

Steam engine

EVERY little boy who comes to the Water Weekend - dads, grandads and mums, too - will be thrilled by this year's steam visitor. It's a Fowler steam engine, No 2528, dating back to 1875, and recently restored by a Chapel en le Frith company.

Brothers Hal and Guy Debes run DSPC Restorations, incorporating Derbyshire Steam Ploughing Company, at Bowden Lane, Chapel. Last year, they brought an 81 year old, restored steam roller to W3. The heavyweight visitor was one of the hits of the weekend.

This year's visitor will be making its High Peak debut at a public event, although some local people saw it on its very steamy test run along the main street and later down the nearby Combs Valley.

A quick history lesson: Fowler No 2528 is the left hand ploughing engine of the pair 2528 and 2529 which were sold to The Derbyshire Steam Cultivating Company of King Street, Derby in April 1875. A notable share holder of the company was the Duke of Devonshire.

The engines worked in the South Derbyshire / Nottinghamshire area until 1899 when they moved to Angrave and Burrows of Rempstone. In 1906 the business of Angrave and Burrows was taken over by Beeby Brothers of Rempstone who continued steam cultivation through into the 1960s. Beeby Brothers operated eleven sets of steam ploughing equipment, of which nine sets were early single cylinder Fowler engines. In order to continue using the engines well into the 20th Century, Beeby's fitted new John Allen boilers to their ageing machines and are solely responsible for all the UK's 14hp ploughing engines in preservation today.

Engine no 2528 was dismantled in the 1920s and was stored as spare parts for Beeby's working engines. In 1988 Beeby Brothers sold most of their remaining ploughing equipment and the unidentified 2528 moved to Cornwall in the hands of Charles Daniel who saved the engine from certain scrapping. Charles began to build a new John Allen type boiler for the engine but in 2005 sold the part built boiler and mechanical parts to Richard Scourfield who sold them on to Hal and Guy Debes, who with Dave Cope completed the boiler and carried out a full mechanical restoration of every part returning the engine to steam in May 2008 in the county where the engine started work 133 years earlier.

You can see more about restored steam engines at www.dspcrestorations.co.uk

OLD ENGINES of a different sort - stationery barn engines - will be displayed by Eric Holinrake of Furness Vale. These petrol driven engines were mostly used on farms, and used for milking cows and corn grinding. Eric's friend George Boyle will be displaying an old Bedford wagon. The canal 'coal boat' is expected to visit the canal basin on Saturday.

CLASSIC and vintage cars will be displayed on the Sunday by members of the Hare and Hounds Classic vehicles Club, which has many members in the Peak and Marple areas. High Peak residents may have seen the club's 13th Peaks and Dales charity run a week before the Water Weekend. Further information on the club's website www.hhcvc.moonfruit.com