

Shetland Classic Motorcycle Club Newsletter

Winter 2020/21



From Behind the Bars

2020 was certainly a year in our lives we will all remember, and not necessarily for good reasons. Covid-19 has had a massive impact on everyday life, and in classic motorcycle circles, it has meant no Club events and little opportunities for interaction or meeting with fellow club members.

However, we did manage to have one memorable night in March, thanks to Colin Nicholson, who suggested we have a 35th year anniversary “doo” to mark the occasion. Thanks, must also go to Joe Gray for his photographs of old memories and his speech, Colin for his part in pulling it altogether, and Jasmine Tulloch for the lovely buffet. Little did we know at the time it would be our only club meet for the year. It was also good to see most of the original committee attending. I would also like to thank that all who attended, and I’m pleased to report, a good night was had by all.

Covid-19, and the lockdown it brought with it, was the push the Club needed to set-up a Facebook page, in an attempt to keep Club members connected. Indeed, it has proved to be very popular, with some very interesting things posted, and lots of followers.

I am aware of several members, myself included, who have made use of the lockdown time to start a project that we thought that we may like to do, but never seemed to have the time. I hope we can all finish before “normality” returns again. I enjoy my time spent in the garage, away from the reality of life. With my current project, I have tried to go back to the roots of our hobby by trying to do as much as I can myself, rather than just handing parts

over to someone else to refurbish. I have gone back to basics of using a scrapper and power wire brush to clean parts up, and brush painting. Doing it this way is a good way to learn the skills that are needed to restore and keep an old motorcycle running, as without this knowledge our hobby will be harder to do.

As for runs out, myself and Birgit have had one or two, some of which were posted on the club Facebook page, again our Facebook page has played its part showing members that there are still active members going for runs in their own groups.

Our winter session meetings, like the summer club runs, have not taken place due to the ongoing restrictions. Likewise, the AGM is currently on-hold, and for the meantime, the Committee members have agreed to remain in their current office bearer positions until the AGM can be held. When we finally get the go ahead that it is safe to do so, I would like to hold an informal meeting first followed by an A.G.M.

One of our Summer runs was to incorporate a donation to the local M.R.I. Scanner appeal. If this had of gone ahead, it would have brought a bit of positive publicity for the club, but Covid-19 rules just did not allow it to happen. Hopefully, you will all have received the “thank you” e-mail from the manager of the scanner appeal for our donation of £500.

With Christmas and New Year behind us, I wish you all the best for 2021 and look forward to meeting you all again, when conditions allow. In the meantime, we could all have a think of group runs for the coming year, maybe we should just use

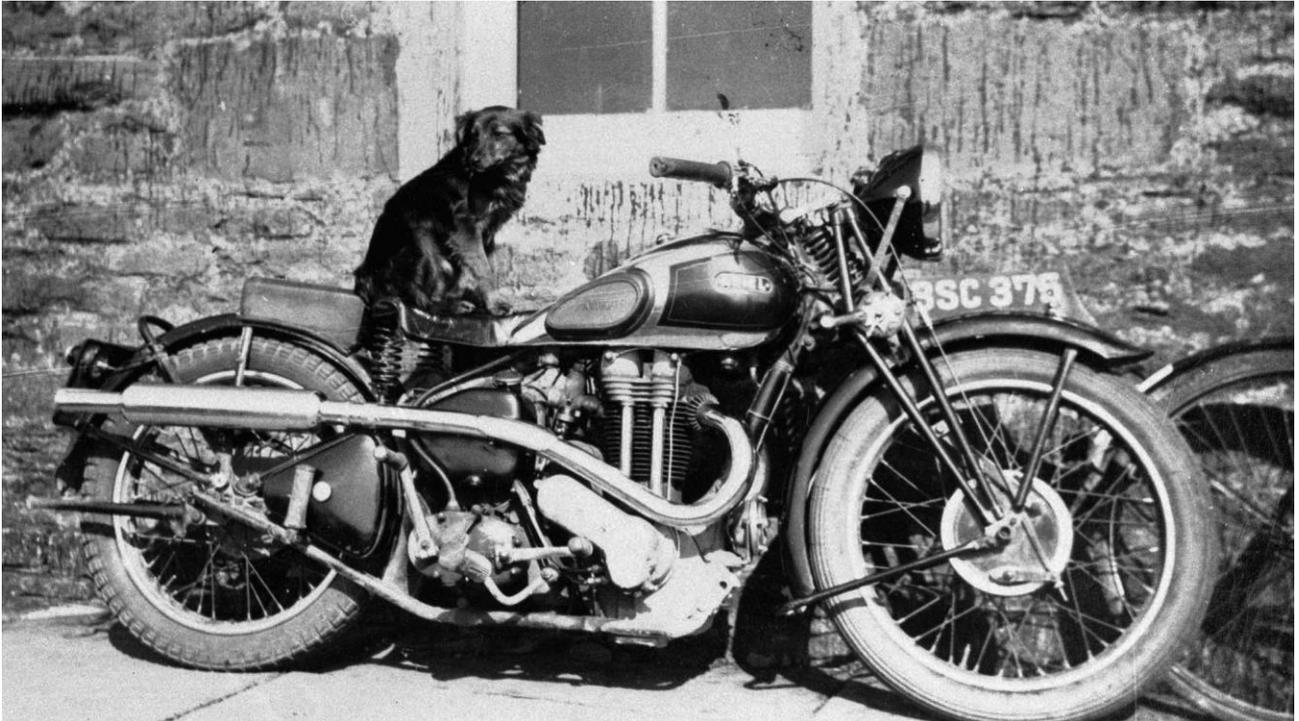
the ones from the 2020 calendar of runs, it would save on a committee meeting (only joking)!

One final thought going through my head is to have a “run what you brung” event to try and get some bikes out from sheds to

an area where they could be run up and possibly ridden.

Cheers for eenoo, Dean.

Rare Bikes in Shetland No. 35



This is a photo I got from Geordie Jacobson some years ago and depicts a fine 500cc, OHV, Ariel from about 1937. Although we will probably never know the exact model, judging by the non-valanced mudguards and upswept exhaust, I would think it is most likely the sporty Red Hunter. By 1937 the valve gear was totally enclosed and the larger oil tank was standard on the 500s. Gearbox is a four-speed foot change Burman, the carburettor is the normal Amal and ignition and lighting is supplied by a Lucas Magdyno. A tank top instrument panel, popular in that era, housed the speedometer, oil gauge, inspection lamp and optional clock. Unlike Triumph, the lighting switch and ammeter remain

housed in the large Lucas 8inch headlamp.

According to Geordie, this one was bought, just before the war from a dealer in Edinburgh, by Tammie Andrew Harper from Exnaboe on his way home from serving in the Merchant Navy. He did not road test it, but had it delivered to the steamer at Leith for onward shipment home to Shetland. Having carefully watched and memorised the starting procedure he'd seen the salesman use in the showroom, he had no problem getting it started in Lerwick, and headed off for da Ness. Never having owned a motorbike before, he had however not been aware that, although you shut the air lever to

assist starting, you had to open it fully once the engine warmed up. With the bike running a bit lumpy due to the enriched mixture, he proceeded back to Lerwick, Geordie thinks to my father's garage, where the matter was soon rectified and he proceeded on his way!

I don't suppose we'll ever know what became of this nice motorcycle, but

Geordie thinks it was sold to a Norwegian in the war time and he took it back to Norway.

Any information on the dog will be gratefully received!

Joe Gray

Boe to Bäretswil...and back (part 2)!

Stuttgart to Tübingen

Leaving Sinsheim and its 700 or so cars, bikes, planes and almost any other form of transport you could think of behind, it was a fairly easy run of just over 50 miles to Stuttgart where we were to 'hole up' for the night at the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel...no flea-pit boarding houses on this trip I can tell you! Our co-organiser Arved Wenger warned us that as the Germans take air quality and pollution from motor vehicles seriously, we could well 'come a cropper' and be fined for entering the city in these reekie old bangers! To stave off such an occurrence those at risk trooped off to the equivalent of an MoT station where, on production of our V5s, we were issued with 'green' exemption windscreen stickers to display to keep any environmentally zealous fuzz at bay.

The hotel was great as expected with on-street parking just outside as well and in easy walking distance of the Mercedes-Benz museum nearby. Housed in an amazing modern structure, the building itself was almost as mind-blowing as the exhibits it contained. On entry, visitors are directed to a glass-fronted lift which takes you all the way to the top floor containing the earliest exhibits. From there you descend from floor to floor on foot via gently sloping ramps situated along the internal perimeter of the oval shaped building.

Alighting from the lift pod one is confronted with man's oldest form of transport.....a

none too well stitched up full size stuffed horse! Leaving 'Dobbin' behind we are introduced to a replica of an 1885 'riding car' billed as the worlds first motorcycle. Powered by a single cylinder 264cc engine which produced 0.5hp at 600rpm and dubbed the 'Grandfather Clock' by makers Messrs Daimler and Maybach this machine was capable of an earth shattering 8mph.



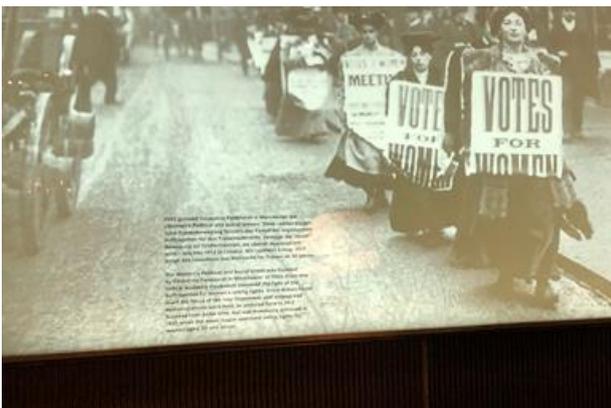
Having used the bike as a testbed for their engine which had proved satisfactory, they fitted an enlarged version into a further venture, Wölfert's motorised airship (see pic. next page). The 600cc single now produced all of 2hp and propelled the craft some six miles on its maiden flight. You're given a state-of-the-art hand-held device which, when pointed at a spot adjacent to exhibits, gives detailed descriptions in your earpiece.



Cars and commercial vehicles are what the brand is famous for. We were treated to a fantastic display of some of the finest ever produced by the company, the 500K Spezial Roadster (shown below) being an example.



Between each floor of the museum the walls of the sloping walkway displayed a potted history of Germany sprinkled with a few world events pertaining to the era of the vehicles on show. A complementary audio commentary accompanied visitors on their downwards progress.



Much to the credit of the curators, no attempt was made to hide or disguise the tragic events which overshadowed the 1930s and early 1940s. UK Suffragette poster shown bottom left.

After a snack lunch, an hour's drive took us to the privately owned Boxenstop Motor Museum at Tübingen. The contrast with the pristine expansive orderliness at Mercedes-Benz was staggering. Housed in a conventional building, the museum was simply jam-packed with interesting vehicles, models and artefacts. Owner Rainer Klink was on hand to enthusiastically tell us all about the vehicles. As might be expected, the concentration was on German and continental machines but there was a fine selection of some of Blighty's finest too.



Pictured above is a very fine ohc Jawa and right behind it a lovely AJS 7R. Lurking in the background we see a Manx Norton, if I remember correctly, and have a wee glimpse of a blue Czechoslovakian ESO. Herr Klink had competed in bike and car races both on the Continent and quite extensively in the UK too.

He obviously has a 'thing' about AMC machinery and in the next pic can be seen a beautiful G50 engined Seeley 500 with a Matchless G45 behind it. He wasn't all that enamored with the G45 though and told me that it wasn't very reliable...perhaps no surprise there. It looked really good though!



The Rocket (below) 3 had the biggest back sprocket I've ever seen on a racer. Perhaps for sprinting..?



Below, a Triumph...but not as we know them. In beautiful condition, as were all the exhibits on show.



This included a delightful NSU and an equally impressive MV Augusta 750S. Every museum should have one!

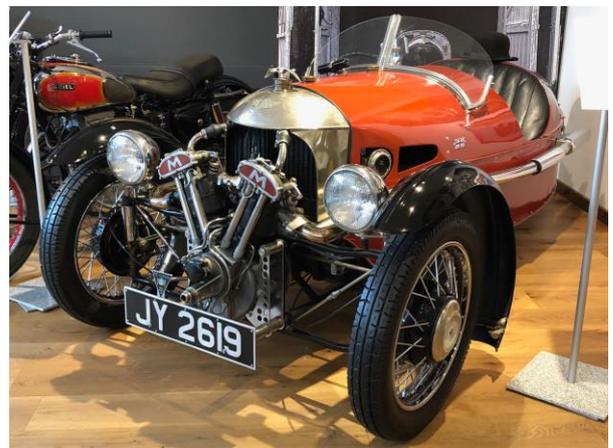


NSU



MV Augusta 750S

Sitting with the motorcycles next to a nicely presented early '50s 'two pipe' Ariel Square Four and a beautiful example of a Triumph Junior is a lovely Matchless engined 3-wheeler, shown below.



Like most of the other vehicles on show it's in full working order and on the wall near it is a photograph of it being driven in anger at an event. Like all the exhibits, the quality of restoration was truly magnificent and a real pleasure to see. Most weren't roped off and it was possible to get up close for photos too.



Post WW2 motorcycles featured with road going examples from Adler (pic. above), BMW...of course! Maico and Horex (pic. below) in addition to the competition machines displayed. The latter particularly impressed me with the quality of paintwork, finish and attention to detail. Shades of thirties Sunbeams and later AJS and Matchless perhaps..? Likewise, the Adler comes across as having a quality of build far in excess of that possessed by some of the rather tinny creatures marketed by a few makers in the UK at the time.



Boxenstop is also rightly famous for an amazing collection of motorcars. Ranging from the humble BMC Mini to a not so humble Ferrari and road going examples from Morgan, Austin-Healey, Jaguar, Alfa Romeo, Autobianchi, and others in between. Racing heritage is well represented too with Bugatti, Lola,

Porsche, Cooper and Lister among the famous names represented. The irrepressible museum owner Herr Klink is seen below with his immaculate Maserati with equally impressive Lola and Bugatti behind.



Equally famous is the astonishing collection of toys, scale models and wall mounted photographs, posters, etc. celebrating motoring history throughout the 20th. century. I can't recommend Rainer and Ute Klink's museum highly enough. There's even a delightful café with mouthwatering home-made treats to tempt you, shown below.



Next time we'll look at some of the beauties on show in the sun by the shore at Lake Constance.

George J.

The one I should've kept! Kawasaki Z750 Turbo



Every one of us who rides motorcycles probably has one they wished they had kept! The one I should have kept was my Kawasaki Z750 Turbo. In the early eighties the big four: Honda; Yamaha; Suzuki and Kawasaki were always trying to outsmart one another. This time it was turbo charging of motorcycles.

Honda had come in with the CX500 and 650 Turbo; Yamaha with its XJ 650 SECA Turbo and Suzuki with the XN65. Kawasaki, as usual, waited to see what the others had done. Most of the offerings looked good but for excitement they were not much different from the normally aspirated models.

Kawasaki had been developing one based around their Z650, a proven 4-cylinder engine, but as the rest had used a 650, Kawasaki took it up a level and based it on their new GPZ 750 UNI TRAK model. The main problem with the others had been turbo lag. To reduce this, Kawasaki

mounted the turbo right in front of the exhaust ports and fitted Digital Fuel Injection. To say this was a success is an under-statement. The bike was launched in 1983 at the Salzburg ring in Austria. It was hailed a great achievement, with the power of the then Kawasaki GPZ 1100 Unitrak and the weight and handling of a 750. Power was 112 bhp, torque was 80ft/lbs. A well-known drag racer of the time "Pee Wee" Gleason put it through the quarter of a mile at 10.7s and a terminal of 145mph.

I bought my one in July 1984, A327 FSO, it was the first on the road in the north of Scotland, it was to replace my Kawasaki Z1000 MK2 which I had owned for 6 years. As I said before, the turbo is based on the Kawasaki GPZ Z750 Unitrak, but with the addition of a full sports fairing which had an aluminium brace across the front to aid airflow to the turbo and protect it. It also made it stand out in a crowd.

While running the bike in for its first 1000 miles, I wondered what all the fuss was about, it was as dead as a peat. The low compression ratio probably did not help either. However, once run in, oh boy, a hooligan was unleashed! There was a gauge on the dash which resembled a rising sun, going up and down according to turbo boost pressure. At 3000 full sun (full boost) of 10.5psi was achieved, you could hear the small Hitachi turbo whistle and you were catapulted to infinity! It was very addictive, shutting off the throttle just to rip it wide open again. The sun would rise, the turbo would scream, the rear tyre would spin and lift the front! Bonkers, but fantastic fun.

I used to take my work colleague on the back from Scalloway to Lerwick. One particular day, we were at the pedestrian crossing in front of Smith and Harpers. I looked in the window and saw Maurice was not paying attention, so I gave her a handful and dumped the clutch. As we catapulted forward, I could feel Maurice on the back clambering to stay on!

At the time Yamaha and Suzuki made road going two stroke racers: the RD and the RG respectively. Many a time in the pub, we would argue over which bike would be the fastest. So, one day we met

Editor's footnote

I'm sure you'll agree, our contributors have come up with a varied and interesting collection of articles for this newsletter, so my thanks go to them.

As Dean mentioned at the start, the Club's Facebook page has gone from strength to strength and it has been great to see various bikes being resurrected. In

Colin

on the three lanes going up out of Lerwick to settle it once and for all. As the saying goes, "there is no substitute for cubes"!

My bike was my only form of transport, and I was learning to scuba dive at the time. My turbo would carry all my gear strapped to the rear seat and I would ride in my wet suit, have a dive then ride home. Well hard or well stupid, I was not sure which!

The bike did not fare well though, the salt just crucified it. The final straw was my own ignorance on turbo use. I would hammer home up to Yell at full chat, up the then Shetland TT track, to the ferry at Toft in 15 minutes, then just turn off the engine. With no cooling down period, the wee turbo went from 200,000 rpm to zero. It eventually had enough and seized. I then had a new one fitted, only for all the pistons to crack around the circumference of the crowns. It was rebuilt yet again, but I had decided enough was enough. I traded it in against a blue Ford Escort MK2 1.1L, that never even saw Shetland, but that's a story for another newsletter.

Have you seen the value of a Turbo now? I paid just £2999 for my one when new!

Dean

fact, one has already been finished, with a couple more not too far away.

So, talented restorers, perhaps you could put the Brasso down for an hour and put pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard, and tell us all about your latest project?

As before, I'd welcome your feedback, along with any suggestions for future articles.

SCMCC Regalia



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