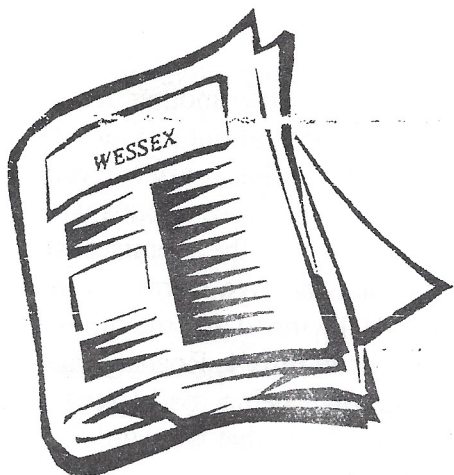


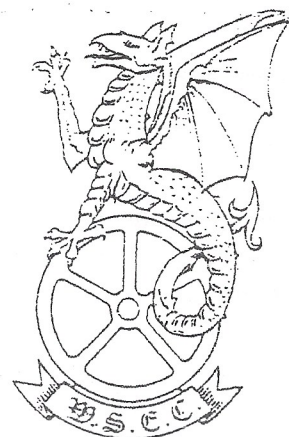


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

MAY 2005

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NEWSLETTER



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******* EDITORIAL *******

As I am writing this editorial it is only twelve weeks to our annual rally at Clutton. To date Eric Gay who is the engine steward has only received 35 engine exhibitor entries, and this includes some members from other clubs. This is unacceptable support from a club with three hundred and fifty members. If any members intend to exhibit at the rally but have not sent in their entry yet, I advise you to do so very soon, as it does not warrant putting on a rally for such small numbers. At a recent committee meeting I advised the rest of the committee that we would monitor the response we get from the members this year and if entry numbers are not high enough we shall not hold rallies in the future. We seem to get more support from crank-ups than we do for a rally, but we never get any feed back as to what you the members want, if you prefer crank-ups instead then for goodness sake tell us, once we pull the plug on rallies they will be gone forever.

******* CHAIRMANS REPORT *******

The April meeting at the Old Down Inn was well attended as usual to be entertained by guest speaker Alan Rogers giving a presentation and talk on Ships in Bottles. This was very interesting as Alan certainly knew his subject, and he was also a very good speaker. He enlisted the help of young Oliver to "pull up the masts" as he demonstrated how he inserted the ship into the bottle, Oliver really loved this. I would like to take this opportunity to remind members to be really vigilant at events where they exhibit their engines to observe the "Safety Code of Practise". Insurance companies are now requesting clubs to do "Risk Assessments" of our activities as health and safety requirements are getting more stringent. The committee will soon be publishing an up to date Code of Practise which every member will receive and hopefully observe. It would only take one major incident or accident to jeopardize our hobby.

THE MARKET PLACE

FOR SALE Petter "M" Generator Set. 3hp. On purpose built trailer. Good running order. Exhibited at Clutton and Headingly for the last 2 years. £900 ovno. Ring Mike on 01225 - 448929 for further details. Bath Area.

FOR SALE 1933 Winget Concrete Mixer with Lister "D" engine, number 111010. Shaft drive ML magneto. Not run for about 20 years. £75, buyer collects. For further details ring Tom Randall on 01761 418926. Midsomer Norton area.

FOR SALE Large '3-ram type' pump by A&G Cooper of Wisbech. Incorporates a 28.5" diameter pulley wheel with delightful curved spokes and exposed gearing. Would make interesting (perhaps unique) trailer mounted exhibit when driven by, say a 5hp engine. For restoration, but not for the faint hearted. Much heavy metal for only £25. Also for sale, one steel drum approx 23" diameter x 34" high, in as new condition. Ideal for conversion to a cooling tank. Price £15. Ring Roger on 01380-724235. Devizes Area.

Morgan Motor Company.

Thanks to a friend of mine George Bryne for organising it Myself, Brian and Chris Murray another friend recently had the most enjoyable day out at the Morgan Motor Company factory, Brian and I set out at 8-30 am to meet our chauffer Chris at his home in Frome, leaving there at 9am we arrived at Malvern after a very pleasant journey at our scheduled time of 11am. Here we had to rendezvous with three of Georges friends who came up from Minehead. They had already reported at reception, so armed with our maps of the premises we started our tour. What was surprising was there was no company guide to show us around, We started in the Dispatch Department where alongside two vintage three wheelers one a 1929 J.A.P- V Twinned and the other a 4 CYL Ford were finished examples of three of the four models produced, these being the Plus/4, Roadster and Aero 8. we only saw one of the fourth model the Aero Max and that was out in the town being road tested. I managed to get a photo of it as it returned later. What really made the tour so interesting was that we were able to talk to all the workers about what they were doing, they told us they were only too glad to have a chat, it helped the day more interesting for them also. A lot of the tasks were being done in the traditional way by hand, one chap was skinning ash door frames, another was putting the wires in the edges of wings, they were so skilled at it it was a real pleasure to watch. In one shop there were galvanised steel chassis fitted with ash frames on trestles having the first of various components fitted, my brother Brian asked the worker "do you get it off the trestle with a forklift?" no was the reply " with a ruddy hernia, and ive got the scars to prove it" and he promptly lifted his shirt to show them. The engines fitted to the cars are a Ford four cyl 16 valves in the Plus/4, a Ford V Six in the Roadster and a BMW V Eight in the Aero 8 and Max. Which is reputed to outstrip a Ferrari. Despite management trying to speed up production by bringing in time and motion studies nothing seems to hurry the workforce, everyone seems to work at one pace, and that is SLOW. We just did not see anyone hurry, but I suppose that when you make something like this virtually by hand, if you try and hurry, the quality will suffer as a result. And what is very obvious as we made our way around that the end product is made to a very high quality. There was one Plus/4 outside being revved quite hard by a man who remarked to his colleague that the engine would have to come out because it was vibrating too much, I offered to take it off his hands to save him the bother, but unfortunately no chance. Although we were not allowed in the Wood mill it appears that all the ash frames are made on site, curves being laminated, door frames set up in jigs, there are very few power tools used, I even saw a spokeshave in use at one stage. All the body panels are aluminium and these are fitted to the frames in the same old way of pinning with nails. We watched two workers trimming the rear wheel arches with leather they made it look so easy; one modern tool they used was the staple gun. When the cars are ready for the painting they have to be pushed from the body shop across the yard to the paint shop, which must make things difficult when it is pouring with rain!!

Another thing that stood out was the cleanliness of the factory with all the floors painted and no sign of any dust or dirt, all the workers were fitted out in company work clothes of sweatshirts and trousers or white overalls, they have a very good small canteen where even us visitors are welcome to go and have food or drink during the lunch hour 12/30 - 1/30 when we are not allowed to stay in the factory. But lunch over we continued with our tour which took us to a relatively new building which is where the Aero 8 is assembled, this seems to be a design that is not particularly liked by the public or the staff who make them, one went as far as to say he thought it would be the downfall of the firm. But as long as they continue selling them at £60000 each it will pay his wages for a while yet, Production is some 15 to 17 cars per week of all models, a lot of these are left hand drive models for export. There is a wide range of colour schemes but my favourite is the Black with Red piping, it looks smashing. Whilst there I managed to take some 40 photographs from all of the departments and so have a lasting record of one of the most enjoyable days out I have had for a very long time. And I would heartily recommend it to anyone, my literary efforts here do not do justice to all that we saw and heard that day. It is so easy to get a tour, just give them a ring and go and see for yourselves.

Tel. 01684-573104 Web www.morgan-motor.co.uk (you can even order your Morgan online)

Colin Baker.

***** NEW MEMBERS *****

The following new members have joined the WSEC in the past month, Mr & Mrs S Wilkinson from Frome, Mr & Mrs Ted Durbin from Shepton Mallet, Mr Lloyd Durbin from Shepton Mallet. We hope your membership will be a long and happy one.

MEDIAEVAL MATHS

I have just about got used to Decimal Currency, but I don't want to get used to metrication. It is easy to imagine most primary school teachers breathing a sigh of relief, no more pounds, shillings, and pence, ounces, pounds and hundredweights, inches, feet and yards, not to mention rods, poles and perches, and the agony of chains, furlongs and acres. However I am sure a few of us think that this metric rubbish puts an unnecessary strain on our mental arithmetic abilities, as we convert back to imperial, and that we have lost another part of our history. Mediaeval yeoman who couldn't read or write needed to measure things and work out distances and areas on their farms. They needed parts of their bodies as units of measurement, the length of the top of their thumb equalled one inch (from the old English inca – one twelfth). The width of a hand equalled four inches and is still used today to measure the height of horses. The length of a foot was twelve inches, and three feet equalled one yard, from gird – a walking stick. The English rod land measurement is as old as farming itself and is the distance required to turn a team of oxen pulling a plough. When the ploughman was handling the plough behind the oxen, another worker, the bovaris, walked in front encouraging the oxen to pull the plough, he also carried a pole, which was one rod in length. When they reached the end of the furrow it was his duty to find the exact spot where the next furrow should be. And perch, well that's from the Norman French perche, simply meaning a pole. So rod, pole and perch were the same measurement. Square rods were familiar to smaller plot holders. A rod is a quarter of a chain and amounts to five and half yards, so that a square rod equals $30\frac{1}{4}$ square yards. This was an amount of land that could be dug in one day with a mediaeval wooden spade, though today an energetic man could probably manage more than twice that amount using a modern steel spade, (but he would be more likely to use a rotavator.) A chain was equivalent to four rods and was 22 yards long. In mediaeval times a strip of ploughing was 10 chains long and one chain wide, this amounted to 4840 square yards or one acre. An acre was the amount of land that a ploughman and his team of oxen were expected to plough in one day. When the king of France was called upon to devise a standard measurement for fine cloth, he decreed that the distance from the tip of his nose to the end of his outstretched hand should be called a metre. He had an iron bar cut exactly matching his royal standard, he also decided that in future instead of counting in dozens like ignorant peasants, his royal system of counting would be based on tens. Now that the French system is universal it's founders iron bar has been changed for a platinum bar, equivalent to one-forty- millionth of the earths circumference in length and is kept in a carefully temperature controlled environment. This is very efficient I am sure, but I still prefer my imperial weights and measures.

MARGARET SIMMONS

A LETTER TO THE CLUB FROM MARY BUTLER

I wish to thank you all for the lovely surprise of honouring me with life membership of the club. It made me feel very proud and has made all the work over the last sixteen and a half years so worthwhile. I would like to continue sending out the newsletter, this has increased from one carrier bag full to two, to carry to the village post office, I hope it never closes. Kind regards, Mary.

THE ANSWERS TO "OTHER OLD STUFF"

The breathalyser was introduced in 1971.
The Minister of Transport then was Barbara Castle.
The 70mph speed limit was introduced in 1974.
The Minister of Transport then was Fred Mulley.
Concorde made its first scheduled flight in 1969.
VAT was introduced in 1980.
The basic rate then was 6%.
The £ was devalued in 1967 by 10%.
The Chancellor then was Callaghan.
The voting age was lowered to 18 in 1969.
This Quiz was compiled by Margaret Simmons for your enjoyment only.
The questions were in last months newsletter.

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

MONDAY JUNE 27th. Club night at the Old Down Inn. Members Evening. Would members bring a maximum of 10 photos of interest that we can show on the screen. Should be a quite interesting evening. The usual Raffle will be held for club funds, prizes would be appreciated.

SATURDAY JULY 2nd. ENGINES WANTED at Holcombe Playing Field for the Village Fete. Also any displays etc. Just turn up on the day.

MONDAY JULY 18th. WSEC visit to South Somerset Club for a quiz challenge match. The venue, Long Sutton Village Hall, start at 8pm. The last time our club visited the South Somerset Club we were really well entertained. If you wish to participate please let me or any committee member know. We shall be having a return match with them in November at the Old Down Inn.

MONDAY AUGUST 29th. (BANK HOLIDAY) ENGINES WANTED. Village Fete at Camerton Village Hall and playing field. Engines and displays welcome, lets put on a good show for them as they are letting us put on a crank up at this venue free of charge.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 11th. ENGINES WANTED WSEC CRANK UP and CAR BOOT SALE at Camerton Village Hall. This is in aid of "The Children's Hospice South West," who have launched the "Babes Big Appeal" in order to raise money to build and equip a hospice for over 800 children in the South West Region with life threatening or life limiting conditions. Please give us your support on the day! This Crank-up replaces the annual fund raising event that was held at Brian Fears Garage Oakhill, which is no longer available to us due to change of ownership. A grand raffle will be held, and prizes donated for this very good cause would be most appreciated. For further details ring Tony or Diana Davis on 01373 464982.

SATURDAY JUNE 11th. ENGINES WANTED. Collet Day at Collet Park Shepton Mallet. This is a fun day at the park with the engines situated around the picturesque park lake. The park is full of stalls and various activities all day. So just turn up with your engine and participate. For further details ring Ted Durbin on 01749 343877.

SATURDAY 16th JULY ENGINES WANTED. Also any static displays, tractors, vintage vehicles of any description at Croscombe Fun Day, Croscombe Village Hall and Playing Field. Croscombe is situated halfway between Shepton Mallet and Wells. 9am onwards. Just turn up on the day. For further details contact 01749 342671.

SAYINGS, PREDICTIONS AND OLD WIVES TALES.

A lot of the sayings our parents used have been proved to be sensible, some are now very dated and some even politically incorrect. Recent changeable weather, with very variable temperatures reminded me of the saying "don't cast a clout until May is out." I have wondered about this, does this mean the month or the May flower, I think it means the month, but with the effects of global warming it could change. "When the Oak is before the Ash, then you will only get a splash, when the Ash is before the Oak, then you may expect a soak." I do not know if it is a good prediction of a summers weather as I do not have an Ash and Oak tree in my garden, but I do know as a gardener that we never get the right amount of rain at the right time. Rain before seven – fine before eleven – does work sometimes. These sayings are an attempt to predict the weather, but some seem to be making excuses for obstinate behaviour, "you can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink" is a very old saying along with "you cannot teach an old dog new tricks." Good housekeeping is encouraged by – "A stitch in time saves nine" and "Make a sauce that isn't lumpy – have a husband who isn't grumpy!" I think I would have to question this one, I suspect it was invented by my school cookery teacher! The sensible one – "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" has been replaced by "eat five portions of fruit and vegetables each day." But the one that could see you in court – "spare the rod and spoil the child" – very politically incorrect now. I took my 4 year old grandchild into a shop which had a tempting carousel display stand with lots of cards on it. She started to rearrange them, when I told her to stop, she looked at me and her hands strayed back to the cards, "if you touch them again I'll smack your hands" I said, then realised that could make me a criminal! Luckily the tone of voice did the trick, so I still have my liberty. A lot of once popular sayings can be traced back to early literature, for instance "A rolling stone gathers no moss" appeared several centuries ago. I think we might have a different phrase now for the conduct of one well known Rolling stone! A bad workman blames his tools was recorded in the 13th century, and I think of this when someone is blaming their computer system for their inefficiency. I am sure you can think of many more sayings that have been passed down for generations, but are being replaced by the young with media and text slogans and abbreviations.

MARGARET SIMMONS