



CRANKING



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April 2020

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

Editor's Note

April 2020 – a month many of us will want to forget – as I write this, I should be with like-minded friends at the brilliant Lister D Rally at Dursley in this brilliant warm sunshine – but due to circumstances which you all won't have failed to miss, we are all stuck at home, with an endless list of DIY jobs to carry out – although that list is rapidly being exhausted!

I'm sure you've all been tinkering and playing with various engines and attachments in your workshops and garages during this period – why not get in touch and tell us about what you've been up to?

One benefit of the internet during these troubled times is the pooling together of information and parts – to this effect I have been able to find two brand new sprayer nozzles for my Petter S engines – as I have trouble with one of them, finding a good known replacement is far from easy if not almost impossible.

Also, there have been a few 'Virtual Crank Ups' on Facebook which have proved to be both very successful and entertaining, perhaps something we could do within the next month? Check out the Club's Facebook page.

I wish you all the very best during these uncertain times, stay safe. *David*

Chairman's Report

It is with great regret that I have to tell you all that once again the committee of the Wessex Midsummer Vintage Show, has no option other than to cancel the event that was to be staged at Semington over the weekend of June 20th & 21st. I think that you will all understand why, not only this but the West Wilts Society of Model Engineers, at the White Horse Country Park coach road Westbury have cancelled all activities until September, this will mean that our crank up and vintage day has not been able to go ahead, the vintage day at Tuckers Grave Inn has also been abandoned – all this due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus.

The club meetings at the Old Down Inn are also postponed until further notice. I know that this will have an effect on you all and I can only hope that the whole country can weather this storm, all of us may stay clear of this terrible infection.

The committee will still work to keep the club running and we will be in contact with each other on a regular basis, please keep us informed of any matters that you may want to raise at this time. I hope you all know my number by now but just in case you do not, here it is – 01225 754374.

Although I was unable to attend the event at Whaddon Lane, put on by Gordon, I was told it was very well supported. We are having a new drive to the house and I had some work to do before the work started, and as I now look out of my window I see a very large hole in the ground and a large caterpillar digger stood digging out yet more earth. It was good to hear that Roger Pike is out of hospital and is a lot better after his latest visit and I know you will all want to wish him well. I know he was off to the greenhouse to get some seeds into boxes ready to plant out as soon as they are ready and the rain gives over and that reminds me - I suppose I had better go and spend some money so that I can get something in the garden, I would love to see some sun shine – it would cheer everyone up somewhat.

Now less of the doom and gloom, as you will see we will not be having a monthly meeting at the Old Down Inn, but that does not mean everything will come to a grinding halt. We have a club newsletter and I can only appeal to you all, we must keep the club going, so what can we do?

Now I know that all of you can write, and when I took on the job of chairman many years back now I could not spell, in fact I was the world's worst and if our late newsletter Kim was still with us he would whole heartedly agree I was rubbish, but I had to learn and I did, yes I still have to look in the dictionary at times but it does not matter if you spell something incorrectly - we have an editor and I am sure if spotted he will put it to rights. So please to help us all at this time please spend a little time now and then to write a piece for the newsletter.

It does not have to be on engines, you can write about great aunty Agee's carbuncle, anything to help keep the pages full and keep us all together through this troubled time.

Now it was suggested at the last committee meeting that the Club set up a help line so that anyone seeking help or assistance with a problem or needing a part repaired or even made could find a club member willing to lend a hand. Now I am far from being the best lathe user but I can get by so I will offer to help in this way, I know we have better people than me so I just hope they may be willing to help others that are in need.

Now no one has unlimited time so we suggest that anyone willing to help in this way lets any member of the committee know how they may be willing to help and we will keep this information within the club, anyone wanting help will then have to contact a committee member and we will contact a suitable member that may be willing to help. This way we safeguard the volunteer from constant phone calls or emails. Oh yes one other thing I do know a bit about electrical wiring.

Now I know that I may not see the members of either committee for some time and firstly I would like to thank all the lads and lasses that have worked so hard up until now on the organising of the Semington Rally, this year we should have had a show to beat anything we have staged before, now it has to be cancelled so may I say thank you to all of you that have tried so hard to make it a show that should have been one to remember.

To the members of the general club committee again, I like you, do not know when we shall meet up and get things back to normal, let's all hope it will not be long, and to you all thank you for your help and input, may you all stay safe and well. *Eric*

Looking Back - Part 1

With this year's Events cancelled not just Club wise but nationwide, I thought it might be nice to reflect back in time to some of our Clubs earlier events that the Committee of the day organised.

Cranmore Rally - On the same site that we now use for our Vintage Jumble it was then just a field, not a scalping laid car park as it is now, We used to have a Club Stall to help raise funds, I recall it being a Tarpaulin covered Elephant Hut that I borrowed from work that our men used to have their lunch in or shelter from the rain, this was ok for us but it was so dark inside you had a job to see what was for sale!!

I am sure I can recall a Merryweather Steam Pumping outfit here that was brought along by South Bristol Technical College - it was a fine exhibit (our Club also supported their events too) Our then Club President David Edgington handed out some trophies at the end of the day to various recipients.

David Sheppard, the acclaimed wildlife artist had a lot of influence here with the Railway as I think at that time he owned the loco Black Prince that was based here and the Station Signal Box had a lot of his paintings on view.

We could also go for a ride on the trains almost to Doultong and back which was nice. Just a year or so later another event took place in a nearby field that may not have been organised by our Club and I recall TV Animal Magic presenter Johnny Morris in attendance; this would have been a crowd puller in particular with the children, I remember a military helicopter landing in the field, as I took a photo of it touching down, one of the crew ran over to me and asked what part of the craft I had photographed - which made me think if it was that secret it shouldn't have been here as it was only an old common egg beater!! *Robin*



Shackleton's Stuarts

An oddball Stuart Turner always peaks my interest, so when I was looking at the Stuart Turner Ltd. Instagram page (You can find engines in all forms of social media these days!) they shared a couple of photos of the Shackleton expedition and low and behold there was a picture of an odd-looking Stuart Turner single cylinder generating set.

Was this an example of the often-quoted engines used on the Shackleton Expedition? I needed to know more!

I have been provided with a thankyou letter from Capt. Frank Hurley to Stuart Turner singing the praises of the Stuart Turner set.

The engine drove a 1/2KW generator which charged a 200Amp/Hour battery, this was used to provide flood lighting during the Antarctic nights and for the Scientific experiments which were taking place, the flood lighting raised morale or as Capt. Hurley put it "Provided an inestimable boon" during the 10 months the Endurance was trapped in ice before being crushed. He praised Stuart Turner for the set's reliability, economy and lack of attention required, commenting that the engine ran right up until the Endurance was crushed and the room it was in flooded with water, the lights continued to operate from the batteries even though they were submerged in 6ft of water.

The picture provided shows a small single cylinder engine, which has a passing resemblance to half a Stuart Turner flat twin, which is a side valve 4 stroke. Looking at this little Stuart set it would seem the carburettor intake is attached to the crankcase, so I am inclined to think it is a 2 stroke.

There is no firm evidence that this is an example of the engine used on the Shackleton Endurance Expeditions, it could also be a concept engine produced for the War Department contract that was later filled by the flat twins. Would one of the early 2 port water cooled 2 strokes have survived the cold? Sadly, there is no one around at the Stuart Turner factory to confirm any of my speculations and will remain a Stuart Turner mystery for the time being.

The engine is housed in the Stuart Turner Factory Museum in Henley on Thames, but I have been unable to get more information on the engine. I would be interested to hear if anyone has visited and have had a closer look at the engine to gauge its construction.

Stephen Williams

CLUB EVENTS/CALENDAR

Owing to the current and proposed restrictions Wessex Stationary Engine Club has decided to curtail all activities for the foreseeable future. All club nights have been suspended, as has the Midsummer Vintage Show due to take place on the 20th and 21st June. We apologise for any inconvenience, but we have taken this action in the interests of our members and guests. We will produce a revised calendar when more is known about the progress of the virus.

There are a couple of extra events that might make up for what looks like being a disastrous summer. We have been invited to the Worton Village Day at Five Lanes Farm on the 5th September, and the following day Trowbridge and Westbury Lions are holding their excellent annual White Horse Classic & Vintage Vehicle Show, and they have asked us to go along. For Worton please contact Eric on 01225 754374 and for the White Horse Classic & Vintage Vehicle Show entry is online www.whitehorsevehicleshow.org or contact me on 07751 918283 for more information. Let's hope the situation improves over the next few weeks and months and we can get back to our hobby of showing our engines and exhibits.

Mother - "Where did you park my bike"?

"Down in the barn Son, under the 'tater sacks"

REBUILD

Hidden within the barn he lurks and lives,
My golden, olden beast of yesterday.
Wrapped in nostalgic cloths of woven dreams,
Biding his time, 'til taken out to play.

Silent he stands, and silently he waits.
Restless within the confines of his lair.
Dormant of circulation, yet he weeps.
Draining his oily lifeblood slowly there.

Now comes the longed for resurrection day.
Slowly he rises, groomed and shod anew.
Fuelled by transfusion, spitting fat blue sparks.
Smoking his tail, he rumbles into view.

Into a land of rising sun he roars,
Blinking against the brightness of the day.
Seeking no contest, competition done,
Graceful decline, where once he too held sway.

Yet, when I tamed him, sat astride his back.
Feeling his long stroke heart heat deep and slow.
Showed him the open road and wound him on,
Yes – when I named him, could I let him go?

Once he enslaved me, there was no release.
Addictive he lives within me, never leaves.
Part of me – heart of me – holds him for all time.
Legend lives far beyond technologies.

Tom

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the committee or its members. Although the greatest care is taken in compiling this newsletter the editor takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions

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Deadline is the 20th of each month