

# GARDNER

## *Engine Forum*



*Autumn 2022*



*Engine  
Forum*

Membership

Application

Title	Mr / Mrs / Miss / Dr / Other		
Forename(s)			
Surname			
Address			
		Post Code	
Telephone No		Ex-Directory	Yes/No
Mobile Telephone Number			
Email Address *			
Engine Model			
Engine Serial No			
Engine Date			
Engine Application	Stationary	Road	Marine
Name of vehicle / vessel			
Any other information			
Signed		Dated	
Periodically we produce a membership list and circulate to members. The list comprises of the membership number, name and address only. To be included in the list and therefore receive a copy please indicate your preference.			
Yes please include me <input type="checkbox"/> No Thank You <input type="checkbox"/>			
* To keep the cost of running the forum as low as possible we use email communication for the notification of renewal and confirmation of membership where possible. If supplied the email address will not be passed on to any third party and will only be used for communicating matters relating the the Forum.			
Membership details are maintained on a computer database accessible to authorised committee members only.			
Membership fee £10.00 per annum (UK) renewable on the anniversary of joining.			
Payable by cheque, standing order mandate or electronic fund transfer.			
Cheque's to be made out to Gardner Engine Forum.			
For standing orders please complete the form below.download the compltie form from the website			
For electronic funds transfer please tick the box, <input type="checkbox"/> we will contact you with the banking details			
Send the completed form to			
Mrs J M Gray - Treasurer.Gardner Engine Forum 29 Verity Walk, Wordsley, Stourbridge, DY8 4XS			
Email:- gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk			

## Gardner Engine Forum Philosophy

The aims of the Forum are to promote and foster interest in all Gardner engines"

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**Advertising Rates:**  
**Free for Members Personnel Ads**  
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**Cover Photo**  
**By Alan Imrie**

**6LW fitted to**  
**Fordson Model N Tractor**

**from**  
**June 2002**

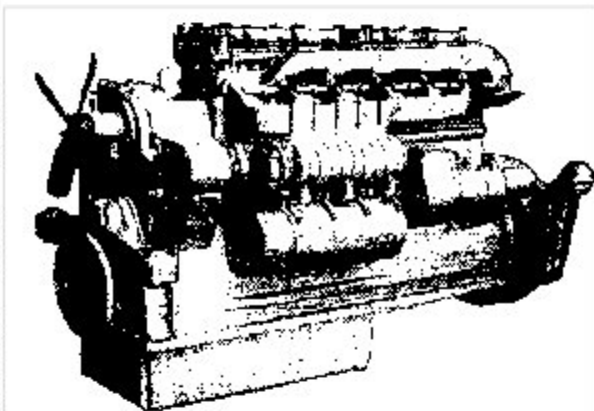
## Chairmans Notes

As Britain sizzles in August, I didn't expect to be writing the Chairman's Autumn notes. I well remember the drought of 1976 and previously the one I mentioned in the Autumn 2020 notes. Evidently they had one in 1921 in London. A chauffeur became the first Britain to be fined for wasting water when he left a hosepipe pouring water down a drain as he washed a car.

The main reason for an earlier Autumn newsletter has been the cancellation of our Rally and the prospect of trying to arrange an AGM. As you will be aware it has been four years since our last Rally. Covid and lack of rain has not helped. The Forum officers have put a lot of effort into organising them, I hope we can see Tony Bowman and the HF13 again in the future. It is important that you voice your opinions at the AGM, it is your Forum.

Further to your editor's very interesting article on 90 years of the LW engine in the Spring 2021 newsletter. I recently met up with member Paul France who presented me with a copy of "The Modern Diesel" 1949 edition. It features a photograph of a 150 bhp Kromhout supercharged engine. As you will be aware from Steven's article

Kromhout of Amsterdam manufactured Gardner engines under licence. This one is based on a 6 LW, the essential design features are similar, but the external structure is modified. The crank case and cylinders form a monoblock casting, in which the timing gear case including a positive fan drive is also incorporated. Kromhout had built Gardner engines since the mid 1930's, but their latest



150 b.h.p. Kromhout supercharged engine

version, apart from the aforementioned differences, was fitted with a Rootes type Marshall Blower driven from the timing gear it is directly flanged coupled to the air intake manifold. Boost pressure of 2 - 4lbs/sq.in raising the standard 6 LW rating of 102 bhp at 1800 rpm to 150 bhp at 2000 rpm. Has anyone seen one? I would be interested to know.

*At this AGM Simon and Pat Roberts are retiring from the committee, this leaves vacancies that we would like to fill, can you spare some time to join us and help keep the Forum going. New blood is always necessary in any organisation so if you would like to join us please let me know.*

I would like to welcome new members:- Phillip Coles, John Wood, Robert Leech and Christopher Mayhew.

*John Naylor*

# Annual General Meeting

We had planned to hold an AGM at this years rally. As we have been unable to hold the rally as planned it has been necessary to find a suitable venue for an AGM. We have tried really hard to come up with a different and interesting venue for our AGM. Steven and myself had a wonderful day out visiting this place, which has something everyone can enjoy. NOT just the men, but the ladies and children too. A lovely cafe is on site where we can all refresh ourselves with the lovely goodies they have on offer, eg sandwiches, drinks (hot and cold), cakes and ice-creams. Memorabilia is also available from the shop adjacent to the cafe.

**The AGM will take place on  
SUNDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER AT 12 NOON.**

**THE VENUE IS  
The Transport Museum  
Chapel Lane  
Wythall  
Worcestershire  
B47 6JA**

**See page 5 for directions**

I would suggest arriving from 11am onward so that you give yourselves time to visit the cafe.

Our AGM will be held on a BUS which of course will be fitted with a Gardner engine. During the day we will all be taken on a short bus trip, which I am sure will bring back to you as it did with us, some wonderful memories. (In my case, "how did I get up and down these bus steps with a loaded satchel and folders in my arms", whilst travelling to school). Of course you had to sit on the top deck!!! We are also being offered a guided tour and to this end it would be very useful for me and the Museum to have an idea of what numbers to expect. Please let me know if you are intending to join us. (my contact details can be found on the inside cover). *Judith Gray*

After not meeting up for such a long time and having to cancel the rally twice this year, I am hoping that as many of you as possible will join us for our AGM. We do need you all to help us with ideas for the future and it would be lovely for us to see you and have your support.

The entry fee will be covered from forum funds.

*Items for the agenda should be sent to the Secretary:-  
Mrs Linda Kemp, Korna Cottage, Barnstone, Notts NG13 9JJ or by  
email to:- [gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk)*



**A great day out ...**

## **TRANSPORT MUSEUM WYTHALL**

The museum houses an extensive collection of buses, coaches and battery electric vehicles and also a miniature steam railway which operates on our special event days. We offer excellent facilities for groups with experienced guides, all DBS checked.

Our bus collection includes representatives from Midland Red, West Midlands PTE blue and cream, the corporation fleets from Birmingham, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, plus many independent operators.

We are home to the largest collection of battery electric road vehicles, including over thirty electric milk floats and bread vans.

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Visitors are advised to check our website and our Facebook page for the most up-to-date museum information.



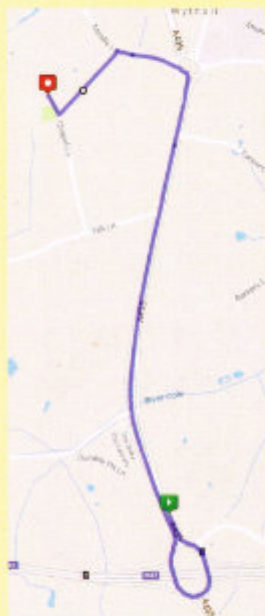
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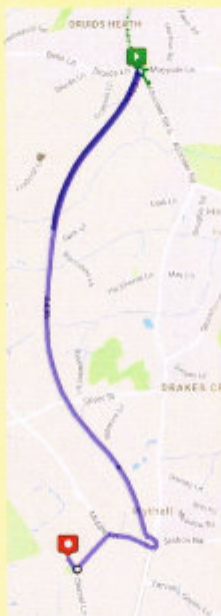
## So, just where is the Transport Museum Wythall?

We couldn't be easier to find, being just 5 minutes drive north from junction 3 of the M42 along the A435. At the first island (Becketts Farm is on your left), take the first exit - Middle Lane - then take the next left into Chapel Lane.

If you are coming from the Birmingham area, we are 5 minutes drive south from the Maypole, again along the A435. At the first island, take the fourth exit - Middle Lane - then take the next left into Chapel Lane.



From M42 J3



From The Maypole

Whether you are coming from the north or the south, once you are in Chapel Lane, turn in by the old Wythall Church and the museum is directly in front of you



We look forward  
to seeing you

Union fees Paid  
3 Shillings  
15th June 1960

### The Transport Museum

Chapel Lane, Wythall, Worcestershire. B47 6JX

Tel: 01564 826471

Email: [enquiries@wythall.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wythall.org.uk)

Web: [www.wythall.org.uk](http://www.wythall.org.uk)

## Connecting rods for diesel engines

For over 100 years one of the leading manufacturers of diesel engines in the United Kingdom has been L. Gardner and Sons Ltd, of Manchester, which is now part of the Hawker Siddeley Group. The Manchester plant has a capacity for five thousand 6 or 8-cylinder engines each year. Most of these are used in the automotive industry for coaches and heavy-transport vehicles, while here is a growing demand for the marine engines for small-to-medium size boats. A number of stationary units are also produced, as required.

Gardners' engines have a fine reputation for high power/weight and power/space ratios. The production of these engines is largely self contained within the Gardner plant with its own foundry, machining facilities, assembly and rigid inspection at all stages of manufacture.

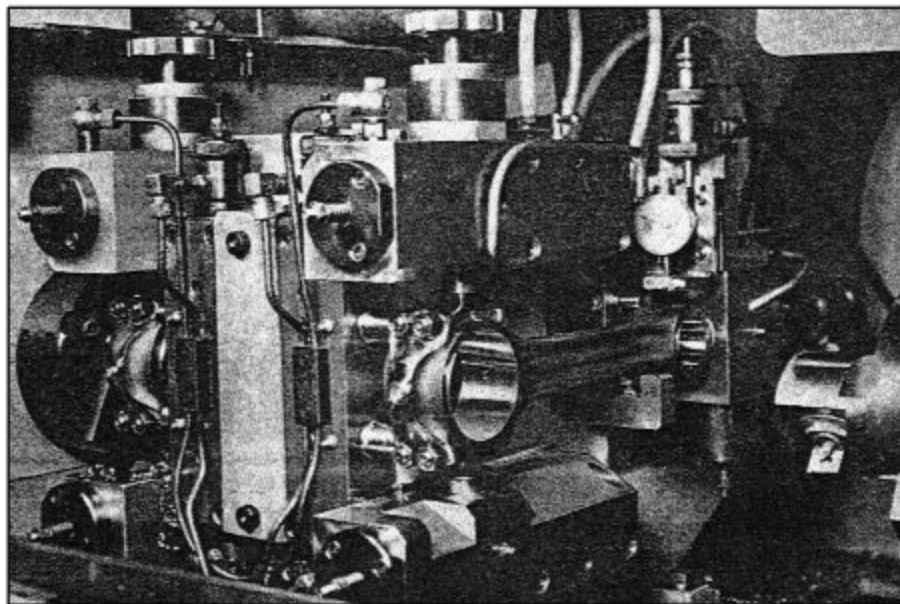


Fig. 1 Station 2 of the fixture for finish boring of the small end to Newall A limits and semi finish boring of the big end. The boring bars are fitted with Microbore tooling. The knob at the top of the fixture and gauge at the back provide a fine adjustment to ensure the two holes are in line with the boring tools.

The company has recently installed a Herbert Ultrafin, which will form part of the connecting-rod production line. The connecting rods are produced from die stampings in high-tensile, alloy steel (EN 19T) and are of 'H' or circular section. The conn-rod line produces the complete component from the die stampings to the finished part. The sequence of operations includes: drilling, turning, profiling, splitting the cap from the rod, grinding, boring, honing, polishing, inserting a bronze bush in the small end and fitting steel shells, prefinished and



lined with specially-surfaced copper lead, to the big end. The rods are also rifle drilled from end to end to provide a central duct for forced lubrication to the small-end bearing. The finished products are subject to a 100% flaw-detection inspection.

The Ultrafin has four boring heads, two at each end. Those at one end each have two coated inserts for rough boring the big and small ends and a third insert for chamfering the bores. During roughing, approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$ " is

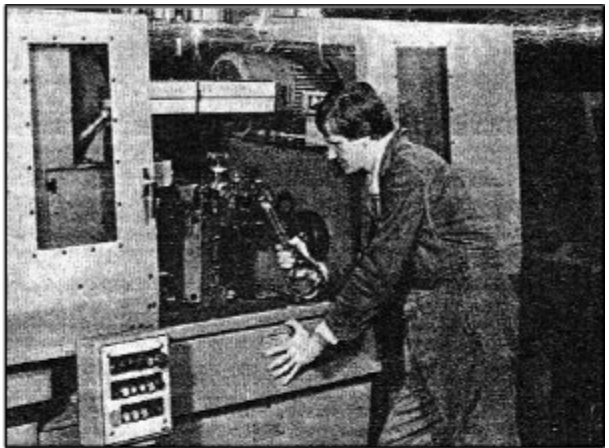


Fig. 2, Herbert Ultrafin 22H installed in the Manchester Works of L. Gardner and Sons Limited for rough and finish boring the ends of diesel-engine conn rods.

removed from the small end and between  $\frac{1}{8}$ " and  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the big end, the variation being due to the ovality caused during splitting of the cap from the rod. During machining, the rod is mounted on a two-station fixture, which clamps it hydraulically against location pins. A manual vertical adjustment and clock gauge are provided to allow the operator to adjust the component to the centre line of the boring bars, if necessary. After rough machining, the connecting rod is unloaded from station 1 and loaded in station 2 for finish boring the small end and semi-finish boring the big end. The latter is subsequently finish bored and honed at a later stage in the production cycle. While the connecting rod is being machined in the second station, the operator loads a new component in the first station. Similarly, station 2 is loaded while machining at station 1. A sliding guard, with interlocks, protects the operator from the machining station while he is loading the other station.

Before installing the Ultrafin, the machining was completed on two machines - a twin-spindle drill and a boring machine. Thus, machining time is now much quicker and occupies less floor space.

Two fixtures are available to allow two different sizes of conn-rod to be machined. The first is  $12\frac{1}{2}$ " between centres while the other is  $16\frac{1}{4}$ ". The tolerance on the finish bore of the small end is to Newall A limits, i.e.  $\pm 000075$ , - 000025 on the 2 in diameter small-end bore of the smaller conn rod.

Indexable inserts are used on the boring bars with ceramic coated tips used in Microbore cartridges for the finishing operations.

The fixtures and boring bars for the Ultrafin were designed and supplied by Alfred Herbert Ltd.

First published in Jan/Feb 1978 issue of Machine Tool Review

## Merchandise

I am sure like me you are disappointed that for the second time this year we have had to cancel our Rally. I was so looking forward to meeting up with everyone again and catching up with their news.

Due to all the restrictions, our shop has not been to an event since September, 2018.

We are going to have a sale, as we really need to move some merchandise along and give you all a chance to stock up again.

Sale items are listed below :-

T. Shirts £5 Sizes available M, L, XL & XXL

Polo Shirts £10 Sizes available M, L, XL & XXL

Black Fleece Gilets £13 Sizes available M, L & XL

Grey Long Sleeved Sweatshirts £15 Sizes available M, L, XL & XXL

Black Long Sleeved Sweatshirts £15 Sizes available L & XL

Black Long Sleeved Fleece £18 Sizes available M, L, XL & XXL

New style items:-

Navy Body Warmers £21 Sizes available L, XL & XXL

Navy Bomber Jacket £30 Sizes available L, XL & XXL

Black Bomber Jacket £30 Size XXL

L2 Sales Catalogue Reprint £5

LW Sales Catalogue Reprint £5

Postage for catalogues is £1.75

Our new items not seen at a rally yet are Tea Towels, Hand Towels, Pennants, Mouse Mats & Key-rings all at a good price. (See merchandise leaflet)

Please allow £3 for postage and package up to 2 kgs.

Thank you all for your support and keeping everything crossed, I will see you at our AGM in October.

Judith

To order email:- [gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk) or telephone

Land line:- 01384 827745.

Mobile:- 07802 494492.

Please leave a message if unanswered and I will ring back.

## Members Letter

I refer to the remark in Chairman's Notes regarding a 6LXB running backwards. In the late 1970s I was driving a Seddon Atkinson fitted with a 6LXB. One day whilst reversing up to an unloading bay, my foot slipped off the clutch pedal, I stamped on the brake and the clutch at the same time. As I was close to the bay I engaged a forward gear to move away, but went backwards, the engine was therefore also reversed. There was no oil pressure or power steering. I switched off and restarted. Hitting the brake had stalled the engine for a split second, it must have just fired a cylinder before TDC, releasing the clutch must have cancelled the stall almost immediately.

That truck, after well over 400K trouble free miles was put onto more local runs and was replaced by a new 6LXC powered Seddon Atkinson. When well out of warranty, and about 100K miles, it seized up big time. My boss replaced the engine with an old 6LXB he had in a corner of his shed. In his spare time he stripped the seized 6LXC down. In the SUMP he found a loose self-locking nut. This had come from the drive to the oil pump !!! This drive on the 6LXB was by taper, woodruff key, castle nut and split pin. On his 6LXC it was by taper and self locking nut, was this Hawker Siddeley trying to make savings ??? The makers did not offer any help at all.

N U F F S A I D.

He bought Scania's in the future.

Henry Johnson

*The practice of fitting split pins had been discontinued by Gardner's on LW main bearing and big end nuts, (long before the LXC was manufactured) provided that the nuts had been correctly tightened as detailed in the instruction manual. It would seem logical that the practice was extended to other parts of the engine range.*

*On a cost basis it would remove the need to drill a cross hole, a self locking nut is cheaper than a castellated nut, there would be no need to purchase the split pin, and it would be quicker to assemble. Maybe it hadn't been tightened up correctly in the first place. (ed)*

## BUS SPOTLIGHT

There are few places where the marriage of Perkins and Gardner has been so completely consummated as it has in Manchester.

Both ranges of engines dominate the fleets of Greater Manchester Buses - while working in total harmony.

GM Buses - as it is better known - is the second largest bus fleet in the United Kingdom. Only London can boast something larger.

More than 2,000 buses from express double - to local hail and ride minis, serve around 2.5 million people in a territory of 50 square miles stretching from Rochdale to Altrincham and Wigan to Glossop.

For Neil Scales, Engineering Manager of GM Buses, it is proving a perfect combination. He has been in the bus business all his working life - indeed, he was the last apprentice to be taken on by Sunderland Corporation back in 1972.

He admits to being a 'Gardner man' - a believer in an engine marque he has seen prove its worth where it counts, out on the bus routes, year after year.

'Fuel is one of our biggest operating costs, so we need fuel efficient engines which give us absolute reliability and a life of around 15 years. And that's been my experience with Gardner.' Greater Manchester, traditionally a Gardner flet, now runs 1700 double deckers - most powered by the Gardner 6LXB engine offering 188bhp of dependable power at 1850 rev/min.

They include Leyland Olympians and Fleetlines as well as MCW Metrobuses and Dennis Dominators.

But with deregulation, Manchester has looked long and hard at minibus potential. It has responded to sharp competition in its southern territory, by introducing a fleet of over 300 minibuses including 80 Metroriders powered by Perkins new six cylinder Phaser 125 engine.

This new fleet required a £7 million investment - big numbers, even for the country's

second largest bus operator. Before the decision was taken, there was a lot of weighing up of the available options.

'We felt that Phaser was an engine which would give us the performance we were looking for, coupled with both reliability and durability.'

The new Metroriders joined an expanding fleet of Dodge 556 minibuses - already the largest of its kind in the UK - to boost GM Bus's Little Gem operations.

They are powered by Perkins six cylinder 6.247 engines and more recently the turbocharged four cylinder Perkins T4.236.

The Perkins-Gardner marriage at Manchester is completed in the single decker fleet - Gardner 6HLXTs in Leyland Lynx buses and the turbocharged T6.3544 in Dennis Domino buses. The Dominos run on the circular Centreline route in central Manchester, between the two mainline rail stations.

The minibuses are 'here to stay' in Manchester, says Mr Scales. 'They have an important place in our kind of operation, particularly in those areas where big buses cannot go.'

With replacement programmes around 15 years for big buses and five years for minis, Mr Scales believes that he must always specify engines he is convinced are capable of 'staying the distance'.

'We specify our big buses completely, including the engine, of course. There is less scope with the minis but in the case of the Metro rider the choice of Phaser was a conscious decision. 'Obviously it is still early days yet, but so far this engine is living up to all our expectations of it.'

'The reliability of Gardner engines, of course, is legendary,' he added.

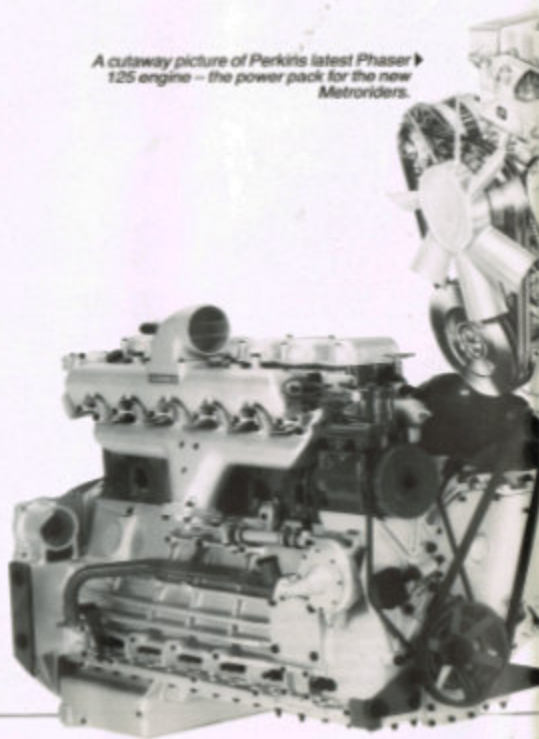
The impact of deregulation is still being felt in Manchester, as it is in other parts of the country. But, whatever the pattern of bus operations to finally emerge it is clear that GM Buses will continue to rely on the Perkins and Gardner marriage of powerful convenience.



▲ A MCW Metrobus powered by Gardner 6LXB engine on the GM Bus picking up in the Piccadilly centre of Manchester.

## A MARRIAGE OF POWER CONVENIENCE IN MANCHESTER

A cutaway picture of Perkins latest Phaser 125 engine - the power pack for the new Metroriders.





Express service –

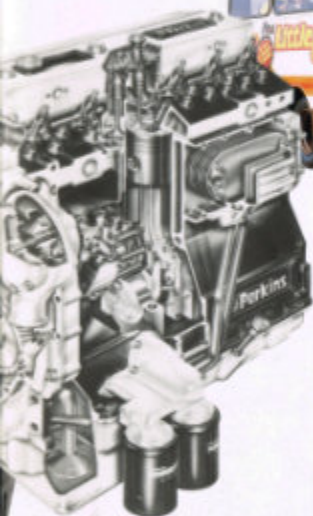


# POWERFUL

▲ Commuting backwards and forwards on a route between Manchester's two mainline stations – Piccadilly and Victoria is a Dennis Domino powered by Perkins turbocharged T6.35-44 engine.



◀ A Dodge S56 minibus – part of the Little Gem fleet – which is powered by a Perkins T4.236.



▼ Latest addition to the GM Fleet the MCW Metroliner. The choice of Phaser to power the buses was a 'conscious decision'.



◀ The Gardner 6LXB – 188bhp of dependable power at 1850 rev/min.

## Family Fortunes.

### *Horace Webster*

*First Published in the June 1995 edition of Trucking International Magazine*

When a basic cab design is retained for over twenty years, it is sobering to think that early versions have, by now, assume historic vehicle status. At the time the ERF B series was launched in 1974 its SP tilt cab was at the forefront of styling and drivers comfort, ready to compete head on with the European imports. Even today it does not look out of place with trucks from the 90's. The most extensive re-styling on the SP came with the current EC range. In EC guise the cab is designated SP5, but there are some of the early SP1 cabled trucks still earning their keep. Their resistance to rot gives them an exceptionally long service life. Ronald Webster's 1976 B series 8 wheeler bears testimony to



ERF's longevity, harking back to an era when Gardner Engines and "Brown" boxes were the order of the day. Based at Kirby Muxlow near Leicester, the ERF is now engaged exclusively on the transport of concrete products for the Alexander Stone Company a mile or so up the road at Ratby. That company has provided a significant share of Horace Websters traffic for many years. Horace, Ronald's father founded the family business back in 1926 and as his six sons grew up, five joined the firm. The eldest brother, Peter retired at the end of 1994 and effectively wound up the Horace Websters licence. However, 63 year old Ron and his other brothers (all of whom hold CPC's) are carrying on as owner/drivers using the same distinctive grey and blue livery.

Of the five brothers Ron was the last one to take up trucking. His life's passion is for machines of a different kind - Aeroplanes. Ron spent the first twenty years of his working life in the Aircraft Industry, but in 1975 he was made redundant

and decided to turn his hand to driving. His first vehicle was a Bedford KN 6 wheeler, one of three that Websters operated at the time. That was nearly twenty years ago but the work was much the same as it is today - paving slabs to Council Depots and builders' merchants. Most journeys were to the south east and it was usual to back load steel coils to the Midlands, he could get another five tons on per trip. When the KM came up for renewal Ron was hoping to get another Bedford preferably a new HMX3 TM2600 But Peter figured that with an eight wheeler he could get another five tons per trip Of course Bedford did not offer a TM eight-wheeler so the brothers opted for a good second-hand ERF, SFP 744R began life as a tanker in the fleet of J O Treasure of Grantham. They had a number of tankers on milk transport for the CWS and Milk Marketing Board. The company was moving over to artics and SFP 744R was one of the last rigids to join the fleet came up for sale after barely two years' service.

"We purchased it in chassis/cab form through Cossington Commercials," says Ron. "Being a trailing axle model it was light in weight and we found that with a flat body it took a full 20-toil payload."

The sturdy alloy and timber body was built by Saunders of Stapleton in Lincolnshire. Under the bonnet the 1977 ERF (officially designated a 31.G 4RD SB6) still has its original Gardner 6LXB 180. With 1.4 million km to its credit it has never given any trouble and apart from a new set of pistons and liners in 1990, it has needed no attention.

Ron has particular praise for ERF electrics. "The best I've ever seen on a truck," he says. "It has circuit breakers, which are so much better than fuses." The truck still has its original alternator, too.

The original David Brown 6A six-speed overdrive gearbox did not match the Gardner on durability. About seven years ago it began playing up. "It needed a new mainshaft," explained Ron. It was going to cost about £800 so I decided to look for a good second-hand Fuller. I managed to get an RT9509 for £400 from Translitre at Swadlincote and installed it myself.

The bolt holes lined up with the existing bell housing so it wasn't too difficult a job. I had to tap into the air system for the supply to the range change. A protection valve was fitted and it all worked perfectly. I had the propshaft shortened by Wilson Driveshafts of Nottingham.

Being a direct top box I lost a few mph on the top speed but about six years ago the diff went and I contacted ERF to see if there was a choice of higher ratios for the Eaton axle. They were really helpful. Even though the lorry was 13 years old they immediately found its history and specified exactly what I needed. It was a Mr Reynolds who dealt with it and I was really impressed."

With his long experience in aircraft engineering Ron is well equipped to maintain the ERF. He does virtually all his own maintenance while his brothers rely on the services of Forest Motor Co. Ron speaks highly of Forest proprietor David Mosely, a brilliant engineer who can be relied on to put the lorries first,

even if it means going over to the Continent to sort out any trouble. With his engineering expertise Ron has come up with a few innovations of his own. Gardner-engined vehicles are well known for their cool running and in winter even the best of heaters takes an age to get going. Ron was so fed up with having numb hands and feet that he designed and fitted his own supplementary heater. The hottest part of the engine is the first section of the exhaust pipe just below the manifold, so he welded a 45 cm-long jacket around the pipe, from which hot air is drawn through a flexible pipe to the standard heater.

When the cab is tilted the pipe automatically detaches itself from a port in the cab floor. It can easily be slipped back on as the cab is lowered. Now the cab warms up quickly even on the coldest days.

Although the ERF now has a nine-speed box and a two-speed axle, giving it 16 forward gears (plus crawler), the gearstick just has the usual Fuller range change control. At first glance the two-speed change button appears to be missing. Then Ron points to the heater console. Sure enough, the two-speed switch is mounted next to the heater controls. "With both controls on the gearstick it would have been too cluttered," Ron explains, "so I came up with this idea, it's easy to reach and I have come to prefer it."

Apart from such mods the ERF's cab is pretty standard, having survived exceptionally well for 18 years. One casualty has been the door trim panels - they began to go brittle and crack so Ron decided to replace them with good old fashioned plywood.

Externally the ERF's appearance has been enhanced by the fitment of an 80-gallon aluminium fuel tank instead of the standard 60-gallon square steel tank. The Gardner 6LXB might be a dying breed but few modern engines can match it on economy. Ron's ERF returns 10.6 mpg - and that's after nearly a million miles of hard graft. It cruises comfortably at 55 to 60 mph. "It's got a speed limiter," jokes Ron, "it's called a Gardner 180!"

SFP 744R is the only eight-wheeler operated by Horace Webster in its 70-year history. In the early days Horace operated a single truck, a 1923 Chevrolet 25 cwt with which he carted building materials locally. Before that he was employed in engineering, but the slump of 1926 forced him onto the dole.

Trucking was one business that seemed to have a future. He was right. In time he bought another vehicle — a GMC truck that had been converted from a bus. That was in 1938.

It wasn't until after World War II that expansion really took place. Peter began his driving career in the army where, among other things, he transported medical supplies along the Burma Road. He joined the firm in 1946 when his father was in ill health, took over the reins and built the company up.

The trucks were then Austin K4s but they later moved on to a Seddon MkV and Bedford S-types. Then came Bedford TKs, KMs and finally TM and MAN artics.



Traffic progressed from local work to long distance and eventually to European work. The Websters pride themselves on their clean record. In all the years they have operated they have never been convicted of speeding or overloading and not one GV9 has ever come their way.

The next brother to join the firm was Raymond, who was demobbed from the army in 1951. Then came David, who drove trucks in the RAF and later spent some time driving for Alexandra Stone. From 1961 he too joined the family firm. About four years later Richard, then 22 and just out of the army, joined the growing business.

It was the era of the Bedford TKs, but they were soon to get their Bedford KM six-wheelers. Ron was the last brother to join the firm, having put in his two decades with aeroplanes. He went on to a KM six-wheeler (a 1968 model with York third axle conversion) in 1976 when the fleet consisted of three such KMs and a Guy Big J. Two Big J's were operated, one having an AEC 505, the other a Leyland 'headless' 500.

Most of the traffic was concrete products and steel, but there were growing opportunities on the European front. Peter was on friendly terms with Barry Hercock whose firm, Hercock Simpson, was expanding its continental traffic. There was enough work for some to be subbed out so Richard bought an MAN artic and began doing continental runs.

David and Peter did the same. All three operated MAN units with their own 40 ft tilts. Loads often consisted of Caterpillar forklift trucks to Italy and Mars confectionery to Switzerland. Return loads consisted of washing machines or marble from Carrera Quarry in Northern Italy.

David and Richard still undertake a mixture of UK and continental work and have stayed loyal to MAN, but Ron is content to stick with his B-series eightlegger on Alexandra's work. "The rates might not be that high," he says, "but Alexandra is a good regular payer and that's important."

Ron plans to put in at least another couple of years with the ERF before he retires, but in his spare time he has rather an unusual hobby. For the past 17 years or so Ron has been designing and building his own aircraft engines.

While most aeroplane enthusiasts are content to build models, Ron set his sights higher and has designed his own five and seven cylinder radial petrol engines under the name of Webster Whirlwind.

The latest is an 85 bhp seven-cylinder. Prior to building his first five-cylinder 45 hp radial, Ron built his own light aircraft, which he powered with a 1600cc VW flat four rescued from a scrapped one-ton van. He has let his private pilot's licence lapse, but hopes to renew it at some stage. With 20 years in the aircraft industry and 70 years of family trucking heritage behind him, it looks like Ron will be flying high for some time to come.

## 2022 Rally

Preparations for the 2022 rally started in January, contact was made with Bugsworth Heritage Trust to confirm that we would be able to use the site, Roger and Jan at the Navigation Inn contacted to see if they would be organising a Buggy Bash this year and then confirming the date that they had planned. A promising start, only permission from Canal and River Trust to be completed. A delve back into the computer archive to find the risk assessment and site plan from our previous visit. One off event insurance to cover the weekend with a cover of £10,000,000 sorted. Online forms filled in and submitted, with each new application there has been another section with further requirements added that we need to comply with, this time the need for a "Safeguarding Policy", fortunately they do provide a template document to work from. Late in March a reply from the department that deals with event applications at C&R.T was received.

*Please find below some queries in relation to the above application.*

1. Confirm number of boats attending the rally (the Trust have concerns around water management)
2. Confirm all boats will be licensed and insured
3. What first aid contingency will be in place?
4. Emergency access points to be identified and the weather considered as part of the risk assessment
5. Will attendees receive a safety briefing?
6. Will there be a designated harbourmaster?

So a few more hoops to jump through, risk assessment updated to cover the points raised and re-submitted. This left us waiting for the final approval from C&R.T.

Entry forms had been sent out with the Newsletter, completed forms were trickling in.

I was aware that there was likely to be some restrictions on the use of the waterway, but the expectation was that it would likely be later in the year when boat movement increases, so wouldn't be an issue. In early April a three day a week usage restriction was placed on the two flights of locks that lead up to the site at Bugsworth Three weeks later it became two days a week, on days that meant boats would have to have passed through early in the week to be onsite for the weekend. Whilst this would not have been a big issue for some, it would have meant that others wouldn't have been able to get there. At this point it was decided to move the rally to another date and location. Notice was sent out to members and entrants.

So the process restarted, as we had been to Etruria for our last event, the 150<sup>th</sup>

celebration, it seemed appropriate to return again. The Etruria Industrial Museums Heritage weekend takes place in September and it left sufficient time to update and resubmit the paperwork to C&R.T. Contact was made with the Museum who were more than happy to accommodate us again. As has become traditional now at our rallies, we were looking to organise food for the Saturday Evening. As we were going to be close to Hanley the suggestion of a "Fish & Chip" supper fitted the bill. John, Judith and myself, met up at Etruria on a scouting trip, we were fortunate to meet up with Bernard from the museum who recommended the "Venus" Fish Bar about a mile away. As it was around lunch time a visit to sample the wares and to see if they would be able to provide the service needed was deemed necessary. The food proved to be of good standard and they had varied a menu from which to chose, plus they could arrange delivery to site, food sorted!. Things were going smoothly. In Mid July I received approval for the rally along with the appropriate paperwork. It looked as if everything was going to plan. No sooner that I had received the event licence, another navigation restriction that was going to affect us was announced. It was a restriction on opening times, but still meant that we could hold the rally. This was quickly followed by a full closure of the canal, with no alternative readily available there was no choice, the rally could not go ahead. It was now the end of July and I was away on holiday. Once back home all members were contacted to inform you of the situation. A call to the insurance company cancelled the insurance and fortunately a full refund of the fees. The order for the plaques was cancelled, fortunately the casting of the plaques had not started so there was no cost to cover other than for the new pattern.

So where do we go in the future? With the water supply issues following the failure of Todbrook Reservoir, it looks likely that the same conditions will occur again next year. Previously, the rally's have been held at Astley Green (Manchester), this is the nearest that it has been to the works at Patricroft. Nottingham (twice), Castlefields (Manchester), Walsall, Dudley (twice) Gloucester, Wrenbury, Huddlesford, Bugsworth (twice) and Etruria. As time has moved on, some sites have changed and are no longer available for us to use. Only Bugsworth and Etruria are venues where the exhibits are grouped closely together and that there is passing public and other attractions. Others are more remote sites and therefore the event becomes self contained. We received an invitation from member Mike Hodgkinson to visit Stafford Boat Club with a view to holding a rally there. Judith and myself met Mike for a look around at what is a very nice site that has the space to accommodate us It does however have a very restricted access road, which we considered to be

unsuitable for the larger commercial vehicles with have attended in the past. We have also received a recommendation from member Kevin Silvester about having a rally at Aston Marina near to Stone. Kevin is going to investigate this further for us.

On our travels this year we passed through Middlewich and passed the Lion Salt Works Museum near to Northwich. Both have the potential as a suitable site. Another possibility is Wigan near to Trencherfield Mill. All of the potential venues need to be investigated. It really needs someone who lives in the vicinity to do further research to decide on the merits and suitability of each venue. If you are a member who lives in the vicinity of any of the mentioned places and can do the spade work, it would be of great assistance.

Without more members becoming involved, then in the future rallies are unlikely to happen.

Other than Stone, all the other venues are between 70-90 miles from where I live. This years event had attracted fewer entrants from all sections, with the number of stationary and road based exhibits being very low. Maybe its time for a rethink on what we are trying to achieve.

Steven

## Newsletter Contributions

It has been 14 years and 28 issues since I took on the role of producing the newsletter. Over the years I have received contributions from a few members, I have been able to find editions of older publications from which to copy articles. I have had rally's to report on and occasionally penned articles myself. As I am sure you can imagine, it is getting very difficult to find content to publish even, on a twice a year schedule, I have pretty much emptied my in-folder of suitable things to include. So do you have a favourite article from a magazine that you have saved for prosperity which would be suitable for publication, or even a tale that you could tell about a Gardner experience to relate. Most of our coverage has been about engines up to and including the LX series, with very little about the later LYT, YT, DT, and LG1200 Please raid your archive for suitable material and send me a copy.

*I have been sent a photograph of a 4LK conversion to a tractor with a Landrover in the background, I would like to use the photograph but cannot remember who sent it to me, it is dated May 21 so is recent. Please let me know from where it came so that I can acknowledge it.*

Steven

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# ANSON ENGINE MUSEUM



**For 2022 opening times check the website**

The Museum holds many records of Gardner and other makes of engine and also offers a dating service. Go to <http://www.enginemuseum.org/news.html> to find the downloadable enquiry form

Special events occur throughout the year normally at Bank Holidays See the Museum Website [www.enginemuseum.org](http://www.enginemuseum.org) for up to date information

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