

July 2009

North Birmingham News

NEWSLETTER

Run to the Engine Sheds



Roger's Wrinkly Run 3/6/2009

The day was pleasant if a bit cooler than the welsh week-end.

10 riders signed on at the little chef Hagley and we had a 30mile run through the lanes and over the sheep walks to Severn Valley Railway Highley.

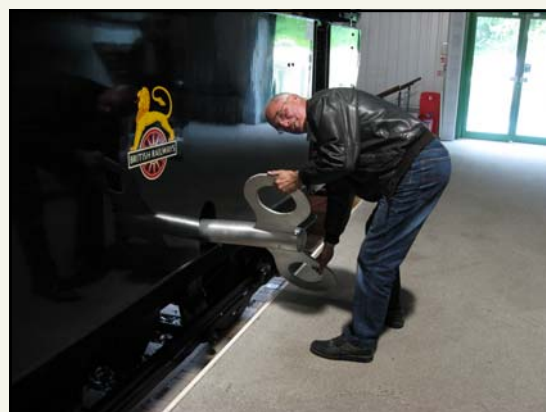
This is where the new Engine House is situated, various refreshments were consumed then we spent a pleasant hour or two looking at the locomotives and other exhibits and I think everyone relived their lost youth.

They have the original mail coach that was raided in the great train robbery with a good audio/visual display.

Bill Danks was persuaded to wind up a locomotive with a giant key (Boys and Toys)

We all then made our own way home with 3 of us calling at the Lock public house for some light refreshment and watch the barges going through the lock

Roger





Fly like an Eagle

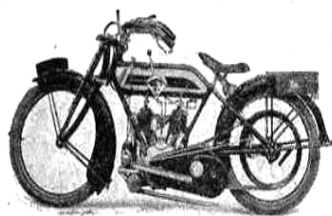
Part 1

As early as 1899, the Coventry Eagle Cycle Company was offering a 2 3/4hp tricycle, with forecarriage.

In December 1914 when national consciousness might have been supposed to be focussed on matters other than motorcycling, "Motorcycling" magazine reported that "The Coventry - Eagle Cycle Company, of Coventry, evidently intend to capture a considerable portion of the motorcycle trade, if you can judge by the fine range of models they are preparing for the season of 1915".

Coventry Eagle.

5-6 h.p. Abingdon, 2-cyl. (50³), 67 x 95 mm., 670 c.c., s.s.
 Amiac or Senspray carburettor.
 Sturmey-Archer 3-speed countershaft gear.
 Chain and belt, 11in.
 Height 29in.
 Dunlop tyres, 26 x 2 1/2in.
 Drip feed.
 Petrol, 2 galls.
 Weight, 175lb.
 Other models.—2 1/2 h.p. Villiers, 1-cyl., 2-stroke, 269 c.c.; 2 1/2 h.p. J.A.P., 1-cyl., 292 c.c.; 3 1/2 h.p. Abingdon, 1-cyl., 499 c.c.
 COVENTRY EAGLE CYCLE AND MOTOR CO.,
 Foleshill Road, Coventry.



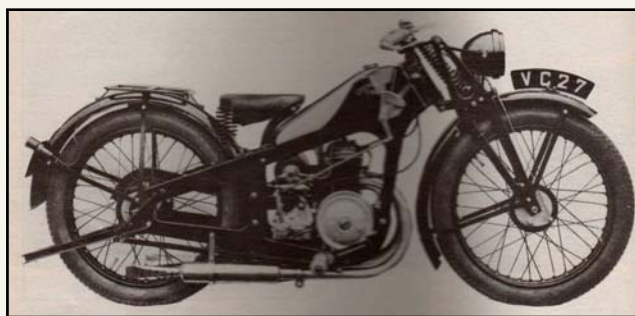
Advert from 1916

The five machines listed were a 2HP two stroke Villiers, above average in the way of finish, the oak footboards were covered with cork lino. A similar model but with a Jardine two speed countershaft gearbox followed, and then came a 5-6HP twin with reinforced frame and a three speed countershaft gearbox. The engine was an Abingdon, with side by side valves and a bore and stroke of 67 x 95mm. This was available with or without a coachbuilt sidecar. The two final models were both 3 1/2HP solos, with engines from Abingdon again, the difference being in the choice of a Sturmey Archer three speed hub for the more deluxe version. The magazine went on to write "All these machines are thoroughly well made and deserve the attention of prospective purchasers"

Despite the war, a cut back range was available and production was maintained and by 1920 new models were coming on stream. The new model first to appear after the war was a 5-6HP JAP twin, with chain and belt drive through a Sturmey Archer three speed countershaft gearbox. There was no front brake fitted, but an excellent brake band was fitted to the rear wheel. Brampton Biflex forks kept the front end bouncing and a novel system of suspension was adopted at the rear, demonstrating the company's willingness to experiment with rider comfort and convenience. Unfortunately the press did not share the factory's view and wrote

"Carried on the rear portion of the frame is a pair of substantial bell cranks mounted on ball bearings. The levers carrying the rear wheel normally form extensions to the chain stays, while the remaining levers of the cranks hang downwards in an approximate vertical position". "These vertical levers are attached to an enclosed tension spring anchored at the front to the foremost part of the chain stays, and the two buffer springs are interposed - one inside the spring core and one outside. One of these buffers is always in compression, and helps to damp put any violent shocks" Was it a success? Apparently not, for this system was not mentioned in any further articles on the machines so it must have been relegated to the list of historic failures.

This experimentation went on for for the next few years until the breakthrough of a big sportster. In 1923 the model had evolved into the 8HP super sports model, featuring a 998cc JAP engine with the classic dimensions of 85x85mm. This was fitted with



Introduced in 1927 the pressed steel frame broke new ground for Coventry Eagle. The bike shown is a 1932 Utility model fitted with a 172cc Villiers engine and three speed gearbox.

aluminium pistons, roller bog ends, ball race mains, floating gudgeon pins, extra large valves, valve stem lubricators, isolated ports, fir cone aluminium valve caps and lightened reciprocating parts. There can be no doubt that this was a very serious motorcycle. It was not however, produced to the exclusion of other models aimed at other markets. In the same year bikes were made from a 1 3/4HP ultra lightweight (the 145cc engine was claimed as Coventry Eagle's own), through several 2 1/4 or 2 3/4 models with a choice of engines, gearboxes and final drive to a general utility 3Hp and a 4 1/2HP family combination.

The Welsh Weekend

The (HOT) Welsh Weekend 2009

Friday morning dawned and it was misty when I got the 2 Velocette's out of the garage but the forecast was for a hot dry weekend.

We set off for Ludlow (Roger Poles and Me) going over clee hill you could not see much due to the mist, we arrived at the square in Ludlow to find Paul Harris, Brian & Pat Empsall already there, We were soon joined by Moss Withers and Ian Harris, Josie and John Aston having elected to meet us at the b&b later.

We left Ludlow by the back roads towards Knighton etc, we then climbed up and over what I think is called Brierley Hill and past the observatory and down into Knighton, where it was decided not to stop for coffee.

We then went through the lanes in the direction of Newtown passing a large wind farm on the way (they make my wind turbines look very small) and arriving at LLanidloes for the lunch stop, where one of our group ordered the heart attack on a plate mixed grill (no names but he rides a Moto Guzzi V50)

The route then took us past Clywedog reservoir and on through the Dovey Forest and down to the Tal-y-llyn lake for a ice cream stop (but was none so I had a beer) We all seemed to go different ways from there, Roger and myself went down to Towyn for a honey ice cream.

When we arrived at the B&B John & Josie were already there and John was tuning his Honda 90 !! We found that we were at the alternate B&B ½ mile!!!! down the road.

We were told to be back for dinner at 7pm sharp. Well Roger and I set off to walk back later only to find the 1/2mile was 1.4 miles and it was B hot so when we got back the first beer did not even touch the sides. The evening meal was excellent but someone could not eat all his (mixed grill?) Several bottles of wine later we made our way back to our luxury b&b.

After a good breakfast we met up with the others for a ride up the Happy Valley and on past the Nant-y-moch reservoir via some spectacular roads and clear views back to the sea, At Devils Bridge we stopped for tea and cake (compulsory) Then we made our way to Rhayader via the Elan Valley reservoir where lunch was taken. The route then took us around the back of Clywedog reservoir and back to Machynlleth and on to Aberdovey for ice cream.

Later Roger and I allowed more time for the marathon walk back to the main b&b for the excellent B,B,Q which was so expertly cooked by Paul Harris (we just made sure his glass was always full) After even more wine it was time for Roger and myself to say goodbye to the rest of the party as we were not going on the Sunday run as I wanted to get back to a Velocette B,B,Q.

We would just like to say thanks to Ian and Josie for a great weekend

The 2 Roger,s



FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS FOR 2009

| | CLUB NIGHTS |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| JULY 29TH | Fish and Chip Supper |
| 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 |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| JUNE 24TH | Ride A Bike Night | Paul Harris | 01902-842732 |
| JUNE 28TH | Severn Valley Run | Bill Danks | 01562-67103 |
| JULY 5TH | Trent Valley Run | Brian Empsall | 01543-264968 |
| JULY 19TH | Long Mynd Run | Colin Lloyd | 01384-371835 |
| JULY 22ND | Wrinkly Run | Ian Harris | 01952-299118 |
| 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 |

