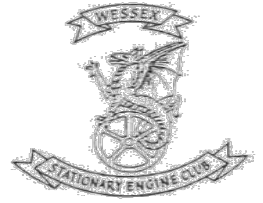


CRANKING



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42 Years of Publication

October 2020

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter From The Sump

I write my piece this month with considerable sadness, noting the loss of two members of WSEC - please see the articles below.

Looking forward into 2021, the season seems to be stalling before it has even started, what with the early cancellation of the Mells Daffodil Festival, sadly, I fear this is only the beginning of another absolutely disastrous Show and Rally Season.

Let's hope things do indeed settle down a little over the next couple of months and we might be able to gather sensibly one last time this year at Whaddon Lane for the Mince Pie Crank-up, but we mustn't get our hopes up. I think 2021 might be the year of small invite-only private crank-ups, limited to small numbers, suitably spaced apart. The fumes from some of our engines would do a pretty good job of neutralising any bugs in the air I think!!!!

60 or so days to go until Christmas, with little celebration and festivities to look forward to, reminds us of how we perhaps took things for granted less than twelve months ago, when we could go where we wanted, with whoever we wanted and do what we wanted. How times change.

Anyway, enough of this negativity, let's all think of the better times ahead of us on those warm sunny summer days, proudly displaying those engines and exhibits we all enjoy.

Take care, stay safe, *David*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I start this report with the sad news that long-standing Club member and friend to many of us John Allen passed away a few days ago. What makes it very sad is we were together at the Wedmore Crank Up only on the 12th of September where he and I tried our best to get a reluctant Amanco to run. I know that all who knew John along with the Committee will want to express their sincere condolences to Shirley, all of John's relations and friends.

Now with the Covid 19 still raging and many more cases in the West Country I beg you all to take great care, I do not want any more sad news to report, already one of the rally committee have fallen foul of this wicked illness and does not know how they managed to become infected, so all of you and to my many friends in the WSEC please take care, stay safe, stay well.

With the year coming towards an end we can only look forward to 2021 in hope that things will return to some form of normality, we desperately want to run the Semington Rally, but as things are at this present time, organising this event may have to be a last minute rush unless by some miracle we find an answer to this virus.

On to a happier subject I have owned a small side shaft open crank fractional horsepower engine for a long time, spending countless hours working on it and trying to get it to run. It was built in the late twenties/early thirties, new piston rings, a remade inlet valve cage repair to inlet and exhaust valve cams, the fitting of electronic ignition system and after all of this and much more it would not keep running and was a right pain to start. So, what do I do next? I had done everything except change the carburettor, so I took a look in the store cupboard and pulled out a Villiers carburettor, bigger than the original so I made a new induction tract and fitted the new bit. It was a lash up but I wanted to see if it made a difference. Switch on ignition, turn on petrol (bit of a leak) but I wanted to try it, so I closed the choke, swung the handle.....not a pop. Open the choke, swung the handle - engine running! Moral of the story.....never give up.

Now over the last month two lovely club members have helped me; one by sending me a small ammeter I was in need of and the other sending me something to drive from my Alamo – thank you both very much indeed.

Now I have got some more work to do, well, it keeps the mind active and helps keep the hand cleaner company in business plus it might save me doing the washing up now and again, but with having to stay home I am getting a real expert at the washing up, but I would be better off out in the workshop.

Well that's another report done, I just hope that it will not be long before I can write some good news for you all and we can meet up and get back to doing the things we like most; go to shows, rallies, have our club meetings and get back all together.

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

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that I hear and also looking at the Club Website to see that Club Member **John Allen** from Coleford has passed away. John's Daughter Debbie said her Dad had a full and active life and the events that he attended made his life much richer. Endorsing Debbie's words, it was always a pleasure to be parked up by him at rallies, John was a popular Club Member and will be missed by all who knew him, our condolences go out to Shirley and John's family at this very sad time. *Robin*

FRANCES ARMSTRONG

It is with great sadness that I have to report that I have just been told of the passing of Frances Armstrong, Frances left us in August; it was Linda Pike that broke the sad news to me.

All of you who remember Rob and Frances will I am sure be sad to learn of her death. They were both great supporters of the Wessex Stationary Engine Club and in times past always attended our meetings at The Old Down Inn. Rob gave us talks on his life as an explosive expert, I am sure that you will remember his talk concerning the submarine and the removal of the torpedo.

Frances had her own hobby, this was making teddy bears and other soft toys but her speciality was her teddies, and for all the years we have spent running the rally at Semington, I always got a phone call "Come and get your teddy for the rally, Eric!" so I would take a trip to Winsley and collect the most beautiful bear, some we added to the raffle, some were auctioned. Frances fought bravely against her illness for the last few years but gave up the fight in August. I am told that all her teddies went to charity – over 600 in total.

I know that all of you who knew Frances would want me to pass on our heartfelt condolences to her friends and family at this sad time. *Eric*

FUTURE MEETINGS

Covid 19 has caused a great many changes in everyday life, and for us it has meant the loss of our annual show and most of our crank-ups. It has also caused us to lose our monthly meetings, but this can be looked upon as an opportunity rather than a problem, and we are taking up the challenge. Our November 30th meeting, which was scheduled to be a quiz night at the Old Down Inn, will now be held online through the medium of "Zoom", and will include a presentation on restoration subjects by member Geoff Wallis. The planned start time will be 8pm as usual, and as a bonus you will be able to have a few beers without having to worry about driving home.

This will probably be new technology for many of you, as indeed it is for me, but it's very simple as long as you have a computer with a reasonable connection to the internet. If you have a webcam and headset you will be able to contribute to the conversation, but even without them you can still watch, listen and enjoy the evening. Prior to the event everyone who has supplied an email address will receive further details and a link to Zoom and you just follow the instructions to join the meeting. I hope that as many as possible will join in, and those who are not connected can maybe have a social evening with someone who is – suitably distanced of course! If you have the necessary equipment and would like to join in but haven't so far supplied an email address please let me have one ASAP to make sure you aren't left out.

We hope that the evening will be a success and Zoom meetings can eventually become a regular part of the club's activities; there is no immediate prospect of resuming our "Old Down" evenings so this might be the only way for us to stay in touch as a club. This technology will also allow members who live a long way from the Old Down to join in, have their say and enjoy the talks.

Unfortunately, we haven't found a way of including the raffle! *Ted Edwards, Hon Sec*

*Please use **secretary@wessexsec.org** to ensure we have your email address should you wish to take part*

MARKETPLACE

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

FOR SALE Brooks electric motor, 3HP@240v, 2800rpm in good working order £60 or would swap for something small for my 1 1/2hp Alamo to run (Not water pumps) 01225 754374 *Eric*

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

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.

A USEFUL BIT OF INFORMATION FROM THE BOTTOM OF A BOX!

A couple of months ago I bought some boxes of engine bits, these were brought home and placed in the corner of the garage until I found time to go through them and sort out what I had actually bought!

In one of the boxes was a nice brand new 18mm spark plug, a Champion 7, still in its original box and wrappings. When I opened the box there was a note inside from the manufacturer which read "Important - the spark gap on this plug is set at 0.022" which is the correct setting for coil ignition; but when used with magneto please set at 0.018".

I'm sure that most people don't realise that magneto plug settings should be smaller than coil ignition, but here it is, straight from the manufacturer.

NOT DESIGNED FOR INDOOR USE!

How many people tinker with running engines in a garage or workshop? At least one, that's me. If it's cold or has been raining recently, can't be bothered to wheel them outside....

Carbon monoxide? Yes I know about that but the bottom of the door where the car would come in (if it could!!) you can feel a gale blowing through it, at least an inch gap, leaves coming through.....I can feel a decent draught. I do jam the other door wide open with an unidentified lump of rusty old iron, so it's fine!

So what is the point to this? Well I bought a carbon monoxide monitor recently, it gives a digital readout in parts per million (ppm) and yes, a horrible noise when the alarm itself is triggered.

I thought I'd try it out in the engine shed, so I stuck it to the wall at face height. I set the doors in the usual positions and started a Fowler 1 1/2 hp and a Lister 3 hp. I sat and waited for numbers to go round Dangerous? Yes, probably!

With my normal settings for ventilation it only took 10 or 15 seconds to get to 15 ppm, rising after a minute to 40ppm where it levelled out. On one really still day I got a reading of 60ppm before noticing and shutting everything down. From the manual for the meter, the healthy adult maximum continuous exposure is 35 ppm in any eight-hour period, so from my my basic calculations, it takes around 200 ppm to make you quite ill, but I would think exposure limits in today's modern society would be much lower.

So no such thing as well no harm done, it's only a five minute run.....I know those doors are both wide open. However cold and wet outside it is, relying upon draughts or even partially open doors is not enough!

CLUB DONATION

It was just a few days ago that I received a letter from the Alzheimer's Society, thanking the Club for the wonderful donation of £170 raised at Sweets Museum and Tea Rooms at Wedmore, where we had a very successful Crank-up back in September.

This event was arranged by Herb & Wendy Gane and was a great success, thanks to all the kind members that helped Herb & Wendy raise this amount, may I say on behalf of Wendy & Herb – Thank you all so very much. *Eric*

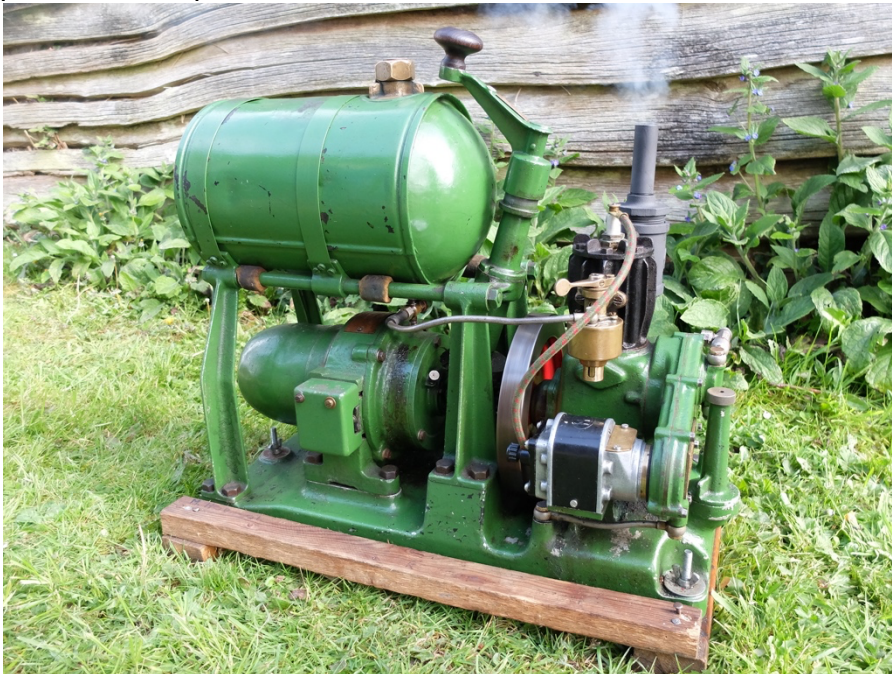
NANCE SAW MILL CRANK UP & MY BARR AND STROUD GENSET

A few times a year Keith Billington and other members of the KOVC get together and fire up John Fear's (sadly passed away a few years ago) old Ruston 8HRA, luckily they let us come down with an engine and spend part of a day listening to the thump of the HR while having a cup of tea and a slice of cake.

It always brings out a good range of engines, a bit of a pre-season test of some, for me it was a chance to try out my Barr and Stroud Sleeve Valve engine.

Barr and Stroud were well known for the Optic, Rangefinder and Steam indicators, following the end of the First World War they were looking for other avenues of income and ways to use their workshops.

Barr and Stroud bought licences from Wallace Glasglow to build The Burt-McCollum patent single sleeve valve engine between 1918 and 1926. A single sleeve rather than the two of the Knight patent, this single sleeve travels up-and-down and has a partial rotary motion, this improves oil distribution compared to the Knight patent and simplified the construction.



I was a bit worried about the running performance of this set being designed to run at 4000RPM at full load for 10 minutes, powering a Marconi Transmitter with a 50 minute break for listening on the receiver. This was to meet planned legislation, they were installed in one lifeboat per ten for passenger ship emergency communications and when run for 10mins every hour they have an endurance of 48hrs. It would seem the legislation never fully came in and the production was dropped, Barr and Stroud found other income by partnering with Austinlite by providing engines for their generator sets.

The Transmitter is powered by a 100VAC 800Hz 250W self-exciting alternator, sadly it is not kicking out much at present, but something to work on.

I was quite surprised at how quiet this engine is, I was expecting quite a raucous thing, but it produces quite a pleasant exhaust note and the lack of poppet valves means there is a lack of mechanical noise.

The low RPM it was running it was passing quite a bit of oil and could have been mistaken for a 2 stroke (I think on first look and me being the owner most people thought it was a Stuart) But the little Barr and Stroud is a 4 stroke.

All in all, I'm very pleased with the engine, it didn't get too hot and ran well for about 3 hours and was the cherry on the top of a nice morning. *Stephen Williams*

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

Contributions to: David Lacey, 8 Dyers Close, West Buckland, Wellington, Somerset. TA21 9JU or (preferably) by email editor@wessexsec.org

Deadline is the 20th of each month