

The Bunko Booth – Home of 4253 Locomotive - Construction



Some shareholders who have not had the opportunity to visit our excellent workshop facilities might be wondering what they look like. You will probably have read my History Reports regarding the various components we have constructed over the years and thought to yourself *“they must have a great workshop in which to achieve all this!”*

The photograph above shows what it looks like today, which is bigger than it was back in 2012. You will see the large high brown wood roof behind the tree. A hole was cut into the existing roof so that this high roof could be installed. This allowed us to erect a tall gantry from which to suspend a powered winch, as well as making it easier for workers to get into and out of the firebox which before then almost touched the old roof.

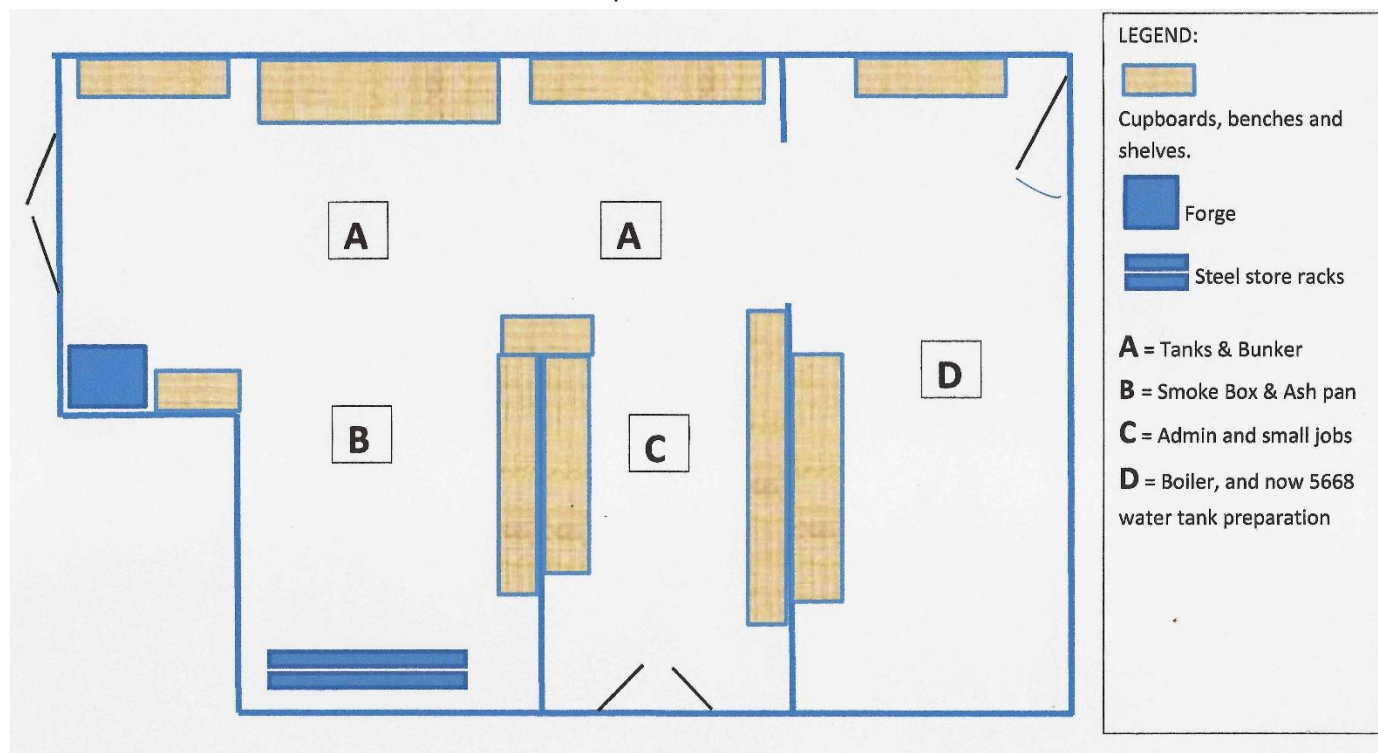


From this angle you can see the high roof more clearly.

This side of the building is the ‘boiler room’ and was built around the boiler after it was lowered onto the concrete base.

As the boiler was upside down, it looked more like a submarine with the firebox sticking up like a conning tower at one end.

Here is the (not to scale) layout of the booth as reference for when you look at the photographs. As you can see from the legend, the areas of the booth have letters. If you refer to the History Reports, you will get an idea of where the work was carried out for each of the main components.



By entering the bunko booth via the bottom double doors, you enter the admin and small jobs area (C). This is where Charlie tends to sit when planning the next stage of fundraising or scrutinizing drawings etc. This area contains storage cupboards, and the drawings cupboard, together with two workbenches.



From here you can turn right into the Boiler Room (D).



You can see from the left picture just how close to the roof the firebox was, and how little room there was around the boiler. The high roof extension seen in the middle photo and of the now empty boiler room allowed for the installation of the gantry for the winch and provide more headroom when working on top of the boiler.

This is now the work area for the drilling of rivet holes in many yards of metal angle in preparation for when we begin the construction of the water tanks for 5668. However, these are not the main focus, that continues to be 4253, but while the boiler is away we needed to continue to provide work for our volunteers.

Turning left after entering the main doors, you come to area A. This area was where first the coal bunker then the two water tanks were constructed. Again, there was little room to move around them. In fact, the larger bench shown in my layout drawing and the photo on the right did not exist during that time as there was no room for it.



The photo below on the left shows our new tool store. Before this was installed last year, all the tools were in 'pigeonholes', and you normally found the spanner you wanted in amongst the ones that fell to the floor the moment you touched them! Also, in this area is the rivet store (and occasional Robin's nest – central column, third slot down) and the forge, which is currently not in use and has bags of coke (coal that is) stacked on top. Once we can commence riveting again, this will be put to good use.



In between the tool store and the forge is area B which not only contains the steel rod store at the end but was also where the smoke box and ash pan were constructed before they were craned out through the roof.



On the left in area C we have Charlie's immaculately tidy work area with storage trays for various nuts and bolts, and on the right is a cupboard in the boiler room known as Dick's Drill Emporium where you can find all sizes of mostly blunt drill bits!



In the winter months we do keep warm thanks to our stoves, particularly Mr Intelligence, (don't ask me why it is called that!)



Now going back to the roof extension. When it was time for the boiler to go to HBSS in Liverpool, off came the roof and the end wall, and out came the boiler – simples! We just had to put it all back together again afterwards!



And finally – why the Bunko Booth? This name originated from when the Coal Bunker was being constructed. If you look back at the photo at the start of this document, you will see part of a cream coloured wall. It was here that the old bunker was broken down on the grass and then under cover, the new bunker constructed. As work continued, more and more space was needed and so the 'booth' was extended and extended again to what it is today.

Just so that you get a feel for how conditions have improved, here are some photos from 2012, 2013 and 2015.

The left-hand picture shows where the bunko Booth began, on a pad of concrete expertly laid by 'Nobby' who then continued laying various sized perfectly flat addons as the years went by. If you look back to page 2 and the first picture after the floor plan, you see the double door entrance. The right-hand picture below is the location of where that first photo was taken from in 2020. The tree is still there but is now hidden behind walls.



2012 – Bunker coal floor being prepared.



2012 – second pad down with cab roof being dismantled.

Standing with backs to the old Yank Tank bunker as a windbreak using the mobile forge for riveting - sans roof!
More concrete floor laid to accommodate the water tanks, but still no walls!



2013



2013

The boiler being worked on even while the roof is under construction above it!



2015