

## Ian Harris's Mid-Week Runs 2019

### May 22<sup>nd</sup> – From Ludlow to Painscastle

We were a small but select group who met in the square in Ludlow. The 11am start at Ludlow was in effect the coffee stop as we had each had a decent ride to arrive there; however after liquid refreshment, we set off. I believed that I was the back marker but after 8 miles it was realised that we were two missing, so back I went, and almost back in Ludlow came across John Shaw and Martyn Round who had stopped to sort a problem with John's bike so I turned round to join them.



Far Left: Paul Harris and his Harris Matchless.

Left: John Shaw's MAF Velocette

The problem was clearly not solved so the 3 of us now stopped again where John gave the magneto a thorough clean which did the trick, so we pressed on through Presteigne, past Kington and on to Newchurch.

At this point it was realised that we wouldn't make lunch in time. This was very disappointing as one of the main reasons for doing this

was for us to ride the planned green lane between Bryngwyn and Rhulen, but also an interesting 20 miles or so to the lunch stop.

A collective decision was made to go straight to Painscastle for lunch and await the arrival of the others, which wasn't long.

Now, I hadn't been over the route and checked out the green lane but was assured by a lady at a nearby equestrian centre that we would be fine to ride it, but those that did found it challenging. When Dave Spencer and Ron Higgins arrived at the start of the green lane they were unsure whether they were on the right track or not, but just then a small party of motorcyclists on proper modern off road bikes, KTMs and such like, descended from the hill. Dave enquired whether this was indeed a green lane, did it come out onto tarmac, and what was it like? The lead rider sucked his teeth, looked Dave, Ron and their bikes up and down and frowned. Pointing at the first few hundred yards of lane he told them this was the worst bit and if they could manage that the rest would be OK. This first section was a steep ascent straight up a hill side and there was a grass bank going up at each side and the lane had been completely covered with fist size loose rocks all the way up the hill. Dave reckons it was not unlike the Pipeline Section in the Scottish Six Days Trial. Clearly it would be unwise to try going up there on two 1950's road going BSAs. So they did.



The lane went on for what seemed like several miles, though Ian reckons it was only about two. Mostly the going was quite good, though there were a few gates to open and close, some on hills where getting on and off and parking a bike was 'challenging'. The expedition took longer than necessary due to Dave wanting to stop and take photographs along the way.



Near the end of the lane, when they were about to set off again after the final gate, a bike could be heard approaching. This turned out to be Paul Harris on the Harris Matchless, alone, so he had managed the other gates on his own. As far as we know, these were the only three to have completed the green lane section, and it had been well worth the effort.



The original planned lunch stop was to be at Aberedw but is now closed so it was changed to The Roast Ox at Painscastle which we had visited on our previous run to Hay on Wye. The lunch was very pleasant and efficiently provided as previously.



Above: John Shaw and Martyn Round enjoying the view after lunch.

Afterwards it was a 5 mile drop to Hay to fill up with petrol. We didn't go into Hay but then made our way back to Ludlow via Woodseaves, Lyonshall and Shobdon. The regrouping at Ludlow didn't seem to happen so I assume all got home safely, I certainly enjoyed the day in spite of the early disappointment.

### **September 11<sup>th</sup> – From Tony's Diner into the Shropshire Hills**

This run was originally intended to end up at Lake Vrnwy, but considering all things it was decided to have a rethink. There wasn't a lot of time so I thought it best to keep the first 35 miles of the original route to the coffee stop at the Halfway Diner on the Shrewsbury to Welshpool road which involved a fair bit of the main Shrewsbury road from Bridgnorth.



After the coffee break (left) the route became a game of two halves as they say in football circles. When we turned towards Westbury and Pontesbury, the Stiperstones together with the Devil's Chair came into view in the distance and which were about to pass as the

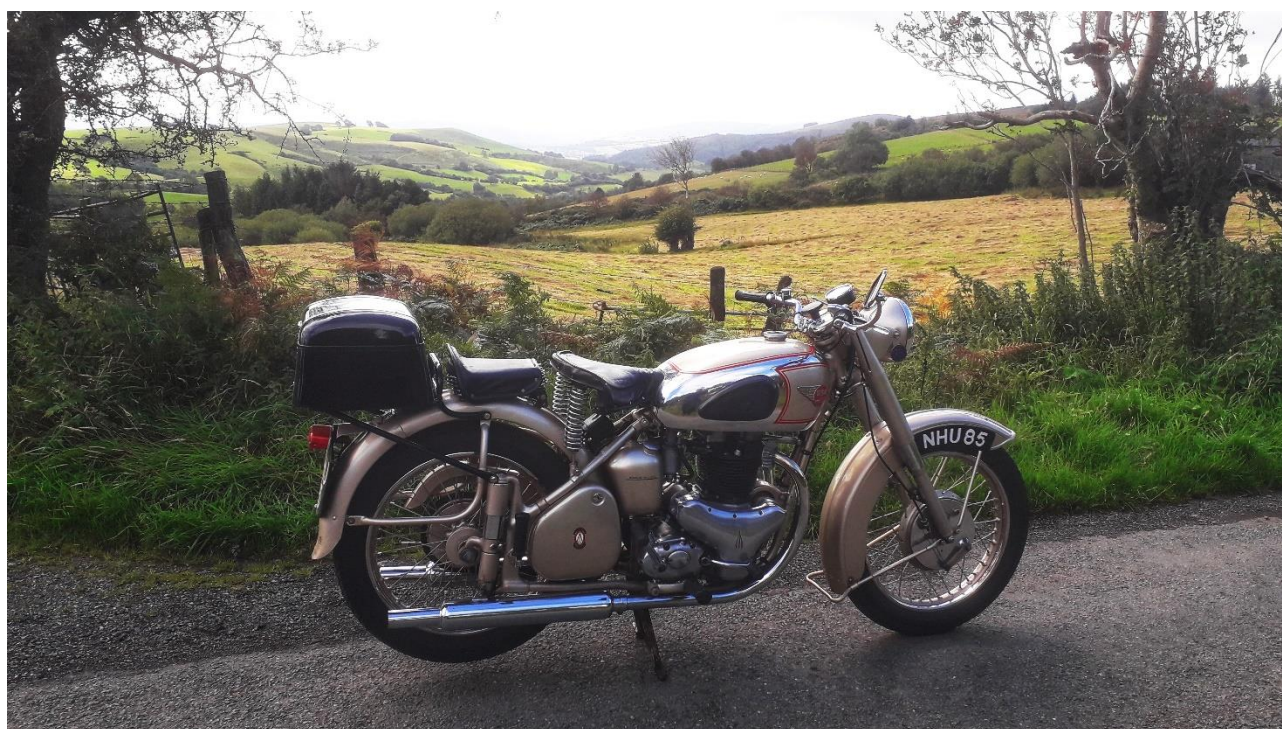


roads became more rustic. In this context it means grass, and gravel but not mud on this occasion. The road climbing up towards Stiperstones was the start of a very scenic 10 mile loop ending in a drop down into the Onny valley whilst passing potential lunch stops at the Inn on the Green and the Bridges Inn before going over the end of the Long Mynd and on to the Royal Oak at Cardington.

It's been some time since we patronised them after a disagreement but everything was fine this time. It was only a short hop back from here and I was only thankful that the revised route worked out as well as it did and provided for all tastes.

**Ian Harris.**

Below: Dave Spencer's 1950 BSA Golden Flash near The Stiperstones, the view looking south towards Bishops Castle



Below: Peter Gray, Triumph, stopped to admire the view towards The Wrekin.

