

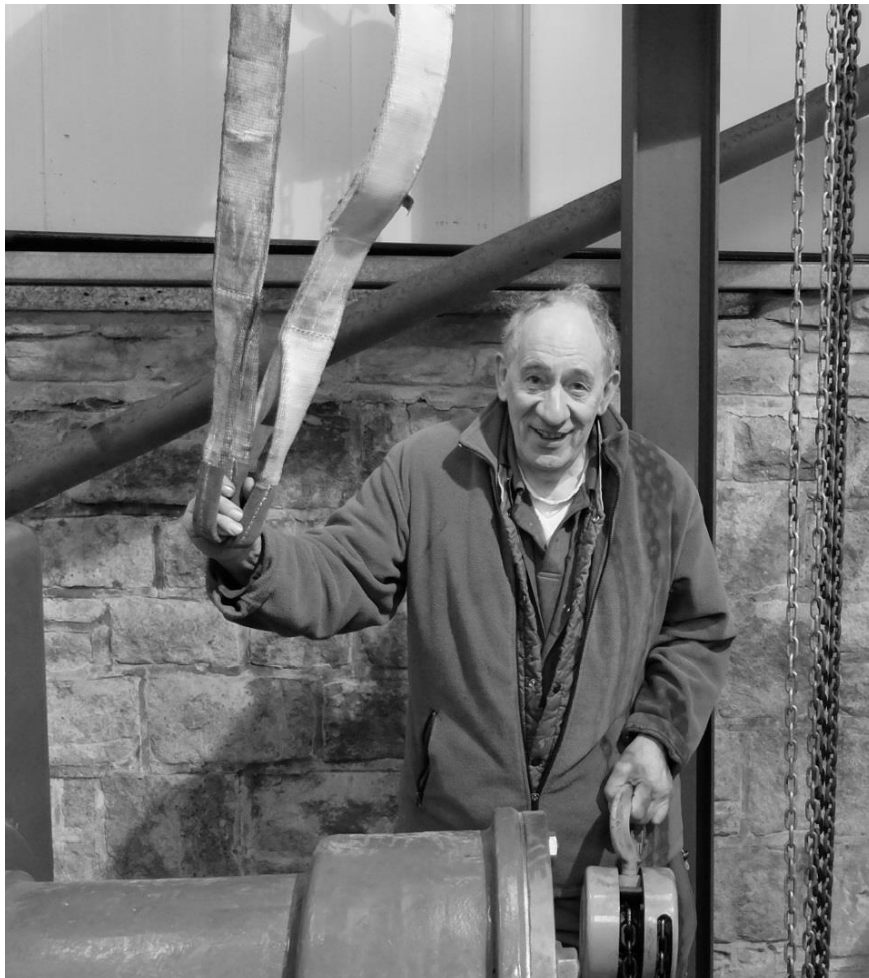
BANCROFT MILL ENGINE TRUST.

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2014.

Dear Member,

Here we are, into another year – and may it be a peaceful one for us all. Lots going on at the Mill for the next couple of months, and, as usual the new steam season will be on us before we know it. The boiler is due to be examined in a few days time, so we just hope that the Inspector passes it as fit, and there is no expensive work to be done.

The last two steam days of last year were quite good, with entertainment in the form of Morris dancers and a school choir. The steam dates for this year are at the end of the letter, so please make note of them, although they will also be on the website. On the same subject, I must mention our ladies, who do such sterling work in the canteen and shop. They are usually the first staff that the visitor sees, and they are always smiling and cheerful – we could not do without them. Thank you Ladies!



John Reid in his element

Work has continued apace on the Bradley Engine Project over the past few months. I mentioned in the last letter that the new high pressure piston was ready to be fitted into the cylinder.

But first we had to fit the gland bearings on the piston rod. These are the bearings and seals that prevent steam from escaping where the rod passes through the end covers.



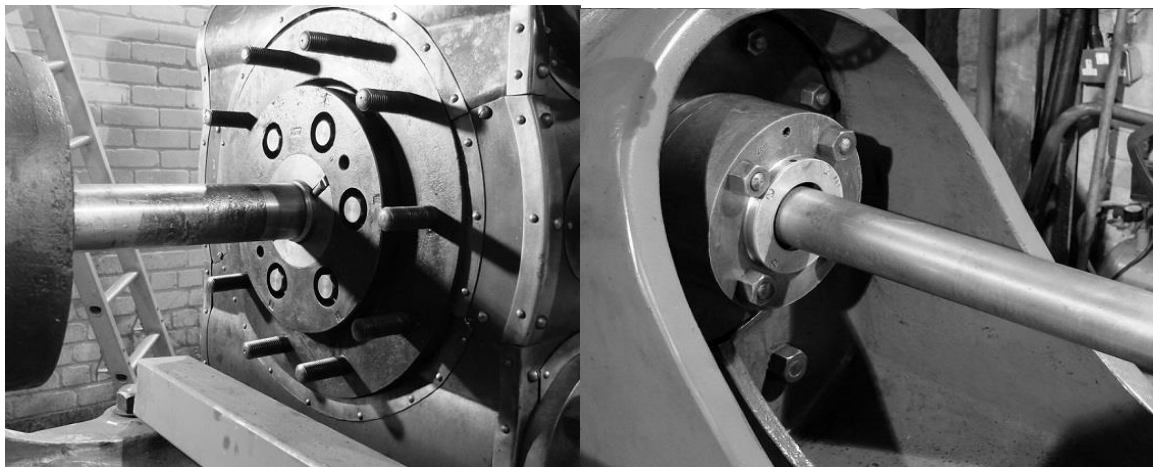
Few of the jobs are light work but the young and the....more mature get on well

They were renovated, and some new parts made, by the Bradford firm which made the originals in 1902 (although the firm is now German owned). As they do not now deal with somewhat antiquated steam seals, they had to call back an ex-employee to provide advice and expertise! They returned the parts to us, beautifully packaged and numbered and with detailed instructions. Bear in mind that there are, I think, twenty- one separate finely machined parts to each gland packing, besides a pile of small springs, all of which have to be assembled in sequence in a very small space. Fitting some of the annular springs was finicky, to say the least. Fred F had his thumb pierced at the first attempt (no lasting damage) but after that it all went smoothly, and the other two glands were completed as well.



1. The set of parts for all three gland packings delivered by Hoerbiger

The HP piston and rings were assembled and locked in position on the rod. Now it is in the bore, we will probably never see it again. Using cables and pulling gear, we have been able to move the rod to and fro, and it moves freely and smoothly.



The piston fully assembled and ready to go in.

The L.P cylinder gland packing fitted.

We are now awaiting the new main-shaft bearing shells, which have to be machined and fitted, before we can install the bottom half of the fly-wheel and the main-shaft itself.

Elsewhere David N and Derek G have completely redecorated the tea room and painted the toilet block floors. Other members of our regular team have been sorting the boiler out, ready for its inspection, and tidying the wood supply. The Bancroft engine has also been cleaned and coated with preservative for the winter months.

Now, there are a lot of attractions up here in the north: Black pudding throwing in Ramsbotham; ferret racing; turnip thrashing; the Sabden treacle mines, and the rhubarb and silage distillery; not to mention boggart hunting. Most of these things are annual events,

however, but there is something of interest at Bancroft Museum all year round, so make a point of calling to see us whenever you are in the area. You will always find a welcome, and usually, a cup of tea.

We use a great variety of tools and machines at Bancroft, but are always on the lookout for gifts of more, because of course, much of the tooling is for obsolete machines and engines, and the modern stuff will not do, or will not look right. Recently, we have been given some much needed small machine tools and hand tools, and have been promised more. We have just taken delivery of a nice pillar drill from the firm that renovated our gland packings. We do appreciate the generosity of members who do so much to keep us going. We have also been given some very good measuring instruments, which are no longer used by modern firms because they are Imperial measurements, whilst they are now using metric.

The water authority saga continues unabated. In spite of emails and letters from our Chairman, and continued input from our MP, we are now well over twelve months down the line since we first told them we could not afford their swingeing demands for collecting water that does not enter any public drain. When they will, if ever, get their act together and sort something out is anybody's guess. Meanwhile, they say they have all sorts of meeting, run around in circles, and achieve nothing.

As promised, here are the dates of steamings for this year:

16 th March	17 th August
6 th April	13 th & 14 th September (open days)
27 th April	5 th October
18 th May	26 th October
8 th June	16 th November
27 th July	7 th December

Don't forget to put them on your calendar.

Subscriptions are now due for this year. Please send them to me at: Mean Moss Farm, Boulsworth Road, Trawden, Colne, Lancs. BB8 8ST.

Those of you who have already paid should receive their membership cards with this letter. Those that have not yet paid will receive them in the next letter, or may collect them from the Museum. The subs. Remain the same: Adults £12. Senior citizens and under 16 years,£10. Life £120.

Remember that subs. and donations are the lifeblood of the Trust. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing you when the new season begins. Goodbye for now.

Jim Gill (Honorary secretary). Tel: 01282 865626.
February 2014.

P.S: As we are going to press, the inspector has been and the boiler has passed with a clean bill of health. Phew! (Ed.)