

The death has occurred of Derek Watts. Derek died in his sleep in the early hours of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October at his home in Worle, after a long illness very bravely borne. Derek was a long serving member of the WSEC and attended all the Wessex events and functions. He was a keen motorcyclist and was never happier than when he was rallying his engines, motorcycles or his classic cars. Derek will be missed on the rally field by all who knew him. The WSEC would like to offer their sincere sympathy and condolences to Dot and Family at their sad loss. Derek's funeral is at Weston-Super-Mare crematorium at 2-30 on Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup>.



**<<<<<<<<<<<<<< A VISIT TO WEST WALES >>>>>>>>>>>>>>**

Eileen and I recently had a weeks holiday in rural West Wales, a very scenic and beautiful area. The primary object was to visit any of the Textile Mills which still existed in this part of the world. Our first call was at the Welsh Woollen Museum at DREFACH. This extensive museum covers all aspects of the industry, from sheep and shepherds through to weaving. We spent two half days there, and it wasn't really enough. Whilst sitting in the café I noticed a door with a small glass panel, but no label. Being nosy I went to look and inside found a large horizontal Tangye gas mill engine. 'Alas', since there is no gas supply in the area there is no chance of it running. Our next call was to CAPEL DEWI, here there is a superb Mk 1 water wheel driven Weaving Mill, which is still in production. It appeared very original and I reckoned only the cobwebs and woodworm holding hands stopped it disintegrating. No engines here so we moved on. Next was a modern mill at FELIN WNDA. When I opened the car door I was greeted by the sound of a stationary engine. The machinery in the mill was only about fifty years old so only of limited interest to me. Their products however was very attractive. Permission was obtained to look in the engine house door, where a two cylinder Lister diesel was producing electrical power. There was also a three cylinder Lister diesel generating set, this was not running, and a third engine which I couldn't see in the gloom at the back of the shed. We decided it was time for a change, so headed towards the seaside. There surprise, surprise, we found a working water wheel driven flour mill at St DOGMAELS. This being a tourist area, for the first time we were charged £1-20 for a personal conducted tour by the miller. It was a bargain! On the ground floor stood a cylindrical device on four cast legs. Cast into the front plate was the name "Bamford". This was a stand by mill in case the water supply to the wheel failed. Noting the overhead countershaft drive, I said what drives that? - Oh the stationary engine next door was the reply. This was a Hornsby - Akroyd of 1907 vintage engine of about 6" bore by 12" stroke. Unfortunately due to the engine house being also used as a store, I couldn't get to the makers plate. Next door "Mrs Miller" had a small tea room where we had a splendid cream tea with buns being baked using flour milled on the site. I have left the best bit until last, - "The Museum of Internal Fire at TAN-Y-GROES. Their brochure lists 35 engines but there were more than that. The engines are mostly large but varied, from the odd Lister D up to two engines removed from the cruise ship 'Balmoral', at her refit a year or so back. These are not running yet, but they will be. The oldest is a 'National Gas and Oil Engine Co,' Type P gas engine of 1912 vintage. The newest, I think, must be the 'Bristol Proteus' gas turbine electrical generating set. We were the only visitors at the time, and had a super conducted tour, which included starting a number of engines just for us, They must have spent more than the £6 entry fee (for two) in fuel! We were there for about four hours, it wasn't nearly long enough. For those on the internet their website is <http://www.internalfire.com>. I am told it contains pictures of the engines - but you won't be able to hear and smell them !! They have also put a large number of manuals and spare part lists on the site which can be downloaded free of charge. We also visited other things including a steam railway, the Museum of Speed at Pendine and a Coracle Museum at Genarth. Now I think I have gone on long enough!! We shall certainly be going again..

**MIKE JENNINGS.**

**P.S. the beer was better than I had been led to expect also.**

## <<<<<<<<<< NEWS OF MEMBERS AROUND THE REGION >>>>>>>>>>

Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> October see's the beginning of the seven day weekend's for the "Wiltshire Moonraker", Bob Hallam, this also means no more bank holidays or extra day's off at Christmas. Welcome to the world of pensioners. Happy 65<sup>th</sup> birthday pensioner Bob.

The club would like to wish a very happy birthday to junior member James Bailey of Fordingbridge who celebrates his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October. Many happy returns James.

The club would like to send a get well soon message to Brian Verrall of Cheddar who has been in hospital for an operation recently. We would all welcome you back to meetings and events as soon as possible Brian.



## <<<<< RALLY REPORTS FROM THE HAMPSHIRE GLOBE TROTTERS >>>>>

For many seasons now we have felt that there was something missing at the rally's, that feel good factor was missing. So this season we've changed our usual venues to see if other rallies still had that something special that makes you go home with an exhausted great soppy grin on your face. Firstly we travelled on May 14<sup>th</sup> to Eastleigh to the Bill Targett rally, the weather was good, just as well as the site is subject to water logging! However we set up and settled down to enjoy a great weekend, lots of steam. Tractors etc. Lots of public showing lots of interest, and many and varied stalls to browse around, a very enjoyable weekend indeed, and guess who got the cup? June 18<sup>th</sup> next, to Dorset, Canford Park, the venue for this new site, some teething problems with this, lots of space, almost too much in parts. Lots of varied stalls and a lot of exhibits, it promises to be quite a good rally, not too many visitors though. July 9<sup>th</sup>. Next stop Burford in the Cotswolds. Large space, nice views, masses of stationary engines all around the outside, lots of stalls all different from the norm, including one of house clearance bits, he did a roaring trade all weekend. Quite a lot of public, lots of the usual lorries, military, falconry etc. But best of all the reappearance of "SUPREME" for my money the best showmans engine ever. It was lovely to see her even though her stay in museums has left her a little tatty around the edges. She's back where she belongs with the Wharton family and on show amongst people who care. July 23rd-25<sup>th</sup>. We've been asked to show our 'Cooper' engine at Welland next year, so we thought we'd better go and see what the set up was like before committing ourselves. It's a fair old trot to Upton-on Severn so we went as punters to suss it out. Setting off at 7-30 am and arrived at 11ish, with a stop of for breakfast. A good job it wasn't a boiling hot day or yours truly would have been well and truly snookered! Anyhow this rally has the "wow" factor, like they used to have, lots going on in the ring, the large funfair all run by steam, ploughing matches, the usual exhibits, rows and rows of stalls and five (5) craft tents, enough to keep all the ladies happy all weekend. This weekend August 7<sup>th</sup> we popped down to Ibsley in the New Forest for "Bygone Days", a quaint little village, the RAF post, or what's left of it is the venue for this well run rally or village fete. The old hangers are packed with books and bric-a-brac etc. Outside were military vehicles, old cars, gypsy wagons, stalls, steam engines etc. A couple of spitfires doing a turn and a marching band (in all that heat). In the evening a hog roast and band concert. Well done to all involved in this, I think the whole area turned out to support this one, most enjoyable, the only place we've tasted proper lardy cake! All sticky gooy and crunchy and just perfect. For a small area an awful lot of effort, and a lot crammed in, a great atmosphere. These are just a few new (to us) places to visit, all great, from first impressions we will be visiting them again. How many of you witnessed the Rolls Royce Merlin RAF engines being lined up at Headingley and Stockley? Those of a certain age were left moist eyed and had a faraway look on their faces after the demo in the ring. That familiar drone kicked in, and the arena edge was packed. Never have seen or heard such spontaneous applause at the end of the run. A real bit of nostalgia

**BARB and KEITH VICKERY**

### REPLY TO THE CHAIRMANS REPORT

**WSEC Annual show.** With a young family, we have so many activities to fit in that something has to go by the wayside. James is a member of Wessex young archaeology club, learning to be a life guard, plus all his homework. The other problem is we have no way of towing a caravan to stay overnight, and my enthusiasm for camping under canvas has gone long ago. James would have loved to have come along and show his engine and water pumps. However we were on holiday in Devon and there was no way James' mum and sister would allow us to go as we had spent most of the last few months in the garage! Hopefully we will attend a WSEC event soon. When is the next event? Is there one at Christmas.

**STEVE BAILEY**

The next event Steve is a crank-up at Nunney Catch Nr frome on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December, there is also a crank-up at Cranmore Steam Railway after Christmas, the date will be in the next newsletter. I shall look forward to seeing you and James at one of these events, preferably both. **Editor.**



## REPORT ON THE WSEC VINTAGE WEEKEND AT CLUTTON

### AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> 2004

The arrangements for this years rally started well before Christmas, with the committee electing stewards for the following classes, Cars and Commercials, Tractors, Motorcycles, Engines, Stalls, Models, Steam, and Static exhibits. Many other things have to be organised along the way, one being the supply of the beer and cider (most important). Many other clubs are written to including tractor clubs, motor cycle clubs car and commercial clubs as well as other engine -clubs. It was February that the first engine entry forms began to fall onto the door mat, and by the end of July the total stood at 78 engines. The WSEC has around 350 members, not all have engines, but it is a sorry state of affairs when we have to rely on other clubs to make the number up to 78, on the weekend only 68 out of the 78 entered turned up, and we would not have had this amount if some exhibitors had not brought more than one engine. So where were you? Your committee works their socks and tights off to run a two day event for your enjoyment, not ours, and believe me it's a lot of work, the letter writing alone takes me many- many hours, and I am not the only one on the committee that gives up untold hours for you the club members. I enjoy what I do for the club in general as well as helping with our main event, the rally, but it would be nice if we could rely on you the members to give us the support I feel we deserve. We had our evening meeting at the Old Down Inn on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August, I ran this meeting as Brian was away on a well deserved holiday. Well the feedback from the members present was that the rally at Clutton is a good one and they want it to continue, well that is what they want, and I for one will be pleased to do all I can to make the next Clutton Rally a success, But without you the club member it will not be the success it should be, so please next year get up and get going to Clutton to give the CLUB RALLY your support. Now onto the rest of the rally, it was arranged that we would start building up the site on the Monday evening, I arrived with my good friend John Bullock just after 6pm to find that the work was under way, and then within the next half hour we had a wonderful workforce of 16 willing members. In all the years I have been a club member I have never seen a rally site laid out, staked, roped and ready to go in one evening. To you all I extend my sincere thanks, and I know that all the rest of the committee would like to extend their thanks to you all as well. Well it was Saturday and I left Trowbridge at around 7am heading for Bradford-on -Avon to pick up daddies little helper, (not so little now but one of the best), and then away to Clutton. The day was spent getting everyone into place with their engines and making sure everyone had enough room for their exhibit, check insurances etc, and even finding time to get a certain nice little Petter lighting plant to run. Then it was time to sort the stalls out, this did not take long as we did not have many, but one very nice stall holder from Wales was so pleased with the way he was treated over the weekend and the friendly way everyone was to him, and the invite to the evening barbecue he insisted that he paid us more than his normal fee. Well we must do something right. We had a good crowd around on Saturday for most of the day. At around lunchtime Catherine and I set off to catch a few people that had managed to hide from our two lady raffle ticket sellers, but they can't hide forever, thank you girls for all your hard work, and thanks Catherine for your help throughout the day. It was late Saturday afternoon when we finally got the use of the ring, and we had a fine display of vintage vehicles in the ring, with a good crowd watching around the ring. I got roped in doing some of the commentating, we had a bit of fun with one or two of the exhibitors. With the ring parade over time was getting on and by about 5-30 most engines had been stopped, given a clean and put away for the night. It was around 7pm when we began to get the evenings entertainment underway, with the B-B-Q, and the free drinks for the exhibitors, and the great Wessex raffle, I won't bore you with who won what, just that a good evening was had by all. Sunday, well what can I say about Sunday?, it was not a good day for the public, the cars and commercials that we had on Saturday were very thin on the ground, and we only had one motorcycle, (Thanks Brian). Neither did we have many tractors, and the ones that we did have were not taken off the lorry they arrived on, but we had no tractor steward in attendance to give them any help or directions. I stood in on Saturday but one cannot do everything. With very few public Sunday was a very poor day, and our exhibitors, bless you all, started to pack up early and head for home. May I say THANK YOU ALL for attending, we had a very good rally, it's a shame that the Sunday was not like the Saturday. But you can count on there being another Clutton Rally in 2005. It is rumoured that the Clutton Village Show may run for two days next year, and if this is so it will make a big difference to the attendance on the Sunday we hope. So once again to all exhibitors, to the club members that turned up to help set up and take down after the event THANK YOU very-very much from myself and the rest of the committee. Now if any you have any comments on the rally or can help us improve it for you the club member in any way please let me or any committee member know and we will do the rest.

**ERIC GAY**



**SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2004**

If it hadn't been for the excellent signing around the maze of narrow country lanes I don't believe we would ever have found this old abandoned coal mine as it was hidden in a wood with access via a track that led to a working smallholding which makes use of the old mine buildings.

On our arrival at 11am the rain was coming down like stair rods and following the marked route to the car park field we passed around 30 people taking shelter in a hay barn after donning our wellies and raincoats and with umbrellas up we joined the first group on the site tour that were looking down the sloping drift mine. The entrance to the tunnel was of brick construction that followed the coal seam at a downward angle of approximately 30 degrees, unfortunately we could not go down the mine as it had flooded way back in the late 1800's when a nearby mine at Yate had closed and stopped their pumping operations which was also helping to keep Oldwood Pit water levels down.

We then walked up a steep wooded incline which was in fact unusable material removed from the mine, known locally as 'The Batch' this man made mound probably stretched 100 metres and has now returned to woodland as nature claimed it back. We moved on to view the vertical shaft that was some 300 ft deep. The shaft was situated inside a building that had partially been turned into a museum which had recently been used by an ITV film crew for a feature to be shown at a later date on a Bristol & Somerset coalfield. Outside this building was the remains of the boiler house chimney which once stood around 100 foot high and had been built from the inside as holes in the brick work indicated that the builders stood on planks that located in the brick work, one hole being deeper than the other allowing the plank to be removed and raised to the next level.

The old brick office has now been turned into a house with the weighbridge being built over when the house was extended and the area turned into a small holding. The unused existing pig stys had unusual metal doors that were the riddling screens that once graded the coal before it was weighed and sold.

A 1903 O/S map shows that a new railway line linked the site to the main Bristol to Gloucester line of the Midland railway which indicated new investment in the mine with plenty of coal to excavate but by 1899 the mine had closed. A local farmer was quoted as saying 'The coal here was excellent and in large lumps.....too many officials....the company took on an Admiralty contract they could not fulfil and finally when Yate collieries closed Oldwood got too much water'

A nice touch to our club's visit here was to see a stationary engine running that had been brought along by an old friend of the Wessex, Derek Hardwicke. The engine was a lamp start Petter Handyman of 1½hp that ran beautifully all the time we were there, it was belted up to a corn mill that was doing the work it was made for. For Derek it was quite nostalgic to have this engine here as it was at this location he discovered and acquired it way back in 1968. It was brought to the small holding in 1920 having spent many years in the village bakery driving the dough making machine.

After tea and cakes in the barn loft refreshment room it was time to say our goodbyes, our thanks to the lady that owned the farm, The South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group and David Harwicke for taking us around on the tour and giving such an informative talk on the Oldwood Pits

It was nice to see Derek again and he extended an invitation to our club for a visit next year to once again see his engine and bygones collections which he hopes to combine with an outside exhibition of engines manufactured in the Bristol area.

ROBIN

**<<<<<<<<<< OVERHEARD IN THE BAR >>>>>>>>>>>>>>**

Take note all members with caravans – you are now referred to as SHED DRAGGERS. And all members who drive 4x4's. You are riding around in a "CHELSEA TRACTOR"



**CRANK-UP AT HOLCOMBE PLAYING FIELDS**  
**SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2004**

An excellent turn out and a hot sunny day made for a great start for this new event, with plenty of room for expansion! The 40 engines were spread along three sides of the playing field, with cars in the middle. The engines included the Fuller and Johnson type N of 1912, owned by John Larcombe, it was originally known as the Peoples Price Engine, the Blackstone 2 ½ hp hot bulb oil engine, and Fairbanks Morse type Z. An interesting engine was John Thornes Webster 2 ½ hp, manufactured around 1899 in Chicago. The engine was imported in the early 1990's in pieces, rebuilt and reconditioned. The engine is 'upside down', i.e. the piston drives down rather than up. One engine on display with history was a Bamford 2 ½ hp, exhibited on it's original barrow trolley. The engine was first exhibited at the 1925 Weston-Super-Mare county show on the Bamford trade stand. The engines were accompanied by 4 tractors, including three Super Majors, 2 cars, various boot-sale stalls, raffle for CLIC, a collection of old and unusual spark plugs, a collection of seed sowers, plus two motorbikes. Kim Siddorn exhibited an eclectic mix of electrical items, including Cold war Geiger counters, early auto pilot, and electrical testing equipment. One of the motorbikes, a very nicely restored AJS 31 CSR 650cc of 1961, spent part of its past life at Brands Hatch, when its owner was a travelling marshall on the circuit. The other half of the motorbike display was Robin Lambert's gleaming BSA Golden Flash of 1952. The two cars were an open top MG with the registration MG2751, and an unrestored Bristol 403. The Bristol was manufactured in 1953, and was rescued from Brietey's scrap yard in 1966, and used as an everyday car by the owner for 10 years. As the car is aluminium bodied, it is still sound 50 years after it was made. Not many cars have had the same owner for the last 36 years. The combined total for CLIC from the churn at the gate, the CLIC stall, raffle, and boot-sale stall fees was a very impressive £268-67. I am certainly looking forward to more events at this venue, and it has all the potential to grow into an even better event. Thanks to all those who helped make it possible.

**JONATHON HOCKEDY**  
**JUNIOR REPORTER**

EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>.** South Somerset Agriculture Preservation Club SORTOUT at Palmers, off Bunford Lane Yeovil. For details ring 01935 824543 or 01935 822845.

**MONDAY NOVEMBER 29<sup>th</sup>** Club night at the Old Down Inn. Guest speaker Peter Davey slides and talk on Bath Trams. Usual raffle. This is the last club night this year so lets have a good turnout.

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>** Anti-freeze crank up at Nunney Catch Transport Café. Hot food and drinks in the Café. Usual grand raffle. Prizes would be appreciated. Bring and buy goods for sale will be welcome.

**The Mince pie crank-up will be at Cranmore Railway but the date has not been finalised yet. Details will be in the December newsletter.**

**WANTED=====WANTED=====WANTED=====WANTED**

Wanted to purchase. BILLHOOKS. These can be either old or modern as they are wanted for a hedge laying competition in Germany by a team from the R.E.M.E. led by a Captain. So come on get behind our boys out there and fix them up with the necessary tools. Please ring Martin if you can help on 01761 432282.

Member Mr F Morgan of 1 Little Mead Close, Hutton, Weston Super Mare has had to give up driving recently due to poor eyesight, he wondered if any one in the Weston area who goes to rallies and events would be prepared to take him as a passenger, he would be willing to share your expenses. Mr Morgans telephone no is 01934 811377. What we are looking for is a good samaritan to help a fellow member enjoy his hobby.