

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 15 – April 11th 2016

We're now running trains every day through to October, with an unusual Green timetable that takes account of the Wareham service which is now delayed, as reported previously.

Also, the Mineral and Mining Museum is open again for the season, and more on this later.

Not forgetting some stuff about the Spring Steam Gala. We went down the extension to the River Frome! Plenty about that later.

In fact there is a number of changes for us to get used to for the coming season, and, as usual, Swanning Around will be bringing to you all the facts and minutiae that you didn't realise you wanted to know!

As always, plenty of things going on around the railway, and plenty of opportunities for you to get off the sofa and have a day or more helping like-minded people achieve good things at the Swanage Railway. Don't just read about it here – be in it!

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Just one visitor for the Spring Steam Gala, April 8th – 10th, and it is Great Western 2-8-0 tank loco no. 4247, built for heavy freight haulage, and brought in from the Bodmin and Wenford Railway, which I am told is in the Peoples Republic of Kernow! (that's Cornwall to anyone north of Plymouth!)

The loco arrived at the new road/rail interchange on 6th April, and was promptly prepared and steamed along the line under its own power for gauging runs.

Pictured after delivery to Norden, Steam Superintendent Graham Froud oils round, while Pete Frost is in the cab raising steam. Note the protrusion of the cylinders and the size of the rods on this beast.



And here it is moving from Arne Road Engineers Siding (that's the road/rail interchange to you and me!), with Deputy Operations Manager Ashley Haines operating the ground frame.



Both photos – Andrew P M Wright

As always with visiting Great Western outside-cylinder locos, which are generally wider than most other British locos, gauging runs are a must. This time, with miniscule platform clearances in places, it was thought prudent to restrict this loco mostly to the Norden to Worgret section in order to mitigate the risk of the cylinders striking a platform edge.

A disappointing change to the weekend timetable, but necessary to avoid damaging the loco. (and our platforms!)

More later.

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On the gala Saturday, many hands were available with the Sygnets on shed, so the Drivers Cabin was full of everyone else. If you wanted tea, you weren't served through this hatch. Its purpose, it seems, is for telling you to make your own, or to provide a photo opportunity of 80104 coming on shed for coal!



At the other end of the Drivers Cabin is a new fire.

An original Southern Railway waiting room stove has been languishing at Harmans Cross for some time, but, with the acquisition of another incomplete example from the Mid Hants Railway, previously from Portsmouth and Southsea station, a good one has been made from two by diesel fitter Andy Garrett.



Here's what he started with,



and here, Paul McDonald and Ashley Haines are carrying out the necessary performance testing under appropriate conditions!

So if you're stuck at Portsmouth in the cold – tough! We're toasty!

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What's happening in the Goods Shed?

The Wessex Belle dining set of coaches is having a re-paint, one coach at a time, of course. Here is First Open no. 3090 in progress.



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You could never accuse Steam Superintendent Graham Froud of not mucking in!
Those overalls could walk off on their own!

Yes,

Mucky Man of the Month is Froudy!



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Talking of muck, you will remember last month's mucky men down in the stream attempting to uncover something, well(!) they found it!

Looking from directly above, they uncovered the well they were looking for, on the left, and dug out the filter bed.

Looks like more work to do on Tuesdays! Any volunteers?



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The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum is open again for visitors, and there's plenty to see.

A new resident, courtesy of its owner Richard Bentley, is the Ruston 48DL diesel locomotive No. 392117 that worked on Fayles Tramway at Norden until the early 1970s, which has returned to live and run at Norden once again.

I borrowed some of these words from their Facebook page, and you can read the rest at <https://www.facebook.com/purbeckmineralandminingmuseum/>



Thanks to John Rowley for providing this picture of the loco and train of tipper wagons crossing the A351 road north of Corfe Castle in the 1960s. Driver Eli Kitcatt (there's a cracking local name for you!) is holding up some fine vehicles – Thames

Trader, Austin A40 and Bedford Duple coach
(apologies to the bus fans if I got that wrong!).



In the locoshed/workshop, Brian Langdown takes a break from welcoming visitors and, with Wayne Masters and Ian Childs, ponders the upturned bogie frame from a Lister bogie wagon – work in progress!

Behind them is the unmistakable form of the new resident Ruston loco, with its unique four exhaust pipes. Doesn't make it go any quicker! In front of it is the usual resident, a similar model machine, but with only a single exhaust.



There's plenty of other stuff awaiting attention, so more volunteers will be welcomed. Amongst the jobs needing help are these tipper wagons. They will look something like the one below when finished.



See also the facebook page for more pictures of all this stuff and Jake Sque wielding a paintbrush on a refurbished tipper tub.

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Back to the [Spring Steam Gala](#) and the extended services to the River Frome, the limit of Swanage Railway operations close to bridge 4. (not to be confused with the boundary with Network Rail at Bridge 2 about one fifth of a mile further).

Now let's get one thing clear.

Down in these parts, Frome is pronounced "Froom" as in "Doom" and "Gloom"! Why is this? No idea! Must be something to do with the natives! Or something in the water! If you disagree with this useless fact and know something different, please submit your evidence with a ten pound note to the usual address!

To get these trains to their destination, the new Norden Gates level crossing was used for scheduled passenger trains for the first time, albeit under local control as indicated in the previous issue of Swanning Around. In this picture, Mike Banks, acting as handsignalman, (that's him, the orange dot in the distance!) has wound the points across for the

main line and is standing at the signal with a green flag, while crossing keeper Roger Pleasant waits on the handy platform to exchange single line tokens with the approaching train led by visitor locomotive 4247.



Down the line (or should it be Up the line? - discuss!) at the River ~~Froom~~ Frome, the 12.00 service from Swanage on Sunday 10th stands behind the Worgret Junction distant signal (that yellow light beyond the train) at bridge 4. 4247 is at the far end, while 34070 "Manston" and driver Pete Doel at this end await the transfer of the single line token and the conductor driver, who is making his way along the lineside.

That is Bridge 5, Cobbs Lane, in the foreground. Strange name for a bridge over a stream!



As usual, Andrew P M Wright, the official photographer, was on hand to record the first of

these trains on Friday 8th April (history was made, etc....., again!).

Andrew's long-lens picture here accentuates the gradient of 1 in 78 up from the river's flood plain to Holme Lane bridge, as 4247's driver Nigel Clark gives it some beans, and fireman Ashley Haines leans from the cab, counting the sleepers. U class 31806 is at the trailing end.



Of interest here are the distant signal just visible behind the train and the cabling marking the location of track circuiting. This latter, along with the approach treadle close to Holme Lane bridge, appears on the signalling panel at Network Rail's Basingstoke signalling centre, so the Network Rail signallers were able to see the progress of Swanage Railway trains on this section. They might have got a surprise if our Corfe signalman hadn't told them that these trains were running! I'm sure they were told, weren't they? If you were a Corfe signalman and didn't, you can confess to me in confidence on production of the usual fee!

-----ooOoo-----

The new buffet facility at Norden, the Norden Kiosk, is now open for business. It is a smaller concern than the previous buffet coach being located in the waiting shelter building, but has proved to be very popular in its first few weeks. In order to keep it open, some new volunteers are required to man it. If you have even a smidgeon of interest, then find buffet manager Penny Smith or Chris Miles at Swanage or email her on penny.smith@swanagerailway.co.uk to find out what is involved. If you are a first time volunteer, make sure you contact the volunteer co-ordinator, details on page 7.



It's 25th March, first day of daily services, and Peter Sykes and Maureen Mitchell welcome some customers into the kiosk.

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As reported last time, the Wareham Project Office handed over project responsibility to the Swanage Railway Company at the end of March. To coincide with this, there was Project Wareham Seminar 4 at Harmans Cross village hall on April 2nd to update us. Outgoing senior project manager Frank Roberts gave us an extensive overview of what had been achieved during the time of his tenure, and

project director Mark Woolley rounded off with news of the outstanding tasks. Here, Mark Woolley explains what's happening with the refurbishment of the DMUs by Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh Works. Apparently, our job is small beer for wheelset suppliers, so the lead times we have been given are affected by their desire to prioritise more lucrative contracts for the main line companies! I'm sure Mr. Branson wouldn't mind waiting while they do ours? Not! Hmm! That's heritage for you!



There's still plenty of paperwork to do, including some for the level crossing, so no time to sit back and rest just yet. The service to Wareham is still planned to start with the 50-day trial next year. We will be given more info when completion dates for various deliverables are clearer.

For those of you with access to the staff website, the presentation material and Site-Eye time-lapse videos of the civil engineering works for the level crossing for the three months September to November 2015 are there for you to view.

The project office team expertise will not leave us, though. Frank will be continuing to volunteer on the railway, as he has done for many years before, Nichola Watts will also be volunteering, and Jon Bridgland has been selected for the paid post as Business Development Manager. Good wishes to all!

-----ooOoo-----

Some awkward people ask me why I am never in Swanning Around.

The answer is, of course, that Swanning Around is about hot news and interesting stuff and encouraging people to volunteer!

So to keep them quiet, here's a picture of me on 80104 taken by Peter Milford last Saturday.

Ugly mug of the month, my son says!



Sorry if anybody feels discouraged!
Feel free to insert perforations either side of this pic and use elsewhere!

-----ooOoo-----

Early Warning!

Diesel Gala and Beer Festival, including other attractions, May 5th to 8th.

See

<http://swanagerailway.co.uk/events/detail/diesel-gala-2>

for details.

Be there, or in the beer tent, or both!

-----ooOoo-----

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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