

WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 1992.

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WINTER CRANK-UP Sunday December 1st.

I arrived at 10 o'clock on a rather misty morning to find sixteen engines already assembled. Brian Paul and Ray Baker had already roped off two enclosures and set up their four engines and pumps. Tom Randall had a book stall and brought his Bamford engine, by eleven o'clock there were twenty four engines, the youngest member Nathan Amos with a Petter 'M', Mike Bevan, Herbie Gane and Bill Coombes all with Amanco's, Eric Gay and Dave Austin with two stroke Petters also Roger Parkins with his Petter 'M', Mike Roberts and Adrian Miles - Lister 'D's, Stan Kerley with Petter AS, Adrain Grant a Bamford, Reg Butler-Fowler PA, John Brooks - Wolseley WD and Don Rogers with his Bulldog. Also with engines were Roger Pike, Brian Verrall and Derrick Watts. Roy Cox had a nice collection of steam models.

Roger Pike raffled a cake for C.L.I.C. which was won by Iris Roberts and our own club raffle had some pheasants donated by Bill Coombes and won by Herbie Gane with Tony Austin winning Scotch and Vic Walton crackers (hope this is not describing Vic's state of health!!!) Ed's typist.

If I have left anyone out I apologise. 3 o'clock came and everyone was on their way home after a most enjoyable day.

ROY POINTING.

ESSEX STEAM RALLY.

The eagle spread its wings and we had a go at the M25, we were heading for Barleyland Farm Museum at Billericay.

This is the 5th year of the Essex Steam & Craft Show, and it is a very good show, very well laid out and room for all. A bit hard on the wings and legs.

Plenty of stationary engines but not too many, some large ones with working demonstrations, one nice big Gardner. Lots of wood sawing, old and new methods. The steam ploughs were more or less the centre of the show.

There seemed to be hundreds of tractors ploughing both days of the show and even lake dredging by two steamers. A superb model railway, some 200 yards of track, not the 20 yard type. Craft stalls everywhere, I don't think I found them all. Horse ploughing, harrowing and seed drilling. Stone crushing and road making - all to improve next years show. Some seventy plus steam engines, big and small. Cars and caravans which we don't see in our part of the world.

A very good selection of motor cycles and the Museum open with over 2,500 extras on show, and out of bounds area with tractors and engines still waiting there turn for T.L.C.

I hope I may have wetted one or two peoples appetite to come and have a closer look at the show, if you can't come by air, then try Junction 29 off the M25 on to the London-Southern dual carriageway is best.

EAGLE.

A.G.M. - Monday 24th February at Old Down Inn. If any club member would like to have an item placed on the Agenda please contact our secretary, Shirley.

NOVEMBER CLUB EVENING - John Kyte.

Quite a nice gathering of members for this evening, I counted thirty seven in all. Panic stations were beginning to take over, when a few days before John's talk we could not raise an epidiascope to show his photographs, but good old Shirley, our secretary came up with one at the eleventh hour well done Shirley, as John explained it would have been difficult without it.

The evening began with John talking and showing us his photographs of his 300 hp Brush Diesel Engine, made in Loughborough approximately 1938. He bought it eventually from Spencer of Melksham after debating whether or not to leave it alone because of its size. With the help of Bill Appleby and a few other dedicated people he proceeded to remove it. He got a local skip trailer to pick it up, but it was difficult to get it off the lorry and at one point of its transportation he got under it with a lever "A very stupid thing to do" said John but he got away with it and it is now safely installed in his back garden.

The flywheel weighs 6 tons and should it come off when working he estimates that it would be travelling at 80 mph. It uses 4 gallons of diesel an hour on the work he does with it but would use many more gallons if it was worked to its full capacity. Also it has a 6½ ton generator giving out 250 kw, 4 cylinders, 12" piston and 50ft of V belt. When John installed it first he said every rivet leaked on it, but its much better now it has rusted up a bit. John is quite a character and one would need to attend his talk to appreciate his humour when telling various stories of how he moved some of the bits and pieces.

Apparently there doesn't seem to be many of these engines around these days but he had heard of another one being removed from Southend Water Works but only got as far as London and was dumped, and is possibly still there.

When asked from the floor what his neighbours thought of it he said 'They love it as so many people come to the village to see it, the pub, the shop and the fish shop all get extra trade, but they do get a bit annoyed when he starts it up sometimes when he comes home from the pub!!!!'

A very good and interesting evening and the club was invited by John to come and see it working sometime, preferably in the summer, as the water is drained from it in winter. Thank you John.

Our usual raffle then took place with Don Rogers winning a burglar alarm, new member Alan Gumm, won a torch and lucky again Dennis Hodges had a book on Whales. Then Eric deciding to make good use of the epidiascope continued for a short while showing photographs of a new rally at North Nibley and a nice photo of a Wallis Steam Engine owned by Robert Coles of Shaftesbury immediately recognised by Alan Gumm as he said he had cleaned the brass on it. The meeting finished at a reasonable hour and we all made our way home after a very enjoyable evening.

J.J.L.

WHATS ON IN 1992

Chase Hospital Appeal Steam & Vintage Rally - 2nd-3rd-4th May at East Worldham (B3004) between Bordon and Alton, Hampshire. All proceeds raised will go to the Hospital. Contact:- Mr. K.J. Wrenn, 9 Linford Way, Lindford, Bordon, Hants. GU35 0SZ or Tel: 0420 - 477483.

Bradford on Avon Hospital Fete - Saturday June 6th 1992 at 1.30 pm. Fifteen to twenty engines wanted please. Contact Tony Jones on Frome (0373) 465189 or write to 121 Marston Lane, Frome, Somerset. BA11 4DW.

FOR SALE Batricar disabled car as new cost over £2000 will sell for £500. Ring Eric Gay on Trowbridge (0225) 754374.

Spare Parts for Norman Engines are available from Mr. R.G.R. Sparkes, 113 Appletree Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex. Send list of spares required together with engine type and serial number for quotation of cost.

Bits and pieces and information on engines - John Delay, 'Xlendi', Herland Road, Godolphin Cross, Helston, Cornwall.

FOR SALE Ford Transit Caravanette 'N' Reg. Good condition for year. M.O.T. to May. Seen at all local rallies. £1000 Contact Dave Clack (0225) 761987.

WANTED 550 watt charging board for Lyon-Norman Generator - Stan Kerley, Salisbury (0722) 73320.

A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME.

(Part 1)

The year is 1864, I had been invited by Mr. Fox, owner of the Kennall Vale Gunpowder works to visit his site and see for myself how Gunpowder is manufactured. I travelled down to Cornwall yesterday on Mr. Brunel's wonderful railway, and from Truro on to Falmouth on the new branch line of his opened only last year. Hereabouts, tin mining is in full production and good quality gunpowder is in great demand for blasting in the mines.

The works is set in a valley about 4 miles from Falmouth and this I reached on horse-back in no time, to be greeted by Mr. Fox himself. After refreshment, the tour started with a visit to the workshops, here the blacksmith makes and repairs parts of the machinery, the coopers make barrels in which to transport the finished product, several carpenters and other workmen are also employed to keep the works in good order. The raw materials charcoal, saltpetre and sulphur, are brought to the site by horse and cart, and the gunpowder leaves the same way. We walk past the packing houses and on down the valley. At intervals between the buildings, great blast walls of granite blocks have been erected to limit the damage from any explosion. From the foot of the valley I could see seven mill buildings each with its massive overshot water wheel. My guide tells me that in its 5½ miles from source to the sea, the river Kennall turns 39 water wheels.

The mixing house was reached first, and here powered by its own wheel, the basic ingredients are mixed in wooden barrels. From here we went to the first of the seven pairs of incorporating mills, where the mixture is dampened and ground to a fine powder between millstones. All the workers wear woollen pocketless suits, and the mill walls are fine rendered to prevent dust gathering on them and creating an explosion hazard. As I walked up the line of mills I was most impressed with the network of leats and sluices feeding the wheels, so arranged that several outfalls feed together and then drive more wheels downstream.

Beyond the last incorporating mill came the Press House, there the fine powder is pressed into hard cakes, then to the Breaking Down House where the cakes are broken into lumps. At the Corning House the powder is further reduced to granules and then dried by means of piped steam in a Gloom Stove. Past the Dusting House where the granules are seperated from the dust, I entered the Glazing House. Here the granules are rotated in a drum with graphite. This produces a rounded and glazed product that can easily be poured into holes and also remains water resistant in the damp mines. Nearly all these houses are water powered, with leats serving them from the river.

What an interesting day I spent at Mr. Fox's works, sure to remain successful for years to come supplying the tin mining industry.

JEREMY ADAMS.

JUST A THANK-YOU letter to the Wessex Stationary Engine Club:-

Dear Robin,

My wife Babs and the boys especially Trev would like to say thank-you for all the happy days spent with the club in one way or another, rallies, club nights etc. since we joined up in 1985 I believe.

Our son Trevor is coming of age, in March, to ride a motor cycle, for good or for bad! So now we are moving on to the motor cycle scene for which I have just taken over the job of road and show secretary and social organiser of the Bath Classic Motor Cycle Club.

We will always keep in touch and support your rally with the bikes, to be honest I don't think we could live without your rally. If you would like I will organise a bike run with members of our club to ride out to your Rally in 1992 if you will send me dates and the necessary entry forms.

We have made so many great friends over the years and learnt so much, we wish the club all the best for years to come, keep up the good work and happy rallying. Happy New Year to you all.

Rich Payne & Family.

Thank you Richard for your kind letter, best wishes to you and your family in your new venture and will certainly look forward to meeting you all again at our Club rally and I'm sure that one of our 'motor cycling' committee members will be in touch with you regarding your kind offer. Robin.

MAGAZINE REVIEW.

"The Farm and Horticultural Equipment Collector" published by Kelsey.

"From great big oak trees, little acorns grow....!" - no, perhaps that's not quite the correct quotation but in this case it is most apt so I won't re-type it. The new magazine from Kelsey Publishing Ltd is obviously a small sapling beginning to germinate, its first issue was published at the end of November as a sister publication to 'Stationary Engine'.

This is a quarterly magazine which covers those aspects of mechanical preservation which S.E. does not quite cater for but, nevertheless has an interest in, such as barn machinery, sawing equipment, garden machinery, crop spraying, hand tools and a whole host of fascinating collectables from Britain's rural history and even quite recent past. It is edited by Patrick Knight who is no stranger to our Club; he regularly visits and exhibits in our area and has given us a couple of interesting slide shows. Patrick, of course, is well known for his regular, well researched articles and photos in Stationary Engine and his interest in engines with a transatlantic flavour.

I found the first copy of FHEC to be very readable and containing plenty of excellent photos but, with a sense of 'deja vu', was reminded of the pleasure received when, back in 1974, the first small copy of 'Stationary Engine Advertiser' (as it then was) fell through my letterbox. S.E. has come a long way since those far off days and given enough support from enthusiasts, FHEC could be just as successful. I can only suggest that you try it, after all it is only the cost of three gallons of petrol for an annual subscription to a quarterly magazine, contribute to it, and above all enjoy it.

Remember the old adage - "From little acorns, great big oak trees grow"

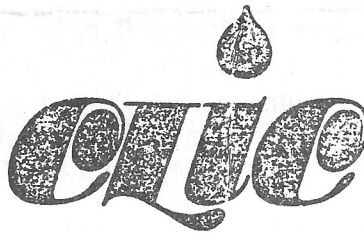
Send your subscription, £6 for four copies to:- Kelsey Publishing Ltd., Kelsey House, 77 High Street, Beckenham, Kent. BR3 1AN and don't forget to enclose your name and address.

EMERSON BRANTINGHAM.

A THANKYOU LETTER FROM C.L.I.C. TO THE COX FAMILIES.

PATRON: Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent, G.C.V.O.

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE
& DISTRICT
BRANCH**



(SOUTH WEST)

THE CANCER & LEUKAEMIA IN CHILDHOOD TRUST



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The fight to save young lives

Mr & Mrs Roy Cox
4 Laurel Drive,
Uphill,
Weston-Super-Mare
Somerset.

3rd October, 1991

Dear Roy Ivor & Families,

What a wonderful amount of money you have well and truly earned for CLIC, this year - £1243.82 - and after all that rain too. We are absolutely thrilled and we thank you and all those wonderful people who made this total possible. I would like to write to each person separately but as that is not possible we have to leave it to you to pass on our gratitude and hope that they did not get wet or catch colds in this mammoth fund raising effort.

A special thanks to you both for all the hard work you do every year for CLIC, we are most grateful and long may it continue.

Best Wishes,

Rat.