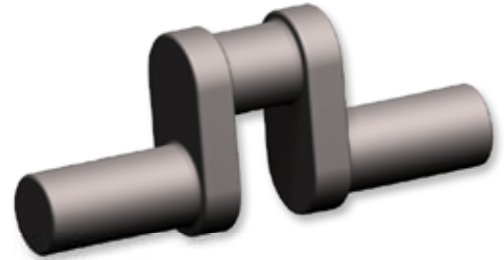


The Crank Calls



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October 2009

MEMBERSHIP

\$25.00 US

Contact

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NEXT MEETING
 October 17, 2009 at
 Chabot College, building 1400
 25555 Hesperian Blvd, Hayward 94545
 Doors open at 9 AM
 Meeting Starts at 10 AM

Upcoming Events

MEETING NOTES

9-19-09

Bob Kradjian, acting secretary for Carl Wilson

The BAEM group was a bit small this month as many members are attending the GEARS show in Portland.



Paul Bennett 1938-2009

The mood also was subdued as we thought of the loss of our much beloved founding member, Paul Bennett. Paul was our host for many years at his Cobra fabricating facility (Bennett Automotive) in Hayward. His consistent support, good spirit, and wise counsel made our club's survival possible. Not only was Paul a wonderful human being, he was a superb craftsman whether it was racing cars, miniature engines, boats, or even antique clocks. Several members gave heartfelt tributes to Paul.

Additional tributes from previous editions of Crank Calls follow:

Member Profile: Paul Bennett

From Crank Calls, September 2001

Our club would not be what it is today without the long and consistent efforts given us by our own Paul Bennett. We enjoyed about 70 meetings in his fine facility prior to his losing a portion of his lease.

Paul is a native San Franciscan who has done just about everything possible that involves speed. He is a life-long sailor on the Bay and was involved for years in class racing. He formerly was an avid snow skier and downhill racer. His motorcycle exploits are legendary. In the mid-60s he was the Open Class champion for the big 650 bikes on a Triumph. He also was an avid "café racer" and

I suspect the Marin cops are still looking for him in connection with some notorious dashes to Stinson Beach. Somehow, he managed all this without a broken bone.

We all know that he is an accomplished fabricator of Cobras. He produced 50 of them before he quit counting. His interest in automobile racing had him at Bonneville just last month. Now to small engines---His first efforts were to modify Hornets and McCoys for hydroplane racing. I first met Paul as a member of the Marin RC (airplane) Group, Paul distinguished himself by his well executed and spectacular head-on, mid-air collisions with friend Mario.

The group requested that he further perfect this art at another facility. His first four-cycle engine was an opposed twin original that was published in Model Engineering (British) in the 1960s. He then went on to make an Offenhauser-style four, a Wall four, and then a pair of Wall boat motors (one a left hander, the other a right hander- --still in progress).

The project on the back burner is the Bennett Four, a five main bearing original, one inch bore and stroke, with original patterns and castings. I can't wait for this screamer to be completed. Even further back on the rear burners is an aluminum bodied Miller style old time Indy Car in 1/5 scale.

BAEM is fortunate to have this genial, generous, and accomplished man as a charter member.

This is from the Crank Calls, Oct. 2003

After the meeting a few of us took a pilgrimage to Paul Bennett's new work place. We all have a strong bond with Paul who was our strong support during our early lean days. It was gratifying to see the work he is doing on VERY large equipment designed to quickly fasten huge, square steel girders to each other in an Erector Set fashion to create buildings (mostly residential) up to eight stories in height. He is fashioning jigs, fixtures, mounts, clamps and other ingenious devices to fabricate these components. In addition, he is mastering CAD/CAM and CNC for the megabuck milling centers there. Congratulations Paul, your employer was fortunate to find someone with the multifaceted talents you possess.

Dick Pretel was instrumental in posting an obituary. For additional information on Paul's life see:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/insidebayarea/obituary.aspx?page=notice&pid=133027560>

Visitors: Lou Martinelli found us at the WEME show in Vallejo. He is a retired machine shop owner (25 years), and has just relocated to

Napa. Despite many years of machine tool experience he has never made a miniature engine. He is connecting with George Gravatt and will be a fine addition to the Napa bunch.

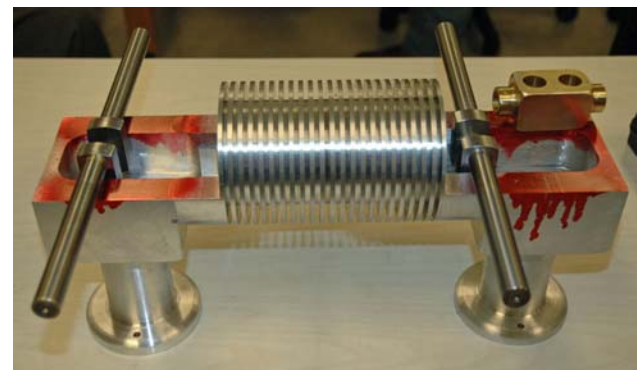
Another welcome visitor was Leona Gravatt. We owe her thanks for giving George the shop time to turn out his many machining gems.

First Pops: Our own Lew Throop has succeeded in coaxing pops out his original Ford Model "A" engine. The engine needed more compression that was afforded by milling the head and dropping the spark plugs by 0.60 inch. This resulted in a 5 pound per square inch boost per cylinder. A bit more refinement in the timing is needed, but Lew is on the way. This engine has a unique electro-formed intake manifold. Lew also makes his own spark plugs and cuts his own gears.

"The Hired Man Engine" auction was won by Southern California BAEM member, Jim Kipp. Congratulations to Jim, we know you'll enjoy this beautiful engine. Also, thanks to both George Gravatt and Dwight Giles for their excellent work on the engine and the running stand. We greatly enjoyed meeting Jim and his brother, David, at the WEME show. Sadly, his marvelous display of highly polished blower castings mounted on a display board was "lost" at the Oakland Airport on their return trip.

Events: There are no scheduled events as we approach fall. Even John Palmer said he was: "Down for the winter".

Bits and Pieces:



George Gravatt provided the first glimpse of his unusual and original opposed-twin piston engine. Completed are the cylinder, sleeve and the two crankshafts. He will use a train of gears

for timing. An intake box is completed, but not yet mounted. This is an ingenious and ambitious project. At least there won't be a head gasket problem!



Peter Lawrence showed us his magneto for the Merlin V-12 project. Well, at least it looks like a magneto. It actually will house the distributor. The coil will be in the engine base. This is the same idea that George Luhrs used in his tiny hit and miss engine, and the Replica Offenhausers and Ford 60's used a similar system. Peter showed detailed diagrams of a Merlin magneto from a Barry Hares article.

A member mentioned that a web site (enginehistory.org) shows a number of photographs of the great Barry Hares engine. Some consider this V-12 to be the greatest model engine ever built.

President Don Jones quickly located that web site and projected some excellent images from the overhead projector.

In our discussion period, the question of a good "first" engine for new model builders was raised. Suggestions included a simple steam engine, Bob Shore's "Silver Angel", the Wall Four Flathead, and why not do what Lon Keeth did? Build a Randall Cox "Hoglet"!

For a tech topic at the next meeting, John Palmer offered to bring back his amazing "round" engine. This mystery engine was featured in a "Crank Calls" from September 2001 if you want to grab a sneak peek.