

# MAINE BEARINGS

*the official publication of*

MAINE ANTIQUE POWER ASSOCIATION, INC.

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"PUBLISHED QUARTERLY--FREE TO CURRENT MEMBERS"

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Dear MAPA member:

Where did Spring go? It is supposed to be back this week! The show season will be underway shortly! The show schedule has been posted on the website, please print it out. Some events have been deleted and others have been added. We will advise you of any additions etc., by email. Updates will be posted on the website.

The 6th annual Model Festival was held at Owls Head Transportation Museum. This is always a great pre-Spring event. Several MAPA members exhibited. As always the OHTM staff did an exceptional job organizing and hosting the event!

**Website:** We will be utilizing the Website to relay information to you. The Maine Bearing newsletters are posted and past editions are archived. With the costs of printing and mailing, the website is a great way to save money and get information out quickly. The more you access the site, the easier it will be for you to get comfortable with the format. The site is very easy to navigate. Be sure to check the Business Card ad page and the Classified Ads as these are updated periodically. Dane has been busy with many revisions and has done an excellent job! Thanks!

Please make sure to update Joe on any **email address** changes you have, so you can receive email updates and notifications.

**Annual Show(s):** The 42nd Skowhegan show is scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup>. Once again, we will be having a merchandise raffle and a 50/50 drawing, plus the silent auctions. These have been very successful in past years. Please, if you can bring an item to donate... Oil, gloves, hats, tools, handmade items, etc, these would be appreciated. Please make sure this is good merchandise. We aren't holding a rummage sale! If you can contact a major tractor dealer in your area, ask them for a few hats and leave a copy of the show flyer. It would be appreciated. Also, please promote the show by circulating show flyers in your area. If you need a flyer, you can print one from the website.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Fall show will be held on October 10th, at the Cumberland County Fairgrounds. Last year Lyle Merrifield and his wife hosted us. They served bean hole baked beans and hot dogs with home made potatoe salad. It was awesome! They plan on doing it again this year!

**May 17th Workday:** We will be inspecting the roof coating on the building. The interior needs to be cleaned and neatened up. We will have a Skowhegan Fair Committee meeting (Don Vining, Dave Huling, Rick Gilbert, Tim Mayberry and Joe) to discuss the equipment to be run. Any other members that are interested in being on the committee are welcome to contribute.

**Skowhegan Fair Staffing:** We need a minimum of **at least 4** members to staff the building and run exhibits each day of the Fair. Per our lease agreement with the Fair, we need to staff the building for the 10 days of the Fair. For some reason my communication regarding this subject was not understood last year. The goal here, is to have running exhibits and do demonstrations. We cannot do this without enough members present. We have many retired members who are encouraged to help out! We have engines in the building that can be operated, you don't need to haul in your own display, just yourself! Make sure and have your current membership card to get in at the Beech St. gate. Any questions please call me.

**Safety:** Every MAPA member is a duly authorized **Safety Officer!** If you see an infraction, bring it to the attention of the operator! Please **do not leave running machinery unattended!**, these are old mechanical devices and are subject to failure. A **fire extinguisher** is required for all operating exhibits. Please observe the Safety Rules for your benefit as well as the general public. Be safe and enjoy the season.

**Insurance:** You must be a "member in good standing", that is your 2015 dues have to be paid to exhibit. This is a requirement of our insurance carrier. The contact person at the event will be responsible for checking this. Please have your current membership card with you at the events you attend this season. We appreciate your co-operation. Enjoy the shows and we'll see you there, Thanks!

**Engine School:** Recently Russ Welch and Doug Kimball conducted a 3 week school on stationary engines at Willowbrook Village. 6 students attended the classes. Robert Schmick, who is the Museum Director hosted the event. It was very well received and MAPA was the recipient of a \$345.00 donation as a result of the fee charged. There may be another class (one day) this Fall. We will advise you of this. Thank you to Russ, Doug and Bob for their efforts!

Have a great season and please operate your equipment **Safely!**

Joe Kelley  
Chief Engineer

Here is an article by Paul Baresel. Paul recently attended a "Steam School". You will find it interesting.

How many of us have wondered and envied the engineer of a steam train or the operator of a steam car? Recently, I had the opportunity to go to a steam school that focused on historical boiler safety for steam traction engines. Already inquisitive minds are asking "What the heck is he talking about?!". The best description of a steam traction engine is a steam locomotive on wheels.

I have an interest in steam and own a steam boat as well as a stationary steam engine. I knew that my chances of owning a Stanley or White steamer would be equivalent to winning the Power Ball. So, I attended the Steam School at the Somerset Steam and Gas Engine Association located in Somerset, VA.

Our timing was great for terrific weather. No snow, plenty of green grass, flowers, and no bugs. Somerset is located northwest of Richmond, VA. The area is beautiful for its small rolling hills and horse or cattle farms. The Association is located right in the heart of this country. It is actually on a working cow farm.

The Pasture Party is held every year on the Fairfield Dairy Farm. The show developed from Gil Robert's Father who use to fire up his steam traction engine near the side of the road for people to see living history. It has developed into a yearly event and school information can be obtained by to their website [info@somersetsteamandgas.org](mailto:info@somersetsteamandgas.org).

I wanted to learn more about historical boiler safety and operation. Primarily, the method of steam produced in steam trains and traction engines is the fire tube boiler design. This method is still used today, but historical boilers require more detailed boiler inspections as well operation. (Each state develops its own standards for inspections.) The operation is nothing like stepping on a gas pedal and go! We focused on learning how to coordinate the traction linkage and steam pressure to develop a smooth start as well as learning what to observe going up and down hills and parking the tractor.

Briefly, a steam engine has steam entering at both ends of the cylinder to push the piston up or down. The steam is timed to enter to push the piston just as the exhaust steam is leaving the cylinder. The valve system is not like valves on a 4 stroke combustion engine.

One unique characteristic of a stream engine is when the piston is at top dead or bottom dead center with the piston rod and eccentric all in a straight line. The piston will not move if steam is applied because the crankshaft cannot turn. Learning to coordinate the forward and reversing linkage quickly and apply short bursts of steam to get the crankshaft to move is challenging. The other method is to get off the tractor and physically move the flywheel. The term to bar over an engine is when this situation occurs on a large steam engine. A custom pry bar was designed to turn the gears and move the flywheel. As hard as I tried, I just could not smoke the wheels in the cow pasture.

I do not know how many traction engines exist in our New England states that are working or were actually used as tractors. There were no rocks and small hills that make safe operation of the tractor in Va.. There are much larger tractors located in the Midwest because of the flat land.

The Farm Collector Magazine offers a listing of several steam schools. I chose this school because of its small class size and it was located in an area of the country we had never visited. Each school is a little different, but all focus on steam theory and safety. You can still attend a school this year by going its website [www.farmcollector.com](http://www.farmcollector.com) and see what schools are available this year. Remember, telling your wife or partner that you want to go to school in another state is always an excuse for an adventure. Actually, you cannot wait to get your hand on the throttle!

