard at the far end of the Exposition's athletic and parade grounds and opposite the Life-Saving Service's station. Fort Point is about a mile farther west. A second yard and car barn were located towards the eastern end of the Exposition grounds, next to the standard gauge rail yard and ferry boat slips on the east side of the Machinery Building. Fort Mason bordered the east side of the Exposition.

I am still looking for a good map of the Exposition grounds that shows clearly the overall route and the facilities of the Overfair Railway. So far, I have been able to obtain detailed, legible maps only of the western sections of the railway. Photographs, however, of both yards are in our archives. Just recently, some good track layout maps of the railway have appeared in Al's caboose; these will be a help. We do have a MacDermot drawing of the gated, passenger loading platforms. That there were "numerous stopping points ... along the line" is new information. On the detailed maps I do have, the "terminals" are clearly marked but not any "stopping points".

The Fadgl auto trains and their financial impact upon the Overfair Railway were described in February 1997 newsletter.

Many thanks to Bob Parkinson for researching these articles. Bob has also found valuable information and photographs of the MacDermot Family's mansion and estate in the late 1890's and early 1900's. That material will appear in a future issue.