

VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

news letter No. 39

Late Winter 2023

Welcome to the first news letter of a brand new year. Some of you will know that as of the recent section A.G.M. I have chosen to step down as section secretary. This role is now in the capable hands of Simon Dudfield who has been a committee member for a number of years. He will have assistance from 'Beezer' Dave Barnes, as well as the rest of the committee also ensuring that the section maintains its high standard of providing members with a good range of events.

If you are not acquainted with the members of the committee our photos are on our website. Just click on 'contact the committee'

This is Simons first report:

Secretary's View.

Hello to members of the VMCC Warwickshire section from Simon Dudfield your new secretary. I've been a VMCC member since 2009 and joined the committee about ten years ago. I'd like to thank Barry Heath for his hard work and I am looking forward to help keeping the section going.

I will be sharing duties with David Barnes. He will attend the club nights that I cannot. He will also be sending out the email alerts to members about forthcoming events and last minute pop-ups. I am pleased to be part of a hard-working committee, who have ably kept the section going. Now lockdowns are well behind us we have the freedom to enjoy a full calender of events (weather permitting of course) so it would lovely to see as many as possible attending.

I also hope we can attract and retain new section members. The first time at club night can be daunting. But if we can make any newcomers welcome enough, hopefully they will return regularly.

Yours faithfully, Simon Dudfield.

VMCC Warwickshire Section AGM Held at Kenilworth rugby club. 11/1/23.

The Chairperson (David Kendall) opened the meeting shortly after 8.00 pm

Apologies from Brenda Hallard ,Richard Woodcock and Arthur Farrow

Minutes of the last meeting. Proposed by Andy Bean seconded by Steve Bradwick.
No matters arising.

Treasure's report. No matters arising.

Committee changes. Simon Dudfield to be named as secretary as Barry Heath is standing down. Some of the duties will be shared with David Barnes. Judith Coote will replace Alan Bailey as Vice Chairperson. Alan will remain on the committee. Malcolm Griffin is to join the committee. The chairman explained that from now on emails to members will mainly come from either Simon or David.

Any other business. There was a suggestion that we should organise a run in to Hoar Park

Awards:

Chairman's Award.- Barry Heath.

Rider of the year award - Steve Bradwick.

Vintage award - Ken Bromley.

Warwickshire Bear - Andy Bean.

Clubman of the year - Barry Heath.

Shiny bike - Peter Brown.

Meeting closed at 20.21

Where is Black Bess parked?



*Last month it was St Chads,
Bishops Tachbrook.*

*But where is this pub with a
military name?*

*the church is dedicated to St
Lawrence*



Chairman's Chat

Classic motorcycles discovered in attic...!

It's always a relief when I manage to pack Christmas and all associated baubles and decorations back into the loft for another year. The trouble is, I get distracted by all my other stuff stored safely in boxes up there, and on this latest occasion, it was a small collection of die cast motorcycles that caught my attention. Most of these miniature machines were picked up on my travels at car boot sales or possibly auto jumbles. Those on display today are...a Norton racing motorcycle, a Triumph 110 sidecar outfit, a Moto Guzzi 850, a Triumph Speed Twin complete with a rider who looks like he is on his way to work, and also a British V twin racing machine - possibly a J.A.P engine? Of course, not forgetting to re-fuel at the Lesney ESSO petrol pump set.

Hopefully, when the weather improves we can be riding and showing off our real Norton and Triumph motorcycles...but in the meantime, please excuse me while I have my own miniature 'pop up meeting' on my kitchen table....brum brum!



VMCC Warwickshire Diary of events for 2023

This is a provisional diary which may change. More events will be added nearer the dates

Date / day	event	details
Feb. 08 W	Club night	Kenilworth Rugby Club Speaker David Morse subject: Fire watching at St. Paul's. 8.00pm start
Mar. 08 W	Club night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. Speaker Mark Bryan Silverstone Classic Auctions 8.00pm start.
April 02 Su	3 counties Spring Run	Meet Willoughby Cafe 10 am for 10.30 start. (D.B.)
April 12 W	Club night	Kenilworth Rugby Club 8.00pm
April 22 Sa	Cov - Brighton Run	National Motorcycle Mueum
April 23 Su	Cov - Brighton Run	Return from Brighton area.
April 30 Su	Nat. Relay Rally	Long Itch Diner CV47 9QZ
May 10 W	Club night	Kenilworth Rugby Club Bring and buy. 7.30pm
May 21 Su	Morning Coffee Run	Meet Hatton Lay-by 09.30 for 10.00am start (S.D)
June 04 Su	Kenilworth Run	Meet Hatton lay-by 10.00 for 10.30 am start. (M.G.)
June 11 Su	Breakfast Ride in	Malt Kiln Farm, Stretton u. Fosse. 10.00am. (H.W.)
June 14 W	Club night	Fish & Chips + bring a bike. 7.30pm
June 18 Su	Banbury Run	National Motor Museum, Gaydon.
June 26 m	Cassington Bike night	Cassington Village, OX29 4DN
July 05 W	Chairperson's Social	Blue Lias, bikes and buffet. from 6.30pm
July 09 Su	Pailton Steam & Bikes+	Fairfield lake and Smite Brook Steam Railway
July 12 W	Club Night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. Bike night. 7.30pm
July 23 Su	Founders Day Rally	Stanford Hall. From 9.00am
Aug. 06 Su	Bill Lacey Run	Evenly, Northants. (more details tba).
Aug 09 W	Club Night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. bike night
Sept. 03 Su	Genteel Run	Run for smaller, older bikes. (details tba). (D.K.)
Sept 17 Su	Afternoon Tea and cake run	Meet at Hatton lay-by. 2.00 for 2.30 (S.D.)
Oct. 08 Su	'Autumn Leaves' run	Meet at Long Itch Diner. 10.00 for 10.30 (S.D.)
Oct. 11 W	Club Night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. 8.00pm
Oct. 22 Su	Antelope Ride In	Meet at Antelope Inn, Lighthorne, 12.00 or ride in from Chesterton Windmill. At 11.30 am (S.D.)
Nov. 08 W	Club Night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. 8.00pm
Nov. 29 W	Xmas Lunch	T.B.A.
Dec. 13 W	Xmas Club Night	Kenilworth Rugby Club. 8.00pm

*Attendance at most of these events will count towards the 'Rider of the year award'
(D.K.) etc. indicates the run leader.*

Hi Barry

Here's a little travel story for you to consider..

Easy Riders!!

In mid October 2019 my brother and I travelled through Colorado and New Mexico to recreate a bit of that epic period of the famous film. We came across the original set of 'La Contenta Bar' and the current owner gave us directions out into the desert to find Dennis Hopper's grave. It's in the middle of nowhere and we wouldn't otherwise have found it.

We were there 50 years to the day after the original film came out!!

Dennis played Billy in the film and sadly died in 2010. Peter played Wyatt and died just a couple of months before our trip.

For anyone interested I can probably still help them with directions.. needless to say it was some trip.

I took off my watch and stamped on it soon after!! I've not worn one since! (*why? ed.*)

I've been to Santa Fe twice and I'd go straight back there given the chance. One of my favourite places in the USA.

All the best and safe riding to everyone.

Stuart (Keithley)



Definitely not me and my brother!



then....



....and now.

Building my Electric bike

I wanted to build a Velocette Valiant V-line from the collection of spares I had collected over the years. (*Writes Ian Brodie*) Having got so far into the restoration of parts for the bicycle part I needed to source either a Valiant engine or use a LE (Noddy Bike) engine. I went for the LE engine and having assembled the gearbox and drive and fitted them into the frame went on to source crankcase and associated parts for the motor itself. It was at this point my wife and I bought a Smart4two electric car and she suggested I built an electric bike instead. It seemed like a good idea.



So far - so good

So I discarded the crank case and chopped the clutch housing in half and took off the clutch basket so that I could use the gearbox without further modification.



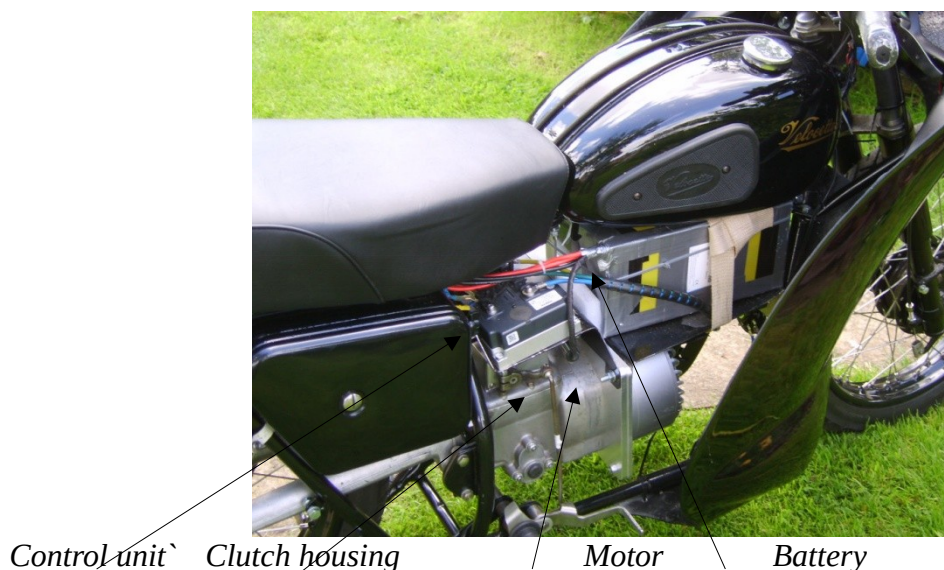
Halved clutch housing on the gearbox



Reduction gear roughly placed

I needed to build a reduction gear to fit in the cut down clutch housing to connect an electric motor to the gearbox. Drive drums and belt were bought and fitted to the clutch housing spindle and the motor. The motor is a Golden Lion from China, and came with a control unit, handlebar levers with electrical connections to facilitate regenerative braking and a handlebar throttle. Once the motor was mounted on a

sliding plate to tension the belt and a mounting for the control unit fabricated, the battery was bought. Again from China it is a Herculesi 48V 60 Ah Li-on battery built to my size specification. Control of speed, cruise, reverse are all available together with the regenerative braking.



I use second gear all the time as it gives a good start and over 40MPH. The range (as calculated and tested so far) is around 20 miles but I have plans to add two more battery units to get it up to 60 miles. It hums!



Front mudguard to be fitted

Getting it registered is another saga for another time
Ian Brodie

Update!

Electric bike - the latest! It is off the road being modified to take three batteries to increase the range from 20 miles to 60 miles! The batteries are Li-on, made to measure and matched in capacity so as to be used in parallel and produced in China. It should be on the road again by the end of February.

Norton factory visit at Solihull

Along with 89 other Norton owners I went to the new state of the art factory on Sunday 15th of January. Only 3 of us arrived by Norton, and one of them was a journalist, John Hagen who is part of the Norton team. It is a real modern large factory which employs about 200 staff and assembles approx 25 model 961's a week!

They need a new engine as the present design is fairly "old hat" and is only euro 4 so is not easy to sell abroad. Norton is now owned by a large Indian firm-TVS who have put millions into the company. There are also plans to manufacture an electric bike- but all is "hush hush" at the moment!

The v4 is a magnificent machine but at over 40 grand out of most of us, mostly retired folks, pocket! The frames are made "in house" but most parts are "bought in" very like the triumphs at Hinckley/ Thailand!

I wish the new venture well and hope to see a smaller, more affordable model in the future. Alan Jennings

Norton Commando 961



Alan Bailey has these bikes for sale due to 'medical issues'

1928 Ariel Model E 500cc Super Sports. Owned for 32 years of enjoyable and reliable service. Sensible offers please, this is a great bike.

1992 Suzuki GN250, electric start, beautiful condition 19556 miles, MOT £995 ono

Both these bikes will be in great condition. See photos on the last page.

tel. Alan 01327 260590

Why I Hate Francis Barnetts. *Ian Chattaway's tale with a sad twist:*

The title is unfair to the Francis Barnett name or a particular bike, more so to my own decision, bad luck, wrong place at the wrong time, circumstance. But nevertheless cannot get this event out of my mind whenever the name Francis Barnett is mentioned.

Back in the mid 1960's my pride and joy was a Triumph T100 Daytona SS. If my memory is correct, it was a 1963 model (burgundy red top to the tank) unit construction 500cc, Rev and speedo clocks, straight handle bars, large chrome headlamp. Purchased from Grays Motorcycles, who sold used bikes and were based at the top of Ball Hill, Coventry. I had regularly visited the shop on my lunch break from work and marvelled at all the bikes available, until I spotted the Triumph and it was a must to have.

But I digress from the story. I had been travelling to and from work on the Triumph, and became concerned during the winter that the Triumph may get damaged, so I purchased a Francis Barnett two stroke for the sole purpose of being transport to and from work. I did take off the leg guards, as it was a step too far to be seen with them.

In those day the roads, certainly the ones I had to use, were never salted and sure enough down went me and the Francis Barnett on an icy road one early morning. With it being a light, tough, and strong bike, it just required picking up and I continued on my journey.

One Sunday, I went over to a friends in Balsall Common and, for a reason I cannot remember, went on the Francis Barnett. On arrival there were two other friends there, as the lad who lived there was customising a BSA C15 into race trim and so advice was in abundance from the others.

Unfortunately one of the friends had a problem with a rear wheel on his combo. that he had come on and needed to go home to get a replacement. His name was Pete, surname I cannot confidently remember, so have left it blank, but he lived in Allesley, Coventry. I lent him the Francis Barnett to go and take the wheel back home. He set off with the wheel on top off the petrol tank supported by his arms, not a good idea. Sadly he was killed (not involving another vehicle) in Lavender Hall Lane after leaving Balsall Common. These days the HS2 work is cutting through this road close to where this unfortunately happened so I am hopeful that the work will improve this road surface and sort out the bend.

So if I had gone on the Triumph that day I certainly would not have lent it to Pete. That's why Francis Barnett's are not a bike I have fond memories of.

RIP Pete

For Sale

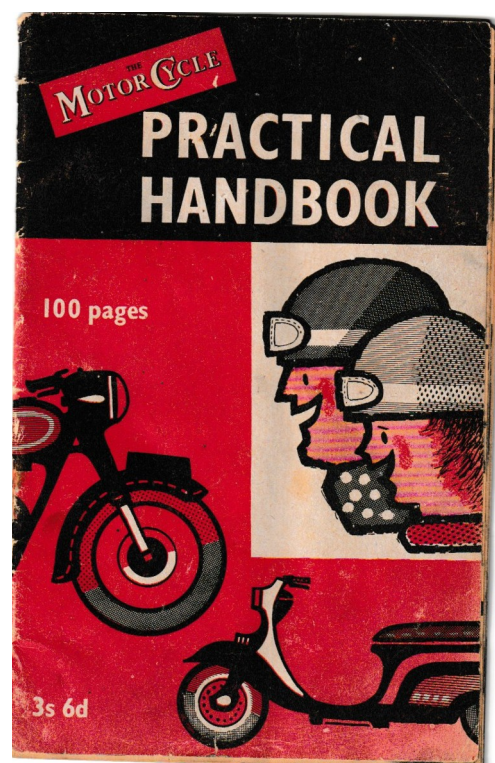
I recently bought a pair of Oxford 'Rain Seal' handlebar muffs. But unfortunately I can't use them with bar end mirrors! So I am selling them for just £20. Brand new in the case.

Phone Barry on 07786718867



Some handy hints from a 1959
publication which cost a whooping
3/6d - 17.5 pence in today's
money!

May be a few more next month?



SELECTING JUNK

Miscellaneous nuts and bolts stored in a tin have usually to be poured out on to the bench and then replaced, by the handful, when the sought-for nut or bolt has been found. But if the contents are wrapped in a piece of polythene sheet before going into the tin the entire selection can be withdrawn, searched through easily, and replaced in seconds only.

PILOT-LIGHT TELL-TALE

In these days of fairings which carry the lamp unit well ahead of the front fork, it is very often impossible to pass a hand across the headlamp to check whether the pilot bulb is lit. One solution comprises a small circle of Perspex, about the size of a half-penny, attached to the tip of a pen-nant standard fitted to the front mud-guard. The reflected light from the lamp is thus readily spotted. When the handlebar screen is not of streamlined, fairing pattern, the plastic disc can be mounted lower and closer to the mudguard blade, through a small angle-bracket.

WHEN TO DECOKE?

It is a widely recognized fact that, where two-strokes are concerned, the way in which an engine is driven and the ratio of oil to petrol employed have an important bearing on when decarbonizing is necessary. Performance, rather than mileage covered, must be the criterion. Since any falling-off in power output owing to carbon formation is inevitably gradual, it is sometimes difficult to detect. Hence a check should be made on a hill on which "clean-engine" performance is known or by means of an acceleration test.

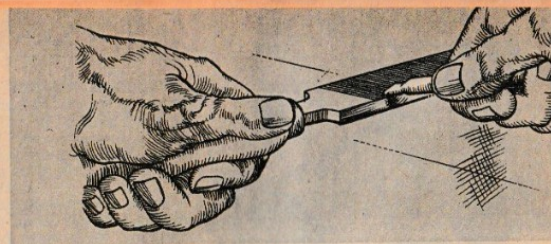
PISTON-RING WEAR

The correct piston-ring end gap is about 0.003 to 0.004 in per inch of cylinder-bore diameter. If the gap is as much as three times that figure, or if the ring has any brownish patches indicating blow-by, a replacement should be fitted. It is false economy to refit doubtful rings; replacements are inexpensive and often serve to put the edge back on performance.



WORKSHOP TOOLS

Excellent carbon scrapers can be made from hexagonal-section keys for socket-head screws. The keys are of different sizes and with their shorter arms ground to a chisel edge they are excellent for cleaning up, for example, the ports in a two-stroke cylinder. More than that, key scrapers of small size make useful screwdrivers for inconveniently placed screws such as those of a lighting switch, ammeter or horn.



SWELLING CLUTCH PLATES

Some clutch materials—notably Neoprene—have a tendency to swell when they are very hot, as may happen when the clutch is abused during fast standing starts, or in dense traffic. When the inserts heat up the clearance at the cable increases. In no circumstances, however, should the slack be taken up, for as soon as the clutch cools the clearance returns to normal. The necessary free movement— $\frac{1}{2}$ in at the handlebar lever—should be set only when the clutch is cold.

DUSTING DOWN

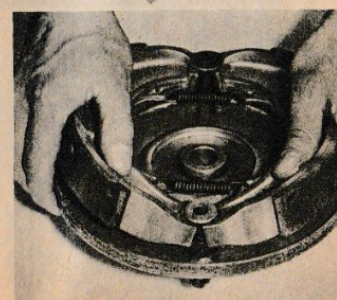
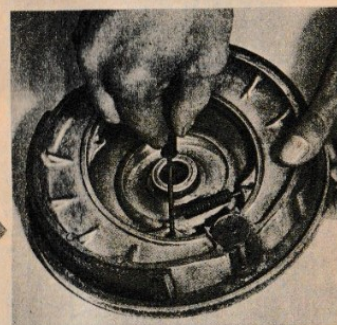
Every under-stairs cupboard conceals a feather duster. When it has served its purpose in the house it will prove excellent for flicking dust off your scooter, motor cycle or sidecar.

FITTING BRAKE SHOES

To ease the task of fitting brake-shoe pull-off springs, the outside spring (where one is fitted) should first be slipped off the cam lever to allow the cam to return to its "neutral" position. A thin-blade screwdriver is then slipped through the free end of one pull-off spring and its tip placed on the eye of the shoe. The screwdriver is then tilted so that the spring slides down the blade and into position. Repeat the process for the other spring. Another scheme, which applies particularly when the springs locate in holes instead of hooks, is to tilt the shoes to form a vee and fit both springs. The shoes are then placed in position on pivot and cam and given a sharp downward push.

CLEANING FILES

Inevitably files become clogged after a time, especially if they have been used on soft metals. One method of cleaning out the teeth is to take a short piece of copper or light-alloy tube, flatten one end and file it square and then rub it over the file in the direction of the teeth.



A 'five minute' job.

I had not used my 1963 Tiger 90 for several weeks due to various factors including the need to change the clutch cable due to it being very jerky and feeling as though it was going to break at any time. So a new inner and outer one was ordered from JJ Cables and this arrived last week.

I have only ever fitted them to little Japanese 2 strokes. I proceeded to start removing the gearbox outer cover by taking off the kick start lever, the gear change lever and a few very tight nuts and bolts. As the cover came away a little, about ½ a cup of water and a drop of oil drained out! I believe it should be dry.

Upon researching further via a parts book I saw that I did not need to remove the cover so on it all went again! The cable is linked to the clutch rod via a vertical short rod with a fork which engages with the ball on the end of the cable. The old cable runs behind the tank so to avoid having to remove it a length of wire was taped to the end of the cable removed from the handlebar lever and then gently pulled through. The new cable was then pulled through the opposite way.

All reconnected and adjusted, first gear was engaged, the clutch lever squeezed and the bike was unable to roll freely! What had I done wrong? The adjustment was rechecked inside the chaincase and at the lever. All perfect but still no luck. I realised that it was not me but sticking clutch plates which were causing the problem so I rocked the bike back and forwards. Started the engine to get it warmed up but still it would not release. I took expert advice involving a brick wall and knocking it into gear! But decided to look for a less violent approach.

In a YouTube video it was said that a tried and tested way was to clamp the clutch lever to the handlebar with a big plastic spring clamp – which I happened to have. So I ventured out to the workshop straight away, late at night, and fitted the clamp. The video said to leave it for a couple of days, but I wanted to use the bike for an event.

So the next morning I pushed the bike out onto my drive and started the engine in neutral, on the centre stand. Then, with the front wheel chocked – just in case – I engaged first gear. There was a slight noise as the back wheel turned but then came almost to a stop. Result! Back in neutral I rolled it off the centre stand and bravely sat astride it and rolled it up to an RSJ used as a gatepost. Clutch lever firmly squeezed, snicked into first and a slight forward motion but a lot freer. After several longer rides across the drive it got better still. I was relieved that the bike was roadworthy once more. Barry

Alan's Bikes for sale

