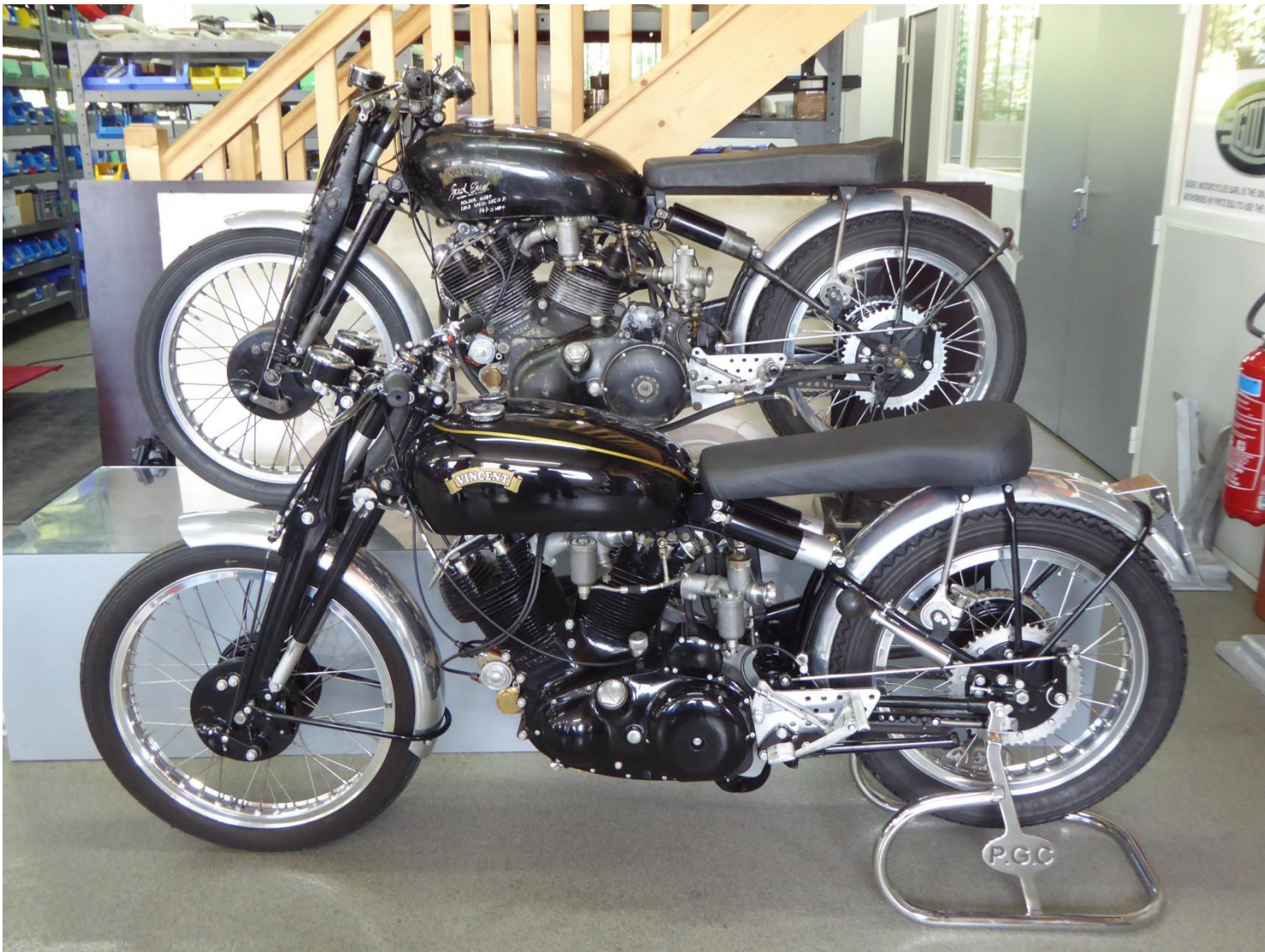




The Oz Vincent Review

Edition #48, March 2018

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



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Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of The Oz Vincent Review. This month the front cover depicts two similar and two dissimilar bikes simultaneously.

Similar in that the real Jack Ehret bike – reputed to be the most expensive motor cycle in the world - is on the stand at the rear, while a reproduction is in the foreground.

Dissimilar in that what was just a tool for Jack Ehret to gain an Australian land speed record in 1953 has now transformed into a new record-breaking price item. The reproduction bike would be lucky to fetch 10% of what the Ehret bike sold for!

What distinguished the Ehret Vincent from its brothers is that it has a history. Stripping down a similar Vincent Black Lightning to record breaking specs won't get you anything like the same price at auction; you'll need that magic pixie dust that clouds the eyes of the rabid Vincent enthusiast.

But, there are some noteworthy modified Vincents that could be brothers to the Ehret bike; and one in particular is coming out to the Broadford Bike Bonanza this year – to be seen and heard. You may find details of the Bonanza in this month's Event Calendar.

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Melbourne, Australia.
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Letters To The Editor

Martyn,
regards exhaust tuning...

In theory there is a standing wave created by the gases in the system, that being a function of several factors including valve timing (overlap), combustion charge, and exhaust pipe volume. The standing wave will have a phase shift as any of the parameters are varied and when it is correctly positioned there will be a pressure pulse at the inlet manifold that can result in some natural supercharging.

In practice it is only ever a compromise as it is for so many things related to internal combustion engine design and tuning, and it is only fully effective at one set of conditions (rpm and throttle). For most of us it won't make any noticeable difference. For the racers looking for a few extra horses when it really matters it is worth pursuing. Does that mean tune for max power at full throttle and 500 rpm below the red line or does it mean tune for maximum torque at the peak of the torque curve? You decide!

My recollection is that most racers tune for the sweet spot by changing the length and profile of the carburettor rather than the exhaust length as it is quicker and easier, and can be done between races in the pits.

Holger Lubotzki, Australia

Hi Martyn,

I just had an eye-opening couple of hours in the company of Neal Videan. As a complete newbie to the glories of the Vincent motorcycle I was taken aback with the total immersion of the man and his passion for this British/Australian motorcycle. It could be called a bipartisan, world motorcycle created in the brains of the two brilliant minds of Vincent – Irving . Just getting my head around the fervour and dedication to continuing this brand that stopped selling production models in 1955 was a task. The international popularity and determination to preserve and recreate this brand I don't think is matched by any other; bar Indian.

The mystique of the name Vincent HRD was cemented recently by the sale of the 1951 Ehret Record Breaking Black Lightning. That the most expensive motorcycle in the world will return to Australia seems like a magnetic draw into the sanctuary of Australian Vincenthood. That the marque is so venerated here should surprise no educated motorcycle aficionado as the motors have powered road sidecars, speedway sidecars, four wheelers as well as the road racers. But why? I was determined to find out from Neal as I sat down in his 'shed' with a coffee and basked in the solemn silence of nine Stevenage's finest.

Firstly, riding them. Stable, planted, fast and the feel. Secondly, even though they might be 'mechanically compromised' internally they still ran. Thirdly, they were the 'hot rod' motor of the day and suited any motorcycle pursuit that demanded outright power and sheer grunt.

But now where are they? Locked up in garages and lounge rooms appreciating? Well, yes, but there are still people like Neal happy to show and ride them and even give them to mates to accompany him on trips – as long as they wash them after! (I'd hate to think of the repair costs if they trowled one!) God love him he's bringing out the 'Blown Sprint Bike', the self-recreated A model (there are still four possible to be assembled at an eye watering price) and the delectable cruddy, oily, well used 1949 B Rapide with the crust of 'patina' so thick you could carve it off and sell it in a pie to the Vincent diehards.

We discussed the constantly changing scale of the age of Vincent owners and the number of bikes actually ridden vs the ones locked away appreciating. Not looking good from the 'bring 'em out and use 'em' viewpoint; but rest assured, at the Shannon's Insurance Broadford Bike Bonanza this Easter you will see the rarest of these iconic motorcycles and what's more – see and HEAR them roar around the speedway track for the Saturday Night Speedway Spectacular.

Regards, Peter Drakeford, Australia

Martyn

I wanted to add to the piece in OVR #43 on Improving Vincent Engine Lubrication. While everything in the article is useful, I have some other observations and tips that some readers may find informative.

Firstly, the camshafts running on the spindles should always be a Vincent owner's main concern when it comes to lubrication. It just so happens that the camshafts will tighten on the spindles as the engine heats up because the bronze bearing bushings have a coefficient of thermal expansion that is more or less double that of steel. Moreover, since the spindles are a simple interference fit in the crank casings and the retaining nuts on the timing steady plate are effectively locked by the rubber oil seals, if the cams start to seize and the force overcomes the friction fit, then the spindles will start to turn and screw inwards towards the piston liners. If the engine has been bombed out to 1200 cc then this gets messy. VERY messy and Very

quickly. Honing out the camshaft bearings when building a new engine requires some special attention which I won't deal with here.

Secondly, the camshafts are lubricated by the oil scavenge pump. What this means in practice is that there needs to be oil in the sump of the engine above the level of the scavenge pump at all times in order for oil to be pumped up to the timing gear. While wet sumping is a popular topic with classic British motorcycle owners, it is not really much of an issue for Vincents because of the low oil pressure roller bearing bottom end, and actually a good thing from the perspective being discussed here.

However, when the engine oil is changed and the sump drained as part of the job, on restarting the engine there will be a delay in the oil level rising up in the sump to the level of the scavenge pump, and there is about one litre of oil in the sump at steady state running conditions. I may have reached borderline paranoia based on my direct previous experiences, but when changing the engine oil I siphon one litre of new oil into the crank case via one of the push rod tubes. I also remove the timing cover banjo bolt from the oil filter and pump in new oil with an oil can until the oil starts coming back at me.

Holger Lubotzki, Australia

Land speed record-breaking motorcycle to return to Australia after setting top auction price



The most valuable motorcycle ever sold at auction will soon return home to Australia where it set a national land speed record 65 years ago.

The British-manufactured 1951 Vincent Black Lightning became part of Australian motoring history after Mascot-born speedster Jack Ehret rode it into the record books in 1953. Forty years later his son, former sidecar racer John Ehret, was the last person to ride the motorcycle in competition.

The Black Lightning Engine No. F10AB/1C/7305 (pictured above and on the front cover) was intended purely as a racing and record breaking mount and built to a special order only. One of approximately 30 built, this authentic and unrestored example was reputed to be the last and fastest Lightning ever to come to Australia.

It was ordered on 25 June 1951 by Tony Mc Alpine, the three times Australian representative to the Isle of Man, you had to be a person of some notoriety in order to secure a Black Lightning in those days. McAlpine built the Black Lightning at the famous Stevenage Race Shop as a replica of "Gunga Din" the famous works Lightning "shakedown" bike ridden to great success by the late George Brown. According to Mc Alpine, whilst Gunga Din was undergoing one of the many race shop refits, some of the very special parts mysteriously ended up in 1C/7305



Upon completion on 19th July 1951 the two machines were contested at Great Garsden Airstrip from a standing start where the Black Lightning was a clear 30 yards ahead of Gunga Din. Factory road test records dated 21st of July 1951 indicated speeds in excess of 130 mph in third gear, along the great North Road, during a 120 miles road test conducted by a Mr. Thomas.

Mc Alpine returned to Australia with the Black Lightning as a private import. After being requested to return to the UK shortly thereafter, he was forced to put the bike up for sale at Burlings & Simmonds, the NSW Velocette agents for 500 pounds. It was briefly owned by Jack Forrest who apparently crashed it twice in three races. The machine was subsequently purchased by Jack Ehret, the already famous Sydney speedster who was the proprietor of well known motor bike shops at Mascot and Randwick.

Perhaps the greatest claim to fame occurred on Monday, January 19th 1953 between Tamworth and Gunnedah, NSW after battling with Officialdom, Jack Ehret smashed the Australian land speed record, previously held by Les Wharton also on the Black Lightning. Jack Ehret clocked a mean speed of 141.509 mph over a quarter-mile stretch where timing devices were operated by ACCA officials.

The Black Lightning was then “put to work” to claim many victories, placings and lap records in senior sidecar and unlimited solo events around Australia. Successes were attained at Bathurst, Mount Druit Airstrip, Werribee Park, Gnoo Blass Orange, Oran Park, Mildura and Parramattaa Park.



Riding into land speed history

In 1952 Jack Ehret began his quest to break the Australian land speed record held by rival rider Les Warton. After a year of preparations, technical challenges and a battle to obtain permission from local authorities to stage the event, on January 19, 1953, he succeeded.

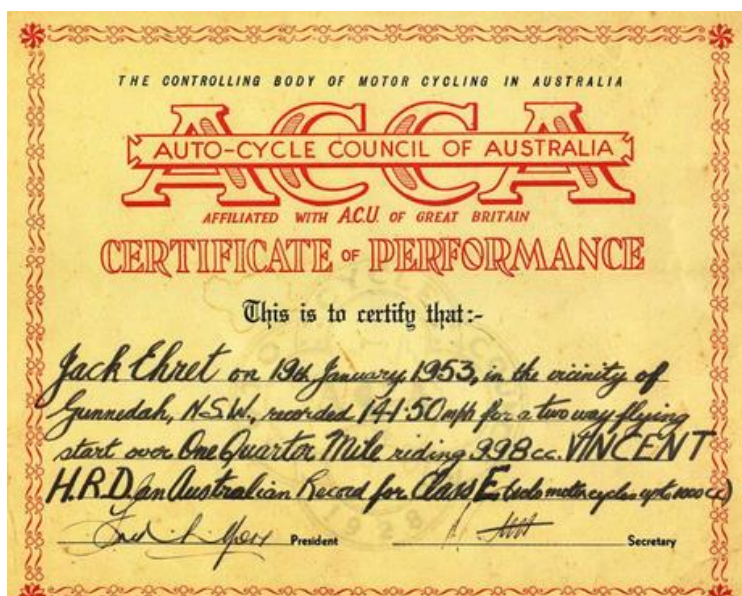
Ehret averaged a speed of 141.5 miles per hour (227.7kph) over two runs on a quarter-mile stretch of road at Gunnedah in north-eastern New South Wales.



Ehret had worked during and after WWII as a fitter and turner at the Garden Island naval base in Sydney, making around £7 a week in wages.

However it was his off-duty activities that earned him the funds to afford the Vincent Black Lightning, which cost £500 — a significant amount of money in those days.

In February 1955 Ehret entered the Black Lightning in a 10 lap senior invitation race at the two and a quarter mile Mount Druit circuit. He was competing against such famous names as Art Senior, Harry Hinton and the world-famous Geoff Duke of a four-cylinder factory Gilera.



Geoff Duke wrote the following:

Ehret made a poor start in the unlimited event, whereas I was first away and piled on the coals from the beginning. Thereafter I was able to keep an eye on the Vincent rider. Although he was unable to make up for his bad start, Ehret rode to such good purpose that he equalled my fastest lap, and we now share the honour of being lap record holders at Mount Druit(1min,42.3sec),1 sec.only outside the previous figure. *Down Under with Geoff Duke- motorcycling magazine April 14th 1955.*

The Black Lightning remained with Ehret for almost 50 years, it has endured approximately 5000 racing miles and numerous rebuilds. Jack maintained it won 80% of all races it entered!

The last recorded race by Ehret and the Black Lightning was at Oran Park January 1978: Ehret, one of the all-time greats in sidecar racing, and a man who could not be beaten in his day, rode to an easy second in one race and then, with the old Vincent Magic, scuttled away to a pair of unapproachable wins in the two others at Oran Park 1978.



In 1999, two years before his death, Ehret sold the motorcycle to an Australian buyer who occasionally toured it around the rally circuit.

After exchanging hands, the bike was sent to France in 2014 and mechanically restored but retained its original factory paintwork and years of patina.

Another Australian connection to the story is Melbourne mechanical engineer Phil Irving who played a major role in the design of the motorcycle.

The 1,000cc motorcycle was bought at auction earlier this year by an undisclosed Australian businessman for \$US929,000 (A\$1.19 million) in Las Vegas.

"I think it's a very important moment given its historical significance," Mr Ehret's son said of the bike's purchase and imminent return Down Under.

Breaking auction records

Ben Walker of Bonhams auction house said the motorcycle attracted such a high price due its rarity, with only 19 remaining in existence.

"Most of them are not going to be seen or come out onto the open market," Mr Walker told OVR.

"But then it's the history of this bike and the fact that Ehret got the Australian land speed record and that it had this continuous ownership."

While it is unknown what the buyer will do with the bike, Mr Walker hesitated to say if it was legally rideable on Australian roads.

"It's not just a trailer queen, it's not so shiny that you've got to wear sunglasses to look at it," he said.

"Hopefully the mystery buyer will take it out, put it on display, show it off to the public again; I think that would be really fantastic

It is only fitting that this slice of Australian motorcycling history is once again, in Australian hands.

The Strip Where We Rode!

A personal comment on Classic Australia from OVR reader and contributor, Derek Pickard

THEY'RE tearing down the old and replacing it with the new. The paint may be better, the plastic fully biodegradable and the architecture more contemporary, but it's still not acceptable.



And so Melbourne's famous Elizabeth Street has all but disappeared. What's there now doesn't have any-thing like the charisma which once existed. Until the nineteen-seventies, 'The Strip' in the heart of Melbourne's central business district was unique in motorcycling. Nearly two city blocks of Elizabeth Street had motorcycle shops lined up — on both sides of the road. And the side lanes were stacked with workshops.

Everything and anything was represented. New Japanese bike dealers stood next to accessory shops which were next to English bike wreckers, used dealers, the lot. Whether you needed a wild cam for a Yoshimura Honda or a used bolt for an old BSA, it was always available in Elizabeth Street. And the time to go was always on Saturday morning. With Melbourne's quaint shopping hours which forbid trading after midday Saturday, everything happened in the morning. Enthusiasts from all over the city regularly made the trip and took their place in the line-up with hundreds of other bikes.

The entertainment was also tops. While most people preferred to stay on the pavement and watch, there were always sufficient performers who had to show-off. Most did elementary drag races against their mates away from the lights, a few managed desperate wheelies, and burn-outs were also very popular.

One particular character had the amusing habit of using up a back tyre every Saturday morning in a most unusual fashion. Straddling his stationary 650 Triumph, he used to pull on the front brake really hard, select first gear, lift his weight off the saddle, take the revs to 5000 and dump the clutch. The rear wheel, of course, span around furiously and heaps of smoke soon filled the district. But what was different about this entertainer was his liking for demonstrating this tactic right up against large glass shop windows. It looked horrific. The motorcyclists always knew it was a stunt and that the front brake was pulled on. But the unsuspecting public in the nearby maternity shop thought only the limited strength of the window was stopping an almighty burst of glass and a sudden entry. Frequently, innocent shoppers could be seen fleeing the area.

The Empire Hotel was the pub to drink in. It stood on the main road. And as various people proved during the more spirited lunchtime drinking sessions, a skilfully ridden motorcycle could just about be squeezed in through the main door, around the public bar and out of the back door. I never heard of an outfit that accomplished the same manoeuvre.

A compulsory pastime for everyone was playing the parking officers at their own game. The signs insisted that one-hour parking was the maximum, but nearly three were required. This always resulted in a form of noisy 'musical chairs', as many cylinders effected the swap-ping over of hundreds of parking positions while the officers patrolled The Strip. Offenders' tickets were rarely issued, for even if a rider accidentally left his bike in one spot for more than an hour, someone would always roll it forward into the next parking bay when patrols were threatening. Melbourne City Council never got rich from motorcycle parking.



For me, the main attraction of The Strip wasn't the bikes at all. It was the incredible line-up of characters who worked in the shops. Not only was the location unique in having so many dealers in one spot, it was also blessed with the fact that a huge percentage of these dealers were remarkably rude to their customers. I've never come across such an amazing assembly of crusty cretins who seemed to delight in insulting every customer as money changed hands.

Motorcyclists, generally speaking, put up with a lot. They take a beating on taxes, insurance, weather, public image, everything. But in Melbourne's Elizabeth Street years ago they also

queued up to be insulted by some of the most contemptible shopkeepers imaginable. If the new helmet the rider was buying was too small, he'd get a remark that his skull was too thick. If the lid was too big, then his being under-brained was sure to be the comment. I clearly recall the hours of enjoyment I used to get from baiting these people. It was as easy as waiting until an updated range of five-speed machines arrived, and walking in with an enquiry to ask why the expense of the extra cog was necessary if the new engines were as flexible as the advertising blurb insisted. Needless to say, these queries were never politely declined or countered with a reasonable explanation. No way — the reaction was a stream of references to single parentage, inability to pay real money and the complete waste of the national education budget. Or words to that effect. Those who ventured in with a genuine enquiry got much the same treatment —and witnessing that was real entertainment.

But while the arrogant ones dominated the main sites along The Strip, the back lanes were friendly. Small workshops were tucked in everywhere. They were capable of anything from a quick oil change to a manufacturing a Metisse replica frame. This was the stomping ground of the real enthusiasts. Many motorcyclists tried their luck at opening a small business and earning their living at what they liked doing best. Unfortunately, few lasted and only the real specialists survived.

Names like Vic Bognor the stove enameller and Stan Einsedel the engineer can be remembered as some of the survivors who stayed until the town planners moved in. To my knowledge, nowhere else in the world had so many dealers in so concentrated a space. There were seventeen of them: five were new-bike dealers, four trade-in used machines, five are servicing facilities, two sell leather riding gear, and just one of the originals offers classic bike parts.



Elizabeth St. 2018, taken from the same spot as the 1973 photo

And Melbourne's motorcyclists still enjoy what's left of The Strip. Although the numbers are smaller, riders still turn up every Saturday morning, inspect the new bikes and compare them to their own. A heavier police presence, stricter parking controls and increased passing traffic pre-vents anything like a road show. But stories swap and grow, exaggerations are enjoyed, and, as with motor-cycle enthusiasts everywhere, claims of performance are always good fun.

60 years on visitors still marvel at such a concentration, and today's youngsters enjoy bragging about what they've got in their home town when travelling overseas. These younger enthusiasts often approach older motorcyclists telling them to revisit Elizabeth Street. Many decline the invitation, explaining that they prefer the good memory of a boom rather than a current view of a compromise. Invariably they use the time-honoured expression (which youngsters hate) of how it's not like it used to be. Only this time, they're right !

It's a Matter of Balance

Recent editions of OVR have looked at engine balance and its overall effect on the performance and comfort of a motorcycle. Having 'absorbed' the material that had been contributed, and troubled by admittedly a minor vibration I decided to put theory into practice and have my Comet's motor balanced – thankfully the appropriate balance factor for a Vincent single is well established in multiple publications as 66%.

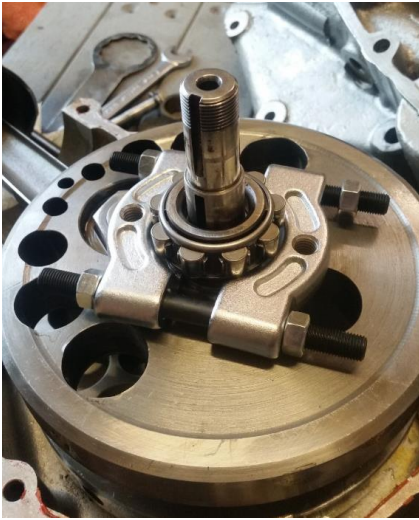


Photo One

Dynamic balancing requires the crankshaft assembly to be removed from the motor and then the main bearings to be removed from the crankshaft; using the appropriate bearing 'puller' (see photo one) allows those main bearings to be removed undamaged and thus able to be reused.

Once delivered to the balancing professional, in my case Murray Johnson proprietor of Balancing Services Australia, the assembly is dismantled and the con rod and piston removed. The con rod is then replaced with a 'bob weight' of a mass calculated by Murray to enable the Repco Dynamic Balancing machine to be used to determine what adjustments are needed to each flywheel in order to achieve true dynamic (and static) balance at my nominated balance factor. The main shafts are left undisturbed.

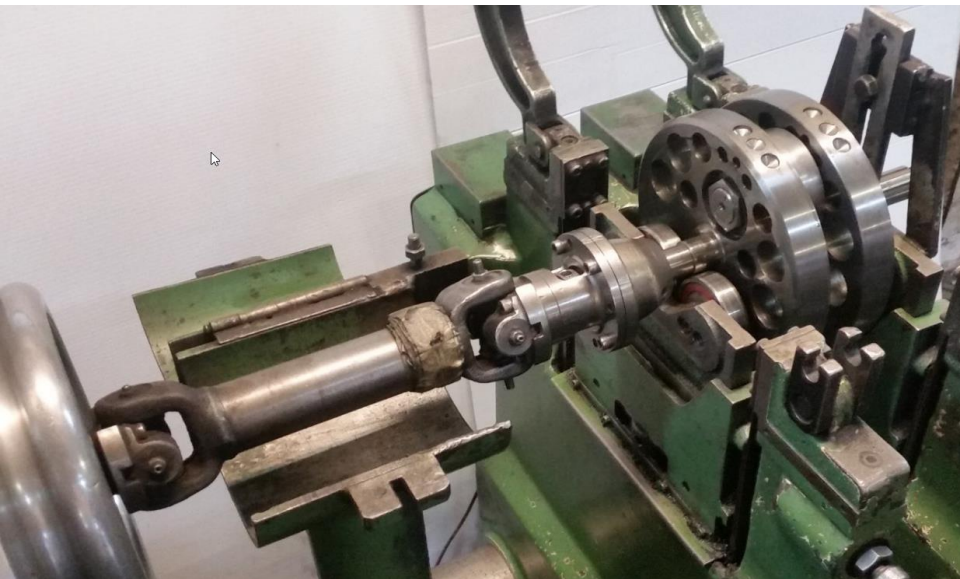


Photo Two: My crank assembly, con rod and piston removed and bob weight installed, part way through the balance process. Already some balance adjustment drilling is evident on the rims of the flywheels.

Photo Three: An overview of the 1950's Repco Dynamic Balancing machine in use, balancing an armature – and before anyone asks – no it's NOT from a Lucas magneto!



Once the crankshaft assembly has been balanced then Murray removes the bob weight, reinstalls the crank pin, big end bearing and con rod then reassembles the crankshaft assembly in accordance with the Factory Worksheets.

Subsequent checking with precision “V” blocks and dial gauges in my own workshop measured the combined mainshaft runout at just 0.0005”, well within the factory specification of ‘no more than 0.002”.



Photo three (left): shows my Comet crank assembly after dynamic balancing. It is interesting to note that the balance adjustment required was different for each flywheel as evidenced by the different edge drilling corrections. This subtlety would never be realised with simple static balancing.

The Repco balancing machine used was built by Repco Australia in the mid 1950’s – and that’s when our own Phil Irving was working there and it’s highly possible that he had a hand in its design.

Pictured right is Murray Johnston along with my now back together and all together smoother Comet.

If you do all the disassembly and reassembly yourself having Murray dynamically balance your crank assembly is not an expensive exercise – it cost me less than A\$200 for his services to balance (including crank disassembly AND reassembly) to the balance factor I nominated (66%); and there’s the catch – it’s up to YOU to decide what balance factor you want Murray to work to. Get it wrong and it’s YOUR responsibility alone, so be sure to do your homework first.

Contact Details: Balancing Services Australia, 43 Chifley Drive, Preston, Victoria, Australia. Phone 03 9480 4040



Event Calendar

2018	
March 16 - 18	Australian Vincent & Velo Rally @ Oberon, NSW. Email j.wenden@bigpond.com for details
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
March 29 – April 1	Broadford Bike Bonanza with a focus on all things Vincent. @ The State Motorcycle Sports Complex, Broadford, Victoria. More info elsewhere in this edition and also at www.ma.org.au
April 20 - 22	All British Rally @ Newstead, Victoria , Australia. Info at https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=333096
April 22	Maffra Motor Museum Swap Meet. Additional info at www.gippslandvehiclecollection.org.au
May 1-5	2018 North American VOC Rally in Kerrville, Texas. The scenery and weather will be great and the riding is really world class. Just too good to miss! More info at http://lsvoc.vincent-hrd.co.uk
May 26-27	42 nd Historic Winton; meeting for heritage cars and motorbikes. More info from www.historicwinton.org
August 27-31	Australian National VOC Rally, to be held at the Maroochy River Resort in Queensland. Contact kevinfowler2@bigpond.com for more info
Sept 18 - 24	VOC Austria Rally. Said to be the best ever – too good to miss. Contact Michi for more info schartner.m@sbg.at
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

Modern must have accessories, are they essential or a luxury?

An OVR contribution from Phil Pilgrim, Australia

Nothing fascinates me more than that such under appreciated luxury item on a motorcycle as a



electric starter, see these days you don't even notice it as its considered natural, trust me I thank all manufactures for fitting them as I have spent years upgrading to over \$4000 on each, fitting them onto various Vincent's, Indian's Triumph's, Velo's, Norton's some with much success (Vincent) others dismal failures (Indian) and that was twice on the Indian! No point in going into why here but now I always secretly smile to myself as I thumb the button on my contemporary Scout.

But what about things that we all take for granted today beside the electric start above it was a ingenious bolt-on part listed in 1916 and a dismal failure as a suitable accumulator (battery) hadn't been invented and it was a failure till Norton Electra 400 came out in the very early sixties and the Japanese refined it to perfection.

Other things Indian invented was the twist grip, something that the Brits re-invented by Velocette in 1928, Velocette invented the positive stop foot gearchange after factory engineer

Harold Willis watched a wheat reaper at work in 1927, can you imagine a new Suzuki Hyabusa with a kick start, hand change or lawn mower throttle lever on the handlebars or no rear suspension?

Saddle fuel tanks were out by 1928 (thanks to Velo) as bolt together fuel tanks as still used on Harley till recently were out of fashion the flat-tank era went within 2 years.

Rear suspension was another feature on Indian in 1916 as well Harley never trusted it till 1954, nearly 40 years later and although Indian dropped the idea Vincent adapted a mono shock in 1928 Philip Vincent never built a rigid frame motorcycle, then Ariel had Anstey's link rear plunger frame out in 1939; Indian fitted a true plunger suspension the same year till they stopped in 1953. BMW liked the idea of telescopic forks in 1939 as well but when 1955 came along everybody else agreed so they dropped it and went to Earles leading link forks but in 1969 went back to them.

Tom Arter in UK fitted the first alloy spoke "modern wheel" to a racing G50 Matchless in the 60's the we're nicknamed "wheel barrow wheels" and took a long time till the seventies when they were accepted, personally I still hate them!



The first modern dual seat rather than a block of leather covered sponge arrived in 1947 with a firm in UK Feridax getting into bed with Vincent and the first 1947 Rapide was the machine to have it. It wasn't available as a spare part and people with other brands wanted them to fit to their models, even Vincent Owners could not buy one unless they had a damaged or crashed Vincent, the seat then would be returned to the Works and only then a new seat was sent out to the owner. Vincent's unique Girdraulic front fork for some time after its introduction in 1949 on the Black Shadow model was the same, unavailable.

May 15, 1952. MOTOR

THIS IS THE RANGE OF
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We could go on but let's get back to modern machinery, GPS if it wasn't for Ronald Reagan and the Russians shooting down a commercial airplane over their airspace because they had crossed into Russian air space we might haven't have it yet as the military used it to guide missiles onto targets at Desert Storm. As soon as that was available, motorists got it first and my first Garmin Nui in 2008 cost \$1160 on special I waited for some time for the Garmin Zumo 550 motorcycle unit to be invented and at \$900 was considerably dearer than the by then readily available car versions as they had halved in price. One guy I used to know was quite sceptical about it saying "What good is that unless your lost" hmm they are a blessing and a curse we have all read in the daily's about the Japanese tourist driving off the mainland into the ocean trying to drive to Tassie, but other benefits such as in UK the postcode isn't the suburb but the exact address of the place i.e. a house number and it takes you to the building your looking for I get lost going from my driveway so it's the best thing invented since the Casio calculator.

Dare I say another essential accessory is a clock! I bought a BMW R100 RSR over 20 years ago, (sold it under 7,000 Klm's) but I've fitted a clock since to every bike I own, this bike also introduced me to heated grips and to machines I ride regularly they are fitted as well.

Things I have had the pleasure of riding with on a Indian that I really miss, Cruise Control, wow is that a nice little option, if you have never had it on a bike imagine it's as good as the first car you owned with it, fantastic, unfortunately it's not on a bike I currently own. Windscreens are another essential piece to have in foul

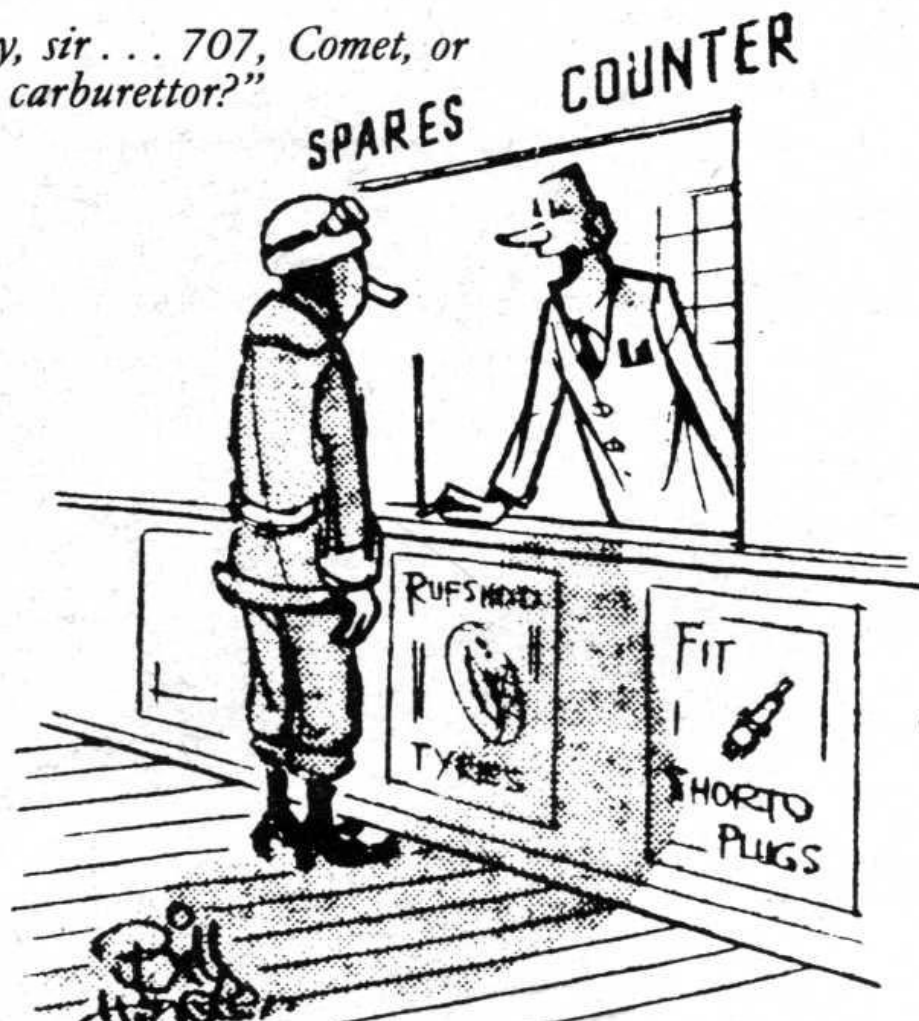
weather, sneering at such a thought is irrelevant in sleet or below freezing conditions, which I have ridden in over the last 46 years. Gear indicators help as well nothing worse than going up and down trying to find neutral at traffic lights. A fuel gauge is another refinement, if not a fuel light to warn you to fill up, who hasn't run out at some time or another?

A Corbin or Mustang aftermarket accessory seat is another way to pamper your body, years of being saddle sore after just a few miles in a standard seat has put paid to just "bearing it" and some are available heated - a nice touch.



The final option has to be belt drive but only if it's easy to replace as it is on the Scout, on H-D's the rear end has to be dismantled so a 1/2 hour job turns into three or four hours, the good thing is no mess with unlike shaft drive the ease of gearing modifications, chains have been with us over 117 years now thanks to P&M (Panther) and although simple it's unpractical on a modern road bike especially a touring model their place remains on off-road models.

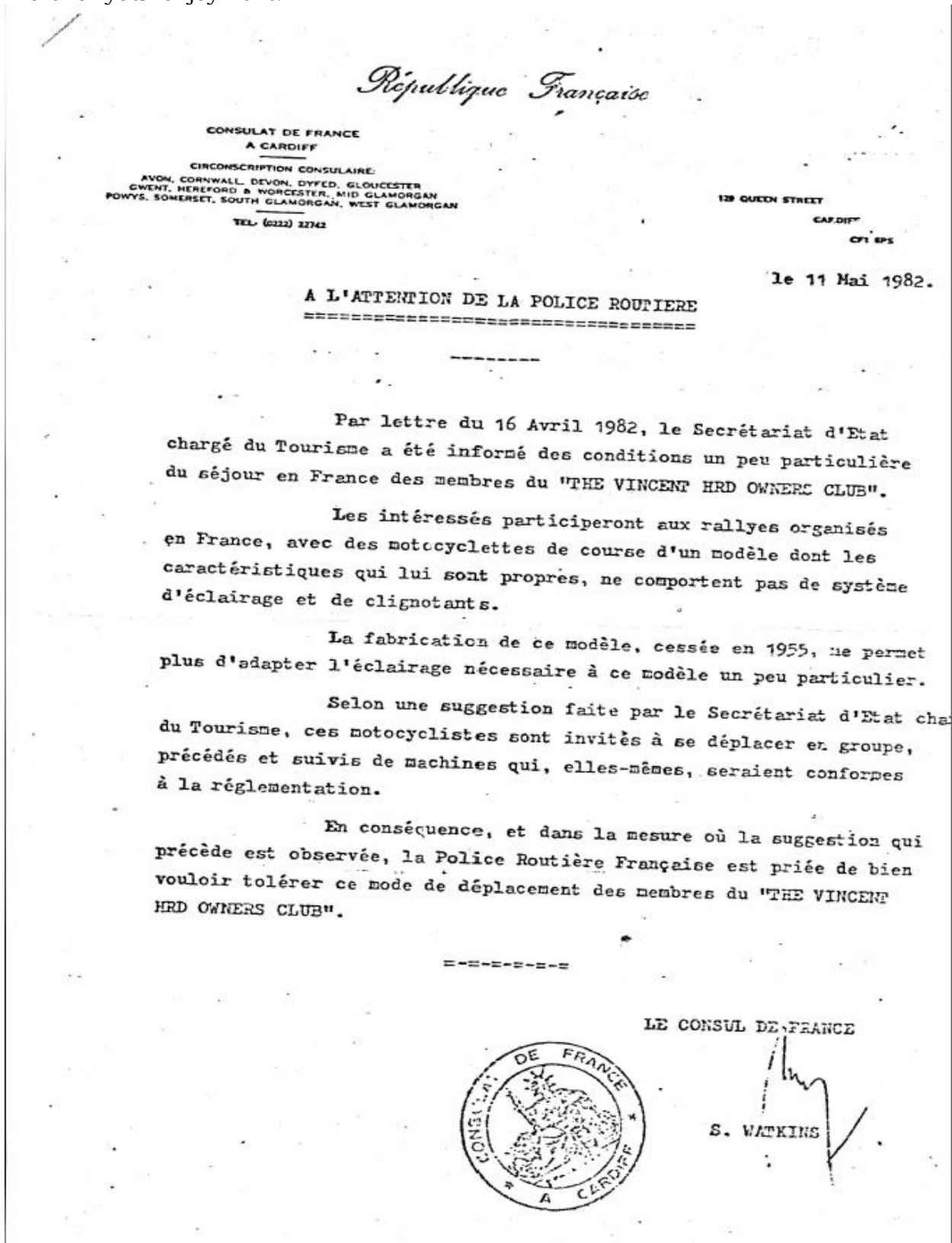
"Jet? Certainly, sir . . . 707, Comet, or just carburettor?"



French Letters !

Article by Alyn Vincent, Australia

When I was in England last year I heard about "The French Letters" and I was intrigued. It sounds so, well, you know.... I asked if I could see them, not knowing what to expect. Well, they turned out to be most fascinating and due to their cultural and historical importance I reproduce them here for your enjoyment.



French Republic

**FRENCH CONSULATE
AT CARDIFF**

AVON, CORNWALL, DEVON, DYFED, GLOUCESTER
GWENT, HERTFORD, & WORCESTER, MID GLAMORGAN
TEL (222) 22742

129 QUEEN STREET
CARDIFF
CF1 EPS

May 11, 1982

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE ROAD POLICE

A letter dated April the 16th of 1982 informed the Office of Tourism concerning the specific conditions that members of "THE VINCENT HRD OWNERS CLUB" will visit France.

Members will indeed participate to rallies organized in France, with racing motorcycles, whose particular specifications do not include either lighting system or turn signals.

The manufacturing of this model was stopped in 1955 and do not enable the installation of the necessary lighting devices.

According a suggestion made by the Office of Tourism, these motorcyclists are invited to travel in groups, preceded and followed by machines that would be compliant to the regulation.

Consequently and provided that the above suggestion is observed, the French Road Police is kindly invited to tolerate this kind of travel of "THE VINCENT HRD OWNERS CLUB" members.

THE FRENCH CONSULATE
S. WATKINS

An alternate translation of the earlier letter...

Following the letter of 16 April 1982 the Secretariat of State in charge of Tourism has been informed of the special conditions of the stay in France by the members of the Vincent HD owners club. The interested parties will participate in rallies organized in France, with racing motorcycles whose model characteristics are specific, and do not include lighting or flashing systems.

As the manufacture of this model ceased in 1955, it no longer makes it possible to adapt the lighting system necessary for this particular model.

According to a suggestion made by the State Secretariat in charge of Tourism, these motorcycles are invited to move in groups preceded and followed by machines that themselves comply with the regulations.

Consequently and to the extent that the above suggestion is observed, the French traffic police is kindly requested to tolerate this mode of transport by the members of the Vincent HRD owners club.

TA/SV

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

MINISTÈRE DES TRANSPORTS

DIRECTION DE LA SÉCURITÉ
ET DE LA CIRCULATION ROUTIÈRES

Sous - Direction de la Réglementation
et de l'Éducation Routières

DIRECTEUR :

244, BOULEVARD SAINT-CERMAIN
CODE POSTAL 75778 PARIS LEDEX 18
TÉLÉPHONE : 844-30-83 - TÉLÉX 280036 F

SERVICES :

208, RUE RAYMOND LOSSEBAND
75014 PARIS - TÉLÉPHONE : 539-25-70
TÉLÉX EKIPRER 200365

PARIS, LE

17 SEP. 1982

REC.1

Poste : 24 - 27

R 40 17/82

Monsieur,

Vous avez bien voulu attirer l'attention du Ministre des Transports sur les problèmes que pose aux utilisateurs de motocyclettes anciennes le respect de l'obligation de circuler de jour en feu de croisement.

Dans la mesure où la motocyclette que vous utilisez est de conception très ancienne et par analogie avec les motos équipées de radio, qui ne sont pas soumis à cette obligation, je vous informe que je vous accorde une dérogation à l'article R 40 - 2 du Code de la Route en raison de l'impossibilité technique de satisfaire à l'obligation de circuler de jour en feu de croisement.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

Par délégation :

POUR LE DIRECTEUR DE LA SÉCURITÉ
ET DE LA CIRCULATION ROUTIÈRES

Le Sous - Directeur, Adjoint au
Directeur,



Max FORTIN

French Republic

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
DIRECTION OF ROAD SECURITY AND TRAFFIC

DIRECTOR:
244 BD SAINT GERMAIN
75775 PARIS CEDEX 16
TEL: 544-30-63

PARIS, 17-SEP-1982

Dear Sir,

You have kindly draw the attention of the Minister of Transport on potential issues that the compliance with the obligation to travel during the day with low beam switched-on may pose to users of classic motorcycles.

Provided that the motorcycle that you use is of a very old model and by analogy to the motorcycles equipped with radio sets that are not subject to the compliance of this regulation, I inform you that I grant you an exemption to the article R40-2 of traffic laws, because it is technically impossible to satisfy to the duty to circulate with headlights switched-on.

Yours sincerely,

By delegation,

FOR THE DIRECTOR OF SECURITY AND ROAD TRAFFIC

The Deputy Director
Max Fortin

And another possible translation:

Sir,

You wanted to draw the Minister of Transport's attention to the problems posed to old motorcycle users by having to respect the obligation to travel on low headlight beam by day.

To the extent that the motorcycle you use is very old design and by analogy with motorcycles equipped with radio, which are not subject to this obligation I inform you that I grant you an exemption to the obligation in article P.40-2 of the Road Rules due to the technical impossibility of satisfying the obligation to travel by day on low beam.

Please, sir, accept my kind regards.

Can you just imagine tearing through France, being pulled over by the Police and then handing over the letter!!! What fun.

Many thanks to Phillippe Guyony, Richard Lloyd and Luis Gallur (and his friend Maxime). There was another more colourful translation but it was deemed not fit for publication; sorry Richard!

Buy, Swap n' Sell

If you have anything that you want to buy, swap or sell you can now do so, free of cost, in this section of OVR. All you need do is send a email to the editor of OVR with the text of your advertisement. OVR will NOT be providing any editorial or corrections. 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.

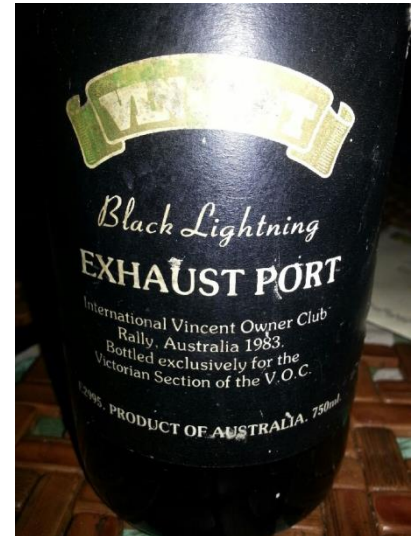
For Sale: An item of history with Spirit.

This is possibly your LAST chance to acquire a rare item of highly collectable Vincent memorabilia.

A virgin, unopened bottle of Black Lightning Exhaust Port carefully selected then bottled exclusively for the 1983 Vincent International Rally. This is possibly the only one in existence left in this pristine state.

Sensible offers over US\$50 are invited. Assistance will be provided with international shipping as required.

Contact Alyn Vincent at alynvincent@mac.com



For Sale: Modern gaskets for the Vincent.

The gasket materials, known as 'AFM' is a chemically blown, compounded nitrile synthetic rubber, bonded to an aluminum core with temperature resistance of over 250° F. AFM material does not require gasket sealers or silicone bead. Re-torque is NOT required.) These gaskets can be used several times over.

Post war Vincent twin gasket set includes: ET106, PD14, ET105, 2 each ET102, ET182/1, ET1801 and 2 each ET181. US\$52.46. Also ET 140 Clutch cover gasket available, US\$14.56

Post war Comet and Meteor kit includes (pictured): ET 106, ET180, ET182, ET181, PD14/1, and ET106. US\$52.00

Pack and post additional

All gaskets are .060", ET106, is supplied in .032". (gaskets are available in .032" & .018" thickness). Contact Paul Holdsworth of the VOC Chicago section c/o phpeh@hotmail.com Located in Chicago IL USA.



For Sale: Complete Girdraulic front end PLUS a spare set of Blades

You will need to be quick for these. From a deceased estate has emerged a complete Vincent front end that could be yours for A\$6,000.

If all you are after is a matched set of blades, there is a pair of them as well and the asking price for blades only is A\$3000.

Located in Adelaide, South Australia the seller can assist with shipping world-wide. Contact Greg by email to gregss@bigpond.com for more info – but be quick; these things went out of production 60 years back!



Service Providers

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

Spares:

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

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

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, 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

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

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:

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 creator 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

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@aceclassics.com.au . Their Web page is www.aceclassics.com.au

Terry Prince Classic Motorbikes, Australia: Specialises in 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

General Services :

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

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

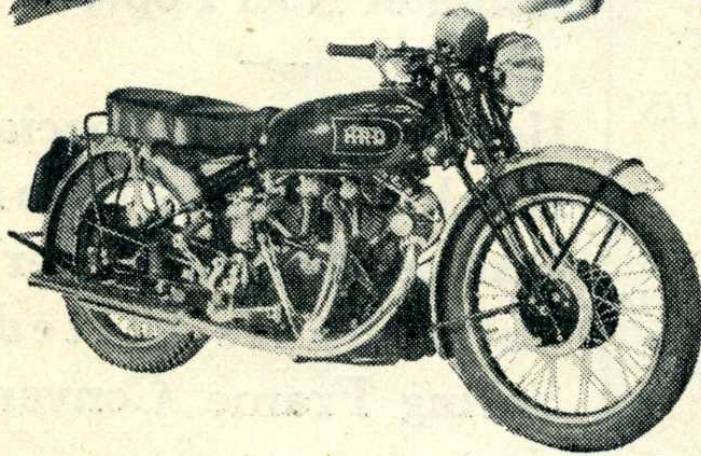
Dyson M/C Engineering, Australia: Wheel building, Crank rebuilds, Bead blasting, Rebores & Engine Rebuilds and more. Located at 12 Chris Crt., Hillside, Victoria. Phone 0400 817 017

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.melbournmotorcyclefairings.com.au/>
Ph 03 9939 3344

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BASED on the machine which averaged over 85 m.p.h. in the Hutchinson "100" the "Black Shadow" possesses similar flexibility, silence and reliability to the standard touring Series "B" Rapide, but its special engine gives far greater acceleration and speed.

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The engine is specially finished in Black and the whole machine has the restrained and sober appearance to be expected of a real thoroughbred, that is so much ahead of any other standard model in performance.

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The Black Shadow Sports Rapide

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