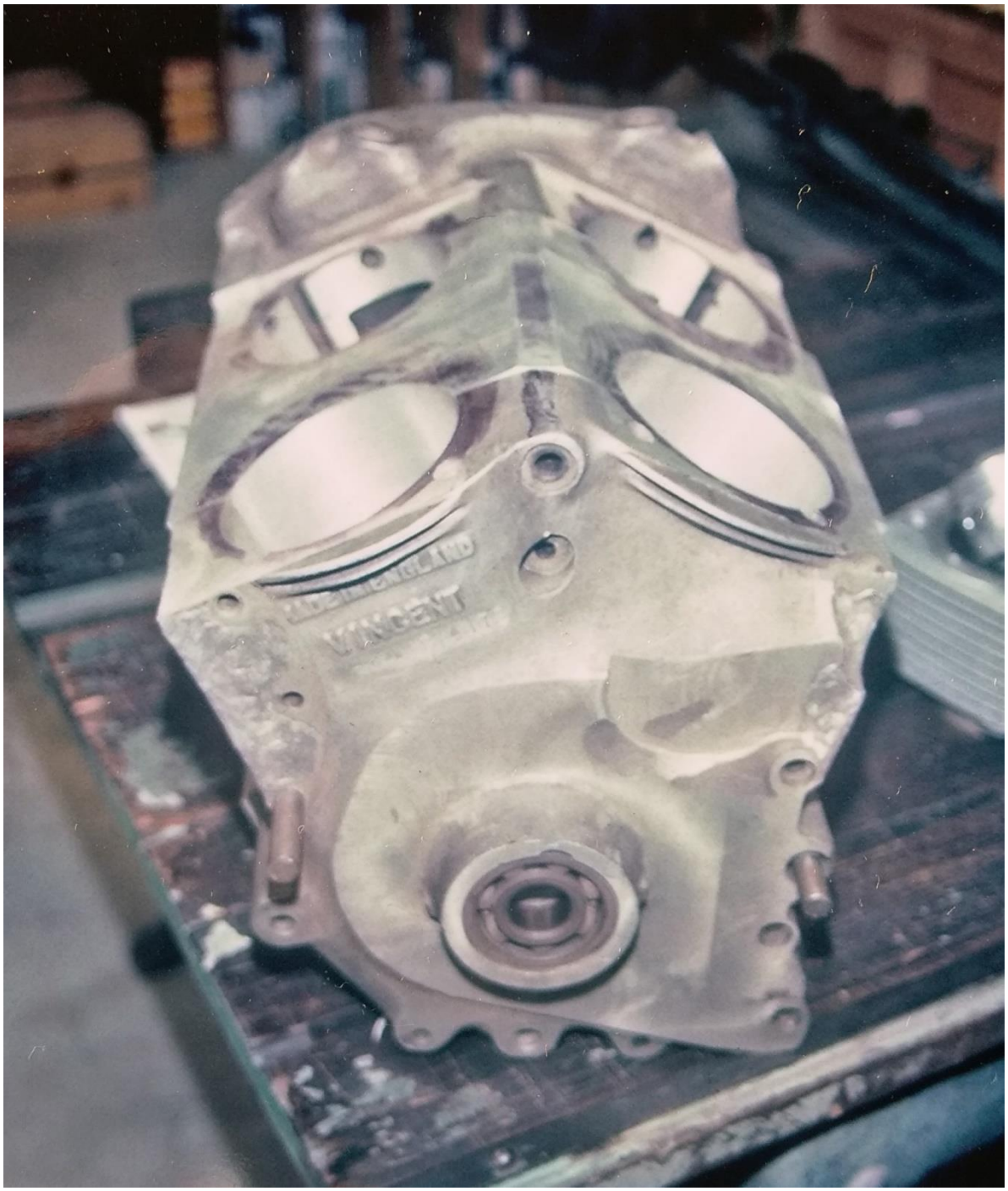
The Oz Vincent Review

Edition #42, September 2017

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 OVR@optusnet.com.au



Welcome

Welcome to this latest edition of The Oz Vincent Review. In this edition we go back to our focus on Vincents, though the marque that seems destined to never die – Royal Enfield - gets a mention as well. And thanks to a generous OVR reader we also have some original writings from P.E.Irving

The front cover of this edition depicts an original 1960's prototype Vincent V4 engine under construction by the late Ken Tipton as spotted by OVR reader Barry Taylor during his visit to MTC Engineering back in 1976. Apparently Ken had started construction of the engine to run it in Top Bike (the ultimate evolution of Australian motorcycle Drag Racing) and it was destined to be 2,500cc and fuel injected on Nitro. Unfortunately the ruling body at the time told him that they would not let him run that setup and the project was abandoned. Click this text to see some Top Bike action

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Martyn

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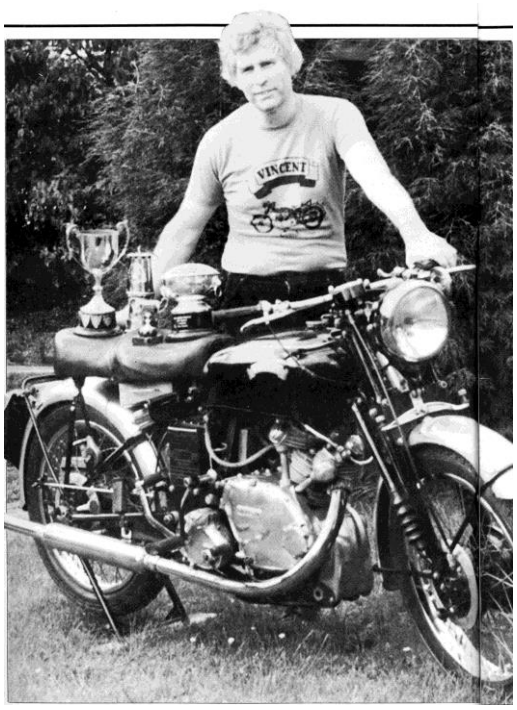
Letters To The Editor

Hi M,

Had a wonderful day at Broadford today (July 31, 2017). The sun shone, I was surrounded by happy bikers, Ken Horner (of Irving-Vincent fame) spoke to me; they're working on one of Jeffrey Richardson's Comets by the sounds. I was all ears. Phil Canning, who's got a highway named after him, hammered his Lighting rep around the track at silly speed. And I got my motivation back to work on mine.



10 years ago nearly to the day I was on the phone talking to my dad in England who was preparing for his parade lap around the Isle of Man TT course during the Manx GP. I asked which Vincent he would be taking and he replied "the shadow" in a tone of "do you have to ask?" He was 70 years old so I thought he might be taking his beloved Comet. "I would love to ride the Comet round there with you dad!". "You can't son, you're not a VOC club member"

3 weeks later I'm on a plane to Blighty with my motorcycle gear, my own VOC membership card and a copy of MPH.

Left: Dave's dad, Fred with his Comet back in 1991 - See OVR # 13, Feb 2015 for the full story of Dave's Dad, Fred, who passed his beloved Comet on to Dave.

Riding out of my parents drive on the morning of the ferry

crossing I looked back at dad and his face read Proud. He had built both of these Vincent's from piles of scrap.

The day of the 'parade lap' arrives and I learn that my dad has put me in a slow group at the back of the field. He was first group out. Getting our photos taken riding the mighty tt circuit together was going to be difficult. So off I set at a cracking pace (85mph) my path made easy as those around me had forgotten we had the whole road at our disposal. This was fun. The roads were lined with spectators, most of them laughing if I remember right, and I felt like John Surties.

A recent photo of Dave at Broadford astride his dads old Comet

There were quite a few fallers (I would see most of them later in Nobles hospital) but no sign of dad and his Shadow. At one point over the mountain I remember a guy coming along side me when I was flat out, I look across and see 1 cylinder, the rider gives me a nod and clears off. I'm left thinking is there another gear in this gearbox?

Eventually I reach the finish line, all the fast guys are lined up in the pits, including fast Comet guy who is at least 75, smiling faces everywhere, but no sign of dad. All my family were there, waiting, then my sister receives the call, dad has crashed and has been air-lifted to Nobles hospital.

We all climb in the hire car, everyone with their own thoughts. Dad's failed to negotiate a fast right hander and ended up in a church yard, breaking numerous bones and yet the first thing he says when we burst into the ward is, " I finally got to ride in a helicopter!". It lightened the mood at the time.

Fast forward 10 years, dad is no longer with us. He made a full recovery, repaired the shadow and promptly sold it. His beloved Comet is now in my shed down here in Oz.

Regards, Dave Hulstone, Australia

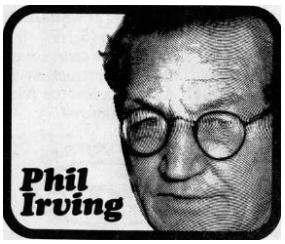
Hello Martyn,

Enjoyed last months OVR and the focus on Nortons. Super news is that the Norton were the only team to have two top-10 finishers at the IOM TT this year in both the Superbike and Senior TT races. The team was represented by the Australian pair of Davo Johnson and Josh Brookes. Josh set a new fastest Mountain Course lap with an average speed 130.883 mph, with Davo also achieving a 130 mph lap in the Senior event. This is the fastest ANY British built bike has ever lapped the IOM circuit!

Speaking of speed, my Vincent chums in Germany tell me one way to get maximum performance from your Comet is to fit a 50 tooth rear sprocket – could be worth a try.

D. Bowen, Late of Stevenage

Fuel Consumption: The Missing Ingredient



An observation penned by Phil Irving and first printed in Revs Motorcycle News, December 1976 and still of relevance today.

WHATEVER happened to fuel consumption? There's one obvious answer to this question: it went sky-high about 15 years ago (1961!) and has remained so ever since, despite wails about the ever-rising cost of petrol and the pleas of the clean-air lobby.

A more interesting matter is why it went that way without much protest from either the public or the press. While most test reports and some readers' letters will devote a vitriolic paragraph or two to the poor location of a switch, or some such piffling detail that an owner could rectify for himself, the matter of fuel consumption is often not referred to at all, or — if unusually excessive — may be dismissed with a few mildly critical words, instead of being roundly condemned under a sub-heading such as "Atrocious Fuel Consumption".

Unfortunately, the picture has lately become somewhat obscured by supplanting our time-honoured and well-understood system of reckoning consumption in miles per gallon, indicating how far you can go on a known amount of fuel, by the system of stating how many litres are used in covering 100 kilometres.

Though it uses metric units, litres per 100 kilometres is not really a metric system but a French idea which, to me, seems back-to-front, and is not easily compared to consumptions recorded on the old system. Just why Revs is adamantly opposed to quoting data in both systems, as many other journals do, is just as hard to understand as the data itself, which to a lot of readers is just plain gibberish.

However, I did not set out to complain about the metric system being shoved down our throats, but to discuss why motorcycles, with a few exceptions, have ceased to be the economical vehicles which they were once.

The chief offenders, judged on a size-for-size basis, are small-capacity Japanese two-strokes, which can consume fuel almost as rapidly as a small car. There was a time when a 250 could cover twice or thrice the distance per unit of petrol than a modem example will, though the former would not have had anything like as good a performance. But in those days, performance did not matter very much; if you wanted more speed, you purchased a bigger machine and, even then, the increased consumption would probably still be less than the present-day standards which most riders seem prepared to accept.

Symptomatic of this acceptance of a bad situation is the emphasis continually placed by writers and advertisers on methods and equipment for improving the factory speed performance; very rarely do you come across an article or product intended to improve consumption!

The inference of this is that only a small minority are really interested in running costs or distance between re-fills, and certainly not to the extent of spending a few dollars in order to save a much larger number of cents in the future. This attitude might be partly because most motorcycles are only ridden for short distances; for long distances the owner goes by car, or takes the bike on a trailer. Because the total usage of fuel is not very great, the fact that it is being used un-economically escapes notice.

The major factor contributing to this situation is the worship of high-speed performance, regardless of almost every other attribute that a good touring machine should possess. The only way to get a high power output from a smallish engine is by running it at very high rpm but unfortunately this can only be achieved at the expense of losing low and then middle-range torque and using up much more fuel irrespective of whether the bike is driven hard or just pottered around in towns.

This is so because the port timings and areas necessary for high two-stroke power at speeds approaching 10,000 rpm are such that at lower speeds much of the fresh mixture goes out unburned through the exhaust port and is wasted.

Worse still, instead of pulling strongly almost down to walking pace, which was a characteristic of the older two-bangers, the modern ones drop their bundle at 4000 or 5000 revs, due to the pressure waves in the exhaust and transfer systems, getting out of phase, and have to be kept on the boil by continually changing down as the road speed drops. Naturally, the consumption suffers.

At very high speeds, a fair amount of power is required merely to overcome internal friction and to pump combustion air through the cylinders which can be appreciated from the braking effect evident when running downhill in low gear with the ignition switched off and the throttle alternately opened and closed. The power thus absorbed can only be derived from part of the fuel used.

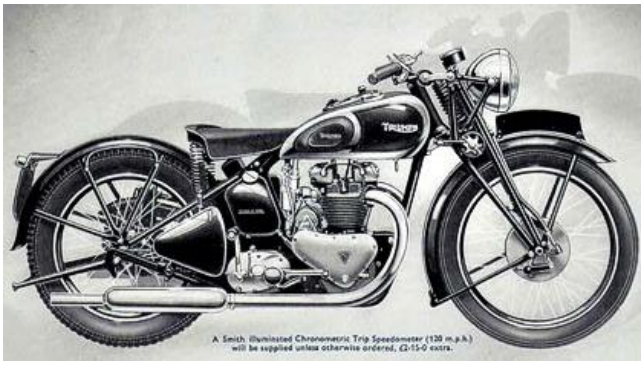
A severe lack of low-speed torque also means that bottom gear must be quite low for starting off, and then five or even six ratios are essential to make the machine rideable on winding roads or hilly country, and very frequent gear-changing is necessary. A citizen who rides one of these screamers through my village about 10 times a day never seems to go for more than five seconds before changing up or down.

Lately (1976!) there have been welcome signs that some factories are changing their thinking — for example, by using reed valves to stop the blow-back which causes loss of fuel — but, nevertheless, it would be better if they placed less emphasis on high performance and brought some semblance of sanity into the consumption question before petrol prices rise still higher and emission controls get tougher.

Four-stroke engines have also suffered from the high-output high-rev syndrome, with touring tachometers red-lined at speeds which not so long ago would be considered too fast even for a racer. Fortunately, being less dependent than two-strokes on wave action in the breathing and' exhaust departments; the bottom end does not fall out of the power curve quite so distressingly and driveability is better, but still the consumption is often very excessive.

For example, the CJ250T Honda twin recently tested by Revs with a maximum speed of 134 km/h (84 mph) had an overall consumption of 5 litres per 100 kilometres, equal to only 54 mpg, but a pre-World War II Speed Twin 500 cm3 Triumph weighing much the same would go as fast or even faster while returning about 15 per-cent better consumption.

This is because the Triumph was not intended to run above 6000 rpm and the valve-timing and pipe sizes were designed for maximum torque of around 4000 with good flexibility and economy, whereas the Honda engine of half the capacity has to turn nearly twice as fast to develop about the same power, while the valve timing and breathing arrangements have to be tailored for high-speed performance at the expense of other qualities.



One of the later examples of Oriental ingenuity, the XS750-D Yamaha, is clearly intended to be a fast tourer rather than a road-equipped racer, but falls down in the very department in which it should excel. Even Revs' tester was impelled to register a protest — a mild one, but nevertheless a protest — against a consumption almost equally that of a small car, but charitably ascribed it to an over-rich setting of one of the three carburettors.

Without giving any other reason, it was felt that the test machine was not a typical example, because a figure of 7 litres per 100 kilometres was expected, and presumably would have been accepted without comment. Even at cruising speed, the consumption exceeded this figure, reducing the tank range to 200 kilometres so an extra fuel supply would be essential in many country areas.

Again going back a few years, the 1000 cm3 Vincent Rapide, with a higher maximum than the Yamaha, would easily record 60 mpg (4.7 litres per 100 kilometres) at a fast touring clip even on a compression ratio low enough to use 80 octane petrol, and a careful rider could get close to 70 mpg (4.0 litres per 100 kilometres). One only has to look at the transmission systems and top-gear ratio of the two machines to see some reasons why this should be.

The XS750-D Yamaha's power is transmitted in all ratios through a total of five steps, which are all less than 100 percent efficient, but when in top gear the Vincent big twin's power only goes through two chains, with less power loss for the majority of running, but the real reason lies in the top gear ratios of 5.2 to 1 for the Yamaha and 3.5 to 1 for the Rapide.

When doing the ton, the Vincent twin was only burbling round at 4600 rpm while the three-cylinder Yamaha model is running at 7000 rpm and using up a lot of its fuel just in spinning itself around. At lower speeds, it loses out for other reasons and there does not seem to be much point in providing double overhead camshafts, multiple carburettors and so forth for a machine which is neither outstandingly fast or economical, when it could quite easily be one or the other depending on the aim of the designer.

This fascinating item was contributed by OVR reader, Ian Fallon.

Tuning Your ATD

WORKSHOP WISDOM

The ATD originally supplied by Lucas for a Vincent, Lucas Part 47505A/D, provided an advance range at the magneto of 16 to 18 degrees, being half of what happens at the crankshaft. With 4 BTDC being the sweet spot for starting a standard Vincent motor this resulted in full advance between 36 to 40 BTDC; fine for the fuels of the 1950's but an potential disaster with the fuels of 2017 and beyond. Unfortunately most of the 'modern' replacement mechanical ATD's presently available give the same advance characteristics as the Lucas original.

With today's fuel, in order to avoid pre-ignition, which can quickly destroy pistons and eventually big end bearings, the fully advanced setting needs to be a tad more conservative.

On regular fuel with an octane rating anywhere between 90 and 105 RON you want the ignition timing of your Vincent motor to be similar to that shown in the table below:

Vincent Motors	Fully Retarded for Starting	Fully Advanced	Total Advance	**Target ATD range**
Kick Start Motors				
Single Spark Head	4 BTDC	34 BTDC	30	15
Twin Spark Head	4 BTDC	26 BTDC	22	11
Electric Start Motors				
Single Spark Head	2 ATDC	34 BTDC	36	18
Twin Spark Head	2 ATDC	26 BTDC	28	14

To find out what your ATD is presently doing you need to accurately measure the amount of advance it provides and it is not hard to do so. Make up a ATD gauge (part of a timing disk) with a 3/8" hole. *Photo 1*; then firmly mount the ATD using a 3/8" BSF bolt and washer from the underside. *Photo 2.* Next make a pointer out of soft wire and fit it over the ATD gear so that it points to 0 or TDC. *Photo 3 and 4*. Finally with your hand rotate the ATD to the limit of its travel and note the reading. *Photo 5.*

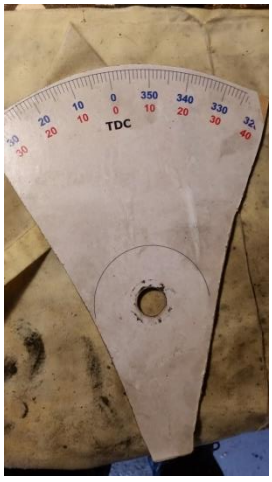


Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

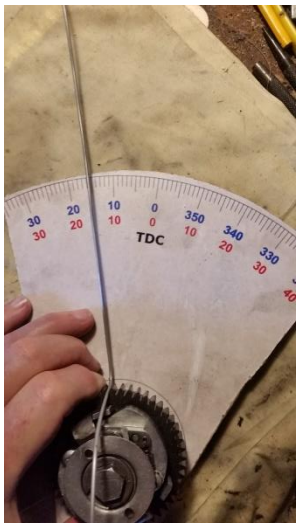


Photo 5

In the photos the amount of ADVANCE the ATD provides is exactly TWICE the reading, so in this example the reading was 15 degrees thus the ATD provides 30 degrees of Total Advance. It's perfect for my kick start, single spark plug motor ONLY because I had already tuned this ATD to give the Total Advance that I wanted. You can do the same for your ATD as well – it's not that hard.

Some folks will tell you that the ATD range may by altered (or tuned) by BENDING the 'ears' on the ATD and while this is true it will create stress inside those bends that could lead to the ATD ears breaking off when in use. The ATD 'base' shown in Photo 6 had both its limit ears fail in use as a result of bending them when attempting to change the ATD range.

What I did was disassemble my ATD then added weld metal onto the edges (or faces) of the two ears attached to the ATD centre , shown in Photo 7 (not the bit attached to the driving gear) then I loosely reassembled the ATD without its fixing collar in place and remeasured the ATD range. At first it was less than I wanted so I carefully removed some of the weld metal from both ears with a file, ensuring that at both limits of travel the ears made full contact with the stops. Reassemble again without the fixing collar and remeasure. Keep repeating this process working slowly till you get to the ATD range you want.

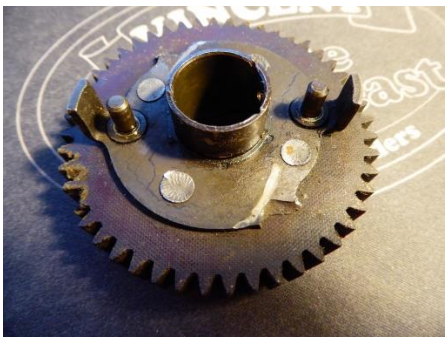
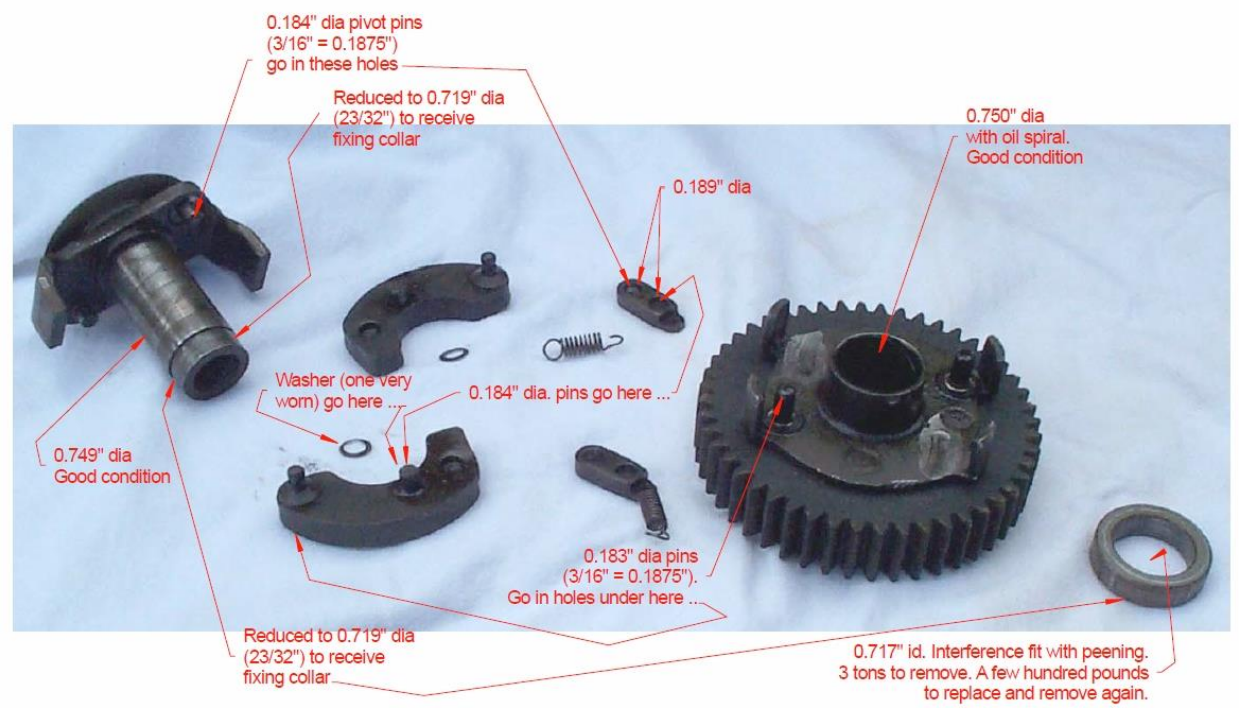


Photo 6

Photo 7

What holds the ATD together is a fixing collar which is an interference fit on the end of the inner sleeve of the ATD. With the Vincent ATD, the pinion is much larger than the ATD, so that you can support the pinion around the ATD and press the inner sleeve out of the fixing collar. Sometimes needs a bit of force the first time. You don't need to unrivet anything.

Here are some photos of an 'exploded' ATD. *These 2 photos provided by BrightSpark Magnetos*



Once you've got your ATD apart, you can clean up the engaging surfaces of the inner and outer sleeves, do your ATD tuning and when satisfied with it only then press it back together again. BE CAREFUL - Don't press the fixing collar all the way home as this will prevent the mechanism turning freely on the centre sleeve. Leave a few thou end float (0.005" / 0.010") in the shaft.

Instructions on how to make your own timing disk / ATD gauge will (with luck) be in the next edition of OVR.

One last thing – your ATD springs are most likely well past their use by date. Do yourself a favour and fit new ones – readily available from the VOC Spares Co. Part No. PR22A/D

NILOS seals and Metric Wheel Bearings

I have metric bearings front n rear on my Vincent and use NILOS seals. The standard NILOS seal for a 30204 (NILOS ring 30204AV) is perfect for the rear axle but NOT for the front. There is no available NILOS seal that will work at the front without modification.

For the front you need a NILOS seal for a 30303 bearing (NILOS ring 30303AV) but you will find the centre hole at 17mm is too small to go over the axle. You need to enlarge the central hole in the seal but it MUST remain EXACTLY central if the seal is to work. As with all sealing elements, the sealing edge of the NILOS-Ring must be exactly concentric. This is the only way to produce the sealing effect required for the labyrinth groove.

The solution I came up with was to hold the NILOS seal GENTLY in a (borrowed) lathe running at the slowest speed possible then with a Dremel or die grinder with a small stone, use that to slowly enlarge the central hole in the seal till it's a snug fit over the axle.

Remember, in order to reduce the moment of friction during the initial use, the dished face on the interior of the NILOS ring is to be filled with grease before fitting. Once the NILOS-Ring has been fully run in, it does not need any further maintenance.

Sealing is produced by placing the sealing edge of the NILOS-Ring under light pressure at the inner and/or outer roller bearing ring and so that it rubs to a greater or lesser depth into the hardened roller bearing ring. The fine labyrinth that is produced (clearly visible in the photo of an old bearing inner) as a result prevents both the leaking of grease and also the penetration of dirt into the bearing.

Lots of good info on NILOS seals can be found here:

http://www.nilos-ring.com/default.aspx/G/111327/A/2/R/-1/1/1033

Event Calendar

2017	
Sept 10	Gawler Swap Meet, Gawler South Australia. More info email swapmeet@gawlercarclub.com
Sept 10	Shepparton Swap Meet, Shepparton Showgrounds, Victoria
Sept 17	Central Coast Motorcycle Swap Meet at Doyalson, Queensland. Contact Alan on +61 2 4396 7187
Sept 21-23	2017 North American Vincent Rally in Minnesota, USA. See www.tinyurl.com/NARally2017
October 1	Motorcycle ONLY Swap Meet. Balhannah Oval, Balhannah, South Australia
October 13-16	Vincent New Zealand Riders Rally in Waipukurau, NZ. Contact Kevin Coombs for more info; email theshifters@yahoo.com
October 15	Longford Swap Meet, Longford Tasmania.
Nov 10-12	AJS & Matchless Downunder Jampot Rally, Lake Hume, Albury NSW Australia. Contact model2a@yahoo.com.au
Nov 10-12	Australian Historic Motorcycle Racing Championships at Wakefield Park, Goulburn NSW. See www.wakefieldpark.com.au for more info
Nov 11	The 59 Club Mods n Rockers Ride. From Brighton Bath car park (Melbourne). Contact the59clubaustralia@hotmail.com for info
Nov 18-19	Bendigo Swap Meet, Bendigo Victoria. Email bendigoswap@impulse.net.au
2018	
March 23-24	New Zealand National Vincent Annual Rally at Waitomo, North Island, New Zealand. email Suzy Hall at thmotorcycles@xtra.co.nz for details
August 27-31	Australian National VOC Rally, to be held at the Maroochy River Resort in Queensland. Contact kevinfowler2@bigpond.com for more info
2019	
June 3 - 19	VOC International Rally; Belgium and Austria. More info to follow also see MPH
2020	
tba	International Jampot Rally in Nelson, New Zealand for AJS & Matchless bikes. Contact nipper@nipper.net.au

Rescue those (slightly bent) Girdraulic Blades

Thanks to OVR reader, Australian Dave Large we now have an insight on what it takes to straighten slightly bent Girdraulic fork blades however any fork blades that exhibit even the slightest signs of cracking cannot be saved and MUST be discarded.

The origin Aluminium blades are made from L40 alloy material which is an old British specification superseded by HE15 which is similar to AS1866-1977 grade 2014. ... To straighten them you must first Solution heat treat at 505 to 515 degrees centigrade for 2 hours followed by Quenching in boiling water then straighten within 30 minutes. After that Precipitation harden at 155 to 185 degrees centigrade for 5 hours and furnace cool.

Another OVR reader, this time from the UK, Charles Falco, provides the following insight as to what all this means.

“In case anyone is interested in what the above steps are designed to do, first, "solution heat treating" doesn't involve putting a Girdraulic blade in a bubbling cauldron of some solution. It refers to holding the Aluminium blade at a high enough temperature to allow all of the alloying element(s) responsible for hardening it -- primarily Copper in this case -- to go into solid solution in the Aluminium.

If the Girdraulics are made of L40 the Copper content is <4.0%, and if they are RR56 it's 2.1%.

What is happening is the same as putting so much salt in a cup of room temperature water that some is still left as a solid at the bottom of the cup after as much salt as possible has dissolved. Because the water has dissolved as much salt as possible at that temperature, it is a "saturated solution" at that temperature. However, heating the Aluminium (or salt water) to a higher temperature and holding it there long enough allows additional Copper (or salt) to go into solution. That is, a saturated solution of a substance at a high temperature contains a larger quantity of the dissolved material than at lower temperature.

Since Copper diffuses fairly slowly in the Al, rapid quenching doesn't give the excess Copper time to precipitate, resulting in a "supersaturated solution" of the Copper once the Aluminium is back at room temperature. However, even at room temperature the Copper atoms very slowly diffuse through the Al. Since the solution is supersaturated, when the Copper atoms bump into other Copper atoms they precipitate as microscopic Copper inclusions. These Copper inclusions pin the movement of dislocations in the Aluminium. A soft metal is one in which dislocations move easily, and a hard metal is one in which they move with difficulty, so L40 and RR56 are "precipitation hardened" alloys.

Although even at room temperature the excess Copper eventually would precipitate and continue to harden the Aluminium, holding it at an elevated temperature increases the diffusion coefficient of the Copper which allows it to precipitate faster. I didn't take the time to look up actual values but diffusion coefficients in solids typically increase exponentially with temperature, which is why the relatively few number of hours at ~175 oC quoted above seems quite reasonable.

Again, heating the Aluminium to ~500 oC allows more Copper to dissolve in it than would be the case at lower temperature. Quenching in water keeps that Copper in a supersaturated solution, at least for long enough to bend it (if it were only to be machined, hardness wouldn't be an issue). Heating to ~175 oC when finished with the bending allows the Copper to have enough mobility that the excess can precipitate into microscopic "pinning centers" that are responsible for the hardness of the L40/RR65/"Duralumin"/"Hiduminium" class of precipitation hardened alloys.

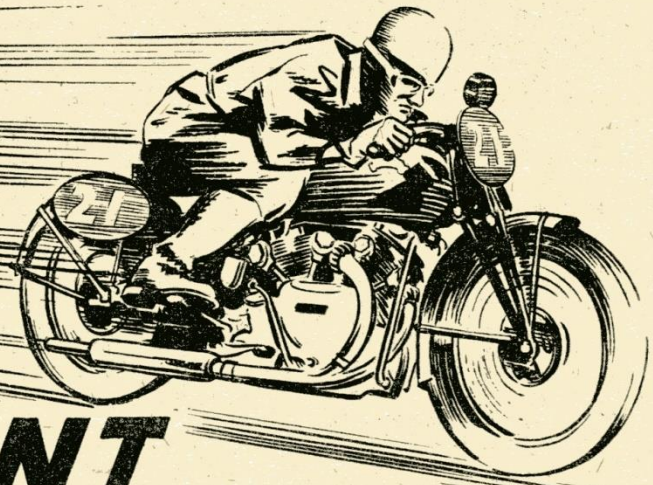
This precipitation hardening would have taken place anyway at room temperature, or if the Aluminium had been slowly cooled from 500 oC, but the higher temperature allows it to happen much faster. Since the amount of Copper that can be dissolved in Aluminium at 20 oC is lower than at 175 oC (which in turn is lower than 500 oC) additional precipitation will take place over the months and years to follow so the hardness will continue to increase, albeit by not very much.”

Well there you have it! **Remember if you even suspect that the blades may be cracked you MUST discard them less they subsequently fail in use with possible fatal consequences.**

Fortunately new (and reputably stronger than original) Girdraulic Fork Blades CNC machined from billet are now available from the VOC Spares company; part FF40R for the right and FF40L for the left .

CONWAY MOTORS

the name behind



The VINCENT

SOLO MACHINES

Price		Deposit
£289	1952 **Vincent** Rapide "C," 5,000 miles. In immaculate condition. A machine for the Connoisseur	£97
£279	1951 **Vincent** Black Shadow "C." Good tyres. 3,000 miles. Really smart sporting machine	£93
£279	1952 **Vincent** Rapide "C," one owner, immaculate	£93
£269	1951 **Vincent** Rapide "C." New exhaust system and dual seat. Excellent all round condition	£89
£259	1951 **Vincent** Rapide "C," low mileage. V.G. cond.	£87
£259	1951 **Vincent** Rapide "C," tourer. 5,000 miles, chrome rims. Smart machine ..	£87
£249	1949 **Vincent** Black Shadow "C." V.G. condition throughout	£83
£249	1950 **Vincent** Rapide "C," chrome bars	£83
£249	1950 **Vincent** Black Shadow "C." Low mileage. Locking T/Grip	£83
£239	1950 **Vincent** Rapide "C." Tourer, s/c. spec. Bargain	£80

EASY TERMS

You can place a deposit now and collect whenever you like.

Conway Motors are often termed "the name behind the Vincent," owing to the close relationship between the two Companies over the past twenty-five years. Our association with the Vincent started in 1928, the year the Vincent H.R.D. Company was formed and the experience we have gained over these last twenty-five years enable us to proudly claim to be

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST VINCENT SPECIALISTS

OVER 300 MODERN USED MACHINES IN STOCK

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY OF ALL VINCENT MACHINES

New sidecars available from Stock, most models of the following makes: BLACKNELL, SWALLOW, WATSONIAN

COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF POST-WAR VINCENT SPARES ALWAYS IN STOCK

CONWAY MOTORS

SOLO MACHINES

Price		Deposit
£229	1949 **Vincent** Rapide "C." Gd. tyres, low mileage. Pannier frames. Gd. all round cond.	£77
£179	1949 **Vincent** Rapide "B." Fast machine. Mechanically sound	£60

COMBINATIONS

£319	1952 **Vincent** Rapide "C," one owner, low mileage with Blacknell Derby s/str. sal.	£107
£299	1951 **Vincent** Rapide "C," touring model. Excellent condition throughout with Garrard 2-seater sidecar. In immaculate condition	£99
£289	1951 **Vincent** Rapide "C," one owner, 8,000 miles with Blacknell Bullett sports s/c. ..	£97
£269	1950 **Vincent** Rapide "C," touring, with Watsonian Albion s/str. saloon sidecar ..	£90
£179	1950 **Vincent** Comet "C." Ex-works. In trial trim. Short wheelbase, Manual B.T.H. Mag. Spec. gearbox. Fully equipped with lights, with spec. Blacknell trial chair. Alloy body, etc.	£59
£129	1938 **H.R.D.** Rapide, 1,000 c.c. twin, ex. cond. with 2-door c/adult sidecar to match	£43

PART EXCHANGES

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AD

An advert from MotorCycling, December 1953 – and of course Conways are still in business, still providing service and support to Vincent owners though the phone number has changed; its now +44 1622 872 715 and they are in 'new' premises in Kent.

Kerala on Kermit (Royal Enfield Classic 500)

A September 2013 Sub-Continental Ride Report from OVR reader, Peter Keage

Don't read this article if you think motorcycle riding solo in India is not a sensible idea. It will be too painful for you. For the adventurers, enjoy.

The web is a powerful tool for planning bike tours but expectations can fall short. I had booked a 'modern' Royal Enfield 500 from Cochin's best bike shop. It all looked too easy at the time but a small tin shed leaking rain on the side of the Cochin Fort Road with a poly-tarp floor was well short of the modern showroom on the web page. Nor was the company CEO (Ivan) as chauffeured as appeared on the web. There he was in oil-stained trousers and a very undersized white shirt. So, the door opened on an epic tour.

After 'hellos' I discovered Ivan was overseeing the assembly of my bike. There were two donor bikes that gave me some 'unique' features to enhance my ride experience. But I was meant to start the ride that day on a newish Royal Enfield so boy was I was peed at the situation unfolding in front of me. It seemed Ivan was a sham and my body language reflected my instincts to cancel everything but Ivan's CEO qualities kicked-in as he insisted head to his home garage. In a few minutes, we turned into an alley and there it was, a tidy white villa surrounded by 30+ ancient Royal Enfield's in various stages of decay. It was as if the bikes formed a moat around his castle.

We weaved our way to his covered 'new' bikes and Ivan then pointed to his pride machine, a metallic green 2011 RE Classic. It looked well maintained and the speedo read 11,300km - 'new' he said. I jumped on the back and we did a spin round the Port and all was set. I left Cochin at dawn on a bike that never missed a beat. A metallic green charger in the rain must be called 'Kermit'.

The 1,250 km tour (see map) was to see as many wildlife reserves as possible, the basalt mountains and tea plantations around Munnar, then though the spice valleys and then down the boarder with Tamil Nadu to the south coast to Trivandrum, then back along coastal roads, with a side trip to the broad waters inland of Cochin. The route included mid-trip options to return to Cochin in case of mechanicals or weather delays. Prior bookings at 'hotels' made it easier to dry out from monsoon showers which were unseasonably regular (and character-building). For navigation, I have a Garmin 60CSx.

The dawn departure was memorable. The excitement was balanced by road traffic, city noise and building rain clouds. Within 30 minutes I was crowded under a shop awning with 50 other bikers and lots more pedestrians waiting for the rain torrent to stop. It was immediately obvious that a big white bloke on a RE 500cc is not normal. From that point, whenever I stopped, I was a point of interest. My head and arm hair, eye and skin colour fascinated many people in the remote villages. What an adventure for me and them.

The first section was along the coastal plain to the Kalady temples and inland to the Kodanad Elephant Reserve. Here Keepers manage rogue elephants that play hard-ball in forest logging operations. It's a terrific place. This was my second visit and I managed to arrive as the elephants were enjoying a morning pedicure in the Periyar River. The Keepers scrub the elephants skin and feet with coconut husks. With trunks resting on their backs free of the passing water, the elephants enter into deep meditation. The man-animal relationship is spellbinding - the elephants size and power dwarf their Keepers but are mostly compliant and happy. After an hour or so at the river I hitched an elephant ride back to Kermit, then headed off to the hills.

Munnar is summer escape for 'Karelaites'. It's a beautiful part of the world with tea plantations swirling around the valleys. My route plan was to avoid traffic but this was one of my oversights as 50% proved to be semi clay roads riddled with potholes. Kermit handled this fine till we turned onto the 'main' road up through the national park to Munnar. This was a character-building afternoon. It was a wet and windy road with a surprise at every turn - bus on the wrong side, a cow or three resting in the middle of the road, or a collapse road caused by cascading waters. But it seemed to work and the views through the clouds and mist gave way to the Munnar ridgeline at sunset. My arrival was announced with a massive cloud burst 15 minutes before finding accommodation.

The ride down through the spice valleys to the next National Park, then across mountains to Tenkasi was a great discovery in lots of ways. The smells of cardamom, ginger, turmeric, pepper and nutmeg was pungent. Early in the morning I realized Kermit was very low on fuel so I took advice from a local trader (aka donkey cart fuel and oil seller) who grunted and pointed to the light brown fuel in a large plastic Coke bottle. Kermit had no choice. Kermit coughed and gargled its way ahead. It wasn't good. After 20km a fuel stop like no other: 30+ bikers pushing and prodding to get fuel from the only pump in a large town. Nobody was going to make way for me but then the station owner appeared, shouted at the crowd and a pathway appeared for Kermit. What a gentleman. We gossiped on V.V.S. Laxman's recent batting and any cultural gap disappeared.

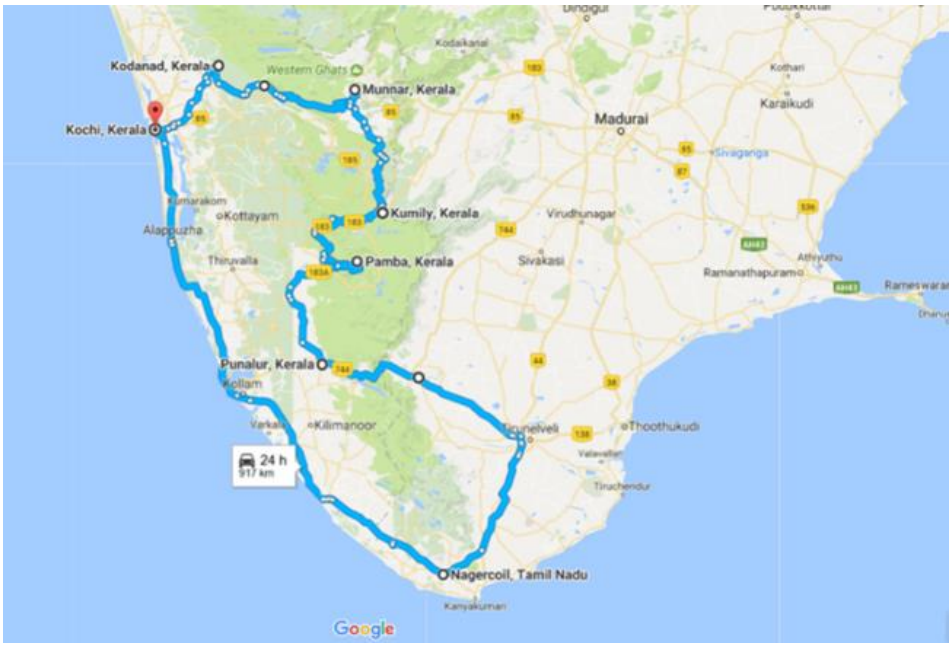
I made it to my accommodation on the edge of the national park just ahead of another downpour. At check-in, I was distracted by Lungar monkeys descending from the trees. They loved my luggage and Kermit's wiring. Next to humans, Lungars' are my favourite primates, the jungle kangaroo. They are

graceful, expressive and great at hunting through my luggage and running off with muesli bars. I repacked and negotiated a $10 arrangement for Kermit sleep in the Reception office monkey-free. The next day's ride in the sub-tropical rainforest among wildlife was a highlight.

The next part of the trip was through Tamil Nadu to Trivandrum. It is like heading to another country -lots changes - landscape, culture, religion and food. Before crossing into Tamil country I stopped at a roadside kitchen for lunch. The family was very poor but very rich in other ways. I was probably the first white person to stop for lunch. I ate off a banana leaf and tea was served in an old army enamel mug. Afterwards I was given a tour of their garden and livestock. There was not a leaf out of order and the garden was prolific. We all have moments when you have great discussions with people from vastly different circumstances, and this was exceptional. They were a picture of good health and very satisfied with life. Education was their priority.

Tamil Nadu is drier and the lowlands are cleared for grazing and farming. I really missed the mountains, rainforest and spices. Here my back-road slowly deteriorated into a cart track. The GPS pointed to a highway 5km south but the track gave way to mud and I was in no mind to retreat. Kermit ploughed on between ponds of lily and fish farms, then to open grasslands when I realized I was on was on a farmer's donkey cart track. A farmer pointed me to anther track and a sealed road appeared. All was fine except Kermit had mud in the chain and a highwater mark just above the gear lever.

At Nanguneri I paid a shop owner to guard Kermit as I headed off to the market and temples. Just strolling about attracted waves of onlookers and about 10 would not leave me. I obliged with cell phone pictures with people, couples and families, mostly towering above them. I posed with a family of six travelling from Chennai in a tuk-tuk fitted with an impressive roof rack for bedding and washing tubs. In the time since leaving Kermit the shop-owner had washed the bike and made me a packed lunch. What a great start to the day. There was no rain so I rode to and along the coast until I felt the need to stop. Poovar then to Kovalam, popular for sun and beach goers.



The last part of the ride was easy riding in mostly clear days. Up the coast to Cochin via a side trip to the 'backwaters' of Cochin. Fishermen still lower Chinese surface nets into the tidal waterway. I was a day from Cochin and decided to head to Alappuzah for the night. By mid-afternoon a large rain front was imminent and the last thing I wanted was a flooded road so I gave Kermit a sprint to the finish. Kermit's speedo needle danced about as I kept up with the quicker riders all trying to escape the downpour.

I ambled the last 60km, enjoyed a road side lunch and gave Kermit a splash of a wash and fuel before pulling-up at CEO Ivan's Castle. It was all over - Kermit was home looking like a rock star. Ivan smiled and handed me a trophy that is now in the 'pool room'. Shortly after I purchased a Royal Enfield 500 Classic (called *Bolly* of course!) for planned future adventures in Oman.

Thank's Peter, what a trip – we look forward to hearing about more of your adventures.

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 advertisment. OVR will NOT be providing any editorial or corrections. 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.

For Sale: 1950 Vincent Series C Comet.

Deceased estate sale.

Older restoration, starts easily and runs well, no smoke, no oil leaks, was used regularly, a reliable performer. No idea of total mileage but owner always kept his machines in good running order. Additional easier- to-use side stand fitted in addition to the original rear and two front stands. The Lucas headlight has correct underslung park light. The ammeter may be a reproduction item. Generator and regulator are Lucas and charge okay. Engine and rear frame numbers are the required 1900 apart. Front frame number is not legible. One gearbox cover stud is broken, but it does not leak. Not hard to replace, no big deal. The rear drum's chromed water excluder ring is missing. Some tools in tray. Very minor dent in tank. Clean, tidy and complete. Red tank and seat beading. Stainless guards fitted. Mikuni carby fitted for easier starting and better running. 19" front wheel fitted in place of original 20" item

Easy and affordable to return to dead original specification if so inclined.

The former owner rode speedway sidecars in the day then classics in later years and always prepared his own machines. He took pride in having reliable and rideable machines. I can speak with some confidence that the Comet would be in reasonably fair and reliable condition with no known pending disasters, as I know he would not have gained enjoyment from riding a bike like that.

Offers from Australian $32,000 considered; Can assist with international shipping if necessary

Bike now kept in secure commercial storage, make appointment to view.
Contact Greg in Adelaide, South Australia. Phone +61 422 580 642 or email gregss@bigpond.com

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For Sale. ***New Lower Price!***

My Feet Forward machine featuring Difazio Hub Centre Steering, fantastic front brake, cast iron disc's & racing AP callipers, full weather protection & top box. Vincent series D type centre stand & side stand. Manufactured 30 years ago with no problems with chassis & carrying full Victoria rego. Honda FT 500 engine, rear wheel & wiring loom & of course electric start. Haggling now starts at a mere A$10,000 for a completely different machine.

If you collect bikes this is one for your stable!
Located in Victoria, Australia.
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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 endorsment 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 refering to them be removed.

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 excelent Vincent Spares and tools. Ships Worldwide. See website for more information http://www.thevincentparts.com

Conway Motors Ltd, UK: Anti-Sumping Valves, Multi-Plate clutch conversions for Comets plus an extensive range of excelent 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.

Fastline Spokes, based in Broadford, Victoria, can supply Australian made spokes for just about any bike. Owner Bruce Lotherington manufactures spokes to order with a turn around time of less than 1 week. For more info see www.fastlinespokes.com.au or phone (+61) 0411 844 169

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

VMS, Holland: 2x2 leading shoe brake kits for Vincents; high quality 30mm wide 4 leading shoe system. Email vspeet@vmsmetaal.nl for info.

François Grosset, France: Electric starter for Vincent Twin. Electronic ignitions for Vincent Single and Twin supplied complete with drive gear. Email pontricoul@gmail.com for more info.

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 Fastners, Australia: 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.

Keables, Australia: The original nut n bolt specialists who are able to supply just about anything with threads and bits to match such as taps n dies. Recently have relocated to 11 Braid St, West Footscray, Vic. Ph 03 9321 6400. Web site www.keables.com.au

Restoration Services:

Steve Barnett, Australia**.** Master coachbuilder and fuel tank creater who does incrediable 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

Ace Classics Australia is a Torquay Vic. based Restoration business specialising only in British Classic and Vintage Motorcycles. Complementing this service, they provide in-house Vapour Blasting, Electrical Repairs and Upgrades, Magneto and Dynamo Restoration plus Servicing and Repairs to all pre-1975 British Motorcycles. They are also the Australian Distributor and Stockist for Alton Generators and Electric Starters. Phone on 0418350350; or email alan@aceclassiscs.com.au . Their Web page is www.aceclassics.com.au

General Services :

Peter Scott Motorcycles, Australia: Top quality magneto and dynamo services, from simple repairs to complete restorations plus a comphrensive 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 skilled in paining 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.

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

Piu Welding, Australia: Frank Piu is a master welding engineer who works with Aluminium as well as steel. No job to small. Has been recommended by multiple OVR readers. Phone 03 9878 2337

MotorCycle Fairings, Australia: This crew are are total professionals when it comes to painting. Expert service, quick turnaround and fair prices. http://www.melbournemotorcyclefairings.com.au/
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