

newsletter No.18,

January 2021

## VMCC Warwickshire Section Newsletter

Welcome to a brand new year. We, as a club, will endeavour to make up for last years lack of activities once this pandemic is finally controlled. We should be holding our a.g.m. very shortly but we need a safe way of doing so. It looks like it will have to be online. Please look out for details via email or our website.

As usual we will start off this edition with some wise words from our chairman:

### Chairman's Chat

2021 and a brave new year..... Hello everybody... and a Happy New year to all our vintage and classic motorcycle enthusiasts from myself and the committee. I also hope that you enjoyed a Happy Christmas and received some useful and interesting presents such as.... Whitworth sockets instead of elasticated socks. . Castrol R instead of after shave. . and Solvol autosol instead of Sanatogen. However if you did receive some gifts that are not to your liking, maybe put them to one side for a raffle prize when we resume our club night activities. Looking ahead to the new year, we will carry over our cancelled 2020 calendar of events into 2021 with revised dates. But being realistic about the current situation most of our Club activities will be on hold until we get the Green light to continue. However, as we get past January and February, we will do our utmost to carry on with our pop-up informal rides into suitable venues similar to last year ..... but ONLY if the Warwickshire Covid infection rates come down and it is deemed safe to proceed under Government guidelines. All I can say is please stay safe in these difficult times, keep your machine well fettled, and stay optimistic. We will soon feel the sun on our backs, along with the aroma of warm engine oil and the sound of some poor soul cursing as he or she tries to kick their motorcycle into life. And don't forget we are always on the lookout for interesting articles for our newsletter....what did you do in lock down Stay safe.. David Kendall

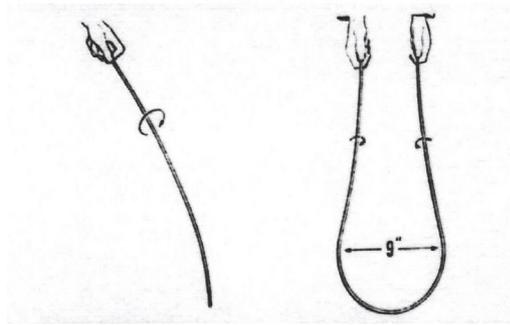
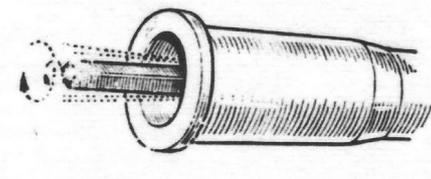
In the course of sorting out a suspected fault with my T90 speedo I had great assistance from a very recent ex-member John Heywood. As well as servicing it he gave me a document that he wrote a few years ago that I found interesting. I thought that many other members would also benefit from reading it and perhaps keeping a copy for future reference. John has kindly agreed for me to share it with you:

# Smith's Speedos

## Installation Guidelines

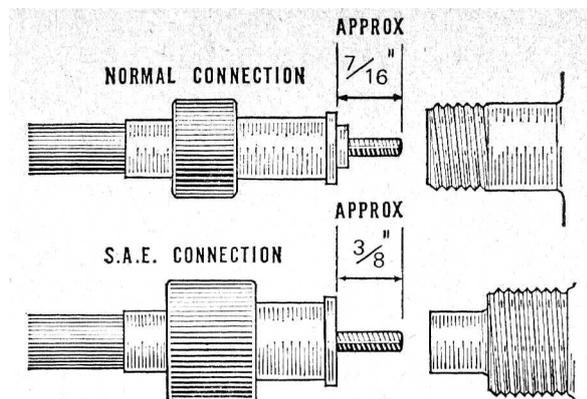
*Since I have been repairing Smiths speedometers and tachometers I have noted that many people are not very sure about some installation details. To remedy this lack I have compiled the following notes (based on original Smiths publications) which I offer to anyone who wants them. It might just save you a bill later!*

### CABLE INSPECTION & LUBRICATION

1. Disconnect the drive cable at the instrument end and withdraw the inner cable.
2. Pull the cable through a rag held in one hand to remove surplus old grease and to detect any broken strands (they will catch on the rag).
3. (a) Lay out the inner cable straight on a flat surface and roll. Any kinks will be easily seen.  
  
(b) Hold the cable in a loop, one end in each hand, with the ends pointing upwards. Gently roll one end between thumb and forefinger and feel with the other hand whether it starts to turn immediately. If it does it is OK. If not it may cause unsteady readings.
4. Check that the inner flex rotates concentrically when fitted to the outer casing, and not eccentrically as shown by the dotted lines.  

5. Grease the inner cable sparingly with Castrol LM grease (Superseded by Multi-purpose) or equivalent. **DO NOT USE OIL.**
5. Feed the inner cable back into its casing then withdraw it approximately 8 inches. Wipe off the surplus grease.
6. Feed the cable down the outer casing and make sure it engages with the drive. Turn the wheel (or tacho drive) in the forward direction of rotation and make sure that the cable rotates in the correct direction for the instrument. Most speedo cables will turn CW when viewed end on. If it turns the wrong way check the gearbox fitted.

Reconnect to the instrument.

[Most speedos and tachos (but not all) turn CCW when viewed at the back of the instrument. Note that there are varieties of gearbox with different ratios and rotations – they are not interchangeable.]



7. Make sure that the squared ends are undamaged (with sharp corners) and a good slide fit in the female squares of the instrument and the drive. If they are too tight a little gentle work with a fine grinding wheel is permissible. They must slide and not wedge when fitted.

8. With the cable fitted to the bike at the drive end and the inner cable pushed down measure the distance it protrudes from the outer casing. If this distance is too great shorten it with a fine grinding wheel, making sure that you do not splay the strands. Too long an inner cable will damage the internals of the instrument and invalidate any warranty you may have.

*[Too short a cable will result in erratic readings. My experience is that 1/2" is satisfactory for the S(R)SM magnetic instruments.]*

When installing the cable Smiths recommended a minimum bend radius of 6" with no bend within 2" of either end.

Please do not fit a new inner cable to an old outer casing (except in an emergency) – it is a recipe for early failure.

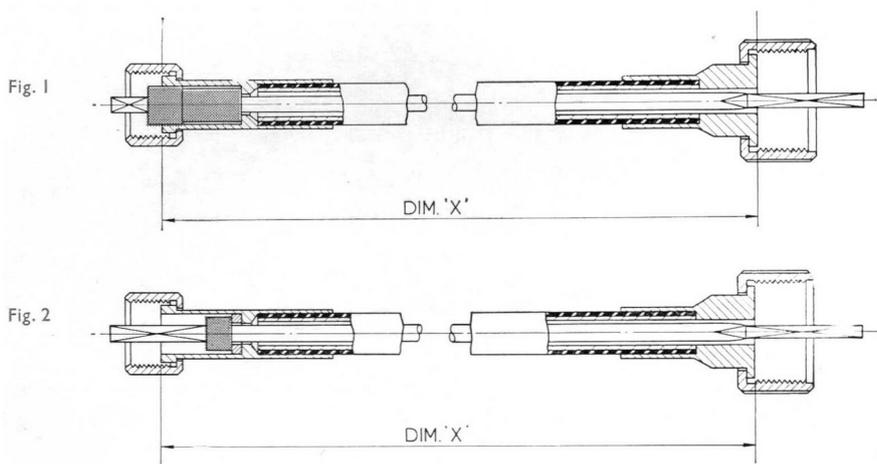
Where the cable is driven from the engine or main gearbox the presence of oil at the lower end on disconnection will indicate failure of the seal. This oil will work its way up the cable and cause instrument failure.

Note that sudden failure of a cable driving a chronometric instrument will, in many cases, leave the instrument stuck at the current reading. This is not a fault in the instrument.

## **CABLE LENGTH**

The first point is to measure the cable correctly when ordering a new one. The actual length is given in the Smiths Catalogues for the make, model and year of the bike. The diagram shows how a cable should be measured (dimension X).

### **Cable Length - Overall**



John Heywood

Tel: 01926 408074

## **Book worm?**

I had already planned to write this article before I received David's 'Chairman's Chat' which asked what members did during lock down. Me? as well as fettling bikes and generally pottering in the shed I read loads of books. These included Catcher in the Rye, The Great Gatsby, The Time Machine, Journey to the Centre of the Earth, 1984,

Animal Farm, Short History of nearly Everything etc. These are books I had wanted to read but never found time. The solution? Audio books. On YouTube there are loads of titles available **free of charge!** I accessed the wi-fi, from the router in the house, on my smartphone. Then clicked on the chosen book and listened whilst I fettled. The recording can be paused, either momentarily or overnight. I am now reading a J K Rowling book (not Harry Potter). So if you want to 'kill 2 birds' and at no cost why not consider listening while you work? *Barry Heath*

### Continuing from last month's recounting of a favourite ride, John Mills rides on:

From Bonchester Bridge we turned right back onto the A6088 eventually joining the busy A68 at Carter Bar. This location marks the border between Scotland and England and was a place where local border disputes were dealt with. Looking at the OS map these meetings were not always settled peacefully, the Redeswire Fray took place there in 1576. Travelling further south into England we passed close to the Otterburn battlefield of 1388 when a Scottish force led by Sir James Douglas Earl of Douglas who were returning from an aborted attack on Newcastle, defeated the English led by Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

As we had not been able to get a view of Kielder Water due to the road closure mentioned previously we took a quick look at the visitor centre before going to Greenhaugh and our accommodation for the night at The Holly Bush. A very pleasant evening was had in the bar with a roaring fire and good food and drink.



The next day we were on the road early in anticipation of a long journey to Skipton and also due to a very bad weather forecast. Initially the weather was dry but by Hexham the wind had got up and some tall vehicles were having problems. The rain started as we headed for Alston on the A686 and after a brief stop in the town to decide whether to find shelter, we took the first option which was to take the B6277 to Middleton in Teesdale and then take the B6276 to Brough.

By this time the weather conditions were worse than anything I had experienced in 50 years of driving a car, let alone riding a motorcycle. It is about 25 miles from Alston to Brough across some very inhospitable terrain, often with few signs of human habitation. Add to this the driving rain and fierce wind making controlling the bike very difficult. It was an



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experience I will never forget. We reached Brough in the early afternoon soaking wet, tired and hungry. First signs were not promising although it had now stopped raining. The chippy was shut but we did find a hotel where we were able to buy a coffee and a

bag of crisps. Feeling a little better we took the A685 to Kirby Stephen and then the B6259/A684 to Hawes. Passing through these towns the sun was shining and both were bustling with tourists and locals going about their business. This was a total contrast to the conditions which we had experienced only a short time before.

After Hawes we took the B6255 and B6279 through Horton in Ribblesdale to Settle and the A65 to complete an uneventful conclusion to our journey to Skipton.

The final day saw us travelling home through the Peak District which was uneventful. We were delayed by a traffic jam on the outskirts of Skipton but once out of it we made good time into Derbyshire although by this time it had started to rain and it got worse the further south we got. By the time we reached Ashbourne for a coffee stop we were soaked again.

With the weather getting even worse we travelled the next 40 miles or so to Kings Bromley where we parted company having covered over 700 miles of quite gruelling but enjoyable motorcycling conditions.

## Secretaries Shorts

I am once again sharing an item from another sections newsletter which I think will be of interest.

### new numberplate regulation

From January 1st 2021 the regulations concerning displaying black & silver (or white) number-plates on historic vehicles will change. The DVLA have issued the following statement: "This note is to tell you about important changes being introduced on 1 January 2021 that affect the ability of vehicles registered in the historic tax class to display the old style pre-1973 black and silver number plates.

### THE LAW OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Following the change in definition of a historic vehicle for vehicle tax exemption purposes in 2015, an issue was identified in the regulatory requirements for the valid display of a black and silver number plate. This resulted in an unintended consequence where any vehicle over 40 years old and registered in the historic tax class would be permitted to display an old style black and silver number plate. This was despite the law previously requiring all vehicles first registered after 1 January 1973 to only display the yellow and white number plates with black characters.

As this was never the intention, we have sought to rectify this through a legal correction which will shortly be implemented. The change seeks to prevent any vehicle constructed after 1 January 1980 from the ability to display the black and silver number plate despite being recorded in the DVLA's historic tax class. Those vehicles with a construction date prior to 1 January 1980 will continue to be able to legally display black and silver number plates to avoid any undue costs of replacement.

**Message from Dennis Beale our new area rep.**

Just in case you have not seen the separate email I forwarded here is his message:

"South Midland Area Rep.

A while ago I was approached about taking on this role. I considered I do not have the time to do it justice, but then I thought as this post is vacant perhaps what time I can allocate to it is better than none at all. So I put my head above the parapet and I have now been co-opted to this role until the next AGM, when I must stand for election to continue. I have been an active member of the VMCC since 1976, have been Chairman of 3 different Sections and organised numerous events, so hopefully have some experience which may be useful to the Club.

I see my role to act as a communicator between the management side of the VMCC and the membership. This will be mainly through electronic communication via the respective Section Secretaries. However I realise that there may be members who, for various reasons, do not attend Section meetings, or do not use modern technology. For any member in this situation, or indeed any member who wishes to discuss something with me direct, I am available on [denbeale@gmail.com](mailto:denbeale@gmail.com) or 01452 750424 (before 9pm please).

There are a lot of decisions to be made regarding the way ahead for the Club and it is important that the members views, based on accurate information, are heard.

Hopefully most members in the South Midland Area will already be aware of this from their respective Section Secretary, but I want to ensure all are included, so if you are aware of a member who does not attend a particular Section, or is not on e mail, could I ask that if possible you pass this information on. I have also put this info in the next Journal to hopefully include all members, but unfortunately everything in the Journal is at least one month behind due the printing schedule.

Best wishes for a summer of vintage motor cycling.

Dennis Beale"

Thats all this month. Please send in your contribution however small. It all helps in the compilation of a varied and interesting news letter.

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