



Welcome to the October edition of the Notts & Derby Section's Newsletter.

In this issue we have an update from Amal Carburetters, news about our Air Ambulance collections, a report of the Lakeland Weekend Run and further information on ethanol in petrol.

### **AGM report**

The AGM was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October. It was a lively meeting with many topics discussed. A copy of the minutes should have been sent to you via a separate email.

### **What's on in November:**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>:** AUTUMN ROAD RUN. Whatstandwell.

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>:** Lunch meet at Grindleford Station Café. Now the weather is closing in, there will be no Sunday all-day runs till the Spring.

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>:** Normous Newark.

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>:** Lunch Meet, Yondermann Café, Wardlow Mires.

### **Air Ambulance collections.**

Regulars on our section runs will be used to Graham Franks taking collections for the Air Ambulance on each run. In September, Graham handed Kate Sherras a cheque for £300 to be banked. He would like to thank all those who have contributed so far this year. The cheque, he says, is proof that he doesn't spend the proceeds on beer!

### **Amal Concentric Mk1 Carb Availability.**

Something you might know about but I didn't. I have had difficulty finding a new Concentric for a while. All suppliers list them as "temporarily out of

stock." I had considered a new Wassell Evolution version (supposedly similar to the Amal Premier) but then I read some concerning reports about quality and after sales service. Recently, I emailed Burlen, the Amal manufacturers to see what the issue is:

This was their prompt and informative reply:

"Dear Mr Phillips,  
We are hoping be able to supply 900 Series carburetters again by the end of the year. The tooling for the 900 Series carburetter bodies was badly damaged last year and had to be written off. Tooling to make them from aluminium was already in development and the decision was made to focus on that. From now on all 900 Series carburetters will be aluminium bodied Premier type and we will no longer be taking orders for 900 Series carburetters made from the traditional Zinc Alloy. Samples from the new tooling have just been received and are currently being machined. Advance orders can be taken for the new carburetters but delivery times can only be approximate at present.

Kind Regards,  
**Phil Beresford**  
Customer Services Advisor"

### **VMCC Lakeland Section Annual Regulation Weekend Run.**



For 25 years or more (with the exception of last year), Graham Bower and I have attended this VMCC event with great enjoyment. The run has seen other VMCC Notts and Derbyshire members attend regularly, ie Dave Jolly and Chris Welch. This year Lloyd Rumbold joined our little group.

Initially in the early years there would be 130 bikes plus but sadly over the years these numbers have dwindled to below 100 entrants. It was nice to see Dave entered this year on Barrie's beautiful old Triumph. Happy memories and I'm sure Barrie would be very proud his old bike made it over this rugged terrain!

Normally this is a very busy weekend event and three runs are arranged. This year with Covid restrictions Colin Steer, the organiser, felt a one day event would be more appropriate, but the option was offered if entrants wanted to do the normal three runs on Saturday and Sunday. This year, understandably, we were down to about 50 entrants. I entered on my Triumph, Graham on his Vellocette and Lloyd on his Matchless Trials and we all opted to complete the three planned provided routes.



The start of all three runs were scheduled to commence from the Wilson Arms, Torver (just south of Coniston). We trailered our bikes 180 odd miles there to our B&B just a few hundred yards from the start. The weather forecast was mixed but, being in the Lakes, the weather was not the best with lots of clouds at higher levels and mainly wet roads throughout, we did however see some sunshine and brilliant views and some dry roads.

We all managed to find a tank full of fuel at a little Land Rover Garage in Torver. The Saturday morning Run took us north to Ambleside, over the Kirkstone Pass and into Patterdale. Headed to Keswick and turned, via a diversion, to Grasmere returning through Coniston and back into Torver. 60 miles in all, all dry but misty!

The Saturday Afternoon run took us south to



Broughton Mills, west of Ulpha and on to Hall Dunnerdale and Seathwaite to Cockley Beck. Turning right on to the picturesque Wrynose Pass and into the remarkable valleys of The Lagdales. We had spent too long looking at stunning views and taking photos of beautiful scenery so we cut the route a little short and returned through Coniston again to Torver. Some better weather for the 40 mile route.



The "official" Sunday run was scheduled to start at 10.00 at the Wilsons Armes and heavy rain greeted us. We decided to delay our start a few hours to

allow the inclement weather to pass. By 11.30 the clouds passed over and we headed north again with a reverse Saturday route. Via Great Langdales over the Wrynose Pass. Lloyd tackled the Hardknott Pass to Eskdale while Graham and I went the flatter and safer route via the Duddon Valley to Eskdale for the lunch time stop at the Railway station. The earlier, more adventurous entrants who started in the rain had gone by the time we got there but Colin Steer was there to greet us. After a brief lunch we continued towards Ravenglass and a right turn on the A595 and across Bootle Fell to Duddon Bridge. Left up to Ulpha to Hall Dunnerdale towards Broughton Mills and Broughton across the Woodland Fell to Grizebeck returning to Torver via Lowick and Blawith via the A 5084. 76 miles in all with some rain and wet roads! I think we were all ready for a shower and a good meal and pint in Coniston that evening.

Overall, a very enjoyable weekend and looking forward to the 2022 Run.

### **Mike Hornsby.**

Lloyd sends a photo of his Matchless on the infamous Hardnott Pass.



### **THE GREAT ETHANOL DEBATE.**

(This article was published in an online group. It is reproduced here for our enlightenment.)

A question that is constantly being asked right now, particularly with the introduction of E10, is whether Ethanol based fuel will harm my bike? As a previous industrial chemist and owner of several classic bikes and cars I decided to address this controversial subject and provide answers to many of the questions being asked. Hopefully, this will

lead to an explanation on the consequences of using Ethanol based fuel and address what changes need to be made and what don't. Using Ethanol based fuel basically comes down to a case of damage limitation.

### **Will Ethanol based fuel corrode my fuel tank?**

The main problem with Ethanol is that it is hygroscopic which means that it has an affinity to absorb moisture from the air. It is this water that causes the ensuing damage since it will, over time, corrode many of the metal parts it comes into contact with. Needless to say, the actual conditions required for the fuel to absorb significant levels of moisture must be considered. The greater the headspace in the fuel tank, the greater the chance of moisture absorption due to increased surface area of exposed fuel. Remember that fuel tanks are essentially vented to atmosphere, as are gravity fed motorcycle carburettors. Moreover, the higher the relative humidity, the greater the chance of moisture absorption. Excessive fluctuations in air temperature can also cause condensation to form which is quickly absorbed by the Ethanol. The best way to reduce moisture absorption to an absolute minimum is therefore to keep the tank topped up to the brim wherever possible and avoid exposure to severe temperature fluctuations. Keeping the bike under cover helps significantly here.

### **Will Ethanol based fuel corrode my carburettor?**

Now onto the damage caused by absorbed moisture in the fuel. The main question is whether the absorbed moisture causes corrosion of metal parts? If the fuel is used before moisture build up becomes significant then corrosion damage is unlikely. However, if the fuel is left for any length of time then excessive moisture build up will start to cause corrosion damage particularly to steel and aluminium parts. Fuel tanks, fuel taps and carburettors are the main problems here and it is not uncommon to witness significant corrosion of carburettor internals when left standing over time containing Ethanol based fuels. Soldered components such as carburettor floats are also quite vulnerable. Ethanol based fuels should be used within a couple of months at the very most and drained from the tank and carburettors if left any longer than this. In any event, modern fuels do not store very well since the octane rating deteriorates if left for any longer than this. Ethanol based fuels are also more unstable than non-Ethanol fuels.

### **Will Ethanol based fuel attack my fuel pipes, rubber seals and gaskets?**

Now onto rubber components. The term rubber is a bit of a misnomer. Seals, gaskets and pipes are made from a wide range of elastomers including Nitrile (Buna N), Neoprene, EPDM, Viton etc. etc. and this is where the problem lies. Whilst some elastomers exhibit very good resistance to Ethanol, many do not. Generally, motorcycle fuel pipes are made from neoprene which is extremely resistant to Ethanol so no problem there. However, many seals and gaskets are made from Nitrile (Buna N) which has very poor resistance to Ethanol. Ethanol can cause these seals and gaskets to swell over time whilst some elastomers can become quite brittle. It's best to swap out any problematic seals and gaskets in the fuel system (taps, carburetors etc.) for a more resistant material, though this is easier said than done since many manufacturers and OEM's do not state what material has been used in the manufacture of these items. This is a difficult one and it's often a case of suck it and see. If Ethanol based fuels appear to be causing problems with seals and gaskets it's best to replace the affected items then avoid Ethanol based fuels altogether. Unless, of course you can identify and obtain Ethanol resistant seals and gaskets made from more resilient materials which exhibit very good resistance to Ethanol. Most modern engine and fuel systems (post 2000) have already been manufactured incorporating seals and gaskets made from more resilient materials.

### **Does 2 stroke oil mix properly with Ethanol based fuels and does Ethanol based fuel increase the risk of engine seizures?**

A popular misconception about Ethanol based fuels is that they can increase the risk of engine seizure. There is no real credible evidence that Ethanol based fuels increase the risk of seizure despite the fact that a 10% Ethanol addition will have a slight (2.6%) leaning effect. Moreover, 2 stroke oils mix with Ethanol based fuels just as well as they do with non-Ethanol fuels. The idea that Ethanol based fuels can contribute to engine seizure is a myth that should be ignored. However, it should be noted that the calorific value (energy content) of Ethanol is less than that of Petrol so we can expect a small difference in performance when using Ethanol based fuels though hardly significant with 10% Ethanol (E10). In some countries like Australia where 85% Ethanol (E85) fuels exist this has become more of an issue but UK fuels currently contain a maximum of 10% Ethanol so not really an issue.

### **Will a fuel stabiliser work to prevent moisture absorption and increase storage life?**

Another common question is whether a fuel stabiliser will work to prevent moisture absorption and increase storage life? In a nutshell, No. Fuel stabilisers do not work to prevent moisture absorption and do very little to retain the octane rating of a fuel during long term storage. Stay away from them, you are wasting your money!

### **Can Ethanol be removed from fuel?**

There are some people out there suggesting that Ethanol can be removed from fuel by mixing water with the fuel to soak up the Ethanol and subsequently draining off the remaining fuel layer. This does actually work but it's all a bit of a fuff and then there's the issue of disposing of the remaining Ethanol/water mixture safely. It's better to try and source a non-Ethanol based fuel in the first place such as Esso Synergy Supreme+ Unleaded 97 or Synergy Supreme+ 99. These are still to be made available in the UK so I am told. Although the forecourt pumps have E5 labels on them, Esso Synergy Supreme+ 99 is actually Ethanol free (except in Devon, Cornwall, North Wales, North England and Scotland). Also, Super Unleaded will still be available for another 5 years which contains only (up to) 5% Ethanol. The less Ethanol the better. I think we're getting the picture now.

Another option, should an owner wish to keep a bike fuelled up during longer term storage is to consider filling up with an Alkylate fuel which is Ethanol free and is very stable during long term storage. This is available and sold under the brand name Aspen in the UK and whilst it does work well it is very expensive.

Indeed, there are definite consequences when using Ethanol based fuel in older engines. In summary I would recommend using non-Ethanol based fuel where available or look out for Super Unleaded which contains only 5% Ethanol. Where it is not available, I would recommend that anyone using Ethanol based fuel keep it in the tank only during the active season when the bike is frequently being started and run to ensure that the fuel does not stay for too long in the bike. All the while, keep a watchful eye on any seals and gaskets within the fuel system and ensure that fuel pipes are made from neoprene. It's easy enough to source neoprene fuel pipe and it's not expensive. When the time comes to lay the bike up, ensure that all Ethanol based fuels are drained from the tank and carburetors and flush them through with paraffin. It is the lesser of two evils since fuel taps and carburetors are best stored filled with fuel to prevent seals from drying out but not with Ethanol based fuels. If possible, fill the tank with enough Alkylate (Aspen) fuel just to be able to flood the fuel

tap and carburettor for Winter storage. Other than that, a light coating of 2 stroke oil mixed with a little paraffin can be used to coat the inside of the fuel tank to prevent corrosion.

I hope this information throws some light on the great Ethanol debate and is helpful to some of you.

**Chris Robinson**

### **E5 AVAILABILITY**

On a cheerier note, 97/98 octane "Super" fuels - designated E5 (max 5% BioEthanol) should be around for at least the next 5 years. All filling stations stocking 2 grades of petrol and selling more than a million litres of fuel a year will be **obliged** to stock 97/98 octane / E5 fuel. The downside is that these fuels typically carry a premium of £0.12 per litre!. If you let us know which of your local stations are stocking E5 fuel, we will publish them in future newsletters.

### **Free Advertisements.**

### **FOR SALE.**



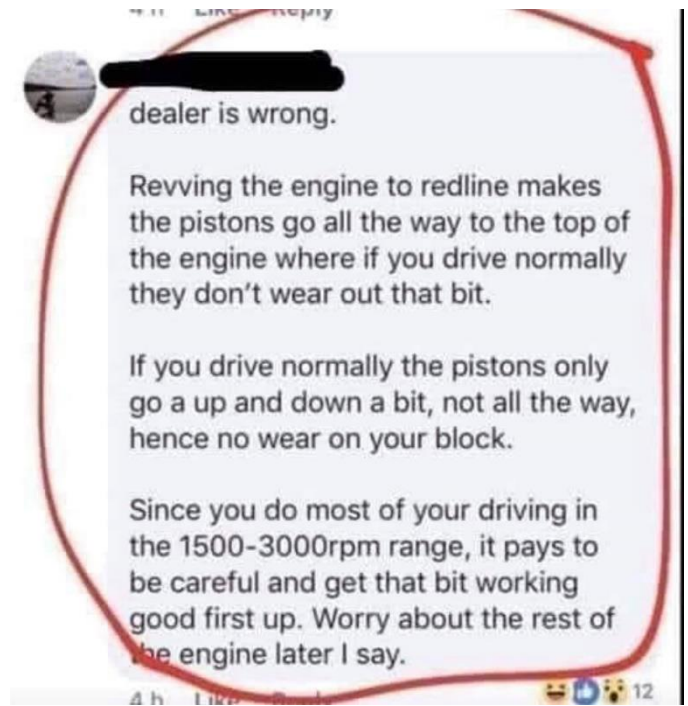
Honda 250 twin port Silk Road 1986 imported 1990 Motd new battery and chain Motd 8/22. Rare extra low bottom gear Kick starter as well as iffy electric starter£2250. Nottm 0115 9179248.

### **WANTED.**

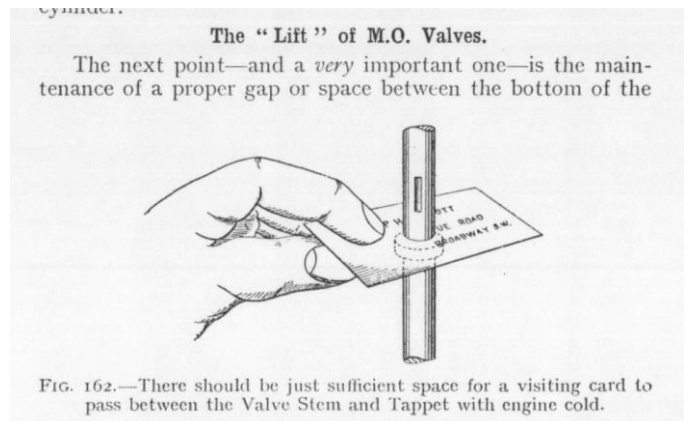
Wanted a pre-war Triumph Speed Twin or 3T. I would also be interested in a BSA C11. Please phone Peter Gibson 0115 9314362 or 07970 285 668.

### **Words of wisdom?**

The following snippet was seen by the Dorset section. Their comment was: "we like to share our extensive knowledge to assist with that rebuild wherever we can. Your correspondent spotted this elsewhere, every day is a school day!"



### **Clearance gauge**



What do you mean you don't have a calling card?  
What sort of a cad are you?

### **CONTACT US:**

**Please** let me have any stories from the past, amusing or otherwise, concerning motorcycles, or any technical information, rebuild stories, photos or news of events by replying to this email.

Let us know what you've been up to by emailing me at: [nottsandderbyvintageclub@outlook.com](mailto:nottsandderbyvintageclub@outlook.com)

Use the same address and format if you have any items or motorcycles for sale. Don't forget to include a phone number and a price.