

CRANKING

April
2008

Thirty first year
of publication
www.wessex-sec.co.uk

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's monthly newsletter

From the Sump

First off, I am pleased to pass on the news that the Sodbury Sort out is not only back in the Calendar, but still on the M4. It is now scheduled for Sunday 3rd August this year at the NMSI premises at Wroughton near Swindon. The Sortout is being held as part of The Wroughton Classic Show. This is principally for cars, bikes & commercials plus an Autojumble. www.wroughtonclassic.org.uk You should be aware that the entrance fee is as follows. One person in a car, van whatever is £5.00 Two or more people in a vehicle – regardless of size or number of bodies – will be £10.00.

Brian Baker has requested that I do not edit his reports in future. As Club Chairman, I naturally extend this courtesy to him and his reports will normally appear as I receive them.

You will find enclosed an invitation to attend our annual rally at Haynes Motor Museum on 14/15th June. Please complete & return to Arthur Smith enclosing an SAE if you wish to attend.

The April crank up at Nunney Catch found about fifty of us strolling around the tarmac looking at thirty two engines brought for display. The weather was kind & the sun shone. There were a few spring gremlins about though: one crept into the rear bearing of a Crossley 1075 & brought proceedings to a halt & another could be seen being exorcised from an alternator. At one time, some of it had even crept into the owner's digital multi-meter as that too was to be seen with its entrails exposed to the spring sunshine! My usually reliable Stuart Turner flat twin was possessed of a small demon & it was determined to run fast or not at all, even dropping out the RH cylinder until I shortened the plug gap. A good day out in pleasant company & you can see Mike Hodgson's photos at

<http://good-times.webshots.com/album/563087485>

The next crank up will be the new venue at Bitton Station. As I have said before, this is very much a toe-in-the-water job for the Railway and we only have a small area in which to set up perhaps ten engines. These will have to be offloaded and wheeled in through the foot passenger gate to the left of the station and parked on the grassy triangle you'll find there.

Moving the Metal

For sale

Amanco mag bracket & gear £60 ono. **Magnetos**, Lucas RS1, a/c, gwo £40 each ono. EIC, gwo £80 ono. **Vauxhall Vectra**. Top of the range, ring for details. For all above ring Eric on 01225 754374
WW2 Lauson engine driving a small compressor. On a steel frame. Even more unusual first exhibit. £95. *Both restored & painted to a high standard.*
Iron Horse 12V 300W generator. Complete & in original paint. Manufacturer, "Outboard Company of Canada". Electric start & runs smoothly. Email me for photo. £70 OVNO

"Old Glory". Stack a foot high 80's & 90's – tenner.
WANTED "Stationary Engine" Magazine. Now only need 16, 17, 18, 24-34, 36. Have early copies to swap! All above, phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

WANTED Oil filler/drain for Ruston PB 1.5hp.
Phone Richard Gill 01934 517322

This column really works! Sold last month – a trailer & four Lister engines. Let's have your engine and similar stuff that you have for sale up here for a month before putting it in SEM – you might see it at rallies if sold locally!

I would hate to put anyone in the position of turning up only to find all the places are taken & therefore I'm asking those intending to support this event to contact me in advance. I'll then collate the responses and personally telephone those attending with final details. Sorry to have to do this & I hope that the next event there will be in the top car park with plenty of room for all.

Following the success of the D Day Crank up last year, we thought we'd invite you to bring along a military exhibit of some kind (if you can) for this year's event on June 4th. Please note that this is NOT a condition of attendance!

It appears that some of us have more than just 1940's engines to hand & if you wanted to augment your display with a steel bowler or a Model 19 radio, please feel free to do so. We only have room for ONE Tiger tank or U boat, so please ask before you bring yours ;o))

Articles, cartoons, photos etc are always very welcome – this is not a one-man band, but an expression of all our thoughts and experience. Submissions can be handwritten, (if brief), typed or word-processed - it is the content we're after, not the grammar or spelling, so please don't feel your efforts will be ignored. The editor reserves the right to change, edit, augment or lessen your

Deathless Prose and asks all to note that opinions expressed in this newsletter may or may not represent club policy
J. Kim Siddorn, 9, Durleigh Close, Bristol. BS13 7NQ or by e-mail to kim.siddorn@blueyonder.co.uk.

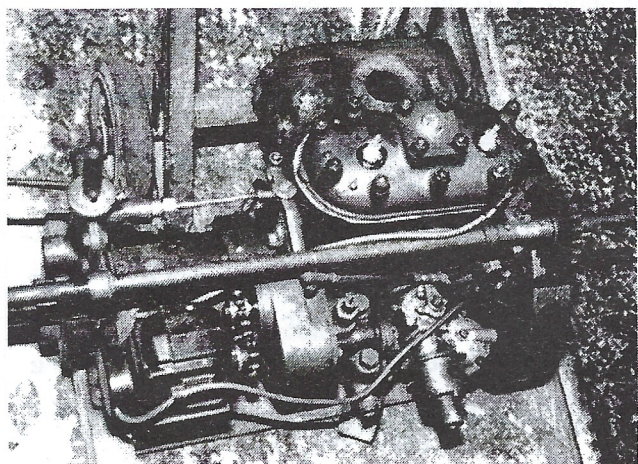
Featured Engine No. 15

The P55 in the skip

By J.K. Siddorn

I had a spot of luck the other day. My neighbour across the road was clearing out his garage and his skip was filling up with bits of 5 series BMW scrapper. I scrounged bolts and stuff, but there was nothing really to interest me BUT around noon I noticed a 12" ship's propeller sticking out of the junk. I'm restoring a marine engine for display, so I thought it might do to aid that display and made a mental note to talk to him later. From the other side of the road, it looked like an aluminium prop, so I didn't exactly wet myself, you understand.

Towards the end of the day, I went out to post some letters and wandered across to peer at it. It was attached to six feet of copper sleeved solid bronze propshaft complete with bearings and grease cups and a B...y great triple vee belt pulley and bearing block at the blunt end. It was lump to lift and must weigh 50-60lbs on its own. Gosh,...

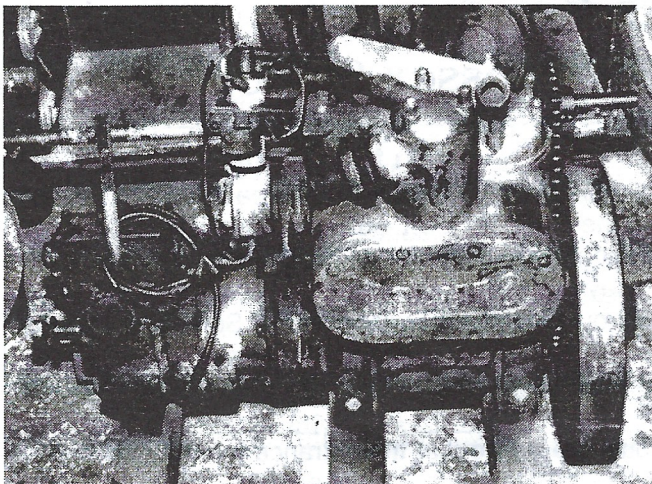


As I turn away, I glance down into the bottom of the skip and do a double take as I recognise the crankcase of a Stuart Turner P55 two stroke twin – and over there is the block and the head and, and – well, all of it really. And three guesses what I'm restoring? That's right, a ST P55 Now, of course, I can't sit down for fear that the skip man might come and haul it all away before neighbour comes home from work. He's a nice chap, but one mustn't presume.

To shorten a tenterhooks afternoon, he comes home, and yes, of course I can have it and helps me excavate the flywheel & odds and sods that were deeper in. He will not hear of being paid for it. I thank him very nicely indeed!

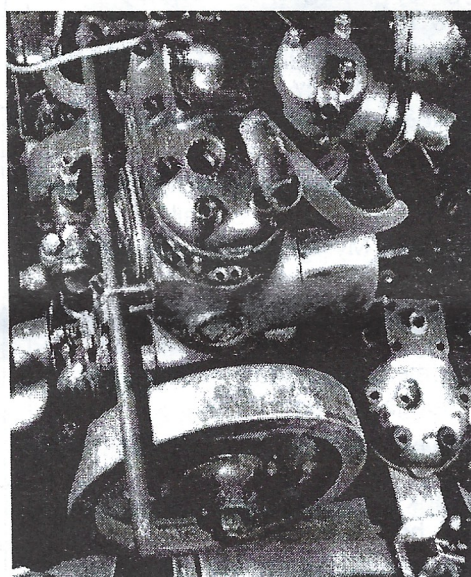
I carry the trophies into the workshop and sit on my stool to examine the haul. The bottom end has a bit of roughness and some of the studs are a bit manky, but the other I have is perfect. The new one is an electric start version and the starter works. Works? It absolutely flies around, the pistons are a blur! The dynamo doesn't motor, but that might just be dirt. The Solex carb is all brass instead of partly

zinc like the others I have and has a nice little drip tray of its own. The gearbox is better and carries the mirror of the big triple vee belt pulley like the propshaft. The flywheel has a neat vee pulley bolted to the front to drive the dynamo. All the good bits will transfer to my bottom end without difficulty. Better



still, the cylinder block is superior to the one I'm rebuilding, but there is a set of rings missing from one piston and the other set are seized in their grooves. However, the block is standard and the pistons I have already from the other block are 0.020" oversize. I ring the Stuart Turner stockists. Rings are in stock at £9.00 EACH. Complete gasket sets are in stock and are £50.00 Ouch!

I phone my tame rebore man. Holes are £12 per bore and he is good, so he'll mike up the slightly worn 0.020" oversize pistons and hone the new bores to fit to get a perfect running clearance. I firmly



quash the still small voice that says I ought not to bore usable bores oversize just to save money – but perhaps I'll see if I can get the seized set out before I decide. Then the cash will be on the side of the angels!

I'm walking down the road as he comes home this evening. "Kim," he calls. I go over "I'm sure I've got the magneto on a shelf in the loft: I had it rebuilt when I got the engine."

"Don't you just love it when that happens?," as they say.

Calendar of Events for 2008

May 10/11th. **Event.** Breamore House, engines wanted. Ring Eric on 01225 754374
 May 19th. **Club night** Members Evening. Show ten photo's or slides on any subject. Prize for best effort.
 May 31st. **Event.** Saturday crank up at Bitton Station
 June 4th. **Event.** Wednesday Evening. D-Day Crank Up at The Old Down Inn. Military stuff preferred!
 June 14/15th. **Event.** Two day WSEC Rally at the Haynes Motor Museum, Sparkford nr Yeovil.
 June 21/22nd. **Event.** 1000 Engine Rally, Astle Park
 Contact Mr M.E.Banks 01538 755844
 June 30th **Club night** Guest Speaker:- Rob Armstrong, An Illustrated Talk "Cleaning Up Ranskill"
 July 6th. **Event.** Bristol & SGSEC annual rally, Contact Mr Williams 01454 413647
 July 28th. **Event.** Evening Crank Up at The Court Hotel, Chilcompton.
 Aug 3rd (only) **Event.** Sodbury Sort out at Wroughton Classic car show. Phone 01454 323109.
 AUGUST 18th. No Meeting
 AUGUST 31st. No Meeting
 Sept 14th. **Coach trip** to the Black Country Museum.
 Sept 29th **Club night** Guest Speaker:- Colin Baker. A digital presentation on a vintage theme.
 Oct 4th. Skittles & supper evening at Butler & Tanner, Frome.
 Oct 18th. **Event.** Wessex Winter Sort out at Cranmore railway station yard.
 Oct 27th. **Club night** Guest Speaker:- Mike Rowland. An illustrated talk on The Clifton Suspension Bridge.
 Nov. 8th. **Event.** Enstone Sortout. Enstone airfield, Oxfordshire. Bookings, 01367 810415
 Nov 24th. **Club night** Guest Speaker:- Tony Scammells. Talk entitled "Just a little something".
 Dec 7th. **Event.** Winter Crankup at Nunney Catch.
 Dec 27th. **Event.** Mince Pie Crankup at the Old Down Inn. ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO ALTERATION.

Chairman's Report

The Spring Sortout on March 1st at Cranmore saw quite a good selection of stalls selling a wide variety of goods, including some very nice engines. The buyers came from far and wide thanks to a fine morning for a change. The only problem as I saw it was the café, new management had taken over and the result was high prices and abysmal service. Oliver and myself had to wait about 40 minutes for a bacon sandwich. The committee intends to take this matter up with the management of the Railway. I could not exhibit at Mells this year as I had to go to Butlins in Minehead to pick up my daughter and family as they had trouble with their car. However I returned about lunchtime, collected Henry and Oliver to go to Mells as visitors. Robin has to be congratulated for the way he sets out and runs Mells. This year he had 68 engines exhibited, including some very large and some very rare engines. The event was blessed with fine weather until mid-afternoon when it started to rain. This resulted in people starting to pack up early. Well done Robin, this was a brilliant event. The monthly meeting at The

Old Down Inn on March 31st had Keith Shepherd giving an illustrated talk on 35 years in the Iron Foundry Business and still learning. This was a superb presentation supported by a digital projector and a lap top computer. Keith had put together a brilliant presentation which was extremely interesting and educational. After a break for the raffle Keith showed a black and white silent film of an iron foundry in 1927. Health and safety definitely wasn't around then, men were working shoulder to shoulder with lots of moving machinery and flapping belts everywhere. This was a very good evenings entertainment, and our sincere thanks to Keith for providing it. Keith who is a WSEC member declined any fee for his evenings work. At the AGM I expressed my disappointment that no one had come forward to fill the vacancies on the committee. Since then Keith Nash has volunteered to serve on the committee. (this must be a first, we never get volunteers). At a recent committee meeting Keith was co-opted onto the committee. As chairman I would like to welcome Keith on board as I'm sure he will be a valuable member of the committee helping to run the club. Robin, Arthur and myself recently visited Haines Motor Museum to sort out the site and finalise details for our rally in June. I'm pleased to say the management at Haines are very keen to have us back. They have agreed again to give members free passes to the museum, these are worth £7 each, to get these passes you must show your WSEC membership card. That's all for this month folks.

B.J.B

Social News

We'd like to mention: -

Happy Birthday to **Oliver Baker** who has his 12th birthday on the 26th May. Good to see **Marita Chant & Eileen Jennings** at the Crank Up on 13th. Welcome to Wessex to new members **Mr & Mrs T. Lanfear of Frome**

"35 years in Iron Founding"

a talk on 31st March by Keith Sheppard

By Eric Gay

I have often started my write ups by saying that it was standing room only well on the 31st it was yet again STANDING ROOM ONLY. The members were gathered to hear a presentation by Keith Sheppard on the black art of the Foundry Industry. I thought I knew a little about this subject, but when the evening came to an end, I knew a great deal more. Maybe I am getting old but it makes me sad to find that this industry along with all of England great engineering heritage is being lost. I can remember when I was a lad that Trowbridge had its own Iron Works and at night you could see the glow in the sky above the furnace.

Keith told us that the type of castings his firm produces can now only be carried out by a very few companies & you can count them on about one hand. Oh, Lord, what's going to happen to our young people when all our knowledge is lost unless we wake up - and soon!

I won't bore you with all the technicalities of the casting process, just to say it is now possible to make a casting that does not need any machining.

The second part of Keith presentation was a film made back in the late twenties early thirties of the works of Westinghouse Brake & Signal at their Chippenham works when Britain was truly the workshop of the world. Westinghouse had the facility to complete every stage of their product from casting to finished components & this old film was a real eye opener to our great engineering past. Thank you Keith for a wonderful evenings entertainment.

Old Deadly Part 3

By Eric Gay

(I know it should be part 2

but I can't put my hand on it – sorry! – Ed)

The racing bug got Old Deadly good and proper, so what did he do but go and buy a Velocette scrambler, with a 250cc all aluminium engine (I have never seen one like it myself, real strange) *(I've got a 1959 Clubman Venom with an Alfin barrel, so they were about – but a 250? – nor me Eric – Ed)* but Old Deadly soon had it running like a very expensive watch, and did it go. First scramble he entered was at Farleigh Castle, that ended in disaster he blew the gear box to bits. He got another gearbox from a bike breakers in Bristol, "along by the river then turn right up a hill" *(that'll be Hoopers in Jacob's Wells Road where I too was a frequent customer! – Ed)* Old Deadly became a good customer there as he wrecked another two gear boxes in the Velo before he saw sense and sold off the engine and other bits. His next move was to buy a 500cc AJS scrambler, one brute of a bike but he had a bit of success on it (well if you can call finishing a few races on it a success).

Now, it was at Nash Hill scramble when Old Deadly's pride was really hurt, like he said to us lads "I were trying me best". He was shouted at by another rider and told to get out the Bxxxxy way. That upset Old Deadly, but a bigger upset was waiting around the corner, it was a few weeks later that the gremlins struck. It was at Leighton between Frome and Shepton Mallet when they struck and oh boy did they strike.

It was on the hill near the end of the lap and Old Deadly was doing well when the engine of the AJS lock up solid. Well, he sat on the bike out of the way of the others riders until he thought that it might start, so he gave it a kick the motor turned over, so a bump start was tried "bang splutter BANG" and the AJS started. Now, as Old Deadly turned the bike at the bottom of the hill to ride up and return to the pits he looked down and FLAMES were all around the carb, Old Deadly tore off his riding gloves and rammed them into the bellmouth of the carb, but to no avail it was too late; the fuel feed tubes were on fire and with about a gallon of high octane in the tank it was time to bale out.

Well, that was the end of AJS it was a total loss. But it was not all doom and gloom, a spectator

in the crowd started a collection and at the end of the day this was given to Old Deadly. He still says that it was the nicest thing ever to happen to him and he will never forget the kindness shown to him on that day. Old Deadly ain't a bad old sod and some of that money was given to another rider that broke his leg at the same meeting.

Big Sister came to most of the races and when disaster struck she just had to make Old Deadly's life more miserable by not being able to keep her great gob shut every living soul had to be told of any misfortune that befell her only brother and oh boy did the truth get stretched.

What happen to the rest of the money? Old Deadly bought a proper Greeves scrambler and I will tell you of his adventures with this in further episodes. About this time that Old Deadly got the hankering for a bigger road bike so he began the search for a good 650cc & I'll tell you more about that next time.

Something a Little Different ...

The Washington Post's Mensa Invitational asks readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are the winners:

1. Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, rendering one financially impotent.
2. Ignoramus (n.): A person who's both stupid and an - (well, you get the picture)
3. Intaxication (n.): Temporary euphoria at getting a tax refund until you realize it was your money anyway
4. Reintarnation (n.): Coming back to life as a hillbilly.
5. Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.
6. Giraffiti (n.): Vandalism spray-painted very high
7. Sarchasm (n.): The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.
8. Inoculatte (n.): To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.
9. Caterpallor (n.): The colour you turn after finding half a worm in the fruit you're eating.
10. Osteopornosis (n.): A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)
11. Karmageddon (n.): It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's, like, a serious bummer.
12. Decafalon (n.): The gruelling event of getting through a day eating only things that are good for you
13. Glibido (n.): All talk and no action.
14. Dopeler effect (n.): Stupid ideas seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.
15. Arachnoleptic fit (n.): The frantic dance performed after accidentally walking through a spider web.
17. Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito, that gets into your bedroom at 3 a.m. and cannot be cast out.