

VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

news letter No. 37

October 2022

As I shall be away on my T90 for the first week of October I have produced a smaller, earlier edition just to keep you up do date with what we have been, and will be, doing. Please keep the articles, etc coming in. Items for sale this month!!
Chairman's Chat this month is on page 10 of the news letter.

Events held since the last news letter.

September 14 Club night at K.R.C. A talk by Graham Davenport.

He gave a very interesting talk about building and racing a classic Aprila powered sidecar outfit. He was accompanied by his dad, Martin and the bike. This was his debut as a speaker, but the comments I heard were all very favourable. We wish him – and his 'team' the best of luck for future race events.



The photo shows David and Simon trying it out for size.

September 25 Pop up at Marton Museum of Country Bygones

22 bikes (actually 21 and a Tina!) would have been 23 if David Kendall had not had a near death experience when his front tyre punctured. He was riding his 1939 Cotton down hill between Princethorpe and Marton but fortunately was able to stop safely and await recovery.

The museum was very interesting with lots of quirky gadgets, household equipment, clothes, tools and all manner of 'stuff' from days of yore. In the clubhouse next door the lady volunteers did a roaring trade in hot drinks and lovely cakes. The view from the veranda was also very good in the sunshine. We must visit again next year.



September 21 Open day and Macmillan coffee morning at Allen House

Several of us attended during the day and enjoyed hot drinks and a variety of cakes whilst chatting to various staff and volunteers. Mario was on good form. The library, as ever, was well worth a visit as was 'Terry's kingdom' i.e. the club shop, full of goodies and well worth a visit.

Upcoming events.

October 12 Club Night. This month we have Triumph Trident aficionado **John Young** talking about the latest project that he is involved with: testing the 4 cylinder 'triple' built by the legendary George Pooley, who was building specials before Alan Millyard left school.! An evening not to be missed!

October 16 The Autumn Run. This is a traditional event. Please watch out for more details.

October 23 Social Meet. T.b.a.

October 29/30 * National Motorcycle Museum open day. Free entry but Car park £15. Parking is free for bikes.

November 9 Club Night to be arranged. Possibly a speaker.

December A Christmas meal at a pub?

Ariel update VNH Pt 3

Last time I spoke about the engine modifications and updates. This time I will turn to the chassis.

As I said earlier, my original intention was always to mount the VNH engine in Ariel cycle parts, but at the time I made the motor I didn't have anything to put it into until I purchased the donor bike off John Mitchell (Ariel magazine editor at the time). The bike from John had not been on the road since 1974. Although mainly complete, the engine turned over, it was loosely bolted together, just what I wanted. The bike was a mid 50's NH 350 and as the cycle parts are all the same from 350 to 650 there was no problem with the frame being too lightweight.

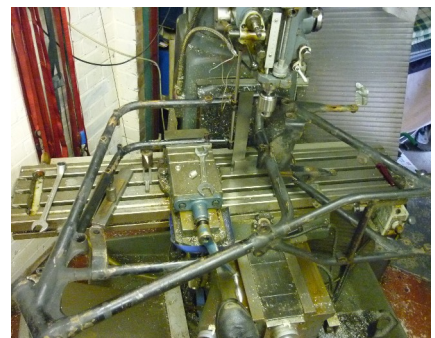
One of the things I didn't want to do is cut this frame as it looked in first class condition.

At the end of 2018 there was an advert hidden in another advert in OBM. This was for an Ariel swing arm frame. There was also an engine /gearbox in engine plates together with all the primary side. This was quite local to me and the guy was immigrating to Germany that week and had no room to take it or inclination to get the bike finished. The frame was pre full width rear hub so about 1955. He wanted very little for it and as I knew I had some major alterations to perform, I thought I could save altering Johns frame, so I just use the cycle parts off the NH like the Guards, forks, tanks etc.

When I got the new frame home and started looking at it closely, I noticed one of the rear footrest silencer brackets was badly damaged and the gearbox bolt lugs on the bottom frame rails were way out of line. It also had no swing arm and one of the splined footrest lugs was also sheared off. (what could I expect for £25).

I set the frame up on my milling machine, lining the swinging arm holes and headstock up at 90 deg to one another. I then machined the holes in the gearbox lugs out and sleeved them in line. This was not easy, (see pictures of hideous set up.)

I then cut the footrest hangers off the rear of the frame and sif bronze welded tubes in their place including rear brake stop mounts. As I didn't have rear footrests I bought a pair off EBay for a BMW R65 for £15. These don't fall down and are far superior to the originals (and cheap).



I bought a swing arm to go with the new frame before I realised that it was the wrong one. The frame had no lugs on it for the cross over linkage to the rear brake. The brake on the 55 model is a single sided one with the lever on the drive side, the same as the chain. The later full width hub has the brake on the time side, hence the bracket on the frame for a cross over linkage. Also, the early swing-arm has an open end where the wheel fits, the later an enclosed end, we live and learn. I could have used

the donor rear wheel and swing arm out of Johns bike but decided to get a single sided one with the drum on the same side as the brake lever. If I hadn't done this, I would have had to weld the brake bracket onto the frame as the later model has. Fortunately Stan Coupland supplied a rear wheel, brake lever and the right swing ardd with open ends. He's a font of Ariel knowledge, thanks Stan. Who needs a manual when Stan's about.

The holes in the engine crankcase I drilled and reamed 10mm (that's a metric dimension for those who were not converted in 1972 ish). I reamed the holes and used 10mm size bar to make engine bolts so the crank case halves lined up. The hole positions were standard Ariel so engine and frame all lined up. I had to move the engine over a little to align the clutch chain wheel with the engine sprocket, this meant I had to put a small cut-out into the timing side bottom tube.

When I put the crankcase into the frame for the first time, minus heads and barrels, I realised the front cylinder would end up in the middle of the front down tubes because of the "V" formation, so they had to go, (not the barrels, the frame tubes, keep up). I also found out that the cylinder head, when fitted, would be under the headstock and would be in the way of the tubes, also the exhaust would hit the front wheel. The only way forward would be to move the headstock about 2" forward to get everything to line up. See pictures somewhere about to show my dilemma.



A picture says a thousand words.

After measurements for headstock angles etc on my frame jig, I got the disc grinder out and took the top frame tubes and front down tubes out.

After fixing the frame onto the fixture and lining the swing arm with the head stock I sleeved the top tubes and sif bronze welded these into position I then plated either side for a little extra strength.

The front down tube I have made detachable, I can now adjust the exhaust tappet on the front cylinder and keep the wheel base down. It also gives direct support and strength to the frame. The wheelbase has ended up between 58 " and 60", depending where the rear wheel is in the fork, so not to bad, just a couple of inch over standard.



I have also made a plate to bolt onto the front cylinder head rocker boxes and this has a tube bolted to it and is fixed directly under the head stock so the front cylinder also reinforces the frame. More belt and braces.

The whole lot is just hand painted in case I need to do any more welding for any reason, which I have.

The next thing was the fuel tank. I didn't want a gap between front the front of the seat and the rear of the tank. Therefore I cut the front tank mounts off and fabricated some more about 1" further back. I then made some brackets for the seat to move about 1" forward. This has closed the gap ok and does not look out of place when it's together.

When I fitted the new swing arm, which had been black powder coated, it had so much movement in the rubber bushes the sides were hitting the footrest mounts. I think it was a little to do with the powder coating and the fact they were over 60 years old. I know you can get new bushes but decided to replace them with bronze ones. I know I'm not the first guy to do this but will write a little piece about this separately in case anybody else fancies doing the same.

I rebuilt the forks with new bushes and springs and used the later full width brake. I will replace this with a single sided 8" one from a BSA or such when I can find one or even a disc if I have to. I will try and keep it period though.

I think that will do this time, so next time, I will deal with fitting the engine, drive train and cycle parts.

Tony

Good news for those members who have early machines

writes Denis Beale

At last Blockley tyres now have 26x 2&1/4 Beaded edge tyres for sale.

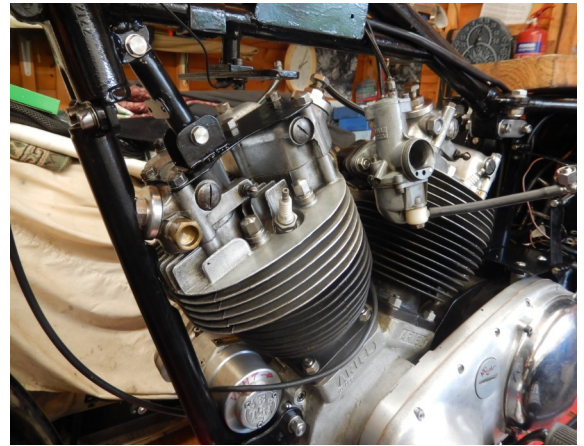
Fred Smith says

"I believe they are £147 inc Vat. He also has butyl tubes for about £17 inc. Vat.

I have some here and they are great tyres.

Possibly even better than the Dunlop's that Joyce cobbing was selling for nearly 200 quid all those years ago".

The owner, in liaison with some Cotswold members, has put considerable effort into getting these made to a high standard so we owe him; please pass the word around, and any feed back appreciated.

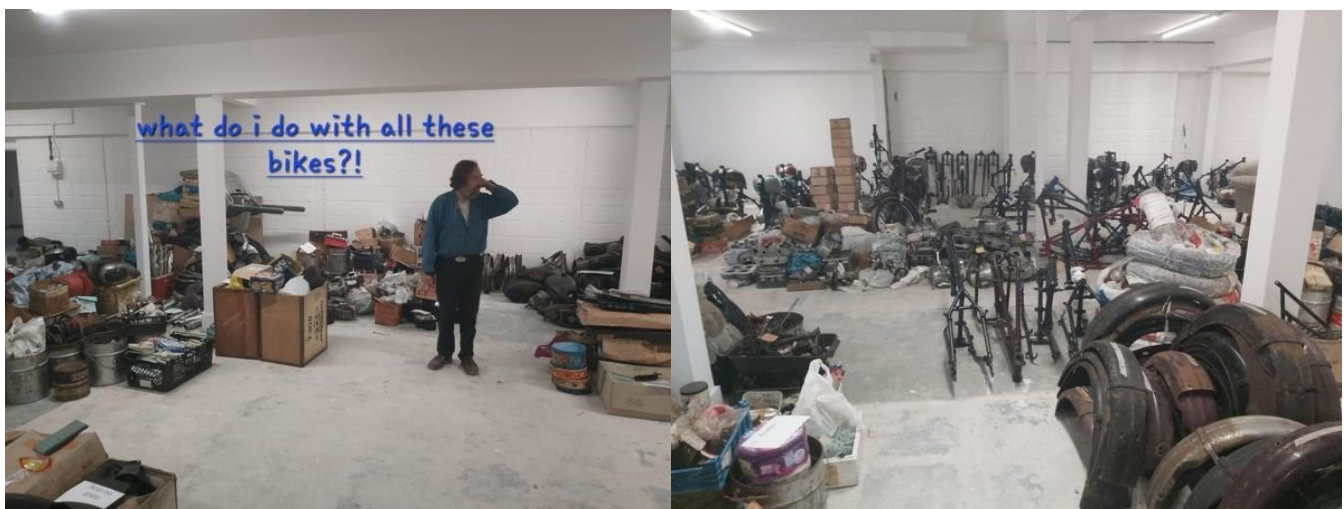


A message from Draganfly which may be of interest if you are after a project:

We've acquired around 65 full motorcycles, the majority of them pre-1950 Ariels! In accordance with the late owners' wishes, we will be selling the bikes complete, NOT breaking them. Mostly singles and Square Fours, with a few Twins. Prices will start from around £2,000 depending on the completeness of each machine. Initially these will be made available to Ariel Owners Club members, but please register your interest with us and we will keep a list of who is keen on what! spares@draganfly.co.uk

We will be offering rebuild services for those that want it, with a dedicated engineer, more details to follow. (see their Facebook page)

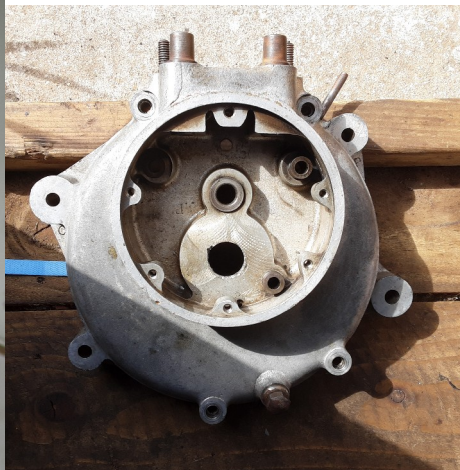
More items for sale at the end of this news letter



Mystery Engine with oval bore

Those members who attended the last club night will have heard about an engine with a single oval bore which the owners are keen to find out more about. It is obviously late teens or early 1920's. The latter seems more likely following a reference to an abandoned project by Triumph (then all one company) on an internet forum plus a recollection by Geoff Booth, who says that he saw this engine over 40 years ago! Both place it in the early 20's.

The only reference to a maker is 'Triumph' on the head of one of the valves. Some of the components match closely with known Triumph ones from a collection of parts held by the engine's owners. Also photographs taken during the restoration of David Kendall's 1927 Triumph Ricardo. If you can add any further information then please let me know.

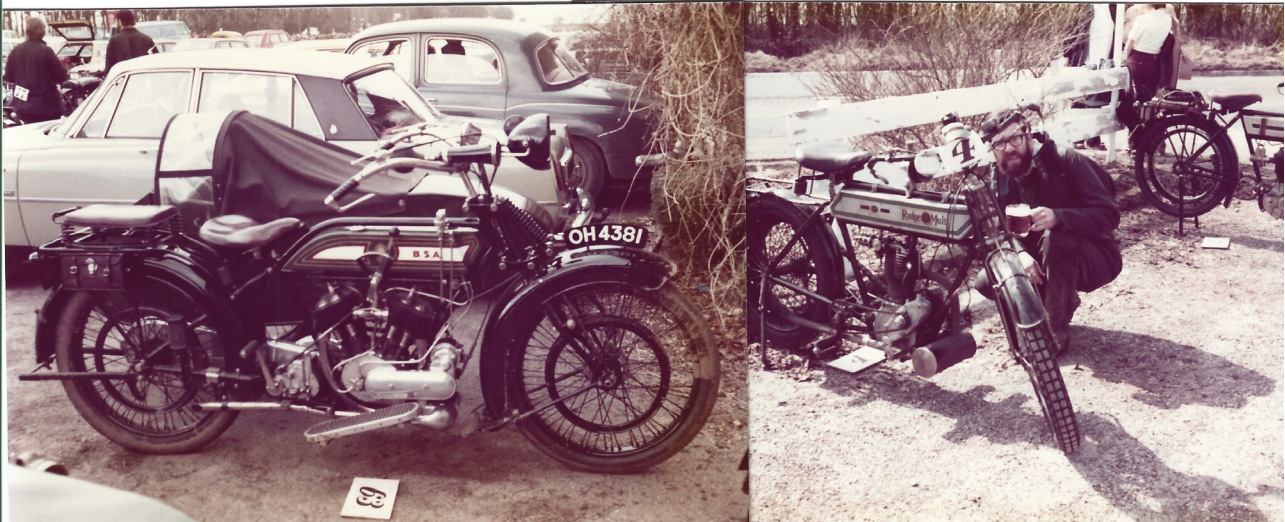
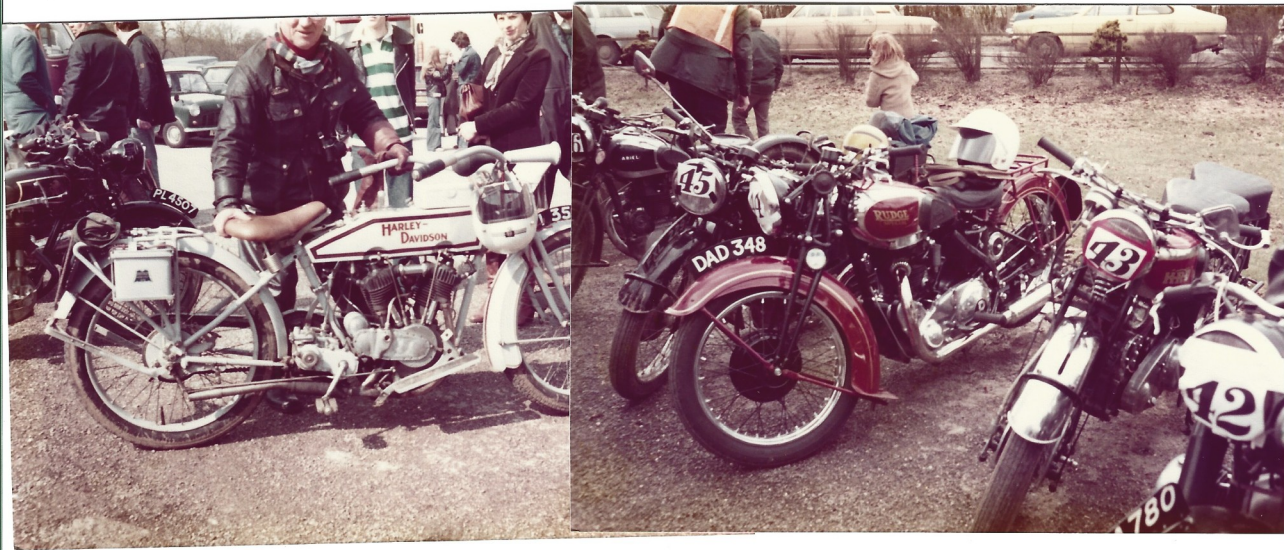
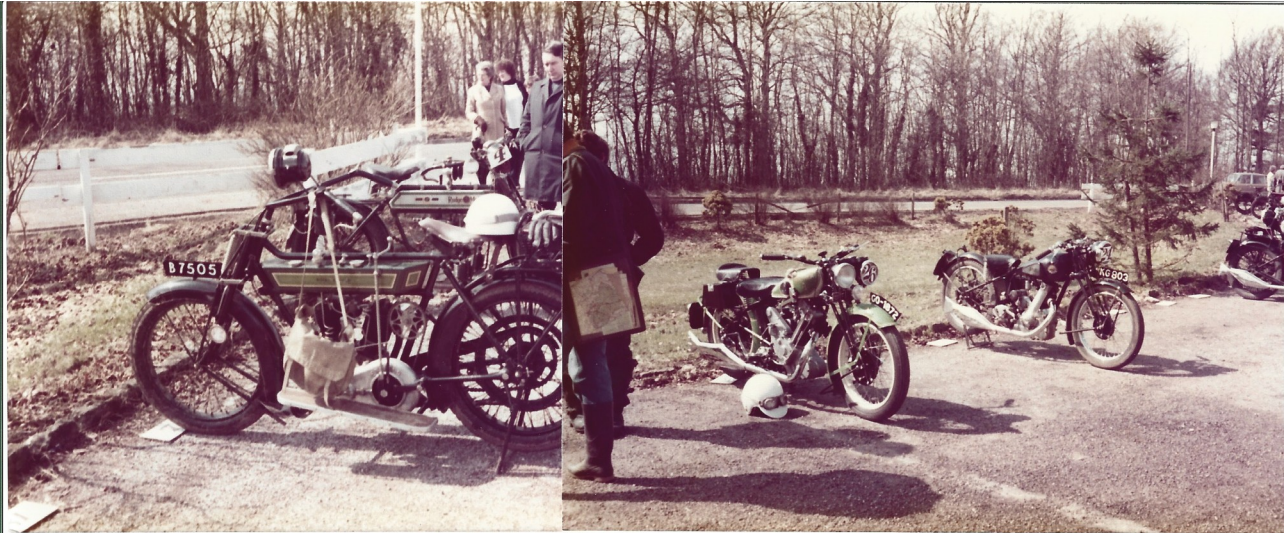


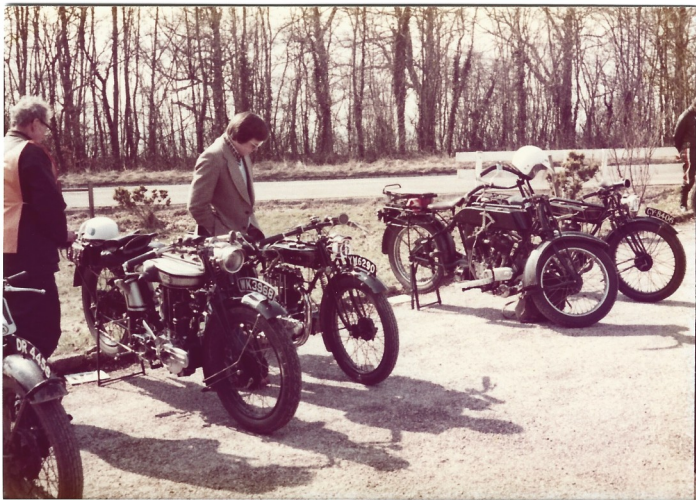
The Ricardo crankcase



The mystery photos: follow up news

A few months ago I included some photos taken at a gathering. But where and when? Geoff Booth has provided some information on the machines but sadly no location:





Pic 4

DAD348 is a Coventry Rudge Special, around 1937

To its right with number 43 on the headlamp, is a series A HRD, looks to be a Comet

Pic 5

Mid 1920's BSA combination not sure of the model as I am not a BSA expert!

Pic 6

Rudge Multi – ask Dave Mac!

Pic 7 & 8

Triumph Model P approximately 1926

Pic 9

Late 1920's Raleigh side valve

Pic 10 Cleckheaton's finest! a very early P & M, I would say about 1908 but others such as Rob T and Mike Wills are better than I with such early machines.

Pic 10

A gorgeous, wonderful Norton Model 18 or even possibly a 19, registered in Coventry in 1927

Behind it is a big port AJS approx. also 1927

All pics look to be the same venue, no leaves on the trees so early spring or late autumn. Definitely not Coventry Parade and I don't think it's the Brighton Run. I recognise no faces, although the "DAD" Rudge does possibly ring a very distant bell, again, Dave Mac is the man.

Any more information would be welcome

Chairman's Chat

No cake for the Chairman....

My Sunday morning started out so well, with a planned ride over to Marton to visit the Museum of Country bygones - my 350 Cotton being the machine of choice for this outing. I had already arranged with the Curator of this eclectic collection of rural paraphernalia to open at 11.00am and for the Pavilion to supply refreshments and cake. After filling up with E5 at the Princethorpe petrol station, I suddenly became aware of very heavy steering and a wallowing front end, in just a nano second or two my 'woolly' Sunday morning brain realised I had a fast deflating front tyre.

Luckily for me, I managed to divert into a very pleasant and quiet country lane beside the main road, so I put the machine on its stand and cursed loudly. Fortunately, it was a nice warm sunny morning and sitting on the pleasant grass verge, I set about phoning the RAC and afterwards Barry Heath to let him know of my predicament. After a while of sitting alone in the sunshine, I became aware of a faint beeping sound from behind the hedge. As I looked up, an army of metal detectorists marched over the lane to start detecting and digging on the adjacent field. Later, Andy Bean came down to keep me company (much appreciated) and we had interesting conversations with Sunday detectorists on Roman coinage, and later visitations from cake and coffee fuelled riders returning from their museum gathering, including

Barry on his Triumph Tina's successful maiden voyage. I have also included an image of my own fascinating roadside archaeological finds while awaiting to be rescued....these artefacts are possibly from the early 'Maximus knackered Mondeo period' ...?



Stay safe..... David Kendall

Secretaries Shorts

First of all thank you to those of you that responded to my request for content for this news letter. It is, however, a bit dismaying when I come to compile a new news letter and find the file is just about empty! So please keep the articles, adverts, news etc coming in at any time of the month, day or night.

Triumph Tina Those of you who were at Marton will know that my trusty steed is just about on the road, although in need of more 'fettling' which is why the side panels are still not fitted. Have you ever fitted and removed them? Who ever came up with that idea wants *****.

Tiger 90 is still leaking oil. But there is some good news. Whilst at Allen House, Burton on Trent, I met, as arranged, Tiger 90 expert Justin Harvey James who I have known for several years. We swapped bikes and after riding several miles he declared mine 'very good' with no other issues, whilst his is just about perfect, as one might expect.

Bridgestone 100TMX will be on my lift very soon to try to get it finally sorted.

Recommended suppliers Arthur Farrow has suggested that we set up a list of recommended local tradespeople who provide good service:

Mick at Nuneaton Rebores. kindly recommended by Chris Chant.

Gary Vickery, for bike electrics 02476 592132. recommended by Barry Heath.

For sale and free

Andy Smith has 3 bikes for sale. Photos will follow next month or contact him direct: 024 76 465962 or Mobile: 07808 320776

Triumph Tiger 80 1937

Triumph T110 1959

Suzuki GSXR 1997

Also a Sunbeam S7 that needs a bit of work doing to it.

Mike Arrowsmith has the following items 'free to a good home'

I have the following 1930's JAP engine spares for free. The rocker boxes look the same as the 500's.

Pair of 250cc crankcases

Pair of flywheels

Rocker box assemblies

Push rod tubes

Clutch plates

I also have a number of precision engineering tools as follows:

0-1" micrometer

5-6" micrometer

adjustable micrometer

Vee blocks and clamps

dial gauges and stands

depth micrometer

square

precision vice

radius gauges

thread gauges

taps and dies

All in good condition except the taps and dies which have some surface rust.

I would accept £100 for all the tools.

Barry Heath has 1 item for sale.

I very recently bought a pair of Oxford 'Rain Seal' handlebar muffs. But unfortunately I can't use them with bar end mirrors! So I am selling them for just £20. Brand new in the bag.



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