



WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

DECEMBER 2003

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NEWSLETTER



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THE CHAIRMAN AND THE COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL MEMBERS AND READERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR. AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL IN THE NEW YEAR AT THE WSEC EVENTS AND MEETINGS.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It seems impossible that it's the end of the year already and this is the last newsletter of 2003. Still on reflection on the past year it's been a successful one for the WSEC. Membership is at an all time high, the meetings and events have been successful and well supported, what more could we ask for. We have a very good programme mapped out for 2004, this is mainly thanks to the very hard work our secretary Arthur puts into finding the guest speakers and booking them to make the meetings at the Old Down Inn the success they are. I would like to thank the committee for the work they have done in the past year running the club on your behalf and I am sure they will continue the good work in the year to come. I would like to wish you all a very merry Xmas and a very happy new year.

ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

Member Reg Williamson from Wincanton rang me the other day to wish me a merry Christmas and to tell me he is going into hospital for a hip replacement. Reg has not enjoyed very good health in the past few years so we all hope his operation is successful and he makes a speedy recovery. We hope to see you out and about in the New Year Reg.

Dave Clack is home at present with a serious illness and would like members to visit him to relieve the boredom. Dave lives at 24 Wyke Road, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7NP. If you would like to visit please ring Dave or Shirley to make sure it is convenient, on 01225 761987. Go on surprise him with a visit.

John Godfrey of Shepton Mallet told me he is going into hospital for a replacement knee. (it's absolutely marvelous what they can do these days) We wish John all the best and hope he has a rapid recovery.

27th OCTOBER. CLUB NIGHT AT THE OLD DOWN INN.
AN ILLUSTRATED TALK ON THE BRISTOL WAGON &
CARRIAGE WORKS. BY ERIC BRAIN.

Our Chairman Brian opened the meeting by mentioning future club events including the Anti-Freeze Crank-up on the 7th December at Nunney Catch, and the Mince-Pie Crank-up which will be held one day later than usual on Sunday 28th December at the East Somerset Railway, Cranmore. He also mentioned how well the Vintage Jumble went, and we hope to plan others at the same venue next spring and autumn. He then introduced our guest speaker, Eric Brain. Eric started his talk by taking us back in time to the City of Bristol around the mid 1850's, he talked about the cobbled streets busy with horses and carts going about their business, and the mass of industry that was housed within the city. The industry he came to tell us about was that of Albert Fry and his brother Theodore who took over a business from Stratton and Hughes, and with his brother began to manufacture carts and wagons. They set up a new works at Lawrence Hill, Bristol, which was approximately a 13 acre site, in close proximity to the Midland Railway line which was to prove a big asset to them in moving completed products to almost anywhere in the country. The works was roughly split into two sections, one manufacturing wagons and carts and the other railway rolling stock of most descriptions. They even supplied all the wagons and carriages for the Lynton to Barnstable railway. The railway side of the business was huge as orders from all around the world came in as new railway networks were being built. The company probably initiated what we know today as portable containers that could be lifted from rail trucks to road transport. Many exports would have left via Bristol docks for destinations worldwide. Such was the magnitude of this business it kept 1500 men employed. Around 1906 came their involvement with the petrol engine, or the 'Victoria' as we collectors know them, they ranged in size from 1½ hp to 10 hp engines, although no 10hp engines seem to have survived, which raises the question were they ever made? The company had offices and showrooms in Victoria Street Bristol and sold other manufactures engines as well as their own, competition was great as Lister and Peter was making their mark with very well engineered machines. The 'Victoria' engines were quite heavy and crude but if looked after would run on forever as many have done right up to the present day. Soon, some we see on the rally field will be approaching their 100th birthday. The Bristol Wagon Works was an enterprising company and if there was money in it, they made it, and some of their products that Eric showed us included a very attractive cast iron garden bench, and an old fashioned mangle that our grandparents would have used to squeeze the water out of their washing. They also fitted car bodies to engines mounted on chassis that were imported to the works, Approximately 3500 stationary engines were thought to be made over a fifteen year period and a survey done about thirteen years ago located about 100 of these, a lot more will probably have come to light and will continue to do so. As Eric wound up his talk Brian thanked him for his very informative talk and slide show, and all those present showed their appreciation too. At half time our usual raffle took place, thanks goes to Christine who was selling the tickets, around thirty prizes were on offer. Thanks to all who brought prizes.

ROBIN.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE FOR 2004

Subscriptions are now due for 2004. Due to the recent increase in postal charges and an increase in our insurance premium the committee have decided to raise the subscriptions by just £1 to **£9 for a single and £11 for a double**. As this only means a rise of one pound it still represents extremely good value for money. The last time the subs were raised were several years ago. You must remember at the end of December unless you have renewed you will not be covered by insurance if you exhibit your engines.

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

MONDAY JANUARY 26th. Club night at the Old Down Inn. Guest speaker Martin Phippard giving a talk and slide show on The Great Alaskan Highway. This is the speaker who gave you "The Australian Road Train "This year

MONDAY FEBRUARY 23rd. 26th **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** at the Old Down Inn. Usual Raffle.

SATURDAY MARCH 6th. **SPRING VINTAGE SORTOUT** at Cranmore Railway Station.

A VISIT TO THE ANSON MUSEUM

BY
KIM SIDDORN

On a cool but sunny morning in October, I set out from Bristol to travel the 180 odd miles to the Anson Museum in Poynton, just south of Manchester. The website can be found at <http://www.enginemuseum.org/nindex.html> For those who have not been there, it is a great day out with many large engines (some twenty feet high!) and associated exhibits situated in the old workshops of the long closed coal pit. My photos can be seen on the internet at <http://community.webshots.com/album/96930201gubYns> Although not well advertised, there were far more people there than I expected and I'd say around 150 at two o'clock, but others came as early arrivals departed. It was actually hard to find somewhere to park the cars! Entry and car parking is free and all are made to feel welcome to wander about and soak up the atmosphere. At one point I was bracketed by two big four cylinder Gardeners and sat watching the 4FMH as the knife edges opened and failed to open the inlet valves. With it's HT magneto, spark plugs AND heated inlet chests to keep the paraffin vaporised it must surely be the most complicated and elegant solution to using paraffin as a viable fuel. This engine was recently featured in SE magazine. The 4T5 Port Build Gardener is a hot tube two stroke engine, designed principally for marine use/ Some eight feet high and fifteen feet long, it requires some 15-20 minutes of pre-heating before the 200 psi air start will fire it up. Driving a Heenan and Froude water brake, it is as impressive as one might expect. Both were a credit to their builders and to Roger Gardener, the man who renovated them. The sound and smell of these two big engines surrounded me and was very evocative of a bygone age. Various big oil and gas engines were tuffing away to themselves in both main halls and all the important British manufactures are well represented. The earliest engine on exhibition is a Crossley brothers inverted vertical engine, S/N 9839 dispatched from the works on 30th June 1886 and going to a Mr J W Dawson of Sheffield. This engine originally employed slide valve flame ignition, was then modified with hot tube ignition for ease of starting. The engine has now been re-converted and is as it was when it left the factory. It was running all the time I was at the museum. A side gallery had several running model engines on display, both internal and external combustion. Outside, a well patined (not to say mossy!) Blackstone hot tube gas engine with a fourteen inch bore at first resisted the attempts of four stalwart souls to make it run, but it gave in eventually and then – of course – ran without missing a beat until it was turned off. There was a small engine display, such as one might find at any event or rally with (for instance) a MarVil varient rigged up to a compressor pumping air through water in a milk bottle! Simple, but an effective way of showing what it was doing. There were perhaps ten engines being displayed, including two vintage lawnmowers. I was unable to resist the chance to snap up two iron horse engines from different vendors, both of which I had running the next day! They are not the usual WD generators, but a strap start and a kickstart stationary engines. They have interesting carbs, quite sophisticated and I've no doubt frugal. What looks like (and doubles as) a float chamber is also a main jet needle and crucial in adjustment. I can tuck them under my arm, a real consideration as one gets older;o)). I am a regular contributor to the stationary engine Newsgroup <uk.rec.engines.stationary>- which I thoroughly recommend to every member of Wessex – was pleased to be able to put faces to a few names during my visit. Geoff Challinor, the curator, had his birthday on the Saturday (I was there on Sunday only) and I suspect that he could have had no better present than to see so many people of all ages appeared at his museum (and I use the term advisedly) more or less at the drop of a hat. He well deserves any success and praise that might come his way and how he has achieved what he has with two pairs of hands and a coterie of willing volunteers is a mystery to me. Although a long trip from Bristol, it is well worth the journey. It would make an ideal coach trip destination in winter or summer and I recommend it to you all.

***** BIRTHDAY GREETINGS *****

The club would like to wish many happy returns of the day to Jonathon Hockedy, our "Junior Reporter" who was 16 years old on the 21st of November. Jonathon probably won't be in a position to do much reporting next year as he has to study for his exams. We wish you well and hope you achieve good results Jonathon. The club would also like to wish Cecil Gibley a very happy birthday as he reaches the grand age of 80 on the 22nd December. That is a very good excuse for a drink (or two) Cecil.



WESSEX MINDBENDER

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13 in a B D

12 D of C

18 H on a G C

S 16 and N B K

1, 2 B my S

G and the 3 B

57 H V

U F S N 13

30 D have S A J N

4 and 20 B B B in a P

7 B for 7 B

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

13 in a Bakers Day

18 holes on a Golf Course

Sweet 16 and never been kissed

Golden Locks and the 3 Bears

4 and 20 Black Birds Baked in a Pie

7 Brides for 7 Brothers

ANSWERS are all names or makes of stationary engines

Useful Bloke

Handyman

Delivered by the Coalman

They made Cash Registers

Close to Coventry

WAKWICK

Richard Burton married one

Alan Titchmarsh

GARDNER

Running through Bath

AVON

? Fairbanks (Actor)

She lived in Osborne House

VICTORIA

Type of potato

Actor who lived in Bates Motel

Mr Grimsdales friend

NORMAN

Religious Fellow

Please send all entries to Jackie Lambert, 15 Beechwood Avenue, Frome, Somerset BA11 2AX.
The winner will receive a **FREE** membership for 1 year and the winning name will be drawn out
At the January meeting 2004.

NAME.....BOB HALLAM.....
ADDRESS.....11 CHALFONT CLOSE.....
.....TROW BRIDGE.....