

news letter No.28

Nov., 2021

VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

Biking activities are definitely slowing down but there are still a few about. The Classic Car and Bike Show at the NEC is imminent and with a VMCC presence this time.

Recently the National Motorcycle Museum held an Open weekend and was very well attended.

Also in this issue Ted Robinson talks about his bikes and Tony Harris concludes his series of articles covering the build of his v twin Ariel. But first, our Chairman writes:

Chairman's Chat

Congratulations Warwickshire..

Yes, well done to those hardy souls who took part in this year's Autumn Run. Ten riders and machines braved the gentle drizzle for a pre run Coffee and moan..... I mean.... constructive natter about the weather at the Long itch Diner on Sunday 17th of October.

Leaving the Diner, our route of 40 miles took us through familiar Warwickshire countryside and onto the leafy and adventurous lanes of Northamptonshire, while passing through many pretty villages along the way. Eventually, a warm safe haven

was found in the Friendly Inn at Frankton. Although now under new management, still gave a warm welcome.

..which is just as well because we did look a slightly cold, thirsty, bedraggled collection

of motorcyclists, however hot soup and other





refreshments helped improve matters no end.

Our thanks go to Simon Dudfield for organising the run. And of course, congratulations because this was our first long run using the 2nd man drop off system – basically, a rider does his points duty at a junction until the tail end Charlie releases them

to carry on and enjoy the ride. We did have to stop at one point and help out a rider and machine when the petrol tank went onto reserve...after a few kicks we were again on our way.... and because the riders stayed at their allotted posts nobody got lost. Well done, we all passed with flying colours. Also, maybe in these days of filling station closures, the organisers of long routes should make a note of the nearest petrol stations along the intended way...or just fill your flipping tank up first!

Of course, there was a time when the Autumn Run signalled the end of the Warwickshire section riding season, hopefully by the time you read this we will have fitted in a few more social pop up meetings before winter really sets in...gloved fingers crossed! Stay safe... David Kendall

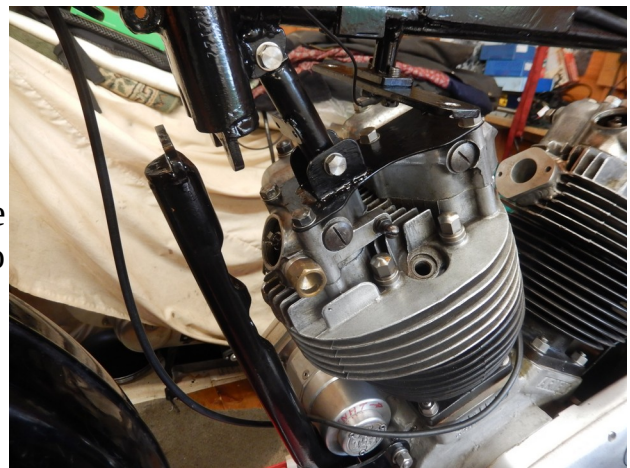
Regular readers will have followed Tony Harris's fascinating articles detailing his build of a V twin Ariel. This is the final part of its construction:

Ariel VNH update part 4

I wanted to make sure the motor could be worked on in the frame and the heads and barrels could be dismantled without having to take the engine out. It also made the unit lighter to put into the frame with no heads and barrels fitted.

One of the things I didn't want was the front mudguard to hit the exhaust pipe or front cylinder head with the forks compressed. This is why the frame was stretched a little. I also needed to have the detachable front down-tube to ease fitting the engine in and adjusting the front cylinder exhaust tappet as stated in part 3.

After fitting the bottom part of the engine in the frame I assembled the heads and barrels. The front cylinder has a plate under the rocker box bolts. This has a detachable tube fitted to it which bolts to the frame, under the headstock. There should be a picture about to show this. It also makes the engine part of the frame for extra rigidity. There is also a bracket that the small HT coils bolt to which is part of this assembly. These coils are external to the electronic self generating magneto, which I also made. This fires the 55 deg V twin engine. It has built advance and retard for easy starting and no kick backs. This bolts to the front of the engine



and is on slots to adjust any timing. The primary chain case screws to the engine and lines up with tapped holes in the standard position, the bike also uses the standard Burman gearbox and clutch. The engine plates I made out of the same thickness material as Ariel used, steel, but parallel with no kinks like the original plates. This helps, because I had to make different size spacers on the gearbox to line the primary chain with the engine sprocket and clutch chain wheel.



The oil tank had quite a large crease on the outside. I decided to cut the back out and knocked this out from the inside, cleaning 45 years of sludge out of the tank at the same time. I then brazed a plate over the hole and because its faces inside can't be seen. The rear guard is from a plunger model, I will keep an eye out for the correct guard, but at this time its better than nothing.

The battery carrier is not Ariel but pre war Triumph. Its a similar ish design. The forks were treated to new springs bushes etc and built up and fitted. I made my own wiring harness using standard colours. All the connections are Japanese type and I used a company called "Electrical supplies" which stock everything for the budding electrician/arsonist. Unfortunately there is no charging system. I will run LED bulbs throughout. This will give many hours of light and I don't really plan to ride to many miles at night. Sometime in the future I'll fit some sort of charging system onto the bike.

One of the things I wasn't too happy about was the old exhaust pipes. I made these some years ago and decided to have a set of stainless bespoke ones made. Not cheap, but I thought the bike deserved it.

So far most things I had were in my stock so its cost very little to this stage. These pipes are mated to a standard Ariel silencer. The Siamese exhaust pipes on the timing side of the bike leave room to fit a better prop stand. I didn't have a standard prop stand so I bought one off eBay for about £10, complete with bracket off some Jap bike. I've used this type on a number of bikes and they work well.



Like most projects, there comes a time to see if it all works. It is all a little scary as many will know. Have I tightened this, or fitted that part right? Will it be timed right

and start? will it leak? you know the sort of thing. However, when you've made a large part of the engine and altered so much it causes even more apprehension. Oh, he of little faith.

I put some oil in the tank and the oil I'd put in the sump returned to the tank from the engine after pushing the bike about with no plugs in and in gear. I popped the fuel tank on and pushed the bike to the front of the house just as my friend (Eddy) rolled into the drive on his Vincent twin. No hiding now.

After turning the fuel on and a quick carb. tickle, (the carb. is a 26mm Concentric by the way), magneto kill switch off and give it a kick. To our amazement it went first kick, just as it did about 10 years ago, Eddy was there then. I let it tick over for a while. The oil was returning and the only leak was from a banjo nut on the rockers which I hadn't tightened. I stopped and started it a number of times and it goes first time every time. At the moment it looks like my smoky start ups are in the past and the latest engine alterations are working, time will tell.

I'm sure there will be a few little problems as with most fresh builds. Hopefully these will be few and far between so I can get some miles on the bike next year. There's a number of things I would like to change, like a better set of guards and maybe a better seat. I am not too sure about the front brake. It's nice to have a standard one but with modern traffic I would like something better. I have recently picked up an almost new Enfield front wheel complete with new tyre, disc and spindle. This, although not looking very standard, would be a lot safer in an emergency. I will have to see how good/bad the front brake I have is first.

Since the above I have done about 50 miles and have raised the gearing a little. I am very pleased with the way it goes and is an improvement all around from the first incarnation.

Update Oct 21.

The bike has now done some longer journeys and a few hundred miles. It's still going well, it starts first kick and rides well on the road. The longer wheel base has made no difference to the steering. I have now fitted the original front brake with mini twin leading shoe, hydraulically operated. Unless you look hard it just looks standard but now you can lock the wheel unlike the standard set up.

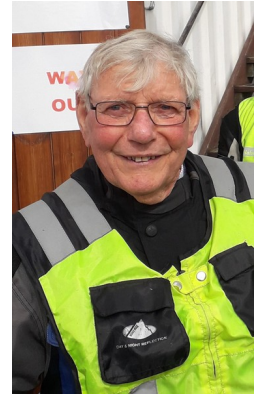
The motor is smooth and doesn't leak. Unlike before, there's no smoke on first start up and the plugs are clean with a nice colour. As long as you are over about 22 mph there's no need to change out of top gear, even with tall gearing. Big flywheels and soft cam timing. Think big pre war side valve, not Ducati.

I never built the bike to take to shows or as a static display. I just fancied an old fashioned classic type V twin. It does fool some into thinking it was an Ariel prototype that never saw production; I suppose I achieved the desired effect all round then. Tony Harris.

Ted tells tales (to Barry)

Ted Robinson is one of our 'stalwarts' who has been a member for ever. He kindly agreed to talk to me about bikes he has owned:

His first bike was a Francis Barnett Plover. A mate needed to sell it so Ted bought it for £4. A neighbour, Les, who he was friends with and for whom he rewired a Royal Enfield, took him the 3 or 4 miles in his van to collect it. The bike was in a sorry state so he started pushing it from Earlsdon whilst Les drove the van home and walked to meet Ted and help push it. His parents passed them in their car, on their way into town and assumed it was Les's bike. By the time they got back home Ted had stripped it down. His mum was not at all pleased that he had bought a bike, but got used to the idea.



Within about a month the bike was painted, rebuilt, and ready for the road. The insurance was bought through Peter Batey. The premium being £3 which Ted did not have so had to persuade his Dad to sign an agreement to pay it in 6 monthly payments of 10 shillings. He then passed his test on it and rode it for about 12 months.

A workmate, ex RAF, had a Scott that he used to ride to camp and back but that he now wanted to sell. Ted was interested. The price was £20. However the owner was not sure that someone of Ted's diminutive stature (at the time) was capable of handling it. However after a short test ride he proved that he could ride it ok. So the deal was done.

Ted loved the bike even though it had seen better days. The gudgeon pins wore the piston and cause it to rattle. So he bought a new pair from Matt. Holder, in Birmingham by writing to them. They cost a hefty £5 a pair. A lot in those days. Upon arrival the next day Ted sent them a postal order.

After his 18th birthday, in 1953, with more money to spend, he looked for a newer bike which would be more powerful, reliable and with more easily available spares. After seeing an advert his dad took him to Ross Motors in Hinckley to look at a BSA. Whilst there he tried a Vincent Comet on sale for £95 but was not impressed so proceeded with the purchase of the BSA 500. It was only 18 months old and cost £87, part of which was paid by trading in the Scott. Ted rode this for several years till his demob from the RAF in 1959.

In 1960 a work colleague at BTH rode an F.B. Cruiser, held together by bits of string. One day he said he was scrapping it! Ted reacted by offering to buy it. The price...£4!



After work Ted rode pillion on it to the sellers house in Tile Hill, weaving through the traffic. He then commenced to ride it home, but soon found that it wandered all over the road and had a dodgy back brake. In town the traffic was so bad that he gave up trying to steer through it and rode to a friends house in Earlsdon and

waited till the traffic died down. He only rode it once after that, but still owns it! He says that they are now quite rare and are worth 'a few bob'.....to be continued, featuring his second Scott. What's wrong?

This is the first of a series of cards that David K. came across:



The following 2 images are from a card game, the description on the box reads.

A truly thought provoking party game from the 1940's /50's where the players have to spot the deliberate mistakes in the pictures.

Two more what's wrong cards next month..

Classic bike for sale

The bike is a 1955 Sun Cyclone 225cc these are now rare bikes. The bike is up and running having been rebuilt and everything that needed doing was done and cost quite a lot of money so I'm



asking very close to £4000 for it anybody if is interested they can ring Frank Parker on 01926-429310 and will be put through as we have had trouble with scammers. answer phone always on.

Secretaries Shorts

Triumph Tina the wiring is finally finished! The last stage involved fitting a double pole double throw key switch (I'd never heard of one either) just behind the rear number plate. As well providing a level of security it also isolates the battery.

A starting problem was resolved when I saw that the h.t. lead that been running against the clutch unit and had worn through to the copper core.!

I am displaying it at the NEC this weekend (on the TOMCC stand) along with.....

Tiger 90 This is running fine.

Bridgestone 100TMX needs the gear change sorting!! I thought that it had been sorted but is not scrolling through the gears properly so the engine may need stripping again to access the gear clusters, although these have been examined both by me and by a very reputable professional motorcycle mechanic. No fault could be found! **Any help or advice would be much appreciated.** It will be on display this weekend at the NEC on the VMCC stand.

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