



Todd Copan and Bob Logan put on a fantastic display for us to enjoy at this year's Tsawwassen swap meet with MV Agusta being the featured marque. BMOC members scooped up a handful of silverware, amongst them, pictured here: (top to bottom) Jim Bush's MV recreation, Alan Comfort's Moto Guzzi Astore and Steve Snoen's Model 18 Norton. Congrats and well done. As ever, many thanks to Todd and Bob and to all the various club members who gave a helping hand at the event. Thanks too to Delta Council and to the gracious folks of Tsawwassen for letting us play in their backyard.



All British Field Meet, VanDusen

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH MOTORCYCLE OWNER'S CLUB
BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA JUNE 2012

GOOD VIBRATIONS





Top, Ian Bardsley's 1957 ES2 won Best Norton - the chosen marque of this year's ABFM and below is Richard Allen's 1940 Ariel VA 500 which won Best in Show and Best New Restoration. Both machines are simply stunning.



Scenes from the Ride 'n Tune at Lyle Whitter's place where Jim Bush debuted his amazing MV Agusta recreation. Great event, great bikes and even better company. Thanks to Lyle and to all those who made it such a success.

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GOOD VIBRATIONS

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Fine print

The West Coast British Motorcycle Owners Club

(aka BMOC) is a registered not for profit society dedicated to the preservation, restoration and use of British motorcycles.

Our newsletter, Good Vibrations, is published sporadically and is intended to inform and entertain our members. Articles appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BMOC. Technical and other information contained in this newsletter should be treated with a measure of common sense, as we cannot test or vouch for every word written.

We welcome all contributions from our members. Want ads and For Sale ads are free to members and non-members.

Ads must be limited to motorcycles or related items. For Sale ads are printed with the good faith that the seller's description of the goods is fair and accurate. BMOC assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the advertisements.

Articles, reports, photographs and ads may be Emailed to p.dent@dccnet.com

Check out the BMOC website: BMOC.ca for full colour version of Good Vibrations and the latest event calender.

Cover: Nortons at the ABFM

Help us to keep in touch, if you have changed your mailing address, phone number or Email address, please Email your current info to

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BRITISH COLUMBIA COALITION
OF MOTORCYCLISTS

For info on the Minter
Gardens show see the
online version of the GV

BMOC RIDE 'N TUNE

Peter Dent

The writer and adventurer TE Lawrence - popularly known as Lawrence of Arabia - was an avid motorcyclist. When he wasn't thundering about the Arabian desert on a camel you might find him thundering about Hampshire where he lived, or, in this case, the Lincolnshire fens, on a Brough Superior. He named one such Brough, a mighty JAP engined road burner it was too, Boanerges - a biblical reference that translates to 'son of thunder'.

Boa is a top-gear machine, as sweet in that as most single-cylinders in middle. I chug lordlily past the guard-room and through the speed limit at no more than sixteen. Round the bend, past the farm, and the way straightens. Now for it. The engine's final development is fifty-two horse-power. A miracle that all this docile strength waits behind one tiny lever for the pleasure of my hand.

At this time Lawrence was a fighter pilot in the RAF. Out for a burn on Boa one fine summer's eve he describes the road like this:

*Another bend:
and I have the
honour of one
of England's
straightest and
fastest roads.*

So there he was, enjoying the moment, long straight road, big JAP motor loping

along comfortably beneath him, when suddenly he turned to see a Bristol Fighter aeroplane skimming the tree tops beside him. A glance at the fuselage number



T.E. Lawrence aboard his mighty JAP engined Brough Superior SS100

told him it was from a neighbouring squadron! He and the pilot exchange, as Lawrence puts it, 'up yer' gestures.

I think you can see where this is going. With mess hall bragging rights on the line, both men tweaked their engines for maximum power. A race it was to be then. On the straightest and fastest road in all of England there was to be a duel between a Brough Superior SS100 and a Bristol Fighter biplane - known to all at that time as a 'Bif'.

Lawrence writes of the event thusly: *The pilot pointed down the road towards Lincoln. I sat hard in the saddle, folded back my ears and went away after him, like a dog after a hare. Quickly we drew*



Bristol Fighter : this example is from the Shuttleworth Collection in Bedfordshire

abreast, as the impulse of his dive to my level exhausted itself. The next mile of road was rough. I braced my feet into the rests, thrust with my arms, and clenched my knees on the tank till its rubber grips goggled under my thighs. Over the first pot-hole Boanerges screamed in surprise, its mud-guard bottoming with a yawp upon the tyre. Through the plunges of the next ten seconds I clung on, wedging my gloved hand in the throttle lever so that no bump should close it and spoil our speed. Then the bicycle wrenched sideways into three long ruts: it swayed dizzily, wagging its tail for thirty awful yards. Out came the clutch, the engine raced freely: Boa checked and straightened his head with a shake, as a Brough should.

abreast, as the impulse of his dive to my level exhausted itself.

The next mile of road was rough. I braced my feet into the rests, thrust with my arms, and clenched my knees on the

They were hoping I was a flash in the pan, giving them best. Open went my throttle again. Boa crept level, fifty feet below: held them: sailed ahead into the clean and lonely country. An approaching car pulled nearly into its ditch at the sight of our race. The Bif was zooming among the trees and telegraph poles, with my scurrying spot only eighty yards ahead. I gained though, gained steadily: was perhaps five miles an hour the faster. Down went my left hand to give the engine two extra dollops of oil, for fear that something was running hot: but an overhead Jap twin, super-tuned like this one, would carry on to the moon and back, unfaltering.

You will note how he pulled ahead at five miles per hour. This is an important number because later Lawrence makes this observation:

A skittish motor-bike with a touch of blood in it is better than all the riding animals on earth, because of its logical extension of our faculties, and the hint, the provocation, to excess conferred by its honeyed untiring smoothness. Because Boa loves me, he gives me five more miles of speed than a stranger would get from him..

I don't doubt this for a second. Despite all logic to the contrary, bikes can exhibit uncanny sensitivities sometimes: ignore this at your peril.....



Wayne Dowler's D7 BSA Bantam blinks it's eyes at the first daylight it has seen in several decades

“Will work for donuts.” Its actually quite an offer and at our recent Ride’nTune that was the deal on hand. Gathered on Lyle Whitter’s driveway was an impressive collection of biwheeled transportation spanning many decades. Much the same might be said of the motley group that had ridden them there - only the bikes looked in considerably better shape. A passing neighbour jibed something about

g r e e y
hair.....yeah?
well grass
doesn’t grow on
a busy street my
friend!I’m
not sure how that
applies but, in
the name of
good humoured
banter, it seemed
a not
unreasonable
retort at the time,
if not exactly of
Blarney Stone
quality. But I
digress.

The said group who loitered there in Lyle’s driveway were waiting; specifically, they were waiting for something to breakdown. This is the principal of the Ride’ n Tune. You bring your mechanical/ electrical ailments and this brains trust of inveterate tinkers apply their not inconsiderable skills and experience to bear on the malady in question. And what experience: all those years of tinkering put together would easily predate the internal combustion engine. They eat donuts while they wait - Tim Hortons no less.



The gathered crowd were amazed at what they beheld.....
Jim Bush, right, and his MV Agusta build.

At last! We have a taker! Wayne Dowler saved the day by rolling up with a freshly purchased - barely the day before apparently - BSA D7 Bantam lashed down on his pick-up bed. And what a little gem it was too. One of those deals you only read about: stored in someone’s basement for forty years and now seeing the light of day for the first time in an age. This is the very challenge the wise men were waiting for.

Once safely ensconced in Lyle’s garage initial assessments were made, then, with something of a theatrical flourish, Wayne, ever the wit, produced a service manual for his wee Brummie. What? *Instructions?..... Laugh?* I thought I was going to pull something.

Logic and experience were being judiciously applied to the dormant BSA when a remarkable event occurred. First, I heard it’s trumpeting shriek, then, looking up, I saw it’s vivid redness. Looking and sounding for all the world like Agostini pulling out of Parliament Square it was none other than our webmaster, Jim Bush. Riding his latest masterpiece of design and engineering, he was actually pulling onto 95th Ave. What a sight it was too; my retinas may have been permanently scarred by its paintwork.

With Jim’s own design and manufactured frame it’s a creation on the theme of Ago’s MV Agusta but with modern ‘Brutale’ running gear and it looks every inch the part. Jim has been keeping us up to date on this project via the club’s web pages. It makes for fascinating reading with many pictures of the stage by stage build; I highly recommend a study of the work that was undertaken here when you get a chance, if, shame on you, you weren’t at the ride ‘n tune that day; you really need to see it in all it’s vivid red glory.

Of course those that were there piled out onto the street to pore over this beauty in detail and to be amazed and impressed by what they beheld. Alas, when this happened the BSA was summarily abandoned.....

This brings me to TE Lawrence’s observation on the sensitivities of bikes. Try as the gathered clan might and for all their amassed years of engine fettling, the BSA was not for starting. One day, yes, almost certainly, but not on this day. On this day events had conspired so that we had lost the BSA’s cooperation.

Never the less, donuts got eaten, coffee got drunk and I like to think that we all rode away a little bit wiser. Our thanks to Lyle and his good lady wife for their generosity and of course if there were any oil spots on the driveway, well, they were clearly nothing to do with us - we ride Brit bikes after all. No, really.....

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Al Lawson

Tsawwassen, April 29th 2012, and Todd Copan's 27th swap meet and show. Ten bucks at the door, \$80 per table, and event T-shirts \$20. Twenty-two bikes on display and 155 vendor tables with 2,600 punters and a parking lot packed with bikes despite a cloudy day.

First table I see has a 'You look like a nice guy, special price for you' sign—both doubtful, so I pass on. How about an unrestored '33 Scott Flying Squirrel? Not for sale, rats! Incomplete '34 Velo KSS and '52 Velo scrambler baskets for \$2,500 each, VL basket at

\$3,200, rough '73 MotoGuzzi 850 for \$1,200 obo, or a rusty Ariel Arrow basket for...who cares?

Hand goes into the pocket for a small hydraulic bike lift for \$25, Lodge-type plug caps for a buck and five for a mirror in the box. Shell out \$25 for a YB4L-2B battery and an aftermarket HD solo seat for \$30. Next '47 Chief barrels, sleeved std with unleaded seats including valves and springs, plus an alloy manifold and kicker spring—all for \$400 (ouch! most I ever spent at a meet). Then there was that fire-blackened HD spoked alloy rear wheel complete



Alan Comfort's prize winning Moto Guzzi 'Astore'



Tasty BSA Gold Star as seen in the parking lot; gems like this abound in Tsawwassen at this time of year.

with sprocket and disc for \$20, melted tyre included. Noted an alloy Squarrel barrel, K top end, Chang Jiang s/car with bike front end and mudguards for \$900, and for a piece of history, Ken Maehly's iron shoe at \$180.

A couple of 'Iron Bandit' colour vests were for sale, a faux Texas club in the 'Lone Heroes' movie filmed in Coquitlam. Also present were 'Nightfighters' patch members and '3rd Canadian Army Veteran' colours, but the best had to be 'Manster Pipe & Sickle Club' with a pipe smoking skull, broken con rod, and 18% (?) patch.

Cool memorabilia at the Rat Fink stand and Norman McFuzzybutt's table with his latest 'Motorcycho' mag and B-movie biker stuff, not to mention my 'Tinker Tales' books #1 & #3 at \$25 the pair, \$15 each (contact lowson@dccnet.com for copies). Out to the parking lot, filling up with everything from wildly chopped Ironheads to a lovely sky blue Square Four. A ridden-in '20s twin port Triumph was a surprise, as was a clutch of Cushmans, including a trike. Sterling steel, in the form of two Vincent Shadows and a Velo Thruxton, with flathead iron represented by a '41 Chief and model U attached to an HD sidecar. A '42 forty-five sat on offer at \$11,00-(250) 838 6667, and a '19 HD s/car for \$3,000. Also noted was a new electric start Royal Enfield Bullet. A British mag tested their claim of 70 mpg only to find they obtained 90 mpg in normal riding!

Cars included a nice MG TA and an interesting right-hand drive Honda 4wd pickup conveniently low for bike loading.

Back inside to the show. Memories of Westwood racetrack were rekindled by a large photo and poster display covering 1959 to 1990. I raced #38, my Sport

Scout, there a few seasons and had Geoff Duke sign that last year's race poster— alas, all subdivision now.

Featured marque this year was MV Agusta with a '77 850cc, '73 750cc, Brutale, and a single, with Jim Bush's 750cc F4 replica taking Judge's Choice. Eighteen other bikes were entered in the Show & Shine for the nine trophy plaques and People's Choice cup. That went to Dan Smith's splendid '12 Spacke-engined Minneapolis, and the judges agreed, awarding it Best in Show. Joe Allan's homebuilt ASV (Allan's Special Vehicle) was a real head-scratcher with its 700cc horizontally opposed powerplant from a Cushman trike mated to a Honda GL Silverwing shaft drive—a well deserved First Place for Homebuilt. Another First went to Martin Spriggs for his '56 off-roads 250cc SS special, while Greg Bismeyer's '70 H1 500cc Kawasaki took Best Japanese. Best of British to Robert Watson' '37 TT replica series A 500cc Vincent HRD, a hard choice between it and his '39 series A Rapide (aka 'plumber's nightmare'). Ron Lacey's very authentic military '42 WLC beat my '48/'31 Chout (Chief/101 Scout hybrid) for Best American, while Best European went home with Alan Comfort for his '48 500cc Moto Guzzi 'bacon slicer' Astore.

So: trophies awarded, bikes planked back on pickups, milk crates full of unsold parts reloaded, and happy punters taking home their newly purchased treasures— roll on next year.

27th Annual Classic & Vintage M/C Show 'N Shine Sunday April 29, 2012

People's Choice – Donated by Imperial Trophies
Won by #2 the 1912 Minneapolis of Dan Smith Vancouver, BC
Best in Show – Donated by Trev Deeley Motorcycles
Won by #2 the 1912 Minneapolis of Dan Smith Vancouver, BC
Judge's Choice --Donated by Bent Bike Ltd.
Won by # 12 the MV Agusta Arturo Magni 1973 Replica Jim Bush of Surrey, BC
Best American / Fred Pazaski Memorial Award –
Donated by the Classic M/C Club of BC
Won by # 1 the 1942 H-D WLC 45 of Ron Lacey Surrey, BC
Best British -- Donated by British Isles Motorcycles
Won by #4 the 1937 Vincent - HRD TTR factory replica racer of Robert Watson Aldergrove, BC
Best European – Donated by Trev Deeley Motorcycles
Won by # 6 the Moto Guzzi Astore of Alan Comfort Vancouver, BC
Best Japanese – Donated by Western Powersports
Won by # 19 the 1970 Kawasaki H1 500cc of Greg Bismeyer Vancouver, BC
BMOC Award -- Donated by the BMOC
Won by # 3 the 1936 Norton Model 18 of Steve Snoen Surrey, BC
1st Place Home Built – Donated by Trev Deeley Motorcycles
Won by # 17 the ASV SS Street Scrambler of Joe Allan Lake Cowichan, BC
1st Place Off Road – Donated by Trev Deeley Motorcycles
Won by #11 the 1956 NSU 250 SS Scrambler of Martin Spriggs Victoria, BC


ABFM 2012 at VanDusen

Peter Dent

James Lansdown Norton made his first complete motorcycle in 1903. By 1913 his company was in financial difficulties.

This, alas, rather set the trend for the next 98 years. Even as late as 2011 the British government issued the latest in a long line of the 'Norton' brand name owners, financial help - this time in the form of a loan guarantee. History shows that the government only lends money when no one else dare - bankers have share holders to answer to; the government on the other hand are always seeking, 'jobs, jobs, jobs'. The international GATT agreement discourages actual handouts, so it's a 'loan'.

Will they ever see their money again? We hope so for it will mean that the company is finally turning a profit but 'hope' has little value in this business; you need a quality product at an affordable price. Between the 1913 failure and the 2011 loan guarantee there were a good many other falterings. There were mergers, there were buy-outs, there was even a government ordered shot-gun wedding when they had to hook-up with BSA/Triumph to be eligible for more tax-



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payer dough. They squatted with AMC in southeast London for a while but all to no avail. Sometimes it seemed that their would-be saviour was just a ruthless asset stripper and they were even worse off than before.

Interestingly enough for us is that there is a strong local connection to some of all this financial maneuvering. One of the past owners of the Norton name is Vancouver entrepreneur, Nelson Scalbania. No machines were manufactured under his tenure and cash flow problems meant that he too had to sell his holdings and move it on.

The next owners were the Vancouver property company Aquilini Investments. The Aquilini family originates from Brescia in northern Italy - Brescia, you might be aware, is also the birth place of one Giacomo Agostini. Aquilini Investments are also the current owners of your Vancouver Canucks and it was under their tenure of the name that the company got involved with the most amazing Norton of them all - well, almost. It was called the Nemesis and it's prototype currently resides in the National Motorcycle Museum in the UK.

The mandate was to create the fastest production motorcycle that money could buy. The builder was an engine designer then involved heavily in Formula 1 and a



The Norton that nearly was. The company was owned by Aquilini Investments at this time: they are the current owners of your Vancouver Canucks

major Norton shareholder himself; Al Melling. The bike was actually built and Carl Forgarty once even rode it. However, and alas, 'however' is a reoccurring word in Norton history, two of the company's investors had to withdraw their investment and the company collapsed costing Melling dearly. There was a court case, lawyers were involved and it all quickly dissolved into acrimony - yet again. It has to be added; 'investors' and 'collapse' also reoccur regularly in the Norton story.

Not much wrong with the bike though: the Nemesis was a 1500cc V8 stomping out 235hp. It dropped all the right names and it pumped out all the right numbers. It was not cheap at around \$50,000 but then it was intended to be the fastest production bike ever made so you would hardly expect it to be. It was a brutally expensive project that even major manufacturers would be hesitant to instigate. Like the 'Cosworth' and the 'Wulf' before it, it was a Norton that was never meant to be. It died, and when it died it bled red ink all over the account ledgers.

Some time ago I read another Norton story. This one doesn't drop any names and there is nothing to be seen in the National Motorcycle Museum and yet, oddly, I feel there is a connection.

When Norton were taken over by AMC and the AJS/Matchless fellows in London they got evicted from their ancestral home in Bracebridge Street, Birmingham. They ended up effectively dossing out on a pull-out sofa at their mate's house in Plumstead having wheeled all that they owned down there in a shopping cart they had fished out of the Engine Arm canal.

Moving the company to London might have made sense to the bean-counters at the time but there were certainly drawbacks. The first was that the skilled and much experienced workforce didn't want to move with them. Well, not all of them at any rate. Moving from the Black Country to the Smoke doesn't sound like much of a choice either way but to do it for a company that had been teetering on collapse for so long did not appeal to many. So Norton had to retrain locals.

The story goes that for reasons unknown they were getting a high rate of crankcase halves going out of tolerance on the boring machine that was the prime mover in the operation. Their machinists tried all the tricks they knew and I would be surprised if the management didn't increase the tolerance limits a tick or two just to keep the line moving; all to no avail. The pile of scrap cases just got higher and higher.

In desperation they decided to phone up to Birmingham and talk to the operator who for years had turned out perfectly usable crankcase halves on the very same machine. Having just been given the boot by the new AMC masters I don't suppose he was too well disposed towards Norton but the jobs of others were at stake so he agreed to go down to the Plumstead works and see what he could do.

We can only imagine the scene that day. Upper management would have been there - well, they had shelled out a bus ticket on this fellow, he had better be good. Middle management would have been there if only because upper management was there. The new trainees of course, they had to know where they were going wrong - middle management would have whispered upper management's displeasure at having to cough up a bus ticket because of their ineptitude: if the company went broke it would be all their fault. The old phrase "out-dated union practices" had been saving the sorry arses of inept management for years, and they all knew it still had a good few miles left in it.

The Brummie machinist would have been uncomfortable at such a crowd but he went through his old familiar routine. Workpiece in jig and clamped - I picture an

extra pull on the clamps here, with this sizable crowd watching on, an errant Atlas crankcase winging around the room.....well, you can imagine. Cutter sharp and correctly positioned.....everything locked.....centralised..... . A machinist I used to know, just before nudging the big green button that would put an awful lot of heavy steel into motion, used to mutter reassuringly to his planer, "now we aren't going to hurt each other are we?". Perhaps the man from Birmingham did the same.



Wayne Dowler's prize winning '57 Triumph TRW

The casting pattern makers don't leave a lot to be removed; it's little more than a skim; machined off metal is wasted metal and it's wasted time doing it too so you barely get enough material for a datum cut: you need to get it right first time. Finally he was ready; well almost. "Where's me stick then?" he suddenly announced to no one in particular.

We have to understand that there is a language issue here. In Plumstead it's a 'gor blimey' Cockney you are going to hear whereas our machinist friend would be rolling 'r's both real and imagined in an altogether different tongue from the Midlands. The lads from

east London would probably be trying to *translate* this word 'stick'. But no, the word he used, it slowly became clear, was indeed 'stick'.

Upper management looked at middle management, middle management looked at each other, the trainees looked at first bewildered and then at their shoes. In a confusion of Cockney and Brum, clarity was sought, and, eventually found.

It turned out that the machine that had served the Norton works so loyally for many years working on their crankcase halves had become somewhat worn out in the process. There was excess play in critical bearings causing the cutter to

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Day Before Father's Day, Saturday, June 17, 2012. Details:

- ☒ **0800: meet at Trolls, Horseshoe Bay for breakfast;**
- ☒ **0900: depart Hwy. 99 to Whistler - sharp;**
- ☒ **1100: Pemberton Petro-Canada for fill up;**
- ☒ **1115: depart Duffy Lake Road to Lillooet;**
- ☒ **1315: arrive Lillooet Café for lunch break;**
- ☒ **OPEN DEPART: Lillooet for Whistler return and/or Canyon/Hope/Rte.7 route.**



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Note: Inclement wet weather will postpone the ride!

chatter and it also gave rise to a slight variation in cutter position, and thus, the final dimension would vary with it.

The Bracebridge Street machinists had learned to counter this variable with a specially fashioned piece of wood - the mysterious 'stick' in question. By applying subtle and carefully measured pressure to the rotating cutter quill with the 'stick' they were able to dampen out the chatter and remove the excess play from the bearings. All this, of course, whilst operating the machine with the other hand. There was no way of actually measuring the pressure required; too much would cause deflection, too little and the chatter problems would persist; it took a practiced hand to reliably put out Atlas crankcases.

For what it's worth, the story holds that a van was sent up to the now empty Bracebridge works and the 'stick' was duly retrieved and production continued.

It's a story of feast or famine with the Norton name: one decade they are leaning on a two by four to keep the production line running and the next we see new investors that are planning an ambitious racing program or making prototypes like the Nemesis with its three plugs per cylinder, active suspension, push button gearshifts and generally bristling with more bells and whistles than you can shake a stick at.

The latest owner, Stuart Garner, taking over from Oregon's Kenny Greer, has an achievable design that nicely evokes the Nortons of yore and as long as he can bring a finished - read 'reliable' - product to market at an affordable price he can expect a measure of success. The secret is to spend your capital wisely. The first Honda Fours had sand-cast casings, only when they knew they had the right product for the market did they invest in die casting tooling. When John Bloor brought Triumph back from the dead he did it with a solid, reliable product at an affordable price. He didn't start up a racing program and even years later with an expanding dealer network and a steady sales graph he insists that sponsors have to cover at least 90% of racing costs.

I fear that Stuart Garner might be tempted to channel sparse product R & D money into a misguided racing venture. Indeed his latest program involves



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**Restorations and servicing by Elwood Powley
and Anthony Nicholson**

We welcome Union Jack Cycle's greater involvement with the Good Vibrations newsletter and their new 'Corporate' membership with us.

entering the IoM TT with a bike that has an Aprilia engine. I'm sure Aprilia are delighted at this, having their product so roundly endorsed by another manufacturer; if nothing else it proves that Norton's own motor isn't up to the task. And don't forget that business with the loan guarantee issued by the British taxpayer; this tells us - and all potential Norton customers - that they don't exactly have money to burn here, and customers will be uncomfortable with this. BMOC members who are thinking about a new Norton will be well advised to research the subject thoroughly before writing any cheques. More than one would-be customer has employed the services of a debt collection agency in an effort to regain their deposit.

But if the future of this famous marque is somewhat uncertain, at least we can rightly celebrate it's glorious past, and at this year's All British Field Meet at Van Dusen we did exactly that. What a day it was too, perfect weather brought a huge turn-out both of bikes and admirers. The Show Committee was able to assemble an interesting sampling of Norton's product range that spanned many decades. The quality of the machines on hand was really quite remarkable; there is no doubt that we gave an extremely good account of ourselves and the viewing public should be well impressed by our collective resources and restoration skills.

The Yellow Peril racing machine was on display and there was also a photographic collection that portrayed every significant model ever produced by this year's marquee marque. Thanks to Robert Smith for taking the time to chase them down; some of these machines are as rare as they are fantastic. Robert also assembled a fine collection of pictures of our own member's Nortons. It was made clear from all these photographs that Norton Motorcycles, in all it's various guises and varying fiscal conditions, have, over the last hundred years, produced some of the most impressive motorcycles ever made.

Our thanks to all who took the time and trouble to bring their bikes along to this grand celebration of British wheels. As Wayne noted at the time, it was good to see club members engaging in conversation with the many event attendees who showed an interest in our machines. The Show Committee of Wayne Dowler, Alan Comfort and Dave Woolley are to be congratulated on putting together an event we can all be proud of. The Committee would like to thank Gill Yarrow, Rick Freestone, Jim Bush and Robert Smith for their assistance in the set-up and tear-down of the club display and, indeed, all those involved who make this event the 'must do' great day out it has become.

Best in Show and Best New Restoration - New BMOC member
Richard Allen with his 1940 Ariel VA 500.

Best Feature Bike (Norton) - Ian Bardsley with his 1957 Norton ES2
Entrants Choice # 1 - BMOC member Alan Comfort with his 1938
Velocette MSS

Entrants Choice # 2 - Carl Barfield 1972 Norton Commando

Entrants Choice # 3 - BMOC member Wayne Dowler with his 1957
Triumph TRW

MV AGUSTAS IN TSAWWASSEN

Peter Dent

We are, of course, Renaissance Men. Our interests are many and varied, yes, a little preoccupied by motorbikes but that's what we are good at. We are interested in all bikes what's more: new bikes, old bikes, British bikes, and relevantly here, Italian bikes.

That's one of the many good things about the Tsawwassen gathering: we get to get in touch with, in this case, our Italian side and we get to rub shoulders with like minded folks, and, importantly we get to view their winter projects; some seeing the light of day for the very first time.

The featured marque this year was the fabled MV Agusta. These machines are as rare as they are exotic but for all their exclusivity, Todd Copan had managed to chase down an impressive collection of the beauties; it really was quite the sight.

MVs - that's Meccanica Verghera - come from the town of Verghera just north west of Milan in northern Italy. It was a separate town at one time but now it merges with the ever sprawling metropolis that is Milan. Home to the likes of Giorgio Armani, Miuccia Prada and Gianni Versace and other such towering figures of the *haute couture* world, Milan is a city that fairly oozes urban cool: sophisticated chic and stylish élan drip from it's very soul. I'm amazed they ever let me in the place.

MV's founder, Count Agusta, was part of the old European aristocracy; he was steeped in court tradition and very much a *Milanese*. Italian history is complex but for centuries there had been strong, if not fierce, competition amongst certain major cities there. Italy as we know it today is only 150 years old and that makes it only 90 years old in the 50s. Before then, independent *city-states*, as they are referred to today, vied for economic supremacy. To all intents and purposes they were independent



Jim Bush's tiddler MV Agusta

countries. Milan was one such powerful city and to this day it's denizens are proud of their history and illustrious past as an independent centre of commerce and art. The Italian stock exchange is located in Milan. La Scala opera house is here - Verdi and Puccini gave *prima* performances here. Over the centuries Milan has been ruled by the Spanish, then Austrians, then Napoleon and 50,000 of his close personal friends came to visit, then Austrian again. Their only constant over the years was that they were always *Milanese*; this makes for a tight-knit culture.

Count Agusta was only too aware of his city's history and it's place in the world. As a Count he enjoyed certain privileges but there were responsibilities that came with his high position. History had charged him with the burden of continuing the traditions of old. His racing machines, then, would have to be *Milanese* in every aspect. They would have to look stylish, elegant, they would have to sound exotic and they would have to be so much superior to other machines, for that is the tradition of the *Milanese*. Cost was not so much a factor; if you want a cheap suit don't go to Milan - Giorgio doesn't cut cheap cloth.

The Count could afford to indulge himself in this endeavour. His day job was making helicopters - some were of his own company's design but mainly he



Rider's view Jim Bush's latest creation

made Bell and Sikorsky machines under license. Business was good and government cheques don't bounce. While other motorcycle manufactures had the tedium of product sales to burden themselves down with, the Count could pretty much give his race shop a *carte blanche* free hand to design whatever it was that was going to win, so he did. He could afford to hire the best riders too, so he did. A dynasty was about to begin.....

Jim Bush's replica MV of this singular era clearly upholds the finest traditions of this celebrated marque. Jim's next project had better be a bigger trophy cabinet; I anticipate much silverware in his future. A fantastic piece of engineering: Count Domenico would be proud.



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The BMO C Technical Committee provides technical assistance on a consultative basis via email. All of our members are experienced in restoration as well as having experience with the more common British marques. We may not be able to answer every question you pose, but we can probably point you in a fruitful direction. To access the Committee send your queries to: BMOtech_cmt@telus.net

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For queries related to vehicle entries, please contact Jerry at 604.794.3652 or via email at c-park@telus.net

For questions related to Minter Gardens or for general event information, please contact Erin by phone at 604.792.3799, or via email at mail@mintergardens.com

Where We Are

Minter Gardens is conveniently located 90 minutes east of downtown Vancouver, British Columbia, just off the Trans-Canada Hwy. #1 at exit #135. Our address is 52892 Bunker Rd., Rosedale, BC V0X 1X1

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For further information on Minter Gardens, please visit our website at www.mintergardens.com



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An invitation from the folks at Minter Gardens:

We are ramping up for our 10th annual Classic Car Show at Minter Gardens this year, and at a recent planning meeting, the suggestion was made that having classic motorcycles at the event would really add a great element. I just wanted to extend a personal invitation to the members of your club to join us this year! The feedback we receive from exhibitors year after year is that this is a relaxed, enjoyable event. We hope you will be able to experience this yourself! And the entrance fee is perfect for BMOC members – it is free!

<http://www.mintergardens.com/>