



FISHTAIL WEST

October & November 2019
no. 234

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**Submissions for
FISHTAIL WEST
due: last day of ODD
numbered months**

Club dues \$30 a year. Membership runs from January thru December. Notices go out by email in December to be paid by January. U.S. funds only. All new member and renewal information can be found on our website:

<http://velocette.org/the-club>.

Front Cover: Jeff Achenbach goes for a test ride. 2019 Mt. Shasta.

Back Cover: AHRMA MX 9 29 at Bushey Ranch by Bill Quaccia

The technical tips, views, and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the editor or any of the other VOCNA officers.

Southern California
Velocette Christmas Party
Saturday December 14th 2019
12:00 noon till ???
Bruce & Remy Farren
18860 Robert's Road
Riverside CA 92508
Please RSVP
remenyf@att.net
951-780-5874



This newsletter often features items from older motorcycle magazines, including photographs, drawings, cartoons etc. Where possible I acknowledge their source. Often these items are often from "MotorCycle" and "MotorCycling", and the current copyright holders are Mortons Motor Cycle Media. I thank them for their use.



Prez Sez

by John Stanley

Not many Velocette things going on around here. Vahan Dinihanian came up a couple of weeks ago, and I helped him assemble and mount his clutch, as well as installing and timing his re-built magneto. It was too late to go riding, but he came back up from Portland about a week later and we had a nice ride up the Valley to Cooper Spur Inn for lunch, he on his Venom and I on the MAC.

Have been riding the MAC and LE a little bit, but have been spending a lot of time with the

teardown of my 1956 Morgan Plus 4 project which I had scheduled to start in October, but since we will be gone on a trip in October I started a bit early. Picking up the bare chassis from some straightening and repair tomorrow, and will be starting assembly when we get back our trip. Plan to complete it by April 2 next year.

I have all of the rides figured out for the 2020 rally, and am going to start to figure out what options anyone would be interested in. Maupin is famous for the fishing and rafting the Deschutes River, which runs adjacent to our motel and campground.

Although it seems like a long way out, by the time you read this it is only 9 short months away. The rooms at the Imperial River Company will be on a first come first serve basis. As I mentioned before, there are 25 rooms at Imperial River, and we have a block on 23 for the full week, and the other 2 rooms for 7/5/20 through Thursday 7/9/20. We have enough rooms and camping to accommodate the number that attended the rally this year, but if we have increased interest, it will get tight. If you know you are going to attend it would be wise to make your reservations as soon as possible. The phone number at Imperial River Company is 541-395-2611.

For camping I need to keep track of how many are going to camp, although final arrangements will be made at the time of registrations. In order for me to have adequate space for all campers, I need to know as soon as possible, as there is little if any time to make adjustments to the space I have already reserved. Please E-mail me at stanco@gorge.net. Remember that the camping will be right next door to the host motel, so this may be the year to get back to nature and pitch that tent.

An easy walk down the road you will find the Oasis Resort. This is a group of 10 rustic cabins as well as their own camping. These cabins remind me of the ones we had at Lochsa Lodge Idaho during the 2014 rally. If have a group of friends you want to share a cabin with this might be a good option. Everything in Maupin fills up early. You can search Oasis Resort in Maupin on the internet, then call 541-395-2611 for reservations.

Just across the road from Imperial River Company is the River Run Lodge. Again you can check their website and call them at 541-395-3747.

When these rooms are all taken, there are rooms at the Deschutes motel, 541-395-2626. These are just northwest of town, about 1 mile or so from Imperial River.

Again, if you are planning to camp please let me know as early as possible how many people and how many tents in your party.

Happy Riding
John

30th Annual
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ALL-BRITISH RIDE
Saturday, November 2, 2019
BRITISH BIKES ONLY!
NO EXCEPTIONS



Ride departs 10:00 am - 940 Seventh Street, Novato

DIRECTIONS:

Highway 101, take the Downtown (DeLong) Exit
Right on Novato Blvd., then right on 7th St.
Meet in front of Novato Gymnastics Center

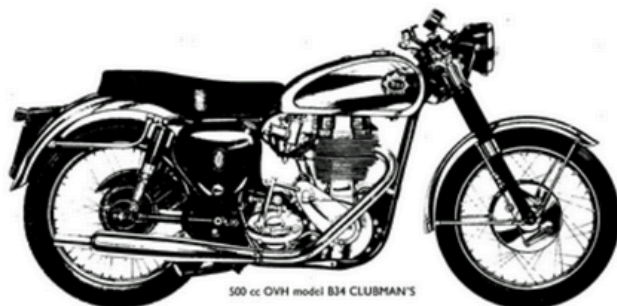
DO NOT PARK BIKES OR TRUCKS IN THE GYMNASTICS CENTER PARKING LOT
ON-STREET PARKING ONLY

Bikes at the curb, Trucks/trailers use neighborhoods

Lunch for British Bike pilots and passengers after the ride at
→ Stafford Lake Park

Lunch tickets sold at sign-in, before the ride - \$20

Info: Don Danmeier, 415-898-0330 or dwdsms@novato.net



Crock Controversy

You may have read comments on the thorny issue of our annual Crock award. Clearly, we have to address the future of this particular Trophy which has been presented at every one of our Rallies since 1984. Do believe that the Trophy was conceived and created by Cary McSquid and it is not addressed or included in our Bye Laws. This particular trophy has caused much mirth but also significant pain and conflict. John Ray addressed the issues thoroughly in the last FTW.

Board members have been consulted and provided their comments and recommendations. It is our decision that for the 2020 Rally in Oregon, that this Trophy Not be included in the judging and awards at the AGM. Additionally, we will provide for membership discussion and decision at the AGM, options for how VOCNA can modify the award (including doing away with it) - to ensure that our Mission is best served.

That's it for now. VOCNA - Real Riders, Proper Motorcycles!

Happy Veloing and do persevere.
Olav Hassel, Chairman.



*Spares, Repairs and
Accessories for
Proper Motor-Cycles*

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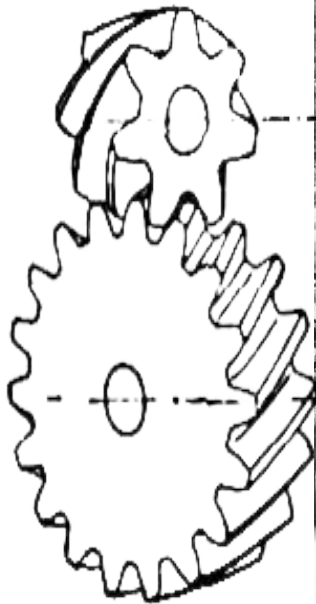
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velocette@nocharge.zzn.com

Web: <http://velogb.tripod.com>

Right: 1983 Phil Swartz in Hanford. photo by Gil Loe



Below: Jimmy Walker, Olav Hassel, Phil Swartz and Mavis Shafer, back in the day. photo by Gil Loe



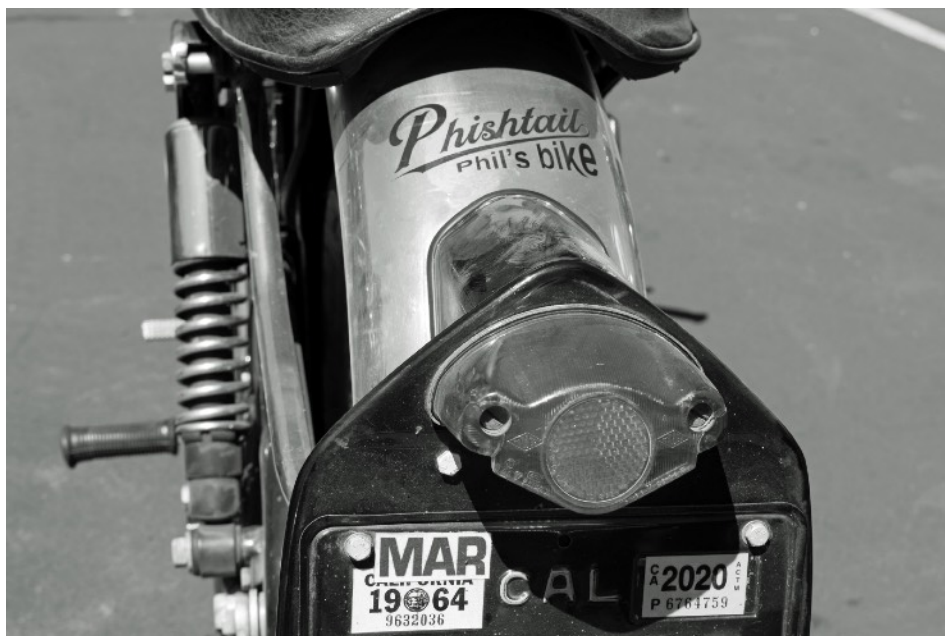
Who was Phishtail Phil?

For the benefit of newer VOCNA members - who was Phishtail Phil? His memory lives on in the Clubman of the Year trophy, awarded every year for special contribution to the Club. This is also known as the Phishtail Phil Trophy.

Phil Swartz has been gone for many years now. He is remembered as a much-loved, true Velo Fellow known for his dry, witty sense of humour and generosity. Some of us still have his funny musings, articles and cartoons which he would often mail out after work. When still in the Airforce, he bought a new Venom Clubman Veeline in 1964 and had the US Airforce deliver it from England to Southern California. He collected it in the middle of the night, assembled it and rode home. This bike has been licensed every year since and, 2 years ago, his long-time partner, Mavis Shafer, gifted it to my son, Eric an able Velo starter and rider. Eric was good enough to allow me to ride it at this year's Rally - around No. Cal and So. Oregon. I had removed the fairing to make it a lighter and smaller motorcycle. It performed with little fault and this, in large part is because Mike Jongblood had gone though the bike a few years ago including much new paint and plating.

I had decals made up celebrating its heritage. These have also gone to Graham Glover who rides Phil's old R80 BMW and also to Keith Canning who has Phil's silver Clubmanized MSS.

Phil was one of my very best friends and, we went to the UK together twice on memorable Velo pilgrimages. A founder member of our Club and still an active part of it. Persevere. Olav



Eastern News

by Andrew Harris

Greetings from the East, the cooler weather means the bike seems to run smoother and sweeter. I decided to research this issue and after lengthy and exhaustive investigations I can now reveal the reason.....

It seems the denser (larger) cool air molecules take up the slack between the throttle slide and (worn) carburetor body, thus promoting better running.

So there. Got to love this technical stuff – priceless.

The vintage club has been out and about this summer, one ride was to the Great War Flying Museum at Brampton. An impressive display of (flying) WW1 replicas, Spad, SE5A, Fokker triplane etc. In addition the carpark had old cars and bikes, my favourite was a 1933 Morgan 3 wheeler with watercooled JAP V-twin engine which was the Earls Court Show model that year. One owner since 1960.

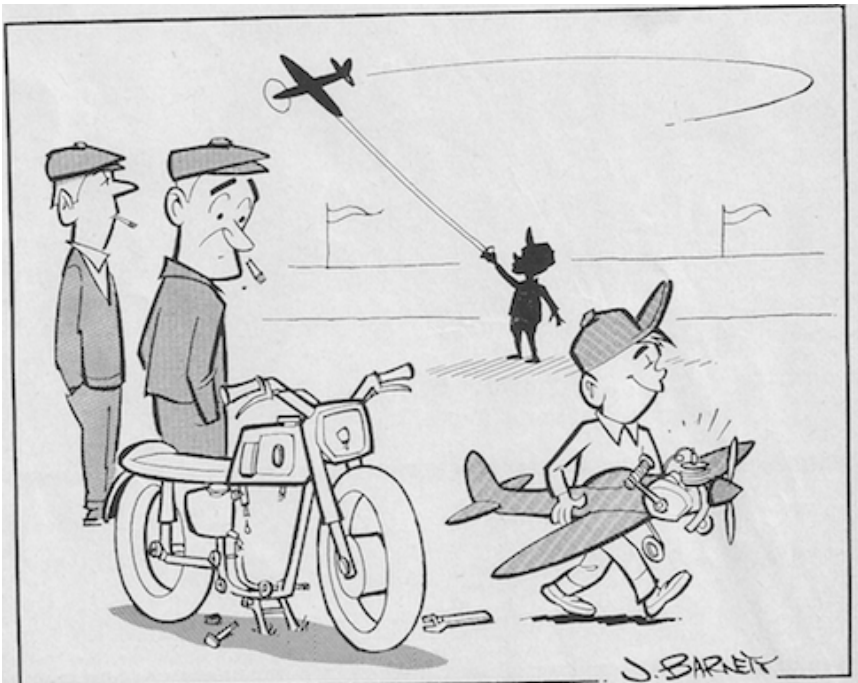
A less happy ride was to the Ontario Provincial police museum where the exhibits include a 1924 Henderson. Unfortunately the ride leader had the route programmed into his GPS.....After getting lost 2 or 3 times we circle Barrie city centre twice before our hero admits to being lost. By now aircooled engines and tempers are overheating and the last straw was a highway dash because we were now late for our appointment at the museum.

Oh well. Just goes to show maps have their uses, as does knowing where you are going before setting off.....

Finally the battery on the Velo has stopped taking a charge. No biggie as the ignition is magneto but I am considering using one of the big blue condensers on a spring instead of the battery. Does anyone have experience of this setup with a dynamo?

Does the condenser affect the dynamo operation in any way? Any input gratefully received.

Ride safely, Andrew



The MAC and the Velocette Whisperer

by Tim Kenney

If you had been on the last Melo Velo ride around Pine Mountain and back to 'The Place' in October of 2018 you may have seen my 1952 MAC being trailered in by Matt Chapin. I was having a great time, riding near Jim Romain on his very clean S/A, when the MAC decided to call an end to the ride. I had noticed some stumbles around Frazier Park, but written it off to the altitude. But, my trustworthy steed finally decided to become non-op, very suddenly, about 10 miles outside of The Place.

After getting the MAC home I delegated it to the back of the Garage, and frankly was too depressed to even look into the failure. You see, we are the same age, me and my MAC, and I have been riding it on and off since I was 16 after my father and I (with used bits from Lou Branch) assembled it from a pile of parts that my brother sourced for a co-worker. It has been touched by many others, including the famous Eddie Arnold. So, I felt deflated that my life-long companion of many a foolish venture had stopped so dramatically.

After some weeks of sitting on a pile of oil, I stuck in my truck and made the pilgrimage to Anaheim to introduce it to Mike Jongblood, who I flippantly refer to above as the Velocette whisperer. Within minutes the tank, head, and barrel were off and the immediate cause of failure was exposed. What I had assumed (not a good idea, I know) was a fuel starvation related issue (I had recently had Mike fix a leak in the tank and thought that I had not cleaned it well enough when I replaced it) turned out to be completely wrong. Under the heading of 'a picture tells a thousand words,' I present the following evidence.



You will note that the top of the piston is slumped down into the top land, and it appears that the engine was running after this, as documented by the carbon build up. Who knows? That funny feeling in Fraizer Park? Things progressed:



This side of the piston shows the evidence of a sudden stop. Notice the lack of any top ring!

But wait, there is more!! I left my MAC in Anaheim, and what followed were a series of discoveries by Mike, to which I responded by searching the world over for replacement parts. MAC parts are not as common as they once were. Ed Gilkison was kind enough to source a 40 over stock piston, but the damage to the barrel was beyond that, so Grove found me a slipper split skirt 60 over (not a JP). Olav also provided some leads. But, as I said, there was more:



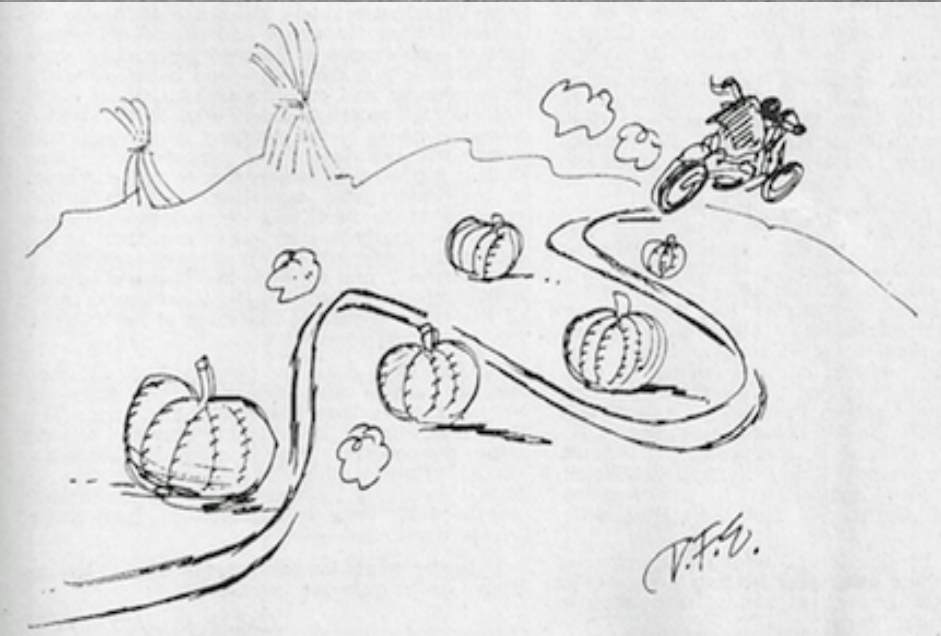
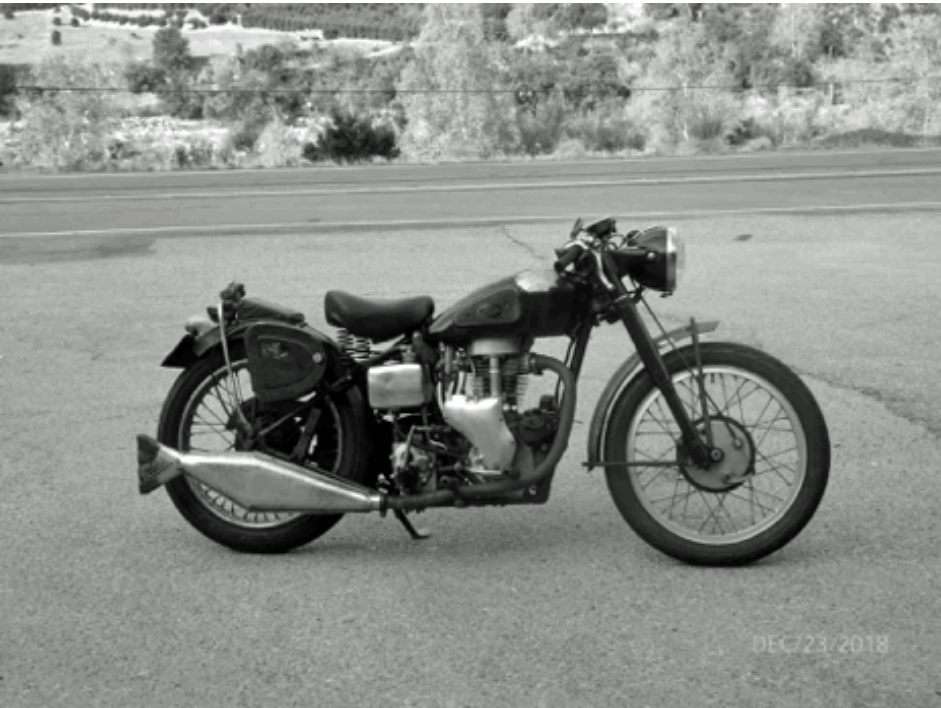
Mike wondered how the motor ran at all.. but it did, a testimony to the agricultural nature of the Velocette, in that it will operate with what an engineering friend of mine called ‘soft failures.’

Mike went deep, and beyond the call of duty as a friend and mechanic. He searched down to the crank for missing piston ring parts (still MIA as far as we can tell), and in the process replaced some critical shimming regulating crank float, then started to build it back up. I have always been suspicious of the auto advance for my BTH, and Mike replace some of the battered weights as well as improving on my hack solution to relieving pressure from the oil tank. I am truly impressed, as I can take parts off and bolt new ones on, but I don’t make beautiful and functional new pieces. Oh, he also added a handmade replacement cover for the generator belt. My original one was pretty rough, and if you know Mike at all, you will know that he likes things to be functional. Details, details, details.. and the MAC was back in one piece.

Well, in addition to being a first class machinist, fabricator, and mechanic, Mike is in all things tremendously modest. So, he was worried about the



assembled MAC, but when I drove back down in late December and rode it around his neighborhood, I was blown away with the feeling of new life that he had breathed in the my lifelong friend. I guess we are destined to put on a few more miles together, and I am sure that the MAC will outlast me, and perhaps be ridden by Christine.





VOCNA 2019 Rally Report

by Jeff Achenbach

VOCNA rally time! Venom has been running well, so no need to check it out or even test ride it. Just put it on the truck and go, right? What could go wrong? There's a spare inner tube over there. Might as well toss it in the truck, along with a set of tire irons. How to load the bike? Well I could use the trailer, but there's plenty of lumber around, so just make some ramps.

Reached camp early Saturday evening. Hung out with Jeff Scott, Lanora Cox and Fred Mork who were the early arrivals. Unloaded the bike the next day to go pick up my rally pack and it was extremely hard to start. Huh????? Missed the turn to the resort and bike died when turning around. Kicked and kicked and no start. Finally pushed it up a steep driveway and bump started, but running poorly. Got my rally pack and again had to bump start to get back to camp.

Back at camp, Jeff had a spare BTH electronic mag and suggested we install that. Managed to get it installed with help from Larry Luce and bike then started easily and idled, but still didn't really run right. As there'd already been a few beers emptied, waited until Monday morning to recheck timing and found it was off. Reset timing and ran better but still not right. Oh well, better to ride than not.

Climbing the grade on NF 17, seemed to be running better when handling suddenly got weird. Blaise rode up beside me pointing at the rear, and sure enough, flat tire. A couple hours later, Tim showed up with the chase truck. Loaded the bike on the trailer and got up over the summit and partway down the other side when BAM! Caught a sharp rock which took out both right tires and mangled a rim. No cell service, so Tim suggested I ride his MAC until I got service and could call for help. 24 miles later, was able to contact John Sims (truck owner) who contacted AAA. They were supposed to be coming with a tow truck, so I rode back up to let Tim know help was on the way. He graciously told me to ride his bike back to camp. No point in both of us waiting around.



Back in camp, after dark (and beers) got word AAA wouldn't tow the truck. They claimed it was on a dirt road???? Brainstorming around camp, someone realized we just needed a second spare, so Kevin volunteered the one on his Toyota and with that plus the spare on the disabled truck, they were able to get truck, trailer and my bike back to town the next day (Tuesday).

Pulled the wheel and found a small puncture in the tube. Looked and looked, but couldn't find anything in the tire to have caused it and it didn't look to have been pinched. Finally gave up, thinking whatever had punctured the tube must have fallen out. Installed new tube and all seemed well (except still not running right, though starting easily and idling nicely). Dropped the float bowl and found the float was full of gas. Fred had a piece of wire that I heated with my backpack stove and made two small holes to drain the gas, then tried to weld the holes shut. Couldn't get them quite closed, so went and got some Krazy Glue, which sealed it just fine.

Wednesday ride to Klamath went reasonably well, though running poorly. Cory Padula followed me most of the way. I suspect he was worried about the way it was running, and I was glad for his company. As we pulled into Klamath, I suddenly had a LOT of play in my clutch lever. Looked down and could see it was badly frayed. Had to stop for directions, after which I started the bike with the kicker and Cory gave me a push to get it rolling then got it in gear. Made it to the campground. Rode passenger with Cory to dinner that evening and when word got around about the clutch cable, Pete Young and Blaise gave me two to try.

Had to make a couple adjustments to the clutch as the cable settled into it's new home, but was still riding. At Cave Corners went into NAPA and got a B7ES plug, as B8ES seemed to be fouling pretty quickly and it seemed to be running very rich. Didn't seem to make much if any difference. Made it to Grant's Pass, but had a hard time finding the campground. Clutch wasn't staying in adjustment when it got hot, but made it into camp.

Friday morning, one more clutch adjustment to get started and began the ride back to Mt. Shasta. Not running great, but having a nice ride until Klamath River. Another flat! Well, I stopped at the Klamath River community hall. There was a big patch of blackberries, many of them ripe. Shade and a water fountain. A local conspiracy theorist on a Sportster stopped and kept me company/entertained until Tim showed up with the chase truck.



Next year I'm going to have a rack so I can carry spare tube, tire irons, pump, spare cable. In spite of a few trials/tribulations, I had a real good time and look forward to next year!

Jeff Achenbach frequently took the position of workin on his bike. Above he hides behind his bike at the campground in Mt. Shasta.

Below he stands as Kevin Burrell supervises at the campground in Klamath.





Achenbach continues:

Meantime, back at the ranch. Reinstalled my old magneto and seems to be running better than ever. 2 new clutch cables on the way. Found the cause of the second flat. I don't want to talk about that. And I now have a luggage rack.



left: The truth comes out... Keith Canning never travels without his vegemite! Secrets discovered on the 2019 VOCNA rally.





2019 BSAOCNC Singles Ride,

Jim Romain organized this romp through Northern California. Danny Brennan sent the photos. According to all there were quite a few Velocettes on the ride. Jeff Ward, Jeff Scott, Don Danmeier and Gus Varetakis can be seen in this lineup.



Danny wrote:

Haha! well it (Vincent) certainly didn't like the bumpiness of mountain house road as much as the Suzuki does, but it was a ton of fun to ride on the smooth bits. Jim's ride was the beginning of the end for my Ducati 250 last year, I think I over spun the motor and blew the oil pump on his ride a year ago and that later developed into a bad main bearing, so i didn't have any vintage single options this year. Danny Brennan



Online Velocette parts store -
www.velocetteclassics.com

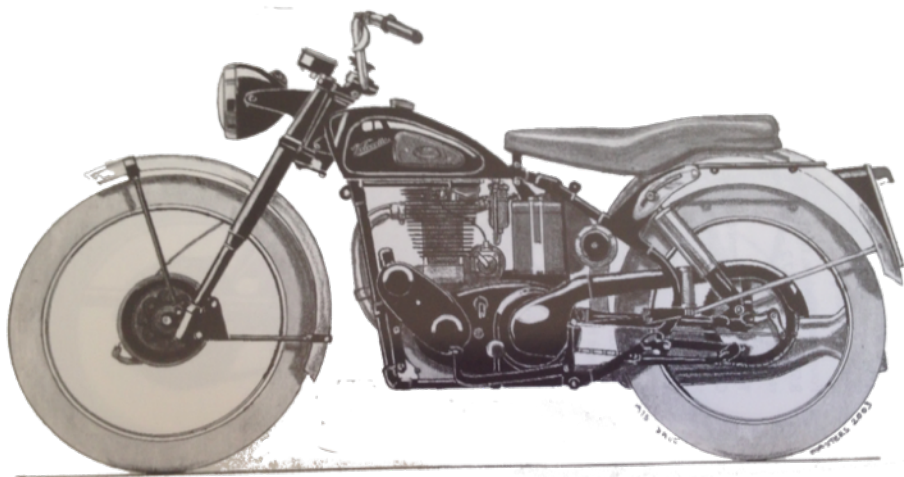
- Restoration of Velocettes
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Peyote Dreams #187

by Art Bone

"Poor Mexico; so far from God, so close to the United States." Porfirio Diaz

Humans can't remember extreme pain. That root canal or road rash or the anal probe by the Aliens from Zxitor; you can't remember it. You remember that it hurt but you can't recall the really sharp, searing pain and existential dread that goes with it. This explains why some women have more than one child and it also explains why some men restore more than one motorcycle.

As you probably surmise from that opening, I'm once again involved in a motorcycle restoration. It's not a Norton this time. Several years ago, my friend Carleton happened to mention he possessed a vintage Velocette he would like to sell, or rather, several boxes of parts that could very well become a vintage Velocette, as we say in Mexico, "en la manana." In this case "manana" doesn't mean "tomorrow." It means sometime in the future.

And of course, we've all heard this. "It's all there. The guy just took it apart and put it in boxes."

That line's right up there with, "Was running when parked," "light surface rust," and "the check's in the mail."

I've been interested in Velos ever since my first trip to the Isle of Man. I went to their meet-up and loved the way they looked and sounded. Then, in 1993 I toured Ireland and happened into the Museum of Irish Transport where I saw a wonderful exhibit of the inventions of Rex McCandless, inventor of the Featherbed frame, of Norton Manx fame, among many other oddities. Right next to that exhibit was another featuring the race bikes and trophies of Stanley Woods, several of which were Velocettes. I was especially interested in this because the year before I had seen Stanley Woods in the paddock at the Island. He was a very old man then (probably about the age I am now) and walking on crutches, but he was enjoying the racing and the attention he was getting from everyone.



The Many Riders of one Velocette Endurance

left: Paul d'Orleans models an Endurance in the slanted light of an Oregon sunset.

*Winner
of the
JUNIOR TT*



1926-8-9

below: Mirek Sharp looks sharp riding an Endurance on a Spring Opener. Behind him Gil Loe prepares for the morning ride.



The following is a description from Wikipedia of his first TT race aboard a Cotton.

The Isle of Man Examiner newspaper described Woods as an "enthusiastic amateur"^[14] and he started the 1922 Junior TT with the number 40 entered by Cotton. After being delayed at the start to stop to recover dropped spark-plugs which had fallen-out of his pocket,^[15] Woods still managed to make good-time and lapped in 40 minutes and 50 seconds, despite^[16] clipping the kerb at Governor's Bridge on lap 1. At Sulby on lap 2, Woods slipped off the motor-cycle,^[17] and got up and continued, but hit the same kerb again at Governor's Bridge, losing part of the exhaust. A fire in the pits at the TT Grandstand followed which was extinguished by pit-attendants and by Woods himself, using an overcoat. Further problems occurred at Braddan Bridge, when Woods had to stop to replace an exhaust valve, after the inlet push-rod had broken.^[15] At Greeba Castle he discovered the brakes had failed after the rear brake cam lever had split^[15] a result of the pit-fire. Woods continued the 1922 Junior TT Race with no brakes, and again fell off at the Ramsey Hairpin on the last lap,^[7] still finishing the race in 5th place, in a time of 3 hours, 55 minutes and 33 seconds.

"Enthusiastic Amateur" indeed!

Woods went on to have quite a racing career. He contested nineteen TTs and won ten of them on Nortons, Moto Guzzis, and Velocettes. He also won many other races in Europe and was a national hero and well remembered on the Isle of Man even fifty years after his last race.

Stanley Woods passed away in 1993, a few months after I saw the exhibit.

When I bought the bike it was in Vermont. I arranged to get it to Barber's Vintage Days, then to McAllen, Texas, where it sat for over a year before I finally got it to San Miguel. Then it sat on shelves in my shop for several more years.

I finally got inspired and started looking for parts. I knew it needed an over-sized piston, valves and valve guides, just for a start. The supposed Velo parts guy in the US seems to be on hiatus, or not interested in my project, or something, so it was one step forward and two steps back.

I checked with my friend Mats Hammerlund, race car builder extraordinaire, and found that there is a powdercoating shop in San Miguel. When I called, the owner came over to my shop and picked the pieces up and returned them four days later looking perfect to my untrained eye. I asked him about a chrome shop and he told me about one in Dolores Hidalgo, twenty-five miles away. I hauled a few pieces over to see if they do decent work and was very pleased with the result.

Also, I was very pleased with the prices of both shops. This isn't going to be nearly as expensive in Mexico as in Georgia.

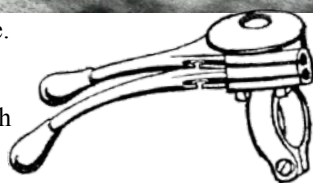
When I bought this bike I knew very little about Velos, but I've always loved their looks, their sound, and their names. Velocette Viper, Venom, and Valiant; I love motorcycle names that start with "V." Velocette, Vincent, V-Max, V-rod, Virago; there seems to be something about that "V" sound that evokes speed and power or perhaps danger.

On the other hand, Vespa sort of disproves that theory.

The year after I bought the "bike" (boxes of parts, really) I was at Vintage days, walking through the pits, and saw several Velos in front of a trailer. I paused to look them over and got into a conversation with the owner who graciously offered to let me ride his Endurance. He even more graciously offered to start it for me. To my surprise, given what I'd heard over the years about starting Velos, it started on the second kick.



Above: Omar Hernandez gets the feel of a the Endurance.
 Below: Dai Gibbison was not sure about those high bars, but after 1000 miles, he was sold. He found the old car as the rally went through Jerome Arizona. photo by Judith Gibbison.



I did find his description of the brakes as being “not very good” was wholly inadequate to the situation. The brakes were nonexistent even at the speed I was riding around the pits. You had to call and make a reservation to stop from fifteen miles an hour.

Brakes aside, I really enjoyed my short ride. I loved the sound and I loved the look of the bike. It really looked “Old.” Commandos look old, compared to modern bikes, but Velo’s look old compared to almost anything. The furnace-brazed frame with big cast-iron lugs, the tiny brakes, the skinny tires, the outside oil lines, and the famous Fishtail muffler cries out “This is an old moto.”

I had no idea I was about to find out how old.

I bought the bike sans title or bill of sale so, in an attempt to find out some more details on the bike, I joined the Velocette Owners Club of North America. I soon found there is an active FaceBook page so I joined that also. When I posted a query about my bike and gave the frame and engine number I received a very nice post from Mr. Dennis Quinlan of Australia. Dennis is the “23 and Me” of Velocettes. He seems to know the DNA of every Velo ever made or at least the ones shipped to the United States. He has the records from Branch Motorcycle Sales of Los Angeles, distributor for Velocette motorcycles back in the day. He sent me a copy of the original invoice for my moto. My bike and four others left the factory to be shipped from Birmingham, England to Los Angeles on August 26th, 1954 on the freighter, “Loch Avon” and the “Home Market Value” including tax was 170. 4. 8d. I assume that was pounds sterling but have no idea what the conversion rate would be now.

Since owning this theoretical bike, I’ve found out some interesting facts about the brand. These bikes were very low production even compared to Nortons, probably about 1000 per year of all models. These things are rare.

And so, after more years than I care to admit, I should have the parts to put the engine back together in two weeks and I can put it back in the freshly powder coated frame, inspect the transmission, install that, then start back together with the rest.

Poco y poco.

My bike is, in theory, a 1954 Endurance but, according to some folks who seem to know their stuff, the bikes could be built to order from the factory, making them a “rivet-counter’s” nightmare. You had your choice of aluminum, painted steel, or chrome fenders, chrome or painted rims, different gas tanks, and the list goes on and on.

Since I’m not by nature a “rivet-counter,” and since I have a pace-maker and an artificial knee, this bike is not going to be original. I’ve decided to equip it with an Alton electric starter which comes with a twelve volt alternator and, since I’ve got to have a battery for the starter, I’m getting rid of the magneto (which is knackered) and replacing it with an electronic ignition. I’m also thinking of replacing the clutch with something more modern. I’ve never heard anything good about Velo clutches.

Also not in the boxes was the carburetor and I’m sort’a glad. I think a brand-new Amal Premier is more in line with my ideas, performance wise. I want something I can start and ride on the rough cobblestone streets of San Miguel and I’m going to do my best to solve the problems these bikes are prone to before they become my problems.

I might not remember all the pain of a specific project but I do remember that the worst pain of any restoration project is not the pain of the restoration itself but the agony of redoing all the little problems that cropped up after I thought I was finished.

Maybe There’s Hope For The World: - Today, January 18th, as I was writing my column, something happened that brought me a little glimmer of hope in a world that has seemed, of late, to be filled with nothing but ill will and rancor.

The phone rang and it was club member Alberto Clave, calling to ask if I knew a biker named Mike Patrick from Texas. It seems Mike, who was riding alone, had an accident on the Arco Norte, the bypass around Mexico City, and was taken to hospital in Pachuca. Someone took pictures of him and the license plate and posted them on FaceBook and started passing the word for someone who might know him.

I don't know Mike but when I saw that someone had posted on the Motorcycle Mexico page, I shared it on my page. Then I sent a text to my friend John Hubbard who is riding over in the Sierra Gorda mountains now.

In the hour after Alberto called I got six messages about Mike's accident. I got messages on FaceBook Messenger, regular text messages, WhatsApp, and phone calls.

Say what you will about social media but you can really get the word out fast now.

I always say bikers are the best people in the world and today reenforced my faith in that proposition. That that many folks would take time out of their day to try to help a total stranger is commendable and also unexpected. It made me really proud of our community.

THE MOTOR CYCLE

MAY 13TH, 1948



OVERNIGHT...



Unlike mushrooms, Velocette motor cycles did not grow overnight.

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Featured above is the
MAC 350 O.H.V.

New WebMaster: JP Default:

As the new host of the VOCNA website, I'm both updating and curating content.

I'm looking for club history, stories, photos, technical advice and all things Velo related.

There will also be a Classifieds page for selling bikes, parts, literature and anything Velo.

webmaster@velocette.org



Battery Woes

by Acidofolis Leadman

That dark feeling you get when the starter button returns a weak click click click. Or the horn button. No juice.

Good maintenance helps keep your battery alive and free electrons at the ready.

With your standard lead acid type, electrolyte level is kept between the lines with distilled water added, hydrometer readings taken at specific temperatures and periodic charging between rides at regular intervals help to avoid sulfation. That's the white sludge that creeps up from the bottom of the casing. When it reaches the plates they short out and that cell is dead. New battery time.

Then we for whom splashed battery acid from the vent tube and its ensuing corrosive nature is annoying there is the sealed lead acid type. No messy turkey baster testing no acid drip and no gallon jug of evaporate that we might use 1/2 ounce of every three years. For all these conveniences the purchase price goes up and we still must use a charger to keep the cells alive.

Now we get into the AGM and Gel cell types some touted for MC use and some adapted from emergency lighting systems alarm back ups and such like. Durability seems to be an issue with these. Especially the alarm battery designed to mount on a solid surface. And few of these are adequate for starting in any case. All need maintenance charging.

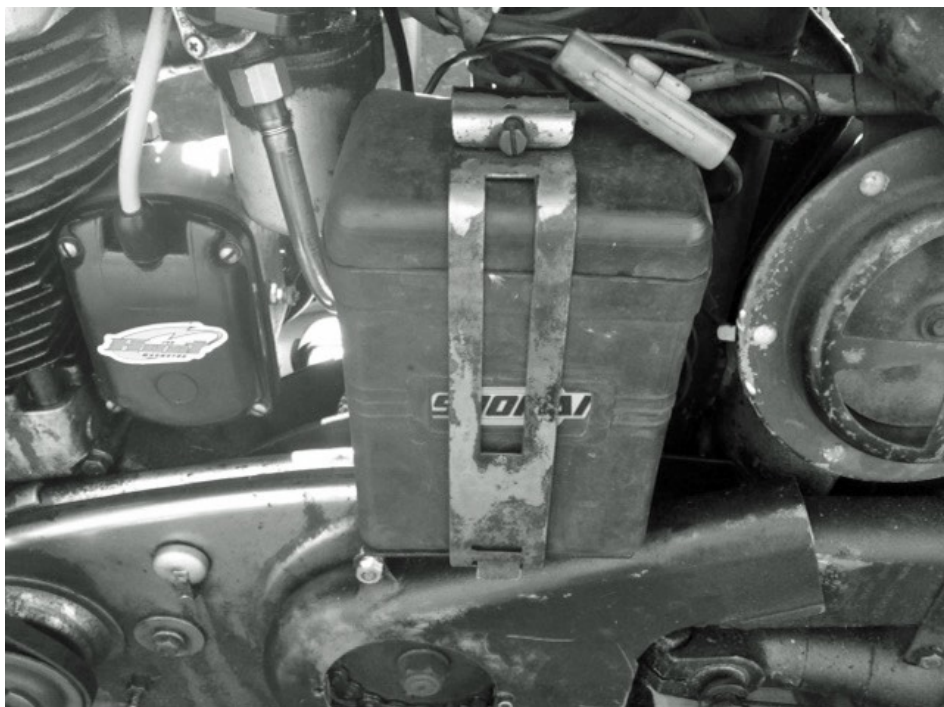
Keep in mind we are assuming a well found charging system with constant regulated output through a wiring loom devoid of oil soaked insulation, intermittent shorts or earthings, and clean solid electrical connections properly placed. Batteries live longer wired in the correct polarity.

Mounting deserves a mention to help battery life. Isolate from vibration and shocks. Well one out of two ain't bad. Balance your crankshaft and avoid pot holes in

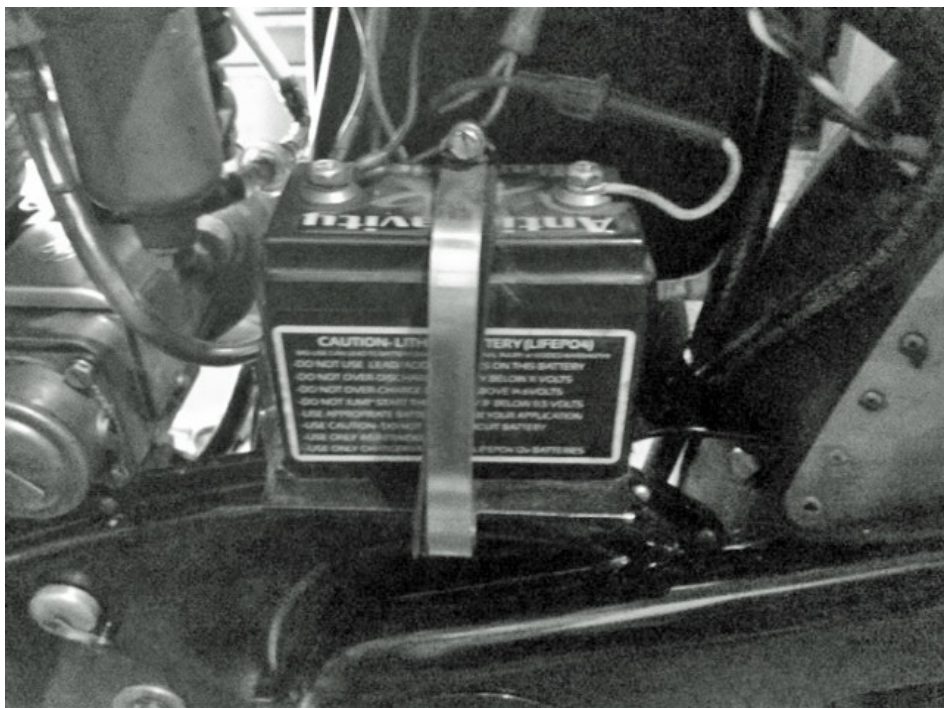


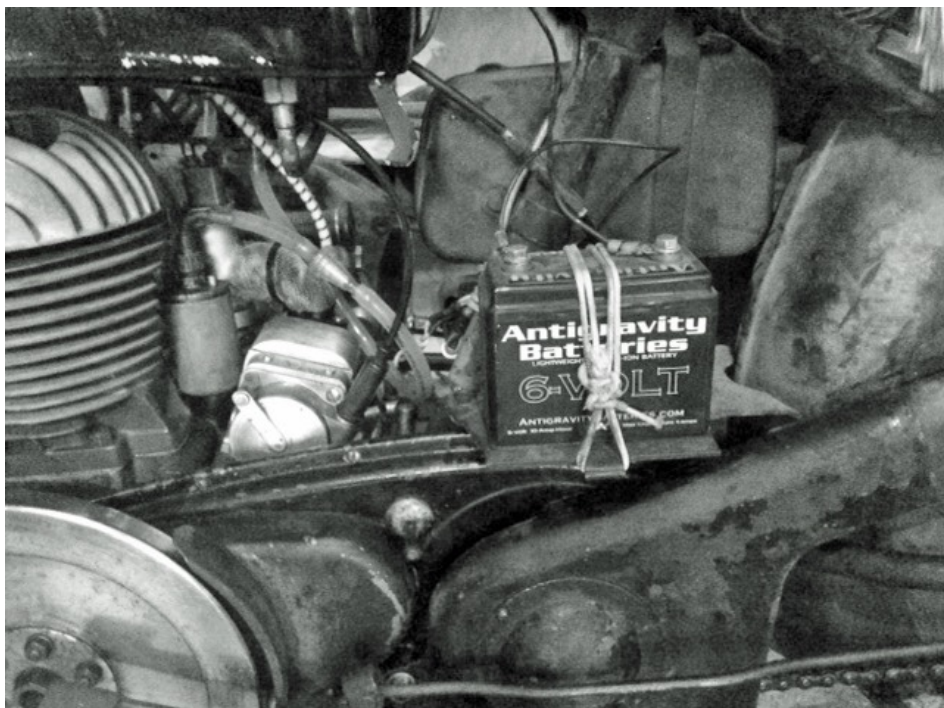
the road. To avoid shocks or sudden jolting to the battery case ensure secure mounting and use padding for protection against hard surfaces if possible. If your battery has a rubber case the standard clip strap works great. Keep watch on the securing screw that





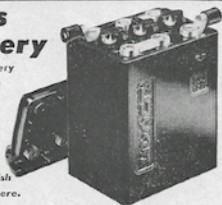
it doesn't loosen when riding. Safety wire works great and looks racy. If your battery goes in a box then make sure to clamp or pad the battery in the space so there is no bouncing or jostling about. And then secure the box. That goes double for the battery





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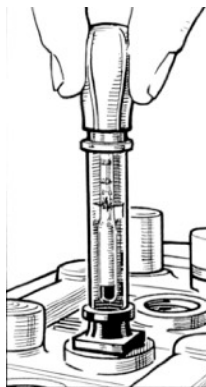
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in the tool box types. Cover the terminals with a non corrosive gazoozalem (petroleum jelly) and something to keep the stray spanner from spanning the terminals like rubber caps or a strip of plastic milk bottle held by a hose clamp.

In the main keep your terminals clean and your cells topped up with juice, both types, and try not to hang the battery by the wires.

We'll see you when your lights are on.



Take Frequent
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How Did You Get Started with Velocette?

editor's note: Below is Tim Kenney's answer. How did you get started with Velocettes? Send your response to editor@velocette.org

I was poor, my Father was an out of work structural engineer, and I couldn't afford a new Honda 90 that everyone else was getting.

I had been riding Minibikes around our yard, and got on the street once and got a ticket. Two wheels.. My brother gave me rides on his new 1967 BSA Lighting Rocket, and I wanted two wheels.

My brother knew a guy he worked with at the Van Nuys Post office named Kenney Eaker (sp??) who had a MAC in a box, and sold it to me for \$25.

We put it in the garage and started putting it together. We had to go down to Lou Branches a few times to buy used parts, and we got it running.

Up to this point I was riding a 1966 Suzuki BearCat to High School, which was limited. I got it from my Uncle, and (you wont believe this) I still have it.

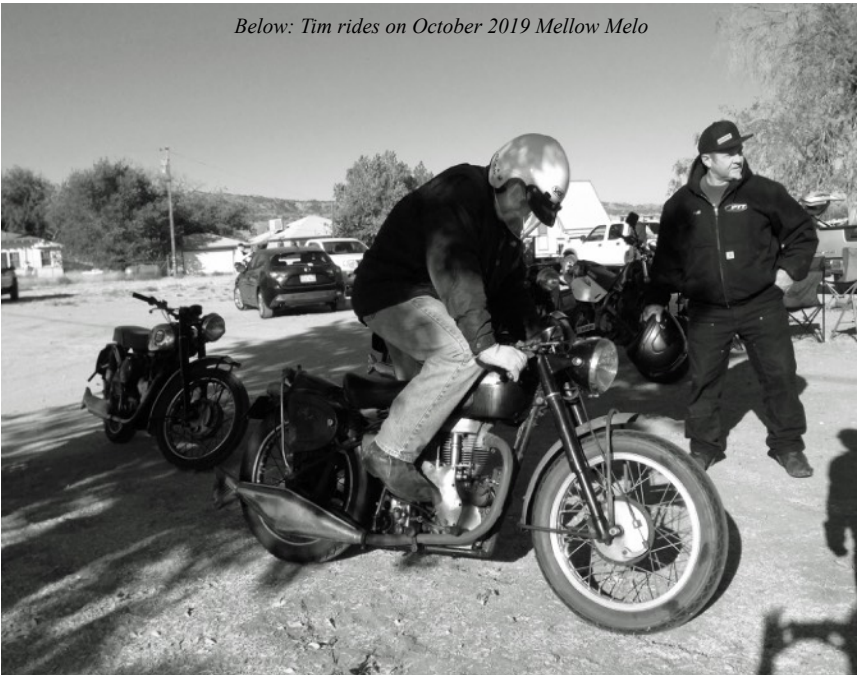
The Velo was rough, but it ran. I got it licensed and used it to ride to what was called 'Valley State', now known as Cal State Northridge. I had all aftermarket lights, etc. Like a mini bober. If you look at the tool box, I still have a parking sticker from Valley State.

I was approached by someone in the parking lot one day who told me about a group of riders who met every Sunday at Algernon's restaurant in Glendale, near Griffith Park (<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/81557443222521206/>) who have breakfast and ride up to the top of the park.

I worked graveyard at a Gas Station, and worked on my bike all night, strapped a box of tools to the back, and headed out for the big ride across the valley. Huge.

This is another story, but through the guys at Algernon's, who raced and fixed Velocettes their whole life, I was embedded in the Velo culture, pretty much, forever. Tim.

Below: Tim rides on October 2019 Mellow Melo



Allan Dow asks:

Will the Velocettes last forever, or to the end of our world?

We know for sure that the Velocette owners and riders have a limited life expectancy. Over time, many are already deceased. Some other life-long fans of Velocettes have had to quit riding and have sold their machines to others.

But what about the machines themselves?

I'll bet that by this time every remaining Velocette world-wide is owned by someone who values it and is giving it good care. It has probably been a while since any Velocette was dismantled just for parts and scrap metal.

I like to think that every remaining Velocette is being protected in a dry garage or better. Certainly that would be true for our Club members, but we can't know about every corner of the world.

Over a long period of time some Velocettes will inevitably be lost. Since people enjoy riding them so much, it's possible a few could be lost to accidents or fires.

I know of three motorcycles (not Velos) destroyed in separate home garage fires. Many of us were in disbelief when the British Motorcycle Museum had its fire that destroyed a big part of its fine collection. Major earthquakes, floods and fires could be future problems in some area. So could climate change and rising oceans, but alert people should be able to save motorcycles just as they will save valuable jewelry.

No one knows what will be happening 100 to 500 years from now. But I'll bet there will still be proud caring people still enjoying owning Velocettes.

Kami - change, can't buy a GTP and change it into a Thruxton....
finesse

Dear finesse, friend of Allan Dow,

You are absolutely positively right! No matter how well timed, that GTP will never be a Thruxton. GTPs are much more rare for instance. They are high indestructible and make great pit bikes. Ponies compared to the high-strung racehorse of the Thruxton. Each has its own role to play.

And the same goes for people to a degree. Often women are attracted to a man's focus on his motorcycle. They think, either consciously or not, that if he pays so much attention to that cold messy ride, he'll pay even more attention to me. Not that he'll be replacing one ride for another! No it's more like I'm better than that inanimate thing, at least I'll give him some attention back. I have to remind the delusional princess that while the occasional frog can be transformed into a healthy wealthy prince, motorcycle lovers rarely change that much. **Kami**



Southern California Velocette Christmas Party.

Saturday December 14th 2019

12:00 noon till ???

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