

Amerton News

September 2011

John Strike

Permanent Way

The 5mph restrictions at 'the kink' beyond Stump Siding are still in force despite various attempts to improve matters. A much fuller re-alignment needs to be carried out over several lengths either side to make a permanent solution. This may involve widening the formation a little. There also appears to be a similar issue developing near the old ford, so we will watch that with interest as well. Some spot re-sleepering has been carried out on the mainline near Two Trees with many of the Phase 1 sleepers now at the end of their life (fourth hand at least!). Ballast retention boards have been dug in along a number of stretches predominantly at Two Trees and alongside the allotments.

Ballast has been topped up at these locations and should now stay there though the sheep at Two Trees are an eternal problem. The dips in the track either side of Bridge 2 have been repacked and with the ballast retention boards should be more permanent. All the turnouts have been greased up and other areas of ballasting carried out. The crossing timbers at Goat Paddock crossing have been removed due to rot and the area stoned up to rail level prior to fixing new timbers in due course, the carriage shed and much of the yard has now also been stoned up to rail level to improve underfoot conditions. The 'new' turnouts have been moved up to Stump Siding and their sleepers removed.



Scrap rails cut to length for the ballast retention works

Chris Dobbs

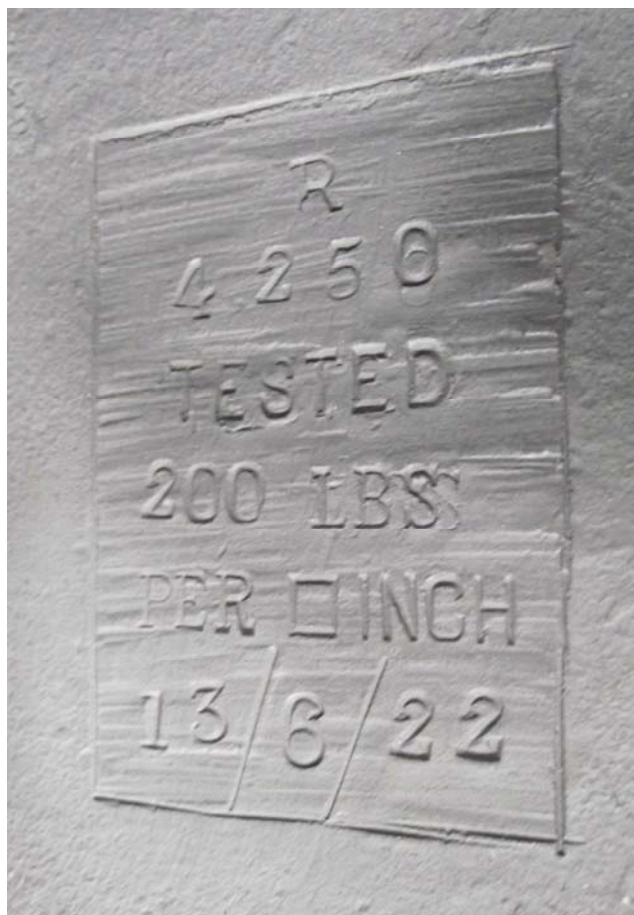
Locomotives

Isabel has now been fully reassembled after having been stripped down after the Santa's. The work has taken a long time due to various circumstances. The insulation and cladding has been re-installed to the boiler and firebox though the fireman's side bunker has been repositioned to clear the over-thick insulation around the firebox. Sadly she missed the Gala, but she was finally steam tested in the presence of our boiler inspector on 20th July 2011 having received a new fusible plug beforehand. The blower pipe was modified to avoid a leaking joint behind the bunker. Reports indicate that she is now very economical with the insulation and indeed the new Welsh Dry Steam coal we are now using. Recently both clacks have stuck open at various times, so the tank was drained and flushed out, with no further reported issues. Various jobs have been attended to prior to her visit to the Apedale

Gala in September, full report next time. It's very good to have the old girl back!

The Henschel, a short term plan has been set to get this project back under way, with work hopefully resuming on the frames and other components by the time you read these notes. We have been in touch with our boiler maker who intends to recommence work on our boiler now that he has completed another boiler for the West Lincs.

Lorna Doone's frames have been shotblasted and primed and are now resident upside down on an Allens flat in the works. An interesting piece of history is stamped on the cylinder castings, see the photograph below, we believe the other surviving Wrens are similarly marked. Work on the horn guides is under way, a new cab roof has been rolled and delivered and the boiler remains in store at Tamworth.



Lorna Doone's right hand cylinder stamped up as tested on 13th June 1922 to 200 psi

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Lorna Doone's *Driving axle horns and keeps set up on the shotblasted frames*

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Paddy has been away from the Railway all year (since September 2010) but was due to return for our Gala in June. Sadly he suffered problems the previous weekend at Wicksteed, a stand in for others, when a bolt worked its way out and collided with the big end, shifting the cranks on the crankpin. The opportunity was taken to remove her to Derbyshire for rebuilding where the gear train arrangement will be replaced by a roller chain. The tender did arrive at the Gala and departed north with the Hayfield coach. *Paddy* had been very busy having been at the Leighton Buzzard Coffee Pot event, Hollycombe and of course Wicksteed.

No. 1 remains safely stored around the works.

Jennie, has come to our rescue and has run nearly all the steam services until recently and has performed very well. She has also had a busy season, visiting Leighton (not used) Hollycombe and Wicksteed and returning for our Gala. She passed her boiler

test in early September, and is available for service alongside *Isabel*.

Barclay well tank *Jack* arrived on the Railway in May following its recent overhaul. A steam test was carried out on 21st May and the loco ran very well once a minor adjustment had been made to a brake block pin. The air brake installation was tested with made up hoses and the loco ran our services over the Bank Holiday weekend. *Jack* then briefly left us to go to Wicksteed and returned to us for our Gala. *Jack* finally returned towards home on the 19th June.

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

Motor Rail 7471 remains available for use as required.

Baguley *Dreadnought* still sees use on the Saturday and weekday services as required.

Ruston Yd No. 70, no further work to report.



Hunslet Gordon shunts an Allens flat on the newly completed ballasted area

Chris Dobbs

The Hunslet *Gordon* sees a lot of use on off peak services and as ever is running well.

The Littleton Ruston sees regular use as works shunter and is running well.

Baguley *Golspie* remains patiently stored in the running shed

Jung 5869 remains stored in the running shed.

Deutz 19531 work continues on axleboxes and wheelsets, amongst other work.

Carriage and Wagon

The passenger set received its deep clean just prior to the Gala and did present a very smart appearance to our passengers. The wagons in use over the Gala including four of our venerable skips all received their annual charge of lubrication and had a thorough test over the whole line. The control cable to the water sprayer ceased to function over the

Gala weekend, meaning much squealing, but has since received a heavier flex.

Plant and Equipment

The pillar drill currently near the sink in the running shed is to be rebuilt over the winter before taking up residence in the workshop. This will provide useful capacity and accuracy between the bench drill press and the huge radial arm.

S & T

The signal box gets ever closer to completion, see report elsewhere, and work to the lower external boards is now complete. Thoughts can now turn to foundations and permanent positioning.

Building and Civil Engineering

The railway engaged a contractor to replace all the station fencing with new tanalised timber as the original had reached the end of its life. The original quote included the driveway, goat paddock curve and the length

along the rear of the platform, with new personnel gates near the coal siding and the back of the platform. This has ended up as a major expense, but should last a long time. The area around the workshop and carriage shed has been levelled to rail head height to improve underfoot conditions. The Chartley building received a thorough clean up and much of the tat disposed of, prior to the occasion of one of the Director's wedding celebrations! New shelves have been erected to the front of the running shed for the 'steam department' tidying up the area considerably and housing our oils and pumps

effectively. The new wood shed is certainly well stocked at present, but our supply of good cotton rags is very low, any donations? New racking has also been erected in the workshop next to the machine shop, but is empty as yet. The planting beds have all been well attended throughout the season and the unseen task of emptying the bins have kept the platform looking smart. The sinks, toilets and tea station also received an overhaul, prior to the Gala, a huge improvement. An open circuit in the upstairs ring main was detected and solved and some minor redecoration carried out.



Scaffold tower erected to the gable end of the Waterhouses signal box

John Strike



Paddy and Pixie double head their train on the Leighton Buzzard Railway

Malcolm Garner



Isabel sits outside a rather different loco shed at Aurora Works at the end of a successful day at the Apedale Valley Light Railway's September 2011 Gala

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Statfold waits at Chartley Road Loop with the train of skips

John Strike



Raising steam on the Sunday morning of the Gala

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The customary line up Jack, Jennie, Peter Pan and Statfold

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Portrait of Jack in Amerton Loop

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