

Shetland Classic Motorcycle Club Newsletter

October 2018



**** Chairman's Chat ****

As Summer fades and our club activities move to the Winter Programme, I need to reminisce a little about the splendid Summer we had, the best I can remember. Riding our bikes is so much more pleasurable when the sun shines.

Looking back on some of the highlights, the visit to Frankies is always popular and it isn't hard to understand why, fine food and fine company.

Our run to Unst and Tony Mouat's 'Museum' was an unexpected delight, sheds of stationary engines, agricultural implements, 'What's that' sheds, lots of everyday objects from a previous era, fascinating. One of the best items was the Norton side valve engine tractor with a rare BTH TT racing magneto, there must be a story behind that. We also took in the Serpentine quarry that day and I now have a sample on my desk from the beach to remind me of that run. I think a few others took home some mementoes that day.

The Classic Show saw a lot of changes and the new layout with the bikes in the Bowls Hall worked well. The design allowed more space between the bikes which gave better opportunities to see the bikes. Comments received were favourable, one exhibitor, who had brought a car up from South, spent all his weekend in the 'Bike Hall' as he was fascinated by the details he could see. A visiting journalist told me that this was the best display of bikes he had seen at any show. There is always room for improvement and some refinements will be introduced for the next show. It can't go ahead without all the support from the exhibitors, marshals and helpers, so a big thanks to all involved.

Thinking ahead, if you are restoring a bike. Can you have it ready for the first weekend in June 2020, please?

I missed the run to David and Beatie's in Yell, but I did hear that they had to pump out some of the ballast on the ferry for the return journey. David and Beatie really put on a fine feast.

Whilst I am talking about food, Kit and Ewan Mowat tempted us with home grown Ollaberry strawberries on our run to see the Walls Boundary fault line. This is an extension of the Great Glen fault line and is the best example of a sheer fault in the UK. This was one of those 'I didn't know that' runs.

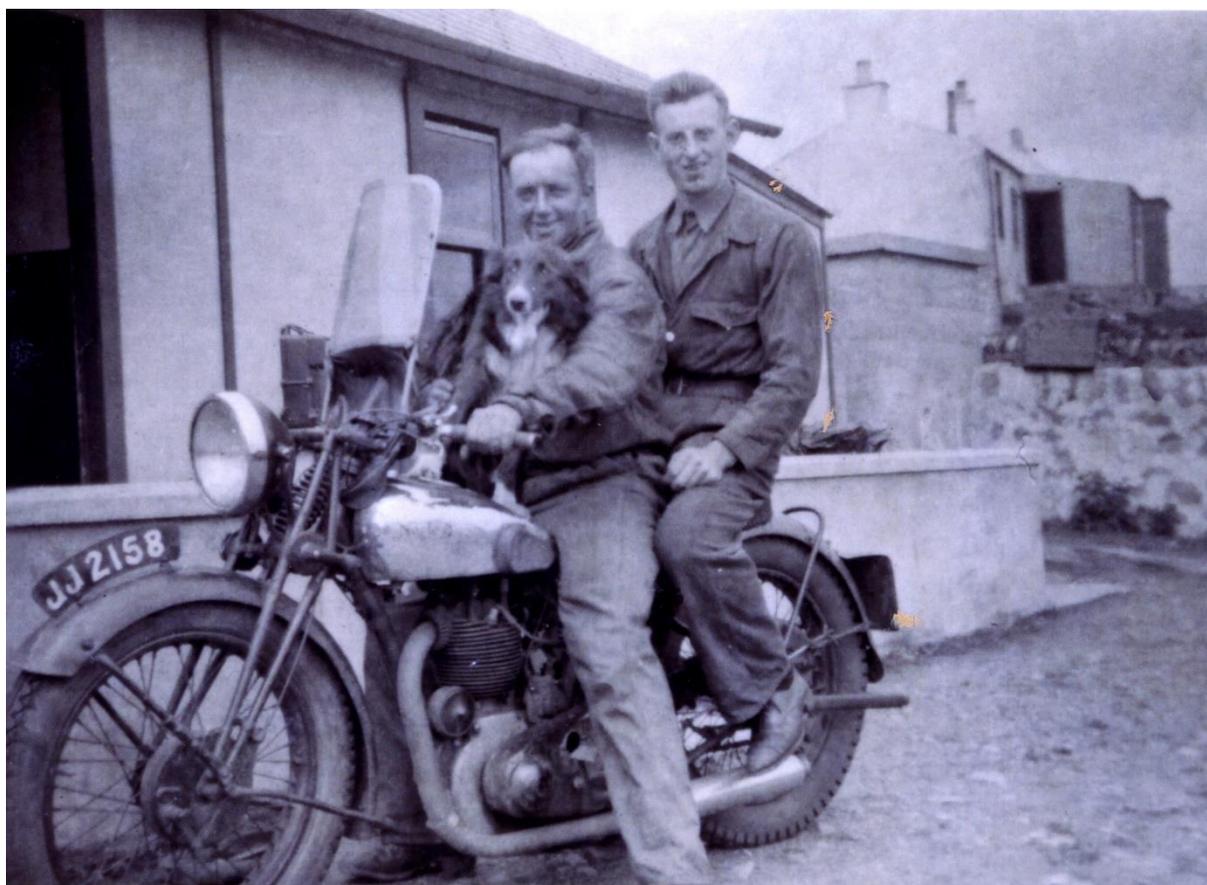
As usual, we had a few runs this year that included unmade tracks, The Hams of Muckle Roe were spectacular, as we basked in the sunshine, munching on the BBQ nibbles, and we had a first when one of our club members arrived by boat! We were fortunate to access the track to Fethaland and had a splendid day as we explored the ruins, investigated the half-made soapstone bowls and listened to the fishing stories.

If you didn't make any of our runs this year hopefully we can tempt you out next year?

Our Winter programme is included in this Newsletter, I hope to see you at some of our meetings.

Gordon

**** Rare Bikes In Shetland No 31 ****



As it is getting more and more difficult to find examples of truly "rare" bikes in Shetland, the time will come when we have to re-title this bit something like, "Shetland Bikes of Note" or just "Shetland Bikes Past". Suggestions please in time for the next committee meeting. Gordon please copy!

Anyway, here's a little offering for now.

As you will notice, it is a Norton and that is about all I am certain about. It is obviously an OHV single so could be a 350, a 500 or even a 600! Now JJ is a London C.C. number and, according to the info I have, it ran from Nov 1932 to March 1933. Some difference in the number of vehicles registered from the local PS numbers which ran from Jan 1904 to Dec 1964 and only reached PS4080!

So this bike is probably a 1933 model unless it was held in a showroom for a while as the next year models usually came out about Nov of the previous year.

So, where do we go from there? Well, judging by the position of the sparking plug, I don't think the engine is tall enough to be a 600cc Model 19 and on the original photo I can count 15 fins below the plug and that makes it a 500, I think. The frame is of the open type and not the cradle one as fitted to the ES2, so that leaves us with the Model 18 the 500 or to be exact 490 cc OHV single.

Two features to note are that the exhaust of the single port engine is mounted on the left which was a feature more or less peculiar to Nortons of that era. The other is that, rather than the lighting switch and ammeter being fitted in the headlamp shell, this one has them mounted in a tank panel. This was a fashion thing offered as an extra on this model.

That is about all that I can say about the bike. The rider is the late John Manson who some of you may remember as a porter in the Gilbert Bain Hospital at one time. On the pillion is Willie Moncrieff who worked at the Lerwick Power Station for many years and later moved South where I believe he still resides.

The picture is taken in Burgess Street, Lerwick outside what was then Willie's father Lewie's house. Lewie kept kye and ran a small milk dairy from there well into the 1950s. As they say, every bike has a story to tell!

Joe Gray

**** The Unst Run and Tony Mouat's Emporium Extraordinaire ****

Sunday, 13th May this year saw a good turnout for the Unst run with, in particular, a visit to Tony Mouat's superb collection of everything antique at Baltasound.

The weather, in keeping with what has proved to be an exceptional Summer, was ideal, as can be seen from the photo of the lineup awaiting to board the ferry from Yell into Unst.

We were joined in Unst by Tammie Strachan on his newish Royal Enfield. Tammie's wife belongs there and they spend a bit of time there at their summer house at the Wasting. On arrival at Baltasound we were warmly welcomed by Tony, his wife Irene and their grandson Archie. And so the tour began!



It is difficult to find words to describe the assembled artifacts and it would be easy to rattle off the usual range of descriptive expletives, but really, Tony has assembled an impressive collection of everyday items that is unique in Shetland and in fact it would be difficult to find a better one anywhere. From a needle to an anchor comes to mind, but that does not really do justice to what is on show there.

We started in the upper shed to see the assembled collection of stationary engines, iron horses, tractors and agricultural implements, the latter two of which there was more outside.



The next shed was more intensive, housing everything from a screw driver to a four wheeled, horse drawn carriage! It is difficult to describe what all was in there, so hopefully the photos will convey something of the magnitude and diversity of the display.



From here we moved into a smaller shed with an array of household items and collections of all sorts of everything!



Then onto the model section with models too numerous and diverse to describe! Actually the reason for that is that for whatever reason I only took this one photo in there and this is it!

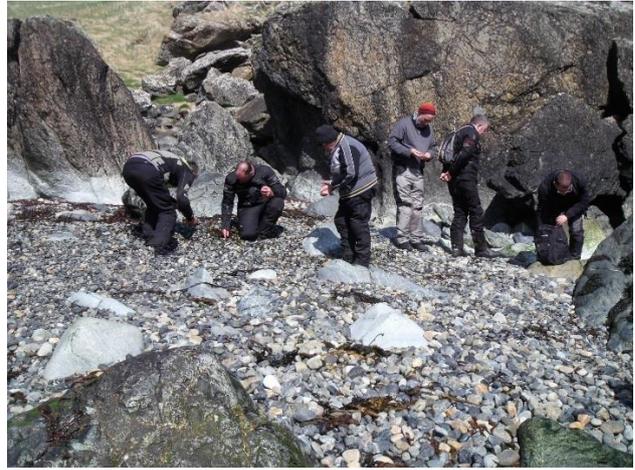


To round off we were led to the garage workshop where on the bench was a good example of a small Trusty tractor. This created great interest as it was powered by nothing less than a Norton Big Four motor cycle engine!

Well this collection really has to be seen, so if you missed out on the run this year make a bee line for Unst next Summer and, by arrangement, I'm sure Tony will be pleased to show you around!

Before leaving we got Tony, Irene and Archie to join us for a record photo. Many thanks to you all for hosting a very memorable visit!

After leaving the Mouat Collection, we headed North and took in the Boat Museum at Haroldswick, the top of Saxavord and Cross Geo at Clibberswick where, as can be seen, the participants took on renewed childlike enthusiasm in searching for the beautiful serpentine pebbles, exclusive to the area.



Finally we enjoyed afternoon cream tea at Victoria's Tearooms, Haroldswick where we fell in with a party of friendly American tourists on a minibus trip.

All too soon, the Chairman announced that if we hurried we could catch earlier ferries. So we fired up and headed with all haste to Belmont and home after a very enjoyable day.

Joe Gray

**** Colin Nicholson and the "Tricycle of Terror" ****

In the September 2017 issue of the Club Newsletter, I finished my article on the Orkney Vintage Rally with a mention of a local BSA Ariel 3, which had recently been liberated from decades of slumber at Exnaboe. Well, for those that still don't know, the new owner of this "Granny Killer" is none other than myself!



John Peter Duncan's Ariel 3

With 3 BMW boxers, a Rudge 500 Special, a Kawasaki KX85 scrambler and a 50cc Italjet Mini Mini Bambino (yes, the double "mini" is correct and not a typing error!) already vying for space in my garage, another project was not even on my radar, especially not a 49cc tilting three-wheeled moped! But as is often the case with chance conversations, the next classic acquisition can happen completely unexpectedly, as the Club run to John Peter Duncan's collection was to prove. While waiting outside for the rest of the group to arrive, I was chatting to Geordie Jacobson and Robbie Burgess and mentioned the bikes I had seen in Orkney, including the Bushfire Orange Ariel 3 of Colin Ross. To which Geordie replied, "Du can come an' get my wan!"

Now I had either forgotten or didn't even know of the existence of this one in his bike collection, which is even more eclectic than mine. However, fate was now stacking up against me, as when we all went inside to view John Peter's superb display, the first thing that greeted us was his very tidy Everglade Green Ariel 3! This gave me the opportunity to actually look more closely at all the idiosyncrasies of this diminutive machine, and I even took some photographs of it.

After a few days of internet research into the marque, and some additional thinking time, I was suitably intrigued and headed to *da Ness* to have a closer look at Geordie's Ariel 3. Now, I hate the phrase "*barn find*", which many on-line sellers of decrepit vehicles habitually use to describe something that looks like it's been dragged out of a skip, despite having never seen the inside an agricultural outbuilding, nor having been lost in the first place. This little curio had been stored, not in a barn, but in a dry garage and the owner most certainly knew that it was there. However, with 3 flat tyres, a few cables hanging off, and the odd part removed, superficially it did look rather sorry for itself, and could have been thus described. Despite this, all the important bits were there, and the engine could still turn over. So that was it, heartstrings well and truly tugged, I'd fallen once again for the underdog, and now found myself as its latest custodian.

Compared to a normal motorcycle, the Ariel 3 is so small and light I was able to fold down the back seat of our Ford Focus and carry it home in the car! And being a two-stroke, there was no liquid to run out of it as it lay on its side. Perhaps this moped ownership malarkey has some advantages after all?



It also has no ignition key and no speedometer, throwbacks to simpler and more trusting times in our society, and very different road traffic laws. Not that one was likely to have been successfully stolen anyway, as they were notoriously difficult to start, and this is one of the main reasons cited for their poor sales figures when new. The starting procedure is theoretically very straightforward, by simply pedalling it like a bicycle. However, the reality was somewhat different, leaving many riders completely out of breath some distance from where they had set out, with an engine which resolutely refused to run. The fixes however were relatively straightforward: widening the spark plug gap to prevent the plug shorting out; removal of the sediment trap loop in the fuel pipe which could cause airlocks; ensuring that the Encawi carburettor was fully vertical, allowing the correct fuel/air mixture.

The Ariel 3 was only ever offered for sale in one of three distinctive and very period colours: Pacific Blue, as well as the aforementioned Bushfire Orange and Everglade Green. However, this one had been painted in the distant past in a shade that I can only describe as Massey Ferguson red, wheels and all! Despite the fact that by the finish, the paint looks to have been applied by floor brush, it has certainly been the saviour of the tinware, with it all looking intact underneath. And talking of which, the underside shows it was originally green, so that is the colour it will be returned to. The fuel tank, having retained the original paint, has cleaned up well with T-Cut.

Looking at the advertising slogans of the day, these were not that inspiring to the point of almost being self-mocking, starting at the launch with: "It's not a bike, it's not a car, but it's fun." later substituted by: "Here it is, whatever it is." and finally: "Ariel 3 lets you laugh all the way to the shops." In reality, it would have been more likely to have had you laughed at all the way to the shops and back again, assuming of course that it started in the first place.



ARIEL 3

ACCESSORIES



PART NO		RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE
8-180	One piece clear acrylic windshield (not illustrated) to give added weather protection with minimum wind resistance. The reverse curvature top, effectively breaks up the air flow.	£4 - 7-6 (£4-37)
8-290	Tinted midi screen in amber, blue, or gold to give fashion co-ordination with shower and glare protection.	£2-12-6 (£2-63)
8-3200	Fashionable rust resistant wide angle rear view mirror, with moulded plastic mirror head and fittings of high quality chromium plate.	14-6 (£0-73)
8-7330	Plastic coated basket with lots of room to take a week's shopping. The basket is quickly and easily attached or removed.	£1-15-0 (£1-75)
8-5095	Waterproof cover to protect basket and contents from sun and weather.	12-6 (£0-63)
8-7190	Luggage carrier, ideal for carrying suitcases, briefcases or similar bulky items. The basket can be fitted to the carrier if desired.	£2-16-6 (£2-83)
8-5125	A spare wheel is a must in the unfortunate event of a puncture. For carrying it fits snugly under the luggage carrier.	£4-10-0 (£4-50)
8-0975	Dri-fix transfer in modern styling.	4-0 (£0-20) Pair
8-5121	Waterproof cover to protect the tyre and keep the spare wheel clean.	7-6 (£0-37)
8-0978	Safety Lock - Anti theft device for personal security.	17-6 (£0-87)

MOTOPLAS CO. LIMITED
One of the B.S.A. Group of Companies
ARMOURY ROAD, BIRMINGHAM B11 2PX. (Telephone: 021 772-1008)

MOT 101/1

BSA marketing material

The BSA Ariel 3 was launched to the World on 11th June 1970 at the Royal Festival Hall, London. There, BSA Group managing Director, Lionel Jofeh addressed a large crowd of celebrities and journalists, where he made the following rather bullish statements: "We think that our sales in the first full year will exceed 25,000 machines worth over £2 ½ million." and "We feel the Ariel 3 is one of the most exciting developments to come out of Birmingham since the Mini." Unfortunately, history proves reality to be somewhat different. A little over three years later, BSA would cease to exist. A sad end to a company that was once the largest manufacturer of motorcycles in the World.

Although the actual number of Ariel 3s built is unknown, it has been suggested to be in the high hundreds rather than in tens of thousands, and the loss to BSA reckoned to be about £2 million. Although its creation and ultimate sales failure is often unfairly stated as the main reason for the bankruptcy of the Company, there are many other factors around poor management and bad decisions that led to the demise of this once premium brand.

After the collapse of BSA, the rights of the tilting 3-wheeler reverted back to the original inventor of the concept, George Wallis, who went on to sell the design to Honda and Daihatsu.

The design project was officially called P22 within BSA, but the design team referred to it as Trixie. However, it wasn't long before it was dubbed the *Granny Killer* due to the habit of falling over, or getting the nearside back wheel caught in cast iron kerbside rainwater gullies, resulting in the rider being flung into the nearest piece of street furniture.

As time has allowed, the strip-down of this one has progressed and entirely as expected, this has revealed some parts missing, and others damaged. However, a well-known internet auction site has been the source of many NOS parts, often still in the original BSA packaging! These have included a brand-new wiring loom, front suspension rubbers, headlight, upper fairing, front mudguard, pedals and even a front fork leg, already painted in the correct Everglade Green.

So, can SCMCC members look forward to the day this 1.7 bhp powerhouse takes part in a Club run? Err, well possibly. Even if I am brave/stupid enough to venture onto the road with it, there's the not insignificant matter of the pedantic DVLA rules to overcome. As the V5 was lost long before Geordie's ownership, and BSA in their wisdom (and cost cutting in the extreme), saw fit to have the frame number marked only by a small sticker which would have fallen off by the time it was sold to the first owner, getting it road registered is going to be a greater challenge than getting it running.

Now, where can I get a Sinclair C5?

Useful Websites

The BSA Ariel 3 register: www.bsaariel3.co.uk

The Ariel 3 Museum: www.ariel3bristol.wordpress.com is a fascinating website and includes a story and photos of a former Scalloway based Ariel 3 that now resides in the dedicated museum in Bristol.

Colin Nicholson

*** SCMCC Newsletter ***

We are keen to receive newsletter contributions from everyone. If you've done a restoration, seen or experienced anything interesting and maybe taken some photos - do share!

Send texts, photos, for sale ads, etc. to birgit.wagner@shetland.co.uk or post to Sungaets, Nesbister, Whiteness, ZE2 9LJ if you don't have an electronic version.

**** Winter Club Nights Programme 2018/2019 ****

2018

October:

Wed, 3rd Premiere of the 2018 Classic Show DVD in the Upper Room in Sound Hall. Copies will be on sale on the night.

November:

Wed, 7th Mulled wine and mince Pies at Frank's Emporium in Market Street

December:

Wed, 5th AGM at the Staney Hill Hall

2019

February:

Wed, 6th Slideshow on Dean's Himalayan Adventure by Royal Enfield at the Staney Hill Hall

March:

Wed, 6th Visit to Shetland Composites - Details to follow

And to kick off the 2019 summer runs season:

Wed, 3rd April: Run to Frankies in Brae for Fish 'n' Chips

NB All the above will commence at 7.30 p.m.

**** SCMCC Committee / Contacts 2018 ****

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Treasurer	Dean Mitchell	01595 840627
Membership Secretary	Frank Johnson	01595 695177
Runs Co-ordinator	Lewie Tulloch	01595 692326
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Newsletter Editor / Webmaster	Birgit Wagner	01595 840627
Committee Members:	Joe Gray	01595 693266
	John Peterson	01595 840797
	Colin Nicholson	01595 696120
	Gibbie Fraser	01595 809203

To avoid spam, we are no longer publishing members' e-mail addresses. To contact the committee by e-mail, use the club contact address: info.scmcc@gmail.com.