

Q Class 541 Overhaul Update

By Steve Pilcher, Treasurer, Maunsell Locomotive Society

Since the last report in the November issue of *The Bluebell Times*, Leaky Finders have cut out wasted areas of the steel outer firebox wrapper on the sides and backhead that re-quire replacement. In due course new sections of steel plate will be welded back into place.

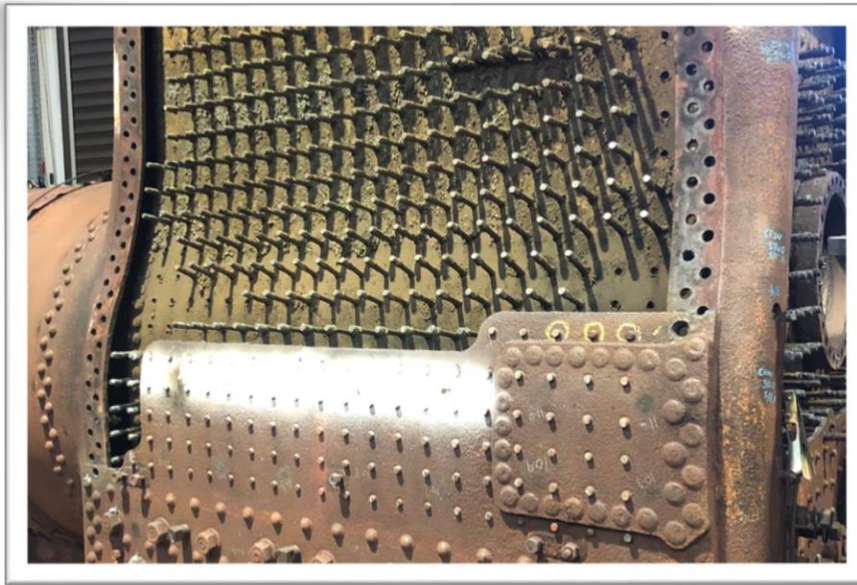
The chassis has been dismantled and the wheelsets are away at the South Devon Railway for tyre turning; the axles and wheelsets have been ultrasonically tested and have passed. The rear dragbox under the cab was found to be wasted and in need of replacement, so it has been removed from the frames, as can be seen in the attached photo.

Back at Sheffield Park, boiler fittings are being overhauled by Bluebell workshop staff along with

some preparatory work on the superheater header. As regards the tender, Melvyn Frohnsdorff has been busy freeing up the tender tank to enable it to be lifted to gain access to the frames in order to assess their condition. This has involved dismantling various lengths of pipework suspended underneath and extracting the vacuum and brake cylinders. The tender tank mounted sandboxes and associated pipework also had to be removed. The working party have commenced work on dismantling the brake rigging and cleaning/painting parts taken off the tender. In due course the tender tank will be lifted and the wheelsets sent away for tyre turning. There will be plenty of work for us cleaning between the frames and addressing any work required to dragboxes etc.



Above: One of the tender's brake cylinders, having been extracted from under the tender.
Photo: Melvyn Frohnsdorff



Left: 541's firebox, showing where areas of the steel outer wrapper have been cut away.

Photo: Leaky Finders

Right: The rear of the loco's frames, showing where the dragbox has been removed.

Photo: Leaky Finders



THE Q NEEDS YOU!

The [Maunsell Locomotive Society](#) has agreed to try and raise £40,000 towards the cost of overhauling the tender and providing a new tender tank. The Q is an ideal size and economical loco for Bluebell operations. It fits in well with the 'Southern' image, and it did actually operate in the vicinity.

Online payments to the appeal can be made by clicking the [DONATE](#) button on the Bluebell website and following the online payment instructions. Select Q Class 541 Overhaul in the drop-down box.

For those who prefer to use cheques, please send a cheque, made payable to the 'Bluebell Railway Trust' (and a [Gift Aid Form](#) – if appropriate) to the Bluebell Railway Trust, Sheffield Park Station, Uckfield TN22 3QL. Please add a note to say it is for the 541 Overhaul Appeal.

At the time of writing, there is over £26,000 in place towards the target of providing £40,000 towards this project. As ever, a very warm 'thank you' to all concerned who have generously contributed thus far. Please consider assisting reaching the target of £40,000 – and thus play a part in getting this very useful loco back in action at Bluebell.