

# WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



## NEWSLETTER

JULY 1990.

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### THE 1990 WSEC CHEDDAR RALLY.

It is difficult to decide when the Rally begins...the entry forms trickle in from January onwards, almost every committee meeting has to mention it, albeit briefly. Then the actual weekend comes when hopefully for everyones sake there are no tremendous hiccups.

By the time Andy, the children and I arrived on Friday the field was covered with various exhibits. A lot of work had been done on Friday pegging and roping etc. Saturday dawned bright and clear and exhibitors came in thick and fast; some faster than others; followed quickly by the public. Whether the advertising and Brian Lovell with Henry the Tractor doing their stint up and down the Gorge with trailer emblazoned with advertising hoardings were the reasons for the increased attendance or the ideal weather we shall never know but the gates were well up on previous years.

This years exhibits consisted of stationary engines (of course), cars, motorcycles, tractors, commercials - Andy would love to own the Morris Commercial, Punch and Judy, two organs, Club stall, models, trade stands, a steamer, Fire Brigade, St. John Ambulance, ice cream, childrens amusements etc.

A few of the engines which caught my eye were a Fairbanks Morse Vertical 2hp engine and generator running so quietly but at the same time making wonderful smoke rings. A Ruston Hornsby with generator and a Petterlight on a nice trolley. There were Amancos, Petters and Listers of all shapes and sizes, together with a nice little water cooled Villiers engine and a National imported from America last year and renovated throughout the winter. It is one of only five in the country; the others situated one in Scotland and three in Bedford. Those in Bedford started as a college study project and multiplied.

Of the tractors my favourite is a T20 and what was absent? Why a T20 of course, there were Fordsons, Case, Field Marshalls, David Brown, a rotovator, large and small: some in original condition and others carefully restored....but no T20.

The motorcycles grew in number as the weekend progressed and ranged from a 1921 model to a modern machine which resembled an armchair on wheels. I wouldn't be surprised if it had a drinks cabinet hidden away somewhere.

There was a marvellous display of model farming equipment including an elevator, Ransome thresher, binder and pony traps and carts. Brian Young has been hooked for twelve years and believes the binder was the most difficult to make as he worked from photos and measurements from a dilapidated original. The basic problem being no central point from which to start. The Ransome looked impressive (well none looked particularly simple) as was from a magazine which gave step by step instructions at 2 monthly intervals.

On Saturday afternoon the Lister D marathon was held with seven competitors. The longest runner was B. Baker at 1 hour and 15 minutes and took the winners prize of £3.50, being the entrance fees. Last years winner, Dave Large sadly was a non starter..still its nice to give someone else a chance. The Wolseley WD marathon was scheduled for Sunday afternoon but as there were only three entrants it was deemed not worthy of running, sorry.

Robin lit the barbeque early so there was plenty of heat to cook the 240 burgers, 119 sausages (one was a Kamikase sausage and had leapt into the flames) and 101lbs of onions. The Mike Ryder Trio were present on the back of our Presidents lorry and kept up a varied and entertaining performance. Eric the Raffle was conspicuous throughout the weekend selling his tickets and collecting dues from the trade stands as well as other duties. Unfortunately I

forgot to make a note of the Saturday raffle winners..I'm sorry. Dancing started later this year and was not overcrowded. I did hear a few mentions of cold weather, but it was hot enough where I was.

Sunday was dull and threatened rain on more than one occasion. The trophies and rosettes were awarded and placed by the winners engines as follows:-

Best open crank engine-E. Thorne. Best Vertical-B. Reakes. Working engine-T. Symes. Junior Shield-S. Stacey. Visitors rosette-R. Sams. Motorcycle-P. Harris. Car-J. Stevens. Tractor-A.Dorey. Steam exhibit-R. Crawford. Model exhibit-L. Spittel.

It seems unfair to make awards but as the Club has three trophies the Committee feel we must use them. After all, everyones exhibit is necessary to put on a varied and interesting display. The awards are another point of interest for the public and exhibitors to discuss.

Another point discussed many times during Friday and Saturday was..who or what has taken the toilet rolls from the green toilet block. Bob and Jackie on toilet patrol were bemused and not a little aggravated at the speed in which they disappeared. Tom Randall was relieved (no pun intended) to find the only bar of soap high in a disused socket box in the gents. After use he replaced it in the box. Later on Sunday Tom was disturbed to find the soap placed in a urinal - he waived the use of it that time. The ladies had no soap at all so the problem didn't arise.

Winners of the Sunday raffle were E. Philips, B. Baker, C. Arnold, B. Verrall, P. Allen and two others who claimed their prizes later. Two items were auctioned and the sum of money raised will be donated to charity.

Nearly finished now.....

The badges were distributed by our President, Herbie Gane sporting a fetching bowler adorned with a rosette proclaiming that he was President. Herbie's wife, Wendy and I escorted him on his duties. Now that was a slight shambles as rain threatened and everyone was making a dash to pack away and get home dry. We shall have to discuss this in some depth at a Committee meeting.

I hope you all enjoyed some part of the weekend and on behalf of everyone concerned, thank you for coming. If you have any suggestions or complaints or even thanks - actually quite a number of people did say thanks - please let a Committee member know.

I'm off to bed now - at 12.22am: Andy has just come downstairs to see what I'M doing.

Look Claude...no strawberry jam this year.

Best Wishes.

Shirley Gale.

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#### THE RALLY SPANNER.

Well done Committee and helpers for another well organised Cheddar Rally. I do know just how much work, time and worry goes into this event and I feel sure that I may on behalf of both exhibitors and visitors say a sincere thank you.

No, I didn't exhibit this year but attended as Joe Public and what I saw impressed. I thought that the resiting of caravans and other domestic paraphernalia to be a great improvement as the rally field, now uncluttered, allowed exhibits to be seen at their best. Although the number of exhibits seemed to be up on other years I did notice that there appeared to me at least, less WSEC members. I don't know what conclusions can be drawn from that but I wonder if after four years at Cheddar it might not be time to consider sharing the Rally around the area a bit. Cheddar is a good site however, with all the facilities so the decision won't be easy.

Engines there were plenty, including our Presidents Chinese diesel, further details of which would be appreciated by the Newsletter. (Gentle hint, Herbie). Another impression I gained was that there were more engines shown in "as found condition", or unrestored and unpainted depending on your viewpoint, than in previous rallies. Thats a pity from the viewing publics standpoint I think, as rusty lumps weeping oil at every joint isn't good value for money, nor does it do much for the reputation of the Stationary Engine movement.

The vexed problem of exhibitor leaving their engines unattended though still running still hasn't been solved I noted. Despite an appeal over the PA by the Chairman for exhibitors to either return to their engines or shut them down, many still banged away in isolation creating a potentially dangerous distuation. Joe the public wants to see engines running not silent and still, but on the other hand the exhibitor wants a chance to see the rest of the Rally. Perhaps a compromise could be devised whereby running but unattended engines could exhibit a notice saying which of its neighbours is giving oversight. Unattended engines could even invalidate the Clubs insurance as, and I quote, "When running an engine each member must ensure that adequate safety precautions have been taken".

One disappointment was that the steam roller was giving an imitation of a stationary engine, I'm not sure that it was even in steam, but then 10 ton or so could cause problems chugging around the rally field. What made up for it though was a guided tour by John Cuff of his Alan Pell 48 keyless organ. Until then I had not realised that modern organs are electronically controlled, some even employ micro chips. One organ that wasn't in song when I passed by was Professor Munt's street organ. For the first time for a good few years Brian was able to sit back and bask in the sun.

Well, Cheddar is over for another year, but I'll bet that next years Rally will be on the agenda for the July Committee Meeting.

Cheers for now,

Claude Lowther.

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#### COMMITTEE NEWS.

The June meeting was brought forward so that the final details for the Rally could be organised, including collection of the barbeque from Frome and Trowbridge for consumption at Cheddar. Well travelled are our bangers.

Problems have also arisen with the visit to Stuart Turners at Cheddar and it was decided to swap the July and August meetings.

In October the coach trip is to be to St. Fagans Welsh Folk Museum near Cardiff. Hopefully it should be a day to remember, I know it often rains in Wales, but it rained at the Black Country Museum and we still enjoyed ourselves. Anyway maybe by October rain will be a novelty.

St. Fagans is approximately 100 acres in extent and its character ideal for Welsh Folk Museum with arts, crafts and buildings reconstructed in the true Welsh traditions. There should be plenty of walking opportunities for the energetic while St. Fagans castle, shops and restaurants are available for the less nimble. Certainly a day for all ages and interests.

Plans for the return journey are still in hand - in other words we are still trying to find a pub able to take a coach for a reasonably priced meal, preferably still in Wales. One quote received was for £13 per head..cough, cough, perhaps not this year. We would be grateful to receive any other suggestions.

For the first time for many months there was no 'Any Other Business' to discuss, so after an extra chat it was home early for once.

What a dull meeting I can hear you say.

Shirley Gale, Secretary.

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#### CLUB DIARY.

20th Aug. Monthly Meeting at Emborough. "Call my bluff", come along and see if you can tell the difference between a double bifurcated detent and a single action stuffing valve. It's unlikely the team will.

Mon 24th Sept. Talk and demonstration by Myford Tools Ltd.

October. A day trip to St. Fagans Welsh Folk Museum, Cardiff. Full details in next months Newsletter.

Mon 21st Oct A regular favourite - SLIDE SHOW, the Committee are making arrangements. Again more information later.

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#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Sun 23rd September. THE FULL QUART CRANK UP, again Ivor and Roy Cox invite you to their popular Crank Up and as always have to apologise that, because of limited space exhibition is by invitation only. It's still a good day out though.

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#### THE MARKET PLACE.

FOR SALE. "THE VICTORIA" by Tim Macaire. A 36 page booklet devoted to the history and detailed descriptions of the engines of the Bristol Wagon and Carriage Works Co. Ltd. A must for every serious engine enthusiast.

£3.95 or £4.50 by post from:-

Tim Macaire,  
Mole Cottage,  
Southole,  
Hartland,  
Bideford EX39 6HW

or phone 02374 697 to reserve your copy.

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ONE MANS ENGINES PART VI.

So far:- After moving to Somerset in 1985, Tony purchased an American Maytag for his '86 season.

The Maytag was a little two stroke, made in the mid 1920s to power butter churns, small pumps and the like on Midwest farms with no form of electricity. It was little bigger than a Honda motorcycle engine, had a ratchet lever kick start and a bark like a heavy gun. A simple single jet carb, needle choked with no throttle, just stop and go with one speed only but a most effective little power producer. A feature was a huge 25mm thread spark plug which I had to get direct from Detroit and which cost almost as much as the engine.

That saw the sport out until the end of '86.

The little Maytag had done quite well but early in 1987 I saw a local paper advert for an unusual French engine and after arranging to borrow a trailer from my son bought it as a rally ready job for £75. It was a most unusual engine, imported into the U.K. in the '30s to provide blade power for a British built horse drawn reaper, it was a sort of stop gap between the old horse drawn mechanical machines with no power source, other than mechanical gearing from the road wheels as they turned round and the incoming modern methods of tractors with power take off drives and machines like the combine with internal full power plants. As a compromise it was not a bad effort but I was told that cooling problems and the entry of field dust made it unreliable.

Dismounted from the reaper and shown as a separate engine, it did have attractions as the complete tin plate box type shielding which sealed it during reaping work could be removed to reveal an engine with a tall cylinder (head and block cast in one), slender open push rods to a single overhead rocker shaft and a beautiful tubed radiator with base and header tanks like a miniature Daimler car cooling system. The magneto was buried in the crankcase with an old car type starting handle operating right through the mag shaft to the crankshaft, for all the world like the old Bentley where the starting handle went right through the supercharger. All the "works" could be seen in motion when the engine ran on display without its shielding and in fact the chap I eventually sold it to went to the length of enclosing the cylinder and its gear behind a perspex panel, and very good it looks.

Then physical problems started up again and (as I should have realised), engines on trailers were just not on for me.

I changed over to a lightweight flat twin Douglas exWD. What it was built for I never found out but I suspect it was one of the various engines bought by both the Army and RAF to drive signal battery chargers. This move proved wrong, the unit would just go into the back of the Volvo but was too heavy for me to handle. I therefore decided to go right down the scale and picked up a 1940 Chore Horse ex WD tank battery charger, this machine had a dyno/motor as the current producer unit and, as such, acted as its own selfstarter when a 12 volt battery was connected. It was ideal as it could be lifted without trouble. It would power some attractive spot lamps and after a press start would run all day with no attention at all.

I gave it a complete overhaul, got a caravan battery box to house the battery and then converted a dustbin trolley to provide a means of movement about the rally field. To any oldster who still wants to enjoy the Rallies and wants his own little exhibit a Chore Horse is an ideal solution. They can still be bought with boxes of spares at Army surplus sales, as it seems that the RAOC still has stocks. The little unit gave me a very enjoyable 1988 Rally year and as it turned out my last one. All sorts of things piled up in the Autumn of '88 and it was clear that I should bow out with as much grace as possible.

In the eight years I had been involved there had been eight engines, I had belonged to four Clubs and averaged twelve meets each season (the picnic cum tool box was so covered in plaques I could hardly lift it). In the two areas I had lived in (Norfolk and Somerset) I had met the most wonderful people who had accepted me at once, given me all sorts of assistance and guidance and boosted a simple hobby into a very rich experience. I am grateful to everyone of them. So ends the story of 'One Man and His Engines'.

P.S. Of course there is a new hobby and is of course wrapped up with the workshop but this time I am even going to nighschool to learn the answers.

Tony Adlington.

Editor. Thank you Tony for this series, and past contributions. The Newsletter, and indeed the WSEC wish you well in your future endeavours.

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