

## SR BOGIE GUARDS VAN S 232

This non-gangwayed passenger brake van was built in December 1939 and formed part of a second batch of Bogie Guard's Vans. S 232 was constructed by the Southern Railway as part of Order No. L 1029 [vehicles numbered S 201 – S 250] and designated as a 'B' van.

The 50 ft underframe was constructed at Lancing Carriage & Wagon Works near Shoreham-by-Sea in West Sussex before moving to Eastleigh C&W Works in Hampshire where the wooden body and other fitments were added. The vehicle's original works plates are still attached to the underframe showing "SR 232 ASHFORD".

The design diagram was No. 3093 which covered the installation of a central Guard's compartment. It had an emergency vacuum brake handle, a hand wheel to apply the clasp brakes (when the van was stabled) plus other equipment needed by a Guard to carry out their duties. Exterior livery was SR Olive Green with ends, underframes and bogies in Black with a Grey roof.

The wooden bodyside is made of alternate wide (6½ inch) and narrow (3½ inch) planking and this includes the four sets of double doors on each side. However, the Guard's external doors have a different design. An internal sliding door permitted entry to each luggage area. Because of loading gauge restrictions a Guard's periscope was fitted in the roof but this was removed by BR, probably in the mid-1970s, along with SR designed 'torpedo' roof ventilators. It weighs 26 Tons, is fitted with steam heat pipes (and a small radiator in the Guard's compartment) and runs on a pair of SR 8 ft bogies which are vacuum braked.

S 232 would have been overhauled and repainted many times during its working life. We know that it would have received a Crimson Lake livery from around 1949 but would have been painted BR (S) Passenger Green after 1956. From mid-1967 the 'in' colour was BR's all over matt Blue including the ends.

S 232 worked for over 40 years mainly on the Southern Railway Western Section, followed by BR (South Western Division), more or less continually in assorted newspaper and/or parcels workings. It was taken out of revenue earning service and converted, in 1982, to become a stores van for the Regional Mechanical & Electrical Engineers section based at Strawberry Hill EMU Depot, Richmond upon Thames in south west London. It gained the number ADB 977065 as well as an engineer's all over Brown service livery for this duty.

The vehicle had not moved for years and was transferred to the British Rail Internal User fleet being re-numbered 083612. Some years later BR decided that 083612 (originally S 232) was now surplus to requirements and sold to scrap merchants Booth Roe Metals in Rotherham. However, two members of the Southern Steam Trust purchased S 232 before its transportation to Rotherham and oblivion.

They purchased it in July 1990 and arranged for movement southward during October 1990. Since arrival on Swanage Railway metals it was used initially as a store. Eventually it was cleared before refurbishment on its conversion to yet another use. The coach had seen a lot of wear and tear over many years, so extensive external restoration was needed which started in 2010.

After completion, S 232 housed an extensive exhibition established by David Haysom, Curator of the Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre, and it was complemented by a small cinema at the other end. It was located originally at Swanage before being moved to Corfe Castle. It now stands in the siding beside the Goods Shed, alongside the historic cattle dock. The Museum and Exhibition Coach now contains a re-vamped display dedicated to the story of rebuilding the Swanage Railway by it's volunteers. The Cinema, after being closed for some time, was renovated during 2012/13 and fitted out with new audio-visual equipment sponsored by Dacombe and Renault of Wimborne.

Information collated by Peter Sykes      29<sup>th</sup> September 2021