

Update on activity at the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway - December 2023

General Status

November is the period when we take a breather after the long daily summer season but almost immediately the staff launch into preparations for running the Christmas 'Tinsel Trains'. Of note last month, the two 03 diesels had a full day out pulling a short train when they were chartered to use the line for a driver experience day. Also Ivatt 46441 has progressed well with its programme of testing (see later for more details).



Photo (above): 46441 leaves Haverthwaite on its second proving run on 6th November.
Photo courtesy of Will Smith.

Some repair work is taking place on Haverthwaite Station Building chimney stacks. Other than Barclay 'David', the steam locomotives have now been drained for winter, cleaned and stored. Rolling stock maintenance is also taking place whilst we have a few weeks to do so.

David was in steam on November 29th to check the train steam heating and to ensure nothing freezes up before the trains start again on the 2nd December.

Photo (right) shows David being warmed through.



With just the Tinsel Trains to come in December to round off our season, we can reflect on a successful 2023. When compared to our busiest ever year (2019) we have now recovered the UK based customer passenger levels but we remain significantly behind in group travel from the key overseas markets of the USA and Asia. Karen Maher, who (amongst several roles) is our Marketing Director, has been very busy over the last few weeks promoting the L&HR in those international markets. Firstly Karen took part in a Visit Britain organised trip to San Francisco to meet with USA travel agents.

Next the L&HR was one of a group of three Lake District tourist companies that travelled to Tokyo to meet with Japan's four major travel agents. See photo (Karen is second from the right). This was a particularly well received visit.

At the same time, other local Lake District attractions were on a special trade mission to India. India is the other big Asian market so whilst Karen covered the L&HR and other local attractions (such as Windermere Lake Cruises) in Japan, our local tourist business friends reciprocated by marketing the L&HR in India.

Finally Karen went directly on to Shanghai (with Visit Britain again) to meet a large number of travel buyers from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

There is optimism that Britain remains a priority destination and that our overseas effort will bear fruit, influencing travel itineraries particularly for the 2025 season.



Locomotive Status

Bagnall 'Victor'	- Operational
Barclay 1245 'Carron Iron Works No. 14'	- Operational
Barclay 'David'	- Operational
BR Class 20 20214	- Operational
BR Class 110 DMU	- Operational
BR Class 03 D2117	- Operational
BR Class 03 D2072	- Operational
LMS Class 11 7120	- Operational
Simplex Tram 'Rachel'	- Operational
BR Fairburn 4MT 42073	- Awaiting overhaul

Locomotives under overhaul:

Ivatt 2MT 46441

Following the successful steam test in October the loco started its commissioning phase. It has done several trips to Lakeside and back, firstly light engine and subsequently with a three coach train. It can be seen passing Linsty Green in the photo (next page - top). Photo courtesy of Shep Woolley.



Photo (right) shows the train arriving at Lakeside. This is a notable milestone as it is the first time that 46441 has been at Lakeside since it closed to passengers in 1965. You can see what may well have been its last visit on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/yb7JfPlaqaQ>

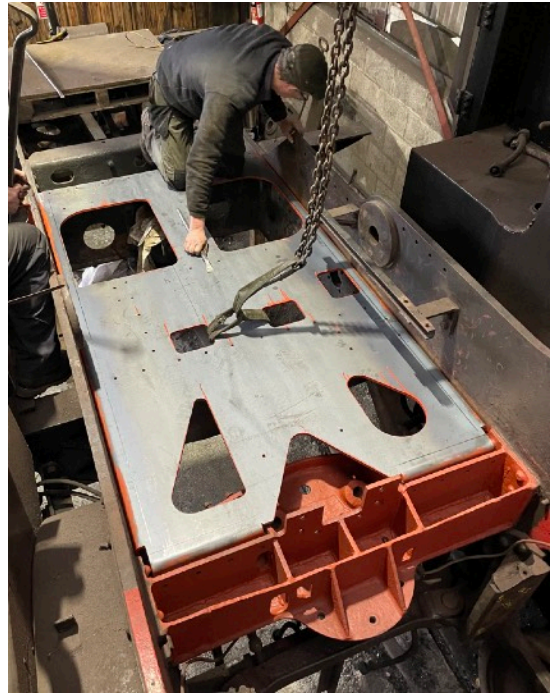
Photo (below) shows a very happy Betty and Chris Beet with their loco.



Testing showed up a few minor issues on the loco but no surprises. It has now been drained and moved inside for winter. We anticipate that it will be steamed next March and run with up to six coaches before being signed off to enter traffic for the main 2024 season. It still needs to be repainted (in its current livery) and ideally we hope to do this in the second quarter of 2024. Whilst laid up for the winter, other tasks are being finished off, such as the refitting of its speedometer and fitting of a steam chest pressure gauge.

BR Fairburn 4MT 42085

Focus is returning to the overhaul of 42085 (as our major locomotive project) now that the Ivatt is largely finished. The new rear horizontal stretcher has been trial fitted by John Fowler & Co. led by Alistair Colquhoun (see photo right).



Rivet holes on the stretcher and frames have subsequently been reamed out. The stretcher has had coats of primer (photo, above left, shows Dave Hutchinson applying the first coat - also see the photo below right).

Following repair fabrication work by Alistair and Pete Akrigg the 'Wednesday gang' consisting of David Hague, Steve Maher, Mark Brown, Graham Magee and Dave Hutchinson have completed the surface preparation and priming of the frames plus vertical stretchers below the footplate (photo below left).



Meanwhile the footplate steps have been repaired by Alistair. In addition Paul Timewell, Tony Mayo and Fred Jones have progressed well with surface preparation and painting of the water transfer boxes, steps and filter boxes.



Hunslet Austerity 'Repulse'

The previous repairs that were carried out on Repulse's boiler throat plate from its days in NCB ownership have been assessed. We have determined that the best way forward for the boiler is to replace the whole section of the throat plate. The John Fowler & Co. engineering team are now getting on with this job at Old Hall Farm.



The water tank, cab side sheets and cab roof have been delivered to Heritage Paints for a professional repaint. The above photo shows them leaving Haverthwaite on Alex Sharphouse's lorry

Bagnall 'Princess'

Princess (along with Victor) was a mainstay of our 2023 season. It is now getting some well earned maintenance through the close season and is seen here in the shed as the work was started by the John Fowler engineering team.



By the end of November all the outside motion had been removed including slide bars and crossheads. The pistons had been removed and inspected. New rings will be fitted. The crossheads will be refurbished to reduce side play and new slippers will be fitted. The slide bars will be ground. Both connecting rod big and little ends will be refurbished to optimum clearances.

Volunteering opportunities at the L&HR in 2024.

New and returning volunteers are always welcome. Locomotive, carriage or wagon overhauls and S&T repair/replacement continue to give us plenty opportunity for a variety of restoration tasks.

We welcome you to join our midweek gangs (or indeed any day of the week) to work on maintaining and improving our railway, including the rolling stock overhauls. We can certainly make a big difference to the visual standard and the pace of work that is done. Just get in touch and we can provide more detail. It is a friendly place and we all find it really rewarding! We shall endeavour to ensure that you are directed towards (and supported on) the appropriate tasks.

If your preference is to volunteer on some of the wider range of tasks that you will see taking place at our railway (or via this newsletter), including gardening, permanent way maintenance or locomotive crew/train operations, then again, please get in touch either by e-mail to info@lakesiderailway.co.uk or phone 015395 31594 Option 1

This and the previous monthly newsletters may be found at:

<https://www.lakesiderailway.co.uk/newsletters/>