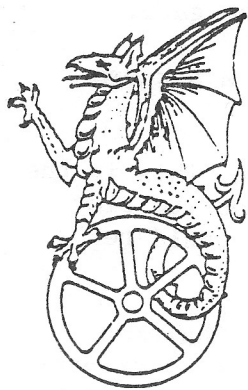


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1990.

EDITOR

Claude Lowther,
Garthside,
Wells Road,
Hallatrow,
Bristol. BS18 5EJ.

Telephone Temple Cloud (0761) 52714.

The material in this Newsletter shall not be reproduced without prior consent and due reference to the Wessex Stationary engine Club. Opinions expressed herein so not necessarily reflect the policies of the Club. All rights reserved.

THE SPANNER

"Some times I sit and think, but mostly I just sit", well yes that sums me up just about, there is always tomorrow to do those important jobs that should have been done yesterday. Lately I have, however been breaking my rules and with much effort, I've been stirring up the grey matter to try and figure out what makes Stationary Engines so popular. Some may say they have commendable motives of preserving examples of engineering skills for future generations. That may sound fine, but isn't it a load of tripe? I have yet to find many of the future generation who are interested in anything but Rock and Coke. No I think its something more basic than that. The fundamental reason could be the old one of economics. Most of us I suspect would much sooner own a Red Label Bentley or a full Showmans Engine than the good old Lister 'D', but the truth is that we can't afford them. A sound enough reason I'm sure you will agree. Then there is the problem of storage space. My second garage is already overflowing, so much so, that 'The Management' is threatening to leave home. The final reason is probably the real one. Stationary Engines are basically simple things, well within the limited knowledge and skills of people such as me. I can't see many of the present models of motor car with their computer controlled this and that being collectors pride and joy. Then there is the absolute joy of making what was once a pile of rust leap into life, the nearest thing to parenthood that can ever be. This feeling is there whether the engine be the mundane 'D' or the rarest and oldest engine found. Yes that must be it.....we enjoy our hobby.

Then I've been thinking about Stationary Engine Men. (Tomorrow I'll give the brain a rest) This breed seems to come in various guises. Firstly there is the 'Collector' who owns a myriad of engines, rarely has them running and even less often takes them to a rally. He gets his pleasure in ownership alone. Incidentally the highest score I know of in the WSEC is 34 at the last count. Perhaps someone can top that you will let me know. Then there is the Rally enthusiast, who every weekend from April to October takes his engine to another gathering of like minded beings. Good luck to them is what I say, but I sometimes can't help wondering if they would not also attend rallies for Milk Bottle Top Exhibitions if there were such things. Then there is the 'Engineer', who with amazing skill can turn half a dozen rusty nuts and bolts into a magnificent engine, and we've got a few of those in the Club too. Yes it takes all sorts to make a wonderful world of Stationary Engine Nuts and I suspect that you will find a bit of each of them in us all. As long as we enjoy ourselves and offend no one, heck what does it matter.

Change of subject. In a telephone call, Bob Donnelly from Newton Abbot tells me that he has investigated a 'scrap yard' at Crediton which had a diesel engine coupled to a winch for sale. Details are at present sparse but he has promised to write with more information. (Not so gentle hint, Bob). Apparently this yard deals with ex WD materials and has a pile of spanners which Bob estimates to be a ton or more. With my luck they would bound to be the wrong size.

Finally you may be wondering why I have been wittering on, you could be excused for being fed up with it, but I have problems. Yes that's it, the Editorial cupboard is bare. News views, reports and even complaints would be most welcome. Now that the rally season is well under way you should have plenty of time while minding your engine to pen a few lines to yours truly.

Cheers for now,

Claude Lowther.

(2)

DIARY

Sat/Sun. 16 & 17th JUNE. THE WESSEX STATIONARY CLUB, CHEDDAR RALLY. While it is now too late to enter it is not too late to book the date in your diary. Come along and give the event your support, or better still volunteer for a stint on the gate. The Committee welcome all the help they can get. Finally, please get your prayer mats out because to make the Rally a success we need GOOD WEATHER.

Mon 25th JUNE. BRING AND BUY and SUMMER CRANK UP at the Old Down Inn, Emborough. This is the event for all the bargains, while at the same time giving your favourite play thing a decent run (stationary engines will also be welcome). What could be better than a pie and a pint flavoured with copious exhaust fumes.

Mon 30th JULY ANOTHER EDITION OF "CALL MY BLUFF". The popular quiz where the Chairman assisted a panel of not so expert antiquarians, and kept in order by your ever faithful Editor, will give the audience a load of cods wallop interspersed with a few gems of truth. Prizes will be awarded to those members who can identify the most lies.

CLUB ACTIVITIES.

26th March '90 Talk by Metalock.

On the evening of 26th March, members received a video and talk on Metalock process for the repair of cast iron. The process, developed in the American oilfields in the 1930's uses the minimum of tools, no heat and therefore no sparks or distortion: it can be done on site in the case of large items, or in the workshop. The video showed us the two basic repair methods.

Imagine a frost crack in the water hopper of your favourite stationary engine. Using a jig, lines of holes are drilled at 90 degrees to the crack at about 1" intervals. The holes are blind, going only to half the thickness of the iron. Using a compressed air operated chisel, the holes are joined together to form a serrated slot. A length of the special Metalock key material, shaped to fit the slot is now fitted and peened into position in the slot. Along the length of the crack, studs are fitted by drilling and tapping. Once all the keys and studs are in position the work can be ground off clean. The repair is not only stronger than the original parent metal, but is water tight and can withstand high pressures. This method is not confined to just crack repair, as in cases where a casting has a hole in it, then a new patch can be made up to fit and keyed in.

For larger industrial castings such as presses etc., then the same stitching method is followed for the parent casting is hollowed out to a depth of several inches depending on its size, and a steel patch is let into the hole and keyed in as before. A Typical repair will only take 3 or 4 days, can be done in situ, and the machine can be in immediate use once the repair has been completed.

The talk was most interesting, and certainly applicable to our engine interests where castings are damaged and replacements unobtainable.

Jeremy Adams.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Sun 27th MAY. GRAND FUN DAY at The Recreation Ground, Silver Street, WELLS, from 12.00 noon until 4.00pm. A handful of engines/tractors/vintage vehicles are required. For further details please contact:- A. Andrews, 32 Stoneleigh, Westbury-sub-Mendip, Nr. Wells. Tel. Wells (0749) 870482.

Sat 1st SEPT. WELLOW FLOWER SHOW, Nr. Bath. About 25 engines or vintage cars, bikes, tractors etc. are required. Plaques will be given. For an entry form contact:- Jeremy Adams, Tel. Bath (0225) 834127 evenings.

Sat 8th DEC. YEOVIL GREAT LYDE WINTER FAYRE. 40 engines are invited to this event at Yeovil. Plaques and free teas for each entrant. 10.30am till 4.00pm. Entry forms from :- Harry S. Davey, 17 Glenville Road, Yeovil, Som. BA21 5AF. Tel. Yeovil (0935) 25938.

THE MARKET PLACE.

WANTED. Bamford Rapid Grinding Mill No. 2 In any condition.
Vic Walton. Tel. Bristol (0272) 622025.

CASTLE COMBE AUCTION.

The weekend of the 17/18th March was for me the start of the 1990 rally season and a very hectic one at that. On Saturday there was the Castle Combe Auction organised by the Chippenham Vintage Machinery Club and held on the racing circuit. This year the weather was kind to us unlike last year when the wind blew so cold that you were glad when the day was over and you could return to the warmth of the motorcar.

We arrived at about 11 o'clock allowing us time to have a look at the various lots up for sale. There were around 650 lots to be viewed with something to suit most tastes and pockets. A good selection of stationary engines were to be found this year, conditions ranged from Class 1 down to Class 5, and of course a variety of spare parts. Listers were predominant as one would expect, with models 'D', 'L' and 'CS' diesels. Petter engines of the 'M' type came in sizes 1½, 3 and 5hp supplemented by several air cooled models. Other makes of engine included Fowler diesel (inkit form), Wolseley WDII, JAP's of various types, several of which were coupled to generators, Douglas twins, Coventry Victor twin, Stuart Turner twin and Villiers of various types. What in my eyes was the best engine on the field was a Bungalyte complete with generator and mounted on its original base. American built engines were represented by an IHC 'M' type of 3hp: this was an early low tension model with the butterfly nut holding the crankcase inspection cover in place. A nicely restored United engine was run from time to time to show its ease of starting. A Witte drag saw was also on offer with what looked like a stone saw and finally a Briggs & Stratton air cooled.

In addition to the engines there was a whole range of items up for sale, those were too numerous to list but the following are a few that come to mind. With the Spring upon us there was a good selection of lawnmowers of the Flymo type or if your grass was of the long paddock type you even had a couple of Allen scythes to choose from. If you are more of the athletic type then **you had a number** of bicycles to pick from. Barn machinery included Chaff cutter, mill, winnower, sack hoist, shandy barrow and a number of crop sprayers. Water pumps as always were plentiful in all sizes. This also applied to iron wheels, several sets of which were home made. Hand tools of all description could be found. A number of smaller items were to be found inside one of the buildings, and there were at least two club members on watch at all times, as you can never be too careful what with the magpies about. Here could be found magnetos, oilers, books, magazines, brass blow lamps, machine tools, fuel cans etc., etc.

This year with so many lots to get through the auctioneers excelled themselves keeping things flowing so well that the bidding was over by around 4 o'clock. I was unable to get all the prices as much of my time was taken up in conversation, but a few were recorded. The Lister 'D' engines went for anything up to £50, the 'L' type class 4 made £52 and the 'CS' diesel made £185. Petter 'M' types fetched £260 for a 1½hp acorn hopper model, £125 for a 3hp tank cooled with mechanical lubricator, and the 5hp tank cooled made £290. The Stuart Turner (marine) twin went for £72, a pair of John Deere flywheels for the 1½hp model 'E', (the spokes of one wheel had been welded) made £46. Bidding on the Bungalyte went upto £395 but it was not sold, failing to reach its reserve. The United also failed to reach the reserve when the bidding stopped at £375. The Witte sold for £370, while the IHC 'M' made the highest price for an engine at £500. Smaller items were priced at £30 for a Mamod steam lorry, a box of 'Days Gone By' toys made £25 and model tractors made £12 to £15. An old fashioned level crossing sign made £66. Of the magnetos a BTH with a Petter gear made £34, while a Wico made just £6.

It was good to get out and see so many friends again, several of which were Wessex members.

Sunday was the Central Southern Vintage Agriculture Club's spring Bring and Buy Sale held at Brook, Surrey. Being a member I went along not to sell but just to see what was about and have a chat. The turn out was very good, the sun must have an effect on old iron collectors with numerous vendors selling from trailers and the backs of cars. In addition to those engines for sale several club members brought along an engine to show, bringing a more summer feeling to the whole affair. The show engines included Lister 'Ds', Wolseley WDI and WDII, Ruston Hornsby PT and PB, Winconsin air cooled and a John Deere model 'E'. Mr. Tony Harcombe, whose name you will have seen in the Stationary Engine magazine brought out his recently finished RETLAS model, the casting of which were purchased from Graham Corry's Alyn foundry. Of the engines for sale a list was made but with exception of one or two I have no idea what was sold. There were Lister 'Ds', Petter 'As', Wolseley WDs, Ruston Hornsby PT, JAPs in various forms, Bamfords of 1½ and 3hp, Kohler for cylinder generating sets (2), Stover, Taylor Vacuum engine, Newway (sold), the United that had not been sold at the Saturday auction (sold), Cushman Cub, Bernard, Coventry Victor, Fairbanks Morse Eclipse model (sold). There was a good selection of trailers selling items such as nuts and bolts, taps, tools, gasket material, you name it and there was somebody who had it. Water pumps, wheels, bicycles and mowers were to be seen changing hands. Like the Saturday outing this was a most enjoyable start to the new season.

Patrick Knight.

The story so far. In last months saga Tony recalled how he had recovered and restored his Wolseley WD8 and now wanted something for it to drive.

As I always insist that engines drive something I looked around for an accessory and, as a change from a water pump, got hold of a very massive "LION" electric generator which put out 110 volts DC at a very good rate of amps. It was almost as big as the WD8 itself and I never found out what it was made for.

Coupled together they made a very attractive unit but very heavy to get on and off the trailer and set up properly. After the first two rallies in 1983 I decided that a purpose built trailer on which the coupled unit could be permanently mounted was the right answer. With my disability (which was not getting any less and I was 69 in 1983) shifting the trailer and the plant on rough rally fields was no go.

The idea paid off and buying a modern torsion sprung axle and a pair of Mini wheels, I fabricated, from angle iron and checkerplate, a strong but light trailer with three drop down jack legs and a standard caravan hitch. With a shaped canvas travel cover (you would not believe what my better half can do with a normal sewing machine) we had a very satisfactory 1983 season.

At the end of the 1983 season another unexpected thing cropped up. Over a pint in our local with my farmer friend he said "I notice you seem to change to a new engine every year, do you want to sell that trailer set up with the generator?" I said I had not given a change any thought but asked "Who was interested anyway?" He said Morris over at Feltham wants a mobile power unit for a field milking parlour which uses American 110volt gear. Currently he has a big transformer and a recitfier on it but its not mobile. "I think that thing of yours behind his Landrover would be just the thing".

As it happened my ills and aches had been playing up and it looked as if a third hip op was on the way and I was not averse to going downscale to a lighter and more portable exhibit. I said I could be interested.

Two days after, Mr. Morris was on the phone, he did want the outfit and I was amazed at the price he offered until I realised that farmers, in the mid 80's had just about every EEC subsidy going and he would charge the whole thing against Income Tax. The Wolseley-Lion outfit went on its way and I was in the market for a replacement.

In various rallies I had seen some interesting little ex-War Dept. machines that, because of the acute shortage of equipment in 1946/7 had been converted to drive various farm gear and while they could not in any way be classed as genuine farm machinery they did the odd job and were light, portable, needed no trailer and I could always rely on lifts in and out of the car at rallies while the block and tackle loaded the gear at the home end.

An advert in The Stationary Engine produced a quite good flat twin engined Norman, which I found had been produced in 1940 to drive an AC alternator with one belt and a 22volt DC generator with the other; the two voltage outputs providing test currents used in the calibration of the early Radar seys. It had been stripped on the generating bits and hitched to a Lister ram water pump for farm use.

A simple clean up, new plugs, points and a bit of a tune was all that was needed and I was all set up for the 1984 season.

(to be continued)

Tony Adlington.

THE MARKET PLACE.

SERVICES. Wessex Restoration of Evercreech, a new business advise that they cater for the enthusiast who, while wishing to do his own restoration has difficulty with the old enemy rust and corrosion. They will grit, shot or beadblast any item from complete engines to the smallest casting, repair where necessary, re-assemble and paint in etching primer.

General restoration work is also undertaken ie: shot preening, welding etc. A collection and delivery service is offered together with a discount to members.

Wessex Restoration own early vehicles and engines themselves and the proprietor Robin Prebble, welcomes any members who wish to call and to discuss their needs, a telephone call first is advisable.

Wessex Restoration, Leighton Industrial Estate, Leighton Lane, Evercreech, Shepton Mallet, Som. BA4 6LQ Tel. Evercreech (0749) 831037.