

Maunsell Locomotive Society

By Steve Pilcher and Chris Hunford, Maunsell Locomotive Society

Q CLASS NO 541

Work on the Q class has slowed slightly over the last couple of months. In the July issue of *The Bluebell Times*, we reported cracks had been discovered in four of the horn blocks and would need specialist cast iron welding to repair them. Well, I'm pleased to say these have just returned from our specialist supplier and work can recommence on the chassis.

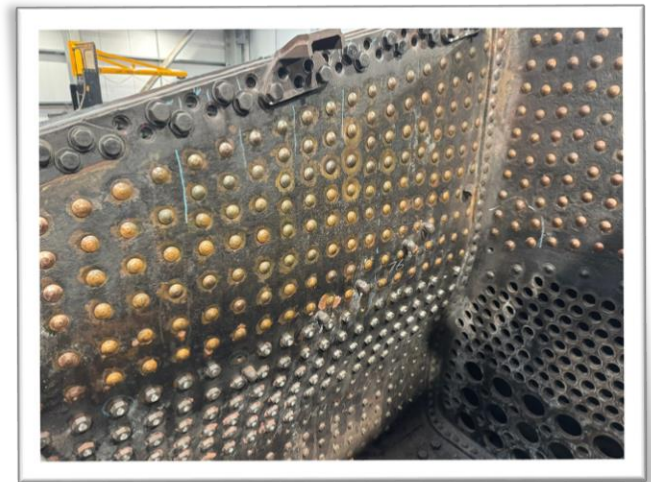
As I write, the repaired horn blocks are being machined ready to fit and work has commenced on the second main frame insert. Work on manufacturing the new axlebox crowns and machining the last axlebox have also been completed, alongside other smaller jobs like refitting the brake shaft and the grate carrier brackets.

Work on the boiler has progressed steadily, largely focusing on annealing, setting, fitting and heading over the copper stays. Work to caulk and nut the monel stays has also been largely completed. Some of the smaller and more fiddly jobs like repairing and fitting the mudhole doors, marking out and fitting the blowdown valve and reaming foundation ring holes have started. These are all essential but more time-consuming tasks.

A small difference between Maunsell locomotives and the majority of others is the fact the boiler flue tubes have a copper bottle shaped end braised on to the steel tube, which then fits into the tubeplate. Once complete each braised end must be tested to ensure no cracks or impurities have formed in the process. This braising process and the NDT (non-destructive testing) work has also been completed meaning the tubes can be fitted when needed.

Back at Sheffield Park, work on repairing and machining the various fittings continues as well as work to the tender tank and chassis. In particular, some of the workshop volunteers have been busy painting the tender chassis pipework and getting the buffers back up into place. The MLS working party have concluded cleaning the interior of the

tender tank and applying the first coat of a very durable paint system.



Top: A view of the inner firebox, showing the new copper stays and new monel stays with their stay nuts fitted.

Bottom: A view of the outer firebox, showing the new patch screws, copper stays and monel stays.

Both photos: Leaky Finders



Buffers back up on 541's tender chassis. Photo: Steve Pilcher

V CLASS NO. 928 STOWE

A significant milestone was reached with Stowe last month, when an order was placed for a new left hand side cylinder pattern and casting. You may recall a flaw was discovered in the existing cylinder which could not be repaired and the decision was taken a new cylinder would be required. So, after many months designing and producing the necessary drawings, discussing the pattern making and casting options with companies and, of course, ensuring there are sufficient funds, we're pleased to say an order has been placed. Our thanks must go to Fred Bailey in Atlantic house for his drawing work and liaison with companies and Simon Blaker in the Loco Works for his advice.

Once the new casting has been received, it will then need to 'sit' for a while before the machining process can start, after which we can look to fit this to the chassis.

With regards to the boiler, we're starting to gather the necessary drawings to make a start on marking out the stay positions across the new platework. The boiler is the most significant part of the locomotive overhaul as the chassis, tender, fittings etc are approximately 90% complete already.

Finally – on the subject of fundraising – although the MLS has managed to accumulate sufficient funds to enable the order to be placed for the left hand cylinder pattern and casting, approximately £15,000 still needs to be raised to pay for machining the casting.

Can you help please?

All contributions welcome, preferably via the Stowe chassis appeal in the Bluebell Railway Trust – or contact the MLS Treasurer, Steve Pilcher, jstepilcher@yahoo.co.uk for further details.