



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 51 – June 21st 2019

With all the hoo-hah of the Flying Scotsman visit and the recent Diesel Gala now behind us, it's back to normal.

Normal?

What is normal on the Swanage Railway? Wouldn't it be nice if all we had to do was stand back and watch the scheduled services go back and forth.

At the best of times we are not that fortunate, and pending infrastructure project and maintenance, coupled with unexpected maintenance requirements with the steam loco fleet, have ensured that we cannot rest for a minute.

Shortage of steam power has meant that where some services require two steam locos, one has to be diesel-hauled. The green timetable normally requires a diesel multiple unit, but, as we said in the last issue, we haven't actually got one available at the moment, so those services also require a diesel loco. With a limited number of drivers passed for these diesels, it's a roster clerk's nightmare! Well done to them for ensuring that all services are continuing to run.

And it's a good job we have the class 26 until September! Here it is snapped by the Corfe Castle web cam passing the South Western Railway summer service train in the other platform.



Yes, the South Western Railway summer service from Waterloo to Corfe Castle, via the pretty way round the South West, has now run for two weekends. Neither has been without an issue, such that the timetables have not quite been as advertised, but the service for the 22nd June has been cancelled owing to an SWR guards strike. Hopefully, all will be well for the remaining scheduled services.

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Earlier this year, we had a tamper fettling the track in places where it was needed, but they were unable to fettle the bit under Nursery Bridge near Harmans Cross. Owing to a surfeit of moisture in all the wrong places, a complete re-lay of that section was required, but the opportunity to do it was not available until now, so we've been stuck with a speed restriction in the meantime.

The Track Team is now doing that job, but can only work after the daily services have finished. That means working from around 6pm to around 2am, doing a bit at a time. Here are some pictures showing something of the activity required just to replace two sixty foot panels in a shift.

It's about 6pm and the engineering possession of the line has been granted, so the two Road/Rail Vehicles, Big Daddy and Little Sis set about lifting out the two panels for the evening's work.



Then, Little Sis with Richard Fry removes all the old soiled ballast down to a solid bed.



These pictures taken on the 19th June, the next lot on 17th June.

We're two panels further towards Swanage than the next set of pictures.

Billy Johnson with Big Daddy delivers fresh ballast to the worksite.



Richard Fry in Little Sis levels the new ballast. Must have laser eyesight for this job!



Concrete sleepers are delivered from Big Daddy's trailer and lifted into position by Little Sis.

Followed by both RRVs lifting the new rail into position.



Rail is aligned and fixed with Pandrol clips, fishplate joint holes drilled, and by the time the second rail is fixed and the next panel completed and connected to the running line, it will be 2am and time to go home.

Final levelling, lining, complete ballasting and other fettling has to wait for another day, as will clearing away the removed panels and spent ballast.



Another major infrastructure job is the inspection pit for the Wareham service diesel units.



On 14th June, the concrete pump has been and gone, and the bottom of the pit and part of the walkway are hardening as the 12.40 from Swanage with 80104 runs wrong road into Corfe station.



A view from the other end shows the bottom of the pit with some of the reinforcing rod for the sides, and 33 111 moving a set of coaches back to Herston sidings.

As this edition is issued, the contractors are completing the steel reinforcing and the shuttering ready for the next concrete pour.



After 257 Squadron suffered some difficulties in May, extended maintenance has been required, but this will soon be completed.

On 19th June, 34072 has relinquished its connection to *Eddystone's* tender, (or was *Sir Keith Park's*?), and has been reunited with its own tender, recovered from the Big Tender Park at Norden, and is being steam tested.



The T9 no. 30120, as you may know, had its tender derailed at Norden some weeks ago, so hasn't been available for service lately.

The Loco Carriage and Wagon department has the tender jacked up in the loco shed and parts removed for inspection.

With the U class still on the jacks at Herston Works, and needing more repairs than anticipated, the team has been stretched!



We haven't got a Page 3 this time, so let's have a

“What's in the Goods Shed?”



Brake Second Corridor coach S35059 has had an external makeover,

And at the other end, the weekend volunteers are in the throes of a makeover for ex-Southern Railway brake van S56400.



On 19th June, Signal and Telegraph (S&T) volunteers Robin Sowter and John Blyth are grovelling about in the ballast at Swanage.

Are they looking for treasure, hiding the evidence, praying, or maybe just tidying up after a job?



Perhaps that job is the cabling for a lock out key cabinet for the Goods Shed siding. As with the engine shed key operated lock out shown in issue 47 of Swanning Around, this will be to prevent the points and signals being operated for the safety of staff when work is being carried out in this siding.

The box for the key switch is located alongside the concrete base for the water tower.



One of the 4TC group's coaches, a driving trailer second open (DTSO) that isn't being overhauled just yet has arrived at the railway. Better than having it collect storage charges elsewhere, and any parts needed for those coaches which have already received external restoration, can be recovered.

You can find out more about the coaches involved in this project by checking the web site at <http://www.4tc.org.uk/unit/index.php/unit413>



On 14th June, an attempt to cover the coach for protection against the elements was partially successful, with just three people managing to get half the coach covered.



Something we learned, however, was that diesel driver and inspector Dave Gravell was neither in the Navy nor a Boy Scout!

What on earth is that knot?!



The 10.40 from Norden on 5th June passes Harmans Cross signal box as Signal and Telegraph volunteers are constructing a walkway over the point rods and signal wires.



As the 10.40 from Swanage waits at the platform with 26 007, the walkway woodwork gets some weather protection.

And on the 6th June, signalman Stuart Magnus models the finished job for your Swanning Around reporter.



As with most charitable trusts, the Swanage Railway depends on donations of one sort or another to survive. Trading returns are insufficient on their own, so doubtless you will have seen donation boxes around the railway as a small part of our fundraising initiatives.

But how often have people got the small change, or larger, in cash to drop in the box?

Now you don't have to bother looking for the cash, you can donate with your credit or debit card. This first poster at Swanage incorporates a card reader into which you can set your donation amount between £3 and £30 and then just tap your contactless card. Job Done! And almost painless!



Photo from Randy Coldham

Remember the T3? We haven't heard much about it lately, but the Swanage Railway Trust has recently given the go ahead for overhaul to operating condition.

This, of course, will depend on raising sufficient funding.



An appeal has been launched to raise £350,000 and you can read all about it on the Swanage Railway web page at

<https://swanagerailway.co.uk/news/detail/ambitious-350000-appeal-launched-to-return-unique-victorian-steam-locomotive-to-full-working-order>

Anybody interested in a trip to The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway in July?

Tony North has submitted this offer:

The Wimborne Railway Society is organising a coach trip to the Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway, on Sunday the 28th of July,

The coach travel fee is £22 and the coach will leave from Wimborne Allendale Car Park. The entrance fee to the railway is to be paid separately and can be obtained online. Please contact Tony North at tony.north@swanagerrailway.co.uk for further details.

You may want to check the GWSR web site at <https://www.gwsr.com/> as the steam railway may be having a diesel gala on that weekend!

Being a diesel second man is an easy job, isn't it!

Not if you're applying the handbrake on the class 26! Ask Martin Smith!

Here, Martin is winding the numerous turns on the handbrake wheel, which is resisting him all the way, while the driver goes for tea! He'll still be doing it when the tea arrives!



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.

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

and

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