

**Lea Bailey Light Railway**  
***The Goldmine Express***

21 December 2012

## **Newsletter No.2**



You have been sent this email because your address has been given to one of the supporters of this project. The idea of the Newsletter is to keep supporters of the Lea Bailey Light Railway informed by email on a frequency of as and when there is something important to tell you. The whole project is a vast learning curve for everyone including this direct email software. If you have information for future Newsletters please send it to me at [mandatrix@gmail.com](mailto:mandatrix@gmail.com) or if you have friends/relations that would like to be included in future mailing lists please let me know.

***Wishing all supporters of the project a Very Happy  
Christmas***

Michael Ayland.



**The Mine train on a delightful frosty December morning**

## **Lea Bailey Light Railway Oct to Dec 2012**

### **Lea Bailey**

Work has continued on tidying the site and improving the railway. Track by the metal shed has been cleared of accumulated leaf litter down to the ballast. Undergrowth has been cut back to clear the railway track and to reveal the stacks of rails and the assorted rolling stock. Overhanging branches and bushes have been removed. Vegetation around the cylindrical steel tank has been cleared and the tank access hatch removed for inspection; it is planned to convert the tank into a secure store for tools and track fittings. Four lightweight (!) 12 foot track panels have been moved from the mine to the container where they are awaiting cutting to provide track in the container and as a bridge to the end of the siding. The container will then become a shed for the Simplex loco.

### **Locos**

The cab has been removed from the Simplex so that it can be stored a couple of yards further in the mine, clear of the frost-damaged rock roof just inside the entrance. The cab is now stored in the container. When the Simplex is moved to the container, the cab can be refitted.

Hunslet 7446 has been started and run at Clearwell. The belts to power the on-board compressor have been replaced by new ones. When the Simplex is moved into the container, it is hoped to move this loco to Lea Bailey where it will be stored in the mine until the metal shed is usable.

The condition of Hunslet 9053 has been judged reasonable for restoration to working order, and a start has been made on removing parts for restoration. So far the air starter, compressor, radiator, 3 panels and various pipe fittings have been removed for safe (dry) storage.

### **Rolling stock**

With the discovery of some Pikrose manriders at Clearwell, the number of different types of manriders available has increased to five.

One of the manrider bodies from Lea Bailey has been shot-blasted and primed. It is now awaiting replacement of some sheet steel panels. Unfortunately the shot-blasting took longer than expected so the price quoted for the second body to be done has more than doubled.

### **Track materials**

Over 100 unused sleepers plus a wagon-load of rails have been collected in the tunnel and moved to just inside the entrance ready to be moved to Lea Bailey. A quantity of trail spikes and fishplates have already been moved to Lea Bailey with more spikes to follow.

Access to Lea Bailey is currently affected by the collapse and consequent closure of the road between Drybrook and Bailey Lane End. The collapse has resulted in some debris falling down towards the trackbed around the gate where ownership of the trackbed changes from Forestry Commission to a private owner.

Rob Needham

### **Meeting at Perrygrove**

Rob Needham, Rob Dickinson and myself had a very productive meeting with Michael Croft the owner of Perrygrove Railway together with David Nelson his Operations Manager and Jez Kirkwood. Michael went to great lengths to describe to us all of the legal requirements for running a railway to which the public is admitted. This was combined with a breakdown of the costs for many aspects of the site administration from public liability insurance, planning matters to simply just providing on-site toilets. All of us came away with a very realistic picture of how Perrygrove is run, administered and what costs are incurred. Whilst Lea Bailey is not proposed to be anything like the Perrygrove enterprise some of the costings would be very similar. A very productive meeting which clarified very many light railway issues.

Mike Ayland

## **The first locomotive at Lea Bailey**

### **A brief history of MR21282**

Date of despatch from Motor Rail works (Bedford) 4/9/1960

Class 20/28hp

Engine Dorman 2DWD, no 68193

Gauge 2'6" 0"

Weight 2½tons

Customer Diesel Loco Hirers Ltd (Motor Rail associated company)

No information on hire customers

Returned to Motor Rail, date n/k

Ex hire fleet 3½ton loco to Eastwoods (this is an earlier name for Kempston Hardwick Brickworks operator, Eastwoods Flettons Ltd became part of Rugby Portland Cement in 1962, then Redland (Flettons) Ltd until 1971, then London Brick Co Ltd), collected 28/4/1965

From London Brick Co, Kempston Hardwick, Beds, to Alan Keef, 2/1973.

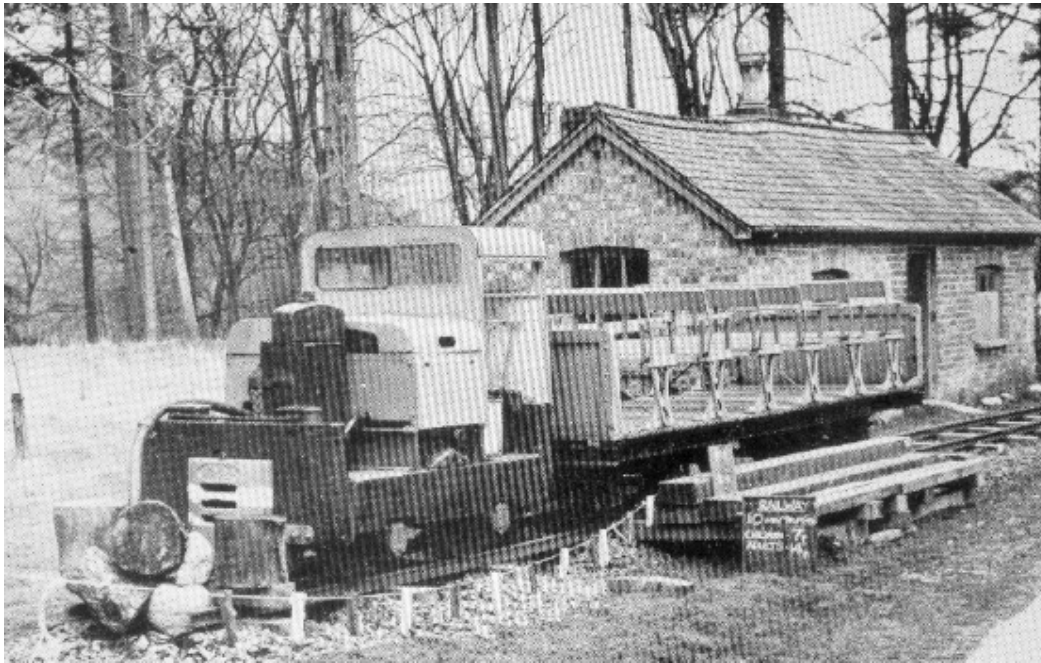
Hired to Elmet Industrial (Tractors) Ltd, South Milford, N.Yorks., 2/1974 (used on contract for Yorks Water Authority at Booth Ferry Bridge, Asselby).

Hired to Haunchwood Lewis, Cheslyn Hay Works, c6/1974.

Returned to Alan Keef (Cote, Ox) by 4/1975.

Hired to Butlin's Ayr, c5/1975 to 31/5/1975.

Sold to Meirion Mill Railway, Gwynedd, 6/1975.



**Photo:- MR21282 at Meirion Mill, on 11/4/1977**

In 1977 the loco looks to be a standard 20/28hp model. At sometime between 1977 and it's sale to Lea Bailey Mine in 1993, the loco has had a Deutz 3 cylinder air-cooled diesel engine fitted in place of the water-cooled Dorman 2 cylinder diesel fitted when built. The current wooden cab was apparently fitted after its sale to Lea Bailey Mine.

Railway closed, recently overhauled loco for sale £750, 7/1977

To Cumberland Moss Litter Industries Ltd, Anthorn, nr Kirkbride, Cumbria, 10/1977

Cumberland Moss Litter Industries Ltd taken over by Fisons Ltd, by 6/1980

From Fisons, Kirkbride, to Alan Keef, 26/7/1989

Hired to Taylor Woodrow, Woodhead Cable Tunnel, 23/7/1990

Returned to Alan Keef, Lea, 20/8/1991

Used on track lifting at Hewitts Farm, 9/1991

Hired to Taylor Woodrow, Isle of Grain, by 12/1991

On hire at Rochdale Canal, by 1/6/1992

Returned to Alan Keef, Lea, by 28/9/1992

Sold to Lea Bailey Mine, Newtown, Glos 9/1993

Moved from Lea Bailey to Clearwell Caves, c1996.

Moved from Clearwell back to Lea Bailey c1997

Moved from Lea Bailey back to Clearwell c2003

Moved from Clearwell to Lea Bailey 20/9/2012

Sources of information:-

A Tale of Many Railways, an autobiography and history of Alan Keef Ltd, pub by Lightmoor Press 2008.

The Motor Rail Works List, pub by Dennis Duck Publications, 2006.

Various Industrial Railway Society handbooks

Photograph and associated news item on Meirion Mill from the long-defunct magazine Narrow Gauge Times

Rob Needham November 2012