



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 96 – April 5th 2023

Swanage Railway Arrives at Wareham!

4th April 2023 at 11.09, the first Swanage Railway service enters Wareham station from Corfe Castle.



Yes, the first train of the 90-day trial arrived at Wareham on time and to a crowded platform of passengers, supporters, photographers, dignitaries and TV cameras.

The service featured on both the local evening news programmes of BBC South Today, and ITV Meridian.

Of course, the return working was fully loaded, but there are another 89 days to go before we can really tell what the future holds for this service. Undoubtedly, there will be much coverage in various outlets, and future issues of Swanning Around . Check out social media for much more coverage today.

The train consisting of the three-car class117 unit and the single-car 121 unit has arrived to a packed platform at Wareham.

And below, the moment when the train comes off the Swanage Branch and joins the Southampton to Weymouth main line at Worgret Junction.



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



The Steam Gala on 24th-26th March has been hailed as a success, always good in these financially difficult times. Helping us to put on a good show were two visiting engines . British Railways Standard Class 4 2-6-0 no. 76084 from the North Norfolk Railway, and British Railways Standard Class 7 pacific no. 70000 *Britannia* courtesy of Locomotive Services Limited of Crewe.

In the pictures below, 76084 is working hard on the gradient from the River Frome to Holme Lane bridge on 26th March, while *Britannia* crosses bridge 11 at Furzebrook on 25th March.



Photo: Andy Moody



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



Here's 76084 heading for Norden and the River Frome limit of Swanage Railway operations, passing the iconic ruins of Corfe Castle.

And here we have 34028 *Eddystone* also in the way to the River Frome passing Motala on 25th March. Motala was once the limit of the Swanage Railway until we were able to take over the rest of the branch to near the main line.

Both these photos: Andrew P M Wright





Another picture of 76084, this time bringing up the rear of a train passing Cat's Eye on 25th March, with a well-filled Pullman Observation Car 14.

Below, 34070 *Manston* powers up the gradient from the River Frome, here passing Creech Bottom and Furzebrook Heath on 25th March. Firemen George Miller and Josh Voce at the cab, while trailing locomotive *Eddystone* has steam to spare.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright





Mustn't forget our other resident loco, U class 31806, seen here on 25th March passing Furzebrook clay works and the redundant Perenco oil sidings.

And yet another picture of 76084! This time sees the loco powering up to Holme Lane bridge on 25th March with the River Frome half a mile behind. The long lens shot accentuates the gradient and makes the picture! Driver and Chief Traction Inspector Nigel Clark in charge.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright





Just two more pictures of trains at the gala! Above, *Britannia* crosses the Wytch Farm road at Norden Gates heading another trip to the River Frome on 26th March.

A short goods train also ran between Swanage and Corfe Castle offering brake van rides. Here 34070 *Manston* starts away from Corfe on a return trip to Swanage on 26th March.



There's more to a gala than just the trains. It's the people!

Britannia crosses the road at Norden Gates on 26th March with Crossing Keeper Graham Hale operating the crossing barriers and ready for the single line token exchanges. Driver Stuart Cotton and Fireman Gary Cox in the cab.



Meanwhile, on the other side of the road, the team of shunters is ready to detach the trailing loco at Norden station.

34028 *Eddystone* eases across the road with driver Ian McDavid on 26th March, and shunters at the ready.





The shunters come from all ranks in Operations department. Cleaner Kadin Jacques uncouples 31806 from the rear of the train with Passed Cleaner George Miller observing.

70000 *Britannia* arrived at Swanage off the main line after a trip from Crewe. There to meet it at Wareham on 22nd March, Swanage Railway's conductor driver Ian McDavid chats to Locomotive Services' Oscar Martin at the cab window prior to moving the loco and its support coach onto the Swanage branch. Oscar is also a Swanage Railway driver and traction inspector.

Britannia also had an extra week in Swanage Railway service with five days of driver experience trips, and will be going back home to Crewe next week.



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



76084 being loaded up for the trip back to the North Norfolk Railway on 30th March didn't stop Phil Minshall from painting the fence at Norden!

And it was the Telecomms team's day to come and fix things, and Geoff Trim is checking the signal post telephones from the Norden Gates crossing box to make sure they work.

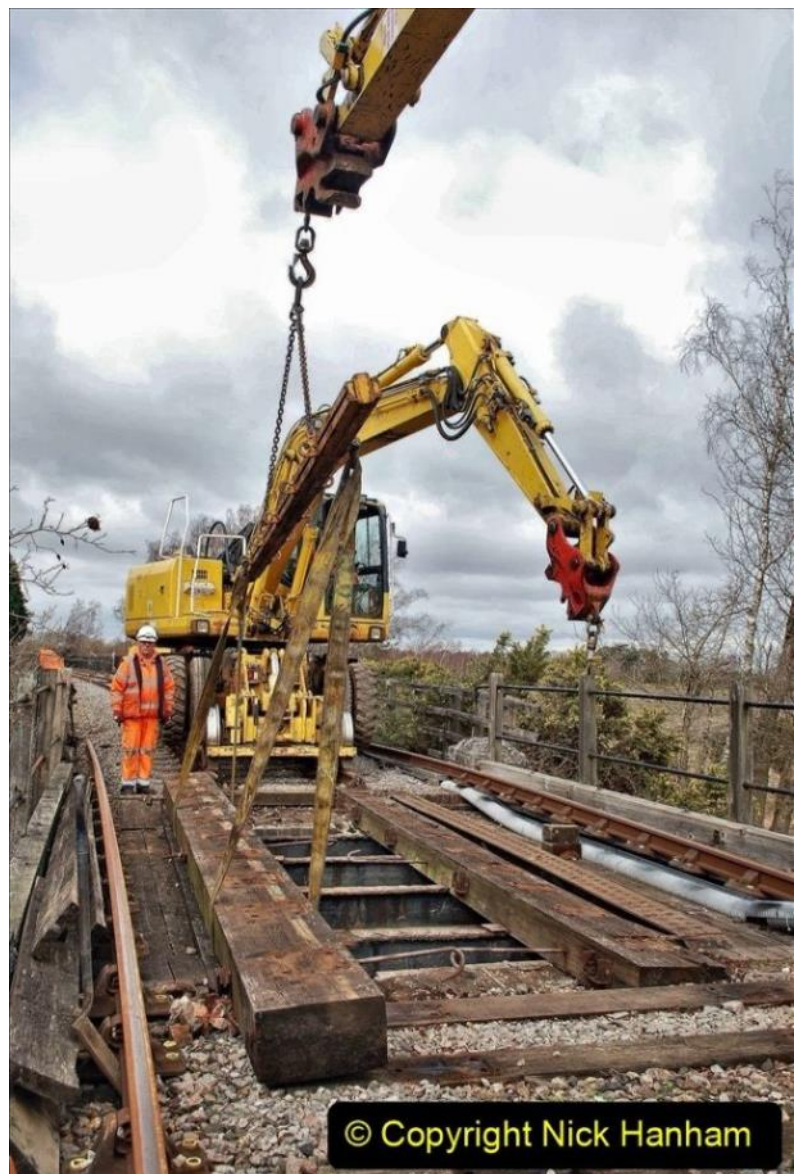




As we know, our permanent way team is always busy doing something, and this last month has seen them working on a bridge repair at bridge 11 at Furzebrook, over the old Fayles tramway route now used as an exit from Blue Pool.

Timbers under and between the rails needed replacement prior to the use of the line for the Steam Gala and the Wareham service.

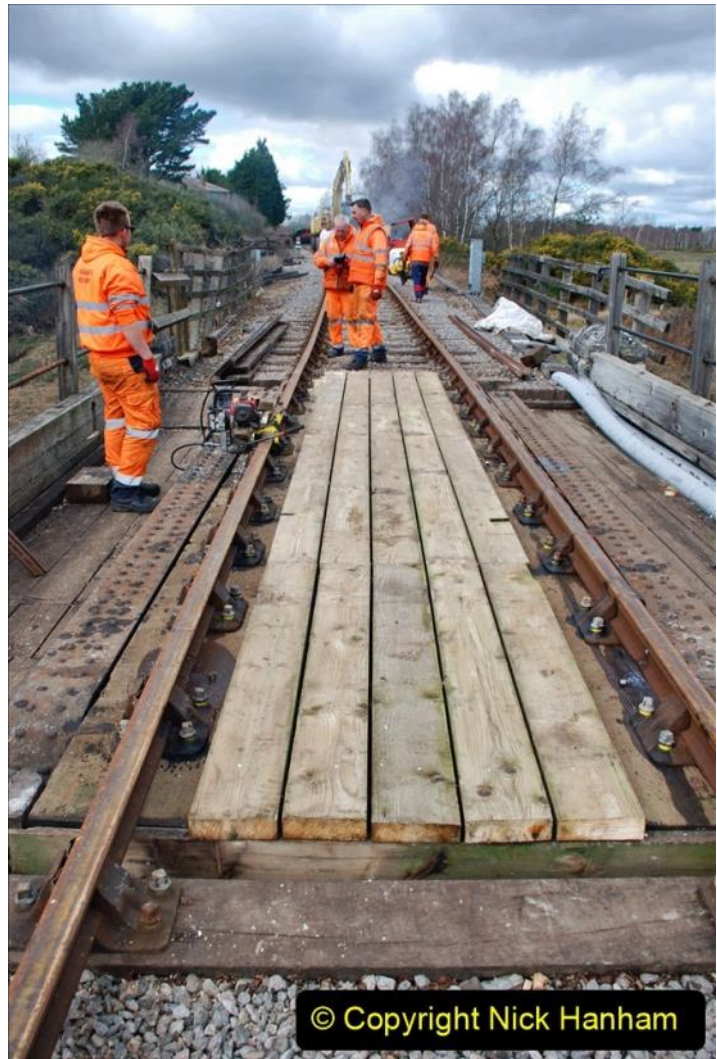
There's the bridge above, and right the old bearer beams are lifted out.



The new beams and timbers are in and the rails replaced and the bridge is nearly ready to hand back for operations.

These photos from Nick Hanham's 5929 Picture Website at <https://5929.co.uk/>

Check it out for lots more pictures at the Swanage Railway, and thousands more of all forms of transport.



The station team at Corfe Castle is always doing something, and recently that has been the refurbishment of the Station Master's sitting room in the station building. Looks particularly comfortable and representable of the days of British Railways, except for it being too clean, perhaps!

Photo provided by station manager David Scott





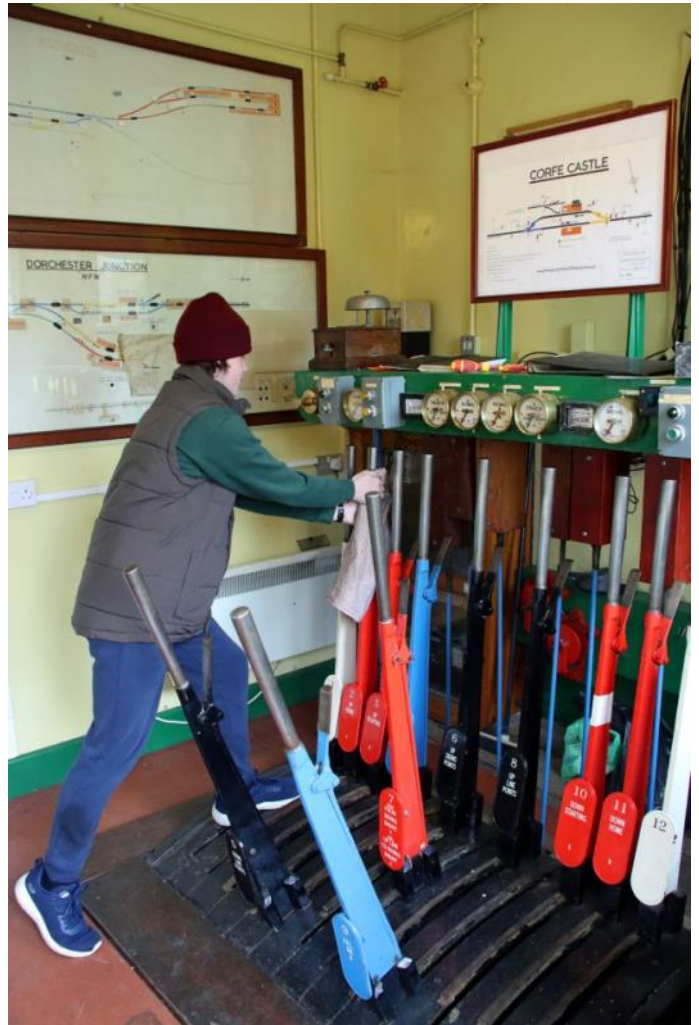
Mike Walshaw spent most of the Steam Gala weekend training others. Here he is above on 25th March with David Over in training in the Norden Gates Crossing Box.

The next day, he was working for the Corfe Castle museum, showing the public how to work the old Corfe Castle signal box.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright



Here's the rest of the museum's signal box with a visitor operating the levers



The museum in the goods shed at Corfe Castle also saw a goodly number of visitors over the steam gala weekend.

The goods shed now has a typical crane in it. Perhaps we will see items not just about these cranes (there's another one in Swanage Goods shed), but also about the whole museum operation in a future Swanning Around.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright





Photo: Gary Packer

On 7th March, FBC2, the 10-ton diesel-electric crane was seen lifting a new coal conveyor into the coal dock at Swanage, to replace a life-expired example. This must be the first time we've seen this crane doing something useful, as these tasks usually fall to FBC1, the 15-ton version.

On 18th March, cleaner Andy Hannaford is on a training turn on 34028 *Eddystone*, in support of his journey to be a fireman.

You too could follow him. All you have to do is volunteer!



In the run up to the start of the Wareham trial service, we were still operating training and mileage accumulation for the diesel multiple units.

Here, driver Bryan Hardwick waits for the right away at Swanage for his next run to Norden on 11th March.

Below, it's another chance to see where fitter Ethan Waller can hide himself!

No, that's not him kneeling. That's him in that hole under the smokebox door, keeping company with the middle cylinder of *Manston*. How the **** did he get in there?

Photo: John Lindsay



How's the T3 coming along? Doing well as you can see from these two pictures from Steve Doughty.

The LSWR crest, hand painted onto the leading wheel splasher, and the complete boiler.

With the new tender tank still to be completed, we still need some more cash to finish the job and get the loco back steaming, so please go to the appeal page at

[https://
www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/t3-
appeal](https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/t3-appeal)

and donate what you can.



From The Directors!

Yes, this insert is the first stab at an initiative to improve communication from both the Swanage Railway Trust and the Swanage Railway Company, to not only staff, volunteers, and members of the Railway, but also to all parties with an interest in the Railway. If you're reading this, that means you!

The directors, as you will read below, are responding to information received, and the next few pages are the initial effort at communicating with the audience. The audience does include the general public, even if the wordage does appear to be aimed internally. If this initiative is to continue and to improve, your responses are critical to its success.

So have a good read, and instead of saying under your breath what you think, send an email to Frank Roberts, who has the Trust portfolio for communications (these ones at least!). Positive, negative and even silly or rubbish comments are all good management data!
Cntl/Enter to activate the email address in this document.

The document that Frank has supplied to Swanning Around is reproduced verbatim below. These submissions should become a regular feature in Swanning Around.

COMMUNICATION

A simple word for such an important topic! In the recent surveys of volunteers and paid staff, there were some common themes, with improving communications being at the top.

As we spring forward after another difficult winter, Trevor Parsons and Gavin Johns have recently responded to a letter written late last year by a number of volunteers. It highlighted a number of concerns across many areas of our Railway. This will lead into an on-line **Open Forum** that will take place on Thu 12 Apr at 1900hrs – information will be released shortly on SR Staff, the SRT website and by email. Please register your interest to attend.

I am delighted that John Denison has welcomed a new approach, allowing **Swanning Around** to be used as a 'platform' to improve communications; specifically so that information on future events, plans, projects and strategy can be quickly disseminated across all areas of our working railway.

The problem with communication is that when there is none, people tend to fill that vacuum with, well, anything! What we aim to provide here is **Consistent Communication**, in a way that suits the majority of those who help to support the operation of the railway on a day-by-day basis – whilst being well aware that this will be read across the public domain.

What do you want to see here? Ben Ford is about to send out an '**Improving communications**' survey, and to ask exactly this – so please look out and respond. Ideas so far are:

- Regular statements from the Chairs of the Trust and Company
- A reminder of where to look for different types of information
- Forecast of events (covering the following 8 weeks)
- Short items of news. These will be called **Three Liners**
- And the rest – well that up to you.

There is a danger that this section might be 'boring' and a bit black and white compared with the rest of Swanning Around. If you have a suggestion on how to liven it up – please let me know. Better still help to prepare this section for publication. ***Thanks to John for his assistance here; let's go.....***

THREE LINERS!

Find here short updates with a title, an update on a current topic and a Point of Contact. They are on no order of precedence or importance.

Spring Gala and Britannia Driving Experience. Company Chairman Trevor Parsons would like to thank everyone who supported the recent events, which proved to be very popular, and has provided a welcome boost as we start the season off. Patronage and income in the shop and catering has been very encouraging. Trevor Parsons added: "When full details of passenger numbers and costs are available, they will be published. Thank you to everyone who supported this event."

Wareham Service. Dorset Council set a requirement of two trial running periods to Wareham, and the second (90 day) has now commenced. Trains will operate four days a week until September.
[Further information: SR Website.](#)

Wareham Service – Ticketing. Through ticketing will be available across the South Western Railway network at the end of the month. Those SR members and staff who are entitled to **travel concessions** include Premier life members, Annual Members, Life Time, Railcard, Working Volunteer, Priv (railway employees), Season Ticket and Shareholders. Tickets are required for all journeys, and some of these require an online discount code.
[Further information: SR Website or visit a SR ticket office should check on line](#)

Recent Rail Regulators Visit. The Office of Rail and Road visited the Railway in March. Many aspects were covered and there was praise for aspects of the infrastructure work undertaken to support the operation of Railway. The Internal Audit process led by Julia Cornborough and the work delivered by Ken Orchard and the PWay team on the track assets were commended.
[Contact: Gavin.johns@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:Gavin.johns@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Improving Communications. What are the communications platforms are associated with SR? If you administer a website, please do let us have the details so that every so often inform readers where your platform is, and what you cover.
[Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk.](mailto:frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Board Vacancies. The Swanage Railway Company Board currently has a number of vacant portfolios, including Finance and Commercial Director.
[Contact: Trevor.parsons@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:Trevor.parsons@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Search Committee. As part of the recent Governance Review, SR must consider how it will attract new dynamic individuals to lead & support what we do; a new Search Committee has been established to fill vacancies at director level.(It will eventually become the Nominations Committee),
[Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Vacancies. There are vacancies in almost every area, of every department, so if you have skills to offer, please contact the relevant departmental manager. We hope to streamline how we advertise vacant roles on the Railway.
[Contact: iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk) [Swanage railway Magazine](#) or [SR staff website](#)

Volunteer Retention & Recruitment Officer. This vacant post has been advertised, and it is hoped that the 12-month post can be filled by May.
[Contact: lis.sellen@swanagerailway.uk](mailto:lis.sellen@swanagerailway.uk)

Fundraiser Post. The Trust has confirmed it is keen to recruit a paid Fundraiser. Information will be released shortly.
[Contact: will.sheret@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:will.sheret@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Three Recent Surveys. There were recent survey for volunteers, passengers and paid staff. This has resulted in some interesting information which will be shared across the Railway.
[Contact: Ben.ford@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:Ben.ford@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Strategic Plan. The Council of Management discussed the current draft on 28 Feb 23, and this will be communicated with the wider SR with in May.

Contact: Gavin.johns@swanagerailway.co.uk

Business Plan. The Company Board has recently considered, and approved, a NEW Business Plan.

Contact: Trevor.parsons@swanagerailway.co.uk

Locomotive T3 Progress. Progress at the Flower mill has been going well, however the locomotive may not be ready for the forthcoming Anniversary Celebrations at London Waterloo.

Contact: will.sheret@swanagerailway.co.uk

Locomotive T3. The Trust has confirmed it is keen to commence preparations for the next works on the T9.

Contact: will.sheret@swanagerailway.co.uk

Herston Community Halt. The Company Board approved a trial to raise the profile of the Halt in the local community, and recruit new volunteers in Sep 2019. There will be a soft launch for this initiative in May

Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.uk

Governance Review. The Trust will proceed with the work started pre-Pandemic, and information will be sent to Trust members in May.

Contact: Gavin.johns@swanagerailway.co.uk

Herston Shed. The Trust is hopeful that clarification on the current planning issue will be received. A Project Board is to be established to ensure that the project team work closer with PWay, C&W and Ops and dovetail construction work with other commercial plans.

Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.uk

Christmas 2023. The Company is exploring options for this Christmas.

Contact: martin.trott@swanagerailway.uk

Communications Plan. The Trust is to develop a Communications Plan to improve the way information is disseminated across all areas of the Railway. Your feedback will help develop this plan.

Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.uk

BBQ Fuel. Co-op (South) agreed to cease selling disposable BBQ's, and Litter Free Dorset (with Dorset Council) are arranging for the disposal of 10,000 BBQ's. Swanage Railway is to receive most of the fuel at the end of Apr, which will arrive in a large skip. It will be sorted, stored and used to assist the lighting of steam locomotives.

Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.uk

How can we move this new initiative forward? If you have any ideas for the future, please

Contact: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk.

As usual, volunteers are required in all departments, so,

To use your existing skills or to learn new ones, contact us about being a Swanage Railway volunteer by either sending an email to iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk or by calling 01929 475212 to contact Mike Whitwam, our Volunteer Liaison Officer.

-----ooOoo-----

If you are not a member of the Swanage Railway, don't be put off! Contact us and volunteer (or at least make an enquiry)! You know you want to! You will be most welcome!

-----ooOoo-----

Compiled and edited by John Denison

Email to swanning.around@swanagerailway.co.uk

Views expressed in 'Swanning Around' are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily the views of the Swanage Railway Trust or the Swanage Railway Company. No liability accepted for errors or inaccuracies.

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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround>