

## A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 12 – January 17<sup>th</sup> 2016

Well, that's Christmas over and done with! Santa trains were very well patronised, the Winter Warm Up was hot, and the New Year was, er.. new!

Services through January into February are weekends only in the hands of the class 108 DMU, so the only steam movement after the New Year has been a couple of days' photo charters by TimeLine Events, featuring the M7 and the T9 on its last steaming day on our railway during this visit. Hopefully, a picture in the next issue.

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With Santa back in Lapland, or Wimborne, or wherever he came from, Passenger Services can be given a pat on the back for the organisation and delivery of 40 Santa Specials carrying close to 9000 happy customers.

To all intents and purposes, every train went out full, with only a handful of single seats and disabled spaces unoccupied.

The challenge is to do the same for at least three more days of Santa Specials in 2016!

Three more days? That means more help required! Make sure you block out your diary for Santa Specials in 2016.

If you haven't done it before, there's very little training required, and you only have to have your legs shortened by a little bit to be one of Santa's elves!

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### Who's Who



New cleaner George Dibbon (I) and cleaner John Flynn take a break at the shed. Whilst John has been volunteering for a while, George has just moved up from the Sygnets, our junior (under 16) group.

Moving up from cleaner to cleaner-passed-for-firing, Steven Duncalfe completes a footplate father-and-son, with dad Pete, a driver, who has been volunteering for around 40 years, I believe.

Here he is on his third rostered turn, on the M7 at the Winter Warmer mini-gala.



Also moving up to passed cleaner is Len Idle, slightly further up the age scale! Doesn't matter who you are, if you're fit enough to do the job, we need you!



Diesel Traction Inspector Dave Gravell points to a strange device – it's a steam loco, Dave!



Yes, Dave, you ARE going to push it! There's no budget for diesel fuel on this job! General Manager Matt Green ensures resources aren't wasted!



Times are hard! Why use shunter fuel when manpower will do? This fish van is going in the shed for a buffer repair, and if it's lucky, a lick of paint too! This is the latest in a series of our goods wagons receiving a tidy-up. Too often, they are left to moulder in a remote siding, and only come out for galas. Contact Operations Manager Nick Lloyd if you are interested in assisting with this and/or any future smartening-up jobs.

### Mucky Man of the Month!



About time Paul Williams got proper dirty! Well, he did volunteer to clean the smokebox of the T9 on Shed Cleaning Day,

January 16<sup>th</sup>. See another view of him in the report on pages 5/6.

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In December’s issue, we told you about the bridge inspections by Dorset County Council, but there’s another picture worth showing. The inspectors don’t shirk when inspecting, and quite what these two are doing on or in Bridge 18, the footpath bridge at Corfe Common, is open to interpretation – you decide!



Picture from Trevor Parsons, the guard for the day. Yes, even the Company Chairman is out there seeing what’s going on!

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Another item in issue 11 was about the access platform being built by Small Works, for the engine shed.

Here’s the finished article, being modelled by new cleaner George Dibbon.



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Think yourselves lucky that Swanning Around doesn’t have Smell-o-Vision! Fraser White attends to a blocked drain under

Harmans Cross signal box.

Think of the risks involved in producing SA when the photographer has to get this close to unpleasantness! ( No! I didn’t mean you, Fraser!)

Just another of the exciting jobs awaiting volunteers – I can hear the sound of swiftly moving feet!

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## Project Wareham

You may have read elsewhere that implementation of the trial service to Wareham has been put back to early 2017, owing to non-availability of refurbished wheelsets for our diesel units.

This has come about owing to the difficulty in finding a supplier who can take time out from normal business to tackle our small quantity of non-standard components.

Fortunately, through hard work and persuasion, we have a supplier, but, unfortunately, the axles and bearings have been found not to meet the necessary Railway Group Standards required for main line operation.

Owing to corrosion of the axle material, which cannot safely be machined away, we have to wait for new axles and bearings to be acquired from South Africa and USA respectively, and these suppliers also have to fit these in with their normal work, so it's not a short lead-time.

Halfords doesn't do this stuff, so we just have to wait!

At Norden Gates, the road/rail interchange (RRI) should be complete in the next few weeks with erection of the road signs and the removable barrier. The signalling and level crossing is complete and just awaits commissioning.

The view from Arne Road bridge on 11 Jan 2016.



Compare this view with one taken from the same place in 1987 that Andrew PM Wright has dug out from his archives.



Give yourself a gold star if you can identify these trees!

With the Norden station to Arne Road track changes and signalling installations complete, the track diagram in Corfe Castle signal box needs updating. On January 12, volunteer S & T technicians Roy Harrison and Paul Norris (r) fit track circuit detection indicators to the new track diagram board.





Further up the line, the permanent way team, or Track Team as they like to call themselves, has been busy lifting and re-laying a length of track north of Grange Road bridge, seen above.

Below, Richard Fry in “Li'l Sis” (yes, and the other road/rail excavator is “Big Bro”!) clears the contaminated material away from the track bed, before the track panels are re-laid by crane FBC1.



Just some local ballasting and tamping the whole extension left to do to bring the track up to the standard required to run passenger trains. It's nearly there!

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Part of the station building at Norden is being converted for use as a catering outlet. On a sunny but very cold Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January, David Budd, appropriately, is busy applying insulation to the building.

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Saturday January 16<sup>th</sup> was Shed Cleaning Day. Not that cleaning doesn't get done on other days, but we are encouraged on this special day by tea, biscuits, buns, and some new tools! Yes, and some brooms with actual bristles!



Amongst the list of jobs, T9 no. 3012 was spruced up, inside and out, prior to leaving us, its next

appearance being at the Mid Hants Railway Spring Steam Gala in February.

The U class 31806 also had some serious attention prior to having a holiday from Swanage at the Great Central Railway's Winter Steam Gala at the end of January.

Other jobs included painting in the locker room, drinking tea, painting in the drivers' cabin, eating biscuits, cleaning and lubricating the turntable, eating iced buns, cleaning out the oil and cleaning stores, drinking more tea, etc., etc., you get the picture!



Cleaner Ian Jamieson came all the way from West London-ish for a fun day cleaning out the oily mess in the cleaning materials store! And christened his

new boots!



At the end of the day, a team photo, although some had already left for home by this time. Are you in the picture? If not, why weren't you there? I was! (that's me, far right)

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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](mailto:mike.whitwam@corfestation.f2s.com) or [volunteer@swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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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