

SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 223

Cal Poly

July-Aug. 2013

ON TRACK with your Director

Ed Carnegie:

Now with our Summer Camp behind us we can look back with pride and take a bow for all that was accomplished. The track crew's main stays were Pete, Scott, and myself, with help from Brendon, Alex and Dave when available. The primary project was uphill bank clearing using the modified back-hoe that operated as a shovel, so no soil or debris were pulled on to the track, the action is away from the track. About 800 feet of right-a-way was cleared, leveled, tamped and ballasted. While the track crew was down the track, the car shop crew consisting of Brendon, Geoff and Fitz, was modifying a small flatcar to accommodate our track power broom and hydraulic power unit, as well as the track blower, into a single unit. This will now make it easier to couple up to and move down the track and frees up a large flat car for other duties. This project was far enough along to test, as well as help the track crew move forward with their project. The next phase, for the blower broom car, is to do some ducting, cleanup and painting.

When Brendon arrived he brought with him train signals, which Pete and crew will be using to advance our signal system.

Randy and Bruce have been concentrating on the 1913, for more details see "In The Roundhouse" by Randy Jones.

The workweek drew to a close with a very successful Railroad Training Run Day/Open House, where we provided: Training for our train crews and an introduction to SPRR as potential volunteers. I also wish to thank the entire culinary team that provided tasty and nutritious meals all week long.

Thanks for the memories.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

For the few of you that have not contributed your 2013 dues--it is not too late.

If you have not filled out the volunteer Personal Information Form [PIF] and had your photograph taken, please come see me during a workday.

PIFs are required by the University; the photos are to be used for our upcoming "Swanton Volunteers Photo Gallery" to be displayed in the Roundhouse. This will help all of us to know who is who and to recognize our volunteers.

Fill out the attached invited and send in.



Track Broom ready for a test run



Brendon and Scott unloading signal lights

Down Behind the Railway

With your President, air monkey, & car-barnist.

Reynold 'Fitz' FitzPatrick

RGBFitz@aol.com 650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons:

In the beginning of September, on Labor Day, we honor those, in the words of Peter J. McGuire, "who from rude nature have delved and carved all the grandeur we behold."

And at the end of September we will have our own celebration by displaying what we have restored, maintained, created, and operated on Cal Poly Day. [Sunday, Sept. 29]

As usual this is an 'all hands on deck' day where every available member is needed in one capacity or another; much like the stately swan gliding across the water while underneath paddling like crazy.

October brings our first General Meeting of the year on Saturday the 12th and nominations for the offices of First and Third –Vice-Presidents and Treasurer.

Come on over and bring a friend.

In The Roundhouse

Randy Jones

The past couple of months have seen progress on many projects. An apparatus was put together to perform a successful fuel consumption test on the 1914, in order to design the new "Micheletti" burners mentioned last time. While pulling a heavy train out of the wye, we burned a max of 0.675 gpm

(even riding the brakes), while "normal" uphill running used 0.38 gpm. Later in July, the loco worked well at the summer camp run, with several volunteers taking turns both firing and running. They all show promise as future crew.

Work on the 1913 tender water tank is complete, and it is back at SPRR with a beautiful coat of gloss black. Fitz has continued working on the tender frame, pressure washing and repairing old damage in preparation for paint. The frame still needs the electrical system installed, and the design for that is mostly complete. Fitz has also been working on the locomotive air pump, and we ran the pump on steam for the first time at summer camp! While it needs more work, we learned a lot.

Geoff, Fitz, Pete, and company are working on repairs to the railcar backhoe which has a worn out main pivot pin. It has proven to be a trying job, and is so typical in that it will go completely unnoticed when it is done. Our hats go off to those so willing to do the glamour-less work SPRR!

Brendon Hilton is finishing up the 1913's lead truck wheels, and we only need to machine off the bearing faces and the truck will be done! The 1913's cab base and boiler mounts are done, and we are almost done fitting up the cab itself. We have some more interior work to do, and then it can go out to paint. The steam pipes have been installed in the smoke box, and throttle work is almost finished and ready to install. The valves and new stems have been fitted into the chambers, but more work remains on the valve stem crossheads. Tooling has been made to fit up and adjust the main crosshead guides, and they should be installed soon. Cab steam piping is under way, but must compete with other tasks for attention.

My profound thanks to you all for your help, encouragement, and patience. Randy

UPCOMING EVENTS/PUBLICITY

Mary Ann Carnegie

Aug. 24/25	work weekend
Sept. 14/15	work weekend
Sept. 28	work day
Sun. Sept. 29	CAL POLY RUN DAY
Oct. 12/13	work weekend-12 th General Mtg.
Back to only one	work weekend per month
Nov. 09/10	work weekend

The SPRR annual Summer Camp Work Week again proved to be most successful in a variety of ways. Many projects were on the to do list--some were completed and some are still in progress; a few new volunteers, along with an entire young family were brought into the Swanton organization; some great evening meals were shared daily by all, along with good times and the building of stronger friendships. Our thanks go to each and all of you for the giving of your time to make it so successful.

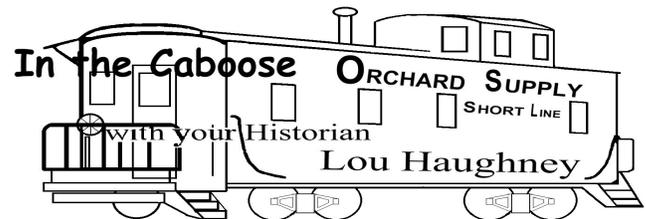
There are only two more regularly scheduled work weekends before our annual Cal Poly Day Run on Sunday, Sept. 29. An invite is included in the newsletter—this is not only for you to RSVP to, but to inform, distribute and encourage others to come on over to Swanton and see what we are all about and to maybe become a part of this great volunteer group. As President Fitz said, we will need “All hands [volunteers] on deck” to have Cal Poly Day be a most successful event for the 500 guests we usually have attend. There will be a notebook at upcoming work weekends, with tasks to be done prior to and on the day of the event, so pick and choose early to get what you really want to do before necessary assignments may have to be made. Invites have gone out to the general public, and RSVP's are being received—get yours/your guests in asap in order to be included in the allowed 500. We need everyone to help out in keeping the operations of this unique, historical, fully functional living museum alive and thriving. Remember the continuation of this organization relies deeply on your gaining future supporters. We want the history and life of the Overfair RR to continue, and to stay at Swanton Pacific—but volunteers are constantly needed to make it so.

In October we go back to the one work weekend a month. Saturday, Oct. 12 will be the General Mtg. for the organization and this is usually taken care of during our lunch hour. Your presence and input at this meeting is necessary and important to carry out the organization's bylaws and thus its lifeline.

There are lots of things to still take care before Cal Poly Day, so come over to help out when you can and for however long you can. Many hands always make the job light. We also welcome anyone that may wish to prepare a Saturday night dinner for the volunteers that stay over. Just let us know if you are planning on staying. Sharing for

the meal's expenses is done by collecting \$5 from those that participate in the meal.

All for now; hope to see you at either of the workdays, and especially at the Cal Poly Run Day. Remember to encourage new volunteers and/or your friends to come on over to enjoy and partake in all the fun we all share in getting together at Swanton.



STILL MORE ABOUT THE VASONA JUNCTION TELEPHONE BOOTH!

The Vasona Junction telephone booth standing next to our roundhouse is not a telephone booth. Rather, it is a train "register booth" that was located inside the wye at the southern end of the SP's Mayfield-Los Altos-Los Gatos branch line. Any SP train entering that end of the branch line had to stop and inspect the register to ascertain whether or not any other train is already on the branch line at that time. If the track was unoccupied, the engineer or conductor had to sign in with the train number, the day, and the time of day before proceeding. Even the regularly scheduled commuter passenger trains had to stop, check the register, then sign in or sign out of that branch line.

The attached photographs show that the register was located inside the lengthy wye. The Smith's family orchard and Winchester Boulevard are visible in the pictures.

Compare these photos with those of the wye in the Jan.-Feb. 2013 issue of the SPRS Newsletter, No. 220.

Using a register book/booth was one method of controlling two-way traffic on a single-track section that does not have block signal control. Another method is the use of a single token, such as a medallion or a baton. A train desiring to enter such an uncontrolled track must pick up the token at its end of the track section. If the token is in its designated spot, then the train may proceed with the token to the other end of that section where the train

crew must then deposit the token in its proper spot. Any train waiting on a passing track may then take the token to the other end of the block.

Here at SPRR when we operate two trains with three locomotive a token is used for each section of single track between College Station and Cosgrove and another token is used from Cosgrove to the Wye. A train can not inter a section with out the proper token.

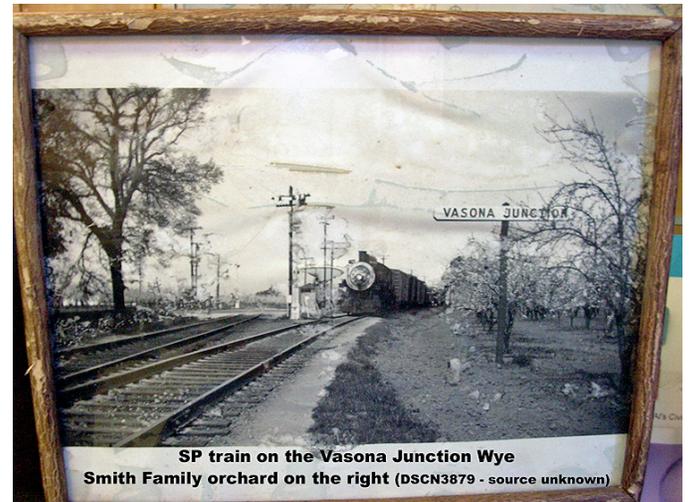
Now that the correct identity of the booth has been determined, another question arises. Was there a similar register booth at the northern end of the Mayfield/Palo Alto - Los Altos - Vasona Junction branch line?

Many thanks to Ed Kelley for clarifying our information about the telephone/register booth. Ed also provided two of the attached photos, and he directed us to two websites that describe in detail the operations at Vasona Junction. (See below.)

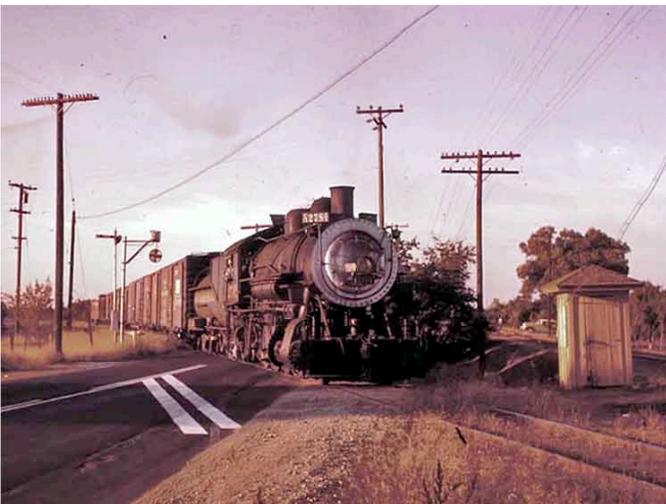
The third attached picture is "snapshot" copy of a large framed photograph from an unknown person. On Al Smith Day, I found this picture in the meadow end of the OSH caboose. It did not have any information about whoever put it there.



Train Register Booth inside the Wye @ Vasona Junction
(Photo from Edward Kelley & Peggy Conaway)



SP train on the Vasona Junction Wye
Smith Family orchard on the right (DSCN3879 - source unknown)



SP Train X2751 crossing the Wye @ Vasona Junction;
the Train Register Booth at right;
(Photo from Edward Kelley & Peggy Conaway)

References: These websites contain particular information about Vasona Junction and its register booth.

1. <http://santacruztrains.com/2013/03/vasona-junction-flag-stop.html>. Lots of information about "Railroads of the Santa Cruz Mountains" by Derek Whaley.

2. <http://vasonabranh.blogspot.com/2009/10/vasona-junction-train-register-booth.html>.

This site, by Robert Bowdidge, reproduces a page from a register book of the Erie Lackawanna RR.

3. <http://historylosatos.org/> This Los Gatos Library website has several pictures of trains at Vasona Junction in its "Hooked on Los Gatos / Library and History Museum Project" site.