

*BANCROFT MILL ENGINE TRUST*

*WINTER NEWSLETTER 2011*

*Dear Member,*

*Here we are again, into yet another year - this is the ninety-first year of the Mill, and the thirty-first of the Trust - with loads of work still going on and never enough time to get it all done. There will be the usual last minute panic as the first steaming date approaches.*

*Last winter the front low-pressure Corliss admission valve was overhauled. This winter it was the turn of the back one. New bronze bushes have been made and fitted and steel bearing faces trued up. It should all be back in place very shortly. Other bits like the oil aquariums and pumps have been cleaned and refurbished. It is a matter of gradually working through the whole engine eventually - like the Forth Bridge!*

*Since the last Newsletter, we had a fairly successful finish to the season, with quite decent visitor numbers. In October we took part in a town centre festival day in Barnoldswick, and were able to display our wares in a big tent. It was quite a good day and we took some very useful money. Maybe we can repeat the occasion this year.*

*At the Cornish boiler inspection last year, the inspector told us that we had to replace three rivets in the underside of the boiler shell. After the end-of-season strip down and clean, we discovered that the area around the three rivets had deteriorated and that some welding was required on the plate, and a total of five rivets had to be replaced. We have obtained quotes for the work (there are not too many rivet exponents around these days), and the work should start in the next couple of weeks. The completed job has to be inspected and then the boiler subjected to a hydraulic pressure test. This involves filling the boiler to the very top with water; sealing it off; then pressurising it with a pump to about 70 psi. and noting if it remains at that pressure for half an hour. The next thing is to put all fittings back on and raise some steam; to test, not only*

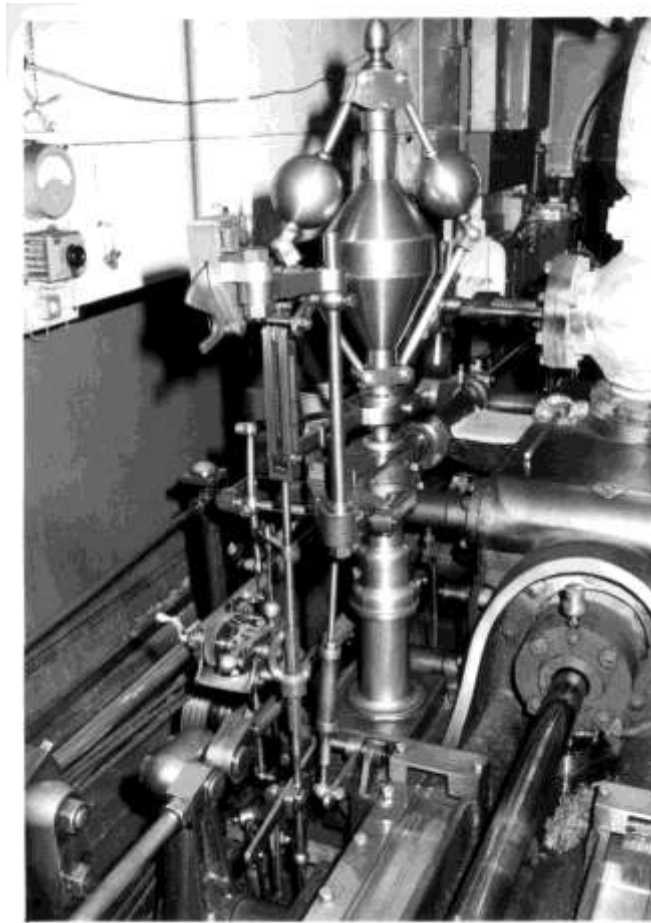
*the boiler, but also the full steam system and the engine. You see now why I spoke of a last minute panic! It is one thing to work on a boiler when it is lifted outside, but quite another in the extremely confined space in the flue under the shell, and also inside the boiler where the fire-tube makes it even more cramped. It is going to cost £2,500, but it has to be done.*



**1 Inside of the side flue of the Cornish boiler**

*Not a lot to report on the Bradley Engine front, what with the festive season and the Antarctic temperatures we have endured. However, we have obtained a full grant for installing electric power and lighting in the Bradley house, plus emergency signing, etc., so things are going on. Also included, are some extra power points for the Bancroft engine house, and power to the lathe which Geoff. F has been fettling. When it is all finished, that lathe is going to be very useful, and will earn its keep.*

*Incidentally, the PRISM grant funding body, from which we obtained money for the engine foundations and mending the cracked engine bed, has now been closed down, so we cannot apply to them any more. Sign of the times?*



**2 Governor and regulator of the Bradley engine**

*That the majority of our volunteer workforce is very firmly on the wrong side of youth and entering the slippery slope of aches and reduced mobility is beyond doubt. Mentally, however, they are (mostly) no different from decades ago. Trying to pursue youthful activities at this stage can, unfortunately, have its down-side, as one of our members discovered a little before Christmas. Having re-built an old motor-cycle, said member attempted to reclaim his youthful ebullience, but excitement overcame wisdom, and he and the bike parted whilst rounding a bend. Our subject suffered a few cracked ribs and collar-bone, but we are relieved to report, is well on the mend. There has to be a moral there somewhere.*

*It is time, once again, to ask you for your support and to start sending membership subscriptions, donations, pots of gold, etc. to me at your earliest convenience. This does make it so much easier for Richard, your treasurer, because he has to prepare our accounts ready for the end of the financial year.*

*What with the work on the boiler to pay for, the continuing work on the chimney will have to be put on hold for a while, so we need to get off with a good start. Incidentally, gift aid, which we try to get visitors to sign up to as well, has brought in a decent sum, and is a very good thing for us. I am enclosing subs. slips where appropriate.*

*Harry M. is working on the new leaflets and also a booklet about the Museum. Hopefully, they will be ready in time for the start of the season, but in any case, for your information, I am including the steaming dates for this year. We do hope, as usual, to include various interesting events on some of the steamings, but there is nothing confirmed at this time.*

*As if we did not have enough to do, we have discovered a whole raft of burst water pipes and blown pipe joints in the toilet block and canteen, and down in the work-shop. These are all mains water pipes, and although the water was turned off at the stop-cock, some remained lying in the pipes, and because of the sustained low temperatures (-15 C at times), we were caught out. The new pipe-work will have proper drain points at their lowest level.*

*Steaming dates for the 2011 season.*

<i>Sunday March 13<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>Sunday July 17<sup>th</sup>.</i>
<i>April 10<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>August 7<sup>th</sup>.</i>
<i>April 24<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>August 28<sup>th</sup>.</i>
<i>May 15<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>Heritage Day September 11<sup>th</sup>.</i>
<i>June 5<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>October 2<sup>nd</sup>.</i>
<i>June 26<sup>th</sup>.</i>	<i>October 23<sup>rd</sup>.</i>
	<i>Last Steaming November 20<sup>th</sup>.</i>

*All of us at Bancroft hope that we will see you during the coming summer (what a lovely word that is). Tell your friends about us and bring them too. Do not forget that we are at the Mill every Saturday, and the kettle is usually hot!*

*Jim Gill. Honorary secretary.*

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