



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

In this issue we have memories of a sidecar outfit, news about unleaded petrol and a selection of machines owned by one man over the years.

### **What's on in October.**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>: Crich Classic Motorcycle Day.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>: **AGM**. Please let me have any items you would like to see on the agenda in good time. This meeting will be an important one as we didn't have one last year and we need to appoint a Treasurer.

Saturday and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>: Stafford Classic Bike Show.

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 2021: Normous Newark.

### **Nellie.**

The piece about Malc Sheppard in last month's issue reminded me of a sidecar outfit he owned in the late 1960s.

It was a BSA Gold Flash with plunger suspension, so it would be about a 1953 model. It had a substantial double-adult chair attached and it was given to him and his pal Dave by an old friend who no longer rode it. Dave's brother Alan was my best friend and so we took an interest in the outfit too. We decided that it needed a name so it was always known by the affectionate term "Nellie."

No pictures, I'm afraid, but you will all know what this kind of machine looks like. It had endured a hard life but after a bit of fettling we all felt it would be an ideal steed for the four of us and we used it for our adventures.

A few occasions spring to mind. On the way to Matlock from Nottingham, we had to make a right turn at the T-junction in Ambergate. This entails emerging from the junction on to the busy A6. Dave was driving and I was on pillion. Dave had a lapse of concentration and pulled out in front of a car which was homing in on us from our right. I saw it just in time to lift my leg above the bonnet before it hit us and pushed us a couple of feet across the road. I probably would have sustained serious injuries had I not moved my leg away from the impact zone. Malc was in the back of the sidecar and was furious with Dave for pulling out. "I'll kill him! Let me out!" he was shouting. Luckily, Alan would not move from the front seat.

We compensated the car driver for Dave's mistake (Dave could hardly say "I didn't see you mate!") and went on our way with Malc driving. As we entered Matlock Bath and slowed for traffic, he suddenly jumped off the bike and ran across the road. Apparently, he had spotted the toilets but he hadn't told me. As the outfit rolled slowly downhill, I slid forward and took the handlebars. As I looked over my shoulder for what is now termed the life saver glance, I could see the driver of the car behind rolling with laughter!

For an old outfit, it certainly had some go left in it. Malc once gave me a lift on the pillion along a local street but started to move off just as I got on. I slid back bit by bit as he accelerated and found myself sitting on the number plate.

### **Nellie goes to Skeg.**

As Easter 1968 approached, we decided that Nellie would take us to Skegness. In preparation, my mother made a full set of curtains for the sidecar. I still don't know why! The journey was remarkable. We soon found that with four adults and a toolbox full of spanners, the sidecar fixings were less than perfect and the sidecar began to lean in. Malc was driving with me on the pillion and whenever he shouted "Now," I had to lean on the sidecar to give him enough clearance to pull the clutch in. This worked reasonably well but it was difficult to look nonchalant as we passed through Lincoln in front of a policeman on point duty.

Eventually we stopped to tighten everything up. Well, we had to really as the rear tyre was flat and we had to repair the puncture. This was the first of seven punctures we experienced on that journey! The root of the problem was that the tyre was an old triangular section racing tyre. Not ideal for a sidecar outfit but it was all we had to hand.

The tread centre soon wore away and so the point of contact had worn very thin. Eventually, somewhere near Horncastle, the valve came adrift. We had no recovery policy (who could afford it in those days?) and it was Good Friday, so we knew it would be a while before we would be moving again. As the chair had loosened off again, we decided to remove the sidecar body from the chassis and line everything up properly. Good job we had the toolbox!

A car driver pulled up and gave Malc a lift to the next town. This man was a true knight of the road and he managed to find a garage which stocked inner tubes. While Alan, Dave and I worked on the bike, Malc had a lift back from the same driver and on his return, we had it all back together ready to put the tyre back on. The journey took a total of 8 1/2 hours and the sidecar had come loose twice. Epic!

Skegness was an experience! Very full of Mods and Rockers but we had a great time. The first night we slept in a derelict farmhouse near Chapel St. Leonards, which we had to share with cattle, and the second night was on the beach at Ingoldmells.

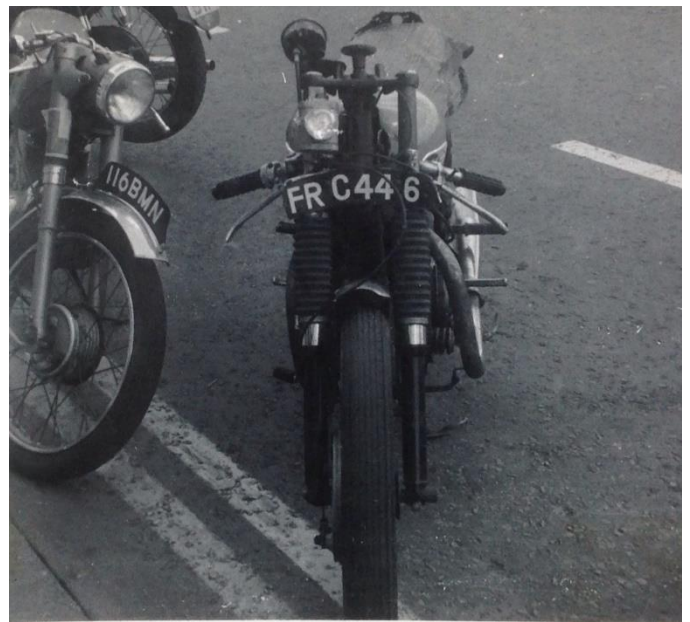
On the way home, we had more trouble with the sidecar and Malc had trouble using the clutch again. We pulled up and removed the sidecar top half (windows and roof and Mother's precious curtains!) and had to leave it in a field. The weather was fine but later Alan lost the magazine he was reading when the wind tore it out of his hands. At least the clutch was usable and we carried on. We came across two policemen in a small village, who were directing traffic around roadworks. The chatted to us for a while and as we were about to leave, one pointed down towards the back wheel. We knew that the canvas was showing and the minimum tread law had come into effect that week! We were very relieved when he pointed out that a mudguard bracket had broken. We thanked him and as we rode away, I took my gauntlet off and held it over the rear number plate in case he noticed the tyre.

There were no further issues until we reached Nottingham and the engine caught fire outside the old Ice Stadium! Soon dealt with and so the return trip took much less time than the outward journey.

### **Nellie's weight loss.**

Later on, Malc decided that he would like to modify the A10 for use as a sprinter. Most of the tinware

disappeared, clip-ons and a short seat were fitted and the silencers were removed. Despite the seat, Malc and Dave still rode two up. It sounded amazing. You could hear it coming from at least a mile away down at the White Hart, which was the Rockers' pub at the time, and with less weight and sidecar gearing, it accelerated very quickly. It clocked 90mph down a side street with a number of us checking that the road was clear for the run. The noise was phenomenal! Well after the bike had passed by, doors all along the street started to open and the residents were peering out to see what the heck was happening. The rider shall remain nameless and I would never condone this sort of behaviour.



This photo, sent in by Malc, shows Nellie in her almost final form, although still sporting silencers and the original seat. Note the "Bobby Dodger" cycle lamp.

Nellie never did make it to the drag strip but Malc and Dave did take her to that year's IOM TT. They had a great week and no trouble from the bike. I have no memory of what happened to Nellie in the end but she provided us with an enormous amount of entertainment for months!

### **Bruce**



## My favourite bikes.

John sends us his memories of some of the interesting motorcycles he has owned and some that he still does.

### 1934 Royal Enfield 250cc Jack Booker replica.

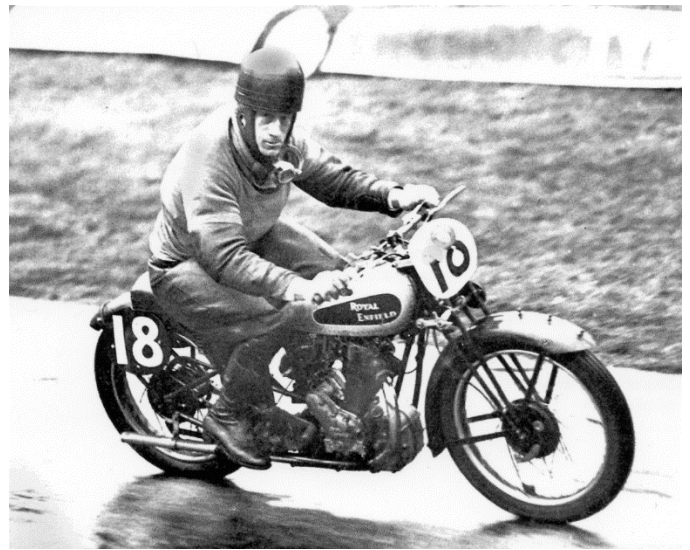
The third bike I bought and has stayed with me. As purchased, it was the "Mason Special" grass tracker. It had a home brewed plunger suspension with Norton wheel, which gave steering at both ends.

Jack Booker was the Enfield works rider, who had many successes on different capacity machines. The Booker 250, unfortunately, has not survived. Six replicas of his machine were produced, and this is the only known survivor.



Booker's 250 was basically a 250 ohv Model BO, "250 Bullet", but used a 350 frame and a 500 gearbox on its side. The engine has a "Dural" con-rod rather than the usual steel rod and a bronze head. Unfortunately, the valve gear was quite weak, but the bike was quick, while it lasted. When Bill Lomas rode similar Enfield's, special rockers were made from a special steel which Harry Lomas showed me under his bench. Harry fortunately sold me an exhaust rocker to replace the brazed-up rocker I had. I still have the fixture to locate the parts for brazing or welding.

It was quite capable of staying with the works 350 Norton's, in mixed capacity races. If it was felt the bike was not going to last the race, Booker went for the lap record, and normally got the record, before the rockers, usually, failed.



Booker is pictured here at the 1934 Donington August Bank Holiday meeting. This machine has a standard petrol not the "proper" works tank. Going down to the Melbourne Hairpin at Donington, Booker's bike was capable of 103 mph, and could keep up with the works 350 Norton's, not bad for a 1934 push rod 250. Booker himself gave me much of this information.

### 1939 BMW 500cc R51RS.

This machine is one of 17 OHV factory produced "practice" racers and for mainly dealer supported riders. It is even rarer than the Rennsports, where around 25 were made. This machine was successfully raced, with a sidecar, by Otto Köhle. The bike has the distinction of being the first non-British bike to win a VMCC race. This was at Mallory Park, with a sidecar attached and John Joiner at the helm. It started at the back of the grid and came out of Gerard's first, on the first lap. In more recent times, it has been rebuilt as a solo racer, more like it would have left the factory.





### 1951 BMW R51/3

With ex Walter Mertinke tuned R75 engine as used in his banking sidecar outfits on grass, sand, and long tracks.

For a several years after the last war, many BMWs and specials had R75 engines fitted for racing. Walter Mertinke raced very successfully, a banking sidecar outfit on grass, sand and long tracks on the Continent during the forties, fifties and probably the sixties.



The engine in this special is one of his engines. It is 773 cc, compression ratio 8.4:1 and has 44 mm inlet valves. The internals have been extensively reworked, including polishing and much piston reworking. The early military machines had a rather hot camshaft, which was soon replaced by a softer version.



### 1953 500cc Beart Manx.



I have ridden this machine up the Brooklands test hill several times. I must say I now find the riding position aggravates my back and neck; one of the problems with anno domini! If I was only a lot younger. When I had the Inter, this is what I would really have loved, although I also fancied a BRS Norton.

### 1954 600cc BMW R68.

This is probably BMW's most desirable model; BMW's first genuine 100 mph, non-racing motorcycle, which it does comfortably. Only 1452 were produced. It was recently fully restored from the crank up at considerable expense for my personal use. It has new, genuine carbs. which cost almost £1000 each & are now virtually unobtainable, plus many more very expensive new parts. Probably my favourite BMW.





### 1913 New Hudson Model VIIA 3½ HP.



As far as is known this is the only survivor of this model. Generally, it was supplied with a sidecar.

### 1958 IFA (MZ) 350cc BK350 and Stoye sidecar.

The engine is developed from the DKW WWII bomber auxiliary engine. It was also the basis of the engine in BMW's 125cc R10 prototype which never got into production.

An interesting and different motorcycle.



### 1943 BMW 750cc R75.

A very technically interesting machine. It has been to some club nights as well as shows including Classic Bike Shows and NEC events.

The bike has 8 forward speeds and 2 reverse. It features a lockable diff. This has a permanent drive

to the sidecar wheel with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the torque going to the rear wheel and  $\frac{1}{3}$  to the sidecar wheel. A very clever bit of design.



I have tried the outfit on some old Derbyshire trials sections and got through.

### 1958 Jawa Model 15 500cc OHC twin.



Another interesting machine. The brakes look impressive, but are only average for the 50's, even after re-lining. There was a fair amount of gear whine, which could have been due to wear. However, it was a pleasant bike to ride with reasonable performance.

It features a "nacelle" headlight and "slick shift" gearbox, which was standard on Jawas before Triumph used them.

### 1976 MZ 250cc Six Days Rep.

Another interesting and fun bike. In good fettle it was capable of over 100mph. This one had a



somewhat worn engine which had the advantage of losing some of the fierce edge off the performance.



When green laning, it was necessary to pull the clutch from time to time and give it a handful to clear the engine. I was once followed by a Triumph so opened up a bit, then a bit more as he was still with me. After slowing to go through Brailsford I then opened up a bit more, then a bit more and, unfortunately, was running out of petrol so had to switch on reserve, after which I was almost home. B\*\*\*\*r!

### 1978 BMW engined Chang Jiang outfit.



This bike shows a variation of the CJ. This machine has been fitted with, according to the engine number, a US spec. R90S engine, which was overhauled to as new condition. There are numerous, and very desirable, special features incorporated into this outfit, including, disc front brake, hand change on reverse gear, battery in sidecar boot, mph speedo, Mikuni carbs, leather

seat, leather panniers, sidecar wind screen, rear view mirrors, jerry can, extra chrome and coach lines. It shows what can be done with a standard Chang Jiang. With this outfit there is BMW performance and reliability. It most certainly goes well, handles well and stops well. A really fun outfit.

### 1948 Condor 580cc A580.



A rather agricultural and uncomfortable bike. Much more like a Zündapp than BMW. It comes with 8 forward speeds and was produced for the Swiss military. I claimed mine was ex-Swiss Navy.

### 1961 BSA 500cc Gold Star Clubman's.



My personal machine, owned by me since 1968, has just been fully restored at considerable expense. It has some very pleasant memories, including 180 miles from Kirk Langley to Holland on Sea when the A14 was still the old A604 going through every village. The run took 3 hours; I've never done that journey quicker, even with the A1M, A14 etc.

**John Lawes.**



## Valentino Rossi retires.

Not strictly vintage-related but many of us will have followed his career with interest.

At 42, Rossi has officially announced his retirement from motorcycle Grand Prix racing at the end of 2021.



Over a career spanning more than a quarter of a century, the Italian has carved out a legend that will be hard to match or surpass, either on-track or off. Nine World Championships, 115 wins and 235 podiums, and being the only competitor in history to win titles in the 125cc, 250cc, 500cc and MotoGP™ categories,

“A difficult decision but you need to understand... I think in the end in sport, the results make the difference,” he said.

He has also announced that his girlfriend Francesca Novello is pregnant. “We are expecting a girl,” Rossi said.

## **UK CHANGES TO UNLEADED FUEL**

The unleaded petrol you fill up with at your local petrol station is changing on the 1st of September. Petrol forecourts need to sell greener 'E10' petrol

as standard by 1st September. This Government imposed rule applies in England, Scotland and Wales and has come in under the radar for most motorists, who may continue filling up oblivious to the changes and the damage that they could be doing to their engines.

The Government say that it is your responsibility to check if your car, motorcycle, moped, mower etc is compatible with the new greener unleaded petrol, that'll be dispensed from most forecourts from that date. However, there are an estimated half a million plus older vehicles that aren't compatible with the new unleaded that is being dispensed from the standard pumps. For those engines that are not compatible you can switch to the pricier super-grade unleaded (well, until they do away with that too some time in the future no doubt).

For those of us whose vehicles are OK to use the new unleaded petrol, the price at the forecourt is the same, but you may need to fill up more often as it's slightly less efficient.

Diesel vehicles are unaffected, as they already have an additive in diesel that diesels are compatible with.

The UK Government's link is below in case you have any other slightly older vehicles that you would like to look up. It doesn't cover machines older than thirty years or so.

<https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-e10-petrol>

## Mystery object.

The machine in the next picture was posted on the internet with the caption: “Saw this welding set at an autojumble that was powered by a Triumph 500 twin engine.”

It appears to look very much like the generator sets used in Lancaster bombers. Perhaps one of our readers can put us right?



(above) What is it? Welder or generator?

### Free Adverts.

#### **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.

#### **For sale:**

**Genuine Lucas** 6-volt ammeter 8-0-8. Brand new, never used. £10. Bruce 07442168932.



### **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.

