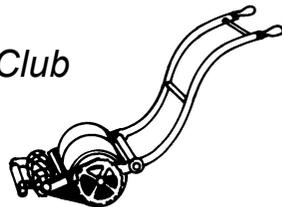


# Grassbox

*The magazine of The Old Lawnmower Club*

Number 80 Spring 2012





Fred Pettit has recently restored this 16" Greens SM De-Luxe. This is the mid 1930s version, with the large nameplate. The last models made in the late 1930s had a much smaller simpler scraper plate. The De-Luxe was the only Greens hand mower to have these grassbox handles fitted to it, and, unlike the Supreme, had cast aluminium frames rather than steel plates. This mower was the Greens equivalent to the Ransomes Certes, yet is much rarer, and as Fred has noticed, seemingly little regarded by most collectors. The transfer was made for Fred by Grant Simpson, a collector from Australia.

## CONTACTING THE CLUB

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**Club Secretary:** Michael Duck. T: 01460 241374

**Treasurer/Club Renewals:** Dick Hardwick T: 01462 816018 E: [treasurer@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk)

**Souvenirs/Regalia:** Bernard "Robbie" Robinson, 10 Burchester Avenue, Headington, Oxford OX3 9NA T: 01865 450899 E: [bernard.robinson@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk](mailto:bernard.robinson@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk)

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## EDITORIAL

This issue should reach you a couple of weeks or so before the annual rally at Milton Keynes on weekend of the 19th and 20th May. This is the club's big event of the year, and a chance for people from all over the UK to meet up, so I hope as many of you as possible will make the journey to be there.

I have again included the auction entry form in this issue, but all entries must be received by the 13th May. Further details of all the arrangements for the event can be found later in this issue.

Also towards the end of this issue you will find a notice for members that a couple of weeks after the annual rally, Andrew Hall and Michael Duck are opening their collection to the public. Andrew asks that all those who wish to

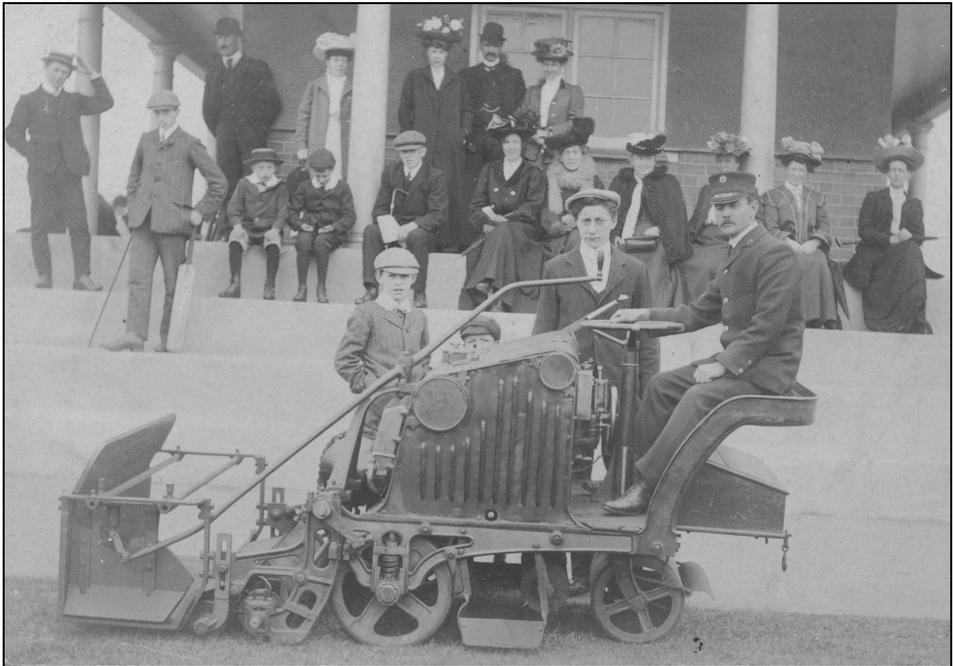
go contact him in advance for more details.

Finally, the first section of the adverts this time is composed of a list of mowers that our club shop manager, and sometime secretary, is offering for sale. Robbie Robinson has decided to sell most of his collection, and I hope that other members will be interested in the machines he has to dispose of and will ensure that they all end up in good hands.

I have had no notifications of other rallies or events for this issue - I am sure there are some, so Please let me know if you have any events later in the Summer to be advertised in the next issue!

I Look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Milton Keynes.

*This month's image from Clive Gravett: A Shanks motor mower, probably from just before the First War, location unknown.*



# THE RANSOMES AJAX

Tony Roe continues his probe into some of the lesser known details of this most successful of hand mowers

## Handle fixings

The early Mark 1 has ornate wooden handles fixed by coach bolts through centrally drilled holes and attached to the pressed steel handles by a drilled and tapped steel block welded on the end of the pressing, as *below*.



The first Mark 2, *below*, has a larger casting welded to the end of the handle pressing drilled and tapped to take the handle fixing bolt, which is very much neater but probably a bit more expensive.



The later Mark 2 is fitted with a very different method of fixing. The pressed steel handle is bent over at the top has a piece punched out out to form two tabs between which a short tubular spacer is fitted. The handle is held by a square nut on the end of a much longer



coach bolt which fits through the tabs and spacer. A much quicker and cheaper method of fixing the wooden handles. The wooden handles are also not so curvaceous as the early ones, and tend to be made of beech rather than ash.

On the Mark 1 and Mark 2, the bottom of the handles are fixed onto the frames with a pair of 3/8th BSW bolts and nuts in the upper fixing holes and by 3/8th BSW bolts screwing into the scraper/name plate in the lower fixing holes in the pressed handles. The Mark 1 and Mark 2 had no special location grooves for the handles which bolted through the castings. Mark 3 to Mark 5 use smaller unified fastenings and the handle and casting holes are thus smaller. This means that the earlier and later handles cannot be interchanged. The Mark 3 had recesses moulded in the aluminium casting to take the rib of the handle pressing and was cast with lips to locate the cover plate fitted over the outside of the handle at this point. From Mark 4 onward the handles fixed directly to the outside of the side cast-

ings with no special locating lugs or grooves. The castings of the Mark 3 differ quite a lot from later Marks. The Mark 3 has a heavy and wide casting provided for the handle to attach with the recess mouldings on the outer face to locate the handles. With the flattened ends of the pipe handles there was no need for special grooves to locate the older pressed versions. The fixing bolts provide all that is needed to hold the handles in place. The inner face of the casting had hollows cast in to save some metal, weight would not have been a consideration as the amount removed is small and the weight of aluminium saved over hundreds of castings would have mounted up.

The Mark 4 and Mark 5 mowers had a set of tubular handles which assembled using a pair of castings which joined all the sections of pipe together at the midpoint of the assembly. The casting design of all the post-war Ajax mowers was virtually identical apart from the handle mounting lugs on the Mark 3. The gear train on all Ajax mowers appears to have been unchanged throughout the whole period of production. The cylinder (reel) bearings and the method of adjustment were also unchanged. I suspect these parts would be interchangeable between Mark 1 through Mark 5, although I have not tried this.

### **Grassboxes**

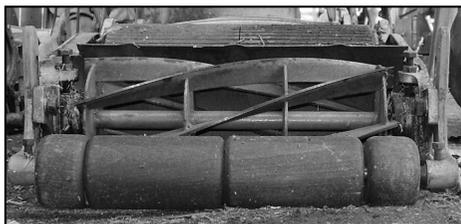
On a number of grass boxes the word "AJAX" appears in black bordered white lettering. I cannot be certain which Marks had this as the grass boxes and the mowers were all stored separately in a real jumble. As any grass box from Mark 3 to Mark 5 is interchangeable I have no way of knowing for certain

whether this was specific to one Mark only.

The grass box mountings on the Mark 1 and Mark 2 differ quite considerably from those fitted to later Mark machines. The grass box mounts between the inner faces of the front roller brackets by an open faced square-form cast bracket attached to each side of the grass box. The part fixing to the box is a "Y" lying on its side. The open face is towards the outside of the mower and the distance between the two roller brackets is 15". The later Mark 3 to Mark 5 grass boxes have a steel strip closed box bracket which mounts onto the front roller brackets. The box bracket is in the form of a single strap running back to the grass box. The distance between the front roller brackets is 14¾", therefore the earlier boxes will not fit the later machines and vice versa.

### **Front rollers**

Of all the marks, numbers 4 and 5 have to be the most similar, with only one difference between them, that being the arrangement of the wooden front rollers. On a Mark 4 all the wooden rollers are the same size, but on a Mark 5 there are two wider ones in the middle, and two narrow rolls at the edge. This enabled the middle rolls to be taken out, then a washer and split pin that came in the mower's toolkit could be inserted into the shaft to keep the side rolls at the edge, enabling longer grass to be cut. The roller arrangement is visible in the photo *below*.



# YOU COLLECT WHAT AGAIN?

By Joe Roulstone

It's 10.30pm in the middle of January. The temperature hasn't topped 2C all day and pockets of frost have lingered for days in shady, North facing nooks and crannies. I got back from walking the hound along the treacherous icy lanes about half an hour ago. When I got home, instead of dashing into the centrally heated sanctuary, I went straight into the shed to tinker with and oil my latest acquisition, a 10" Ransomes Automaton Minor (an enigmatic chain drive mower that I suspect is something in the region of 100 years old). So how did it come to this? Why on earth would anyone want to collect lawn mowers? My guess is that for most of us there are a variety of reasons involving curious synchronicities. And ultimately we may not know exactly why or how we came to have sheds populated by mowers and, perhaps even stranger, to have wish lists and collections of mower ephemera.

A love of, and desire to preserve, our engineering past is core, I think, to most of us. I grew up in Birmingham and the Black Country and evidence of living in the cradle of the Industrial Revolution was all around. Pride in hard won skills ran through the area like Cradley, and as vast swathes of the industrial heartland were flattened during the 1980s it was obvious, even to me as a child, that what was being lost could never be reclaimed. Take me on a train journey from Birmingham to Wolverhampton and I can point out park land, seemingly verdant and unspoiled and I can say, without a trace of irony, "When I was a lad all this was factories as far as the

eye could see". The mowers I collect are symbolic of days when companies manufactured the best machine they could rather than building in redundancy that would force their customers back to the market place in a few short years. I have several 100 year old machines in my collection and they work and are used. What could I possibly hope to buy from my local DIY monolith that would have that sort of longevity?

Along with the superb quality of manufacture, there is the adornment. Complex and ornate handles (the Shanks pictured on page 6 of David Halford's book is an extreme example), scraper plates (the excessive size and weight of the plate on the Drummond Willing Worker beggars belief in these slim line days) and grass box fittings (the brackets on the afore mentioned Automaton Minor's box are shaped to double as handles). All of this indicates a level of skill, pride in workmanship and attention to detail that has been all but lost. So whether it is an interest in preserving old garden machinery, or a desire to preserve evidence of our engineering heritage more generally (19% and 33% of respondents respectively in the Club's poll on the topic), an underlying interest in old machinery seems key. But is that really all there is to it?

Surprisingly, only 7% (14 voters) suggested that mowers' being cheap to collect was a motivating factor. In terms of what you get for your money, though, old lawnmowers do tend to be good value. Certainly prices have escalated as the number of shed and barn finds dwindles and more of the surviving

mowers are in the hands of collectors (us!), but most hand mowers still sell for less than £50. When one considers what £50 will buy you in terms of other antiques, beer or take away curry, old mowers suddenly become a very attractive option. Add to this the better results gained from actually mowing your lawn rather than hacking at it with a much more expensive rotary appliance, and they can become incredible bargains. Indeed, there is a lecturer friend of mine in Nottingham, a spritely young chap of some 36 summers, who now mows with a MK2 Ajax he bought from me after some haggling at a B & Q. Certainly he is in a position to buy a new mower, but the Ajax produces good results and is about as environmentally friendly as they come. It is easier for me to whip out the Shanks Caledonia and whizz round my small lawns than to dig out the Mountfield. The Caledonia cost me about 1/6th of what I paid for the modern motor mower and runs on Strong Arm power rather than ever more expensive petrol.

So what about me? I had my orders. I was getting underfoot. I was to get myself a hobby. Well, as I have mentioned previously in these pages, I am not very good mechanically. Things break when I am near them. So collecting old cars (my wife calls my 1969 Series 2A Land Rover a Folly because it hasn't moved in nearly 3 years), motorcycles (I sold my 30 year old Yamaha because I couldn't make it go), or tractors (although I still really want a Ransomes MG Crawler at some point...) was really out of the question. I'm not weighed down with money I have no use for so I couldn't buy a traction engine. And then, during my time working in a book shop, I happened to pick up a copy of

Tom Fort's "The Grass Is Greener" from the bargain bin. I was struck and captivated by the names of the mowers: Automaton, Silens Messor, Multum In Parvo, Willing Worker, Archimedean. I resolved that I would get myself an old lawn mower. I never said anything about getting 17 of the blighters!

So, I enjoy preserving this part of our history and I get great enjoyment from using machines that are still fit for purpose a century after they left the factories in Ipswich, Leeds or Arbroath. But this last is also tinged with melancholy: What a savage indictment it is on the way we do things now that the best tool I own for cutting grass was built before my grandparents were born.....

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## TOP TIP

### WOODEN ROLLERS

**By Warren Darling**

Like many members I have been collecting machines that fall into the "Seen better days" or "Not for the want of neglect" category. In nearly every case the wooden parts, handles and front rollers, are nearly always split, cracked or barrel shaped at best. Not a problem for me as I possess wood turning skills and a lathe but for those that don't then this tip may help. If you go to a local boot sale one can often see domestic pastry rollers for sale for as little as 20p. They are often made of hard wood such as beech and very well seasoned and already turned parallel and some even have a hole through the centre. You can also buy new ones from pound shops or Wilkinsons for a pound or two if you wish.

# AN UNUSUAL JP MINOR

by Henry Ellis

JP exhibited their mowers at various flower shows before and after World War two including the Chelsea Flower Show and the Southport International Flower Show. Show models were often finished in black paint with many components chromium-plated. Apparently at the Festival of Britain in 1951, JP exhibited their mowers in bright orange and chrome!

One such exhibition mower is a recent acquisition: an 11" Minor (XM IC 53) made in March 1935.

As can be seen from the photographs the side frames, cross bars and front roller assembly are chrome-plated as is the rear roller but here the plating has suffered from use. The back plate, rear roller cover and handlebars are painted black although the handlebar struts are chromed. The two side covers are pol-

ished aluminium castings. There was no grassbox so a new one was fabricated and it was decided to paint the wooden sides black to continue the scheme of the mower itself. Apart from the loss of plating on the rear roller the mower seems to have had little use as there is plenty of metal on the cylinder cutter and bottom blade and only one of the four ball bearings needed to be replaced.

The mower is the second version of the pre-war Minor having the bulbous aluminium side cover on the non-drive side and a cover over the rear roller although this is not secured to the rear tie bar as in the models from 1936 onwards. The worm drive adjuster along the top of the back plate is slightly worn but still useable (see my article on this subject in *Grassbox 58*).



# ELECTRIC LAWMOWERS – A CAUTIONARY TALE

by Stewart Baillie

Up here in Scotland my old mowers don't usually see the light of day until late April at the earliest because the grass at the rear of my house was always soggy. This was the result of poor soil (heavy clay), bad drainage, and the usual wet spring weather. This year, I was able to get the old mowers out of the shed and give them a turn about the grass during the last week of March.

I decided to use the JP Electric (made in August 1953 – date courtesy of Henry Ellis). I purchased this machine in April, 2005 from a lady near Leicester who was selling it on behalf of her late father. He had carried out a couple of modifications that required a little rework to get the mower more or less back to its original state. This included repositioning the heavy Brooks of Huddersfield "Gryphon" Electric Motor back onto the original cross bar ties and making a new Drive Coupling. The original rubber bonded coupling supplied with this model had a habit of tearing itself apart – aided no doubt by fatigue and age. I also made sure there was a good earth connection onto the motor chassis and that the mains lead connections were sound.

When I came to use it this time, I had almost finished the job when the machine suddenly stopped running. I checked the RCD (Residual Current Device) and found it had tripped. For any readers who don't know, an RCD is an electrical wiring device that disconnects a circuit whenever it detects that the electric current is not balanced between the energized conductor and the return neutral conductor. Such an imbalance may indicate current leakage

through the body of a person who is grounded and accidentally touching the energized part of the circuit. A lethal shock can result from these conditions and an RCD is therefore designed to disconnect the electrical supply quickly enough to prevent injury caused by such shocks.

Continuity checks confirmed that the 75 foot extension lead supplied by JP with the mower was fine. Further investigations revealed that the start capacitor bolted onto the motor chassis was fine also. But, I found a dead short across the live and return at the terminals behind the electric motor switch. In other words, the problem was somewhere inside the Motor.

I took the motor to the only Electric Motor Repair facility in Edinburgh. They stripped it down and found that the original rubber insulation on the internal wiring, between the motor windings and the connection points for the Mains Switch and Start Capacitor, had deteriorated to such an extent that a short circuit across the live and return wiring had occurred.

They replaced the internal wiring, fitted new bearings, and gave the motor a full electrical test. Cost £70.

The moral of the story is:

- 1. Always use an RCD with any and every electrical device in the garden.**
- 2. If you own a JP Electric or any other of these older mains driven lawnmowers, and intend to use it, have all the wiring inside AND outside tested by a competent electrician. Have the Electric Motor tested and verified as safe.**

# ADVERTISEMENTS

## FOR SALE

- 10" New Automaton £120 c/w grassbox; 10" Patent Gear Automaton £100; 10" Automaton Minor £100 c/w grassbox; 10" Chain Automaton Minor £90; 12" Anglia £50; 10" Leo £50; 12" Leo £70 c/w thrower plate & grassbox; 12" Leo £40 c/w thrower plate; 12" Leo £30 no badge; 9" Lion £40; 11" Lion £40; 13" Lion £50 c/w thrower plate; 8" Ace £50 thrower plate; 8" Ace £50; 12" High Wheel Cub £40 c/w thrower plate; Greens 8" Silens Messor £80 (1889); 10" Silens Messor £80; 10" Prince £50; Shanks 12" Britisher £50; 12" New Britisher £40; 10" Gordon £40; 14" Pennsylvania £60 (Bought from Mike Dibley Made in USA); 12" Qualcast Model E £30; 10" Qualcast Model E £30. C: Bernard Robinson. T: 01865 450899 (Oxford) E: [bernard.robinson@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk](mailto:bernard.robinson@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk)
- 18" Ransomes Marquis, BSA Sloper F12, c/w box, offers. C: John Webster T: 07580 005681 E: [johndwebster@sky.com](mailto:johndwebster@sky.com) (Northallerton)#
- 10" Ransomes Automaton, c/w box, offers; 12" Ransomes Ajax, c1970, c/w box, offers. C: Peter Dodds T: 01493 751143 E: [janandpeter.dodds@btinternet.com](mailto:janandpeter.dodds@btinternet.com) (Norwich)#
- 20" Brott 202 serial number C670377, 1967, Briggs & Stratton, c/w box, £160. C: Rose Stockwell T: 0845 345 4878 E: [stockscott@phonecoop.coop](mailto:stockscott@phonecoop.coop) (Exmouth)#
- Greens Zephyr 8, c/w box, offers. C: Kevin Briggs T: 07765 896193 E: [kevbriggs@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kevbriggs@yahoo.co.uk) (sheffield)#
- 12" Suffolk Colt, 1965, c/w box. C: Skinner T: 01392 272620 E: [dougal@okapismum.plus.com](mailto:dougal@okapismum.plus.com) (Exeter)#
- 11" JP Minor Mk2, FTGH. C: P Barker T: 07712 196579 E: [philip@barker7524.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:philip@barker7524.freeserve.co.uk) (Loughborough)#
- 21" Webb, Briggs & Stratton, c/w box, £250. C: Steve Grainger T: 01737 843159 E: [binzy1@talktalk.net](mailto:binzy1@talktalk.net) (Dorking)#
- Allen Scythe, offers; 18" Suffolk Punch, 1970s, c/w box, offers; 18" Atco, 1930s, c/w box, offers; Ransomes three-gang unit. C: John McGuffog T: 01483 214201 E: [jlmcguffog@btinternet.com](mailto:jlmcguffog@btinternet.com) (Cranleigh)#
- 19" Shanks 448KJR, 2008, Kawasaki, c/w box, £100.00. C: Tim Chislett T: 01252 640153 E: [info@busybeegardenservices.co.uk](mailto:info@busybeegardenservices.co.uk) (Aldershot)#
- Ransomes Fourteen, BSA, c/w box, £40. C: Glyn Davies T: 01792 862468 E: [walforddavies123@btinternet.com](mailto:walforddavies123@btinternet.com) (Neath)#
- 36" Ransomes Matador, c1950, JAP, c/w box, offers. C: Tony Evans T: 07970 137167 E: [tony\\_evans@live.co.uk](mailto:tony_evans@live.co.uk) (Melksham)#
- Atco, 1920-1930, Villiers, £40. C: Mike Compton T: 07876 702860 E: [m.compton@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:m.compton@tiscali.co.uk) (Bournemouth)#
- 20" Allett C20, 2006, Honda, c/w box, £1,000. C: Brian Moore T: 01227 787 129 E: [ba\\_moore@btinternet.com](mailto:ba_moore@btinternet.com) (Canterbury)#
- 12" Shanks Scot, 1930s, c/w box, offers. C: Nick Littlebury T: 0207 690 8275 E: [nlhigh@hotmail.com](mailto:nlhigh@hotmail.com) (Watford)#
- Qualcast Rotar Cut Mk V, 1963, Aspera, offers. C: Phillip Jones T: 07752 685541 E: [phillnrhigos@gmail.com](mailto:phillnrhigos@gmail.com) (Neath)#
- 14" Webb Battery, 1967, c/w box, £80.00. C: Frank Nixon T: 07730 268289 E: [frankc.nixon@sky.com](mailto:frankc.nixon@sky.com) (Preston)#
- 12" Qualcast Punch 35D/L Series 5., c/w box, but not original, FTGH. C: Tony Latham T: 01725 510214 E: [t.latham@talktalk.net](mailto:t.latham@talktalk.net) (Salisbury)#
- 12" JP Maxees, 1950/60, c/w box, £55. C: David Garwood T: 01702 544655 E: [rosewood@talktalk.net](mailto:rosewood@talktalk.net) (Southend-on-Sea)#
- 12" The Perfection, Possibly pre-war, c/w box, offers. C: Mrs N Tufrey T: 01626 368994 E: [n.tufrey@btinternet.com](mailto:n.tufrey@btinternet.com) (Newton Abbot)#
- 10" Qualcast H, 30s/40s, FTGH. C: Christopher Smith T: 01628 633051 E: [patsy\\_asmith@hotmail.com](mailto:patsy_asmith@hotmail.com) (Maidenhead)#
- 18" ATCO Kick Start, 1950s, c/w box, FTGH. C: Damon Hammond T: 07709 507903 E: [dah8@aber.ac.uk](mailto:dah8@aber.ac.uk) (Aberystwyth)#
- 12" Greens SM Junior, 1910/1920, c/w box, £40. C: John Roberts T: 07961 541 532 E: [John@Discusgroup.co](mailto:John@Discusgroup.co) (Lichfield)#
- 12" Atco, 1940s, c/w box, offers. C: Anne Gates T: 01792 232476 E: [annie.gates@live.co.uk](mailto:annie.gates@live.co.uk) (Swansea)#
- 20" JP Super Mk 4 Power Mower, c1963, Villiers, c/w box. C: Roger Brown T: 01539 821528 E: [rbrown309@btinternet.com](mailto:rbrown309@btinternet.com) (Kendal)#
- Greens Zephyr. C: Gavin Lander T: 07790 637332 E: [gavinlndr@googlegmail.com](mailto:gavinlndr@googlegmail.com) (Chesterfield)#
- 14" Suffolk Iron Foundry Punch Mark VII, c1960, Suffolk Type 75 G14 Model No 14A, c/w box,

FTGH. C: John Hallwood T: 01205 280436  
E: hallwood@btinternet.com (Boston)#  
Webb Wasp, c/w box, FTGH. C: Mrs McWiggan  
T: 0191 2364900 (Newcastle)#  
Ransomes 16" Mk2 motor mower, No A5298,  
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E: bob.kingsley@uk.ngrid.com E:  
bobkingsley@rheadgroup.com (Devon)#  
JP Maxees Mk2. C: John Milborrow E:  
john\_milborrow@o2.co.uk  
(Horsham)#  
Atco motor mower with "straight" kick start, 1935  
C: Chris Collins M: 07920 280799 E:  
cozzie.collins@hotmail.co.uk (Croughton)#  
Suffolk Colt, c/w box. C: Remo Amato T: 0208  
559 6500 M: 07824 591376 E:  
ramato@foxint.com (Essex)#  
Qualcast Panther, c1935; Folbat, c1950s C: Alex  
E: janeandalex@btopenworld.com  
(Unknown)#  
24" Atco Royale B24, c/w box, £1200. C: Liz But-  
ler-Graham T: 07894 716873 E:  
liz@colourful-communications.com  
(Tunbridge Wells)#

## WANTED

Pre 1940 lawn mowers. Anything considered,  
except Atco, including individual machines  
and whole collections. Write to Michael  
Duck, 1 Belmont Terrace, Shepton Beau-  
champ, Somerset TA19 0JX.  
19" Hayter Harrier H2. C: Alan Carter. T: 01992  
551221 (Hertford)  
Blind enthusiast seeks mowers to restore to orig-  
inal condition or refurbish. Any make and  
model as long as all parts are with the ma-  
chine. C: Lewis Alexander T: 07936 877500  
E: turningbytouch@gmail.com (Rhyl)#  
Grass box for 14" Atco Deluxe, c1980, willing to  
pay shipping costs. C: Kay T: 00 49  
17623882635 E: kayli@t-online.de (Berlin)  
Cylinder grinding machine, anything considered.  
C: Ben Laker. T: 01424 628892 M: 07908  
495452 (New Forest)

**Adverts are best submitted through the Club website as this gets them into the standard format for the magazine. However, all adverts are welcome by post or phone and are free of charge. Non members are denoted by a '#'.**

## HALL & DUCK INFORMATION SERVICE

The Hall & Duck Trust can provide infor-  
mation on almost any make and model  
of lawn mower. For just £15 per ma-  
chine they will search their extensive  
information archive and provide copies  
of documents found, dates of manufac-  
ture and more. Special rates for multiple  
queries. Please make cheques payable  
to "The Hall & Duck Trust". Send que-  
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chivist, The Hall & Duck Trust, 1  
Belmont Terrace, Shepton Beau-  
champ, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19  
0JX. T: 01460 241374 /E:  
archivist@hdtrust.co.uk W:  
www.hdtrust.co.uk**

## GARFITTS SPARES

Contact Richard Jones on 01243  
575937 or by email at  
richard.jones@oldlawnmowerclub.co.  
uk to order bottom blades, cutting cylin-  
ders and fixing screws from Garfitt's of  
Sheffield. Items ordered through Rich-  
ard are subject to special terms and you  
only need to pay the club after the order  
is received. Richard will also be able to  
offer general advice on removal and  
replacement of the blades.

## WEBSITE PASSWORD:

**Username: olcmember  
Password 12"Sidewheel**

Words must be spelled correctly with  
the right capital and lower case letters  
and symbols. Don't forget, this is a ge-  
neric login so that all members can  
access all areas of the site. If you want  
to add your own comments to pages or  
contribute to the forums you'll need to  
set up your own specific username and  
password.

# ANNUAL RALLY

**Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th May.**

## General Information

We want as many club members as possible to come to the Annual Rally. It's an informal affair and the emphasis is on meeting other collectors and discussing our unique hobby rather than putting on a show for the public. We are making a few changes this year to try and make it an even better event for members. Please read these notes carefully to find out more.

The rally is held at Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, MK12 5EL. This is in the northern part of Milton Keynes and within a mile or two you should see the museum's Brown Tourist road signs. If you need to ask anyone for directions the museum is "opposite the snooker club". Full details can be found on the OLC website, or see map opposite.

## Arrival and Registration

You can arrive on the Friday afternoon and stay on site until Sunday evening. Please do not arrive before 4pm on the Friday as there will be nobody from the club there to welcome you. If you do arrive earlier the museum will be open but please park in the car park until a member of the club can direct you to the correct location on the site. Caravans and camper vans are OK but please try to let me (Keith Wootton) know if you're coming with one of these. Drive very slowly when on the museum site. Members of the public and farm animals may be present.

Park your vehicle in the designated areas as instructed by an OLC committee member on the day. In general we

ask all members, visitors and exhibitors to take their vehicles to the museum car park as soon as any exhibits have been unloaded.

This year we are asking all members who attend the rally at any time over the weekend to register on arrival and to wear a badge. The committee hopes this will allow us all to identify and get to know each other more easily.

## Food

The museum's tea rooms will be open on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday and Sunday to serve a range of sandwiches, cakes and other light refreshments. On Friday and Saturday evenings we arrange take-aways for members who are staying overnight. Fish and chips are served on Saturday lunchtime. You are welcome to bring a picnic if you prefer.

## Displays

You can of course bring as many mowers as you like to display. This year we want to encourage as many members as possible to label their machines with basic details such as make, model, age and owner. We hope this will make it easier for other members to learn more about individual machines. Labels don't need to be very big and ideally would not obscure the mower for anyone who wants to take a photo. We will be making a special award to the member who does the best job - in the opinion of the committee - of labelling their machines.

The theme this year is "Mowers with a royal connection" to link with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The connection could be the name (eg Balmoral, Royal Blade, Windsor etc), the age

(made in 1952 perhaps) or something even looser (flags on the badge, a royal crest on the grass box!) and the idea is to be inclusive rather than put people off. But don't worry, you can bring any mowers you like whether or not they have a "royal" connection.

### Bring & Buy

You may bring mowers and associated items to sell during the weekend in our "Bring & Buy" section. Items for sale should be kept separate from exhibits. It's a good idea to mark items for sale and to include some form of identification so that other members know who to contact or ask for if you are busy elsewhere.

### Auction

The auction will take place around lunchtime on the Sunday but no sooner than 12.30pm. Please submit any entries on the form supplied with this (and the previous) edition of Grassbox. You can also send details by email to me at [keith.wootton@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk](mailto:keith.wootton@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk) but all entries must be received by Sunday 13 May at the latest. All items must be paid for and removed on the

say of the auction. A full list of items entered for the auction will be available on the website before the rally.

### Annual General Meeting

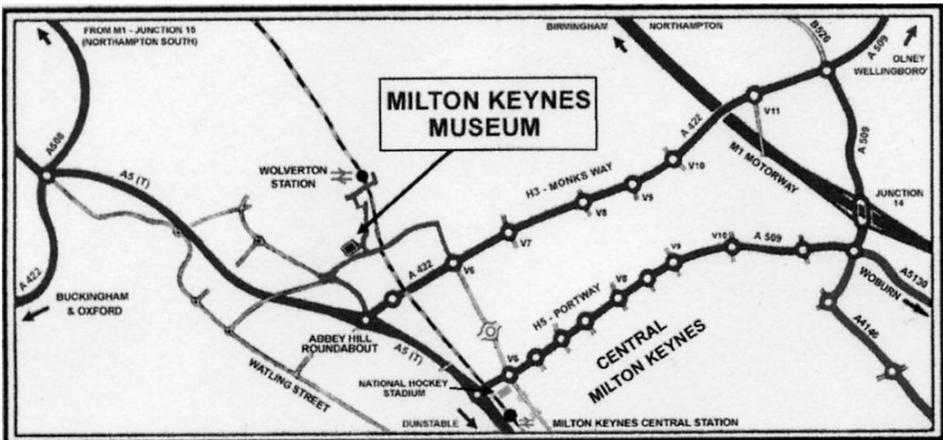
The AGM will be held at 3pm on the Sunday afternoon. This is a major change from previous years and we hope it will encourage members to stay a little longer later in the day while allowing a bit more time to arrive and chat with others in the morning. Among the issues we expect to discuss will be a proposal to raise the membership fee slightly. This is mainly because postal prices have risen so much in the past couple of years. It is important that members are involved in this decision.

### Prizes

Prizes and awards will be presented at the end of the AGM.

### Further Information

All enquiries about the Annual Rally should be directed to Keith Wootton at [keith.wootton@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk](mailto:keith.wootton@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk) or 01327 830675



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals for the year 2012/13 will be sent out after the annual rally. You will only receive a renewal notice if the address label for this edition of Grassbox includes the wording "Until: 2012" at the bottom.

## HALL & DUCK TRUST OPEN DAY

To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of The Hall & Duck Trust, we are going to open the doors of our Museum on the weekend of **June Saturday 2nd, and June Sunday 3rd**, (Jubilee Weekend) The site is near Ilminster Somerset.

We have made changes to our collection in the past year so that they are now all located on one site, so this is a chance to see rare and varied lawn mowers that do not normally come out on display. Our spares department has now been moved to create more space for display areas.

Anyone interested in attending either days or both, please reply via email to [andrew@hdtrust.co.uk](mailto:andrew@hdtrust.co.uk) or to our address: **Andrew Hall, The Hall & Duck Trust, 1 Belmont Terrace, Shepton Beauchamp, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0JX** so that an RSVP can be sent with full directions of the site.

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**Next Edition: Summer 2012**

**Edition 80 - Spring 2012. Edited by William Proudfoot**



Henry Ellis's exhibition finished JP minor, as described in the article elsewhere in this issue. Note the chrome plating and the black paint finish rather than the normal green. As usual Henry has done an impressive restoration on this mower.

14 year old Matt Jefferies has been busy with his Grandfather restoring this Mk 4 Ransomes Ajax, which he bought in quite a rusty state for £4. He says it took him about 5 or 6 weekends, and it looks as though he has made a good job. Hopefully it will be the first of many mower restorations for Matt. It's good to know that the Club is better supported than most collectors societies by younger members.





Ray Hogben recently rescued this Webb Trimmer from the scrap metal skip. These mowers are not all that common, but what makes this one special is that it still has its grassbox, and it's not just any old grassbox either. It is made out of yellow plastic, and Ray says that it is very thin indeed, and has several cracks in it which have been repaired at some stage by

smearing glue over them. The box had a steel hoop all round it, the red bit in the photos, which hooks over two projecting brackets at the front end. The Trimmer is also interesting as it contains some of the same components as the Webb Child's mower, though this is a proper working machine. It also has the front roller located behind the cutting cylinder, making the mower less stable. This may be one reason for the need to have a very lightweight plastic grassbox, as the weight of a steel one would probably tip the mower up when in use. Ray wonders if anyone else has seen one of these?

