

## VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

news letter No. 48

Early Winter 2023

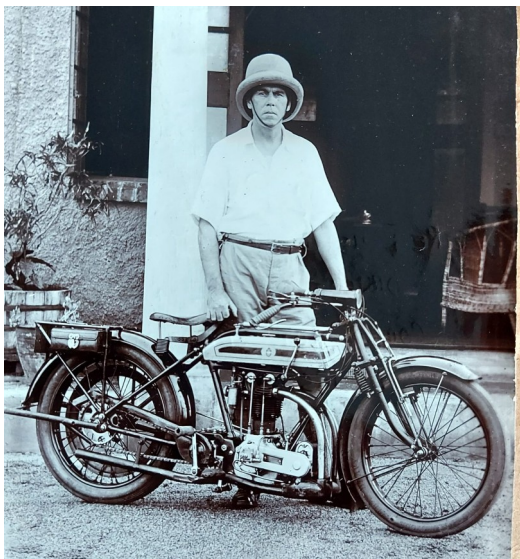
Welcome to the final news letter of 2023. I hope that it was a good one for you and yours. Club wise we had some good meetings, pop ups etc.

In these pages is a lot of good 'stuff' including reports on recent section events and those still to come including our Festive lunch. If its as good as last year it will be well worth attending. Thanks must go to Judith for arranging an excellent event.

### Chairman's Chat: an image from the past.

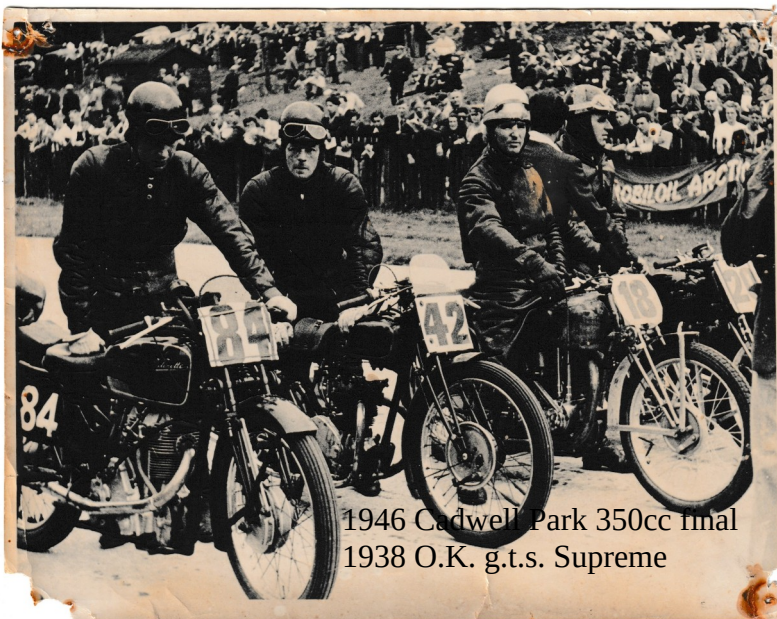
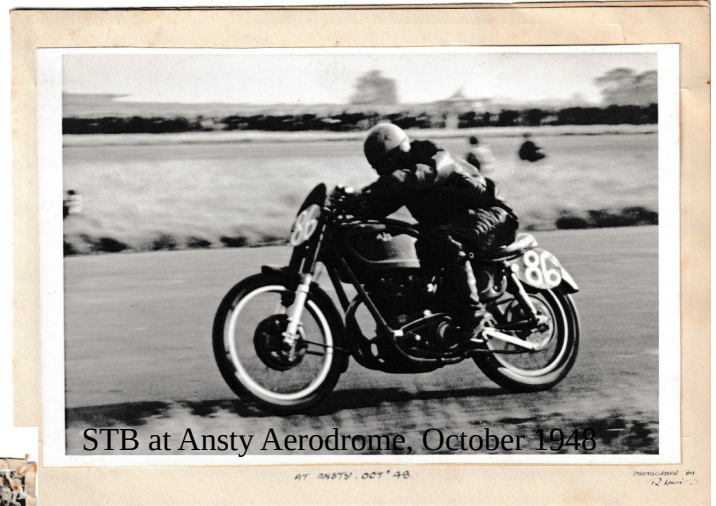
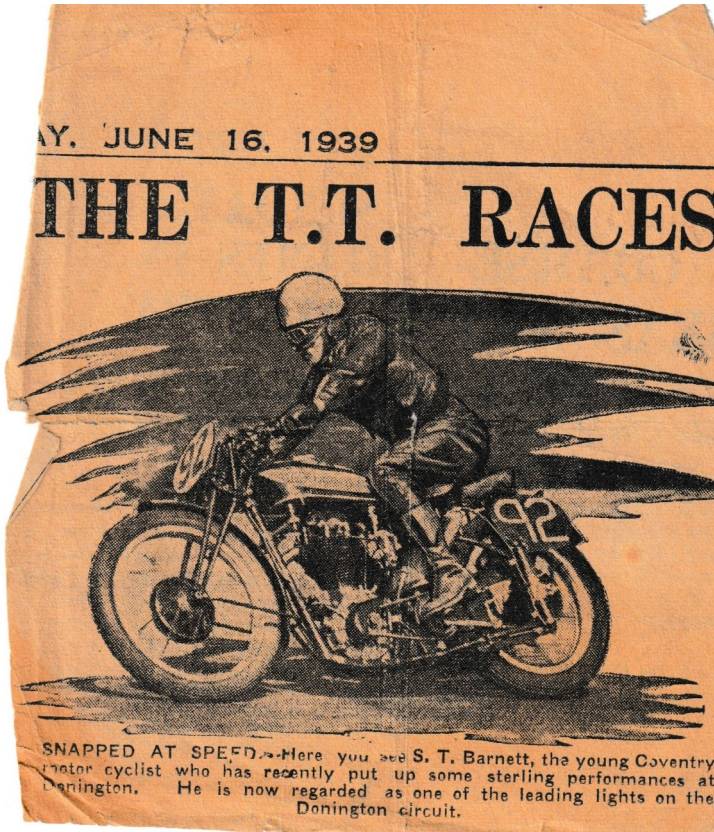
I recently received an email from Peter Henshaw, the editor of our monthly VMCC journal. He'd received a request from a fellow member about riding and owning a Triumph Ricardo motorcycle and wondered if I could help. The gentleman in question, sent me a wonderful period photograph of his Great Grandfather with his Triumph Ricardo, taken while working for the railways in Tamil Nadu India....and what a lovely image it is! Proudly standing beside his mount, wearing possibly a Cork safari style hat and appropriate hot weather clothing. What is really interesting is that the bike shown looks virtually brand new. It also sports a thinner 'sportier' front mudguard blade rather than the sensible touring one fitted to my own bike...maybe a more enclosed front mudguard was supplied only for our climate..? I must do some research. This all started because of an image I had submitted for the 'Photo of the month' column in our wonderful monthly journal. So if you do have a desire to take a photo or two on your new fangled phone, and you think it's an interesting one, then send it in to the editor of the VMCC journal....because you never know what could happen next...?

David  
Kendall



# Sydney T. Barnett

So a chap walks into Ken Bromley's motorcycle shop and hands him a pile of old photos, newspaper cuttings and a typed article all pertaining to Sydney T. Barnett (STB). (The source of this collection is not known but will be passed on to relatives in due course). He was by trade a master butcher in Coventry, but his passion was motorcycle racing, pre and post war. He had some successes and held several lap records at various circuits almost all on privately entered bikes. He rode in many TT and MGP races and, whilst never winning, he had a few good top ten places. Here are some of the photos with captions when possible:



### Pre-Blitz vows last 60 years

STB in TT race

**WHY PAY MORE?**  
Tyre Sales

If you have any Knowledge of him or his family then please let me know. I have scanned all of the resource. If you wish me to email it to you then please ask.

## Building an electric Velocette Valiant. *Second and final part*

A couple of months ago we published the first part of Ian Brodie's account of building an electric Velo from cycle bits he had lying around, during 'lockdown'. The motor and associated parts he bought from Sweden. This is how he finished the project:

It took time and I had to source some bits, like the indicators, the flasher unit, the horn, the brake switch. I had a repro rear lamp plus the headlamp and internals. I also had the modern handlebar switches for the lighting, ignition and starter (to be used for other purposes). Whilst it came together quite well at least it worked in the shed even if it was not pretty. The motor ran (I had not made use of the reverse function however) and I could select whichever gear I fancied prior to getting the back wheel turning. The day arrived when I would sneak out into the rather steep lane outside my house and prove that it would go. It did, un-registered, un-taxed, un-MOT'd and un-insured on that part of the lane that I and my neighbours own. I went up and down in circles three or four times (or perhaps more). Now I was ready to take on the DVLA.

You may remember that I sought advice and was proffered, at that time, some excellent information about how to deal with the DVLA and it was observed that if I pursued a particular course of action I just might be able to get an age related number. So I dispatched forms to the appropriate place in Swansea. I also talked to a helpful man in an office in Swansea who sent me more forms (and a VIN number) to take to Leyton Buzzard so that another helpful man could inspect the bike that I had trailed there one wet day.

I thought that I had done everything right. Everything worked, I had stamped the VIN number on the frame, had a plaque made in the USA with the VIN number on it to attach to the fairing, The indicator buzzed beautifully whilst the lamps dimmed and flashed. I'd fitted two mirrors on stalks to give a spectacular view behind. I had even connected the redundant left hand clutch lever to the back brake.

It helps if one reads the appropriate paperwork prior to offering a vehicle to the DVSA for inspection. Had I done so? No. What did the man find?

I had taken my home-converted electric Valiant to the DVSA inspection unit at Leyton Buzzard in expectation of its sailing through and my departing from there with the paperwork to obtain a registration number. Everything that I had fitted worked and with its fairing, new seat, paintwork and restored (but redundant ) fuel tank I thought that it looked good enough to dazzle any inspector. Unloaded and parked in the dry, the bike was walked round by the DVSA man. He made pleasant comments, asked where I got the engine, control unit, handlebar levers and battery. He wondered aloud about the fairing and I assured him that it was indeed a complete Velocette V-line fairing from the 1950s. Then he went to work, first the stands, prop and centre. Then the mirrors, the speedo, horn and lights.

'Where is the immobiliser', he asked, 'none fitted', said I, 'Oh', said he. He considered the external projections, i.e. the mirrors and the stalks with the indicators, and the height of the screen. He checked the light's patterns for main and dip. He noted that I had connected the left handlebar (redundant clutch) lever to the rear brake foot pedal and was included in the brake efficiency check, tyres were looked at and the treads

measured, handholds were sought. Finally the wheel base was measured and he vanished into his cubbyhole leaving me none the wiser as to having gained a pass or not.

I suppose it wasn't a bad day exactly, of the eighteen items that he checked only six failed to meet the requirements. The mirrors were a couple of millimetres short in height, the speedo had no internal lamp, the flashers dimmed not flashed, I needed a key switch to prevent unauthorised use, no main beam indicator, no windscreen edge trim, and I had not grommeted the holes into the tool boxes. Operating my front brake did not bring on the rear brake lamp either.

The last two on his list really presented me with problems. The filler cap on the tank was too high, and the handlebar levers had no ball ends! He smiled when I had taken all this in and said 'book it in early for another inspection then set work and fix it'. So I went home, swapped the mirrors, fitted a lamp, swapped the flasher unit, fitted a key switch and a main beam indicator, trimmed the windscreen and fitted grommets. The handlebar levers were more of a problem. They had come from China with the motor and control unit and had electrical connections to the control unit to facilitate regenerative breaking so I would have to modify them. I finally bought some large hard plastic spheres, bored a hole into them, slotted the holes to fit the lever ends, epoxy resined them into place and black shrink wrapped the result. I got an inline switch from JJ Cables who fitted it in the front brake Bowden cable and was wired into the appropriate circuit. I intended to replace the tank with a Bantam tank, sans filler. Then I thought 'what the hell' and removed the tank, hid the under-tank wiring in a bit of split large black plastic down pipe and took it, tankless, back for its inspection. This was completed, on the trailer, in about five minutes and I had the bit of paper I needed.

The man in the Swansea office had said that the bike had to be treated as new bike and meet the current regulations therefore it was not historic and would have to have a Q plate and that is what I have got. The insurance company did not even blink when I added it to my multi-bike policy, only charged an admin fee.

Now I have used legally it on the bits of the lane I don't own, and elsewhere. It spins the back wheel in first gear and has a low top speed. It gets away quickly in second and will run up to just under 50MPH. It is sluggish off the mark in third but the top speed is unchanged and it does not want to know in fourth – so I don't bother. In use it is a case of selecting the appropriate gear then set off. Gear changing on the move is not an option. Range was initially around twenty miles – then it stops! I have had one of the reduction gears come adrift and had the belt torn to bits as a result. This meant removing the drive unit and dismantling the reduction gear and securing properly the large wheel and refitting everything. It has been off the road off the road whilst I awaited three new custom built batteries which now have increased the range to around 60 miles. I did have to redesign the battery mountings, and to get all three fitted



is still work in progress. **Note** If you are tempted to convert to electric drive, then convert a registered historic bike (so as to keep the number and historic designation), just change the motor and then tell the DVLA.

# What we did in October

## Club night Bring and Buy auction.

What a successful evening! A good range of items were donated and were all sold. Some of the items, such as a pre war motorcycle engine, went for over £100! Thanks must go to generous donators and even more generous bidders. The final total exceeded £400. A record amount, and the raffle added over £30 more.

## Antelope Ride in

*Simon reports:*

We were lucky enough to ride in to the Antelope run-in in dry weather, despite the threat of rain. Ten machines assembled by the Chesterton windmill for a short meander through some scenic and narrow lanes through Moreton Morrell and into Lighthorne. Upon arrival, a few more had assembled already. Over the next half hour or so more MC's arrived. In the end a very pleasing 23 people signed on.

We were visited by our area rep Dana Neal. It was a pleasure to meet him and talk about our concerns for the club. He went away with some items for him to discuss at HQ.

Unusually, there were no girder fork machines on show today, but there was an electric powered Velocette valiant. However a couple (in my opinion) who could be a choice for "motor cycle you'd like to take home" were a Norton international and a Velocette Venom.

So the ninth Antelope run-in brings the curtain down on the 2023 riding season.





## National Motorcycle Museum Open weekend

This not one of our section events but is always attended by several of us members. Most of us rode in partly because of the £15 parking fee with the associated queuing both to park and to pay at the reception desk.

Midland section members (who meet there regularly) acted as parking marshals directing the continual influx of cars and bikes into the appropriate areas.

By lunchtime several hundred bikes near filled the allocated area. The goodish weather helped.

Inside were guided tours of the bike collection, book signings and 'selfies' with guests, Henry Cole and his TV mates: 'Millie' 'Skid' and 'Fuzz', who then spent a good hour on stage entertaining a pack auditorium with Steve Plater trying to keep them in order! The usual array of trade stands were doing good business and the VMCC recruitment stand manned (personed?) by Gary and Kate Sleeman signed up a steady stream of new members. An event recommended by myself and very many others.

## LARA VMCC NEWSLETTER Nr 29 (well worth reading )

Previous Nr 28 was sent out on 12/09/2023

There has been a bit of a lull since the last newsletter as we have waited for the outcome of the VMCC Management Committee's deliberations about the budget for the remainder of this financial year to the AGM on 17/03/24, and any indication for participation with key outside associations like LARA. The answer is nothing for this year and wait for an indication of the membership's view when looking forward into 2024-25.- see p.46 of our VMCC Journal for October.

Meanwhile the world doesn't stand still as you will recognise from the latest information that I received from LARA which I have forwarded to you all as an email. I refer of course to the recognition that some apparently innocuous wording arising from an amendment in the Lords (historically always a source of threat to our interests) to the 'Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill' - again note the unlikely source of the threat, does this sound remotely like something that could affect motorcycling access? Well experience over 40 years of dealing with Government legislation says that it well might, and LARA, thank goodness has spotted it and is on the case.



As I translate it the bottom line is that AONBs could gain the same conservation powers as the National Parks currently have where they can in cases of perceived conflict use additional powers to favour conservation over access. And such restrictions could be applied to **minor surfaced byways as well as 'green lanes'**. Our National Parks already cover 10% of our most beautiful countryside and the AONBs the next

10%, so this is significant!

For Example: it's practically the whole of the Cotswolds from Stratford on Avon in the North to Bath in the south. Page 3 of this newsletter shows the other areas of England which would be affected.

With global climate change driving national targets for the reduction of CO2 emissions and the antipathy towards the petroleum driven vehicle this is not a time for either the Board or the membership of the VMCC 'to wait and see' but conversely to make a priority of engaging with the policy makers to ensure, as best we can, a meaningful future for classic motorcycling on the open road as opposed to museums or restricted areas. We are most likely to achieved this through robust support of established and well recognised collective bodies (who know their way around) such as LARA for countryside access, and the National Motorcyclists Council for urban issues (like ULEZ, etc): with a newly established Memorandum of Understanding joining them on common or overlapping issues.

LARA is consciously involved in adapting itself to meet the challenge: it is in the process of evolving a forward looking business plan; it is promulgating its up-dated 'Management of Vehicles in the Countryside' with DEFRA encouraging them to adopt its known best practice recipes into DEFRA current 'Landscapes' initiative; strengthening its leverage by partnering with the National Motorcyclists Council via an innovative Memorandum of Understanding; it has extended its purview by adding '**The safeguarding of all minor highways, both sealed and unsealed**' into its Mission Statement and will I trust be considering how it might increase its ability to take the initiative through the application of its Fighting Fund. The 'Irregulars' have been influential in much of this which is a testament to those who have through their contributions made it possible for a Vintage perspective to be present.

A Fighting Fund that is capable of fighting as opposed to being just a bulwark against a rainy day is an aspiration of mine for LARA. I have constantly reported that there is a shortage of resources in government departments of both experience and finance which is dangerous for us because creates the potential for crude broad-brush solutions to motoring related problems, both real and perceived, for example road out of repair = shut it with a TRO, or similar, which if uncontested can be forced through. But I have also noticed that where duly challenged on reasonable grounds and faced with a court case or even the 'sniff' of 'costs against them' they retreated from their bullish stance. I can quote two such cases recently; so I am hopeful of the development of a Fighting Fund that can at least in part support such challenges: which means of course a drive to consciously increase the fund, which the 'Irregulars' have shown is possible.

That brings me back to the first paragraph and the current stance of the VMCC. We always said that we were not a break away group and that our ultimate goal was to return the VMCC to full LARA membership (note full). Is now the time to make that appeal to all the Sections and to the membership in general using what I have said above?

- 1) To support the 'Irregulars' LARA contribution for this year (23-24) with a request for a £50 contribution from each Section, or if an individual wishes to make a donation a suggestion of £10.
- 2) An appropriate Motion for the VMCC AGM next April saying that we should be taking a more proactive approach to safeguarding our recreation and as a consequence we should be applying to rejoin LARA as full members. with full voting rights?
- 3)

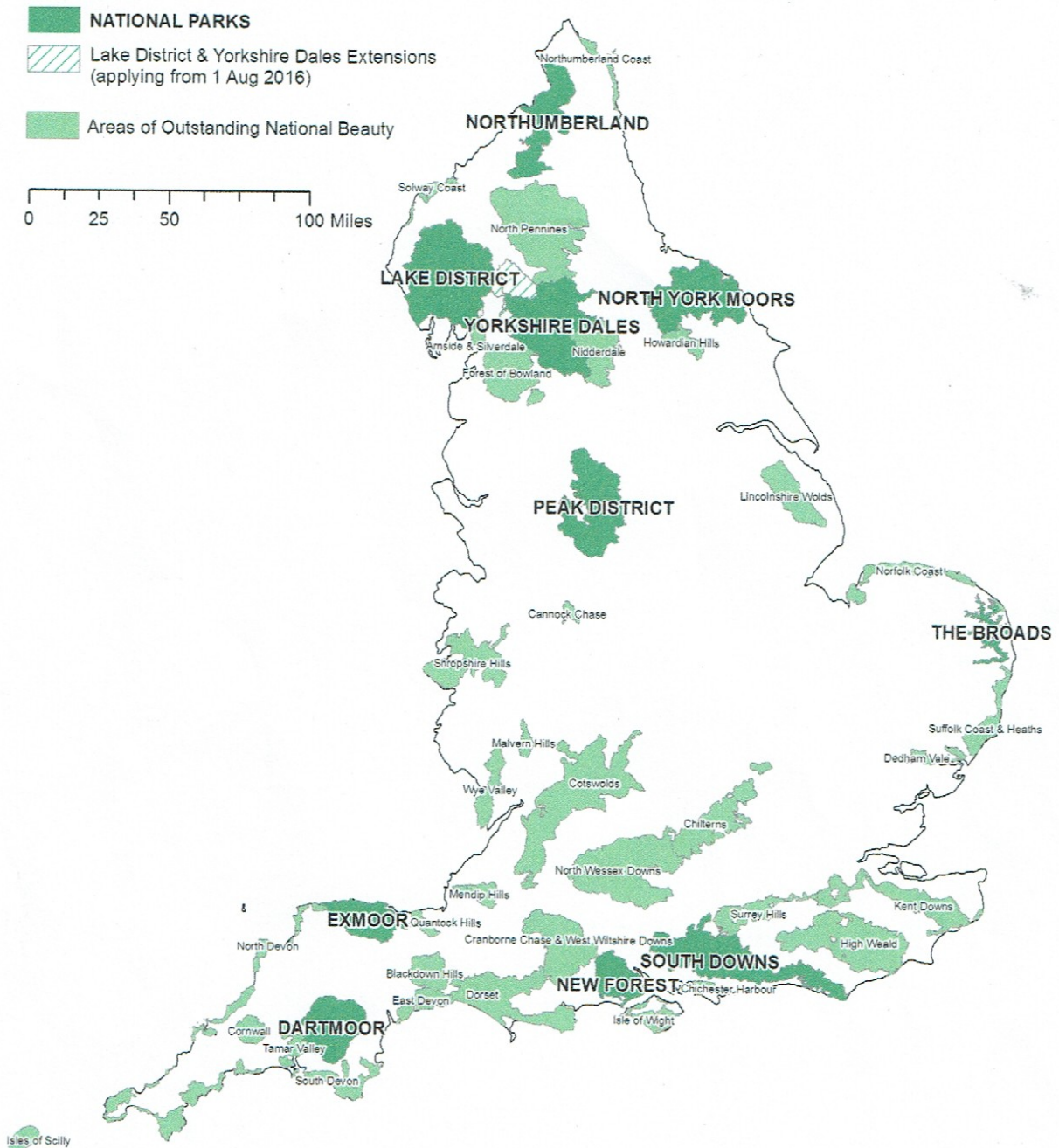
I REALLY WOULD APPRECIATE A BRIEF RESPONSE TO THIS FROM EACH ONE OF YOU.



Dave Giles  
20/10/2023

Footnote: Just for interest both of the photos were taken on a recent October ride in the Cotswolds

# Designated Landscapes in England



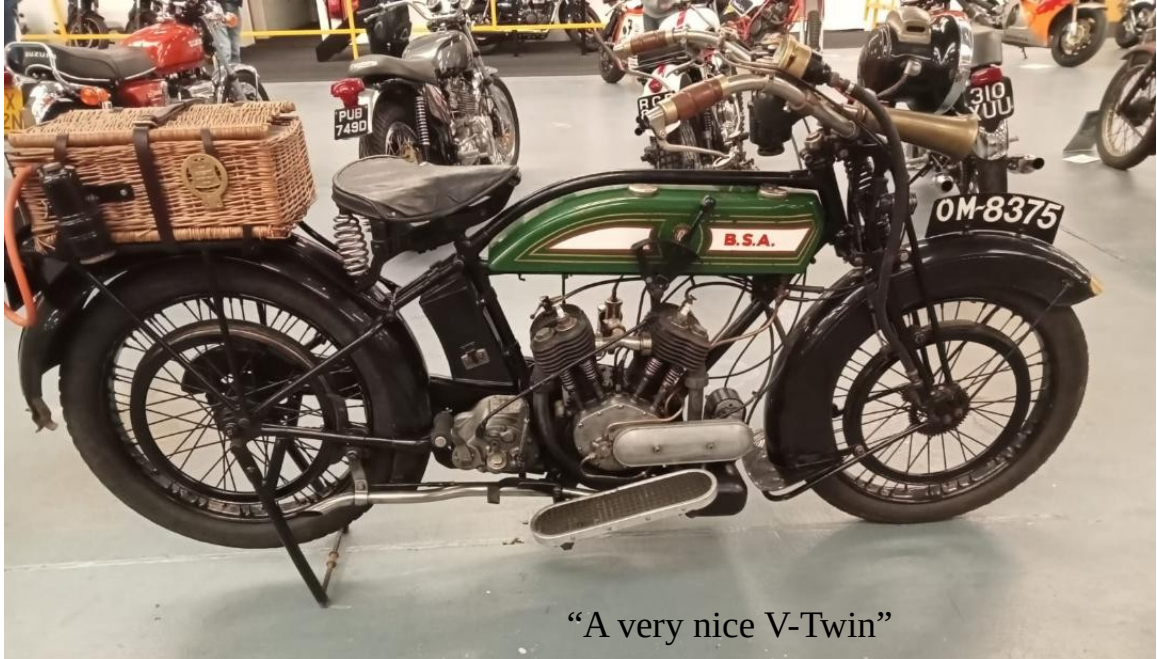
Note this is just for England, Wales would have its own legislation, but is likely to Follow. Scottish access law is completely different. c:\LARA VMCC Newsletter Nr 29.

## Alan Jennings visited a BSA show

During the Summer Alan went to a BSA show at Coventry Airport.

It was a free event! Very well attended.

He says that a raffle for a new Gold Star was won by a chap with no bike licence.



“A very nice V-Twin”



“Is this the future?”

Alan Says: “On the way home mine lost compression but just made it1”

Maybe an event to go on our calender as of interest to members?

# Upcoming events for the remainder of 2023

## Nov. 8. Club Night at K.R.C. 8.00pm start

Our speakers will be Mike Clayton and Emma Porter, talking about the Tham Luang cave rescue of 2018 in Northern Thailand.

## Nov. 29. Our Sections Festive Lunch

### VMCC WARWICKSHIRE SECTION CHRISTMAS LUNCH

WEDNESDAY 29th NOVEMBER 2023. 12 FOR 12.30pm

LEAMINGTON & COUNTY GOLF CLUB (CV31 2QA)

£22.50 per person for two courses plus tea/coffee & mince pies

#### MENU CHOICES

\*Traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings

OR

Roasted stuffed pepper, roasted vegetables, couscous & caramelised red onion sauce

\*Christmas Pudding with brandy sauce

OR

Vanilla Ice cream

#### TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

Contact Judith Coote (Email [jacoote58@gmail.com](mailto:jacoote58@gmail.com) or phone 07484815084)

Please give your name and menu choices when you book

We pay for the meal on the day



Dec. 13. Club Night at K. R. C. To be advised. Keep an eye out for details.

Jan. 10. Club Night at K.R.C. Warwickshire Section AGM and Awards Night.

Some provisional events for 2024 are on our website. More details will be sent out later.

## Ron's Irish Adventure

*Ron Hubbard tells all:*

“ I travelled from Pillerton Hersey to Dublin (not on a bike) to ride Jonathan Bewley's 1922 Royal Enfield on the Royal Irish Automobile Club (RIAC) Pioneer Run recently. 70 trouble free miles of pure fun!

My good friend Don Larkin organises the event. I was going to take my 1930 Douglas S5 but the event is for pre 1918 cars and motorcycles. He said “get yourself over to Dublin and I'll find you a motorcycle to ride.” Another friend of his, Jonathan Bewley, bought the Royal Enfield in 1960 for £3, he restored it aged 18 and has been enjoying it ever since. His son, and grandson are both good riders and have used the Enfield with

Jonathan over the years. I am not slim, yet the superb 350cc single powered us along beautifully, cruising happily at 45mph. The 3 speed gearbox is a delight to use, and the rear brake effective. A brilliant event we'll worth travelling to Dublin for. “

*I asked him how come he had been allowed to enter a pre 1918 event on a 1922 bike?*

*His answer:*

“Because they are Irish! Rules are for the guidance of wise men, and the acceptance of fools!”



Ron on the 1922 Enfield.

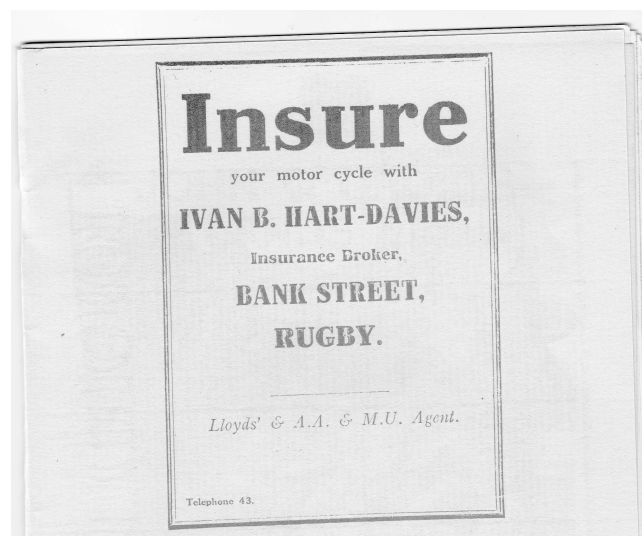
## Referring to last month's News letter

*Mike Wills sent in this extra information:*

Good to read about Ivan Hart-Davies and the End to End Record. He was an insurance agent in Rugby.

Also Hugh Gibson and George Wray riding a Bradbury and sidecar set the sidecar record in 1911.

The ACU, as stated, banned further attempts and banned all three from ACU competitions for a period.



*N.B. Mike is the VMCC marque specialist for Bradbury Motorcycles.*

***Extra upcoming events (not VMCC).....but worth a visit.***

***Classic Vehicle Show at N.E.C This weekend 10-12 November***

An excellent show, especially for the cars, but Hall 5 is where the bikes are. The Triumph Owners Motorcycle Club always has a good selection of around 2 dozen on show. Plus others makers and trade stands.

***Winter Classic Motorcycle Show. Newark Show ground. January 5/6***

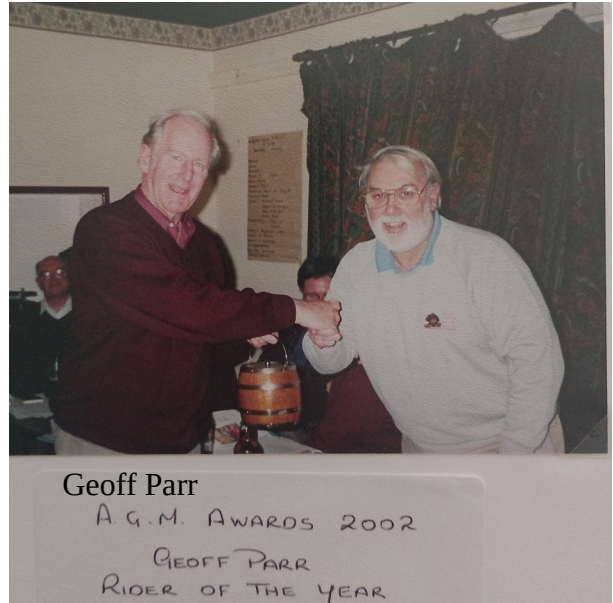
A great start to the year. Plenty of bikes plus trade stands and auto jumble.

Well worth a ride or drive up the A46. See you there?

*If you know of an event that might be of interest to other members then please send me the details in time for it to be included.*

## Geoff Parr

I have recently been to the funeral of Geoff Parr. A long standing and active member of the Warwickshire section. He was a knowledgeable and helpful chap. As a new member found him to be encouraging. He did his bit for the VMCC cause as a clerk of the course for the Banbury Run . I got to know him when we were at the Race Retro show, Tachbrook fete and the Kings Head at Mickleton displaying our motorcycles. His first project was a 1938 BSA Empire Star. A far from complete motor cycle. He swapped a grandfather clock for it !. His wife Jo was unaware of the deal and was less than pleased. The motor cycles I remember was a vintage Sunbeam with leg shields and a Norton twin. Condolences to his wife Jo and their family. RIPP Geoff.



Simon Dudfield, 9 Oct. 2023

## *For Sale or wanted*

**1958 Velocette Valiant Veeline** that has not been used for over five years. kept in the shed. It is a rebuild and not as it came from the dealers. Single seat, 50's Craven luggage, original fairing, modified dashboard with oil pressure gauge (I have an original dash). It is in reasonable condition, and the engine has been recently run. The XC pennant has been removed. Anybody interested in buying it at around £1800?

Ian Brodie 01926 812179 CV47 8LX



## **Sunbeam model 9**

first registered in 1932  
500cc single twin port  
3 speed Sturmey Archer hand change  
excellent condition  
starts fairly easily and runs ok.  
Comes with a pair of crank cases  
and a pair of bar end levers. £9,995 o.n.o.



## Honda VTX

1800 cc

registered 2007

low mileage

recent m.o.t.

Runs very well.

Vance and Hines pipes

Held saddlebags

£7,250

For more information on  
both bikes please contact

John Pearson on

07946 731702

or email [jdpearson75@gmail.com](mailto:jdpearson75@gmail.com)

