



# News

Issue 2 Winter 2019



Last event for 2019: **Santa Specials: Weekends 30 Nov to 22 Dec + 23/24 December**



New racking being installed in our bunko booth. We're always busy improving things.



Jim spraying clock bodies ready for assembly and sale at our Christmas stalls.



The newsletter editorial team rack their brains at an on-site meeting.



Paul 'slaps' on the finishing coat to a cab tool box - looks quite professional!



Factory picture of a couple of connecting rods similar to ours.



## A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR THE MAN (OR WOMAN) WHO HAS EVERYTHING!

**For the price of just £2,800 each !!**

WHAT ABOUT FUNDING ONE OR TWO OF THE TWO BRAND NEW CONNECTING AND INTERMEDIATE RODS THAT NOW NEED TO BE FORGED FOR OUR LOCOMOTIVE ?

**Help to get this historic locomotive moving again !**

Maybe that amount is just a smidgen too much? Why not club together with other shareholders and fund one between you?

A company in Birmingham has already been selected to do the work - all it needs now is the money!

Contact Charlie Masterson if you would like to discuss this opportunity to fund a rod or rods: **fog49@live.co.uk 07747 545720**

**Editorial by Mark Yonge** [gwr4253news@gmail.com](mailto:gwr4253news@gmail.com)

Dear shareholder,

WE live in exciting times and no, I am not referring to Brexit. We sincerely thank our shareholders for the faith they have placed in this project which started in 2011 when the 'rusting hulk', like a refugee from another land, was delivered to the Rolvenden works for restoration.

My editorial colleagues Kelvin and Dave, with a suggestion from Chairman Charlie, decided that now would be a good time to review progress from

the start to the present day. Some shareholders who were not around in earlier times will hopefully appreciate a basic history of the story so far, with the final chapter waiting to be written in the near future. So read on...

Like so many inspirational schemes it certainly had its share of detractors. How often did we hear remarks like, 'you'll never do it', 'it's too heavy' or 'it's not a Colonel Stephens' locomotive' and so on. Well, we are pleased to report that the board of the Kent & East Sussex Railway is putting its weight

behind us and with the extension to Robertsbridge on the horizon, it is realised that a locomotive of this calibre will be needed for the 27 mile round trip.

You will notice that the grand draw is conspicuous by its absence. This method of raising funds has been successful, raising useful sums of cash since its inception. We would like to thank the K&ESR for allowing us to use the Terrier magazine mailing over the years every autumn to promote the draw and are now giving them space for their own fund raising activity this year.

We are now approaching the final push as during 2020 we will be putting all our efforts into the boiler.

The bullet must be bitten to raise sufficient funds and ensure that after so many years as a static exhibit, our locomotive will once again raise steam on the railway.

**The Annual General Meeting will be held on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020** in the buffet at Tenterden station. We do urge you to attend as you will hear first-hand our plans, with your help, to raise sufficient funds to complete the task.

In the meantime there are two items that we must fund which will allow us all to witness the full piston and rods movement, prior to the boiler being installed. These are for one Connecting Rod at £2881 and a further Intermediate Rod at £2864. If any generous member could fund either singly or jointly one or two of these items, we would be forever grateful. Take a look at the advert on the front page which includes a picture of a couple of finished connecting rods. Yes, it's not a very Christmassy present, but absolutely vital. We could then make public our plans for finishing the engine with a clear message that there would be no hidden extras.

Finally thanks to you all for all your support over the years. This project could never have

succeeded to this stage without your generous help.

*We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

## Readers' Forum

PLEASE send your letters, articles, comments etc., by email to the news team:

**[gwr4253news@gmail.com](mailto:gwr4253news@gmail.com)** for inclusion in the next issue, or to contact us.

Why not write an article about your experiences working on 4253 or about a particular aspect of the locomotive, its history or maintenance while in steam? We look forward to your articles!

## Winter Events



*Mark Singleton in the background with Dick Weekes and Dave Stubbs braving the cold at the Tenterden Christmas market.*

THE last two events for 2019 are the Tenterden Christmas market and the K&ESR Santa Special weekends. These are always cold and damp events and the shareholders that man the sales stands every weekend in the run up to Christmas certainly deserve a special endurance medal - such is the dedication of our volunteers to raise money for the continued restoration of the loco. You can see from the picture above that we have an array of merchandise for sale including clocks, egg timers, badges etc, etc, as well as the ever-popular Tombola (to the right) and a brief history of 4253 restoration progress. There's always a steady stream of people trying their luck





*The Tombola is always popular. People are seen here queuing up at the Tenterden Christmas Market.*

on the Tombola where, even if they don't win, the kids get a free lolly or biscuits! That can't be bad. Mark Singleton, our Events Coordinator, will soon be booking us in for another round of fund raising events throughout 2020. **One of which will include possibly our most incredible and certainly most ambitious project yet, at the Weald of Kent Steam Rally at Woodchurch.** *Details are yet to be finalised but watch out for further news in next year's newsletters!*

## **GWR 4253 Progress Report**



*Needle gunning the inside of the boiler barrel. Very noisy and dusty work. Our extraction fan is just out of the picture.*

THE boiler continues its transformation from a rather heavy collection of copper and steel plates into a working and functional locomotive boiler. Since the last newsletter much laborious work has been undertaken, arguably the worst being the needle gunning of the inside of the the barrel. This

entailed two men inside the boiler with air operated needle guns which hammered their way through a layer of scale that had long ago built up on the inner surface of the metal. As you can imagine, two



*Dick admiring his handiwork - or maybe just tired? You can see the improvement the needle guns makes to the surface.*

needle guns hammering against the inside of what turned out to be an enormous 'heavy metal' cylindrical amplifier, required everyone within a 30 foot distance to wear ear defenders all day long! Not only that, we needed to use our welding extraction fan equipment to take away clouds of dust from a very cramped and difficult working environment. Everyone was provided with the necessary masks, goggles, gloves and ear defenders inside the boiler but even then breaks were required with turns taken to carry out the task over about a six day period with legs and arms



*Our specialist coded welder Steve Casey, welds the lower edges of the throat plate to the main boiler. This high standard of welding is required by the boiler inspector!*

taking a lot of punishment. The end result is a perfectly clean surface which can now be inspected for any pitting and necessary welding to build up imperfections.

The other major step forward is with the throat plate. Much work has been done over the preceding weeks to get to a stage where the lower edges could be welded to the existing boiler by our specialist coded welder Steve Casey. This has now been done to the standards required by the boiler inspector. With the welding completed, it allowed us to remove temporary rivet hole 'holding' bolts one at a time, ream the hole out to the correct size, countersink where necessary then replace



*Henry tightens down the temporary holding bolts after the rivet holes are reamed to the correct size.*

the bolts in turn, thus keeping the integrity and alignment of the throat plate relative to the boiler as the job progressed. We are now ready to hot rivet the throat plate finally down in position, which is a major achievement for all who were involved. All the lap seam rivets have now been replaced (those that surround the front edge of the fire box). The top rivets that go into the corners of the fire box were the most difficult to get at and entailed making various packing plates to fit between the outer boiler plate and the head of the rivet, together with a hydraulic ram - quite a juggling act, and all this while trying to handle a red hot rivet!

Other areas that have progressed include the cab tool boxes which have been made from scratch (to



*"Think that chestnut is done Martin!" Paul holding the torch on our mobile forge - heating lap seam rivets . . . we think?*

the original drawings) and now look resplendent in a high gloss finish and put back into store until required. We have also recently been asked by K&ESR Carriage and Wagon dept., if we could clean all the brake gear from the 108 DMMU bogies. This will help speed up repairs and its quick return to traffic. All parts (a large number of



*Some of the team standing next a selection of the many 108 DMMU parts painted in an initial anti-rust primer. All of the DMMU brake parts are being painted by 4253 volunteers.*

them) have been stripped by a team of 4253 volunteers in our workshop, treated with special anti-rust undercoats and finished with a final top coat of gloss black. The turnaround on these items has been achieved at a rapid rate and everything will be returned to C&W ready for any new bushes to be fitted and final fitting.

All the latest details of work can be followed weekly on either [www.4253.co.uk](http://www.4253.co.uk) Facebook: **4253 Locomotive Company** or Twitter: **@GWR4253**  
*Dave Farnham*