



newsletter No.21,

April, 2021

VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

Welcome. Is the end in sight? Can we dare to believe that we are definitely seeing the end of this pandemic. Some say that we are not. But we must be optimistic and plan events in the hope that we can enjoy a season a bit more like “the good old days” of ‘19.

More about this years events later but first:

I have lifted this article from the Hereford Sections latest news letter because I know that some members will have read about changes to the law and are not sure if their bikes’ lighting is legal. The highlighted paragraph towards the end seems to state the current legal situation:

DON'T BELIEVE WHAT YOU READ IN THE PAPERS – LED and HID HEADLAMP BULBS

Hot on the heels of the “Carnet” scare stirred up by ill-informed reporting in national newspapers, the Dailly Express launched this misleading headline. “LED bulbs in V&C machines to be made illegal” As ever with these “shock – horror” headlines, it pays to read the whole piece and to read it carefully and as usual, buried deep in the text is the word “Could” as opposed to the more certain phrase found in the headline.

The other issue conveniently overlooked by the headline is the difference between “Illegal” and an “MOT failure”. There was some element of truth in the story, as changes were made in May 2018 to UK MOT law, banning HID conversion for halogen headlamp reflectors and this was extended to include LED conversions in January 2021. The corresponding guidance was issued in MOT testers Manual, which stated, “Existing halogen headlamp units should not be converted to be used with high intensity discharge (HID) or light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.” And continues “If such a conversion has been done, you must fail the headlamp.” It is important to note that this guidance to MOT testers relates only to conversion of halogen bulbs And does not apply to headlamps that were fitted with the earlier Tungsten filament bulbs such as the British Pre-Focus or Bayonet Cap types as fitted to all British bikes from the late 1920s to the 1970s. These can be converted to HID or LED as long as the beam pattern is acceptable.

BULBS OTHER THAN FOR HEADLAMPS

Even greater confusion surrounds the fitting of LED bulbs to indicators and stop/tail lights. These bulbs are fitted extensively to older bikes, particularly the stop/tail bulbs which prevent the dangerous dimming of headlights when the rear brake is applied. According to the Daily Express article “LED lights cannot be fitted anywhere else on your historic vehicle unless the bulbs meet ECE 128 and ECE standard 148”.

Classic lighting Guru Paul Goff helpfully explains the real situation regarding upgraded lights. We print his words without comment:-

“The current MoT regulations specifically state that ‘Existing halogen headlamp units should not be converted to be used with HID or LED bulbs’. This therefore does not apply to headlights that were fitted with the earlier Tungsten filament bulbs such as the British Pre-Focus or Bayonet Cap types as fitted to all British bikes from the late 1920s to the 1970s. Many commentators, journalists, and do-gooders have missed that the change banning LED headlight bulbs only applies to halogen headlights. Maybe they don't know the difference between Halogen & Tungsten filament bulbs? This shouldn't be an MoT failure, providing the pattern is acceptable and some early BPF LEDs were poor in this respect. (I didn't start selling LED headlamp bulbs until I found good ones.) Also, there is a lot of rubbish on Ebay, particularly for the H4 halogen headlamp.

Many old car/biker owners fitted the later H4 halogen headlamps with QH bulbs and have now fitted LEDs. These are MoT failure, just as a split fork gaiter or cracked rear lights is an MoT failure. You cannot be prosecuted so to are other laws governing vehicles from 1980 and more from 1986 which covers CE marking. Vehicles made before CE marking was invented are exempt from these regs. They are not retrospective. Again this point is usually missed.

CONSTRUCTION AND USE REGULATIONS

The only regs. that older vehicles could fall foul of is the Construction and Use Regs that were in place when the vehicle was built. These give minimum Wattages for each bulb, but who is going to check? Certainly not an MoT tester. As long as they look bright enough they're OK and again there is no offence.

The new MoT regs were obviously designed to stop the fitting of poor quality LEDs/HIDs that cause glare. I sell good ones and am happy to carry on as before.”

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT STATEMENT

“Following feedback, a review of regulations has led the Department for Transport to conclude that the MOT headlamp conversion failure for HID and LED bulbs will no longer apply to motorcycles. The conversion failure continues to apply to cars and vans first used on or after 1 April 1986 but does not apply for vehicles with a conversion prior to 1 April 1986.

The Motorcycle and Cars and passenger vehicles inspection manuals will be updated shortly.

Further information • The change will not be retrospectively applied.

• LED headlamp replacement units can continue to be fitted to older vehicles.”

My First Banbury Run by Simon Dudfield

In the last news letter Simon recalled buying the AJS from David Kendall, now he rides it!:

January the 5th was the opening date for the Banbury run entries. I downloaded the entry form, enclosed a cheque and sent it to Allen House. Fortunately I was accepted and could look forward to June. In the meantime, I rode all the Warwickshire Section runs, accompanying Davids Payne and Kendall, as their motorcycles' pace matched the AJS's.

I had entered a timed run and discussed with award-winning veterans the various methods of achieving a timing award. It seemed to me luck played as much a part as stopwatches and copiously studying maps or practising at the required speed. No speedometer or odometer are allowed. The only definite to be calculated is the finish time. Choosing the C route, it was a 35 mile run to be completed at an average of 15 mph... and no Sunrising Hill! It is meant for veteran motorcycles really. No matter. I just wanted to get safely round and enjoy the day.

The day arrived. I rode the six miles to Gaydon in glorious sunshine. I was ushered to the parking area, dismounted and pushed the AJS to my number and parked up. Then signed in, attached my number and put the route sheet in my route roller. I had time to look at the excellent machines on show and chat to their owners. My start time arrived. Your machines are pushed to an area where you are instructed to start your engine. Five motorcycles start at five minute intervals. After that Harry Wiles (Clerk of the course) calls you forward to line up. With a "good morning" to Harry, the flag dropped and we were away. Concentration is required as the only instructions on the Tulip sheet are the type of junction and left or right. No mileages!. I soon caught up with some one on a timed C route riding a veteran Royal Enfield. He had to stop at each junction as it had no clutch. I guessed that if I went faster, it would allow time to nip off route for a cup of tea. On return to the route I had to give way to the surprise of the veteran Enfield rider. A five minute gap behind him had to be maintained. I stopped for a chat with my friend David Payne who was having a break. On arrival at Gaydon the route card has to be handed in. An official noticed an error and helpfully put me right. The Banbury mug safely stored in my saddlebag, I watched the remaining riders return and browsed the auto jumble.

The day was completed with the award ceremony. Imagine my surprise when a silver award was presented to me. Which proved my 'luck rather than judgement' theory! I thoroughly enjoyed my day. All I can say is the organisers do a brilliant job and can't be thanked enough. I have now completed five Banburys. The opportunity to enter other pre`30 and`40 events were subsequently taken but more about those next month..... to be continued.



Simon on the 'Banbury Run'

Chairman's Chat

Fill her up...while you can!

I can still remember being served petrol for the first time after purchasing my first motorcycle, and also feeling very proud and grown up about this experience. Up until that point in my life, I had to make do with observing the forecourt rituals through the window of our family car, and my Dad's much cherished Humber Sceptre springs to mind. I was always fascinated by watching the small impeller spin around inside the glass dome...was this to prove fuel was flowing into the customer's vehicle or just to amuse an inquisitive child?

The petrol station in question for my first ever fill up, was Smith & Sons on the Binley road in Coventry not far from the Craven Arms Public House, and the brand of fuel on sale was ICI. However, just up the road was another petrol station - this time selling Murco petrol, complete with the forecourt stones painted in Red, White and Blue...very smart and very much like a race circuit. Alas, both these fuel dispensing establishments have ceased trading, and the Murco station is now the Binley Mega Chippie, dispensing amongst other things deep fried Halloumi.....how times have changed!

With the inevitable onwards march of vehicle electrification and the closing of smaller filling stations, maybe now is a good time to be considering carrying a couple of litres of spare fuel – just enough get you home...or at least to the nearest filling station. Vintage machines in particular can be very deceptive in the amount of fuel they actually carry, because a section of the petrol tank actually contains an oil tank. Help is at hand, because I can recommend two ways that a Vintage or Classic motorcyclist can carry some spare fuel safely and conveniently in a secure container:



Fuelpax from Rotopax supply various size containers which mount securely to their own mounting system, as used by Gordon May on his latest overland adventures. Or, Fuel Friend, a tough 2litre leak proof container that is small enough to be carried on a rack or even in a rucksack. I carry my spare (get me home) fuel for the Rover in one of these on my rack.

Suggested online suppliers are 'The adventure bike shop' and 'Louis motorcycle equipment' Don't get caught out, because before you know it, that petrol station you thought would always be there could end up being a Vegan tanning salon or a McDonalds drive through...or maybe both!

Stay safe.. David Kendall

National Waypoint Rally

I am sure that you will by now have read about is event in the Vintage and Classic journal. As our contribution I have submitted 3 locations in our 'patch'.

These are: Chesterton Windmill, up on the hill near the junction of the Fosse Way and the B4100 near Gaydon. If you have never walked up to it its a great view point easily accessible from Windmill Hill Lane CV33 9LB.

Queen and Castle pub opposite Kenilworth Castle. CV8 1ND. A nice area with both roadside parking and car parks nearby. A walk past the pretty old cottages leads to Purlieu Lane an almost traffic free route to the open fields at the rear of the castle. From here one can circumnavigate the medievil fortress. A very pleasant walk in good weather. Our third location is the monument on Meriden Green. This ancient site traditionally marked the centre of England. (now officially on Lindley Hall Farm, in Fenny Drayton, Leicestershire). It is a pleasant location for a stop en route, with a very nice chip shop fairly close by for an al fresco lunch.

I thought it would be good if riders visiting these, and more especially way points in other areas, could send me photos of you and bike at locations with a paragraph or two, if you wish, about your trip(s). The 'official' booklet will be out soon I believe. Please observe Covid rules, of course.

Sidecar frame for free!!

Canterbury make sidecar chassis (c 1950's) for disposal, free to collect (Leamington) if anybody should want it. Rusty but sound with braked wheel but no fittings; next stop the tip.

smith_brian1@sky.com



a similar one showing a better image



the actual one

Riding Suit for Sale

I had a phone call from Geoff Parr saying that he has now stopped riding his bikes and wishes to sell his motor cycle suit which would be a good one. The suit is, Trousers and Padded Jacket by Richa size XL. Geoff would like £100 for it, the suit can be seen/ tried on at our house at 9 chandlers Rd, Whitnash but please ring first 01926-429310 we have an answer phone on all the time, so could you please put it out to our members. Many thanks and take care. All the best. Frank (Parker)

Triumph Bonneville America for sale



This is a rare opportunity to own a 2007 bike with only 3070 miles on the clock! Its former owner bought it new but soon fell ill and passed away.

It comes with all its paperwork and m.o.t's. It also comes with Triumph branded leather panniers, back rack and sissy bar (back rest) and a wind screen. It is 865cc and one of the last ones with carburettors.

Phone John – a section member- on 07946731702

£4,300 o.n.o.

As he is downsizing his 'collection' he also has available a 1972 T120 Bonneville, a 1971 T150 Trident - both in excellent condition, a 1970 B.S.A. Starfire (the one I rode round Yorkshire and wrote an article about in 2019) and a Francis Barnett 175cc 1959 'Lt. Cruiser' both in usable condition.

Forthcoming events:

We will be putting events onto the calendar fairly soon. The one we know about is Founders Day at Stanford Hall on Sunday 18 July. Entry fee refund for bikes on our stand!

Coventry Parade may be on again this year. Keep an eye on the website and emails.

The events NOT on this year...so far are The Banbury Run, and Cassington Bike night.

I will update members as I hear about events which may be of interest.

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