



# BMCT NEWS

Newsletter of The British Motorcycle Charitable Trust

Summer 2011

## COVENTRY TO BRIGHTON RUN 2011

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The Lord Mayor of Coventry flags Jim Martin away on his 1927 BSA L27, watched by BMCT Chairman Peter Wellings and the Lady Mayoress

This year's VMCC Coventry to Brighton Run was the 50th since the event's inception in 1962, when it was organised by the Midland Section. Now under the banner of the Warwickshire Section, the event is held every April and entrants ride from the start at Coventry Transport Museum via a pleasant route to the finish line at Brighton, where awards are given for successful rides in various categories. Each year there are a number of contestants from the Sussex and Surrey areas who enter the event and are effectively riding home, whereas those more local to the start have to ride home the following day after an overnight stay in one of the Brighton area's numerous hotels. We understand from organisers Ian and Kathy Alexander that this format may be in jeopardy for next year's event, however, due to many of the hotels refusing to accept bookings for the Saturday night alone. So if any members have contacts in the hotel trade in the Brighton area who could help, please let us know.

More than eighty entries were due to leave Coventry bright and early on the morning of 16th April, after taking refreshment provided by the BMCT. First away was the Henderson of Steve Marks, carrying a letter of greeting from the Lord Mayor of Coventry to his opposite number in Brighton. Amongst the departing motorcycles and combos the three-wheeler brigade were represented by a couple of Morgans and a 1932 BSA TW Sports Special. One of the most eye-catching machines was the 1936 Calthorpe Ivory Major (below) of Geoff Booth, which has been rebuilt from a written-off wreck following an argument with a lorry in the nineteen forties. 'Percy', as the bike is known, took the Post Vintage trophy, and also The Riders' Cup. Jim Martin's 1927 BSA took Best Veteran after a bit of a scare when it was reluctant to fire up at the start of the event. Hopefully all will be back in 2012 to celebrate the event's 50th year and 51st Run if the problems with hotels can be resolved.



The Lord Mayor with the letter carried to Brighton on the 1920 Henderson (inset). Not everyone got away without last minute adjustments, this Vincent rider (right) had the spanners out.



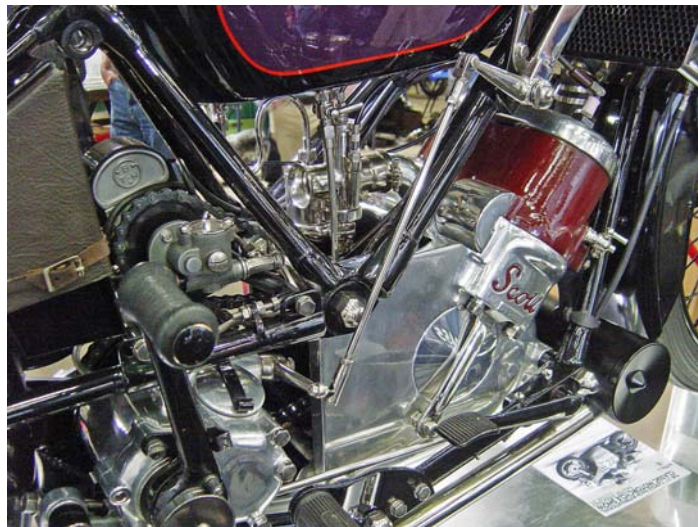
# STAFFORD SHOW

A BMCT member has taken a major award at this year's prestigious Carole Nash Classic MotorCycle Show at Stafford. Richard Duffin's stunning 1927 Scott Flying Squirrel took the prize for Best Vintage Machine, and Best in Show went to a 1967 BSA Hornet.

The award for Best Trials Machine went to Sammy Miller for his wonderful restoration of Gordon Jackson's works AJS on which he famously lost only one mark in the 1961 Scottish Six Days Trial



(Above and below) Two views of Richard Duffin's prizewinning restoration.



This 1959 Matchless G9 Café Racer won Best Classic Special



1927 AJS K7, second in the Vintage class



Outside in the Autojumble this tidy BSA B33 was looking for a new home at £4,250



No awards, but this nice update of a Triumph T160 showed what could have been with more development.



The BSA Hornet voted Best in Show at Stafford. Complete with compulsory oil leak!



A deserving winner of the award for Outstanding Service to the Classic Motorcycle Movement was Ken Sprayson, seen receiving his award from former Yamaha works rider Steve Baker and BMCT member Ivan Rhodes, who was the winner of the award in 2010.

## BONHAMS AUCTION REPORT

Bonhams' annual sale of Collectors' Motorcycles and Related Memorabilia at The Classic MotorCycle Show, Stafford on Easter Sunday, 24th April once more demonstrated the strength of the motorcycle market with a sales total of £2 million and 93% of Lots sold (85% by value). Top item in the sale was Lot 339, the 1934 Brough Superior SS100 (*below*). Restored by marque specialist Dave Clark in 2004, the Brough



changed hands for an on-estimate £131,300.

Britain's most successful 'over the counter' racing motorcycle of all time, the Manx Norton is always in demand and the restored 1961 500cc version sold to a bidder in California for an above-estimate £29,900, reflecting its rarity as a 'matching-numbers' example. Also British but much less well known, the 1965



DMW Typhoon 500cc twin-cylinder prototype (*above*) fetched £19,550 against an estimate of £8,000 – 12,000.

Ben Walker, Head of Bonhams Collectors' Motorcycle Department,

commented: 'We were extremely happy with the results achieved. The vendors of some of the more expensive machines had been offered substantially less in advance of the sale than the actual prices achieved, which amply demonstrates the merits of offering collectible motorcycles to a worldwide audience at a Bonhams auction.'

As usual the sale attracted a worldwide audience, with bidders representing almost every European Union country plus the USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Hong Kong, South Africa, Switzerland, Norway, Mexico and India. This sale was also notable as the first at Stafford to include live bidding via the Internet.

Vincent's are always in demand and this sale provided plentiful opportunities for devotees of the Stevenage marque to expand their collections, there being no fewer than eleven consigned. As expected, top performer was the 1955 Series D Victor prototype, the only one of its kind ever made, which sold for a premium-inclusive £107,100, more than double its top estimate of £50,000. Offered from the same private collection, the 1949 Black Shadow Series C fetched £68,600 while the totally dismantled 1951 Comet 'project' made £9,200.

Other 'projects' and 'barn finds' turned in some of the sale's most notable results, confirming the continuing healthy demand for original, unrestored machines, whatever their condition. Purchased by its late owner in 1960, the totally original 1950 Ariel Model 4G 'Square Four' sold for £5,520 while the dismantled 1928 Norton Model 18 'flat tanker' was knocked down for £16,100 against a top estimate of £4,000.

As usual, British roadsters made up the bulk of the sale, particularly noteworthy results in this category being turned in by the 1977 Norton Commando MkIII – the last of its kind made – which sold for £18,975 while its showroom rival, the unregistered 1975 Triumph T160 Trident with only 7 'push' miles recorded, made £13,800.

Within the sale's memorabilia section, the Ken Jones Photographic Collection was the undisputed highlight. Comprising thousands of prints and negatives taken at Brands Hatch and other British circuits during the 1940s, '50s and '60s, this unique historic archive sailed way past its £8,000 top estimate, selling to a prominent private collector in Wales for £22,800.

Any memorabilia associated with Britain's most successful motorcycle racer of all time – Mike Hailwood – is always keenly sought after and the seven such Lots on offer proved no exception, the top performer being Mike's silver replica trophy, awarded for his 1st place in the 1967 Isle of Man Junior TT, which sold for £8,400.

Prior to Mike Hailwood, Stanley Woods had been the most successful rider at the Isle of Man TT, and his collection of memorabilia attracted keen interest. Although not quite the most valuable item, the letter from Stanley's mother – saying she would give him the motorcycle if he promised he would 'never take intoxicating drink' – was by far the most poignant, selling for £1,680 against a top estimate of £200

### LATE NEWS

The **AJS Porcupine** that was once part of the display at the National Motor Museum is to be sold at auction by Bonhams in Carmel on August 18th 2011. Their estimate is \$750,000.

## UNLIKELY RACERS (PART 2)



In the early nineteen seventies the BSA/Triumph Group had notable and well publicised success with their Rocket 3 and Trident based works racing machines. Less well known are the achievements of a small racing team who sought to make a competitive endurance racer out of the relatively humble BSA B50. The Mead and Tomkinson equipe took on the might of the factory teams across Europe with their little British four stroke pushrod single and amazingly managed to come second overall in 1971 at the Barcelona 24 Hour race (*left*), splitting the two factory 750 Laverdas and winning the 500cc class outright, despite team rider Nigel Rollason (*right, at Thruxton*) crashing the bike two hours from the end. Fortunately the damage was light, and Nigel was able to resume without losing a position. Later that year they led the 500cc class at the Bol d'Or for 23 hours before being slowed by brake trouble, finally coming in 2nd.



# MUSEUM NEWS

**The National Motor Museum** at Beaulieu have commenced a major redevelopment programme. The first phase of the work was to enlarge the entrance area to accommodate the Feats of Endurance exhibition, and phase two involves a revamp of the main display area with the removal of the metal trackways to the outside of the building and the construction of a mezzanine floor and walkway which will connect to the Motorcycle Gallery and allow much easier access.

**The Sammy Miller Museum** have been busy on the restoration front, as always. Latest projects to emerge from the workshops are the Austin 7 - engined RCS, a handful of which were made by renowned special builder Bob Collier after WW2 and the restored AJS 660cc in line four cylinder, which will be ridden by The Classic MotorCycle editor James Robinson at the upcoming VMCC Banbury Run.

**The Haynes International Motor Museum** are holding the first of what is hoped will be an annual Motorcycle Show at the museum on Sunday 21st August.

There will be plenty to see and do for lovers of motorcycles ancient and modern, with trade stands, stunt shows, Bikesafe training and demonstrations. The event will also incorporate the annual Jeff Clew Memorial Run. The BMCT roadshow will be there, so come along and say hello.

**Coventry Transport Museum** are staging a very special motorcycle exhibition in their entrance foyer for four months from the beginning of June. It tells the story of the Ace Café, that iconic establishment on London's North Circular Road that became the home of the Rocker movement in the late fifties and early sixties. For "Coming of Age at the Ace Café" the café itself will be re-created in the museum and filled with bikes, clothing and stories from the Rocker era - don't miss it.

**The London Motorcycle Museum** were in the news recently when their BSA Spitfire (*right*) featured along with a gleaming new Bentley and the Royal Marine Commando Display Team at the launch of the new

James Bond novel "Carte Blanche" at St Pancras Station in London. Hopefully the boys from the museum got to taste some of the bubbly that flowed freely.

**The Black Country Museum** have announced that On the first Saturday of every month between February and December historic vehicles from the Marston collection will take a spin of the Museum's circuit. Motoring marvels from the early 1900s up to the 1930s take centre stage and these rare gems are sure to be the torque of the town! The Marston group are often on site carrying out vital restoration work. For more details contact the Museum on 0121 557 9643. Sunday 31st July also sees the annual Festival of Black Country Vehicles where owners bring along their own machines to demonstrate around the museum grounds.



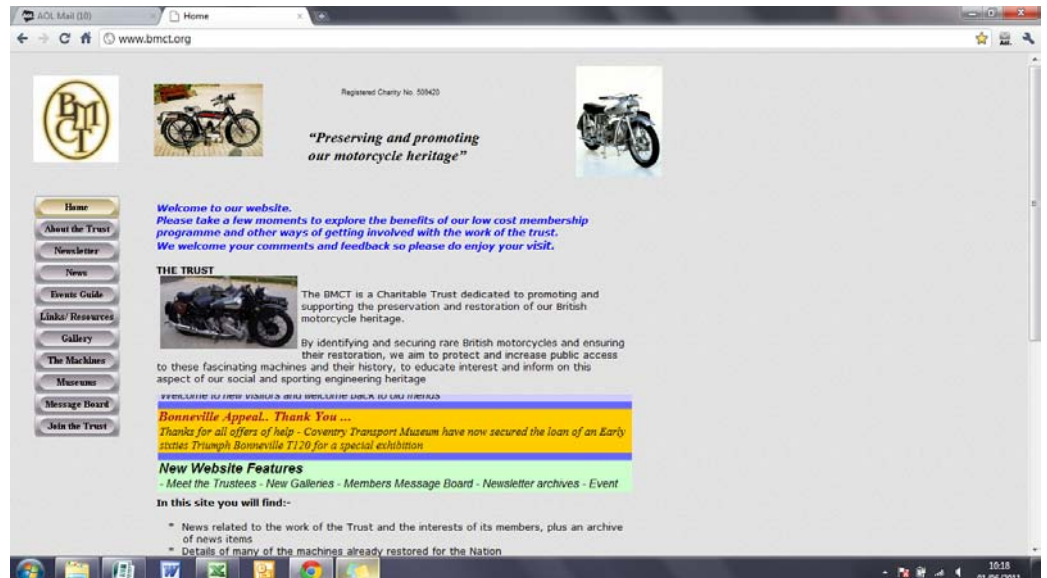
# RE-VAMPED WEBSITE NOW ON LINE

Some members will have already noticed the changes in our web site which went live in the Spring. BMCT member and webmaster Graham Boocock has re-jigged the site to provide more capacity,

allowing for a greater number of pages and the addition of photo galleries covering the events we've attended. Other new features include trustee biographies, museum profiles, newsletter archive

and a message board where BMCT members and the general public can exchange views and information on anything to do with British bikes. Check it all out now at [www.bmct.org](http://www.bmct.org)

Screenshots from the new site:



## MEMBERS BIKE



Our featured bike in the Spring 2011 was Michael Stuart's Ariel VG, but Michael is lucky enough to also own this immaculate 1975 Triumph Trident T160. An export model, it was re-imported from

Louisiana and professionally restored to its present condition. Michael reports that he has done numerous bits of mechanical work on the machine and it now runs like a dream.

**SHARE YOUR PRIDE AND JOY WITH OUR MEMBERS. SEND A PHOTO AND DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BIKE BY POST OR E-MAIL TO ANDY BUFTON**

## 2011 BANBURY RUN

Sunday June 19th sees the 63rd running of the VMCC's famous Banbury Run - the largest event for pre-1931 motorcycles anywhere in the world. Over 700 entries were received for the 600 starting places on this year's event, which starts at the Heritage Motor Centre and runs through Warwickshire and Oxford-

shire on roads designed to challenge rider and machine alike. There are three classes and different routes to cater for veterans, early vintage and late vintage, the latter two taking in the fearsome Sunrising Hill near Banbury, scene of many incidents in the past. Among the BMCT members taking part are Sammy

Miller, starting at number one on the 1920 Wooler, Chris Oliver (344) on his 1927 680cc Zenith, Ivan Rhodes on the 1927 AJS H6 he acquired 51 years ago, and Richard Duffin on his unique 1926 680 cc Burney. There's an autojumble on the site and lots of trade stands.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**June 3 - Oct 2** - Coming of Age at the Ace Café, Coventry Transport Museum

**June 19th** - VMCC Banbury Run, Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire. Starts 10.00 am

**June 23-25** - Salon Privé Concours d'Elegance at Syon Park, Twickenham, Middlesex

**June 26th** - British Bike Ride-In at the Sammy Miller Museum, New Milton, Hampshire

**June 26th** - Daytona Day at the London Motorcycle Museum, Greenford, Middlesex

**July 8-10** - VMCC Festival of 1,000 Bikes, Mallory Park, Leicestershire

**July 15-17** - Pageant of Power, Cholmondeley Castle, Malpas, Cheshire

**July 31** - Triumph Ride-In at the Sammy Miller Museum, new Milton, Hampshire

**July 31** - Festival of Black Country Vehicles, Black Country Museum, Dudley

**August 21** - Motorcycle Show at Haynes International Motor Museum, Sparkford, Somerset

### NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members and supporters of our cause:

Trevor Howells, Burntwood  
 Ray Cawte, Chineham  
 Simon Bish, Woodley  
 Ian Wright, Saunderton  
 Job Thorn, Staines  
 Debra Caunter, Hartley Wintney  
 Rob Snow, Southampton  
 Charles Meacock, Ilford  
 Keith Lee, Dorchester  
 Jeremy Ridgley, Abingdon  
 Adam Ant, London  
 David Purchase, Lymington  
 Stephen Penn, London  
 Ben Hodgetts, London  
 Terry Collingwood, Lyndhurst  
 Allan Hiscock, Andover  
 Nick Reece, Selly Oak  
 Stuart Graham, Eastleigh  
 Dave Gurney, Daventry  
 Peter Norris, Maidenhead  
 Roger Clayton, Brockenhurst  
 Robert Burton, Watford  
 Matthew Clarke, London  
 William Carpenter, Reading  
 Derek Spencer, Bournemouth  
 Jerry Cox, Hayes  
 John Thorogood, Thatcham  
 Bob Dowty, Douglas, IoM  
 Robert Kyle, Killiney, Ireland  
 Dan Towers, Henley on Thames  
 Andy Court, Ashford  
 Phillip Kersey, Bisham

### Cassington Bike Night

It is with much regret that the British Motorcycle Riders Club (Oxford) have announced that this year's Bike Night at Cassington in Oxfordshire has had to be cancelled. The event appears to have become a victim of its own success, having grown from a small local annual meet into a large event that takes over virtually the entire village once a year. The organising club say they no longer have the resources to provide the level of crowd control, traffic management and health and safety requirements demanded by the local authorities.

# THE BMCT COLLECTION - 1939 Sunbeam 350 B24S

The Sunbeam Company was taken over by Associated Motor Cycles (AMC) in September 1937, and for the 1938 season the only Sunbeams to emerge from the Plumstead works were elderly designs built from the stock of parts AMC acquired. It rapidly became clear to the management that updated machines were required, and Bert Collier took the opportunity to start with a clean sheet of paper to design a family of high-camshaft sporting singles in 250, 350, 500 and 600 versions. One feature was inherited from the Wolverhampton-built Sunbeams, though - double hairpin valve springs, which were patented by

Sunbeam in 1925 and used under licence by many manufacturers subsequently. Behind the large timing cover with its Sunbeam script is a chain with Weller tensioner taking drive to a high set camshaft, enabling the use of short pushrods to reduce rocker wear. The cylinder barrel is sunk deeply into the crankcase, giving the impression of a short stroke motor. The Sports versions gained a high compression piston, polished cylinder head, check-springs on the forks, upswept exhaust and sportier mudguards. The advent of hostilities in 1939 meant that very few of these attractive machines were made.



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The British Motorcycle Charitable Trust was originally founded in 1979 as a means of raising funds to establish what was to become the National Motorcycle Museum at Bickenhill, near Birmingham. By 1995 the museum was well established as a successful commercial venture, and it and the charity became separate organisations. A new board of trustees was appointed to manage the assets of the BMCT as it pursues its objective to preserve and promote British motorcycle engineering heritage.

Our funding comes from bequests, donations, membership fees and interest on our reserves. We have an expanding network of affiliated museums that we assist with projects to improve their motorcycle exhibitions and we also own a growing collection of rare and unusual British machines which can be seen on display at various locations throughout the country. Our members enjoy free entry to all our affiliated museums for the very reasonable sum of £20 a year.

To enquire about membership or to find out about how you can help the trust through a donation or bequest, please contact Andy Bufton at the address on the left.

Visit our website at:

[www.bmct.org](http://www.bmct.org)