

CRANKING

January

2008

Thirty first year
of publication

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The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's monthly newsletter

From the Sump

I hope you all had a Happy Christmas and are looking forward to an interesting new year. No doubt many will be feeling the first stirrings of getting back into the workshop & fettlin' the beasts for the season. I wandered in amongst my Iron Charges yesterday on pretext of looking for something & got quite twitchy – bit cold yet though!

I'm always rather surprised by the good attendance we get at our crank ups. I remember thinking when I first joined that it seemed like a lot of trouble to go to for one day, let alone a couple of hours of an evening, but I was soon hooked and now you'd not keep me away. This holiday, I attended the Wessex do at the Old Down Inn and also went to Frog Farm for the Bristol & SGSEC winter event. There were equivalent numbers at both, around fifty people & eighteen engines. Both clubs supplied hot food & it was interesting to see different engines on two days close together.

Quite a few members live in the Bristol area and I suggested to the committee a while ago that it might be welcomed if we had a crank up in the Bristol area. Therefore, I'm arranging a crank up for Wessex at the Avon Valley Railway at Bitton Station. I've already done a site visit, met with the operations manager & you will notice the new addition to our Calendar of Events. We shall be in the top car park & event details will follow as appropriate. You can learn more about the site here:- <http://www.avonvalleyrailway.org/>

You must all have noticed that this newsletter is substantially written each and every month by myself, Eric Gay and Robin Lambert. There are regular contributions from Brian Baker & Jackie Lambert keeps me up to speed with social news like birthdays and things like that. There are occasional features from Tony Davis and others. I am not at all fazed by this, as it is usually the case with club newsletters that the same people do all the work! I am especially grateful to them all for their continuing help. Therefore, it is especially pleasant that we have a "Featured Engine" by Andy Vincent and an excellent visit write up by Michael Jennings.

Please do contribute something yourself. It is not a test and there are only Brownie points for your efforts! Go on, you know you want to!

Moving the Metal

For sale

Lister D. Two near complete engines & many spares - £100 ono. **Amanco** mag bracket & gear £60 ono. **Magnetos**, Lucas RS1, a/c, gwo £40 each ono. **EIC**, gwo £80 ono. **Blowlamp**, large USA made brass lamp & soldering iron £30. **Draper** 140 amp fan cooled welding plant, good order £40. **Grease gun**, old, iron & brass £5. **Brass oil can** by Eagle. Rare £150, no offers. **Well hand pump** as found £50 ono. **Old Glory** Magazines, large quantity, good condition £30. **Model boats**. An RAF rescue launch, plus another launch, good condition - £100 each. Tug, needs some work £50 ono. **Greenhouse**, 8x6, stripped & ready to move £45. **Kitchen scales** with brass weights £25. **Sewing machine**, shuttle bobbin, cased. Good condition £15 ono. **Vauxhall Vectra**. Top of the range, ring for details For all above ring Eric on 01225 754374

Lister D, Class 3/4. Chain drive mag, no date. Mostly complete & sound. As found & requires work. No trolley. £30 ONO. **Richmond** 01 horizontal mill with power feed and vertical head. **Alba** 1A shaper. Half a ton each & cheap - buy 1 get 1 free! Buyer to collect from Newton Abbot area. Both above phone Dave Ashwell on 01626 355019

WANTED "Stationary Engine" Magazine. Now only need 16,17,18,19,24-34,36. Have early copies to swap! phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

Official Notice of AGM

You are hereby notified that the club's AGM will be held at The Old Down Inn at Emborough, Somerset, BA3 4SA on the evening of 25th February 2008. The meeting will commence at 8.00pm. Officers will stand for election, club business be decided & it is your right and privilege to attend & have your voice heard. This year, the Executive Committee have exhaustively discussed and updated our Constitution & it will be put forward for ratification at this AGM.

**Remember, decisions are made
by those who turn up!**

Articles, cartoons, photos etc are always very welcome – this is not a one-man band, but an expression of all our thoughts and experience. Submissions can be handwritten, (if brief), typed or word-processed - it is the content we're after, not the grammar or spelling, so please don't feel your efforts will be ignored. The editor reserves the right to change, edit, augment or lessen your

Deathless Prose and asks all to note that opinions expressed in this newsletter may or may not represent club policy

J. Kim Siddorn, 9, Durleigh Close, Bristol. BS13 7NQ or by e-mail to kim.siddorn@blueyonder.co.uk.

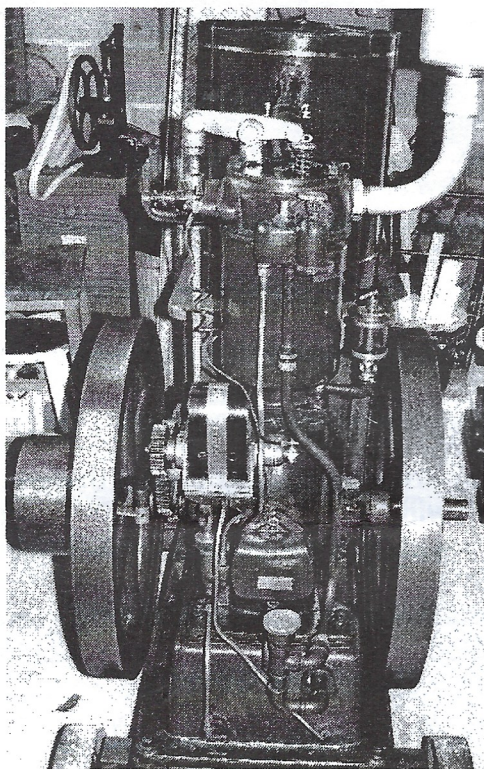
Featured Engine No. 11

My Pilter engine

By Andy Vincent

It all started back several years ago when a SSAPC member, knowing I was on the look out for some engines to build my collection, gave my phone number to a chap who was looking to pass on some milking equipment and an old Norman gen set. Without prior knowledge, I received a call and was told of the Norman and other vintage milking equipment. However, being taken by surprise and unsure, I declined the offer.

A few days passed and after thinking about the Norman, curiosity got the better of me, so I rang the chap back and arranged to view the items for sale. On arrival a tray of tea was brought out and a brief chat before being taken through to the garage where the engine and equipment were stored. Sure enough there was quite a nice single cylinder Norman SC Gen set, a couple of milking buckets and clusters and a Manus vacuum pump. Not being really what I was looking for, I decided not to buy - but my attention was drawn towards two engine-shaped objects covered in dust sheets in the corner of the garage. I asked What they were and was told "they're Father's old engines".

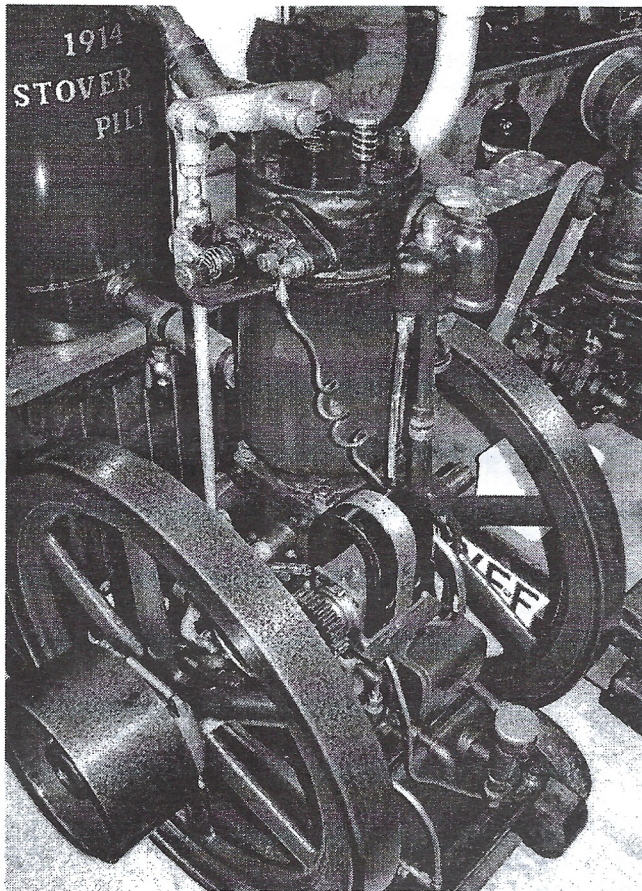


Off came the covers to reveal a very nice early Amanco Hired Man and the Pilter, an engine that I'd not come across before. The story was told of how his Father had found and restored the engines in the late 1970's and had then rallied them through the 1980's including the

Longleat rallies, sadly passing away in 1989. After his fathers passing, the son took the engines and stored them in his garage, getting them out once a year and starting them up just to keep them in running order. The visit was finished off with more tea and chat before heading home.

The next few weeks were spent thinking about the engines, wondering if there was a chance for me to purchase. I made the call and explained that I would very much like to buy the engines and

would he consider selling them? After some Family discussion, it was agreed that I could purchase - but only if I bought the whole lot, milking equipment and all. I agreed & the next weekend I loaded it all into my trailer & headed home with a big smile on my face.



Pilter engine no.61378 is actually a USA built Stover type YA producing 2 HP, vertical semi open crank with hit and miss governing built in September 1914 and shipped to London in October 1914 to Agents Pilter & co where it was re-badged "Pilter" a common practice of the time and sold as their own to a farmer in Chardstock, Devon where it worked all its life. When found it was covered in old sacks in a barn with the cylinder frost split and many bits rusted and seized. During the restoration it had a new liner pressed in and various gears, brackets & rods made up and is a credit to the former owner. I was lucky enough to be given before, during and after pictures which is a nice thing to have.

Whilst in my ownership the magneto has been re-magnetised and timed, a new white metal big end made and a new base tank made with a drain off so I can get the petrol back out after running as it seems to go off so quick these days.

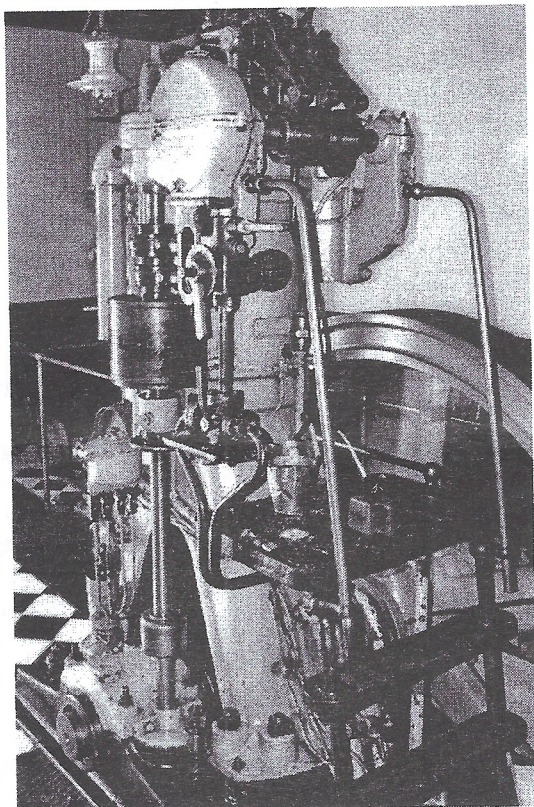
Around once a year the son will come over to my house and we get the Pilter out for a run while he tells me stories of his fathers experiences with the old engine. Although I have owned the engine for a few years, I've not often rallied it & it has only been out half a dozen times including the odd club crank-up.

To sum up, it just goes to show it's worth "having a look" at items offered for sale otherwise I would never have come across my Pilter.

One of my favourites in this hall is the National Gas and Oil Engine Type P gas engine of 1912 vintage (16HP, 16 inch stroke x 8inch bore). Having watched it for a few minutes, it is a joy to step outside to listen to the chuff, huff, huff, chuff of its

exhaust. Other inmates of this hall include Lister, Petter, Crossley and Ruston Hornsby. They are all on the large side and of pre-WW2 vintage.

The second hall contains the real 'gem' of the collection – a Sulzer 1D 25 Air Blast injection



diesel engine. Built in 1912/13, this engine is thought to be the oldest running diesel engine in the world. Starting it has to be seen to be believed. A Petter S next door drives a

Hamworthy Compressor to charge the air bottles to 750psi. The Maestro then consults a bank of big brass gauges and adjusts various valves and taps. When he is satisfied, he climbs to the top of the engine where there is a bank of large levers. Moving the appropriate lever causes a sighing sound and the engine starts to move. Operating the other levers in order causes the engine to rumble into life. Down from his lofty perch, Paul makes a few more adjustments with the help of a hand-held tachometer on the end of the crankshaft. How he managed to learn how to start and run this extraordinary beast in the first place, without any instruction or information, is a mystery to me. He did however confide that a good deal of crossing of fingers etc is still involved. The engine is belted to a 220v DC dynamo when a load is required. It performs with apparent effortless ease. I felt very privileged to see such a priceless piece of engine history brought to life. It isn't often run, in deference to its age and historical significance.

In addition, this hall contains a 12hp Tangye AA Oil engine of 1922 vintage driving a Tangye three throw pump, also a 20hp semi-diesel Clayton & Shuttleworth and a fine Allen two-stroke diesel. The Allen was one of the few engines that, having just finished its restoration,

was not run for us. It was due to be run publicly for the first time at the end of season Crank-Up in mid-October.

Next comes the Lister Room, which houses an assortment of Lister driven generating sets. These include Lister A & N petrol engines, a Lister TL petrol/paraffin set from the mid-1920s and, of course, a Start-O-Matic set. In a corner is a lovely Widdop diesel. Everything in this room was producing volts of one sort or another.

The last hall contains the biggest engines. There is a Tangye Type MLD7 twin cylinder horizontal diesel. This was running very peacefully under the watchful eye of volunteer Keith, one of the museum stalwarts. Next comes my own particular favourite, a Ruston Hornsby size 6 Type X HR 34 hp four-stroke diesel. (17.5stroke x 9.25 bore built 1938). This engine has a garden bench in front of it & one of the many joys of the museum is to sit there & listen to the gentle sound it produces. Don't sit there for too long, because it will send you to sleep.

On the other side of the shed is another large Ruston & Hornsby, this time 52 hp Type 9H with its little brother Ruston & Hornsby Type LPR starting engine. Last of the "big boys" is a Worthington Simpson 160hp vertical twin two-stroke diesel built in 1929 (24 inch stroke x 13 inch bore). This engine requires lighted 'fuses' to be inserted into the heads for starting. Just watching it being barred over to starting position made me feel faint. When it fired, a spectacular cloud of soot and rubble shot from the exhaust.

This is only a very quick run down of what we saw. Outside there are more engines than you can take in, ranging from ListerDs to a Proteus Gas Turbine generating set and a pair of Newbury Sirron 600hp diesels removed from the cruise ship Balmoral during her last refit. There are far too many to mention, but don't take my word for it. GO AND SEE FOR YOURSELF. I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

My sincere thanks to Hazel, Paul and Keith for a wonderful visit. I shall certainly be back again next year. Many thanks also to Jackie for her efforts organising it all. We'll draw a veil over the trip home – a long day but well worth the effort.

PS I hope that the engine crew have recovered from their labours. My, did they work hard! They must have worked up quite a thirst!

PPS Have booked a cottage for my next year's visit.