



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 98 – June 4th 2023

There's loads of stuff in this bumper issue. That and holiday time is the excuse from Swanning Around about the later-than-usual issue timing!

Yes, the annual Swanage Diesel Gala and Beer Festival is in here, along with progress on several projects, some words about the new Sea Green timetable, and another issue of SITREP from Frank Roberts on behalf of the management team.

What's SITREP? Situation Report. If it's from Frank we think it's probably a military thing. Does the job!

There are various reports within SITREP, and here's a picture to go with one of them.

In SITREP on page 5, Jeremy Weller has given an update on the progress of SR box van S48367.

So here's a picture of what he is talking about. Since our previous report in Swanning Around some time ago, there has been a lot of progress by this Saturday one-day-a-week team. Fancy being involved with this sort of thing? I'm sure they can find something for you to do if you want to be involved with wagon restoration.



Picture: Gary Packer



Passenger numbers have been good for the diesel gala and the late May Bank Holiday weekend and school half term. In fact the weather in May has helped enormously to get people out and on our trains. Sufficient for the Wareham service DMMU to be bolstered by the addition of the 121 single car unit to make it a four-car train, and by the creation of a Sea Green timetable implemented on some days of expected higher capacity required when the Wareham service is not operating. See SITREF for management comments about our performance.

Above, the four-car DMMU leaves Corfe for Wareham on 30th May, and below was the scene at Corfe Castle on 29th May. Still room for more!



We were going to have another Mucky Man of the Month in this issue, but Divvy of the Month seems more appropriate, with two likely customers. Both are cleaners and have had issues with the use of water under pressure.

Firstly, Josh Thorpe here was supposed to be getting a tender clean, but in the usual Swanage Railway cleaner tradition, he seems to have got most of it over himself!

Learning point: don't stand in front of the muck splashing back!

Photo: Charlie Rogers



Cameron Sweetenham managed to go one better in the divvy stakes. Cleaning your boots with water under pressure seems like a good idea. You don't want to take the muck home with you, but you don't want wet feet, either!

However, the expression 'Fill yer boots' doesn't apply in these circumstances!

His foot has survived—this time!

Learning point: if you're going to use a pressure hose to clean your boots, probably best not to do it with your feet in them!

SITREP! (01 Jun 23)

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

Forecast of Main Events

Sun 04 Jun **Weekly Champagne Afternoon Tea in the 'Devon Belle' Pullman Observation Car.**
04 Jun SOLD OUT. Then 11 Jun & 02, 09, 16 Jul

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)

A close watch is being kept on the Fire Risk situation across the whole railway, we have installed new fire beaters on all existing sites and one or two new ones as well.

Passenger numbers continue to be encouraging but showing little likelihood of returning to pre-covid numbers. However, a close watch is being kept on numbers with train services being put in place to meet demand. Clearly the heavily subsidised bus fares do not help. "Kids for a Quid" is an offer that was in place for this half term week. Local campsites look to be well in use over the recent Bank Holiday weekend which was reflected in our passenger loadings and hence two train running has been in place every day.

Passenger numbers will be appearing elsewhere in the next week or so.

Diesel Gala - Comment from Trevor Parsons (Swanage Railway Company Chairman)

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped make our Diesel Gala event a success, from the organising committee to all of you who helped us to cover more than 250 turns over the four days.

We are still crunching the numbers, but we are happy to announce that we carried 2,849 passengers during the event (single and multi-day tickets), which is a 5% increase over last year and almost identical to 2019 – encouraging numbers given the general downward trend the sector is seeing as a whole.

The Beer festival, catering across the Railway and the shop were also very busy. As always, thank you for all your hard work in making the Railway a success in difficult circumstances and I look forward to seeing you around as we get into the swing of summer.

Vacancies – Extracted from Swanage Railway News Update (May 2023)

We continue to seek high quality volunteer applicants for some of our more significant governance roles. In particular two Directors for the Company Board covering Governance and Commercial portfolios and Secretaries for both the Trust & the Company to enable succession planning. If you have skills that would enable you to carry out these roles and want to work with others in a team please consider an application. Further, more formal advertising will be taking place.

Further information: iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk

In addition, we are currently advertising for a Volunteer Recruitment & Retention Officer and will shortly start recruitment of a Chief Executive Officer – both these roles are salaried.

Further information: recruitment@swanagerailway.co.uk

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or for any role on the Railway, please get in touch.

What is HOPS?

HOPS, or Heritage Operations Processing System is a staff management system built specifically for heritage railways.

The project was started in 2009 and now administers over 20,000 staff at [176 heritage centres and museums](#). Primarily through the provision of online management tools, HOPS aims to provide best-practice solutions for preserved and heritage railways, museums and centres to manage staff, operations, and compliance. Virtually all aspects of data processing, recording and ancillary administration relevant to the heritage sector are within the ultimate scope of this system.

We started working with HOPS at the start of 2022 and now have more than 620 staff members on the system. We manage rosters for multiple departments and timetable information as well as using HOPS to track and maintain competency across the organisation.

It being an internet-based system HOPS allows users to access the system from anywhere on any internet-enabled device and its powerful permission system enables us to make sure that everybody sees only the information that their role requires.

HOPS also provides services such as our UK-wide ID card system, bulk-buying consumables and uniform items for sale to heritage railway staff and volunteers in our shop, UK-side Safety Circular system for sharing of lessons learned, and regular online Workshops for subjects such as Safety Management Systems.

The SR HOPS Administrator is Ben Dolman; ben.dolman@swanagerailway.co.uk

An Update from Jeremy Weller on Goods Vehicles.

We are continuing with the rebuild of SR box van S48367. All the planks for the body have been completed and there is now only 1 set of side panels and one end to be refitted. One set of doors were salvageable, and these have been rubbed down and primed, however the other pair were rotting-out so we have just started on making a new pair.

Work on new doors for the Sygnets B van continues with just one more pair to do and the south side will be completed. The left hand one had to be completely rebuilt, fortunately the right hand one is in better condition. Not sure if we will finish in time to refit them whilst the van is back at Corfe Castle or whether we will have to wait for the staging to be completed at Norden and the van returned to it's siding.

Notice to Swanage Railway Trust (SRT) Members – Wareham Service

Swanage Railway is now running the second year of the Wareham Heritage Diesel trial service. Member's discount entitlements are as follows:

SRT Premier Life Members: Entitled to FREE travel on the Wareham service.

SRT Lifetime Travel Members: Free travel between Swanage & Norden, public fares applied Norden to Wareham or Vice versa.

SRT Annual Members: 33% Discount on Wareham service.

A reminder that you must have a ticket to travel on all services. Membership cards are not sufficient for travel. Online booking for members is now available via discount codes, the discount codes are available on the members area on the SRT website www.swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk

This is a password protected site, the current password can be obtained from membership@swanagerailway.co.uk or by calling 01929 475202, leaving your name, membership number and contact number. Please note the office is not staffed daily.

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

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

Swanage Railway Trust 200 Club

Our 200 Club has supported dozens of projects on the Railway for many decades, varying in size from signal boxes to hand tools used to complete a specialised job. Your support is just as important now, so please consider joining the Club, realising the opportunity of being a winner in the monthly prize draw. (Usually six cash winners each month)

Further information: [Peter Parascandolo - 200club@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:Peter.Parascandolo@swanagerailway.co.uk)

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

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](http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk)

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



A colorful poster for the Swanage Railway Roads to Rail Steam Rally. The top features a green banner with the locations: NORDEN • CORFE CASTLE • HARMANS CROSS • HERSTON • SWANAGE. Below this, the central text reads "SWANAGE RAILWAY" in a large, stylized font, followed by "ROADS TO RAIL STEAM RALLY" and the dates "23RD - 25TH JUNE 2023". To the left of the central text, a list of activities includes: LIVE BANDS AND BEER TENTS, CATERING OUTLETS, PICNIC AREAS, and COMBINATION TICKETS AVAILABLE. To the right, it lists: CAKES AND ICECREAMS, CHILDRENS RIDES, FAIRGROUND RIDES, * WORKING ENGINES, * DEMONSTRATIONS, * SHOWMAN'S ENGINES, and * CLASSIC CARS. The bottom section features an illustration of a steam train, vintage cars, and a fairground. The website address "www.swanagerailwayroadstorail.co.uk" is at the bottom.

NORDEN • CORFE CASTLE • HARMANS CROSS • HERSTON • SWANAGE

LIVE BANDS AND BEER TENTS
CATERING OUTLETS
PICNIC AREAS

SWANAGE RAILWAY

**ROADS TO RAIL
STEAM RALLY**

23RD - 25TH JUNE 2023

FREE PARKING ~ UNDER 15'S GO FREE

Camping plus 3 days entry for 2 people only £50 *

COMBINATION TICKETS AVAILABLE
BOOKINGS OPEN ONLINE

CAKES AND ICECREAMS
CHILDRENS RIDES
FAIRGROUND RIDES

* WORKING ENGINES
* DEMONSTRATIONS
* SHOWMAN'S ENGINES
* CLASSIC CARS

www.swanagerailwayroadstorail.co.uk

Frank Roberts
01 Jun 23



Battle of Britain pacific 34070 *Manston* continues with its 'weathered' livery, seen here arriving at Corfe Castle on 30th May, and moving towards its train at Swanage on 2nd June. Intended to be a more authentic look from its days in service with British Railways, still needs some more muck to be **really** like the 1960s!



Photo: Gary Packer



Normally, being the Norden crossing keeper would be a relaxing day, with a train passing to and from Wareham every now and then. Unless it's 10th May, with U class 31806 going out to the Cotswold Festival of Steam at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway by road, and two class 73 Electro-diesels coming in by rail for the gala.

In the photo above, 'Crompton' 33 111 has brought the U class to be loaded on the lorry, and the two 73s, 73 107 and 73 201, wait for the signal from crossing keeper Mike Walshaw to move across the road to attach to the rear of the service train at the platform at Norden station for a free ride to Swanage. Saves having to find another path in the timetable.

Mike Walshaw's view of 31806 makes the 'U-boat' look high and dry!

Photo: Mike Walshaw





Instead of a whole lot of pictures of diesels working the trains of the diesel gala, we're going to recommend you go to YouTube and watch some of the good videos there, while we show some pictures of locos arriving, and even an unscheduled arrival!

You might want to start with The Southerner's video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUID6SVwOF8&list=TLPQMDQwNjIwMjMfMk1tEaZxVlQ&index=2> other videos are available!

Above, the two 73s arrive at Swanage on the tail end of the 16.20 from Norden on 10th May.

Below, our resident mainline certified class 33 D6515 *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* has been to Eastleigh to collect the London Transport 4TC unit, pictured here crossing bridges 3 and 4 over the River Frome, on 11th May.





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

Soon after D6515 and the 4TC, Freightliner's class 47 no. 47 830 *Beeching's Legacy* crosses the River Frome.

The class 17 D8568 arrived by road, and we haven't got a handy picture, so we've got it on a service train on the preview day 11th May crossing the Studland Road viaduct on its way to Norden.



Photo: Andrew P M Wright



Peter Milford was on hand at his local station at Sway to record the diesel loco convoy passing on its way to Swanage on 10th May. Class 40 D345 leads 50 021, 50 026, and 45 108.

50 021 *Rodney* is a stablemate of 50 026 *Indomitable* and was only finished at Eastleigh in time to make the trip. It was not scheduled to be at the gala, so was a surprise arrival for some. As with many new restorations, it had not had any amount of running so this was its first real outing with its new paint.

Below, the two locos are together at Swanage.





With any new restoration, there's bound to be some fettling required, so here's Lee Freeman in the cab of 50 021 *Rodney* making some 'adjustments' to enable the loco to run on the railway.

Its first run out was coupled inside 50 026 on a service train on 12th May to ensure that it was fit to run. Here it waits for 50 026 to couple on the front. Later it was seen to be hauling trains on its own in the place of 50 026.

Some wags were heard to refer to this *Rodney* as 'Dave'. For those not in the know, this loco was not named in honour of 'Only Fools and Horses' but after the *Nelson* class battleship *HMS Rodney*, which itself was named after *Admiral George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron Rodney, KB (1718 – 1792)*. There! Now somebody will tell us we've got that wrong!





50 026 is now coupled to the front, and this train now has super-power! Two 2700hp locos at the front with class 40 D345's 2000hp at the rear!

Apart from a small vacuum leak, easily overcome, *Rodney's* first time on a train went well enough for it to subsequently haul trains on its own.



On 13th May, 47 830 rolls in to platform 1 at Swanage with a train from Corfe Castle, while D345 waits in platform 2 to take away a train to the limit of Swanage Railway operations at Bridge 4 on the River Frome.

A bit of sea mist is enveloping Corfe Castle as class 45 no. 45 108 rolls in to Corfe Castle' Up platform with the last Down train of the gala on Sunday 14th May. Not many enthusiasts left now!



It was a Friday to remember when the family brought Elaine Axton to the Swanage Railway Diesel Gala. Elaine did not know that the family had been in touch with the railway through Peter Milford to find out about a headboard that was carried on our resident Crompton diesel after her husband, Dave Axton, passed away a few years ago. Dave was well known for working on the locomotives and for bringing them back into service and remembered by many of the current diesel crew. An investigation by James Cox found the headboard and arrangements were made for it to be presented to Elaine.

Elaine was delighted to be reunited with the special headboard - Axton Angel - which was then placed on the front of the Crompton before Elaine and her son Kevin were given a cab ride to Swanage.

The photo shows Elaine (centre) with her son Kevin Axton (left) and Swanage Railway's Kevin Hare (right) who had made the headboard as a tribute to Dave.

The Axton Angel headboard now occupies a pride of place in Elaine's home.

Thanks go to everyone who helped to make a very special day for Elaine.

Words and picture from Peter Milford





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

The Diesel Gala is mostly about diesels running up and down for the benefit of enthusiasts, but that would not be enough to get our former Permanent Way Manager Barry Light back from the Severn Valley for the weekend. The beer festival at Corfe Castle station did the trick though! And what better job to do than to ensure that all the beers are satisfactory for our visitors, here with driver Andy Dunster (r) of the organising team.

Also on offer on the Monday after the gala was a series of Driver Experiences on the visiting class 17 diesel D8568, between Norden and the River Frome. Here's the first customer climbing aboard at the Norden road/rail siding.



We may be viewed by some as amateurs playing trains, and we have a mix of people ranging from professional railwaymen to people for whom the Swanage Railway is a hobby and with no other railway experience. Whatever their background, everybody on the railway works to the highest professional standards, and this is reflected in the training and certification.

Here, we have signalman Bill Miles exchanging tokens with the train crew on his first training turn for Corfe Castle signal box on 29th May. He is already a signalman at Harmans Cross.

On 2nd June, Steve Dadd passed out as a guard, and is seen below flagging away the 15.37 from Norden on the Sea Green timetable.



Also in May we had the road/rail machine drivers being given refreshers by a trainer, and our cranes and crange equipment being tested and signed off for continued use by an approved test organisation. Safety is number one on this railway!

So what on earth is the Sea Green timetable? Is it a watered down version of the Green timetable (which includes the Wareham service)? Yes-ish! It's the same but has a diesel-hauled service running in the same path as the Wareham service but only to Norden, to provide additional capacity on the days when the Wareham service isn't running. Got it?



What this does is provide some long waits at Swanage and Norden, something we haven't been used to on pre-Covid timetables. So what do the crews do while they wait? At Swanage, cleaner Tim Nobbs relaxes with his phone while 31806's fireman Jeff Harris is on the bench, again with his phone. Must be jolly interesting! Must be checking HOPS!

At Norden, however, an extended waiting time in the Sea Green timetable allows driver Nathan Au and guard Aidan Wright to play to the camera! Good one! Photo supplied by Aidan so that he could win a bet!





The finishing line must surely be in sight for the T3 class no. 563. The tender tank has been reunited with the chassis at Herston Works, and the boiler is back in the frames at the Flower Mill Workshop.

There is still some more fundraising to do to finish the job, so if you can spare a few pennies (or substantially more!), please go the Swanage Railway Trust appeals page at

<https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/giving>

for details of how to part with your cash!

This is a beauty! You'll want to be part of it!

More information on progress at the 563 Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SRT563LG/>





Our carriage and wagon team can only work on one coach at a time in the goods shed, and S4349 a Tourist Second Open (TSO) has been getting the full metalwork repairs and repainting treatment and has reached the primer stage. With a re-upholstered interior, this is going to be an excellent showpiece for the work this small team can achieve.

But what about the paintwork of the coaches in service, deteriorating in the sea air? In the fine weather we've had this last month, faded paint gets a refinish whilst in the platform at Swanage. Alan English applies a fresh coat of varnish on 2nd May.

Photo: Bob Bunyar





Now here's a picture from the diesel gala which brings us nicely to the subject of our own 4TC set. One coach of this is up on the jacks outside the goods shed at Swanage, in company with the London Transport-owned set in platform 1, and the class 40 D345 visiting from the East Lancashire Railway.

Looks like any other Mark 1 coach, except that these are basically unpowered electric units, so they have a lot of stuff for braking, electrical, and control systems underneath to deal with. In storage over the years, some of that stuff has been deemed to be of some value by someone else, so our 4TC Group now has to replace it!

The picture below from the 4TC group shows part of the pipework under these vehicles, with some replacements being fitted.



The picture below, a screengrab filched from 317Dan's YouTube video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj4Cg7NIEjg>

Shows the class 73 Electro-diesel 73 201 *Broadlands*, visiting from GB RailFreight for the diesel gala, propelling the London Transport 4TC set away from Corfe Castle. The train is being driven from the leading end cab of the 4TC. This combination can also be achieved using our resident Crompton 33 111, which is equipped with the appropriate control gear.

Perhaps you can help the 4TC Group get our own set working with 33 111 by donating at

<https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/giving>

And scroll down to 4TC Multiple Unit

The group also has a Facebook page at

https://www.facebook.com/SwanageTCgroup/?locale=en_GB

with the latest info about the coach on the jacks.





On 9th May, the Estates department was out in force replacing the access gate to Swanage signal box on Gilbert Road.

Manager Pat Cattle is on site to control John Redwood, John Watt, Andy Shepherd and David Parkinson.

On the same day, the loco fitters didn't like the tune *Eddystone* was playing, so it was a stripdown of the exhaust side of the right hand cylinder. This all looks very complicated, and had to be finished in good time as, for a few days after the 9th May, *Eddystone* was our only operating steam loco, while 31806 was away at the Cotswold Festival of Steam, and *Manston* was awaiting its new valve rings.

Both these teams would welcome some more volunteers to help. Why not enquire and give it a go?



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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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

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