

THE MODEL ENGINE COLLECTOR

Official Journal of the Model Engine Collectors' Association

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ENGINE-EERING - IN GENERAL

This is the first issue of a new "publication" - of, by, and for model engine collectors everywhere. Its purposes are several: to furnish a "meeting place" for our organization; to bring news of interest to all our members; to act as a "trading post"; and to do everything possible to further our hobby - both quantitatively and qualitatively.

First: we have an organization. True, it's loosely knit and more or less informal (perhaps it will work best that way!), but at the moment there are more than 40 of us with interests enough in common to make it appear that a reasonably regular publication such as this could be of real help to all of us.

If this is in fact true, it should be a good idea to set forth some of the principles that this publication should follow. These basic tenets have been arrived at in correspondence between several members of our group, and seem eminently reasonable to your editor.

(1) The circulation of this magazine will be restricted to bona fide model engine collectors only. The size of an individual's collection is not in question; but the magazine is definitely not intended for those whose only interest in model engines lies in buying and selling them solely for profit. Since one of the goals of this publication is the halting - and possibly reversal! - of the present trend to astronomical prices for old and uncommon engines, it would be pointless to allow our club paper to fall into "enemy" hands.

(2) This magazine will publish a "Want" and an "Available" list from any member, subject only to the following restrictions: a limit of 10 items in each category ("Wants" and "Availables") per member per issue - for space reasons, of course; no rare engine (such as "Flush", "Dragon", or "Meteor") shall be listed as a "Want" since nearly all of us need these; also, no rare engine shall be listed as "Available" since this would only lead to a mad rush of our members to outbid one another - causing hard feelings, and also increasing the upward spiral of engine prices.

(3) For the protection of the members, this magazine will publish a list of "sharppers" and outright crooks in the engine collecting field - both private individuals and business firms.

(4) The magazine will list the names and addresses of dealers and private individuals who have engines and/or parts for sale.

Of course, in order to successfully carry out a program as listed above, your editor must have the help and cooperation of all the members - who are requested to send in any information of interest.

AN APPRECIATION OF BRUCE UNDERWOOD

We wish to extend our profound gratitude and appreciation to Bruce Underwood, whose single-handed efforts brought our group into being. Bruce originated the idea of a club of model engine collectors. He started the system of engine serializing and classification; worked out the "Engine Listing Form" and printed and supplied these to us at his own expense. At the sacrifice of much time, effort, and money - in 1958 Bruce spent more for postage alone than some of us did on our collections - Bruce has kept our organization going. It might even be said that Bruce is responsible for the popularity of model engine collecting as a new hobby.

After several years of self-sacrifice for the group, it now becomes necessary for Bruce to diminish his activities on our behalf. His new Model Power Company is making much greater demands on his time, as the well-known "Yellow-Jacket" parts for the Dooling are becoming increasingly popular; and each single one of these requires hours of precision work on Bruce's part. Consequently, it is no longer possible for Bruce to carry the entire load of our organization.

It is therefore requested that the members address their letters dealing with matters of general interest to this editor, restricting letters to Bruce to personal ones.

From the editor, and the membership in general - a heartfelt "THANK YOU!" to Mr. Bruce Underwood!

THE "CLUB"

First: Why a club at all? We've gotten along pretty well in the past with a very informal "pen-pal" sort of setup, haven't we? Why organize? What good will it do us, anyway???

Well, here is how it looks to your editor.

It's true that we have managed to do quite well on a most informal basis in the past; but this was mainly because of the relatively small number of really active collectors. But in the last year or so, many new collections have been started; most of them by people with just as much - or maybe more! - enthusiasm as any of the "old-timers". And it just isn't practical any more for any of us to try to keep up a personal correspondence with all, or even a majority, of the other collectors. But a club can carry a great deal of this burden through a publication such as this; one of the main reasons for personal correspondence being that of seeking, finding, and swapping engines and parts.

Another benefit of great possible value to members is in the process of negotiation by your editor. If a majority of our active membership is in favor of a more formal organization than we have at the moment, then it appears possible to make an arrangement with a hobby wholesaler whereby club members can obtain new, modern engines - and perhaps other hobby supplies - at wholesale prices (plus postage). In most cases this will result in at least a 33 1/3% discount. However, the wholesaler insists, for his own protection, that he will only deal with us on the basis of a more-or-less formally organized group, whose purposes are primarily those of collecting model engines.

Here is the "Club" situation at present. It appears, from the personal correspondence of your editor, and from the response to the "Newsletter" sent out previously, that most of the active collectors would like a stronger, more formal group. In fact, a number of members have voted on a name for our club. Your editor has taken the liberty of using in the heading of this magazine which received the largest number of votes, even though a majority of the members did not reply on this question. At any rate, this name seems as good as any; in the absence of instructions to the contrary from the membership, it will continue to be used unless the group prefers a different name.

For now, it would not seem necessary or useful for our club to have a very formal written constitution - this sort of document being mainly intended for societies which hold regular meetings; i.e. a constitution generally is most concerned with duties and responsibilities of office-holders, rules for parliamentary procedure, and related matters, few of which would seem to be of especial value to our sort of association. However, we should set up a brief statement of our purposes and aims, together with a description of our organization which includes a provision for elected officers who will have authority to act for the club as a whole, as necessary for it to achieve its goals. Also, and most important, we should have a set of "Rules of Ethics" that spell out our standards of doing business with one another.

It does not appear necessary at the moment to have such things as dues or membership fees - although it would probably be only fair for the membership to bear a part of the cost of this publication. This particular issue is being prepared, printed, and mailed at a total cash outlay of about \$15.00 - which averages out to approximately 35¢ per member. Naturally, a large factor in the cost is the number of pages, which may be larger for this first issue than for succeeding ones. It is your editor's hope, however, that enough interest will be shown by the members, and enough material sent in, to fill this much space in each and every issue!

At any rate - you are most earnestly requested to send us your reactions and opinions of this magazine. Just a postcard will do, if you're pressed for time - but please let us hear something from you, so we will at least know whether you are still in the game or not. Even if your collection is inactive at the moment, let us know! The response to the "newsletter" was not too large; but if you have already written in reply to it, you need not write us again unless you have new information. But if you have not answered the "newsletter", please write. If we do not hear from you at all in the next 60 days, we will be forced to the conclusion that you are no longer interested in our group and/or its publication.

WHERE TO FIND 'EM

Obviously, in order to collect engines, one has to find them first. Listed below are a number of sources that have proven fruitful to your editor and some of his correspondents.

(A) Hobby Shops: This source of engines seems somewhat obvious; but our purpose here is to examine some less apparent aspects. Naturally, all collectors are on the lookout for shops that have been in business for many years; but it is your editor's experience that the newer shops, and sometimes the very newest, can often do a collector more good than

older ones. The gimmick here is that people occasionally bring old engines in to a hobby shop as "trade-ins". This happens more commonly than one might suppose, and most of these engines are in quite good condition - as few people would try to trade in an obvious wreck. Now, a hobby dealer - particularly a new one who deals mostly in plastics and similar items - is not always willing to take an old engine in on a trade; he usually has his doubts as to whether he'll be able to get rid of the old klunker and get his money out of it. So, it is a very worthwhile project to call on all the hobby shops in your vicinity, new and old, and let them know what you are in the market for.

(B) Model Builders: Another obvious source that bears further looking into. All of us hope to contact some ex-modeler who has been active since 1929, and who has kept all his old engines - in immaculate shape, too - but doesn't want them any more and will give them all away for nothing. Unfortunately, this seldom happens. However, it pays not to neglect any modeler as a potential source of old engines. Many young kids just starting into modeling have been given old engines by aunts, or fathers of friends, who say, "Here! This Horton H-5 used to belong to my boy, but he's lost interest in that stuff now, so you may as well have it to play with!". Haunt the flying fields and ask everybody about old engines. You might be able to trade a Cox Pee-wee to some 12-year-old for a Megow 19 or a Trojan Jr.!

(C) Philanthropic Organizations: All large cities and most smaller ones have at least one organization such as the Salvation Army, that makes a practice of soliciting donations of used and unwanted items from householders, to be used for the benefit of the poor. Most of these societies operate "stores" which sell used and salvaged items obtained in this way. Every now and again a rare old model engine turns up in one of these places. And prices are always most reasonable!

(D) Second-Hand Stores: Much of item (C) above applies here also. Sellers of used merchandise have much better prices on old model motors than most hobby shops and private owners.

(E) Ads in Company Papers and On Company Bulletin Boards: In even the smallest of companies there are frequently a few ex-modelers who have been away from the game for years. And most of these have never even heard of the hobby of collecting engines. Some very good buys can sometimes be had by seeking these fellows out.

(F) Displays of your Collection in Public Places: If you can prepare even a half-way decent exhibit of your collection - or just a part of it - such as by mounting from 15 to 50 of your more interesting items on a sheet of black-painted plywood, you will have little difficulty in getting it displayed in a public place. Hobby shop windows are an obvious choice here. But for our purposes (unearthing rare specimens) a better choice would be the Public Library or a retail store in a non-hobby line. Libraries in particular are unbelievably happy to display collections. A discreet card with your name and address attached to your exhibit will invariably bring some contacts with owners of old, no-longer-used engines. One little "trick" that works wonders in making useful contacts is to type up a little "nameplate" for each engine in your display, giving the name, displacement, year of manufacture, etc. - and at the bottom of a chosen few of these "nameplates" you add: "Donated to the collection by Jasper Cowsnowski, Pivot Tooth, Oklahoma"... For many people, there is no incentive more powerful than the hope of getting their names in print.

ENGINES AND PARTS WANTED

Don Baker (1711 Kent Drive, Arlington, Texas): "Fleetwind" timer, tank, &n.v.; "Hornet" timer; Brown B timer, n.v., & tank; prewar Forster 99 timer and tank; "Rocket" exhaust and tank; Fox 59 timer; GHQ n.v. Also: Brown D; OK 60; "Pacemaker"; McCoy 29 Redhead ign.; Atwood "Champion".

Don Belote (1834 Brame Place, Toledo 13, Ohio): "Rocket" fuel tank.

Jerry Burk (708 College Oaks Drive, Arlington, Texas): "Sky Chief" prop driver; Elf Twin n.y. & propeller driver.

Steve Ditta (219-42 Edgewood Ave., Laurelton, Queens, N.Y.): OK Twin crankshaft.

Bob Livesay (13832 Lombardy Rd., Garden City, Calif.): Campus CO₂; Ohlsson 19; Ohlsson 29.

Bruce Underwood (931 Binerva Ave., Columbus 24, Ohio): "Hornet 60" parts list; 5-spoke cast-iron wheel from old hand-push carpet sweeper.

Joe Wagner (14668 Kalisher St., San Fernando, Calif.): Ohlsson 60 Rotary Valve model (not a sideport conversion); original OK Cub .049 (the model with a serial no.); Forster P-29.

Charles Werve (6220 Fifth Ave., Kenosha, Wisconsin): 2-cylinder single acting steam engine.

ENGINES AND PARTS AVAILABLE

Hobby Den (Great Southern Shopping Center, Columbus, Ohio): Buzz D, condition unknown - \$3.00.

Hobby City (Great Western Shoppers' Mart, Columbus, Ohio): Fuji, parts missing - \$1.00; 2 O&R 23s, condition unknown - \$1.00 each; Pagco race car engine, .099 with wheels - \$4.95 new; \$2.98 used.

Hobby Lobby (3518 W. Victory Blvd., Burbank, Calif.): Atwood Triumph .49s and .51s (about 9 in all) \$10.00 each; with Timertank \$11.50 each.

Darrell Herringer (921 N. Egar Ave., Madison, S. Dakota): O&R 60 sideport, very good - \$7.50; Dennyrite, new - \$9.50; Arden .099 with D.E. conversion kit, new - \$16.00; Cannon 300, very good - \$13.50; Bantam .19, new, \$16.50.

Doug Wendt (Rt. #1, Whitefish, Montana) Rocket, cond. CG; O&R 60 black-head sideport, cond. CG; Silver Streak .15, new in box, factory tuned.

Don Baker, Don Belote, Steve Ditta, Bruce Underwood, and Joe Wagner - all addresses listed in "Want" column - have many miscellaneous parts for most American engines. Send your inquiries to this magazine.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Ever come across a specimen for your collection, only to find that it has a broken-off screw in it? If so, here's an almost foolproof method of extracting broken screws. Your editor has devised and ex-

perimented with many different ways of removing these, but the method described below is by far the best and most reliable.

Get a piece of 1/16" music wire and sharpen one end with a grinder to about a 60° point. Do the grinding slowly and carefully, so as not to get the wire so hot that it changes color (which indicates loss of temper) and do not quench the wire in water. Next, grind the pointed end to a triangular cross-section, including about a 1/4" length of the straight part of the wire as well as the point. Be very cautious in grinding the triangle. The edges should be quite sharp, but very little if any material should be removed at the actual edges. In other words, what we want to end up with is a triangular section that is exactly the same size as the wire, with just 3 sides ground away.

Now take another piece of 1/16" music wire about 1 1/2" long and sharpen one end to a 60° point. Grind the other end flat. This will be used as a small center punch; the wire with the triangular section is the extractor itself. Now - to extract a broken-off screw.

Using the center punch and a small hammer, punch a center mark in the broken end of the screw, as close to the actual center as possible. Now very carefully drill a no. 56 (.0465 dia.) hole straight down into the screw. Go at least 1/2" deep, unless of course the broken-off portion is not that long. It does not matter if the hole goes all the way through. Next, force or drive the extractor as deep into the hole as possible - being very sure not to break the extractor; if this happens, you've had it! One of the best ways to force the extractor into the hole is to use a drill press to drill the hole, then leave the piece containing the broken screw on the drill press table. Remove the drill from the chuck and replace it with the extractor, tightening the chuck firmly. Now, use the drill press (not rotating!) to push the extractor into the hole in the broken screw.

At this point, be patient! It's tempting to try to remove the screw now, but don't. Remember that the screw end is probably seated pretty firmly in order for it to be broken off in the first place. We want to get it out on the first try. So - don't try to remove it yet.

Put a few drops of penetrating oil on the top end of the screw. 3-in-1 is fine; "Liquid Wrench" is better. Next, put the part with the screw and the extractor in it into an oven and bake it at 450° for a half hour. At the end of this time remove the part from the oven, using a potholder and immediately unscrew the screw. One end of the extractor can be bent at a right angle as a handle to unscrew with, or the shank of the extractor can be gripped with a pair of "Vise-Grip" pliers.

ANYONE FOR BOOKS?

During the past few years your editor has received many inquiries from collectors about American model engines - when a certain motor was made; the difference between one model and another; how many different versions there are of an engine; etc. We always answer these questions cheerfully and to the best of our ability. But lately a thought occurred to us: if we were to publish a book which listed every known American model engine - there are about 450 different makes and models all told - together with the dates of manufacturer, original cost, displacement, model differences, plus a brief history of each type - would there be enough of a demand from collectors to justify the expenditure of time and money necessary to put the book out?

As closely as your editor can estimate it, if this book were printed the same way this magazine is, to be placed in a loose-leaf binder, it would cost something over \$200.00 for the printing alone. This means if we figured on selling 20 copies of the book, we would have to charge about \$10.00 each to defray the cost of printing it. In your opinion, would something of this kind be worth \$10.00 or so to you? Please let us know. If 15 or more members would appreciate such a book, your editor will begin work on it, for tentative completion this summer.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

Next time, we are hoping to present:

- (1) A consensus of members' opinions on the organization of our club.
- (2) A complete roster of members: names, addresses, types of collections, number of engines. In fact, we would like to make this a regular feature - but we must get the information for it from you.
- (3) A question-and-answer department: we will be happy to answer to the best of our ability any question on model engine collecting or related subjects. All you have to do is to furnish the questions.
- (4) A brief article on methods of displaying collections; pros and cons of several different systems.
- (5) More "Tricks of the Trade" - would you like this to be a regular feature? If so, let us know!
- (6) Any other feature that you request and we are able to provide.

A FINAL WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Well, gang, that's just about all for this first issue. We hope you enjoyed the foregoing pages! Please let us know your thoughts and opinions on what we've had to say. We are hoping to obtain enough material of interest to be able to publish this little magazine regularly - at least one issue every 6 weeks; more frequently if your response warrants it. We realize that most of you are quite busy, with work, your collections, and possibly other hobbies too. It's not necessary for you to write us a lengthy letter if you are hard pressed for time - but please send us at least a postcard from time to time, so we will know that you are still with us.

Joe Wagner, Acting Editor