



The New Zealand AJS & Matchless Owners Register Inc.

March 2025



*This is what owning and riding old bikes is all about comradeship,
laughter and good stories*

Long may it continue

Grant Jury; George Whiting; Glen Richards' Murray McLean

UNDAMPED TALES FROM THE NATIONS JAMPOTERS

A bi-monthly publication for New Zealand Register members

www.jampot.co.nz

Articles for the May 2025 edition to the Editor by 15th April please

AROUND THE WORLD TO TALK OLD MOTORCYCLES



It wasn't too far to travel really, they live only 5 minutes from Heathrow Airport. Just jump over a couple of fences, dodge a guard and his/her/its/their dog, (have I missed any well muddled gender?), jump on a 'plane, sit back and after a bit of a snooze you get here a day before you left. (it's not yours to keep however as we take it away when you fly back home).

We welcomed John and Liz Bradford to our Jampot gathering, hopefully they enjoyed themselves, both at the Rally and touring around the Isle of South after the event. Thankyou both for making the effort to visit us out here in the loyal Dominions, it is much appreciated.

Did they discover a new car on their travels?



PRESIDENTIAL PRATTLINGS

Currently and finally in the depths of the G85 conundrum. Removing and fettling tappets/ cams, and changing hairpin valve springs to coils. Therein lies more dragons and raises many questions, length, rate, pressures. At least I have managed to commandeer a purpose built device for digitally measuring height/ pressure for tabulating various combinations of springs and retainers. No real information is available regarding suitable pressures, only intelligent (sometimes) guesses at around 100lb on seat and 170 / 190 at full lift. Anyway the analysis continues..... I had bought spring set from James Holland some years back, which coil bound well before full lift - so much for a tried and tested set up from the "experts", as Toprak Razgathoglu often says "We shall see". So to March 2025



Greetings fellow AMC enthusiasts. The 2025 rally at Motueka is still a fresh memory, and the Norton rally at Murchison is even fresher. Both rallies being great success with good numbers attending, and some mighty fine machinery being presented, great weather and camaraderie as always, and plenty of good food and good cheer to lubricate the discussions. I am sure that those who attended would agree with me in giving to Murray and his team a big thank you for putting the rally together and making all the necessary arrangements. A job well done, as Murray also organised the Norton rally at Murchison the following weekend – another successful rally as those of us who are in both clubs would agree, also thank you for those who made the effort to attend to make a great occasion.

The AGM held at the rally camp raised no major issues, the committee have some follow up actions to deliberate. The minutes will be communicated in due course. The committee membership has no changes this year, next year will need a change or two, Myself as president will have completed my 3 year term , and as the constitution requires, the role of president has to change to a new person so a suitably enthusiastic individual will be required to step into the breach. So please don't be shy, if anyone should aspire to the role, please get in contact with me. To be honest, it has been a pleasure as it has not been an onerous task at all due to the fact that the committee members are all true enthusiasts and great support and camaraderie all round. As advised at the AGM by our esteemed newsletter editor/secretary, Mike has given us a couple of years notice, any prospective successors ?? you have time to consider taking on this important role at the heart of the Register.

The revised Constitution to ensure we are compliant with the Incorporated Societies office has previously been communicated to all, was voted on, and was accepted by those present plus proxy votes at the AGM, and will be submitted to the Inc Soc office in due course. Thanks to the team working through the bureaucracy details – Gordon Alexander, Mike Robertshawe, Murray, myself, and the lion's share by Pierre. Great effort ! Good to see that behind us. Please don't forget that this is your club, we want to hear from YOU if there are any suggestions – please contact the committee so we can work on ideas and hopefully present solutions rather than mass debate at AGM, don't leave it for an AGM, put it writing as it comes to mind.

Great to see the Register numbers are remaining healthy as in Murray's report– we still would like some young blood getting involved. The finances are in good health, and looking for thoughts on how we can support various Register activities.

The 2026 rally will be in New Plymouth, with Peter Hutton leading the charge, and us other locals being press-ganged (*Not really, as we are all enthusiasts*) into aiding with the arrangements.

Travel to and from the rally was a bit different for me this year as I decided to use the two rallies to have a three week wander around the 'Top of the South', with a caravan, a week before, a week in between, and a week after. This involved use of a van for the bike etc (1964 G80 this year, selected by default as two others are still disemboweled, awaiting the surgeon), plus the caravan for mobile accommodation.

Tales of the shed : Pre – rally preparations created a flurry of activity due to the G50 and G85 both with top end issues to resolve and time required diverted to other activities – next year! The Commando had a bit of work involving the auto advance rebuild (yup, still run the faithful points last built up in 1989) and carburettors clean out, all good, but not a good look for the Pres to roll up on a non AJS / Matchy ! So attention turned to the '64 Matchy G80 which hadn't turned a wheel for some 3 – 4 years.....just need to check the tire pressures, give it an oil change and new filter (running a Norton type can oil filter) check gearbox oil, primary oil and chain tensions, tappets good, battery still holding charge after all that time, all good, now to drain the gas tank and fill with fresh gas. That's where the fun began, tank ½ full, but zero liquid passing the tap. Remove and dismantle the tap to find it gummed solid as was the fine gauze filter element, after all the solvents (about 8) in the shed, nothing moved the hard gum. Ordered a couple of new

taps and in desperation relented to buy a spray can of Nulon carb cleaner which actually worked with a gentle brushing with a toothbrush, all good, but the internal state of the tank presented a fair bit of rust and fuel gum lining the tank – still a work in progress after electrolysis, caustic, solvent washes etc. Moral of the story – use the bike more often !

Currently in a grey day in Greymouth (great morning at Punakaiki earlier) tapping out this epistle post another great rally, hope you all managed to return home safely and without too many aches and pains. The Takaka hill, salmon farm (great feed, and the local private museum which was brilliant. Still got a dusty Matchy in the van to clean after Murray's Norton club ride from Murchison - adventure ride up about 26 mile of metalled road with 6 fords (only got tossed out of the saddle on one of them, but managed to keep both wheels and the water on the underside) , great scenery and adventure along a back road. If you have any stories, I am sure Mike will only be too pleased to embellish on them !

Thanks to all for another great year.

All the best, be safe and keep the rubber side down.

PK

THE EDITORIAL SOAPBOX AND SECRETARIAL SCRIBBLINGS

Those of you who also receive the Norton Owners, and, or the Hawke's Bay Classic Club's magazines will find the following story repeated. It struck me rather forcefully as to the burden some of us mortals carry and so I decided to share it as far and wide as possible.

One would not pick the entrance to a suburban supermarket as the place that would give rise to some serious thought about how life deals its cards and how us, the players, play our hand. It was a warm afternoon and I had spent a good chunk of time preparing an array of various foodstuff that will be consumed on the day that we celebrate the 'Miracle of Virgin birth', (it's kept Rome going for a goodly number of centuries, and made them a lot of money in the process, so who am I to debunk it?). I was a bit hot, a bit tired and all I wanted was a cold beer. There was a couple wheeling in their trolley in front of me and I noticed that the chap, who was wearing shorts, had an artificial right leg from above the knee. He was coping very well, a bit of an unusual gait, but doing well in the walking department all things considered. Then I noticed that his right arm had a prosthesis from above the elbow, ending in a pair of hooked jaws, Christ! the poor guy's left arm was also fitted with the same bit of kit. So here is this chap with the only complete limb being his left leg just walking beside his wife/partner/caregiver, I know not which, he was wandering around looking at things and being very much involved in the decision making as to what was being purchased. I think I have problems when 'Plonk' won't start!! Just dwell for a moment what life must be like for this guy, washing, toileting , eating, dressing, using a phone, etc., all these things which none of us even think about are a challenge for this chap. Riding a motorcycle is not on the 'Can Do' list. My admiration goes out to him, who ever he is. The human spirit is indeed a wonderful thing.

A glimmer of hope has broken through the fog of wokeism that seems to inhabit the halls of the Ministry of Transport. The many faceless members of the 'Team', (as all establishments now sign their communications off with), had previously declined to accept the case that the FoMC had been pushing for acceptance for many years. Why? Who knows, but in spite of the recent results from the extensive survey conducted, their recommendation was a blunt refusal, "No". The Minister, who faces the public every three years, in a rare political moment of self discovery, found a couple of objects in his 'Gentleman's Equipment', and announced to the country that 40 year old + vehicles would now only need a WoF check every 12 months. The 'Team' have all taken mental health leave and are now even harder to discover, "It wasn't me", the catch-cry of their faceless number. Much celebration by the electorate ensued. The further nonsense of 'Consultation and Submissions' is now needed, (more sausage rolls and designer coffee), to be followed by an even further



recommendation and then, if we have not all passed away in the interim, it becomes 'Fait Accompli'. Jeez one could get exhausted just thinking about all of this! 'Donald' would have just said "do it" and it would be over, but we are not meant to talk about 'him' in mixed company.

The horns of a dilemma are what I find myself sitting on as I pen this. And why? I here you ask? With the two Rallies I plan to attend being a week apart, one hosting our beloved AMC products..... (*Jamport machinery*), the second also hosting our beloved AMC products (*Norton machinery*) I am struggling to decide if I should ride 'Plonk' to both, or my Dominator 99. A good part of me wishes to take 'Plonk'. Compliance with the legal niceties would say take the Norton, the cheeky side is saying combine the two and chance your arm with 'Plonk'. To this end I have been giving 'Plonk' a good work-out over the last few weeks and indeed it took me on a 100 k journey the other weekend without too much fuss. I did notice that the normally solid compression had gone a bit soft when starting it the last time so it was up onto the operating table for some investigative and exploratory surgery. Breaking my rule of only ever altering one thing at a time, I had a bit of a play in three places which I am hopeful will not cause too much drama in my life.

First thing was to do was to investigate the lack of compression and check valve clearances. Pay dirt! The inlet clearance had gone away and took some half a turn on the push rod adjuster to restore it to where I would like. So what has happened? Wary of overthinking things, I shall consign this to a 'settling in of things' after its make-over. Next was an attempt to reduce the carbonization of the right rear suspension unit. The exhaust exit is close by and the deliberate richness of settings, (*Done to avoid the dreaded too lean symptom of holes in pistons and seized motors!*), has made itself evident each and every ride. Off with the carb top and I dropped the needle one notch, so it is now in its weakest setting, but nothing is original on this motor so one can only look at spark plugs and sooty exhausts as a fettling guide. The final 'fiddle' was to lift the slide by quarter of a turn on the throttle stop. Having a bike that idles reliably is a great thing, having one that starts easily is another great thing, so it is very much a case of "Softly, softly catchee monkey" in this area. Whilst it was up on the lift I took the opportunity of going over all the bits that might have come loose, finding a few that had 'relaxed' since the original build. Checking oil levels, chain tensions, all the normal things that books tell us to do, but we mostly put off, then "Nec Minit", it has gone a bit wrong! Drive chain lubed, battery charged, what can possibly go wrong? I am always cognoscente of my two constant companions in life, Murphy, who says, "If it can go wrong, it will go wrong", and Machiavelli who is just mischief waiting to happen. Maybe I should write a letter to the Vatican, or Brian Tamati of the Destiny Church ?? Both seem to dwell in Fantasyland, a place where Plonk is known to visit on occasions.

A similar 'Fiddle' with the Norton has seen it fettled to within an inch of its life also. Plonk took some persuading to rejoin the land of living things, the Norton was a one kick angel. Is this telling me something? In spite of being born under the star sign of Gemini, I can still only ride one at a time, but I am required to register all bikes for all of the time, go figure!

My annual session of 'Sport', (*read conversations*), with Sky TV has resulted in a bout of severe frustration, unnecessary expenditure and a degree of time-wasting for those who have listened to my tale of woe. Last year, 2024, Sky streamed World Superbike races on their sports channels, so I reluctantly paid up and a clever chap arrived and installed the new Sky box and set the whole system up to allow me to watch all WSBK races. I had previously turned many backflips with my tame guru of all thing electronic and computer linked in an attempt to transition the Dorna WSBK video link from my computer to the TV, all to no avail, but I have since learned that it is probably possible if I run cables from here to there and mutter quiet words to myself. (*Thankyou to the two 'Daves' who listened patiently to my dilemma*). Dorna Sport have now confirmed to me that they do not offer a TV enabled system and after a couple of abortive attempts to communicate with Sky via email, plus a detailed search of their programme schedule, all which drew a blank, so I followed all this up with a phone call. This resulted in a 'Sing Song' conversation with an insanely polite woman, based, I suspect, somewhere on the Indian sub-continent, who was unlucky enough to be on the 'Unhelp desk'. The query to 'Mrs. Sing-Song', was to inquire about Sky's plans, or not, to broadcast the series this year. (*I guess this descriptor of the woman now rules me out of getting a job at a hamburger bar in Queenstown!*). Her promised response did not eventuate, so one day before the Australian round began, still unable to see any coverage being listed, I rejoined Dorna Sport which would entail me being glued to my computer screen in order to watch what promises to be an exciting year of competition.

Sitting under the shady Walnut tree after the end of month ride for February, I mentioned this to Eric, of Wednesday fame, who gleefully told me he had watched all the action so far this weekend from Phillip Island on Sky!! It seems it became available 24 hours previously!! The Bastards!! Part of my psyche tells me to ring them and cancel everything, thus ramming home my displeasure with them, but that would be a case of cutting off one's nose to spite my face. I sat down over the evening and watched the rest of the days racing. Double Bastards!! We chaps of a mature age are quite justified in being 'Grumpy old Men' with this

sort of rubbish having to be contended with in our lives.

It has been known for some of us, most of us, all of us to grumble and gripe about some maintenance jobs we attempt on our much 'loved' steeds. The last week has seen your Editor have a wee tinker with Plonk, nothing too serious, just a tappet check a touch up of the carburettor settings and a peep at the spark plug. All very straight forward and very accessible jobs. Flushed with the success of all this I turned my attention to the 2021 Yamaha in the shed. I wished to fit a set of braided brake lines, perform a 20,000 km service, which entailed changing the spark plugs, plus the normal oil and filter change. The last listed was very straight forward, but then the fun began. Remove the seat, easy. Remove the battery, easy. Remove the petrol tank, not so easy, as a bunch of plastic covers needed to come off and then in the very limited space one must remove three pipes and a electrical connector from under the tank. Being born with three hands would be a definite advantage for this operation. Then the airbox needed to be removed. At this point I had a chat to my long departed parents about the size of hands I have been blessed with, I also discovered how handy a 1/4" drive socket set is, nothing else seemed to fit in the small spaces between the many components that a modern bike is 'Blessed' with. The spark plugs are fitted down a very deep hole the best instructions for removing them is to read Jules Verne's "Journey to the centre of the Earth". I did find them and after unscrewing them fished them out with a magnet! Now for the brake lines.

To help us humans to come to a halt under the many road conditions we may encounter, other humans have designed and fitted a system known as ABS. Fitting the control unit for this into my bike has seen it bolted under the seat with long runs of tubing from handlebars and then to the front wheel calipers. Many small fixings for these runs of tubes/hoses, are in inaccessible places to hold all this together. Debating the ancestry and marital status of the designers parents to myself, I eventually managed to remove the old and affix the new. It did occur to me the clever thinking that must go into the design of the assembly process in the factory so bit 'A' does not require to be removed to allow bit 'B' to be fitted. Bleeding the whole braking shebang is an exercise in patience, as the many little air bubbles are slowly coxed out of their hiding places, and there are now a lot more of these hiding places than there used to be. An overnight clamping of the levers with cable ties and a final bleed saw a 'lever feel' that I am very happy with. The other plus was that the bike started straight up once all was reinstalled. It's a great thing technology, if you don't weaken along the rocky road that it leads one! The next major service is due in another 20,000 km, will I still be alive for it? I probably won't be able to afford to pay someone to do it, so I guess I had better ride the bike more often so the service comes around sooner??!!

As an aside, I sourced the replacement brake lines from the States, they were half the price of the same items sourced from New Zealand and that included the freight!! He's a great guy that Trump fellow!!! (*Yeah right, just ask the Canadians!*) The kit contained a very detailed set of instructions, I guess to mitigate the likelihood of being sued, and it all fitted very neatly.

Senior management and self have just returned from the two rallies held at the beginning of this month, , which is why we are a couple of weeks late with this issue of our magazine, hopefully you will think it was worth the wait. I was riding my trusty '57 Norton Dominator 99, Ali was driving our car as we were heading to Murchison and beyond after the Jampot

For me the whole point of these gatherings is to renew old acquaintances, make new ones, and to maybe glean some long held secret as to how to improve things on our two wheeled delights. The Friday evening is always a bit of a hoot as all enjoy some serious thirst slaking accompanied by story telling that may or not be based on an actual event.

Having spent a lot longer than planned in getting to Motueka, due to the reliably unreliable ferry sailings that also included my wife being 'detained' by some over officious hi-vis wearing woman due to her attempt to procure some edible sustenance that didn't emanate from a vending machine and a deep fryer. All to no avail, finally she was loaded into a van and delivered back to rejoin me, still hungry and a trifle bemused by the whole episode. Two and a half hours late and we were finally loaded onto the ferry which predictably meant we were delivered to Picton two and a half hours later than planned. Somehow we navigated our separate ways through Nelson and the setting sun and then groped our way in the dark to the Rally site. The Friday evening was indeed as described and I toddled off to sleep with a good portion of rum swilling through my veins.

If Friday evenings twists and turns of Queen Charlotte Drive weren't enough, the ride over and back of the Takaka Hill was the icing on the cake for the bend swinging department. The long straights of the Wairau Valley made up for it a week later. A most pleasant lunch and a visit to a shed full of 'STUFF' filled the day and then it was to the final act of dinner and the "Hu Wun Wot" prizegiving.

A large thankyou to all who organised the weekend, it was a most enjoyable event.

Mike

THE CANTERBURY BLEAT...

Suddenly Summer is over and the daily temperatures are rapidly dropping here in the South, so hopefully you have all managed to complete your Summer projects.

The Canterbury section held their annual BBQ on Sunday 19 February with a mixed weather forecast which fortunately still provided comfortable conditions for the afternoon. This event was again kindly hosted by Gordon Alexander at his Ohoka "Plumstead" property and attracted 25 members who contributed a wide selection of salads and desserts to share.

That weekend also saw the Coast to Coast multi-discipline race from Kumara Beach to New Brighton beach. Although in past years I have watched competitors on the last cycling leg, I was at the finish-line this year to witness the excitement of those competitors who managed to complete the course. I have the greatest admiration for all who received a finisher's medal.

The next event on our calendar was of course the Motueka Jampot Rally for which we had a contingent of 12 members with 8 Matchless and AJS motorcycles with Chris Lynch and Nigel Harris riding from Christchurch to Motueka. We all had a great time catching up with old friends and making new ones. Everything was first rate, accommodation, meals, organization and even the weather, which at times sent me looking for the shade. I drove up to Nelson on Thursday and stayed at a friend's place, moving on to Motueka on Friday afternoon. I checked into the Holiday Park about 3pm, it should have been half an hour earlier, but having been told the place was easy to find I hadn't done any research on its exact location and had to divert to the information centre. I settled into my cabin and was preparing to wander round to the RSA for dinner when I had an interesting conversation with the Holiday Park reception when they called my mobile to ask me what time I was expecting to arrive???

The ride to Takaka on Saturday was great and quite different to the last time I was there on the International Jampot Rally in 2020, with the road surface now much improved. The lunch at Anatoki Salmon was again excellent and the last stop at Paul Sangster Museum was a treasure chest of memorabilia where one could spend many hours browsing.

Of the trophies awarded at the Rally dinner Saturday evening the results will show that Cantabrians Gary Hawke, Nelson Craw and Nigel Harris were all happy recipients - congratulations guys. We are all hoping to make next year's rally.

The Canterbury Section meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at the Tavern Harewood, Harewood Road, Bishopdale from 7.30pm.

Terry Lewington



THE ECHELON BULLETIN...

Happy New Year to all Echelon and Register members and their families. I hope everyone enjoyed their annual festivities and catch-up with family and friends. The time has been well spent and now the steed is polished and ready to be used for our monthly well organized ride and, I'm looking forward to it!

THE SAINTS HILLCLIMB

This event happened on the 7th December and was organized by The Pukekohe Hot-rod Club. Race entries were invitation only but all spectators were welcome for a small fee. The event took place at a friend's farm in Glenbrook. Most entrants were of the 4 wheeled variety and all had to be pre 1960. The cars were as cool as you would expect, hot flathead Ford V8s and Model A's with overhead valve conversions. The cars used the shingle cattle race which the bikes used last year, however this year the bikes were to use a steep grassed hillside. About 8 bikes attended in various states of preparedness. I was warned about my road tyres before I went and sure enough they let me down!



This hill climbing lark is jolly hard work!

enjoyed watching the bikes too. Inia Taylor's competition Matchless 350 was best suited for the day. I'm looking forward to the next Hill climb and I hope to have my own purpose built bike ready for the event. This year we were catered for by the hot-rod club, sausages for breakfast lunch and tea! Very nice sausages too, not your plastic fundraiser jobs!. (*that's fortunate M*)

MEREMERE DRAGS

This is a regular event organized by a "motorcycle club" on a regular basis. A Gold coin donation is all that's asked for admission. If you want to have a go and see what your bike can do in the quarter mile, \$60 and you can run as many times as you like. How's that for value? - no red tape no bureaucracy. Loads of fun and plenty of noise.

I entered my '75 Harley Iron head Sportster and over 5 runs I managed a best ¼ mile in 15.8 seconds with a maximum speed of 84 mph. (Specs of the day boasted a ¼ mile mid 14 seconds.) Not too bad considering the bike had no stripping down or special preparations - aside from me having to fit it out with a nappy to prevent an annoying leak from the crankcase escaping onto the track! Our friend Orb Morby is organizing a 'Classic Drag Meeting' Watch this space. Thanks to Pedro for kindly transporting my bike down to Meremere.

ON THE SMELL OF AN OILY RAG *This is a true story.*

Back in 1970, a friend bought a WW2 BSA M20 which is a 500 cc rigid. After giving it the once over and confirming that it did have compression and the magneto put out a healthy spark, we were desperately wanting to hear her run. But there was a big problem the carburettor was missing !!!

My good friend's father came to the rescue, "Have you heard of the saying 'on the smell of an oily rag?'" Yes we said (who hasn't) "Well he said, 'get that rag and soak it in petrol' We held said rag to the carburettor flange and another guy kicked her over. Well! she burst into life just like that !!! The funny part was, the closer you held the rag, the faster she ran and equally the further away the slower she ran. It's true - I was there!

A note for those of you who are members of the Register

If you are not making the trip to the Jampot this year, you may consider casting a proxy vote if you want to have your say as to whether you think the club should remain as an incorporated society. You will have received some information about this if you are still a current member and I would encourage you to read it. This is an important issue and a lot of work has gone into up-dating our constitution and looking into the pros and cons. Maurice has kindly offered to cast a proxy vote for any of you who aren't attending the rally but would like their vote counted. (Maurice: 021 2459725)



Mich.

Focus on Classic Bikes

Below is an extract from the December FoMC newsletter , penned by our Membership Secretary.in it he discusses the hoary old problem of Classic Motorcycling in New Zealand and the world in general.

We asked long time motorcyclist & FoMC Executive Member Murray McLean for his “take” on the Classic Motorcycle scene, as we haven’t featured them recently in Wheel Torque.

Having been involved in several classic and one make classic motorcycle clubs since the mid 70’s either as a member, committee member, president or secretary and Motorcycle Dealership Owner/operator, I have gleaned a vast knowledge of the classic Motorcycle scene here in New Zealand and overseas in USA and England.

As club members have aged, so has their appetite for the use older machines waned. In the scramble to maintain membership Classic clubs have adopted a 20 year rule or “An interest in classic bikes”. From this has emerged the modern classic club riders who ride their modern bikes to club events and rides further discouraging the older bike owners to participate, as the modern bikes disappear into the distance.

Another more worrying trend was the cancellation of the Wellington based National Classic Rally late November with only 23 entries. Another Classic British-only Motorcycle Rally held in Murchison the same weekend had 80 odd entries from lower North Island to Mid South Island.

The older one-make clubs are slowly dying and the Classic Clubs are becoming unrecognizable as such. Clubs are struggling to find volunteers to take on committee roles in clubs that are incorporated societies as the compliance and red tape pressures increase. Where to from here?

I personally don’t have the answer as I feel this dilemma is affecting all clubs across the spectrum in New Zealand and overseas. There are so many diverse opinions on the subject that is being tackled by all member clubs of the FOMC. We are lucky in New Zealand to have a combined voice of the FoMC to lobby our Politicians for continued use of our heritage vehicles, so thank you all for your continuing support.

Murray McLean

This space could have your story featured, but it is empty because you didn’t send it to me. Go on, be brave, tell us about your bike and the fun you have on it. You could be world famous in New Zealand!!

THE BORTHWICK PAPERS, A CONTINUING SAGA OF HUMAN LOVE, LUST, DRAMA & MAYHEM

The CSR lives to be ridden again

Yay! Yippee! Time for something up-beat!

Yes! The gearbox is in, the brakes have been fixed, she started first kick and runs like a dream! (*why do I feel like there will be a sequel to this story? - M*)

To get the front brake working, I found that you can add spacers into the system, spreading the pads apart at the cam. The "masterful British engineers" however, did not think of using a cam down at the pivot point, so the spread is uneven - but it does mean that you are using the correct fulcrum. Barry D. tidied up the cable, fitting a ferrule and shortening it a bit - what a difference! No longer can I grab a handful and haul the lever hard to the bars, and ! and! the brakes now, almost, stop the bike! 100% improvement! I'm not shooting for miracles here, I can now arrest forward motion (it still is a sixty year old British bike after all!)

Test ride day approached! Hand over heart, this was an event I wanted to approach cautiously. After all, I'm at best an amateur spanner hand who has destroyed quite a number of brain cells over the last fifty years. (*and bikes too, probably - M*)

There is every possibility that the gearbox will have one forward and three reverse. Just a little ride, five hundred yards (*keep it imperial*), down the road. She moved ... forward, up the road, down the hill, through all gears. The brakes slowed us down, the grin was spreading, let's go further! Now it's at this point that I should remind the reader that "Pride cometh before a fall". It's whining! There is a distinct sound of mechanicals in protest! What have I done? And it is jumping out of first.....oh woe!. And much gnashing of gums. (*False teeth are too expensive to gnash, plus they kept falling out! Now I can't find the top set.....so it's gums!*)

The front brake is also whining and is getting hot ! Looks like we may have shortened the cable a tad too much. I might have to take out a shim as well.....

Back to the shed and up on the table, on to the main stand and fire it up! I ran it through all the gears, no whine?....must just be brakes....phew!

The next day, after putting some slack into the rear brake - as that's where the sound seemed to be coming from, - I rode down to Barry's to collect a collet he had kindly made for me.....still whining.

Under the premise that two heads are better than one, Barry made a cuppa, and we sat down to.....talk about fishing. Oh, of course, we talked about gearboxes, brakes, and bikes in general. Barry also played the prophet of doom and said that the box needs to come back out as the cam is notI'm in tears at this point and can't see to type..... But, says he! you may have the primary chain too tight, that will make it whine....

We had a look at the chain just before I left (my tears had dried enough to see that,) yes, the primary chain is bar tight!!!

At this point, I will explain to the reader that British engineers have got together over milky cups of tea and collaborated to design the most awkward, the most useless device possible for tensioning the chain. A bolt head resting against the round surface of the gearbox mounting bolt. Applying force to this simply causes it to ride up over the shaft! I had set all this up correctly at assembly, but it would seem that as things got tightened here and there, so did the chain. For now, it has some slack back in, waiting for a re test.

The expert consensus is that the gear box will need to come apart again, so that I can re align the selector cam, as the detent is not fully engaging, thus allowing first gear to slip back to its resting place under load.

This will not happen at present as the table is occupied by the Triumph whose motor it appears is. F..... ! Why do we use that word? I mean, intercourse is a useful and pleasant pastime. There is nothing pleasant about the Triumph motor at the moment, but this is a story for another day!

Pedro

Editors note:- it may save you some work, or it may cause you some further angst Pedro. The gears are held in mesh by the undercut on their dogs, not by the indents in the cam plate. If a gear is jumping out of mesh the two engaging dogs need attention. There is a chap in Wanganui who is set up to do this work and we have had good results from his actions. Boss Engineering Services, Wanganui ph. 06 348 9516 hope this helps. Is the gearbox an AMC one? **Mike**

A DREAMY SUMMER'S DAY RIDE

Our local Hawke's Bay Classic Club runs three rides a month, the second of which is a classics ride. Classics have been defined as a bike that is 25 years, or more old. This is now resulting in the early Honda Blackbirds and their ilk being part of the scene. There are many reasons why this has happened and I do not propose to go into them here, but it is a bit of a stretch when I front up on 'Plonk' a 1952 G80S!

This month's Classic's ride got off to a bit of a flurried start in the Editorial household, as the required alteration to 'Senior Management's' sewing table, took a little longer than anticipated, but finally my 'Client' was happy and I found myself scrabbling around in a bit of a tizz, checking tyre pressures and oil levels on 'Plonk', my chosen mount for the day. That set of tasks completed, a change of wardrobe saw me astride this fine machine and wondering if all would be as hoped in the starting department. A couple of priming kicks and then "A long swinging kick", as the gurus would advise, saw life. Yee Ha! a click into gear and off to Clive to join in the fun.

Numbers were a little down, as a conflicting event known as 'Art Deco Weekend' was occupying Napier, plus two Cruise ship with their many moneyed passengers which had drawn some of our numbers on their older machinery to parade up and down the main street and burn their clutches out as they attempted to impress the many 'Flappers', who dress in twenties attire, complete with the obligatory parasol and pretend to be living in a time warp. No worry, as sufficient of us had gathered to make the whole day of our chosen petrol-head nonsense worthwhile. George J had tasked us with not getting too lost along the banks of the Ngaruroro River and the tangled by-ways around Crownthorpe and so after his 'Dolcetto tones' had given us a run down of where we were to go, how to behave, and particularly not to fall off or breakdown, off we went.

'Plonk' again endeared itself to me, starting with one good kick, "Brilliant", I thought, as I set off very much at the rear of our group. Somehow I got stuck behind a large truck and trailer unit as I made my way into Omarunui Road. Plonk, lacking the snappy acceleration of more modern machines, forced me to be patient, but eventually I managed to get past the swaying trailer and breath fresh air once more. I was now well 'Tail end Charlie', so ambled along at a period pace, twisting and turning on the narrow roadways. I came around one corner and found myself staring at a 1920's Chrysler, very similar in appearance to my 1926 Essex, the first car I ever owned. This car was in much finer fettle than the poor old one I had tho'. Was he lost? or just enjoying a tootle around some back roads? Finally I managed to find myself back onto the Napier-Taihapa Road, where I unleashed most of the meagre Equine power Plonk possesses and finally pulled into the Club bike park, ready for a drink and some conversation, a little one-sided conversation sadly, as I had forgotten to pack my hearing aids into my jacket pocket. I nodded sagely and uttered the occasional "Hmmm" at the appropriate moments and hopefully avoided being labelled a total Noddy.

Time to leave, but unbeknown to me, my Nemesis, Machiavelli, had snuck into my life once more. I somehow got things a bit wrong in the pre starting 'Cockpit drill' and Plonk was having none of it. A couple of firm kick backs demonstrated that the magneto was indeed working well, but that was about all! Some choice adjectives and blasphemes, coupled with a very determined kick, eventually once more brought life into the workings of a somewhat fiddled with old G80 motor, so I wrung it neck on the way home as a lesson to it and to demonstrate that I expect better things next time out.

Glenn our local club gambling guru, had once more failed me, as he avoided giving me the winning ticket in the raffle, but as he had pushed his Jawa for six miles around the carpark at Clive to restore life to it, I forgave him. Our thanks to George Johnson for setting the ride and to Adelle for not only being a Presidential Person, but also running the bar. To the cleaner-uppers after we have been and made a mess, a large and constant thankyou also.

Another good day to be alive!

Mike

MEMBERSHIP MAN MUTTERINGS....

I hope all 2025 Rally Goers enjoyed our Motueka based Rally. The weather was perfect, food was excellent and great company. The Saturday ride over the Takaka Hill was a Highlight as the sound of twins and singles engines filled the air, toiling up and over.

Our destination was the Anatoki Salmon Farm where huge platters of Salmon were delivered and consumed. Then it was off to view Paul Sangster's private museum of firearms, motorcycles, militaria, curios and all manner of items from years gone by that Paul has collected and stored in his large sheds. The old Takaka Jail filled with police memorabilia and some Machine Guns topped the visit off.

Only 2 bikes graced the backup trailer on the return journey!

The Saturday Dinner and prizegiving at the Moueka RSA finished the evening off with the register supporting Rally goers with some great prizes suitable to keeping old bikes mobile.

We had approx. 55 entries including British visitors John and Liz Bradford. A huge Thankyou to all who supported me with Rally planning and Amin. After all expenses were paid a small surplus was made and the RSA who provided most of the meals and the Top 10 motor camp both benefited from our Rally.

Next Rally is in New Plymouth 27th Feb – 1st March Headed by Peter Hutton. Don't forget Subs are Due as from 1st April and I will send out invoices to Members who's subs fall due.

Regards

Murray

We welcome new members Michael Weeds from Te Awamutu, Kelvin Mustard from Blenheim, Peter Officer from Wallacetown, Glen McGrath from Auckland and Murray Schwass from Upper Moutere to our folds. Write a story, send a photo of your bike, ask for help, we mind not, it is your magazine and we would love to hear your stories.

OUR MAN ON THE SPOT, CLIVE TURNER...

Well Hilary and I have been avoiding the winter by visiting the grandchildren in Melbourne, but enjoyable as this was, and warmer than the UK, it has slowed up the repairs to the Black G11CS. This had done about 17,000 miles since I last had it apart. The damage to the inner primary chaincase and the left hand crankcase was mended by a good friend and master welder. But now the work on the rest of the engine has shown the barrels were well worn out as I think all I did 17000 miles ago was put the pistons back. Measurements suggested rebore was vital but I could get away with new shells on the crankshaft which had been reground previously. Hopefully with the temperature rising in the unheated garage I will get it back together in the next month or so.

Liz and John made it to your Jampot Rally, but the photo seems to show them more interested in four wheels than two! Anyone thinking of travelling to the UK will be welcome at the International Jampot Rally being held on the Island of Skye in Scotland in June, or the UK Jampot Rally in Northumberland in August.

Age seems to be catching up and I may be taking the bike on a trailer this year, as both are a fair distance away (600ish and 300ish miles from London). My last long rally trip was a 2,200 mile round trip to Slovenia a couple of years ago, but somehow UK roads don't appeal so much, (I hope I am not putting anyone off!)

Regards

Clive



Currently we are seeing another of Albert Einstein's predictions/quotes being proven as correct.

THREE GREAT FORCES RULE THE WORLD

STUPIDITY, FEAR AND GREED

Recent events on the world stage are cringeworthy in the extreme. A self appointed despot who has terrorized his way to incredible wealth and power decides he wishes to have another country, so marches in and attempt to take it. It has been a bit of a misjudgment on his part, as the rest of the 'Free World' has up until now resisted this. As I write this the major player of the Free World has just done an about face and its newly elected leader is now 'Trumpeting' to the beleaguered country and its leader "It's your fault, you were the aggressor, and by the way your leader is a dictator". It now seems in his book to be OK to just take things from others, things such as countries. One wonders if we are seeing the Achilles heel of Democracy when the most powerful nation on our planet elects such an individual as its leader. One also wonders if this is a prelude to his floated idea of a local land grab of nearby sovereign states by this 'Ego on legs', who is effectively pushing the world into another European/World War.

For nearly 80 years Europe has been without a major war and this is mostly due to the generosity of the USA with its many assistance plans that rebuilt Europe after it had been reduced to rubble and the provision of defence capability for the smaller nations. One may well argue that they didn't get it right some of the time, and some own nest feathering was going on, but in essence they have been the Free World's watch-dog. Not any more it seems, as the new man and his mega rich cronies are cutting ties in a dramatic fashion with its trans Atlantic allies, and their own federal services. 'Stand on your own two feet' is his message to the world and Europe in particular. We are now seeing increases in defence spend already from countries such as Denmark, *(they are the people that happen to have a territory known as Greenland. A country 'Someone' has just announced to the world that he wants!)*

What has this got to do with old British motorcycles? Not a lot you may say, but if all this ego strutting and posturing goes pear-shaped in a big way our prodigy may well be chasing war surplus motorcycles in years into the future, *(maybe there is hope yet for KTM?)*. I can still remember the advertisements for surplus Army Indians from Valentines in Hamilton 70 years ago

STUPIDITY, FEAR AND GREED.

These three forces may well control our destinies for the next few years.

Mike

ITEMS FOR SALE, WANTED TO BUY, FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Hi there I have a car rego (Personalized plate) numberplate that I would like to sell. Just wondering if anyone in your club would be interested? Plate rego is X AJS X. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers, Alistair. Ph:- 021508171, Email: alistairs@tumblr.co.nz



FOR SALE

Any one interested in buying this before I stick it onto Trade me?

Selling on behalf of aged uncle.

1963 model 31, (frame # A86435).

Rebuilt CSR motor (number 31csr/x8174)
Rebuilt gearbox, New Len Parry mufflers,
New fork tubes, Not shown are some
new chrome guards, Rebuilt speedo.

Pete, 0211905185

peter.wilkening@gmail.com>

THE GREAT TREK SOUTH, FEATURING THE ADVENTURES OF 'TWO RALLY ALI'

With my dearest's family domiciled in the Isle of South there is no way I was to be permitted to cross the troubled waters via an even more troubled ferry system to spend ten days attending a couple of rallies without being chaperoned and guided by my afore mentioned dearest.

The final day of February dawned and very soon after a 1957 Norton Dominator 99 and 'back-up' Nissan trundled out of our driveway and headed for the capital city of our fair land. We left behind a small white dog who for several days had observed suitcases, many suitcases, many, many suitcases being packed, repacked then repacked again and finally jammed into the rear of our SUV. I had managed to fit all my required apparel into one soft bag, but that is just the way of things in my world!! First stop was to be Dannevirke for a leg stretch and top up of fuel for the Norton. Ali, driving the Nissan, decided the correct order of things was for her to proceed me, this is a new concept of 'back-up' but I chose not to debate this. A cup of coffee at the 'Lazy Graze' in Eketahuna saw the new back up system reinforced and making a bold decision we decided to top things up at Upper Hutt before setting out on the final part of our North Island trip. Arriving in good time to check in at the InterIslander and interesting conversation ensued. Me, to young lass at the check-in window, *"Here is my ticket"*, young lass, *"Youse know the ferry is running two and a half hours late, we sent Youse a email at 9.00am"*. Me, *"I can't receive Emails on my bike"*, young lass, *"Sorry Bro, just go to the front of row 19"*. So 'Bro' and 'Mrs Bro' queued up and waited in the Wellington sun for a good three and a half hours.

With the scheduled sailing originally at 1.00 pm the plan was to get lunch on board the Ferry, but now we were confronted with a kiosk in the car park, dispensing coffee and chippies, nothing else. 'Mrs Bro' decided she would walk over to the main cafeteria and see what was on offer there. Ten minutes later I received a phone call telling me she had been detained as she was in a no go area?? *"How far did you go, to Russia?"* I asked. Not being permitted to leave the way she had just come, she was finally driven back to rejoin us, in a van with 'SECURITY' on the side complete with many flashing lights, piloted by a woman with several large independent parts, all moving in some sort of macabre unison as she toddled along.

Finally we boarded, joined the scrum at the food hall and were delivered to Picton at sometime around 6.30 pm. At this point we made a tactical error and decided to take the Queen Charlotte Drive to Havelock as it was about a third the distance. I had forgotten just how tight and twisty this road is and when we finally emerged at Havelock straight roads were a welcome experience. By the time we arrived at Nelson with well frazzled eyes after peering into the setting sun, darkness was upon us. I was searching for a sign that mentioned Motueka, I found ones that read Richmond, Wakefield, and finally Collingwood, Motueka has apparently not been deemed worthy of being mentioned. I also discovered that Motueka was further away than I thought and so set off in the by now pitch dark sky wondering if I would ever see Ali again, or would she be lost forever in the environs of Nelson. The welcome sight of the Top Ten Motor Camp was only surpassed as a couple of minutes later Ali turned up, I was indeed proud of her new found resilience and navigational skills. The following few hours were somewhat blurred due to the majority of a one litre bottle of rum being consumed by self and a couple of dedicated helpers.

After the serious side of Saturday was disposed of Ali went off in search of relatives and I joined the trail of bikes heading up and over the Takaka hill giving the steering head on the Norton another good work out. Lunch at the Anatoki salmon farm was a delight and then it was off to see the largest collection of old fire-arms ever assembled in the Milky Way. How any of our specie remain if all of these were used to shoot at each other is a testament to the poor eyesight of our forefathers! Back up over the 'Hill' and an event of further headshaking was experienced. I needed to use the camp laundry, so with an arm full of clothing and a pocket full of coins, I located the establishment. A row of very big shiny machinery confronted me, a list of instructions on the wall which informed me I needed to use my 'Smart Phone' to make things clean again. *"Christ on a bike"*! I had no idea how to proceed,. Looking around in a blind panic I spied a lass removing washing from the adjacent clothesline, *"Help"* I cried, and being a woman of infinite compassion she came to my assistance. I stood in awe as she scanned the jumble of shapes on the wall, took a photo of my credit card, installed something named Google Pay into my phone and then held the thing up to the washing machine which miraculously turned itself on, removed \$6,40 from my credit card, but did not have any soap!! She shook her head and ran off, returning with the required substance and finally the cleansing process commenced. I was completely in awe of all this, who would think that one needs a phone to wash clothes, I truly am a luddite of immense proportions. From this point on the evening was very low tech indeed, we ate food, drank beer and applauded prize winners, how simple is that?

A relaxed start to the day as Sunday arrived, fine weather was still the order of things and so after breakfast we set off in convoy, 'Back-up' vehicle leading!! A very pleasant ride up through the Motueka River Valley saw us pull into the Flat Rock Café for a coffee and a final 'Planning session'. I had arranged to leave my bike with a fellow motorcyclist and bee keeper, domiciled up Mangle Valley Road. This is just on the outskirts of Murchison where the Norton Rally was scheduled to happen the following weekend. With a vehicle between us I saw Ali blissfully sail straight past the turn-off, being unable to point this out I ventured up

Mangle Valley. The place I was looking for was on a corner up this road, "Well signposted" I was informed. Well signposted it was, but a bloody great tree hid the sign!! At the end of the road I figured I had missed the place so retraced my wheel tracks to find the sign proudly displaying its presence on the other side of the tree! I had just opened the access gate when Ali turned up having been up and down the main road a few times before turning off. The bike was parked, the bee keeper's wife was contacted and all was sorted. Luncheon was partaken in Murchison and it was off to the outskirts of Oxford and the home of Ali's brother. The sun was shining, the traffic was light, a most pleasant drive saw us pull into their driveway just in time for a sundowner. A most enjoyable Sunday.

The next few days were spent doing Christchurch things which included a visit to the Ashburton Aviation museum and a long look at a wonderful shed full of 'Muscle car' restoration equipment and cars. The obligatory family catch-up meal and a quiz night where I was on the other side of the questions, yes we won!

Friday dawned and a most wonderful discovery was made. Setting off back up toward Murchison a coffee stop was made in the little village of Waikari, to be precise the Waikari Kitchen. This a small little café run by a chef named Dean. The food there is just brilliant, it is well worth a stop if one is passing. Carrying on we found Murchison right where we left it and drove through the place and up Mangle Valley Road once more to hopefully retrieve my Norton. Just before we got to the place a brace of Commandos on the roadside caused us to investigate where upon we found the majority of the rally gathered at 'Father Ted's Shed', gawking at a very large and comprehensive collection of BSA's. finally we dragged ourselves away and retrieved the Norton which endeared itself to me once more by starting first kick in front of a group of guys ready to proffer unhelpful suggestions in the event of it not starting, great relief was felt!

We found our cabin in among the trees and then proceeded to engage in a further Friday night of nonsense. Saturday morning saw the AGM disposed of in short order and then the day was a very free one with a sort of organised ride to Reefton for lunch and then back to the campground via Springs Junction, a round trip of some 170 km. a very pretty ride through the Upper Buller Gorge and again from Reefton to Springs Junction. The Norton was singing along at a fair clip, all was well in God's Heaven.

Another meal, another prize giving, but by this time fatigue was becoming a little more present in the Editorial body, so it was off to bed and the land of Nod.

The final Sunday and another ride, this time from Murchison to Blenheim along the Wairau Valley. To get there one must pass through the 'Valley of Sandflies' aka St Arnould. This place saw me leave a good portion of my blood several years ago to these hungry little bastards, even worse is the fact is the bite is one that keeps on itching. Thankyou God, you did really well with the creation of these little critters.

If one is to doubt the capacity of humans to drink wine a trip along this area of the world should dispel that myth. There seemed to be a green carpet of vineyards from the Nelson Lakes to the sea, but drama was awaiting.

The road down this valley seems mostly to consist of long straights with 'S' bends and one way bridges interspersed to keep one awake. I was again following my back-up vehicle and came around a corner proceeding one of these bridges to see my princess on the other side of the bridge, hazard lights flashing and a motorcycle and rider lying in the middle of the road, my heart sank. Crossing the bridge and pulling up I was relieved to see no evidence of contact between the car and the bike. There were two bikes in convoy, the lead guy had stopped as Ali had right of way, but his mate must have been in Lala land and not reacted until the last minute then locked the front wheel on his large Yamaha 'Me too Harley' and threw himself down the road, wearing out his leather gear as it did what it was designed to do. Ali and the other guy got him to his feet as I stopped and we all got him to the side of the road. He had no skin abrasions or broken anything, but had had a good knock on the head and was in 'Day dream land' quite badly. They were both from Havelock and out for a Sunday ride. We stood his bike up, it had superficial damage to the right side, but was rideable with care, but the rider was not so flash, he kept on telling me he knew me, then he knew Ali, then he didn't know where he came from. We got to the stage where Ali and I could do no more, his mate was ringing a friend to come and pick them up and I was reinforcing to him not to attempt to ride.

If ever one needed a lesson on the benefits of a full face helmet over a open face one it was there for all to see in this accident. The lower right side of his helmet from ear to jaw was well bugged, yet he had not a mark on him, an open face one would have seen some serious damage to his jaw area at the very least. We arrived in Blenheim without further ado, attended to a little family business and in the early hours of the morning rode/drove to Picton, not a pleasant trip as there was all the ferry traffic blinding us as they headed south. A float on a boat and then the long grind back up through the Wairarapa and finally Hawke's Bay and home. The bike never missed a beat, started first kick every time and more importantly Ali enjoyed herself, which meant I enjoyed myself!

Mike

THEE BUT FOR THE FICKLE FINGER OF FATE....



Murray thinks that this a woman and probably his grandmother, but disowns the children. It was the kneeling beside a bike that gave her away!

This photo of a dispatch rider in WW1 France has nothing to do with either an AJS or Matchless, but I thought it was a nice photo to share. I'm sure it hides an interesting back story. Having just read a book about a dispatch rider in WW2 (*one Herbert Kenney*) who was the first allied soldier to enter the notorious Belsen concentration camp ('Opening the gates of Hell', written by Mark Hodkinson) It tweaked my interest in these riders. This particular picture shows a model H Triumph. However in WW2, the DR's (as they were commonly called) started off on Rigid framed, girder forked, BSA M20's, before being upgraded to Matchless G3L's with Teledraulic forks. 'All roads are Smooth' the Army Briefing said. 'Teledraulics just gobble up those bumps and pot holes and make all roads feel smooth'. Would you all agree??

The DR riders were well trained in riding in all conditions, day or night with little in the way of lighting, not only carrying important information, and performing vital reconnaissance work, but often carrying equipment such as machine guns etc. They were experts at repairing these motorcycles, often under shocking conditions and enemy fire. They were brave chaps and filled an important role during both wars. Spare a thought for these guys the next time you are fixing your bike in the comfort of a warm garage, and things aren't going well but aided with all manner of tools, equipment and the internet at your disposal!

Mick.

Murray McLean

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WINNERS AND GRINNERS AT MOTUEKA 2025

The following couple of pages hopefully captured the smiling faces of our members who by fair means or foul, received prizes at our Rally in Motueka.

The opposite page has from top left:-

Top row:- Pete Kingsnorth presenting Murray with the Johnny Hart Trophy; Willy Wood telling stories.

Centre:- More stories from Mindy Chowdhury; Rod Briggs; and Trevor Poyntz.

Lower:- Bruce Heywood; Nicole; with Andy Birch receiving a prize for furthest travelled.

Back page:-

Gary Hawke-Jampot trophy; Pete Kingsnorth- Hybrid Trophy

Gary Hawke; Nigel Harris- Mean and Keen award

Nelson Crow- Best Twin; Michael Watts- best single

Congratulations to all and a large thankyou to the organising committee.

A RIDE FULL OF HOPE AND GREAT EXPECTATIONS

The middle of March sees the Hawke's Bay Classic Motorcycle Club run its annual Mail Run event. This commemorates a ride some time back in the distant past when supposedly a letter from the Mayor of Taupo was delivered to the Mayor of Napier by a motorcycle rider, or some such similar tale. The HBCMC has been running a reenactment of this event for the last 36 years and it is a great day out for the real old timers, both bikes and riders, in our community.

Rules are simple:- rigid frame; girder forks, sprung saddle. If your bike meets these then you're in. The event is somewhat counter-culture as rusty old 'Barn finds' are much prized in the line up of machinery. This year there were some 45 entries, three of which were bikes over 100 years old! All gathered on the lake front in Taupo ready for the off at 10.00 am. Much chuffing and huffing from riders as they in turn persuaded their chosen steeds for the day to chuff and huff and then it was all on.

This year your Editor was involved as crew Chief/back-up driver/ spanner twiddler for Tommo who had by great subterfuge managed to extract a small 1936, 250 cc, Triumph away from 'Honest Mark Ericksen'. This saga started several months previously when 'Honest Mark' found a very delapidated small motorcycle languishing in the forgotten depths of a farm shed, a true 'Barn Find'. Due to some 'deal' it became domiciled in Marks Bayview emporium and was spied there by Tommo, who in a moment of great enthusiasm decided that your editor should prepare this machine for the upcoming Mail run. New control cables, replacement wiring and many other niceties were lavished on this little machine and after a couple of kicks it burst back into life. A shakedown ride out to the clubrooms and back saw one clutch spring make a successful bid for freedom, but once that was fixed it was deemed ready for the challenge.

An early morning trip to Taupo saw things ready for the off. After a suitable amount of swearing we persuaded the little thing into life and off he set, next stop Rangitaiki Pub where a re-group was planned. 10 Km down the road here he was on the side of the road on the brink of fatal exhaustion as it had petered out and defied his attempts to rekindle the spark of life. Some spirited Editorial kicking saw life again restored, but after two further repeats of similar activity we gave up and loaded it onto the trailer, shortly joined by a 1919 Excelsior. We rolled into the parking area at Rangitaiki which resembled a low tech Paris-Dakar rally site with much spannering taking place. The Excelsior regained life, followed by the little Triumph. Off we set once more and to my great amazement and surprise we made it all the way to Tarawera for the BBQ lunch.

The real test was to be on the final leg with its long climbs. Sadly the little machine had a premonition of all this and barely a couple of hundred meters down the road it started its fuel starvation antics once more, a couple of repeat performances saw the onset of terminal rider exhaustion and a realisation that it was not going to happen this year, so with a bit of a heavy heart we loaded it back onto the trailer and took it back to the Onekawa shed where it had a good rest. What the whole thing has done is to cement into place in both Tommo's and my minds is that we have some unfinished business here, so next year we will be there with a hopefully more reliable little Triumph.

All of you with old machines that fit the criteria should seriously consider joining in for this event, it is a ton of fun, the camaraderie is brilliant, come on have a go!

Mike

AN EARTHQUAKE HIT THE PRIZE GIVING!



