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“Old Rube restoration part 2”

This document was written by Paul Naylor in early 2025 and is the second article in a restoration project. The articles were published more or less simultaneously in the Frimley and Ascot Locomotive Society newsletter.

Since I now have acquired this locomotive, I thought I would write a set of articles about its restoration, this is the first one other than the original ‘I have it’ article. It is a sight removed from the usual fiddling with items I can more or less lift and use small tools for and planning ahead is vital methinks.

The enormity of it has now sunk in, both to my soul and to my garage floor. Fortunately, it came on its own wheeled trolley (over 3 metres long), and the painful job of removing all of the pipework and a lot of other bits besides (that occupy a number of boxes) has already been done. Painful, because it usually is trying to dismantle something carefully and logically....and if the parts are piled up haphazardly, painful when it comes to working out a). have I got everything, b). what is recoverable and c). working out where in the 3-D jigsaw they all go. The latter set of ‘painfuls’ will be down to me though!

As I get older and find moving heavy things difficult, I have now a policy of putting all such items on wheels... like trolleys for locos and some machines that I don’t use frequently. Now that we no longer have a caravan, the motorised ‘caravan mover’ I made a while ago and that I couldn’t bear to part with will come into its own moving ‘Old Rube’s trolley and loco around!



I spent some time using my mind and computer researching boilers: definitely - and in more ways than one - the ‘elephant in the room’. That the present one is essentially scrap is not in question...finding a company that can make a new one to good standard and with full certification is harder. I *think* I have found one though with the requisite skills and experience and who seems to know what he is talking about and at a ‘reasonable’ price. How you define reasonable, is of course, a moot point, but since I got the engine free, this is an easier decision. I will, with pleasure, advertise who it is when the journey is successfully complete, but this will not be for 18 months after I order it (possibly early 2025). I think, God willing, 18 months of waiting for a boiler will be sufficient time to restore the rest though!



The boiler is integral with the smokebox (that is, the tube plate is recessed about 200mm inside the tube) and I am told this does not allow sufficient room for reliable welding, so it is going to have a separate smokebox. This is probably good news though as it means I can use the old smokebox as long as the company will cut off the old one in the right place. I don't then have to worry about drilling loads of holes in the right place in something 10mm thick and 100kg in weight. As a result, I have started to remove the various fittings still attached. Amazingly, the nice water gauge fittings and the 'robust' but still good condition valves came off easily after much WD40. That cannot be said for the bolts holding bits to the smokebox like the chimney and other brackets, some sheared and I will be cutting off others.

The only other progress for this article is the ancilliary item I got with the engine...a 1980's 'engine' crane (yes, I know it is obvious, but engine here means car engine). Whilst this seems to work OK if a little scabby in appearance, it weighs a lot and the wheels on it, being cast iron and small, do not allow easy movement. In addition, I want to store it on its side and so I have welded up more wheels (larger and with rubber tyres) to stick out sideways when being stored. I am pleased to say that this works fine and I can trundle this around easily now.



That had better be the close of this section...more removal of hard to get at rusty bolts to come, and then I can think about sending the boiler off to be used as a copy for a new one.