



# Swanning Around

## A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 109 – May 17<sup>th</sup> 2024

With daily public services resumed for the season, there appears to have been a favourable response from our customers with the cashless trial, such that the Company has authorised the trial to continue for the rest of the year. Financially though, the numbers we are getting are positive, but we should like to remind you that donations are still required to ensure that loans negotiated to permit the Company to continue trading can be repaid. We cannot trade our way out of a capital hole!

The Swanage Railway "Save Your Railway" appeal is ongoing and , if you are able, you can donate to the appeal at <https://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/save-your-railway>

So what's been happening since Easter? The main event, coverage of which has delayed this issue of Swanning Around, has been the annual Swanage Railway Diesel Gala and Beer Festival, 9<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> May. Not the incident-free event that we would have liked this year.

Other events have included driver experiences on both steam and diesel traction, and filming for the Channel 5 Big Steam Adventure series 2, the episode which features Swanage Railway airs on Friday May 17<sup>th</sup> from 8pm. Don't miss it! (that's today!)

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May,,  
class 24  
diesel D5054  
*Phil Southern*  
arrives at  
Norden by  
road from  
the East  
Lancashire  
Railway.





The Diesel Gala got under way with a preview day on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May, with visiting class 52 no. D1015 *Western Champion* sharing public services with 34028 *Eddystone*. That is, until the raitour from London arrived behind D6515, accompanied by GB Railfreight's 69002 and 73109, hauling the London Transport 4TC set. The 4TC set was then snaffled for use with our other resident class 33/1 33111, which is fitted with the matching control system for the 4TC.

both photos: Andrew P M Wright





Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> provided the only opportunity to ride in the 4TC using its own trailer control (TC!). Here it is being driven from the leading cab of the 4TC while being propelled by 33111 on one of the two round trips.

Also on 9<sup>th</sup>, visiting diesel 37219 from Colas Rail arrived from Westbury, and is passing Harmans Cross.

both photos: Andrew P M Wright



photo: Andrew P M Wright



As previously mentioned public services were shared on 9<sup>th</sup> with 34028 *Eddystone*, seen here meeting the London Transport 4TC set at Corfe Castle.

On the gala days, there were three train sets in use, two for the services through to the limit of operations at the River Frome, and the 4TC used for a shuttle between Swanage and Corfe. Here, a return from River Frome headed by class 24 no. D5054 *Phil Southern* meets a shuttle ready to go behind class 69 no 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* at Swanage on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

photo: Andrew P M Wright





On 11<sup>th</sup> May, the shuttle arrives at Corfe Castle behind 69002, where the locos will be changed. 69002 will be detached, and either 37219 or the pair of class 20s nos. 20302 and 20311 from HNRail will be attached for the trip back to Swanage. All these locos are air brake only, so could not be used on the vacuum brake sets for River Frome, but matched the air braked 4TC set. Below, 37219 exits the siding at Corfe to be attached to the Swanage end of the 4TC.

Both these pictures are stills from one of the new Railcam webcams on Corfe Castle signal box. The resolution of the new cameras at Corfe and Swanage is much improved over the old ones, and you can now view these on YouTube.

(ps. the Corfe webcams were offline at the time of writing)





## SITREP Summary - May 2024

All working volunteers & staff should have access to [Heritage Operations Processing System \(HOPS\)](#). For access and other information please contact the SR HOPS Administrator Ben Dolman: [ben.dolman@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:ben.dolman@swanagerailway.co.uk)

For [SR Staff access](#), and to be added to the '[Volunteer Information](#)' email group, please contact Peter Milford on [peter.milford@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:peter.milford@swanagerailway.co.uk)

SITREP is also posted on the [Swanage Railway Trust website](#) which provides members with information on the history of the modern Swanage Railway. Some areas require a password, which is available from [membership@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:membership@swanagerailway.co.uk) or by calling 01929 475202, leaving your name, membership number and contact number. Please note the office is not staffed daily.

### **A statement: Gavin Johns**

On Saturday 11th May an operating incident occurred at Corfe Castle involving one of our Diesel Gala public trains and led to the partial derailment of a diesel locomotive.

The incident involving a Class 50 No. 50 026 '*Indomitable*' happened around 6.30pm as a passenger train bound for Harman's Cross and Swanage was running into Corfe Castle station from Norden. No people were injured and no damage was sustained to the carriages of the train or two of the three locomotives in the train consist. There was a diesel locomotive on the front of the train (a class 52) and two locomotives on the rear a class 33 and a class 50. The train was travelling at very low speed preparing to stop as planned in the up platform. The class 50 suffered a partial derailment to the leading bogie. The rear bogie of the locomotive remained on the track.

Evening diesel gala and beer festival train services were suspended. Customers who had travelled to Corfe Castle for the Beer Festival were later taken back to Swanage by bus and special train.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) were promptly informed and they confirmed that they will be formally investigating the cause of the partial derailment. The Office of Road and Rail were also informed. We are working with both organisations to support their investigations.

The locomotive, with agreement from RAIB, was recovered overnight and into the early morning on Sunday with the support of specialist contractors. The locomotive is waiting an examination before it can leave the Railway. The track sustained damage and the up loop at Corfe Castle remains out of use until we are able to start repair work. It is hoped that this repair will be completed this week. Meantime special arrangements have been put in place for all trains to use the down platform. Because of this restriction, services for the final day of the Diesel Gala were re-planned and eleven return trains (between Swanage and Norden only) and the return 'Jurassic Crompton' charter to London Waterloo were operated today, Sunday 12th May. RAIB attended on site today and spent the day examining the track and locomotive gathering information to determine the cause of the derailment. Their report will be published in due course. The date of publication is not known at present.

Until the report is published we should refrain from making comment about the incident on social media. Should you see what you consider inappropriate photographs or commentary please forward it to me. A press statement has been issued.

From a personal perspective, there is no doubt that an incident of this nature is a unpleasant shock, reinforcing in a stark way our responsibilities for the safe operation of trains.

But what I believe to be a truism on the Swanage Railway was proven again last night: when we need to and are focused on a critical problem to solve, we are good at coming together to address it. I am particularly grateful to: Ashley Haines, Operating Manager and Steve Duncalfe, Responsible Officer for leading members of Operations in the response and in developing during the night our operating plan for today; members of the P Way team, in particular Ken Orchard and Adam Woodman, who turned out to support the recovery of the locomotive during the night and early hours of Sunday morning and to Robert Patterson, Duty Manager who focused on our customers immediate travel needs. They probably did not get much sleep last night but the professionalism displayed in addressing the matter was exemplary.

I know others will have had involvement in this matter so may I on behalf of the Board express my thanks to all of those involved in whatever shape or form.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter please get in touch.

### **Positive Commercial Progress: Gavin Johns**

We have had a positive start to the season with Easter traffic and income levels growing healthily in comparison with last year, and a more detailed review of commercial matters written by Robert Patterson, our Commercial Director will be issued soon. It is still early steps in our three-year recovery plan, but we are starting on the right footing and need to maintain this to make the business resilient and sustainable in the longer term.

Early in the season we are dependent on the weather and have by and large been fortunate. Our major mid-season events - the Diesel Gala and Strictly Bullied 2 - in May and June respectively, will be very significant for us and in order to ensure that they hit the mark for our customers a lot of planning work has gone into them to present fantastic line ups of locomotives and activities. Press announcements will follow soon and internal communications through SITREP and Swanning Around will keep you informed. In addition, by signing up to the newsletter on our main website you will also keep yourself up to date.

### **Catering: Robert Patterson**

At the start of the year the railway embarked on outsourcing catering operations. We knew this innovative process would likely take time – and so it has proven. These negotiations are now concluding with a likely start date of 1st June. Firstly, the Board would like to thank all our amazing catering volunteers for keeping things going during the intervening period. We would like to thank everybody for their patience over this time of uncertainty and, not least the £14,000 in catering income raised to the end of March.

Clearly once the contract is finalised, we will announce the new caterer across the railway. The contractor has a number of exciting and innovative ideas and will be putting in modest new investment into each of the sites. They would also like to meet our catering volunteers to go through their proposals and the opportunities that are available.

It is in everybody's interests that this new venture succeeds and thrives. The deal is commercially confidential, but it will be no surprise that it involves a % take on turnover. Therefore, the better the contractor does – the better the railway does financially as well. Overall, with a secured income for the railway, investment and new ideas for catering and an enhanced customer experience there are clear benefits with these arrangements.

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Mention of the 'operating incident' in SITREP brings us to what may be described as perturbed working. Although the diesel loco was declared fit to run for its trip back to its home at Eastleigh, the track was not so fortunate, with some sleepers, rail and fittings needing replacement. In this picture, work is in progress on the affected section of track, which has the effect of requiring wrong line running for the service trains in the Norden direction, and the affected track circuit and two signals being inoperative. For those signals, a handsignalman was provided on 16<sup>th</sup> May, and here is Jon Riding displaying a green flag signal at the signal post authorising the driver of T3 no. 563 to proceed past the inoperative section signal at Corfe Castle.

On the affected track to the left, sleepers have been replaced, waiting for the rails.

(that's a lot of affected effects!)

By the way, we will have to wait for the RAIB report to discover the cause of the derailment.







Our resident mainline-certified class 33 no D6515 (33 012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* has been out and about several times in the last few weeks. We saw in the previous issue of SA that the loco had been to Eastleigh to collect 50 026 *Indomitable*. It also brought in a railtour from London for the diesel gala, accompanied by GB Railfreight's 69002 and 73109 with the London Transport 4TC set on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May, and the return on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

Prior to that, the 4TC set with D6515 was used on two railtours, one to the West and one to the South and South West.

Above, D6515 is seen somewhere in South Wales on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, with 59005 for company on the back. (Screenshot from YouTube video by South Wales Trainspotting)

Below, D6515 is getting some help at Exeter Central on 4<sup>th</sup> May in this view of the underpowered train! Four coaches with five locos, numbers at the top of the picture. (Screenshot from a YouTube video by Luke Pyle) Other videos are available on YouTube for these railtours and the diesel gala.





photo: Gary Packer

In other news, the 563 Group which successfully brought the T3 back to steam at Swanage has now taken on the possible overhaul of the T9 no 30120. We say possible because the T9 is owned by the National Railway Museum, and any work on the loco will have to be approved by them, and an agreement formulated between them and the Swanage Railway.

So it's not a given, but on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 30120 was towed to Norden where the tender was split off and the loco transported to The Flour Mill Workshop for assessment. The tender stays behind..





photo: Bob Bunyar

Harmans Cross up platform has been resurfaced. Works such as this, and keeping the place looking cared for, both in the buildings and the gardens, is all down to the station team.

The sort of work required by station teams is largely unskilled so if you are interested in helping to maintain any of our five stations, all you have to do is contact our Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Officer. See last page for details.



photo: Stuart Magnus



We're on the telly! Or more accurately, Peter Davison, John Sergeant, and Paul 'Piglet' Middleton are at Swanage Railway on the Channel 5 programme Big Steam Adventure, which will be on your TV at 8.00pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 8.00pm, or an hour later or on catchup probably if you have access to it. Don't miss it!

The three travellers are in discussion about the T3, in front of which they are standing, hosted by the T3 Group's Matt McManus.

both photos: Andrew P M Wright





The Estates department volunteers are always out doing something, and here are some of them preparing to erect some fencing at the picnic area by Norden station. A new staircase to the area has been made by carpenter John Piper.

David Parkinson, David Budd, John Redwood, and Andy Shepherd are on site on 30<sup>th</sup> April. Fencing to be erected, handrails required for the stairs, and placing the picnic tables to be done before our visitors can use it.



From Peter Sills,

### **Purbeck Mining Museum, Norden - a great destination on the Swanage Railway**

In a great demonstration of how Swanage Railway can make the most of its museums, a group of 54 students and 4 teachers from the Charles de Foucauld college in Brest, France came for a guided visit to Purbeck Mining Museum at Norden Station on 9 April 2024.

The group leader had discovered PMM on Facebook and wanted the children to have the fun of a steam train ride combined with an educational purpose. Purbeck Mining Museum was the perfect destination. Not only do we offer a chance to see rare artefacts of social and scientific interests, but there's also the unique experience of the underground clay tunnel.

This is the first of a few youth visits planned for 2024. Purbeck Mining Museum will also be welcoming a large group of cub scouts in June and Brownies in July. We hope that Swanage Railway continues to promote Purbeck Mining Museum as an exciting destination for groups of all ages. This benefits both the museum and the railway.

For more info about the Purbeck Mining Museum, go to the web page at <https://purbeckminingmuseum.org/>



Amongst our driver experience offerings this year are various diesel experiences. In this picture above from one of The Southerner's excellent YouTube videos, the 'Bubble Car' single unit W55028 is passing Creech Bottom on one such trip on 18<sup>th</sup> April.

The visiting 50026 *Indomitable* has also been used for some experiences, and here's Del Bennett, who works at Bournemouth Traincare and is also on the loco's support team having the first go on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Also in May, the visiting class 24 D5054 will be giving some experiences before returning to its home at the East Lancashire Railway.



On 30<sup>th</sup> April, driver Bryan Hardwick shunts 34053 *Sir Keith Park's* tender into Swanage Goods Shed .....



.... and on 10<sup>th</sup> May, it looks like this!  
-thanks to SR's carriage and wagon team!

Meanwhile, in Herston Works, 34053 itself looks like this on 13<sup>th</sup> May.  
The Southern Locomotives team is making progress fast!



© David Ensor Travel Photography



And don't forget Strictly Bulleid 2, 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June with a preview day on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

Details and ticket info on the Swanage Railway website at

<https://www.swanagerailway.co.uk/events/view/strictly-bulleid-ii>

Six Bulleid pacifics on the flyer below ( .... and may be a seventh!?)

**BIGGEST EVER BULLEID FEST!**

SWANAGE RAILWAY

**STRICTLY BULLEID II**

SPONSORED BY  
**TRACKSIDE**  
— The Journal of Railway Preservation —

7-9 JUNE

Featuring...

34081 92 Squadron

34028 Eddystone

34070 Manston

35006 Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co

34092 City of Wells

34072 257 Squadron

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](mailto: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](mailto: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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