

6880 Betton Grange

# 6880

Building the 81st Grange for the 21st century

Find us at [www.6880.co.uk](http://www.6880.co.uk)

Quarterly Newsletter No: 4

Welcome to our fourth quarterly newsletter.

Its been a year since I first started to write these newsletters, and while I try to update you all once every three months time and circumstances mean I cannot always produce the newsletter on time. We are as yet a small group and each committee member has many responsibilities to take care of. The last few months have been just such a case, and I apologize for missing the newsletter in June. At the time some things were fast moving and pressure on my time from other group activities meant the delay of the newsletter, then the expected release of forthcoming news has then kept the delay over to this, the September newsletter. I have kept the website current with news snippets during this period, and it is intended that the newsletter will be a synopsis of the update that will appear on the web as they happen. This newsletter does contain news that will make its delay worthwhile though.

First I will recap the events of the last few months. 5199 made a successful visit to the Barry Transport Extravaganza during the weekend 12-13th June. This was a great success for the team, and the Vale of Glamorgan Railway. The relationship between the two societies, and the Llangollen Railway, has been further cemented, and a return visit by working members of the VOGR has already taken place at Llangollen.

The event at Barry was originally planned to coincide with the signing over of Willington Hall to the County project and the Society. When 5199 left Llangollen for the VOG this was still to take place, however this was cancelled at the last minute and we became the victim of the political system. We have, at the time of writing, still no firm date for the signing to take place, much to the dismay of both the negotiators within the WDA and the VOG Council, and ourselves. We are confident that we will soon be able to officially announce the agreement, and will update you when it takes place.



**5199 alongside 6880 at Barry MPD. One day soon!**



**Left. 5199 pulls Willington Hall from the shed.**

**Right. 5199 crossing the Barry Island causeway.**



One of the questions we are most often asked is "when will Willington Hall be moved?" and I hope the above partly answers that question. Even if we obtain permission to move Willington Hall tomorrow it is unlikely that such a move would now take place until the Summer of 2005 at the earliest, this is to fulfil our obligations of space at Llangollen, and to fit in with our planned program of works. A decision was taken sometime ago on a working plan, and we identified key components that we were to concentrate on. Some of these are to raise our publicity profile and prove that we are a project that is here to stay, rather than just a programme of works.

One key component identified by ourselves fits neatly with the next most common question we receive. "When will you start work on 6880?" The answer is simply "we have".

Over a year ago we were provided with an accurate costing for the main frames for 6880 at just over £5000, and we settled on making this the first key component we would purchase, however since we made these enquiries we have become aware of a huge increase in the price of steel. The international market for both new and scrap steel has seen prices driven upwards by the huge developments taking place in China, this has resulted in the rise in the original quote to over £8000 now. It is expected that prices will fall in a couple of year's time, but not before further rises take place. Our original plan was place an order for the frame materials at the end of this year, however in the light of international developments, and a better than expected bank balance; we placed an order for the frame material during August.

The steel was ordered to a specification suitable for mainline use, and on Sept 13th the profiling took place at Jaymee Engineering in the West Midlands. The original 1936 plans were used for the cutting of the material. Movement of the finished frame components then took place on the 28st Sept. Our next stage will be to build the jigs needed for assembly, followed by the necessary drilling of the frames to enable their construction to take place.

This is a momentous event for us, and as such we were pleased that we could release this news to Heritage Railway in time for the publication of a 2-part article in the same magazine, the first part of which was published with the news of the frames on the 23rd September. This article explains, over the two parts, why we picked a Grange, and how we intend to build her.



**Cutting the frames 13/9/04**

We cannot afford to rest on our laurels now though. The placing of the frame order has taken place in advance of its schedule, but while we were in a better

than expected financial position, it has happened in part because we have obtained loans from supportive groups and individuals. The frames are a key component, they are the heart of 6880, and we are pleased with the progress we have made since the launch of the project at the beginning of this year.



It is with your support that we have come so far, and it is your support that we need to carry us forward. If you have not yet made a commitment to membership please ask yourself 'why not?' and if you can afford to increase your contribution, or make a one off donation, maybe at this time next year we will be in a position to place an order for the extension frames, or cylinders. If the frames alone won't convince you, look out for other major announcements in the coming months.

On a slightly less happy note, the tender long promised to us by the Kinlet Hall society has turned out to be a lot more expensive purchase than we expected. Following the AGM of the Kinglet Hall society we were given an asking price in excess of three times what we expected, and indeed what the market would expect. After careful consideration we felt that this offer was not acceptable, and despite the work we have put into it we rejected the asking price. At this stage in the project we feel it is more important to concentrate on the locomotive, a tender, while vital, is not glamorous or publicity worthy at this point. In addition rejection of this tender has put us in a better position for ordering the frames, and it is interesting to note that we have already seen the offer of a loan of a suitable tender for 6880. We will not make a final decision on a tender until later in the project.



Other news is that we have taken a pattern from the nameplate of Bearley Grange, belonging to one of our members, and we have now cut out the steel backing plate to enable the making of the nameplates for Betton Grange. Mainly symbolic, the production of the nameplates is primarily for publicity purposes. While on this subject of publicity, the 6880 road show attended the Great Dorset Steam Fair at the beginning of September, a new venture for us, this event is aimed at our road going steam cousins, but we were invited onto the display pitch of Heritage Railway magazine's parent group, Morton Publications, and the event proved to be profitable. If the Flying Scotsman could attend a steam fair, why

should we not? We are to take the road show to the West Somerset Autumn gala, along with 5199, and we hope to increase our support from this area.



One last item, Craig Tiley's drawing of 6880 is now completed and we will be arranging the print run in the very near future, delivery to eligible members will take place shortly after the printing is finished. We think it has been worth the wait.



**Craig Tiley's magnificent drawing of 6880 outside Llangollen shed, flanked by 5199 and 6430.**

**How long will it be before we can make this a reality?**

That's it for this update; look out on the web for more photos of the frames and the WSR gala.