



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 102 – October 5th 2023

You can expect this week to be all about the T3 563, with the launch into service scheduled for Saturday 7th October, and the first public trains with 563 on Sunday 8th October. So we start this issue with some pictures of the T3 during its commissioning runs.

Check the Swanage Railway web site for details of 563 service trains in October.

The high season may now be passed, but there's still been plenty going on in September, with two excursions from the main line, and some driver experience trains to add to the usual low season timetable in operation.

Short of some content and production difficulties—expect a supplement to this issue next week.

563 passes Corfe Common while on a commissioning run on 28th September.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright





After delivery from the Flour Mill Workshop, as seen in issue 101, 563 took another trip to Herston Works for some remedial snagging work as part of the commissioning process. The loco returned to the rails on 22nd September. Ben Dolman is calling on Nigel Clark in 33 111, pushing the loco towards its tender at the Norden road/rail interchange. The lorry which brought the loco from Herston is there loaded with a pipe wagon for onward transport to the Severn Valley Railway. The fire is already lit, and 563 then proceeded to Swanage from Norden under its own power. Steam Superintendent Graham Froud has stopped the loco at Corfe Castle for examination, to ensure that all is well, as this is the first time it's run any distance on its own.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright





After several days solo running, this week it's the loaded tests, as seen here on 3rd October leaving Swanage.

Also this last month, on some Mondays and Fridays there have been some driver experience trains, as seen here on 2nd October, with U class 31806. The single line tokens are exchanged at Corfe Castle between signalman Stuart Magnus and fireman Dave Clayton.



You know what to do. Volunteer!

And that's just what Paul Jolly did recently.

Here's Paul measuring something, at least once, with the crane gang, having previously, the same day, assisted with the adjustment of some signalling apparatus at Swanage. Busy!

Paul has written us some words to describe his experience as a new recruit, and we hope it may encourage others to join! Go on! You know you want to try it!



First experiences of a new volunteer. Up to Sept 15th 2023.

(Names have been purposely left out of the text; you know who you are, my thanks for your encouragement.)

Having held a Swanage railway season ticket for several years as a passenger, I had been thinking of volunteering for some time but wondered where my skills would be most useful. Looking through the information available to the general public I found it hard to determine what I would be doing as a volunteer and thus I procrastinated.

Traveling on a diesel train one day I discovered the buffet car in operation: Over a ginger beer I started conversing with another who turned out to be monitoring the two youths running the buffet; his information although more general peaked my interest and prompted a discussion over where he thought my skills would be best fitted. A further trip up and down the line after a phone call allowed me to meet with someone from S&T who encouraged me to join the group as it seemed I would be a good fit for the team due to my background. I was invited to Norden to meet the team a week later; the delay due to my own commitments and the fact that although I had a pair of steel toed boots they were at home and the soft shoes I was wearing were obviously potentially dangerous. Having resolved to join I purchased a hi-viz orange top just in case; I had a yellow hi-viz to carry in the car in case of emergencies but of course this is not acceptable on the railway; my yellow kit was starting to get grubby so getting a nice new shiny orange one made sense.

The first day was interesting and taxing, being taken through the Norden control system and getting to grips with the unfamiliar circuit diagrams to attempt to trace out a possible fault, all the time learning how the electrical system of the railway works: It is very interesting to see how the mechanical heritage has carried through into electronics for the interlocking of points, signals and train movements; although complex every circuit clearly has a good reason for existing to ensure safety of the total railway system.

Thence it was onto checking the back illumination of a semaphore signal at Harmans Cross and a further one between Herston and Swanage which entailed climbing a signal followed by a track walk between the two positions with the pair of us keeping a lookout for passing trains and acknowledging our presence to the drivers; and often passengers as well as the guard which was, I thought, a nice touch of companionship.

Next task was to help restore a track-rat; these are the small yellow 4 person self propelled vehicles that can be seen at Norden near the cranes (the lifting variety not the flying ones). A slight diversion during one of the days where two of us went to Harmans Cross to check on a point lock setting (which had been fixed by the time we got there). This progressed to help with re-constructing a track-rat trolley and grinding parts of another then disassembling an unusable track-rat for spares.

I also joined in the Wednesday gang at Quarr Farm crossing for a day to rub down and paint the control boxes there.

The fun has continued with fault finding a 415 volt three phase generator to bring it back to life, at least the circuits in the manual were closer to the type I am used to.

One thing that has amazed me the most in my short time as a volunteer is the size of a steam engine; standing on a platform as a passenger the train looks huge but trackside close to the line (in a position of safety) the engine is enormous, it is only from this point of view that you can get a real sense of the dimensions and latent power of the machine.

Now I am just into my third week with the S&T and the Crane departments; I can't wait to find out what the future will bring.

Paul Jolly.

Photo: Peter Milford



The Swanage to Wareham service saw the last train of the trial on 9th September. Loadings throughout the high season ensured that the full 4-car set of the class 121 "Bubble Car" and the 3-car class 117 unit ran together for much of the time. Here they are, 121 leading, at Wareham on 30th August

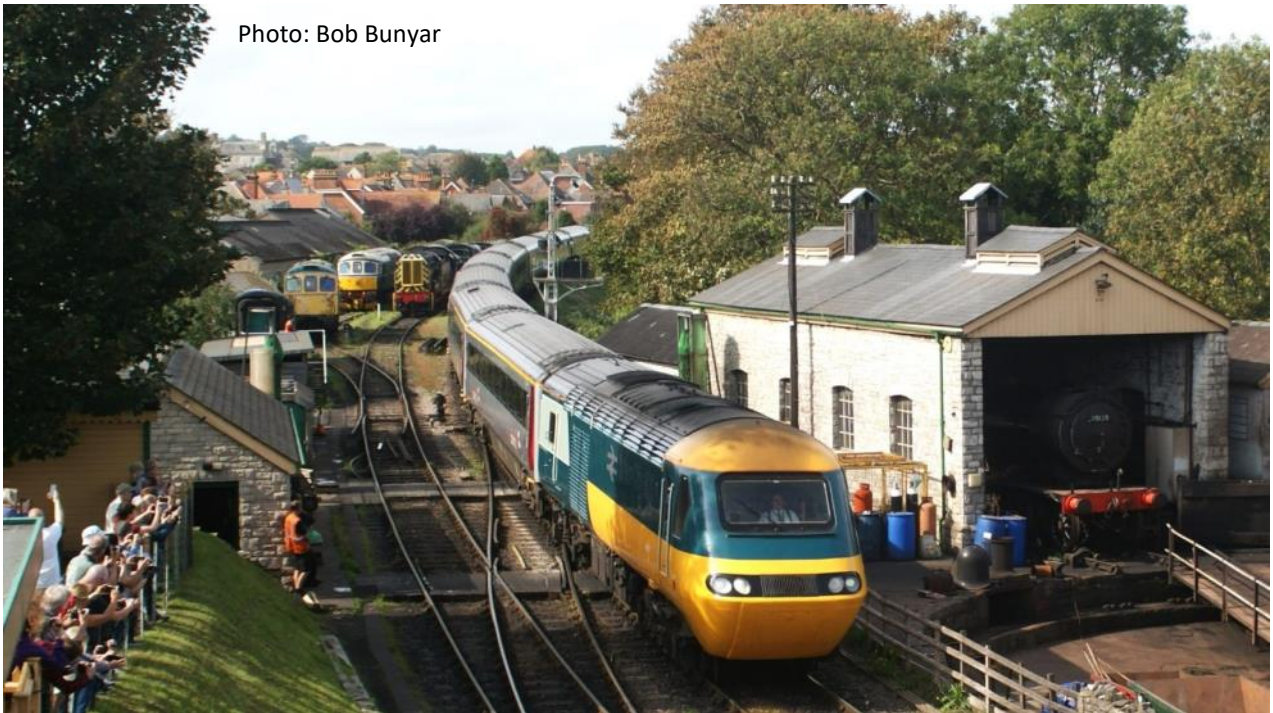
There were a couple of times when South Western Railway trains were running out of course, which resulted in the waiting passengers being found on the wrong platform at Wareham! Our service train normally would run into the down platform, but on these occasions was routed by the Basingstoke signaller into the up platform to avoid the main line trains.

On 5th September, all the customers are on the down platform while the train runs into the up side!

Photo: Bob Bunyar



Photo: Bob Bunyar



To commemorate the end of use of the full length Inter City 125 high speed trains by Cross Country trains, The Branch Line Society ran a special excursion from Leeds to Swanage on 26th September. The 8-coach set had power cars in heritage livery at each end, one in the original Inter-City blue/grey and one in the later Inter-City swallow style.

The train arrives at Swanage with the blue/grey unit leading, and is ready to depart later on a return trip to Bournemouth carrying the Pines Express headboard.

Alongside is the T3 on the goods shed line. Getting on for 90 years difference in their ages, but now both are museum pieces!

Photo: Bob Bunyar





The train crosses the Wytch Farm Road on its way to Bournemouth and the token exchange takes place between Bill Miles and Bill Monteith. Bill Miles is a signalman having a training day at Norden Gates as part of the training scheme for Corfe Castle signal box, and Bill Monteith is a West Coast Railways driver, on this occasion being a route conductor for the parts of the main line route not signed by the Cross Country driver. He has been to Swanage many times as West Coast driver of incoming excursions. Below, the same service approaches Cats Eye bridge on the Norden to Worgret extension.





Photo: Andrew P M Wright

Another visitor from the main line on 18th September was a Network Rail rail cleaning unit, on an outing from its base at Totton.

Using its high pressure water jets, the line is getting cleaned between Norden and Corfe Castle above, and approaching Harmans Cross below.



Photo: Bob Bunyar



In issue 101, Estates were doing a demolition job on the parts of the Swanage Station porch woodwork that needed some TLC, and here we are on 14th September with repair work completed, job done! David Parkinson and David Budd are clearing up, with just a top coat to apply to that cabinet behind. Another good job from Estates!

Repair work also required on Permanent Way equipment on 26th September as Adam Woodman sets about fixing the flail mowers, both of which have problems. With the amazing lineside growth this year, those flails have been worth their weight in gold, except when they don't work, then they're just a weight!





Another main line excursion to Swanage, this time from London, with Jubilee class 45596 *Bahamas* on 13th September.

Above, the train arrives at Wareham where it stops to pick up the Swanage Railway conductor driver.

With the coaching stock of the excursion occupying platform 2 at Swanage, *Bahamas* is serviced at the coal dock while our service trains have to use platform 1. This requires the train loco to be taken off before arrival at the platform and the loco re-attached after the train has been drawn in by diesel. Here *Manston* is dropping down to re-attach to its train to take the next service to Norden.

As this issue goes out, *Manston* will be on its way to/at the Bluebell Railway to take part in their Giants of Steam gala.

Both photos: Andrew P M Wright





There was a Sygnets outing to the Churnet Valley Railway at Cheddleton on the weekend of the 8th to 10th September. Organised by Sygnets leader (among so many other jobs) Aidan Wright and Churnet volunteer (and Swanage fireman) Jon Kerr. That's Jon top left and Aidan is that very tall one right at the back. Other leaders in the party were Jo Guess, Ben Ford, Bex Seaman, Anthony Bossom, Karen Gough, and Ashley Read.

Rather than the hard-pressed SA staff trying to explain what they did, we'll quote Aidan's words!

We drove up in two 9-seater minibuses, picking up Sygnets as we went.

Friday: drove up. Saturday: Clean and prep S160 (that's the big American loco—Ed.) at Cheddleton, clear pit. Drive to Consall, complete testing of signalling equipment and install new track bonding for track circuits to allow longer trains. BBQ that evening at Consall. Train ride to Froghall and back to Consall. Sunday: wake up, served Staffordshire oatcakes on the train, got off at Leekbrook Junction and completed a track and tunnel inspection with their Permanent Way department. Walked back to Cheddleton, had lunch, drove to Froghall and split into two teams. One team cleared vegetation and the other pulled cable for a new 230v supply.

That was a busy weekend! The following pictures show some of that activity.

All photos provided by Aidan Wright.



Track circuit bonding, and Cheddleton tunnel inspection.





Cleaning and prepping the S160, under instruction from Churnet Valley Railway staff.



The Swanage branch line was opened in 1885, so its 125th birthday was a few years ago, but there is one item of original equipment still in use that has just had *its* 125th birthday. That is the Tyers No. 6 tablet instrument in Corfe Castle signal box. This wasn't installed until 1898 as shown by the accompanying instruction sheets on the next two pages. 125 years later and this instrument is still working in the front line of signalling safety on the Worgret to Swanage branch.

It's probably survived this long 'cos it's built like a battleship! And nearly as heavy!

This photo and the info sheets provided by signaller and guard Graham Cope.



LONDON & SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

INSTRUCTION No. 206, 1898.

SWANAGE BRANCH LINE.

**Important Instructions to Station Masters, Inspectors,
Enginemen, Guards, Signalmen and all others concerned,**

AS TO

WORKING THE SINGLE LINE

BETWEEN

WORGRET JUNCTION & SWANAGE STATION

BY TRAIN TABLET

In substitution of the present Train Staff and Ticket System,
COMMENCING

On SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, 1898.

On Sunday, September 18th, the Train Staff and Ticket arrangements on the Swanage Branch will be abolished, and this Single Line will be worked under **Tyer's (New) Train Tablet System** as described in Instruction No. 17 of 1898.

This Tablet Instruction has been supplied to all concerned, including Enginemen and Guards, and must be exhibited in the Signal Boxes at Wareham, Worgret Junction, Corfe Castle and Swanage, and in the Station Masters' Offices at Wareham, Corfe Castle and Swanage.

Instruction No. 139, 1890, for Electrical Train Signalling on Single Lines will cease to apply to the Swanage Branch Line after the last Train on Saturday, September 17th.

The Tablet working will cancel Green Instruction No. 152, dated 27th June, 1898, as to the Train Staff working.

There will be **two Tablet Sections** as follows: -

1. **Worgret Junction and Corfe Castle.**
2. **Corfe Castle and Swanage.**

The 10.45 p.m. Train from Wareham to Swanage on Saturday, September 17th, will take a Ticket from Wareham and Corfe Castle instead of the Staff as usual.

The Train Staff and Train Tickets will be withdrawn by **Inspector Howe** on Sunday, September 18th.

A Special Train consisting of one Coach and Van with Workmen will leave Southampton at 8.00 a.m. on Sunday, September 18th for Swanage, and will run between Swanage and Wareham as required, for the purpose of testing the Instruments, returning to Southampton at time uncertain.

Mr. Wiltshire to provide Train. **Northam** Engine.

The Signal Boxes at Worgret Junction, Corfe Castle, and Swanage must be kept open on Sunday, September 18th, until the Tablet System is in proper working order. Station Masters to arrange.

The first Tablet to be taken will be by the 6.50 a.m. Train from Swanage to Wareham, on **Monday**, September 19th.

WORGRET JUNCTION.

Drivers of all Trains and Engines, both Down and Up, must slacken speed at Worgret Junction to receive or deliver the Train Tablet with safety.

ELDON'S SIDING.

Eldon's Siding is situated 72 chains the Worgret Junction side of Corfe Castle Station, the Points being facing for Down Trains.

The Points (the normal position of which will be right for the Main Line) leading into the Goods Siding are fitted with Tyer's Patent Train Tablet Locking Apparatus, which can only be released by the Train Tablet for the Worgret Junction and Corfe Castle Section, and the Points cannot be moved until the Train Tablet has been placed in the Apparatus and the Points unlocked.

After the Points are unlocked the Train Tablet cannot be released until the Points have been put back to their normal position.

The mode of working will be as follows: -

The Station Master at Corfe Castle must provide a competent man to attend to the working of the Points at Eldon's Siding, and when a Goods Train has to leave any Trucks at this Siding, or bring any Trucks away, the Guard will, after the Train as (sic) arrived there, go to the Driver and obtain the Train Tablet, the Guard will then place it in the Apparatus to release the Points, and after the necessary work has been done he will return the Train Tablet to the Driver, and the Train will proceed on its journey.

SWANAGE BRANCH LINE – *continued.*

GAS WORKS SIDING.

Gas Works Siding is situated between Corfe Castle and Swanage Stations, the Points being facing for Up Trains.

The Points (the normal position of which will be right for the Main Line) leading into the Goods Siding are fitted with Tyer's Patent Train Tablet Locking Apparatus, which can only be released by the Train Tablet for the Corfe Castle and Swanage Section, and the Points cannot be moved until the Train Tablet has been placed in the Apparatus and the Points unlocked.

After the Points are unlocked the Train Tablet cannot be released until the Points have been put back to their normal position.

The mode of working will be as follows: -

The Station Master at Swanage must provide a competent man to attend to the working of the Points at Gas Works Siding, and when a Goods Train has to leave any Trucks at this Siding, or bring any Trucks away, the Guard will, after the Train has arrived there, go to the Driver and obtain the Train Tablet, the Guard will then place it in the Apparatus to release the Points, and after the necessary work has been done he will return the Train Tablet to the Driver, and the Train will proceed on its journey.

Instructions as to Single Line Working by a Pilotman during the failure or breakdown of the Tablet System:-

The working of the Traffic on Single Lines during a failure or breakdown of the Tablet Instruments, **whether the Telegraph Speaking Instruments are affected or not, must be by means of a Pilotman**, which is the only method sanctioned by the Board of Trade.

In order to minimise the delay to traffic, which must almost necessarily follow a breakdown, the method of establishing Pilot-working when only the Tablet Apparatus has failed will be different (with certain exceptions) to that when both the Tablet Apparatus and the Telegraph Speaking Instruments also have failed, according to the following particulars: -

For example, assume that a Tablet cannot be obtained for a Down Train to proceed from Corfe Castle to Swanage.

FAILURE OF TABLET INSTRUMENT ONLY.

The Station Master at Corfe Castle to immediately telegraph to the Station Master at Swanage advising him of the failure and requesting him to establish Pilot-working for the Down Train by filling in the necessary Pilot-working forms and sending a Pilotman as quickly as possible along the line (to ascertain that the section is clear) to Corfe Castle.

FAILURE OF BOTH TABLET AND SPEAKING INSTRUMENTS.

The working must be in accordance with the following, viz: -

The Station Master at Corfe Castle (having a Down Train to proceed to Swanage and being unable to obtain a Tablet) would fill in the requisite forms for Pilot-working and must himself proceed (or send a duly appointed Pilotman) along the line to Swanage, and having left the necessary forms at that Station and having ascertained that the section is clear, return as quickly as possible to Corfe Castle for the Down Train.

In the event of an Up Train being due to leave Swanage during the interval that the Down Train would be detained at Corfe Castle, and which would enable the Pilotman to reach Corfe Castle sooner than by walking the distance or by conveyance, it would be his duty to wait and Pilot the Up Train.

These Instructions apply to any two Tablet Stations, and it is thus evident that the responsibility for safe working rests entirely with the Station Masters.

In the event of the Traffic having to be worked by Pilotman in consequence of any obstruction on the Line, arrangements must be made in accordance with Rule 217c of the Book of Regulations, dated 1st November, 1897. Forms are provided for the working in case of Tablet Failure, No. 1841, and separate forms for Pilotman working in case of Obstruction of the Line, No. 1841A.

The Lineman for the Swanage Branch, whose name is **Pearce**, lives at **Wimborne**, and upon any irregularity or failure of the instruments occurring he must be communicated with immediately. In addition to the Lineman being advised, a telegram must also be sent to **Mr. Wadden, Eastleigh**, and **Mr. Goldstone, Southampton**, giving particulars of the irregularity or failure, but the first care must be to secure the attendance of the resident Lineman, who must always leave word in the Telegraph Office at **Wimborne** where he is to be found.

Note.— Should a failure occur between Worgret Junction and Corfe Castle, requiring Pilotman working, it must always be arranged by the Station Master at Corfe Castle, as the Junction Signaller will not be in a position to undertake it.

WATERLOO STATION,
September 13th, 1898.
(T.R. 72,324)

GEO. T. WHITE
Superintendent of the Line
(1,000)

Waterlow and Sons Limited, Printers, London Wall, London.

Transcribed from a photograph of the original by M.H. Walshaw, Swanage Railway, S&T Dept, 26 Jan 2005

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 Lisa Gravett, 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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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround> (not password protected)

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