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The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's monthly newsletter

From the Sump

As I sit here in mid December, it is raining outside & blowing half a gale with the rest of it promised for tomorrow! I can see from my window that the plastic tarp over one of the engines has torn in the battering wind & I'll need to go and rescue it before it gets water inside. Rust is our great enemy & we spend a lot of our time getting rid of it, preventing it, treating it or turning it into a more inert compound with Phosphoric acid – Naval Jelly or Jenolite. Strange to think, therefore, that we have created a whole civilization that depends upon rust for its very existence. It is iron oxide that coats our audio and video tapes, that records our information on hard disks in our computers. New developments mean that the day of the rust-based society is passing, but we've a while to go yet!

Early pistons were made of fine grain cast iron, more or less the same material that the cylinder was made from. Cast iron (CI) has a lot of carbon in its structure & this acts as a borderline lubricant when the going gets tough and the oil gets going. For instance, turning and cutting CI is usually done dry – and a right messy business it is too.

Looking at a cylinder liner that has seen extensive service reveals a smooth and highly polished surface, one that is shared by the ring faces. The piston itself should remain dull in colour & ideally never come in contact with the bore, being separated from it by an oil film. It is amazing how long both bore and piston will last in low stress conditions & if something can be done to ameliorate the pistons' rocking at top dead centre, the step at the top of the ring travel can be much reduced. The running in of piston & bore starts with a good deal of friction & I've known of reconditioned engines that would not turn on the starter because there was so much friction to overcome. Towing or belting to one that does go has started many an engine.

Only when the engine is neglected will oil dissipate & water creep in to start its corrosive work, but oxygen is required too. If the cylinder is sealed because the valves are shut, there is a plug in the head and the crankcase is sealed from both air and water, then corrosion will be slow and the resulting rust of fine particle structure. In such conditions, an engine might last a century without harm.

Moving the Metal

For sale

Lister D. Two near complete engines plus many spares - £100 ono. **Amanco** mag bracket & gear £60 ono. **Magnetos**, Lucas RS1, a/c, gwo £40 each ono. **EIC**, gwo £80 ono. **Blowlamp**, large USA made brass lamp & soldering iron £30. **Draper** 140 amp fan cooled welding plant, good order £40. **Grease gun**, old, iron & brass £5. **Brass oil can** by Eagle. Rare £150, no offers. **Well hand pump** as found £50 ono. **Old Glory** Magazines, large quantity, good condition £30. **Model boats**. An RAF rescue launch, plus another launch, good condition - £100 each. Tug, needs some work £50 ono. **Greenhouse**, 8x6, stripped & ready to move £45. **Kitchen scales** with brass weights £25. **Sewing machine**, shuttle bobbin, cased. Good condition £15 ono **Vauxhall Vectra**. Top of the range, ring for details.

For all the above ring Eric on 01225 754374.

WANTED - "Stationary Engine" Magazine. Now only missing 16, 17, 18, 19, 24-34, 36. Have early copies to swap! phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

Therefore, your final task in the workshop this year should be to ensure that all your engines are left with the carb dry of fuel & the petrol tank drained. If your petrol tap has a cork seal, take the tap off the tank & drop it into a jamjar with a drop of petrol and oil in it to preserve the cork wet through the winter. Next, take out the plug and squirt some oil around inside, turning the engine over several times to coat bore and piston. Replace the plug and bring the piston to top dead centre on the compression stroke, thus ensuring both valves are on their seats. Good practice with two strokes too as it closes off the ports & keeps the mice out! Finally, stuff an oily rag into the bottom of the bore on open crank engines, thus preventing rust from dulling the bore.

Well, I've had a really good time editing the newsletter this year and I hope you feel I've done a good job as I'll be standing again for the post at the AGM in February. Please vote for ME!!

A very merry Christmas to you and yours & I hope 2008 is cheerful & prosperous for you all.

Articles, cartoons, photos etc are always very welcome – this is not a one-man band, but an expression of all our thoughts and experience. Submissions can be handwritten, (if brief), typed or word-processed - it is the content we're after, not the grammar or spelling, so please don't feel your efforts will be ignored. The editor reserves the right to change, edit, augment or lessen your

Deathless Prose and asks all to note that opinions expressed in this newsletter may or may not represent club policy
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