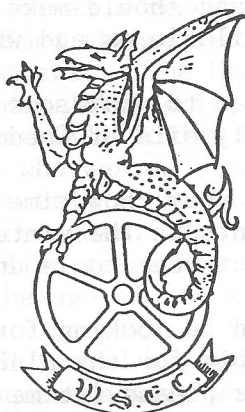


WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB LIMITED

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1998



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***** EDITORIAL *****

When I look at the membership list of Wessex members the addresses are scattered all over the Country. Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and other far flung parts of England, but when I receive any material for the newsletter it always seems to be 'local'. So I would like to appeal to all our members who live in these 'foreign parts', let us know whats happening in your backyard. All the rally reports seem to be from the ones based in the West Country, I would dearly like to know whats happening in Wales or Scotland, so come on drop me a line.

STANTON DREW RALLY.

As usual a splendid weekend was in store. We took our engine up on the Thursday evening and joined an already busy engine line. The field was filling up fast and it was even larger than ever. On Friday we arrived again with our caravan and from start to finish it was a busy fun filled time. Friday evening was spent at the social area which included a very large fair, bar, many food outlets, working steam traction engines and a very good group playing country and western and 60's type music. Saturday dawned fine and bright and a busy day commenced. The stalls this year were situated all around the ring, and in several rows. It took Evelyn and myself 2 hours to look at them all. Ring events were taking place all day, including an hours display by the pony club. A triplane gave us a display overhead, flying for about half an hour. In a field beside us ploughing was going on and across the field gypsies were sat around a camp fire singing and telling fortunes. Activities oozed from every inch of the field as the spectators came in thick and fast. I've heard the gate takings were 75% up on Saturday. One little chap must have at least an inch shorter legs, poor Henry, every time we looked up he was off walking around again, holding hands and trying to keep up with his grandad. (Poor Henry indeed, it was Henry dragging me off around the blasted stalls again. Ed.)

Hot air balloons went up, up and away at seven thirty p.m. to start off a fantastic evening of entertainment for all ages. My family came and visited and insisted I went on the Dodgems and Galloping Horses, kids? But I did enjoy it after the initial panic. There were the engines lit up in all their glory, and the food outlets were packed solid as was the bar where the group 'Absolute Mayhem' were providing the entertainment. Further up the field Arts Cider Bar was doing a roaring trade, whilst entertained by the Bristol Water Float, where we ended a superb evening dancing to the good old "rock-n-roll". (Unknown to me until Monday morning I was spotted by the works gardener. HELP.) Sunday the weather did a turnabout on us, but it didn't deter the public as they flowed in steadily. Activities still managed to take place, including Henry's walks, and a good day was had by all until 4.30 p.m. when a mass clear up started. By the time we left, the field entrance was a little worse for wear as the field turned into a mud swamp. A super weekend, yet again many thanks to all involved in its vast organisation.

LINDA AND ROGER PIKE.

***** BIRTHDAY GREETINGS *****

Congratulations to William Rogers on becoming a TEENAGER. William was thirteen this month, it does not seem that long ago that his Mother Christine used to bring him to rallies as a baby in arms, how time flies. MANY HAPPY RETURNS WILLIAM FROM ALL THE WESSEX MEMBERS.

***** CHAIRMANS REPORT *****

At the last committee meeting the committee discussed at length the venue for the next Wessex Rally. A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed that the 1999 Wessex Rally would be held at Winchester Farm, Cheddar. To be on Saturday - Sunday 19th - 20th JUNE. It is a large two field site, with hard roadways leading into it, and should make an ideal rally site, only time will tell. Further details will be made available as and when they arise.

Also in the spring we hope to put on a Autojumble type sale, similar to what some clubs are already doing. Hopefully this will also take place on the new rally site at Cheddar.

Probably sometime in March. Watch this space for further details.

It doesn't seem possible that the rally season is over for another year, how time flies, and winter will soon be upon us. However there is still a few events in the winter months, crank-ups, auctions, autojumbles etc, and now is the time to get out your tools and start that resoration you have been putting off the the last few years.

Its also time to think about the running of the club, we shall soon be looking for new committee members for next year. So if you would like to do your bit for the club and serve on the committee, or if you know someone you would like to nominate please let me or any other member of the committee know.

B.J.B.

ALL THE WAY FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO VISIT THE WESSEX RALLY.

For most rallygoers this year it has been very disappointing to say the least. The weather has been so variable it seems that one day rallies have faired the best! My ray of sunshine came in the form of a telephone call one evening from a lady with a strange sounding accent. She explained that her husband was in London on a business trip and was interested in coming along to the Wessex Rally as his passion was stationary engines. I told her that Trowbridge was a little distance from London and the trains were not as direct as they could be.

Anyway I rang the rail timetable office and was told that there was a train from London to Trowbridge coming in around 5 p.m. on Friday evening 12th June. This was fine but then the next problem I had to sort out was how was I going to get to Trowbridge station to meet him and where was he going to stay overnight as I was already parked with my caravan on the rally field that day alone and with no transport! I then decided to telephone Jackie Lambert to see if she could give me some help in finding out who lived in and around Trowbridge and would know of a local pub or guest house. Why not get in touch with Mary and Reg Butler they live quite near to the rally field she said and also not too far from the railway station. So I gave Mary a call, she was more than helpful. She fixed up bed and breakfast at a local pub for this stranger who we now know as Gerald Buitendach and she had even arranged for Reg to pick him up at the railway station at 5 p.m. on Friday evening after he had finished work.

Mary asked me how she would recognise this stranger on the station platform - I had no idea. Would be he a six foot black man with a toga and spear or would he be a hunky suntanned thirty something wearing nothing but a gleaming smile and perhaps a red carnation. I thought I had better find out. I rang South Africa that evening and spoke to his wife. She seemed quite friendly and so I politely asked the burning question of how would we recognise her husband - that's easy she said, he's short, stocky and going bald! Oh, I said, (trying not to sound too disappointed) nothing ever changes does it, sounds very similar to the one I have at home already and he's been around for the last 37 years! Saturday came in the form of a mixed day, sunshine and showers. The newly elected Mayor of Trowbridge kindly came along to officially open the show, the newsmen from the Western Daily Press and a few visitors, and of course Gerald. He came to my caravan with Reg and Mary and it was just like Christmas, he was so excited at seeing all the stationary engines around the edge of the field, he was almost jumping up and down! He managed to visit the auction which our Chairman Brian Baker was organising and successfully bid for a small pump which he managed to take back to London and then on to South Africa, we never found out how but probably in his suitcase no doubt.

After a thoroughly good day, meeting and talking to lots of people Gerald had to go back to Trowbridge station and catch his train back to London but he really did enjoy himself and he said that although he had visited Tatton Park last year when he was here on a business trip (where incidentally it had rained so hard he had to buy himself a raincoat) he thought that the Wessex Rally was a lot better organised and the people much more friendly. I thought I would write and tell you a little about our visitor Gerald Buitendach. This very nice gentleman from Johannesburg, who by reading the Wessex Site Page on the Internet came all the way to Wild Wiltshire to spend a few hours and had a wonderful time. I am also very grateful to Mary and Reg for their very kindness in helping me to arrange this visit from afar and I know a very satisfied person went back to South Africa that week as he has telephone to tell me so.

ANNE CARNEY.

**** CLUB NIGHT AT THE OLD DOWN INN. MONDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER ****

Brian opened the meeting with the sad news that the display cabinet in our club room had what was probably its most valuable item stolen - it was a model fire engine that was presented to the club by the Wiltshire Fire Brigade many years ago following a joint rally held at Longleat. It was a boxed and numbered edition and possibly quite valuable as someone no doubt knew and helped themselves. Brian also mentioned a new event that will take place next year for club members. "The Catch Crank-Up" to be held at the Nunney Catch Transport Cafe car park on Sunday 18th April, courtesy of club members Jackie and Gordon Callow, more details of this event will follow in the new year. Monday evenings guest speaker was The Reverend Alan Newman who was no stranger to many older club members as around ten years ago he gave an excellent talk on stationary steam engines, and tonight he was to give an illustrated talk on steam once again. Not stationary engines but the mobile kind that once adorned Britains railways. Alan began his talk with slides taken from book illustrations and paintings depicting the age of steam locomotives which brought back memories to many of us who lived in this era. He rightly described these giants of steam as living machines that actually breathed and showed enjoyment when being put to work, unlike todays modern diesel engines that have no character, which he lightheartedly described as giant oil cans. Alans interest in steam began as a young lad during the 1930's and has remained with him all his life, and like many of us he was saddened to see the demise of steam, these once glistening giants mostly ending up in Dai Woodhams graveyard at Barry, and on top of all this the dreaded axe of Dr. Beeching who robbed us of hundreds of miles of track as he closed branch lines nationwide. Many of Alans slides were taken at the West Somerset Railway, the East Somerset Railway, the Bluebell Line, Settle to Carlisle Line, Isle of Man Railways, Welsh Narrow Gauge Railways, Bressingham (Alan Bloom Collection), Barry Scrapyard, St. Phillips Marsh Sheds Bristol, and Green Park in Bath. The slide taken of several locos based at Green Park was rather a sad one as it showed the last working loco dropping its fire for the last time, never to be used again, a very sorrowful sight to have witnessed. Alan went on to show us what happened in the world of preservation and many of the engines that have been rescued from the Barry scrapyard. A star example of restoration was the Duke of Gloucester which is now back in main line service also a local Black Prince owned by David Sheppard and based at Cranmore. We saw preservation work being carried out at Bitton Nr. Bath, and steam trains at Bradford-on-Avon. We then saw slides of the many Welsh railways that are still in operation and remain ever popular with enthusiast and public alike, it was only listening to Alan that we were reminded of the vast amount of locomotives that still exist in the British Isles thanks to the dedication of their keepers who refuse to let these wonderful machines die. On rounding up our Chairman Brian said this was the most interesting 'sermon' we have ever had on a club night, and everyone showed their appreciation to Alan for such an entertaining evening. To end the evening the usual raffle took place and the lucky winners were - Robin, basket of fruit, Ken Barnett, Ruben Smith, Brian Read, Roger Pike all won bottles, Andrew House, biscuits Brian Verrall, cans of beer, Ray Baker, beer, and S. Harris, orange juice. Many thanks to Leslie Nicholson for selling the tickets and helping with the draw.

ROBIN

SKITTLE MATCH AND SOCIAL EVENING AT THE CHEDDAR FOOTBALL CLUB. SATURDAY 3RD OCTOBER.

This event proved to be as popular as ever with over forty members attending. The Football Club has refurbished the skittle alley area since our last visit and I must congratulate them on the result. Robin and Jackie captained the two skittle teams and I'm glad she selected me for her team as Jackies team won. Ivor Cox won a bottle of wine for the highest mans score and Mary Nicholson won a bottle of wine for the highest lady. We also awarded a 'booby' prize for the lowest score, this was decided with a 'play off' between Leslie Nicholson and Diane Davis, Diane picked up the prize. After the skittles we sat down for the supper, this consisted of loads of hot jacket potatoes, salad, cheese, pickles, chilli con carne and lovely large hot faggots, I really did enjoy those. After the repast the raffle took place, there were some thirty five prizes on offer including a radio cassette player, a bottle of brandy, a bottle of scotch, a magnificent basket of fruit, and numerous other goodies. The first number drawn belonged to Leslie Nicholson, and she chose the basket of fruit, the rest of the prizes were won by various members also some of the footballers in the other room. I'm sure everyone who attended will agree this had been a very enjoyable evening. Next year I hope that you will turn up again because I have already booked the alley.

B.J.B.

***** NEW EVENT FOR 1999 *****

THE "CATCH" CRANK-UP. A new event for 1999 to take place on Sunday 18th April at Nunney Catch Transport Cafe, three miles west of Frome on the A361. A new event for Wessex Members only. So please support it and we can make this an annual crank-up. For further details see later newsletters.

FULL QUART CRANK-UP.

The Crank-up at the Full Quart Inn had its 18th Birthday this year.....and as usual the rain came tumbling down! But even the pelting rain just didn't keep those mad ardent ralliers away, they turned up smiling and bearing raffle prizes and were eager to set up their exhibits. As the morning wore on the rain didn't let up and still the exhibitors kept arriving. Ivor and I just couldn't believe that the Crank-Up could go ahead in such wet conditions. So I decided to go around asking everyone if we should pack it in or have a go. The unanimous response was "We are going to raise some money for the kids". So off came the covers, up went the ropes and suddenly the show was up and running. Clever Roger Pike with his veggie stall managed to rig up a plastic sheet across the back of his van and he was in business. One of his customers was heard to remark that he had the largest turnips she had ever seen!! Linda Pikes cake stall and the grand raffle managed to beg some space in the only tent available belonging to the soft toys. Derrick Watts kindly went home to fetch his camper van which has a large awning attached. The bric-a-brac team of ladies made use of this cover and set up their tables, either side of the awning was then anchored down - one side to a motor-bike and the other side to a mini tractor, poor Brian Verrall had a nasty shock when he found his motorbike missing! When he found it had been put to good use it soon made him smile. Luckily the rain eased off not long after mid-day and under threatening skies we carried on. Surprisingly 50 out of 60 stationary engines turned up, 13 out of 20 tractors, 10 vintage and classic cars and 2 steamers. We also had Alan Carneys model railway layout, 3 organ grinders, old radio and old railway relic displays, and model tractors. The exhibitor who travelled the furthest was the "Basingstoke Wanderer", thank you Alan Vickery it was much appreciated. That also goes to everyone who turned up in such rotten weather. This year there were 38 lovely prizes in the draw, one of which caused quite a stir and many a naughty grin! A tub of body chocolate was donated by Liz and Arthur Smith. (I bet they had quite a job getting it back into the pot). This year we were lucky enough to have £115 in donations on the day, which helped swell the total collected to £587.88. Added to this was £129.50 taken at Tencrest Rally and £163.43 from the rally C.L.I.C. treasure chest which made a grand total of £880.80. Ivor and myself would like to extend an extra big thank you to Don and William Rogers for all their help in the rain on Saturday. Just another thing as a point of interest we have now given £16,078.94 to C.L.I.C. Everyone did a grand job, so thanks again. ROY AND IVOR COX.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE & DISTRICT BRANCH. C.L.I.C. SOUTH WEST.

DEAR FRIENDS OF C.L.I.C. I really do not know how you do it! Going out in the pouring rain and paddling about in the mud on a very miserable Sunday, you still collect the astonishing amount of £880.80. I really am amazed at the generosity and kindness of you people who, year after year meet together and collect fantastic sums for this wonderful charity. "Thank You" seems most inadequate way to express our gratitude for your dedication, but I assure you it comes from the heart. I do hope that you all arrived home safely and were able to get dry and warm quickly. Please keep up the good work as it is on people like yourselves that we rely.

You may be interested to know that they are building a new childrens hospital in Bristol and C.L.I.C. have promised one million pounds for a "state of the arts" paediatric oncology unit. Short of winning the lottery which is about as remote as the moon we place our faith in people like you. God bless you all. Once again, our congratulations and thanks and best wishes for many more successful and happy "Crank-Ups".

Yours sincerely, Pat Dain. President.

***** THE MARKET PLACE *****

FOR SALE - 1989 FORD TRANSIT. 'F' REG. VERY TIDY VAN, FITTED WITH TOW BAR AND WINCH. MANY NEW PARTS INCLUDING EXHAUST, REAR BRAKES, ALTERNATOR ETC. COMES WITH 12 MONTHS M.O.T. AND 6 MONTHS TAX. BARGAIN PRICE £1,500. TELEPHONE ROBIN ON 01373 463526. FROME AREA.

***** EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY *****

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30TH. Club night at the Old Down Inn. Robin Lambert giving a slide show on 21 years of Wessex events. This is one event not to be missed. Who knows? You may be the star turn of the show. Usual grand raffle with lots of prizes on offer. Don't miss it.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 6TH. The Annual "ANTI-FREEZE" Crank-Up at the Old Down Inn. 9 am onwards. "Bring and Buy" bit for sale welcome. Usual raffle. Any prizes donated would be most Appreciated. Make an effort and turn up with an engine.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 27TH. MINCE PIE CRANK UP at Nashs Yard, Evercreech Junction. 9 am onwards. Anyone and everyone welcome. Free Food, tea and coffee all day. Usual raffle. Raffle prizes would be most welcome. Turn up with or without an engine for a chance to have a good natter and escape from all that cold turkey at home.

NEW MEMBER A warm welcome is extended to Mr. Gordon Yardley from Congresbury. We trust your time with the Wessex Stationary Engine Club will be a happy one.