

The

Buzzing Club



Volume 29

Number 3

June 2010

*Motorised Cycling
by*

Berini

THE TROUBLE FREE CYCLEMOTOR

£12 17 6
INCLUDING PURCHASE TAX

14 MILES
for this

A small illustration of a coin, likely a pound coin, is shown next to the text 'for this'.



The National Autocycle & Cyclemotor 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 August 2010 issue of Buzzing should reach Buzzing Production at the address above by Friday 23rd July 2010.

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Club Information

Membership

Membership of the NACC in the UK costs £10.00 a year plus a £3 joining fee for new or lapsed members. Application forms are available from the Membership Secretary (see previous page). European membership costs £12.00 and the rest of the world £16.00 per annum.

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 Veteranknallert 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 previous page 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 a huge number of photos in addition to those published in Buzzing, as well as many 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. Application forms can be downloaded from the NACC website. Events organised at short notice (min 28 days), apply in writing to Events Secretary to ensure issue of a permit. We'll 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....

News from HQ

Buzzing Prod.

A couple of omissions and corrections from April's magazine; the photo credits to Patrick Barrabès and Henk van Kessel for the lovely Mobylette pictures they sent in to illustrate the *La Mobylette Universelle* book review vanished off the bottom of the page, no doubt elbowed out by the fat bloke in glasses buying a carton of milk, so belated thanks to both of them. Thanks also go to Ian McGregor for the fabulous Coventry Eagle Auto-Ette catalogue picture on Buzzing's front cover, Ian also supplied the equally great Berini brochure illustration on this issue's front cover. The correction concerns Anne Faulkner's letter in the Letters pages and Anne's idea to form a North Lancashire & Fylde section. Fumble-fingers here printed an incorrect email address with too many "ees" in it, the correct address is afaulkner94@googlemail.com. Apologies to those who didn't manage to get through. Anne tells us that she has had a good response and is hoping to organise a first run out soon. Contact her at the above email address or on 01253 763958 for more information. **Glen Brown's** proposed **Stepthrough Club GB** letter in April's Buzzing had the wrong address, Glen lives at 19 Walton Court, Stockton on Tees TS18 2LQ, not 24 Walton Court as published, and he has an email address- Glen Brown1@hotmail.co.uk. Apologies to all who received no response from Glen.

NACC listings on eBay- for some months now an NACC member, Frank Brzeski, has been posting inflammatory and derogatory listings on eBay which do not advertise anything for sale but are being used to publicly criticise the NACC club and members, the NACC committee and club rules concerning classes of machine acceptable as "NACC type bikes". Frank's complaint is that 'small motorcycles' are increasingly being used on NACC runs (e.g. Japanese step-throughs & Chinese clones, European sport mopeds etc.) to the disadvantage of clip-on cyclemotors, autocycles and mopeds and that bikes should only be accepted on a run if they have feeble small-capacity engines and bicycle-type pedals. He also claims it is possible to earn an NACC Riders Badge with great ease "without ever riding an NACC type machine" to the disadvantage of those who wish to ride cyclemotors and other slow two-wheelers to earn a badge.

The NACC committee is also being accused of "spending a considerable amount of money on good signage for Shows, only to use them for promoting Honda motorcycles" (Uttoxeter). Frank then lodged a formal complaint on this matter which was discussed at the February 2010 committee meeting, the committee deciding allegations made in his complaint were unsubstantiated and therefore no further action would be taken.

However, the eBay campaign has continued, with postings of further accusations, personal attacks on committee members and a form calling for an EGM. The EGM form also included solicitation for proxy votes to be given to Frank which would be used at his proposed EGM to change Club rules on what constitutes an acceptable "NACC-type machine". As a result of continued eBay postings the committee decided to suspend Frank Brzeski's NACC membership as of 15th May and requested he attend the committee meeting on 21st August to discuss these issues.

We would like to know what views other NACC members have on this topic- please send your ideas and comments to our Secretary John Aston, email & postal address on page 2 of this magazine

We hereby give formal notice of the Annual General Meeting of the NACC to be held at RAF Cosford Museum near Wolverhampton on 4th December 2010, the meeting to start at 10.30am.

Any proposals or items for the agenda to be with the Secretary by 12 July 2010

John Aston, 1 Honesty Close, Clayhanger, Walsall, West Midlands, WS8 7RE or email john@johnaston.wanadoo.co.uk

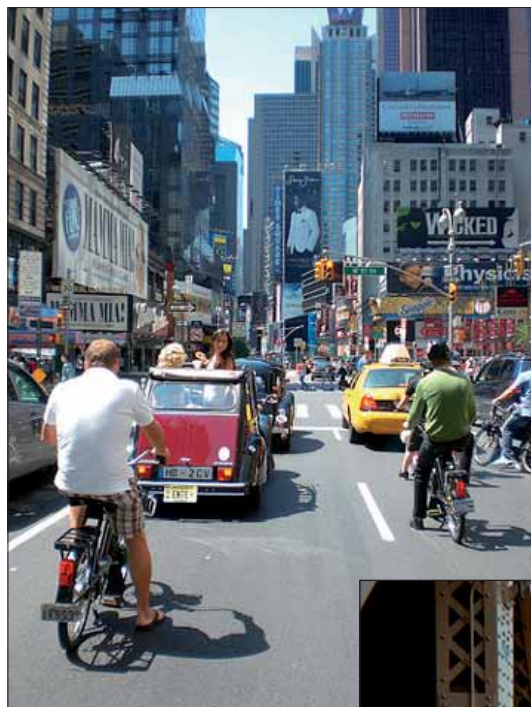
News

The Yike Bike- Member Dennis Gallyer forwarded links to this fascinating new electric bike being made in New Zealand. It's unlike anything seen before, the brainchild of entrepreneur Grant Ryan and so revolutionary that he suggests one day the Yike Bike will be the most commonly-owned transport device in the world, more ubiquitous than the good old-fashioned push-bike. It was memorably described as "...the extraordinary love-child of a Segway and a Penny-Farthing with dwarfism" by one British journalist. "The basic bike hasn't changed for 100 years...our aim was to find another configuration that was inherently stable" was Grant Ryan's plan.



Brief specifications include: carbon-fibre frame, 1kw brushless DC motor, electric anti-skid regenerative braking, battery LiFePO4, 40 minute recharge, range of up to 10kms at a maximum of 25kph, weight 10kgs, fold time under 20 secs, weight limit 100kgs, user height 163-193cms, wheel size 20" front, 8" back, built-in high-vis LED lights and the price is, er, 3,495 euros or £2,995. Always a draw-back somewhere with such high-tech kit. If you'd like to read all about it then check the Yike Bike website at www.yikebike.com where there's a lots more info on the design and tons of photos.

Bastille Day Rendezvous 2010 will be celebrated on 11th July (nearest Sunday to 14th July) this year in New York City, USA. Arch Solex-enthusiast Brian Colter emailed Buzzing to send us pictures and details of the 2009 Rendezvous (a celebration shared with the Citroën 2CV club) thanks to Larry Fisher of Pranafa Playboy and autocycle fame, who put us in touch (see Letters, page 12) with Brian. The pictures show some of the Solexistes in Times Square and crossing the Queensborough Bridge at Queens, NYC. Number-plates seem obligatory, but not helmets! Brian



remembers the 2009 event; “*Incredible! Unbelievable!* Two years in a row with perfect weather! Saturday night and into the early hours of Sunday morning, the thunder crashed and the lightning flashed, and the rain came down torrentially. I’m sure that most of the Citroën and Solex owners were watching the weather and wondering if it would end in time for the event. But, as the sun rose on Sunday morning, July 12th, 2009, the rain stopped, and the clouds made their exit, and out came the Atoll blue skies to match the color of the ride that I had chosen for the day, my Atoll Blue 1977 Velosolex 4600 V3. I was not to be alone on my journey to and from the event; brothers Pierre and Jean-Philippe would be joining me. Pierre lives relatively near to me and had recently purchased a Solex on eBay,

a late ‘60s model S 3800, while Pierre’s brother Jean-Philippe lives in California and decided to ship his 1974 model S 3800 here to ride it during the event, definitely winning the long-distance award!” There is a surprisingly large and active group of Solexistes in America of which Brian is a



key member, so if you fancy corresponding with VéloSoleX enthusiasts in the USA, contact him at:Rickbrendan420@aol.com or visit Brian’s blog at- <http://velosolex4600.over-blog.com/>

We hope to publish a report on the 2010 Bastille Day Rendezvous in a future issue of Buzzing.

CYCLEMOTOR ONLY RUN FINAL DETAILS The AS IT WAS BUZZ

Saturday 26th June should be a red letter day for enthusiasts of minimalist motorcycling with a true and traditional Cyclemotor run. Gone the fear of being the only person on a run with a motor hindered bicycle or being left behind in a moped race, it should be a day to be savoured and maybe give newer members a glimpse of how runs used to be. With the details leaked (the intention was to inform those that enquired personally) you can now find all that you need to know below- The BARGE INN @ HONEYSTREET does have a web page that will give you an idea of the setting. There are camping /caravan facilities for those that wish, these can be arranged on the day. During the weekend of 26/27 June the Barge is celebrating its 200th Birthday as is the Kennet & Avon Canal that runs along side, so we could be part of an interesting weekend. On the subject of "interesting weekends " the day after the AS IT WAS BUZZ and just a 1 hour drive away the TVG will be holding our 12th ODIHAM RUN to which you are all invited. So with a resolute backside and a sense of adventure a whole weekend drenched in joy is available. I will just mention again that for the sake of this event a Cyclemotor is defined as a ladies or gents bicycle that has had a "clip-on " engine from the 1940s, 50s or 60s attached to it. There will be a one off AS IT WAS BUZZ commemorative T shirt awarded to the rider who has travelled furthest to the event. SATURDAY 26 JUNE, AS IT WAS BUZZ. THE BARGE INN,HONEYSTREET, Nr PEWSEY, WILTSHIRE. SN9 5PS. The entrance to this pub is via a wood yard, we gather at 10 .30 ish for an 11ish start.The route is about 28 miles of the Vale of Pewseys lanes and minor roads and for the ailing machine or indeed rider there will be a breakdown van available. Food is available at the Barge, there is outside seating and canal side walking with wonderful views so there is, if the weather is fine, the opportunity to make the day one for the family. Please bring your membership cards ...you know the rules! If you need any further information please contact me, tel 01672 562901 or email eieio@hotmail.co.uk. Safe riding, Colin.

Coast-to-Coast badges- If you have successfully completed the Coast to Coast Run and would like everyone to know, then you can now apply for a finishers badge. The badge is available from Dave Casper at a cost of £3.50 plus 50p P&P and all profits from the sale of the badge will be donated to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance fund. The badge will also be available at The Beacon on Sunday the 20th of June`



VéloSolex

enthusiasts with online capability would enjoy a video clip of the Solex Millenium group leaving the Château Renaissance du Plessis-Brion on a run, to be seen on YouTube at- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqSo045GQOA> , and there's even a Micron to be seen on the road. Other Solex-related clips available on YouTube include one of the 13th running of the 24 heures Solex de Chaumont race- incredible machines bearing only a passing resemblance to Goddard & Mennesson's original creation! Thanks to Benoît Ménard for the info.



Letters to the Editor



Hello Dave

I thought you might like to include the photos below of a Perle Saxonette in *Buzzing* sometime. I took the photos in Holland in 2008 at a Vintage event there. The bike was claimed to be from 1938, but it all seems too modern for that period. I've since found out that the 'Saxonette' engine unit was made by Sachs from the 1930's up until the 1960's but am willing to be corrected on that. There is very little information at large on the unit which must pre-date the Cyclemaster by quite a few years, I suspect. I've since seen the same bike on a 2009 Veteran motorcycle event in Belgium and seem to recollect that it was being ridden on German plates. I've also seen references to the Saxonette being 60cc. Has anyone any further information on this machine? Cheers, **Bill Phelps**



(Definitely too modern for 1938! More likely late1950's, any better guesses?- Nice sprung forks...)

Dear David

I noticed a mention in April's *Buzzing* magazine a reference to the non availability of "traditional" pedals. However, some are available and I buy mine from Chain Reaction Cycles. Go online to- www.chainreactioncycles.com/Models.aspx?ModelID=15300. Hope this helps! Regards

David Ross

Dear David

If there are any NACC members in the Uxbridge area etc. of West London and they would like to meet with (some) fellow enthusiasts they are welcome to come to the Uxbridge & District Classic Vehicle Society; we meet on the Third Wednesday of the month @ Thorney Park Golf Club, Iver, Bucks. and ask for me- **Roger R Brown**.

Hi Dave

Here in the US I feel like a bit of an oddity- in addition to the Pranafa Playboy (*see Buzzing passim*) I have several autocycles and other quirky machines, including a BSA Starlite aka Beagle, (and yes, it IS a dog) a 1947 Francis Barnett Powerbike, a 1948 James Superlux, six VéloSoleXes, including...

a beautiful original-paintwork 1400, a 1950 SHL model 04, and more. Yesterday I visited a friend in New York who has 30+ Solexes in his garage, he organises a Solex ride for Bastille Day in NYC area that we hope to participate in this July. Our other interest is in micro-electric cars or "autoettes" from the 40's, 50's and 60's that were built in southern California, we have five of the little gems. I write a blog on the subject at- <http://autoette.blogspot.com> . Buzzing is always like a breath of fresh air, bringing news of fellow enthusiasts from afar! All the best, **Larry Fisher**

Dear David

I don't know if you've heard this story, but it came to me from a friend who had joined the Road Research Laboratory and, as a chap with an interest in vintage motorcycles and history in general, he'd been looking through their archives. He told me there was a file on a discussion with the Ministry of Transport, who were concerned about the rising rate of casualties amongst ex-cyclists who had moved up to a cyclemotor attachment and suddenly found themselves travelling at twice the speed previously reached. All on the same tyres, same brakes, same level of non-maintenance in many cases. The Ministry asked the RRL to produce an outline spec for economical transport to meet this need, and they drew up a ten-point requirement for a powered two-wheeler that would cope with the speeds realised. It included proper brakes, suspension, improved lighting and I can't remember the rest.

According to my friend this was presented to the Cycle and Motor Cycle Industry Association - I assume at Starley House in Coventry - who pooh-pooed the whole idea and carried doing what they did. Whether some of the early developments you outline in Stinkwheel reflected a response to that high level concern I don't know. Whatever, according to my friend, within 18 months of this discussion and rejection of the idea, the NSU Quickly was launched with eight of those ten specification points included. And we all know what a great flop that was. Regards, **Jim Reynolds**

Dear David

In the summer of 1949 I left the local Grammar School after having had to good fortune to obtain a Matriculation Certificate (discontinued many years ago) and gained employment with the Gravesend Trustee Savings Bank at a vast salary of £2.1s.6d (£2.7p) per week. As I was in a Savings Bank I felt I should do some saving and started to put 5/- (25p) a week away. After 2 years this had mounted up to £50, a not inconsiderable sum in those days. I was called up for National Service in the Royal Army Pay Corps in December 1951 and upon completion of my "Square Bashing" in February 1952, decided to buy a 25.7cc Cyclomaster from a local garage together with a new single-speed bicycle. In all this venture cost me £49.19s.6d (£49.97)- I had sixpence left over! The Cyclomaster gave me great pleasure until I purchased my first car, a 1933 Austin 7 box saloon. I then continued a path of many Vintage cars and 20 old buses over the years but the Cyclomaster remained, being used from time to time right through to the 1980's, when it was put to one side, together with a Cyclaid and a Cymota which I had acquired in the course of time.

About August last year I decided to spend the coming winter restoring the three cyclemotors and get them to run. amazingly the Cyclomaster started up readily, though it needed a replacement fuel tank, and is now in full running order. The Cyclaid also started readily but the Cymota, owing to a weak spark, is having to be converted to 6v coil ignition. However, referring back to the Cyclomaster, I have now owned this wheel with its original registration number since 1952-is this a record? I should add that the Cyclomaster is now mounted in a Tradesman's bike, complete with wicker basket (made by the Royal National Institute for the Blind) and a full compliment of wax fruit! I look forward to runs with the machines in 2010. Yours sincerely, **Colin Durham**

(An amazing story Colin- has any othe NACC member owned his/her cyclemotor since new?)

Shows & Run Reports

Stafford Classic Motorcycle Show 24-25/4 DB

The South Staffs Section put on a great show at April's Classic Motorcycle Show; NACC Shows organiser John Aston, ably assisted by committee Josie Stanley, Bob & Liz, Glyn, Paul, Ian and Bob Jeffcoat, to name but a few, had gathered together a wide variety of "our" kind of bikes to display. The result was a constantly-busy stand, with many bikers with big machines stopping by to reminisce about their mis-spent youth aboard some dead-slow moped in the sixties, many couldn't resist and as a result fifteen of them signed up to become new members! Regalia sales were brisk too, with the latest NACC 'beanie' woolly caps flying off the stand until there were almost none left by Sunday.



Above- John Davies prize-winning 1969 Garelli Monza alongside the Autocycle display; l to r, Paul Harris's restored 1958 New Hudson restyle, DB's similar but unrestored one, Glyn Udall's New Hudson, Steve Frost's 1940 Rudge and David Casper's Britax Cucciolo.

A round dozen bikes were on show, some superbly restored, some *dans son jus*, ranging from Ian Chisholm and Bob Jeffcoat's 1961 and 1967 VéloSoleXes, Keith Glover's 3-speed NSU Quickly, Derek Mountford's unusual 1975 Simson Star, John Aston's 1972 Puch MS50D, John Davies multi prize-winning Garelli Monza and no less than six autocycles. Side by side were two black New Hudson restyles making an interesting contrast, with Paul Harris's beautifully restored bike alongside DB's totally original, rusty-and-all as-found machine. Next came Glyn's super maroon last of the pre-restyle New Hudsons with large headlamp, alongside Steve Frost's immaculate and rare 1940 Rudge, with David Casper's fine Britax Cucciolo by the tea urn. On the table alongside we had a fascinating very early SIATA Cucciolo engine displayed on a stand which had the rearward-facing exhaust port and loop-ended pullrods. On the other side Ken Rowark's 1949 JDL- powered James De Luxe caught the judges eyes and was awarded a Highly Commended rosette.



Left- Ken Rowark's Highly Commended 1949 James De Luxe auto cycle

VéloSoleXes seem to have become a passion for South Staffs members- Liz Butler has one and there were two others on the stand; Bob Jeffcoat's restored 1967 3800 painted a particularly fetching shade of mauve that must have had Messrs. Goudard and Mennesson spinning in their graves, while Ian Chisholm's as-found 1961-ish 2200 was suitably rough.

Derek Mountford's 1975 50cc Simson Star was unusual and very solid, sporting fine handlebar muffs for those cold Eastern European winters and John Aston's Puch MS50D looked ready for any NACC run, however long it may be.

Thanks to all for having put in all the work which helped put on such a successful display, roll on October!



The Welsh Run 4/4

DB

Philippa did it again this year, organising a gloriously sunny though fresh Spring morning and a new route running north of Abergavenny for our benefit, she would have ridden backstop but for the non-arrival of insurance cover-notes nearly a month after the renewal payment was debited.....

right- Castle Street car-park and the gathered clan warms up old machinery wrenched from a warm shed early in the morning and expected to undertake a 30+ mile run round the Welsh countryside. Ray's New Hudson clears its tubes in the foreground.



Nineteen hardy souls turned up on the day including the regular deputation from Thames Valley Section- Derek and Lorraine on New Hudsons and Alan & Robert on Power Paks. The south Walian VMCC section turned up, including Ray's New Hudson, as well as a scattering of Hondum in various guises. Paul Jephcott set off from home at 6am and rode all the way from Birmingham to Abergavenny on his superb Velocette LE Mk2, did the run and rode back again. That's true enthusiasm. Mopeders included John Tylee's interesting AJW Pointer, Dennis Iles NSU Quickly, Rod Western's Puch Monza, Frank Cropp's Peugeot, a Raleigh Ultramatic and a Mobylette.



Philippa's new route was an interesting ramble through narrow byeways, occasionally sprinkled with mud and ordure of one kind or another and made more exciting by the propensity of local motorists to hurtle round blind bends at high speed in Land Rovers. The standard Welsh avoidance technique is employed on encountering an unexpected gaggle of cyclemotors/mopeds in a narrow lane, stuff the Land Rover into the hedge and smile cheerfully as we trundle by....that's why there are so many gaps in Welsh hedges.

We all survived however and had a great ride, except for poor Robert Hummerstone who suffered a terminally massive puncture not far outside Abergavenny, but there was compensation in the form of the usual post-run fry-up at a renowned local caff. Roll on next year.



Audruicq Autojumble 28/2

Nick Devonport

Nestling in the hinterland of the Pas de Calais between Calais and Dunkerque is Audruicq, a little town typical of many in the area and unremarkable for the British cyclemotorist apart from the last weekend in February when the *salle polyvalente* plays host to the Tacot Club Calaisien's annual autojumble. It's been a regular event on my calendar for several years and this was the second time I'd taken a stall in an attempt to clear out unwanted garage crap – sorry, treasures – and sell them to the French. Unlike similar events here where dealers are often aggressive in their bartering, I found the local breed pleasant to deal with and made some useful contacts for future reference.

The hall opened its' doors to the public at 0900 and trade was brisk from the off. Unfortunately temptation seemed to beckon at every stall I looked at and it would have been easy to spend my takings as soon as they hit my pocket. I managed to limit my expenditure to three panniers for future projects and found several parts for another friend's Solex restoration. The photos give an idea of the temptations on offer, a blue 1975 Solex 5000 at €500 and a 1965 3300 at €450 both competently restored by members of the Solex Club Spirales. The 3300 was successfully re-homed but the 5000, the nicer machine in my opinion, was still there when we left.

(contd. next page)

Maybe €500 is a bit steep for a 5000 no matter how good a condition it's in. Members of the same Club are known for the inventiveness of their creations and the yellow twin-engined 3800 caused a stir. Badged a 7600 and sporting a two-metre aerial, it was a marvel of Heath-Robinson style engineering. Other stalls offered a variety of Solexes and Mobylettes – a barn-find AU32 rubbing shoulders incongruously with a superb Velocette, a far from special Speciale 98 with more duct tape than saddle and some other reasonably tidy Solexes.



Had I been weaker-willed I could have blown a substantial part of the day's takings on a Mobylette Cady in running order for €140 and the siren voices of three so-called "mates" did their best to ensure that I did just that but, being in a relatively new relationship where "Don't bring back any more mopeds" just might mean "Don't bring back any more mopeds or else" I mustered all my willpower and walked away from it. (*but he'll be back next year.....*)



Solex Club Spirales Canterbury Run 20/3 Stuart Hall

On Saturday 20 March the Calais East Solex Club, better known as the "SCS" Solex Club Spirales, made a day trip to Kent to ride from Dover to Canterbury for lunch and then back again. Jean Maurice Duhaut, the Club's President, had originally planned this excursion for late last year, the idea being to visit the Canterbury Christmas market on 19 December. The problem was the harsh winter. Everybody was ready to go on the 19th when the country froze to a standstill. Sensibly the event was postponed and a new date of 6 Feb was timetabled, although the savage winter conditions also made this inadvisable. Since the original booking made by SCS had a maximum of 3 months life, it was decided to wait for the warmest conditions possible on the 20 March.

Well, as it turned out, things were not too cold but, unfortunately, not too dry either. It was potentially a very wet weekend although the very south east corner of the UK did manage to stay fairly dry until after lunch, meaning that only the return journey was made in conditions of light rain. As with all SCS events that we have experienced, the organisation was superb, the route was carefully pre-planned, and, in true French style, a buffet lunch had been pre-booked and organised at The White Hart pub in central Canterbury. A carefully chosen pub that gave the club the benefit of secure private parking for all the Solexes in the gated beer garden at the rear. The route was well-chosen and, although at one point, there was no choice but to ride along the A2.....

...the traffic was not that heavy and surprisingly devoid of lorries. The rest of the route was on minor roads and green lanes, which presented no problems other than the previous day's rain had caused one section to flood creating a potential ford. I can therefore confirm that Solex ignition systems are remarkably water proof!!

In total there were 42 French visitors. Four were in a 2CV fitted with Sat Nav which led the way, one on a Motobecane AV3 and the remainder all on Solexes. Representing the NACC and UK there were two riders, myself, Stuart Hall from Northampton, and Peter Jones from Brighton. I rode my Plisolex and Peter one of his 5000s. All the SCS members crossed the channel riding a Solex and came off the ferry in a swarm at about 10am. Peter and I had been waiting at the P&O ferry terminal for their arrival and followed them through Dover by car before parking up just out of town to unload our own machines and join the swarm.



Above and right, the assembled throng- not many of those new French number plates to be seen yet! Below, the rally plaque carried by all participants and bottom right, British runners Peter Jones (left) and Stuart Hall (right).

(More on this event from the French perspective in August's Buzzing.)



May Bug Buzz 9/5

Alan Hummerstone

The VMCC Cyclemotor Section's May Bug Buzz was held as usual at the Swan Inn, at Radcot after some earlier doubt with the delightful riverside pub being closed for a while. There were eighteen runners, and riders and everyone got back to the finish, although Bob Goodwin needed the helpful hand of Derek Carter, and the New Hudson to get back on his reluctant Solex. The two Cyclemasters didn't miss a beat, and Lorraine Carter flew round on her Firefly. Bernard Marlow had a good ride on his two speed Excelsior, and Robert Hirons had fun creating a smoke screen on his Dad's early Excelsior when the newly fitted seat inadvertently adjusted the oiling system to maximum after hitting a few bumps. The new folk at the Swan fed us magnificently, and I really hope they manage to make a success of what has become a difficult trade. Here's to next year.



An Evening Run around Ayrshire

Alan Kempster
& John Shaw

Mid May and summer seems to have arrived. Its Monday and an email gets pinged around the locals with mopeds. Suddenly everyone's chomping at the bit for a run up the backroads. We manage to get 5 bikes to meet up at John Shaw's house near Kilmarnock. After a quick chat I lead off on my Puch MS50D, followed by Arthur McKay on a Norman Nippy, John Gallagher on an MV Agusta Germano, John Sykes on a Raleigh/Motobecane and John S on his MV Agusta Liberty. Tootling northwards we avoid all the main roads and find some very interesting and challenging climbs as we work our way inland and up into the hills. We're heading to the village of Uplawmoor where the local VMCC group meet. They always seem overwhelmed by our presence on the mopeds, demanding lots of stories, asking too many questions and snapping at us with their mobiles!





Without exhausting the chat, after a cuppa its time to head off home before darkness falls. The way back tending to be more or less on surprisingly smooth B roads, now downhill, and ideally devoid of traffic for the quick buzz home. During our trip we had fantastic views of Arran to the west, Ben Lomond to the north, and enjoyed some lovely countryside on the way. Lots of spring lambs too, experiencing their first sights, sounds and smells of a 2-stroke!

...and those MV's: **1964 50cc Liberty 'S'** - (*below*) four stroke pushrod motor with three speed handlebar change gearbox. Essentially a 'shrunken'

version of the larger MV singles. Swing arm/tele. forks suspension with decent brakes. Completely standard, and by and large untouched other than for essential 'care and maintenance'. Rather nice to ride and handles/stops well. Not fast, but a sweet and fascinating ride that keeps up with most 60's and 70's 3 speed mopeds OK. Impressive fuel economy (makers claimed 274mpg!!) and a 2 gallon fuel tank give impressive and bum-achingly good range capability. Very expensive in its day, and very rare today, there are only 2 in the UK and the other one is not used



on the road, being solely displayed in shows and concours events. Even in Italy it is a very rare ultra-light motorcycle. eBay Italy has virtually nothing by way of complete machines or even spares for this wee gem. The **1968 50cc 'Germano'**. (*left*)-MV's answer to the NSU 'Quickly'?? Two stroke with 3 speed handlebar change gearbox. Essentially untouched from new. Par for the course, 35mph and quite nippy through the gears. Again, a very rare machine, and the only MV ever made with a non-MV manufactured engine. German manufacturer 'Zundapp' provided the nippy and reliable power unit. Hence the model designation 'Germano'.

(Photos courtesy "Velton" on Flickr)

Nearly a PC World!

David McKenny

No less than four Honda PC 50's lined up alongside seven other assorted machines for the South West Lincolnshire Sections May run. Following tea coffee and chocolate biscuits provided by Mel and Vince riders enjoyed an almost uneventful run to the lunchtime destination Wymondham Mill. I



say almost uneventful because my newly acquired PC50 developed a condition rare in the world of the moped rider, a speed wobble. Very disturbing for the digestive system. The cause was soon identified as a loose axle nut on the front wheel. A self-locking version has now been ordered from David Silver. Lunch at the Mill where our machines were viewed with interest by a cycling group and a bunch of BMW riders, both confident of a better top speed than most of us. Uneventful return run to Colsterworth. Apart from the

fact that I lost the pack (perhaps the plot) and got back to base a little later than the rest!

Riders were Mike Green Honda PC50, John Redding Puch Cheetah, Archie Bryson Batavus HS50, John Truluck Raleigh Supermatic, Harvey Spencer Honda PC50, Peter Smith Honda PC50, Peter Lawson Puch M2, Vince Shreeve Honda C50, Mark Batley Vespa, Martin Hardy Raleigh RM6, and last and probably least David McKenny Honda PC50. Thanks to all those who attended and please note that our July 18th run will start from the Royal Oak PH at Long Bennington, and the September 19th event from 3 Woodlands Drive, Colsterworth NG33 5NH.”



XX

Utrecht Rally, Holland

John Redding

Although there have been many articles in Buzzing on cycle-motoring and mopeding in Holland I don't recall any rally reports so maybe this is a first? Anyhow, a long standing invitation from one of the NACC's well known Dutch members, Mick Van Asten and his family, prompted a Redding tour of the Benelux countries earlier this year. Primarily it was to attend a rally on Easter Monday near Utrecht but Mick also managed to combine it with a trip to Amsterdam where I studied the canal system and the bird life indigenous to a certain area of the city! Er, back to the rally. Naturally, wanting to impress the Dutch, I had my machine professionally serviced in true British style, i.e. dragged the first bike from the garage that fired up and put it on the David Cooper car rack. It was my yellow Puch MV50 of buckled wheel fame from Sars Poteries.

Easter Monday, a chilly day, every day is chilly lately, I put my Oud Maar Sterk Veteranen Toerclub sticker on the Puch and we arrived somewhere near Oudewater at a cafe. Seventy riders were there on Eysinks, Zundapps, DKW's, Flandrias and naturally some Hondas. The run of 90 km (55 miles)



was a sheer pleasure as cyclists/mopedists have priority at ALL junctions, including roundabouts and you can see motorists looking out for you and stopping in good time to allow you to pass unheeded. Naturally, we were never far from rivers or dykes (pay attention Nick Devonport) and the only hill encountered was on a bank near the river Maas. Plenty of flooded ares and strange farm buildings which had height adjusting roofs depending on how much hay was stored in them. They looked like they were made out of telegraph poles. A pleasant stop at a cafe, a look around an old town that belongs to their Queen more farm buildings and back to base. To summarise, a great day out and a salient reminder of how pleasant it is to be on low powered two wheelers in the Netherlands, try it yourself, I am sure Mick has some more rallies arranged!



North Wilts Run 28/3

Richard Woodbridge

The first run of the year and reasonably good weather, I was unable to go so Dennis looked after it with a friend of his who kindly came as sweeper car. Six riders only but they all enjoyed it as usual, Steve was unable to go due to a hand injury, get well soon Steve. Thanks to our friends from Bristol who doubled our attendance, we will see you all shortly on your run. No breakdowns, thank goodness. Thanks to all for attending.

Riders were: Dennis Iles- NSU Quickly; John Tylee- AJW Pointer; Paul Flowers- Mobylette AV92; Geoff Brooks- Honda Chaly; Rod western- Puch Monza; Alan Burton- Honda N50

Vincent Piatti, creator of the Mini Motor

Andrew Nahum

Vincent Piatti's first start in engineering was with Ettore Bugatti's twin-engined racing aircraft. In June 1937 he joined the team in Paris to do stress calculations. It was his first job after graduating from college as an aeronautical engineer though he recalled, 'I was lacking in experience and common sense, one day I plucked up courage to tell Bugatti who I was - that he and my father had been at art college in Milan together. He went away very gloomy. Next day he comes in very cheerful. He talked about the party they had after he won a motor race on a Prinetti & Stucchi



machine [a de Dion type tricycle designed by Bugatti]. He won 500 lire - then a huge amount of money. The party went on for three days! The most beautiful girls, plenty to drink, plenty of the best cigars to smoke. On the third day, their canary died'.

Meeting Vincent Piatti was a happy chance. One day in the 1980s I was chatting to Saab's head of engine design, Per Gillbrand when suddenly he said 'don't you know Vincent Piatti? You must meet him - he's a marvellous chap' and beckoning through the crowd, he materialised a

short, sprightly, and dapper Italian who seemed to be bubbling with energy and humour. Piatti had been working as a consultant with Saab from the time they started trying four-valve heads. Piatti was an enthralling link with the classic age of engineering, but was still an engineer who was fully absorbed professionally and could not stop thinking about the latest problems. Later, I met and talked to him in his fine house in Ovington Gardens, just up the road from Harrods. In conversation

he frequently would say "I'm not interested in history" as he darted across the room to show a new drawing or some feature of his latest idea. His father was an artist whose work took him to France & Belgium after he had studied at the Accademia di Brera in Milan.

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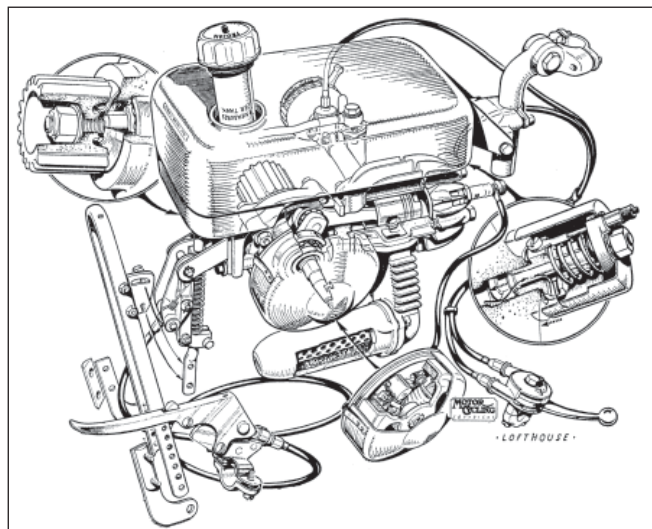
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Thus Vincent, though born Italian, was educated abroad, and graduated in aeronautical engineering in Paris. It was chance, not the family connection, that provided the first job in Bugatti's design office, but 'when he realised my father had been his friend he would always come behind me at the drawing board. I was a young engineer, very theoretical, and he would say of a component 'you must do what you want but I've a feeling it's not strong enough'. I would do the calculations again and usually he was right. He was an artist - he had no theoretical training, but for this reason I say he had a certain feeling.

His assessment was very visual. If, say, a conrod was designed he would ask for it to be modelled in wood, so he could judge it. He had a wonderful feeling for metal'.

Piatti also worked on the mast designs for Bugatti's yacht which had an unusual sail-furling system, and a braced pylon mast structure, before losing his job for taking part in a political strike against the appeasement of Hitler in 1938. Named on the Italian government's black list of anti-fascists he spent part of the war hiding in the Auvergne working on gas producers to enable cars to run on wood. Arrested by the Germans he was deported to Austria to work on aircraft assembly in what he called 'a light concentration camp'. Just before Christmas 1944 he escaped and went into hiding in Northern Italy.



As the Allies took control of Italy Piatti realised that a major need was transport. Petrol was scarce, so were tyres - even if people still had a car stored they couldn't run it. He decided to design a tiny two-stroke to clip on to push bikes, which he christened the *Mini motore*, though he did not mention devising the engine originally to drive lathes when I interviewed him.

(image courtesy Morton's Media Archive)

(continued overleaf)

There were a number of engines of this type created in Italy at the time and the Trojan car company sent a representative to find one that would be suitable for the British market. They wanted the simplest type and the 'Mini-motor' fitted the bill. In 1947, says Piatti, 'I arrived in England with my little engine. I got nine shillings from Trojan for each engine they sold. I never got so much for an invention again! With this engine we started buying this house'. For a while he continued with two-strokes and economy two-wheelers designing a cyclemotor for Raleigh and scooters, built both by Cyclemaster in Byfleet and in Belgium. However, became more involved with cars and through racing projects started buying parts from Cosworth and met Keith Duckworth. Piatti characterized him as 'arrogant, like a 19th century engineer, a Brunel or a Stephenson' but this was not a criticism. He found him to be a powerful influence. 'More than any other English engineer I've met he's able to derive his design from very basic first principles - but he also knows how to leave well alone, and to think of the metal'. Perhaps Piatti was thinking of Duckworth when he says 'I learned to be pragmatic in England. French engineering is Cartesian, very theoretical - you start from first principles - but sometimes you never get to the end! So you must be empirical - but believe in the theory!'



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THE CYCLE-UNIT MADE BY TROJAN, CROYDON

Many engineers have bright ideas. - but don't get paid for them. Piatti was well organised at establishing proper royalty arrangements for his schemes. One of his most widely used and lucrative inventions has been a kind of cheap universal joint, used throughout the motor industry in applications like steering columns which transmit relatively low power. It was not the novel basic design which made Torrington adopt his invention, but an innovative assembly technique which used controlled deformation of the pins to lock the unit together. It was not entirely orthodox and the 'lateral thought' element recalls his work on cams which he designs, he says 'not by mathematics, but the rape of mathematics that I invented'. He also invented a system for operating two valves from one cam lobe and bucket ('adopted' for the Maserati Biturbo).

Cams, valve operation and cylinder head design have become his major concern in recent years. At the time when four-valve heads were coming into use on production vehicles Piatti began to think that the gas swirl in these engines might rotate around an axis parallel to the engine crank, and not round the cylinder axis, as with two-valve heads. Some experts have doubted whether the gas moves in the way Piatti said it did, and Suzuki made all their four-valve engines for many years according to Piatti patents, promoting them with the logo TSCC (twin spin combustion chamber). Piatti moved away from Knightsbridge and spent time in Sardinia where he had a vineyard on the coast. He continued to work on engines and combustion chambers for the industry 'to his last day' and is even said to have been windsurfing in his 80s! But though he was continually scheming new engine ideas he was also cautious about too much novelty. 'Novelty is the ruin of all engineers. Every engineer has an engine in him that will ruin him!' Vincent Piatti died in 1997. (photos copyright of Andrew Nahum)



The Valmobile and Go Devil

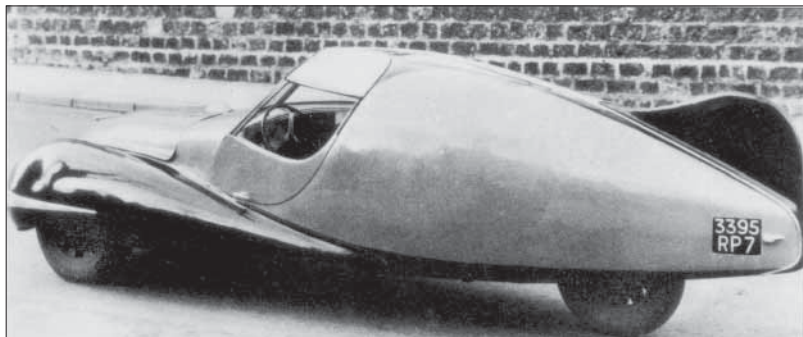
DB

In April's Buzzing you were promised some pictures of the Valmobile made by The Goshō Co. Ltd. Japan and also the Go Devil, a similar idea to the Valmobile but made by Fuji Motors Corporation. First however, some history; The Valmobile was the brainchild of Frenchman Victor Bouffort, born in 1912, who studied for and then worked in the field of aeronautical engineering and in particular aerodynamics, a subject which fascinated him throughout his life. He became deeply interested in the application of streamlining for cars and much admired the work of Jean Andreau, an engineer who helped carmaker Émile Mathis devise the extraordinary Mathis 333, an ultra-streamlined 3-wheeler prototype (right) which appeared in 1939, powered by a 700cc flat-twin.



Bouffort decided to design his version of the same idea (below right), based around a stiff sheet-steel backbone chassis and a Citroën 11CV engine/gearbox unit up front, alloy bodywork and gull-wing doors. Unfortunately World War

Two intervened before either car could be fully developed and Bouffort's JB prototype had to wait until 1946 to see the light of day.



In addition to the prototype, two more JB cars were made, one of which was exported to England, it created quite a stir wherever it went. Has it survived? Bouffort realised he was never going to make the JB in quantity and instead became involved in designing and making a tiny teardrop-shaped

(more streamlining, though at the speeds it was capable of hardly a concern) micro-car called the City Car 123- 1 for 1hp, 2 for two seats and 3 for wheels. The photo shows Daily Express Motoring Correspondent Basil Cardew being given a trial run in 1952, possibly by Bouffort himself. There's a wonderful short clip of this on the internet, go to Myspace then Cool 50s Car: The Peardrop. Squeezing quarts into pint pots became something of an obsession with Bouffort and he put his fertile imagination to work on a tiny folding scooter which could be carried in a car boot,



on a small boat or even in a small airplane- the Valmobile- "val" as in *valise* or suitcase. Several companies took out licences to make it but, as many have discovered since (Trojan, Di Blasi et al), there just aren't that many people out there with money who need such a thing, brilliant though the concept is. The Goshu Co was one, and the photos reproduced here are from the factory colour

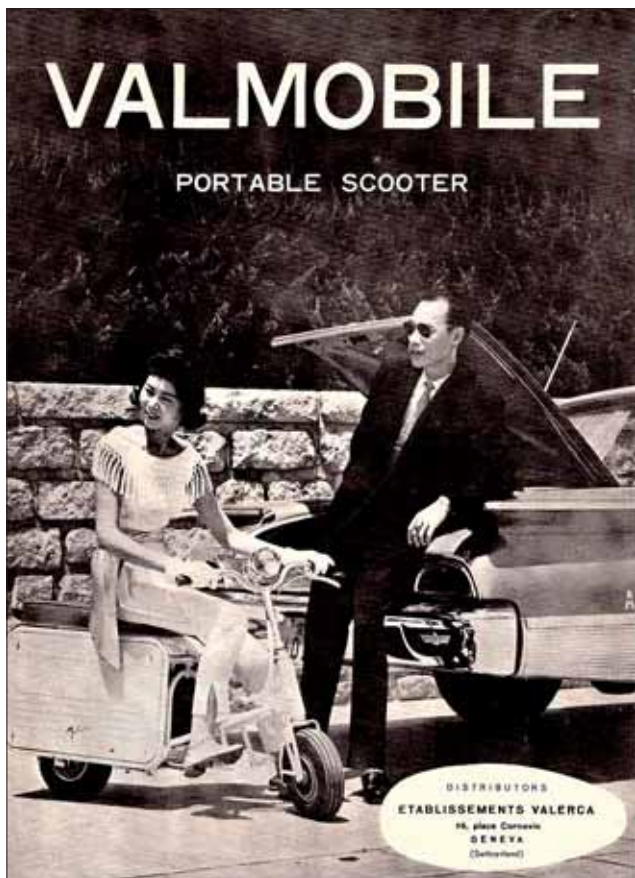
brochure and a b/w brochure from an optimistic Swiss distributor near the Gare Cornavin in Geneva, Ets. Valerca. How many were made? How many sold? No idea, confirmable numbers are difficult to find but the probable answer is- not many.



Above- just the place to use your Valmobile, a yacht harbour, where you can heave it out of your speedboat for the girlfriend (he looks that kind of dude, he has three) to ride off downtown and buy some sushi for tea.

Right- clever design ensures it all packs away tidily into its little steel box ready to be wheeled away- it weighed a hefty 42kgs.





Another pose from the same cool dude; this time he's lugged the Valmobile out of the boot of his Ford Thunderbird and is resting his new hernia- you can't see his eyes watering behind the sunglasses, while girlfriend No.2 is wondering if she will get oil all over her clean white slacks.

Brief specifications are: air-cooled 2-stroke 49cc engine with 3.1bhp @ 7,300rpm, fuel consumption 165mpg at 19mph, maximum speed 34mph, tyres are 3.40/3.00 x 5, transmission is "automatic", starting by kick, ignition by flywheel magneto and one brake on the rear wheel.

It's unlikely Valmobile's designer Victor Bouffort made any serious money out of his creation, a pity as it was no worse than any other folding miniature scooter. He died in 1995. Fortunately a few have survived, including the rather surreal one with sidecar below. Was it an option or did someone just make it for a laugh?

Then there was the Go Devil, a different version of the same idea, but that's another story.....



(photos courtesy Nick Devonport, Automobilia Histoires & Collections and René Bellu, Daily Express/Mechanics mag.)



Cucciolo main bearing/drive gear removal

Gilbert Smith

The aluminium end plate fits over the drive side bearing, and not behind it. Using a hot air gun, it can be warmed up until the crankshaft falls out. There is now access to the gap under the gear wheel to fit a bearing extractor. On one crankshaft, I used a Sealey extractor, but for the second crankshaft I worked on, I made an extractor out of thin angle iron. It needed a couple of modifications as I used it, but it did work, and it removed both bearings, and the gear wheel. An extra thing I had to make was a blind bush to fit over the threaded end of the shaft to protect the threads when forcing off.



Position the crankshaft in a vice with the gear wheel up. Position the bearing extractor under the gear wheel. Fit the protective bush, and screw down the centre bolt, this is a normal procedure. The gear wheel will pull off. NOTE: the gear wheel is keyed onto the shaft, it is located by a pin, remove the pin with pliers. Do not lose the pin.

Depending on the bearing extractor, there might not be enough clearance under the bearing, in which case, reverse the crankshaft in the vice. The larger bearing fits on a slightly larger diameter than the shaft, with a small amount extending out of the bearing. Fit some soft material in the vice (my vice has aluminium jaws), rest this part of the shaft on the jaws, and with a drift, knock the bearing down. It only needs to be

sufficient to fit the extractor under the bearing. If you knock it too far down, you will run out of shaft to rest on the vice jaws. Once this bearing has been removed, reverse the crankshaft. This time I rested the end on a block of wood when knocking the bearing down with the drift. When there is sufficient clearance, remove the bearing with the extractor. I know this all might seem straight forward, and basic engineering, but it is sometimes nice to follow a procedure which has worked, and it also shows a home made tool can do the job.



While on the subject of Cuccioli, a superb Cucciolo-powered tandem was on sale recently on the French equivalent to eBay- Le Bon Coin (www.leboncoin.fr- don't go there, it is full of wonderful cyclemotors & mopeds, you'll just have sleepless nights and waste loads of money) and has been sold- asking price €2,000- £1,725 and worth every cent.

Cuccioli do seem to come up for sale more frequently in France, where they were very likely sold in much greater numbers than Britax ever managed here (no registration, license needed etc. etc.) so in the interests of scientific research on behalf of the NACC and for Buzzing your Ed locked away his credit cards and went on line to have a look at what is currently on offer in the way of a Cucciolo (well, on sale when this is being written in late April) and this is what came up:



On the right we have a really fabulous classic ladies-frame bicycle, looks fully restored and ready to run, all your for €2000 and all you have to do is go see Frédéric near Toulouse in south-western France. You could buy a car-load of wine while you are down there.



On the left we have a superb 1953 Eriac frame specially made for the Cucciolo engine unit, this one was on sale for just €1500 and you'd need to go down to the Département du Var, 83500 La Seyne-sur-Mer, for it. A nice leisurely trip to Toulon on the warm Mediterranean coast, you could buy a car-load of good cheap wine down there too.

Dr. Alex Moulton's cellar....

DB

Continuing on from where lack of space forced a temporary abandonment of our visit to Alex Moulton's *oubliette* in April's issue of *Buzzing*, we had moved on from the two prototype petrol-engined Moulton Mopeds. The first was the subject of US patent 3,280,932 and could have been readily productionised, the other a tentative foray into front-wheel drive, also with an Ohlsson & Rice Compact III engine. It is doubtful if anybody except Dr. Moulton and his engineers knew this one existed, it was very undeveloped and probably just an exercise in engineering curiosity, but it might well have led to a Solex-like autocytle if our legislation had been more friendly toward such machines.

Electric-powered, or more properly, electrically-assisted bicycles however had received a lot more study- there were quite a few of those lurking in the cellar. One in particular attracted



our attention, it was a license-built Moulton frame from Japan, fitted with an experimental Bridgestone rear hub motor and battery pack (*seen left and below, with Alex Moulton and Tony Hadland in contemplation*) which could have easily seen production. The battery pack was rudimentary but probably dated from before the advent of modern ultra-compact lithium based batteries, but the rear hub motor was beautifully engineered and controlled by



what looked like a twist-grip accelerator. Apparently it was sent to Alex Moulton

at Bradford on Avon for appraisal but did not progress any further. Opposite this one lay another electric -assist bike (the electric drive part was pretty primitive but sufficed for testing), with a superbly-built Pylon spaceframe and what we'd call girder front forks. These were designed in such a way that the frame pivot points were behind the headstock, thus limiting 'trail' and keeping the steering light. Springing medium was tiny rubber in torsion units at each end of the swing arms and the whole assembly wonderfully light but strong and a fine example of precision engineering. Rear suspension was rising-rate rubber in compression and the handlebars an unusual 'cow-horns' shape with reversed brake levers in the tube ends (*see photos next page*).



(Above, the Pylon spaceframe electric bike on the left of the row and front suspension below left)



While we were ruminating on some of these projects Alex Moulton turned to us said something along the lines of “Well, if you’re that interested in electric bicycles, I believe there are some more in the loft, would you like to have a look?” Would we.....



(continued next page)

So Dr. Moulton led the way back upstairs from the cellar and handed us over to one of his assistants, who conducted Tony Hadland & I up to the loft, via wide wood-bannistered staircases, floor after floor, until we entered a room with a large door at the end. This led us into the loft, a glorious high-ceilinged second *oubliette* with a number of experiments and prototypes (X-frame, Y-frame, the AM2 and a couple of rudimentary electric bikes) and many examples of production Moultons. These included the Moulton 20, Moulton MkIII, the small-frame Moulton 70- 70% the size of a standard Moulton for small cyclists and a Triang Junior Moulton for children.



(above, general view of one side of Dr. Moulton's loft)

Other notable bicycles stored away included three rarities- Raleigh Moultons. George Wilson of Raleigh's devious plan to get rid of Moulton by a) building a competitor, the dreadful RSW16, or b) buy the Moulton patents and business to make Moultons themselves, is well explained in Alex Moulton's autobiography (*see next page*) and here were three examples with Raleigh badges and obvious money-saving construction, the gold one (shades of Wisps!) even devoid of front



suspension. We also found John Woodburn's record-breaking Cardiff to London Moulton S-Speed- in 1962 he averaged 24mph over 162 miles and completed the run in 6hrs 43mins 29secs, 18mins 31secs faster than the old record. Proof if ever there was need of the superiority of a Moulton over a conventional bicycle.

Grateful thanks to Dr. Alex Moulton and Tony Hadland for generously arranging our visit to The Hall at Bradford on Avon and to look at some of the treasures therein for the benefit of NACC members.

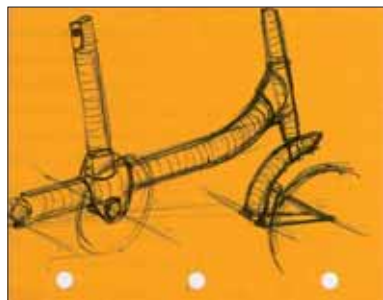
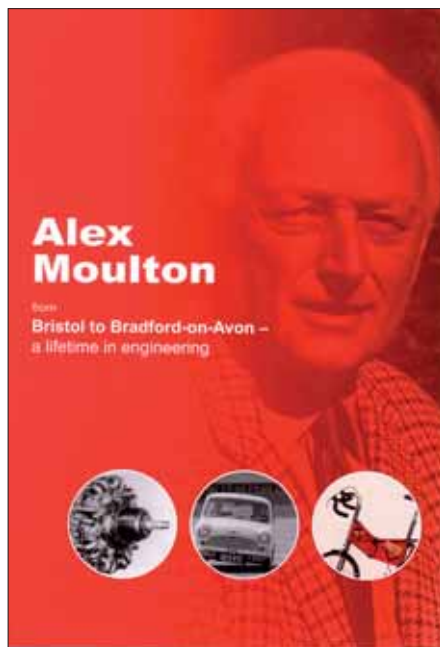
Book review- Alex Moulton, from Bristol to Bradford on Avon, a lifetime in engineering.

ISBN 978-1-872922-39-3 RR Heritage Trust

This 320-page A4 format book is utterly fascinating, being an extended memoir of the life and works of one of Britain's most talented engineers and inventors. Though there is nothing on the Moulton Moped there are over 50 pages dedicated to the conception, evolution and career of Alex Moulton's small-wheeled, rubber suspended bicycles, from first ideas on lightweight bicycles during the petrol-rationing of the Suez crisis in 1956 to monoque prototypes in 1959 and the now-classic tube-frame bicycles first shown to George Wilson of Raleigh in November 1959.

Alex Moulton's family have been established in Bradford on Avon for over 150 years, with prosperity gained from canny acquisition of Charles Goodyear's US patents for vulcanising rubber compounds, a business which became Spencer Moulton Co Ltd. by 1892. The family interest in rubber continued through three generations, with Alex Moulton famously designing the 'dry' rubber suspension units fitted to Alec Issigonis's 1959 BMC Mini and subsequent 'wet' self-levelling Hydrolastic rubber & water suspension fitted to the 1960's BMC 1100 & 1800 cars and then in modified form, Hydragas, for the 1972-1986 Austin Allegro.

Alex Moulton built himself a steam-powered GN cyclecar as a teenager (with help from a blacksmith, and a millwright) and went on to study engineering at Cambridge, where he indulged in racing a Scott TT Replica and Austin 7 Speedy before WW2 intervened. He then got an important job in the Bristol Aeroplane Engineering Division at Patchway under Sir Roy Fedden and was soon involved with the Bristol Taurus 14-cylinder sleeve valve radial aero engine. The war over, Alex Moulton joined the family firm Spencer Moulton and concentrated on vehicle suspension design & development, with successful results on cars, bikes, coaches, 4x4's and railway bogies.



The book is illustrated with a huge number of photos, sketches from private notebooks, research data sheets, notes on designs of the Bristol radial aero engines, rubber in torsion rear suspension for motorcycles, development of the Mini with Alec Issigonis (the two men had a great deal in common) and of course Moulton bicycles.

Published by the Rolls Royce Heritage Trust and available from Alex Moulton Books (www.alexmoultonbooks.co.uk) at £30.75 inc. UK post & packing, it is an outstanding work

worth every penny, a fascinating journey through British engineering covering more than 80 years.

The 1964 ACU National Rally

Paul Duley

The Auto Cycle Union National Rally was first held in 1943 and aimed to give road-going motorcyclists on standard machines a real challenge- six hundred miles on ordinary A and B road, often clogged with traffic, to be covered in 24 hours. This meant a considerable part of the total would be covered in darkness, the road ahead being illuminated by pathetically weak 6v headlights which cut the rate of progress right down. Indeed a challenge.

Six members of the Sunbeam Motorcycle Club who usually rode the ACU National as a team, including my Dad Richard Duley, decided in 1964 that they were going to do it the hard way- on 50cc bikes of some kind, just to see if they could make it. All six of them owned large-capacity bikes but none had a tiddler, so they set to and contacted a number of British moped and small-capacity motorcycle manufacturers, asking if they would lend 6 machines to the team. The press publicity generated by such an entry was pointed out to those contacted but offers came there none, every one declined to loan the Sunbeam MC team any British bikes. Undaunted, they contacted Honda who had recently introduced a fine little 50cc OHV motorcycle, the C110 Sport. Honda were very keen to be involved and proposed lending six brand-new C110's to the team a month before the ACU Rally, so the riders could run them in, acclimatise themselves and prepare the machines to their liking. My Dad Richard rigged up an ex-Despatch Rider's map holder on the tank, with the addition of a couple of small lamps to allow the maps to be read at night.



(pictured above l to r, riders were ?, ?, Eric, Trevor, Doug and Richard Duley)

The team set about carefully optimising their route to achieve the maximum number of check-points over the 600 miles that they would cover in the 24-hour event. Altogether these little Hondas were ridden flat out for nearly 36 hours, when the time to get to the first check-point, the rally itself and the ride home afterwards were taken into account. *(contd. next page)*

The little Hondas performed well, reaching a top speed of approximately 55mph. This was aided by a head on the tank, bum in the air riding style, and a liberal dose of slipstreaming. At one point Dad had just passed what was, unknown to him, a press car, the resultant photo taken from that car was published in a magazine (Motorcycling?) and is reproduced below. It shows him trying to squeeze

the last few mph out in a bid to reach the final check-point in time.



Going 8.30 p.m. at Strand and—with a long night's ride ahead—Peter Formby from Rancorn looks round for his wife Maureen. Checking them out is Barry Stagg, son of pre-war Baughan trials ace Chris Stagg.



Three head Dougie tries to help with competitors control.

R I G H T :
 "C' mon me beauty, we'll make the final check on time"—and R. K. Duley helps his little Honda to cover the last few miles of the rally.



The only mechanical failure was on the long trip home, from New Brighton near Liverpool, to London, and it was on my Dad's bike. There was a loud bang and it slowed to a halt, with what was suspected to be an ignition fault caused by the vibration from being flat out for so long. It broke down at Aylesbury, not too far from home, so Trevor and Dad joined their Barbour jacket belts together



R I G H T :
 "C' mon me beauty, we'll make the final check on time"—and R. K. Duley helps his little Honda to cover the last few miles of the rally.

LEFT: B. Barker of the Worktop and District MCC sets his instructions for the ill-revolving speed test at New Brighton.



LEFT: When you've ridden for a day and a night there's a lot to be said for relaxing—and T. D. Buck from Ross-on-Woe does just that after checking in at the finish.

RIGHT: "I wonder how I did it?"—a little girl who rode a big bike—a Norton Dominator—with considerable aplomb in Mrs. I. McWeeney from Swathorpe.



to effect a tow rope. Trevor's bike had an arduous last stint, having to haul not only Trevor but also my Dad and his bike along. It managed it though, even up the steepest of hills. The team did well, with several getting maximum marks including my Dad (see photo of plaque right), and Honda themselves were pleased with the achievements of the team and the little C110's. They sent Dad a letter of congratulations from the Assistant Marketing Manager, A L Priest who commented "...I would like to congratulate you on an extremely fine effort... and have pleasure in enclosing a souvenir photograph".



Les Amis du VéloSolex 69 Bryan Hollinshead

Chers Amis

Since writing the last Les Amis I've had several emails seeking advice on recently acquired Solexes. One which was easily answered was a request concerning the year of manufacture and confirmation of the actual specification of the model in question but the second concerned a somewhat lesser known model namely the 5000. Never having owned one of these and only having given one a quick glance in a Brocante I wasn't able to comment on the type of carburetor or fuel pump as fitted let alone give help in finding these components necessary for its restoration. Fortunately several years ago I formed a contact with a Solex owner near Bordeaux who had a 5000 in his collection and he was able supply me with all the necessary information as well as a source of the required components. No big deal but it always gives pleasure when one is able to help another enthusiast.

In Paris , recently, I acquired several parts including a right hand combined brake and twist grip lever to replace the broken one on my 3800 model . I thought that I had struck lucky on the occasion of my usual visit to Klocycles when I saw amongst a pile of bits the clip which holds a Jerry Baby in place on a 2200. I'd been looking for one such clamp for ages having made a passable substitute myself but, needless to say, the proprietor would not sell it to me in spite of my earnest pleadings. However, all was not lost ; with my lightweight bicycle spanner and pocket sized screwdriver I recycled a few useful pieces from a long abandoned and cannibalised 2200 nestling amongst a row of scooters. Keeping your eyes open in Paris and probably in any other large French city might well result in the finding that elusive piece. In any case it's good fun. My neighbouring Solex enthusiast has returned to spend some time at his holiday home bringing with him his latest acquisition namely a 4600 produced for the American market, an example of which I had not seen before except in photographs. Immaculately restored with all the cosmetic work done by professionals it looks superb. Obviously he spends a great deal of time and money searching the internet for all the correct components and accessories. The large head and rear lights would be of considerable advantage as would be the stoplights and horn. Now his attentions are drawn to finding a Pli-Solex which will receive similar treatment. His other gem was a normal 3800. Common enough not to be given a second glance but instead of the normal black finish this one had been painted in the deep maroon colour used on certain Citroen cars. With shining chrome and white walled tyres this one would stand out in any display. Perhaps I should dig out that tatty 3800 frame which has been languishing in my garage for several years and give it a makeover.

The Editor's account of his meeting with Alex Moulton reminded me of a similar encounter which I had some twenty or so years ago with the great man. At that time I was living only a short drive from Bradford on Avon and for some reason (I can't remember what it was) he was holding an Open Day at the Hall. Somehow or other I found myself sitting in his study discussing industrial gas turbines with him as I had a particular interest in that subject . Our conversation must have lasted some twenty minutes or so and I consider it a privilege to have had the opportunity of meeting one of the foremost engineers of our time . Although we had one of his early small wheeled bicycles in our garage I can't say that I took to it a great deal but that was possibly because I'd always been used to conventional bikes.

The long term weather forecast promises a long , hot summer. After a miserable winter and cold spring I can hardly wait for this to become a reality. So, let's get all the bikes ready and , as the saying goes, 'Go For It' . Bonne Route, **Bryan**