



WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

NOVEMBER 2004

*The Editor : Brian Baker
27 Wickham Way
SHEPTON MALLET
Somerset BA4 5YG
Tel: 01749 342671*

NEWSLETTER



Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Club. All rights reserved

EDITORIAL

With only a few weeks to the end of yet another year, I would like to remind members that at the end of December your membership is due for renewal. The good news is despite an impending rise in postal charges the subscriptions for 2005 will remain the same as this year. This is £11 for a double membership of husband and wife, £8 for single membership and only £1 for junior membership of anyone under 18 years old. Do not forget that after 31st December you will not be covered by insurance at any event unless you have paid your subscription, also you will not be eligible to vote at the AGM. The 27th AGM of the WSEC will be held at the Old Down Inn on February 28th. We need new committee members to come forward to help run the club, so if you think you would like to come on the committee and do your bit please contact me or any other committee member, remember the club cannot run itself.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The October club night saw a really good crowd turn up at the Old Down Inn to support Robin and Arthur who were giving us a talk and illustrated presentation on their holiday earlier in the year to New Zealand. The members present were entertained to a brilliant evenings show, (you wouldn't expect anything less from Robin and Arthur would you?). On behalf of the members present that evening thank you both very much. You will be pleased to know the Mince Pie Crank-Up is on the 27th December at the OLD DOWN INN. (See the events advert). So lets have a good turnout for this event back at an old crank-up venue. I would like to thank members who answered my appeal for alternative venues for this event with possible sites, we shall file these away for future reference if the need arises. With no club meeting in December I shall look forward to our two crank-up's in that month to see out the end of yet another year.

REPLY TO THE EDITORIAL

NEW ENGINES

I totally agree with the comments about entry ticket engines in the last issue of WSEC newsletter. I do not mind paying money to see a show, but for some people getting in and camping overnight for free and then not participating faithfully seems unfair. New engines have their place, but location is the key. I have visited vintage car rallies and often there are some modern cars on display as well. However they are not mixed in all together but tastefully put in different areas. (not in the public car park). Being a complete novice I think it is better to see a full line up of engines working, rather than a few not doing much or Joe Public will not return next year. Before we 'lay down the law' on new engines at a vintage show we need to get our own house in order. How many shows this year have you spotted old engines with no display boards! Perhaps there should be a different award for a new engine, then it would not upset vintage owners.

STEVE BAILEY

WANTED***WANTED*****WANTED**

Wood to make posts out of for putting club signs on. They need to be 2"x 2", 3"x 2" or 4"x 2". I can then band the tops and paint them ready for next year's events. If you can help please ring Tony on 01373 464982.

COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT IN PRESERVATION CLUB (HISTORY ON THE MOVE)

MARGARET SIMMONS.

***** CLIC ***** CLIC ***** CLIC *****

Thank you very much for returning the amended cheque for £10, which I received this morning. We are most grateful to the Wessex Stationary Engine Club Ltd. For their generosity and support. The total amount that you have sent me is £278-67 which is an excellent result. Please thank all your friends in the club who have given so generously of their time to raise this money. May I wish you well in the future in all your endeavours.

<<<<<<<<<<<<< MISSING CUPS >>>>>>>>>>>>>>

of his customers as part payment for work done. **BJB.**

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

SUNDAY DECEMBER 15th ANTI-FREEZE CRANK-UP and bring and buy sale at Nunney Catch Transport Café. Café open for food and drinks as usual. There will be a grand raffle with lots of prizes. The club would appreciate any gifts of prizes for the raffle as the proceeds go to club funds. Lets have a good turn out of engines for this event. **Anyone with a 'paper' programme please note Anti-Freeze Crank-Up not the 25th Dec it's the 5th as above**

MONDAY DECEMBER 27th MINCE PIE CRANK-UP. New Venue! We are back at the Old Down Inn Car Park. This is the last Wessex Event for 2004 so lets have a really good response and a good number of engines to make the hard work of the committee who finds these venues and puts them on justified. The Old Down will be open for refreshments and we shall be having our usual raffle. Prizes would be appreciated. Free hot mince pies and sausage rolls will be available to members.

MONDAY JANUARY 31st. Club Night at the Old Down Inn. Guest Speaker:- Jonathon Hockedy (Junior Reporter). Giving a talk and presentation on, **BANK NOTES OF THE WORLD**. If Jonathon's newsletter reports are anything to go by this will be a very interesting evenings entertainment. **DON'T MISS IT.**

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

FOR SALE Induction Motor 0.5 bhp. Fitted with fan and V belt pulley wheel. Can be seen running. £12-00. Phone Tony on 01373 464982. Frome Area.

FOR SALE Mayfield 2 wheel Garden Tractor with grass cutting bar. Good working order. £70. Telephone 01225 719407. Trowbridge Area.

FOR SALE 2 Berth Caravan. Elddis XL. Fridge. Full Cooker. Shower. Water Heater. Cassette. Toilet. Spare Wheel. 2 Gas Bottles. All in excellent condition. £1750. To view by appointment. Please ring Robin on 01373 463526 who will make arrangements for viewing.

FOR SALE Trailer. Galvavised. Trelgo Make. 5'x 3 ½'. Brakes. Complete with high side extensions and cover. £200. Ring 01761 232233 for further details.

***** NEW MEMBERS *****

The following are new members who have just joined the WSEC for the first time, we hope their membership will prove to be a happy and long one. Mr Alex White, from Bartley, Southampton. Mr Michael St John, from Coleford Nr Radstock. Mr Michael White also from Coleford. Mr and Mrs Ray Chandler from Hengrove, Bristol. And last but not least Mr and Mrs Royston Wilmot and Junior Member Sam from Whitchurch, Bristol.

Club Member Tony Jones has kindly donated some large frying pans to the club to use at our barbeques at the rally. Thank you very much Tony, they will be put to good use as we are planning an evening barbeque later on next year as a new event. watch this space for the details.

AN OBITUARY SPANNING THE 24 YEARS I KNEW DERRICK GEORGE WATTS OF
WORLE, WESTON-SUPER-MARE. 20th APRIL 1928 to OCTOBER 15th 2004.

Derrick and his dear wife, Dorothy, "Dot" to her friends, have graced the show Fields far and wide exhibiting stationary engines, cars and motorcycles. Derrick was respected by everyone who came into contact with him. My recollections are of two people who extended warmth and companionship whenever we met, and above all, the trust Derrick had in allowing me to ride and show his motorcycles for him. His final journey, escorted by his family and friends, took place at the Weston-Super-Mare Crematorium on Tuesday 26th October. The Chapel was full to standing room only, and when Derrick finally arrived a track of his favourite music was played, "You're my best friend" by Don Williams, and finally at the end, "Moonlight Serenade" by Glen Millar. This is a wonderful memory to cherish. After this moving service we were able to relax at a local hostelry for some refreshments, where we could meet and make new friends. Dot I hope you will still come to see us on the show fields.

BRIAN LOVELL

MONDAY 27th SEPTEMBER. CLUB NIGHT AT THE OLD DOWN INN

FUSSELLS OF MELL'S IRON WORKS. MAKERS OF FINE EDGE TOOLS.

A TALK AND SLIDE SHOW BY JAMES FUSSELL

The room at the Old Down Inn was full with members for the talk and slide show by James Fussell on the Iron works of the Fussell family of Mells. Mells is the largest of a number of villages in a part of East Somerset immediately north of Frome. Today the area is largely made over to agriculture with the exception of some very large scale quarrying. However from the mid 18th century to the end of the 19th, it was very different, for in the Mells valley the Fussell family were busy building their Iron Empire. The first record of an iron works near Mells, at Stoke Lane, or otherwise known as Stoke St Michael is around 1720, the true date is not known. In 1744 a James Fussell took a lease on a plot of ground in Mells, he leased the land for 99 years from John Horner, (yes the one in the nursery rhyme). At this time James was described as 'Edg Tool Maker', at this time James must have had a degree of financial standing. By 1753 James had established himself in Mells and was elected to the post of Church Warden. His son Austin followed him into this post and also into the Mells business, as did Austins son John. Austins brother (another James) became proprietors of the iron works at some time around 1770. The Fussell empire was expanding. Another brother of Austin Fussell broke away from Mells and established an iron works at Nunney (now famous for it's crank-up's). By 1791 a further works was set up at Great Elm, 1 ½ miles east of Mells, this formed an extension of the Mells works. Other branches of the works were established at Stony Lane Chantry, and at Railford between Chantry and Whatley. By 1831 the firm named James Fussell and Sons were even issuing their own banknotes and doing it's own banking business. It was not only iron and edge tools that concerned the Fussell's, for around '800 an active interest was taken in the Dorset and Somerset canal, sadly aborted, but not before James Fussell IV had successfully designed and patented and had built an ingenious 'balance lock' or boat lift. He also patented a number of other inventions. As time passed the empire grew and the fine tools that were produced were exported to the European and American Continents and beyond. The edge tools made by the Fussells Iron Works were of high quality and were renowned for their ability to keep their edge. The initial lease granted to Fussells specifies a mill for grinding edge tools and forging iron plates – there is no mention of actual production of iron, the implication being that at least at this stage iron was brought in as pig iron (the product of a blast furnace). It is quite possible that Fussell produced his own steel, using iron ore mined locally, this would have contained a high degree of manganese and therefore result in a very special steel, this may have provided the explanation for the astonishing reputation that Fussells edge tools enjoyed. The sheer steel bars were heated and cut to lengths comparable with the wrought iron before being reduced in thickness under the tilt hammer. The materials were then ready for fire welding, which required fuel, air, a furnace and forging machinery – tilt hammers again. A sandwich of wrought iron / steel / wrought iron was brought to white heat and passed to the forger who fire welded into a laminate, at the same time changing it's dimension and shape nearer those of the finished product. These were then spread laterally by a series of blows from the tilt hammer, these were pointed and bent to the required shape on anvils in hand forges, this was followed by double heat treatment to harden the steel and then remove the brittleness by tempering. The next process was grinding, performed on water powered rotating grindstones, this resulted in the hard cutting edge being honed and sharpened. The blade was then finally polished on a fine abrasive wheel. Blades would then be painted except for a narrow band along the cutting edge which was oiled. The Fussell empire collapsed towards the end of the 19th century. This may have been due to not keeping up with the technical development of the time, even at this stage most of the power required in the making of the tools came from water power with around 20 water wheels throughout the site. A sad end to a thriving company. James showed us many slides taken of the old works, some taken from old photographs when the works at Mells was in full production, now most of the site is in a state of dereliction. Our thanks to James for a most informative and entertaining evening

ERIC GAY

<<<<<<<<<<<<< LETTERS TO THE EDITOR >>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Dear Brian,

Re your editorial, you have stated what I have been saying for many years. It is up to the club committees to give the engine stewards the brief of what is required, and to make it quite clear on the entry forms. I for one do less and less shows and the reason is the poor selection of engines. In 2003 I did a show in Cornwall and there were only seven engines worth a look at. If the clubs and stewards do not get a grip on things it might be the downfall or even the end of our hobby. It is not only the stationary engine exhibits in decline, how often do you see a flat tank, hand change or belt drive motorcycle? Also with the cars, should the shows be for just the 60-70-80s onwards vehicles? I'm sorry if I upset anyone with this letter.

TERRY HEATH
YEOVIL