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The

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. Items for the February 2022 magazine to be sent to editor@thebuzzingclub.net and reach Dave at Buzzing Production well before Friday 14th January 2022, as by that date 99% of the magazine will be finished.

Cover image - Happy Christmas to you all! An image found on the internet.

The saga of Raleigh and the RSW16 small-wheel bicycle versus the Moulton is reprised on pages 18-24 - the story of an industrial giant taking on and crushing a much smaller business which had designed a highly successful competitor to Establishment conventions. Raleigh was offered the Moulton on a plate but turned it down - far too risky, old boy - then proceeded to ruin the Moulton bicycle business by pressuring cycle shops to refuse orders.

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 - click on "Join the Club". **Our bank is the HSBC, sort code 40-47-11, account no. 52867664, for payments and renewals by BACS transfers.**

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, 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 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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News from HQ.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Due to the success of holding last year's AGM via Zoom (and saving the club considerable expenses) we've decided to continue this format for the 2021 AGM. It will be held online on Saturday 29th January 2022, commencing at 10.30am.

If you would like to participate in the AGM via Zoom, please email Secretary Liz well before the 29th January, including your membership number, so that you can be added to the list of attendees. A link will be emailed to you a day or so before the AGM date, which you can click on when invited to do so by the Zoom software to join the discussion. You can download the Zoom app for free at <https://zoom.us/download>

Agenda for the 2021 NACC Annual General Meeting, Saturday 29th January 2022.

Welcome

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Approval of Minutes of 2020 AGM held 30th January 2021.
3. Matters arising from the minutes.
4. Club Officers Reports.
5. Approval of 2020 Club & Company Accounts as published in October 2021 Buzzing.
6. Approval of the updated Articles of Association and Club Byelaws.
7. Election of Club Officers & Committee.
8. Election of Directors.

Following the conclusion of the meeting the intention is to hold an open forum for general discussion.

Liz Butler
NACC Secretary

Chairman's Chat

Welcome to the Christmas edition of our favourite magazine. I hope that Santa has you all on the "nice" list and brings you some exciting parcels to open on the big day. I must admit that a present from me to me arrived early – in October, to be precise – when my shiny new Honda was delivered to the Stafford Show. It isn't a traditional Club machine and may have raised a few eyebrows but the CT125 certainly drew attention to the NACC stand. As I write this, in early November, I'm still waiting for the V5C from Swansea which, the dealer tells me, is likely to arrive towards the end of the month. I'm trying to be patient with the strike and Covid-ridden agency, but it's not easy when you're itching to fire up a new bike and gets some miles under its wheels! I have the same feeling of anticipation that I had as a ten-year-old boy in the late 1960s waiting for the postman to deliver my Century 21 comic, eager to catch up with the heroic Tracy family and their fabulous Thunderbirds machines.

Back to the Christmas theme, and a shameless plug for the regalia shop! There's a range of clothing, badges and stickers available (see the list inside the back cover) which make great presents – or maybe just a treat to yourself.

I'm sure that we're all looking forward to next year's riding season. Mine starts with my January birthday run, usually a brass-monkey affair for the masochistic regulars, and I intend to be camped on the Somerset Levels in February for the Bristol Show at Shepton Mallet. In the meantime, we've got a few months of shed time to get things sorted out for 2022.

It only remains for me to wish you, on behalf of the Committee, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and safe New Year.

Nick Devonport



Enclosed with this Christmas issue of Buzzing is a small prezzie, the latest NACC machine sticker! Happy Christmas to you all, we hope you will be able to join with your families and celebrate being able to be together this year, unlike 2020.

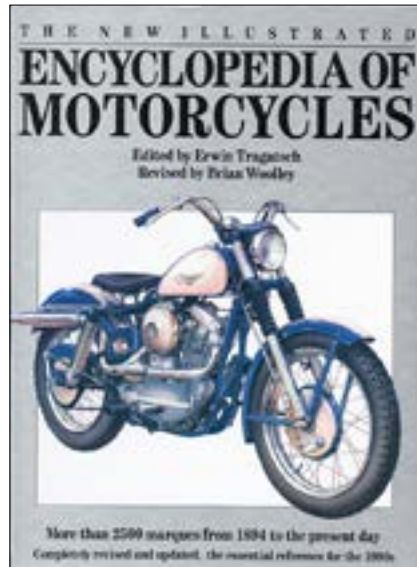
News

A great photo from the cover of the Summer 2021 Trojan Museum Trust newsletter, featuring one of the workers at Trojan's factory assembling a Mini-Motor. With thanks to Colin King and Rob Hirons for suggesting it be included, and for kind permission from David Hambleton to reproduce it.

The Trojan Museum Trust has a great website where you can download the newsletters as a pdf. www.trojanmuseumtrust.org

Library News

Now that the winter evenings are drawing in, I will continue to scan items from Philippa's collection of Power & Pedal magazines to add many more listings to the Library.



I've had quite a few requests for scans of manuals recently. Some files are too big to email at around 20 megabytes, so I'm sending them to recipients via WeTransfer, a Netherlands-based large file (up to 2 gigabytes) forwarding service. It is free and you don't need to sign up to anything or register an account.

Bob Jeffcoat has kindly donated a copy of the revised (1992) Encyclopedia of Motorcycles to the Library, it was originally edited by the late Erwin Tragatsch and published in 1979. If any member would like a scan of the listing on a particular marque, please ask and I'll scan it as a .jpeg image to email rather than post a large, very heavy book to you!

Next two pages- a brilliant article on the NACC in Classic Bike magazine, November 2021 issue! Thanks to Nick for proposing the idea and a credit to Editor Gary Pinchin & Classic Bike for publishing it.





For left: You want low-powered glamour? Check out this 1964 NSU Bocklby with sliding sweater

Left: The NACC club stand is always popular at shows like Stafford



NO NEED TO PEDAL NOW!

Our latest update is the...
 New...
 427 . 10 . 0
Cyclenmaster

For left: All manner of low-powered fantasies is welcomed and encouraged by the NACC. Why not join in yourself?

at the enthusiasm that hides in a myriad of sheds and garages as members fettle their project machines to take part in regular rides out.

We have an eclectic mix of machines within the NACC, from the small but perfectly formed 18cc Lohmann compression-ignition clip-on, through the more common 25 and 32cc Cyclenmaster, Mini-Motor and Power Pak, passing to touch on the 98cc motorcycles by the likes of Bown, Rudge and New Hudson and back to the mopeds,

mostly 49cc machines from famous names including Mobylett, NSU and Phillips. Some run as more suitable for cyclists with fewer hills requiring less Light Pedalling Assistance, but all low-powered roadsters is welcomed and encouraged.

Although many of our machines are of the older variety, we are a very catholic organisation and many of us ride more modern machines like Honda step-throughs. It's a fact often mentioned in the context of the old bike hobby that we are an ageing demographic and for many of us, pedal-starting recumbent machinery and scripping, dripping carburettors at the roadside tends to stop being fun after a few years. That said, it is gratifying to see younger members tuning up on Puch Maxis and even more modern twin and go-scooters - emerging classics, perhaps?

The Buzzing magazine mentioned above is eagerly awaited by the members, many of whom read it from the back, where the classified ads are cosied by people keen to add another bike to a growing collection. Sometimes these acquisitions actually take place with the full knowledge and even approval of the buyer's other half! Can you believe that? Buzzing also carries technical articles, appeals for

assistance with projects, hints and tips and reports on road runs so that members can see what their counterparts in other parts of the country have been up to.

Our Librarian holds an extensive database of technical publications, handbooks, period articles and advertisements which can be useful for those burning the midnight oil, trying to work out where that wulfer goes. This is a free service to members by the wonders of email and a small charge may be made for printed documents.

Although many of the events run by the club are in the UK, we frequently travel abroad with our machines. Several of us visited Holland a few years ago and for many, the June meeting called Rando Cyclo in northern France is the highlight of the year. Riders of many nationalities gather at a small town near the Belgian border to sample French hospitality and to experience the beautiful Ardennois region's culture and scenery. We have strong links with our Dutch equivalent, the RHC, and have found that Holland is perfect cycling/motoring country.

The NACC can also be seen at several major events, including both Stafford shows. We were particularly proud of John Burgess, who carried off the award for Best Motorcycle with his Guy Gibson-inspired Norman Autocycle at the July show. Our stand there always proves popular and showcases the best of our low-powered hobbies.

If any of this has whetted your appetite and you wish to know more, look us up online at thebuzzing.co.uk. You'll find links to the membership page, assistance with registering your machine, back issues of Buzzing and a fascinating photo gallery. We look forward to welcoming you!



More News - and a recent discovery!

An astonishingly original Her-cu-Motor has surfaced and been acquired by Ian McGregor.

The Her-cu-Motor was bought on the 9th October 1956 by a Mr. Lawson of Whitby from Upton & Sons of Middlesbrough to enable him to get to work during the Suez crisis. Petrol was about to be rationed because Colonel Nasser of Egypt had nationalised the canal, resulting in a misguided Anglo-French invasion which closed the canal to all traffic. Mr. Lawson's Her-cu-Motor was last taxed in December 1958, after which it was put into storage, having covered only 474 miles. It had been in a private collection for many years before being offered for sale recently.



The machine came with the original guarantee card, maintenance booklet, a sales brochure, insurance certificates and a petrol ration-book from 1956!



Dave Casper proposed the following theory as to why it has such a low mileage: "The first and only owner lived in Whitby, which lies in the Esk Valley. Apart from the small harbour area, every road in Whitby leading out of the town is very steep and most probably needed plenty of pedal assistance. It is likely the owner test-rode a Her-cu-Motor at the nearest dealer in Middlesborough, which is flat with no hills, before buying one. Riding it in and around Whitby would have been a totally different experience to his test-ride, so he probably gave up trying and stored it in his garage, where it resided for the next 60-odd years."



The Motor Cycle road-tested the Her-cu-Motor and published a report in April 1956, giving all the salient details of the bike and some background. The engine was designed by G. H. Jones for engine-maker J. A. Prestwich, Jones was also involved with the design of the Raynal autocycle.

THE MOTOR CYCLE, 19 April 1956

THE 49 c.c. HERCULES

An All-British Moped with an Ingenious Engine-transmission Unit and a Comprehensive Specification

The unusual mounting of the power unit brings its weight well forward

INTRODUCED at the London Show last November, the 49 c.c. Hercules BCM is entirely British in design and manufacture and presents a strong answer to the continental challenge in the moped field. Features include a composite pressed and tubular steel frame of welded construction, a bottom-link front fork and a two-stroke J.A.P. engine with longitudinal crankshaft and employing enclosed shaft primary drive to a Barman two-speed gear box of ingenious design.

The engine was designed by G. J. Jones, the engineering consultant, in collaboration with the Hercules and J.A.P. concerns. Enclosing the shaft primary drive is a flange-driving, light-alloy casing which is bolted to the rear of the crankcase and forward face of the gear-box shell. Thus the engine and gear box are formed into a unit, the gear-box end of which is attached to the frame below the bottom bracket housing the pedal-crank bearings. Advantages of the layout are that the width of the pedal crank can be maintained at a standard dimension and that the engine's weight is placed well forward.

Bore and stroke dimensions of the engine are considerably over-square at 42 x 35.5mm. Power output is stated to be approximately 1.5 h.p. at 4,500 r.p.m.—sufficient to propel the 80 lb (including weight) machine at 30 to 35 m.p.h. The built-up forged crankshaft employs the usual twin bottomweights and has a peywood-in crankpin. The crankshaft is supported by two caged journal ball bearings which are provided with oil wicks. A high-tensile steel connecting rod has a single row of rollers at its big end. The small end is bronze bushed and the fully floating gudgeon pin is retained in the piston by clips.

Lo-ex aluminium alloy is the material used for the piston which carries two compression rings and is flat at the top save for a shallow bowl; transfer openings are provided in the skirt. Two transfer ports are formed integrally with the cast-iron cylinder barrel. The barrel and the cast-aluminium cylinder head, which has a shallow, dome-shaped combustion space, are retained by nuts and four studs which pass right through from the crankcase.

Stub-mounted in an Axial type 360/4 carburettor (described and illustrated in *The Motor Cycle* for October 27 last) which embodies an air cleaner and also a self-cancelling rich-mixture device to facilitate starting the engine from cold.

Mounted at the forward end of the crankshaft is a Miller flywheel magneto incorporating lighting coils. A tongue on the rearward end of the crankshaft engages with a slot in the primary drive shaft which is of 1/16-in diameter between the larger-diameter ends. Rearward end of the shaft is supported in a ball bearing and carries the clutch drive member comprising a slotted housing and two Perode rings which are dogged at the periphery to engage with the housing slots. Hence the clutch is driven, at engine speed and, further, it runs in oil.

These steel plates comprise the driven members of the clutch; they are internally splined to mate with corresponding splines on the gear-box input sleeve. Foremost of the three driven plates is the pressure plate. Against its front face bears a large-diameter coil spring constrained at its forward end by a collar which, in turn, is held to the input sleeve by a circlip.

Clutch withdrawal is by means of cable pull on one side of a ring which is pivoted on the opposite side and is located behind the clutch co-axially with the input sleeve. The ring is shaped to have on its forward face two rounded projections which bear against the rearward face of the outer race of a ball thrust bearing. The bearing inner race rotates with the clutch, and its forward face contacts three pins which project forward through holes in two of the driven plates to bear on the rear face of the pressure plate.

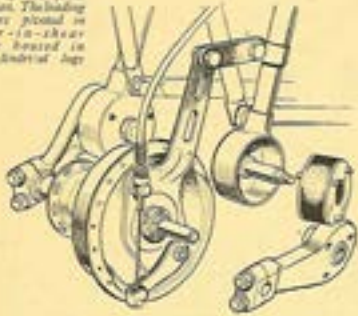
In addition to the input sleeve the gear box contains three shafts which may be termed the mainshaft, the layshaft and the output shaft. The input sleeve is internally bronze-bushed at each end and floats on the mainshaft. An already mentioned, the input sleeve is also splined externally; the number of splines is seven.

The mainshaft is supported near its rear end by a ball bearing and at its front end is splined into the primary drive shaft which is bushed for the purpose. Locked to the mainshaft at a medial position is a member embodying seven involute teeth which are narrower than the input-sleeve splines but mesh there as regards radial spacing. (The member is made from a 14-tooth gear pinion which is reduced in diameter and has alternate teeth milled away.) The member is adjacent to the rear end of the input sleeve which is thus located endwise. A thrust washer is interposed between the forward end of the input sleeve and the rear (hollow) end of the primary drive shaft.

Two gears are carried by the mainshaft just forward of its rear bearing. The rearmost gear (that adjacent to the bearing) has 18 teeth and is locked to the shaft; the foremost has 14 teeth and is free to turn on the shaft. Integral with the 14-tooth gear is a dog-clutch comprising seven involute teeth identical with those on the mainshaft medial member. Indeed, the gear is twice as wide as its 18-tooth neighbour and its front half is reduced in diameter and has alternate teeth removed. Immediately behind its rear bearing the mainshaft transmits in a spiral-bevel pinion.

Mounted substantially below the mainshaft is the layshaft, which is overhung for just sufficient length to accommodate a pair of gears splined thereto. The larger gear has 18 teeth and is in constant mesh with the free (14-tooth) gear on the mainshaft. The smaller gear of the layshaft pair has 14 teeth and meshes with the mainshaft 18-tooth fixed gear. The layshaft is supported behind its gears by a long phosphor-bronze bush and is located endwise by a hardened steel strip bolted to the gear-box casing.

Details of the front suspension. The leading links are pivoted in rubber-in-shoe bearings housed in cast aluminium legs



Carrying a crown-wheel and the final-drive sprocket, the output shaft is arranged transversely at the rear of the gear box. The reduction between the bevel pinion and crown-wheel is 3.54 to 1.

Gear engagement is effected by a selector sleeve which slides on the input shaft. Internally the selector sleeve has seven splines which mate with the seven on the input sleeve, but externally the selector splines are machined away for more than a third of their length to form a recess.

When the selector sleeve is moved forward its splines restward of the recess engage the seventh tooth radial member on the mainshaft, thus locking the input sleeve to the mainshaft, and providing direct drive for high gear. With the selector in mid-position there is no connection between the input sleeve and mainshaft and hence neutral is provided. When the selector is moved farther to the rear its splines rearward of the recess engage the seven involute teeth provided on the mainshaft 14-tooth free gear. In that way the drive is taken through the layshaft pinions (1.65 to 1 reduction for low gear).

A detail point is that the inner race of the clutch thrust bearing is extended considerably rearward and is supported by the selector sleeve on which it is a sliding fit. Externally the rear of the selector sleeve is of bobbin shape to receive a striker fork employed to impart axial movement to the sleeve for gear changing. The fork embodies a rearwardly extending rod which slides within a long phosphor-bronze bush accommodated in a lag within the gear-box shell. Striker-fork forward movement is effected by cable pull from a wingnut on the left of the handlebar. Inside the gear box the cable is loaded by a co-axial coil spring which is compressed when the selector mechanism is moved forward from the low-gear position.

Main member of the welded open frame comprises two taper-driven, D-section tubes; dimensions are 2 1/2 x 1 1/2 x 17 gauge. At the steering head the tubes are milled and gasketed; at the base of the seat pillar they divide to form the chain stays. The dividing point is reinforced by a triangular fabricated member carrying the seat pillar. Below the joint is welded the bottom bracket, a box-section member which, as mentioned previously, houses the pedal crank bearings and forms the mounting for the power unit. A wedge-shaped tool box is carried between the seat pillar and the rear mudguard.

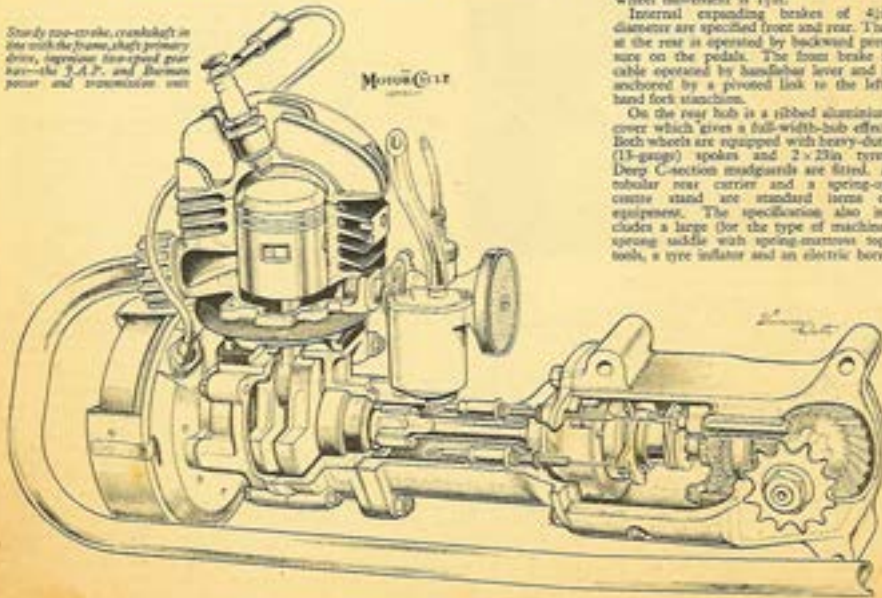
Of leading-link type, the front fork utilizes as stanchion members D-50-O-section, heavy-duty, carrier-pattern fork blades bridged at the top by a cast malleable yoke or crown. To the lower ends of the stanchions are brazed cylindrical, cast malleable legs which house bonded rubber-in-sheet bearings in which the cast-aluminium links are pivoted. Each bearing features two steel thrust faces from each of which project three integral steel pegs. The pegs locate in corresponding holes in the housing on one side of the bearing and in the link on the other side. The whole assembly is pulled up by a hardened-steel spindle, nut and lock nut. Wheel movement is 1 1/2 in.

Internal expanding brakes of 4 1/2 in diameter are specified front and rear. That at the rear is operated by backward pressure on the pedals. The front brake is cable operated by handlebar lever and is anchored by a pivoted link to the left-hand fork stanchion.

On the rear hub is a ribbed aluminium cover which gives a full-width-hub effect. Both wheels are equipped with heavy-duty (13-gauge) spokes and 2 x 23 in tyres. Deep C-section mudguards are fitted. A tubular rear carrier and a spring-up centre stand are standard items of equipment. The specification also includes a large (for the type of machine) sprung saddle with spring-mattress top, tools, a tyre inflater and an electric horn.

Steady two-stroke, crankshaft in line with the frame, shaft primary drive, ingenious inverted gear box—the J.A.P. and Boreman power and transmission unit

MOTORCYCLE



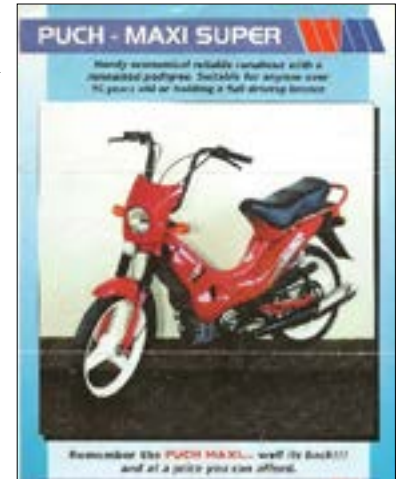
Ian has asked the following: "If any members have any new information about G. H. Jones would they please contact me. As we know, George Herbert Jones designed among other things, the 98cc Villiers autocycle engine and also the JAP engine fitted to the Hercumotor." Ian can be contacted on 07753 167595 or by email at i.mcgregor688@btinternet.com.

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 was relieved to read in the last issue of Buzzing that Brian Aplin had retired at 77 but not left us completely. I don't recall him seeking my permission to do so however, so below please find an open letter to the personality whose company never failed to produce some story or anecdote to entertain customers.

"Dear Brian,
I was shocked and wounded to ride over to Arnos Vale some weeks back to find you closed and gone, but relieved to read the reason was retirement, not the final departure! This, however, I regret just won't do, I can only assume that it was an oversight on your part that you failed to consult me on your intention, before performing your disappearing act – as I don't recall giving you my consent! You may recall we met over 30 years ago when I would turn up to your near neighbour the Royal Enfield shop, where I could usually get bits for my 1950 Triumph Speed Twin.



In 1998 I bought from you a brand-new Manet Korado – basically a Puch Maxi with go-faster panels and paint-work. I used that little bike for a while around Bristol, then shoved it into the back of my garage when we moved to Bath 15 or so years ago. The reason I came by – to find you gone – was to show you its re-incarnation into a nitrous-oxide turbocharged model – Well, I lie about the Nitrous oxide and the turbo, but the look denies the lie!



The tank comes from a 1950s lawn mower, the trumpet from an old SU carburettor (it's bolted to the body panel) the brass bindings are fashioned from a redundant office building name plate and the 'fuel' line was a cupro-nickel brake line salvaged from my brother's garage scrap heap.

The seat came from a racing Kriedler, extended and supported on an old bicycle saddle post fixed by means of an electrical conduit bracket emanating from a wartime Nissen hut. Finally, the ace bars – the only item that required expenditure - were a fiver from your goodself.

I shall miss your little stories, including the memorable one of a chap who wanted to return a front tyre he had bought from you as it failed to do its job. The reason it failed was that his labour-saving method of fitting it was to saw it in half, thread it through the forks and then attempt to re-join it with wire lacing! Those and host of other unbelievable anecdotes should be recorded.

Happy retirement and bowling, Brian, from **Eddy Lambah-Stoate**.



Help Wanted!

Member Michael Cotton is trying to source “pale transfer varnish VX16700” - can anyone help by letting Michael know where to buy it? Alternatively, a high-quality varnish which could be used to seal transfers? Contact Michael via Mark Graham at rmarkgraham1eb@gmail.com Thanks!

Can any member help John Mcquade with information on the route of the old Yorkshire Tun run? It hasn't been held for many years and John, together with his friend Ron Paterson, would like to ride the route again. John can be contacted via email at john.mac1@ymail.com Many thanks.

Member Ray Turner presented us with a problem on the NACC stand at Stafford. He has bought a non-running 25cc Cyclemaster and someone in the past has wound insulating tape round the inlet pipe stub to take up play between the stub and the Amal 308/43 carburettor clamp. Ray showed us it on the stand and there is no way tightening the clamp would take up the slack and seal it properly. Does anybody know of a solution to this? Ray can be contacted on 07811 208383 or raymond.turner333@btinternet.com

Graham Bennett contacted the club via our website: “I've seen that an Achilles Lido, reg YKP 854, was sold at auction in 2018 without documents. I know the early history of this bike (right), and would be happy to pass it on if it belongs to a member.” Graham's email is: benananne75@gmail.com



Dirty Dealings in Big Business

Autocyclus

Writing up the report on Raleigh Wisps and the Raleigh RSW16 small-wheel bicycle in October's Buzzing reminded me of the April 2010 issue of Buzzing. Author and Moulton expert Tony Hadland and I visited Dr. Alex Moulton's cellar at The Hall, Bradford-on-Avon in a quest to find out about the mythical Moulton Moped, which we succeeded in doing and also met Alex Moulton himself.



For details of the Moulton Moped please refer to that issue of Buzzing - it makes very interesting reading!* What concerns us here are the multiple machinations of Raleigh in an attempt to compete with the fully-suspended Moulton bicycle by launching the RSW16 (Raleigh Small Wheel bicycle), which was a misguided concept from the very beginning.

Alex Moulton's great-grandfather Stephen introduced the Goodyear rubber vulcanising process to the UK, establishing a factory in the old Kingston woollen mill at Bradford-on-Avon and buying The Hall with some of the proceeds. The present-day Moulton Bicycle Company factory is very active and is still established at The Hall.

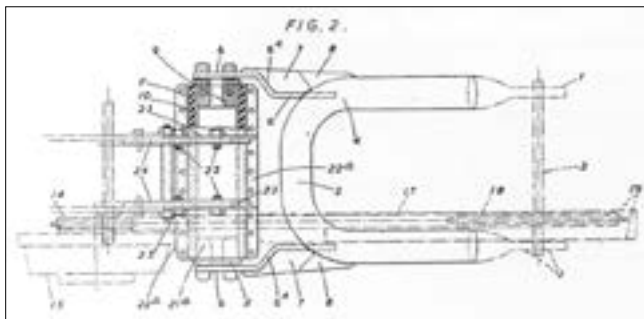
Interest in rubber and its industrial applications had been passed down through several generations of the Moulton family, with the late Alex Moulton (1920-2012) being one of the last to continue this process.

Alex Moulton was always fascinated by engineering ideas and problem-solving, becoming a keen cyclist in his teens with membership of the Cyclist Touring Club. While at Marlborough College he built a steam-powered GN cyclecar and this experience resulted in a five-month pupillage at the Sentinel Steam Waggon Works at Shrewsbury. There he learned many skills such as producing engineering drawings, pattern-making, casting techniques, machining and batch-production. He was also a keen motorcyclist, running a 1931 Scott TT replica and an Austin Seven Speedy in competition events organised by the Cambridge University Automobile Club while he was studying Mechanical Sciences at King's College, Cambridge.

*Available by email as a pdf file - please contact hello@thebuzzingclub.net to request a copy.

During WWII Moulton applied for and was given a job at the Bristol Aeroplane Engine Co. by Sir Roy Fedden, where he worked on the 14-cylinder air-cooled Bristol Taurus and the 18-cylinder Centaurus radial engines, both of which had sleeve-valves. Alex Moulton's father, John, was already a supplier of industrial rubber items to the Bristol company through the family firm of Spencer Moulton, so a family connection did no harm.

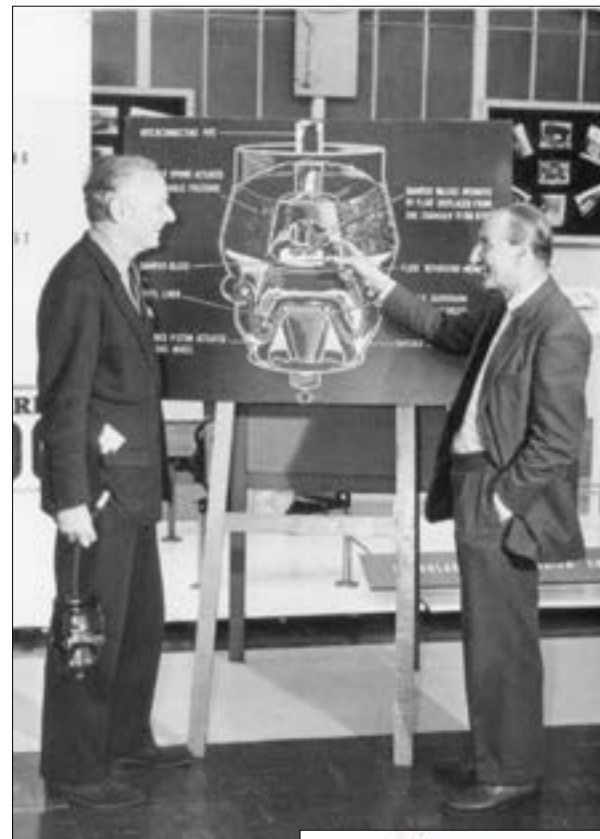
Fast-forward to 1948, when Alex Moulton opened a new Research Laboratory for Spencer Moulton at Bradford-on-Avon, which tested rubber and metal elements with industrial applications, including fatigue testing to destruction. He also developed and patented a simple rubber in torsion motorcycle rear suspension which he tried out on his 1947 Vincent Comet (above). He also equipped his Morgan 4/4, which had sliding-pillar front suspension, with a column of rubber rings in lieu of the standard coil springs.



Further rubber suspension projects included a 1951 Thornycroft 7-ton truck independent front suspension, which failed because the chassis was torsionally very weak and introduced wheel tramp, and 'Flexitor' rear suspension units for the Bond Minicar. Other rubber in torsion suspension units were used in military trailers and the all independently-suspended Austin Gipsy 4x4, which proved superior to the rigid axles and leaf springs of the Land Rover. The photo above, from Autocar 25th January 1965, shows the flexibility of Moulton's rubber suspension on an early Austin Gipsy.



Then, of course, there was the BMC Mini, suspended on rubber cones which gave rising-rate suspension able to cope with the big difference between laden and unladen weight, allowing a solo driver a decent ride while stiffening up for a heavier load of 4 passengers plus their luggage.



Alex Moulton and Alec Issigonis - designer of the Morris Minor, BMC Mini, 1100 and 1300 series cars and the infamous 'Land Crab' 1800 - got on very well together and were close friends as well as collaborating engineers.

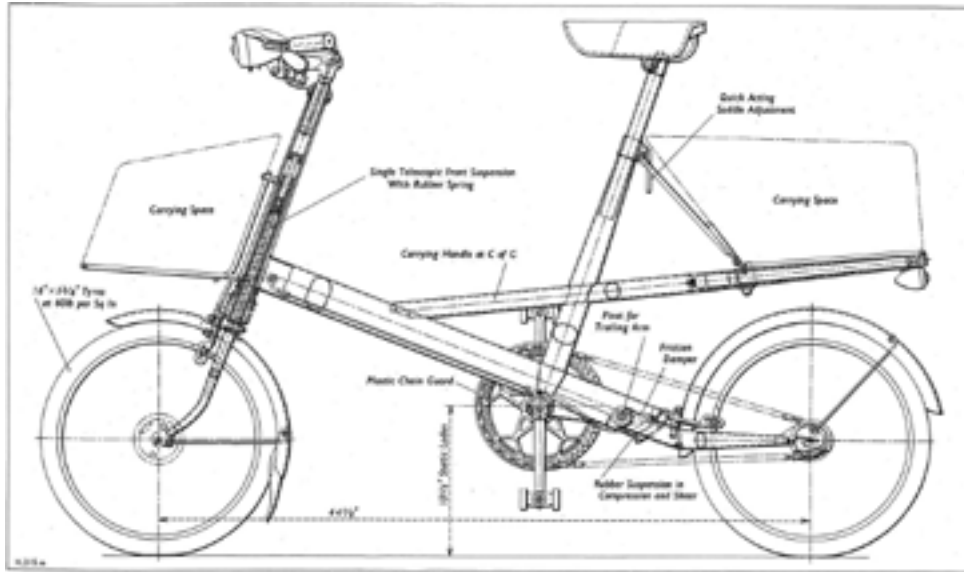
Between them they developed the Hydrolastic (and later Hydragas) interconnected suspension system for the BMC 1100/1300 and 1800 cars, which used rubber displacers to feed movement from the front wheels to the rear using a water/antifreeze mix, akin to the mechanically-interlinked suspension of the Citroën 2CV. Photo left is a BMC publicity shot explaining the suspension at the Morris 1100 launch in 1962.

Following Alec Issigonis's fitting of 10in wheels to the 1959 Mini, Alex Moulton began investigating the possibility of a small-wheeled bicycle, as seen below on the original F-frame Moulton.

Sketches were made the same year, which showed rubber suspension on front and rear wheels. "The factors of rolling-resistance, tread life and wet grip had all to be considered, as well as the effect of the lower gyroscopic effect due to the smaller diameter" (AM)

Having suspension meant that high-pressure hard tyres could be used, reducing rolling-resistance, cutting down on pedalling and not rattling a rider's fillings out!





“Believing in the overall beneficial features of my new bicycle in comparison with the classic, I was anxious to get a cycle manufacturer to consider making and marketing it under licence. Raleigh was the first choice as the acknowledged world leader; British and situated in Nottingham.” (AM)

An appointment was made with George Wilson, chairman of Raleigh, which by this time had been taken over by TI (Tube Investments), to go to Bradford-on-Avon on 19th November 1959, and to take a standard Raleigh bicycle with him for comparison. “George and I sat on the stone bridge at Staverton, watching my machine being ridden up and down the hill in comparison with the Raleigh roadster. There was no doubt which performed better, especially as my bicycle was 3lb lighter.”

A timed ride comparison between the Moulton prototype (34.5lb) and the Raleigh (37.5lb) revealed the Moulton to be 8.5% faster over a 49-minute circular ride.

Alex Moulton visited Nottingham many times in the early 1960s, but “I sensed from everyone their belief in the absolute superiority of Raleigh and its practices.”

(Photo Wiltshire Gazette & Herald)



“It was understandable from the world dominance of Raleigh of Nottingham, at least in quality standards and production methods. Raleigh were adamant that all tubes should be joined by lugs so the Mark IV [prototype made by Raleigh] showed enormous pressed-steel lugs embracing the big diameter tubes where the head and seat tubes joined the main beam.

I was not aware of the depth of hostility of the Raleigh Sales Department towards the adoption of the Moulton bicycle. I was surprised, on waiting to enter the boardroom for a meeting in the summer of 1960, to see Sales Manager Jim Harrison pressing down and wiping sideways the front suspension of a prototype Moulton... trying to break it by this unnatural loading.”

Alex Moulton simply wanted to get his unique bicycle made somewhere as he had no manufacturing facilities himself. 1960 dragged on, with George Wilson telling Moulton at the November 1960 Cycle Show at Earls Court that the “project was on,” but continued hostility from the Raleigh Sales Department and Jim Harrison blocked progress. “The [Raleigh] Works said that it would need an output of 200 machines a week, or 10,000 per year, to make the tooling investment worthwhile in making the Moulton. Sales declared it would be impossible to sell that amount.” (AM)

It was dawning on Moulton that Raleigh was really not interested in making his bicycle. Meanwhile, the company had realised the Moulton was a serious threat to its hegemony of conventional bicycles, so began designing a competitor, the 1965 Raleigh RSW16, with a similar-looking frame but no suspension, compensated for by fat balloon tyres which increased rolling-resistance when compared to the hard-tyred Moulton.

Moulton decided to go ahead and set up a factory in the grounds of The Hall to make his bicycle, in the firm belief it would be successful. Ground was broken and a small production run made in time for the November 1962 Cycle Show at Earls Court. Fourteen Moultons were on display at the show. "Because we knew that the trade would be completely negative, like Raleigh had been, we had a bump-rig which showed off the bicycle's suspension." The public's reaction was rather different. David Duffield - working for Moulton on sales and advertising (he was an enthusiastic cyclist who broke the Lands End to John O'Groats record twice on a tricycle) - recalled "We had to beat them off with sticks - at the Show we were desperately short of man-power and we had to enlist friends, relations and anybody else to help us!"

"At the beginning, the trade was just as negative as ever. But as the week progressed and dealers had had customers asking to buy this new bike, we had phenomenal demands for our product. During the Show a most extraordinary thing happened. I received a telephone call from Sydney Wheeler, the Secretary and a director of the British Motor Corporation, with a message from Sir Leonard Lord [President of BMC] and George Harriman [Chairman & MD of BMC] saying 'Alex, don't hesitate in taking orders because we, BMC, will make the thing for you.' The reason for this staggering and flattering offer was that BMC knew that the motor industry had come out of the bicycle industry."



Close ties already existed between Moulton and BMC due to his work on the rubber suspension systems for the Mini, 1100/1300 and 1800 cars. BMC's Fisher & Ludlow factory in Wolverhampton was tooled up to produce Moulton bicycle frames - much to the displeasure of TI which had taken over Raleigh in 1959 and was BMC's main supplier of exhaust systems and other tube products!

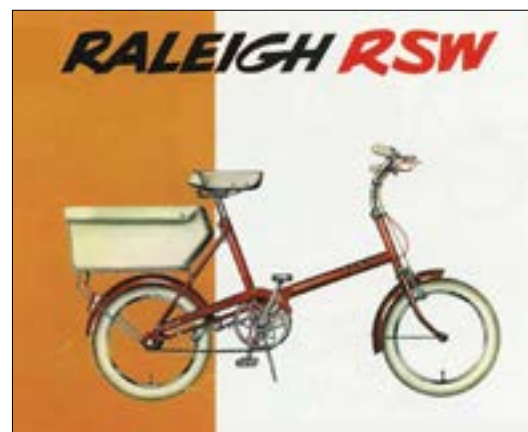


A convincing demonstration of the superiority of Moulton's new bicycle was carried out shortly after the 1962 Cycle Show closed - bad weather had prevented the demonstration during the show. On 9th December 1962 John Woodbridge, a successful short distance time-trial rider, broke the Cardiff to London road record by an astonishing margin on a Moulton.

It was fitted with a 4-speed Sturmey Archer hub gear, a larger chainwheel and drop handlebars, but was otherwise all standard. The record was broken by 18 minutes 31 seconds at an average of 24mph, taking Woodbridge 6 hours, 43 minutes and 29 seconds for the run.

Despite all these achievements however, all was not well at Moulton Bicycles in Bradford-on-Avon. Lax accounting procedures meant the company was losing money in spite of high sales.

Raleigh was also doing everything in its power to discredit Moulton bicycles, to the point that the company put pressure on bicycle dealers and shops to refuse orders for Moultons if they wanted to continue to sell Raleigh bicycles. Raleigh's financial muscle was also behind the publicity launch budget for the RSW16 small-wheel bicycle, reputedly at £250,000. "A resolve for revenge started fairly early on with the development [of the RSW16], they were going to prove to their Board that they were entirely justified in not having taken up the Moulton." (Alex Moulton)



All this took a toll on Alex Moulton, who eventually decided he could no longer afford a conflict with the massive Raleigh business and sold his company and the rights to manufacture Moulton bicycles to Raleigh. Raleigh had assured Sir George Harriman of BMC that the company did not intend to produce or sell a small-wheel bicycle, only to renege on that assurance in 1965 with the launch of the RSW16, effectively Raleigh's reply to Moulton.

Then came the hugely successful 'Chopper' which so distracted Raleigh it dropped all pretence of making Moulton bicycles and ended production in 1974.

Classic Mechanics Show Stafford

Autocyclus

Only a short time passed between the postponed April Stafford Show (which took place in July) and the October Classic Mechanics Show, so the team was still “in gear”! We had the stand next-door to the one in July, slightly cramped but we had fewer bikes on display so it didn’t look too crowded.



On the stand (left to right) were the following bikes: John Aston’s ‘Mobylette Special’, built up during the first lockdown in 2020 from bits & pieces acquired at autojumbles, basically an AV44 frame with AV42 forks fitted with a later variator engine; John Aston’s immaculate restored 1972 Puch MS50D 3-speeder; Neil Howell’s just-finished and very fine 1968 Honda P50, Honda’s equivalent to a Cyclemaster, and John Burgess’s 1950 Bown Auto Roadster with Villiers 2F power, made in Wales but first registered in London. Simon Lake displayed an unusual East German Simson KR51/1 50cc scooter, a lockdown restoration which went way beyond what he’d intended; John Redding brought his VéloSolex assembled in Holland under license by Van der Heem, which showed many differences to the French versions; Nick Devonport showed his 1984 MBK Club, one of the first model Mobylettes to be made following the takeover of Motobécane by Yamaha; and in the back row were Ian McGregor’s fabulous, original and almost unused, typically French early 1950s Cyclocette, with a VAP 4 motor, John Burgess’s Mini-Motor on a period Rudge bicycle and my Garelli Mosquito 38B Centrimatic on a Royal England bicycle, a Chinese copy of an old Raleigh, which had come to the UK from Singapore.

An addition came on Saturday - Nick had delivered a brand spanking new US-spec Honda he’d ordered from an importer because Honda don’t officially import this model! It looks like the fabled Australian postie bike, with a single seat, an enormously-strong platform behind and Honda’s new 125cc single OHC fuel-injected engine.



The NACC stand was busy throughout the weekend though few visitors were wearing masks, a real contrast to July when this was obligatory inside the halls.

Below, Ian McGregor’s wonderful Cyclocette, so typical of French *cyclomoteurs* of the 1950s.



On the outdoor stands there was the usual complement of rotting, rusty mopeds and motorcycles at vastly inflated prices, most of which were still there at closing-time on Sunday afternoon! Rusty Honda Cubs seem to command at least £1,500 these days.....

Bonhams auction



on Saturday offered a range of ‘our’ kind of bikes for sale, all grouped together from Lot 1. The Deryn tandem sold for £747, the Deryn *Entraîneur* went for £632 and the Narcisse-Sachs tandem (far left) for £1,725.

A couple of restored NSU Quicklies made £1,207 (1961) and £862 (1957), while a nice Cyclemaster fetched £517.

Two Vincent Fireflys were on offer; one was in reasonable condition (right), the other looked like it had been lying on the bottom of a pond for a decade. The reasonable Firefly (JPM 556) sold for £2,415, while the nicely-restored New Hudson autocycle alongside made the buyer happy at £805.



The pond-dweller (WRK 984 but not registered with the DVLA) is seen left. It had Webb forks and was advertised as “by far the cheapest route to Vincent ownership.” Sold for £1,782.

A restorable c1951 Norman Model C autocycle (PKR 737, left, but also not on the DVLA database) made just £368.

Then there was a grotty Raleigh Wisp, missing engine panels and a recoverable registration (below) which even Nick (currently Wisplless) felt he couldn't offer a home to! It sold for £178 and will probably be broken for spares.



A tidy Raleigh Runabout made £632; a part-restored unidentified JDL-engined autocycle (it looked like a Rudge) made just £460, so there were some bargains to be had. Two Honda Cubs sold for £1,265 (C50) and £1,380 (C90), both in nice condition, unlike the rusty ones on offer outside....All prices quoted above include Bonhams commission (15%) and VAT.

Honda Chaly CF70 - a fortunate stroke of serendipity Ken Brooks

Taking my Honda CD200 to an independent motorcycle repairer for its MOT, I got chatting with the proprietor about the old Honda bikes he had worked on in the past. Looking around his interesting emporium I noticed a little Honda overshadowed by a fine Triumph Bonneville. It just happens that I'm a great fan of smaller Honda machines as in my Buzzing piece from 2020, and one of the first things I noticed about this bike was the Bristol registration number, the “OHU” identical and the numbers close to that of the 1973 Honda CD175 bought new by me almost 50 years ago.

Having a closer look, the machine was a Honda Chaly CF70, and what one might describe as “cosmetically challenged”, that is, pretty scruffy, both wheels red with rust. The good news was the bike had an MOT, started very easily, was completely original and potentially for sale! Some while back I sold a couple of rather nice Honda ST70 Dax bikes for what now seems absurdly low prices and had been wondering about another, when purely by chance here was something similar on offer.



After a few days of agonised thought I took the plunge and asked to come and take a better look, and accepted the offer of a test ride. On a lovely sunny morning I took an illicit, helmet-less ride round the block and suitably impressed, returned to agree the purchase. I discovered a little more about it. The bike had been stored in a container for years, part of a stash put away by the former owner of the business.

The current proprietor had bought them, and on this one replaced the plug, points, fuel pipe, drive chain, brake and speedo cables and battery to get the machine running and roadworthy, taking it through an MOT. Checking out documents showed that the bike was registered on Friday 3 August 1973, my CD175 on Monday 6th. The DVLA website revealed that the tax had expired in 1988, over 33 years ago!



Despite a warning that the bike was far from pristine, on delivery my wife commented that it was difficult to distinguish between dirt and rust, an opinion which neatly summed up its distressed appearance. The usual clean up commenced with some degreaser and a good scrub with soap and water which marginally improved the appearance.

I noticed the bike emitted petrol odours due to an unclamped fuel pipe but also from a weeping fuel tap. Almost all my Hondas have suffered this at some stage and the tap was dismantled for a new insert to be fitted.

So far, so good, but after five days of drying out following the clean up, the bike refused to start, or even fire. With the brand new spark plug removed there was a strong spark across the gap. Fuel was getting to the carburettor which I had carefully dried days before. Baffled by all this some engine start was sprayed in to the carburettor, and when that didn't work, directly in to the cylinder. In desperation, and feeling a bit sheepish, I rang the seller who said "You'll get a spark with the plug out of the engine, but 10mm plugs can fail under engine compression after getting wet." I must have sounded doubtful as I pointed out the new plug he had fitted, but he said believe me, it will work straight away with another one. And so it did!



With tax and insurance arranged it was time for a few rides. Many miles were covered in teenage years on a 49cc Honda C100 where the gearbox was one up, two down whereas the Chaly gearbox is three down. First is very low indeed and seems of limited use, second is fine for level starts but when in third I found myself feeling for another gear. There's a fair bit of engine noise but the bike pulls surprisingly lustily up inclines and seems happy pottering along around 22 mph, anything faster seems like screaming the poor engine. For a 72cc machine the gears could have all been slightly taller for a more relaxed ride.

Suitably anonymous and disguised in my fluorescent jacket, I have not yet been

identified by neighbours. Such is the absence of street credibility on a tiny old rusty machine that a white van driver kindly deferred to me, waving me through a gap, giving me a thumbs up, perhaps pitying the rider as an impoverished pizza courier. You meet the nicest people on a Honda.

To improve its appearance I shall probably clean up and respray the wheels and crankcase sides in silver with 2 pack lacquer to finish, and carefully prepare the mudguards for a new matching white finish.

So, after a short period of ownership, what are my initial riding impressions? On the road it just about keeps up with urban speeds, but is lightweight, great fun to ride, much faster than walking and far easier than cycling. It makes me smile every time and I'm just loving it. What's not to like about a diminutive Honda Chaly?

More on the Honda Chaly.

Back in August 2012 we published a story on the discovery of another Honda Chaly. “Chris Rogerson has been at it again; in June’s Buzzing he told us of the rediscovery and recovery of his Mum’s 1965 Raleigh RM6, which had been stored in a relative’s shed since 1968. This time he’s found a Honda Chaly tucked away in an abandoned garden outhouse. It looked undamaged, just a bit rusty, and has just 6057 miles on the clock.”



Chris’s rescued Honda Chaly will by now have been fully restored and hopefully will be running again. Anybody seen it out and about on an NACC run recently?

N.I. Section Bann Valley Run

Andrew Huston

The heavy overnight rain and wind did not deter sixteen riders from turning out for our final run of 2021. Surprisingly, we enjoyed beautiful autumn sunshine throughout the run which covered many quiet roads along the River Bann valley. The wet roads were beginning to dry, although heavy leaf fall made some lanes a bit tricky in places. A few stops were necessary for Kenny Davison to change spark-plugs on his Francis Barnett and John Scott had the same issue on his New Hudson but otherwise it was a trouble free run.



A trip along Movanager Road brought us to a beautiful rest stop (right) alongside the river which was heavy in flood. Several riders commented that they had never been here before and some were keen to push on to the lunch stop at Drumaheglis Marina.



We continued along roads skirting the abandoned Mullaghmore Airfield which was used by the U.S. Air Force during 1943-44. At the Marina some of the riders enjoyed their picnic lunch while others visited the excellent coffee shop. With the first signs of possible rainfall, the run continued back to Somerset Park in Coleraine without getting wet, a total distance of 42 miles. Special mention is made of our guest Gerry Christie (aka Willie Nelson, left) who travelled all the way from Co. Kerry in Southern Ireland to take part.

Thames Valley Group Silchester Saunter Robin C

The Silchester Saunter was run on 19th September from The New Inn & Hotel, Odiham Road, Heckfield, Hampshire. Twelve riders turned up and were duly signed on. See below for a picture of the gathered riders at The New Inn:



Weather predictions forecast some rain and some did occur at the extremities of the run, otherwise a good event was held. Bert Beagley had to be retrieved with a broken throttle cable. No other issues were experienced and all riders returned safely. We adjourned to the pub, where Sunday Lunch was enjoyed plus a small swift medicinal compound “gargle” before going home.



A reminder of hazards facing riders on an average Coast to Coast run, this is June 2007- June! Supposed to be summer, but not in the NE of England that year! Torrential rain caused low-lying roads on the route to flood, so the wearing of wellies and wet-weather gear was essential.



South Staffs/Buzz'ards Autumn Run Autocyclus

The idea of a combined Autumn Run was proposed at Stafford by Neil Howells and John Burgess, it was fixed for Sunday 24th October, with fingers crossed for decent weather. The route was a 25-mile round trip to Patshull fishing lake, where we stoked the inner fires with tea and butties of various kinds - sausage, sausage egg & bacon etc. A small dog mesmerised us all into giving it titbits.



Riders were: Ken Hayes- Honda PC50; Ian Harris- Kreidler Florette; Graham Bennett- Honda Vision; Simon Lake- BSA Beaver; Neil Howells- Honda NC50; Dave Johnson- Honda C90; John Burgess- Piaggio Velofax, and DB- Honda Sky. Bob Jeffcoat joined us at Patshull on his amazing Honda Stream - Honda's version of an Ariel 3! Geoff Theophilus arrived on his Royal Enfield to see us off and Bob Rushton joined us on his New Hudson, sadly breaking down shortly after departure.



Left- “Hondas don't break down, do they...” Neil's NC50 suffering from SIC problems - “S**t In Carb” just as it started raining a bit.

All but three bikes on the run were Hondas! The route followed some familiar lanes that we've used on past National rallies. Bob Terry joined us at Patshull on his bicycle, it was good to see him again.

feet. "Thanks all the same but I can take this on my own."



Every cyclist longs to discard his "L" plates, but examiners will not issue a "pass" certificate until they are satisfied a cycle is safe and the driver is competent. With cyclist's growing in number every day, there is reason to suppose that examiners are becoming stricter in their judgments, the more so, I believe, because a person qualified to drive a cycle is also entitled to drive a motorcycle. This strikes me as strange, and I am convinced that separate tests are needed. I know that many examiners will agree with me, since obviously there is a world of difference between driving a cycle at a

maximum of 25 m.p.h. and driving a motorcycle at anything up to 70 m.p.h.

I shan't easily forget the day I took my driving test. I arrived in Salisbury only a minute before the appointed time, spent five minutes looking for the examiner's office, and would probably not have found it for another quarter of an hour had not the examiner himself spotted me. For all my lateness he was in a good humour, but now, if ever I take a test to drive a steamroller or a mowing-machine, I shall take care to be at the examiner's in ample time.

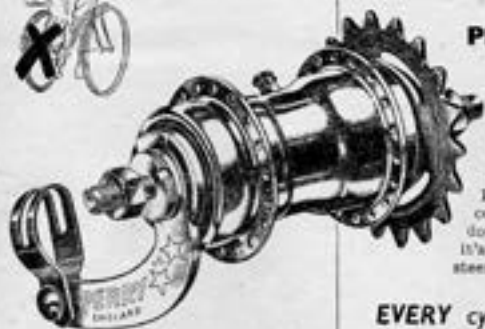
All went well with my test until suddenly the machine began to drag and I had to pedal hard to ride up only a slight rise. "Having trouble?" asked the examiner. I stammered some excuse, not having the least clue as to what was

wrong, but supposing that the fault was with the motor. It was only after I had been given a "pass" and I was out of the examiners' sight that I found out what had happened: one of my front brake blocks was jammed tight against the rim! Be warned: make sure before you take a test that your machine is thoroughly roadworthy.

As a journalist, I use my *Power Pad* to take me into the Wiltshire countryside, to report on the activities of the villages, whether fetes, funerals or parish councils. It's all in a day's work, and what more pleasant at the end of it—if a journalist's day ever does have an end—than to cycle home in the cool of a summer's evening, scornful of hills and undaunted by distance. Yes, my cyclist is a good friend.



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A snapshot of a long-lost era nearly seventy years ago - how life has changed since then. Now we have computers, phones that do photos and internet activities, most people have cars and cycling is relegated to a leisure activity, not how you got to work. Many households in 1953 didn't even have a phone - back then it connected to a lady manning the doll's eye & plug board at the local exchange!

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 - Lapel badge - enamel, silver with red logo £3.50
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