

A Look at What's Happening Around the Swanage Railway

Issue 22 – January 18th 2017

There's no such thing as a shutdown on the Swanage Railway, but the nearest thing to it is in January.

With public services at a minimum, being the Orange service on Saturday only, there are plenty of other things going on, and as usual, plenty of help required from volunteers.

So, for a New Year's resolution, why not think about becoming a volunteer, and have some fun on our railway? You know you want to, and if training is required, you'll get it!

It's a win-win situation, as those at home will be perfectly happy to see the back of you for the day, trust me, I know!

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At the lowest part of the running season, advantage is taken to maintain the track, signals, and associated jobs that can't be done while the trains are running.

This year, there is some selective re-ballasting, to be followed by tamping towards the end of February.

Several signals are being moved or replaced, and there are some Driver Experience trips being operated.

There are also many opportunities for volunteers to make a difference! No change there!

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The Tuesday Gang is there as usual, doing any job that comes along, and there's plenty of room for more, if you are interested in a useful day out with like-minded fun-seekers!

Breaking up pallets for the lighting-up store,



digging out wells, clearing the drains, digging out footings, you name it , they do it!

Talking of footings, they dug out a trench for the coal storage area extension that is now in progress, with a contractor demolishing the existing retaining wall on 17th January. You can see from the picture that the area will be extended about 10 feet in order that the 28-tonne coal deliveries can be fully contained, instead of spilling outside the gates.



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There are several 'opportunities' needing your help in the next few weeks, and I make no apology for filling these pages with appeals!

Shed Cleaning Day

These will be on Saturday 21st January, and Saturday 11th February.

Jobs for the days include:

- Cleaning 31806 especially underneath and in-between the frames, in preparation for work on her pistons, bushes and rods in Herston Works.
- Cleaning and polishing 34070
- Tidy, clean and store materials in the Shed.
- Clean out Oil Store, including the Lamp room; tidy and paint outside.
- Fuel Point tidy up and deep clean.

and much more

(including tea and biscuits, I expect! ...Ed)

Woodpecker Siding Scrub Bash

The great 'scrub bash' will be **Tues Jan 24 to Fri Jan 27 January; 9.45am to 3pm daily**. Meet at Norden Gates Box for signing on. Appropriate weather proof clothing and footwear essential, also, especially, heavy duty gloves.

Bring own refreshments and any cutting implements you care to (ab)use. Please contact Graham Colborne at **07534 107 803** to spend

delightful days (for would-be pyromaniacs and/or budding arsonists) playing at bonfires.

(p.s. no chain saws unless you bring competence certificates and appropriate PPE)

Carriage Cleaning

David Chant advises that carriage cleaning exercises will take place on 21st, 23rd and 28th February, and 2nd March.

Again the usual fun and tea and biscuits!

Further details for these items on the Staff web site, for those who have access.

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During January, Taster and Advanced Driver Experiences have been running.

The tasters run within station limits at Swanage, and our M7 runs into Swanage station on 17th January.



Don't forget, the M7 is due to be taken out of service in the next three or four weeks for overhaul, so not many more running days, subject to availability, of course.

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Now, there are plenty of 'glamorous' jobs around the railway where the operators would qualify for this page, but getting a picture can sometimes be difficult.

No matter, your editorial team knows no bounds in search of material for your enjoyment!

Working amongst the 'waggly bits' between the frames of the M7 easily qualifies, and fitter Frank Mead squeezed himself between the firebox and crank axle to work on the steam-powered reverser.

Yes, Frank Mead, you are

Mucky Man of the Month!



You can see some of Frank in this picture, the rest of him is stuck behind the crank axle. The reversing mechanism he is trying to work on is top right, behind that connecting rod.

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The Advanced Driver Experience uses the full line through to Norden, and it was during one of these trips that Andrew P M Wright, our official photographer, captured what could easily be taken as a scene from the 1950s/60s at Corfe Castle.

Another cracking picture from Andrew!



For the motoring aficionados, the car is our own Phil Minshall's daily transport, and is a 1936 Wolseley Super Six Series 2.

This scene actually occurred on 8th January 2017, and was taken from the access road to the signal box (a private road, with permission).

-----ooOoo-----

There are several signal movements taking place. You have already seen the S&T folks preparing the posts in issue 19 of Swanning Around, now they are planting them!



With help from the road/rail vehicle 'Big Daddy', the S&T gang erected the new post for the Corfe Down Distant signal near to Castle View crossing in December.

They know how to spoil a good view!



These three photos courtesy of Tony North.

This signal and the Corfe Up Distant are being re-sited to better reflect the stopping distance to the Home signals.

The Up Home signals at Harmans Cross, presently sited close to the road bridge, are being re-sited in advance of improvements planned for the approach to the station in that direction.

On 14th January, Tony North and Mike Southey are terminating a new, longer, signalling cable in the cabinet on Harmans Cross platform. They had already erected a new cabinet adjacent to the new signal position.



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The track team spent week commencing 9th January dropping fresh ballast at various locations along the line, in advance of a visit from the tamper later in February.



1000 tonnes of ballast was purchased for this job, and it worked out cheaper to have it delivered by road rather than rail.

So here's a stack of around 850 tonnes of the stuff at Arne Road Engineers Siding, as Richard Fry on 'Little Sis' loads a 'Dogfish' ballast hopper.

Thanks to Guard Tim Marshall for the photo.



Down the line near Afflington bridge, Tyler Herrington, Will Fooks, and John Stockley operate the hopper doors, while Barry Light and Ken Orchard give direction from the lineside.



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What's happening in the Goods Shed?



As you can see, the Kitchen Car from the Wessex Belle dining set is in for a re-paint. But who's that helping? None other than chef Adam Trott! Hope he's not doing the paint recipe!

At the other end, Diesel fitter Andy Garrett puts in some time re-painting the diesel shunter 08 436.



Doesn't matter what your job title is, it's all hands required to get the jobs done.

But where's Beryl?

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In the Engine Shed.

Yes, Beryl has been ejected from the Goods Shed and has a new home in the back of the engine shed.

Normal operations do not usually feature in Swanning Around, but there's always the exception.

Nothing unusual in the following picture on shed, you might think. Fitter Frank Mead is climbing down having just blown down the boiler of the M7, and Fireman Pete Davies leans out of the cab, but who are all these other people?

They are all cleaners!

You know how we are always harping on about the need for more volunteers, as we are short-staffed in all departments, you can imagine our surprise when seven, yes **seven**, cleaners turned up on 14th January!



We could do with that many **every** day!

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Other News.

Check out the Swanage Railway website

<http://swanagerailway.co.uk>

or Facebook for the latest news about the Strictly Bulleid spring steam gala on March 31st to 2nd April.

Five Bulleid Pacifics, in both rebuilt and unrebuilt forms, are confirmed for this event.

Make sure you have the annual Diesel Gala and Beer Festival in your diary – it's on 5th to 7th May.

British Pathe TV has a film about the Story of the Swanage Railway on free viewing at the moment. Check it out at

https://www.britishpathe.tv/#/details?feed_id=6wkAATkGz5LmS&group_id=hcezLk2wgJdw9

Updates on locomotive overhaul progress in the next issue.

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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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