

Betton Grange 6880

Building the 81st Grange

NEWSLETTER



Summer 2011



A slightly modified rear, three-quarter view of 6880 Betton Grange's new extension frames, temporarily offered up to the main frames in the shed at Llangollen in early April.
David Hunbatch.

THE last three months or so have been the most productive in terms of visible progress in the construction of 6880 since erection of the main frame plates at Llangollen.

Members will no doubt have read the various news stories in the railway press, including a full-length feature article in *Steam Railway* and the launch of an appeal in *Heritage Railway* to raise funds for the manufacture of 6880's new cylinders.

Indeed it has been a busy time for Llangollen Railway Engineering, the 6880 committee and working members, and details of the work undertaken during this time is covered in the next few pages.

The highlights include fabrication and delivery of the extension frames and their subsequent trial fitting at Llangollen, real progress with the horn-guides and horn-ties on the main frame, acquisition of a set of driving wheels and the refurbishment of No. 5952 *Cogan Hall's* bogie for use under No. 6880.

Meanwhile much work has been going on behind the scenes and is perhaps less obvious in terms of making progress with the construction of *Betton Grange*; a small team of members has collected and put into store a not inconsiderable amount of spare parts acquired from Ken Ryder at his farm near Driffield, East Yorkshire (see Quentin McGuinness' report on page 5), and preparatory work for next year's big fund-raiser, *Steel, Steam & Stars III*, for which at the time of writing these notes, the first three guest locomotives have been secured (details on page 7).

There is much to encourage all of us at the moment and the momentum really is with us. The appeal in *Heritage Railway* magazine suggests that rather than wait to raise a target of £60,000 for the

casting and machining of No. 6880's cylinders we should set about raising the money now, so that money from SSS3 can go towards something else, such as the refurbishment of the boiler for *Betton Grange*.

These certainly are exciting times for us all, and next year's gala – put the dates in your diary if you haven't already; 21st-29th April 2012 – is a superb opportunity to raise enough funds to advance the construction of 'our locomotive' to the next stage. Last time we raised almost £40,000 towards the extension frames. With your help this time round we can raise even more.

We need your help in staging the event. We are 'hiring' the railway for the nine days, but it will be up to us to staff and steward the proceedings, so we need as many pairs of hands as possible, even if it is just for one day, or a few hours.

If you can help, please register your support by emailing me at paul.apples@virgin.net and I will send you a list of tasks that need covering and you can decide what and when you would like to offer your services. Why not make a holiday of it, volunteer for just part of it, and spend the rest enjoying the gala?

MEMBER'S DAY AT LLANGOLLEN

Don't forget the members' day on 16th July at the Llangollen Railway. Lunch and various talks are being laid on, as well as a return trip to Carrog and a guided tour of the workshops including inspection of progress on 6880.

Paul Appleton, Editor.

THE newly cut and machined extension frames were delivered on time by RHG Stone and were soon test-fitted with temporary bolts and clamps at the start of April. David Huntbatch went down to Stone's premises in Street, Somerset a couple of times to film and photograph the process so that we have a proper record of this important development.

To fit the extension frames in front of the main frames meant that 6880 had to be winched back to make room which was itself an interesting exercise for the working party (see picture).

With frames re-grounded, *Betton Grange* at last became a full length locomotive, save for its tender and buffers of course!

The engineering team next returned its focus to finishing the horn-guides and fitting the horn-ties, which are now all but complete.

The Horn Guides have all been fitted with their respective horn-ties. The stay bar which was borrowed from *Cogan Hall* has now been fitted between the rear horn-ties (see photo). The next job is the reaming out to full size of the holes in the horn guides and manufacture of fitted bolts. Final adjustments will be made to ensure the faces are parallel. Once this has been done and the middle axle datum established, the extension frames position will then be adjusted and accurately fitted. Meanwhile subsequent volunteer working parties

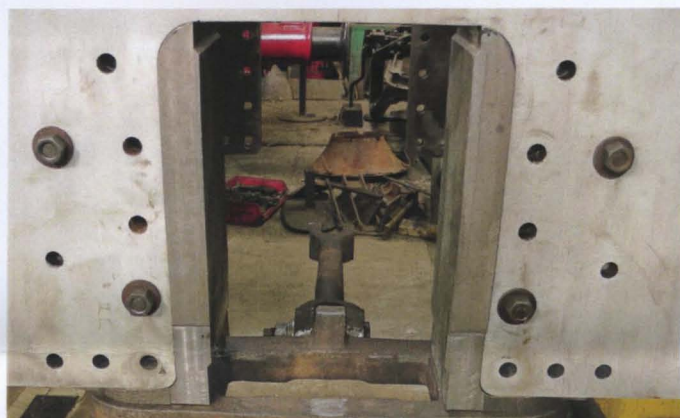


Mike Pearce and Richard Pumphrey help winch back the frames of No. 6880 by 12ft, using boiler trolleys. Richard Cadge looks on! *Quentin McGuinness.*

focused on cutting and trimming to size, six steel sheets that form the running plates along both sides of the locomotive. At about the same time, the main frames received their first coat of primer. Several coats will be needed before the first layers of paint can be applied.

In order to receive the primer, the steelwork had to be cleaned of any rust and oil that had accumulated over the past couple of years, with copious use of grinders and other power tools to create the required surface.

At the most recent working weekend on 2nd & 3rd July, the three left side running plates were offered up and drilled, by new Express Member Robin Matthews, with the result that



The rear left side horn-guide with stretcher attached. *David Huntbatch.*

the frames are really starting to look like a locomotive bottom-end.

The current plan is to aim for

a rolling chassis by the time of *Steel, Steam & Stars III* next April, and with this in mind the bogie was removed from under No. 5952 *Cogan Hall* and transported to Williton on the West Somerset Railway.

Here, locally based 6880 members are refurbishing the bogie for use under No. 6880 and as the accompanying pictures show. Paul Johnson, Jeff Jones and Neil Tiley have made great strides in completely stripping down the assembly and cleaning and measuring up all of the components ready for its rebuild and return to Llangollen.

A set of guard irons, obtained from Ken Ryder, was also delivered to Williton by Mick Prior and this should mean that all of the required parts are now in one place.

In a separate development, agreement has been reached with the GWR(SVR) Association at the Severn Valley Railway, for us to have use of the spare set of driving wheels that were once in use under SVR-based Collett 'Mogul' No. 7325/9303



The locomotive's main frames have received their first coat of primer, courtesy of Quentin McGuinness and Paul Appleton seen here on 7th May. *Quentin McGuinness.*

Drilling of the new extension frames being undertaken at RHG Stone's premises in Somerset on 25th March this year.
David Humberbatch.



Above: Close up showing how the stay bar attaches to the horn-tie. *Quentin McGuinness.*

Left: This view shows the rear stay bar (stretcher) borrowed from 5952 in place between both rear horn-guides, seen during June. *Quentin McGuinness.*

until around 30 years ago, when during the locomotive's restoration, a new set with thicker tyres was acquired from Barry scrap yard in South Wales.

The wheels were left in the triangle at Bewdley and have never been touched since. With No. 7325 on display in the Engine

House at Highley, and some way down the overhaul queue at the SVR, the wheels aren't required in the foreseeable future, if indeed at all, so both parties have agreed to a long-term arrangement for them to be used under No. 6880.

6880 Society Chairman,

Quentin McGuinness, was over at the SVR at the end of May, cleaning up the axle ends in all three wheelsets so that the axles can be tested for flaws in order that we can establish whether any of the driving wheels need replacement axles. It is then planned to crane them out of

their present location and obtain a quotation from the South Devon Railway for their complete overhaul.

With progress being made on both the bogie and driving wheels, there is every possibility that everything could be brought together early in 2012.

IT'S A 'BITSER'

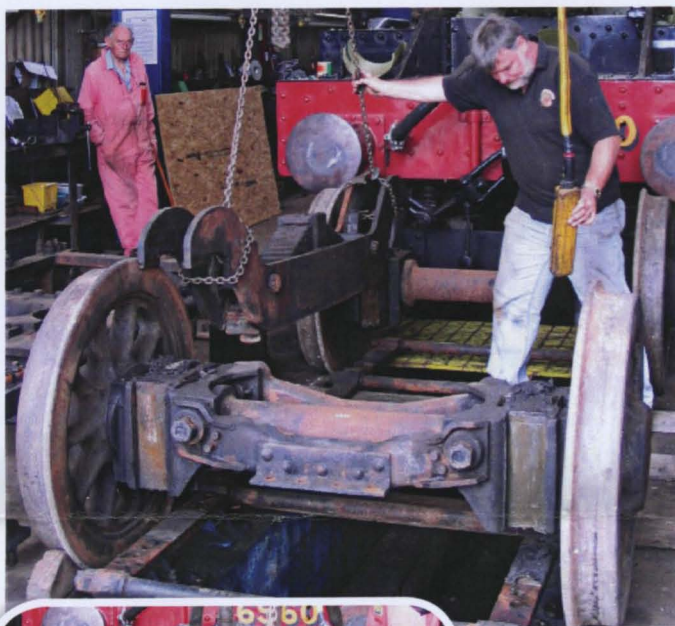
As is well known, parts from different locomotives ended up on others and so it is with No. 5952. As the team stripped down the bogie at the WSR's Williton works they found several components stamped with the running number from other locomotives, for example one of the axle boxes was once used under 'Castle' No. 7036 Taunton Castle. The GWR's policy of standardisation at work!



Parts from the bogie recovered from No. 5952 have also seen use under No. 6821 Leaton Grange, No. 6875 Hindford Grange and No. 7036 Taunton Castle. All, Neil Tiley.

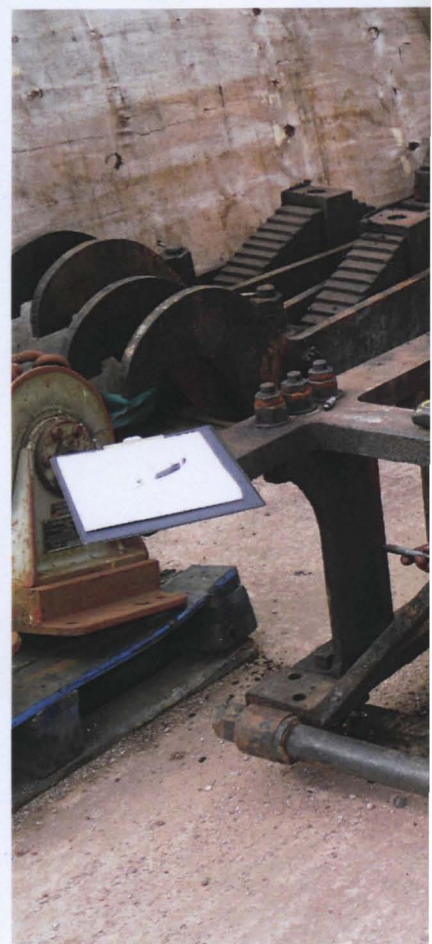
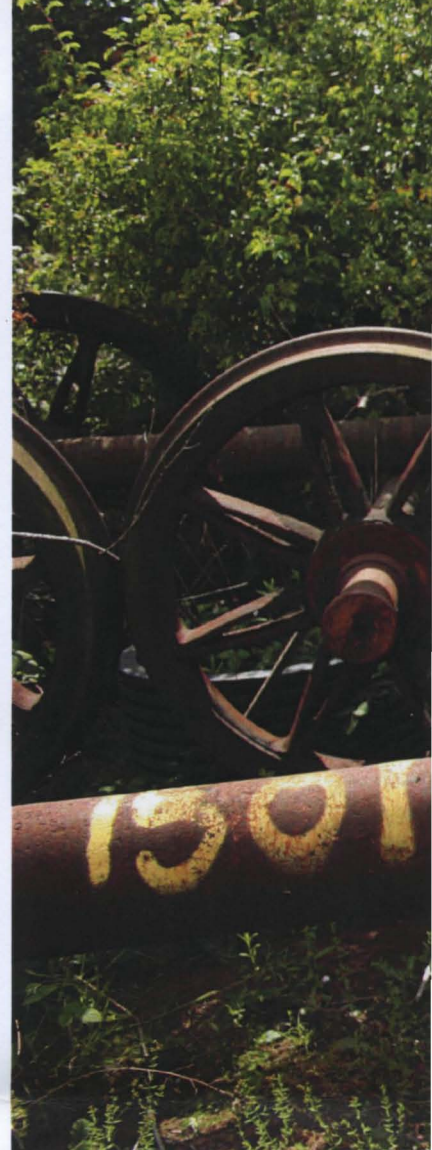


The bogie from No. 5952 stands outside the workshops at Williton in May before work started in earnest on stripping the whole lot down to its component parts. Neil Tiley.



Above: The bogie is now almost completely dismantled with one of the springs and its hanger being lifted out of place. Neil Tiley.

Left: One of the axle-boxes is lifted clear of the bogie. Neil Tiley.



NL012 Paul Johnson stamping No. 6880's identity onto the bogie guard irons. Neil Tiley.





Above: In the 'triangle' at Bewdley on the Severn Valley Railway on 25th June, Quentin McGuinness is seen cleaning the axle ends of one of the spare driving wheel sets from No. 7325, which once restored, will be used under No. 6880 Betton Grange. Pete Simpson.



Left: Measuring the dismantled bogie frame at Williton in June. Neil Tiley.

PICKING UP THOSE BITS & PIECES

On 30th May Quentin, Mick Prior and Steve Jones, took a hire van over to East Yorkshire to visit Ken Ryder at his fish farm. The first half of the parts collection for Cogan Hall/Betton Grange needed to be picked up.

Ken helped us remove a selection of larger items from a store room. This took a couple of hours due to the sheer weight of the items.

When we had reached the weight limit for the van, we realised there was still enough parts left to make a further trip necessary some time next year.

On return to Llangollen in the late afternoon, we set about putting the items into our storage van which had been shunted up to the yard for convenience. Thanks to Graham Elwood for assistance with that.

The largest items were the three coupling rods and these along with the reverser were too heavy to lift by hand into the van!

The collection is very important to us and will help speed up the completion of 6880. We now have for example all four coupling rods required. The screw reverser is a major item too that would be very costly to manufacture. A special blast pipe casting was also found that is required for the three row super-heater boiler type that we have for 6880 and 5952.

Quentin McGuinness

At the age of 64 now, I remember well the 'Grange' Class operating throughout the Western Region in the 1950s and 60s. It was these memories that inspired me to become a member of the Betton Grange Society and help fill the gap left in preservation, when all 80 of these classic locomotives were scrapped.

I was born and spent my life in Wolverhampton until I was 19 years old, becoming a lifelong 'Wolves' supporter for my sins. My railway interest started at Low Level Station with 'Castles' and 'Kings' on the London trains and although the LMS was firmly seated at High Level Station, it was the Great Western that was my first love. Many hours were spent cycling to Oxley, Stafford Road and the Works. In those days I became something of a rabid trainspotter, travelling all over the country with my Ian Allan ABC. It was a good life experience teaching me to be independent and much about our country.

My working life has been in Sales and Marketing, firstly with the Birmingham Company, Bulpitt & Sons, the creators and manufacturers of the Swan Brand Electric Kettles and other household goods. It was whilst travelling to work each day by train from Wolverhampton to Snow Hill that I experienced 'Grange haulage' on my trains home.



David poses in front of No. 6024 King Edward I at Gloucester on 27th September 1997.

Moving south to Sussex I have remained in Sales and Marketing throughout my life, often travelling around the world appointing sales agents for my new company, Furness Controls Ltd., manufacturers of Leak Detection equipment for the automotive and gas Industries. During this period after marrying and having three children to help raise, my railway activity had stopped completely.

However, by 1987 I started to visit Didcot and rekindle old

interests. It was here in 1991 that I first encountered No. 6024 King Edward I, my first sighting of a 'King' since 1963 at Old Oak Common when No. 6018 was still available for special trains. Seeing a 'King' again encouraged me to immediately join the 6024 Society quickly becoming Editor of *The King's Messenger* magazine as well as the *Club 60-Twentyfour* Newsletter.

Life on the mainline with the 'King' was always exciting. It had its highs and lows too. The sound

of the 'King' climbing Hatton Bank, Llanvihangel, Whiteball or even Dainton is a sound not easily forgotten. Highlights experienced at firsthand have been the first 'King' into Norwich, the re-enactment of No. 6018's trial run from Leeds to King's Cross, the first solo run by a 'King' over the South Devon Banks to Plymouth since 1962 and a certain gallop down Wellington Bank, where the speed reached cannot be put into print! Low Points were the night we knocked the safety valves off under a bridge approaching Paddington Station, emptying the boiler and bringing out the bomb squad. Also running out of steam on Shap with a heavily clinkered fire. That was just plain embarrassing.

After ten years as Editor I moved over to concentrate more on my new business, Belhurst Productions, filming, producing and selling railway DVDs. There's over 50 titles now, many filmed overseas, but many U.K. ones too. It's been this experience that put me in a position to film both Steel, Steam & Stars Galas for us and produce the DVDs which have added to our income.

Today I'm retired, but very active making films. My other main interest is the Betton Grange Society, where I know we can soon bring back this greatly missed class of locomotive. I just look forward to the day when she moves under her own power for the first time. This can't come soon enough for me.



David in action filming the removal and loading of Cogan Hall's bogie at Llangollen on 5th March 2011. Quentin McGuinness.



NL020 TR No. 2 Dolgoch at Tywyn Wharf Station following its return to traffic earlier this year. Anthony Coulls.

THE fun part of organising any event like Steel, Steam & Stars is choosing which locomotives to invite. That really is the easy bit, the much more realistic and significantly more difficult bit is actually turning those aspirations into reality.

Many possible scenarios have been put forward, including locomotives for a Cambrian themed event, but more often than not, the chosen engines just aren't available or the engines simply are going to be out of ticket, awaiting overhaul.

With the clock ticking, the 6880 Directors were starting to get a bit anxious, with just Talylyn Railway No. 2 *Dolgoch* confirmed for what will be its first ever, in-steam visit away from its Tywyn home.

But then things really started to 'happen' with first the big news that BR 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia* – an early target for the event – could indeed make it, followed by arguably even bigger news that TV celebrity 'Pacific' No. 60163 *Tornado* will also be spending the full nine days of

SSS3 with us at Llangollen.

An earlier request to bring *Tornado* to the Llangollen Railway had fallen through due to the locomotive's commitments elsewhere, but towards the end of June, AI Steam Locomotive Trust Operations Director, Graeme Bunker and Chairman, Mark Allatt came through with confirmation that the £3m new-build locomotive, would indeed take part in our showpiece event, to appear in its recently applied BR lined 'express passenger' green livery.

Jeremy Hosking's Riddles-designed BR 'Standard' *Britannia* is currently running in plain BR black, without nameplates, the condition in which it first appeared when out-shopped from Crewe in January 1951. It is hoped that by next April, No. 70000 will be repainted in BR lined green and have its nameplates returned to its smoke deflectors.

This will be the first time that either locomotive has appeared on the Llangollen Railway and are sure to be a big draw, not just for enthusiasts, but the public at

large, for whom many *Tornado* is a household name, having seen it in news bulletins and on the BBC's *Top Gear* programme. This is a tremendous PR opportunity for both the Llangollen Railway and the 6880 Betton Grange Society, and one that we intend to make as much as possible from, with the LR's George Jones busy writing to all of the region's newspapers, radio and TV stations.

It is planned to operate 2' 3" gauge Fletcher, Jennings-built TR No. 2 on a specially laid section of track in Carrog station goods yard, offering footplate rides to the public. The locomotive was recently overhauled, including the fitting of a brand new boiler made at the Severn Valley Railway, following a national appeal to get it ready for the TR's and railway preservation in general's, 60th Anniversary Celebrations, No. 2 being the locomotive that pulled the first ever preservation-era train on 14th May 1951.

Dolgoch will be 146 years old when it joins us to take part in SSS3 next year. Whilst it was making history at the respectably

old age of 85 at the Talylyn Railway in 1951, No. 70000 *Britannia* was just running in, and as for No 60163, well..... the original 49 members of the class were still in their prime!

It is hoped to bring in a further three locomotives for our nine-day event and negotiations for these are at an advanced stage, but as is often the case with society-owned engines, a collective decision is often required and can take time to reach fruition.

It has also been agreed to hold a model railway exhibition in the field at Glyndyfrdwy as part of the display of vintage vehicles there. Hosted in a large marquee, it is planned to have a selection of high quality layouts, supported by specialist traders. Anyone interested in bringing a layout or trading in the marquee is invited to contact Edward Woodward at edward.aspire@btinternet.com or telephone him on 01300 345355. Keep an eye on the web site for full details as and when they become available at www.6880.co.uk

SSS3 21st to 29th April 2012

WE must start by thanking all members and supporters who responded to our appeal for further funding by way of donations or taking out a new direct debit mandate, in the last newsletter. The response has been fantastic and the value of donations and new direct debits exceeded £10,000.00. This is of course very encouraging and we do hope that further members and supporters will follow suit in due course.

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter we

are now at the stage where pace of progress is only being dictated by availability of funds. All donations no matter how small will really make a difference.

We have recently written to all Society members who have completed their initial direct debit mandate to ask if they will consider continuing with a regular £10 a month payment.

It is clear that as the construction of *Betton Grange* makes significant and noticeable progress we receive an increasing number

of donations and new members. We are optimistic that the pace of funds being committed will continue to increase as construction progresses. To this end we all believe it is very important that we achieve a rolling chassis in 2012 and all being well in time for the Steel, Steam and Stars Gala in April.

May we ask all members and supporters to consider taking out a further direct debit or making a donation? We appreciate that this is a really big ask but it will make a big difference to our progress.

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

Mark Massey
David Mark
Brian Grumbridge
Martin Butler
M. T. Dawson
Keith Wilkinson
J. E. Talbot
John Gardner
Rodney Sharrock
Martin Davis
Graham Orme
Robert Breakwell

Peter Williams
Malcolm Cowtan
William Murray
Andrew Bevan
Brian Limb
John Rice
Dave Owen
C.K. Andrews
Dr John Riviere
Terry Savage
David Cuss
Geoffrey Rogers

Graham Bondi
David Evans
Nicholas Kingminnett
Frank Tyler
Peter Evans
R Chapman
Alasdair Rogers
Paul Weston
Richard Randall
George Colbourne
Robin & Rhiannon
Matthews

We are keen to gain more members and would like existing members to persuade friends and relatives to join the society. As an added incentive any member who signs up another member before the end of August 2011 will receive a free gift and the same for their friend.

FREE GIFTS ARE:

Society Membership – Polo Shirt

City Membership – Sweatshirt

Express Membership – Rugby Shirt or Fleece.

● **Contact me by post at 14 Newborough Road, Shirley, Solihull, W Midlands B90 2HA. E-mail at richard@cadge.co.uk**

Flash back to 2009; a reminder of the scenic splendour and sheer motive power variety that make Steel, Steam & Stars events unique. D49 No. 246 Morayshire from Bo'ness is piloted by National Collection celebrity 4-4-0 No. 3440 City of Truro, on the approach to Carrog. Paul Appleton

IT'S A MUGS GAME!

City Member, Geoff Griffiths, from Blackwood in Gwent, has been busy doing 'his bit' to put much needed money into the 6880 coffers. He has managed to sell eight of the society's mugs to his workmates, raising £36 in the process. Here he is seen taking another box of mugs and some of the 6880 pens in his continuing efforts to sell society merchandise. He has also taken away a pile of membership forms and SSS2 brochures to help drum up interest in SSS3 (new SS3 brochures are now in production).

This is something that all members could help with. Can you sell a few mugs or pens, or perhaps even a polo shirt or rugby top? It all adds up to help speed the construction of 6880. Let Quentin know if you can help at quentin.6880@gmail.com or call 07989 396577.

Picture: Quentin McGuinness

