



The Oz Vincent Review

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The Oz Vincent Review is a totally independent, non-profit, e-Zine about the classic British motorcycling scene with a focus all things Vincent. OVR, distributed free of charge to its readers, may be contacted by email at OzVinReview@gmail.com



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Welcome.

Welcome to this edition of The Oz Vincent Review, an independent, not for profit, e-zine that provides a forum and voice for all folks with an interest in Classic British Bikes and Vincent motorcycles in particular.

With this edition we are return to our focus on Vincents though traces of other marques have made their presence felt plus there is a bumper edition of Workshop Wisdom .

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Melbourne, Australia.

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The Front Cover

This months cover features John Ulver and his standard Series D Black Shadow which has been timed at the Bonneville Salt Flats at almost 130 MPH. John's wife Irene Ulver (VOC Honorary Member) is his everpresent pillion. It has great to see these two stalwarts of the Vincent world out enjoying the Oregon winter sun.

Photo and the bit of history provided by Rodney Brown, your Oz Vincent Review roving reporter.

In Praise Of Analogue

A contribution from Jack "Luddite" Youdan, Australia.

The world is full of digital information screens, think computers, phones, TV, MYKI, GPS, scoreboards, cars, aircraft and on and on. Unfortunately now they are much in vogue as motorcycle instruments, taking away from a traditional design feature since motorcycling began.....analogue clock things with needles. Yes I know, digital is more efficient, costs less, more reliable-durable (?) and analogue just follows on from steam gauges, but consider the aesthetics.

When riding, we spend most time looking at the road, traffic and the instrument layout, so the latter needs to look good. Analogue instruments are like eyes: expressive, centre of focus, as is said "eyes are the windows to the soul". Some examples of analogue instrument excellence are the BMW R series and Moto Guzzi Le Mans "cockpits" from the 1970s, the great Vincent Black Shadow large speedometer and clock set up from the 1950s, the stacked dash arrangement of Triumph's 1990s Speed Triple, Honda VF 1000R cockpit from 1980s....all works of art.

Thankfully some current production bikes are not digital but continue with tradition, particularly the retro models from Triumph, HD, Kawasaki, et al. — an analogue face is a great place to show a bike maker's logo. So you owners with analogue instruments, whether they are old-style cable or modern electrical drive, whether black, white or grey faced,---- rejoice, it is the way.

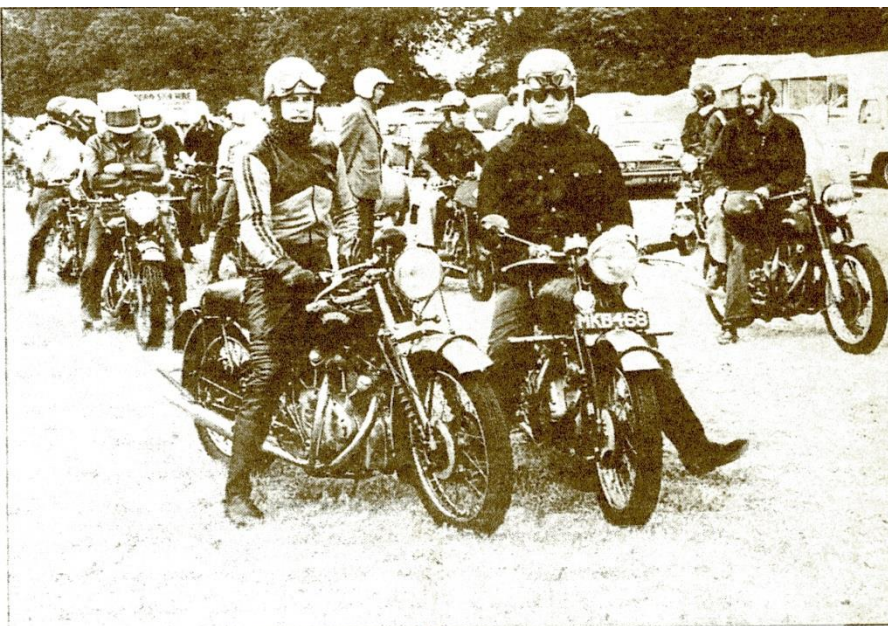
P.S. When ordering the new Bentley, one specifies the traditional analogue Breitling timepiece, not some flat-screen, recorded chimes item!

The Joys of Vincent Ownership

Roy Harper reminisces from 35 years past

THIS is it my first ride on a pre-war Rapide. This is a very special Rapide, however, no less than the works Show model displayed at Olympia in 1937. The owner hesitates before relinquishing his glittering object of hero-worship. 'Do you know how to start it?' he asks anxiously. 'Yes: I reply without conviction. The method of starting a pre-war Rapide is one of the secrets of the Series A sect of the Vincent brotherhood, and is handed down owner unto owner. He is worried. I am worried. He is concerned about damage to the clutch, gearbox, chains, etc. I am concerned about my ankles, knees and neck (should the Beast kick back and propel me over the handlebars). I feel nervous — my life is about to depend on ancient bolts. Although we are brothers, I am not of the sect, so he starts the monster for me.

Raucous sounds rend the air and low-flying birds become high-flying birds. I straddle the bike and lean forward to grasp the handlebars. I ease the gear pedal into first and feed in the clutch. We're off! and the transmission joins in with a variety of sounds --- another secret of the sect is knowing which noises are healthy and which are expensive. I tweak the throttle. Wham! The Beast leaps forward like a startled stallion and hurtles into the seventies in eight seconds. Third gear whisks me into the nineties and wind pressure shoves me back, but I cling to the bars and click into top. The needle climbs to the ton and a gale flattens my cardboard peak against my helmet. My goggles are lifted and soon my eyes water and smart. I lift a hand from the bars but it's blown back. I grab the bars again to control the vibrating bike as it ploughs its way through the air. A dithering moped rider meanders into my path but flick the bars and am out of danger. Into a right-hand bend now and the hike holds its line superbly. Straighten up, then into a roundabout. Due to the offset position of the engine in the frame, there is more weight on the right of the bike than the left, which makes right-hand bends easy and left-handers exciting. I wrestle my way around the traffic island and continue my wild dash as the engine purrs like a contented tiger. Meanwhile, oil is rushing round the system, lubricating cams, rockers, followers,



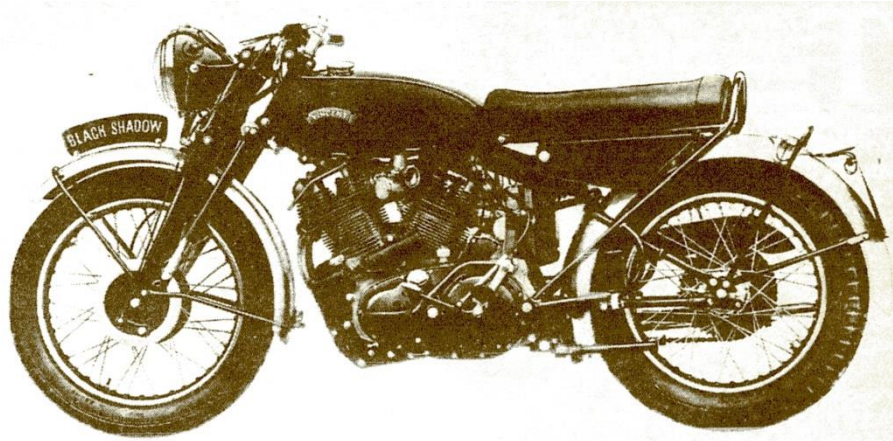
Vincent ownership — a world-wide cult. Continental enthusiast (left) meets with a British rider at the Vincent International Rally in 1979.

pistons, big-ends, bearings and a considerable portion of my right leg. I return the Beast to its worried owner satisfied that the Vincent HRD has lived up to its legend. The legend began in October 1936 when the prototype Vincent V-twin clocked 108mph on its first high-speed test run and became the world's fastest production vehicle on two, three or four wheels. A fellow road tester later achieved 110mph but found the 1000cc engine nearly as thirsty as a 1979 200cc Japanese bike (Yamaha RD200DX'I. viz 45mpg. Braking was excellent — 26ft from 30mph.

Production of the Series A Rapide ended in 1939 when the BMW boys had to be sorted out. Then, in 1946, the Series B Rapide appeared and set new standards for reliability, speed and roadholding.

Private owners eagerly tuned the Beast and times were continually up-dated as record after record fell to the thundering twins from Stevenage. In the USA in 1948, Rollie Free became the first man to clock 150mph on an naturally aspirated motorcycle when he rode a Black Shadow at Utah. In 1954, in New Zealand, Bob Burns tuned a second-hand Rapide and broke the world sidecar record. In 1955. he broke it again and Russ Wright took the world solo A record on the

same machine — all done on a wet road. In 1956, Russ clocked 198.3mph on a Black Lightning at Utah — a speed yet to be beaten by anyone riding an unsupercharged conventional motorcycle. During the past decade we have had the record-breaking exploits of Ron Vane (1000cc The Thing three-wheeler) and the nine-second drag racing achievements of Brian Chapman (500cc Mighty Mouse) to prove that the Vincent engine is still competitive. Each racing or record success enhanced the legend of the Vincent, while on the open road riders of other machinery would try to blow Vincent owners off the road. Top gear gave me too great an advantage so I would drop into third, pull alongside and then, when the other bloke was flat on his tank on full throttle, I'd click into top and disappear.



If you owned a Series D Vincent Black Shadow like this example, wouldn't you feel aloof and elite?

Riders of the invincible Rapide inevitably formed themselves into a club (in 1948) and in 1949 the club journal MPH was published with the slogan 'Riders of the world's fastest standard motorcycle'. This was later dropped because it was thought to be 'putting on side'. It was, perhaps, a public relations exercise because the club had acquired a reputation for aloofness, especially among Triumph owners, as the following story shows.

In the fifties a pal of mine, Brian, used to court a girl in Newcastle and every weekend he left London and covered the 300 miles in six hours, a remarkable time considering the absence of motorways. A colleague of Brian disbelieved the time until one Friday he watched him ride off on his Rapide from London at 5pm and later rang Newcastle at 11pm to hear Brian answer! During the cold winter months, Brian's ardour carried him through but one evening it was so cold he stopped the bike, got off and ran alongside to restore his circulation. A Triumph owner pulled up and, thinking that Brian was trying to bump-start his Vincent (Triumph owners always expect Vincents to break down), asked what the trouble was. Brian replied that he was 'just running alongside to keep warm'. 'Sarcastic blighter', growled the Triumph man, and rode off in a huff with another story of Vincent aloofness. (We always returned the wave of another motorcyclist but only if he was riding a Vincent, a tradition I maintain to this day.)

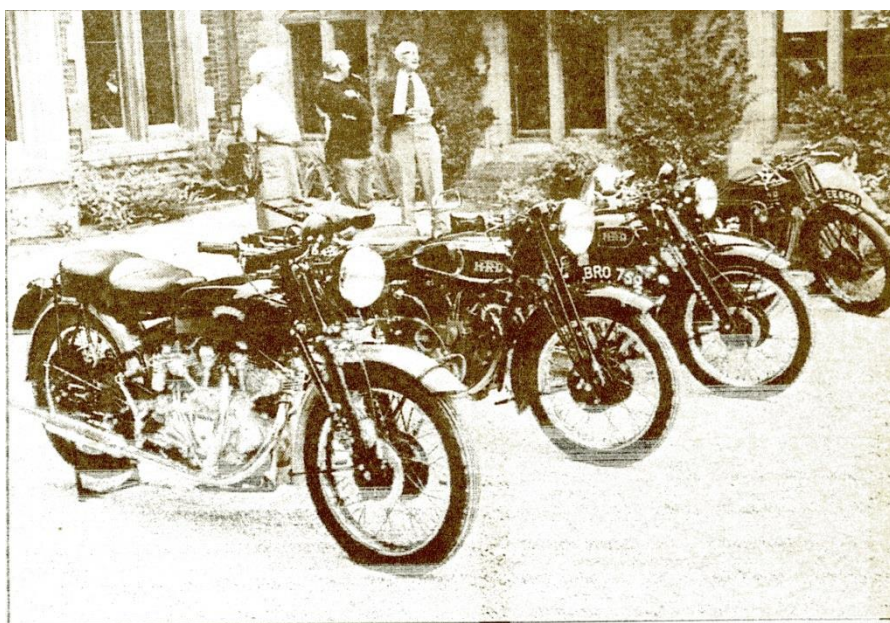
Sometimes, of course, Triumph riders happened to be policemen and the pace became rather hot. Like the occasion in New South Wales when a Vincent owner went so fast to get away from a patrolman that he overtook another policeman chasing another miscreant rider! My own relations with the police have always been very cordial if stopped while riding a Vincent. One day, soon after acquiring a Series C Comet ('Bonka') I was riding through Hyde Park when I noticed a policeman on a Triumph proceeding in an easterly direction towards me. He wheeled round and tucked in behind me and I was apprehensive when we halted together at some traffic lights. However, we promptly hit it off like two Irishmen meeting in a pub and discovering they had both backed the Derby winner. He liked Vincents. Liked Vincents. He wanted one. I owned one. He couldn't afford to run one. I couldn't afford to run one. He gazed sadly at the Comet with its bald tyres, flopping chain, trailing wires, rusty spokes and pipes, oil leaks and other flaws, and a wistful look appeared in his eyes as he envisaged an immaculate contours machine. 'Going to do it up, are you?' he enquired enviously. 'Yes, of course,' I replied. The lights changed to green and, maintaining the cordiality of the meeting, I politely let him out-accelerate me. This generous act didn't assuage his chagrin, however, for within 100 yards he had booked a long-haired youth (a learner) for some offence or other (I didn't loiter near the scene). The lad had made the mistake of riding a humble but immaculate BSA Bantam, which didn't interest the fuzz at all.

Sometimes the police were obliged to issue cautions of the 'move this vehicle or else' variety, like the time I lived in Eaton Square with my Rolls-Royce and Vincent keeping each other company outside the front door (rah, happy days — no parking meters or traffic wardens). Classic motorcycles may be a la mode in Belgravia now, but in those days they were strictly de trop

especially my Rapide after I had removed its petrol tank to do some deft work on the top end. Around me lived various cabinet ministers, judges, and other members of the establishment, and soon there were complaints that my motorcycle was lowering the tone of the neighbourhood. Pressure from high places was soon brought to bear on the chief constable and he duly arrived on my doorstep and politely asked me to remove the vehicle, or I could be charged with 'leaving litter'. I merely detached the front end and stowed the bike in the back of the Rolls-Royce, where, looking more repulsive than ever, it remained on view to the public more prominently than before. And there was nothing anyone could do to banish it from sight. This Rapide, a Series C model, was a great improvement over the pre-war Rapide, giving greater fuel economy (55-60mpg) and better roadholding. However, the Black Shadow, which first appeared in February 1948, was the ultimate roadster for looks and performance, and I once owned the 1952 works show model. This beautiful beast, its chromium-plated nuts and bolts sparkling against the black engine like diamonds dripping down a wealthy woman's velvet gown, was good for well over the ton in third rear (I never did find out the top speed in fourth rear) with superb roadholding to match its performance.

This Black Shadow was my first Vincent V-twin, and almost immediately after buying it I was to experience this excellent roadholding which was largely due to the new Girdraulics designed by Phil Irving. These were incredibly robust and resisted my many inadvertent attempts to bend them. New to the Vincent thousand, I took the bike round to a veteran Vinnie enthusiast, Charlie, and said, 'Steering seems odd.' I expected him to examine the bike from front number plate to the rear light, but he merely said, 'Jump on', and away we went to our test track. We lived in Middlesex and the test track was a stretch of de-restricted road alongside PCV's old school, Harrow. Halfway along the route was a sharp bend under a bridge. As we approached this bend I stood up on the rear footrests and noted the speed -- 94mph. I'd just resumed my seat when the bike did a sudden heave-ho and lurched round the bend. Charlie wrestled with the plot, brought it under control, and stopped. Then other Vincent owners arrived and someone suggested we put a gauge on the front tyre. Phew! It registered just 10lb.

Before buying the Shadow I'd been offered a Black Lightning in road trim. but didn't think I was ready for its performance — it was capable of around 135-140mph so was nearly as slow as the Laverda Jota produced two decades later. Phil Irving, the designer of the Black Lightning, left the works in 1949 to return to Australia and for the next five years P C Vincent produced his range of 1,000cc and 500cc motorcycles practically unaltered. He also catered for the public's demand for mopeds by distributing very successfully the 49cc NSU Quickly and producing the NSU-Vincent Fox (98cc and 125cc). Another venture was the Firefly, which consisted of a 49cc engine slung in a pedal-cycle frame. Its 18mph cruising speed stretched the patience of testers, but one boosted his test mileage by rigging up his mount on a set of rollers every night before switching on the rollers and going to bed. The Firefly was never popular with VOC members, but as One Track once pointed out, it was very useful as hardcore. The Firefly was originally made by Millers, who also admitted responsibility for the dynamo used on Series B and C models. The dynamos on my oil-spreading Vincents never lasted long, and I would complain about my electrics until a cynical pal suggested that the Miller was probably chosen because it could run in oil longer than any other.



Concours machines await judging at a VOC function. The club is one of the largest, best-run motorcycle organisations in the world.

Anyway, when PCV designed the Series D range in 1954 he used a Lucas dynamo and also coil ignition. As a result of this thoughtful act the Beast became easy to start and many owners are leading useful, energetic lives instead of sitting around nursing broken ankles, knees or hernias. The main alteration to the frame was the substitution of a single unit joining the rear frame member to a tube with a casting at each end in place of the Series C set-up: two spring boxes with a damper in between linked to the upper frame member (which doubled as an oil tank). Unfortunately, PCV did not produce a bike that people wanted — he made a machine he thought they should have, i.e. one incorporating weather protection. As always, he insisted on quality — the black fibreglass enclosures were stove-enamelled! (and today it's impossible to get the same quality of finish). The public regarded the fairings as ugly appurtenances. Worse, they hid the famous V-twin engine and lopped 10mph off the top speed. Despite the world records by Burns and Wright in 1955 the Black Prince and Black Knight models were unpopular — only some 200 were made — and production ceased in December.

I've owned a Black Knight, 'Sir Nigel'. for several years and although the windscreen is efficient, the pendulum effect of the front fairings doesn't help the steering; neither does the 3.50 x 19in front tyre instead of the proven 3.00 x 20in size used on the Series C Vincents. Nevertheless, the enclosed Series D provides a more comfortable ride than its predecessor and is therefore less fatiguing on a long trip, especially during inclement weather. Whenever I halt for a while members of the public, in their materialistic way, paw the bike and bore me with their bleats of 'wossiwof'.

Why so many of us keep our Vincents for several years is difficult to say. It's true that spares are plentiful, the bike is easy to service due to the accessibility of carburettors, tappets, bearings, etc., the seat, footrests and controls can be adjusted to suit the rider, the engine and gearbox will give 100,000 miles before replacements are necessary, and the faster one goes, the better the bike handles. The answer, perhaps, is that the Vincent was designed by motorcyclists for enthusiasts and owed its progeny to two keen riders of the thirties — P C Vincent, an idealist of steely determination, who dreamed of producing a 125mph roadster, and P E Irving, a realist of immense practical ability, who enabled the dream to come true.

Roy Harper, 1980

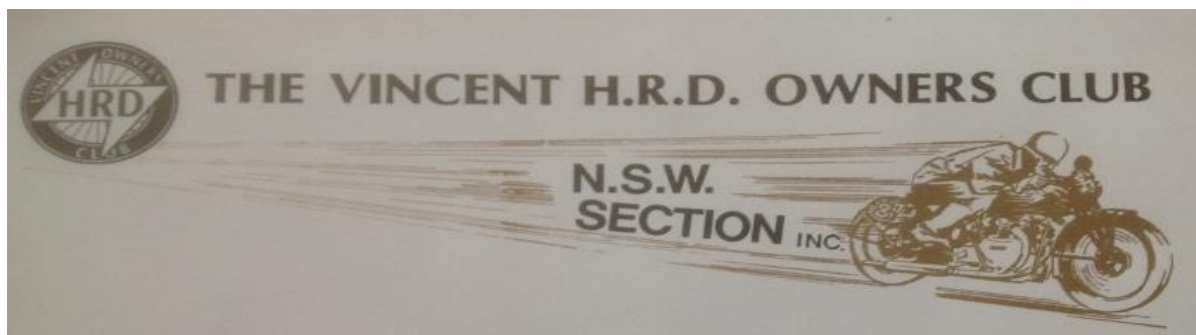
Event Calendar

An overview of some upcoming rides and events that may be of interest.

If you are planning any rides or are aware of events that readers may be interested in, you may invite others to participate via the "OVR Event Calendar" column in OVR. Just drop the editor a line at OzVinReview@Gmail.com.

May 2-3	Griffith CMCC, ANZAC Rally, @ Griffith, NSW. contact mdat777@bigpond.com
May 8-10	Bendigo Historic Motorcycle Club, Singles & Girder Fork Rally at Llanley. Contact Pam Jones for more info ph 0407683376
May 9	Geelong Swap Meet, Geelong Show Grounds.
May 9	Vintage Car Club of New Zealand: Waimea Motor Cycle Rally; contact amandastuf@vodaphone.co.nz for more info
May 22-24	Australian Velo and Vincent Rally, Moss Vale, NSW.
May 30-31	Historic Winton – see flyer in this edition for more information
September 6 – 21, 2015	VOC International Rally, Italy; <i>for VOC members only.</i>
October 4-9, 2015	Australian National Vintage Motorcycle Rally, Ararat, Victoria.
October 14-17, 2016	VOC Australian National Rally at Parkes, NSW. Put this in your ride diary now.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – Australian National Rally 2016



The NSW Section of the Vincent Owners Club will be hosting the upcoming 2016 Australian National Rally to be held at PARKES, NSW on the weekend of Fri 14th, Sat 15th, Sun 16th OCTOBER 2016. (Departing Monday 17th).

VENUE: Parkview Motor Inn, 34 Forbes Rd (Newell Highway), Parkes, 2870, NSW, Australia

Their website: <http://www.parkviewmotorinn.net.au/>
Email: enquiries@parkviewmotorinn.net.au
Phone: 02 6862 2888 Fax: 02 6862 5306

The Parkview Motor Inn Winner of Trip Advisor's Certificate of Excellence 2014 has 39 ground floor rooms and is a 3½ star AAA rated motel located in Parkes NSW, on the Newell Highway A39. On route between Melbourne and Brisbane. **Their Facilities include:** Swimming Pool, Licensed Bar and Restaurant (open Mon – Sat), Free WIFI, Foxtel (Premiere Movie Channel) Guest Laundry, BBQ facility and parking at your door.

Parkview Motor Inn Rates, per night, are approximately:

A\$90 (Queen bed)

A\$95 (Twin bed - Queen and single)

A\$120 (Queen and 2 singles up to 4 people in the room)

Large Family room \$150 - only 1 available (Queen and 4 singles up to 6 people).

Parkes is located 124 km from Orange, 379 km from Sydney, 708 km from Melbourne, and 970 km from Brisbane.

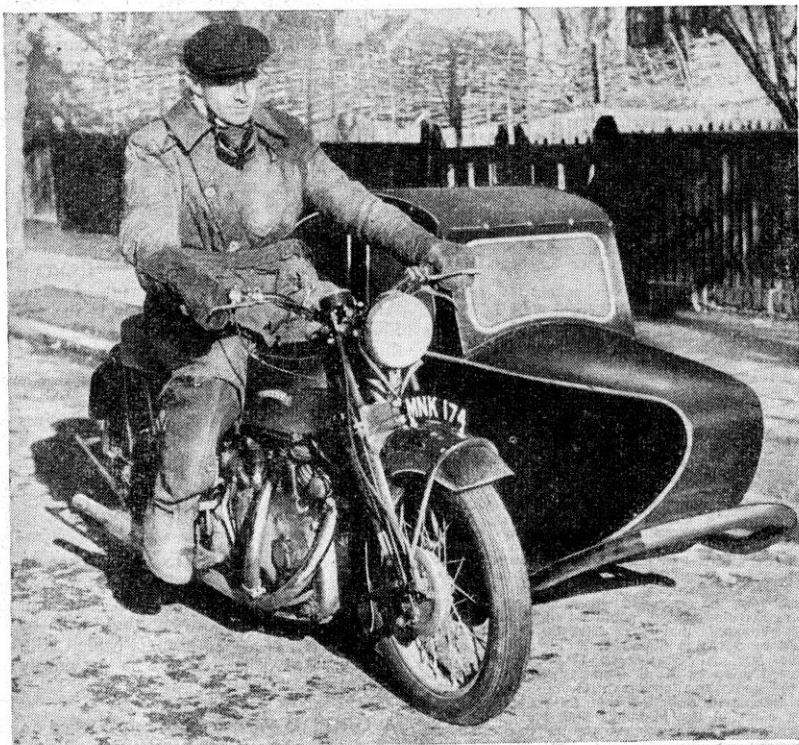
The rally will follow the usual format of arrival on the Friday afternoon, a long ride on the Saturday encompassing the vineyards of the Orange region with a lunch stop. Dinner will be at the motor inn on the Saturday evening. The Sunday concourse and judging will be held at the CSIRO Parkes Observatory known as "The Dish", bring your camera. Sunday night will be the Presentation of Trophies and the evening meal, possibly to be held at the local Services Club depending on numbers. Departure will be on Mon 17th by 10am.

This is NOT a rally committment, but a request for an expression of interest. Rally fees and meal costing etc will follow at a later date. At the moment, the Rally Secretary needs to know if you are interested in attending and joining in for another great Australian National Vincent Rally.

So if you plan on taking part, and why not? please send an email, before May 31, 2015, listing your name and address plus your phone number and the names of those in your party to the Rally Secretary,

Joanne Wenden; email j.wenden@bigpond.com

ROAD TESTS OF CURRENT MODELS —

THE 998 c.c.
VINCENT

child-adult "Sherwood" saloon, mounted on the standard "Safety" chassis, was specified to be hitched to a touring "Rapide," with deep-section mudguards and "fat" tyres (3.50 ins. by 19 ins. front and 4.00 ins. by 18 ins. rear).

The outfit has been "on the strength" for six months now, during which time it has covered some 4,000 miles, and—unless calamity intervenes in the form of a telephone call from Stevenage demanding its return—the "barouche," as it has come to be known, will be out again next week-end, on a duty trip or taking a "free" member of the staff and his family on a pleasure run.

Being no newcomer to the market, the "Rapide" needs only a brief description. Its massive 998 c.c. power-unit is nowadays the only British example of what is often described as "the side-carrist's ideal"—an o.h.v. vee-twin "thousand." Its high-camshaft, short-

WHAT is a reasonable cruising speed for a two-seater sidecar outfit? Fifty? Fifty-five, perhaps? Even a mile a minute if an over-500 c.c. motor is providing the power? Or what?

One Sunday evening, last November, Cyril Quantrill walked into the "local"—back from covering some trial. "Most unusual," said Bernal Osborne, "you're early!" "On the new Vinc.," said Quantrill. "Oh," said Osborne. "Goes well," said Quantrill, "really good . . . know what? . . ." "No," said Osborne. "Holds '75' with the family aboard." "Straight?" "Straight!" "Strewth" . . . and Bernal took such a gulp of his bitter that he nearly choked.

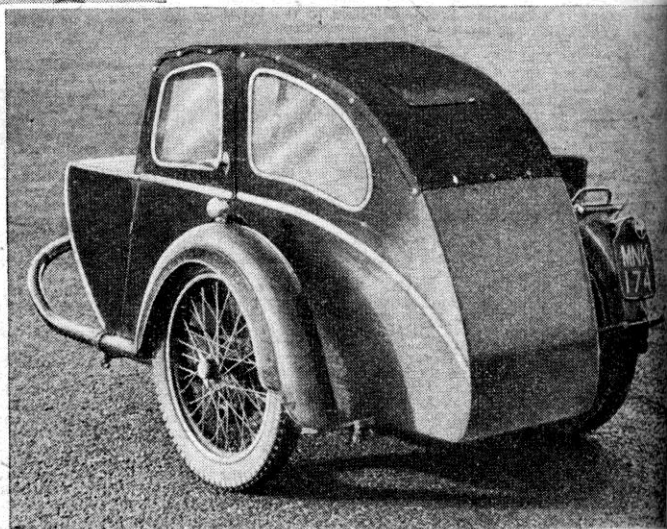
Two years ago Quantrill shocked a lot of purist speed men by hitching a "Rapide" to a two-seater "chair" in order to combine a holiday *en famille* on the Continent with the urgent business of covering two "classic" race meetings in one week, and in the process became a Vincent fan.

At the time, almost everyone seemed to regard this high-performance big twin as essentially a solo mount, but the general motorcycling public has now decided that it is also an ideal machine for heavy-duty sidecar work. There are to be seen nowadays a succession of "Rapides," speeding town-dwelling families to the seaside.

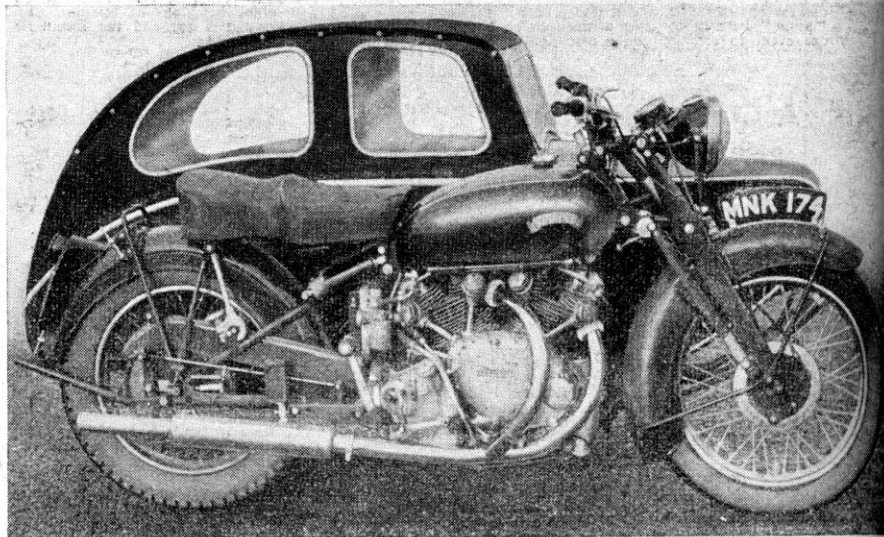
"Motor Cycling" decided to test a Vincent in sidecar trim and—because Blacknell Sidecars, Ltd., of Nottingham, have produced a range of chassis and bodies particularly adapted for use with a machine, such as the Vincent, with swinging arm rear suspension—a

A connoisseur's combination! The Series C Vincent "Rapide" attached to a Blacknell saloon sidecar.

(Above) Although it is a two-seater, the Blacknell "Sherwood" by no means dwarfs the machine to which it is attached.



(Right) The sidecar has a good streamline contour, which materially assists high-speed driving. Access to the rear locker is from inside the body.



SERIES C

"RAPIDE" and BLACKNELL "SHERWOOD" SIDECAR

An o.h.v. "Big Twin" and Luxury Saloon Sidecar Give "Motor Cycling" Testers Fresh Ideas on Passenger Machine Averages and Maximums

pushrod, layout enables the engine to run at a much higher r.p.m. than usual with this type and a highly efficient dry-sump lubrication system and the use of light alloy for the cylinders and heads overcome that old bugbear of big twins—overheating on the rear cylinder. Separate Amal carburettors are fitted, with a cable junction box providing compensated control for the throttle

opening and separate levers enabling individual settings to be given for each air slide.

The Lucas magneto has automatic advance and retard mechanism and one of the very few criticisms which can be made of the machine is of the inability of the automatic device to compete with the special requirements of sidecar work—a weakness evidenced by pinking when accelerating sharply on hills.

A separate 50-watt Miller dynamo and voltage control unit, and a 13 amp-hr. Exide battery attend to the lighting and warning equipment. The Miller head lamp furnishes a broad beam which makes night driving a pleasure and high praise goes to the Lucas "Altette" horn, which has a note which without being frightening, nevertheless gives distinctly audible warning of approach—a most necessary adjunct to a machine which is extremely quiet when running at 50 m.p.h. or less in top.

In semi-unit construction, the four-speed gearbox provides ratios ideally spaced for sidecar work and, additionally, there is a choice of rear sprockets which—compared with the more usual tooth-to-tooth change of engine sprocket—gives a far finer selection of gears. After running the road test outfit for a time with a 56-tooth sprocket—which gave a speedometer maximum of over 90 m.p.h. under favourable conditions—it was decided that a more suitable top-gear performance could be obtained by "cogging down"—in fact,

adding teeth by fitting a 60-tooth sprocket.

With that modification the actual ratios available are 4.56, 5.47, 7.3 and 12.5 to 1. That means a top-gear range of anything from 30 m.p.h. up to 80 m.p.h.—and up to that speed in a mere 31 secs.—without any changing down or lying flat. If the intermediate ratios are used, the jump from 30 m.p.h. to the same figure can be accomplished in as little as 21 secs., whilst the all-out, sitting-up-in-a-great-big-riding-coat maximum is just short of 80 m.p.h. with a passenger weight of one wife and two small children aboard, and the really getting-down-to-it figure with "guinea-pig" Bernal Osborne in the "chair" is no less than 85 m.p.h.

Galloping the outfit with an empty sidecar, an 88 m.p.h. maximum figure has been recorded, allowing for 5 per cent. speedometer error. When obtaining the figures recorded on the tester's sheet, it was discovered that the change from second gear to third was none too simple and more than once "miscogging" resulted in fabulous—and frightening—surges of r.p.m.

With so much power available, an immediate thought is "do the brakes work?"

They do. There are four of them, two to each wheel of the machine and each of 7 ins. diameter and, provided they are adjusted at fairly regular intervals—for halting 700 lb of motorcycle and sidecar, plus about 3 cwt. of passengers, is no light duty—they will stop the combination in a distance which few sidecar outfits could equal. The limiting factors, in fact, are road surface and tyre adhesion—not the brake linings or leverage.

But too great an accent must not be placed on sheer performance, for quite the most endearing attribute of the Vincent is its ability to gobble up miles effortlessly. Such is the manner in which the "Rapide" surmounts gradients without giving any indication that they even exist, such is its stopping power, and so well does it sweep round bends, that comfortable 35 m.p.h. averages can be maintained with the needle seldom going past the "60" mark.

Petrol consumption could be fairly heavy. There have been occasions when no more than 33 m.p.g. has been recorded. Shocking? Hardly, for that figure has been coupled with a "40 plus" average, on journeys of 150 or 200 miles. At the nominal figure of a maintained 30 m.p.h.—but who in his right senses wants to maintain a steady thirty on the Vincent outfit?—the consumption figure rises to 55 m.p.g.

Much the same variation comes in on oil consumption. When the machine is driven really hard—as it has been almost continually since it has been with "Motor Cycling"—a one-pint replenishment every second fill-up (every 220 to 250 miles on 3-gallon replenishments) has been normal, yet, when the outfit has been driven sedately for an equivalent distance—as when used for daily 16-mile journeys to and from the office—there has been a scarcely noticeable drop in the oil level.

Mention of daily journeys introduces

B23



A phase in the exploratory run to Goodwood undertaken by "Motor Cycling" staff. The photographer forsook the sidecar momentarily to get this picture in the heart of Winchester, with the King Alfred memorial in the background.

BRIEF SPECIFICATION OF THE 998 c.c. VINCENT TOURING "RAPIDE" and BLACKNELL "SHERWOOD" SIDECAR

The Machine

Engine: 50-degree vee-twin; bore 84 mm., stroke 90 mm; 998 c.c.; high-camshaft push-rod o.h.v.; dry-sump lubrication, oil tank capacity 6 pints; Lucas magneto ignition with automatic control; Miller 50-watt dynamo; Amal carburettors.

Transmission: Positive-stop four-speed Vincent gearbox with neutral selector; ratios 4.56, 5.47, 7.3 and 12.5 to 1; rear chain $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. by $\frac{3}{8}$ -in.; $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. triplex primary chain with adjustable spring-blade tensioner.

Frame: Engine comprises frame basis; pressed steel top member, incorporating oil tank bolted to cylinder heads; pivot type, triangulated suspension at rear with adjustable shock-absorbers; front forks patent Vincent "Giraudric" type with central spring and hydraulic dampin.

Wheels: Fitted with Avon tyres, 3.50 ins. by 19 ins. front and 4.00 ins. by 18 ins. rear; twin 7-in. diameter brakes

with compensated control, front and rear.

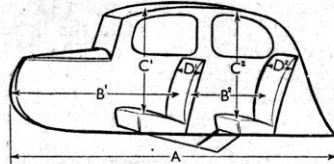
Tank: Welded steel $3\frac{1}{2}$ -gallon fuel tank.

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 56 ins.; overall length, 85 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins.; saddle height, 30 ins.; ground clearance, $5\frac{1}{2}$ ins.; weight, 455 lb.

Finish: Black frame and tank, with gold lettering and lining; other parts chrome or cadmium plated or polished aluminium.

Price: £265, fully equipped, plus £71 11s. P.T.

Makers: Vincent-H.R.D. Co., Ltd., Stevenage, Herts.



The Sidecar

Chassis: Blacknell "Safety" of single main tube construction; quarter-elliptic rear springs, rubber bush front suspension.

Wheel: Mounted on stub axle with large-diameter taper roller bearings; Avon tyre, 3.50 ins. by 19 ins.

Body: Blacknell "Sherwood" child-adult single-door saloon, coachbuilt with aluminium panelling; folding backrest to front seat; luggage locker behind rear seat.

Dimensions: (See diagram) A=81 ins.; B1=54 ins.; B2=20 ins.; C1=38 ins.; C2=32 ins.; D1=19 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins.; D2=18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

Finish: All-black exterior with high-quality red leathercloth upholstery and fawn lining; separate roll-up hoods for front and rear passengers.

Price: Body £51, plus £13 12s. P.T.; chassis £32 15s. 4d., plus £8 14s. 9d. P.T.

Makers: Blacknell Sidecars, Ltd., New Nuthall, Notts.

the subject of starting. It is making no unfair comment to say that earlier "Rapides" have been fickle in this respect. But 1951 modifications to the valve gear and cam contours have virtually "killed" that bother.

Knowing that the model handed over to "Motor Cycling" would come in for more than its normal share of hammering, the Vincent technical staff fitted comparatively "hot" Champion NA8 plugs instead of the standard N8s. Even so, there was little sign of plug-wetting or oiling and, generally, starting was a simple procedure. It was advisable to keep the air levers closed for the first minute or so, and to ease them open steadily, when starting from cold, but once the engine was warm, the mixture controls could be disregarded.

With more damping on the rear springing than would be required for solo use, and with the steering damper just biting, the outfit handled superbly, the weight of the sidecar only making itself evident by a suspicion of handle-

bar flap when decelerating below 40 m.p.h. The writer preferred the wide handlebars fitted to the standard short Vincent bars, but would have been even happier had there been a more definite backward curve in the bends. And being very long-legged, he would have liked to have had the footrests lower than the lowest level at which the standard range of adjustment permits them to be set.

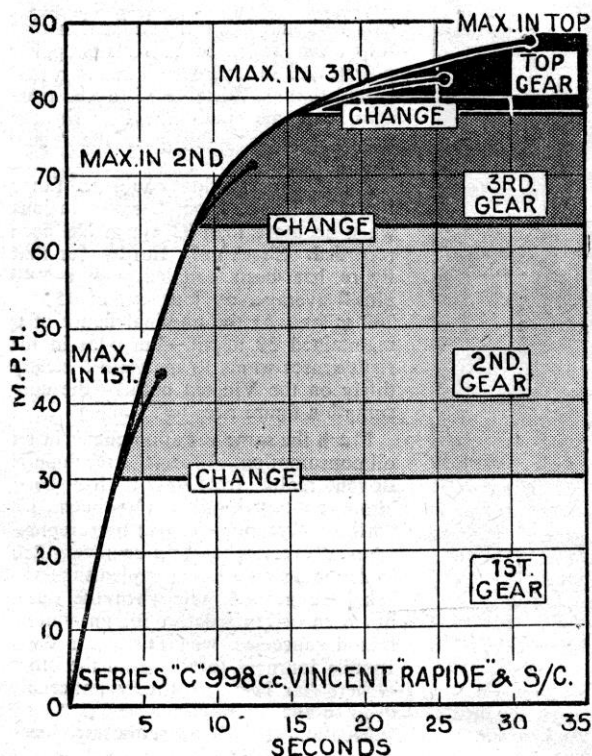
From the passenger's point of view, the "Sherwood" gained full marks. Rear accommodation is sufficient to seat a five-footer or two small children in comfort, while the largest adult would not be cramped in the front seat. With the hoods in position, it is easy for the front passenger to get in or out without disarranging her hat. To say that the interior of the sidecar is snug in winter is true but, with only a small hood-flap to provide ventilation, it might become too warm if heavy rain necessitated complete battening-down in midsummer.

The suspension—rubber-bushed at

the front end and on quarter-elliptic, multi-leaf springs at the rear—is such that there is absolutely no roll on corners and no unpleasant fore and aft pitching on bumpy roads.

Confirming previous experience on sidecar road tests, it was noted that the weight of a passenger had very little effect on performance figures—as little, in fact, as a mere $\frac{2}{3}$ sec. on the "flying quarter." It is the frontal area of the outfit which steals the m.p.h.—particularly over the "60" mark—and, undoubtedly, a contributory factor to the outstanding performance of the Vincent was the excellent aerodynamic contour of the "Sherwood" body.

With the machine costing £265, plus £71 11s. P.T., and the sidecar £106 2s. 1d., including P.T., making a total of £442 13s. 1d., the combination obviously comes into the luxury class. Yet a glance at the tester's report sheet on this page immediately confirms that the Vincent-Blacknell outfit provides a performance, coupled with passenger comfort, which would cost many times that amount if the vehicle had a wheel at each corner instead of two in line and one at the side.



B24

MOTOR CYCLING

TESTER'S ROAD REPORT
MODEL VINCENT "RAPIDE"
AND BLACKNELL
"SHERWOOD" SIDECAR

Maximum Speeds in:—	Time from Standing Start
Top Gear (Ratio 4.56 to 1) 88 m.p.h. = 5125 r.p.m.	30 $\frac{2}{3}$ secs.
Third Gear (Ratio 5.47 to 1) 83 m.p.h. = 5800 r.p.m.	25 $\frac{1}{2}$ secs.
Second Gear (Ratio 7.3 to 1) 71 m.p.h. = 6600 r.p.m.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ secs.

Speeds over measured Quarter Mile:—

Flying Start 83.35 (80.37) m.p.h. Standing Start 53.58 (52.95) m.p.h.
FIGURES IN BRACKETS REFER TO PERFORMANCE WITH

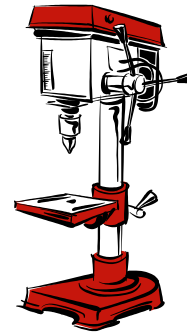
Braking Figures On SMOOTH TARMAC Surface, from 30 m.p.h.:—

Both Brakes 49 ft. Front Brake 56 ft. Rear Brake 86 ft.

30 MPH 55
Fuel Consumption:— Town 50MPH 46 m.p.g. Country _____ m.p.g.
60MPH 38

Oil Consumption:— 1850 m.p.g.

Workshop Wisdom

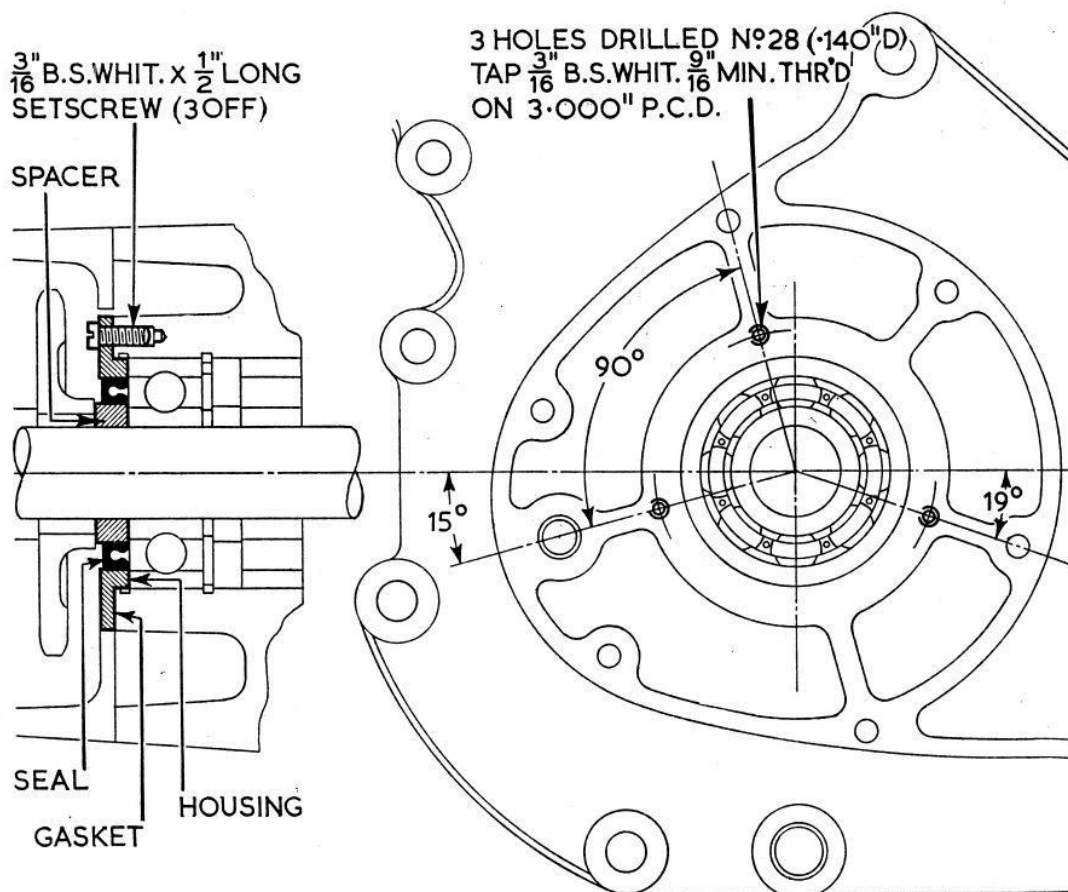


Installing a Primary Drive Oil Seal in a Comet

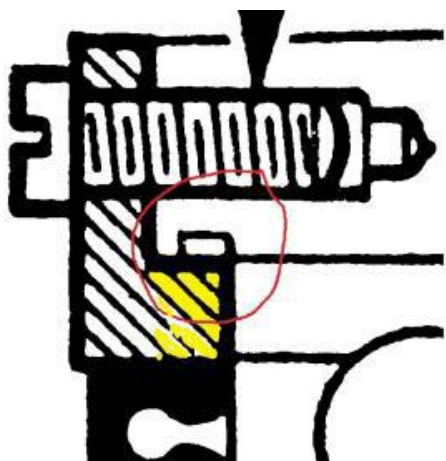
an original contribution from the Black Sheep

AS I wanted my the bike was to be a reliable, clean regular ride I set about doing the best I could to rectify the situation of excessive oil in the primary drive case – oil migrating from the crankcase, that eventually overflowed creating a mess all over the back of the bike; I ordered the parts required to install a main shaft oil seal in the primary chain case, as described in Richardson’s book. Parts ordered were 1 x ET236 Main Bearing Seal Housing; 1 x E216/1 Comet Engine Sprocket Spacer; 1 x G24 Sprocket Oil Seal and 3 x 3/16” x 1/2” Whit countersunk setscrews

Once the parts ordered for the main shaft oil seal arrived I set about its installation. Richardson’s book provides this illustration depicting how to fit such a seal



With the parts on hand I started on the installation. The Spares Parts List, in drawing M064 shows that on the outside of the outer main bearing E91 there is a circlip ET125. When I attempted my first “dry fit” of the Housing into the crankcase I found that I could not get it to seat fully and on close examination it was clear that the bottom of the housing was in contact with the circlip. Reverting to the drawing in Richardson, upon very close examination it was clear that Richardson shows that the circlip has been discarded.



In this magnified section of the Richardson drawing you can see the empty channel where the circlip has been removed. Highlighted is the portion of the ET236 seal housing leg which I subsequently reduced in height.

I measured the distance from the outer face of the crankcase to the face of the main bearing and then I measured the depth of the shoulder on the housing. This revealed that if I were to remove the circlip then install the housing there would be 0.040” clearance between the bottom of the housing and the bearing, which I figured may then allow the bearing to “walk” and also that PEI put that circlip there for a very good reason. Even if the housing did make good contact with the bearing, all that holds it in place is 3 very short 3/16” screws.

Considering all this I measured the length of the E216/1 spacer and determined that if I was to leave the circlip in place and reduce the depth of the housing so that its outer face could be pulled up snug against the crankcase I would only need to reduce the inside depth of leg of the ET236 housing to 0.090” (as the face of the circlip was 0.093” below the face of the crankcase).

The ET 236 was supplied with 3 holes spaced equidistant around its perimeter and while this would be fine for a twin they were in the wrong places for a Comet but I did find them of use. I used those 3 holes to mount the housing, face down on a plank of wood so that I could then start reducing the height of the housing leg with a file. Once I had reduced the height of the housing leg I again did a “dry fit” into the crankcase to ensure that the housing was no longer fouling the circlip. While there I drilled 3 x 1/16” holes thru the flange of the housing and just into the surface of the crankcase that aligned with the webs of the bearing carrier, where I wanted to fit the housing retaining screws. At the same time I put paint marks on the crankcase and the seal housing to assist in subsequent alignment.

I removed the “dry fit” housing from the crankcase then, using the 1/16” holes as pilot drilled then tapped the crankcase to accept the 3/16” housing retaining setscrews. Again using the 1/16” holes as a guide I drilled then countersunk the flange of the housing to accept the setscrews.

It was pretty much easy from this point on however I did not fit a gasket as suggested in Richardson; in its place I put a thin bead of Hylomar sealant around the shoulder of the holder where it abuts the crankcase then let it “cure” for an hour before final assembly.

One final note, assembly sequence was fit the seal into the housing then fit the spacer into the seal and finally fit the assembly to the main shaft and crankcase.



Rear Chain Adjustment

If the rear chain is run too tight the bearing on the sprocket side will stretch the housing and come loose. Eventually the hub will fracture. It's worth taking the trouble to get it right, you'll only have to do it once.

First, make sure that the rear wheel is in line.

- Put the bike on the rear stand.
- Unbolt the seat at the front and lift it up out of the way.
- Disconnect the spring units at one end and swing them clear.
- Put a ring spanner on the wheel spindle and lift the wheel until the chain is at its tightest,
- Move both adjusters an equal number of clicks until the chain is just loose at its tightest point.
- Bolt everything back together and with the wheel hanging clear of the ground measure the slack in the chain.

Write this measurement up on the workshop wall, use it whenever you check the tension, and have peace of mind.

The 2015 International Rally
6th to 21st September 2015

Finally – the details that you have been waiting for!
The rally will consist of three stages, each of five nights.
Accommodation has been reserved in Four Star hotels.
If you wish to camp then you are welcome to do so, but we have focused on getting all of our hotel rooms close together in a central location. They do not have adjoining campsites. In all cases camping is available within a few miles.
When looking at the prices, please remember that they are all in Euros and that they include breakfast and evening meals.
At this stage we need to get the hotel rooms reserved. Outings and excursions will be booked later.
On most days you will be able to choose either a coach trip or a motorbike outing or just do your own thing.
Trip highlights include Venice, Florence and Pisa. Costs will range from €40 to €60 depending on the venue and will include tour guides and lunch.
If you don't want to bring a vehicle then minibus transfers will be available.
We need to finalise bookings NOW. If you want to come and haven't registered then you need to do so by 15th June 2014. You can go to www.voc.uk.com and click on the Italian Rally logo.
Otherwise, you can contact the Soc's Secretary. Details inside front cover MPH.

Stage 1: The Garda Village, Sirmione.
6th to 11th September
Single Person: €600 Euros
Single Person Sharing: €380 Euros
Couple: €750 Euros

Stage 2: Rimini
11th to 16th September
Single Person: €610 Euros
Single Person Sharing: €475 Euros
Couple: €950 Euros

Stage 3: Montecatini Terme
16th to 21st September
Single Person: €540 Euros
Single Person Sharing: €460 Euros
Couple: €910 Euros

ITALY 2015
VINCENT
INTERNATIONAL RALLY

Vincent Twin Final Drive Ratios

from Holger Lubotzki, Australia

Long story short, but my TPV 1200cc Rapide is giving the standard final drive chain some grief and I am looking at the O-Ring chain conversion kit from VOC spares. I have mine geared high and I wanted to make sure I get to keep the long legs, so I worked up the following numbers based on an Avon Roadrider AM26 100/90-19 fitted to the rear wheel. The tables might be of general interest to your readers.

Miles per Hour per 1,000 rpm			
Engine rpm	G/box Sprocket	Rear Sprocket	Speed (mph)
1,000	21	46	22.4
1,000	21	48	21.5
1,000	21	50	20.6
1,000	21	52	19.8
1,000	22	46	23.5
1,000	22	48	22.5
1,000	22	50	21.6
1,000	22	52	20.8

Engine rpm at 70mph			
Engine rpm	G/box Sprocket	Rear Sprocket	Speed (mph)
2,979	22	46	70
3,111	22	48	70
3,125	21	46	70
3,241	22	50	70
3,256	21	48	70
3,365	22	52	70
3,398	21	50	70
3,535	21	52	70

Stripped !

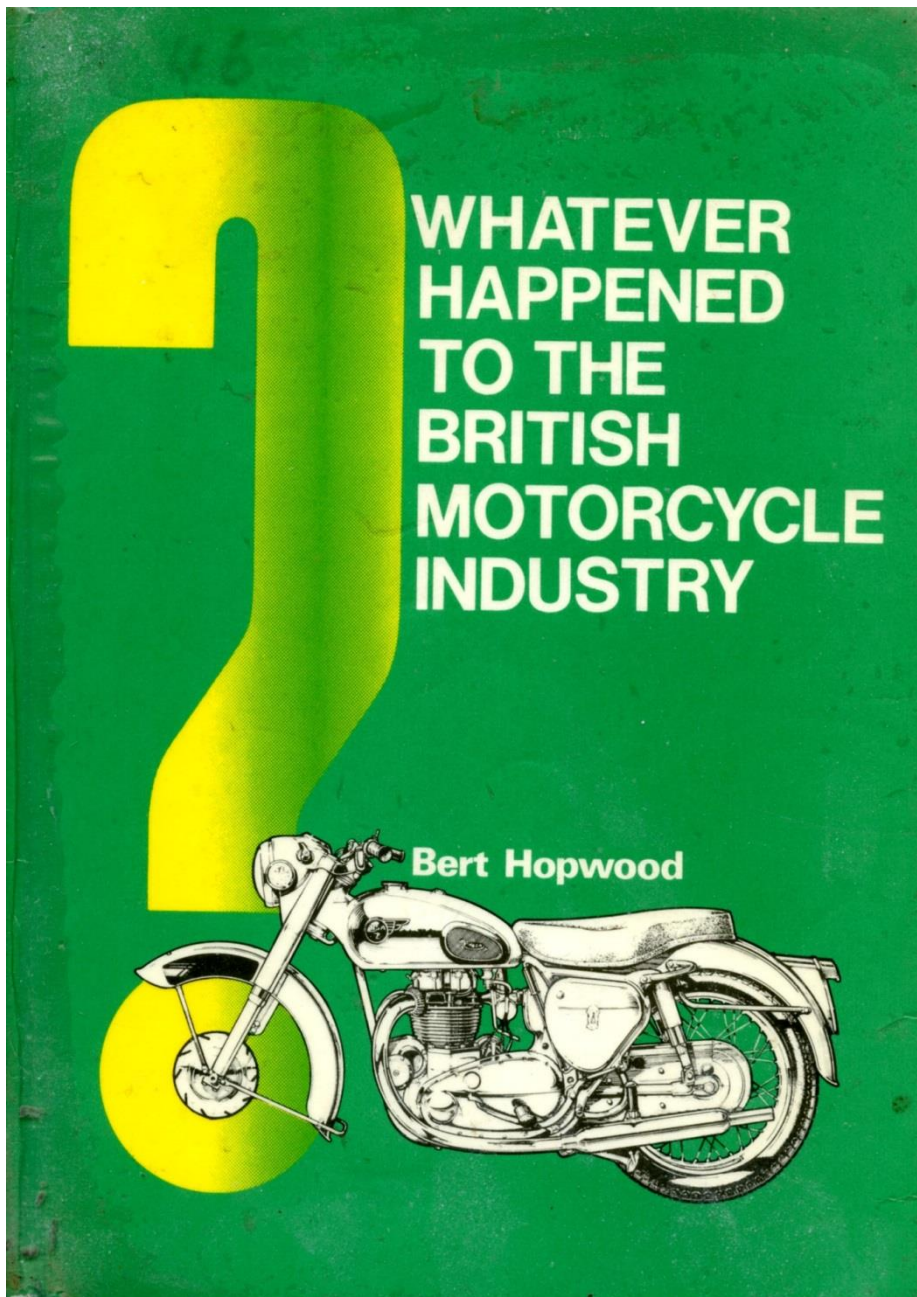
How frustrating it can be if you manage to strip a thread on your bike, especially in a difficult and or expensive component. This recently happened to me with a 5/16" BSC thread and my usual bolt suppliers told me that there was no thread repair kit available anywhere in Australia. A search of the internet found a kit in the UK which was purchased. On arrival I was surprised to see it clearly marked "Product of Australia". WTF! I now know that Alcoa Fastening Systems manufactures an extensive range of thread repair kits here in Australia – just part of their range is listed below, showing the available sizes and matching Alcoa part numbers.

Alcoa Fastening Systems, Australia			RECOIL Thread Repair Kits		
Size	BSW	BSF	BSC	BSP	BA
1/8"	32028	n/a	n/a	31028	
3/16"	32038	30038	n/a	n/a	
1/4"	32048	30048	n/a	31048	
5/16"	32058	30058	36508	n/a	0BA= 30508
3/8"	32068	30068	36608	31068	2BA = 30528
7/16"	32078	30078	36708	n/a	4BA= 30548
1/2"	32088	30088	36808	31080	6BA= 30568
9/16"	32098	30098	n/a	n/a	
5/8"	n/a	30108	n/a	n/a	
3/4"	32128	30128	n/a	31120	
1"	n/a	n/a	n/a	31160	



A trio of loyal OVR readers spotted at the 2104 Australian Vincent Owners Rally admiring one of the fabulous Irving-Vincent creations;

Planning for the Australian 2016 Australian National VOC event to be held at Parkes, New South Wales, is well under way, the see the flyer earlier in this edition, so why not start making plans to be there? Your first step is just an email with an expression of interest to the Rally Secretary Joanne Wenden; email j.wenden@bigpond.com . It could not be simpler.



The book "**Whatever happened to the British Motorcycle Industry?**" by Bert Hopwood gives an insight in the fascinating field of motorcycle production from the pre-WW II years until the early 70s in Great Britain. It recalls the working life of its author, who was associated with the famous British names of Triumph, BSA and Norton.

The book is unique in two ways: firstly, it does not concentrate of the technical side of the bikes. Instead, it is based on a broader perspective. It tells its readers why certain motorcycles were built and why others were scrapped. Secondly, it offers first-hand explanations of what went wrong with the British producers.

One is reminded that the so-called 'Japanese onslaught', starting in the early 1960s, could have been prevented, had the British reacted in time with modern features that were already designed (multi-cylinder ohc-machines) or put their focus on smaller bikes being manufactured with economies-of-scale.

It is a book that tells the sad history of the British motorcycle industry that once was on top of the world but virtually ceased to exist with the collapse of NVT in the early 1970s.

It is seen through the eyes of a key figure, who worked for decades in the field of motorcycle design and production. Anyone, whose interest goes beyond the number of valves used in a certain engine, is recommended to read this book! I suppose it is the only one of its kind that gives that much detailed information on a non-scientific level.

ISBN 10: 0854294597 ISBN 13: 9780854294596

Buy, Swap n' Sell

If you have anything that you want to buy, swap or sell you can now do so, free of cost, in this section of OVR. All you need do is send a email to the editor of OVR with the text of your advertisement. OVR will NOT be providing any editorial or corrections – what you send is what will be published. Of course OVR cannot accept any responsibility for anything to do with the items advertised – that's a buyer/seller matter. Items will be listed in 2 consecutive editions of OVR.

Australian reader Vincent Vidler is still looking for a complete Miller 1950's headlamp for his Vincent. If you have one you want to see go to a good home contact him by email the1vin@hotmail.com

Ken Butler, in Victoria, Australia has the following bikes for sale:



A 2008 Suzuki SV650ABS, 20,000K great condition, full service history including the first owners paper work & the log book I started 4.5years ago when purchased. A quick, light great bike. Handlebar fairing, heated grips, extended front guard (keeps crap away from oil cooler) tank bag, Ventura rack & bag & paddock stand. Any test. A\$6,200K ONO.LAM approved.



Also for sale is his 2008 Gilera Fuoco 500ie, twin wheel front end for great stability great when parking too. Gilera front screen, pillion back rest, bark buster & hiway foot pegs (great for long legs). 36,500K Just had the drive belt, 8 rollers & sliders replaced, serviced every 4,000K. New front tyres, rear done 5,000K. Old parts & bills available. Excellent condition, A\$5,800 ONO.

For either bike, Contact Ken Butler 03-5678 2245 or 0409004017, else email to kenneth_butler@bigpond.com.

This space is available for your Buy Swap or Sell item.

Service Providers

The Service Providers listed have been used with a degree of satisfaction by OVR readers in the past. Just because they are listed does not imply an endorsement of them by OVR. Service providers are not charged a fee for this service nor can service providers themselves request that their information be included, though they may request that an entry referring to them be removed.

Spares:

V3 Products, Australia: (aka Neal Videan) has an extensive range of top quality Vincent Spares including multiplate clutches, oil leak eliminator kits, socket head tappet adjusters, paper element oil filters and lots lots more. Ships worldwide. Email for a price list to nvidean@optusnet.com.au

Coventry Spares Ltd, USA: Fantastic service and deep product knowledge plus extensive range of excellent Vincent Spares and tools. Ships Worldwide. See website for more information <http://www.thevincentparts.com>

Conway Motors Ltd, UK: Anti-Sumping Valves, Comet Multi-Plate clutch conversions plus an extensive range of excellent Vincent Spares. Ships Worldwide. Email for more information steve@conway-motors.co.uk

VOC Spares Company Ltd, UK: Full range of Vincent Spares. Ships Worldwide. Visit their web site for more information <http://www.vincentspares.co.uk>.

Union Jack Motorcycles, Australia: Full range of Triumph, Amal and control cable parts, plus an extensive range of Vincent parts. Ships worldwide. More info at the website www.unionjack.com.au

Pablo's Motorcycle Tyres, Australia: Road, Classic, Road Racing, Classic Racing, Enduro, Motocross, Speedway, Trials and Slicks....and if they haven't got it - they'll get it! For more info see their web site www.pablos.com.au

Paul Goff, UK: A massive range of electrical spares and replacements including 6 and 12V quartz Halogen bulbs, LED lamps, solid state voltage regulators and lots lots more. Ships Worldwide. PayPal accepted. See Paul's website for more information www.norbsa02.freeuk.com

Nuts n Bolts:

Acme Stainless Steel, UK: All stainless steel fasteners are machined to original samples supplied by customers and clubs over the years to enable us to keep your machine looking authentic and rust free! Ships Worldwide. More info at their web site www.acmestainless.co.uk

Peter Barker, UK: Extensive range of nuts, bolts and fittings in Stainless Steel for Vincents and other classic bikes; all sourced in the UK by this enthusiast. Email for a catalogue hrd998@hotmail.com

Classic Fasteners, Australia: Classic Fasteners is a family owned business, established in 1988. Their aim is to supply obsolete and hard to obtain fasteners for your restoration project be it a professional or private venture. The print catalogue, available for download, lists the current complete range. Ships Worldwide. <http://www.classicfasteners.com.au/>

Precision Shims Australia: All types of shims made to your requirements, ships worldwide. More info at their web site www.precisionshims.com.au

Services :

Woody's Hydroblast, Australia: Woodys Engine Services / Hydroblast is a Melbourne, Australia based business dedicated to helping car and bike restorers repair and detail their componentry to the highest standards. The wet abrasive blasting used to finish jet turbines now provided by him is able to clean the most intricate components without degradation to the original surface. For more information visit their web site www.woodyshydroblast.com or call (03) 9597 0387

Outer Cycles, Australia: Jim Browhly is a master craftsman who manufactures bespoke motorcycle exhaust systems for classic bikes, no job is beyond his capability, so if you do need a new system that will be made to your precise requirements, give Jim a call, telephone 03 9761 9217.

Cylinder Heads, Australia: Cylinder Heads are highly skilled engine experts with 30 years of experience operating from their Box Hill North workshop. Alex has extensive experience in complete reconditioning of motorcycle heads, including Vincents plus installation of hardened valve seats, valve guides and valve stem seals. Also offers precision welding of all metals. For more information see <http://www.cylinderheadsvictoria.com.au> or phone (03) 9899 1400

Peter Scott Motorcycles, Australia: Top quality magneto and dynamo services, from simple repairs to complete restorations plus a comprehensive range of associated spares. Provides hi-output coil rewinds with a 5 year warranty. For more info contact Peter on (02) 9624 1262 or email qualmag@optusnet.com.au

Ringwood Speedometer Service, Australia: Experts in the repair and restoration of all motorcycle, automotive and marine instruments. Smiths cronometric specialists. Telephone (03) 9874 2260

Rays Custom Spray Painting, Australia: Ray Drever is the consummate perfectionist when it comes to painting bike tanks and frames. Also a craftsman in flame work and airbrushing. Located near Geelong; contact Ray on 03 5251 2458 or 0402 988 284.

Terry Prince Classic Motorbikes, Australia: Classic Motor Bikes, specialises in restoration, manufacture of new parts, and the development and manufacture of high performance components for Vincent motor cycles. For more information visit the web site [Click Here](#) or telephone +61 2 4568 2208

Dyson M/C Engineering, Australia: Wheel building, Crank rebuilds, Bead blasting, Rebores & Engine Rebuilds and more. Located at 12 Chris Crt., Hillside, Victoria. Phone 0400 817 017

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