

Quarterly Quest

Jan 2009 Vol.10



East London & Essex Section
News Letter

An Alternative View

Despite bad weather reports prior to our Friday departure, the sunny morning was most inspiring! The run assembled at Vics house in Dagenham and consisted of seven section members, Vic, Dudley, Roy, Graham (Eaton), Ron (Mathers), Dave (Slater) and Dennis. Graham was riding Roy's P11 which was not happy ticking over. Bearing in mind our proposed route through the City and its necessary frequent stops and starts, minor adjustments were made. Departing at 10.20am we were accompanied by Reg through Central London until he departed



for home in the West End. Although London was, as usual, very busy we remained "tight" and via the M4 with a couple of stops, we continued, using 'A' roads arriving at the Rally site at approximately 12.15. A busy scene greeted us and after booking in and enjoying tea and coffee plus biscuits thoughtfully provided by the organizers. We ensured that Vic's camping site was settled in and we noncamping "wimps" departed for our campsite, a hotel! Later, returning to the Rally we joined the scheduled 4pm run and enjoyed a well conducted ride through lovely scenery, over the downs with far reaching views, touching areas of Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire. A total of 35 riders enjoyed this excellent run of some 40 miles in good company and fine weather. Dinner at our pub that night was very lively! Saturday dawned cloudy but dry and after a "full English" the "wimps" returned to the Rally site to re-unite with Vic and also Richard Smith (who had travelled separately),

both of whom had camped successfully. Further adjustments were again made to the P11 and after much meeting and greeting of old friends and making new ones, the main run briefing took place with the ride departing sharp at 11am. Another well conducted run in somewhat cold and windy weather and a little "scotch mist", took us again through some very nice country, past 'one' of the White Horse chalk cuttings and onto a very interesting Motor Museum at Calne, mid run. The P11 was still being rather troublesome so it was decided that a swap round of machinery was in order. Rob Swift was whinging about Malcolm Arnold's G80CS, so he was handed the P11, Graham on the AJS 33CSR (Ken Burton's bike, that Roy now has) and Roy on the G80. We start to make our way back, through the ancient stone circle at Avebury, but it's not long before Rob's moaning again. Another swap, this time Roy on the P11 and Rob back on the G80 (best stick with what you know!) and we completed this 90 mile ride which we all thoroughly enjoyed. After chatting at the site (more tea and coffee) and inspecting many and various nice bikes, the "wimps" departed for a wash-up and change of togs before dinner.

Later at the site we met with Rob Swift and family and dined with many other rallyists at a local pub restaurant before attending the Rally booze-up(oops sorry meeting) where in a boisterous atmosphere Ron Mathers was presented with the Best AJS trophy for his model 20, well done that man! Awaking on Sunday morning we soon realised that our luck with the weather had run out. After raining all night it continued the rest of the day. Returning to the Rally to meet with Vic we found him in his usual good spirits despite having to pack up a



sopping wet tent etc (oh the joys of camping). Led again by Vic and in absolutely FOUL weather we set of for home in non stop torrential rain following a more direct route of the A34 onto the M4 and back into Central London getting wetter every mile. It's about this time that everybody starts thinking that really we have had no 'mechanical maladies or problems. However just after leaving Vic's the P11 spluttered onto 1 cylinder and then completely stopped. Yes you've guessed, out of fuel and as

Graham was bringing up the rear, watched everyone ride away! Soon Dudley and Roy notice he is missing and return to find out what the problem is and by now has pushed the bike about ½ a mile. Holding onto Roy's arm, not the safest way to ride, some better progress was made, Roy did however have a tow strap in the back pack and by using this they eventually made it to a garage, where, once refueled were on their way again. We were somewhat mystified why the P11 ran out of fuel, despite refueling just before leaving the Rally site, when exactly the same journey was completed going without a problem. The only thought was that as a result of the 'adjustments' over the Rally weekend the bike had become somewhat 'enriched' thus using significantly more fuel? Only Vic stayed dry apart from wet feet! The rest of us wet right through and even Roy's ploy of plastic bags in his boots did not work. We all thought we were well prepared but found out otherwise!! However, we all agreed that we had enjoyed the Rally and the company, my total mileage for the three days being 305 but I know some had a little further to go before getting home.

Dennis/Graham

Front cover The Alternative Crew

Mister Bisters Rattle Part Two

As Vic said 'everything has been renewed or checked, so the oil must be going down worn valve guides, heads off again, over to Vic's place, because he has special permission to use the domestic oven from her indoors (only kidding Gloria) to heat up the heads, remove old guides and fit new. Joan would have divorced me had I suggested it at home. Heads put back on, down the road for a road test, guess what still burning oil like a 2 stroke, so bad it oils up the right hand spark plug and we are on one cylinder. I have already changed down to heat ranges plug wise. Not far from my workshop is engineering John, when I have customers head gasket repair, the head goes to John for skimming etc, he does the engineering side of the car business. John used to work for Gosnay's engineering years ago and has done work on old bikes. I had spoken to him about the problem 'sounds like rings to me' ---- no John they have been renewed and have covered less than 1000 miles, 'it still sounds like rings'. A couple of weeks pass by (still hoping the rings will bed in) and engineering John suggests right head off again to have a look. Seat off, petrol tank off, another set of gaskets, head removed only to reveal oil on the piston crown and an oil trail right across the head gasket. This trail of oil seems to be coming from the metering jet area, where the barrel oil drilling meets the head drilling, that's it the head is warped, no its not, I check it with a straight edge, so does John cause he says my straight edge is probably not straight. John loans me a pot of special gasket cement (20 pounds a pot) 'want it back quick because we use it everyday', 'put some around the metering jets both sides of the gasket' he said. Just finished putting the head on, seat on and tank on, when I noticed 1/8 inch thick rubber washer on the garage floor, it comes from under the left hand front petrol tank mounting bolt 'O blow' (Well ---- a similar word but different spelling!). Can't be bothered to replace it now, I want to road test, I will refit it another time. Road test reveals oil is still a problem, but it also shows the left hand handle 'bar now has a tingle at 40 mph. On the final build when this rubber washer was correctly replaced the tingle had disappeared ---- just shows you doesn't it. I spoke to engineering John again and he said no messing about this time (that was spelt differently too!) take both barrels off and we will have a look. Large amounts of oil on both pistons and the oil rings were so sharp you could have shaved with them, the oil rings had warn away in 1000 miles. Complained to Gosnay's who had supplied the rings, they said glaze was not busted enough, so how come the comp rings were not worn, still gapped at 4 thou and the oil rings which were originally gapped at 6 thou were now 28 thou and 22 thou. The compression rings were supplied in hepolite packets, the oil rings supplied loose (probably made in Patagonia!). New oil control rings, this time in hepolite packets were fitted and the bike now runs beautifully (thanks Vic for all your help!).

So remember if vibration makes your false teeth pop out get into rubber! SShh.....is that a rattle I can hear on the velo?

Graham B. Ps Piston Brooke winner 2008 for the third Time

I saw this in the Bonham Stafford Auction and diced to have a punt but droped out at £1,750.00 Roy

Sale <u>16253</u> - Collectors' Motorcycles and Related Memorabilia, 19 Oct 2008 Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show, Stafford

Lot No: 244

1955 Matchless 347cc G3 LS 347cc

Registration no. HJL 233 Frame no. A 32687 Engine no. 28957

One of Britain's best-loved machines in the post-war period, the '350 Matchbox', along with its AJS counterpart, received the company's improved teledraulic forks with full-width hubs in late 1954. This 'G3 LS' version, registered by Astons of Coventry on 31st May 1955, has been in the hands of just two brothers from new. HJL 233 was ridden into the garage in 1962 and, for family reasons, remained there until late 2008 meaning that it has had forty or so years less wear than most of its contemporaries. It is in absolutely original condition needing re-commissioning and a 'deep clean' to emerge as the sort of bike that every AMOC member will want to fight for. It has its RF.60 Logbook, a V5, the original panniers and some spares. Absolutely lovely.

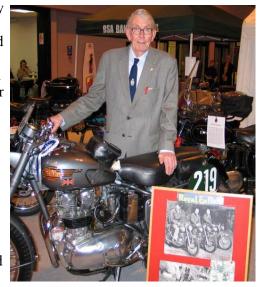


Sold for £2,185 inclusive of Buyer's Premium

The Classic Bike Show

On Sunday 16th November Dennis, Roy, Dudley, Graham & I travelled up to the NEC in Birmingham to visit Classic Bikes, incorporated in the Classic Motor Show. I was elected as the driver for the day, setting off just after 7:00am to collect everyone. Roy had already purchased the tickets, to take advantage of the discount available. In typical fashion we stopped for breakfast at the first Little Chef on the

A45, having decided to give the motorway services a miss. Fortified with the eggs & bacon, not to mention the sausages tea and toast, we carried on to the show, arriving just after opening time. The bikes were on display in the Pavilion where we made our way to the club stand to store our coats etc. By handing our ticket stubs to Roger & Spider the club were able to receive £1 each back from the organisers. Amongst the bikes on our stand was this year's raffle bike resplendent in two tone blue and cream. Colin Seeley also had part of the stand where he was selling volume 2 of his book; which both Graham and I took the opportunity to purchase. We wandered around the various other stands to view



some very good exhibits from other one make & specialist clubs from BSA to Vincent. Dennis became sidetracked on the Motorcycling Club stand, where he had visions of reliving his youth by once again entering long distance trials. Dudley of course looked at the jumble and accessories stalls but could not see any bargains to be had. I could not resist buying even more tools to add to my already overflowing toolboxes. However I did manage to resist buying the new Shark crash helmet priced at £325!!! We also went into the other halls that contained scores of very desirable classic cars along with many trade stands selling a huge variety of specialist parts.

Eventually we returned to the club stand to find Editor Chris Read persuading attractive young ladies to pose on the raffle bike. He claims this is merely to obtain a suitable photo for the December front cover! It did of course attract some attention to our stand and we set about selling



tickets for the raffle which was to be drawn shortly.

New club chairman John Lowe and President Roy accosted every passer by: encouraging many to part with their money. (Over the 3 days of the show approximately £1000 was taken). Former trials and ISDT star Johnnie Britain agreed to draw the tickets for the raffle, but before doing so entertained the gathering crowd with tales from the 1952/3 ISDT. One of the

special test involved repairing a puncture which John told us could be achieved in only *four* minutes. The actual bike on which he won a Gold Medal & helped the British Team to Trophy victory was on the adjoining Royal Enfield stand. Johnnie then drew the three winning tickets from the many thousands in the drum but none were won by our section, although the bike has been won by a club member

A Jennings.

Where's The Superiority?

"I think you should do an article on waterproof clothing for the Quest", said Vic after arriving in heavy rain at the Cornwall Jampot rally on the Thursday afternoon, while I was commiserating with him about the seemingly short life of the waterproofing element of even the most expensive of garments. However it is very difficult to know how and where to start such an article, after all I have hardly had wide experience of all the types and brands of motor cycle clothing on offer, so any sort of test results or comparison is out of the question. Also I have my own likes and dislikes as to what I want to wear when riding my bikes and I am not about to "preach" to anyone else what they should wear. So although Vic's comment was made half in jest I thought that perhaps I would just put down my own thoughts and experiences in the hope that others might later join in and provide a bit more copy for Roy for future issues of "Quest".

I have never really favoured leather for motorcycle clothing as, although it is often portrayed, maybe correctly, as being the strongest and safest thing to wear, I have not found it to be either waterproof or particularly warm. So although I do have a sturdy leather jacket in my wardrobe it doesn't get a lot of use, being only brought out on days when I feel certain that it is not going to rain or be too cold – or too hot for that matter. Consequently, being hardly qualified with wide experience of leather clothing I shall confine my thoughts to those garments which are meant to give weather protection rather than comment on any crash protection properties which the garments might have. Most motorcycle magazines carry out some sort of clothing revues on a regular basis and often start their articles with statements to the effect that the clothing we have available now is so much better than in the past and how lucky we are that we now have a so much better choice of clothing to keep us warm and dry than was available previously. Certainly I can't argue with the amount of choice because there are no end of manufacturers rushing to part us from our money with numerous stylish offerings and promises of total protection from the elements. I was beginning to think that it was just me being continually unlucky but, the more people I speak to the more I find that are having the same problems as me and that things are nowhere near as good as we are led to believe. It seems that although we can have an "off" in relative comfort compared with days of old, we still cannot expect to cover more than a few miles in heavy rain without getting the same old "soggy" feeling so familiar for so many years.

When I first started riding, back in the early 1960's, I couldn't afford any motorcycle clothing and for the first few months I "made do" with my father's old battledress top which, although reasonably windproof kept no water out for more than a minute or two. Then I was given a very secondhand vinyl copy of the typical "coffee bar cowboy" leather jacket. Although heavy and as stiff as a board in cold weather, due to its welded vinyl seams, it was completely waterproof and did the job I wanted it to. However, eventually the plastic started splitting around the neck and sleeves so I took my motorcycling uncle's advice and bought a thornproof Belstaff Trialsmaster jacket and trousers, big enough to get a heavy layer of jumpers underneath. This served its purpose admirably and remained waterproof and flexible, with heavy jumpers underneath it kept me warm in winter and with just a shirt underneath, cool enough in summer. Of course there were no thoughts of armoured inserts then. The big downside though was that the things were filthy, leaving black waxy marks on everything I came into contact with including the bike, and shirt cuffs

and collars. It might be OK for attending a rally in the middle of a field, but not the best thing for going to work in or visiting a fussy relative or friend.

When I put this point to my uncle, he gave me the coat which he had used for going to work on his bike. Made by a company called Armadrake, it was full length and came down to my ankles. Made of a similar vynide plastic as my old "rocker jacket" I could wear it over any sort of "normal" clothing as I so desired and I kept perfectly dry and warm. It was, in fact, a plasticized version of what was generally known as a stormcoat and no matter if the plastic overtrousers that I was wearing were a bit leaky around the seat area I still kept dry because the coat came well below that area in any case. Of course, wearing such an "out of fashion" garment in the mid 1960s was a cause of much ribaldry from my workmates at first, with comments of, "here comes the Gestapo", or "have you come to read the meter". Never mind, I was remaining dry while they were rather wetter in the bad weather – or had switched to their cars instead.

Eventually though, the plastic on this admirable coat started to crack up and of course by that time there were no replacements on the motorcycle market. However, at work, we were able to obtain long coats called Paramaters, which were made of what I believe is the proper mackingtosh material in that it consists of two cotton layers with a thickish rubber membrane between them. They were intended for people who had to spend long hours out in the pouring rain (ie the aforesaid meter readers) and were of a similar dimension to my Armadrake coat and so I put one of these to good use and used it for many years on my motorcycle for going to work. The only downside was that it sometimes let a little water in at the front because it was buttoned at the front rather than zipped. However it was nowhere near as much as you might expect. In time though, a succession of "rubberized nylon" with taped seams motorcycle jackets appeared on the market, followed by the welded soft plastic suits from companies such as Rukka, and Belstaff, so I "modernised" and swapped my long and old fashioned coat for a succession of these newer and brighter type of motorcycle clothing and, to be fair, they did keep me mostly dry, although the trousers never lasted for many years and were very prone to getting holes melted in them from hot exhaust pipes. I did find the jackets totally waterproof though and in fact I still keep one of them for use in the worst of the rain. The only real problem with them, apart from the fact that they are not strong enough to class as safety clothing, is that plastic does not "breathe" and therefore they can get quite "sweaty" in hot weather. In winter though they were just the thing. With a couple of thick jumpers, or indeed a leather jacket worn underneath a larger size jacket they were as warm and as waterproof as I wanted. They served me well for years and it's a pity that I can't get new one now.

The answer to the "sweaty" plastic jacket was supposed to be the new wonder material known as "micropore" and sold under several trade names, Goretex being probably the most well known. Essentially though, it is supposed to let air and moisture through its tiny pores but will not allow the larger dampness droplets through. In other words it allows the interior of the clothing to breathe but does not allow water to pass through it to the inside of the garment and this is the basis of most of the motorcycle clothing on the market today. Being just a membrane this micropore material needs the strength of a much stronger fabric as well and Cordura seems to be the favoured one.

This, in itself is not waterproof – the micropore membrane supposedly does that job – but it is very strong, lasts well and can be made to look very smart. I have absolutely no problem with Cordura itself, or indeed the design and style of the clothing, I have had several of them by now and for the most part (apart from my hatred of Velcro fastenings) have been happy with the comfort and practicality of them. My real complaint is than not one of them has remained truly waterproof for more than a year or so, despite costing a considerable amount of money, while my very much cheaper plastic jackets remained waterproof for many years, in fact usually until I wanted to change them for other reasons. The problem seems to be in the waterproof membrane itself, either it is not strong enough for motorcycle use and ruptures after a relatively short period of use, or it is not the barrier that is supposed to be when faced with the driven rain which it is subjected to on a motorcycle. Either way, the result is expensive and still otherwise serviceable motorcycle clothing becomes useless for use in bad weather after a very short time, which makes it pointless buying it in the first place.

While journalists continue to talk about the good clothing that we have available now, possibly because they are always using a new suit or maybe they do not attach so much importance to it because they only use their waterproof clothing when in company with other motorcyclists, where to arrive with soggy clothes with obvious wet patches might be cause for a few laughs from others who are only too aware of the uncomfortable feeling, but then is soon forgotten. However, it is quite another matter to arrive for work, say, in a bank front office where you are going to be meeting the public and among a set of non-motorcycling colleagues. Arriving for work in a decidedly dishevelled suit and looking like you have just suffered an embarrassing personal accident does not go down at all well with the management, hence the past popularity of the long "stormcoat" in the days when people actually used motorcycles as regular everyday transport.

I write this with some feeling, having just returned home from a run during which I passed through some heavy rain. The rain did not last for long, only about five miles, yet when I got back home only about another five miles further on I found that I had not only suffered from the usual "soggy crotch" syndrome, which I tend to expect from every pair of supposedly waterproof trousers now sold, but that my latest jacket (from a well known German maker) which I bought new just two years ago, was now no longer waterproof at all. Now considering that I no longer use my bike daily and therefore my jacket has a relatively easy life now, I consider it very poor that it now leaks as much as the one it replaced (which was itself only four years old and had leaked for some time) because these jackets are not exactly cheap to buy and except for the lack of waterproofing they are still in otherwise good condition and it is frustrating to build up a collection of jackets which are all apparently in good condition except that they are totally useless for riding in even a moderate amount of rain.

Every winter I bring out my old Belstaff Black Prince vinyl overtrousers, dating back to the 1960s which, although stiff enough in cold weather to stand up on their own, still remain waterproof after all these years and are easy to wipe down and are the only over trousers that I trust to keep me dry. In fact I still have one of those full length rubberised "paramatta" riding coats in good condition, but somehow I must be getting a

bit too sensitive in my old age, as although it seems perfectly in order for Pat Gill to turn up somewhere in his full length riding coat when paired with a pudding basin crash helmet and riding one of his pre-war collection of bikes, I would feel somewhat conspicuous if I turned up at High Beach tea hut for instance, in a full length riding coat when paired with a full face crash helmet and modern gloves and boots. However, with every expensive modern jacket failure I am getting more and more tempted. Today's motorcycle journalists might consider that today's clothing is superior to that of the past but it will take a lot more than their words to convince me of that after my own experiences.



Not exactly stylish in today's terms I admit, but at least they are warm and stay waterproof

Colin

"A Message from the Missus"

Well hello there boys!

I thought I would take a few minutes out of my busy Christmas shopping schedule and have a few words with you all.

I would like to start off by saying what an enjoyable evening we all had at Toot Hill Golf Club. It's amazing really how well you all scrub up when you prize yourselves out of your biking gear or your grease monkey uniforms. I must say you all looked very handsome. Of course the ladies all looked gorgeous but then again they always do.

The meal I thought was excellent (although I can't say the same for the flies). God only knows where they came from. I did think at one point we were taking part in a "Bush Tucker Trial" but with a few whacks of my handy folder we seemed to get them under control. (Just for the record though, I will be putting in a complaint to the management).

The evening passed very quickly and I have to say I didn't really get a chance to have a chat with as many of the ladies as I would have liked, therefore I have decided that I need to organise a Summer Evening Event which will give us another opportunity to dress up and have a good old natter. So I've got my thinking cap on to see if I can come up with something different. WATCH THIS SPACE!

I thought I could also give you boys a little reminder that you need to hit the shops yourselves soon and find that special little something for the love of your life. Do not ask her what she would like, because she will tell you she doesn't want anything. Trust me...she's telling fibs she wants a surprise.

Anyway I'd better be off now as I have to get back to the shops myself and carry on filing my stockings.

I wish you all and your loved ones a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy new year.

See your all soon.

Lots of love K xxx

Photos of the Quarter







January—June	2009	Venue	Time
8th January	Thursday Club Night.	Squadron	7.30 PM
11th January	Sunday Jumble Witham		10.00 AM
22nd January	Thursday Club Night. Train Restortion	Squadron	7.30 PM
12th February	Thursday Club Night.	Squadron	7.30 PM
22nd February	Sunday Run TBA	TBA	10.00AM
26th February	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
12th March	Thursday Club Night.	Squadron	7.30 PM
26th March	Thursday Club Night Pat Gill Talk	Squadron	7.30 PM
29th March	Sunday Run To Ardingly West Sussex	J28M25	9.00 AM
5th April	Sunday Eastern Counties Meet	Squadron	10.00AM
9th April	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
23rd April	Thursday Club Night. Fish & Chips	Squadron	7.30 PM
26th April	Sunday Run Drive it Day	TBA	10.00AM
14th May	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
16thMay	Saturday Open Day Kettering	TBA	9.00 AM
17th May	Sunday Jericho Cottage Bike Meet	TBA	10.00AM
28th May	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
28th-1st June	Fri- Mon 2007 International Jampot	Italy	
7th June	Sunday 8th Classic bike show Kenbwort	h TBA	9.00 AM
11th June	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
14th June	Sunday North weald Show	North Weald	9.00AM
20/21 June	Sunday North weald Air Britain	TBA	10.00 AM
25thJune	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM

July-August 2009		Venue	Time
5th July	Sunday Club Stand Battlesbridge	TBA	10.00AM
9th July	Thursday Club Night BBQ Kent Section visi	itSquadron	7.30 PM
12th July	Sun section run Cressing Temple	TBA	10.00AM
23rd July	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
26th July	Section Run TBA	TBA	10.00 AM
9th August	Section Run Museum Of Power	TBA	9.30AM
13th August	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
17th August	Monday Evening Run To Kent Section	TBA	6.30 PM
27th August	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
27th-31st August	Fri - Mon Jampot Rally	Kimbolton	
30th August	Sun/Mon Countess of Warwick Show	TBA	10.30AM
10th September	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
20tht September	Sunday Run TBA		
24th September	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
27th September	Section run to Battlesbridge	TBA	
2nd-4th October	Alternative Rally	Woodthorp Lincs	
8th October	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
11th October	Sunday Run TBA	TBA	10.00 AM
22ndOctober	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
25th October	Sunday Change of Clocks Run	TBA	10.00 AM
8th November	Sunday Remembrance Sunday	Squadron	10.00 AM
12th November	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
26th November	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
28th November	Saturday End of Season Dinner	TBA	7.00 PM
10th December	Thursday Club Night	Cauadran	7 20 DM
10th December	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM
24th December	Thursday Club Night	Squadron	7.30 PM

The Next Quarter

January 2009

Thu 8th Club Night

Sun 11th Witham Jumble

Thu 22nd Club Night Talk G Thompson Train Restrortion

February 2009

Thu 12th Club Night

Sun 22nd possible Run TBA

Thu 26th Club Night

March 2009

Thu 12th Club Night

Thu 26th Club Night

Sun 29th Section Run Ardingly West Sussex

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