

The Cotswold Section

of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club



Newsletter



Issue 90 – July 2013



Your editor at the Banbury Run 2013 trying to demonstrate the art of speed. Check the elements of converging lines, spoke movement and the steely look. Image taken by peterwilemanphotography.com where other shots can be viewed Reg Eyre KOB1, 01242-870375 (before 9.00pm)

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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.

September 2013 deadline is 20th August 2013

From the B190

The vintage motorcycling year has begun! The Felix-Burke/Cotswold Road Trial has taken place, the mid-week rallies are clogging car parks around Gloucestershire, the Signpost Rally had a reasonable entry and some of our Section's popular events are being readied as this issue goes out. Please see Dave's calendar and get those entries in. Various events in neighbouring counties are looking for riders to participate and the Western Region events are a good source of riding events.

Reg Eyre KOB

Letter to the Editor

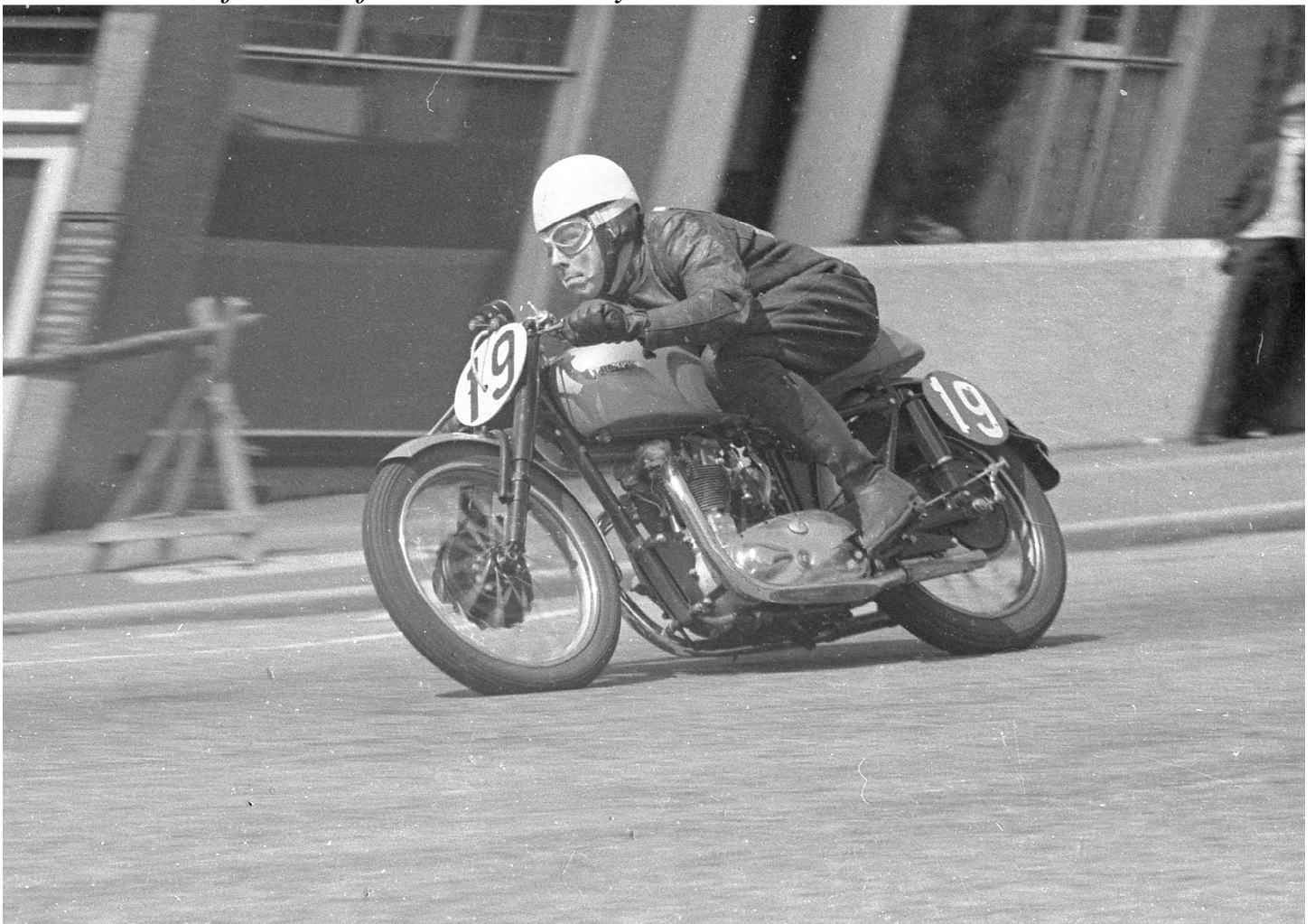
Hi Reg,

Attached is a picture of a racer named Tony Ovens on his way down Bray Hill to a fourth place finish (at 84+mph) in the 1954 Clubmans TT.

Do any of your members know anything about Tony Ovens, and, in particular, why Triumph would have provided a factory bike for him (unofficially, of course!) for this race. Was he perhaps connected with a local Triumph dealer or had he scored (and did he continue to score) successes with this or some other Triumph?

My interest is because I used to own the bike (it was the one on which I had my first race, in fact) and I would love to know more about its factory connection and its rider in 1954.

Bruce – Editor of Piece of Cake – Banbury Section



Hello Reg,

The mention of J.E.S. reminded me of the attached snippet I 'culled' from a copy of The Motor Cycle recently; one never knows when such might come in useful. Anyway, it may interest your readers.

The author of the piece was, of course, Ixion; from one of his 'Occasional Comments' compilations.

Kind Regards,

KenH

A Rare Bird.

The other day I met a *rara avis* in the shape of a motor cyclist who uses a motor attachment clipped inside the diamond frame of a pedal cycle. I had fancied that this species was practically extinct. His particular mount took the form of a J.E.S. attachment, and he thinks nothing of doing 120 miles in a day, of averaging 20 m.p.h. in the level Midlands, and of covering upwards of 150 miles on a gallon of petrol. His sole complaint is that the swinging pedals make extremely uncomfortable footrests on long rides—a weakness from which the earlier motor cycles suffered, as I well remember, and that the frame dimensions and construction do not readily lend themselves to the attachment of a pair of fixed rests in a convenient position.

Cotswold Week-End - Saturday Road Trial

Having been delegated to be Clerk of the Course for the main road trial on the Saturday (13th July), I thought a few details may be of interest to Section members; even if not taking part you may wish to visit the start, lunch or finish. In fact you may wish to marshal in which case I shall be pleased to hear from you.

Start: 10.00am Ragged Cot Inn, Minchinhampton 162/887012 (tea, coffee, bacon rolls available).

There is a possibility that coffee will be available at the morning checkpoint and a point of interest (still awaiting confirmation from venue of being open).

Lunch: The New Inn, Waterley Bottom, near Wotton-under-Edge 162/758963

Finish: Ragged Cot Inn.

The run is a road safety trial and will have checkpoints on route where questions related to the Highway Code and motor cycling history may be asked; there may also be passage controls where riders will be observed for correct route finding and safe riding. Remember this is a competitive event with awards so you have to do something to win them!

Because of the cross section of motorcycle ages and the type of terrain the route will not be a long one, (approx 35 miles each for morning and afternoon). There will be some narrow lanes and some hills but I have tried to avoid the longest and steepest. Anyone riding machines of the Reg Eyre preference who have concerns, please talk to me and I'll advise alternatives. I have tried to avoid busy main roads except where required for access.

Anyone wishing to assist as a marshal please give me a call 01452 750424.

Dennis Beale KOB

Hi Reg,

I enjoyed reading the Newsletter but I am not an active rider now, don't know why, but I enjoy restoring bikes rather than riding them.

Please find images of my latest project, 1962 Stella, 98cc Villiers engine, the bike was made in Ipswich, where I live, in the back of a caterpillar workshop in the evenings and weekends, only 8 are known to exist, of which this is one, they could have been bought in any colour you liked, so I have done this in Compair Reavell Blue.

If you are interested, look at: www.icenicam.ukfsn.org/

Robin



From our New Zealand Correspondent

As in most modern nations red tape is alive and thriving in New Zealand. Bureaucrats, traditionally better paid than their private sector equivalents, have contrived to make comfortable lives for themselves by confusing us mere mortals with regulations - probably brought ashore with Capt. Cook. The dawn of motoring brought endless examples.

When they discovered motoring as a source of income, local bodies were empowered to issue registration numbers and charge handsomely for the privilege. This meant that the same number could appear on different vehicles in different parts of the country. Cue more red tape. Eventually a unified system evolved but as we are dealing with the public service, this was not a *simplified* system. In place of a normal system of a number for the vehicle for life enshrined in a ledger somewhere and matched by a piece of paper on the windscreen to satisfy P.C. Plod, they devised a system of new number plates every couple of years issued after the payment of copious quantities of money. This meant that new types of number plates had to be devised in different colours, some with hyphens, some with commas, etc. The motorist not only had to screw on a new set of plates every two years he had to remember a new identity number. Nor could you make your own plates, one of the bureaucrats' mates made a fortune making them. By the 1960s a little sanity had arrived. As an aside, these early number plates have become collector's items and books have been published to inform modern generations that their forefathers were totally bonkers. Now a number would be issued for the life of a vehicle but it does mean that there is no easy trace of its early life and therefore no cult of antiquity of numbers such as there is in the UK. The only significant change was the switch to reflective plates in the 1980s.

A testing regime came into force in the late 1930s known as a warrant of fitness. This you will recognise is twenty or more years before the MoT in the UK but predicated on the same premise as safety and the saving of lives. (Not that the income derived from it was an incentive you understand.) In the early days a WOF was in the form of a printed and hand written luggage label tied to the car's steering column where it could be inspected by the aforementioned Plod. Today's WOFs are in the form of a label on the car's windscreen or visible on a bike as is the registration sticker (tax). Together with the requirement for the driver to carry his licence with him, it means that roadside legality checks can be carried out without the need to present yourself at the John o' Groats police station within seven days and its attendant paperwork for the Police. This is a system the UK could well adopt.

You will note no mention of insurance so far. Since 1974 when a world first accident compensation scheme was introduced for the protection of the driver's body it has been unnecessary to insure vehicles although I insure all of mine as most people do.

Personally I think it should be compulsory and a small sticker issued for the vehicle as in parts of Europe.

The current regime is for a new vehicle to be issued with a VIN on a plate screwed somewhere visible, a registration number with the usual plates fore and aft but only on

the aft of a motorcycle and a WOF each year for its first six years of life. Thereafter a WOF lasts only six months. Lately there has been a move to extend the annual WOF to twelve years, fought vigorously by the Motor Trade Association for whom WOFs are their pension fund. The historic movement is campaigning to have the regime relaxed for cherished vehicles. Trailers are separately registered and warranted.

The car costs about £145 pounds annually whilst a big modern bike around £300. Once a vehicle exceeds 40 years of age the cost drops to under half and my bikes, the biggest of which is 350cc, are about 57 pounds. The obligation to continuous registration is waived for 40+ year olds so layups are easy. Registration can be for three, six or twelve months so two of my three bikes are only registered for the summer. A WOF costs around 26 pounds for the car and 13 for the bike and trailer.

Paul Whitehead, Katikati, New Zealand

Message from Tony Page

Hi All,

Last September I organised a classic track day at Cadwell the day before a weekend of VMCC racing. It was a great success.

This year, on September 27th, I am doing it again.

There will be three ability classes, so it will be ideal for anyone and everyone reading these words: i.e. **You!**

Participants can bring as many (pre-1990) bikes as they wish; just book one of them in. It doesn't matter if you don't end up bringing that booked bike. Book on-line www.msvtrackdays.co.uk/classicbikes2013 or phone MSV on 0843 453 3000.

Be aware that there will be the usual 105dB noise limit and usual requirements: i.e. full motorcycle driving licence (both parts need to be produced on the day); one-piece or zip-together leathers; full face Gold Sticker helmet; boots; gloves. Overseas riders most welcome!

The cost is £99 and that includes free camping AND free entry to the weekend's VMCC / BHR classic racing event.

We all get there Thursday, so why not come along anyway even if you don't fancy a track ticket? Entry is free, so what's stopping you...

One last thing: I am not paid by MSV (or anyone else) to organise this track day - I do it because I enjoy riding round Cadwell Park on a real bike with real people. If you have always fancied doing a track day but haven't quite got around to it, now is the time.

Give me a ring on 01932 586955 or email me asingetalife@talktalk.net if you need further encouragement or any more details.

Tony Page

Hello Reg,

Regarding the photo of the Rollo in the May Newsletter– (did I send you that photo?) It looks suspiciously as though I did, but for the life of me I cannot remember.

Anyway, reason I ask is that I have a couple more of the same cycle-car. All were taken at The Morgan Three-wheeler Club's 'Opening Run'. Location is Bourton-on-the-Water.

Among the 'foreigners' present, was the 1910 A.C. Sociable that you can find attached which looks nicely patinated doesn't it and a peek into its engine compartment revealed – the engine! How about those two cooling fans, friction-driven off the matching twin-flywheels? A novel idea, but I note that one of the friction wheels is sans its friction material and has conveniently polished the flywheel's rim!



And, here's a true foreigner for you. It may look like a Morgan in most respects and, indeed, it was built under licence from the Malvern firm. But its carrosserie rather gives it away. Arguably somewhat sleeker than the English sporting versions this is a Darmont, constructed in Paris. Not sure whether the corpulent gent in the background of one of the shots is its owner but, whether or not, he would have to breathe in deeply to get behind that enormous steering wheel.

KenH

Out and About

Dave Giles enjoying the ford during the Signpost Rally



So good, he did it twice!

A Recent Mid-Week Rally in Miserden



From the Editor

Some time ago, I bought a scrapbook, which had belonged to Felix Burke, a well-known member of the Cotswold Section, and before that, the Secretary of the Western Region of the VMCC. The book was a collection of cuttings from *Motor Cycling* from 1942 to about 1945. I passed the book on and wondered if it should be in a library, such as the VMCC main library or the Cotswold Section library.

I have now been reacquainted with this book and found out that it had survived the fire and water damage when the section club hut burned down. It shows evidence of this event together with glue stains smearing the cuttings.

On re-reading the book, I realised that the main thrust of the articles presented are about Captain J J Hall, especially after he had suggested with the editor Graham Walker, "Why not a Vintage Motorcycle Club?" Graham Walker was offering to collect correspondence and ideas on the formation of such a club.

Captain Hall described his adventures in seeking out old machines and then passing them on to friends, or restoring and riding them in the company of others who had also found, restored and ridden these hidden gems. He had suggested forming a Collectors Club and I think I now own one of the badges – wonderful eBay!



The writing says:

THE COLLECTORS' CLUB

For
Historical
Motor Cycles

(If any older members can give us more information, I will publish it in the next issue. – Ed)

Most readers obviously enjoyed reading about the exploits of Captain Hall, but he began to generate letters from men fighting abroad who also wanted to discover machines for themselves and decried someone who sold on some of the finds. These men would still be abroad for a further three years.

By May 21st 1942, the editor, Graham Walker was outlining some ideas sent in by enthusiastic correspondents which included a clear demarcation between veteran machines which were to be stored on display in museums, and vintage machines for which “there is fine sport and a deal of education to be extracted from the models of the teens and twenties.”

By November 1943, some correspondents were accusing J J Hall “of low motives in acquiring old machines and passing them on to fellow officers.” In 1944, Hall was reconnoitring in France, Holland and Belgium and still writing for *Motorcycling*. The first record of a letter from C E ‘Titch’ Allen asking for support for a Vintage Motor Cycle Club was in November 1945. A fortnight later, an RAF corporal was disagreeing with the 1930 cut-off date for vintage machines and he suggested 1928 because from that date machines were being made with ‘modern’ petrol tanks and gaudy colour schemes.

The last entry in the Felix Burke scrap-book is March 1950, but no further mention is made about our ‘founder.’ Should we respect Hall and Walker as well as Allen in setting up the VMCC? Also, where should this scrap-book finally rest?

Reg



In among some papers I bought on eBay recently, I found this photograph.

Does anyone have any information?
– who, what, where, etc.
Please reply to the editor

Advertisement

While visiting the National Cycle Museum in Llandudno recently, I asked why they had a BSA Bantam on display. I was asked if I wanted to buy it! Allegedly, this machine was ridden into the museum and it has sat, on display for over 30 years. If you wish to make an offer, please contact Dave Roberts on 07952-722666. It is a D3 BSA Bantam 125cc, registration mark LJW492 and Mr. Roberts cannot find the paperwork. He is looking for about £500.

Did you know...?

In 1962 the VMCC produced a Year Book for its members. The President of the Club was Peter Moffatt, a leading light in our region. The 1962 Calendar of Main events consisted of 42 events and was printed on one sheet of paper. Harold 'Oily' Karslake had just died and was not only known for his 1902 Dreadnought but also as the main historian of the early days of the British Motor Cycle industry. The Banbury Run programme was printed in the centre pages and had an entry of 321 riders. Full membership of the VMCC was £1/0/0, with a joining fee of 5 shillings and Life membership was £5/5/0. The only motorcycle manufacturer to advertise in the booklet was BSA.

Thanks to Joe Fryer who owns a copy of this booklet

Making the Sparks fly!

Problems starting the bike? Invariably any persistent problem on this front is down to a spark problem. No mixture in the cylinder to burn does not help, but problems causing this are easily checked and fairly obvious. If all appears good on the petrol and mechanical front then concentrate on the spark.

(Tip: if you suspect a fuel feed problem, insert a teaspoon of petrol directly into the cylinder via the plug hole, refit the plug and give it a kick. If it fires then yes there is at least an occasional spark so assume a fuel problem). *(I mostly use Cold Start which is easily sprayed down the plug hole or directly into the carburettor inlet – Ed)*

Where do we start with the spark? Basics first every time.

Remove and check the plug. Try a new one to see if there is a spark. First set the gap to 0.016" (16thou, 0.4mm), then whilst holding the plug body to earth and kicking the engine over. (If you don't have a new plug then clean the old one with a wire brush being sure to clean down inside the body as detritus here will short the electrode out. Open the electrodes and clean their faces with a small fine file then reset the gap).

If there is a spark note the quality as here we have some important clues; is the spark regular or intermittent, is it yellow and thin or is it fat and blue? Is the spark regular at every turn or is it intermittent, sparking then not, then sparking again? Important clues which we shall discuss later.

If there is no spark then remove the plug cap from the lead and bare a little wire at the end of the lead; try it again with the lead held close to the engine. If it now works then a new plug and cap should fix it. *Dennis KOBİ* (to be continued next issue)

COTSWOLD SECTION CALENDAR - JULY 2013 to SEPTEMBER

2013

June

30th Midsummer Madness Breakfast
Run to Sammy Miller's
Motorcycle Museum
Free Car Park near Churchdown Club

July

3rd Mid-Week Social Run
The Butchers Arms Inn, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud
3rd Mid-Week Rally
The Butchers Arms Inn, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud
7th Summer Meeting
The Snowhill Arms Inn, Snowhill, Broadway
10th Mid-Week Rally
The Lower Lode Inn, Forthampton, Tewkesbury
12th 25th Cotswold Weekend - Social
Gathering
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
13th 25th Cotswold Weekend - Road
Trial
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
14th 25th Cotswold Weekend - Social
Run
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
15th Cotswold Touring Holiday
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
17th Mid-Week Rally and Barbecue
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
19th Veteran and Vintage Weekend -
Social Gathering
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
20th Veteran and Vintage Weekend -
Navigational Trial
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
21st Veteran and Vintage Weekend -
Social Run
Tobacconist Farm, Tobacconist Road, Minchinhampton
22nd 15th Anglo-Dutch Reliability
Trial and Touring Assembly
Cotswold Water Park Hotel, Spine Road, South Cerney,
Cirencester
27th
The Old Boat House Inn, Spine Road, South Cerney,
Cirencester
24th Mid-Week Rally
Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
30th Committee Meeting
The Haw Bridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester
31st Club Night

August

4th Sidecar and Three-Wheeler Run
The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester
7th Mid-Week Social Run
The Daneway Inn, Sapperton, Cirencester
7th Mid-Week Rally
The Daneway Inn, Sapperton, Cirencester
14th Mid-Week Rally
The Seven Tuns Inn, Queen Street, Chedworth,
Cheltenham
18th Breakfast Run - destination
venue - TBA + The Boat Inn,
Ashleworth
Free Car Park near Churchdown Club
18th Summer Meeting
The Boat Inn, Ashleworth, Gloucester
20th Deadline for September 2012 Newsletter copy
21st Mid-Week Rally
The Village Inn, Twyning, Tewkesbury
27th Committee Meeting
Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
28th Club Night
The Haw Bridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester

September

4th Mid-Week Social Run
The Royal Oak Inn, Andoversford, Cheltenham
4th Mid-Week Rally
The Royal Oak Inn, Andoversford, Cheltenham
8th Summer Meeting
The Walwyn Arms Inn, Much Marcle, Ledbury
11th Mid-Week Rally
The Gloucester Old Spot Inn, Piffs Elm, Cheltenham
18th Mid-Week Rally
The Bell Inn, Shurdington, Cheltenham
24th Committee Meeting
Churchdown Club, Church Rd., Churchdown
25th Mid-Week Rally and Barbecue
The Haw Bridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester

I have my bike back!

It was my birthday on Sunday and the attached picture shows what Jacqueline brought over as my present. Amazing.

I can't officially ride it yet as I am still waiting for the DVLA to decide whether I can keep my registration number or not. However, I did actually zap up the road and back on it – yes, dressed as in the picture wearing a skirt and posh shoes and no helmet!

As soon as I get it road legal I'll try to get up to show it to you – I know you saw it in Clive's shed but that's not the same as seeing it on the road.

Mary Roberts



Mid Week Rally at Naunton – Showing only those who could not park next to the pub or in the car park opposite – Photo by Roy Plowman

