



The Oz Vincent Review

Edition #76, June 2020

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



This month's cover depicts a painting in the style of Edward Hopper (1822-1967) an American realist painter and printmaker. While he is widely known for his oil paintings, he was equally proficient as a watercolorist and printmaker in etching. Both in his urban and rural scenes, his spare and finely calculated renderings reflected his personal vision of modern American life. Like all of us constrained in movement by Covid-19 restrictions, the person depicted is looking wistfully at the Shadow not parked, just waiting, outside.

Disclaimer: The editor does not necessarily agree with or endorse any of the opinions expressed in, nor the accuracy of content, in published articles or endorse products or services no matter how or where mentioned; likewise hints, tips or modifications **must** be confirmed with a competent party before implementation.

Welcome to the latest edition of OVR . If you enjoyed the cover painting you can find out a lot more about Hopper [BY CLICKING HERE](#) .

Remember, to access the complete OVR archive from any device, just go to the OVR web site <https://ovr270.wixsite.com/ozvincentreview>



Melbourne, Australia.

Letters to the Editor

Hi Martyn,

Please find attached a brief history of G & B bicycles and motor-bicycles, 1 of 6 known surviving 1909 King Dick's and, one of it's longest owners, Mr Albert Walters. Cabinet Maker to his Excellency, the Governor;-)

Best Wishes, Dickie, Melbourne, Australia [see this super item within this edition]

Mr Editor, I really enjoyed Alice's monograph (OVR #74). However ,..I felt too much time was spent on the gaps, tips, nipples and brushes. I have an aversion to such things as they can often lead to smoke. More time could have been spent on pivots, bushes and backlash.

The bushes in the pivots are very important. Reaming the bushes is a fine art. There needs to be the correct lubrication and the reaming must be gradual. Shimming the bearings is something that comes with practice and the pressure of the final screw of the nut has to be done more by feel than by a manual. The rear member needs to be attacked gently. There is a big difference in the ride between a tight and a loose rear end.

Regarding the front suspension I like to use a stirrup to remove it. I use a steel wired core inside a plastic sleeve clothes line. I thread the line through the bottom pivot and tie it off with a multiple knot. Run the line over the handlebar and make a stirrup. This should be about 2" from the ground when the foot is placed into it. Remove the lower bolt and step down to take the tension. Then lean down and pull the lower spring box backwards. All good and safe for feet, tank and the nuts.

Getting back to the rear end. If the RFM bearings are to be replaced then knock out the excluder discs as well. They are probably rusted and contributing to damaging the bearings. I always like to think of what is linked to what. And if you do replace them remember they are NOT meant to be a press fit – you must fettle them so they are a easy push in fit.

If your big nut on any bearing end is not smooth you will have problems!! Why not replace your nuts?? It is quite painless. A lot of people ignore their big end quill as they get older. It is quite important and can also indicate the quality of your big end. Too often people only discover a problem when there is a seizure. Why not check it every time you change your oil filter?

How often do you check your rockers? Some people call them tappets but that is not too sexy is it? You should only need to adjust every 5-10,000 miles if all is good. Signs of loose tappets is noise. Signs of tight tappets can be very easy starting (due to exhaust valve staying open). At one point I had very easy starting on my Rapide and no long-lasting damage due to the gap closing when the engine was hot. It was only about 2 thou tight.

Last year I witnessed three potentially very dangerous problems on Vincents.

1. Broken bolts in the rear brake drum. .. Probably due to either poor fit or poor tightening.
2. Loose and broken bolts on rear sprocket. Reason, same as above.
3. Broken spring on rear torque arm. The arm was only being held on by grease and dirt.
4. Poorly shimmed rear wheel bearings leading to a seized rear axle and major damage to RFM.

AND let's not forget the catastrophic failure of the front mount of a rear torque arm at the 2007 International Rally!! As tragic as it was it could have been much worse.

Maintenance is the key to safe and happy riding.

Cheers, Alyn, Australia

Hi Martyn

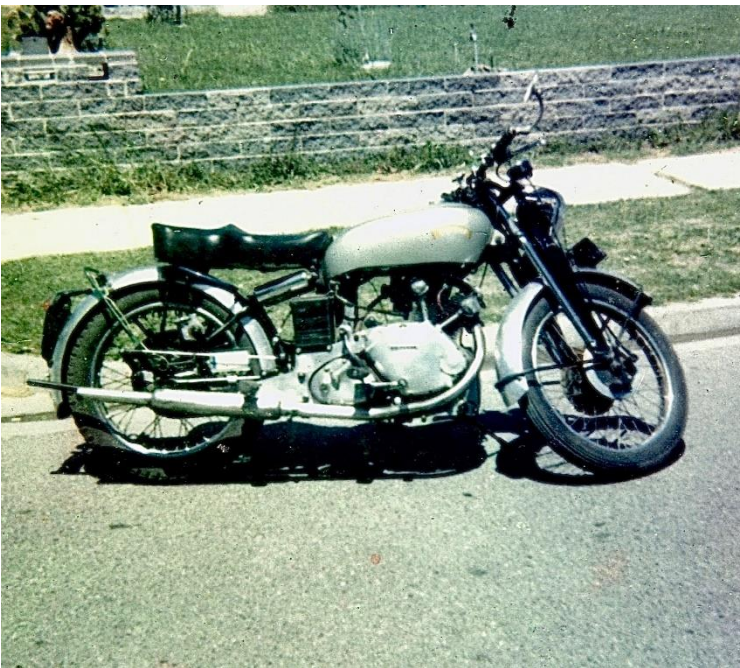
Thanks for the Special Edition, and a special thanks to Alice Leney, for a very clever and funny article. We all know what the road to hell is paved with..... so (at last) I will heed the call, and send you my modest contribution which also happens to be quite uplifting in as much as it occurred in more normal times and shows the good and funny side of the human race.

Regards, Colin Manning, UK

(see Colin's contribution in the next edition)

Dear Martyn,

In the late 1960s I was the proud owner of a 1951 C Series Vincent Comet (F5A/2AB/4968, Vic. Reg. DR 039) that I regrettably sold in 1974.



My brother and I were planning the big overland trip to the UK at that time and pulling together as much cash as we could, selling amongst other things, an unregistered B Series Meteor in parts, a Velocette Viper, the bones of a 350cc Manx Norton (with hairpin valve-springs), a Tilbrook sidecar, 2 4/4 Morgans (flat radiator models) and sundry other treasures, me keeping my Bristol 400 and he his BSA DB32 Goldstar.

On our return we each followed our own pursuits and mine included further study. So, as a newly impoverished student, I put the Bristol into long-term storage, only visiting it occasionally, as funds allowed, to begin its restoration. My interest in Vincents never waned however and some

time ago, whilst perusing the VOC website I came across this interesting photo taken outside the Vincent Factory in Stevenage in the UK.

When the Vincent factory began the design and manufacture of the Girdraulic front forks they went to the Bristol Aeroplane Company to have the blades forged and heat treated in L40 aluminium alloy (quoting "Know Thy Beast" here), drawing on Bristol's extensive metallurgical knowledge and experience gained during WW2.



I wonder whether, during his negotiations with Bristol, Philip Vincent was so impressed with the quality of their workmanship that he decided to buy his first Bristol, a Type 400, shown here outside the Vincent factory in Stevenage. I believe in the 1950s he then purchased a later model 405 Bristol, so he obviously felt some affection for the cars!

Other Bristol owners have had their own connection to Vincent motorcycles and the late, and highly esteemed Bristol Owners Club of Australia (BOCA) Patron, Mr. Neil Burns, is shown here as a young man on a friend's B Series Rapide. Neil Burns owned and restored a number of Bristols including a very rare 402 Bristol.

And now, in retirement, I have almost finished the restoration of my Bristol and would dearly love to know what became of my Vincent Comet. I am also ready to look around for a C Series Comet suitable for restoration as my next project. (If any OVR readers have any knowledge of my old Comet my contact details are in the Victoria, Australia section of the VOC's "The List" for 2020).

Regards,

Rod Blacker. Australia



Editors Comment:

A recent enquiry to the VOC Machine Registrar yielded this information:

F5AB/2A/4968 is a series C Comet originally sold by Conway Motors in London, UK and so how and when it got to Australia I don't know.

The only ownership info I have is against a Rod Callaghan in Victoria, Australia between 1976 & 1979. Since 1979 the bike has disappeared from our records so I don't know where it currently is.

TASSIE TOUR 2020

Peter McColl has recently returned to the Australian mainland having taken part in the 2020 Tassie Tour. Yes there was a report on the tour in last months OVR – here is an alternative review of that same tour. Martyn

It was promoted as **“The World’s Greatest Motor Cycle Rally”**
And you know what, it just might be!

All the people on the Rally, who had attended rallies in Europe e.g. Vincent, Brough etc, all agreed, the roads, the accommodation, the organization, was equal to or better than anything they had yet experienced. High praise indeed!!

It all started for us on the mainland, at Station Pier, late Monday arvo, lining up to board the Spirit of Tasmania. I arrived at the pier a bit after 5pm, no traffic, got nearly all the green lights, the Atlas was running sweet, so as usual I was early. I had to then wait for the rest to arrive. Phil on his



At Nelson Falls

MII Commando, Ross D, Craig Mc, Dave H, in Craig’s van with Ross’s 650SS & Craig’s BSA MkIV Spitfire & his BSA Lightning. Jon Munn was in his van along with his 1937 BSA Y13. So, there’s our group 3 Norton’s – 3 BSA’s. It’s a case of hurry up and wait, when it comes to boarding that boat, finally got on a bit after 7pm. We saw quite a few people we knew while lined up, then more once on board, they had their bikes on trailers or in vans. We found something to eat & drink, as you do, bit of a chat with whoever would listen, went out on deck to watch the moon come up over the Melbourne skyline, spectacular, by then it was time for sleep, smooth crossing, never felt a bump arriving in Devonport unscathed.

Down two decks from our cabin, well before 8am to where the bikes are very well strapped down, release the tiedowns, saddle up & wait instructions to start your engines, then ride off to meet up with the baggage van in the carpark. You put your luggage in the van & they will drop it at your motel, perfect, that’s how it went for the rest of the tour, no having to carry a suitcase or large bag on the bike. Then off to just outside Ulverstone to unload the bikes leave the van there in safe storage for the duration. Fired up the cavally & in to town for breakfast, then to the motel, retrieved luggage, booked in, then road to the Surf Lifesaving Club for lunch after which we all road to Sheffield for a coffee & a good look at the 100 or so other bikes – what a site!

The next morning, we woke to bright sunshine, checked out of the motel, left the baggage at reception & made our way back to the Surf Lifesaving club for today’s briefing. Then on our way to St Helens, about an hour out, somewhere near Exeter, Jon’s Beeza started miss firing, pulled over to find a spark plug had come loose, now not an ordinary spark plug, but an early two piece type & the centre had started to unscrew from the main body, tightened it up, thought Oh well just one of those things, rode fine for another 10 or 15mins then, you guessed it, started miss firing again. Took the plug out to find the porcelain was breaking up so the plug was dead shorting, got a spare plug? Jon, No, forgot to bring ‘em. Nothing left to do but wait for the backup trailer, not a minute later Chris Owens pulled up with his early BSA in his trailer (magneto had failed) can I help you guys? Yes, was the response, got a spare spark plug? No, not with me, but you

can have the one out of the engine, no sooner said than done, we're up & running, never missed a beat. Stopped at Scottsdale for a coffee and found out there was an Auto shop in Hobart that carried that style of plug. We'll be in Hobart tomorrow afternoon; fingers crossed the other old plug doesn't fail? It didn't and we made it to St Helens no worries.

Leaving the next morning the weather wasn't so fine, overcast & fresh, but no rain, we rode down to Bicheno or Swansea. We stopped for coffee & lunch, all going well, nothing to report, just fantastic scenery, the road follows the coast nearly all the way to Oxford, were we stopped again for coffee, fuelled up or whatever we had to do, then on our way through Sorell to Hobart. Now it's peak hour Thursday afternoon, peak hour in Hobart means catching two stop lights in a row (smile). Jon & I had become separated from the other four & didn't know the address of Rydges hotel we were staying at, so we just pulled over & asked someone on the street for directions, confirmed it on Google maps on Jon's phone & beat the others there anyway. Checked in, found our luggage, took it to our rooms. Jon then went off, on my Atlas, to buy 2 new spark plugs, I thought it better he rides my bike, than a 1937 BSA around an unfamiliar city, on streets he didn't know, looking for a shop he'd not been to before. When he got back, with 2 equivalent modern replacement plugs, his first comment as the helmet came off was – "that's probably the best Atlas I've ever ridden, don't want to give it back" not bad praise from Jon. Fitted plugs, Beeza running sweet. While giving the Atlas a chamois over I noticed the left muffler was loose, a close inspection revealed the rear foot peg was missing, had fallen off somewhere between St Helens & Hobart – bummer, not a major problem, we found a nut & bolt to secure the exhaust as the foot peg doubles as the muffler anchor.

The next day was Friday the 13th, fitting cause the rains were coming. We decided against the organised ride down the Huon Peninsular. Some fool hearty few did still go, but got very, very wet. We walked into town for lunch, found a great old pub & stayed until late afternoon when the weather had cleared. Next day was a free day, no ride organised, three of us, Ross Jon & myself, ventured down to Salamanca Market. In the park next to the market, Shannon's Insurance had organised 'Get Your Tops Off', a display of convertible cars from around Hobart to raise money for Breast Cancer. They invited us to display our bikes, which was nice to be included. There were 30 or 40 cars to look at. We brought some raffle tickets & a pink flower which you placed in front of the car you most liked. Believe it or not, our bikes got some votes. We went over to the Market for coffee & lunch, then back to the display in time for presentation etc. No, none of the bikes won, but the first raffle ticket drawn out was held by Ross, who immediately said, draw it again, this time a local picked up the prize, which was how it should be. Saturday night is the main Rally dinner. It was held at the Hobart Yacht Club and was going to be an informative evening with a talk from Jim Scaysbrook, on his amazing career as a competitive international racer. During one of the breaks, Casey Overeem took the microphone & asked if anyone had lost a foot peg, one of the eagle eyed back up trailer drivers had spotted it in a small town, while negotiating a round-a-bout. Yes, was the cry from our table, what sort of bike is it from, came back from Casey, a Norton, we replied, yeah thought it was from a cheap bike, was Casey's response – Cheeky Bastard! What are the odds, it was like finding a needle in a haystack?



Craig McDonalds recently completed Lightning

Sunday dawned & it was time to leave Hobart for Tarraleah. The briefing was at the Derwent Entertainment Centre carpark, out of Hobart, past the industrial area, just after the bridge that takes you to Richmond. We parked the bikes, listened to the day's ride details. When we got back to the bikes Craig noticed a small amount of oil under his Lightning. The oil pressure switch was leaking slightly, it wasn't going to stop, only get worse, so back into the Industrial area to find a Repco or

similar. I said I'll wait right here until you get back, then we'll ride out to Richmond & catch up with the mob. So I waited & waited & waited. I was the only one left & had been for probably 40mins. I knew how to get to Richmond, but didn't know where the ride was heading after that, so rang Craig, no answer, sent him a text saying can't wait any longer, hope all's OK. Then I set off for Richmond, arrived to find Craig had just got there. He'd looked into the carpark from the bridge & not seen me through the trees so didn't stop. He realised his mistake as soon as I pulled up, apologized, no harm done, oil leak was cured.



The view that we saw down the East Coast

There was no time for a coffee as the main group were heading off to Bridgewater after which there is nothing much but wilderness & winding roads until Tarraleah. We stopped at Bushy Park Oval for lunch. It was organised by the locals, happy to support them. Tarraleah village is just that, a village of late 40's early 50's, Californian Bungalows, built to house the workers & their families who were building the Hydro Electric Power Station nearby. When all the work was done & maintenance finished, the men, women and the kids all moved on, creating a ghost town, thankfully saved, renovated, & now a popular holiday destination.

Today's destination was Strahan, the weather is average, cold & it's almost certainly going to rain, we donned the wet weather gear & headed west through the unspoilt wilderness. First stop is "The Wall" an amazing enormous ongoing wood carving, that depicts the people, the early settlers of this wild, untamed country, coffee & a snack. Then back on the bike for the next recommended stop, Nelson Falls, picture postcard perfect, well worth the stop. Queenstown for fuel & lunch, then down the wet & winding road to Strahan, booked into our cabin, cold & tired, volunteered someone to put the kettle on & enjoyed a hot cup of tea.

The next day is a rest day, a ride was organised, but we'd booked a spot on the Gordon River Cruise. The weather improved dramatically, the sun came out, the cruise, the sites, the information was far above expectations, we couldn't recommend the experience highly enough.

Dinner tonight is Huon Atlantic Salmon, donated by Peter Bender, barbecued to perfection in the picnic area on the beach just opposite the Holiday retreat which was walking distance from our cabin. A hundred blokes, eating salmon, drinking beer, talking mostly BS on a balmy evening by the beach, can't ask for more than that! It wasn't too late when we wandered back to the cabin for a good night's sleep, hoping the weather would hold for tomorrow's ride.

OK we're up & running, Strahan to Stanley up the west coast, no ocean views this time, just a lot of wilderness on fantastic roads, cold



At the Shannon's Display

though, with threatening rain. We travel past the historic mining towns of Zeehan & Roseberry, stopping for a warming coffee & fuel as there is nowhere else until Somerset which is not far from Stanley, the rain has been light, but steady.

On to Hellyer Gorge for lunch, another sterling effort, one food van serving hot food, freshly cut sandwiches, & again much needed hot drinks. The rain had all but stopped, but the roads were still wet & slippery. There were some ongoing minor adjustments to some bikes, so words of encouragement offered. Our three Norton's & three Beeza's were running faultlessly, Phil's commando front brake pads were squealing, probably couldn't get enough heat into the hard compound pads he'd fitted. A nuisance but not a problem that would stop him ridding the bike. More fantastic roads & by mid-afternoon we're in Stanley, the biggest town on that North - West part of Tassie, even so, not a lot there, one pub already booked out for dinner, but we enjoyed the Public Bar for an hour or so. We inquired at the Café / Restaurant a few doors from the pub & there were still a couple of tables available, put our name to one, walked back to the cabins, had another cup of tea, checked out more bikes, walked back to the main street & enjoyed a very nice meal, I think we did better than "Pub Grub".

Day 10 - Stanley to Ulverston, this is the last day on the bikes, the Rally concludes tonight, with a farewell dinner at the Rowing Club. We make the most of these great roads that will take us through beautiful farming country to Table Cape Lighthouse, then on to Wynyard for lunch. Out the back of the main street is the Wonders of Wynyard veteran car & bike museum, mostly cars. The majority were Ford, one being a 1904 Model A, believed to be the only one still existing in the world, a 1905 a 1907 then more including early T models & a 1929 A model, only a few bikes, the only one I can remember was an early Indian, sorry I was so taken by the Fords, having always owned them myself.

Although the weather had been good so far today you could see it was going to rain, so we decided not to stop at Penguin but go straight through to Ulverstone, take the three bikes out to the other side of town, where Craig's van had been stored, load them up, then back to our motel & chill out for the arvo. There was a meeting point where a courtesy bus would pick you up & take you to tonight's Farwell Dinner, but it was a fair walk to get to it. By the time we were ready to go it was P15Sing down with rain and we would be drowned walking to the pickup point. Ross & I were volunteered to get in the back of the van with the bikes, the other three went in the front on the comfy seats. Jon had his own van and was staying somewhere else anyway, so that's what we did.



The oldest Bike on the Rally 1926

The Rowing Club had decided to separate the dinner guest into two rooms instead of one, connecting the two via video link. The Coronavirus (which limited numbers in groups) had started, although we had been isolated inside our helmets, on our motorbikes & away from TV news etc. Information from home phone calls, made us realise this was VERY VERY serious!! The night went well, even though the shine had been taken off it a bit, with the two rooms, but without doing that, there was no night. Jon Munns Y13 won a trophy, as it deserved too, 83yr old bike, didn't just keep up, but on occasions set the pace. Good food, good wine, good company, a quick chat with as many other participants as possible and the night was too soon over. Back in the van, us in the back again, cup of tea when we got back to the motel. Lots of reflection on what we had

done in the last 10 days and what were we going to do tomorrow, as we were waiting in Devonport till late arvo to board the boat.

Next morning, we made a trip into town for breakfast, same mode of transport as last night, already packed the bag, ready to strap onto bike, no luggage van now, we're on our own. We went back to the motel. Phil & I loaded up our bikes, we all went to reception to check out, a harsh reality check awaited us.



At the Farewell Dinner

The motel owner told us, as a direct result of the coronavirus all bookings after Sunday (and this was Friday morning) had been cancelled, next week the place would be empty. That took the smile of our faces.

Back on the road for the short ride/drive to Devonport, we found a large carpark, just off the main drag to leave the wheels. Phil new this neat Antique Collectable warehouse on the harbour waterfront which was a short walk away. That'll do, we spent some time there browsing, it went forever and was huge. Time soon went and unfortunately when we re-emerged from the bowels of the shop, it was raining heavy, the bikes, with bags strapped on the back, were in the rain. It finally eased 15min later and we made a dash for the carpark, only to discover an undercover area we'd not seen when we pulled up, so we moved the bikes to the dry area. We found our way to the main street, lots of shops closed – eery, it was starting to sink in, found a café open, had some lunch, then went to the library, were confronted with a bottle of hand sanitiser and a sign “must use before entering” got a book out, nestled into a comfortable chair, read & slept the afternoon away. The coffee shop downstairs was open, so one last caffeine fix before riding around to the other side of the harbour to board.

The rain had stopped, but the wind was strong & from the southwest, it was not going to be a smooth crossing & it wasn't. We got onboard reasonably quickly, helped tie the bikes down, up two flights of stairs to the lounge, acquired a table- food – drinks- chatted, then to the bunks in the small cabin. I'd drawn the short straw and had the top bunk. The boat was Rockin and a Rollin, to the point, where you felt like you could be tossed out (can't happen) but you feels like it could. Around 1 or 2am we must have passed through the heads & into Port Phillip Bay, instant calm, slept solid from then until the wakeup call at 5-30am. Dave had been up since 4am (said he couldn't sleep) so he went back to the lounge, had a couple of gaspers and greeted us with his smiley face when we arrived.

The call came to go to your vehicles, that was it, all over, the guys with the vans would go one-way, the bikes the other. We wished everybody a safe trip home and we'd talk soon, no final breakfast in South Melbourne, the cafés were shut!

We were back from 10+ days of isolation, we had a lot of catching up to do, the world as we knew it had changed!!

Peter McColl

A Story of a Hobart bicycle and motorcycle frame manufacturer, Walter GAHAGAN of Gahagan & Beddome and a G&B Abingdon King Dick

An OVR Original from Dick Prisgrove – Sunbury, Vic

The G & B liveried with Tasmanian Registration 614 Abingdon King Dick, Eng. No: 74; matching Frame Numbers; 75 & matching fork Numbers 34, arrived in Australia in the first quarter of 1910, but to what port remains unsolved, but in all likelihood it was Hobart as a private import, which, if registration records from Tasmania are a guide, was common place at this time. Also what the exact purpose of numbering the 3 sections that combine to make the frame and the 4 main sections that combine to make a fork set was for, isn't known. But a best guess might be for accounting (ledgering), production to sales, after all by 1909 the *Pioneer days* were past and the profit and pragmatic age of British motoring had begun.



*This is the first photographic record of the G & B King Dick and sporting a NSW number plate. The gentleman astride is Mr **Albert Harold WALTERS** and the trees in the background are ornamental trees planted by Albert at Lutana, Tasmania in July 1910, the photo being taken in December 1913 while Albert was having Christmas in Tasmania, before he returned to Sydney in Jan 1914. This photo has accompanied the bike for half a century.*

G&B are the surname initials of Mr Wally Gahagan and Mr Charles Beddome who, in partnership bought *The Rover and Tasma Bicycles* business located at 133 Elizabeth Street (133 cited in an article written in *The Mercury*) Hobart from Mr Sim King in Sept 1908. Prior to this, Wally Gahagan had been the Manager at Mr Sim King's Hobart bicycle business, Sim King was already an established bike *and* motor trader, who was an Agent for *The Rover Cycle Co, England* with authorised Agents in:

- Ulverstone (Mr Norman L. Frost Proprietor of *Devon Cycle and Motor Works*),
- Devonport (Mr Arthur Phillips),
- Burnie (Mr A.W. Tattersall &Co.) and in,
- Sheffield (Mr H.J. Youd).

King himself, who as early as July 1907 had already relocated to concentrate and develop these business interests from 87 Brisbane Street, Launceston, leaving Wally Gahagan to run and manage his interests in Hobart and Huonville. Sim King's business flourishes into the 1990's.



In 1964 Mst Richard Locke and his Father found the Abingdon King Dick in a shed where it had been put there by Albert Walters in 1918, almost 45 years earlier. They bought the bike for £10 from a now aging Albert. You can still make out the remnants of the G & B logo and the Abingdon-Ecco water-slide transfers on the petrol and oil tank...



...& the photo that that Richard took that clearly showed the eng. No and the distinctive double-stamped letters 'PNB'

Interestingly I have now photographed a considerable number of confirmed Abingdon Works engine & frame components and mis, double & over-stamping is more common yan you'd think!

What 'PNB' stands for or means, remains unknown.

The mid to late 1880's saw Wally Gahagan begin learning his craft of bicycle manufacturing during a 6 year apprenticeship at the *New Zealand Cycle Works*, Christchurch, New Zealand before he relocated to Sydney, NSW to take up an appointment as a Foreman at *The Sydney Cycle Company* around 1897/98, which he held for 3 years,

The Daily Post, Hobart. Though in 1918, when enlisting for *Active Service* when asked if he'd ever served an *Apprenticeship*, he answers *no*. He also states his *Profession* as *Motor Importer*.



The hand painted G & B logo painted from the transfer tracing from the 'barn find' by Mr Guy Leopold



A complete Abingdon-Ecco water slide

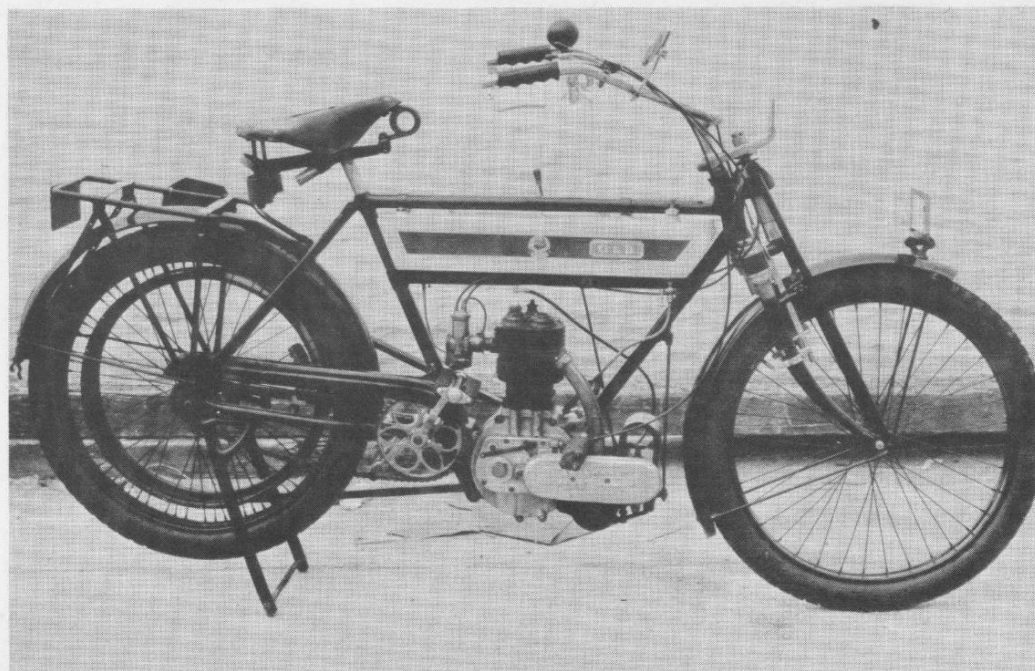
Courtesy of Mr Bill Veitch of New Zealand.

The young Gahagan beginnings in Australia got off to a shaky start, when in Jan 1898 he was charged and found guilty of *Furious Driving* (his bicycle), when he struck and seriously injured a pedestrian on William Street, Darlinghurst. He was eventually sentenced and released from a 9 month custodial sentence on the last day of the trial under the *First Offenders Act*; but only after agreeing to 2 sureties, each £75! The trial(s) continuing through to the end of July, the same year. Wally's furious cycling and the collision with a pedestrian, made news in almost every Australian mainland newspaper, for many months. This, and the theft of his own bicycle in Nov 1900, may well have been contributing factors that lead to him resigning from *Sydney Cycle Company* with the intent to return to NZ a few years later. However, Wally Gahagan hears that Sim King was looking for a Foreman and so begins Wally Gahagan's life in Tasmania, around 1901/02.

Less is known about Mr Charles Boswell Beddome, a qualified Engineer, who had served for some years at *Mort's Dock* in Sydney also had experience in the Cycle and Motor Trade and had purchased a Rover cycle in 1897 which he still had with him when he went into business with Gahagan, he takes sole charge for the manufacturing and repairing department. It's possible the *Tasma* bicycle, became the *G&B* bicycle, in Hobart at least. In later bankruptcy documents for Walter Gahagan, its Beddome's Wife, Alice Adelaide, who is listed as a notable creditor, owed £179/12/11 and living in Sydney. *Chas Beddome dies of possible heat stroke, along with another unfortunate soul on a hot Sydney day when found in his car on 23rd December 1951.*

Their first advert in the *Daily News*, in Oct 1908 gives some indication to where the pair's thinking was going when it is clear they wanted to clear the cycle and motorcycle stock they had bought from King and sometime soon after they begin to manufacture their own bicycles under the *G&B* brand with a cycle exhibit later in the same month. They promote local cycling and race events through The *Suburban Cycle Club* which Wally Gahagan was Hon. Secretary, the Rover, Beestom-Humber and now their own brand, *The G & B*, which you could have built from £10/10/ by the beginning of Nov 1908.

A 1908 Abingdon King Dick imported and assembled by Messrs Gagahan & Beddome of Tasmania, and sold with their initials on the tank.



The photo with caption as it appeared in Mr David Dumble's booklet in 1974. The cited date in the accompanying caption, is now known to be, incorrect.

Over the Christmas of 1908 and well into 1909, Gagahan & Beddome promote the business very heavily in advertising in *The Mercury* and less so in *The Daily News*, both in Hobart. It is unclear what happens almost a year later to the day of beginning their partnership, but by mid Oct 1909, it appears Beddome leaves and Gagahan continues trading as Wally Gagahan and retains the *G & B* brand, according to an ad placed in *The Mercury Hobart* on the 15th October 1909. Whether the ventures into motorcycles was a factor in Beddome leaving or taking a back seat is not known. But it is clear that from the beginning, there's a definite interest in motorcycles as records from the *Motor traffic Act of 1907*, from March 1909 shows that Gagahan and Beddome to a lesser extent, are buying and selling motorcycles in their own names as well as in the business name of *G & B*.

On stand 115 for the East London Rubber Co. at the Stanley Show, London; sees the new 3&1/2HP Abingdon King Dick make its debut on the 22nd November 1909. Coincidentally, November is the same month Abingdon-Works files for patent of their distinctively unique sliding fork assembly, though oddly, not manufactured to this design; the application for patent itself not fully lodged until May 1910.

The first advert for the *new* Abingdon King Dicks in Australia is placed by Mr E.W. Brown in Melbourne on Christmas day 1909 in *The Age* and the marques name soon features in ads in *The Capricornia Rockhampton* Rockhampton Qld by Mr A.E. Beal by May 1910; in *The Daily Telegraph* Sydney for Bennett & Woods (B&W), but under their own brand, *Speedwell* in Aug 1910. It is interesting to note that most references to King Dick motorcycles by B&W, is under the *Kerry-Abingdon* name, a reference for the marques name for sale in the UK under an agreement with the East London Rubber Co (ELRC) founder, Alfred Kerry who had a joint venture with Abingdon Works. A Representative from ELRC had been on a sales visit to Australia a few years before. Irrespective of that, all the machines were built under the same roof at the Abingdon (Ecco) Works in Birmingham.



Mr Ross Martin, foundation member of the Antique Motorcycle Club of Australia and FIM Official whom I first met while volunteering as a Medical Radio Controller at Phillip Island about 17 years ago and kindly asked me to be the next G & B King Dick's Custodian. And Mr John Hill. Location is in my shed in January 2019, at a time when I was building the wheels

The first ad for the marque's *new* model in Tasmania first appears 29th March 1911 in *The North Western Advocate and Emu Bay Times* for N.L. Frost of the *Devon Cycle and Motor Works*, Ulverstone. I cannot

establish an exact date, but around or soon after this, an article appears in the *Daily Post* in Launceston, hinting that indeed having grown his business in Launceston, Mr Sim King might well have been Tasmania's Agent Principle for Abingdon (in addition to Rover) motorcycles into Tasmania at this time. More research needs to be done to conclude this. Nevertheless, a year earlier on the 14th March 1910, Chas Beddome, registers a new Abingdon King Dick and is given number plate 611. Four days later, on the 18th March a Mr Henry J. Fitzgerald of 56 Queens Street, Sandy Bay registers another of the new Abingdon King Dick's and is given number plate 614. Both motorcycles making an appearance on the other side of the planet just 14 weeks of the Stanley show!

The two King Dicks soon change hands however, with 611 first being sold to James H. Walters on the 7th October 1910; followed a short time later 614 is sold to James's brother Albert H. Walters on the 3rd December. 611 stays with James Walters until he sells it to a Mr C. McWilliams in Feb. 1914, initially gives his address as Oatlands in Central Tasmania before he and King Dick have relocated to Argyle Street in Hobart by 19th March 1916. Mr C. McWilliams sells the bike on the 30th November 1917 to Mr Marcus George Gibson of 284 Argyle Street, Hobart. This is the last known time and place of this very early King Dick, but not of Marcus Gibson who becomes a long serving Judge from 1951 to 1968. A little more on Judge Gibson and Albert Walters a little later.

In the meantime, Wally Gahagan on Aug 1911 places ads in *The Mercury* for "*a mechanic / decarboniser to repair engines*". This suggests he is expanding further in motorcycles, placing his first ad confirming this in the *Daily Post* Hobart on the 14th Sept 1912 as an Agent for Rover and G&B cycles, but using a King Dick motorcycle sketch in the ad. This ad is 2 years after he is got into motorcycles and selling the 2 King Dicks in early 1910. And in November 1912 he places an ad in *The Mercury* as "*the sole agent for Abingdon, Rover and now F.N. motorcycles*"; Wally Gahagan's business appears to be on the up.

In Late Oct 1913 in an article in *The Mercury*, Hobart, at a recent exhibition Wally Gahagan has on display within the confines of an improvised marquee, "*The firm also shows a G & B **motorcycle** of their own make. They make several different models of this, with fixed engines and free engines and various speed gears, and it is sold at prices to suit everybody.*" The same article describes the vast range on motorcycle accessories, new G&B cycles. Wally Gahagan is cited as *enterprising with a standalone display*. This is confirmed when in 1915 vehicle makes first appear within the notices of the *Motor Traffic Act of 1907* and G & B motorcycles are cited using both *Precision* and *J.A. Prestwich* engines are recorded.



The G & B liveryed Abingdon King Dick as I received it...tired & missing a lot of its original parts



A young and dashing John Hill all set for open road in 1967/68

The last ad Wally Gahagan places as an Abingdon Agent is in *The Mercury*, Hobart a few weeks later at the end of Nov 1913. Going into 1914, Wally Gahagan seems to placing ads at farmers, many for second hand machines, new G&B's and the ever present, Rovers and towards the end of 1914 the larger *Pope Motorcycles* appear in Wally's ads and in Oct 1914 he has also opened a second shop at 73 Collins Street, Hobart from which he is selling the Popes, *The Mercury*. And another year later, almost to the day in October 1915, Wally Gahagan branches out into *Studebaker Cars* as well as making *G&B Motorcycles*, And again, almost another year later, in October 1916, Wally Gahagan has taken on *Harley Davidson*, almost certainly due to supply shortages from the UK and has relocated from 133 Elizabeth St to 125 Elizabeth Street according to *The Mercury*, Hobart. And citing his premises at Collins Street as *Wally Gahagan's Garage*. Things are moving on! Mr John Hill of Sandy Bay in Tasmania, recalls seeing the doors from *Wally Gahagan's Garage* being taken away on the back of a lorry as he sat in his Office at the ANZ bank around 1967/68.

Abruptly, by March 1917, Wally Gahagan's ads appear smaller and a little less frequent and this trend continues through to July 1918. I wasn't able to quantify this until I came upon..." SC84 "Documents in cases of Bankruptcy" for *Walter Gahagan in 1917*", filed in the Supreme Court of Tasmania 1st Nov 1917, with a *sale of all goods* set for Jan 1918, *The Mercury*, Hobart. Wally Gahagan himself still has *Harley Davidsons*, but trading now

solely out of Argyle Street; *The World*, Hobart Aug 5th. 1918. In Sept 2018, Gahagan, now at almost 45 years old, as mentioned earlier enlists in Sydney, NSW with the Australian Military Forces for *Service Abroad*.

The Last occupation I found on Wally Gahagan is on the 10th October 1922 when he is appointed as taking over the Management for *Goodrich Tyres* for Messrs H.C. Heathorn and Co. *The Mercury*, Hobart, also in *The Mercury*, Hobart 5 years later in Nov 1927, it's reported that Wally marries Coral Worsley from Margate, Tasmania, in faraway Warwick, Queensland. Walter Gahagan dies in May 1936, aged 62 and is buried in Botany Cemetery. But this isn't the end of the G & B story.

Albert H. Walters born in 1887, was quite an enterprising and remarkable man, as an accomplished Cabinet & furniture Maker, starting Southern Cross Cabinet, which at one time advertised "...under the patronage of the State Governor of Tasmania and the Australian Federal Government". He moves to Sydney in June of 1911 setting up a business at 438 Harris Street, Ultimo to expand his Journey interests' interstate and taking his Abingdon King Dick motorcycle with him. As was the law at that time, he registers the bike there and is issued with number plate 2707. And during this period in Sydney he becomes involved more in motorcycling becoming Vice President, acting Treasurer and Chairman of Committee of the Motorcycle Club of NSW. He also was an elected delegate for the first ever meeting which form the Auto Cycle Association (ACA) of NSW which was held at Sports Clubrooms in Hunter Street and elected to the first Committee of the ACA on the 17th October 1913. He also gets to know and ride with the Melbourne to Sydney *speed demons* and record breakers of the day, Mr J.A.Fair and Mr W. Tormey. He is on the same ACA committee and Fair.

In March 1914 he returns to Tasmania and re-registers the King Dick back into Tasmania and is issued with the number plate, 2764. He builds a new and larger factory at 17 Risdon Road, New Town and manage his ornamental and orchid trees at Lutana, which unfortunately is destroyed in 1917 as a result of pollution from the recently constructed nearby Zinc Works. And there at Risdon Road the story of the second G & B liveried Abingdon King Dicks may have ended, but for the enthusiasm of a 15 year teenager.



Myself (left), Ms Julie WALTERS (Albert's granddaughter), Mr John HILL and Mr Richard LOCKE at a get together in May 2019 at Mr Hill's Sandy Bay home. NB Albert's diary which was so, so valuable in writing this story on my lap. And the original photo under Richard's leg that a small copy of that as accompanied the past 3 owners, which was the inspiration for this story.

On the 6th June 1964 a Mr John Locke, a veteran car enthusiast, takes his young Son, Richard to look at a veteran motorcycle he thinks might be an interesting project to get him into. It is the 1910 G & B King Dick, looking tired, but all there! Richard and his Dad meet with a now elderly Albert Walters and negotiate the sale of the bike for £10 and so begins its restoration to bring it back to its former glory. Richard however, by aged 17 has moved-on and is now becoming an accomplished MotoX rider and thus the G & B has to go to fund the new interest. And in 1966, sometime after Feb, Richard sells the partially restored King Dick for \$100 to Mr John Hill, a friend of Mr John Locke who oversee the completion and return of the G & B King Dick to rideable rallying condition.

Mr John Hill, who becomes a Manager with the ANZ Bank, brings the bike to Victoria in 1968 when he moves there to further his career, but before doing so he register the G & B for last time in Tasmania and is issued with number plate WDZ052. John rallies the bike in Melbourne and joins the Veteran Motorcycle Club of Victoria where it spotted a rallies and its photo published in a VMCC periodical for a bike show in 1970, and in Mr David Dumble's booklet from 1974, *Veteran Motorcycles in Australia* and again in 1996 is mentioned in Mr Robert Seward's book, *A-Z of Australian-Made Motorcycles 1803-1942*. And during the next 10 years the G & B changes hands twice more and after parts from it are removed for another project the bike is again stored away for 3 decades; until over a cup of coffee and a chat at the Gisborne shopping Centre, "*Dick, how would you like the G & B as a restoration project?*"

I said yes, not knowing the first thing about early British veteran motorcycles and even less about the bike I had just bought, other than it was first thought (incorrectly), to be an Australian built motorcycle, and I owned King Dick spanners! But as I had just finished restoring a 1969 Triumph T150 that had been in Melbourne all of its life since it was first registered at the Exhibition Building, Carlton in March 1969 and begun a *new* career as a self-taught fitter & turner after a 30 year career as a Paramedic, I thought, *why not...what possibly could go wrong!*





A work in progress...having sourced some original parts and replicating others...Feb 2020



One notable consistency found all over the bike are these same pattern of striated hand filing marks, found on the exhaust, all lugs and castings and on the head stem bearing tube and beneath the fork sleeves. 'Slapstick build like'. Uncharacteristic I though from Abingdon Works; after all, they'd been precision engineering gun parts for almost 4 decades before.

Top quality memories

A chance discovery of an old filing cabinet has rekindled memories of a unique Tasmanian business. BRENDON BOWES writes that the label Southern Cross was once the hallmark of top quality office furniture.

WHEN Donald Walters spied a blackwood filing cabinet in a Hobart antique shop, he immediately recognised it as a product of Southern Cross Joinery, a cabinetmaking business established by his father Albert Walters at New Town in the early 1900s.

Donald's brothers Alan, Colin and Keith Walters had worked in the factory until its closure.

Prompted by his find, research by Mr Walters, a retired civil engineer of Bellerive, has revealed that early this century Southern Cross was the only Australian maker of filing cabinets.

It was a thriving business exporting all over Australia and won awards at British Empire Exhibitions in the 1920s.

The filing cabinets were made with such care and attention to detail that some have survived to the present



Albert Walters on one of his favorite motorcycles.

day and items marked with this label can command a high price at antique shops.

Delving into family history has uncovered an illustrated catalogue, patent certificates and a diary his father kept between 1907 and 1916 revealing fascinating details about Southern Cross.

Starting from a small workshop at New Town, Albert Walters established the well-known factory at Risdon Rd noted for top-quality hand-made furniture produced from the finest blackwood and select Tasmanian oak.

The firm made an important contribution to the state's economy through manufacturing office equipment, joinery

and shopfitting, and construction of houses, stores and even a church.

Born in 1887, Albert was one of 11 children and after his apprenticeship as a cabinetmaker and joiner in Hobart started working for Southern Sales Co of Sydney in 1908.

He was assembling prefabricated American-made office furniture, including filing and card index cabinets.

Recognising that there was a rosy market for office filing systems it started him thinking.

Returning to Hobart and registering the name Southern Cross Systems, Albert began manufacturing filing and card index cabinets to his own designs. Business quickly expanded with sales to offices throughout Australia.

A special cabinet was made for Lady Barron, wife of Tasmanian Governor Sir Harry Barron, resulting in Vice-Regal patronage when more cabinets were ordered for Government House.

Large orders followed for filing cabinets and massive 20 drawer and 30 drawer ledger cabinets for the Hobart General Post Office and the Supreme Court registry.

In 1910 Albert arranged with agents J. Walch & Sons to print an illustrated catalogue proudly acknowledging that the business was "under the patronage of the State Governor of Tasmania and the Australian Federal Government".

In July 1914 he moved to a larger factory at 17 Risdon Road, a three horsepower electric motor powering the machinery.

A man of restless energy, Albert also owned and managed an orchard at Lutana and at one time investigated the manufacture of cricket stumps. He was also an inventor and patented an ingenious filing cabinet locking mechanism.

Closing the top drawer locked all those under-

neath it, requiring only one lock and key for each cabinet.

Albert also loved cycling and achieved the fastest time in a Launceston to Hobart race.

Enthusiasm for motor cycles saw him purchase an Abington King Dick in 1910 which had no gears and was push started.

In 1915 he made a promotional visit to Melbourne displaying Southern Cross cabinets in Federal Parliament House and meeting government ministers. The cabinets were much admired, resulting in orders from government departments.

His products also featured at the world's largest trade fair in London's

Wembley Centre where British Empire Exhibitions were staged.

At the 1924 exhibition a Southern Cross filing cabinet was entered by J. Walch & Sons.

It was specially made from Tasmanian fiddle-back blackwood, winning a medal and certificate of honour for Albert. The cabinet also won a medal at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition, and was later used in the office of Sir Geoffrey Walch, Managing Director of Walch & Sons.

In the 1920s Albert's sons Alan, Colin and Keith were apprenticed and worked in the family business. Donald also serving there for a short period then working for a firm of consulting engineers for over 40 years.



Jim Oakham, left, and Rod Boucher with a surviving Southern Cross filing cabinet now on show at The Mercury's Print Museum.

Southern Cross building projects included St Michael's Anglican Church at Orford in 1929, a new storey on the Dover Hotel, and in recent years joinery for the University chemistry building, Rosny College and Cosgrove High School.

In 1969 the family decided to sell the Risdon Rd factory site at New Town and the adjacent residence to Coles.

Business continued from other premises and office equipment was still being made by Keith and his son Craig until 1984.

In 1986 Craig Walters left for Perth, WA to continue cabinetmaking and joinery in that state.

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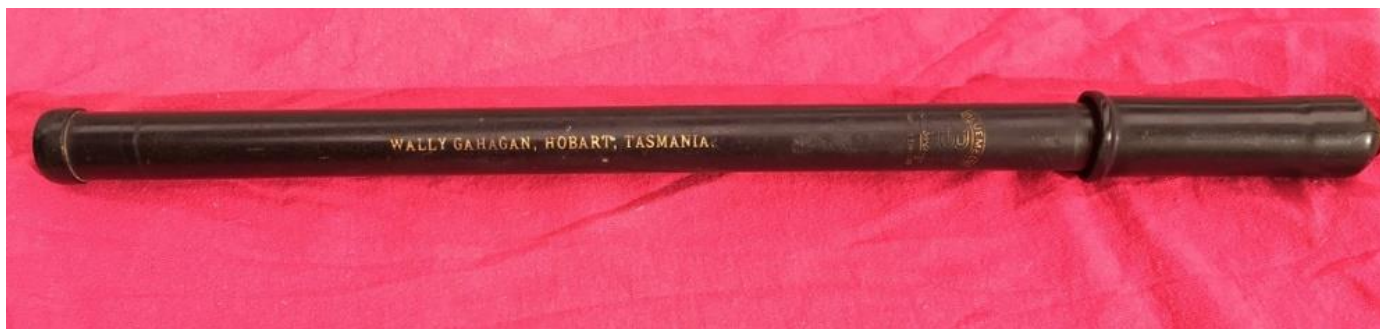
Mr Ray Stacey - Phone: (03) 6221 4271 BH (03) 6247 68 65 AH
Email: rst@hutchins.tas.edu.au

Dr Peter Carey - Phone: (03) 6225 4050 AH Fax: (03) 6225 1640
Email: pjsc@courier.tas.gov.au

Mr Peter Tatham: Phone: 6226 2098 Fax: 6226 2059
Email: peter.tatham@utas.edu.au

Sharon Starr, Administration Officer
National Office: PO Box 5084 Alberton SA 5014
Phone: 1800 222 390 Fax: (08) 8341 1635

It is unfortunate that so very little from the Wally Gahagan & Charles Beddome era has survived, the 1910 King Dick, sold by Wally Gahagan as a G & B when he sold it to Mr Henry J. Fitzgerald, a bicycle seen and photographed a few years ago at an agricultural show in Southern Tasmania. And an engraved *Wally Gahagan, Hobart Tasmania Bluemel's Sterling* bicycle pump which was most generously given to me by Mr Howard Burrows, seems to be it!



At Abingdon Works, they were more than happy to see their machines re-badged both here and in New Zealand:

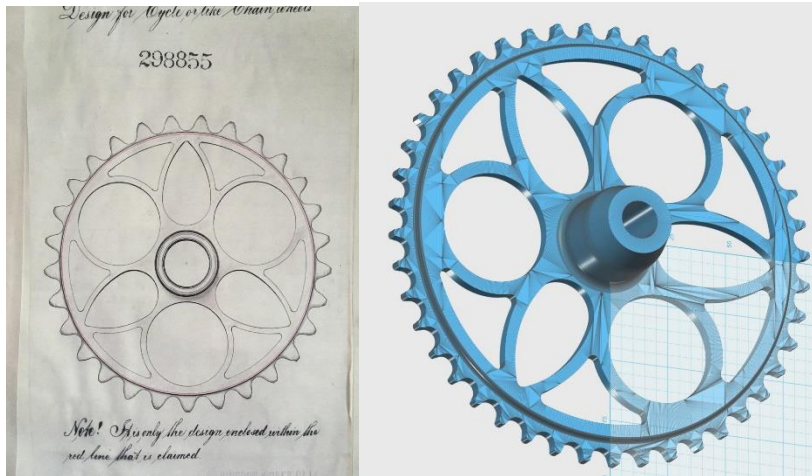
G & B in Hobart - Tas,
Speedwell in Sydney - NSW,
Favourite in Peterborough - SA and
Bennett Bros, Christchurch - NZ.

King Dick survives to this day and in Birmingham making quality hand tools.

As for His Worship, Marcus George Gibson and the other G & B with number plate 611. Well, as this story is set in Tasmania, he turns out to be a relative of Mr John Hills's Wife, Roslyn...but that's a story for another time.

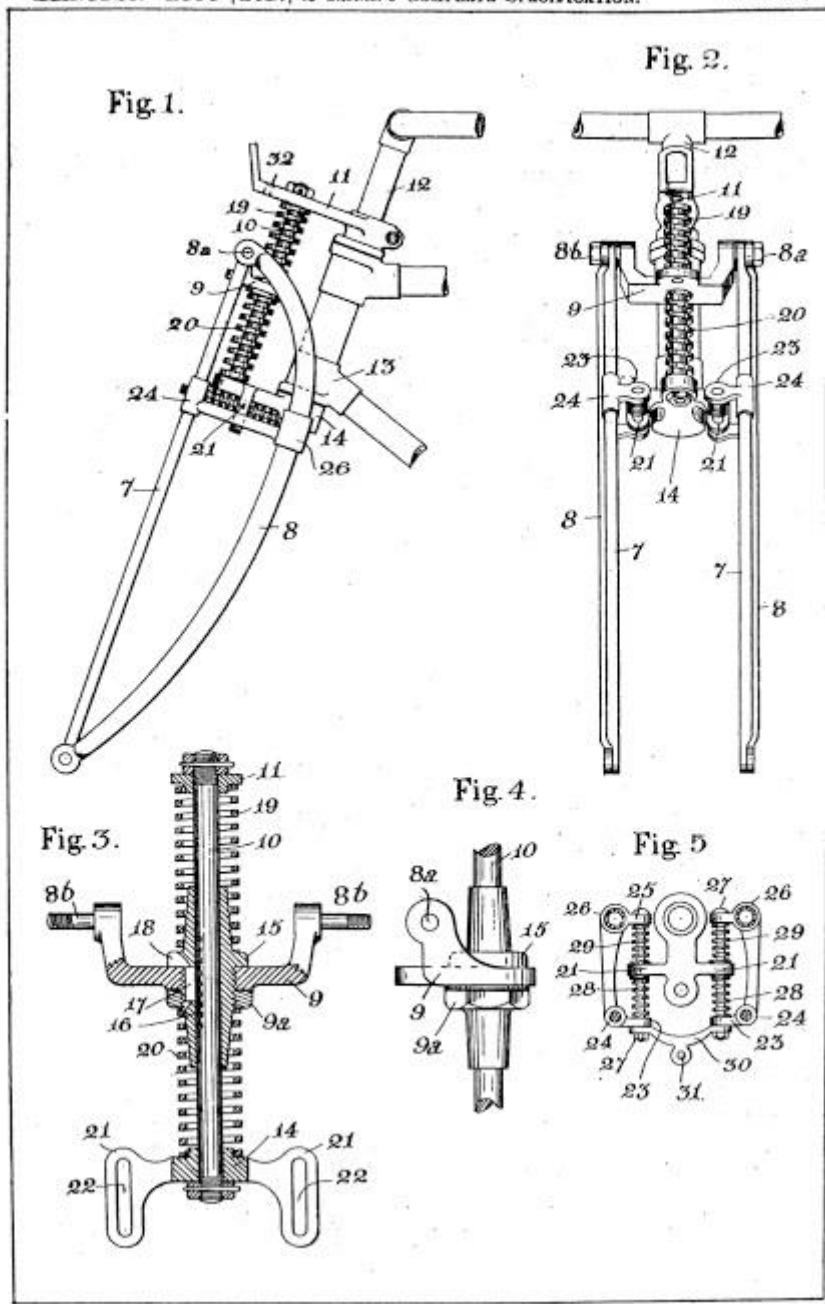


The G & B in pieces, the day Mr John Hill collected it from Richard & John Locke in 1966.



A.D. 1909. Nov. 1. N^o. 25,057.
ABINGDON—ECCO [LTD.] & another's COMPLETE SPECIFICATION. (1 SHEET)

[This Drawing is a reproduction of the Original on a reduced scale.]



Malby & Sons, Photo-Litho.

Original drawings from Mr John Gray (Abingdon Works), sent for patent...NB Fig5 that was never incorporated



References:

- A variety of Mainland Hobart and Tasmanian Newspapers, both articles and advertisements;
- The State Library and Archive Service of Tasmanian and the National Archives of Australia, National Reference Service, North Melbourne
- Mr Ken Young, Launceston, author of 100 Clicks
- TROVE, The Tasmanian Police Gazettes 1909 through to 1960
- Ms Julies WALTERS and the extended Walters Family
- Messes Richard LOCKE; John HILL; Ross MARTIN; William (Bill) Whitley (author The Quest for King Dick 2017), Leon MITCHELL; Howard BURROWS; Mr Bill VEITCH (NZ); Chris TAYLOR (NZ); Damien DUIGAN (Shannon's), Stuart Roberts (Shannon's), Dave MOORE; Antony GULLICK; Mr Brian BENNETT.

Dickie my Lad, what a fantastic story and thanks on behalf of the world-wide OVR community for sharing it with us. A great contribution example for others to follow. Martyn, Editor OVR

An Effective Vincent Steering Damper ,



Problem is :

1. How to install an effective steering damper on a Vincent without use of the sidecar mount points.
2. Ensuring that, if fitted, there is no interference with a crash bar
3. Ensuring clearance of all parts thru the FULL travel of the steering damper
4. Ensuring linear action so there is equal damping at both sides of the steering arc i.e. side to side movement of the handlebars
5. Retain the ability to 'adjust' the damping while under way
6. No modifications to the bike itself.

Chosen damper is a time proven standard Kawasaki step adjustable damper manufactured by NHK Precision of Japan. Final design has the damper positioned across the front of the motor, with the adjustment knob on the right hand side of the bike, so it can be operated by the riders right hand.



Two brackets are required, one for each end of the damper. You may consider making up trial fit brackets from light weight material till you are happy with the fit and damper travel BEFORE you get into the 3 mm steel. I ended up with about 3 of the head brackets and about 6 of the head stem brackets before I was happy.

The Head/Engine Bracket

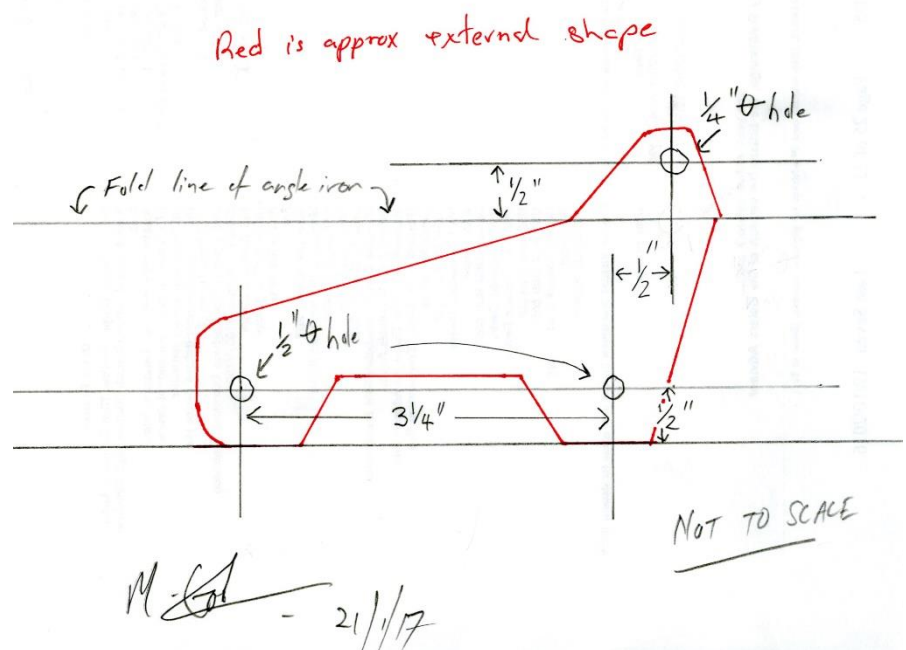
The first bracket is mounted on the right hand side of the front head, using 2 of the head bracket studs n nuts – see

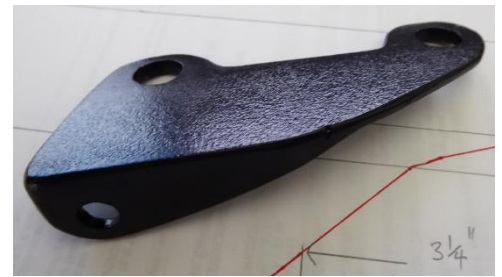
photo

This bracket has been made from 50 x 50 x 3mm angle iron then drilled, cut then filed to shape. Here is the drawing/dimensions for the bracket. After finishing I painted it with an acid etch primer then black enamel.

You can see in the photo exactly how it's fitted to the motor. I used blue Loctite on the nuts on top of the bracket to ensure they were secure. The nut that holds the damper itself is a nylock fitted with blue Loctite as fail safe.

Final - Engine mount for Damper
Material 50 x 50 x 3 mm mild steel angle iron





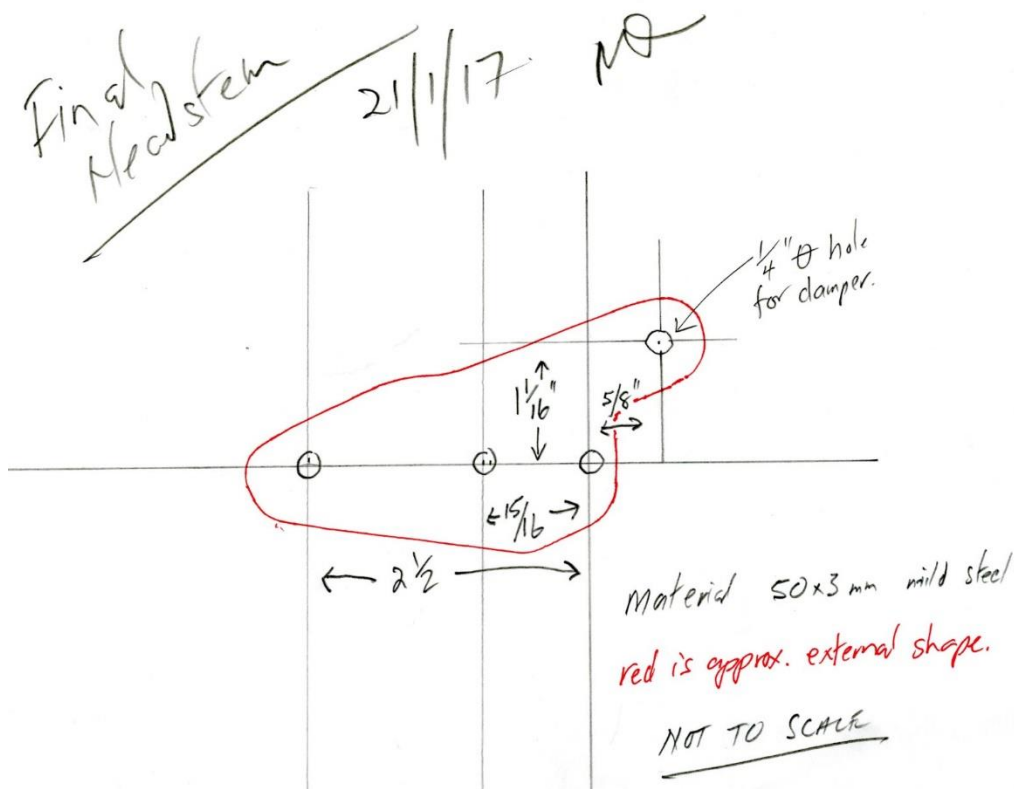
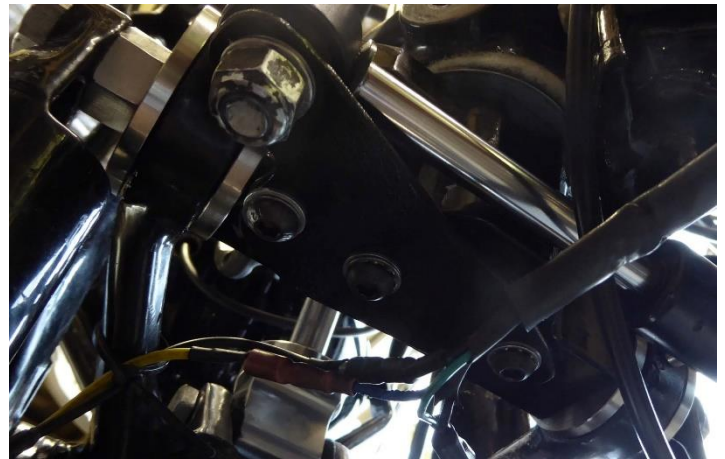
The Head Stem Bracket

The other end of the damper needs to be attached to the under side of the head stem as depicted in the picture

This was fashioned from a length of flat 50 x 3mm steel. To secure it to the underside of the headstem I drilled and tapped the holes into the underside of the headstem. It's a smart move to do that first and only then do the holes in the bracket, making sure they line up.

ALL FIXTURES MUST BE HIGH TENSILE – do not be tempted to use stainless for if/when you need to rely on the damper doing its job, the forces all be they momentary, will be very high.

At the left hand end of the damper is a rubber bush. You need to fit a suitable sized washer each side of the rubber bush then use a high tensile nut and bolt to secure to it to the bracket. The damper fitting goes ON TOP of the bracket with the nut and a washer below. Again I used a nyloc nut AND blue Loctite.



On full Right lock.



Note the clearance of the damper rod at the rear of the head stem when seen from the left side of the bike. That rod must NEVER make contact with any part of the bike.



Still at max right hand lock, with almost all of the damper travel used

On Full LEFT lock

Video.

<https://youtu.be/T6yJBN4Refw>

Possible Damper Supply



<https://www.ebay.com.au/itm/NEW-steering-damper-stabilizer-jap-NHK-ODM500-for-KAWASAKI-z1-h1-h2-s3-kh750-kh/352927594745?hash=item522c1fb8f9:g:enwAAOSwCmBd1P~G&frcectupt=true>

<https://www.ebay.com.au/itm/NEW-NHK-ODM500-263mm-Steering-Damper-Z900-Z1000-GS750-RD350-YPVS-Cafe-Racer/113797143067?hash=item1a7ed69a1b:g:YfkAAOSwpP9Y7JcP&frcectupt=true>

<https://www.ebay.com.au/itm/Universal-Steering-Damper-NHK500-Cafe-Racer-Triumph-Royal-Enfield-Norton/223798629596?hash=item341b7014dc:g:cBoAAOSwtXVd-DF0&frcectupt=true>

A Gripping Yarn – The Vincent Clutch!

This is an OVR original based on material provided by OVR reader Colin Bryant.

During this global COVID-19 crisis it seems many of us have time to get into those tasks we had been putting off – in some cases for decades – and for at least one OVR reader it lead to a very interesting discovery, hidden away in the attic of his family home for the best part of 76 years – a discovery that shines new light on the origins of the clutch fitted by the Vincent H.R.D. works to all their series B, C and D twin engines.

OVR reader Colin Bryant when cleaning out the attic discovered the following magazine cuttings, dated October 14, 1944.

A MIXED bag forms the fare this week. There are experiences with little 'uns and with really big ones. First, a big 'un. Almost every week I get a letter or two about the Vincent-H.R.D. Rapide, that 1,000 c.c. twin of mighty power and superb steering. The only crab with this machine has been the clutch. All manner of variations of the normal theme have been tried—more plates, stronger springs, different linings, and so on—but always one has needed to be very careful if the clutch was not to start slipping. The maxim has had to be: "No power until the clutch is right home." Hence when changing up it has been a case of shutting right off, making the change and getting the clutch fully in before turning on any "steam." Obviously, one was wasting time and missing some of the joy of the machine's mighty performance.

Vincent-H.R.D.s have spent a lot of thought on the problem of getting a clutch that will transmit the power, and last week I tried a Rapide fitted with a new clutch. It is so laid out that the greater the torque the greater the grip. The basic idea, you will be interested to know, came from an actual owner of a Rapide.

The Rapide had obviously been lying by for some little time because the front tyre was decidedly soft and had to be pumped up. I flooded the two carburetors a soupçon, set the ignition control where I was told, namely, about one-third retarded, and, having found compression on one cylinder and eased the piston over top dead centre, gave a quite genteel thrust on the starter pedal. Two of these "digs" and the engine started. I was interested to find that the rorty twin which had been lying by required no real effort—would start with me standing astride and not exerting myself. Of

course, the compression ratio of the Rapide, for all its speed, is not high. The ratio with this machine, I believe, was 5.8 to 1.

I started up with the throttle barely open. Once the engine was firing I twisted the grip a fraction open, bringing the carburetors off the pilot jet; she stopped!

The clutch, I found, freed perfectly. One did not have to "wait for it" before engaging bottom gear. Bottom would go in instantly and without the slightest grunt or grab. How I wish I could say this of my own machine. Early in the war I had synthetic rubber clutch inserts fitted. In a series of comparative tests these particular inserts had come out top, doing more restarts on a given mighty hill than any other type. Unhappily, as I have found, they are remarkable for their grip under another condition. They have a habit of not wanting to free when the clutch lever is operated. Once, when the machine had been lying by for some time, I had to remove the clutch dome and separate each pair of plates with a screwdriver!

It Freed Perfectly

However, this Vincent-H.R.D. clutch was perfection as regards freeing, and you know how a clutch that really frees facilitates gear changing. I went along the road changing up and down, and turned the taps up wide in bottom and second gear, indulging in just those practices which help clutch slip to develop.

There was only one thing I queried on my return: whether when one was travelling slowly there was a slight oscillatory movement between the clutch members. The engine, which apparently had been as right as could be on its previous outing, was liable to misfire, which meant

Here is the balance of the item – keep in mind it's from 1944.

Among Other Things
"Torrens" Tries Out a
Clutch Designed So That
the Greater the Torque
the Greater is the Grip

that I could not be certain. If there is any flicking to and fro I do not think any owner will be grousing; at last, it seems, he will have a clutch that enables him to use the colossal urge to the full, and next time we have a road test it will not be necessary to state that while the machine would cruise at 90 the best speed over the "Quarter," owing to clutch slip, was only 98 m.p.h.—*only*

the right idea!

* * *

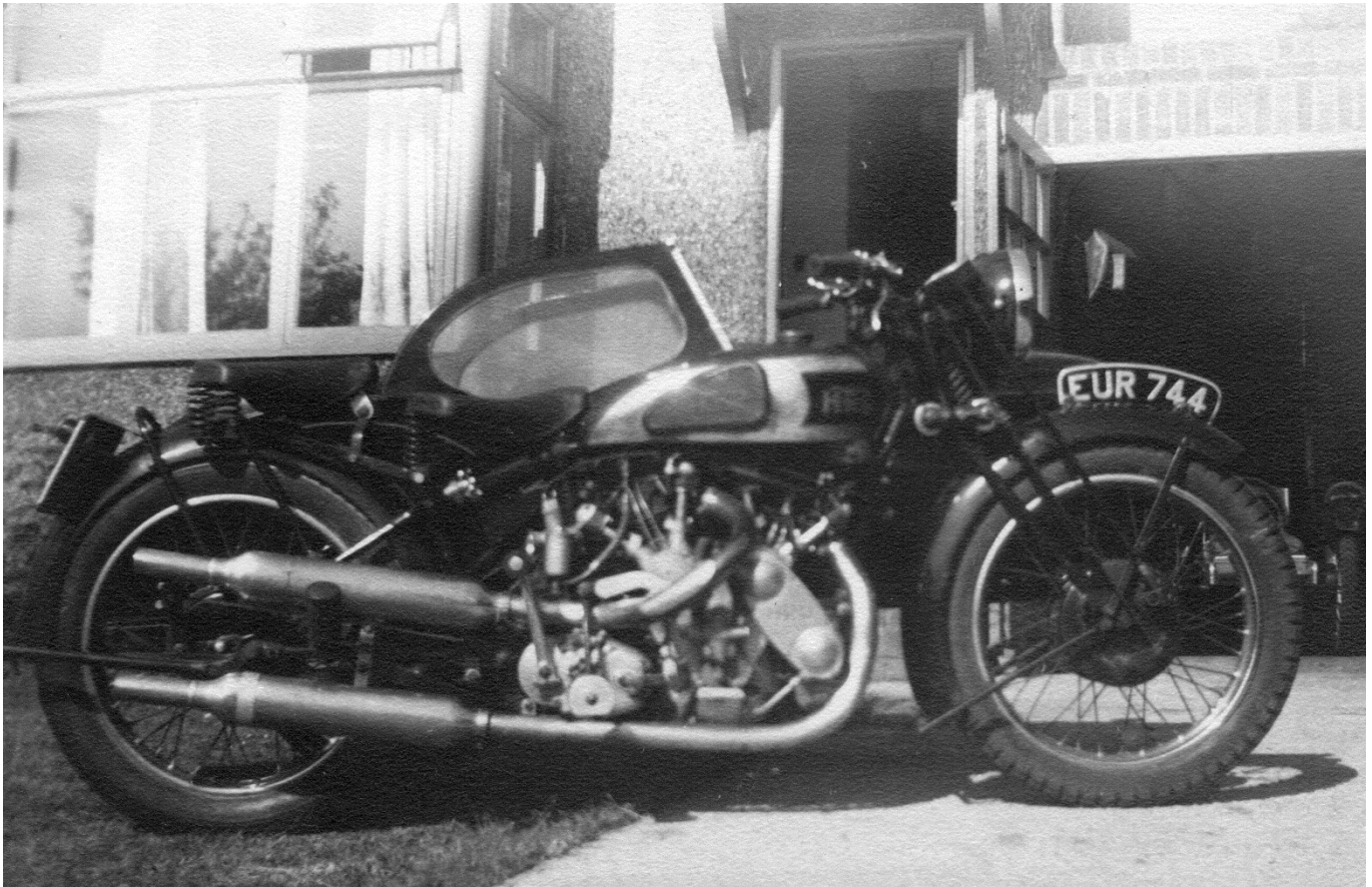
TALKING of design, I wonder if it is appreciated how big a part private owners play in the introduction of improvements? I was reminded of this last week when Graham Walker told me he had ridden a very "hot" Vincent-H.R.D. Rapide, equipped with a new design of clutch warranted to transmit the exceptional power of that very exceptional unit, yet almost as light as a feather so far as operation is concerned. It is no secret that in the past the clutch has provided slight headaches at Stevenage, but the new type, designed by an enthusiastic private owner, whose name cannot be disclosed yet because of pending patents, has certainly eliminated any anxieties in regard to this component.

And here is a separate cutting from the same time which interestingly mentions that the design had a patent pending on it. Remember, this is 1944 – before the Vincent HRD works had even seen the 'new clutch design'

Colin's father recounted much of what follows to Colin.

Colin's Grandad 'Dave' (actually Dennis) Bryant who was a keen motorcyclist and motorcycle repairer lost his right leg in a motorcycle accident in 1938 when he was struck by a lorry and so from then on he rode sidecar combinations which he built/adapted himself including linkages to transfer the foot gear controls to the other side and sometimes with the sidecar on the wrong side for British roads.

As a skilled cabinet maker, he spent the war working for De Havilland, just 11 miles from Stevenage, straight up the A1, building the wooden framed Mosquito fighter bomber by day and working on his motorcycles by night in his well-equipped workshop.



Pictured is 'Dave' Bryant's Vincent HRD Rapide Series A with his high grip self designed servo clutch, linkage to transfer gear pedal to LHS for one-legged rider, twin silencers & sidecar – as tested and described in the articles above in late 1944!

Getting back to the cuttings - on the back of the two cuttings in faded pencil they are dated 14/10/1944 when Graham Walker editor of 'Motorcycling Magazine' and 'Torrens' editor of 'The Motorcycle' actually road tested a working clutch in Colins granddads Vincent, EUR 744, well before the end of the War and well before Ernie Walsh joined Vincent and a year before the Vincent works had a servo assisted prototype working. Phil Irving also tells us they had a prototype on test well before Ernie Walsh started work on it in late 1945. In his autobiography Phil Irving writes as follows:

*“Vincent and Bill Clarke had thought up several new clutch designs before Bill was commissioned in the R.A.F., without producing any tangible results, **and in 1945 a one-legged soldier, who had been invalided out of the Army, came along with an idea which seemed to hold some promise.** The normal spring pressure would be augmented by being applied through a face-cam device, so that if the clutch slipped, the clamping pressure would automatically be increased. It so happened that a draftsman named Ernie Welch ... was looking for work after the war ended and came to us in the hope of finding an outlet for his talents. Vincent took him on and let him loose on the clutch design, which featured only one friction plate. I had my doubts about the thing, not because it might not work, but that it might work too well and, in effect, take itself out of the rider's control and engage itself at the wrong moment, but in a couple of weeks one was drawn, made and fitted to our Rapide DUR142 within the normal oil-bath chain case. To the inventor's delight, it worked like a charm, being much lighter to operate than the Burman clutch, yet it showed no tendency to slip under power. It was tried and praised by several riders...”*

Harper, in his book "The Vincent H.R.D. Story attributes the invention of the Vincent clutch to the Vincent works.

Stevens, in his publication "Know Thy Beast" tells the reader that "the makers (Vincent) evolved a fascinating and very unorthodox servo clutch which completely solved the problem of transmitting the very large engine power".

Now it may well be that the two Phil's improved on the design of 'Dave' Bryant after seeing his improved clutch fitted to EUR 744 during his visit to the works in 1945 but I can't help thinking they didn't give him, who Phil Irving refers to as "a one-legged soldier", the credit he deserved for the clutch he invented, that the Phil's examined in detail including borrowing a 'prototype' from Dave Bryant and that was subsequently adapted by the works and used in all Vincent twins from then on.

Colin Bryant tells us that he has been unable to locate any evidence of recompense for the Vincent works use of his granddad's original design which was, it seems, a working prototype that in 1944 had Patent Pending status and which had been road tested and admired by two leading motorcycle journalists of the time.

After the war 'Dave' Bryant then turned his motorcycling hobby into a thriving business, buying ex-army bikes in job lots at auction and rebuilding and selling them, eventually retiring in 1964.

VOC records show that Dave Bryants 'A' twin, EUR 744, has passed thru many hands since then and is now, after who knows what 'restorations' have been carried out on it, located in the USA.



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by JOHN PARKER - Amal Specialist, Australia

ALL PRE - MONOBLOCS

- Needle jet, float chamber lock screw and float chamber drain plug** 1/4 inch dia. B.S.F..
- Throttle and air cable adjusters** 7/32 inch M.E. (Model Engineers) 40 T.P.i.
- Float bowl pipe nipple** 1/4 inch B.S.P (British Standard Pipe).
- Security spring attachment screw on top cap** 5 B.A.
- Throttle stop, pilot air screw and main jet** 1 B.A.
- Float chamber holding bolt** 5/8 inch dia. x 24 T.P.i.
- Float chamber cover** 1 and 25/32 inch dia. x 20 T.P.i

SPECIFIC TO TYPE 6, 76 and 276 MODELS

- Mixing chamber top ring** 1 and 3/8 inch dia. x 24 T.P.i.
- Bell mouth** 1 and 1/4 inch x 24 T.P.i.
- Mixing chamber body union nut** 1 and 3/8 inch dia. x 24 T.P.i.



SPECIFIC TO TYPE 29, 89, 289 MODELS

- Mixing chamber top ring** 1 and 1/2 inch dia. x 24 T.P.i.
- Bell mouth** 1 and 7/16 inch dia. x 24 T.P.I
- Mixing chamber union nut** 1 and 1/2 inch dia x 24 T.P.i

OVR Event Schedule, updated 30 May 2020

Date	Details	More Info?
2020	2020	
June 5-7	VRV Winter Jaunt Event	CANCELLED
Sept 21-25	Australian National Vincent Rally, McLaren Vale, South Australia.!	Rescheduled to 2021
Sept 27	Bay to Birdwood Rally, South Australia	CANCELLED
Oct 2-4	VRV Bit on the Side Adventure	<u>Under Review</u>
Oct 2-4	Australian Superbike Championship @ Philip Island	<u>Under Review</u>
Oct 23-25	MotoGP @ Philip Island	<u>Under Review</u>

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Amal Mk1 Concentric Carburettor Shim Kits, provides for twelve 0.016" incremental needle adjustments to allow precise mixture tuning in the critical mid-range. Also suitable for Wassell carbs. A\$15 per kit including postage world-wide. Additional kits just A\$10 each. Email ozvinreview@gmail.com

For Sale: Brand new Schubert C3 Pro Helmet, Matt Black, size XL. Just A\$450, save over \$200. Shipping from West Australia extra. Email holger@lqgroup.com.au



For Sale: Vincent Series C front cylinder head

Brand new and twin plugged and never run, made by Godden as supplied to Conways, JMR etc A\$2300 which is what it cost to buy a new rear Godden head to fit to project a mates doing, this head would not work in a Vindian as you need front and rear, unfortunately the new engine was fitted with two front heads hence this is now redundant

Contact Phil Pilgrim (Australia) 03 94996428 (B.H)



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

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

Tri-Spark Ignition, based in Adelaide, Australia. Modern electronic ignition systems with models for all classic (and modern) bikes and the current system of choice by Godet Motorcycles (France) for installation in their superb Godet-Vincent machines. For info go to www.trispark.com.au

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, Lucas, Amal and Venhill control cables. Ships worldwide. More info at the website 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 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.

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 Located in Chicago IL USA.

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

John Parker, AMAL Carbs, Melbourne, Australia: A specialist in AMAL carbs of all models, repairs, restorations and a massive supply of spare parts. For information phone him on +61 3 9879 3817 or email to ukcarbs@hotmail.com

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

LUCAS STUFF – The man who bought Kevin Baker's Lucas Parts business is Danny Lee in Melbourne. Email: dannyleepersonal@gmail.com His phone number is 0412 327 197 Apparently Kevin has moved to Melbourne and works with Danny one day a week.

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
