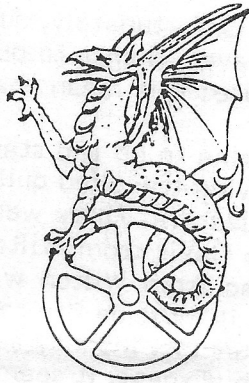


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1985

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Abbey Hill Rally, Yeovil 1985

After leaving home at about 8.30 a.m. on the Saturday morning, we arrived at Yeovil at about 9.20. We unloaded Eric's little Wolseley WD11 and Lister H2 pump first and then my Lister Junior. This was the first rally I had attended without bringing my own water as I thought Terry Heath would have had water brought around to us. I asked him about it and he said that they would be bringing it later on but rather than wait around Eric and I decided to take the churn down to the tap and collect our own. We started the engines and took it in turns to keep an eye on them while the other had a look around. There were quite a few exhibitors; I knew some of them by name but many more by sight only. There was Dave Webber from Wiviliscoombe with his 1940 3 hp Ruston & Hornsby driving a sheep shearing machine, Fred Rendell from Gillingham with his Coburn C6 and Phoenix pump, Phil Harris with a very nicely restored Ruston Hornsby ZPR 1½ hp of 1926, John Emery with his 1929 ZPRE similar 2 hp, Roy Cox with his Petter A and Lister Domestic pump, Dave Clack from Trowbridge with his very nice 1925 single flywheel Lister Junior A-type, Bill Appleby with his RUSHTON (in the Programme!) 8 hp, Robin Lambert with his unusual Aster B7 1½ hp, and Dave Fisher with a nice Lister A-type driving a Stuart pump. Also Dave Ball and Gerald Hoddinott from Warminster with their Lister A, 1924, and a very nice Petter M-type. In all, there was a grand show of 100 engines entered but I think quite a few never turned up because of the weather, it was very showery.

There was an excellent show of steam engines including the Ransomes 'Mendip Lady' of Des Penny and a couple of working models of steam engines, a Stanley Steam car of 1921 vintage, besides other vintage cars and motorcycles. How good it was to hear and see British motorcycles, as you don't see many of those on the roads these days.

There was a lot of Autojumble stalls to look around plus a few fairground rides for the young at heart at this three day rally. However, on Saturday the weather was not too bad until lunch time when it began to rain heavily; this continued on and off all the next day, so by Sunday afternoon the field was very muddy indeed. When we left home for the rally field on Monday, it was still raining, this time 'cats & dogs' so we decided to stay until lunch time only. Of course, when we arrived at Barwick Park, the sun was shining through and the wind was drying up the mud. We removed the covers from the engines and had a walk, chatting to other exhibitors as we went. A few wanted to join our Club so I had a word with Jackie Lambert and got some entry forms. (That must have been when you were talked into doing this report Bill...Ed.). Bill Appleby's engine persisted in stopping as it was running on kerosene, nevertheless Robin Lambert soon had it going again; he said it was due to the cold wind not allowing the engine to get hot enough. About 11.30 it rained AGAIN so we sat in the car and had our lunch, collected our plaques at 1.00 p.m. as, by this time, Terry was too knackered to bring them around. They were very elegant plaques and Terry thanked us for coming.

We tried to move the car with the aid of Vi and Eric pushing; eventually we got to higher ground and Eric and I went back for the trailer. As the clouds were gathering themselves up again for a further downpour we stopped the engines quickly and with difficulty pulled them up to the trailer helped by Dave Fisher. I was glad of his help too! With Dave and Eric pushing we eventually managed to get out of a very muddy rallyfield at about 2.00 p.m.

Bill Coombs

Overheard in the Ladies Loo.....'Infantile!! - squatting over heaps of scrap cast-iron in a boggy field miles from nowhere; it's worse than squatting over a card in the Bingo Hall', and 'At least he's not in the pub - it's either that or the rallyfield these days'

2.

We welcome a new contributor to the Newsletter this month....

Abbey Hill Easter Steam Rally

Our first rally this year was somewhat dampened by continual rain and wind. However, everyone put on a very brave face and stuck it out to the end as all good rallyists should.

We arrived on Friday lunchtime and by then there was quite a few coming in. Unfortunately, due to the high winds, I was stupid enough to crush my finger in the caravan door; however, thanks to our friend 'Dot' watts, first aid was swiftly rendered, a real Florence Nightingale! (does this mean that Derek will soon be acquiring a 'lamp-start' engine???...Ed). Full marks Dot.

On Saturday morning, despite the heavy showers, everyone turned up and raring to go and start their engines. I think there must have been around 100 engines, many exhibitors having travelled quite some distance and were determined that the weather wasn't going to spoil their pleasure. There were quite a few Wessex members, including our 'new' Chairman, Rob Lambert and Joe Davis from Wilton was there with his Lister having left his Showman's Living Wagon at home. Also from Wilton was Harry Lomas, who, by the way, tells me that they don't get mud at their rallies so it must be dry rain there! On Sunday, down came the rain once more but even so, the engines kept running. Monday saw the same monotonous weather but I am certain everyone stayed right to the finish (Except, it seems, Bill Coombs...Ed.). An excellent rally, well organised, but spoilt by bad weather - better luck next year.

Gwen Large

OBITUARY

We regret to announce the passing of Leslie Crouch on March 30th at St.Martin's Hospital, Bath, aged 76 years. Together with his brother, he was a member of our Club from it's earliest days and they have both been familiar figures at many local rallies, always with an exhibit in impeccable order.

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club extends its condolences to his family in their loss; the rallyfield too, will miss him.

IN SHORT....! Last month, you remember, we gave you a '125 years ago'; this month we find yet another piece of local history chronicled under the heading '25 years ago'. This time from the 'Somerset Guardian', we learn that Donald Rogers,..... of Springfield Buildings, Old Mills, Paulton..... had been chosen to play outside left for Somerset against Gloucestershire. He also plays for Thicket Mead Youth Club and his School's first XI'. Do we know where those summer shorts come from....?? - or can there be ANOTHER Don Rogers?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT (especially for the preservationists...!) 'To look back to antiquity is one thing; to go back to it is another'

CLUB RALLY - Longleat House, nr. Warminster, Wilts. June 15/16th 1985

Would all entrants please note that our rally is open to anyone, not, as has recently been published, to members only. If you know any non-Wessex member who has entered and is confused by this spurious information, would you please let them know that the only conditions are, that priority will be given to entrants who will undertake to rally on both days, whether members or not.

Additional information to that given on your entry return:- 1. The beer tent will be open until 23.00 hrs. on Friday night and until 23.30 hrs. on Saturday night. 2. Live evening entertainment will be free and everyone will be welcome. This will consist of Country & Western Music **AND**, wait for it.... Can-Can Girls! (This programme should please Amanco and Japy Freres owners!).

MONKTON FARLEIGH MINES

Following the report in the February Newsletter of a visit to these Bath Stone Mines and underground ammunition stores covering eight acres by our erudite roving reporter, Ern Brassplate, we have heard other members enthusing about their own visit.

Roger Parsons of Tynings, Clutton, tells us that he was enthralled by all he saw, especially the Ruston Hornsby engine and the miles of conveyors for the World War II ammunition. He is hoping to pay a second visit in the near future and says it is well worth the £1.50 entrance fee. For details etc. telephone Bath 852400.

REMINISCENCES (mainly for the benefit of our newer members)

Looking down from the top floor of the Blagdon Pumping Station at the overwhelming crowd who turned up for the April meeting, I realised that of later months we have many new faces. Could the reason for about seventy or so members coming along be due to pangs of conscience following Claude Lowther's letter in the January Newsletter? I think not, most of the members present were unknown to myself; many were from far afield.

The WSEC was formed early in 1977 from an original idea in the autumn of 1976 and the inaugural

meeting was at a private address at Midsomer Norton, not far from last years Club Rally field. Twenty or so people were at that first gathering, a committee was formed and the Club swelled during the first year to about 75 members. The first rally was at Kilmersdon in a farmer's field with a biting wind; the flywheel escaping from the then Chairman's Crossley convinced us all that some form of Club Insurance policy was vital, we were one of the first Clubs to make that decision. Our decision to stick solely to stationary engines at first met with some derisory comments, but was, I still feel, the right path to follow having seen other clubs diversify to their ruin. We held one meeting at a pub in Chew Magna and it was obvious that there simply was not enough room, so the Old down Inn was approached as it seemed geographically right. Gordon welcomed us so much that we have never needed to look any further.

That first year, and the next, we held our Club Rally at Cranmore, the home of David Sheppard's East Somerset Railway but we quickly outgrew even that and have since made it our policy to try and move around the area each year; this current year we are indeed fortunate in going to Longleat.

At the start of our second year, a borrowed engine caused a minor furore and the ensuing re-grouping saw Tom Randall as Chairman; the Club has never looked back from that time. Tom took over the Newsletter, having seen it's potential in keeping the, by now, 120 or so members in touch, and brought it up to the standard which yours truly has been trying to keep it ever since!

We were privileged indeed that some of our members were chosen by our then President, David Edgington, to assist in the organisation and running of the 1979 1000 Engines Rally and the 1981 Great Gathering at Longleat, two of the most enjoyable (and busiest!) week(ends) I personally have ever spent. There is more, ask any founder member such as Herb Gane (our longest serving committee member), Bill Appleby, Michael Cannon, Tom Randall, David Edgington and myself. What happened to John Spear, Phil Lane and all the many others who have come and gone?

It says a lot that the constitution of the Club has undergone only minor modifications from that set out at the inaugural meeting; the alterations being mainly to do with insurance and Junior Members' legal liabilities. This document, by the way, is available for any member to read at any time; just ask any committee member.

Finally, a quote from the first line of the constitution.... 'The aims of the Club shall be the restoration, preservation and display of stationary engines over 25 years old....' Happy Rallying!

Eric Brain

 THE MONTHLY MEETING, 29th April 1985

The evening's meeting was destined to be one of particular interest to those of us who have a fascination for Victorian engineering. We were not to be disappointed as a crowd of cup-final proportions (by our standards anyway) descended on the picturesque Yeo Pumping Station at Blagdon. Bristol Waterworks normally would have opened the Station in May but for the Wessex Stationary Engine Club, we had our own private tour. Our guide for the evening was Waterworks engineer Michael Pitman, and his assistant who spent the entire evening running around with an oil can and a rag. He had the sort of face that showed he was completely absorbed in his work - well who wouldn't be with that sort of charge in your care.

Michael Pitman commenced his talk by explaining that Bristol Waterworks Company was founded by Act of Parliament in 1846 solely for the supply of water. In 1851 water could be supplied as far as Clifton by gravity feed via aquaducts, tunnels and a 30 inch pipeline from the companies original source in the Mendips. The Yeo (Blagdon) reservoir was completed in 1903 and the station pumped its first gallon of water in December 1904. The elegant red brick building originally housed four 170 horsepower Woolf type compound beam engines built by the Kilmarnock firm of Glenfield and Kennedy between 1902 and 1905. Three engines were in constant use with the fourth as a stand-by. Steam was supplied at 100 lbs per square inch by six Lancashire Boilers. Coal was delivered direct to the boiler house by four sidings and a branch line connecting with the former Bristol & Exeter Railway at Yatton. The 90% mechanically efficient engines worked until April 1949 when the steam plant was closed. Pumping duties were then taken over by electric pumps. Two of the engines were removed and by some quirk of fate number 1 and 2 engines remained and these are the preserved examples see today. In 1984 the Hick, Hargreaves & Co. barring engine was removed to its present position by one of the pressure regulators and a 20 hp electric motor now turns over number 2 engine. The piston rings from the 34" diameter low pressure cylinder and the 21" diameter high pressure cylinder were removed to ease rotation. With the push of a button Michael Pitman set the 20 foot, 20 ton flywheel in motion and we all became quite transfixed as the engine gently and quietly reciprocated at a modest eight revolutions per minute - half of its original working speed. The isochronous governor seemed to hold particular interest for Diana Emery as I watched her for some time become mesmerised by the twin 6" balls! Several people were intrigued by the valve levers, eight for each engine, that stood like signal levers adjacent to the low pressure cylinder. Each lever had its own release pedal on the floor and these would have been operated manually when the engine was first started and automatic operation would have taken over when speed and timing was correct. The parts that held particular interest for me, as it always does on any beam engine, was Watt's parallel link motion - quite simply a work of engineering art. Other items on display around the triple

4. galleried engine house were the original installation drawings by Glenfield and Kennedy dated 14th February 1900 as supplied to the consulting engineers T & C Hawksley of Westminster, a superb brass flowmeter calibrated in millions of gallons per day enclosed in a polished mahogany case, engine number 1 revolution counter reading 5166100 (I wonder how many times round that is), and the piston rings from number 2 engine. I started to count the number of sight feed oilers visible but gave up when I got to 56. There were in fact 72 oilers on each engine, 18 of which were on the parallel link motion itself! After the engine was stopped, Michael Pitman drew the raffle; towels for Dorothy Watts, chocolates for George Tomlinson, and a box of assorted screws for Ted Wilkins (young George immediately announced he was taking the chocs home for his Mum, it seems there were none for his Dad, Steve, who brought him along to the meeting... Ed.!).

A very appreciative gesture of gratitude was given to Michael Pitman and his assistant who was by now busy methodically turning off each one of the 72 oilers! The evening concluded with the majority of us invading the local hostelry in Blagdon.

A really interesting evening which was extremely well supported and our thanks are once again extended to the staff of Bristol Waterworks Co for making it all possible. One final note, no charge was made by the Waterworks Co. for the tour of the Pumping Station and so the committee agreed to send a donation to the benevolent fund of the Company.

Michael Cannon

***** FOR SALE

Crossley Bros. Petrol/Kerosene engine, 3 hp, 600 rpm, 1926, all complete on a new trailer and driving a 110 volt dynamo at 8 amps. Very good condition and ready to rally complete with running stands and some bulbs. £320 ono or might swap for an interesting motorcycle. Tony Jones, 121 Marston Lane, Frome, Somt. Tel Frome 65189.

Petter AA1 diesel, approx. 3 hp air-cooled, with 6:1 reduction gear. Good condition, £45 ono. 12 volt dynamo at 110 amps in good working order, £20 ono; Lister J type in good restorable condition and working, £60 ono. Brian Hann, 2 Clist's Buildings, Alexandra Rd., From, Somt. Tel. Frome 71467 after 6pm

Raleigh Ladies Cycle, 20" wheels, 3 speed gear, detachable shopping basket. £30. Tel. West Harptree 473 after 6.00 p.m.

2 x 300 Gallon Oil Tanks - good condition, Ivor Yeo, Chyventon, Smitham Hill, East Harptree, Somerset. Tel. West Harptree 604.

WANTED

Big-end for Lister L-type; is anyone breaking an engine? Phil Harris, Tel. Wedmore 712048.

***** FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Classic Vehicle Show and Fair Day, Kingswood, near Wotton under Edge on Sat, 7th September. Contact Rod Alexander, Fourways, 1 Wotton Road, Kingswood, Wotton under Edge, Glos. Bleadon Steam Country Fayre, near Weston super Mare, will be held this year on July 28/29. Details from Roy Cox, 4 Laurel Drive, Uphill, Weston super Mare, Somerset. The Full Quart Inn Rally will be held this year at Hewish, near Weston super Mare on September 29th. Contact Roy Cox, as above, for details.

Birmingham Museum of Science & Technology coach trip is planned for October, but due to printing deadlines, the actual date and more complete details will not be available until next month's Newsletter at the earliest. The Museum is crammed with engines of all descriptions as well as all sorts of other very interesting machinery, cars, motorcycles, a locomotive, radio, radar, etc., etc. Keep mid-October free, this will be a well subscribed visit.

***** CLUB MEETINGS

June 15/16	Club Rally at Longleat
June 24	Guess the Object - a guessing game with a difference
July 29	Talk on Whitemetalling by Mr. Greig
August 19	NOT the last Monday in the month - Member's evening, a chance for any member to bring along his favourite slides, films or give us a talk on any engine related subject.
September 30	Things in people's attics, a talk by Mr. Oldiss on collecting antiques and bygoners.
October 20	Collecting Dinky Toys, a talk on this popular pastime by a real enthusiast on the subject.
November 25	Talk on the maintenance and use of chainsaws, just in time for gathering winter fuel.
December 14	WSEC Dinner & Dance at Frome, generally as other years, look out for full details in due course.