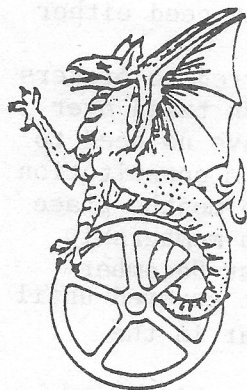


# WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 1990.



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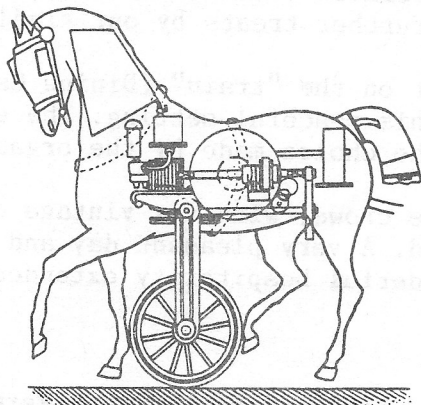
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### THE SPANNER.

Sorry but I've got to start with the annual reminder. Your subscriptions were due for renewal on the 1st January and if you have not paid up this will be the last Newsletter coming your way. While you may not be too put out by that, what should concern you is that you are no longer covered by the Club's insurance and hence any accident which affects you could cost you a tidy fortune. I believe that not all members realise that insurance cover ceases on 31st December of each year and absolutely no latitude is allowed. So you have been warned. The Secretary makes more of this point in the Committee Notes, so now you have been doubly warned.

On to more light hearted matters now. As a result of Tom Randall's item on motorised roller skates in the December Newsletter, Eric Brain has suggested we might investigate a motorised horse which he discovered in the 'History of Technology' published in 1958. Despite a much enlarged illustration of the one shown here I've not been able to work out how it was supposed to work, but if anyone is able to solve the mystery it would make a super exhibit at the Cheddar Rally. Come on Eric surprise us all.



*The petrol horse: a novel form of tractor  
patented in France in 1897.*

While on the subject of our Rally, it has been suggested that the Lister 'D' Economy Run be repeated on the Saturday with Wolseleys showing their paces on Sunday afternoon. In fact rosettes have already been ordered for the winners. It's not too early therefore to get your old faithful out from under its dust sheets and give it a trial run. Last year some hopeful competitors set their mixture too weak and their engines stopped. Others hoped for slow running, but set the governors too slow with the same result. One poor entrant discovered that the petrol pipe from his tank was above the half pint allowed, so he didn't get started even. I bet he doesn't let that happen again. Still now is the time to get them tuned up while there are no rallies to distract you. Who knows, perhaps we may have a record of something approaching two hours on half a pint.

Finally, I do not propose to publish lists of Rally dates this year as most will be available in the Stationary Engine. Dates of local events will however be advertised, so if organisers will provide details I will do the necessary. All part of the service folks.

That's the lot for this month,  
Cheers,

Claude Lowther.

January '90 Committee News.

This month's meeting covered the Cheddar Rally and arrangements for the AGM together with a couple of A.O.B.'s. (Any other business). The Rally is now taking shape, with children and 'young adults' occupations in hand. Advertising is being chased, and exhibitors cards etc. on the way to the printer. We have a sweet and candy floss stall organised, but need either a hot potato or fish and chip stand. Does anyone know of some tasty caterers?

Our insurance broker, Willis Wrigton has suggested our policy be transferred to brokers called Ronaldsway UK Limited at Clevedon. No reason, so presumably they've been taken over or reshuffled. We have been assured (no pun) our cover still stands and you have no need to worry. However it has been brought to the Committee's attention that the Club's constitution requires amendment regarding insurance. Currently it states that there is two months grace between Jan and March for renewing membership. While this may be true for Club membership it certainly is not the case for insurance cover. This cover ceases on the 31st December and although the Treasurer renews it on the 1st Jan individual members are not covered until they have paid their new subscription. Work is in hand to make this point clear in the constitution.

As has already been reported, the Committee should receive an influx of new blood and we will be looking forward to new faces and ideas, but at the same time be sad at not having the old stalwarts with us on Tuesdays.

Well, I think that's about it, Happy Rally form filling.

Shirley Gale Secretary.

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CLUB DIARY.

Mon. 26th March. Talk and demonstration by METALOCK LTD. on metal stitching.  
 Mon. 30th April. "Forty Questions".

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RALLY REPORTS.

15th & 16th October. Dean Forest Railway, Lydney.

I chose to attend this year as a visitor and leave 'Henry' at home. Having arrived on the Saturday morning, we were again treated with another afternoon tour of the Forest with visits to Coleford and Lydney, while in the evening we had further treats by our kindly hosts of a skittle match and buffet at the local hostelry.

Rally day dawned bright and clear, and after a breakfast on the "train" (Dining Car), I wandered through the sidings to see steam being raised in this peaceful setting. The exhibits of all kinds quickly filled the space, and on reflection, the choice made by the organisers was first class and very varied.

The day stayed fine and dry which pulled in a very large crowd, with six vintage coaches running a shuttle service between Lydney and the show ground. A very pleasant day and well run. My thanks to John White and George Booker for the wonderful hospitality extended to me as a non exhibitor.

1st October. west Huntspill Rally.

This newly formed Sedgemoor Vintage Machinery Group held an event at New Road Farm, West Huntspill near Highbridge where the farm is set out to cater for school and public visits to see the various poultry, waterfowl and wild life that are resident on the farm. The event was held in an orchard and an adjacent field where vehicles could parade around with safety. There was a wide selection of stationary engines with plenty of room to make the display more interesting. Far better than the congestion experience at some shows.

A good cross section of tractors represented the many well known makes, as was the display of cars, but I must say the cars excelled themselves by having two arrive at 4.15pm on Sunday afternoon. An organ gave the gathering a nice touch of atmosphere while a traction engine and a steam roller gave continuous displays in the field.

The largest exhibit was the Fordson Major and Showman's living van presented by Gerrard Boelens from the Netherlands which drew a constant flow of visitors.

In all a very pleasant and friendly atmosphere was created that made my visit a memorable one.

Brian Lovell.

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Having joined the Club a few years ago and as yet not attended any of your meetings I feel I should make an effort to contribute an item to your very informative Newsletter. So this is my recount of how I became interested in engines. When I was growing up in West Wales, an area which was mainly farming, steam powered threshing was an annual event and steam rollers were a daily sight. The local G.W.R. branch line was also steam and I spent many a happy hour just watching and listening. If I was lucky I had the occasional ride on the foot-plate when the engine was being taken back to the shed at the end of the day. Sadly all of this is no more, but my interest in steam is as strong as ever.

Sixteen years ago myself, wife and son had occasion to move to the Bath area from London suburbia and very soon discovered that we were in an area where steam rallies abounded. The first year we attended every rally within a radius of 30 - 40 miles. Steam engines were the main attraction, also vintage vehicles of every description. We became more selective as the years went by but still attended quite a few. Stourpaine has remained a regular and is a must every year.

Although steampower remains the main fascination of these events, I found I was being attracted more and more to that corner of the field where those other workhorses of days gone by were busy working away. Their noise and clatter became music to my ears and I found I was spending just as much time there as with the steamers. Inevitably I became hooked and on several occasions came very close to being the owner of a Lister D or something similar, but somehow not quite making it.

Then one day during a visit to my home town I met my brother, my interest in engines came into the conversation which prompted him to say that he had inherited an engine of some sort when he had bought his farm some 18 years previously. It was apparently tucked away in an outbuilding and had not been used in the time he had been there. Arrangements were made to unearth it and I began to get excited at the prospect of becoming the owner of an engine as yet with no identity.

When the engine finally came to light it was in quite a state but more or less complete, but it was not a Lister D. It was bigger and it had twin flywheels, removing some of the grime revealed a nameplate stating 'Bamford EG 2'. Needless price negotiations started immediately and ended up with a swap for a redundant stereo centre. It could be argued as to who got the better bargain. As a bonus a Lister H3 pump, in a similar condition to the engine was thrown in.

The engine's more recent history is unknown, but contact with a Mr. Richard Bamford of Cotton-in-the-Clay, Derbs revealed that it was delivered to a farmer in Llandeilo, Dyfed in August 1945, about 30 miles from my brother's farm. How it came to be in it's final resting place is unknown.

Chatting to numerous Bamford owners at various rallies and picking their brains for engine restoration information and taking photographs of their exhibits has been very useful. Our own Tom Randall has also been very supportive in this respect and was instrumental in me joining the Club.

Regarding the present state of the engine, most of it is still down in Wales. The valves have been ground in and the cylinder head reassembled. The magneto has been cleaned up and sparking reasonably well. The metal work has been painted and everything is ready for assembly. Sadly it will not be possible for me to exhibit the engine at any event, club or otherwise, this side of the Severn Bridge.

Since writing this article I have taken early retirement and am in the process of selling up and moving back to West Wales.

Fortunately they have a thriving club there so I am looking forward to many years of enjoyment in familiar surroundings.

W.O.R. EVANS.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Sat. 26th May. Approximately 12 engines are invited to attend a Charity Fete in aid of Cancer Research to be held at Oakfield Road School, Frome. Those wishing to attend please contact Mrs. Walton on Frome 64457 after 2.00pm.

Sat. 9th June. 10 to 15 stationary engines are invited to the Bradford on Avon Hospital Fete, starting at 1.30pm. Plaques will be given.

Please contact Tony Jones, 121 Marston Lane, Frome, BA11 4PW. Tel. Frome 65189.

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ONE MANS ENGINES.

One tends to start hobbies through unexpected circumstances, at least I do, and in 1979, having returned to England after over twenty years abroad I had built a house in Norfolk and made a good friend of my neighbour, a farmer with a large farm.

He called one spring day in 1980 and invited me to go to an Agricultural Rally at Wheeeting where some old time steam ploughing was to be seen. It was, but what so impressed me was a great line of stationary engines puffing away; there were all the old names I had known when I was serving my time on the bench, Lister, Wolseley, Bamford, Petter, Villiers, the lot. Most were in superb condition, perfectly restored by proud owners who had lavished blood, sweat and love on them.

I was enchanted, here was a perfect hobby that would compliment my existing pursuit of building precision models of factory engines, artillery peices and the like, here in petrol and oil form was the real thing. I clamoured for information and was told "Join a Club", then look around the farms for junk engines.

Full of enthusiasm, I applied my two basic rules to anything I don't know, First get all the books on the subject. Second find the local expert (there is always one about) take him out to a well oiled lunch and get him to talk his head off. As usual it worked, Norfolk had and has a very good Agricultural Preservation Society with a most impressive and large museum, with a curator who certainly knew his engines, the magazine 'The Stationary Engine' had an Editor who was an international figure and my farmer friend said "If its an engine you want there are a couple of Lister 'D' jobs, with water pumps, somewhere in the back of the Hall Farm hay barn".

I was in business.

The deal with my farmer friend was that if I fixed up both Listers, so that he had a spare water pump incase of power cuts, I got the other one for free. They were both very rusty, almost impossible to turn over, and both water pumps were solid. Mr. Lambert admitted that the last time either had been used was during the War, when put away they had been runners. My experience in the pre-war days, when I was a lad in the Welsh Hills with the hill farmers, was that no farmer ever throws anything away but would never dream of preservation or storage preparation and when he does dig the thing out and it won't go he is shocked because "It were alright when put it away".

However I had a good basic workshop with all the machines, I was both a turner and a welder and in the model game one worked to half a thou if needed. Things went well, I put in a over head gantry with chain blocks so that I could lift heavy stuff, (I was in my mid sixties with two artificial hips which was a bit of a handicap) and started in.

Soaking the engines in diesel oil freed all the stuck parts, the pistons were lapped into the bores with metal polish and the magnetos, after a spell of gentle cooking in the kitchen oven, came back to life. I had to change one set of points and both the silencers were beyond repair. This was no worry as I found that spares for Listers were easy to get and there seemed little difference in the basic bits no matter which year of Lister. The pumps were all brass working parts in cast iron bodies and once freed off and with valve seatings trued up were no problem. Two Norfolk clubs accepted my membership; they gave me good insurance cover to use at rallies and said "When you get problems there is always some Club member who can put you straight". Bless them all, they could not have been more helpful to me.

By the start of the 1981 season the Listers were like new (even gold transfers and layers of paint to the exact Lister shade).

I bought a trailer, stuck a tow bracket on the back of the Merc., and with some trepidation started off to my first rally.

To be continued.

Tony Adlington.

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THE MARKET PLACE.

WANTED. Float and needle for a 4hp AP or BP Ruston Hornsby.  
Graham White Tel. 0495 213523.

FOR SALE. 1935 Lister 'B' Trolley Mounted. Class 2. £80 Conord HO 1½hp on wooden trolley  
Class 2. £65. Petter Universal 2hp air cooled. Needs tank and starting  
handle. Unrestored. £50. Two Norman Twins, incomplete but with original hand-  
book. £15.

Brian Reekes, 43 Queens Road, Keynsham. Tel. Bristol 868549.

WANTED. Brass Door Bells to add to those I have thus making a complete scale. You will recall that 'is Lordship used to jangle them via long lenghts of wire and cranks to call the parlour maid to minister to his needs.....

Claude Lowther Tel. Temple Cloud (0761) 52714.

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