

Amerton News August 2009

John Strike

Permanent Way

The hot weather of May (remember?) caused us some track misalignment, particularly one stretch just beyond Stump Siding and before the change to the GWR 48lb rail. One Wednesday evening was spent splitting the fishplates and re-greasing to good effect, but by the following week a couple of joints were as bad as ever. Another Wednesday evening in the rain (!) saw us out with the Jim Crow and we added a few tie bars to secure the lot. The main turnout to Amerton Loop was also in trouble and we had lost gauge on the closure rails and blades. Again some effort over Wednesdays and Sundays saw several new timbers inserted, the ground frame timbers replaced and the whole turnout brought back into gauge through the blades by cutting and re-welding the base plates. Various other tweaks saw it fit for service again. A set of a dozen or so tie bars have been placed in the Baddesley rail between the top crossing and stump siding to overcome the effects of baseplates and wasted rail foots. The track has also been re-aligned along Brook Straight and near the ford. Finally the annual weed killing was carried out to good effect.

Locomotives

Isabel's reassembly continues steadily. Additional work was identified last time on the valves, and this work has now been completed with the D-valves being built up with weld and machined back to give the correct clearance in the steam chests, and with new washers either side, the valve rods were replaced, slide bars aligned and the rest of the valve gear put up. The new plate to the furnace backhead arrived (and a spare) and the actual original steel casting has been extensively welded up and the door aperture made good. The hinges have also been remade with a new pin and the door now sits

in the backhead better than it has ever done. A new piece of piano type stainless steel hinge has been sourced to fit the bottom of the backhead to take the new damper door. The furnace casting has also had a lip welded on so as to bear on the boiler firebox flange and thereby take the weight off of the three fixing bolts, it should also mean a better air seal around the plate. The next issue to arise was that the boiler is fractionally longer than the original and the firedoor no longer opened past the brake column, quite a hindrance for the fireman. You may recall that it only just cleared previously and became very tight when the boiler was hot, but we were now about $\frac{3}{4}$ " shy. The brake column has been altered and effectively tipped back a little to give us clearance, the channel packing piece being altered to suit. Our lining man came and was able to complete all the lining over a few days to a very high standard; the finished result will look magnificent. Finally various pieces of pipework have been refitted and a new piece of copper pipe let in to the steam brake supply as the original pipe was no longer long enough! It has been decided not to install the Winson air pump at this time, and if and when it is re-fitted then the bracket will be of a better design and the pipework layout improved.

Lorna Doone was thoroughly cleaned prior to the Gala and looked as splendid as ever. Details of the sponsorship are currently being sorted and it is likely that the boiler will be sent away in the autumn for evaluation.

The Henschel has seen some work on the spectacles and there is also rumour of work on the boiler in the I-O-W alongside the West Lancs Joffre boiler?

Paddy returned from his exertions in Belgium and was prepared for inspection by the Railway Inspector. *Paddy* passed with flying colours on 13th June 2009 and was thereby deemed fit for passenger use. As it was in steam, *Paddy* ran some of the trains that afternoon, and of course saw much use at the Gala performing very well on our 4-car passenger set. In July *Paddy* departed to attend the Wicksteed Steam in the Park event where once again all went well, but on the wet rail and steep grades was limited to two coaches.

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

Jennie has been running very well, taking all the Sunday passenger turns this season. An issue was noticed that the tyres seem to be wearing at an alarming rate and contact was made with Hunslets. *Jennie* returned to Tamworth on 22nd June 2009 for a new set of rolled tyres in B6 material and it returned to Amerton on 1st July. The tyres are also of slightly different profile and also ¼” wider. Some extended tail pipes were also brazed onto the drain cocks which now direct the steam slightly forward and away rather than digging up the ballast.

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

Motor Rail 7471 remains in full working and has seen some use on summer works trains.

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

Ruston *Yd No. 70*, no progress this last quarter due to other commitments.

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 and is running well.

Baguley *Golspie* is stored in the carriage shed.

Jung 5869 remains stored in the running shed.

Carriage and Wagon

The carriage cleaning team did another fine job on the carriages prior to the Gala and had them looking extremely smart again. Some damage to the paintwork will need to be made good.



*Paddy and the veteran de Winton Chaloner during a layover at Wicksteed, very similar sized machines
John Strike*



The new Bagnall lining seen here on Isabel's saddle tank – a very fine job indeed.

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Plant and Equipment

A new drill fame has been welded up to hold our Mag Drill horizontally for drilling the rail webs for the tiebars – this really makes what is an awkward job very easy indeed. The replacement parts for the Archdale Mill have been manufactured and returned to the works. The drive belt cover to the Town radial arm drill has been painted and sign written appropriately – have a look next time that you are in the works!

S & T

The new indicator signal has been set up on the platform end of the running shed, but is currently covered up. The ground frame steps have also been repaired along with some of the supporting timberwork. The windows have been replaced in the front of the Waterhouses signal box

Building and Civil Engineering

The GWR platform bench has been cleaned and repainted and put back in position on the platform. The wood shed will need some tlc fairly soon as after almost 20 years, its starting to come adrift.



All the windows have now been restored and replaced into the Waterhouse Signal Box

Ray Ashdown



Frank, Roger, Ray and Alan take a break from the carriage cleaning for a photo call

Ray Ashdown



Jennie, Paddy, Peter Pan and Sragi No. 1 line up on the Saturday evening of the Gala

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Sragi No. 1 Krauss 4045 of 1899, a well tank, side tank and rear tank!

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Paddy prepares to leave Amerton Station with plenty of interested bystanders!

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And later forges up the 1 in 75 towards Two Trees

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