



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 65 – August 18th 2020



Reset - *Restart* - Recover

Covid-19 is still with us, and likely to be for some time to come. Nobody can predict when the country and the Swanage Railway will be back to normal, or whatever normal will be in the future.

But the railway is at least able to run some trains, albeit under strict regulation. As we said last time, running trains does not mean that we are out of trouble—far from it. We are probably covering some costs in running the trains, but the appeal is still there for donations.

Without your help, we may not be able to survive in the longer term, so please keep donating.

We would like to thank everyone for their generous donations which, on 17th August, totalled £265,734.92. There is still a long way to go to ensure the financial stability of the railway, donations can be made through

Save Our Service at <https://saveourservice.co.uk/>

At the time of the last issue of Swanning Around, we had been running an initial diesel service for a week, and steam-hauled trains started on Saturday 18th July.

Below, the crew of U class 31806 prepares for the first service train on 18th July—driver Oscar Martin, fireman Josh Voce, and cleaner James Forster.



This photo and on previous page from Andrew P M Wright

Also taking a turn on the steam-hauled service is 34072 257 *Squadron*, seen here leaving Norden on 29th July.

Picture: Andrew P M Wright



After the first few weeks of getting used to providing a service somewhat different to what would be expected at this time of year, and with much-reduced numbers of travellers, it was deemed appropriate to increase the service to two trains, one steam one diesel. This commenced on 1st August, along with opening Corfe Castle station. Norden station had already been opened with the steam service.

The two trains crossed at Harmans Cross, and Graham Jakes of the station team captured class 33 no. 33 111 awaiting the arrival of the U class 31806 on 3rd August.



Harmans Cross station may not be open, and is likely to stay that way for some time, but this hasn't stopped the station team from ensuring that nature doesn't take over!

Maintenance continues as usual, and David Castle and Paul Clements were there when Swanning Around visited on 17th August. It looks just as tidy as you would expect it if the station was open. Good job!



Also on 17th August fireman Andy Croggon collects the single line token from signalman Duncan Light, with some serious social distancing, while driver Nigel Clark looks on, suitably amused!



On 2nd August, it's signalman Duncan Light again, this time at Corfe Castle, exchanging tokens with diesel driver Chris Lemon.

Corfe Castle station is now open for limited set-downs and pick-ups.

Photo: Andrew P M Wright

Corfe station, below, has barriers in place to separate the incoming and outgoing passengers, to promote social distancing, as can be seen here on 17th August, with class 33 D6515 arriving. Just one platform is in use to enable control of social distancing by station staff.





On the diesel for the day on 17th August were driver Kevin Martin and secondman Gary Cox.

A scene due to change very slightly soon as Gary turns his best side to the camera. The signal on the post to the right is a direct replacement for the ground signal between the tracks. Does it work? No! But it will do when Signal and Telegraph volunteers have finished setting it up. Watch this space!



With reference to the previous picture, Randy Coldham was Corfe Castle signalman on 5th August when he took this picture of the S&T people doing something to the new signal at the Norden end of the Down platform, having attached the signal arm with a cross on it to denote out-of-use.

Using open coaches has meant reduced capacity to ensure social distancing, but from this week both train sets will have been fitted with partitions that meet Covid-19 regulations in order to increase the seating usage.

Hopefully, we'll have plenty of customers to fill them!



Andrew P M Wright is the Swanage Railway's photographer and PR man, and we regularly use some of his pictures in Swanning Around, you may have noticed. With his PR hat on, he is frequently sending copy to local and national media outlets to promote the railway, and during this pandemic emergency when we find ourselves unable to operate as we would normally wish, he was busy publicising our return after lockdown.

Here's what he said on 20th July:

As a result of the news release that I sent out to the media on Wednesday of last week about the SR's steam reopening on Saturday, attached is (was—Ed.) a link to the BBC South Today report that was used in both yesterday's teatime and evening news bulletins. It was the top story:

Also thanks to the news release, the SR was also on page 5 of the Telegraph on Saturday and also in the Express newspaper as well thanks to the pics taken on shed on Friday morning which the Press Association sent out to the national media later on Friday morning.

The Bournemouth News and Picture Service also took pics of the SR test steam trains on Thursday of last week and also sent those pics, with a story, out to the national media.

There were also pre-Saturday illustrated articles about the SR's steam reopening in the Dorset and Bournemouth Echos as well as on Wessex FM and BBC Radio Solent.

Just what we need to help our recovery from a potentially disastrous stoppage through lockdown.
Good one, Andrew!

Thankfully not in The Sun!

Could be the
1960s?

Photo by
Robin Moira
White





What's going on here? Robin Moira White, who provided this picture, was asking this very question on Facebook!

Provide your own caption!

If you want a proper caption, it's on page 10.

—o—

What do volunteers at other railways think of us? Well, a bunch of people from the Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway came to Purbeck for a few days and visited our railway. When they got back home, they made a blog of the event.

To see what they said and did, go to <http://haylesabbeyhalt.blogspot.com/2020/07/> and scroll down to **A look over the Fence - Swanage railway**

There are a few references to Norden Park and Ride, but we know it was never a proper park and ride, only a car park, and as you know from Swanning Around, it is now called Purbeck Park!

The station is still called Norden.

Clive Hardy has posted out Long Service badges to September's recipients. If you haven't received yours and you'd like to do so sooner rather than later then email Clive at - clive.hardy@swanagerailway.co.uk - with your address.

September's Long Service badge recipients are :-

MIKE BANKS - Operations - 25 YEARS
STEVE JENKINS – Operations - 25 YEARS
MIKE ODAM - Operations - 25 YEARS
DEREK DOUBLE – Trust - 20 YEARS
RICHARD FARRELL - Trust – 20 YEARS
PETER SILLS – Trust - 20 YEARS
GRAHAM VINCENT - Passenger Services – 15 YEARS
MATTHEW WEBB - Sales & Marketing – 15 YEARS
JOHN FLYNN – Operations - 10 YEARS
DAVID GRIFFITHS - Sales & Marketing - 10 YEARS
MICHAEL DOW - Trust - 5 YEARS
PETER HARRIS – Operations - 5 YEARS
DEREK SPENCER - LC&W - 5 YEARS



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Caption for the picture on page 9:

Work continues to free LC&W manager James Cox's head from under U class 31806.

Seriously though, 31806 is registered to work on the national network and has a forthcoming outing scheduled at the head of the Dorset Coast Express between Weymouth and Southampton on 3rd September, assuming Covid-19 doesn't cancel it.

Steam Locomotive Superintendent Graham Froud , on the left, ensures that the loco is fit to run on the main line, and this activity is in support. Apart from Graham, who appears to be doing something very important, we have James Forster operating the apparatus for weighing the axle loads, James Cox is underneath adjusting the springs as required, and Operations Manager Ashley Haynes gives some essential moral support!

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

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.

-----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

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Views expressed in 'Swanning Around' are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily the views of the Swanage Railway Trust or the Swanage Railway Company. No liability accepted for errors or inaccuracies.

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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

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

and

<http://swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>