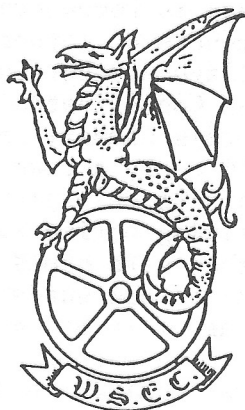


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1995.



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EDITORIAL.

When you read this Newsletter every month, I'm sure, like most other members you will take it for granted it will appear month after month with no contribution from you. I would like to appeal to YOU and the rest of the membership for material to make it possible to publish the Newsletter each month. Any item, however small will be published, small ads., hints and tips, restoration stories etc. will all be welcome. I need to receive copy by the end of the month for the following month's Newsletter.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

After this year's A.G.M. the Committee were two members short. Now two members have resigned from the Committee, leaving it four members short. The Committee would like to hear from any member who would like to help run the club by joining the Committee. This does not involve anything more than attending one meeting each month on the second Tuesday at The Old Down Inn. So give this request serious thought, the club cannot run itself.

BRIAN J. BAKER.

DIARY DATES.

AUCTION

Saturday 11th November 1995. Farmor's School, Fairford, Glos. Starts 11.30am. Gates open 8.30 am. Bidding by numbers. Two auctioneers. 25p lotting up fee. For further details Telephone (01285) 712302.

SODBURY SORT OUT

Saturday 18th November 1995. Signposted on A46. Stalls from £6. Admission £1. Gates open 10 am. over by 2.00 p.m. Details ring (01454) 321010.
Just load up and come.

ANTI-FREEZE CRANK UP

Old Down Inn, Emborough. Sunday morning 3rd December, 1995. Lets have a good turn out for the last W.S.E.C. event of 1995. Grand Raffle. Old Down Inn open for drinks and food. Details ring (01749) 342671.

MINCE PIE CRANK UP

27th December, 1995 (the day after Boxing Day), at Nash's Timber Yard, Evercreech Junction on the A371. ON ALL DAY. RAIN OR SHINE. Plenty of food, mince pies, sausage rolls, sandwiches, tea, coffee, soft drinks - ALL FREE OF CHARGE. GRAND RAFFLE. Everyone welcome. Just turn up, with an engine preferably. Enquires ring Brian Baker on (01749) 342671.

IF ANY MEMBER WISHES TO DONATE A RAFFLE PRIZE FOR THE ABOVE TWO EVENTS THEY WOULD BE GRATEFULLY APPRECIATED.

W.S.E.C. ANNUAL COACH TRIP - SUNDAY 13TH AUGUST.

In August a party of about 20 Wessex members and friends met at the Old Down Inn at 8 a.m. for a coach trip to Morwellham Quay. After a break at Exeter Services we eventually arrived at our destination by descending a very narrow and steep hill. Morwellham itself is a small port situated on the river Tamar 20 miles inland, the village is reconstructed and restored as it would have been in the early 1800. In 1844 vast amounts of copper ore was discovered in woods near Morwellham (about 4 miles away). The village and surrounding land were owned by the Duke of Bedford who formed the 'Devonshire Great Consolidated Copper Mining Company' to mine the copper ore. At the time of setting up of this company shares were being sold for £1 each, within a year these shares were worth £800 each, a considerable rise which made the Duke a very rich man and so in 1858 it was necessary to enlarge the dock and quays to handle the large amounts of ore. The ore was mined by driving horizontal tunnels into the rocky hillside until they met the seams or loads as they were named in mining. These loads were narrow vertical seams of ore running upwards and downwards beneath the floor of the tunnel, sometimes for a depth of up to 250ft. The seams were mined by using a series of ladders and platforms to bring the ore to the main tunnel which was only about 6ft in circumference. The rock was originally removed by lighting fires against it and when it was really hot it was doused by cold water causing it to crack. Later it was replaced by using steel drills striking them with sledge hammers this was replaced again by using compressed air and pneumatic drills and blasting with explosives. This caused much noise and dust it was said that most miners were deaf by the age of 20 years and dead by the age of 40.

Wages earned by the miners were very low and sometimes to earn sufficient money the men stayed in the mines for several days at a time. Small boys sometimes as young as 8 years old were employed alongside the men, these boys were sent to the village to fetch food and water for the miners. No women or girls were allowed to be employed in the mine itself these females were used outside the mine to break up the rock and separate the waste rock from valuable copper ore this was then removed to the quay to be loaded onto ships and barges. Men were paid one old pence per ton for scorching this ore onto the boat. This ore was shipped to South Wales for smelting. When the copper finally ran out thousands of miners and their families were forced to emigrate to Australia or America or anywhere where new mines were springing up and required staffed labour. Also in this area tin, lead, manganese and arsonic were mined, it was said there was enough arsonic in Morwellham to poison the whole world, after mining the rock it was burnt similar to lime burning to form the extracted powdered arsonic. This would only be accepted for shipment by the ships captains if it was sealed in casks similar to beer barrels to prevent leaks.

That is a brief history of the village, now for a report of our tour first of all we entered a building that was showing a video of what we could expect to see. After a short walk up a hill we arrived at the entrance to the mine shaft where we were met by the man that was to drive a small loco, pulling three small trucks with seats after alighting into these trucks we were taken on a ride into the mine, stopping at intervals for an interesting description of past events given by the driver, we eventually entered into the daylight again after riding about one mile through the tunnel. We then walked around the various attractions which included a couple of ancient ships standing in the docks, a coopers workshop, a couple of waterwheels still working various workshops, cottages etc., all restored with their contents relating to the 1800's. After walking up a hill in another direction we came to the Dukes carriage drive, this consists of a number of covered four wheel wagons pulled by beautiful shire horses (they have 10 shire horses owned by the Friends of Morwellham Trust which runs the village). About a dozen of us filled one wagon which was being driven by a very friendly Devonshire man who carried on quite an entertaining banter with our chairman who was asked by the driver why he sat right at the back of the wagon when he was the first to alight, the reply with in case the horse had the wind. The chairman also asked the driver if he had a bag so that he could take home some horse dropping for his roses. When we got back from the ride I was the last to get out of the wagon, the driver remarked to me he doesn't want any horse shit he has got plenty of bull shit. After the ride we retired to a small inn named The Ship with the building dating from around 1500 AD. This inn lost its licence to serve alcohol in the 1920's and didn't regain it until 1940. After suitable refreshment we visited a quite modern hydroelectric power station built near the village this is powered by water descending from a reservoir high above the hills. After walking around many more interesting features including workers cottages that were built in 1858 by the Duke of Bedford for £25 each we were then ready to board the coach home at 4 o'clock. Travelling by way of Dartmoor we saw the prison away to our right, we arrived at Exeter Services again for a break and refreshments. Arriving back at the Old Down Inn at about 8 o'clock. All in all a very interesting and enjoyable day - it's a great pity that more members do not take advantage of these trips arranged by the club committee for their benefit.

RAY BAKER.

TALK ON GRIFFIN ENGINES BY STUART BURROUGHS - 25TH SEPTEMBER.

About 29 members and friends gathered for what was Stuart's second visit to the Wessex Stationary Engine Club. Stuart made an apology to us straight away. He brought the wrong slide presentation. The slides he had brought were on Bowler's Engineering & Mineral Water business in Bath. This however proved to be a bonus for us. We effectively had two talks. To start with Stuart presented some background on Samuel Griffin and his various engines and innovations. Samuel Griffin started his engineering business in Bath, on what is now the Bus Station site, in 1870, at the young age of 27. His main business at this time was the repair of agriculture machinery. By 1879 Griffin was manufacturing gas engines. Griffin had a very fertile mind and was busy improving and inventing things almost continuously. 1883 saw the introduction of his 'Patent Slide Valve'. Around this time saw the appearance of Otto and his four stroke internal combustion engine. Otto was keen to protect his interest in the four stroke engine, making it impossible for anyone to use this system without obtaining a licence. This forced many engineers, like Griffin and Joseph Day to seek alternative solutions.

The Samuel Griffin was the introduction of the 6 stroke, single acting engine of 1883. By 1884/85 he introduced a 6 stroke double acting unit. 1890 saw the introduction of Stationary Oil Engines, working on Griffin Patents. Griffin had an association with the Bath Electric Generating Works and did much work with dynamo's and large stationary oil engines.

In 1886 Dick-Kerr (later part of English Electric) well known Steam Locomotive manufacturer, could see a future in large oil engines. They bought the rights to Griffins large oil engines. These were then manufactured under the name of 'Kilmarnock'. Around this time Griffin had moved from his central Bath site, to a new red brick factory in Old-field Park (still standing). At this plant, employing around seventy people, he continued production of various smaller engines including an order for thirty of his patented 'Duplex' Gas Engines for the Bath firm of Charles Bayer, who manufacturing ladies Corsetry. These engines were for both the Bath factory and one in London.

During the 1900's the company produced a patented 'Hydro oil engine'. (A fine mist of water was sprayed into the combustion chamber along with the fuel oil). These were fitted to torpedo boats. At this time Griffin also invented a twin screw propellor. Interesting factories in Paris, Gothenburg and Uruguay held licences to produce these engines and equipment. Sadly, the business was wound up in 1923, Griffin died in 1924. Working on various projects right until the end.

Along with the other Bath engineer, Joseph Day, Samuel Griffin, was little known outside those with an interest in industrial archaeology. Although in his day he was very well known. His products were often reviewed by the learned journals of the day. After the draw and break, Stuart continued his talk with a brief history of J.B. Bowler. This part was enhanced by superb black and white views of the inside views of Bowlers organised chaos of factory, shop and soft drink manufacturing plant. Some of us think our workshops, sheds etc. are in a mess, but they must be tidy in comparison with Bowlers. This was the firm that you could still buy virtually anything connected with engineering right until its demise in 1969. When the business closed the contents were sold to what is now the Camden Works Museum in Bath. The trustees have lovingly recreated Bowlers old business at a different part of Bath. I would strongly advise members to visit this museum, its well worth a couple of hours. Should anyone wish to see a Griffin six stroke engine, one is currently on display in the Birmingham Science Museum. A four stroke engine will shortly be joining the Camden Museum from Bristol. Readers may also be interested to know, that reference, with illustrations of some of Griffin engines is made in volume II of Rankin Kennedy, series modern engines and power generators. Published by Caxton in 1904.

PHILIP CAUDLE.

YESTERDAYS FARMING - 9TH & 10TH SEPTEMBER.

This was our last weekend away in the tent this year, and what a brilliant time we've had camping at the rallies. Mummy and Daddy packed the car and trailer with all the camping equipment and engine. Grandad arrived and Karl and I went in his car as there was no room in ours. At last we were heading for the Yesterdays Farming Rally. While Mummy and Daddy were putting up the tent we went with Grandad to pick some blackberries and looked at the engines on the way back. Grandad and Daddy took us down to the beer tent, we finished our drinks before them so we went outside to watch the Punch and Judy Show.

Grandad went home at tea time because he overslept in the morning and forgot to pack his tent. On Sunday it rained all day and everything was really wet and muddy but it didn't stop our fun, we still watched the sheep being sheared and enjoyed the fair rides and looking around the stalls. Soon it was time to go home and Karl thought it was great being towed out of the field by a tractor. We had a great weekend and will be back next year.

MICHAELA BAKER - AGED 5½ YEARS.

The magnificent total of £1,316.65p has been raised for C.L.I.C. this year by W.S.E.C. members Roy and Ivor Cox. This was raised as follows:

Tencrest Crank-Up £60. Full Quart Crank-Up and C.L.I.C. boxes £917.32. A collection in memory of Reg Butlers mother £127.40. It might have been a little more but the Sentinel Steam Wagon drove home from the Full Quart with a C.L.I.C. collecting tin still hanging on the front. This will go towards next years collection. Well done to all concerned with raising this grand sum of money.

EDITOR.

CONGRATULATIONS to club member John Freeman who was presented with a cup for best stationary engine at the Country Cavalcade held at the Royal Bath and West Showground. John's exhibit was a 8hp Ruston & Hornsby model AP which he has trailer mounted for easy manoeuvrability and is a super example of this class of engine.

At the 143rd Mid-Somerset Show held at Shepton Mallet on August 17th one of the main attractions in the main ring was the appearance of the band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Dressed in very resplendent uniforms, this band of a very elite fighting unit gave a very outstanding and brilliant display. The band was accompanied by an ex-Gurkha Angansing Rai who was awarded the highest military honour, the Victoria Cross after a brave battle to recapture two enemy posts in the hills of Burma in June 1944.

Leading an attack under direct fire by two machine guns he killed three of a machine gun crew of four. Rai advanced towards the other position under intense fire, arriving at close range he killed three of the enemy and his men killed two more. Rai covered by a gunner advanced alone with a grenade and a sub machine gun. Through devastating fire he reached the enemy position and killed all four of the occupants of the bunker, the remainder of the enemy, then fled.

During a break in their displays, members of the band toured the rest of the Show. A group of them visited the stationary engine section, in conversation with one of the engine owners they enquired why the engines were being exhibited, on it being explained to them that the engines were used in days long gone past and that they were now superseded by more modern means of motion (mainly electricity) - one of them said in perfect Oxford English that they were very much still in daily use in their native country of Nepal.

- RAY BAKER.
- FOR SALE - 4hp Moteurs Deville. (See Stationary Engine No. 164). Rad cooled. Mag rebuilt. Trolley mounted. Good runner. Not often seen on the Rally field. Class 2. £220 o.n.o. Ring Brian Reakes on 01179 868549 (Keynsham).
 - FOR SALE - Lister A. 1927. Runner. Needs attention to fuel tank and pipework. On base and trolley. £100.
Hydrovane compressor. 6 PVAS. 3 phase. £200 o.n.o.
Ring Dave Chinnock 01749 676883
 - FOR SALE - Howard Cultivator (Bantam) with plough attachment. Needs attention £15 ono. Tel: 01225 755375 Des Clark.
 - FOR SALE - Engine Parts for New Generation Ford Transit 2.5 D.I. (all parts brand new) Complete Rocker Shaft, Cam Shaft, Set of Push Rods, Set of Valves, Cam Followers, 4 Injectors, Gaskets, Plus other parts. (All at 17½% Less trade price). Please contact Chris at Hillmans Garage, Beckington, Nr. Frome. Tel: 01373 830238.
 - FOR SALE - International Harvester Model M. 3hp. (1917?). L.T. enclosed crank with Blake water pump. £300. Tel: P. Holloway 01935 840370.
 - WANTED - Crankshaft in good condition for 1½hp P.B. Ruston Hornsby. Tel: 01225 761987.
 - WANTED - Silencer, Fuel Tank and starting handle for Wolseley WD2. Also four iron wheels suitable for trolley. Tel: Philip Caudle 01225 316794.
 - WANTED - For a 3hp Amanco 3 mule team gooseneck igniter trip (pick bracket) flanged manifold, exhaust pipe, starting handle, rocker arm, (valve lever), valve collars (2). If you can help or advise where I can obtain the above. Please ring Phil Marshal on 01761 471461.