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## **WESSEX AUTUMN SORTOUT AT CRANMORE STEAM RAILWAY**

### **SATURDAY OCTOBER 25<sup>th</sup> 2003**

The morning turned out dry and cold which was a great relief, as we were hoping that our third change of venue would turn out as good as the other two this year. The weather turned quite warm as the morning progressed, with over 20 stalls and a steady stream of buyers coming in there was a fair amount of trading going on in engines and bits and pieces. The only small hitch was when I had to sort out the buyers from the meals on wheels people coming in to collect food deliveries when I was on the entrance gate. In the restaurant trade seemed to pick up quite well, and the cook had to pop down to Shepton to fetch more bacon. They served big breakfasts, bacon butties, tea, coffee, and lots more. At the end of the day we were able to hand over to the railway people a good sum of money which made all the time and effort worthwhile. On being press ganged into going on the committee on the understanding I did not do any paperwork, on this occasion I've had to do this mini report as our junior reporter J.P. is on holiday.

**Tony Davis.**

## **THE WEST OF ENGLAND STEAM ENGINE SOCIETY 48<sup>th</sup>**

### **ANNUAL EVENT AT ST AGNES AUGUST 15/16/17<sup>th</sup>**

The magnitude of this event seems to increase year by year, if you were on a day visit the chances are you would not see it all. As an exhibitor it's only possible over the three days, by doing what we all do, taking it in turns to look after your neighbours exhibit. Even for our ladies there is plenty for them to enjoy, four rows of stalls that stretch almost out of sight, will take a couple of hours to view, a giant ten pole marquee that houses about eighty craft exhibits and almost seventy model exhibits. Outside around the field are twenty bygone displays and six hours each day are programmed ring events. Around ninety full sized steam engines, several steam cars, and sixty miniatures adorned the field. The most I have ever seen outside the Dorset Steam Fair. 160 tractors, 4 wood sawing areas, 200 vintage cars, 180 motorcycles, 100 commercial and military vehicles are entered in the programme. My apologies for all of the figures but if you have never been to St Agnes before this might tempt you to make the effort and the long journey to Cornwall. It's also a nice opportunity to meet up with our Devon and Cornwall members. The show is well organised and the stationary engine section is very friendly, and we are looked after by steward Chris Leverton who has all the exhibitors interests at heart. Close to the large beer and entertainment tent is a nice old fashioned fairground with some modern rides that offer entertainment for the little kids and the big ones. Hot food vans are placed around the field offering a good cross section of food. A lot of members travel down here in campers and towing caravans, some book into bed and breakfast and find accommodation nearby, and even stay on after the show for a few days and have a short holiday. I always smile at the large sign displayed by the exhibitors entrance 'NO PASS, NO ENTRY, NO ARGUMENT' and guess who had left their pass at home? – Yes I did, but this was soon rectified by Chris our steward and things were back on line. A steam motorcycle on the field caused a lot of interest, built in 1910, it had a flash boiler and worked at quite a high pressure 600/700 lbs. An interesting steam challenge has been put forward by the show organisers, to celebrate it's forthcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005. The challenge is open to all groups or individuals to build a steam motorcycle which can be run on the wall of death, prize money of £1000 will be shared between all entrants. (So how about that for all the Wessex engineers?)

**ROBIN**

## **OUR CLUB VINTAGE JUMBLE AT CRANMORE**

Jackie and I attended here with our stall and arrived at around 7.45am, after first scraping the ice off the van thinking we would be the first on site, but others had beaten us to it, the first buyers had actually followed us in and were sifting through the van before we could unload. Lots more stalls arrived along with the punters from as far afield as Devon and Hampshire. As the sun rose in the sky temperatures picked up and we basked in glorious sunshine. The station cafeteria did a brisk trade with breakfasts and hot drinks which were very welcome for us, and those who had travelled long distance. We really did enjoy our day at this new venue and would like to thank all patrons to our stall for reducing the amount we had to take back home. We hope the committee and members were happy with the new site and the way things went. We certainly had a good day.

**ROBIN AND JACKIE**



## (((((((( THE GREAT DORSET STEAM FAIR 2003 ))))))))

Ten long years had gone by since I last went to the Steam Fair at Tarrant Hinton, I had not planned to go this year, but when I got up on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> I said to myself it's time you had a day off my son. So I set off heading for Shaftesbury, the first part of the journey was not to bad, but as I got near to Shaftesbury traffic began to build up, but I soon lost that for I knew my way through the back lanes and very soon I was out on the Salisbury to Blandford road, and by 9-30I was on the show site. Money paid and I began my day at the great Dorset Steam Fair. First port of call was the Stationary Engine Section, plenty of engines to see, but not one WSEC member could I find. (well I will put that right next year god willing). There were a few very nice engine exhibits, one being a 6hp Blackstone from Wales, this still had it's original horse shafts for moving the engine from place to place to do it's work driving different farm machinery. Another good exhibit was a 5hp Bamford, incorrectly identified at the Bamford works as a 4hp model and sent to a customer Bellows of Leominster, when the error was found out it was then shipped to Ashbrittle Farm in Devon to drive line shafting. The star of the stationary engines was as you might have guessed – a Petter, but not a "M" type, but a lamp start "S" type, this was a top restoration. A few more engines caught my eye, but overall I thought the standard of restoration was not wonderful. The WSEC had engines of a far better standard at our rally at Clutton. I then moved on to find my next "must see" exhibits, the steam ploughing engines, not in great numbers but just to see them at work is worth the journey and the entry fee. After a good time looking at the engines and taking photographs it was time to have a look at what was going on in the heavy haulage area, WHAT A SHOW, I know I have not been for ten years but I can never remember such a wonderful show of engines working before in the heavy haulage section, I could have spent all day just watching the action. It was really non stop all day, with every type of load from trees, generators, stone, and even a full size train engine on a low loader being hauled around the area. With the sun shining on the paint work of these engines and the polished steel and bright work it was a wonderful sight. The wood yard and road making was my next stop and again this was first class. I will just mention one exhibit on show and that was a model traction engine in 4 inch scale driving a saw bench, no not a model saw bench but a full size bench cutting large timber, this was a magnificent exhibit, as was all the full size engines working in the wood yard and thrashing area. The road making was the next stop and I must admit this was the first time in all the times I have been to the steam fair that I have seen this demonstration, and this was well worth the walk across the site. (The legs were getting a bit tired, must be something to do with the passing of time). Time was passing and I had other things planned to do and see, called in at the Old Glory stand, TheVintage Spirit, and the Stationary Engine Magazine stands and spread the word, (why not a write up on the WSEC?) We had better all start buying the Vintage Spirit Magazine, it looks like I have got myself another job in the not to distant future. But up and on I was now heading for the fair ground, no I did not want a ride on the bumper cars but wanted to see the showmans engines and take some more photo's. I was not to be disappointed, what a line up of fine engines, I cannot do them justice in this write-up, you just have to see them for yourself. The work that goes into the restoration and the maintenance of these works of art must be a full time job, I just wish I had the money and the time, well I can dream can't I. The camera worked overtime as I looked at Burrells, Fowlers, Garretts, Fosters, McLaren, Taskers and Aveling & Porters showmans engines. It was now late afternoon and the time was flying by, so it was now a quick look around the autojumble and stalls, but I did not dwell to long as I am more interested in the vintage exhibits than looking at a load of old rubbish, but one mans rubbish is another mans treasure. I did get a chance to go up on the tender of an absolutely first class Garret Heavy Haulage Steam Tractor. By being polite and asking questions in a nice way it's remarkable what lovely people you meet and how well you get treated. I shall not forget my day at the Great Dorset, just for this one incident it made my day. Evening was beginning to fall and I decided to stay until dark just to see the lights of the Showmans engines and the fairground, to give the camera a bit more work. Well all good things come to an end and time waits for no one so all to soon it was time to head for home. I will remember my day at Dorset, but it was not long enough, but I have made myself a promise to spend 5 days in Dorset, September 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> 2004. If anyone else in the WSEC wants to go next year why not get in touch and we can have a Wessex get together at The Great Dorset Steam Fair.

E.J.G.



\*\*\*\*\* A LETTER TO THE EDITOR \*\*\*\*\*

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## EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

**SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER** Anti-freeze crank-up at Nunney Catch Transport Café. Hot food and drinks available. Usual grand seasonal raffle. Prizes would be appreciated. Bring and buy goods for sale will be welcome.

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 28<sup>th</sup>**. Mince pie crank-up at CRANMORE STEAM RAILWAY. Please note change of date and change of venue. The café will be open for hot food and drinks. There will be the usual raffle. Prizes will be appreciated. Free mince pies for all exhibitors. Come on, dust off your engines, this is the last event of 2003.

**MONDAY JANUARY 26<sup>th</sup>**. Club night at the Old Down Inn. Martin Phippard is giving a talk and slide show on The Great Alaskan Highway. Remember the talk he gave this year on the Australian Roadtrains ? Do not miss this first WSEC meeting in 2004.

## <<<<<<<<< THE MARKET PLACE >>>>>>>>>

**FOR SALE** Box trailer for sale. 7'x4'. Drop down tailgate. Fitted with Winch. 13" wheels. Brakes. Ladder Rack. All ready for use. Ideal for stationary engines. Ring Roy on 01934 419826. Weston Super Mare area.

## <<<<<<<<<< NEW MEMBERS >>>>>>>>>>

The club would like to welcome the following new members. Mr and Mrs R Thorner and 1 Junior member from Shepton Mallet. And Mr J. R. Paget from Midsomer Norton We hope your membership will be a long and rewarding one.