

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 8 – September 5th 2015

August – what a month! It's all been happening, mostly from above!

I know I said last time that the weather was picking up. Well, it picked up and went elsewhere!

The local weather pundits have confirmed that we had three times the expected rainfall in August. Can't think it has done our evening diesel service income much good – we shall see.

We've had a few firsts during the month, mostly at Norden, see below.

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The 45 ton steam crane and the 10 ton diesel electric crane have both passed their certification tests and are now fit for use for their first times in preservation, although there is more work to do on the aesthetics, at least.



On August 25th, Peter Pickering is taking the steam crane through the range of tests,

supported by John Stockley, the P'Way team's crane operator, Fraser White from the crane gang biting his nails, and observed by Steve Banks from Able Lifting, the certifying authority.

Peter seems to have the only place with any semblance of protection against the usual August weather!



Here, Peter picks up the proof test load of weights borrowed from John Weaver. Steve checks the weight on his instrument connected to a load cell located in the rams horn crane hook. 57.8tonnes! That's 56.9 of your proper British tons.

Next day, during a rare spell of dryness, Steve Banks was back to observe the certification testing of FBC2, the 10 ton crane. The crane gang has been working on this for at least 20 years, on and off, so Fraser was having a very nervous time, but he needn't have worried, it did the job. Here, Steve and Fraser look on, and John steadies the Safe Working Load as Keith Bowers in the cab picks it up.



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On the same two days, work started preparing for installation of the new level crossing at Norden. Trunking for the crossing controls and an extension to the concrete crossing foundation was completed on the first day.

With the sun out, Barry Light, Tyler Herrington and Will Fooks are replacing the timber sleepers in a track panel with concrete ones, while John Weaver's driver loads some of the crane test weights.



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Who's Who?



Don't see management out and about? Don't know who they are? It's none other than our General Manager.. er, what's-'is-name.....Matt Green doing a porter shift at Corfe Castle. He's been seen doing guard's duties too. He gets around – where were you?

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Complaints Department

Difficult to believe, I know, that Swanning Around could have such an item, but there have been complaints.



Firstly, profuse apologies to Shaun Sharp of the Restorations Department for mis-spelling his name in the previous issue. I do endeavour to ensure names are correct, just couldn't read my own writing!

Secondly, Martin James complained about being missed out from the Restorations Department article. He does turn up once a month, but, the cheek of it, he even attempted to suggest there was more than one Purbeck! And I'm sure our readers do **not** want to know what he does with **his** purbecks! Any other complaints, you know where you can put them! (tip: address on page 6!)

Mucky Man of the Month is back!

Richard Winslade, 'Bungle' to his friends, is a volunteer who gets all the best jobs in steam loco maintenance. He must have a screw loose for him to turn up week after week to tackle the jobs no-one else wants, when he isn't driving the shunter.



Here, he has entered the new workshop to get his loose screw adjusted by diesel fitter Andy Garrett. If he wasn't maladjusted before, he certainly will be now!

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Great News! The Swanage TC Group

has been taken under the umbrella of the Swanage Railway Trust after a 99-year agreement was signed on August 27th. Go to

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

for full details.

It's 2nd August and the M7 passes a scene of activity in the sidings at Corfe Castle.



Down in No. 2 siding, the Heritage Coaches group sets about weatherproofing another section of roof on Bulleid Open coach 1457, which will become their workshop. Tim Hengst, Pete Short, Kevin Bailey, and Clive Tombs on only his second time volunteering, affix thin ply and roofing felt to another section of roof.

There looks like more than a couple of days' work required on this coach!



If you fancy something to do on a Sunday, they could do with some help!

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Some Technical Stuff

Now, the class 108 DMU has not been well enough in August to fulfill all of its duties, some of which have been covered by the Crompton 33 201, with the occasional steam-hauled DMU service!

A knocking noise in one engine on August 1st confined the unit to barracks while it was resolved, and another day was lost owing to... well, what do you think it is, and, more to the point, how did it happen?



If you know both answers, take first prize, a smug feeling of self-satisfaction! You need to volunteer for Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon!

While Andy Garrett was fixing the engine, he had some help in the form of Adam Maddox, on a week's work experience from the University Technical College at Reading.

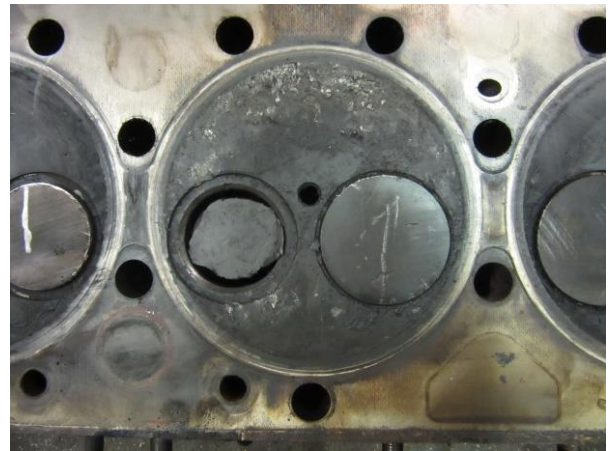
Apparently, this was the first time he's actually been given work to do on work experience!

If anybody else wants some proper work experience, we've plenty more where that came from – form an orderly queue!



Adam and Andy finally have the awkwardly located exhaust manifold off the engine.

And here's the culprit! No. 5 exhaust valve.



No.5 piston didn't come out of it too well, either!



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Back on page 2, you saw the P'Way gang on 25/26 August starting the preparatory work for the new level crossing barriers. These cannot be installed until the Road/Rail Interchange is moved to the other side of the road.

Contractors Andrews of Wareham have started the not inconsiderable job of levelling the site, by preparing the ground to lay track for the Sea Urchin wagons we will use to take the spoil to Embankment 4. (check previous issues of SA to remind yourselves!)

This is 4th Sept., and a big digger is at work shifting dirt and in the distance, a smaller digger is digging more dirt on the Wytch Farm Road. (note: this is the only sort of dirt dug in SA, so you're all quite safe!)



Further up the branch at Furzebrook, a new 50mph crossing (points, that is!) has been installed, close to bridge 11.



Now, I expect you thought that P'Way was very technical. Well, this new crossing was supplied as a kit of parts with every part numbered and locations marked. Still needed Honorary Consultant Jim Wheeler and P'Way Manager Barry Light to read the instructions and make sure the parts were laid in the right order and in the right direction!



Here's the finished article. The current main line on the right will become a long siding with a headshunt for access to the former oil

sidings, while the existing loop on the left will become the main line.

Yet further, towards Creech Bottom, beyond bridge 10, track is being re-laid with concrete sleepers and what will become welded joints. This end will be slewed to join the new main line to be laid to the left.



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The weather has been a talking point throughout August, but there have been some nice bits.

Below is a view taken from Harman's Cross signal box towards the West Hill at Corfe as the sun went down on the 21st.



Another view, this time of a pink sky, was taken on the 28th.

Half the sky was pink as the Bistro arrived at Norden. By the time Crompton 33 201 had run round, the sky was as you see here. Three minutes later and it was all gone!



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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 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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