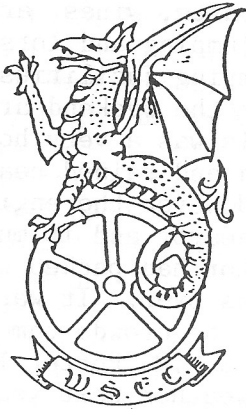


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1996



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EDITORIAL

It appears the world of high technology has caught up with vintage engine enthusiasts. If any member has access to the Internet or World Wide Web there is a very interesting netsite, it is. <http://www.servtech.com/public/cprucha> It is about antique gas engines and was only set up recently. There is a lot about Fairbanks Morse and Emerson Brantingham engines also tractors, cars etc. For further information on this subject consult our President Eric Brain.

It has been brought to my attention that one major rally in our area will next year be imposing a charge, probably £3 per night for anyone with a caravan or camper. If this does happen I can only advise members to follow my example and boycott such an event.

The Wessex Club would like to welcome new members Mr. and Mrs. K. Barnett from Wells. May your membership with the Wessex be a long and happy one.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I have been extremely pleased at the high attendance at our recent monthly meetings, also at the high standard of the programmes and guest speakers, long may it continue. I think this is due to the committee's dedication to finding items of interest and the speakers to put them over, at the meetings throughout the year. It is certainly a difficult task to put on a monthly programme year after year of interest to members. I feel the committee deserve high acclaim for their efforts, also at the recent meetings due to the higher attendances the raffles have been more successful, and for the last three meetings all the raffle prizes were donated by members, this makes a useful addition to club funds, so to all of you who contributed - THANK YOU.

ALADDINS CAVE

For months I've been trying to obtain piston rings for a Bamford engine size 82mm x 1/8 width. On visiting a motorcycle breakers who advertises his premises as an autojumble, I came across shelves stacked with piston rings and pistons. There were dozens of the size I required, compression and scraper, what a stroke of luck. The price for 4 rings was only £4. Yes £1 per ring. The range of sizes were considerable. The rings I wanted turned out to be the same as a 600cc side valve BSA. The proprietor of this establishment is Mike Plummer, 192 Marsh Lane, Henstridge. Tel: (01963) 362039.
BRIAN J. BAKER.

Bill Coombes can offer any Wessex member a wood planing service for a modest sum to cover the electricity used. The wood must be nail free and no wider than nine inches, this seems to be the ideal way to prepare wood for trolley making. Please contact Bill on (01749) 840868.

We are all familiar with stationary engines being painted green or red but the Editor could be A HEAD be exhibiting something that is blue this season.

GILLINGHAM & SHAFTESBURY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

This annual show held at the Showground between the two towns near Motcombe village, was held on Wednesday 23rd August, 1995. This is a large show for a one day event and is worth having time off from work to go. Flowers, vegetables, homecrafts, wines, art and photography filled several marquees. All the farm animals, horse jumping and lots of trade stands, stationary engines had a section along the road hedge. Camping facilities are available on site and those wishing to remain on the camp site over the weekend are welcome to do so. Each exhibitor received a plaque and £3 for petrol. This was a very hot dry summer, that is until the morning of the 23rd, show day. It rained and rained nearly all day. This kept the marquees full of people for most of the day. However the engine men tried to keep going even in the rain. The Samaritans had a stand nearby and it must be a first because they came over to me and asked for help. The generator had packed up on the stand. My wire brush cleaned the plug and the Samaritans crisis was over. It was unfortunate that it only stopped raining late in the afternoon, just as the crowds came out of the tents it was time to go home. My brothers first rally for the S.H.P. Petter 1919 and it ran all day. A good site and show, we can hope for better weather next year.

RICHARD COWELL.

BOOK REVIEW

'AMANCO ENGINES - THE STORY OF ASSOCIATED MANUFACTURERS CO. LTD.'

by DAVID W. EDGINGTON.

Here at last is a book which will have instant appeal to devotees of those interesting and idiosyncratic engines - the Amanco Line. The company history was researched over many years by the late Charles Cawood, and after his death David Edgington took over the task, partly as a tribute to Charles and partly to help dispel some of the myths about the engines which have developed over the years. The reader must not expect a compilation of technical data, the book deals with the historical side of the company and its products and is written in a simple, easy to read and interesting manner. The volume is in A4 format with seventy-six pages, soft covered in good quality board, and in Amanco red of course, which makes it stand out in the book shelf among the usual 'cabbage green' in much the same way as the engines themselves do on a rally field. It is well illustrated with a multitude of photographs and contemporary Amanco sales adverts which almost tell the history of the engines on their own. The changes to the models and differences to the home market sales are described in some detail, in many cases giving sound reasons for these changes and, where possible, the approximate dates. Other makes touched upon by the Associated empire such as Case, Grey, United and Acme are also discussed. Later bought-in engines are described with their sources, such as the 'Lister D look-alike', Amancos and the small enclosed crankcase engines from Bradford, the 'X' and 'V' types from Moteurs Deville in France, as well as other products marketed by the UK agents. The small air-cooled Colt and Midget models, the diesels and the marine models have almost a chapter to themselves, making this to be a book for the general engine enthusiast. One minor spelling mistake and a printers error do little or nothing to mar a long awaited and extremely interesting book. It represents extremely good value for £11.00 inc. p&p, buy a copy and allow plenty of time because like me you will not want to put it down....

ERIC BRAIN 29.3.96

- FOR SALE - A Path to the Door - the complete Petter History. Published price £16.99. Special offer to Wessex Club members £15 at Club meetings, or £16.45 by post from Tom Randall (01761) 418926.
- FOR SALE - Two large 40 gallon engine cooling tanks £10 each. Tom Randall (01761) 418926
- WANTED - Coil for Ruston Hornsby PB 1½HP Flywheel mag. Also pulley for Petter 'M'. Please ring Phil Marshall on (01761) 471461. Bath area.
- WANTED - Help wanted boring out a sprocket to suit a magneto ¼ to 3/8 taper, also wanted starting handle 1 ¾ bore or one suitable for boring out or sleeving to size. Brian Reakes, 43 Queens Road, Keynsham, Bristol. Tel Bristol 9868549
- WANTED - To purchase photographs of "LEEK ENGINES" and photographs of "LEEK" advertising material. Ring Hugh Thomas (01425) 621721 evenings.

A TALE OF A PETTER.

A year after I joined the W.S.E.C. I remembered that many years ago I had heard an engine running up near the Old Down Inn, so after a bit of thought I went up to see Mr. William Rawles whose land it was on (he used to keep pigs in a small orchard down in the dip at Old Down), when I asked him if he still had the engine, his reply was 'What do you know about the B****Y thing'. I was quite taken aback at his reply, I explained that years ago when I was cycling by, I had heard the engine running on several occasions, his reply was 'Well somebody has pinched the generator and batteries and switch gear, and I reckon that they might be back for the engine'. I thought that I was in the wrong place and the wrong time again, so I told him that I hadn't stolen his generator etc., and would the engine be for sale. 'No way he said, I'll let it rust away before I'll sell it now'. Up to now I hadn't even seen the engine, anyway time went on, five years later, his brother Ron who worked for the same Company that I did asked me a favour, to take a washing machine into his daughter's house in Shepton Mallet. So I did Ron the favour and he asked me what he owed me I said 'try to persuade your brother Bill to sell me that engine, we got talking about it and he told me that the engine was owned between them and it was a Petter, it had two flywheels and a water hopper on top. I was over the moon. A couple of weeks later I had a phone call from Bill to go up and have a look at the engine, we arranged for the following Sunday morning. I could hardly contain my excitement until Sunday morning. We drove up to his home at Old Down, a nice February morning white frost and the sun out. We went down to the sheds where he said the engine was, it was like going down a mountain, very steep, down in the bottom was the old galvanised iron sheds, big thick planks nailed across the door, all around the shed was a chain and padlock and a wire rope padlocked together, I done that to stop the engine being pinched he said. When he had unlocked the padlocks and taken the timbers down with a crowbar we could open the door and there in the corner stood this Petter 'H' Appletop. We pulled her outside to ascertain if everything was there and nothing was cracked or broken, it was complete and it was on a sack truck type of trolley. 'What's it's worth then' he said, 'What do you want for it' I said, he named a price and my wallet left my pocket as if it was greased, I quickly paid out the money and the engine was mine. Eric and I pulled it up the steep slope with great difficulty, and nearly at the top we got stuck where the heifers had been prancing about hoof marks in the mud, and the sun coming out had done away with the frosty conditions, and we were well and truly knackered. So we sat on the wall and just looked at the engine bogged down, after a while a tractor came to feed the heifers, the tractor had a hydraulic loader on the front for handling big round bales of hay, just the job I thought, so I asked the driver if he could pull the engine up to where my van was, 'piece of cake' he said, and so it was. I offered him a couple of quid, no way he said I might want a favour one day, quite unlike a farmer I thought. Eric and I loaded our engine and away down home we went, very pleased with our mornings hard work.

After dinner we had a good look at the engine and discovered it was a 4 h.p. new model Petter 'M' and all complete and free to turn over. However it was another seven years before it was restored, but thats another story.

BILL COOMBES.

Lets hope its not another seven years before we get 'Thats another story'. ED.

VIDEO REVIEW BY ART MAGIC.

GIANTS OF STEAM - £3.99

This video is presented by actor Brian Sterling paying his personal tribute to the giants of a bygone age in a colourful and informative new video about the great steam traction engines filmed in Astle Park in Cheshire.

Brian talks to owners about their engines and we see them all in steam, it's a well filmed video with plenty of close up's of moving parts.

50 minutes of good colour and steam, sadly the film has a musical background sound track, well chosen but not the same as real steam noises, but really good value at only £3.99. I bought my copy at my local Leo's supermarket, so next time you are being dragged around with the shopping trolley stop and check out the video section.

The same company produce the following films, The History of Trams, The London underground, The London Red Bus, New Zealand Trams, plus several preserved railway lines. HAPPY SHOPPING BRIAN REAKES.

Bill and Violet Coombes would like to convey their thanks to all Wessex members who have called in or telephoned to enquire about Bill since his accident, also I happen to know one member has given up his time taking Bill into hospital, to all of you many thanks.

ED.

CLUB COACH TRIP TO CARDIFF BAY HARBOURSUNDAY AUGUST 11th 1996.

The club intends to organise a coach trip to Cardiff Bay Inner Harbour on Sunday August 11th to leave the Old Down Inn car park at 8.30 a.m. The bay boasts many attractions including the Welsh Industrial Maritime Museum, Techniquet, which is the largest science centre in the country, the Norwegian Church Centre, a waterfront park, Lightship 2000, many listed buildings, and if you feel peckish a Harry Ramsdens fish shop. Free coach trips around the bay and much, much more. Also it is only a short distance to the main Cardiff shopping centre.

Admission to most of the attractions are free with the exception of the Museum and the Techniquet. The fare for this trip is only £5 for members, so to make sure of your seat by sending your remittance to Jackie Lambert, 15 Beechwood Avenue, Frome, Somerset. BA11 2AX.

***** CLUB CHARACTERS *****

NO. 2 - TOM RANDALL.

Tom Randall is well known by most of us in the Wessex Stationary Engine Club Ltd., having been a founder member and held a number of offices over the years. These include Chairman for a couple of years, Newsletter Editor for six years, and President for three. Although Tom still tries to be an active Club member (he organises the printing of the Club Christmas cards), his work as a management consultant now takes a lot of his time. Nevertheless he somehow endeavours to enjoy other pursuits such as folk music, playing the banjo with a local group, researching into local history, and he collects, buys and sells books and ephemera on a variety of specialised subjects. These include folklore, folk music, European mythology and, of course, industrial archaeology. He developed an interest in researching the history of the Mendip motorcar works which was building steam and petrol lorries and cars in Chewton Mendip from about 1904 to 1923 and gives talks on the subject to many interested local groups.

Tom says "My first introduction to engine rallies came about during a Sunday drive in 1968 when we noticed some engines and a fair in a field near Banbury. About a year later we moved to Paulton and were pleased to discover the Camerton Rally, as it was then, right on our doorstep. Here we met engine enthusiasts whom, eventually a couple of years later, I rejoined to help form the nucleus of the Wessex Club. The opportunity to enter the rally presented itself when a friend in Yorkshire announced that if I wanted it, I could have an old Bamford engine which I had found in his hedge whilst staying with him some years before. The engine was duly delivered to my door in a pig trailer. This was about 1975 and the Bamford made its first public appearance the following year, following an extensive restoration. I have recently reduced my collection, keeping only the Bamford of course, which is my favourite, an Amanco, a Hobbs, and a Victoria 3 h.p. (which is the earliest on the register), plus a couple of Lister 'D's. This clear out was to make room for a 1935 Citroen, yet another passion."

As you have probably gathered by now, Tom has a little spare time to travel to far distant rallies but prefers instead to support local events. He states "Nowhere is as interesting as your own area which is why I am involved with the local Museum Society. They have my 1914 Lister L-type there on display as it was originally installed in the local blacksmith's shop. I have restored a variety of things such as items of furniture, musical instruments, carriage lamps, tools, toys, various pieces of Victorian cast-iron and of course, our cottage, which is an on-going project; there is always something to repair and the garden never stops growing. My wife Ester, is supportive of all my hobbies, she accompanies me to rallies whenever possible but knowing my capacity for buying interesting things on impulse, is always wary of the possibility of something like a Road Roller or Fowler Gyrotiller suddenly turning up on the drive".

Tom does all his own restoration wherever possible but has been known to seek outside help if necessary. Some years ago he was manager of a small local foundry. He says "I cannot begin to record the number of Amanco 'goose-neck strikers', Victoria brass name and number plates or Bradford rockers there are about which I have made, it must be hundreds over the years. We even made Bamford splash guards". In summary, Tom is a good example of someone whose pleasure he gets from his hobbies is directly proportional to his involvement and enthusiasm.

EMERSON BRANTINGHAM.