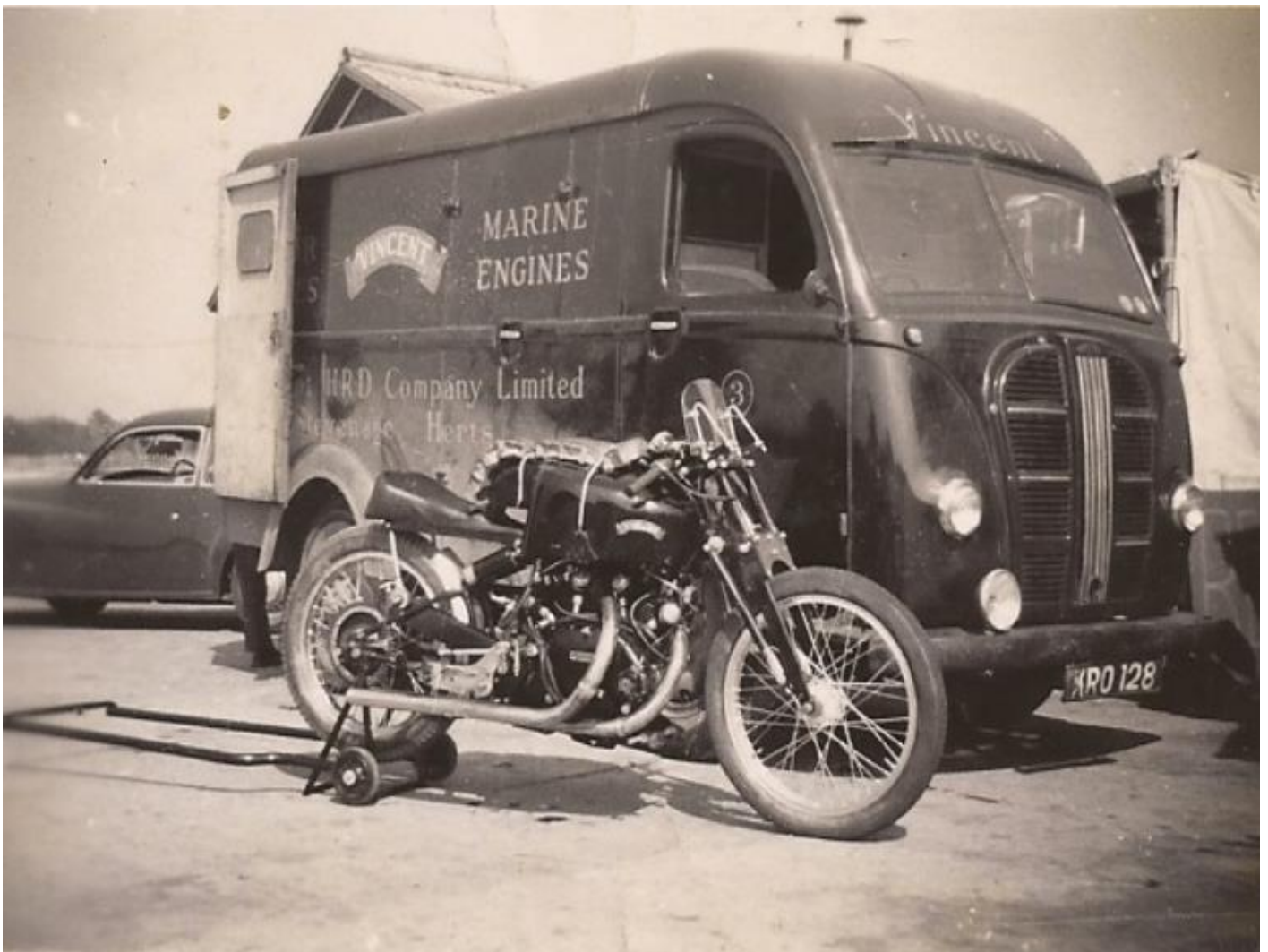




The Oz Vincent Review

Edition #24, March 2016

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 latest edition of The Oz Vincent Review. The cover this month depicts a scene at the speed record preparations at Montlhery, France with Philip Vincents Bristol sedan in the background. Of interest about the Lightning is the larger capacity fuel tank, the absence of any front brake and the small fly screen. The Austin K8 Three Way van, KRO128, was the works van often used by George Brown as the factory race tender; if still intact, it would be the ultimate Vincent collectors prize. I wonder where it is today.

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Finally, the OVR archive is now available on-line via this link <https://goo.gl/jZkiFb> . The archive will be updated annually.



Melbourne, Australia.

Email: ozvinreview@gmail.com

Letters to the Editor

Hi there Martyn, Just wanted to let you know that there will be 2 Racing Vincent's coming down from Queensland for the Barry Sheene Festival Of Speed this March 2016 over the weekend of 18th, 19th, 20th of March. I will be bringing my racer for my first race since my accident in July last year, and the other will be a newly built 1300 cc Norvin owned by Tom Dermody here in Brisbane. I believe he had this bike at the recent Island Classic, although it wasn't entered in any races, and it was giving some teething troubles apparently (Pretending to be a single, not a twin.....!!!) Anyway, I feel there will be a good turnout of Man and Machines, so it should be a great event. Cheers and Beers.....Greg Brillus VOCAustralia.

Arvo Martyn and owgosya Comet? Just finished reading the latest edition with a particular interest on the lightning's that came to Oz, especially Don Willison and his lightning.

I actually met Don while he was still into the speedway scene when I was attempting to campaign an old 1948(?), Matchless short circuit bike as a stock bike (not well I might add), and though I cannot recall if he rode, I certainly saw one (or more), of his Vincent outfits compete in Darwin and I think also at Territory title meet in Alice Springs. Anyway he was legendary status with young blokes like me and I can clearly remember the morning when I heard that he'd crashed his truck and died just north of Alice Springs, where I lived at the time.

I believe it is true there was a Vincent Speedway outfit lashed down on the back of Don's truck when it crashed, but it wasn't the lightning. I never saw it as when I visited the scene the wreckage was still there, but I cannot recall seeing any outfit. I don't seem to recall seeing much on the trailer at all, I thought he was heading south unloaded to pick up a load to take back to Darwin (common enough sight, seeing empty trucks heading south at that time).

The outfit that Don had been transporting was to be dropped off in Alice Springs and belonged to Greg Schlein and it was painted yellow. I have attached a pic of Greg...he is standing next to Ron Johnson (can't miss his dome), in the leathers (also yellow), with the words' "Rumble and Jury), a local Alice Springs pump and small engine repair business. I think the pic is circa 1975/76 of the outfit Guys who went to the UK to represent Oz.

In 1970-72 there were at least 4 Vincent speedway outfits in the Alice, most came up from Adelaide and I can clearly remember heated arguments at Viv Johnson's bike shop over a half stripped HRD about it's 'innards' not being as what had been promised to be before one such sale from Adelaide. I believe nearly all the Vincents outfits still racing at this time resembled little of their originality of the 1950's. Not sure how many Vincents Don had, but in Darwin he seemed to 'have a hand' in more than one; There was much entrenched skull-skulduggery within Vincent HRD speedway scene of the early 1970's. Hell most of the 'players' had about 20 years to hone their skills;-)

Kieth Milich (unfortunately deceased), was a well known Vello and Vincent man from Adelaide and it is his story of the Willo Lightning;

I have the original letter (the note that Mr Ron Weste made), received of Kieth's account of what may have happened to the Willison Black Lightning. Kieth had forgotten my address and sent the letter to Ron. The note is Ron's account as told by Kieth over the phone (Kieth didn't have my number).

Anyway either your readers may find this piece of diatribe of interest. And I think Kieth's account probably only adds to the mystery of the missing Black Lightning.

Cheers, Dick, Australia

The Ian Boyd Collection

A contribution from Dave Hulstone, Australia

Over the 2015/6 Christmas break whilst staying with family in Perth I decided to see if it would be possible to go and see the biggest collection of Vincents in the world, located just 2hrs north of where I was staying. So I hesitantly ring Ian Boyd, introduce myself as a Vincent owner from Victoria and ask if it would be at all possible to view his collection. "Of course, come anytime, I'm here all day"



I arrive there with my son in law, who prefers his cars but came along to see what all the fuss was about. Ian is out on the porch of his newly appointed house/museum and welcomes us with a handshake and a smile. "what Vincents have you got then?" he asks, "a Comet " I reply, which ended that conversation rather quickly. (sorry Ed)

Ian invites us in anyway and says hold on, I'll go and put some lights on. He didn't need to. In front of us was Vincent heaven. I was expecting a line up of maybe 15 bikes, much like the stand that my late father used to organise at the Stafford show in the UK every year, 1 of each model ever produced. But here was much, much more.



The lights came on and from our elevated position I started to pick off the rare ones, 2 Lightnings, 2 Grey Flashes, A Chinese Red Rapide, a couple of A series..... Ian then walked us through his amazing collection telling us 'the story' behind every one of them.



"This Lightning came from a prince in Singapore. He didn't much like it so in the 50's it was purchased by a buyer here in Oz who put it on a ship and got it through customs as a piece of agricultural machinery", Says Ian, It's totally original.

The other Lightning is the 2nd to last one ever built. It has a blower fitted and the head stem and swinging arm are drilled to resemble Swiss cheese. Ian tells me "The previous owner of this Lightning was bet it wouldn't do a sub 10 second quarter mile. It did a 9".



I spot 1 of my personal favorites, the B series Black Shadow. There are in fact 3. Ian shows me the one he rides to rally's. It's immaculate. Then there's the recently restored by Greg Brillus, Comet that looks as good as it did when it left the factory. There's the bike Tony Hines raced at Phillip Island last year, an A series twin, and a road going A series TTR twin minus it's engine, which is away being restored. This bike was raced in 1936 by Buster Brown around the old Cowes circuit on Philip Island I'm told.



Ian Boyd, at the recent Philip Island Classic Race Meeting, near Melbourne, where he was supporting the West Australian contingent



2hrs later we arrive at the end of the collection, the newest Vincent in the world, well if you could call it that. Built by the guy in America who bought the Vincent name but was tragically killed in a car accident, it is his idea of a modern Black shadow. Fitted with a Honda V twin race engine, spoked wheels, trellis frame, sitting very low. Quite appealing.

We sign the visitors book and notice an Egli framed comet taking shape on the bench, "I picked that frame up at a swap meet" says Ian. The collection is ever growing. One thing becomes obvious to me. Ian loves the history with each bike as much as the bike itself, which I totally understand. 'Good on y Ian'!

THE **40**th ANNIVERSARY
OF
ALL-HISTORIC
RACING

**PRE-1960
CARS & BIKES**
Racing on
2, 3 & 4 WHEELS



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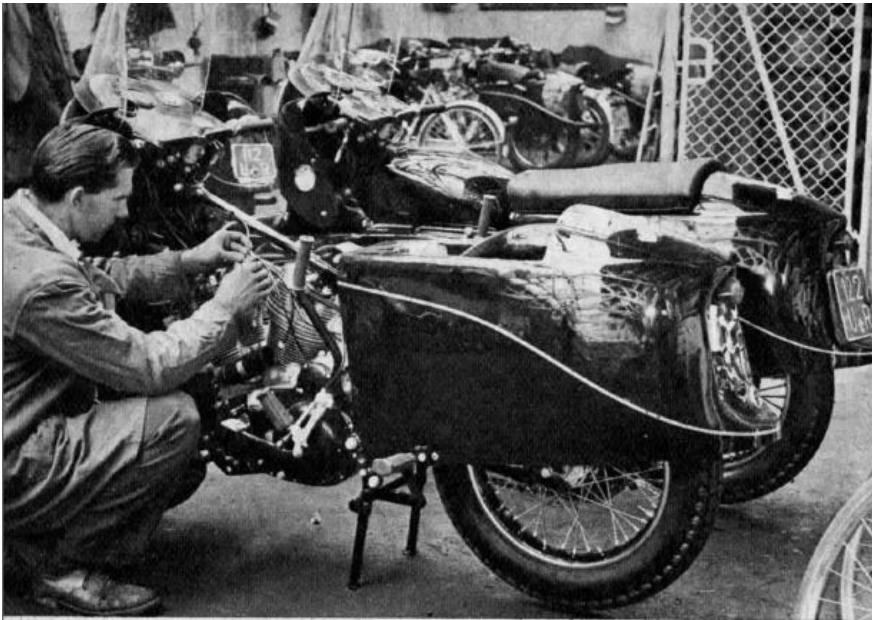
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THE LAST of the VINCENTS

In this, the Final Issue of the Dying Year, "Motor Cycling" Describes the End of an Epoch—and, Perhaps, the Start of Another

by
BRUCE MAIN-SMITH



Before fitting the petrol tank, Alf Searle makes final adjustments to the front carburettor of "The Last." Alf, who has been on assembly since the Series "B" days in 1947, will be continuing in the Service Department.

(Right) "The Last," ready to go on road-test. Chief Tester Bob Brown about to leave the farewell gathering of (left to right) P. C. Vincent, managing director, E. C. Baillie, chairman, Ted Davis, development and sales engineer, and Bruce Main-Smith, "Motor Cycling."



(Below) Three feet—and nearly two decades—apart. The Old and the New. Bob Brown on one of "The First" Series "A"; Bruce Main-Smith on "The Last," the final British Vee-twin to be built . . . ?



THE closing weeks of 1955 marked the end of an epoch. Since 1937 the comparatively small Hertfordshire concern, latterly known as Vincent Engineers (Stevenage), Ltd., have been building 1,000 c.c. Vee-twin motorcycles. Now, that production has ceased.

One day, during the week before Christmas, *Motor Cycling* was the only technical journal privileged to see the last one of these ingenious machines come off the production line into the final-examination shop, whence it was taken for routine road-test by a works rider. Afterwards the writer had the unique experience of riding the actual machine that bears the label—"The Last."

Readers will recall that in our issue for September 15 we broke the sad news that Vincents were reluctantly concentrating their manufacturing programme on their other lines to the exclusion of motorcycles. Mr. Philip Vincent had been forced to do this because the fabrication of a machine of the standard associated with the *marque* could no longer be profitable in the quantities that the factory produced and sold. This came to all as a shock—cushioned for some by the knowledge that 100 more of the Series "D" big-twins would be built.

And 100 were built. No more, no less; and on Friday, December 16, 1955, the last "Black Prince"—frame No. RD.13034B/F, engine No. F10AB/2B/11134—first saw the light of day as a complete motorcycle. This was the last of the final batch of six, each one ordered—some even paid for.

A rare privilege indeed it was to see the last of a long line of such proud and illustrious parentage—nearly 12,000 vee-twins have been built. Remember "Gunga Din" and the track records that fell to that machine? The American records of Roland Free? And only this year the crowning achievement of absolute World Records that fell to the "Lightning" of Burns and Wright?

A more rare privilege it was to ride up the Great North Road on "The Last"—in the company of Chief Tester Bob Brown mounted on one of "The First." This latter, a grand 18-year-old model—the "hardly-ever-used" example from Vincent's own "museum," was one of the earliest of the 70 Series "A" a "Rapide," built in the pre-war years. It had been specially brought out for the occasion and lovingly fettled, for the engine had not been started for some three years.

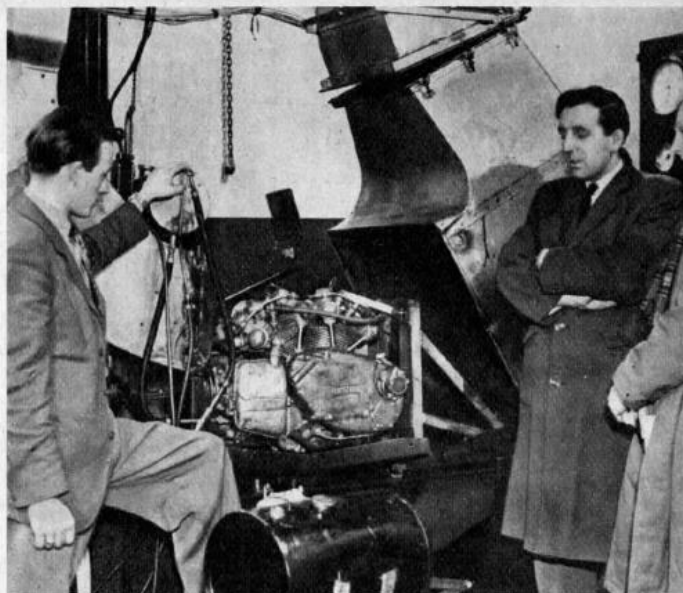
Then came an especial pleasure—I was permitted to take over the Series "A" (a type which I have never before handled). Instantly, I felt an affinity between the two machines. The engine had the same "punch"—perhaps not as refined as that of the "Prince," but still that exhilarating, distinctive response to the throttle. The duo-brakes were there, too—and that pioneer amongst spring frames . . . possibly the first of its type that ever proved its worth on a high-performance motorcycle.

Yes, it can be guessed that it was a sad day, and a memorable one, too, marking as it did the end of an epoch, but, a never-to-be-forgotten one.

We shall not see another Vincent "1000," but that does not mean the company has passed away too. It becomes ever more vigorous, with freedom to concentrate on more remunerative lines. Production of the "Picador" radio-controlled target aircraft engine continues apace. The "Seventy-Five" two-stroke, in all its variants, widens the ripples it has cast in the pools of industry and agriculture. The guaranteed-to-run-for-1,000-hours marine engine continues to find favour with specialist users. The "Two-Hundred" two-stroke prepares to follow in the footsteps of its smaller brother.

And, who knows, many miles may yet roll beneath the wheels of a Vincent-powered mo-ped. The ubiquitous "Seventy-Five" with a 2-speed gearbox has been made in prototype form to investigate possibilities in that field. Whatever one may say about the demise of the "thousands," one must admit that Vincent Engineers (Stevenage), Ltd., are still actively to the fore in original precision engineering—and, of course, they will continue to make the "Firefly."

(Right) An example of one of the company's future products demonstrated by a Vincent employee. The proprietary cultivator is powered by the Vincent-designed and manufactured "Seventy-Five"; this air-cooled two-stroke is made in many variants.



With Australian test-house superintendent Johnny Penn, Ted Davis shows "Motor Cycling's" man a "Picador" engine being prepared for the brake. Both Johnny and Ted are, of course, continuing with Vincents.



Bruce Main-Smith appears to be enjoying himself on what should have been a sad occasion. Here he is mounted on the 1938 "Rapide" which, it will be seen, is in as-new condition.



Event Calendar

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. Just drop the editor a line at OzVinReview@Gmail.com.

2016	
March 19	Annual New Zealand Mail Run Rally; contact hbcmcmailrun@gmail.com for more info
March 26-27	Penrite Broadford Bike Bonanza
April 22 - 25	All British Rally @ Newstead Racecourse, Victoria, Australia. More info is available BY CLICKING HERE
April 29 - May 1 Note: Revised dates	New South Wales (Australia) Vincent/Velo rally at Moss Vale, NSW; Online, go to www.mossvalevillagecaravanpark.com.au and email mvcp@bigpond.com to book your cabin
August 18-21	North American Vincent Rally 2016 – in Missoula, Montana. Contact Josh Bogage for more information, email Joshuabogage@gmail.com .
September 17-18	40 th All-Historic Race Meet on 2, 3 and 4 wheels @ Wakefield Park, Goulburn. More info at www.vscaa.org.au
October 15-16	Girder Fork Rally, Cooma, NSW - email owenpamjohnson@gmail.com for more info.
October 15-17	VOC Australian National Rally, Parkes, NSW. contact alynvincent@mac.com for more information
2017	
March 19-30	Tassie Tour 2017 (Australia), open to pre 1970 British bikes – for more info contact tassietour2017@hotmail.com . This fantastic 10 day tour, limited to just 100 bikes, is already oversubscribed BUT a waiting list is available if you are keen!

Maggie: the Abandoned Beasty.

Story and photos by Glenn Bewley, USA

The mythical "Vincent In A Barn". It's the holy grail of vintage motorcycles, the find every vintage motorcycle junkie dreams about. And sometimes the dream comes true.



This all started one night with a phone call from an old friend, He'd been contacted by a man in Philadelphia whose company had purchased a home at a tax foreclosure sale, A clean-up crew had gone to empty the house, and cleaning the garage out the crew came upon an older, unfamiliar motorcycle, They sought the advice of my friend, who runs a vintage motorcycle website , I specialize in Vincent restoration (www.classicmotorcycleengineering.com), so he pointed them my way.

The people on the Philadelphia end really knew nothing of motorcycles, They sent some photographs showing a Vincent, and I spent several hours over several nights talking to the owners about what they had found, Initially, I thought it was just a beater Black Shadow with some nice parts , They Said they appreciated my help and that they would have to figure out what they were going to do with the bike, and would get back to me, then things went quiet.

Months later, I called the Philadelphia people and asked if the Vincent had been sold: It had not – they had moved it to a garage and basically forgotten about it , My call reminded them they needed to sell it, so they asked me for a figure I would be willing to pay, They pulled me up a bit, and a deal was set.

First Blush

The bike was a 1949 "transition" Series C Black Shadow, but wearing the upper frame member (the upper frame member, or UFM, is the steering head and oil tank of the Vincent) from a Series B Black Shadow, along with Brampton forks, which would have been correct for a Series B machine, I happened to know of a Series B Black Shadow that was not numbers-matching, It belonged to a dear friend we had lost several years ago, and the bike had been inherited by his son~ I called the son and asked him for the numbers from his bike, and I was stunned to discover that not only was the UFM on the bike I was buying the match to his bike, the one on his bike matched the machine that was soon to be mine!



Tachometer is from a Vincent Grey Flash (above). Rare Lucas KVF-TT racing magneto (right) was another surprise.



I hired Dan, a shipper I use, with instructions to give the bike the best look over he could, checking that the engine and gear- box were free before accepting it. On the day he collected it, Dan called and said the gearbox seemed tight, with trouble catching fourth. I pondered the issue, then threw caution to the wind and pulled the trigger on the deal.

A few weeks later I collected the bike and took stock in what I had. Walking around her, I realized what a specially equipped machine she was. There, ready to offer sparks, was a virtually unused Lucas KVF-TT racing magneto, There, ready to fuel the beast, was a pair of 32mm Amal 10TT9 carburetors on their long intake manifolds, There, ready to free her sound and power, was a pair of super thin (0.031" wall) Lightning 2-inch pipes. There, ready to keep the pilot aware, was a rev-counter from a Vincent Grey Flash, There, ready to carry her down the road, was a set of Borranni alloy rims, shod with an Avon Speedster front tire and Avon Racing rear. This purposeful machine was, for all intents and purposes, a full Lightning spec bike.

Missing from the bike was everything that could hold her back; There was no generator, no battery, no lights, no front brakes and no speedometer, The rear suspension had been replaced with tubular struts, The standard gas tank was gone, replaced by a pair of homemade fiberglass tanks, set low to let the rider get tucked in, The standard seat was gone, replaced by a long, thinly padded perch made of light-gauge aluminium plate stretched between the rear of the UFM

and the rearmost fender stay, That she had survived intact all these years - and found her way into my hands - was a wondrous thing. Apparently it's true: Even a blind squirrel occasionally finds a nut.

Second Look

I started Investigating the bike, and from the numbers stamped on every cover I removed I discovered she had started life as and indeed still was, except for the UFM - a fully numbers matching Black Shadow.

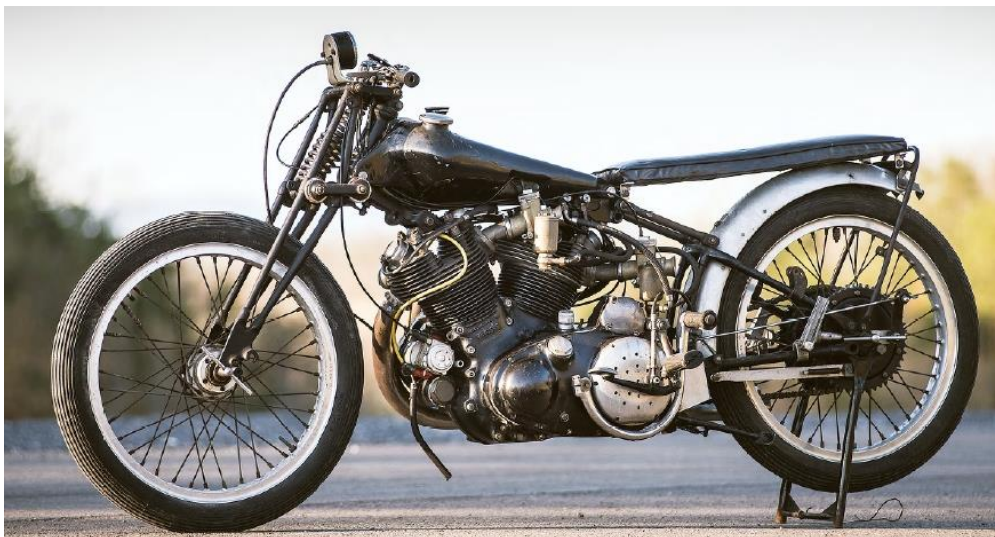
The photographs of the bike showed strange plugs where the spark plugs should be and also in corks inserted into the carburetors - These turned out to be dehydrator plugs; Common in the aircraft industry, they're filled with a desiccant to protect engines from moisture during long-term storage. There were also dehydrator canisters inside the primary case, the exhaust ports were taped over, and where oil lines had been removed the remaining orifices were taped as well, Whoever had owned or worked on this machine was very caring and careful in putting it away, Investigating the shifting it was indeed quite stiff, I pulled the kick-start cover and the shift shaft came out with some effort, coated in very gummy oil. After a quick trip to the parts washer and cleaning its bore with parts cleaner and a bottle brush, the gearbox worked as well as any I've known.



As found: Dehydrator plugs were screwed into the spark plug threads and inserted into corks in the carburetors.

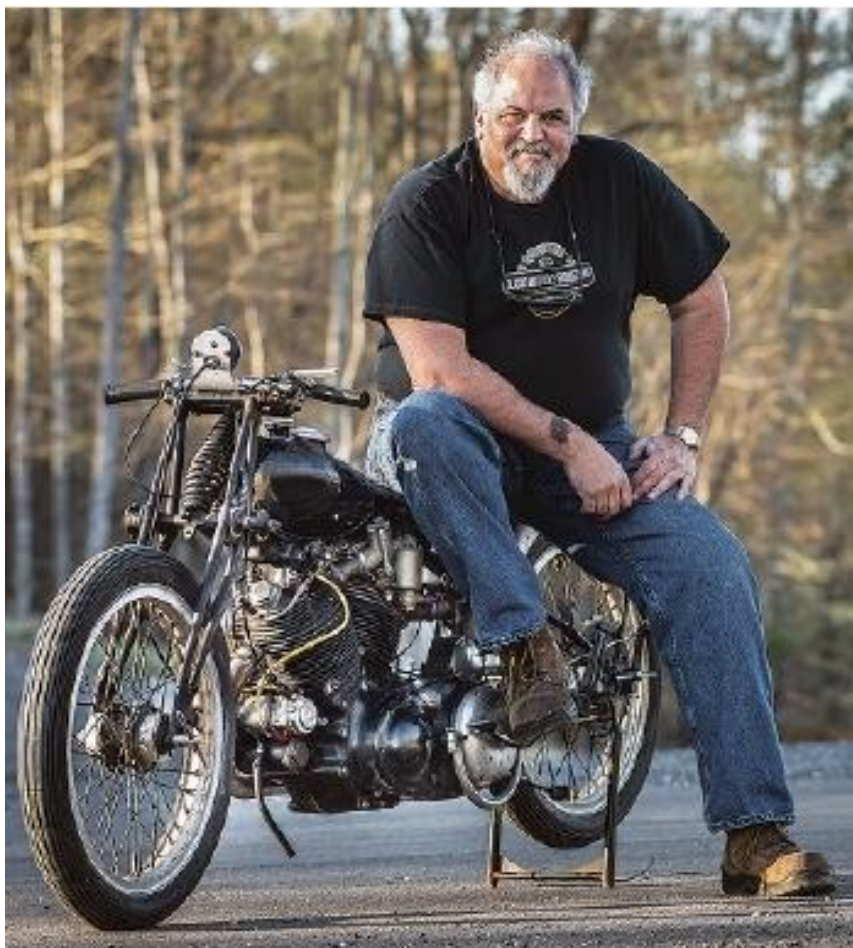
Excited, I pulled the timing cover, its insides covered with the black color that comes from non-detergent oil. The timing pinion, missing the automatic timing device of a standard street bike, was a solid unit with a factory tach drive adaptor. The steady plate outboard of the timing gear showed no sign it had ever been removed and the original bronze large idler gear was in place. Curious to see what cams were in the machine, I was a touch disappointed to find they were stamped "1" - the standard road- going cams of early Vincents Race cams were Mk 2 and later road cams were Mk 3. Every clue leads me to believe that when this machine was built, factory race cams were in short supply.

Having assured myself that the bike was mechanically sound, I decided to give her a few kicks to check compression. I was disappointed to find only 60psi per cylinder, but then I realized I hadn't



removed the air-restricting corks and dehydrator plugs from the carburetors. Removing them and checking again, it went to 90psi - not bad for something that had sat for so many years, especially considering my awkward kick on the left-side lever while trying to hold the bike up!

The bike was pushed into a corner for the next two months, during which time the Machine Registrar at the Vincent Owners Club (VOC) confirmed that my bike and my friends were indeed wearing each other's UFM. As it happened, some friends from the area where the second bike lived agreed to bring its UPM to be swapped for mine. Pulling the UFM off my bike, I found it had been drilled at the rear to accommodate the nonstock gas tanks and that the tab that receives the rear hold-down bolts on a standard machine's tank had been cut off. I fabricated and welded on a new tab and filled the holes.



Owner Glenn Bewley with Maggie.

With the engine uncovered, I decided to peer inside. Removing the cylinder heads, the rear head (actually a front head with left side intake - a common conversion) was incredibly clean inside, as if the bike had only been started for a short test with that head installed. The front head had considerably more carbon, but both were well ported, to the point that I could scarcely feel the transition from the long factory Lightning manifolds into the ports. Pulling the valves to check guide clearances, I found the heads still had the third valve spring that was used on early Shadows, but dropped by the factory in about 1950. The lower guides and valves were in very good shape, although the guides themselves were a bit oversized. I made new guides and rebuilt the heads, leaving the third springs out. Looking at the cylinders, I found it was equipped with 0.020-inch oversized 9:1 compression ratio Specialloid pistons; The cylinder linings were original (recognizable by how the cylinder wall oil feed holes are made) and had no doubt been over-bored only due to a change from the original Shadow 7:1 pistons. I am not a huge fan of Specialloids, mainly due to their ring design, and as I have IE Pistons make pistons for me in this compression, I decided to resleeve the barrels and replace the pistons with standard size (84mm) bores. I reassembled the bike with its fresh top end and reinstalled the UFM, not bothering with the oil lines and pushrods as I was pushed for customer work. She was again relegated to a corner to await further attention another day.

Getting back to it

Some months passed, and I stayed busy with customer machines as well as building a 1950 Red Rapide to pull my Blacknell Bullet sidecar, a bike I had promised to friends from the U.K. who were going to participate in the Hillbilly Vincent Owners 2014 Blue Ridge to Barber Rally in Maggie Valley, North Carolina.

Time had gotten away from me, and the Rapide was only completed and the car attached and test-driven the day before the start of the rally. It occurred to me the racer may be a really good bike to take along for the rally, so the next morning found me and several VOC members and friends furiously working to install the push rods and adjust the valves, mount the tank, change

the gearbox and engine oils, and generally make the bike presentable. The rear tire, which had been holding air, had opted out, but I loaded the bike anyway.

Arriving to the rally late in the day I unloaded, and the next morning the bike corral revealed two race-replica bikes. The owners, both good friends of mine, had done spectacular jobs on their machines and later on they started their beasts to great enthusiasm. Then they started berating me to start the abandoned beast.

Frankly, with as little as I'd done to it, I was doubtful as to the wisdom of this move I had never put fuel in the tanks and didn't even know if they would hold same, nor had I looked at the magneto beyond checking it for a spark. I hadn't touched the carburetors other than to check the main jet size to be sure they weren't set up for methanol and besides, the rear tyre was flat. But sometimes I'm a sucker to peer pressure, and before the end of the day I had Coventry Spares ship me a tube for the rear tire. The morning found me in a friend's race trailer removing the tube from the rear tire, and in another testimony to when the machine may have been built I found the rear tire had an Avon Tyres red rubber inner tube.

A few friends and I started looking at things so far untouched. The carbs were essentially new, but the cables were grungy. We oiled them as best we could, then removed the fuel lines and shot oil up onto the petcock corks. With the thought of the bike not starting looming over me, I sought solace in the fact that the fuel tanks with their four Ewarts petcocks would surely never hold fuel and I would be saved, because starting the bike would be obviously hazardous due to the possibility of fire. I figured I'd get a few condolences, for which I would cover up my happiness, and get on with the rest of the rally.

First Fire

With that thought in mind, I wheeled the machine out to the street. As a crowd gathered we poured some race fuel - just a cup or so - into the tank. We had rerouted the fuel lines so that only one tank was being used, and to every one's amazement not a drop of fuel fell from the taps or the lines. It was completely dry.



My friend Pete had pulled his starting rollers out so I could move the oil around in the engine a bit before starting. With great trepidation, I wheeled the bike backwards onto the rollers and gave Pete the nod. We spun the engine for several seconds and then stopped. Frankly, in my excitement, and given the odd position of the levers, I wasn't sure which lever I'd pulled; the clutch or the

valve lifter. Erring on the safe side, we ran her up again for a few seconds and let her come to a stop for a second time. Deciding it was go big or go home, I tickled the carburetors and we let her spin again. As soon as the rollers got the engine up to a steady speed, I dropped the valve lifter.

She fired immediately. I'm talking about on the next combustion stroke. It was glorious and raucous and wonderful. She ran a bit rough as I gave her a little stick, and then I realized that unlike a road Vincent, this special needed a bit more attention. I advanced the magneto and she got smoother and smoother under throttle. Thirty seconds of running with a hand on the throttle and I dropped off, and she sat there and idled. No one in attendance was more surprised than I nor anyone more pleased.

Despite the fact that she had no rear suspension, no front brakes, 2-inch open pipes and no lights of any sort, I could not resist the temptation. Disengaging the clutch, I snicked her into gear and headed onto the highway in front of the rally headquarters. Being used to the short gearing of my road going hot rod Vincent, I chugged her a bit starting into the street, but with a bit of throttle she quickly caught up, pulling strong in first and second, which is as high as I went; I didn't want the police to rain on an otherwise fine day. I brought her back to glorious applause, basking in the warmth of her reception as I accepted congratulations from all around, especially those who had been instrumental in getting her started.



Later that night, a Hillbilly Vincent Owners member wandered into the room I was sharing with another Vincent owner. Just as I was saying that although I didn't normally do so, the bike had performed so well I should name her. Without missing a beat, she offered the name, marking the location where the bike first burst into life after so many years: Maggie, the Abandoned Beasty.

Maggie fired the next day, and again at the Barber Vintage Festival at the end of the rally. On the kick-starter!

Future plans are up in the air, but I am considering taking her to the East Coast Timing Association timing runs in Ohio. Just to give her the thrashing for which she was built. Beyond that, options abound. Frankly, I'm too large to race the bike myself, and I don't tend to own machines I can't ride on the road. She could easily be built into a standard Black Shadow, but I think she is a solid representation of a period in which the mighty Vincent was king, and I think she is more interesting in her scruffy glory than many of the freshly restored replicas currently out there. I may have to find a home for her where the public can enjoy seeing the way it was done - hot rodding a Vincent - back when it was done!

Workshop Wisdom

Easing the Twist Grip Load – Amal Mk1 Concentrics

A while back I had a major "Off" as a result of a vicious tank slapper (a story for another time). Bike was OK but I sustained significant damage to my right (that's my drinking!) wrist. After months of recovery I am finding it difficult to hold the throttle open against the standard throttle spring for more than 10 to 15 minutes at a time.

An enquiry to Burlin Systems – the Amal folk in the UK – revealed that there is a lightweight throttle spring available – part number 622/227 - that provided just 1/3 of the force of the standard spring. Originally designed for use with BSA/Triumph triples; it is just the thing for any bike equipped with Amal Mk 1 concentrics where you want to lighten the throttle action. And it's cheap at just Stg £2.30 each. It got me riding again!

For an insomnia curing study of tank slappers [CLICK HERE](#)



Two Australians At Large

The continuing travel diary of Bob Allen and his Shadow outfit.

Preamble: The Allens decided to take part in the 2015 VOC International Rally in Italy. In preparation Bob built up the Shadow outfit in his workshop in Australia then shipped it off to the UK. Bob picks up the next part of the story [editor]

Running a little behind with my story as life is hectic on the road. We arrived at Sirmione, the location of Stage 1 of the VOC International Rally just in time for some much needed maintenance. A new main shaft and bush had been procured and were duly fitted after a little sage advice from Glynn Baxter to help speed things along, and Ian Savage was standing by with a new BTH to replace the recalcitrant unit and as the French say VIOLA !

The next day we are a riding group of four bikes with Brian & Jenny Hale leading from

the front with not a trace of trouble, but with some serious solo bike roads Eric would go for a fang on his Norvin and it was on for young and old, with the sidecar trailing along behind, but we always found them waiting at an intersection somewhere along the track.

On the last night of stage 1 of the VOC International Rally we say goodbye to our French Vincent owners as they are leaving at first light, on our last ride together my Girdraulics seized solid returning to camp and there was no time to strip them before the 280kkm ride to Rimini with a locked up front end.

We settled down to a steady 85 kph to try to stop any further damage, and by mid afternoon we were checked into the Ambassador hotel on the beachfront in Rimmini and were soon socializing with some new faces that weren't there on stage one.

The next morning with help from Dave Johnson aka (Sidecar Grandpa) and his van jack we lifted the front end off the ground, removed the damper and spring boxes with his ratchet strap, pulled out the front wheel allowing us to ascertain which spindle had seized. It was the bottom front link and with a hand from Neal Videan we were able to beat it out and I finished the spindle and bushes, greased them all up and put it back together.

As Brian Hale and I were refitting the front wheel, he



spun it and a nasty grinding sound emanated; riding without suspension had broken the spring retainer off one of the brake shoes, but with help, a piece of wire and a battery drill from Marcus Bowden it was Jerry rigged with a loop to carry the return spring, a couple of wheel shims donated by Mark & Sue Vane and the job was done in three hours, a new record??

Time to enjoy Rimini with a visit to the motorcycle museum, we asked the ladies if they would care to join us, but Jenny Hale replied, " I would rather stick pins in my eyes". Being men we took this as NO. And organised two taxis full of blokes, some great bikes and memorabilia, and they serve ice cold beer!!!. Afterwards sitting around a table and under a shady tree with beers in hand talking with Marty Dickerson, Chris Weir, Brian Hale and Alyn Vincent about the legends of our Vincent culture, their thinning ranks and who would be moving up the ladder was very interesting and a pleasant way to finish the afternoon.



Today is Sunday 12th of Sept. the Italian Grand Prix, Valentino Rossi lives in Tavulia, just 20km from our Hotel and all the locals' want him to win. The number 46 is everywhere and everyone is in party mode, win or lose, it will be a big night!

Well the race was run and Valentino didn't win, big disappointment to the locals but like true Italians they celebrated anyway, all night long!!

We did one of the tours behind Rimini with Dave and Yvonne Johnson (Sidecar Grandpa) who had helped us out with suspension problems early in our trip and later with the seized spindle.

We had a nice lunch high in the mountains at a small cafe in another beautiful medieval village, it was quite a warm day but we were back in time to jump in the pool and have a swim before dinner.

The time had come to say farewell to leave beautiful Rimini and head to stage 3 of the rally in Monte Catini Terme.

We had decided to take the pretty route that was six hours through the mountains instead of the three hours by freeway, and it was worth the effort, stunning views in every direction. While taking photos at the half waypoint we were joined by two more Vincent's, it was Rhinehart and Ute, his wife from Germany on their very nice Rapides, his with a Stieb attached. We had a chat about the scenery and Vincent's before heading onwards to the rally site for check in and see if any new members would turn up for the last stage.

All the rides on the rally were great , but the Chianti Valley and San Gimignano with the Hales leading the way was amazing, and the trip to Pisa with the Vincent's lined up in the square was a total knockout that will probably never happen again, so thanks to Giovanni and the people who made this possible !



Very quickly it was time for the Gala Dinner at the Terme Excelsior for presentations and farewells, a very dressy occasion for people living out of saddlebags I must say. With the eating out of the way, the trophies awarded, and the speeches made, it was over for another four years, where next time, who knows? but I hope I'm there!

The Aussies did us proud, with 27 in attendance, there were three Kiwis who sounded like twenty Kiwis and everybody had fun, the main reason people attend any event.

As you have no doubt noticed I have just skimmed over the rally, as I'm sure others will submit a much more detailed account of events, but I would like to personally thank the VOC for a brilliant job of organizing 55 plus Vincent's, 180 (so I'm Told) participants, spare parts, technical talks and also having their people on the ground to answer all and sundry questions.

Also special thanks to Giovanni Cabbassi and the Italian section for the concept and the hard slog of organizing all the amazing rides and the special Pisa experience; a tough act to follow for the next International.

Giovanni also arranged top class security storage for our precious bike and sidecar for 3 weeks whilst we met up with friends to travel the rest of Italy and Sicily by car.

The next morning people and bikes were heading in every direction to their homes, but Brian and Jenny Hale and Joy and I rode off into the mountains to the City of Medina for a dinner at Osteria Franciscana voted one of the 50 best restaurants of the world. The degustation was amazing and Massimo Bottura, the Chef and Owner, came to our table and chatted to Jenny about cooking (her passion) and her soup kitchen plan for the underprivileged in the world.

The next morning I was doing my bike check and found the clutch cable about to snap and one broken spoke in the sidecar wheel; with Brian's help we hoisted the sidecar onto a very large rock removed the wheel and replaced the spoke and tuned it without removing the tyre. Spare spokes are a necessity when touring always carry 1/2 dozen or so for each wheel they don't take up too much room and can save you a lot of pain trying to explain over the phone in a foreign language what you require. I fitted one of the spare cables for the clutch and we were a little late leaving from Milan with another large storm front bearing down on us.

On the road with the wind rising and heavy rain inevitable we told Brian and Jenny to make their own pace to Milan as they were riding further on to France and we were going to head down to Sorrento after leaving the bike with Giovanni Cabbasi in Milan.

Well it pelted down rain for half the trip and after leaving the Shadow safely with Giovanni we headed to the main station to catch the fast train to Sorrento to meet up with Vince and Justine Rogers from Australia.

As we alighted from the taxi at the station Joy said look it's the Hales what a surprise they must be missing us already!!! No not really when we were loading our bikes in Milan our luggage got mixed up and Jenny had my clothes and I had Jenny's Computer and all her worldly goods in my bag.

That's the problem with using matching Vincent luggage, so more farewells and they rode off into the rain towards France we caught our Train and met the Rogers in Sorrento.



A few Snaps captured at the Philip Island Classic, 2016



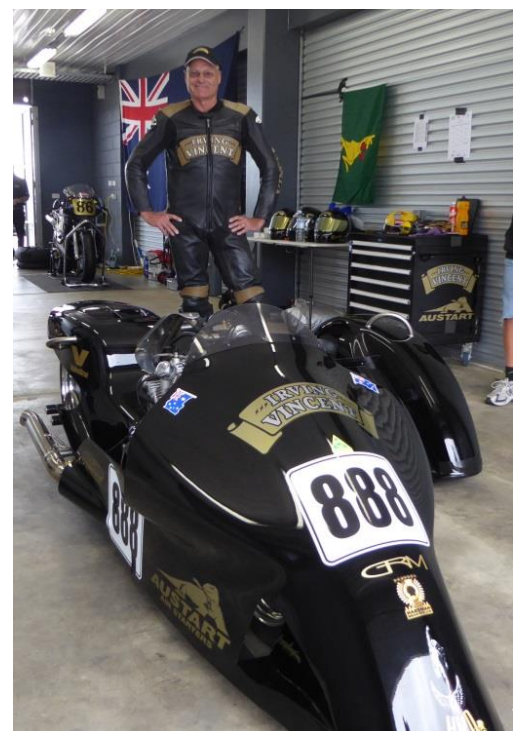
Left: Cam Donald leads the pack on the Irving Vincent; Below the Goodwood Vincent front end detail



Right, The Irving Vincent Outfit.

Below Left- Triumph outfit spotted in the spectators parking area

Below Right - Barry Horner, co-designer and passenger. Irving Vincent outfit

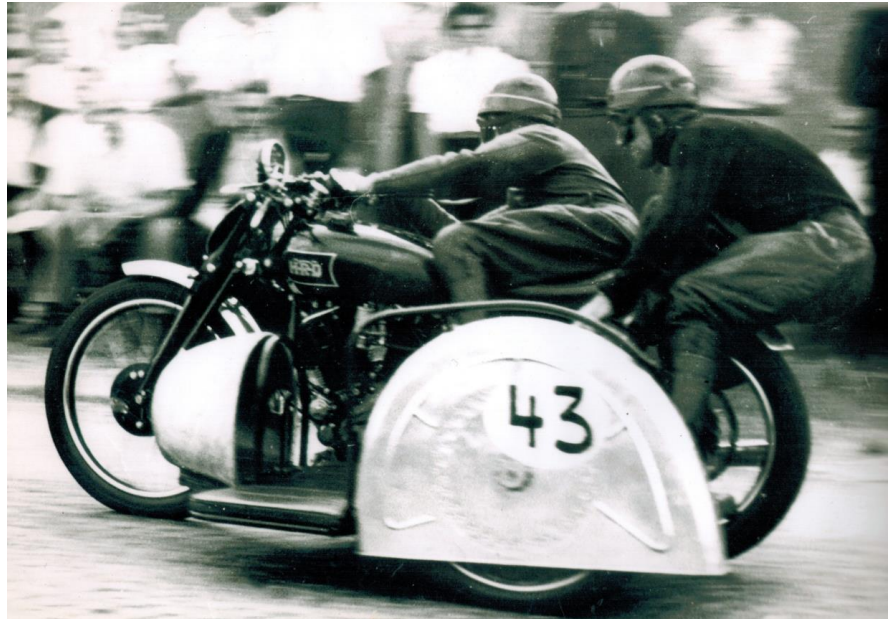


Some More Light on a Lightning

A contribution from Michael Kamper, Germany

Here is some more information about Black Lightning F10AB/1C/1648, no. 5 in the list in last OVR (February 2016). The bike is still being raced, possibly the only Black Lightning on earth, which is being used as intended by its makers back in 1949, and surely the only one in Germany in perfect running condition.

Vintage racer and sportsman Ernst Hegeler, now aged 75, bought it 1968 in Basel, Switzerland from Hans Staerkle, a known local racer, who had bought it from Hieronymi, the Swiss Vincent agent in 1949. Staerkle used it in a sidecar outfit with some success.



Hans Staerkle on 1C/1648 outfit at Basel City Race, 1950

His widow sold it to Ernst in solo trim and he converted it, until 1969, to legal road specification bike with working electrics, Honda CB450 front forks and a duplex front drum brake of the Black Bomber, as the Honda 450 was called then. In this configuration it covered some 70,000kms of travelling across Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. The bike was used by Ernst until 1993, to meet rallyists and court his present girlfriend, Karin. Karin was travelling around on a Muench Mammoth at that time, and once sent a post card to the Muench factory from Mariupol, the big city in Ukraine, when the employees at Muench's were shocked: "How could they dare to go that far on a Muench?" So much for the Muench's faith in their own machine!

Since 1968, Ernst has kept contact with Hans Staerkle's widow, keeping her informed about his activities around Vincent and his Black Lightning. In 1995, Ernst brought the Lightning to the I.O.M. to the International Rally, where he wanted to show his bike to visitors amongst all the other Vincents. But some VOC official of some importance asked him to take his Lightning away, as this was a club's meet, and Ernst was not a VOC- member, which is no wonder, as during his youth, at the Third Reich, they did not teach the English Language in Germany! Regardless Ernst and his Lightning enjoyed their stay on the I.O.M. without disturbing or further bothering with the VOC's events. Possibly, his Lightning was declared "machina non grata", since then!

After return back home, Ernst decided to convert the bike back to race trim again, as he had all the original equipment, as was fitted at the time of delivery in 1949.

Since 1995 till now (2016), Ernst runs the restored to original Lightning at numerous Vintage Race Events like those in Hockenheim, Schleiz, Schotten, Lorsch or Varano in Italy. In all those various races, his Lightning has never failed or had an accident. She starts most times first or second kick. (Ernst has fitted a kick start, as at youthful 75, he does not want to push start her anymore). He has exchanged the original race magneto for his own manufactured electronic ignition for the same reason: easy starting.

To start her, he opens both throttles with the bike on the paddock stand, injects some cigarette-lighter-fuel into the carbs, closes the throttles again, ignition ON!, and a quick jump on the



kick start lets her burst into life. She must be kept alive with handful of throttle-blips for warm-up, as there is no tick-over, as for safety reasons, the engine stops, if you leave the throttle alone.

In every paddock, within 2 - 4 minutes, the roaring beast is surrounded by spectators, as her sound is unique – music to be heard!

Amongst the original parts, Ernst still has in his shelf, is also the Brampton forks, she was delivered with, but never raced.

The author of this report once had the chance to follow Ernst on his Lightning in a race at Nordhorn, back in 2014, on a Comet racer from 1948. We were in a 180 deg. left-hander, when the Comet was overtaken by a 3cyl.-twostroke-watercooled 750cc Kawasaki, which wanted to overtake the Lightning in front of him at the end of the turn - at least, this is, what its rider intended - as Ernst opened the BL's throttles full bore on the following short straight of app. 120 yds (meters), when a sharp left hander followed, which had to be done at first gear.

No, the Kawa didn't make it! Its rider later came to Ernst in the paddock and asked with frank astonishment: " What a hell of a bike is this? I felt the shock waves of its exhaust on my visor!" Well, this is why its name is BLACK LIGHTNING!



Ernst and 1C/1648 on full song at Varano, 2014

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For Sale: Kick Start return spring for Burman BAP gearbox Vincent Comet Part PR50-130X (brand New) purchased in error from VOC Spares. A\$20 plus postage: Contact Graeme on 0448480909

Almost Free: Following editions of MPH (1 copy of each) are available for just the cost of postage from Melbourne Australia. MPH Numbers: 423, 527 to 530, 532 to 553, 555, 573 to 576, 584, 590, 594 and 596. Contact Martyn by email goodwin@pobox.com or phone +61 419 499 901

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Spares:

V3 Products, Australia: (aka Neal Videan) has an extensive range of top quality Vincent Spares including multiplate clutches for twins, 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 for Comets 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

BRITISH Only Austria Fahrzeughandel GmbH. Great range of Vincent parts. Ships worldwide. More information at <http://www.vintage-motorcycle.com/index.php?language=en&site=4&pid=54>

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

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

V3 Products (see entry under Spares above) also stocks a large range of Vincent specific nuts n bolts.

Restoration Services:

Steve Barnett, Australia. Master coachbuilder and fuel tank creater who does incredible workmanship; located in Harcourt, Victoria. Ph +61 3 5474 2864, email steviemoto@hotmail.com

Ken Phelps, Australia – Qualified aircraft engineer and builder and daily rider of Norvins for over 30 years, who has the skill and experience to carry out overhauls, rebuilds, general repairs and maintenance to Vincent HRD motorcycles. Full machine shop facilities enabling complete engine and chassis rebuilds, Painting, wiring, polishing, aluminium welding and wheel building. Ken Phelps Phone: (61+) 0351760809 E-mail: ogrilp400@hotmail.com . Located in Traralgon, Victoria, Australia

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.

Grant White – Motor Trimmer, Australia: Specialising in Vintage and Classic Cars and Motorcycles. Located in Viewbank, Victoria. ph 03 9458 3479 or email grantwhite11@bigpond.com

General 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. For more information visit their web site www.woodyshydroblast.com or call (03) 9597 0387

Cylinder Heads, Australia: 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) 8838 8515 (**Note the new phone number!**)

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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

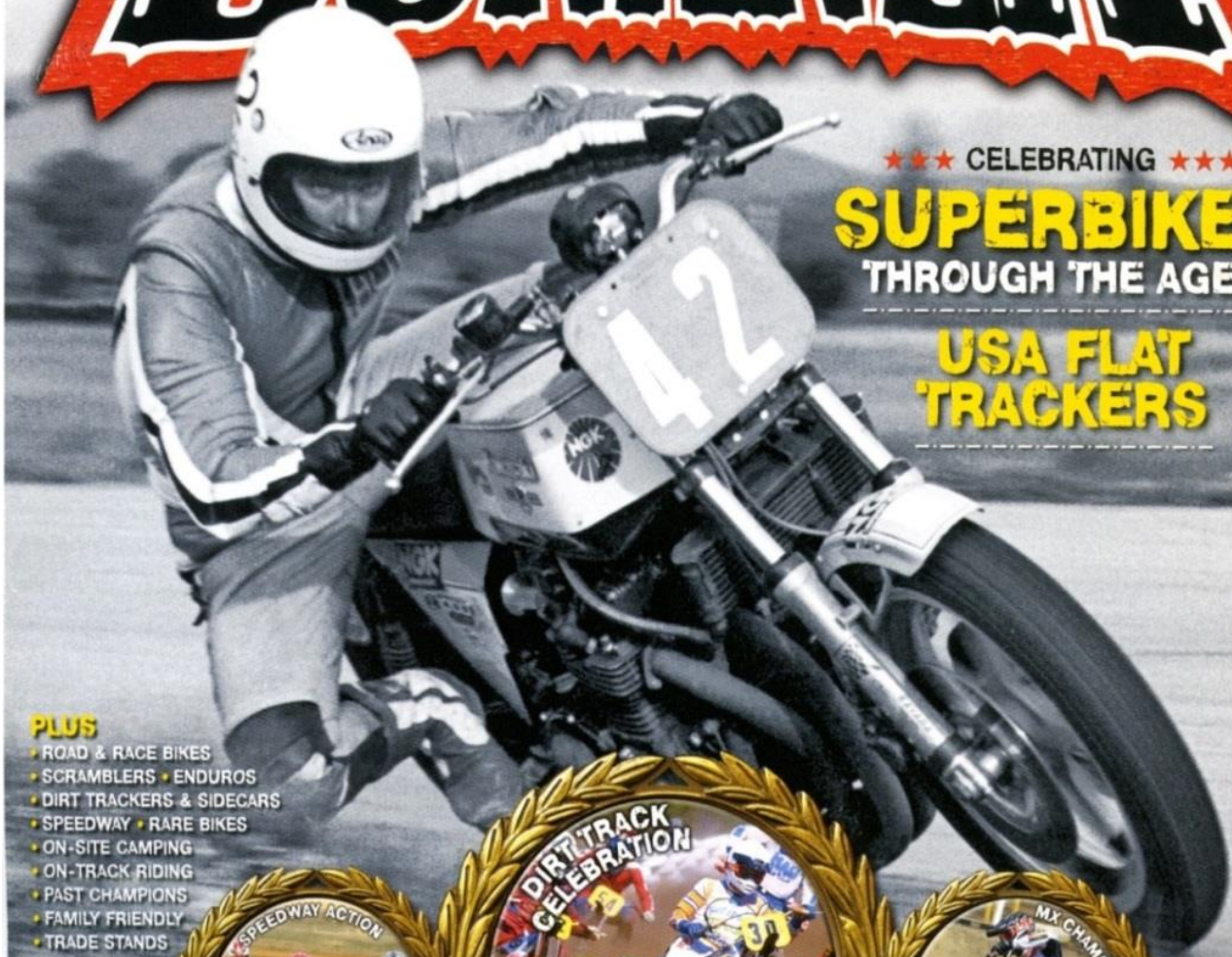
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