

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 16 – May 13th 2016

Summer's coming! Yes! The rain's warming up nicely!

That means more people looking to visit Dorset attractions, and we're looking to be at the front of the list.

Kicking this off in May, a bank holiday, followed by the annual diesel gala, then another bank holiday. But still lots happening behind the scenes to report in Swanning Around.

-----ooOoo-----

Work at Corfe Castle station continues.

The contractors are getting on with the painting, and the results are becoming clear to see.

But some of our own volunteers have been active as well.

A new finial that made an appearance in issue 7 is now resplendent on the ridge of station house, and retired chippy John Piper has been up there making sure all the decorative woodwork on the gable end is in top condition.

The contractors are presently painting under the canopy when it's wet, and working on the Lamp Hut in the garden when it's dry enough. In the picture from the webcam taken on 11th May, you can see the sea fog creeping in behind the castle. Not the best conditions.



John Piper repairs and prepares the gable woodwork on 31st March



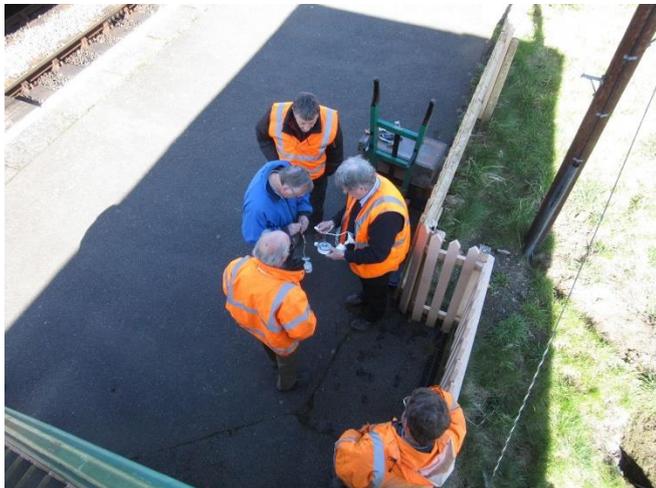
Contractors Stephen and Gary are spray painting the roof of the lamp hut as Manston departs with a train for Norden. I'm sure I saw them rubbing down by sliding down the roof sitting on a sheet of sandpaper!

In March, the weather got into the webcam attached to the signal box and caused it to fail.

Company Secretary , network wiz, and general xspurt Peter Milford (that's a tenner he owes

me!) arranged for a new, higher resolution, camera to be installed. See the improved quality in the picture on the previous page.

We're always short of volunteers – how many does it take to install a camera? It's six!



Peter Milford (middle right) has collared the telecomms team (you met them in issue 7) from another job, and a planning meeting is in progress. It takes at least four to decide what to do with that wire!

Six? Yes. Pat Cattle and his handy scaffold tower were also needed to screw it to the woodwork.

At present, there is also a webcam on trial on Swanage signalbox. Watch your back! You might be on telly!

-----ooOoo-----

Now, the railway can get through quite a few tons of coal, especially at a steam gala, and, when there is storage at the shed for only about 25 tons, prompt deliveries of replacement stock is vital.

So, on April 11th, after the steam gala and with a delivery late, Manston's crew struggled to make the best of nothing and had to 'borrow' some bags of coal intended for the steam crane.



Fireman Nathan Au, always efficient, eliminates double handling and demonstrates firing by the bag!



Both photos courtesy of the driver, Nick Hanham

The late shift crew of Paul Sheppee and Jonathan Cooper were in even more trouble until the coal lorry turned up, and the paling fence at Corfe had to be guarded to ensure it wasn't used for fuel!

Page 3

It's increasingly difficult to find someone new getting mucky, so, for a change, in future other glamorous(?) entries may be included, such as 'Grumpy Guard', 'Metaphysical Manager', (look it up! Several different meanings!), 'Diligent Driver', 'Faultless Fireman', etc., etc..

You know where to send the suggestions!

So maybe something different for page 3 next month, so watch out, there's a hack with a camera about!
It could be you!

-----ooOoo-----

The Diesel Gala has come and gone for another year. Some people out there may be asking

“why do we do it?”

This is Why!



Visiting locos, like this one, attract additional enthusiasts to our railway. Those people who have spent enormous amounts of man hours and cash to get their pride and joy to this condition also get the opportunity to see it running and to collect some hire fees.

Andrew Lacy in the driving seat should be justifiably proud of the 19 years he has put in helping to get 2000hp class 40 no. D213 'Andania' to this condition. This gala was its first operating outing since completing restoration. The paint is just three weeks old.

And this



2500hp class 46 no. D182, in similar fresh-out-of-the-box condition.

And this



Guard Luke Lockton flags away another train loaded to standing room only, and the platform still looks like rush hour!

The warm, sunny weather may also have influenced the visitor numbers.

And this



Driver Steve Barker and GM's PA Amanda Hardy welcome another driving experience customer at Arne Road siding. Two days were allocated for these opportunities of driving a class 33 'Crompton' from our home fleet from here to the River Frome at bridge 4 and return.

And this



Sunday 8th May saw brake van rides to bridge 4, topped and tailed by our two diesel shunters. The Queen Mary Appreciation Society has done a fine job getting these vans up to scratch. (pictures above and below - Andrew P M Wright)

And this



The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum's two diesels were out doing demonstration runs, including the recently-arrived Ruston 48DL reported in issue 15 of SA. Here, Aaron Hunt watches arrivals at Norden station. Those four exhaust pipes are non-standard go-faster additions, but it doesn't go any quicker!

And this



General Manager Matt Green mans the stand at Swanage selling souvenir mugs, glasses, beer, programmes, etc.

And this



Visiting 'Warship' class diesel no. D832 'Onslaught' drifts through sylvan surroundings past Norden Heath crossing, bridge 13, and Woodpecker Siding on preview day, 5th May, with the only return service to travel the full length of the Swanage Railway during the diesel event.

Home fleet class 33 'Crompton' D6515 brought up the rear.

Platelayers hut decoration by local artists!

And this

The income!

Rumour has it that we had surpassed last year's total by Saturday lunchtime. That is some feat! Thanks are due to all those involved in organising this event, which is no spur of the moment thing. They are probably working on next year's event already!
Well done everybody!

-----ooOoo-----

This is something we don't see too often – diesels being cleaned!

Prior to the gala, 71A group members Dave Gravell and Richard Kirwin give two of our class 33s a good clean, 33 201 nearest, and D6515 furthest, the latter just returned from a protracted visit to the Midlands for remedial work on its new axles.



Perhaps we should have a regular gang to clean our diesel fleet, including the shunters and railcar unit.

Anyone interested?
Drop me an email.

-----ooOoo-----

You might have thought that handing over the Norden to Worgret section for normal running at 25mph means there's nothing more for the Permanent Way Track Team to do. Not a bit of it!

Still work to do on the extension, and week commencing 25th April it was sleeper and bridge beam replacement at bridge 3 over the River Frome.

A track panel has been lifted, creating a hole, and the track team is looking into it! (sorry, but the old ones really are the best!)



With the panel removed, the team sets about replacing the sleepers.



But, you can't start work until you get to the site!

While Simon from Andrews Plant Hire clears the fuel system on Little Sis near Holme Lane, there's a queue forming behind.



Now it's not all frantic action being a goods guard!

John Stopher takes appropriate action during another stoppage for fuel trouble, this time near bridge 5.



It has to be said that there is a lot of hanging about for drivers and guards on permanent way work, just like the old days. A perfect re-creation of the 1960s!

On 10th May, progress is being made on the headshunt for Arne Road Siding.

A retaining wall is being installed to stabilise the embankment prior to installing the track.

Road/Rail Vehicle Little Sis is being used to push stakes in the ground while Big Bro (that's the one with the wheels) awaits its next duty scraping the bank.



-----ooOoo-----

Meanwhile, in Herston Works, progress is not as planned owing to the non-appearance of two overhauled boilers from the contractor in the North-East.

Consequently, the N class overhaul is having a short holiday.



But the re-metalled driving axle boxes have arrived back from Tyseley Locomotive Works, so Steam Superintendent Graham Froud is able to complete the work required on them by building up the worn areas to eliminate excessive fore-and-aft play.



Will we see the N on its wheels soon? Don't ask me, just watch this space!

There's no holiday from pledging support for the Swanage Moguls, however, and you can help by checking out the web site at <http://swanagemoguls.com/> and there's a super draw with £1000 for the winner! Go on! You know you want to!

Meanwhile, on the other side of the workshop, Southern Locos is making no progress with '257 Squadron', no boiler you see.

So Ian Dunford is getting on with the tender chassis formerly paired with 34038 'Eddystone', which has had many new parts, refurbished parts, and a coat of paint since it parted company from its tank in issue 11 of SA.



He's making a proper job of installing the handbrake linkage in this view.

Ahead of the tender, Eddystone's boiler is being freed from its chassis, ready for overhaul.

The tender paintwork is being done by veteran volunteer Ron Bennett, who has been at the works for 19 years, and has risen to the lofty grade where he is allowed a paintbrush!



Now, if you thought you were too old to volunteer, take a tip from Ron. It gets you out of the house and keeps you young, just like him! He's a mere 89!

-----ooOoo-----

While we are talking overhauls, Standard 4 Tank 80104 hauled its last train for a while on Thursday 5th May. It will soon be going away to Tyseley Locomotive Works to have its bottom end refurbished. Sounds painful!

Before it goes, later in May, there is a cleaning plan prepared by Ops administrative assistant Peter Harris, to prepare it for its holiday. Details are on the staff website, or contact Peter on 07801 796631 to offer your assistance.

If Tyseley can keep to its promised delivery lead time, 80104 should be back in service before the October steam gala.



80104 poses on shed, viewed from the kitchen in the drivers cabin.

-----ooOoo-----

From time to time, you will see pictures in Swanning Around credited to the Swanage Railway official photographer and PR officer Andrew P M Wright.



Here he is in Norden Gates crossing keeper's cabin, in the pose in which most people will recognise him – camera glued to eye!

Acting as handsignalman, Mike Banks looks on.

Credit to M & S for providing the fitted cover for the crossing control pedestal!

We are still operating with reduced functionality, but, hopefully, the controls will be fully operational soon.

-----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.

-----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!

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

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<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround>
and
<http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>

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