



# CRANKING



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## The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

### From The Sump

I really cannot believe how fast these months are passing us by, this year really has shot past me since taking up editorship of Cranking back in March. It is so true, the older you get, the faster time goes by...

With a year that started off so well, what with both Crank-Ups at Gordons and then promised so much....and then subsequently delivered so little, we now look forward to 2021, where hopefully the eagerly-awaited vaccines will have arrived in full force and many of us will be able to take the vaccine – and then hopefully we may get back to some sort of normality by mid-year with a bit of luck. Only time will tell.

Along with others, I took part in the recent virtual Club Presentation which was delivered by Zoom, a really simple and easy to use video sharing application, where Club member Geoff Wallis took us on an entertaining journey with the restoration of his Blackstone engine – it was really well presented and was a very enjoyable couple of hours – due thanks to Ted for organising it and to Geoff for providing some really good content.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and safe Christmas and I look forward to meeting up with many of you hopefully in the spring of next year.

Till next month.....Take care, stay safe, *David*

### MESSAGE FROM WSEC CLUB PRESIDENT

Greetings to all on what is nearly the end of a very unusual year. We have missed meeting everyone this year.

In the meantime, I have managed to restore two pumps I found in the back of my shed!

Hopefully we can get to rally them next year – fingers crossed.

We wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New year

Looking forward to seeing you all again – *Roger Pike, Club President & Linda*

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Hello everyone....well here we are coming towards the end of yet another year and what a year it has been with no shows, no rallies and above all not being able to hold our meetings at the Old Down Inn. Like all of you I just hope that we can all have a much better year in 2021.

As you may have seen in the last newsletter it has been suggested that the Wessex Stationary Engine Club makes a donation to the Children's Hospice South West, it was to be a sum of £300. I have spoken to the clubs treasurer and at this time Caroline feels that this sum is far too high for us to pay out and therefore will only sanction the sum of one hundred pounds. Caroline has pointed out to me that the club has had no income for the last two years and with ongoing expenditure such as insurance, bills for storage, cost of newsletter, this now is a great deal less than when it was with our former printers thanks to David but we still have bills to pay and it may be that we will have no income from a rally this coming year. I very much hope that this will not be the case and I know that all the members of the rally committee will do their utmost to run a show in 2021. If this happens and a profit is made the Wessex Stationary Engine Club will make another donation to the Children's Hospice South West.

Now we must remember that Caroline was elected as club treasurer and that is her responsibility to look after the clubs finances, therefore I can only recommend that we accept her recommendations, let us all hope that we can, in the not too distant future, we can make a further donation to the Hospice.

If any kind members would like to make a donation to be added to the club's donation, please send it to me at 21, Rutland Crescent, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. BA14 ONX, please make cheques payable to either the Wessex Stationary Engine Club Ltd, or the Children's Hospice South West, and we will forward them to the hospice, I have already been promised several donations and may I say a very big thank you to those kind members.

Now on to another subject, I have had some members speaking to me with their concerns in the possible loss of our hobby due to this Government's decision to ban the use of petrol. Please, remember this will not happen for quite a number of years but now is the time to start the fight to keep alive the proud heritage of this country, With the banning of fossil fuels this could be the end of all preserved railways, the loss of all our beloved vintage cars, commercials, motor cycles, military Vehicles and even steam traction engines. I must tell you all that over the last Year have written three letters to my MP, plus phone calls, my letters have been passed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, The Rt. Hon George Eustice MP (George Useless would be nearer the mark!!) I have been trying for eleven months to get a reply, if I had run my little business as this Government runs its affairs I would have been bankrupt in a very short time. I have also written to our Prime Minister on the same subject, the introduction of electric vehicle vehicles and the burning of fossil fuels and the possible destruction of our once great heritage. If we don't all fight I fear that we will lose these things we in the preservation movement love so much. So why not write to your MP or even our nice Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson Prime Minister 10, Downing Street, London. SW1A 2AA, or the secretary of state For the Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Noble House, 17, Smith Square, London. SW1P 3JR.

Now do we want to see all the preserved vehicles put into museums, well that won't work for if people cannot see them working they will not go to see them in a museum as they stand idle and rot away, The young people of this country will be robbed of their heritage. There are seven hundred thousand vintage and veteran vehicles registered with the DVLA and many more under restoration and on SORN, will they all end up in scrap yards? They will if we do not stand together and fight for our rights. Remember the Government is your servant not the other way around, as they would like it to be! I appeal to everyone to join one of the large preservation Movements such as the Traction Engine Trust, The Historic Vehicle Preservation Society, the Vintage Motor Cycle Club, The National Tractor & Engine Club, for the louder our voice is, the stronger we are and why should we be forced to give up what many of us have worked a life time to save and preserve. I agree that the planet is in a right state but it is not caused by us running old engines for a few hours at a weekend, we do not get told by our Government that the building of one electric car makes more pollution than me driving my 2.3L diesel for my whole life time, that is a fact and there is much more we have just bored a hole in Cornwall over 500m deep to find Lithium, there came a great cheer we found enough to keep us going for years and years, then they told us the truth.

We have not got the science to extract the Lithium from the brine water it is held in, I wonder how much pollution the drilling produced? I do have many more facts concerning the production of electric vehicles but I won't bore you with them now, maybe next month....just to give you all something to study in the new year. Through the good offices of our young Ted, the Club ran an evening event on Zoom, I have been told this was very good and certainly a success, I could not join in due to lock down and me not connected to the internet. So thanks must go to all those that took part and to Geoff Wallis for his presentation on the restoration of his Blackstone engine. Let us all hope that with the news of a vaccine going to be rolled out in the very near future, I hear that may start within the next fourteen days I keep my fingers crossed.

This may mean we get back to something near normal for 2021 and if so it will mean, with luck, we can once again run crank ups and above all our Semington Rally, well let us hope so, plus hopefully getting back to our meetings at the Old Down Inn.

I had better end now one last thing and that is to wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year and I look forward to meeting with many of you In the New Year.

Once more till then – keep safe, keep well. *Eric Gay – WSEC Chairman*

## **GET WELL WISHES**

Roger Pike, our Club President and lifelong Committee member has been under the weather of late, although Linda says he won't slow down! I'm sure you will join me in sending him our best wishes for a speedy and full recovery.

Another stalwart of WSEC and great supporter of our events, Christine Rogers, has also been unwell recently, we would like to send our best wishes to her too. *Herb Gane*

## MARKETPLACE

*Please note all Sales and Wanted adverts will stay in for 3 months unless you tell me otherwise!*

### WANTED

Does anybody have an original Petter 'M' water tank stand or an EXACT replica? It should be approximately 19 inches square by 7 1/2 inches tall. I only require dimensions to build one for my engine.

Any help would be gratefully received - Gerald Atherton 01934 852670.

### FREE

A Motovario heavy duty foot mounted gearbox with pulley and shaft adaptors. Ratio is 5.5:1 and it is bi-directional. Almost as new condition. FREE to whoever collects it from Bath. Ring Graham on 01225 314128

### SERVICES

Amanco igniters, checked over & rebuilt, RS1 magnetos, checked new condensers fitted if needed. Good RS1 magneto cases if any are corroded etc now with enforced lockdown is the time to let me have anything that needs attention, rather than finding something is not working at a rally, sometime! Not too far away.

Kerwin Harris 30 Hillcrest Avenue, Truro, Cornwall TR1 3NE Tel – 01872 273388

## ANOTHER LOCKDOWN, ANOTHER ENGINE – BLACKSTONE - Part 1

As some of you may be aware, I have a fairly tired looking hot bulb Blackstone on a trailer. After many hours of discussion, the decision was made to remove the engine and put it on a trolley, it is at this point the problems began. How do you lift a tonne of Blackstone? Thank you very much Gordon, easy work with a tractor! Where do you get a trolley from? Make one!



We decided upon a ladder chassis made out of 4" channel, 1/4" thick. The ladder chassis is 8' long and 20" wide, the beam axles are 3.5" box with 1 5/8" stub axles. We were going to need some substantial wheels to take the weight and I found a blacksmith in Ledbury called Alex Wilkins who makes steel wheels to order.

I decided on 28" wheels at the back and 24" wheels at the front, this gave a 4" difference in height which is used for the steering turntable.

The chassis was laid out on the floor and carefully shimmed before it was welded, after some careful tacking and final straightening the chassis was welded up. The next thing to do was the axles, we put closing plates onto the box section and welded on the stub axles. Once we had made up one beam axle it was then welded to the back of the chassis. The steering turntable was made from two 6" round plates one of which was welded to the front of the chassis on the first crossmember with a hole drilled all the way through. The second plate had two uprights welded to it so it would fit over the beam axle allowing

it to articulate (similar to a tractor). The two steering plates were bolted together and with many, many smiles we lifted it up and slid the four wheels onto their axles, everything fitted very nicely, what a relief!

How to place the Blackstone exactly in the right position was my next concern.....to be continued! *Pete Gear*

## Looking Back - Part 5

Looking back to some of the smaller organised venues our Club visited many years ago - a nice interesting day out was at Westonzoyland Pumping Station near Bridgwater. Built in the mid 1800s, the Station helped to drain excess water from the Somerset levels allowing the lands agriculture to continue and not be flooded. The excess water was pumped into the nearby river Parrett by an 1860 Easton & Amos steam powered Engine which was up and running on our visit and had been restored to immaculate condition.



The Pumping Station Operators Cottage was open for us to view all fitted out with period furnishings which gave us a view as to how life was over 100 years ago. A small narrow-gauge Railway ran parallel to the long entrance road and I had to smile at an outside W C that had subsided towards the Cottage leaving its users an uneasy feeling of leaning to the right when seated! I am sure all who attended our Club visit found it most enjoyable.

Another nice visit we made was only 10 miles away from our Club headquarters; it was to the City of Bath and JB Bowlers Museum. Founded in 1872 Mr Bowler described himself as an Engineer, gas Fitter, Locksmith and Bell Hanger, also adjoining his works was a Mineral Factory run by his daughters making fizzy drinks including Bath Punch, Hot Tom, & Cherry Ciderette. Our Guide told us they also filled and pressurized Soda Siphons one of which exploded and injured one of his Daughters and to prevent this happening again a metal wire stocking was invented to fit around the glass bottle. Our tour of the museum took us to a gallery that looked down on a Victorian workshop which was all powered by line shafts and belting. Our tour then

finished walking through the old offices, furnished with beautiful oak chairs and desks together with an array of gas lights to help see in the hours of darkness. *Robin*

## MOTORCYCLE SECTION

'Twas the night before Christmas, and down in the shed, the bikes shared the magic of dreams in their heads....

They'd dozed through the Autumn, no rallies or shows, they'd not been neglected, but progress had slowed...

'Old Velo' was look out and scanning the skies, his Wish List was headed with "Clutch plates, times five".

A note on the bench by the 500 Manx, read "Full Restoration, bring everything, Thanks."

Down in the corner, but still in the game, the shadowy form of the 'Frame with no name'...Believed to be Triumph or old BSA, excitedly waiting for Santa to say.....A clatter of hooves, and a "Whoa Rudolph, Whoa." A jingle of bells, and a flurry of snow. The thumping of parcels, a shout of delight.

MERRY CHRISTMAS to All, and to All a Good Night." *Liz Harrison*

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 for copy submissions is always 20<sup>th</sup> of the month**