

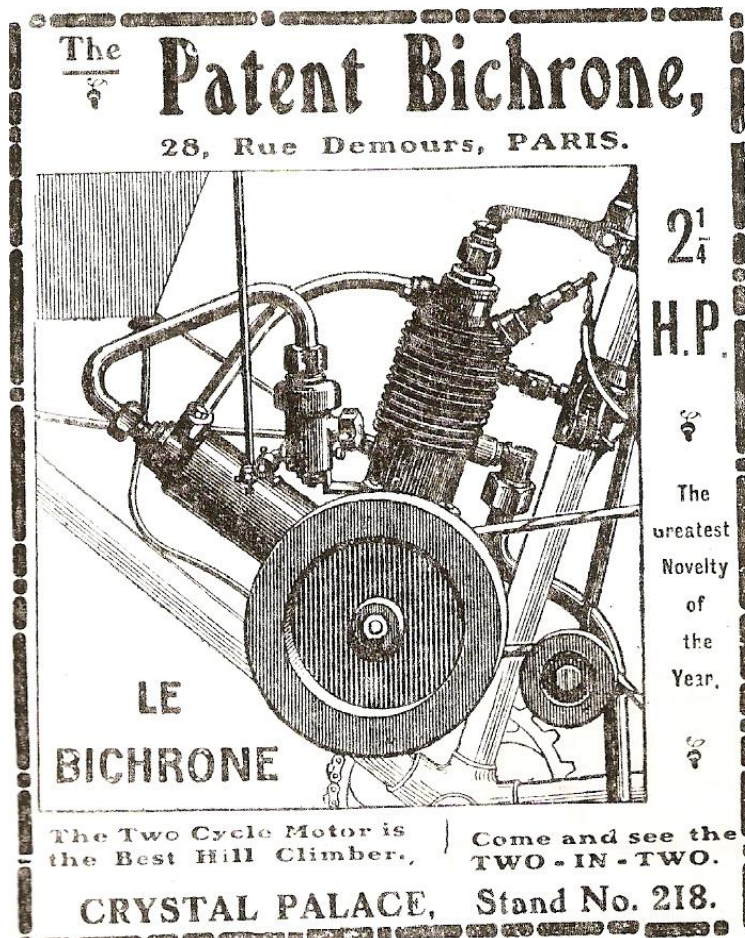
The Cotswold Section

of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club



Newsletter

Issue 82 - March 2012



A 'new two-stroke' for 1903 from The Motor, February 4th 1903

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the officers of the Cotswold Section or the Editor:

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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.

May 2012 deadline is 20th April 2012

From the B190

I am going to bring together some themes from ‘the past’ in this issue. Spring frames appear to have raised some interest, some notes from New Zealand, a collection of images from the ‘The Motor Cycle’ from 1911 and some current news. What is missing is something about the more modern scene such as the 1950s or the 1980s. If you would like to read about such things, please send some text or images to the editor.

Reg Eyre KOB

The Chairman’s FB adventure

After some time spent over the past months Brian finally decided that “The Gloucester Old Spot” should be the inaugural club meeting suited for an appearance of his 1927 Model 9 Super Sport Francis Barnett.

The day dawned bright and frosty and the FB duly got him to Piffs Elm in the nice bright sunshine. Bikes turned up from all directions in the nice weather and riders sat outside in the warm sun. A good chat and a pint of shandy ensued and even two more FBs turned up!



The time came for Brian and the FB to make for home and the engine fired up well, eager to please its master. Unfortunately, although the engine was willing, the back tyre inner tube was not and just after Staverton village, announced by a loud bang, a FB (Flat Back) tyre resulted.



Peter on his Triumph Daytona was first on the scene and Chris on his flat tank Sunbeam. After deciding it was a bit too far to push the FB back to Churchdown, Brian rang his wife who helpfully suggested that he might like to stuff the tyre with grass or at least that's what Brian said Louise said? After chocolate biscuit sustenance, produced from Chris's handy ration bag, it was decided that FB (Fast Breakdown) recovery was required. I suggested to Brian that "Hints and Tips" would recommend filling a pipe at this stage for a calm contemplative smoke but as he didn't smoke or have a pipe I don't think this helped as much as the chocolate biscuit! Once the breakdown recovery had been summoned Peter and Chris departed for home.

I expect that Brian got his FB back into his garage and thought you FB (Fickle Bike?) He now has to wrestle that beaded edge tyre off to fit a new inner tube.

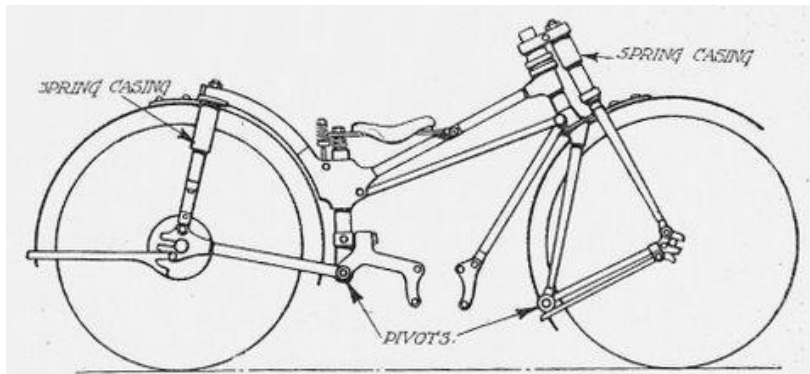
Welcome Brian, to the pleasures of Vintage Motorcycling!
CFR

The North wind doth blow and we shall have snow
And what will your flat-tank do then, old thing?
It'll stay in the barn
Wrapped up to keep warm
And won't be brought out 'til the spring, old thing!
Onja Bijke

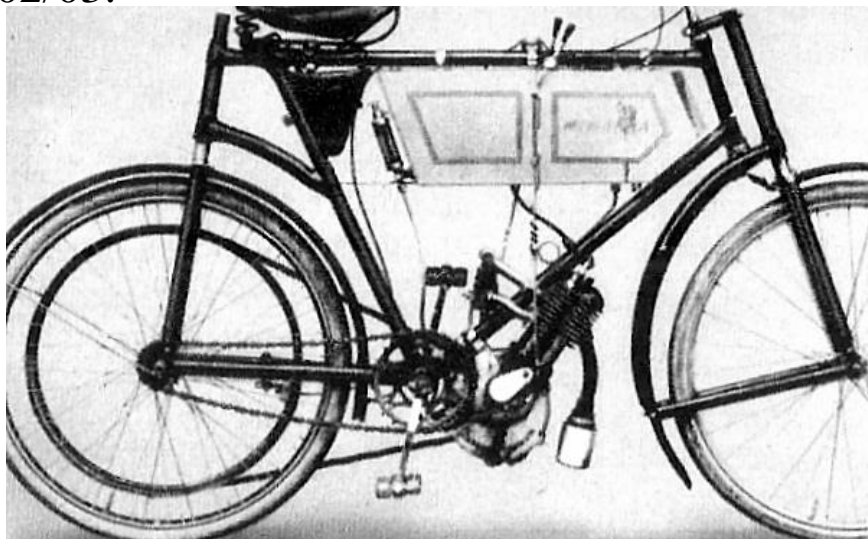
Spring Frames

It was for long a popular pastime, amongst motorcycle enthusiasts, to bemoan the lack of technical progress in design. Advances in reliability, performance, economy of operation, sophistication, comfort and the rest only seemed to come about, more or less, by pulling hen's teeth. Of course, mere 'users' knew little about what might have been going on behind the scenes. Perhaps there wasn't anything better to be had? Well, seldom was that true.

Take suspension systems for example – yes, I know I fed you Maplestone-Webb forks in a previous issue, but I will get off the same trolley after this one – progress there was pathetically slow for far too long. Yet, slap in the midst of the Vintage years the design you see here was up and running and ready to go. I suppose the lines of the drawing itself somewhat give away the era in which it was conceived but, be honest, wouldn't a machine much like this have been lauded as 'modern' in the 1950s? Thomas Ashburn's design was in fact revealed in 1926, and was said to be the outcome of 10-years experimental work.



Now, that is not difficult to believe, especially when I show you that Mr. Ashburn had patented and produced a prototype fully-sprung motorcycle way back in 1902/03.



His principles then had been the same. Pivoted arms, controlled by compression and rebound springs contained within telescopic tubes. Those long leading links at the front, pivoting on wide bearings connected to each

other behind the wheel, might well have inspired Ernest Richard George Earles of Birmingham, when he patented his own well-remembered and successful fork in 1951. Ashburn could, perhaps, have usefully incorporated some form of friction damping front and rear; an approach to Bentley & Draper would have readily solved that one. His additional seat-post springing of the saddle, meant 'comfort' plus, and the low seating position itself was very fashionable indeed at that date. If only a major manufacturer had taken it on; Think about it -

“The machine of 1950 here for you **NOW!**” What a sales pitch!

Back in Newsletter 76 - March last year - Darol Baker was recalling (lamenting?) how things once were with this Section. In particular, the last days of Hurrell Hall; or rather, the Phoenix version to be exact.

Maybe, more recent members will welcome this opportunity to view the VMCC Journal's publicity for, and events that accompanied the launch of, that considerable project on its official opening in March 1969. Come to think about it, at 40+ years ago now – *just about* every current member **should** be interested; for it is history in itself.

Kenilworth

UNREPEATABLE OFFER!

Available from 10.30 a.m. onwards on

SUNDAY, MARCH 16th

to any member of the V.M.C.C. is the opportunity to see the results of the COTSWOLD SECTION'S frenzied activities of recent months, when THE PRESIDENT himself will open the Section's new Headquarters in the grounds of

THE PLOUGH, at STAVERTON, near CHELTENHAM

(on main A.40 Gloucester to Cheltenham road)

— * —

ALL ARE WELCOME, PARTICULARLY RIDERS OF
VINTAGE MACHINES!

— * —

FREE Coffee and Biscuits — SOUVENIR PRIZE for the member travelling longest distance (as the crow flies) to attend — SOUVENIR PRIZE for “the motor cycle I would most like to own” selected from machines of members attending — MARKET STALL with ‘goodies’ on sale — DISPLAYS of motor cycle miscellania, photos, etc.

— * —

Well known personalities of the Vintage era will be in attendance

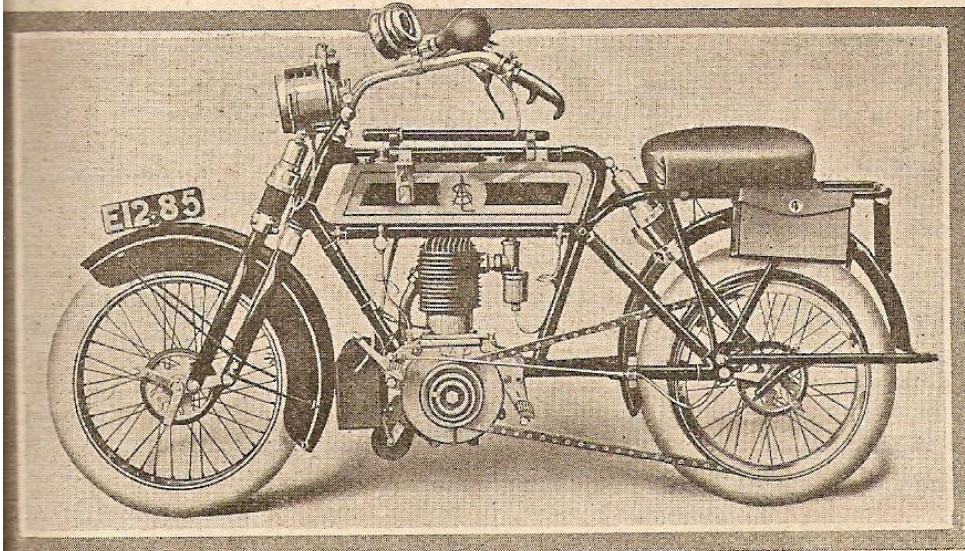
Licensed premises open from 12 noon — Refreshments available

— * —

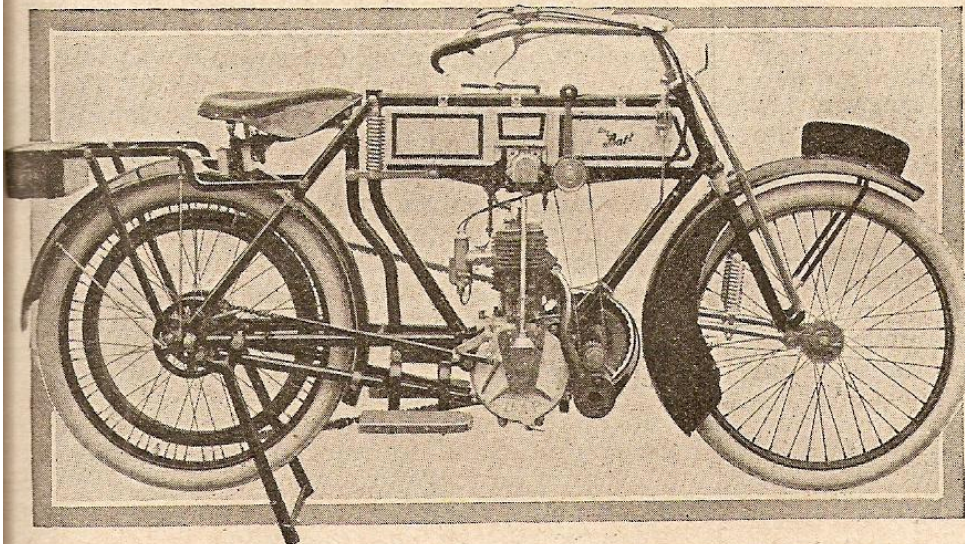
* DON'T MISS THIS GALA OCCASION . . .

NOTE THE DATE NOW!

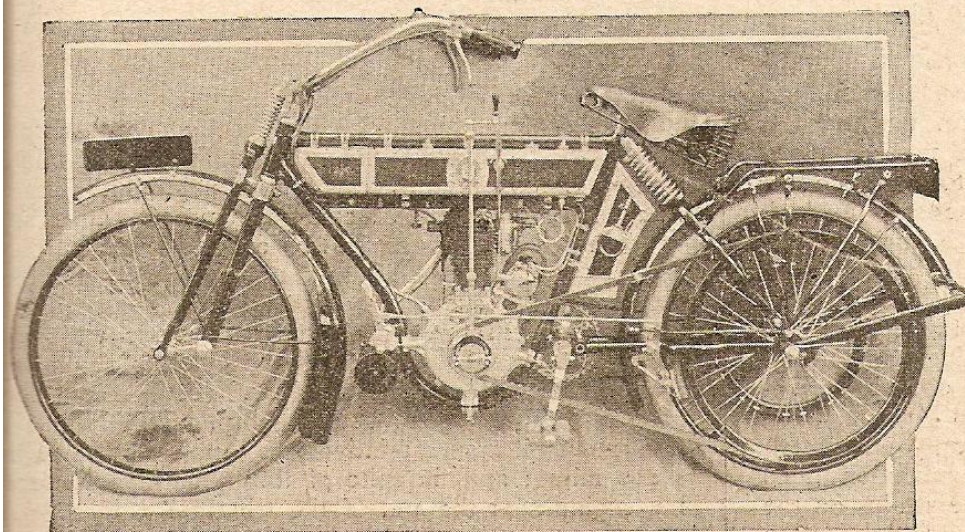
A Trio of Spring-framed Machines.



1912 model 3½ h.p. air-spring frame A.S.L.



3½ h.p. single-cylinder Bat-Jap with P. & M. two-speed gear and combined chain and belt drive.



The new 60 × 78 mm. 2½ h.p. loop frame single-cylinder N.S.U. with two-speed gear on engine shaft.

Some more spring offerings in 1911 from ASL, BAT and NSU

A True Tale of the Invisible Bertie (A Story from New Zealand – Ed)

Out riding in the countryside I happened upon this small bridge, which activated the old cogs.

As I stood looking over the rail there it was, the drop down to the creek, right angle turn, 20 yards of mud and the bank – " Berties' Bank".

Ah yes almost 60 years ago, washing the WW2 Flat Head BSA, here come the lads, Joe '38 Ajay, Tommy '36 Ariel and Bertie '39 Rudge with 21" front wheel and two port up swept pipes and he could ride it too.

Off into the wilderness Bertie soon took the lead. We stopped at this very bridge. Bertie had found the perfect trial section.

One by one we paddled through the mud, slithered up the bank and according to Bertie our scores were in the 100's. Okay Berties' turn, three neat circles on the road, three times through the section not even looking like a dab. Say no more.

We moved on, Bertie knew of a small underground mine we should visit. He led us by a railway station along a main road and up a side road to a level crossing.

Bertie pointed up the tracks to an overgrown cutting barely wide enough for an engine. Some 200 yards up it disappeared around a curve. The rails were set on sleepers 6" high and about 18" apart, hardly girder fork rigid frame territory.

Never the less Bertie would ride it and if a train should come, no worries Bertie would boastfully "ride the rail". Away went Bertie standing on the pegs 3 neat circles, bump, bump, bump soon out of sight soon out of earshot. Dead silence, deadly silence, no one spoke, ears cocked. Shit! The scream of an engine whistle!

Around the curve came the Rudge not 40 yards behind was the train. The Rudge was cracking along at around 25mph and true to his word Bertie was riding "atop of the rail". He locked up the back wheel and skidded over the crossing and disappeared down the road. The train hissed and rocked through the crossing with the driver leaning out of his cab waving his fist at us, his other hand still hard on the whistle. We caught up with Bertie at the turnoff stubbing out his third "North Pole" tailor made. Joe casually lit his pipe, blew clouds of smoke into the air and gesturing with the stem and a wry smile suggested we take the long way home!!

Roy Foster, Waikato Motorcycle Club, New Zealand

What did you do today?

Yesterday, Mary and I went into town and visited a shop. When we came out, there was a policeman writing out a parking ticket.

We went up to him and I said, 'Come on, man, how about giving a senior citizen a break?' He ignored us and continued writing the ticket. I called him an "asshole". He glared at me and started writing another ticket for having worn-out tyres.

So Mary called him a "shit head". He finished the second ticket and put it on the windscreen with the first. Then he started writing more tickets. This went on for about 20 minutes. The more we abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

Just then our bus arrived, and we got on it and went home.

We try to have a little fun each day now that we've retired.

Old Codger

Received by email from New Zealand

Hi Reg,

Please can you give me an opinion. My James two-stroke has been acting up, finally refusing to run at all. I have chased down every red herring I could think of until I cobbled together an external coil and battery arrangement and lo! She runs fine. The original Wipac arrangement is a small coil, behind a flywheel in which there are six magnets whizzing by the coil. (Actually there are three coils, the other two being lighting which don't work either - something you identified for me when you were here.) My query is: is there any easy way of testing the coil and also the magnets for guidance as to why it won't go that way? I have tested the magnets with a washer and each magnet brings the washer to attention. When I turn over the engine with the plug out I get a spark - but occasionally I don't, which is what led me to try the coil/battery setup. I can't convert to a full time battery and coil as there is no way of charging the battery and I have no way of knowing how long it would spark before the battery was flat. My only electrical instrument is a small multi-meter. Any thoughts?

Kind regards

Paul – Does anyone have suggestions? – I can forward them to NZ - Ed

2012 Felix Burke Weekend - 31st March, 1st April

Entries for this event close on 14th March. Please get your entry to Jenny Hart, 56 Wigeon Lane, Walton Cardiff, Tewkesbury, GL20 7RS by then.

Think Bike!

I used to have a Matchless
As made by AMC
A typical Brit Classic
Of nineteen fifty three

I rode it into work each day
At weekends it was fun
Though it was quite a heavyweight
And felt like half a ton

A long straight road, the morning bright
An ideal riding day
No idiots on four wheels in sight
Or walkers in the way

The engine purred and all was well
When suddenly in front
A car reversed across my path
I knew there'd be a shunt

Horrendous bang and I flew off
Across the gleaming roof
I somersaulted in the air
And landed 'on the hoof'

I rolled along the tarmac street
My helmet saved the head
Unsteadily I'm on my feet
And can't see any 'red'

By 'Crasher' Chippy

With nothing broken, lots of aches
It was a lucky strike
So naturally I went to look
At my beloved bike

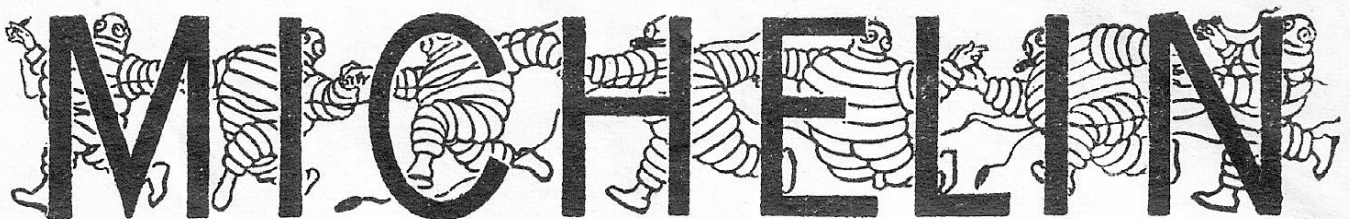
The wheel was twisted, front forks bent
The headlamp just a mess
But all the rest looked good as new
Repairable I guess

The driver climbed out of his car
No thoughts of "How are you?"
"My wife's" he cried "Brand new last week,
It's nearly cut in two!"

I said "You drove without a thought
That wasn't very bright
As far as consequences go
It surely serves you right"

The men in blue came on the scene
And cleared the cluttered ground
I caught the bus and thanked my stars
That I was still around

I got my bike back good as new
The driver got a fine
But what his wife said might not fit
The room in this last line!



One of a number of letter heads belonging to Colin Seaton

Festive Period Meetings



Boxing Day at the Royal Oak, Andoversford



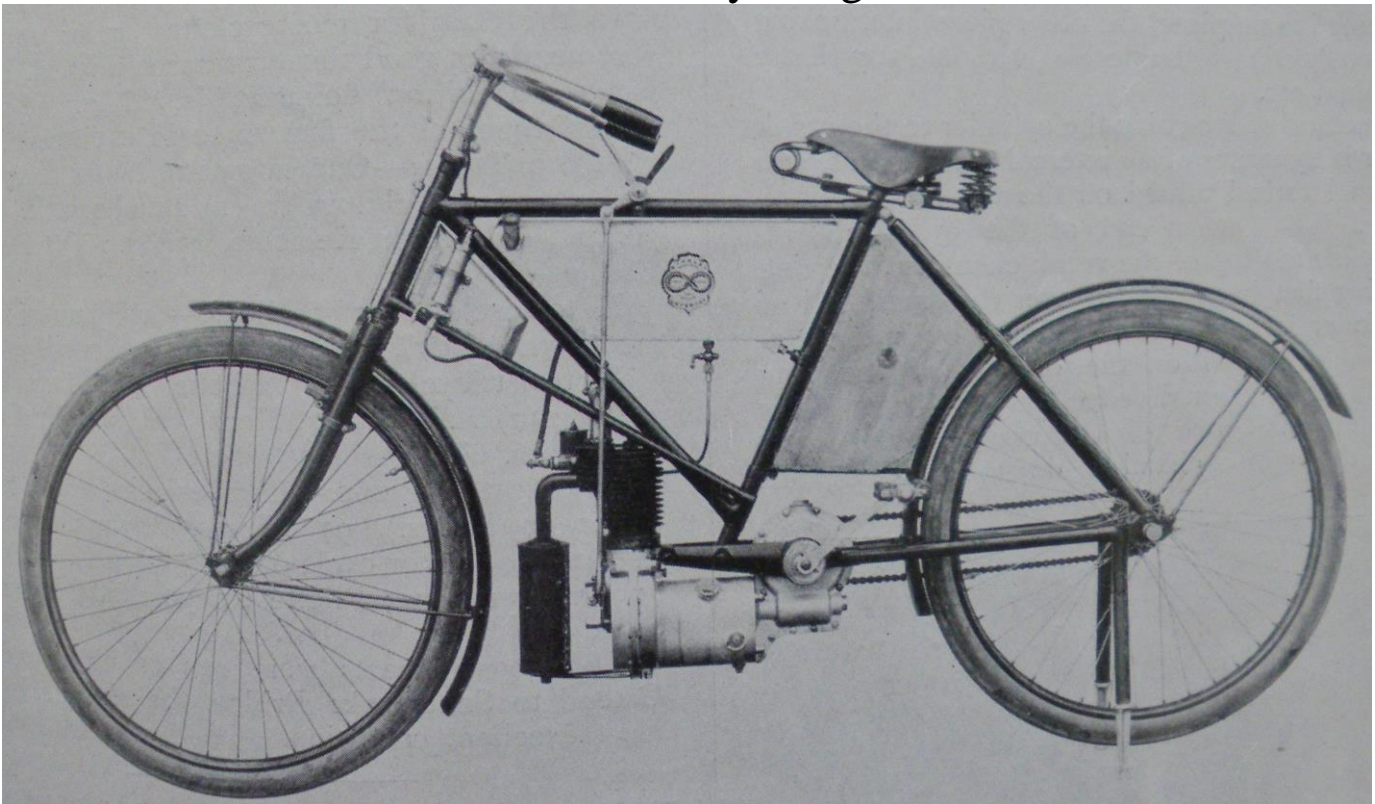
New Year's Day at the Daneway – A full car park!

Competition

Spot the differences – Thank you to Ian Young for these images



This is a 1903 Swift based on a Starley design



This is a 1903 Starley built by Swift

Which is the correct statement? Top image from BM-S 'Veteran Scene', bottom image from 1903 'The Motor Cycle'

Cotswold Section Calendar for March to May 2012

March

| | | |
|------------------|--|--|
| 7 th | "The Journey of a Lifetime", a sailing memoir - Patrick Howell | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 11 th | Winter Wandering | The Carpenters Arms, Miserden, Stroud |
| 14 th | St Patricks Night Quiz | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 21 st | Club Night | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 27 th | Committee Meeting | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 28 th | Club Night | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 31 st | Felix Burke Weekend Social Run | Denfurlong Farm, Chedworth, Cheltenham |

April

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| 1 st | 58th (Felix Burke Memorial) Cotswold Road Trial | Chedworth Village Hall, Chedworth, Cheltenham |
| 4 th | Mid-Week Social Run | The Haw Bridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester |
| 4 th | Mid-Week Rally | The Haw Bridge Inn, Tirley, Gloucester |
| 11 th | Mid-Week Rally | The Shutter Inn, Gotherington, Cheltenham |
| 22 nd | Summer Meeting | The Royal Spring Inn, Lower Lydbrook |
| 18 th | Mid-Week Rally | The Kings Head Inn, Birdwood, Gloucester |
| 20th | Deadline for May 2012 Newsletter copy | |
| 24 th | Committee Meeting | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 25 th | Club Night | Dowty Sports and Social Club, Staverton |
| 29 th | Breakfast Run to Bewdley | Dowty Sports and Social Club, Staverton |

May

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 2 nd | Mid-Week Social Run | The George Inn, Frocester, Gloucester |
| 2 nd | Mid-Week Rally | The George Inn, Frocester, Gloucester |
| 6 th | Founder's Relay Rally | The Aviator Inn, Staverton, Cheltenham |
| 9 th | Mid-Week Rally | The Seven Tuns Inn, Chedworth, Cheltenham |
| 12 th | Social Run to The Scrumpy Run | Dowty Sports and Social Club, Staverton |
| 13 th | Summer Meeting | The Drum and Monkey Inn, Upton-upon-Severn |
| 16 th | Mid-Week Rally | The Gloucester Old Spot Inn, Piffs Elm, Cheltenham |
| 20 th | 23rd Cotswold Signpost Rally | Denfurlong Farm, Chedworth, Cheltenham |
| 23 rd | Mid-Week Rally | The Daneway Inn, Sapperton, Cirencester |
| 29 th | Committee Meeting | Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown |
| 30 th | Club Night | Dowty Sports and Social Club, Staverton |