

Amerton News July 2008

John Strike

Permanent Way

Steve carried out the annual weed killing along the whole railway to good effect, we seem to have caught it at the right time. Two sleepers were replaced in the run-round loop at Amerton Station where those old Baddesley base plates had allowed the gauge to widen slightly; new timbers, new spikes and no plates secured the job. A derailment in the yard on the ex Leighton Buzzard turnout saw a temporary fix, but the timbers to this will need digging out and replacing.

Locomotives

Isabel's boiler has continued to make progress at Alton Engineering although some delays were experienced around the water circulator, supply of tubes and indeed an inspection date. However the boiler passed its steam test on Friday 13th June 2008 (!) and now awaits collection. Meanwhile back in the workshop several gangs have been rubbing down *Isabel's* frames, saddletank, cladding and cab sides, removing the lining and flattening the whole lot ready for painting. Steve took a brush to the inside of the frames (red) and the footplating (black). On the mechanical side Peter and Steve have machined the crosshead to receive two whitemetalled slippers on an improvement to the original design. The new pistons have been left temporarily oversize to be a good fit in the bores and the slidebars have been surface ground true and flat. When attempting to set all this lot up we realised that the slidebars were not correctly aligned. That on the RHS (driver's side) was

particularly bad and Peter turned up an offset top hat bush for the front fixing, but the rear will need extensive work. In resetting the slidebars to the new slipper dimensions some material has been machined off the bottom of the valve support rod so that everything lines up again. The piston rings had been on order for some time and finally arrived in June. Once happy with the slidebars, the pistons and the stroke of the pistons will be carefully measured to centralise its position in the cylinder bore and then the piston machined to suit, including the grooves for the rings. Terry and Frank have been painting primer and undercoat on a whole host of components, a splendid job being done. Peter and Steve have also fabricated two sets of rollers for the driving axle to help us in setting up the valve gear, which should be a lot easier than barring the loco up and down the track!

No. 1 finally arrived at Amerton on 2nd July 2008, and has been carefully stored in and around the workshop, the frames and a few other components being set up on a flat wagon for display, hopefully with a few photographs as well.

Lorna Doone remains on display and as popular as ever and was carefully cleaned prior to prominent display for the Gala, and as always she received many admiring glances.

The Henschel, nothing to report this quarter, but work will resume once *Isabel* is back together again.



Roger eases Paddy back onto shed on one of its final test runs prior to Gala service

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Paddy, work continued with Dave and Roger completing various details including the drain cocks, coal bunker, lagging to steam pipes, various drains and the setting up of the eccentrics and reversing gear. Bob from Alan Keef's also paid a visit to help set up the valve gear. Dave removed the main drive gear and machined it to maintain concentricity with the driving axle. Dave has also fabricated a light steel cover to the gears which should cut down on some of the noise, but also keep out the dust etc. Several steam tests were carried out culminating in a steam test for the Railway Inspector, who pronounced himself pleased other than the tender wheelsets. New second hand wheelsets have been sourced and measurements will be made. *Paddy* entered service on goods trains at our Gala and performed and looked exceedingly well.

Emmet has been running all the steam services and is performing well. Various maintenance items have been attended to including the steam supply pipe to the drain cocks, the ash pan door, Klinger sleeves to the gauge glass drain (though wrongly sized?) and more major work to the crossheads. Some new off cuts of Turcite and a very expensive 2 part glue were bought from a supplier in Birmingham and replaced the rather dog-eared pieces remaining in the crosshead. This unusual fix appears to have been successful. The air hose connectors at the front of the loco were exchanged for our small Rectus types ready for the Gala.

Minworth Motor Rail 746 received a good clean at the Gala, it remains in full working order and available as required.



Kerr Stuart Wrens, Peter Pan, Lorna Doone and Howard line up at the end of a successful day on Saturday 14th June 2008; what a superb trio.

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Motor Rail 7471 also remains in full working order and it too received a thorough clean by Frank prior to running several trains at the Gala to the delight of a few enthusiasts.

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

Ruston *Yd No. 70*, no further progress to report, though plans are in place to move one of the 4VRO engines to John's workshop where it is more likely to get some attention. It is planned to mount it on heavy duty wheels so that it can be trollyed about.

The Hunslet *Gordon* is running very well and sees a lot of use, its ease of operation being very popular with all crews.

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 is stored in the workshop, but is likely to move to make way for *No. 1*.

Carriage and Wagon

Coach 2 came into the works for a full internal repaint which necessitated the removal of all the seats. Everything received a liberal coating of Williamson's finest paint, the seats were repaired, a new roof covering fixed and the gutters replaced. Coach 1 was

also in the works for internal painting to seats, floor and also the cream externals. A huge improvement has been made to the fleet and certainly they looked very smart at the Gala. The disabled compartment removable seat in Coach 5 received some repairs and additional strengthening and re-entered service. The Allens flats resumed their stacked position, 4 high, saving much space in the yard.

Plant and Equipment

Peter Booth has carried out some further restoration to the machine tools prior to their final installation.

Building and Civil Engineering

Pete Booth has made a superb job of planting up the boxes and creating a linear garden along the fence line either side of the Amerton Station name board. Much work has concentrated on the workshop and John Jones has completed the installation of the Fire and Intruder Alarm, all linked into the original panel in the Running Shed. Derek has been painting the amenity area inside and out including the fitting of the architraves and skirting, all finished in the company colours of cream walls and monarch woodwork. Some effort was needed to find all the various cables and water pipes which

had been buried under the plaster, but once found all the sinks, wash hand basins and toilets were installed, the wastes connected and extract ductwork replaced. The stainless steel shower cubicle was finally fully plumbed in, earthed and connected to the waste with a new shower curtain provided. A huge tidy up prior to the gala preceded the connecting up of the power to all the lights and particularly the 8KW shower. The shower was an absolute luxury over the weekend and believe me is a very worthwhile addition! The main electrical panel is now being installed and all the permanent connections made for the whole workshop. Peter Booth has also rubbed down and repainted the main stairs in black.

Signal and Telegraph

A pulley on the McKenzie and Holland signal failed or rather the piece of timber it was affixed to did! this was replaced on a new lump of timber. The whistle board has also suffered from rot, and requires a new fixing to its post. The ex RNAD shelter adjacent the Ground Frame was scrapped, in any case the Leek and Manifold box will take its place in the not too distant future. The windows to the north gable of the signal box have been replaced after overhaul together with the matchboarding.



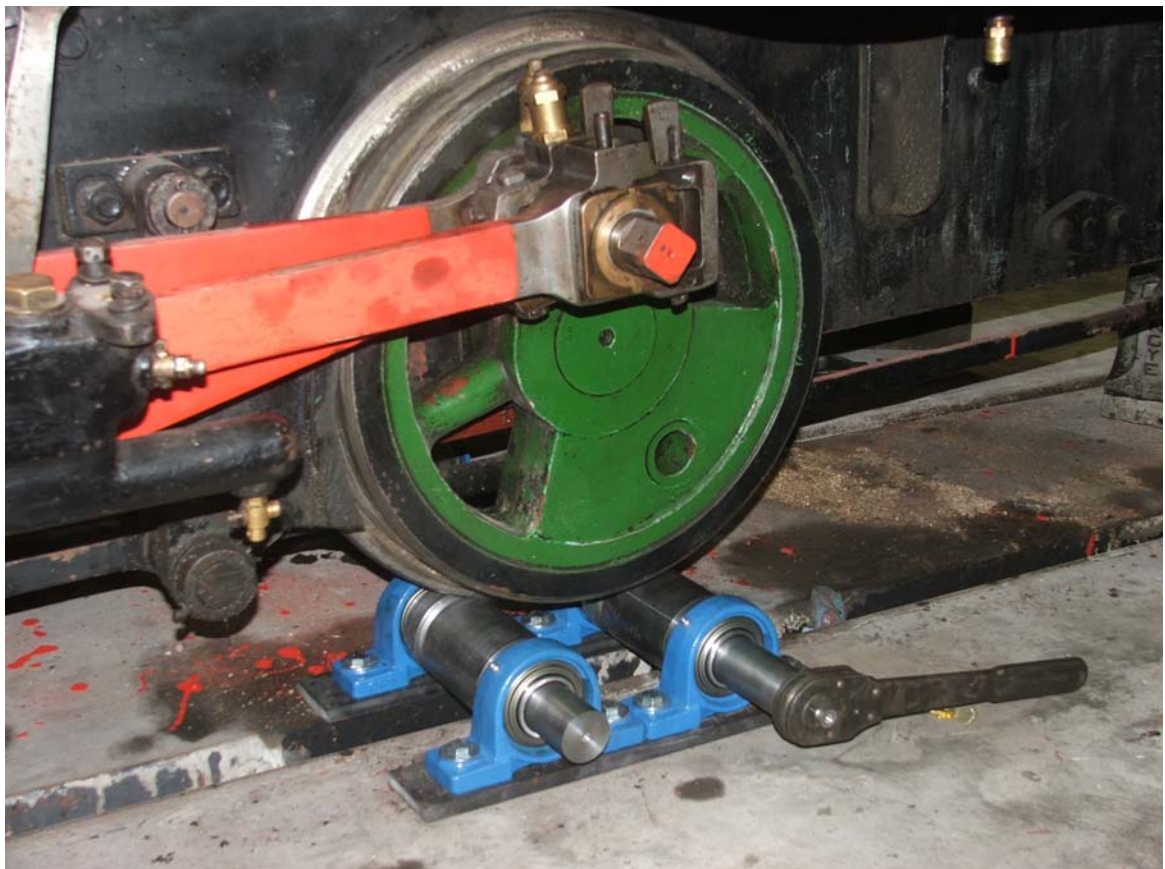
Roger puts the finishing touches to all the planter boxes

Roger Strike



Isabel's boiler nearing completion in Derbyshire, note the regulator valve

Peter Bell



The new rollers ready to assist in setting up the valve gear

John Strike



New-build Hunslet Howard waits in the loop with the RNAD goods train

John Strike



The restored sashes have been replaced in the Leek and Manifold Waterhouses Signal Box

John Strike