

Journal of the National Autocycle & Cyclemotor Club Ltd.

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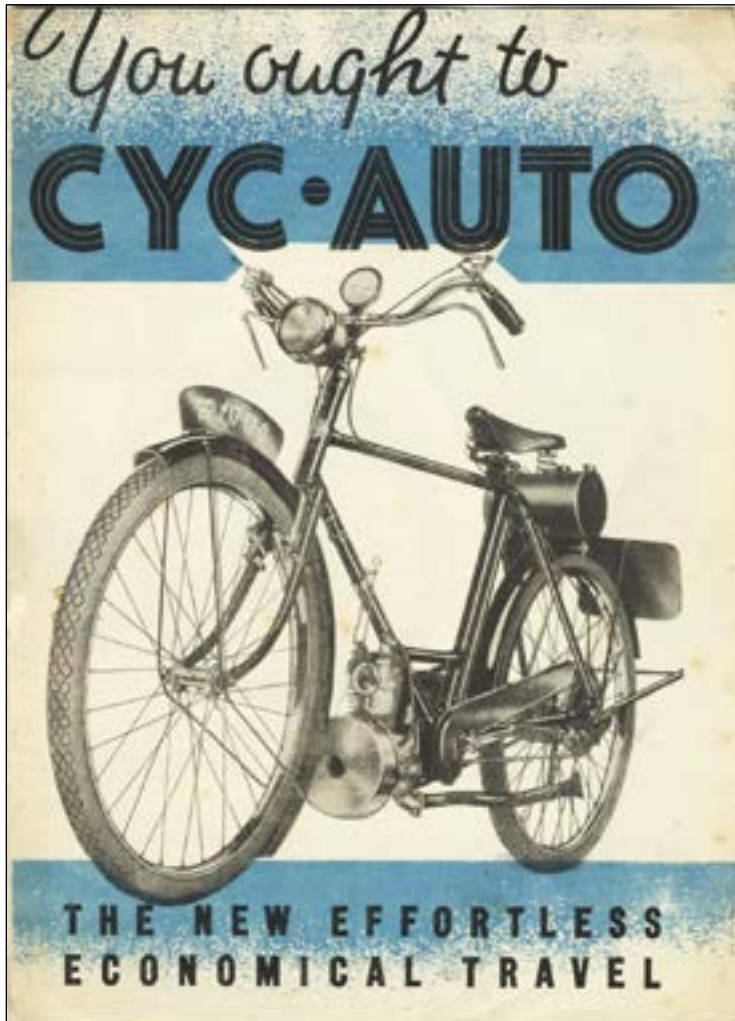
**Buzzing** Club®



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40th Anniversary Year!



The National Autocycle & Cyclemotor Club Ltd.  
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**General enquiries via email; please contact [hello@thebuzzingclub.net](mailto:hello@thebuzzingclub.net). Items for the August 2021 magazine to be sent to [editor@thebuzzingclub.net](mailto:editor@thebuzzingclub.net) and reach Dave at Buzzing Production well before Friday 16th July 2021, as by that date 99% of the magazine will be finished.**

The Cyc-Auto illustrated on the front cover was the first autocycle introduced pre-war, in 1934. Designed by Ernest Wallington Butt, it featured a longitudinal crankshaft instead of an across-the-frame layout, with worm and wheel transmission to a sprocket and chain final drive. Sadly for him all subsequent designs had transverse crankshafts and were cheaper to manufacture, especially when Villiers introduced the Junior engine aimed at autocycle assemblers. Scott took over the design post-war but failed to make it a success. The only other longitudinal crank small-capacity machine was the Hercules Grey Wolf and Her-Cu-Motor. Image courtesy of Ian McGregor.

## Club Information

### Membership

Membership of the NACC in the UK costs £18.00 a year. Associate Membership is £3 in addition to the full membership fee. European membership costs £20.00 and the rest of the world £25.00 per annum. Application forms are available from Membership Administration (see previous page) or downloadable from our website [www.thebuzzingclub.net](http://www.thebuzzingclub.net) - click on "Join the Club"

### Dating and Registration

The current dating fees for club members are: £10 (£20 for non-members) for a certificate supporting an application for an age-related registration, £12.50 (£30 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** and 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 Sjællands 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 **0333 207 6293**.

### Library

Dave Beare can supply copies of material held in the NACC Library (contact Dave for a copy of the Library List, see previous page for his details)

### Website

[www.thebuzzingclub.net](http://www.thebuzzingclub.net) Our website has up-to-date news on upcoming events, a regularly-updated events calendar and news of section & club activities. Next time you're on the 'net take a look.

## Events Calendar

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 via email or in writing to Events Secretary Bob Jeffcoat to ensure issue of a permit. Details will be posted on the NACC website. **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 £3 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 payment.

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Chris knew he was terminally ill with Mesothelioma so he wrote the following obituary:

“Chris Harper, who has passed away aged 80, was an enthusiastic member of the Buzzing Club. He enjoyed the National Rally, Nick’s Summer Camp and especially the South Staffs Christmas dinners, great fun. Sincerest condolences to Cynthia his beloved wife of 53 years, his family and friends who cared for him until the end.”



His obituary is very modest so we thought we’d add a little story - so typical of Chris - from Liz Butler of the South Staffordshire Section, of which Chris was a long-time member.

“I am sure that you will all have many memories of Chris as he attended every National Rally, all our meal nights and many of our runs, but the one event that will forever stay with me is at one of the Rally runs he had set off slightly ahead of the field as he often did as his trusted steed didn’t like to have to go too slowly. About an hour later I had a call from him to say that he was fine but losing power (yes I know, how could the power of our machines reduce?). Anyway, he was confident that he would be able to make it back to base under his own steam, knew where he was and didn’t need the services of Jumbo, the rescue van. Hours passed, people returned but still no sign of Chris. Later in the afternoon (bearing in mind that he was only coming back from Coven when he had called) a lonesome figure appeared back at Castlecroft. It transpired that he had taken a wrong turning, finished up on the A449 dual carriageway heading towards Wolverhampton, and then negotiated the ring road in the centre of Wolverhampton, which at times can be a feat even in a car let alone on a little Garelli! Then he spotted the Harley Davidson dealership just on the outskirts of the town centre, so decided to pop in for a coffee on his way back and check out their stock as he was looking for a new helmet for Cynthia. I often imagine what the car-park there would have looked like with the little Garelli parked up alongside all the big shiny Harleys, but both Chris and bike had had a brilliant day and all was well, and he was back in good time for the usual quiet Saturday night dinner!”

## Chairman’s Chat

*Hello Members,*

*As we head towards the end of the Coronavirus restrictions on meeting our friends for social events, the Committee has been considering the issue of permits for NACC runs. Section leaders are invited to apply for permits for events to take place after July 1st. Our Events Secretary, Bob Jeffcoat, has his spreadsheet poised and we look forward to filling in a few lines after waiting for so long to see a trail of two-stroke smoke on the breeze. This date builds in a margin of safety following the June 21st planned date for the lifting of the National restrictions. We must stress that the permits for events are provisional and subject to not only cancellation but possibly local restrictions which may be in force after the June 21st date for ending the lockdown. Anyone planning to attend an event is advised to keep in touch with the organiser to ensure that it’s still going ahead and to give them an idea of how many riders to expect for catering and for any social distancing requirements. It’s been a long time since we’ve been able to meet and I’m sure that this news will be welcomed by everyone.*

*Nick Devonport*

## News from HQ.

A computer glitch at our printers meant that a number of envelopes were printed with random erroneous postcodes, some up to 200 miles from the correct destination! This meant a few Buzzings went astray, though most were correctly routed by staff at sorting offices. We apologise if your copy of Buzzing was late due to the postcode problem, and are sure it will have been fixed by the time this issue is mailed out. If you are still missing your copy of April’s Buzzing, please contact PFP Print Ltd. (details on page 2) and ask to be sent a replacement.



## News

Jean-Maurice Duhaut, founder of the Solex Club Spirales near Calais, was at the head of a procession in Lille on 10th April, leading a convoy of motorcyclists demonstrating against the imposition of a more strict *contrôle technique* (MOT) for old motorcycles and mopeds in 2022.



Jean-Maurice and a friend led hundreds of motorcyclists on their two VéloSolexes. The demonstration was organised by the *Fédération Française des Motards en Colère* - the French Federation of Angry Bikers - as a protest at what they see as a “useless racket” which will limit use of old, small-capacity mopeds and older motorcycles.



French legislation relating to use of older cyclemotors and mopeds is a lot stricter than it is in the UK, so we should count our blessings while we still can!

**Autocycle tyres in stock:** Tony Etheridge has 225 x 21 tyres back in stock, suitable for many autocycles, please find his contact details on the inside back page. Don't delay, these soon sell out!



## NSU OWNERS 'GET-TOGETHER & QUICKLY GATHERING' SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th 2021

Caldecotte Miniature Railway, Caldecotte Lake, Lakeside Grove, Bletcham Way, Milton Keynes MK7 8HP. From 11.00 am on.

Hello all you NSU owners, welcome to the Caldecotte Miniature Railway for this year's UK Treffen. They have invited us on to their display field in the centre of their 7 1/4" gauge circular running track. Open to all NSU cars, motorcycles, scooters, Quick 50s, bicycles and of course Quicklys. On arrival, check with the level crossing keeper for access on to the field.

Ample parking for 'modern cars' and trailers. Hotel, food and toilet facilities nearby. Bring your own seating and centre stand pads. We will have a gazebo for shelter and sale of small parts and memorabilia.

### LOOK OUT FOR THE NSU BANNER BY THE ENTRANCE

Please note, there is no registration or fee, just turn up and enjoy, although the railway will welcome any donations, then we can come back next year. Mike Sargent is hoping to bring his E Quickly for demonstrations. **Important Warning.** This is a working passenger railway train system, be aware of moving trains and follow any instruction given by recognised railway staff. Moving trains always have priority

Contact before and on the day – Roger Worton – 07754 521753 or [roger@nsuquicklyspares.co](mailto:roger@nsuquicklyspares.co)  
[www.caldecotteminaturerailway.co.uk](http://www.caldecotteminaturerailway.co.uk)

Finally, yes sorry to mention this, but all subject to Covid restrictions in place on the day.



# The EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE

The club does not hold itself responsible for the opinions of its correspondents. Please send all items to Dave Beare, contact details on page 2, and please include your name and address.

**Dear Dave,**

I thought you might like a copy of my recent letter to Nottingham City Council about their flagrant disregard for the safety of those on small motorcycles.

“Portfolio Holder for Communities, Highways and Strategic Transport for Nottingham City Council.

Dear \*\*\*\*\*,

I'm interested in vintage transport and am a member of three clubs catering for early motorcycles. My particular interest is in low-powered, minimal cheap transport from around 100 years ago. The clubs encourage the use of our bikes whenever possible, but some roads don't make that easy. My three early bikes do about 20mph and 180mpg, but despite minimal environmental impact are not classed as “low emission.” They need pedal-assistance on steep hills and are really more ‘cycle’ than ‘motor’ and were made quiet enough to co-exist with horse traffic.

The A612 Daleside Road (Trent Lane junction onwards), where the Council has pioneered a road layout to favour buses and ultra low-emission vehicles (ULEVs). Regrettably, in so doing it has put some road users in grave danger. A petrol-engined vehicle, however slow, is now disbarred from using the inside lane. The outside lane is heavily used by HGVs at 40mph or sometimes more. The inside lane seem little used. The rider of a low-powered



two-wheeler is faced with an impossible plight. If he or she rides on the extreme left of the outside lane then they impede the passage of buses to their left, as the left lane isn't quite wide enough for a double-decker. If he or she rides further out then they impede the passage of all other traffic to their right, which then has to overtake by pulling out into oncoming traffic. The rider comes to feel like the filling in a ‘heavy vehicle sandwich’, one sneeze and you would get squashed! The Highway Code offers no answers and the rider seems compelled to become unpopular AND risk an horrendous accident. I would appreciate your advice and comments.

Buses to the left of them  
Lorries to the right of them  
Theirs not to reason why  
Theirs but to humbly comply.

Your sincerely, **Derek Langdon.**”



Derek enclosed a photo of his 1923 Atlas (left) - cruising speed 18-20mph, fuel consumption “not a lot!”

**Dear Dave,**

A little note relating to Paul Hopewell's article on the Bianchi Aquilotto roller repair. Having to hand (under the bench) an old Skoda Yeti water pump - new pumps are part of the timing-belt replacement kits - I realised how much the the pump drive, a solid steel toothed-hub, resembled the Bianchi drive roller. Sorry, I do not have a modern phone, so no pictures. It has 24 grooves instead of 23 and 2 3/4 in. diameter. I feel sure these drive hubs could be easily utilised to make replacement rollers, given access to a lathe, with less machining. Not as hard as Mr. Hopewell's stainless steel roller, but it should give a reasonable life-span.

I must say I really admire his engineering skills. I'm in my late eighties now and cannot ride anymore - loss of balance - but I still enjoy mechanical fiddling-about and am refurbishing a small garden tractor I made years ago. Our grandchildren practised basic driving on our shared long drive and two large lawns, so now it is our great-grandchildren's turn. Looking forward to it, as I look

forward to my Buzzing magazine every other month. I'm also looking forward to visiting the NACC stand at Stafford, fingers crossed for July! Yours, **Ralph Snowdon**

**Dear Dave,** Just a short letter to bring to attention a picture I took in my local motorcycle shop, Ray Hamblin Motorcycles. Tucked in a dark corner I saw this unusual cyclemotor, someone had obviously purchased a kit and assembled it on his donor bike. He initially had it tested at Ray Hamblin's for road-worthiness and ridden it away. Apparently two years later he returned with the



bike for repairs! Hamblin's had fixed the problem but until now the owner had not returned to collect it. So there it sits, waiting for something, maybe May 17th! I wasn't allowed to inspect it, but others may know the type of motor?

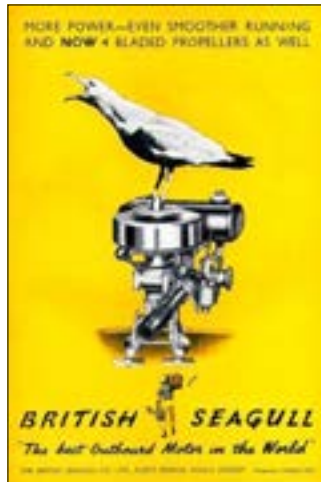
*(It's a 50-80cc kit originally intended for the US market and sold dirt-cheap on eBay, but next to impossible to legally register in the UK - Ed)*



## A rope-start for cyclemotors with the Wipac Series 90, Miller BS9 and Bantamags. Robert Bruce-Chwatt

The tedium of lock-down and the weather that made the last winter one that few will forget, gave pause for thought on testing and tuning a two-stroke BSA Winged Wheel without having to go outside and pedal-start the engine. Those of us without a garage are even more at odds with the elements.

Getting the machine ready for summer requires being able to start the engine; this normally involves getting it out on the road. First the clutch won't release, then, when it does it slips and won't turn the magneto flywheel; it is after all a wet-clutch and sits in oil. Then the fuel overflows, as the 335/1 Amal carburettor float has stuck to the bottom of the float chamber, even when I'd let it run dry and green mould is growing in the glass bowl of the fuel filter.



Various starting attachments have appeared in the Buzzing over the years, all slotting into the openings on the flywheel and driven by an electric drill. Disengaging once the engine catches is a complication and a Bendix gear is too complex. Here is a much simpler solution.

The 3hp British Seagull outboard two-stroke, the Solex of the Sea, has very a simple, rope-start pulley without a ratchet or spring rewind, just a knotted rope and a T-handle. The Eureka moment was seeing the notched pulley sitting on the top and which is actually part of the casting on the horizontal Seagull magneto flywheel.

The Miller BS9 and Wipac S90 magnetos operate in the vertical and have smooth tops;



however, there are the threaded holes for the flywheel puller to which you can bolt a suitably modified pulley.

The Miller has two tapped 2BA holes, the Wipac four 2BAs and the Bantamag three, though the Bantamag thread is 8/32 UNC, for some odd reason. Smaller than 2BA fortunately, so this was re-threaded so that the Bantamag was also tapped to 2BA to avoid yet more differing bolts.

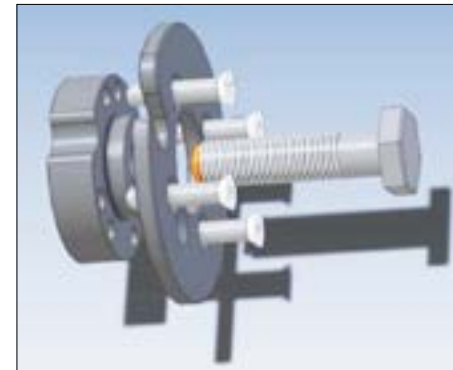
The modification of a suitable aluminium pulley required; a suitable notch in it for a CCW rotation, a pattern of countersink holes for the three types and bolts for attachment to the top of one of these flywheels. The rope-pull was from red cord and a wooden toggle from a duffle coat becket. Conveniently for the pattern of holes, all three flywheels have the puller holes at the same radius from the centre and thus the BantaMag can use the South one of the 2-4 holes plus two others at 120° either side of the West-East ones as seen opposite. Three balance holes were drilled opposite the rope slot.

The photo right shows the Mk1 prototype set to running counter clockwise (CCW) for the BSA Winged Wheel. Some cyclemotors with a friction roller drive have magnetos running CW, so the design needed to be of a pulley that could be bolted on the either way round. This would require a spacer-disc that would slot in either way. The spacer disc would be designed to also act on its own as a flywheel puller, if required. A two-in-one, win-win situation.



I had been in touch with Julian Kemp of MiniMag Co about designing an electronic ignition for all three types already mentioned. During our conversation I had raised the possibility of a combined flywheel puller and rope-start disc, a two piece design to bolt on top any of the three magneto flywheels.

A CAD drawing was produced by Julian and a 3D hard plastic printout made. It bolted neatly on top, and can be turned round for a clockwise start. The plan is to produce a very limited number of CNC examples to test the NACC market, though the costs of CNC has raised problems.



Does it work? Yes, it certainly does and I have been able to work on, test and fit various formats of the Valkyrie electronic ignition system designed by MiniMag Co. on my Hercules-frame Winged Wheel. The results have been excellent and a number of modifications have resulted in a version that can be adjusted, using a 3V external power source and a built in green LED indicator, to give spot on firing at 5/32ths of an inch BTDC or 0.1563 of an inch or 3.9688mm. This equates to just less than 4mm, or four complete rotations of the hand of the modified dial meter seen on the next page.

This provides a hands-free reading while the aluminium magnet collar is set to the correct firing point and the grub screws tightened. No more squinting on your knees through the openings of the flywheel, no feeler gauges, not burned points, no failed capacitor, just big, fat, regular blue sparks when you set the sparking plug gap at 20 to 22 thou.



If you are interested in Robert's project for a rope pull-start for your cyclemotor, please contact him by email at: [bimble467@gmail.com](mailto:bimble467@gmail.com) or post: 1 York Road, Richmond TW10 6DR.



## Help Wanted!

Peter Crowder asks the following: "Help appreciated: JES Auxiliary carburettor wanted to enliven my 1921 142cc 4 Stroke JES project. Please contact Peter Crowder on 01943 466099" See photo right.



New NACC member Colin Roberts sent in a photo of his very unusual moped, a Moto Guzzi Trotter, and wondered if any member has information on this make. The NACC Library certainly doesn't!



Colin can be contacted via the editorial email address. Thanks for any help you can give Colin.

Frank Farr, the editor of Power & Pedal magazine, writing under his pen-name of Androcles, published a memoir of his first post-war trip to France on his Berini M13 cyclemotor. It's a lovely story of times past which has been in Buzzing's "pending" folder for a while.



*First Drink in France. Androcles and his "Berini" at Etables*

## Idle and Insolvent

### The Editor Tours Abroad

WE are no longer so young as we were. Androcles and I, certainly not young enough to do things the hard way for pleasure. We had little cash to spare anyway and very little time. But we shared a nostalgia for France, which neither of us had visited since the war, and we felt we needed a holiday that would be more than just a temporary cessation of work, so we went.

It was surprisingly easy. We turned up at Lympe Airport at the appointed hour, handed over

our tickets to the Silver City desk and had our carnets whisked away by the motoring organisation's representatives on the spot, took a beer apiece at the nearby Airport Club bar and returned to the office to find our machines already gone from the parking racks into the Customs shed. We followed them shortly afterwards, drifted through the trivial formalities of foreign travel and in due course took our own seats in the Bristol Freighter. Then came 20 minutes in the air, the same casual formalities at Le

Touquet, and soon we were religiously keeping to the right of the road, free, happy, and on French soil. Certainly not the hard way!

We had no schedules at all and, beyond the intention to wander around the Normandy coast, no plans. The Androcles *Berini* is slightly faster than my *Solex* so he automatically took the lead and I followed without a care in the world.

France means food and wine to right-thinking Englishmen and I knew I could trust him to find a



suitable stopping place within a couple of miles. He did, at Etaples and so began one of the pleasantest tours of my experience.

It is not the intention of this article to record our day by day progress, routes and resting places. Suffice it that we pottered amiably along the resorts among the sand-dunes that line the coast, eating well, drinking plenty and stopping at hotels wherever we happened to be around seven o'clock each evening. Indeed the chief difficulty was to keep moving since each place we saw seemed friendly and invited a stay. The impressions crowd up in retrospect but for all things the verdict is the same—It was good.

So far as the countryside inland is concerned, it differs little in general characteristics from our own southern counties. Pleasant lanes wind through rich agricultural territory and clean, well-stocked farms give an impression of settled prosperity that seems almost strange in a country that was so recently the scene of some of the greatest and most terrible battles in the history of mankind. It is true that many of the towns and villages still bear the scars of war, but an enormous amount of rebuilding has been done and this itself lends interest. It appears that there is no need whatever for new rural building to have that awful, divorced, "council house" look about it that we see and accept as an unpleasant necessity here. New cottages, farms and village shops in northern France blend with the old and fit their surroundings perfectly.

The roads are fairly good, better in the country than in the towns. The virtually fixed cruising speed of my *Solex*, around 18 m.p.h., was perfectly comfortable all the time and gave leisurely freedom to see and appreciate all there was en route, so the *Borini* was kept throttled down a bit most of the way. There was very little other traffic on the secondary roads we

used and this was a great advantage over home ground.

Petrol supplies were not a problem since the garages were always reasonably near at hand and served petrol in single litres without question. At one place a hard-faced lady who appeared to be boss charged us 100 francs per litre but the standard charge appeared to be 80 frs. for the mixture pre-mixed on the spot. Full marks, however, must go to the modern Esso Station at Montreuil, where they produced a properly marked one-litre bottle filled with ready mixed petrol and fitted with a proper pourer-spout with incorporated filter, the service being dexterous, courteous and efficient. If Esso like to introduce that drill here they have half a million two-stroke users waiting to buy from them.

We used the smaller hotels and cafes and found the food uniformly good and the prices reasonable. A well-cooked and well served meal consisting of sliced ham or soup, followed by grilled steak with roast new potatoes and salad or beans, then fresh fruit or good cheese and coffee, including a bottle of sound wine between us, cost on average about 8/- per head and quantities were generous at that. Butter was delicious and plentiful and not charged for in the ridiculous little "penny-pats" we see in this country.

Beer is slightly dearer than here but wines and spirits much cheaper. We found quite satisfactory local table wines at 180/200 francs a bottle and did experiment with some at 150 frs. but it was pretty rough at that price. Cigarettes and tobacco are much cheaper too and we happen to like them, but they are not to all English tastes.

In all, having started with only a few pounds each and taken little trouble to seek economical ways of living, we found that we ate and drank literally all we could take and slept in comfortable beds in pleasant hotels for an average of thirty bob a day each. Such

standards would cost double that here.

I observed many cyclomotors in France but no clip-ons, they were all proper built-in-one-piece machines. The *Mobyette* has swept the market there and although it has only been going for two years more than fifty per cent. of the autocycles on the road were of that make. Two garage men I talked to confirmed this estimate and one of them enthusiastically showed me his own mount which, he said, had done 30,000 miles, was on the road "two or three" and had never suffered the slightest trouble. I saw some of the deluxe models with telescopic forks, but most were the standard type and were being used everywhere by young and old, men and women, and sometimes both—they carry passengers frequently. Next in popularity was the *Solex* and mine created a lot of interest along the route.

Our own machines behaved quite well. Until a little while ago *Andreolas* was under the impression that his motor was turned by little devils working a treadmill, but having seen me decoke it a couple of times he tried his hand and found it worked. Delighted, he now cannot be restrained from tearing the engine apart at every traffic stop.

At Rue, our first stage point, he decoked before breakfast, but loss of power later in the day when climbing the tough hill out of Ault, caused him to repeat the dose the following morning. He found the piston and rings badly scored. He admitted having ascended virtually dry the previous day and on checking up we remembered that we had pushed his jet needle down a notch a week or so before to reduce fourstroking. He was also using a pretty light proportion of oil to petrol. The combination of these things had given the engine a tough time on the long, hot runs, although it had served well enough for local utility work at home.

## The Kestrel KRM50 Moped

Ken Powell

The Kestrel KRM50 was billed by its makers as a new race-styled sports moped - a brand new design. That, sad to say, was advertising hype. Instead the KRM50 seems to be a collection of parts assembled from the remains of the AJW moped with which it bears much more than a passing resemblance. The AJW version has a relatively robust frame, mag wheels and proper engineering on the frame, forks and steering. My Kestrel is made from super lightweight materials—even the head bearings are replaced by a nylon bar and a long bolt. But despite its shortcomings I love my Kestrel. It's light, has the superb Minarelli V1 engine and goes well for a moped.



My Kestrel story started when, as a 15-year-old nipper eagerly awaiting my first provisional licence, I scanned all the mags for my first real transport. I was no stranger to mopeds but only as field bikes. Bike magazine did a sports moped comparison test between the Kestrel, Honda MB50 and Jawa Mustang. The Honda won hands down though the Jawa was fastest.

The Kestrel was noted for its "innovative use of glass-fibre panels", but it was the only bike in my price range. What's more it was made in Southampton so, for an Isle of Wight lad, it was a local bike. I duly sent off for the brochures from Kestrel with an SAE but nothing arrived. In fact the company had probably ceased trading by then and I ended up with an MB50 Honda (which was an excellent bike) but the lure of the Kestrel remained.



A local chap, a former motorcycle dealer, had a collection of Kestrel mopeds acquired I believe, from a sale.

Despite many requests over the best part of 20 years he would never give me a price and finally I heard on the grapevine that they had been sold to another dealer locally in 2018.



I contacted their new owner and was able to buy the red Kestrel I own now. The original owner subsequently asked what I paid. I told him and he replied, "You could have had the three for that." To which I replied, "You never gave me a price!"

My Kestrel had been used as a donor bike to keep the few examples sold supplied with warranty spares and had never been registered. Missing parts included the speedometer, engine fan cover, flywheel, electrics and exhaust. But, apart from spending 40 years in storage, it was a new bike. I sourced the bits and thanks to the NACC dating officer, I managed to register it. I asked the DVLA for a 'DL' registration as it was first registered on the Isle of Wight but apparently no DL suffix numbers are left. They came up with an 'EL' registration so thanks to them for trying.

The Kestrel starts and runs well—Minarelli engines are good, so no surprise there. However the lights are poor, so poor that I'm debating using a 12V total-loss battery system. Brakes are adequate but the Kestrel's most notable feature is its riding position: stretched out, bum well back, which makes for light steering on an already lightweight bike. It zips up to its 30mph top speed and holds it well despite the fact that I am no longer the nine-stone nipper it was made for. Even hills are tackled with ease once moving but taking off uphill is slow with no pedals to help get under way. Despite its faults I really like my Kestrel and the very few Kestrel owners I have met or been in contact with all seem to have a genuine affection for these odd, British rarities. In the pictures are

two red Kestrels: mine and the Red Funnel Red Kestrel Freight Ferry that visits the Isle of Wight from Southampton twice a day.

PS: I now own all three of the bikes I lovingly researched in *Bike* back in 1979: the Kestrel, the MB50 Honda and the Jawa Mustang. One day I hope to recreate that *Bike* magazine moped shoot-out 40 years on...



## Basic, Better, Best

Nick Devonport

I'm a great fan of the Antiques Roadshow, currently fronted by the lovely Fiona Bruce – she of the floaty dresses, tight jeans and long legs. When I can bring myself to focus on the programme content rather than the presenter, they have a section called "Basic, Better, Best" in which an expert brings along three items for the audience to assess by guessing the quality (and thereby the value) of the items. I recently sold a Raleigh Wisp to a friend – and he still is, despite the fact that I sold him a Raleigh Wisp – the discussion turned to the worst bikes I've owned so I had a think about applying the Antiques Roadshow test to my collection, past and present.



Without a shadow of a doubt, the worst hailed from India. I had spotted a Rajdoot on eBay and placed a bid in a drunken haze while staying overnight with a friend. He, ever the voice of reason, advised against the purchase and in the cold light of day I attempted to cancel my bid but too late, I'd bought the thing.

(Left, the infamous Rajdoot. Photo from the Web - for some reason, I can't find any of mine!)

This necessitated a trip from Dover to Newquay, a hell of a schlep in a 1970s Sherpa camper, where I paid for and collected the bike. Back at my friend's house, we conducted a forensic examination of the build quality and found it to be wanting. He had also tracked the last few sales of my bike through Bonhams' auction catalogues and we saw that it had lost money each time it crossed the block. I had bought it to do a Welsh run on as I'd been advised that something with gears would be useful and to that extent it was, but that's where the usefulness ended. The bike started to dissolve before my very eyes and every nut and bolt seemed to be made of monkey metal. To say that the handling was a bit wayward would be like saying that Genghis Khan was a bit right wing. It didn't actually hurt me but gave me a few brown-trouser moments before I decided to do the right thing and move it on, continuing the tradition of losing money on it, of course.

My candidate for "better" is my 1976 Motoconfort X7. Well, as a confirmed Francophile, I'd have to pick one of Courbevoie's products, wouldn't I? The angular styling of this bright yellow machine raises a smile, as well as the odd eyebrow, whenever I take it out. It's the third bike of this type that I've bought from the same French autojumbler from his stand at Audruicq, each one being of a slightly higher specification.



Mine is the Mobyx X7VL, the V signifying that it has the variator transmission with the swinging engine and L telling the world that it is fitted with the luxury of indicators. In a quirk which is probably down to the meagre power output of the lighting coil, the front and rear indicators flash alternately rather than together. Despite it having one of the more powerful of Mobyette's engines, I have managed to handicap the performance significantly by fitting leg shields, panniers and a substantial luggage rack as well as gaining weight. It does its best, though, and has a long-term place in the collection as well as in my affections.



(Right - X7 at a favourite location in France.)

In the "best" slot, the award is given to my Honda Sky. The Vale of Glamorgan guys swear by these bikes and after being offered the chance to ride the late Ray Butcher's example at a National rally a couple of years ago, I decided that I ought to have one. Coincidentally, a friend was selling a 2003 model not far from my home in Kent and a ride round the block was enough to convince me to put my hand in my pocket.



The friend in question takes great care of his bikes and had fitted a windscreen and heated grips which make it a very practical year-round bike. When the time came to change the exhaust, I succumbed to the promise of "performance enhancement" on an eBay listing and I have to say that despite my scepticism, it's improved the performance significantly. Fitting an old-school manual fuel tap has cured the woes caused by Honda's vacuum system on the advice of the Welsh experts. There are further modifications that I could do by experimenting with different roller weights in the variator to alter the performance but for now, I'm happy to leave it as Soichiro's factory intended. Let's hear your thoughts on your "Basic, Better, Best" list!

(Left - Honda Sky at a famous local signpost.)

## Garelli Mosquito 38B restoration

## Autocyclus



Italy is home to many great names in the motorcycling world - Ducati, Moto Guzzi, Gilera, Aprilia, Bianchi, Benelli, Mondial and Garelli, to name but a few, not forgetting Piaggio and Innocenti, makers of Vespa and Lambretta scooters.

Way back in the early 1960s I rode a 1952 BMG Mosquito auticycle (publicity photo left) which had suspension at both ends and always went well, so I acquired a taste for Mr. Garelli's little Mosquito.

I've been looking for a Garelli Mosquito 38B Centrimatic cyclemotor for a while as they are rather rare and have a clutch - unlike the original Mosquito clip-on which needs restarting after every stop. The 38B is technically fascinating and has good performance - not in the same league as a Cucciolo or ITOM Tourist - I've ridden both and they are mighty impressive for 1950s cyclemotors, so typically Italian - more powerful, noisier, faster! A 38B came up for sale last autumn and I was unable to resist it.

Garelli was founded by Adalberto Garelli (1886-1968) in 1919. He developed a 350cc split-single two-stroke engine, which he built into a motorcycle. The same year it set a record from Milan to Naples (840km) at an average of 38.29kph (24mph) with Ettore Girardi riding. Many famous Italian



motorcycle racers rode Garelli machines in competition, including Tazio Nuvolari, Achille Varzi and Alberto Ascari. They all went on to win championships in F1 car races using skills learned at 10/10ths on bikes - the difference between winning and crashing out is down to incredibly fine judgement of the limits of tyre adhesion. John Surtees did exactly the same in Britain.

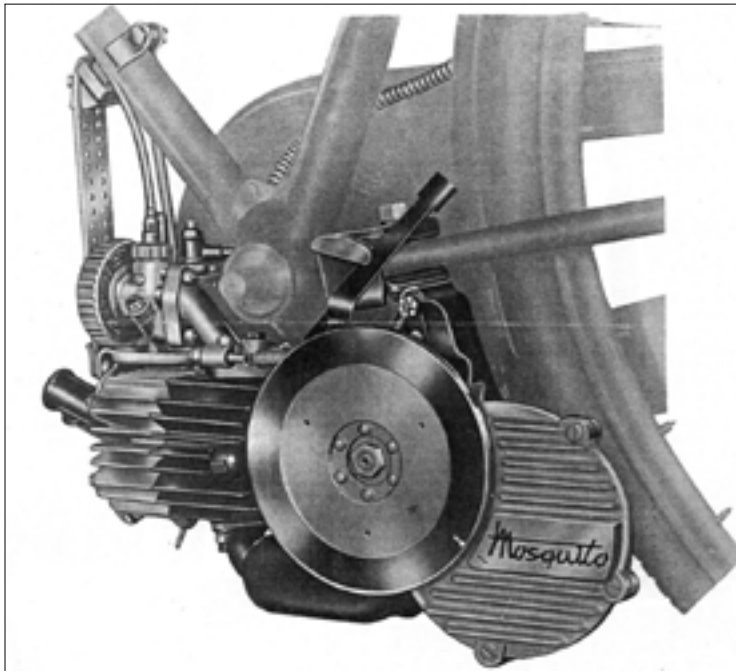


Right; Nuvolari on a twin-cam Bianchi *Freccia Celeste* (sky-blue arrow) in 1929, when he rode for the factory. Garelli dominated the 125cc class in the 1980s, winning six consecutive championships 1982-1987. The promotion of the 125cc class is down to the legality in Italy of riding 125cc bikes and scooters on a car licence, without a motorcycle test.



Garelli's first foray into post-WW2 clip-on cyclemotor engines came in 1947 with the introduction of the 38cc Mosquito, which was so narrow (3 7/8in.) it fitted under the bottom-bracket and between the pedals of an ordinary bicycle. Due to this very limited space Garelli's engineers put the magneto inside the drive roller, which was geared down 2:1 and there was no room for a clutch, meaning constant restarts. Unfortunately the magneto often ceased to function due to water ingress and poor quality shellac insulation of the coils inside breaking down.

However, it was an engineering marvel, described by Harry Louis of *The Motor Cycle* in January 1948: "...the ingenuity and excellence of the design and solid, practical advantages... led me to want to test one." He imported his own Mosquito and used it every day as a town hack.



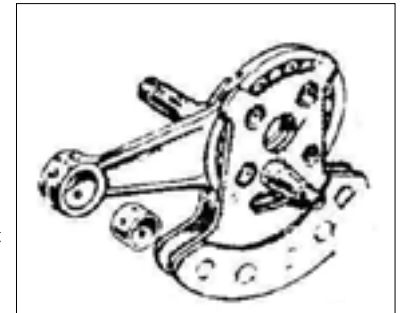
It proved a very popular clip-on and by 1953 the British importer, Bob Sergeant of Liverpool, was advertising that "over 200,000 are in use", mostly on the Continent.



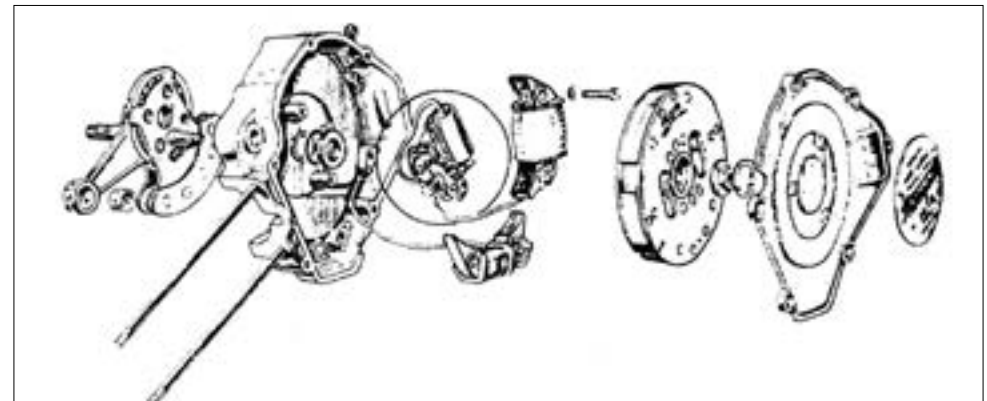
The 38cc Mosquito was also made under licence in great numbers by Chapuis Frères in France, where a 55-day endurance test using a Chapuis Mosquito was undertaken in August 1952, covering 40,000km (25,000 miles) at an average of 30kph (19mph). Relays of riders ran it constantly day and night. A wonderful translation from Italian was published in *Power & Pedal* January 1953, and is available as a digital file from the NACC Library.

In 1953 Garelli announced a replacement for the hugely

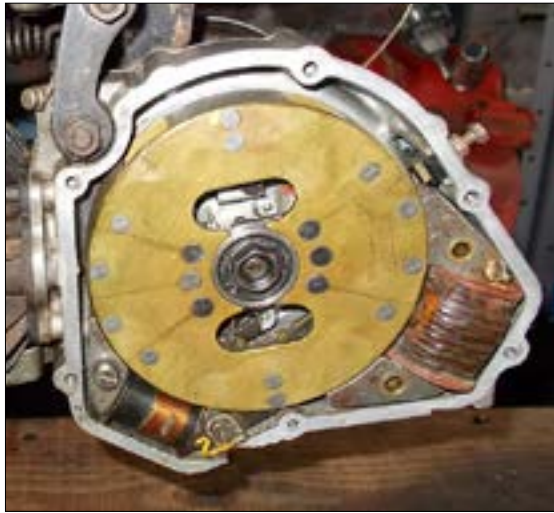
successful but expensive-to-make Mosquito, the 38B. This was a completely different 50cc design, though still very narrow in order to fit between ordinary bicycle pedal-cranks. Gone were the reduction gears and magneto inside the roller, instead the new unit was a direct roller-drive with a crankshaft-mounted magneto, and much engineering ingenuity was used to keep the overall width to a minimum. The crankshaft (right) was more like an eccentric than a crank - the big-end roller bearing was huge in diameter and very narrow, the crank itself was made up of two very thin high-tensile steel side-plates riveted together inside the inner track of the big-end.



So large was the big-end that it overlapped the main bearing shafts centrelines. The conrod was a very thin steel forging centred by the side-plates and the whole rotating mass so much lighter and narrower than the big lumps of cast-iron normally used for crankshafts. The magneto is just 30mm wide yet houses the contact-breaker and condenser inside, while the HT ignition coil and 6v 5w lighting coils lived outside the flywheel assembly.



Initial inspection of my 38B revealed a total lack of sparks so I opened it up to find out why. Not much was wrong apart from the spring connecting the coil output to the HT lead being too short.



Other than that the engine had good compression, turned freely and didn't make any nasty noises when run-up using a drill with the plug out. Removing the exhaust showed a clean, uncoked-up port and dismantling the carb showed very little silt or wear. The conclusion was that it had had very little use in its life, so a complete overhaul was delayed until it was running and an overhaul proved either to be necessary or unnecessary.

The history of this Mosquito 38B proved to be rather unusual. It was first registered in Rome on the 13th May 1964 according to the Italian log book (right) - very late for a 38B as by 1955 Garelli was making proper mopeds with no trace of clip-on ancestry. It might have been a unit sitting on a shelf at the back of a Garelli dealer's premises in Rome, finally being sold to a loyal Mosquito rider.



It must have been used in Italy for a while as the *velocipede normale* fitted with this Mosquito was

declared as a Bianchi. It then turned up in Britain and was registered by Lancashire County Council on 26th August 1966 to a Mr. V. Fontanelli at St. Annes on Sea, with the unusual notation in the green log-book of "Imported from Singapore, formerly SAF 3390." Mr. Fontanelli paid the sum of £5 6s 10d to HM Customs & Excise Cashier on 20th June 1966 for "Duty, PT & TCI on Powered bicycle SAF 3390" at London Airport, Hounslow. The engine number on the 38B corresponds to both the Roman document and the UK log-book in Mr. Fontanelli's name. How it ended up in Singapore is a mystery to be solved on another day; perhaps Mr. Fontanelli got a job in Singapore and took his Mosquito with him for bimbly around that city-state?

The engine became divorced from the original Bianchi bicycle at some stage because when it turned up in Lancashire it was attached to a different bicycle called "Royal England - the All-Steel Bicycle" which has defeated - according to a friend who tried to find out more - "the most tightly zipped anoraks in the vintage bicycle world!" Another interesting detail is that the Royal England/Mosquito 38B was owned by Colin Packman between 1984 and 1987. Colin was a great enthusiast in the cyclemotoring world, running the Kent, Sussex & S.E. London section of the NACC for many years and publishing the International Cyclemotor News between December 1983 and April 1990.

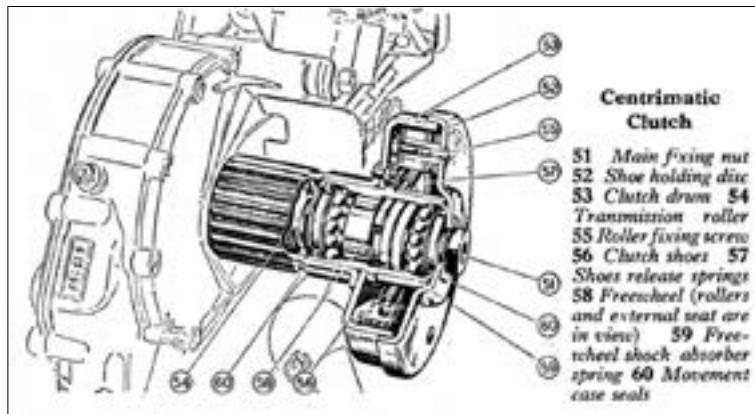


A best guess is that the Royal England bicycle is an Oriental copy of possibly a Raleigh frame. This is borne out by dismantling and cleaning the hub brakes, which have Chinese characters and the title "Eaeccelioo" stamped on the backplates. Perhaps the Mosquito saw off the Bianchi and was fitted to a stronger bicycle available for sale in Singapore? The bicycle itself is in reasonable condition, a bit battered and with rust showing through the paint. It seems to have been sprayed - all of it, including the wheels - with some kind of yellowing lacquer, which has protected it to a degree but is difficult to remove without stripping off the paint or chrome too. The wheels were still true, though the tyres & tubes were scrap, replaced by new ones generously supplied by a friend.

A great deal of time was spent inspecting, cleaning and adjusting everything to a safe standard. The hubs and bottom bracket were filled with the thickest, stickiest grease I've ever come across - possibly for use on steam railway locomotives! I decided to keep the bicycle as is, warts and all, with the scars of many years on the road displayed - this isn't going to be a fancy shiny restoration, I want to ride it - often.



One part of the engine causing some concern was the Centrimatic clutch and roller assembly - more ingenious engineering by Garelli. It replaces a simple ribbed roller on the standard 38B with a dual-function starter clutch and centrifugal main



clutch, which operates in the usual way with friction linings. The starter clutch is inside an extension of the drive-roller as shown above. It is a uni-directional roller clutch (58) which allows pedalling to start the engine, after which the centrifugal clutch takes over for moving off under power.

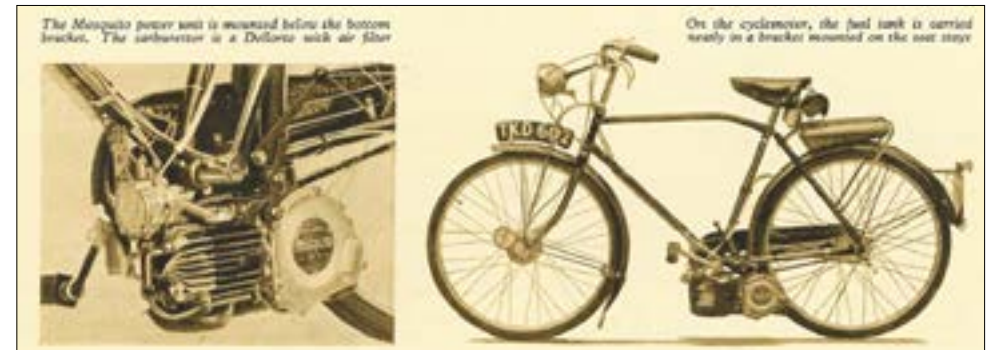


Nothing in Garelli's service instructions says what lubrication the roller-clutch needs. I assumed it might be grease and took the assembly off to find out if it was possible to re-grease it. Short answer- no! The main fixing 'nut' (51) is in fact a long, hollow bolt that goes right through the roller to the threaded end of the crankshaft. It is also incredibly tight and only yielded to an impact driver and a oil-filter strap on a 2ft heaving bar holding the clutch drum.

Once off, the clutch assembly revealed a very large hexagonal fixing holding the splined drive on the clutch input shaft (right), impossible to undo with a conventional socket as there's almost no clearance, Garelli must have supplied a special service tool to undo it. Lacking this tool, I put a small amount of 20/50 engine oil in there, hoping it would seep down into the roller clutch where it would do some good, which it seems to have done. The impact driver torque was turned down to 1 and the hollow fixing bolt has a right-hand thread, undoing anti-clockwise, should you ever need or want to do this to your Mosquito 38B Centrimatic.....



Because of the impossibility of opening the clutch assembly, the centrifugal clutch drum was left intact, hoping it would work OK once the engine was running - as has proved to be the case.



Motor Cycling magazine published a road test of the 38B Centrimatic on July 19th 1956, reporting: "Powerful, flexible, with an ideal weight distribution, the Centrimatic Mosquito became a great favourite for local journeys, its controllability in traffic in particular well fitting it for use in crowded city streets. The machine was never sluggish and it seemed virtually impossible to stall the engine - save by sheer timidity in use of the throttle lever. Probably the best bet was to set the throttle for a slow tick-over and, for fast get-away from traffic lights, to wallop it wide open and leave it to the centrifugal clutch to pick up and start wafting the machine away at quite a smart rate acceleration up to its maximum speed of some 25 to 30mph. The hill-climbing power of the unit, of course, was excellent. Italy is a mountainous country and the unit is designed to provide good low-down pulling power, which enabled all but the worst London hills to be climbed with minimal pedal assistance."

On 27th April the Mosquito 38B started easily and went out for a run up the road. See you out there sometime soon!



### Small Adventures with a Tiny Honda Cub, contd.

I have been encouraged to undertake more multi-day adventures but so far, to my shame, have managed to avoid them. I now feel too old and inflexible for lightweight camping and in all honesty did not enjoy my hostel experience at all. I am now convinced that my sister-in-law was right when she firmly declared, a few years ago - "My days of not having en-suite are long gone". I have still not ruled out some of the trips that are still bouncing around in my head.

Planning is currently underway for a "Heartlands" trip based on the film of that name which is, in my opinion, the best C90 road movie produced so far. It documents a trip from an un-named post-industrial town in North East of England to Blackpool by a sad young man on his C90. Taken in geographical order the film locations bear little relation to reality but strung together in a different order represent a two or three-day trip (as in the film). I just have to find the start point, I hope the cooling towers in the film aren't those in Tinsley, Sheffield as they were demolished a few years ago and film location guides do not list this particular location. The quest continues.



### Better than money in the Bank.

When you get to Appendix 1 (*in the next issue of Buzzing*) where details of my running costs are given you will see that my annual costs work out at £40 per year (or 11p per day). This is partly because Cubs are inherently cheap transport but also because when you acquire a Cub you become a member of a very fluid brotherhood of present, past, future and 'associate' would-be owners. Occasionally, Cub riders have an immense stroke of good fortune when they park up and an 'old boy' appears and announces "I used to have one of those" and the Cub owner holds his or her breath hoping that the next comment is "I've still got some bits if you want them". This type of good fortune has happened to me twice during my period of ownership. Obviously, the Holy Grail is the announcement "And it's still at the back of the shed if you want it". This has never happened to me but I know people who have won this particular lottery – sadly the rise of eBay has increased the perceived value of these shed find 'projects' to ridiculous levels and has given hopeful sellers unreasonable expectation of the value of their stored treasure. I know of at least three C90s hiding in garages (one still in its original crate), which are waiting to make their owners multi-millionaires or die, whichever occurs the soonest.

Neither of my days of good fortune were the result of an approach from a retired owner. One was an advert on eBay for a small selection of spare parts listed as 'Collection Only' in a nearby village with a start price of 99p. I went mad and bid £1. There were no other bids and when I went to collect my booty the seller pointed to a large pile of spare parts in his back garden and said I could take them all if I wanted as he was having a clear out and his wife was pressuring him to get rid of them quickly. I filled my car, paid my £1 and disappeared fast. I've subsequently sold or donated some of the hoard to fellow enthusiasts, used a few of them and stored the rest in my garage roof where they will presumably remain until the disposal cycle begins again.



The second spares acquisition was a 'bitter sweet' experience. While out on my C90 I called into a local garage to enquire about a small welding job and the proprietor appeared and said he couldn't do the welding but "I've got one of those in my store shed if you want it" – well "Yes, I might be interested." Several weeks later he phoned to say he had dug it out if I wanted to have a look at it. I went down and there was a blue C90 with bent forks, no engine but otherwise clean, solid and complete. "How much?" – "£30 if you want it – including delivery" – "YES PLEASE."

It turned out he had run a recovery service for the local police in the days when stolen C90s were regarded as little more than scrap. He was allowed to dispose of them as he wished and apparently was in the habit of taking out the engines that he built into go-carts for his kids and their friends. And now the really bitter bit - "I had a clear out last month and threw the remains of about ten C90s into the scrap metal skip"! This was definitely a case of good timing / bad timing because a few days later it could have been much worse as the next skip-load was being prepared. I dismantled the remains, kept the bits I wanted and sold the rest for a small profit to a happy buyer who is a C90 endurance racer (really) and Custom Cub builder. Looking back I should perhaps have kept it and built an additional Cub for myself but space, time and ability constraints tell me that selling to a good home was probably the best course. Incidentally, this buyer is the originator of the "Money in the Bank" quote and at the time of writing has several garages full of C90 spares that are increasing in value far more rapidly than any financial investment.

I had a friend and colleague in a previous life who, together with five friends, bought a small aeroplane with a covenant that, as members of the syndicate died their share would pass to the surviving members until finally one of them would become sole owner. Last time I spoke to him his chance of ownership was down to 1 in 4. I imagine the same will happen with all the C90s and spares stored throughout the country and eventually one lucky (or unfortunate) survivor will inherit the whole lot.



## So Where Are They Now?

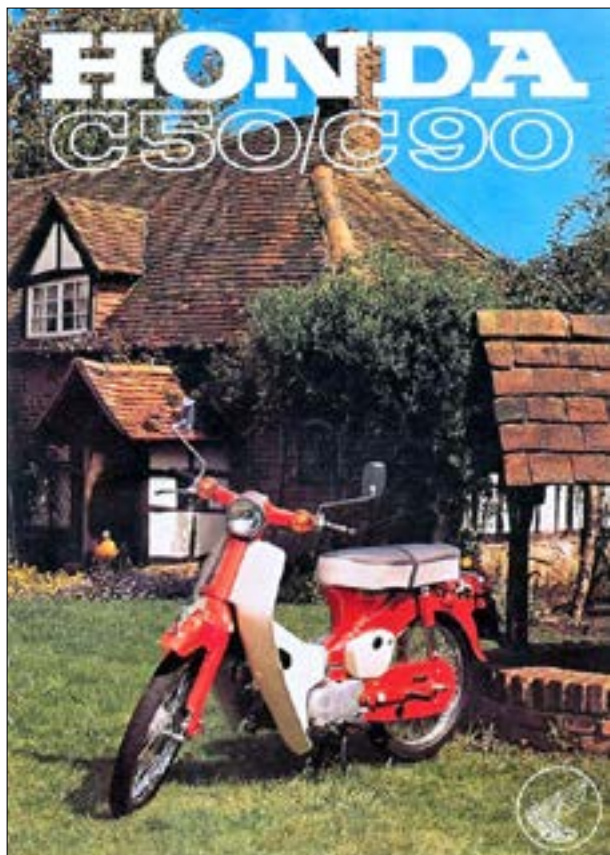
Most people know that the Cub, together with its variants and derivatives, is the record holder for the number of a single vehicle type produced, having been in continuous production since 1958. Records show that Honda alone has produced over 100 million units (2017) in 15 different countries. Many other manufacturers, principally in the Far East, have produced very similar models or even blatant 'clones'. Cub variants from other Japanese manufacturers are of equal; some would even claim superior, quality. Those from China, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia are of lower quality in general but each has its band of enthusiasts and variants from these countries have the advantage of far lower prices both for complete bikes and spare parts.

The following list is an account drawing on my personal experiences and in no way is it intended to be a definitive review

of where to find Cubs across the globe so please forgive omissions and inaccuracies. What I have found during our travels has been that the photos of the Cub on my phone invariably produce a positive response, albeit sometimes with bemusement that a "rich" westerner should have an interest in, and worse still ride, an old Honda Cub. Of less use to me is that as well as eliciting a friendly reaction I have been offered (and declined) numerous cigarettes, which seem to be an integral part of Cub ownership across the Far East.

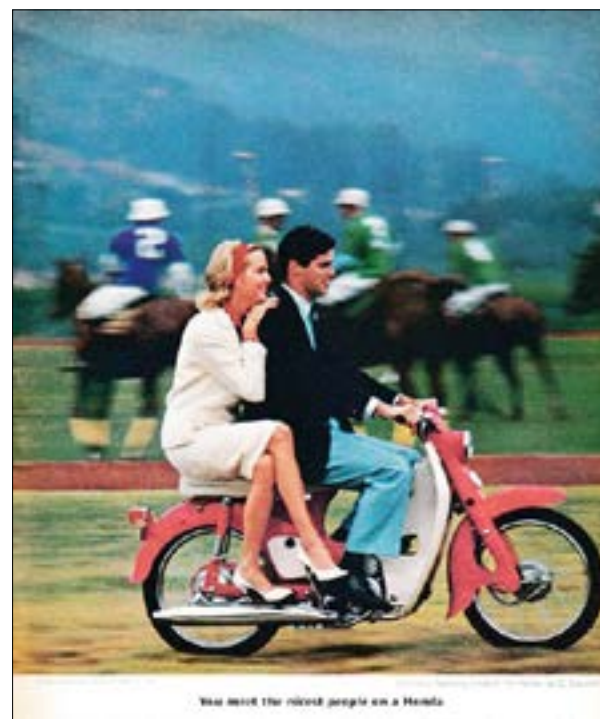
### Europe:

Traditionally Cubs have not been popular in many parts of Europe. Partly, I suspect, because in affluent Northern Europe Cubs were sold as commuter bikes and cars are the preferred option for cold, wet and dark journeys to and from work. Another factor is the traditionally lax regulation of mopeds in many countries – if you can ride an unregistered, uninsured moped when you are 14 or use cycleways legally why bother with anything else? The final factor that I think has played a part is simple protectionism or national pride – not official but very real and obvious – in France you mainly see French vehicles and especially in Italy, the land of scooters, Italian manufactured vehicles are almost de rigueur. Deus Ex Machina in Milan is an exception and produces some quite impressive and very expensive Custom Cubs but when I asked the builder where the donor bikes came from the answer was "China"!



However, Deus is a niche supplier and despite the Latin name is an Australian not an Italian company - but they do serve excellent cappuccino. One shining light for Cubbers in Europe is Greece and the Greek islands where Cubs; both standard and massively customised are everywhere. An essential for almost every Cub in Greece is a very loud race style exhaust which would produce an instant MOT fail in the UK – inevitably in the UK blamed on "Europe", but last time I looked Greece was in Europe – so exactly who is responsible for draconian regulations in the UK?

Britain is cold, wet and dark and the Cub became the commuter bike of choice for many British workers, so why was this? I suspect a combination of complex factors: not least of which was the dreadful, profit driven lightweight offerings from the moribund British motorcycle industry. The reality is that many of them, particularly those with Villiers engines were not that bad and with a bit of development could have been very good work bikes but that development never happened and the asset stripped British motorcycle industry died. The sad reality is that it is now, with the exception of a few low volume specialist, high-end manufactures, impossible to buy a British made vehicle (except those from foreign owned factories) – a sad state for the nation that supplied cars and motorcycles to the world less than a generation ago.



### Americas:

I have never seen a Cub in any part of North or South America despite the US being the first target export market in the early days of the Cub with the 'You Meet the Nicest People on a Honda' campaign and even a Beach Boys song about their little Honda! The Cubs are obviously still there, known as The Passport, and rust free California origin CT90 trail bikes occasionally pop up on the UK market at inflated prices. Canada is probably too cold for motorcycling in general with shiny Harleys coming out as toys on the occasional sunny day.

Honda CB500s are interesting taxis in the narrow streets of the Rio favelas with no Cubs seen in Brazil but the C90 club has at least one member in Argentina. Cuba is a delight for lovers of East European two strokes (and

old American cars with dubious, frequently Lada, replacement engines) but no "Capitalist Cubs". The only Cub I saw in any part of the Americas was an immaculate, customised C90 at Nelson's Dockyard in Antigua but The Americas is a big place and just because I've only seen one doesn't mean they aren't there.



## Far East:

The first time I visited Vietnam I thought I had died and gone to Cub heaven. I have never seen so many and I have been told that in many cities the average is two cubs per household. They are everywhere and serve many functions: carrying massive and ungainly loads or entire families.

I have personally seen a family of five on one bike but I'm sure others will be able to beat that. In both

Vietnam and Thailand there are also home made commercial sidecars of apparently impossible size serving many functions ranging from mobile shops, to builder's floats and mobile catering outlets offering excellent street food. It seems that the older type Cubs with leading link forks have been relegated to 'beast of burden' roles and anyone with any sort of social standing rides an updated version with telescopic forks and, whisper it quietly, a front disc brake – these updated versions are not available in Europe as they don't meet emissions and other regulations (At the time of writing there are rumours of a Euro compliant version in the pipeline). Cubs and variants are found in many other countries in the Far East and spare parts are widely available and very cheap.

If I were to make one suggestion it would be that if you possibly can visit Vietnam before it becomes "modernised" and cheap cars or electric scooters replace Cubs. If you can manage to go you will find fascinating history both recent and ancient, wonderful happy people, interesting food and probably the only chance you will ever have to fire off a few rounds from an AK47 or an M16 rifle, climb on a disabled US tank left in place as a memorial to the all female battalion that 'killed' it and explore the Viet Cong tunnels (if that's your thing) all for the price of a couple of pints of beer in the UK, or you can have 20 pints of local beer instead if you prefer. I just thank my personal God that Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister at the time, defied our American "special friends" and saved thousands of British young men (including probably me) from going there to experience the real thing in 1965. If you are so minded you can also fill your luggage with ridiculously cheap Cub spares to take home. *(to be continued)*



## What Did You Do in the War Grandad #2? Ted Bemand

You may recall I had restored five VeloSolexes, one was already re-homed with a fellow Wobbler and two awaiting 'rescue', oh, and one was my very own *escargot*! For my next battle.... I was left musing how to marry a French engine into a German frame. Perhaps I should explain, the German was an engineless 1954 REX Luxus, a 'generous gift' from my 87 year-old uncle, Gordon. Living for 60 years in Germany he had over the years found many exotic motorcycles to restore. But, unable to find an engine for this one, he passed the ball to me.



Plan A: I tried an internet search but found nothing; the only similar REX single speed engine was fitted to an early Phillips Gadabout. One 'expert' suggested a VAP 4 motor would fit? Well, I had a VAP 4 fitted in a 1951 French Gitane moped that I restored 10 years ago but now it was unused, mothballed behind the hedge. So I dug it out and it was none the worse for the hibernation. I removed the engine and tried it for size, but no chance! This 'expert' is now off my Christmas card list! Still, the engine was out and a crank oil

seal replacement was overdue. More work for later....

Plan B: I had picked up in a French flea-market a Mobylette Cady and a Variomatic engine - the vario unit had been living rough, sleeping in a waterbutt! I refurbished the Cady and it looked promising, but on a 'lash up' test it was clear the mounting points would call for some major frame cutting to gain pulley alignment, so another no no. It will now probably end up on eBay....

Plan C: My basic rusty 1958 Mobylette AV42 (yes, another flea-market find) had a serviceable engine, it just needing the autoclutch components replacing and it looked about right to fit the REX. Time to consult an expert - Eddie Two Wheels Dewe, a fellow Wobbler and retired Mobylette dealer. I took the REX frame and vario engine to Eddie. He felt, with some custom brackets and a modified cylinder head mount, it might be possible to create a variomatic AV42 - subject to a major rebuild on the 'water-marked' vario engine. I could then use the basic AV engine for the REX. Excellent idea, I quickly got started. With some fabricating of adapter plates and a new exhaust layout it was soon 'in' (with just 0.010" clearance on the downpipe)



However, the REX had originally used an all-chain drive system; I would have to modify the bottom bracket to create a pedal crank/engageable pulley drive to the engine to enable starting and auto clutch operation. Then maths reared its ugly head - not my best subject! What size for the rear sprocket? (Currently 54 teeth). The Moby engine to pulley ratio was a 4-1 reduction. The pedal crank had 11 teeth to drive the rear toothed sprocket. This would then turn a 26" dia tyre, giving a ground travel of 2m per rev. My calculations, based on engine at 1000 rpm were for about 29 teeth, providing approx 5mph/1,000rpm, so I ordered a 29-toothed blank which ace hybrid moped-builder Dave Keeling kindly bored out and drilled the mounting holes. He did comment it might be a bit over geared. Oh dear, my confidence in my sums dissolved in seconds!



Anyway, it was now ordered. While waiting, I had time to move off the REX and onto the AV42/Moby Vario conversion. I started on the engine, stripping to discover what was needed. An order to Brian at Aplins of Bristol for main, seals, gaskets, rings, auto clutch etc. enabled rebuilding to go ahead. Luckily I had a flywheel rotor puller, but the fiendish tiny circlips in the auto-clutch called for some creative re-shaping on my Britool pliers! While waiting for the engine parts to arrive I stripped/ painted/reassembled the AV42 frame and started



fabricating the special lower mounting brackets for the auto-tension vario spring to react against (above).

Finally, with new parts fitted the rebuilt engine was ready. I just had to do some minor mods to the top frame mount and cylinder head. With the engine in place I found the belt alignment was about right, I was rather pleased at this stage. Firing up the engine confirmed the engine would indeed perform as a vario, happy days!



So, all change, back to the REX. My little shed was like the Crewe shunting yard, (happy BR apprentice days!) Moby out, REX in. With the new rear sprocket fitted and a shortened chain, the next task was to fit the new 'lightweight' auto clutch bob weights and clutch drive drum. However, first I needed a drive belt. I had the parts manual on loan from Eddie and ordered the listed (and expensive!) correct AV42 belt from local factor. Big mistake!



Problem 1: My hybrid set up called for a slightly shorter belt! A suitable belt was quickly sourced (for 1/3rd of the price) on the internet.

Problem 2: Despite violent pedalling the auto bob weights refused to fly out and connect to the crank drive. After much checking with Brian and Eddie (I had fitted them correctly) I resorted to making much softer return springs so it now engages on a pedal-push and starts instantly.

Problem 4: The engine suddenly got difficult to start, with a lot of carb backfiring, could it be timing? Yes - on investigation the points cam/rotor is not keyed, it's on a taper so needed to be 'reset' as it had slipped. Lapping in the rotor/shaft with a spot of fine grinding paste and resetting soon cured this problem.

Problem 5: On a short road test on a nearby business park service road I found it was grossly over geared! It eventually hit 45kph at an estimated 3,000rpm.

Leading to Problem 6:.....gawd..... I do this for fun...sometimes!

**BRAKES:** or to be precise, the lack of. Front - a tiny 8cm diameter skinny drum. Rear - a useless back pedaller, absolutely not a moped for the cut and thrust of rush hour traffic! As I have a redundant clutch lever (now being an automatic) on the left handlebar, I might be able to adapt a bicycle disc brake on the rear freewheel sprocket? REX: Back in the shed to remove the 29 tooth sprocket. Dave Keeling rang me - he had a surplus ex-Chinese bike kit blank with 44 teeth. Next day he bored it out and it was delivered and fitted. Success, it worked perfectly! All I need now is find some way of stopping it. With the Rex more or less sorted all I had to do was refit the now re-sealed VAP 4 engine into the Gitane and fire it up. What a great sound an old deflector-piston engine makes, a sort of 2 stroke Manx Norton! (Opposite page- most of Ted's collection of bikes.) To be continued.





## Cyclmasters in the Netherlands

## Autocyclus

As is well-known to Cyclenaster enthusiasts, the original design came from two ex-Auto Union/DKW engineers who travelled to the Netherlands after the war with blueprints for a well-advanced German cyclemotor engine, the RadMeister.

The Cyclenaster was launched at the Utrecht Industries Fair in March 1950 by the Interpro Construction Bureau, an international organisation set up in 1948 to restart the Netherlands industrial base, decimated and destroyed by the Nazis.



(All photos & images courtesy Naud Aendekerk & the Rijwiel Hulpmotor Club)



The Cyclenaster proved an enormous success; an affordable, economical, easily-fitted power unit for a flat country with a long tradition of cycling on nation-wide traffic-free cycleways.





The Netherlands bicycle industry took to the Cyclmaster instantly and began producing sophisticated frames sold to customers complete with an integral Cyclmaster unit, as in the photo on the previous page and here on the right.

Initially the engine capacity was 25.7cc giving 0.6bhp, a remarkably good output, it was increased in 1952 to 32cc.

The frames illustrated had sophisticated leading-link front suspension (below), the medium being a moulded rubber strap in tension, with an articulated stay for the brake backplate.



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