

MAUNSELL OPEN THIRD S 1323 S

Southern Railway Lancing Carriage Works' standard 59ft underframe was transferred to Eastleigh Carriage Works. They attached the wooden framed sheet steel bodywork on it and installed the interior fittings using design diagram 2005. Coach 1323 was part of Lot 706. Diagram 2005 even provided for fittings which allowed tables to be installed permitting passengers to dine when Open Thirds were coupled to Kitchen Third vehicles.

On entry to service, S1323 ran 'loose' for around 27 years, from 1933 until early 1960, after which it was withdrawn for conversion for push-pull operation. When out shopped, this 56 seater vehicle was coupled to Brake Corridor Composite S6680 to form two-coach Set 611. It ran like this from June 1960 on Southern Region's SE Division. It was transferred to undertake BR(SR)Western Division services where it worked from September 1961 to May 1964.

After withdrawal, it became one of BR Southern Region's Internal User vehicles (numbered 082236) where the interior was completely stripped. In 1967 it was fitted out to become an Instruction Coach (DS 70266) for the Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineer's Department for a number of years.

It was still departmental condition when purchased by the Mid-Hants Railway during 1982. In 1984, however, it was put up for sale as it had been heavily vandalized. The coach was donated to Swanage Railway in 2005 and placed in store. This was pending a possible application for heritage grant-aid to rebuild into an SR push pull set condition along with Maunsell Brake 6697 (another former Mid-Hants resident).

S1323 S was moved to Swanage in September 2005 where it was sheeted on arrival. Unfortunately it continued to suffer vandalism, and deteriorated to a poor condition, so it was decided to move it into secure storage undercover away from the railway. This was undertaken on Monday 14th December 2009 along with LSWR Corridor Third 728 and Maunsell-designed Brake Composite 6699.

When funds permit, it is still intended to restore it for use in a reconfigured Maunsell two-coach push-pull set, to be numbered 619, to operate on the Swanage Railway in conjunction with a suitably adapted locomotive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Swanage Railway Stock Books

Preserved Coaching Stock of British Railways – Part One BR Design Stock
by Peter Hall and Peter Fox (Platform 5 Publishing – 1994)

The Railway Heritage Register Carriage Survey Project:
<http://www.cs.rhrp.org.uk/se/CarriageInfo.asp?Ref=397>

Information collated by Peter Sykes 17th March 2024