



Quarterly Quest

October 2006 Vol.1



29th June 2006

East London & Essex Section
News Letter

Section News

On the 25th May the members of ***East London & Essex*** met for the last time at the Green Man, Navestock Side; all future meetings will be at the Squadron, North Weald airfield. On Wednesday 31st May we were busy loading five solos & one sidecar outfit into Pat's large van ready to leave for the International the next day. The bikes included my late G80CS that had only fired up the previous day after a complete, and expensive, engine rebuild. We arrived at our hotel (camping is not for us) after the ferry crossing from Harwich and a 4-hour drive across Holland in traffic that made the M25 seem fast. After unloading the van, Roy discovered that his sidecar was handling like a reluctant hippo, wallowing across the road on sweeping lefthanders. But hey, we boys from Essex can fix anything: especially after our exploits with the army bike. So out came the tools and we set to work. The problem was however, that nobody had ever set up a sidecar before! After several hours of loosening and retightening every nut and bolt in sight we had marginally improved things: fortunately Roy is strong enough to tame the beast. As a special treat, to celebrate his birthday, Dave Slater was allowed to act as ballast to check the handling. The following day we decided to go to the museum in Ibbenburren, following the route card supplied. We eventually found the museum, more by luck than judgement as I was leading the run: and even returned to the rally sight, but instead of riding 120 kilometres as shown on the card we did 120 miles! The organised run on the Sunday went through the rural area around Denekamp past many farms & animals. It was very pleasing to see the local people were prepared to wait for the whole cavalcade to pass, waving in a friendly greeting. The run ended at Tubbergen, site of the historic races, but unfortunately I did not make it as the clutch failed on my hastily rebuilt bike. I had to be recovered back to the campsite, where Mary, Pat's wife, looked after me with refreshments until the rest returned. All in all a very good rally. Many thanks to the AJS-Matchless Vereniging Nederland.

Other members of the section attended the show at Knebworth held the same weekend as the rally. In all some 15 took part, with 10 riding from the Green Man. Ron Mathers won an award for the best AJS, judged by AMC stalwart and former Jampot contributor Frank Westworth. Our first night at our new venue was very well attended with more than 30 present. Let us hope this continues. The organised run to the Museum of Power at Langford did not really take place due to many other commitments, but nether the less some 10 or 12 members made their own way there to what is always an enjoyable venue. ***See you at the Squadron.***

Section News

Attendance at club nights seems to be holding up well since *East London & Essex* moved to the Squadron at North Weald. Indeed we have seen the welcome return of some members, with several new members showing up. Roy has even persuaded others who used to chat to us in the Green Man to become club members.

Vic Sayers once again this year made another epic journey from Essex to John O'Groats. He started out on 11th June in company with eight others; all on much more modern bikes than Vic's model 20 A.J.S. He finally returned on 17th. On Thursday 29th June we had an extra meeting to welcome the lads from Kent to our new venue. They were led by Smoky, a.k.a. biscuit, (known to us in Essex,) who hopefully would know the way. The normal gremlins associated with the bridge too far (Dartford crossing) struck again. One of their members suffered ignition failure, just outside Brentwood, and had to be repatriated by rescue services. The delay meant that Dave Nicholls had a very long wait to escort the remaining five the last couple of miles around the airfield. As they were about to leave Alan E (name withheld to protect his identity) was heard to say, "Sod it I can't get me leg over! I have Margaret's over trousers on," amid much heckling from the gathered multitude. Strange he was walking a bit like John Wayne all night. Never mind Alan, your secret is safe with US.

Some dozen or so members went to The Battlesbridge Motorcycle show on the 2nd July. This is always a good event, with live music, a beer tent and of course a large auto jumble. Roy bought, with Karen's encouragement, yet another bike. This time a G9 whose year of manufacture matches his date of birth. It has, unlike Roy, stood idle since 1962. Club night on the 13th was yet another good turnout where we finalised details for the North Weald Classic Sprint on the following Sunday (16th). This event went very well with a good attendance and plenty of interest. (See separate article for details). Section members please note! With effect from the next meeting you will need to enter a security code, at the main gate, to gain access to the airfield

Yours, Heir Flick



Replace your Swinging Arm Bushes Keith Jackson December 1991

Chatting with friends the other day, someone asked about a problem which I solved years ago and it made me wonder how newcomers to AMC get to know the ins and outs of our glorious marques these days. As there have been complaints about a shortage of technical articles in the Potty, here goes one to get the ball rolling.

The first common fallacy is that AMC never changed anything. In truth, AMC changed a hell of a lot but the bikes still looked just the same! Nevertheless, the interchangeability of parts means that there are a number of hybrids around with unoriginal combinations of parts. This makes the likes of poor old 'Honest Ernie' go greyer) whenever they think about it. Fortunately, swinging-arm spindles and bushes were pretty much standard, on the heavyweights, at least.

The vast majority of heavyweights (with the exception of the G85CS) used the same arrangement from their introduction in 1949. This consists of a steel tube (which acts as the # pivot spindle) and two bronze bushes in steel sleeves pressed into the arm casting. The original bushes were sintered, which means that they hold oil better than current replacements, although I have used Scheme bushes for years without troubles but you must keep the oil level correct. This is far more important because sintered bushes absorb oil into themselves and can put up with lower oil levels for longer, although this is not good practice.

The early swinging-arm frames were meant to be interchangeable with the rigids so ! there is a separate alloy casting which carried the spindle. From 1956 this was incorporated into the frame itself. The very earliest frames have probably all had their alloy castings replaced by now as they did not lock the steel tube with cotter-pins and this would leave the spindles free to rotate and wear the housing - not good.

This oversight was rectified, but AMC, having a few engineers around the place, did not use a conventional cotter-pin but had their own, as shown in Figure 1. Basically, the conventional cotter has a tapered side and is pulled as tightly as possible into the pedal to attach it to the crank. The AMC cotter has an arc-shaped cut-out which grips the spindle without the need for large forces to be applied. The cotter is trapped by the spindle and is inserted first. As a consequence, generations of owners have spent many frustrating hours belting the ends of the cotter trying to get it out before the tube. No can do.

The next thing to remember is that AMC built bikes in England (gasps of surprise) which means that almost any dimension is going to be Imperial, ie feet, inches, sixty-fourths and the like. In the case of the swinging-arm, all components increased in diameter by a quarter of an inch. Thus, the tube is a nominal inch in diameter with a bore of three-quarters of an inch. The bushes are one-inch bore and so on.!

Figure 2 shows the tools we made to do the job and which removed a spindle from my CSR (which was seized solid in the bushes) so effectively that I could re-use the whole assembly. The anvil-tube is designed to fit against the end of the steel sleeve while allowing the tube to pass into it. The anvil must not touch the bush itself or the bronze bush will swell and trap the spindle. The anvil needs to be longer than the spindle by at least an inch overall and should be bored out to about an inch and a sixteenth inside. The drift is made from one inch bar turned down by a sixteenth to pass through the bushes without damaging them. The spigots locate the drift in the spindle and the anvil in the sleeve. Depending on the outside diameter of the anvil you may have to turn the outside down to fit into the eye of the swinging-arm.

The procedure outlined is for a 1956-on bike but the principle is the same for the previous version. Completely strip the frame so that it can be laid on its side and handled by two people. Take off the end-caps by undoing the spoke-nipple on the drive-side and withdrawing the spoke. These caps may need a little persuasion to come off. Now you can see the assembly. If you have not already done so remove the nuts from the cotter pins and very lightly tap them to jar them loose. Remember, you cannot get them out yet.

JAMPOT RALLY 2006

The rally started out with seven (Roy, Karen, Lucinda, Alan and Jackie Jennings, Will and Ginny) of us driving to Yorkshire on the Thursday morning to set up the marquee. Ginny was not amused as she and Will should have been riding, but Will's back was not up to its best and their plans changed. After some 200 miles we arrived.

The site was not due to open until Friday, but I had made an arrangement to arrive early to ensure we got a good pitch. We met up with Alan Earl from Kent section who had the same idea. With the section zone set up camp secure we headed off to find our weekend accommodation, which was just four miles up the road in South Cave. Thursday evening the seven of us enjoyed a first class meal in a local pub.

Friday morning after breakfast we returned to the rally site to book in and get a full programme of events. As there was nothing organized for the Friday morning we decided to have a ride into nearby Beverley. We had a nice ride and a walk around the town returning back to the camp site mid afternoon. By this time Dave Evans and Alex Burnett had arrived on their bikes with Dave Slater and Dudley following behind in Dave's car with their bikes in the trailer as back up vehicle in case of any problems. Unfortunately Dave had a problem just a few miles from the site and arrived in the back of a van courtesy of a friendly local passer-by (Hot mag being the problem) On our return to site Dave Nichols had appeared fresh off the road somewhat soggy. Where's Lyn" Karen asked. Dave replied "I dropped her off at the travel lodge on the way through to warm herself up". It had been a long old ride.

Friday evening we had a meal booked at the accommodation where 18 including Chris Read, Dave Speck, John and Tony from Norfolk Section and by this time (but only just) Pat and Nick Gill had arrived.

Saturday saw an early start with breakfast at 8.00am as we needed to be ready on site for a 10.00am run start leaving for the coastal run to Thornwick Bay. An estimated 108 miles return trip. As Will was feeling a bit better I offered him a ride on my latest purchase (Bruce Stevens G12). As we approached our halfway 'wee stop' at approx 40 miles I noticed that Will was having a fiddle (with the bike not Gin) only for it to stop as he pulled up. The problem was soon diagnosed as the magneto. It started with a set of new plugs just as the back marshal was about to leave us for the two following trucks.

On our arrival at the lunch stop Will was seen coasting down hill into the car park with his water soaked hanky dousing the mag... After an hours stop the bike fired up and he managed to limp it back to the rally site.

A quick look around the jumble and it was time for Karen and me to go and get 20 portions of local fish and chips for tea (and of course Dave S wanted chicken). After supper we wondered up to the bar on site to see what entertainment was about. We later returned to the digs and downed a few more drinks in the lounge.

Sunday proved even an earlier start with breakfast at 7.30am. By now the waitress had learned that one sausage and one egg was not sufficient for us southerners and proudly presented us with double sausage and eggs with our full breakfast. We were on site for 9.00am ready for a 9.30am leave to cover the 130 mile trip to Hutton-le-Hole. Will decided that he would pass on this one as the previous days run had played havoc with his back. At some 50 miles we encountered the 'wee stop' which was very pleasant and ice-creams and teas were available. Included in the run was an added extra. An optional 12 mile loop over the moors that incorporated a 1 in 3-climb with two hair pins. This was not made very clear when we approached the stop and unfortunately Karen (who wanted to master the hairpins to help with her U turn in her test) has entered the car park. This meant it was up to me and Lucinda to go it alone. The moors were no problem but it did rain hard for a short time, but once we were over the top and down the other side the sun was shining. As we approached the climb we were spurred on by the marshal to get some speed up. The first bend was fine then a car coming down hill made me lose all momentum and almost came to a stop. With the throttle full open and the clutch out the trike moved very slowly (I'm sure the chain was going one tooth at a time) until we managed to get to the top. (Yahoo!!)

Back at the pub I came across Alan Jennings bending over his bike which was now sitting on a trailer attached to a tow truck. It's the gear box I heard him say. (Was this the one he had recently rebuilt - just last week?)

After some decision with Pat G and a few spanners were put to use we saw AJ roar of down the road on a test run. As we sat having tea and cakes (Roy Karen Lucinda and Dave S) far down the hill approached AJ but not on his bike it was shanks pony looking like Michael Shumaker on a long walk back to the pits with helmet still on to hide his embarrassment (see photo over the page) well it was back on the trailer just like the International rally in June. The rest of us were to ride back at the back of the run so as not to get dropped off. All was fine until some 3-4miles before the refueling stop Pat G ran out of petrol at the top of a hill out side of town and proceed to coast down the hill and straight through a red light closely followed by Dave S. and Karen. With a small top up and we were on our way only for Pat to run out of fuel again some 1/2 a mile on, this time as we were so far at the back of the run it only took the breakdown truck a minute to arrive and refuel him. Not much more happened until about six miles from the camp the drop off Marshall's had left there post leaving us on our own, with some fate on luck we were back on site before many outers picking up stray riders on the way.

Sunday evening we went of the Hall for some scran and see the goings on with the prize-giving etc. Joined by Rob, Jan and Kerry Harknett. We left Dave S, Colin A. Alex B and Dave Evans in the Marquee finishing of a bottle of whiskey that Chris Read had brought with him. Its OK boys your wife's will not find out will they? What a good evening it turned out to be Rob won Clubman of the Year and Pat picked up The Collier Cup for best Pre-War Matchless and finishing off with two raffle prizes.

So Monday started with by now the big breakfast for most of us. Down at the camp it did not take long to pack up the marquee and load the bikes on their respective trailers and head off. As we were all leaving and taking different routes home we set off at our own pace seeing Dave and Linda and Will and Ginny first to leave and the rest of us, as and when. Roy decided to cross the Humber Bridge but this was not for Colin A as he is scared of heights and the wind was pretty wild. The run home was looking good, but as we approached the end of the A1 I just caught a glimpse of Alex B on the hard shoulder and little Dave S car in the distance. We caught Dave up and they went back to Alex and the News as we now know is a seized engine requiring a full re-build. It's a shame to have ended with a major breakdown but that's motorcycling. Next year we are off to Suffolk.

Those who attended Roy Karen Lucinda, Will & Ginny. Pat & Nick, Dave & Linda Nichols. Alan & Jackie Jennings. Rob, Jan and Kerry Harknett, The Boys Dave Slater, Dudley Woods, Colin Atkinson, Dave Evans, Alex Burnett.





Photos of the Quarter



Alan's 1948 AJS On The Breakdown Truck at the half way Stop @ the 2006 Jampot rally



Alan On his shameful walk back to the Pits (Jampot rally 2006)

Photos of the Quarter



International Jampot Rally June 2006



The Next Quarter

End of Season dinner Saturday 2nd December

October

Sun 8th Section Run To Coalhouse Fort Tilbury

Thu 12h Club Night

Thu 26th Club Night

Sun 29th Section Run Mosquito Museum

November

Thu 9th Club Night

Sun 12th Section Run North weald

Thu 23rd Club Night

December

Sat 2nd End of Season Dinner

Sun 10th Section run to North Weald

Thu 14th Club Night

Thu 28th Club Night

Section Committee

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