

The Bluebell Standard

Newsletter of the Bluebell Railway Standard Class 2 Project Issue 3 Summer 07

Locomotive Report

This, the third issue of our report and newsletter, is a little later than we had intended, but there is, as a result of waiting, some good news to report. Earlier this week, a complete set of the stretchers we need to build the frame extension and a replacement for one just behind the firebox, which is of different design to that in 78059, arrived at Sheffield Park from Fleet Tip in Bradford. By the time we left the Park yesterday, they had all been measured up to check compliance with our drawings and Alan had given most a protective coat of red steel primer. These fabricated stretchers have been purchased using a large part of the money generously given by our supporters through the gift aid scheme, which we had arranged with the help of the Bluebell Railway Trust. The next stage will be the acquisition of the frame plates. We have quotations for these, and subject to confirmation, we expect to buy these with a grant from the Trust. We have also estimated some further expenditure needed, such as skilled welding to join the frame plates, a new rear buffer beam and a pair of support gussets, which we expect will also be funded by the Trust.



Cross Stays



Stretchers

The two unpainted stretchers in the left hand image are the cross stays that lie beneath and stiffen the rear pony truck stretcher at the rear of the engine, whilst those in the other image are from right to left: the vertical stretcher forward of the bunker, the vertical stretcher to the rear of the firebox that will carry the central rear boiler guide, the horizontal stretcher behind the trailing coupled wheels that will provide the centre for the rear pony truck reins, and the stretcher that will carry the steam brake cylinder, for which the mounting flange is clearly visible.

The choice of Fleet Tip was made only after visiting and evaluating their facilities and inspecting work similar to the Project's, which they had done for the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. Another quotation for the work was substantially more and was therefore not acceptable to us. We have previously reported the importance of tolerances on these fabrications in order to achieve the correct finished sizes to fit between the frames. Fleet Tip offered and have delivered what we need to do the job. We have every intention of getting further quotes from Fleet Tip for fabricated items such as the hind buffer beam gussets and injector mounting bracket.



Using A Magnet Base Drill On The Frames



Reversing Gear Bracket Being Restored

As visitors to Sheffield Park may have been able to see, the rear portion of our temporary PVC cover has been off to make the best of the weather breaks during the last few weeks and to drill out further redundant rivets and to drill starting holes for parts to suit the tank engine. Even with a magnet base drill, shown being used by Bill and Ron in the left hand image above, this is a slow and painstaking job. Further plugs for the redundant holes have been made up in the machine shop by an apprentice, who we hope will help us with more items, as a part of his on-going training programme.

Norman has been busy with the cab mounted reversing gear, which was recovered from the ply-sided van. The van roof had been in a poor condition for some time and the amount of grime to remove from the gear is substantial, nevertheless the results have been really worthwhile, as indicated by the appearance of the support bracket in the right image overleaf. We fitted a temporary ply roof to the van, topped off by a new uPVC cover.

The front pony truck from 78059 has been moved down to our work area and taken apart to check on its condition. The plan is to clean and repaint before reassembly. Fortunately, all the springs we need, as well as the wheel set and reins, are to hand. Some thought has also been given to the rear pony truck and the plan to use parts available to the Project from a 9F. These parts have been taken apart and inspected. As the 9F reins are set at a different angle, we will need to lay out on a drawing just how to use the 9F horn guides and determine what is needed by way of new reins.

The initial stage in the removal of the corroded liners from the driving wheel horn guides and axle boxes has been completed with the machining out of horn guide liner plug welds. Some of the edge welds have also been removed but more remains to be done to detach the liners. The liner material is a hard manganese steel, which has, as anticipated, proved difficult to machine. No start has yet been made on the axle box liners. The new manganese steel liners for both horn guides and axle boxes are in store, coated to preserve them pending attachment. Off-cut liner material is available for welding trials.

The front pony truck frame stretcher parts remain ready for the completion of the welding.

New bolts and nuts have now been made for the valve spindle crosshead guides and we have a complete set of crosshead guide blocks from 78059 all refurbished and painted.

Work Planned

The short term goals are to complete and fit the front frame stretcher and buffer beam, to complete the hind frame extension with its buffer beam and to attach this to the rest of the frames. This will be a tipping point in the Project. Meanwhile work will continue to restore the horn-guides and axle boxes, restore the motion and build the pony trucks so that the engine can be wheeled and the motion fitted. Once this is completed work can turn to making the side tanks, cab and bunker and the numerous brackets before the engine can be assembled. The boiler overhaul will be the last area of attention.

Fundraising

We hope to benefit from the publicity we got with our stand at the Society's AGM and from the publication of an article on 84030 in the July 2007 edition of Railway Magazine. Last summer, displays to publicise the project were mounted at Horsted Keynes for the Toy and Collectors Fair and for the Giants in Steam Weekend. This year we plan to cover the same events plus the commemorative weekend in August at Sheffield Park, when some areas of the yard are due to be opened for conducted tours. Volunteers and others interested have continued to give items for sale at the these events in support of the rebuild fund. We have also been given more items to sell on e-Bay. The display on the collection chimney, which has been doubled in size thanks to Roy, will be renewed shortly as the existing prints have begun to fade. The chimney has contributed over £320 for the project. We continue to receive support from other areas, including a generous donation of £1000 from "mince pie" money taken from the proceeds of the Santa Specials last year.

Thanks are due to all the working volunteers, to the workshop staff and to those on other projects, particularly from the Atlantic and Sir Archibald Sinclair groups, for their willing help and advice. We are particularly grateful to our donors, to whom this newsletter is really addressed, and to those who help in so many ways in support of our publicity and fund raising efforts.

We are benefiting greatly from the Trust's agreement to process regular and occasional financial contributions from taxpayers of £20 or more to the Project as charitable gifts. It is not just that there is no surviving example of a British Railways Class 2 Tank Engine; 84030 will be exactly right for the Bluebell Railway's operations in terms of its versatility, power and reliability.