

The Cotswold Section of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club



Newsletter

Issue 95 – April 2014



Arthur Mortimer riding an Avondale – KOBİ founder member and instigator

Arthur succumbed to cancer after a short illness

Shortly afterwards, Audrey Lewis also died after illness

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Copies of the Newsletter can be obtained from our web-site, by letting the editor know that you want to receive it by email or by sending 6 stamped self addressed C5 envelopes to the editor.

June 2014 deadline is 20th May 2014

From the B190

I am still impressed by the response for material for the last sidecar special issue and there are still some items arriving! Temptation, I know, but how about a call for pictures or articles on “Riding my first old machine”?

Sadly, I have to report the passing of both Arthur Mortimer and Audrey Lewis. I have included a summary of obituaries for both long time members of the Section. Full versions are printed in the VMCC Journal.

Reg Eyre KOB

Obituaries

Arthur's standing in the VMCC was well established. He was President (1969-1971), Editor of the Journal (1965-1976), and had been a staunch member of the Cotswold Section since the early 'sixties.

Arthur shares the credit, or blame, for the KOB Brotherhood. Initiated in 1967, to Right Properly Record and Celebrate the Idiotic Deeds of their fellow-clubmen...history shows that the Knights of the Order of Bloody Idiots have Right Thriven ever since!

He had a prodigious memory for faces and names, and (given a few minutes) could identify nearly everyone in old VMCC group-photos, even from the 'sixties.

Arthur, you had a long, full and busy life: good on you, old friend!

Audrey Lewis was also a stalwart member of the Cotswold Section. Rumour has it that, on being approached by a current member of the Section who fancied buying Arthur's Scott, his offer was rebuffed but Arthur agreed to join the Cotswold Section only if Audrey could come too. Audrey then proceeded to look after Arthur, and the Section, by writing letters to new members, posting copies of the Newsletter to faraway members in desolate places and corresponding with speakers for Cotswold meetings.

Thank you Arthur and Audrey for all you did for the Cotswold Section.

The Traub Motor Cycle

Paul Whitehead from New Zealand sent in this story. In 1967, a plumber doing renovations of an apartment building outside Chicago broke down a brick wall and found what would prove to be a baffling mystery to vintage motorcycle enthusiasts - a one-of-a-kind motorcycle bearing 1917 plates and the name "Traub". The building's elderly owner admitted that his son had stolen the bike before going off to WWI, never to return. But where the bike came from and who made it remains an unknown to this day.

If you have information about this machine, other than from the web, please write in and inform us all.



Soon after we went to print, Chris Harvey and his team ran the Cotswold Sporting Trial and Angela Rendell has sent in some images. If you are in the picture, why not write in to tell us what it was like for you?





Please note that a trial needs volunteers

Caption Competition Please send in suggestions for the following photo of a nearly aerial Ariel.



Remember 2014 is a very special year for the Cotswold Section as it is our Diamond Jubilee (60 years) celebratory anniversary.

One heck of an achievement and it says volumes for the members over the years that have contributed to the club in all ways to reach this milestone.

This year will be marked with a special Celebration day on July 12th, the Cotswold Road Trial (Felix Burke) will also be the 60th running of the event, the Signpost Rally, the Cotswold Weekend Trial, Touring Week and finishes in the autumn with the Night Trial. Make sure your bikes are in fine fettle for a busy riding year.

Let's hope that the weather joins in with the spirit of the Diamond Jubilee year and provides end-to-end sunshine at least for all of our rides.

Brian

Images from Tony Page somewhere in New Zealand

Some of these might get you thinking of Summer rides in the UK.



I rode this road on my visits to New Zealand but found it difficult to travel more than 25metres before having to stop again to take in the views opening up. The glacial lake on the right was an unimaginable blue and the reflections of Mount Cook were worth the air fare and 25 hour flights. (*Ed*)



Tony also sent me a photograph of this 1928 Humber 350cc with overhead camshaft. It so happened that I had just read the February 1928 copy of *Motor Cycling*.

(Yes, I know it takes time for me to get around all the magazines!)

He asks if there are any around still in the UK.

This advertisement was on the front cover of the magazine and claims that car practice was an advantage. Name other companies who could claim similarly?

An advertisement for a Humber motorcycle. At the top, a black and white photograph shows a man in a suit standing next to a vintage open-top car on a road. Below this, the text reads: "Backed by the advantages of car practice." In the center is a detailed illustration of a Humber motorcycle, shown from a side profile. At the bottom left, it says "Dunlop Tyres Standard." At the bottom right, it provides pricing information: "To see this new Humber 3'49 h.p. overhead Camshaft 'Sports' Model (twin port exhaust and saddle tank) is to want one. Price £63. 3'49 h.p. S.V. 'Sports,' £46. 3'49 h.p. O.H.V. 'Sports,' £54."

Insurance

It has taken me over two years to write this, but recent events and an article by Dave Minton in *Real Classic* have finally led me to put finger to keyboard. Every year we all receive reminder letters quoting a price for renewal of our insurance. Every year I telephone the insurers and ask why the premium has gone up by 20% or 50% - every year they remind me that inflation has gone up, others are making large claims and people like me are expected to pay for their accidents when we have made no claims for a large number of years. Having got them to agree that such increases are unreasonable, I ask for a new quote and give them a

week to review their rates. I then obtain quotes from other companies which can be about the same or, sometimes, considerably less. When the current company phones back, I usually find that they offer a lower quote and when confronted by the lowest quote, will either tell me to go, or offer slightly more than the lowest quote so that you stay because it is less effort than moving.

I had been switching between Carole Nash and Footman James for a number of years and sadly had two accidents within a two-week period last year. (Note that I had 50 years of paying insurance without having made any claim!) The two claims were settled amicably and both machines are back on the road – at this point I wanted to write a piece about how wonderful the company, assessors and restorers were. But my renewal notice arrived recently asking for a 50% increase, (that's £200), which I thought unreasonable. They were prepared to lower the premium by £20 straight away but I went for quotes from other companies. None of the quotes came within £50 of the Carole Nash quote and one was over £150 less. You can guess the rest. I can thoroughly recommend phoning around and letting each company know the best quote you have had so far. There are members out there who are finding that reaching 70 years of age means that premiums have risen dramatically. I recommend obtaining a quote from Peter James.

Reg Eyre

P.S. I follow the same procedure for all insurance, energy, water, etc. bills – this costs about half a day for each bill, but could save you money.

A Reader Asks

I have been a VMCC member for a few years and I have had a flat tank 1922 500cc Dunelt for some years and it is nearly fit for the road. The marque specialist lives in Sweden though and I would like to know if there are similar machines in your Section?

Seymour Moss – I can forward replies – Ed

And Another

Thanks for continuing to include me on the local VMCC Newsletter.

I am just doing a few jobs on the 1912 Rollo Cycle car and one of them is to replace the two leather cup washers in the hand oil pump feeding the JAP engine. The pump cylinder bore is 15/16in so the washers would probably need to be 1inch diameter. Do you have any idea where I could obtain a couple of washers please? Any help or advice much appreciated.

Paul Cooper – Ditto – I can forward replies – Ed

Tales of old KOB

I remember when Felix and Rose moved from St Paul's Terrace to Albermarle Gate in the more salubrious area of Pitville.

Felix was not a good navigator. Rose in the chair was the navigator; I was just

following (blindly) in the Morgan. We were travelling south from the northern tip where the Skagerrak and the Kattegat join. We should have kept the ocean on our left. Eventually I could see the North Sea on our right. We had gone from one side of Denmark to the other. Eventually I was able to stop them and we duly sorted ourselves out. *(To be continued)*

Bob Main KOBİ – The only KOBİ who can write!

Advertisement

Norton model ES2, wideline featherbed frame, circa 1956, most parts are there, but needs some work to complete, Offers invited.

Please contact Roger Kordas telephone 01886-832502, for further details or viewing.

Coincidence 2

While looking for the cover picture of Arthur Mortimer riding a motorised bicycle, I came across this image of a young Bill Phelps riding a 1902 Clement engined bicycle in the Pioneer Run.



I find it amusing that Bill and I have ridden similar machines but, how does he cope with short legs and no red socks? Bill recently gave a talk on riding early motorcycles at the Flat Tank Section.

Ed

A Late Sidecar Article, (sorry, no pictures were taken of the Panther)

The writer's sixteenth birthday saw him wobble off on his Rudge 2-valve 250cc "Rapide" model, but teenage impulsivity and attraction to anything a bit different meant the Rudge shortly gave way to a 1952 Velocette LE model, three-speed

hand-change and hand-lever start. It was the 192cc Mark 2 model, and I hesitate to wonder how puny the preceding 149cc engine had been, given that mine sported a singularly feeble performance.

In any case, events happened fast in that halcyon summer of 1963 and a recently-introduced change of law led one to realise that a learner could ride any capacity of sidecar outfit, not only that, but carry any passengers too, with the latter not having to have passed their own motor cycle driving test either. I say that because as a learner one could carry a passenger even on a solo, provided they had passed their motorcycle test. It goes without saying that very few teenage girls had added that achievement to their portfolios, then or even perhaps now, so the advantages of a sidecar outfit were undeniable!

The same long-suffering dealer who had sold me both the Rudge and the Velocette accepted the same price [£10] for a rather sad and tatty 1951 Panther Model 100 600cc single, hanging on the side of a Blacknell "Launch" sidecar, itself on the distinctive Blacknell chassis comprised mainly of one large diameter tube curving up and over the front. A bit like the famous petrol-holding Brough jobbie, or indeed a piece of bent scaffold tube.

The dear old Panther went surprisingly well, so what if the Dunlop Universal back tyre was worn through at least three layers of canvas, and the dual exhaust rusted paper-thin? A second-hand tyre could be found for perhaps 10 bob, [50p] and I could remove the worst exhaust and bung the port up with a piece of tin cut to a circle. The latter desecration, by the way, made no discernible difference at all to the running.

This was August 1963 and the outfit saw me through the following winter without much worse than being frequently late for work, after having bounced around ineffectually with all of my nine and a half stone on the kick-start, fighting the drag of the 40-weight sump oil which was all that I could purloin free of charge from the 40-gallon barrel of the stuff which my Dad used in the farm's Fordson E27N tractors. I always managed after a struggle but can picture the expression of anguished powerlessness on the face of my poor old Mum now on one occasion, when I had made the futile last-resort attempt of trying to push-start it on my own down a small hill, which I had just about bust a gut pushing it up beforehand. Anyway, sidecarring is or was about spills, if one can joke about such matters in this day, and your scribe had two memorable ones.

In the first, a friend Chris Smith had accompanied me on a trip from our town of Sleaford, to Newark, about 19-20 miles away along the A17. Coming back we swapped places for Chris to have a go at riding the outfit and I went in the sidecar, the better to get stuck into the contents of my tea-flask, and Marmite sandwiches. After the classic Beano-style first semi-circle had been bitten out of one, Chris entered the right-hander forming the first of the then double bends at Byard's Leap, near RAF Cranwell. No sooner had the Panther obeyed the helm and duly swung starboard, than the sidecar and its gourmet cargo hit the deck with an almighty bang

and grinding noise, immediately slewing the whole ensemble off to the left and off the road. Aforementioned puny personal avoirdupois was nowhere near sufficient to hold everything down, so that which had gone down, then went up and over the bike and Chris. Those sidecar lids in place of doors were found to have their advantages in terms of one component of a fair simulation of a Martin Baker ejector seat, so your hapless (no hap whatsoever) scribe, still clutching the one-bite sandwich, descended on top of friend Chris. My berating of him was rudely interrupted by his pointing by way of absolution, to the absence of any sign of the sidecar wheel.

Attempts to find same anywhere within reasonable trekking distance meant taking it in turns to push the bike and carry the sidecar bit to a place of refuge, namely Byard's Leap Garage, leave it, and hitchhike home. A mate took us back the next day when we eventually found the wheel, complete with broken stub-axle. It had cleared a dry-stone wall and settled about 80 yards into a field. Needless to say, everything was fixed for next to nowt, and the outfit lived on.

Learning much sense is still proving problematic fifty years on, so the next spill occurred shortly afterwards. This time, again on the A17, returning from the Youth Club held in a pub in Heckington, myself and another friend, Barry were coming back to Sleaford and entered the first left-hand bend of a small series, now bypassed but with the same bit of road still there near Asgarby.

It was dark, up came the sidecar, and over the road to the opposite side we went in my efforts to tame the elevating sidecar, Barry by the way was on the pillion, where his weight sat right where we didn't want it. After demolishing a concrete reflector bollard on the opposite grass verge, the handle bars flipped to the left and the outfit reared up on its front end, catapulting Barry and myself a considerable distance up and forward. Fundamental laws of physics meant that he travelled about twice as far as my 10-15 feet, and when I staggered to my plates, Barry was nowhere to be seen. Increasingly frantic shouting on my part eventually elicited unintelligible shouting/gurgling from the bowels of the nearby earth. This was shortly followed by the emergence of a stinking, dripping biped crawling on hands and knees out of the sewerage ditch into which it had recently and impressively flown. The presence of eyes and teeth in roughly humanoid juxtaposition were the only bits not covered in sewage. Aforementioned mouth was emitting curses in large measure, all directed at yours truly.

A lovely friendly lorry driver had stopped upon seeing the poor mangled Panther, and duly offered us a lift into town. This offer was promptly withdrawn, or rather conditions applied to exclude Barry from the cab but, what the hell, he could clamber onto the load on the back. Unfortunately, the cargo, the nature of which is now forgotten, did not abut the headboard and rear window, so the eyes and teeth could burn and gnash their owner's justifiable rage at his nemesis, through the medium of the lorry's little rear window. On the last leg home to our neighbouring houses, we called upon Chris to ask if he'd take me back the next day to get the

bike. Barry was more interested in ensuring that Chris was witness to his demands that I, (me?) pay for the new suit needed after the undeniable demise of the one from which sewage was dripping and forming a sizeable stinking puddle on Chris's doorstep.

Needless to say, these precautions proved fruitless, after all, on £4 per week and with a Panther to straighten out yet again...

Nigel Stennett-Cox

Classic Track Day at Cadwell Park September 2014

This is a track day for pre-1990 motorcycles of any make, with three ability classes. You can bring more than one bike should you wish, but require a full UK or EU motorcycle driving licence (which **MUST** be presented on the day: no licence, no track time. No exceptions), full or zip-together leathers, full-face helmet. There will be at least seven 20-minute sessions through the day so it would be prudent to bring a 20-litre jerry can of fuel. There is a petrol pump on site but opening times are erratic and it is expensive.

Self Indulgence

January is when I eagerly look forward to receiving the new calendar of events from the various clubs I belong to. This then allows me to produce the master list of riding challenges for the new year. I have normally to put in the major events where I am doing my 'Murray Walker' commentating, such as Pioneer Run, the Banbury Run and the Festival of 1000 bikes until its recent demise.

My first trawl is through the VMCC event listings, now containing over 1000 events. This compares to the early days when ALL riding events took one side only of the Journal. Even then, half the listings were for sporting off road events. I continue scanning to look for the 'magic words Veteran or pre 31 machines only', these being my own preference, but somehow there seem to be fewer, perhaps indicating that times have moved on.

The inevitable clash of events on certain dates still frustrates me. I smile at the imaginative names for some of the events.

An active riding year for me will see me covering three or four thousand miles in the saddle, exploring interesting parts of our country.

For this year I decided to collect information on driving miles to get to and from meetings, entry fee costs, ferry costs, meals and accommodation for more distant events I am staggered at the total cost, but consoled that other people easily spend similar amounts of time and money playing golf, sailing or socialising in pubs.

Ian Young

Late News

Thanks go to the Cotswold Section who hosted the St. Patrick's Night Quiz. The winners, by a one-point margin, were the Flat Tank Section, consisting of four members, five KOBIs, three Chairmen and three Secretaries. They forgot to lose by one point!

COTSWOLD SECTION CALENDAR - APRIL 2014 to JUNE 2014

April

2 nd	Mid-Week Social Run	The Aviator Inn, Gloucestershire Airport, Staverton, Cheltenham
2 nd	Mid-Week Rally	Andoversford Sports & Social Club, Templefields, Andoversford, Cheltenham
5 th	Felix Burke Weekend Social Run	Andoversford Village Hall, Crossfields, Andoversford, Cheltenham
6 th	60 th (Felix Burke Memorial) Cotswold Road Trial	Andoversford, Cheltenham
9 th	Mid-Week Rally	The Highwayman Inn, Winstone, Cheltenham
13 th	Breakfast Run to Three Shires Garden Centre at Newent	M&S BP Service Station, Barnwood Road, Gloucester
16 th	Mid-Week Rally	The Kings Head Inn, Birdwood, Gloucester
23 rd	Mid-Week Rally	The Lower Lode Inn, Forthampton, Gloucester
27 th	Summer Meeting	The Royal Spring Inn, Lower Lydbrook
29 th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
30 th	Club Night	The Hawbridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester

May

4 th	Founder's Relay Rally	The JetAge Museum, Meteor Business Park, Cheltenham Road East, Gloucester
7 th	Mid-Week Social Run	The Old Neighbourhood Inn, off Midway, Chalford Hill, Stroud
7 th	Mid-Week Rally	Free Car Park near Churchdown Club
10 th	Social Run to Devon Section's Scrumpy Run	The Duke of York Inn, Berrow, Malvern
11 th	Summer Meeting	The White Hart Inn, Broadoak, Gloucester
14 th	Mid-Week Rally	Denfurlong Farm, Chedworth, Cheltenham
18 th	25 th Cotswold Signpost Rally	

DEADLINE FOR JUNE 2014 NEWSLETTER

20 th		
21 st	Mid-Week Rally	The Beacon Hotel, Haresfield, Stonehouse
27 th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
28 th	Club Night	The Hawbridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester

June

4 th	Mid-Week Social Run	The Carpenters Arms, Miserden, Stroud
4 th	Mid-Week Rally	The Half-Way House Inn, Kington, Cheltenham
11 th	Mid-Week Rally	The Rising Sun Inn, Moseley Green, Parkend, Lydney
18 th	Mid-Week Rally	Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
24 th	Committee Meeting	The Hawbridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester
25 th	Club Night	
29 th	Midsummer Madness Breakfast Run to the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum at New Milton	M&S BP Service Station, Barnwood Road, Gloucester