



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 95 – March 5th 2023

2023 is going to be a difficult year to manage for everybody, which makes budget planning on heritage railways even more so. The Swanage Railway is not excluded from difficult management decisions , but we have been in a better position than some in the first months of the year with some initiatives to capture public interest that have persuaded the public to spend their dwindling funds with us.

Unlike many leisure activities and some other heritage railways, Swanage Railway has been very busy in February. DMU mileage accumulation and crew competence continuation, a charter to get half marathon participants back to where they started in Swanage, a community engagement weekend followed by half term week. Not forgetting all the other activity behind the scenes, some of which features in Swanning Around as usual.

No Mucky Man of the Month this time, but a sort of mucky team on page 2, and a mucky loco substitute on Page 3!

Last but definitely not least is something we'd rather not be reporting — vandalism. More on that on page 19.

But first, what's been happening in Swanage Railway management? Lots, it would appear, as there is now an initiative to produce some monthly information for Swanning Around in order to improve communications, particularly towards our volunteers. Unfortunately, we do not have a report for this issue, but look out for something next time!

We can report, however, that Swanage Railway Trust and Company directors are not sitting on their hands, and we can expect some more information about forthcoming events on social media before the next issue of SA .

So, what is coming up? More DMU test runs, plus some driver experience days for Southern Locomotives' shareholders, then the Spring Steam Gala starts on 24th March. Visiting locos for this event are standard 4 mogul 76084 from the North Norfolk Railway and 70000 Britannia from Crewe-based Locomotive Services. 70000 will continue to be with us for five days of driver experience trains, which all sold out very quickly!

But back to the improved communications. This is being led by director and trustee Frank Roberts. We look forward to see what he can do for the next issue of SA, but in the meantime, he has sent us a selfie with Pete Duncalfe and Hannah Jamieson. These are all members of the team supporting Herston Community Halt. Both Frank and Pete are 40-year volunteers at the railway, and here they are doing their bit for the community by clearing the rubbish from the verges of the A351. Why is it that us British are so selfish and inconsiderate that we can't keep our rubbish to ourselves and dispose of it properly?

Full marks to our own Mucky Team of the Month!



Swanage Railway Glamour Page 3

With no Mucky Man of the Month, we're having Mucky Loco of the Month!

But let's be fair. 34070 *Manston* isn't really mucky, it's just been left uncleaned to represent the reality of steam in the 1960s, although many of us old enough to have seen the real thing would not wish *Manston* to get that filthy!

This picture from Gary Packer shows *Manston* leaving Corfe Castle on 13th February with Gary Cox driving, and looking much like we could have expected in the 1960s. Except that the DMU would not have been there!





Saturday 4th February was a busy day with crews rostered for a charter and for DMU test running.

The charter was for the Jurassic Express Half Marathon participants who finished the run at Corfe Castle and were transported back to where they started at Swanage by Swanage Railway.

The picture from the Corfe Castle web cam shows *Manston* arriving on one of the three trips to pick up the finishers. Seems to be popular with the runners!

And for those reaching for the rulebooks, *Manston* is not hauling a passenger train into a line not signalled for passenger trains, it's an empty stock train until it arrives here! Why didn't it use the other platform that *is* signalled for an arriving passenger train? 'Cos the DMU test train was using it! Or perhaps it was too much for the runners to use the footbridge!

And here's the DMU using the other platform starting another run to bridge 4 at the River Frome.





Now onto the Community Engagement weekend, when the public was encouraged to travel with kids go free ticketing and open house at the railway for a look round. Seems to have been very effective as the pictures here suggest. *Manston* has just arrived with a good trainload, and *Eddystone* is doing a good trade even though the footplate visit was for a small fee, we are told!.





Community civic leaders were invited to this event.

The visit by Swanage town councillors, the Dorset Council councillor for Swanage, the Dorset Council councillor for Wareham, and the Mayor of Swanage, Councillor Tina Foster, was hosted by Swanage Railway Company chairman Robert Patterson, seen above with the DMU at Swanage on 11th February.

The party also paid a visit to Norden and the Purbeck Mining and Mineral Museum, seen here with volunteers and the Sygnets.

both pictures: Andrew P M Wright





Also on offer at Swanage, Driver for a Fiver, with the diesel shunter 08 436. Driver Nick Lloyd has the task of chaperoning these likely drivers in station limits at Swanage on 11th February, while porter/steward James Honeyman-Bristow kept order and took the money!





The weekend timetable included the DMU working extended trips from Swanage right through to the limit of working at River Frome bridge 4. This involved crossing the Wytch Farm road at Norden, and here we see driver Ian McDavid about to exchange single line tokens with signalling roster clerk Alan Blackman, who is honing his crossing keeper skills while rostered keeper Mike Walshaw observes from the cabin on 12th February.

The DMU provides a much better view of the countryside and has a view forward as seen here on 11th February as driver Steve Barker prepares to exchange tokens with crossing keeper John Lindsay.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright





Open house in the signal boxes ensured that Corfe Castle box was busy with visitors, being located on the platform.

Signalman Randy Coldham is giving some visitors the whole 100% on 12th February, in between nipping off downstairs to exchange tokens with driver Andy Dunster and Fireman David Clayton on *Manston*.

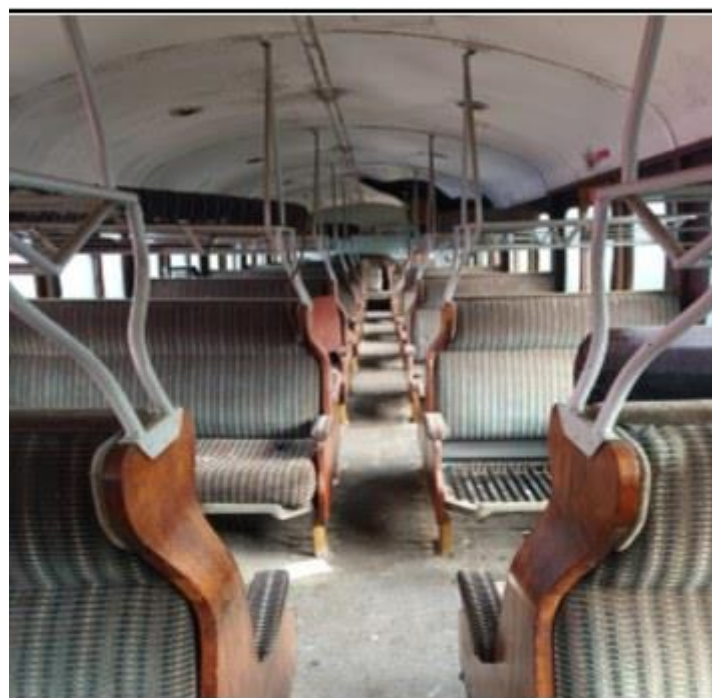
Photo: Andrew P M Wright





So what's this apparition that's appeared at Norden this last month? We are told it's a centre coach from an EPB electric multiple unit, coach no. S15396 built around 1951. It has been acquired for parts by our Heritage Carriage Group, as many of the parts can be used in the restoration of our own heritage carriages.

This is what it looked like inside and outside before they set about it.





Heritage Carriage team busy stripping out the inside on 11th February, including the emergency chain.

And here it is today . There's not much left! Is there anything else they can glean from this vehicle ? If not, the word is recycle!





We mentioned last time that the call had gone out for volunteers to assist the fitters, and here we have one such volunteer. Driver Pete Doel is helping fitter Ethan Waller on 10th February.

Looks like they're doing a piston and valve exam on U class 31806. But what's Ethan doing in the lower picture? Tell him, Pete, that he doesn't have to look for that piston in there—it's already out!





And another volunteer, this time for the 71A Locomotive group that owns class 33 D6515 (33 012), is Kevin Hare who has assumed the position on the workshop floor to measure out a section of rubber door seal.

This is for the engine room side access door.

These products of the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Company are notorious for water ingress, and can rot for Britain if left for long enough!



As a perfect follow-on for the previous page, here we have three photos by Kevin Hare of classmate 33 111.

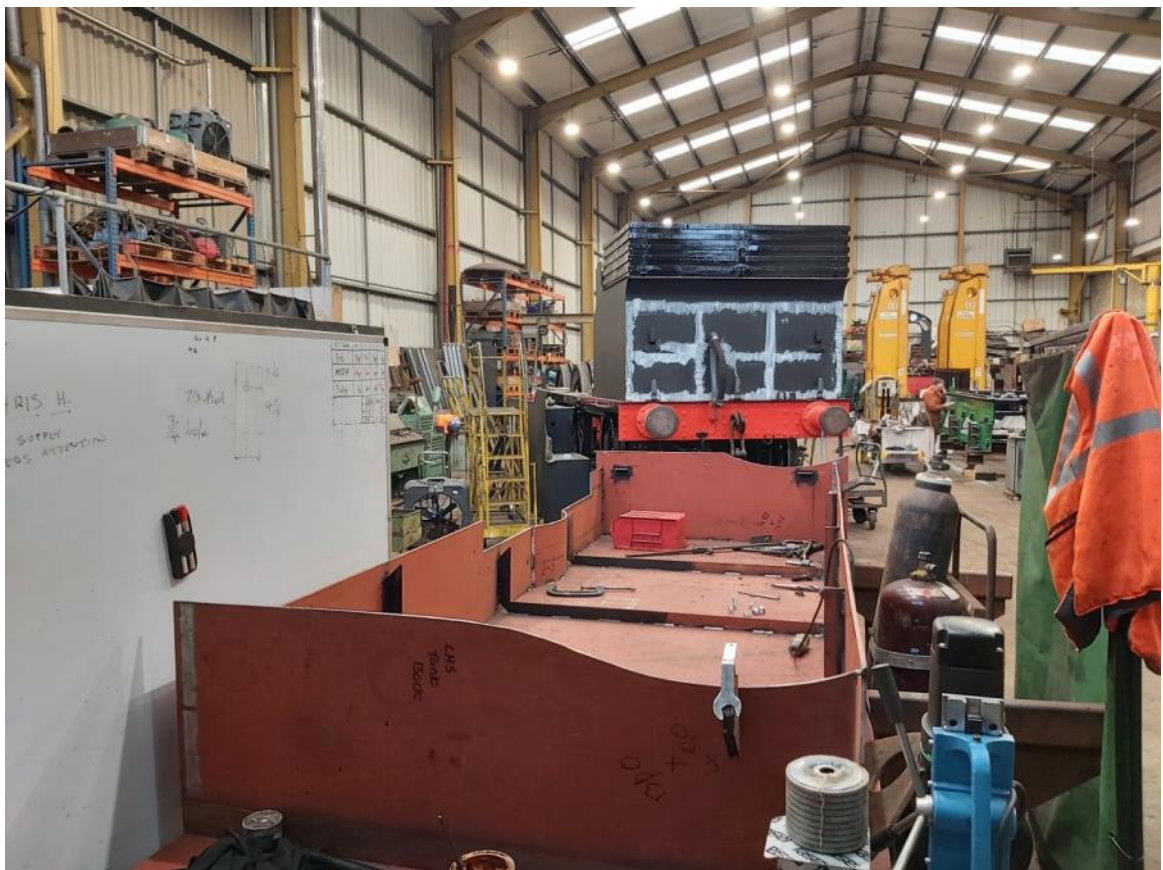
The 71A group has been assisting the Class 33/1 Preservation co. that owns this loco with some internal gutter replacements, to prevent some rot, but as you can see, there's plenty already there!





Just a quick update from Herston Works. On 16th February, 34053 *Sir Keith Park* is just about ready for a trip to Tyseley to have the boiler swapped for the one that has been refurbished by the North Norfolk Railway boiler shop.

M7 30053 is there with one new side tank finished and the other in progress in the foreground of this pic.



Outside the Goods Shed at Swanage, the new concrete pad is set and a new fence is in progress. Check out that yellow thing. That's new! It's a rail stop which was previously used at the former boundary with Network Rail at Motala.

Mid-week there's often some departmental trips and shunting to be done, and driver Bryan Hardwick and operations assistant Ben Dolman are ready on 10th February with 33 111 to leave for just such a job in readiness for the community engagement weekend and half term services.



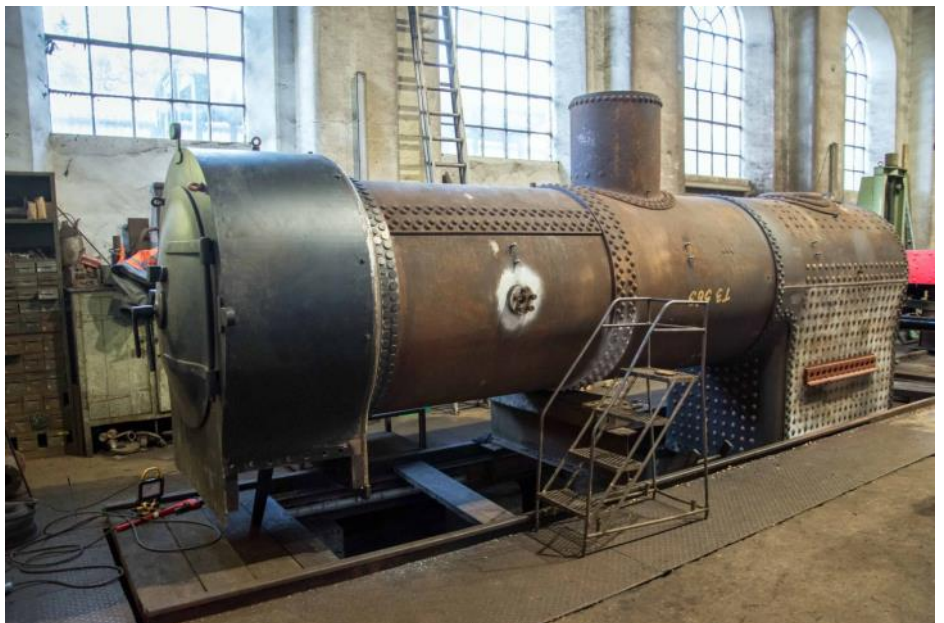
T3 no. 563 is nearly there. From the 563 Group:

It is hoped to have the 81-tonne T3 locomotive back in steam, for the first time in 75 years, during the spring of this year - 2023 being the centenary of the Southern Railway and the 185th anniversary of the London and South Western Railway's formation.

To achieve that milestone, the Swanage Railway Trust's 563 Locomotive Group has launched an appeal to raise £85,000 so the locomotive's restoration can be completed and the T3 can steam for the first time since 1948.

Without your help, it could be a long spring! As you can see from the following pictures, there's not a lot left to do. You can help by going to the usual web address at

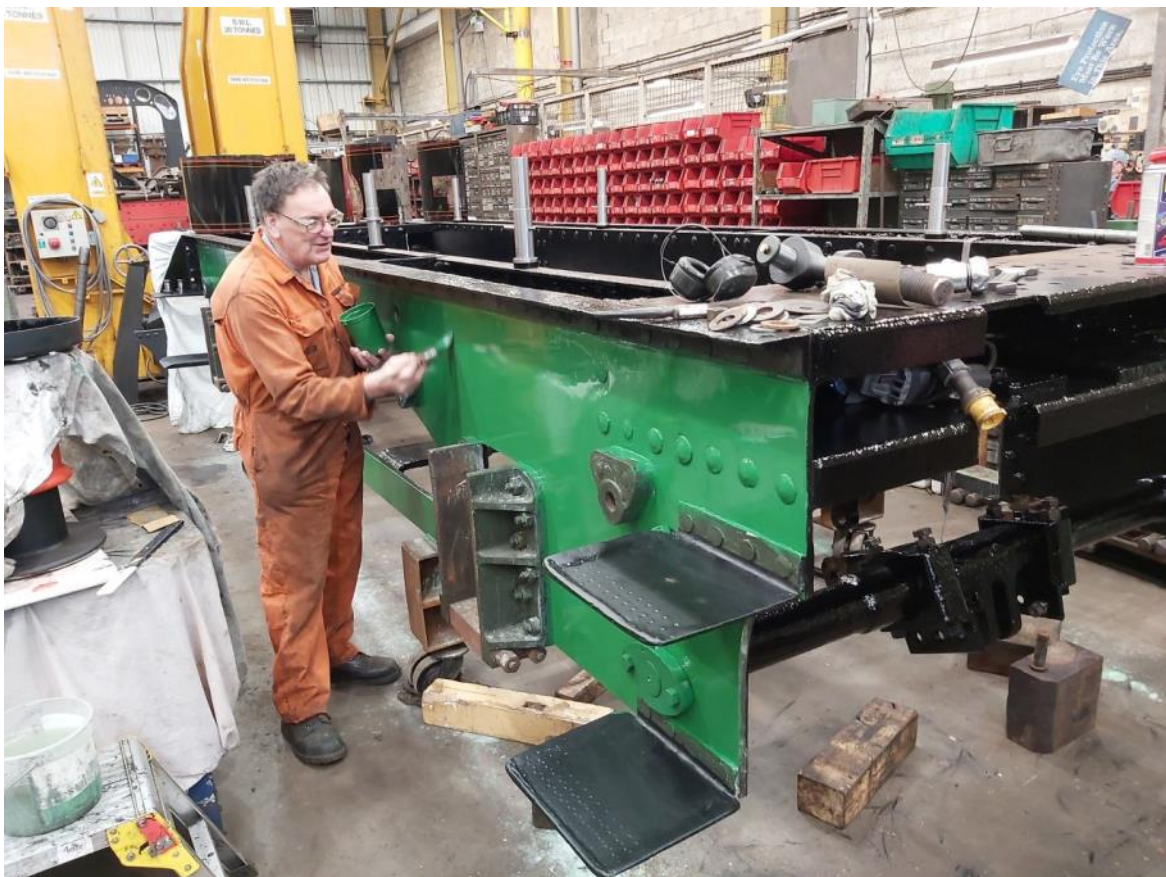
<https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/t3-appeal>





The engineers at the Flour Mill Workshop pose with the boiler test-fitted in the frames.

Meanwhile, on 16th February, Peter Pickering applies another undercoat to the T3's tender frames.





Now here's some news that we would rather have not occurred—vandalism.

On one day, possibly 24th February overnight, shots were fired at the Wessex Belle dining coach, breaking some windows.

On 25th February, someone gained entry to the carriage and attempted to set fire to it with accelerant and a bottle with a wick. Fortunately, that part was unsuccessful as the accelerant did not light.

The incident has been captured on CCTV and the police are carrying out an investigation.

Can't say any more than that at present.

Photos from Peter Milford



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-----

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