

February 2008



**The monthly newsletter of the North Staffordshire branch of the BSA Owners Club**



Apart from their interest in old motorbikes, Norths Staffs members have other rewarding hobbies. Derek and Jeff enjoy relaxing in old boats.

## Visit to Norton Motors

On 19 January 2008, we were invited to Norton Motors in Rugeley. Myles, Jon and I had planned to make our way there by motorcycle in spite of the very unpromising weather forecast. We set off fully expecting to get drenched but, as it was, the worst weather we experienced was a very slight drizzle and the ride there was very enjoyable. We arrived early but it wasn't long before the doors were opened and we were given a warm welcome and offered tea, coffee and biscuits. There was a good turnout and we were left to wander around, looking at the bikes and the workshop. In the distance, we could hear loud BSA noises and as it drew closer, someone was heard to say "Ah, that'll be Andy then" and sure enough Andy Lorenz made a dramatic arrival on his outfit.



*This Rotary-engined Commander was without most of its bodywork as it was in for modifications. A few of us thought we would ditch the bodywork and just tweak it a little to make an impressive streetfighter!*

After a while having a good look and bikes and workshop things and chatting to the staff of Norton Motors, director Richard Negus gave a brief talk explaining how the start of the rotary engine was really with BSA, with the first prototype he remembered being the Sachs engined Starfire at Umberslade Hall in about 1969. As avid readers of this newsletter will remember, it was Jeff's picture of this very prototype that led to our visit to Norton Motors so it was a shame that Jeff couldn't be there. You can read more about the history of the rotary engine on Norton Motors excellent website. We have also been invited back

for the open day which will be some time in September. After more browsing and chatting, souvenirs were purchased and photos taken. Colin Podmore spotted a Fortnum and Mason picnic hamper stored in the workshop and asked if he could buy it for his Round Tank BSA. Richard Negus and his wife wanted to give it to him but a deal was struck where Colin left payment on the desk before he left. I look forward to seeing the hamper on your bike, Colin!



*Rocket 3 for sale at Norton Motors.*

As everyone started heading for their respective homes, Myles, Jon and I set off, following Colin Clay on his Funduro for part of the way & taking a different route home, which took in some nice stretches of road with interesting scenery and buildings to look at. An interesting couple of hours at Norton Motors with a good bike ride either side - an excellent way to spend a Saturday in cold, damp January.

Thank you to everyone who turned up and thanks to Jeff for providing the picture that eventually led to our invitation to Norton Motors.

*Hazel*

## BSA Junior/NVT Ranger



*BSA Junior at the International Rally in Belgium, 2007*

For those of you who don't know, the NVT Ranger/BSA Junior are differently badged versions of the same bike - a small 50cc bike aimed at 7-12 year olds in the 1970s. They use a similar engine to the NVT Easy Rider mopeds but have a kick start instead of pedals.

A while ago I bought a tatty NVT Ranger on E-bay for Rhys and, shamefully, it has taken a very long time for Jon and I to do very much work on it. Recently, however, I received an email via the website from someone who had acquired a BSA Junior (also on e-bay) and, having seen Rhys's Ranger on the website, wondered if we could give him any advice on where to find parts. I suggested Chell's of Stafford, even though I have never had any contact with them myself. Last week, I received an email saying that Chell's had been able to provide the parts needed. This has inspired me to drag Rhys's bike out again and start cleaning it up and preparing a list of parts to request from Chell's so hopefully it should be up and running in the not-too-distant future.

Steve, owner of the BSA Junior, has set up a very impressive website dedicated to the BSA Junior and NVT Ranger and it covers the history, technical data etc. It also provides a link to our own website and says very nice things about it!! Check out his website at <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/nvtrangerbsajunior>. I will soon be adding it to the Links on our website and will be adding Chells of Stafford to the recommended suppliers.

*Hazel*

## Bristol Show

I'm sure everyone had a good time at the Bristol Show - if anyone would like to provide a writeup and photos I will include it in the newsletter next month.

## Appeal for advice/parts etc

A friend in the NACC is helping a friend of his to restore a 1958 Super Rocket. He has removed the cylinder head and found it is absolute c\*\*\*!! (his words, not mine, of course!!). Does any one know of a cylinder head for sale & is the Super Rocket one unique or can a basic A10 one be modified to suit? Any advice would be appreciated.

## Classic Off-Road Show, Malvern

This was on 16 February and we had arranged to meet Myles and anyone else who was going at the cafe in Quat at 9.30. It was a cold morning and I wrapped myself up in lots of layers but still had cold toes - and that was in the Transit van, as we had ruled out riding there for various reasons (non-compatibility of arthritis and cold weather, mainly!). Myles and Tim were, as usual, much braver and were B40 and Triumph Legend mounted. No-one else turned up but we had a delicious cooked breakfast and hot drink before setting off. Although very cold, it was a beautiful sunny day and I did have moments of wishing I was on the bike but I contented myself with filming Myles and Tim as they allowed us to overtake them on the dual carriageway 😊



## Classic Off-Road Show, Malvern *continued*

We arrived at Malvern and had a quick look at interesting bikes in the car park before paying our £9 entrance fee and entering the showground. None of us had been to this show before and didn't know exactly what to expect. There were two big halls for exhibitors and trade stands and a sizeable autojumble outside.

We had a look around one of the halls which was full of interesting bikes on display & for sale and lots of parts and accessories for sale, then, having warmed up, ventured outside to trawl the autojumble. Myles cheekily started taking photos of engine jigs that one of the stalls was selling and we were so embarrassed that we bought one! Actually, it was designed to fit a B40 engine and was only £20 so it seemed a good idea to have one and we are going to hire it out to Myles to copy.....

I bought some bits of rubberwear for my little Tribsa - nothing kinky, just a distributor sheath and some lever covers for the fancy adjustable levers I bought from the Trial and Trail shop on good old e-bay. Jon was looking for a carburettor part for the New Hudson and, assisted by Myles' and Tim's rummaging skills, managed to buy a whole carburettor, cable and throttle lever for the grand sum of £2. Myles purchased a chain cover for the B40, having thankfully decided that it wasn't worthwhile to photograph and measure it then make one later.

After a cup of tea/coffee and cake for Tim and Myles we explored the other hall, which was again full of interesting goodies and kept us busy for the afternoon. We set off for home having thoroughly enjoyed the show, even though we hadn't had time to see it all, and thinking that the £9 entrance fee that had initially seemed a little steep was not so bad after all.



*Walwin BSA competition bike. One of only two fitted with B25 engine. Designed and built by the Winward brothers, believed to be out of the BSA competition shop. Road registered and in perfect working condition and with 12 months MOT - asking price £3,500. I had spotted the other B25 engined one on ebay just before Christmas with an asking price of £5,500!!*

*Hazel*

## EVENTS

**Sunday 16 March 10.00am (provisional?)** North Wales British Motorcycle Preservation Society motorcycle jumble and bikes for sale. Mochdre Village Hall, Colwyn Bay. £1 admission. Refreshments. Info: 01745 823904

**Monday 24 March** - Red Marley Hill Climb. There is also a classic trial on Sunday 23 March so some of us are considering camping there on Sunday night - you can get camping passes and there is apparently a bit of a party on Sunday night.

**Saturday 30 March** - Vintage & Classic Motorcycle Show at 10.30am, Wistanstow Village Hall nr Church Stretton.

**Saturday 5 April** - 1960s transport day, Severn Valley Railway

**Sunday 6 April** - Big Breakfast at Preece Heath

**26-27 April** - Stafford Show.

**28-29 June** - 1940s Wartime Weekend, Severn Valley Railway

**5-6 July** - 1940s Wartime Weekend, Severn Valley Railway

**5-6 July** - Uttoxeter Classic Motorcycle Show and Autojumble at Uttoxeter Racecourse. Tel/fax: 0870 0138562

**Saturday 12 October** - Vintage Vehicle Day, Severn Valley Railway

Severn Valley Railway anticipates formally re-opening to full line running for Easter. Additionally the Engine House (the new display facility / museum) will be open at Highley.

## EDITOR'S FOOTNOTE

I am feeling quite excited at the moment, due to seeing some results from the North Staffs BSAOC website. . I think it was earlier this year that I first noticed that the website does now appear if you look for it using search engines such as Google - I have to confess I almost jumped with excitement when that first happened!

As I mentioned earlier in the newsletter, the website led to an enquiry about the NVT Easyrider which, apart from giving me a bit of a push to get on with Rhys's project, shows that there is some benefit in having the website - it might be contributing in some small way to helping keep BSAs running and putting people in touch with others who can help or advise. Since then, we have welcomed a new face at the last meeting - Kevin Rowe - who I hope will come back again. Before the meeting, he contacted me via the website - and once again I

was pleased that the website was being seen by people who do not regularly attend the meetings - and I'm sure I shall continue enjoying each little indication that the website is worthwhile.

To help me improve the website and newsletter, please send any contributions to either [hazel@hazelclarke.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:hazel@hazelclarke.orangehome.co.uk) or [editor@bsaoc-northstaffs.co.uk](mailto:editor@bsaoc-northstaffs.co.uk) or give them to either me or Jon at the meetings. Any photos for the photo albums on the website would be welcome, too. Even if you just want to recommend a valued supplier or a favourite website link, it all helps to make the website a useful and entertaining reference point for anyone interested in BSAs and motorcycling.

*Hazel*

