

The

Buzzing Club



Volume 28

Number 6

December 2008





The National Autocycle & Cyclomotor Club Ltd. A company limited by guarantee. Registered Office: 7 St. Nicholas Road, Copmanthorpe, York YO23 3UX

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Please send an SAE (an IRC from Europe, 2 IRCs from outside Europe) if you need a reply when writing to Club officers. General enquiries via email, please contact info@thebuzzingclub.co.uk

Buzzing is published on the 20th day of February, April, June, August, October and December. Articles, letters & adverts for the February 2009 issue of Buzzing should reach the Editor at the address above by Friday 23rd January 2009.

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Club Information

Membership

Membership of the NACC costs £9.00 a year plus a £3 joining fee for new or lapsed members. Application forms are available from the Membership Secretary (see page 2).

Dating and Registration

The current dating fees for club members are: £7 (£10 for non-members) for a certificate supporting an application for an age-related registration, £12.50 (£17.50 for non-members) for processing a V765 application. Contact the Machine Registrar for details, please send an SAE.

Affiliations

The NACC Ltd. is a member of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, we have corresponding agreements with; the Register of Unusual Microcars, New Zealand Classic Scooter Club, the Bermuda Classic Bike Club, Rijwiel Hulpmotor Club Nederland, AML GC17 in France, the Sjælland's Veterankallert Klub, Denmark and the British Two Stroke Club.

Club Insurance

Full and Associate members of the NACC can benefit from our Footman James NACC Insurance Scheme, offering a range of policies to suit Autocycle, Cyclemotor and Moped owners, including those riding sub-50cc machines on full car licences without a motorcycle licence or CBT. Please quote your membership number when contacting **Footman James** on **0121 561 6222**.

Library

Alan Hummerstone can supply copies of material held in the NACC Library (contact Alan for a copy of the Library List, see opposite for his details)

Website

The NACC website www.thebuzzingclub.co.uk is updated frequently and carries all the latest news. It's well worth a visit as there are many photos in addition to those published in Buzzing as well as video clips taken on events, not to mention access to the vast and comprehensive on-line NACC archive.

Events Calendar

Don't Forget!

If you want to organise a club-permit event and wish information to appear in Buzzing in time, please write to the Events Secretary at least 2 months prior. From Jan 2009 organisers should ask Bryan for an application form, or use the sample to be found in the centre-fold of this magazine. Events organised at short notice (min 28 days), apply in writing to Events Secretary to ensure issue of a permit. We will publish details of a short-notice event on the NACC website as publishing deadlines may make it impossible to advise members via Buzzing.

Signing-on sheets must be returned within 14 days of holding the event. The rule for riding on NACC events is no membership card- no ride. Those who cannot produce a valid card have to pay a day membership fee. All participants must personally sign the official sign-on sheet issued by the Events Secretary. Events shown in **BOLD** on the next page are official NACC events, those not shown in bold are non-NACC events which may require a day membership, unless you have dual-nationality....

From NACC H.Q.

Editor's Desk

In November the Editorial computer crashed totally, infected by a virus hidden in an email attachment which got under the virus-check radar. It took 2 days to reinstall the operating system, get my computer running again and reload all the backups. Unfortunately the virus obliterated all emails stored in the "Buzzing- unpublished" sector, so if your contribution hasn't appeared as expected in this issue, that's where it went. Sorry! I also lost all my email addresses. Please resend any articles or Section notes that are missing and I will ensure they appear in February 2009. Can I *please* ask you not to send me any more jokes or multiple-forwarded items from the internet, you don't know where they've been!

October's Buzzing was the last issue of the magazine produced using the archaic MS Word dtp program, which is a nightmare to convert into the.pdf format required by Jason & Co at KDS and still keep the original layout. This Buzzing is my first using Adobe InDesign, a program I've never used before and which is nothing like Word, so it's a bit of an experiment, the layout and fonts are different, things will improve with practice - please be patient! When submitting digital photos for reproduction please ensure they are around 800 kb size or at least 200dpi resolution, some pictures in this issue were very low res. and have not printed well.

The last magazine featured most but not all of the reports submitted from participants on the 2008 End-to-End Run. One or two were held over to this issue, as were a number of other reports from events held earlier in the summer. These are included in this Christmas issue. Wishing you all Good Cheer and a Happy Xmas.

Dave B

Chairmans Chat

As we come to the end of another riding year with only a couple of 'Hangover Runs' left before the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all out there for their efforts this year in making it a very successful year for the club. My thanks, in no particular order, go to the committee members who have guided the club through recent times, all sections and members who have organised the record number of events run this year, over 60, those who represented the club at the major motorcycle shows, and not least the individual members of the club who given their time and support by attending the clubs events. On behalf of the committee may I wish you all the best for the Festive Season and safe riding in 2009.

David C

Membership Matters

Could I remind all members that the mailing label on the envelope you receive containing Buzzing has both your membership number and expiry date of membership printed on it, cut the label off the envelope and keep it, this will serve as a reminder for the future.

Bob Jeffcoat

Machine Registrar

May I thank everyone who responded to my appeal for Machine Inspectors in the last edition of Buzzing. I am now compiling a list of Machine Inspectors and if you volunteered your services and I haven't been in touch with you yet then I will be soon. The inspection scheme is already running and will be implemented in full by January 2009 when by this date all machines will need to be examined by the club where a dating certificate or a V765 application is requested. The club still needs more members to help run the vehicle examination scheme so please contact me if you can help in any way.

David Casper

From the Library

Scanning the library content continues at a slow and steady pace, quite appropriate really, considering the content. It is a pleasure to help with information for your beloved tiddlers. The "gen" is available as hard copy, disc or by e-mail. Contact me if you need help, or even if you just enjoy reading some of the trivia we are lucky enough to have.

Alan Hummerstone

The Classic Mechanics Show, Stafford, 18-19 Oct.

Another very successful weekend at the NACC Club stand, where a good number of new members were signed up. A display of four E2E machines was complimented by six other bikes, including an unusual (East German?) Patria WKG, John Aston's superb Puch MS50D and Dave Casper's equally perfect and rare 1967 Moto Morini Corsarino. Thanks to the South Staffs Section for all their efforts in putting on such a successful show.



Letters to the Editor



Dear David

In a communication from Ian McGregor in Scotland a while ago, he mentioned that you were enquiring about Bantamoto population. A couple of years ago I was told by someone at NACC that there weren't any Bantamoto. A copy of the Bantamoto Register that I have put together is attached to this email (*Geoff lists no less than nine Bantamoto units known in New Zealand, four of them are his. There are a further five in the UK, an extraordinary survival rate. Bantamoto must have had a very active importer in NZ during the 1950's!*) My very next project is mounting up two Bantamotos, one for myself and one for my wife. The one I rode in Clyde at our recent Cyclaid Rally went exceptionally well and has made myself, Doug Willis and Kelven Martin all very enthusiastic to get their units mounted and running.

Letters contd.

I uncovered these Bantamotos, both in New Zealand and in the UK, in under one year and I am quite confident I will find more in New Zealand. To date I don't know who was the importer and to date I have never seen a Parts List and Instruction Manual for Bantamoto. Do you know if they existed? *(Not to my knowledge, Geoff. Researching Stinkwheel 2 brought nothing to light other than a photocopy of the first Bantamoto brochure in the NACC library [Ban01] and an article from Motor Cycling of March 22, 1951 [Ban 02].*

There was an article by someone for NACC commenting that the quality of the engineering on the Bantamoto was not so good. I have stripped a number of them and I would have to say the quality of the engineering is as good as you will see in either Cyclaid or BSA Winged Wheel which is exceptionally high. There are a couple of people in New Zealand, three or four of them, each with in excess of fifty cyclemotors.

Geoff Clarke

Dear David

This might help other sufferers of weak magnetoets and knees. All my little machines suffered from the former and caused the latter. In desperation I was about to try the remedy of using an external coil powered by battery or second lighting coil (Buzzing Oct 2002). However I simply tried using a cheap car condensor mounted externally. Result, three machines that start by simply walking alongside for a few steps and tick over reliably. Can't cure the knees though.

Charlie

Dear Members

I have resigned as a committee member and director of the NACC, I tendered my resignation the day after I stood for re- election at the 2008 AGM, so I think an explanation is called for. I originally stood for committee after an appeal in Buzzing by Andrew Pattle, and served through the troubled, sad times, and the difficult task of conversion to a limited company.

I was not going to stand this year except that I felt the Riders Badge Scheme, needed modifying and that there should be a reward scheme for machines as well. As this would have created extra work, and as a great believer in "Put up or Shut up", I felt obliged to run the expanded badge scheme. As it was rejected by the AGM I am now relieved of this obligation.

The 2008 AGM and the committee meeting after it brought to a close the sad affair that has had such a negative effect on the club. I never have been a good committee person, I prefer to actually get things done, instead of discussing them, then dotting the i's and crossing the t's. Now the club is back on an even-ish keel, I feel no guilt in quitting, and now intend to enjoy the NACC rather than be involved in the politics, which I find very negative, and which have somewhat spoiled my enjoyment of the club over the last few years. Hoping this year to ride in more events and chat with like minds about the machines and the fun of riding them.

Frank Brzeski

Latest News

Hi-visibility clothing for drivers. France has introduced legislation obliging car drivers to carry a high-visibility vest or coat in their car at all times, which has to be put on if for any reason the driver gets out of his car at the roadside. Van and truck drivers have already been subject to this rule for some time. The vest must be carried *inside* the car, not left in the boot, and the Gendarmerie are applying on-the-spot fines to all motorists of whatever nationality who do not comply. You are also legally obliged to carry a warning triangle in the car (in Spain you need two). Conversely, motorcyclists do *not* have to wear high-visibility clothing, but all motorcycles must now carry at least one rear-view mirror

The NACC website- Dolly has instituted an experimental forum page where NACC members can exchange ideas, information and technical info, a sort of NACC chat-room if you like, though no doubt with much less *risqué* content than many other chat-rooms that populate the internet..... The forum is moderated and participants who wish to use it have to register, full details and instructions are to be found on www.thebuzzingclub.co.uk.

The NACC AGM took place on Sunday 16th November at the RAF Cosford Aerospace Museum, where Chairman David Casper reported that the Club had had a good year, with a record seventy-four club events being held all over the country during the course of 2008.

Events Secretary Bryan Norton asked that members planning on organising a run or other event should apply for a permit as soon as possible, using the new form obtainable from him (also included in the centre of this magazine), to confirm the intended date. The NACC events calendar is ever more crowded (great!), so to avoid clashes of dates Bryan needs to know your plans asap. Bob Jeffcoat, the Membership Secretary, reported that membership numbers had fluctuated during the past year, though total membership remains close to 1800. The Club's finances remained in good shape, reported Liz Butler, with a small loss compared to 2007, largely due to increased costs associated with producing Buzzing. Librarian Alan Hummerstone commented that the Library continues to grow, with constant submissions from members, and that most communications were nowadays by email. Peter Moore Transfers Secretary, reported that transfers had recently been restocked, he has had around 40 requests for items and that a new price list was in preparation.

Election of Club Officers- the AGM voted unanimously to retain the present committee in their various posts. The Directors of the NACC Ltd. company remained as before.

The 2009 NACC Ltd. AGM will be held on Sunday 15th November 09, probably at the RAF Cosford Aerospace Museum again, confirmation of this or a change of venue will be advised nearer the time.

Goodwood Revival- Derek Carter rode his 1943 New Hudson auticycle at this year's Revival in period costume, there is a short video clip on the club website showing him setting off on a ride round the track. A full report can be found on page 19.

The Hudson Hares- you may remember from October's issue of Buzzing that the E2E Hares, Jeff Wilkes, Paul Gildea, Bob Hume and Martin Knowles, raised £1600 from sponsorship of their Lands End to John O'Groats ride. Now all the sponsorship money has been paid in, they found they had raised an astonishing £3292 in total, which has paid for two beds in the acute stroke unit at Bolton Royal Hospital. Well done the Hares!

End-to-Enders honoured. The Lands End to John O'Groats Association annually award their Cock of the North trophy to the most unusual/deserving/ daftest Le Jog runners- this year they have awarded it to our very own End-to-Enders! Well done everybody. The trophy will be presented at a ceremony to be held in January 2009.

Getting Lost and Breaking Down in the Ardennes with a Simson!

Keith Clarke

Alan Abraham, the chairman of the British Two Stroke Club, organised a four-night hotel-based trip (with 3 days riding) in May 2008 to the Ardennes region of Belgium. There were routes through Luxembourg and Germany as well. I had convinced my mates Ray Tappin and Dave Shaw that this was a good idea, so we eagerly booked into the hotel, which was in the small rural village of Ourren, right on the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany.

We took with us Ray's 1959 D7 Bantam, my 1957 Frances Barnett 197cc 'bitza' and a 1981 Simson S51 50cc moped, and on unloading we drew straws as to who would ride which bike. It worked out that Ray would ride his own Bantam, Dave the FB and I drew the short straw, ending up with the little Simson. There were 17 of us in total on 14 bikes, including an Ariel Leader, Panther, HRD, Scott, Speed Twin, Matchless and Alan's faithful 98cc James. He had produced route cards for each day and these included proposed coffee and lunch stops. All very civilised.

(apologies for the poor quality picture, scanned off a low-res printed image)



L to R- Francis-Barnett, Keith Clarke, Simson and Ray Tappin

We duly headed off at the rear of the group at 10am, with me leading the way on the smallest bike (top speed 45mph downhill with a following wind) and we had no chance of catching up the bigger machines. Weather was overcast and, typically for Alan's routes, we were on minor roads in the middle of nowhere with little or no traffic to contend with. The booked coffee stop was La Roche (43 miles) and we arrived late. The town square was undergoing major building work and was a sea of mud, parked cars, pedestrians and traffic hurtling around in all directions, with a lone gendarme trying to bring some sort of order to this chaos.

(contd. next page)

Back on the road and into Luxembourg we travelled for lunch at the unusually-named “Kentucky Café near Clevaux (72 miles), followed by refuelling on the Luxembourg/German border before heading to our hotel in Geramny, a total of 145 miles and my backside was killing me!

Next day we left the hotel in dark miserable weather and then lost the route after 10 miles, somewhere outside Lommersweiler, though we retraced our steps we couldn’t pick it up again and so gave up on the route card, and by then it was raining. Rather than go back to the hotel we went exploring on our own- but had also forgotten our map, so we were riding into the unknown. We stopped for coffee at a biker-friendly café and then further on just outside a local Yamaha dealer to sort a sticking throttle on the FB. We chatted to the girl on the counter who, on learning we had no idea where we were going, kindly supplied us with a map showing the local biking routes and pointed out where we actually were. Ray elected to be our map reader and, after refuelling in Prum, we headed down one of the routes on our new map and later stopped for another coffee in the village of Irrhausen, Alas when we asked the waitress to confirm where we were, she pointed to a place miles away, it seems Ray, our experienced navigator, had misread our position and we were far from where we thought we were!

Having established a new route we set off again and by luck recognised some of the roads from the previous day’s route, which we dutifully followed, and eventually got back safely to our hotel, having completed nearly 100 miles. The following day we all lined up for a group photo in front of the hotel and, surprise-surprise, we were not the last to leave. We were determined not to get lost today with Dave leading the way (he felt the rest of us were hopeless at map reading) in overcast conditions, Dave had decided that instead of using the road sign directions shown on the route card he would go by the mileages on the card instead. We retraced some of the roads we’d travelled the day before and were happily following a group of riders admiring the German countryside, when at a junction they went straight on and Dave turned left. We stopped & waited and Dave returned to find us, by this time we were last again. We finally caught up with the others, having coffee near the Neuestrasse “resort” by the picturesque lake. We all left together and, on a long drag uphill Alan and his 2-speed James overtook the Simson- how embarrassing, but we evened up the honours later when I overtook him.

After lunch we tackled some steep hills and the Simson suffered badly, some needed first gear, so we were at the back of the group again when it rolled to a stop about 10 miles from the hotel. We found it had a good spark but the engine would not fire, we changed the plug anyway (well, it is a 2-stroke) and stripped the carb, to no avail, the Simson wanted to stay in its country of origin (well, nearly). Dave and Ray abandoned me at the side of the road and headed back to the hotel to fetch the van to recover me, they eventually returned, the bike was thrown in the back and we went back to the hotel again. Mileage for the day on the Simson was 95, but the others did at least 10 miles extra. Thursday morning we woke in complete blackness- a power cut! The sky was black and it was chucking it down with rain, fortunately it stopped after breakfast when we were loading the bikes back in the van, we waved the others off before leaving in the direction of France- last again! The trip was over.

Conclusion- it was a well-planned event, very enjoyable and well worth attending. The hotel Alan chose was good, in a great location, the small number of us mixed well and we all had a very enjoyable time. Whether the Simson was the right choice of bike is open to debate, it was fast enough on the flat but suffered quite badly on hills- all in all it was a fun bike to ride.

Would I do it again? You bet!

Harleston Funday

Mick Sudds

A first for an NACC event at this venue in Norfolk we were blessed with good weather and an excellent turnout of members with a total 18 machines featured in the line-up on the club stand. Also notable amongst this display was Terry Keable's Land's End to John O'Groats Raleigh Runabout complete with its own information boards and of course the proud owner as well. If that was not enough we also had the draw later in the day for the 1981 Motobecane 7 Special Moped (taxed & mot'd) that had been donated by fellow member Michael Ottignon with proceeds from the draw tickets going to charity. This moped was also on display here and won by member Brian 'Mick' Ritchie. Below- Terry Keable receives a Cheque for £350 from Carl Squirrel, the money was raised by raffling a Motobécane, won by Mick Ritchie. The money was included with other funds raised by Terry on the E2E and was donated to East Anglian charities.



The run out began at around midday and was supported by eleven machines and riders and involved a leisurely seventeen mile run out from Harleston. Our destination was the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton and this really is an ideal venue as they have both a pub and tea shop on site and if you like aviation as well it really is on the must see list. The staff were very enthusiastic about us dropping by and kindly arranged for us to park our machines by one of the many static aircraft that are on site here. Our thanks go to them for their help in setting up this stopover.

All too soon the stop at Flixton was over and we returned to Harleston by a shorter but more direct route of six miles to continue and enjoy the rest of the time available at the Fun Day. We had lots of enquiries about the NACC and our machines of course from a very interested and admiring public. Many thanks to all those who supported this event and of course to Carl for making the day run smoothly and making it look so easy!

Goodwood Revival

Lorraine Carter

We recently had the opportunity to exhibit our 1943 New Hudson autocycle at the renowned Goodwood Revival meeting, held annually at the Goodwood race track in Sussex. Normally, our humble mode of transport would be well out of place amongst the most glorious, exotic racing cars and bikes of the 50's and 60's that are on display there, but this year, there was an exhibition themed "Life on the road in 1948" - this being the 60th anniversary of the first race at the circuit.. The revival meeting, generally, is a three-day happening, with track displays, car and motorcycle racing, aircraft displays, and stalls and exhibitions of all things period-transport related. Many of the spectators and entrants dress in appropriate period clothing - this being encouraged by the organisers.

Our little part of it included the vehicles you might have seen being used in 1948, and included beasts such as tractors, steam waggons, busses, a bicycle, a hearse, fire engine and a super variety of cars and lorries, to name but some of them. We even had a small aircraft on the track with us. We basically had our New Hudson on display during the whole event, with a lap of the circuit planned for all three days. Unfortunately, on the first day of the meeting, although she started perfectly when our parade was called, we waited so long to proceed onto the track that we stopped it running, not wanting it to overheat.



Derek disports himself in the sun, admired by a bevy of stunning young things...

You can predict the next bit - as with many of our beloved two-strokes, when the time came to re-start, it wouldn't play ball. Not only that, but much frantic pedalling on the spot resulted in a breaking-off of the left pedal - game over for the day. We watched the rest of the parade do it's stuff, then went off to find a solution - which, as it happened, was fairly easy. The event organisers - Lord March and his team - had a display of an old garage set-up on site, who were also there to help with just such problems as ours - they willingly took the pedal and crank off for a quick welding job (apparently, it was an old weld repair that had given way), and we were able to pick it up later in the day, ready to go back on the BIKE. On the Saturday and Sunday, we reacted to our previous mistake by not even thinking of starting the bike until the barrier was raised to allow the parade out on the track, starting it at the last minute. I rode it round on Saturday, and Derek rode it on Sunday. It was a wonderful way of experiencing riding on the legendary sussex circuit, at a slow pace, able to watch and respond to the waving crowd. The other motorcycles out with us were a Corgi, which also seemed a little bit temperamental on the starting front, and an HRD Vincent (!).



Other than the track event for us, we spent time talking to a huge number of people about our bike, and about small engined bikes generally. A lot of visitors were from overseas, and Americans and Australians in particular were intrigued by our hobby. As per normal, some people were already familiar with cyclemotors and autocycles, others were ignorant about them, but amazed by what they can still achieve in the way of performance - the coast to coast ride being just one of the examples given to them. As it happens, we'd also taken a couple of old bicycles with us to get around on, which gave us another opportunity to bring clip-ons into the conversation on a regular basis. Many people took note, over the weekend, of the NACC details, and what it has to offer them, with a lot of them being grateful that someone may have an answer to their questions about their own particular bike. We ourselves were extremely grateful to have had the opportunity of being part of this very prestigious and wonderful event, especially with such a humble machine as the New Hood, but this sort of thing can happen when you are part of such a great club.

Leiston “Final Fling”

Carl Squirrel

Mark Gibb organised this event at quite short notice as we felt it was necessary to mark our 1st Birthday in style! The Leiston Long Shop Museum once again allowed us to display our machines at their Final Fling day which marks the end of their season, many exhibits are wheeled out and fired up, you certainly don't need a Sat Nav to find the site as it can be done by the smell and sight of the steam plummeting up into the atmosphere.

Once again we had a good number of riders attend and our allocated area was soon overflowing with machines. Our End to End hero Terry Keable forsake his usual Raleighs for a most unusual machine a fold-up moped complete with plastic wheels normally known as an Akro Blylight but it soon got christened as 'Old Clanky' once it fired up ! Our newest member Rod Fryatt must have wondered what he had let himself in for when he set off behind Terry on the outward Run to the Eels Foot, it was noticeable that he made a quick exit when it was time to leave the 'Foot' rapidly leaving Terry in his wake. Day member Neil Ridgeon must have been impressed though as a few days after the event he turned up at my house on a recently Taxed, Mot'd and Insured Runabout wanting to know when the next run was !

All in all another great day in what we thought was our last event of 2008 - that is until Frank put a 'Spoke' in the works and asked to do another one ! Once again many thanks to Mark for organising the event for us.

Runners and Riders: Carl Squirrell - PC50 Sidecar Outfit, Colin Clover - Bown, Terry Keable - 'Old Clanky', Raleigh RM1 and RM6, Dave Arnott - Victoria Vicky & Honda P50, Mark Gibb - Ariel 3, PC50, Ray Gibb - PC50, Billy Doy - PC50, Ray Hatt - PC50, Brian Barley - Tomos A3M, Rod Fryatt - Mobylette N40, Dave Watson - Mobylette, Francis Barnett Autocycles x 2, Nippi (ex Nick Devonport) 3 wheeler, (None of these would go so he borrowed a Puch Maxi from Colin !), Day Member Neil Ridgeon - Honda C70.



End to End Encore

Martin Wikner

Back in 2002 I rode a Pooch Maxi from John O'Groats to Hartlepool, then took in that year's Coast to Coast run, when, some of you may recall, the Daily Telegraph journalists took part. Having completed that I then headed off down to Lands End the whole journey took 11 days and some 1,100 miles were covered. Back then we happened to own a VW camper and Sharon my wife followed on as backup support. Whilst my run was enjoyable it was a somewhat solitary & lonely event. So when last year Frank mentioned that he and some of the Granadaland posse were thinking about doing the run as part of a properly organised NACC event, I thought to myself, yeah I've got to give it another go. Sharon was overhearing the conversation and announced "I'll have some of that too!" Hmm, I thought this could become expensive!

Anyway, roll on another eight months and I found myself at Framlington Hall attending Roly Scarce's birthday run and I was gazing at a small collection of Honda PC50's. About half an hour later I was again staring at the backend of a Honda PC 50, I was following Frank who was riding one owing to the fact that Big Percy had'nt made it past the starting gate, so he'd blagged a spare bike from Carl Squirrel. I thought at the time that they looked quite a solid functional comfortable and reliable machine. The main thing however was it was a four stroke and that was important as Sharon had made it clear she would be riding her Easy Rider DX50 that had just had a winter rebuild and was now running a 90cc engine complete with gears. She had become a four stroke convert following a problematical relationship with Puch Maxi on the previous year's Coast to Coast. The amount of fuel you carry on long distance events can become important, so if we both had the same type that would be one problem dealt with.

A couple of days later I was perusing E-Bay as I do and I spotted a Honda PC 50 that seemed to fit my requirements, so I thought that I'll just watch it and bang in an appropriate bid 45 seconds before the end. That's what I do, what do you lot do? Well the long and the short of it is that I got the bike for £220. Some of you might wince at the price and say that you got one for £50 but I think that I got a good deal it was reasonably clean and tidy, it had a year's MOT and an all important V5, it ran well and had a full tank of petrol. Most importantly it did not need any obvious work doing to it, though the owner proudly announced that it still had its original tyres on; hmm I thought perhaps I had better look at them. So the PC was put into service, completing several organised events including Sars Poteries and of course this year's Coast to Coast. So, to preparation for the End to End run; I took the plug out and inspected it, ah lovely grey colour put it back in quick and with a quick check of the oil level hmm very clean. Thus concluded the preparation, the only other thing was to fit an equipment box on the rear carrier. This was in fact small storage container that I spied in IKEA whilst trudging woefully around following family on a shopping trip, preparation costs so far £3.25 and had taken 20 minutes. I then went indoors to consult a map in conjunction with the daily route sheets that Frank had kindly E-Mailed me.

Roll on to the following week we were arriving at Lands End at about 11.00am courtesy of friends of ours in there people carrier complete with the two bikes a lot of expectation and a little disappointment that it had now started raining steadily. We started to unload and were soon joined by the other 12 riders who had made their way from Penzance station. On stowing our bags in the back of Frank's trailer I thought there is a lot of gear in here considering all but two bikes had been unloaded.

Well, after a certain amount of milling about and picture taking we were off on our adventure. An advance party of 4 Granadaland guys went on ahead as they wanted to complete the run in about 7 days and then get back for work. At Sharon's insistence we'd bought two new rain suits, we had of course had our regular yearly soaking on the Coast to Coast so perhaps it was a good idea, however I did think at the time of purchase that this was a belt and braces approach and once bought we would seldom wear them. How wrong was I.



(On goes that wet-weather gear. photos Terry Keable)

Let me tell you about the rain we endured on the first day. When you say the rain was falling like stair rods that's OK, dealt with that before, but this time we had a severe stormy wind so we were getting horizontal stair rods as well, it was like someone was chasing you down the road with a jet washer, rain was coming in by my neck and making its way steadily down to my crotch. When we stopped for a lunch break with Frank and Brian we decided that conditions could only get better simply because it could not get any worse, as I emptied the water from my boots. Well we all made it eventually to St Austall but there were already worrying signs that Franks Cucciolo was developing a taste for consuming spokes in its rear wheel. However, all was fixed by the following morning, his bike having spent the night under repair in his hotel bedroom.

The second day the weather was threatening with dark clouds and a bit of rain here and there but by and large we avoided the worst. We all made it to Barnstaple but Frank was in later and the problem with the spokes in his rear wheel seemed worse now that the machine was on dryer roads. He had by now run out of spare spokes but not to worry, he would locate a Bicycle shop in the morning and all would be solved, or so he thought. Everyone else seemed OK and all bikes were running well.

I could tell you of the lovely scenery in Cornwall, but I won't because there wasn't any when the weather is dull and dismal it makes everywhere look the same so I think at that stage everyone was trying to make it to the daily destination as soon as possible to avoid any more deluges. The third day we were en route to Portishead, there seemed to be no problems with the bikes other than Frank's Cucciolo now consuming more spokes to the mile than the bike was doing miles to the gallon. By this stage he had broken at least 16. My Honda PC 50 was running fine except that the speedo had packed up, having chewed its drive gear in the hub. The resulting mechanical carnage had ejected the cable out of its orifice allowing it to hang down, in turn letting the inner cable to slither out and off into the Devon Countryside where it will never be seen again.

As this was like an expedition rather than a little jaunt in the countryside everyone was getting used to the long hours in the saddle and there seemed a type of rhythm developing, with the New Hudsons of Derek and Andy as pace setters but Alan's Bown seemed strangely slow at this stage. Then there was Stuart with his trusty wellies on his Excelsior who was invariably leading Brian on a Puch Maxi, Peter on his Puch NV50 followed by Terry on his Raleigh Runabout. Sharon and I were always somewhere in between and at this stage of the event Frank and the recalcitrant Cucciolo at the back of the field. Of course bringing up the rear was Bernard & Christine and Gill, (Brian's wife) with the backup Discovery towing Frank's trailer with all those spares.



I of course was carrying my spare inner tube in my box along with other useful items like my flip flops. On arrival at Portishead we were greeted with the sight of Alan's Bown in pieces with the engine removed. It appeared that a piston ring had broken and made its way past the piston and done a bit of a war dance on the cylinder head. Engine change time, this was soon done and all was well we hoped. Frank eventually arrived having bought out the stock of bicycle spokes from a cycle shop and gone on a little sightseeing tour of his own and irritating the Clifton Suspension Bridge security person by holding up the traffic for his own photo shoot! The fourth day started with a bit of early morning welding to Stuart's Excelsior top front suspension pivot. The power source for the mig welder came via an extension lead from our hotel room window. Breakfast was interrupted by a rendition of "Happy Birthday" for Derek who had achieved three score years and ten, well done!

So off we went on the road to Telford, well not quite. Alan's Bown complete with its spare engine seemed reluctant to start and when it did it ran roughly so it was put on the trailer and the spare Jawa was pressed into service. Seven miles into the run it was my turn to have a problem just after we had crossed the Clifton Suspension Bridge my front wheel started wobbling alarmingly so much so I had to stop. At the time I couldn't figure out the problem, nor could anyone else, so a quick call for the backup was made. I had to wait for a while but once it arrived it was onto the trailer and out with the second spare bike, a Honda Novio kindly loaned by Carl Squirrell, which incidentally was a good little bike. By this time Sharon and I were well behind the field so it took some determined riding to get to Telford in reasonable time. We were lucky in that being later coming down the road we appeared to have avoided a huge thunder storm that caught Derek, Andy and Alan. All Sharon and I were aware was that we were riding over extremely wet roads. Minutes after we had arrived at Telford another thunderstorm erupted so we were kind of lucky that day.



above, yet more spokes go into Frank's long-suffering rear wheel. Photo- Terry Keable

As soon as the backup arrived I pounced on my bike and stripped the front suspension, only to find nothing broken. I put it all back together, sleeving up some of the worn bushes with tape (a bodge I know, but needs must). After much discussion it became clear that the wheel spindle had worked loose allowing the front wheel to flop about. So hopefully problem solved with the use of some brute force when tightening up the axle nut. That evening we were joined in the bar from some members of, I think, the Warwickshire section, which was nice, as well as Ian Chisolm, who had lent his Puch Maxi to Brian from New Zealand.

So, to day five, the road to Preston. We had all got into some sort of routine now, most of us made breakfast at 07.30 and after that there was a hive of activity with the bikes, a little servicing going on and petrol mix being added. We were normally on the road by about 08.30. Stuart, Peter, Brian & Terry usually picked a slightly alternative route on, where possible, quieter roads.

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(the Gentlemen Riders at Cromarty Firth, photo Terry Keable)

The fact that every evening we headed for our pre-booked hotel, a Premier Inn, made our adventure very civilised- at least you always knew that whatever the weather did there was always a good shower and comfortable bed awaiting. The Pubs attached to the hotels made the event nicely sociable, we usually booked a table for 14 every night and enjoyed a meal together. Terry enjoyed his meals more than most because he usually ate more than most, particularly when it came to his puddings, his favourite were those that come in a large glass server that people with lesser appetites share with someone. Day six the route to Carlisle saw Frank set off first on the revitalised Cucciolo, he disappeared into the middle distance and indeed was the first to the hotel. This day saw Alan out on his Honda Dream that he had popped home to collect, having given up hope of resurrecting the Bown. My bike was running well now the only little niggle I had with it was the size of the small fuel tank which was singularly unsuited to long distance touring. It would only do 50 miles from full up to empty, this necessitated us always riding with a fuel can. Some days we had to refill three times whereas the New Hudsons were good for 120 miles and Peter's huge tank on his Puch I reckon would last at least two days with this sort of mileage.

(Part 2 of Martin's report will be published in February's issue of Buzzing)

Clatteringshaws Run 28/9

Alan Kempster

The only thing that could ruin a run this time of year would be the weather...right that's the boring bit over with. I had done this run before, albeit on something 12 times as big. "Let's go on our mopeds", "Yeah why not". John Shaw on a Raleigh Supermatic, Neil Cowan on a Puch and myself on Gerosa. There would be just 3 of us this time so Neil's van was used as main transport to the start, which was in Dalmellington, but we had a cunning plan- we would start at Carsphairn only a few miles down the road. By doing this we missed out a fast section of the A713 and also ensured the safety of Neil's van from the Neds in Dalmellington, where even the cats have cauliflower ears.

Togged and tooled up we were off and straight away headed off the main road, taking the B729 that runs more or less parallel to the A713. This was a great wee road, great views and a fabulous sweeping section down into St John's Town of Dalry where after a quick discussion and we headed north and over the Water of Ken (he'd had heavy night previous) now south on the A762 to find the wee road over Glenlee. A long climb out of Glenlee village up into the forests, floods and effing idiots driving rally wanabees, this road brought us out just east of Clatteringshaws. A quick nip up the road to the visitors centre and, hey, we were first there.



No time to lose- get in the café before the others arrive. We were half way through our meal when the rest started to come in; Nige formerly Solex and Lambo now Ducati, Carlo nee Bianchi now Norton and 30 others, sorry but you know who you are, thanks to you all for the turn out. All fed, John Shaw announced we had to go, see you at Moniaive was the cry. As we left the car park I got the feeling some folk thought we were a bit bonkers and perhaps not just a bit. The A712 was another sweeping hill down into New Galloway I must have touched 35mph at least. A dog leg over Water of Ken and up into the Braes of Glenkens to climb up to Moniaive where a noticeable chill in the air prompted a hot chocolate.

Parked at the main junction we watched as high powered machines buzzed through the sleepy village, not I might add club members – where were you guys? Cups emptied and not to be outdone, we buzzed through the village sounding like a trimmer’s convention. After Moniaive we headed up to Thornhill and on up the A702 to Elvanfoot, it was now getting a bit nippy as we came over Dalveen Pass and in the far distance we could see the traffic on the M74. A quick stop in Elvanfoot to check fuel and grins, then push on up the B7040 to Leadhills and Wanlockhead, another quick stop to don wet weather gear. Entertainment was provided by Neil Cowan trying to put his over trousers on, helped by yours truly. Downhill through Mennock Pass the roads were wet and slippery, as was proven by Mr. Vauxhall in a ditch and Mrs. V on the mobile (don’t think the AA can get that out, madam).

A right at Mennock and then a left on to very small lane running parallel with the river Nith (this one is recommended) before long we were back in Moniaive. After a couple of hiccups, re-direction en route, we were heading across open moorland on the B729 at the end of which we dropped down into Carsphairn, Neil’s wheels still intact. Mileage 122 miles, fuel consumption 145mpg, grin factor – ear to ear. Would we do it again? Daft question.

Neil (big grin) Cowan on Puch, John Shaw on Raleigh Supermatic, John Gallagher on Gerosa and keyboard. Many thanks to Neil Cowan for providing van transport.

Itom of Interest

Alan Hummerstone

I was privileged to be able to read Dave Beare and Philippa Wheeler’s Stinkwheel Saga Episode 2 earlier than most of you, Dave sent me a proof copy to read to see if I might review it for him. I was more than happy to do that, as I had been so impressed with Episode 1. The book was a joy to read, but the chapter about the Itom Tourist caused the old collecting disease to flare up again. I defy any enthusiast to read this chapter and come away without wanting to at least ride an Itom Tourist.

Now, the question was where to find such a rare beast. It seemed a call to our regalia man Ian McGregor might help, as I knew that Ian had some time ago acquired the Itom Tourist formerly belonging to John Cam. Ian turned up on my doorstep with not just one, but a selection of incomplete Itom engines, out of which we managed to assemble something which looked promising. Ian also brought his incomplete Busy Bee, and his Nasseti Il Pelegrino along. I also have one of each of these models, so for that evening we had several rare and interesting clip ons under my workshop roof.

A little not very serious negotiation took place, and thanks to Ian’s magnanimity, I now owned enough of an Itom to make a decent start. Missing were the carburettor, the drive roller, part of the engagement mechanism, the fuel tank and the special pedal crank needed to clear the rather wide engine. The magneto produced a spark to shame most Wipac-equipped bikes; the engine was free and had very good compression. A little research produced pictures of the missing engagement part.

The next call was to Gilbert Smith of Power Pak, and Raleigh carrier fame. A day in Gilbert’s beautifully equipped workshop produced a prototype bracket for the engagement, and a temporary acting drive roller.

A rummage amongst my bits produced a Weber carburettor which would fit, a suitable bicycle and a J.A.P. lawnmower fuel tank which would do to get us running. Another day with Gilbert was spent fitting the parts that he had been busy modifying. Gilbert had made changes to the profile of the operating cam for the engagement mechanism, made a suitable pedal crank, and another drive roller. Everything fitted, and with a little adjustment worked O.K., so we just had to try it on Gilbert's drive. Would it work? It didn't just go, it flew up the drive. Gilbert's grin had to be seen to be believed; time for a cup of tea and a few ginger nuts to celebrate.

Back home with my new prize, I set about starting the registration process as there were no documents at all with what I had. First thing was to get a dating certificate. I acquired the correct form, photographed the bike, deciphered the engine, and frame numbers, and sent it all off with the fee. In the meantime, Ian McGregor had brought the ex John Cam complete Itom Tourist down from McGregor towers in Scotland, and it was possible to copy the original form of the engagement device from Ian's machine. I now have a dating certificate, and Gilbert has made two more engagement clamps for Ian's other engines, together with yet another drive roller. The next jobs are to get the machine MOTd on the frame number, put it on my insurance, fill in a V55/5, send the paperwork off to my local VRO, and impatiently wait their pleasure. With any luck, I'll be riding it in the New Year.

Below: Alan's confection of Itom bits, lawnmower fuel tank and racy ladies cycle.



Biggar-Berwick-Biggar-

incongruous knockers and vital sparks....

John Shaw

Now don't get the wrong idea here, we know that this is a family show so rest easy and read on.....

The concept was simple, just follow as closely as possible the Tweed valley cycle route from Biggar Lanarkshire to Berwick-on-Tweed in Northumberland. Stay the evening in Berwick, and back upstream on the Sunday to Biggar. The weather had been 'unsettled' for a week or two with serious flash floods, and sure enough, Ireland was seriously underwater as we were enjoying our essentially dry two day run. Fantastic for us. Our bikes were; Quickly 2 speed, Motobi 3 speed, Moby bleu, and Raleigh Supermatic. Riders; Tom Norman, Alan Kempster, Martin Preston, and myself, John Shaw on the Raleigh. Rather than bore you all stupid with who did what, and which bike did the most mpg etc., Let me tell you about Martin and his incongruous knockers!

Berwick on Tweed has a fascinating history and as we strolled around the ramparts and fortifications on Saturday evening before our traditional curry/swally, thoughts turned to architecture. A beautiful sandstone façade faced out over the Tweed estuary. Lovely portico and front door. Wrong! I don't think much of the knockers growled (hungry and possibly because of that, grumpy) Martin. True enough the owner had chosen to fit totally inappropriate skimpy and square brass knockers from B&Q it would seem. Sorry to disappoint those amongst our readers who were looking forward to something more risqué! And rest assured that all this talk about knockers had nothing whatever to do with our stop at Scotland's oldest inhabited house at Traquair on our way home on Sunday. And specifically, it definitely had nothing to do with the most shapely young waitress who served us with our meal.

Back to reality! Apart from Tom's Quickly which was fixed mainly due to the 'never give in' Martin and the roadside loan of a soldering iron (Fountain Cottage – see photo) they made our day, and it seemed we made their day! Great, we had a mainly trouble free run. We managed to find some narrow off-road sections as always, and a rather nice pedestrian bridge. Alan had struggled manfully to rebuild his Puch 3 speeder before the event, but had to call on friend Carlo to beg a loan of the Motobi. This bike is used regularly for local shopping trips, and was untouched since the epic C2C2C. It fired up first twist of the pedals and ran perfectly all weekend. We all had a fantastic almost completely dry weekend, and the upper Tweed valley in particular was simply stunning. Purple heather on the mountainsides contrasted with the lush green. The rich scent of balsam, wild herb and meadowsweet all contributed to a most pleasant run out.

Great way to make the most of a mid summer weekend.



The Devon Dipper Run

Roy Best

James was the first to turn up on his way home after doing the night shift at 8.30am to say he will be back soon with his Mobylette, said he had been busy but he still looked bright eyed and bushy tailed. Plans were well on the way with setting up refreshments etc for later and setting up our tea stop at halfway house. John turned up with his Bantam as his Raleigh was having problems with the clutch, trouble was, the Bantam had a slow puncture as it proved later in the day. Nick popped in to say he couldn't make it as he had to cut some trees down for his mum as promised. Alistair turned up with his Raleigh RM5 Supermatic saying that he had not rode it before on the road, which last came out at the Powderam Rally. My Honda Novio which would be having its first trip out in seven years, apart form a couple of miles the day before. Michael Wood from Dorset followed with his Honda P50 looking forward to meeting some fellow members and Barry turning up on his Post Office Bantam D1.



With Des & Irene offering to do the back up trailer with attached camper van, hoping to give them an easy day out in the country and from Somerset Joe & Jenny who came to see us off. Ten Thirty arrived and we made a move on the first leg of our run through some Devon lanes and the odd main rd or two, weather was dull and damp but promising, also the women folk set off to get set up for the tea stop. Things were going well until the Mobylette started to play up with fuel problems (it was OK when I sold it to you mate) best place for now was the trailer as tea was waiting for us as we thought. Arriving at half way house, yes the women folk were yapping to our host and nearly forgot about the men folk, so the rush was on to sort refreshments. James had a look into the fuel problems and soon sorted the trouble, "Yea all right" then Barry turns around and says his gearbox on the Bantam was jamming and couldn't ride it so the Bantam takes the place of the Mobylette for now and off we go for the second leg which would take us back to our start and lunch on a different route (hot spuds waiting). The second leg of our journey was to prove a bit more of a challenge with some light rain and the back up trailer being a very important bit of kit, after about eight mile James was soon to be back on the trailer he and Barry lapping it up in the camper.

(The Devon Dipper contd.)

Right, now remember, John and his Bantam with the slow puncture at the start, (yes you got it) the thing gave up for good and backup was called upon again, I think the tyre and tube was past there sell by date. On arrival of backup the Mobylette was taken out and James promptly started it again so in goes the Bantam, the trailer started to look like a Bantam grave yard. In the mean time, me, Alistair and Mike were having a great ride with Mike & Alistair having to move on as time for them was by now getting a bit short for other commitments. James nursed his bike home with me following and Bantams in tow ready for lunch, if ever a back up trailer was needed this was the day and thank-you to Des & Irene. Hot soup and roast spuds were waiting for us with loads of cakes and tea and time to talk of the run with all the events of the day. A big thank-you to Margaret and Theresa for looking after us during the day, they put a lot of work into this side of our road run.

Best thing to do is sell the Bantams and buy a moped.

Potenzia la tua Bicicletta*

David Casper

It's Friday the 7th of August and Britain is being lashed by gales and torrential rain. Newspapers carry the headlines `worst floods for fifty years` and a police warning to motorists about rising fuel thefts due to the shortage and high cost of petrol. An all too familiar tale.

But this is not 2008 we are talking about but 1948, sixty years ago where, in sunny Milan, 27 year old Giancarlo Tironi was preparing his new sprung frame `Caproni-Capellino` bicycle fitted with a Ducati Cucciolo engine for a special journey. Chosen to be the official representative of the Italian Cyclists Touring Club, he was about to set off to ride to the three day Cyclist Touring Club Rally held at York's Knavesmire to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the CTC and the 50th birthday of the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme.



Leaving Milan on the 7th of August, Giancarlo headed north riding his heavily laden Cucciolo towards Switzerland via the Simplon Pass. Situated between the Pennine and Lepontine Alps, the road rising over the 6,581 ft. Simplon Pass was built as a military route by Napoleon between 1800 and 1807 as a crossing between Italy and Switzerland. After crossing the pass Giancarlo continued his journey, riding through Switzerland, then across France to Paris where he paused for a rest. Arriving in England he headed for London where he realised time was running short. The last 200 miles of his trip were a race against time and he arrived at the rally on its last day, Sunday the 16th of August having covered a distance of 1,447 kilometres in ten days. One can only wonder what the state of the post war roads were at that time and it must have been quite an achievement this cover this distance in the time taken.

Under the heading `Just in time to win prize at Cyclists Rally` the local Yorkshire Evening Press carried the story of how a `solitary, sunburned, travel stained figure with a gleaming smile arrived on an odd-looking bicycle`. Signor Tironi had triumphed and became the man of the hour. In voluble Italian he told those present how charming he found Yorkshire and he then joined the other representatives of the 13 European nations attending the Rally in celebrating what was described at the time as the `biggest event in cycling this century`.

But this wasn't the end of Giancarlo's travels as he then decided to continue his tour of England by riding the length of Hadrian's Wall from the Irish Sea to the North Sea before leaving for Ostende. Transversing Belgium, Luxembourg and France, he then crossed Switzerland by the Gran San Bernardo valley and pass. Arriving back in Milan on the 16th of September. Bike and rider had covered a total distance of 4,645 kilometres, setting a new record for the greatest distance travelled on a Cucciolo. The `Caproni-Capellino Cucciolo` suffered no mechanical problems with only oil changes and routine adjustments to the clutch being needed throughout this epic journey.

Giancarlo's incredible trip created much press interest. In addition to the Yorkshire Evening Press report, many other Provincial newspapers reported on the Cyclist's Touring Clubs Rally, including the Harrogate Advertiser- "Thousands of cyclists from all over the country and many parts of the Continent gathered to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of The Cyclists Touring Club, and the Jubilee of the Alliance Internationale de Toursime."

The Daily Despatch of Manchester reported on 16th August that "TIRONI RIDES TO YORK- JUST IN TIME- Just before the rally in York ended last evening, a travel-stained sun-burned figure rode up to the crowded Knavesmire and joined the representatives of 13 nations who had assembled there from all parts of the Continent..... he was 27-year old Signor G.C.Tironi of the Italian Touring Club, who had cycled from Milan to the Rally, crossing the Alps, Switzerland and France. In the last stage of his journey he was racing against time and, had he reached the rally two hours later, he would have found the arena empty and the stands deserted."

Tironi's achievement was almost recognised, the Yorkshire Herald reported that "Signor Tironi arrived to find the prize for the rider covering the longest distance to the rally had been awarded to a Swedish cyclist. He was undismayed and joined the enthusiasts from other Continental countries- led by a contingent of 30 from France." No Riders badge for Giancarlo then.

His Caproni-Capellino bicycle was interesting, it featured a "telaio elastico" or sprung frame which had front and rear suspension. At the front are what look like straightforward telescopic forks (quite advanced for 1948- girder forks were still much-used) while the entire rear frame pivots at the bottom bracket, with a sliding guide into the lower end of the crossbar and two slim vertical spring units attached at the top to a rigid tubular luggage-carrier. It all must have been solidly made and reliable to have withstood Giancarlo Tironi's epic journey.

*`power your bicycle

Book Review- Il Cucciolo, un gigante.

For any Cucciolo owner or enthusiast 'Il Cucciolo, un gigante' is a must-have. This informative book covers the history of the Cucciolo engine from its creation by Aldo Farinelli of SIATA in 1945, through to the M55 of 1955 and the larger-capacity variants. Also mentioned are the 'built under licence' versions such as the French Rocher. Differing from the usual 'Ducati history' found in other books on the Cucciolo, this book covers many other aspects of the Cucciolo's long history. There is information covering the many Italian manufacturers who used the Cucciolo engine in their own bikes, the special frames available, the Cucciolo's sporting achievements and the many epic journeys undertaken by riders of these machines.

Written by Italian sports journalist Giuliano Musi, this soft-back 143-page book contains numerous photographs, both colour and black & white, and is so far the most definitive work on the Cucciolo that I have come across. It is published in Italian only and is available directly from the publisher, Minerva Edizione at www.minervaedizione.com

David Casper



Above- typical Italian cycle frame from the late-1940's- early 1950's designed specifically to take the Cucciolo engine unit, the Bertocchi. Dozens of similar frames were on offer, Cucciolo owners were spoilt for choice.

Le Tour de Presteigne 2008

(With kind permission of Broad Sheep magazine reporter Samson Ickx & editor Pete Musthill. And if you've never heard of Broad Sheep, you haven't really lived and evidently don't know what goes on in Herefordshire and the Welsh Marches, the centre of the Universe.) OK, OK, I know you are all addicted to two-stroke oil fumes and vibrating saddles, but this item is the way of the future, so pay attention at the back there.

"The 2008 Tour de Presteigne, in case you have been living in a cave in the Philippines for the past five years, is a rally for electric bikes. It is sparkling event, even when wet. This year it was dry, and it positively glittered. Threescore cyclists hurtled round the track emitting sparks of electricity and goodwill. A few heavies with horrid bulging calves hurtled to and fro, leading to general agreement among those of calmer temperament that a total ban on Lycra would be no bad thing. Statistics show that it takes ten days output from the Al-Wahabi oilfields to make a single low-cut cycling suit, and the results on a hairy road-hog are by no means enticing, let alone carbon-neutral. The majority potted round the circuit wearing three-piece tweed suits. In the end the best man won after a Stewards Enquiry, allegations of strewn drawing-pins and general chunterings about the Purity of the Turf.



The main event of the day was Lunch, partly because the wood-fired pizza-queue is a good place to meet dear friends, providing as it does about an hour to gas about this n'that. But mostly it was because amongst those present was WaiWon Ching, a genuine Chinese industrialist, designer and manufacturer of the eZee electric bike, winner of this year's Tour despite skullduggerous competition from professional cycle ringers.

(Le Tour de Presteigne, contd.)

The eZee is as perfect a bit of gear as anything bolted together by Messrs Rolls, or even Royce. And carbon neutraller, natch. But what is all this about lunch, I hear you cry? Wait for it. Ching was once a high-powered executive in a massive engineering company based in a vast office block on an industrial estate in Shanghai. He is a slim, intellectual-looking geezer who likes his lunch. *'The box lunches at the office were awful'* he said, *'so I walked to a restaurant, one mile'*. Shanghai industrial estates evidently have no equivalent to the great British industrial estate chippy-van/Deb's Diner/ Sarnie lady.



Above left - Lucy; top- the Tridem; lower right - ban Lycra! Photos: Phil Key & Alex Ramsey

Having exhausted the possibilities of that menu he looked around for another restaurant, but the next nearest was three miles away- too far to walk and too sweaty to cycle in the 80° summer heat. So he invented an electric bike and discovered that his increased mobility gave him a choice of more than 100 lunch-spots. Then he improved the bike and set up a factory and the world became his lunch counter.

Now Ching sells 3000 electric bikes a year and counting, and he is winning awards in many places, including Switzerland, famed for hills and fondue. To cap it all (this is why I'm writing about him and his lunch) he very decently lent me one of his bikes for the Tour and it was like riding a balmy south-westerly breeze. Even after lunch. And in spite of thugs in Lycra hurling themselves about all over the place. So I hereby announce that I'm saving up for an eZee bike, and I suggest you do too. Remember the name. Got it? I'm off to lunch. In Penzance."

South Pennines Challenge Ride Allan Green

Sixteen brave riders lined up at the Turnpike Inn to venture forth along moorland roads and over hill and dale into the unknown South Pennines. A first time run in more ways than one, and 40 miles at that. The run came about from an original idea by Dave Hutton that wouldn't it be nice if some of us who lived locally could get together and get out there. In discussion this then expanded to a realisation that other riders in the club might well like to join in the fun. And so the challenge began. Could we come up with a route that was actually rideable without impossible gradients? Well, almost, but in one direction only!

Now I think the South Pennines uplands are blessed with fantastic views, wildness, escape and unspoilt nature, and pleasant valleys. And other than on foot or by cycle, what better way to see the sights than on a lowly moped. I hope others new to the area would now agree, particularly since the weather was relatively kind on the day!

Enthusiasm to set off can only be described as irrepressible. Well, I was left standing as a varied assortment of some 15 snarling auto-cycles, mopeds and cycle-motors took to the hills. And I thought we were having just a photo shoot - until the Chairman said, "if they don't set off now they'll run out of petrol!" I said to myself, "where's my helmet, this is for real Allan!"



South Pennines Challenge contd.

However, after the first adrenalin rush, things settled down to a steady pace with stops for regrouping and to admire the views. The morning loop saw us back at the Turnpike Inn by lunchtime. Some of us enjoyed a hearty mealŠ eventually. Others visited the nearby ³Old Bore² - to admire the pricesŠ and possibly the beer!

We then ventured forth on the afternoon loop, thankful that a sudden downpour decided to drop itself at lunchtime. Passed by a massed outing of a Lotus car club I thought, sublime and ridiculous, bizarre but true. And then disaster! Three riders vanished into thin air, nowhere in front and nowhere behind. Was it the cruel hand of fate?

With some resignation to this loss, we eventually arrived back at the Turnpike Inn. But then all was well, at least after an apology, our lost riders had returned. Mechanically things went well, on the basis that I am assured cyclemotorists like the challenge of rebuilding their engines as well as the challenge of the ride. A good day out I would say, but I am just one. Will there be another, well possibly. But for sure, many thanks to Dave Jackson and his mate Peter Smith for providing backup.

Participants: Peter Fairbank (Excelsior), Andrew Speak (New Hudson), David Hutton (Mobylette), Philip Crowder (Cyclenmaster), Peter Crowder (Rudge Multi 25cc), John Topping (Mobylette), Sherwood Grimshaw (Honda), Dave Casper (Golden Eagle), Jeff Wilkes (James), Derek Ashworth (New Hudson), David Porah (Jawa), Dennis Hiller (Motom), Ronald Bond (NSU), David Bell (Puch Maxi), Jan Green (Mobylette), Allan Green (Puch Maxi & report writer).

Souled Out

Keith Glover brought an envelope stuffed with interesting material to the Classic Mechanics Show at Stafford in October- he had participated as an extra and ridden his Puch MS50V in a street scene in the independently-made film, Souled Out. The movie was shot around Birmingham over 3 days in mid-September and is about the Northern Soul club scene in 1974, so appropriate period machinery was used throughout, including an NSU Quickly and Keith's Puch Maxi, which at one stage was ridden by the lead actor.

Below, Keith in a street scene with Bedford CA van.



Keith rides the MS50V in street scenes around Wellington Road, Hanley, where his Puch Maxi is seen parked outside a terraced house, from where an actor (the protagonist's father) rides away. One problem was to teach Martin Simmonds, the young actor who plays the lead role of Joe McCain, how to ride a moped, something he'd never done before.



Above- Keith shows Martin the ropes

The film story line includes a night scene where Joe McCain steals his Dad's Puch Maxi to get to Wigan but runs out of fuel and abandons the bike.

Scriptwriter Jeff Williams recreates the feel of 1974 with much archive footage; clips of Jimmy Saville introducing the glam-rock band Mud, street scenes with male extras wandering about in big flared trousers, knitted waistcoats, shirts with huge collars and porn-star moustaches. Women in big floppy hats and maxi-skirts and Ford Capri adverts also feature, and there's a revolting shot of a grim Vesta Beef Curry- brown lumpy poo-like paste on a bed of rice. You remember, we all used to eat that stuff in our poverty-stricken youth.... The footage includes Ted Heath's resignation, industrial unrest with miners and power workers on strike, Britain running on candle-power, the three-day week, queues at petrol stations where you could only buy 3 gallons, riots between fans at football matches where police waded, in cracking skulls with baton charges.....

Makes you come over all nostalgic, doesn't it.

Chers Amis

During the past few weeks I've had several enquiries from NACC members who own holiday homes in France and wish to keep a Vélosolex for use there. They want to know where to obtain one, what are the laws governing their use and how to go about obtaining a registration number.

The first I have mentioned several times and that is to enquire at any motorcycle dealers, put an 'ad' (petite annonce) in the local newspaper or just ask around. The second requirement is that from the first of July 2009 all mopeds and scooters must carry a registration number on a plate of stipulated size fastened to the rear mudguard. The letters and numbers on this plate must also conform to the correct dimensions. The wearing of a helmet (casque) is also compulsory and don't imagine that your old pudding basin or corker helmet will do. Only a fortnight ago I was stopped by the Gendarmes and told that the helmet that I was wearing did not conform to the regulations and that I must not ride any of my bikes until I had replaced it. I have now bought a new one.. A rear view mirror is also required. Naturally insurance is necessary and not too expensive; my 'Fleet' insurance costs only seventy-nine euros per annum.

Now comes the tricky bit. As anyone who is familiar with it will know, French bureaucracy can be very trying at times and so an explanation would take up the whole of this article. The best course of action for anyone contemplating registering a Solex or other moped would be to contact me and I will be pleased to send them a copy of the procedure to be followed. Naturally it is written in French but even with only schoolboy/girl French and a decent dictionary it should not be too difficult to follow.

Since writing the previous paragraphs I have received an e-mail from a member who wishes to obtain a UK registration number for his 3300. Although the engine number places it as a 1966 model Dave Casper requires a frame number in addition which the member cannot find. In my collection there are four 3800's including an export model and a Luxe as well as a 5000 and none of them carries a frame number although my 2200, 1700 and col de cygnes do. I have several dating lists from acknowledged experts including the late Claude de Decker aka 'Papy Solex and all give production dates relating to engine numbers. So what is to be done? Obviously some Solex owners in the UK have got around this problem. I'd be interested to hear how they managed to do so.

Two early 45cc models have recently surfaced in the UK and are in the process of being restored for use. Unfortunately one of these is lacking several important parts which have 'gone missing. As I've said in the past, spares for the early models are becoming increasingly difficult to find and require much effort to track down. I am always willing to help when I can but, I repeat, unless you are able to spend time in France to search around the restoration of the earliest models can be very frustrating. For some time I have been trying to find the correct handlebar for my 3800 Export model. As the handlebar is similar to that on the 5000 one would imagine that there would be no difficulty in finding a suitable one but this has not proved to be the case. Marc Deschamps had one for sale at a price of fifty euros plus a further ten euros for postage which I thought excessive.

However , recently I was in Paris for a few days and, as always ,I visited the MBK dealer on the Boulevard Saint-Michel. I asked if they had one. The owner disappeared into the back of the shop and brought back one in its original wrapping for which he asked only twenty euros. Unfortunately ,as is his custom, he would not let me remove the cast aluminium ‘enjolveur’ for the footplate on a very tatty 2200 outside his shop. I would have loved that but you can’t win them all.

In Paris a visit to Le Musée de L’Armée afforded me the opportunity of having a good look at a Wellbike, something which I had not the chance to do in the past. Unfortunately not having a camera with me I couldn’t take a photograph. Other interesting exhibits were two Gatling guns and the ball turret from a B17 flying fortress.

I’m afraid that this edition has been taken up with mundane things but I believe that the points mentioned will be of use. Nevertheless I will wish Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année to Solexistes everywhere and my you all ride many happy kilometres without recourse to the ‘camion balai.

Bryan

