

WESSEX STATIONARY ENGINE CLUB

Newsletter

September 1977

125th Anniversary Mid-Somerset Show, Saturday, August 20th

It rained almost all day on the Friday and since I had planned to take my engine to the Show ground on the Friday evening, I had visions of my axle sinking deep in mud - which is not very far on a Mini!

A break in the rain about 7 p.m. encouraged me to load up and set off. I entered the ground just after 8 p.m. by what I was to discover a half-hour later was the wrong entrance. My second attempt was ultimately successful but it did take a further half-hour of quizzing people, all of whom turned out to be total strangers, before overwhelming relief was provided by the sight of a bowler hat which, through the drizzle-blurred light of my now dimming headlights, was instantly recognisable as the property of Terry Heath. Fortunately Terry was in fact wearing it, and a little bit of his expert peg counting determined the resting place for the night of my drenched Bamford.

The following morning I arrived at the ground about 9 a.m. and was approached through the rain by a tall, distinguished looking man wearing a dripping deerstalker and sporting a decidedly damp and rather wilting handlebar moustache. "That's an impressive bunch of tickets you've got there, son", he said, admiring my fistful of purple, blue and white permits and passes. His admiration was short-lived however, and without further ado they were whisked from my hand, torn in half and thrust out of sight into some deep pocket under folds of tweed which looked more like the natural habitat of the odd ferret or brace of partridge perhaps. He was not too encouraging about the state of the field either, "I doubt you'll make it past the first gate in that". I imagined my puny Mini having mud splashed in its eyes by this 'Charles Atlas of Country Life' coursing by in his Range-Rover. We did in fact get onto the field without any problem and in the absence of a few fine-weather rallyers, we were able to park conveniently by our engine.

Seventeen engines made up the field, five of which were out of the well-known, Chapman stable. Dave's 3 h.p. 1934 Bamford with Neals pump took four cranks to start, which I thought was excessive. My come-uppence was swift however, since my own 4 h.p. 1935 Bamford took about half an hour to start, by which time Dave's offer of a fiver began to look generous!

The rest of the field comprised Wilf Andrews 1930 Lister 2½ h.p., D Maybee's early Amanco 1½ h.p., a nicely restored American engine marketed by the Acme Engine Company of Lansing, Michigan, shop No 5619, 2½ h.p. belonging to W. Cox and dated 1915, K Eastment's 1921 Powell, No 2523, 2½ h.p., T Heath's nice 1923 Crossley 7 h.p., a 1928 Lister D and 1931 Villiers Century Unit, both belonging to B Filer. The star of the show was undoubtedly the 1901 lamp-start, 6½ h.p. engine by W H Pool and Sons, Chipstable, Somerset, which had spent its working life in a saw mill in Dulverton and is now owned by Mr G Cox of the South Somerset Agricultural Preservation Club.

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The day was marred by intermittent rain, culminating in a torrential downpour about 4 p.m. which sent the four scantilly clad dolly birds, with the James Bond car, scuttling for shelter in a manner something less than ladylike. (What happened to the electric umbrella then James?). Just what 007's car was doing in the cavalcade of 125 years of agriculture escapes me but doubtless some enlightened agriculturalist will fill me in on that later.

The plaques were nicer than the Bath and West. I was hoping that David 'Cranmore' Shepherd would present me with mine, but I had to settle for Mary Chapman - oh well, perhaps one day....!

Plenty of willing hands saw us all loaded up and safely off the field at the end of what, inspite of the wet, was an interesting day out.

Tom Randall.

Honiton Hill Rally 28th-29th August

This Rally was blessed with fine weather Sunday and Monday after a rather wet and blowey Saturday. This being the first time we attended this Rally, we were certainly impressed with the standard of engines restored and unrestored. There were some unusual sights which included, 2 Poole engines both of the same model and as most of you know they were made in Chipstable, Somerset.

There were the usual Petters Listers and Amanco's a few Crossley and Blackstones. One of the owners of a Blackstone engine suffered a few problems when a water pump that was driven by direct gear drive seized up on the Sunday afternoon. This meant that the teeth were broken off and the bearing cap broken. This was a shame but the owners enthusiasm for working engines at Rallies helped him to take the broken parts home Sunday evening and remake the teeth of the gear and to weld the bearing cap, so that the spectators on Monday saw the engine driving the water pump. As usual well done to the gentleman in question.

One of our Club members came second in the judging, well done Geoff Bryant with your Petter.

This Rally totaled 129 stationary engines and would be well worth a visit or entering as an exhibitor.

Other awards went to

1st A large Blackstone, 7 H.P owned by J H Heywood
2nd Petter - Geoff Bryant
3rd Hornsby - Mr M G Callow

David Chapman

Veteran Fire Engine Rally & Fete, September 3rd and 4th

Phut'. Phut! Phut! Bang!! Phut! Phut! Phut! Bang!!

This now familiar sound heralded the start of another bright and breezy Rally day. We had been cordially invited to this event by the Wootton Bassett Fire Brigade and although there were only a dozen or so engines, it proved to be a very successful weekend. It was good to see a couple of our junior members polishing their engines; Andrew Harris with his Lister D Type and Wolseley WD and Michael Harper's

1913 4 H.P. Lister J type driving a Lister pump 'turn of the century' $\frac{1}{2}$ h.p. Stuart. The Chairman's Petter M type spluttered its way through the weekend accompanied by lots of black smoke. Mike Harris's 3 h.p. Lister A type ran smoothly all weekend. Also exhibited were Mike's two Amanco's one Hit and Miss, the other petrol/paraffin and Mr Dodds air cooled Amanco making an interesting trio of $2\frac{1}{4}$ h.p. Amancos. Mr Dodds of Blunsdon, Wilts also had a nicely restored 5 h.p. 1925 Bamford and an unusual radiator cooled Ruston Hornsby Class P.T.

During both Saturday and Sunday there were very interesting fire fighting displays, parade of vintage and veteran fire engines, cars, motor cycles, lorries and traction engines, these were supported by a fair and numerous side shows and stalls.

Although this was a first time event with only a handful of engines, it is hoped to extend the show next year so maybe the Club will be able to give it plenty of support then, as all proceeds go to a worthy cause, The Fire Services National Benevolent Fund. All in all an enjoyable event, Thanks to Wootton Bassett Fire Brigade and Mike and Hazel Harris for putting up with us for the weekend.

Anon.

Somerset Traction Engine Club held their 'Westonzoyland Rally' on Saturday and Sunday 20th and 21st August.

When we arrived early on Saturday morning, and unloaded our engines, I was pleased we had brought four with us as the number of engines there was very poor and it did not look like much of a Rally. However, we set up next to that Veteran Rallyist, Ron Frampton of Bournemouth and prepared to start up. Then came the mist and rain so everything was sheeted up and everyone retired to their caravans and tents (thankgoodness for T.V.). Sunday dawned fine and clear and great joy, more engines began to arrive.

One thing I noticed was that Petter engines seem to be chasing Listers for top place in numbers. Seven Petters, nine Listers, pride of place must go to Geoff Cox's 'Pools' which ran very well all day which reminds me, I must finish mine some time.

All in all forgetting Saturdays weather, it was a very good Rally, much enjoyed by everyone.

Anon

Forthcoming Events

- October 4th - Roger Greenhalgh Bath College,
 - October 1st/2nd - Cranmore Rally -
 - October 8th/9th - John Kytes Rally
 - October 22nd/23rd - Hullavington Rally
 - October 29th - Social Evening Heddington for entrants of Heddington and Stockley Rally.
 - October 31st - Club Meeting at Old Down Inn Emborough, Roger Greenhalgh repeating his excellent illustrated talk on 'Canal Boats' which was requested by most of the members.
- NOTE: Any member with any interesting slides of rallies, engines etc, who would like them shown please bring them along.

November 5th - Jumble Sale at Westfield Church Hall, 2.15 p.m. Any offers of help, jumble etc would be appreciated.

November 28th - Club Dinner and Dance at Star Hotel, Wells

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January 2nd - Club Meeting Old Down Inn, 'Members involvement meeting'
NOTE: This is a Tuesday Meeting

February 27th - Cornish Beam Engines

March 27th? - Ray Hooley Ruston and Hornsby

Dinner Dance 28th November

Please can you bring your money for the Dance to the October Meeting

Cranmore Rally.

A Barbeque will be held on the Saturday night and any member not attending the Rally is invited.

Recovery of a 1925 Lister 'A' Type Engine and Deep well pump

Following an inquiry to R.A. Lister and Company Ltd, regarding the age and value of an engine and pump in his possession, we visited a retired gentleman farmer at this country house in the Forest of Dean.

The pumping shed housing the equipment had fallen in some years ago, so this had first to be shored up. When this was done we found a Lister Junior 'A' type single flywheel engine on a concrete base and a deep well pump which had been used in years gone by to raise water from the 60ft well. This well still supplies the house with water although an electrically driven pump is now used.

The engine and pump had not worked for at least 10 years to the owner's knowledge, and probably not for considerably longer. At this point a price was agreed and we set about the task of dismantling.

We removed the engine without difficulty, and, after freeing a stuck valve, filled the tank with petrol and away she went. The pump was a slightly different problem. The driving mechanism at the well-head was dismantled, but after some thought and discussion with the owner, it was decided to leave the pumping mechanism at the bottom of the well in order not to disturb the present electric pump. However, it is still hoped at some stage to recover this.

The next problem - after cleaning and painting - was to devise some means of making an easily transportable exhibit for showing. A wooden platform was made with the pump bolted at one end and the engine mounted at the other. Although obviously not the correct distance apart it makes a working model which at least gives the public some idea of how the original would have looked when it was first installed in 1925.

Pam and Ray Saunders

Do You Know Your Committee?

Recent administrative changes have taken place resulting in a slight reshuffle of the Committee:

President.	David Edgington
Chairman	Eric Brain
Vice Chairman	Dave Farendon
Secretary	Ailene Cannon
Treasurer &	
Membership Sec	Ann Brain
Raffles	John Spear
	Phil Lane

and we are pleased to welcome Mike Cannon onto the Committee who will hold the post of assistant secretary, by virtue of marriage!!

Please as always, any questions or suggestions to any committee member who will be only too pleased to help.

Mary Chapman has offered to stand-down from the Secretaryship to enable her to spend more time on the 'engineregister' which she has been compiling over the past months.

Thank you Mary for your able work as General Secretary whilst the W.S.E.C. was getting onto its feet.

While on the subject would all club members please ensure that Mary has full particulars of their engines, especially those whose collections change from time to time - the register must be updated to be effective. Please send all changes to Mary Chapman, Greenbank, Charlton Road, Midsomer Norton.

Eric Brain

Chairman's Report

The membership of the Club now having reached nearly 3 figures, shows a need for an increase in administration. As can be seen elsewhere in the Newsletter, a recent reshuffle has taken place and an amendment made to the constitution to this aim. This is an admirable chance for three extra persons wishing to take part in the Club management for a short period upto the AGM, to 'feel their feet' with a view to re-election afterwards.

At present future club events are under discussion, next years rallies club meetings and outing.

The W.S.E.C. are most fortunate in recently being offered ON LOAN, an engine to be rallied under the Club Banner. This engine is at present undergoing restoration by David Chapman and is hoped to appear at Cranmore for the first time. It is a Petter Handyman, lamp start and we are proud to be, I believe the first club to be loaned an engine by a manufacturer for display.

Finally, a plea, the Dinner and Dance list needs swelling considerably to make this expensive event go with a swing. A disco has been arranged for the evening and all laid on at the STAR HOTEL, WELLS on November 26th. Friends who are not members are also very welcome. Price £3.20 per head. Please pay any committee member.

The Crossley Hunt

Chapter 3

As the Land-Rover lurched and swayed along what was little more than a rough track, he could'nt help remembering the forlorn look on the womans' face when the name Crossley was mentioned. He decided that weather and the wife permitting he would return to the yard the following day.

As he drove into the yard it was quite noticeable that some of the rusting ferrous objects had been moved and he thought this rather odd since the place gave the impression that everything had been there, untouched, since the invention of the Poppet valve. Just as the Land-Rover engine omitted its stopping gasps, the woman came out of her caravan and although her awesome sight made him think he had made a mistake in returning, she smiled, her eyes lit up and she looked quite human.

"I'ad a feeling ye'd be back me dear", she said in a comforting voice. "Well I came to see if you had any other engines". "No yer didnt", the woman said in a superior knowing voice "Yer came after this yere Crossley that's about". She beckoned him into the caravan and explained that her father had supplied the Crossley to the pump house when it was new. He used to be the area agent for the Manchester firm from 1900 until about 1920 when he began dealing in scrap. "Twas father's pride and joy", said the woman "to look after the engine. E looked after it until e died two years ago this fall". She went on to explain how she had grown up with the engine and had grown to love it as did her father. "I were goin to present it to the local museum in Fathers memory" she said with a note of sadness in her voice, "but three weeks ago two men from up country came loaded with fivers an they did take it away. I tried to stop em but they would'nt listen, they just loaded up and took it away, they did". The woman was now quite openly upset. After gaining some more information about the two men he bade her goodbye and resumed his search for the Crossley with renewed enthusiasm. The Land-Rover burst into life and roared off along the bumpy lane.

Was he getting closer to his goal - find out in next months installment of.....
THE CROSSLEY HUNT

Michael Cannon

We hear that club member Mr R E Hicks of Exeter has been un well and send our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

We are also please to hear that Mrs W Andrews of Wedmore is now fully recovered from her illness.