

## FUEL FOR THOUGHT. A Letter from the Chairman.

It has never ceased to amaze me what wierd turns of fate have brought us to the hobby we all enjoy, Stationary Engines! In these times when we have a world-wide energy problem, it is hard to imagine that at the beginning of the 18th. century they had the same problem. The industrial revolution had been with them for around fifty years, with water power as the prime mover. Mines were getting deeper and needed to be drained in order to reach more coal which was needed in turn to smelt more iron to supply the ever increasing demand. The steam engine proper had not been invented when, in 1673, Christiaan Huygens carried out his first experiments with gun-powder engines.

I have made a joke of the gun being the first internal combustion engine, but it is a fact and Huygens gun-powder engine was a real attempt to harness the power of explosion to drain mines, although it was ultimately a failure.

The world had to wait another twenty years or so for the first steam engine with a moving piston. Dennis Papin, an assistant of Huygens, made a similar engine to that of his master, but using steam as his power source. Then in 1717, Newcomen built his first engine, but it was 1775-85 before the appearance of the first real double acting steam engine of James Watt. Note that this was about 100 years after the Huygens experiments. What would the course of history taken if Huygens and Papin had continued with internal combustion instead of external or surface combustion. I know that fuel was a problem, but gas was available and, although crude oil was not drilled for until Colonel Drake's first drilling in 1859, there were some potential liquid fuels such as the coal derivative, turpentine.

What a long time from the first attempt to harness the power of a moving piston in a cylinder to the first internal combustion engine by Lenoire in 1860 and, the father of the modern internal combustion engine, Otto's 4-stroke engine. Nearly 200 years between the two events. There were very many other i.c. non-compression engines tried out between 1790 and 1860, but Lenoire and Otto, mainly Otto, were first.

All this came about from the need to find an alternative power for increasing industrial demands, and the need to find an alternative to coal, the resources of which were under very great pressure due to the high consumption rate. In fact, coal as a prime energy source was not superseded by oil until the mid 1960's and here we are, just 20 years on and back in the same boat, looking for alternative sources of energy, not only for increasing industrial use, but, very soon, just to maintain life as we know it.

It is interesting to note also that Hero's reaction turbine and Branca's impulse turbine, the first recorded steam powered mechanisms, are the fore-runners of the steam and water turbines that we know today. Also, apart from Frank Whittle's gas turbine engine, all engine development from the cannon to the modern i.c. engine has followed the same principle of a piston moving in a cylinder. It makes you think that there is nothing really new in this world, just old things to be re-invented!

The evolution of the i.c. engine has taken 300 years. I wonder how they will view our efforts at engine preservation and restoration in 300 years time? They will probably be re-developing the i.c. engine yet again! That will not concern us though, but perhaps our efforts may be of some use to them. It would be nice to think that some of our engines may still be around then. I wonder what sort of prices they will be changing hands for if they are? You never know, there may still be a W.S.E.C.!

But enough of all that! At this time of year, when things are quiet club-wise, ones thoughts look forward to the next year and to what new finds may turn up. I have heard of some exciting new finds in the club, so we may be in for some surprises in 1982.

From my family and myself, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rod Dring.

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## EXCLUSIVE BOOK REVIEW

"STATIONARY ENGINES FOR THE ENTHUSIAST" Compiled, Edited & Published by David Edgington & Charles Hudson. £5.25 post paid.

At time when many a Stationary Engine wife is wondering what to put on her husband's Christmas present list, what could be more timely than this much rumoured, long awaited book? Almost within hours of its publication, it has become the definitive volume on its subject and represents value for money, especially considering its price is inclusive of postage.

Its foreword is written by Yorkshireman - enthusiast Charles Cawood, who has proven himself many times to be a master of words to suit every occasion. Printed in Stationary Engine Magazine size format on quality paper and containing some 230 photographs, the book deals swiftly and accurately with the "what, how & when" of stationary engines. It continues in fully captioned, well chosen photographic form to show makes and types of most engines of British manufacture. The final six chapters deal in a more specialised way with a wide variety of engines, large, small, compression ignition, rarities, oddities and finally the engine preservation scene which we all know so well today.

For the critical, the binding perhaps leaves room for improvement, but, at the price and

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Eric Brain.

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We are privileged to print this exclusive advance announcement about a whole new range of television programmes which will be screened in 1982 which will be of considerable interest to all stationary engine enthusiasts. An increasing number of enthusiast's wives have been lobbying the television companies to produce programmes that will encourage their husbands to stay in and 'goggle-watch' with them of an evening rather than disappearing straight after supper into the workshop and restore engines. The response from the T.V. companies in tackling this increasing social problem has been tremendous and we are pleased to have been chosen for the release of the following programme information.

"It ain't 'alf Otto, Mum."  
"Amanco'd Ironside."  
"Crossley Roads."  
"The Last of the Sumpter Windings."  
"The Bamford Files."

"Bentall Mill at One."  
 "The South-Fairbanks Show."  
 "Russell Hartop."

"The Generator Game."  
(With Tony Jones.)  
"Cranketty Crank."

"Gardners World."  
 "Tomorrow's Weld."  
 "International" Football.  
 "Little Pet Black."

"Blue Petter"

This will be complemented by a new radio programme for toddlers, "Lister with Mother".

Some new films are scheduled also, but as yet only two titles have been released;

"From Ruston with Love," starring Roger Rebores as Irish secret agent, "Dubble O'Gage."  
 "Where Eagles are Rare," a restoration comedy starring Douglas Fairbanks Morse in the role of the great engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brownwall. You will doubtless remember his igniting performance in the classic film, "The Bulldog Breeds".

There are also two new late-night films for adult viewing, "A Manual" a most explicit film about how to do it, and that all-time great, "Last Tango in Paris."

Oily Sump (with irresistable extras from Jethro Tool).



- This annual event is timed as a fund-raiser

to help finance the Dinner & Dance and was again well supported. Several members and friends arrived about 11.30a.m. with an accumulation of unwanted goods of all types and the ladies were soon sorting and pricing, whilst the men put up the tables. Tony Jones soon found the teapot and Steve Emery, along with Nick & Kevin Dring, helped by Alison as "treasurer" were despatched to the local chippie for our lunches.

At 2.15p.m. prompt, Bill Appleby opened the door and the rush began. Predictably, the now well known market stall-holders flocked to the bric-a-brac & hardware stall and the bargain of the year - a portable radio in working order - was soon (thankfully) sold. The 'working order' came to an abrupt end five seconds after the £1 had been paid, when the bottom fell out, depositing the battery heavily on the floor!

Tom & Stuart were heard driving a hard bargain with an astute purchaser over three "marble-stopper" lemonade bottles. However the combined talents of "Randall's Rubbish" & our Hon. Treasurer paid dividends and soon our price was seen to be paid! Brian Munt did a roaring trade as bookseller, with books to suit all tastes. Our now familiar-each-year copy of the Kama Sutra once again remained unsold! The Wessex ladies held their own in the catfight with the public on the clothes stalls and Herbie raffled several prizes with an air of one who has had much practice!

has had much practice!  
About an hour saw the last of the bargains disappear down the drive and we all sat back for a well earned cuppa whilst Stuart & Jan Ashman sorted the pounds from the pence. The traditional raffle was held amongst the helpers to guess the total takings, the 50p prize being won by Kev Dring who was nearest to the £84.60 gross total. A bit down on last year, but we had less good bric-a-brac to sell. Thanks to all donors & helpers and a special thanks to the youngsters, Tina Lambert, Lucy & Melissa Randall, Paul & Ian Stride and Julia Munt for helping the adults play "shop." !!  
ANN BRAIN.

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LECKFORD (18th. & 19th. July) was to be the start of our two weeks annual holiday so we packed up and set out on the Friday evening. We arrived at 8 p.m. and hardly a spare space was to be found - it seems as though we shall soon have to start out on the Thursday - but we soon set up camp and then tried some of the local brew in the Leckford Hut Inn which was very conveniently situated at the entrance to the field, after which we turned in for an early night.

Saturday came, the weather appearing quite good, but the enginemmen started up rather late as a result of the auction sale in the next field. Sixty seven engines were booked in and there weren't too many empty pegs. The auction produced no bargains it seemed, so the engines were going full blast in the afternoon. There were a lot of nice stalls and the arena events included the Whitchurch Majorettes, The Wessex Rangers Band, parades of tractors, cars and steam engines and a children's Tug o' War. Sunday morning brought the usual mist and early-morning drizzle, but that soon cleared up and we were left with a nice fine warm day. Similar ring events plus a few more stalls and many more spectators made this a very enjoyable day. This rally is held in aid of the Andover and District Cubs and Scouts. On the Monday morning, Bill and Marg Appleby and ourselves all packed up and were soon on our way to the next rally which was to be NETLEY MARSH (24th, 25th. & 26th. July).

This is a much larger rally, held in aid of many local charities. The Friday was a fairly fine day, with only the odd shower of rain. Only about half the stationary engine entries were there that day. There was a lot of Royal Wedding bunting decorating the engines and it was nice to see the enginemmen getting into the spirit of it all! Besides the many auto-jumble stalls, there were many others, more interesting to us ladies! The ring events started at 10 a.m. and continued throughout the rest of the day and into the evening, to be followed by a barbeque around the beer tent, with entertainment by Shag Connors and the Carrot Crunchers! (Chipping Sodbury has a lot to answer for! Ed.). At 9.45 p.m. there was a Royal Wedding firework display in the main arena, which was very good. Saturday came and with it, more engines to fill the empty pegs. Most of Friday's events were repeated with the addition of Mud Wrestling, (so what's so special about that? Everyone does it at Stourpaine! Ed.), Hot Air Ballons, Helicopter rides and to the great joy of all the children, and some mums & dads, a surprise personal appearance of Wuzel Gummidge (Jon Pertwee), which really made their day! Sunday was the best day weatherwise and the crowds came in their thousands, which rounded the weekend off very nicely. I believe that the adult admission fee for this rally was £1.75 and it really must have been worth every penny of that for family entertainment. This weekend came to a close all too soon and as everyone packed up and moved out, we were practically alone in the field.

Anyway, on with the holiday. Monday dawned much too early for me, but, nevertheless, Bill, Marg and ourselves set off at 8 a.m. for BRIGHTON & HOVE ENGINEERIUM, which is about 80 miles from Netley Marsh. This is a superb place, very clean and nicely kept with model engines of every size and description filling the glass cases. Also on view was a Corliss horizontal steam engine. (I haven't suddenly become very knowledgable about engines, I just followed a class of engineering students around with their lecturer and listened to what he was telling them!!!!). They have an immaculate boiler room which is used to raise steam for the beam engine, but unfortunately they only get up steam on Sundays, but it was well worth a visit all the same. We spent the rest of the week touring around the South coast, but we did not find any stationary engines, although it was not for the lack of looking on Rob and Bill's part. Sorry, they did find a Coventry Climax and a Fowler marine engine, both being used as anchors!!

We left for home on the Friday as we were taking the Amanco to WINSLEY HOSPITAL FETE on the Saturday. These small events are becoming increasingly popular as regards having a few engines on view. I think this is to keep the menfolk happy whilst the wives look around the stalls.

We were up bright and early on the Sunday again and off to BEAULIEU! (I was beginning to think I would be glad to get back to work!!). Nevertheless, the weather was perfect and there were lots of very nicely restored engines on view. Four of the trophy winners were Wessex members. Well done Mark Tilley, Rod Dring, Nick Perry and Pete Steele.

Jackie Lambert.

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#### ROVING REPORT

I went over to the Vintage Bring & Buy sale at Fairford, held by the Cotswold Oil Engine Preservation Society on Saturday, 14th. November. There was a mixed selection of engines, pumps (which were selling well) and auto-jumble. Several Wessex members from as far afield as Abergavenny, Dorset and Weston-super-Mare were there. One buyer of implement seats came from Hartfield in Sussex! I bought a car radio for £1 and it works, as does an 8 track cassette player which cost 50 pence! Real bargains.

The other day I was stuck in a traffic jam in Bath when I saw a well known Wessex member stop and look all around before entering a shop which had all its windows painted over so that one could not see in. Being curious, I asked a passer-by about this shop and was told that it is a sex shop! It looks as though someone's engine will not be restored or over-hauled this winter!

I was talking to Brian Dando, from Wapley, recently (Member of Bristol Steam Club) and he told me that B.S.C. and the Sodbury Vale NVTEC branch are hoping to stage a rally, in place of the

(cont'd.)



Harry Champion (Roving Reporter)

CLUB EVENTS.

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

keep the costs down by enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope with your letter.

THE LAST WORD IN 1981.

taken time to write material for the newsletters again this year. My appeal for more material last month has been heeded and I have enough to start January's newsletter, but NOT enough to finish it. There will be a report on the Dinner & Dance next month, but it was a grand evening and several people have already written and said how much they enjoyed it. So, please keep those articles & adverts coming!!!  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS. Tom Randall.Editor.

Tom Randall, Editor.

