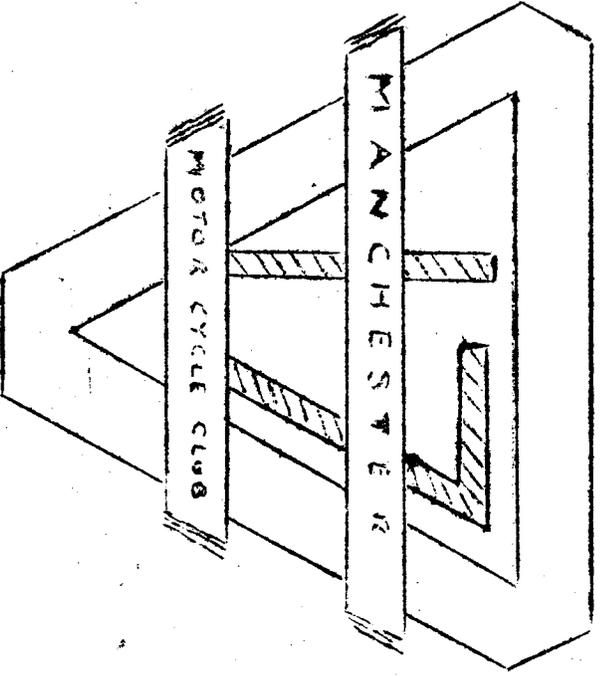


# THE



# NEWSLETTER.

October, 1966.

THE MANCHESTER '17' MOTOR CYCLE CLUB NEWSLETTER

At the last two committee meetings the social side of club life has been discussed more than usual. Most members will agree that, from a motor-cyclist's point of view, the club is all but dead for non-sporting members. Apart from Tuesday evening meetings, nothing worthwhile has been organised for a long time and we could meet in a pub or coffee bar without paying 15/- subs.

This may be a cynical view of the situation, but it is about time we became a MOTOR CYCLE CLUB again. What has happened to the good old days we are often told about by older members? Rows and rows of gleaming bikes outside the club room from 7.30 and not 9.30 or 10 o'clock as we have now. Tales of mass club runs, treasure hunts, rallies, road trials, semi-sporting trials and the like.

Could it be that motor-cyclists are changing? There would appear to be a division between enthusiastic sportsmen and 'social' members, who may have a road bike but only until they can afford a comfortable fag box, sorry motor car. However, this is only true of a minority of members and the rest are true enthusiasts underneath.

This became evident when members' suggestions for social activities were asked for. Almost without exception, we want weekly club runs of a fair mileage and not just trips to Ainsdale etc. Opinions differed as to whether runs should be to specific events, but everyone would like to know where they are going beforehand.

A popular suggestion was one for camping weekends on the lines of a miniature rally. A definite site would be made known to members on club night for the following week-end. People would be able to arrive at the camp any time between Friday evening and Sunday morning. This would seem an excellent idea.

Suggestions for club room activities included film and slide shows (including members' efforts), talks by personalities and organised discussions.

Several people expressed disappointment in the present lack of activity. This is reflected in the steadily decreasing membership and general trend for coming late to meetings (eventually they won't come at all).

The committee is not as much to blame as some would have it. Committee members have a lot to do to keep on top of their individual jobs and they devote a great deal of energy and spare time to doing this. In fact, most of the committee have little idea of what the members want. It is not their job to ask, they should be told. Every year at the A.G.M. you, the members, elect fellow members for committee posts. You do this because you think they are the people to do the job the way you would like to see it done, but they cannot possibly do what the majority of members want, if nobody tells them what they DO want. If you don't think anyone who stands for election is suitable for the job then stand for election yourself and when the committee is elected, don't forget them. To run the club successfully, they must be constantly fed with ideas, practical help (e.g. articles for newsletters) complaints and the occasional 'wake up'. So come on you enthusiasts, let's "start" a motor cycle club.

\* \* \* \* \*

MANCHESTER '17' IN THE ISLAND 1966.

After a very smooth crossing, a party of ten members arrived in the Island for this year's T.T. races. The weather was not exactly scorching, but it was dry for the main part of the holiday. The racing was great, although we were all disappointed, as all fans were, about the decision regarding Fritz Sheideggar.

I think we all consider him the winner. Mike Hailwood as always made the racing very interesting with Agostini doing some great laps. It was grand to see so many of our lads over there for the trial in which Eric Castle and Mick Greenhough came 4th in the sidecar event. In all there must have been about thirty Manchester '17' members over at the same time.

The trip back wasn't so hectic, we were nearly all a bit wheezy, bar, of course, little Scott Leaver, who had his mum charging all over the boat going in all the little cubby holes. He wasn't in the least worried about the heaving about.

Incidentally, we may be seeing another of the Hankinson family in the Island next year. Neville's eldest son is hankering after becoming a trials star. Another interesting point is that Jack Matthews wasn't heard to utter one swear word against Cyril all the way through the trial. I was so surprised, I had to mention it. Is this some sort of record?

JEAN TURNER

:: :: ::

Last Wednesday the 19th, Brian Glynn and Dave Fildes, held a party at the Horseshoe Club in Ashton. The reason was, of course, that they are emigrating to Canada very soon. Both lads were familiar figures on club runs particularly Brian who can't have missed many runs for all the years he has been a club member. I certainly don't remember any runs without him, since I joined the club nearly three years ago. Brian has also been a committee member for this last year, and on Wednesday, he was presented with the Shell/B.P. Road Safety Award.

Dave Fildes is a comparatively new member, but has quickly made a lot of friends and although we shall miss both these enthusiastic members, we can only wish them the very best of luck for the future.

:: :: ::

#### R.A.C./A.C.U. Training Scheme

On Friday evening the 16th September, trainees and instructors of the Training Scheme were guests at the Stockport Police Headquarters, for the presentation of the Proficiency Certificates.

An excellent film show was followed by a cup of tea and biscuits, and then a short speech by several people concerned in road safety. Finally the certificates were awarded and it was pleasing to see the majority of them go to Manchester '17' trainees.

:: :: ::

A word of warning to owners of 'hairy' machines using large bore down-draught carbs, particularly if they have no needle as on the Velocette Venom Thruxton. Don't use a rag to block the bellmouth when you park the bike. Several weeks ago, Dave Thomas, remembered his rag, but only after he had tried to start the bike. The result was several hours work in the dark, outside the club, extracting the rag from around the inlet valve. Another Thruxton owner, when told of this, laughed and said it had happened to him the week before! Both now use proper bungs.

:: :: :: ::

#### SAND RACING

Glynn Jones owns a 305c.c. Honda road bike, and I own a semi road/trials 350c.c. A.J.S. One day we decided to go sand racing. We both use our bikes daily for work and so most of the 'preparation' was done on the Friday evening before the meeting. We both rode our bikes to Wallasey with passengers. I was unable to leave Manchester until about 10.20 a.m., but we arrived in Wallasey at about 11.15 a.m., after several wrong turnings and passing a car sideways.

We had arrived too late for practice and started frantically to rip off registration plates, my rear seat and footrests, and Glynn's headlamp lens and replace them with racing numbers. I went to sign on whilst the scrutineer doubtfully eyed my bike.

Dave Heinz signed on after me. He had just arrived too, although he had left half an hour before us, but it takes longer in a mini. Apparently the scrutineer had a sense of humour, and passed my bike, so I parked it and went to watch the first race. Dave was on the line on his 250c.c. Greeves trials bike, with an assortment of machinery which could only be entered together in a sand race. Like myself and Glynn, Dave had never ridden on sand before and was obviously feeling his way as the flag dropped and the riders slithered and weaved to the first bend, apart from an Ariel Leader, which had trouble starting. The Ariel caught Dave at the end of the back straight, and they swapped places until the finish. I believe, the Ariel just beating Dave to the post, but I didn't see the end as I had to line up with Glynn for the first 350c.c. race.

As I sat there warming the engine, I looked about at the opposition - Goldies, 7R's, Velocettes, etc., mostly highly polished. My Ajay provided contrast with its delicate shade of rust. At last we moved onto the line as the last 250c.c. was flagged off, and I had my first close look at the course. Suddenly we were off, or they were off, as I made a very bad start, with my first taste of riding on sand. Although last into the first bend, I had passed about half a dozen riders as we came out, including the intrepid Honda rider G.P. Jones. Then they all opened up, including Glynn, and left me. Down the back straight, I discovered a disadvantage of having a silencer fitted, as I couldn't hear my engine and I didn't know when to change up, the result was that I left it in third much too long. The second bend loomed up and I shut off, changed down, and applied the brakes, to my surprise, I didn't slide with a locked back wheel, most peculiar stuff this sand. I went very wide outside the flags in fact, and plunged into the deep sand of the second straight, and also into a vicious wobble. I stayed on, just, but a rider immediately in front was less fortunate, and, as he rolled over and over with his machine, I remember thinking that the rider had probably hurt himself. I continued circulating without passing anything and since nothing passed me, I assumed I was last. However, I finished with about five or six machines behind me and was justifiably chuffed. Returning to the 'pits', I discovered that Glynn had provided the spectacular crash and was surveying the wreckage - a crumpled mudguard, headlamp and bent fork leg, but our intrepid rider was unhurt apart from his pride.

Dave retired in his second race with a jammed throttle and I lined up determined to improve on my last effort, now that I was more 'experienced'. I made a good start and was about fourth out of the first bend, but again, most of the field passed me on the straight. A rider (on a 7R I think) was taking the second bend slowly, due to his clip-ons, and I tried to squeeze inside, but drifted into him nearly bringing us both off. Into the deep sand again, up into top and nothing, the clutch lever went limp and I coasted off the course.

After pushing back, I discovered that the clutch centre splines had sheared and the whole lot was loose. Of course there was no question of riding it home and so I cadged a lift off Dave Heinz for the bike, and we returned home via British Rail. Incidentally Glynn Jones rode his bike home without too much bother, despite the bent fork.

Not much of a day you might think, but given a bit of luck, and an old banger, I shall be there next year.

MOSES

\*\* \*\* \*

Nearly three years ago, Wilf Earlam started an article for the newsletter on the motor cycles he had owned. He promised the second instalment in the next issue, however, it was never finished. I have persuaded Wilf to finish it and you will find it in the next issue, plus the first part again since we have many new members, and in any case the older ones will have forgotten the first instalment.

\*\* \*\* \*

A.G.M.

All full members are requested to attend the Annual General Meeting when the new committee will be elected. It is on Tuesday evening the 15th November. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU ATTEND.