

North Birmingham News

NEWSLETTER

Severn Valley Run



Despite a changeable forecast, we were blessed with a fine, if not humid day. Eighteen riders signed on at Tony's Diner on the Bridgnorth- Kidderminster road. Our machines ranging from Peter Ashen's elegant 1925 Sunbeam through 1950's and 60's Triumphs, BSA's, AJS's to 12 cylinders of Honda !!! Not really, I made that bit up, they were, of course, the three 750-4 Honda's of Messrs. Little, Round and McDonald.

The order of the Whiskered Plug (smoky smelly two strokes to you guys) was represented by my Greeves and Moss Trupp on his 1929 yowling Scott. The BSA of Paul Harris "sulked" for five minute but started with a roar after some "sweet talking" by Paul down the carburetor bell mouth.

So off we set, Peter Ashen leading the way, through Alverley and Shatterford for an ice cream stop in Bewdley High street. Having watched a motorcycle escorted Winston Churchill pass by (1940's weekend) we motored on down the Severn valley to Dunley, Heighington, over Hurtle Hill to Bliss Gate and Rock before turning right onto the Bromyard road and over British Camp with its spectacular views of the Teme valley. Then northwards through Stockton on Teme, Menithwood, Clows Top with its magnificent views of the Clee Hills before striking the Cleobury Mortimer "B" road to take us back to Bridgnorth via Kinlet for the finish and lunch at Tony's Diner.

No breakdowns or fuel shortages occurred. (I sincerely hope not there were six, yes six open petrol stations en-route. However I feel it necessary to recorded some Health and Safety issues. Health, well you should have seen the look on Maurice Trupp's face as he opened his sandwich box to reveal his ham cobs had turned to dust !!! Sorry Maurice high revving Scott's and Tupperware don't mix. (Picture on page 2). The safety issues of our hobby were clearly demonstrated by that well-known acrobatic act of Ashen and Bull who succeeded in "pulling a wheelie" using one of the cafes picnic tables while eating their lunch. Luckily the Air Ambulance was not required but Peter suffered some indigestion. Talking of the Air Ambulance, we raised £21 for this year's nominated charity.

Gentlemen, I sincerely hope you enjoyed the route and had as much fun as I did. Thank you for your company and I look forward to seeing you next year.

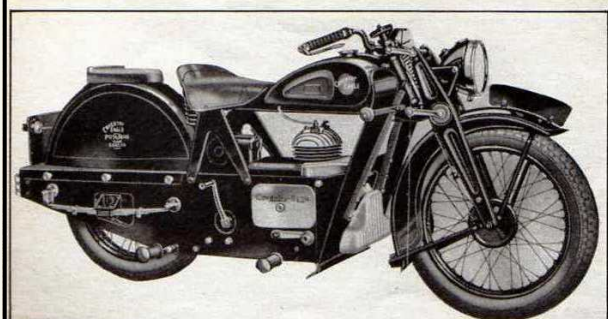
Bill Danks





Fly like an Eagle

Part 2

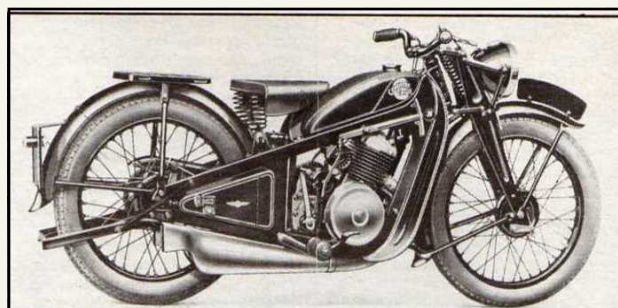


Two views of Coventry-Eagle's unorthodox Pullman. The factory photo shows what the designer had in mind, while the other records the ravages of time and use on the 250cc Villiers-powered two-seater.



'A Handsome Sporting Bus' is how *Motorcycling* described the Flying Eight — and they were right.

The 8HP was the flagship, and it led a comprehensive fleet. As reported in May 1923 the road tester found the machine to be tractable, comfortable and handleable in town, whilst on the open road acceleration was very brisk with the merest whiff of throttle, also the machine was reasonably quiet with a good rear brake and you get the feeling he rather liked it. There was however a definite Achilles heel on the machine, the front brake was a miniscule internal expanding brake and this was improved by fitting an 8" Enfield internal expanding brakes were fitted front and rear for the 1926 season. During the following years, the machines underwent



Silent Superb was a name first applied in 1933. This 1936 model has a 250cc Villiers engine, and triple silencers. It was one of seven variants, all of which featured the same frame and forks.

gradual improvement, and being given names such as The "Wonder Junior" and the "Silent Superb". The latter name was to last a long time, and by 1938 there were no less than six types of Silent Superb, powered by two stroke engines varying in size from 148cc to 250cc and in different states of tune and trim, this was in fact the last year of serious production for the pressed steel frame models. The pressed steel forks, however, survived to be fitted to the "Cadet" which had its chassis made from Reynolds 531 tubing. A model range of machines was announced for 1940, but with the war, Coventry Eagle did not get around to making any more motorcycles. It has survived one war, but like New Imperial, Rudge and OK-Supreme, it could not survive a second.



The Trent Valley Run

The weather leading up to this year's Trent Valley Run had been decidedly mixed but although there was quite a bit of cloud around twelve bikes (two vintage, four 1950s, four 1960s and two 1970s) and riders plus two passengers assembled in the dry at the Bowling Green, Lichfield and were rewarded with a pleasant days riding and no rain. We were not the only ones to be relieved that the weather held fair as in Lichfield that weekend there was a large vehicle rally in Beacon Park, The Lichfield Mystery Plays in the Market Place and elsewhere and the re-opening of Erasmus Darwin House. [*Erasmus was the grandfather of Charles, invented, amongst other things, Ackermann steering and pioneered much of the work later published by Charles. His house is well worth a visit.*] On the run we also encountered a half marathon, two cycle races, two gymkhanas and two villages holding scarecrow competitions. This year's route first followed familiar roads through Kings Bromley, then across the River Trent on the outskirts of Yoxall and on to Hoar's Cross and Newborough where there was a scarecrow competition and an enormous puddle. Clearly there had just been a downpour which we were pleased to have missed ! Then it was on to Hanbury, with magnificent views from the top of the hill, and down to the coffee stop at the Boar's Head. On then across the River Dove and past Sudbury Hall to follow country lanes to Marston Montgomery where we then turned east to Longford before heading south back into the Trent Valley at Willington. We finished the morning route (47 miles) by following the river through Repton (ancient capital of West Mercia) to the John Thompson on the river bank at Ingleby. The weather had steadily improved so we were able to enjoy lunch outside in the sunshine.

The afternoon route took us through Ticknall which was in full carnival mood for their Scarecrow Competition which included a scarecrow on a motorcycle, a scarecrow in an aeroplane, a scarecrow Rapunzel trailing her hair from an upstairs widow and a scarecrow policeman and policelady with their (genuine) police car displaying a notice asking all to drive scarefully ! After Ticknall we skirted Staunton Harold Reservoir and passed through Packington, Appleby Magna, Clifton Campville and Harlaston before turning down a road signed Whitmore Haye Only. In fact the road does continue after Whitmore Haye but only as a narrow forgotten backwater before crossing the Lichfield - Burton railway line at a primitive level crossing. During the week the crossing keeper must be summoned by a blast on the horn but on Sundays the track is closed to trains and the gates locked open to the road; so it was straight across and on to Fradley Junction to sit by the canal with tea and (enormous) ice creams. Only four of us (three bikes) made it to end (35 miles), others having peeled off to make their own ways home; but I have heard only good reports so I hope everyone enjoyed the run.

Brian



FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS FOR 2009

	CLUB NIGHTS
AUGUST 26TH	Arrive on Your Bike Night
SEPTEMBER 30TH	James Hewing VMCC CEO
OCTOBER 28TH	An Evening with Bill
NOVEMBER 25TH	Bring and Buy evening
DECEMBER	No Meeting

DATE	RUN	ORGANISER	Tel No
AUGUST 2ND	Breakfast Run	Rob Pell	0121-624-7674
AUGUST 16TH	Anniversary / Concours	Peter Ashen	01562-882854
SEPTEMBER 6TH	Flight of Fantasy Run	Trevor Bull	01905-778917
SEPTEMBER 20TH	Roger's Run	Roger Greening	01562-730464
OCTOBER 4TH	Levis Cup Road Trial	Paul Harris	01902-842732
OCTOBER 11TH	Autumn Run	Andy Briggs	0121-544-5938
NOVEMBER 1ST	Winter Wander	Josie Stanley	01902-607293

