



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 56 – November 22nd 2019

It's still November, but if you needed reminding, it's just about four weeks until Christmas!

Of course you knew! How could you not when it's been Christmas at Sainsbury's since August, the Sony Christmas channel on TV has been active for months, and everywhere you go, commercial enterprises want your money.

No different at the Swanage Railway as the Santa Specials are an important source of revenue when tourism business is a bit slack.

Yes, the Santa Express trains start on 30th November, and preparations are in progress, as you can see on the platform at Swanage.

But help is still needed to ensure we give our customers a good time without wearing out the volunteers. If you would like to join the Santa team, contact Liz Sellen on **07970 666029** or **liz.sellen@swanagerailway.co.uk**.

If you wish to travel on our Christmas trains, including the Christmas Belle, there may still be some availability. Check these out on our web page at

<https://swanagerailway.co.uk/events>



Following the agreement for the Swanage Railway to overhaul the M7, the rolling chassis was moved to Herston Works on 19th November. It was towed from Swanage to the Road/Rail Interchange (RRI) siding the day before, and transported to Herston on the trailer used to move 34028 *Eddystone* from the works to the RRI, of which more later.

That new trailer acquired by S A Smith and driven by our own fireman Gareth Buscombe is a real beast. With most of its ten axles able to steer, and the built-in ramp enabling the tractor unit to remain connected during loading and unloading, it makes the whole job a lot easier.

Check out the trailer steering in this picture of the M7 departing from the RRI.



The M7 soon found itself in the back of the works, and the fitting staff started work immediately



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The very nature of the job means that Rob Tuck is the glamour gift that keeps giving!

Yes, **Rob Tuck is Mucky Man of the Month** again!

He's done a proper job this time!



Now here's some more glamour, the recently-overhauled class 117 Diesel unit for the Wareham service, pictured recently at Eastleigh works.

When's it coming to Swanage? No information available to SA, but rumour has it that it may be ready in a few weeks.





Being unable to lift the boiler into the frames of 34028 *Eddystone* in the car park at Herston, to avoid damage to the tarmac, the rolling chassis was moved from Herston on the S A Smith trailer which brought the M7 (see page 2), the boiler moved by lorry from its previous location, and the pair reunited at the RRI using a large crane.

In the picture above, the ashpan has been fitted under the firebox, and the boiler then lifted onto the chassis, with fine adjustments made to ensure it sits down where it should, below.

The loco was then trailered back to the works for remaining work to be completed.



Our Stothert and Pitt diesel-electric cranes have been in use this month.

Crane No. 2, the ten-tonner, was tripped the short distance from Lakeside siding, over the level crossing, to the RRI where new trainee crane operators were able to commence a training course.

Seen here, on 7th November, No. 2 is on the RRI with crane driver and tutor Keith Bowers, and trainees Jamie Wrightson and Randy Coldham.



On 8th November, no. 2 was tripped back to Lakeside siding at Norden station, and is seen here crossing the road at Norden Gates.

Picture from Dave Irving



Who needs a turntable when you have crane no.1, the fifteen-tonner?

As part of a megashunt to reorganise vehicles at Corfe Castle sidings, the LSWR van used as the Book Van had to be turned round.

Couldn't get access to the turntable at Swanage, so the job was done at Norden on 8th November.

Keith Bowers was in the crane, John Wight providing the turning moment.



As part of the megashunt, the TC coach at Corfe, which had been sheeted over by the TC group, was reunited with its unrestored siblings at Harmans Cross . In doing so, it formed a 3TC set! Something to look forward to when enough coaches have been restored.

Providing the shunting power, class 33 D6515 finds itself in a sandwich with the freight set on the far end.





The Permanent Way Track Team has been at work cutting back the greenery near Dickers Crossing between Swanage and Harmans Cross. Not only has this involved cutting back the extensive growth, but also replacing the boundary fencing which had been lost in the shrubbery.

Seen above, P'Way manager Barry Light, Billy Johnson and Adam Woodman make short work of the timber trashing, revealing what's left of the old fence, seen below.

A date of November 1921 was seen on one of these concrete posts, 98 years prior to this picture on 7th November 2019. They lasted well! Shame there's no wire left!





While the Track Team has been busy at Dickers Crossing, their welfare unit parked nearby did not fare well in the storm we had overnight on 1st November. Don't suppose the roof was designed to resist 90mph winds! However, if it had been on the Isle of Wight with 130mph wind, the whole unit would probably have been in Kent by now!

In the picture above, the roof is looking somewhat detached, and below, David Reeves is inside, pointing to a source of fresh water! Good job there's a kettle to catch it in!

Note all the materials stacked ready for the track re-lay at this location in January.



What was U class 31625 doing on the RRI in early November?
Bored with sharing Imerys clay works shed with the T3 tender?
Fancied a run out?

No! It was brought out of hibernation for some work to be carried out which, in the end, didn't get done! At least the dust was washed off by the rain!

Getting ready for the trip to Norden, Josh Voce oils the moving parts outside the clay works on 1st November.



Once at the RRI, 31625 shares the pad with Big Daddy.



A couple of days later, on 3rd November, the rainbow says that the loco has turned into a pot of gold!

After disappointed volunteers had spent some time looking for the gold, with no luck, the loco was put back in its shed at Imerys clay works.



And now for some nice pictures. This is what Corfe Castle station looks like when the light fades on 3rd November, picture taken by Gary Packer.

The picture below is at around the same time on the same day taken in the opposite direction, from the signal box.



Another Gary Packer picture from 3rd November, this time in daylight, with guard Paul Simons flagging the train away from Swanage.



And last, but definitely not least, on 11th November, a memorial train for one of our most respected drivers, Tony Hallworth, was run.

With 34072 257 *Squadron* suitably presented in respect for Tony, the train leaves Swanage for Norden on the first of two trips with Tony's family on board. Tony's ashes were scattered in the firebox on the second trip.

RIP Tony.

This picture also from Gary Packer



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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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

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

and

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