

The Cotswold Section of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club



Newsletter

Issue 103 – August 2015



The Banbury Run 2015, David Payne

In memory of Horace Chapman, 28.8.1904 - 25.1.1979

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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.

October 2015 deadline is 20th September 2015

From the B190

A small amount of history of a rider's machine, the first Saundersfoot Rally, an historic ride on Humbers, a KOBİ report on riding the Banbury and a rider's impression of a veteran Norton. Please read and enjoy!

Reg Eyre KOBİ

The History of my Veteran Motorcycle

This is the story of my veteran motorcycle, a 1912 Triumph Free Engine Model, or hub clutch as we generally know it these days. The model was introduced by Triumph in 1909 after they had patented their multi-plate metal clutch for the rear hub. Still a single speed belt driven bike but riding made easier by not having to 'pedal-off' or 'run and jump' to start, as most bikes were up to that time, although a stop to lower the gearing by opening the 2 piece engine pulley and shortening the belt were still necessary to accomplish an ascent of the steeper hills.

My Grandfather Captain Arthur Chapman who was in the RAF purchased the bike for £50 soon after the end of the Great War. He had previously been in the RFC based in Coventry, which is where the family lived. When he was transferred to RAF Henlow in Bedfordshire he used the bike to commute from his lodgings in Shefford and also to get home when on leave.



My Mother standing, with her brother Arthur and younger sister Vera

In the early 1920's he was posted to India and took the bike with him. On his return the bike was given to his eldest son, also called Arthur, to use. Arthur often rode the Triumph but eventually decided to purchase a new Humber motorcycle, so handed the bike down to his younger brother Horace.

The bike continued to be used regularly until in 1929, whilst riding along the Kenilworth Road in Coventry, Horace was stopped by a policeman who took objection to the loud noise the bike was making, Horace had, of course, been using the exhaust cut-out. He was told to take the Triumph off the road in no uncertain terms or the policeman would "run him in". Whether in fear of or respect for the police I don't know but my Uncle never rode the bike again, it was just left outside the house in the

back garden. As you can imagine my grandparents were not happy with him leaving the bike there and said he must either sell it or do something with it. My grandmother told him the dustmen had been talking to her and offered to buy it for

£5, but my Uncle would not accept less than £10 so to keep the peace he took the bike apart and stored all the pieces in the attic.

Then in 1938, with a move to a new home, everything was moved to the new attic. There it lay until the winter of 65/66 when on a visit to see my uncle I was informed that they were about to have central heating installed. I was pleased for them, as it was a cold house at the best of times. Whilst we were discussing the benefits uncle said the engineers would need the loft cleared so they could lay pipes. This was the moment when I first heard that amongst all the items stored up there, “just in case they were needed one day”, were the parts of a Triumph motorcycle. After I asked the obvious question uncle related the story of how it came to be there but went on to say that he was going to reassemble the parts and ride the bike again. Little did he realise how long it would take!

The attic was duly emptied and the bike parts placed in the garage ready for work to begin. As my uncle checked the items he discovered that various parts were missing and after a thorough search of the attic assumed that a box of parts must have been lost when moving home. What was he to do? (At that time he was unaware of the SMCC and the VMCC), how was he going to find the necessary parts that were needed? Well he decided that as Triumph Engineering in Meriden was just a few miles from his home in Coventry he would pay them a visit to see if they still had any parts for 1912 models. You can imagine the expression on the face of the security man on the gate when he explained the reason for his visit to the factory! He was directed to the offices but needless to say, parts for his bike were no longer available, though they did make one or two suggestions but none of any help.

Not to be daunted by the lack of success he wrote to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry who suggested that he contact a Mr. W. Hume stating that he was the VMCC Machine Registrar. So a letter was duly sent and the reply from Mr. Hume told him in no uncertain terms “*he had to join the VMCC*” and a membership form was enclosed. Mr. Hume also went on to say that - “*he had no Triumph parts at all being a BSA, Douglas and Royal Enfield specialist*”, but he gave the names and addresses of three VMCC members, including the late Colin Missen, saying - “*If anyone can and will help you it is one of this trio. They’ll probably try to buy your bike first mind!*”

Being given the name of Colin Missen proved to be the help he needed. Not only was Colin willing to help him with some of the missing parts but his enthusiasm and knowledge for old

motorcycles was infectious. He gave my uncle information about where items could be obtained and detailed instructions on the subsequent assembly. Even with this help though due to the

Triumph over adversity

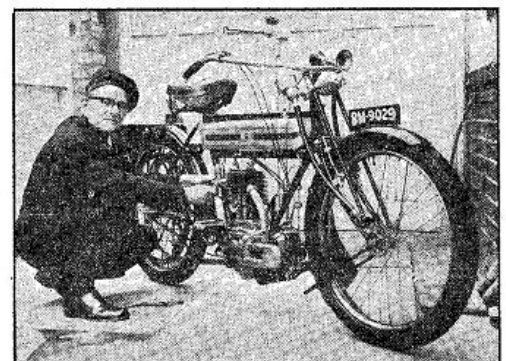
It was taken off the road in 1929 when its owner was warned by a policeman that the exhaust was illegal.

The errant lad riding it was told by his father to either sell it or put it in the attic.

Mr. Horace Chapman (right), of Coventry, now 71, accepted the latter option.

Ten years ago, he sneaked it out again and has been busy ever since replacing the many missing pieces and restoring the 1912 3½hp Triumph to its former glory.

At last it is ready for the road — this time with exhaust intact.



On the road again: Mr. Horace Chapman with his 1912 Triumph bike.

pressure of home and business the assembly took over 10 years. The bike was finally completed in 1976 and uncle was proudly photographed with the bike by the local paper. For some reason my uncle never started the engine, although he had promised the first ride to Colin for all his help, and the bike was kept under an old velvet curtain in the front room of the house. Sadly three years later in the winter of 1978/79 after clearing snow from the path he came back into the house suddenly collapsed and died.

Some weeks later I discovered that he had left me the Triumph in his will so the bike was duly collected and stored in my garage. At this point I have to say that because my parents had not allowed me to have a motorcycle my driving licence did not cover me to ride a bike, and as the Triumph is 499cc I had to purchase a smaller engine bike to be able to take the necessary test. Whilst this was going on I



still wanted to get the Triumph going and Colin Missen again came to the rescue being pleased to help with the timing of the magneto and instruct me in the finer points of riding a veteran bike.

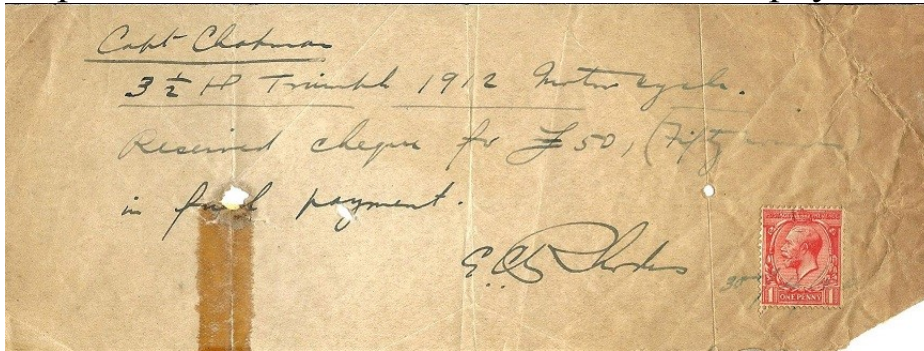
I then told Colin I would like to keep my uncle's promise to him and give him the first ride on the bike. He didn't take any persuading and after the bike had passed its MoT test it was entered for the 1979

Coventry Parade. Colin duly completed the

run with no problems and to my surprise was awarded the Triumph Cup by the judges. Having passed my motorcycle test I rode the bike for a year or two but then with business pressures had little time to use it and unfortunately, as we had moved house, the Triumph was relegated to an old barn and subsequently a shed in the garden, where it remained until 2004 when we moved home once again. This time it was at least kept in a dry brick built store however it's time in the barn and the shed had taken their toll and it was in a sorry state. When I finally got round to recommissioning it a few years later it obviously needed a considerable amount of work, so I took the decision to strip it down and completely rebuild it. A number of the nuts and bolts which had been fitted previously were not the original Triumph design and were replaced with the correct shape components, the frame, tank etc., repainted and the nickel plating re-done.

The restoration was completed in 2010 and has since been ridden regularly, however riding a bike with little power in modern traffic can, shall we say, be 'challenging'. The brakes are primitive, the front one being a bicycle stirrup type operating onto polished nickel plate – I call it my rim polisher! The rear one is the main brake but it has nowhere near the stopping power of modern vehicles so one always tries to leave plenty of room, hoping you don't have someone overtake and then decide to brake sharply. The rocking front fork can cause problems when

negotiating corners on uneven road surfaces but it does keep you concentrating on the road! Having said all that riding a veteran is a great experience and one I thoroughly enjoy. I have used it in local Warwickshire VMCC Section events as well as completing several Banbury Runs and SMCC Pioneer Runs. Much to my surprise it was awarded the Harold Scott Trophy at this years' Banbury Run.



£50 Receipt to Captain Chapman for the 1912 Triumph

My thanks must go to Colin Missen and Ian Jennings for all their help and advice during the restoration.

David Payne

Letter to the Editor

I was happy riding the Banbury Run, the weather was great and Reg Eyre's little 1929 250cc Ariel, which he kindly lent me, chugged along reliably, and although I got totally lost for over an extra hour, (riding an old bike and trying to follow directions at the same time is beyond my brain power), it was great fun and I even did Sunrising Hill in second gear (3 speed box) with no problems.

I have today bought a 1925 Light Solo Sunbeam from the same bloke who sold me the 95L.

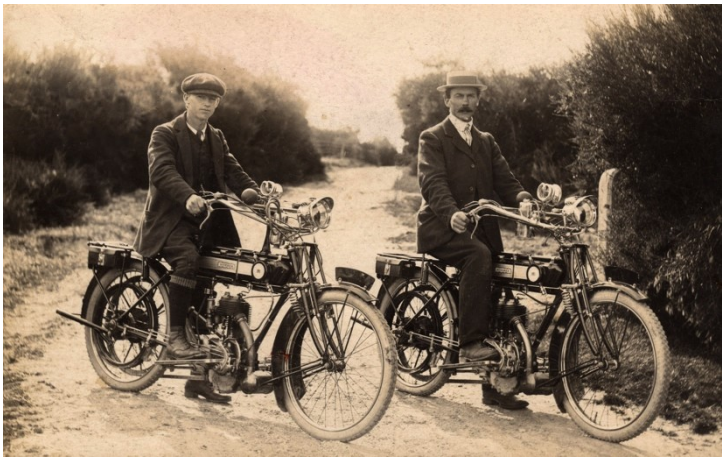
This is the second Sunbeam he bought in 1980 from a deceased's estate sale along with the 95L, however, unlike the 95L when I got it, this Light Solo is complete and in very nice conserved condition and so while I normally do a ground up restoration on every car or bike I buy, I may well decide to "Oily Rag" this one and just do what is needed to just make it reliably rideable.

Regards *Hans Deamer, USA*



Missed From Last Issue

Last year the VMCC magazine carried a short article about a major adventure for a couple of young New Zealanders, Eric Knight and Frank Russell, who rode in 1914 from Waipori, in Otago in the South Island of New Zealand, up to Nelson and back - about 1200 miles in total. Their bikes were 1912 Humbers and Eric's grandson, Ashley Blair, did the trip last year - also on a Humber, albeit a 1914 model.



This photo shows Eric and Frank before they set out and Ashley is particularly pleased to still have the camera used to take the photo. The second one is Ashley, riding a 1914 Humber in 2014

Simon Grigson

A Wished for Ride

In Issue 100, last February, Andrew Repton from Australia sent us the story of the restoration of his 1910 Norton. I put an editorial comment in asking if I could have a test ride. Well, Christmas came early for Reg! Andrew emailed me to say he would be coming to the UK, with his Norton, and offered me a test ride. (I think he had entered a number of other events while he was over here.)

We agreed to meet in the middle of June at my place, (he and his lady were staying at Cranham), and he brought the Norton, as promised. I had the talk about the problems with riding such a machine and how I would be one of very few to ride his Norton as we unloaded the machine. The preliminaries were very few and the controls were similar to other single speed, direct belt drive early machines so I set off with a push from Andrew.

I chose to go slightly uphill from our house to start the one mile test route from our house. The first few yards were interesting as I opened the choke and gently headed to the cross roads to turn left. The engine felt powerful with each pulse from the engine pushing the machine forward. Once I was on a straight, I opened the choke, then the throttle and away we went at an indecent rate so I was able to feel the effects of manipulating each control and experience the sensation of riding this 105year old veteran. Most of you know that my usual riding fare includes the gutless, under powered wonders of the veteran period and will realise what a change this was.

I rode past Andrew who was observing me from the drive of our house and hoped he would take some photographs to entertain you in the Newsletter. Each time, he was thwarted by cars coming in the opposite direction and obscured the shots he wanted to take. I had even posed the racing crouch which may not come out. It was great fun to accelerate up our hill without pedalling, as I have to do with some of my veterans.

I handed back the Norton to Andrew and suggested that he would have no problem with Sunrising Hill on the Banbury Run since there was so much power available from the Norton.



So dreams can come true! When I rode my 1928 Ariel for the first time, in 1970, I was aware of a slow revving motor cycle overtaking me. It was a Norton, just like this one, with John Moore riding it and laughing at my attempt to crouch down and go faster than the 50mph I was travelling at. Andrew's bike will also cause some riders to question why their 'modern' 1920's machines cannot keep going at the same speed as these 'old miracles' can.

Editor Reg

Thanks Andrew!

From our Overseas KOBİ Correspondent

I did many Banbury Runs; certainly one or two on my 1918 4hp Douglas and sidecar and I ended up in a ditch on my 1924 Light Sport Sunbeam during one of them, (with no damage to the 'bike or me). I could also have used a 1929 Model 9 Sunbeam, 1926 Model 5 Sunbeam, a 293cc 1913 Hazlewood or a Zenith Super 8. I remember Sunrising Hill, of course, and expending considerable energy on some machines to get to the top. I also had a 1924 Rudge Multi, which struggled. I doubt it was on one of the two Wall Auto Wheels that I had. Surely I would not have been such a 'Bloody Idiot' to attempt that?

I turned 71 this very day, (7th July), so lots of memories. I must say the Cotswold Section gave me a great deal of fun and companionship; I recall those days with great pleasure.

In some ways flying is easier and I can sit down in more comfort. I enjoy the



discipline of trying to fly as well as I can. It requires quite a bit of mental concentration to do things safely and with some finesse.

Please pass on my regards to all that knew me.

Bob Main KOB

I certainly **did not** do the Banbury Run on my AJS 7R!

Recollections of the First Saundersfoot Weekend, 1956

The first Saundersfoot run started in the corner of St. Michael's Square in Gloucester City: Peter and Audrey Moffatt lived in a first-floor flat there.

The run started badly for me, I got a puncture before we'd reached The Dog at Over. But Peter came to my aid, and we were friends from that day on.

Jean rode in the sidecar of Jack Lewis's Brough 6/80, and Audrey Moffatt was on his pillion.

The prize-cups in this first run were donated by a Saundersfoot businessman, and were 'outright': I still have mine.

The photo is of the winners. From left to right they are Cyril Palmer, self, Peter Moffatt, and John Cadogan from Newport (died last year).

My cup was for Meritorious Performance because my tank had split and I was obliged to carry bottles of petrol in my pockets.

For the return ride I chewed tablets of carbolic soap to soften them, and plug the split.

Jean and I had previously driven down in the Bugatti to see Dave James, and arrange some things.

How the place at Saundersfoot has changed over the years.

Fred Smith Senior KOB



Scene(!) at the recent Cotswold Signpost Rally



Anyone know details of the bike on the left? Or the Monopole?

Recent Mid-week Rally Venues



27th Cotswold Weekend – 11th / 12th July 2015

Dave and Christine Pritchard set a course that went through most of the scenic parts of the Cotswolds. The long route, (approximately 75miles), circled Cirencester, while the shorter route of 60miles found most of the flatter roads in a hilly area. A route card was issued, together with symbols tied to posts to indicate when riders should turn left, right or go straight ahead. Weather wise, it was almost perfect with some drizzle and not too hot for the older engines. With an open helmet, it allowed the riders to enjoy the villages where flowers gave each village a scent. Well done Dave and Christine!



At the start in Chedworth

At the coffee stop in Cerney Wick

My longest ride, (well not quite!)

1963, and I was busy campaigning a 1923 SD Triumph and a 1911 Indian. The Cotswolds Road Trial was old hat by this time and considered 'local'. So, looking for a bit more adventure I plumped for the Colwyn Bay Rally on the 26th May. My SD had electric lights and a mag-dyno, but they never worked properly – electrics were a black art to me at the time, (not that I know much more nowadays.) It's always been a case of 'if you can't see it, then it must be magic'. So, it was a case of ride the bike to Colwyn Bay and back – we used to do things like that in those days. No such thing as a trailer, at least I didn't have one at the time. Back to the SD – it normally pulled a sidecar and had a 14-tooth engine sprocket, which was a touch low, geared for a solo ride. A raise of gear ratios would give the bike longer legs and hopefully a better turn of speed. In my box of bits I found a 17-tooth model H engine sprocket. The problem was that the H sprocket was for a 5/8 x 3/8 chain and the SD used a 5/8 x 1/4 chain. Luckily the H sprocket was soft enough to machine in a lathe, so it was skimmed down and fitted to the SD.

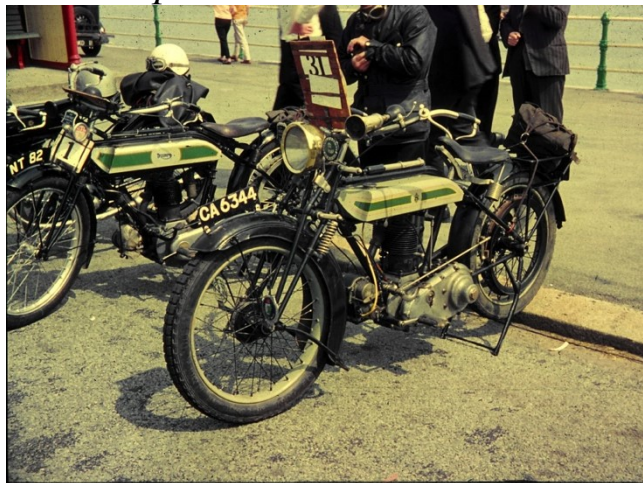
The ride had to be done during daylight hours; so some planning was called for. Late May and we had some long days and a start was set for 5am. I reckoned that I could just do it in a day, as lighting up time was well past 9pm. My life long pal, Tony, decided to come with me and he was to ride his 1958 BSA Road Rocket. We met up and were soon on the road just after 5am. The route from Cardiff was Newport, Monmouth and then the A49 straight north to Shrewsbury. From there we picked up the A5 and headed for Llangollen and on to Bettws-y-coed and through Snowdonia to Colwyn Bay. The run started at 12noon, so we had the best part of 7 hours to cover the 190 miles to North Wales. The SD settled into a steady 35/40mph with Tony and the Road Rocket following. I can well remember Tony on the Rocket blasting past a few times – just to blow the cobwebs out, he said. Luckily he didn't notice the accumulation of oil all over himself and his beloved Beeza from the exhaust mist chucked out by the SD.

I can't remember just how long the journey took but we arrived in plenty of time for me to sign on and get ready for the noon start of the run. Looking through the programme now there are quite a few names that I recognise – Alan Doughty, Geoff Hayes, Jim Boulton, John Moore, Archie Beggs, Ron Cresswell, Evan John Williams and Walter Green. Walter was riding his beautifully restored 1913 BSA. I was number 31 of the 55 entrants and we had a 50 mile road trial to complete. That seemed shorter than it actually felt, as my recollection is that the roads were pretty rough. Soon back on the promenade at Colwyn Bay it was a case of wandering off to look at some of the Vintage cars that had turned up to put on a display. I took a few photos and on returning to the SD found that some toe-rag had stolen my nickel-plated tyre pump that was on the top bar of the frame.

A Frederick Hargreaves, who lived in Ruthin, had bought the SD brand new in 1923 and as we were travelling back home, I thought it would be nice to take the bike back to show him. In 1955 Fred Hargreaves had part ex-ed the bike, along

with a 1919 Model H into a local dealer for a new Triumph Speed Twin. I had the address of Fred from the original logbook and without any further information, and as Ruthin was on the route back home Tony and I decided to divert to find the address in the hope that Fred still lived there. We found the address easily enough and Fred still lived there. He was quite taken with the fact that someone was still using his old bike, let alone had bothered to called on him to show him the bike again. We didn't get to talk for too long, as the day light hours that were left made it a bit tight to get home before dark – but we made it without any problems at all. The bike clocked up 440 miles that day.

Bill Phelps



Dennis Beale KOBIs asks...

Does anyone know anything about this engine?



It was part of the Cobbing cobweb collection.

Dennis also sent an obituary for Joyce Cobbing, which mostly appeared in the VMCC Journal. Sadly, the Section has lost several long-term members through old age and infirmity. It may be that we are not good at recording the past when these members depart this life.

An Apology

In the VMCC Journal, under Flat Tank Section Notes, I gave Granville Bradshaw a knighthood. He was honoured with an OBE but was never knighted by the Monarch. Knowing how much Tony Wright KOBIs² admired him, I had awarded him a KOBIs since Tony has two. I apologise for making an error. *Editor Reg*

COTSWOLD SECTION CALENDAR - AUGUST 2015 to SEPTEMBER 2015

August

2nd	Sidecar and Three-Wheeler Run	The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester
5th	Mid-Week Social Run	The Red Hart Inn, Blaisdon, Gloucester
5th	Mid-Week Rally	
9th	Summer Meeting	The Carpenters Arms Inn, Miserden, Stroud
12th	Mid-Week Rally	The Farmers Arms Inn, Guiting Power, Cheltenham
19th	Mid-Week Rally	The Red Lion Inn, High Street, Arlingham, Gloucester
23rd	Breakfast Run to Weston's Cider Cafe at Much Marcle	M&S BP Service Station, Barnwood Road, Gloucester
25th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
26th	Club Night	The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester

September

2nd	Mid-Week Social Run	The Highwayman Inn, Beech Pike, Elkstone, Cheltenham
2nd	Mid-Week Rally	
9th	Mid-Week Rally	The Shutter Inn, Gotherington, Cheltenham
13th	Summer Meeting	The Walwyn Arms Inn, Much Marcle, Ledbury
16th	Mid-Week Rally	The Kings Head Inn, Birdwood, Gloucester
20th	DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER 2015 NEWSLETTER	
29th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
30th	Mid-Week Rally and Barbecue	The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester

October

3rd	32nd Cotswold Evening Trial	The Aviator Inn, Staverton, Cheltenham
4th	21st Belt and Braces Run	The Cottage, Hartlands Hill, Minsterworth
7th	AGM / Bring and Buy Sale	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
14th	Section Library - Viewing Night	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
18th	Winter Wandering	The Half-Way House Inn, Kington, Cheltenham
18th	Social Run to Engine Society Open Day at Sevenhampton	The Half-Way House Inn, Kington, Cheltenham
21st	Guest Speaker - Chris Witts My Life on the Severn	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
27th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
28th	Club Night	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown

32nd Cotswold Evening Road Trial

Saturday 3rd October 2015

The Aviator Inn, Staverton, Cheltenham

Regulations and Entry Forms available soon from Brian Keeling,

01452 712753, briankeeling@btinternet.com