

The Cotswold Section of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club



Newsletter

Issue 100 – February 2015



An image of Pa Norton, standing between the Senior and Sidecar Tourist Trophies in July 1924.

Standing on the right is Walter Moore who developed the Norton OHV design into a racer.

This was Pa Norton's last public appearance. He died within the year.

(Image from Jim Reynolds – Pictorial History of Norton Motorcycles, Temple Press 1985)

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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.

April 2015 deadline is 20th March 2015

From the B190

This is a 'special' issue on the Norton motorcycle. As editor, I am easily swayed by a number of articles based on a theme such a make of motorcycle, articles on touring, restoration or general history. There were two Nortons which made an impression on me and they were the BRS model and the 500T, both of which are featured in this issue. Shall we try to make the Ariel the feature for the next issue?

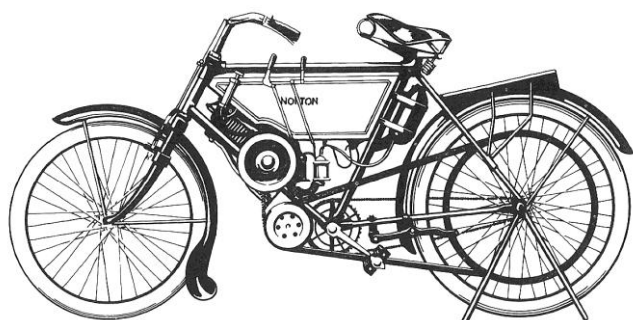
Reg Eyre KOB1

Norton

In the beginning was the Energette. Mr. Garrard imported the engine and he also had heavy-duty frames made to support the relatively heavy engine. Mr. Norton was duly impressed and ordered several to which he added an under-slung two-speed gearbox and called them The Energette. I had a 142cc Clement engine which was fitted into a bicycle and this machine ensured that my leg muscles grew disproportionately. I had not thought of adapting a gearbox!



On the left is a clement engine bicycle and on the right is an advertisement for the Clement-Garrard which had the stronger, heavier frame. Pa Norton sold both single speed and two speed machines under the Energette label.



It is known that several of these machines were supplied to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1902. It is also obvious that there was close cooperation between Garrard and Norton. Norton soon made their own engines.

I put two images of a flat tank Norton in a recent issue of the Cotswold Newsletter. The machine shown belonged to Andrew Repton, one of our Australian readers and he has written the following about his machine and how it was restored.

“I have attached a copy of the article that Eric Langton wrote on restoring my Norton The Norton will arrive in the UK in late February and then we will ride the Pioneer and the Banbury Runs. I will try for as many other runs as I can get to in between touring around, and so I have made enquiries about the Coventry to Brighton Run so far and will try that one if time permits. It is a fantastic bike to ride and very quick with long legs. It is fitted with a Philipson pulley that is a problem in the wet as the belt cannot be tightened up, so I'm going to cast an alloy spacer that will lock the outer flange and allow the rear wheel to be pulled back and tighten the belt. I spent a lot of time with Eric Langton, the previous owner, talking about pattern making and casting and now do all my own patterns and casting here at home. All as the factory made them. I also own the other 1910 Norton with a Nortoroc hub, (Roc hub made especially for Norton), that Eric talks about in the article and I am working at it slowly. I have not found another one anywhere, but I have found three engines.

We are throwing the idea around about bringing over three veteran Nortons and having a go at the Dutch horsepower run. If all works out we could bring two single speeders like my 1910 and a 1908 or 1902 like mine, and the Roc hub machine.”

Regards Andrew

My Unapproachable Norton –Eric Langton

It was in Adelaide, while there for the 1974 National Rally that I first saw the Norton. Quite a large contingent of members of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club of Western Australia had made the 1750 mile trip across the Nullabor Desert to attend the event which was run as a Hub Rally, so we were all back in Adelaide each night. It was late in the week that Doug Bennetts, the president of the local Vintage Motor Cycle Club, invited all motorcycle entrants to his home for a barbecue evening.

There was a lot of food and gallons of grog, but his shed and bikes were firmly under lock and key when we got there. However, as the night wore on, and the hospitality was soaked up, Doug was prevailed upon to let a few of us into his shed. There was a splendid array of beautifully restored Nortons up to about 1930, but what caught my eye was a belt driver, obviously an early one, lacking an engine, but otherwise just about restored. It had a straight top tube frame, separate lug where the lower tank rail joined the front down tube. I had only ever seen one other Norton with a similar frame, a 1908 model that Reg. Hancock, of Adelaide, was riding in the rally. It had a trailing rear brake shoe and the Norton name embossed in the tank— a la Rem Fowler Norton—and lamp bracket Druids. I couldn't take my eyes off it. When I did, there, hanging on the wall behind the workbench, was another one just like it but unrestored. I just couldn't believe my eyes, but immediately resolved that I had to have it. When quizzed later about the hold up with the belt driver, Doug said that he had two engines but only one crankcase, and that was useless. I straightaway said, “How about I make you a crankcase and you give me the unrestored bike?” and he agreed just as promptly.



Back in Perth with what remained of the old crankcase, I got a quote for a set of patterns—\$400 whew! That's £200 and just the beginning, so I decided to have a go myself. Way back in the mid-1920s, while serving my apprenticeship as a toolmaker, I had done a two-year stint in the pattern shop and enjoyed every minute of it. During my racing days I had kept my hand in making crankcases for my own J.A.Ps in better alloys, and also narrow valve angle cylinder heads. More recently I have made C.I. pistons for most of my veteran and vintage restorations. The patterns took about two weeks, the most time consuming bits were the capital letters for the timing side name.

I fluked the pulley side ones, lead letters from some old patterns at the foundry seemed to be just the right size, from what could be recognised of the name on the old, battered, corroded, and woefully thin original case. I got two sets of castings by Christmas, about 10 weeks after making the rather rash offer, and then it was how to set about machining them on my 5.5inch centre lathe. For a start I made four detachable, adjustable jaws to fit my 14inch faceplate and turn it into a four-jaw chuck. That took care of the mating faces and bearing bores. The next move was to make a dummy timing case cover in C.I. about 5/8in. thick, with drill and reamer bushes for the cam- wheel centres and locating from the main bearing bore. Having no access to even a milling machine, the jig boring had to be done using the time honoured method of toolmakers buttons, something I hadn't done since apprenticeship days. The drill plate for the cylinder holding down stud holes had to be done in the same way, locating from the cylinder spigot bore, which I did on a Buma cylinder borer—a leftover from my speedway engine maintenance days. I had the finished job bead blasted and, though I say it myself, "It looked like a bought one".

I packed it up and railed it off to Adelaide and awaited developments. A couple of weeks went by without even an acknowledgment of arrival, so I sent off a tentative enquiry and still nothing. A few weeks later I wrote to a bloke whom I knew did some restoration work for Doug, and weeks later got a letter from Doug's wife, at least it had arrived, but no mention of my Norton bits. I attended the unmatched atmosphere of the Banbury Run, where riding Oliver's 1903 London/ Edinburgh Rex, with a score of 142 years, I was awarded the Percy Wheeler Trophy.

I couldn't wait to get at the packing case, which had arrived unheralded while we had been in the UK. There it was, all that I had expected though the belt rim looked too small and the good-looking tank had later looking filler caps, and a bonus of a 1910 Bosh mag., but no carburettor. It didn't take long to replace the broken front down tube and lower tank rail. I resisted the temptation to leave off the magneto platform support rod lug—the '08 and '09 had a clip—but put it back just where Mr. Norton had put it, i.e. where the rod had to be bent to meet

it, so that meant 1910 or later. The slotted rear fork ends, a carry-over from 1909 when pedalling chain adjustment was needed, had originally no provision for a stand—neither '08 or '09 had a stand—but a very professional job had been done of brazing matching slotted plates inside the fork ends carrying a boss below for the stand to pivot on, not the double lug type into which the stand fitted, that came later. The front forks were in a sad state; the lower spindle had almost worn its way through the lug in the girders, and one fork end lug had been changed for a later one, i.e. one with a separate boss and tapped hole for the mudguard stay mounting. As I had by me an almost identical pair of girders in good shape, I put the older ones on one side for later renovation.



And then on to the engine, the 82mm bore cylinder was in excellent shape needing only re-boring and new guides, and one fin had to be built up. I had already made a pattern and corebox for an 82mm piston for my 1907 82mm x 86mm Triumph—still not completed as the cylinder is very sick—and had had several castings made, so I machined up one of these. The con-rod was a problem, the small end bush had worked its way out and forced the rod against the drive-side flywheel and the rod was worn away almost to the centre web. I decided to try to recover it by welding and enlisted the aid of the local Entectic demonstrator. Using a low temperature process quite new to me he built up the rod by pre-heating locally to a just visible red, blowing the steel powder on and then heating the powder to melting point. The finished job was fantastic and required little or no fettling at all, and if it had been my wife piping a cake with icing sugar she couldn't have done a neater job. The demonstrator, a Londoner from Wembley before emigrating here, had been a fan of mine when I had made my periodic appearances for Belle Vue at the Empire Stadium. Now I'm a fan of his. I thought the main shafts at 3/4 inch dia. were woefully weak and as they had to be replaced. I opted for lighter series ball races, which would take 1 in. dia. shafts. Unfortunately in shrinking in the new drive side shaft the flywheel showed a crack between the crankpin and main shaft holes. I made a pattern and had one cast in grey iron and machined it up to match the T/side one. Making a pair of flywheels is one thing but making a new one to match an old one is something quite different, and I had to very carefully measure the stroke. So don't try to tell me that Mr Norton didn't make an 82mm x 94mm engine! I know Nortons themselves had no record of it when they were approached around 1956, but Mr Norton had put his name on my flywheels in inch high capitals. The original cam-wheels were like the front forks, almost worn away, and had been built up by welding more than once. Luckily, the cam-wheel centres and pinion dimensions of this engine carried over into the 79mm x 100mm engine, so with very little modification to the cam levers—the later cams themselves were smaller—I was able to use 16H cams.

The magneto chain case cover with those pot bellied "Os" in the Norton name, quite unlike

those pressed into the tank, is well illustrated on the Norton version of the Rem Fowler Peugeot T.T. twin, but that wasn't quite enough to go on. So, Reg Hancock in Adelaide, whom I believe has the only single cylinder Norton with an original detachable mag. chain case, was prevailed upon to remove it from his bike and loan it to me. I was astonished to find that both halves were pressings in 80 grade aluminium.

I hand-formed a pair of cases for patterns in 8G aluminium and had four pairs cast, one pair for the bloke I got the bike from, one pair for a 1910 82mm x 120mm Big 4 here in Perth under restoration, and two pairs for myself. For the name I made a die from a rubbing of Reg's cover, into which I pressed 220 annealed aluminium with a rubber pad in the vice and achieved an excellent result after half a dozen or so goes. With these trimmed to fit the recess and bonded in place with "Plastibond", the covers would pass muster under the closest scrutiny. Don't tell anybody, nobody else knows that they are not really pressings or even that they should be. The original mudguards, which came with the machine, were battered but substantially sound, and I was able to recover them using a wheeling machine that I had made years ago in order to make a set of mudguards for my 1914 Swift Cyclecar. "D" section 26 in. x 2 in. x 21 in. rims are obtainable from Japan, and I get mine undrilled and re-rolled then to drop-centre pattern so they were no problem. The belt rims, however, are unobtainable here, and when in England for my brother's funeral, I talked to two people who offered them for sale without learning very much from either. I was completely in the dark when I started to have a go. I decided to try the method I had used to make the mudguards, i.e., welding a flat strip into a hoop and then proceeding to roll in the form. I had a pair of rollers that I had made to iron out the belt groove in a crushed Model H belt rim for my 1915 T.T. Triumph. With the female roller mounted on the lathe spindle and the male one on the tool post, I quickly had a V groove deep enough to take a "C" section belt. The trouble was the rim was miles out of round and had a bit of a wiggle in it at the weld, as this had tended to let go at the narrow edge. I should have stopped and re-welded but it was going so well that I just had to press on. I thought I could have got it a bit nearer round by putting all my weight on it but even though this first one was only 22G my 11stone didn't even flex it. The third problem was that it had grown about 1 in. in diameter. I added another roller, two male and one female for the next attempt, and that did the trick with a stop halfway through to touch up the weld.

The next move was to try 20g and that proved to be as much as I could handle. When trimmed and flanged for the short mounting spokes—yes the '08 and '09 adverts show short spokes—and the addition of the usual lightening (?) holes, I had a serviceable belt rim. Some previous owner had explored the internals of the oil compartment by cutting out the side and then soldering a rough patch over the hole. A good thing I removed it as the sand and oil had set in a mastic-like mass that couldn't have been removed otherwise. I made up a carburettor from various contemporary B & B bits that I had, rebored the mixing chamber and built up the slides. The B & B control levers had an unusual spring-loaded plunger and serration stiction system like Triumphs introduced for their twist grips just before the World War (was it 1937?).

So with most of the problems ironed out it was just a matter of getting it all together, which I managed with a week to spare before our 360 mile Two-Day Trial. The Club examiner came over to vet the bike for concessional licencing, the Traffic Branch accepts our word for roadworthiness. He gave me a push and away she went. He did a couple of laps round the block too, sans number plates and licence disc; well he had to test it, hadn't he?

I put the finishing touches to the bike during the week, but of course at 73 couldn't push start it alone from cold. On the Saturday morning I got a push from a neighbour for the one mile run to the start of the Two-Day and that's the entire running it did before setting off for the 360 mile event. There was a slight whine from the timing gears for the first few miles, and as the

engine freed off the mixture seemed a bit on the weak side. I had made the jet the same size as a Model H Triumph, and that's for 550cc but, with the petrol level so far below the choke tube, carburation can only be anything but automatic.

Well on the way back with about 300 miles up, I gave the motor a bit of a burst only to be disappointed with the seemingly sluggish response. I soon forgot about that as with about 30 miles still to go the threatening rain came down, and the belt slipped and slipped. The bike had run perfectly throughout and with its 56in. wheelbase—surely one of Mr Norton's "Ferrets"—had given me a good, comfortable ride, and with its approximate 63° head angle steered extra well in a straight line. However, I had been concerned that it seemed to be consuming far more oil than the half pump I was giving it every 15 minutes, but all was explained when I drained the oil next day and almost a quart came out of it, no wonder it was sluggish. The spring-loaded ball valve under the hand pump was being opened by the crankcase depression, the breather had worked too well, and the engine was helping itself to oil. Simple cure - stronger spring. So what about dating it. Well, I have definite proof that it isn't a 1909 machine that had pedals, an external hand oil pump at the front of the tank and a clip on the front down tube for the magneto platform support rod.

"Old Miracle" has a 79 x 100 engine, an internal hand oil pump at the front of the tank and a head lug, which extends below the lower tank rail. Its engine number is 50100 and that is presumed to be 1912. So mine with its 82 x 94 engine numbered 347 and frame number 976 must be earlier, i.e. 1910 or '11. Reg Hancock's engine number is 327 and that must be an '08 or '09 as it conforms almost exactly to the adverts in "Motor Cycle" of '08 and '09. Dick Platt tells me that there is no photograph in the Club's Photographic Records of a 1910 model other than the Big 4 with "Nortorac" hub and there is such a model here in Perth and its frame number is 995. Until more definite information is available I feel I am justified in dating mine as a 1910 machine.

As for the title of this epistle, they are not my words but those of the immortal James L., who as far as I can find, first used them to describe his "mechanically and scientifically correct" two-model range 5hp Twin, 50 guineas and 3hp Single, 43 guineas in "Motor Cycle" dated December 16th, 1908.

Eric Langton, Western Australia

2014 Belgian Classic TT Gedinne

Some time back Ian Bryant, Paul Cooper and myself started to partake in some track days namely Festival of 1000 bikes and, as last year, the Manx parade lap and the Jurby festival. This is all lots of fun particularly when you don't have any speed restrictions, the Manx had marshals leading you round but boy did they go and Jurby and 1000 bikes a free for all speed wise although you do go out with similar bikes age and size wise. The only restrictions that have so far loomed is the one of noise, Castle Combe that we attended in June this year has a 105dba limit which is stringently enforced. We had some ideas at the start of this year as to try some circuits on the continent, Coiux in France some 60 miles from Le Harve looked very good and had some favourable reports from others that had attended in years past. This was going to be our goal this year but a chance conversation with Ken Perch, (1947 350 Manx, the one with the very large wrap round oil tank), at the April Stafford show pointed us in the direction of a circuit in Belgium called

Gedinne. The organisers of the circuit had a stand at Stafford and they gleefully gave me all the gen about their big event, The Belgium Classic TT. You can enter your bike in the parade but after a discussion with Eddy De Kyser one of the organisers said it was safer to enter a race! Now the last time I held a racing license was in 1979 so it was well expired but talking to Eddy he said I could get a one event license so this sounded very interesting, I now had a chance of now giving my old Inter a racing pedigree well into her 76th year.



The Bennett brother's bikes

The regulations/entry forms came out in June of this year and both Ian and I entered races, Ian who has a 1972 Triumph Daytona racer entered his bikes appropriate class and I entered the Vintage Junior class for 350cc bikes up to 1949. Paul could only enter the parade as his RD250 race bike did not quite meet the classic eligibility as his bike had a disc brake. Once our entries were accepted and we were paid up I booked up our ferry crossing through a company in Weston Super Mud called Alternative Promotions, £125 return for my short wheel base Transit and 3 adults sounded like a bargain and I can thoroughly recommend them (as it turns out the ticket was for up to 9 adults so the thought of a stopover at Sangatte with the back doors open crossed my mind). All preparations were going swimmingly until about 6 weeks before the event when Ian had to have a dyno rod job done on an artery unexpectedly. Naturally this sadly put the mockers on his trip so he had to cancel going. He is fine now and looking forward to next year's event.

So come the 21st August Paul and myself headed off to Belgium, by Aztec West. I had lost a great big filling from a tooth so things did not bode too well as I had thoughts of raging tooth ache for the trip but fortunately this did not arise. The trip over was very smooth and as we were driving in the early hours, there was very little traffic on both sides of the channel. We arrived at Gedinne at about 4am and parked out in the road as the paddock was locked up, a few hours sleep until about 6am when we were woken by other vans arriving. You would think as you were in a remote part of Belgium the first people you speak to would be Belgians, not so. Nearly everyone we met were English, most travel over a few days before to help set out the circuit and it seems to be a real social thing.

The circuit itself is lovely, a road circuit mostly about 30 feet wide, some 3 miles in length with some nice hills but nothing too steep, similar to the full Cadwell Park

circuit. The road surface is very good and the only white lines are down the main road part of the circuit, the fastest part. If you watch YouTube type in Gedinne and you can see what the circuit is like put in 'Belgian Classic TT 2014 classic race rerun' and it is me in my race!

The paddock is not for the faint hearted, just a couple of fields with what at first, in the early morning mist, looked like BBQ's but turned out to be electric hook up points. The toilet facilities were brilliant, all porta-loos but to a very high standard, you had to pay 40 cents for their use but it meant every time you used one it was like brand new. There were some food vans and plenty of Belgian beer, some of which was very strong. For the two race days Saturday and Sunday there are some trade stands and auto jumble which are very interesting, same crap as we get at Kempton but with the € in front of the price.

Anyway down to what we had come for, with both bikes scrutinized OK on the Friday we completed our practice sessions. For Paul this was good, as for his money, he would have 20 minutes practice then in the actual parade another 20 minutes so for his €140 he would get 4 sessions, (or would have!, more of the reasons why not later). For the parade there are all types of bike, road, trail or rocket ship and speeds vary, for my class mixed in with me are up to 350 and 500 pre 1949, up to 1982 50cc bikes, 200cc European engine and 200cc Jap engined bikes. And you've guessed some of the 50's go like the clappers, the 200's even quicker with the 500s about the same. The lap times were fastest for Merv Stratford on his 250 Rudge about 3' 4s my best time was 3'40s but Merv is good and wins a lot of races. I think I qualified 16th on the grid out of 20 in my class with the modern stuff starting 20 seconds after us oldies.



So come my first race and I am on the start line thinking 'coo the last time I had done this was 34 years ago in 1979'. The flag drops and away we go, all the other bikes are geared up for racing so get away quite quickly leaving me behind but I manage to keep up with some of the slower than me vintage stuff. I manage to keep up OK for the first lap then half way into the 2nd lap the race is red flagged due to a rider on one of the 200cc bikes having a big off. The race is stopped for about 30min while the rider, a young girl I think, is taken to hospital via helicopter,

I hope she has recovered now. Come the restart we are off again, the YouTube clip taken using my GoPro gives you some feeling of the circuit, how slow I was going and how girder forks work! The race was shortened to 2 laps because of the stoppage and just about 3/4 into the first lap it starts to rain, which made things even more interesting. Some riders really slowed up with water in the works but the old Inter kept going, not missing a beat, and we ended up 5th in my class. The Saturday night was spent drinking Belgian beer, eating fries, looking at bikes and chatting to all nationalities. The atmosphere in the paddock is really nice, people very open with information on their bikes, as I said at the start lots of British riders were there on all sorts of machinery, quite a few on Norton's. I think my bike was the only road bike being raced which the locals were quite impressed with, a mad Englishman risking his classic pride and joy for fun. Sunday dawned and the weather looked to be a lot better and dryer, practice was early at 08.50 for Paul and 09.20 for me, but disaster loomed. Paul went to start his bike and it was locked solid! On the Saturday no problem showed in the practice or the parade and his bike went very well but when he came to start it on the Sunday it was solid. Transpires a coil in his generator had come adrift and this jammed the crank, must have come adrift just as he stopped the bike the night before. So then it was my turn to go to practice, bike started OK and off we went, arrived at the warm up area a bit early so shut the engine off for a few minutes. Started up again ready to go out when she just stopped! I tried kicking as you do, nothing, not even a kick back. A few more kicks and she locked up, now resigned to the fact I'm not going out for practice I push her back to the van.



Look no valve

I took the plug out and lo and behold no plug gap! So what had happened? Looking down the plughole I could see some debris on top of the piston, so off with its head. Very neatly the exhaust valve seat had completely broken up, the bits clouting the plug and hence the engine stopping with no sparks. So that was the end of Tony and Paul's riding exploits in the Belgian Classic TT. Both of us counting ourselves very lucky as to when the bikes had stopped, if we had been on the track at speed a lot more damage could have been done to both bikes let alone us if we had been thrown off as both bikes would have probably locked up in a big way. We packed

up on the Monday and made our way back to Calais via some WW1 sites, we stayed overnight in a town called Peronne which has a very fine WW1 museum, well recommended.

So if you like racing, particularly classic bikes, can put up with a field to camp in and want to live the dream of the Continental Circus then Gedinne is for you. With entry fees, including one event license, diesel, ferry crossing, one night hotel and some booze and food cost of the 6day trip was about £450 each. The only downside is that this event is just at the beginning of the Manx so if you're brave you could do the both but it would be a bit of a rush, for me I will certainly do Gedinne next year and can't wait!

Tony Lockwood

Riding a Norton 500T

Chris Harvey prefers to tell his story about riding this machine in picture form.

What he actually wrote was. "The oldest and heaviest bike in the Scottish Six Day Trial. Look at me, not a clue what is about to happen! A lovely bike to ride but not for the feeble..."



In trepidation mode

"Mine could have looked like this!"



Bags of enthusiasm and little fear

And now – back to the normal Cotswold Newsletter!

A Springtime Ride to Italy – Part 2

When we left our intrepid pair, Geoff had just thrown away his HT cap, attached the bared wires direct to the plug and rode through the tunnel to catch up with Peter.

Geoff Brown and I will certainly remember this Italian Rally because of the weather as well as the many good things that we experienced. We only had six dry days during the 14 days that we were riding. It was wet the first day and it was wet the last day and in between we had rain, heavy rain, a thunder storm and the snow that I mentioned in part 1.

One of the worst days was the day that we arrived at Saronno. The afternoon before we'd ridden around Lake Geneva through the traffic in Lausanne and Montreux and on to our hotel in Leysin. Leysin is, during the winter, a ski resort in a high valley south of Montreux. It was a great ride up from the busy main road, taking us steeply along more than 10 miles of twisting and, in places, narrow road. That evening we went for a walk through Leysin and found the village station on the rack railway that served the village. It was a lovely mild evening.

It was a bit of a surprise the next morning when we found that it was snowing. So we had to change our plan for the day – the Simplon Pass was definitely going to be affected. We decided that we'd have to use a road tunnel instead and the obvious one was the Great St Bernard tunnel. This still meant riding up into the Alps. It was raining lower down but it was wet snow as we got to the tunnel entrance on the Swiss side.

When we emerged on the Italian side the weather was much better – no snow or rain. But after a time it started to rain, then it got harder until, closer to Milan it turned into one of the worst thunderstorms that I've ever ridden in. The water was building up on the motorway carriageway and it was becoming more difficult to ride.

Luckily after just a few miles there was a service area, so we pulled off the road. Unfortunately there was even more water built up on the slip road and my magneto was drowned in the 'ford' we had to ride through.

It was here that the shortcomings of Geoff's riding boots became most obvious. He had realised during the previous rainy days that his feet were getting a bit wet, but on this day it was so bad that he poured water out of his boots when we eventually arrived at our hotel.

Things remained bad for Geoff and his boots on the following wet days in Italy and during the return through France – until he decided that dramatic action was needed. It was our last day in France and it was very wet in the morning. We found a large supermarket and Geoff bought some green wellies. He'd threatened to throw his motorbike boots in the nearest bin, but in the end he put them under the bungee straps on his luggage.

Highlights

So, with all the trials and tribulation with the weather, how did the rally go? In a word the three days were great!

The May Day Rally near Saronno was excellent as always, the weather was good, the food was perfect and it was good to meet up with old friends and make new ones. We had met Ron and Heather Langston the previous day as we were in the same hotel as them. There were one or two other Brits there as well.

The next day was wet and the route for the run to Lake Maggorie was altered. The mountainous part was taken out. Because of the poor conditions, many people, including some of the Italian members, decided to use cars instead of riding. Ron and Heather went by car and Geoff, whose boots and gloves were still very wet, joined them.

I'm told that the lunch was a really good Italian meal with many fish dishes. I wasn't feeling too well (I think that I had enjoyed the food too much the previous day). Instead, I rode part of the route by myself at my own pace.

For me, the final day of the rally was one to remember. On the face of it, it was just a ride to a restaurant and back. In fact it was much more than that – it was a ride up into the mountains for a meal at a place with stunning views – a restaurant with a difference. The first stop on the run was at a town on Lake Como. Soon after this we left the lakeside and started to climb up into the mountains above the lake.

Narrow country roads, tight hairpin bends and finally a rough road, greeted us as we got closer to the restaurant, was crossed by many drainage gulleys, (no doubt to allow melting winter snow to run across the road).



Our destination was the Rifugio Venini, which is at 1576 m (5170 ft) on the saddle between the peaks of Monte Galbigea and Monte Tremezzo. The food was just right, the main course being various meat stews and polenta (which I had never had before), eaten outside the restaurant with the mountains around and Lake Como far below.

Perfect.

Peter Kent

Photographs of the New Year's Day Meeting at the Daneway



There were bikes with girder forks –
somewhere around,
There were red bikes, some with sidecars
fitted,
And there many people trudging around
the muddy car park.
Thanks to Dave Hoskins for the images.

Editor's Cut



Anyone got a good caption for this?



This Nordson used to be a regular at the Wainlode's mid-week rally. Has it been seen since?

European Rallies

In 2015 the International 2 - day Vintage Motorcycle Run called the " North Germany" will celebrate its 30th anniversary.

From 17th to 19th July 2015 we will be looking forward to welcoming you again or even for the first time.

Our special guests will be the New Imperial Owners Club.

We look forward to seeing you in North Germany in July 2015. For more Information please contact

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The 16th Anglo-Dutch Rally for pre-1915 machines will take place in the last week of July 2015 in the province of Gelderland and Overijssel, Netherland.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Anglo-Dutch website www.vmcmotor.com/anglo-dutch. The organisers are Wim and Gerrie Marsman and Fred and Janette Hesselink.

Telephone: (+31)(0)575-551555

Email: anglo-dutch@vmcmotor.com

COTSWOLD SECTION CALENDAR - FEBRUARY 2015 to APRIL 2015

February

1st	Winter Wandering	The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester
4th	Club Night	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
11th	Club Night	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
15th	Winter Wandering	The Gloucester Old Spot Inn, Piffs Elm, Cheltenham
18th	Guest Speaker - Ian Young "True or False"	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
24th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
25th	Chris Robert's Picture Quiz	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown

March

4th	Club Night Guest Speakers - John Close and Pat Barrett "Cotton Tales"	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
11th		Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
15th	Winter Wandering	The Snowhill Arms Inn, Snowhill, Broadway
18th	Club Night	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
20th	DEADLINE FOR APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER	
24th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
25th	Guest Speaker	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
26th	St Patrick's Night Quiz	Thornbury Rugby Football Club, Newton Hill, Thornbury, BS35 1LG
28th	Felix Burke Weekend Social Run	Andoversford Sports & Social Club, Templefields, Andoversford, Cheltenham
29th	61st (Felix Burke Memorial) Cotswold Road Trial	Andoversford Village Hall, Crossfields, Andoversford, Cheltenham

April

1st	Mid-Week Social Run	The Gloucester Old Spot Inn, Piffs Elm, Cheltenham
1st	Mid-Week Rally	
8th	Mid-Week Rally	The Beacon Hotel, Haresfield, Stonehouse
19th	Breakfast Run to Prescott Breakfast Club	M&S BP Service Station, Barnwood Road, Gloucester
15th	Mid-Week Rally	The Red Lion Inn, Wainlodes, Gloucester
22nd	Mid-Week Rally	The Five Mile House Inn, Old Gloucester Road, Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester
26th	Summer Meeting	The Royal Spring Inn, Lower Lydbrook
28th	Committee Meeting	Churchdown Club, Church Road, Churchdown
29th	Velocette Night with Ivan Rhodes and Jim Plant	The Haw Bridge Inn, Haw Bridge, Tirley, Gloucester