

NORTH EASTERN LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP

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NEWSLETTER NO. 15

JUNE-JULY 1969

Dear Member,

It is pleasing to report in this Newsletter a substantial increase in active members which has enabled a large volume of work to have been completed during recent months.

Groups of members are very busy carrying out major repairs to locomotive 63395, while others are giving valuable assistance with the heavy track movements at present being carried out on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

These two items show clearly the strong unity that exists between the N.Y.M.R. and the N.E.L.P.G., and most important of all, the unity that exists amongst our own members throughout the Group.

Q6 BOILER REPAIRS

As the last Newsletter went to press arrangements were being made for the hydraulic test to be carried out on the Q6 Boiler.

On Saturday, May 10th, all the washout plugs, mud hole doors, and inspection holes were removed and the boiler given a complete "washout", clearing 4" of mud that had accumulated around the base of the firebox. With a clean boiler all the plugs and doors were replaced and the blank flanges for the injector steam valves, safety valves, whistle, steam reversing valve and regulator valve were securely bolted in position and made watertight.

We managed to obtain a hydraulic pump and arranged for the boiler test to be carried out on Tuesday, May 27th, in the presence of the Engineer-Surveyor representing the Vulcan Boiler & General Insurance Co.Ltd. Filling the boiler completely with water at the dome (this of course being the highest point on the Boiler), the dome cover was replaced and the hydraulic pump connected to a safety valve blank flange. Pumping more water into the Boiler the pressure soon started to rise until we reached the test pressure of 270 lbs/in². which was maintained for 30 mins. while the detailed inspection was made and our nail-biting members watched hopefully on.

Generally, the Inspector was well satisfied with the condition of the firebox (tubeplate O.K. no stays broken) but was rather worried about 21 small 2" tubes which had "waisted ends"- where the beading on the tube end has been completely burnt away flush with the tubeplate.

In the smokebox everything was nearly dry except for two small leaking tubes. It was when the Inspector took a closer look at these tubes that he noticed small traces of water coming from "above" the highest tube. At first we thought it was the seam between the smokebox tubeplate and the boiler barrel, but by polishing the effective area with a wire brush a small fracture was discovered appearing to be about 1" long.

With this discovery there was now no question of the boiler passing its hydraulic test, so the Inspector advised an ultra-sonic test to be carried out on the tubeplate to determine the total length of the fracture, so to enable the crack to be chiseled out and welded up.

He also advised we replace 21 small tubes which had burnt ends in the firebox.

After many months of hard work by members this test failure left everyone rather "down in the dumps", and one humorous member even tried selling the Q6 to a passing trainspotter for a princely sum of half-a-crown, but when the "spotter" refused to buy it, we realised it just wasn't our day!!

After the Inspector had gone home, we all sat in the cab of the engine talking about what to do next and where to begin.

The solution to some members on hearing the rather depressing news might be to head for the nearest public house but we all agreed that the only "real" solution to our problem was to take immediate action.

With two hours of the test failure several members under the expert guidance of a B.R. Boilersmith started to re-tube the Q6 boiler.

By 9 p.m. on the Tuesday evening 10 of the 2" tubes had been completely removed, the remaining tubes being removed on the following Saturday, when the ultra-sonic test was carried out on the smokebox tubeplate.

The length of the fracture was found to be approximately 10" long although it only penetrates the full thickness of the plate for 1" of its length. This fracture will shortly be completely chiseled out and welded up, but to provide excess for this repair the left hand side steam pipe from the superheater header to the cylinders has been removed together with the removal of one vertical row of element tubes, and the chimney.

Although the boiler is being given first priority, other mechanical work now completed is becoming quite considerable as can be seen from the details below :-

Mechanical Repairs - 63395

1. Tender (No. 8755)

a) Brake Gear :- This has been completely stripped down for inspection and re-blocking. All block hanger pin wear has been compensated for by inserting washers and the brake block springs which stop the weight of each block dragging on the wheels when the brakes are 'off' have all been correctly adjusted. After the fitting of new brake blocks and complete re-assembly, the brakes were adjusted so to give the correct amount of movement in accordance with B.R. regulations.

b) Water Supply :- After various items of spares which had been stored "inside" the tender had been removed the sump cover was taken down and a large quantity of slime, scale and sand flushed out with high pressure water.

A new rubber sealing ring has been fitted to the sump cover which has now been re-bolted in position, and made watertight.

Both tender water valves were found siezed, so were stripped down for inspection and repair. This inspection revealed that the linkage which operates these valves from the footplate (one linkage for each valve) were in poor condition due to severe corrosion and excessive wear on the pins. To repair the mechanism new pins have been fitted and both valves ground in.

c) Structural Repairs :- In the bottom of the coal chute a large area of plate had been completely rusted away, so to rectify this matter, the complete area has been burnt out, and a new plate bolted in position.

2. Locomotive

a) Boiler Mountings :- All boiler mountings except the manifold and blow down valve have been removed as required for hydraulic test. All mounting pads have now been refaced to give good steam-tight joints when the fittings are replaced.

b) Boiler Fittings

Injector Steam Valves :- Both valves have been completely stripped down for inspection and repair with the result that the valve spindles have now been renewed and the mitre ends re-faced also the valve seats which were badly damaged have been re-machined. Both water clacks and water stop valves have been ground in, and all deposits in the steam and water passages removed using nitric acid.

Water Gauge Cocks :- All worn plugs have been replaced where necessary and new packings fitted throughout.

Blower Valve :- Found to be in good working order.

Whistle Assembly :- The whistle isolation valve was found to be beyond repair owing to the stripped thread in the spindle box. A spare valve was available this being fitted to the original whistle 'Bell'.

The whistle operating rods and roof crank mechanism have been cleaned and worn pins replaced.

Safety Valves :- Both valves were found in a very bad state and were constantly leaking owing to the damaged seats. Fortunately, the group purchased some new unused safety valves from B.R. and these will be eventually fitted.

Regulator :- This had to be blanked off for the hydraulic test so the opportunity was used to clean and grind in the 'Big' and 'Small' valve faces.

c) Sanding Gear :- Owing to siezed sand valves and slackness in the operating mechanism, the sanding gear was completely unusable. The operating lever in the cab was broken and the pin about which it pivots found to be excessively worn causing a loss in motion. This lever has now been fully repaired and work is still continuing with the freeing of siezed valves.

d) Cab Roof :- This was removed to facilitate the polishing of the woodwork and the repainting of the cab. The cab roof now beautifully restored and has been replaced, and new roof felt will be fitted shortly.

All seats, steps, windows and coal boards have been fully restored and will be re-fitted in the near future.

- e) Mechanical Lubricator :- This has been completely stripped, cleaned and re-assembled and will be refitted to the engine when the sandboxes, frames and splashers have been re-painted.
- f) Locomotive Brakes :- These are at present being re-blocked in a similar manner to the tender.
- g) Boiler :- Repairs proceeding as described earlier. A new set of firebars have been fitted into the firebox.

It should be pointed out that all the repairs so far completed have been done at no cost to the Group, this only being possible by the knowledge we gained by overhauling 65894 at Philadelphia and by the guidance given by the B.R. staff at Thornaby M.P.D. Using this knowledge and our considerable number of "contacts" which have been established in the Teesside Area it has enabled the Group to save in the region of £400, had all these repairs been done elsewhere.

WORKING PARTIES

In the last Newsletter we appealed for more members to help in bringing 63395 into full working order. We are therefore delighted to say that there has been a remarkable increase in new volunteers all of which have taken a particular pride and personal interest in wanting to see the repairs to 63395 completed and the engine steamed again.

Relations between British Rail and the Group at Thornaby M.P.D. (where both engines are of course stored) are extremely good, so it is now up to every member to ensure that these relations are maintained.

In accordance with B.R. instructions, all members working on our locomotives are fully insured against all forms of accidents although it must be stressed that in every member's safety, and in the Groups interest, to always report to the running foreman both when arriving and leaving the shed.

THIS RULE MUST BE OBERVED AT ALL TIMES

Working parties at Thornaby M.P.D. take place every Saturday starting at 9 am, and finishing in the early evening when the set programme of work is completed. We are also intending very shortly to have working parties organised for Sundays, full details will be available soon.

The organisation of working parties is at present jointly being carried out by :-

Peter Hutchinson, (for postal enquiries) 19 Chestnut Road, Eaglescliffe,
Teesside

and

Maurice Burns, (for telephone enquiries) Eaglescliffe 3382).

BOILERSMITHS TOOLS

As all members will appreciate, the lifespan of any locomotive is determined by the condition of the engine's boiler. It is therefore essential that any faults which may occur in everyday use, like leaking tubes, stays and seams be given immediate attention to avoid further damage.

It should also be borne in mind that repacing tubes and stays will become commonplace on the N.Y.M.R. in years to come.

It was therefore fortunate that the Secretary managed to locate after some considerable difficulty a complete set of Boilersmith's tools which were lying at Goole (of all places!) and Hull (Dairycoats) M.P.D.'s. Negotiations were started first with B.R. at Hull then later at Derby with the result that the Group purchased everything available for £50.

In brief detail, we now have the following tools :-

- 1) Complete range of small tube expanders complete with mandrills and ratchets.
- 2) Tube expanders for superheater element tubes (1") complete with mandrills and ratchets.
- 3) Complete set of superheater flue tube expanders ranging from 3½" to 5¼". Complete with mandrills and ratchets.
- 4) Calking chisels (100 various).
- 5) Long and short stay taps (used when fitting new stays).
- 6) Washout and fuseable plug taps.

All the above tools have now been collected and moved to Teesside where they are safely stored under lock and key !!

RAPID PROGRESS ON THE N.Y.M.R.

Since the last Newsletter all the coaches and locomotives have been moved 'up' the bank from Grosmont to Goathland, this taking place on April 27th.

For this occasion both the O-6-O Andrew Barclay "Salmon" and the O-4-O oil fired well tank were steamed, the well tank pulling the Hull and Barnsley Mess and Tool Van and "Salmon" pushing "Mirvale" and the sleeping car. As everyone expected blowups were very frequent, but what happened to the well tank at Darnholm no-one is quite sure, for the engine did not stop for a blowup, it blew up then stopped. The explosion in the locomotive's firebox could be heard miles away as it blew off the smokebox door twisting the catches and hinges in the process.

Fortunately, no-one was injured and the engine was quickly repaired.

Activity on the P.way has been increasing with the fine weather, and all the track movements at Goathland and Eller Beck are almost complete.

The big news recently has been the placing of the 10% Deposit for the line which now enables the Society to run works train when required.

Another large item of expenditure has been the purchase of a Gresley Buffet Car and a Thompson 1st and 2nd class Composite Coach.

Both these coaches will be on the line shortly and as the A.G.M. of the N.Y.M.R. is in September, "Salmon" is now being vacuum fitted to work members trains.

FLYING SCOTSMAN RAILTOUR

Booking for the Groups "North Eastern" Railtour from Newcastle to the K.W.V.R., on Sunday June 29th are now over 400, but this still leaves 100 seats unfilled.

Although it is now only a matter of days before the Railtour, Booking will still be taken at the Groups Meeting on June 27th (Friday) and will even be taken on the Day of the Tour.

All bookings should be sent to Mr. J. Richardson, 125 Haydon Close, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, or if you intend to join the train at short notice, please notify Mr. Richardson by telephoning Gosforth 51806.

The timing from Darlington to York of 41 minutes (start to stop) is extremely fast and will ensure a high speed run.

Finally, the raffle on our tour will have a very "special" first prize !!

MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Group takes place on Friday 27th June when Mr. W.T. Raftery, the Divisional Carriage and Wagon Engineer for the Newcastle Area will be giving a talk.

The following meeting on Friday 25th July - a selection of Cine Films will be shown about the arrival and movement of steam engines of the N.Y.M.R. over the past 5 months.

Both meetings will be held at the Bridge Hotel (near the Castle Keep) Newcastle-upon-Tyne, beginning at 20.00 hrs.

OTHER NEWS IN BRIEF

New brass liners for the axleboxes of 65894 are now being made to enable B R. to be in a position to start work on the J27 at Thornaby.

All Sales Stock is being taken on our Railtour, hence the lack of publicity in this Newsletter.

Because both the J27 and Q6 tenders are at a point of overflowing with spares we are looking into the possibility of purchasing a suitable stores van.

Membership of the Group continues to grow but we must give a special welcome to our latest member, Andrew Blake from Ontario, Canada.

Wanted ----- 25 ton and 50 ton Hydraulic Jacks -----
information to Secretary please.

Wanted by a Member ----- Colour slides of "Clun Castle"
when she visited Newcastle on Railtours. Donation to Group if
slides can be obtained.

Newsletter comments -----we are trying to assess if
the Groups Members are satisfied with the present form of News-
letter - we would therefore be extremely grateful if all Members
could send their comments to the Secretary by July 16th.

STOP PRESS ----- STOP PRESS ----- STOP PRESS

Official approach has been made by the Group to obtain
Ex. N.E.R. 0-8-0 Q7 No. 63460 at present in store and part of the
National Collection. We have now been informed that this locomotive
is not yet for disposal "at this stage" but our interest in this
engine has been carefully noted.