

Amerton News April 2012

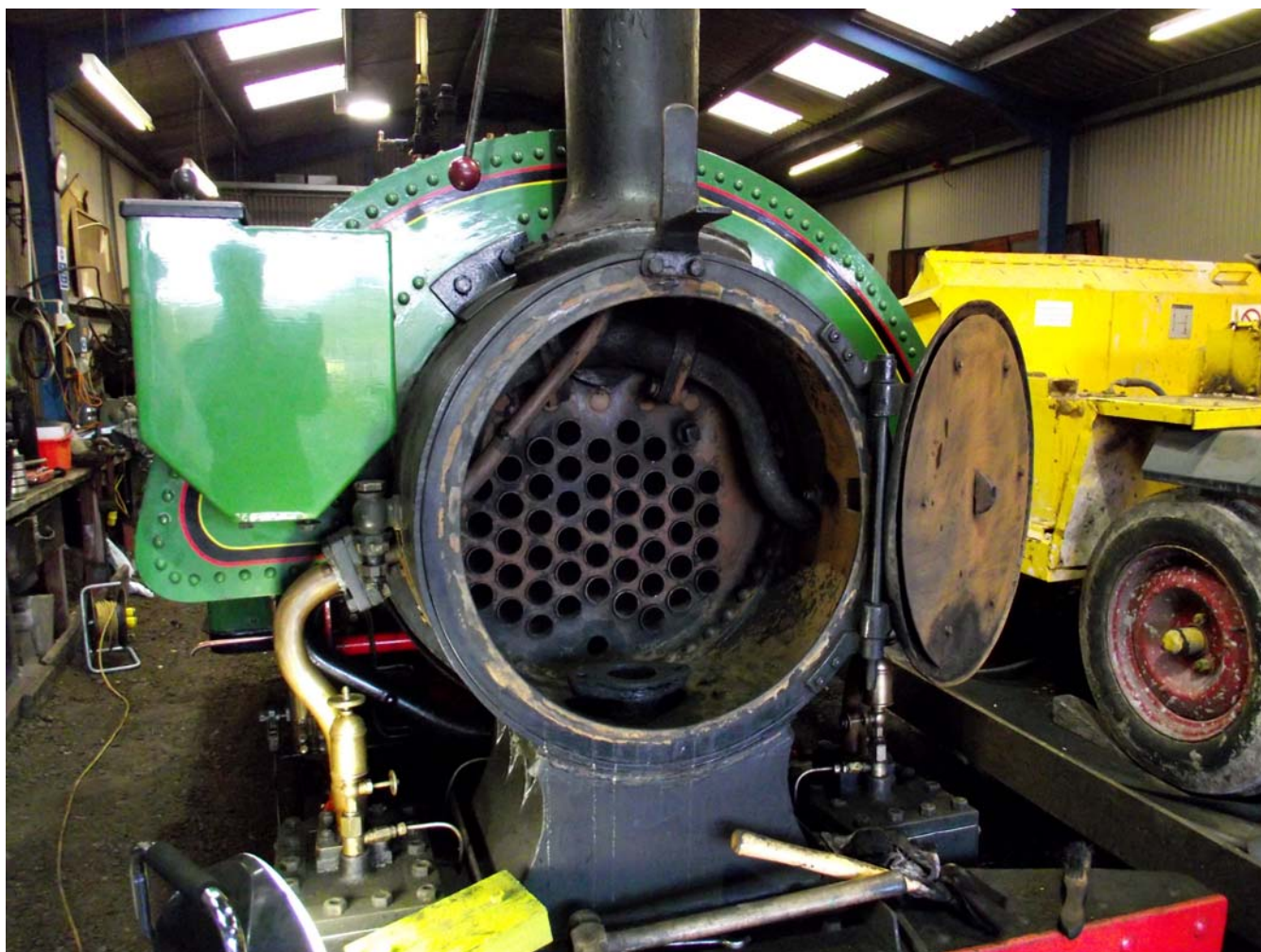
John Strike

Permanent Way

The gravel boards installed last year are holding up well and our small stock of limestone ballast has been used to top up various lengths and improve the line and level. Work is planned between February and the start of the main season to improve matters at the kink, this will need some quite major re-alignment at this point. Two Lengths of rail have been removed, the alignment improved and a single rail installed to replace the kink.

Locomotives

Isabel has run very well on the Welsh Dry Steam, the coal being virtually smokeless and it does not tend to clinker. She ran five of the Santa Specials and was drained down soon afterwards. She was then carefully prepared for her cold boiler exam at the end of February. She passed her steam test on 7th March 2012. There is quite a leak from the steam brake displacement lubricator which will be attended to prior to the main season. Other than that she is in fine fettle and ready for service.



Isabel seen here part way through her prep for the cold boiler exam, there's a tub of elbow grease kicking about somewhere!
John Strike

Bagnall No. 1 remains carefully stored patiently waiting for its day to come. Investigation into possible funding will commence once the land purchase is successfully concluded.

The Henschel, some material to turn up a new sleeve for the gland on the regulator has been purchased and contact made yet again with the boiler maker in the Isle of Wight concerning lack of progress on the boiler, the boiler has now been away for 10 years. A dimensioned and detailed drawing has recently been obtained of the Klein-Lindner axles, which will prove useful in completing the machining of the new components.

Lorna Doone work continues on the horns and axleboxes. The horns are being trued up and the bronze shims machined to fit the axleboxes with set screws, prior to detailed measurement and final setting up of the boxes. Work has also commenced on the dumb buffers, the face plates have been cut from 10mm steel and we have eyed up some suitable timber for the blocks themselves. The two original displacement lubricators were missing a spindle, various hand wheels and the bayonet top to one of them. The hand wheel and spindle have been turned up and work is due to commence on the complex cap. Once the horns are complete the frames will be painted in DCC red. All the parts have now been collected back at Amerton.



One of Lorna Doone's axleboxes set up on the Archdale mill

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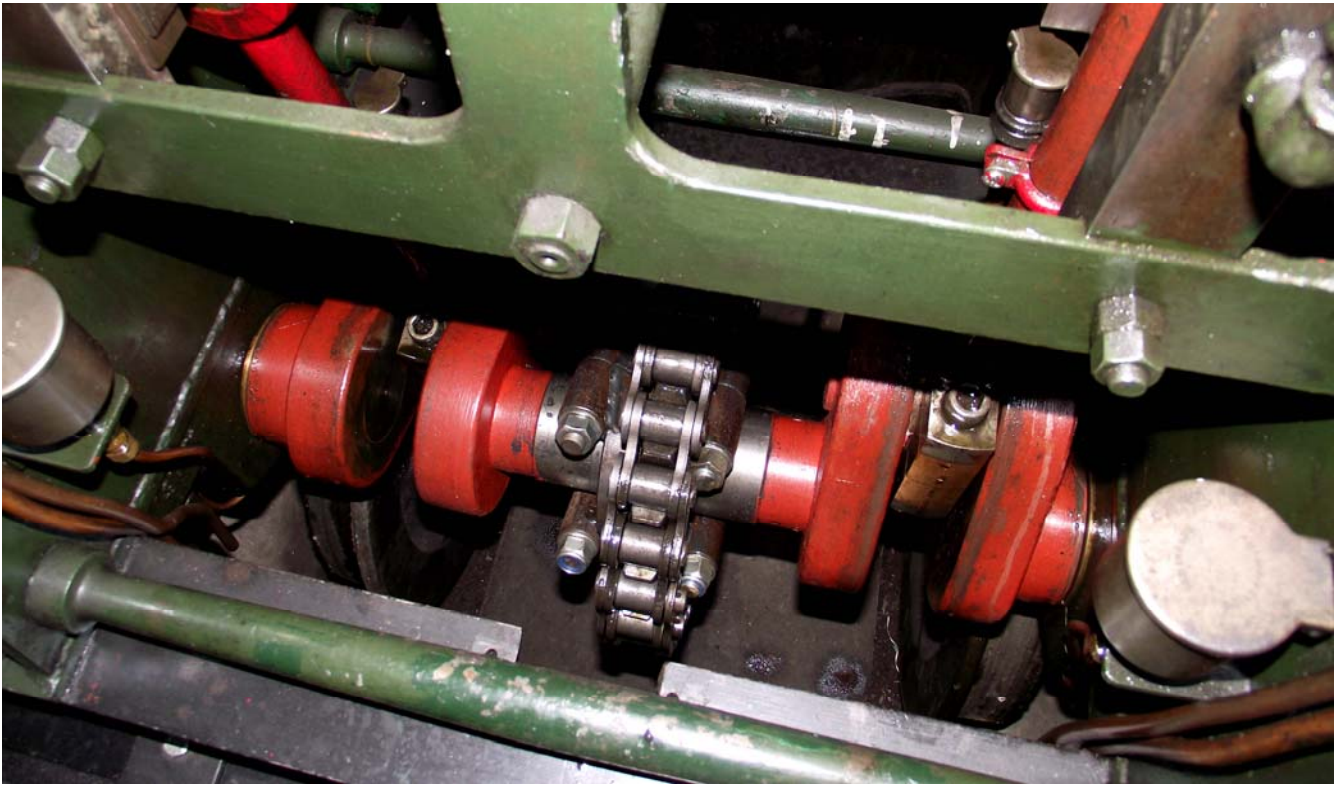
The new bronze shims to three of Lorna Doone's axleboxes, awaiting final machining

John Strike

Jennie, likewise has run well on the Welsh Dry Steam coal and ran the first three Santa Specials and was drained down and washed out thereafter. Investigation is underway for new replacement injectors to the original pattern and also possibly new discreet coupling arrangements. She too was prepared for her cold boiler exam at the end of February, and passed her steam test on 7th March 2012. She ran the first steam services of the 2012 season.

Paddy was rebuilt over the Autumn in Derbyshire with a new chain drive in lieu of the previous gear train. He was returned to

Amerton on the 11th January 2012 and successfully steam tested on the 12th. During the damage at Wicksteed the crank axle possibly shifted and the opportunity is being taken to remove the engine from the frames to investigate further. *Paddy* was in the works dismantled with the crank axle set up in the lathe for detailed measurement. This concluded that one crank has indeed moved on the crank pin and the axle was taken away to be pressed true once again. He passed his steam test on 7th March 2012 and is likely to go visiting various railways again during 2012 including Beamish and Threlkeld, flying the flag for Amerton.



The new sprockets and chain drive down to the leading axle on Paddy

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Isabel, Jennie and Paddy on the occasion of their successful steam tests on 7th March 2012

Ian Hodgson



Almost an industrial scene as Minworth Motor Rail 746 takes some air in the yard

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Minworth Motor Rail 746 remains in full working order and available as required, it will receive a thorough clean and tidy up prior to the main season.

Motor Rail 7471 remains available for use as required and has recently changed hands, becoming privately owned but will remain based on the Railway.

Baguley *Dreadnought* remains available for use as required, and sees occasional use as a backup for *Gordon*.

Ruston *Yd No. 70*, work re-commenced on the spare 4VRO engine with efforts made to prove all the internal oil ways. A spare pump was mounted in the Monarch lathe and flushing oil pumped through the system. A further session was held with some of the oilways plugged up proved the outer reaches

of the system. A final session will see clean flushing oil used to finish the job. The loco chassis has been cleared of debris ready for an engine lift as we need to recover the original loco flywheel for use on the spare engine.

The Hunslet *Gordon* was due to receive a new float sensor in the fuel tank and has been checked over for the forthcoming season and 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, but has had a new wooden saddle made up to support the rear end of the 'boiler', this will tidy her appearance no end.

Jung 5869 remains stored in the running shed.

Deutz 19531 remains stored in the workshop.

Carriage and Wagon

Van 4 was converted in November to become Santa's Grotto for the festive season and has since been returned to being a brake van. Coach 1 has seen the much overdue tidying up of all the miscellaneous wiring in the first compartment associated with the water spray and air compressor, this now presents a much better image to our inquisitive passengers. Coach 5 will need a tidy up of some of the paintwork this year; it has lasted very well over the 10 years since completion.

Plant and Equipment

The petrol generator was checked over and readied for the Santas, with installation in its hutch at CRL (Toyland). The pillar drill has been moved into the workshop and work commenced on sorting out the various components prior to repair and reassembly.

S & T

Various adjustments have been made to the point rodding runs as one of the sleeper piles had moved slightly to foul one of the longer rods. Work has commenced on turning up the finials for the signal box, one of the originals has gone missing and the other is in very poor shape. A jarrah sleeper has been cut up and machines well on the Myford wood lathe, but dulls the tools very quickly. The gable end boards are now complete to the North end of the box.

Building and Civil Engineering

The Chartley Road/Toyland sign was re-erected at CRL following some attention. The GWR cast iron bench has been stripped bare and repainted and once again looks very smart. The door into the workshop from the

locker room finally received its door closer and the doors in this area prepared and primed. Padlocks have been fitted to the roller doors in the workshop. Extensive works have been carried out at very short notice in bringing the workshop up to scratch to pass Building Regs and includes: fire call points, klaxons, emergency lighting, smoke detectors, rodding eye to the external waste pipe, a fire door between the locker room and the bottom of the stairs, sealing off of the bottom of the stairs to maintain the compartmentation, boxing in the extract duct to the downstairs toilet, flooring to the ceiling of the office in t & g chipboard, much plasterboard and plastering, fire exit signage and of course certification of the fire alarm and emergency lighting installation. This has been a major effort and cost and has largely been carried out by the Wednesday gang and in quick time. The Bldg Inspector returned and finally passed the workshop. A new 3ph feed across the back wall has been commenced for the pillar drill and mechanical saw. The whole workshop and running shed has benefited from a massive tidy up and all the tools collected together in the right places. Backboards for the tools are being fabricated and line markings on the shed floor being positioned to keep walkways clear. The machine shop has also been tidied and the slotted table repositioned to give more space. The other *Isabel* in the Chartley Building has received attention and new large castor wheels attached to make it more mobile as a very prominent advertisement for our Railway. The Amerton Station sign has also received a very thorough refurbishment and will be re-erected prior to the main season. The stove in the running shed will require some attention before long as gaps have grown between the component parts and the stainless steel flue is paper thin, you can see the flames through it!



The newly clad carriage shed doors

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General view of the works with Paddy and Paddy's engine prominent, Lorna Doone's frame can be seen in the background

John Strike



Isabel approaches the platform at Chartley Road towards the end of last year's season Malcolm Garner