



# Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 89 – September 4<sup>th</sup> 2022

After that heatwave in July and early August that caused the Swanage Railway to substitute diesel for steam on our high season services, a thunderstorm signalled the return to partial and full steam operations through the second half of August.

How has this affected our finances, you ask? Well, even if you didn't ask, we can tell you that, like many other attractions, numbers are down compared to the same period in 2019 before the pandemic, and expenses are up, not least the price hike for coal.

So it is a comfort for the finance director that we have just announced the visit of *Flying Scotsman* in late October/early November, which hopefully will do our bottom line no harm at all!



Photo: Andrew P M Wright

A few lines selected from the press release issued on 1<sup>st</sup> September by our press officer Andrew P M Wright, tell you where and when. Further details on the Swanage Railway website [here](#).

***Close to celebrating its centenary, record-breaking ‘Flying Scotsman’ – the most famous and iconic steam locomotive in the world – is to visit the Swanage Railway in Dorset’s Isle of Purbeck for almost three weeks during October, 2022.***

*Owned by the National Railway Museum in York, the iconic 97-tonne A3 class locomotive – completed in 1923 by the London and North Eastern Railway (L.N.E.R.) – will be on the popular Purbeck heritage line for 19 days from Wednesday, 19 October, to Sunday, 6 November, 2022, inclusive.*

*Fresh from a major engineering overhaul, ‘Flying Scotsman’ will be hauling passenger trains from Swanage to Corfe Castle and Norden for five days – from Saturday, 22 October, to Wednesday, 26 October, 2022, inclusive – with ticket-only access to stations for the public.*

*The iconic steam locomotive will be on static display at Swanage station on Thursday, 20 October, and Friday, 21 October, 2022, and again from Thursday, 27 October, to Sunday, 6 November, 2022, inclusive, with ticket-only access to visit the fascinating footplate of the iconic steam locomotive.*

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While we are on forthcoming events, subject to a mainline steam ban being lifted, we should expect to see a steam charter coming into Swanage on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September. Power should be in the hands of Jubilee class 45596 *Bahamas*. Otherwise, it may be diesel-hauled.

And don't forget that the annual Transport Rally in conjunction with the Bournemouth and Poole Preservation Club will be taking place at Harmans Cross, with an enhanced train service, on 9-11<sup>th</sup> September.







Swanage Railway continued to operate a two-train steam service during the heatwave up to the point when the fire risk became too great in early August. For the next week or two, it was diesel only, with 33 111 joining classmate D6515 (33 012) on services, seen here from the Corfe Castle web cam on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

A handy thunderstorm and a shower or two signalled a review, and from 17<sup>th</sup> August, it was one steam one diesel, as seen here at Harmans Cross on the 18<sup>th</sup> with *Eddystone* waiting for the Norden to Swanage train formed of the class 121 bubble car and class 117 diesel multiple unit.







Three stories in one picture here from the web cam on Swanage signal box. Full two train steam service has been resumed with *257 Squadron* departing for Norden, *Car 14*, the Pullman observation car in the Goods Shed getting some attention before being paired with *Flying Scotsman* later in the year , and who's nicked the carriage lifting jacks?

You know from previous issues of *Swanning Around* that the original jacks were replaced by some acquired from Bournemouth depot. Unlike the originals, these are movable, so the concrete pad outside the shed is being re-laid to enable this function to be used. The previous surface was quite unsuitable, and restricted the jacking position to lifting only Mark 1 coaches.







This badge says it all! 25 successful years of Swange Railway Sygnets, and to celebrate this milestone, they had a barbecue at Corfe Castle station on 13<sup>th</sup> August. They even had a special headboard for the train, seen here on the front of the DMU, with Sygnets, leaders and helpers stopping for a photo call.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright







Photo: Jo Guess



Photo: Jo Guess

The Sygnets enjoyed the barbecue in the garden at Corfe station, with leaders Ben Ford, Anthony Bossom, and Aidan Wright looking like they might be in charge of the food!

Below, Aidan Wright, who is also a guard and signaller and who came up through the Sygnets himself, attempts to show a young Sygnet what signalling is all about. Good luck with that!

Photo: Andrew P M Wright



Rather than give you all the volunteer appeal Swanning Around fashion, we have reproduced Andrew P M Wright's press release in full. It is of course essential to the future of the railway to bring on the younger generation, and if you can volunteer here, it is a very worthwhile job. Read on!

## **SYGNETS YOUTH GROUP APPEALS FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS** **AS IT CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF HELPING YOUNGSTERS THRIVE**

**A youth group that has inspired generations of children to find and develop their skills – some becoming adult Swanage Railway volunteers running the trains – is appealing for more volunteer leaders to come forward and help as the Sygnets celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

It was in the summer of 1997 that the Sygnets youth group was formed and since then hundreds of boys and girls aged 13 to 18 have enjoyed the friendship, challenge and enjoyment of experiencing a range of roles and activities around the heritage railway.

Combining a varied and enjoyable mix of formal and informal learning opportunities and activities, there are occasional working parties and visits to other heritage railways as well as fund-raising events and an annual social event.

Meeting once a month on a Saturday – with socialising together, often at a barbecue, being an important aspect of the youth group – the Sygnets has seven volunteer adult helpers who encourage, inspire and mentor 15 youngsters.

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Gavin Johns said: "The Swanage Railway has depended on several generations of volunteers to develop over the past 50 years and we still depend on volunteers now and will do into the future as we give the public the chance to travel and experience Britain's steam railways as they were in the 1950s.

"Encouraging and developing a heritage railway interest in young people is a key part of ensuring the Swanage Railway's future and our Sygnets Group is a vital part in introducing young people to railways and encouraging their practical interests for the future," added Gavin who is a volunteer signaller on the heritage railway.

Now a 30-year old Sygnets volunteer leader, Ben Ford – who lives in Poole - started with the youth group as a keen eleven year old in 2003.

The information technology engineer said: "It has been a privilege to have been part of the Sygnets for almost 20 years and even more so to now lead it. It's incredible to see how far the group has come since its inception in 1997.

"It's really gratifying that many of our Sygnets have gone on to main line railway and engineering careers as a result of having their interests nurtured from a young age.

"The Sygnets is a vibrant and enjoyable community - a place to build friendships and share a passion for the same interests – with all activities carefully risk-assessed.

"While the Sygnets support the Swanage Railway with a steady flow of future volunteers, and teach the children the skills they need to do so, the relationships built in the Sygnets are equally as important and show in the number of former Sygnets who volunteer for the Swanage Railway as adults," explained Ben.

While the Sygnets have gone from strength to strength over the past 25 years, there is a waiting list of children who want to become involved in the Swanage Railway because more adult volunteer leaders are needed to cope with demand.

As well as railway topics, learning and experience opportunities include gaining skills that are useful outside the Swanage Railway, such as first aid, and moving and handling as well as life skills around communication, team working and building self-confidence.

Sygnets adult leader Aidan Wright from Swanage – who was with the youth group as a child and is now an engineer in the electricity industry – explained: "We try to ensure that each Sygnets meeting includes an opportunity to ride on the Swanage Railway and learn about all aspects of safely operating and restoring the heritage railway.

"At the age of 16, members of the Sygnets are encouraged to move into volunteering with one of the Swanage Railway's varied departments while still being mentored and supported, through the Sygnets group, until they are 18 years old.

"With an ever-ageing volunteer workforce, the Sygnets provides the Swanage Railway with a stream of knowledgeable and enthusiastic young volunteers while the skills learned in Sygnets are often transferable to the world of work with a steady flow of ex-Sygnets enjoying successful careers on the national rail network or in the wider engineering industry," he added.

**Anyone wanting to volunteer as a Sygnets leader – or register their child on the youth group's waiting list – should contact Swanage Railway volunteer recruitment and retention officer Jonathan Evans on 01929 408466 or email [iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk).**



So what's happening in Herston Works?

*Manston's* enjoying the high life, having been lifted to effect some repairs to the Bissel trailing truck. Residing under the cab, it was having its thrust bearings attended to when it was noticed that there was severe corrosion in the frame, so the loco was lifted to remove the truck. This hasn't helped the expected return to traffic for the high season, but it has to be right before it leaves the works.



Southern Locos and Swanage Railway volunteer Chris Hardy points out the places on the truck frame that have been repaired with new metal.







Just behind *Manston*, work on the M7 30053 is quietly proceeding with work on the new bunker, and the pistons and valves now in position. The wheels are also looking ready to be fitted. Perhaps now just waiting for *Manston* to free up those jacks, that's if *Sir Keith Park* doesn't grab them first! Yes, when *Manston* leaves the works, *Sir Keith*\* will be moving into the vacated space.

\* who?! See page 13







Outside the works, we find Dave Ensor working on *Brocklebank Line's* cab. Where's the rest of this loco, and how come Southern Locos (SLL) is working on it? Check out the Southern Locos web site [here](#) for details. It's a few years since SLL had a Merchant Navy class loco on their books. Dave and others have been working to get this cab from its previous poor state up to the usual SLL standard. It was brought to Herston as it was not possible to do the work in a field in Kent!

The T3 tender is also in a dismantled state at Herston, the wheels having joined the rest in Wheel City! Those big ones behind belong to West Country class 34020 *Sidmouth*, whose boiler, incidentally, is due to be fitted to *Sir Keith Park* to speed up its return to service.







And here's the T3's tender frame stripped of anything that will move, and a box of bits inside.

There's plenty of work for volunteers to do here, so if you are interested in being part of the team bringing the T3 back to life, please email the T3 team at: [matt.mcmanus@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:matt.mcmanus@swanagerailway.co.uk) or call Matt McManus on **07825 237306**.







Some people pictures. People is what the railway is all about. Without them, nothing happens!

Above, some of the Estates department are on an afternoon out at Norden on 2<sup>nd</sup> August. They are, left to right, Mel Smith, John Watt, Phil Minshall (in the hole!), John Redwood, Estates manager Pat Cattle, and David Budd.

Phil's digging a new hole for that gate post that John Redwood is propping up, and Mel is about to cross to the Permanent Way hut to install some new lighting.

Below, Corfe Castle signalman Andy Moody is caught in the act of exchanging single line tokens with cleaner Aidan Strand on the 12.00 from Norden on 4<sup>th</sup> September.







We've already mentioned *Sir Keith Park* (SKP) once or twice, which you may think is out of place since it is not a regular at Swanage, having been moved to the Spa Valley Railway at Tunbridge Wells as its resident home.

As an SLL loco, its repair base will be Herston works, and now that its 10 year certification has expired, it has returned for overhaul. It is planned to enter the works when Manston comes out, but in the meantime, it has been an ambassador for the Swanage Railway and Southern Locos at the Great Dorset Steam Fair, seen above being hauled around the arena by three traction engines on 27<sup>th</sup> August. The loco has returned to the Swanage Railway and is currently parked at Corfe Castle with Manston's tender awaiting its next move into the works.

On 6<sup>th</sup> August, the BBMF Lancaster paid a visit to Swanage while on a show elsewhere and was captured by a few on Swanage station. This one from Heather Foster has a gull giving chase, with the crew taking evasive action to prevent the gull getting their chips!





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](mailto:iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk) or by calling 01929 408466 to contact Jonathan Evans, our Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Officer.

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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!

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