

# WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

## NEWSLETTER

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### CLUB MEETING - 23RD MAY.

Our vice-chairman Eric Gay opened the meeting which was well supported, Eric, then introduced us to Mr. David Harris who used to work for R.A. Lister & Co of Dursley, Gloucester he gave a talk and showed slides on Listers - the first 100 years.

The Lister family originated in Yorkshire and came to Dursley in the mid 1800's where they made punch cards for the woollen mills. The firm of R.A. Lister & Co. was founded on the 23rd August 1867 by Ashton Lister. The factory is built on a lake bed and the work force at that time consisted of one man and a boy. Ashton Lister called himself a machinist and general mill furnisher. The early years were not easy for the firm, the growing numbers of workers had to make all types of tools and machinery and by the 1900's started to make butter churns, which had origins in Canada. They later went on to making cream separators and on to milk coolers and buckets etc. and as the firm grew they moved into engines. Listers started by selling engines as agents for the Yeovil firm Petters. Listers had an agency to sell an engine called the handyman, but soon decided to produce there own engines. The first engines were a direct development of an engine called the Southwell safety petrol engine the Southwell being an American built stover engine made by the Stover manufacturing & engine Co. U.S.A. and was marketed by F.S. Southwell & Co. Ltd. At this time, around 1908 R.A. Lister were also manufacturing sheep shearing equipment, it is claimed that most of the sheep in Australia were sheared using Lister equipment and many engines were developed to run them. In about 1908 R.A. Lister & Co. bought the rights to sell the Southwell engine, initially a small amount of engines were sold. In May 1909 Listers introduced there own Lister petrol engine, from then on R.A. Lister went on to design and build many different type type of engines, for all uses including a small engine for bicycles. Portable engines were introduced for use with shearing sets, sometimes driving up to six shearing heads.

Around 1924 the Lister A & B engines were introduced and were in production until the 1960's. In 1926 the Lister D was also introduced to satisfy the ever increasing demand for a robust multi purpose engine, an engine which was in production until 1964 and was probably one of the longest runs of any single type of engine. In the late 1920's Listers developed their diesel CS range, CS which stands for cold start, an engine which was to be a very popular range, many of which are still in use today. A CD model was introduced around 1933 and this was followed by the twin cylinder version called the CE, the CD & CE was in production until about 1952, at that time around 1938, R.A. Lister made an attempt to compete with the air cooled engines which appeared such as the Petter 'A'. These air cooled engines proved to be a big success with sales all over the world, a lot of these engines were later to be installed into light houses. Engines were also fitted into ships, some were fitted into the QE2. The QE2 has large generators and pumps installed, Lister engines are also fitted into lifeboats. The Thames barrier side gates are also fitted with 100 hp engines.

The company of R.A. Lister & Co are still going strong but now named Lister Petter employing about 800 workers.

During half time the raffle was held, the winners being Ivor Young - set of spanners, Richard Pawlek - Atlas and Bill Coombs - model steam lorry.

STEVE ROUTLEY.

SEMINGTON RALLY 1994.

Work commitments have for the last couple of years prevented me from attending the Wessex Stationary Engine Club rally, held again at Semington. This year however, I found myself free on the Sunday and decided to go as a visit to view the rally from the other side of the ropes, as your average punter, so to speak.

I had only just arrived, and was partaking of a cup of coffee when I spotted the chairman, Brian Verrall, rushing to sort out some problem or other. Once this was done he came across and after the usual pleasantries I found myself landed with the honour! of judging the stationary engines. I know there are many views on judging, be they for or against so will not go into them here. We all know judging can cause unrest amongst exhibitors, with some taking exception when their engine is not chosen. With this in mind and knowing that the standard of restoration would be very high, it was agreed that the winning engines should be the judges preference and no statement that one engine was better than another.

The first tour around the engine pens allowed me to narrow the field somewhat. Further visits brought each category down to a short list of five. There were four trophies to be awarded, best vertical engine, best horizontal engines, best working exhibit and best club junior member. (Those last couple of sentences were a lot easier to write than doing the actual judging for as expected the majority of engines were of a very high standard). The hardest part was choosing a winner in each class but, finally this was done and the winners were called over to the secretaries caravan to be presented with their trophy.

The winners were best vertical engine - Philip Thornton-Evison with his Ransomes Sims & Jefferies 'Wizard'. Best horizontal engine - Mr. Hollaway, Amanco 2½hp gas engine. Best working exhibit - Mr. Harris - Wolseley WD with Bracket water pump. Best Junior member, K. Baker - Lister D and water pump.

As I was playing the average visitor I was somewhat disappointed that so few engines had information boards telling me what I was looking at. This applied to other sections as well and not just the stationary engines. I learnt later that each exhibitor was given a Stationary Engine log sheet to fill out and display but, I saw very few of these. Where any returned to the steward?? Another moan was the amount of bits and pieces for sale dumped down in front of engines. Don't get me wrong, I have no objection to these sales, I feel things should be kept tidy, after you are representing the club and should present a good image to the general public.

PATRICK KNIGHT.

Thanks for you report Patrick, its nice to have a viewpoint from the public side of the ropes. I wonder what they thought about the decision this year to have camping to the rear of the engines - was it a good idea or not? Some exhibitors actually said they would prefer to camp in the camping earea at the bottom of the field as it was a much more tranquil place well away from the noise and fumes and only seconds away form their engines. It would be nice to get some feed back from our members on this subject.

I feel this was our best rally to date with something for everyone to look at. The Saturday auction went well although some people said why have it outside the show when there was a large open space inside doing nothing, meaning the ring, a good point this and it will no doubt be given some thought by our committee. I thought the stall area this year was very good plus the car boot on Sunday morning, quite a few bargains to be had. I found a nice little step ladder for Jackie's birthday and am still looking for the wallpaper and glue, I am sure it will turn up somewhere!!!!!!!!!!

I believe this was the first time we have had a Showmans engine, a super locomotive as was the Sentinel Steam Waggon, and the wood sawing area was a very popular attraction, parked nearby was a threshing machine all up and running being powered by a tractor, my grandson was mesmerised by the thresher as its wheels and pulleys turned and belts wizzed round and round.

The motor cycle - car - commercial and tractor section was well supported and nearly all did a tour around the ring. Saturday evening was very good with the folk either inside or outside the beer tent. Our barbeque did a very good trade with burgers and sausages at very good prices and an added evening attraction was the fire engine with ladder fully extended to almost 100 ft for those who wanted a good view of the rally site plus Devizes, Melksham, Trowbridge etc. There were a few who had a climb to the top including a very senior club member who did the accent like a greyhound leaving a trap, and on reaching the top could have easily been mistaken for Lord Nelson, except that Nelson didn't wear glasses and own a Delco Light engine.

How lucky we were to have such nice weather for the two days it really made the weekend. A big thank you must go to everyone who helped and assisted in any way to put this show together so that a lot of people could have a nice time. ED.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS - Mr. & Mrs. L. Armstrong from Bradford on Avon and to Mr. P. Newton from Leigh on Mendip.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE "TRIPLE D" TRACTOR.

After the war and up to the mid-fifties, the makers of tractors, both here in Britain and in Europe, turned out many hundreds of farm tractors. But not much attention was paid to the needs of modern farmers, such as increased power and, above all, the greatly increased efficiency of four-wheeled drive. Although there are many designs of tracked tractors available on many farms and soil, they were not the ideal solution.

Of all the thousands of farm tractors that have been built since Steam Ploughing finally gave way to the internal combustion engine, many were of weird, wonderful and ingenious designs, but the most interesting was the "Triple D."

An Essex farmer called Mr. Pryor found that all the post war tractors were not ideal for the very heavy clay soil that composed most of his farmland. In the mid-fifties, after looking at all the available designs, he decided, as none were suitable, he would design and build his own. He was an engineer, as well as a farmer and, having a fully equipped workshop at his disposal, he set to work to build a tractor to his design.

He obtained two Fordson Major tractors, removed the front axles and wheels from them and joined the back of one to the front of the other, thus creating an articulated vehicle. The front unit was controlled and steered by a hydraulic ram connected to a steering wheel mounted on the rear unit; the driver was also seated on the rear unit.

There were several disadvantages to the design, as there were two complete engines to service and maintain, and also two separate fuel tanks to fill, and the engine of the front unit could not be started from the rear driving position.

However the disadvantages were outweighed by the advantages. At the time of building the tractor, a 50 hp tractor was a very large vehicle and four-wheeled drive virtually unobtainable and, in spite of the tractor's enormous length, it was highly manoeuvrable and could out-perform any wheeled tractor in production.

The tractor aroused much interest among farmers and others connected with agricultural equipment. Of the many people who went to Mr. Pryor's farm to look at the tractor, there was a certain Mr. Ernest Doe. He was head of a very successful firm dealing in agricultural equipment and he was also an Agent for Ford tractors. He was very impressed by the performance of the articulated tractor, and being a very shrewd business man, he realized the potential of such a tractor amongst the Essex farmers on heavy soil farms.

Discussions took place between Ernest Doe and Mr. Pryor and an agreement was reached whereby Doe & Sons would produce the tractor, based on the Pryor design.

Production started in 1957 and the articulated tractor was called the "Triple D" standing for Doe Dual Drive. At first it was the farmers of Essex and the surrounding counties, who bought the tractor and there was a very brisk demand for them. Being very pleased with the demand, Doe & Sons began a selling campaign on a national scale and it sold very well, especially to farmers on very heavy soils. Quite a few "Triple D's" were sold in Australia, West Africa and Scandinavia.

In 1960 the "Triple D" was awarded a Silver Medal at the Royal Agricultural Show, being one of only two awarded that year.

Eventually, to obtain more power, the two Fordson Major engines were replaced by the Ford 4000 and the Ford 5000, the new tractor being called the "Doe 130." The two new engines were capable of producing nearly 130 hp. However, the Doe Company began to meet with increasing competition from other makers who were making four-wheeled drive tractors with increased power output.

Another problem the Company had to contend with was the fact that the newer tractors were much cheaper, as the two engine arrangement was very expensive to produce and required more maintenance. When production finally ceased, in the late sixties, the Doe Company had produced more than 300 of these unusual tractors, many of which gave good service long after the Company had closed down.

ALBERT CRITTELL.

## SHOT BLASTING.

One of our club members recently asked me if I knew of any club member who had a shot blasting booth for cleaning small rusty parts. If anyone has a kit and would be prepared to undertake this type of work on your terms, please let me know and I will make it known via this newsletter. ED.

AUGUST CLUB MEETING - Monday 22nd August - David Hanstead giving a talk on hot air engines (Please note this is NOT the last Monday in the month because of the Bank Holiday.)

HAZELBURY BRYAN RALLY - Sunday 8th May 1994. We arrived early on Sunday morning to find a very fast filling rally site. The weather was very kind to us with a fair amount of sunshine and not a spot of rain in sight. The stationary engines were well supported by the Wessex members and there was a good display of engines all told. Tractors and vintage cars were there in numbers too. The car boot was larger than ever with stalls to suit everyone. The rather large raffle took place at 4pm to close another successful day. This rally seems to get larger every year and is definitely worth a visit next year, even if you can't bring an engine.

ROGER PIKE

PRISTON STEAM NIGHT - Friday 10th June 1994. A lovely summers evening greeted ralliers for a change as they arrived in there numbers to Priston. Stationary engines included Don Rogers with his 1½ Lister generator. John Brooks with his 1½ Lister 'D', Mike Bevan 1½ Ruston PT, John Soper a 2½hp Amanco, A. Doddington 2½hp Lister generator, Chris & Andrew 1½hp Ruston PT and of course yours truly with my 1¾ Amanco. The steam traction engine 'Duke of Windsor' was there and had a bit of a laugh to fill her up with water, the hosepipe was just too short, it was a case of stand and aim! A Sentinel steam lorry joined the line and a 1902 Aveling & Porter roller from Cheddar, also a 1923 traction engine 'Ellen' completed the line. There were a few motor bikes which included Brian Verrall who had ridden it all the way up from Cheddar. Tractors were very much in evidence, one of which a young lady had driven all the way from Winford, she left home at a quarter to six and arrived at about seven o'clock 'Good for her'. There was a exhibition of Railway Relics by Pete Singer of Bristol, a miniature traction engine and two fairground organs. There were many side shows including a coconut shy and hot dog and beefburgers were on sale and of course the pub was open all night. The public came in droves, at one point the crowd was so thick in all directions it was hard to mingle through. A very successful night was enjoyed by many and all participants enjoyed a free ploughmans supper. The evening drew to a close at 11 o'clock and after packing up we arrived home at midnight. One of the best Priston Steam Nights yet - Well done Brian Box.

ROGER PIKE.

ANNUAL CLUB OUTING - Just a last reminder that out club outing is to be to Gloucester Docks on the 14th August (Sunday). The coach will pick up at The Old Down Inn at 9.00am leaving promptly at 9.15am. The cost of this trip is Adults £6.00 - £5.00 per OAP and £3.00 for children under 14. This includes entry to the Waterways Museum.

### YES WE HAVE NO BANANAS.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL WAS AT ASSEMBLY AND EXCITEMENT WAS HANGING IN THE AIR, A BANANA WAS BEING RAFFLED AT THAT TIME A BANANA WAS RARE.

IN FACT I COULDN'T REMEMBER WHAT ONE TASTED LIKE AT ALL, I WAS FIVE WHEN THE WAR STARTED AND ALL THE BANANAS HAD VANISHED FROM ALL THE FRUIT STALLS.

BUT NOW, JOHN HAWKINS FATHER HAD BROUGHT SOME HOME AND HE HAD SENT ONE ALONG TO THE SCHOOL AND IT WAS LYING ON TOP OF THE TABLE IN FRONT OF US AND WE WERE ALL STARTING TO DROOL.

THE RAFFLE TICKETS WERE TWOPENCE EACH AND OVER A HUNDRED HAD BEEN SOLD, IMAGINE SEVENTEEN BOB FOR A BANANA! THAT KNOCKS TODAYS INFLATION QUITE COLD.

WE'D SUNG TWO HYMNS AND IN THE PRAYERS WE'D SAID THANK YOU FOR DAILY MANNA, TWO HUNDRED KIDS MUST HAVE PUT HIM ON A SPOT ALL ASKING TO WIN THE BANANA!

BUT I REALIZE, - HE'D ARRANGED IT. EVERYTHING IS AS HE INTENDS, THE BANANA WAS WON BY A SHY GIRL, WHO DIDN'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS, BUT NOW SUDDENLY SHE'D GOT OVER A HUNDRED FRIENDS ALL EAGER FOR A TASTE OF THE BANANA.

THE BANANA WAS LOOKING A LITTLE BIT SAD, MORE LIKE A STICKY SORT OF PASTE, BUT SOMEHOW WE ALL GOT THE FLAVOUR. I SUCKED THE BIT OF SKIN, AND THE GIRL WHO WON THE BANANA, WAS VERY PLEASED WITH HER WIN, BECAUSE SHE'D WON HERSELF A HOST OF FRIENDS THOUGH SHE NEVER TASTED HER BANANA. AND I'VE OFTEN THOUGHT OF THAT DAY SUPPOSING SHE'D ONLY WON A SULTANA!!!!

Ted Routley.