



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 97 – April 30th 2023

Following on from the initial notes from the directors in issue 96, the second submission from Frank Roberts is included in this issue under the heading of *SITREP!*. As before, you may find it pointing more at volunteers and staff, but it is good for communicating externally also. If you feel that you would like to know more (or less!) from Frank and the management of the Swanage Railway, or you have a suggestion about the format, then please contact Frank directly with your comments. His email is in the content of the presentation.

The trial service to Wareham is at the front of the action in April after the well-supported start to the 90 days on 4th April. We'll leave it to those who are monitoring its success to report on how it's going.

The overhaul of the T3 no. 563 continues apace, but more funding still required. See later for current boiler info, and how to contribute towards completion later this year.

With two Bulleid pacifics not available for service earlier in April, U class 31806 has borne the brunt of the services alongside the class 117 three car DMMU on the Wareham runs. 34028 *Eddystone* has been on holiday to the North Norfolk Railway, and 34070 *Manston* is awaiting some replacement valve rings.

Oh, and a mistake in issue 96. Yes, we blundered! We've tried to hide the correction at the back of this issue!



It's 4th April at Wareham, and Wareham's mayor attempts to flag away the first service, but it won't go far with driver Andy Hawkins hanging out of the window and the Swanage Railway guard Trevor Parsons standing next to him!

On 5th April, driver Andy Hawkins exchanges single line tokens with Norden crossing keeper Mike Walshaw.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

6th April and a Wareham to Swanage service passes Creech Bottom level crossing.

Below, the Corfe Castle web cam has recorded U class 31806 on its penultimate day on steam services before handing over to *Eddystone* after its Norfolk holiday. The 117 DMMU rolls in on another service from Wareham. To date, there have been no issues to concern us with the Wareham service. Long may it continue!



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



Four tenths of a mile of the Swanage Branch belongs to Network Rail and we rarely see pictures on this section, but our official photographer Andrew P M Wright can go where others fear to tread and has provided these two shots in the cutting between Bridge 2 and Worgret Junction.

The class 117 DMMU is on its way to Wareham on 5th April, while 70000 *Britannia* is on its way back home to Crewe on 11th April after a successful visit for our steam gala in March, and five days of driver experience trips.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright



Ins and outs at Norden.

Seen from the crossing cabin, *Eddystone* arrives back at Norden on 24th April from its Norfolk holiday.

Photo: Stuart Magnus



On 26th April, one of the two Tube wagons is loaded for transport to a Charitable Community Interest Company's 'Men in Sheds' project. Good luck to them. They might need some!

Looks like the second wagon is not going without leaving us a present to clean up!



People time, and Estates department volunteers are in action at Swanage near the sleeping coach accommodation.

Electrician Paul Smith is fitting a new electricity distribution board, assisted by John Watt on 26th April.

We'd like to say the picture was taken from a place of safety, but it was from the road outside the railway with back to the traffic!

On duty on the service train on U class 31806 on its last day in service, 26th April, before boiler washout and routine maintenance.

Passed fireman Gary Cox, cleaner Tim Nobbs, driver John Denison.

Fitter Ethan Waller was requisitioned to take the photo!



Photo from Tim Nobbs



SITREP! (26 Apr 23)

Several positive comments have been received since the inclusion of our fledgling initiative to assist/improve communication across the Swanage Railway. Swanning Around is offering a platform for short reports and updates, and I hope a small team will pull the items together for releases of *SITREP!* If you have any feedback, please email frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk

May I encourage you to offer feedback following Ben Ford's recent initiative launched on 24 Apr. A further survey has been launched, which will "To help us better understand how we can improve in this [communications] area we have created a short survey to identify which communication styles would be most effective and which content is deemed most important. Alternatively *SITREP!* could include:

Statements from across Swanage Railway Trust or the Company
Information on where various items of information might be found.
Forecast of Events
Short items of news.

Forecast of Main Events

Sat 06 May	Coronation and BH weekend
Thu 11 May	Preview Day (Diesel & Steam)
Fri 12 May-	Diesel Gala & Diesel Weekend
Sun 14 May	No Wareham Service on Sat; regular services to River Frome
Mon 15 May	'The Clayton' Driving Experience
Fri 19 May	Fish & Chip Specials (commence)
Sat 27 May-	Whitsun Bank Holiday Weekend
Mon 29 May	
Fri 23 Jun-	Roads to Rail steam weekend
Sun 25 Jun	Wareham Service on Fri 23 Jun
Sat 29 Jul-	Swanage Carnival
Sat 05 Aug	Theme 'Under the Sea'
Fri 01 Sep	PS Waverley (Visit commences)
	The world's last ocean-going paddle steamer

Comment from Trevor Parsons (Swanage Railway Company Chairman)

The Wareham Service started as planned on April 4th and was attended by both the Mayors of Swanage and Wareham together with other invited guests including Councillors from local Authorities and South Western Railway Managers. Since then, the service has run as planned.

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The Heritage services have, in the main run as planned including during the Easter weekend when we introduced an additional carriage to the steam set when the Wareham service was not running (six in total).

I do have a very serious concern regarding the Company's finances. Across the railway everyone needs to be diligent in keeping our costs down to a minimum, whether it be basic running costs or sundry expenses. We continue to monitor passenger numbers and as the season progresses, look to meet passenger levels with the most appropriate train service.

Comment from Lorna Lock (Finance and Personnel Manager)

SRC income is showing slightly higher than budgeted, however, the income budget was set lower than in previous years, due to the "cost of living crisis" and what appears to be the trend.

Costs continue to rise and, as always, staff are asked to be vigilant and make savings, wherever possible.

Railway departments are requested to be prudent, and only place orders for essential items.

H&S - Accidents. Swanage Railway has an established Accident Reporting system. Please ensure that you take steps to report all relevant details if you have to assist with an accident/incident, including if you are a witness. Please note that **it is essential that we obtain contact details of those involved.**

Further information: andy.haddon@swanagerailway.co.uk

H&S – Hot Weather Arrangements. Ops staff and others should look out for this new document.

Further information: andy.haddon@swanagerailway.co.uk

H&S - Fire Beaters. A review of the Railway's fire beaters is currently taking place. The future location of fire beaters will be attached as an annex to the Hot Weather Arrangements.

Further information: keneth.orchard@swanagerailway.co.uk

Increasing Our Revenue. Can you help raise the profile of the Swanage Railway amongst your family and friends, on Facebook or across local community groups that you are a member of? Please encourage others to visit the main Swanage Railway website, and encourage potential visitors to subscribe to receive 'Regular News & Updates' from Passenger Services—see the bottom of most pages.

Further information: [SR Website](#)

Wareham Service – Ticketing. I am led to believe that add-on tickets are now available from ticket offices across South Western Railway. Please be aware that SR & staff concessions are not valid on SWR. Further information on **travel concessions**, including Premier Life Members, Annual Members, Lifetime Members, Rail cards, Working Volunteers, Priv (railway employees), Season Ticket and Shareholders should be sought from SR Ticket Offices. Please ensure you purchase a ticket before travelling for all journeys. **Some tickets purchased on-line require an online discount code.**

Further information: [see SR Website](#) or [visit a SR ticket office.](#)

Wareham Service. The Wareham Services has had a good start and is bedding-in well. Running days Tue-Thu & Sat each week until Sat 09 Sep 23. **See notes in red above.**

Further information: [SR Website](#)

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Help Improve Communication on the Swanage Railway. To help us better understand how we can improve in this area we have created a short survey to identify which communication styles would be most effective and which content is deemed most important.

Further information: HOPS (or ben.ford@swanagerailway.co.uk)

Volunteer Recruitment & Retention Officer. Interviews for this post recently took place.

T3 Locomotive

The T3's boiler is once again in steam for the first time in 75 years. There's less than £50,000 left to raise so if you want to see our very own Victorian icon steaming through Purbeck, please consider making a donation. Any contribution will be greatly appreciated and help give the project its fairy-tale ending!

Further information: william.sheret@swanagerailway.co.uk

M7 Locomotive. A meeting between the Drummond Locomotive Society and the Swanage Railway Company is to take place to discuss future options.

Further information: nathan.au@swanagerailway.co.uk

The Big Help Out. As part of The Coronation Potential community volunteers are encouraged to attend this event to be held on Swanage Seafront 1100-1400hrs on Mon 8 May. Swanage railway will be represented.

Further information: mike.whitwam@corfestation.f2s.com

Roads to Rail. There has been substantial interest from exhibitors planning to attend this event, primarily held at Norden. The Wareham Service is running on the Friday, and evening services are planned.

Further information: lorna.lock@swanagerailway.co.uk

BBQ Charcoal. Southern Co-op and some other retailers have agreed not to sell disposable BBQs in their outlets and 8,000 were dismantled by 40 volunteers in Poole. Five Tons recently arrived at the Coad Dock; some went to two local Forges and other good causes; the rest will go up in smoke - in SR locos. Thanks to Jamie Punter, Richard Earle, Ashley Read & Pete Duncalfe, and others in Ops.

Ops + Passenger Service Planning. The forecasting of likely visitor numbers during the peak summer period is taking place, so Ops can best accommodate passenger levels. Planning for December is also taking place.

Further information: [Ops/Pass Service staff & directors](#)

Taxi Office. The SRC is investigating if the leasing the old taxi office in the Swanage station Building is a viable option.

Further information: ben.ford@swanagerailway.co.uk

Herston Halt – Public Address. Equipment to provide audio announcements at Herston Halt has been delivered. Passenger announcements, driven by the Realtime Trains system, will commence shortly.

Further information: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk

Restore Your Railway. This is the HMG initiative to bring closed railways back to life. The SR has submitted some proposals, however there has been no recent news from the Department for Transport.

Frank Roberts
29 Apr 23

T3 4-4-0 no. 563



Copied from the [Swanage Railway Trust 563 Locomotive Group](#) Facebook page:

There she blows! After slumbering for 75 years, since 1948, we're excited to announce 563's boiler is steaming once more at 175 psi and a new lease of life awaits...

After starting the T3's overhaul six years ago, this chapter of 563's fairytale story will soon be over but there's more to look forward to and still lots to do as we reassemble both the engine at the Flour Mill and the tender at our own engineering Works at Herston!

With less than £50,000 to raise, we can't thank everyone enough for helping us get to this point. The boiler has been the lionshare of this project so this is a truly amazing achievement. We're well and truly on the home straight and there are only a few hurdles left, if you can now help us finish the engine, there are a number of ways which you can donate.

Firstly, you can make a payment direct from your bank to the 563 account at the Swanage Railway Trust (account number 93757269, sort code 20-68-79) with your name and 'T3' as the reference. Secondly, you can make a payment online via the Swanage Railway Trust's website at www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/t3-appeal or the 563 Locomotive Group website www.563locomotivegroup.co.uk Finally, you can send a cheque to 563 Locomotive Group, Swanage Railway Trust, Station House, Swanage, DORSET, BH19 1HB. Cheques should be made payable to the Swanage Railway Trust and endorsed '563 Locomotive Group' on the back please.

Click on that Facebook link at the top of the page to see more pictures.



The boiler has a house outside at the Flour Mill Workshop for its hydraulic and steam tests

Photos from the 563 Group



From Steven Booth, Purbeck Community Rail Officer:

Popular RSPB Arne Summer Shuttle Bus returns to Purbeck Dorset

From 2nd May through to the 30th August 2023, RSPB Dorset will run a shuttle bus service for a second trial period. The registered service 2RN (to Arne) will take passengers from Wareham mainline train station to RSPB Arne Nature reserve. It will also run from the Purbeck Park which includes the “Park and Ride” and Norden Park link for the Swanage Railway Service complementing other public transport links within the Purbeck area.

Last year’s trial showed the service to be of great benefit to those who cannot access a car and otherwise who wouldn’t be able to get to the reserve. It was also used by people who wanted to leave the car behind and enjoy the scenic journey. This year’s trial service will be key to understanding if this is to run into future years and the potential to expand beyond the summer months, so the RSPB is encouraging everyone to use it. The service is generously supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Purbeck Community Partnership and operated by Dorset Community Transport. The bus connects people visiting by train, or local bus and serves local people including the villages of Stoborough and Ridge.

This year the service will also be more accessible to holidaymakers around Purbeck with the addition of a new stop at Norden Farm campsite as well as the existing Lookout and Ridge Farm stops. Using this bus service to access RSPB Arne will also have environmental benefits by reducing the number of cars on the road, lowering carbon emissions, and so further help to protect Dorset’s special nature.

The main objective is to provide a sustainable public transport link from Wareham Station to the RSPB Arne Reserve, thus reducing road traffic especially in the main summer season. This also enables links with walking and cycle hire for visitors staying within the region. This is part of a two-year trial ending at the end of August 2023, and we hope that the local community and visitors will support this service to enable it to become economically viable and permanent service.

For the full Service 2RN timetable, visit: [ECT Charity - Services - DORSET](#)

No booking needed, just step onboard, enjoy the journey and experience the outstanding scenery.

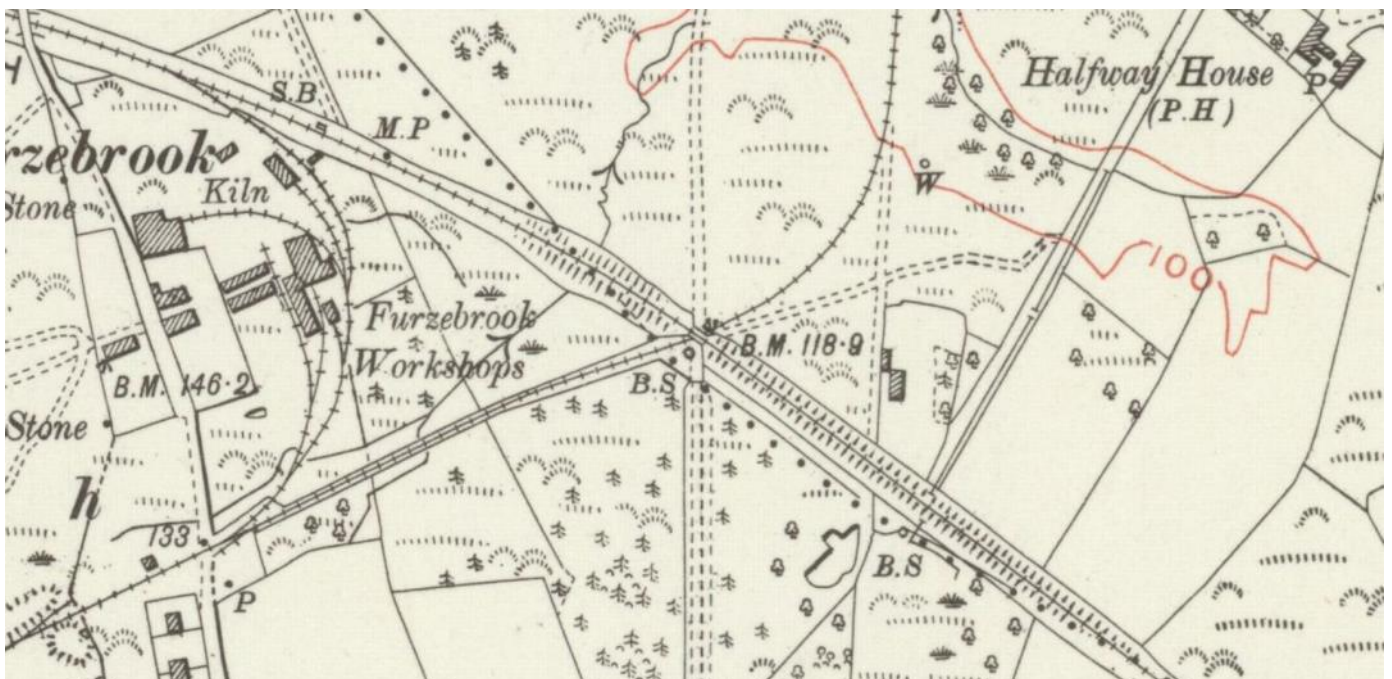


Ooops! It's correction time! Yes, Swanning Around issue 96 contained a boo-boo!

Surprisingly, only one reader has pointed out that, in the item about Bridge 11, it was referenced as the old Fayles Tramway route. Wrong! It is of course the old Pikes Tramway which ran under this bridge. Moreover, the wording in issue 96 was not too clear and could have suggested that the outlet road from Blue Pool ran over the old tramway route. It doesn't, as the two are quite separate and only share the bridge. See the Ordnance Survey map of 1925 below from the National Library of Scotland's web site.

Bridge 11 is right in the centre, with the Swanage Railway branch running South East to North West, or bottom right to top left for those without a compass! The Blue Pool roadway runs vertically South to North, and Pikes Tramway from South West curving round to North, to eventually terminate at Ridge Quay on the River Frome.

Many thanks to Jules Hathaway for pointing this out. Swanning Around must do better!



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

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