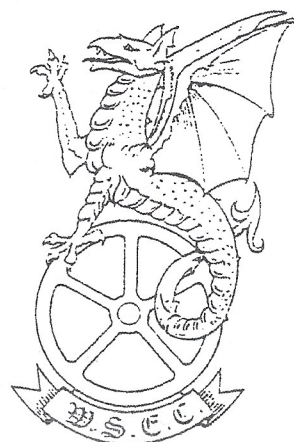


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

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NEWSLETTER



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EDITORIAL

Since the start of 2005 all our meetings and events have been really well supported. The Monday nights at the Old Down Inn, the Autojumble at Cranmore, Mells Daffodil Day, Nunney Catch Crank Up have all been really well supported by the Wessex Members, well done all of you who participated. Today as I write this editorial I have just returned from the organised visit to the Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop in Hampshire. Over 30 members attended which certainly justifies the work the Committee does in organising and setting up these visits. I can only describe the Museum and its contents as stunning. I took young Oliver with me and I think his words summed up our day, he said to me "I have had a brilliant day, it certainly beats going shopping with Mum". I have criticized members in the past for not supporting events but so far this year you have excelled yourselves, well done, keep it up.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In the editorial I have said how well the events and meetings are going, one meeting that took place was nothing short of a miracle, (thank you lord). I arrived at the Old down Inn on Monday March 23rd at 7-15 as usual to be greeted by the landlord with the words 'you can't use the room tonight' I've booked it for the Morris Dancers. This was probably because the meeting was a week early due to the bank holiday the following weekend. Bill and Sheila always knows which weeks we have ever since they have been at the pub so I don't know why they done this. By now members are starting to fill up the entrance hall to the pub, Don Rogers said we had better cancel the meeting, I didn't want to do this if I could find an alternative as by now Kim Siddorn who was giving us a talk would have been well on his way. Fred Biggs suggested we try the Court Hotel, I told Fred I didn't think they would have enough room for us, however I said to Fred jump in my car we will go and see. We went to the Court hotel and I could see they had a fairly large dining room, but it was all laid out with table cloths, napkins, silver service cutlery and champagne glasses – the lot. We explained our predicament to the landlady Sue and in an instance she said, bring them down, we will manage somehow. I took Fred back to the O.D. and by the time I returned to the Court Hotel the tables had been stripped and the room was ours, Sue was absolutely marvellous and she would not take any money for the hire of the room. We ended up having one of the best club nights ever with a stunning talk by Kim Siddorn on the Vikings, so all was well that ended well. Kim also declined any Payment for his expenses which was very generous of him. I hope we don't get many instances like this as it isn't good for my blood pressure. When we were waiting at the Old Down young Oliver said to me 'we are like baby Jesus, no room at the Inn', how true. I would like to end my report by saying we owe Fred Biggs a very big vote of thanks for suggesting the Court Hotel as that certainly saved the day. As I said in the beginning I now believe in miracles, my next project will be trying to turn water into wine, Ill let you know how I get on.

B.J.B.

MELLS DAFFODIL FESTIVAL - Bank Holiday Monday, 28th March

As in other years I pick up Tony on Sunday morning and we go to Mells to mark out the engine enclosures, but only after a phone call from him to check on our meeting time as he was concerned where I had got to and he said "I bet you never put your clocks forward last night" "Quite right" I laughed. (How embarrassing I had not given it a thought). This meant a rushed trip to Mells to meet with a festival committee member for a site meeting. The setting up only takes a couple of hours or so and this year we had Fred Biggs who was also working out how much space he required for his latest project.

Monday morning came and around 7.15am I made my way to the field, this was blanketed with thick fog. A lone figure was standing by the gateway who informed me that a few engines had already arrived !! I could not believe that someone had beaten me to it until I saw their campers and I realised that they had pulled in the night before. By 8am a steady stream of engines were coming in, we almost had 50 this year which must be a record and by mid morning the sun had burnt away the fog away and the rest of the day was glorious. Although most of the exhibitors were Wessex members other clubs were represented, The Bristol & South Gloucester Club brought some very nice engines as did the South Somerset and Wiltshire clubs.

We had two unusual exhibits this year on the end of the enclosures one was Brian and Class Munt with their hand turned Street Organ which at one point was being turned by junior club member Max Feeney, and the other was Fred Biggs with his latest project in the form of a brand new Shepherd's Hut perfect in every detail down to the stove and fittings inside. It also had foldaway stairs and even a picture of Granny on the far wall. Fred erected a small area for two sheep to graze and even dressed up as the country squire - well done Fred a great exhibit. As the day went on the engines proved to be very popular with the public as hundreds of people filtered by, lots of questions were being asked and many answered which is always nice to see.

I never ventured down to the High Street where the stalls are but I was told that it was packed solid with public for as far as you could see with many interesting stalls to browse over. The lower end of the field was enhanced with Vintage Cars, Lorries, Tractors and some Military vehicles which included our own Secretary Arthur who was seen flying around the field on a WW2 B.S.A. Bicycle, the fold up type which was used by airborne troops. I am sure the exercise did him good.

To sum up I had a great day made even greater by all who supported this event and many thanks to the clearing up team who made my life a lot easier and did in minutes what would have taken me an hour. Hope to see you all again next year.

Robin

CRANK - UP AT NUNNEY CATCH ON SUNDAY 10th APRIL

This crank-up was in my opinion the best we have held at Nunney Catch. I counted 48 engines in the line up around the car park, engines of many different makes and sizes. We also had a display of horticulture tools put on by Alan Rogers, Arthur Smith had his World War 2 Jeep, Sam Jackson turned up with a very early Austin Seven, myself and Oliver came in my 1958 Ford Anglia, and Don Rogers had quite a job to squeeze everyone in. Several members had autojumble for sale including John Brooks and Robin Lambert, this added to the general ambience of the event. Diana done sterling work selling the raffle tickets which resulted in sales of over-£100, well done Diana, she was also busy with the club shop. Gordon and Jackie were busy as usual with their breakfasts and cooked lunches. Our thanks to both of them for allowing us to use this brilliant venue. The day was wound up as usual after lunch with the raffle, which had over 40 prizes on offer. I would like to thank the generous members who continually contributes prizes for the club raffles, you really are very generous people. I think crank-up's like this will become the venues of the future as laws and legislation covering agricultural land becomes more complex and makes holding events more difficult.

B.J.B.

NEW MEMBERS

The following names are now members of the Wessex Stationary Engine Club, we hope your membership will be a long and happy one. Mr and Mrs Derek Bradfield from Gillingham. Junior Member Carl Stevens. Mr D Casling from Wells. Mr A Hall and Mr M Duck from London. Mr M Hodges from Shepton Mallet. Mr and Mrs J Moore from Coleford Nr Bath. Mr R Trussler from Coleford. Mr C Jones from Warmley Bristol. Mr J Tully from Evercreech. A warm welcome to all of you to our club.

MONDAY 21st MARCH – CLUB NIGHT AT THE OLD DOWN INN

Monday 21st March, off I went to collect my friend John for an evening at the Old Down Inn. The first thing to go wrong that night was John had forgotten that the meeting was a week early due to the bank holiday. This was soon put right, off with the slippers and on with the shoes and we were on our way. Next thing to go wrong was as we approached Wingfield crossroads just short of Farleigh Hungerford, big notice, road closed, "oh thanks", why can't the council put a warning as one leaves Trowbridge? warning that the road is closed? Too much to hope for. Now a detour of about six miles and time was getting on, so the new van was pushed on a bit. We arrived at the Old Down Inn on the stroke of eight only to find the car park empty, what was going on? Have I got the wrong date after all? On entering the Old Down Bill the landlord soon put us right. The room had been double booked, and as Brian had not confirmed the booking Bill had let it to the Morris Dancers. Oh dear, well that was sorted out with some help from very good club members and we just moved down the road to the Court Hotel. Thanks Fred you saved the day. They say things happen in threes, and it did on Monday the 21st. now once everyone was settled, the members of the WSEC that were present, (about 40) were entertained to a standard I am sure that no one present will ever forget. **KIM SIDDORN alias KING ERIC BLOODAXE**. Kim gave us an evening on the history of the Vikings, this was like no history lesson I have ever sat through. Kim came into the room dressed in full battle dress, padded long shirt over a lighter garment, over the long padded shirt came a long coat of chain mail, (this alone was a work of art) and was very very heavy; draped across his shoulders was a real wolf's skin, along with this came the shield made of ash planks with a large central metal pommel, next came the sword, and this again was a work of great beauty being an exact copy of a Viking sword in the British Museum. Across the mail coat another large knife was carried, Kim did tell us what this weapon was called but I have to admit I have forgotten. Above all this armour and weapons came the helmet, (no not one with horns) but helmets again were real works of art with one again a copy of one in the British Museum, this cost a great deal of money to be made, more than I have ever spent on an engine. Kim was telling us people think that the Vikings were just warriors, looters and pillagers, but that is far from the truth, the Vikings had technology as good as we have today in some fields, for example they could make tool steel as good as we can today, it just took them longer. Not only this they built large ships of oak, and to hold the planks to the frames took 700 kilo's of iron nails, all hand made. One Viking ship would cost equivalent to one million pounds at today's values. Money was minted in mostly silver with some gold ones, the gold coin being very rare, and if you come across one let me know for I will gladly give you one hundred pounds for it. (I should make a bob or two). Those who minted coins had to take care, no cheating, no lead or copper mixed with the silver so that more coins could be struck, because the Vikings could assay the silver to check the silver content of the coinage and if you were caught on the fiddle it was goodbye to your hand and this would be nailed above your door as a warning to others not to try and steal from the Vikings. So we old lads with fair hair and names like Eric were some clever old boys. I would not have minded living back in Viking times as a bit of plunder and pillage could have been nearly as much fun as being a member of the WSEC. The evening drew to a close with the usual raffle and I won a prize, "things must be on the up". And now we can thank Kim for such a wonderful evening, so Kim from me and the committee and all the members gathered at the Court Hotel thank you very very much for all your hard work and effort that you put into giving us all a great evening's entertainment.

ERIC GAY

OTHER OLD STUFF

When was the breathalyser introduced? 1959 -1967-1971 or 1965?

Who was Minister of Transport then? Fred Mulley, Barbara Castle, Tony Benn or Lord Haskins?

When was the 70 mph speed limit introduced? 1973 – 1974 – 1981 or 1969?

Who was the Minister of Transport then, was it, Fred Mulley, Barbara Castle, Tony Benn or Lord Haskins?

When did Concord make it's first scheduled flight? Was it, 1966, 1969, 1971, or 1974?

When was VAT introduced? 1969, 1971, 1973, or 1980?

What was the basic rate of VAT then? 10%, 8%, 11%, or 6%?

The pound was devalued in 1967 by what %? 10% - 14.3% - 11.3% or 12%?

Who was Chancellor then, was it Wilson, Callaghan, Benn or Jenkins?

When was the voting age lowered from 21 to 18 years? Was it 1971, 1947, 1959, or 1969?

This quiz was compiled for your amusement only by Margaret Simmons.

Answers in next month's newsletter.

OBITUARY

While many of us were at the Club's Crank-Up at Nunney Catch on Sunday 10th of April we received the sad news that yours and my old friend Bill Appleby had died. His grandson Keith had come over to tell us that Bill had passed away at Frome Victoria hospital the evening before, he was aged 82. Many of you knew that Bill had not been well for some time, and last June was to be his last time on the rally field, where along with Marg he had spent a few days at West Bay where he had enjoyed the hobby he loved. All who knew Bill will miss him greatly, he had such a lovely gentle nature, and was a generous man who would always pass on his knowledge in a way that could be understood. He loved his family dearly to whom we send our condolences, and to Marg his wife of 56 years, our thoughts are with her at this sad time.

Robin.

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

MAY 14-15th CASTLE COOMBE RALLY CONTACT 01454 294117

MAY 22nd CRANK - UP AT RADSTOCK MUSEUM CANCELLED

MONDAY MAY 23rd CLUB NIGHT AT THE OLD DOWN INN. SLIDES AND TALK ON ISLE OF MAN RAILWAYS AND MODEL ENGINEERING BY Mr DES CLARKE. PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING IS A WEEK EARLY DUE TO THE MAY BANK HOLIDAY. USUAL RAFFLE FOR CLUB FUNDS.

MAY 28th-30th SELWOOD STEAM RALLY. CONTACT 01373 466846

ENGINES WANTED Stationary engines wanted for a display in the recreation field in Oakhill Village on Saturday September 3rd. Also room for car boot stalls. For more information ring Mrs Doreen Marks on 01749 840271.

BRIAN MUNT has just come out of hospital after an operation and is now home recovering. We hope to soon see you out and about again Brian and we all wish you a very speedy recovery.

HENRY SIMMONS is waiting to go into hospital for an operation and is rather dismayed by not being given dates for this to happen. So much for our wonderful NHS. We hope you soon get your date Henry, and we wish you all the best when eventually you do.

THE MARKET PLACE

FOR SALE Merrytiller Wolseley Rotavator. Good working order. 11 years old but has had little use. £75 o.n.o. Ring 01761 452271 for further details. Clutton Area.4

CONGRATULATIONS

Happy birthday to Junior member **Henry Baker** who had his 11th birthday on 23rd March. Henry started going to rallies with me when he was three years old, how time flies.

Many happy returns of the day to Committee member **Tony Davis** who celebrated his 68th birthday on April 29th. Best wishes from us all Tony.

Congratulations to our treasurer **Jackie** who will reach the ripe old age of 60 on the 16th MAY. Happy birthday wishes from the club on your big day in May Jackie

A very big birthday wish to member **Freda Kerley** who was 80 on the 10th April. Many happy returns of the day Freda, best wishes from us all.

You forgot your own birthday **Brian**, 71 on the 1st May. Many happy returns.

CONGRATULATIONS to our Junior Reporter **Jonathon Hockedy** for getting that brilliant article printed in the latest edition of the Stationary Engine Magazine. I think we shall have to change your title to Senior Reporter. Jonathon has recently been to France on a work exchange scheme teaching French children the English language, I hear from a reliable source that you are fluent in French. Keep up the good work Jonathon, we shall follow whatever career you choose with interest, we are extremely proud of you and you are a real asset to the club