



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 110 – June 15th 2024

The Swanage Railway's promotion of monthly events continues. Early May had the diesel gala, and now in June we have two events! Just this last weekend the amazing Strictly Bulleid 2 saw the gathering together of eight of the Southern Railway Chief Mechanical Engineer Oliver Bulleid's pacific loco designs. This must be the first time since 1967 that so many of these have been seen together, excepting of course their sojourn in the South Wales scrapyards at Barry, from where they were all saved by many like-minded preservationists.

Also this month, the now annual Roads to Rail Steam Rally from 28th to 30th June. You can find details of all forthcoming events and experiences on the Swanage Railway web site [HERE](#).

As we have said before in Swanning Around, success in these events doesn't mean that we can trade ourselves out of the tricky financial position that we have found ourselves in, so your contributions to the Save Your Railway appeal are still vital. For details of how you can help, click [HERE](#).

In this issue, an update on the progress of the 4TC project, which is making progress, but will need extra help to keep up the momentum. Also, a blue plaque has appeared on Swanage station.

And the very popular Polar Express will be back later in the year, and bookings are now open, so go to the web site at <https://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/events/view/polar-express> to ensure you don't miss out!



Strictly Bulleid 2

What an amazing event! To get eight Bulleid-designed pacific locos together in one place, and organising a timetable to ensure all locos are spread over all services is a logistics effort worthy of much praise for all involved. On top of that, the investment outlay to achieve this event must have given our finance team the jitters!

But all has worked out, with the railway on the side of surplus, having carried over 4700 passengers over the weekend.

Locos coming in from as far as Lancashire and as close as Herston Works all required road transport, with the exception of Merchant Navy class 35018 *British India Line* from West Coast Railways at Carnforth, which came under its own power, and with some extra coaches for the gala.

Of special mention is the enormous effort put in by those working with Southern Locomotives and Swanage Railway to finish 34053 *Sir Keith Park* and have it out of Herston Works in time to take part in this gala. 13 weeks from rolling chassis to finished article!

34053 *Sir Keith Park* has been transported by road from Herston Works to Norden where it meets its tender on 21st May.



In this picture, from Swanage Railway's official photographer Andrew P M Wright, are all eight locomotives.

On the main line (l) are original condition Battle of Britain class 34072 *257 Squadron* leading 34081 *92 Squadron*.

In the near siding, original condition West Country class 34092 *City of Wells* leads rebuilt Merchant Navy class 35006 *Peninsular And Oriental S.N Co.* and 35018 *British India Line*.

In the far siding rebuilt Battle of Britain class 34053 *Sir Keith Park* and rebuilt West Country class 34028 *Eddystone* are hiding in front of original condition Battle of Britain class 34070 *Manston*.

There! That's all eight of them in one place!



As with all events of this nature, good planning helps to ensure the event runs smoothly, but the unexpected can put the schedules awry. And it was at Corfe Castle station on Saturday that the timetable had to be quickly adjusted as the up platform had to be closed for a while to allow first aiders and paramedics to deal with a passenger who had a fall and broke a hip. Two other medical issues occurred at Corfe on the same day.

If that wasn't enough, the original condition Battle of Britain class 34081 *92 Squadron* had to be withdrawn from service on Saturday 8th June with a leaking superheater element that could not easily be repaired.



Steam Superintendent Graham Froud enters the smokebox of 34081 *92 Squadron* to investigate the leaking superheater element.

This was very much an enthusiast event, so what did they say about it? Let's see what's on social media:

"...undoubtedly one of the highlight events of 2024"

"Thank you to everyone involved for staging a very impressive Gala. "

"An ambitious and quite extraordinary gala, which was extremely well organised and a great success!"

"... in my view an event fully worth the money ..."

"...and huge praise to the railway and its volunteers and footplate crews for putting on a great show."

"Has to be a contender for "gala of the century so far" "

"It doesn't get much better than this: what a fantastic event! "

So there you are, a great event, but you had to be there to get the full experience. There are some pictures of the event following, but, as usual, to get the best of the gala, YouTube is your friend. There's a lot a videos out there for you to get the feel of the weekend. Do it now!



Now how do you use all eight locos in turn on an intense schedule? Well, lots of engine changes at Corfe Castle and Swanage.

Using screenshots from the webcams at Corfe, here's how it works. A Frome River-bound train with 34081 *92 Squadron* waits impatiently in the up platform for the down train from Frome River to Swanage to arrive behind Merchant Navies 35018 *British India Line* and 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co.*. 34072 *257 Squadron* is detached from the tail of the down train which then departs to Swanage.





34092 *City of Wells* runs from the sidings and is attached to the rear end of the Frome River train while we weren't looking, and the train departs. 34072 *257 Squadron* then runs to the sidings to wait to be attached to the next up train. These trains have to be top-and-tailed as there is no facility to run round at Frome River. This pattern is repeated for subsequent trains.

At Swanage, an up train waits in platform 1 for a down train to arrive in platform 2. The up train to Frome River then departs. In this picture Merchant Navies 35018 *British India Line* and 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co.* are arriving, with 34028 *Eddystone* and 34053 *Sir Keith Park* ready to depart. By the time of this picture, 34081 *92 Squadron* is on the naughty step in the Goods Shed road!

photo: Robert Freeman via Facebook





You've probably guessed that these pictures are not necessarily in any sort of chronological order, but are just picked at random to demonstrate the process. So 34081 *92 Squadron* is here before its failure, moving to couple on to an incoming train on platform 2 which it will then shunt to platform 1 to form the next up train, which will depart after the next down train arrives, like in the previous picture.

Confused? It's all very straightforward until Corfe up platform cannot be used because of that medical emergency! Full credit to those people on the ground who had to deal with that issue and to keep the trains moving!

The set of coaches brought in by West Coast Railways ensured that we could have three full sets of six high capacity coaches for this gala. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* and 34028 *Eddystone* are on the 1 in 78 gradient of New Barn bank by Dickers crossing on 7th June.



As if an intensive daytime service isn't enough to tax them, our intrepid gala organisers even included an all-night service from Saturday to Sunday morning! The last time this happened was over twenty years ago, we think.

Now who would want to be in Harmans Cross at 5 o'clock on a Sunday morning? Only a Bulleid enthusiast! Southern Steam Lad was there to record a short video for Facebook, with 34070 *Manston* arriving with the 05.00 service from Swanage, with the sun rising behind.

Another fine shot of *Manston* in its weathered condition, reflecting the real conditions of the 1960s, powering out from under Northbrook Road bridge with the 18.15 service to Norden on 9th June, Steam Superintendent Graham Froud driving.

photo: Bob Bunyar





photo: Andrew P M Wright

Sunday 9th June was headboard day, when some of the boards used by named trains in the 1950s and 60s were used. Above, 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co.* and 35018 *British India Line* are sporting a Southampton boat train board for the SS Canberra liner, appropriately a P & O line ship!

Below, last thing Sunday and a special line-up of the four Southern Locomotives-owned participants was organised at Corfe Castle. 34070 *Manston*, 34028 *Eddystone*, 34072 *257 Squadron*, and 34053 *Sir Keith Park* have been posed for photography. More headboards for boat trains, and the Pines Express and the Atlantic Coast Express in view.



photo: Andrew P M Wright



A plaque marking the 80th anniversary of the Allied D-Day invasion of France in June, 1944, has been unveiled at the station from where young American soldiers boarded trains on their way to the horrors of Omaha Beach in Normandy.

The tribute was unveiled at Swanage station on Monday, 27 May, 2024, by 99-year old English D-Day veteran soldier Peter Lovett, who lives in Swanage, in the presence of civic and community guests - including the Mayor of Swanage Tina Foster.

The poignant plaque remembers and honours the men of the 26th Infantry Regiment of the US Army's First Infantry Division which was known as the 'Big Red One' because of the distinctive red shoulder flash worn on the uniforms of the soldiers.

The American troops – known as GIs - were billeted in Swanage between November, 1943, and April, 1944, while they trained for D-Day and their part in the largest maritime invasion in history.

A retired guest house proprietor, Peter Lovett said: "I was honoured to unveil the D-Day plaque because it's important that people remember and learn from the sacrifices of the past to defend freedom. My father's war – the First World War – was never remembered."

Pictured above, Peter Lovett unveils the plaque by the station entrance, accompanied by Swanage Railway Trust Chairman Frank Roberts, himself a former soldier.



After our galas have finished, visiting locomotives are usually very soon on their way home. But not recently at Swanage, where we have purloined some for further use!

After the diesel gala, class 24 D5054 was used for some driver experiences, and is seen here at Corfe Castle on its way to Norden for a day's work to the Frome river and back. On this date, 18th May, the up platform is out of use while the track is under repair after the derailment incident at the diesel gala.

We don't have any Merchant Navy class locos on our railway, but at least we've had an extra week for people to enjoy 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co.* seen arriving at Corfe Castle with the 11.20 service from Swanage on 10th June. The loco spent the week on our normal service trains.





While we were playing at home with other people's engines, some of our own residents were playing away!

U class 31806 went to the Kent and East Sussex Railway to help them celebrate their 50 year anniversary on 1st and 2nd June, seen above at Northiam in this screen grab from a Joe Light Railway video on YouTube.

D6515 (33012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* was out again on railtour duty, again with the London Transport 4TC set, and with 50008 *Thunderer*, on the "Holt Hoover" to the North Norfolk Railway's Rails and Ales event, and the "Not The Cromer Crompton" return railtour. Who makes up these names?!

Below, D6515 has arrived at Norwich on the way to Sheringham with the outward train. 50008 is on the back. Another screen grab, this time from Stort13's video.



The Swanage Railway Trust 4TC project.

As reported in previous issues of Swanning Around, work is still in progress but the rate of completion depends on having hands on the job and, more importantly as usual, sufficient funding in place for purchasing materials, etc. To date, the project has relied on existing supporters' continuing financial input, but here at Swanning Around, we want to spread the word and the load a lot wider to attract more supporters.

So Swanage Railway Trustee Dan Bennett has prepared the following update to show the latest status.

The only other 4TC set is the London Transport unit which does the rounds of the galas, and was seen here on the Diesel Gala preview day doing two round trips in the push-pull mode that it was designed for, here being propelled out of Corfe Castle by 33111, which is a member of the class 33 sub-class 33/1 with the control system that matches the TC unit.

That's what we are looking to achieve with our own unit, and we look to you to become a supporter and pledge some monetary assistance.

Read Dan's report, which contains details of how you can contribute.

When you see the cost of replacement air reservoirs, pictured in the report, it's not difficult to see why more funds are required!



Swanage Railway Trust 4TC Swanning Around update 04/06/24

The following is an update that recently went out to our established supporters. However, we are always open to new supporters to help us with the restoration both financially and physically. So, if you'd like to know more, read on...

Firstly, an update on the progress with each of our vehicles. The initial plan is to create a 3TC unit consisting of two DTSOs (76275 & 763422) and the TBSK 70824. 70824 is the current centre of our attention and has been outside the goods shed at Swanage for a few months where we have been beavering away on it at least a couple of days a week. Next attention will turn to 76275 to bring it up to the same standard as 76322. The 3TC when finished will be able to be used with 33111 in "push-pull" mode as a substitute for the DMU when required – it can even operate with same small number of staff (driver, guard, and a signaller at Corfe) as there is no need to run round.

Driving Trailer Standard Open (DTSO) 76322

76322's bodywork and bogie restoration at Rampart was completed in March 2021. The coach then returned to railway and has been in storage at Harmans Cross since awaiting its turn on the lifting jacks at Swanage to complete the repairs to cable and pipework theft damage on the underframe. Fortunately, we have most of the materials required for this work in stock. We also need to fit tarpaulins to this coach at some point soon to prevent the overhauled bodywork from suffering any damage or deterioration.



76322 being unloaded at Norden after bodywork restoration and bogie overhaul (30th March 2021)

Trailer Brake Standard Corridor (TBSK) 70824

A huge amount of work has taken place on 70824 over the last year or so. It is now almost mechanically and electrically complete, with the air system tested, and most of the electrical system tested including the Compressor and Motor Generator – both of which work perfectly! Electrically there's just the compartment heaters left to fit and test once the new lino flooring is fitted - more on this under fundraising. Hopefully it is now back on its bogies for the last time too. The full list of work carried out by our small team of volunteers since May 2023 is as follows:

Bogies:

- Brake cylinder pipework overhauled.
 - Brake rigging freed off, examined & lubricated.
 - Brake blocks replaced.
 - Slack adjusters tested and set up.
 - Brake cylinders tested.
 - Lateral dampers replaced with overhauled units.
- Bogie frames and wheelsets needle gunned and painted.

Air system:

- Replacement air reservoirs made by contractor and fitted.
- Air system water/dirt filters overhauled.
- All isolating cocks overhauled.
- Damaged and stolen pipework replaced - approximately 50% of pipework.
- System pressure tested.

Faulty compressor governor replaced.

Electrical:

- Vehicle lighting wiring examined and tested.
 - ETH power cables replaced due to being stolen.
 - End to end control, lighting and heating wiring completely replaced due to being stolen or damaged.
 - Auxiliary control cubicle over 75% new rewired.
 - Significant replacement of wiring conduit due to damage caused during theft of wiring.
 - Replacement batteries fitted.
 - Compartment heater conduit and wiring replaced due to corrosion.
 - Compartment reading lights overhauled with new switches.
 - Jumper sockets rewired and fitted.
 - Compressor examined and repaired.
 - Motor Generator set examined.
 - High voltage electrics tested off a shore supply with compressor and motor generator both working for first time in at least 23 years. Heaters that are still fitted worked too.
- PA system tested.

Underframe/exterior:

- Battery boxes repaired.
- Entire underframe cleaned and painted.
- Gangway faceplates needle gunned and painted.

Shore supply switch box repaired.

Interior work:

- Compartment floors and bearers repaired or replaced as required.
- Toilet floor repaired.
- Corridor floor and bearers repaired or replaced as required.
- Walls between compartments and toilet repaired as required.

New floor support "top hat" sections welded in as required.

Next up for 70824 is the laying of new linoleum in the four compartments, corridor and toilet. This will then allow the compartment heaters and seats to be refitted, which in turn will clear most things stored in the luggage van enabling this area to be completed too. Then there is the toilet water tank to sort out as there is a leak to investigate, and all the toilet pipework to replace as this was stolen. Then comes laying of linoleum in the guards office and luggage areas, followed by refitting of internal sliding doors and other interior fittings.

A selection of photos of work carried out over the last year on 70824 can be found on the last few pages of this update.

DTSO 76275

Unfortunately, 76275 is now suffering from bodywork deterioration – this is down to a combination of having never received a bodywork overhaul in preservation, and being stored outside in all weathers since it arrived on the railway in early 2017. It only received a repaint and some electrical work before it departed St Leonards Depot, and unfortunately has spent a few of the years since it arrived on the railway without tarpaulins fitted and some of the windows are leaking badly. Fortunately, it is nowhere near as bad as 76322 was before it was restored, and we are now in the process of getting quotes to carry out the necessary bodywork repairs and a repaint.

Trailer First Corridor (TFK) 70855

In store at Harmans Cross awaiting funds for its restoration.

4BIG Buffet Coach 69322

In store at Harmans Cross awaiting funds for its restoration.

DTSO 76298

Stored at Harmans Cross.

DTSOs 76301 & 76302

These two coaches arrived on the railway last year after they were donated to us by Bellingham Heritage Centre in Northumberland. They originate from 4TC unit 417. They were due to be replaced at Bellingham with some Mk3 coaches, and if we hadn't given them a home they would have most likely gone for scrap. These coaches are also in store at Harmans Cross, and whilst there are no immediate plans to restore either of them, 76302 for example will yield more than enough serviceable seat backs and bases to complete the interiors of 76275 and 76322, avoiding the costly task of having to get their existing seats reupholstered. Both coaches also appear to have good bogies under them – another item that might prove very useful and cost saving in the future. We may look to restore one of them as a spare driving trailer in the long term.

Whilst the coaches themselves were donated to us, the cost of transporting them from Northumberland to Dorset was quite significant and made a dent in the group's finances to the tune of £8,000. If you would be interesting in contributing to cover this cost, then please see the fundraising section below.

Fundraising

Whilst the restoration of TBSK 70824 has progressed significantly, this has inevitably depleted our existing funds. Our next major outlay for 70824 is the linoleum flooring. This work will cost around £4,200 having asked three flooring companies to quote for the work. We are breaking this work down in to two stages – phase 1 is the compartments, toilet, and the corridor/ vestibules; phase 2 is the Guard's office, and luggage area.

Each of the four compartments and the one toilet will cost approximately £600 each for the linoleum to be laid, and we are looking for five supporters to sponsor this work. If you would like to sponsor one or more compartment/toilet then please get in touch by email to 4tc@swanagerailway.co.uk, or by using of one of the donation options below.

We also mentioned earlier the cost of moving Driving Trailers 76301 & 76302 to Dorset (£8,000) – if you would be interested in helping to cover the cost of bringing these coaches back to Dorset then also please get in touch. Whilst this money has already been spent, it would be great if we were able to reimburse some of the costs to the group's funding reserves to enable restoration work to continue at the current pace.

Any funding received is greatly appreciated and helps get us closer to our ultimate aim of having the TC running.

If you would like to donate, it can be done in the following ways:

visit www.4tcgroup.co.uk and click on the blue "Donate Now" button.

direct bank transfer to Account Number 13462420, Sort Code 20-68-79

or by cheque payable to "Swanage Railway Trust - 4TC Group" and posted to "Swanage Railway Trust - 4TC Group, Station house, Swanage, BH19 1HB.

Thank you for taking the time to read this update and thank you for your support.

Dan Bennett, Swanage Railway Trust 4TC Group Trustee. dan.bennett@swanagerailway.co.uk

On the next few pages is a selection of photos showing some of the work undertaken on TBSK 70824.



TBSK 70824 lifted off its bogies (13th May 2023).



Bogie during needle gunning to remove old paint and rust.

Bogie after spraying black with anti-corrosive paint, and yellow axlebox covers



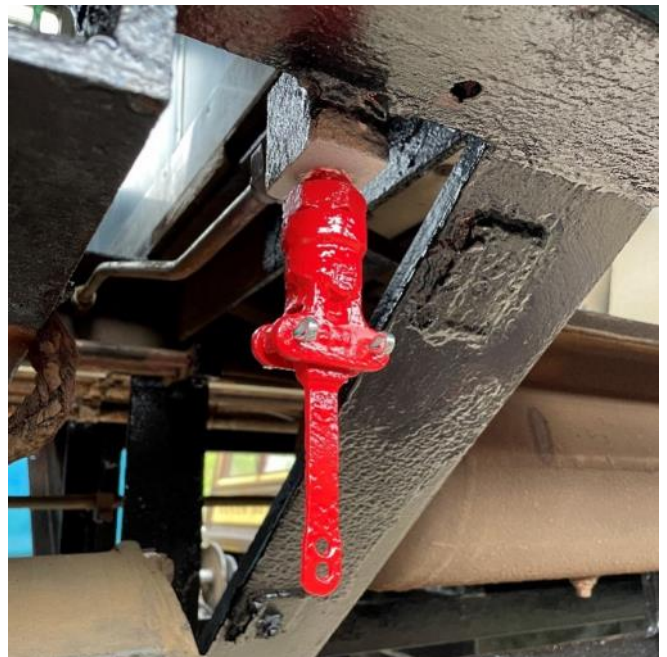


Air filter/strainer stripped for overhaul



Overhauled air filter/strainer

Overhauled brake release valve





Old air reservoirs after removal – both subsequently failed testing due to corrosion

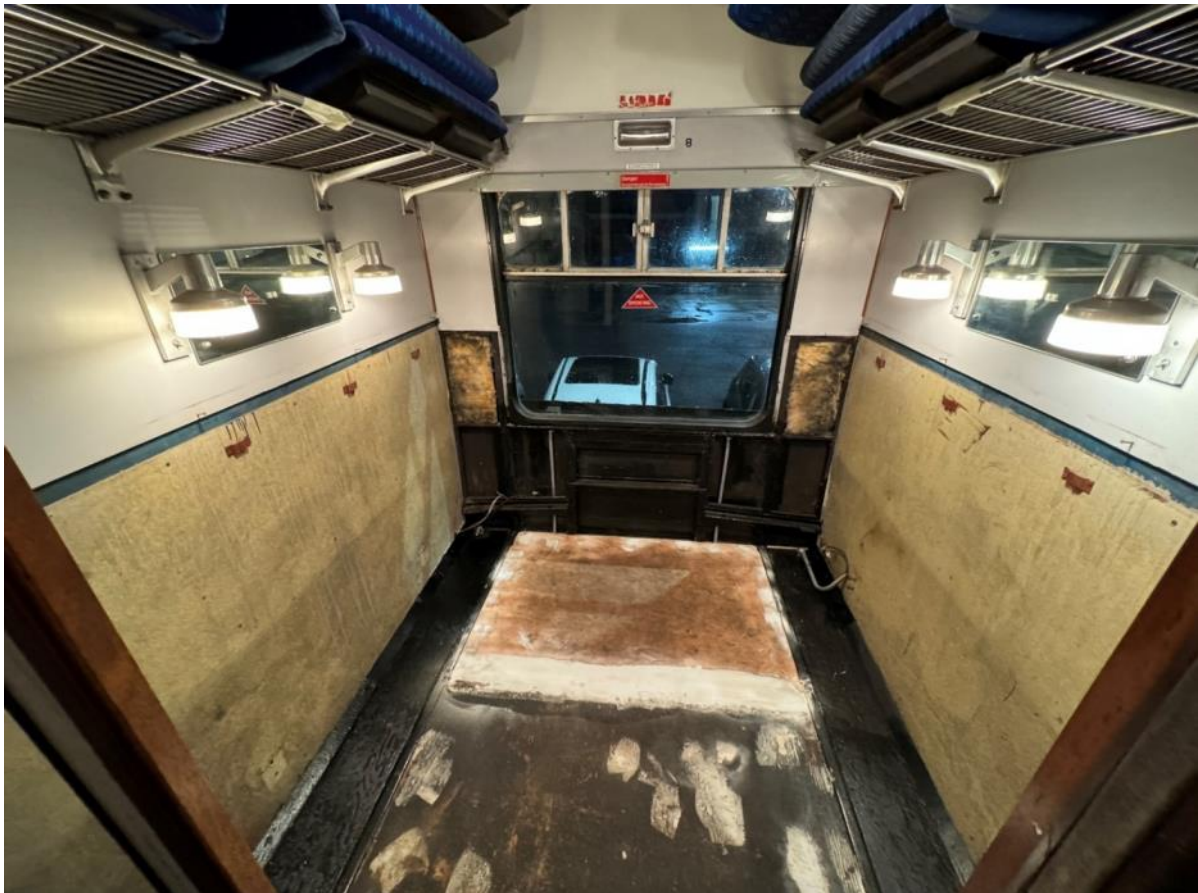
£2,900 later and we had two new air reservoirs ready to fit. Fortunately, one of our regular volunteers offered to sponsor their fabrication thus avoiding depleting our funds.

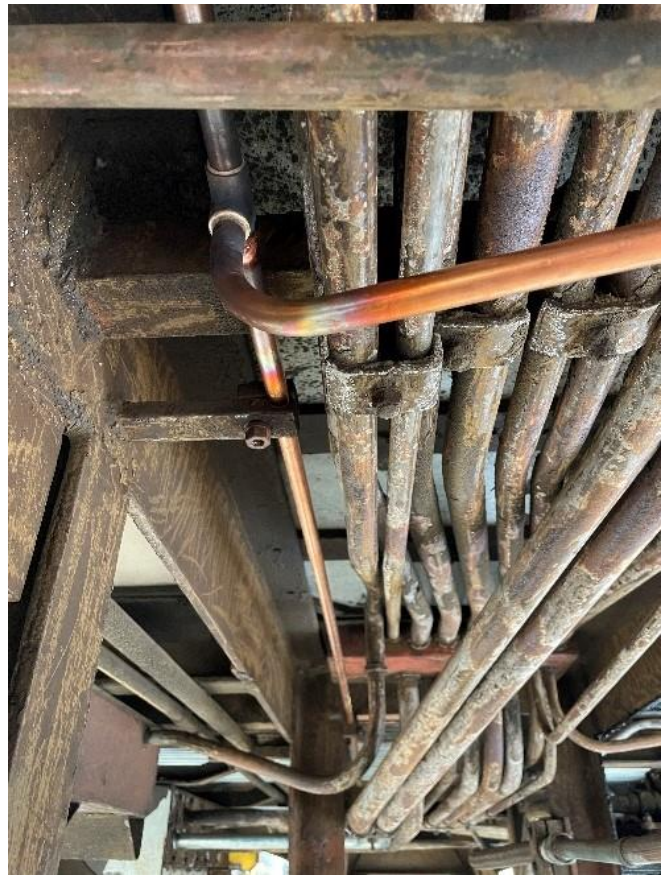




Compartment floor bearers being replaced

One of the compartments showing the repaired floor awaiting linoleum, and the overhauled reading lights being tested





New brake pipework fitted to replace stolen sections

New conduit fitted to replace sections damaged when cable was stolen





Old railway and new railway meet at Swanage. On 11th June, the Balfour Beatty operated weedkiller train visited the railway, and in order to get those rascally plants in the sidings, four Bulleid pacifics were pulled out into platform 1. British Railways 1949 meets Network Rail 2024. Swanage Railway conductor driver Billy Johnson is poised to collect the single line token from the signalman.



We sell tickets to anyone! (This one is probably a freebie!)

Photo from booking office clerk Maureen Edmondson at Corfe Castle.

As usual, volunteers are required in all departments, so,

To use your existing skills or to learn new ones, contact us about being a Swanage Railway volunteer by either sending an email to iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk or by calling 01929 475212 to contact Lisa Gravett, our Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Officer.

-----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!

-----ooOoo-----

Compiled and edited by John Denison

Email to swanning.around@swanagerailway.co.uk

Swanning Around also appears on line at:

<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround> (not password protected)

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