Reminder

Our workdays for June are Wednesday evening, June 8th, at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, June 8th, starting @ 9:00 A.M.

On Track
with your Director, 
Ed Carnegie

What do you know?? I have been asked a few times ‘what’s the cost of the Cal Poly Day’s, June 15th BBQ?’. The cost will be $12 for adults and $6 for children. A list of jobs was taken at the last work day. Not all of the jobs were taken for the next run. If you want to help on the June 15th run you can pick a task you would like to help with and/or call in to let us know, or come to the June work day and sign up then. You will find the list of tasks later in this newsletter.

The grass planted in the meadow last month isn’t growing very fast, but the weeds certainly are. You will have to see it to believe. At least the meadow is green and looks a lot better than last year at this time.

We have had another marriage on the Swanton Ranch. That makes three that I know of. This time it was Wally and Laurie. The day was beautiful and the attendees had a wonderful time. Now we just have to see if the special dust did Wally’s head any good. If it works as good as the water on weeds in the meadow... well I need say no more. Where’s Wally under a head of hair?

A truck load of new ties arrived last month; just in time for the track crew to start replacing some of the old ones. We will concentrate on the track for the next few work days to make sure that we are ready for the summer’s operational schedule. Two switches were laid out for going into the new car barn and work has started on building them. When we are ready the new barn will be cut in and work can start on rebuilding the track leading into the car shop and the old car barn.

Again I would like to thank each of you for all that you contribute to making Swanton a success and lots of fun. Your contributions of time, work, sore muscles, conversation and developing bonds friendships are what makes our trips to Swanton so much fun. We look forward to seeing all of you at the next workday, Saturday, June 8. There will be plenty of tasks to do to get things ready for the following Saturday run for Cal Poly Day.

Behind the Throttle
with your President, 
Bill McNab

Well, I wasn’t able to be there on the May workday as plans changed with a kitchen makeover at home. So my comments will be on something I have noticed and would like to see the people out of their “cave” more often.

I’m talking about that brick red mysterious odd looking partially rounded building with the big cement lined swimming pool size hole in front of it and 5 sets of RR tracks heading under the black doors. The description could be indicative of a missile launch pad of some sort.

In the winter time it is even more mysterious because all the doors are shut, smoke usually meanders away from a stove pipe on the roof, and metallic pounding noises are heard at times (secret code?) Those people that have timidly open a door to peek in, get the gruff “CLOSE THE DOOR”. At times on cold days a door will fly open, oak embers a Cal Poly colored and gold wheel barrow and two attendents. They head across the tracks and up towards the red house where they fumble around the wood pile looking for just the right size pieces for some project back in the odd shaped building. With wheel barrow loaded, they head back and quietly enter through the black doorway, the door shuts and all is silent. About this time, increased smoke is noticed coming out of the stove pipe on the roof and eventually
metal clanging sounds resumed in the building interior. I ventured into this enclave just to see what was going on. Shouted yelling and a couple of grunts were heard back. Wandering around you see iron hammers. On closer examination they are sleeping steam engines, tenders, crane cars, diesel locomotive, and parts all over the place. One thing about a round house is its shape is not conducive to stacking parts in a corner.

I heard a conversation that went something like this - 30 seconds, so many thousands, throttle sticking, pins, brakes, water treatment, wheel flange, etc. So I shook my head at their strange language and was thinking of moving on. A voice boomed out of the dark and asked if I could help hold something. You feel recognized and think someone knows me - Hey You! One of the gals explained that this particular building uses a lot of "bridge" language in the course of a day. Not knowing if she meant cardgame bridge (which operates somewhat like the government in that just as soon as you think you understand the rules then more are brought forward) I inquired as to what was meant. It seems "Bridge" language is the language used between things going OK and "its too short, too long, doesn't work, and it never will". Something like the ordinary words just don't describe the frustration of the situation.

Have you noticed these cave creatures on RR run days? They all have on good looking black caps with the Swanton Pacific logo. I inquired as to how to obtain a black cap and got blank stares. Well at Al Smith's day this year, Elmer Stone received a new black cap that has Conductors spelled out on the back. I thought here's my chance - and I said to Elmer, now that you have a new black cap you ought to get rid of your old smudged cap. Elmer looked me straight in the eye and said that hat is a souvenir and he doesn't get rid of souvenirs!!

As I wondered off I thought it sure would be nice if some of those cave creatures with the grunts and grunts, could give us a clue as to what is taking place in that odd shaped building. Could some 52's here a few thousands there, produce some roundhouse news and chatter? Any takers?

See you at the June work day.

Observation Car

This is part of the newsletter. Hello Observation Car #54 - where are you? I know we have some really good observationists, as well as what ever else you may want to call yourselves - but we would really like to hear from you. Good, bad, or indifferent we want to hear from you. You can make yourself known or you can remain unknown - but this is your newsletter and your organization - so speak up. Your words will be heard via the Observation Car.

Please submit ideas, suggestions, and/or general comments that you would like to see published in the newsletter. All observations must be submitted by the 25th of each month in order to make the printing deadline. Please submit your observations to Jim Mulberry, c/o Age, Engineering Dept., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407. Or call 805 756-2432.

One member called and said that he would like to see more activities other than week days. Such as a trip to the Billy Jones RR, Niles RR or a gathering at the Railroad Museum in Sacramento. What do you think? Is anybody else interested?

Name Tags

Name tags have been made for all members who have paid dues. These tags have been brought to most of the week days for you to pick up. If you are a member and for some reasons you cannot find your tag or if you are unable to stop by and would like to have your name tag mailed, give a call to 605-756-2432 and leave a message. New name tags will be made right after the June work day, so if you need a name tag make sure to let us know.

Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>Cal Poly work evening</td>
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<td>June 8</td>
<td>SRS work day</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>&quot;Cal Poly Days&quot; (steam run)</td>
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<td>July 10</td>
<td>Cal Poly work evening</td>
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<td>July 13</td>
<td>SRS work day</td>
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Membership

Annual dues to the society is $25.00 per person. Dues are collected during the first of each year. Any correspondence to this newsletter or change of address and/or phone number should be sent to:

Swanton Pacific Railroad Society
Agricultural Engineering Department
Cal Poly State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

(805) 756-2578
(805) 756-2526 FAX
http://www.calpoly.edu/ae/swanton/sprs.html

Workdays are held at the Swanton Pacific Ranch near Davenport, CA, the second Saturday of the month and the Wednesday evening, prior to that Saturday at the Agricultural Engineering Department, Cal Poly State University. Anyone and everyone is welcome at these workdays. The phone number at the Swanton Pacific Railroad for messages is: (608) 423-8204

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