

THE *A1* STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST

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ALL SIX 6ft 8in DRIVING WHEELS FOR NEW STEAM LOCOMOTIVE COMPLETED

***Finished wheelsets delivered to Darlington Locomotive Works
and trial fitted to axleboxes***

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, the registered charity that is building the first new mainline steam locomotive in Britain for 40 years at a cost of over £1.7 million, today announced that its 6ft 8in driving wheelsets have been completed and delivered to Darlington Locomotive Works for fitting to *Tornado*.

The wheelsets, which comprise the six 6ft 8in driving wheels, two plain and one crank axle and the roller bearings have been a major undertaking for the Trust, costing over £89,000, involving nine suppliers and has taken over five years. The wheels were cast by William Cook plc on very advantageous terms to the Trust. This is the first time that a new set of wheels has been completed for a mainline steam locomotive since British Railways received its last new steam locomotive in 1960.

David Elliott, Head of Engineering, The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, commented:

“The completion of the driving wheelsets, and hence all of the wheelsets for *Tornado*, is a very significant step forward for the Trust and a major step forward for the heritage railway movement. In addition to keeping steam alive in the 21st Century by building new locomotives, we seek to apply the best of both modern and traditional engineering methods, processes and technology – seen at its best in *Tornado*'s wheel manufacture.”

The Trust has already made a successful trial fit of one of the leading coupled (crank) axle's axle boxes. This clears the way for permanent fitting of the axleboxes with the assistance of the Timken Service Engineer to ensure that the correct adjustment is made to the bearings to achieve the necessary running clearance.

More follows...

Work continues to prepare all the wheelsets for ultrasonic testing of the axles (this is undertaken at this stage to provide traces of the axles in the new state to as a reference for future routine ultrasonic inspections). Under a new Railtrack rule, we also have to have the surface of the middle portion of each axle subjected to magnetic particle crack detection. Again this should be a formality for new axles. Both of these testing procedures will be carried out by Serco Railtest of Derby.

This will pave the way for final fitting of the axle and cannon boxes. The bogie cannon boxes should arrive in Darlington in early July with the coupled wheel cannon boxes in early August.

Other news

Hardy Non Ferrous Metals Ltd of Middlesborough have cast all the coupling and connecting rod bushes from Leaded Gunmetal and Phosphor Bronze as appropriate to the application. The bushes are all at Darlington for machining prior to white metalling where appropriate.

Machining of the coupling and connecting rods, pistons and crossheads continues at Ufone Precision Engineers in the West Midlands. Likewise the chimney and chimney cowl.

At DLW the bogie frame is being assembled using fitted bolts made in the Locomotive Works. When this is finished, the manganese steel liners supplied by Firth Rixon Liner Products at Sheffield will be welded onto the frames. Similar liners will also be fitted to the driving axle hornblocks.

The new crane at Darlington Locomotive Works will be put to good use in lifting the smokebox and cab off to enable the frames to be lifted to fit the wheelsets.

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