



Swanning Around

Incorporating GM's Jottings

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 41 – August 27th 2018

Holiday time, and the heatwave continues. Or it did until this week, and that's good news on the fire risk front.

And holidays means Swanning Around even later in the month than usual. Next month's issue may be deliberately early with reduced content to get us back to the middle of the month—a short tack as sailors might say! On the other hand, it may depend on available time, as usual!

As we said last time, the Swanage Railway has managed the fire risk situation well enough (with occasional help from the Fire Service!) to avoid substitution of steam by diesels. However, as this is written, we could do with some more heat—it's ""ing cold and very wet today (26th August)! British summer?

The summer holiday high season is critical to the fortunes of this railway, providing a very large slice of the annual fare income, and this time last year, we were short of steam power and had to use diesel, and this cost us in terms of bums on seats. Fortunately, we have not had to substitute diesels because of the fire risk, so we are hopeful that passenger numbers are as expected. There's no GM's Jottings this time, so perhaps he will tell us next month how well we've done (or not!).

The South Western Railway services into Corfe appeared to have brought additional visitors until the RMT strike meant that these services aren't running, except for 25th August, which is now scheduled to be the last one.

And some almost late news in this issue—71A Locomotives' class 33 'Crompton' D6515, main line registered and based at Swanage, was pressed into use on a main line 'Thunderbird' job on 23rd August. Some pictures in here!

Read on!

The T9 has been out of action again recently, owing to a leaky steam pipe.

As you might expect, steam pipes don't last for ever, and this one had grown mighty thin, with a number of holes appearing, and a tap with a handy chisel shows how thin the metal has become.

Here's the offending part, which sits on top of the cylinder block, in the smokebox. The threaded boss is for the cylinder lubrication pipe.



A replacement part was manufactured by our loco maintenance team, and the loco is back in service, seen here on 18th August leading the 15.20 service out of Swanage. Signalman Andrew Moody hands the single line token to the fireman while driver Bryan Hardwick isn't counting the ballast or sleepers, he's just looking back down the train! The narrow cab of the T9 means you have to lean out a long way to see anything behind.



The Sygnets Barbecue

The Sygnets had their summer BBQ in August.

An invite was sent inviting any members of staff who would like to meet the volunteers of the future....they were bribed by the offer of a free burger.

The train crews of the day were fed at Corfe as they passed through. The South Western Railway (SWR) crew of the Wareham shuttle were fed too.



A special thank you to the staff at Corfe for allowing us to use their garden.

Also a thank you to the SWR staff for allowing our youngsters a ride to Wareham and back.



Earlier in the day a track walk was undertaken from Corfe to Norden with all aspects of track safety explained.

This is all part of the training that our youngsters have with the intention of keep them as safe as possible in and around the railway environment either here at Swanage or elsewhere.

At Norden the opportunity was taken to watch how Norden Gates cabin operates and a big thank you to Mike Banks for his willingness to explain.



Let us pray?
Don't think so!

What would we
do without our
phones?!



Words and pictures for this event provided by Sygnets Leader Steve Barker. Other leaders are available, but more are needed. Numbers of Sygnets that can be accommodated are restricted by the availability of adults to lead, and, as always, more are required.

If you are interested in helping our younger members progress, you know where to enquire. Enquiring is free, and there's no commitment if it's not for you. Why not give it a go?

Sygnets visit to GCR 2018

Words and pictures provided by Steve Barker

Two mini buses of Sygnets and leaders set off early on the morning of 4th June for a visit to the Great Central Railway (GCR) at Loughborough.

We were met by Alan Pakes (now I have heard his name somewhere else) at Loughborough. His good lady wife Alex joined us and as we were shown round the loco shed they both gave us an insider's view with their many years of experience.



After some lunch we enjoyed a trip down to Leicester and one of the lads, Max, expressed interest in alighting at Rothley, to look round the model railway and possibly the signal box. Well we never did get to see the model railway as we were welcomed into the box by a familiar faceI've seen him somewhere before too. He did make a good cup of tea!

All too quickly the rest of the party returned back from Leicester and we re-joined them for the ride back to Loughborough.

We were then kindly invited to visit the yard at Swithland (normally out of bounds to the public). We were made more than welcome and the Yard “manager” gave us an insight and explanation of the set up. Whilst there the opportunity to film passing trains was too tempting to turn down.



The days visit was a great success and it was wonderful for the Sygnets to see the inside of another railway.

A big thank you to Alan and Alex for their patience and obvious enthusiasm for the GCR and also to all the other staff that we bumped into during the day.



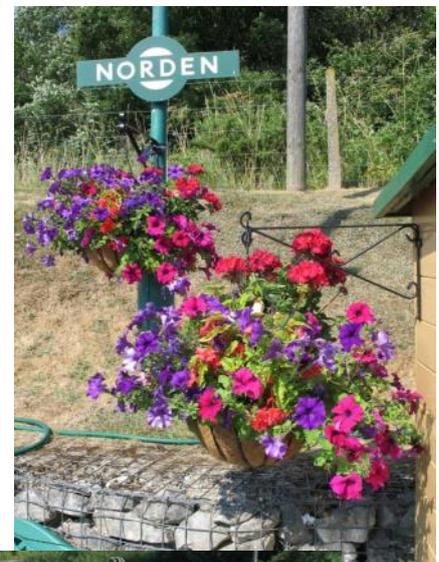
Alan Pakes and the Rothley signalman Graham White are very familiar to us as they both volunteer at Swanage. In fact , many of our volunteer staff also volunteer at other heritage railways, such as the GCR, West Somerset, Bluebell, Mid Hants, Llangollen, Churnet Valley, Severn Valley, Kent and East Sussex, and more!

Also seen, above, were locos familiar to the Sygnets. *Oliver Cromwell* has visited the Swanage Railway and the Fowler diesel shunter is similar to the one the Sygnets are restoring at Corfe Castle.

Remember the Multi-fingered Worker of the Month in issue 38?

Rob Barrett's hard work has been completed by the station team at Norden, and the raised bed is providing a welcoming splash of colour for our visitors.

Even in the recent dry weather, the flowers around the station have been watered regularly, giving a bright contrast against the dry ground around.



Mike Brown provided these pictures, and writes:

I managed to get a pic of TTI Thomas Masters watering the plants. The porters and others have done a fab job during the heatwave keeping the station looking great. We were still getting fab comments from passengers and staff regarding the upkeep of Norden and the whole of the line during our visit last weekend.

A job well done!

Now a couple of project updates to keep you in the loop.

First the T3 no. 563.

As previously reported, the loco is at the Flour Mill Workshop in the Forest of Dean for stripping and evaluation. The boiler has been removed, and externally looks in surprisingly good condition, considering that the inner firebox has been declared as life-expired. We are awaiting removal of the said firebox to make a full evaluation of the boiler condition.

The rolling chassis is a different story. To quote from the latest report:

“No.563 appears to be in quite remarkable mechanical condition. The chassis appears to be a freshly overhauled locomotive from Eastleigh.

The slide valves appear to be brand new and the motion looks like it has only just been put up after overhaul. There are machining scraping marks on the white metal bearings that show that the bearings have only just been used as you would normally expect these marks to be worn away with persistent use. “

The tender, however, is certainly a candidate for some work, and we may get a fuller report on all this condition after the holiday period.

Holidays in August? What are people thinking? They probably wish they hadn't on 26th August!

Here's a picture of the boiler out of the frames at the Flour Mill Workshop, from the management team.



Now the 4TC set restoration at the Midland Railway Centre.

You can check out the status of this project for yourselves at

<http://www.4tc.org.uk/unit/index.php>

And here's a couple of pictures from the web site of the latest repairs to Trailer Brake Second Corridor vehicle no.70824.

Additional work has been found such that costs increase, so your contributions are even more important.

Dig deep!



Before



After

Both pictures borrowed from the 4TC web site

The old and new at Corfe Castle on 25th August.

South Western Railway class 159 Express Sprinter diesel unit 159 005 built 1992 alongside the T9, built 1899, at Corfe Castle station.

The 159 is providing SWR's Saturday service from Basingstoke to Corfe, with a couple of shuttles to Wareham, and a later return to Waterloo, the pretty way via Weymouth, Salisbury, etc.. Standing room only when it arrived from Basingstoke, we are told!



Photo: Robin Moira White

The 14.10 service from Corfe to Wareham on 25th August passes the level crossing at Norden Gates, as crossing keeper Paul Clements hands the single line token to the driver.



Owing to the RMT union strike, 25th August could be the last day this SWR service runs.

The Floating Compensator

Yes, a compensator that should have been fixed to the ground, wasn't! This resulted in the signalman at Swanage operating lever 12 to switch the points to allow trains to enter or leave platform 1, and the points doing nothing!

The concrete stools holding the compensator base plate had broken, hence the floating bit.

For clarity, the compensator absorbs expansion and contraction of the point operating rods, so that other adjustments in service are generally not required, unlike the signalling wires, which are manually adjusted inside the signal box.

Here, on 20th August, S&T Manager Tony North sits on a new stool while he and technician Michael Paul discuss adjustments. The compensator itself has already been removed. The offending points are in the distance, over Michael's shoulder.



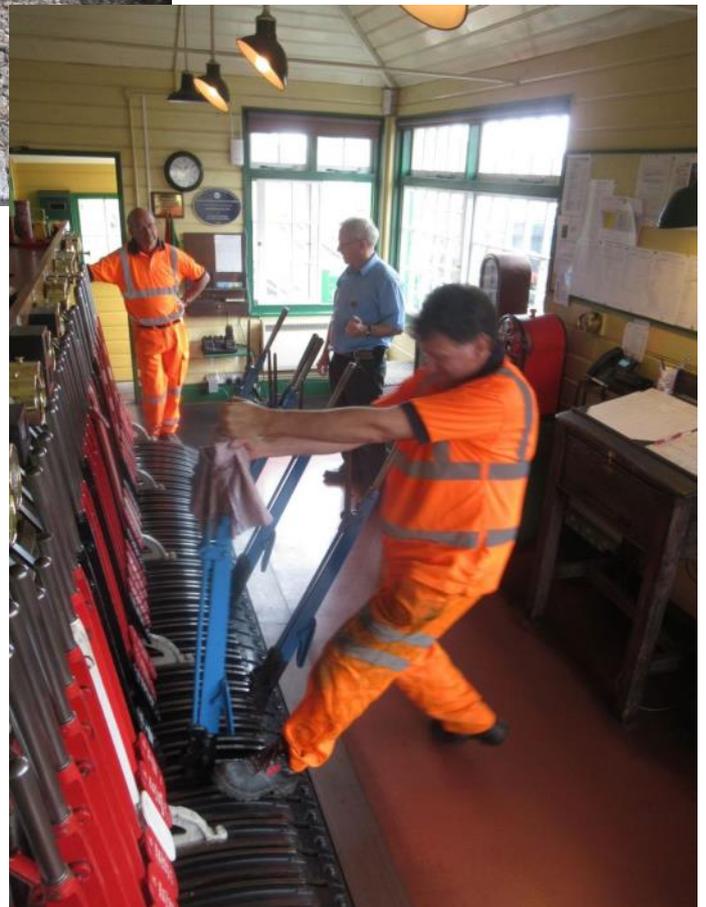
Tony and Michael, with help from Mike Soutjhey, wrestle the first broken stool out from under the point rodding.

Even a broken one is heavy!

It's the 23rd August, and the new stools have been installed, and the compensator, on the right, has been restored to its proper position.



At the points, Michael Paul makes adjustments, while Geoff Poskitt talks to the signalman by radio.



Finally, signalman Malcolm Munro offers Michael the opportunity to test the operation before the repair is signed off.

Hell's Bells! This is hard work!

More adjustment required!

The Dorset Coast Express

The Dorset Coast Express, operated by West Coast Railways and featuring that fine A4 class no. 60009 *Union of South Africa* at its head, made a fine sight at speed from London Waterloo to Weymouth on Thursday 23rd August.

Not so for the return! Call the Swanage Railway for help!

The class 47 diesel no. 47 580 on the tail end to haul the train back to Southampton had failed at Weymouth, so West Coast called up Swanage Railway to provide 71A Locomotives' main line registered class 33 no. D6515 to go to the rescue.

Volunteers appeared at short notice to get the loco to the national network at Wareham.



D6515 was attached to the 18.00 departure from Swanage to get it to Norden.

Photo: Robin Moira White.



Arriving at Weymouth.

Photo from Gary Packer



D6515 is attached to the Dorset Coast Express at Weymouth station, ready to take the delayed train to Clapham Junction, and the stock to the depot at Southall.

Photo from Gary Packer

Giving it the beans at speed through Holton Heath with 10 coaches and an A4 behind, in failing light at 20.10, around three hours later than originally scheduled.



And at the scheduled stop at Bournemouth.

Photo from Gary Packer



The Great Dorset Steam Fair

The Swanage Railway had an organised presence at the GDSF, which ran from 23rd to 27th August, in the form of a marquee promoting the railway, and volunteering in particular. By the time you read this, it will all over bar the mud bath trying to get everything off the site!

Many of our volunteers were also there, some manning the marquee, some not, much to the chagrin of our roster clerks!



To avoid denuding the railway of volunteers, some lifesize cardboard cutouts were used, of Rachel Fairbank from Passenger Services and Steven Duncalfe from Operations.

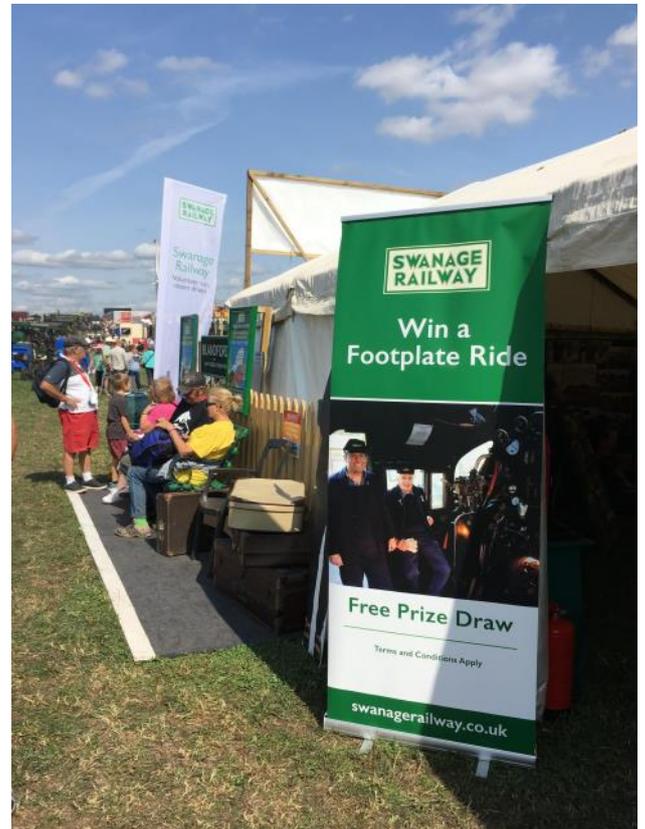
We wonder what these can be used for after the show?!

Suggestions on the usual £20 note!

And here's another one!

But no! This is the real Barry Light, Permanent Way Manager, who, along with Pat Cattle our Estates Manager, and others, helped Trustee Jacqui Hagger set up the display.





As you can see from these pictures, a lot of work went into our presence there, and thanks are due to all who helped over the time from setting up to taking down.

All steam fair pictures borrowed from Pat Cattle's Facebook submission.

Seen on 9th August, on a test run at Harmans Cross.

Yes, 257 Squadron works. Hopefully back in service very soon.



Photo: Bob Bunyar

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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Views expressed in 'Swanning Around' are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily the views of the Swanage Railway Trust or the Swanage Railway Company. No liability accepted for errors or inaccuracies.

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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

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

and

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