



# Swanning Around

## A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 72 – April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

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Sorry about the date of this issue! But let us assure you, our readers, that you will not find any spoofs in here, however hard you look!

We're a little late this time as there is so much going on, in spite of the recent lockdown. 29<sup>th</sup> March has seen a loosening of restrictions enabling us to welcome some more volunteers to site, albeit still under Covid-19 operating conditions, in order to get ready for planned resumption of public services on 12<sup>th</sup> April. This will depend, of course, on there being no change to the Government road map out of restrictions, but initially, services will be run in the same manner as operated in the last months of 2020.

Check out the Swanage Railway web site at

<https://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/book-travel-tickets> to book tickets.

At present, there is a published timetable for April, and timetables beyond will be formulated dependent upon how restrictions are lifted. The present Government roadmap may be subject to change if the Covid-19 infection rates are significantly affected by public behaviour in the meantime. Let's hope we are out of this by June!

But do we still need your help? Of course we do! This pandemic has sucked the finances just like any other business that has not been getting the normal levels of income, so as the Save Our Service appeal is overtaken by the resumption of services, so the project appeals take front of stage to replenish where the SOS reduced their income. Be generous! go to

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

to see the open appeals for help..

So much has been going on that this has turned out to be a bumper issue! And that takes time to find the content. And there's lots going on that isn't in here as well! This time, we have New Barn bridge, the T3, the 4TC, D6515, carriage shed, test runs, staff refreshers, and much more!

A lot of this issue is about preparations for the restart, and what better place to start than with U class 31806, which we saw in the last issue getting N class 31874's refurbished boiler. The loco fitters under steam superintendent Graham Froud have done a magnificent job putting the loco back together, and we can start with a view of the first test run from Swanage to near the railway boundary at the River Frome bridge.

With Graham Froud and steam fitter Chris Birmingham in charge, the initial light engine movement passes Corfe Castle signal box on 26<sup>th</sup> March.



Followed later in the day by a loaded test run, seen here passing track inspection walkers Adam Woodman and Steve Froud (no relation to Graham!) at Castle View crossing on the approach to Norden.

Picture: Andrew P M Wright



In the last issue, fitter Rob Tuck was preparing the Standard 4 tank loco for a test steaming, and on 10<sup>th</sup> March he's preparing the bits underneath the U class. We note here that staff and volunteers have made a cracking job of cleaning up the motion! The other locos Standard 4 80104 and 34072 257 *Squadron* have received some similar attention and are looking great!



And volunteer passed cleaner James Forster is seen here helping out with the lubrication.





After a successful steam test, James Forster oils up Standard 4 Tank 80104 on 25<sup>th</sup> March, prior to test runs to Norden. Picture: Andrew P M Wright

Later in the day, 80104 is passing Harmans Cross, returning to Swanage.



Carriages have also had some attention, with carriage fitters Alan English and Will Rudge oiling bearings and ensuring that doors work properly.

Pictures: Andrew P M Wright



And on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, carriage cleaning is in progress, organised by David Chant, with Peter Hunt, Steve Meech, Steve Todd, and Jeff and Helen Cole, ensuring that the outsides look presentable for the start of services.



There is a renewed appeal for funds to get the construction of the Herston carriage site under way again, for construction of the steel frame this year and for completion in 2022.

The shed will be the largest structure ever built by the Swanage Railway and will cover an area of more than 1000 square metres. It will be fully enclosed on its south side to ensure that our historic carriages are protected from the ravages of the weather, but will have a half-height wall stretching down from the roof on its north side. The lower half will be open to provide safe clearances for staff and allow for natural light and ventilation.

The overall cost of the carriage shed will be £240,000, so far the Trust has raised £177,000 towards the building costs thanks to successful fund-raising efforts as well as generous legacies and bequests. We had hoped to secure a grant to part-fund the construction but it was no longer available as the grant administrators had changed their requirement to enable them to finance organisations affected by Covid-19.

Without the grant and because of the early cessation of the original appeal and allowing for inflation, we need your help to raise the final £65,000 to turn our vision for secure undercover accommodation for our carriages into a reality.

The total amount received towards the Carriage Shed Appeal is, as at Friday 26th March, £15,914.32

If you can help, please go to the appeal site at

<https://www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/carriage-shed-appeal>

Below is an artist's impression of the finished shed.

ps. info for non-locals, the surrounding land doesn't look anything like that!

pps. unless the project includes bulldozing all of Swanage and turning it to agricultural land!





The Permanent Way team ran a tidy train on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, which included clearing material from the Herston carriage shed site, ready for resumption of construction.

Picture: Andrew P M Wright

33 111 is carrying out all the large diesel jobs while D6515 is away at Arlington's works at Eastleigh.

They're not messing about with the bodywork repairs as this view shows. Easier to get at the rusty metal with the fibreglass cab roof and the windows removed.



The Corfe Castle station kitchen used by staff has had a makeover!

The kitchen was donated by Andy Dunster and Simon Williams of Purbeck Kitchens, with the help of their suppliers Masterclass Kitchens and Mitchells worktops.

Here's the "before" picture taken by Andy before they set about it.



On 6<sup>th</sup> March, Andy, who is a Swanage Railway driver, is marking up for the wall cabinets, while station manager David Scott makes the tea.

And this is the "after" view taken on 31<sup>st</sup> March, complete with a new floor covering. Same old table and chairs, though!



Now here's a first for the Swanage Railway. A public online conference over the internet using Zoom.

This was on 26<sup>th</sup> March for the T3 loco project by the 563 Loco Group, chaired by Nathan Au.

Missed it? No matter. You can watch it on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3MP1LWb1jY>

Watching this will bring you right up to date with the restoration status, and includes the latest appeal, this time for the tender.

You can also access this appeal for your donations and join the T3NDER club , or sign up for their newsletter at

[www.563locomotivegroup.co.uk](http://www.563locomotivegroup.co.uk)

563 Virtual Presentation, March 2021 combined (V4).pptx - Google Slides

Photo: Colour Rail

**563 Locomotive Group Virtual Conference**  
7pm, 26th March 2021

zoom

Swanage Railway 563 Locomotive Group

Nathan Au

*Eddystone* is nearly there!

In Herston Works, gloss paint has been applied, while in the goods shed today, the tender is now lined out, waiting for the British Railways transfers to be applied.



© David Ensor Travel Photography

To keep up to date, check out Southern Locomotives' Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthernLocomotivesLtd/> where David Ensor puts up pictures like the one above.



Car 14 has gone on holiday to Margate! Perhaps not somewhere we might choose to go for our hols, but undercover storage at Jeremy Hosking's facility in the old Hornby factory is what it's all about. Our carriage shed is some way off yet, and the carriage cannot be used at present as it cannot be made Covid-safe. It can come back when our carriage shed is up.



Before it escaped, the opportunity was taken for some video work by Kevin Babey, seen here at Corfe Castle. Driver, and director responsible for communications and chairman of the 563 group and may be other things, Nathan Au hangs out of the cab on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

On 8<sup>th</sup> March, Car 14 is loaded up at Arne Road ready for its trip from the Isle of Purbeck to the Isle of Thanet.



Picture: Rob Teahan

Norden North ground frame has had a safety improvement. Perhaps being more prone to inviting errors than other ground frames on the railway, it has been seen as prudent to update it with a track circuit locking system. This removes any chance of the points being operated when they shouldn't!



On 10<sup>th</sup> March, Signal and Telegraph technicians Tony North and Dave Cobb are busy working out how to implement the design specification, while, on 24<sup>th</sup> March, technician Jon Riding checks the circuitry after the system has been installed.

Pictures from S&T

On 30<sup>th</sup> March, fireman Gary Cox is on a refresher trip and has to get to grips with the changes in the ground frame cabin. And that's after he's fought his way past the coded lock on the door! It's all change since last year!



The Telecomms team has also been busy making sure the phones are working. Amongst all the other work, here's a new installation for the public-accessible phone at Quarr Farm level crossing being checked over.



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Another coach for the 4TC set has arrived, back from the contractor Ramparts at Barrow Hill. We saw some of the bodywork repairs under way in a previous issue of Swanning Around.

Brian Cuttell just happened to be passing Barrow Hill on 15<sup>th</sup> March and photographed the coach in the yard there, waiting for transport. Looking good, eh?



On 30<sup>th</sup> March, the coach is at Norden, and is seen rolling off SA Smith's trailer, as class 33/1 33 111 arrives over the level crossing to take it to Harmans Cross.

Now that makes three externally refurbished TC coaches at the Swanage Railway, enough for a 3TC set that would go with 33 111 in push-pull format, but, and it is a big but, although the coach looks great in its new paint, there is a lot of work to be done to the electrics, brakes and internals before it is fit to run.

This worthy project is for a train set typical of those in use on the Bournemouth to Weymouth line in the 1960s/70s, until 1988 when the line to Weymouth was electrified.

Can you help to re-create this part of railway history in the south? then please go to

[4tc.org.uk/unit/index.php/how-can-i-help?](http://4tc.org.uk/unit/index.php/how-can-i-help?)

and check out the 4TCGroup Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SwanageTCgroup> for the latest news.



We had a big thing about New Barn bridge in the previous issue of Swanning Around, and here's the finish.

Firstly, here's that concrete block that they were about to cast when we left them last time, and the new way beam being lowered into place.

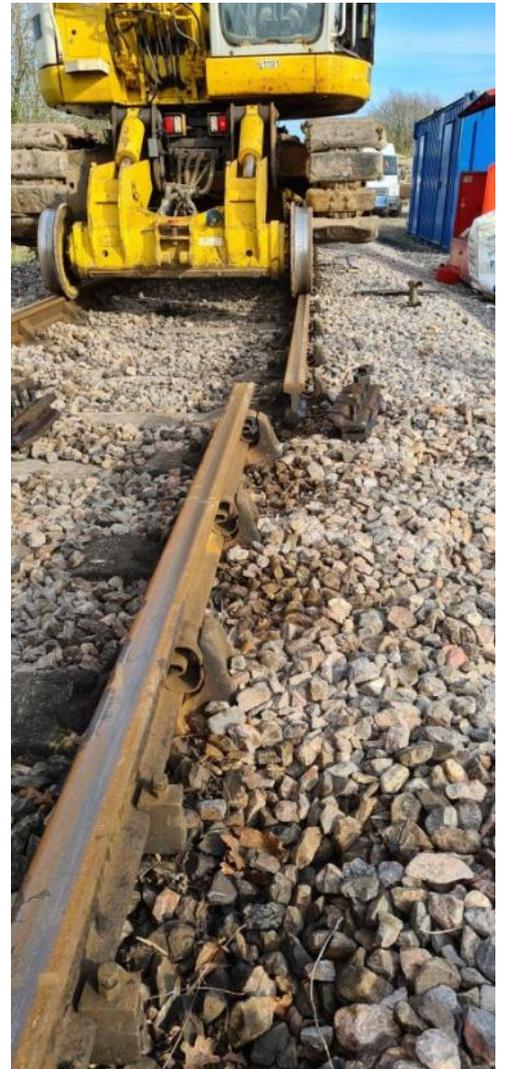


Picture from P'Way

Project manager Nick Coram looks on as the P'way team eases the woodwork into position on 4<sup>th</sup> March. It fits exactly! First time! How did that happen, Nick? Must have been measured umpteen times, order once, and hope! Good job!



Mmm! Bit of slewing needed here!



And here's the nearly finished article. Just a bit of fettling to be done to ensure a smooth ride.

New Barn bridge is back!



As usual, volunteers are required in all departments, so,

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

[iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk)

or the volunteer contact phone number

**01929-475212**, where you can leave a message.

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.**

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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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Compiled and edited by John Denison

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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

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