



CRANKING

April - May
2014

Thirty seventh year
of publication
Club website now at
www.wessexsec.org

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

From The Sump

It is quite the fashion these days to be doing U turns in Government and the Wessex SEC does like to keep up with the trend! Therefore, following a number of complaints, the committee has reversed its stance on the newsletter and – commencing with this edition – it will return to monthly distribution. I should say that it was not a decision taken lightly and our reasons for a bimonthly edition are perfectly valid.

However, it was felt that the deafening silence at the end of alternate months, the near impossibility of getting information to the membership in a timely fashion, the severe risk of dislocation of affection, the likelihood of missing events as the long-established monthly repetition of the events calendar were just some of the reasons put forward. The decision was not unanimous but there was a very clear majority in favour of this reverse of a decision made with the best will in the world. It was with some relief, I think, that most members of the committee agreed that we would just have to find the money and if it means that we need to put the subs up in due course, we will have to bite that bullet when we cross it.

It is with regret that I must tell you that Eric Brain - one of our founder members - has resigned from the club. It is long since he exhibited engines and other recreational pastimes take up his interest now. These were not his only reasons, but I'm sure that all who knew him will regret his decision. The parting of the ways from a man I hold in great esteem makes me sad and the club will be the poorer for his resignation. I'm equally certain that most will wish him well for the future and look forward to reading more of his work in S E M.

Once again, the content of the newsletter appeared on the agenda and the old, dry bone of the lack of contributions from the minds other than the four regular contributors was kicked around the room and gnawed a bit more. I was bid to ask once again – as the footer below this deathless prose says in every edition - we really would like to see other people submitting rally reports, notes about new engines they have bought, social news and likewise stuff. I have no expectation whatever that my doormat will be covered in material just begging to be printed here in the months to come, none at all. Why should things change now? Every other request has fallen upon deaf ears, why should this one make a difference? But we shall have to see.....

The old chestnut of "I sent something in and it never got printed" was rolled into a club to beat me with ;o). Quite right too – there have been occasions where I have decided for one reason or another not to print something, lost it or there was simply not room. I apologise for it. I am only human and am capable of error. I shall try harder to please.

Moving the Metal

For sale

Trailer by Nova. As new, all galvanised steel construction 3' wide by 5' long, drop down tail board with safety chain. 16" wheels with spare. Lights all work. Extras! 2" tie down straps, strong Ali ramps. ~~£15.00~~
Phone 01373 464982. Ask for Tony Davis (Frome) ~~£150.00~~

Petter "M" 1.5 hp. Rugby Ball Hopper. Also **United** 2.5hp 1912 Type "C". Both dry stored and not used for past 12 years. Please Contact Ray 01747 840835.

Kerrison Predictor Generator. Scott PAB engine, some instruments missing but mostly complete. Rarely advertised! £350. located in Salisbury. Keith Winch k.winch@virgin.net

Horse hair Combing Machine. Built by Gauntlets of Trowbridge. Only unaltered and complete one known. £490 ono. MUCH REDICED PRICE! phone Eric Gay 01225 754374

Lauson engine on steel frame. This interesting lightweight Canadian engine dates from WW2 and is driving its own petrol pump (underslung tank) and a small air compressor. Light, easily fits in the boot. Painted and ready to rally! £165.

Power Hacksaw. Five feet long and tall, Free standing and an impressive lump begging to be driven by your engine! £175 (reduced) or swap either for something small and interesting.

Watermota K2. Mid thirties twin cylinder marine engine. Complete with square bodied ML magneto. manifolds and original frame. Standing many years and is seized but is just stirring! £175. (reduced for last time otherwise it can go back in its corner!) Tel: Kim on 0117 964 6818

Wanted

Screw cap filler petrol tank for Lister D. Other cap fittings considered! ;-))

Box Trailer approx 6ft x 4ft to carry upwards of half a tonne, with ramps if possible. Or information leading to the purchase of same Please help your new chairman Eric on 01225 754374

Suppliers

Recommended Bearing Supplier – very helpful!

Solent Bearings, Unit 20&21, Test Valley Business Centre, Test Lane, Nursling, Southampton, SO16 9JW
Phone - 02380 667100. www.solent-bearings.co.uk

Fuel Tanks and Crank Guards made.

Tel John Hedges 01635-268359 or 07831-410473 (Newbury Area). Robin Says – "I have known John for over 30 years and he is a good engineer. He has sold all his engines and thought he would have a go at Tanks & guards and is doing quite well, "

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 Engineer Number 3

Sir Harry Ricardo (26 Jan 1885 – 18 May 1974)

From Internet Research



Harry Ricardo was born at 13 Bedford Square, London in 1885, the eldest of three children, and only son of Halsey Ricardo, an architect, and his wife Catherine Jane, daughter of Sir Alexander Meadows Rendel, a civil engineer. Ricardo was descended from a brother of the famous political economist David Ricardo, a

Sephardi Jew of Portuguese origin, hence the unusual family name. His grandfather purchased an automobile in 1898, exposing Harry to engines at a tender age. He used tools and worked on engines from the age of ten and had a brilliant and insightful mind. His family were wealthy and he was sent to Rugby School. In October 1903 he went up to Cambridge and took Civil Engineering at Trinity College.

At the end of his first year, he decided to enter the University Automobile Club's event, which was a competition to design a machine that could travel the furthest on one gallon of petrol. His single cylinder motorcycle engine was the heaviest entered but nonetheless won the competition, returning 40MPG.

He was then persuaded to join Professor Bertram Hopkinson of Mechanism and Applied Mechanics, working on research into engine performance. He graduated in 1906 and spent a further year researching at Cambridge.

Percy Kidner, then Co-Managing Director of Vauxhall said that Ricardo had a hand in the design of the Vauxhall engine designed by Laurence Pomeroy for the 1908 2,000 mile RAC trial.

Before graduation, Ricardo had designed a two-stroke motorcycle engine in order to study the effect of mixture strength upon the combustion process. When he graduated, a small firm, Messrs Lloyd and Plaister, showed an interest in making the engine. Ricardo produced designs for two different sizes, and the smaller one sold about 50 engines until 1914, when the war halted production.

In 1909 he designed a 3.3 litre two-stroke engine for his cousin Ralph Ricardo, who had started "the Two Stroke Engine Company", a small car manufacturing company based in Shoreham-by-Sea. The engine was to be used in a car called the *Dolphin*. The cars were too well made for their own good and cost more to make than they sold for!

The company had better luck making two-stroke engines for fishing boats. However, in 1911 the firm folded when Ralph left for India. Harry Ricardo continued to design engines for small electric lighting sets, that were produced by two companies up to 1914.

Ricardo set up a new company in 1915, "Engine Patents Ltd." They developed the engine that

would eventually be used in the first successful tank design, the British Mark V. The Daimler sleeve-valve engine used in the Mark I created copious amounts of smoke, which easily gave away its position. Ricardo was asked to look at the problem and decided that a new engine was needed. It was Ricardo's design that went into production and it was manufactured by several companies for the War Department. The new engine was cleaner running and much more powerful, his new six-cylinder engine producing 150hp, compared with 105hp of the previous engine. Later modifications produced 225hp and 260hp. By April 1917, production was up to 100 units a week and a total of over 8,000 were finally in military service. It was the first British-designed engine to be produced in large numbers. The Mark IX tank, as well as the British version of the Mark VIII, also used a Ricardo engine. In addition to being fitted to tanks, several hundred of the 150hp engines were used in France for providing power and lighting for base workshops, hospitals, camps, etc.

By 1917, Prof. Bertram Hopkinson was Technical Director at the Air Ministry, and invited him to join the new engine research facility at the Department of Military Aeronautics, later to become the Royal Aircraft Establishment.

In 1918 Hopkinson was killed while flying a Bristol Fighter and Ricardo took over his position. From that point on the department produced a string of experimental engines and research reports that constantly drove the British, and world, engine industry.

One of his first major research projects was on the problems of pre-ignition. He built a unique variable-compression test engine which led to the development of an octane rating system for fuels, and considerable investment into additives and refining systems. The dramatic reduction in fuel use as a result of higher-octane fuel was directly responsible for allowing Alcock and Brown to fly the Atlantic in their Vickers Vimy bomber adapted with his modifications. In 1919, Ricardo realised that turbulence within the combustion chamber increased flame travel, and that he could achieve this by offsetting the cylinder head. He also realised that making the chamber as compact as possible would reduce the distance that the flame had to travel and the likelihood of detonation. He later developed the induction swirl chamber, an attempt to achieve orderly air motion in a diesel engine. The swirl was initiated by inclined ports and accentuated by forcing the air into a small cylindrical volume. Finally, he developed the compression swirl chamber for diesel engines. This design embodied intense swirl with a reasonable rate of pressure rise and good fuel consumption.

]

Ed – There is too much left to say about the life of this man whose work continues to touch the lives of anyone who uses and internal combustion engine. Continued next month.

Calendar of Events

Key. CN = Club Night. E = Event

May 24-26th E. **Selwood Rally**. Southwick Nr Trowbridge.
 June 21/22nd E. **Wessex Midsummer Vintage Gathering**,
 Semington
 June 21/22nd E. **29th 1000 Engine Rally**, Astle Park.
 June 30th CN. To Be Announced
 July 19/20th E. **West Oxen Steam & Vintage Show**. Ducklington,
 Whitney, OX29 7TY (off junction of A40/A415) Info: Gary Leach
 01993 700716
 July 19/20th E. **Much Marcle Steam Rally**. Rye Meadows near
 Ledbury. HR8 2LX Phone, Richard & Gareth Hall, 01452 840862
 July 28th CN. **Crank Up At The Court Hotel**
 Aug 18th CN. **Engines At Wessex Events** Slide Show.
Early Because Of Bank Holiday.
 Sept 29th CN. Quiz. Anne Kempson As Quizmaster.
 Oct 11th Sat. **Wessex Autumn Sortout** At Cranmore Station.
 Oct 27th CN. **Engines at the 1000 Engine Rally** by Kim Siddom
 Nov 8th E. (Sat) **"Enstone" Autumn Sale. ***NEW VENUE*****
 Oakley Airfield. HP18 9JX. The new venue is 22 miles east of
 Enstone Airfield. Check the distance for you before you set off!
 info: Mrs. Anne Harris 01367 810415
 Nov 24th CN. **Decoys On Mendip, World War 11.**
 Talk by Mike Chipperfield
 Dec **No Club Night.**
 Dec 7th Sun. **Anti-Freeze Crank-Up** at Nunney Catch
 Dec 27th Sun. **Mince Pie Crank-Up** at The Court Hotel.
*This events calendar is prepared by the editor based upon the
 Wessex SEC calendar produced by Brian Baker.*

Engines Wanted

Hollycombe Working Steam Museum. Engines,
 engines with driven machinery and other
 exhibits. 24th-26th May. Contact Paul Rogers 10,
 Gwynne Road, Poole, Dorset. BH12 2AS.
 Remember to enclose an SAE, won't you?.

The Wessex SEC has been invited to take part in the
 The Bath Motor Pageant — Vintage, Historic and
 Classic Car and Motorcycle Exhibition
 on the 5 and 6 July at the Walcot Rugby Club
 Bath BA1 9BJ. There is plenty going on and they
 raised really good money for their chosen charity:
 For all enquiries please email nick@volly.co.uk or
hildegard.e@btinternet.com

For Sale

Bill Coombs (Radstock Area) is selling up. He
 has a lot of stuff to get rid of and far too much
 to list. He asks that interested parties ring him
 in the first instance on 01749 841220. He asks
 that you ring him before 7.30 in the evening.
 Callers after that time may well find
 themselves leaving a message!

Social news

Best Wishes and get well soon go out to Graham
 White our South Wales club member. Graham has
 had a spell in Newport Hospital and is home now
 recuperating and building himself up to get back on
 the Rally Field.

Chairman's Report

Friday 16th May, No report received

Brown & May Showmans Traction Engine's Of Devizes, Wiltshire.

By Eric Gay

The Brown & May Showman's engine's
 came from the design of the of the 4hp steam
 tractor in early 1906, later in the same year a
 drawings were prepared for a 6hp traction
 engine. The first engine of this design (build
 No. 7987) was not built until late in 1907 and
 was shown at the Smithfield Show in December
 of that year,. It was sold late in 1908 to a
 customer in Ireland, a testimonial from the
 owner could not praise this engine highly
 enough, part of the letter stating that "it is the
 best engine ever to reach the shores of Ireland".

In the second half of 1909 a new design
 this being a compound tractor cylinders were 4¹/₂"
 & 72' with a stroke of 12ins and rated at 5hp. The
 ordinary Traction version was very similar to
 the tractor except for the compound cylinders
 and motion. Being a compound, the boiler was
 modified to stand a pressure of 200psi. The
 compound was also fitted with a mechanical
 boiler pump and one injector, unlike the
 single cylinder tractor having two injectors fitted
 and no pump.

The Showman's version had the boiler
 increased in length by 13" and it was fitted with
 larger & wider wheels. Belly tanks and a
 canopy were a standard part of the design.
 Plates for mounting the Dynamo were riveted
 to each side of the smoke box cross supports
 and a flat bed plate made up. At a later date
 this was redesigned and a curved mounting
 bracket fitted.

The first 5hp compound Showman's
 Engine went to the firm of Henry Jennings of
 Devizes and had the name of "Little Jim" this
 was after Henry Jennings' son James. It would
 seem that the engine was delivered at the
 village of Enford, the fete at the village being on
 at that time. Henry must have had some spare
 cash, as the engine was finished to a very high
 standard with very ornate decoration. This engine
 did great service for Jennings as it was in
 their ownership in 1910 and did not leave until
 some time around 1933.

Two more engines of this type were built
 with the same type of dynamo bracket No.
 8437, named "Rambler" and the other No. 8613
 "Pride of The North". I believe "Rambler" went
 to a customer in Lancashire, while "Pride Of
 The North" was sold away to Cheshire.

Around four other Showman's Engines
 left the works before the closure in 1913, they
 all had the modified dynamo bracket, now

iveted to the top of the smoke box. These were numbers 8439, 8469, 8643 and 8685.

The last two Showman's Engines were built in between 1911 and 1912 this being designed as a 6hp Compound Engine. The first went away to John Gale of Winchester No. 8582 named "Holly King" and the last built by Brown & May was the "General Buller", I am led to believe that this engine is the only surviving Brown & May Showman's Engine and has been in the same family ownership from new. In 1913 at the close of the works a further 6hp Compound engine was under construction which was later completed by Taskers of Andover. I cannot at this time say whether or not it was completed as a Showman's engine.

Although best known for the range of portable steam engines Brown & May built many fine road steam vehicles, Traction Engines, Steam Tractors, Steam lorries (not a great success) and even a Steam Car along with a great range of other products.

Some years ago I was lucky enough to spend many hours on a Brown and May engine at the Great Dorset Steam Fair.

I hope very much that we may have some Brown & May Portable engines at our Wessex show at Semington this year.

Lambourn Spring Country Show

By Robin Lambert

Held at Woodland St Mary just two miles off M4 Junction 14 this was to be our first Rally of the year. It would have been our second if Mells had not been cancelled! Talking of Mells, there was a Mini Event that took place on Easter Monday held in the Barn just off the High Street with a bouncy castle for the children and a few bands playing but that was it! The field we would normally have used had a few lines of cars parked up which I am sure would not have had any traction problems at all.

Well, I digress, back to Lambourn. We arrived mid-day on Saturday in glorious sunshine and were gobsmacked to find that our only way in was to be on the end of a tow rope. The field looked in perfect condition but was spongy under the nice green grass and any vehicle heavier than a car just sank and was stuck. All this was caused by very heavy rainfall which missed our neck of the woods and fell here even causing flooding in some Villages. The Organisers even considered calling the event off, but I am glad they didn't as on Sunday the visitor numbers were huge, Two very long lines of stationary engines on display, lots of vintage vehicles of all description's. Most ring events took place other than the classic cars as the tractors had churned things up a bit before the cars were due in the ring.

I did have a chat to one of the Stewards as to why they don't make this a two day event and he told me and he said it would cause problems with the animals as they would require feeding and watering

and the Land Agreement was they had to be out and clear of the field on Monday.

Talking of animals, two of our club members won some trophies in the bird and egg tent, Pauline and Gordon Guley took along some chickens and eggs and won some prizes, so well done to them.

There is always a good Auto Jumble here with 4 long lines of stalls. It was enough to quench the thirst of those who like turning over tons of bits looking for the little gem to make their day.

Well, before we knew it, the show was coming to an end, everyone was packing up and it was time to find a tow to tug us out of the ruts we had slowly sunk into. Our first tug was by club member Graham White (thank you Graham) but after he left we were in trouble again and Tony from the South Bristol Club came to our aid and we were slowly pulled out to the hard road from whence we drove on to Suffolk some 170 miles up the motorway for a family Visit.

"I'm Very Well Thank you"

by Albert (sorry, ed)

I've nothing the matter with me
I'm as healthy as can be
I have arthritis in both my knees
And I walk and talk with a wheeze
My pulse is weak, my blood is thin
But I'm very well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I shouldn't be able to walk up the street
Sleep is denied me night after night
But every morning I find I'm alright
My memory is fading, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

How did I know my youth is all spent
Well, my "get up and go" has got up and went
The moral is this as the tale unfolds
That for you and me, who are now growing old
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a smile
Than to let folks know the shape you're in

But I really don't mind, when I think with a grin
Of all the grand places my "get up" has bin!
Old age is golden I've heard it said
But sometimes I wonder, as I get into bed
With my ears in the drawer, my teeth in a cup
And my eyes on the table for when I get up.

Ere sleep overtakes me, I say to myself
"Is there anything else I should leave on the shelf?"
When I was young, my slippers were red
I could kick up my heels right over my head
When I was older my slippers were blue
But still I could dance the whole night through.

Now I am old my slippers are black
I walk to the stores, and puff my way back
I get up each morning and dust off my wits
To pick the paper and read the "Obits"
If my name is still missing, I know I'm not dead
And have a good breakfast - then go back to bed!