

Amerton News October 2008

John Strike

Permanent Way

We are negotiating for the purchase of four 1 in 5 turnouts in 35M material and two 30lb Y points. The 1 in 5s are to be used in the Station throat area to replace the near life expired ex Trecwn turnouts originally laid in 1990. The Y points will be kept in stock and who knows one day we will lay the turning triangle! Peter Booth has done an excellent job and cleared the Goat Paddock curve of weeds and also around the abutments to Bridge No. 1

Locomotives

Isabel's 10 year overhaul has made good steady progress. The newly rebuilt boiler arrived back at Amerton at the end of June and a fine job it is too. Derek opened up the chimney aperture in the smoke box and prepared the cast iron ring to fit. There was an issue with the regulator quadrant/stuffing box in that the actual valve wasn't fully closed when the regulator handle was against the stop. Conversely the regulator handle didn't go right across the quadrant in the fully open position. Much head scratching revealed that on *Isabel's* old boiler the studs must have been put in out of level, thus altering the throw of the handle. On our new backhead they have been set level and have now caused this problem! Derek made

up a tapered shim and also built up the square on the regulator rod and by various adjustments it is about right. The slidebars and motion brackets have seen a lot of work by Peter and Steve in truing up the alignment of the slidebars. Much preparation work and eccentric bushes have largely solved the problem. The new pistons can now be turned down to size with the correct clearance and the grooves machined for the new plain piston rings. A DRO was set up to determine the FDC and BDC of the crankpin throw to enable measurements to be made to centre up the piston position in the bore. As it happened they were very close and only some minor adjustment to the shims may be needed at the big end. Derek cut a set of new gaskets with a set of new punches obtained for the purpose. Derek also started to refit the drain cock gear whilst the loco was jacked up at the front end. Once complete she can go back down and the boiler be fitted. Most energy has gone into preparing, painting and flatting all the platework, including some areas of filler. Peter managed to get the first coat of gloss on the saddle tank in the middle of September. Inevitably we could really do with some additional help here during the reassembly.



Close up of Isabel's regulator valve; note that the pilot valve drags the main valve open

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Isabel's frames jacked up and having the drain cocks refitted and primer applied to the wheels

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The works plate Bagnall 1889 of 191, now owned by the Railway

Peter Bell



No. 1 set up on an Allen's flat for display

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No. 1 was moved into the main running shed and consists of frames, tank, cabside and wheelsets set up as an interim display. One of the original works plates has been acquired from auction and copies will be cast in due course for use on the loco. The set of 50 Bagnall drawings arrived on a CD, but unfortunately they were scanned at too low a resolution, further negotiations are underway.

Lorna Doone remains on display and as popular as ever.

The Henschel, the drawing for the brake blocks was amended to suit the three different loco owners and an oversize pattern is now being made in the Black Country. Work has started off site on the cab spectacles both the cast iron frames and bronze hinges.

Paddy's tender has been brought into the works and mounted upside down on one of

the Allens flats. The old curly spoke wheels have been removed and a set of chilled iron wheels sourced. New axles have been made and the wheels are due to be pressed on at Alton Engineering. The tender frame and axleboxes are being modified to incorporate coil springs, which should improve the ride for any tender passengers!

Emmet received its cold exam and steam test on 25th July 2008 and passed to be back in traffic the following weekend. *Emmet* has continued to run well and has received some minor maintenance over the summer months.

Jennie, the new Hunslet Wren arrived on the railway on 29th September 2008 and has already run our Sunday service on three occasions. New nameplates are to be cast by Hunslet and one or two other minor jobs will be carried out over the coming weeks. *Jennie* is a very nice and very welcome addition to the Amerton steam fleet.



Graham Lee hands over the Owner's Manual for the Wren to Andrew Gully on the occasion of its arrival at Amerton, 6th October 2008

Peter Gully

Minworth Motor Rail 746, it remains in full working order and available as required.

Motor Rail 7471 also remains in full working.

Baguley *Dreadnought* still sees occasional use on the Saturday services.

Ruston Yd No. 70, has seen some progress towards re-engining the loco. A trolley frame has been fabricated for fixing to the feet of the ex Gen Set 4VRO engine to make it transportable. It is likely to go to John's workshop once stripped. The flywheel has now been freed off the crankshaft and further dismantling and cleaning will be carried out at Amerton prior to the move.

The Hunslet *Gordon* has seen regular use throughout the Summer on the Saturday and mid week services.

The Littleton Ruston sees a lot of use on shunting duties and is running well.

Baguley *Golspie* remains in store in the carriage shed.

Baguley 774 is still stored complete in the shed and awaits a decision from Tywyn..

Jung 5869 was moved into the running shed and we will try to refit the rear coupling to make it easier to move around.



Nick drills the fixing holes for the heavy duty castors for the Ruston 4VRO trolley

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Carriage and Wagon

Not a great deal to report here, as all passenger and goods vehicles have performed well during the season with no particular issues. Peter has obtained some additional air reservoirs to be fitted to Coach 1 for when the passenger set is used without the Brake Van compressor or a loco without a compressor, these will be installed in due course.

Plant and Equipment

The machine tools were due to be collected in October from near Newport, Shropshire and comprise a substantial lathe, radial arm drill, 15hp 50 cfm 3phase compressor and a whole range of tooling together with two hefty steel trestles which are earmarked for under the Henschel frames.

S & T

Roger and Ray have started work on the front of the Waterhouses Signal Box, the

sashes have been removed and are under repair at Roger's workshop at home. Some thought will be required soon and a time slot arranged to move the Box into its final position on suitable foundations.

Building and Civil Engineering

Work has continued on the Workshop with the majority of the fit out now complete. All the electrics have now been installed and tested with work on the machine shop 3 phase underway. Various hand dryers and all the lighting has been installed but we are waiting to install a timer for the hot water heater. The upstairs skirting, architrave and carpets have been completed and the door out onto the mezzanine hung in place. Some sets of personnel lockers have arrived and they are temporarily positioned downstairs prior to final fixing. A substantial drawing chest has been installed upstairs to take our growing collection of drawings and will prove most useful in the years to come.