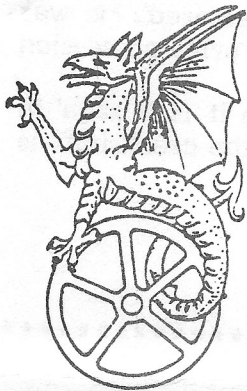


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1986

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AN AMANCO DISCOVERY

This saga began four days before Christmas 1985 with a knock on the door during the evening. Surely not more carol singers? At the door stood a tractor enthusiast acquaintance who thrust some raffle tickets into my hand. 'Can't stop' he said, 'but there's an address on the back you may be interested in; it's an Amanco of some sort'. Off he shot, into the night.

Now I've been after one of those machine for years; even offered to take Tony Jones' off his hands but he was not keen. Can't think why! I studied the name of the village on the raffle ticket but could not place it; there was no telephone number and all I had to go on was that it was in the Newbury area. Out came all the maps, yes all of them, but no joy. At work I had an inspired idea, try the reference library - so one the way home I called in and after a long search found it about in the middle of a field.

The seasonal festivities then took over for a few days, days for me of waiting, wondering if it was still there, was it ever there, had someone nipped in before me and snapped it up? - this has happened to me before. (And so say all of us.....Ed!) How could I find an excuse to get around the Newbury area? Simple really, I had a brilliant idea; the Sales start right after Christmas so I made a simple suggestion to my wife and daughter that they should pay Newbury a visit and have a look whereupon I would nip back to try to find the village and locate the engine.

On the appointed day all began well, the two shoppers were deposited in the town and after a search I found the village. I must have passed through it a dozen times and at last I spotted human life in a cottage garden. I was then directed to a spot half a mile or so away finding a remote house in a field.

A woman answered my knock on the door. 'Has your husband an engine for sale? I asked. She replied 'Yes'. 'Is it sold and can I see it?' I asked. 'No, he's gone out' she said, 'but he will be back about five o'clock'. Eventually I discovered that they had just had the phone installed so I wrote down the number intending to ring that same evening. By now my wife and daughter must have been getting very cold so I nipped back to Newbury to collect them. 'Did you get it?' was the first question to which I mumbled a disappointed 'No'. That evening I made the call. He still had the engine and so I enquired what his asking price was. 'Well' he said, 'before we go into all that, it has got a damaged cylinder but everything else is OK'. Thoughts flashed through my mind, how bad is the damage, is it holes caused by frost? 'The gudgeon pin came loose and scored the bore down one side' the man said. It was arranged for me to travel down the next Sunday to see the engine. It was a freezing cold January day with the roads covered in ice. On my arrival I was taken to a shed where we unlocked the door and then forced it open. Behold.....an Amanco 2½ hp Hired Man, filthy dirty and with its flywheels sunk into the frozen dirt floor.

We heaved it up onto a block and I checked it over. The low-tension mag was all there and OK, so was the ignitor, grease caps and all the small accessories. All that seemed to be missing was the fuel tank and crank guard and there was a small amount of compression. I noted the groove in the cylinder, decided that I could do something with it and, after a bit of haggling, the engine was mine. At last, after all these years....I owned an Amanco! I expect you all know the feeling of euphoria. I duly arranged to collect the Amanco on the following Sunday and as I set off homewards the snowflakes were falling fast.

The next Sunday saw the trailer dug out of hibernation and even though the snow had fallen all week, it would have taken more than a foot or so to have put me off my journey. At the house in the field the cash changed hands, then after much grunting and heaving, the engine was on board and I was off on my homeward way thinking as I watched the trailer in my mirror that the next time I see

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the engine in the trailer it will be all restored and off to its first rally. When I got home I was informed that it was dinner time and 'you can unload afterwards'. That afternoon, my neighbours were peering over the fence. 'Is that one of your engines?' I was asked. 'Yes' I replied 'but that's how they look when I get them, now come around and see what they look like when they are restored'. He was decidedly impressed, so I managed to talk him into helping me lift the newly acquired prize possession out of the trailer.

As for the restoration.....look out for a report on that at a later date because it is a 'saga' in itself....! By the way, can anyone help with dating the engine for me? The number on the crankshaft is 138317.

Jim Miller

(Thank's Jim, we await 'part two' with great interest....Ed.)

WESSEX ENGINES: No.2 - The Yorkshire 'TTR'

As its name suggests, this engine was produced in the North of England and is thus instantly recognisable by its distinctive exhaust note. It features a 'book type' mag. which speaks volumes for its reliability. This latter quality has caused it to become locally known as the 'President', a name which we hope will stick for many years to come. Has had some use in the boot and shoe industry, then was used in a local foundry powering machinery for casting road-studs for a Middle Eastern Motorway project. Was used for a short period for winding G-strings for banjos and by Morris for a somewhat obscure purpose, probably to do with the laundering of the company's white boiler suits. It is feared that in this capacity the engine was allowed to jump around a lot. The Wessex example is often seen nowadays at rallies driving a Sovereign Grinder and although this is believed to be for 'display purposes' only, there always seems to be plenty of raw material being processed. When not on the rallyfield, the 'TTR' is in regular use either in producing the raw material for silence in libraries or for mixing concrete on a building site. In short, a popular and versatile engine.

Emerson Brantingham

CASTLE CARY CAVALCADE OF MOTORING 1986. Sunday, 13th July

Held on the John Pither Memorial Field, just off the town centre, this was my first time exhibiting at this show and I must say how impressed I was. Although the rally is not officially open until 1.00 p.m. most of the exhibitors were in position by 11.00 o'clock.

There were almost 150 entries in the excellent 25p programme to keep the public busy all afternoon, plus a car boot sale, five different car classes, commercial vehicles, motorcycles, tractors, fire engines, military trucks and stationary engines; most of which were very nicely restored.

Castle Cary Scout & Guide Band played in the arena and then led the procession of vehicles around the town, and back again. This left the field practically empty except for the stationary engines of which there were 22 of all types, some driving equipment and doing the job they were supposed to do.

When all the vehicles had returned to the park, a presentation of trophies took place to all classes, by Count de Salis. Brian Verrall won the Best Stationary Engine with a 1926 Stuart, that he and Mary had entered. Wessex S.E.C. member, Dave Stickland, took charge of the Stationary Engine Section and, I believe, gave the cup which was quite magnificent. Thanks to Dave and all the other organisers for a very enjoyable day out.

Robin Lambert

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

The following two Committee members have recently moved house and their new addresses are as follows:-

Hon.Secretary: Shirley Gale, 18 Church Lane, North Bradley, Trowbridge, Wilts. BA1 40TF. Tel. Trowbridge 67095
Cttee.Member: Michael Cannon, Conifer Cottage, School Lane, Northend, Batheaston, Bath. Tel.539536 (24 hr. answering).

THIS N' THAT

Has anyone heard the tale of a Wessex member who rallied in Holland this year only to strain his shoulder with the starting handle at the first rally and thus relegating him to 'spectator' status for the remainder of his stay? We hear that in spite of his injuries, however, he thoroughly enjoyed his holiday.

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The most enjoyable skittles match versus the South Somerset Club (when we lost ignominiously) is being negotiated again for a return match during the winter months. This advance warning is to give you all plenty of time to practice in!

3. Overheard on the rallyfield; 'those Petter Apple-Top engines are a bit like women, attractive and very desirable - except when they smoke.....!'

At an auction in Cornwall recently, a well restored Lister F-type in Class 1 condition made £70 or so, whilst an E-B 3 hp, as found and with many vital parts missing, sold for £400. It is reported by one of our members that a lady bystander was heard to ask her male companion whatever possessed anyone to pay that for a lot of old rust when they could have had the Lister for so much less.....! This peculiar sense of values immediately singled her out as a NON-enthusiast!

The Castle Cary free 'newspaper', the Visitor, is renowned locally for its oblique views on local events. In its report of the Castle Cary Cavalcade of Motoring (which, by the way, our members who entered, found most enjoyable) some comment was made about the entrants judging themselves. The WSEC pioneered this method of judging which has been adopted by many other clubs and societies as the fairest method in respect of the multiplicity of makes and models of engines. It seems, therefore, that the Visitor, by its lack of insight, is a most unwelcome visitor into the world of the Stationary Engine enthusiast.

***** THE MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting on the 28th July was not very well attended due to holidays, etc. To all those who missed it, you missed a treat. The evening opened with Brian Verrall taking the Chair owing to Robin being unable to attend. The entertainment for the evening was Mike Cannon's very interesting video showing the retrieval of a 6½ hp Blackstone engine from Davis' Cider Mill at Sutton Montis. He was ably aided and abetted by Phil Harris and Brian Verrall with Jane capturing the action with the video camera.

It seems that the engine was made in about 1906/7 and was bought to run the cider mill in season producing Davis' Gold Medal Cider. Between the seasons it was used to grind corn. The engine was due to be scrapped two years ago but the farmer became ill and did not get around to finalising the deal. Mike was able to buy it from the farmer's son.

When the engine was cleaned up, it ran on the fuel already in the tank - surely a good vintage at 20 years old! Soon, however, all the hard work began with Brian acting as working chargehand and Phil as technical adviser. Even Gemma the dog managed to get a look-in. Getting the engine out involved cutting the bolts holding it to the concrete base. It was then manoevered onto the waiting trailer with the aid of 2" rollers and a winch. All the time, the rain pelted down and as the tension mounted, the language became more colourfull (A few bleeps and cuts were made here I think for public viewing). Also discovered with the engine were two boxes of unused vital spare parts. Further problems arose at Mike's house which is perched on the side of a 1 in 6 hill. With a few more heaves and groans, eventually the engine was installed at its new home and soon announced its arrival to all the neighbours for miles around by merrily chugging away for 20 minutes or so. There is no film evidence to record how Mike and Jane coped when they moved house some two months later. (But I bet they got plenty of help from the aforementioned neighbours.....! Ed.).

After the interval, the raffle was drawn with Eric Gay winning a bottle of claret and the intrepid Cannon Duo winning an appropriate bottle of Vintage Cider. The second half of the evening was devoted to a video made by Ivo Peters for the BBC of the Somerset & Dorset Railway which ran from Bath to Bournemouth. The film opened with clips of Bath Green Park Station in the 50's and '60's showing the volume of steam traffic at that time.

The S & D was made up of the Dorset Central Railway and the Somerset Central Railway which merged at the end of the 19th century. The line was an important north-south link and was, perhaps, best known for its 'Pines Express'. The film showed some lovely shots of engines steaming away against a background of snow covered hills in 1963. We left the line at Evercreech Junction to make our way home through an evening more reminiscent of November than July.

This report was compiled and written at midnight to enable our Editor to keep an even tighter than usual printing schedule. Time and monthly deadlines waiteth for no man, least of all Newsletter editors.

Herb and Wendy Gane

***** FOR SALE

Lee and Howl Compactum Water Pump, very big - Offers. Also loving home required for my believed rare machine by Naylor & Co. Insufficient skill and time to finish to deservedly high standard required for such an artefact. Also a Sprite Caravan chassis suitable for conversion to 1½ tonne trailer c/w hitch and jockey-wheel unit. Tel Dave Stickland, Castle Cary 51395.

Lister 6½ hp type 83L, No.72091, complete - £100; Bosche type 22 trip magneto - £55; ML trip magneto - £35; two Wico A-series magnetos, fit Ruston Hornsby, Wolseley, Petter, etc. £20 each. Jim Anstee, Tel. Calne 813189.

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WANTED

Small Lister water pump for Lister D to drive - must be fair condition and complete. Stephen Butler aged 11, 152 Wyke Road, Trowbridge, Wilts. BA14 7NT. Tel. Trowbridge 64304.

Piston for Lister D-type. 0.030" oversize. G.Raymond, Tel. Trowbridge 64579.

Old cast-iron push along **lawn mowers** by collector. D. Stickland, tel.Castle Cary 51395.

Caravan style **swan-necked gas lamps** to help complete restoration of traditional style narrow-boat. Ian Marsh, Wolfson Laboratory, Bath University. Tel. Bath 826826, xtn.5675.

Details of **spray-cooling system**, drawings, photocopies, anything for a **Lister J-type**, 74J, 3 hp and also the **pulley** for the circulating pump for the spray cooling. John Woolard, Tel. Shepton Mallet 2496.

CLUB EVENTS

Sept.29. Talk by ex-racing driver and sales director for Villiers Engines Ltd Terry Sanger on his life in the engineering world, his racing activities, and much, much more.

Oct.11. Annual coach outing by double decker bus to the Exeter Maritime Museum. Price £4 per person; leaving Bath (London Road Bus Depot) at 7.30 a.m. via Radstock, Old Down Inn, Burrington Combe, Lower Weare and hence via A38 and M5 to Exeter. The forms were with last month's Newsletter. If you have mislaid yours please contact Shirley Gale. Return via Cat & Fiddle where varied menus are available and arriving back at Bath around 10 p.m. We can pick you up anywhere along the route, just let us know where when you book.

Oct.19. Car Boot Sales. We are running two at once; one at Great Mills, Trowbridge, the other at Presto, Worle, near W-s-M. Start at 10 a.m. and finish about 2 p.m. Price: £1.50 per car for members, £3 for non-WSEC.

Oct.27. 'Old Farming' a talk by Jim Wilkey, illus.by films, at the Old Down Inn, Emborough.

Nov.1. Wessex Social Evening at the Chilcompton Village Hall. The menu will be attached to the September Newsletter with a booking form. Catering this year will be a semi-Buffer style supper in an attempt to keep the cost to a minimum and we will be running a bar with limited popular drinks. We would be most grateful for any willing lady members to volunteer to assist with the food early on the night, both preparation and distribution. Please telephone Shirley Gale on Trowbridge 67095. Entertainment is that popular and versatile musical comedy act - Al Fresco who delighted so many of us at the Club Rally.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Aug. 30	Wells Royal British Legion Field Day & Flower Show at the Recreational Field. Entries are invited from Stationary engine owners so if you have an afternoon to spare ring G.C.Martin on Wells 75756.
Aug. 25	Corsley Show, between Frome and Warminster, if you wish to attend and exhibit you engine ring Robin Lambert on Frome 63526.
Sept. 6/7	Liskeard Steam & Vintage Rally; if you are down in the Duchy on holiday this is a very popular event and worth a visit.
Sept. 6/7	'Yesterdays Farming', at Manor Farm, Long Sutton, Langport. Entries have closed but it is a most enjoyable day out for all the family.
Sept.28	Full Quart Crank Up at Hewish near Weston-super-Mare. This rally is renowned for its friendly atmosphere and its variety of interesting engines, super Pub lunches, stalls, vintage cars, etc. Proceeds to Cancer & Leukaemia in Childhood Trust (CLIC).
Sept. 20/21	N.Somerset NVETC Rally and Ploughing Match at Grove Farm, Backwell, near Bristol. Details from Mrs. M. Hill, Ridings Farm, Dundry.

The Newsletter is **DESPERATE** for reports, news, views, adverts, etc. Come on all you regular rally goers; surely the last rally you attended was worthy of putting pen to paper? Send your report to Eric Brain, Newsletter Editor, 5 Greenridge, Clutton, Near Bristol or phone your advert - Temple Cloud (0761)52633.