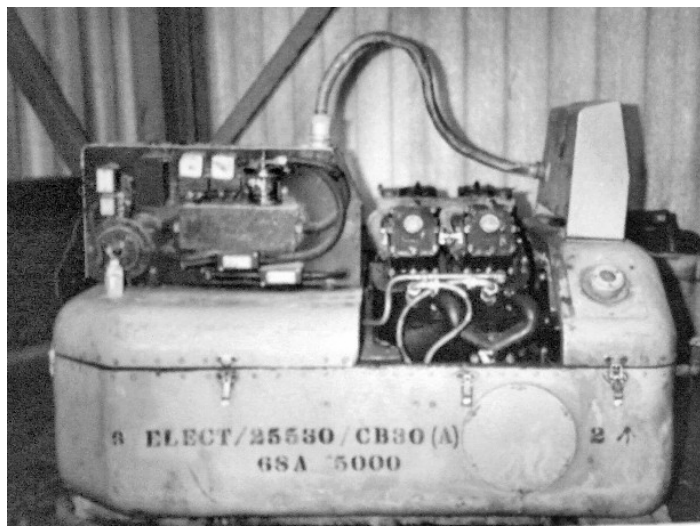


Featured Engine No.6

The Editor's ABC "Bee" Vee Four

Some readers might recall that I am somewhat struck (OK, bowled over) by the engines and generators that ABC (All British engine Company) made under the management of Granville Bradshaw. Designed as aero auxiliary power units (APU's), they are always complex, full of innovative ideas and built like expensive watches. The Good Lord alone now knows what they cost to build and they are far from numerous now, specialised beasts that they were in their heyday.

The darkest hours of the soul can be lit by the unlikely strokes of good fortune and my soul was lit last year by managing to buy an ABC "Bee" Mk 100 Vee four off E-bay. The auction closed at midnight on Tuesday and on Wednesday I was in Harpenden on business, so arranged to drive on the extra 65 miles to Peterborough where it lurked in the back of a lock up garage. The deal was done and so home to face the wife with yet another addition to my Iron Charges.

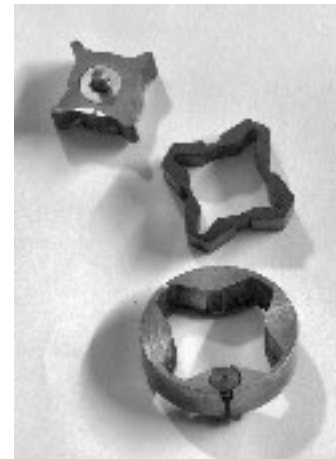


This engine was originally the beating heart of a power pod used as an APU on Blackburn Beverley's, the huge transport aircraft that lumbered about our skies in the Cold War years. Like an Egyptian tomb painting, it was not intended to be seen by human eye, living as it did inside a sealed aluminium box that bore a striking resemblance to a huge broadbean. What a waste, for it is a typical example of Mr Bradshaw's work and no stone has been left unturned in the quest for first class engineering, style and complexity. A 743cc OHV vee four, rated at a conservative 19 BHP at 3,900 RPM in order to drive a 200 amp 28 volt dynamo, does seem to me to be rather a lot of overkill - but it is so pretty I can just sit on a box and look at it!

Mine (s/n 24) is mechanically complete and still bolted firmly to the beautifully machined aluminium base designed for it. I've fitted a pair of appropriate wheels to the carrying handle extensions at the front, thus turning the base into a trolley. The unit has long been divested of its cowling and fan, generator and – worst of all – its pair of aero

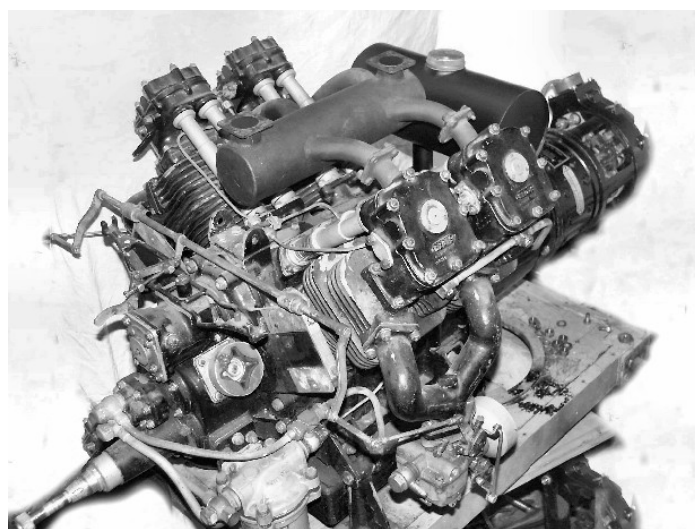
standard BTH MC2 magnetos. It took me a while to realise that each magneto fired the plugs on one side of the bank, NOT either side of the vee. So for a while I was looking for not one but two 90o BTH magnetos, a mission doomed to failure.

Looking at a schematic one day drew me to the revelation that I was actually looking for two flat twin magnetos. A search of my shelves revealed one immediately & another was found at Sodbury the next time I was there. They are driven by a beautiful vernier coupling allowing the most sensitive adjustment to the ignition timing. Of course, the driven flanges went with the magnetos and I spent some hours with plastic metal casting up a couple of them and trapping a bolt in their centre so they screw direct onto the mag armature.



Some time previous to finding this engine, I bought a 24 Volt generator, expecting to drive it off quite another engine. To my surprise, it bolts directly to the engine's ancillary gearbox, leaving me the task of finding – or causing to be made – the very expensive bevel gear that would drive it.

The next task is to arrange cooling for the beast. Although I'm unlikely to run it at its design speed of 3,900 RPM, it will still need a fairly strong air blast from below the cylinders to keep it tepid. I've looked at 12 Volt computer fans, ducted Land Rover electric fans and a range of other possible solutions, but nothing yet commends itself to me.



The silencer is set in the vee, the carbs hang beneath

A fellow contributor to that excellent Newsgroup uk.rec.engines.stationary milled me up a very nice starting handle, but as is often the case in the real world, other projects come along, but I'm still working on it – perhaps next year

Calendar of Events for 2007

July 21st Event. Camerton Village Day. Engines required. Phone Kim Siddorn on 0117 964 6818

July 30th Event. Evening Crank Up, Court Hotel, Chilcompton.

Aug 5th SUNDAY ONLY. Event. Our Annual Rally at Haynes Motor Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil.

Aug 11/12th Event. Royal Berkshire Steam Rally. Engines wanted. Phone 01494 717071

Aug 18th Event. Writhlington Flower Show. Engines required. Phone Mrs H. Gulliford 01761 420417

Aug 20th Club night. No meeting this month.

Sep 9th Event. Crank up at Nunney Catch. *Please donate raffle prizes in aid of the BABE appeal.*

Sept 8/9th Event. UTVV Club Working Weekend at Stockbridge. Entry forms, Alan Vickery 01256 703169

Sep 24th Club night. A digital presentation on a Vintage Theme. Speaker:- Colin Baker,

Oct 6th Skittles and supper evening at Butler & Tanner, Frome.

Oct 20th Event. Vintage Jumble - Cranmore station.

Oct 29th Club night. An illustrated talk on Narrow Gauge Railways in France and Austria. Speaker:- Roger F. Newman,

Nov 10th Event. Engine Jumble, Enstone Airfield, Oxfordshire. Off the B4022.

Nov 26th Club night. The Life of a Victorian Chimney Sweep. Speaker:- John Sanson

Dec 2nd Event. Crank Up at Nunney Catch

Dec 27th Event. Mince Pie crank up, Old Down Inn.

Chairman's Report

The April meeting at the Old Down Inn was slightly down on the usual numbers. Over half the committee were on holiday, Robin and Jackie, Kevin and Carol were in Canada and Tony and Diana in Weymouth. However, a good number of members were present to be entertained by our editor Kim giving a talk on how to turn an oak wood into a Saxon Hall. With lots of photos, his Power Point presentation was excellent. For a re-enactment club (*Regia Anglorum* – www.regia.org - ed) with no real experience of building anything, this was a brave venture. All the structural timber used was oak, most from within a mile of the site & all from within Kent. The shingles are hand cleft oak but came from near Chippenham! Some 16,000 are now in place at a cost of about £1 each and it is no wonder the project to date has cost in the region of £85,000. Kim is a really good orator who speaks without referring to notes and is well versed in his subject. All in all, it was a brilliant entertainment that was all the better for being delivered by one of our own members. On behalf of the club, thank you very much Kim. (When is your next talk?)

We had the usual raffle, which was well supported by the members present.

On Sunday the 29th April Eric Gay organised a coach trip for twenty six Wessex members to see

the late John Jefferies collection of engines at Crawley, Nr Gatwick Airport. Jenny Jefferies, John's widow, has an open day once a year for invited guests and don't hesitate if you ever get the chance to go and see this wonderful collection. This massive collection of engines and memorabilia has to be seen to be believed & is housed in buildings that once comprised a working farm. The hospitality that Jenny extended to us was brilliant with good food and drink available all day. It really was a super feast. On behalf of the WSEC I would like to thank Jenny for her hospitality - second to none! Also a big thank you to WSEC member Nigel Scorse for getting us invited and to Eric for organising the coach.

At the May meeting, we held the first EGM I can remember. It was to elect a Vice Chair & there were two nominations, Eric Gay winning from Anthea Feeney by three votes.

We went on to see photos from a number of members ranging from stationary engines, nostalgic pictures of club events twenty or more years ago – weren't we young? – to the recent visit to the Great Britain. Kim had a Power Point presentation of some amazing aircraft-linked photos & won the prize of the evening. Oliver Baker won the junior prize

The committee are revising the club's constitution to bring it up to date and are taking into account requests from our members. In due course each member will get a copy and we hope members will ratify this document at the next AGM.

27th Tatworth Mini Rally – Sunday June 3rd by Robin Lambert

I have been attending this event for several years now and it is always a "must" on my events calendar. A nicer location would be hard to find with the event set up on the village recreation field with stunning views all around. I still have trouble finding my way to *the* site, as passing through Chard always makes me think I have made a wrong turn as I make my way through its bent streets. This year, if I had taken a wrong turning, two more *Wessex* vehicles following me would have got lost *too*.

There is always a nice reception on entering the field a hand shake 'and thanks for coming' makes you feel welcome. The field pavilion was doing a roaring trade supplying cooked breakfasts, I saw David *Upton* waiting patiently for his plate full and he was in for a treat.

We took "Stuart" out for the day to see if he would like to generate a few volts which he duly did and performed well with the odd bit of smoke that you would expect to see from a 2 stroke, but we are fine tuning *this* as we get used to him, although on this occasion he was running on a mixture of petrol and *Diesel* that was given to me, which had been drained from a car's *Diesel* tank that was accidentally filled up with petrol by a lady driver (this isn't to say that chaps would make the same mistake, but this time it happened to be a lady!) I did take a few bits and pieces for sale and I said goodbye to my old 1.5hp

Petter 'M' which I have had for around 30 years. I don't believe that I have run it in the last 28, so it was time it had a new owner. I am pleased to know it's still local and look forward to seeing it out soon.

I didn't get around the engines as much as I would have liked to as talking seems to take up so much of the day, but what I did see was some real classics including Ed & John Thorne's large Hornsby on its huge original carriage. They had just started up and it was running very well, but John thought the exhaust was a bit on the noisy side and after some careful listening said to his Dad "we have got it running the wrong way". He then turned off the fuel supply slowing the engine right down and as the engine came onto compression, it bounced off and was then running the correct way. Easy!

Ed & Gloria Carp had their Ruston Homsby PR on display and Ed told me that he had taken it to the Bath & West Show and the torrential rain had got inside it's magneto and caused a few problems. He duly drained the water out and it was back up and running again. At the end of the enclosure, Mike Snook had his large Powell and in the pen opposite him was David Upton with his nicely restored 5hp Blackstone. It is always worth watching David load this one into his 'stretched' transit with his electric winch screaming it always reminds me of a whale swallowing a dolphin.

The usual car boot and stalls were present and my bargain was ten candle shaped light bulbs for a quid. I could have had flickering ones if I had wanted, but felt our front room would be like sitting in an old cinema watching a silent movie. The weather was kind to us and it stayed dry all day despite a dodgy forecast of rain coming up through the West, but it stopped at Exeter - what a bit of luck. An excellent day out and I am already looking forward to next year.

Happy Birthday to Mary Butler on 26th June & belated congrats to Martina & Paul Chant on their 7th wedding anniversary on 17th June.

Welcome to our new members. We hope you enjoy your membership & we look forward to seeing you at a rally or crank up very soon. Brian Coles - Wookey, Pete Gear - Trowbridge, Keith Shepherd - Warminster, & M.White of Calshot Nr Southampton.

Engines Wanted

7th July (Saturday) at 1.00pm. Engines are requested at a garden fete at Burrington House, Burrington Village.
Please phone Brian Read on 01934 852766

21st July (Saturday) Engines wanted at the Camerton Village Day. Please try to attend this one day event. They are donating £50 to the BABE appeal on our behalf, so let's have a good turn out!
Please phone Kim Siddorn on 0117 964 6818

A collection of Prince of Darkness jokes

- The Lucas motto: "Get home before dark."
- Lucas denies having invented darkness. But they still claim "sudden, unexpected darkness"
- Lucas - inventor of the first intermittent wiper.
- Lucas - inventor of the self-dimming headlamp.
- The three-position Lucas switch - DIM, FLICKER and OFF. The other three switch settings - SMOKE, SMOLDER and IGNITE.
- The original anti-theft devices - Lucas products.
- "I've had a Lucas pacemaker for years and have never experienced any prob..."
- If Lucas made guns, wars would not start either.
- It's not true that Lucas, in 1947, tried to get Parliament to repeal Ohm's Law. They withdrew their efforts when they met too much resistance.
- A Land Rover owner was asked how he could tell one switch from another at night, since they all look the same. He replied, "It doesn't matter which one you use, nothing happens!"
- Back in the '70s Lucas decided to diversify its product line and began manufacturing vacuum cleaners. It was the only product they offered which didn't suck.
- Quality Assurance phoned and advised the Engineering guy that they had trouble with his design shorting out. So he made the wires longer.
- Why do the English drink warm beer? Lucas made the refrigerators, too.
- Alexander Graham Bell invented the Telephone.
- Thomas Edison invented the Light Bulb.
- Joseph Lucas invented the Short Circuit.
- Recommended procedure before taking on a repair of Lucas equipment: check the position of the stars, kill a chicken and walk three times sunwise around your car chanting: "Oh mighty Prince of Darkness protect your unworthy servant."
- Lucas systems actually uses AC current; it just has a random frequency.

Stop Press News

As we go to press, we hear third hand that people exhibiting engines at Kemble MUST have £5M TPL insurance. Those unable to provide proof of this will be turned away at the gate.

Lost at the Mells Daffodil Rally,

Four cast aluminium wheels. They may have been left behind accidentally. If you can help, please phone Robin on 01373 463526