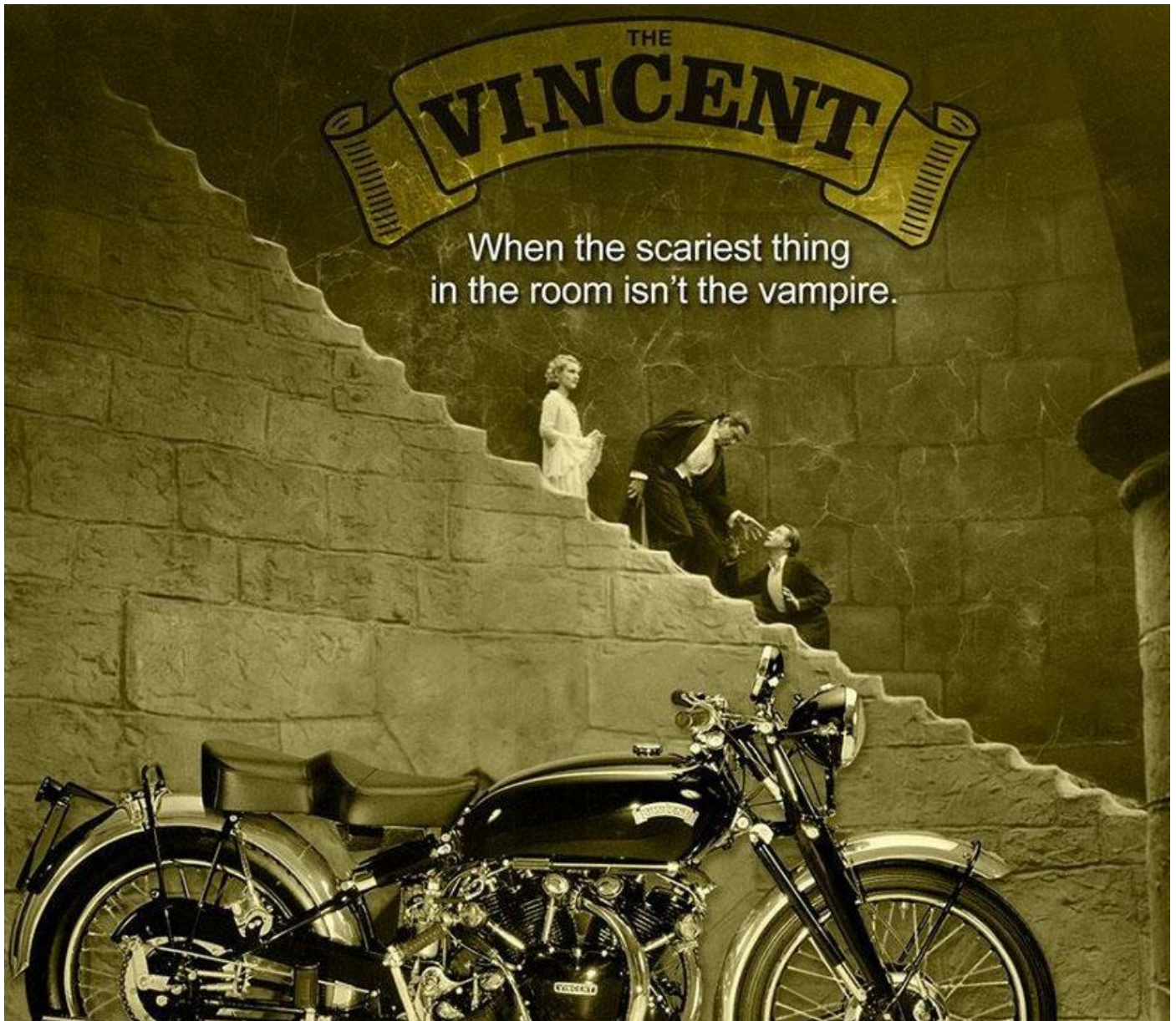




# The Oz Vincent Review

Edition #63, June 2019

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



*This month's Front Cover picture provided by Alec Corner (Australia) reminds us that it's no longer the performance on the road, but that in the Auction rooms that's most scary.*

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# Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of OVR. As you read this edition the entire OVR team (sic!) is just about to arrive at the VOC International Rally site in Belgium, and as a consequence, this edition – and possibly July as well, may not be up to our usual standards – not that we ever had any!

There has been some interesting mail in about the last edition plus it seems we may be on the trail of another OVR scoop – this time concerning pre-Series A machines. Stay tuned as they say.

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Melbourne, Australia.  
Email: [ozvinreview@gmail.com](mailto:ozvinreview@gmail.com)

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## Letters to the Editor

Hi Martyn,

I was pleased to see my writing in the Oz Review Ed. 62, but did want to point out that for the most part, and there is little to no difference in the two, the article was actually written with the Pre-monoblock units as we have on standard machines in mind.

I hope you are well, Glenn Bewley, USA

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Hello Martyn,

I am currently writing an article for the English VMCC mag on the 1939 Exeter Trial so the story of Bill Clarke came at a very appropriate time. As it happens I have done a spread sheet of sorts listing the entry and types of machine. Being 1939 there was a large Services component so WD 16H Nortons dominate but there was also a surprising Vincent-HRD entry. Given the small number made in comparison to the big boys Vincent -HRD could very much hold their heads high with six 500's and a lone 998 joining in. As expected by your story the lone 998 was entered by one W. Clarke. The Snarling Beast was there!

Personally the idea of doing an Exeter on a 998cc Model A dressed in decent gear is far more appealing than doing it in Army uniform on a WD 16H Norton.

Cheers, Bob McGrath

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Hello Martyn, Currently there is a small group of Bristol (Phil Vincent favourite car) enthusiasts touring Australia with their cars. Some very desirable variants amongst them. In conversation I asked as to how they achieved approvals for entry into Australia, in particular with regard to asbestos-free certification. I was then shown a very comprehensive number of documents covering all the possible areas that may contain asbestos and the samples (very

small pieces) that were taken and the laboratory test results. The English company that carried out the approval testing, for the very reasonable sum of GBP300, was <https://www.survey-services.co.uk/> .

They were all accepted in Australia for entry without question. This company may be worth contacting if contemplating an addition to one's collection shipping from the UK.

Regards, Chris. C.W.Edwards.

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Hi Martyn - in deepest Devon, but please see a few shots.

Here are 2 frame grabs from the extensive Vincent family library of archive film we are using in "SpeedisExpensive", with kind permission of the family.



The OVR story on Bill Clark is a great read, Martyn: a really worthy tribute to a man, we can see, who meant so much to PCV, Irving and the factory as a whole.

Regards, David Lancaster

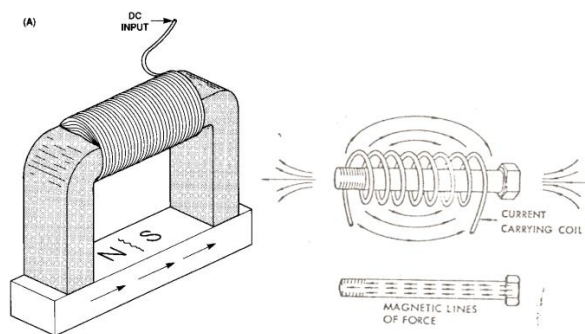
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G'day Martyn: Thoroughly enjoyed the last OVR. Such a diversity is just terrific in any publication but especially so in one freely contributed to and freely available

I was particularly interested in Alyn Vincent's article concerning powder coating. In the past I have powder coated quite a few components and have not always been completely happy with the results, particularly with reference to colour or gloss. I found the best solution was to powder coat then spray over it. A bit of belt and braces I suppose

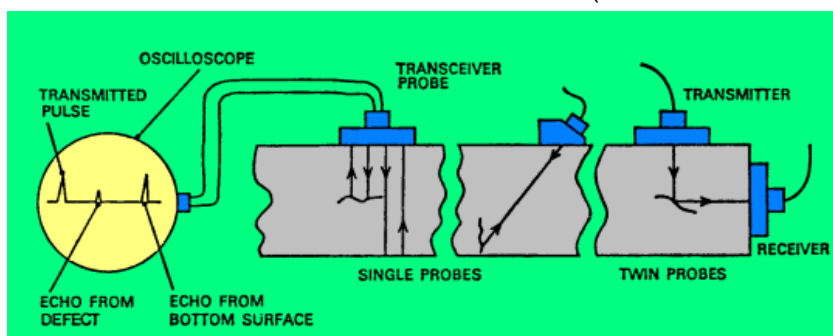
Alyn quite rightly observes that one of the problems of aging machines is determining what things are like on the inside and he suggests that x rays are not the answer. In this I can't but agree. Aircraft tubular steel structures have provision for oil coating the structure internally after welding, our bike don't. However don't despair. Three other processes that are relatively cheap can address the problem

Firstly there is **magnetic particle inspection**. This process can be performed on any magnetic material. In some applications it is not even necessary to dismantle the item. Quite simply, any crack or discontinuity will form a minute North and South Pole on either side of it when placed under a magnetising influence (this may be achieved with a magnet, an electromagnet, a current carrying cable or by passing a current through the object). Iron filings or magnetic dust will adhere to the poles indicating the defect. Just as a magnetising force can be felt through paper, it can be felt through paint too. This process is extremely accurate



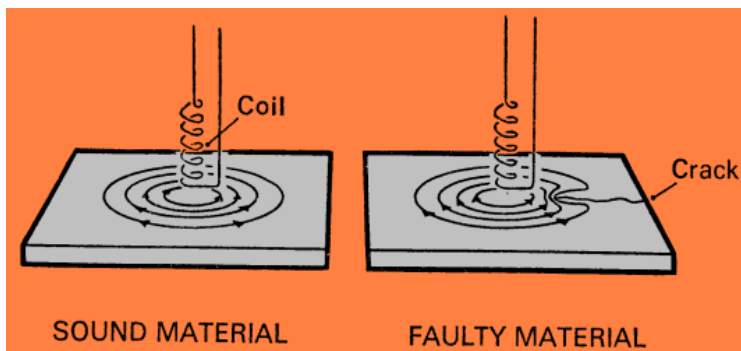
Internal corrosion may be readily detected through **ultrasonic testing**. It's again a relatively simple principle. Sound travel through any medium at a speed relative to the medium itself and it's temperature. Ultrasounds are readily able to penetrate solid matter or pass through liquids. When the sound reaches the back wall (the inner surface of a frame tube) it reflects or echoes back.

If the sound is projected perpendicular to the surface it will bounce straight back. If it passes into a structure at an angle other than perpendicular it will bounce along echoing of each surface along the length of the component. Passing a sound through a structure takes time. So the technician does a small calculation on how long it



should take for the sound to get back to where it came from, just like an echo. It takes a little while to calibrate an ultrasonic tester using gauge blocks or a Dutch block. However once calibrated it will give a very accurate indication of thickness on an oscilloscope.

The last method is called **eddy current testing** (no relation to milli amp). Eddy currents are small circlet movements of electrons in conductors when placed under a changing magnetic influence, typically a small coil activated by an ac current. When a probe containing a coil that is being energised is placed near any conductor the electrons will move in a circular pattern, or eddy. This creates a second magnetic field (according to Lenz's Law, this will oppose the field and current that created it, never really understood that myself so lucky old Lenz was around). The two fields give a resultant that may be read on a gauge (amperes). The thing is, if there is even the most minor discontinuity the eddy currents have to go around it as they cannot arc across them. This distorts the eddy currents magnetic field giving a new resultant field that is instantly identified. Modern machines would penetrate paint



These three methods could readily interpret the integrity of any frame component in terms of cracks or internal corrosion. The trick is to find someone who can do the trick! Most large aircraft engine overhaul facilities would have such a capability as do those industries checking pressure vessels. They come under the general classification of Non Destructive Testing

While on the subject of powder coating I welded up some frames from steel to be used in my bathroom and had them powder coated. Within a year I had signs of rust!

Keep up the good work!, Ray Schriever, Queensland, Australia

Dear Martyn,

Thank you for the splendid article on Sqn Ldr Bill Clarke in your last edition of the OVR. In identifying the airman riding the HRD in the wartime Motor Cycle magazine advert you state: "The chevron on his uniform (upper right sleeve) was that of a Bombardier and it is thus assumed it was Sgt. J.T. Lawson R.A.F. Bombardier a surviving member of Bill Clarke's ill-fated crew."

Please may I nicely, tactfully and politely (!) disagree and say I think that's almost certainly incorrect – due to the following reasons:

1. The RAF did not have, "bombardiers", they had Bomb Aimers. Bomb Aimers wore a half-wing badge, depicting a letter "B", on their left chest – in the same position as the double wing pilot's badge shown in your photograph of Bill Clarke. The, "bombardier's chevron" to which you refer is the RAF eagle badge, worn at the top of each sleeve by all ranks below that of Warrant Officer. Look at the photograph of this airman and you will see the wing-tip of that same badge just showing at the top of his left sleeve.
2. The airman has put his forage or side cap under his left shoulder epaulette. You will see that the cap bears a white flash. This flash was used to signify that following initial basic military training, that the airman was then undergoing aircrew training. Furthermore, you will note that there are no badges of rank on his right sleeve. This means that his rank was that of Aircraftman – he was certainly not a sergeant!
3. Aircrew were not formed into crews until after they had finished their aircrew training and were qualified in their particular trade. Thus, this aircrew trainee could not possibly be part of Bill Clarke's crew.

Best regards and very much, Thank You for the OVR, Richard Bell, UK. Warrant Officer RAF (Retired)

*At the going down of the sun; and in the morning, we will remember them.  
They gave their tomorrow for our today*

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## DIY B&B?

*Writing in Motorcycling in 1957, Paul Elsey describes his solution to expensive touring accommodation for his family. Not something you could expect to get away with today!*

BUILDING a caravan for my Motorcycle posed me many problems. The chief question was: could it be done for, say, £40-£50? The legal limit of 5 cwt. also had to be considered. The van I had in mind would have to be at least 9 ft. long—big enough to leave room for cooking and similar operations. The idea of a "sleeping trailer" did not appeal.

After many hours with pencil and paper, it looked possible. The biggest worry turned out to be weight. I had to discover the weights of all the materials needed and tot them up; my calculations gave me a rough total of 4 cwt., unladen.

The first job tackled was the chassis. This did not give me a great deal of worry; being a toolmaker by trade, I felt reasonably at home with the metal parts. (Incidentally, the only machine I used was a small electric hand drill.) I was able to make my own towing attachment, jacks and various "bits and bobs." These items can be bought for quite a reasonable figure, but making them for myself saved a quid or so. The chassis, as my diagram shows, follows the usual pattern.

The longitudinal members "A" are braced at the spring mountings by short lengths of angle to form a box section, all cross-over points being welded.

I chose small wheels-16 in. by 4 in., ex-Bond "Minicar"—to keep the overall height down.

The problem was to

find an axle to fit. Finally, I hit on the idea of using a car axle, with adaptors, to take the "Minicar" wheels. An Austin 7 front axle in perfect order, was picked up from the local scrapyard. The axle beam itself was not wide enough for my purpose, so the next step was to remove the king-pins, leaving just the hubs. Two stub axles were then fabricated from 1-in.-thick steel. Actually these could have been made from straight bar; the reason for the fancy shape was to drop the overall height an inch or so. Angle iron was used for the axle, all three items being welded together as shown. The flat portion of each stub formed the spring platform. A pair of leaf springs were also obtained from the scrap dealer. In their original state they appeared to be on the hard side, so two leaves were removed from each. The brakes are operated on the overrun principle, and an adjustable jockey-wheel of my own make, is fitted—a useful item, although not really essential on a lightweight van.

The axle is set back 1 and 1/2 in. from the centre-line of the chassis; this gives a steady and shake-free ride at all speeds up to the legal 30 m.p.h. limit.

Bodywork caused me-a few sleepless nights as the only joinery experience I had had was the general handyman work around the house. Roof and corner bend's, each of which was laminated from three pieces in. thick and 1+ in. wide were the main items. The form was defined by nails hammered into a bench and pieces for each corner were then glued, placed in the former of nails and clamped together. Once the glue had set and the timber had been removed from the former, the shape was retained, but screws were put, through every 6 in. or so just in case the glue did fail. When the bends were completed, all that remained to do was to fit the supporting struts. All joints are half-lapped, glued and screwed. The timber is Parana pine throughout, except the floor, which is of 1/2"-in. T. and G. board..

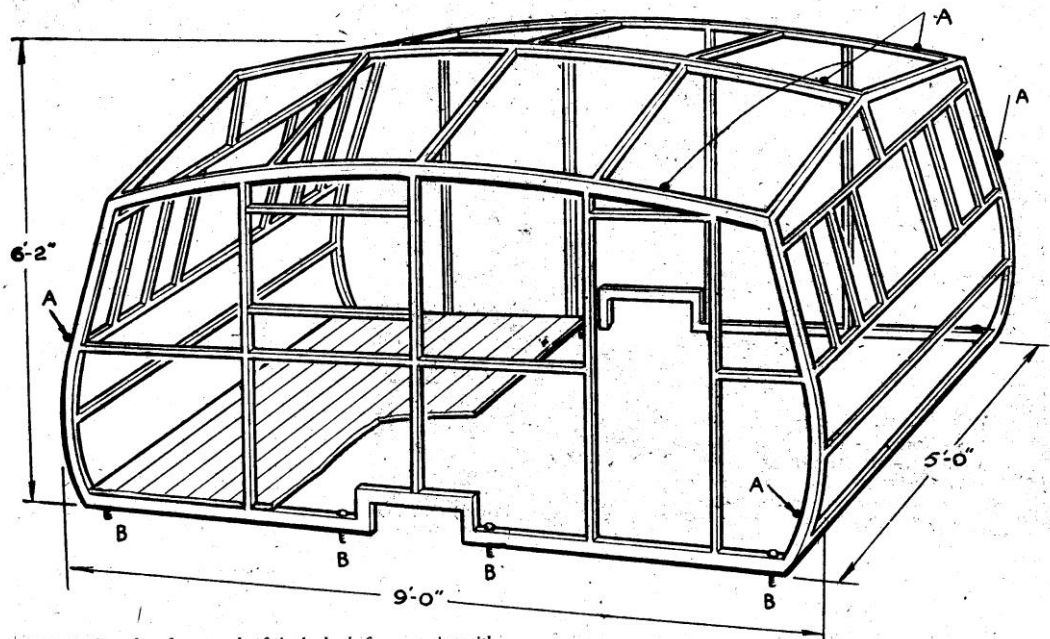


Fig. 3. Complete framework of the body, before covering with

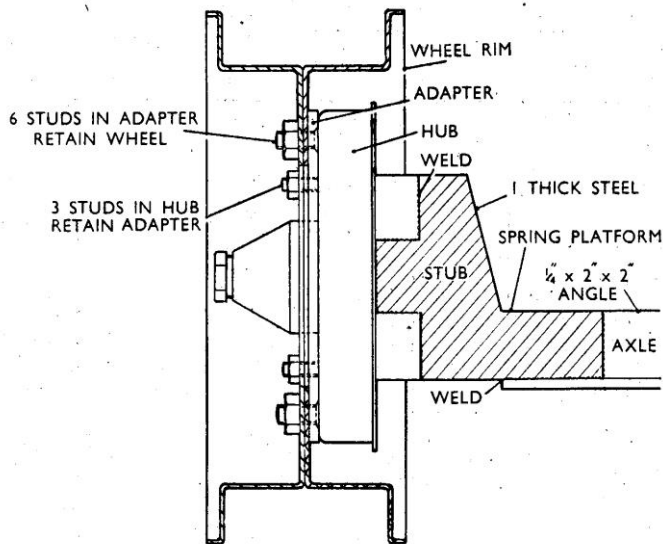
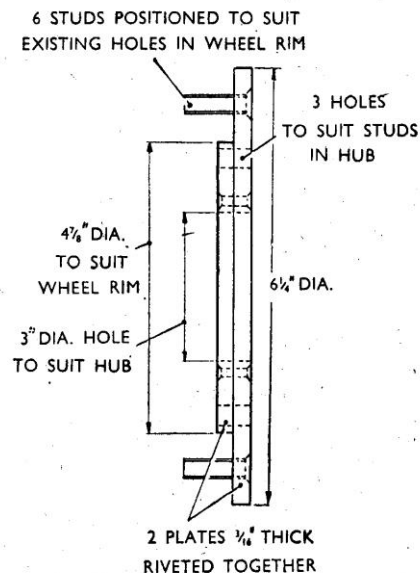


Fig. 1. Details of hub and stub axle assembly. The hub itself is ex-Austin 7; the stub and cross-axle were home-built. Dimensions of the adaptor are shown on the right (Fig. 2).

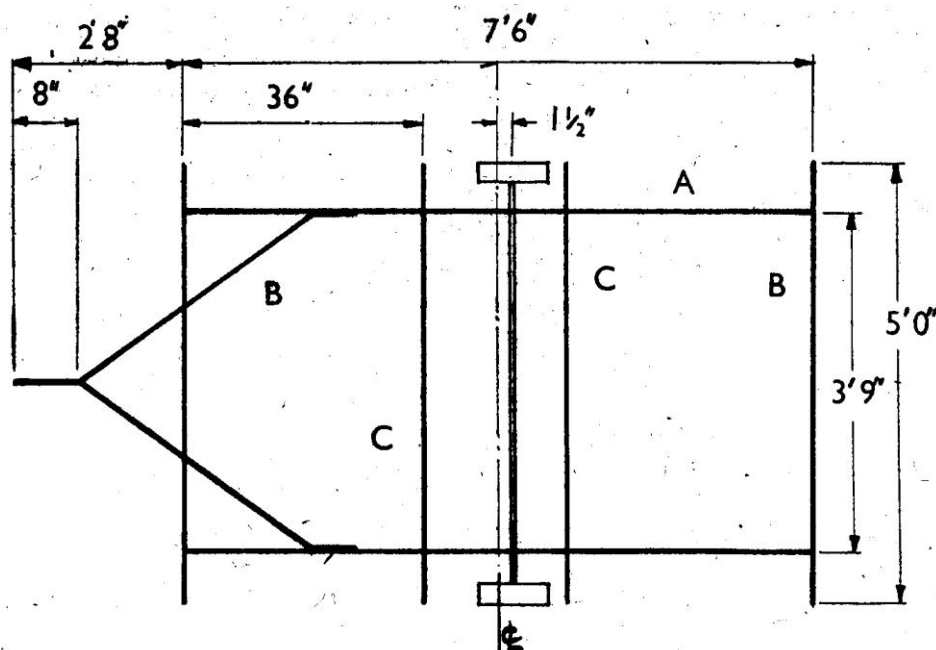


A18

The outer panels are of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hardboard. I did not think it advisable to fit large side panels (say 6 ft. by 3 ft.) because considerable warping takes place. All seams in the outer panels are filled with putty, covered with adhesive tape, painted and finished with  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wooden "D" beading; this gives a good, waterproof joint. All window frames, both fixed and opening, are covered with alloy beading 1 and  $\frac{1}{16}$ " waist moulding), which gives the van that "little something extra" in appearance. The inner skin is of 3-mm. plywood; when this is stained and varnished, the grain is quite good and seams are covered in  $\frac{1}{2}$ " "D" beading. Interior fittings are, of course, determined by one's needs and tastes. My own plans for the interior were a little rushed, as the holidays were drawing near. At present there is, a bunk for my wife and small daughter, a large cupboard, drawers, and a Working surface for cooking and similar jobs. There is also a table which folds away at night. My own sleeping accommodation at present consists of an air mattress on the floor, but I intend to modify the interior for next year. (Ed. 1958!)

In general, the van tows without trouble behind my 1952 650 c.c. B.S.A. and sidecar.

The outfit is geared for normal sidecar work and this seems quite satisfactory; first gear has never been engaged so far for hill climbing. On normal roads I obtain 40 m.p.g. at a steady 30 m.p.h.; in hilly country, about 35 m.p.g.



My caravan took nine months' spare-time work to make and cost a little under £44, but it has been well worth it and I'm looking forward to many happy holidays without paying through the nose for possibly inferior hotel or boarding-house accommodation.

# A Quiet Afternoon's Work, (custom F81)

When I first acquired my Vincent I found that both of the front fuel tank mounts (F81) in the UFM had their threads (5/16" BSF) damaged and essentially stripped. So one of my first tasks was to repair them. Like a lot of others I went down the Helicoil path and this involves re-drilling the hole using the supplied drill bit then tapping with the supplied tap it to take the Helicoil that restores the 5/16" BSF thread. Pretty simple and straightforward. Or so it seems.



3/8" tube extends into the UFM

The retention arrangement is a shouldered anti-vibration rubber bush (FT80) that sits in the tank mounting hole and also holds the tank bracket away from the UFM. A shouldered bolt then passes thru the rubber bush with its shoulder abutting the UFM and when you tighten that bolt it is meant to tighten its shoulder up against the face of the UFM without

compressing the bush. If in the process the rubber bush does get compressed it loses some if not all of its anti-vibration ability.

Here is the problem – when you drill out the UFM to accept the Helicoil repair you actually ENLARGE the hole in the UFM. Later on you will find that now the shoulders of the bolt goes into the UFM a bit further and the FT80 rubber bush starts to compress. As a consequence the bike seems to vibrate more than before. This is exactly what the situation with my bike was. And I put up with it for years.

Simple fix is a F81 shouldered bolt with a longer shoulder section so that the FT80 rubber IS NOT compressed– but where to get one?



Old Left: New Right

Complication is that the required new shoulder length will be different on different UFM's.

The bolt into the UFM is 5/16" BSF; the shoulder on the shouldered bolt is 3/8". Just so happens that SS tube 3/8" OD x 5"16" ID is available at most hobby shops – sold as K&S Metal part #87119 which is 12 inches long.

So with my tank removed and a set of new FT80 rubbers from the Spares Co, I fitted a rubber onto the tube then pressed that lot against the UFM making sure the tube 'bottomed' in the UFM mount hole and the rubber was up against the UFM. I discovered that the tube went into the UFM – about 1/8" – so I carefully marked the outside of the tube then cut it off and slipped the resultant 'sleeve over my 5/16" BSF bolt resulting in a 'new' shouldered bolt that was a perfect fit.



Done: FT80 no longer crushed and anti-vibration restored

To ensure that any clamping force was taken by the new 'sleeve' and not the FT80 rubber I fitted a stout 5/16 inch washer under the head of the bolt.

Then I did the same on the other side of the UFM. The BSF bolts I used started out at 1 1/2" long and I found that I need to shorten them to 1 and 3/8" to achieve the desired result.

As you can see there is now zero compression of the FT80 rubber bushes when the bolts are fully home. Anti-vibration properties fully restored!





## OVR Event Schedule, updated 16 May 2019

Date	Details	More Info?
<b>2019</b>	<b>2019</b>	
June 22-23	Cafe Racer Festival at Monthéry, France. The ambition is to bring to Monthéry the largest number of Egli-Vincent, Vincent and Norvin for a "laps of Honor Parade" which will take place on Saturday June 22nd at 02.00 PM	kindly contact Guy DANO (guy.dano@orange.fr or +336 8035 3869) for registration.
<b>July 7</b>	<b>VRV Mid-Winter Romp.</b> Meet @ Caltex Servo 377 Plenty Rd Mill Park @ 9:30am	RSVP by July 1 <a href="mailto:unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com">unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com</a>
<b>August 11</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting – venue to be advised.</b>	
<b>August 17-19</b>	<b>VRV run to Wimmera Silo Art plus General Meeting,</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
August 25	Federation Picnic at Marwong, Victoria. Significant VRV participation anticipated!	<a href="mailto:neil.athorn@bendigobank.com.au">neil.athorn@bendigobank.com.au</a>
Aug 21-29	2019 Vincent Owners Club North Queensland Atherton Tableland Tour	<a href="mailto:mdbarr48@bigpond.com">mdbarr48@bigpond.com</a>
Aug 24-25	BULLI ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLE WEEKEND, Bulli Showgrounds, Grevillea Park Road Bulli NSW	
<b>Sept 8</b>	<b>VRV Annual General meeting; venue to be advised.</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
<b>Sept 22</b>	<b>VRV post-AGM Committee Meeting – venue to be decided</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
Sept 29	Bay to Birdwood Rally, South Australia	
Oct 6	HTPAA Antique & Collectable Tool Market, St Anthony's School Hall, 164-168 Neerim Rd, Caulfield East, 9am start till 12.30pm	
<b>Oct 11</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting, meeting at 7 pm followed by dinner, location TBA.</b>	
<b>Oct 19</b>	<b>VRV Bit on the Side Run, for outfits but singles also welcome</b>	<a href="mailto:brianh1967@yahoo.com">brianh1967@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Oct 22</b>	<b>VRV First Anniversary Event</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
<b>Nov 10</b>	<b>VRV Day ride plus General and Committee meeting; venue to be decided at the prior General meeting</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
Nov 16-17	Bendigo Swap Meet, Bendigo showgrounds, gates open from 6 am!	
<b>Nov 22, 23 24</b>	<b>VRV Annual Vincent Riders Dinner</b>	<a href="mailto:brianh1967@yahoo.com">brianh1967@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Dec 8</b>	<b>VRV Xmas Function plus General and Committee meeting; venue to be decided</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>	
<b>Jan 12</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA</b>	
Feb 3 - 18	2020 International Jampot (AJS & Matchless) Rally in New Zealand	<a href="mailto:matchlessnz@icloud.com">matchlessnz@icloud.com</a>
<b>Feb 9</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA</b>	
<b>March 13</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting, meeting at 7 pm followed by dinner, location TBA.</b>	
March 10-19	Tassie Tour 2020, held in association with the British Motorcycle Club of Tasmania.	<a href="http://www.tassietour.info">www.tassietour.info</a>
March 28- April 4	Australian Historic Motoring Federation 2020 National Motoring Tour, Albury NSW & Wodonga Vic.	<a href="http://www.ahmf.org.au">www.ahmf.org.au</a>
<b>April 12</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA</b>	
<b>May 9</b>	<b>VRV General Meeting – one day early to avoid Mothers Day clash! venue to be advised.</b>	

<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>More Info?</i>
June 14	VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA	
July 10	VRV General Meeting, meeting at 7 pm followed by dinner, location TBA.	
Aug 9	VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA	
Sept 13	VRV Annual General Meeting; venue TBA	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
Sept 21-25	Australian National Vincent Rally, McLaren Vale, South Australia.! Timed to align with the Bay to Birdwood event for vehicles built up to 1960 which will be held on the following Sunday 27 Sept.	<a href="http://lesbeyer@internode.on.net">lesbeyer@internode.on.net</a>
Sept 27	Bay to Birdwood Rally, South Australia	<a href="http://baytobirdwood.com.au/">http://baytobirdwood.com.au/</a>
Oct 9	VRV General Meeting, meeting at 7 pm followed by dinner, location TBA.	
Nov 8	VRV General Meeting and Ride. Details TBA	
Nov 20, 21, 22	VRV Annual Vincent Riders Dinner	<a href="mailto:Sec.vrv@gmail.com">Sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
Dec 13	VRV Xmas Function plus General and Committee meeting; venue to be decided	
<b>2021</b>		
Sept 12	VRV Annual General meeting; venue to be advised	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>
Nov 19,20, 21	VRV Annual Vincent Riders Dinner	<a href="mailto:sec.vrv@gmail.com">sec.vrv@gmail.com</a>

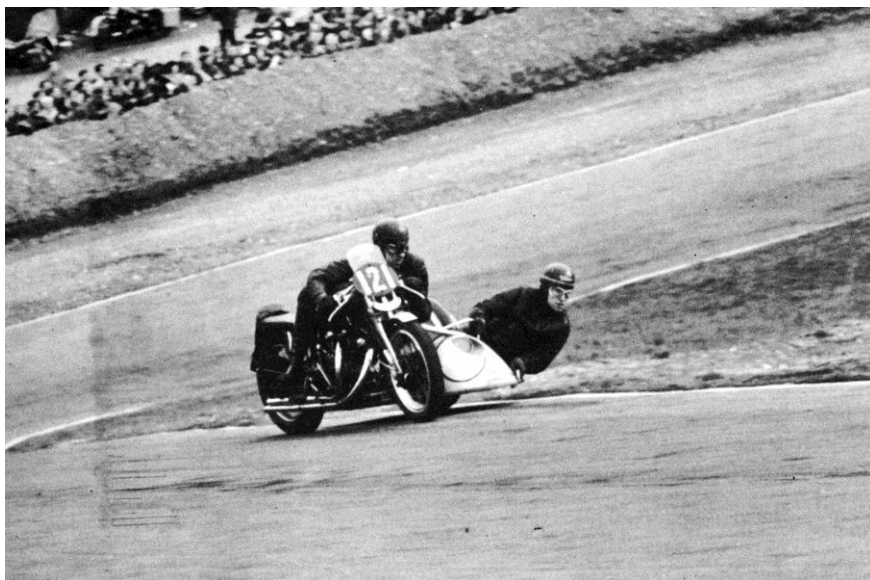
**Planning an event? Any other event OVR readers should know about?  
Contact OVR to have it listed here**

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## My Racing Years:

*As told by Ted Davis in Motorcycle Sport, 1975*

AS AN ASSOCIATE of Wharton and Mustill, the newly-appointed Vincent agent in Loughborough, and racing a 1938 TT Replica 500, I was invited to Stevenage in the summer of 1947 for 'a "gallop" down the A 1 on the now legendary 998 c.c. Vincent, Gunga Din. Nearly 10 years later, as Chief Development Engineer at Stevenage, I was to partner Gunga's engine in breaking its last record. You will note I refer only to the engine as I was, in fact, driving the



Vincent three-wheeler now owned by Roy Harper; the venue — Practice Day at Snetterton; the record —my own sidecar record!

Yes: Gunga Din's engine had its last glorious appearance, in anger, behind me (in the three-wheeler). Not its usual position during my solo racing days when George Brown rode it so brilliantly, although I did keep ahead a couple of times at Haddenham and Boreham until I dropped the plot. Incidentally, due to its closure I can still lay claim to one

record — the Boreham sidecar lap record at 88 m.p.h. with my Lightning-Watsonian.

Back to 1947 and one of my first rather amusing encounters with Stevenage and Phil Vincent. The A1 ran north directly from the old works and I was riding what was, as it eventually turned out to be, the first of hundreds of Vincents I would ride on this same stretch of road. The odd things about this bike was that though it was probably far from being the most potent two-wheeler on public roads, it was rapidly turning into the most appalling device I had ever had the misfortune to throw a leg over. A quick about-turn and a somewhat premature return to the works brought Phil Vincent out to receive the normal glowing words of praise. Gunga clanked and pinked to a standstill amid a cloud of steam rising from beneath the tank which had been topped up, in error, with paraffin!

It was later that year I joined the Vincent H.R.D. Co., Ltd. (the first new employee to arrive on his own Series B twin) and it is this period through till 1959, when I transferred to Borg-Warner (of automatic transmission fame).

My serious motorcycling started in 1938 when, aged 16, I rode a Manx Norton against ginger Woods on the works Series A Rapide at Donington. I remember having quite a good write-up by Titch Allen, the Leicester Evening News reporter at that time . . . An exciting road-racing career was interrupted by a certain BMW fan but a fair amount of illicit motorcycling continued around the world under the sponsorship of the Royal Navy until the end of it all, and the beginning of this story in 1947.

Nineteen forty eight was really the true start of my saga and the beginning of many eventful years with the Stevenage big twins and, to a lesser extent, their half-brothers, which continues . . .

Now I was fully employed at the old works, building and road-testing Stevenage products, it was but a short period before my own Series B was being prepared for combat; Esholt Sprint and then to Ireland for the Leinster 200 — the first time a post-war twin had appeared in a long-distance true road race.



This was a "ride it there — race it — ride it back" affair, money being scarcer than Vincent twin magneto cowls are now. I remember paying for our garage near Dublin with my two spare plugs (used), accompanied by a load of English blarney.

The race itself was great; 200 miles of full-bore stuff punctuated by numerous trips up slip-roads. At one stage we were lying fourth but, following explicit instructions from my Irish pit attendants who just hung the same sign out every lap, "FASTER", I slowly dropped back, finishing half-way down the field of 20 or so finishers, having actually gone down every slip-road at every corner on one particular lap (eight miles and eight corners to the lap). The fact was, I couldn't ride any faster. Ernie Lyons won on a 7R.

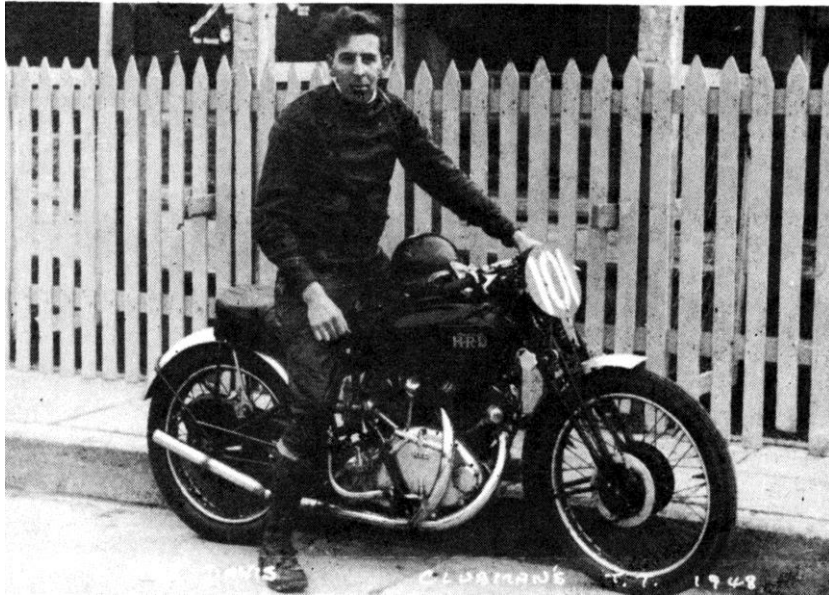
Our return on the midnight boat to Holyhead and thence to Stevenage was to prove almost as exciting as the race. Piloting the plot home was shared with the late Henry Pinnington (TT rider and Vincent tester who was later killed road-testing a Black Shadow near Stevenage). After we had removed all lighting equipment, it was necessary to "buy" a bicycle lamp from a porter's bicycle at Holyhead station to see our way across the Welsh mountains home. Henry, having

raced many times in Ireland, claimed to know the route home like the back of his hand so chose to ride the first stint.

After half-an-hour's acclimatisation to moonlight racing on the public roads we were soon cruising in the 70s and Henry's claims were surely being substantiated when, suddenly, we slid under what seemed to be better than 5G retardation into a very imposing front door which, according to Henry, had been left with house attached across the middle of our road home. We had, in fact, diverted down someone's drive, and this at 70 m.p.h. in the moonlight!

The rest of the trip home was uneventful except when Henry fell off the pillion, having fallen asleep. A retrace of two miles found him, unharmed, sitting on the side of the A5, having assumed he had dreamt it all or, at least, hoping he had.

Eight o'clock next morning saw us both helping to build and test the 15 twins Stevenage were making a week.



The next big one was the 1948 Clubman's TT with nine twins entered. It looked like everyone and his brother were riding Rapides — Cliff Brown's brother being just one in mind, with Phil Irving acting as adviser and doing 90 per cent of the fettling. We spent two whole days (Whit Saturday and Sunday) working on the heads of my Series B to improve the breathing, plus a little illicit blending of the 1 and 1/16" carburettors. Result, timed by TT Special on Sulby, was 126 m.p.h., and this on pool petrol without even

a flyscreen (not allowed?); 10 m.p.h. quicker than Artie Bell's works Norton. Can't account for why I was lapping a similar 10 m.p.h. slower than Artie — just shows the advantage of a flyscreen!

Starting number 101, last away, kept the race interesting while George Brown set the pace somewhere ahead, only eventually to run out of fuel. However I did manage to scratch home fifth, having lost my oil filler cap when refuelling.

Ever tried sticking your nose down into an oil tank for a couple of laps of the Island?

Problem now was to get home — money still being conspicuous by its absence. Problem solved; sold the tyres off the bike — scrounged two bald ones to ride home. Simple! No M.o.T. test in those. days.

Vincent policy was to support anyone but me, Ted Davis, a situation which, strangely enough, continued to the end of my racing career (who was it said the Lord helps those who help themselves?) eight years later, by which time I had collected some 60 wins, scores of places and numerous f.t.d. and lap records, solo, sidecar, three-wheeler and Formula 2 (Vincent 1150).

Winter of 1948 saw the Series B sold to Pat Wilson (of Lawton and Wilson) who, incidentally, finished third in the 1949 Clubman's after falling at Governor's, and the writer building a super White Lightning completely of "sub-standard" parts, i.e. at reduced price (the nearest I ever got to being works supported), assembled in the bedroom. The 1948 winter scene rapidly changed to

the starting grid at Haddenham and my first clash with Gunga and George (referred to earlier), together with a power slide followed by an instant sore backside which ended the session (perhaps I should have changed to three wheels there and then!

However the 1949 season produced the odd win and some good places behind Duke, Brown, Daniell, Parkinson, Brett, etc, at Silverstone, Brough, Croft, Thurxtori, Brands and Boreham, ending with a swop with Jack Surtees (John's father) for a 596 Norton and chair and much needed cash which, eventually, was to lead to the most successful period of my racing career — but that is another story.

I ought to end the 1949 saga with an account of my one and only sand racing episode at Pendine Sands, South Wales, the scene of many abortive record attempts and subsequent corroded mudguards, rims and castings. The main event, a 100-mile blind (two mile straights linked by a "make your own turn around each end"), was preceded by some one-mile dashes in a straight line. My White Lightning, now with 11 to 1 c.r. and 80 per cent Methanol and 20 per cent pure Benzol, sailed up to 150 m.p.h., blowing everything into the sandhills except another Lightning ridden by Danny Thomas, a Vincent road-tester who specialised in sand racing.

Came the big race, 100 miles on dope, main jets of 1/8 in. bore, fuel consumption 8 to 10 m.p.g.



A re-fuelling station and lap score chart were set up on the seaweed side of the course manned by George Rose. It has to be realised that Pendine was Fred Rist's BSA domain and Fred would win regardless; his superb broadsides at each end were a joy to watch and ensured he did, in fact, only cover 100 miles total against yours truly's 150 (never could broadside a Lightning at 100 m.p.h. — not

on two wheels, anyway!). However, with the advantage of 50 m.p.h. on maximum, it only remained for me to pass the finish 100 times, plus a time or two for good measure, to collect the shekels.

George made a ft-long mark for each lap on the sand, plus an X for each time I lapped Fred (three, I think), and dutifully poured in the dope on what seemed like every lap. Came the end, Fred was acclaimed winner, just as it should be! After\_ all, didn't Fred always win!

The follow-up scenes were more like a demonstration in Ireland; attempts were made to turn official cars on their sides, tents were pulled down, George dragged everyone down to see his scoreboard in the sand, only to find it was obliterated by the incoming tide. Strange thing was, it was the Welshmen doing all the objecting; honest, I didn't say a word — I was too choked with a mixture of dope, sand and salt.

The 1949 season continued in a similar vein to the Pendine outing, the proverbial shoestring providing the wherewithal. Another dispute at Silverstone — this time I thought I had won the 100-mile handicap race. I was not the only competitor who made equal claim to the first home award. BMCRC Stewards said "Second" —and that's how it stayed.

I even won a race at Cadwell . . . what price a Lightning up the mountain? No stranger to Cadwell, I had ridden a Grand Prix New Imperial here in 1939 (as a schoolboy racer) powered by

a full needle-bearing high camshaft 350 JAP, one of two specially made for collecting 350 Gold Stars (100 m.p.h. lap) at Brooklands. I traded an Empire Star BSA for it from Titch Allen.

I remember being impressed by C. J. (Jack) Williams, TT rider and member of the Vincent-HRD works team, and team-mate Arthur Tyler. I bought Arthur's leathers for £1 when he retired in 1938. I must stop this reminiscing back to pre-war and return to reality and Yorkshire — surely one of the real homes of die-hard enthusiasts. Several ding-dongs and a win/place or two behind, or in front of, Jack Brett and Dennis Parkinson, etc, at Brough, Croft, Tranwell, and a win (almost) at Boreham (magneto pinion stripped on the last lap).

The year 1949 went out literally with a bang. I was riding the ex-works Norton belonging to Jim Smith of Pegston, near Hitchin (a Vincent/Norton tuner), which was fitted with a GP Triumph engine, when it blew up with a bang, not dissimilar to an IRA bomb blast — broken con-rods knocking the magneto clean off, sent me scurrying back to riding Vincents and left poor old Jim some £100+ worse off (probably hastening him towards becoming a Vincent tuner).

(To Be Continued!)

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## Vincent Fan? Unemployed? Want a Challenge?


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# Spark Plug Heat Range

The spark plug heat range is determined by the centre electrode's ability to absorb heat. The amount of porcelain exposed to the combustion chamber is the determining factor. The more porcelain you see when peering into the end of a sparkplug, the hotter the heat range will be. Obviously, when the amount of porcelain is seen from the centre electrode to the steel portion of the sparkplug, the sparkplug will be very cold in it's heat range.



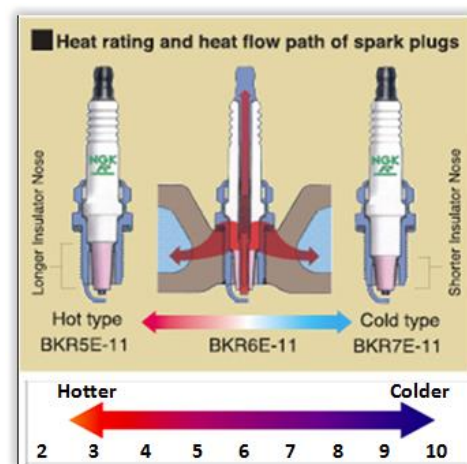
The rule of thumb is that the harder you run and the more temperature created in the engine, the colder the plug. Lower speeds, less heat, and for sure an oiling engine, the hotter the plug. There's no difference in the ignition start up quality of a cold or hot plug in a cold engine.

There are many books, well, not so many books, but rather pamphlets, available showing the colour of a plug's porcelain, which tells you if the engine is running rich or lean. If the engine is running rich, you can safely run a hotter plug. If the engine is running lean, always favour a colder plug. The point here is to ensure that the electrodes do not become so heated as to turn into a glow plug. When this happens pre-ignition occurs.

**Myth Revealed:** The condition or colour of the insulator when you do a 'plug chop' ONLY tells you if the spark plug heat range is correct for the mixture, it DOES NOT tell you if your mixture is too rich or too lean!

The heat range of sparkplugs affects engine performance somewhat, but not as much as people would like you to believe. As long as the heat range is within safe limits you'll be alright, and that's a pretty wide range.

Porcelain is an insulator to electrical current, but a good conductor of heat. Each time a plug is fired, the centre electrode goes to a glow plug condition. The electrode is cooled after ignition by two means. First, the intake of air with a small air/fuel ratio at the beginning of the intake, cools the centre electrode enough so that when the fuel/air ratio increases during the intake that fuel isn't ignited, as the centre electrode no longer has the temperature to ignite. The centre electrode then is further cooled by heat transfer from the electrode, then through the porcelain, then to the steel threaded sparkplug, then to the cylinder head, then to whatever the means to cool the head, air or water. Again, the more porcelain, the more heat transfer is offered to the centre electrode. The amount of porcelain dictates the heat range of the plug. It's easier to control the heat range of the plug with a long reach plug over a short reach plug. It's easier to control a sparkplug's heat range with a 14 mm plug than with a 10 mm plug. It all has to do with surface area and conductivity of heat.



# 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: Modern gaskets for the Vincent.

The gasket materials, known as 'AFM' is a chemically blown, compounded nitrile synthetic rubber, bonded to an aluminium 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 many times over.

**Post war Vincent twin gasket set** includes:ET106, PD14, ET105, 2 each ET102, ET182/1, ET1801 and 2 each ET181. US\$58.00. Also ET 140 Clutch cover gasket available, US\$15.28

**Post war Comet and Meteor kit** includes (pictured): ET 106, ET180, ET182, ET181, PD14/1, and ET106. US\$55.00

Pack and post is 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](mailto:phpeh@hotmail.com) Located in Chicago IL, USA.



**For Sale: Expressions of Interest** are being sought for a Vincent Series A Comet 1937 (previously owned by Ollie Fuller – South Australia VOC). Bike is located in South Australia. Engine # C4xx, Frame # D15xx (original D13xx) *Editor's note, numbers edited to foil forgers!*

Almost complete. Final parts available. Photos can be emailed. Inspection in situ will be arranged prior to purchase. Purchaser's responsibility to pack and ship.

Send a request for the photos to Anne Clark [kurraltacc@bigpond.com](mailto:kurraltacc@bigpond.com) . You can then submit your **first and final best offer** for consideration to the email above. Potential purchaser will be invited to inspect the bike.



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## For Sale: Taps n Dies

1/4" to 1/2" HSS BSF tap and die kit made in EU, just the thing for your Vincent, also available in BSC (CYCLE THREAD) A\$230. Contact [vindian1952@gmail.com](mailto:vindian1952@gmail.com)



## For Sale: Vincent Comet Flywheel Assembly



From a 1950 Comet, and in great condition. Comprised of original ET3 flywheels, a new Maughan's caged needle roller crankpin assembly, an original and polished ET6/2 conrod in superb condition and unmarked mainshafts. This flywheel assembly has been dynamically balanced to 66% (to match an Omega piston) as per Phil Irving's recommendation using a Repco balancing machine designed by the same Phil Irving. Sale is the result of upgrading my Comet with Terry Prince performance items. Seeking Australian \$1,500 or near offer for the complete Flywheel Assembly.

Located in Melbourne, Australia. Can assist with international shipping. Hi-Res photo's available.

Email to [Goodwin@pobox.com](mailto:Goodwin@pobox.com)

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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 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@outlook.com](mailto:nvidean@outlook.com)

**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](mailto: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](http://www.fastlinespokes.com.au) or phone (+61) 0411 844 169

**Union Jack Motorcycles**, Australia: Full range of Triumph, Lucas, Amal and Venhill control cables. Ships worldwide. More info at the website [www.unionjack.com.au](http://www.unionjack.com.au) or phone +61 3 9499 6428

**VSM**, Holland: 2x2 leading shoe brake kits for Vincents; high quality 30mm wide 4 leading shoe system. Email [vspeet@vsmmetaal.nl](mailto:vspeet@vsmmetaal.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](mailto:pontricoul@gmail.com) for more info.

**Cometic Gaskets**: Modern, reusable gasket sets for Vincent twins and singles. If you actually USE your Vincent you are mad not to have these. Contact Paul Holdsworth of the VOC Chicago section c/o [phpeh@hotmail.com](mailto:phpeh@hotmail.com) Located in Chicago IL USA.

## *Nuts n Bolts:*

**Classic Fasteners**, 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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:alan@aceclassics.com.au) . Their Web page is [www.aceclassics.com.au](http://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](mailto: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

**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/>  
Ph 03 9939 3344

