



# **FISHTAIL WEST**

**Velocette Owners' Club of North America**

**December 2019 no.235**

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

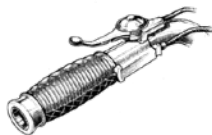
**Club dues \$30 a year.** Membership runs from January thru December. Notices go out by email in December to be paid by January. U.S. funds only. All new member and renewal information can be found on our website:

**<http://velocette.org/the-club>  
DECEMBER IS TIME TO RENEW!  
RENEW NOW!**

*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.*

**Front Cover: Holly Varey and Gary McCaw.** For more on this story, see page 7.

**Back Cover: Larry Luce and Todd Cameron on the 1st Cross Country Chase.** photo by Michael Lichter. Used with permission. Check out the galleries on his site, [lichterphoto.com](http://lichterphoto.com). Prints of the event as well as the Panorama of all entrants at the start are available for purchase.



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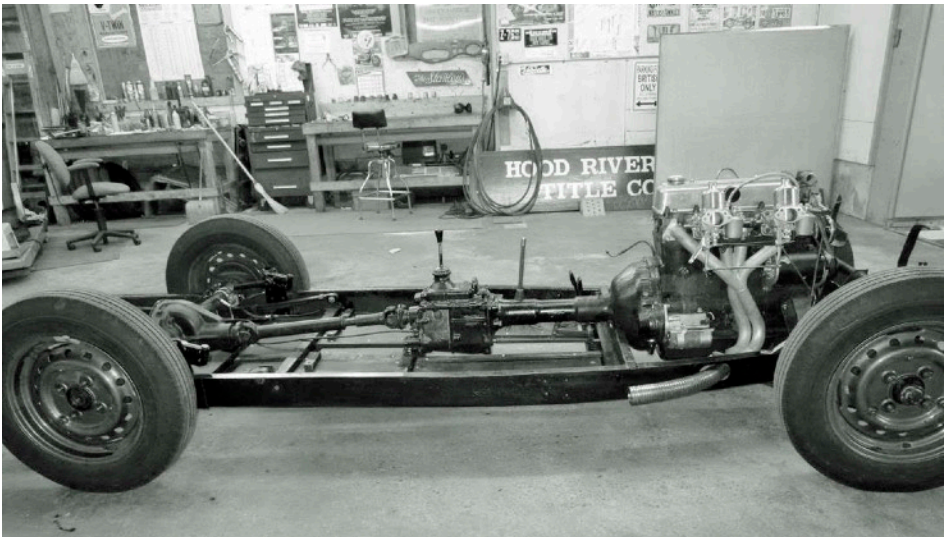
## **John Stanley President's Message**

First of all and most importantly there is a correction in the phone number for the Imperial River Company which you will find below. Sorry about that, just looked on the wrong line when typing and put in the old number for the Oasis which was right below it. Interesting enough the Oasis has been sold and they have a new phone number, also below. I understand there will be some upgrading there by the new owners. Also when the Oasis was sold, their former campground along the river was kept by the prior owner. I am looking into the possibility of using that former campground as parking for any RV's that are brought to the rally. Just found out about this today (writing this November 28), and talked to the owner. I am going to make arrangements to see the property as soon as weather permits. I do know that it is very close to our host site, and that there are no hookups.

The MSS and LE have been fully serviced, fuel drained and batteries removed for the season. The MAC is also serviced, but will remain operational throughout the winter. I took a nice 50 mile ride to lunch the other day. Although it was about 40 degrees, it was sunny and a nice ride.

Hopefully all of you will be checking your machines over during the winter so there are no surprises in the spring when you go for that first ride.

A couple of weeks ago I had a mobile "Dustless Blasting" unit show up and completely strip all the sheet metal for my 56 Morgan project to bare metal. All in only 5 hours. They could have done all the sheet metal on a motorcycle in under an hour, so will be calling on them again. A couple of days later I trailered the body and all its parts to a body shop in Gresham Oregon, and am looking forward to the completion of body and paint work. I already finished the chassis which would be drivable now if I put a steering column and a seat on it. It will be gathering dust for the next 3 months or so awaiting its body. Still well on schedule to be driving it by April 2.



## **UPDATE ON “DESCHUTES RIVER RALLY”**

All of the routes are set, and the final route instructions are complete on 4 of the rides. The final route instructions for ride 5 will be my excuse to go for ride when we get a nice sunny (but not too cold) day.

Maupin is famous for the fishing and rafting the Deschutes River, which runs adjacent to our motel and campground. Imperial River Company has their own rafting business which starts and ends at the motel. There are also many other rafting companies in town.

Although it seems like a long way out, by the time you read this it is only 7 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 should 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 541-395-2404. You can also visit their web site at [deschutesriver.com](http://deschutesriver.com). When I checked the other day there are already 8 rooms booked. I was relieved that 8 people found the right phone number already.

For camping I need to keep track of how many are going to camp, although final arrangements will be made at the time of registration. 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](mailto: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. The more campers the lower the cost for each as the groups sites will be a flat rate. Thanks to the 5 of you who already let me know.

An easy walk down the road you will find the Oasis Resort. This is a group of 10 rustic cabins. These cabins remind me of the ones we had at Lochsa Lodge Idaho during the 2014 rally. If you 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. Their new phone number is 541-241-8805. I did talk to the new owner today, and he said that he has already taken a couple of reservations for our group.

Just across the road from Imperial River Company is the River Run Lodge. Again you can check their website and call them at 541-395-2747.

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. Thanks to the 5 of you who have already let me know.

Also, if you are going to be bring an RV, I do need to know this as soon as possible. Last I checked there was only one RV site not already reserved at the City park. As mentioned above, I am trying to arrange parking, so it is important that I know how many there may be.

**CAMPERS AND RV'S PLEASE LET ME KNOW BY E-MAIL AT:  
[STANCO@GORGE.NET](mailto:STANCO@GORGE.NET)**

Happy Riding  
John



**Eastern News  
by Andrew Harris**

Greetings from the East, by the time you read this it will be 2020....or pretty close. So let me wish everyone a Happy Hogmanay. Let me also hope that members in California and Australia are safe after the bushfires in both places.

Reading FTW 234 I was surprised by Art Bones' assertion that he has "never heard anything good about Velo clutches." I will be the first to admit

the Velo clutch has its' foibles but I really think Mr. Bone has been talking to the wrong people. Just because it is different doesn't mean it is bad.

If you follow the instructions in the manual and ensure all the parts are in good condition then I would opine the clutch is a delightful device.

But....you must follow the instructions.....

Having said that I can recommend a roller race conversion for the thrust bearing (prevents premature wear of said thrust bearing) and if your plates are distorted the Goodman clutch with modern friction material is a good idea.

None of this takes away the fact that the basic design is good and generally a delight to use.

Now for something quite a bit different, I recently saw a youtube video of a guy in the UK who built a V-twin using a rigid MAC frame and two sets of MAC heads and barrels.

The result is quite delightful and really looks the part.

If you have not seen it yet look up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJS8NO2Koic>

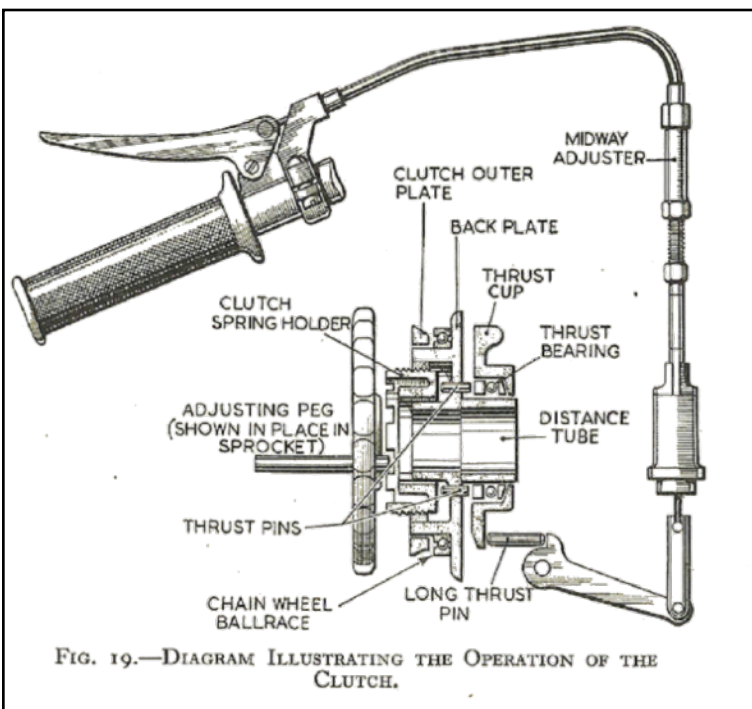
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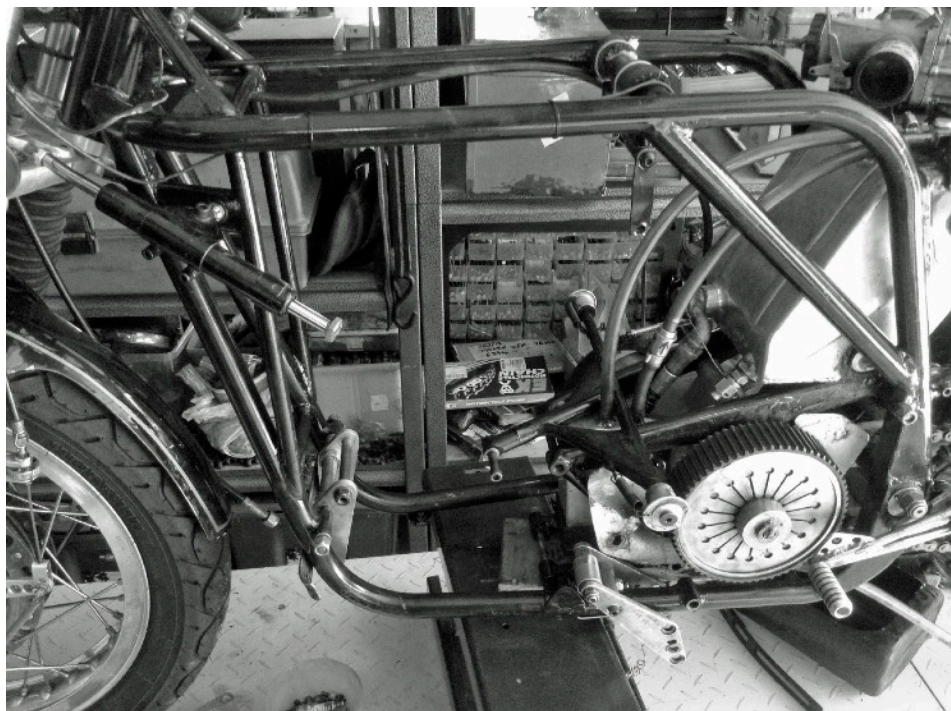
The work is to a very high standard, the builder has made crankcases and engine parts, as well as building a 12V alternator.

I wrote last time about battery problems. While putting the bike away for the winter I discovered one of the battery connections had broken where the ring terminal joins the wire but remained in place, thus causing a (very?) high resistance connection. No doubt this contributed to the erratic charging behaviour. The fault was not visible until I actually moved the battery.

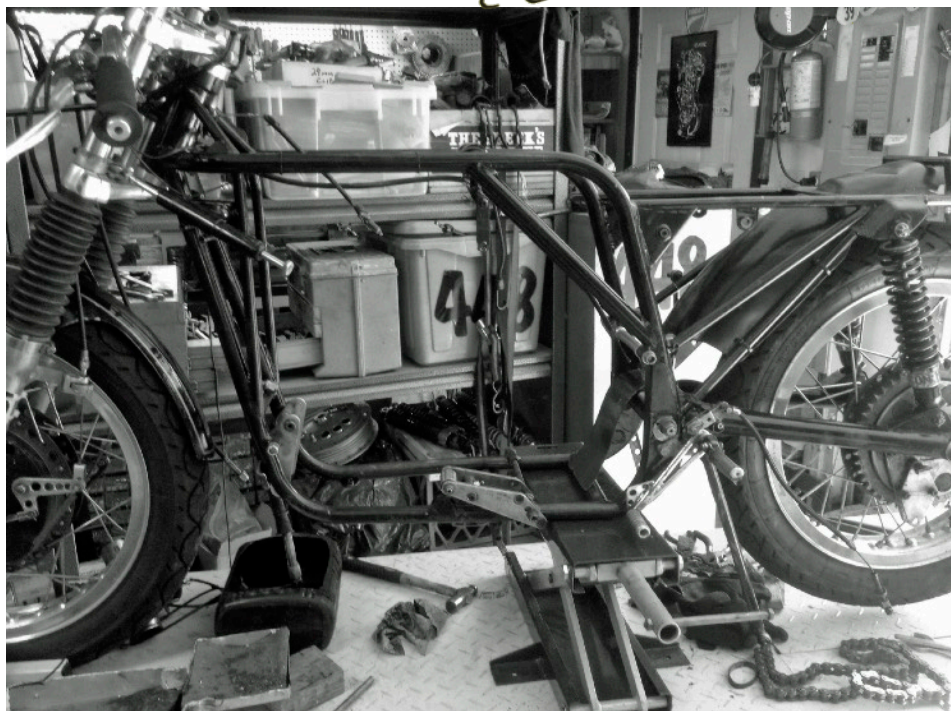
Ride safely

Andrew





Two views of special bits on Gary McCaw's Alan Taylor Special Velo





## The New Works: Powerful Women, Velocette History, Racing, Technical Expertise by Gary McCaw

Here are some photos of the ALAN TAYLOR SPECIAL Velo. Alan built this bike from a variety of parts but using a highly modified Venom engine. I have owned & raced this bike for over 20 years but now have a young friend riding it for me. Holly Varey started road racing in 2018 on my 250 Ducati and is a "natural." She is very fast & a smart rider. So this year ( 2019 ) I have put her on the ATS Velo. She is starting to really like it although at first she thought it was a bit of a handful compared to the Ducati. She is picking up speed & had a win on it at Mosport (Canadian Tire Motor-sport Track ) on Labour Day weekend .

Lyster frame

Matchless gearbox shell with a Quaif 5 speed cluster

Norton front forks

Suzuki 4 shoe front brake

Triumph rear hub ( made to look like Manx )

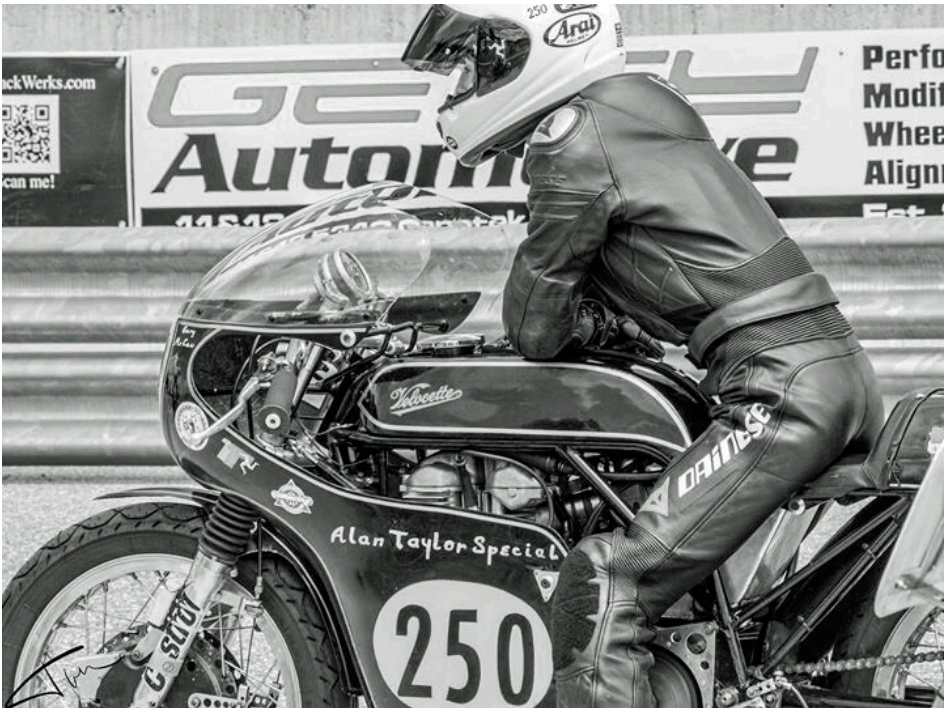
Commando clutch

Belt drive primary

Holly is Jody & Bonnie's daughter. She approached me last year as I was working on 3 of my bikes at the track. I guess I looked "done in" because she said if I was ever looking for a rider , she knew of someone. When I asked who & she said "me," I just about fell over. She has a lot of experience street riding but had never raced. She soon proved that she was a natural & has been showing the guys around. Who knew?!?!

Her grand-parents ran a motorcycle shop & were Velocette agents here in Canada. The Venom that I still ride was ordered through them in 1967. So the relationship goes back for decades. Holly is thrilled to be riding a Velo on the track.

Cheers , Gary





**Melo Velo 37, in memory of Mick Felder.  
by Tim Kenney with photos by Gil Loe**

I organize a yearly rally which on paper is a place for Velocette riders to meet and greet over food and refreshments, with an interested ride thrown in. This year it was held at 'The Place' in Ventucopa, a 'rustic' location with a dirt back yard to camp in, an all you can eat dinner and breakfast, and root beer and real beer on tap. The root beer is from the Indian Wells Brewing Company and is my favorite.

This year we were honoring a fallen friend, Mick Felder, who died after an accident on an all brit ride out of Hansen Dam. He was part of an ever shrinking group of Southern California Velocette riders, and will be missed.

In past versions of this rally there were quite a few Velocettes, but I was happy to have a Velo count of 8 this year, much better than last time. One guy rode up from Norwalk on a 500 swing arm Velocette, others trucked in, and my Nephew and I rode in





from Ojai on Velos. We had a GTP show up (a rare two stroke Velocette built from 1930 to 1946... at least rare in the US), a Thruxton, 2 MACs, and 4 Swing Arm (SA) 500 singles, all Venoms, which had the hot cam (an '8' cam) but not the ported and flowed head that the Thruxton has.

After the 'hor duerves' were consumed (Thanks to Jane for the nice table settings, water, wine, and good cheer) and much tire kicking was engaged in, an all you can eat dinner of chicken, bratwurst, potatoes, sour kraut, rolls and salad was available. This is a local high point out there in the middle of no where, and this is the only local restaurant, so there was a crowd. Then the band started!

The attendees ended up sitting around a large fire built in the pit in the back, no worry about safety, dirt doesn't burn. Scotch and beer were consumed, stories told, and I handed out some dumb awards.

Best Non Velo, Norton Combat Commando Interstate , Bob Rymer  
 Best Velo, Dana Shatts, 69 Thruxton  
 Long Distance Velo, Craig Rich, Venom  
 Dee Cameron RIHAPIAW award – Lanora Cox – 50 MAC  
 Bob Young attention to detail award – Bruce Farren 62 Venom

Eventually all turned in.

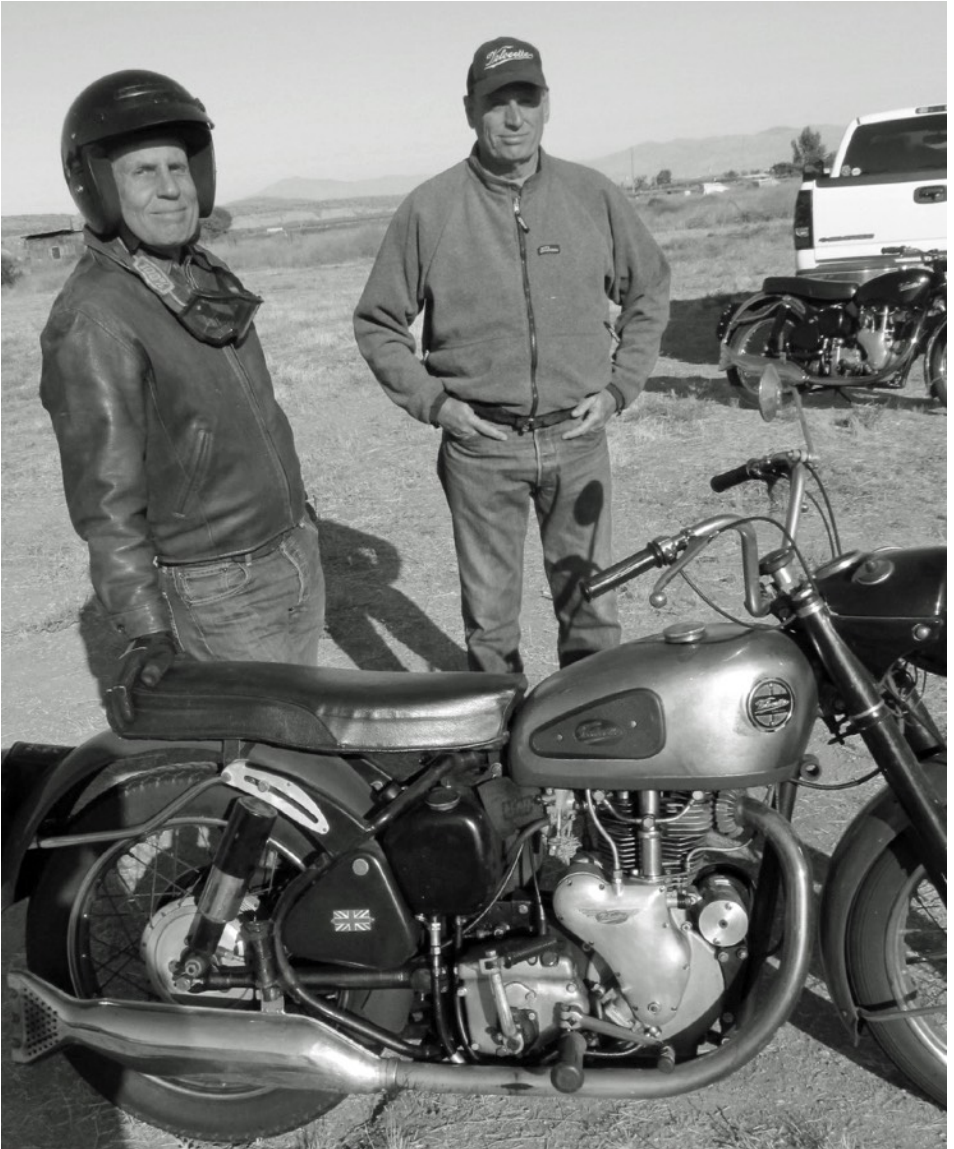
The next morning was an early breakfast followed by a ride to Pine Mountain Club clockwise.. that is, up 33 to 166, to Hudson ranch road, and follow your nose to Pine Mountain club, a long climb. I was riding a 1952 MAC, so the climb was slow. That may have been a blessing, as we encountered three (3) CHP cruisers hiding in bushes on the route. Things looked up (or down) after that, as there is a descent into the Frazier Park area, then a right on Lockwood Valley road, a real interesting bit of pavement. We had one breakdown, the mag on the GTP packed up and ended up on the

chase truck (thanks to my daughter Christine for driving).. Finally, we return to 'The Place' for lunch, load the trucks, and everyone heads home. My nephew and I and a few others headed back over 33 to Ojai. It was a nice descent once I gained the mountain top, but we were slowed down by a downed power line near Ojai! They let the bikes to the front of the line and allowed us to push under the wires and continue, so for once the motorcycles were given priority without being ass holes. That was nice.

So, no crashed, no tickets, just good clean fun on old crocks. What more can one ask for??

Next year event and location is under serious evaluation. Maybe The Place for lunch? Ride out of Ojai. Or, maybe Paso. Much to be researched.  
Cheers, Tim.

*Below: Larry Luce checks in with Bruce Farren before hitting the road.*





### **So You Wanna be a Cross Country Chase Star** **by Larry Luce**

Sure you've done the Mille (a long weekend), and maybe a Velo club summer rally (a short week) and now your asking; what more? What other venues exist to test the mettle of my machine and my own stamina you might wonder. I suggest you consider the Cross Country Chase. I did the inaugural Chase this past September and here in I will try to convey how it all went down.

The Cross Country Chase is a competitive event staged by the same people who put on the Motorcycle Cannonball. It differs from the Cannonball in that motorcycles eligible are restricted to those manufactured between 1930 and 1948 (the Cannonball is for pre 1929 bikes). The other big difference is you are not allowed any support. That means you have to carry everything you need on the bike and perform any required work yourself. You are allowed to avail yourself of the help of any fellow participant or any casual observer who volunteers. And then there is the quiz. Each day there are ten questions on local history, pertinent local statistical data and U.S. motorcycle history which must be completed. Assuming you finish each day on schedule, with no penalties assessed, the quiz is the factor that will influence your standing in the competition.

The bit about no support allowed introduces a big element of luck into the success equation. You have to select your spares carefully and hope breakdowns occur where you have time to address them before the chase truck arrives or you might suffer a penalty. There is a cash prize for the overall winner (\$7500 this year) and the winner within each class (bikes are grouped by displacement) is recognized. Bikes are assigned a handicap score initially based on year of manufacture, estimated top speed and displacement. The ideal bike, from a handicap point of view, is 250 cc's and was manufactured in 1930. The organizers tend to believe whatever is shown on the bike title so some fudging is apparent among participants. Upgrades to brakes are allowed but the



bike is suppose to be largely original. Other than a cursory safety inspection (bikes must have some semblance of functioning lights, a fire extinguisher and a rear reflector) I saw no one checking appropriateness of fitments on bikes entered. I doubt the organizers would be able to accurately discern the vintage of any non-USA manufactured bike entered (they're Harley oriented people).

I had always been intrigued by the concept of the Motorcycle Cannonball. I also thought the Cannonball would be a good opportunity to experience parts of this country I have not previously visited. The problem was I do not own a motorbike of appropriate vintage for the Cannonball. I do, however, own a 1938 KSS Velocette so when Todd Cameron (Dee Cameron's son for those who recognize the name) told me about the chase I was all in. I did not approach this event as a competitor, my only goal was to finish. Todd, I was to learn, had other ideas.

I first met Todd Cameron at a, local to me, vintage bike event. He showed up on an early Velo GTP he said he was going to use in the Chase. It quickly became apparent he knew nothing of the bike and also that this particular GTP stood little chance of surviving such a trip. Mike Jongblood and I did what we could to educate Todd about his bike (a very recent acquisition) and tried to explain why it was not the best Velo for the intended objective. Meanwhile, I went home and signed up for the Chase.

That was in late May of this year and the starting date of the 2019 Velo summer rally was rapidly approaching. I needed to prepare a bike for that event so thoughts of the Chase were put aside. Mike Jongblood volunteered to freshen up the KSS motor so I pulled that and turned it over to him. The Velo rally turned out really well for my wife and I and my big hope was that my luck would hold.

Post Velo rally, I reconnected with Todd Cameron. I was thinking we might mutually work out the logistics of getting our bikes to the starting point (Saulte Saint



Marie, Michigan). Shipping services could have been arranged through the event organizers but that would have entailed turning over the bikes to the shippers weeks ahead. In the mean time, Todd had purchased a 1930 BSA 500cc OHV sloper motorcycle out of Germany and was anxiously awaiting its arrival.

Three weeks before our planned departure day the BSA had still not arrived. Todd was getting anxious. I had spent the available time doing some cursory painting on the KSS and checking out the mechanics. The bike seemed viable and I did about 150 miles on it. It's hard to say when you have done enough "shake down" miles to verify all is well versus just wearing things out. The last things I installed were a modern programmable speedometer and a device to accommodate the daily instructions which would come on a long continuous sheet of paper. Both of these items are essential. A large water resistant bag for my clothing and personal essentials along with a set of "best buy" Amazon (\$26) canvas saddle bags for the oil and spares I would carry completed my travel package. No style points deserved for this kit but it seemed it could work.

Todd's bike finally showed up nine days before our planned departure date. It ran (max speed 55 mph) and seemed marginally viable but he had no clue as to the details of its operation. He did some significant rides on the BSA before he became aware you needed to grease the rocker shafts (no oil feed to the top end). I gave him a book which covered operation of slightly later BSAs and he did what he could to figure out the rest. He is an experienced mechanical engineer so there was some hope he could pull this off. The BSA seemed to be using about a quart of oil every 100 miles so his plan was to carry a lot of oil and spark plugs.

We arrived in Michigan on the evening before the formal start of the event. The California contingent (only Todd and I) looked like poor relations in comparison to most of the other participant machines. Gleaming Harleys and Indians dominated the field of 70 bikes along with a fair number of Henderson fours. The foreign contingent consisted of three Triumphs, two BSAs, a Norton, a Nimbus, a Zundapp and my Velocette. Pre-start opinion (revealed much later) was that neither BSA nor the Velocette would survive.

The ride consisted of ten stages. The average day was about 260 miles. There were no rest days. That's not a grueling schedule but it can wear on you after awhile. In general people were friendly but I wouldn't say there was no marque bias in this crowd.

I'm not competitive by nature. I care more about enjoying the experience than winning a prize. I had no intention of studying for the quizzes or sweating the schedule. Todd had different ideas; he was out to win. I got a stern talking-to when I was not ready to be among the first people across the starting line on the first day. I was interested in finishing so I decided to adopt Todd's regime with the reservation I would go my own way if things got to tedious.

And so it went. Todd set a slow but steady pace on the BSA. The good thing was I didn't have to worry about navigation and could relax and enjoy the scenery. The lakes and forest of Michigan and Wisconsin morphed into the endless corn fields of Illinois. In Tennessee we encountered significant hills and it became apparent the BSA could not climb them. Another participant came along who suggested Todd retard the ignition timing. Problem solved, but Todd's progress was now even slower. I could not abide that. This was too good of a road so I left him behind. We reconnected at the end of the day in Chattanooga. The air temperature was 102 degrees f with 90+ % humidity. Welcome to the south.

Kentucky the next morning was beautiful. Low rolling hills with thick hard wood forest and abundant rivers and streams. The roads curved through this topogra-

phy with very few impediments imposed by civilization. Even Todd's BSA seemed happy here. But all too soon we entered Georgia. The roads straightened out and the temperature went up.

Looking back the rest is largely a blur. Florida was notable for it's road-kill alligators and warning signs about pumas in the bushes (bike don't fail me now). A late afternoon crossing the Everglades with the "endless sea of grass" rolling in the wind and storm clouds on the distant horizon will not soon be forgotten. A hot plate of wonderful fresh paella at the Harley dealer in Miami was such a welcome surprise after way too much pulled pork over the previous days. And then Key West and it was over.

With some help and parts from me and timely advise from others the BSA sloper finished and Todd was the overall winner. I finished with no penalties (the KSS had no difficulties other than a flat tire) but my performance on the quiz moved me down to 12th place. Would I do it again? Maybe, but if I did I would have to take it more serious and that would not be nearly as much fun.

Larry Luce



*Above: Yes! Todd Cameron came in first place. Congratulations Todd.*



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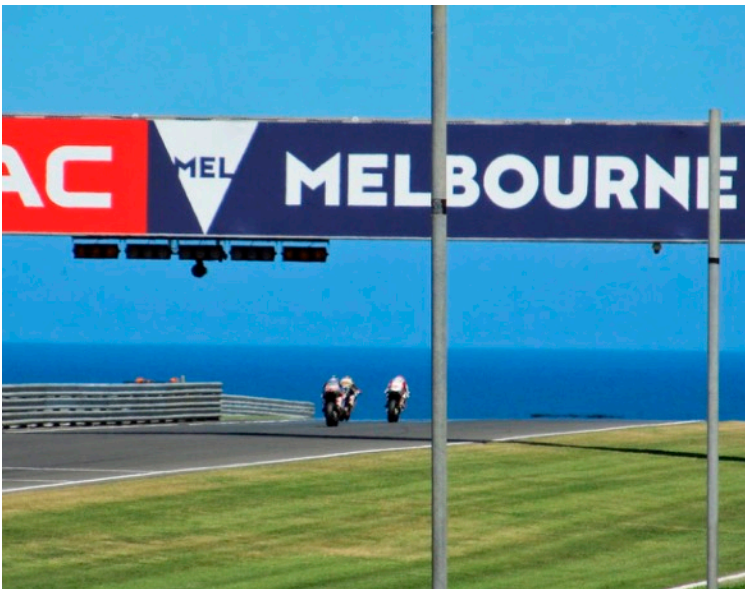
*Voice mail: 781-644-7338*

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





According to the sign in Don and Kathy Rouit Flat Track Museum, the bike above is Mid 50's Velocette Half miler. 500 cc. Mss engine, 1948 frame, stock forks, Barnes rear wheel, Harley WR front wheel, no brakes. This bike mainly raced at Ascot Park in Gardena CA. It was ridden by Terry Dohaher #43x, Art Barda #96, Dewayne Keeter #44x, Lynn Halloway #50k, and others. The bike was owned and built by Ernie Pico, Bob Walther & Will Joyner. In one season at Ascot they had 33 Friday night races. This is in as raced condition. photo by Don Danmeier



## 2019 VOCA Hahndorf Good Companion Rally

VOCNA members Gil Loe and Dana Shatts went downunder and sampled all sorts of motorcycle events. Left is the Mo-toGP. The Southern ocean is in the back-ground. The sun only came out on one day, Friday. photo and text by Gil Loe



Above: On the way to Hahndorf, Gil and Dana stayed the night in Keith, south Australia. That's a lot of Velos!

**2019 VOCA Hahndorf Good Companion Rally**  
**photos by Gil Loe**

Stop the press! More information about this rally just came in! More stories and photos from this rally in the next issue!

Below: Keith and Colleen with Syd Taylor from Western Australia lookin on.







Above: Jim Romain continues on his stunning KTS. The Deli/bakery in Tomales was closed due to lack of power.

**Velos make a Great Showing at  
The 30th Annual BSAOCNC All-British Ride, November 2019**  
photos by Lanora Cox

Below: Paul Zell scooted around the route on this hot rod MeSS Velo. Some how we never saw him on the road, only when taking a break at the Old Tocaloma bridge.







Above: John Sims is getting ready to ride home on his special Venom.  
 Right: Pete Young proudly accepts the Top Wanker award. This is typically awarded to the rider who makes a you know what of themselves.  
 Below: Jeff Ward will have no problems riding home on his Venom.





## **The 30th Annual BSAOCNC All-British Ride Don Danmeier**

The only drawback to this event had to be the number of riders who shied away, probably because of fears concerning air quality due to the fires that had been raging in Sonoma county. That was understandable. As late as the previous Tuesday, we'd canceled business with our caterer – the County had closed Stafford Lake Park, and the "red flag" warning posted by the

weather service meant no BBQ anyway. There began a bit of a scuffle, trying to find another BBQ location and possibly another caterer. But when I went online on Wednesday morning, I found that the warning would be lifted at 4:00 PM that day, and the Park closure had been lifted. Adam the Park ranger confirmed it. "You're good to go on Saturday," he said. There began a scuffle to get the caterer back on board. None of the phone numbers got me anything other than an answering machine; there was no reply to my e-mail, either. That is, until Wednesday night, when I got a return call. They didn't think they could pull it off. We both agreed that it was very short notice but they agreed to talk it over and call me the next day. On Thursday morning, they called with an OK, and we were back in business. After that, all the smoke came out of their barbecue, not my ears.

What we eventually got on Saturday was a perfect example of How Can You Possibly Top This? Well, you couldn't. We missed those who had stayed away, but still had a substantial 103 entries and with no wind, clear blue skies, mild weather, wonderful west Marin roads, elegant motorcycles, enthusiastic riders and good food later at the Park, no, you couldn't beat it.

Once again, Velocettes were represented in numbers all out of proportion to the number that were ever produced. Maybe that says something about the type of ride we have. BSA, Triumph and Norton, as usual, dominated the entry list. The lone Royal Enfield had retreated prior to lift-off, which you read about last month; there was a beautiful Matchless, also a Rickman Triumph. I did see one Ariel, which was rudely passed by a Velo just north of Tomales.

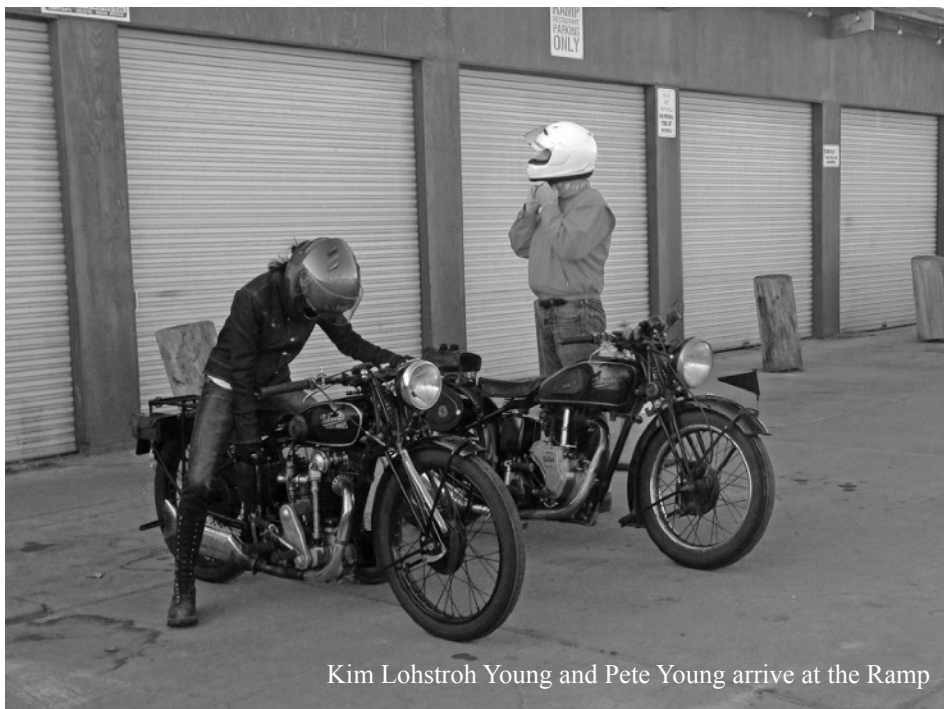
Happy award winners at the end of the afternoon included:

**HARD LUCK**  
**CHROME WON'T GET YOU HOME**  
**TOP PIT CREW**  
**OLDEST BIKE**  
**BLING THING**  
**SMOKE SCREEN**  
**SOUND OF MUSIC**  
**EXXON VALDEZ**  
**TOP WANKER**

Fred Meyer, Velocette  
Jeff Ward, Velocette  
Bjorn Stumer & John Magri, Chase Trucks  
Kim Williams, 1934 BSA Blue Star  
Bill Sherlock, BSA Gold Star  
Kim Williams, 1934 BSA Blue Star  
Jeff Sierck, Triumph Trident  
Doug Rumrill, BSA Gold Star  
Pete Young, Velocette

The 1934 BSA won the its second award only because its lubrication system was properly adjusted, and there were no other smokers. And Doug told me afterward that the spot seen under his Gold Star Tomales was not oil but rather, pigeon poop. So was that excuse.





Kim Lohstroh Young and Pete Young arrive at the Ramp

Below: Charlie Taylor admired the crimson Vincent. He's recovered from the VOCNA rally.



## 49 Mile Jump

### photos and text by Allan King

After years of uncooperative work conflicts and even less cooperative riderly contraptions of a vintage character, I finally landed at the pre-Halloween 49-mile ride in San Francisco, hosted annually by Pete Young and Kim Lohstroh Young.

Other riders materialized, discreetly or in pipe-blasting bombast, at the restaurant named The Ramp, near Mariposa and Terry A Francois Boulevard.

Braced by donuts and the aroma of roasted java, I scouted a row of choppers. Like some bazaar in Madagascar, natty Downton Abbey types strolled beside what looked to be ragged refugees from the Mad Max outback, contemplating a scarlet Ducati or the winged emblem of a Honda CD305 Superhawk (I think), then navigated around the sable contours of a BMW R60 and even a black Vincent Comet paired with its crimson cousin.





Circled by amused disbelievers stood one demented tangle of bronze-brown iron, christened the "Honduki," which sported a Ducati engine, a gold-stenciled serpent coiled about the gas tank, twin smoke stack pipes, an outboard dry clutch, and a spiked sissy bar.

Late to the show, my leathered offspring steered a "molten magma orange" BMW K1300 into the parking lot, his paramour clinging with visible misgiving behind him. (Son: Hey, it has 179 hp! Dad: No one needs that many horses. Son: Exactly!!)



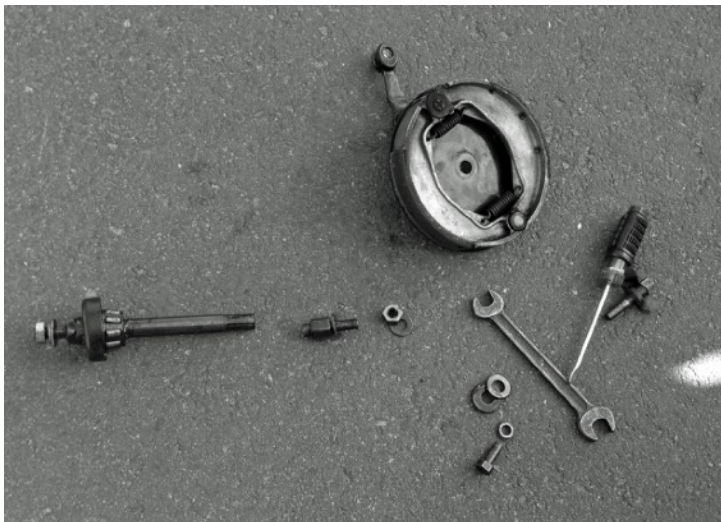
After a terse call to arms by our impresario, the entourage embarked, led by Pete astride his iron MSS and Kim on her recently re-clutched KSS, along with Jeff Scott on the usual trusty Endurance and Lanora Cox aboard her bumblebee-yellow Buell.

To the thunder of pre-war knuckleheads and the mosquito whine of Vespas, riders darted in tandem or around each other in split-second hyper-shifting kinetics akin

to schooling pikes and swarmed through the chaos theory of Embarcadero traffic. Their passage was witnessed by marveling, horrified onlookers. And some riders.

Past Pier 31 and through the Marina, we headed for the heart of the Presidio. Sandy eddies swirled underfoot, daring us to keep our steeds aright.

Eventually the horde pulled in at Fort Point, where mutual bike-admiration continued. On his one-of-a-kind, personally modified Norton ES2, Lynn Miller admonished me against obsessive petcock leak-checking. I spied a venerable HD with bake-lite knobs. Elsewhere, parking lot triage revealed Kim's KSS had suffered a broken axle. Bike on board the makeshift moto-ambulance, Kim saddled up behind Jeff on his Endurance.



Kim felt the back wheel wobble as she rode from the Ramp to Fort Point, but she didn't know why. Below Pete went all out to determine the problem. Duncan Ross and others gave it the determined, keep the Velo on the road try, but a broken axle is a broken axle.



We wound out of the Presidio and broke free by Sea Cliff and around the turn by the Cliff House, the Pacific surf uncharacteristically sparkling yet wracked with titanic wind-kicked menace and mayhem. Along Highway 1, wrestling with that same wind, the above Ducati challenged the above Shadowhawk , and they disappeared in grainy turbulence.

My 47 Matchless G80 soon found its way to the front of the tribe, where it trailed Pete and his body guards back through Park Merced and the Sunset, then up to Twin Peaks. Here, the wind that fueled wildfires elsewhere cleared the view below, revealing the panoramic reaches of San Francisco architecture.



David James parked his BSA, then joined the crew in picturesque appreciating, where I spied Duncan Ross of the famed Dark Star trio (three Velo fellows) who, with side-car Jules, voyaged in their Velo safari from Glasgow/London to Cape Town aboard one post-war and two pre-war Velocette MSS machines ("because life just isn't hard enough"). We're not worthy!!! Their exploits can still be enjoyed online: <https://darkstarmotorcycles.tumblr.com/> and <https://veloadventure.tumblr.com/archive>

On the way down, I tagged along, a rude urchin in royal company, behind a chap on a swank 50's cream-colored Moto Guzzi, the seemingly omnipresent Duncan Ross on the Superhawk, and the energetic Brian on his Black Vincent, which we later learned was resurrected with the help of his father – self-taught engineers all – from baskets and bits. Most impressive, Young SkyWalker.

Through the crowded Mission and into the seemingly deserted Dogpatch, the four of us headed back to the Ramp, where considerably fewer returned than had departed.

Against the dockside background of tilting masts and knocking hulls, the assembled sat down to waffles or gargantuan burgers on the outside patio, observed by vigilant not-quite-starving starlings, who brazenly scavenged among the boots and ox-fords of the party. Brews were quaffed and oversized stories traded, our penchant for truth long since squandered.

So ended the 2019 ride: the vintage, the veterans, the young Turks and iconoclasts, the outcast and arty. How can you not love this quixotic and barbarous, if unaffordable, fable-charged town.

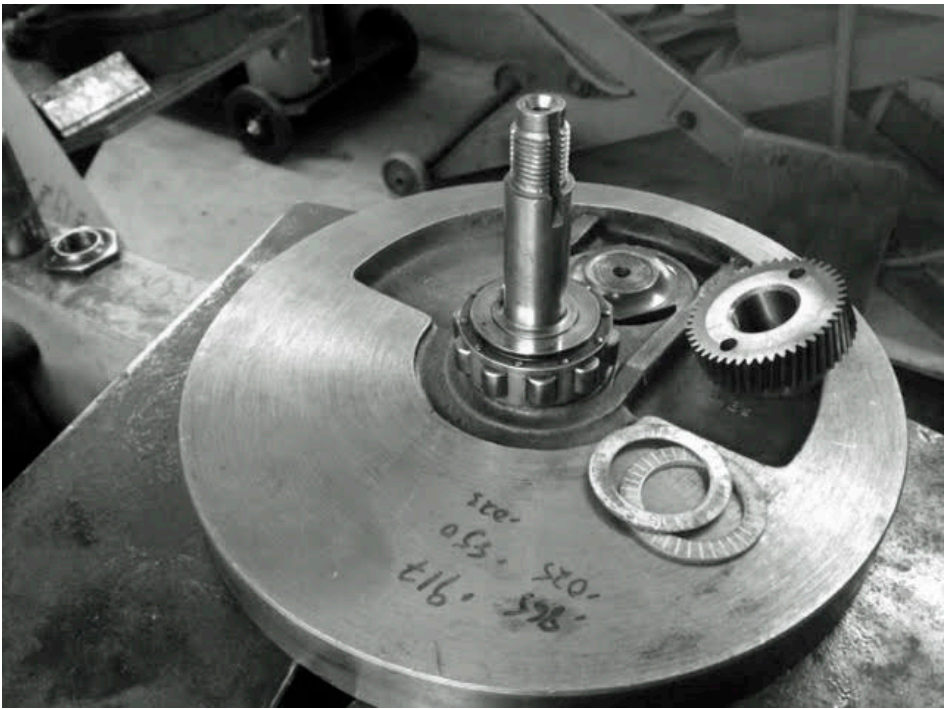


On the trip home, we dodged fume-engulfed bridges closed by wildfires and stretches of highway crowded by folks escaping black outs and smoke.



Above: This fire in Vallejo California fortunately blew away from the editor's house. Below: It's not every day you are allowed to park in the boat yard. Jeff Scott and Allan King unload bikes, a Velocette Endurance, a Matchless G80cs, and a Buell Blast, in the morning of the 49 Mile ride.





### **As the Crankshaft Turns** **by Jeffrey Shadetree**

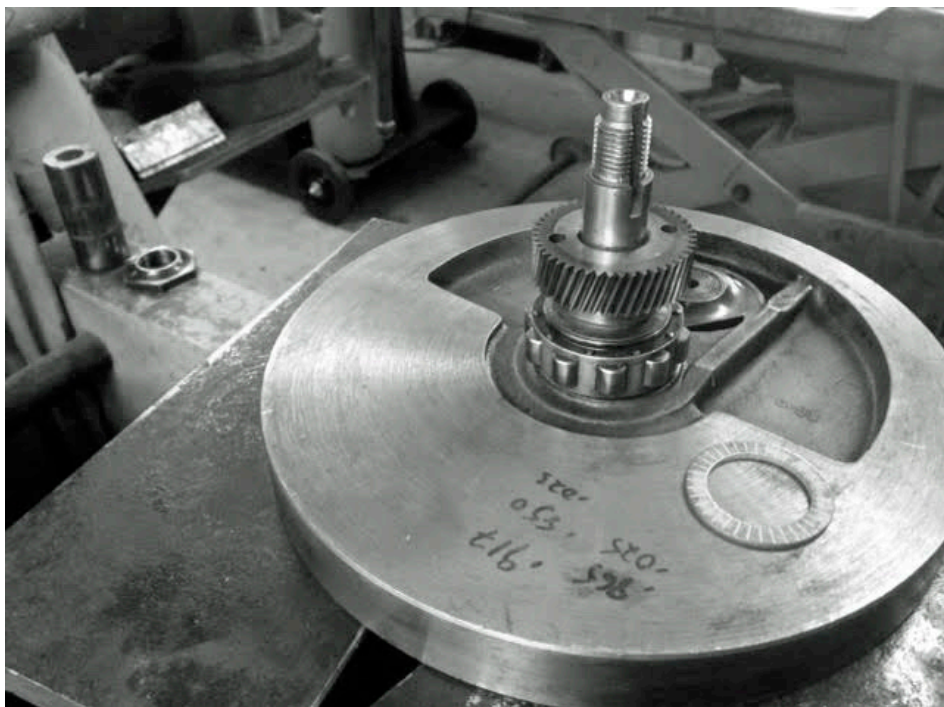
Cranky. Verb- unpleasant, out of sorts, volubly noisy.

Opening the cases on the Rita Mac revealed the timing side bearing, at some point a roller had been substituted for the works ball, had walked off the taper and moved over .020 allowing the drive side roller to chew up the side thrust race and deposit the detritus into the roller cage causing the rollers to bind up and skid over the outer race.

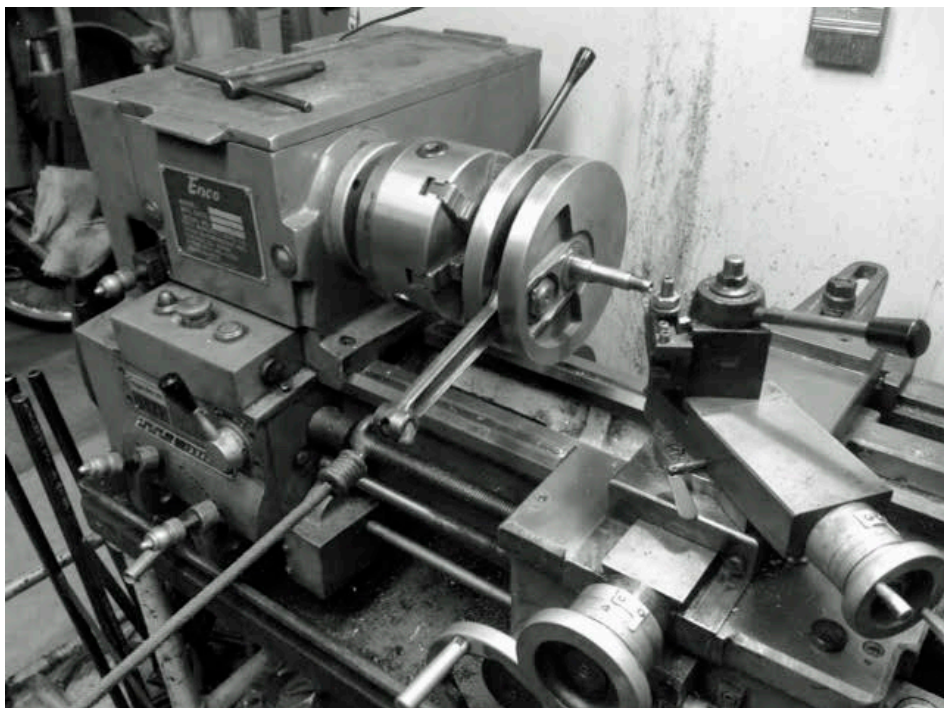
Turns out, no pun intended, this is a common Mac-itis, usually dealt with by leaving enough end float to let the timing side bearing float. I made the mistake of taking up the slop.

The drive side bearing is held onto the taper by the pressure of the shock absorber spring. The timing side bearing has a gap between the drive gear for the timing train where it butts against the step on the mainshaft and the bearing inner race so over time the taper gets loose and the bearing walks. I found by fitting a shim over the mainshaft to rest against the bearing inner race and extending past the step .004, or so, the pinion gear just nips the shim as it come hard on the step holding the bearing onto its taper. So whether you use two rollers or a ball and roller set up the end float should remain constant.

Unfortunately the new bearing outer race was contacting the inner web of the crank cheek on a portion of the original casting face that had to be turned in the lathe to be removed. Of course I failed to notice this little defect until I had spent considerable time getting the assembly trued up. Contact was causing the bearing to cock enough so the assembly would not turn all the way through with the cases lightly bolted together, first clue, and some head scratching was done before the culprit came to light. By the way I recommend just splitting the wheels before trying to make this cut. Having the assembly turning in the lathe, even at half speed, was nerve wracking to say the least.

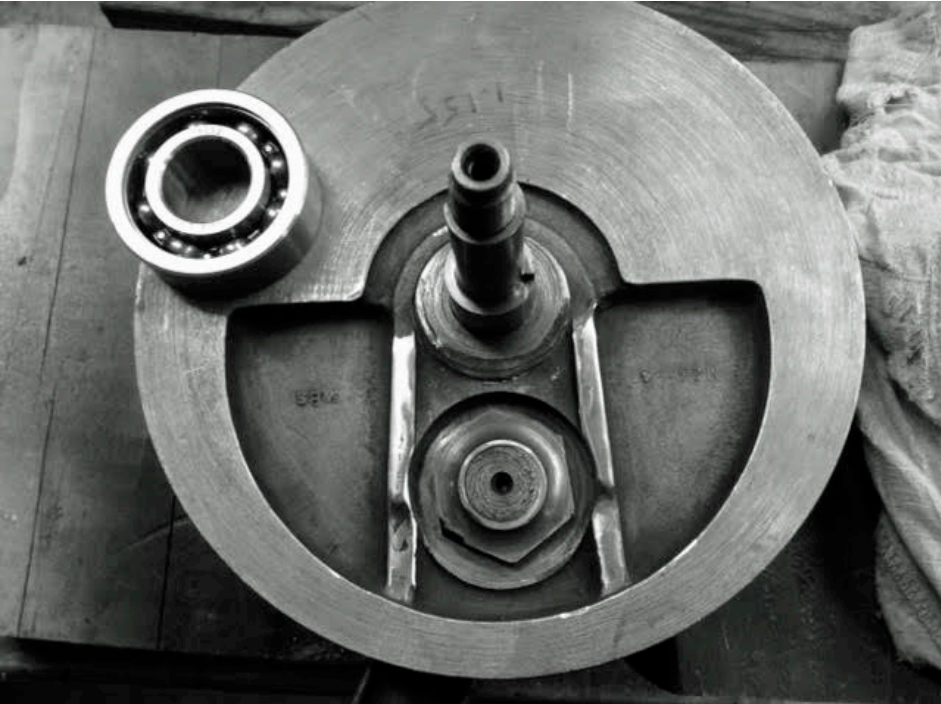


Above: The shim is in place between the bearing inner race and pinion gear.  
Below: Kids, don't try this at home!

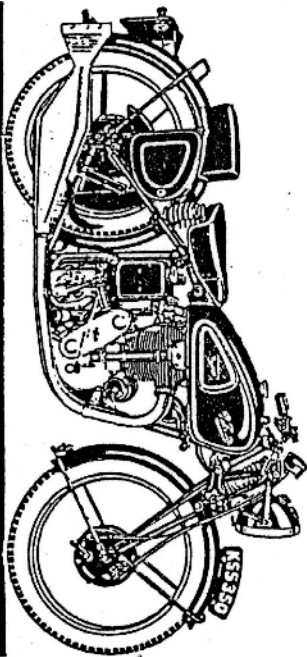




Below: the casting flange relieved to clear the bearing outer race.

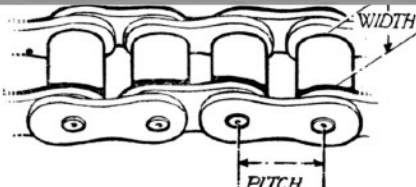


So the Works set up of timing side ball drive side roller is in and everything seems to be working with quite a bit less noise and with an absence of crankiness..





If you like the back cover, remember to check out the galleries on Michael Lichter's site, [lichterphoto.com](http://lichterphoto.com). Prints of the event as well as the Panorama of all entrants at the start are available for purchase.



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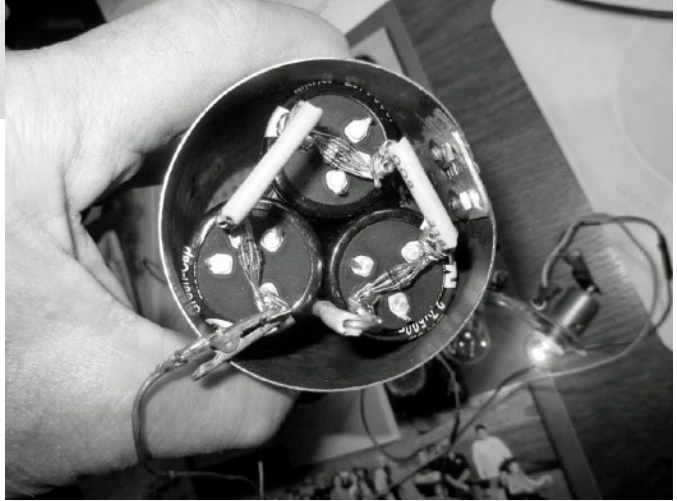
## First Velocette By Dave Jorgensen

As promised, I will relate how I came to own my first Velo, but first, on to Andrew's question.

I have successfully used capacitors to replace both 6v and 12v systems on my bikes. The attached pics show the caps I found on the internet, 500 Farad @ 2.7v. For my Triton 12v system I used 5 in series, for 6v systems 3 in series are required. Note it is necessary that the voltage across each cap does not exceed 2.7v, so I found some 0.5 watt zener diodes that start to conduct at 2.5v. I used 10 of these wired



in parallel across each cap to keep the voltage below the 2.7v limit. I have a 12v Podtronics VR on the Triton and use the old Lucas MR2 VR on my 6v bikes. The pic shows how I wired 3 of the 5 caps on the Triton, I hid them where the generator used to be on the Triumph engine, using



an alternator in the primary chaincase to produce the 12v power supply. The caps will keep the headlight lit brightly for about a minute after the engine is shut down. If not discharged, they will hold their charge for about a week or so and should be OK for a coil ignition system if the bike is ridden regularly. All my bikes have magneto ignition.

My first Velo came my way when I went to visit the Danish girl who had the year before taken care of the 6 passengers on a freighter from Copenhagen to New York. My friend Curt and I had booked passage in order to get our 250 Ducatis home after a 2 year stint in the Peace Corps, but that's another story.

The plan was to buy a bike in Copenhagen then ride to Sicily, take the ferry to Tunisia and visit the friends I had made there. First I needed a bike to get from Copenhagen to Tunisia and back which would haul Jette, me and our luggage. There sat a nice Velo Viper for sale which would do nicely. It was a great trip, up the Rhine, thru France and Italy, onto Tunisia to see the ruins of Carthage and Sbeitla, the Kasserine Pass where the American 34th division met Rommel on his way back from Egypt, etc.

The Viper did yeoman duty and brought us back to Copenhagen without problems, somewhat at times slowly but surely. Previous experience tells one when it is appropriate to throttle back a bit.

The 5/8" by 1/4" rear chain was pretty knackered after the trip but with a bit of a cleanup I then sold the Viper for what I paid for it. After that, why wouldn't I treat Velos with the respect they deserve?

Cheers, Dave Jorgensen



### Do any of you blokes remember Jim Sitz??

He is a good friend of Paul Adams and was also of Velo guru Eddie Arnold and also Cary Mc-Squid and Richard Ong. Was part of the original So Cal Velo bunch and, was at a couple of the early Cambria Rallies. He had a v fast swing arm MAC with an Arnold tuned engine. Great rider but not too good mechanic I recall. Anyway - glad he's still around.

Here is a fascinating interview and much about his adventures in sports car field. Check it out and do persevere. O

Note: The interview is in the November 2019 edition, of the Vintage Car Research Newsletter

## LETTERS



Hey Lanora,

My name is Donald, I'm in the UK VOC, Swapped an electric guitar for a box of bits

VR1011 and started building when I was 16, (finished when I was 19) I'm 39 now, live in Oxfordshire, work in IT ....zzzzzz Enough about me, I hate talking about myself.

You may or may not be aware that some philistine has started up a Velocette forum on a reasonably 'modern' platform.

To be honest I didn't really think that there would be any takers so I just made it one afternoon last week while I was in a boring meeting at work, but within a few hours nearly 60 people had joined, and there appears to be a substantial amount of support for a 'modern' functional forum that is 'not facebook'. None of this was done to make money, tread on any ones toes, 'replace' anything, or get attention of any kind etc... It's just a thing, let's not over-think it.... Aaaaanyways...

As a forum will only thrive if people know about it, I'm keen to involve as many different groups around the world as possible. The English guys can be so....

well, you know..... some of the more vocal velo enthusiasts here can be a little 'un-sive' or 'resistant to change', and that's fine, but I want everyone from everywhere that est in Velo's to feel very welcome, and for it to be easy to participate, share, learn, help, be helped, etc....


Please do take a look. Obviously right now, it's essentially an almost empty forum but in my experience, with a few keen participants these things grow steadily.

<https://velocette.vbulletin.net/>

Having seen a few of your FB threads, you sure as hell seem to get elbows deep in these things. Would you mind distributing a mentioning in passing? Also, would it be weird if I joined your club?

Take it easy,

Don  
editor's note: It would be weird if you didn't join Don!



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## OverHeard Kami

No letters this month so I'm going to talk to you about proper winter attire... Those tattoos don't keep you warm!

You can start with a g-string and a low cut strapless bra but you still gotta be warm enough to manipulate the compression release when you stop. So that means you need a comfortable perspiration-wicking primary layer and then your normal warm layer, wool, recycled plastic water bottles, high-tech titanium heat-reflecting wet suit, whatever.

Socks. What kind of socks are you going to be wearing in your boots?

This might be a good time to have your electric socks and vest ready to plug in if you can find any that work on 6 volts.

Next you're going to need some sort of neck protection - say a French silk scarf, cashmere from the Middle East, or an arctic micro-fiber neck protector.

Now the problem with all this gear is, it don't fit under your leathers unless you had weight problems in the past and had to buy a second set of leathers when you slimmed down.

So you have to invest in a modern fiber winter riding suit with rain-proof microfiber technology.

Make sure you give your boots a good coat of waterproofing and make sure you got a layer of antifog on your visor.

Your gloves are gonna have to be a compromise. Either you get heated hand grips or your hands are gonna freeze, but your partner won't mind. Cold hands, warm heart!

A strip of high-vis reflector tape on your helmet and you should be good to go.

Next stop, bike inspection. Don't be riding around on slicks in the rain!

Kami



