



It works!

Last Sunday, 4th February, we connected the Eimco 24 to the compressor wagon, started the compressor, and, with Richard at the controls, the Eimco bucket was raised and lowered and the machine then ran backwards and forwards on the short length of track.

Very little work had been necessary to get the Eimco to this state - air hoses and some pipe fittings were replaced, the bucket motor had been removed, freed and replaced, and oil checked for contamination and then topped up.

And then it was run.



Editor

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Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion in the May 2018 Newsletter is the 30th April 2018.

Submissions are welcome that would be of interest to members of the LBLRS. These can be forwarded to me as text/disc by post or you can email or telephone. If you require anything returning please ask. Photographs, plans and drawings are acceptable as long as permission has been given by the copyright owner.

Photos by Rob Needham (stills from video)

Getting the big Eimco working

One Sunday a few weeks ago at Lea Bailey Nick and James, finding themselves at a bit of a loose end, decided to have a look at the 24 (previously we had decided that there were other higher priority tasks so we did not plan to look at it until other tasks had been completed). Starting with the direction control, they found that it was easily dismantled and cleaned up.



So the following weekend, Richard removed the old air hoses and checked the various metal pipe fittings so that he could get new hoses and fittings during the week.

Meanwhile Nick removed the bucket air motor, found it was seized, so he and Richard freed the motor and refitted it. The third weekend Nick checked the oil levels and topped up the oil in the motors and gearbox. Richard fitted new air hoses and fittings. Finally, Richard attacked the bucket drive chain with a lump hammer and can of WD-40 to loosen up the seized links.

While working on the Eimco, Nick and Richard soon came to the conclusion that the machine appeared to be little used. The motors and gears showed no signs of wear and the oil was clean and clear of any contamination. All of the fittings and bolts that they had undone had been easy to remove despite initially appearing heavily corroded. The contrast with the state of the

Eimco 12B at Clearwell was marked. Obviously storage in the open air was much better than storage in a high humidity underground location.



Photo:- Just visible is Nick loosening the bucket air motor retaining bolts.

Having fitted new hoses and topped up oil levels, the next stage was to see what happened when connected to a compressor. See page 1 for the results.

Open days at Lea Bailey in 2018

Saturday & Sunday May 19th/20th

Expected to be working :-

WR8 'Murphy'

Simplex 21282

Eimco 401 'Whistling Pig'

Eimco 12B and 24 rockershovels

Plus visiting loco

from Statfold 0-4-0CA 'Issing Sid'



Saturday & Sunday September 22nd /23rd

Expected to be working :-

WR8 'Murphy'

Simplex 21282

Eimco 401 'Whistling Pig'

Eimco 12B and 24 rockershovels

Note - Alan Keef steam-up will be on Sept 22nd

Another user of compressed air

On a recent visit to Cornwall, Richard bought an old Holman air winch from Peter Sheppard at Drillserve.



Hopefully one day we'll see this working at Lea Bailey.

Meanwhile, at Lea Bailey ...

It's been a quiet few months.

Apart from the arrival of the Eimco 24, the most visible



improvements at Lea Bailey have been the ongoing renovation of the 4 wheel manrider, which now looks smarter with a coat of black paint. Now just needs new seats.....



And clearance of dead wood from the top of the old mine waste tip continues. Following the heavy snow-fall in December, many branches and trees throughout the Forest were brought down by the sheer weight of snow. This included several at Lea Bailey.



The compressor makes a good leaf-blower to clear the tracks.



Lea Bailey in the news

Who saw this in a recent issue of Narrow Gauge World?

YouTube Watch

The online video site YouTube, which encourages users to upload their own clips, is a great source of narrow gauge items. If you've seen a clip that our readers would enjoy watching, why not send in the link?



■ Something a little different this time, showing the lengths preservationists sometimes need to go to! The short video shows the Forest of Dean-based Lea Bailey Light Railway recovering a tipper wagon from a seldom-used tramway in the depths of Clearwell Caves in 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuQ9pSOCHLc>

Which reminds me - video of the first run of the Eimco 24 at Lea Bailey is on YouTube at:-

<https://youtu.be/9QLG5GejKGA>



Eimco 24 first run at Lea Bailey

34 views



Rob Needham

Published on 5 Feb 2018

Note my obvious error - should be 2017

EDIT VIDEO

First attempt to power up this large rockershovel since its arrival at the Lea Bailey Light Railway in November 2016. Last known previous power up was in 1995. Thought to be last surviving Eimco 24 in the UK. Will be better when powered up using our larger compressor.

News from YouTube

Overall, the YT figures continue to astonish me, LBLR continues to punch above its weight and the clips attract a steady stream of comments, mainly from the USA. The total views are now approaching 500,000 and they come from all over the world as far as I can see.

The May 2015 Issin Sid has now passed 250,000 views (!) and recently the May 2017 clip with the duo has passed 80,000. Loco Exchange is over 50,000 and the Clearwell Caves over 45,000, the latter no doubt benefitting from a mention in the enthusiast press.

Rob Dickinson

Left or Right Hand Drive?



Photo:- RHD controls on Eimco 24

The Eimco 24 is currently set up for right hand drive. As such it appears to be unique in the UK. All other

surviving rockershovels are left hand drive.



Photo:- LHD Eimco 24 caught at Tyndrum (Scotland) by Ron Callender (NMRS)

Apparently all were made as LHD, and conversion to RHD was only undertaken when two parallel tracks in a mine passage required two rockershovels (one LHD, the other RHD) to work side-by-side. Our Eimco has everything required to convert it back to LHD if we so desire.



Photo:- Lea Bailey Eimco 24 with bolt holes showing where LHD controls used to be fitted
Or should we keep it unique as RHD?

Where did the Eimco 24 work?

While setting the 24 to work it became obvious that there was little sign of wear to the motors, gears or bucket drive chain (which still has traces of paint on it). Also the motor oil was clean and all fastenings have so far been easy to undo (unlike on the 12B). So it looks like the 24 has led an easy life. But where? We know nothing of its history after manufacture in c1950 until it appeared in Alan Keef's yard in 1995. There is evidence (the number 45299 in weld on the body side) that it used to be at an NCB colliery in Nottinghamshire. Did the NCB get it from new? If it was converted to RHD by the NCB, this implies that they had another (LHD) 24 to work with it. The

conversion to RHD has a 'home-made' look to it. Compare the neat appearance of the locating points for the operators platform on the Tyndrum machine with those for the RHD platform on the Lea Bailey machine.



Photo:- platform locating points on our 24

The most serious problem with the big Eimco is that we have not managed to find any documentation on the Model 24. So we have had to work on it 'blind'. If anyone finds any documentation on the Eimco 24, please contact me

Not forgotten

One rotten sleeper was replaced (just to fill in the odd hour)



and Nick continued to work on the WR8 electrics (but the WR5 has been held up while he worked



on the big Eimco).

An appeal from the chairman

2018 is upon us and we are almost halfway through February already. The dates have been decided for our Spring Open Weekend (19th & 20th May) and we have a project that needs to be completed before our visitors arrive. The track which runs between the set of points near the mine entrance and the locomotive container needs to be completely re-laid with new sleepers and ballast. We are also planning to insert an extra set of points which will lead down to the top of the mine tip where the Eimco 24 is currently parked.

On Sunday 11th February we will start the preparation works such as measuring and marking up of rails, along with moving the stock around and tidying up loose ends of other projects. On Sunday 18th February we could do with at least 4 or 5 willing and able volunteers to help with lifting out the old track and making the area ready for a visit by a hired digger to level the area ready for ballast.

Ben Coulson

Congratulations to Ben and Ruth on the birth of a daughter

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