Let me start this article with an update on the washout. We have been working closely with the volunteers and the Swanton Pacific Ranch staff to develop a plan to repair the track that was washed out during the storms of winter 2017. We have created the necessary plans and submitted them to the county for review and hopefully approval. We are hoping to start bidding the work on the railroad bed soon. The University has submitted an application to FEMA to receive funding to cover the repairs … we are hopeful the application will be approved. The bad news about the washout repair is that it will require removal of the track from the Ed Carnegie Bridge to the washout. The good news is once the repairs are made we will have all new ties and track from the bridge to the washout. The outcome of our application to FEMA will probably determine if the restoration of the track will be something the contractors take care of or if it will have to be a volunteer effort.

I also want to touch on our efforts to deliver on Al Smith’s vision of having students involved with the operation of the ranch and the railroad. For our part the Swanton Pacific Railroad Society volunteers continue to identify projects for Cal Poly students to work on. We have involved students from multiple departments across the University. Some recent examples include a GPS-based system to monitor where the trains are on the track, the modification of the hydraulic shovel we use to maintain our right of way, the construction of a new heavy haul rail car, and the development of an automated track condition cart that will help us measure track gauge. Not all projects turn out successfully, but the students are learning a great deal about railroad operations and gain skills in customer relations, critical thinking, equipment design and manufacturing. Students quickly learn that making something that will perform to the required specifications and hold up to the rigors of railroad operations is not a simple task. It is rewarding to see the Swanton Pacific Railroad being used to provide students with the Cal Poly hallmark … Learn by Doing.

In closing, there is one constant with the Swanton Pacific Railroad … there is always work to be done. We would welcome your help and involvement. We are in the summer season, so our work weekends start on the second and fourth Saturday of each month. Our summer camp week will be July 21 through 29. We hope we will see you there.
DOWN BEHIND THE RAILWAY

With your President, air monkey & car-barnist.
Reynold ‘Fitz’ FitzPatrick
RGBFit@aol.com  650.737.9584

My Fellow Swantoons:
Track work is on the top of the list in the near future, Swanton time – that means months, as we must remove the track between the bridge and the washout, then replace it after the repair work is finished. Welcome to the Swanton Health and Fitness Club.

Our next Board Meeting will be on Sunday, June 10th and all members are welcome to attend as guests.

The By-Law committee is working toward updating the By-Laws and will have the revision up for review at our October General Meeting and approval by the membership at our November General Meeting. The changes will reflect the changes in management of the Society, duties of Officers, and bring us into the digital world. Sue Pierce has volunteered to be the Society’s Secretary for the remainder of this term and I hope to convince her to run for re-election come October.

Keep the last full week of July open for the annual Summer Camp where we’ll tackle some projects that require more than one day to complete.

If you are not into track work, there are still several projects available just for you. Come be a champion and make one your own.

Come on down, we’ll have fun.

Fitz

The “Roundhouse Curve” track replacement is almost complete with new ties and 20-lb rail, the 1913 has been moved through it with zero binding or interference, and the other equipment passes through very smoothly as well. For those who may not be familiar with the origin of this project, the first time we tested the 1913 in this curve with her renewed wheel-to-frame clearances, the loco bound up in a sharp spot and would not move! The inside rail was applying so much lateral force to the center driver that on the outside the driver was actually
laid to 140’ radius, but the addition, removal, and movement of switches over the years had resulted in very sharp spots at the ends of the curve. The 1912 and 1914 had been able to pass through these partly due to their somewhat worn clearances, something that will need to be addressed someday. But they did this with a good deal of groaning and gauge spreading, and we knew the time would come when the track problem would have to be corrected. The need to replace many ties, repair the road crossing, and resolve the drainage problems, combined with the opportunity, indicated to us the time was Now. The crossing into “Gaddis Flat” is also complete and back in service, with just a few details left to do. There is still a repair to be done to the concrete crossing of the carbarn tracks, and finally, road repair that may have to wait for funding.

We have been working with a group of Cal Poly students on a Senior Project to benefit the railroad. They are designing and will build a track gauge measuring cart that will be able to record all its data. It is designed to deliver a spreading force to the rails while rolling, just like our locomotives do, and record and match the data to its location on the track. We will be able to begin inspecting at any point along our line and proceed in either direction. This will not only help us determine what locations are most in need of work but will provide a record of our track condition for our OSHA inspections.

Geoff has found the material for the 502’s new tires, and it is on order. He and Bruce hope to begin work on them soon. Bruce is also working on repairing the tailstock on the larger lathe, as this will be needed to true up the wheels before shrinking the tires on, as well as turning the profiles on the tires once they are mounted.

Work is continuing on the 1912 in Cheyenne. The staybolts are almost finished, and they are just about ready to install the boiler tubes.

On the 1913, the fireman’s manifold is done. The piping to the blower and burner will come next. The firing valve has received work, and the oil piping is
in progress. The original back mounting bracket didn’t allow for pipe adjustment after being bolted to the frame, so this was re-made to better enable assembly and future service to the valve. The new burner is receiving adjustments following the first tests. It is a “work in progress” that we have high hopes will be a big improvement over the original made in 1975 for the Calistoga operation. The air brake filter and regulators have been assembled, and the brake pipe to the tender secured to the frame. Next up is the mounting and piping of the brake valves. Fitz made some brazing repairs to the exhaust blast nozzle, and Bruce re-machined the bore and face. We still need to make a new cross-splitter for the nozzle, and the blower ring needs repair or replacement.

Stay tuned for more developments……

Randy

OUT ON THE TRACK
by Robert Ritchey

Track removal has begun between the washout and the bridge in anticipation for construction starting on the repair of the washout. The scope of the work needing to be done requires heavy equipment to be able to travel back and forth on our right-of-way between the washout and the station. To save on contractor equipment travel time, which in this case saves us a lot of money as well, it was decided to remove the rails and ties so the equipment can drive up and down our right-of-way without needing to be extra careful around our track and ties. With the help of railroad volunteers and a group of students from UCSC, track has started to be removed.

This is one of those cases were many hands help make great progress. Three teams of people were setup. One team worked on pulling most of the spikes and most of the rail joiner bolts. Another team came behind them with poles to lift the rail and ties out of the ground to make it easier to remove the ties once there was no rail on them. Another team followed behind them removing the last of the spikes and rail joiner bolts on that section of rail, then removed that section of rail and placed it on a small portable flat car we used as a push cart. After they had that section of rail removed the ties were then picked up as well and placed on the push cart. Once all the ties were picked up the push cart was moved just passed the next section of rail and the process was repeated. After that the push cart was moved further up the railroad to the chosen location of storing all the rail and ties for this section. The push cart was unloaded then brought back down to where the next section of rail was to be removed and the process was started all over again. We made great

Next section being removed.

Ties removed preparing to move to next section.

Rail being removed and placed on push cart.
progress. However, we are not done yet and can definitely use more volunteer help. Come on in and join us.

**New Construction of a Buckeye Truck**
by Edgar J Carnegie

The Cal Poly, BRAE Project Class took on the task to build a heavy haul equipment car with a detachable end. Landing legs are lowered to carry the load, then the detachable end is pulled clear, and the deck can then be lowered. This was done to make it easier to load and unload equipment.

It was suggested that a six-wheel truck should be used. Instead of a passenger style truck, a freight truck was preferred. So it was decided to design a three-axel Buckeye truck. After Fitz found a drawing of a full scale Buckeye truck on the Internet, I then took on the project to design and construct a set of Buckeye trucks to be 1/3 scale for Swanton, as well as to accommodate the heavy haul drop-bed trailer the BRAE student class is building. That work started in November 2017.

The BRAE instructional Technician, Virgil Threlkel, and his student assistant Chris Kanaley, took the CAD drawing that I made, and cut the parts out of \( \frac{1}{2} \) steel plate.

Once the side parts were cut out, they needed to be worked over by heating and bending. The first bend was the end bend that becomes part of the structure and the novel look of a buckeye truck.

The next step was to make a \( \frac{1}{4} \) inch offset, so the three parts can move to allow the axels to equalize the load. The offsets were accomplished by placing part of the side member on \( \frac{1}{4} \) inch standoff, applying heat with a rose bud torch until that area became red, and through the use of C-clamps it forced the unsupported end to be even with the table top.
It was then left there to cool.

Once all the side members were offset, the next step was for them to be machined. Here is where Bruce’s machining expertise was needed, where he set and aligned the side members up in the mill in order to “true” the mating surfaces.

The bearing boxes were the next step. Here I was able to use my own lathe and mill. First, the centers were turned from 3 ½ inch steel stock cut to length, to fit the roller bearings; then the end caps were turned and drilled using the indexing head on the mill.

The next step of this project will be to make the center bolster that keeps everything in alignment and will connect the truck to the car.

So stay tuned.

DUES are now DUE!!

It’s still not too late to pay your dues.

We have 52 members who paid dues in 2017 but have not yet paid this year; we have 11 from 2016, and 13 from 2013.

If we do not hear from you, we will remove your name from our active member list, as well as our mailing list. So, in order to keep you informed of Swanton happenings, as well as to continue your support of this operational, historical Railroad, we encourage you to fill out the dues form, attach your check, and mail it back.

Your support to our society is ALWAYS appreciated.

PASSED

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of long time member, and dear friend of the Swanton Pacific Railroad Society, Lou Haughney. Lou became a volunteer April 14, 1992 and was one of our first life-members. For many years Lou was our Historian and always had a most interesting and informative article for SPRR Newsletter, many of which you can still read via the SPRR website: sprr.calpoly.edu/newsletters

Lou’s first articles started in September 1995, with establishing the railroad’s historical timeline, with written historical reports beginning in February 1996. So, if you are ever inquisitive about the history of SPRR go to the newsletter archives and Lou has probably already answered your questions.

Lou will be greatly missed…

Membership Coordinator
Ed Carnegie

NEW SOCIETY SUPPORTERS

Daniel FitzPatrick     Folsom, CA

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 supporters may not recognize you right away, so please introduce yourselves so that we can get to better know you & vice versa.