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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 December 2021 magazine to be sent to editor@thebuzzingclub.net and reach Dave at Buzzing Production well before Friday 19th November 2021, as by that date 99% of the magazine will be finished.

Front cover: archetypal image from the Swinging Sixties - the June 1967 Vogue fashion-shoot picture of Twiggy in shorts aboard Raleigh Wisp JTV 838E - is it still out there somewhere? The Wisp was an adaptation of the Raleigh RSW16 (Raleigh Small Wheel) bicycle (numbered after the 16x2in balloon tyres?). The RSW16 was Raleigh's response to Alex Moulton's runaway success with his Moulton bicycle, which had suspension at both ends and could use hard, narrow-section tyres with far less rolling-resistance than the Raleigh. The Wisp used a frame based on the RSW16 design but it had heavier-section tubing and strengthened joints. See more on pages 18-21. (Photo courtesy of Vogue.)

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"

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 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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Chairman's Chat

Well, the nights are drawing in and I hope that you've all enjoyed getting out and about again on your bikes. The highlight of my year was meeting up with around twenty friends at a small camp site not far from my home and visiting local attractions. Even my unscheduled overnight stay in hospital didn't spoil the weekend! Next year, I hope that riding a moped in France will be on my agenda once again, either as part of an officially-organised event or as just a gathering of friends on a favourite camp site.

I reckon that the darker and colder evenings will be a cue to spend more time in the workshop, keeping our bikes in good running order and probably fighting the effects of the dreaded E10 fuel. I've recently filled up my garage petrol cans with E5 Super Unleaded but I'll be looking into a local source of Avgas which is much better for ageing fuel systems and has a longer shelf life.

Buzzing used to carry a list of Marque Enthusiasts, people who had a special interest in a certain make of machine and who would be prepared to advise others on maintenance and repairs. Of course, the Club library has an extensive list of publications which cover the majority of our machines and a Google enquiry will answer many queries but there's no substitute for a chat with someone who has encountered and probably fixed the problem that you're battling. If you have an interest in a particular machine or machines and are prepared to help others, we'd love to hear from you! Please contact either me or Dave the Editor and we'll arrange to add you to a refreshed Marque Enthusiast list. It would be a great way of helping others and adding another string to the NACC's bow!

Enjoy this issue and keep warm in those sheds.

Nick Devonport



A nice old postcard from the Netherlands, right, a happy couple out on their VéloSolexes, ideal machines for getting around on cycleways.

News

"Much-loved Bristol shop closes after more than 60 years in business."

Many of you have probably heard via the grapevine that Brian Aplin, purveyor of Mobylette and Raleigh spares to mopedders throughout Britain and worldwide, has decided to retire and has sold his shop on the Bath Road. He was made an offer he couldn't refuse by a developer who had bought the adjacent property and wanted to demolish both to build a new block on the site. At 77, Brian has been in the same business for 60 years and deserves a restful retirement. We have permission from the Bristol Post to reproduce the following article and photos on Brian's retirement.

"Anyone who has ever driven along Bath Road will have passed Aplans - a tiny corner shop in Arnos Vale dealing solely in mopeds. The family venture has seen thousands of customers over 62 years in business - some of them even arriving on four legs. Brian Aplin started there when he was 15, the morning after he finished school, and swiftly caught the moped bug. His 'very strict and very positive' parents bought the shop - and the flat upstairs - in 1959. The 77-year-old said: 'The first bikes my parents had were two NSU Quicklys and three pushbikes. Then they went into mopeds and they built it up from there. I finished school on a Friday and I was arranging to go away for two weeks with my mates. My father said 'what do you want to do?' and I said 'come into the bikes'. And he said 'fine, if you want to come into the bikes you start Saturday morning or you don't start at all'."

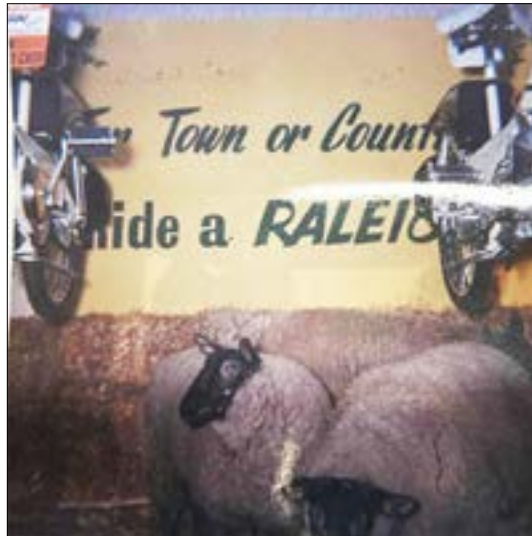
(Photos courtesy James Beck/Bristol Live/Bristol Post)





“Aplins Motorcycles specialised in the Raleigh Wisp and Mobylette mopeds, before branching out into Honda and Suzuki models. Their Christmas promotions became the talk of the town when Brian’s father, Bill, used farmyard animals to advertise the bikes. ‘In 1964 and ‘65 we had the ducks, ‘66 was the sheep and ‘67 would have been the donkey. Bill was even featured in a newspaper story at the time, which described his ‘imagination’ and ‘verve’.

‘It’s amazing what a flock of sheep in the showroom and a banner reading ‘For Town or Country ride a Raleigh’ will do for sales,’ the article said. I think the most embarrassing thing that happened was when we had the donkey - that was the last year we did it. I had to exercise it every evening, I had to take it for a walk. And one night I got stopped by the police because I didn’t have a red light on the back of it,” Brian chuckled.



The aim of the promotion was to encourage people towards two-wheeled vehicles rather than using cars and buses, he explained. ‘It’s a bit like what we’re trying to do today in a way, it was a bit ahead of its time. We were trying to target people who would cut through town in their cars. We specialised in the lightweight section and we didn’t diversify to the very big stuff, we kept to what we knew. We did a good service, I believe, in supplying bikes, spares, servicing and giving technical information,’ Brian said.

After setting up the shop in 1959, Bill made a deal with Mobylette to be their sole supplier in the South West. He was soon selling 80 Mobylettes a fortnight, as well as several other types of moped. At that time, Bath Road was a bustling thoroughfare in the heart of the industrial district. ‘You had the workers on the buses coming down the road, packed, but it was costly and time-consuming so people started to go on two wheels. All we did was mopeds - everything up to 125cc, nothing above it - basically to get people to and from work as cheaply as possible. Both my parents were very hardworking.”

“‘My mother was working in the shop all day, then she’d go up and do the cooking, cleaning - all your normal things. Sometimes my father would work to nine or 10 o’clock at night,’ Brian remembered. Even when his father moved into the lorry business, Mrs Aplin stayed to help Brian run the shop. She was a whizz with numbers, he said, and ahead of her time. ‘She was very good, she dealt with all the spares, she had the numbers in her head, you’d just say ‘I want a particular item’ and she knew the number - picked it up, got it, fine. She would have been 75 or 76 when she got too ill to work anymore, and she still had her finger on the button, she knew her stuff. They say women don’t know a lot of stuff about bikes, but she did,’ he said.

After Raleigh ceased production in the 1970s and Mobylettes were no longer imported to the UK, Aplin’s became a lifeline for owners of vintage mopeds all over the world. For the last 20 years, Brian has been posting spare parts to Australia, New Zealand, America and other far-flung locations. However, after a lifetime spent in the shop, he will hang up his tools for the final time on July 30. ‘After 62 years’ service to the moped world, I’m going to take a break. I’m going to relax and play boules at Knowle Bowling Club, and I shall see more of my grandchildren’, Brian said. But he won’t leave customers in the lurch he explained, as he reckoned he was one of just two people in the UK who still supplied spare parts for vintage mopeds. ‘The property is being sold on, but all the spares will continue to be sold by another party, which we’re negotiating at the moment [Malcolm Corrigan of Classic Moped Spares in Taunton] He’s said he will continue to supply the spares for anyone in the UK or Europe in the future. We are trying to continue the people who’ve got the products to keep them on the road as long as possible,’ he said.

But it isn’t over yet - and Brian still has a few last-minute customers to sort out before he goes. He said: ‘I will miss the people you deal with, moped owners are very enthusiastic, very loyal and they all get on with one another. I’ve got a chap coming today, he’s heard I’m retiring and he’s coming down from Winchester. I’ve always dealt with him on the phone and he said ‘I’ve never met you, but as you’re retiring, I’m coming down.’”

(Photo below courtesy Imogen McGuckin/Bristol Live/Bristol Post)



Brian Aplin’s stock of Mobylette & Raleigh spares has been bought by Malcolm Corrigan of Classis Moped Spares - see Malcolm’s new advert at the bottom of page 46.

More News

Next month sees the introduction of E10 unleaded petrol, with 10% added methanol. David Casper writes: "Although it's unlikely to seriously affect the machines we use it will be a problem for older four strokes. There's no real advice regarding two strokes but E10 will damage fuel systems over a period of time due to its hygroscopic nature. It also damages solder so the brass floats found in many old carbs will be susceptible to damage unless petrol is drained from the tank and carb after use. One recommendation being made is to switch to Super Unleaded which shouldn't be a cost problem with the mileage we do. E10 isn't as efficient as E5 so mpg, which brings the Govt. extra fuel duty, will be less."

An alternative is to buy (it's perfectly legal, VAT is paid) Avgas 100LL (low lead) aviation fuel from a local aerodrome. It's more expensive at approx. £1.90 a litre, but with the low mileages we do.....In addition, Avgas 100LL has a storage life of up to 2 years in ideal conditions, unlike the unleaded crap sold on forecourts, which lasts a couple of months and has dissolved butane in it to heat catalytic converters in cars, contributing to vaporisation in hot weather. I've used Avgas for years in my two and four-stroke bikes (old and new) without any problems and it can overwinter in the tank as it has no methanol content and doesn't "go off". I top up my tanks at the end of the year so the likelihood of condensation forming in cold winter weather is minimised. Dave B.

A great photo from our friend Markus Kepke, a regular at Rando Cyclos over many years. He and his mates made a trip to the bandstand at Sars Poteries in remembrance of missed events.



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Classic Workshop

BSA's Beaver moped - not too heavy for learners



DAMMED BY LACK OF BEAVER PARTS

Like myself, Allan Harris owned a BSA Beaver sports moped in the early 1980s, Allan's working as a reliable and economical commuter around London. But even then he recalls struggling to get parts and asks whether there are any suppliers now.

I have no idea, Allan, but I doubt it. The Beaver was an attempt by what remained of the BSA company to get back into some sort of production in 1979. Along with its trail-style sibling the Brigand, it was a pretty sound 'sixteener moped' that suffered from a poor choice of name, slightly odd styling and the generally lousy reputation of British made bikes among riders of the day (the enormous BSA company having expensively plummeted to earth like a flaming blimp just a few years before). But at a time when the opposition's fifties were still

housed in cheap steel pressings, the BSA had a quality tubular-steel British-designed monoshock frame that probably deserved a faster engine than a restricted 50cc unit. That aside, most of the rest was Italian - Minarelli engine, Dell'Orto carb, Paioli forks - so it has much in common with other continental mopeds. So my first port of call would be the National Auto Cycle and Cyclometer Club (thebuzzingclub.net) who positively revel in all forms of low-powered modestly-priced ultra-lightweight two-wheelers.

Frankly, these guys aren't playing the game at all; they buy cheap bikes nobody wants and then manage to have more fun per mile than the rest of us. They never seem worried about 'investment values', their club magazine is a great read and they got great fuel economy. It's just not cricket... but well worth joining!

A nice commendation for the NACC in a recent issue of Classic Bike magazine (left) regarding the difficulty in finding spares for a BSA Beaver moped.

Reproduced with kind permission from Gary Pinchin, Editor of Classic Bike magazine.

Good to see that the FBHVC enjoyed our 40th anniversary booklet!

At Nick's Summer Camp back in July, Malcolm Caulfield showed us a drawing of a fuel tap extension which he'd had made by Paul Crouch, using 3D printing technology. The drawing Paul produced for Malcolm can be seen below, with all relevant dimensions. Should you need a one-off plastic part reproduced, or even lots of them, then Paul can be contacted at:

NGP Services, Unit 8, Islnd Carr Industrial Estate, Island Carr Road, Brigg DN20 8PD. Tel. 01652 652300 or 07921 976586 or email paul@ngp-services.co.uk.



Nick Devonport recently needed assistance from a breakdown service while driving to the Dover Transport Museum in his ex-Dennis Gallyer Poirier invalid trike. It developed terminal clutch-slip en route to the museum so he called out a rescue service, which turned up with this!



The rescue service drivers run a weekly sweepstake on who picked up the most bizarre vehicle, Nick's driver was convinced he'd won it that week!

The Poirier is fitted with an electric-start Mobylette AV89 engine and transmission, so there's no way of starting it other than with a good powerful battery.

Poirier invalid carriages were made in France between 1928 and 1958. Pre-WWII small monocars and tandem-seater voiturettes were produced, but post-WWII the main business was making invalid carriages for the *mutilés de guerre*, ex-servicemen who could only use a hand-powered or motorised vehicle.



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A plea from Johnny Pettersen in Norway: "I have one of a handful of Trojan Mini-Motors sold in Norway, it is a 1953 model mounted on a bicycle and in good running order. I've been in touch with David Hambleton at the Trojan Owners Club who suggested contacting the NACC as I'm missing the screen and fastening clip on the carburettor air intake, also missing is the spring clip for flywheel cover. Can anyone help me with these parts please? Contact Johnny by email johnnpett@gmail.com or by post at Kjøstadvegen 309, N-2345 Ådalsbruk, Norway. Thanks!

Help Wanted!

Dear Dave, I would like to make a request via the pages of Buzzing as follows: Wanted, for BSA Winged Wheel - rear mudguard in usable condition for BSA Webb fork frame, and rear wheel, rim size 26"x 1½" or 26"x 1¼" - 36 spokes, plus Carrier-style tyre to fit. Would consider complete wheel & tyre.



For the engine I've had to make a new crankshaft assembly a new (cast) piston, plus rings, rebored the cylinder and a new gear for the gearbox. My project is held up by the missing parts. Please contact David Churchman on 01223 830740, evenings best. (CB22 Duxford, Cambs)

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 don't know if I'm alone in finding car adverts quite amusing. "Prove that your greatness comes from within" and "Power your way through the beautiful dream called life" in an advert for some hybrid or electric car that's less exciting than a new fridge.....

I'd always thought that cyclists were above this sort of twaddle, but apparently not. An article in a Nottingham newspaper announces the opening of a new bike shop - "Redefining the bike-buying customer journey and experience." I wonder if any of the staff could true a wheel? But it gets better. They are offering a "fully-immersive customer experience!" I immediately thought of a canal-side ride gone badly wrong! Or perhaps a faulty sprinkler system in the shop? If my late mentor Eric Holmes, cycle shop owner and life-long mickey-taker had heard about this, he would no doubt have placed a sign in his window saying "Cycle capes and leggings on sale here. Avoid an immersive experience." Regards, **Derek Langdon**.

(Correspondence contd. opposite)

Dear Dave,
A couple more stories re my father's Mercury Dolphin (Buzzing, February 2021, page 11).

1) On a caravan holiday in 1961, there was a long, rough, stony lane to get to the beach from our caravan. After about the third run the frame bent in the middle, under my father's feet. He had to use it to get to work, it must have been a weird steering-rake on the way there.



The bodywork was removed and the bent frame tubes were cut out, about 4 inches in length - the frame was too long anyway. Handlebar tubing proved perfect for sleeving the frame tubes, which were sleeved and brazed. The legshields were shortened a bit and the cables slightly re-routed. So, if anyone finds a Mercury Dolphin that is four inches shorter than standard, that's the one.

2) On leaving the Ulster Grand Prix in 1961, the little Villiers engine flooded the crankcase, so obviously would not re-start. My father didn't know what was wrong, and I certainly didn't at nine years old. We had to push the wee bike 3 miles home, luckily all flat or downhill.

When he got home my father, disgusted, threw the bike in the back garden and went in for a well-earned cup of tea with my mother. I was curious as to why the Villiers had refused to go, so got the little handbook out and began to read.



"Reasons engine won't start: no spark" - so I checked the spark - it was OK. "Crankcase flooded" - I didn't know what a crankcase was but eventually found the drain-plug and unscrewed it. Quite a lot of neat fuel came out, so I replaced the plug, put in a new spark-plug and 'bingo' - second kick and she fired up. My father came running out and asked "how did you do that?" I simply said "I just read the book."

This was my first introduction to two-stroke workings and at nine years old was more than chuffed. I'm 69 now, still doing it and have loved every minute. Happy Buzzing members, and keep 'er lit.
Alan Dodridge.

(Photo courtesy Sheldon's Emu)

Whispers about the Raleigh Wisp

Autocyclus

Most of us can remember the press photos from 1967 when the Raleigh Wisp was launched, featuring various cool female models in mini-skirts and the occasional city gent in a bowler-hat.



The Wisp, despite being given the project number RM7 in 1963, was overtaken by the RM8 Runabout and several other Mobylette-derived mopeds before being sorted well enough by Raleigh's engineers to be publicly launched on 14th April 1967, at a price of 57 guineas. Raleigh's PR department really pushed the fashion-conscious theme, trying to identify the Wisp as the runabout of choice for Dolly Birds and "with it" city folk.

Just as well, for early examples were woefully under-g geared, possibly acceptable for city traffic but anything long-distance would numb the bum and hands of every rider. The problem lay in Raleigh's use of the smallest off-the-shelf rear sprocket available from Motobécane, which had 44 teeth. Top whack on an early Wisp was about 22mph, despite Raleigh's claim that it would manage 25mph "without any fuss", by which speed the engine was at self-destruct levels of revs. Complaints began filtering through to Nottingham from dealers obliged to replace broken, over-revved engines under warranty, together with other vibration-prone items such as mudguards and engine covers. By January 1968 Raleigh took note of the complaints and introduced a 36-tooth sprocket - specially made for the Wisp - as a less-expensive alternative to repeatedly shelling out for replacement engines and various bits of tinwork under warranty!

A well-publicised photo below of singer Max Bygraves on his RSW16. He kept it in the boot of his Rolls-Royce so he could get from his parked Roller to the pub.



Above, a period advert - "The Raleigh RSW16 is a sparkling riposte to lack-lustre transport. It adds delight to all sorts of journeys, makes life exciting for all sorts of people, expertly accepts all sorts of sizes."

Two Wisp paint colours were offered; Spanish Gold (below) and Fiesta Blue (next page), reflecting the growing 1960s movement of taking off (Freddy Laker?) for a Spanish Costa and a fortnight's holiday bronzing and boozing.

Another infamous feature of the Wisp is the fuel tap, with that long shaft to locate in the tap itself through a hole in the engine cover. Not easy when it's raining and a rider is vulnerable to passing traffic. Now unobtainium and, if a genuine usable one, mega-expensive.

Wisps all had the same engine as the later RM6, the 1.7bhp split-fin Mobylette unit. It used a Raleigh-cast inlet pipe to keep the Gurner carburettor float-chamber level, this being necessary due to the steeper angle of the engine under the Wisp frame.



Wisp publicity material quoted a figure of 1.4bhp from an earlier engine, a mistake never rectified, giving rise to speculation that Raleigh's inlet pipe was responsible for the lost .3bhp. Not.

Cyril Quantrill wrote "Riding the Raleigh" for Motor Cyclist Illustrated magazine in October 1967; "When a moped is launched with all of the hoo-hah that attends the birth of the Raleigh Wisp, it is time for even a big-banger diehard like me to have a look at it. The launch itself - all pretty girls, wine, food and cigars - was quite a memorable occasion and concluded with an invitation to sample a Wisp on the windswept tarmac of the airfield chosen for the little machine's debut."



There is a video-clip on YouTube of a couple of ladies, one in an evening gown, trying out Wisps, probably at the same launch as the footage is taken on a windswept airfield!

Cyril Quantrill continued; "A mile or so round the block will give no indication of even a moped's worth. You must put in at least one continuous run of several miles. For the Wisp, the Isle of Man presented just the right route for that, in the shape of the TT circuit, all 37¾ miles of it. Which accounts for the fact that I now have a 2hr 5min lap to my credit. Not exactly in the Mike Hailwood bracket, but quite good enough to demonstrate that this little Raleigh is no toy.

The tour started with a brisk 25mph plunge down Bray Hill, the speed scarcely dropped on the rise before Quarter Bridge, and the brakes brought my steed to a halt, as required, at the roundabout. Away to the west, taking



a very long line round Braddan in order to keep out of the way of the tea-time racers and kerb-hugging through Union Mills. The climb up to Glen Vine knocked the speed down to about 15mph, then it built up again, only to be reduced by the drag through Crosby. So far there had been no need to pedal. Greeba to Ballacraine was a fast stretch, flat out until the motor misfired - once or twice at first, then more regularly. Dear, dear! That old 2-stroke trouble, perhaps a whiskered plug."

It was not our old friend, a whiskered plug. "Surprisingly, when I twiddled the pedals, after setting the Wisp on its stand, it started. Away again. Only to have another bout of misfiring, and another stop. Once more it re-started, as if nothing was wrong. This sort of progress was repeated all the way to Kirkmichael, where, at last, I spotted the trouble - the petrol tap half on, half off. It is vibration, felt through the saddle and pedals, which limits the top speed to the manufacturer's claimed 25mph. After that, it never missed a beat. I had proved that it would be quite feasible to go touring on a Wisp as to use it for the daily journey to and from work, school or the shops."

Cyril Quantrill had set off around 6pm, thinking most TT visitors would be at their boarding houses "for a knife and fork tea" but was delayed by the misfiring. "By the time Douglas was regained, the 'troops' were out in force."



"I'll never know who started it but I could kill him....no sooner had I rounded the corner from Broadway onto the Promenade than some great loon gave a cheer. Others took it up. And there I was pobbles along the prom, just slightly faster than a horse-tram, accompanied by an ever-increasing chorus of cheers and jeers. I've never felt such a Charlie. Unless, of course..."

The Wisp was short-lived - just 2 years 5 months - it was deleted when production of all Raleigh's Mobylette-based mopeds was shut down in September 1969. This left just the RM6 in production until February 1971, possibly to use up the remaining engines imported from Motobécane and stored in Nottingham.

Nick's Summer Camp

Nick Devonport

For 2021, Summer Camp relocated to a small friendly site just outside Deal. Lillyroo's is mainly a glamping site with large tepees but has a pitch-your-own area, all of which was occupied for three nights by our regulars. Granted, the site doesn't have the same commanding views of the English Channel with opportunities to spot Border Force vessels towing rubber dinghies towards Dover Harbour, but it is level and it has a small bar and restaurant, both were well-used over the weekend.



The weather forecast for both Saturday and Sunday was dire, with thunderstorms promised by my weather app. Although there was a shower on Saturday morning, it was over before we were due to leave the site on our road run. This was an anti-clockwise tour of the lanes to Goodnestone where Lynne at the Fitzwalter Arms welcomed us for lunch. The pub (below) is an important community hub and the village shop is in the adjacent barn, all very nice.

There are some beautiful old buildings in the village and the lane leads to Goodnestone Park, a Queen Anne mansion built in 1704 and now a popular, if pricey, wedding hire venue.

After lunch, we passed Chillenden Windmill on the way home. This has undergone a recent refurbishment and rebalancing as it was developing an alarming lean. Although the sweeps have been replaced, there is still some work taking place inside and we were unable to visit so we'll leave that for another day.



Sunday dawned a bit overcast but again, the threatened deluge didn't trouble us. The run out was a short ride to the East Kent Railway at Shepherdswell, a popular tourist attraction with a good café which plays host to our Bike Nights on alternate Wednesdays. This is usually well-attended and worth a visit if you're in the area. The railway was built to serve the Kent coalfields and is now in preservation, running a variety of locomotives and rolling stock at weekends. We left the railway to head for

Solley's Farm where the ice-cream parlour provided a treat for everyone. We caught the end of the monthly classic car meeting and our two- and three-wheelers were appreciated by the other visitors. We used the drop-off system again with Andrew Johns as Blue Leader and Dave Beare bringing up the rear. This ensured a drama-free run on both days.

Runners & riders: Dave Beare – Skyteam Dax, Howard Bentham – Tomos Standard, Malcolm Caulfield and Karin Humphries – Suzuki VanVan 125, Paul Debnam – Skyteam Dax 125, Russell Germain – Honda Vision, Roger Hodgson – Honda City Express, Andrew Johns – MBK Club Swing, Marie Johns – Honda Vision, Rob Gill – Raleigh Runabout, William Gill – NVT Easy Rider, Nick Mander – Bond Minicar, Terry Martin – Mobylette, Ian McGregor – Honda City Express, Wayne Musleh – Kawasaki 100, John Redding – Lifan Dax, Ken Standen – Bond Minicar.

You'll notice one name missing from the list – mine! A visit to A&E on Friday night put paid to my riding for the weekend but I followed the pack as a passenger in Michael Gill's car. My MBK Club remained at the camp site as a spare but wasn't needed – there were no breakdowns on the runs and the only one which played up at the start of Sunday's outing was quickly replaced. Obviously, it ran perfectly when we returned. Typical!

Awards were given to Russell Germain for Hero of the Weekend – he rode to the event on his Vision, despite being injured from a close encounter with a 4x4 the previous evening which knocked him off his “proper” bike. The distance award went to Howard Bentham who beat Dave Beare by a mere three miles! Andrew took home a cup for the Support Act. Paul Debnam had the bike I'd most like to take home. If you see it, you'll understand. Thanks to everyone for coming and for helping me to pack up after the weekend. See you next July!





The challenge on the Welsh Mountain Challenge is staying upright, especially when crossing the World's End ford, which this year was especially slippery.

Our route took us downhill from the Moors via narrow but bumpy and busy lanes, followed by a blast up to the Ponderosa Café at the top of Horseshoe Pass, much frequented by superbikers who were amused by us lot arriving on tiddlers with less brake horsepower than they waste running their fuel-injection systems, ABS and lights...

Rather necessary on the Mountain Challenge are gears and good brakes, though Ken on a Mobylette and Graham on a Honda Vision scooter managed perfectly well without.



The scenery and views up on the top tracks are stunning and very remote, with just a few hardy hikers and the odd camper-van for company. The heather this year was very much in flower and so colourful, as seen in the photos above.

From there we descended all the way down to Llangollen on miles of steep lanes, punishing for older drum brakes, but we all managed it without dramas. Llangollen itself was very crowded, lots of traffic and hordes of holiday-makers, so we zipped on through to our lunch stop at the end of the Pontcysyllte aquaduct, opened in 1805, a masterpiece of construction by Thomas Telford to carry the Llangollen Canal across the Dee River valley. Crossing it in a narrowboat is not for the faint-hearted; on one side is the towpath and railings, while on the other side is about eighteen inches of cast-iron trough full of water and nothing else, just a sheer drop to the river below!



After lunch we set off again for the high hills and more challenging tracks and lanes, but with superb views.

Lunch was accompanied by the presentation of a cake to celebrate Austin Reed and Ted's 80th birthdays (below), kindly produced by Pat Keeling's daughter, in the form of a speed-limit 80 sign... There's no sign of either of them slowing down!



The final challenge was the dreaded World's End ford. Several of us (including Autocyclus) had to put their feet down to prevent a wiggle from turning into The Big Slide!

Poor Jim Scott took a tumble and got wet, while Ted, as always, had his camera at the ready...

Riders were: Ted Bemand - Nanfang, Howard Bentham - Honda Monkey, Martin Archer - Garelli, Terry Gaunt - Yamaha RX-S, Simon Lake - BSA Beaver, Austin Reed - Odava, Graham Bennett - Honda Vision, Ron Leyland - Honda CT90, Dave & Pat Keeling - Derbi, Jim Scott - Yamaha Townmate, Ken Watkinson - Mobylette and DB - Skyteam Dax. Roll on next year!



Northern Ireland Five Corners Run

Trevor Kirk

The 2021 Five Corners Run in Northern Ireland took place on 5/9/21 headed by Trevor Kirk and had a turnout of 20 members and one temporary member for the day. We had a variety of bikes ranging from different Honda models, a Lifan, Batavus Go Go, Francis Barnett, Yamaha, Sun, Excelsior, NSU Quickly and a few New Hudsons. As usual we had our reliable recovery vehicle supplied by Alan and Betty Gillespie, so a big 'Thankyou' to them. Thankfully they did not have to much to do, one of the Hondas needed a temporary pickup to our first coffee stop for minor repairs leaving it good to go again, the only other pickup was one of the New Hudson's had a tyre blowout not far from the finish line so had to be recovered.

The forecast was for showers in the afternoon so we headed off making the best of the pleasant morning. We tried to stick to small country roads as much as possible taking in the local scenery. We had a quick coffee break not far in, for those who skipped breakfast. After setting off again we headed through the small village of Straid up a long steady climb heading for our next stop which was The Knockagh Monument.

This monument is a War Memorial and was erected and dedicated to the fallen from County Antrim during the Great War 1914-1918, and later in remembrance of those who died in the Second World War 1939-1945. The first stone was laid in 1922 but it wasn't completed until 1936.



The monument is erected on top of a hillside overlooking Belfast Lough with super views of Belfast, Carrickfergus and further afield, although the views were interrupted by haze during our visit. We then set off down a steep corkscrew road that hosts rally stages and hillclimbs, putting the autocycle brakes to the test on the incline.

Our next stop was the village of Ballyrobert which features a life size model of the ERA (English Racing Automobiles) car which took part in the 1946 Ulster Trophy Race, the car won the race driven by the Thai Prince Bira. This was the first international road race in Britain after the Second World War, it took place on public roads and was 4 miles 250yds long and was run over 12 laps with the cars averaging 55-60mph. A clip of the race can be found on YouTube "Bira Wins Ulster T.T."



After this stop it was just a matter of winding our way back to our starting point at The Five Corners Bar and Brothers Restaurant where those wishing to eat were treated to a lovely meal and some socialising with a bit of a catch up on what projects and new purchases our colleagues are working on. This brought an enjoyable Five Corners 37 mile run to end for 2021, and we managed to avoid the rain.

Tricycle Bicycle Cyclemotor eBike

Colin King

Charles Darwin might not have muttered those words, but it's still evolution of a kind.

In the very early 1950s the family Box Brownie camera captured photographs of my sister Jill and me on our tricycle. It was second-hand when it arrived at our cottage on the edge of Odiham woods and with its chainless Penny Farthing style pedal system, those black and white photos could have been Edwardian - but it was loved and we were mobile.

Several years later it seemed that I might be getting a bicycle for Christmas - this was exciting stuff. However, on Christmas morning I was taken outside to see my present and there, leaning against the whitewashed wall of our home, Porch Cottage, was the bike. Not the shiny red one that I had dreamt of but a dull blue one. It was one that I would grow into evidently.



Being too big for me, my Dad had made wooden blocks that were attached to each side of both pedals and took up the two inches of slack that were missing in my tiny legs. I had seen that bike before - it belonged to Tony Smith, the son of my Dad's mate Jim, and was to be the second in a long series of second-hand bicycles.

Old bicycles at that time were not unusual, all of our neighbours rode them as none had cars. A particular memory is of Ronnie Fulbrook riding back from his sessions at the New Inn public house on the banks of the Basingstoke canal. Ronnie, in his brown suit, would push his old pre-war bike to the crest of the red brick bridge and, with cycle-clips in position and hands firmly clamped to the handle bars, he would take off. Of sallow complexion, his unblinking eyes staring into the far distance and no part of his bolt-upright body moving, he would glide the long downward slope of the bridge in the direction of home along the road that crossed the common, his legs absolutely still.

Ronnie silently gliding home - a post-pub spectre - Odiham's very own Ghost Rider. I have no memory of him ever pedalling, he just seemed to glide everywhere.

With that dull blue bike minus its wooden blocks and now too small, it was time for yet another pre-owned lovely. This time it was the turn of a cousin, who provided a machine for me to do my paper-round on.

It was a Pink Witch, a lady's bike in pink, pale blue and brown chrome, but hey-ho it had the luxury of a Sturmey Archer 3-speed. The paper-round was rural and scattered, taking in a six mile round-trip and delivering to about 12 homes. Draped in my sister's ex-school gabardine mac and a lumberjack hat to keep my ears warm, it would not have made pleasant viewing, but was normal and acceptable at the time.

For this 6-day trip Bertie Butt, the newsagent and postmaster, paid me 12/6d (62p) a week. The ten shilling note was always placed in a tin by my bedside for the fishing-rod fund - I allowed myself a few treats with the 2/6d.



There followed a self-enforced few years of having no bicycle, not even another secondhand machine. Having moved to London and lost a friend in a city cycling accident and another injured, cycling did not appeal. That was until a garage was found for the car and in it a small space between front bumper and tea-chests of assorted stuff. Although not big enough for a motorcycle that might need fettling and thus fulfil the need to tinker with something mechanical, I had seen on the inside cover of a motorcycle magazine somebody standing in their back garden with a VéloSolex and a Cyclemaster.



After a couple of weeks of hectic research a trip to Framlingham was made, with the result being a return trip with a BSA Winged Wheel resting in the back of the van. It didn't have a carb, but the owner gave me a copy of Buzzing and circled Roger Worton's ad on the back page where I was assured a carb would be found. That Winged Wheel filled the gap in the garage perfectly and, without realising it, this would be the start of a 25-year spell of a rather special kind of satisfaction and happiness. A second lockup was found and soon filled with cyclemotors and parts, leaving just enough room to work on them and build the first of the Rex Hake Specials.

Saturdays became autojumble time and was as exciting as panning a riverbed for gold nuggets. Sundays became a day for riding, lured to pub car-parks by the whiff of two-stroke mix, the cyclemotors that belched it and the gentle and enthusiastic banter that hung in the air. Living in a city like London what could be better than cyclemotoring the byways of rural England on a sunny Sunday with lovely people on fascinating machines, a pint of Guinness and a pub lunch. What could be better than that?

Having enjoyed so many runs put on by the NACC and the VMCC Cyclemotor Section, I really wanted to see cyclemotors around my childhood haunt in Hampshire. In 1999 I made a pair of trophies (right) and worked out a route that would become The Odiham Run.

Cyclemotors continued to cram the garage until relief came with a move to Wiltshire and a 23 x 20 foot shed. The lanes around this new area started to look like ideal cyclemotoring country so, in 2009 a new event was added to the calendar. Having seen runs being populated by more and more by mopeds and modern lightweights, it seemed a decent idea to have a cyclemotor-only run.



It would be called the As It Was Buzz. Strictly Come Cyclemotoring was another possible title but not used. It would be a slow and gentle jaunt through lovely terrain with no fear of being left behind when the pack headed over the horizon in front of you. That big shed encouraged more cyclemotor renovation, specials projects and vintage bicycles.

Below - riders on the 2011 As It Was Buzz.



Then, at the age of 65, the lifetime series of second-hand bicycles ended and I bought myself a brand new hybrid bike to celebrate retirement. In recent years the cyclemotors and heaps of spares have thinned out but the joy of cyclemotoring remains, mostly as solo trips out around the vale or as a general means of transport. However, there is a new and very exciting - yes, new - pair of wheels available. Having thought long and hard for two years it was decided that an electric bike could be a good thing and with ageing knees it has been a blessing and a very nice balance to the dear old cyclemotors. I do miss the pre-outing alchemy of mixing 2-stroke but not the heavy bag of tools hanging from my back, nor the fear of punctures.

So, it appears to me that this is the final stage of a bespoke evolution, to have a reliable eBike and its puncture-resistant tyres locked up alongside some 1950s motor-hindered bicycles and all of the charm that goes with them. It is all a long way from that dear old child's trike in the 1950s but the joy is similar. As child I would cycle across Odiham common to the nearby Basingstoke canal with a fishing rod up my back and spend many happy hours on the towpath by the water's edge.

Last week I took the eBike and that same old 1962 Alcocks Duraglass fishing rod and its Intrepid Regent reel to the Kennet and Avon canal. After a few happy hours fishing, I cycled home from Ladies Bridge on a balmy summer's evening, with that fishing rod up my back and, with the assistance of Bosch technology putting youth back into my knees, felt 12 years old once again. It was magical.

Hercules tandem with Power Pak Derek Langdon

About three months ago I got my Power Pak tandem on the road and have now done around 500 miles on it. The project started with a Hercules frame for twenty-five quid (original paint and dead straight!) and a 1954 standard Power Pak which, although the roller was unworn, had a scored bore and slightly rusty bearings. It also had a smashed carburettor body which somebody had started to repair with a turned brass sleeve.



I was very lucky to find all the tandem parts that I needed, including some Dunlop tandem rims and two British Hub Company hub brakes. With modern linings and the rust skimmed out of the drums, the brakes are all you could wish for. Poetry in Motion Cycles in York supplied lovely 13-14 gauge butted spokes, cut and threaded to length, and friends came up with Bluemels alloy mudguards and a Cyclo 3-speed twin-cable derailleur. The engine was treated to a full rebuild, the tank was painted by my local car-body wizard after I'd welded up a split underneath, and an unused BEC carburettor was fitted - not the correct BEC.



It went fairly well on the way to the MOT, but after I got it registered the trouble started. The ignition coil failed fairly quickly. Another coil (admittedly manky-looking) lasted next to no time! As I had no more decent coils to try, I sent the magneto to the Minimag Co., as advertised in Buzzing. I was very impressed with the service and I particularly liked the battery-powered LED, which makes setting the timing accurate and easy. The kit included everything you need, even the battery for setting the timing!

I have had NO ignition problems since the kit was fitted and I'm using a 28 thou plug gap, which seems to help when the engine is cold. I've had to run the engine in during the recent heatwave and at times it got so hot that I could barely stand to touch the magneto backplate, but the mag never faltered.

I've had plenty of other problems - several times I've been caught in thunderstorms.



On one occasion the bike got very sick indeed. Soaked to the skin and sheltering under a viaduct, I investigated and found that the vent hole in the filler cap was bunged up, thereby stopping the fuel flow. The BEC carburettor was too rich throughout the range, so I set about finishing the repairs to the smashed Amal. With the Amal fitted it went much better for about ten miles, then started flooding. I found the float was punctured and had been steadily filling up with fuel. I ended up taking the float apart and then soldering it all back together again.

Since then the tandem has been steadily improving. The piston clearance was a bit on the tight side after the +20 thou rebore (3 thou skirt clearance) so it has been given lots of LPA and cooling-off stops.

After 500 miles it is now starting to climb well, rev more freely and is still improving!

A Bigger Timing-Disc!

Robert Bruce-Chwatt

I helped Julian Kemp with the testing of the Minimag electronic ignition kit for Bantamag, Wipac S90 and Miller BS9 magnetos, his Valkyrie system. The latest version, with an LED to set a perfect 5/32" BTDC, is amazing (see Derek Langdon's previous story on this feature). No more timing discs or cigarette papers.... Talking of timing discs, the photo below is of a wartime German timing disc, but rather larger than the one I used on my magnetos!

I found this quite by chance online while looking at the problems of timing German aircraft and 12 cylinders engines. I think it is an ME109 from the hinged cockpit canopy.



It is not for adjusting synchronised firing as the machine guns are in the wings and the 20mm cannon fires through the propeller boss, so it must be engine timing. Visible are odd and uneven placements of outer markers. They should be $360 \div 12 =$ every 30 degrees, not 2-1-2-1-2-1....

Any thoughts as to what the markers might mean? A very impressive bit of German kit and it would be rather nice to have one, though what for is relevant, yet not relevant...

Over to you, Buzzers! Let us know if you've got any further info on the reason for Daimler Benz issuing a timing disc this big for the inverted V12 aero-engine of a Messerschmitt ME109, and the strange markings.

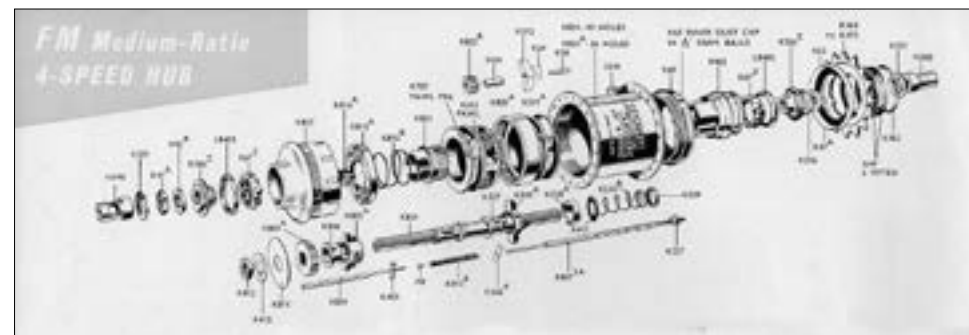
A Monument to the Unknown Cyclomotorist #3

Arresting the Decomposition

Dave Stevenson

(Part 1 of A Monument was published in the December 2020 issue of Buzzing. #2 appeared in August 2021)

The handlebar grips are very hard. I'm not sure whether they are the old celluloid grips or made from one of the first generation of plastics whose development was given a boost by wartime material shortages. They really didn't want to come off when the handlebar was being painted so I glued up the cracks in them and then masked them during the paint application. I can't think they will be comfortable in use. The saddle is of the standard sprung construction covered by a padded Lexan cover. This cleaned up surprisingly well but I know from experience will disintegrate if much used. I have an old B66 Brooks saddle off another Mini-Motor encumbered bicycle which I will fit if I intend to ride any distance. The new chain is unfortunately very shiny.



I had the four speed Sturmey Archer hub on my Dad's bike (a replacement as the original has damage to the casing) serviced by Peter Williamson in Cambridge (petermwilliamson@yahoo.co.uk) both before and after LEJOG.

Peter's services had been excellent so I sent him the 3 speed hub off the Enfield for a similar check. He found that standing for so long it had accumulated a lot of rust inside the shell and that some of the bearing surfaces were too damaged to re-use. He also suggested changing the type of sprocket used to one that came into service in 1951 and was still available as a spare, thus not original but 'period'. Peter sends his customers an assessment of the condition of their hub and a list of necessary spares, individually priced. In this case he said it was interesting because the painted hub suggested a manufacturing date of 1940 – 1944 but the internals were of a later date. This seems to suggest that our unknown cyclomotorist fitted a re-conditioned hub, probably when he added, or had the Mini Motor added, in October 1951.

And that's as far as I've got. The Enfield is hanging in chains in the garage not because it is in disgrace but because my Serveta is still having a tantrum on the workbench and there's no room to put the Enfield once it has been tried. The plan is to attach the spare engine from LEJOG and give the cycle parts a shake down before stripping the Enfield's own motor which is quietly stewing in its own pungent juice. There will be an update, if I'm spared as they say around here.

What did you do in the War, Grandad? -Epilogue

Ted Bemand

Withdrawal symptoms were kicking in - after over a year of 'shed dwelling' my stock of two-wheeled projects had finally run out! I tried some retail therapy but it didn't help: re-stocking a couple of inner tubes ready for a 'rainy day' Wirral Wobbler event - flat tyres are our most popular breakdown! I even bought a new pair of overalls to look smart while refurbishing my wooden window frames - still not gone plastic. Neither did gardening, not really my scene. However, a 'garage sweep' was productive. An eBay-able pile was soon created; four car/bike magnetos, three 2-stroke engines, two bench-grinders and a box of new panel beating tools, but there's a LOT more still to go! I digress.....

The eight restored mopeds are now up and running but sadly bureaucracy has kicked in and 'bitten' the bikes in their rear tyres. Back in March six NOVA

application forms and dating certificates were sent to H.M.Customs in Belfast for clearance. Within two weeks emails started to arrive giving them all clean NOVA reference numbers. In April, these numbers were then added to the bundle of forms, evidence documents and cheques for six registrations fees (£330) all sent to the DVLA.

Five weeks later the Mobylette and one Solex were at last given V5C registration docs. However, a further two weeks later two sets of complete documents were returned – “We need a NOVA certificate for both these machines” - they didn't ask for certificates for the previous bikes! Note: an A5 notification slip is sent out by HMRC approximately three weeks after the emails. But, as everything is normally done by email for notifying HMRC, I originally just added the mail reference data on the DVLA forms but these then failed! I re-sent these two applications back with NOVA slips but to date (4th July) nothing from Swansea on these bikes.

There's more! Another couple of weeks go by and two brown DVLA envelopes arrive. Sadly, they were not the expected V5Cs. Both German mopeds applications had now come back. "We need original German registration documents and importation paperwork". The bikes had been sitting unused for 30 years in my uncle's garage and were likely bought paperless in flea markets. They also came to UK before Brexit! AGHHH.....as the 'Sorcerer's Apprentice', the DVLA robots/temp. workers seem to be going 'off piste' while the regular staff are busy striking!



It looks like the DVLA is on the rocks. A Dutch salvage tug has been seen anchored near Swansea. I sent a comprehensive written explanation of the German bikes, a gift from my old uncle, and I wait, I wait and wait. The new DVLA slogan? “The difficult we avoid like the plague and miracles? Forget it.”

The 1969 Mobylette AV42 conversion to Variomatic is now performing well - a sheep in lamb's clothing! The 1951 Gitane with VAP 4 engine also running fine but a complicated beast to actually fire up and get into motion plus bringing it to a stop. The same for the Mobylette-powered 1954 REX.

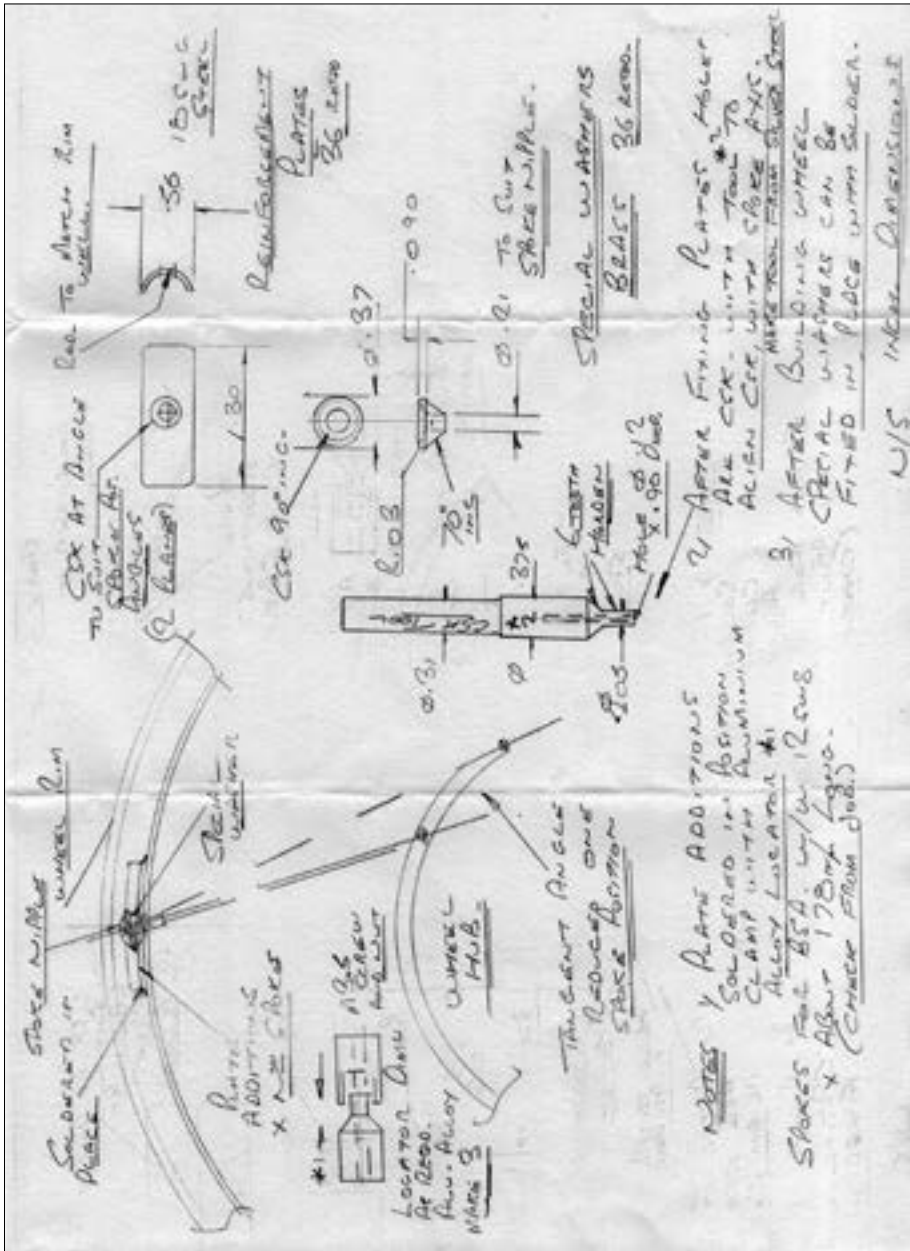


With the VéloSolexes I can reveal some hard-won pearls of Solex wisdom. In standard form a Solex does about 15mph. For mild tuning I enlarged the 28cc main jet (approx.0.045mm to 0.055mm) and by completely removing the air bleed jet to pass more air this gave 20mph but a tendency to 4-stroke above this speed, so possibly too rich? Critical “Solex won't run” facts: Starting at the tank, there is a plastic filter in the outlet orifice which can be removed with a long self-tapping screw - it must be cleaned. The steel feed pipe can block up, especially if not used for years, it needs a poke with piano wire. For a serious blockage, heat the pipe with a flame and poke upward away from the tank. The crankcase-mounted pump has 2 tiny transparent glass ball valves with plastic seats, so when working on the pump do it over a plastic tray - if you lose a ball you will never find it! These can be bought from some Solex suppliers. Servicing the pump calls for at least a new diaphragm. Finally, if all is working so far, there is another ultra fine plastic filter in the carb, which also blocks up over time. To check the fuel flow is sufficient, when pushing bike to start you must see a good excess flow in the transparent return pipe. Exhaust pipes can block on the down pipe curve; cooking on a BBQ or blowlamp works, plus a bit of poking and banging to remove carbon.

The fiendish throttle linkage between hand-grip and carb must be set to ensure full throttle and tick-over setting. A careful balance of cable tension and return spring power, it took some stressful hours getting this spot on. Finally, ignition. There is no timing adjustment as the stator plate is fixed. Points gap is arbitrary - I found the critical position is just breaking at the 'feel' of maximum magnetic flux. Trial and error until a snappy spark in produced. I use an electric drill to drive the engine with spark plug out to check this but care is needed - the die-cast key in the flywheel is easily sheared if the nut is not fully tight. A new condenser can make all the difference on iffy outputs. Addressing all these settings and Solexes usually kick into life after a few yards - sorry, metres.

So that's it, Jack. Actually, the grandson went out to play months ago - Grandad's fleet is all up and running and on the road - the DVLA got their act together and the last two V5Cs finally arrived!

David Churchman writes: "This is a method I've used to enable standard Westwood rims to be used to build wheels for cyclemotors with enlarged hubs, e.g. BSA Winged Wheels and Cyclemasters. It works very well and makes a strong assembly. However, it does need access to a workshop to make parts and assembly jigs."



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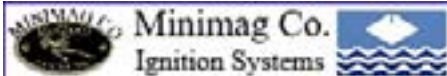
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