

Daily (Now mostly weekly at best) Blogg – Part 9 - Part 10 Started May 2019

Sunday 21st April 2019

The Venom is hopefully sorted. I let the tyre down and was able to move it on the rim enough to get the valve lined up properly. I then blew it up to 40psi and left it for a couple of days during which it lost only 1psi. Decided there was no need to actually replace the tube. Now has it's back wheel in place and is in the garage awaiting the trip to France.

I had noticed the off drip of oil from the R65 on recent trips and eventually traced the leak to the oil pressure switch. It was confusing because the oil was coming out of the central contact then running down the wire sheath so that it finally emerged under the gearbox. Managed to get the BMW part number which turned out to be the same as fitted to many BMW and other cars. My local car parts shop got me one for next day. Now fitted and hopefully goodbye oil leak. One other issue with the bike which is irritating rather than serious is the LH front indicator stalk which keeps coming loose in its housing. I have replaced the cap head bolts with new ones and done them up really tight but will need to keep an eye on this. I think the problem is that the indicator shaft also provides the support for the droopy snout and the weight of this is sufficient on bumpy roads (are there any other type these days) to work it loose. While I was at it I drained both front fork legs and refilled with SAE5 fork oil. This gives a noticeably softer ride over bumps compared to whatever was in there before (40765 miles).

Earlier today I took the KLX250 on an 80 mile ride round some of the WHT control locations. I was meant to be doing just the road checkpoints but could not resist including a few of the green lane checkpoints as well. The weather has been dry for several weeks so the dirt roads were very easy. When I topped up the tank it worked out at 99mpg! Just wish the 250cc MZs were as economical. I enjoyed the ride, perhaps too much as I seem to have mislaid my small tank bag which most likely flew off on one of the more bouncy green lanes. By the time I noticed it was missing I was nearly home and could not be bothered to retrace my steps.

Wednesday 17th April 2019

I checked the T100 over and found nothing obvious wrong though the RH plug was showing a very rich mixture whilst the LH plug was normal. I swapped the plugs over and the bike ran perfectly on a 4 mile test ride and both plugs were the same colour afterwards. Now baffled but I have ordered a new set of plugs anyway and have put the bike away to get started on the other bikes.

First into the workshop was the TS125 Sport though in truth it just needed nothing more than wipe over. I did about 50 miles on it last Friday checking out some of the White Horse Trial locations. It did have a funny five minutes when it refused to start but eventually got going without me doing anything except swear at it and did not miss a beat thereafter. Strange really as mostly it buzzes along at 45-50mph quite happily then needing bottom gear for a short stretch up Bowden Hill. I seem to remember my first TS125 (in 1976)

behaving in a similar fashion. I think that 150cc conversion is on the cards. Anyway I can see no reason why it should not get me round the Moonraker Trial on 5th May.

Next in the workshop was the Venom which needed a bit more good clean after which it came up quite nicely. Starting is now good and it settles to a reliable tickover straight away. Main problem was it not charging. Checked the alternator which was fine and there DC was DC current coming out of the regulator – bright at first then fading to a glimmer. At first I thought the regulator was faulty but when I took the bike for a test ride yesterday it suddenly started charging even on full headlights. Mechanically the bike ran fine but it felt a bit uneasy on roundabouts. Undoubtedly this was due to the fact that the rear tyre had only 8psi and the was red hot by the time I got back. The tyre has also moved on the rim so the wheel is now out of the bike to sort this out. Serves me right for not checking the tyre pressures before the ride.

I have also been working on the R65 ready for Wales next weekend. Up to now I have never been able to get a smooth tickover on the bike and the exhaust always seems noisy. Having consulted the experts an issue with the RH carb was diagnosed so I stripped this down paying special attention to the pilot jet circuit. It did not seem overly dirty but the jet and airways were all blown through with high pressure air. The fuel level also seemed very high so this was adjusted. One issue not yet resolved was the main jet holder which is seized in the body of the carb. I had intended to replace the needle jet and needle but abandoned the attempt for fear of breaking something. Eventually It was all put back together and I took it for a test run. Not a happy bike with a bad misfire when the throttle was opened wide though it ran ok on light throttle settings. My suspicion was fuel starvation due to lowering the float level too much; the reality was the opposite. The fuel level was still too high but the real problem was the lack of a main jet which had come unscrewed and was sitting in the bottom of the float chamber. Fixing these two own goals enabled me to set up both carbs and balance them so we now have a smooth and reliable tickover. I rode it about 50 miles today to one of our lunch time meets and it ran like a swiss watch. – Great relief. I also filled the tank on the way home and despite the amount of fuel wasted on test rides etc, it is returned 53mpg. I would hope for something even better on the Welsh trip. Not sure if it is connected or not, but whilst cleaning the bike this morning, I noticed that the rear exhaust balance bike was cracked. I put a jubilee clip in place as a temporary measure and need to either replace it if I can get one in time or more likely fabricate something as a better repair. Always something needs doing with these old bikes.

Monday 8th April 2019

Wow, 3 weeks since I last updated the blogg so a few things to report. The Saxon fun is no longer in the garage. On reflection I felt it was no better than ETZ250 which I really like so I offered it to John Hill in Exeter who had asked for first refusal. However, he needed to sell one of his existing bikes to make room in his garage so decided he would pass on he chance for now. I then offered it to Keith Johnston who had also expressed an interest but he decided the time was not right for him also. So in the end I put it on Gumtree and it was sold within 24hours.Funnily enough it was bought by Rob Holusza who is a member of the Bristol MZ section and a chap I know well. So that's 4 owners in a row for this bike from the Bristol

section. Bit sad to see it go but it was never expected to be a long term resident of the garage and at least I now know that the 251 engines are not appreciably different from the earlier ETZ engines in terms of flexibility.

We spent the weekend 28th-31st March at Cheddar taking the caravan and the ETZ250 to participate in the Cheddar Weekend. Though a bit breezy, the weather was dry and quite sunny so it made a nice start to the camping season. I rode the ETZ250 on the social run on the Saturday and the Trial itself on the Sunday. Bike performed faultlessly on both days; less so the rider who made a pig's orphan of the special tests and came nowhere in the results. Still I did do much better than Bill Little whose Ariel outfit ran out of sparks after about 7 miles. Mike kindly took him back to the start to get the van so also did not complete the trial. They kindly told me to carry on which I did though by that time running against the clock. Indeed I was the last to arrive at a couple of the checkpoints which were on the point of closing. Not a good start to the Rally season.

Last Sunday was the Felix Burke Navigation Trial; one of our favourite events. I managed to find a 60 mile route to maximise our bonus marks and starting from the nearest control to us – at Duntisbourne. We had 5 riders in the group at this point, Mike D, his son Simon, Bill Little and Jim Gaisford who was just along for the ride. All went well for the first two sections then Bill's Ariel refused to restart so he decided to get recovery back home and sent us on our way. Jim by then had met up with Tony Page and decided to ride round with him so suddenly we were down to 3 – but frankly that was a blessing in some ways. All went well until the penultimate control when Simon's bike refused to re-start. It was clear the reason was a flat battery and Mike found a loose wire on the fuse block. Thankfully the bike then started so we rode swiftly to the finish. It also ran fine on the way home. My ETZ250 and Mike's CD200 ran fine all day though they needed a good clean after doing 8 green lanes. We await the results with rather more hope this time though we stand no chance of the team prize with Bill dropping out.

One of the things I had done recently was to fit a side stand to the ETZ250 and it was only thanks to the alertness of Mike & Simon that I did not ride away with it still down. So today I have fitted a warning light on the dashboard which is activated by a tilt switch attached to the side stand. If this works well I may well do the same mod to my other MZs with side stands. While I had the headlight assembly off to wire up the warning light, I decided to fit one of my spare LED headlight bulbs.

I have also brought the T100 up to the workshop to investigate its reluctance to start and the lack of charge from the dynamo. The charging problem turned out to be a dodgy battery and once I had fitted a new one all was well. You can now see the headlight visibly brighten as the engine is revved above tickover; always a reassuring sign. The starting problem seems to have gone away as without doing anything particular, it now starts easily and ticks over fine. I did check the tappets as it sounded a bit clattery and a couple were rather slack but I cannot say it sounded any quieter after the adjustment. I also investigated a strange rattling noise apparent when cold and with a slow tickover speed. Having eliminated the tappets I removed the primary chaincase to see if anything was loose inside as it sounded a bit like a

loose chain. As the bike has been fitted with a belt primary drive, this was unlikely but I wanted to make sure nothing else was loose in there but there was nothing obvious

I did notice score marks on the inside of the chaincase cover and on the internet I found that several companies were selling spacers to give more clearance for belt drive conversions. Indeed when I ran the engine without the cover in place the noise did seem absent. Before lashing out £55 I decided to make up an extra gasket using very thick gasket material. Bit fiddly as I had to make it up in 4 sections as the material was not large enough to make it in one piece. Finally got it held together with super glue and replaced the cover. No noticeable improvement sadly but it did no harm so I have left it in place for now and at least I have established there is nothing about to come loose inside the cover.

I took the T100 for a ride today and it ran like a dream on the 10 mile trip to Mike D's house for coffee. In the open air the engine sounded much less clattery and I did not notice the rattle even when retarding the ignition to give a really slow tickover I also rode with the headlight on and it was still burning bright when I got to Mike's. Coming home however, the headlight refused to work on dip or main even though it was clear that the battery was still well charged. To make matters worse after about 5 miles it developed a misfire at about ½ throttle opening. It still ticked over perfectly and would cruise happily on a light throttle. You could also rev the motor out of the misfire range so not sure yet what was the cause. Something to be investigated tomorrow. I did check the headlight problem which seems to have been a poor earth connection. I have never been impressed by the Lucas HL bulb cap and will consider fitting an H4 unit instead if the T100 is likely to be used much at night. Annoying as I had thought I could return the T100 to the garage and get started on the Venom which is due to go to France in May.

Monday 11th March 2019

Now done a couple of trips on the Saxon Fun. First was to Poulshot on Thursday for the VMCC lunchtime meet. Bike was much admired and went well but boy was it windy and the big tank acts just like a sail. Second ride was a bit further up to Ham for the monthly MZRC meeting, this time in company with Richard Warne on his Supa5. This identified a couple of issues. The Saxon simply did not have the top gear pulling power of the Supa5; he was able to pull top gear even with strong head wind whereas I was in 4th a lot of the time. No doubt some of this is down to my 15st weight (Richard is a lot slimmer). When I checked the bike today, I found it was running a 21t gearbox sprocket. This is correct for a 251 but a Supa5 runs a 20t gearbox sprocket and both have 16" rear wheels. In my experience, MZs are usually overgeared so I have now fitted a 20t sprocket. I may lose out in ultimate speed but it should make top gear much more usable. We shall see.

The other thing I noticed was a sort of flat spot at the point of pulling away. Often you needed to rev the motor to get going and it was quite sluggish until the power came in with a rush. My belief is that the mixture is a tad too weak at the cutaway stage. The plug looks a shade on the light side so I have raised the needle one notch to see if that helps. This certainly worked on my TS150 trail bike which had a similar flat spot. This might also

improved the top gear pulling power – perhaps I should only have changed one thing at a time!

On Friday Keith Johnson came over to try out some of my MZs as he is thinking of buying one. He rode the Saxon first which he liked, then the ETZ250 which he thought was smoother and also like. Then he rode the Supa5 and now realises why we all prefer the power characteristics of this model. I noticed that the lower chain rubber on the ETZ250 was badly worn and rubbing on the chain. It is now up on the bike lift having a new rubber fitted – horrible dirty job and it will have to be done again later. I have a load of new spare chain rubbers, but when I came to fit one I found they were all for aTS250. They look identical but the sprocket cover on the ETZ is wider and they don't fit. I managed to repair the old one for now with some inner tube but the search is on for the correct rubbers.

Friday 1st March 2019

Some riding in what has been until a couple of days ago an exceptionally warm dry spell. The R65 has done a couple of trips, the longest being to Malmesbury for a VMCC lunchtime meet. The ETZ250 passed its MoT on 26th February so is good to go for another year. The KLX250 was ridden to the VMCC club night on 28th as I wanted to give it an airing before its MoT on 4th March. Bike went well but the lights are dire in terms of seeing where you are going; which was a bit odd as I got the occasional flash from car drivers even when on dipped beam. I'll ask the MoT tester to check the beam adjustment. Today I have done some sorting out, tidying and cataloguing of the MZ spares I have scattered around. Seem to have a lot of wheels but none are duplicates so I guess they should all be retained. Sadly I did not find anything that should be thrown away or sold. What I have done is to bring the rebuilt engines from the garage to the workshop to remove any chance of them getting wet or damaged through condensation. Most of them were only bottom end rebuilds so I am in the process of sorting out barrels/pistons so they can be completed. One of the engines was the Hybrid ETZ250/TS250 I built in 2009 which came back into my garage by a convoluted route about 3 years ago. I stripped the top end to examine the condition and all looks good. The top end will get used on one of the other TS250's and the ETZ250 bottom end will be held in reserve in standard form. The adapter plate which was the heart of the conversion is still in good condition and will also be held in case I ever feel like building another.

Major thing to report is the acquisition of a very presentable ETZ251 Saxon Fun from Rick Carter in Witney. I picked it up today as the van has just be taxed ready for the Spring. Not yet ridden the bike, will be interesting to see how it compares with the ETZ250. The ETZ251 motor is supposed to have altered porting which makes it a bit less peaky - we shall see.



Saturday 16th February 2019

Thursday was dry and quite warm so I decided to ride the ETZ250 to the VMCC meeting at Chippenham. First time I have ridden it in the dark and I found that the headlight was pointing into the nearside verge. When there was no other traffic to light the way, I had to ride down the centre of the road or even on the RH side. Fortunately the headlamp is easy to adjust so I twisted it a bit more central when I arrived at club.

As it was still warm and sunny on Friday, I got all the bikes out of the garage to get an airing. Just as well as they were all covered in condensation despite being wrapped in blankets and waterproof covers. They all started up ok so the damp has not got into the electrics. The other reason for emptying the garage was to get the ride-on mower out for a service along with some of the other garden tools. Bit worried to find that the roof has been leaking again (though it may be condensation from the tin roof) and some of the stuff on the shelves was a bit wet. Nothing serious but a bit of a wake-up call. Having dried everything out, I made sure that the valuable stuff was well wrapped in waterproof materials. I also took the wheelbarrow full of MZ spares which came from Steeple Ashton recently to the workshop and Rob Parker-Norman came over this morning to pick them up. Now I have my barrow back I can get on with some gardening. Rob has taken the plunge and bought himself a Royal Enfield Himalayan that he collected from somewhere up North yesterday. He has offered to let me borrow it when he is away (he is in the Merchant Navy and does 2-weeks on 2weeks off shifts). Tempted but I don't really like the responsibility of riding other people's bikes. Worse still I might get to like it and just have to buy one.

Went over to Holt this afternoon with Keith Johnson to look at a 1990 ETZ251 which he had seen advertised. Turned out that the vendor was a chap called Steve who has been round to the house in the past seeking help with this bike. He has now lost interest and wants to move it on. It is really too much of a project for Keith so I doubt he is going to pursue it. Steve does have a varied collection of bikes though so it was a interesting visit.

Tuesday 12th February 2019

Spent a lot of the intervening period with a gastric problem which has meant little enthusiasm for getting cold in the garage and wet riding a bike until the last few days. I did work up enough energy to take the R65 to Bromham on Thursday for a VMCC lunchtime meeting and filled it up with fuel on the way on home; a round trip of at least 13 miles!

I turned the petrol on then went back to lock up the garage and when I came back fuel was dripping from the LH carb again. Anyway, I just ignored it and made sure I only turned on the petrol once I was actually riding. I rode the bike up to Ham on Sunday for the MZRC meeting and did not notice any fuel leaking so perhaps it was just the use of the side stand that created the problem. I did notice that it was leaning more then I expected and my drive is quite uneven. Other than that, the bike went fine. Today I gave it an oil change; the filter was replaced only a couple of hundred miles ago so was left this time.

I needed to go to the shop to post a parcel and Mrs F was out with the car and not due back till late afternoon so I dug out the ETZ250 as it had the biggest top box. Once again I was really happy with the way the bike went and I am now seriously thinking of using it as my bike of choice for VMCC road trials. Only drawback is the Felix-Burke trial which has lots of tempting green lanes and I don't really want to get it that muddy.

As it has warmed up a little, I had a go at starting the Venom and the T100. Against all the odds, the Venom coughed encouragingly on the first kick and started on the third. It quickly settled down to a steady tickover so perhaps I have finally sorted out its carb. Clearly also the Lucas mag I fitted last year (unnecessarily as it turned out) is in good condition. The T100 was a different story, it was most reluctant to start and when it did go it was as a single initially. I threw on my riding gear and took it for a blast round my test route. Once it warmed up it ran ok but was still a little hesitant at low speed/revs. I'll order a new set of plugs and see if that helps though probably it's just the cold damp weather.

I have now temporarily fitted the LED voltage indicators to both bikes and they are both charging which is good news. I had to reset the once in use on the T100 to 6v which was a bit fiddly but I think I got there in the end.

Bummer really, I am feeling a lot better and the weather is set fair for a few days but we don't have any runs in the calendar. Just have to improvise.

I am also toying with the idea of buying another bike, an ETZ251 Saxon Fun which belongs to my friend Rick Carter in Witney. It would be the 3rd bike I have bought from Rick if the deal does go ahead – I had an R80ST BMW and a Honda Transalp from Rick in the past – both superb bikes. I know the ETZ will be presentable and well looked after, he is that sort of guy. I have heard that the 251 motors are more flexible than the earlier ETZ250 motors and it

would be nice to run a pair head to head. Still pondering on the idea; space to keep a tenth bike is probably the biggest obstacle – as well as finding time to ride/maintain yet another bike. However, that has never stopped me in the past once I get a notion into my head.

Friday 1st February 2019

Most garage activity has been on hold partly because of weather, partly because of my finger (which has now healed) but mainly because MRS F has been poorly again meaning I didn't have much free time. Anyway she is on the mend so I have managed a few hours of garage therapy. The R65 now has decent clips on all its fuel pipes so that should nail the leakage problem down. The pipes themselves were ok, it was just that they were a slightly loose fit on the T piece sorted with the new clips.

The weather has been extremely cold and snow was forecast for Friday (which has now arrived in force). As a precaution, I brought the Venom and the T100 up to the workshop on Wednesday to give their batteries some attention. Yesterday both were fitted with Optimate charging connectors to make this easier and allow connection of my charge status LED. Though neither battery had received any attention for many months and were a bit down, both took up full charge without any hassle. In the past I have had trouble with the Venom battery discharging if left connected so I removed the fuse when it was parked up; this clearly worked. The T100 with its 6V mechanical regulator does not seem to suffer from this leakage problem.

I kicked both bikes over just to circulate some oil – funnily enough the Venom was easier to turn than the T100 which felt very sticky even though it is normally an instant easy starter. Guess it's the sub-zero temperatures and all those plain bearings. Doubt either would want to start in these conditions and I don't intend to try. Two things I noted for future reference. The front wheel rim on the Venom is looking very sad and should really be rechromed or replaced. The spokes are galvanised and a bit dull but perfectly sound – do I feel brave enough to attempt a rebuild? The other thing was a continuing leak from the RH fork leg on the T100. This started after I drained and refilled the fork oil last summer. At first I thought it was a slack drain screw, which was tightened, but quite a lot more oil has drained out since October when it was last used. Needs looking into but not till it warms up a bit and the snow has gone.

Tuesday 15th January 2019

I stripped and rebuilt the LH carb on the R65 using a new needle for the fuel feed and new gaskets. the float height was a bit high so I adjusted that according to the book. Bit fiddly but eventually it all went back together and found it would only run on the RH side – doh! The LH float bowl was empty so clearly I had set the float height too low – a second attempt got the bike running on 2 cylinders and no sign of flooding from the LH carb. However, there was leak from the petrol pipe which runs under the air cleaner. I pushed it more firmly onto its 'T' connector and all was well but I need to get a clamp for this joint as it's marginal. Took the bike for a run to get it warmed up and then balanced the carbs. The book setting for the pilot air adjuster is ½ turn out from closed but the engine ran far more smoothly and cleaner with it just over 1 full turn out so that's where I left it. My plan to go for a longer ride was

scuppered when I decided to first wash the caravan a job I had been putting of for ages. The roof was really dirty mouldy and took forever to clean up – it one of those jobs which once started has to be finished.

Next day it was raining so I brought the Trophy into the garage and fitted the Powerdynamo system – full story in the Trophy blog but whilst doing this my hand slipped and I gashed my right index finger quite badly. All patched up but it did prevent me from riding a bike as operating the brake or throttle opened up the cut. Sadly I had to drive the car to the MZRC meeting at Ham on Sunday; good turnout and lots to talk about.

A few days ago a chap called Tony who lives in Steeple Ashton popped round on his nice BSA B25 to see if I was interested in some MZ spares he was willing to give away. He had seen my details in OBM. On Monday I went over and collected the selection of parts in the picture. He also has some Indian Enfield parts which I took pictures of and passed over to a local chap who runs a 350 Bullet. There were only a couple of small bits of any interest to me so the rest will be distributed to local MZ enthusiasts.



Wednesday 9th January 2019

The TS250 is now up and running, wiring tidied and the seat & tank refitted. Started easily and sounds fine. Not convinced the charging system is functioning properly even though the charge light does go out. The neutral light dims as the revs drop and with the headlight on it threatens to stall. It might be the battery but, in any event, I am not too concerned. The Trophy will donate a full set of 6v components including an electronic regulator and a good battery when the Powerdynamo kit is fitted. So the TS250 has been returned to the shed for now to allow room in the workshop to tackle the LH carb on the R65 – tomorrows task.



Tuesday 8th January 2019

Some positive news. I found a spray can of the paint I used to on the 4spd TS250 which was matched from the Supa5 so I already have the necessary touch-up paint for the headlamp. I had another go at the level plug on the R65 bevel box and finally managed to get it out – basically it was brute force, I used mole grips on the hexagon and levered against this until I could get the thread to engage, then it unscrewed. The bolt that came out was definitely not an original BMW item and was about 5/16” but not a metric thread as far as I can tell – more like BSC as it was very fine and not a good choice for an aluminium housing.

I have now tapped it to 8mm and made up a bolt that was as long as possible and considerably longer than the one that came out. This is now holding firmly so I think the problem is solved. I drained the oil and washed the housing out with petrol before and after tapping (with grease on the tap to catch any swarf)– nothing untoward came out either time. I measure the oil that was in the bevel box and it was spot on 350cc as per the book so despite the leak, either not much was lost or it was overfilled in the first place. The oil itself was very clean so I put it back and left the bike on the centre stand overnight. No oil has leaked either from the level plug or the brake spindle so looks like a good job. Also checked the carb and its still leaking so that’s the next job – parts should be here tomorrow.

The 4spd TS250 is now in the workshop and work has begun to convert it back to standard. The original forks and 16” front wheel have been fitted as well as its original small tank (it must have been a basic model without chrome panels). The tank I removed was nearly full

so its contents have been shared between the replacement tank and the Supa5. The large tank was a loan from Andrew Long so can now be returned.

Eventually I am going to fit a 4spd engine complete with 6v electrics – the Powerdynamo system is going into the Trophy to try and sort its ignition problems once and for all. On reflection I decided it would be safer to make this a 2-stage task and convert it to 6v dynamo electrics first with an engine I know is mechanically sound. Stripping the power dynamo system is pretty easy and its now safely packed away. I also managed to find a complete set of the 6v electrics after a bit of a hunt. This is now all fitted though some of the wiring is temporary and will need attention. Pleasingly, everything seems to work, the engine fired up and the charge light even went out. It was 8pm by then so I called it a day.

Friday 4th January 2019

Rode up to Miserden with Mike Davis, me on the R65 and him on his lovely R75/6. Good ride in dry conditions and not too cold. Bike went well apart from a tendency for the revs not to drop back quickly (shades of the T100), which also meant engine braking was a bit limited at times. I suspect the throttle cables need oiling though there may well be a spare set in the toolbox. Rode the bike to a Wandering at our old meeting place, the Lysley Arms on Thursday and noticed that the LH carb was weeping again. Not major problem, I just switched the petrol tap off until the engine hesitated then turned it on for a minute or so. The bike goes about 2 miles on a float chamber of fuel. The problem with the revs not dropping back quickly was less apparent so it may be connected with the flooding carb.

Today I removed the float bowl and ran the fuel through to flush out any dirt on the cutoff needle. Afterwards, when I gently pushed the float up the petrol did cut off so all seemed well. However, once the float bowl was back in place the carb eventually flooded again so I guess it is time for the carb to be stripped and overhauled. At least on a BMW the carbs are easily accessible and the parts are available – though not cheap.

In the meantime, I have compiled a list of jobs I need to do with the other bikes. First on the list was to recommission my Supa5 which has not been used since Colombres in October 2015. It is now in the workshop mainly needing cleaning and charging the battery. It started easily enough as it has the Powerdynamo system installed which is self-energising. I did have a strange occurrence with the electrics – almost identical to the problem we had with Rob Parker-Normans bike. Though the lights would work at full power, the indicators were very intermittent. They would not work at all on one side and were pretty feeble on the other side. When the headlight was switched on it strobed in time with the indicators. This was with the battery fitted but on checking it was down to 11 volts. I left it on trickle charge overnight and next morning everything worked perfectly. I also connected up my charge indicator LED and this confirmed that the system was balancing the load even with headlight, stoplight and indicators all running simultaneously. So why would it not power the indicators with the engine running when the battery was low? Still puzzling about this. Anyway, that apart the bike is fine and holding up well cosmetically considering that it was restored 15 years ago. I do need some touch-up paint though as the headlamp is chipped

and scratched by the keys. Other than that it seems fine and I look forward to riding it again. It will be good to contrast it with the ETZ250 which is growing on me.

Next job is to strip down the 4 spd TS250 to replace its original forks and to fit a 4 speed motor. With the Supa5 back in service, I want the TS250 to be as original as possible. Only slight snag is that I used its 16" front wheel on the Trophy. Conundrum; do I use the spare set of s/s spokes I bought recently to rebuild another 16" front wheel for the TS250 or to rebuild the back wheel of the Trophy; which is what I bought them for?

Monday 31st December 2018

Hard to believe another year is ending, how does the time pass so quickly. Not a bad year from the motorcycling perspective and no major dramas with life in general though Mrs F's health is a concern and I am beginning to feel my age. I do wonder how many more years I will feel able and willing to ride a bike. But for the moment I have a nice stable of bikes and some super events lined up for 2019. Anyway best wishes for 2019 to anyone who reads this blogg

The R65 passed its MoT without any advisories last Friday and all being well it will be taxed tomorrow ready to ride to Miserden for the Cotswold section New Years Day gathering. I have just arranged with Mike D to meet him at J17 of the M4 so we can complete the ride together. Yesterday I spent the morning examining the front end wiring. Initially I was tracing the connection for the clutch interlock switch; this is missing on the bike and is pretty essential as it enables the starter to work even when the bike is in gear provided the clutch is pulled in. With the tank off I quickly found the harness end of the connection and have just ordered a new one from Motorworks.

While I was at it I decided to investigate the lack of indicator warning lights and the intermittent sidelight. This meant removing the droopy nose cone and the instrument cover. Looked daunting and clearly it has suffered over the years as a couple of the plastic ears were broken and had been repaired with screws and small plates. Eventually I got it apart without breaking anything else and was able to investigate the problems. First thing I found was the speedo indicator light unit dangling on its cable with no bulb fitted. Not having ridden it in the dark I had not noticed this deficiency but it was easily fixed with a new bulb and some tape to patch up the damaged holder. Job 1 done. There are two indicator warning lights (RH & LH) and I found that they had been removed from their holders and taped up though both worked ok when I fitted bulbs. A warning buzzer had been wired into the system so I guess a previous owner had decided to dispense with the warning lights. It was a fiddle but eventually I got everything back into its rightful place. The buzzer works for both directions and the LH warning light works every time but the RH light is somewhat intermittent. Could not find any obvious fault so this has been left for now.

The sidelight was another oddball. In the end it was down to a poorly fitting earth connector on the headlight reflector. It was loose so I glued it in place and this seems to have cured the problem. So a satisfactory mornings work on the electrical front.

I have hit one snag though with the bevel drive. I tried to remove the level plug to see if the oil leak from the brake spindle was due to it being overfilled. Unfortunately, the level plug thread seems to be stripped. It turns but will not loosen even with a screwdriver pushing it whilst turning. I have left this alone for now – Mr Dixon will be consulted when he returns after New Year.

Took the ETZ250 on trip to the bank this morning to pay in the MZRC cheques – it is really going well now and I like it more each time I ride it. Really glad now that I resisted the temptation to get rid of it when I reviewed the stable last autumn. Now torn as to which bike to ride on New Years Day.

Thursday 27th December 2018

Well we survived Christmas despite the fact that I had to cook the Christmas Dinner. Actually, it went rather well but I sincerely hope I don't have to do it again for a very long time. Mrs F is on the mend albeit slowly so I was able to get some garage therapy on Boxing Day to play with the R65. It has cleaned up quite well though it will never be a concours job. Rod had bled the front brake line and the brake now works fine. I was grateful for that as never enjoy playing with hydraulics. I have managed to balance the carbs a bit better such that it now ticks over on two cylinders rather than one. A quick test ride up the road suggested it was still not quite right but I then found there was zero slack in the RH throttle cable. After matching the slack in both cables, the pickup was noticeably smoother so I am hopeful it will perform better when I take it for MoT on Friday.

One of the 6mm bolts holding the LH silencer had sheared but there was enough protruding to attach a pair of mole grips and with the help of WD40 it came out cleanly. I took the silencer off to make it easier to remove the rear wheel and so that I could rub down and spray the swinging arm tubes. Just enough to stop any further rusting. The other reason for removing the wheel was to check the brake linings and investigate an oil leak from the bevel drive area. I was afraid it was the large oil seal for the output bearing and oil could get onto the linings; fortunately, this was not the case. In the end I traced the leak to the brake camshaft which runs through the bevel box. Not serious for now but will need attention. There are a couple of hopefully minor electrical problems. There is no front sidelight, its not the bulb as it does very occasionally work, just hope they don't pick it up as a fail at the MoT as I cannot see how to get the headlight unit out at present and the Haynes manual is no help. The other problem is the cutout switch built into the clutch lever so you can start the engine without having to find neutral. This does not work; not surprising really as there is no switch in the lever and no obvious wiring hanging around loose. Both of these jobs are going to need the tank off to allow in depth investigation. However, overall I am very pleased with the bike and it is so much more comfortable than the Mastiff you would not believe.

Sunday 23rd December 2018

Things have been quiet recently because Mrs F has been, indeed still is very poorly. Today is the first day she has got out of bed and that was only for a short period. In between nursing

care, I did manage to sell the Mastiff to a chap who lives in Neath. He and his brother both have Skorpions and he wanted to try a Mastiff. Conveniently, this was on the Tuesday as I had arranged to visit Rod Western on the on the Wednesday to look at the R65. The bike is pictured below:



As normal it looks better in the picture than in the flesh but should respond well to some TLC. It has been standing for 2 years so needs a few jobs doing – brakes bleeding, carbs balancing amongst others. Rod is delivering it on Christmas Eve though unless Mrs F makes a dramatic improvement by tomorrow, I don't know when I will be able to play with it. The bike is a 1982 BMW R65LS standard as far as I can tell apart from the raised handlebars and the aftermarket chromed exhaust system; both an improvement as far as I am concerned. It also comes with a set of panniers and a toolkit. Mileage is 40k assuming its genuine. At least the engine and frame numbers match. Sounded really quiet and smooth mechanically when running though the exhaust was a bit brash for a BMW.

On another subject, the Trophy played up yet again when used last Sunday – see the ES250 blogg.

Wednesday 12th December 2018

Things did not go quite to plan. I rode the Trophy to town to do some small shopping. It went very well except that it died literally as I stopped in my drive. Investigation showed a blown fuse which, as it was only 5amp, was probably not surprising. I reckon that putting on the back brake with the indicators going and sidelights on was just too much. Anyway, both

fuses are now the correct 15amp rating. Nevertheless this made me a bit nervous about taking it the Bristol section meeting but the decision not to take it was made for me when I found I needed a large top box to bring back Mrs F's Pyrex dish that I had left at the AGM. So the ETZ250 got it's first longish run and performed very well. I am still getting used to its power delivery characteristics. It is very sluggish below circa 3500 revs especially in 3rd or above. I rode up with Richard Warne (riding his very quick TS250/1). It was interesting watching the point at which he changed gear usually well before I had the ETZ250 into its power band. Overall the performance is pretty similar I suspect eventually it will prove to be quicker as it loosens up from running-in. I prefer the more torque delivery of the Supa5 motor but overall I really enjoyed the ride and my plans to sell it to John Hill are on long term hold. Oh yes I did collect the dish.

We met at the Stagecoach Inn on the A38 at Newport as the Salutation was holding its Christmas Market. I was impressed as were a number of other members and the landlord seemed very happy with us. It would make an excellent venue should we decide on a change. Had hoped to pick up the s/s spokes from Rob Holusza but he could not make it due to work commitments. He rang me that evening and is going to post them on.

I got talking to Rod Western at the meeting and discovered he still has the BMW R65 I saw when I collected the T100 but which was not for sale at the time. Things have moved on and the price he mentioned would be acceptable, subject of course to a satisfactory test ride so I am going to look at the bike next Wednesday. That really seals the fate of the Mastiff as I will need both the money it represents and the space it occupies. Placed an advert on Gumtree tonight and got two very quick responses, both of which are obvious scammers. This seems to happen every time I place an ad on Gumtree and makes me wonder whether it is worth using the site any more. It is free but I guess you only get what you pay for. Hopefully, I will get a genuine response eventually

3rd December 2018

As predicted, the Mastiff has been sorned and the ETZ250 is now road legal. I have also kept the KLX250 taxed as well. However, none of them have had any use and are unlikely to for a few days as the weather is most unpleasant. I am hoping to take the Trophy to the December MZ club meeting to see if I can lay the ghost of its breakdowns.

Last Saturday was the MZ Bristol section AGM and social. Held at lunch time with a buffet to follow and much preferable to holding the event in the evening as Thornbury is not an easy place to get to especially in the dark and wet. Our usual venue is no longer available for December meetings (indeed has not been for several years) as the publican holds a Christmas market on the 2nd Sunday of December and we are frozen out. The Mariners Arms in Berkeley which we have used previously is now closed so we are trying the Stagecoach somewhere further up the A38. Next year we may well use the venue in Thornbury and combine the AGM and monthly meeting – seems like an excellent idea to me.

The tilt switches I ordered from China have finally arrived so I shall try wiring them into the MZ prop stands. I will start with the Trophy so the results will appear in its blog first.

Friday 23rd November 2018

John Hill came to visit last Friday and stayed the night as he finds long return trips a bit tiring these days (he is well over 80 after all). We had lunch at the Cross Keys outside Frome as he wanted to discuss with them holding one of his engineering club lunches there. I managed to find a few bits and pieces for him and he brought up an ETZ15 wheel which he would like rebuilt with s/s spokes. It was a pleasant visit and hopefully he will do it again some time. Whilst inspecting the contents of my garage he mentioned that he would be interested in my ETZ250. He is finding the 750 Guzzi he bought a while ago too heavy and wants to downsize. At the moment I have no plans to sell the ETZ250 but it's nice to know there is a buyer lurking in the wings. In fact, I intend to SORN the Mastiff at the end of November and tax the EZ250; it's high time it got some use.

The ETZ150 wheel is proving a bit of a problem as it's pretty scruffy especially the hub. MZ in their wisdom painted the hubs black on the later models. It invariably develops corrosion under the paint and looks dreadful. Really I have no option but to try and clean this up as rebuilding it with nice shiny s/s spokes and leaving the scabby hub is a waste of money. I tried soaking it in brake fluid which helped a little but in the end I had to do it the hard way. I removed 4 spokes at a time so I could gain access to use a rotary wire brush then replaced the old spokes for now. Once cleaned I was able to spray the hub satin black including of course a fair amount on the spokes. When its all dry I will have to replace the old spokes with the new s/s ones. Means a doing the job twice but at least it will look pretty good when completed. At least the old spokes will come out easily next time. Normally I just cut out the old spokes with the angle grinder if they are the slightest bit stiff but these I needed to replace so it was a tedious job. There were three I simply could not undo so I had to clean round them for now. They will get the angle grinder treatment next time. This will not be for a couple of weeks at least as s/s spokes are in short supply at present and will not be back in stock for 10-14 days.

Wednesday 14th November 2018

Rode Mastiff to Ham for the MZ Club meeting on Sunday. New charge indicator works well. The new seat is a marginal improvement on the old upholstery but not as much as I had hoped. Anyway, it was a nice ride in decent weather and a good chinwag. Ollie Harris's dad Paul turned up with a neighbour called Neil, both on MZ's. Having heard a lot about him from Ollie it was nice to meet him in the flesh, a very clever engineer with lots of good ideas. The Scott chain oiler is still not working so I will have to investigate further though frankly its just as easy to pop the bike on my mini lift and spray the chain the old fashioned way.

Most of my time recently has been spent on the ES250 and the TS125 and the reports on these activities are in their respective diaries. I have however, spent a little time on the ETZ250. The original red tank has now been refitted having proved to be petrol tight since I repaired it last year. Sadly the finish is not petrol proof and filing the tank has to be done with care. If there is any spillage, it must be left to dry naturally. Any attempt to wipe it off just smears the finish. Strangely I don't think it is the paint which I have used successfully on

previous occasions from the same source. I think it is the spray on lacquer which is the culprit. I did carefully clean up one smear with very fine wet/dry finishing with T cut and polish. This bit is now shinier than the rest of the finish as I have also smoothed out the slight orange peel effect. I may be able to repeat this treatment to the rest of the tank – if I have the patience.

For some time I have been concerned about how smokey the ETZ motor is. The amount is embarrassing such that I had to move it to the orchard to give it a decent test. I had already adjusted the oil pump to ensure it was correctly set and made sure the cold start plunger was properly seated. None of this improved matters much. I was beginning to think that the drive side engine seal had failed or there was something wrong with the carb. However, none of these seemed likely as I don't remember the bike misbehaving like this when Richard used it back in May for a VMCC trial and it has not been used on the road since. Looking at the petrol in the tank, it was pretty dirty so I rode the bike down to the garage this afternoon and put in 2 gallons of fresh petrol. It still smoked a for a while afterwards but that was probably down to what was already in the carb. However, by the time I got down to Semington it was much improved and no smoke at all was visible in the mirrors on the trip back home by which time there was only the slightest haze. Just enough to reassure me that the oil pump was working ok. The tickover was a bit ragged but with a warm engine it was easy to set this up correctly. Interestingly, the pilot air setting was much too weak and the tickover was much smoother when I richened it up. This checks out with a lack of power I noticed just off tickover when pulling away. During my test run I had put this down to the power characteristics of the ETZ motor (which has little low down grunt). In hindsight it was probably a poorly set up carb. Possibly I may have weakened it in the past to try and deal with the smoking? For the moment though all seems well. It was a nice bike to ride and I really ought to start using it more though I suspect for regular usage, changing the 19t gearbox sprocket for an 18t item would be sensible. Top currently feels a bit tall with my weight to carry though it makes for relaxed cruising on the flat

Monday 5th November 2018

I have solved the problem of connecting the voltage indicator led on the Mastiff. The bike has an Accumate connector which is used for charging the battery. I have a small supply of Accumate connectors and the voltage led is now wired to the charging socket but can easily be unclipped if the battery goes flat. Normally this would be a daft idea as the voltage led is live all the time and would flatten the battery eventually. However this device is quite clever and has a variety of configurations to choose from. One config allows the device to detect it is permanently connected such that when the charging ceases (as in when the engine is switched off) it reverts to a sleep mode and just blinks occasionally making it look like a security device. If all is well the led blinks green, then orange then red indicating the battery may need charging. When the engine starts it behaves normally – green for ok, any other colour indicating a charging problem. If the bike is likely to be long term stored, I can just unclip the Accumate connection – simple and no need to break into the wiring loom.

I also put the Mastiff on the mini bike lift to make it easier to lube the chain. It looks as though the Scottolier is not working as the reservoir was full and the chain dried out. I'll have to check it over to see if I can find out what is wrong.

Sunday 4th November 2018

Pleased to record that my decision not to cancel the New Forest Run despite an ominous weather forecast was justified. To my great relief (and admiration) everyone who put their names down for the run turned up despite the rain which continued until just after we left the coffee stop at Downton. Still overcast but the actual forest run was dry as was the ride home. I rode the Mastiff and ran like a dream. The re-upholstered seat is a little better but not as much as I was hoping. The led bulb I fitted a while ago worked fine. I was concerned that it was too long and touching the front lens but it gave no trouble so I will fit the other one tomorrow (twin headlights)

Friday 2nd November 2018

The week did not start too well. I moved the Venom to the garage to make room in the workshop for the TS125. Didn't notice any difficulty in pushing the bike but when I parked it up the rear tyre was flat! I span the wheel but could not see any obvious foreign bodies embedded in the tyre. Pumped it up and left it for a couple of days to find that it was still hard – very odd.

The TS125 is now in the workshop – see the separate project blog for an update.

On Thursday I taxed the Mastiff and the KLX250 as both have been on SORN for a couple of months. Apart from pumping up the tyres the Mastiff did not need any work and I rode it over to Neston to give it an airing and fill the tank. I plan to use it on a VMCC run on Sunday. I was disappointed with the seat I had re-upholstered. Superficially it looks good but the guy did not modify it exactly as I specified and now that the cover has settled, you can see how crudely the inserted material has been shaped not to mention that it seems very hard. I will reserve judgement until after Sunday's run to the new Forest but if I remain unhappy, I feel included to take it back and complain. I recently bought an LED based voltage indicator similar to the one I fitted to my Baghira. I want to fit it to the Mastiff so that I have the comfort of knowing the charging system is working correctly. Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to figure out where to access the appropriate spot in the wiring loom. There is no readily accessible point around the headlight area – at least not without stripping off the loom covering which I am reluctant to do. Seems like I will have to remove the seat and tank to investigate.

Our VMCC section has run a touring holiday in June for many years but the long time organiser, Bob Fisher, is not well and announced that he would not be able to continue. A small group of us decided to try and continue the event and found that there were plenty of people who also wanted to take part so we have booked a week at the Shap Wells hotel for 2-9th June 2019. We went there in 2015 and it proved to be an excellent base for exploring a wonderful part of the country. I have spent some very enjoyable evenings reviving the routes we used in 2015 and devising some new ones. One benefit of this hotel is that you can plot

routes to all points of the compass and get to new places without having to ride miles over the same route. I have planned 6 routs but don't intend to ride every day myself. I am going to take a ride on the Carlisle to Settle railway to enjoy the scenery from the comfort of a carriage. The route includes the Ribbleshead viaduct which we will also pass on one of my rides.

Friday 26th October 2018

I stripped down the Venom this morning to allow the head nuts to be tightened, None seemed particularly slack but none were close to the 20ft lb of torque recommended – they are now. I was right to order a set of gaskets as the one on the rocker box split when I removed the cover. Though I had also ordered new head nuts, washers and 'O' rings for the studs I did not fit them as the originals were all in good condition with no apparent leaks down the studs. However, I was concerned about the hollow bolt which secure the oil feed pipe to the rockers. I had to use a 16mm metric spanner to undo it as none of my imperial sizes would fit. The thread also seemed rather coarse and did not seem to be long enough. I am seeking advice about this but my gut feeling is that the original thread in the housing was stripped and someone has adapted another hollow bolt to make a repair. I may be worrying about nothing as there was no sign of leakage at the joint when I dismantled the engine but I was very circumspect when tightening it up. Something I need to keep an eye on.

I thought I had ordered s a couple of spare timing cover gaskets but there were none in the parcel and when I checked my order form I had overlooked them – doh! Anyway, I did have once from the MAC gasket set which I had tried to use previously without success, it simply did not fit. I read a tip a long time ago about soaking gaskets in warm water to soften them as they can shrink over time. Having dried the gasket between sheets of newspaper it did prove to be a better fit and is now on the bike. I had been running it without a gasket at all but there was a constant drip from the bottom of the timing chest. Hopefully this is now cured.

The bike started easily once it was all back together and settled to a steady tickover so I think my efforts were productive. Pity I did not complete the work before Colombres but never mind, it is now ready for next year.

So far as I am aware the backlog of repairs is completed so maybe I can turn my attention to the TS125 Sport as the winter project.

Wednesday 24th October 2018

I rode the T100 to Acton Turville on Sunday, its first longish ride (circa 60 miles) since I sorted the high tickover speed issue. It went like a dream and is so much easier to ride now that I have engine braking. The plugs still seem a little light to me so today I raised the needle one notch to see what effect that has.

The Velo is also back in the workshop as I noticed that it was emitting a puff of smoke when starting up sometimes. With the engine running, I could feel air leaking from the head joint. Looks like the head nuts need tightening up. I have ordered a gasket set and a few other bits

to be on hand when I tackle the job. They should be here by Saturday. If I have the spares I probably won't need them. Without the spares I am bound to trash a gasket or lose something critical.

Saturday 13th October 2018

Well the Colombres trip is now behind us sadly. We had a great 10 days and all three bikes performed faultlessly. The story of the holiday can be found [here](#).

Since getting back I have mostly been catching up with domestic chores but the TS250 has been given some TLC to repair the damage sustained in Spain. In practise all it needed was new headlight rim and headlight 'ear' as the one on the rh side was more bent than I realised at the time. Remarkably tough little bikes MZs. I have also been looking into the poor starting of the Venom and have concluded it was mostly down to me not being able to give it a sufficiently purposeful kick due to the ankle problem. This has improved a lot whilst I was away. However, I did make some small adjustments to the pilot settings and put in a new plug which may have helped. Provided I follow the Velo starting drill to the letter I can now get it running first or second time. Once hot it starts easily. I guess I could have taken it to Spain after all but the MZ did me proud.

Saturday 29th September 2018

Much of my time over the past couple of days has been spent fettling the TS250 ready for Colombres. Mostly a matter of running the spanners over it to make sure nothing is loose, checking the oil and greasing the chain. I rode it to Chippenham on Thursday night and filled the tank. It was dark on the trip home so first time I have used the lights in earnest and the main beam was somewhat intermittent though dip was fine thank goodness. I changed the dipswitch as this seemed to be the cause of the problem but it did not help much. Though the bulb had both filaments working, the glass part was loose so I put in a new bulb and all now seems well. I don't expect to do any night riding in Spain, but it is a legal requirement to ride with lights on so as well to make sure. The top box is now pretty heavy as it is loaded with spare cables, inner tubes (2 sizes), brake and clutch levers, handlebar mirror (I broke one last year) plus 1.5 litres of oil. The latter which should give me at least 800 miles and as I am starting with a full tank around 1000 miles in all. I have wrapped the security chain round the headstock to move some weight forward and the toolkit is under the seat. Had an email from Bill Little today to say he is now having trouble with his Velo so has loaded his MZ for the trip! We leave from my house as the last pickup around 11am tomorrow.

Having sorted the MZ I had time to consider the Velo carburettor problem. I adjusted the float level as previously mentioned and checked over the rest and found another issue which was the pilot jet not fully screwed into the body. I have to put my hand up to this as I removed the jet some time ago to change it for a larger size and obviously failed to tighten it up properly for some reason. Logic says that this is almost certainly the cause of the sooty plugs as the fuel could pass round the outside of the jet rather than through it. Possibly the low fuel level was a red herring! Anyway with the adjusted carb refitted the bike ran my test route without a problem so I took it for a 10 mile ride and it ran absolutely fine even; the slow running hunting has gone (that was why the pilot jet was enlarged). The tickover is fine and the plug is a perfect shade of chocolate as well. Only one drawback, I have yet to sort out the ideal starting technique – every time you mess with the Velo carburettor, you have

to learn a new technique. Time to practise this when I get back from Spain. A parcel arrived from the Velo Spares Scheme today which included a new dynamo V belt so I fitted that to get the job out of the way. There are also a couple of timing cover gaskets which I will fit later.

I had a visitor today, chap called Steve who lives in Holt (don't actually know his surname). He was given an ETZ251 a while back and has been round several times to pick my brain. Today he kindly dropped of a remote Oil Filter kit for a Triumph which is surplus to his needs. It would be good if I could make it fit the T100 as it only has very crude filtration.

That brings things up to date; next report will be after I get back from Spain around 9th October.

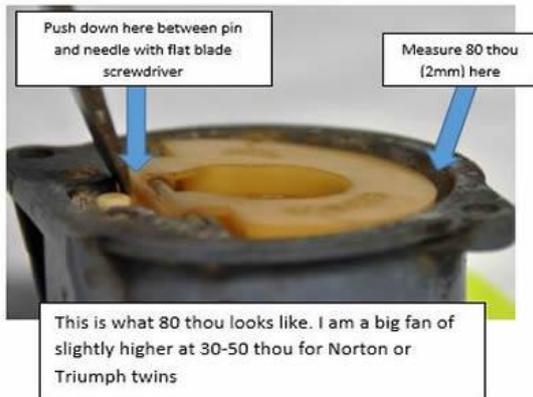
Wednesday 26th September 2018

Today was the turn of the Mastiff and a chance to try out my new bike lifter. The latter worked like a charm, was easy to use and very stable. It just slides underneath whilst the bike is on its side stand, you then adjust the sliders to the bike rails and wind it up. It made getting the wheel out dead easy as you can set the height precisely so the spindle slides in and out easily. Having the wheel out made it easy to rub down some of the flaking paint on the aluminium swinging arm and apply some Hammerite smooth silver paint. Only one of the wheel bearings was duff but I had made one mistake in reading the spares list. I thought it specified a 6302RS bearing (which I had in stock) but what is actually fitted is a 6203RS. However, as luck would have it I did find exactly the right bearing in my spares box so it saved a panic trip to Melksham. Wheel is now back in place and all trace of play has gone. While the bike was on the lift I decided to replace the original dog bones. This reinstates its original ride height but I can now cope with this and lowering it did make the back end look a bit odd.

Tuesday 25th September 2018

On Monday I fitted a Monobloc carb borrowed from Terry Dixon to the Venom. It had only recently been removed from his Venom so I made no adjustments, just fitted it as it came, cables and all. The transformation was immediate. The bike started first kick and settled to a steady tickover. A ride round my usual test route produced no misfiring so I took it on a longer main road trip and pushed it to over 60mph on the way back all without a single misfire. Back home the only adjustment needed was to slow the tickover a little. When it cooled down I checked the plug which a new one, was light brown, if anything a little weak but nothing to worry about. As a precaution, I then fitted one of the old dirty plugs and did another test run; still no misfire. So the problem is now proven to be the Wassell carb.

I was tempted to simply throw the Wassell in the bin and chalk it up to experience (you get what you pay for!) but common sense and curiosity made me strip it down to see if there was anything obvious wrong. My first reaction was how well made the carb was especially compared to the Amal version. There was one very obvious problem concerning the float level. This should be set to about 2mm but mine was 4.6mm meaning that the fuel level was



very low and the needle barely allowed any fuel to pass. But this does create an enigma; a low fuel level and flow rate would certainly cause misfiring but would surely also cause a weak mixture. Yet the plugs always showed signs of excessive richness. So far no one has come up with a plausible explanation for this phenomenon. I have run out of time to devote to the Venom for now, but when I get back from Spain I may decide to adjust the Wassell and have one more try at getting it to work.

Friday 20th September 2018

Well the K1F magneto has not cured the Venom of its problems. Initially it went well on the ride to Bishops Cannings but by the time I had covered a few miles it started misfiring and was as bad as ever by the time I arrived. Likewise, on the way home and to add insult to injury, the toolbox lid came open and I lost my entire toolkit some of which were special spanners adapted for the bike. Talking it over with friends it was suggested that the plug cap might be the culprit and indeed the K1F was using the one from the BT-H as it was the only non-resistor cap I had available. I checked the plug and once again it was really sooty so I fitted a clean plug and another cap. First couple of miles and I really thought I had cracked the problem but eventually the misfiring returned. Thinking about it, cleaning the plug always produces a significant improvement but only for a very limited period. The needle is already on its lowest setting and even if the main jet was over sized, it only has an effect above $\frac{3}{4}$ throttle; a point I never get to reach.

The richness has to be caused by something else possibly the needle itself or the needle jet but the carb is new so they should not be worn. In any event the old 30mm concentric had a worn needle jet which I did eventually replace but it never caused this level of richness or misfiring even before it was repaired. The other possibility is the float level being too high but I will have to read up on how to check this on the Wassell carb and find out if it's adjustable. Terry D offered to remove from his Venom the 30mm carb I loaned him but I don't want to put him to that much trouble until such time as he has made up his mind whether to revert to his Monobloc or buy a new carb. The reason he made the change was poor starting but since then he found a problem with his magneto which was probably the original culprit. I may take up his offer to try the Monobloc to see what if any difference that makes.

However, I have decided that I cannot afford to risk taking the Venom and will have to prepare another bike for Spain. My preference would be the T100 but after taking it over

with Bill, he was concerned about the extra weight and the size. Velo's are quite small and light compared to most contemporary British bikes. So the TS250 is the only other option at this time as none of my other 'on the road' bikes are eligible.

Having made the decision I recalled that it was still running with the standard MZ front brake which has proved ok during UK mileage but may be a bit feeble for the Pecos mountains. So last night I collected together all the parts needed to fit the Honda TLS front wheel I have in stock. Normally this is a fairly straightforward job, the main task being the swapping over of the fork legs (otherwise you have a twin trailing shoe brake). However, the TS250 front forks are the earlier design so everything has to be changed legs, yokes headlamp shrouds and mudguard. I found all the necessary bits but a few items needed painting so I did that first and left them to dry overnight.

This morning I stripped and rebuilt the front end and apart from some fiddling to get the brake cable to fit all went well. I also made up a spare front brake cable as well as they are different from the standard MZ cables. The rest of the of the bike was checked over and serviced as necessary so its looking good. When its stops raining, I will take it for a test ride just to make sure. I also need to think about what other spares and how much oil to take with me.



Just to add to my woes on Thursday, the Mastiff had two advisories after its MoT. One was for minor weep on the nearside fork leg which has been there since I bought it. As the seals were replaced last year according to the documentation I doubt there is much point in changing them again. A set of gaiters is probably more sensible and not urgent. The other issue is a rear wheel bearing which definitely has to be replaced asap. Just as well I had no immediate plans to use the bike. However, it will be a chance to try out the new bike lift.

Wednesday 19th September 2018

The Venom has been occupying my attention for most of the last 2 days. I think I may have mentioned that when I rode it to the Odd Down Inn a few weeks ago it had misfired a couple of times. This condition seems to have worsened significantly since. A trip round my

extended test route (we now have a bypass for the main part of the village) proved disappointing. The bike performs well enough if you potter around, but any attempt at wider throttle opening to pick up speed quickly resulted in a misfire. You could wind the bike up to 50mph or so but only in gentle stages and by keeping it in the higher gears.

Inspection showed the plug to be very black so I stripped the carb but found nothing obvious wrong. I did drop the needle to its lowest position and I changed the plug but no improvement. The carb itself is a brand new 28mm Wassell which replaced an old 30mm Concentric previously used. That also had given problems in the past which is why it was replaced and one of those problems had been the occasional misfire at wide throttle openings. However, I don't recall that happening when in Spain or in Brittany with the Venom in 2017. The fact remained that now the misfire was present all the time. Opening the throttle wide in the garage the revs would only rise to a certain point (well short of valve float) before misfiring and effectively governing it. In all other respects the bike was fine, it starts easily and has an excellent tickover and if you just wanted to potter you might never know there was a problem. However, I certainly did not want to take the bike to Spain like that.

It was becoming more like an electrical problem and my first thought was the magneto was running retarded so I checked the timing which was spot on at 38° btdc. Any other checks were difficult as the magneto is a modern BT-H electronic type – see picture.



I rang BT-H and had a long chat with the owner. It seems that he took over the business in August 2011 and my mag was made in April 2011 and is apparently unique in his experience. Though it looks identical to the models he still makes these all use an external high tension coil whereas mine must have it fitted internally as the black lead you can see is the HT lead. The net result of the conversation was that there were no checks or adjustments I could make. The only option was to remove it from the bike and send it to him for testing.

Well several hours later with skinned knuckles, broken finger nails and a bad temper, the BT-H is off the bike and a spare Lucas K1F magneto I had on the shelf is now fitted and working. My initial bench testing suggested that it was not a lot better than the BT-H but a ride round the block told a different story – albeit traffic limited the degree of performance I could use. Tomorrow we have a meeting at Bishops Cannings so the Venom will be used for that trip to see how well it performs. If it's ok then I will continue to prepare it for Spain, otherwise I have to decide what to replace it with and get that ready. Ideally I would like to use the Triumph but it's more likely to be one of the MZ's. . Choice of replacement will

depend on what Bill Little thinks he can get in his van as space and load weight is a bit limited.

I did visit the doctor on Monday and I have something called Plantar Fasciitis which is an inflammation of a membrane under the heel. There is no specific cause and little in the way of treatment; it can take from 1-6 months to go away. I guess it's a relief it is nothing more serious so I just have to grin and bear it resting the foot whenever it gets to painful. Standing around in the garage trying to sort the Venom was not the ideal treatment! However, assuming I can get a bike prepared, there is no reason not to travel to Spain as actually riding a bike does not cause any discomfort thankfully.

Sunday 16th September 2018

We were blessed with much better weather for the 2018 Cornish Week than in 2017 and only had one wet ride which I cut short at the first coffee stop near Wadebridge as Bodmin Moor has little appeal in thick fog. The T100 went well overall but threw up two issues. The first was the return of the excessive tickover speed which came and went throughout the week without any obvious reason. The second, which I don't think is connected, was a very low (as in near 100mpg) fuel consumption. Normally I agonise over my bikes using too much fuel but visions of a weak mixture causing burnt valves or a holed piston worried me more during the holiday. I kept an eye on the plugs and they seemed pretty normal to me; perhaps a lighter shade of brown than I normally see but not excessively so. In total we did just over 400 miles and apart from the concerns mentioned above the bike was a delight to ride and so easy to start. Just as well really as I developed a swollen ankle early on which has not improved and I shall be consulting the doctor tomorrow.

Today I had the T100 on the bike lift to give it good clean and to investigate the concerns. Hopefully I have solved the variable tickover issue which I think had two causes. The first and probably major one was the alignment of the throttle cable which exited the carb cover at near 40 degrees. With the tank off I was able to re-route it. I also stripped the carb (which is a new Monobloc) and found that the slide had some sticky residue on the engine side mostly near the bottom. The bike had been unused for 5-6 years before I bought it so I imagine the sticky residue is old petrol. It certainly took some cleaning to get it off. I also cleaned the main jet in case it was partially blocked by the same substance and the needle as this seemed a tad sticky as well. My intention had been to raise the needle one notch to richen the mixture but on balance I have left it in the standard middle setting for now. The tickover issue did not manifest itself on subsequent road test so I am hopeful all is now well. However, a longer road test will have to wait as I need to get the Venom out of hibernation ready for Spain which is now only two weeks away.

Tuesday 4th September 2018

The seat for the Mastiff is now down in Somerset, near Axbridge hopefully on its way to being modified. We had to go to Burnham to see a friend so I took the bike in the van so the upholsterer could see exactly what I needed. He has marked it up and we chose the colour for the replacement cover. Should be ready when I get back from Cornwall mid-September.

I had pretty much decided to take the T100 for the Cornish Week but first I gave it a test run to one of our mid-week wanderings at Hullavington which is about 24 miles away by the route I chose. The bike performed well when running on main roads but seemed to develop an increasing tickover speed as the journey progressed. This was most unpleasant not least because there was little if any engine breaking. I tried adjusting the carb when I arrived at the pub but could not slow it down even with the slide adjuster slackened right off. The journey home was equally unpleasant when in traffic but in other respects I was happy with the bike. Back home I was pretty sure the problem lay with the throttle cable so I slackened the adjuster and that did seem to help a little. I then adjusted the pilot air mixture and found that screwing it in (which richens the mixture) did slow it down and finally I was able to set a reliable and acceptable tickover. A test run confirmed it was back to being a nice bike to ride so it's now in the van ready for Cornwall. Still puzzled about this but at least it now seems ok. One thing I meant to do and forgot about until too late for Cornwall was to order a spare throttle cable for the T100 as I am still dubious about it and having a spare with you on holiday makes sense. Just hope it does not give me any grief next week.

The ES250/2 came up with a new wobbly yesterday – read the story in the Trophy Project Blog. Having disposed of the MOV, I had no particular use for the MAC engine I had built up so an advert was placed in the VOC journal Fishtail. This came out on Saturday and a chap from Bristol came to look at it last night. He has now carted it off leaving me with enough money to cover its cost and a small profit plus a bit more space in the workshop.

Sunday 26th August 2018

Wow nearly three weeks since I wrote up the blog. Would not have been done today either except that it's typical bank holiday weather (very wet and very windy) so I have been catching up with things including the blogg.

The Enfield Bullet has gone to a chap in North Wales who seems to love it; keeps texting me about his trips and the things he is planning to do to it. Very sweet but once I have sold a bike I don't really want to hear about it again good or bad. The ES250 is I think now fixed, the latest coil seems to have made all the difference – the full story is in the Trophy Project blogg. I rode it over to Bratton to see Rob Parker-Norman and help him with the Powerdynamo conversion of his blue supa5. Bike went well and now starts easily but a 12 mile round trip is not conclusive and I need to fit in something longer to be sure. I would like to take it to Cornwall in September.

I had a test ride on a BMW F650CS belonging to Janet Wilson of the MZ club. Nice bike, very comfortable and a good price so I agonised for a long time. However, I needed to sell the MZ Mastiff to pay for it (and to create space) and when I only got silly offers, I got to thinking it over. The Mastiff is a great bike with one serious fault; the seat is hideously uncomfortable! At the MZ Club AGM last Sunday I got talking to Eric Hagon who also has a Mastiff for which he had the seat modified with excellent results. I talked to a couple of specialists about this and have opted for a company down near Bridgewater. The seat is now with them and should be ready by mid-September. No panic as the bike is presently on SORN and needs an MoT anyway. Funnily enough one of the people who responded to the

Mastiff advert also told me to keep it and modify the seat – sent me some pictures of his which I am using as a template for my conversion. There are some kind people out there.

Last Tuesday I led a ride across the army ranges with 4 other friends. This was heavily based on the ride we did in May but that time we were all following Keith Johnstone who is currently nursing a broken ankle so not able to ride. Predictably we (I) did get a bit lost but we managed not to get blown up or arrested, though we did come across a tank at one point. About 75 miles in total – probably 50 off-road and smiles all round.

Today I rebuilt the ETZ125 engine which has been lying around in bits for months. I attempted this awhile back then discovered the crankshaft was missing. Subsequently found it and fortunately all the other bits were present. No particular use for it but leaving it in bits was courting disaster. May try to swap it for a TS150 motor for the TS125 Sport to give it a bit more of a chance.

Monday 6th August 2018

An eventful week. I decided that the MOV Velocette had reached its sell-by date so far as I was concerned and it has now gone to a new home – not too far away. More details on this in the MOV Diary. The ES250 motor has been rebuilt – at least the bottom end has. I could not find a satisfactory piston to use with the Trophy barrel I had been hoarding so ordered one from the chap selling MZ spares in Bristol. This arrived on Saturday and will be fitted shortly.

On Sunday Mike and I did the Somerset Signpost Trial starting at Creech St Michael. Super event and sad that so few people actually take part. The heat made it quite a tiring day and we did get lost a few times but we did find all the checkpoints and the answers to the questions. The final result depends on how well or in my case badly, one does on the road safety quiz. I used the 4spd TS250 and it ran like a sewing machine all day.

For some time I have been considering the merits of modifying the Trophy type cylinder head to take a central spark plug. MZ did this with the ISDT bikes which were basically the same castings. Anyway my friend Terry D kindly agreed to investigate using a TS250 head I had spare. These are identical to the Trophy heads except that they also have the rear mounting lugs. The operation was a success. In fact there was sufficient depth of metal to allow a long reach plug. Today I fitted this to my 4spd TS250 and it works fine. I have used an old plug to block the original hole and this can be brought back into use by simply swapping the plug cap. Probably my imagination, but the engine seems to feel crisper and Charlie Ollis, who I saw on Sunday swears by this mod. Not yet had time to try it on the road. If it proves successful, I will ask Terry to modify the head on the Trophy but that can wait until the rebuilt engine is ready to fit.

My attempts at selling the KLV250 came to nothing so I am keeping it. It has always worried me slightly that the previous owner changed the colour scheme from its original black to green but without telling DVLA. In any case I am not a fan of Kawasaki green so I have now refitted the original panels and sprayed the brush guards satin black. Sadly most of the original transfers for the black panels are missing and so far I have failed to find anything

suitable on the internet. You can get the green decals by the bucket load but black ones do not seem to exist even from Kawasaki dealers. I have made up some temporary ones to brighten things up. While it was in the workshop I also refitted the wheels with road tyres as frankly that is where it is going to spend most of its time. Road tyres are adequate for the limited off road riding I am intending to tackle.



Today I decided that the Enfield Bullet had also reached its sell-by date. No particular reason. I have enjoyed tinkering with it and pottering around, mostly it gets used for shopping trips. Its heavy and slow and doesn't do anything especially well compared to my other bikes. Its not in the same league as the Venom and The MZs are quicker and a lot more fun to ride. I put it on Gumtree this afternoon and already had two offers which I have turned down. I am not desperate to get rid of it so if it does not make the advertised price it will stay.

Sunday 29th July 2018

The extreme temperatures we have 'enjoyed' for the past few weeks seems to have sapped all my energy and I have done very little and even writing up the blogg seems to much effort. Now of course I am struggling to remember what little I did do.

I gave the Venom a spin on 19th riding to the VMCC lunchtime meet at the Odd Down Inn nr Emborough about a 36 mile round trip. Bike died as I was coming back through Chilcompton but it was only because it needed to go onto reserve. There was a garage only 100yds back up the road so I filled the tank. Mostly it ran well with the new carb. Certainly no burbling or

backfires in the exhaust on the overrun. There is still a slight hesitation on very light throttle openings which I will try to correct by adjusting the pilot mixture. However, it starts and ticks over so nicely I am reluctant to risk disturbing it too much. More worrying is a misfire at wider throttle openings when I tried to give it a bit of stick. I fear this may not be a fuel issue as it has done this with the previous carb. I think it might be ignition related but as it has a modern BTH electronic magneto I have no idea where to start looking. I don't encounter the problem at the speeds/throttle openings I normally use to give me 50-55mph cruising so I will probably leave it alone for now. I do have a very good Lucas mag and drive gear I bought for the MOV Velo which I could fit if it gets serious.

The paintwork at the front end of the TS125 is now finished and a new exhaust pipe arrived with my last spares order from Germany. I am having trouble with the tank so its currently off the road – details in the TS125 blogg.

The ES250 Trophy has been trouble free since I tightened the head bolts. Starting is now easy and it has not missed a beat on a number of shortish rides. Longest was to the VMCC club night in Chippenham (about 26 miles return). However, the 6v lighting is a bit dire

I decided to advertise the KLX250 to test the market, I also put it on the drive with a For Sale notice. The latter did get some attention but Gumtree so far has produced no potential buyers. We have recently been discussing some off-road rides on the Imber ranges at club so it won't break my heart if it does not go.

I rode the Enfield on a shopping trip for the first time since the blow out. Somewhat nervously initially but it was fine. I had hoped to take it for a VMCC ride today. However, the hot weather bubble finally burst and it is wet and very windy so the run was cancelled thank goodness. This change in the weather is very welcome to cool things down for the garden, but it does seem ironic. Several of the family (granny, daughter and grandchildren) went down to Swanage yesterday for a week in the caravan. Just hope it dries up and brightens up for them later.

I found a spare master cylinder and calliper for the ETZ250 in the spares box. After some attention it seems fine and is now on the bike. Only intended as a temporary measure as the spares from Germany included new seals for the original brake.

With Mrs F in Swanage I am chief dog warden so this will limit how far I and for how long I can stray away from the house for the next week. I have several jobs planned one of which was to rebuild the ETZ125 engine I stripped a few months ago. The box of parts has been stored in the garage and was brought up to the workshop for cleaning and a checkover. All seem in order until I realised that there was no crankshaft in the boxes of bit. Every other item was present but no crankshaft. That was a week ago and I have searched high and low since then without finding any trace of the darn thing. So that's one job that will not get completed next week. However, I do have all the parts needed to build the ES250 motor so that will keep me well occupied. 4spd motors are not my favourite engine to rebuild.

Monday 16th July 2018

Some you win some you lose. Had a great day out on Sunday at the Cotswold section Weekend Trial and the TS250 ran well. When I got home I decided to have another play with the Trophy and it was once again reluctant to start using the normal technique. However, this time I noticed an odd noise a bit like a fart when kicking it over and this is usually associated with a blowing head gasket. Sure enough, the head nuts were nowhere near as tight as they should have been. Since then the bike has been a lot easier to start so perhaps this has been the major problem all along – I do hope so. Anyway I took it for a test run and it ground to a halt less than ½ mile down the road! Electrics totally dead but after a bit of playing around I discovered the fuse on the earth line had blown so I bypassed it temporarily and we were up and running again. Back home I found the blown fuse was only rated as 5amp so it's a miracle it did not blow a lot earlier. Replaced both with new 15amp fuses. The bike certainly feels much livelier now, I think I have mentioned previously that it has always seemed a bit pedestrian and a blowing head gasket would explain that. I would love to think that the trophy is now sorted but I will need a few more trouble-free runs before I can accept that as a fact.

After lunch I removed the front mudguard from the TS125 and took it to Rainbow Paints in Westbury for them to match the colour. I plan to repaint the mudguard, the headlamp shell and the headlamp shrouds in red as per the original sales brochure. I have been using the caustic soda mix I used to clean the petrol tanks as a paint solvent with great success. The paint on the shrouds softened up to the point where you could just wipe it off with a pan scrubber leaving a perfect finish. The mudguard is now in the tank but I can only get half in at a time. Just need to keep turning it round from time to time. It's a slow process but it is a lot easier than trying to burn it off and a lot cheaper and gentler than paying to have it sand blasted. After all this was supposed to be next winters project!

The battery for the Venom arrived today and is a perfect fit inside the rubber casing. Even the wiring fitted without need for alteration. After I remembered to give it a really good tickle the bike started easily and no evidence of wet-sumping. The lights work fine and the ammeter recorded a good charge so all seems well. I have also fitted the rear carrier last used in Spain 2 years ago and a top box borrowed from the Supa5. Don't really like carriers and top boxes, but when on a touring holiday they are virtually essential. At least the setup looks neat and the box itself is QD for days when I don't need one.

Whilst moving bikes round the garage I discovered that front brake on the ETZ250 was no longer working. There is no hydraulic pressure at all at the master cylinder and some trace of fluid at the calliper. So that's another job on the list. I am tempted to fit the wheel with the Honda TLS brake. It will look a bit more period and its once less thing to worry about. I never have much success with hydraulic brakes. As I said at the start, some you win some you lose.

Saturday 14th July 2018

Well I almost had my third incident but fortunately I seem to have got away with it. I put petrol in the TS125 today for the first time having allowed the Petseal to cure for a week as per instructions. No leaks evident from tank tap pipe or the carb so far and the bike started

first kick following the approved MZ starting technique. I took it for a highly illegal spin down the road and back and it runs really nicely. Not the quickest thing on the planet but it is only a 125. Then I remembered that the toolbox cover was not properly secured! Put my hand down and could feel that the lid was missing so I did another trip up & down the road looking for it without success. Pulled into the drive and still no sign so I somewhat grumpily put the bike on it's stand and found that the cover had trapped itself somehow and it and the key were still present – whew. Not sure now whether to go the whole hog and MoT the TS125 or stick to the plan and mothball it until the winter.

The Enfield rear tyre was still fully inflated this morning so it has been moved from the bike lift ready for duty and its place has been taken by the Trophy. The tank cleaning turned out to be pretty much unnecessary. The caustic soda soak established that there was virtually no petrol residues to be removed and likewise the spirits of salts found only small amount of rust to dissolve. The tank has now been washed out with fresh water, dried and is back on the bike. Everything has been connected up and so far no fuel leaks from tap, pipe or carb. However, it still won't start using the normal drill and eventually I had to resort to the wide open throttle and kick till exhausted technique. Thereafter it started first kick every time, runs smoothly and even ticks over after a fashion. Still baffled by this bike. I will have to organise a 20+ mile run on a hot day to see if I can get it to die on me again – maybe (starting apart) I have fixed the problem but somehow I doubt it.

Friday 13th July 2018

On Thursday I fitted a new HT lead and plug cap to the Trophy as part of a continuing (change one thing at a time) attempt to find or at least fix the problems I have been having with it. Started first kick without choke or even turning the petrol on! Took it for a ride to Neston for coffee with Mike D and it ran fine. However, it would only start by holding the throttle wide open and kicking 7-8 times (maybe more) which is a long standing issue with the bike. Once running it was fine and ran nicely all the way home. It has all the hallmarks of flooding, but the carb does not appear to overflow, the plug is a nice colour and the choke assembly seems to be properly fitted. Anyway, I have stripped and checked the carb thoroughly, even referring to the manual to confirm it had all the right parts and was correctly adjusted. The float did not appear to have absorbed any fuel and it did not bubble when I put it in hot water. So its now back on the bike but cannot test it yet as I decided to give the petrol tank the full cleaning treatment and its still soaking.

On Thursday evening I had a rear wheel blowout on the Enfield, fortunately I managed to stay on board – scary stuff though. As it was only ½ mile or so from home, I left the bike in a convenient layby and walked home for the van. New inner tube now fitted though it was not easy to source one locally. Had to get it from Stevens in Devizes and it's very thick rubber, I suspect intended for motocross bikes. Cause of blowout is unclear. Tyre was correctly inflated only the previous day and there was nothing stuck in the tyre and the tube had no holes or cuts apart from the fact that the valve had pulled out. Whether this was the cause or it was collateral damage I don't know. I was doing about 45 when it happened and it took a while to stop then I had to push it around a fair bit with the tyre flat so who knows?

Anyway that's two bike related incidents this week and it's Friday 13th so I wonder what the third incident will be; nothing too serious I hope.

Tuesday 10th July 2018

My confidence in the Trophy was misplaced and the sad tale of my trip to Ham on Sunday is in the Trophy Blogg.

Yesterday I thought it would be prudent to give the 4spd TS250 a longer run to make sure that the engine repair was sound. Apart from smoking quite heavily for the first couple of miles when I gave it some wellie, it ran fine. I shall probably take it to the Cotswold Weekend Road Trial next Sunday mainly because it's a lot lighter to load than the Enfield. I filled the tank during the strip and the fuel consumption (mostly on the HoE event) worked out at 74mpg. Not brilliant but acceptable and the plug was a good colour.

Today I did an oil change on the T100. I really must give this bike a run – perhaps to Chippenham on Thursday. The Velo also needs a run. As it's too hot to work outside much, I have also cleaned up the parts from the original Trophy engine ready for its rebuild – but first I need to find a source of the spare parts. None of my favourite German sites seem able to supply everything I need so I am casting the net wider.

Wednesday 4th July 2018

I rode the Trophy over to Westbury to visit John May today. It seems very high geared and is reluctant to go over an indicated 45 unless really wound up and given a long run. It runs up to 40+ in third gear but the gap in ratio is quite large so progress slows markedly thereafter. However, we were keeping up with the traffic and I wonder if it's running a bigger gearbox sprocket as this would make the speedo run slower as well as raising the gearing. The gearbox also needs careful use, the lever has a very long travel (like the Bullet) and it's easy to select a false neutral. Paradoxically several times I also managed to overselect and go into a neutral on the other side of the intended gear. Progress is so pedestrian that it is an annoyance but not a serious problem and probably something I will get used to. In other respects, it ran well, at least until I got close to John's house when it started misfiring a bit and stalled just as I arrived. Turned out to be a shortage of petrol. Turning the tap to reserve got things going again and the petrol station was just down the road.

Back home I checked the plug which was a perfect colour and in so doing found the plug cap was just resting on the plug which may have contributed to the occasional misfire. In general the engine seems mechanically quiet on the move and is very smooth. I have now modified the alloy cover over the carb to include a hole adjacent to the mixture screw so that I can make adjustments without the need to remove it.

I am debating whether to ride the bike on our VMCC run tomorrow; perhaps a bit optimistic given the bike has only done about 15 miles since it was put back on the road.

Tuesday 3rd July 2018

Not a lot of riding activity this week as we took the caravan to Windsor on Wednesday for a Dog Show. I came home on Friday night (leaving Mrs F and the caravan at Windsor) to get ready for the White Horse Trial (WHT) on Sunday. As it happened, there was not much last minute frenzy so it did not take long to get the paperwork and other equipment loaded into the van ready for Sunday. This gave me Saturday morning to play with the TS125 Sport – mainly I wanted to get the tank off to get it cleaned inside, de-rusted and sealed as I was concerned about the amount of rust evident. Removing it was not easy as the saddle has to come off, which means the wheel and the side panels have to come off first, Anyway it is now soaking in a Caustic soda solution which will soften any residual petrol mixture and the rust flakes. A can of Spirits of Salts has been ordered which should be here on Thursday. Searched all the local hardware suppliers and could not find anyone who stocked it yet it is readily available from eBay.

I gave the rest of the bike a checkover and made a list of the things I would like to do to it; mainly cosmetic. I did put some fuel in a temporary tank and the engine started easily enough and sounds fine. Bike is now back in the shed ostensibly awaiting its Winter makeover but I would not be surprised to see me get it out earlier.

The WHT went very well with 37 entries, the most for many years. Boy was it hot but with one exception, everyone said they had enjoyed the event. The exception was my son Richard who had ridden down from Shrewsbury on the Saturday to take part, completing the journey successfully this time (his battery failed when he came down in May). Anyway, he managed to find the first two controls then came across a huge tractor blocking the lane he was riding down. He pulled over to the verge tried to put his foot down then found there was nothing there and over he went. The bike was ok and the tractor driver helped get him back on it but he had hurt his knee abandoned the trail and went back to our house. At RUH later that evening he they diagnosed some serious damage to the knee and he is now back in Shrewsbury waiting to see a specialist – surgery seems likely. Rather took the edge of my day but I guess these things happen. The Baghira is still at my house and I need to find somewhere to store it – doubt he will be riding for a while sadly.

Monday 25th June 2018

The HoE trial went well. I clocked 171 miles on the TS250 and visited 24 controls which got me the Gold Award I was aiming for Timewise I was well in had having got back by 4pm with another tow hours in hand so I could probably have fitted in a few more but I was glad to finish and slept well last night. My planning paid off and my route sheets worked really well. I had to refer to the map once because a signpost I had seen on streetwise was no longer visible. The only navigation snag was that I managed to mislay the last sheet of the route card which covered the section from Hay on Wye to the finish. Fortunately, I could remember some of it but it was a lot slower because I had to keep stopping to refer to the maps. The rattling noise worried me all the way round so I took it fairly easy, not that speed was an option on a lot of the route. That apart the bike did not miss a beat and there was still a gallon or more in the tank.

Today I decided to strip the engine to trace the rattle. Thought I had found the problem as soon as I pulled off the barrel. There were score marks above and below the transfer ports and gouges out of the piston where the circlips on both sides had broken up. The circlips were the square sort with earholes for circlip pliers. One ear on each had been eaten. Normally MZs use the wire type and I am not sure now if this was the later style piston for which the ear type was correct or if it was my mistake in using the wrong type. As far as I could determine the broken bits had worked there way upwards and out through the exhaust port and the bottom end seemed fine.

As luck would have it, the original ES250/2 engine was fitted with a TS250 barrel and head and the bore & piston were in reasonable condition. An hour later the engine was back together and I started it up expecting to have solved the problem. Wrong! The rattle was just as bad as before so I retired hurt to ponder on what else it could be. Andrew Long suggested the old trick of a piece of wood as stethoscope which I tried (albeit with a long handled screwdriver; not being able to find a suitable piece of dowling). Eventually I traced the source of the noise to the carburettor slide. The carb is a replica probably from China and did give me some grief a couple of years ago when the pin locating the slide went adrift and jammed the throttle open. However, when this was fixed it has been quite reliable as it's performance on Sunday proved. Nevertheless, I found the slide was very loose in the bore much more so than a very old and worn original BVF I compared it with. The slide from the old BVF was a perfect fit in the new body so it was reassembled that way. Bingo, the rattle has now gone. There are of course plenty of other noises to take its place but they are the type that you get used to with an MZ, mainly clutch thrust bearing and primary drive gears.

In hindsight it was as well that I did not discover the carb to be the culprit first; otherwise I would probably not have stripped the top end and found the damaged piston.

Saturday 23rd June 2018

Rode the TS250 into town to do some shopping then round to Tesco's to fill the tank; mileage 2327. I wore my old open face crash helmet and I could hear a rattling noise coming from the engine. Unable to decide if it's a worn bottom end or a slack piston/small end. It has always rattled a bit and perhaps it seems worse because of the helmet but it does concern me given that its scheduled to do 160+ miles tomorrow. I was tempted to whip off the head and barrel to check it out but if I did and found nothing seriously wrong I would have wasted my time and quite possibly broken something in the process. On balance I decided to leave it alone and take a chance, it was not a problem I noticed when I rode it in the signpost rally. If I ride it gently then hopefully it will survive one more event. I don't think the Enfield is yet proven enough for this trip and none of my other 'on the road' bikes are in the same class so I would forfeit any chance of Western Region points. Regardless of what happens, I will have to give the engine some attention but I have until August before the next Western Region event to get it sorted or establish that the Enfield is proven sufficiently. If it is a major bottom end problem then I have two engines on the shelf which could be used. A fully rebuilt 5spd unit and my experimental 4spd engine with Supa5 crank.

It would be nice to try this out so that may be the one to use and it would be good in some ways to get the bike closer to standard condition.

To keep my mind of the problem I took the ES250 for a spin – see the Trophy project diary then dragged the Venom out of the garage to give it an oil service. What came out was remarkably clean and I cannot remember when I last changed it. If it was before the 2017 Colombres rally (which I am pretty sure it was) then the oil had done around 1200 miles without blackening up much if at all. Bike was reluctant to start initially but it was mostly my starting technique which I have yet to perfect since replacing the carb. When I finally gave it a hearty tickle it sprang into life and quickly settled to a steady tickover. Thereafter it started first kick each time I tried it. I gave it a preliminary clean but frankly it was too hot to want to work on it much more today even in the shade. The Triumph also starts easily now and ticks over reliably as well.

Friday 22nd June 2018

Picked up the TS125 Sport today. Bit cosmetically challenged but seems to be all there and looks a good prospect. Put it away for now as I don't want to start yet another project and there is nothing needs doing immediately. Not sure about the colour of the headlight and fork shrouds, think they should be red.





Thursday 21st June 2018

Today is the longest day and it is amazing how quickly the nights will start drawing in again. I rode the triumph to Poulshot Show last night. A fair number of bikes but many of them were modern. They were far outnumbered by the 4 wheel brigade who turned up in droves with some very tasty machinery. The bike went well on the move but the tickover was still erratic so today I stripped the carb down and found a few issues despite the fact it is brand new. The first clue was the colour of the plugs which were on the weak side of acceptable, light straw in colour whereas I feel a milk chocolate brown is safer. I removed the pilot jet and cleaned the airways though I don't think they were actually blocked. Then I checked the fuel level in the float chamber by connecting a piece of tubing to the pilot jet. This showed the fuel level to be well below optimum.

The float itself is not adjustable and the only way I could see to raise the fuel level was to put a thicker washer under the inlet connector. This connector is screwed into the main carb body and also holds the cut-off needle. Raising it with a thicker washer effectively moves the needle further from the float meaning the fuel level should rise. When I repeated my test with the plastic tubing it had indeed risen; not quite as far as the marker dot on the outer cover but a lot closer. I also found that the O' ring which seals the carb body to the manifold was too big for the groove in the body so cannot have been sealing properly. Fortunately, I had a new spare so the carb was refitted with this. Not now sure which of these three changes did the trick but in combination they worked and the bike now ticks over slowly and reliably. Hopefully job done but it does make you wonder about the quality of the Amal carbs now being supplied.

We had a mid-week wandering to the Daneway at Sapperton so I abandoned working on the T100 for a couple of hours in favour of a ride on the Enfield. It was about 80 miles for the return trip and took me over an hour going as we were bucking a strong head wind and the bike was happiest at about 45. Coming back it returned to its normal gait of 50-55. This is the longest trip I have attempted by far and it performed absolutely fine. The main reason for going (apart from the pleasure of the ride) was to try and persuade a few more people to enter the WHT and in this I was successful as I signed up 3 more entrants with a prospect of a couple more. Did an oil change when I got back. Pretty straightforward but I left the oil filter as there are mixed views about doing this too often. Did have a slight problem with the fibre washer breaking up on the crankshaft feed quill but managed to find a suitable replacement for now

Just got off the phone to John Hill who tells me the TS125 Sport is now loaded in his trailer ready for the trip to Yeovil. I have found a pub not too far from our meeting place for lunch and have invited David Childs to join us as he lives in Yeovil (David was the chap who sold me the Velocette MOV project). I will have to be very strong minded over the TS125 when I get back as top priority has to be getting the TS250 serviced and ready for the HoE trial on Sunday. Just had a newsletter about the event and there are 72 entries – not as many as I thought but a goodly number. Judging by the pictures of other competitors, most people will be riding much bigger bikes than mine though there are 4 intrepid Lambretta TV175 riders.

Tuesday 19th June 2018

Well reading my notes below one thing I have not done is refit the road wheels to the KLX250; not enough time or enthusiasm for the task. I did ride it yesterday to check out the remaining locations for the white Horse Trial. Did about 64 miles and visited 14 checkpoints though only one green lane as I have done all the others and I did not want to get the bike dirty. It's frugality is amazing; 105mpg on the latest fillup. When we got back I did an oil change and it may be my imagination but the engine sounded a bit quieter afterwards. The engine still has a tendency to stall and has become difficult to restart sometimes. I guess its going to need investigating but not sure where to start on a bike with fuel injection and all those electronic gizmos.

Last Thursday Andrew Long arrived out of the blue having been touring all week on his TS250. We had a pleasant natter and when he got back he sent me an email to confirm that the TS125 Sport was now ready for collection. In fact John Hill is coming up to Yeovil on Friday and has offered to bring the bike up on his trailer. That will save me having to drive all the way to Exeter and back. Today I put the TS125 and the ES250 Trophy onto my bike insurance policy, the latter is now taxed, the former will probably need some recommissioning and as its 1983, an MoT.

On Sunday it was the Wessex Vintage society show at Semington just a mile down the road. I planned to take the T100 but it was playing up. Started easily enough but I could not get it to tickover unless the choke was left full on. In the end I rode the Bullet. Mike and Terry also came to the show so we had a good old natter and a wander round some of the exhibits.

Left about 4pm when it started to drizzle. Today I took the T100 for a brief ride to get it warmed up and the tickover was back but not desperately smooth. I found that it needs the pilot air screw only about ½ turn from closed to get any sort of tickover – normally its closer to 1 ½ or even 2 turns out. My suspicion was that the pilot jet was too small but it is correct. Tomorrow it's the Poulshot show so I will give the T100 a longer run to see what happens.

We now have 28 entries for the White Horse Trial, and I am aware of a few more in the pipeline so hopefully we will beat last years total of 32. The final instructions were sent out on Sunday. This has given me a breathing space to work on the Hereford on the Edge (HoE) trial and I have worked out a route to visit 24 checkpoints which will give me a Gold award if I manage to get to them all. Normally for events like this I just use a marked up map, often not needing to refer to it as I have been doing the events so long I can remember in most cases the route. All I really need is a list of the order in which to tackle the controls. However, the HoE event is much longer and in a part of the country which I don't know well. For this event I have prepared an itemised route sheet with mileages. It runs to 5 pages and the total mileage is over 160. I expect that this will be well exceeded on the day due in part to errors in planning and getting lost a few times. Just in case I have also printed 13 A4 pages of maps covering the route but hopefully these will not be needed.

Sunday 9th June 2018

I took the Mastiff down to Llanelli for 3 nights on the sections annual holiday. Rode down via Abergavenny in company with Mike Davis on the 27th and came back on my own on the following Wednesday. Bike went well but despite my modifications to the seat it was very hard on the bottom and I had to stop several times going and coming back. During the rideouts it was fine as we stopped regularly anyway. Did about 500 miles in toto. Traffic and road conditions around Llanelli and the surrounding villages is dire. Never seen so many speed bumps, cameras and speed warning devices, every village seemed to have several of the latter, Once outside the built up area the roads were good and the scenery wonderful. Pity I had to come home early as I missed the ride round the Elan valley, the drovers road and Llynn Brianne.

Then we were off with the caravan for 10 days or so. Firstly to Newbury for a dog show, then to Malvern for another dog show and finally to Slimbridge for the MZ Bristol section camp. I took the KLX250 with me as it is light and easy to load/unload. Got a few short rides around Newbury and Malvern and the MZRC rideout on the Saturday. I have decided to refit the road tyred wheels to the KLX250 as mostly its being used for road work and these tyres are fine for the type of off-road riding I intend to do in future. Having had a taste of the muddy lanes when out with Keith Johnson, I intend to steer clear of those in future as far as possible. Not only do I not enjoy them, but it's a pain to keep the bike clean.

I have just entered the Hereford on the Edge road trial and am working my way through plotting the 32 checkpoints on the ordnance survey map. This is going to be a long hard day as the start is at Ross on Wye and the circuit will be at least 150 miles, possibly more depending on how many checkpoints I visit. The following day we are off to Windsor with the caravan and it could be a tad tiring so not absolutely sure I am going to do it. In the

interim, I have to prepare and issue the final instructions for our own White Horse Trial due on the 1st July which reminds me, I have still to ride some of our own checkpoints.

Friday 25th May 2018

Richard rode down on his Baghira on Saturday. At least he rode as far as Cirencester where it refused to restart after he had refuelled. We discussed the symptoms over the phone and I could not advise anything over and above what he had already tried so I went up in the van and brought him back. He does have AA Recovery but we decided it was better to save that to get him home if we could not fix the bike in my garage. To cut a long story short, the battery was the problem, it had died completely during the journey down. We fitted the battery from the Mastiff and instantly everything worked. I checked the charging with the meter and that was fine. He rode the bike home on Sunday evening with no problems. I ordered a new battery for the Mastiff which arrived on Tuesday and that is back up and running as well. I have decided to ride the Mastiff down to Llanelli for the club holiday rather than use the van. Luggage carrying is an issue; I think I could have used my throw-over bags but as I am only going for 3 nights, I am going to opt use a back pack and see how that works.

Richard came down to take part in the Cotswold Signpost rally on the Sunday. I gave him the choice of the Bullet or the ETZ250. When he realised that the Bullet had a right hand gear lever and an up for down gearchange, he wisely chose the ETZ. We look both bikes up in the van partly to give us a chance to talk about the event (he has not done one of these before) and partly to let him chill out on the way back before riding up to Shrewsbury. A busy weekend for him but he thoroughly enjoyed it. Both the ETZ250 and the TS250 went well. The latter I will put on SORN at the end of May as I prefer riding either the Mastiff or the Bullet. The TS250 is resting as it won't be needed until August for the Somerset Signpost Rally and since it free tax there is no point in putting it on SORN.

Thursday was a wet day, the first for several weeks so it gave me an excuse to work out a route for the Llanelli trip; the rest of the day was spent putting the Velocette MAC engine back together. It was not a definitive rebuild, more a test assembly to make sure I now have all the bits and they fit together correctly. I did have to adjust one of the pushrods and its tappet adjuster but apart from that all was well. Don't know why but the crankcases have been modified to include two extra breathers. One on top of the case behind the rocker oil feed connector and the other behind the magneto housing. This seems overkill and the one behind the magneto will be difficult to connect a pipe to. I may well block this one off and just use the top one. Anyway, the engine is now fully assembled and can be put away until required as can the box of bits associated with the MOV rebuild.

Friday was even wetter but with family visiting I did not get any garage therapy until the evening. The Mastiff got a checkover not much to do apart from the tyres and topping up the chain oiler. Both tyres were well down so I shall have to keep a closer eye on pressures whilst away. I also did a bit of cosmetic work on its nearside pillion footrest hanger which was quite rusty. Its been cleaned, primed and painted and will be ready to fit tomorrow when it has hardened off. I also got the Bullet on the bike lift and spent a mucky hour

getting all the greasy grime and loose rust of the centre stand. This too has been painted and looks a lot tidier.

Friday 18th May 2018

The ES250/2 was picked up on 9th May and has become the focus of attention in the garage despite my original intention for it to be next winters project. I have set up a separate diary which can be found [here](#).

On the Thursday I rode the ETZ250 to Chippenham for the VMCC meeting and without incident and on Sunday 13th May I rode the ETZ250 up to Ham for the MZ club monthly meeting; In total over 100 miles. I treated it very gently as I still have doubts about the oil pump but I am obviously being paranoid as if it was not working properly, it would have seized long since as I am running it with straight petrol in the tank. Indeed, at times it smokes quite a lot so if it is over oiling; I need to check the pump setting. I still cannot come to terms with the power delivery of the ETZ motor. It has practically no power below 3000rpm and the power band does not really kick in until 3500rpm when it comes in with a rush. 3500 rpm is over 50mph and the slightest gradient or head wind at this speed knocks it out of the power band. With the present gearing this means using 4th gear a lot. I need to check the gearbox sprocket and if, as I suspect, it's a standard 19t, I will swap it for an 18t.

The Enfield Bullet has been used quite a lot as my shopping trolley for a while without incident so yesterday I rode it to Kington St Michael for the VMCC lunchtime meet. It was a joy to ride on the country lane route I chose and now that I have more confidence in it, 50mph on the main roads is quite achievable. It would probably go quicker if I wanted it to but somehow both of us feel comfortable at that speed. I finally managed to get a suitable replacement tap with a built-in reserve position (Bullets only have a single tap) and this was fitted to the spare petrol tank which is now on the bike. Though it's black rather than dark green it looks fine and is in much better condition. Though smaller in capacity, I find it more comfortable as the green tank is very wide and pushes your knees outwards. Richard is coming down this weekend to take part in the Cotswold signpost Trial and wants to ride a VMCC eligible bike. I had planned for him to use the ETZ250 but I am a bit tempted to let him loose with the Bullet.

Next weekend is the Sections annual holiday based just outside Llanelli this year. I can only go for a few days (Sunday to Wednesday) and am still pondering on which bike to take and whether to ride down or use the van. Nice to be spoilt for choice.

Tuesday 8th May 2018

The weather was still warm and dry on Monday so in the afternoon I went over to Melksham on the T100 to meet up with Terry and we rode in convoy to Neston to see Mike. Terry was doing his first longish trip on the Venom he has been working on and wanted some company in case of problems. In fact both bikes went well. Mike took the Venom out for a spin and declared it absolutely fine, in fact he reckoned the forks were better than on his Venom. The T100 front fork action has never been good and Terry helped me check it out. The cause was diagnosed as slack head bearings which I tightened up today. A test run

this afternoon confirmed that the forks now work fine without the clonking and juddering under braking.

I have arranged with John Rayment to pick up the ES250/2 tomorrow morning. I don't plan to do any serious repair work on it yet but I will check it over to assess what is missing. There are lot of other bits not shown including a complete new exhaust system and the seat.:



Sunday 6th May 2018

Yesterday morning I spent a fruitless hour trying to undo the bolts that hold the chain guard. One came undone easily, the other flatly refused to move and as its tucked away underneath is virtually impossible to get any meaningful in size of spanner to bear. I gave up in the end. The reason for wanting it off was to rub it down and repaint it as its quite rusty. It will have to stay that way for now as the only way I can see to get it undone is to remove the whole swinging arm assembly.

More productively, as the weather was really pleasant and expected to stay that way right through the bank Holiday weekend, we tackled the gardening backlog which included turning out one of the sheds and the green house, In the case of the latter also fixing the glazing so that it is considerably more weather proof than it has been for some time. A lot of the stuff we removed was jointly agreed as being no longer required and has been binned or will be taken to the recycling centre shortly. We now have a shed with enough space to

store a motorbike. Indeed, one would also fit easily into the greenhouse but it would have to be well wrapped as its not totally weatherproof. I am now contemplating picking up the ES250/2 sooner rather than later. I have also been offered another MZ which is very tempting as it's a model I have never previously owned. We are still in the preliminary discussion stage – more info later.

Today was the VMCC Relay Rally, an event run every other year. You plot your own route to visit as many controls as you feel comfortable with. The controls being set up and manned by volunteers from local sections. Mike, Terry and I rode down to the Old sarum as our first control, then to Shillingstone in Dorset, to Henstridge and finally to Burcott just outside Wells. We had intended to finish at our own section control at Stanton St Quintin but spent too much time drinking tea and talking at the various stops along the route We found we had less than an hour to ride the 40 miles from Burcott and with Bank holiday traffic we would never make it. So we decided to have another cuppa and finally left for home about 4;30pm Even so we did about 130 miles door to door. I rode the Mastiff and tried using a piece of Vet Bed as a seat cover which proved very successful. Vet bed is a special material a bit like a sheepskin to look at and we have loads of the stuff from the days when we bred dogs. All in all a very good day.

Friday 4th may 2018

On Wednesday I rode the Enfield down to Batheaston to visit John Rayment. It went quite well and pulled really strongly up Sally in the Woods on the way home. I don't know if its because I have a bit more confidence in the bike to use the what performance is available, or whether the new silencer does make a difference. I did check the spark plug before the trip which was showing a rich mixture and when I got home its was a nice shade of brown so no need to rejet as far as I can see. The visit to John was to have a look at his scooters; two LMLs made in India under a Piaggio licence and looking very like the original Vespas. The other reason was to look at the ES250 Trophy which he bought about 17 years as a project which he has never got around to. We have reached an agreement and it will be moving into my garage once I have created some space for it. This will be next winter's project all being well.



On Thursday I rode the KLX250 on our VMCC Army Ranges run. Clocked about 110 miles in total over half of which was off-road. Great fun enjoyed by 8 of us altogether. The intrepid group is shown below when we stopped for lunch. Bike went well and still had not reached reserve by the time I got home but it must be close as the tank is only 7.7litres.



Today I went back to rainbow Paints in Westbury on the Enfield to show them how the paint they supplied had turned out. They agreed something was wrong and kindly made me up a new batch as a Spray can which is very much better. Not sure what I am going to do with the original ½ litre which is apparently Nato Green according to the label. Perhaps it's a sign I should do an army project? On the way home I popped in to see John May and look at progress on his ETZ250 trail bike; looks really good. He has also fitted the trials chair from his BMW outfit to a Hinckley Triumph he bought a while back and this also is looking impressive.

During the ride the carb on the Enfield started flooding so I spent most of the trip turning the petrol tap on and off to minimise fuel loss. I guess it must have been some grit under the shut-off needle as by the time I got home its had stopped leaking.. I had previously noticed a dirty patch on what was mainly a clean crankcase top and I suspect that the carb has done this before. I have checked it a couple of times since and it is still leak free but something I will need to keep an eye on.

This afternoon I removed the front wheel from the Enfield to investigate the off-centre wheel. I had hoped that I could sort this my playing around with spacers but the design does not allow much scope for this. I did find one separate problem in that a spacer behind the brake plate was too thin causing the plate to bind to the hub if the locknut was properly tightened. Presumably that's why it was loose; anyway, a new spacer has addressed this. The only way I can see to correct the spacing is to adjust the spokes to shift the rim over the

required 7mm. This does of course assume that the nipples are free enough to be slackened and tightened.

Tuesday 1st May 2018

Bit of mixed fortunes over the last couple of days. I found the canvas bags and have attached them to the Enfield carrier to give me some carrying capacity. I did toy with the idea of putting one of my spare tope boxes on the carrier but I fancy this would make mounting and dismounting a difficult so the bags will have to suffice. I rode the Bullet to Westbury to get some paint, despite a great deal of care with the assistant in selecting the best match using their paint chips, the results when I tried it later were disappointing. The new paint is far lighter then the old. I cannot believe we both made such a gross mistake and I plan to take it back to have it checked – I think they may have made up the wrong formulae – at least I hope so. I had planned to put in some fuel but forgot and the bike spluttered to a halt part way back. I tried putting it on reserve without success so in the end had to resort to the old trick of tipping the bike to one side to get petrol from the other side of the tank. This worked fine and I was able to get to the garage.



The bike performed well with no nasty surprises. It's no racer though and we plodded along at a sedate 45mph. It will probably go rather quicker but not until we are better acquainted. Back home I tried blowing through the fuel lines with the air line to clear the reserve without success in the process I also managed to break a piece off the pipe connector. Its

bodged back on for now but a new tap is definitely on the cards. One thing I did notice was an exhaust leak where the pipe joins the silencer. The silencer internal orifice is considerably bigger than the external diameter of the pipe and needs a better adapter to make it seal properly. Out of interest I tried an old Burgess silencer and this was a perfect fit on the pipe so I have made up a bracket to attach this for now. Although its much shorter in length and of the straight through design its very little noisier than the very long Indian silencer. I plan to try it out tomorrow.

The results of the Moonraker Trial arrived this afternoon and I have won the Post Classic Class by a whisker. I had the same points as John Webb but his bike is a newer than mine so I won on the tie-break. Still no sign of the Cheddar Trial results – as Sue the organiser is in Australia these could be a long time coming.

Look on the web site www.starfield181.co.uk for [Part 8](#) and earlier editions of this Blogg