

# Wessex Stationary Engine Club. Newsletter.

JULY 1980.

## RANDOM RAMBLINGS.

The three rallies attended over the weekend of June 28th.-30th., can best be summed up as informal, disorganised and impossible, respectively.

### SATURDAY. Chippenham Carnival.

We assembled at 12.30pm in Chippenham & set up our engines in Monkton Park, a very pleasant site on the bank of the River Avon. A good selection of makes and types of engine were evident - Massey Harris, Ruston & Hornsby, Lister D, 2½hp Amanco, 3hp Tangye, Tom Senior, Lister 4L, Petter M, & Bradford making an interesting display. The group consisted mainly of Wessex members, but we were all able to welcome Jim Anstee of Chippenham, making a come-back to the S.E. scene with his superb pumping outfit, and Gillian Taylor, with her 2½hp Amanco Hired Man. A very enjoyable, relaxed afternoon, marred only by an overcast sky.

### SUNDAY. 'Wings & Wheels.' Bath & West Showground.

This day dawned bright and clear, a fine summers day, in fact. On arrival at the site, we soon realised that the 'Lions' capability for rally organisation was non-existent. Firstly, we were charged an entrance fee, only to find later that our area had been booked 'gratis'. The marshals, equipped with expensive walkie-talkies, had no idea of the site layout and were disinclined to help. Eventually, thanks to Chris & Don Rogers, we found our spot, half a mile from where we had been first directed, so we re-loaded the R & H after a sharp exchange of words with the marshal. Finally, another verbal battle with the first official got our money back. In fairness, he later apologised but the incident had been completely un-necessary. In fact it took us an hour to get on-site after entering the gate. Later in the day one of the vintage car entrants was heard loudly complaining about the marshals lack of organisation and co-ordination. However, the visitors flocked in in their thousands. From where we sat in the sun, behind our engines, we noticed some nice exhibits on the other side of the ropes too!!! The handful of engines present, Amanco, R&H, Bradford, Bulldog, Petter and Crossley, (NO Lister D's!!!) drew much interest and we all agreed we had enjoyed the afternoon, especially the display of vintage aircraft, notably the World War 2 Spitfire, and the powered hang-glider. Thanks must go to Tony Andrews for his liaison with the 'organisers'. Perhaps next year we could stage an even bigger Club display. Finally, just for the record, Yeovil Festival of Transport, you have nothing to fear in the way of competition from 'Wings & Wheels'.

### MONDAY. W.S.E.C. 'Crank-Up'.

What a disappointment - not by any means in the number of members who turned up, we must have had a record attendance in the filthiest weather that an English summer could devise! The 'Crank-Up' was declared cancelled before it had even begun, but a few hardy souls braved the rain and wind, namely John Emery with his recently acquired Ruston (he did say that it could hardly get any rustier!), Herb Gane with his Petter M and Don Rogers with the Bulldog. Some other members brought their engines, but they stayed sheeted down on their trailers. Even the Priston Morris Men went inside the Old Down Inn, admitting that even their ritual dances were powerless in the face of the black elements that had conjured up the heathen weather. Fortunately they only drew two spectators from our Club-room, although one of those was the Hon-Sec! The evening was filled with an impromptu slide-show with a selection of vintage cars; traction engines, the 1980 Historic Commercial Vehicle Run and even a few stationary engines!

To the crowd of members who braved the weather, "Well done." The numbers turned a disastrous evening rally into a good social evening, with a lot of new faces.

Emerson Brantingham.

## +++++ F.S.E.C. RALLY, YATTON, 1980. Financial Report.

The Club Rally yeilded a surprising profit of about £80. The raffle made £21, the Club Stall, including teas, £65, programmes, £24, 'Whisky Roll' £12.35, 'Buzzer' £1.33, a noble effort by all involved. A small loss was made on the food, and donations of £25 to the Cancer & Leukaemia in Children Trust, and £12.50 to Yatton R.F.C. left the Club with a healthy contribution to its funds.

Stuart Ashman.

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CLUB EVENTS.  
 AUGUST 31st. CLUB TOUR of SEDGEMOOR PUMPING STATIONS. Please note that this IS the August Club Meeting and it IS on a SUNDAY! Meet up at 1.45pm. at Aller Moor Pumping Station, Burrowbridge, Somerset (on the Glastonbury-Taunton Rd) Visit will also include Curry Moor and Westonzoyland Pumping Stations.  
 DECEMBER 13th. CLUB ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE, to be held at The Portway Hotel, Frome. Tickets only £5 per head for a full Christmas Dinner Menu. Booking slips will be in newsletters from August onwards. Please book early.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES.

AUGUST 2/3 ALDERHOLT RALLY.  
 AUGUST 9/10 YEOVIL FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT.  
 AUGUST 15. WEDMORE HARVEST HOME. Anyone interested in entering this afternoon/evening rally at Wedmore, contact Phil Harris on Wedmore 712048. Plaques will be given. There will also be a barn dance in the evening.  
 AUGUST 16/17 FAIRFORD RALLY. Also, Somerset Club Rally at Langport.  
 AUGUST 24/25 HONITON HILL RALLY. Also WILTS NVTEC RALLY, Neston Park Estate, Corshan. Also WHEELS AT LONGLEAT, Sponsored by Autocar in aid of Dr. Barnardo's. Entries are welcome for ANYTHING with wheels! There is an entry fee of £1 which goes straight to charity and entry forms are available from Diana Emery or from Dr. Barnardo's. 431, Bromley Road, Downham, Bromley, Kent. Plaques will be given and there will be trade stalls, an auto-jumble, rides, etc.  
 SEPTEMBER 13/14. SELWOOD CLUB RALLY, Beckington, Frome. Closing date for entries, July ...  
 SEPT. 19-21 STOURPAINE BUSHES RALLY, Blandford Forum, Dorset.  
 SEPT. 20. COTSWOLD VINTAGE PLOUGHING MATCH. Stationary Engine entries to:- A. Ward. 'Happy Acre', Kingsdown Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wilts.  
 SEPT. 27/28. SODBURY VALE PLOUGHING MATCH.  
 NOVEMBER 8. COTSWOLD OIL ENGINE CLUB Bring & Buy Auction Sale, Fairford. Entry forms from Mrs. B. Cross. 'Pettersville' 2, Cheworth Road, Cricklade, Swindon, Wilts.

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PUCKLECHURCH REVEL. June 21st.

This is an annual event, but this was the first time that Sodbury Vale NVTEC entered engines and tractors. Out of the 12 engines and 6 tractors, Messrs. F. Mills, R. Woolford, R. Saunders & myself were Wessex members. For once we had a nice, sunny day.

CHIPPENHAM CARNIVAL. June 28th.

After a damp start, the day became better and at tea-time I started up the Nuffield and went into Chippenham to take part in the Carnival Procession. The route was lined with crowds of people who I hope will come to the Heddington & Stockley Rally, as I was towing a trailer plastered with posters. Although I was entered in the Swindon Fire Engine Rally, I was unable to go because my van's engine has broken piston rings and I am looking around for another engine. I hope that by the time you read this I shall be back on the rally field. I heard that the lucky few who took their engines to Chippenham were paid £3 per engine. Thus the more you entered, the more money you got. This could lead to a stampede next year to get in!

SODBURY VALE PLOUGHING MATCH. Sept 27th. & 28th. As last year, there will be another Auction Sale at this event. The Auctioneers will be Davis, Meade & Partners, of Bath.

HARRY CHAMPION.

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SPACE-FILLER!

Amongst the many problems faced by a newsletter editor, one of the most infuriating is being left with a couple of inches of space at the bottom of the last page (No, the newsletter is not typed in page sequence, this really is the last page!) that is too short to get any of the remaining contributions into. I usually try to find some little gem to fill this last bit, but this month, no such luck. It occurred to me that we might print a few restoration tips, but whilst discussing the recent article on rally safety, the frivolous element crept in and the best we could come up with were a few snappy engineman's proverbs, such as, 'A Petter in the hand is worth two at Stourpaine Bushes' or, 'There's no smoke without an M Type'. It is only total lack of further inspiration that prevents me from going even further, so why not have a go yourself. Send your engine proverb in. Make the most of it, or, as the old proverb says, 'Gather ye Rustons while ye may'!



PROCESTER MANOR RALLY. May 24th., 25th. & 26th.

This was blessed with fine weather, but was very cool in the evenings. It was held on the lawns of this lovely old manor house, in aid of the mentally handicapped, and was well attended by both the public and exhibitors. Many W.S.E.C. members were there, Eddie Mills (Engine Steward), Chairman Rod Dring & family, Rob Woolford & family, The Jennings', and Ray & Pam Saunders. The Sodbury Vale branch of the N.V.T.E.C. were well represented with tractors and stationary engines. Despite the non-appearance of several listed exhibitors, there were a lot who came from Bucks., Cornwall, Devon, and Worcs., who were not in the programme. There were a lot of well restored cars and of course, the Ex-Army Corps. There were three organs on show, Mrs. Gardiner's Limonaire, Len Cullimore's Chiappa and T. Peter's Dean. Six steam rollers and three traction engines were on show and also a steam railway, the same one as was at Ross-on-Wye Rally last year. Tony Fielding laid on a good Saturday evenings entertainment with the bar and a Country & Western duo. There was a disco on the Sunday evening and the bar was packed solid. A good time was had by all and I hope that this rally will carry on into the future.

ABERGAVERN RALLY. May 30th. & June 1st.

Saturday was damp and we had a heavy storm in the afternoon, after which things soon dried out. Sunday was much better, a lovely warm day, and the public crowded in, there was something for everyone. Fun Fair, Model Tent, old cars and commercials, military vehicles, automobile, twenty vintage tractors, four fairground organs, a steam section and over 150 stationary engines of all makes and sizes, their owners coming from all over the map. Wessex were well represented by Rob Lambert, Bill Appleby, Rene & Len Fry, Mr. & Mrs. Jennings, Ray Saunders, Terry Heath and myself. More interest seemed to be centred on engines powering tools than on ones just on their own. The Rally was held in Baily Park, 10 minutes walk from the town and the shops. As I was coming home via Usk, I went over a bridge under which ran the road from Raglan to Newport, just in time to see Rene & Len Fry speeding along on their long way home. Next year's rally will be on June 6th. & 7th., and I would like to see more Wessex members there, if we can afford to go with the increasing costs. The rally organisers cater for the exhibitors by having a tent open all day long serving free cups of tea and coffee, and rolls. You do not get this at many rallies!

Harry Champion.

(Harry is also hoping for more support in his campaign in Worlds Fair for exhibitors travelling costs.)

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RKET LAVINGTON & EASTERTON F.C. RALLY. May 25th. & 26th.

This can only be described as a superb country fair, giving pleasure for young and old alike. The show had a varied selection of exhibits such as vintage cars & motor cycles, a 1927 Morris Commercial army lorry and about 60 engines, not forgetting the five-a-side football and the Military Band. John Kyte had his hot bulb Blackstone on the field, which John gave me the pleasure of looking after whilst he was off around the field organising and generally getting well lubricated. It took John about ten minutes to explain the controls to me and I managed to start this enormous engine. After about an hour or so, this usually reliable Blackstone stopped. I decided to get it started again, but in front of an audience of Eric Brain & Co., it would not start, after several attempts. Eric & friends got fed up with waiting and left. After ten minutes of straining on that massive flywheel, I suddenly realised that I had not let the choke off each time the engine fired. With this mistake corrected, she started, bellowing vast columns of smoke from the unburned fuel and leaving me with a strained muscle in my right arm. (Stick to beer next time, it's what your right arm's for! Ed.)

The field was well supported by Wessex members, with a trio of Petter M's belonging to Rob Lambert, Tony Jones and Mark Tilly, who also ended the day with a sore arm from trying to start his Petter after its flight down the skids! Bill Appleby also had his Victoria there, running as sweet as a nut.

I would like to thank John Kyte & company for a super weekend, well done!

Steve Norwell.

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The show was set in the picturesque grounds of the Manor. The weather turned out to be very fine and warm for the weekend, which seemed to attract people in droves from all around. (Nice cars those droves!).

The money taken over the weekend will go to the home farm trust for the mentally handicapped. They live at the manor and it was nice to see the patients taking an interest in the exhibits. There was plenty to see from stationary engines, tractors and trains, to motor bikes, steamers and organs.

A Lister Bruston lighting set owned by K.R. Bridge, proved to be a popular attraction, nicely restored, and a nice runner. Roy Cox's Amanco ran nicely all weekend and is one of the best running Amancos around. There was an attractive Bentall Pioneer driving a Harris Underhill grinder, owned by W.A. Taylor of Evesham. Another eye-catcher was Rob Woolford's 1920 Fairbanks Morse 2 Type.

Next was EDDY MILL's Bamford, the original stationary engine. We did hear a rumour that Eddy was actually going to start the Bamford, but unfortunately we missed this historic event! There was also a very well restored 3hp Gardiner gas engine of 1902, owned by Les Deaville. Next was a 1925 Delco Light and a nice 1940 Stuart Turner generating set. Then came an extremely well restored Ruston Hornsby 2hp PT which was built in Grantham and not in Lincoln. It was taken from an elevator originally and then later used with sheep shearing equipment.

One of the popular attractions over the weekend was the Wessex Chairman shooting Rod Woolford's bucket accross the rally field using the backfire from the exhaust of the big Ruston. Another of the attractions was the patient in running shorts who kept sprinting down to the sweet stall, grabbing a handfull of sweets and then dashing back to the manor! An unusual and totally unscheduled event was the glider crash, although we did not see it ourselves. The pilot was said to have baled out and left the glider to the influences of gravity. It ended up in a field in Kings Stanley, near Stonehouse. This extremely good rally was topped off by each exhibitor receiving a plaque for the plaque-board, and a smaller version of the plaque on a key-ring.

Kev & Nick Dring.

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#### A WEEKEND IN JUNE.

Friday, June 13th., dawned lovely, and stayed that way all day. We packed everything - including the kitchen sink - and off we went - West to Yatton. Well, we made it to Trowbridge, where we spent 1½ hours at a garage, repairing a wheel on the trailer, and eventually arrived at Yatton to a glorious sunset. Up went the tent and we settled down for our very first night under canvas at a rally.

"What was that?" 2a.m. and it thundered, lightened - oh - and yes, it rained..... And it kept raining until 2 p.m. Saturday, by which time I think we all had webbed feet. But just to prove it still existed, the sun did come out and the air was filled with 'Chug, Chug,' and much spluttering and hissing (Sid, perhaps? Ed.) and at long last we got started. For a couple of hours anyway, until a slight breeze (!!!) sent everyone moving to the top of the field to the Club, where we all enjoyed a very companionable evening and a lovely supper. (Big thankyou to the ladies.)

Well, no thunder and lightening on Saturday night, but someone's fire alarm was working overtime, but we were all too tired to go and find out where. Sunday dawned with sunshine and a light wind, and a lot of optimism for what proved to be a lovely day, apart from one slight (!!) shower at lunchtime.

As I said at the start, this was our first rally where we had actually camped out, only having joined the engine fraternity last September, and despite the wet weather at Yatton - don't forget, the road to Heathrow was flooded! - and they cancelled some Cross-Channel ferries - we arrived home Sunday evening, looking forward to the next time.

Many thanks to all our new friends who made us so welcome - sorry I can't remember many names, (I'll have to start coming to Club meetings instead of Sid!) But I know we will see many of you at Heddington. I still can't tell a Lister from a Petter from a Bamford, etc!!!

Marian Wilson. Devizes.

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#### RUSTON & HORNSBY DIESEL ENGINE, SIZE 3, CLASS XHR, No.185152.

Readers may be interested to know that this engine, advertised solely in the May issue of this newsletter, has been purchased by Turnbulls (Automobile Specialists) Ltd., of Wolseley Road, Milehouse, Plymouth, who have expressed their intention to restore the engine and place it on display at their filling station. Hopefully this will not take too long, since this would be nice stopping off point on those frequent but long excursions to Cornwall that seem so popular these days!

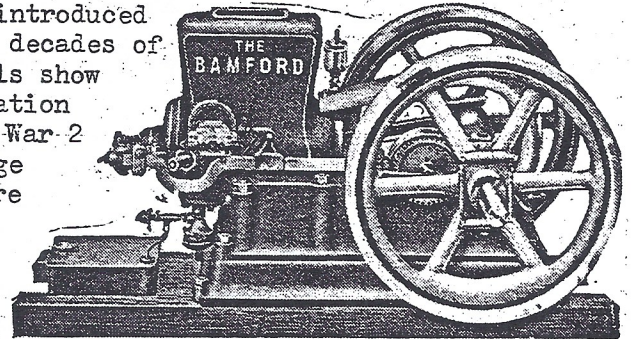


Many members will already have heard that Bamfords' of Uttoxeter, one of Britains oldest surviving makers of agricultural machinery, has gone into voluntary liquidation. Share dealing was suspended towards the end of May following the appointment of the Official Receiver to recover an outstanding debt of around £50,000 on behalf of a steel supplier. At the time, ordinary shareholders seemed unlikely to see anything from their investment and the prospects for the 580 or so employees were virtually nil. The company had been trading at a loss for over 18 months and a six week long strike at the plant earlier in the year only served to accelerate the companys already plummeting cash-flow position. This situation, following a massive £700,000 investment programme in a new foundry, called for a further substantial injection of capital just to keep the company afloat, but with the long-term future of the agricultural machinery market looking so grim, there seemed little likely to encourage the companys bankers to invest even further. At the beginning of July however, a spark of hope appeared in that the Receiver has now expressed his intention to re-employ some 300 personnel on a week-to-week basis in order to keep the company running so that, hopefully, it may be put up for sale as a going concern. perhaps by the time you read this, we shall know just how successful this move has been.



Bamfords was established in 1871 and pioneered the steel plough and the cylinder mower, as well as producing high quality traditional implements and machines.

Our famous line of Silver Medal horizontal engines introduced in 1920 changed little in basic design during the two decades of their manufacture. The castings of the 'Thirties models show many signs of pattern repair, and the biggest modification was the change from L.T. to H.T. ignition. From World War 2 onwards, their vertical engine range, the EV & SV range from 1½hp to 5hp, and the diesels, SD types, etc., were characterised by the patent hinged crankcase, "Remove four Bolts and all the Working Parts are exposed for Inspection," said their advertisements.



Although engine production at Bamfords only ceased a few years ago, the competition from more lightweight

power units must have been an ever-present limitation, their own engines being robust but generally big and heavy, a quality typical of many of their products over the years. In recent years the company has failed to capitalise on its earlier successes and, rather than develop its own products, had turned to importing and manufacturing under licence.

In 1971 the acquisition of Jones Balers from Allis-Chalmers gave Bamfords the right to manufacture and sell under the Allis-Chalmers trademark outside of the U.S.A. This trend has led to the company having an inadequate line of products to compete against other specialised manufacturers, which, together with the general decline in the U.K. market for agricultural equipment and tractors has written what may well be the closing chapters of this old family firm, of which only 10% of the present share capital now remains in the family.

A bitter family struggle to stave off a take-over bid from brother Joe

Bamford, of JCB fame, some years ago, resulted in a holding company, Frederick H. Burgess - agricultural machinery distributors - purchasing a 60% stake in the firm. Joe Bamford left the old firm in the 'Thirties following a family disagreement, and set up on his own making farm trailers, a business which ultimately established JCB as a name synonymous with heavy plant and made Joe a millionaire and a tax exile. His ultimate desire to take over the old firm has thus far remained thwarted.

The companys failure could mean the sad loss of a name prominent in agricultural machinery for over a century. It is hoped that the invaluable records of engine production and sales which are still in existence will be preserved and continue to be available to Bamford engine owners through the generous offices of Mr. Richard Bamford.

Jethro Tool.

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FOR SALE. Lucas SR4 tractor magneto, £12. Also large (8" dia.) moving coil ammeter, 0-60 amps. £7.50. T.T.Randall. Tel Midsomer Norton 418926.

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## COMMITTEE.

Rod Dring.....Chairman.  
Adrian Stride.....Vice-Chairman.  
Diana Emery.....Secretary.  
Eric Brain.....Assistant Secretary & Newsletter Postal Distribution.  
Stuart Ashman.....Treasurer.  
Tony Jones.  
Ivor Yeo.  
Herb Gane.  
Rob Lambert.  
Bill Appleby.  
Ian Skuse.  
Steve Norwell.  
Tom Randall.....Newsletter Editor.

Secretary:- 'Odstax,' Wells Road, Hallatrow, Bristol. Tel:- Temple Cloud 52939.

Treasurer:- Moorledge Farm Cottage, Knowle Hill, Chew Magna, Bristol.  
Tel:- Chew Magna 2655.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Joint Membership (Engaged/Married Couples).....£2.00 per year.  
Individual Membership (18 years and over).....£1.50 per year.  
Junior Membership (Under 18 years).....£0.50 per year.

## THIRD PARTY LIABILITY INSURANCE.

The Club offers a Third Party Liability Scheme to its fully paid up Members, affording cover up to a maximum of £250,000. It covers the use of stationary engines on the insured's own premises as well as on the rally field and it meets the full requirements for insurance cover now usually a condition of rally entry. The premium payable is £1.00 per paid-up member per year and a certificate of insurance is issued upon receipt of that premium. It is not available to individuals under 18 years of age, or non-members. If your membership lapses, so does your insurance cover. Send an s.a.e. to the Treasurer for full details.

## CLUB MEETINGS.

The Club holds its meetings at the Old Down Inn, Emborough (at the junction of the A367 and the B3139, 5 miles North of Shepton Mallet), on the last Monday of each month as far as is practical. Any deviation from this is announced in the newsletter. Meetings usually start about 8.00pm.

## CLUB BADGES & TEE-SHIRTS.

The Club's red & green on gold metal badge is obtainable for £1 plus a s.a.e., from Adrian Stride, 100, Marshfield Way, Fairfield Park, Bath. Blue tee-shirts printed with the Club's flywheel motif & Club name are available from Tony Jones, 59, Marsh Road, Trowbridge, Wilts. Send s.a.e. for available sizes and prices.

## NEWSLETTER ITEMS.

This is YOUR Newsletter. Please support it with articles, news snippets, engine information, restoration tips, rally reports, rally dates, etc., plus your sales & wants published free as often as you like, by sending them to Tom Randall, Welton Hill Cottage, West Road, Midsomer Norton, Bath. BA3 2TL. Tel:- Midsomer Norton 418926.

## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS.

David Edgington. Club President and Editor of 'The Stationary Engine.'  
Bill Foster.  
Tom Randall.

## LATE NEWS.