

Featured Engine No. 3 Eric Brain's 3hp Victoria

" I always fancied one of those!" How often have we heard those words? In my case, having a great interest in Victoria engines and already owning a late example of a 5hp engine, I had always thought that the Bristol-made 3hp had better proportions so I resolved to get one when the opportunity arose.

Someone told me of a 5hp near Devizes needing a new home; I already had a 5hp and did nothing about it. Moral so far – always go and look - as in the end it turned out to be a very early 3hp and was snapped up by another enthusiast, from whom I might add, it has changed hands a few times since. Later, I received information that there were some engines which might be for sale on a farm near Lulsgate Airport (Bristol International) among which were a couple of Victorias. I duly went to have a look and met the farmer and his wife who was a former antique dealer – not a good combination I must say to attempt a shrewd deal! The farmer showed me around; he obviously had once had a good interest in Victorias and there were three in one barn along with a Petter M type stood outside on a barrel, a rusty Crossley and I believe a Lister L type. He also showed me another barn containing a couple of vintage motorcycles – Nortons I seem to remember.

Back to the Victorias. One was green and was or had been a 5hp kerosene engine, another 5hp was covered with old sacking, had a rusty silencer held together with wire wound around and finally – a 3hp in quite restorable condition – not good ! - but restorable. Ignoring my interest in the 3hp, he commenced to try and start the better of the two 5hps. Cranking madly, there was a loud "bang" and bits of rusty silencer and wire flew across the barn. We discussed the 3hp and he hesitatingly suggested that when he was ready, he would ring or I could ring him to name a price and possibly collect it. Subsequently this I did and he said "Yes, come on over now". I hitched up the trailer and set off. On arrival he was nowhere to be seen but his good lady said he was "up across the ground somewhere". I waited and waited. In the end and three cups of tea later, I gave up and departed home disappointed. Some months later I heard that he had thrown a rope over the beam in the barn where the Nortons were and despatched himself.....

Well, one doesn't like to pursue in these circumstances until a reasonable time elapses but soon after, Ivor Yeo explained that he had bought some engines through a farmer-friend of the widow, among which were some Victorias. One, the better of the two 5hps, went to someone near Bristol, the other to Surrey, and Ivor was to keep and restore the 3hp. Ivor made a good job of the engine; he mounted it on a trolley, keeping the carrying frame original and neatly lined it out. He rallied it a couple of times and then moved on to another project. I believe he was concerned about one of the main hazards of an

engine designed in the first ten years of the 20th century, namely oil leaks or rather "oil-spray " which seems endemic in Victorias especially the 3hp size.

Some time later, a friend told me that Ivor was in the process of selling a few engines including the Victoria and that it was destined to go to an enthusiast in Somerset – the price was even mentioned. A quick word with Ivor confirmed this and fortunately within days I met this proposed purchaser at a rally; he had heard that I wanted the engine and in the true spirit of enginemen came up to me and said " If you want it - its more your sort of thing than mine" – see Ivor and if he agrees, have it at the price I offered." Deal done. I trailered it home, I rallied it a few times and sure enough it leaked oil. Victorias have no gaskets, few machined faces either. Early engines had breathers, they also had drip feed oilers – this one being a very late one (not too many serial no's away from my 5hp) had neither. I solved the problem partly but don't tell anyone! by replicating the breather of the earlier engine in the side of the crankcase in the correct position.

One fine sunny summers Sunday, and after the Bosch magneto had been playing up a bit, I set the engine on my back lawn under the tree and attempted retiming from first principles. My immediate neighbour's wife and two teenage daughters were I knew, sunbathing on their lawn on the other side of my garage. It was often fun to "accidentally" misdirect the hose when washing the car causing squeals and much merriment. My wife was washing her hair in the bath room overlooking the back garden.

I attempted to start the engine. I swung it again, no joy. I bet you know the feeling! My neighbours on the other side decided that enough was enough and since to them, Sunday was "a day of rest", took themselves off for a walk.

After another adjustment, another swing and....BANG!! A blinding blue flash at eye level – and when I reopened my eyes which had involuntarily shut, the smoke was clearing but.....where was the silencer????

The bathroom window opened – "What the b....y hell was that" ? Ann shouted. My neighbour appeared , adjusting the top of, I remember, a blue bikini since she had jumped up so fast in fright that it had become detached – if it wasn't already. The girls had run into the house.....

"Where is it I said?" I had not heard the silencer land and assumed it was up in the branches of the tree – a very large tree. No one else had seen



or heard it fall either but all I had was a smoking stub of pipe. We all discussed the problem – and I might add – the bikini!!!. Some minutes elapsed and another neighbour two doors along had seen something fall onto his lawn, narrowly missing the other two who were passing for their Sunday stroll and to escape the activity. He appeared on my drive. "Is this yours Eric" he asked holding the still- smoking oily black silencer. It had cleared two houses!

After making a new replica silencer, during which time the saga was related to Ivor Yeo, the engine was retired to become a static exhibit in my collection. My singed eyebrows meanwhile, have regrown – several times.

By the way, Ivor could only say "Don't tell Sylvia, the silencer top was made from a favourite kettle of hers, the dome was just the right shape, she often wondered where it had gone."

She knows now!!!!

Not Designed For Indoor Use

By
Ken J. Russell.

How many people tinker with running engines in a garage, let's say at least one, me. Can't be bothered to wheel them outside, its been cold recently etc. etc. - carbon monoxide ? Yes, I know about that, but the bottom of the door where the car would come in (if it could!) has a gale blowing through at least an inch gap, leaves come through, I can feel a draught, and I do jam the other door open a foot or so with an unidentified old bit of iron.

So what point to this? Well, I bought a carbon monoxide monitor, gives a digital readout in parts per million (ppm), I tried it first on the car exhaust to give confidence that all is working - yes 'orrible noise as the alarm tripped, then stuck it on the wall. Then over the next few days I jammed the door in the normal spot and started a Fowler 1.5 hp and a Lister 3 hp, sat and waited for the numbers to go round. Dangerous ? probably.

With my normal 'settings' for ventilation, it only took 10 or 15 seconds to get to (rough averages) 15ppm, rising after a minute 40ppm where it levelled out. On one really still day I got a reading of 60ppm something before noticing and shut everything down. From the manual for the meter 'In a healthy adult maximum continuous exposure is 35ppm in any 8 hour period'. It takes 200 to make you ill.

So, no such thing as "Well, no harm it's only a five minute run", and now those doors are both wide open however cold - relying on draughts or even partially open doors is not enough.

I understand that a Lister D was being run in a confined space in Gloucestershire last year and killed its owner by CO poisoning - Ed

Calendar of Events for 2007

- Apr 9th Event.** Easter Monday. Mells Daffodil Rally
- April 14th Event.** Sodbury Sort Out, Newbury show ground. M4/A34 Cheiveley.
- Apr 21st Event.** Engine Jumble, Enstone Airfield, Oxfordshire. Off the B4022.
- Apr 22nd Event.** Spring Crank Up - Nunney Catch
- Apr 30th Club night.** Kim Siddorn on "Tree murdering – how to build a Saxon Hall."
- May 6th Club trip** – Venue to be announced
- May 21st Club night.** Members Evening:- Bring along ten photo's or slides on any subject. There will be a prize for the best effort.
- Jun 6th Event.** D-Day evening crankup, Old Down.
- June 9th/10th Event.** Wiltshire Agricultural Preservation Group steam & vintage rally, Rainscombe park, Oare nr Marlborough. Stationary engines entries invited. Phone Graham on 07843 583855 or raymondeverlong@blueyonder.co.uk
- June 15/17th Event.** Lister-Tyndale Rally, Berkeley Castle. Details, 01453 546024
- Jun. 25th Club night.** Julian Wood. An illustrated talk on Stirling engines.
- July 1st Event.** Bristol & SGSEC Club Rally.
- Jul 30th Event.** Evening Crank Up, Court Hotel, Chilcompton.
- Aug 5th SUNDAY ONLY. Event.** Our Annual Rally at Haynes Motor Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil.
- Aug 20th Club night.** No meeting this month.
- Sep 2nd Event.** Crank up, Camerton Village Field In aid of the Babe Appeal.
- 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.
- ALL THE ABOVE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO ALTERATION.

Social news

Happy birthdays to our members **Fred Biggs** on 16th April, **Tony Davis** on 29th April, **Eric Gay** on 28th of March, and to Ex pat Wessex member **Philip Thornton-Evison** who celebrates a Significant Birthday on March 22nd. Happy birthday to them all.

Especial mention must go to **Henry Baker** who becomes a teenager on 23rd March

Christmas competition winners were Christine & Don Rogers & our congratulations to them both.

AGM - Chairman's Report

By Brian Baker

After attending 12 AGM'S since I was elected chairman, I thought this year's AGM would follow the same pattern as the previous years, how wrong could I have been? This years AGM was complete chaos, it was hi-jacked by members who tried to introduce a secret ballot to elect the officers of the club instead of the show of hands that we have used for the last thirty years. This topic had been discussed two weeks previous at the committee meeting and voted on. The secret ballot idea was voted out, two votes for and five against, therefore this subject should not have been raised again at the AGM. The argument that followed was allowed to continue out of control by the President who was chairing the meeting. I intervened and tried to restore calm and let the meeting continue. When it came to electing a Vice-Chairman the President accepted Eric Gay's nomination but omitted to put it to the members present to vote him in, so the position is he is not Vice-Chairman at the moment. As Chairman of the WSEC I intend to hold an Extra Ordinary AGM at the May meeting at the Old Down Inn on May 21st. this will only take about 15 minutes to elect a Vice-Chairman in. If any member wishes to put in a nomination for the Vice-Chairman's position will they please submit it to Arthur Smith the secretary 21 days before the meeting.

Restoring an Apple Top – part three

By

Eric Gay

After the flywheels – which is where I left off last month - it was the turn of the base tank. It didn't go well, lots of dirt & bits in the paint appearing from somewhere. I always clean my brushes out well as soon as I have finished with them then dry them and put them into a paper bag. *(I often slip an elastic band around the tip of the brush in order to stop the bristles from splaying out. It works a treat! - ed)* I always strain my paint into another and then use vending cups to paint from. This time, the paint was attacking the plastic of the cup which was flaking in tiny bits. I had to let the paint dry and start all over again over a clean undercoat. We can all make mistakes and this is one I shall not repeat. I still use vending cups for paint pots but from a different supplier. After this palaver, the base tank was coated with about nine coats of rust proofer, primer, undercoat and gloss!

The main block was next and this has turned out quite nicely. It had rust proofing, primer, undercoat & two coats of gloss, but I was still not satisfied with it & it needed two more coats of Tekaloid enamel until I was happy with the result.

With the engine's parts all restored, it was time to start on the trolley. With no access to lifting gear, I would need to build a trolley then assemble the engine onto it. I'm not that good with wood, but needs must! A good rummage through my stock

found the required wood which was cut to size, then drill the holes to hold everything together. I have a pillar drill and this was put to use to drill the holes, so please can anyone tell me why the holes start where I mark them but appear on the other face somewhere else? I said that wood and I don't get on very well and that's a fact.

I found a set of iron wheels, which were cleaned up, rust proofed and painted, front and rear axles were made up and welded. The front axle was made fully steerable with the wheels being able to pass right under the trolley. This makes it easy to park in my garage/workshop as space is very limited. I won't bore you any more with the details of building the trolley, but I know the next time I need wood cut, drilled or fitted together, I am going to call on a certain committee member at Frome!

I now fitted the base tank to the trolley and wonders of wonders it did line up with the holes I had already drilled, things were looking up, well, that was until it was time to fit the crank case to the base tank. I had fitted the crankshaft, bearing housings, connrod and piston. Oh dear, I cannot lift this lot on my own and having no one to help me it was on with the thinking cap. As most of you may know I am an electrician for my sins, (mothers, don't ever let your sons do anything so silly as becoming an electrician). I just happen to have a heavy duty line vice, a tool for pulling up overhead wiring, and is like a small winch fitted with a hand vice at one end. I fixed this to the metal roof truss of my garage, a sling was made up to hold the crank case and the wire rope from the line vice fitted to the sling. Two lengths of timber placed under the roof truss for extra support and

I was ready to lift the crankcase into place. Very slowly, the little winch was turned and the crank case lifted off the floor with little effort. The trolley was run under and the crank case lowered into place – sounds simple, but it took ages to set it all up but it worked very well. Please do take care when lifting heavy parts, it's all too easy to put yourself at risk. Next on went the flywheels, governors and magneto drive pinion, the longest job was refitting the drip feed oiler. I think this engine was returned to the factory at some time in its life, as it is dated 1920 but has oiling main bearings and a drip feed oiler. Greasers were standard fittings then & the drip feed oilers must have been fitted later. The oiler proved a right so-and-so to refit and get right because it is an apple top, the top of the oiler needle has to be cut off so that it can clear the apple and this makes it difficult to use and set. The oiler now fitted is a mixture of two oilers, a bit of a fiddle still, but better than Mr. Petters effort.

Now I like my engines to start without having to swing them time after time, so a good deal of time is spent getting the timing spot on, and as all Petter owners know this is easy enough on an M type. I always set up the mag on the bench before fitting to the engine, setting the points to 12thou. before fitting the magneto to the engine. When the timing marks

are in line the points will just free a thin bit of paper between them.

All this done, the fuel chamber refitted and all pipe work back in place, it was time to see that if, after many years the Petter would start. Fuel chamber primed, regulator opened one and half turns, the starting handle in place and swing the flywheel. Yes, folks, she started on the very first swing and ran like a dream - I was a happy man.

This is not quite the end of the story as I had an old 50 volt dynamo for the Petter to drive and this was restored and fitted without difficulty. The engine started easily enough the first time, but soon stopped. It proved hard to start again but did eventually go. Finally, I traced the problem to the shaft turning in the pinion, this was soon put to rights and the engine is again a first swing starter and looks quite good driving its generator.

Rallying in 2006 – part three

By
Eric Gay

We only had one more event in 2006 and this was the charity Rally at Berwick St John. I have said it before in the write up of the year, but if you have never been to this Bi-Annual event, make sure that you attend in 2008. I has a most friendly atmosphere and it is free to go in. This is how rallies were back when I started and believe me it has everthing, all the old trades, thatching, blacksmithing, stonewalling, woodworking with pole lathes and much more. The steam engine section is a great working area with rack saws, threshing, steam ploughing, showman's and heavy haulage engines. I was taking photographs of Earl Beaty, (a showman's engine belonging to Mr. Robert Coles, when a voice said well you've taken the sides and front, you'd had better get up on the engine and finish the job. I could not thank the lady with the engine enough this made my day for this engine is spectacular. As you can imagine, I didn't need to be asked twice! But this is how the whole show at Berwick is, friendly and happy - how it should be. I was told on two occasions that the show raised over £20,000 on Saturday alone for Cancer Research - if this is correct it is a marvelous achievement.

Oh dear, I have not said a word about the stationary engine line up, around eighty engines in all and very nice exhibits they were, we had taken the Amanco and Corn Mill for a change this year, and we had plenty of space and best of all we made some new friends in the engine world and with luck they may join the Wessex club.

With another good look round the rally on Sunday and running the engine, the day just flew by and all to soon it was time to pack up and head back to Trowbridge.

So another rallying year has come to an end and I hope that you have had a good and happy year visiting and exhibiting at shows you like to

attend. I know I have had a good year, now just to finish off I went to the Wiltshire Agricultural Preservation Group's annual ploughing match and stationary engine day on the first Sunday of October. Wessex member Bob Lodge from Banwell also attend. It rained very hard at times, but between the showers I had a damn good day. and just to top it off, I won Best Engine.

Well, that's about it. I hope 2007 will be as good as this for me and may I wish you all a happy and safe rallying year.

The Astle Park 1000 Engine Rally

I'd not been to this rally before and whilst there were not a thousand engines present, there were certainly more than I'd seen in any other place by a good long way. The engines, tractors, hot fog vehicles and old cars & bikes were in serried ranks arrayed with a reasonable distance between each one. Camping and caravans were scattered around the site in profusion, but even here there was an underwhelming sign of overt organisation, just tidily parked because that seemed to be the thing to do. I was most impressed, actually and any Health and Safety officer would have been mildly pleased to see such underlying common sense exhibited by so many.

I arrived at 10.30pm on Friday evening, found a spot in the line up, put up my gazebo (ably assisted by Neville, who knew me from somewhere), unloaded the engines and went to the beer tent. I had a cyder but couldn't see anyone I knew, so went to bed. Nature called me at the ungodly hour of 5.45 and I knew it was useless going back to bed, so went in search of petrol, finding it on the M6. Back for breakfast and a wander around the auction site where absolutely nothing called to me. I looked at various things in the club stand, some of which did call to me but none of them loudly enough to get my wallet out – in fact, the only thing I found to interest me was a pressure gauge which the bloke apologised for the needle being stuck at just under 15 psi. So I gave him £1.50 for it

It was now 10.00am or so, so I wandered back to the line up, started my engines (Coventry Victor MA2 and Norman T300 marine engines, plus my hybrid Iron Horse teaser and the Edgar Westbury 80 watt) in time for it to rain. No sooner done than a steward arrived to tell me I must remove my gazebo. It appears that they are not allowed at this rally (completely news to me!!) as “ ... they are dangerous when they blow away.”

R-i-g-h-t.

I argued with all the authority and eloquence of which I am capable as the rain pattered on the plastic roof above us, but he stuck to his guns and offered me the loan of a fishing umbrella. This I accepted with reasonably good grace, but I was not happy to cower thus before the occasional flurries of rain and decided then that I'd be on my way that evening. Dave Croft had posted a .jpg of the rules at

<http://community.webshots.com/photo/152558084/152558982eXTBkD> and having read through them again now, I can see no mention of such a rule. Hrumph!

I walked around the stalls for a while and was struck by the ever-increasing number of stalls selling tools and WD equipment. There seem to be more and more at every event I attend.

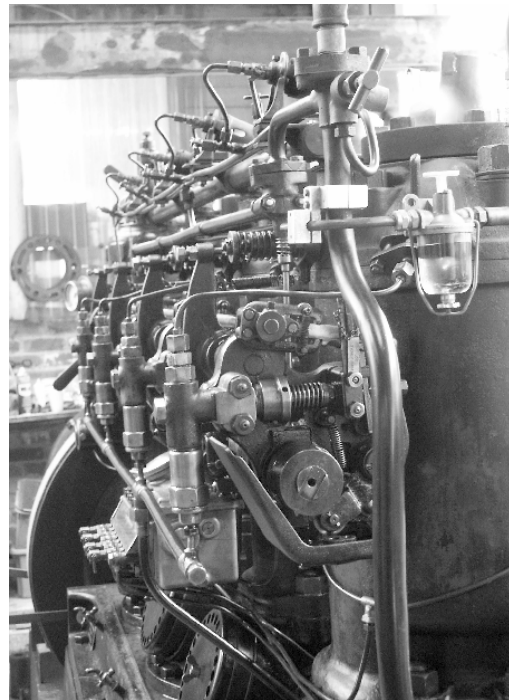
Back through the engine pens and an exciting array of engines both ancient and modern, including a Norman T300 that spent its entire day INSIDE a fishing tent, gleaming but silent. Philip T-E remarked upon the sheer number of engines that must have been cast in water-soluble iron as they were tightly sheeted down for the whole day with none going near them let alone running them. Many that were cheerfully running in the rain got stared at, but none called to me sufficiently to get my chair for a longer look. It was noticeable (as usual) that cantankerous and hard-to-start engines attracted the onlooker whilst those quietly pursuing their lawful occasions were unremarked. Damp, windy fields are no place for hot bulb engines! May you live with an Interesting Engine, perhaps ;o))

This hobby is a small enough world for one to collect a number of friends and acquaintances in quite a short time, but I was nonetheless surprised at the number of people that said "Hello Kim". Included amongst the ones I could place a name to was Andy Badman that had sold me the Norman marine engine and the Westbury 80 watt I was exhibiting, the guy next to me on my left was Paul to whom I'd sold a Wolseley magneto and Jim Anderson from Edinburgh, the previous owner of my much prized ABC auxiliary engine appeared like a genii from a lamp to make my day complete!

Having been involved in outdoor events for many years, I'm interested to see the level of control – or the lack of it – at events like this. We are a pretty decent, clean living, urban set of people, so I suppose there is no real reason for a tightly written set of rules, but there are limits. For instance, I could find no one to tell me what time the public arrived or were encouraged to leave, what time we could get vehicles on, leave or whatever – although it is true I did not go to the lengths of asking at the caravan which was miles away. So I resolved of my own authority to turn my engines off at 4.45pm and fetch the car at five. This I did, stripped my rather soggy patch and returning the fishing umbrella on the way out, made my way in advance of the two coach parties to the Anson Museum just ten miles away.

At The Anson – you really MUST go there, you know - Roger Gardner was pottering about amongst his grandfather's products and I was chatting to him when Geoff Challinor came up and wrung my hand. I know it's not possible for any of us to be in more places than one at a time, but Geoff gave a damned good impression of it on Saturday evening! He was only on one place for a short time, usually to start another engine and there were a dozen running at one time to my certain knowledge.

Every time I looked, another flywheel was spinning, but nothing beat being at the rail when Roger Gardner fired up the big 4T5 (*pictured*). The turning of taps, the lighting of the burners, the arcane movement of this or that control that led



to the roar of the lamps, the swish of 200 psi of compressed air and the deep, steady rumble of combustion. Running up the somewhat smaller 4FHM that shortly followed was almost tame by comparison, but the sound and smell of the two of them

running together in a not-so-large room is worth going back for. The 4FHM hunts a little, speeding up and slowing down on the governor. Roger intimated that he can easily adjust the mixture so that it runs at a steady pace, but prefers the rise and fall of the note. I think he's dead right and it seems more alive because of it.

Towards the end of the evening, I spent some time talking to Steve Gold who has a special connection with the big Robey engine that he tends so lovingly. He found it deep in a quarry slurry pit and was involved in both its removal and its subsequent renovation. It was missing several parts, many of which were re-created by Steve from photos and calculations. The flyball governor is a good example, taking eight years of research and machining. It worked first time, too. The engine has high-tension wipe ignition, either an original feature or certainly an early modification and it will be a hundred and twelve years old next year.

Every time I visit the Anson, I wonder at the changes that have taken place since I was last there. In the eight months since my previous visit, walls had been knocked through to lighten the building, a reception area and café created and several floors raised, levelled and concreted. How Geoff and his cheerful band of helpers manage it, I can't imagine and their efforts show real dedication and commitment.

In closing, I'd like to thank Geoff for donating a couple of fire hose fittings I'd been looking for and also for letting me rummage in his skip! Skip diving at the Anson is very interesting ...

<http://community.webshots.com/scripts/editPhotos.fcgi?action=viewall&albumID=152558084&ran=27056>