



Rebuilding and running a community railway through the Isle of Purbeck

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FROM STAGE TO RAIL – NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM TRANSFERS
OWNERSHIP OF RARE VICTORIAN STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

A unique Victorian steam locomotive that escaped the cutting torch thanks to the centenary of London's Waterloo station – and starred in 'The Railway Children' on both sides of the Atlantic – has been transferred to the Swanage Railway by the National Railway Museum.

Built in February, 1893, for hauling express trains on the London and South Western Railway, T3 class 4-4-0 wheel arrangement locomotive No. 563 was withdrawn by the Southern Railway at the end of the Second World War in August, 1945, by which time it had run a total of 1.5 million miles.

Designed by William Adams for smooth running at up to 80mph – and built at Nine Elms in London – the 81-tonne No. 563 was not scrapped in 1948.

Instead, the unique locomotive was selected for restoration and display at the centenary celebrations for London's Waterloo station in a move that thankfully guaranteed the preservation of No. 563.

Part of the National Railway Museum collection at Locomotion, the National Railway Museum at Shildon in County Durham, the veteran locomotive was transported by sea to Canada in 2011 where it had a six-month starring role in Toronto's Roundhouse Park for a theatrical production of 'The Railway Children'.

Returning across the Atlantic, No. 563 again took to the stage when the production – an adaptation by Mike Kenny of E. Nesbit's much-loved novel – was staged at King's Cross station in London where a thousand-seat pop-up theatre had been built.

Swanage Railway Company chairman Trevor Parsons said: "We are delighted, thrilled and very grateful to the National Railway Museum for donating such a rare Victorian steam locomotive to the Swanage Railway.

"Thanks to the T3's ownership being transferred to the Swanage Railway, we hope to suitably display the locomotive to the public and illustrate a period of important London and South Western Railway history that has previously not been possible. Our primary aim is No. 563's conservation and preservation.



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"The T3 class of steam locomotives – and perhaps No. 563 itself – worked trains from London down to Corfe Castle and Swanage; taking expectant families on holiday from the city to the sea. The locomotives were part of the story of Swanage's development as a popular seaside resort.

"We look forward to hopefully putting the locomotive on suitable display so our visitors can delight in its late Victorian engineering and see the marvellous machine that hauled trains from the city to the sea for half a century.

"Only twenty of the T3 class of steam locomotive were built for the London and South Western Railway in 1892 and 1893 – and No. 563 is the only survivor of the class so it is unique," added Mr Parsons, a Swanage Railway volunteer signaller and train guard.

A spokesperson from the National Railway Museum said: "We are delighted to gift the T3 class to the Swanage Railway as part of its growing collection and to have found such a suitable home for this locomotive.

"The Swanage Railway has an outstanding record for preserving and displaying items, something which is paramount to the museum, allowing the public to appreciate the locomotive and attract a new audience to Swanage on a railway steeped in T3 history."

Carrying three tonnes of coal and 3,300 gallons of water, the first T3 was withdrawn from service by the Southern Railway in 1930 as the late Victorian locomotives were replaced by more modern designs.

Just three years later, only three of the outside cylinder locomotives remained in use for light duties.

The transport demands of the Second World War delayed the end for No. 563 but the coming of peace saw the last of the Victorian class withdrawn.

During 1948, No. 563 was restored in the London and South Western Railway Dugald Drummond locomotive livery of green with chocolate edging.

In 1961, the T3 class locomotive was repainted in its original 1893 livery of light green with black and brass beading.

The classic locomotive is due to be transported by road to the Swanage Railway in the near future.

The Swanage Railway always welcomes new volunteers so for an informal chat, contact Swanage Railway volunteer co-ordinator Mike Whitwam on 01929 475212 or email volunteer@swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk.



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Swanage Railway train times – and special event details – are available online at www.swanagerailway.co.uk or by telephone on 01929 425800.

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM BACKGROUND FACTS:

1. The National Railway Museum in York has the largest collection of railway objects in the world and attracts over 700,000 visitors per year.
2. The National Railway Museum's collection includes over 300 locomotives and rolling stock, 628 coins and medals, 4,899 pieces of railway uniform and costume, railway equipment, documents, records, artwork and railway related photographs.
3. The National Railway Museum houses a world-class collection of Royal trains, which includes a collection of Royal carriages, from those used by Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth II.
4. The National Railway Museum's vast art collection comprises of 11,270 posters, 2,358 prints and drawings, 1,052 paintings, and 1,750,000 photographs – many of which have never been on public display.
5. The National Railway Museum forms part of the Science Museum Group, along with the Science Museum in London, the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, the National Media Museum in Bradford and Locomotion, the National Railway Museum at Shildon.
6. Admission to the National Railway Museum is free.

For more information about the National Railway Museum, visit: nrm.org.uk
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