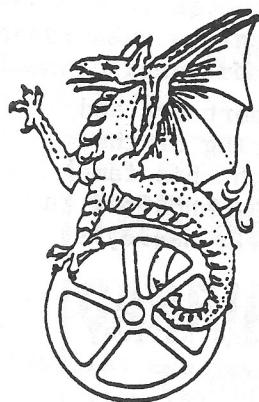


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1991.

Please send newsletter material to:-
Robin Lambert,
15 Beechwood Avenue,
FROME,
Somerset.
BA11 2AX.

Tel. (0373) 463526.

The material in this Newsletter shall not be reproduced without prior consent and due reference to the Wessex Stationary Engine Club. Opinions expressed herein so not necessarily reflect the policies of the Club. All rights reserved.

CHAIRMAN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

On behalf of the Wessex Stationary Engine Club Committee and myself I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members all the very best for Christmas and the coming year and we look forward to seeing you all at club meetings and rallies throughout 1992.

BRIAN

WHERE DID 1991 GO.

For me it went by much too quickly and no doubt it did for many of you, it doesn't seem long ago that I sat down with Bill, just after Christmas and we planned our year out around the kitchen table, always a nice time is this as we reminisce the past year and look forward to the new one, and before you know it its all gone by. All in all '91 was a good year, not too many shows were washed out with rain, even we had a wet day at Cheddar but we should be able to recall more fine days than wet ones.

Lots of activities took place at the Old Down Inn and varied from the Crank-Ups to Model evenings and illustrated talks, not forgetting our skittle evening against the South Somerset Club at Pilton. There was a trip to Lister's factory and the visit to Blagdon Pumping Station and we shouldn't forget who organised all this plus more, yes our committee, well done to them.

On a light hearted look '91 was the year the editor had the arm of his chair vandalised at Shepton Mallet Show by a very excited club member expressing himself, he has since paid a penance for this dastardly deed by means of swinging his 5hp Victoria twenty times on full compression each night for a month. '91 was also the year of the flying cow frisbies, easily mistaken for a UFO until you spotted the two legged launching mechanism clearing a space for their camper, and finally the most wicked deed was the theft of Dave's Large loo tent while parked at the Dorset Steam Fair. May lightning strike it every time its used!!!!

Should you think your temporary editor, (yes the job is still going if there are any takers) has been waffling on a bit, its because with four pages a A4 paper to fill once a month it takes a bit of doing especially when the winter months come along and there's not much happening. We are all very much indebted to our regular newsletter contributors and even the occasional ones, no matter how big or small, it does keep our newsletter alive so please don't give up in 1992 keep putting your pen to paper with your rally reports, projects, for sale and wanted, anything you feel would be of interest, don't worry if you are not too good at writing or spelling, you should see mine before Jackie sorts it out. I would like to thank everyone involved with producing the newsletter, Jackie for doing the proof, Mary Butler for her patience and skill in typing the finished article, Reg for all the miles he travels bringing it back to me to take it to the printer and not forgetting Marg and Bill Appleby who send it out to the members and have to lick all those stamps and then take them to the post Office.

Look forward to hearing from you in 1992.

Best Wishes Rob.

(2)
THE 'VICTORIA' ENGINES

A brief history of the Bristol Wagon and Carriage Works Co. Ltd.

The Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works Company was formed around 1851 by Albert Fry and John Fowler in Temple Street, Bristol. The partners were both Quakers, Fry being of the famous chocolate manufacturing family. Fowler left after four years and sought his fame making steam ploughing engines so Albert Fry and his brother Theodore set up a showroom in nearby Victoria Street. This well known Bristol landmark (latterly occupied by Henley's) was demolished in 1966 to make way for the new flyover.

The company's factory expanded on a twelve acre site adjoining the Midland Railway station on Lawrence Hill where its main products were rolling stock for the various railway companies. One such company was the now forgotten Lynton and Barnstaple light railway. They also produced agricultural wagons of many types which led on naturally to motor bodies for the dawning 'new age' of the internal combustion engine. It may be worth mentioning at this point that the Wagon and Carriage Works had no connection with the Tramways and Carriage Works Company which was set up by George White (later Sir George) to help provide cheap public transport in the city, chiefly to his aeroplane factory in Filton.

The Wagon Works (as it was called locally) was well set up to produce engines; it had all the facilities including a foundry and a wood-working shop, not to mention close ties with the agricultural trade and a nearby rail siding. The first engine was a 4½ hp and was exhibited at the Smithfield Show in November, 1906. Only a few examples now exist, the best known one being that of Bill Appleby which, although its date is not known, must be pre-1909 since that is about when the style changed to the 'flat-topped' cylinder. Early engines had coil and battery ignition which continued for a while after magnetos were introduced with the new style cylinder. At this time, the carburettor was changed, the long intake tube was shortened and the mag. was rear mounted. Soon after the horse power was re-rated (in 1908) to 5 hp, a new model 3 hp was introduced followed by a 7 hp version and, in the following year, a 10 hp. Later on, around 1912, a 1½ hp hopper-cooled model was shown at the North Somerset Show as part of a pumping set destined for Cox's Cave, Cheddar.

The 5 hp version and its Kerosene fuelled variant were the most common engines and they were produced with only minor changes right through to the demise of the company in 1924. The 1½ hp was, and still is, the most uncommon while just a handful of 7 hp survive today. Does anyone know of a 10 hp?

Talking of survival rate, at one time to own a Victoria was to own a very rare engine but nowadays even though they are not too common a sight on the rally field it is surprising how many are in the hands of preservationists. At the recent Fairford Sale, a handful of enthusiasts within touching distance of each other owned nearly twenty engines from the Lawrence Hill works between them....! Time perhaps for a one-make rally.....in Bristol?

Dating these engines can be almost impossible as the Wagon Works' agents seem to have changed and reconditioned parts irrespective and without reference to serial numbers. Features and 'crank-end' numbers seem muddled and cannot be relied on as to date. However, one date is certain; the works was sold on Thursday, July 24th, 1924 at 3.00 pm 'precisely', having been acquired by the Leeds Forge Company in 1921. The agricultural dealership side of the business ran on supplying farmers throughout the West on an agency basis until after the Second War. My late father used to collect machinery from them with his haulage business within my memory but I feel sure that was from somewhere in Bedminster or Ashton. I have documentary evidence that engines were still being supplied late in 1922.....but at greatly discounted prices.

Finally, one point of interest. Should you pay a visit to Bristol's most famous feature - Brunel's great bridge over the Avon Gorge, take note as you sit to rest and admire the bridge, the public benches around the Downs near the bridge all bear the makers name proudly cast in for posterity.... Yes you've guessed it... The Bristol Wagon Works!

ERIC G. BRAIN

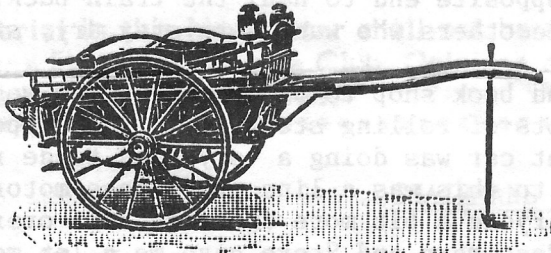
Nov. 24th 1991.

See sheet 3.

We usually associate the Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works with the famous range of Victoria stationary engines, but of course there was another side of the business making wagons of all descriptions from dog carts to horse drawn Black Marias. ED.

THE BRISTOL WAGON & CARRIAGE WORKS Co. Ltd.

LAWRENCE HILL, BRISTOL.
Makers of Light Spring Floats.



FARM CARTS AND WAGONS, DOG CARTS,
PHAETONS, AND OTHER CARRIAGES.

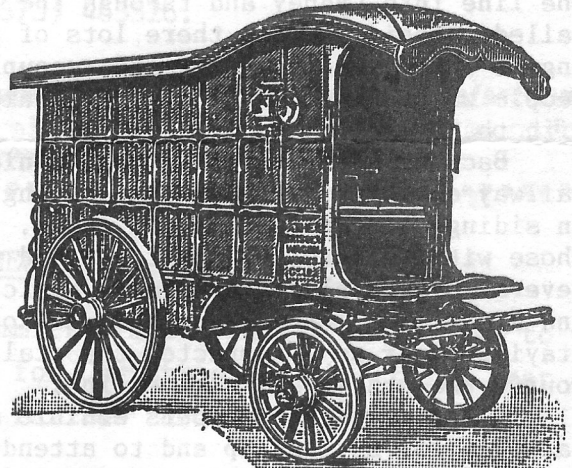
Full Catalogue, the Largest and most Comprehensive in the Trade. Free on Application.

Also Builders of Motor Trolleys,
Wagons, &c., of the latest designs, and
suitable for all purposes.

Chief Offices and Works—Lawrence Hill, Bristol.
Showrooms—Victoria Street, Bristol.
London Offices—15 Victoria St., Westminster, S.W.

THE BRISTOL WAGON & CARRIAGE WORKS Co. Ltd.

LAWRENCE HILL, BRISTOL.



The 'HEATON' GAME VAN,
as supplied to H.M. the King.

Shooting Carts and Vans, &c.

Please write for full particulars.

Chief Offices and Works—Lawrence Hill, Bristol.
Showrooms—Victoria Street, Bristol.
London Offices—15 Victoria St., Westminster, S.W.

B.W. & C.W.C. Ltd.

Those wishing to read in more detail about Victoria engines are advised to try 'Victoria' by Tim Macaire. The book details the model changes as best as it possibly can and distinguishes between the various models. Cheques to Tim Macaire, Mole Cottage, Southole, Hartland, Bideford, Devon. EX39 6HW. Only £4.50 including p & p.

Tim also produces a facimile reproduction of a Victoria sales brochure which is well detailed with pictures of all the models. The price can be found by writing to Tim at the address above but please enclose a S.A.E. This publication is highly recommended.

E.G.B.

INFORMATION WANTED.

On the correct paint colour for a Fairbanks Morse Eclipse Engine, if any of our club members know what to use please phone Brian Adaway on 0323 891234. He has just completed a major restoration on this engine and now wants to paint it.

FOR SALE - Fowler 1 PAH 1½HP Heavy Duty Type in a complete and restorable condition £50.
Please contact Philip Thornton-Evison, Greyfriars, Denchworth Road, Grove,
Wantage. 02357 69441.

CRANK-UP.

Friday 27th December at Nash's Timber Yard (Old Somerset & Dorset Railway goods yard) on the A371 between Shepton Mallet and Castle Cary from 10 o'clock onwards. Anyone welcome, free refreshments, mince pies, coffee etc. Enquiries Brian Baker 0749 342671.

Overheard in the Ladies Loo "..... and I saw this red smudge on his shirt collar so I asked him how it got there. He said 'it was when I was touching up Victoria.. Then I saw red - and walked out. Now you tell me Victoria's just some old engine...."

FOREST OF DEAN RALLY - October 20th.

This rally is held at The Norchard Steam Centre, which is approximately one mile from Lydney. It was to be a very interesting day for Jackie and myself. Totally ignoring the park and ride notices that were displayed all around the town of Lydney, I drove right up to the railway entrance only to be told that there is no room for visitors to park owing to all available space being taken up by exhibits etc. and was asked by a nice man on the gate 'Didn't you see all the park and rides notices around the town' !! Feeling somewhat sheepish and frustrated I drove back down to the large town car park, had a quick brew up then stood by one of the temporary bus stops, which was a rally visitors pick up point for the multitude of vintage buses ferrying people to and from the show.

Once inside the rally site the weather started to turn a bit foul so we decided to go for a ride in the steam railway and hopefully leave looking at the outdoor exhibits to when and if the rain stopped. A little 0-6-0 tank engine pulled several packed carriages down the line into Lydney and through the level crossing gates in the town and on to a halt called Lakeside. Once there lots of people alighted to take photographs of the little engine which was uncoupled and recoupled at the opposite end to haul the train back, some people walked back and took the scenic route while others who wanted to stay dry, stayed with the train.

Back at the rally site and a nice museum and book shop to browse around as was the railway engineering workshops and engine shed, lots of rolling stock of various types parked in sidings, including a steam crane. A restaurant car was doing a very good trade refreshing those with thirsts and appetites and parked next to this was a line of vintage motor-cycles. Several organs played enjoyable music to give everyone a bit more cheer on this overcast and dismal day. A very welcome cup of tea with Reg, Mary and Steve gave me a lot more staying power as I inspected the stall area, vintage buses, lorries, cars, tractors and of course the stationary engine line.

A lot of Wessex members exhibit at this event and usually arrive at the show on Saturday for setting up and to attend an exhibitors evening on the Saturday, this I am told is most enjoyable as they are ferried to a local hostelry by vintage buses.

A very enjoyable day was spent at this rally and a bonus was the offer of a rally report from the London area 'Thank you Terry' this will help fill our newsletter pages during the winter months.

ROBIN.

CLUB SOCIAL EVENING - Saturday 23rd November.

Held at North Bradley Village Hall, near Trowbridge, almost eighty club members and their guests attended our annual Social Evening. Some arrived in fancy dress which ranged from a very seductive looking french maid, Benny Hill's favourite character 'Captain Scuttle', Teddy Boys, a pirate, a nun and even the Vatican allowed the Pope out for the evening. The first part of the evening was spent getting our glasses charged and having a bop around on the dance floor to the sound of 'Idle Fret' the group that entertained us so well at Cheddar.

At 9.00 pm we all sat down to a lovely supper that had been prepared during the afternoon by Shirley and helpers. Eric was busy during the first hour selling raffle tickets and proceeded with the draw during the intermission. Lots of prizes were on the table, one of which I won and the rest were spread pretty evenly all around the hall. Eric also had a parade of all those in fancy dress and the best junior costume went to a mean looking pirate in the guise of William Rogers and best adult was Benny Hill dressed as Bob Hallam or was it the other way round!!!

The evening continued with almost everyone on the dance floor raving on to Buddy Holly, and head banging to Status Quo with a few smoochy numbers to finish up just after midnight.

A super evening was had and Herbie thanked everyone for coming and to everyone who had helped to put the evening together.

ED.

COMING NEXT MONTH.

'A Journey back in Time' - an article by Jeremy Adams.

Reports on November club meeting and the Anti-Freeze Crank-Up.