



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

In this issue we have the story of one man's Norton, a report on the Blood Bikes Talk, news about the website, a report from the Telford off-road show and exciting news about modern Triumph motorcycles.

What's on in April

- 3rd **BREAKFAST RUN.** 10am Papplewick.
- 6th **Duke William Lunchtime meet.** Matlock.
- 7th **Natter Night**
- 10th **Normous Newark.**
- 21st **EVENING RUN.** 7.30pm Griffins Head,
- 23/24th **Stafford Classic Show**
- 28th **EVENING RUN** 7.30pm Ripley Market
- 30th **Coffee Run** 10am Griffins Head.

Club Nights Venue.

When attending club meetings, please purchase refreshments at the bar. We are not charged for the room and recently, with low attendance, the publican has noticed that some members are not reciprocating this gesture.

There is a worry that we could lose the room.

Back issues of the newsletter available on the website.

A number of members have commented on the monthly newsletter. You can now download back issues from our section website:

(<https://nottsandderby.vmcc.net/>)

Simply select the "Newsletters" tab on the home page and click on the title of the issue you would like to download to your computer, tablet or smartphone.

Blood bikes talk



Twenty-seven members attended the Derbyshire Blood Bikes Talk on 3rd March at Ockbrook. Paul Smith, who is also actually a VMCC member, gave us an entertaining, informative and interesting insight into the way the organization works and what the volunteers do during the course of their shifts. The talk went down really well and the meeting raised £142.15 towards the running costs of the Blood Bikes.

Coffee Morning Run.



Gordon led this year's first run of six motorcycles from Papplewick past pumping station through Farnsfield to Ashcroft farm shop, Edingley, for coffee and tea. The return journey took the group down Greaves Lane, then Blidworth Bottoms and back to Papplewick.

Malc Sheppard.

The Norton International Story

1957 Model 30 500cc

It all started in Sept 2006; I was looking for an engine for My MK Indy kit car, having just removed the Honda Blackbird engine that I built it with, as I would have lost my licence it was so damn quick! Anyway, a friend of mine said he had a Ford Zetec

engine sitting in his dad's garage, so I went to look at it and it wasn't what I wanted (I ended up with a Vauxhall 2ltr red top, but that's by the by) but while I was there, I saw this engine languishing under the bench. I asked his dad (John) what it was and he told me it was an old Norton engine, so out of curiosity I took a picture of it and emailed it to my good friend Chris Norton and asked him what it was. A swift reply came back telling me it was a Norton International engine and "has he got the rest of it!" I said I didn't know but would find out. When I next saw John, I asked him if he had the rest of it, and he told me he had, but it had been in the shed down the garden for 40 years and he'd lost the key to the shed! Repeated asking bought about the same reply so a little subterfuge was required. When he went away on holiday his son said he knew where the key was and took me into the shed and lo and behold there was the Norton Featherbed International rolling chassis and next to it was a '57 Triumph Speed Twin.



The International as found.

It transpired that the bike was originally acquired with a seized engine, having been run with an oil tap turned off, so he hoofed the Inter out and fitted a Triumph T110 and ran it for a couple of years, it was then dismantled and put in the shed where it remained until I saw it. He also showed me the cupboard under the bench where all the original Inter parts had been stored along with the Triton bits. Then to cap it all, in the front room was a '75 Trident that was last on the road in '79 with 12k on the clock!

I spent the next three years trying to persuade John to sell me the Inter to no avail until one evening in Sept 2009 when I rang him up and said that I'd just

sold my kit car and could I come and see him about the bike. To my surprise he said yes! He said he'd seen some of my previous work and knew that if he sold it to me; I would make a good job of it and wasn't doing it for the money. Two days later, over a cup of coffee, the deal was done and I found myself the owner of a '57 Inter, a '57 Speed Twin and a '75 Trident!

As I've done enough Triumphs over the years, the speed twin was moved on, as was, and the Trident was re-commissioned and ridden for a year before being sold to finance the Inter. The Inter restoration was started in January 2010 and finished in March 2011. It was originally registered in Nottingham and I'm the 4th owner and it has 17k on the speedo.

Thanks to the help of Chris Streather of the Norton Owners Club, I now have the original registration number 412 AAU which is a Nottingham reg and was supplied by Hooleys Garage of Greyfriar Gate on 7th August 1957. She now has 21,000 miles on the clock and has done a several track parades with the club.



The finished machine.

Ian Lawrence
Derbyshire

(By sheer coincidence, I had already written a Norton story of my own, which I will hold back for next month's issue. I had even used the same logo in the title! – Bruce.)

TELFORD Bike show 2022

Well, that's the Telford show over for another year and my helping hand on the DOT Club stand once more. We had lots of visitors and chatted to DOT aficionados and friends over the weekend but Sunday attendance was well down. We sold T-

shirts, badges, history books, brewed lots of coffees and enjoyed the ambiance!



Roy's 1952 TD

I must mention that the Centre security stewards were helpful when loading and unloading for a change. Just a bit of blagging here and there needed to get through a couple of locked gates! lol We enjoyed a jovial meeting when The Clubs AGM took place after the show on Saturday where our long-time secretary, Jim Evans retired and Chairman, Roy Entiknap also stood down. Both would continue as honorary club committee members.



My 1970 Minarelli DOT

I was honoured to be asked to take on the role of Chairman going forward and agreed to act as interim secretary. Hopefully, new blood will be introduced to fill the vacant positions at the Stafford Show meeting in two months' time.

Andrew Cooke.

More Brit-built Triumphs! New jobs as UK factory gears up to build more than 20,000 bikes a year.

Triumph are massively ramping up their UK production in a move that will more than treble output from the Hinckley factory and create nearly 100 new jobs after a big rise in UK and European sales.

This expansion comes two years after the company made cutbacks when production of the last two British-built bikes – the Speed Triple and Tiger 1200 – were moved to Thailand. At the time Triumph said they wanted to realign their UK focus to R&D and prototype/bespoke models. Production was reduced from around 7000 machines per year to 4500, focusing on top end bikes from their TFC range.



Triumph manufacturing in the UK

At the time Triumph confirmed that they were in consultation with up to 50 UK workers over the future of their jobs. Then in June 2020, as the pandemic hit, Triumph announced 400 job losses globally with 240 redundancies to be made at the UK factory, as the firm predicted an economic downturn similar to the 2008 crash. Sales, however, have bounced back more strongly than expected, putting Triumph in a position to expand at their Leicestershire HQ.

"Sales were just over 81,500 motorcycles in 2021, 29% growth on the previous year," says Chief Commercial Officer Paul Stroud. "We'll have the Centre of Design Excellence (at Hinckley) and an expanded production capability as well. It will start progressively, at a rate of 15,000 a year, then we'll go up very quickly to beyond 20,000."

Triumph say that there are a number of factors in their considerable expansion, but point specifically at the success of their mass-market Trident 660 and Tiger 900 range, their launch in China, and

other new markets such as Philippines and South Korea, plus an overall growth in the global network to more than 700 dealers. They've also seen a significant increase in demand within Europe, which has been a strong catalyst for the ramping-up of production in the UK specifically.

"The thing that was basically the trigger was the growing demand of our sales in Europe," adds Stroud. "We'll still be producing Tiger 1200ss and 900s over in Thailand, but also producing more locally to sell to the local markets." He predicts the factory will be running at full capacity within nine months, starting with the Tiger 1200, while the Tiger 900, Speed Triple and Rocket 3 will follow before the end of the year.

Already changes have begun with a walk around the factory revealing improvements to the production system which have reduced build times by 20%.

With Norton opening a new factory facility just up the road, BSA promising an all-new manufacturing base in the Midlands, and Royal Enfield's strong UK R&D base, could we be witnessing the return of British motorcycle manufacturing's glorious heyday?

Bonneville Display

The following snippet was found on the internet, written by Lionel Goulder, who worked for BSA/Triumph.



"In August 1972 I was tasked with taking 6 Bonneville's from finished stock and prepare them to be used in a promotion. The venue was to be Brandon Speedway in Coventry and the machines were to be used in parade laps at the British Finals, I also had to source 5 riders to join me. The bikes were prepared by the Service Dept at Meriden which exposed a raft of faults on these bikes which

had been ready for dispatch to UK dealers. One of these 5 speed Bonneville's had a **4 speed box!!**"

Norton Featherbed Frames.

Continuing the Norton Theme, the following words were written by LJK Setright quite some time ago. Someone has scanned them from the old publication "On Two Wheels." LJKS never minced his words:

Undoubtedly the greatest impact of any frame in the history of motor cycling was however on the introduction of the full double-loop cradle in the form of the racing Norton which became famous as the Featherbed. All the swoops and bends of the tubes in this frame looked lovely, and there were few critics to voice their suspicions that with so little bracing between the two sides there was little to prevent one side being pushed forward and the other back under the influence of transverse loads fed in from the trailing fork. Admittedly the engine and transmission were bolted between the sides, but in most frames of this type (rough copies are prolific) the engine mounts are actually tabs welded to the tubes and are inherently flexible – indeed they often fracture. There was in truth only one good thing about the Featherbed frame, this being the way in which the two steel tube loops were anchored to the steering head. The top rails converged on the bottom of the steering head, the down tubes sprang from its top, and when eventually Norton added some gusseting and a detachable head-stay or two, the acceptance by the frame of the loads originating at the front wheel was altogether more comfortable than before. It was this, combined with superior suspension and good steering geometry, that gave the Manx Norton its reputation for good handling – something that was not always inherited by copyists who failed to use such robust tubing as that of the genuine

Manx Featherbed, not realising that it was the quality of the material rather than its disposition that was responsible for such resistance to lateral distortion as the Featherbed frame was able to deploy. Norton for their part went on to make a spine frame (basically a four-inch diameter tube) for the works racer that was to replace the Featherbed in 1956. All the other copyists went on using the double-loop frame, expecting it to behave despite the fact that they were feeding more and more power into it, more by far than the single-cylinder 500 Manx engine ever developed. The better ones took great pains to stiffen the area in which the trailing fork was pivoted: those who did not were left with a machine that felt, under duress, as though it had a hinge in the middle.

A similar feeling might be experienced by the rider of the last Norton frame, the Isolastic, a fine example of Burke's dictum that 'Many a thing is specious in theory and ruinous in practice'. The Isolastic frame of the Norton Commando was an original solution to the problem of isolating the vibration of the 750cc parallel twin Norton engine which, as the Atlas, had proved an altogether too rumbustious occupant of the production Featherbed frame. The idea was that the engine and all the transmission, together with the rear fork and wheel, would be isolated as a separate sub-assembly from the rest of the motor cycle, the vibrations (which were all either vertical or longitudinal) being absorbed by resilient mountings. Unfortunately these flexible bearers, whilst effective in giving the isolated sub-assembly the desired degrees of limited freedom longitudinally and vertically, rapidly developed another and emphatically unwelcome degree of lateral freedom, accompanied by severe degradation of the steering and handling: the machine truly did have a hinge in the middle. To be fair to the designers, their original construction would have been less troublesome, but production economies dictated detail changes that made all the difference.

Welsh National Road Rally.

The Welsh National Rally is a navigational scatter rally organised by the Clive Motorcycle Club, based in Welshpool. Held in early May, it is the first of the three GB National Rallies to be held each year, with the English (National Road Rally) and Scottish (National Rally of Scotland) being held in July and September. Riders completing all three in the same year are eligible for the Three Nations Challenge Award.

The Rally involves visiting as many checkpoints as you wish, on the day of the Rally. There are 55 checkpoints, all of them in Wales. There's no set route to follow. You are free to visit whichever checkpoints you wish, in whatever order. Riders receive awards, Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze, depending on how many checkpoints they visit. The location of the checkpoints is changed every year, so the Rally is different every year! There's also an additional, optional, Dragon Award for riders that visit a number of specially chosen checkpoints related to the theme for the year. Riders can't receive a Platinum award unless they've also completed the Dragon Award, or they're using a machine from 1979 or earlier.

This is a non-club event open to everyone. This year's event will be held on 7th May 2022. The online Entry form and Rally Regulations will be available on the Clive Motorcycle Club website, here:

<http://www.clivemcc.co.uk>

and entries open later this month.

Black and Silver Number Plates.

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs received the following information from the DVLA:

“This note is to tell you about important changes being introduced on 1 January 2021 that affect the ability of vehicles registered in the historic tax class to display the old style pre-1973 black and silver number plates.

Following the change in definition of a historic vehicle for vehicle tax exemption purposes in 2015, an issue was identified in the regulatory requirements for the valid display of a black and silver number plate. This resulted in an unintended consequence where any vehicle over 40 years old

and registered in the historic tax class would be permitted to display an old style black and silver number plate. This was despite the law previously requiring all vehicles first registered after 1 January 1973 to only display the yellow and white number plates with black characters.

As this was never the intention, we have sought to rectify this through a legal correction which will shortly be implemented. The change seeks to prevent any vehicle constructed after 1 January 1980 from the ability to display the black and silver number plate despite being recorded in the DVLA's historic tax class. Those vehicles with a construction date prior to 1 January 1980 will continue to be able to legally display black and silver number plates to avoid any undue costs of replacement.

Your members may also wish to note that from 1 January it will no longer be permissible to fix a new number plate displaying a Euro symbol. Number plates already fixed to vehicles are unaffected. We will also be introducing a new British Standard for number plates produced from 1 September 2021 which will mean all current style number plates that are first fixed to a vehicle from that date must meet the technical requirements contained in that standard.”

Learner rider.



Even Mike Hailwood, had to start somehow!

Is This How Royal Enfield Road Test their Motorcycles?

This is an example of the Royal Enfield Bullet being tested to the limit.

No wind tunnel test required to measure drag and wind noise.

No fastest lap around the Nuremberg race circuit to ascertain top speed



Instead, it's all about how many Indian Army Service Corps can the bullet carry.

In this case it's a Guinness World record achieved in November 2021.

A staggering 58 Army service Corps aboard the bullet traveling for just over a kilometre fully loaded!!

That's a very impressive road test for a single cylinder 499cc 27.2 HP air cooled Motorcycle.

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.

Dot Armstrong shock absorbers. Norton.

Many of you will know that DOT made shock absorbers after motorcycle production finished. These were taken from a featherbed Dominator (a not-uncommon replacement, apparently) but might fit others. 12 inches between centres, stamped MT-023.

Condition used but seem good. Two or three of the bottom rubber bushes have been trimmed back a little. Photo shows the worst one. You can check before buying. Collection preferred as postage would be expensive. £40.

Bruce 07442 168932.



Mamouth heavy duty ground anchor (brand new, no fixings). £20. (They sell at £42.95) Phill, 07790 179095.



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.

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

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.

