

Amerton News February 2011

John Strike

Permanent Way

Work is all but completed in the long carriage shed to improve the underfoot conditions and improve the drainage. The right hand wall is a retaining wall some 5ft or so high and a new land drain is to be laid to connect into the existing manhole outside to take away the groundwater from the retained earth. Whilst at it the track will be raised slightly and generally boxed in with stone for better foot access. The kink in the track beyond Stump Siding has been adjusted, but will require further major attention. The

plans for the earthworks for the extended headshunt/loop have been put on hold whilst the carriage shed works are undertaken. Ballast retention boards have been set up around Bridge No. 2 to avoid the loss of ballast here and the subsequent effects on track level. Several other locations have been identified where boards are required including by Two Trees and adjacent the market garden. The turnout to the workshop has been raised and new timbers replacing old.



The Wednesday gang makes adjustments to the workshop turnout Feb 2011

Malcolm Garner

Locomotives

Isabel completed the season *sans* cladding and it is planned to finally replace the cladding and insulation after Christmas to coincide with her boiler exam. A new brick arch slab has been cut and rebated to fit the existing holder after the failure of the previous one. There are various small painting jobs to be completed and the chimney does lean

forward a bit, but it will be good to see her finally completed and in fine fettle. We have trialled some other coal samples including a new supply of Welsh steam coal which burns slowly and smokelessly but on first trial did clinker a bit, but was better on other turns. We'll see how we get on.



Isabel's firebox with the collapsed brick arch, since replaced

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Lorna Doone's frames upside down and prior to shotblasting

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Lorna Doone work continues on the frames which have now been shot-blasted and primed, whilst work continues on the horn

openings and the horns themselves. The drain cock installation has been completed and a new cab roof is to be fabricated.



Work continues on Lorna Doone by machining brake parts on our radial arm drill

Peter Bell



Paddy basks in the sunshine on the temporary track, with the colliery headgear as a backdrop *Dave Potter*



No. 1 still safely stored in the running shed, one day!

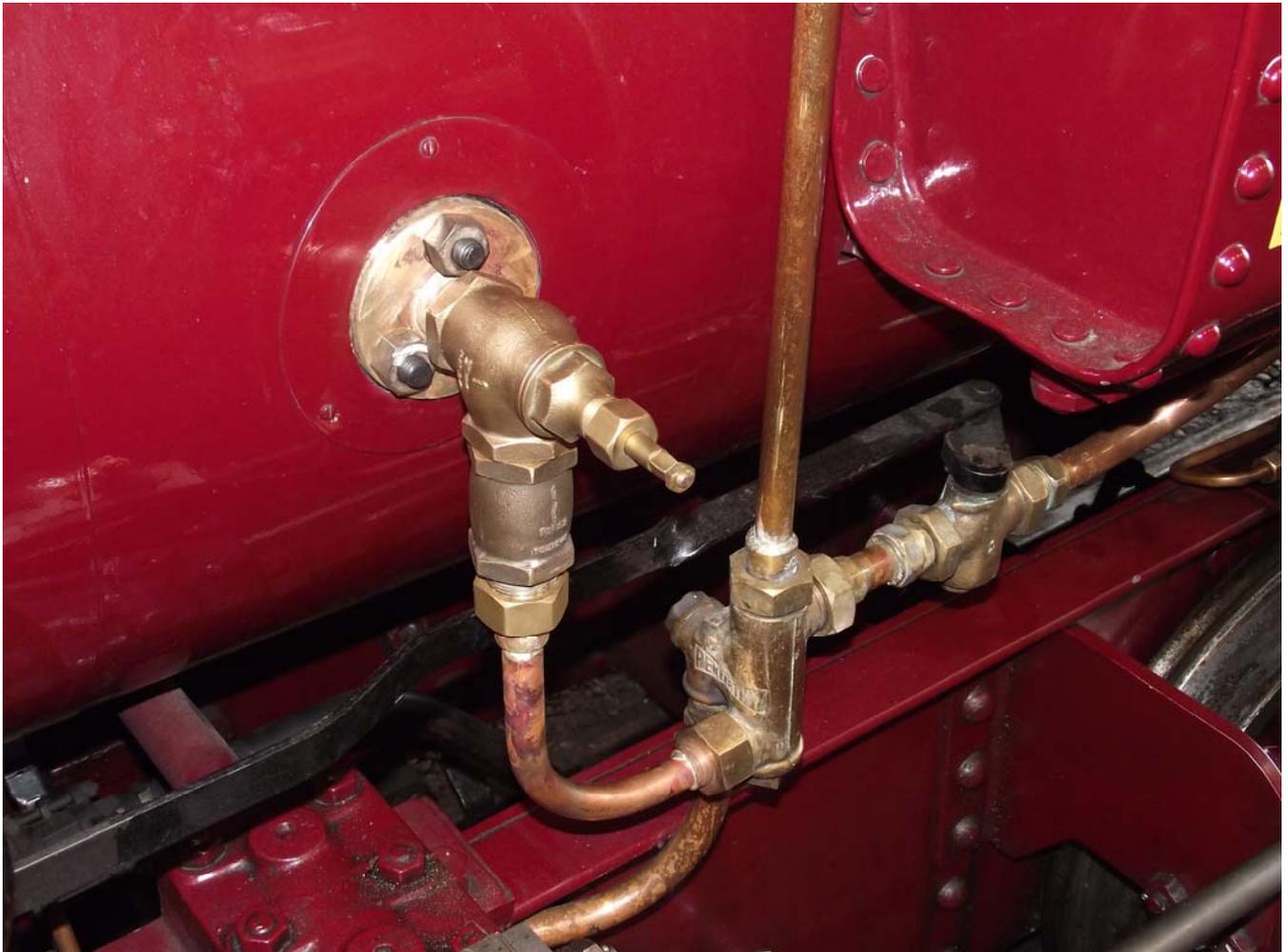
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The Henschel, no progress to report at the present time.

Paddy is currently away from the railway having visited Beamish and Apedale for their Opening Day Ceremony. It remained at Apedale over the winter and has a full and extensive programme of visits for the 2011 season including the start of regular steam services at Apedale, but we hope it will be back for our Gala in June.

No. 1 remains stored around the workshop and running shed but some of the cages with the stored components have now found better homes on the new racking in the workshop.

Jennie, has been used for much of the season but has suffered some issues of late with sticking clacks. Two new clacks were fitted with shut off valves and all the pipework adjusted to suit. The driver's side steam valve for the injector sheared its spindle whilst at Wicksteed, a prompt repair saw it return to service there, but in November it failed again. A new valve has now been fitted without an operating rod. Two displacement lubricators have been ordered and delivered for installation on the steam chest covers as an additional initial dose of steam oil. She was drained down and cleaned out after her spell on the Santa Specials.



Jennie's new driver's side clack, note the screw down valve

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

Motor Rail 7471 remains available for use as required.

Baguley *Dreadnought* saw use once again as Santa's personal transport and gave a welcome splash of colour in the Toyland Loop alongside the Grotto. A new battery has been fitted and a minor oil leak is to be investigated.

Ruston Yd No. 70, no further work to report.

The Hunslet *Gordon* has received some routine maintenance and saw use over the October half term and on general shunting duties.

The Littleton Ruston sees regular use as works shunter and is running well.

Baguley *Golspie* remains patiently stored in the running shed

Jung 5869 remains stored in the running shed.

Deutz 19531 work continues on axleboxes and wheelsets.

Carriage and Wagon

Carriage No. 1 has received some repairs to one of the roof uprights, and generally made stronger at that point. A new lightweight wheelchair ramp has been obtained for use with our Coach 5 and works very well. The "coffin cars" and other miscellaneous and un-useful wagons will be scrapped when the opportunity arises to have a scrap skip.

Plant and Equipment

The Dorman powered air compressor (six cylinder with three cylinders given over to air production) has been advertised for sale but had raised no interest, if you know of anyone who would be interested then please let the railway know.

S & T

The dolly signal has been refurbished and replaced and now is specifically for the loop line at Amerton only, see the arrow on the photograph below.

Building and Civil Engineering

Some plain wire has been installed on the fencing near Stump Siding where there is a possibility of passenger's hands getting caught, if they chose to lean out and grab hold! Various warning signs have appeared at strategic locations all over the railway, to better inform passengers and volunteers of

potential hazards. One of the platform edging slabs has been re-bedded. Infilling around and inside the carriage shed is ongoing to improve levels and underfoot conditions. The Stafford Model Engineers have donated a suitable shed to replace our life expired woodshed. This has been generally repaired and made good and mounted on new foundations in the location of the original. The original shed was made from an ex Dorman packing case and lasted 20 years! A fire risk assessment has been carried out and new extinguishers will be provided where necessary. The oil store has been re-organised with smaller containers and racking rather than the large drum in the corner of the running shed. Step irons have been obtained for the alternative egress from the pit and will be fixed to the wall opposite the ramp. The gateway for the JCB to gain access to the farm's fields has been widened by a contractor.



Refurbished dolly signal in the loop at Amerton

John Strike



Gordon pulls a short train across a very swollen Amerton Brook

Malcolm Garner



The whole railway received a good splattering of snow in November and December and at times operating trains was quite a task with frozen points, frozen brakes and frozen water hoses, but all the Santa services ran each weekend to the credit of all involved. This is Chartley Road Loop looking towards the two bridges on Saturday 4th December 2010

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