

The Crank Calls



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MEMBERSHIP \$25.00 US

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NEXT MEETING

**Saturday, June 21, 2025, at the
Golden Gate Live Steamers clubhouse site in
Tilden Park, Orinda, CA**

Gate opens at **9:00 am**
Meeting starts at **10:00 am**

Upcoming Events

- June 21: BAEM meeting at GGLS
- July 19: BAEM meeting at GGLS
- July 31-Aug 3: EDGE&TA Amador County Fairgrounds
- Aug 16: BAEM meeting at GGLS
- Aug 22 -24: Good Guys West Coast Nationals at Pleasanton Fairgrounds

See below for more details regarding events. Watch Crank Calls, BAEM emails and BAEM web page for updates. BAEM meetings are usually 3rd Saturday of the month except December.

MEETING NOTES

The Bay Area Engine Modelers met at the Golden Gate Live Steamers clubhouse on May 31, 2025. Thirteen members attended on this beautiful Spring Day. Our meeting was timed to coincide with the GGLS Spring Meet, so we had a number of interested GGLS members as guests.

NEW MEMBERS/VISITORS

BAEM members are reminded that visitors are welcome at our club meetings, and we're always looking for new members.

TREASURER REPORT

Club finances are sound.

Annual \$25 dues are payable for 2025. Please give your check to Paul Denham, or mail it to Deirdre Denham at 1937 Merchant St, Crockett, CA 94525. Make checks payable to "BAEM".

Some members have expressed concern regarding delayed deposit of dues checks. Paul explained that our treasurer waits for a convenient time to make a trip to the bank where the club account resides, due to logistic challenges. Please be patient, your check will be cashed in due course.

CLUB BADGE

If you are a member in need of a badge, contact Mike Rehms (editor@modelenginebuilder.com) who has offered to produce them.

SHOWS AND EVENTS

Shows present an opportunity to show off our fine engines and meet potential new members of our club. After all, what could be better than spending a day hanging out with people who are fascinated by our model engines, and want to hear all about what we've been doing?

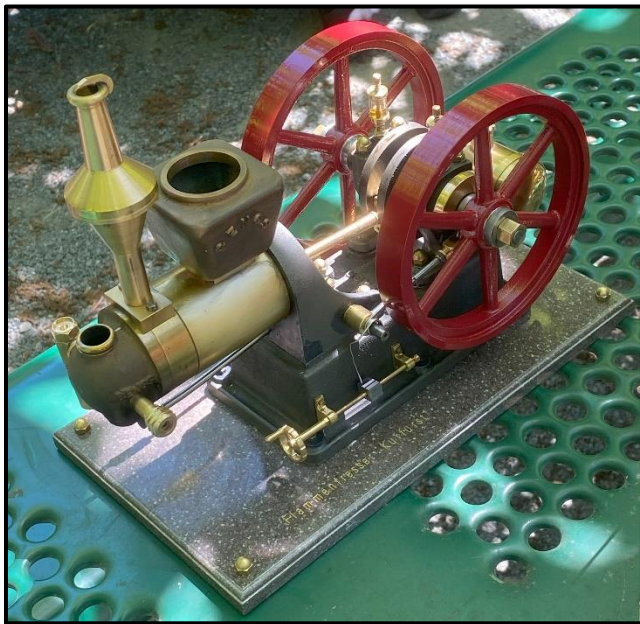
Edge&TA-Branch 13 – July 31-August 3

Amador County Fairgrounds, 18621 Sherwood Street, Plymouth, CA. Robert Facino (916) 417-8732 rtsco@netzero.com is the Branch 13 contact. Ray Fontaine is coordinating for BAEM and will be attending. Raftus2@outlook.com (925) 784-5411

Note that Ray is the coordinator of BAEM participation in EDGE&TA – Branch 13 events. The events highlighted here are those that might be of particular interest to BAEM members. The entire calendar of Branch 13 events can be found [here](#).

FIRST POPS

Paul Denham finished the German Flammenfresse (Flame Licker) casting kit he acquired from Tim Horn. It ran well, earning "First Pop" status.



Paul's Flammenfresse (Flame Licker)

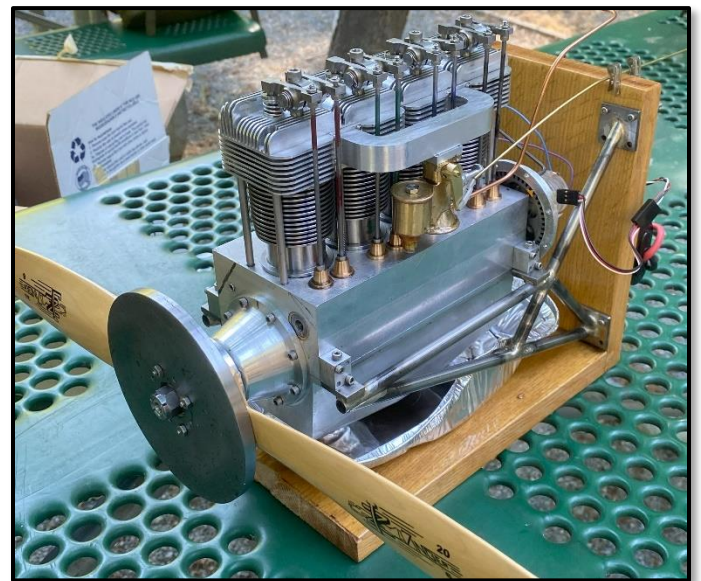
The model has more complex timing valves than usually used in flame lickers. Paul managed to bend one of the push rods which required 30 minutes of trouble shooting to get running.

The very impressive looking engine is mounted on a nicely engraved Corian base with rounded-over edges. The polished brass, bright red flywheels and carefully machined parts are all typical of Paul's high level of workmanship.

Peter Lawrence reported "first pops" with his Cirrus aircraft engine. He was able to get it to run briefly at home but was unable to achieve a sustained run. More about this project below.

BITS AND PIECES

Peter Lawrence has been sharing progress on his Cirrus aircraft engine made from bar stock. He fabricated a wooden mount and steel tube frame to support the engine. The various mechanical parts of the engine are complete and installed. Peter installed the ignition, hoping to have the engine running in time for the GGLS open house. It still needs an exhaust manifold. Peter described his extensive efforts to identify and resolve the problems which are still underway. Current issues appear to be weak spark and poor compression.



Peter's Cirrus

Peter also showed the rotary broach he made from Home Model Engine Machinist plans found here: [rotary broach tool design](#). The broach was needed to cut small (7/64") square woodruff key slots. He noted that a commercial broach could cost \$900. The cutting tool he used was \$90. An alternative is the rotary broach kit available from Hemmingway for \$69.21: [Compact Rotary Broach](#).

Miniature spark plugs suitable for model engines are hard to find and expensive, now costing around \$40 each. Both Peter and Paul described their methods of fabricating spark plugs.

Peter utilizes a ceramic rod material that he was able to obtain in bulk. The metal part of his plugs is made of steel. Loctite is used to bond the parts together.



Peter's spark plug

Paul described his technique for shop-made spark plugs. His design uses small ceramic beads for the insulator. He sourced these from Ebay, where they are sold as wiring insulators for use in HVAC equipment. Bonding material is Torr Seal, a high temperature epoxy sealant. The Torr Seal material is also used to create a smooth surface on the ceramic beads. The metal portion of the plugs is machined from brass.



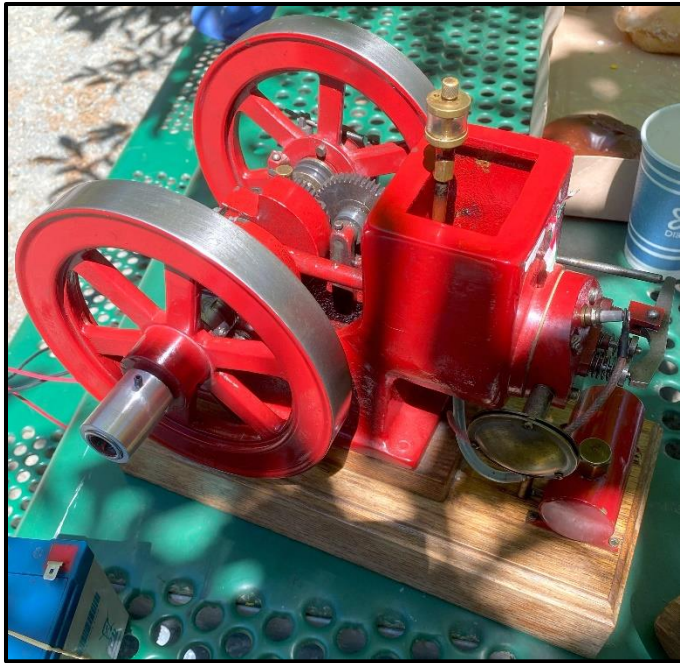
Paul's spark plug components



Paul's spark plugs

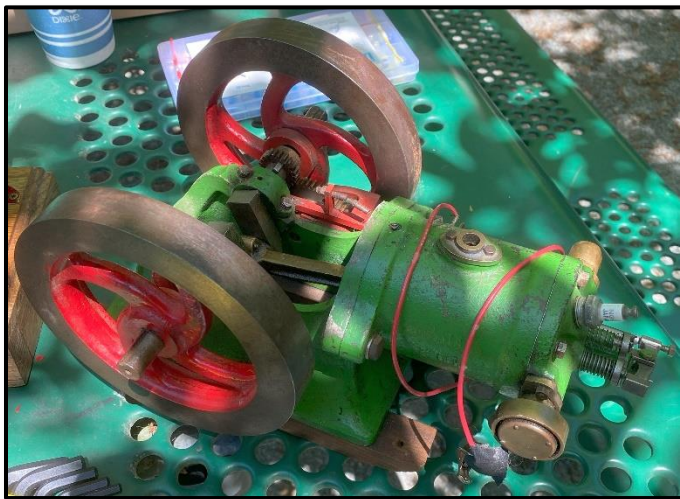
Ray Fontaine attends Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association shows. He reports that the EDGE&TA folks are always glad to see us and are happy if we can make it for only a single day of a multi-day event.

While attending these shows, Ray is occasionally asked for "help" in getting old model engines running. He brought in two of these from a recent Branch 13 show and reported on his progress in getting them running.



Ray gets it running

This red engine of uncertain heritage is a hit-and-miss with a timing cam that runs on the main shaft. Ray reworked the timing and ignition and got it running.



Ray still working on this one

A second engine, apparently built from a Cole casting kit, is awaiting Ray's attention.

Another "needs help to get running" project is a large Challenger horizontal hit-and-miss that was donated to GGLS. Paul Denham had done his magic and ran the engine.



Paul works on the donated Challenger

Following the club meeting, club members enjoyed participating in the GGLS luncheon. Hamburgers and hot dogs were served, along with a wide variety of salads and desserts.

BAEM members Paul Denham, Ray Fontaine and Eugene Ellerbusch showed engines to the GGLS folks and interested members of the general public on Sunday. Paul reported the weather was perfect: cool in the morning and sunny all afternoon. Crowds were small compared to some years, but still enjoyable. The Club engines: Gilmore V8 and the vertical inverted single ran well. Most of Paul's stuff ran well all day. The Carl Wilson Merry Explosive made the water hot.

RAMBLINGS

Working on an interesting project? Got a great BAEM story? Share it with us here. Send us pics and

project details, and your hard work will be shared with the entire club.

FOR SALE

BAEM member Marvin Miller of Santa Cruz offers:

- \$2500: Cole's casting kit of American LaFrance fire engine.

- \$1700: Little Engines American 4-4-0 locomotive, partially built.

Contact Marvin for more information.

marbenjam2@gmail.com

Got something you'd like to sell? Your ad is free and will be seen by likely customers.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTION

Your contributions to this newsletter are appreciated: workshop reports, tech articles, reviews, historical pieces, whatever. You contribute, we'll figure out how to post it. Send your contributions to either or both of us. Thanks!

-Mike Byrne at mgbyrne3@comcast.net

-Wes Wagon at weswag@ix.netcom.com