

Amerton News April 2009

John Strike



Bucking the trend? A busy Sunday at Amerton in April 2009 with Jennie in charge of the consist, Ian Hodgson tends to the fire prior to the next trip

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Permanent Way

An inspection of the permanent way was carried prior to the start of the season, and declared fit for use. One or two issues have arisen and will be attended to in the coming weeks, including some spot re-sleepering, and some lining and levelling as required. Some adjustment will be required to the Amerton Station loop point as it appears a little tight to gauge in places and very tired in others.

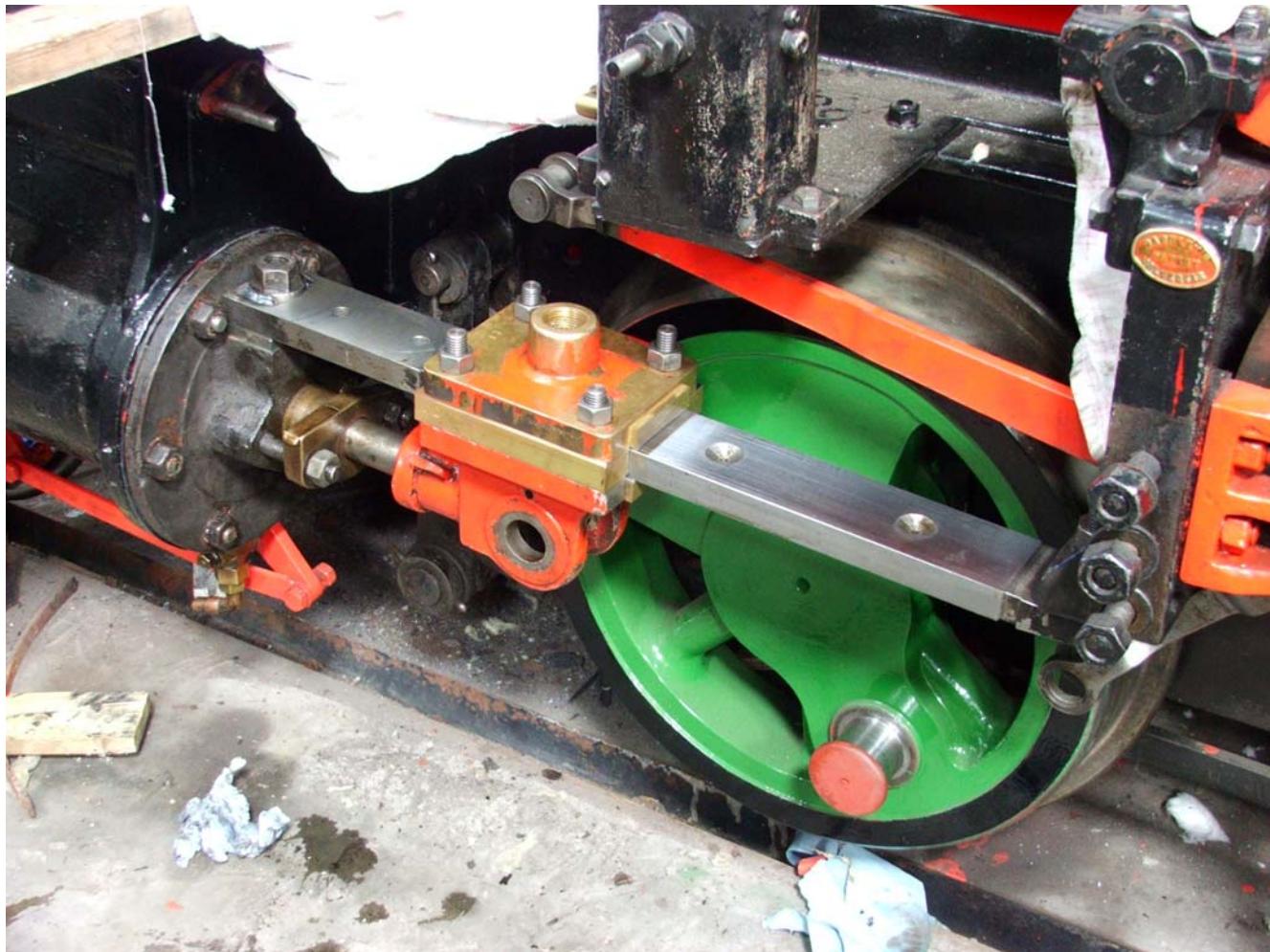
Locomotives

Isabel's re-assembly has continued slowly, though with the majority of jobs completed it should start to go together nicely. Steve

completed the welding to the smokebox saddle and the boiler was trial fitted, all seemed okay so a packing plate was rolled and two layers of gasket material cut to suit as bedding. The boiler was finally bolted in position, though the lock nuts need to be improved to the saddle. The boiler was also rubbed down and primed prior to receiving 2" thick Rockwool insulation, cut and laid to suit. The cladding sheets were tried in place and needed some adjustment to fit particularly around the firebox wash out plugs. The firebrick carrier was tried in position and much to our delight this awkward piece of ironmongery fitted perfectly! The original furnace backhead has

had its cladding and insulation removed, and we discovered that it is in fact a steel casting rather than cast iron. So, Steve was able to weld up the many cracks and also build up material around the door, so as to make it all a somewhat better fit. Terry has organised a new piece of plate, profile cut, to re-clad the rear, and some more work will be required on the door hinges to line them up correctly. The majority of pipework has been cleaned up and some lengths refitted to the loco where possible. The axleboxes have been cleaned out, new wicks fitted and the covers straightened and refitted prior to reconnecting all the oil feed pipes from the mechanical lubricator. The cladding straps

were "forgotten" and have now been rubbed down and painted black and await the visit of the lining out man prior to securing the cladding. The lining man was due to visit in April to do all the lining to the original dimensions recorded by Nick prior to the repainting. The new pistons have been attached to the rods and new cotter pins fitted and the new piston rings have been correctly gapped. We have discovered also that the D-valves are rather worn and these will also have to be built up on the sides with weld and machined back to be a better fit in the steam chest. The face of the valve where the valve rod passes through will also be trued up. Plenty to be going on with.



Isabel's rebuilt cross-head with whitemetal faced bronze slippers top and bottom, surface ground sidebar and new pistons, all installed for the first time, April 2009

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Lorna Doone remains on display in the running shed. A new 25 year agreement has been completed whereby we are able to restore *Lorna Doone* to full working order. The agreement runs until the end of March 2034! Plans are already afoot to secure funding.

The Henschel, work continues on the S&B injector, smokebox dogs, the cab spectacles and the machining of the re-railing beam. The drawings have now been stored in the plan chest.

Paddy, the tender wheelsets returned and the axleboxes have been modified to take small coil springs to improve the ride. The tender was then spun over and *Paddy* was steam tested 18th March 2009. The insulation and cladding has been fitted to the cylinders and one or two other jobs completed. *Paddy*

should then be ready for a final inspection prior to entering service.

Emmet, Nick spent a considerable time cleaning *Emmet* after a full season's service at Amerton, the inside of the cab roof was particularly dirty. All the oil cans and tools were collected together and our air connectors removed prior to *Emmet* leaving to visit Statfold on 20th March 2009. We believe she may then move south to another railway close to Jim's home. It has been a pleasure to have *Emmet* here for almost 18 months and we thank Jim Haylock profusely for letting us have her.

No. 1 remains stored on the Allens flat in the running shed, no further news as yet on the replacement drawings.



Jennie basks in the evening sun on 19th April 2009 for her official photograph

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Jennie has had a new air brake installation completed using our standard fittings, with new pipework and new Rectus self sealing connectors. The hardwood bunker top on the driver's side has been modified and has a hinged section for access to the bunker below. She left the railway on 20th March 2009 for a visit to Statfold for their Open Day on the 28th. She performed very well on the garden line and the mainline, double headed with O&K 614. Whilst there she was fitted with a blowdown valve and returned to Amerton on 1st April 2009 ready to start services over the Easter weekend.

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

Motor Rail 7471 remains in full working.

Baguley *Dreadnought* is in working order, and gets used on the odd Saturday service.

Ruston *Yd No. 70*, progress has slowed but the dummy bearing for the gen set crankshaft removal has been completed and the whole crankshaft should emerge sometime soon!

The Hunslet *Gordon* sees regular use on all duties and is running very well.

The Littleton Ruston sees a lot of use on shunting duties.

Baguley *Golspie* is stored in the carriage shed.

Jung 5869 remains stored in the shed.

Carriage and Wagon

Roger and Ray carried out repairs to the Coach 5 top end sill where the hardwood had rotted away. A new hardwood sill was profiled by Roger and let in, the whole lot being primed and painted thereafter and a new piece of glass fitted. The cleaning gang

also paid attention to the coaching stock with good results. Van 4 had an altercation with one of the carriage shed door frames, neither came off too well. Van 4 gutters and cant rail needed attention and a handrail re-welding. Whilst checking the running gear over the pit we realised that the handbrake wasn't actually clamping the brake shoes tight enough. Various amounts of play and slack in the linkage has been taken up and all is now functioning correctly. Nick has been fabricating some new solid coupling bars from 12mm plate with bosses welded on each end. These will suit *Jennie* and the Allens flats amongst other items.

Plant and Equipment

The radial arm drill was reassembled and a new drive belt cover fabricated by Terry and fixed to the floor. Pete has continued his PAT testing and re-cabling of our portable electrical equipment to great effect. The new compressor has been stripped down by Pete and Chris and a new oil seal fitted to the main shaft, and the air receiver thoroughly cleaned out. The electrics have been renewed and the whole lot given a coat or two of Monarch gloss. New mud doors and gaskets were obtained and fitted to the original receiver, and a new much larger receiver purchased to increase the capacity for riveting etc. This now awaits installation in the running shed. Steve carried out some minor repairs to the FLT, but currently the machine is stopped pending further work. Unfortunately the Archdale vertical mill suffered a breakage when an insert "dug in" to the work piece. One of the drive gears has broken in half and another has been found to be severely worn. Replacement parts are not available, but a quote of several hundred pounds has been received for the new items, a gear and a gear on a shaft. The machine is in pretty sound condition, so we are likely to proceed.



The completed compressor ready to be installed in the running shed, what a beast!

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S & T

Proposals have been tabled for various revised signalling schemes, but at present a mimic signal is to be installed to aid drivers in the platform prior to departure.

Building and Civil Engineering

All the lockers in the locker room have now got tenants and they have even been provided with knobs! Pete set up a new light fitting above the plan chest on the mezzanine floor so that we can now see what we are looking at. The new racking in the corner of the works have become the Electrical Department and the shelves now contain

much of our portable devices. The original Opening Day headboard from 1993 has resurfaced and now adorns the workshop wall. Roger and Ray have ground the concrete threshold to the two roller shutter doors to improve the fit of the seal to prevent wind blown water ingress. The door to the carriage shed will require some serious rectification, prior to a reliable door catch being devised. The working week gang also achieved much painting and repairs in and around the station area, see separate article. One or two jobs are left to complete, but the whole station really does look rather good.



The Ticket Office now looks rather smart again, in its Monarch and Cream colours

Malcolm Garner