



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 88 – August 1st 2022

July 2022 is 50 years since the Swanage Railway project began (in 1972 to save you the maths!). In commemoration, trains ran with a special headboard and additional long-service badges, including some at 50 years, were presented by our special guest Lord Montagu, of National Motor Museum fame.

Also this month was yet another remembrance of the last steam train run by British Railways Southern Region on July 9th 1967.

Add to that a visit from BBC South Today, the Royal Wessex, an uplifting ceremony at Herston Halt, and progress on the T3, and you can see we're not short of current content for this issue.

U Class 31806 sports the headboard commemorating 50 years of the Swanage Railway project.



Photo: Andrew P M Wright

On 23rd July, there was a long service badge presentation at Corfe Castle station. Lord Montagu, of Beaulieu, was the special guest .

Here, Gavin Johns, chairman of the Swanage Railway Trust does the introductions, to the assembled recipients and guests, below.



At this event, badges representing 30 to 50 years service to the railway project were presented.

Once the presentations are under way, Swanage Railway's official photographer Andrew P M Wright is in action recording the individual recipients.

Here, Jeremy Weller, of Saturday wagon gang fame, receives his 40 year badge from Lord Montagu.



Oh, Joy! We have another **Mucky Man of the Month!**

What on earth has cleaner(!) **Richard Millington** been doing? Look at the state of him!



Apparently, on 13th July, there was an issue getting the wet ash out of 31806's ashpan, and most of it had to be manually extracted to permit the damper door to be opened and the spark-arresting mesh removed. Once open, Richard could then use the hose to wash the rest out. He should know better than to stand in front of the ashpan whilst carrying out this task! The ash is supposed to go on the floor of the pit, not on your clothes!

Thanks to fellow cleaner David Wale, who managed to stay somewhat cleaner, for this almost action shot!



On 5th July, BBC South Today presenter Tom Hepworth and cameraman Ian DaCosta were at Swanage obtaining material for a broadcast on 20th July. The piece is about how south of England heritage railways are facing the challenges of higher operating costs (coal), fewer volunteers (increased petrol costs) and fewer passengers because of the increased cost of living.

Among the interviewees, fireman Martin Sheret, a long standing member of the railway, is in the cab of 34072 257 *Squadron*, with driver Toby Roberts.

Visitor opinion was also canvassed, while 257 *Squadron*, complete with Royal Wessex headboard, runs round the train at Swanage.

Photos: Andrew P M Wright





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

As an idea to promote alternative offerings to the usual turn-up-and-ride service, the railway has introduced a premium fare ride in the Royal Wessex commemoration of the 1950s and 60s service which saw through coaches to Swanage detached from the London Waterloo to Weymouth service of the same name at Wareham. A freshly prepared Maunsell coach with roof boards and a loco headboard are provided in support of this initiative, and time will tell whether this kind of diversion from the norm will help revenue in these difficult times.

Fireman Martin Sheret and Driver Toby Roberts display the carriage roof boards.

For the benefit of rivet-counters, the Maunsell coach is not typical of the 1950s service which used the then new BR Mark 1 coaches, but it provides a distinction at Swanage from the usual service offering.



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



The Maunsell coach S1381, freshly repainted and carrying the roof boards seen in the previous picture.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright

And here's a 1950s picture from the Andrew P M Wright Collection of the two Royal Wessex carriages, having been detached from the main Weymouth train at Wareham and attached to the normal push-pull service to Swanage. M7 no. 30108, a regular on the Swanage Branch, does the honours sandwiched between the two sets of coaches, ready to depart for Swanage.





Another ceremony this month, this time at Herston Halt. This station has for many years been associated with the Royal Signals at Blandford through our own Frank Roberts.

As you can see from the picture above, Lt. Col RS Jacques-Grey, the Commanding Officer, and Swanage Mayor Tina Foster, along with Frank, below, and Royal Signals representatives and Swanage Railway volunteers were here to unveil the new pond at the station.

What's it all about? Here are some words from Frank Roberts to explain.

The visit on 22nd July marks the formal Launch of Herston Community Halt, a proposal to raise the profile of the Halt in the local community and recruit additional volunteers. The initiative was approved by the Company Board in autumn 2019, but work to install facilities such as a toilet have been delayed, not least by the Pandemic. The new staff toilet has been made possible by the contribution of grants from the Association of Community Rail and Purbeck Community Rail Partnership.

Our focus will now turn to improving our stores and workshop facility as maintenance work commences on our Scenery Van, which in addition to our messing facility will provide a new photograph exhibition depicting both 40 years of Swanage Army Link, but also the development of radar in WWII at RAF Worth Matravers.

Photos: Andrew P M Wright





News of the T3 from the Flour Mill Workshop is that that the loco is now on its wheels!

Above the T3 project team is on the loco, left to right, Will Armston-Sheret, Nick Lloyd, group chairman Nathan Au, and Steve Doughty. In front is Flour Mill foreman Geoff Phelps, with TV presenter Tim Dunn.

Usual thing, if you can help support this cracking project, please go to the appeal page at <https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/t3-appeal> and as a supporter you will get the T3 Times, which carries a lot more about progress than you will get here!

Photos: 563 loco group

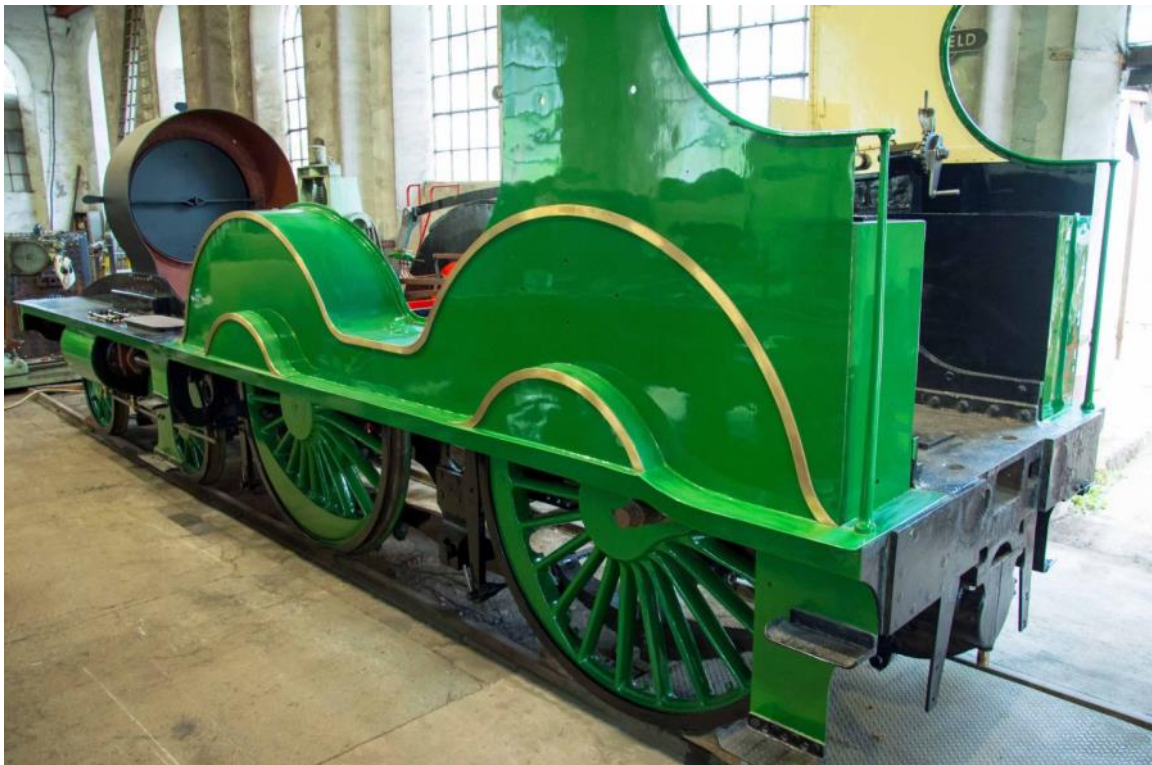




Photo: Stuart Magnus

The T3 tender chassis has arrived at Herston Works, and since this picture was taken, has been de-wheeled ready for some action.

Want to help? Firstly, you may want to lighten your wallet to help, as the tender top has been sent away for contract work and will require some funding! See previous page for where to contribute.

Secondly, you could provide physical help by responding to the volunteer appeal. If you are already a Swanage Railway volunteer, contact details are below. If you are not already a volunteer, contact the Volunteer and Recruitment Officer, details on the last page of this issue.

From the T3 group:

Now that the Tender for the Adams T3 No. 563 has made its way to Herston Works, we are in need of volunteers to assist with the stripping down and re-assembly of the tender including, but not limited to, needle gunning, sanding and painting.

The group plans to be there from 10am Monday 1st of August with initial works parties to follow.

*If you'd like to help out with the above, please email us at: matt.mcmanus@swanagerailway.co.uk or call Matt McManus on **07825 237306**.*



Heatwave! Wow! That was hot!

A period in the middle of July gave cause for concern country-wide, such that many heritage railways curtailed their services for a short period. We at Swanage are made of slightly sterner stuff and we kept going by substituting diesel-powered services. For two reasons. The risk of starting lineside fires and requiring the assistance of the overstretched Fire Service, and the risk of exhaustion of the steam crews.

This gave the opportunity for two-train services with class 33 D6515 on one train and the class 117 Diesel multiple unit on the other. Services were run on one platform only at Corfe Castle to avoid the hard-pressed signalman having to work the points when they may get jammed owing to heat expansion.

On the subject of fires, here's one we did earlier near Corfe. Thanks, Billy! We put this one out ourselves! Don't want any more!





What's this? An enormous birthday present? Nope, it's the carriage that was in the goods shed at Swanage being overhauled by the Carriage and Wagon folks, but has been usurped by a repaint for the Maunsell coach for the Royal Wessex, and work on the recently returned Pullman observation Car 14. To ensure their good work isn't spoiled by the weather while it's stored outside, it's been seriously wrapped up!

And a gratuitous pic of signalman Dave Harrison on 5th July at Harmans Cross.





9th July 1967—the last day of steam train services run by the Southern Region of British Railways, commemorated every year here in the south.

It's 9th July 2022 and on the Swanage Railway, a headboard carried on the service train locomotives. This is 34072 257 *Squadron*.

A commemorative steam railtour from London to Weymouth was also seen passing Wareham on the return, hauled this year by Merchant Navy class 35028 *Clan Line*.

Photos: Andrew P M Wright





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

Unusual events

On 2nd July, servicing facilities were provided by the Swanage Railway for a London to Bournemouth Pullman excursion train just west of Norden. Above 57 314 of West Coast Railways is seen crossing the Frome River leaving the Swanage Railway after servicing to start the return trip from Bournemouth. 47 804 was on the other end.

Unusual in Swanage as the 2022 two train timetable gives a timetable break to one train such that both can be seen in Swanage together around lunch time. *Eddystone* is ready to start the 13.15 service to Norden on 24th July with driver Stuart Cotton waiting for the single line token from the signalman before he can go.



What's going on here?



What's happened here? Fitter Ethan Waller and Operations Assistant Ben Dolman may be thinking there's a bit of an unusual gap between the U Class and its tender. In fact, the U Class is getting its own tender back, now that it has been fitted with the electronics for main line operation. Previously, it was running with the tender from the N class.

Picture from Gary Packer.

What's going on here? Amanda McDavid from the Corfe buffet is concentrating on something on the track, we know not what, while Booking Office clerk Maureen Edmondson appears to be making a suggestion.

You'd best make up your own caption! We'd rather not risk it!

Picture from porter Ben Sturch.



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 408466 to contact Jonathan Evans, our Volunteer Recruitment and Retention 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-----

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