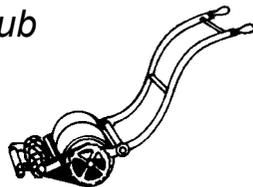


# Grassbox

*The magazine of The Old Lawnmower Club*



Number 84

Spring 2013

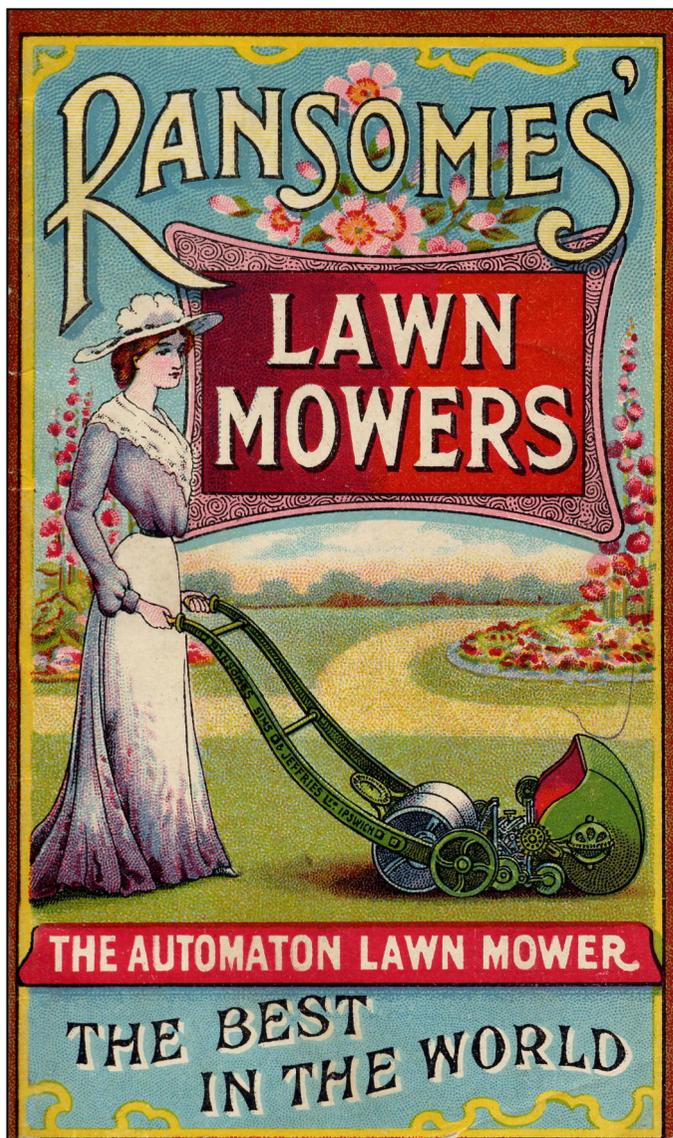
**Inside this issue:**

Revive your sparks

Re-gearing a Multum  
in Parvo

The Webb Radio  
controlled mower

Plus details of the Annual  
Rally, Auction  
and Club AGM on  
18th & 19th May.





Above: The completed 8" Mulum In Parvo. The restoration of this machine is described on page 6 of the magazine. All the red parts are new replacements. Right: The starting point for the restoration. Note the compound chain drive.



Front Cover Picture: This is the front cover of the 1904 Ransomes catalogue.

## CONTACTING THE CLUB

Please note new contact and address for the club shop, now with Richard Jones, and also new address and phone number for Keith Wootton.

**Chairman:** Peter Hampton. T: 01225 755864 E: peter.hampton@blueyonder.co.uk

**Treasurer/Club Renewals:** Dick Hardwick T: 01462 816018

E: treasurer@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk

**Souvenirs/Regalia/Garfitts spares:** Richard Jones, 13 The Avenue, Hambrook, West Sussex, PO18 8TZ. T: 01243 575937 E: lawnmower.jones@hotmail.co.uk

**Grassbox Editor:** William Proudfoot, The Old Rectory, Fawkham, Longfield, Kent. DA3 8LX T: 01474 707513 E: wproudfoot@firenet.uk.net

**President:** Keith Wootton, 9 Blisworth Road, Gayton, Northampton, NN7 3EYT: T:01604 859402 / 07778 315966 E: keith.wootton@oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk

## EDITORIAL

This issue should I hope find you all gearing up for the annual rally in May, which is our biggest event of the year. Keith has as ever organised proceedings and more details of the event can be found near the end of this issue. There is still space for lots in the auction, so we have included the entry form again, and we hope that despite your buying and selling intentions, you will still bring as many machines to display as possible.

After many years, Robbie has decided to give up running the club shop and the job has been passed over to Richard Jones, who many of you will know either from rallies or for supplying the Garfitts spares such as bottom blades. I am sure a full vote of thanks will be made to Robbie at the AGM next month, but I would like to give my own thanks for all the work he and his wife have done over the years.

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## TRANSFERS

The club has produced a number of transfers for many years. Our first designs were the round CHP logo and the "Atco Motor Mower" emblem for the Atco "Standard" mowers from the 1920s that we first produced in the mid-1990s. These waterslide decals were very popular and we still sell quite a lot. But we had to get something like 500 made to keep the price down for buyers. Over the years the cost of reproduction and the technology available has made it a lot simpler and cheaper to produce good quality designs for more mowers in smaller numbers. Today, it's relatively easy to produce stick-on decals four or five at a time and at a very affordable price because there are none of the

large up front set-up costs associated with old-fashioned printing methods. For all of the designs we sell the price you pay is more or less the cost to the club plus an amount to cover postage, all rounded up to the nearest £1 for simplicity. The aim is to keep it as affordable as possible. It also means that a relatively small amount of the club's cash is bound up in stock because in practice we only buy from the supplier what we know we will sell to members.

One principal we have employed from the very beginning is to only produce designs which we believe are as authentic and true to the originals as possible. In general we can only produce a new design when we have a reasonably good quality original to work from. An original never applied to a machine (ie on its backing paper) is best but our suppliers can also use decent photographs of designs in-situ as long as they know the precise dimensions (ie how high and how wide). We generally won't produce something that we believe to be inaccurate, has been produced by guesswork or which doesn't look quite right when it's on the finished mower.

We have only ever promoted the decals to club members which is why they can only be viewed on the website in the "members only" section (see elsewhere in this Grassbox on how to log on) or bought through Grassbox. This limited "exclusivity" is designed to be a benefit of belonging to our club. However, non-members can also buy our transfers but at a higher price.

If you have a mower with a transfer or deal on it that other members might like, send us a good size photograph with the dimensions and we'll do the rest.

**Keith Wootton**

# SPARKS

By Tony Hopwood

Since the 1850s, electric sparks have been lighting the fires in internal combustion engines. The idea is simple enough - a high voltage spark jumping between insulated points in a cylinder containing an explosive mixture will make it ignite and drive the piston of an engine. The timing of all this is critical as anyone who has suffered from a backfiring starting handle will testify.

Now for some physics (yawn yawn) - essential if you want to know why your mower won't start on that nice warm dry summer afternoon. High voltage electricity is slippery stuff - always trying to sneak off the job.

How is it generated? There are two types of generator in mowers. Flywheel and separate magneto. The principal is the same in both - two coils of insulated wire move rapidly past an iron core or vice versa. This causes a heavy current to flow in a thick wire primary winding which is shorted by a contact breaker and condenser. At current maximum, the contact breaker opens dumping the energy stored in the magnetic field into the secondary winding comprising many thousands of turns of well insulated fine wire. This primary voltage spike of a few hundred volts is multiplied to thousands of volts, enough for a spark to jump the gap on the plug. However, as mentioned earlier, high voltage electricity is slippery stuff always trying to escape, and probing for any weak link in the chain.

So where to start if faced with a dumb engine, having checked the fuel is fresh

and getting through the carburettor into the cylinder, and that there is compression. First remove the plug and check the insulator is clean and not covered in soot or that the points aren't bridged by a flake of carbon or a blob of oil. Check the gap is no more than 20 thou. Then place the plug on the frame (not on any plastic bits) so you can see if there is a spark. Top tip - I use a button magnet of an LED torch to hold it down firmly while winding the engine. If it's sunny, the spark is not easy to see, so you can put a bit of tube on the thread and look down. If there is a spark, close the gap by about 5 thou and squirt some lighter fuel into the cylinder, then replace the plug.

This may be enough to get things going, but it's a warning that the spark is weak. If there's no joy, we have to get technical. You'll need an electronic meter (DVM) to test the high voltage coil in the mag. The resistance should be measured from the plug lead through the coil to the frame. Don't measure it from the plug cap to the frame. Some plug caps have a suppressor resistor in them, so measure close to the winding. This should show a resistance of up to 20,000 ohms. No ohms, no sparks. Check the ignition lead before pronouncing any death sentence, particularly the carbon brush on a rotary magneto under the plug lead terminal.

If the windings are intact, it's time to look at the contact breaker. On a flywheel magneto like a Villiers, it's inside the flywheel under a cover and on a

rotary magneto it is under the end cap. Both have fibre bearing bushes to insulate them from the frames.

Two possibilities: Firstly, dirty points. Clean them with a thin nail file. Second, the pivot is sticky, so the points aren't moving fast enough to follow the cam when they should be closing. This very often happens in the spring after a winter's rest in a damp shed. WD40 or other similar oil spray is a good fix, but don't get it on the contacts.

Another problem may be the condenser across the points. Most flywheel magnetos keep it under the contact breaker assembly. These are usually made of mica and foil sheets and don't often fail. Later rotary mags like Lucas sugar loaf and Wico A types have automotive types made of rolled paper and foil. These usually degrade and fail after about 50 years, so should be replaced. They can be tested off the magneto using a DVM. As they degrade they become little batteries, and will show a small voltage on the millivolts range, anything over 10 millivolts should be replaced. Any condenser showing any resistance on the megaohms range is also dead. Spares are normally available. Symptoms of a dodgy condenser are a weak spark and the engine stopping when it gets hot, but starts again when cold.

### Testing for sparks

CW rotation flywheel magneto engines can be spun rapidly with the plug out using an electric drill or impact wrench on the nut on the end of the crankshaft. Separate magnetos of either rotation can be similarly spun using a hand brace. Both should produce bright

sparks at the plug. It's possible that the plug will spark outside the engine only. This means that the voltage at the plug is too low to spark under compression. In air, it takes about 1000 volts per thou of gap. Under compression this rises to almost double. One way to test for a spark under compression is to use an AM transistor radio. Tune it to medium wave away from a station, and hold it near the engine. There should be a plop every time the spark jumps the gap in or out of the cylinder. In noisy surroundings use an earphone as supplied with most such radios. This is the only way I know of checking the spark once the plug is out of sight in the engine.

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## MOWER MANTRA

When he's not trying to keep high voltage electricity on the straight and narrow, **Tony Hopwood** takes time out to compose mower related verse. It's been a while since the last one, but here is his latest, to the hymn tune Morning has broken.

Mower has broken,  
Gardener's in mourning.  
Missus has spoken,  
Had the last word.  
Sweet the rains new fall,  
Tumbling from heaven,  
On the moles upcast,  
Spoiling the grass.  
The end of this pastiche  
Is coming up fast,  
So fix your old mower,  
And fettle the grass.

# ALL THE GEARS ARE MISSING? BETTER MAKE SOME NEW ONES THEN...

By William Proudfoot

It has always fascinated me the strange things you see done to old mowers by a previous owner. Sometimes it was a well meaning bodge. Other times it was an attempt to keep the mower going a few more years in its working life, or sometimes it has been the subject of a serious mechanical engineer who had perhaps run out of other things to tinker with. This article concerns a mower that had fallen well and truly into the hands of the latter category.

The photo below shows what has gone on. The starting point is a first generation 8" Multum in Parvo, (see below) the cross over geared version, which I assume had fallen on hard times. The gears on these are inclined to crack and break, so it is possible it had a less than full complement of gears when our man got to it. However, he has set about in good style, removing all trace of the gear drive, and replacing it with a compound chain effort. To do this, the roller



*The completed mower with new gears*

is the other way round, and a new mounting bracket for the intermediate shaft has appeared. In addition, the split brass bearings have been replaced with large well machined brass bushes, the bearing caps have been replaced with massive oilers on them, the handle mounting points are held together with crude metal straps and the cross bar

behind the roller has been replaced with a piece of pipe. Weirdly though, our man left one thing unfinished - he never drilled a hole for a split pin or cut a thread for a nut on the end of the intermediate sprocket shaft, so the sprocket fell off, jamming up the chains, if you tried to push it along!

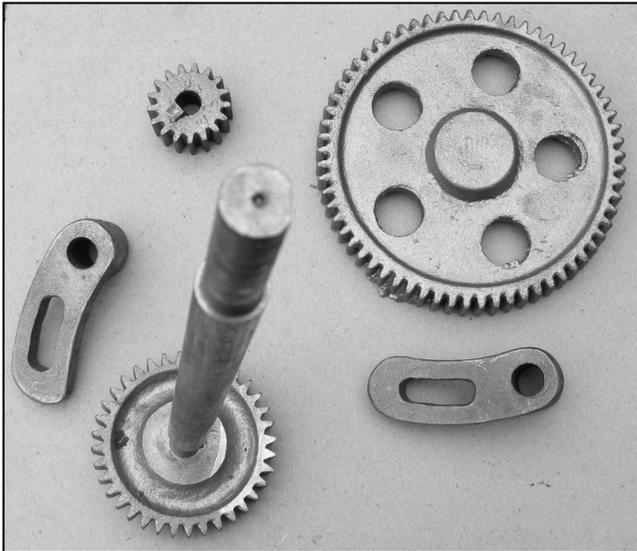
So where to start? Well, fortunately we



have 6" version of the same mower, so all the missing parts were available to be copied or as patterns. The first thing seemed to be whether we could get good castings of the gears made. The gears on these machined were not machined, they were cast to a much higher standard than most foundries can achieve today in the first place. The only foundry I know of and have used does most of its business making ornamental ironwork, and uses spheroidal graphite iron, which has similar characteristics to malleable cast iron. This means that it bends a bit and won't break as easily, but it is softer than the cast iron used originally, so gears made out of it would not withstand years of hard use. Not a great problem for us though.

So off I trotted to the foundry where I they cast the small pinion as a test piece first. It was rough, as you can see

*The new countershaft, with one gear fitted and new brackets. The pinion and key are finished, while the large gear for the roller is in ex foundry state.*



in the unfinished large gear in the photo below. With a lot of tedious filing I was able to make a useable gear, so back to the foundry I went with the other bits. So, with two new large gears (they are the same as each other), two small ones, two new cross over shaft brackets and two new bearing covers, we were on our way.

Each gear had to be put on a lathe to have the centre hole drilled out, and while the small one went in a chuck, the large ones had to be mounted on a faceplate with straps between the holes. Getting it true and square given its slightly irregular shape and a rough casting was a slow business. The larger small gear was too big for a chuck, and had no holes, so we made a slightly undersize wooden collar for a brass cup chuck, and hammered it in tight, the teeth of the gear gripping it very tightly.

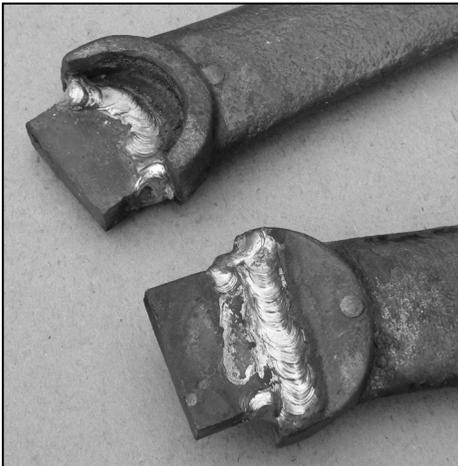
A new countershaft was turned up and

new keys made to hold the gear onto the journals. Our engineer friend had turned down the journals on the roller and the cylinder, so the old key flats were no longer visible. This made the journals unusually small, as well as meaning new flats had to be filed on them. Aligning the countershaft and finishing the mounting brackets was a long job, and my father spent a whole afternoon filing and tinkering to get them right. Mating two rough castings together the get an accurate alignment is not easy!

Filing out the teeth on all four gears was also somewhat tedious, but I am reasonably happy with the result.

Next I had to deal with the mower's other faults. One of the first things I did was make a new crossbar. Unlike later models, these have a plain round crossbar rather than a cast scraper behind the roller, and I have described before in Grassbox 63 how to make these, except that with a small one you can turn down the ends in a lathe and therefore make the shaped collar on the end a neater fit.

The broken ends of the frame/handle mountings had to be welded. These often break through the bolt hole, and in this case the small half circles of cast iron were missing, so I had pieces of steel bar welded on then ground them to the required shape afterwards, which I think was easier than making them the right shape to start with. The photo below shows them after welding and also shows where I have blocked up the holes that held on the old repair straps.



*At the top is one handle, while below it is the side frame from the opposite side.*

Next I had to make new split brass bearings. These I machined out of half inch thick brass flat bar. I did almost all of it on the lathe, with hand filing to finish. I put each pair of half inch thick blocks together and cut out the large slot to fit into the frame, then put them together in the four jaw chuck on the lathe and drilled the hole down the centre. After drilling and finishing the new bearing cap castings the cylinder end of the machine was done.

Finally, I decided to make new square headed bolts for all the fixings. Modern hexagonal bolt heads annoy me if the mower originally had square ones and as only four originals survived, I had to make twelve more, of varying lengths. I could have turned them out of square section bar, but this seemed very wasteful, and would have meant a lot of turning, so instead I made some studing out of a length of steel round, and bought a short piece of square section and drilled a hole down the middle so I could cut it up into individual heads. I then tapped these and brazed them onto the lengths of studing. It sounds a bit of an effort, but I am sure it was quicker than turning off the amount of metal I would have need to in order to make them out of solid steel, and they will be plenty strong enough for this purpose.

Finally the rest of the work was straight forward restoration of the sort that we have all done plenty of times before. I sand blasted the mower as it was quite badly rusted under the gaudy green paint, reground the cylinder and bottom blade and repainted it. Final touches were the new wooden handles and rollers, made out of beech as most Greens originals were. The completed machine is illustrated on the inside front cover of the magazine.

# RADIO-CONTROLLED LAWN MOWER

By Clive Gravett

While Jim Walker from Portland USA is credited with inventing the first radio controlled lawn mower in 1948, it was an adaptation of a petrol engine side-wheel mower similar to the Ransomes Antelope that most members will be familiar with. However as early as April 1940 Charles Paulus & Raymond Stout of Dayton Ohio sought a patent for a buried wire that would be tracked by an electromagnetic pick-up to guide any kind of moving vehicle. From the 1940s to the 1980s various remote controlled devices were being tested, photocells, contoured program discs tailored to you lawn, paper tape and many others. It was not until the 1985 when robotics were developed that further progress was made and then it took another 10 years for the first mass production of robot mowers.

That said, my interest was aroused by the launch of Webb's radio controlled mower in 1959 at the Chelsea Flower Show, for any Dr Who fans does it remind you of K9? The mower was displayed as part of 'The Times Garden of Tomorrow' having been developed by H.C.

Webb & Co Ltd & Atton Developments (Woking).

The specification was as follows, 14" cutting width- 60 clips per yard-1.82 mph-independent four point suspension. Powered by a 1/3 h.p 24-volt motor, running at 1450rpm, steering was stated to be accurate and controlled by 2 specially designed clutches controlling the rollers. The operator held a transmitter with two switches, a multi-stage receiver operating at 27m/cs with internal relays actuated by means of varying audio frequencies.

The effective range of radio control was stated as being up to a mile! Bearing in mind remote video had not been invented then I am sure it could only be used successfully within eyesight!

*The mower is demonstrated at Chelsea Flower Show, 1959.*



# ADVERTISEMENTS

## FOR SALE

- 14" Ransomes Minor Mk6, working, no box; Qualcast Superlight Panther c/w box; Qualcast Super Panther c/w box; Qualcast 16, original paint; 14" Atco kickstart 1930s; 14" Atco Kickstart 1950s; 14" Greens Master c/w box. C: Ian Wallis. T: 0114 2439172 (Sheffield)
- 20" Ransomes Mk10, c1947, restored and running, c/w grassbox. £65; 24" Dennis "Square Tank" 1926, c/w grassbox, £90; 24" Shanks Dragonfly Mk3, c1958, runs, c/w grassbox, £60; 20" British Anzani Powermow (the less common walk behind Anzani mower), 1962, Villiers engine, c/w grassbox £40; 24" Automower type H, 1939, Lister engine, ugly but unusual! Runs, £Offers; 17" Ranger Ezimow, c1955, JAP engine, c/w grassbox, £Offers; Various other motor and push mowers from 40's & 50's available, e-mail for details. C: Alan Hardwick E: alanhardwick@me.com T: 01462 816018 (Sheffield)
- 40" Ransomes Ride on with grassbox (1950s/60s) C: Michael Dakic. T: 01243 542621 (Chichester).
- 14" Ransomes Moon sidewheel. C: Vandaele Wouter T: +32 473 969469 E: vandaelew@telenet.be (Belgium)
- Suffolk Corporation sidewheel motor mower, c1965. C: Harald Smedsrud. T: + 47 97 63 22 44. E:hara-sm@online.no (Norway)
- 12" JP Maxees, c/w box. C: Ian T: 01462 790333 (Hitchin)#
- 14" Suffolk Punch c1950s, Offers C: Keith Mace T: 01508 489037 E: kjmace@btinternet.com (Norwich)#
- 36" Atco, c/w Villiers, c/w box, Offers C: Michael Mahoney T: 0033 5 53 51 93 51 E: mtjmahoney@hotmail.com (France)#
- 12" Ransomes Ajax Mk 4, c/w box, Offers C: David Earl T: 01708 223069 E: david.earl7@ntlworld.com (Romford)#
- 12/14" Qualcast Electric 240v, c/w Electric, Offers C: Glen Simpson T: 07933 842024 E: buttons-car@hotmail.com (Dundee)#
- 14" JP Maxees Mark 3 c1960, c/w box, £50ono C: B Gooders T: 01273 555442 E: barry.gooders@ntlworld.com (Brighton)#
- 16" Ransomes Mark IV 1930, c/w Blackburn, c/w box, Offers C: John Keeping T: 01235 531630 E: jennyjohnkeeping@btinternet.com (Abingdon)#
- Qualcast, Suffolk Colt, Wolsley Merry Tiller manuals 1960, c/w JAP/B&S, £3 to cover postage C: Peter Youd T: 01395 232825 E: pete\_you@hotmail.co.uk (Exeter.)#
- 24" Ransomes Unknown model 1950s, c/w JAP, c/w box, £100 to charity of my choice C: Dr Tony Jones T: 02920-529345 E: tonyjonescamelot@aol.com (Cardiff)#
- 12" Webb Roller push c1950s, c/w box, £10; 12" Pennsylvania £10.00 C: DC Doxey T: 01335 370015 E: dan.doxey@hotmail.co.uk (Ashbourne)#
- 16" Suffolk Punch 13A c1965, c/w Type 75G14, c/w box, Offers in region of £50 C: Philippa Standley T: 01892 782959 E: p.j.standley@talk21.com (Tunbridge Wells)#
- Villiers 50cc lightweight range 1964, c/w Brand new engine never, used in box with original receipt, Offers C: Mark Elliott T: 07703 325448 E: markell22@hotmail.co.uk (Northwich)#
- 14" Atco 1950s, c/w Villiers, c/w box, FTGH C: Julian Fawcett T: 02392 632865 E: jandvfawcett@btinternet.com (Portsmouth)#
- 16" Ransomes Mk 11, c/w A4655, c/w box, Offers C: Spencer Hopkinson T: 01775 841 E: spencer.hopkinson@tiscali.co.uk (Spalding)#
- 14" JP Super Mk 5, c/w Villiers 4S, c/w box C: Peter Allnutt T: 020 8546 6827 E: pallnutt@rgare.com (Cheam)#
- 30" Dennis x 2, c/w Dennis, c/w box, Offers C: Andre Wood E: andre@andrewoodorango.com or andrewood@live.com (Kidderminster)#
- 12" Webb Witch, c/w box, Offers C: K Atkinson T: 0191 237 3945 E: k.atkinson@tiscali.co.uk (Newcastle upon Tyne)#
- 12" Ransomes Ajax 1964, c/w box C: V Hanks T: 01962 748560 E: hanksveronica@yahoo.co.uk (Winchester)#
- 12" Qualcast E1 1950s/60s, c/w box, Offers C: Andrew Nutting T: 01622 737809 E: andrewnutting@hotmail.com (Maidstone)#
- Allen Autoscythe, c/w Villiers, Offers C: Dan Sanger T: E: dan.sanger1@gmail.com ()#
- 12" Greens Monitor c1947, c/w box, FTGH C: Andrew Howard T: E: andrew.howard132@ntlworld.com (Newport, South Wales)#
- 12" Suffolk Viceroy C: Dave Routley T: 07595 371818 E: daveroutley@me.com (Epsom Surrey)#

- 12" Ransomes unknown model c1930s, c/w Villiers Midget £40 C: Albert T: 07561 321393 E: burt1947@hotmail.co.uk (Basingstoke)#
- 14" Greens Master Lightweight Motor Mower, c/w Villiers, c/w box C: Mike Worst T: 07789 955051 E: mikeworst@mail.com (Rushden)#
- 12" Shanks Scot, c/w box £10 C: Nick Littlebury T: 0207 6908275 E: nlhigh@hotmail.com (Watford)#
- 12" Ransomes Ajax 1968, c/w box, Offers C: PL Shoesmith T: 01252 621268 E: vivien.shoesmith@hotmail.co.uk (Guildford/Reading/Basingstoke)#
- 14" Ransomes Lightweight Mk4, S/N T8975 1930s/40s, c/w box C: John Francis T: 01446 771726 E: jh.francis@btinternet.com (Cardiff)#
- 18" Ransomes Gazelle Mk2, c 1950s, c/w Villiers, FTGH. C: Peter Smith. E: jillsmith52@hotmail.com (Winsford)#
- Qualcast Sixteen, c1940s/50s 16" Ransomes Mercury. One offered in return for getting the other to work. C: Steve Corbett T: 07894 751325 E: mellie@melliexr.plus.com (Kent/Greater London)#
- Husqvarna hand mower, c1950s, c/w long handle, FTGH. C: David Wiltshire T: 01628 527223 E: dwiltshire32@gmail.com (High Wycombe)#
- JP Maxees. C: Gary Mawer E: gbeatz.gm@googlemail.com (Unknown)#
- 14" Atco battery mower, c1960s, c/w box; 17" Atco motor mower, 1960s/70s, c/w box. C: Lynton Jones E: lynton\_jones@hotmail.com (Unknown)#
- Qualcast hand mower, unknown model, possibly 1930s; JP Maxees. C: Trevor Locke T: 01795 842013 E: t.locke013@btinternet.com (Sittingbourne)#
- Atco motor mower, 1950s, c/w box. C: Charlotte Powell E: Charlotte.Powell@WSPGroup.com (London)#

## WANTED

- Ransomes New Automaton 10" scraper plate C: Clive Gravett. E:clive@adurgardening.com T:07833 306619
- Pre 1940 lawn mowers. Anything considered, except Atco, including individual machines and whole collections. Write to Michael Duck, 1 Belmont Terrace, Shepton Beauchamp, Somerset TA19 0JX.

**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 information on almost any make and model of lawn mower. For just £15 per machine they will search their extensive information archive and provide copies of documents found, dates of manufacture and more. Special rates for multiple queries. Please make cheques payable to "The Hall & Duck Trust". Send queries with cheques to: **Andrew Hall, Archivist, The Hall & Duck Trust, 1 Belmont Terrace, Shepton Beauchamp, 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 [lawnmower.jones@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lawnmower.jones@hotmail.co.uk) to order bottom blades, cutting cylinders and fixing screws from Garfitt's of Sheffield. Items ordered through Richard 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

Access to the majority of the club website is open to everyone. To access certain "members only" content (back copies of Grassbox, to see available transfers etc) you can use the following:

Username: olcmember  
Password: £1000Atco

Words must be spelled correctly with the right capital and lower case letters and symbols. If you want to contribute to forums, post comments and submit

classified ads etc you must register separately with your own username and password.

## **ANNUAL RALLY AND AGM**

**Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 May.** This is the club's biggest and best event of the year and we really do want as many members as possible to come along for some, if not all, of the time. **The museum address is Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, MK12 5EL.**

If you have been before you'll know what to expect but if you're thinking of coming for the first time you might feel a little daunted. Don't be. It's all very informal and everyone is welcome. Bring family and friends too - even if they are not interested in mowers, the museum is great and there's lots to look at.

This year's theme is "catalogue and badged" mowers. This is a fairly broad area and we chose it because we think most members will be able to put their hands on something that fits the bill. But all mowers are welcome, large and small, hand and motorised. We encourage all members to bring at least one machine from their collection to exhibit, hopefully more. It's surprising how much you can get in the boot of a car when you try!

Regular attendees know that the Saturday is less hectic and more informal than the Sunday. On each day simply turn up, drop off your machines into the display area, remove your vehicles and get talking to other members.

We're planning on keeping the same timetable as last year which means the auction will take place late morning, no sooner than 11 am, on the Sunday. If you haven't already entered a lot

there's still time but you must let us know before the event if you want to sell anything. Turning up with lots on the day adds to the committee's workload when there isn't much spare time.

The AGM will be held after lunch, starting no sooner than 2 pm on Sunday afternoon. Awards and presentations will be made at the end of the meeting. We'll also present each member in attendance with a souvenir of the weekend (you also get a souvenir if you only come on Saturday but you need to ask a committee member for one).

The usual competitions of "best working machine" and "spot the part" will take place and of course we'll be holding the annual contest for the Andrew Grout Plate. Competition for all of these is likely to be as fierce as ever. The club shop will be open regularly throughout the weekend with the complete range of souvenirs, clothing and transfers available.

Finally, a bit of housekeeping. If you're planning to arrive on the Friday please do not come before 3 pm because there won't be anyone from the club to welcome you before then. After that, feel free to come at any time. The gates to the site are closed when it gets dark but are open again from around 7.30 am on the Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Once on site turn left through the gate inside the museum's main entrance and proceed slowly into the field but please keep an eye open for people who may be walking around the grounds. As with last year we plan to ask all club members to sign a book when they arrive so that we know who's been. All vehicles and trailers must be parked in the designated area as marked by signs or indicated by a committee member. This is for safety and to allow other members

to drop off and collect their exhibits without hindrance.

Camping is permitted on Friday and Saturday evenings. The toilets and washrooms will be open until late at night and from early morning on each day. The museum tea room will be serving breakfast on Saturday and Sunday morning and light refreshments throughout each day. On the Friday and Saturday evenings we generally send out for take-aways.

### **NEW CHAIRMAN & COMMITTEE**

After two years as club Chairman, Peter Hampton has decided to stand down. Peter feels strongly that the chairmanship of the club should change regularly so that different people with (hopefully) some fresh ideas can take over. How-

ever, Peter is willing to remain on the committee if elected at the AGM. That means we'll be electing a new chairman at this year's meeting and the committee will be seeking nominations in the run up to the rally.

Michael Duck, who has been secretary for the past couple of years, and Andrew Hall have decided to stand down from the committee so that they can spend more time on their work with the Hall & Duck Trust. I know everyone in the club will wish to thank them for their service on the committee and wish them well for the future.

Anyone interested in joining the committee at the AGM should please contact an existing committee member before or during the rally.

**Keith Wootton.**

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# FOLLOWS & BATE POSTER

By Clive Gravett

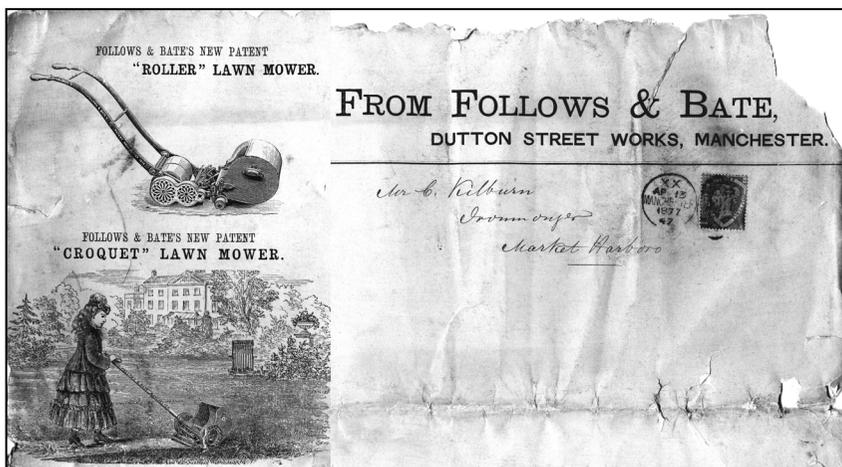
I acquired the Follows & Bate poster pictured on the page opposite last year; it was neatly folded in the envelope pictured below, where it appears to have been since March 1877. The colours are as vivid as the day they were printed some 136 years ago; the document had only suffered a minimal amount of damage along a couple of folds, but nothing to the main content. The poster is large 36.75" by 28" (93cm x 71cm) this is larger than standard A1 posters which are only 84cm x 59cm. Whilst I did consider attempting to make my own digital image by balancing on a step ladder with the poster spread on the floor, I opted for professional help from a local archivist who arranged to scan the document on a special vacuum bed to pull down any creases and he has provided me with excellent 300dpi digital copy. I will arrange for a limited number of posters to be printed, making them available in due course. Now to the content, the 'Anglo American' side-wheel mower which I under-

stand was first made in 1871 in sizes of 12" to 20" this being only 2 years after the invention/launch of the first side-wheel the Follows & Bate 'Climax'.

I have come across several articles praising the 'Anglo American' including an advertisement in the Sydney Mail Sept 1887 which used similar images to those seen on the poster, stressing the travelling, distributing & collecting capabilities of the machine.

Another reference was found in the Lincolnshire Chronicle of December 1870 which stated that 'Messrs Clarke & Co, agricultural implement makers had received an order to make 2500 lawn mowers for Messrs Follows & Bates of Manchester the patentees' was this the first run of Anglo Americans or just another batch of Climax's! (where are they now?)

If a member has an 'Anglo American' in their collection perhaps they would consider bringing it to the annual rally at Milton Keynes next month and we could be display it with the poster.





# FOLLOWS & BATES



ROYAL PRIZE MEDAL PATENT

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## FOLLOWS & BATE PATENTEES & MANUFACTURERS, MANCHESTER.

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Above: The high street store River Island has been using old mowers painted pink in some of its displays. Left is a Qualcast B1 in the Manchester branch, while right is a Webb Whippet at the Oxford Street store.

Below is Dick Goodall from Hastings, New Zealand on 23/24 March his local show at Takapau Central, Hawkes Bay. The mower is a Dennis Z model which Dick has restored this since 2007, having received it in pieces. Dick showed quite a few other mowers, but, as the show was held at the end of the longest drought recorded in New Zealand, there wasn't much grass to cut.

