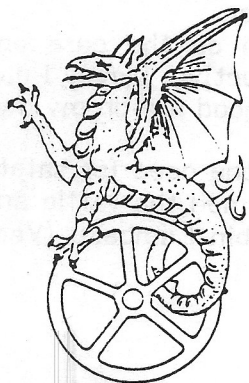


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

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THE CLUB DINNER & DANCE 1986 - held at Frome on December 14th

We set off from home in Bristol to travel the 25 or so miles to Frome for the annual Dinner Dance. This was our fifth such event and it made a welcome change on this occasion not to have to worry about freezing fog and ice; it was a damp mild night and there were quite a few members already at the Hall when we arrived.

Farmer John was setting up his Disco, how nice to be able to sit and chat to our friends without having to shout because of the music being too loud. Soon Herbie was in action selling his raffle tickets! I reckon he ought to run a National Lottery - the WSEC could then buy Westlands AND have enough over to pay off Liverpool City Council's debts!

After the toast to the Queen, we were served a meal starting with soup and followed by Roast Turkey and vegetables. With the meal we were served wine, much better than the sherry we have had in the past. The sweet was apple or mince pie with cream followed by cheese and biscuits, coffee and crackers; a four course meal with entertainment for £5.50 each can't be too bad.

Next came the speeches, one from our President, Tom Randall, who told us a little tale about his drains - Well done Tom; then one from Chairman, Robin Lambert, he told a tale of a rally in Wales. This featured two enginemen who pondered whether to go into a market stall run by the local WI. When one of the ladies came out and asked if they wished to go in, one engineman said 'Do you sell mags? - such as Wico or Lucas'. 'Oh no' came the reply 'but if you go in you may find some 'Mayfair' or 'Playboy'.....'

After the speeches, the music started and someone shouted that Father Christmas had arrived. No such luck, it was past Chairman, Ian Skuse, and his good lady, only 2 hours late - made some excuse that he only left Dover at 5.00 p.m. that evening. Luckily for them there was some food left.

In between the dancing, Herbie and myself executed the draw; as usual the prizes had been wrapped up beforehand to give no clue as to their identity which always makes it interesting. Prize winners were as follows: Spot prize (hidden under chair) Dennis Hodges. Lucky ticket, Lynda Pike - 28lb swedes; chocolates - Marg Appleby; chocolates - Wendy Gane; motorcycle book - Hazel Getsom; mincemeat - Chris Rogers; bottle of wine - Bill Foster; ditto - Sue Millard; biscuits - Lynda Pike; Martini - Roger Pike; Babycham - Mrs. Hallam; wine - Brenda Gregory; metal polish & duster - John Emery; powder & soap - Joanne Penny; chocolates - Mr. Millard; book - W. Connolly; box of apples - Diana Emery; turkey - Jackie Lambert; book of vintage cars - Mrs. Connolly; chocolates - Carol Skuse; **THE DREADED CORSETS** - Reg the Barman; sherry - Eric Gay; wine - Tom Randall; paper skeleton - Katie Weston. Grateful thanks to all those who donated prizes and helped in any way to the success of the evening.

After the draw we danced until midnight when Chris Rogers lost half her tights during Auld Lang Syne; we all thought she had commenced a strip show but no such luck - she had got hitched up on a nail in the floor!

All too soon it was time to pack up and head for home, this year at least there was no need to scrape windscreens free of ice.

A Happy New Year and a Dry Rally Season to you all.

Professor 'Punch' Munt ('That's the way to do it')

MONTHLY MEETING (November 25th) at the Old Down Inn
(Held over from last month due to seasonal deadlines!)

CHAINSAW MAINTENANCE

The speaker for the evening, Mr. Dudley Hollis, was unable to attend due to ill health so his place was taken by Brian Verrall with Stuart Ashman juggling the controls of the projector.

Two interesting films were shown which gave some useful information on the care and maintenance of chainsaws which I'm sure many found helpful, interesting and instructive. I know I did, because I invested in a new file from Brian and put my new-found knowledge to good use on my own saw the next day. What a difference - I wish I had seen the films years ago.

After the films, Brian gave a short talk on the use of chainsaws, stressing the need for safety precautions. Later, questions were asked and duly answered by Brian. Herb performed the raffle and the winners were:- wine - Hazel Getsom; biscuits - Bill Foster; crackers - Robin Lambert. (Very apt....Ed.).

Derrick Watts

PS. Does anyone agree with me that the instructor in the films resembled our Trowbridge member, Dave Clack? Ed.

THIS N' THAT

Those members owning or contemplating owning a Series Two Land Rover will be interested to know that a Club for these vehicles has recently been formed a covers Series 2 and 2a models between 1958 and 1971. The subscription year commences on 1st February and the secretary is Ross Floyd, 2 Brockley End Cottages, Cleeve, Nr. Bristol. BS19 4PP who will be pleased to furnish you with full details.

The Border Vintage Agricultural Association held their Annual Rally in conjunction with the Border Country Life Museum at Thurlestane Castle on Sunday October 6th. Our Northern correspondent, Andy Mercer, reports that it 'persistently rained all day'. However, there were some 80 engines, Land Rover Owners Club doing their thing on a piece of scrubland, and five horse-driving displays. Andy goes on to say that he has a photo of our Longleat Rally Secretary on his desk; there's nothing I can really add to that....!

Quote from 'Automobile engineer'....discussing the way cars of various countries have changed over the past 20 years or so.....'Back in the 1960's Americans were building cars that resembled a cross between Dolly Parton and a Saturn Missile. The British were building dull cars that didn't start in the rain. The German cars looked like they had been hatched. The Italians were driving their cars around mountain curves at up to 180mph whether the car was capable or not! The Japanese were making small plastic toys found in Christmas Crackers. Now, all that has changed.....except for the Italians; they are **still** enjoying their motoring....!!

Certain Wessex members were reported having been seen at COEPS Fairford Sale which, apparently, was a huge success. Two incomplete Amancos were withdrawn at £245 each, a restored Ruston Hornsby 5AP made £480, and International 1½ M-type made just £40, a Petter S of 5 hp, fully restored, made £190, whilst Lister D's varied from £11 up to £45. Engines at the lower end of the desirability spectrum were obtainable for £25 downwards to a mere coin of the realm. An enjoyable day out, congratulations to Doug Newton and the COEPS team.

Did anyone see the film 'Tess' dueing the Christmas period? Based on the Thomas Hardy Novel and set in Dorset just before the turn of the century, there were some good scenes whilst steam threshing took place. The twin flywheel steam portable engine sounded just great as it was working very hard but did anyone have any clue to its make? With the knowledge that this enjoyable TV film was made in France, not Dorset, has anyone any advance on the theory that the engine was a Societe Francais de Material Agricole et Industriel as can be seen almost exactly on the front cover of 'Farming with Steam' by Harold Bonnett, a Shire Publication.

Did Father Christmas bring **YOU** an engine to restore? Remember our Wessex Car Boot Sale at Trowbridge back in October - well there was a most unusual small power engine on one stall there. John Emery expressed an inordinate amount of interest in it, but could have kicked himself some weeks later when it was rumoured to have ended up at the Fairford Sale. Unknown to him, Diana had snapped up the Madison with myself acting as 'agent', i.e., barterer, transporter, packer and storage until Christmas. Of course, all this subterfuge needed class one security and the project generally was code-named 'vacuum-cleaner'. The Madison was packed in paper shreds and Flo-pak, entwined in holly as a gesture to the season and presented in a packing case with the lid securely screwed down. It was smuggled to 'Odstax' on Christmas Eve and hidden behind the tumble-drier. Next morning as the family unwrapped their gifts from the tree John was pleased to find that he had a large screwdriver among his presents. The attached note suggested that he used it to good purpose in the kitchen, this he did and was staggered to find the Madison which he never thought he'd see again. Restoration commenced Christmas Day so we hope to see the finished article soon on the Rallyfield.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery from the Wessex Stationary Engine Club to Mrs. Alan Sweet who, we hear, is recuperating from a recent illness.

The Wessex versus SSAPC skittles match, which was mentioned in a recent Newsletter, will be held at the Brook House Inn, near Castle Cary on either of the last two Saturday evenings in March, but this is yet to be confirmed at the time of going to press. A definite time and date will be announced as soon as we possibly can.

The Wessex Jumble Sale is to be at St. Petters Church Hall, Westfield, Norton-Radstock on Saturday, 15th March. Plenty of jumble, bric-a-brac, etc., would be most welcome as will be help on the day. Don't leave it all to the usual few, come along and help, it's great fun.

Yeovil Festival of Transport have at last 'come clean' and stated that they prefer the revenue from the Autojumble stalls to the display of Stationary Engines. It must be confessed that there never was much of a selection of engines but equally the quality of last year's 'autojumble' left a lot to be desired. It has been said that they wish to perpetuate the 'transport' theme; engines are not transport - but then 60% of the 'autojumble' last year had nothing to do with 'autos' either! However, they do invite tractor entries - tractormen, please have a long hard think before you make up your mind to enter.

By the way of reciprocation for the excellent Club Evening Meeting last November by George Hatt on 'Metal Model Miniatures', a group of our Committee led by our Chairman, Robin Lambert, are putting on a film show on 'Vintage Haulage and Stationary Engines' at Trowbridge Model Club on Monday, 3rd February.

JASON ROBSON - Early Pioneer of a Style of Two-Stroke Engine

Everyone reads about Otto and De Rochas and the four-stroke cycle, but very little seems to be recorded about a two-stroke designer, one James Robson.

He was born in 1833 in North Shields, the son of a builder and contractor. When he was 19 years old, Robson was experimenting with gas and air mixtures and their explosive qualities. By the time he was 22 he had won £500 for his ideas on fuel and combustion in a competition organised by the Steam coal Collieries Association of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In 1857, at the age of 24, he constructed his first experimental gas engine which became known as the 'cogwheel' engine. It was given this nickname because Robson utilised a spurwheel from a disused crane as a flywheel. The engine had a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " bore and a 6" stroke and worked by direct explosion on the underside of the piston. The inlet valve was controlled by a cam on the crankshaft and the exhaust valve by a bell-crank and rod from an excentric also on the crankshaft. This engine worked well but was destroyed when the gable end of Robson's workshop collapsed in 1865.

Robson's second engine was built in 1858; this being a vertical gas engine of three horse-power which was put to work on an 18" circular saw in his father's shop. Two more engines of this type were built and they were put to work in a printing works in North Shields.

In 1887, Robson took out a patent (No.2334) for an engine of the two-cycle compression type'. He only made the one example and used it to drive machine tools in his workshop until it was replaced by his 1879 patent type gas engines. All previous so-called two-strokes used one or more separate pumps for introducing the combustible mixture into the cylinder; however, the 1879 patent engine, whilst both ends of the cylinder were closed as in his previous engines, had a separate cylinder in which an amount of gas was retained and used via a valve mechanism for restarting purposes.

Michael Cannon (to be continued)

FIVE GALLONS OF TWO-STAR.....well the cost of it anyway! That's all it needs for a year's subscription to the Stationary Engine Magazine. Now into its twelfth year and indispensable to the real enthusiast. Recent copies have contained histories of Amanco, Douglas and Villiers; a biography of Sir Henry Ricardo; travels of a Petter installation engineer, sales reports and much, much more. How can any Wessex member fail to appreciate this locally-grown publication! Still only £9 p.a. by subscription from PPG Publishing Ltd., Kelsey House, 77 High Street, Beckenham, Kent. (Back numbers £1 each including p & p).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Club hereby give formal notice of the Annual General Meeting to take place at the Old Down Inn on Monday, 24th February at 8 p.m. prompt. This is the time for election/re-election of officers and a chance for YOU to air your views on the Club and its affairs. Should any vote be necessary, only fully paid-up members are eligible for voting; the subscription year ended on December 31st 1985 - have YOU paid your 1986 subscription yet?

During the latter part of the Agenda at the AGM, we invite comments on the following suggestions:-

1. Move the date of the Annual Dinner/Dance forward to around October in order that it remains a proper Dinner/Dance and less of a Christmas Party.
2. Do away with a December meeting altogether; most people are so busy with Christmas coming up fast in December that attendance is poor anyway.

The AGM will take its usual form, Jackie Lambert will be on hand to take 1986 subscriptions so if you haven't paid, this could be your last Newsletter....!

RALLY DIARY 1986

Wessex Rally at 'The Secret Underground City' Monkton Farleigh, near Bath will be on June 14/15. Tractor, engine, vintage motorcycles, cars - all welcome. Entry forms from Mrs. Jane Cannon, 19 Eagle Road, Batheaston, Bath.

Abbey Hill Steam Rally, May Day weekend - 3/4/5 May 1985

Bleadon Rally, 2/3 August

Bath Festival of Steam, 28/29 June. Entry forms and full details from Mr. M. Fleet, Plantation View, Sharpham Road, Cheddar, Somerset. Tel. 743921.

'Yesterday's Farming', this year at Manor Farm, Long Sutton, on 6/7 Sept. Details, entry forms, etc. from Brian Crudge, 22 Stoke Road, Taunton, Somt., TA1 3EJ.

The Great Dorset Steam Fair at Stourpaine will be held at Everley Hill, as last year on 28/31 August. Details from M.A. Oliver, Tel. 0258 860361.

Market Lavington Spring Fayre will be held on 25/26 May Bank Holiday weekend and details are available from John Kyte, 10 High Street, Market Lavington, Devizes, Wiltshire.

Abergavenny Rally is also on 25/26 May and details are available from Mr. & Mrs. M.A. Bray, 224 Underhill Crescent, Abergavenny, Gwent.

Please Note: when writing for details, most Rally Secretaries appreciate a sae and it saves time!

FOR SALE

Wolseley air-cooled petrol/kerosene engine, rev. rotation, good spark and complete. 1½-5 hp at 600-1500 rpm as illustrated in David Edgington's excellent and informative booklet 'Wolseley Engines' on p.16/17. £45 ono. Alan Sweet, Arch Cilla, Bread St., Pilton, Shepton Mallet, Somt. Tel. Pilton 586.

Flavel B700 caravan type cooker, 2 rings, grill and oven. As new and currently set up for North Sea gas but could run on Calor. £25. **Stainless** steel combined draining board, bowl and 2-ring plus grill caravan cooker made by 'Leisure Princess'. Used once only £24. **Stainless** steel hand basin, used but very good condition, suitable for a caravan £4. **Set** of white painted plywood cupboards 27" x 12" x 88". Just right for garage or workshop £12. Moving house only reason for sale. Kevin D. Whittle, 20 Woolley Drive, Bradford on Avon. Tel 2055.

WANTED

Complete Solex 26-FH carb. or at least the air strangler assembly for a Bamford EV3. Similar carb. from a Fowler will do. Desperate to complete restoration. Philip Thornton-Evison, Greyfriars, Denchworth Road, Grove, Oxon, OX12 0AT.

Magneto trip eccentric and mechanism for a 'Victoria' 5 hp or loan of parts to copy. Mr. Tom Jackson, Manor Farm, Shrivenham, near Cheltenham. Tel. 820408.

Fluorescent strip lights from caravan, 12 volts. Alan Sweet, Tel. Pilton (as above) 586.