

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



NO.247

OCT.2008

EDITORIAL

This year has seen the Q6 and K1 fulfilling their potential, covering 7,500 and 6,300 miles respectively. The former has amassed over 10,000 miles since it entered traffic last September, and 2009 should see the locomotive covering a similar mileage to this year. It will then start to build up the funds for its next major overhaul having all but finally made up the shortfall in the cost of the recent overhaul.

The K1's earnings would have been somewhat greater had the locomotive not had to return from Scotland rather sooner than anticipated. However, every cloud supposedly has a silver lining and instead of the expected five month wait for the delivery of new pony tyres, by the time this NEWS is published, the tyre replacement should be well advanced, which is splendid news indeed.

There is good news too, in respect of the J72; what we had originally envisaged to be a rather complex and costly process to resolve the girder stay problem in the firebox has been tackled successfully without recourse to removing the firebox crown. With good progress being made at Hopetown, a 2009 return to steam for the J72 is confidently being predicted.

The year has been a positive one, too, with regard to volunteering; attendances at Hopetown have, at times, been so populous that it has given the R.O. a bit of a headache in keeping everyone gainfully employed. There have been several new faces and the same can be said of the support crews at Fort William, where it has been possible to introduce some new volunteers and give them first hand experience and training in main line running. As a result it is expected that we will have another responsible officer for future main line operations, which will help to share this important aspect of our activities.

This editorial has regularly appealed for new blood and it would be nice to think that this has borne fruit. The NELPG still achieves so much, through so few, and to spread the workload whilst at the same time investing for the future, is just what the Group needs.



Come on and join in!

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT by Richard Pearson & Martin Lloyd

J27 NO. 65894

The last two months have seen rapid progress made with the dismantling of the J27; all the brake gear, the connecting rods, big ends, cross heads, both slide bars, the rear cylinder covers, all 6 driving wheel springs, the side rods and the cylinder liners have all been removed. The next stage in the dismantling will be to lift the frames to remove the driving wheels, which we hope to complete during November.

The cylinder block is still waiting an official inspection by a specialist cast iron welding company. We had hoped that it would have been inspected by now but the cleaning and de-scaling of the casting is proving to be a difficult, time consuming job and is taking longer than expected. Only when this job is complete can a full and thorough inspection take place. Our own inspections so far show the cylinder block to be badly fractured in many places, but we think it can be repaired using the same process that was used to repair the J72's block but we know it's going to be very expensive. We will have to wait and see what happens at the official inspection that is now pencilled in for the first week of November. If anybody has a spare £20,000 that they would like to donate to the repair of the cylinder block then our treasurer will be very pleased to hear from you!

The boiler is outside on our boiler wagon; it has been cleaned and washed out to remove loose rust and scale before being shot blasted by a contractor and painted by our painting team. The contractors have still to return to complete the shot blasting inside the boiler barrel, and once this is complete the boiler will be covered over for the winter.



The smokebox being shot blasted on 3rd October (Nigel Hall)



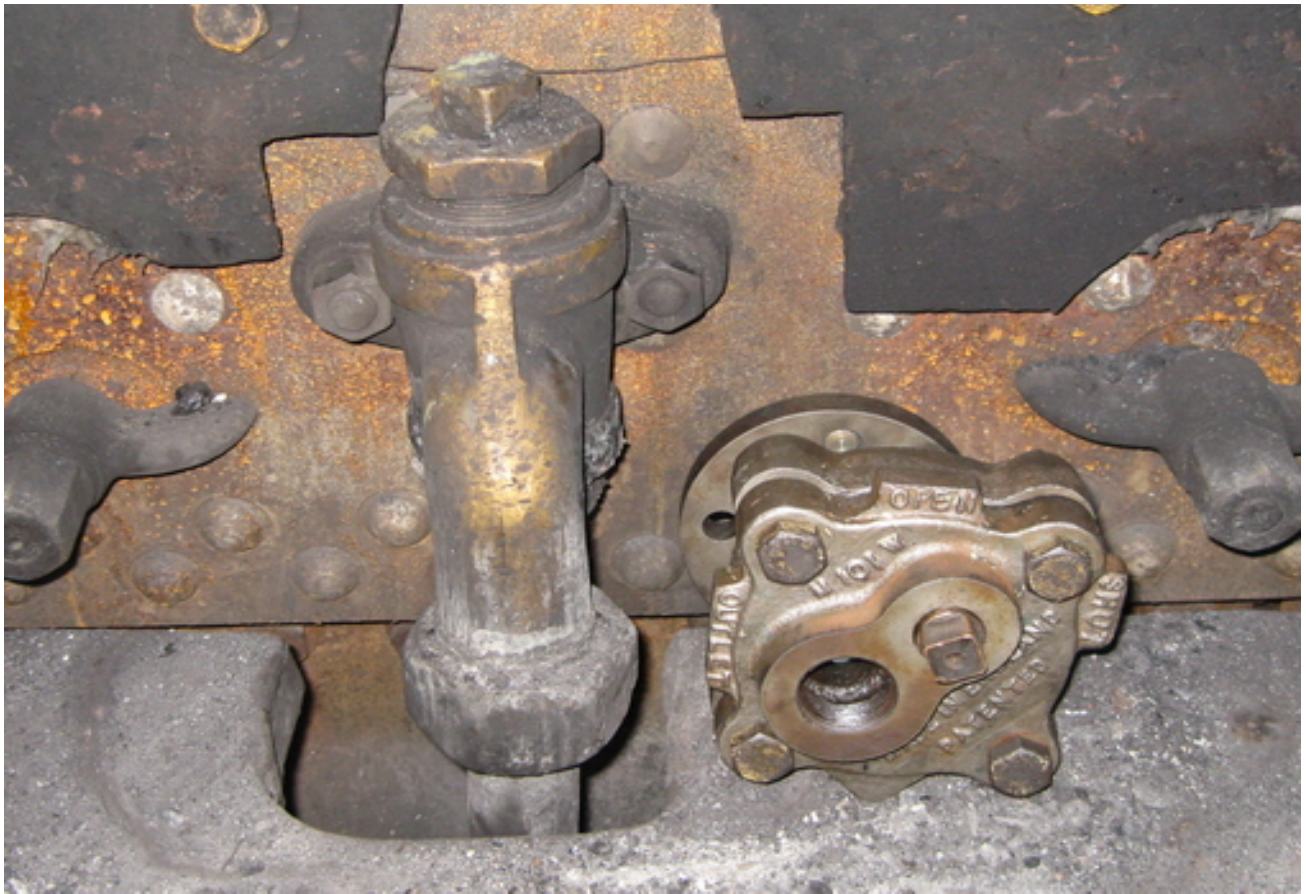
The J27 boiler stands outside the Hopetown Works on 2nd October (Nigel Hall)

Q6 NO.63395

The Q6 is now coming to the end of its first full season back in traffic after overhaul. During this time the engine has been in or available for traffic almost continuously, the only spells out of traffic being for boiler washouts and minor routine maintenance. Since going into traffic in September 2007 the engine has done just over 10,000 miles of which 7,500 have been in 2008. The Q6 worked the annual NELPG members' special on 25th October, following which we plan to keep the engine available for traffic for another week until the end of the NYMR's main running season.

In early November the Q6 will be withdrawn from traffic for winter maintenance; this will start with a boiler washout and the firebox concrete arch will be knocked down. Following the boiler washout, the engine will be moved into Deviation shed where we will start a number of winter maintenance jobs. The opportunity will be taken to fit the boiler with a boiler blow down valve; this is a special type of valve that can be fully opened with the boiler in steam to drain water from the boiler. The process of removing water from the boiler in this way helps to remove solid particles of scale and sludge that are suspended within the boiler water. The boilers of locomotives on the NYMR are usually blown down once every day when they are in service, and this process then allows the boiler to run for longer periods between boiler water changes and washouts. Blowing down improves the quality of the water in the boiler and helps prevent problems such as foaming and priming which are often caused by poor boiler water quality. The blow down valve on the Q6 will be fitted in the cab on the back of

the boiler just below the fire hole door; the valve will replace the original boiler drain valve that is currently fitted in this position.



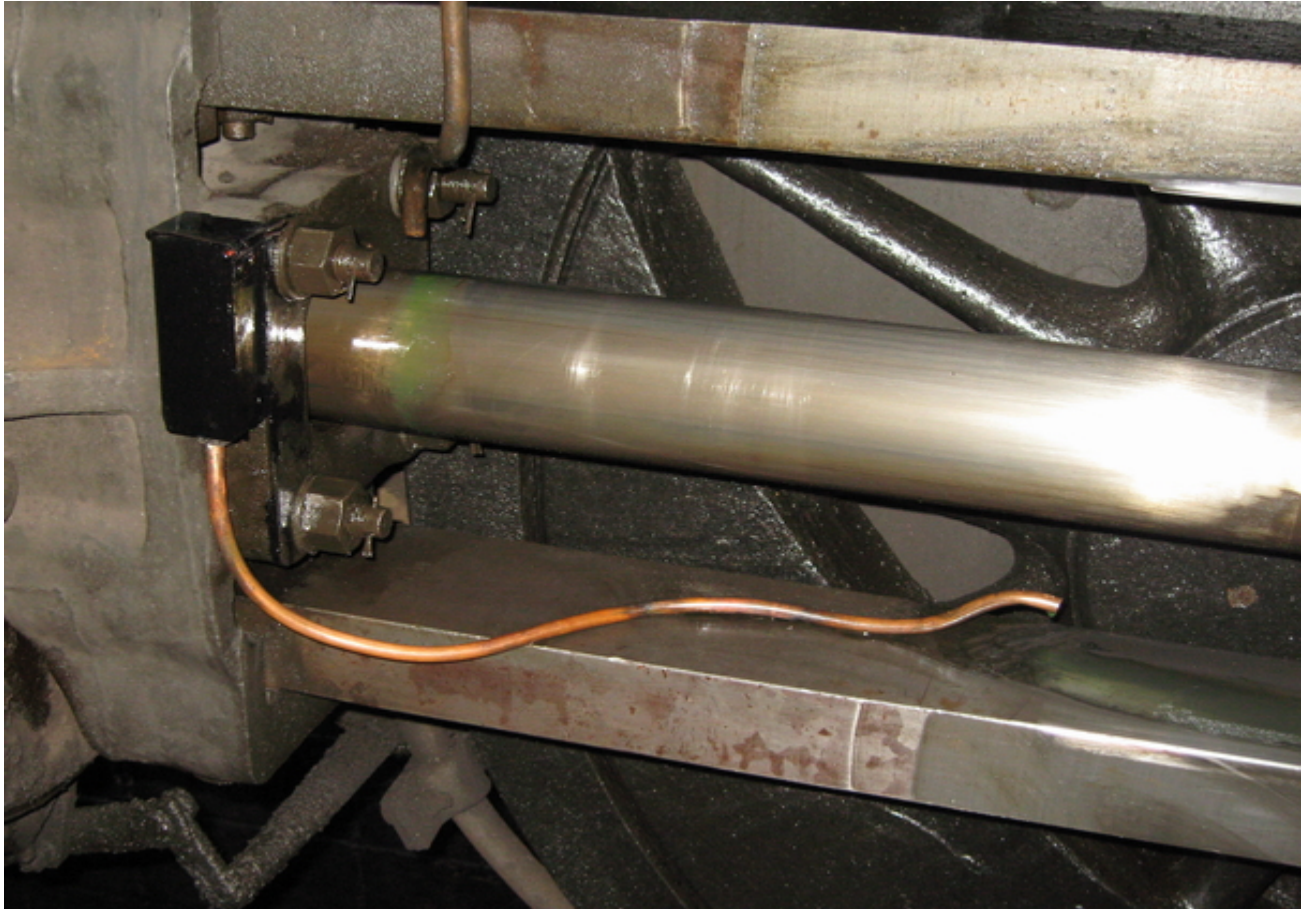
Comparison of the old and new (r) boiler blow down valves on the Q6 (Richard Pearson)

The engine has run 10,000 miles since overhaul so it is now due a piston and valve exam; the pistons and valves will be removed for inspection and de-carboning, any problems with the pistons and valves will be noted, and the appropriate actions taken too rectify any faults.

The LH injector will be removed for a full strip down bench inspection; the injector has given trouble on and off all summer and now the opportunity will be taken to put it right. We know the injector cones aren't in very good condition and work has been done on them during the summer to improve the performance of the injector but we have never had enough time with the engine in traffic to carry out a full inspection and repair. If deemed necessary the injector will be sent away to a specialist for repair or full replacement of the injector cones.

Earlier in the season we were having problems with excessive crosshead wear and we had to make adjustments to the slide bar shims to close up clearances because of this excessive wear. To help slow down this wear two new oil pots were made and fitted, one each side, to feed oil onto the front of the bottom slide bars. Also written instructions with the word 'OIL' and an arrow, now remind drivers that there are two oil cups that are difficult to see and otherwise might have been missed on the bottom

cross head slippers. These simple measures have lead to the bottom slide bars getting a lot more oil and have now reduced the wear rate down to almost nothing.



*One of the new oil pots to lubricate the bottom slide bar on 27th August
(Richard Pearson)*

All the winter jobs need to be complete and the engine back in one piece before Christmas, to allow the engine to move through to Newbridge so it can leave the NYMR for its visit to a wheel lathe for tyre turning, as well as the planned visit to the Great Central Railway. We are still speaking with EWS to organise a date for the engine to visit one of its wheel lathes either on the way to the GCR or on the way home from the GCR. If it's on its way there, then the engine will leave the NYMR in the week beginning 15th December but if it is on the way back, then the engine will leave the NYMR for the GCR in the week beginning 5th January. Only the engine will visit a lathe as the tyres on the tender don't need turning.

When on the GCR the engine will take part in the winter gala which will be held over the weekend of 30th January to 1st February; it is also planned for the engine to take part in a week long session of freight photo charters running with the GCR windcutter set and box wagons. During February and March the Q6 should see use on weekend service trains before taking part in the 1960s gala on 21st/22nd March. The Q6 will then return to the NYMR at the end of March. More information about the GCR including timetable information and special event details can be found by visiting the GCR website at <http://www.gcrailway.co.uk/>



An unusual view of Glenfinnan viaduct with the K1 crossing (Dominic McCall)

Well, another season at the Fort William Holiday Camp has come to an end. For the K1 it was a little sooner than expected but it allowed us to start the winter maintenance a little earlier than anticipated.

It seems appropriate to look back on this latest season in Scotland. The K1 arrived early and kept the show running until a second loco was available. If you remember 45231 wasn't quite ready and 45407 was already booked elsewhere. The K1 stood in for a couple of days before the former Black Five arrived. The K1 then ran until it missed a day with a pony axlebox problem dealt with promptly to return the locomotive back to traffic in its normal slot. 45231 arrived and worked the remainder of its season successfully and was replaced, as planned, by 45407. This then incurred cylinder problems and had to return to Bury, so the K1 had to run continuously for three weeks at the peak of the season.

This latter event called for some assistance all round. When Ian Riley's locomotive arrived, it had only run one day when the problem surfaced. A few phone calls and we realised Roger Barker and Marge were on holiday in Fort William. They were persuaded to act as temporary support crew until we could send replacements. With the help of Ian Riley's lads, Roger and Marge covered a few days, our support crew arrived a day early, forsook the usual preparation day and ran our normal week. A scratch crew then covered the next week followed by our rostered week until Ian Riley's BR Standard 4 76079 arrived. The K1 worked 33 out of 34 four days and it

was then discovered that the K1 had a pony tyre problem, so the locomotive returned south.

The positive things this season are a well-patronised service, some new support crew members and continued support by our regulars. We also undertook some training of a potential new RO. We got involved in some publicity for the Mallaig Lifeboat and as a result the support crew that week were shown round the lifeboat during the Gala Saturday. During the earlier part of that week the Jacobite service had to terminate at Arisaig for two days because of an incident at Mallaig where one of the Sprinter sets had damaged some point work. The local fire brigade turned out to supply us with water. Thankfully we didn't get involved with any other emergency services!

The Lifeboat episode deserves a further mention. The final day of our visit in August was to be 'Lifeboat Day' at Mallaig, so two lifeboat crew members were brought to Fort William on the Friday to pose on the K1, which was to be decked out with a headboard and flags for the journey the next day. Mo, the photographer (I don't know his full name I'm afraid), took photos for the local newspaper. Florence, the guard, was determined to be photographed between the two hunks of seafaring manhood.



Left to right, K1, Lifeboatman 1, Matt Earnshaw, Florence the guard, Lifeboatman 2, Dominic McCall, Frank Santrian, Harry Scott, Paul Kane, Steve Hyman, Martin Lloyd, Neil Smedley, The Mallaig Lifeboat Secretary ("Mo" the Mallaig freelance photographer)

The rest of us were just co-incidental to the picture! The next day we really made the K1 shine and carried the headboard and flags through to Mallaig. On board the train were another two lifeboat crew collecting funds. They weren't quite as sexy so didn't warrant Florence having a photo taken with them! On arrival at Mallaig we were welcomed by civic guests – and the usual piper! After all the usual ceremonies the NELPG support crew went down to the harbour and aboard the lifeboat where we were given special treatment amongst a rather large crowd. We were shown round the boat and told it was worth around £3.5 million. The coxswain said it was their toy and they looked forward to bad weather to be given the excuse to go out and play with it.



Martin Lloyd, Neil Smedley, Steve Hyman, Matt Earnshaw, Dominic McCall and the Mallaig Lifeboat Coxswain, on the deck of £3.5 million pounds worth of high technology (“Mo” the Mallaig freelance photographer)

So, what next? Well, if you enjoyed this year's activities in Scotland (or even just on the railtour in the Northeast) do you want to see more of it next year? Quite simply it won't happen – not unless some more of you get involved in the working parties at Carnforth. These take place mid week and at weekends and up to now have been rather poorly attended. We can only assume that the early finish to our part of the season has taken you all by surprise and that you are looking forward to a busy winter. On occasions in the past we have organised overnight stays at Carnforth. A day's exhilarating exercise, a shower in idyllic surroundings, followed by dining out in a top class restaurant (Truck Haven). The evening is rounded off with 'tails of the rails' by revisiting some highland memories via Glenmorangie, Glenlivet and Glenfiddich then sleeping soundly in the Mark One hotel. Breakfast the following morning is a meal to remember - Tesco's finest produce cooked to perfection! Tempted, anyone?

Why are we repairing the loco at Carnforth? I can hear you saying. There are a number of factors which include:- the support coach needs some repairs and a repaint; the loco repairs require the services of contractors who are more readily available at

Carnforth; and this winter we hope to install an inspection pit inside Deviation Shed so space will be at a premium at Grosmont.

Work is, of course, already underway. Valves and pistons have been removed, all side rods are off and measurements taken for valve reboring, cylinder reboring, side rod bush replacement – where necessary. Tender water valves have leaked for several years so these have been removed for overhaul. Most of the relevant parts are now back at Hopetown for further work to be done by volunteers or specialists.



Dave Donegan starts to extract a valve from the K1 on 24th September (Colin Smith)

We have placed an order with the South Devon Railway for the replacement of the K1's pony tyres; we had been holding off for a few weeks with placing an order with other companies because we knew that the SDR already had new un-machined tyres of the size we require in its yard in Devon and we have been waiting for permission to use them. This is a massive advantage to us because otherwise we would have had to order new tyres from the rolling mills in South Africa and there is a 5 month wait for delivery. The tyres we will now use were bought in a few months ago for another locomotive but they are not needed for a few years, so we are going to use these tyres now and replace them in 5 months time when the tyres we order arrive from S.A. In the week beginning 20th October the pony wheelset was removed on the wheel drops, and the old tyres cut off. The wheelset was then delivered to the SDR on 28th October; we expect the fitting of the tyres to be finished in late November and the wheels back at Carnforth in early December

The other big job that has taken place is the re-boring of the piston valve liners. The equipment was set up on 27th October and the machining of the liners started straight

away and it took four days to complete the boring of all four valve liners. This job was carried out by former NYMR fitter machinist Nigel Crisp, a good friend of NELPG.



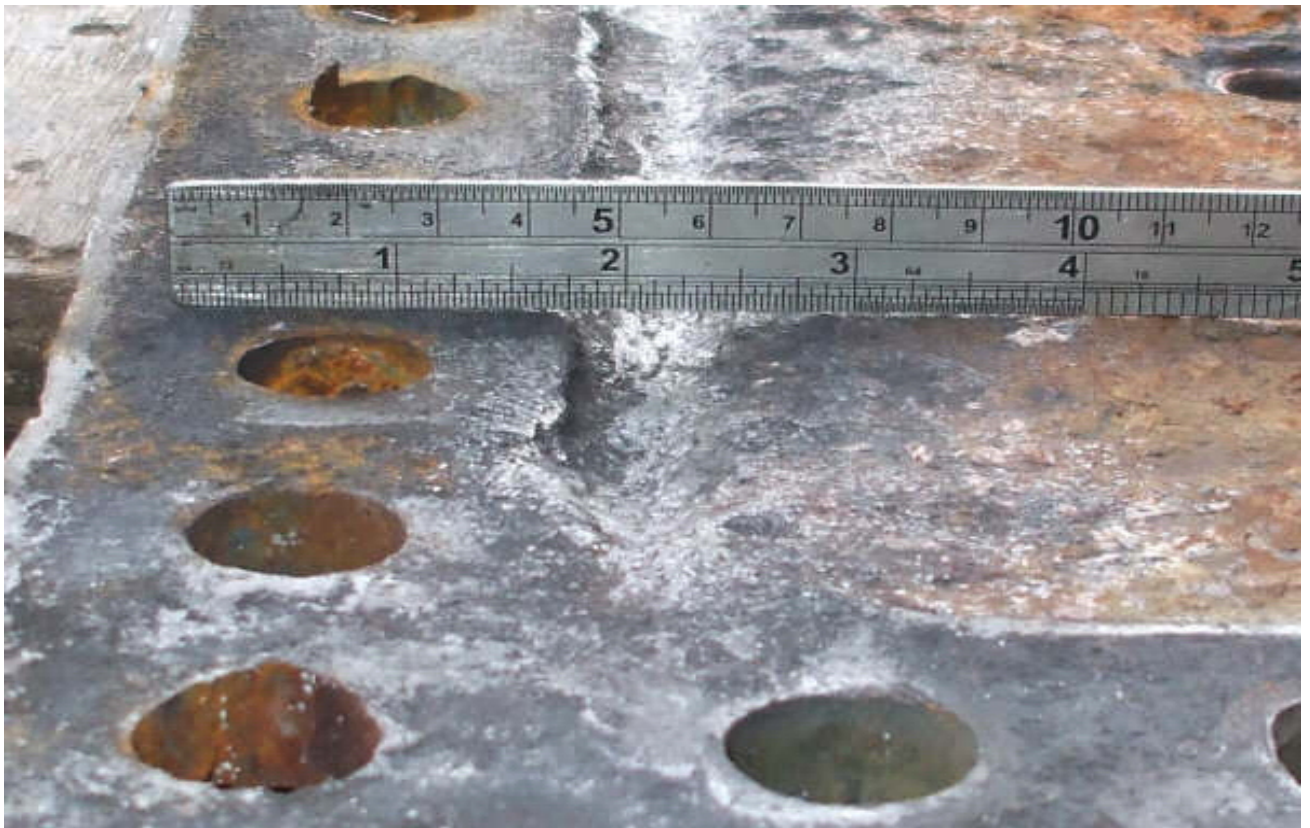
Guy Atkins, suitably attired, removing the concrete arch inside the K1's firebox on 4th October (Richard Pearson)

J72 No. 69023

Tremendous progress is being made on the boiler at Carnforth. The boiler is now positioned upside down on a flat wagon, and the firebox is surrounded by scaffolding to give access to the bottom of the firebox where most of the work is currently taking place.

The bottom 12 inches of the outer steel firebox on all four sides has now been removed (see top picture on back cover) to reveal grooving on the inside of all the removed sections; this grooving is fairly typical wear and was originally detected when we did the ultrasonic inspection on the boiler at Hopetown. The picture on the next page shows the grooving on the inside face of the plate running along its length just above the level where it fastens to the foundation ring; the grooving means the boiler plate is down to about half its original thickness at this point. New plate will be welded in to replace the old sections, and then all the boiler stays and rivets will be renewed in these areas.

It was originally thought that the firebox top would have to be cut off to gain access to the firebox roof girder stays but the Carnforth boiler team has managed to get the girders and roof stays out without having to take the top off, which is excellent news. The bottom picture on the back cover shows the removed girders now all shot blasted and painted, and the other picture on the next page shows the old roof stay bolts, which are very badly corroded.



One of the bottom sections of the outer firebox showing the grooving above the foundation ring; the vertical line of holes show where the ring is fitted (Guy Atkins)



The old roof stay bolts, which are very badly corroded (Richard Pearson)

Another area of plate that has corroded badly is on the boiler barrel; a section about 2ft x 2ft will be replaced on the bottom of the barrel just in front of the throat plate. It is the area where the palm stays are fastened to the barrel and has corroded badly between the palm stay anchor brackets.

The inner copper firebox is generally in good condition with only two small areas that have shown up to be thinner than required; in these areas the plate thickness will be built up by copper overlay welding. This relatively new copper welding procedure will be done by a specialist who normally works in the Scottish whisky industry, this technique having originally been developed to repair copper whisky stills.

Back at Hopetown work on the mechanical overhaul is almost complete. As reported in the previous issue the last remaining new components to be made were the little end bushes; the bushes were finished in September and fitted to the connecting rods. This then enabled us to fit the connecting rods to the locomotive, and once fitted the locomotive was moved and the piston stroke measured to ensure the pistons move the full length of the cylinder and give equal 'cylinder clearance' at the front and back of each stroke. The 'cylinder clearance', as it is known, is the gap between the piston head and the end of the cylinder when the piston is at the end of the stroke; on the J72 this clearance is approximately 3/16". When checked we found that we had no clearance at the back and too much at the front of each piston, so therefore we had to dismantle both big end brasses and make adjustments by machining the brasses and adjusting shims which when assembled will move the connection rod, cross heads and pistons forward slightly to equalise the cylinder clearance.

The painting team lead by Nigel Hall has been busy during September as it works towards getting the engine into gloss. There have been regular mid week day time working parties with many hours spent rubbing down and applying paint; the tanks, cab, bunker and all the boiler cladding sheets have received several coats of primer, green under coat and now apple green gloss.

If you were a member a few years ago you will remember that the membership livery ballot voted in favour BR station pilot green, the same livery the engine carried before overhaul and a copy of the livery carried by J72's 68723 and 68736 while in BR service. However, while researching the livery we discovered that the livery previously carried by our J72 in preservation wasn't an accurate portrayal of the original BR station pilot livery.

On close examination of the very few colour photographs that we could find, we discovered, for example, that the back of the cab should be black whereas ours was green, the cab hand rails and doors should also be black and not green, the footsteps on the back of the bunker should be green and not black, and the side rods were red and they should be unpainted. These minor changes to livery are being rectified so when finished our J72 will more accurately match the liveries originally carried by 68723 and 68736.



*Nigel Hall continues with the painting on the J72 at Hopetown on 25th September
(Colin Smith)*



Going green! The boiler cladding sheets in gloss on 13th October (Richard Pearson)

Also while studying photos we discovered that the whistle on our J72 isn't as carried in BR days. The vast majority of J72's had low tone 'organ pipe' whistles with very few having the LNER 'high pitched bell' whistle. Looking at photos 69023 had an organ pipe whistle in BR days and also we have pictures of the engine with an organ pipe while the engine was running on the Derwent Valley Railway in 1977 before it was owned by NELPG. We also have photos of 69023 on the KWVR in the early 70's with a high pitched bell whistle so it appears that between BR ownership and NELPG ownership the locomotive often had a change of whistles.

We would now like to go back to fitting the original type of organ pipe whistle and we are now on the lookout for a whistle of this type, so we would like to appeal to anybody that might have a NER/LNER organ pipe whistle that they don't need and may have been gathering dust in the back of a cupboard for years, to contact us and we will put it to good use again.

A2 No. 60532 Blue Peter

The A2 is still on display at Barrow Hill. As yet there have been no developments to report on the locomotive's future.

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WORKING PARTIES

The regular Monday and Thursday evenings continue at Hopetown on the J72 and the J27 as well, when time and labour allow. If you want to join them and help on the J72 and J27 at Darlington, day or night, please contact **Fred Ramshaw on 01325 377306** or **Terry Newman on 01642 654675**. Please try to turn up if you can. The phone number for **Hopetown Carriage Works** is **01325 382155**. However, there will also be work on the Q6 at Grosmont, and to this end there can be mid-week and weekend working parties – if you can help at Grosmont please contact **Richard Pearson on 01642 659461 (or 07779 366796)** or **Fred Ramshaw on 01325 377306**. There are also regular working parties at Carnforth to work on the K1, contacts as above.

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MEMBERS' DINING SPECIAL

The traditional autumn NELPG members' special, planned for Saturday 25th October 2008, was fully booked in just three days. The raffle proceeds were £260, which will be placed in the J27 Overhaul Fund. Norman Crockit was the lucky 1st prize winner of the replica diamond shaped K1 brass plate! 14 other prizes were donated to the raffle by members - thank you for that kind action. A total of around £1,000 has now been raised over the last four years from dining train raffles. Thanks are also extended

to the on board catering team who, once more, came up with top class food and happy service. Thanks, too, to our driver Martin Lloyd and his crew.

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS by Colin Smith

We welcome the following members who have joined us since the last NEWS:-

Mr. G. Berry from Caterham,
Mr. R. Cartwright from Alton,
Mr. I. Hodgman from Hartlepool, and
Mr. R. Mallaby from Stockton on Tees.

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SECRETARY'S REPORT by Jackie Maples

Ben Duncan attended the September committee meeting and Bob Grey the October committee meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: 5 were received in September and 3 in October.

2. Minutes of previous meeting: The minutes of the August meeting were accepted as a true record following a small correction and the September minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising: NELPG is now registered under the Data Protection Act.

4. Correspondence: (a) A letter of condolence on behalf of NELPG was sent to the widow of Bob Mitchell, Chairman of the Thompson B1 Society. (A wreath was also placed on the smokebox of the K1).

(b) Workspace at Shildon has been offered to NELPG. There are several ways possibly to make use of this offer. E.g. K1 winter maintenance in 2009, painting of the J72.

5. Finance: (a) The Treasurer's reports were submitted.

(b) A professional fundraiser has offered to help NELPG. Although his main area of expertise is buildings he will investigate, without initial cost, any opportunities which may be useful.

(c) A bid for funding is being submitted to Northern Rock, which is reported to have distributed £2.2 million in the last year.

(d) A new letter has been produced for subscribers to the J27 appeal. There will be a standing order form included and the letter is now ready for distribution.

6. Deviation Shed:

- (a) Buffer stop fitting is now complete.
- (b) The photographic display is progressing well but colour photographs are required.
- (c) It was suggested that the J21 chimney could be used as a donation box.
- (d) The NYMR has no objection to the building of a pit providing the Esk Valley sewer is not disturbed! This project is being progressed by a NELPG representative with Roger Barker, who is a qualified civil engineer.
- (e) The issue of the fire escape door and route to safety is awaiting the attention of the NYMR.

7. Hopetown: A notice board has been donated by the Post Office.

8. Vehicles: Progress reported elsewhere in NELPG NEWS.

9. Safety: (a) Risk assessments are being progressed for all NELPG premises. This is now a requirement.

(b) All policies are being reviewed; COSH assessments and statements for use of equipment are also being updated. Keeping up with the required paperwork is a daunting task and NELPG is fortunate to have a committee member prepared to undertake this.

(c) There will be demonstrations at Hopetown on the operation of the defibrillators.

(d) Arrangements will be made for Safety training courses and First Aid courses.

10. Education: Nothing to report.

11. Web-site: A progress report should be available for the next Committee meeting.

12. NYMR Locomotive Hire Agreement: Discussions continue without agreement being reached. There is a danger that the Loco Owners cannot agree amongst themselves which could have disappointing consequences.

13. AOB: (a) A draft EEC regulation will make it compulsory to have registered workshop status at present only applies to places where work is carried out on freight vehicles.

(b) Enquiries are to be made with the new NELPG NEWS printers concerning the printing of the next batch of membership forms.

(c) The members' dining train is again fully booked.

(d) The ROs' review of mainline running this year will take place before November 10th.

(e) The workers' 'Bunfight' will take place after November 10th.

(f) A new venue is required for the Friday evening meetings.

The next Committee meeting will take place on Monday November 10th. Another volunteer will be welcome to observe and comment.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 14th November 2008

STEAM ON SHED by Ray Goad

Friday 12th December 2008

MEMBERS SLIDES and a locomotive progress report with slides. In addition a Pie and Pea supper.

Friday 9th January 2009

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ARMSTRONG TRUST'S COLLECTION by Richard Barber

Friday 13th February 2009

THREE STREAKS AND A DUCHESS by Ted Parker

Friday 13th March 2009

20 YEARS ON THE NYMR by Ian McInnes

Friday 10th April 2009

M.O.D. TRAINS ON THE WENSLEYDALE RAILWAY by Adrian Walby

Friday 8th May 2009

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Meetings **until December** are held in the Railway Athletic Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington commencing at 7.30 pm. Further details appear on the NELPG website.

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COVER PICTURES

Front: A cheque for £500 for the J27 appeal from the Benevolent Committee of the Province of Durham (Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of England) being presented to John Marsland (NELPG Auditor and Finance Sub Committee) by Richard Tucker at Hopetown on 7th July (Terry Newman)

Back (top): The upturned J72 boiler with the four bottom sections of the outer firebox and the foundation ring removed (Richard Pearson)

Back (bottom): The girder stays from out of the J72's firebox, shot blasted and painted (Richard Pearson)

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