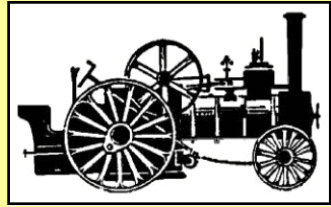


A Wisp of STEAM SUPREME



Extracts from the Melbourne Steam Traction Engine Club Newsletter

Spiros firing Rodney Martins steam boat the I.K. Brunell on the Maribyrnong

Junior Members



Festival of Italian Motorbikes

Goulburn Valley Relics

Gardner Horizontal



Around the Club

With our Rally out of the way Motorbikes seemed to be the theme this month with visits from a couple of Clubs

Festival of Italian Motorcycles First was a visit with owners of these machines entering into the spirit of the day complete with not only their machines but Pizzas , Cappuccino , Gelato and Prizes (bottles of red wine).

In days gone by they had their get to gethers in Lygon street but tended to attracted the attention of uninvited guests . No problem this time with about 180 machines on display in our arena to the delight of enthusiast and our regular visitors still with the usual entry by just a donation.

Bikes were arranged by make with the most impressive of each group being awarded a bottle of red .

A line up of Ducati's with their impressive desmodromic L twin produced from 1974 to 2017 with claims of 200 + bhp (no valve springs , one cam lifts the valve and another closes it in turn .



▲ *Another iconic Italian bike was the Moto Guzzi with it's big horizontal cylinder and exposed flywheel whizzing around your left ankle .*

Seen everywhere in Italy in the 1970 being used by Police , military and 3 wheeled street vendors this horizontal configuration was made for about 50 years with many variations .

Tech details are not easy to find but one has to wonder which came first the Guzzi or the Landini (Italys version of the Lanz Bulldog tractor)



The Bimota -3D is for those who want unique elegant craftsmanship combined with pioneering hub center steering according to the blurb.

◀ *The front wheel is suspended on a swinging arm frame in place of sliding forks while the steering pivot is inside the hub rather than the frames headstock . Different but not better seems to be the verdict !*

The highlight of the day for most was something never seen before .

A Ferrari arriving towing a trailer full of exotic bikes.



View of Ferrari and trailer from up BigFoot
The mind boggles. *I had to go and have a look at a couple of scooters and a moped to come back to earth.*



Crawlin the Hume is an event looked forward to by old truckies as it brings back a chance to catch up with old friends and vehicles while travelling sections of the highway from the ‘ good old days.’ Run roughly every 2 years it travel from Campbell field to Albury along as much of the old road as possible , which is still quite a lot. This year it falls the week before the Hunter Valley steamfest at Maitland Steam which is 100 km or so north of Sydney .

This is a favourite event for a number of our members giving the chance to kill 2 birds with one stone by taking along a couple of vintage trucks and steam wagons to both events
Next issue we look forward to a full report .



Rob Jones and Sam Newman’s steam wagons loaded onto Robs semi waits on the arena for the off to Albury . Later in the week they join Mick Black in his B model Mack for Maitland .

GARDNER

Horizontal Oil Engine is the latest addition to the club . It is a 1909 ? Type 3F , Engine Number 19

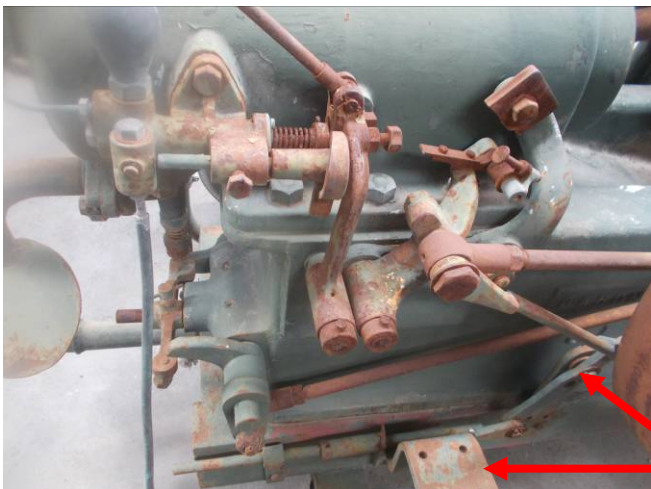
404 on permanent loan from Scott and Ian Davies . The families are keen to see it restored and running at the MSC with us eventually getting full ownership .

These early Gardner stationeries are prestigious engines in the UK probably because of their refined operation and high cost . There are not many in Australia so do not have much brand recognition out here. We only have one small vertical in the MSTEC collection that does not get a second glance.



When restored I am sure this impressive horizontal engine will put that right . It’s vertically opposed inlet and exhaust valves actuated by long slender rods driven by eccentrics will have visitors fascinated with their gentle silent operation . Indeed poetry in motion.

Assessment The engine is almost complete except for it’s stove around the hot bulb and blowlamp as at some time it has been converted to flick magneto by the addition of extra linkages and bracket . With no obvious spark plug and the magneto missing consideration should be given to making a reproduction stove and putting it back to standard.



Cobbled up magneto bracket and linkage is not standard .

Junior(s) Matter(s) The Profile of Junior Members At MSTEC

Club member Paula Thyme, being the mother of young Flynn, raised the matter of how juniors fit in at MSTEC. She writes :-

“ I think we need to raise the profile of young people in the club and one way could be to add a "Junior" section" to the Steam Supreme “

As the MSTEC Child Safe Person, I put my hand up to coordinate this Junior section/page for the newsletter, and take responsibility for acquiring various permissions required to have them appear in the pages .

There are many significant reasons to raise the profile of junior members at our club including the following:

1. Best practice in 'Child Safe' policy and implementation: The more children and young people feel they belong, and are important and valued in the club, the more confident they will feel to **SPEAK UP** if they ever feel unsafe or nervous or angry. This is an important/crucial part of child safety.
2. MSTEC should pro-actively acknowledge Junior members' contributions because they deserve positive feedback just like adults do, but young people are often over-looked
3. Rewarding/praising junior members will help in retaining these young people in the club for longer
4. Show the adult Members that Juniors are capable, valuable, not invisible, but a strong part of the club and can actually achieve things.
5. Juniors are a critical part of succession planning for the club - we need to pro-actively mentor these younger members and hand down knowledge and experience.

What do you think??? Paula

Well the Committee thinks it is a wonderful idea and the title Junior(s) Matters(s) is catchy as it applies in a number of way. So here goes Paula's first contribution which features the way that Neil Meyers recently arrived Ferret Armoured Scout Car has become a vehicle for their involvement at the club . Ed.

Junior(s) Matter(s)

During the March Run Day, there was a lot of interest from some of our Junior members in Neil's newly arrived military vehicle: the Ferret Scout Car.



Greg and Paula 'supervising' the cleaning of years of grime inside the Ferret.

Flynn helping Adrian and Neil to remove the Ferret's transmission.





More cleaning, this time the transmission

Nag & Son interested in the Ferret.

The Ferret is a British Armoured fighting vehicle built between 1952 and 1971 by Daimler mainly for reconnaissance . It has independent suspension and 4 WD through shafts in a H layout. Powered by a 4.26 l Rolls Royce 6 cylinder petrol engine driving through a fluid coupling and preselector gearbox giving 5 forwards and 5 reverses.
Ed.



S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S

Doug's Trip

Easter is a good time to catch up with friends so the opportunity was taken to get together with some of the old gang from a couple of overseas Vintage Machinery Tours and do the Goulburn Valley area hosted by Doug of Shepparton .

Wunghnu Vintage Tractor Pull and Rally was the first stop. The 39 th put on by the Goulburn Valley Club and by my calculations the first tractor pull I went to must have been their first. Some things had not changed much and others a lot .

Of particular interest was their big 800 hp Crossley Diesel engine from Radio Australia headquarters just north of Shepparton dating back to WW2 .

The Internet suggests the engine is a PCT6 model, a 6 cylinder water cooled vertical of 14 1/2 " bore and 17 " stroke supercharged to give 800 hp at 375 rpm and weighting 28.93 tons .



The engine is direct coupled to an alternator and exciter in a similar manner to the Willans . Evident here is the Roots blower to supercharge the engine for increase output .

Offcourse I had to enquire about the foundation . They just built it as original which is not too different to the Willans except no piers . They estimate the whole project cost in the region of \$100,000





Behind the Crossley was a nicely behaved Lister Blackstone . It was content to chug away on it's own .

Started regularly for the enjoyment of all visitors .
 A single lever controls the air start which motors the engine over and it just trundles away when the decompression is released and fuel brought in . Quite an anti climax with none of the snorting , banging and smoke screen of the Willans .



The most appealing engine was this little single cylinder Tangye of Birmingham lamp oil engine running quite steadily under no load without any hitting and missing . I wish I had got more details



After a look around the stationary engine pens we were a bit surprised to find some of the exhibitors from our recent rally , they certainly must be keen and get around .

The Wunghnu reserve also had a 7 1/4 ' gauge railway running around 3 sides giving a ride of just over 1 km . They were well set up with clubrooms and loading and steaming bays for visiting locomotives so must have quite an active following .

As I run our club loco regularly for the public it was interesting to hear they face many of the challenges that we do .

A Private Viewing Now Doug , being an Irrigation Engineer , has got the right contacts so we then headed north to a large irrigation property that had been in the same family for 3 generations . It was straight round the back to an old corrugated iron shed were the waiting farmer threw open the doors .

Here was an absolutely complete very large Ruston Proctor portable steam engine.

It was delivered new in 1919 to the local railway siding and the family still has the original accompanying paperwork .

Used for irrigation for many years and kept shedded it is still capable of being steamed and the family is very proud of it .



Doug's photos



The backhead of the engine is all there complete with cobwebs and dust but in remarkable condition . The displacement lubricator is a later addition .

The AGENTS plate declares THOMAS McPHERSON & SON MELBOURNE and stamped below is SEL 28119 ,



But there is More, a short drive to another shed to look at the replacement to the steam engine . A Ronaldson Tippett Crude Oil Engine itself now retired but still capable of running .



The makers plate gave no clue about the date or rating of the Ronny . Is it an M Type ?



The business end of the Ronaldson Tippett .

Particularly prominent is the highly stylized compressor with it's spherical crankcase and tapered finned cylinder. Fast and loose pulleys allow it to be driven from the main engine to pump up the starting air .

The 4 cylinder Ruston Diesel that replaced the Ronny now itself retired and replaced by electric pumps . What a wonderful cross section of technology ?



Tocumwal Aerodrome Travelling further North and crossing the river we came to what was once the largest Air Base in the Southern Hemisphere covering 25 square miles and 5000 personnel .



Got operational in only 2 months by the Americans, it really brings home how serious things really were at the time. Operations quickly moved north to Townsville when it became apparent the enemy advances on Australia had been checked by the Battle of the Coral Sea off Queensland. The airfield was then quickly taken over by the RAAF becoming a major center for training and maintenance finally ending in 1960 as a place old military planes came to die and a wonderful source of spares for others .

Two giant aircraft hangers still remain with their original 39.6 m clear span Australian hardwood timber trusses , the longest known . To get an idea of perspective the white dot on the right is a car . Today the hangers are used for industrial purpose .

It is now just a shadow of its former self with a Gliding center and Museum with most of the land returned to agriculture. This is where Doug came into his own knowing his way around the farms he gave us a tour of war time remains including 3 of the original hangars, the 2 aero engine test houses plus fuel depot and railway complex sites .



Aircraft Engine Test House . Bays for 4 engines note sound absorbing panels on the wall and 2 pairs of control rooms .

During the war Tocumwal was the S.W .Pacific center for overhauling the American Pratt & Whitney R-1830 14 cylinder radial . With over 173 thousand made, the most produced aircraft engine in the world, it was widely used during the war including in the four-engined B24 Liberator heavy bomber and the twin engined Douglas DC-3 transport .Akn Wicki 1830 Wasp engine

At up to 1200 hp each imagine the noise of 4 running at full power for several hours

during run in ?

Obviously a sensitive issue as the Americans now call them Hush Houses !

Radial engine running in a Hush House . Internet pic .



Can we get one for the NSC ?

Heading Back to Shepparton , a slightly different route took us past some Silo Art at a railway siding .

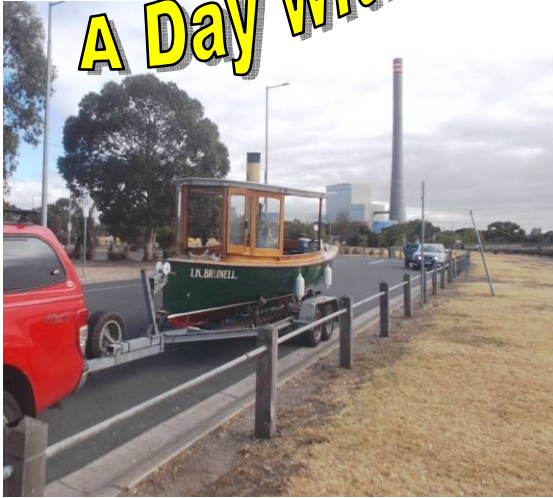
This depicts first the indigenous people enjoying their land . Next a team of horses towing a wagon , no doubt signifying the arrival of Europeans . Finally a steam locomotive crossing a trestle bridge representing the introduction of transport and technology . It could have been the train that delivered the Ruston Proctor portable at the farm just down the road ? With that back to Shepparton with a pause outside the Furphy works on the way . What a wonderful weekend enjoying a cross section of local history and technology .

Thanks Doug



I.K. BRUNEL(L)

A Day with



The Boat and the Man

◀ **Steam Boat I.K. Brunell with Newport Steam PowerStation in the background.**

In the vicinity is Science Works Sewerage pumping station , Westgate Bridge and Ship lined Docks

What an appropriate place to launch a Steam boat named after Isambard Kingdom Brunel a nineteenth century British Engineer who changed the face of the world through his pioneering in these and many other engineering fields

Rodney Martin's Steam Boat on the ramp at the Warmies shows the classic lines of a "couta boat". ▶



Rodney selected a couta boat as the ideal starting point for his steam boat project because of the surprisingly low water resistance of their curvacious shape and high load carrying capacity of their wide deep hull .

The evolution of these iconic gaff rigged boats started pre 1900 for fishing barracouta a large ugly fish found along the coast and in the bays between Lakes Entrance and Portland . (not to be confused with Barracuda a tropical fish) The fish appeared in large numbers in shoals so a craft with a high carrying capacity was need while being seaworthy in Bass straight. Being a very competitive industry at the time speed was important because first back with a full load got the best price which lead to fierce competition and the evolution of a unique craft to this region . At one time they were around in

great numbers but declining fish population and the emergence of engine powered boats saw them nearly disappear. Today they are enjoying a resurgence as pleasure craft and a good starting point for conversion to steam.

▶ **Bob Atkins taking his first look at Rodney's steam plant . The engine a single cylinder vertical double acting is to Rodney's own design**

▶ **Rodney Martin and Spiros making preparations for sailing .**



Once in the water the first act was lighting up the fire then loading up the boat with buckets of short wood and provisions for the day . By the time we were ready the water tube boiler was already building up pressure .



View down the Warmies channel . It was then sharp

left up into the Yarra river . The Warmies is a rock lined channel , parallel to the Yarra, that returns warmed up cooling water from the Newport power station's steam condensers back to the bay.



Getting along nicely up the Yarra at 5 min to 12 and 125 psi on the clocks we get passed by a tug.



This is as far as we go up the Yarra before turning Port (Left) into the Maribyrnong river.

Captain Rodney surveys the low bridges and mountains of containers in the industrial area of Yarraville with Footscray in the distance



Under the Bridges



By the time we were clear of numerous bridges our crew got into the swing of things with Rodney running the engine at a constant throttle and fine tuning the bypass on the feed water pump to keep about 3/4 of a glass. We could then settle down a bit and enjoy the scenery which had changed from industrial to residential luxury waterside apartments and the Highpoint shopping center.



Then past an amazing mosque which someone had remarked looked like it had just landed from outerspace aptly marked on the map as The Buddhist Temple of the Heavenly Queen



Before long we were going past Flemington racecourse where the river bank had opened out considerably with bike paths and parklands and we began to feel peckish.



The Boat house restaurant seemed in order with its fish and chips and elevated view from it's patio from which we could keep our eye on the boat .



During lunch the I.K.Brunell had attracted a number of admirers . Greg looks contended as we head off again after a good feed.



◀ *By this time young Spiros V had appointed himself chief fireman and soon learned a little often was the order of the day as the water tube boiler's small water volume and large surface area meant it's pressure was very quick to respond .*

We continued up the river for another hour or 2 and around a large horseshoe bend surrounding now vacant Government land of then Maribyrnong Explosive factory on Cordite Avenue . An establishment which brought back memories of old work days for Bob Atkins. .

By now the river was getting narrower but sill looked suitable for navigation the suddenly the propeller hit a rather solid object which was taken as the signal to turn around.

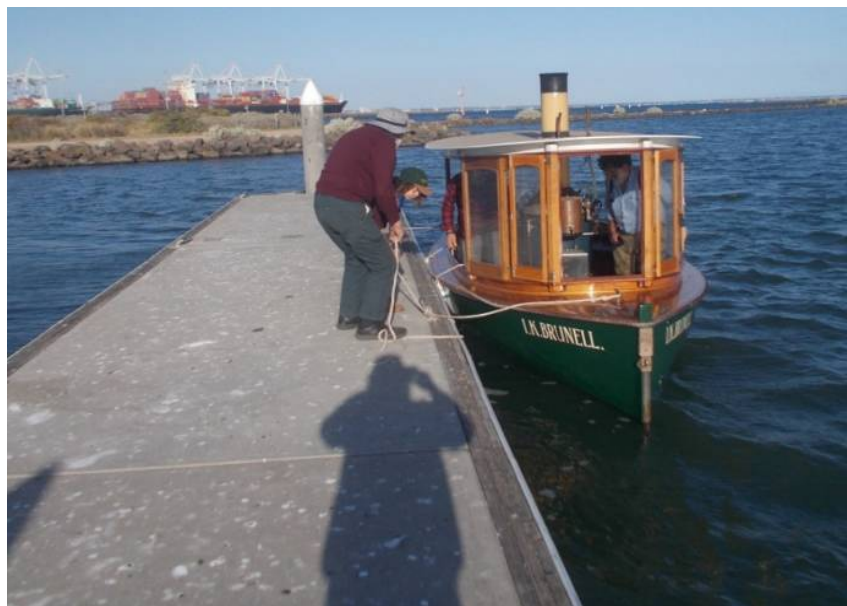
The way back was uneventful but being after knock off time there were more people around so we attracted a lot more friendly attention . One kayaker decided to try to race us down the river and was able to pace us for about a km but Rodney wisely resisted the temptation to open her up knowing that slow and steady wins the race and the paddler would soon be a spent force .

All the attention from onlookers went to Spiros's head and he was soon tooting the whistle at every opportunity. I got the impression Rodney was keeping a close eye on the feedwater supply which was not very much as the engine is fully condensing however whistle blowing is water lost from the system and river water here is salty making it unfit for boiler feed. Before we knew it we were back in the Yarra not taking nearly as long as going up stream which is the way with rivers and steam boats.

▶ *Long shadows as we tie up back at the Warmies with Webb dock in the background with 2 ships disgorging cars just a km from where they used to be made.*

What a wonderful day and a tribute to the I . K. Brunel(l)s

Thanks Rodney and crew.



Around the Club cont

SS SS SS SS SS SS SS



Motor Bike Swap Meet Good crowd and plenty of stalls but drizzly weather .

A 1915 Douglas belt drive motor bike on display.

We have 2 of these engines on portable military generators in our collection .



HD/HR Holden Visit .

A good line up of cars ranging from bog standard to highly modified made an interesting display.

Time to leave one had to be Jumpstart ed What they really needed was a crank handle .