



The Amberley Footplate Experience



A footplate course with a difference

Our one day footplate experience provides a wonderful opportunity to roll your sleeves up and spend a day firing and driving a Bagnall steam loco around the Museum's 36 acre site.

You are guaranteed five action-packed hours on the footplate. There are only three people on the footplate at any time (one instructor and two clients) so the course is 100% 'hands-on'. You will enjoy the use of the full length of track around the site and

pass other trains at certain stages, allowing practice of stopping and starting the loco.

Our expert instructor will provide the underlying theory and driver training notes giving the breakdown of how a steam injector works and how to test water gauge cocks.

The Amberley footplate experience will make a fantastic surprise for anyone who loves steam and we will do as much as we can to accommodate any special requirements to fit in with the occasion. We look forward to making your footplate course a day to remember.

Please note...

The Amberley footplate experience can be booked for anyone between 21 – 75 years of age inclusive. Unfortunately it is not suitable for disabled persons. We ask that health declaration and insurance forms are signed before any booking is confirmed. You will need to be physically fit enough to participate. The course involves standing for long periods of time and the operation of working equipment. However, the instructor will be on hand at all times to help out.

We recommend that overalls and suitable footwear should be worn (ideally steel toe capped boots or shoes). Amberley Museum cannot be held responsible for any clothing that is burnt, stained or damaged during the day.

Amberley Museum reserves the right to alter, curtail or cancel the booking without notice, but will only do so if absolutely necessary. In the event of a cancellation, a full refund will be offered.

Testimonial

"I arrived not knowing what to expect but John soon put us at ease starting with our introduction and safety talk. From oiling, to firing, to driving the steam engine, they made it informative and fun. Working with all of the railway staff was a pleasure.

"The highlight of the day was the competition between us to find out who was the smoothest operator in driving the goods train, picking up and dropping off wagons.

"My thanks go to John and Rod and all the people assisting to make the driving a steam train course an enjoyable day. I can thoroughly recommend this course." Lawrie Baker, previous client

A short history of the loco - BAGNALL 0-4-0ST 2067/1918: 'PETER'

Built in 1918, Peter was originally constructed to 3ft gauge. It was purchased by the Ministry of Munitions for War in December that year and delivered to the Canadian Forestry Corps at Longtown, Cumberland. After the Great War, Peter became redundant and was put up for auction by the Board of Trade in 1920. It was bought back in by Bagnall from a dealer and the boiler, tanks and other working parts transferred onto a 2ft gauge frame. It was finally put to work again with the Cliffe Hill Quarry Co in Leicestershire.

Peter worked at Cliffe Hill until 1949. Following several changes of ownership the loco finally came to the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, who in turn passed it into the care of the Museum in 1983, although ownership of the loco remained with the Narrow Gauge Railway Society (NGRS). By this time, some dismantling had taken place and several parts put into store.

The decision to undertake restoration to working order was taken early in 1989 and the job was entrusted to Doug Bentley with able assistance from Bill Johnston. Work on the overhaul of the frames, motion and cab area commenced almost immediately. All the parts have been extensively overhauled and, where necessary, new parts made in the Railway workshops at the Museum. New cabsides and footplate were all fabricated from plate steel and chequer plate from the Museum's stocks. The saddle tank was badly corroded and beyond repair. However, the Museum was able to obtain a new tank from the NGRS, and this was collected from Stafford in 1990.

Meanwhile, the boiler was painstakingly dismantled. No mechanical means was available to do this job and the tubes (50 in all) were knocked through from the firebox end and out through the front tube plate by hand. In addition, all the rivets holding the smoke box had to be ground flat and then drilled out. The condition of the boiler was then assessed and invitations to tender for the rebuilding work were



sent out in early 1991. The boiler repairs were financed by a generous private donation. Peter was officially returned to steam Sunday 10 October 1993, 44 years after it last turned a wheel under its own steam. The locomotive visited Amerton in May 1997 for the 100th anniversary of sister locomotive Isabel, in the care of the Staffordshire NGRS.

Peter passed into ownership of the Museum in 2001.

When the 10 year boiler certificate expired in 2003, Peter was withdrawn from service and placed on static display in Betchworth Hall pending assessment for repairs or replacement of the boiler. A public fund-raising appeal was started and from this and other sources, funds were allocated to the project and the work on the boiler entrusted to Alex Hume of Cross-in-Hand, East Sussex. The boiler returned to Amberley in February 2007 and work to return Peter to service was completed in June 2009. Since then the loco has seen regular use both on these footplate courses and special events.