



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 34 – January 18th 2018

It's January, and that means very low season for the Swanage Railway. This year it's so low we are not running any public trains at all until 10th February.

That doesn't mean that there's nothing happening – far from it!

This time allows us to carry out works that would not usually be possible during normal running periods, like removing some rails and occupying the track for maintenance purposes.

Basically, everything is available for maintenance, and that is what this issue of Swanning Around is largely about.

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But first, a correction for issue 33.

The picture of the M7's boiler being swung over the fence at Swanage was credited as "...from Billy Johnson", which, although being strictly correct, did not credit the actual owner of the picture, none other than our own diesel fitter Andy Garrett.

So to avoid painful recriminations, Swanning Around offers an unreserved apology to Andy, and to make up for it, here's another of his pictures of the event showing the M7's boiler on

the road trailer being readied for its trip to Norfolk. And it's been photo-bombed by Bob Payne! He gets everywhere!

More of Andy later, with one of Bob's other projects!



Picture credit – Andy Garrett!

Before we leave the M7, word has it that work has started on the boiler, with the dismantling and assessment bit prior to starting work on repairs and, to complete the boiler removal stuff, here's a picture, which arrived too late for the last issue, by signalman Malcolm Munro, of Big Daddy lifting off one of the side tanks prior to the boiler lift.



Picture – Malcolm Munro

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Seen at Norden – three abandoned Bulleid pacific tenders.

Wot? No locos?



This side of the road crossing are tenders for 34028 *Eddystone*, nearest, and 34070 *Manston*. If you look hard, on the other side on the road/rail interchange, is the tender for 34053 *Sir Keith Park*.

Where are the locos to go with them?

As you know from issue 33, *Manston* has gone to the West Midlands, *Eddystone* is in Herston Works, and *Sir Keith Park* arrived at Herston Works on 11th January after serving the last five years at the Severn Valley Railway. A regulator change and some other maintenance activities will see the loco ready to take up duty at Swanage soon.

Watch this space!

In the works, *Sir K Park* looks upon the chassis of *Eddystone*.



Usually, we would show the loco being unloaded at Swanage, but, unusually, this movement has been pictured on social media at various locations on its journey. Clearly a much-loved loco, so here we will show it in transit through a picture borrowed from the Severn Valley Railway website.



Where is it? No idea!

Want to know more? Then check out the Southern Locomotives website at

<http://www.southern-locomotives.co.uk/>

or their Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthernLocomotiveSLtd>

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In the loco shed at Swanage, Standard Tank 80104, still masquerading as 80146, is receiving attention to pistons and valves, amongst other things, and will be receiving a new valve chest liner on one side to replace a worn one. The other side has already been done to replace a cracked liner, so will not need replacing this time. On 12th January, steam fitter Chris Birmingham burns out carbon deposits to clean up the valve chest.



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Wot? No Page 3?
Perhaps next time!

In the meantime, let's see what diesel fitter Andy Garrett is up to with the Atlas hydraulic crane. Just to bore you a little, some history.

Three of these cranes were built at Ashford Works in Kent, in about 1971, for particular uses, this one for lifting lineside electrical equipment. The crane was built on a surplus Warwell wagon previously used for transporting tanks for the Army. The other two have also been rescued for use at heritage railways, being at the West Somerset and Mid Hants Railways.

This crane at Swanage is fitted with a Perkins 4.203 3-litre diesel engine which has decided it's had enough abuse and has seized up, so Andy is preparing to fit a replacement.



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On the running line alongside Andy, on 8th January, the Track Team is busy changing worn rails.



The replacement rails, although not new, are good-condition bullhead rails recovered from Tilbury Power Station many years ago, and are replacing rails that have been in situ so long they are now hardly fit for a siding.

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The shed access track has been lifted and the soft sub structure under the trap points dug out and replaced, along with the sleepers.

15th January finds the Track Team at work filling a hole with new material and replacing the sleepers.



See the Super Turbot wagon, that you saw being modified in issue 25, in use carrying the spoil from the hole.

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While all this is going on, crew training is in progress, at least that's what we think it is!

In Swanage signal box on 8th January, Phil Minshall in his role as cleaner rather than painter, gets some basic signalling training as part of the cleaners' training package.

Not sure what Roger Pleasant is telling him about what happens in the signal box, but those cups may give us a clue!



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Talking of painting, scaffolding is being erected on the Swanage signal box, the water tower, and the Bird's Nest buffet coach, to facilitate painting. Not the best time of year for such activity, but the only time when the running lines can be fouled by the scaffolding.

In this view, on 16th January, the Tuesday gang is inspecting the water tower, perhaps with a view to generating some off-season income by offering diving lessons?



And there's the Track Team replacing another rail!

Also in the background of the picture above, 34072 257 Squadron stands awaiting some action (don't we all!), while the visiting Ivatt tank 41312 waits for its refurbished brake linkage before returning home to the Mid Hants Railway soon.

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Starting on 3rd January, Corfe Castle signal box and the environs of Corfe Cutting were rendered inoperative by the works required to alter the signalling to introduce the new Down Home signal into service.

Now you may think this should be easy, but the work involved includes changes to the mechanical and electrical interlocking, physical changes to the trackwork to alter the track circuits, moving a shunt signal, connecting up wiring, etc..

This work is done largely by volunteers, so takes place over several weeks.

Here are some of them at work on a particularly fine 10th January.

Nearest the camera, Pete Edwards splices the operating wire cable for the re-positioned shunt signal, while Jeff Poskett, Richard Tilley, and Michael Paul try to make sense of the re-positioned insulating joint for the track circuiting. The old Down Home signal stands proud in the background, but not for much longer!



Look out for more about commissioning these changes and other interesting stuff in the next issue!

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Up at Norden, the crane gang, or some of them, took advantage of the shutdown to occupy the loop and foul the running line so that crane FBC2, the ten tonner, could be used for a site tidy-up.



With Keith Bowers driving and Roger Denning and John Wight directing, a portable generator is repositioned.

That generator is, of course,

portable if you happen to have a crane handy! And, unlike FBC1, this one can drive itself along.

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And to finish off, let us remind you about the Purbeck Railway Circle. Check out their website for content of future meetings, at <http://www.purbeckrailwaycircle.org.uk/>

Here's what the hall looked like on 12th January when our official photographer Andrew P M Wright gave us a photo show of the last 50 years of the Swanage branch.

Very popular! The pictures, not Andrew!



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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 mike.whitwam@corfestation.f2s.com or volunteer@swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk 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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Swanning Around also appears on line at:
<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround>
and
<http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>

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