



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 61 – April 16th 2020

Another Covid-19, Coronavirus issue



No need to remind you to keep safe! And that is the message from the Swanage Railway to all voluntary and paid staff, and , of course, to all readers of Swanning Around!

Swanning Around is, sadly, not amongst those activities listed as essential by the Coronavirus regulations, so staff is confined to barracks and scratching around to provide some content.

As suggested in the last issue, some contributors have come forward with some quizzes, a couple of which are in this issue, and some held over until the next one. Hopefully these may be challenging enough to keep you occupied for a few minutes of your lockdown!

Also in this issue, updates from the Railway management, latest news on the **Save Our Service** appeal, a T3 update, and some other sundry page fillers!

So let's start with the latest statement from Liz Sellen, Chairman of the Swanage Railway Company.

Faced with the need to suspend Railway services, and the consequent loss of income, the Company has had to take actions to quickly reduce our costs and place the Railway on a care and maintenance basis. Most staff have now been furloughed under the Government's Job Retention Scheme. A small group has been retained to do essential work during the 'care and maintenance' stage.

We have had great support from locomotive owners who have waived or suspended hire charges, and we are discussing similar approaches with the Councils to whom we pay rent.

Our rates bill for 2020 has been waived. Other seasonal costs have also been removed.

Although there may be room to further reduce some costs, the situation is stable enough to allow planning for the next stages - re-opening, winter 2020 and 2021 season - to start. The biggest issues are around how and when we can safely start services, the likely response of customers who may still be exceptionally cautious about mixing in public, and the need to resource these services in a cost effective way. We would hope to have further for this for May.

Why the SOS Appeal is critical ... It is already clear though, as we feared from the start, that by 2021, there will be a need for a significant additional sum of money to enable the Railway to function during the lean winter periods. In part this can come from Government support, or from summer trading, in part from the Trust, in part from a loan and in part from the SOS Appeal. Until our planning gives us a good feel for the total figure needed, it is vital for us to now continue to press ahead with the SOS Appeal.

The appeal stands at **£78,260.11 . on 16th April, bolstered by a recent magnificent contribution by the 200 Club of £17,000. Every pound raised will go directly to support the Railway. Donations can be made at saveourservice.co.uk**

An initiative recently launched is to ask you to submit your ideas on how the business can perk up what it does to win back custom lost due to coronavirus. Any idea either big or small can be submitted. Although some ideas may not make it through to implementation, all will be given proper consideration by the group who are managing this initiative. Send your ideas to new.ideas@swanagerailway.co.uk within the next two weeks.

Ending with A reminder ... (unless of course this changes in coming days - everything else does - in which case we will of course advise)

The Railway currently remains closed to volunteers, because Government guidance to deal with coronavirus, prohibits non-essential work. The situation is being routinely monitored and advice sought on the circumstances under which volunteers might be permitted to resume some activities. Should conditions change, then plans will be rolled out to enable some volunteer activity to take place. But for the time being volunteers must not visit the Railway.

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Click on the picture to go to **Donate** page

One thing that is clear from Liz's update is that funds will be in short supply right through to this time next year, not just for the duration of the Coronavirus lockdown. This is because the Railway relies heavily on income from the main running season, Easter to September to bolster the finances through the winter.

Anything you can do to help will be greatly appreciated.

Check out our Save Our Service videos on the Swanage Railway YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYzUOBLaW-U>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NsLXnZR7kU>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVAyCZoe_ok

You can go direct to the **Donate** web page by clicking on the picture above or going to

<https://saveourservice.co.uk>

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So what about the Wareham Project? Mark Woolley, Project Director, writes:

“...the only news I can provide at this stage is to confirm that we have updated all our major external stakeholders, including the ORR, Dorset Council and Network Rail. They all fully appreciate that a start of service date can no longer be predicted, and fully understand the reasons for this.”

Hot news from the Government is that the lockdown is extended for another three weeks at least, so your guess about resuming services is as good as anyone's!

On a well-known railway forum, it was noted that some class 142 'Pacer' multiple units, previously giving Northern Rail passengers a rough ride for their money, had been seen passing Salisbury in the direction of Eastleigh.

Someone suggested that they might be heading to Swanage for the Wareham service! - Gulp!

And it wasn't even April 1st!

Fortunately, Mark Woolley has confirmed "...There was never a grain of truth in the rumour that the Class 142 'Pacers' were coming to Swanage. The Class 117/121 DMUs may be older but they are also a lot more comfortable to ride in!"

Phew! That's a relief!

Another forum poster has suggested that their new purpose is to use on South Western Railway services to discourage people from travelling, to reduce crowding on the trains and encourage social distancing during Coronavirus lockdown!

Hopefully, someone's going to scrap them quickly!

For those of you lucky enough not to have seen these trains, here's a bunch of the units passing through Salisbury on 31st March (we think).

Photo credit to 'Shaggy' at Salisbury.



Let's have a quick(?) quiz.

This one submitted by Clive Hardy. If we're lucky, he'll let us have the answers for the next issue of Swanning Around!

All the shields below are, or have been, carried by preserved Battle of Britain and West Country class locos, above or below their nameplates.

All you have to do is name the locos that these shields are/were attached to.

No prizes being offered by Swanning Around, so you'll have to make do with the satisfaction of having found a use for some of your lockdown time!



Last time, we showed you a long lens picture of the class 117 diesel unit under test near Holme Lane Bridge, with the line down (or should it be up?) to the Swanage Railway / Network Rail boundary at bridge 2.

This time we have two more pictures by Andrew P M Wright taken by him from private property with permission, showing the Network Rail bit from Bridge 2 to Bridge 1 at Worgret Junction.

In these pictures 6233 Duchess of Sutherland is arriving on the Swanage Railway on 11th October 2018.



In the picture above, looking towards Worgret Junction, Bridge 1 can just be made out to the right of that GSM radio mast, just 9 chains from the junction. 6233 is just passing Network Rail signal PW5750.

Even though it is Network Rail track at this point, our single line token has to be carried before an incoming train can pass Worgret Junction.

In the picture left, looking towards Holme Lane bridge in the far distance over 3/4 mile away, Bridge 2 is where the track ballast changes colour, and Bridges 3 and 4 can be seen where the two light patches are between the rails.

News and status of the T3 project has recently been communicated to supporters by Matt McManus, Deputy Chair, 563 Locomotive Group. If you've forgotten what it should look like, that's it on the right.

The project hasn't escaped Coronavirus, what with travel restrictions and social distancing, and realistically, the project isn't now expected to be complete until 2022. More funding will be required, and this isn't expected to come from the Swanage Railway Trust who will be financially fire-fighting for some time.

At the moment, work has stopped, but there is great news that, before the lockdown, the South Devon Railway Boiler Shop was making progress with the new copper firebox pressings. Below are the bare pressings for the backhead and tubeplate.

The picture to the right shows the rear driving wheels on the wheel lathe at the Flour Mill Workshop on an earlier date.



With access to the Railway strictly forbidden, TTI Clive Hardy is distributing Long Service badges by post. Here he is hard at work at home preparing May's delivery.

Happy qualifiers for the month are :-

David DOW = 5 years

John HENSBY = 15 years

Matt McMANUS = 20 years

& Maureen EDMUNDSON = 5 years



Clive says “The only home addresses I have available to me are for people who have filled in the Volunteer Information form on srstaff. If you think you’re due for a badge soon, and would like to receive it on time, make sure you complete the form, or email long.service@swanagerailway.co.uk to contact me directly. Where I don’t have the information for posting I’ll be taking the badges to Swanage for distribution via the departments once access is available”.



Clive isn’t the only person working through lockdown. There are the members of management keeping their fingers on the pulse, and making sure there will be a pulse after lockdown. On the ground, Barry Light the Permanent Way manager, Pat Cattle the Estates manager, and steam fitter Chris Birmingham, at least, are all ensuring that when the railway reopens, we will have something to run, and something to run it on. And security is carried out 24 hours a day by these people and our cctv installations. Anyone thinking we are an easy target or a playground in lockdown will find themselves being a tv star!

Let's have another quiz, to finish. This one's from Peter Foster, Station Master at Harmans Cross and porters trainer. Again, answers in the next issue of Swanning Around.

Q 1: In which year did the 'Coronation Scot' make its inaugural run ? Was it 1935,1936 or 1937?

Q 2: Who composed the tune 'Coronation Scot' ?

Q 3: In which year did the first passenger train leave Swanage for Wareham ?

Q 4: What type of locomotive hauled the train in Question 3 ?

Q 5: What was the named train that ran from St Pancras to Edinburgh ?

Q 6: What was the name of the locoshed at Carlisle beginning with K - ?

Q 7: Who designed the last two of the Coronation Class LMS Pacifics, the first 36 being designed by Sir William Stanier ?

Q 8: What is the title of the rail guide used by Michael Portillo in his Great British Railway Journeys TV series ?

Q 9: With which railway was S.D. Holden the Locomotive Superintendent ?

Q 10: The Cornish Riviera Express had a number of slip coach portions. The first was slipped at Heywood Road Jct near Westbury, for which destination ?

Stay safe. Stay home.

Because of the
pandemic I want
you all to stay
safe at home...



Except you, of
course, Sneezy.

You can
~~stay~~ off.
Clear

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!

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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>