



Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 36 – March 22nd 2018

Beware the ~~ides~~ Ice of March!

Just when you thought Spring had sprung,
Mother Nature had other ideas!

As this edition of Swanning Around is issued,
there is still some snow on the Purbeck hills, and
it has been melting for several days. We haven't
had this much snow here for many years.

The Beast from the East did its best to disable the
railway as it came with some ice as well, and
some scheduled services and charters had to be
cancelled for safety reasons. Who could believe
that there would be somebody ice skating on the
street in Swanage?

The Beast's little brother, Mini Beast, although it
dumped more depth of snow, was not able to
defeat the stalwart staff of the Swanage Railway,
who ensured that it was safe to welcome visitors
and operate trains, as scheduled.

As this edition hits the ether, preparations for the
Spring Steam Gala are in full swing, for a
weekend of action 23rd to 25th March. Will you be
there?

-----ooOoo-----

But what about that snow? In Purbeck, this is
almost a rare occurrence, and the amount of
snow delivered is even rarer than that!

The web cam on Swanage signal box ensured that
Swanning Around staff did not have to go out in
the cold by providing images of snowing in
progress such as this on 27th February. In Purbeck
terms, it's a white-out!



Two weekends later, and after Mini Beast had left
its calling card, P'Way manager Barry Light is out
at Harmans Cross with S&T technician Fraser
White on 18th March to ensure that the points
could be worked to allow the Sunday Lunch train
to pass the service train.



This picture came from trainee signalman Randy Coldham, permitting SA staff to stay at home in the warm!

Another picture from Randy shows the dining train led by T9 30120 entering Corfe Castle station on the same day, platforms suitably cleared of snow.



-----ooOoo-----

On 5th March, the Track Team's on-track machine Big Daddy refused to play, blaming the freezing weather.

In truth, it was more like the filters got blocked by particles in the fuel, but it had to be moved, so Little Sis obliged by giving it a shove into the headshunt to allow the crane behind to vacate Arne Road siding.

While machine driver Richard Fry did the business, Barry Light ensures that the movement proceeds without incident.

Fuel system cleaned, and Big Daddy was back in service.



All this activity broke up someone's party! These two fine beasts were seen by Arne Road bridge. Stag party, get it? Don't often see them with these fine antlers.



-----ooOoo-----

While we are at Norden, on 23rd February the class 108 DMU was in use again for training associated with running services to Wareham. Here is the crossing keeper's view of the train at signal 32.



-----ooOoo-----

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You know that we are struggling to find suitable victims volunteers for this page, so to broaden the appeal, we are accepting

Nearly Mucky Man of the Month



First person to have this accolade is cleaner Paul Davies, seen here posing as secondman on a diesel.

You can see he has made an effort to get grubby, a few more dirty jobs should do the trick!

-----ooOoo-----

Following on from above, our class 33 diesel D6515 has been used for two days of class 33 familiarisation for some London Transport employees.

On 21st March, four LT drivers are having a day with the loco, and are seen here at Corfe Castle.

Firstly, a picture of the engine running round the train at Corfe Castle,



and secondly, easing onto the other end of the train, with guard Jon Smallwood calling on, and secondman Paul Davies ready to couple up.



-----ooOoo-----

Down in Herston Works on 6th March, Battle of Britain class 34053 *Sir Keith Park*, was in for maintenance, and was being fettled prior to being returned to the railway.

Bob Bevis was adjusting a piston rod cotter,



and at this point it was interesting to note that this cotter had been used on other engines before.

On one side, it was shown as having been used on Merchant Navy class no. 35013 *Blue Funnel*,



and on the other side, standard class 4 2-6-0 no. 76077.

A truly standard part!

On the other side of the shop, Stuart Magnus, Trustee and signalman, helps to clean up *Eddystone's* frames, ready to receive the overhauled boiler, due soon.



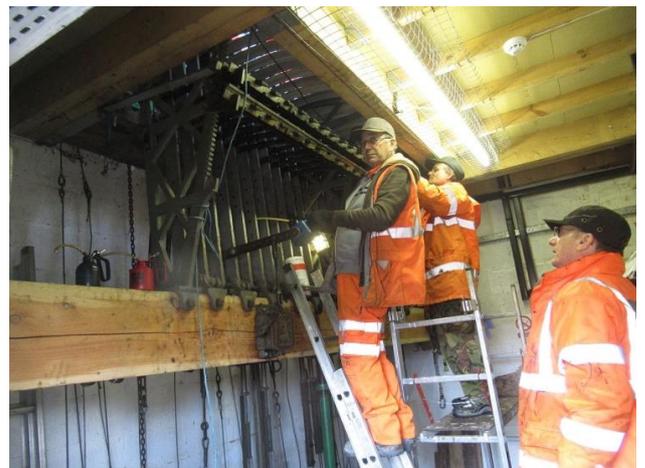
-----ooOoo-----

Availability of suitable volunteers sometimes dictates when jobs can be done, and this was so for maintenance of the lever frame and locking mechanism in Harmans Cross signal box. Doing the job on 10th March meant that signals and points could not be used, so handsignalmen were used instead, to signal trains.

Arrival at the signal box finds S&T manager Tony North doing something to the frame, while Paul Edwards, Stuart Ward, and handsignalman Mike Banks admire the quality of Tony's work, and signalman John Lindsay tries to step around everybody.



Later, downstairs in the locking room, Stuart, Tony, and Paul clean up the locking components,



while, outside, Mike has had to take a hike to the starting signal to exhibit a green flag for the departure of the T9 30120 on the service train.



Does the frame work better today? Of course it does! Another great job from the S&T team.

-----ooOoo-----

The Harmans Cross station team has been steadily improving the visitor experience, and their latest effort has been to improve the down platform surface.

Two patches of poor surface have been improved by applying tarmac.

On 21st March, Mike Ellis, John Dainton and David Castle are seen preparing one area,



and, on 22nd March, the gentlemen from Steve Collins Surfacing are seen first applying a compacted sub-base of Type 1 aggregate to the other patch,



then the tarmac



If you want to see the finished job, get there and have a look! Go by train!

-----ooOoo-----

Painting the Bird's Nest Buffet coach at Swanage was always going to be difficult at this time of year, but Pat Cattle's Estates team is on top of the job!

Following on from their presence in the last issue of Swanning Around, the painting team of Phil Minshall, Brian Crouch, and Dave Taylor have finished the green ,



and, on 21st March, David Budd applies the red stripe signifying a catering vehicle. Danny Dumper acts as safety man, and Pat is there again to ensure everything is going as planned.



General Manager Matt Green has been out doing the signage, and the result is just what the coach needed before the start of the main running season. Just the roof to do now.

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A small number of you may have received a copy of issue 35 with an error at the top right of page 7. Some copies had David Morgan on line 4, this should have read Colin Morgan. Apologies to both gentlemen.

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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

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.

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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://swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>

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