

# WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



## NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1989.

EDITOR

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### THE SPANNER.

On Easter Monday afternoon it was brought home to me just how lucky I have been in my working conditions and home circumstances. I learnt this lesson by a visit to the Radstock, Midsomer Norton and District Museum at Haydon, Radstock. This is a local museum run by a band of local volunteers raising their own cash assisted by some local business sponsorship and is open every Saturday from 10.00am to 4.00pm. It is by no means a stuffy place, but shows local life as it was. As it is sited in the heart of the Somerset coalfields these figure prominently in the exhibits and it was a reconstruction of a coal seam and a miners kitchen which made me realise how fortunate I have been. I can thoroughly recommend a visit and guarantee an interesting afternoon. Cost 75p with Senior Citizens etc. at 25p. Stationary engines are catered for by an exhibit of a 1914 Lister by Tom Randall which as you might expect has been well researched and interestingly presented.

This brings me to the real point. I think we as a preservation Club should give more support to local enterprises. Within a few miles radius we have this museum, the Glastonbury Rural Life Museum and probably the best known the Bristol Industrial Museum yet at no time to my knowledge have we offered to take engines to these places for a working display. The Bristol Museum invited us to just that a few years ago but the offer was not taken up. Perhaps we as a Club could provide and maintain an engine at one or other of these museums as the Cotswold Oil Engine people do at the Gloucester Maritime Museum. I feel certain that sufficient members would support such a venture as an alternative to the rally field. Can I suggest that this idea be given consideration by our Committee.

I have a further as yet unsolved problem. I have been investigating the possibility of converting my rather ancient car to unleaded petrol without damaging the exhaust valves, so far information has been rather scant. However this problem prompted me to think about our stationary engines. Surely they too should run on unleaded fuel, as when most of them were manufactured that was all that was available. Here is another initiative which the Club could take... that is encourage members to use only unleaded petrol, even make it a condition for rally entry. To show our commitment to environmental improvement we could provide WSEC stickers for fixing to petrol tanks stating that the engine uses unleaded fuel. Maybe it is only a small contribution to the improvement in the life expectancy of us and our children but unless someone takes the lead nothing will happen. Let the WSEC be in the forefront. I do realise how busy our Committee always is but could I put this forward as another suggestion for consideration please.

Finally could I explain that as the cost of producing the Newsletter is now a major item in the WSEC budget I must try to keep it within four sides, consequently some contributions must be held over. However I am always pleased to receive views and comments no matter how adverse they may be. So far they have been absolutely... ZERO....

Cheers for now,

Claude Lowther.

Third Party Liability Insurance.

On some Insurance Forms issued by the WSEC the policy number has been incorrectly shown. Would members with forms numbered in the range 1 to 101 please amend the policy number to read 60L ST6 1106155.

Jackie Lambert Treasurer.

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CLUB DIARY.

Sun 21st May. Steam train journey on the West Somerset Railway from Minehead to Bishops Lydeard. Followed by a conducted tour of the CEGB Power Station at Hinkley Point. Booking forms have been distributed but Committee members have details. Picnic lunch recommended.

Mon 22nd May. Talk and demonstration by Loctite Ltd. on their range of adhesives and other products. All members to get stuck into this one.

Sat. & Sun 17/18th June. WSEC ANNUAL STATIONARY RALLY at CHEDDAR. In addition to engines steamers have been invited together with other vintage vehicles. Stalls are being organised as well as other displays. An innovation for this year is the WSEC Lister 'D' Economy Run on the Saturday afternoon, details with your entry form. Here is the opportunity for the amateur to beat the professional and win a bob or two at the same time.

Sat 24th June. The WSEC supported Wedmore Football Club Funday, side shows, carboot sale, games, Pig roast and dance in the evening. Engines cordially invited. Further details from Phil Harris Tel Wedmore 712048.

Mon 26th June. Crank Up and Engine Clinic at the Old Down Inn, Emborough. Besides bringing your favourite engine, bring along that perisher that doesn't always run as you would like and get a second opinion. Tools and test gear would be advantageous.

Sun 6th August. The WSEC sponsored TENCREST RALLY on the A37 near Gurney Slade. Engines, cars, motor bikes and Car Boot Sale etc. Proceeds to be divided between CLIC and WSEC. Details from Bill Coombes, Oakhill 840868, engines etc. Phil Harris, Wedmore 712048 for Car Boot and Brian Verrall, Cheddar 743460 for draw and prizes.

Fri/Sun 6/8th October. Weekend trip to York with two nights B & B in a central York Hotel. Cost £60 by installments if desired. Details from Brian Verrall Cheddar 743460.

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CLUB ACTIVITIES.

27th February. The Annual General Meeting.

The 12th AGM of the WSEC was held on 27th Feb. at the Old Down Inn: the President and Committee members at one end and club members sat at the other.. I wonder why people do not like sitting at the front.

The retiring President, Tom Randall, gave us much food for thought in his parting speech. We, as a specialist club have to cope with the varying interests of our growing membership. Some of us are happy just to own a couple of engines, which enable us to participate in rallies and expand our social circle; others show detailed fascination for variation in engine design and are not content until they have absorbed every bit of available knowledge. Most of the rest of us are spread out in between. Where does this leave the specialist club?... trying to make up it's mind what to do... Tom's answer was to compromise. However whatever happens, remember the common interest in engines that was strong enough to bring us together in the first place is strong enough to keep us together in the future.

Tom then handed over the Presidential reins to Herbie Gain, a founder member, who has continuously served on the committee for twelve years, plus selling one or two raffle tickets... He has been a stationary engine enthusiast for so long his first engine cost him five shillings. Welcome Herbie.

Brian Munt, the Chairman, thanked Tom, welcomed Herbie and introduced Eric Gay as our new raffle organiser, all in one breath. Brian gave a humorous resume of the years activities, club meetings, coach outings to London and Morwellham Quay where the fog was so thick over Dartmoor they could hardly see the road let alone the view. He reminded us of the atrocious rally weather yet the wonderful Cheddar weekend, perhaps there was a moral there some where. On the Rally, Brian was able to give the good news that negotiations are in hand for another field for camping and caravans this year. He then briefly covered the opinion survey, thanked those who took part and commented the Committee would be implementing some of the suggestions.



The Treasurer, Jackie Lambert, gave us her report and explained how she tallied up those figures. Well done Jackie.

The Chairman then made presentations to the retiring President, Newsletter Editor, printer and typist with the Club's grateful thanks. The Club's appreciation was also shown to our hosts, the Secretary and Treasurer with further presentations. Brian concluded by welcoming the new Newsletter team of Editor Claude Lowther, Typist Mary Butler and distributors Margaret and Bill Appleby.

The Club Officers were then elected as follows:- Chairman Brian Munt, Vice Chairman Brian Verrall, Secretary Shirley Gale, Treasurer Jackie Lambert. The Committee election followed with Jeremy Adams, Gerald Atherton, Hazel Getson, Eric Gay, Bob Hallam, Phil Harris and Derek Watts taking on a further term. It was sad to learn that Robin Lambert and Herbie Gane were retiring from the Committee but pleasing to have Brian Reakes and Roy Pointing as replacements.

In A.O.B. Eric Brain raised the question of VAT rating and the possibility of the WSEC becoming a limited company. The Chairman undertook to examine the suggestion.

At 9.20pm our New President, Herbie Gane, closed the AGM and Don Rogers drew the raffle. Jeremy Adams took home a casserole dish, Dennis Hodges a box of screws and Bob Hallam a bottle of wine. I think I've covered most things except to say, thank goodness that's over for another year.

Shirley Gale. Secretary.

#### Sunday 5 th. March. Visit to Bath Industrial Heritage Museum.

We arrived in Bath to be welcomed by a bunch of Wessex members waiting in a group outside the works. After parking the Motorhome we made our way to the entrance only to bump into our new President, Herbie Gane and his family. Herbie was sporting a nice new cap... that's what promotion does for you. Inside there were about sixty members who were split into two groups for the conducted tour. Good to see so many wives and children attending.

Our group's guide was a very interesting chap who took us firstly to the engineering shop where there were lathes, turning machines and drills etc. all working off belts and pulleys and powered by an electric motor. Originally they were all worked off an old gas engine which our guide told us was too big for the museum so was now displayed in the Bristol Industrial Museum.. pity that. On then to the office of the original proprietor, Mr. Bowler who it appeared never threw anything away. One drawer of his old fashioned desk held at least four dozen pipes. Our next port of call was the pattern shop where wooden patterns were made of engine parts etc. and onto the moulding dept. where, using the patterns, the parts were actually cast.

The next stage of the tour took us to the other part of the Bowler works, the Mineral Water plant. There were all sorts of bottles and stone jars displayed and our guide explained how they got the drink into the old Codd bottles. You know the sort, with the marble in the neck. Perhaps you didn't know that Codd bottles are still used in India and China. He also showed us how Ginger Beer was made... dreadful stuff. Ginger beer was popular with the workers in the stone quarries etc. who drank it by the gallon mixed with beer, can you imagine. Our guide then showed us how the labels were stuck on the bottles and said that a new machine had been made at a cost of £3000 to do the job. However when the girls came to use the machine it wouldn't work so it was back to the good old LICK.

The tour came to an end in the Bottling Office after an hour and a half of an interesting insight into life in the early days of 1900.

The only fault we could find was that there were no refreshments because of staff shortages. Pity that, because they could have made a few bob otherwise. Never mind, it was a very interesting afternoon. After saying goodbye to everyone it was back to my mothers in Bath for Mothering Sunday so we killed two birds with one stone, that's the way to do it.

PS Just think of it. I've dug tons of earth out of tips looking for old bottles while they were stacking to the ceiling at Bowlers.

Brian Munt.

#### Sat 18th March. Skittles.. Wessex versus Cheddar Football Club.

Following the completion of Cheddar FC's new clubhouse it was decided it would be a nice gesture if the Wessex challenged them to a skittles match, so here is a brief rundown of the evening.

Audrey, Andrew and myself arrived around 8.00pm to be greeted by Don, Chris and William Rogers, Brian and Mary Verrall, Dot and Derek Watts. We all had a drink in the very nice surroundings of the club and credit must be given to all those members who had helped in building such a super clubhouse. We were then beginning to wonder if we would be able to raise a team but reinforcements arrived in the form of Brian and Klaz Munt, Don Hodges and his wife Sybil together with Ted Phillips and his better half Phyllis. Also there were friends and fellow club members Bert and Betty Barton (try saying that with a mouthful) from Frome. The names of our team were entered on the marker board as were the names of the Football club team.

The game commenced with a breathtaking start with Punch Munt hitting two spares.. yes two spares. Oh by the way did you know that Brian's middle name is Joseph, so when you see his new hand cranked street organ you will see a lovely picture with Prof. Joe written on it. What a Joey... From that good start I'm afraid the skittling ~~from~~ then on went downhill but when you consider that each team had twenty five members and we only lost by 42 pins it doesn't sound too bad, does it?

What I like about the club is that they made us very welcome and at half time supplied us with a lovely spread of food that would have put a few wedding receptions to shame. All in all a very good evening and one which we will have to repeat when possible.

Looking back I find I have forgotten others who either played or supported us, namely Gerald Atherton and Hazel Getson, recent new members John Barret and his wife, Roger Millard our ex coach driver and our recent driver Ernie, the fastest driver in the West, with his wife too. Last but by no means least Ken Horler and wife Christine from Bath. Sorry if I've still missed anyone but thank you all for making it a grand evening.

What a shock to hear on the following Monday that some rotten person or persons had broken into the club via the roof and had stolen a lot of items and wrecked parts of the room. Just how low can some thieves stoop? I hope it will be OK by June.

Phil Harris

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#### SALE REPORT.

#### 18.3.89 Chippenham Vintage Machinery Club's Sale Castle Combe.

This popular event had a new venue this year as the car park of the normal site at Chippenham gets chewed up and hard standing was thought to be better. Over five hundred lots from a magneto to a large David Brown tractor attracted a fair number of people and bidding was fairly brisk. With a very cold biting wind it was not the place however to stand still for too long. I personally took several mags. that would not fit anything I own and an old rusted relic of a gun but amazingly it made £12. Which only goes to show that if you can't use if yourself someone somewhere needs it. It also helps pay for the petrol to and from various sales.

Now the snip of the day must have gone to Arthur (International) Smith who dug very deeply into his bottomless trouser pocket to buy a very unusual 'Taylor' American open crank engine with an internal compressor, and was of about 1½hp. This engine was unusual because of it's "stepped" piston. I won't tell you what he paid for it, but next time you see Arthur ask him, it will surely make you cry.

We as a Club are talking it over and wondering if it would be a good idea to hold a "Bring and Buy" sale on similar lines. Anyone got a nice big hard surface or other ideas?????

Phil Harris

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#### THE MARKET PLACE.

FOR SALE Crossley engine (type 1030) about 2½hp. Magneto rebuilt at a cost of £40.  
£60. Wolseley WD11 £25.  
John Gould Tel. Timsbury 70806.

FOR SALE Embroidered Machinery Emblems and Badges for:-  
Allis Chalmers, McCormick Deering, Ferguson, Minneapolis-Moline, Ford Ferguson,  
Massey Harris £2.50 each plus 25p postage.  
John Deere, Caterpillar, International, Oliver, Massey Ferguson, Case  
£1.75 each plus 25p postage.  
Mark Tilly, 21 Pine Close, Rudloe, Corsham, Wilts. SN13 OLB. Tel. 0225 810251.

#### NEW BOOKS AT DISCOUNT PRICES.

I have a limited number of copies of the following new books:

CLASSIC AMERICAN FARM GAS ENGINES, Dave Arnold & C.H. Wendel. £12.95, only £10.50.

THE IRON WORKHORSE. American Gas Tractors and Steam Traction Engines. Arnold & Wendel,  
£12.95, now only £10.50.

TRACTION ENGINES. Andrew Morland. £7.95, now only £6.00.

ALLIS-CHALMERS AGROCULTURAL MACHINERY, Bill Huxley, £7.95, now only £6.00.

ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MOTORCYCLES. Erwin Tragatsch. £20.00, now only £12.50.

ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES. Robert Tufnell. £19.95, now only £10.50.

KALEIDOSCOPE OF CHAR-A-BANCS AND COACHES. Stan Lockwood. £7.95, now only £4.75.

THE NATIONAL RAILWAY COLLECTION. (York Railway Museum). £8.95, now only £5.75.

A HISTORY OF HOT AIR AND CALORIC ENGINES. Robert Sier. £8.95, now only £6.50.

All these books are beautifully and profusely illustrated with both colour and black & white photographs. Please telephone (evenings) to reserve any item before sending payment.  
Tom Randall. Midsomer Norton (0761) 418926.