

CRANKING

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The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

FROM THE SUMP

With the 2025 rally season just about to commence I'm sure many of you will be busy making final last-minute adjustments and improvements to your engines which I am sure will perform faultlessly throughout the events ahead!!

There have been a few small events this season so far, why don't you put a few words and pictures together for me to keep the Newsletter interesting?

I'm really struggling for content this month.

Many of us recently attended a small informal crank up at Stoke St Mary nr Taunton, where we had 25 or so engines lined up and running, tractors, together with a few classic cars, it turned out to be a great day, raising £142 from a raffle, donated to the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance.

Hopefully the weather remains kind to us into May where many of us will be attending shows such as Abbey Hill, Breamore Steam working weekend, Steam on the Levels at Westonzoyland and Tatworth Rally in very early June. Please, send me a few pictures and a few words of how many engines and anything of interest for me to publish. *David*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

What a day....Saturday 5th April, The White Horse Country Park for the Crank up along with the West Wilts Society of Model Engineers and it was one lovely day, the sun shone and we had 30 engines on show, one coming all the way from Stoke on Trent.

I arrived at what I thought was early to put up stakes and ropes, only to be met with exhibitors who had already arrived and had set up! My thanks must go to Heidi Andrews for all her help on the day, driving in stakes and tying up ropes, your help was greatly appreciated.

I, for a change took along my 3hp Petter apple top and lighting plant; this had not seen the light of day for some years, but the Thursday before the event it was pulled out of the workshop, cleaned and after a little encouragement it burst into life and ran for quite a time on the drive. Help with unloading the Alamo from the trailer and the subsequent re-loading of one Petter was assisted by No1 daughter and all was well and ready for the Saturday.

But we must have loaded the gremlins unseen as the miserable Petter would not keep running and in the end it lost its spark....so it is now back in the workshop in disgrace.

Well it was now time to don my chef's hat, light up the BBQ and start cooking. I cooked up fifty sausages so that those poor underfed exhibitors did not go home hungry!

I hope you all enjoyed your day at Westbury, I will try to get another crank up at the end of the year if possible, so watch this space I will do my best but the West Wilts Society of Model Engineers have a very busy year with open days etc.

Now time waits for no man and our main event at Southwick is only weeks way, with West Bay stealing the Wessex Clubs dates, we need all the support from you the club members so

that we can put on a very good event, so as your Chairman I ask you to please give the committee of The Wessex Midsummer Vintage Show your support, as you all know this event help in no small way to keep the club finances in a healthy state and it also helps those far less fortunate than most of us, by raising funds for the Children's Hospice South West. We do not only want stationary engines but exhibitors from right across the vintage movement so please do come along and join us over the weekend of June 14th & 15th.

I should like to take this opportunity to include a letter that the club received after last year's event.

K. Sutherland. Just wanted to send thanks for the vintage fair event on the weekend. We came along with our 2 year old boy, thinking he'd love to see all the old tractors etc. I didn't expect to enjoy it anywhere near as much as I did though and of course the wee one had an excellent time! Huge thanks to the very kind man who let my boy and his dad climb up into his tractor for a few minutes, the photos I have from the show are absolutely priceless grin on my boys face! I reckon we will be back next year.

This is just one of the thank-you messages we had concerning last year's event so please help us make 2025 a great show and one to remember.

Now I am sat here nursing a very poorly foot, the doctor tells me I got Gout it don't arf 'urt and very little sleep over the last few nights, they do want to take some blood out of I next week! I hope they do leave a drop in I as I do want to carry on doing what I do like best, helping to run the Wessex Stationary Engine Club and the rally.

Restoring lumps of old iron I have just received a new petrol tank for the tulip top I am restoring, a top class bit of work by Frank Gelder, I can recommend his work and the service he gives.

Well I was at Westbury crank up I was approached by a very kind gentleman, "I have a load of old bits in my van would you be interested??"well it turned out to be a small lathe, a selection of brass offcuts, lathe tools and large pieces of ally, that went to the model club. The lathe went to a good friend of mine in the model club and I had the brass and the tooling etc, along with a Stuart Turner steam engine, all for free.

The best was yet to come, "I have an old pump, would you be interested??" I was the shown a photograph, a poor photo, but it looked like a large steam engine, "Yes I would be interested" I replied.....A few days later I had a call will you be at home in a couple of hours? - yes was my answer and a little later the van arrived at my home.

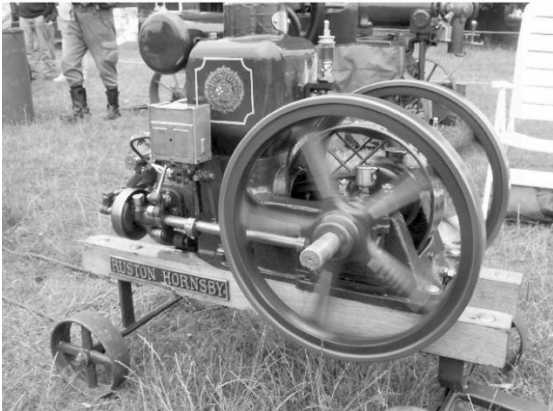
"Come and look at the pump" it was not a pump but a large steam engine, in lovely condition and dating from the early twenties mounted on an oak plinth, "It was in my late uncles workshop" I can only guess that it at some time it may have powered the workshop. This engine is now in my collection, the woodwork needs a good clean and re-varnishing, the engine itself is in perfect order only needing some cosmetic work and a boiler to power it - I am on the lookout and hope I may find a boiler.

It just goes to prove that there are still vintage goodies out there to be found I was very lucky to be given such a wonderful item.

Well that it for another month, Keep well and safe and have a great rallying and events year

Featured Engine - Ruston-Hornsby 'P' series engines - by Kim Siddorn

Established as Proctor and Burton, they were millwrights and engineers. Joseph Ruston joined the company in 1857 & Ruston, Procter & Co built successful steam locomotives and other heavy machinery in the middle years of the 19th Century. During the First World War they built Matilda tanks and a large number of Sopwith Camels. Richard Hornsby & Sons Ltd were early manufacturers of vaporising oil engines, being in production a full eight years before Rudolph Diesel got his engines into production. Richard Hornsby & Sons merged with Ruston Procter & Co just after the First World War. They made a wide range of both petrol/paraffin & Diesel engines of a quite staggering range of sizes. They rapidly gained a well-deserved reputation for high quality, sturdy engines of a conservative design that was designed to last and give exceptional service.

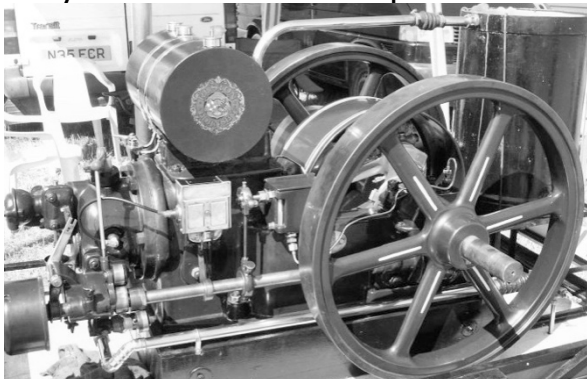


They introduced a 'P' (for paraffin) range of engines in various sizes in the early 1920's in a production run that lasted until early 1940. There were many variants, the AP denoting an Agricultural engine, IP industrial etc. Some were fitted with direct drive compressors and others specially fitted for electrical generation. AP's tended to be hopper cooled and were naturally mounted on a trolley or skids for use around the farm. Industrial units were generally tank cooled as they were expected

to lead a more sedentary life! Lubrication was generally by means of the familiar drip oiler, but a more expensive option was a mechanical lubricator that fed both cylinder and big end bearing directly. Driven from the side shaft by an eccentric, it was a factory fitting and included a special pad cast into the main bed casting that is not to be seen on drip oiled versions.

Ignition was initially by means of low-tension magneto, but this was changed for high tension equipment by 1930 and a number of magnetos were used, the Wico EK being very common. They were triggered by a leaf spring struck by an eccentric mounted on the side shaft, an extension of which drove the governor assembly.

Early carburetion difficulties led to the design change that was also in place by 1930. After a century of excellent service, many of this company's products are still being found where they were installed in a quite different age. Built in an age where duty and service were not only admired but expected in life, these engines were truly built to last. Where the weather and the hand of man has been excluded, it is still possible to run completely unrestored as found examples. Mr Ruston and Mr Hornsby would have every reason to be proud



of their long-lived engines that even in retirement command a premium price.

A tank cooled version at the Lister-Tynedale rally in 2004

VINTAGE DISPLAY AT HIGH LITTLETON VILLAGE FETE

We have been invited to display at High Littleton village fete on the 23rd August (Bank Holiday Saturday) 12pm to 5pm. Would anyone interested in attending please contact me as soon as possible, as I need to give an answer to the organisers. *Ted Edwards* 07751 918283

FOR SALE

1913 Gilson 1¾ hp

Lister D 1½ hp

1934 Petter M 4 hp with generator

Petter M 2 hp with Lister Water pump

1922 International M 3 hp Low Tension

Root & Vandervort 2 hp

Ruston & Hornsby PB 1½ hp – 2¼ hp

1914 Amanco Hired Man with Amanco pump

No 2 Climax pump

Majestic Canadian import via Avonmouth corn mill, quite rare

Bentall chaff cutter

if interested please ring for details 01761 471461 (Timsbury, Bath area)

Phil Marshall

FOR SALE - Two wheel, braked, galvanised caravan chassis with jockey wheel and four corner jacks. Overall width including wheels 7' (2.1m), Overall length 18' (5.5m).

Ideal for engine mounting or trailer conversion. £150 ono Please contact 01934 852670

Gerald Atherton

FOR SALE:- Belt driven barley roller. Contact secretary@wessexsec.org or 07751 918283

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the committee or its members. Although the greatest care is taken in compiling this newsletter, the editor takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions

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