

STATEMENT: Lea Bailey gold mine outflow of water

Over the weekend of 9/10th January there was a sudden outflow of water from the mine at Lea Bailey.

At approximately 9pm on the Saturday local residents reported a loud noise heard from the direction of the mine, and on the Sunday morning debris and water were reported on the road below the mine.

On visiting the mine later that morning it was found that the mine doors had burst open, some rolling stock stored just inside the mine had floated out, and much of the mine site was covered in silt from the mine. Water was still flowing in abnormal quantities. Fortunately no one had been present at the mine when the doors had burst open.

By the following Wednesday the flow from the mine had returned to a more normal level.

Damage to one mine door has been repaired and the mine site made safe. No railway equipment was lost or damaged by the outflow.

Rob Needham



WHAT A TURNOUT!



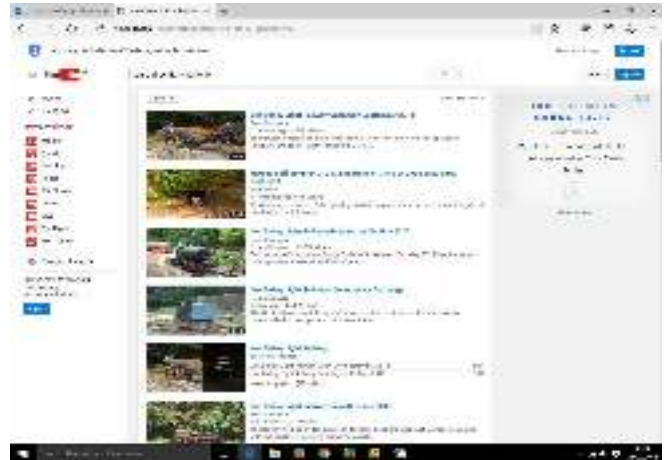
Rob plans to convert the points nearest the Drybrook end of Lea Bailey to three way.

“I think the best way forward is to convert the points to 3 way as at Rosevale and Churcham, and to lay track towards Lea Bailey alongside existing track, then turning left through 90 degrees to repositioned container,” said Rob. “Digging away four feet of heap under the pithead wheel would allow two containers with an 8ft gap between them for another track.”

The ex-Sharlston colliery wheel has been moved towards the car park using a tirfor, and the tip cleared.



THOUSANDS LOVE LEA BAILEY!



Social media is proving a great way of promoting the society, thanks to a series of great videos posted by Rob Dickinson on Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzGS4j1YQPs>

Over 15,700 people have viewed Issing Sid at the May open day, and the September open day attracted over 700 views in one week alone.

One viewer described Sid as “quite an amusing machine” whilst another said it was “amazing”.

Facebook has 754 likes and increasing.

www.facebook.com/leabaileylightrailway



Interestingly, Rob spotted a photo of the wheel at Sharlston Colliery in Steve Grudgings new book *The Last Years of Coal Mining in Yorkshire*. (above)

MAKE A DATE WITH THE LBLRS

Two versions of a Lea Bailey 2016 calendar have been produced by Rob Needham to raise money for society funds. The first, features a variety Eimco rocker shovels photographed by Rob on his explorations around the country from Cornwall to the Scottish Highlands. The second is a photographic record of the successes at the LBLR. The cost is £6.50 per calendar if collected or £7.50 including postage. Both are available for a bargain £11.50. PHOTO email 3/1/16 and 21/11/15



EX-ADMIRALTY TUNNEL WORKER PASSES ON

We are sad to report the passing of Edgar Tippins, of Oaklands, Lea Bailey, who at 91, was the last surviving ex-Admiralty worker from Hawthorns (Euroclydon) tunnel at Drybrook.

Rob Needham and Rob and Yuehong Dickinson visited Edgar in 2012 to speak to him about his work in the tunnel, an account of which can be found on the LBLRS website: <http://www.leabaileylightrailway.co.uk/euroclydon.htm>

Rob Needham returned several months later for another chat and records his conversation:

I made a further visit on 11th January 2013, which resulted in more recollections by Edgar. In the tunnel was dry, helped by asbestos lining on a wooden frame (of which nothing remains). Now the tunnel is very wet in winter due to water leaking from the brook which runs above the tunnel. Back then the brook ran in a wooden trough with a wooden shed over the brook above the Drybrook end of the tunnel. This shed provided the sole lavatory for the workers (at the other end of the tunnel they apparently used to nip out through the gate and use the surrounding woods!) On mention of the current closure of the road from Drybrook to Lea Bailey due to a landslip, Edgar mentioned that in either the 1950s or early 1960s a Berry Wiggins tar tanker had come off the road and rolled down the hillside towards the trackbed of the never-opened standard gauge Mitcheldean Road and Forest of Dean Junction Railway. At this point I remembered seeing shiny black splashes of tar on some rocks beside the trackbed when I had been walking along it from Lea Bailey towards the Euroclydon tunnel. Which convinced me that Edgar has a much better memory at age 88 than I do at 64!

For further information on the Admiralty facility in the tunnel see

IRS Handbook J, Industrial Locomotives of Central Southern England, pJ3 (1981)

Forest of Dean Branch, Vol. 1, pp29-30 (1992) and Vol. 2, pp376-7 (1997), by Ian Pope and Paul Karau, published by Wild Swan

END OF A FOREST MINING LEGEND



Robin Morgan photo: The Citizen

Forest mining legend Robin Morgan sadly passed away on 21st January aged 80 just one day after working a shift at Hopewell Colliery. Robin began working underground at 13 years old, and was registered as freeminer no. 4215 in July 1975.

Such was his notoriety that tributes have called him “one of a kind” and many have said that his mining knowledge was such that his advice could always be relied on. His passing has attracted much coverage in the national press, as Britain’s oldest miner.

Deputy Gaveller Dan Howell told the Guardian “Robin was always prepared to help other colliers with mining difficulties and knew the geology of the Dean like the back of his hand. If Robin spoke, you would be wise to listen – he was almost certainly right. He was held in the highest regard within the mining fraternity.” “He was from the generation of miners that were expected to keep going – defiant of all mortality.”

His working life saw him tunneling under railways in Gloucester and Cheltenham, mining for the National Coal Board, and owning his own freemines, notably Hopewell Colliery which was both a working mine and also a museum.

Although he sold the pit to Rich Daniels over a year ago, Robin still worked underground at Hopewell. He had also recently offered advice and help to the Harding brothers who were constructing a timber headgear at Haywood mine.

News in brief

The LBLRS annual open day will be held over the weekend of May 14th and 15th. Details have yet to be finalized, because of the impact of adverse winter weather on the site. (see statement).

The 2016 Forest Narrow Gauge open day will be held on September 17th, at Lea Bailey, Clearwell, Perrygrove and Alan Keef.

Some of our furthest afield visitors came in October – all the way from Germany! Marcus and Ute Mandelartz had previously been in May, but nobody was on site. They are involved with the Feldbahn Museum, Oekoven.

The Eimco mucker No. 28 at Geevor, is now fully restored thanks to help from Rob and the LBLRS who arranged for the manufacture, supply and delivery of new cables.

The LBLR has been invited to have a stand at the Sodbury Vale Model Railway Exhibition - 13 February 2016 at St Mary's Church and Church Hall, Church Road, Yate.
Open: 10.00am to 4.30pm.
Admission: Adults £5 and accompanied children FREE..
There will be 15 layouts plus trade stands and of course the LBLRS!

The Simplex has been out of action since the starter motor failed. It is awaiting repair but there is a three week backlog at the starter centre.

More news in brief

A skip body has been found by Brian Lawson at Alan Keef, to replace the rusty one at Lea Bailey. "This is in better condition than the one on our V tipper," said Rob Needham "So this will give us a chance to repair ours."

"As the new body came with two pedestals and we already have a set of wheels, axles and axleboxes, we should be able to make a second wagon frame to take our original skip body when it has been repaired."



The Eimco operating platform should be made by Tim Hodder for the May open day. The guardrail has now been fitted as shown in the left-hand photo.

Nick has been busy working on the controller on the WR8. More updates in the next newsletter.



OLD RAILS EXVACATED

Eight rails have been dug out of the culvert after being buried for 20 years, and cleaned for re-use at Lea Bailey. If you would like to get involved, members meet most weekends.



ON TOUR WITH THE LBLRS

A group of members spent four days in Cornwall in late September, visiting Geevor, Levant, Botallack, King Edward, Rosevale Mine, Moseley Museum and Morwhellam Quay. Photo shows Holman test mine Eimco.

UNDER PRESSURE

Such has been the interest in Issing Sid that Rob felt the Society should consider buying a rare compressed air loco, one of only a handful in the country, but unfortunately we were beaten to it by a private collector and it is now heading overseas.

The Universal Tramaire American low pressure compressed mine locomotive was built by the Eaton Metal Products Co/ Universal Dredge Co. Denver Colorado, USA. The 2ft gauge (convertable down to 18" gauge) locomotive is works no 379, and was built in 1958. It was

last used in 2010 and is designed to be charged up to 100 psi with a range of about 1000 yards hauling around 10 tons, dependant on conditions and gradient.



More exciting railway equipment can often be found online at the Industrial Narrow Gauge Railway website: http://www.ingr.co.uk/equip_sale.html



AND FINALLY: The September Open Day provided a unique photo opportunity when a train of all seven locos (including WR5L) ran. There were guest appearances from Skippy, and Lister 33650. A party of ten was also taken through Hawthorn tunnel.