



YESTERDAYS ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLES

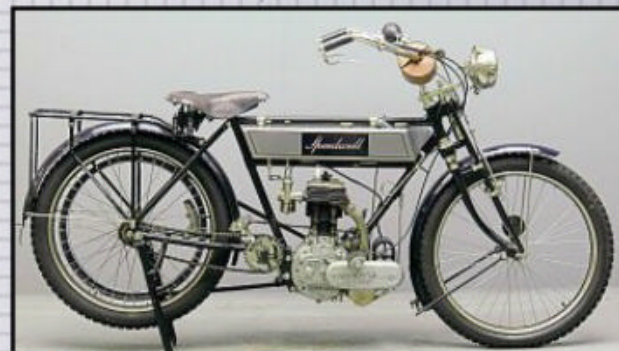
Pannenweg 260, 6031 RK Nederweert, The Netherlands



1924 Sunbeam 599cc Model 7 combination£19,750



1935 BSA J35-12 498cc OHV V-twin£32,750



1909 Speedwell 3 1/2 HP 499cc£17,250



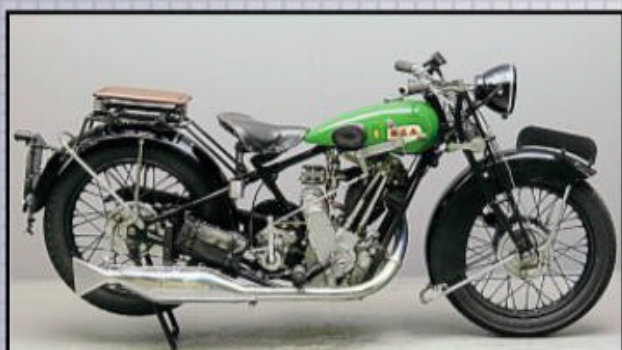
1937 Indian Sport Scout 746cc.....£21,750



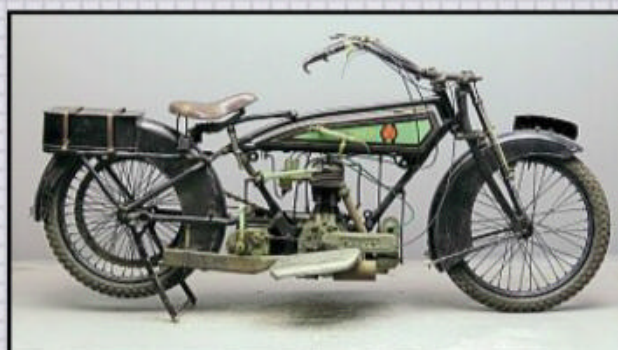
1903 Blackford 210cc£21,500



1920 Cleveland 220cc£12,250



1928 BSA 493cc OHV Sloper ...£12,250



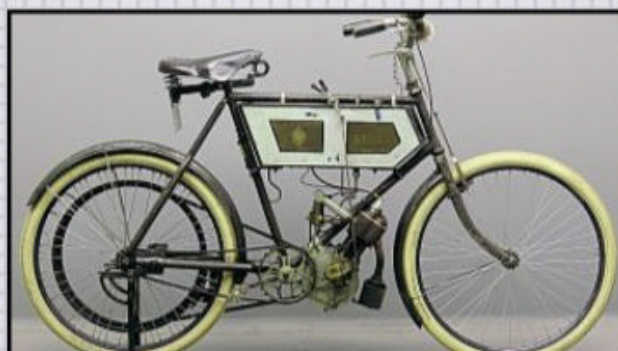
1920 Rex 550cc Model 77£19,950



1917 Harley-Davidson 989cc Model "F" combination£43,750



1920 Ixion 269cc Villiers£7795



1903 Rothwell 2HP 269cc£21,500



1928 Moto Guzzi 500GT "Norge"£25,750

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Vintage Royal Enfield twin



MORTONS

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1907 450cc Quadrant. Free engine



1924 550cc Triumph Model SD.



1925 633cc Norton Big 4.



1928 500cc Sunbeam Model 9.



1928 680cc Brough Superior 680.



1938 1000cc BSA Model G14.



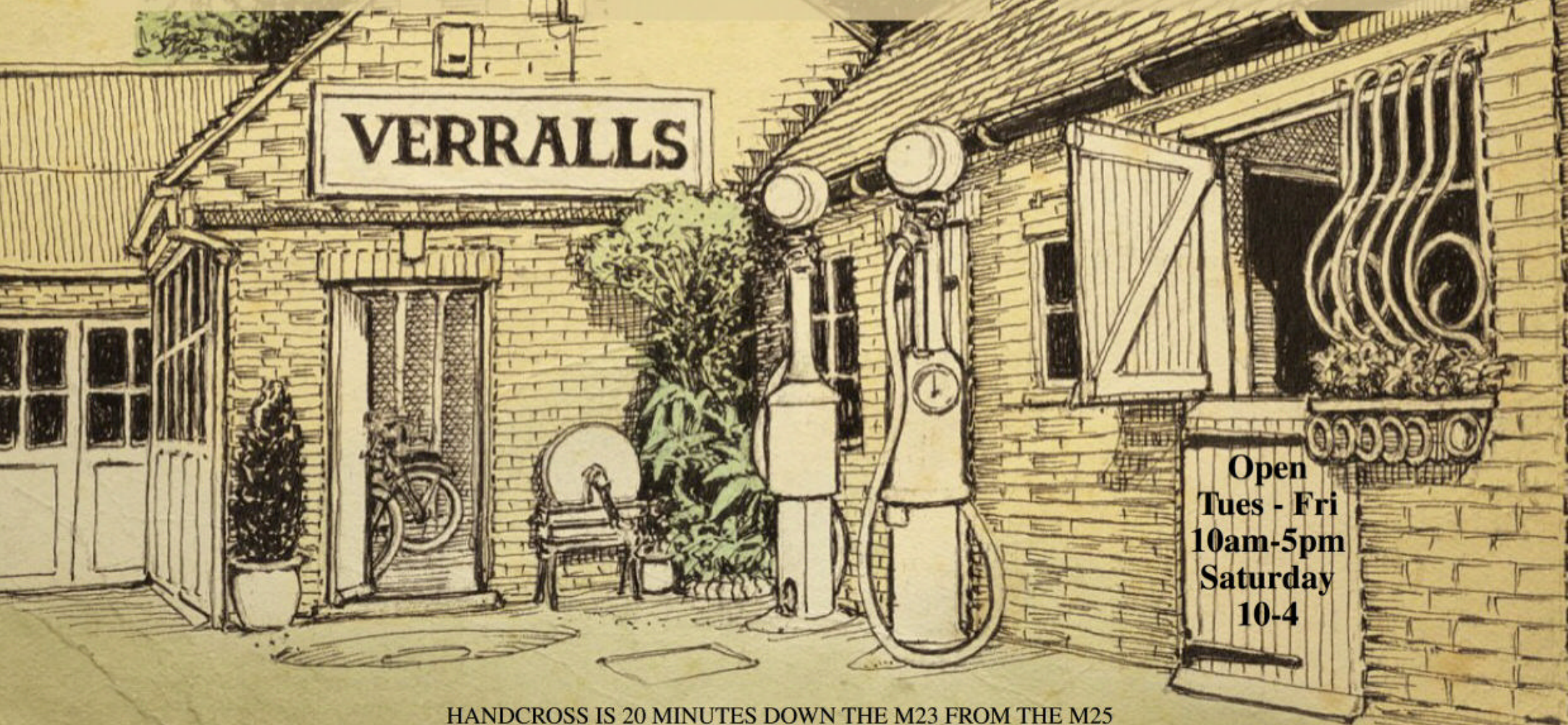
1950 500cc Vincent Comet.



1951 1000cc Ariel Square Four.



1970 650cc BSA Lightning.



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Editor's welcome

When I was selling one of my motorcycles a year or two back, I'd included in the advert that I'd be happy to consider any part exchanges, which is something I've pretty much always said whenever I've advertised anything for sale.

One chap responded to my advert with the comment: 'I presume you're a dealer then?' To which I explained I'm anything but a dealer, it's just that when it comes to old motorcycles, as it was so beautifully put by the inimitable Oscar Wilde, 'I can resist everything except temptation'.

My tastes are so wide ranging that anything and everything is of appeal. To that end, I've perhaps not held onto things for as long as many people have or do, because I've always been keen to try the next thing, and the way to facilitate it has generally meant having to part with the last one.

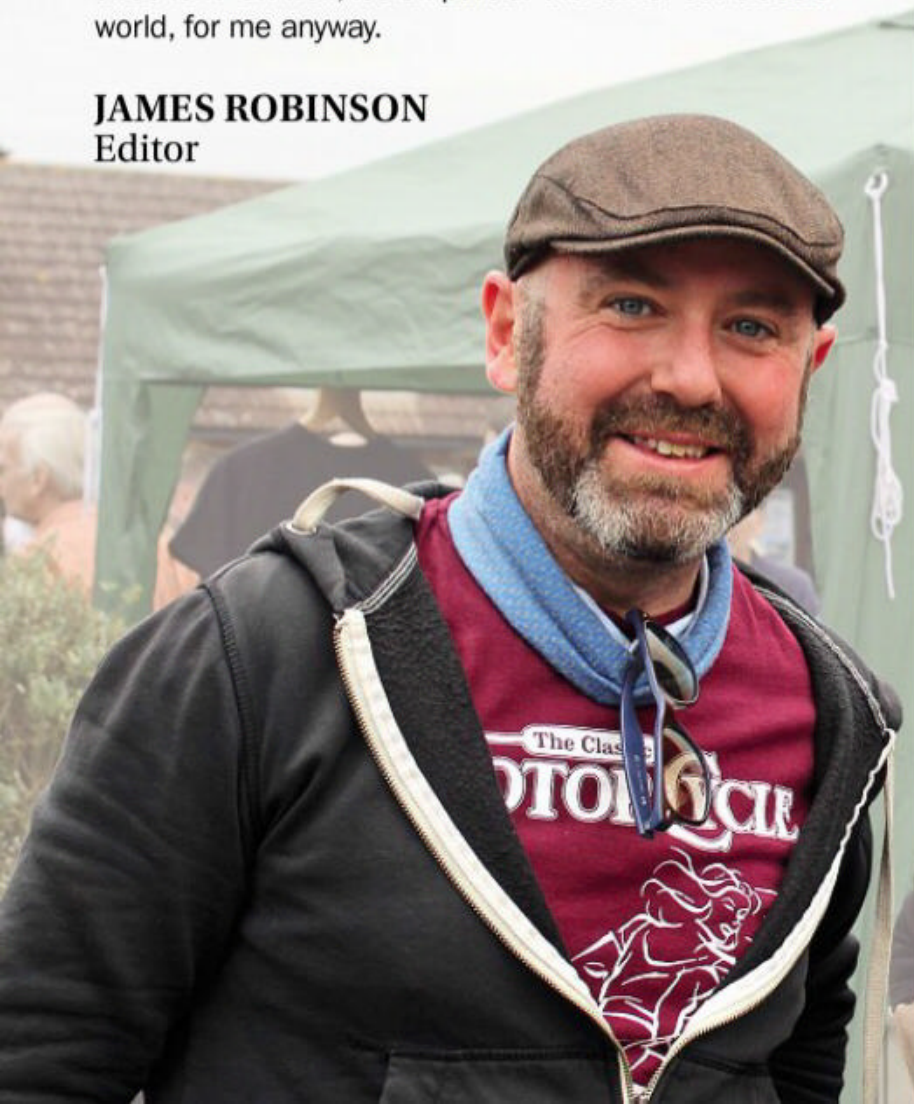
Hence my including on an advert that I'd be open to part-exchanges and when the motorcycle referred to in the advert did find a new owner, in part exchange I took two machines that frankly I've never really considered as being on, or even anywhere near, my wish-list.

Still, it'll be interesting to try something different and see how it goes, then they will probably go the way of their predecessor, to enable something else to be experienced. While I admit I envy people who manage to keep the same motorcycle for years, I've always been hungry for the next thing.

This came to mind while researching this month's archive photo. I came across an expert for one or other of the cars – I think it was the Bugatti – who had once owned the one pictured, 'among upwards of 30 examples of the marque' – which is quite some going. Not a dealer, from what I understand, he just liked the buying, selling, moving, swapping and changing. I understand that.

There's a friend of mine who is of a similar mindset, though he has a rule that he'll only have four motorcycles at a time, which means that if he wants another, one of the quartet must depart. This is a very good rule, and one I'd love to conform with, and am making efforts to do so. So how come I always end up going the opposite direction? Oh well, it's all part of the fun of our classic world, for me anyway.

JAMES ROBINSON
Editor



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Season finale

At the last meeting of 1931 on Southport beach, two top motorcyclists go head-to-head with a pair of quick cars.

Photograph: MORTONS ARCHIVE

One of the features of Southport's popular beach series had become a car v motorcycle 'match race,' with the fastest pair of two-wheelers and the same from the four-wheelers going head-to-head in a handicap race, with, in this instance, the motorcycle men being hit with a 10-second handicap.

Held at the start of October 1931, the pictured event was a novelty, really, with the more serious business for the motorcycle men being a straight mile, a two-mile, a six-mile, a 12-mile and a 20-mile event, with capacity classes of 350cc, 500cc, 750cc and 1000cc.

Southport had an array of specialists who would regularly appear and do most of the winning, and so it was the case on this day. One of those is pictured on the left of the picture, in the form of Tim

Hunt, Norton's charismatic and debonair playboy racer, fresh from a 350cc Junior and 500cc Senior TT double triumph for the Birmingham firm.

The other motorcycling star name in the photograph is Charlie Dodson, on board an Excelsior-JAP. Dodson was the winner of both 1928 and 1929 Senior TTs on Sunbeams, and had swapped to Excelsior for the 1931 season; he was sixth on one in the Junior TT.

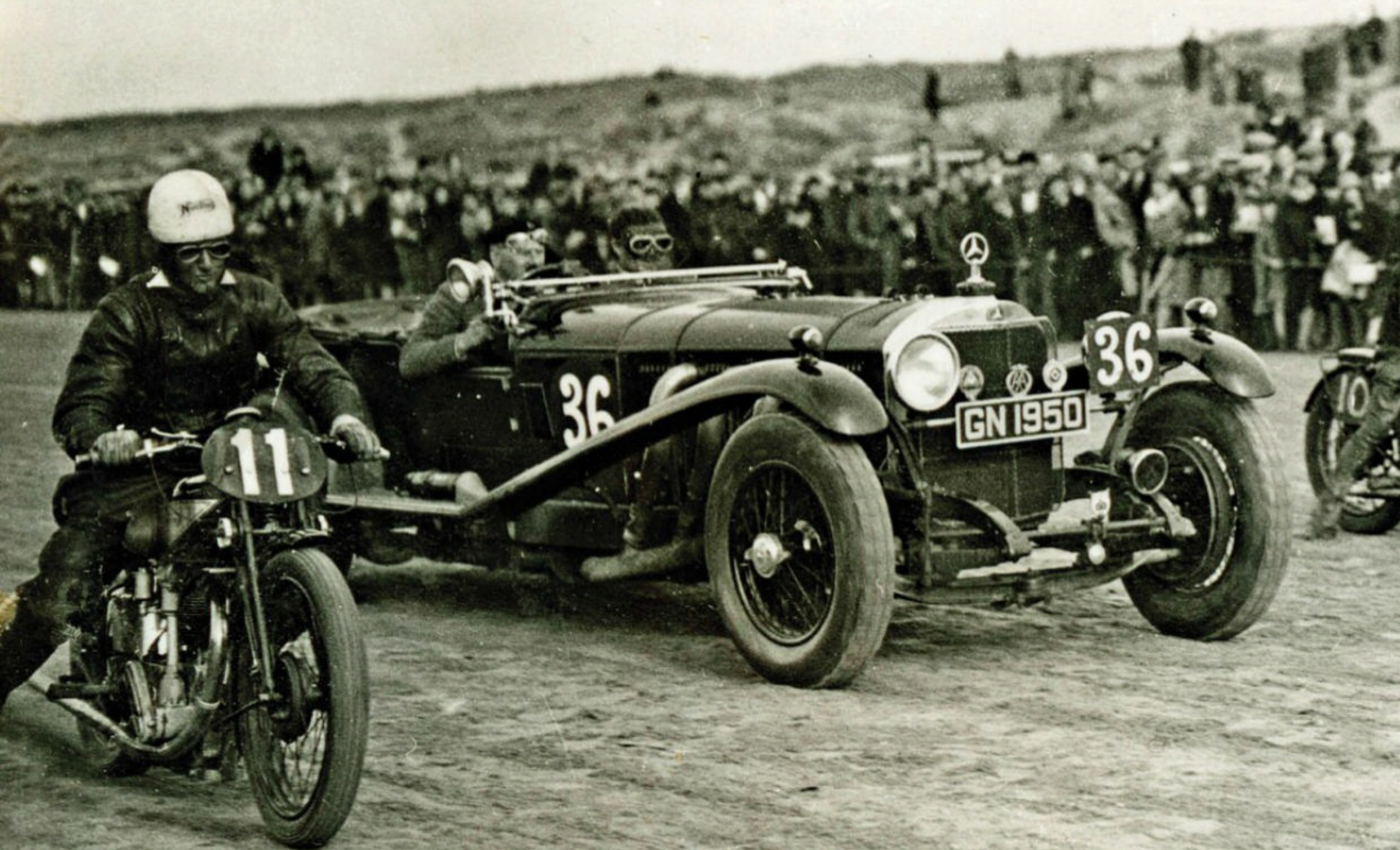
The line-up is completed by, on the far right, Vivian Selby's light blue Type 35 Bugatti, and a big black Mercedes, which would most likely seem to be 'The Forgotten Bentley Boy' – the title of a book about Tommy 'Scrap' Thistlethwayte – in his 1928 36/220S. The Mercedes is still registered with the DVLA, its capacity given as 6.8 litres, though it hasn't been taxed since

1990 and its colour is now recorded as white.

Mr Selby was a Southport regular (and Thistlethwayte, with his 'big Mercedes' a regular opponent, hence the deduction of who is in the black car), as well as at Brooklands, racing his Type 35C from 1929 to 1935. He was a regular winner on the sand, as well as on the continent, where he took part in races and rallies, including the Monte Carlo.

Post Second World War, Selby was the racing manager for Bristol cars, and one of Jack Brabham's first contacts when the Australian first came to the UK in the 1950s, on his way to becoming Formula 1 world champion.

On this occasion, Selby was the winner – but not 'on the sand' as Hunt, just, was ahead of Dobson past the flag, but they were only seven seconds ahead of the light



blue Bugatti, so Selby was declared victor.

His car, a 1925 two-litre example, chassis 4450 and the 19th to be manufactured, as well as the first of its model to appear at Brooklands in previous ownership, subsequently had a fascinating life, ending up in Australia, fitted with an Anzani engine, before eventually being reunited with a Bugatti power plant and sold by Bonhams at Monte Carlo in 2006 for £882,107.

Southport sand races were a huge thing in the period, with crowds of around 50,000 not unheard of. There were celebrities – the car boys of course, plus the motorcyclists, with, as well as Hunt and Dodson, riders like white-overall clad AJS exponent Ron Parkinson; Clarrie Wood with his big Douglas; Gilbert Emery with a Velocette or Sunbeam; the Crabtree brothers;

Harry 'Brock' Brockbank on his array of specials; Charles Needham, often with a big Brough Superior; and Bill Kitchen, a Velocette exponent.

On this day – October 3, 1931 – Ron Parkinson cleared off and easily won the one mile 350cc race, then in that category Kitchen took the two and six, with Needham, on a KTT Velocette, winning the 12 and 20 miles races, both times from Kitchen.

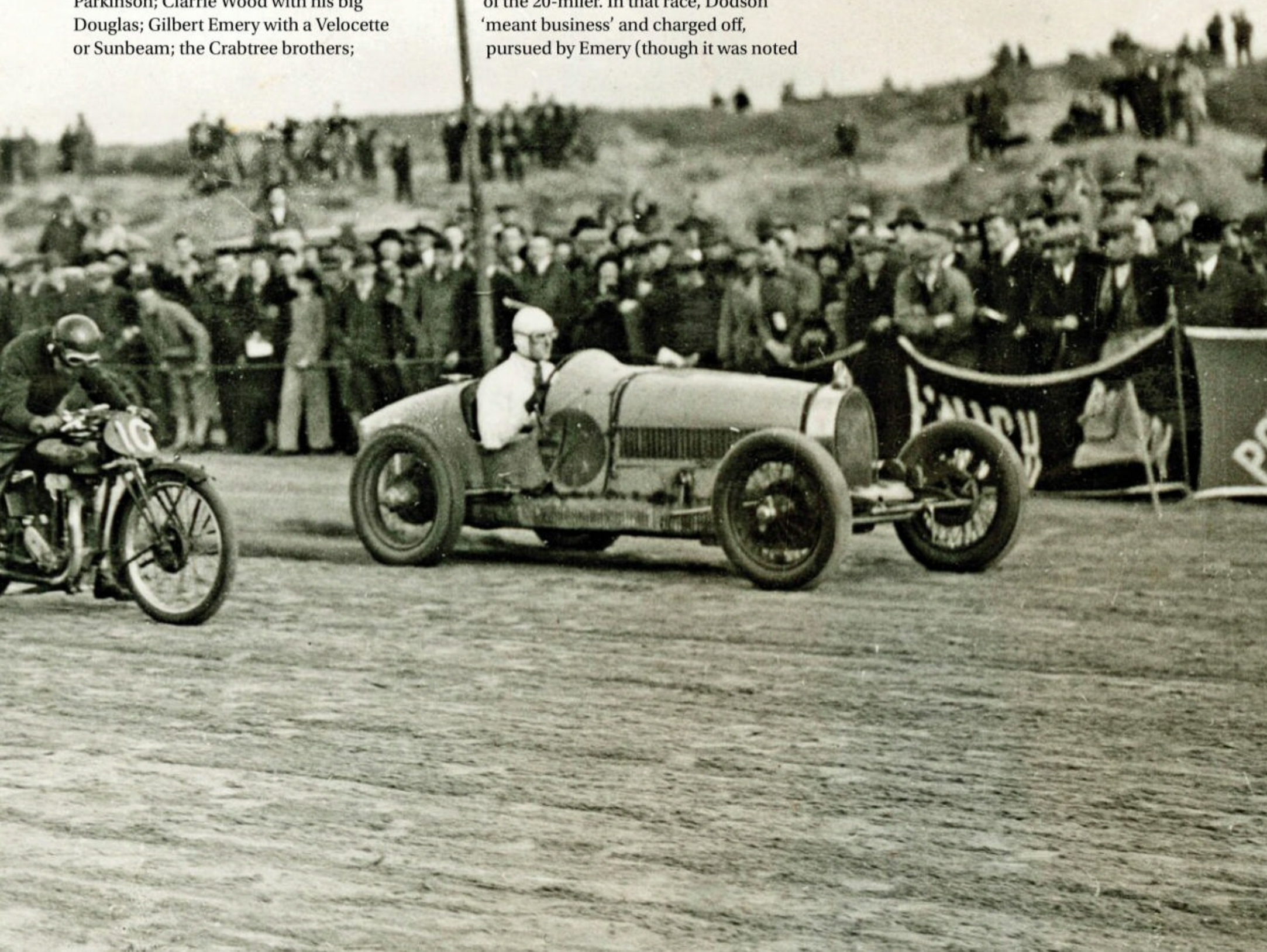
The one mile 500 and 750cc divisions were won by Brockbank on his semi-streamlined Norton special, with Hunt 500cc king over two, six and 12 miles, though he stalled on the line and pushed his Norton aside at the start of the 20-miler. In that race, Dodson 'meant business' and charged off, pursued by Emery (though it was noted

Charlie's Excelsior was the quicker mount) and Dodson pushed harder, harder, then too hard, crashing out.

Poor Emery, though, had his gearbox break just a lap later, leaving Anderson (500cc AJS) and Needham (350cc Velo) at the pointy end, the man on the bigger machine just triumphing.

Elsewhere, Wood was pretty much untroubled in the bigger classes, taking several comprehensive victories, while also among the places was Steve Darbishire, 500cc Norton, just missing out on third overall to Kitchen. Darbishire – later Doctor Darbishire – was second in the 1935 Junior Manx GP and best man at Geoff Duke's 1951 wedding.

End



New & Events

Stafford builds and builds

This year's Stafford show, to be held over April 25/26, celebrates the 40th anniversary since the event was first held in 1980.

To mark the occasion, there's lots of things happening around the '40' theme, also loosely marking the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Expect lots of machines from that period, with a Spitfire, Hurricane and a running Merlin engine – plus another big, period aviation engine – to be among the attractions.

We've got George Formby impersonator Graeme Hardy and the ex-Formby International Norton – more next month – coming along; there's Stuart Graham, the ex-works Suzuki and Honda man, and son of 1949 500cc GP world champion, Les, who was Lancaster pilot; a gang of Dad's Army celebrants; while there's some spectacular machines almost ready to be confirmed, from not just the 1940s, but different periods as well. What with those and aircraft engines, it'll be something of an aural delight too.

Clubs are being asked to enter into the spirit of the event, with 1940s themes, with visitors welcome to join in and get in the spirit too. It's all adding up to be quite the spectacle.



There's also to be a tribute to Colin Seeley, with four Seeley machines being displayed under the wings of one of the Second World War fighters, with various guests to be asked to talk about the revered Mr Seeley too.

And of course, there'll be all the usual Stafford highlights and regulars as well, so it's promising to be a weekend to remember.

To buy advance tickets call 01507 529529 or visit www.classicbikeshows.com

Lechlade annual rally

The sixth Lechlade annual vintage rally and country show takes place over May 23-25, 2020, at Langley Lane, Clanfield, Oxon, OX18 2RZ.

There's a 10am start each day, with cars, motorcycles, tractors, models, commercials, plus plenty more. Public 'all weekend' camping is just £10 per night, with free admission to the rally.

Email info@lechladecollectorsclub.co.uk for a booking form. Entry is £5 adults, £3 concessions with under 16s free.

Evesham summer gala

The Evesham Vale Light Railway in Worcestershire organise an historic vehicle weekend alongside its annual railway summer gala.

The event is growing year on year with over 250 vehicles on display over the two days, including a variety of military vehicles, as well as many classic cars and motorcycles.

This year's event is on July 4/5, between 10.30 and 4.30pm. Call 07867 804776, email ml31271@gmail.com or www.evlr.co.uk

Pioneer Run's new destination

The Sunbeam Motor Cycle Club has announced a new destination for the finish of its annual Pioneer Run for some 300 Veteran motorcycles, tricycles, quadricycles and combinations. Starting at Tattenham Corner, Epsom, at around 8am on Sunday, March 22, 2020 the final destination will be Brighton City Airport at Shoreham, where machines will start arriving at lunchtime.



Jurby gone, but T-shirts remain

Though it has now been confirmed that the Isle of Man's Festival of Jurby is no more, Wemoto will continue to raise money for the Manx Grand Prix Supporters' Club through the sale of its T-shirts, with over £80,000 raised for the charity so far.

With last year's fundraising now complete, Wemoto is proud to announce that they raised £14,327 in 2019. The 2020 charity T-shirt will be revealed soon and available to buy online at wemoto.com or 01273 597072.

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Comprising approximately 220 motorcycles this important collection was built up by the museum's founder, motorcycle manufacturer and Grand Prix boss Giancarlo Morbidelli, over a period of 40 years, and is one of the largest single owner collections to be offered by Bonhams to date.

COMPLIMENTARY AUCTION APPRAISAL

Further entries are now being invited. To discuss any aspect of selling or buying collectors motorcycles at auction, please contact the London office or visit bonhams.com/motorcycles to submit a complimentary auction appraisal request.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MORBIDELLI COLLECTION

1974 MORBIDELLI 125CC GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE
1976 MORBIDELLI 250CC GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE
1934 BENELLI 175CC BIALBERO RACING MOTORCYCLE
1950 BENELLI 250CC GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE
1964 BENELLI 250 GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE
1964 DUCATI 125CC GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE

LOT PREVIEW

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ENQUIRIES

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NEWS IN BRIEF

■ ASI MOTOSHOW

The wonderful ASI Motoshow takes place over May 8-10, 2020, in Parma. With a sprawling autojumble, on-track action and free entry, it's a great visit. Visit www.asifed.it

■ CAMBRIDGESHIRE SALE

Cheffins hosts an auction on April 18, 2020, at its Ely showground. Details or to consign from 01353 777767 or vintage@cheffins.co.uk

■ JOIN TEAM OBSOLETE

Team Obsolete is seeking a skilled race mechanic/engine builder for their Brooklyn, New York shop. Please email CV and cover letter to bikes@teamobsolete.com

■ VELO BOOK BACK... AND BETTER

Ivan Rhodes has updated his long out of print Velocette book, 'Technical Excellence Exemplified', with lots of new information and chapters and given it the new title 'Velocette, Passion of a Lifetime.' The official launch of the book will be at the National Motorcycle Museum on Saturday March 28, 2020, at 11am.

■ THRUXTON TICKETS STILL ON SALE

There is still time to buy tickets for a chance to win a brand new Triumph Factory Custom Thruxton 1200cc motorcycle in the National Motorcycle Museum's winter raffle draw. Second prize is a Sealey hydraulic bench, third a weekend hotel break. The draw will take place on Sunday, April 26, at the Stafford show. Tickets cost £2 each and can be obtained via the museum, 01675 444123 or online www.thenmm.co.uk

Morbidelli machinery to wow the crowds



After protracted negotiations and complicated export issues, Bonhams has confirmed that the post Second World War machines from the former Morbidelli Museum in Italy will be included in the sale to be held at Stafford county showground over the weekend of April 24-26.

This brings some truly spectacular machinery onto the open market, with two four cylinder racers from the 1960s probably the pick of the offerings.

First off, it's the 1965 125cc Ducati four, top left, an almost mythical machine, which was the subject of much perseverance and effort from Mr Morbidelli, as he tracked down



the key elements of the machine and reunited them. The estimate is £400,000-£600,000, reflecting the machine's unique nature.

The second four is an ex-Tarquino Provini 1964

Benelli, above, essentially the forerunner of the machine on which Kel Carruthers was 1969 250cc world champion. This example was used by Provini to win the Spanish GP. Estimate is £80,000-£120,000.

The exotica doesn't end there though. From 1950, a 250cc Benelli racer (£120,000-£160,000), top right, a later machine from the same maker, myriad Ducatis, MVs, Motobis, Mondial, Paton (and a Paton-Mondial, left), and of course Morbidelli. The collection will be amazing to see and study.

More from Bonhams on 0208 9632817 or bonhams.com



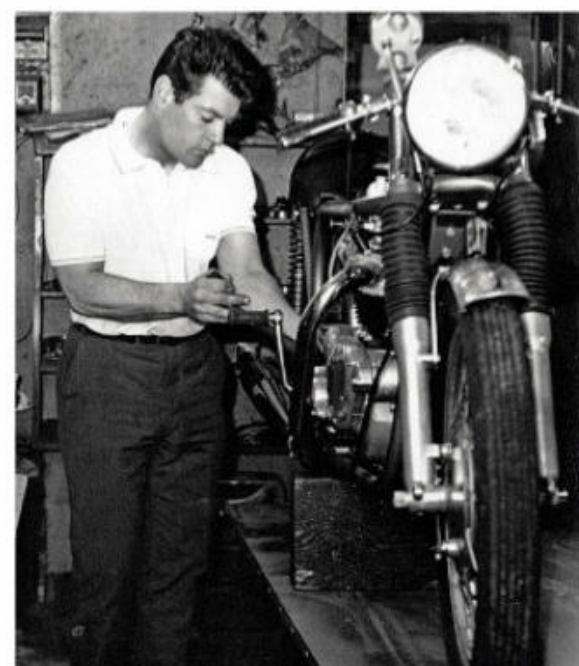
South of England show

Guest of honour at Elk Promotions' show, at the South of England showground at Ardingly, West Sussex, on March 29, will be legendary Triton builder, racer and raconteur Dave Degens.

Additionally, the show boasts five indoor halls, with all manner of attractions. If you enter your

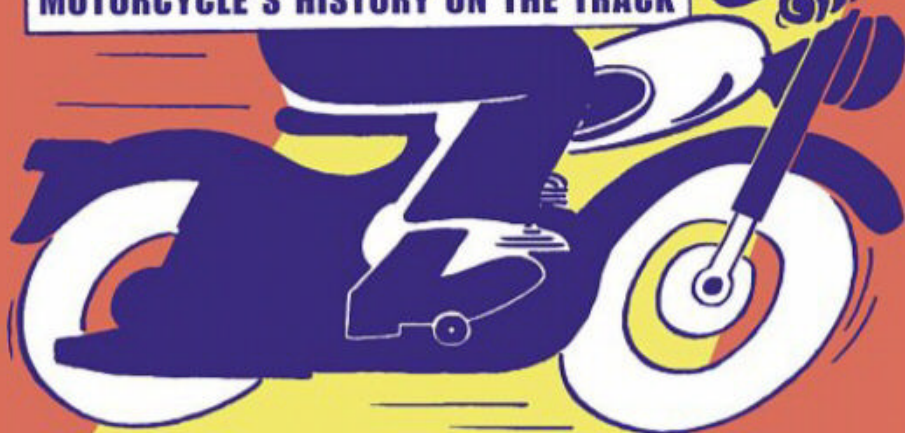
pre-1980 classic into the show before March 1, then you'll be sent a pass which will let you in free. Visit www.elk-promotions.co.uk for details, or contact Julie Diplock on 01797 344277.

Right: Dave Degens fettling a Dresda at his Putney premises in the 1960s.





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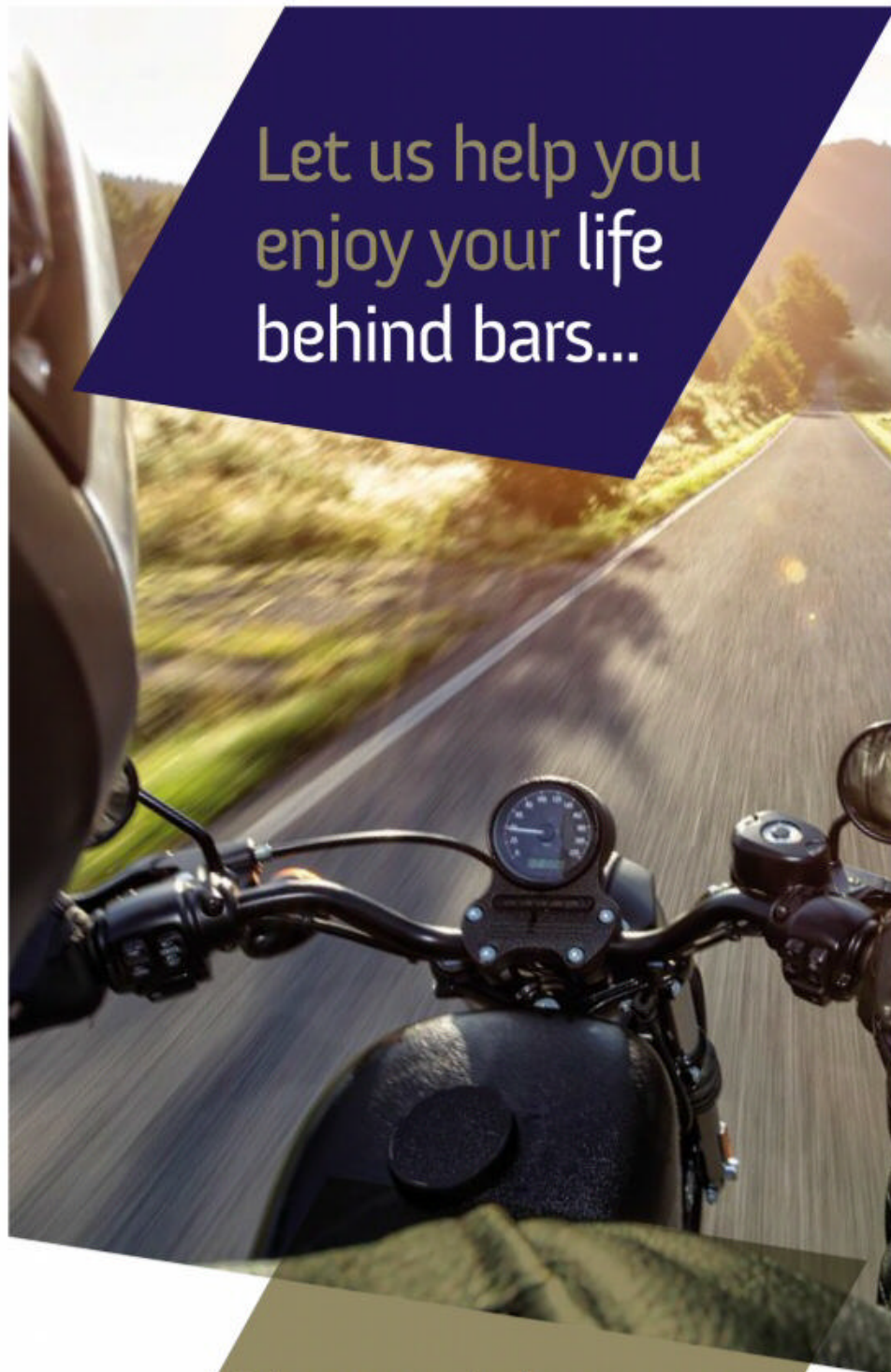
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Welsh week 2020



The Sunbeam Motorcycle Club has announced the Welsh Week 2020, to be held over June 20-27.

This long-standing event, first run in 1984, attracts a wide variety of pre-1940 machines.

Each day comes with a new route, adding a variety of views and fantastic quiet roads, known in general for their good surfaces.

The last run takes place on Friday, and entrants leave on Saturday after breakfast.

A full breakfast, packed lunch and two course evening meal are provided each day. Entry fee is £26 for Sunbeam MCC members, £29 for non-members. Board and accommodation (including meals) from £260 per person. Camping/caravanning (including meals) for £230 per person.

For more details and entry form, contact Jack Kemp, email office@radnorrevivals.com or 07876 597 697.

Prewar singles to the fore at H&H

One of the star lots at H&H's sale at the National Motorcycle Museum on April 7, will include this 1938 Vincent-HRD Meteor, below, which was discovered incomplete in a barn, and subsequently restored over 10 years to its current condition.

Specialists Maughan and Sons and Conway Motors have been involved in its rebirth. It has an optional Jaeger eight day clock, recently restored and in good running order.

The Meteor has been dated and inspected by the Vincent Owners' Club, with paperwork included. Copies of the original works order and original engine specification are included. Estimate is £30,000-40,000.

Other eye-catchers include



this unusual 1930 Norton CS1 (above), which has been in its current ownership since the 1960s. When sold, 100% of the proceeds of this Norton is going towards the purchase of the local church, built by the current owner's distant relative.

Bought in approximately 1969 in a dismantled state by the current seller, the CS1 was untouched and kept in boxes due to moving around the country for RAF duties, before restoration started in 2003 on retirement, with the engine restored by well-known Norton tuner Francis Beart's mechanic Keith Manning. Estimate is £25,000-£27,000.

Details on these and all the other lots (which includes veterans and several Vincents) from www.handh.co.uk

Book Review

'The Knife and Fork Man'

The life and work of Charles Benjamin Redrup. Innovative engineer and engine designer. New enlarged second edition

Author: William Fairney

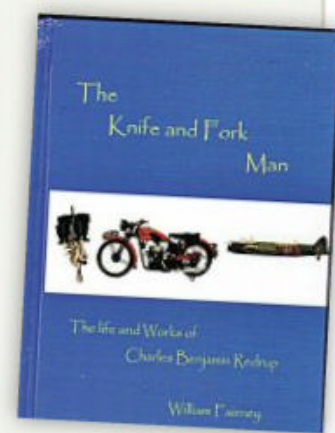
Publisher: Diesel Publishing, 2 The Tithe Barn, Hawksbury Upton, Badminton, South Glos. GL9 1AY

Email: dieselpublishing@gmail.com

Tel: 01454 238553

Hardback, 160 x 240mm (portrait); 360 pages with over 200 black and white photographs and illustrations, plus 33 colour plates and now includes an index.

ISBN 9780955445521 £18.95 plus £2.80 p&p (U.K.)



Charles Benjamin Redrup, the engineer and inventor, was born in Newport, South Wales, to wealthy parents, in 1878. The eldest of 10 children, Charles was privately educated, where he showed a great aptitude for science and engineering. He was apprenticed for five years to the Great Western Railway as a Premium Engineering Apprentice, where he learned all aspects of design, drawing, metallurgy, machining, pattern-making, casting and production methods.

Raised in Barry, Redrup designed and manufactured the twin-cylinder rotary-engined Barry motorcycle in 1904 and went on to design a prodigious range of engines for First World War aircraft, motorcycles, cars, boats and buses.

He carried out most of his development work in his simply-equipped home workshop, and often said that he made most of his engines with little more than "a knife and fork."

Redrup was the inventor of the unique wobble-plate axial engine, which powered a motor launch and a Crosley car in the 1920s. A variant of the engine flew in a Simmons Spartan aircraft in 1929. Several versions of Redrup's axial engines powered vehicles of the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company in the 1930s.

During the Second World

War, he worked with Alliott Verdon-Roe and Barnes Wallace on top-secret armaments projects, including the bouncing bomb, for the Avro Lancaster bomber and other aircraft.

After the war, Charles designed more motorcycle engines and in 1948 was encouraged and assisted by his son John – also a gifted engineer – to design and build a motorcycle based on the very successful Y-format three-cylinder Redrup radial engine of the 1920s, but with overhead valves and a carburettor of their own design, and shaft final drive.

This 250cc engine was mounted horizontally in a Royal Enfield frame with one cylinder facing forward and the other two at 120°. Sammy Miller has now restored this fascinating machine which is on display at his museum in Hampshire.

Prof Fairney is to be congratulated on the vast amount of research required for this new, second edition. This book is a very good read, not only for its technical information but for its social history and fascinating accounts of Charles Benjamin Redrup's amazing career. However, the book does suffer from poor reproduction quality of some of the photographs and inferior typesetting.

Reviewed by Jonathan Hill.

THE WAY WE WERE IN APRIL

1920

The Birmingham MCC received 177 entries for their Victory Cup Trial, one of 20 open ACU events in this year. Of the entries received, 165 started, and 156 completed the trial.

Although notorious hills including Birdlip, Old Wyche at Malvern and Rising Sun were terrors pre First World War, 1920 machines, in the hands of able riders, made easy work of them this time. Many, including Bert Bladder (8hp New Imperial outfit), Gus Kuhn (2¼hp Levis), George Dance (3½hp Sunbeam) and Howard Davies (6hp AJS) simply cruised up the ascents.

Over a section of Bidlip, the Birmingham Club organised a timed climb, with Dance making fastest time of 25 seconds, closely followed by Eric Porter (3hp ABC), Davies, Frank Applebee (3hp ABC) and W Woodcock (6-7hp Ariel). Grinton (7-9hp Harley-Davidson) headed the chairmen while H B Denley (8hp Morgan) was

fastest runabout.

The Martinsyde-Newman of F Whitworth wasn't ready until just before the start time, so he joined the ranks of the spectators, many of whom couldn't keep with his quiet Martinsyde on the open road. The Rev J M Philpott, ACU consul and chaplain to the Coventry and Warwickshire Motor Club, collected his new 2¾hp Wilkin-Blackburne on the trial's eve, and, despite undergoing minimal running in, the machine climbed all hills successfully.

Hard luck story of the day went to Mr E Matthews, whose Brough climbed all hills easily until he reached the summit the last climb - Willersey - when it broke a chain.

The organisers stated the dry conditions made for an easy trial. A Milner (2½hp Diamond) made best solo performance, while J E Greenwood (3½hp Sunbeam) was best outfit and was part of the team prize-winning Sunbeam squad.

1945

Looking forward to peacetime, James Leek, chairman of BSA Guns Ltd and BSA Cycle Ltd, stated his factories were manufacturing goods at up to 67 sites, with

28,000 employees using over 25,000 machine tools to supply more than 10 million components for the Allied war effort, including well over 100,000 motorcycles

1970

The 12-round 500cc motocross world championship series kicked off in Switzerland, with BSA works riders John Banks and Dave Nicoll having terrible starts, as, aboard their big four-stroke singles, they

made their bid to best the two-strokes. But it all went wrong, with Nicoll breaking a bone in his right foot during practice, while Banks broke a finger when lying fourth in the second leg.

1995

Having won the opening two rounds of the 500cc GP title chase followed by a second place in Japan, Australian Mick Doohan led the series, while German

Ralf Waldmann topped the 250cc class, with Japanese Haruchika Aoki having edged ahead of rival 125cc runners. All rode Hondas.
Richard Rosenthal.

Take a turn for the better

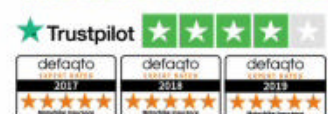
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Readers' Letters

YOUR VOICE & YOUR OPINIONS

Comet burial and rebirth

The Vincent Comet in the February 2020 issue prompted me to put pen to paper.

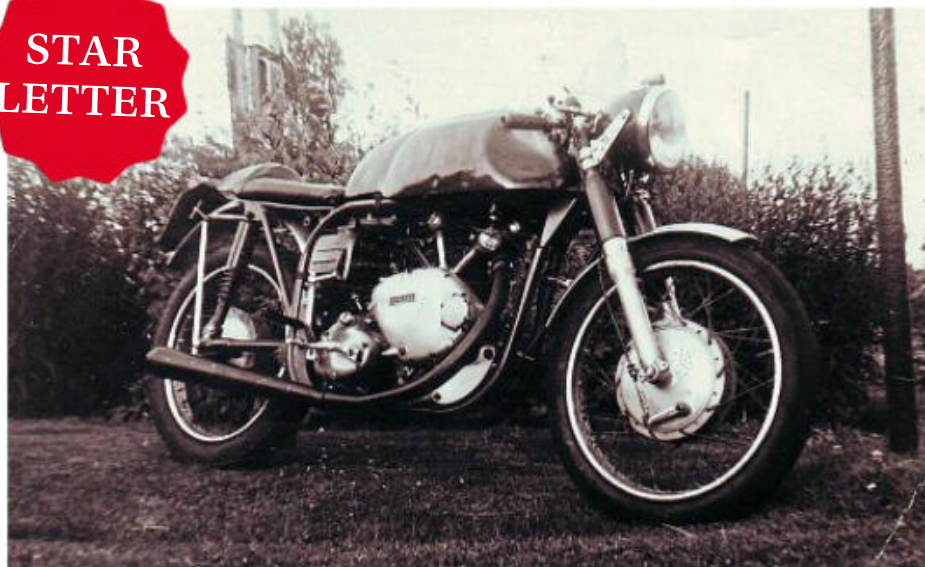
In 1968, at the age of 17, I had the good fortune to buy a running Vincent Comet from my brother Ivor for the princely sum of £12 and 10 bob.

My Norton Model 50 (the second bike I'd owned, after the almost-obligatory Tiger Cub), had elongated its big-end, so I decided to build a 500cc Norvin. I couldn't afford a twin

on an apprentice wage anyway.

I used the engine, gearbox and regulator. The rest of the Vincent was advertised in MCN for spares. A chap came from Southend to Cambridgeshire in a Reliant Van and bought the two front sidestands for 12 bob and then the rest – yes, all the rest – was made as small as possible and buried at the bottom of the garden in the soakaway dad was digging. But if anyone is thinking of going

STAR LETTER



The Norvin that Edwin Webb built, aged 17, with a Comet engine.

excavating, it will do them no good, as there's a house on the spot now.

The Norvin was eventually sold for £25. I still ride, on

either a 250cc V-twin Morini, TriBSA or new Royal Enfield Interceptor.

Edwin Webb, Hauxton, Cambs.

The world's oldest?

My name is Tim Millard and I am the current MD of Millard & Co Ltd, in Guernsey.

I wondered if you would be interested to find out about a recent Facebook campaign we started, to find the oldest motorcycle shop in the world.

The campaign has currently received about 40,000 views and shares worldwide and a lot of informative feedback. However, to date, no one knew of, or could suggest, a motorcycle shop that is as old as Millards, and still in existence.

This all came about after the recent passing of one of our family and the discovery about an article in the Wiltshire Times on February 26, 1896, reporting my great-grandfather, Thomas Millard, selling the

first motorised tricycle from his shop in the area. The customer paid about £100 for this machine and the article reports him taking delivery from the shop in Fore Street, Trowbridge, and his subsequent ride to Beckington. The event attracted a crowd of onlookers so large, it blocked the wide road in front of the premises.

We therefore wondered if you would like to offer this 'challenge' up to your readership – to find a motorcycle shop that is still in existence that has documented evidence of its first motorcycle/tricycle sale dating earlier than February 26, 1896. If there is a motorcycle shop anywhere in the world that can beat that, we will happily concede our claim to the title.

As a little bit of background...



Is there an older dealer than Millards? If so, do let us know.

Thomas Millard started out in business in 1887 selling cycles. Six years later, he was manufacturing pedal powered two-wheelers and at some point prior to February 26, 1896 started selling motorcycles/tricycles.

The business continued and moved to Guernsey in 1908. The shop has been involved in the manufacture and sale of motorcycles and became a BSA dealer in 1917. It is still owned and run by the same family.

Tim Millard, Guernsey.



THIS MONTH'S STAR LETTER WINS

The writer of this month's Star Letter wins a Premier Rocker U9 BM open-face helmet worth £89.95. Premier have been around since 1956 and found fame in the 1970s with Phil Read MBE. The Rocker features a retractable internal sun visor and moisture-wicking/ odour-free lining. Find out more at www.thekeycollection.co.uk

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Cycle pacing pictures

The two photographs of cyclists being paced by motorcyclists in the March issue (pages 39 and 98) were interesting for several reasons.

As some other readers would have noticed, the one being paced by Geoff Duke (39) had a smaller front wheel than the back one, and his front forks were back to front. This enabled him to ride closer to the screen and stopped his front wheel from touching the chain wheel.

Measuring the chain wheel and sprocket appeared to give roughly a 7:1 ratio – i.e the back wheel would rotate seven times to the chain wheel's once, compared to a motorbike engine which would rev faster than the back wheel, and the cyclist would require assistance to get started.

The other photo which was taken in 1903 is remarkable in that the cameras of the day would have had only small apertures and the film or plate glass negative would also have been much slower than today's film or electronic equivalent. Yet the spokes of a supposedly moving duo were in sharp focus. I think both riders must have been propped up somehow, and the evidence of the props erased from the photo.

Colin Porter, via email.

ISDTs on screen

In response to A F Spackman's enquiry, You Were Asking, March 2020, p88. There is a video (not a DVD) from Duke video production, catalogue code 1101, title Enduro Classics ISDT 1950s Nostalgia. I don't know if it is on a disc, but if you can get a copy you won't be disappointed. It runs for about three hours, and contains the 1951, 1952 and 1954 ISDTs, Maude's Trophy and lots more.

Brian Hulme, via email.

PS. Great mag!

Monty's Beam in museum



Having read the fantastic article in the March edition of *The Classic Motorcycle*, regarding the Sunbeam S7/S8, I can inform you that Lord Montgomery's motorbike is in the Louwman Museum in

Den Hague, along with Winston Churchill's Humber Pullman car. The museum is well worth a visit for anyone interested.

This photograph was taken in 2017.

Phillip Gipp, via email.

Teenage dreams two

Like John Weedon (*TCM*, March) my first sight of the Mk.II BSA Spitfire made me want one desperately, but at the time my 1960 DBD34 Gold Star was worth less than half the price of one of these new.

In early 1967, with a bit more cash available, I went to David Tye's at Cromford to see if it might be possible to get a new Mk.II – by now superseded by the Mk.III version.

The ever helpful George Beachum, who ran Tye's, managed to find one and I took ownership of RRA 755E for the reduced price of £329 in May 1967. It would be the only new bike I ever owned.

It was Peony Red, a much darker shade than John's bike, and was my only transport for four years, used for my daily 20 mile round trip to my job as a bus mechanic, sometimes starting at 6am on early shift or finishing at 2am on the late shift. It also took me to the Isle of Man several times, regularly to a friend's in North Yorkshire, and to Scotland.

The engine was never taken

apart while I owned it but the oil was changed every 1000 miles, using Duckhams 20/50. Regular checks were made on float level, throttle synchronisation, valve clearance and timing, the latter being made easier after separately adjustable points were fitted under warranty.

It was the fastest bike I have ever owned on both top speed and acceleration, this being helped when it was fitted with a Lightning Clubman rearset footrest kit and bars and US export high level pipes and silencers.

The only problem was the intense vibration through the fuel tank at high revs and although nothing ever fell off or fractured, you ended up numb where you were in contact with it on longer journeys!

Wanting to try road racing, I reluctantly sold it to a local friend and after he traded it in for a BMW I never saw or heard of it again. I often wonder if it survived, as the Goldie did. I hope so, as it was the best bike I ever owned.

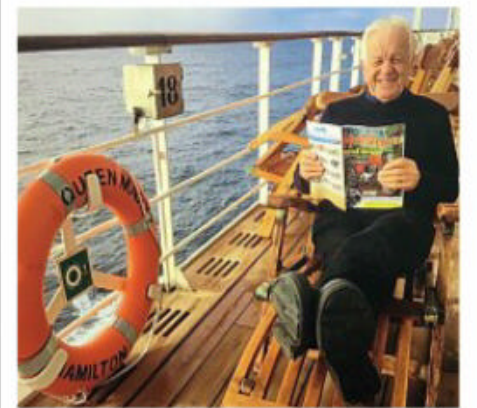
Eric Smith, Derby.

Cruising treat

What could be better than reading *TCM* whilst being mid-Atlantic on the Queen Mary 2?

I have owned my B31 since 1965 and it's been recently restored to its original alternator specification, after I had converted it to magdyno in the 1960s as the old 6v alternator system kept boiling batteries. No voltage control then, only by headlamp switch! I also have a Triumph T140, which was rescued out of a friend's back garden after 40 years, and which has been fully restored.

Dave Edwards, via email.



Conquest memories

Martin Squires' Sketchbooks are outstanding every month but that beautiful drawing of the Cotton Conquest in the January 2020 issue really took me back.

Martin's statement that a production of 200 might have been exaggerated makes the fact that my roommate purchased one new from Lee Cowie's Motorsport in St Louis, Missouri, a special memory.

My friend's had a dualseat and on summer evenings we would leave a trail of pungent exhaust through the twists and turns of old US Route 66 to the Riteway Diner for another unhealthy bachelors' dinner.

Blaine Stone, St Louis, USA.



Martin Squires' Cotton Conquest really brought the memories back for Blaine Stone.



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Percy's pain in the backside...

Reading the Percy Tait obituary (February 2020) reminded me of the various chats I had with Jaguar tester and legend Norman Dewis, who also passed away in 2019 – June 8 to be precise, at the age of 98.

Norman and Percy's paths often crossed when they were testing their respective products at MIRA (Motor Industry Research Association), where there was always some friendly rivalry between the Jaguar and Triumph testers.

Norman once told me about a time he was testing a prototype E-type at MIRA, and 'Perc' couldn't believe the pace. So it was a surprise that when Norman was building up speed to take the banking, that a demented rider on board a Triumph went rocketing by, only to lose it at the top.



The MIRA test facility at Nuneaton was opened after the Second World War and used across the British vehicle industry. This is a 1954 open day.

Norman was still laughing as he recalled the story: "I watched poor old Perc sliding down the banking on his butt, thinking 'that's gonna hurt.'"

The pair enjoyed a healthy respect and showed great interest in whatever new device the other had.

Jim Patten, email.

I know that agony

With reference to Tim Britton's ongoing project and losing things when moving house. I too have suffered the same agony.

In 1984 we relocated, but only next door, so we took out two sections of fencing for the 'removals.' Straightaway, we had a really big garage commissioned, double width and 26ft long, intending to build a nice bench for the forthcoming rebuild, that had already started at the previous house.

Frame and all black tinware of the 1960 Viper were sent for stove enamelling. All polishing went to the platers. I took the nuts and bolts for the frame, mostly still Rubery Owen, along too.

"Have you got any more of these to do?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Because the plating (cadmium) is such a dirty process that we have to clean out the vats each time!"

So the following week I took the whole lot and by now was losing the idea of what goes where... Move completed, all

building work – including a new, enlarged kitchen – finished and it was time to get started on the rebuild.

The frame was set up on a workmate, leaving plenty of room on the big new bench. Now, where are the nuts and bolts? I searched everywhere for nearly a year... Then, voila, they appeared. I'd put them in a cardboard box under the bench, behind the old kitchen wall cabinet. The times I looked at it and each time said 'Nothing behind that,' fully intending to fix it to the wall sometime...

It took five years to complete the Viper, taking on board readings in *TCM* that going flat out might cause disinterest when things get tough. The Viper is still as good as new after all these years. I also know where my original Viper (1962) is in Suffolk and that's the reason for this bike. The original one was advertised as a '1962' but when I got it home the buff log book said 1960. But Velos didn't change much in those days did they?

Jeff Waller, Alicante, Spain.



The three stages of the rebuild. Jeff Waller's Viper before the job was started, as it finished, and mid-assembly.



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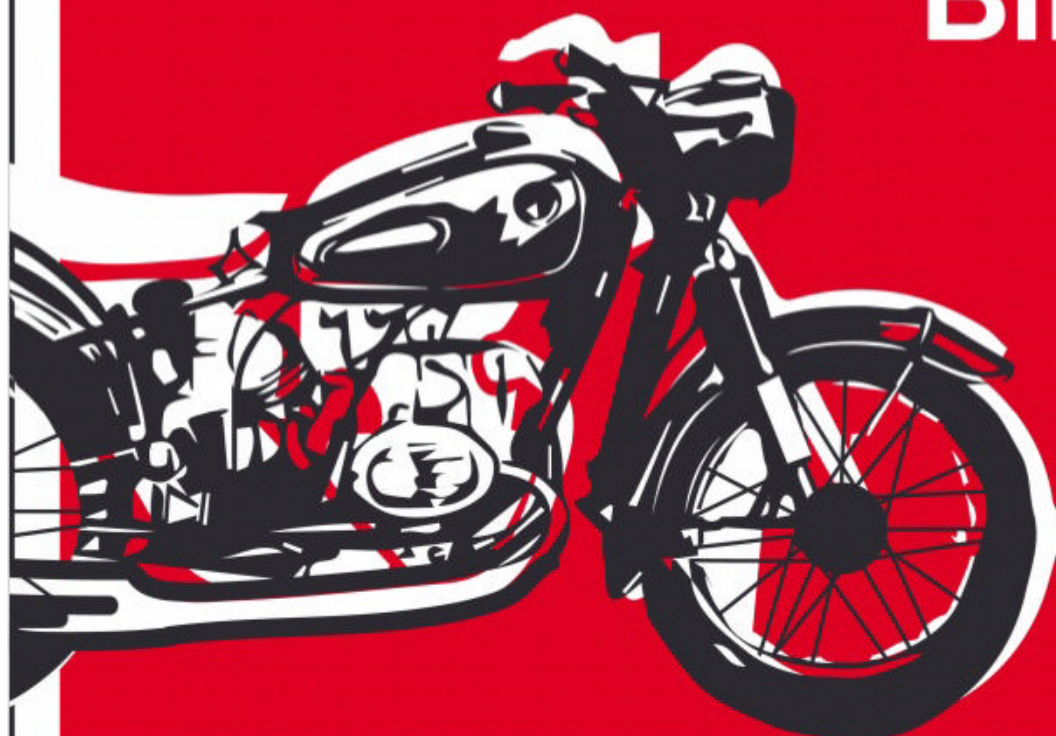
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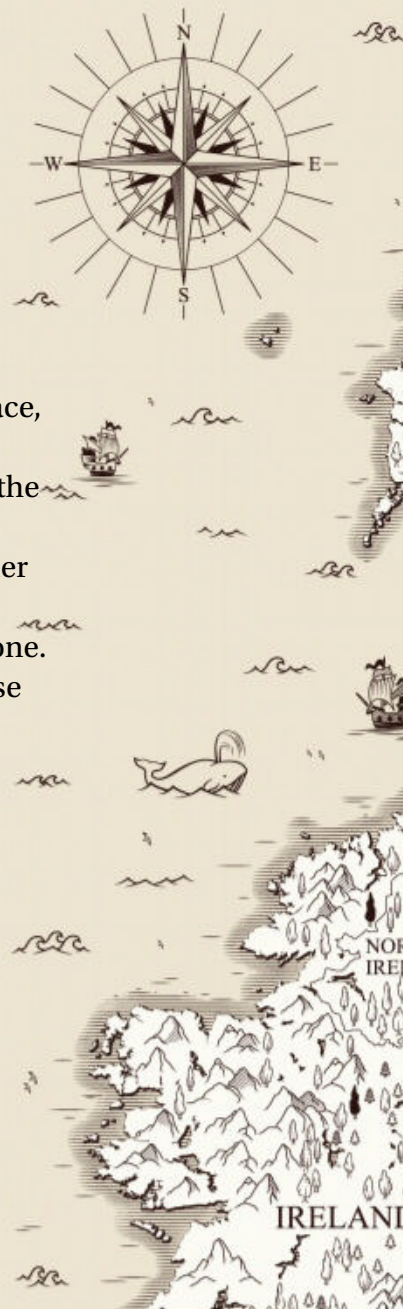
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Hit the great museum trail



For just about every reader of *The Classic Motorcycle*, there's an inbuilt fascination with motorcycles of a certain age, so we don't really need a specific reason to visit a motorcycle museum – they contain old bikes, do we have to have an excuse? But we shouldn't deny that there are distinct reasons to spend some time in a museum – regardless of the fact that the motorcycles in question are, more often than not, static exhibits of engineering created with the sole purpose of transportation. If we have a project bike in mid-build, it's nice to be able to go somewhere to be able to compare a complete and intact model, or to research specification, colours, quality of finish etc. Quite often, especially in the case of rarer models, if we want to directly compare like with like, we have little option but to go to a museum as it's highly unlikely that we'll see one at a local bike meet, or in a neighbour's garage. So, in order to be able to see bikes to compare and contrast, we all need to support our local museums so that they're still there when we really need them.

Some museums will have multiple examples of one make or even model, while others have an eclectic array of machinery that has no particular specialisation or even organisation.

Some are chaotic, with bikes, parts and memorabilia crammed into every inch of available space, while others are beautifully lit, open and airy – an art gallery for internal combustion. Neither is better than the other, and size is irrelevant. From the multiple halls of the National Motorcycle Museum and the Sammy Miller Museum, to the one-shed-and-a-lean-to of private collections, there is joy to be found in each and every one. There are probably more transport museums than those that cater solely for bikes, yet very few will have no motorcycles at all. The simple fact is that motorcycles are far too interesting for a museum to be without any. You can always find some interesting roads to and from any museum, and many are in some stunning locations. It's also worth bearing in mind that many museums (the Grampian Transport Museum is a good example) offer deals for clubs that're visiting, which all combines to create the question – do you actually need a reason?

As you can see from the map, there are museums all around the country with displays of classic bikes begging for your attention. So go on, get out there on your classic and pay them a visit!

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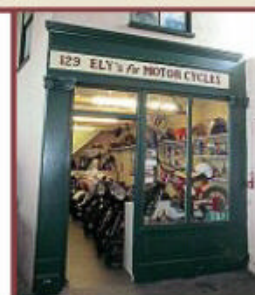
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Back on track

After last year's postponement caused by heavy snow, it was reassuring that this year's Bristol Classic Show went ahead with no such drama.

Words: JAMES ROBINSON **Photographs:** GARY CHAPMAN

Best in Show winner Jim Devereux was delighted to pick up the premier award with his incredibly rare four-valve 1931 Ariel SG Sloper, a machine that was actually restored a few years back, but is still in tip-top condition, its black and chrome glistening under the show lights.

It was displayed on the Stonehenge section of the VMCC's stand – always a place where standards are high, with several other prize winners part of the display.

Also proud with Jim's prize-winning performance was Sammy Miller, the evergreen trials, road racing and museum curating legend, having taken Jim on at the museum, with the Ariel more than likely not proving too bad a 'CV' if one wants a job restoring motorcycles.

The full story of its rebuild was covered in our February 2014 issue, while in

the interim it's not simply been hidden away and stored, but used, making its still-stunning appearance even more praiseworthy.

There were a couple of fresh restorations that picked up prizes too, the first being Andy Burbidge's wonderful 1960 Triumph Bonneville 'Thrupton'. Not to be confused with the later unit-type Thrupton Bonneville machines, Andy's is a one-year-only rarity, and he explained how it all came about: "It came to me as a standard 1960 T120 Bonneville and I bought it from Cliff Rushworth at Ace Classics," he explains, "and Cliff encouraged me to do it to Thrupton spec, it being the only year it was offered."

Handily, Cliff was able to supply most of the parts too, including a one-gallon oil tank, rear sets, different handlebars and plug-in headlamp, among other things. Andy did stray from 'catalogue' though

with his silencers, deciding that he fancied megas – and very well they look too – while also wanting a lighter shade of brown/gold paint for the magneto, again to his own personal taste.

For the show regular (and regular winner) the pre-unit Bonnie offers something of a departure, his usual forte being the Triumph Trophy Trail/Adventurer series. "I'm down to 12 bikes now," he confessed, "though most of them are Trophy Trails." He had "a lot more" but has passed on several.

With the newly-finished Bonnie, it really did go down to the wire. "I finished it early last week – it was taken off the bench on Friday morning and it started up straight away, it sounds lovely.

"I'm looking forward to getting it home, putting it on the road and getting it run-in."

The restoration took Andy four months, 300 hours or 35 working days, depending ▶



Tangerine Dream anyone? Well-presented 1959 Bonneville gets closely inspected.



Andy Burbidge with his prize-winning pre-unit Bonneville. Very nice.



Left: There were several scramblers to the fore on the Gold Star Owners' Club stand.

Right: Now, a Morini 3½ we've all seen, but a 2½? Not so much. Rare 250cc four-stroke single, like an Italian, miniature Vincent Comet perhaps...

Below: The New Imp Club are Bristol show stalwarts and they always put in plenty of effort.





Mike Stocks poses with 'Elsie', his oft-used 1942 Harley-Davidson WLC.



Laverda up for discussion. Literally.

how one would prepare to categorise it! His efforts won him the Best Postwar prize, of which there could be little dispute. There was barely a moment at the show when someone wasn't taking a picture of it.

There's not many people who have taken home more silverware from the Bristol show than Alan Smith, from just up the road – well, the M4 – in Swindon. This year Alan had another exquisitely detailed AJS, a 1928 side-valve, which looked to be a fabulous restoration, though closer examination and questing revealed that wasn't necessarily so.

"It's completely built up out of bits," he recounts. "I've had the frame kicking about for years. I think I bought it and the forks in 2004. The engine came with a load of bits from Australia, I actually got it as part of a swap deal.

"I bought the gearbox at Founders Day while the valve lifter mechanism came from a chap, Jari, in Finland, who's part of the vintage AJS community, as part of another deal.

"The wheels were interesting. Dale Sole (son of the late Pete, another multiple award

winner, while Dale still exhibits at least one of his dad's bikes) called me up from an autojumble somewhere, and said he was looking at some vintage AJS wheels, which the seller thought were either 1927 or 1928.

"They're not quite the same and turned out to be 1927, but we were able to make them work. The front hub, though, was made completely from scratch, rough machined by someone and then finished off by my friend (and fellow AJS guru) Ray Carter. We increased the width of the hub too, which gives a better brake.

"Obviously, if I'd have had a Big Port (so 350cc ohv) engine I'd have used that, but actually these little side-valves go really well. Though he do have to rev 'em."

Anyway, Alan already has two Big Ports, as well as a 'cammy', so the side-valve nicely completes the set and it sparkled on the North Wilts Motorcycle Club stand, joined by plenty of other desirable and interesting pieces of machinery, including Cyril Griffiths' lovely, cobby and purposeful 1924 350cc Omega-JAP.

Less sparkling but no less interesting was Mike Stocks' 1942 Harley-Davidson WLC, chosen as Best Military, with the attention to detail of the other bits and pieces Mike has collected adding to the appeal of his display. But even better, Mike rides the Harley pretty much every day.

"I'm a tattooist and I park it outside my shop, where it always attracts attention. It's a great talking point.

"It's also easy to look after and dead reliable – you just put fuel and oil in it, kick it over a few times, and away it goes. It did take a little bit of getting used to – the hand change and the foot clutch – but now it's second nature."

So enamoured is he with his Harley, he now has two. His children love it too – it has 'Elsie' painted on the petrol tank, as that was how it was christened by the youngsters, owing to it being a (W) LC.





Mike went on to say: "I've learned so much from having owned it, and collecting up all sorts of bits and pieces."

He opened up one of his panniers and started getting out all sorts of things, including a French/English dictionary.

Explaining further, he told how it's not possible to tell if his machine actually saw service as, post-Second World War, most were sent to Holland and all records were lost, as they ended up in civilian hands.

So whether Mike's example was on the beach at Normandy in 1944 is unknown, but it has still got sand in its tyres now, owing to a commemorative event on Saunton beach. He's even raced a tank on the sand aboard the Harley!

Elsewhere there were some other lovely things to look at and marvel over, including Henry Body's remarkable Douglas sprinter on which he was unbeatable for decades – literally – while the Lew Coffin award (Lew was a show regular for many years) went, fittingly, to a rakish Mk.1 cammy Velo grasstracker, while it was a pleasure to gaze upon Brian Casely's factory-built ISDT Tribsa, which picked up a pot for Best Off-roader. There were many later classics – the Japanese being well-represented – while there was a good helping of early machines too, notably more than in recent years or at other shows.

All in all it was a good show, with a cheerful spirit evident throughout the showground all weekend.

End

Above: Jim Devereux was delighted to claim Best in Show with his unusual Ariel.

Right: Best Veteran was this sparkling Rudge Multi. Nice indeed.

Below: This trio of Douglas 600cc twins had an interesting shared history, living together for many years. Paul Wirdnam's is in the centre. The three shared the Jeff Clew Endeavour award.





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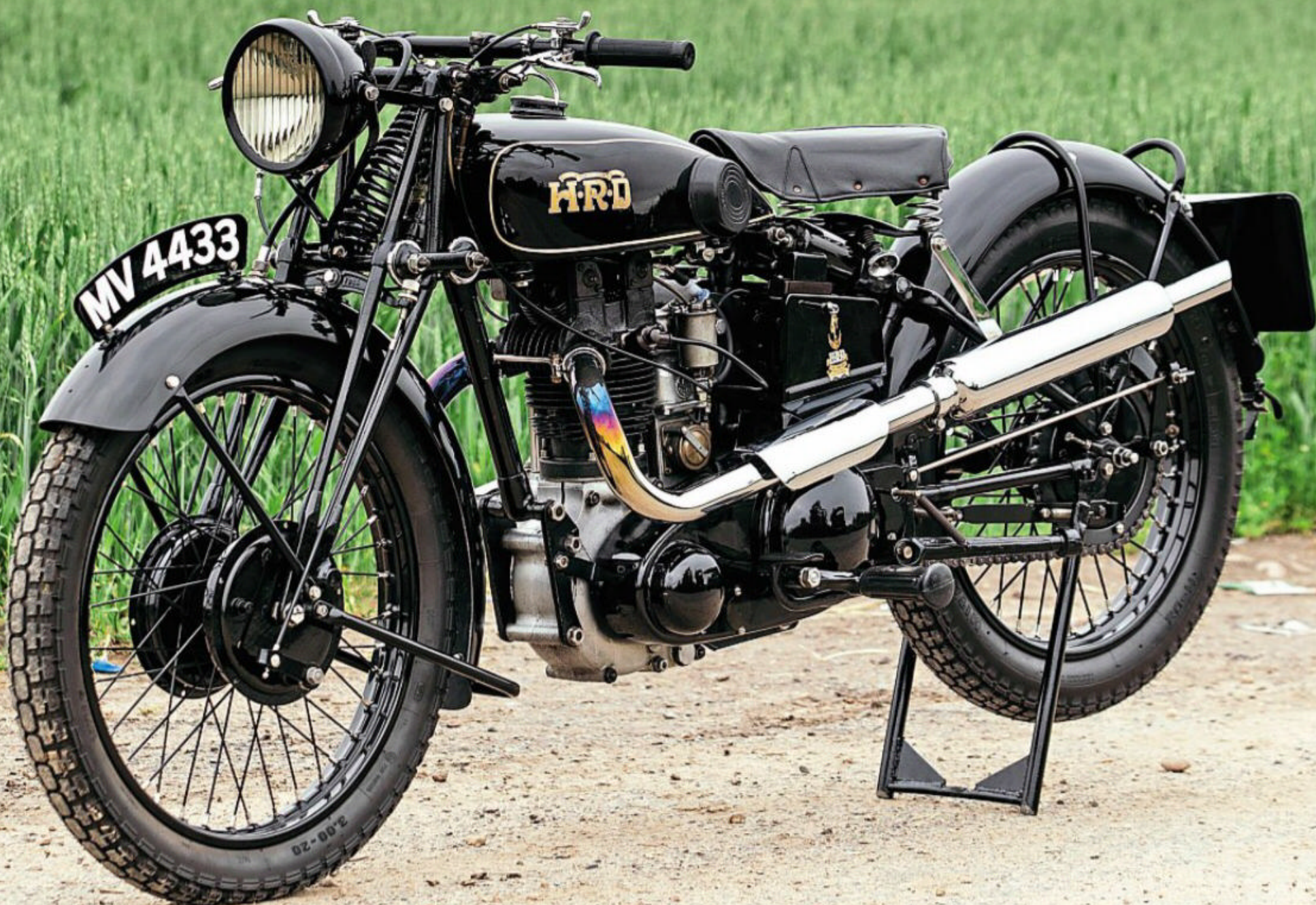
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101 *not out*

Despite being over a century old, this Royal Enfield V-twin is still a capable performer.

Words: ANDY WESTLAKE **Photographs:** GARY CHAPMAN

This 1919 Model 140 Royal Enfield, owned by Paul Hepworth, is one of the oldest two-wheelers I've ever ridden. I was extremely interested in firing it up and taking the stunningly restored machine for a ride, but I wasn't relishing mixing it with speeding cars and heavy quarry lorries lumbering along the busy roads near Paul's home in West Wiltshire.

A first ride on a motorcycle manufactured over 100 years ago, with its modest performance and marginal/non-existent brakes, is not the ideal tool to negotiate modern traffic conditions, but thankfully salvation to my concerns came in the form of Robert Floyd, who invited me along to the beautiful Edwardian manor house at Great Chalfield to put the 3hp Redditch twin through its paces.

Built in 1469, Great Chalfield was recently chosen by Country Life magazine as one of the top six finest manor houses in the UK and has been a popular choice for television companies owing to its timeless backdrop. On a cold but bright day it certainly proved to be a perfect setting to both photograph and ride the little 424cc V-twin.

Before we fire the engine into action and go for a brief outing along Great Chalfield's long drive, we'll turn the clock back to 1913 and the launch of the 3hp Model 140.

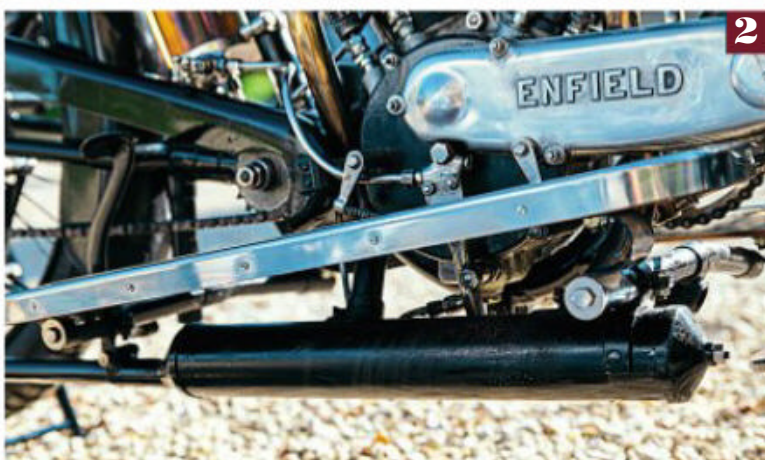
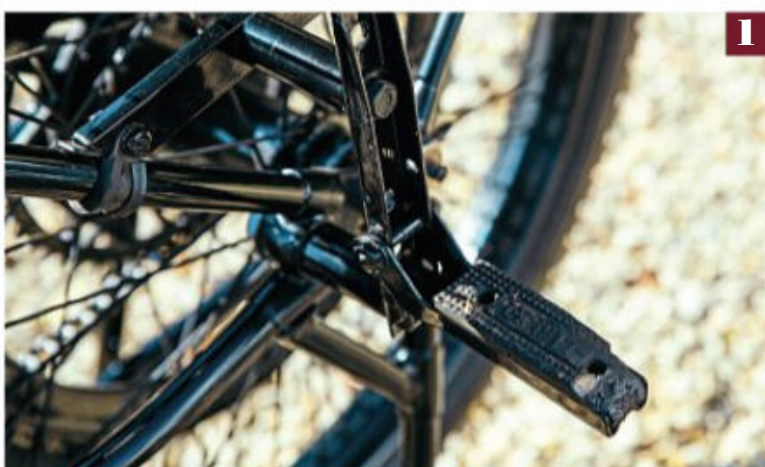
Although the 424cc V-twin was a new machine, it wasn't the first Royal Enfield to carry the 'Model 140' name. At the November 1909 motorcycle show, the Redditch company had displayed their new offering – designed by W Guillon and R W Smith – which was powered by a 60 degree, 2¼hp 297cc four-stroke engine. Along with its 145 sibling – same specification but fitted with Dunlop studded tyres and a Brooks 130/3 saddle – the well-built single speed machines proved to be extremely reliable and popular in the numerous reliability trials including the ACU's six days trials and the Land's End to John O'Groats event, winning gold medals for their riders in 1910. In a road test, the editor of *Bicycling News* wrote: "The Enfield motor bicycle is a gem of neat design – as dainty and complete little mount as one could wish for."

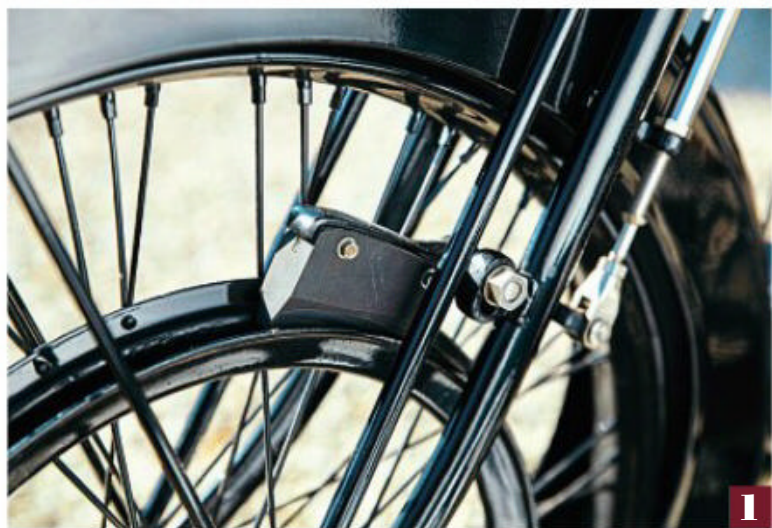
The first motorcycle to carry the name of Royal Enfield on its petrol tank was a 1½hp Minerva-powered machine which went on sale in 1901, but the origins of the company can be traced back to 1851 and the

1: There's just a single pillion footrest, to be teamed with the 'side saddle' pillion perch when fitted.

2: Under engine tubular silencer is responsible for the pleasant exhaust note.

3: Paul and Jan Hepworth, looking very much the part at the Beamish Museum in 2018.





1: Dummy belt rim brakes are described as 'marginal' at best...

2: The kick-starter can be a tad awkward to operate.

Below: It's much nicer being able to play on a private road for a first try on a machine such as this.

decision of George Townsend to set up a needle manufacturing works at Hunt End, near Redditch. The Enfield name was first used on a range of cycles in 1892 and the following year 'Royal' was added to signify that the cycles were undoubtedly of superior quality. From 1899 to 1903, both quadricycles and tricycles were made under licence from De Dion Bouton, followed in the second year of the new century by the Jules Gobiet-designed 1½hp Minerva powered motorcycle.

With their motorcycles, Enfield were certainly not short of innovative ideas and at the Stanley Show at the end of 1903 displayed a chain-driven water-cooled engine mounted low down in its loop frame. A price of 75 guineas proved to be too expensive and for the following year it was replaced by an air-cooled 2½hp model, at a much more modest 40 guineas.

But the motorcycle world was unsettled, and the cycle world profitable, so in 1906 they decided to leave the business for a while and it would be another four years before they considered re-entering the powered two-wheeler world, with the first Model 140 and its similar 145 sibling. The two little V-twins were dropped from the range for 1912 while the company developed their new range of machines ready for their release the following year. Now displacing 424cc and rated at 3hp, the new, all chain-drive machine featured overhead inlet valves and a two-speed gearbox which had been developed from





the Guillon designed 344cc engine raced so successfully by Bert Colver at Brooklands during 1912.

While many of the opposition manufacturers were content to produce a four page advertising sheet, Enfield certainly put them to shame with a lavish 32-page publication. This provided full specification and technical details of their three new models along with riding hints for new riders, illustrations of the newly equipped Redditch works plus a summary of the company's 1912 sporting successes.

The new 3hp model 140 was still a 60 degree V-twin with a 75mm stroke but it had been bored out to 60mm and was fitted with overhead valves housed in a dome directly above the side exhaust valves. Lubrication was taken care of by the introduction of an interesting automatic dry-sump system which saw the oil fed under pressure from a geared pump to the big-end via a hollow crankpin and thus distributed to each cylinder. The oil accumulated in the sump was then pumped out and returned to a glass tank fitted behind the seat tube of the frame. This was one of the earliest known examples of its type and illustrated as a cut-away illustration in the company's 32-page brochure.

During the First World War most of Enfield's production was concentrated on the manufacture of artillery shells and gun-carrying sidecars for the military. After, there was an acute shortage in the supply and escalating cost of raw materials resulting in the price of the Model 140 rising from £52-10s in 1914 to £69-6s four years later.

The 1919 motorcycle show was held at Olympia and the Enfield stand was a lavish affair displaying not only 14 different models of the company's pedal cycles, but the newly announced 225cc two-stroke, along with four of the big 771cc four-stroke twins. Despite its popularity,

Above: This Model 140 comes from the last year of production, 1919.

it was the end of the road for the 3hp Model 140 and the last one left the Redditch production lines at the end of December that year, the same month our subject motorcycle was first registered.

The machine's subsequent history is now unknown, so we fast forward to December 2015, when AF 2259 made its way to the West Country to join the eclectic collection belonging to Colin Groves. Colin will be known to regular readers of the magazine as I've written six articles on some of his bikes and although the Enfield has now been sold to Paul Hepworth, Colin told me a little about his early motorcycling career and how he came to obtain the bike in late 2015.

"My father was very much into bikes and between the wars, along with the Sleightholm brothers Wilf and Jeff, formed the Farleigh grasstrack club. Bikes were always around at our home, so as soon as I was 16 I got my first machine, a 1948 G3L Matchless. The Matchy not only carried me to work, but also covered many thousands of miles watching sporting events around the West Country.

"Over the years I've owned scores of different machines but for six decades my great love has been for V-twins and when I saw the Model 140 Royal Enfield advertised at Andy Tiernan's dealership, I decided it was too good an opportunity to miss. It had been stunningly restored and with deal done – Andy took a couple of Nortons and a BSA single in part exchange – it was the perfect Christmas present!"

Due to an ongoing illness Colin was not able to ride the Enfield twin and it was sold to his friend and neighbour Paul Hepworth, who takes up the story.

"As a lad I was smitten by two wheels (both cycles and motorbikes) and my first powered two-wheeler was a purple FS1E Yamaha, which, on my 16th

FINER DETAILS

1919 Royal Enfield 3hp Model 140

ENGINE

Four-stroke V-twin,
with overhead inlet
valves, side exhaust
valves

CAPACITY

424cc

BORE

60mm

STROKE

75mm

GEARBOX

Two-speed hand
change

CARBURETTOR

AMAC multiple jet

STARTING

Kick

TRANSMISSION

Chain

IGNITION

Bosch waterproof
magneto

SUSPENSION

Front, registered
spring forks plus
spring footboards; rear,
rigid

TANK

1½ gallons

TYRES

26 x 2¼ front and rear

PRICE NEW

£69-6s (1919)

birthday, I rode to nearby Flamborough Head.

"The views from the white cliffs were breathtaking so a friend and I decided to stay out all night. I hadn't thought on how my parents would react not knowing where I was and the following morning I was awoken by the local policeman, who had been sent out searching for me!

"Over the years I've owned and ridden lots of different bikes but in recent times I've concentrated on my old and classic machines. It didn't take long to make up my mind when Colin asked me if I was interested in buying his Royal Enfield. I was extremely pleased with it and although I haven't ridden it on the road in the last couple of years, I've taken it to several steam fairs – another passion of mine – and in 2018 my wife Jan and I took it to the Great War gathering at Beamish. It was a fantastic weekend and the Enfield created a lot of interest, lots of photographs were taken especially with Jan, in her period gear, sat side saddle on the 'Tan Sad' rear pillion seat."

There is no doubt that from every angle the Model 140 looks as good as the day it rolled off the Redditch production line, so what's it like to ride? Firstly, it is not the easiest bike to start from cold and despite our best efforts it failed to fire up on the kick-start. Thankfully Colin had thoughtfully brought along some starting

rollers and with this in operation, it eventually chimed into life.

As Enfield had claimed in their 1913 advertising brochure, the silencer is incredibly efficient with just a gentle 'burble' emitting though the long, thin exhaust pipe. The Bowden cables are tucked neatly away inside the handlebars, but with gloved hands the close fitting twin throttle/mixture controls were not easy to operate smoothly.

With its low seat height, footboards and swept back handlebars the riding position was a bit cramped for a six footer (i.e. me!) but I was soon into second gear and bowling along at a speed of around 30mph along the long Chalfield Manor drive.

Paul's machine has been fitted a set of the optional acetylene lights, a rear seat and single rear footrest, a pair of period leather panniers and a huge klaxon horn, the latter an important feature to warn pedestrians of your approach as the dummy rim brakes are, to say the least, a bit 'marginal.' My brief outing on the Royal Enfield was a wonderful reminder of how motorcycles have developed in the last 100 years and I take my hat off to the men and women who competed on similar machines in long distance events like the ACU's six days and the Land's End/John O'Groats trials. They certainly earned their gold medals.

End





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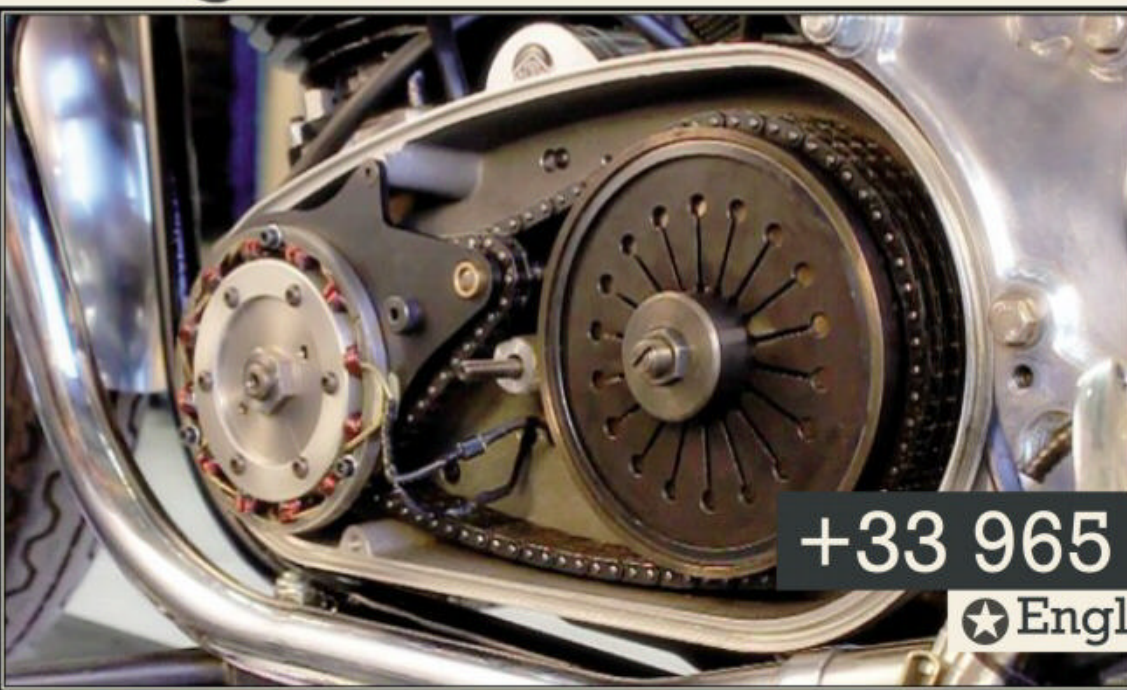
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SHORT *AND* Sweet

Marketed as a BSA and a Triumph, the 1971 oil-in-frame dual-purpose 250 had a lot going for it. But tangled in Small Heath's collapse, sadly it didn't last long.

Words: STEVE WILSON **Photographs:** GARY CHAPMAN



What Peter Hall fancied in 2002 was “something to go to the shops on and nip off onto the local farm tracks once in a while.” The Trail version of BSA’s last, dual-purpose 250cc fitted the bill.

The one he came upon at GB Motorcycles in Wiltshire (Tel: 07711 156919) had been produced as a Triumph, the T25T Trail Blazer, though built at Small Heath. But Peter likes BSAs, and substituted a B25SS steel petrol tank for the Trail Triumph’s alloy one with its more rounded front end (though he’s kept the Tangerine Triumph tank).

The 250cc oil-in-frame machine already carried the eight-inch t/s conical hub front brake off the SS version. Peter concluded that some previous owner had substituted it for the Trail’s underwhelming, off-road-oriented six-inch version (I’d done that with the B50 500cc version I had owned in the 1970s). But he had obtained a copy of the relevant page of the factory despatch book relating to his bike, and he (and I) puzzled over the ‘N/S’ entry in the ‘Equipment’ column, as well as the ‘DE’ entry in the same column.

Go-to guru

So I consulted BSA unit single expert Rupert Ratio, aka Dave Smith, whose painstaking trilogy of books on these models is definitive. (To obtain them, contact Dave at www.ratiopublishing.co.uk, or call 07504 867504.) Dave confirmed that, as I had suspected, the ‘DE,’ shared by the 40 T25Ts on the ledger page, all but nine of them headed Stateside, was the manufacturing date, ‘D’ indicating April and ‘E’ 1971; while ‘N/S’ indicated ‘non-standard’ or ‘non-stock’ – which could explain the bigger front brake.

The abiding mystery, however, was this T25T’s white frame. Both Dave and I have recorded that, unlike the Dove Grey BSA versions up to May 1971, the Triumph versions had all featured black frames from the start. And this frame was white, as found on the Rocket 3 Mk.2, not Dove Grey; triple sources have heard that white paint was used as the Dove Grey had run out. And there was no black paint underneath this one.

Dave Smith asked other unit single aficionados but none had ever heard of a T25 with a pale frame, though Peter says he has seen others similarly finished. In November 1971, six months after the bulk of the bikes had shipped out to the States, this motorcycle had gone to dealers Mead and Tomkinson in Hereford, (famous for their road racing success with carefully assembled B50s), and was first registered in 1972. Had a customer asked for the pale frame? Had the factory, which as we’ll see had been in down-spiralling disarray at the time, originally used a frame that was to hand? I suspect we’ll never know.

Ownership

Peter had liked the o.i.f. B25T Victor (rather than the ineptly named ‘Gold Star SS’ street scrambler) when it had first appeared, and the 250cc Suzuki Hustler. I had been less open-minded; I well remember checking the new 1971 range outside a Norwich dealer’s and finding



their spindliness off-puttingly alien – I was running Bantams and an A10 at the time. Curiously, it took tiny black and white images, from ink stamp blocks which BSA supplied to dealers, and reproduced in the BSAOC's 'Star' magazine later in the decade, to get me fixated on the o.i.f. singles and pursuing a B50. The range really had been ahead of its time; soon enough road/trail bikes styled with the 'implied performance' of real off-roaders would be common, and the XT500 would cash in.

Peter got his T25T at a good price, as it had been suffering from compression loss. "That was due to valve clearances," he explained, "because of the eccentric cam valve adjusters, which would slip." Peter, a qualified mechanic by trade currently working for Scania, carried out a top end overhaul and cured the problem. At the same time he fitted new big end shells, a known vulnerable point, plus a new piston and rings, though no rebore was necessary.

As well as his spannering skills, Peter is known for a series of very smart restorations – a T160 Trident, a brace of 750cc Honda fours, an A10 etc – and he likes to keep his machines "top of the line," as you can see from the T25/B25, which despite off-road forays, is immaculate, and an argument in the metal for the charisma of the admittedly impractical pale frame. A new 'lozenge' silencer and exhaust were sourced at Kempton Park autojumble in 2014, since the original had rotted out from the inside, as they would do. That apart, changes have been few; the 250 runs on points not electronic, and with Peter's set-up skills, ticks over exceptionally steadily.

Peter is not too concerned with strict originality on the smart mix-and-match BSA/Triumph. He fitted the BSA SS's black-striped Flamboyant Red steel 1 3/8th Imperial gallon petrol tank, and had the side-panels resprayed to match, but decked them with '250 Trail Blazer' transfers. He kept the big brake and 18 x 3.25in front wheel and tyre, where the Trail's was 20 x 3.0, but retained the Trail's sprung front mudguard, braced Trail handlebars and single 80mm speedo – the SS carried twin 60mm tacho and speedo. But this 250 looks and functions well as a whole, for there were few fundamental differences between the two versions – and during these models' brief, disorganised life, their specifications would often succumb to "use whatever's to hand."

The o.i.f. B25/T25 Story

The BSA 250cc unit single, after being hotted up for 1967, developed a reputation for its engine's grenade-like qualities.

The Triumph versions, introduced for 1968, were also burdened by BSA v Triumph rivalry. Built at Small Heath, there were stories of line workers eating their lunch while flicking ball bearings across at the open



ABOVE: Cheerful owner, mechanic Peter Hall, keeps his on/off-road BSA "top of the line".

BELOW LEFT: The 52-tooth rear sprocket is part of both the SS and Trail gearing set-up. Fat 4.00x18in rear dual-purpose tyre was Trail spec.

BELOW RIGHT: Larger eight-inch t/s conical hub front brake on 18 inch wheel, a transplant from the SS variants on this Trail model.

plug holes of Triumph versions under construction. Brooke and Gaylin's 'Triumph In America' confirmed that dealers there called the TR250Ws 'the Twud,' or 'BSA's Revenge,' after finding instances of pistons installed backwards and other evidence of 'shoddy assembly.' In the UK, Jim Lee, then a Meriden tester, confirmed that "With its after-sales service problems, The Triumph Service Dept hated 'em," as Meriden was billed for correcting Small Heath's manufacturing and design defects, which also reflected badly on the Triumph name.

By 1970, while still no paragon of reliability, several issues had been addressed. A cast iron, three-stud fixing oil pump was adopted, less distortion-prone than the previous alloy two-stud one. The drive side main substituted a roller bearing for the former ball-bearing. Engine breathers were modified – the breathing system had always been a prime cause of the unit 250's characteristic oil leaks. All this had to be set against 1969's compression hike to 10:1, still with no valve lifter to assist starting. But high compression was an essential component for the power-hungry majority American market, and delivered a claimed 24bhp@8250rpm, and top speed in the mid-80s for the B25 Starfire roadster.

The 250 engines became newly significant, as in September 1969 BSA management had announced the decision to launch the 'Power Set' of bikes for 1971, with revised cycle parts but, with the exception of the new dohc Bandit/Fury 350cc twin, the existing engines. With the singles' chassis they had a head start. The US trail-bike market was booming with models like Yamaha's DT1 250 selling well, so the decision was taken to employ the existing Mk.IV oil-bearing Victor works scrambles frame and Ceriani-style front forks for both 250 and 500cc production single engines.

At the Group's R and D centre, Umberslade Hall, the chassis, on the advice of Reynolds Tubes' Ken Sprayson, was given full headstock gusset plates after it had been found to break around the front engine mounting on the MIRA pave. It also adopted a wider spaced rear engine plate mounting, and the necessary brackets for a battery



Split personality? This motorcycle bears its Triumph T25T side-panel transfers, though the owner has fitted a BSA B25SS petrol tank. Both versions were built at Small Heath.



carrier, tool tray etc. Oil capacity was down one pint from the Starfire, at four pints, but the frame was judged excellent, and at 290lb the new 250s were 30lb lighter than the previous Starfire Trail version.

The all-alloy 250cc engine, now correctly catalogued as 247cc, not 249cc as previously, for 1971 fitted a strengthened con rod, a five-plate clutch with the lip at its rear deleted, and an external British Filters oil filter with a renewable element, mounted behind the gearbox. This, plus the cast iron pump, extended big end life, which was as well, since the big end retained its shell bearings, rather than the roller bearing it needed to help cure its problems. Cylinder head to barrel joint faces were widened, and the size of the cylinder base flange increased. The crankcase pressure relief valve became the superior Triumph twin piston-type. And exhaust valves of superior Nimonic 80 material were fitted. These were substantial improvements.

Umberslade's weak leadership, overstaffing and failures of communication are well known; of its many nick-names, my favourite is 'Mecca', as in 'They could mecca balls of anything up there.' Its story is documented in Brad Jones' excellent book 'From the Inside' (Compass Publishing - for a copy, contact Brad at juxta71@outlook.fr) In the febrile rush to get the already announced range into production and shipped out in time for 1971's six week April to June US selling season, hastiness took its toll.

At Umberslade, the new frame's side-panel design had used the side-panel bracket from the scrambler,

It all comes back... Steve once owned a T25T-converted-to-BSA.

whose panels had been in pliable-at-the-forming-stage glass fibre. The T and SS panels were in steel, and the impractical angular design around the front, forward-facing Dzus fastener, when they tried to produce it suffered splits around that area, where the metal was spread too thin.

The singles, coded P40, were the first 'Power Set' bikes to enter production, and in November 1970, already two months late, because of the panels, assembly was halted with machines almost complete. The late Alan Sargent, Umberslade's engineering manager, had been appointed by Group MD Lionel Jofeh to trouble-shoot 250cc production. He told me how he and his team stood by press operators at Small Heath saying 'Try this...' until a version of the panel with more rounded extremities came out with no wrinkles or splits. They then took the workpiece back to Umberslade and did the drawings from that. "It was the wrong way," Alan said ruefully, "but at that stage, the only way." Then the mounting bracket was redesigned to suit. Alan acknowledged that panels resulting from this panic engineering often located badly and sometimes fell off. I remember one from my B50 bouncing down the road and disappearing beneath lorry wheels...

Production of the 250cc machine was delayed until late December. Another component undergoing last minute changes was the aluminium 'black' box under the tank containing all the electrical components. The original design had permitted genuinely quickly-detachable plug-in wiring connections so that lights,





indicators etc could be rapidly removed when the dual-purpose machines took to the dirt, along with the battery, as they would run on the built-in capacitor. But Small Heath's Service and Quality Managers decided that the box could not be properly serviced, and added "...hundreds of horrible bloody Lucar connectors," making for much fiddlier removal and reconnection, and also the many loose wires having to be carefully manipulated when replacing the tank.

One last minute genuinely improved design involved the matt-black 'lozenge' silencer with its perforated stainless steel heat-shield. The design was cleaned up, with a previous ugly seam removed, and a new more stylish tail-pipe, reangled to avoid the offside indicator, and an additional small black perforated heat-shield added over the tail-pipe to protect the pillion passenger's thigh. But as Alan Sargent's wife Louise, who also worked at Umberslade, told me: "It was very nice to have the perforated plate keep the heat off your leg – but it would have been a good idea if they'd heat-insulated its two fixing bolts as well!" With the pillion footrests mounted on the swinging-arm, the passenger experience must have been memorable!

The 250 in production was still subject to several revisions, but the model would not last long. US dealers (though not the press) disliked the pale frames, and they were discontinued after April 1971. And according to Rupert Ratio, May was the last month of 250cc bulk production, which effectively ended at frame No. EE11243, with B50 production then beginning. Sixty B25s carried over from the end of the 1971 season, and, like the test bike, more would not be sold and registered until 1972. A batch of o.i.f. B25 Fleetstars, the police/utility versions, was produced for a few months from October 1972, and that was it.

Trail blazing

I climbed aboard the already-running 250 – you shouldn't start them on the prop-stand (centrestands were optional, and rare), and my foot had kept slipping off the downward-sloping folding kick-start pedal,

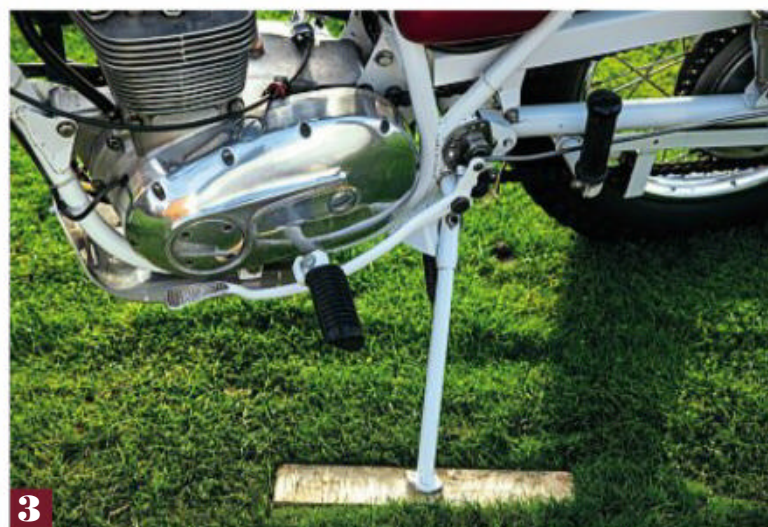
1: Handsome two US gallon steel B25SS tank was added by owner Peter Hall (but he's kept the Triumph one). Note oil filler in front of the fuel cap.

2: Pale frame, never officially used on Triumph variants, was discontinued in May 1971 – but here it is on a T25T dispatched in November.

3: No centrestand was fitted as standard, but the sidestand was a good length, though potentially fragile.

4: Box silencer and perforated heat shields were "alien" features in 1971 – but they worked well.

5: 'Black' box housed 12 volt electrical components, with too many loose wires in production form. Side-reflectors were required by US legislation.



so Peter obliged. I'd owned a T25T (which I'd also rebadged BSA, of course) in the 1990s for trail-riding, and while cold starting hadn't been that bad despite the lack of a choke, you did have to be scrupulous about turning off the petrol tap at every stop, due to the steep downdraught carb being ever ready to cause flooding.

It was tall in the saddle, but you could put both feet on the ground due to the nice narrow nose of the comfortable seat. Moving off, the riding position felt tall indeed (ground clearance was catalogued at seven inches), and with the high and wide handlebars I had to reacquaint myself with Planet o.i.f. where until you were accustomed, the steering could feel as if you were turning in too far when cornering. But keeping the engine buzzing helped, and despite the knobbly tyres, it didn't take too long to feel confidence growing. The plot steered well and was, I knew, forgiving, on and off road. As with a chopper, you just had to learn to take bends with less degree of lean, but it would pull you through, no problem. And once accustomed, the light weight made it big fun to chuck around on tarmac.

I ventured onto a straight, downhill mud-surfaced farm-track, and rode up and down it with no qualms. I remembered how the chassis had got me out of trouble on the dirt in the past, and how the 250's soft bottom end power, while unlike a big single's plonk, accentuated by the blurred, muted roar from the silencer, deceptively pulled you forwards. The turning circle was not the tightest, but not bad.

On the road a big plus point was the suspension, particularly the front forks with their needle roller steering head bearings and 6¾ inches of travel, which ate up most pot-holes the narrow muddy rustic lanes threw at us. This was not a specially fast version. Standard gearing on both T and SS had involved a noticeably low 52 tooth rear sprocket, with a 16 tooth gearbox sprocket for the SS and a lower 17 tooth one for the T, the latter being what Peter ran. Replacing the rear sprocket with a 47 tooth one off the B50, but retaining the 17 tooth gearbox one gave a middle range, while a taller one was to be had by fitting a 14 tooth gearbox

In its element. The BSA scrambles-bred frame and forks can handle a muddy track, no problem.



The 10:1 compression ratio, 24bhp engine had started life in 1952 as 8bhp 149cc Triumph Terrier. We've come a long way, baby!

sprocket. The Trail set-up was a reasonable dual-purpose compromise. It left a big gap between second and third, so you learned to wind it up a bit in second, and comfortable speed in top was 50mph, though 60 could be had. The gearchange was not the smoothest, but there were no false neutrals, and actual neutral was easy to find.

Riding through the wooded lanes where Peter lives became a rejuvenating pleasure, with the comfortable suspension and reliable roadholding making for seamless bend-swinging as confidence grew. The one black spot was the big front brake, which was not impressive, failing even to bring you to a halt when used on its own. "I relined it a couple of years ago," grinned Peter, "but now it's not as good as it was before!" My low mileage B50's new brake had worked very well, so the right linings may well be a factor. But this one's seven inch sls rear stopper was pretty good, and Peter had got the clutch just so, as well as the crucial engine timing. Both to look at and to ride, he's done this Small Heath machine proud.

End



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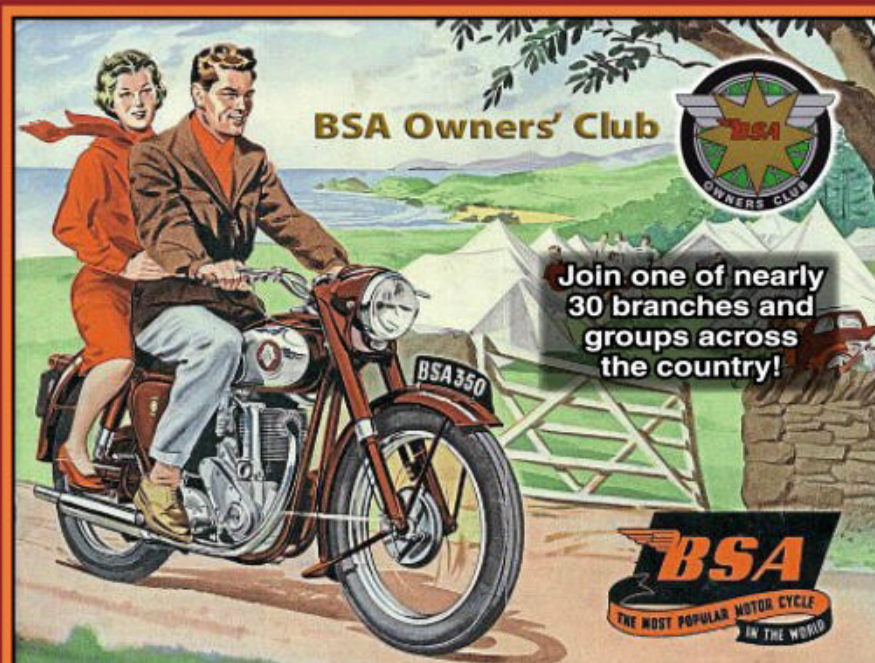
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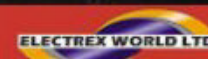
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Battle of the bugs

Words: PHIL TURNER Photographs: GARY CHAPMAN

After the Second World War, motorcycling wasn't all about heavyweights slugging it out for supremacy – a cheap and easy way to get around was priority number one for most people. The Garelli Mosquito and Vincent Firefly were two such offerings.



Having fought hard for their freedom, it's fair to say the citizens of post Second World War Europe wanted to make the most of it. Personal mobility was high on their list of priorities, but even more pressing – for themselves and the shattered industries, infrastructure and economies the conflict had left behind – was the need for cost-effective transportation to and from their places of work.

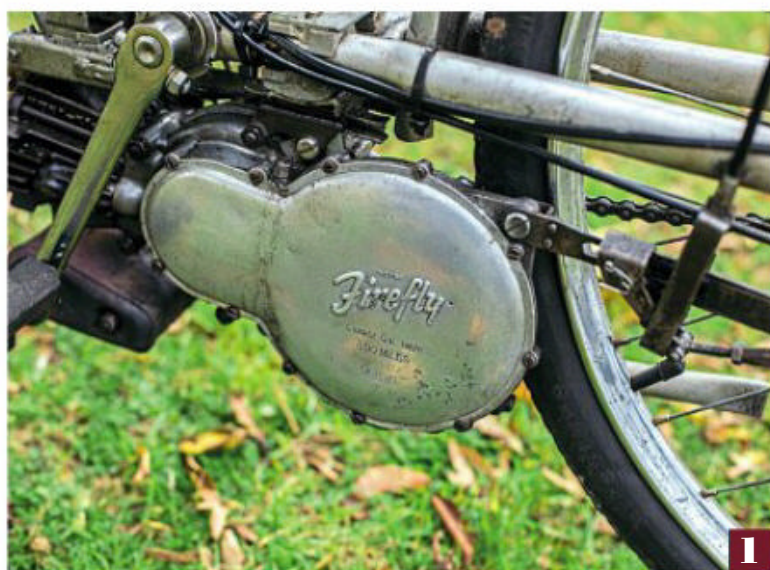
For the moment, motorcycle manufacturers would have to forget the race for road and track supremacy and instead focus on the cheapest possible way to get workers to the factories.

Mosquito

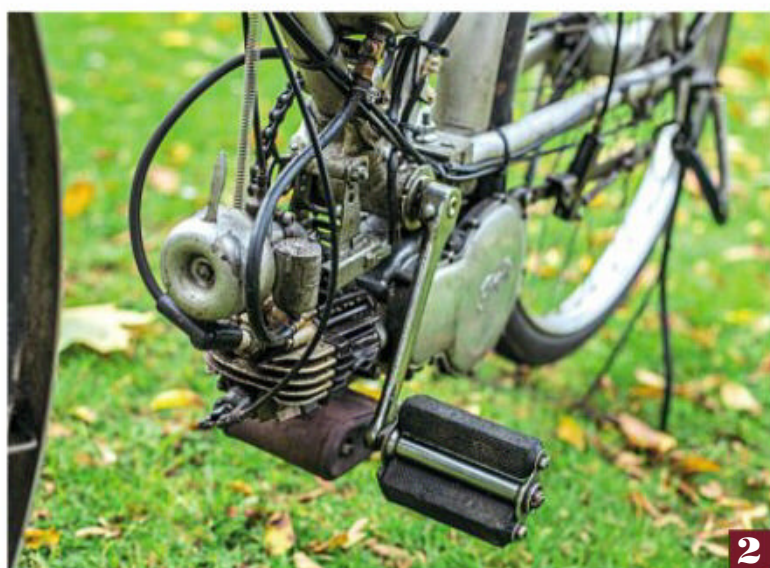
Few countries had been hit quite so hard during the conflict as Italy, or had quite as much work to do to rebuild and renew, so it's no surprise that it's there the first of our duo was conceived.

The idea for the Garelli Mosquito – or rather the engine that powers it – came to Milanese engineer Carlo Alberio Gilardi in the mid-1930s. Carlo had to travel long distances by bicycle – weighed down by a toolbox – in his work maintaining and repairing industrial machinery. He quickly realised the journeys would be whole lot easier and quicker with more than just pedal power, so he set about designing and patenting a small, two-stroke engine, compact enough to fit between the pedals of a bicycle.





1



2

1: Electrical component suppliers Millers were actually responsible for the 45cc engine.

2: Width was crucial with the Firefly, as it needed to fit in a cycle frame.

Below: When two bugs go to war... Phil Turner on the Mosquito, Gordon Hallett on the Firefly.

In 1945, he was hired by Garelli and a few months later, showed his drawings to founder and owner Adalberto Garelli. Signor Garelli had – having abandoned production of motorcycles in favour of air compressors and generators for the military – already been kicking round a moped design of his own, but was won over by Alberio's design; its compactness made it easy to install at the crank of most cycles, without interfering with the position of the pedals.

A year later, Gilardi's engine was put on sale under the name Mosquito, the English translation of the nickname 'zanzarino,' given to it by Garelli workers.

Supplied in kit form, the Mosquito was designed to be fixed quickly and easily to the majority of bicycles – it attached using a clamp and two wing nuts only. The only concession, apart from the added weight (4kg, roughly), was the loss of luggage capacity as the fuel tank was designed to be fixed to a rear rack.

Drive was transferred direct to the rear tyre via a roller, which could be disengaged to allow the bike to be pedalled normally. A small lever added to the handlebars was pushed forward to accelerate and aft to decelerate; a valve lifter for starting and a mechanical horn were also supplied.

The 38-A of 1946 was the first in the series. It was of course a two-stroke, with a displacement of 38.5cc, a Dell'Orto carburettor and delivering around 0.8 horsepower.

To demonstrate the reliability of the Mosquito, Garelli





Above: Satellite factories in Naples, Spain, France, Argentina and even behind the Iron Curtain in Hungary made Mosquito versions under licence.

organised a continuous use test. Eight riders took turns driving a 38-A for 55 days straight – from August 31 to October 24, 1952 – round the Circuit de Pau-Ville in France. With two town bailiffs watching on to ensure no foul play, they covered 24,900 miles (the equivalent to riding around the equator) in 1325 hours, at an average speed of 19mph.

Version two – the 38-B – of 1953 was much the same, with an increase in capacity to 48cc.

The 'Centrimatic' came in 1956 and introduced automatic transmission, simplifying the controls and increasing top speed to 28mph. Cheap to buy, easy to fit and very cheap to run – reports of 240mpg were not uncommon – it was a roaring success. So much so that satellite factories in Naples, Spain, France, Argentina and even beyond the Iron Curtain in Hungary sprang up. It's estimated around 2,000,000 Mosquitos were produced, making it the most successful of its type in Europe.

Firefly

Around about the same time the eight Garelli pilots were turning their last few laps of Circuit de Pau-Ville, Vincent enthusiasts' cheque books were twitching in anticipation; the Stevenage factory had hinted that a new model was about to emerge. When that announcement came a few months later and the (presumably very small...) cover came off the 45cc Firefly clip-on engine, those cheque books were put back firmly in the oak bureau drawers from whence they came.

While his big twins were popular, Phil Vincent recognised that there was a growing demand for more affordable personal transport; few people in early 1950s Britain were lucky enough to have cheque books and solid oak bureaus.

He needed a machine to offer to those people though,

and one would come his way from an unexpected source. Miller – suppliers of electrical components – had been working on a small clip-on power unit that could be fixed to a pedal cycle. Like the Mosquito, it was narrow enough to fit between a bicycle's pedals, and operated using a similar principle: the engine slid rearwards via a lever under the cycle's seat (this lever would be moved to the handlebars by Vincent, prior to production) wherein a toothed wheel made contact with the tyre to transfer the drive.

Along with the 'engage/disengage' lever on the handlebars was a combined decompressor and throttle lever – pushing it forward shuts the throttle and opens the decompressor; back does the opposite, as you'd expect. The engine sat on rails under the bottom bracket of the cycle to enable the slide. The long, thin fuel tank fitted to the down tube.

Unusual for the time – although not too unusual considering the engine's designers – it had an alternator fitted. Ignition was by a coil fitted in a recess at the base of the fuel tank.

Almost as soon as the Miller Firefly was announced, production moved to Stevenage. Initially it was available as a bolt-on unit only, but shortly after launch Vincent decided to offer the Firefly as a complete bike – dubbed the Vincent Power Cycle. Early frames were made by Sun, later ones by Philips.

Around 3000 were produced during the three-year production run, which came to an abrupt end due to a new tie-in with NSU and Vincent taking on the marketing of the Quickly moped in the UK.

Ironically, their rarity and oddity means Vincent aficionados are now very willing to fish around in the oak bureau drawer for the cheque book, should a Firefly come up for sale – and they rarely do.



1

Above: This wasn't perhaps what Vincent owners were expecting when a new model was being rumoured...

1: Phil Turner (left) and owner Gordon Hallett discuss 1950s autocycles.

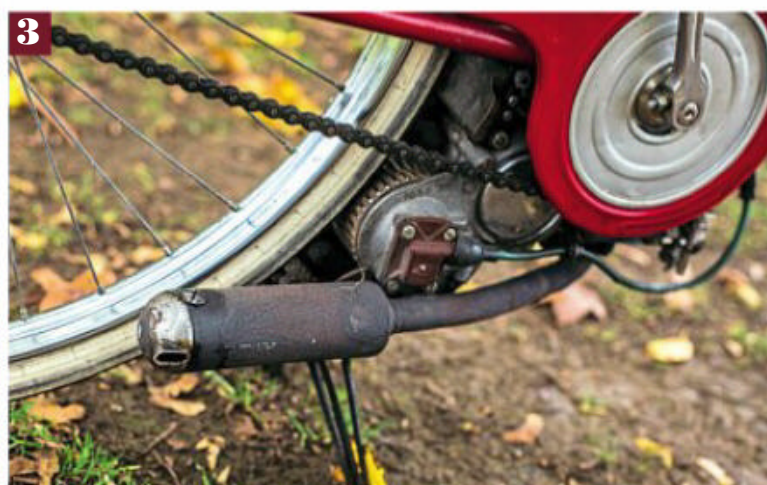
2: Again, with the Mosquito, width was of the essence...

3: Drive system is pretty simple, relying on friction.

2



3



Mosquito vs Firefly

So I felt rather privileged to be able to pilot one, and even more so to be doing it in its birthplace of Stevenage.

Handily, the Hertfordshire town still has an extensive network of cycleways – the brainchild of chief engineer of the Stevenage Development Corporation, Eric Claxton – linking New Town’s housing estates, shops, schools and places of work. Cyclists are kept separate from road traffic and pedestrians throughout the majority of the 30-mile network; the wide, smooth contraflow lanes run alongside the roads and cross major junctions and underneath roundabouts via lit underpasses.

It was the ideal testing ground for the Garelli and Vincent – mopeds are allowed on the network, so long as due care and courtesy is afforded to those using pedal power only.

Having never ridden one before, I was advised by Garelli owner Gordon to cut my cycle-motor teeth on the Garelli; its controls being slightly easier to master than the Vincent’s.

After a few hair-raising attempts at starting it, balanced on the very narrow centrestand – the feeling it’s about to give way underneath is disconcerting/terrifying – the little 48cc engine buzzed into life and I was off.

I don’t mind admitting that there was a lot of wobbling, pulling levers in the wrong direction and frantic grabbing at virtually non-existent brakes until I got the hang of it, but once I did the Garelli was a little gem, the engine happily buzzing away beneath me and offering its assistance whenever an incline presented itself. My main mistake was to treat the Mosquito as if it were a motorcycle – i.e.: sit still and let the engine do the work – but once I reprogrammed my brain and started riding it like a bicycle, everything became a little easier and more natural.

Just as I got the hang of it, I switched to the Firefly, which felt far from natural. Like the Garelli, the engine is started by engaging the drive and spinning the pedals.



4

This is supposed to be done on the stand but as it looked and felt less sturdy even than the Garelli’s – and the saddle was much further from the ground – it was decided I’d better do it on the move.

The method is as follows: engage the drive using the clutch-like lever on the left of the handlebar – this operates in reverse, so holding it in engages it. There’s a clip designed to hold it in, which is useful when you have the knack, but not when you’re learning. As you’re doing that, push the throttle lever all the way forward to operate the decompressor and pedal, then once the engine is spinning sufficiently, pull the throttle lever back towards you and the engine should start. When it does, you keep the drive engaged – unless you’re heading towards something coming the other way or just in the way – and control the ‘assistance’ with the throttle/decompressor, being careful not to decompress too much.

Got that? No, I didn’t either at first and I don’t mind admitting there was even more wobbling, pulling and pushing of levers and grabbing at brakes than there had been on the Garelli.

Still, I got the hang of it eventually and really rather enjoyed buzzing my way through underpasses and around the sights of Stevenage New Town – although I’m not sure how enamoured I’d have been, had I been removed from the safety and serenity of the separated cycle lanes and thrown into modern traffic – and I started to wonder how easy it would be to organise a few more flyweights, a group of friends, and a couple of weeks exploring the Netherlands... You might say I’d been bitten by the bug(s).

End



5

4: Although it felt a bit alien at first, Phil Turner soon got the hang of the Firefly.

5: The Mosquito has a proper petrol tank!

6: Another great British motorcycle name – the Firefly engine is mounted in a Birmingham-built bicycle.



6

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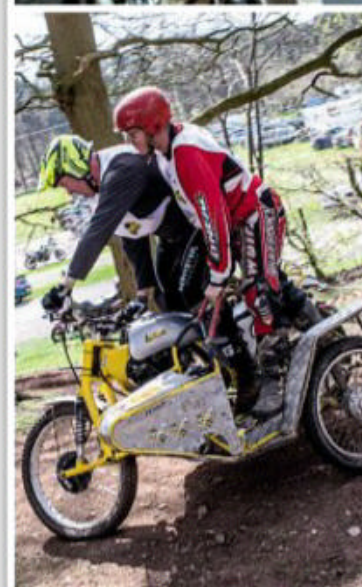
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On any Sunday

Inspired by the exploits of Steve McQueen and friends, a dream is realised in the Mojave Desert.

Words and photographs: CHELSEA BEE

On any Sunday' is a 1971 American documentary film about motorcycling, directed by Bruce Brown. It was nominated for an Academy award in 1972 and still has a cult following. For me, the appearance of actor Steve McQueen, filmed racing in the Mojave Desert, inspired me with an ambition to try desert riding, and like McQueen, I wanted to do it on a Rickman Metisse.

Bud Ekins, stuntman in the film industry and desert racer in Southern California, was the motorcycling mentor of McQueen. Ekins owned a Triumph dealership and as well as supplying motorcycles to McQueen, he taught him the skills of off-road riding. McQueen loved nothing more than leaving his Hollywood lifestyle behind and heading out to the desert with a bunch of friends to ride motorcycles. Along with many other brilliant riders, they would take part in various events. The two main events in the desert were the Hare and Hound (a race over two different loops) and the Hare Scramble (multiple laps of the same loop).

The British Rickman Metisse, created by Don and Derek and so successfully ridden in European and British scrambling, had caught the attention of the Americans. Up until the development of the Metisse Mk.III frame, American Triumph enthusiasts raced their standard Triumphs customised to make them lighter for off-road racing. When McQueen got his first Triumph-engined Rickman Metisse, he described it as the best handling bike he'd ever ridden.

And so, as a Metisse rider, this folklore of desert riding became part of my dreaming to one day ride in the Mojave Desert. I'd watched all the videos I could find on desert riding and thought it looked like the ultimate off-road fun.

It was a dream I shared with a dear friend and Triumph enthusiast, Jordan Goldspink. We would talk endlessly about anything we'd learned about desert racing and we planned one day to experience it together. Tragically, Jordan died in 2018, aged just 23, before he had the chance. So now, in his memory, I had to follow this dream...





Chelsea had a picture of her fellow desert racing dreamer Jordan Goldspink in her pocket. Tragically Jordan died, aged 23, before he was able to experience desert riding.

We planned to put a couple of classic Triumphs in the back of a pickup truck and head out to the desert, ride the dunes, camp out, and experience that Steve McQueen dream first-hand. I was lucky enough in September 2019 to get an opportunity to do just that.

I had become friends with John Crain, a Brit living in California, a classic enthusiast and Rickman Metisse owner. He managed to tie in a business trip to Moscow with a trip to Sammy Miller's museum for the Rickman Enthusiasts' Day in June 2019. It was good to meet someone who knew about desert riding. John had ridden his Rickman in the Baja 1000 multiple times. I told him about my friend, Jordan, and how we had dreamed of riding in the desert together.

Coincidentally, at the time I, had a trip to California booked to celebrate my 30th birthday. John had said he would do his best to help me get my ride in the desert. True to his word, John kindly offered to loan me his Rickman to ride. To say I was excited was an understatement.

On the day, it was an early start. I left my hotel at 5am and met John at British American Motorcycles (BA Moto), a great motorcycle shop based in Long Beach, Los Angeles. It's a service, repair and restore shop that specialise in modern and classic British and American bikes, but from what I could see in the workshop, mostly Triumphs.

They're a group of like-minded, young, passionate and incredibly knowledgeable guys and highly talented riders. I can't think that I have come across a shop of this kind anywhere before. It was an awe-inspiring set-up and an Aladdin's cave of interesting machines. Marty, one of the main guys and talented mechanics at BA Moto, was joining us with his 1961 T100 desert sled.

John showed me his Rickman, his pride and joy – a 1953 pre-unit 650cc Triumph engined machine, that I

**Camp for the night.
The big hill in the
background made for
a good playground.**



would be riding. He'd raced the Baja with this bike; it sure had stories to tell and it looked used and well loved. I was excited to see what it was like to ride compared to my own Triumph 650cc Rickman.

Having built my road-going Wasp-framed machine which was finished in June 2018 (see *TCM*, November 2018, and June 2019), I have had little off-road experience on the British marque, my green lane choice being a very light, late 1970s Honda XL250.

Between John, Marty and I, we packed up the truck with three bikes (the two Triumphs and a modern Yamaha for John), and we headed out towards the desert. The dream was becoming a reality. We took the highway north towards Barstow, in convoy – I was following the truck with the bikes in the back. We drove through the most dramatic landscapes, the huge rolling hills ultimately getting more and more barren. We arrived at a place called Slash X; a bar in a former ranch just south of Barstow in the Stoddard Valley area of the Mojave Desert. A funky old joint that had been there since the early 1950s, it's the only bar for miles serving burgers and beers, so is a popular spot for off-landers to call in at. Considering most of the best riders in the world had ridden out in the Mojave Desert at some point, it was incredible to think who had been there before me.

Living the desert dream

Through the powers of social media, I had got to know Clay Hunwick, a passionate motorcycle collector and rider. His truck was loaded up outside Slash X when we arrived, with a TR6 and another Triumph Rickman. We went inside the long wooden building, an amazing place filled with racing memorabilia, a mix between Mad Max and country and western. We had a quick drink and then unloaded the bikes. It was still early, and it was already feeling very warm. By the time we had unloaded the bikes and got geared up it was 9am and it was already an insane 110 degrees.

Eager to get going, I started up John's Rickman, with all eyes on me, and had a quick blast around the car park to get my head around the gear change, which was set the opposite to my Triumph. After a couple of laps, I was happy, and we headed out into the wide expanse. The dry and sandy landscape went on for as far as the eye could see. Almost immediately, we hit a long section of whoops – apprehensive about riding on the sand and without much instruction, I stood up with my weight towards the back of the bike, pulling on the bars. I held on for dear life and just let the bike do its thing. It felt awesome.

After the first 10 minutes, I started to relax. Adrenaline was pumping and I knew the day ahead was going to be a lot of fun. I felt at home on John's Rickman, everything made sense, it handled really well and was not intimidating in the harsh environment.

The desert really is a huge open playground, ideal for motorcyclists. In my opinion, this was adventure riding at its finest. Part of any adventure is finding your own way. We took whatever track we wanted, the silence of the desert broken only by the sound of our heavy breathing Triumphs.

The pace was fast, these guys were experienced, and I suddenly became anxious about being separated from the others. We followed a track parallel to some electricity pylons that seemed to go on for ever. As if



Outside of Slash X ranch saloon, where Mad Max meets country and western.



Nathan (the owner, second left) and Marty (centre) outside BA Moto with customers who had ridden all the way from Bakersfield to Long Beach (about 140 miles) to have them work on their bikes.

telepathically, the lead rider, Clay, stopped and said to me that if we happened to get separated, then I was to follow the pylons all the way back to Slash X. We continued on; throttle open, we kept going further into the desert. Riding in the sand takes 100% concentration; I was learning that a low gear and high revs was needed – finding the right revs, the engine’s sweet spot, where it felt comfortable for mile after mile of sand moving beneath the wheels.

We came to the stop at the bottom of what looked like a mountain (I’m exaggerating, though it was a massive hill...) and Clay announced we were going up it. Looking at it, it was rocky, gnarly and intimidating. Gulp. I thought of ‘On Any Sunday’ and the Hill Climb they call ‘The Widow Maker.’ Double gulp. I thought to myself: “I’m not even married yet!” but, still, I took a deep breath and followed the others.

It was extremely rocky and part way up, a momentary loss of confidence and subsequent hesitation with keeping the power on, ended in my first crash. Tumbling back down, I lost the bike and found myself on the ground unhurt. Seeing me off, Marty came to my rescue, and, with my confidence temporarily on hold, he rode the bike to the top. This was not the only time he came to my rescue on hills like this... I’d reached



Marty aboard the ex-Buck Smith disc-braked racer, now owned by Clay Hunwick.

The Crain machine, now minus its tailpiece, which detached itself in one of Chelsea’s ‘offs’.





Marty's 500cc desert racer, a physically smaller machine than the big 650s.



Chelsea aboard John Crain's Rickman, on which he competed in the Baja off-road race.

the edge of my ability, but I'd made a friend. Each time Marty rode my bike to the top for me. Of course, I then had to clamber up the slope in all my gear in the midday heat. It was exhausting for both of us.

Despite this, arriving on top of Mother Nature's great platform, taking a rest to enjoy the magnificent views, was absolutely wonderful. We pointed out into the distance deciding where to ride next and set off again. There seemed to be no limitations, no end, in the desert, except energy levels, so we headed back to Slash X for a pit stop, some body fuel and a much-needed cold drink.

We didn't hang around and were back out in the sand, over the whoops again. I still couldn't believe I was living the dream. This time I went on Clay's 1965 650cc Triumph Rickman, which was ridden by the legendary rider desert racer William 'Buck' Smith. It felt like an armchair, the bars were set back and it had a thick, super comfortable seat and the footrests were positioned slightly more forward. It was modified with disc brakes and an unusual large 'desert' tank. Of course, the standard Rickman tank was designed for the shorter distances of scrambles racing. The larger capacity tanks were popular in America for the desert. The detail about this bike was all about long distance riding. It handled like a Metisse but was geared for sand racing, with a long first and second gear that brought huge amounts of torque for the challenges of the desert.

The never-ending wide-open space of the desert feels like you could ride as fast as you like, but it has its challenges to negotiate. The terrain is a great teacher for any level of rider. I wanted to go at my own speed and enjoy the environment without holding the others up, so the group separated. Marty came to my rescue again and we stuck together for the afternoon. I got a chance to ride his T100 desert sled, and he rode the 1965 Rickman.

This T100 was fine-tuned by Marty himself. It was definitely not standard; it was a bespoke motorcycle that worked and it sure did look the part too. The riding position was more upright, and with its 500cc engine it felt lighter and more agile than the 650cc bikes. The power delivery of the smaller engine seemed to have torque over a wider engine speed. I was beginning to think the 500cc was more suited to my riding.

We took a single track and followed it for about 15 miles. Some parts were rocky and others were high speed smooth surfaces. It was an unreal feeling to be out there on two desert sleds blasting along next to each other.

Part of my desert riding dream was to spend the night in the desert. As the afternoon turned to evening, we loaded up the pickup and headed to Johnson Valley. It was about an hour south where we spent the night by a dry lake bed, surrounded my mountains, lit up by a harvest moon. Late into the night we watched a variety of off-road vehicles with huge lights pass us by, lighting

“There was often up to 1000 riders lined up on the start line for Hare and Hound Scrambles.”

Loaded up, driving through Johnson Valley.



Chelsea in the desert, on John Crain's Rickman.



up the desert for miles. What an extraordinary vast and barren playground the Mojave Desert is.

The morning came and the desert seemed a quiet and unearthly place. That is until we kicked our Triumphs into action. We had one last blast on the bikes, carving our way across the dry lake bed, dodging desert dwelling cacti and rocks. My morning ended chasing a hare I spotted across the landscape and of course the name Hare Scramble now made perfect sense.

There is still the odd race in the desert but nothing like the events of the time of 'On Any Sunday.' There was often up to 1000 riders lined up on the start line of the Hare and Hound Scrambles. I now have an understanding of how incredibly tough these races must have been. Not only due to the heat, rugged terrain and all the dust, but often riders would not have a chance to practise the route before the race, the route could be up to 20 miles long, they would get out there and deal with what was in front of them. Desert racing is not for the fainthearted and not surprisingly 10% of the entrants never made the first five miles.

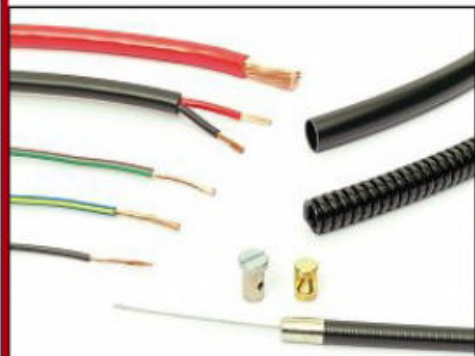
I was getting the hang of riding in the desert and, as I always thought I would, I loved it. It was like we had been dropped on another planet with our favourite motorcycles. I made some incredible memories and I will definitely be back for more. I learned a bit more about these machines that I love too. The power to weight ratio and the power delivery of 500cc Triumph is all you really need for riding in the dirt. I have come away with a new dream; I am now thinking about a Petite Metisse with a Triumph 500cc engine...

End

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If at first...

At first, with its big V-twin Model V, Harley-Davidson certainly didn't succeed. But they got it right in the end.

Words and photographs: PHILLIP TOOTH

Harley weren't shy about promoting their new Big Twin flathead. "Boys, just gaze at this greatest of all Harley-Davidson 74s," trumpeted the five-cent factory magazine. "Note the LOW saddle position. And see the brand new motor design. Yes, and look at the Drop Forged steel I-beam forks!" The catalogue gushed with even more self-praise: "Brilliant in design and engineering, brilliant in colours and chrome plating, brilliant in speed and performance – the new Big Twin is setting a new and faster pace in motorcycle history. Here is a mount that has everything you want or expect in a modern motorcycle – with advantages that no other motorcycle can offer, regardless of price... speed that fairly takes your breath away, lightning-like acceleration, amazing ease of handling, and the riding comfort of an armchair!"

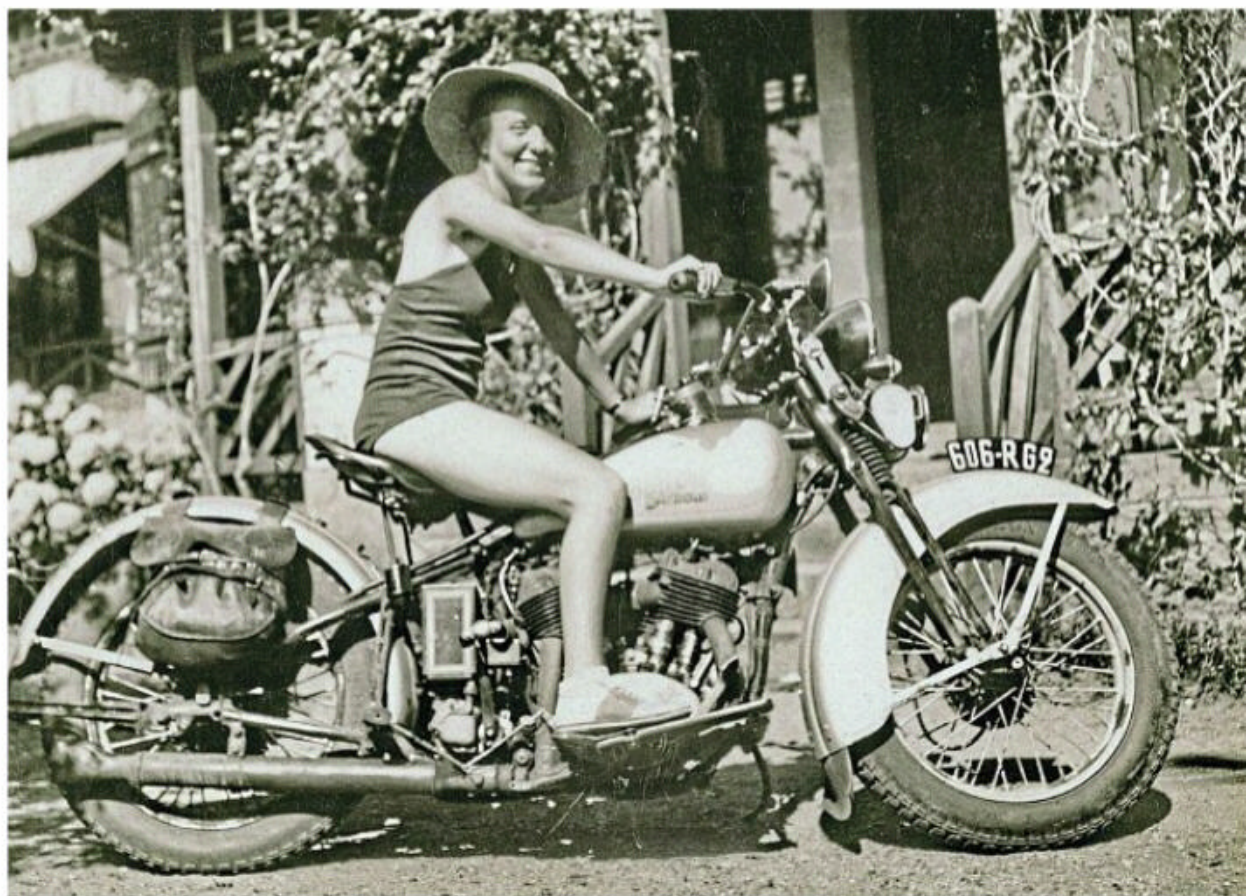
No wonder Harley were shouting about the flathead (side-valve) Model V. It desperately needed a replacement for the out-dated inlet-over-exhaust Model J series of Big Twins that could trace their heritage back to 1915. With a single camshaft to operate all four valves, the stock J produced an asthmatic 18hp. Although a two-cam version (one for each pair of valves) was developed from the factory racers and delivered as much as 28hp, these were only available in 1928 and 1929. They cost a small fortune and were as rare as rocking horse manure.

Introduced in July 1929 for the 1930 season, the Model V Big Twin was designed to go head-to-head with the Indian Chief and also win sales from police departments buying expensive four-cylinder motorcycles. The bore and stroke, and the capacity of 74.24 cubic inches (1217cc) might have been the same as the Model J, but everything else about the new engine was different. Four dedicated cam gears – one for each valve – and detachable 'squish' cylinder heads designed by Englishman Harry Ricardo gave a hint of the performance that should have been available.

But the new Big Twin was a disaster. In their search for rapid acceleration, Harley's engineers used small diameter, lightweight flywheels. Kickstarting the Big Twin became much harder because there wasn't the mass in the flywheels to spin the pistons over top dead centre. When it did finally start, revs would rise quickly but with no tree stump-pulling power at low



Three-speed crash box was used with minor modifications from 1915 to 1936.



Lovely period picture of a VL, taken in the 1930s.



With a capacity of 74.24 cubic inches (1217cc) the Model V was the big brother of the Harley 45 launched the previous year.



Wedge-shaped toolbox and horn are mounted under a seven-inch headlamp.



The rocking heel and toe clutch lever. The clutch can be set with a touch of slip, making riding in traffic easy.

speeds, the clutch had to be abused to stop the engine stalling. Seriously annoyed owners found that excessive vibration would shake the fillings from their teeth and acceleration slowed dramatically above 50mph, which was just where they really wanted it.

Some of those Harley engineers knew the Model V wasn't ready for the road, but the sales department convinced Walter Davidson that it was good to go. It was an expensive mistake. Police forces cancelled orders and owners were demanding their money back. With nearly 1500 bikes already sold, Harley decided to play hard ball. There would be no refunds but the Motor Company would supply heavyweight flywheels that would be fitted free of charge, although they wouldn't be ready for several months. It wasn't a quick fix. To carry the bigger flywheels, Harley's engineers needed to design a bigger crankcase. And that meant a new frame to take the new crankcase...

The franchise dealer mechanic had to completely strip the engine, assemble the new flywheels and connecting rods, and fit the replacement crankcase halves around them before rebuilding the timing side gear train. With the engine and transmission installed in the new frame – complete with a modified clutch – the mechanic then transferred over the forks and cycle parts. When Harley told their dealers that they wouldn't get paid for making the swap to bikes they had already sold, or the ones still in their showrooms, they were just as angry as the owners. Some of them decided to sell Indians instead.

Even then, many owners weren't entirely satisfied. The Model V should have been fast, but its acceleration was hampered by its weight. While the Model J tipped the scales at 185kg, the flathead was a porky 55kg heavier. Much of that was down to the single-loop frame with its curved front downtube made from heavy gauge tubing and drop forged fittings. It might have been stronger, but it was also 25% heavier. Forged I-beams used for the rear two of the four fork legs didn't help either, but anybody with a brain would have been happy to take the extra weight of the two decent brakes – a seven-inch drum up front and a eight inch one at the rear.

Where the modified Model V did trump the Model J was with its rugged reliability. While the old inlet-over-exhaust twin would shake itself apart if it was held at 75mph for mile after mile, the flathead just kept going.

By 1931 the Model V, which had a 4.0:1 compression ratio and delivered 28hp, was joined by eight other versions including the sidecar-hauling VS with 3.6:1 pistons, a small-choke Schebler carburettor and a three-speed gearbox with optional reverse. But by far the most popular was the Model VL. With its 4.5:1 alloy pistons, a bigger carb and a reliable 30hp at a lazy 4000rpm, this was the Harley that delivered the goods. Harley-Davidson's police motorcycle brochure claimed they had the answer to America's crime wave: "A few short years ago, machine-gun bandits, kidnappers, youthful hold-up men, racketeers and gangsters were scarcely heard of, but now they have become bywords in every community throughout the land. To whip this group into line there is an effective solution – virile young officers mounted on Harley-Davidson motorcycles!"

By 1932 more than 3000 police forces were using



By 1934 the Harley would cost about £110, while a 500cc Norton Model 18 was only £62. The Brit bike weighed 345lb with oil and gas, had a four-speed box, handled like a Norton and hit 80mph.

the 85mph VL Harley. “Nothing will strike more terror into the heart of a law violator than the scream of a police motorcycle siren,” claimed Harley’s marketing men. “He realises flight is futile for he knows too well that the motorcycle officer can flash through traffic or fly over the highway and quickly overtake him. And few lawbreakers will take a chance against motorcycle officers who are physically hardened and mentally quick and sharp from their service in the open air.”

The 1931 VL we have here was always finished in the standard Olive Green enamel. For a few dollars more customers could choose black, maroon, grey, blue, cream and green. Deeper pockets opened up the Harley paint box of ‘special colour combinations’ that included black and red, white and gold, and maroon and cream.

Thanks to the heavy flywheels the engine spins easily over compression, and the twin coil ignition delivers a big fat spark for reliable starting. A couple of kicks with the choke closed and then one proper kick with the choke half opened will start a cold engine. When it is warmed up, just kick and go.

If you only ride European motorcycles the US Big Twin takes a bit of getting used to. The right twistgrip controls the throttle and also the mechanical pump for engine lubrication, while the twistgrip on the left is for the ignition advance. Also on the left is the front brake



Police with their 1930 Model Vs, but problems led to the cancellation of orders.



lever. A headlight dip switch is on the right and a horn button on the left. And that's it. There is no clutter on these wide Harley handlebars.

On the left side of the tank is the gearchange lever, and there's a rocking pedal for the clutch. Press your heel down on the rear of the pedal to disengage the clutch, push the gear lever forward from neutral into first, rock your foot forward on the sprung pedal and it's 'Toe to Go'. The pedal has a friction-disc adjustment so the clutch can be set with just a trace of slip so that top gear riding in 15mph traffic is silky smooth. Need to manoeuvre at low speed? Select low gear and use that slipping clutch again. It seems strange at first, but you'll soon get the hang of it.

Carried over from the J series, the three-speed crash gearbox has a locking device to stop the cogs jumping out of mesh. This is not a box that can be rushed, but second will take you past 60mph while top is good for about 85mph. A hand pump in the combined petrol and oil tank can be used to deliver an extra dollop of lubricant when running at high speeds for long distances, especially if hauling a sidecar, but its real purpose is to recharge the crankcase after you've drained out the oil following a day's riding. To make that job easier there's a spring-loaded tap on top of the crankcase, right next to the engine number.

When Indian introduced a circulating dry sump lubrication, Harley cheekily boasted in adverts that their vintage-style total loss system meant only clean oil was used in their machines. Meanwhile, Indian owners could always point out where a Harley had been parked. The duplex primary chain was automatically lubricated by the throttle controlled pump, with excess dripping

Above: Thanks to knock-out axles the wheels were quickly detachable and interchangeable, a real advantage on a sidecar rig that came with a spare wheel.

from the pressed steel chaincase on to the road. Harleys were designed to leak oil.

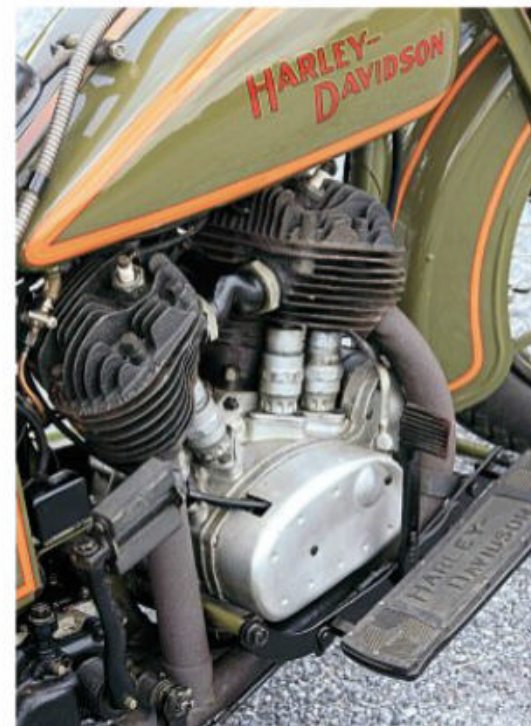
For such a heavy motorcycle the steering is surprisingly light. Four massive fork springs and Harley's famous saddle, with its long coil spring inside the seat pillar tube, provide a comfortable a ride over the roughest roads.

After a bumpy start Harley-Davidson had finally got their Big Twin sorted.

End



Other options included a steering damper, jiffy (side) stand, windscreen, an 80mph speedometer, and – for the optimistic – a 100mph Corbin instrument.



Pressed alloy cover on the timing side hides mechanical oil pump and contact breaker.

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12.00pm: Steve Plater talks with Allen Millyard on stage in the Main Hall

1.00pm: John McCrink interviews Allen Millyard in the Competition Hall

2.00pm: Firing up session with Allen Millyard interviewed by Steve Plater in Classic Racer GP Paddock (weather dependant)

SUNDAY:

9.00am: Firing up session with Allen Millyard interviewed by Steve Plater in Classic Racer GP Paddock (weather dependant)

10.00am: John McCrink interviews Allen Millyard in the Competition Hall - signing after interview

12.00pm: Steve Plater talks with Allen Millyard on stage in the Main Hall

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Master creator

Kawasakis with extra cylinders, Hondas in reimagined configurations and even aircraft engine cylinder barrels and top ends, have all been used to power some of Allen Millyard's motorcycling masterpieces.

It's not restoration, it's re-creation - or perhaps even creation. At least it is where mechanical guru Allen Millyard is concerned. For 25 years, this master of spanners has created some of the wackiest, most ambitious motorcycles in the UK, all within the confines of a single car garage attached

to his 1985 semi-detached house. Allen's creativity has spawned a YouTube career, as well as television appearances, plus he's some thought on Britain's education system and, in a departure from his often Japanese-based projects, he's gone British and built a very special Velocette.





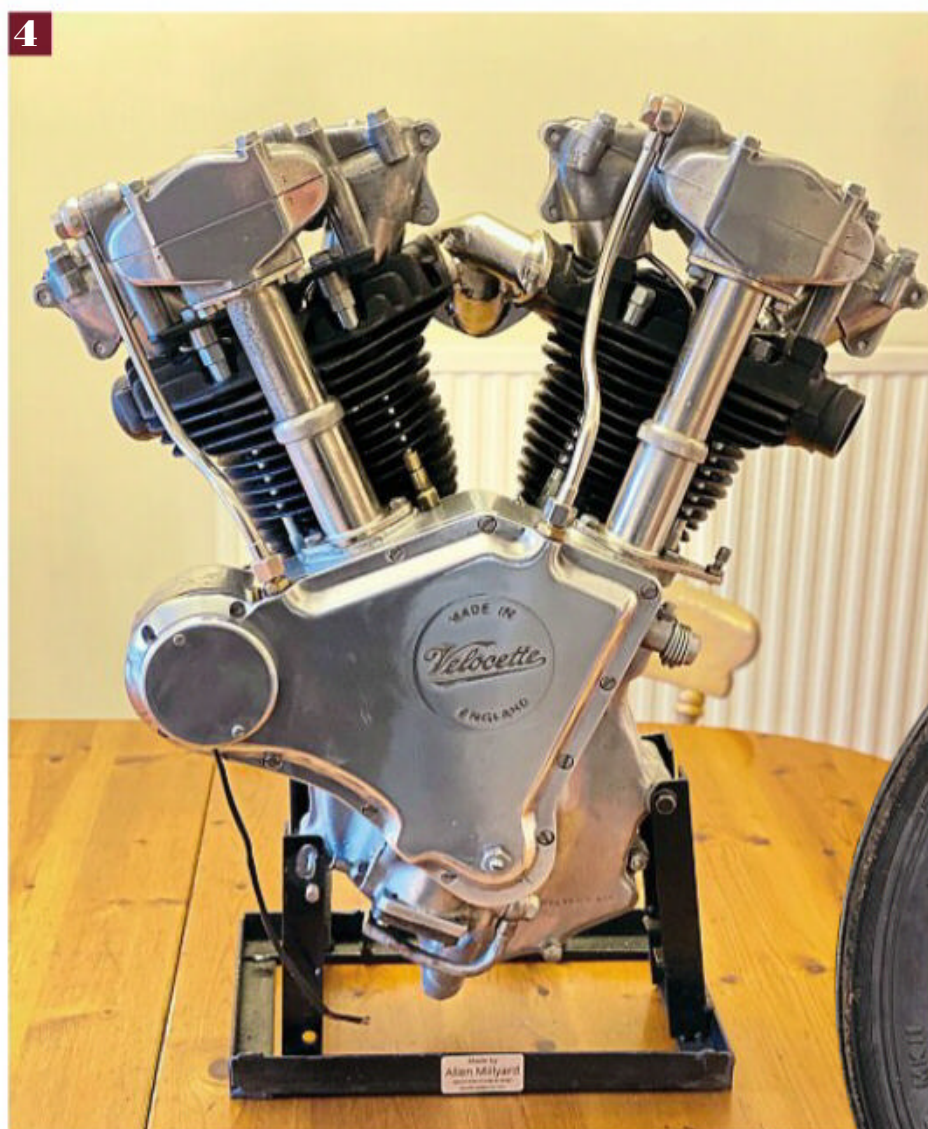
1



2



3



4

1: The engine under assembly on the bench.

2: It's all coming together.

3: The neatly made timing chest.

4: And here's another one! With one under his belt, Allen has now made a second engine.

The first YouTube video ever was posted on April 24, 2005, at 2:17:12am. It was called 'Me at the Zoo' and showed YouTube's founder Jawed Karim talking about elephant trunks. Now – almost 15 years later – it hosts as many as 1,300,000,000 videos with a revenue of \$15 billion last year alone.

YouTube has made millionaires of stay-at-home mums, children and even pets. Among these 'stars' is an LA-based mortician who answers all manner of questions about human decomposition; a man who sits in a room for four hours smiling; and – most importantly for us – Allen Millyard, whose two-wheeled creations have garnered hundreds of thousands of views on the channel.

And it's not hard to see why: there's a touch of wizardry to Allen's creations – a six-cylinder Kawasaki Z1 had 580,352 views, and the start-up of the 'Flying Millyard' five litre V-twin engine, had a staggering 1,686,933 views.

Allen says: "I don't class myself as a restorer, I'm a creator. I've made all sorts of things. I made The Flying Millyard, of course, which is totally wacky and steampunk in the frame of a board racer; I've made four cylinder, five cylinder and six cylinder Kawasakis for a laugh; I made a Honda six replica, my RC374 – which took the motorcycle world by storm in 2018. I did quite a nice copy of it and even machined the hubs from scratch."



But these creations aren't unproblematic. "All the bikes I've made have their own problems in their own right. So the problem with the Dodge Viper V10 was harnessing a 550hp engine that weighs 800lb into a motorcycle in a manner that makes it rideable while still looking like a motorbike and not looking like a car that's seen the angle iron."

But the proof was in the pudding – and it worked: "I finished that and I got to 207mph with a half throttle at Bruntingthorpe to prove it."

"And then there's the Flying Millyard," he says, "Which is massive in every way – it's a 5000cc V-twin engine, which I made from scratch, apart from the cylinders, which were off a 1945 aeroplane. That was difficult but the hardest thing was keeping it looking totally original. If you weren't an expert you might think it was an original British bike from period."

It's clear Allen isn't a restorer, but nor is he creating anything out of keeping with the original. Rather, he's channelling how the bike could have been by reimagining the next notch in a machine's evolution. As Allen himself explains: "I don't restore bikes to their original state, rather I make bikes that I think should have been made back in the day."

And perhaps the finest example of Allen's channelling of how a bike could have been is his recently-finished rigid-framed and girder forked Velocette MAC – a reimagined V-twin version of the classic single which was finished in a matter of weeks.

"It was eight weeks from the first conceptional cut to the end (but without paint)," says Allen. "It was a complete riding bike but the paintwork took a further

eight weeks so I had a little quip with my mate about that because it took him as long to paint it as it took me to make it."

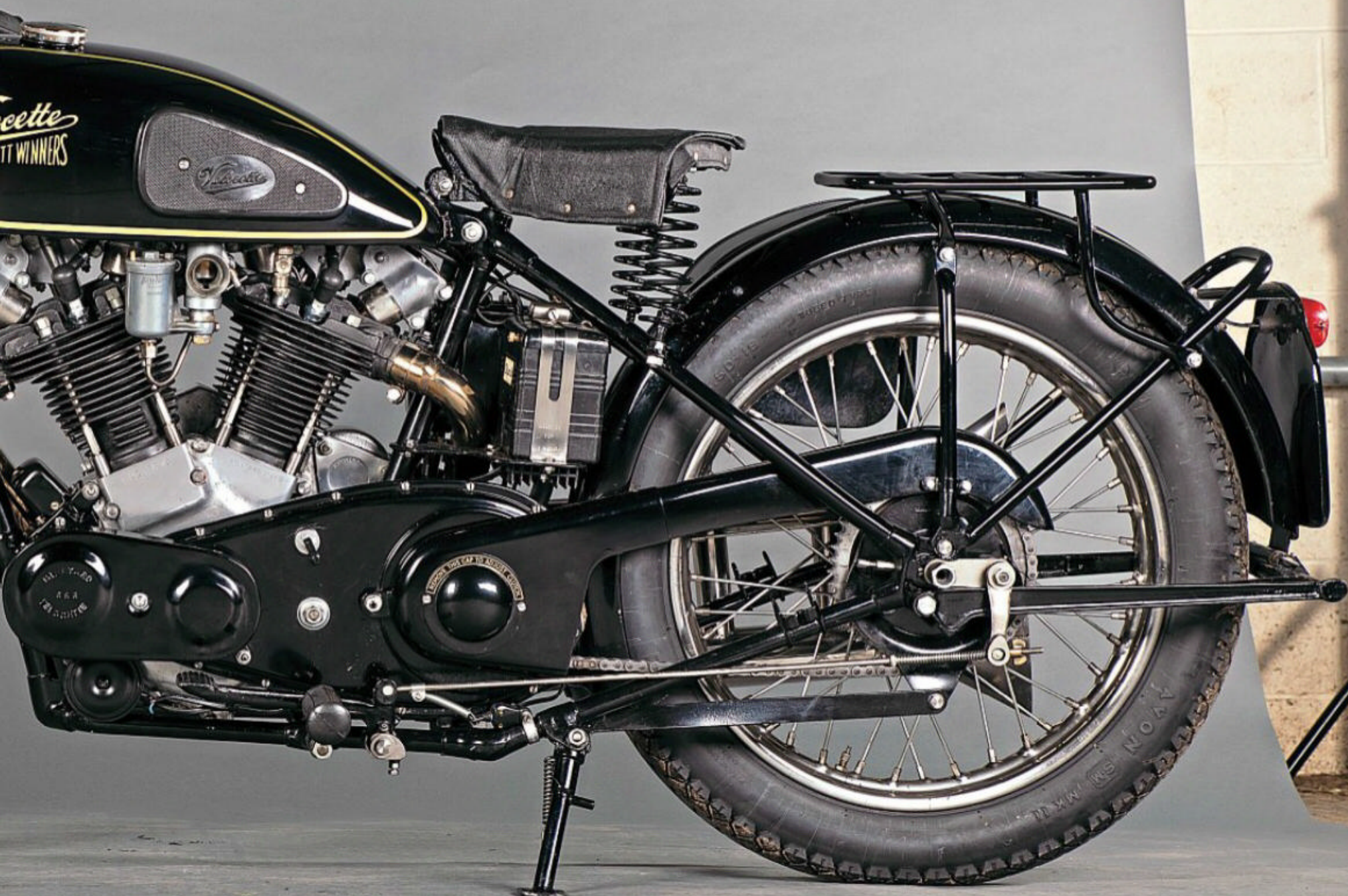
Allen's expediency is owing to his unconventional working practice: "I don't use drawings, I don't do plans, I don't think about things too much," he says. "I just wake up in the morning with an idea to make something. I know exactly what I'm going to do and I just go out and do it."

"I lay there in bed at night and I go through what I have done during the day and I go through it piece-by-piece. There have been times when I've thought 'my gosh I haven't put that washer in there' and I've had to come downstairs in the middle of the night, unbolt a casing, put the washer on, do it back up and go back upstairs to bed. That's how I work out a lot of my problems – quite often I wake up in the night and I've sorted out problems as I've slept."

This unique system doesn't even require pen and paper, let alone a laptop: "I can visualise and see finished engines before I've started making them. I figure out everything – where to cut, where to weld.... It's like having a CAD package inside my mind, only without a computer. That's how I work. I just jump straight in."

Clearly, engineering comes naturally to Allen. And his Velocette MAC, despite having a very non-standard V-twin engine, looks as if it rolled straight out of the factory in Hall Green, Birmingham.

"I even had Ivan Rhodes wanting to buy it off me," said Allen. "He thought it was absolutely amazing. He said he was thrilled to have even sat on it and he's the Velocette guru. When I took it to Stafford I was expected to get a



bit of grief from the purists, I thought they'd be saying 'you've destroyed it' but everyone loved it. But I had done it in such a way that if I hadn't said I had made it you could have easily thought I'd found it."

His method is all in the imagination - with a bit of time travel thrown in. "I re-engineer machines by imagining how the original design engineers were thinking at the time. I then create something along the lines of how they would have created it."

One would assume this would require endless examinations of Velocette's blueprints but he insists this is not the case. "I don't need to research the history of the bike," he says. "I just look at the bike as I see it and when I strip it I can see how they have made it."

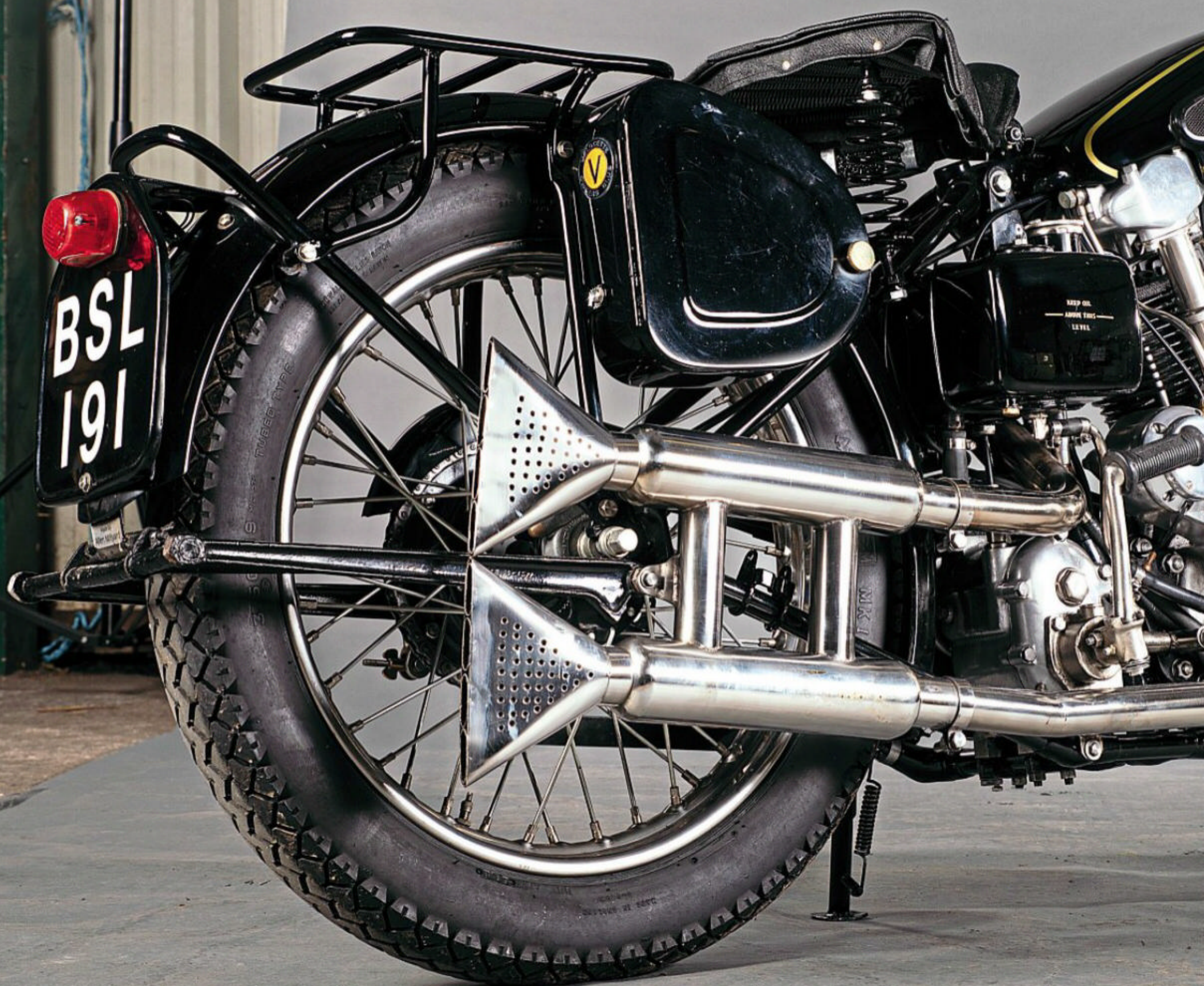
"The classic one is the Kawasaki three-cylinder, which was originally a twin but I can see how Kawasaki converted it into a triple and I copied that same ethos to make it into a four. I didn't think 'I'm going to make myself a four-cylinder bike and put my slant on it' but this is what a lot of people do and this is why their bikes don't look factory:

they start making stuff themselves and not working from what's already there. I try and imagine I'm back in Kawasaki 1972 or back at Velocette sat in the board room and then I knock up a prototype accordingly, like the Velocette MAC."

Of all the machines he's re-engineered, Allen has a particular soft spot for Velocettes. "The Velocette engine is like a Swiss Watch. The crankcases are very narrow with really finely-cut gears which run smoothly. That's why I like the Velocette."

But there's another, much deeper, reason for Allen's love affair with the Birmingham marque, as he explains: "I was an apprentice at work and I had a friend whose father had a load of old bikes. I went down to have a look and I said 'what's that?' pointing to a pile of bits, and his dad says: 'That's an old Velocette but I don't think I'm ever going to do it up' so I asked if he'd be happy to sell it, as my dad loved Velocettes and I fancied getting one for myself anyway... My mate's dad said: 'You can have it for £50.'"

But Allen was - at the time - a young





Single Amal carb pokes out from underneath the petrol tank.



The Flying Millyard. All Allen's work, save for the top ends of the engine.



apprentice engineer at the Ministry of Defence, and £50 was the equivalent of six weeks' work. So he saved up and after several weeks took the Velo home. "I put it in the garage and my dad came home and said: 'Oh my gosh, you've got a Velocette, that's amazing!'"

His dad then offered to swap the Velo for his 350cc AJS, which was taxed and MOT'd. A deal was done. "Dad did the MAC up over about a year and then in 1980 we went down to Cornwall on a ride – I was on the AJS and my brother and dad were on the Velocette. But after we came back he never rode it again. He was working too hard and we didn't have a lot of disposable money."

By 1980 – like the majority of young motorcyclists across the world – Allen had discovered Japanese motorcycles. "The Velocette was parked in the shed, I was into Hondas; I was fully into the Japanese scene. I'd had my AJS Model 8, I'd had an AJS twin, my Matchless G80S, Triumph Tiger Cub and a Norton Commando, but with the British bikes, I was doing 40 miles a day commuting then spending most weekends fixing the bike ready for the next week. But the Japanese machines just ran and ran."

Then, in 1999, Allen thought it was time to return to the Velocette. "Dad was turning 60 and I said 'I'm going to restore that Velocette for your 60th birthday and get it all painted' and he was quite chuffed because it had rusted away a bit. So I got it back home, stripped it all down, had it all painted professionally and then rode it back down to Cornwall with my son on the back. We gave it to my dad and he was absolutely chuffed – his little face lit right up. So he pottered around locally on it, which was really nice. When he died in 2014 I got the bike back."

But it would be four years before he looked at it again. "I put it in the shed and thought 'I'll get around to fixing that one day' and I was at Stafford show talking to one







Allen Millyard is (or at least was) probably best known for his multi-cylinder Kawasaki two-strokes. Here's a selection of them.

of the chaps about a V-twin in a Velo and he had a MAC engine. So I bought the engine off that chap there and then. He was a great help with the parts as well so I bought all those bits at Stafford and then on the Monday I was straight into the shed."

He didn't hang about. "I ripped the engine out and cut the engines up and by the end of the week I had everything cut and welded into a V-twin." Now, of course, the machine is completely finished and a YouTube hit. It's also a reminder of Allen's dad, without whom he would never have gained the skills to embark on such a project.

"What was cool about my dad was that he never interfered – he let me learn from my own mistakes. He could have done things for me but he didn't. I would say 'I'm going to put that there' and he would say 'okay...' but of course it snapped off and then he would say: 'So why do you think that happened?'"

But Allen needed a mentor – he was barely nine years old when he started messing around with mechanics. By the age of 15 he'd built his own bike. He said: "I put an Austin Mini engine in a BSA Bantam. I cut the Bantam in half and welded some brackets on and it was a real crude thing but somehow I rode it to school. Some of my Facebook friends remember it but sadly there are no photographs – it cost a lot of money to have photographs developed and we never had the money."

Despite the lack of photographic evidence, Allen's memory of his inaugural ride to school on the Bantam/Austin is still vivid: "People at school were absolutely gobsmacked, you can imagine the scene: we're in class and I say 'I'm going to make a bike with a car engine in it' and they say 'oh yes, whatever...' even my metalwork teacher – who I was friendly with – didn't believe me. Then the headmaster came down and said 'you

shouldn't have ridden it to school!'

"But my dad suggested I took it apart because it was a little bit dangerous. You could imagine falling off and maiming yourself, so I dismantled it. I think he was proud though."

Allen's machines have come on a bit since then, though his equipment is more or less the same as it was in 1975. "I've got a 1958 milling machine, a reboring machine, a big vice and lots of files and screwdrivers. There's no need for a multi thousand pound tool kit! I have a shadow board with half a dozen tools on and that's it. And of all those tools the ones I use most are hacksaws, files and spanners."

The ability to turn a hand to this modest array of tools and create, for example, a 5000cc board track racer or a Velocette V-twin is owing to his 1970s education, says Allen. "I wouldn't be who I am today if I had been educated in today's education system. We were allowed to do stuff back then. I was in the metalwork department every morning before school and most nights after school and the teachers just left me to it. That's how you learn, by having a go. And when it came to my apprenticeship at the Ministry of Defence I learned a broad spectrum of skills, including electrics, welding, machining, clockwork, all sorts, which means I'm able to do most things myself."

Indeed he does. With the exception of paintwork, Allen makes everything on his machines from scratch. "When I say 'I've made a bike' I mean it: I have made a bike myself. But when you ask other people in this game you soon find out that they outsource everything. And then they say: 'I've made that.' No you didn't."

Allen, on the other hand, is the real deal. And now, with 21 unique creations under his belt, he's even become a YouTube star.

End

Is it a motorcycle? Is it a car?

No, it's a cyclecar!

Many wordy tomes inform the cyclecar was a light cheap three or four-wheeled vehicle, built to bridge the gap between motorcycles and cars, often powered by a motorcycle engine and built circa 1910-1925. Unfortunately, this statement leaves as many ifs and buts as answers. But it is a starting point.

Words: RICHARD ROSENTHAL **Photographs:** MORTONS ARCHIVE

Arguably, the cyclecar is a homeless vehicle. Many were built using a large proportion of motorcycle parts, including variously engine, gearbox, clutch, wheels, brakes and sundries than from any other source. But with three or four wheels, it is not a motorcycle. Likewise, with so many non-car components, in the eyes of many period observers, it wasn't a car either.

In period, classes for cyclecars were included in many motorcycle reliability trials, hillclimbs and speed events, including at Brooklands. Significantly, there has never been an IoM Cyclecar TT alongside the annual motorcycle races. Likewise, some car events included a cyclecar class, but they weren't universally accepted at all motorcycle or car events. There were plans for a standalone Cyclecar TT, but the First World War saw to that.

To complicate this discussion (which is going nowhere) do we accept the core dates of cyclecar production as 1910-1925? It has been written by occasional scribes that quadricycles built for a few years from the late Victorian period were the forerunner of the cyclecar – not a thought that is favoured by this columnist, as the quadricycle possesses many design features found with period tricycles from De Dion, Progress, Beeston et al. Okay, but what about forecar design? Really, examples by makers such as Humber were initially motorcycles with forecar attachments, but by 1904/7, they'd evolved into three-wheeled vehicles which, by design, couldn't be reconverted to motorcycles, which leads to the question: 'Why aren't these cyclecars?' when the later Morgan, for example, was initially considered a cyclecar – after all, both have identical wheel layouts.

We can continue this questioning with

'why not include some early veteran light cars as cyclecars?' Their engines are motorcycle-like, some had wire motorcycle-esque wheels, control levers were familiar motorcycle items and so on. Then, moving into the mid-Edwardian period, why isn't a light car (voiturette) a cyclecar? And, moving on in time, how can a Morgan be regarded in the 'cyclecar period' as a cyclecar, but if we accept the period ends in the mid-192 no longer a cyclecar? Morgan trike production didn't end until 1952 with the demise of the Ford-engined three-wheeler, and then Morgan compounded the problem by launching their new generation three-wheelers in 2011.

Moving sideways, what about bubblecars, Bond Minicars, Goggomobils and all the other microcars? They are probably best regarded as microcars, not cyclecars, but you can see the problem.

Accepting there was a rise in the number of cyclecars built and registered by the close of the first decade of the 20th century, one quite rightly might ask why?

In certain countries – including notably France – there was a financial advantage when registering and licensing small cars. Confusion reigned as to what was a cyclecar and what wasn't, as alluded to above.

To thrash out the issue, the Fédération Internationale des Clubs Moto Cycliste met on December 14, 1912, to formally classify cyclecars.

Countries that accepted this classification included Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy and the US.



1912 cyclecar classifications

Class	Large	Small
Maximum weight	350kg (331lb)	150kg (772lb)
Maximum engine capacity	1100cc	750cc
Minimum tyre width	55mm (2.2in)	60mm (2.4in)

In the 1910-25 period, at least 16 countries worldwide, from Argentina to the US, had seen one or more cyclecar marques made in their domain. Seemingly, none were built in Australia or New Zealand, but this could be an oversight.

France (often regarded as the home of the cyclecar) could boast 106 makers, who produced from a handful to large numbers,



One of the better cyclecar efforts was the Bleriot Whippet. Designed in 1919 it sold well and its popularity is demonstrated by this picture outside the Addlestone, Surrey premises of its maker, the Air Navigation Co.

in the 1910-25 period, including the attractive Bédélia, designed by Robert Bourdeau and built in Paris by Bourdeau & Devaux, often with engines of up to 990cc. Many motorcycle makers tried their hand with cyclecars, including Lurquin-Courdet (aka Courdet), who began building a friction drive V-twin powered cyclecar circa 1907 and later switched to chain drive and clutch, and the aero factory Salmson, founded by Emile Salmson, initially to make pumps.

The US was third in the list of cyclecar makers with 67 brands in the period, although a few were earlier marques renamed, including the Briggs and Stratton Flyer, which started life as the Smith Flyer in 1915, built by AO Smith Co. of Milwaukee. It was, in effect, a flat wooden board with a wooden chassis, the flex of which served as its suspension, with a

wheel at each corner powered by a Smith Motowheel, based on the Wall Autowheel design, pushing the vehicle along from behind. The manufacturing rights were sold in 1919 to Briggs and Stratton and it had the honour, according to many sources, of being 'the most inexpensive car of all time'. Others with catchy names include the Dudly Bug by the Dudly Tool Co of Menominee, Michigan, and the O-We-Go built at Owego, New York.

However, the UK had by far the largest number of cyclecar makes who traded at some time during our allotted period, with at least 167 recorded. Cyclecar manufacture was tried (or at least considered) by a number of leading British motorcycle makers, including Douglas, Matchless, Chater-Lea, New Hudson, Royal Ruby, Rudge-Whitworth, Champion, and car makers including Humber (Humberette).

Others were made thanks to the fertile minds of engineers, cycle-makers, would-be car-makers, plus a few who were hoping for a 'get rich quick scheme'.

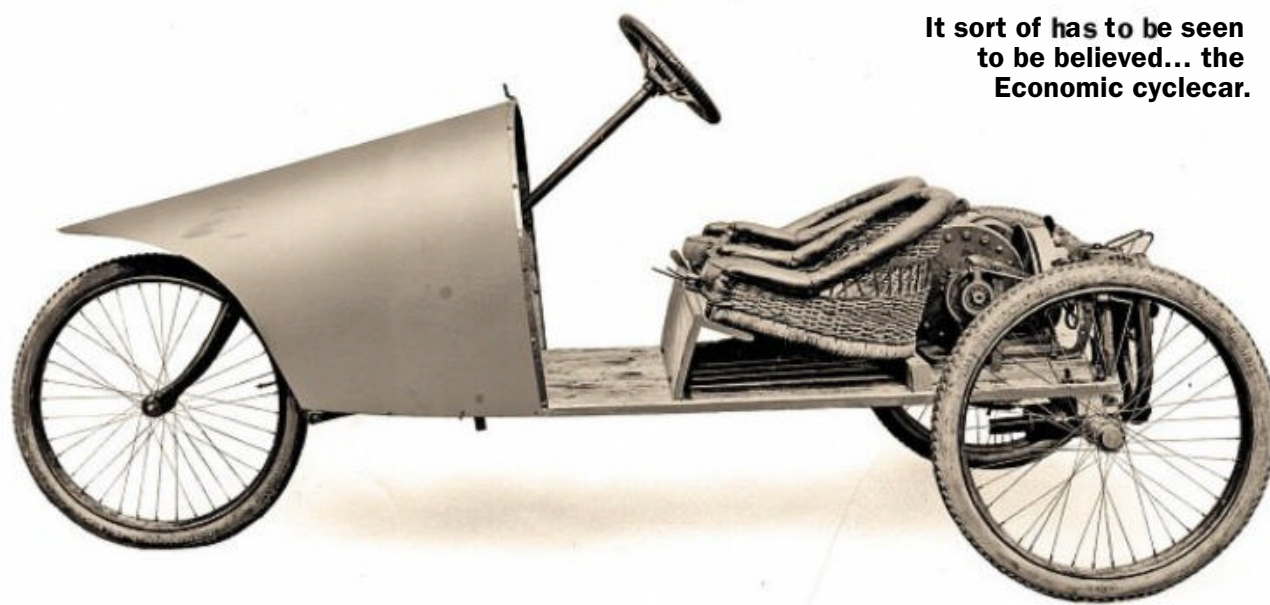
While many were serious attempts to design and build a worthy light car with acceptable brakes, steering, seats, some form of gearchange and clutch, protective bodywork and a serviceable engine, a few were real terrors. Imagine string and bobbin steering, direct drive with no free engine, unattached seats – or even no seats. Yes, these specifications and more were offered by one or two makers.

With in excess of 400 cyclecar brands across the world in the 1910-25 period, one could only list them in this short feature, which is pointless, as such lists are readily available on the internet. Instead, here's a more detailed look at a few, ranging from the accomplished, to the notorious... 

The Economic Buckboard

Based on a US design, Economic Motors Ltd, Wells Street, London, W1 offered, at the 1921 Olympia Show, a cyclemotor attachment and miniature motorcycle, both powered by the same 1½HP 165cc flat twin-cylinder two-stroke engine, and the Buckboard, also with a flat twin-cylinder two-stroke engine. However, in its publicity material the maker stated: 'The Buckboard's engine, while similar to that of the cyclemotor and lightweight motorcycle, are units specially selected to develop 4HP'

Priced at £60, the three-wheeler comprised a wooden platform with an ash slat under-frame with single front wheel, supported in an unsprung cycle-type fork with steering wheel control. One shudders to think of the technology here, but it probably involved wires and bobbins. Two tilted back wicker seats provided comfort for the driver



It sort of has to be seen to be believed... the Economic cyclecar.

and passenger, aided by the spring of the wooden platform, with the Economic engine, fitted at the back, boasting drive by friction and then chain to the offside rear wheel, on which the single brake also operated.

Economic Motors Ltd claimed a two-up

top speed of 30mph and the ability to climb single figure gradients, again two-up. Despite the maker's claim of a 'specially selected 4HP engine,' car encyclopaedias imply it was a spindly three-wheeler with under 200cc engine. Oh dear.

Brough Sociable

Just before Christmas 1911, WE Brough & Co, of Basford, Nottingham, unveiled a three-wheeled sociable with the brave announcement that an example would run in the forthcoming MCC 24-hour Exeter Winter Run, that was scheduled for December 26 & 27, 1911.

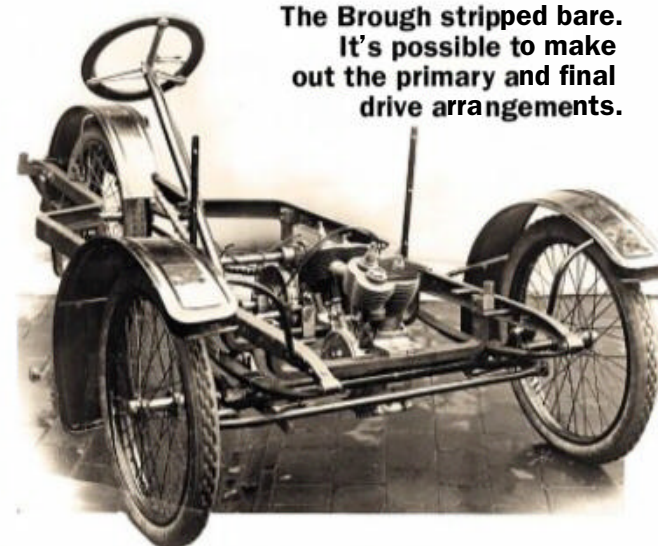
The Exeter's results list details Henry Frederick Stanley (always better known as HFS) Morgan (8HP Morgan) and GN Higgs (AC Sociable) gaining gold medals, and two other cyclecars were out of the awards, but there is no evidence of the Brough setting out for Exeter from the Bulstrode Hotel, Hounslow.

The first Brough Sociable, a two-seater, offered to the press in late 1911 for appraisal, was powered by a side-valve V-twin of either 6HP 820cc or a 8HP 998cc. Rather than take the route of many rivals in fitting JAP engines, implications suggest WE Brough seems to have made his own V-twin engines for the cyclecar, though the example fitted to the model offered to the press has many similarities with the AKD V-twin unit.



Introduced at Christmas 1911, the Brough came with two engine size options, 6HP and 8HP.

With its engine mounted in line with the chassis, the Brough relied on chain primary drive to a cross shaft, then a reduction gear comprising two pinions with a variable belt pulley secured to the second pinion and, finally, by belt to the rear wheel. Utilising linkages, the driver altered the pulley, giving the stated variable gear ratio system from a free engine position to highest ratio. A large rear wheel band brake served the stopping department, while semi-elliptical leaf springs provided suspension.



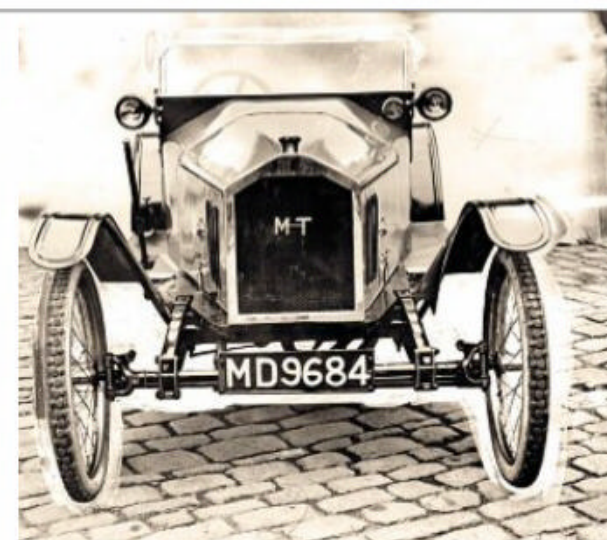
The Brough stripped bare. It's possible to make out the primary and final drive arrangements.

The Metro-Tyler (MT) cyclecar

If one small engine isn't powerful enough for a four-wheeled, two-seater cyclecar, then why not fit two? The Metro-Tyler Co, Banister Road, London, W10, did just that, as Joseph van Hooydonk had in the mid-Edwardian days to some Phoenix Trim forecars. True, van Hooydonk intended just one engine in play for normal driving and the second reserved for when more power was needed, but there is logic with both designs.

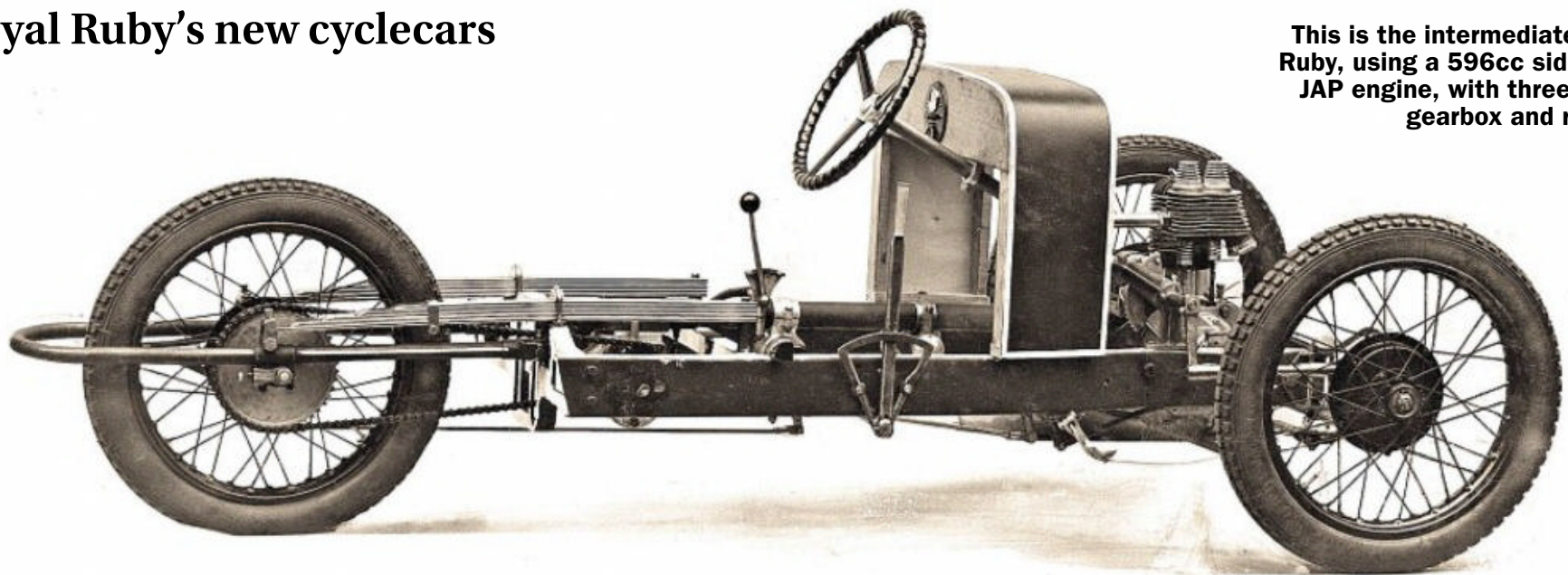
For their lightweight runabout, MT

coupled two 269cc two-stroke engines, their crankshafts in line, to the car's ash chassis, with chain drive to a Sturmey-Archer three-speed motorcycle gearbox with clutch and then belt final drive to the live rear axle. The driver fired the engines with an outboard starting handle from the driving seat, while sitting side-by-side with a passenger. Leaf springs served as both front and rear suspension and the steering wheel and live steering system was described by *The Motor Cycle's* tester as 'effective.'



There was a double-engine set-up for the four-wheeled, two-seat Metro-Tyler.

Royal Ruby's new cyclecars



This is the intermediate Royal Ruby, using a 596cc side-valve JAP engine, with three-speed gearbox and reverse.

As if to further question the cyclecar era cut off date of 1925, The Royal Ruby Cycle Co, Bradshawgate, Bolton, who had marketed a 10HP V-twin JAP-engined cyclecar before the First World War, launched their new three model, three-wheeled cyclecar range in autumn 1927 for the following season.

The trio all employed a welded channel steel rectangular chassis, which was more lightweight for the two smaller cyclecars.

All two-seaters, the cheapest was powered by a 343cc single-cylinder two-stroke engine, driving through a Sturmey-Archer three-speed motorcycle gearbox, while the intermediate model was fitted with a 596cc side-valve JAP engine driving through a 'special' three-speed gearbox with reverse gear. Both were fitted with wired-on tyres, full suspension, seemingly all chain drive and brakes to each wheel.

Aiming at the sporting market, Royal Ruby's third model was powered by a V-twin, ohv Blackburne engine, capacity unknown, driving through a Moss three-speed light car gearbox, with reverse and shaft to the single rear wheel. The maker described its body as 'upon racing lines' and provision for a spare wheel was made. Alongside these, Royal Ruby planned a goods-carrying vehicle with an unusual commercial body.

Matchless

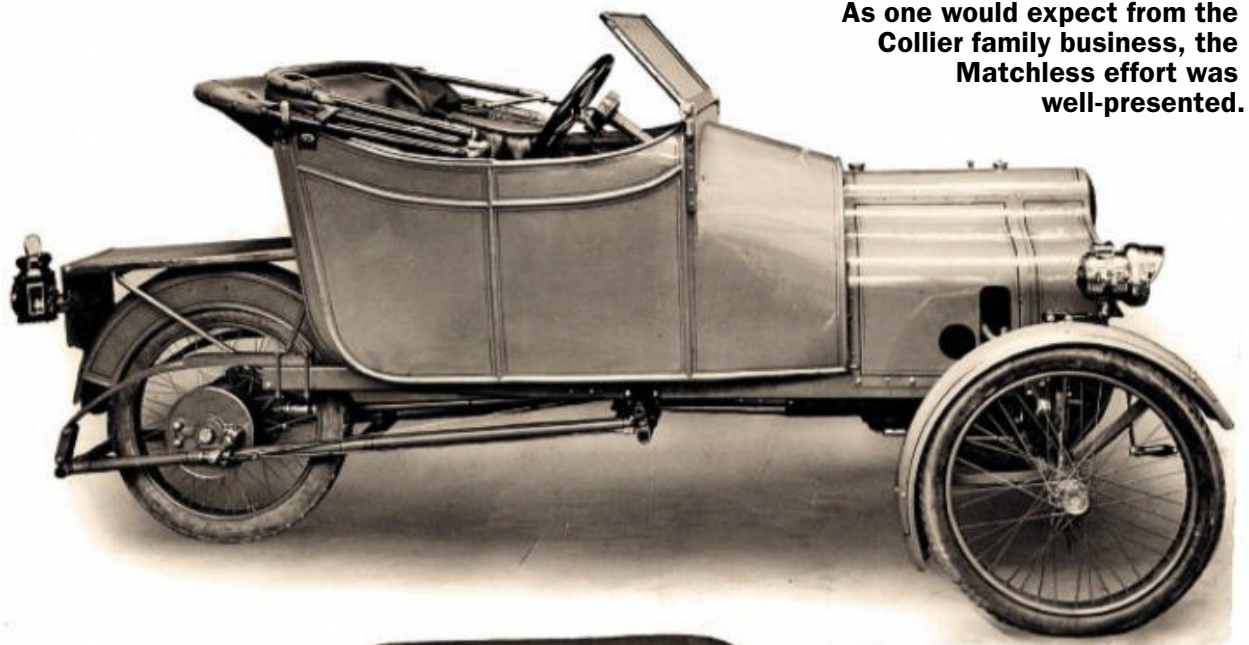
The famous factory of H Collier and Sons, Plumstead, exhibited a 6HP Fafnir-engined runabout at the 1906 Stanley Show, of which nothing more was heard.

Then, at the 1912 London Show, they displayed an advanced, well-built three-wheeler powered by an 8HP 90 degree JAP V-twin, probably of 965cc. Period and later copy state it was an ohv engine but the model displayed at the 1912 London Show appears to have mechanical side exhaust valves and overhead inlet valves operated by long, slender pushrods.

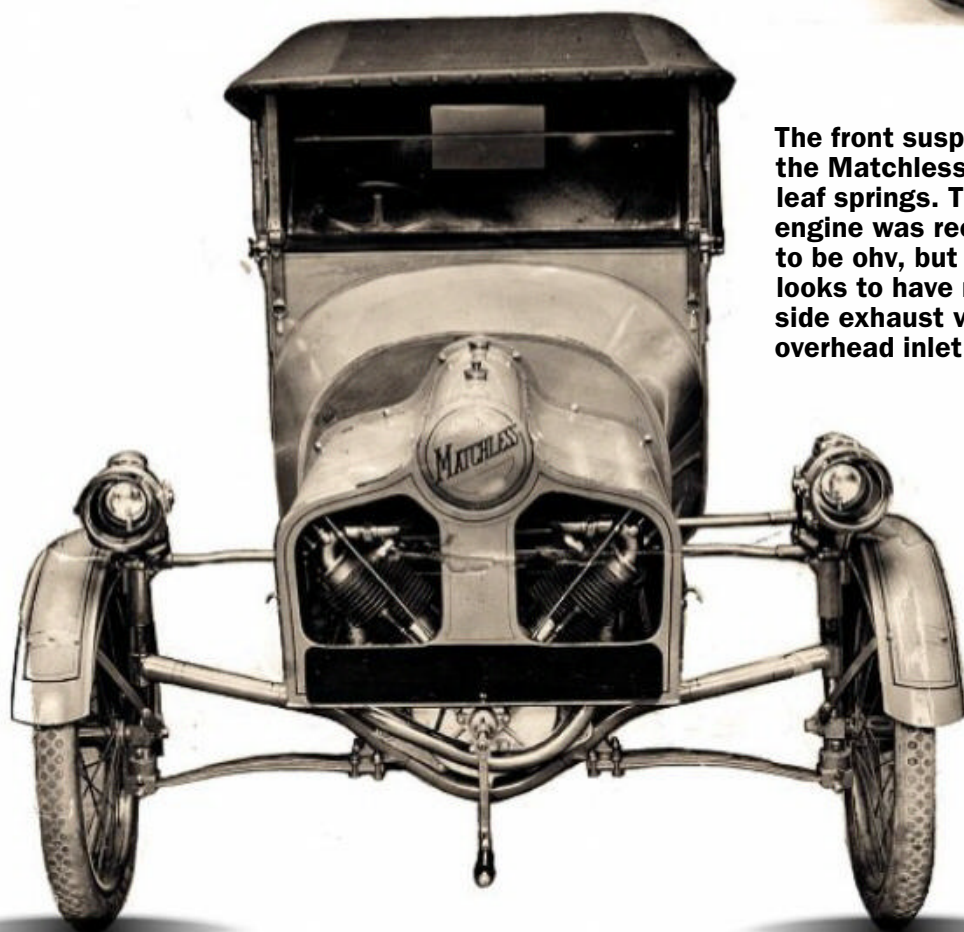
Period copy implies this model was in production until the First World War, thus perhaps the limited number of production models built employed ohv engines, but not the show model.

The JAP engine drove via a 'claimed' in-unit two-speed gearbox with Ferodo-lined cone clutch and thence cardan shaft to a bevel box at the back wheel, to which a single, substantial drum brake was fitted. The show model had independent suspension to all wheels but no front wheel brakes, which were later adopted.

Brief reports give no indication of speed but they record that low gear is seldom required with two people sitting on the side-by-side seats. The three-wheeler's 3½ gallon fuel tank gave a range of 150 miles. After the First World War, Matchless introduced an integral construction cyclecar with a 1250c flat-twin engine. Car encyclopaedias imply this remained in limited production until 1929.



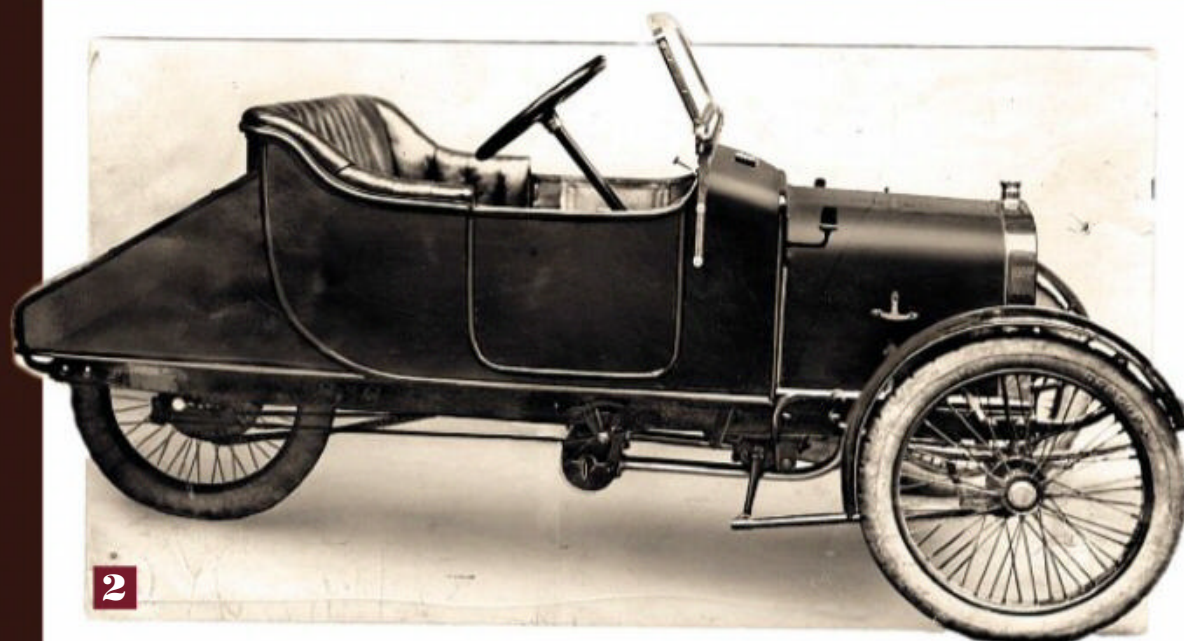
As one would expect from the Collier family business, the Matchless effort was well-presented.



The front suspension of the Matchless, using leaf springs. The JAP engine was reckoned to be ohv, but this one looks to have mechanical side exhaust valves and overhead inlet valves.



1



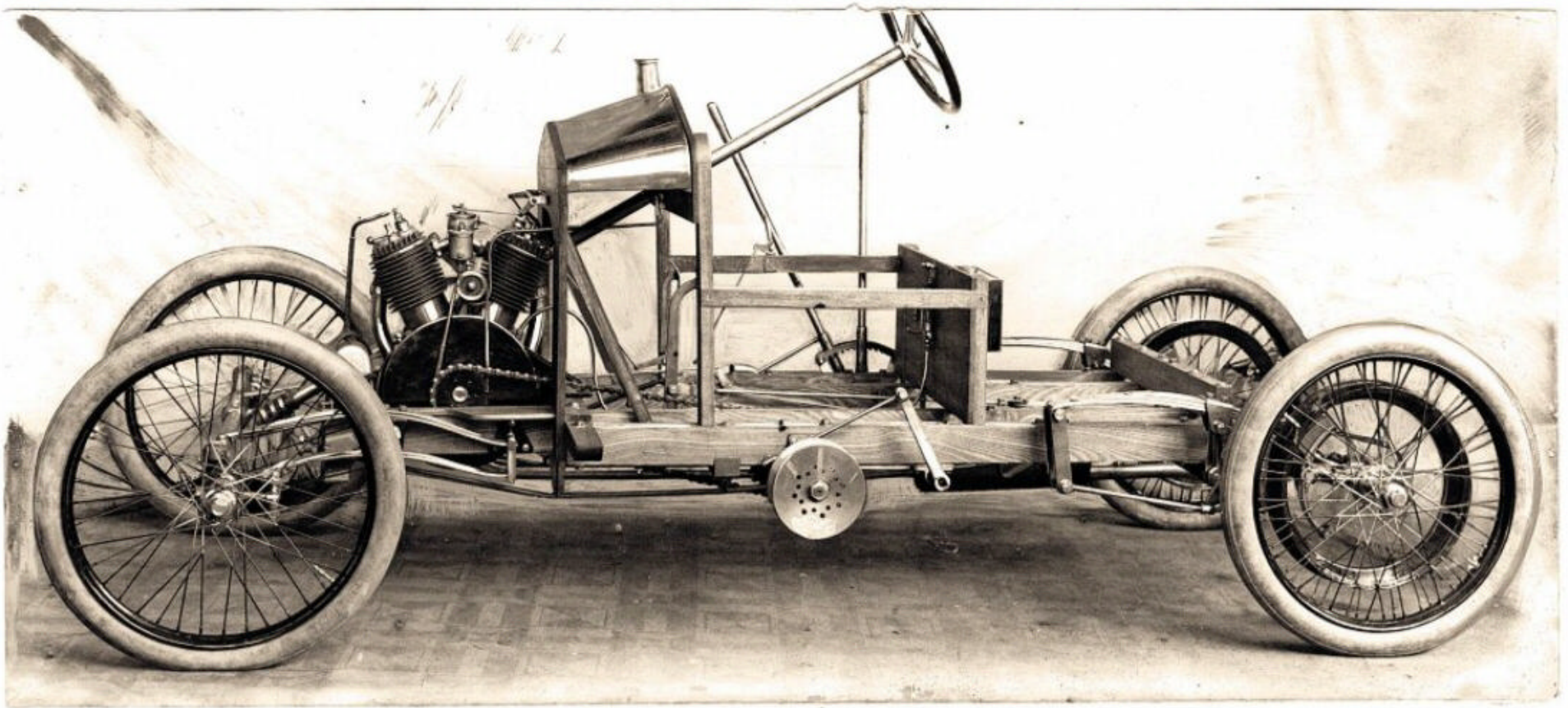
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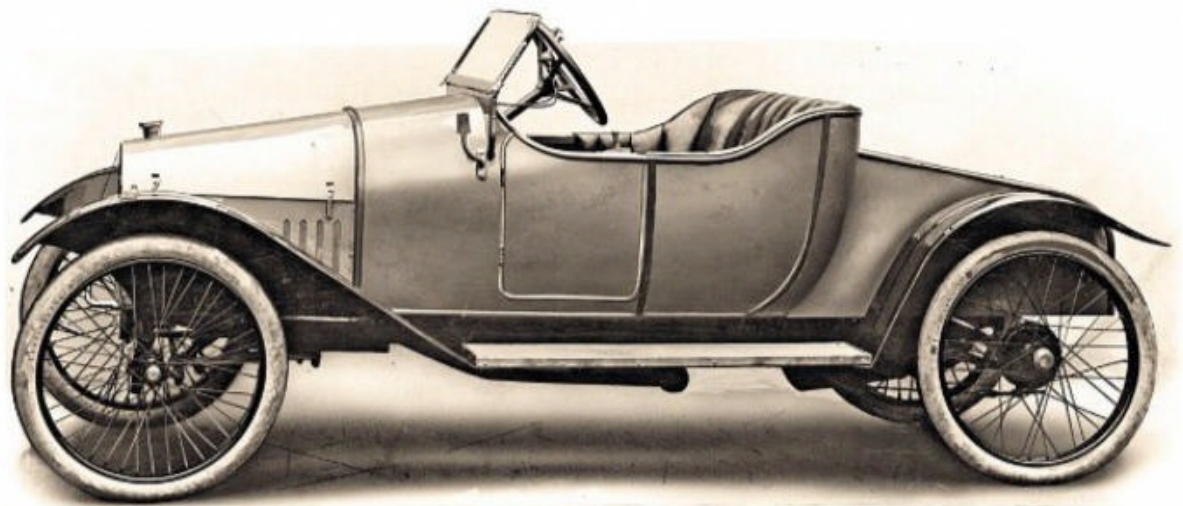
Many of you may now be asking: “Why not include the Morgan? Surely it’s a cyclecar?”

And the same could be asked about the likes of the BSA, the English-built Omega (which set six world records in 1926) and the Raleigh Safety Seven. Simply, these are well-known, proven products which, in the case of Morgan, BSA and Raleigh, survive in varying numbers. Instead, this feature is looking at the rare, the unusual, the bizarre and the downright horrible.

If the Smith Flyer or Economic Buckboard aren’t extreme enough, spare a thought for purchasers of the basic model Xtra Car (Xtracar), described by the maker (Xtra Cars, London Road, Chertsey) as “of special appeal to the businessmen and lady drivers”.

The Xtracar comprised a single seat sidecar or coach built pram body mounted on three wheels, with two at the front. Powered by a 269cc Villiers engine driving through a two-speed gear system with clutch, starting lever, chain and friction drive, it doesn’t sound worse than many rivals. And other than the fact you would suffer the indignity of driving along your local high street in a powered three-wheel pram, it perhaps wasn’t.

Sales at the lowly price of £95 in 1921/22 must have been slow, prompting the maker to a master stroke. Using either the 269cc Villiers engine or a larger 343cc two-stroke unit of unknown origin, Xtra Cars produced a similar vehicle in direct drive form, claiming it to be the ideal vehicle for



local trips and shopping errands. They even published photos of an elegant lady in her best fur coat smiling from the driving seat. Apparently, the direct drive (so no clutch) cyclecar held no horrors as “it was a matter of simplicity to run alongside the vehicle to start and hop aboard”.

To stop, one decompressed the engine, and for restarts one got out, ran alongside, started the engine, hopped aboard, all without crashing and while clad in your finest fur coat! Really?

If you didn’t fancy any of the products detailed above, one could opt for the wooden-framed Duo, the Yorkshire-built Nansen, Barker and Co’s Tincarc, the rakish Rudge, Rollo’s single seat Mono or Sociable Tourer, the ultra-narrow Super with tandem seating from E Jozor Ltd, New Oxford Street, London, the smart Tyseley or Surridge and hundreds of others offered. Or one could

build one’s own, as a fair number did.

Needing fillers, the weeklies carried period pictures and brief reports of specially-built motorcycles and outfits, often created for little outlay on the ‘make do and mend’ basis. So why not cyclecars? Why not indeed? Examples included amateur mechanic Mr Holmes, whose creation was based on an 1897 quad converted into a three-wheeler in 1904 and, finally, into a single seat sporting vehicle. Mr Holloway rebodied his Invicta tricar and further ‘redisposed’ its components to create a more comfortable and accommodating vehicle with better handling, while Welshman Mr J Yeo added cyclecar-type bodywork and a steering wheel to his Rexette.

Composing this feature encouraged my mind to race back more than a decade to when a Velocette MOV-powered cyclecar was offered at a Duxford auction. Built in the early 1960s by Cambridge University students with an aluminium body owing more to baking foil than sheet material, it changed hands for a modest sum. I briefly considered whether I should wave my paddle. I didn’t, but I hope it found a good home after I left the sale without a single regret – there are enough oddballs lurking in my workshop already.

End

1: Smart Lincolnshire-built home-made Monocar, featured in 1920, powered by an 8HP JAP engine and built by a Mr Walton of Sleaford. His daughter doesn’t perhaps look so enamoured...

2: The Tyseley was a handsome, grown-up offering, which looks younger than its 1912 date.

3: The Xtracar, which was offered in clutchless, single-speed form. ‘Simplicity itself’ to push start and jump aboard, apparently. Good luck with that.

4, 5, 6: Three more from November 1912... the wood-framed Duo, the rather stylish Surridge and the tandem-seat Super cyclecar.



A brief chat with... **Charterhouse Auctioneers**

Building up to their first Classic TT sale later in 2020, the team from Charterhouse answer a few questions.

Words: TIM BRITTON **Photographs:** CHARTERHOUSE

Currently creating quite a bit of interest in the auction world is the tie-in between Charterhouse Auctioneers and the Manx Government's Enterprise Board, which will see an auction of motorcycle and motorcycle related lots at the 2020 Classic TT in August.

The sale's location will of course attract interest from the racing world and TT legend Mick Grant's lap record-setting Kawasaki KR750 is an early sale entry. However, Charterhouse and the Manx Enterprise Board are keen to stress the sale is not just about race legends.

Motorcycle enthusiasts Matt Whitney and

Dan Peacock are Charterhouse's motorcycle men and naturally the first question had to be about the TT sale and how it came about.

Says Matt: "Charterhouse's involvement with this sale is for a four-year period initially and during this time we expect the sale to grow, which, given the interest in it so far, it will do."

Charterhouse, from its Dorset base, has been involved in classic vehicle sales since 2000 when the first vehicle sale, a combined car and motorcycle one, took place. Very quickly the sales were split and now there are four dedicated motorcycle sales per year; the TT sale becoming the fifth.

Everyone at Charterhouse believes in building a relationship with the client, it doesn't matter what the sale item is, this relationship and trust is important.

"In some respects, the TT sale will differ slightly from our normal method. Yes, the client contact and discussions will be the same, as will our client care, but the scale of charges will be specific for this sale."

There are some high profile entries for the sale and alongside Mick Grant's Kawasaki there is an ex-Arthur Wheeler 250cc Moto Guzzi and an incredible 49cc Van Veen Kreidler – or maybe the Fantic Chopper is more your thing?

What is the company's full name and where are you based?

That's an easy opener, we're Charterhouse Auctioneers and Valuers and we've been in the Dorset town of Sherbourne since our founding.

That's a nice lead in to the next question – when was the company founded?

Charterhouse was founded in 1999 by Abigail and Richard Bromell, both of whom have an auction and valuing background. Richard, along with Matt Whitney, are the principle auctioneers.

Why 'Charterhouse'?

That's easy. When deciding on a name for the company, Richard put on a blindfold, was spun round three times and then stuck a pin in a map. It pierced 'Charterhouse' and that's how the company was named.

Is Charterhouse a vehicle specialist or do you conduct other sales?

Charterhouse hold a variety of auctions, four being motorcycle, six car and 12 fine art at the moment. The sales tend to balance out for us.

Charterhouse have recently announced a tie-in with the Manx Government for a sale during the International TT race meet, how did this come about?

Through a lot of hard work over an 18-month period. The Manx Government were keen for the sale to be all-encompassing rather than just race machines, so there will be all sorts of bikes from budget end lightweights to top end race machines, plus automobilia, accessories, books and trophies.

Is Charterhouse an international company?

Charterhouse is currently UK based though the TT sale is attracting interest from all over the world.

Will this Manx sale be an ongoing event?

It will, yes. Initially there is a four-year contract and the sale will be grown as we go on.

Do you have a pool of experts in-house or advisors you can call on?

Speaking generally rather than specifically motorcycling, Charterhouse has a pool of experts they can call on for valuing, depending on the subject.

Looking at the people involved in Charterhouse, do any of you have a motorcycling background?

Yes, Matt Whitney and Dan Peacock are both active motorcyclists.

Are any of the team involved in competition work – racing or off-road sport?

Matt has a background of off-road motorcycle sport, trials and scrambles though says: "If you asked me what have I right now, then the



Brought back from NZ in 2009, in October 2012 full restoration of this 1966 Kawasaki A1R started. The machine appeared to be all there but on closer inspection the engine had no internals; bits were sourced in the US and Fahren Engineering made up new cylinder liners and reworked the cylinder heads. To be sold at the Classic TT auction.



A 1956 Ducati Grand Prix/Formula III, to be sold at Charterhouse's classic and vintage motorcycle auction at the Haynes International Museum on May 6, 2020 .



This 1956 BSA Gold Star DBD34, with matching numbers, and restored to concours condition, sold at Charterhouse's February 2020 auction for £18,000.

answer will be nothing as I've just sold a couple of bikes. Ask me again in a week and the answer will be different..."

How does someone auction something through Charterhouse? What is the process? Are they assisted along the way to make it as easy as possible?

The selling process through Charterhouse is designed to be as easy as possible and a client is assisted along the way at every stage. Charterhouse believe in building a relationship with clients and will follow up a call with a chat then a visit to the client.

Everyone will, or should, realise an auction house is a business and there to make money. There will be terms of sale, are these easy to follow?

Once a client has decided an auction is for them then details are discussed and a realistic sales figure is arrived at and the consignment form is filled in. This will detail the terms of business and the costs involved.

What's the most unusual sale conducted?

There are three machines which stand out as unusual, one being an absolutely original pre-Second World War 16H Norton, hidden away and forgotten; another an AJS from a flour mill, held together by, er, flour; then

there was a 1939 HRD Meteor belonging to bicycle designer Alex Moulton.

Is there such thing as a typical client?

I was going to say no, not really, as our clients hail from all walks of life, then I thought about our motorcycle clients and no matter their background, they're all typically enthusiasts.

Is it possible to say a particular model is always popular and every time there's one in a sale it creates interest?

It depends. We've found 1970s bikes are popular at the moment, with Yamaha's iconic 'Fizzy' – the 50cc FS1E sports moped – attracting interest.

Finally for the motorcycle department... what's your favourite motorcycle of all time?

Says Matt: "If I'm answering the question, it has to be Kawasaki's KH250, my first road bike."

End

**CONTACTING
CHARTERHOUSE**

Contacting Charterhouse is quite easy and can be done by phone, website or email, the details are as follows: Charterhouse Auctioneers and Valuers, The Long St. Salerooms, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3BS. Tel: 01935 812277
www.charterhouse-auction.com
enquiry@charterhouse-auction.com

J I M M Y S I M P S O N

“The fast start, a good lead, then an unlucky end; this was to be the familiar Simpson story.”

With a racing nickname of ‘Unlucky Jim’ there’s really no doubt as to which side favour fell for James Douglas Jerrold Hampson-Simpson, though he entered races as J H Simpson. But despite his moniker of misfortune, he actually achieved plenty, racking up 14 continental GP victories, setting seven TT lap records – including the remarkable feat of being the first man to record 60mph, 70mph and 80mph laps of the Mountain Course – and accrued four third places and a quartet of runner-up finishes, as well as a solitary TT win.

Born in Birmingham to a comfortably off family in the summer of 1898, both his parents were motorcyclists, with his father a depot manager for Rudge-Whitworth, and in 1910 Simpson senior rode one of the first experimental 500cc Rudges in competition. His mother did the same, so it was no surprise their progeny developed a passion for motorcycling at a tender age.

On his 13th birthday, his father presented him with a driving licence and a promise to show junior the ropes of riding. But Jim/Jimmie/Jimmy (all monikers and spellings seem to have been permissible) wasn’t one for waiting – the next morning, he was up an hour before his father, borrowed his Rudge and went for a ride... He brought the Rudge home safe and sound, exceeding 55mph on his first outing, losing his hat in the process.

Father soon spotted the lad had potential and it wasn’t long (1912) before the precocious teenager was taking part in local competitions and speed trials; on Rudges, of course. But war clouds were gathering, and an underage Simpson volunteered, spending several years driving lorries in France. So that was the end of motorcycle competition, but come peace time, young Simpson gained a position with the AJS company in Wolverhampton, hoping his time there would catapult him into a racing career. It didn’t, so he quit, setting off to Australia’s Gold Coast for a spell there, serving an enterprise that involved trading cocoa for Oldsmobile cars.

But for whatever reason, life in the antipodes didn’t suit and soon Jim was back in Blighty, competing (with quite a bit of success) in motorcycle events and working as a motor salesman, then making his TT debut in 1922, aboard what seems to have been a works Scott, though his entry was funded by a dealer, Harold Petty, from his now-hometown Leicester. The TT debut ended in disappointment, with the petrol tank of his two-stroke two-speeder holing on lap one.

He was back at the TT in 1923, on another works machine (an AJS) but this time financed and entered by his employer Chapman’s Garage, Leicester. Jim, as was his want, set off at a scalding pace, and was in a handsome lead, when the handlebars came loose and he crashed. He stopped and tightened them, only then to have a puncture, so he stopped and changed the tube, next to crash owing to avoiding a stray dog, breaking his own ribs and ending his race. The fast start, a good lead, then an unlucky end; this was to be the familiar Simpson story.

But Jim was fast, there was no doubt. So much so, he was recruited by AJS, where he was to remain as a works rider and employee until 1928. His first TT as an official rider was in 1924 – and he set off at full bore, becoming the first man to lap the Island course at over 60mph, but his Big Port couldn’t take the pasting and duly broke on lap three. The AJS-owning Stevens brothers tried to impress on him he ‘didn’t have to win by half an hour’ and to this end they detuned his (350cc) Senior entry. Still, it broke anyway. But he did become 350cc European champion, courtesy of a win at Monza.

He did finish the TT in 1925, a ‘poor’ (he reckoned) third in the Junior, riding to a strict schedule, before retiring his (new, full 500cc) Senior mount, owing to a broken magneto. He was fifth in the Sidecar race, while he also won the French 500cc GP at Montlhery, despite a sprained wrist owing to a practice crash, then a further race crash and his clutch packing up. He still won by almost seven minutes. The same year he won an ISDT gold medal. For 1926 (the year he was 500cc European champion), he was second on his pushrod Ajay to Alec Bennett’s cammy Velo in the Junior race, then, in the Senior race, he became the first man to lap at 70mph, before he literally blew his motor to smithereens, the flywheel and conrod firing itself up the road ahead of him...the 1927 Senior brought the same result, as well as third in the Junior on his ‘slow’ overhead cam 350.

Back on pushrod Ajays for 1928, he retired from the lead in the wet Senior, having befallen the same fate in the Junior. Despite a switch to Norton (the marque he was now to ride in the 350 and 500cc classes until retirement) results in the Island for 1929 were exactly the same, before a third in 1930s Junior (and a Senior DNF) and then another 1931 Senior DNF, although he became the first man to lap at over 80mph. Third in 1932’s Senior, he improved to second in 1933, which he repeated in the next year’s Senior TT, while he was also second in the Junior race. That year, 1934, he secured his first TT victory, winning the Lightweight race (his debut in that category) on a 250cc Rudge – ironically the same marque he’d started competing on 22 years before. He’d announced his forthcoming retirement at season’s start, while owing to who he was to work for (Shell) he also had a special contract with Norton, allowing him to use that lubricant, rather than the Castrol Norton was contracted to use. In 1933 and 1934 he was also 350cc European champion, to add to his same 1927 crown.

After retiring from racing, he was a founder member and president of the TT Riders’ Association (TTRA) and he was employed as competition manager for Shell Mex and BP Ltd., a position in which he continued for the rest of his working life, with a hiatus as a motorcycle trainer during the Second World War. He retired in 1960 and passed away at his home in West Looe, Cornwall, during the first week of December, 1981, aged 83, survived by his wife Nora and children Jimmy and Sonia. The Jimmy Simpson Trophy is annually awarded to the rider who sets the fastest lap at the TT races.

End



Mixing trades

Rebuilding a motorcycle involves a variety of skills – but woodwork? Not necessarily the main desirable skill perhaps, but, well, everything helps...



Who would have thought that woodworking skills would come in handy for an enthusiast rebuilding a motorcycle? Not very often, I grant you, and this is probably only the third time in 45 years of working on my own solo motorcycles that I've had to resort to the skills I learned as an apprentice joiner, to make bits for one of them.

The first time was to make a new chainguard from a bit of scrap aluminium sheet – a mate had just cut a new panel for his Lotus 7 and had some scraps the right size – all I needed to do was dress a piece of staircase tread to flatten off the nosing and form the sheet around the wood.

The second go was a lot of years later, when a discussion during a barbecue on

competition vehicle – car, motorcycle etc – weight saving by using aluminium instead of steel ended up with me forming a wooden buck for my talented sheet metalworker friend to make a smaller petrol tank for my 650cc Triumph.

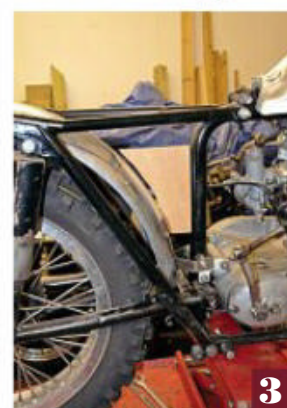
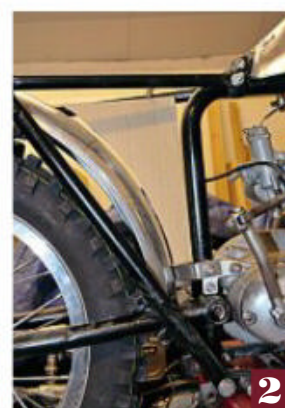
And here we have the third go – an oil tank. Okay, I could have bought one but: a) I don't have a budget for such expense; b) a proprietary one might not fit the frame mods, and, c) it would be too easy, and where's the fun in that?

Actually, making a wooden former for things like this isn't difficult, nor does it have to be fancy, and all I used were some scraps of plywood that I had lying around the place, some glue and a few screws. It helps too that I've a number of tools on hand to work wood with – nothing

complicated is needed though, and I could have managed quite well with a coping saw, a round Surform, a screwdriver and sandpaper wrapped around a block of wood. It would have taken longer but that's not the point.

But before all this woodwork there was a task to be completed, which I'd been putting off due to fear. When bunging this bike together in the early stages, I used the rear mudguard which I'd taken off my 650cc Triumph around 10 years ago. It's an original steel TR6/T120 type and has been bent, bashed straight, split, welded and rusted through until it looks horrible, but fitted in with the 'use what I had lying around' ethos of this build.

I did, and still do, have a selection of alloy front mudguards and wondered at the



- 1: This is the inspiration.**
- 2: Now the mudguard is in place a piece of cardboard can be sliced to a rudimentary shape.**
- 3: A rough cut at first.**
- 4: Gradually more and more plywood is built up.**
- 5: A clamp such as this is useful.**

possibility of finding a battered rear one in an autojumble but, in such searches, I'm generally two places behind in the queue when the stall vendor passes on exactly what I need to someone else – for next to nothing.

Still, in a conversation with Allan Hitchcock about something Royal Enfield, I chucked in: "You've not got an alloy rear guard taken off a bike that's too scabby for one of your jobs, have you?"

The reply: "No, but we do have a shop-soiled one which fell off the shelf and got scraped, is that any good?" A deal was done and the guard headed north.

There is something awe-inspiring about an undrilled mudguard, its usually pristine surface unmarked (in this case apart from the scrape).

I don't mind admitting I've had several goes at offering up this guard to go in place, and chickened out each time, but, this time it had to be done, or I wouldn't stand much of a chance of making the curve on the rear of the oil tank look like it was supposed to be following the mudguard.

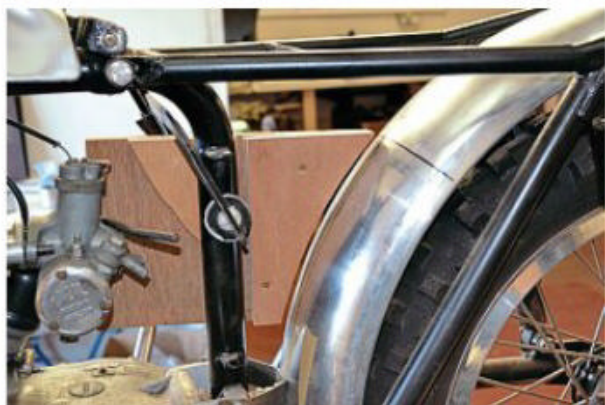
Though both guards would be mounted in the same place, there would be some difference and the curvature marked on my oil tank template from one wouldn't necessarily look right against the other so the new guard had to go on. To mount it, I'm using what is referred to in Triumph parts manuals as rear lifting handle and will fabricate a bracket for the front mount which goes down by the rear engine plates.

With the old guard off and out of the way, I slipped the new one in place and held it

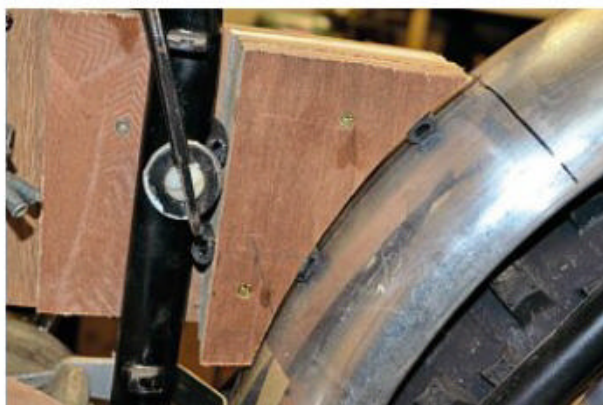
roughly in place with some old electrical wire. Wedging the tyre with some scraps of wood allowed more scraps to push the bottom bit of the guard to where it looked right. In such cases as this, there is a certain amount of, 'if it looks right then it probably is right' going on and of the three people who happened to be on hand, all three agreed it did indeed look right.

Rummaging in the scrap bin I found a cutting of mild steel and formed it into a pleasing shape by clamping it in my vice. Nothing fancy here either, just a few trips back and forth to the bike from the vice as the forming continued.

Once happy with the shape and fit, I took the top stud out of the engine plate, lined up the bracket and marked the first hole. Drilling out meant I could mark the other



A gap is produced on the back so the tank won't sit on the frame tube.



Initially rubber fuel hose was used to keep the gap regular.

side by pushing a drill bit through the hole. Bracket in place, a hole could be drilled to secure the bottom bit.

Next job was to line the guard up by sight so it covered the tyre, then tighten the wire up so it is held in place. Naturally the rear lifting hand was nowhere near the right place – more bending in the vice until it looked right and the two bolt brackets on it sat properly. Then I checked it all again.

Once happy I marked the holes through the brackets and then I checked everything – again – rubbed the marks out (they were soft pencil ones) and marked again. This time they were slightly better positioned. At this point I needed a coffee – after which I checked it again, before taking the guard off and drilling both holes.

The screws I've got holding the guard in place are M6 plastic numberplate screws, which, as a temporary measure, are fine.

There is still a middle mount to sort but I'm not 100% sure what form that will take at the moment. I could form another bracket to go over the top of the guard and onto the suspension bolts, which seems most likely and is what various original guards use.

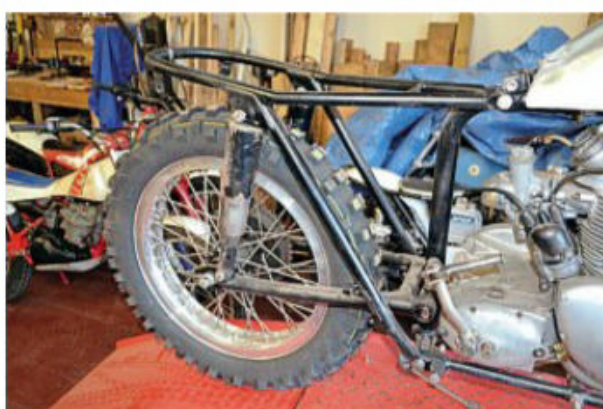
However, I want the oil tank in place, or at least its former, so the space available can be seen, as there are other things to go under the seat area – such as the ignition coil, lighting control and that sort of stuff. I



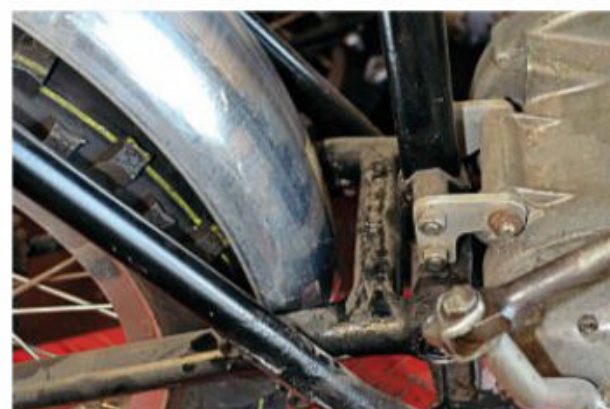
Looking at the buck, I felt the top was too low so screwed a flat piece on the top.



The old mudguard was pretty ropery...



...so it went in the bin.



Not sure if this is where I want the front of the guard.



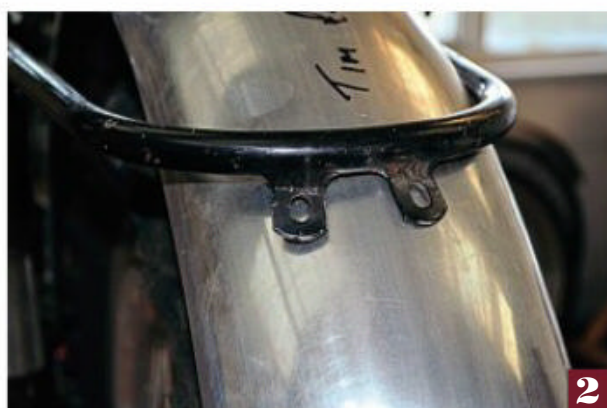
The new alloy guard is wired in place.



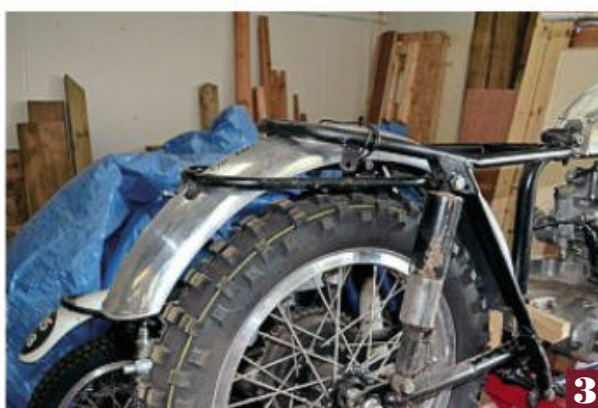
Not quite in line yet.



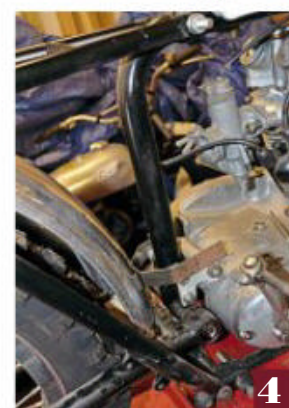
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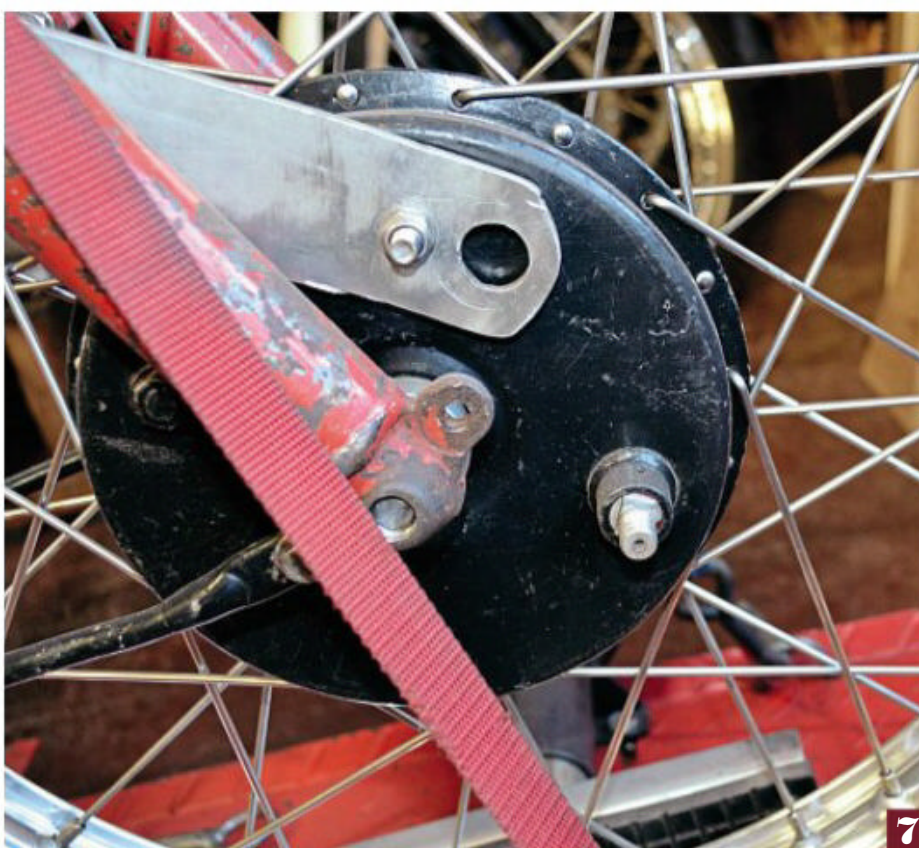
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5



6



7

1: Wedging the wheel in place makes things easier.

2: The lifting handle needs moving over a little.

3: This is better.

4: The bracket at the bottom isn't complicated, being little more than a hand-bent steel bar.

5: A rummage in a misplaced box produced an alloy front brake lever and some headlamp brackets.

6: Perhaps I'll find two clamps the same.

7: A brake arm is still needed, too.

want to see what space this stuff will take before finalising the middle mounting bit.

There are still a couple of tasks to do on the guard, rubber mounting so it won't split first time the bike fires up and the front of it at the bottom needs to be formed around the swinging arm bridge, but for the present this will do.

Tanking along

Inspiration for this tank came from the one on my B40, in as much as it will wrap around the main frame pillar – but where the B40 one is simply angled with a radius on each corner, I wanted to have the rear of this tank follow the curve of the mudguard.

First task was to roughly – very roughly – cut out a curve on a cardboard template so the shape can be transferred to a piece of plywood which can be slotted in the frame and scribed to the curve. A thick felt pen followed the curve and gave me something to cut to and, no, I didn't use a coping saw, as I have a band saw to hand.

Once this template was cut to the curve, a few strokes of a belt sander tidied it up and the curve was almost matched to that of the mudguard and also fitted the downtube of the main frame. This is only a template because the last thing anyone wants on a British motorcycle is for an oil tank to be tight up against other components. The template gives me the starting point for

the rest of the cuttings I will build up the buck from.

At first, I used some bits of old oil tube to create a gap, but they weren't quite right for the job, as they wouldn't compress enough to give the gap I wanted, so I ended up with some slim bits of ply to hold the buck in place.

After that, it was a case of cutting more bits and building up the size I wanted or, more correctly, the size which looks right. The beauty of doing things this way is there's a physical 'thing' to see. There are those who can visualise such things, but I'm more of the type to have something in place. I could have drawn the oil tank to scale on paper on a drawing board, but that would have been just as time consuming as carving it from bits of scrap ply. Once drawn I'd still have to make it in something and, as a joiner, that would be wood so it could be modified easily in my workshop.

It might be worth pointing out that any such buck made is always the inside dimension, so the actual tank made from it would be slightly bigger – probably 4mm all round as such tanks are generally made from 2mm or $\frac{5}{64}$ in alloy – it won't be a major issue as long as you're aware of it.

The tank buck I've got has a flat piece on top, as looking at it the top seemed low, so I screwed more on which brought the top to where I felt it should be. In order to finish

the rest of it off, I need to add some bits to make the froth tower and breather outlet, plus the filler cap. This will have to wait, as various fittings will be available at the *Classic Dirt Bike Show* which will have been and gone when you read this.

What I expect to find there is a bottom feed and a return with a rocker feed for the oil ways, plus some cuttings of alloy so I can make the other bits and pieces.

I'll also have a chance to see what ignitions are out there for just such a project, as in common with many enthusiasts I have a mental block where electricity is concerned – I just know it hurts when my wet fingers touch it...

End

Identified... maybe

In my excitement to try and do away with the distributor for a tidier points-in-the-side ignition, a side case on eBay was bid on and arrived shortly after. It seems I was maybe a bit hasty, as it's not right for the job, having more oil drillings in it than needed. All the part numbers cast in it were correct, so it was a bit of a mystery, still is if I'm honest, but the smart thinking – from someone who owned one – is it may be a 650 case. It is a very sad case which has been repaired by someone who welds worse than me.

Finding the ace of clubs

Every marque has an owners' club that'll suit an enthusiast's needs – if you feel ostracised in one place, you'll more than likely be welcomed elsewhere.

Given that motorcycling is primarily a solitary occupation, it's somewhat surprising that club membership plays a large part in many motorcyclists' lives. On second thoughts, though, clubs are incredibly important because without them riders (especially solitary ones) would find it difficult to share interests, experiences and problems.

But which club do you join? There's certainly no shortage of choice; *TCM's* sister magazine *Old Bike Mart* regularly lists well over 100 clubs, and that doesn't include local and informal ones. It could even be that just a group of friends serves as your club, but if you want a dating certificate or expert advice, you'll need one of the bigger national clubs. Before joining, though, it's wise to study the club's magazine (most will happily send you a sample copy), because you might be surprised by the members' preoccupations and interests.

If you have a little flat-twin Velocette, for example, you'll find little of relevance in the Velocette Owners' Club's Fishtail magazine, because your type of bike has a separate club with its cleverly-named *On the Level* magazine (referring to both the LE-VELocette and its 'level' engine). Similarly Bantam owners may be puzzled by the lack of attention they receive in the BSA OC's *Star* magazine, until they realise that previous Bantam enthusiasts felt excluded enough to break away and form their own club.

Even clubs which profess to remain inclusive struggle to involve all the models made by their preferred marque. So, the content of the Ariel Owners' *Cheval de Fer* (Iron Horse) magazine suggests that the heavyweights are the real deal, while Arrows and Leaders are slightly alien. And members obviously chose to deny the very existence of the poor little Ariel 3 with its disastrous advertising slogan of 'Here it is. Whatever it is.'

Ariels are of course again being made, but in such small numbers that new ones arouse curiosity rather than antagonism, and a similar situation occurs with the Norton club where the Donington-made twins and fours are still relative rarities. Consequently there is little sign of deliberate discrimination in the *Roadholder* magazine, where the concentration on traditional heavyweight singles and twins – rather than the 'lightweights' from Jubilees to Electras – is understandable considering their relative numbers and longevity.

The popularity of current Triumphs on the other hand, has led some members to write in questioning whether



Roy Poynting has been a regular contributor to *The Classic MotorCycle* since 1995 when he entered and won a writing competition. A veteran of many restorations, he continues to be an enthusiastic rider.

Hinckley-made bikes are 'true Triumphs.' These diehards have probably already lost the battle though, as the club magazine has to regularly explain why it is called the *Nacelle* – something that would be obvious to owners of older Trumpets. In any case, such zealots don't seem to realise that Meriden was the company's second major home, and if there had been an owners' club shortly after the Second World War, members with Coventry-made Triumphs would probably have been raising exactly the same reservations about Thunderbirds and T110s! As for present-day attitudes, Tiger Cubs and Terriers seem to be tolerated, but members evidently prefer to forget that Tina and Tigress scooters were marketed as Triumphs.

Meriden/Hinckley-type disputes are nothing new, and a couple of decades ago Royal Enfield owners were querying whether Indian-made bikes deserved to be featured in *The Gun* magazine alongside the British ones. Well, that's also a done deal now – especially with the new 650cc twins proving to be what many Enfield enthusiasts (and others) have been asking for.

Fortunately, if you or your machine are slightly cold-shouldered by the one-make clubs, there are several national non-specific ones. The magazine of the biggest – the Vintage Motor Cycle Club – gives fair coverage of all types over 25 years old, but tends to get bogged down by members' concerns about maintaining membership numbers in the face of an aging population. Other clubs seem much more ready to accept that there's a finite number of potential members, and are all the happier for it.

Most relaxed of all seem to be the smaller non-specific associations, perhaps because they are clubs in the traditional sense rather than businesses like the VMCC. For instance, the British Two-Stroke Club's *Independent* magazine belies its own mission-statement of 'especially welcoming two-stroke machines of British manufacture', and smokers made on the Continent, in the far-east or the Communist Bloc are as likely to be featured as Bantams and Fanny-Bs. Similarly, the Sunbeam MCC confusingly contradicts its own title by welcoming all machines made up to 1939.

And you might think the precisely titled National Autocycle and Cyclemotor Club would be snuffy about anything other than Villiers-powered single-speeders and bicycles with bolt-on engines. Not a bit of it. The club magazine, *Buzzing*, shows that anything with a small engine is accepted, with an especially warm welcome for quirky devices like the otherwise-ostracised Ariel 3!

End

“Even clubs which profess to remain inclusive struggle to involve all the models made by their preferred marque.”

Spit 'n' polish

To paraphrase Charles Dickens, front forks – especially telescopic ones – can provide you with both the best of times and the worst of times...

I'm sitting writing this having spent the last three nights working on a pair of 'teles' – and I'm not done yet. I contest that while girders are fiddly, with bushes, grease nipples and the like, for flat-out hard slogging, nothing beats trying to bring a set of telescopics back from the dead.

First comes the nerve-racking prospect of draining the damping oil. I say nerve-racking, not because there is anything difficult about the process, although air assisted forks can provide great excitement if you forget to let them down first; it's surprising just how far even quite thick fork oil goes under a few psi of pressure.

It is a big moment because, once you have got the drain screws to come out, the colour of the oil gives the first clue to the inside state of the forks. Thankfully, the current pair discharged a stream of perfectly coloured oil, as if they had been serviced only last week. In the past though, I have watched in fascinated horror as they yielded only a rich brown gloop that lazily fell out of the holes, complete with drips of sludge. Sure enough the insides were wrecked.

The top caps are easy enough if you have the correct flat wall socket, although I'm still experimenting with the best way to keep some pressure on them to prevent either them, or any spacers on top of the springs, from being flung across the workshop from any pre-load on the springs. Next, you'll be taping together every socket extension you have to make a long-reach tool to access the bottom nuts.

The stanchions. I've never found anything more than a very slightly curved fork leg, probably because I wouldn't buy a bike with visibly bent forks, for fear of other damage that might have resulted. The subject couple were not dead straight – maybe 1/32 out over the full length – and I've successfully tweaked them dead straight. I'm far more concerned that on inspection, I will find a nick out of the hard chrome in the area swept with the seals, which will eat them in short order.

Given that they are coated in oil, fork springs and any spacers shouldn't be rusty. Having said this, my wrecked pair had ones that were coated with what appeared to be a rust-like layer. Whatever it was, it had to come off, as the parts that go back into the fork need to be surgically clean. Anything still adhering when



Jerry Thurston bought his first vintage motorcycle when he was 17. For a time he was *The Classic Motorcycle* advertising manager. Now 30 years on from buying his first old bike, Jerry still owns and loves them and is especially fond of fast, noisy flat-tankers.

they are reassembled will be washed off by the oil and contaminate it, eventually destroying the seals and, potentially, the hard chrome layer too.

Fork seals can be terrors to remove without damaging the sealing areas – past experience tells me that they shouldn't come out until you have measured where they sit... I used to make the assumption that all seals sat against a locating lip, until I gleefully popped one out and found, to my horror, that this one had no lip, but instead was inserted to a specific depth with a special tool.

Making the alloy lowers nice again would appear to be the last job, but I always do most of the work barring the final polish at this point – unless they are near perfect, you are going to be using various grades of emery paper, rubbing compound, wire wool and the like. No matter how careful you are, some residue will find its way inside them, so one may as well get this dirty work done before the big clean-up.

Getting the inside of forks scrupulously clean takes time – once you are happy they are ready to rebuild, it takes longer than you might expect. I've tried everything but I have had best success with soaking them in degreaser and then getting a pressure washer into all the nooks and crannies. You'll be soaked through, but it budes even the muck that's precipitated out and is sitting mockingly at the bottom of the alloy sliders. I then make up wads to push through – rather like a big gun cleaning kit – and once they come out totally clean, sit the whole lot on a radiator for a couple of days to dry thoroughly.

Finally getting them back together is joyful. Custom seal pushers can be made from nylon or bought and certainly make life easier, and while you are at it, don't forget to replace the seals for the drain screws, and the bolt seals if yours have a through fixing right through the lower casting. Slip them back into the yokes, remembering that although most go in flush with the top yoke, others can deliberately protrude above, top up with fresh fork oil, spring spacers and top caps back on, and all that is left to do is a final buff of the alloy, fit the front wheel and stand back and admire.

Now, not only will your machine look nicer it'll ride better too, so definitely a win all round.

End

“It's surprising just how far even quite thick fork oil goes under a few psi of pressure.”

Sketchbook Travels

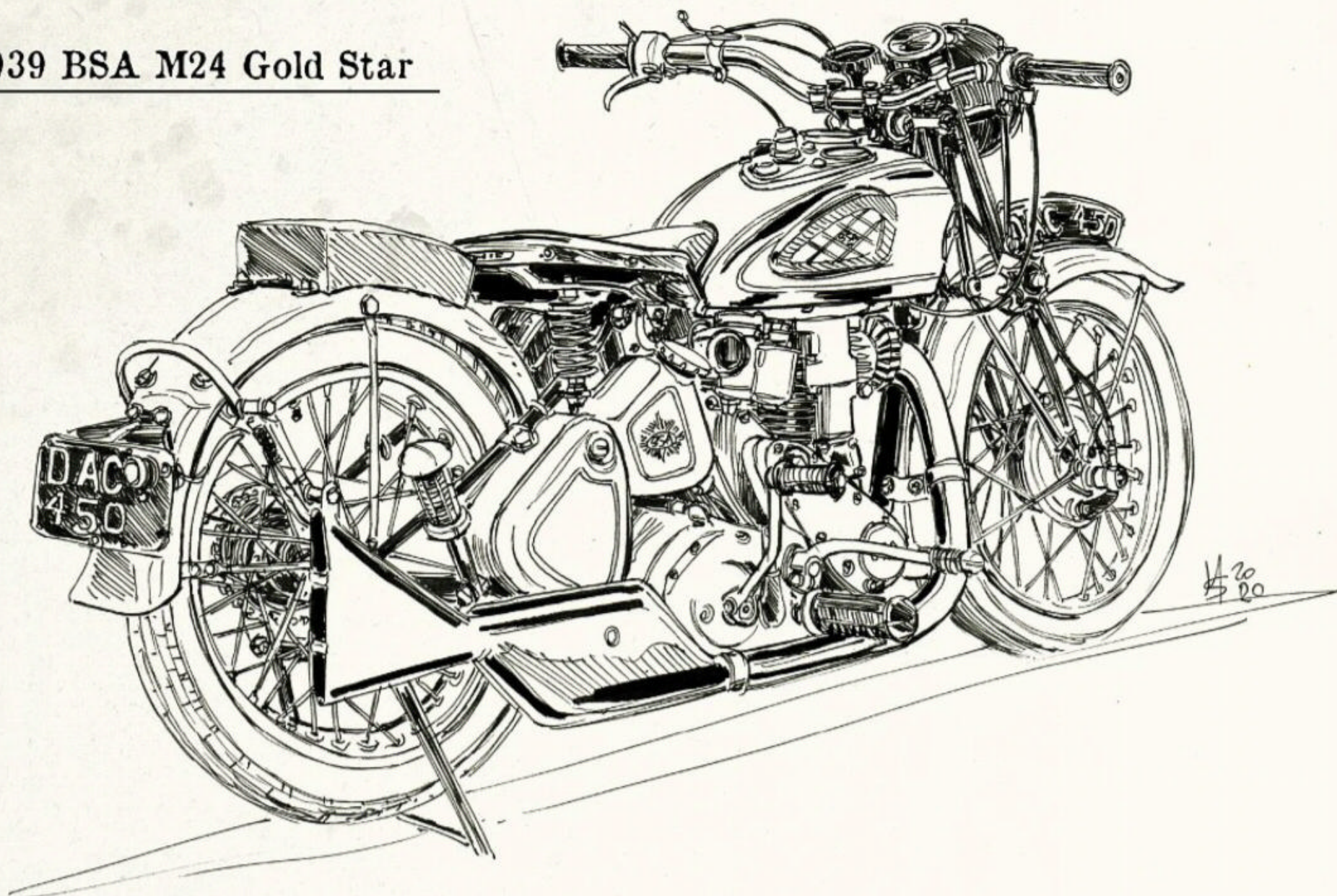
MOTORCYCLES, SEEN THROUGH THE SKETCHBOOKS OF MARTIN SQUIRES

WORDS & ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARTIN SQUIRES



Years ago, January was a quiet month for shows... Until the Winter Classic came along. So keen was I to get sketching at a show after the Christmas break, I ended up travelling across country a week early to find an empty car park! Well, luckily the Newark Air Museum was open and I found some interesting stuff to entertain me there. Returning a week later, on the correct date, the Winter Classic provided a great range of two-wheeled – rather than two-winged... – machines to choose from.

1939 BSA M24 Gold Star



Found on the Gold Star Owners Club stand, this lovely M24 was my first pick for the sketchbook at Newark. This rare BSA M24 was not produced in vast numbers – just 298 of this later KM24 model were dispatched, 120 of which went overseas, so I was really happy to have sketched this one.

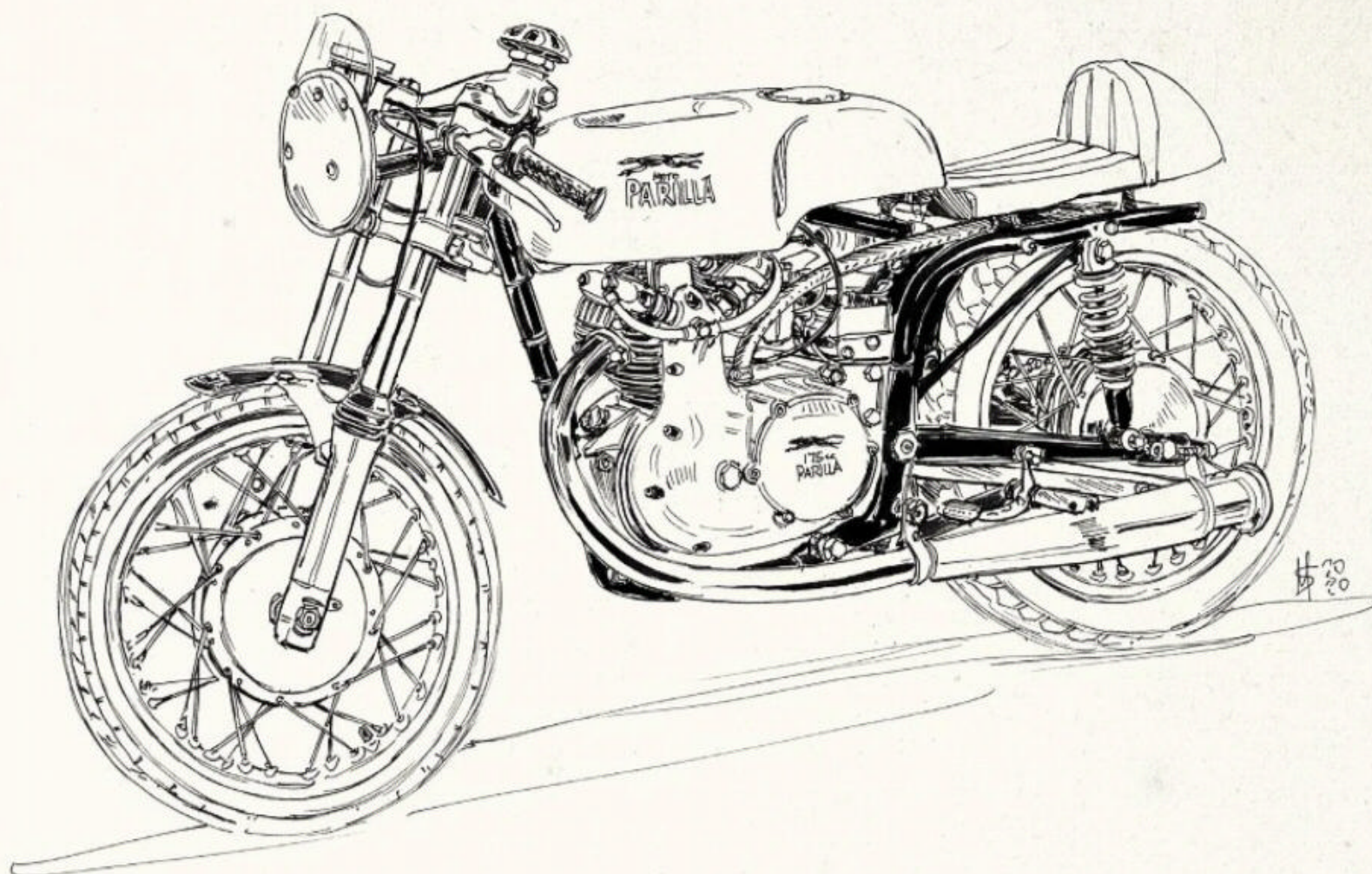
The M24 was the first production machine that would use the Gold Star name after Wal Handley achieved his Brooklands Gold Star, lapping Brooklands at an average of 107.57mph in 1937. Cashing in on the Brooklands fame, the M24 Gold Star was produced from 1937 to 1939 in two major model types: the JM24 made from late 1937 until September 1938 and then production switched to the KM24, the first of these being dispatched in December 1938 and produced up to the outbreak of the Second World War, the war stopping any further development as production moved over to the military M20.

The KM24 had a new petrol tank design to the JM24, with an instrument panel holding a Lucas ammeter, light switch, oil pressure indicator button and Lucas mobile inspection light. While being a very practical touring machine, with the instrument panel and frame-mounted toolbox, the standard gearbox had close ratio gears, giving the owner a racing edge with an option to have the wider 1938 ratios available. One last notable change in the KM24 model as opposed to the JM24 was the change to an aluminium alloy gearbox casing, replacing the magnesium one used previously.

Even though it was produced for only a short period, the M24 Gold Star was popular, especially with the off-road fraternity – the BSA and British army teams in the 1939 ISDT used Gold Stars. It was the long 94mm stroke, providing low end torque, that made the M24 engine popular in off-road competition. BSA factory rider Harold Tozer rode an M24 sidecar outfit in trials up until 1949, when the factory insisted that he use the new ZB34 Gold Star.

This particular example is quite a recent find from Scotland, rescued before it was to be chopped up to fit in a skip. The new owner, a Gold Star enthusiast, used the Worcester registration to recover records of when the old log book was surrendered. Further research in the BSA works records at the VMCC library confirmed that the KM24 engine and KM23 frame both left the works together. Only 10 KM24 machines left the factory with KM23 frames, as these had the lugs for attaching a sidecar, making this an even more elusive discovery. BSA-m24.com, a website run by M-series expert Georges Wander, currently lists 38 original KM24 machines known worldwide, possibly making this number 39.

Since being rescued, the M24 has been fully restored, with chrome and painted panel tank, along with the addition of the fishtail exhaust, an addition which pays homage to the Brooklands roots of the Gold Star. The current owner fully intends for this to be a used machine "prowling the hills of Derbyshire this very summer."



1957 Moto Parilla MSDS

This simple Italian racer caught my eye initially due to the valve arrangement and smooth styling of the integrated crankcases and cam timing cover. Not only that, but the black frame and silver tank were reminiscent of a Norton. When talking to the owner, all soon became clear.

Legend has it that Giovanni Parilla, while working as a repairman, would talk motorcycle racing with his friends during lunch breaks. At the time, Italian entries

into international races weren't fairing too well. As a reaction, Giovanni bet his pals that he could build a better racing motorcycle. He wasn't taken that seriously at the time – but that didn't deter him.

As this was 1949, Giovanni, like many others, were amazed by the performance of the Manx Norton. In order to understand this competitive machine, Giovanni bought one and took it apart to take measurements and notes and understand the overhead

cam engine. Once he had finished directing and rebuilding the Norton, he sold it to finance building his own machine. It was only a matter of months before he entered his prototype into its first race, which he won. Approached by a keen prospective customer, Giovanni refused to sell the prototype but offered up the next one he made.

By the late 1950s Parilla machines like this MSDS ('Macchina Sport Derivato della Serie', which translates as 'Sport Machine Deriving from the Series') were being offered for privateers to enter club racing and Moto Giro races. This is a typical example, with drop handlebars and the racing tank, with indent to enable a lower head position. Lastly, as mentioned, the engine, frame and tank coachwork are all an intentional tribute to the Manx Norton, which inspired the genesis of the Parilla marque.



1964 Bridgestone BS7

Whether it's me only just noticing them, or it's a more recent trend, unusual small capacity machines are turning up at shows more and more. Made by Bridgestone, the Model 7 was the first machine to be imported from Japan in 1963 by Rockford Scooter Co. of Illinois – Bridgestone would not start exporting to the UK until 1968, so I'm assuming this machine has come via America at some point.

This particular Model 7 is the sportster model, known as the Surfrider. The distinguishing features of the 7 is the fan-cooled engine (admittedly the feature that first attracted me to the machine), and something I thought was more akin to agricultural machinery. The brochure quotes that the "exclusive flywheel fan design keeps engine temperatures down, improves performance, [and] lengthens engine life." The 50cc, 4.2hp engine revved to 7000rpm, provided a top speed of 45mph, and apparently enabled its rider to climb 1 in 4 hill as well as returning 'over' 200mpg!



You were asking

Your queries resolved with Richard Rosenthal

Beaded edge tyres – are they safe?

Two readers have had recently fitted, new beaded edge tyres strip their bead and come off, while another asks is it better to have the wheels of his early 1920s V-twin rebuilt with rims to accept wired-on tyres, and three more have asked beaded edge tyre pressure advice.

There appears to be a batch, or perhaps even a container load, of what are probably rickshaw tyres dribbling onto the European market and the two examples which stripped their beads may be part of this batch. While they are of appropriate sizes for motorcycles, one stated it must not exceed 30mph (50kph) and both implied they were two ply covers. However, priced at £35 each when offered for sale two years ago, they were snapped up.

The only advice this column can give is don't buy such 'bargains' – they are simply too cheap and no respected specialist would sell them. As a by-thumb rule, beaded edge tyres suitable for our veteran and early vintage motorcycles will cost in the order of £100 per cover, including tube and postage, and more for the larger sizes, with some imported from America costing in excess of £300.

The idea of swapping rims to accept wired-on tyres instead of beaded edge has its merits, but it places one between a rock and a hard place. Until 1926, most motorcycles were shod with beaded edge rims and for originality most of us will want to stick with them, but there is no doubting wired on tyres have many advantages, including acceptable lower inflation requirements, giving a softer ride and, unless in very poor condition, they won't come off the rim in the event of a sudden puncture at speed.

Add to this the range choice



Beaded edge tyres to the fore, at the conclusion of the Pioneer Run.

available and in some sizes the options of softer compound tyres for speed work and the merit list grows.

However, we have found decent beaded edge tyres perfectly satisfactory and safe to use on our veteran and early vintage models. We always buy beaded edge tyres which are manufactured for motorcycle use from a leading, established supplier.

We check the tyres at least annually for side wall damage, cracks and always maintain appropriate tyre pressures, even when the machines are stored. Sunlight, great variations of temperature and allowing machines to stand on flat or severely under-inflated tyres will drastically reduce the life of the tyres, but the same applies to wired on ones.

By design, beaded edge tyres don't have wire in the bead. Instead, they have contoured

beads and soft flaps moulded in tyre compound, which may (or may not) be reinforced with webbing. So, with no wire to keep the tyre on the rim, they rely solely on tyre pressure. Tyre makers sometimes offer inflation advice, but, if not, the late Radco (Frank Farrington) published a handy chart as a guide in his super book, 'The Vintage Motorcyclists' Workshop', ISBN 0854294724.

This guide below relates tyre inflation pressure to load per wheel.

Taking myself and my motorcycle as an example:
So, 1911 Premier, weight 160lb
Myself in casual clothes 182lb
Motorcycle jacket, boots, helmet etc 30lb
Tools and spare fuel 20lb
Total = 392lb

Thus load per tyre equals total divided by two, or $392 \div 2$, which equals 196. As this machine has 2½in balloon tyres, they need inflating to a minimum of 27psi. However, the tyres currently fitted have a high safe upper limit, so I inflate to 33psi.

Inflation pressure guide for beaded edge motorcycle rated tyres						
Inflation pressure expressed in terms of PSI						
Ballon	24	27	30	33	36	40
Maximum load in lb per tyre						
2in	-	130	150	170	180	
2¼in	110	160	200	220	240	
2½in	150	200	240	280	320	
3in	230	290	320	360	390	440

THE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE | APRIL 2020 **87**



You were asking

Bonniksen speedometers

Can you explain in simple terms how the Bonniksen speedometer works?

Bren Halstead, email, USA.

Danish-born horologist Bahne Bonniksen designed, and it appears initially manufactured the Bonniksen Isochronous Speedometer. The first example marketed in 1912 was a 50mph instrument. Later models of up to 100mph were offered.

During the second half of the First World War he sold the manufacturing rights and designs to Coventry watchmakers Rotherham and Sons Ltd. Instruments made by the designer bear the legend 'B Bonnikson' and those manufactured by Rotherham and Son Ltd bear the legend 'Rotherhams, Coventry.' Whether Rotherhams manufactured early instruments for Bahne is unclear.

Initially, the instrument was a speedometer with two needles and an odometer. Stationary, the two large matching needles are at zero. On the move, one needle goes to a position to indicate the speed and remains there for 2.5 or 5 seconds then zeros, and the second needle moves around the dial to mark the real speed at

that moment and stops there for 2.5 or 5 seconds before zeroing. Then the first needle moves etc.

Circa late 1913/early 1914, Bahne Bonniksen unveiled a new instrument with two additional smaller trip dials. One graduated 1 to 10 in one mile increments which are subdivided into fractions thereof and the other also graduated 1 to 10 in 10 mile steps subdivided into fractions thereof. To read if the 100 mile trip reads three (30) and the one mile reads one, then 31 miles have been travelled. On covering precisely 100 miles both dials are at zero. For trips over 100 miles, the rider needs to remember how many units of 100 miles have been covered, so period literature informs!

A few years after (circa 1922) Rotherhams – with economies of manufacture in mind – introduced spun bezels (rather than machined) and plain (rather than bevelled) glass. At about the same time, instruments were offered with the option of having one small dial recording elapsed time using the familiar watch/clock type two hands and the other a 100 mile trip, again employing two hands.



Is there any nicer adornment for a 1920s motorcycle? A Bonniksen graces any handlebar.

Below: Richard Rosenthal's lovely Sunbeam. Can anyone help him with Bonniksen clock workings?

In all instances the odometer records 0 to 9999.9 miles then zeros to start again.

By the mid-1920s (and possibly earlier) Rotherhams offered a clock fitted in a similar 2¾inch case as the Bonniksen speedo for motorcycles.

Now a personal plea: My original finish, three owner from new 1927 Sunbeam TT90 has both the Bonniksen speedometer with elapsed time clock and a separate clock, or at least the clock case, because the clock's workings, bezel (spun type) and glass pinged into oblivion while first owner, Harper Roads, was thrashing the Beam from Cambridge to his home 10 miles distant at Caxton, during, it is believed, the 1950s. If you have spares of any of the missing clock parts (I can sort the glass) lurking in a drawer or on a shelf going begging, I'd be thrilled to buy them from you. And you can be certain they'll be assured a good home on the Sunbeam.





Flat-twin Levis

In my father's garage, we've discovered a Levis flat configuration twin cylinder two-stroke engine he's forgotten buying! What model Levis motorcycle did this fit? And from when? I can't find any pictures of one and would like to build the engine into a period looking motorcycle.

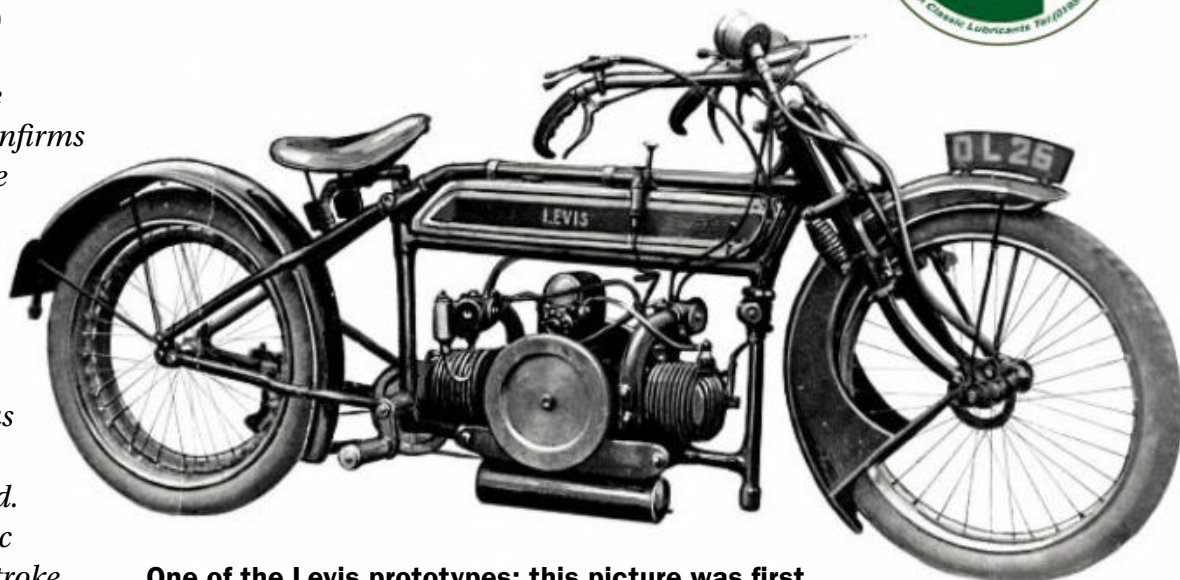
Ed C Weyman, south coast.

The likelihood is your engine is a Levis stationary engine, comprising two 211cc motorcycle-like barrels mounted to a common crankcase, with an outside flywheel and, often, a Fellows twin cylinder magneto. The engines were supplied in air and water-cooled forms in moderate numbers to the War Office during the First World

War for stationary engine applications. Research confirms the Royal Navy used some for powering generators, water pumps and the like.

Some sources have suggested they were tried as light aircraft engines, as a few have surfaced with a small propeller attached. One can't imagine a 422cc Levis twin cylinder two-stroke engine, even if 250cc barrels were fitted, having enough 'oomph' for even a light aircraft, although perhaps a drone or target aircraft. However, it's more likely these engines had the propeller fitted for cooling purposes or possibly to serve as a wind blower/gas extractor.

In the period of and around



One of the Levis prototypes: this picture was first published in *The Motor Cycle* in July 1918.

the First World War, Levis did build a few prototype motorcycles with air-cooled flat-twin two-stroke engines, often mated to a three-speed gearbox with belt final drive. It was rated at 3½hp, but didn't go into production. Occasionally,

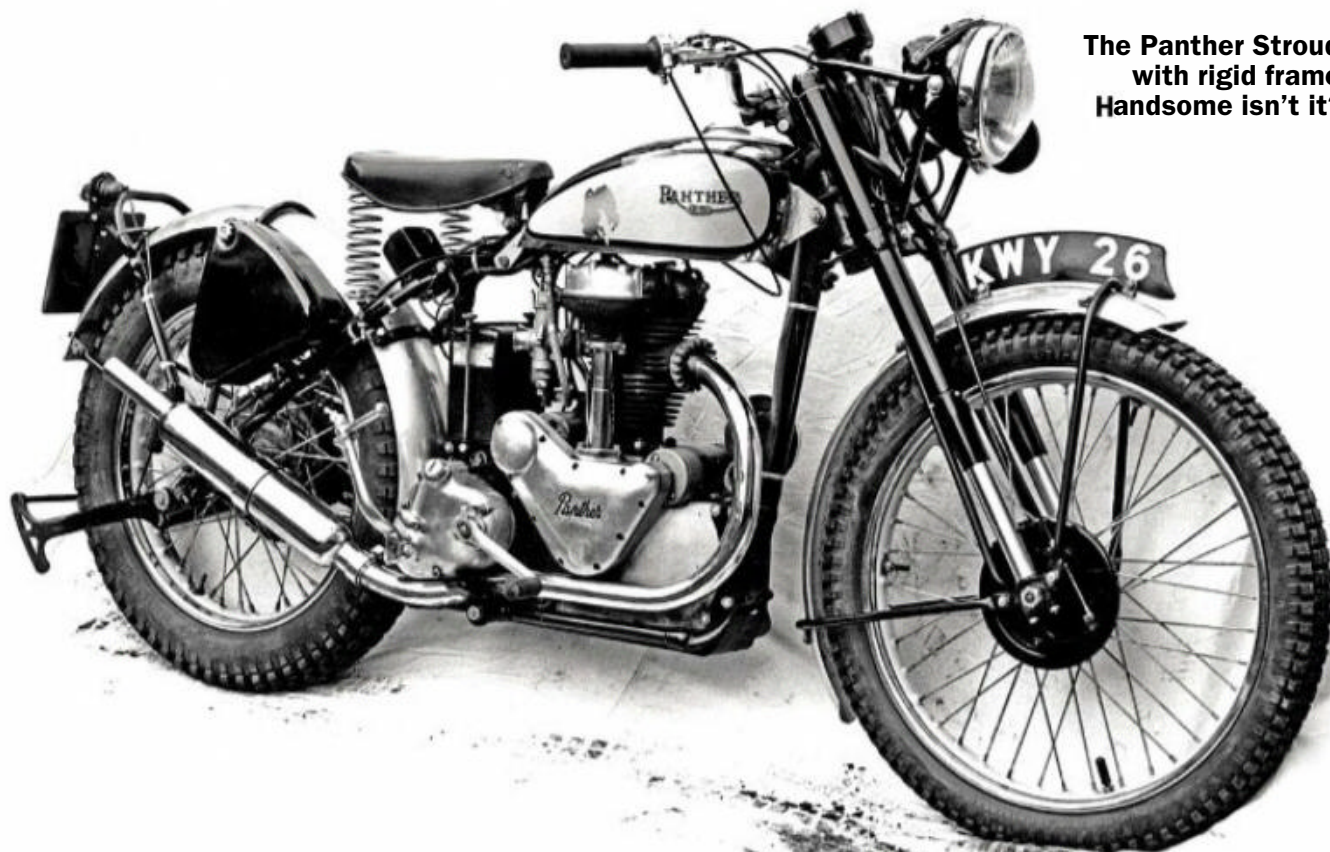
a special with an air-cooled Levis stationary engine installed appears at East Anglian rallies and classic motorcycle events. The owner/builder has rigged up a cooling fan as the radial barrel fins don't help cooling much in a horizontal position.

Panther Stroud

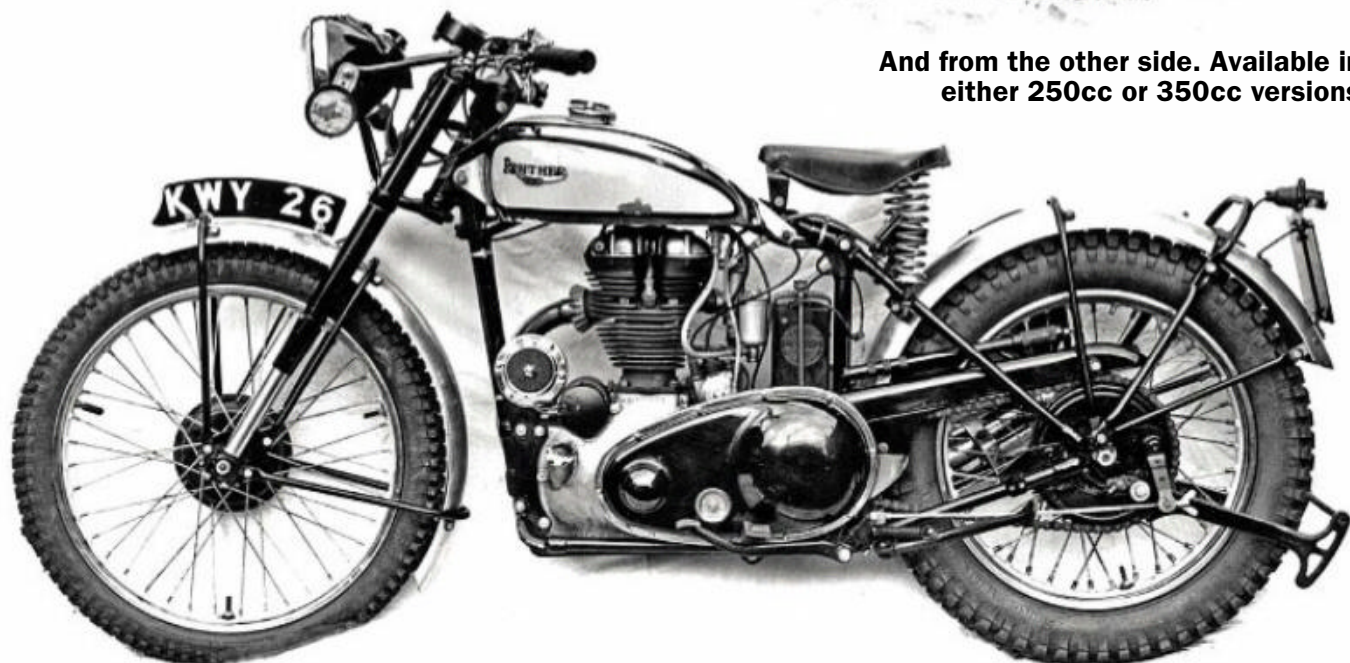
An uncle has left me his Panther Stroud in his will. He used to ride it in local trials, claiming he spent more time in the mud than on the machine. We've now got it running and I'd like to know more, such as its capacity, and when it was made.

Derek Howell, email, and Kempton Park Autojumble.

Phelon and Moore Ltd of Cleckheaton, Yorkshire, built their Stroud 250 and 350cc (65 and 75 respectively) competition models c1949 to 1955, with a moderate number of updates including a heavier frame in c1952 and aluminium alloy cylinder head slightly earlier. In effect, the 250 and 350cc machines were identical, other than differing bore dimensions (250cc is 60 x 88mm, 350cc of 71 x 88mm) and gear ratios. The engine number prefix should help identify which you have without needing to strip the engine to measure its bore, as the first two digits indicate the year of manufacture and the following letter indicates 250 or 350cc, with J for the smaller model and K for bigger brother.



The Panther Stroud, with rigid frame. Handsome isn't it?



And from the other side. Available in either 250cc or 350cc versions.

TRIUMPH TR5 TROPHY 1948-59

THE SPECIALIST

After nearly three decades, south London-based Ace Classics has become a byword for Triumphs, specialising in the pre-unit bikes. Usable, enjoyable, but in danger of being let down by poor-quality pattern parts, Cliff Rushworth, by establishing Ace, has done much to remedy that potential situation. He's the man to thank for his wisdom on Triumph's first Trophy model.

■ Ace Classics: 0208 698 4273; www.aceclassics.co.uk

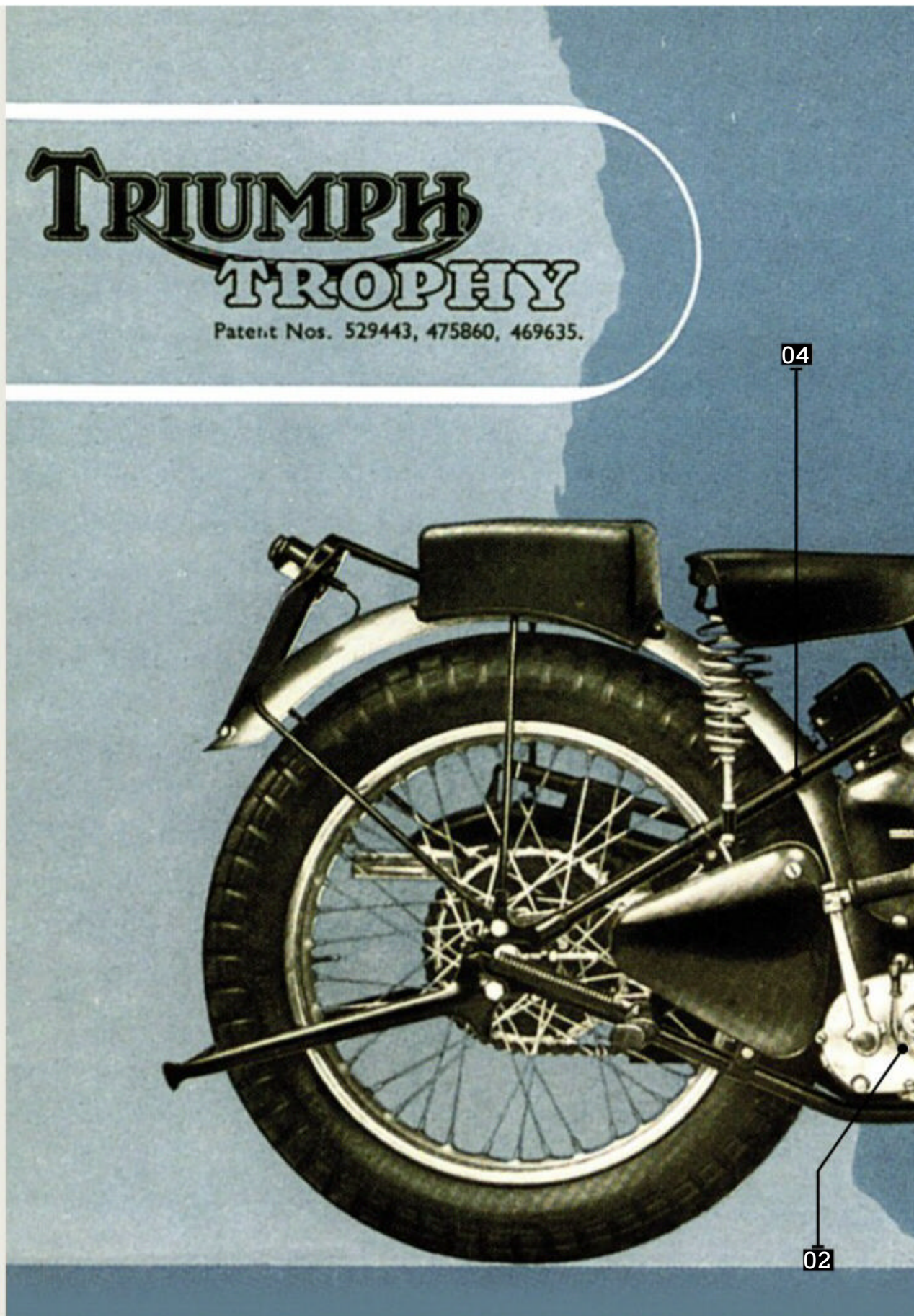
MODEL HISTORY

Henry Vale, of Triumph's recently instituted Competition Department, turned out three Speed Twin based bikes for factory riders competing in the 1948 ISDT (International Six Days Trial). With all awarded gold medals, it was an achievement on which the factory was keen to capitalise. One-day observation trials were the most popular of British off-road competitions, but were dominated by big singles. Could buyers be persuaded near-ISDT replicas were credible twin-cylinder alternatives?

Combining an all-alloy, Tiger 100-based engine with cycle parts from the newly-launched service-issue TRW, a minimum of compromises and new parts resulted in a relatively light, seemingly dual-purpose, motorcycle. The Trophy name was a reminder of the bike's heritage.

Further ISDT successes followed, but works rider Jim Alves proved the Trophy equally adept in some of the toughest British one-day observation events. Here was a bike that could be ridden to work but also be a competitive weekend sporting mount.

The Trophy sold steadily, but when trials riders finally accepted the advantages of rear suspension, Triumph's optional sprung hub was outclassed. In 1955, revisions including a pivoted fork frame, aligned the Trophy with most Triumph twins. This different package was aimed firmly at American buyers. Soon, the TR6 650 proved even more of a transatlantic success and the last 500s were sold in 1959.



01

Engine

The first incarnation of the TR5 was based on the Tiger 100 bottom-half with the alloy top half from Triumph's legendary wartime generator sets. These were also in demand for the Grand Prix racer and stocks soon dried up. The 1951 Trophy was a softer tuned, full Tiger 100, but 1955-on engines were to sporting Tiger 100 specification.

All incarnations were 360-degree parallel twins with an 80mm stroke moving pistons in 63mm bores, compression ratios were 6:1 and 8:1 for the

1955-on engines. The crank was supported on a drive-side ball-journal bearing, and roller timing side, changing to a ball-type in 1954. The big-ends were white-metal, shell-type adopted later. The timing case contained gear drive to the camshaft and the plunger oil pump. Additional pinions drove the separate magneto and dynamo. The 1955 update saw the use of Tiger 110 crank and cams.

Cast-iron cylinder sleeves were pressed into the alloy block. Between the cylinders, tappets operated on the push-rods contained in separate tubes. The

cylinder head was also one piece alloy, with rockers acting on the two valves for each cylinder, with screw and lock-nut adjustment for the valve clearance. Carburettor was single Amal 276, Monobloc 376 from 1956. Power was quoted as 25bhp, increased to 33 from 1955. Assuming the castings are in good order, just about anything else should be readily available. Shell bearing conrods are available to replace the white-metal type.

02

Transmission

The polished alloy

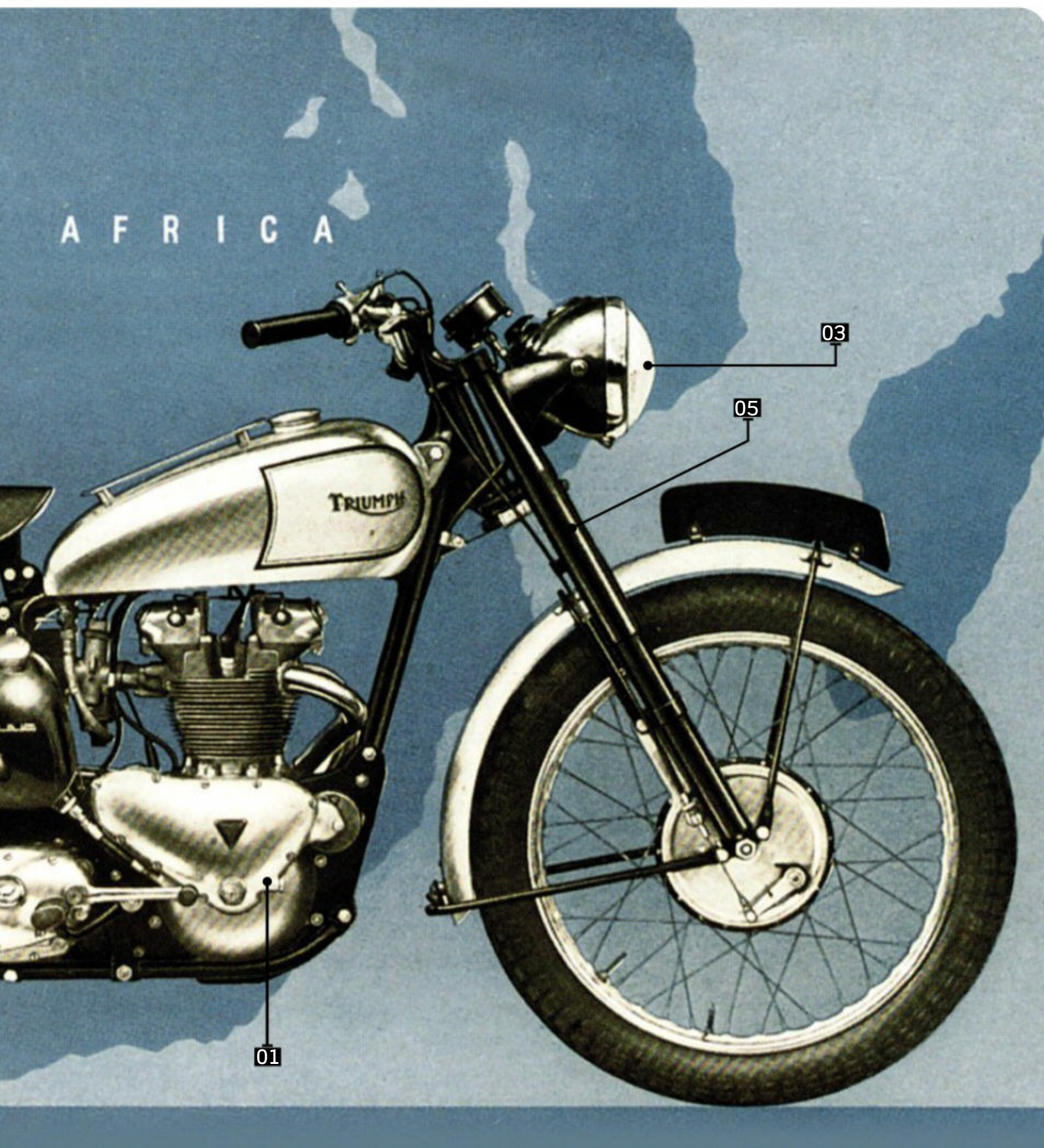
chaincase contained the oil-bath primary drive. Via a face-cam, crankshaft shock-absorber, a single row primary chain transferred drive to a multi-plate clutch. For 1953, the shock absorber became a vane type, incorporated in the clutch hub. The four-speed gearbox was the same as that of the TRW. This had the wide-ratio cluster favoured for off-road use. The gearbox was uprated in 1950, then changed again for 1955-on models, which also had updates to the clutch. Standard or close-ratio clusters remained factory options.

The chaincase was unique to the short wheelbase rigid models, but the clutch assembly was regular Triumph. All good news for the restorer with most parts on the shelf. Gearbox problems are often caused by worn bearings, bushes or selector mechanisms, readily obtainable, but correct replacement gears may be harder to find.

03

Electrics

Earlier models had a BTH magneto for ignition. By 1953, Triumph was fitting the Lucas K2F unit. Current for the six-volt lighting



system came from a Lucas dynamo, soon changed from an E3H to E3L and gear-driven from the exhaust cam. The lighting system and its six-inch headlamp (seven-inch later) was supplied by Lucas and was quickly detachable via multi-pin plugs and even the dynamo could be removed (Triumph supplied a blanking plug).

04

Cycle parts

Until 1954, the Trophy had revised versions of the TRW frame, with a modified front engine mount. Afterwards,

models shared the same frame as the rest of the twin-cylinder range. The front hub had ball journal bearings and a single-sided drum brake, until acquiring the full width hub for later pivoted fork models. The front wheel had a 20in, WM1 rim, reduced to 19in diameter for 1957-on. Rear wheels had taper-roller hubs and were fitted with 19in WM3 rims. Sprung-hubs used ball journal bearings. For 1955-on, 18in rims became standard. All rear tyres were 4-00 section.

Fuel tank was 2½ gallon, early ones were chromed, various paint finishes

appeared on later models.

Trophy models all had siamesed high-level exhausts, the earlier generator-type engines had parallel exhaust ports and parallel silencers, adopting the more rounded, tapered Triumph style in 1954. Saddles were Lycett or Terry, but Lycett only after 1952. Pillion pad and footrests were optional extras. The twin seat fitted to the pivoted fork models was unique to the Trophy.

05

Suspension

Rigid frames initially appealed to the dedicated

British competition rider, but there were still plenty of buyers wanting the sprung-hub option. This can be overhauled, but removing the spring assembly is, emphatically, a specialist task.

The pivoted fork of the later Trophy moved on bushes and was controlled by Girling coilover damping units. Any parts should be off the shelf. Trophy models were all fitted with telescopic forks with updates at various times and alterations to the steering geometry, but the parts remained common to other various Triumphs.

PRICING

Dealers are offering matching numbers, fully restored bikes at £14-15,000, but similar-spec bikes appear to sell privately at around half that! Most important assessment of a restoration project is what is not there, rare parts (those early square barrels, for example) command big money.

IN CONCLUSION

Making the TR5 Trophy so successful was a tribute to the combined talents of Henry Vale and Jim Alves. The latter's riding ability proved a twin-cylinder motorcycle could be competitive in trials at the highest level as well as being ridden to work the rest of the week.

The TR5 received other detail updates, but Ace Classics reckons that anything is still obtainable, with service and most overhaul items kept on the shelf. Even some of the more obscure components can be hunted down in the aftermarket.

Now a rarity in competition, a Trophy used as a practical road-riding classic is a winner once more with its distinctive looks.

The TR5 had anticipated the trail bike phenomenon some two decades later. Swinging arm versions have the sporting engines, but the softer tune of the rigid models offers an easy, flexible motor that still has ample performance.

A 1950s Triumph advert claimed: 'Consistent success'. The Trophy name was so intertwined with the Triumph brand so it was some homage that the name reappeared on one of the new models from the Hinckley rebirth some 40 years later.

End



What the finished result will be. A maroon ('Amaranth Red') finish has been chosen for the subject, rather than black. Both look great.

Top end assembly

Motorcycle engines can absorb huge amounts of money and effort to get them to the point of assembly. Fortunately, with some parts to hand, the costs involved with this 5T engine were modest, although lots of time has been spent on it. Assembly is often the briefest stage, but the best fun. Suddenly, the boxes of wrapped parts have gone and one is left with an engine.

Words and photographs: RICHARD ROSENTHAL

Alongside reorganising the Triumph works with regard to company and production line efficiency, Edward Turner – appointed chief designer and general manager in 1936 by Jack Sangster on his purchase of the struggling Coventry factory – was working on his take of the vertical twin engine.

This wasn't Triumph's first vertical twin, as Val Page had designed and helped into production the 646cc 6/1, with prototypes unveiled in 1933, while in 1913 Triumph announced a 600cc vertical twin, which never entered production.

On July 29, 1937, *The Motor Cycle* announced Triumph's new vertical twin and the following week *Motor Cycling* carried a more in-depth announcement of the new model. Today, it is almost impossible to realise what a change from the norm of big singles and even bigger V-twins Turner's new twin engine was.

In standard form as launched in 1937, it packed a punch of 26bhp@6000rpm and a little over a year later it was developed into the Tiger 100, with 34bhp@7000rpm on tap. Even better, during hard acceleration the power came on instantly, making this first Speed Twin the grandad of the acceleration game, something over the coming decades Triumph was considered master of.

Imagine you're 21, have just handed over the £77 purchase price (or more likely signed the HP agreement) for the new Speed Twin and are cruising down Brownhill Road, Chiswick High Road, Holloway Road, or wherever your Triumph's stomping ground is. Everyone is looking at you – well, probably not, but in your imagination they are. Then you hit the lights (first introduced in 1926, in Piccadilly Circus). Into first on amber and you're off, snapping on the power in each gear, almost nothing will keep with you until the next

set of lights. Road testers may have dwelled on cruising speeds, fuel economy and mechanical quietness, but Edward Turner knew many of his twins sold in the UK or the USA were bought for their point and squirt excellence.

Over eight decades later, it may seem wrong to highlight the Speed Twin's nature in this way, but this performance was exactly what Edward Turner sought and designed this motorcycle for, so no apologies here for flagging up its inherent nature. Even I, as a big singles enthusiast – why complicate things with two cylinders when Goldies, Model 90 Sunbeams et al perform so well with one? – have to admit Turner's new twin engine was stylish. And Turner – a man possessed of 'a good eye' – having designed the engine wanted the rest of the machine to complete the package.

While there were many models with



Edward Turner's first vertical twin set a standard of handsome engines he endeavoured to maintain throughout his career with Triumph. You'll need to overlook the slave plugs fitted, they're serving to keep any flotsam from entering the combustion chambers until start up day, when a pair period Champions in hand will be installed.



Copper cylinder head gasket annealed and ready to accept the cylinder head. Four bolts secure the cylinder head directly to the barrels and another four (two per rocker cover) complete the fastening of head to barrel by passing through the rocker covers.

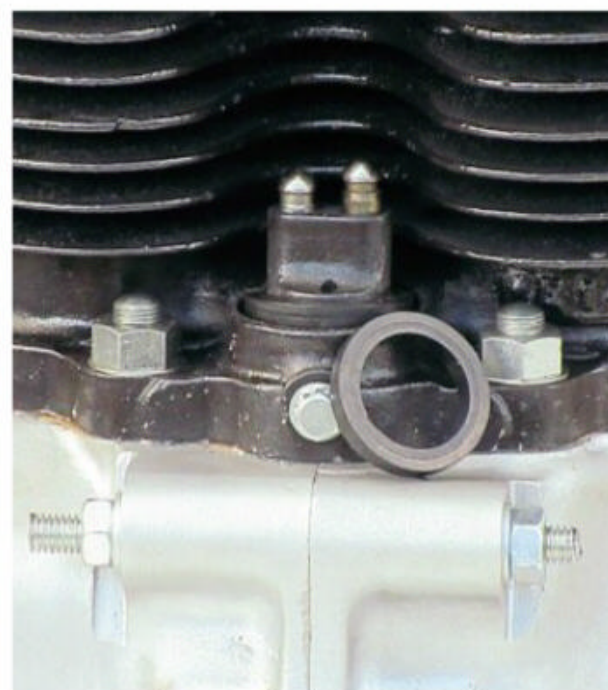
conservative (i.e. black) finish, there were plenty of attractive models too in the 1930s and, for me, Ariels from the mid-1930s take some beating. And really what had gone on at Ariel's Selly Oak factory was then replicated at Triumph's Priory Street, Coventry plant.

After Ariel's financial problems in 1932, that doyen of engine designers, Val Page, left Selly Oak for Priory Street and owner Jack Sangster, who bankrolled Ariel's road to recovery, appointed Edward Turner (yes, the same chap) who styled Page's designs into often stunning motorcycles.

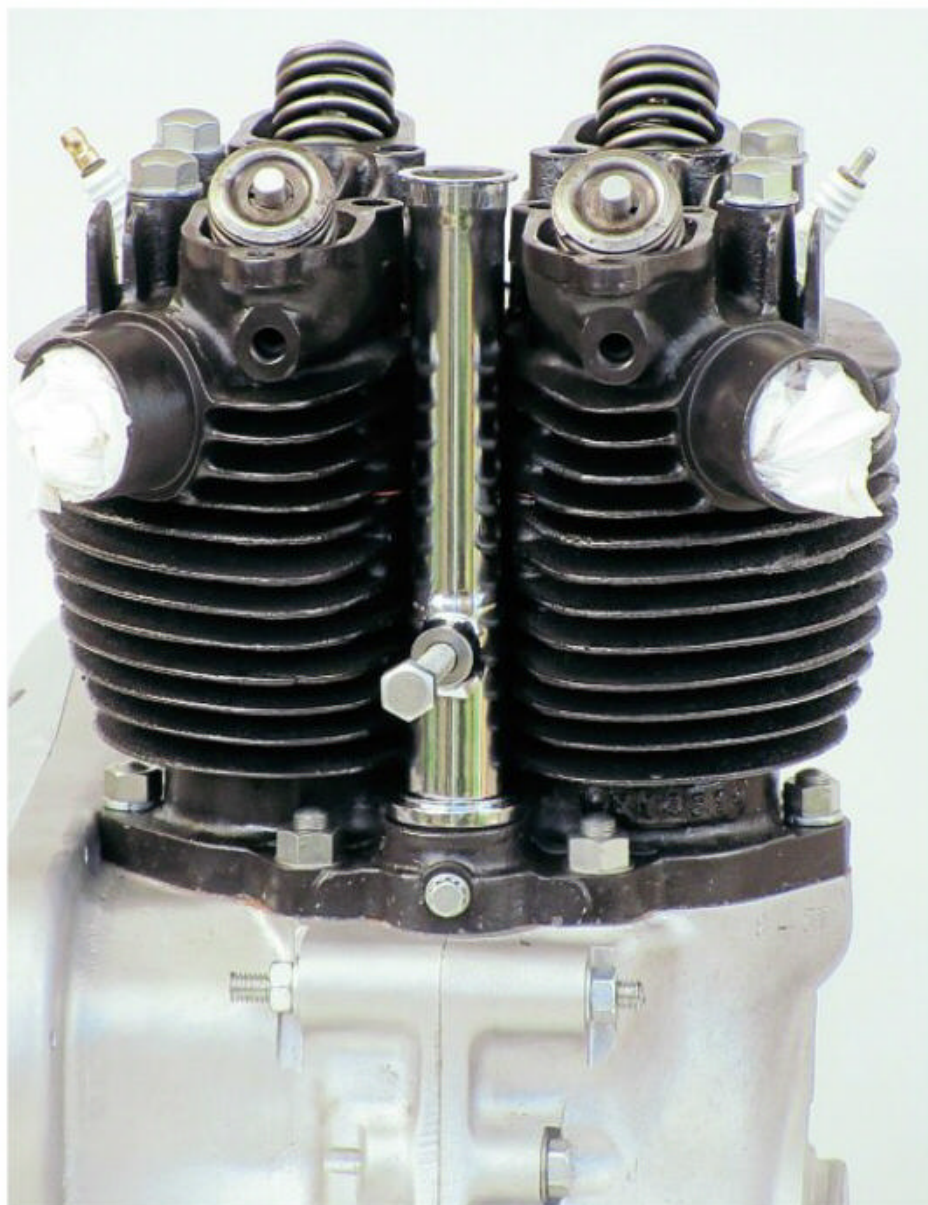
As we know, history repeated itself in 1936 at the Triumph works, with Turner again styling Page's designs, as well as starting on his own vertical twin. It is a matter of taste as to whether you prefer classic, deep glossy black machines embellished with gold coach lines, cheeky lightweights finished with bright paintwork, models with lots of chrome plate, or whatever, but regardless of your taste, there is no doubting Edward Turner not only created a machine which went well but was a 'looker' too. Finished in amaranth red with lots of chrome plate and amaranth red panels to tank and wheel

rim centres with coach lines, it certainly cut quite a dash.

Previously in this feature I've implied Turner designed an all-new machine. This concept is partly true and partly false because largely the new model's rolling chassis was, for the most part, that of the single cylinder Tiger 90 he'd restyled earlier from Val Page's 5/5. Good production



As many will know, Triumph vertical twins (above and left) derived from Edward Turner's 1938 season (1937 launch) Speed Twin rely on round seals to seal their pushrod tubes (one front and one back) to respective barrel boss and rocker cover. The rule is black seal to bottom and white/off white seal to top. Some – even production – pushrod tubes are marginally short, necessitating the use of a thin gasket-like packer ring, though happily not needed for this engine.



Pushrod tube pressed over the tappet guide and onto the barrel boss. Why the bolt fitted to the oil pipe mount to the pushrod tube? Alan Underwood advised this to maintain a central position of the oil boss, as he says the pushrod tubes can uncannily turn as the rocker box is secured, though there is no logical reason for this. Sure enough, the front twisted by about 15 degrees but with a thumb on the bolt, was soon again centralised for final fasten.



Why the grease? I'm not a great fan of silicone gasket sealers, and as I age, I become even less enthusiastic. Instead, a smear of grease to either side of the gasket helps and if mating surfaces are sound and fastening is appropriate these gaskets will be oil-tight. The grease also sticks the gasket in place while fitting components. If silicone is needed, I use the lightest smear of a high temperature material.



Pushrods in place. You will all notice one rocker cover gasket is askew – the result of clumsy shaking hands when locating pushrods! Before fitting the rocker cover, these were trued.

line practice, something BSA, for example, had already been practicing for a decade or two and another skill Turner brought to Triumph.

No motorcycle, car, van or whatever is perfect, no matter how much money is lavished on them. True, today many are near perfect, but in the 1930s they were less so and no matter how much Triumph oil is flowing through your veins, one, including Edward Turner, could see 'issues.' This isn't a feature about modifications to the Triumph twin range, but a comparison between the 1938 and 1939 season ranges will reveal maker's changes to the Speed Twin, some as improvements and others for production line expediency. Of course, it should be noted here production line expediency isn't always for the good of the motorcycle.

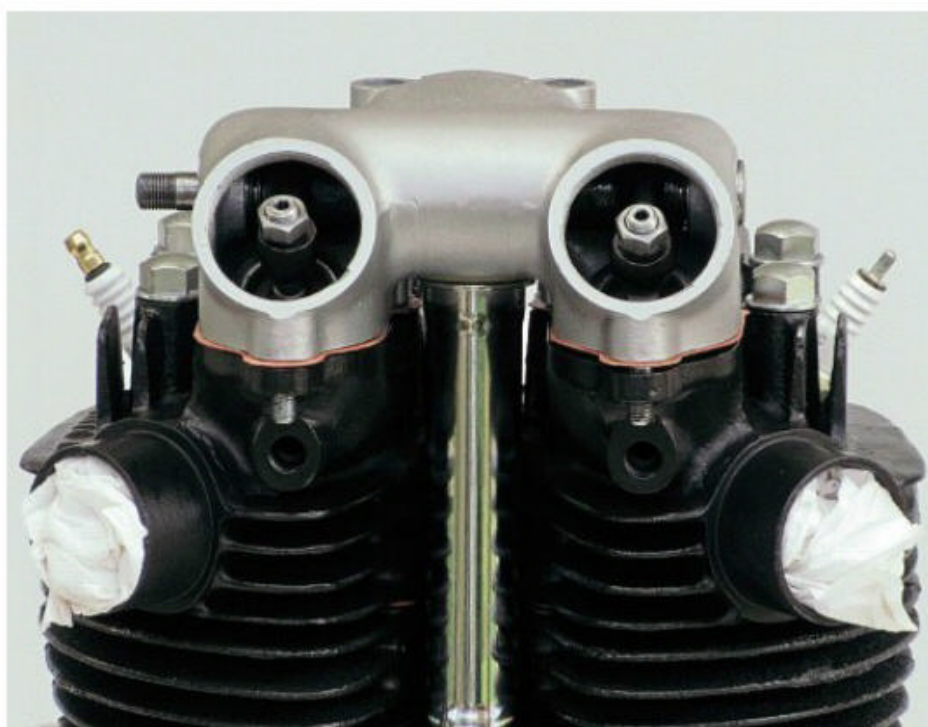
Press scribes soon got their mitts on test model Speed Twins with both *Motor Cycling* and *The Motor Cycle* stating Turner's new twin was good for 90mph, with above normal acceleration for a 500cc model, and *The Motor Cycle* even claimed 107mph

one way with a tail wind. Hmm, really...

Unfortunately, both test models developed minor oil leaks, but overall the model was given an enthusiastic thumbs-up. In hindsight, many have stated the 1937 launch of the first (1938) season Speed Twins took the world by storm. As I've implied earlier, my preference is for sporting big singles, so I could never go that far, but even I will willingly admit Turner's new twin was a game changer – and an attractive one at that.

The subject engine belongs to a 'matching numbers' first season Speed Twin and the eagle-eyed may note it has a six stud barrel fixing (rather than the familiar, later eight stud) and the year number '8' on the crankcase. Vague history suggests this machine was probably dismantled in the early 1960s, from a rough, near complete machine, and has been stored in a succession of sheds, barns and garages since, along with other dismantled projects.

When the Speed Twin surfaced



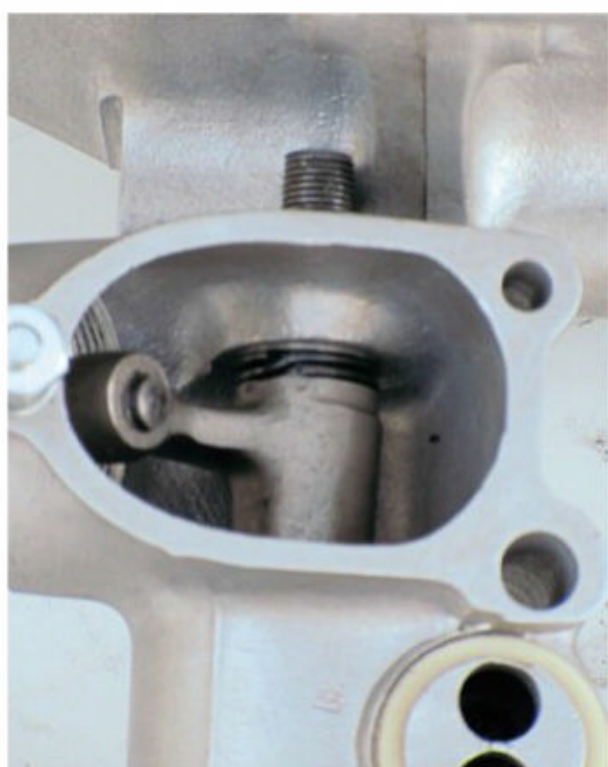
Front rocker on. For ease, the engine was rotated until the pushrods were both at their lowest position, equating to both valves shut for the compression stroke.



Front rocker box fastened. The two front rocker cover through fasteners also accept the head steady once the engine is installed in the frame. Oddly, the parts list we have show these as one per rocker cover, which doesn't seem correct, but as the rebuilt engine will be fitted to the rolling chassis as part of the final dry build procedure, we can remedy this if we are wrong.



Bottom pushrod seals nicely compressed in situ for a sound fit without any of the seal squeezing out. If this happens – and it's apparently often the top one which causes problems – it's a case of try, try again.



Although outside this feature, new seals, flat washers and Thackery spring washers were fitted to rocker boxes. Luckily, the rockers were good, but new replacement tappet adjustment screws and lock nuts were fitted.



Some eye of faith is needed here. The first photograph illustrates the pushrod tube's rotation to the left as one looks at the engine, while it has been squared before the second picture and final tighten. You will note no mention of fastener torque settings has been quoted here. Two reasons – firstly (and perhaps arrogantly on my part) I rely on tightening by experience for older all iron engines, but always tighten to recommended torque for later units with aluminium cylinder heads and/or barrels if torque settings are quoted, and, secondly, this engine is a total rebuild with all new gaskets, soft annealed cylinder head etc and it will settle and need further appropriate tightening before starting, during running in and on completion of running in. ▶



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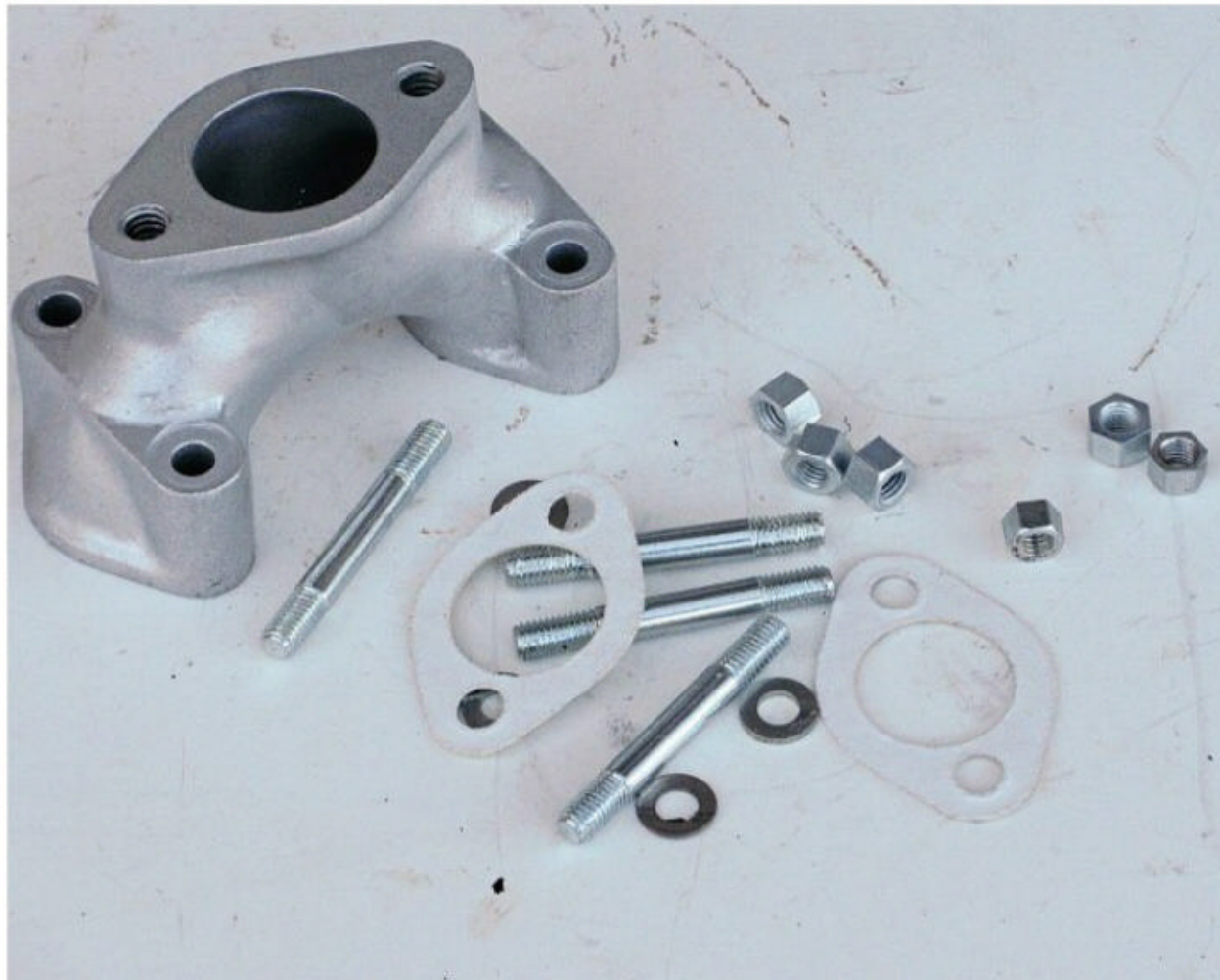
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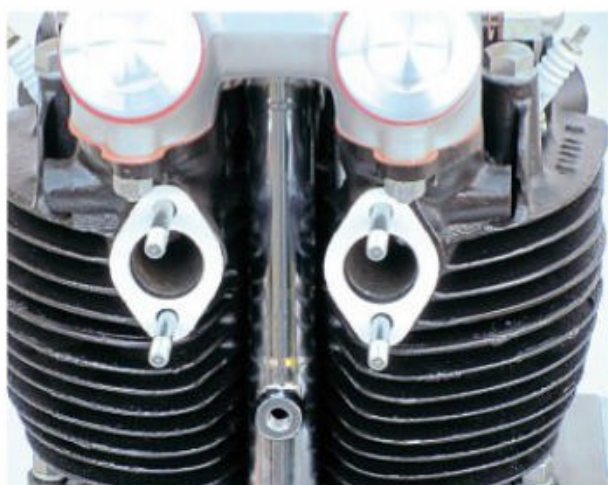
Front and rear rocker boxes fitted and all seals in place. Breather valve and timing chest cover badge to be fitted later.



Tappet adjustment caps and sealing fibre washer. Some rebuilders prefer thin 'O' ring seals. The choice is yours, but on removing caps it's often a sound idea to replace the seals, as they seat and often you won't return the fit to the seat.



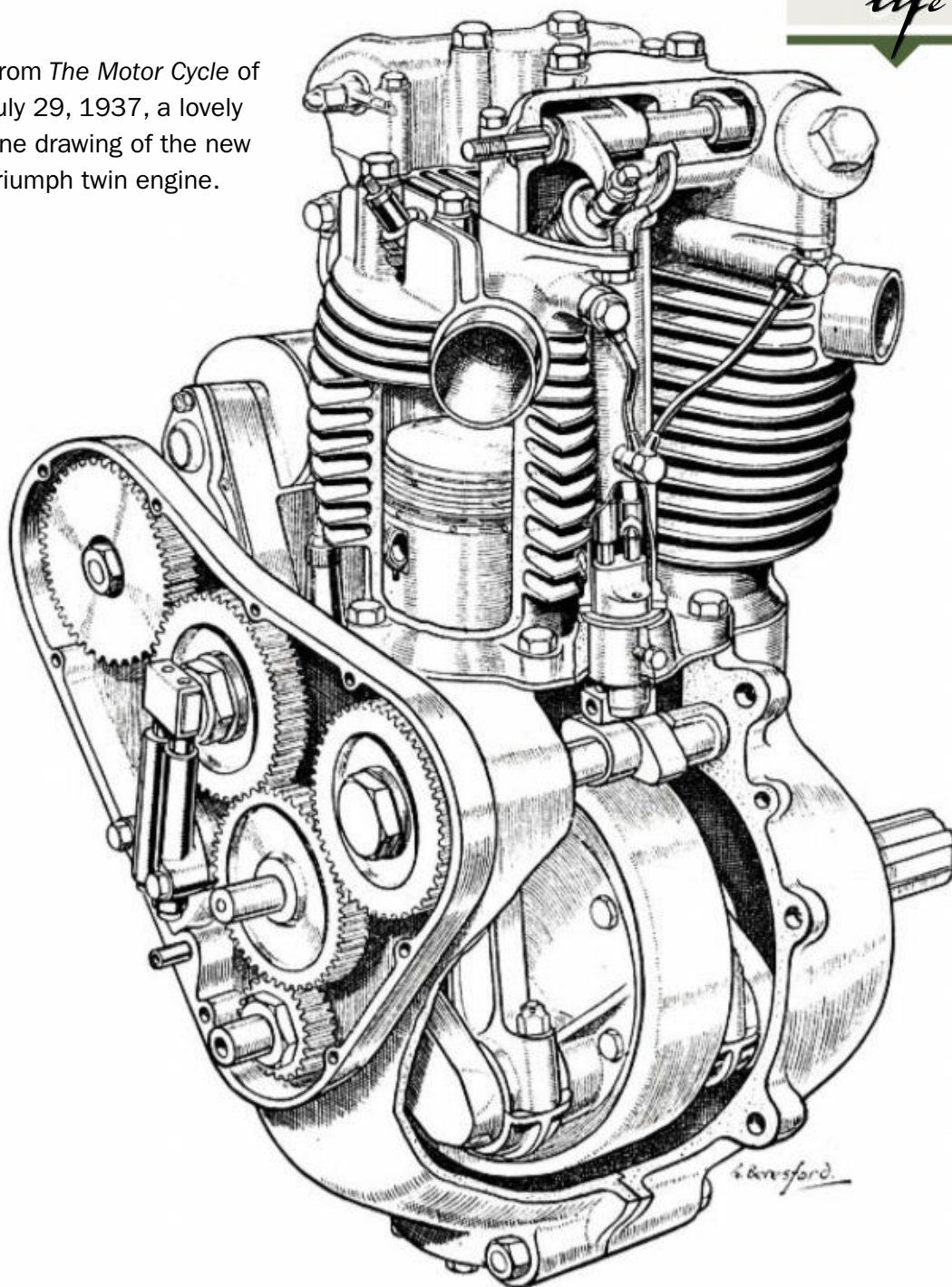
Two into one inlet manifold for the Triumph's single Amal 1 5/16 in 76/132 carburettor, manifold gaskets, studs and nuts. Two of the nuts pictured are slave nuts with which to fit the manifold studs. The carburettor studs will be fitted to the manifold when the carburettor is returned to the engine after its renovation.



Valve clearance adjustment. With piston on compression stroke, both valve clearances for that cylinder are set. The Triumph instruction book states: "The adjustment is made when the engine is cold and it is advisable to ensure there is the slightest up and down shake on the rocker arm, which will give the approximate clearance of 0.001in." These replacement tappet adjustment screws have Allen key heads, not to everyone's taste, but I like them.



From *The Motor Cycle* of July 29, 1937, a lovely line drawing of the new Triumph twin engine.

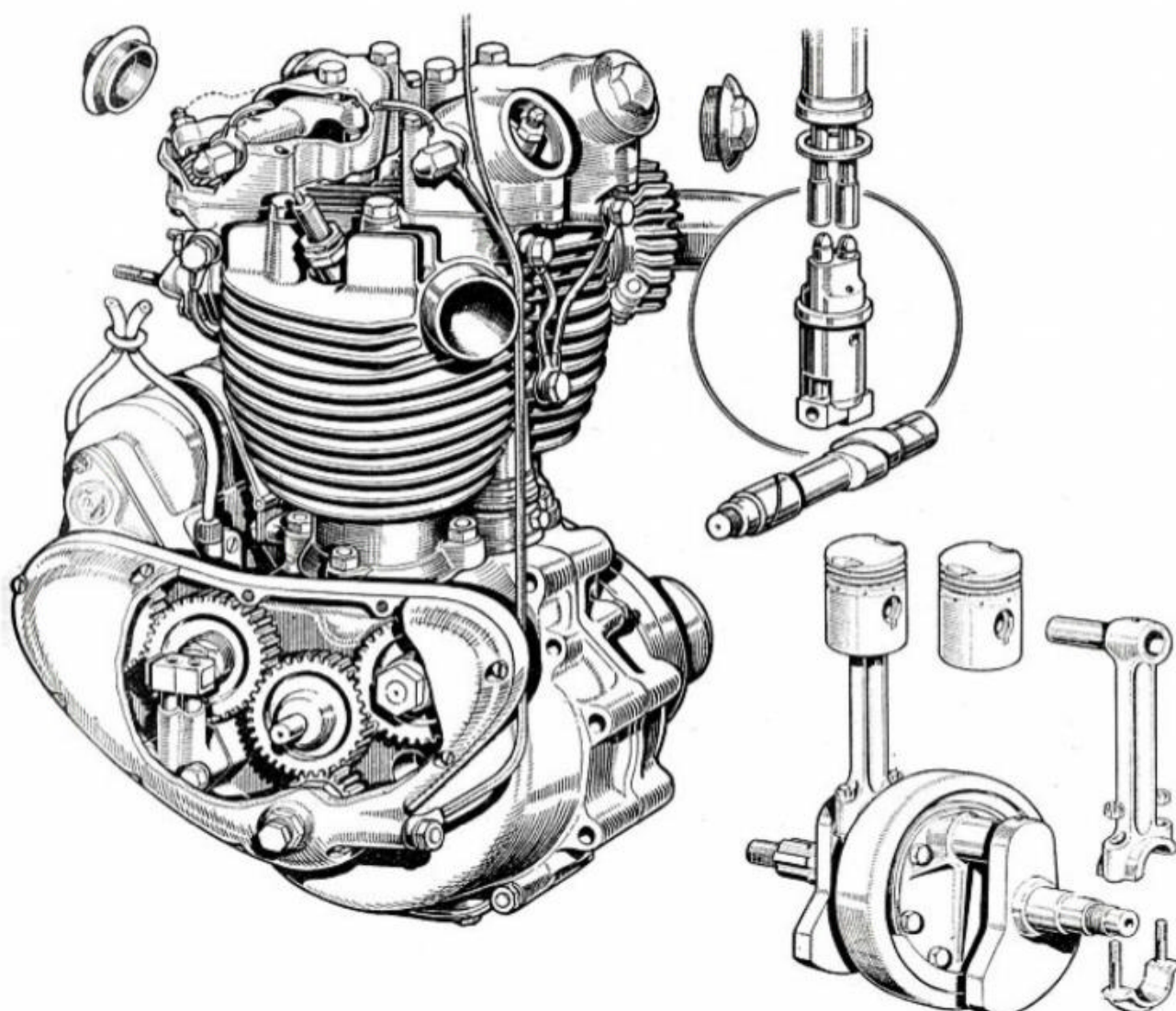


The Speed Twin's engine rebuild is completed to our desired stage. Next, it will be refitted to the rolling chassis as the final dry build stage of the machine nears completion. Arguably this isn't necessary, as the bottom half's fit to the frame and engine plates has already been checked, but it will be a sound idea to check fit of new exhaust pipes and also to shape oil pipes. And once it has been painted and plated we want to minimise damage risks, so we want to get everything fitting beforehand.

as a totally dismantled kit a certain young lady (my son's wife) took an instant shine to a picture of a 1938 amaranth red Speed Twin. Possibly, this subject machine was originally finished in black, but in amaranth red it's going to be reborn! This is a slow and costly restoration, even with us doing as much of the work as possible. Slow, because it has somehow leap-frogged itself up the restoration list to place itself alongside a couple of veterans which I would like done, and costly, because only a stunning end result will be good enough.

Such is Rowena's enthusiasm, she has sold other machines and projects to raise the cash, because it will be a super alternative to her Triumph 21.

We aren't Triumph experts, in fact near novices, therefore we are grateful to the Davis family from Cheltenham for their advice and enthusiasm; Cliff and Kev of Ace Classics, London (020 8698 4273 or www.aceclassics.co.uk) for their parts supply and again enthusiasm; and especially to our long-time friend 'Mr Triumph' aka Alan Underwood, for his continued enthusiasm and guidance. Overuse of the word 'enthusiasm' in a single paragraph, but rightly so here, as this 1938 Speed Twin has fostered such a high level of said emotion among others.



Not to be outdone, a week later (August 4, 1937) *Motor Cycling* had its own line drawings, with more detail than what had gone before.

More engines and victories

Forging forward on land and into the air, JAP were Britain's leading designers, makers and producers of proprietary engines, with them going faster and faster as well as getting bigger and bigger, in the late Edwardian days.

Words: RICHARD ROSENTHAL **Photograph:** MORTONS ARCHIVE

Alongside developing an interest in car designs (including offering water-cooled versions of their single and V-twin engines, perhaps fostered by their earlier single cylinder JAP 'Dual Sociable') the Tottenham maker supplied engines to a growing list of motorcycle makers, including BAT, Chater Lea and Matchless.

While JAP-powered machines enjoyed much success in trials and at speed events from illegal hill climbs to record breaking at the Canning Town cycle track, Matchless gave them their first IoM TT victory, at the inaugural 1907 races.

Brothers Harry and Charlie Collier lined up for the race's start on ohv 3½hp JAP single cylinder powered Matchless models, built by the Colliers, to be run over 10 laps of the St John's Course. Every record book informs Charlie was victorious in the 158.125 mile TT with a race speed of 38.22mph, while brother Harry set the TT's first single cylinder lap record at 41.81mph. To be the first of anything is special, even if Rem Fowler's Norton V-twin posted a faster lap.

To comply with race/class capacity requirements, JAP added specials and modest production number engines to their exciting range of 2½hp-4½hp single cylinder, 6hp to 16hp (later 3½hp to 16hp) V-twins, 8hp three-cylinder and 10hp four-cylinder models. These included an ohv 6hp 738cc V-twin developed for 1909, the larger (85x85mm) 8hp V-twin engine with stroke reduced to 65mm and a huge ohv 20hp V-twin engine, aimed at record breaking.

For the 1910 season, a new touring engine appeared, the side-valve 771cc (76 x 85mm) 5-6hp V-twin, which BAT first fitted and then later others, including Royal Enfield.

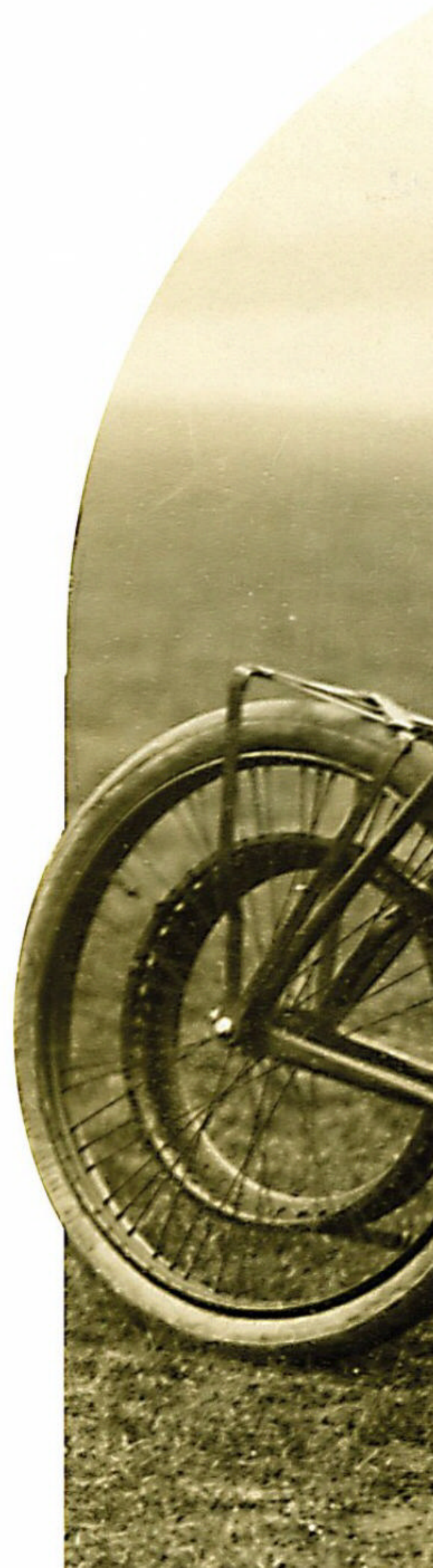
Without going into the fascinating detail of each engine configuration, JAP carried

on making special capacity engines, or at least supplying the parts for owner conversions. Thus in 1910 racers and the occasional road rider used 341 and 344cc ohv singles and V-twins built in capacities from 500cc upwards. True, some of these engines were specially built by their owners/riders, but often JAP were complicit, supplying shorter/longer con rods, barrels plus smaller/larger bore cylinders to convert existing engines. And, often, JAP assembled or reassembled these engines for their owners or supplied them as new units. All incredibly exciting stuff.

As the interest in aviation exploded, JAP started to seriously develop aero engines and in April 1910 unveiled the JAP-Harding monoplane, which the Tottenham factory had built with John Prestwich's enthusiastic guidance. Pilot Harding first flew the plane, powered by a side-valve 40hp V-eight cylinder air-cooled engine, at Lea Marshes (near Tottenham, and where much later European champion Don Smith honed his mud plugging skills). JAP engines had been used for pioneering aircraft since 1906, but these had been V-twin engines. Alongside this, JAP were soon offering an aero engine range, including a V-four, and V-eights of varying capacities with options of side-valve, ohv or even ohc, the latter rated from 35-50hp.

By the end of 1910, over 30 makers along with countless tiny volume manufacturers were offering JAP powered motorcycles, including Norton (yes, that same Norton) who fitted a 293cc engine into a dropped frame ladies' model. Probably, only a few were made, but they were listed. To this date, JAP had largely had it all their own way in the 'British made' proprietary engine market – but this happy state wasn't to last for much longer.

End



Charlie Collier, who on a JAP-powered Matchless won the 1907 Single Cylinder TT, and was first overall. This is the same combination (Collier/Matchless/JAP) but in 1909, with a 'track racer'.



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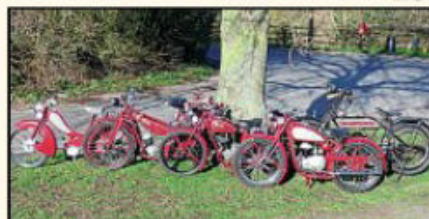
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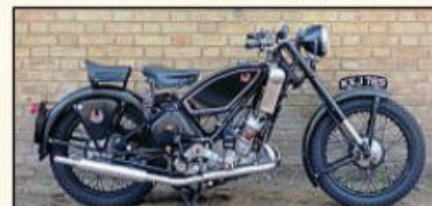
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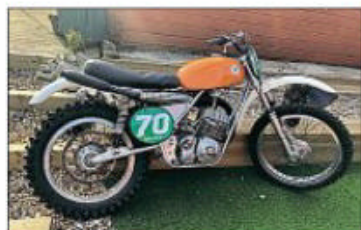
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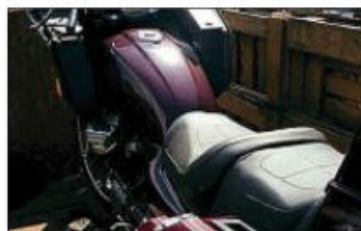
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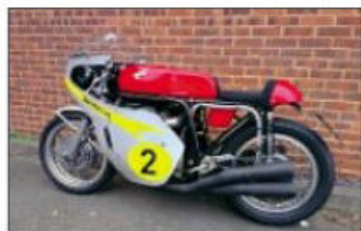
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JAWA/CZ 175 trail, genuine barn find, showing low 8000 miles, no documents, sold as project bike, been used on a farm, £750 Tel. 01723 372219. North Yorkshire



KAWASAKI KH400 1979, vgc, runs well, original handbook and tool kit, £7500 Tel. Steve 07977 857383. South Yorks



KAWASAKI W800 immaculate, 2013, 14,800 miles, still looks like new, really well maintained, service history, MoT May 2020, £3750 ono p/x classic two-stroke or WHY? Tel. 07817 257889. Leics



LEVIS 600 1937, used on local run in Lancashire, good condition, restored 5 years ago, not original hubs and gearbox, tidy bike, rare bike, £10,950 Tel. Glen 07751 260056.



MATCHLESS 350 rigid trials Iron, 1937/47 frame, 1954 GLC motor, AMC gearbox, many mods, very competitive and in vgc, offers in region £4500 Tel. 07968 609013. Hampshire



MATCHLESS G12 650cc CSR, 1959-1960, new clutch fitted, dynamo serviced, new pickups fitted, £5350. Hein Gericke bike trousers, waist 32"-36", £40 Tel. 01765 606298. North Yorks



MATCHLESS G15CS 1967, clean tidy running bike, not concours or original but in vgc, V5C in my name, dating cert, £9500 may take p/x Tel. 01328 700711. Norfolk



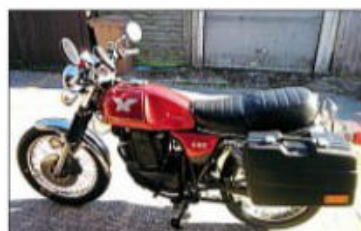
MATCHLESS G2 250cc, 1960, some history, new front brake shoes, good runner, need the room in garage, £1975 Tel. 07767 396697. Suffolk



MATCHLESS G3L/C 1957 trials bike, 350cc long stroke engine, alloy barrel, alloy wheels, alloy petrol tank, alloy central oil tank, £4995 ono Tel. 01425 674300. Dorset



MATCHLESS G5 1960, 350cc, 17,074 miles, been restored sometime in its life, it is so clean, frame looks to have been powder coated, £3750 ovno Tel. Bob 07815 324787. Devon



MATCHLESS G80 Les Harris, 1992, 494cc Rotax, electric start model, Krauser pannier set, new battery, rear tyre and horn fitted, MoT, £4200 ovno Tel. Tony 07769 181376. Essex



MATCHLESS GLS350 37,000 miles, excellent condition, great runner, original, must be seen, £3995 ono Tel. 07738 516222. Essex



MIKE HAILWOOD REPLICA 1980, number 298, 51,252 miles, 3 previous owners, can be heard running, original condition, one of the first generation with kick-start only, £19,000 ono Tel. Jack 07928 624595. Fife, Scotland



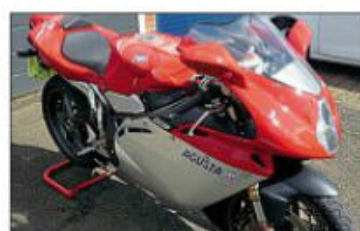
MOTO CONFORT Jap, 1935, original condition, needs restoring, £1850 Tel. 01538 753086. Staffs



MOTO GUZZI 1000 Crossbow Spada Special, 1980, 44k, owned 35 years, dry stored, needs recommissioning, includes full fairing, £4950 Tel. 07941 684073. Powys



MOTO GUZZI V9 Roamer, 2017, screen, engine bars, rack, top box, handguards, USB socket, immobiliser, 7000 miles, £5700 possible p/x combination or wanted sidecar Tel. 079130 32864. Yorks



MV AGUSTA F4 750S, year 2000, one owner, 5670 miles, single seat version, completely original, vgc, MoT, £7900 Tel. 07972 831570. Cheshire

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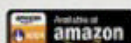
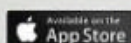
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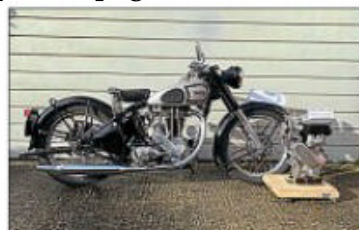
NEW HUDSON 1921 lightweight, lots of history and has its original number plate with V5, £9500 ovno Tel. 07954 122859. Kent



NORTON Commando Mk3, 1976, 23,000 miles, immaculate condition, upgraded starter, Pazon electronic ignition, premier Amal carbs, £8950 Tel. David 07484 826293. Surrey



NORTON Classic Rotary, number 007 of only 100 produced, matching numbers, starts, runs and rides perfect Tel. 07989 417323. Kent



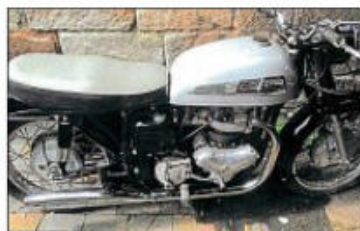
NORTON 1948 Big 4 fitted with Model 19 engine, included in sale is the original rebuilt Big 4 engine with matching numbers, £8000 ono Tel. 07960 404932.



NORTON 50 1936, 350cc, clean unmolested condition, good running order, new tyres, brake shoes, tank lining, modern mirror, re-aligned spokes, £9250 ovno Tel. Sue 07808 378577. Kent



NORTON COMMANDO 850cc MK2A, beautiful recently restored 1975, new paint, new tyres, needs indicators and horn connecting so £7000 or £8000 Tel. 07365 297414. Hants



NORTON DOMINATOR 1960, 600cc, Slimline, original reg, nice bike, £4950. Velocette MAC, 1953, beautiful bike, old log book, original reg Tel. 07743 370641. Staffs



NORTON DOMINATOR 1963, 600cc cafe racer, matching numbers, chrome frame, rear set rests with Manx gear & brake levers, offers over £6000 Tel. 07801 801435. West Midlands



NORTON DOMINATOR 1960, immaculate condition, 600cc engine runs perfectly, bike rebuilt 4 years ago, 3000 miles since, reliable bike, £6900 Tel. 07530 312463. North Yorkshire



NORTON INTERNATIONAL 1950, paperwork including history, raced Isle of Man, £14,000 Tel. Andy 01308 423330; 07969 695929. Dorset



NSU QUICKLY S2/23, 1962, 50cc, owned since 1986, not used & stored in dry since 1970, believed complete non-runner RF60 reg, £650 Tel. 01788 522142. Warwickshire



NSU SUPERMAX 1958, 250cc, OHC, good condition, easy starter, receipts for €1800 spent in 2005, low mileage since, passenger seat and some spares, £4500 ono Tel. 01332 793249. Derby



PEUGEOT P55CC 1949, 125cc, two-stroke, running, wonderfully original, £1600 would p/x for kitcar Tel. 07756 567248. Bournemouth



PHILLIPS BICYCLE gents, 1949/50, good all round original condition, lights, pump, good tyres fitted, 32cc Cycle Master engine, £625 Tel. 01784 421013. Surrey



PUCH M125 1970, as tested in the last month's issue of Classic Motorcycle Mechanics, immac cond, runs and rides very nicely, restored 18 months ago with no expense spared, £3000 ono Tel. 07964 155461. Essex



RALEIGH RUNABOUT 1965, there can't be many unrestored Raleigh Runabouts like this, not a barn find, call Steve for info if interested Tel. 07858 233372. Oxon



ROYAL ENFIELD Bullet 350cc, 1954, very original, Redditch built with original number, green log book and V5C, excellent all round, £3500 Tel. 01723 372219. North Yorkshire



ROYAL ENFIELD 250 Clipper, thorough rebuild to very good ready to ride standard, engine starts readily is strong and mechanically quiet, £2750 Tel. 07413 720085. Durham



ROYAL ENFIELD Crusader, 1966, 250cc, Sorned, good condition, good tyres, runs really well, £2300 ono Tel. 01524 733604. Lancashire



ROYAL ENFIELD Himalayan, new in January 2018, fully serviced, 3500 miles only, excellent condition throughout, Tel. John 07510 355079. Cornwall



ROYAL ENFIELD GT535, 2014, vgc, Mikuni carb, Hitchcocks dual seat, bar raisers, Gold Star silencer, £3250 ono Tel. 07961 948279. Somerset



ROYAL ENFIELD 350 Bullet, 1999 chrome edition, recent piston rings and de-choke due to fixing snapped fin, MoT August 2020, 9000 miles, £1595 Tel. 07850 880811. South Devon



ROYAL ENFIELD Turbo twin, 1965, many new parts, matching numbers, restored to be ridden, Lazarus project needs new home, £3750 Tel. 07956 053463. Staffs



ROYAL ENFIELD Trials, 2002, s/ steel s/stand, main stand, Lithium battery, ISDT tank, MoT, f/brace, e/start, alloy rims, 13,000 miles, £2950 Tel. 01865 390868. Oxfordshire



ROYAL ENFIELD Woodsman, 2011, 500cc, 4750 miles, Sorned, recent battery, tyres, just services, MoT, chrome, paint very good, £2750 Tel. 01865 390868. Oxon



SUZUKI GS450E 1987, MoT April, 36,000 miles, used daily hence in need of a good scrub, £2100 Tel. 07787 790722. Surrey



SUZUKI GSF600 Bandit, 1997, 2 owners, genuine 8437 miles, Sorned 19/7/2014, now recommissioned, new battery, filters, oil, plugs, carbs cleaned, MoT, £1250 Tel. 01289 303077.



SUZUKI GT200 X5, 1982, new tyres, new front mudguard, new battery, new seat cover, all new chrome, all original, runs and rides lovely, £2300 ono Tel. 07583 069656. Stockport



SUZUKI T500 1975, UK bike, good running order, paint recently done, chrome in good condition, tax & MoT exempt, £4950 Tel. 07882 129671. Suffolk

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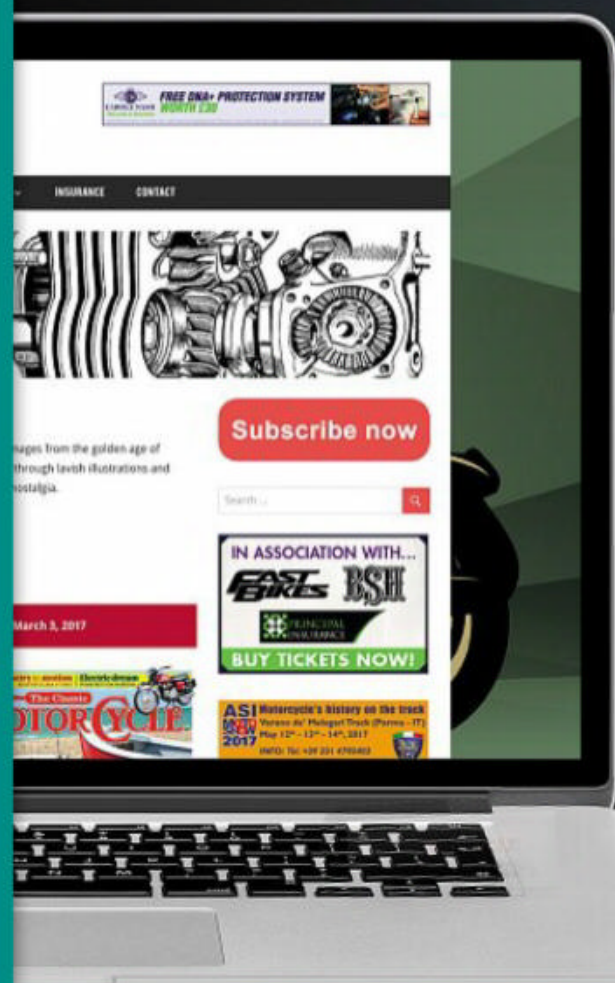


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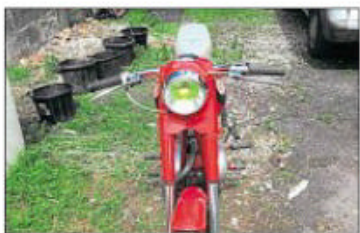


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TERROT TENOR 1961, overhead valve, nice bike, original, £1700 Tel. 01538 753086. Staffs



TRIUMPH 1963 Tiger Cub, lovely restored condition, lots of new parts, lots of receipts, must be seen, £4500 ono Tel. 07831 481814. South Wales



TRIUMPH TIGER 100S, Sept 1967 reg, 68 spec, matching numbers, original unrestored, Sorned since 09, clean tank & carb, original Dunlop rims, £3900 Email. trevsmaill.2102@yahoo.com West Sussex



TRIUMPH Thunderbird 900, 2000, very low mileage, only 3775 miles from new, excellent paint, chrome, tyres, on Sorn, £5995 Tel. 07788 775509. Rye, East Sussex



TRIUMPH Trophy 3, 1992, good original condition, 30,000 miles, MoT June 2020, serviced, Givi luggage included, £1350 Tel. 07722 749635. London



TRIUMPH Bonneville, American spec, fantastic original condition, 10,725 miles matching numbers, with V5C, £6250 or offers poss p/x for smaller Brit bike, Jap classic Tel. 07538 713806. Leics



TRIUMPH 21 1962, owned for 30 years, matching engine & frame numbers, £3250 Tel. Bob 07729 246757. Bedfordshire



TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE lovely, no matching numbers, contact for any more details Tel. 07882 529304. Wales



TRIUMPH T100 1956, matching numbers, easy to start, runs and charges well, used regularly, any trial, £6000 Tel. 01428 723056. Hants



TRIUMPH T100 2006, 865cc carb model, 8726 miles, MoT May, Tor pipes, centre stand, screen, rear rack, owners books + paperwork, £3950 ovno Tel. 07445 914770. Teeside



TRIUMPH T110 1956, £6100 p/x welcome, all original. Also two autocycles BSA winged wheel and cyclemaster, both very original, £1200 pair Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorks



TRIUMPH T110 1955, all paint work & chrome completed, engine runs well, requires tlc to complete, £5750 ono Tel. 01884 508274. Devon



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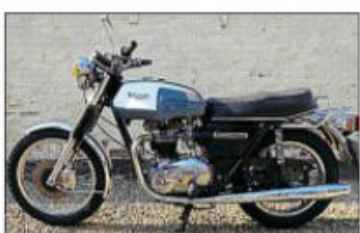
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TRIUMPH T120R lovely old 1966 Bonneville, runs well, tank needs a respray, bit of welding on the frame, great chrome work, £6000 Tel. 07365 297414. Hants



TRIUMPH T140 Bonneville fitted with Rickman fairing and child/adult Watsonian sidecar, comes with colour matched Squire trailer in red/gold, on Sorn, offers Tel. Mike 01612 054620.



TRIUMPH T140V Bonneville, 6047 miles, perfect running order, electrics converted to 12V, electronic ignition, £5500 firm Tel. Mark 07970 821049. Wigan



TRIUMPH Bonneville, American spec, fantastic original condition, 10,725 miles believed correct, matching numbers, with V5C, £6250 or offers p/x considered small Brit bike, Jap classic Tel. 07538 713806. Leics



TRIUMPH T140W TSS, 1982, excellent original condition, German market model with 17,000kms on clock, owned since 1985, rare useable classic, £6000 Tel. 07879 633814. Norfolk



TRIUMPH T150V 1972, V5, Sorn, good original, unrestored, running order. T150 1972 dismantled for restoration. BSA Rocket 3, 1972 dismantled, incomplete project, £8500 for everything Tel. 07594 506435. Kent



TRIUMPH T160 Trident 750cc, matching numbers, thousands spent, good chrome & stainless steel, many more top quality parts, £9750 Tel. Gary 07877 017041. East Sussex



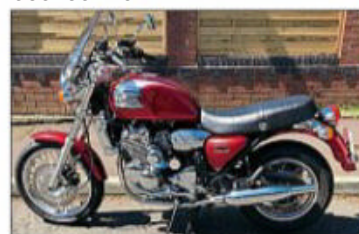
TRIUMPH T90 500cc, matching numbers, vgc, paint work by Ace Classics, electronic ignition, stainless rims, new tyres, battery, £3800 Tel. 07925 033340; 01452 831639. Gloucs



TRIUMPH TR6 650cc, 1972, restoration with full engine rebuild, many new parts inc rims, spokes, seat, carb, electronic ign etc, matching nos, £5400 Tel. 07887 688169. North Yorks



TRIUMPH TR6C 1971 Trophy competition in good working order, starts and runs well, needs a respray, needs standard pipes, £4650 no offers, cash on collection Tel. 07365 297414. Hampshire



TRIUMPH Thunderbird 900, 1997, 6500 miles, MoT June 2020, owned from new, extras fitted from new, alarm, screen & centre stand, £4995 Tel. 07850 339159. Lancs



VELOCETTE KSS Mk2, 1938, been in storage for a number of years but woken last week, starts and ran well, £8000 Tel. 01603 745922. Norwich



VESPA GTS Piaggio, 2015, 300cc, Super, MoT August 2020, 9000 miles, dual seat, small screen, new rear tyre, good condition, £2300 Tel. 07948 560431. County Durham



YAMAHA FZR1000 EXUP, 1990, 14,800 miles, immaculate condition, serviced and well maintained, £2720 Tel. 07964 266863. Scotland



YAMAHA MT-01 1670cc, 90bhp, 2005, 30k, all original, 3 keys inc master, good tyres etc, new MoT on request, ride away, £5500 Tel. 07941 684073. Powys



YAMAHA RD350 YPVS, 1983, approx 28,000 miles, engine rebuilt, crank rebored, still running, one owner, Goodridge hose kit, £6800 Tel. 07842 142855. Hants



YAMAHA XT500E 1978, 15.3k miles, two previous owners, running and good to go, £4000 Tel. 07540 590793. Scotland



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Kenley Autojumble. Portcullis Club, Kenley Airfield, Victor Beamish Avenue, Caterham, CR3 5FX (sat nav CR3 5LT). www.kenleyautojumble.co.uk.

BMPS motorcycle jumble & bikes for sale. Mochdre Village Hall, Colwyn Bay, LL28 5HU. www.bmpswnwales.org.uk. Email leonardferney@gmail.com.

Ledbury MCC Anything Motorcycle Autojumble. Bromsberrow Village Hall, Albrighton Lane, Bromsberrow Heath, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1RU. Tel Sally Palmer 07968 649327. Email sallyannpalmer226@gmail.com.

S Dorset VMCC Club Run. The Three Compasses, Charminster, DT2 9QT. Muchelney Abbey Run, tel Eddie Sheppard 01305 786891.

MARCH 10

South Cumbria VMCC Club Night. Ulverston Sports Club, Priory Road, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 9HN.

MARCH 14

S Dorset VMCC Breakfast Meet. The Three Compasses, Charminster, DT2 9QT. Tel Martin Figg/Rod Hann 01935 872528.

MARCH 14-15

NG Road Racing. Pembrey. www.ngroadracing.org.

MARCH 15

Bike Day. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com.

VMCC Pre-65 Sporting Trial. Rectory Farm, Uppingham. www.thetaverners.co.uk. Tel Peter Hydemonk 07826 683600. Email pmonk83@yahoo.com.

Huddersfield Auto/Retro Jumble. The Old Market Building, Brook Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1RG. www.phoenixfairs.jimdo.com. Tel 01773 819154; 07795 505388. Email jeffpff@hotmail.co.uk.

LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes. Meet at the bridge at the bottom of the village, Downham. Tel 01772 782516.

MARCH 21

Mathewson's Motorcycle Auction. Roxby Garage, Pickering Road, Thornton-le-Dale, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 7LH. mathewsons.co.uk. Tel 01751 474455; 07507 210031. Email enquiries@mathewsons.co.uk.

Scorton Auto & Bike Jumble. North Yorkshire Events Centre, Scorton, DL10 6EJ. Tel Bert 07909 904705.

MARCH 22

Straightliners. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants, NN29 7XA. www.straightliners.co.uk. Tel 01234 782828.

Overland & Adventure Bike Day. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com.

Sunbeam MCC 81st Pioneer Run (pre-1915 machines). From Epsom Downs to Brighton City Airport. Tel Ian McGill 01293 771446. Email pioneerorganiser@gmail.com.

The Churchill Arms Spring Bike Jumble in association with Wheelers Motorcycle Events. The Churchill Arms, Daggons Road, Alderholt, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 3AA. www.wheelersmce.co.uk. Tel 01425 652147.

MARCH 26

LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes. Glasson Dock. Tel 01772 782516.

S Dorset VMCC Club Night. The Three Compasses, Charminster, DT2 9QT. Tel Martin Figg/Rod Hann 01935 872528.

MARCH 27-29

NG Road Racing. Pembrey. www.ngroadracing.org.

MARCH 28

South Cumbria VMCC George's Spring Run. Start: Red Lion, Lowick. Tel George Bownass 01229 580776.

LE Velo Northampton. Plume of Feathers, Weedon Bec, NN7 4QR. Tel 01604 499858.

MARCH 28-29

Goodwood 78th Members' Meeting. Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0PX.



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Diary

www.goodwood.com.

Manchester Bike Show. EventCity, Phoenix Way, off Barton Dock Road, Manchester, M41 7TB.

www.manchesterbikeshow.com.
Tel 01484 482005.

MARCH 29

Scooter Sunday & Raleigh Chopper Meet. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com.

Stickney Autojumble. Stickney Car Boot field, Stickney, Boston, Lincs, PE22 8AG. Tel 01205 480274.

South of England Classic Show & Bikejumble. South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6TL. www.elk-promotions.co.uk. Tel 01797 344277.

VMCC Grasstrack & Speedway Section. Victory Field, Banbury Road, Ashorne, nr Warwick, CV33 9QJ. Tel Neil Waddoups 07949 231009.

APRIL 4

Kempton Park Motorcycle Autojumble. Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, TW16 5AQ. www.kemptonautojumble.co.uk.

Tel 01507 529529.

VMCC (Isle of Wight Section) – Isle of Wight Vintage & Classic Show. Winter Gardens, Ventnor. Tel Keith Hadfield 01983 730559. Email keith.hadfield1@btinternet.com.

APRIL 4-5

South Wales Sunbeam Motorcycle Club 28th Annual Bike Show. Llanishen High School, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5YL. www.southwalesunbeamcc.co.uk.

APRIL 5

'Normous Newark Autojumble. The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts, NG24 2NY. www.newarkautojumble.co.uk. Tel 01507 529529.

Kawasaki Sunday. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com.

Malvern Festival of Transport. Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 6NW. www.classicshows.org. Tel 01484 667776.

Pre-65 Sporting Trial. Lount. Tel Peter Hydemonk 07826 683600. Email pmonk83@yahoo.com.

Ledbury MCC Ledbury Leader

Grasstrack Racing for Youth and Adults. Sparrington Farm, Pencombe, Bromyard, Herefordshire, HR7 4SL.

Tel Sally Palmer 07968 649327. Email sallyannpalmer226@gmail.com.

LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes. Lower Barn, Rivington. Tel 01772 782516.

Hoghton Tower Sprint. Hoghton Tower, Hoghton, Preston, PR5 0SH. www.hoghtontower.co.uk/event/motorcyclesprintevent. Tel 01254 852986.

Sunday Biker's Breakfast. New Inn, North Thoresby, Lincs, DN36 5QS. Tel 01472 840118.

APRIL 8

Bike Night. Plough Inn, Town Street, South Leverton, DN22 0BT. Tel 01427 880323.

APRIL 9-12

MZ Riders' Club Coastal Camping Weekend. The Links Camping & Caravanning Park, Links Road, Mundesley, NR11 8AT. Tel Nigel Stennett-Cox 01692 406075. Email binroundabit@btinternet.com.

APRIL 10-12

Festival of Power. Santa Pod

Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants, NN29 7XA. www.santapod.com. Tel 01234 782828.

APRIL 11

South Midlands Autojumble. Ross Livestock Centre, Overross, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7QQ. Tel 01989 750731.

APRIL 12

Rocket III Owners' Club Meet. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com.

APRIL 12-13

The Easter Motor Show. Weston Park, nr Telford, Shropshire, TF11 8LE. www.classicshows.org. Tel 01484 667776.

APRIL 13

Ashford Classic Motorcycle Show & Bikejumble. Ashford Market, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0HB. www.elk-promotions.co.uk. Tel 01797 344277.

APRIL 16

LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes. Meet Viaduct car park, Arnside. Tel 01772 782516.
Bike Night. New Inn, North Thoresby, Lincs, DN36 5QS. Tel 01472 840118.



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YOUR EVENT SHOULD BE HERE

The Classic MotorCycle is anxious to learn all about your motorcycle-related events. Contact us at **The Classic MotorCycle**, Mortons Media Ltd, Diary Listings, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ or email obmwallplanner@mortons.co.uk

APRIL 17-18

NG Road Racing. Oulton Park.
www.ngroadracing.org

APRIL 18

Crayford Kestrels Speedway: Crayford vs Romney. Belgar Farm, Romney Road, Lydd, TN29 9LS. Tel 07870 471770.

British Two-Stroke Club Run.

Sausthorpe Village Hall, Sausthorpe, Spilsby, Lincs. Tel Jay 07502 222754 or Andy 07940 447570.

Home Counties Autojumble. Village Hall, Chestnut Road, Yardley Gobion, Towcester, Northants, NN12 7TW. Email Mark.trials59@yahoo.co.uk.

APRIL 19

British & Classic Bike Day + BSA

Special. Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD.
london.acecafe.com.

Navestock Autojumble. Navestock Village Hall, Navestock Side, nr Kelvedon Hatch, Essex, CM14 5SD.
www.woodclass.com. Tel 020 8252 6831.

Stickney Autojumble. Stickney Car Boot field, Stickney, Boston, Lincs, PE22 8AG. Tel 01205 480274.

The 13th Suffolk Classic Motorcycle

Show. Stour Valley Business Park, Brundon Lane, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 7GB. Tel John Walker 01787 881803.

Sussex British Motorcycle Owners' Club: The Marlet Run (formerly the Engineerium Run). www.sbmoc.vpweb.com. Tel Richard Bennett 01242 542928.

APRIL 22

Bike Night. Plough Inn, Town Street, South Leverton, DN22 0BT.
Tel 01427 880323.

APRIL 25

Mathewson's Motorcycle Auction.

Roxby Garage, Pickering Road, Thornton-le-Dale, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 7LH. mathewsons.co.uk.
Tel 01751 474455; 07507 210031.

Adventure Bike Ride In. Sammy Miller Museum. www.sammymiller.co.uk.

APRIL 25-26

The 40th Carole Nash International Classic Motorcycle Show. County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0BD. www.staffordclassicbikeshows.com. Tel 01507 529529.

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South of England Classic Show & Bikejumble 10am Sunday 25th October 2020 Celebrating 70 Years of the BSA Golden Flash. Ardingly, W Sussex, RH17 6TL

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On the grid

British road racer gets ready for the start of a South African motorcycle race.

Photograph: MORTONS ARCHIVE

From his grid position way back, Britain Dave Chadwick – with a couple of helpers in some rather natty headgear – looks fairly relaxed on his Norton for the start of the 500cc scratch race, at the Transvaal Club's Grand Central Circuit meeting, on the main road between Pretoria and Johannesburg, staged on February 2, 1957.

There was a crowd of around 20,000 lining the 2½mile circuit – and a lot of them had come to see one man – multi-world champion Geoff Duke, who was there with a 500cc four-cylinder Gilera. In this race, Duke duly did as expected, streaking off to take the win, though the start had been delayed allowing him to make it on time.

Feeling unwell, he was last man to the grid, but there was little sign of his sickness as he cleared off and won, although local Borro Castellani, on his 500cc Manx Norton, excited the local crowd by keeping with Duke early on, '...riding like a man possessed.'

Sadly, it ended predictably, with Castellani coming off and 'receiving severe arm injuries' and that was his day done. Duke won, from Boet Ferreira (Norton) and Jannie Stander's Velocette. There was no mention of Chadwick in the results, although he later did finish seventh in the programme-concluding handicap race, while it was also noted he was '...riding the 350cc Norton

which caused such a sensation by lapping the Port Elizabeth course at 97mph in January.'

There was no such high-speed success for Chadwick on this day, though in the open handicap Duke became the first person to lap the Grand Central Circuit at over 70mph, his actual lap record being 72mph. Still, it wasn't enough for him to finish any higher than last, owing to four minutes lost at the beginning when the normally super reliable Gilera proved recalcitrant to get going, then sulked for a lap, necessitating a pit stop. Once going, Duke was flying, breaking the lap record and providing a fine show for the spectators.

There were some other names in the programme that were to become familiar, with Paddy Driver and Jim Redman, who were both to come to Europe and excel, featuring. On this day, Driver was second in the 250cc race on a Velocette, Jim Redman, Norton, fifth in the 350cc race.

Chadwick, whose successes included second in the 1958 Junior TT in the Isle of Man on his way to fourth in that year's world championship, was killed racing in Belgium in 1960, only two months after getting married, Mike Hailwood being his best man. Chadwick and Hailwood's friendship forged from racing together in South Africa.

End

“Dave Chadwick had caused a sensation in South Africa, lapping the Port Elizabeth course at 97mph on a 350cc Manx Norton.”

