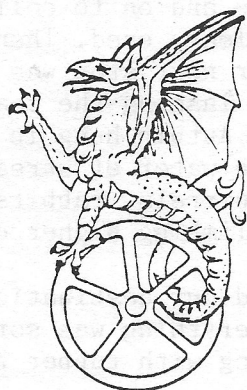


# WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB



## NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1988

EDITOR

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

Tel. Temple Cloud (0761) 52714.

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### THE SPANNER.

News from the Committee is that they are busily engaged in devising a programme of events and meetings for next year. While there is a wide and varied choice of visits and topics of general interest they are finding problems in locating speakers willing to talk about stationary engine subjects. As stationary engine restoration is the primary aim of the Club, it is felt this subject should not be overlooked. I suspect that the Committee would welcome any suggestions members may have, but please don't leave them too late as the programme has to be with the printers shortly.

I would like to welcome Margaret and Bill Appleby to the Newsletter team, as from last month they have taken over the responsibility for Newsletter distribution. Thank you both. It is surprising how this task has grown. Some four years ago when Marion and I took on the job we used to post about 50 copies each month. Now it's grown to nearly 150 copies monthly which to my mind shows just how vigorous the Club is.

I feel sure all members will join me in wishing Mike Hodgson a speedy recovery after a stint in hospital undergoing surgery. Take it steadily Mike, there is still an awful lot of rallies to attend.

Finally this is the time for Christmas shopping. (Who needs reminding, in our house it seems to start in August..). But our Treasurer points out that the WSEC has gifts to please most engine men. Car stickers (60p) and metal or cloth badges (£1.00) are available from Derrick Watts. While the absolute fashion in WSEC sweatshirts (£6.50) can be obtained from either Shirley Gale or Jackie Lambert. Go on give someone a treat.

Final finally, it would appear that many engines suffer from magneto problems. I think an article on their maintenance would be very welcome, including the possibilities of re-energising magnets. Any experts about please?

Cheers

Claude Lowther.

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### CLUB DIARY.

Sunday 4th December. The Anti Freeze Rally at The Old Down Inn, 10.30am until dusk or until you are frozen, whichever is earliest. Gordon, the Landlord is laying on his usual bar snacks and our meeting room should have its fire going for our weaker brethren. No entry forms required, just turn up and have an enjoyable day out.

Monday 30th January '89. Monthly Meeting. Film Show featuring Shell films, further details in next Newsletter.

Saturday 18th March '89. Skittles Match against Cheddar Football Club at their Clubhouse.

It is hoped to arrange over night parking for caravans, so there will be no problems for those living a distance away.

CLUB ACTIVITIES.8th October. Coach trip to Morwellham Quay.

Roll call eight o'clock at the Old Down Inn, all were present. We were on the road by five past eight heading for Churchill traffic lights, down through Burrington Combe and on to collect the next load of early rising club members, some I noticed were still a bit bleary eyed. Then down the A38 to Lower Weir where eight more brave souls faced the weather. Our next stop was at Taunton Deane where Ray Earle boarded. On we travelled with rain and spray lashing the coach, tea and bun stop at Exeter Services. Then on to Dartmoor where the colours of Autumn hung in the trees, even in poor weather there is beauty to see in our countryside. The water of streams splash over rocks and the wild life is there to see. There were pheasants, squirrels, rabbits and sat on a stone near a stream we spotted a large buzzard. As we drove on climbing higher on the moor the cloud descended and the moors vanished from sight.

At one o'clock we came off Dartmoor into Tavistock and eventually reached our destination, Morwellham Quay. To begin with no one seemed to know who we were, but soon everything was sorted out and we were made most welcome. I distributed the thirty eight tickets along with rubber bands to hang on your coat buttons, hand bags or even round your neck.

After a quick bite to eat it was onto see the film telling the history of Morwellham. The quiet village of Morwellham on the River Tamar has seen shipping come and go for seven hundred years. Just over one hundred years ago the port was probably the most important ore exporting centre in Europe. The earliest mention of Morwellham is in AD1235. Above Gunnislake some two miles up stream the River Tamar carves a gorge through rocks of granite rich in valueable minerals. In its heyday Morwellham had more shipping than the Mersey of Liverpool. After the film show it is left to the visitor to decide which route to take, the Red Trail or the Blue Trail.

Maureen and I decided to take the Red Trail. We first reached the Ship Inn, Chandlers Shop and two museums. The first treat is to board the train which takes you six hundred feet into the heart of the hill. Following the course of the 'Deep Adit' we learned the conditions and methods of eighteenth and nineteenth century mining. Illuminated displays vividly portray how ore was extracted from the rocks of the mine. From 1700 to 1869 this took place at Morwellham and countless other workings. The adit we visited had easy access, but the other adit (meaning parallel shaft or tunnel) was four hundred feet deep. We learned that miners descended by ladder taking about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  hours to ascend.

From the mine we then went on to visit the Hydro Electric Power Station, proper modern it was, built in 1933 and being the only one of its kind in England. Then it was on to the Lime Burners Cottage where we met up with a right motley crew of WSEC members. They looked a very handsome lot all dressed in Victorian costume, hope to see photos at the dinner and dance.

The Red Trail then takes you back past the Old Lime Kilns, another Morwellham industry. Here limestone and coal burned to produce lime fertiliser, disinfectant and whitewash. In the early 1800's manganese was very rare, it was found in the Tamar Valley and brought to the Quay where it was ground into powder by the great overshot water wheel which still works today. When the copper seams were exhausted so other minerals were mined, a little lead and tin was found but not in any large quantity. Arsenic took over from copper to a large extent and shipped to the USA to kill cotton weevil. But the heyday of Morwellham was over by the 1890's, even the sale of arsenic became no longer possible and in 1901 the pump of the Devon Great Consols ran silent, Morwellham died.

I have tried to give a rough insight into a visit to Morwellham however there is a great deal more to see. The miners cottages complete with pigs in their sty, the pump wheel which pumps water for the Bedford Cottages. As well as all this there is the Devon Great Consols Quay where up to four thousand tons of copper ore at a time lay on the quays waiting shipment.

But what of the Blue Trail. One day I hope to return and visit the Victorian Farmyard, the Shire Horse Stables and the Old Shaft. As you can see Morwellham has a great deal to offer and is a wonderful day out. On the journey home we stopped at the Cat and Fiddle who did us proud with plenty of grub on offer. I bet there are a lot of ladies saying "I must go on a diet after all that fattening food". All horribly fattening, but all horribly tasty.. We were joined by Angela and Ray Hicks from Exeter, Ray has been unwell recently but I am pleased to say he is on the mend now. Finally thank you to our coach driver Ernie.

Roll on the next outing.

ERIC GAY

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Stop Press

WANTED Has anyone information or Literature on the Versatillier (Rotovator) fitted with a Vincent Industrial Power Engine. Please contact Alan Sweet Pilton 586.



CLUB ACTIVITIES contd.23rd October - Car Boot Sale.

We were very lucky to have such a nice day for our Car Boot Sale at the Lo-Cost Super-market car park, Worle. The event was very well supported with a total of 43 cars including quite a few Club members. All told £103 was raised for the Club funds.

We would like to say thank you to new member Shirley Tuffley for her help in collecting the money as people arrived. Thanks also to Dave Tuffley, Mary and Brian Verrall and anyone else I have not mentioned for helping to clear up at the end of the day. Last but not least thanks to Brian Munt for attending with his organ complete with monkey.

DOT & DERRICK WATTS.

26th September. Monthly Club Meeting.

A large number of members met at the Old Down Inn for our meeting on the 26th Sept., in fact there were so many there was a hunt for extra chairs. It was nice to see such a gathering.

Patrick Knight was our speaker for the evening with an interesting collection of stationary engine slides. I must admit that some were very rare and quite unknown to me. Some slides were of individual collections such as Ray Jones and John Deley either of which could hold their own Engine Rally and make most collections look very mediocre.

The Old Hill Museum in Surrey looks an interesting place to visit. The show continued with slides of various rallies including the ones at Abergavenny and Rushmoor.

Herbie's raffle was, as always well supported and prizes won by the following:- Roy Cox - Booze (of course), Dave Laidlaw - Crocus bulbs, and Ted Phillips - Lantern.

The evening I feel sure was very much enjoyed by all and thanks to Patrick Knight for giving his time to make a good evening for the Club.

DERRICK WATTS.

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RALLY REPORTS.

THE FULL QUART INN CRANK UP.

Once again the Crank Up weekend arrived. The weather on the Saturday decided to be really miserable with heavy rain all afternoon and evening which dampened our spirits. In the evening all our willing helpers and overnight exhibitors retired to the pub to get wet on the inside as well as the outside and to have a natter.

Sunday dawned with a wet and misty morning which as time went on brightened slightly to a grey but fairly dry day. Exhibitors arrived early and set up. The new landlord and landlady were most impressed and very enthusiastic giving a lot of prizes from the pub to add to those donated by exhibitors and others, making 59 all told.

This year we once again had a good selection of exhibitors, especially engines. One in particular, an American engine built by Stickney, came all the way from Helston in Cornwall. The grand total raised this year, together with the seasons CLIC treasure chest reached the magic figure of £1027.66. This was boosted by Sid Wilson's £110 sponsored run. (A policeman on the run aye..) Well done Sid.

The money was given to the CLIC branch at Weston Super Mare who have bought a flat on the sea front for sick children to have a much needed holiday. Now they can buy equipment for the kitchen. The cheque was handed over at the pub to Mrs. Dain, the CLIC representative, who clearly was delighted with the amount. The one thing that truly amazed Mrs. Dain was the fact that you all travelled many miles to display your exhibits without being paid for it. She made me promise to thank each and everyone of you. "What nice people" she said. The best nutters we told her. The cheque was handed over by Mark Maybee, who as most of you know is cured of leukaemia and was accepted by Roland Lewis who is cured of cancer. And THAT'S what it's all about folks.

THE COX FAMILIES.

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More on Hydaulic Ram Pumps.

The excellent and most interesting article on Hydaulic Rams by Jeremy Adams prompts me add a small story of the reconditioning of such a pump.

My last house in the Norfolk village of Oxborough lay alongside the historic Oxborough Hall (Mary Queen of Scots spent much of her English captivity there) and it was important during the Civil War. The Hall Custodian over a pint at our local said they had found, in a copse, an old engine house containing a Ram Pump which had been employed from the early 1800s to 1930 (when the Hall got mains water), in pumping up the drinking, washing and what have you water from the river fed moat of the Hall, to lead tanks sixty feet up on the roof. He thought that, reconditioned and working a fountain, the Pump would be an added attraction to the many visitors who tour the Hall each year - Would I have a go?

I knew nothing of these machines, but what bygones engineer ever refused a challenge. The National Trust put me in contact with the Norfolk Industrial Archaeological Society who not only gave me much information on Ram Pumps (Invented in 1775 and produced in the Ironbridge Foundry in quite large numbers upto the 1890s) but also sent a photographer around to take pictures of the 'before' and 'after' situations.

The pump proved to be the dry land type where the motive and supply water was fed by pipe some distance from the Hall moat which being large, river fed, and higher than the Pump House acted as a powerful header supply tank. The pump house, (half underground) had filled up with soil and debris and we spent a whole day digging the complete unit out from whence it was transported by digger bucket to my workshop. Stripped down, the very large air dome (which in this type of ram unit acted not only as a flow equaliser but also as a water propulsion unit with the heavily compressed air reasserting itself and forcing a charge of water up the domestic pipe to the roof storage tanks) proved to contain a massive cast bronze helical vane impeller in addition to a large cowhide diaphragm and a heavy duty coil spring above a brass outlet valve. As the district water was very soft and both impeller and valve were operating in good quality cast iron bearing and seating the wear was very little, the water itself, acting both as a constant coolant and a lubricant, almost insured a no wear life for the unit. I had only to clear up, replace the rotted diaphragm and provide a stainless steel spring to replace the old brass one.

A most helpful THETFORD engineering firm was talked into a complete shot blasting and hot zinc spray job over all cast iron body and dome. I had all brass work electro plated and lacquered against any future corrosion and bolted it together again, keeping fingers crossed.

We then ran a test with the local Fire Brigade providing the water (they almost flooded my entrance drive) and 'hey presto' it worked. As funds of the National Trust did not then permit rebuilding of the Pump House or provision of a fountain unit is (as far as I know) still on display - with suitable legend and photographs in the Guard Room of Oxborough Hall Gate House.

The job was most interesting and proved to me that as Jeremy Adams points out "This is an example of the simple but highly efficient engineering of a bygone age" and in these days of sky high fuel costs - which we are told will run out by the year 2000 - it is time we went back and looked again at the many, simple, cheap and efficient machines our great grandfathers designed and sold the world over.

TONY ADLINGTON

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THE MARKET PLACE.

For Sale. Petter M 1½hp Acorn Top £150. Corn mill make unknown £50. Bamford root cutter £25. All for restoration. In rally condition - Villiers MK20 and pump £65.

Roy Cox, Weston Super Mare 419826

For Sale. 3 Lister D engines, all as found, one a petrol/TVO £60. Petter Universal engine horizontal enclosed crank, all complete as found £50.

Derek Maybee Blagdon 62795.

For Sale. Lister Junior 3hp c1932. Runner. Complete including original trolley which needs slight repair. Also includes oilcan, toolbox and starting handle. Only needs new silencer. £100 ono. Terry Filby, 5 Claremont Gardens, Nailsea 854053.

For Sale. 1955 B.S.A. 650cc Twin Golden Flash (First of swinging arm models) Combination with Watsoian sports chair Monza. R.M. Payne Trowbridge (0225) 761795.

For Sale. A member of the Kernow Old Vehicle Club wishes to dispose of his collection of Cornish Teagle engines. In the collection are 3-4 stroke Teagles, 4 different Jet Cuts, 1 - 2 stroke motor hoe, 2 - 4 stroke motor hoes, 1 - 4 stroke Jet sythe, 1 - 2 stroke Jet sythe, 1 - 2 stroke Lawn Mower.

For further details contact 'Kermit' Harris Truro 73388.

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