

CRANKING

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

May 2015
37 years of publication!

MUST SEE

www.wessexsec.org
NEW!!! With forms,
photos, info, latest
stuff. Archive.

From The Sump

I've been slowly restoring my '36 Cammy Norton for several years now and it occurred to me in the winter that if I had any hope of riding the thing, at 73 I ought to get on with it! Most of the work was done, but there remained some specialist bits to do and I decided that I'd ask Sammy Miller down near Southampton to finish off the stuff I was going to find difficult to do without a proper hydraulic ramp. Yesterday, I went down to see how he's getting on and was delighted with his progress. I think the photo says it all



I know there are many motorcyclists amongst our members and if you have not been to Sammy Miller's Museum, I thoroughly recommend it.

It is possible that I'll have it back in time for our rally at Semington. Look out for the happy motorcyclist with flies on his teeth!

Moving the Metal For sale

I am open to sensible offers on all items, please ring for further details, evenings only.

Phone Matthew Hodges on 01747 870516

Amanco 3 HP, on a trolley. £550

Bamford 3HP on a trolley. £250

Bradford (similar to PB shape) No mag. On a trolley. £50

International 3.5HP. No trolley or skids. £450

Lister A, tank cooled, driving original H2 pump, on original trolley. £350

Lister A, single flywheel, New petrol tank, mag rebuilt £350

Lister L, tank cooled, steerable trolley. £250

Lister water pump, large size, on a trolley. £200

Ruston PB6, on a trolley. £175

Ruston 8DP, 3HP. On a trolley. £275

Ruston 9PB. On a trolley. £275

Ruston 4.5HP, open crank. On a trolley £750

Hacksaw, trolley mounted. £100

Three assorted trolleys, one Lister A. £180 each.

Assorted magnetos.

Lister D, on a trolley £150. **Wolseley WD11**, on a trolley. £150.

Lister A, on a trolley. £200. **Godwin pump**, £100. **Lister H1**, £100. Phone Phil Roberts 01749 840093.

Troy AGR Utilities Ltd. Single plough and set of cultivators.

Large cast iron wheels. Engine turns over, open gear box.

£150. **ONO** Phone Richard Cowell, 01747 824102 (Dorset)

Petter M. 1934, Apple top, 4hp. On a trolley driving a generator and complete with Lighting board.

EMCO screw cutting Lathe, 5". With milling attachment. Loads of tools and kit, very good condition. All open to offers.

Phone Phil Coombs, Gurney Slade. 01749 841220

Believed **Ruston Hornsby** trolley. Four good wheels, axles and steering head but wood U/S! £80.00 **ONO**

Lister L bottom end, more or less complete timing gears etc £70 **ONO**. Set of trolley wheels - offers

Bosch flick mag, appears in good order £60

(Bob Alexander, below)

WANTED

Lister L type, fixed head. Magneto drive chain cover. A water pump suitable for circulating water across the screen cooler.

Grateful thanks to all those who have helped so far!

Phone Bob Alexander 01225 766211.

A fuel nozzle for a 3 hp **Petter M.** Phone Roger 01722 416949.

Suppliers

Recommended Bearing Supplier - very helpful!

Solent Bearings, Unit 20&21, Test Valley Business Centre, Test Lane, Nursling, Southampton, SO16 9JW

Articles, cartoons, photos etc are always very welcome - this is not a one-man band, but an expression of all our thoughts and experience. Submissions should be preferably typed or word-processed or even handwritten, (if brief), - it is the content we're after, not the grammar or spelling, so please don't feel your efforts will be ignored. The editor reserves the right to change, edit, augment or lessen your Deathless Prose and asks all to note that opinions expressed in this newsletter may or may not represent club policy

Phone - 0117 964 6818

J. Kim Siddorn, 9, Durleigh Close, Bristol. BS13 7NQ or by e-mail to kim.siddorn@blueyonder.co.uk.

Featured Engineer Number 11

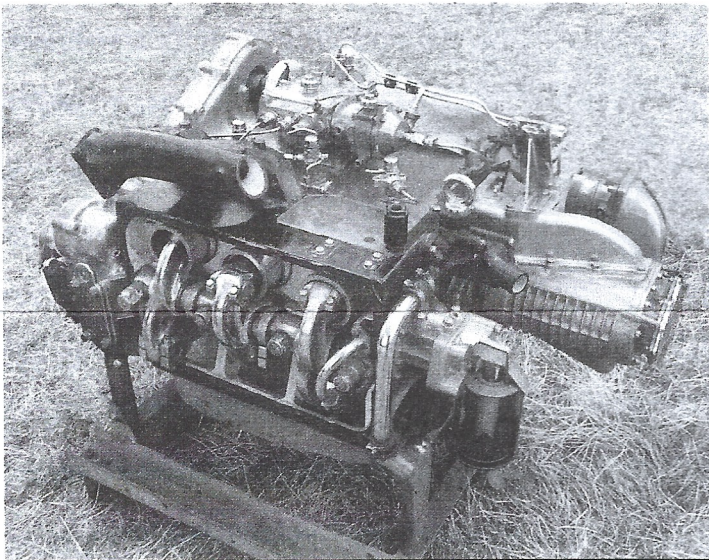
A retired Motor Engineer who wishes to remain anonymous

Tony was a bit scared of Joe and so if a radiator needed repair, he would send me down to Joe. "Can you repair this?" I would timidly ask. His answer would paraphrase Mr. P. "What?" he would explode. "How many f***ing hands do you think I have?" The tirade of expletives would last around a quarter of a minute, then reluctantly he would say, "Leave it here but I can't do it today." An hour later I would collect it, perfectly repaired.

The daily grind of engine, gearbox, suspension repairs and exhaust-fitting (in the days before dedicated exhaust centres), was relieved by fairly regular incidents. New cars from the showroom were sent down to the diesel repair shop to have their number plates made and fitted. This entailed a journey on King George's Road round a tight bend where the F Shed once stood. One of the fitters Derek M was ferrying such a new car a bit too enthusiastically and lost it on the corner, hitting a lamppost amidships and nearly cutting the car in two. Needless to say, he got the sack!

Another occurrence was when a lorry engine would stick open on full throttle. The large Routes Group lorries employed a supercharged two-stroke engine which would rev up and up with a deafening row until the engine exploded.

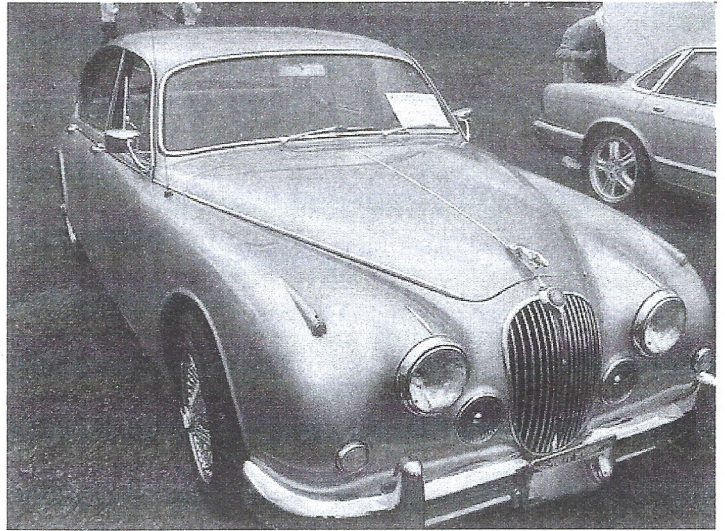
Before this happened, some brave soul would run up to it and smash the glass bowl of the fuel pump to stop it but not before the whole garage complex would fill with dense brown smoke and have to be evacuated.



Sectioned Commer TS3

One humorous (to the onlooker!) incident happened when I was working in the later repair shop overlooking Beswick Road. Whilst grinding in some valves, looking out of the window, a posh Jaguar car pulled up. The road was fairly empty in those days. The driver got out and walked over to the open door and into the lorry shop. A moment later a lorry backed out across the road and hit the Jaguar. Not only that, but it pushed the car along some heavy

railings, smashing the front and side right in. A group gathered to survey the scene and it transpired that the lorry had belonged to the Jaguar owner who had popped in to see if it was ready. Not his day I think!



The garage employed an engineer George C and his apprentice, Dave R. Dave was a practical joker and would wire the cage surrounding the engineering machines to the mains, alarming if you touched the door handle. He was finally dismissed when a home-made bomb he had set off on the waste ground next to Perdition Street ended its flight through the air by crashing through the diesel shop roof!

This waste ground was used for parking the motorbikes owned by us mechanics. Not many of us owned cars then, but I don't remember any of the riders being hurt in accidents. When telling of all these incidents, one would think life as a mechanic was an amusing doddle but everything in the 1960s was done by hand and was hard work.

The garage equipment was kept to the barest minimum. I now realise this was probably done to cut down theft as anything new and exotic would soon vanish including tools. The thing to do was to borrow other people's tools. Why, you ask, would anyone lend out their tools to you? The secret was to own a rarely-used special tool no-one else had. I owned a seldom-used micrometer and so had an advantage as I could borrow other people's tools with impunity. Of course there were a few who would not lend anything and were entirely self-sufficient.

The garage declined in the 70s due to the latest financial trick of asset stripping and closed in about 1980. Even the premises were demolished and although there is a modern building to take its place, the memories remain.

I hope you've enjoyed this trip down memory lane, written by my mate who prefers to remain anonymous. Some place names have been changed to protect the guilty – the innocent not needing such protection – as many west country people are still around that would remember the old place. Hopefully, this article will bully other club members into writing a similar memoir! – Ed..

Calendar of Events

key. CN = Club Night. E = Event

June 20th - 21st E. **The Wessex Midsummer Vintage Show** - Semington, nr Trowbridge, Wiltshire

June 21/22nd. E. 31st **1000 Engine Rally**, Astle Park. Cheshire

June 29th CN. **My Life In Motor Sport** - Prof Andrew Graves.

July 18/19th. E. **Much Marcle Steam Rally**. Rye Meadows near

Ledbury. HR8 2LX Phone, Mrs Dot Pullen, 01531 633664

July 18/19. E. **West Oxen Steam & Vintage Show**, Contact

Andy on 01993 771251 or Download Entry Form Via

www.westoxensteam.co.uk. Venue, Ducklington Nr Witney

July 27th CN. **Crank Up** - The Court Hotel With Bread &

Cheeses Supper

Aug 24th CN. **HMS Aphrodite, EOKA and Enosis** - 2

years in Cyprus 1958-59 - David Griffiths

Sept 28th CN. **Hawker Hunter Fighters** - Grp Cpt John Heron

Oct 26th CN. **My Life In The Fire Service** - John Bullock

Nov 7th. E. (Sat) **Autumn Sale**. Oakley Airfield. HP18 9JX. info:

Mrs. Anne Harris 01367 810415

Nov 30th CN. **Lights At The Court Hotel** - Bring an engine driving dynamo or genny in the afternoon and then model show in the evening with silver soldering demonstration & supper

Dec **Christmas Party** - Court Hotel (Date To Be Announced)

Dec 27th **No Christmas Crank Up**

All the above dates are subject to alteration and changes will be

announced in the newsletter.

Engines Required!

John Brooks Memorial Vintage Crank up, 7th June 2015

John was a very good friend of mine and many others in the club and is greatly missed by all that knew him. The event is at Piltown Farm, West Pennard between Shepton Mallet and Glattonbury, BA6 8NQ. The entrance to the farm is opposite Stockbridge Lane.

Bring an engine, bring a model, bring a miniature traction engine or any other vintage exhibit, or come along and adopt an engine for a day, many engines on site and if you want to have a play just bring a few tools and have fun getting one up and running.

Cider, Bread and Cheese free for you to enjoy

Please come along and help us remember our dear friend and long time club member John Brooks. For full details give Eric a call on 01225 754374.

Chairman's Report

Hello everyone, To begin this report I must tell you that a few days ago I received some startling news. I had a telephone call from Oliver, Brian Baker's grandson to tell me that Brian has had a major heart attack and was in a very serious condition in hospital at Bristol. However, Brian being the fighter he is, he is making a steady recovery "sitting up in bed and cussing us as usual" as it was put to me! He is not out of the woods yet, but we may hope he'll be back with us all in the not too distant future.

Now, on to a little good news about the Crank up at the White Horse Country Park on the outskirts of Westbury. May I first say a very big thank you to all those that came along and made this event a great success. With forty

engines, six vintage tractors, cars commercials and military vehicles, it did really make the effort put in to arranging this event worth while so thank you all once again. (I have arranged with the club that we may stage the event again next year) The West Wilts Society of Model Engineers ran steam and diesel powered trains throughout the day, giving rides to the young children and some not so young children, did you enjoy your train ride Sue?

Our club evening at the Court Hotel on Monday the 27th April was well attended, but we still have room for more. We had a wonderful evening all learning about the life of a rat catcher with Pete The Rat. Not only rats but Foxes, Baggers, Mink, Moles, Wasps and Deer were all part of a day's work to Pete. Moles seemed to give Pete the most trouble when he started in the trade of vermin exterminator. It was not until an old gentleman told him that "you need a Mole to catch a Mole" that things got easier. Now Moles hate each other and fight like mad over territory, so if a mole smells another mole he will go and hunt out the intruder, just rub your trap with a dead mole and set it in the run. Goodbye mole!. This was a great evening entertainment with many a laugh so good that I did not get home till well after 11 O'clock - 'tis a long time since that happened may we have many more evening like this and thank you to all that attended I am sure you all enjoyed it.

The WSEC's big event at Semington gets ever closer now only a few weeks away, so please if you can spare just a few hours to give us some help with setting up and taking down after the event the committee of the rally will ever be in your debt.

Please don't forget The John Brooks Memorial Crank Up on 7th of June at Piltown Farm on the Shepton Mallet to Glattonbury Road. Please come along and let's make this a good day out. Remember there be Cider and Cheese so what can be better than that?

Monday Club Night 27th April

by Bryan Coles

'Pete the Rat' was our guest speaker at the Court Hotel, attended by an average number of members. Pete gave an interesting insight into his work as a professional vermin exterminator, explaining various methods of pest control, especially of rats and mice.

Traps were on display and mechanisms of some were demonstrated. He also spoke of new legislation controlling the use of baits and poisons that will make his task much more difficult, especially where food is stored and around farms.

He made the point that vermin will always be around as long as food is available, waste or otherwise. Questions and answers followed and Peter was thanked for an entertaining evening

The Way We Were - 1985

By Robin Lambert

Following a chat with our hard worked and long suffering editor about his problem of getting enough material for the Club Newsletter, I wonder if our readers would be interested to learn, 'if that's the right word' a few things about something we all take foregranted - Electricity or the problems of keeping it flowing. Every time we switch on a light or turn on the television, it always obeys us and never seems to fail, or at least for many of us who live in the towns and cities, where our supply comes from a substantial underground cable network,, but spare a thought for those who live in more rural areas.

With almost all my working years associated with the maintenance and operation of overhead power lines, many hundreds of incidents causing major power cuts have occurred. The most regular must be gale force winds, which always seem to uproot or break-off the largest tree which, when crashing onto overhead lines, can cause enormous amounts of damage, snapping poles like matchsticks and pulling down cables for hundreds of yards. These high winds also rip off roofs from barns and sheds, large tarpaulins from hayricks, and they always seem to deposit themselves on the nearest overhead lines.

Another serious problem is thunder storms, it is said that lightening never strikes in the same place twice; don't believe it, it certainly can. Despite a certain amount of protection built into the design of power lines, lightening can cause a lot of damage. Two years ago violent thunder storms swept across Somerset and Dorset during mid- morning and by mid-day you would have thought it was midnight, almost total darkness except for the roar of bright orange and blue lightening crashing from the sky to the earth, the damage done to our network was astronomical, hundreds of wires on the ground and 72 pole-mounted transformers had to be changed, many split wide open as if someone had been around them with a can opener.

Snow, if 'wet' can also be a big problem; it freezes on the conductors causing a large build-up of ice which will weigh very heavy on the lines causing them to sag and eventually snap. So gales, thunderstorms and icing-up, are perhaps the most common reasons for power cuts.

Other third party and dangerous occurrences also account for many faults, such as cranes, high loads and objects coming into contact with overhead lines, this can be extremely dangerous for people and vehicles. I remember seeing a new six-wheeler lorry that had deposited its load, and then drove forward with the tipper up, go straight into a 11000volt line, all the tyres caught fire and the lorry looked in a very sorry state, fortunately the driver was not hurt. The military also have their share of troubles when on Salisbury Plain; parachutes became entangled with the lines, as do large 50 ton tanks roaring across the plain with their gun barrels in the

side position swiping off poles like a wire cutter going through cheese.

The poor old swans get their share of trouble too when coming in to land on rivers and lakes, they just don't see the wire and crash straight into them often killing the bird. Overhead line damage by aircraft was rare since the war years but recently a crop spraying plane came to grief while trying to finish off an awkward corner of a field, his undercarriage got caught up in a high voltage line and flipped the plane over twice, bringing it down in a crumpled heap the right way up. The pilot escaped with only a cut to his hand.

I think the most unusual fault was caused by a giraffe being delivered in a wooden crate to Longleat on the back of a lorry, the driver failed to notice a power line crossing the road, and drove straight through it, the giraffe was not hurt, but what a fright it must have had as it was very nearly garrotted.

Lambourn Spring Country show

Out and About With Robin And Jackie

by Robin Lambert

We have been attending this event now for the past two or three years and I am always puzzled as to why its not a two day show as there is a lot to see here and the amount of hard work put in to set everything up really does warrant an extra day.

This year on Sunday 3rd May, we were in situ with our Exhibit having arrived the day before along with a few more and got all set up in readiness for the Big Day thus giving us plenty of time to have a good look around Sunday morning as the Event is not programmed to start till 11am. But there was a fly in the ointment yes you have guessed it! The Weather, having watched the forecast all week Rain was due to sweep through on Saturday leaving Sunday fine, but it was a day late coming and really put the dampers on things, starting with the large Vintage Jumble when early Sunday morning. Only a few Traders were putting out their wares, the rest not wanting to get wet, left things in their vans and trailers waitingfor a break in the rain which thankfully did happen. By midday the car park was rapidly filling up and as in previous years the public were entering the Show in droves.

There were fifty stationary engines in our two lines, over sixty tractors, eighty vintage cars, thirty commercials and a superb E S Hindley steam plant with vertical engine and boiler ticking over like a Grandfather clock.

There were all the usual ring events, plus heavy horses and even musical side saddle demonstrations by ladies dressed up in their finery,

Quite a lot of our Club Members were there, some even exhibiting in the bird tent and guess what, I came away with a Trophy for the Oldest Stationary Engine with a 1902 hot air engine!

(Photos from Internet resources)