



Newsletter

Keeping Shareholders Informed



Issue 28

Autumn 2024

The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited, based in Rolvenden, Kent, is a non-profit, non-political organisation. Reproduction of photos by permission of The 4253 Locomotive Company.

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K&ESR Santa Specials Appeal

With Christmas not too far away . . . (sorry!), we are again looking towards setting up our tombola and merchandise stall on Tenterden Town Station platform for the Santa Specials.

This is our main fundraising event of the year and an opportunity to boost our bank account for the loco expenses of next year. We will need every penny we can get to return your loco to steam.

As usual, we rely on 4253 shareholders to man the stall over the four weekends of the Santa Specials which run up to Christmas – *without your help it can't be done.*

Please, if you've got a spare Saturday or Sunday (morning or afternoon . . . or all day) email in your preferred date(s) and times to: gwr4253news@gmail.com

You can see a dedicated appeal in this newsletter on Page 2 with links to the the rota and email details.

Thank you in advance for your continued support of the 4253 Santa Specials fundraising stall.

541 Tender Project

Much work has continued with our other fund raising project – the tender for 541. As this newsletter goes out, it is actually beginning to look like a nearly complete tender, rather than a jigsaw puzzle!

Please see Kelvin's report on Page 3 for all the latest pictures and news.

4253 Boiler Progress

In tandem with the 541 tender project, we have moved ever closer to the first steam test of our boiler since it arrived back from HBSS in Liverpool.

We have been fortunate enough to have a usually large volunteer workforce to be able to split between 541 and 4253. This has enabled both projects to move forward at a rapid pace. The boiler crinolines, which fit around the boiler, are also progressing at a good steady pace. This can't be rushed as they have to fit perfectly round the boiler to enable the cleating sheets to fit correctly.

See Charlie's Boiler Report on Page 9, together with the Crinolines Report on Page 10.

We would like to thank all shareholders for their continued support.

Things are moving in a very positive direction for GWR 4253, which has only been possible with the help of all volunteers and 4253 shareholders.

Thank You!



K&ESR

SANTA SPECIALS

**WE ARE AGAIN TAKING OUR TOMBOLA AND MERCHANDISE STALL
TO TENTERDEN STATION PLATFORM FOR THE KENT AND
EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY SANTA SPECIALS**

BUT...

WE CAN ONLY DO THIS WITH THE HELP OF 4253 SHAREHOLDERS!

**THIS IS OUR MAIN FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR AND
REQUIRES VOLUNTEERS TO MAN OUR STALL OVER THE FOUR
WEEKENDS RUNNING UP TO CHRISTMAS.**

**IF YOU CAN HELP RAISE MONEY FOR THE RESTORATION OF YOUR
LOCO, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO VIEW THE
CURRENT ROTA:**



**PLEASE EMAIL YOUR PREFERRED DATES AND TIMES, TOGETHER
WITH YOUR NAME TO:**

gwr4253news@gmail.com

***PLEASE EMAIL US WITHIN THE NEXT THREE WEEKS WITH YOUR
DATE(S) AS WE NEED A MINIMUM NUMBER OF SHAREHOLDERS TO
RUN THIS EVENT!***

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.

4253 Project 541 Tender Update *continued*



A selection of fiddly bits and sheet metal which all had to be sorted and audited.

The first section was placed in our 'boiler room' to begin the drilling of holes.



Manhandling the first sheet into the boiler room, they are not light!

So, how far along are we after 24 weeks, from laying that first sheet down in the boiler room? The second sheet was laid, which created a platform with a rectangular hole in the middle. This was where the 'in between the wheels' lower water area would go, created from eight sheets of steel that required positioning and supporting while they were watertight welded. Once this platform was in place the front end sheet could be put up and welded.



Jerry drilling the front panel and Jake and John also having a go before it could be raised.

Then came the fitting of the front end side panels, swiftly followed by the coal floor.

Once these were in place the rear end side panels could be fitted and the internal cross bracing bars fitted, as well as a new baffle that was not in the original design.

All the lamp brackets and steps on the old back panel were salvaged, cleaned and riveted on to the new back panel. The original sand boxes were salvaged, cleaned and have been bolted to the front of the tender. The filler lid was cleaned up and test fitted to the new filler hole.

4253 Project 541 Tender Update *continued*



Dave and Dai doing a bit of salvaging while Jake, Kevin and Kelvin get busy cleaning things up.



The new back panel with reclaimed brackets and steps riveted, sand boxes fitted and filler lid test fitted.

The original tool boxes were removed and refurbished before they were re-riveted to the new tender. The new sloped coal floor had an access panel installed that was also not in the original design. The original coal door guide rails were cleaned up and test fitted, as was the coal hole door. Note the curved line of rivets that show the profile of the coal space.



Tool boxes rivetted in place awaiting their doors.



New inspection hatch fitted (*the slope is not as steep as it appears here*).



Coal door slides in place.



Henry is seen here trial fitting the new copper float to its arm mechanism. Both the float and arm had to be replaced as the old ones were far too corroded.

4253 Project 541 Tender Update *continued*

All the original cross bracing bars were inspected, cleaned and have been riveted to the new support brackets, and an additional baffle plate has been installed (*the large grey sheet with three square holes*). The 45° support angle bar will be removed eventually.

Picture (right) shows the new support brackets temporarily tack welded.

Picture (far right) shows the interior of the water space tank with the eight cross supports. Quite a complicated structure.



Picture (above) shows the rear plate being carefully positioned before welding.

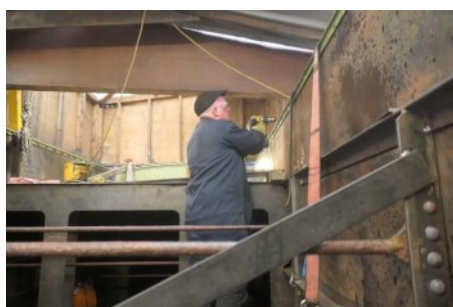
Pictures (top and bottom left) show the top plate with water filler hole, and the rear curved coal plate in position.



A montage of many little jobs being done by many of our happy crew:



Neil



Graham



Chris

4253 Project 541 Tender Update *continued*



Paul



John



Graham and 'Film Star' Dave



Dick and 'Film Star' Dave



Dick and Kevin



Paul



You've missed a bit!



George



Paul and Scott

***By the time this newsletter is published, the 541 tender project will be about 90% completed. A fantastic effort by all our volunteers!
We'll give a further update in the next newsletter.***

A gentle reminder to all shareholders

Can you please let us know of any changes to your telephone number, address or email address, so that we can keep our mailing database up-to-date.

Please Note:

4253 Locomotive Company never shares any information with any other third parties.

It is important to us that we remain in contact with all our shareholders and that our mailing database is accurate.

Please let us know: gwr4253news@gmail.com

If you haven't told us about your new email address - then you are probably not reading this!

**The 4253 Locomotive
Company Limited**

**Notice of the
Annual General Meeting**

to be held on

Saturday 18th January 2025

at

***Tenterden Town Station Buffet
Station Road
Tenterden
TN30 6HE***

Please Note:

The meeting will start promptly at 14.00

The meeting will include reports from the Chairman,
Finance Director and Engineering Director with updates on how the
project is progressing.

“How’s the boiler getting on?” you ask

Here’s a rundown of what’s been done since the boiler returned from HBSS:

All fitting studs have been cut back to the correct length. These are for the backhead, safety valve, smoke box regulator, blower and brake ejector. These were intentionally made long as we didn't know the various flange widths.

All the washout plugs have been removed and checked along with mud hole doors with a master plan drawn up and each one number stamped. This enables them to go back into the correct holes when removed.

Boiler washed out a couple times.

Superheater header sent to Tylsley for seats to be countersunk for the new style superheater ends.

Chimney sent with the blower and brake ejector ring to the Bluebell Railway to be machined to fit one another. This was necessary as the chimney is a brand new casting.

Water trays fitted inside boiler. These help stop cold water from the clacks going straight into the hot water and cooling it too much — they act like a warming channel.

On the backhead: The gauge frame has been fitted, blower valve fitted, brake ejector blanked off and regulator stuffing box fitted.

Temporary fire grate constructed for steam test purposes whilst in the yard.

Fire hole door holding studs drilled and tapped and fitted and the flap fitted with all operating levers.

Blow down valve trial fitted.

Safety valve unit trial fitted.

Regulator trial fitted in the smoke box.

Regulator rod fitted.

Copper pipes from regulator box to superheater header have been annealed and trial fitted.

New bosses made for the blower and the brake ejector and trial fitted in the smoke box.

The missing brackets for the spark arrester and the rod that holds the mesh and the cover plate holding brackets for the superheater, have all been manufactured.

The fittings for the smoke box steam lance have been made.

The shut off valves for the smokebox lubrication system have been drilled and valves fitted with the pipework started from front to back.

The smokebox: Door and handrails removed and treated with heat resistant paint, the seam joining strip riveted on and the countersunk rivets dressed, the whole thing rubbed down and two coats of special primer applied.

Together with all the crinoline work, everything is progressing as expected with the boiler.

We hope to have a more detailed roundup of how the boiler is going in the next issue.

4253 Locomotive Crinolines

“It’s the worst job on a steam locomotive - bar none!”

Locomotive crinolines. Firstly, what are they?

Apart from being popular with ladies in the mid 19th century to hold their skirts out, the ones we need to focus on are steam locomotive crinolines. It is a framework of metal hoops and bars fixed around the boiler and firebox to enable the outer metal casing (*cleating*) to be fixed to.



Picture by kind permission of GWR 3814 Co.

The above picture is a very good example of locomotive crinolines. It shows GWR 3814 with the basic framework that supports the metal cleating around the boiler and firebox areas.

The framework of crinolines sits away from the boiler and firebox surfaces using metal pegs or ‘stools’ by approximately one to two inches to allow insulation material to be placed in the resultant gap. We are using a modern high performance insulation material which comes in rolls and is fixed around all the heat-losing surfaces. The material itself is sandwiched between shiny metal foil (not unlike Bacofoil) for ease of handling and to maintain its strength.

4253 Locomotive Crinolines *continued*



This picture shows an example of crinolines and backhead platework around the firebox end of a boiler. Note all the platework at the back – ***we still have all this to make!***

A huge amount of work goes into creating tailor made crinolines and although our design will be slightly different to this arrangement, it gives an idea of how complicated and difficult it is to create this type of framework. The whole thing needs to be screwed together with countersunk screws and joining plates, so that it can all be removed for any boiler repair or certainly at the 10 year overhaul period.

Our locomotive would almost certainly not have had crinolines as such when it came out of Swindon in 1917. The common practice then, of moulding an asbestos insulation material to the firebox and boiler and then clamping the outer cladding metal sheets to that, is obviously not a good idea today! This method was extensively used throughout locomotive production for many years and the health hazards of early loco production makes the mind boggle in today's world.

Original specific crinoline drawings do not seem to exist until much later and only started to appear in BR Western Region in 1953. Certainly we have not been able to find any earlier drawings or history before. So one of our volunteers, Chris Greatley, was 'enlisted' to produce a set of drawings to enable us to fabricate our own. His task has not been easy, with only BR drawings of other types of locos available, he has had to design tailormade 4253 crinolines virtually from scratch.

Having spent untold hours and months researching and locating any information and drawings that do exist, he has come up with a range of detailed drawings to enable us to move forward. We now have the task of turning his theory into practice and the challenges have already begun to show themselves with much head scratching and the now famous 'crinoline meetings' taking place all too often!

Where are we now with creating our crinolines?



So, the overall concept of crinolines is firstly to encase the insulation wrap that retains boiler heat, and secondly to have something to fix the outside metal cleating to.

The picture on the left shows where we are at the moment in the long process of the construction around our boiler. There are a total of eight hoops (*five on the boiler barrel and three on the firebox*) and stretcher

bars to be fixed. Each one has to be custom made with much time and patience to get it to all fit snugly around the complicated profile of the boiler and firebox. You might be able to see from the picture how our No 4 boiler slopes down towards the smokebox at the top but is straight at the bottom! This barrel shape makes thing even more complicated.

One of the crinoline hoops, number four, unfortunately ends up either side of the main safety valve. This has required a special curved plate to be made to take it round the valve, which can be seen in this picture

(*right*) at the top of the boiler, taken from the firebox end. This plate also has to be strong enough to support the brass safety valve bonnet which will be bolted to it. You might just be able to make out the metal 'stools' which hold it all away from the boiler surface at the required distance. The insulation will fit between the boiler surface and crinoline bands.



4253 Locomotive Crinolines *continued*

Some of the ever-growing 'crinoline team' in action . . .



This picture (left) shows a triumphant trial fitting of our wonderful shiny safety valve bonnet to the curved crinoline plate, which takes number four crinoline around the valve. *Left to right, Chris, Chris, Dave, Dan, John and Kelvin.*

The picture below shows crinoline hoop numbers one and two being joined together with the top stretcher.



Picture left shows Dan and Kelvin 'tweaking' a red hot firebox crinoline band.

Below shows Bob (left) and Chris up on top of the firebox. Chris is the 'boss' and architect of 4253's crinolines!





GWR 2-8-0T Locomotive No. 4253 Share Application Form

Please complete the form below in BLOCK CAPITALS and return to:
The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited, 28 Archer Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5RZ

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

I hereby make an application for _____ share(s) in The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited.
I enclose a cheque made payable to The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited (£250 per share) / a completed Bankers Standing Order (*please delete as appropriate*).

I am a member of The Kent and East Sussex Railway: Yes / No (*please delete as appropriate*).

I consent to being contacted by 4253 Locomotive Co. via email/post for information updates about 4253 progress and activities.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Bankers Standing Order Form (if you wish to pay by monthly Standing Order)

To the Manager: _____ (Your) Bank

Your Bank Address: _____

Please pay £ _____ on the _____ day of every month commencing on _____ / _____ / _____ to:
**The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited, Account Number 47817011 National Westminster Bank Plc.
20 High Street, Ashford, Kent. TN24 8SH. Sort Code 60-01-21.**

Account Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Sort Code: _____ Account Number: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

*Please quote Reference Number in all payments _____ * to be entered by 4253 Project Staff.

Reg Office: The 4253 Locomotive Company Limited, Old Chilmington Oast, Chilmington Green, Ashford, Kent TN23 3DP