

FEB 2000

## The Hercules Engine News

by Glenn Karch  
20601 Old State Road  
Haubstadt, Indiana 47639  
glenkarch@gte.net

There are "bits and pieces" that apply to almost everything. Here are bits and pieces from the world of Hercules engines.

On November 13, I had occasion to stop by the Arizona Early Days Gas Engine and Tractor Association's show at Glendale. There was one lone Hercules engine there. It was a newly acquired 1 1/4 HP model S Hercules, number 370,158, shown by Keith and Kenny Tennyson of Phoenix. They had a problem with their new toy. It would run but it was so fast and wouldn't shut down. Problem solved—the detent blade was worn round on the end and wouldn't latch behind the block.

A call came from Charlie Thompson of Gilbertsville, Alabama, the other day. He has what I would call the newest large size Hercules engine. It is a 14 HP number 363,163 model S. It has March 23, 1927 casting date on the head. It is very likely that production of

this size engine ended soon after that. The fall 1928 Sears catalog no longer lists a 14 HP size and the Hercules price list of February 1, 1929 no longer lists that size either.

An interesting letter showed up in the mail back in November. Pat Downey of Hofmyer, South Africa, writes to tell about rebuilding a 5 HP model EK Hercules engine, number 280,569. In addition to the normal Hercules tag, it has another tag on the base that reads, "RICHARDS & HIRSCHFELD INC. NEW YORK CITY." It is assumed that they were exporters in South Africa at that time.

Occasionally there is some confusion between what started out as the Hercules Gas Engine Company of Evansville, Indiana, and the Hercules Motor Company of Canton, Ohio. Quickly, they were separate, distinct and completely unrelated companies. Of course, neither is any longer in business. Hercules at Evansville built one cylinder open flywheel engines primarily for stationary farm use. Hercules at Canton built two, four and six cylinder enclosed engines that were used to power various kinds of industrial equipment. To a lesser degree, they also powered some small farm tractors, balers and combines.

Recently, three model NXB, two cylinder Hercules power units showed at my place. They are rated at 17 HP and were built in 1950. They had been coupled to pumps in the oil fields to transfer oil along the pipelines to the oil storage tanks. They are radiator cooled, have Rockford clutches, and are equipped with electric starters. When serviced in the field, the starter was normally jumped from the service truck, thus no generator or battery was necessary on the engine itself. Interestingly, all three of these two cylinder Hercules engines are equipped with an oil gauge that has a low oil pressure ignition shut-off built into it. Even though I have them, these two cylinder engines are not my main area of interest. People occasionally contact me for information on them and I have none.

To help clear that up a little, I recently talked with Jerry Biro, P.O. Box 206, Martinsburg, Ohio 43037. He can supply information, some parts and literature for those MULTI-CYLINDER Hercules engines built at Canton, Ohio. You may phone him at 740-745-1475. Please note - he DOES NOT have information or parts for the ONE CYLINDER Hercules engines built at Evansville, Indiana. ○