

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 7 – August 4th 2015

Summer comes soonest in the South, so the famous poster goes, and we've seen some of it already.

But you know when summer has really arrived in the Isle of Purbeck (not in the Purbecks, as some would have it – there's **only one Purbeck!**) when the school holidays start, Morebus lifts the lids off their open-top buses on Route 50 to Bournemouth, the camp sites at Harman's Cross and Norden turn into small villages, and the Swanage Railway's yellow timetable peak season service starts.

Oh, and

the rain's warm! And lots of it!



This was July 24th, the day after the crane was in the bus depot, the open-top buses are stood down, and it's tipping it down!

Yes, it's another proper British summer!

Just got to do the leaflets for swimming lessons in the turntable pit and we are ready for anything!

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On the subject of the yellow timetable, don't forget the **evening diesel service** will be running every day until the end of August, timetables available at stations and on the Swanage Railway website

<http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/>

Stop press! Looks like Crompton + coaches for a while as the DMU is hors de combat with engine trouble.

Weather's picked up, though!

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It's Harman's Cross, and if you think back to the first issue of Swanning Around in February, you will remember that there was a little bit of landscape gardening required. Here you see it is nearly finished, and in the picture below, a

committee decision has been finalised – how to spell SR!
 This will be set in concrete to ensure they can't change their minds!
 (completed yesterday, go and see it – ed)



L to r, Mike Ellis, Bob Bunyar, Jeff Gregory, and Dave Castle look pleased with their morning's effort – time for tea!

-----ooOoo-----



Guard and guard inspector Martyn Curtler finds out what happens when you run your train to 'Curtler time' instead of railway time. It's PNB



time locked in the DMU cage by the platform staff!

Swanage porter David Hales looks pleased with himself – it was nothing to do with him, of course!

-----ooOoo-----

Who's Who?



In the new workshop, diesel fitter Andy Garrett uses old technology to repair an oil feeder. Daisy the DMU says he's going to be busy this week!



Mike Leach does one of the least glamorous but very essential jobs of clearing everybody else's rubbish to the recycling bins at Swanage.



SRC Finance Director Andrew Moore has found his true vocation lounging in a guards van. Looks happy. Budgets all tickety-boo, then?

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This isn't what Swanning Around, and particularly Page 3, is all about, but I have to tell you that our Grubby Puss from issue 4 has passed on.

Ringwood the 71B shed cat was found by the early crew on 25th July, and has been laid to rest on the railway. She will have a suitable memorial plaque fixed at her place of rest.

Now you may think all of this is a bit soppy about a cat, but most of us loved Ringwood as much as she loved us, and she will be much missed.



Ringwood actually belonged to a house across the road from the shed, but spent nearly all her time with us. When she first turned up, nobody knew where from until a visit to the vet revealed her real home, and the name 'Bubbles'. Her owners soon found out that she had adopted us, and were not unhappy about it.

Whenever there were people at the shed, she was there, whether at 4 in the morning prepping for a photo shoot, or at midnight disposing an evening turn steam loco.

In the five or six years she had been with us, she had learned to cross the road safely, and to cross our running lines in accordance with the rule book (mostly!).



If she wasn't coveting attention around the shed, you could find her curled up in the bothy on someone's overalls.

Many was the time that the late shift had to eject her from the bothy before locking up. No more.

RIP Ringwood

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Feature this month is on Telecomms. It's a department which gets lost amongst all the railway activity, but is essential to support the communications required to run the organisation and the trains. They are usually on site every Thursday.



Here, Bob Knight, Terry Otter, Stuart Nutbeem, and Dave Johnson are repairing the internal telephone cable to the Bird's Nest Buffet.

The cable developed a fault in the trunking running under the platform at Swanage, a fault so serious it took four people to fix it! When the repaired cable was fed back into the trunking, the plum job of pulling it through fell to Bob. Here he is under the floor in Station House, another sit-down job!



Meanwhile, in the small workshop/exchange room at Harmans Cross station, Peter Harris repairs a group selector from the Strowger exchanges on which the railway's internal phone system is based.



Another picture shows him examining a relay set in an exchange unit on the rack which carries the small exchange at Harmans Cross. There is some authentic test equipment behind him.

Strowger exchanges have been around since the nineteenth century – and it looks like it! If you know what a group selector in a Strowger exchange is, you know where to volunteer!



Apart from the internal phones, there are also the telephone concentrators in the signal boxes. These connect lineside phones at signals, crossing places, etc. to the nearest signal box, and between the 'boxes, and are pure British Railways complexity!



They look confusing enough from the outside, but you need to know what you are doing with the inside. Terry Otter has the front open exposing the multitude of apparently un-labelled wires behind the switches.



Imagine what the cabinet underneath must look like. Good job Terry knows what he's doing!

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When I was out and about, I came across Bob Payne PAT testing. Does anyone know who PAT is and why she requires testing? Perhaps she knows Bridg'it, who I've also heard about on the grapevine?

If you don't understand what's going on here, don't worry, neither do I! But someone out there does! Perhaps we'll know more in due course, and I can report it here.

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Back in the real world at Corfe Castle, several groups are beavering away out of the public eye, including the self-styled Restorations Department. Consisting largely of Geoff and June Neale, Norman Blears, Stan Westcott, Shawn Sharp, and Bob Payne (and PAT?), most projects they are handling have something to do with wood. They can be seen in action on any Sunday, weather permitting.



June finishes painting a platform barrow, while Geoff and Norman, in the background, set about creating yet another van door. Check out the quality of their work on the van behind June. That fence is their handiwork, too.

Most of the wagons at Corfe have been subject to their attention, not to mention platform barrows, seating, fencing, door frames, etc.



Check the finish on this van. Bet it's not like that on the other side!



A few months ago, this van was work in progress. Norman and Geoff cut new panels for the doors.



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Finials for signals? No! For the roof of Corfe Station House! I am not sure that these are totally the work of the Restorations Department, they didn't make these in a Shocvan! I wouldn't expect to see them up a ladder fixing them either!



Is there no end to this man's talent? Not satisfied with refurbishing the LSWR van for use as The Book Wagon, Geoff has also scratch-built a 4mm scale replica, including the horse-shunting towing loop. The model also contains the books! There's dedication!

They do some nice work - better than my photography!

Note to self: must do better for the next issue!

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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Compiled and edited by John Denison
swanning.around@swanagerailway.co.uk

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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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