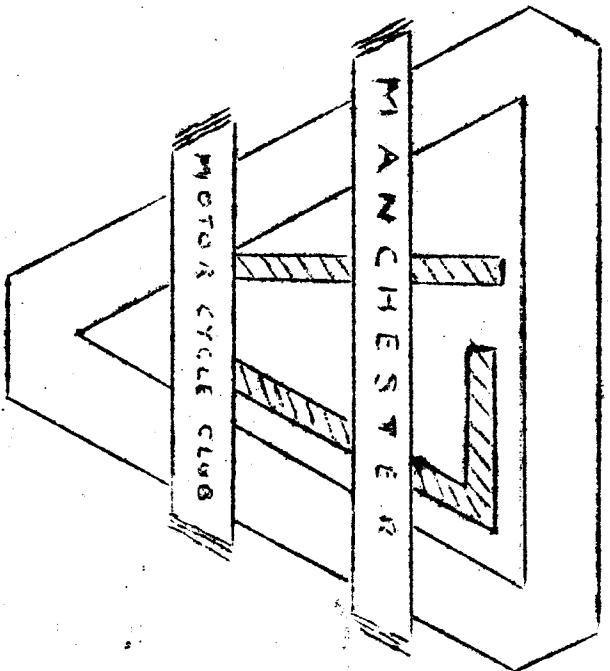


THE



NEWSLETTER.

March, 1967

MANCHESTER '17' MOTOR CYCLE CLUB

NEWSLETTER

By the time you read this, the club trial will have been held and I hope it will be a success. It would not be a success if John Roberts relied on club members to volunteer as observers, and this applies to any of our trials. It is not difficult to be an observer and I've always found it to be very interesting, so next time observers are wanted, how about a few more volunteers.

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The latest R.A.C./A.C.U. training scheme course started on Sunday, 5th March and Trevor hopes to make this the most successful ever with no failures at the end. I believe there were 14 trainees at the first meeting.

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The result of the Cheshire Centre Team Trial was a win for Wrexham, with the Manchester '17' team four marks behind in second place. I gather there was some disagreement about the results at first and the results printed in the press were incorrect. Our team men were - Dave Rowlands, Harvey Lloyd and Doug Chadwick.

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You may remember the generous offer of a trophy from Frank Varey at the Dinner Dance. Well, the trophy, a very handsome one I'm told, has arrived. Mr. Varey has had the trophy engraved, and to someone's intense embarrassment, it has been named the 'Pev Attwood Trophy'. I'm sure everyone will agree that it's about time Pev's work for the club was acknowledged formally, thank you very much Mr. Varey.

The Cup will be awarded once only, and to the novice who shows the most improvement in club events this year.

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Saturday 27th January at the Jodrell Arms in Whaley Bridge, has been suggested provisionally as a date and venue for the next Annual Dinner Dance. The committee would be interested in your reactions to this change of date and day. If a sufficient number of people are interested a coach may be hired, probably at no extra charge.

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Despite my request for people to arrive at the club reasonably early, few members have bothered. The ones that did will know that we have had several quizzes, which have gone down very well.

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C L U B R U N (By Christine)

The latest club run was held on Sunday 5th March, and it was to Mallory Park, where an International Meeting was being held. Three bikes went on the run - Len Morton on his Triumph, Jim Hallows on a 450 Honda, and Brian Kennedy and myself on the new B.S.A. lightning. We met at the training scheme and left at approximately 10.15 a.m. arriving at Mallory Park with 15 minutes to spare. The weather was sunny and warm and the racing very good, with Cooper, the 2nd and 3rd riders coming off, leaving the 4th man to win. Arriving back at the bikes, to our dismay we found Len's speedo and rev-counter were missing. After going to report the loss, we found ourselves on the open road heading for home. I think I can safely say that a good time was had by all. For the next club run I hope we will get more riders and **then we can really call it a CLUB run.**

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A very amusing episode took place after one club meeting. I had bought my latest bike, a 350 cc Enfield, that night and was not yet 'with' all the controls. After leaving the car park, we managed about 20 yards and then coasted to a halt in a side street, under a no parking sign. I switched off the lights as the battery was flat, and then, of course, the gendarme appeared smiling. After he had pointed out that the tax disc was

not in the correct position, he examined my licence etc., and then asked if the petrol was switched on. "Of course", I replied. After several more kicks, he asked if the ignition was switched on, "Yes", I said. Then he suggested I push it, so into second and off I plodded. "Is it heavy?" he asked. "Pant, pant," I replied. "Well, sit on it and I'll push it," he said. Now just close your eyes and picture me sat on a silent bike with a policeman pushing his heart out behind. It still didn't fire and I bent down to tickle it a little. After a short while, I noticed my finger was still not wet and after a closer examination, I found the petrol turned off. He didn't say a word, but I had a rough idea what he was thinking!

MOSES

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It is difficult enough to persuade people to write articles for the newsletter and so, when I received one in verse I thought the author was either very enthusiastic or a nut. When I tell you he is both you'll know who I mean. Anyway well done Glynn!

DRAG FEST DRAGON

Saturday dawned cold and clear,
And I'd not packed my camping gear.
As it lay in a great heap on the floor,
There came a loud knock upon the door.
Dave Thomas and Dave Allcock were standing there,
With me not ready they started to swear.
"Come on you clot, we're off to the Dragon,
You're never on time you're always laggin'."
We loaded the bikes and off we shot,
Then Allcock's right boot got very hot,
Oil spurted out of his Triton's crank-case,
So at Mere Corner he ended the race.
Dave parked his bike at a farm in Mere,
Dave Thomas stopped a combo to carry our gear.
Both Daves on one Velo roared off down the road,
I waved good-bye to the combo toting our load.
Through Wales we screamed, as if in a race,
A look of terror on Dave Allcock's face.
We took all the bends like bats out of hell,
Poor Dave Allcock didn't feel very well.
In Llanberis we parked on the rally site,
And saw Trevor Cowdrey, who'd got there alright.
After pitching the tent, we got wood for a fire,
Happy Norton rolled up with Brian Kennedy Esquire.
Getting together the lads in our group,
We went for our badges and one cup of soup.
For our supper, we went down to the town,
Then the communal bonfire, we gathered around.
The choir was singing and we were as well,
Did you know Trevor Cowdrey sounded like hell.
After the singing we all went back,
To the tent for some coffee and a snack.
Brian brewed the coffee it looked like mud,
In spite of that it tasted quite good.
There's nothing like spending a night in the open,
If you're adept in fly sheet ropin'.
With the sting of the smoke as you peer in the gloom,
Crushed up in a tent, where there isn't much room,
But it's great when you wake with a stretch and a yawn,
And go for a walk in the clear cold dawn.
The bikes were loaded, we were ready to go,
Twas a beautiful morning, with no sign of snow.
Dave and I shot ahead to have a good blind,
I was in front with Dave just behind.
As I was overtaking a 250 B.S.A.
The rider fell off right in Dave's way.
When I looked back the sight left me cold,
To see Dave and his Thruxton a heap in the Road,
With much battered legs on the tarmac he lay.
Trevor phoned for a blood van to take him away.

The cops came along and made quite a fuss,
And all we could do was stand there and cuss.
As I wheeled Dave's well pranged Thruxton away,
They took him to Bangor for an X-Ray.
The accident happened just near Pen-y-gwryd,
In a hotel garage the Velo, we hid.
We retrieved Dave Thomas from the hospital staff,
At his attempts to walk we didn't dare laugh.
Going back that night it was bitterly cold,
But not a murmur I heard from David The Bold.
Trevor's bike packed up on the way back,
Of that famous 'Bang Water' there was a great lack.
When Brian said, "Hey Trev your air vent's bunged up",
He got a black look and wished he'd shut up.
I wish I was there to see Trevor's face,
A touch of Lambrettas, it was a disgrace.
So next year, why don't you come along,
For a ride, some fresh air and a camp fire sing-song.

GLYNN

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At last I have the rest of Wilf Earlam's 'autobiography' and after reading this second instalment I'm sure you'll agree, it was well worth waiting for.

THE BIKES IN MY LIFE (By Wilf Earlam)

(Part Two)

You may remember in a previous issue of the Newsletter, I started telling you of some of my experiences on the various bikes I've had and I had reached the point where my Tiger 100 was missing when I came out of Belle Vue Speedway one night.

It's a terrible feeling when it finally dawns on you that your beloved bike has really gone, and after mentally tearing the thief limb from limb, you report your sad loss to the Police. You feel like dying when the station sergeant says - "Yours is the ninth this week, you can say good-bye to that" etc. etc.

The problem now arose of how to get around, for anyone who knows where I live will realise transport is essential and I had also to get to work in Stockport. A pal at work came to my rescue by loaning me a 1937 350 A.J.S., which his brother had given to him and which he couldn't ride - and this very pleasant device carried me about faithfully for the next few months.

By now the war had started and all the roads around Ringway had road blocks, where only service men and residents were allowed in the area. The only thing was that I was out on the A.J.S. when these were erected, and sailing happily round a bend about a mile from home, on a very dark night, and with my regulation headlamp mask emitting its full three glow worm power - a voice bellowed out "Halt, who goes there", and then a very bright torch was pointed in my direction and something, which turned out to be the business end of a .303 Enfield rifle was pushed about a foot from my face.

I was petrified believe me, I'd got visions of German invaders and prison camps, and God knows what, but soon everything was sorted out and many a good laugh and sing song was had with those lads in the following five years.

However, that's by the way, so back to the Tiger 100 which, I forgot to mention, had a rather peculiar dent in the offside exhaust pipe, near the foot-rest. Every bike I saw I checked its exhaust pipes, and I had all the lads I knew looking for it too, and every bike that came into the works yard brought forth a shout from the lads near the windows. A similar shout eleven months later took me to the window to have a look at a Speed Twin of 1938 vintage, and it struck me as rather odd that it had a 1932 registration!

The owner suddenly appeared and as he turned round to leave the yard there was my exhaust pipe!!!

Frantic enquiries as to where he was going and equally frantic calls to the Police and he was stopped in Cheadle - and it was my exhaust pipe. He had five bikes at home, all stolen, and kept two going with bits from the others including my Tiger 100. For that he got 3 months in the 'clink' and I eventually sorted out enough parts to rebuild the Tiger, but it hadn't got a steering damper or battery and had been 'painted' a dirty black.

Some days later a bright red and silver Tiger 100 was ready for its first run and away I went up the road followed by a pal of mine on his Tiger. I intended to go down a steep hill near home and round the bumpy bend at the bottom in order to see how it steered without a damper, but my intended 40 m.p.m. got to 60 as Doug tried to climb up my exhaust pipe - and then the fun started!

I got into a beautiful wobble, both steering lock stops broke off, both sides of the tank were dented by the fork blades and the front tyre was smoking and melting. Eventually, (about 3 years later) it straightened out, 500 yards farther up the hill and about a foot from the opposite bank and left a black zig zag line in the road that was visible for four years! I'll never be able to understand why I wasn't cast off that bike, or why my wooden hand wasn't flung off, or why I didn't die of sheer fright on the spot.

I turned round right away and rode home at a steady 40 m.p.h. and about twenty minutes later Doug was packing up motor cycling there and then and they don't come any wilder than Doug! He left his bike in my garage and walked 4 miles home and two weeks later was called up for the Army.

I bought his bike for 340 which was a 1940 Tiger 100 and one of the last pre-war ones to be made, and I sold my own to Kings for 339 having lost faith in it anyway. By this time I was a part time member of the Fire Service (A.F.S.) and acted as despatch rider, so with a petrol allowance for that and a petrol allowance to go to work, I was able to continue riding.

What with riding through water, rubble, bomb craters, etc., in Manchester and Liverpool, during the war years I learned a lot of what a bike would do and then I decided to swap the Tiger 100 for a beautiful little 250 Tiger 70, which in those days was a 'competition model'. I had a lot of fun with this and eventually one of my 'pals' in the fire service persuaded me to sell it to him in 1945 for 275 (and it had cost 255 two years before.)

He hadn't got the cash but gave me £25 and an I.O.U. for £50 and I posted his savings certificates so he could prove he had the lolly! As he lived in Congleton, and I'm soft, I lent him the bike on a Friday night, to go home on to see if his savings certificates (or rather the cash) had arrived, and I have never seen him, the money, or the bike from that day to this. He was going in the Navy that week-end, had already got a customer for the bike and did get the cash from his certificates as subsequent enquiries confirmed, so be warned friends - a business deal is still **business**, even with friends!

This little lot left me once again without a bike, but a call on the father of one of my workmates, who was overseas in the Army, brought forth the use of his son's 350 B.S.A., which sheared the crank pin in the first 4 miles but continued to get me the last 2 miles home making one hell of a noise. I got a new crankpin made for 10 fags at the works so was soon on the road again, but I never liked that bike, particularly on wet roads.

However, as I was to use it until 1946, I asked if I could buy it and duly paid 10 deposit and 1 a week for 20 weeks, which went 30 weeks after several hard luck stories. Incidentally, this lad that owned the Beeza had a sister who joined the A.T.S. at 19 and drove everything from a motor bike to a tank transporter - some girl!

Came the end of the war and one of the first 340 A.J.S. in the area with Tele forks was bought by yours truly and a beautiful bike it was, so much so that my next 6 bikes were all A.J.S.- but all trials bikes.

In 1945, with the first A.J. I met a member of Manchester '17' and accepted an invitation to their clubroom in Chorlton and liked the company so much I joined on the spot.

So started the happiest period of my motorcycling, amongst the nicest crowd of people it's ever been my good fortune to meet.

(Continued)

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Wilf has recently started a driving school (for four wheelers) and if you are interested I'm sure Wilf will be pleased to hear from you.

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In answer to my plea for more material, Jim Hallows has very sportingly come forward with his report on the National Rally. Thanks very much Jim.

NATIONAL RALLY

Following Dave's account of his exploits on the National Rally in the last Newsletter I was prompted to put pen to paper with regard to our experiences in the said event.

Alan Brown on his 99 Norton and I on my 450 Honda set out from Warrington intending to cover 32 check points. By the outskirts of the town, we were, as we thought, clear of the other riders, but after several miles we passed a young lad on a Honda 90.

As we left Trench, our 2nd check point, the Honda 90 rider was just arriving. From then on he kept appearing all over the place, and this became rather disconcerting for us 'big bike boys' until we discovered that he had missed several of our check points.

Just outside Banbury, a sweet young lady in a mini decided to overtake another car just as I was passing her which resulted in a bent gear lever and a holed alternator cover. As oil spewed out on every subsequent left hander we tried patching the hole with chewing gum, but this merely boiled on the hot motor.

Another memorable event was during the night near Wisbech. The old Roman Roads there are arrow straight for miles with sudden 'S' bends at the end of a straight. We were flagged down by a couple of 'Velo' riders, who had been taken unaware by a bend and had shot through a hedge into a field. Together we extracted the machine and sorted things out by the light of Mr. Brown's brilliant Cibie headlamp. Amazingly the only damage suffered was a pushed in headlamp glass.

Then there was the bloke who bounced his immaculate Triton down the road in a shower of sparks at Boston after braking hard to avoid a car.

Between Lincoln and Gainsborough I lost my check card and was lucky to find it in the dark after a 5 mile return journey.

At Buxton, learning that we were four points under the maximum we skipped the special test and got to Belle Vue at about 7 a.m. being the first to arrive apart from one chap who had not done the full course.

The Rally was really good fun and it would be nice to see more entries than last year from the '17'.

I believe the Honda 90 rider got a special award!

JIM

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At last a newsletter which I haven't written all myself. I hope this is an indication of a bit more enthusiasm from members, keep it up!

DAVE ABRAHAMS (MOSES)