

# Amerton News

## John Strike

### Permanent Way



*The stored VoR rail in the loop at Amerton, these are the parts of the two turnouts!*

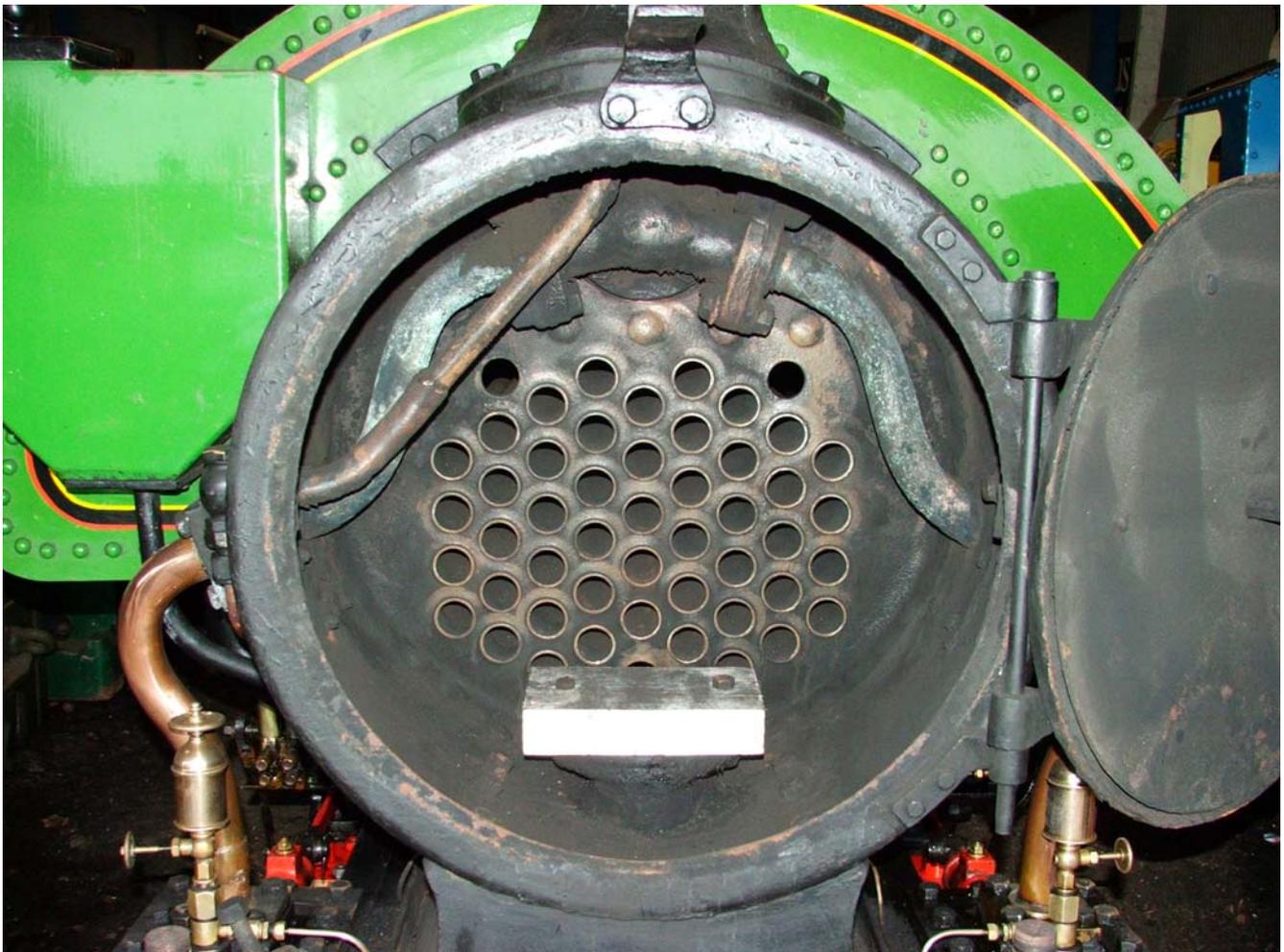
*John Strike*

Two 12ft 35M panels were made up from materials in stock including heavy-duty steel sleepers, ready for *Isabel* to be moved and displayed at the Stafford show. The VoR rail was still to be moved out of the loop and be stored at Chartley Road.

### Locomotives

*Isabel* was thoroughly cleaned and prepared for display at the Stafford Railway Circle 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show (see elsewhere). She was eventually lifted by crane and weighed 6.1 tonnes empty. Once returned to Amerton, she was stripped down ready for the cold

boiler exam by our boiler inspector. An awful lot of preparation is required including cleaning the tubes, removing carbon off the front tube plate, complete clean of firebox, removal of fusible plug and a dose of oil on the exposed bottom of the firebox wrapper. The inspector was appreciably happy with the condition in which he found her and passed her fit for use till the end of October 2007, subject as always to a satisfactory steam test. The Winson steam/air pump finally freed up towards the end of the Santa Specials and was fully dosed with oil.



*A view not often seen by many, Isabel's smokebox, cleaned and ready for the boiler inspector     John Strike*

The pump steam valve requires some attention, as it appears to constantly leak to the steam pump. A new Nabic fusible plug (£110 !!) was purchased and *Isabel* re-assembled ready for the start of the season on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2007

*Lorna Doone* remained covered up during the Winter period and will be cleaned prior to going back on display.

The Henschel has seen progress on injectors, rods and Klein–Lindner axles, together with the spectacle plates. The frames will shortly be moved into the new workshop, where a space at the thin end has been identified.

Minworth Motor Rail 746 remains in use on engineering trains. The owners recently acquired a genuine Motor Rail cast bronze

“roundel”, which would have originally been mounted on the vertical front of the loco's bonnet, only problem is that Minworth removed the bonnet front, very early on, so we haven't actually got anywhere to fix it!

Motor Rail 7471 remains in full working order and sees use in its “industrial” condition, but still runs very well.

Baguley *Dreadnought* remains in full working order and sees occasional use on the Saturday services.

Ruston *Yd No. 70*, the pair of Ruston 4VRO engines were moved into the new workshop and one will be set up on a stand for the rebuild to commence.

The Hunslet *Gordon* was dismantled after the Santa's and a number of jobs started. The head was removed and sent away for testing, this didn't show up anything in particular, but we took the decision to obtain another head. The choice fell on a reconditioned bare head for £250 or a brand new head from India for £180 – we went for the Indian one! The new head and valves were fitted, the existing water-cooled manifold was discarded and Steve fabricated a new one. Steve also fabricated a simpler and smaller inlet

manifold to replace the huge Hunslet thing! A new thermostat housing was ordered as the existing one was rusted up solid. New electro-pneumatic valves have also been ordered for the transmission to replace the original faulty parts. A new main hydraulic hose from the pump has replaced the original leaky one. Finally it was test run but needs various other further modifications before it is complete. She should enter service towards the end of March in readiness for the new season.



*Hunslet dismantled for overhaul*

*John Strike*

The Littleton Ruston has had a number of body panels re-secured and is running well.

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

Baguley 774 also remains stored and negotiations are underway for its return to Tywyn.

Jung 5869 the non-original engine bearers have been removed and a Coventry Climax 2 cylinder 4-stroke engine acquired together

with new spares for pistons, liners, rings and big ends. The loco is still stored on an Allens flat.

### **Carriage and Wagon**

A team of volunteers lead by Roger was due to give all the coaches a thorough clean, inside and out, right at the start of the season. Some thought into a partial repaint internally and externally together with new coach roofs will be required this year – at least we will have a workshop to do it in!

### **Plant and Equipment**

The Coventry Fork Lift Truck is proving a most useful tool, a new rocker box gasket was fitted to stop an oil leak. A lifting beam has also been fabricated and can be mounted on the front forks, also proving very handy. A large 7 tonne cherry picker was hired for the cladders and also saw use by the electrical gangs. Also an all-terrain FLT was hired to move the cladding sheets round the farm, both items were returned when the work was completed. Derek has fabricated a pair of rail lifting tongs for use by the forklift or JCB.

### **S & T**

The colour light signal fuse has now been replaced.

### **Building and Civil Engineering**

The workshop construction has continued apace, the dwarf wall to the perimeter was laid in hollow blocks and then infilled with a mortar mix. The various cladding rails and sag rods were replaced and tensioned up as some had been removed to allow us access. The various doorframes were bolted in position and a new frame made for the personnel door for the new thin end door. 34t of crusher run was laid down siding 7

(alongside carriage shed) to create a level access for the cherry picker. An area in front of the thin end roller shutter door was also laid flush with the railhead. The cladders returned to fix all the vertical cladding, flashings and rain water goods, which took about a week. In the meantime we erected the steel for the mezzanine floor, but decided we had designed it a little too high, so we got the cladders to modify it and drop the floor level by 500mm. The rainwater down pipe got modified by a load on a wagon (!) so we changed the downspout with the fittings we had, and we now need to complete the work. The insulated doors have been ordered for the rail access and vehicle access together with 4 personnel doors, including one to replace the existing timber door to the old shed. These are all multipoint locking, steel security doors and are pretty expensive, but we only want to do the doors once! We measured and ordered a set of steel stairs, which arrived quite quickly, but unfortunately were wrong and badly made to boot, so we had to remake the entire assembly, moving all the treads and making a complete new top flight. 9” x 2” floor timbers have been placed in the centre bay of the mezzanine, we have also started the partition at the foot of the stairs.

The electrical gang hung all 7 low bay lights, which made the workshop very bright indeed, and John Jones has been erecting the containment round the perimeter of the shed at high level. Lol has started distributing 110v power to the existing shed to prevent frequent use of those heavy transformers. The porch to the signal box has been carefully dismantled and labelled up to enable access to the fourth and final leg, which is now being replaced.



*Stoning up the siding 7 prior to the cladding*

*John Strike*



*The inside showing the end of the mezzanine floor*

*John Strike*

*Isabel* was one of the main attractions at the recent Stafford Railway Circle 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition at the Showground. The show was a very successful event, filling two of the large halls and appeared very well

attended. Nick and John manned the stand for much of the Saturday, but it was a shame we couldn't have someone there all weekend – maybe next time! *Isabel* looked very smart and attracted a lot of attention.



*Isabel on display at the Stafford Railway Circle 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition in February.*

*John Strike*



*Ian does the honours at the opening of the show, and right, Isabel is landed outside the hall.*

# Waterhouses Signal Box



*Jointing detail of leg number three, note the excellent condition of the tenons*

*Roger Strike*



*Ray during the careful dismantling of the porch*

*John Strike*