

The Cotswold Section

Newsletter



Covid19 Issue 6 Lockdown week 7



Dave and Suzanne Boon on the BMW outfit, which has been modified to take the chair on the left or right hand side of the bike with little effort. The report of their 3000mile trip is in verse form, written by Suzanne and attached to this issue as a separate file.

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The purpose of this mailing is to occupy the thoughts of members of the motorcycling fraternity during the current crisis when non-essential riding might be deemed to be unlawful. Articles may be technical, thought provoking, humorous, accompanied by images, etc, but definitely about our hobby of motorcycling. Please feel free to share the contents with any other interested riders and send appropriate material to me at the above email address. Thanks!

From the B190

The cover image reminds us all that we would rather be riding than stuck at home! Having said that, Dennis found a copy of a Cotswold Section event showing members at the end of a run that reminds members of the Cotswold Section of their recent past, Mike Gore has recalled a memorable ride, Alastair is in his workshop, my namesake Reg Glading recalls his first motorcycle, Dave Giles recalls his first spectator event, and all I can provide is a book review after putting my back out!

Keep well and keep safe.

Reg Eyre KOB

A Cotswold Memory



I thought this photo might be of interest for Cotswold Section members in the Cotswold Section Newsletter.

Left to Right are: Dave Pritchard KOB, Len Ore KOB, Darol Baker KOB, Dennis Beale KOB is on the 1927 AJS 500sv, Tom Barker, Elvira Ore, Daisy Dimmock from the charity and at the Headway building, Goff Hannam, the late Sue Parker, Peter Hannam (Goff's son), and on the right is Brian Higgs of Swindon. I think the date was 1989 and we did a Round Gloucestershire run, organised by Dave Pritchard to raise money for Headway, which cared for our previous chairman John Janes after his accident, which caused brain damage. This picture appeared in *The Citizen*.

Dennis Beale KOB

Dave Pritchard KOB, the organiser of the run writes: "The event started and finished at Headway House, London Road, Gloucester and covered about 300 miles in the two days with an overnight stop at Moreton-in-Marsh. It was a charity run following John Jane's accident where he suffered head injuries and was looked after by Headway. This was the second Round Gloucestershire Sponsored Ride, the earlier one covered the extremities of Gloucestershire in an anti-clockwise direction whereas this one was ridden clockwise and raised just over £1300 for Headway."

A Close Shave

In 1965, I had left Gloucester for Deal in Kent to join the Marines and as we were not allowed any form of personal transport during training in those days, I left my pride and joy for my younger brother to use, my pride and joy being a Villiers 325cc twin that I had salvaged from a written off Panther that had been shunted from the back end. I mounted that motor in a Cotton duplex frame straight from the factory (probably via the back door) but utilised the front forks and wheels from the Panther that had some rather smart alloy hubs with 8" brakes and in my eyes it was fabulous.

Whilst I was away my brother had managed write the bike off in an accident that was no fault of his.

With the resulting insurance money as a deposit he bought one of the newly imported 250cc Suzuki super sixes. He kindly gave me the use of the Suzuki whilst I was on leave, that bike was really impressive, 6 gears, separate oil tank so no need to fill it up with pre-mix.

Well that blast around Gloucester on my brother's bike resulted in the biking bug biting me again and I became determined to get another bike when I got back to my new unit.

My new posting was to 41 Commando RM stationed at Bickleigh on the edge of Dartmoor so, as soon as I had scraped a bit of money together I went in to Plymouth to a Bike dealer in Cliff Road. My close friend Barney with whom I had spent the last year in Aden, had turned up at Bickleigh with a BSA DBD34 Goldstar so I had to get something to compete. I bought a 1958 Tiger 110 complete with sweptback exhausts and Goldie silencers for £126 all in, no such thing as VAT in those days.

It was a lovely bike, blue and grey with a slickshift gearbox, didn't leak too much oil and starting it was a doddle.

Barney and I would tear around the lovely Dartmoor roads swapping bikes and generally enjoying life.

One night I went to Tavistock town hall where Dave Dee, Dozy, Mick and Titch were the main act and I was determined that I would go and see them. There were no late buses back from Tavistock so I had to go on the trusty Triumph as I had to be back in barracks by 23:00 hours and a taxi was way beyond my humble means.

I thoroughly enjoyed the show but it finished at 22:30 so I had to get a shift on to be back in Bickleigh on time. I kicked the Triumph over, it roared in to life and off I went knowing it was about a 20 minute journey back.

I got to Yelverton and took the A386 Plymouth road that would lead me back to Bickleigh. It's a lovely straight road across open moorland with plenty of ups and downs and no fences, walls or hedges. I was going at quite a lick in excess of 80mph when disaster struck and I had a front tyre blow out! I only had time to grab the clutch when the bike went in to a violent tank slapper. I was hanging on for dear life, feet off the foot pegs and flying all over the place so I couldn't apply the back brake, I had the throttle wide open and couldn't let that off to grab the front brake, the clutch was pulled in and I couldn't let that go for the engine braking to slow me down, the throttle was wide open anyway so that wouldn't have worked. Next thing with all the banging up and down from the bare rim running on the road the headlight went out. Then I'm thinking I could just run off the road on to the grass and drop the bike for a soft landing as I could barely see where I was going. Then I thought I couldn't do that! I've only just bought these trousers I'm wearing and I'm not going to ruin them, I can't afford another pair! I'll just hang on and think of a plan B

Luckily I came to a hill and the bike started to slow down allowing me to regain some sort of control, shut the throttle off, get my feet back on the foot pegs and apply the brakes. I ran the

bike up on to the grass verge, laid it on its' side and started a lonely walk back to Bickleigh which was about a mile away and hoping to thumb a lift from a passing car or lorry. No such luck and I trudged forlornly back arriving about half an hour late. I had trouble convincing the guard commander of my excuse for arriving late as he had probably heard every hard luck story under the sun but did admit it was a new one on him.

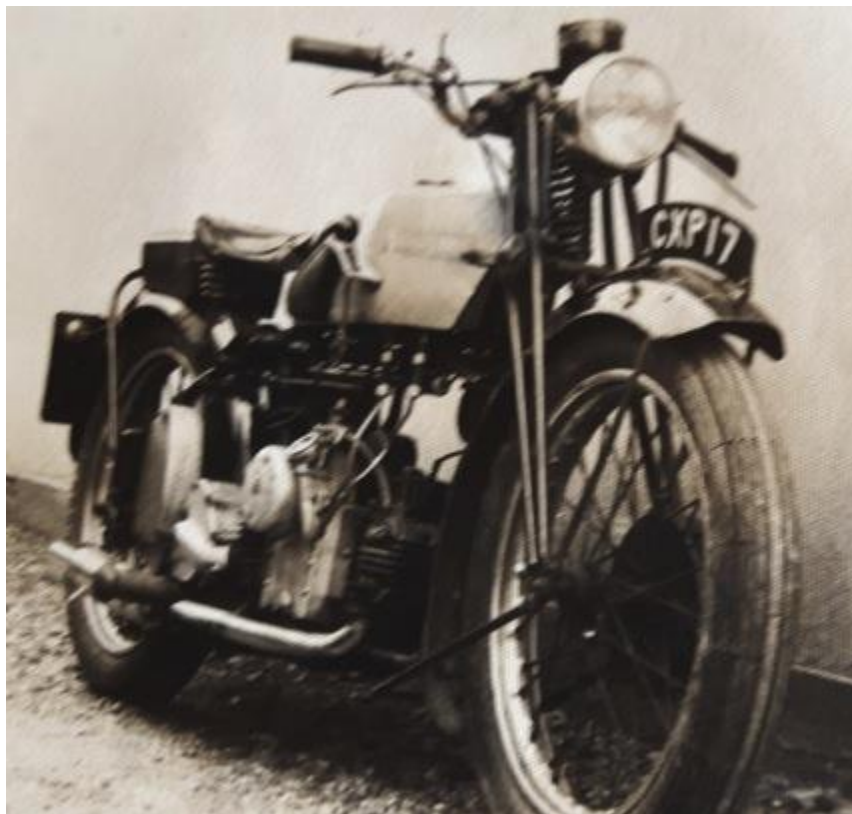
I went back to the bike the next day, armed with a puncture repair outfit and found that it didn't have a puncture at all. The valve had failed and whether it was a weak spring or what I'll never know but it taught me one thing: Never to ride without valve caps fitted.

Mike Gore

My start in motorcycling

My father was opposed to my having a motorcycle but knew that I was determined. The compromise was, "alright but 250cc - maximum". My 16th birthday almost coincided with Dad's posting to Cyprus, (he was in the RAF). After I had ridden the 250cc Douglas to home, Dad wasn't impressed and said that he didn't know that Douglas had made a 250. Anyway I had a bike and rode it to school and several visits to race meetings and scrambles. I was disappointed with the performance of the Douglas; my friend's 250cc Rudge could out perform it in every way. So I decided to strip the engine to find out what was wrong and why it was so gutless. When Dad came home on leave he asked where's the Douglas, I said its in bits in the garage, he came out with me to see it and promptly said that it was bigger than a 250 and measured the bore and stroke, it was 500cc. Even though the logbook said it was a 250, I don't think Dad was happy about it. Any way after reassembly with new rings and ground in valves, it still couldn't keep up with my mate's Rudge. So I bought a better 250, a Lighthouse OK Supreme, which could more than keep up with the Rudge.

Reg Glading



A Story from Ken McIntosh

If you think the bureaucrats are looking for more ways to annoy you, here is an example of how it could always be worse.

My good friend, Les Wilson, long deceased, bought a 1939 ES2 Norton that had been "impressed" at the start of the war, (and never used) from the Army stores just after the war finished. The rear tyre was worn out, and here is the letter from a Govt. Bureaucrat in Nov 1945 explaining he could not have a PERMIT for a NEW tyre but he could have a permit for a USED tyre, if he could find one. In April 1946, 5 months later Les had still not found one so he re-applied for a new one. I don't know if Mr Manchester, the District Tyre and Tube Controller still had his job as I don't have his reply. Imagine being paid to sit at a desk all day to write those letters! **Oh, the good old days!!**

P.S. Les rode the bike every day to his work at the ASB Bank in Dominion Rd, where he was manager. He kept it until his death at over 80. I bought it from his son Mike, who was a past President of the NZCMRR. It came with a file with every piece of paper and receipt to do with the bike, including the tyre request. In the 1970's Les was the official Judge at all the Auckland Motorcycle Club meetings, and the Norton was always leaned against the wooden fence in the pits at Pukekohe, (a New Zealand race track), behind the timing bus. It was never polished but never dirty. It was the only girder fork Norton I ever saw on the road in Auckland at that time.

Related by our South Pacific Coorespondent Paul Whitehead

B. D. File No. 1/ 82595

DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND.

District Oil Fuel Control Office,
P.O.Box 2185,
AUCKLAND, C.1.

MR E.L. WILSON

27th November, 1945

8. Karori Crescent,
AUCKLAND S.E.2.

Dear Sir/Madam,

In reference to your application for a permit to purchase
1 tire tires size 350x19
..... which was lodged on the
21st November, 1945 tubes

.....: I have to say that full consideration has been given the application but as the vehicle concerned does not qualify for new tires and tubes under the present rationing plan, it is regretted that the issue of a permit cannot be approved.

A permit for used tires will, however, be made available should you be in a position to advise a source of supply, together with the purchase price.

Yours faithfully,

Geo. H. H. H.
District Tyre & Tube Controller.

First Impressions, maybe others have interesting memories?

Background: I was 10 when my Dad took me to my first post war trial: the 'John Douglas', which was run by the Bristol MCC in 1947.

The last hill of the day, which was on Lansdown, N.W. of Bath, was called 'Pipley Bottom' which from a stream crossing, rose steeply through a muddy gully with rock outcrops to a 1 in 3 exit where the section end card was planted.



G. F. Parry (348 Douglas) has to call in the tow-rope gang after making an excellent show on Pipley. This modified version of the Kingswood product was the subject of considerable interest and favourable comment.

I recall the Marshall shouting to the spectators perched precariously on the sides: 'Stand back lads, the works BSA team are next, and they haven't lost a mark yet'. Everyone shuffled a bit but didn't really move back much – well not a first!

It was one of those do-or-die hills. Flat out in second, swinging from bank to bank – clipping toes – came the big hairy 500's of Fred Rist, Bill Nicholson and then on a 350 a young fresh faced lad, a new member to the 'works'. As he ear'oled into the mud with his front wheel just out of the section, I remember looking through the programme to find the 'new' lads name: G.E. Duke - never heard of him.



Geoff Duke on the 350 BSA

Footnote: Geoff rode for one season in the BSA team before he transferred to the Norton's: initially with the works trials team.

But then came the Clubman's TT of '49, followed by the Manx and our man was on his way to the Norton works racing team and World Championships. However he continued to ride off road for his own pleasure and as good fitness training for many years

The photo shows him in later years on his own BSA.

Dave Giles

Two photos attached: Top right corner - boy in navy cap and raincoat is the author: the second is Duke later in his career.

Busily doing nothing!

I have been productive in the house and in the garage so I am using the time to advantage. I have all but finished a 1925 Royal Enfield 225 cc two stroke. I need new rear spindle cones and then I will have it sorted. I have finished a 1925 Model CW Douglas, which has lain dormant since the 1950s and was recovered from a pub cellar. The seat was awful so I got it recovered. It is all very original and has been great fun to work on. I had a bit of help from pals along the way so my job was to finish it off. I have attached some photos.

Alastair Alexander



Book Review

Time is now aplenty for catching up on new reading and re-reading some of the older books on the shelf. Like Chris Roberts, I have an interest in the Despatch Riders of the Great War who volunteered at the outbreak of hostilities and served in the very first actions with the British Expeditionary Force in the 'dynamic' phase of the first actions. These included the advances, retreats, and then further advances before everyone 'dug in' for the more static phase of trench warfare.

Martin Gegg wrote the book "War Bike – British Military Motorcycling, 1899 – 1919" in 2015 to be ready for the centenary of the end of the Great War.

However, he starts with the first attempts to interest the military in the use of motorised machines from 1899 including the Simms Motor Scout and then the efforts of the bicycle brigades to show how motorcycles could add many features of this new technology to the manner in which bicycles were used.

Experiments were undertaken by the military in the UK and on the continent in the use of De Bouton three-wheelers to tow light armaments into battle as well as armoured machine gun units in 1899. The cycle brigades knew that motorised bicycles were of little use for their scouting work since the noise of the motor would give their positions away to an enemy. The main proposed use of motorcycles was for the carrying of despatches between officers conducting the battle and the forward lines involved in the actions.

The author covers many aspects of the use of motorcycles in the lead time up to the war as well as the developments of different types of machines for specialist units, such as; Early experiments, procurement, mobilisation, the use of motorcycles through each of the years of the war, specialised units, maintenance in the field, women motorcyclists and numbers and manufacturers of machines used.

This book is comprehensive and yet an easy read and I can thoroughly recommend obtaining a copy if this period interests you.

Martin Gegg, "War Bike – British Military Motorcycling, 1899 – 1919", published by Fenland Classic Motorcycles – www.Fenlandclassics.com or try eBay or Amazon.

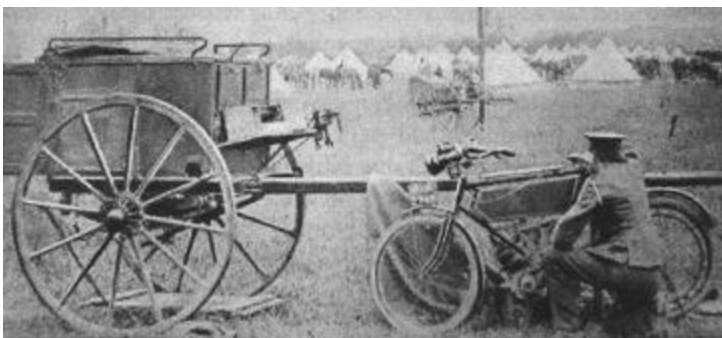
Reg Eyre



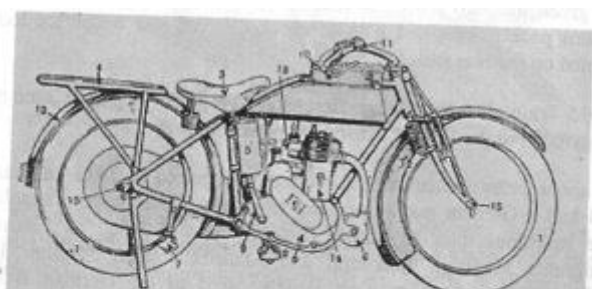
Simms Demonstrating The Motor Scout in 1899 (Mortons)



Motorised Tricycle Easter 1899 (Army & Navy Illustrated 22 April 1899)



Rider with a Minerva at Rowlands Castle during 1910 Manoeuvres



- Sketch of Military Motor Cycle suggested by Vernon Busby's Article
1. 3in. tyres
 2. Big ground clearance
 3. Saddle far forward
 4. Extra large flat top carrier
 5. Spare petrol tank
 6. Large silencer
 7. Footrest for silent rider
 8. Engine and two-speed gear unit
 9. Kick starter
 10. Tool box on top tube
 11. Handle-bar control for clutch
 12. Large guards with big diameter
 13. Exhaust bent at carburettor
 14. Enclosed valve gear
 15. Detachable wheel

Busby's idea of the ideal Military Mount in September 1914 (The Motorcycle)

This last image shows a drawing made by Vernon Busby, a 'works' rider of Sunbeam machines prior to the Great War. I think it could easily fit in with machines built for WW2 – Ed

And Finally,

About a year ago in the VMCC Journal, I suggested that riders of pioneer machines might like to ride in cyclemotor events because of the flat routes, which were not too long.

I had a reply from Derek Langdon from Nottingham in which he said that he had been campaigning cyclemotors for many years but he had always been fascinated by the very old and the very unusual, (his daughter thought that this was an apt description of him!)

“The idea of seeing and hearing very early machines on Cyclemotor runs really appeals, and might be advantageous to promoting both types of machines. I have always been somewhat impecunious, (nay skint), so the earliest thing in my collection is a home-built special using a 1923 Atlas 142.5cc two stoke engine in a Jagrose bicycle*. With single speed chain-cum-belt transmission on 9 to 1 gearing, it is happy at 18 to 20mph and climbs fairly well, but even this is a bit slow for many Cyclemotor events. Regrettably, these runs seem to be blighted by an infestation of oriental scooterettes carrying plastic leg shields and luggage boxes, and cyclemotors seem to be in decline. The introduction of a few really early machines might completely revitalise the events to the benefit of all concerned.”

Derek Langdon

* J.A.Grose were a catalogue company like Halfords and could supply bicycles, motorcycles, prams, mowers, etc, including spares and accessories.