

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

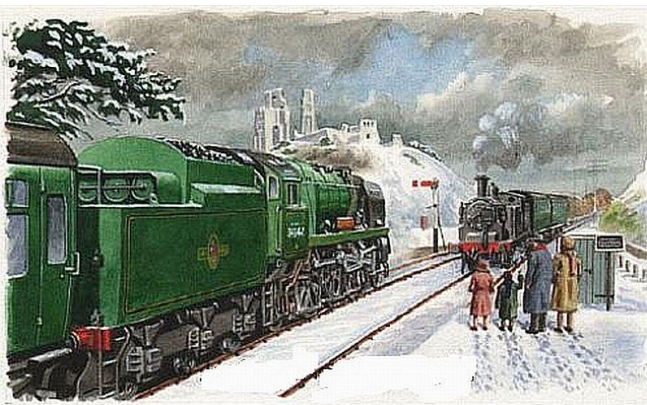
Issue 21 – December 21st 2016

Well, it's that time of year again, when commercial enterprises attempt to persuade us to spend what little resources we have, or don't have, on stuff to give to others, and hope they like it!

For others, a card may suffice, but even that is becoming a costly affair, and, like some other organisations, Swanning Around would be sending out cards to our loyal readers, as a 'thank you' and to wish you all you would wish for yourselves in 2017.

Bit of a problem there, though, as the SA budget doesn't run to such things, in fact there is no budget and even if there was, the Railway Shop at Swanage station has sold out of all Christmas cards!

So here's a picture of the Swanage Railway card that SA would have sent you, with best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all the (1) staff at Swanning Around!



-----ooOoo-----

Talking of the Railway Shop, there's still time to get those last-minute presents, and they will also be open in the New Year on running and many non-running days, with all the usual range of products.

-----ooOoo-----

There's a lot going on before the train gets to leave for the first Santa Special of the day, and not everything happening is connected with the day's train service.

On the operating side, you need some locomotives, and when the M7 was failed with broken firebox stays on the previous weekend, the engineering team did a superb job of stripping numerous parts off the loco, obtaining and fitting replacement stays, steam testing, and re-assembling, all before the next Santa Special on 17th December.



Here are Steam Superintendent Graham Froud and steam fitter Billy Johnson getting ready for a steam test on 14th December. Award yourself an extra mince pie if you can spot the five new stays.

-----ooOoo-----

Back at the shed on 17th December, the loco crews and cleaners are hard at work preparing the locos for service on a damp and foggy morning. The M7 is back in one piece and, with U class 31806, is receiving attention from the cleaners. 'Battle of Britain' class 34070 Manston can just be seen through the bridge arch, being prepared for the Dorsetman dining train.



When the locos leave the shed, it is time for cleaners, and others, to clear the ash out of the inspection pit. Today's Responsible Officer, Steve Barker (that's him on the left), shows the cleaners the right way to use a long-handled shovel!



When there is an unforeseen crew shortage, it's up to the Operations Manager Nick Lloyd to get the voids filled.

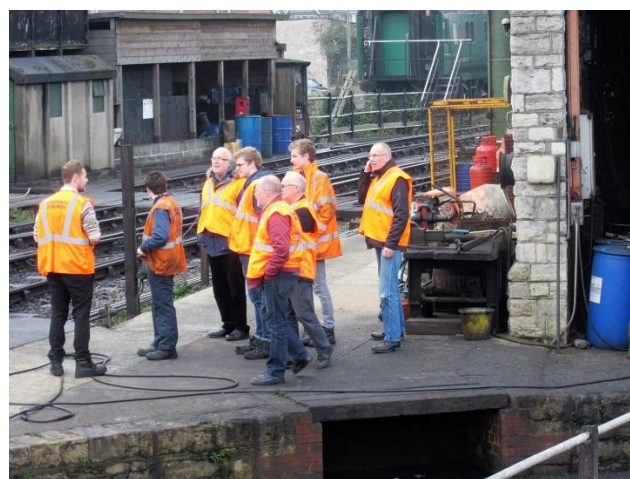


He's on the phone in a safe and quiet place – "No, Mr Claus, I don't need a reindeer with a red nose, I

have plenty of tail lamps! I want some drivers for Christmas!"

While all this is going on, Administrative Assistant Pete Harris takes a class for instruction in Personal Track Safety (PTS).

The victims are now certified to be trackside, but don't get in the way when a train comes – all that orange won't save you!



(Continued on page 3)

Page 3

The most glamorous job on the railway is being an engine driver, right?

Wrong!

Driver Bob Payne has turned up at 06.30 to get oil into all those difficult to access places, and get covered in the stuff whilst doing so! He doesn't look too excited about it, even though it is now daylight on 17th December, and at least he can see what he's doing!

It's a mucky job, but someone has to do it!



So Bob Payne is

Mucky Man of the Month!

What's Bob saying?

You can guess!

Do that Christmas Day word-guessing game – two words, second one three letters ending in 'f'!

-----ooOoo-----

(Continued from page 2)



In previous editions of SA, and on the staff web site, we have appealed for help to give our festive customers the best possible day out. Even our Company Chairman, Trevor Parsons, can testify to

the benefits of volunteering to serve our customers their champagne and ~~canapés~~ canapés nibbles on the Christmas Belle in the Pullman observation car. Don't you just love a man in uniform?! Doesn't look like he's coming to get orders from the loco crew, though!

There are still some opportunities for helping with the Santa Specials this week. See SRStaff web site for details.

Early evening, and M7 30053 has come off the last Santa Special of the day, and is waiting to go to the shed for disposal. Just time for some young visitors to visit the cab and have photos taken.



That was December 17th!

Santa Specials contribute significantly to the income of the railway, so well worth supporting, and our visitors agree! Get it in your diary for next year!

-----ooOoo-----

While all this Santa stuff is going on, Dan Bennett has been assisting with diesel loco scheduled examinations, and has now turned his attention to making the brakes work on the ballast hoppers we received last month (see page 5 of issue 20), so that they are fit to use in January.

When everybody else is going home, Dan's hard at it, relieving the inoperative vacuum brake cylinder of its corroded fixings.



There's plenty of work available on the poor relations of rolling stock, our wagons. You know where to volunteer!

-----ooOoo-----

Now for something completely different. How to re-wheel N class no. 31874 in Herston Works.

First, get someone to show up with some very handy, remote-controlled lifting jacks.



Secondly, lift the frames way up high!



Then roll the whole lot backwards on the tracks the jacks stand on, and remove the pony truck from under the front end, using a convenient crane on a lorry.

Roll the driving wheels into the respective axle positions.



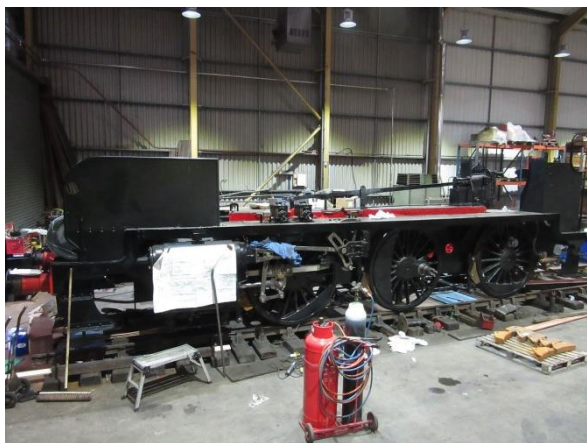
Now lower the frames onto the axles, fiddling the axleboxes and springs into position and putting some nuts on to keep everything in place.



Remove jacking equipment.

Job done!

Class dismissed!



All this happened on 1st December.

-----ooOoo-----

But that's not the end of school!

You will remember from page 3 of issue 19 that Standard Tank no. 80104 had its worn cylinders bored out to accept new cast iron liners. On 2nd December, Bryn Engineering, in the form of John Marrow and his son Jake, returned to insert the newly-manufactured liners. As the liners have to be a tight fit in the cylinders, liquid nitrogen at around -196 deg C is used to shrink the liner by about 32 thousandths of an

inch, that's about 1/32nd of an inch, and make it a sliding fit.

First, a dry run. John and Jake steady a liner while our own Barry Light holds it up with Big Daddy, the Road/Rail vehicle.



With the loco rolled out of the Goods Shed to provide better access, the liner spends some minutes in a bath of liquid nitrogen, and when John has confirmed that the liner is the right size,



out it comes,



And is manhandled into position in the cylinder.



Got a couple of minutes to ensure correct positioning, then job done.

Now, what do we do with a second hand bath of boiling nitrogen?

And careful where you stand – you can't see your feet on this job!

Don't try this at home! Lesson over!

-----ooOoo-----



Infrastructure maintenance continues throughout the year, regardless of the conditions.

It's 7th December, and Phil Minshall is taking advantage of a dry, but cold, day to get some more paint on the bits of the Corfe Castle fencing that the Sky engineers (see issue 19 page 4/5) were unable to finish.

-----ooOoo-----

Meanwhile, down at Norden station, our electricians Barry Leyman and Paul Smith have given up the unequal task of trying to make the old station lighting lamp units work reliably and have inserted LED units.

So how many people does it take to change a light bulb?

If it's at Norden, you need four! And probably at least one ~~watching~~ supervising!

Yes, it's a good job they are doing this work when the crane gang is in attendance, as, appropriately, they need them to help lower the blinking lamp down and lift the non-blinking lamp back up again.

Keith Bowers has helped to push while Brian Sorrell is pulling on a rope from somewhere out of sight to the right!



Photo from Fraser White (supervising, of course!)

-----ooOoo-----

You don't need reminding that we are always looking for volunteers in all departments.

Operations department is feeling the pinch, with many opportunities to progress through the ranks to Fireman and Driver grades.

Pete Harris has produced an advert in the style of an old British Railways poster.

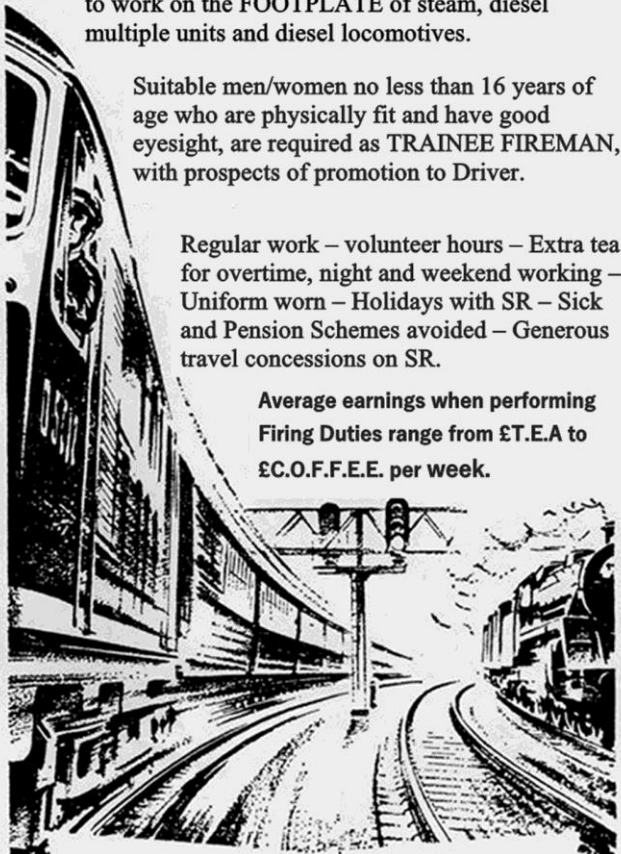
Swanage Railway offers you a fine opportunity

to work on the FOOTPLATE of steam, diesel multiple units and diesel locomotives.

Suitable men/women no less than 16 years of age who are physically fit and have good eyesight, are required as TRAINEE FIREMAN, with prospects of promotion to Driver.

Regular work – volunteer hours – Extra tea for overtime, night and weekend working – Uniform worn – Holidays with SR – Sick and Pension Schemes avoided – Generous travel concessions on SR.

Average earnings when performing Firing Duties range from £T.E.A to £C.O.F.F.E.E. per week.



Apply Now to the
Shedmaster at SWANAGE
Motive Power Depot

SOUTHERN
BRITISH RAILWAYS
REGION

Make a New Year resolution! You know where to apply!

Let's have a happy New Year! See you next year.

-----ooOoo-----

If you fancy volunteering for something, or need more info about a project, department, or anything else on the railway, then contact **Volunteer Liaison Officer Mike Whitwam** on mike.whitwam@corfestation.f2s.com or volunteer@swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk
You will get a prompt response.

NOTE: All new volunteers MUST go through Mike Whitwam for induction and registration before they can start on the railway.

-----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
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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>
and
<http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>

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