

# CRANKING

*The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter*

April 2011  
Thirty fourth year  
of publication  
**www.wessex  
-sec.co.uk**

## From the Sump

*Couldn't think of much to say this month, but what better use can I find for the space than to donate it to Eric Gay in pursuit of our annual gathering – ed.*

Well, its that time of year again when we all start to get things ready for the rally season, so I thought it was time to bring you all up to date with what's happening with this year's Midsummer Vintage Gathering. This is to be staged near the village of Semington over the weekend of June 18th & 19th so don't forget. We want to see YOU at our main event and most of all we all want you to have a good time.

This year's event will have many different attractions with bygone displays, wood working area with a rack saw as well as the pole and wheel lathes of the last two years. Lackham College will be rebuilding the Ferguson tractor again this year.

For all you animal lovers, we have a treat - how about some Alpaca's - you know, them big woolly sheep and with luck a heard of Donkeys.

We have a good number of model steam engines coming along and one is the only 6" scale model ever to do a road run from Fairford in Gloucestershire to the Great Dorset Steam fair.

The Shepton Mallet Drifters model boat club will also be on site over the weekend. We need some help over the week before the rally as we have to build a lake on site with straw bales so if you can spare a little time to give us a bit of help please come along. It's not all work, we do have some fun and you might even get a free drink or two.

As you may know, we now have a much larger team working for YOU to give every one a good weekend, and this has been a great help as Barry has got us our own marquee. This being 30ft x 10ft and this all for a club donation of £20 to the Children's Hospice South West and a trip in a certain Nissan to Luton to collect it. We also have new fold away tables and new fire extinguishers. so things are looking up.

Regia Anglorum will be putting on the usual Viking & Saxon battle, arranged of course by Kim.

We will once again be running the sales area, so if you got some fabulous goodies for sale, bring them along & we will do our best to sell them for you.

Our rope making demo will be with us as last year and Joe, Pauline and Gary will be again making walking sticks and we are working hard to attract other crafts as well. For instance, do you know

## Moving the Metal

### For sale

**Lister D**, running, not on trolley - £80 ONO. **Lister generator** 50/75 Volt 17 Amp, nice bit of kit. £250. RS1 Magneto £60. ML CK type1 magneto – good spark £60. ML CK 1 requires overhaul £15. I have other mags for sale – give me a ring. Eric Gay 01225 754374

**Steerable wooden trolley**, heavy duty, 4'8" long, 1'10" wide. Matching 6 spoke 14" wheels. Needs a little TLC. £65ono. Phone Ed Carp on 01458 210929

**Length of steel shafting**, 2½" diameter, 9ft long with 2 plummer blocks. A bit rusty but a lot of useful steel for only £5. Buyer collects. Tel. Tom Randall 01761 418926

**Detroit 2.5 HP** vertical, circa 1913. £750. **International Titan** 1HP horizontal £1,050. **International**, M type, LT, 3HP, 1920, £450. Tel John: 0122 5340432 or email wjohnfire@virginmedia.com.

### WANTED

8" or 10" iron wheels – can you help? Eric Gay 01225 754374

Four to five inch **flat belt pulley**. Petter A1 starting handle. Phone R. Champion 01275 892944

**ABC engine**. Particularly 1915 250cc Firefly but anything considered. Good price paid for right engine!

**Stuart Turner** flat twin generator complete. Alternatively, I just need the (apparently!) special dynamo. PLEASE look under your bench for one! (photo 2)

Both above, phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

(Cont) ..... a Blacksmith, Thatcher dry stone waller or any other craftsman that may like to attend? Do please let me know and I will contact them.

This year there will be a programme on sale (proper posh we be ) so we hope you will all buy one (yes, I'm after your money again) but remember this is your rally but we also do this to help the life limited children of the Children's Hospice South West.

Well, that will do for now. I very much hope I will see YOU there. I hope you have a happy and safe rally.

## Engines wanted

**Westonzoyland Steam Pumping Station** Sat/Sun 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> June  
Engines and vehicles required. Overnight camping available.  
For entry form, ring Alan Davies 01823 282760 or Jason Keswick 07976 834689

**The Carnival Country Fair**, Trowbridge Park, St Stephen's Place, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8AH, 3<sup>rd</sup> September.  
Ring Eric Gay 01225 754374

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 should be preferably typed or word-processed or even handwritten, (if brief), - 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

Phone - 0117 964 6818

J. Kim Siddorn, 9, Durleigh Close, Bristol. BS13 7NQ or by e-mail to kim.siddorn@blueyonder.co.uk.

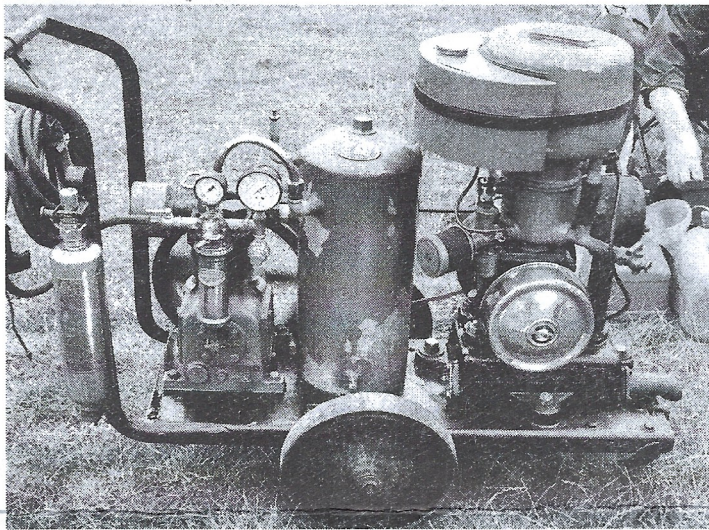


## Featured Engine No. 51

### The Villiers WX11 By Kim Siddorn

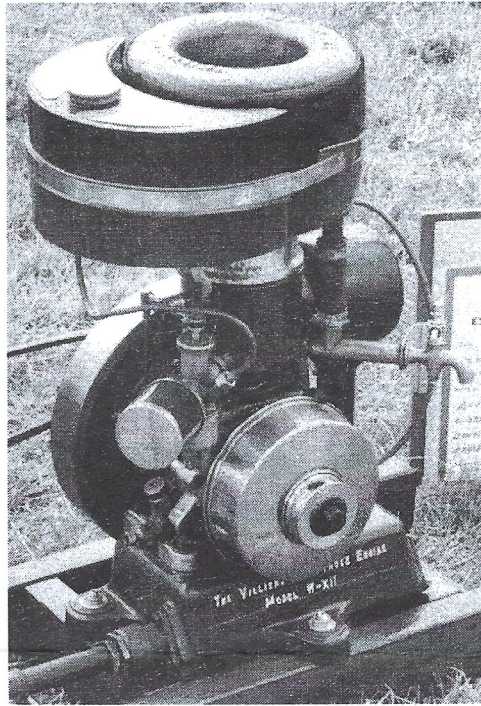
I have had a couple of WX11 (that is "11" by the way, not a Roman numeral II) since the 1970's when I was first interested in stationary engines. They are a curious beast dating back to the late 1920's and have long puzzled me as they seem to stand alone in a field dominated by air cooled engines. It seemed odd to me that Villiers should go out of their way to produce a water cooled engine – surely one of their many air cooled units could have been pressed into service to drive (for instance) Aerograph compressors. Further, I have been unable to find out much about them although I always ask owners for info when I meet them.

The other day I came across one Paul Anders who told me that they were originally a marine device, developed as an inboard engine for small craft in the USA during the mid 1920's. The originator was obscure, but there was sketchy evidence that the later link between Villiers and Jakobson in the USA that led to the MarVill might be an indication of the WX11's antecedents. Anyone that can throw more light on this link – or indeed, any history at all on this interesting engine will be most gratefully received.



Villiers introduced the LZ (later LZH) blind end cylinder version in 1927/8. This was later developed into the LHM, the UK marine version. The original 247cc unit (WAH & WAT) produced 1½ BHP and in early 1933 a 343cc 2½ BHP version (WBH & WHT) was introduced. The two units ran side by side in production for some years. The engines were designed to withstand "heavy duty" as they used to say and had ball or roller main bearings at a time when similar engines made do with bronze bushes. They soon acquired a rather fetching bronze head and it is reasonable to think that this was another marine derivative as otherwise aluminium would have given better thermal efficiency for less weight, that metal being in extensive use throughout the design.

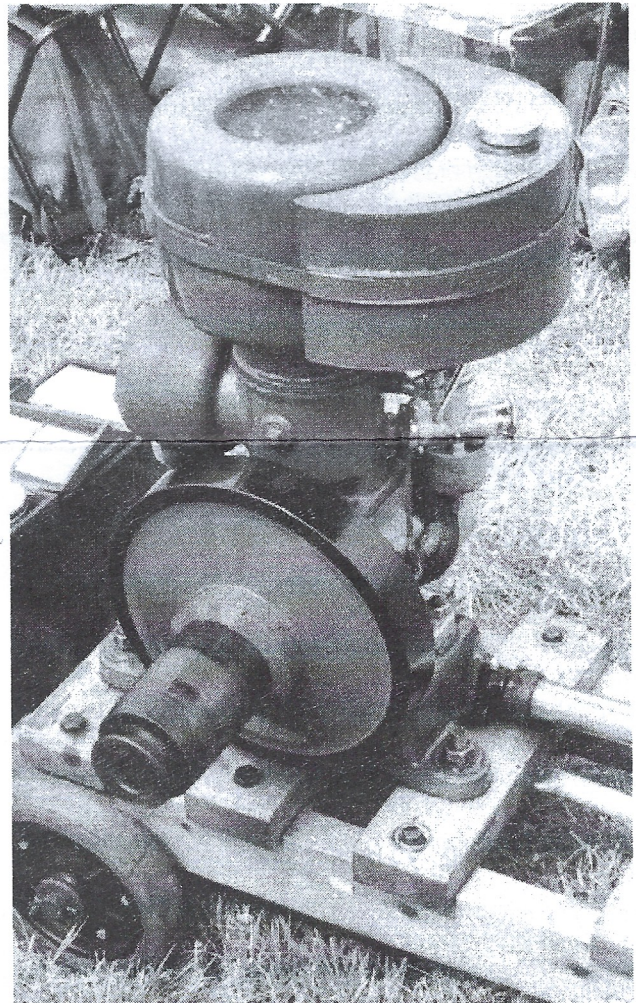
The exhaust features a cast iron expansion box - then a common feature on industrial two strokes – and a vertical pipe conducts the exhaust charge to a "base tank" in sand cast aluminium.



Many units were hopper cooled, but tank cooling was available from the first and the bulbous aluminium hoppers are a real landmark of the series.

To sum up. Once it is in your mind that they might well have a marine background, various features do

present themselves. It was originally a fixed head barrel on a crankcase with big bearings. In this, it is not unlike the Stuart Turner engines and, indeed, many others of that general capacity range, all from a marine background. The output shaft is unusually massive for its capacity. The bronze head. The adaptive bolt on hopper and exhaust box base.



I await the flood of information and comment with considerable interest.



## Calendar of Events

**Key. CN = Club Night. CU = Crankup**

**April 25<sup>th</sup>** Easter Monday **Event** at Mells. Contact Robin Lambert 01373 463526 if you want to attend.

**May 7<sup>th</sup>** E. The Breamore Countryside Museum. Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 2DF. Contact Eric Gay 01225 754374.

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>** . CN. Guest speaker John Heron. "The RAF Harrier in the Cold War"

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** Wed. CU. D-Day Cranmore station Yard. Bring something military if you can.

**June 18/19<sup>th</sup>** Wessex Midsummer Vintage Gathering. Our **club rally** at Semington

**June 25/26<sup>th</sup>** . **Event**. 27<sup>th</sup> 1000 Engine Rally, Astle Park.

**June 25/26<sup>th</sup>** . **Event**. Please bring an engine **Cranmore Railway Station**. An in steam day at this popular venue.

**June 27<sup>th</sup>** . CN. Richard Harris. "Restoring a Bedford TK."

**July 22-24<sup>th</sup>** . **Event**. **Netley Marsh Rally** at Meadowmead Farm, Netley Marsh, SO40 7GY contact Jean White on 023 8086 0313.

**July 25<sup>th</sup>** CN. Crankup at The Court Hotel

**July 31<sup>st</sup>** Sunday. **Event**. Mini rally at **Haynes Museum**, Sparkford mini - rally Haynes motor museum.

**July 29-31<sup>st</sup>** **Event**. **The 47<sup>th</sup> Welland Steam Rally**, Woodside Farm WR13 6NG Phone 01531 890 762 for an entry form.

**August 22<sup>nd</sup>** CN. *Early because of bank holiday*. **Photo presentation** by the members. Bring along ten photo's or slides. Prize for best effort.

**Sept 10/11<sup>th</sup>** . **Event**. Stockbridge Working Weekend. Please phone Alan Vickery for details 01256 703169

**Sept 18<sup>th</sup>** Sunday. **Club Visit**. Coach trip to Kew Bridge Steam Museum.

**Sept 26<sup>th</sup>** CN. Kim Siddom. "Engines at the 1000 Engine Rally"

**Oct 8<sup>th</sup>** . Sat. **Skittle match**. South Parade Club, Frome.

**Oct 15<sup>th</sup>** . Sat. **Autumn sortout** at Cranmore Station Yard.

**Oct 31<sup>st</sup>** CN. Selwood preservation club. **Inter club quiz**.

**Nov 12<sup>th</sup>** Saturday. **Autumn Enstone Sale**.

**Nov 28<sup>th</sup>** . CN Guest speaker Patrick Hassell. "Bristol Before Rolls-Royce"

**Dec 4<sup>th</sup>** Sunday. Antifreeze CU at Nunney Catch.

December **no club night**.

**Dec 27<sup>th</sup>** . Mince Pie CU at The Court Hotel

*All events are listed in good faith. You should always ascertain if an event is taking place before you go. If in doubt, ring Brian Baker on 01749 342671*

### Social news

By Earwig

Two of our senior club members celebrate their birthdays in April. Rob Armstrong on the 21<sup>st</sup> and his good lady Frances on 22<sup>nd</sup> . Our esteemed Chairman Brian has his birthday on May 1<sup>st</sup> and a well know relation of his, Oliver, celebrates his birthday on the 26<sup>th</sup> . Best wishes to them all!

Welcome to new members Mr& Mrs J.C. Webb of Sherbourne, Mr& Mrs K. Hole, Bristol. Mr & Mrs J. Squire Bristol.

### Chairman's report (printed as received)

By Brian Baker

The monthly meeting at the Court Hotel on Monday 28th March had quite a good attendance of members to be entertained with a talk and slide show put on by member Robin Lambert. Robin's talk was a updated one he done many years ago about Frome Electricity Company. Around the turn of the century the only means the local council had for street lighting was gas. The

Frome councillors decided to set up their own electricity supply company, this they carried out and were then in competition with the gas companies, private users then wanted electricity in their homes and so the service grew. Frome council sold this company out, and eventually it ended up as SWEB, The South Western Electricity Board. Robins talk was supplemented with lots of slides from way back, up to recent times, and as Robin was employed by Southern Electricity it must have brought back many memories for him. This was a very entertaining presentation and on behalf of the committee and the members present a big thank you to Robin. The usual raffle followed, with a lot of prizes donated by the very generous members present, including a beautiful teddy bear made by Francis Armstrong, (much better than a Stief) This was won by member Roger Kempson who had just been presented with a grandchild, what a lovely gift for a new born. On Sunday 3rd April the committee had organised a drive yourself visit to Westonzoyland Steam Pumping Station. Henry, Oliver and I attended and so did about 35 other members. *(Kim attended in the morning as he got the time wrong! - Ed)* I was very pleased with the number that turned up because it justifies the work the committee puts in organising them. I won't elaborate on the visit because Eric has sent Kim a report on the event which will appear in the newsletter. On Sunday April 10th was crank-up day at Nunney Catch transport café. This had been put back a week from the original date due to clashing with something else. Usually at Nunney we have to wear two overcoats because of the biting cold winds, but this time it was a beautiful hot sunny day, and my coats were in the car. It attracted over 25 engines including Robin Lambert exhibiting Bill Appleby's Victoria, next to Robin was a very rare sight, three single flywheel Lister "B's" in a row, it is unusual to see one of these never mind three. Thank you to the members who brought them along. Another engine that caught my eye was a very nicely restored Fairbanks Morse 6hp made in 1929. Pete bought this three years ago as a box of bits and has only recently restored it. It was brought to Nunney from Trowbridge by Range Rover and very large trailer driven by Pete's wife as Pete is partially sighted and does not drive. Next to Peter was his friend Eric with his nicely restored Bamford 2 ½ hp 1920. Don and William Rogers had a lovely Powel on display; I believe this was a recent purchase from Mike Snook. Arthur Smith and Liz arrived in style in their Ford Mustang, what a car; the condition for a car made in 1966 is amazing. Arthur recently won "best in show" at the Bath and West Classic Show. Also in the car park was a very nice Morris 1000 shooting brake. The café was doing a good trade with breakfasts and dinners, I cad definitely recommend their sausage sandwiches. After dinner we had our usual raffle and everyone then loaded up and headed home. All in all, with the glorious weather and a good entry, this from my point of view was a successful event. **DON'T FORGET TO RING ME TO BOOK YOUR SEATS FOR THE KEW TRIP.**

### After Astle Park

By Robin Lambert

I am sure club members will have read numerous reports in various newsletters and magazines from what is probably the UK's largest Stationary Engine rally, so I thought it may be useful to anyone attending this years event who would like to spend an enjoyable week after the show. This is what Jackie and I did afterwards last year.



**Monday** morning pull out of camping area with van and trailer and head north up the M5 then turn left for North Wales via the M56. We found a nice site at Conwy to park up for two nights and there was plenty to see here with a huge castle and a very old town to explore, this took up the rest of Monday.

**Tuesday** was to back track a couple of miles into Llandudno an old Victorian town with sea front and pier. I must admit that I had an ulterior motive with intentions of a ride up the Great Orme on its ancient tramway. A useful tip here is that parking in town in June can be a bit of a problem as it can be very busy. We found an easy way around this by driving up the Great Orme roadway where on top there is acres of parking with great views. Before catching the tram back down to town a look around the small museum is worth while and its always nice to have a chat with the tramway staff as to how things operate. Once boarding the tram it only travels about half way down the Orme where you have to switch to another carriage for the final decent. The halfway stop is the power house that controls the winches that do all the pulling and lowering of the carriages. It must be almost a carbon copy of the San Francisco tramway except that these trams do not clamp on to a moving cable but are attached to the ends of the wire ropes which are set in a trough below ground with rollers helping to ease the cable around all the twists and turns.

**Wednesday** came all too soon and we were off early to Llanberis, fully intending to go on the Snowdon mountain railway. Not so easy we found, firstly getting parked up with van and trailer proved to be a problem as I entered into a pay car park "Can't come in here with that" Taffy said "why not" said I "too big" so I said I will pay for two spaces then, "Ah well that's OK then. Twelve quid please". Having parked up and wallet much lighter we walked a short distance to Mountain railway booking office to purchase tickets. Well, we were there at 9.30 and the earliest we could go up on the train was 3pm. It seems you can book in advance by internet and a lot of the trains are booked up by tour operators.

So, with tickets safely in my wallet replacing the £50 void, we had to decide what to do for the next five hours. This was easy - just walk across the road to the Dinorwic Power station visitor centre, which has a nice shop and restaurant and lots to see and hear about "Electric Mountain". So, after a cuppa, we were off on the power station bus for a tour inside the mountain. We did this about fifteen years ago and is always nice to have a refresher trip, I am sure most of you know this is a hydro power station that is powered by water dropped from a great height. It comes from a lake high up in the mountains and the station can run for about six hours from this supply, usually during the day when demand for power is at its greatest.

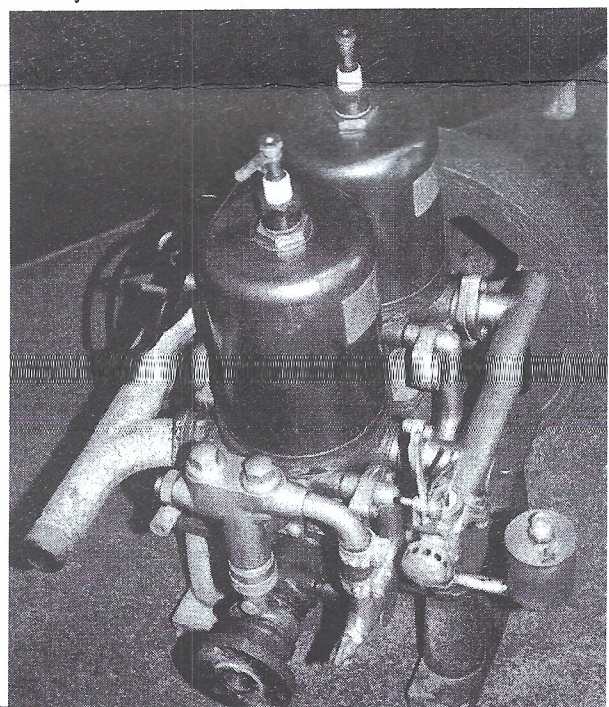
The water having passed through the turbines is collected in a large lake and pumped back up the mountain at night when electricity is cheaper. The cavern that houses the turbines and generators is the biggest man made cavern in the world. The tour looks at much of the engineering feats and is well worth doing and the guides information is first class. (The TV personality Carol Vorderman was a mathematician on the project before she started her TV career - Ed)

With the tour over and a light lunch it is our turn to go up the Snowdon Railway all eight kilometres in length, an hour-long journey up and another back down, there are times going up when you think the little steam engine won't make it, with the long hard push the chuff chuff really sags at times as though its

giving up then it recovers as some of the gradients are less steep. After taking on water half way to the summit, the top is reached and we were told to be back in half an hour for the return journey. If you are late and miss it you won't get on the next one as they are always full, so it would mean shanks' pony all the way down. The views from the top are breathtaking if you pick a fine day. All over Anglesey one way, Caernarfon Bay to the west, and into the mountains all around, after coming back to ground level it is on the move again to find a camp site near Shrewsbury.

**Thursday** comes and a chance to visit Blists Hill open Victorian museum near Ironbridge. Our club visited here many years ago with a coach trip and what a great day we all had. There is even more to see here now including a great cafe that serves up a wonderful portion of faggots and chips! A lot more has been added since our last visit with even more shops, all staffed by folk in period costume. In all, there are 56 different things to view here including a seasonal fairground to keep the youngsters happy and if you are in the area for a few days you can purchase a good value ticket for two adults and up to five children which will allow you to visit the Coalport China Museum, The Tar Tunnel, Blist's Hill, the Tile Museum, Broseley pipe works, Iron Bridge Toll house, Museum of the Gorge and the Darby House. This is all spread over a distance of about four miles. At the end of a rather tiresome day we move on further south to Bridgnorth to put our feet down for the last time.

**Friday**, and its off to have a good look around this hill top town, I always like the old high street it has lots of alley ways leading off to allsorts of interesting places including a cliff railway that will take you all the way down to the river and of course there is the Severn Valley Steam Railway to Kidderminster. I must do that journey some time. I did find a gem of a place to look around on the North side of town, a fabulous military surplus store that sells every thing from clothing, tools, fixings, household goods, military electrical equipment of all kinds, so if you are in the area, don't miss it. It is opposite Sainsbury's on the edge of a large car park. Well, that is the end of our interesting week, its back down south now to attend the Bristol & South Glos annual rally for another nice week end.



**A K2 Watermota. Very pretty in its polished copper waterjacket**