

Bob Hallam

Wessex Stationary Engine Club. Newsletter. JUNE 1983

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THE APRIL MONTHLY MEETING - A MEETING WITH 'FRED'

Monday, April 25th at the Old Down Inn, Emborough was yet another well attended meeting; It was a Video Film Show of Fred Dibnah, the BBC documentary of the well-known steeple jack from Bolton in Lancashire.

Grateful thanks for this show (a 'fill-in' due to a cancellation of the speaker for April), are due to Rod Dring for his film, Ivor Yeo, for loan of the video equipment, and to Gordon Marshall and Penny at the Old Down Inn, for the use of their TV receivers for the evening - Thank you all.

Anyone who missed the series on TV or who did not turn up at the Club meeting just can't imagine what they missed; this chap Fred is such a character. The way that he climbs up chimneys, then sits on a bosun's chair and just swings about as though he is just three feet off the ground and not three hundred! To listen to his anecdotes about his job, you hear things like 'if I fall off, then it's a good half days work for the undertaker'. When someone once criticised him for drinking before he went up a chimney he said, 'you just try to climb one sober'. He proved himself to be a craftsman, making the weather-vane for a local church and in the many parts he had to make in restoring his steamroller. How I would like a man like him living next to us.

His family too, were well trained in his ways. On a holiday trip to Blackpool, he even had his wife helping him knock down a smallish chimney at an engineering works. It was raining, and as he said 'she got wet, right through to her knickers'.

This man has got more wit even, than Don Rogers and Brian Munt put together!! All in all, it was a most interesting and entertaining show, interrupted at half-time by Herbie Gane as usual, with the customary raffle. The first prize was won by Roy Cox, a road atlas. Just one thing Herb, the pages are blank. Are they next month's prize?

Ian Skuse

***** ABBEY HILL STEAM RALLY - APRIL 2nd & 3rd

Len and I arrived at Barwick Park, Yeovil late on the Friday afternoon, to be greeted by Terry Heath and his wife, Shirley. After a good nights rest, we set up our engine alongside Bill Appleby's and Robin Lambert's exhibits. Traction engines, buses, vintage commercials, tractors, cars and miscellaneous exhibits as well as about one hundred stationary engines, were well represented. Bill Foster was showing various articles used in agriculture in by-gone days. Also the organ enthusiasts were not forgotten as the Anderton & Rowlands 98 Key Marengi scenic Organ was playing beautifully, and the trade stands, meanwhile catered for everyone's needs.

We packed up on Sunday evening after a most enjoyable weekend, hoping perhaps next year it will be extended to all three days!

Rene Fry

***** CLUB RALLY - JULY 17th

As you all know, this year's Rally is being held in conjunction with the Lions Club Family Day at Cladown, Radstock, Nr. Bath. We assemble on the Saturday to meet socially and set out our exhibits, also to give our hosts a helping hand if needs be. There will be the usual Wessex Social Gathering in the marquee later on in the evening. The Family Day promises to have plenty for non-engine wives and children to see and do, with something for everyone.

Please try and arrive on the Saturday, but if you can't, by no later than 9.30am on the Sunday morning. The site is at map reference Sheet 172 ST 679563. We will be running the Club Stall at the rally to help defray expenses and would be grateful for any goods to sell, produce, bric-a-brac, books, etc.

***** ROAD RAIL '83 - MAY 1st & 2nd

What could have turned out to be a super 2-day event turned into an early Stourpaine, wet, cold and very muddy. Nevertheless, this was an interesting little rally held in a field adjacent to the engine sheds of the East Somerset Railway at Cranmore and to quote from the programme "the whole place is a working museum of the sights and sounds and practices which are either dead or dying elsewhere", and this is very true as it is a very busy little railway.

Cranmore Station itself has a ticket office/souvenir shop and an occupied station-master's house, all nicely kept including the flower borders. The signal box has been turned into an Art Gallery with many of David Shepperd's paintings on display and for sale, and below this a small museum of railway relics, maps, photographs, etc. which was formally opened on the Monday by Johnny Morris (Animal Magic fame). A hundred yards or so along from the station are the sheds, this is where the engine restoration takes place, also in this area is an old restored restaurant car which was open for snacks, meals and drinks, all reasonably priced. From here also one can take a train ride, exhibitors are given free passes for this, and Black Prince and a small tank engine alternately took two carriages for approx. one mile up to a small halt and back again, this was very popular. Then from these sheds you could walk (or should I say wade) through a gate into the Rally.

About 20 stationary engines were lined up. A nice exhibit was that of Roger Pike's Amanco and also Pete Holloway's pumping outfit caught the eye. A new exhibit this season is Reg Butler's Wolseley WD2 1½ hp and Climax Water Pump. Mike Duck and John Cornelius brought their interesting collection of lawn mowers (OVERHEARD - Mike Duck fell asleep in the train ride and it was several rides up and down the line later before he awoke!!!). Also on show were two Showmans engines, rollers, ploughing engine and a general purpose engine and three tractors.

The Army Air Corps has an exhibition and information stand with a static helicopter on a trailer, and on Sunday they flew in a Gazelle, and Monday, a Lynx; both types I believe, were used in the Falklands. This was an added interest to the other military vehicles on display.

Also, very worthy of a mention, was the gentleman with a Standard Fordson tractor who, on seeing a small group of people with handicapped children in wheelchairs looking very dubious at the mud, then hitched up to a flat-bed trailer, put them all onto it and slowly towed them all around the show, even stopping at the sweet stall for them. I am sure this must have made their day. He also did a very good job towing other exhibitors in and out of the mud during the day.

To end our weekend, Johnny Morris and David Shepperd walked the field and thanked everyone for their support and hoped we would return next year, and so despite the weather it was still an enjoyable small and friendly rally.

Wessex Rambler

CLUB INSURANCE

We have had a number of queries this year from members attempting to fill in rally entry forms which are asking for cover up to £500,000, whereas the W.S.E.C. cover is only for £250,000. Generally these other rallies are run by clubs who cater for tractors as well as stationary engines and possibly come under the 'umbrella' of the National Tractor & Engine Club who have minimum cover of £500,000. As the W.S.E.C. is purely for stationary engine owners, we have always considered that our figure is adequate for our needs, stationary engines being stationary and not constantly rambling around the rally field! We suggest that members in any doubt about this, should do as suggested by one such rally organiser this year, and state on the form "£250,000 Wessex Stationary Engine Club" and initial the endorsement. We invite comments from rally organisers on this point.

We take this opportunity to reiterate that our cover does not apply outside the UK, neither does it cover Junior Members unless accompanied by their legal parent or guardian, who must also be a W.S.E.C. member. We do, however, cover ancillary equipment including drag-saws, but excluding circular saws and air vessels.

BRISTOL DOCKS RALLY - MAY 14th & 15th 1983

This annual event, in what must be the most relaxing and interesting City rally venue possible, was blessed this year with weather which, compared with the days either side of it, can only be described as very good. Saturday provided just one sharp sunny shower, Sunday was showerless and very sunny.

The rally site itself, for the benefit of those members who have not yet exhibited, is situated in the heart of Bristol's city dockland, which is being developed as an Inner City leisure centre, and the attractions for wives and children range from visits to the Bristol Industrial Museum, SS Great Britain, trips around the City Docks by small ferry boat or canal narrowboat, radio-controlled model boats, etc. with, dare I mention it, Broadmead Shopping Centre only about 15 minutes walk away.

Enough of the promotional salesmanship and onto the rally! Eighteen members of the Wessex Club brought a variety of engines, ranging in size from a ½ hp open crank mounted on a wall-paper pasting table which seemed to be hiding the oilman's dream, an open topped oil-well; to a 10 hp lorry-mounted Blackstone open crank, the lorry appeared to give birth to a small red off-spring when no-one was looking! We had a "Wookey Wolseley" and a "Large Lister". (Local man, Phil Wookey, had his dutiful wife appear on Sunday with a complete three course Sunday dinner, Wessex wives please take note...!). Tom Senior and his Superior Cannon.... or was it Jane Cannon with her Senior Tom Superior...? Barrie and Sue Thomas (see Sue, I didn't forget)

from Bradford with their Truro engine with 'total-loss' cooling system; Brian Munt's Flister or Floster or Flower engine, silenced by Burgess and which he really isn't too sure about as it was entered as a Bernard Conord, (all the worry of it caused him to feel ill on the Sunday) and Tom Randall's Bamford had a pre-judging paintwork job, it still didn't win the plaque! Eric Brain was overheard to say that the mixture was right on his Victoria when the air intake whistled in 'C' sharp. (Being 'tone-deaf', I can't tell 'C' sharp from a flat chest...Ed).

In addition to these Wessex engines, some late exhibitors from other clubs were in evidence, one of which was a superb Witte Diesel which I'm sure didn't have a Swarfega silencer when it left Kansas City, or a pallatised cooling system either; nevertheless Barrie Thomas went all 'ga-ga' over it. The only reason he didn't make an offer for it was in case some spectator at a future rally asked him 'how many jets in the carburetter?'. He is still counting the jets in his Bradford....or is it a Truro?

Enough of this joculariry!! I would like to thank all exhibitors for supporting the rally again this year and to congratulate Phil Harris for winning the trophy "The Chairman's Plaque", presented by the Institute of Plant Engineers - Western Branch, with the 1911 Blackstone 10 hp. A very popular result to a very democratic system of judging.

Special thanks are also due to those, Mike Hodgson, Tom Randall and many more, who helped the healing of my appendectomy late on Saturday night and again early on Sunday morning. Next year the rally will be on May 12th & 13th, come on you locals...and that includes you too Andrew Mercer! To all engine exhibitors, keep it up, locate and restore and preserve historic and unusual stationary engines, not as museum pieces, but as working exhibits.

Finally, something has been nagging at me since the rally. Reading John Emery's screed about his restoration of his latest restoration job, it ended with the following sentence..."it has given the owner many hours of oily enjoyment during the winter months". Come John, what is 'IT'..?

Eddy May

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Chairman	Ian Skuse, 12 Southlands Way, Congresbury, Bristol, (Yatton 834943)
Hon.Sec.	Diana Emery, Odstax, Wells Road, Hallatrow, Bristol (Temple Cloud 52939)
Newsletter	Eric Brain, 5 Greenridge, Clutton, Bristol (Temple Cloud 52633)
Tee Shirts & Misc.	Tony Jones, 59 Marsh Road, Trowbridge, Wilts. (Trowbridge 5351)
Sales	
Treasurer &	Stuart Ashman, Moorledge Farm Cottage Chew Magna, Bristol (Chew Magna 2655)
Membership	
Vice Chairman &	Robin Lambert, 15 Beechwood Ave., Frome, Somerset (Frome 63526).
Misc.Sales	
Raffles	Herb Gane, 45 Welsford Ave., Wells, Somerset (Wells 74402)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July 9th	Wessex Garden Party at Tony Jones' residence, 59 Marsh Road, Trowbridge. Three days of engines, camping, Disco, Kookie, the Clown, Barbequed bangers, etc. All proceeds in aid of CLIC
July 17th	The Club Rally at Clandown, Nr.Bath. see page 1.
July 25th	Club Evening Meeting, not at the Old Down Inn this month but a visit to see Mr.John Huish's collection of steam, oil and gas engines at Worle, Nr.Weston Super Mare. Meet outside the Nat.West.Bank in Worle High Street at 1.15 p.m. promptly for a 7.30 p.m. start. Map.ref. Sheet 182 SS 356628. Well worth a visit.
August 22nd	PLEASE NOTE - this meeting is a week early due to the Bank Holiday. We have Mr. Gander of the SS Great Britain project coming along to talk on the on-going restoration of Brunel's famous ship. Old Down Inn as usual.

OTHER EVENTS

July 16th & 17th	Blandford Fire Engine Rally. Enquiries to Mr. Ernie Adams, 1/13 King's Road, Blandford, Dorset Tel. 51229
July 24th	Gower Rally, near Swansea. Late entries to Mrs. M. Davies, 724 Gower Road, Upper Kilkey, Swansea, West Glamorgan.
August 6th & 7th	Torbay Steam Rally, Windy Corner, Paignton, Devon. Enquiries to Ernie Luxton, 10 Ashleigh Crescent, Barnstaple.
August 13th & 14th	Yeovil Festival of Transport. Enquiries to Bill Foster, Fourways, Sandley, Gillingham, Dorset. Tel. 2345.
August 28th & 29th	Honiton Hill Rally. Enquiries to Mr. L. Oldridge, 24 Sainthill Close, Exeter, Devon.
Sept.3rd & 4th	Stonehouse Rally. Enquiries to Mrs. B. Partridge, Filbert House, Middleyard, Stonehouse, Glos.
Sept.10th & 11th	Backwell Hill Rally. Closing date August 11th. Entries to Gerald Atherton, Mill Farm, Station Road, Flax Bourton, Bristol.

FOR SALE - WANTED - SERVICES - ETC

To make your restored engine into a proper exhibit, not just a rally entry ticket, why not commission a nicely presented description of your engine in art script to your own specification? Examples can be seen already on the rallyfield, on John Emery's Ruston IP, Phil Harris' award winning Blackstone, and Brian Munt's sausage machine. Only £3 or so for a really professional job. Apply to Joanne Penny, c/o Stephen Emery on Temple Cloud 52939 or contact the W.S.E.C. secretary.

Do you need a trailer? Try Cradock Trailer Hire. Trailers also made to your specifications. Ian Cradock, 100a The Knap, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wilts. Tel. 62198 for full details.

For Sale: Steam engine, made in Blackburn. About the size of a 6 hp stationary engine. Enquiries to Mr. A. Bennett, Pilning 2810.

For Sale: Wolseley 1500 saloon. Only 37,000 miles from new. 1957 model in almost as new condition with orig. tools, carpets, etc. Apply to Mr. R. Peplar, School of Engineering, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath.

For Sale: Crossley 1040 E/C engine on trolley, ready to rally. Tel John Emery, Temple Cloud (0761) 52939.

For Sale: Boxford Lathe on stand, 3-jaw chuck, new $\frac{1}{2}$ hp single phase motor fitted and can be seen running. Also Coronet Band Saw, 6" throat, ideal for small work. Offers to Mr. R.A. Earle, Bristol 673016 evenings.

For Sale: Lister L-type 1924. Offers to Roy Cox, Weston-super-Mare 419826.

For Sale: Lister D-type 1928, on trolley and in working order. £30; Petter AII, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hp, early model, complete but not working; Stuart Turner P4 also complete and on a trolley, around 1940, not working. £50. P. Marsh, 66 Portway, Warminster, Wilts. Tel. 215772 after 6.00 p.m.

For Sale: Climax Well Pump, working order. Offers to Ray Hicks, 8 Mortimer Court, Bishop Westall Road, Exeter, Devon. Tel. Exeter 50178 after 6.00 p.m.

WHEELS OF YESTERDAY RALLY, BATTERSEA PARK, LONDON - MAY DAY WEEKEND

Len and I left home at noon on the Friday and journeyed in steady rain all the way to London. When the control centre opened at 5.00 p.m. we were told where our rally position was to be. This proved to be an ideal site, next to the roadway where the Vintage Commercials, which were the main attraction, passed by.

Soon we were joined by Terry Heath and Shirley, also Keith Reader.

Saturday was a lovely sunny morning, so after breakfast, Shirley and I decided to shopping in Regent's Street for the day. On our return we found crowds lining the streets. Was Royalty expected? No such luck! Custom Cars were being expected and when they arrived, what fantastic designs!

Sunday dawned wet and dull; we watched the Vintage Lorries and Buses set off on their run to Brighton, this took most of the morning. On the Monday the vehicles did another road run around London from Battersea Park, the first of its kind, thus making history.

At 4.00 p.m., Roy Kinnear presented the prizes; Terry and Shirley Heath's Blackstone had first prize in the Stationary Engine Section with Keith Reader's Eagle as runner-up.

Soon we packed up, and arrived back to Salisbury with no traffic problem after a very enjoyable holiday weekend.

Rene Fry

Rene also wishes to say that although she enjoyed what she saw of the Fred Dibnah Video Films, "unfortunately I did not see all the films owing to a bad previous night's sleep and the warmth of the Club Room; I fell asleep in spite of numerous 'digs' from Len...!! I must apologise to all concerned with the showing of the films".

This comment can only be construed as a "feather in the cap" of the Club....and the Old Down Inn. Who was that member who, not too long ago, said that he did not attend Club meetings because the room was too COLD....! Ed.

WINDSCREEN STICKERS

The long awaited W.S.E.C. Windscreen Stickers are now available. Good value at 60p each - available from Brian Munt, 41 Gilda Crescent, Whitchurch, Bristol. Please enclosed s/a envelope or see Brian next to his Sausage Machine at the next rally or Club Meeting.