



Smoke Signals

The 'meant to be quarterly' newsletter of Iron Indian Riders Australia

Spring 2022 Edition



Key Club Contacts

Your Executive Committee

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| President & Public Relations: | Don McDonald | deemac58@hotmail.com |
| Vice President | Mark Barthelmie | markbarthelmie@hotmail.com |
| Secretary | Phil Pilgrim | unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com |
| Treasurer & Ride Coordinator | Dave Catterill | david_catterillrsl@hotmail.com |
| Machine Examiners/Red Plate | Richard Onyon | custombuild@bigpond.com |
| | Phil Pilgrim | unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com |
| | Mark Barthelmie | markbarthelmie@hotmail.com |

Non-Executive Committee Members

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Membership Secretary | Andrew Ellis | chopper1@mail.com |
| Rally Coordinator | Owen Jones | guzzimaster@hotmail.com |
| Welfare Officer | Phil Nuske | pnuske@internode.on.net |
| Immediate Past President | Alistair Piercy | |

National Section Representatives

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Victoria | Phil Pilgrim | unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com |
| Tasmania | Steve York | blueyhvic@optusnet.com.au |
| South Australia | Murray Johnson | kmbrtbikes@internode.on.net |

Postal Address

Iron Indian Riders Australia
PO Box 1064
Ivanhoe, VIC 3079

Web Site <http://ironindian.com.au/>

Monthly Meetings

Victoria Last Tuesday of the month (except December) @ 7:30 pm
Cross Keys Hotel
350 Pascoe Vale Road, Essendon

The Front Cover

King Charles III on the king of motorcycles, a 1927 Indian Scout. Long live the King(s).

Each edition of Smoke Signals will hopefully feature a photo of, or relating to, an Indian motorcycle or a detailed image of part thereof. If you have a photo you would like to see on a future front cover, please email it to the editor of Smoke Signals along with a sentence or two telling its story.

A Message From Your President

As your President, I appreciate the efforts by the executive and non-executive committee members, and input by members who make the role of being President a lot less stressful, It was great to see two previous club members return to the Tribe, and having our first meeting at our new venue, The Cross Keys Hotel in Essendon which is more club friendly than, the previous venue, this new venue has a great atmosphere with well-priced, good quality meals.

So, if you're a member that hasn't attended a meeting for a while, check out our new meeting venue, we are now a club, that is working on returning to the old values of mateship, where the common bond is Indian motorcycles of all models from 1901 to the present line - up and future models.

Regards Donald McDonald

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Secretary's Notes

This month we have the AGM coming up at our new venue the Cross Keys Hotel in Essendon, the last meeting was fairly well attended and everybody agreed it is a vast improvement on our last place we have been meeting at since 2016. Please attend the next meeting as you can meet your new committee.

Now your new committee in waiting has acted on quite a number of things that have been in the pipeline now for a couple of years, one is the e magazine newsletter which you can see is happening, another item is new regalia incorporating our new logo a now registered design you will notice new beanies and caps available and these are for sale at the meeting or mail order, stickers are being ordered as well.

Everyone has asked about a new 18 month wall calendar and this is being organised now but we need a clear picture with a nice background, either side of your Indian will do and with no helmets or people to distract away from the subject of course in focus and no other non Indians in the background, the sooner we have suitable photos of 16 bikes the sooner I can get it printed.

We have a new membership secretary Andrew Ellis and he is doing a great job please introduce yourself to him whenever possible so he can put a face to a name.

The new editor Martyn Goodwin is an associate member who knows little about Indians and has managed to put this fantastic edition together, now so you don't get him frustrated at receiving no articles to publish as he may start writing about Honda's or Vincent Comets! So how about putting something down about your bike or even your mates Indian, or about how and why you even bought one, it may seem boring to you but it's not and you will get to see your name in print!

We still need a Rally coordinator and even an Associate member can hold this non executive post so give it some thought and volunteer please.

Years of wringing of hands and weeping have got your new committee organising and deciding to review all our existing 4 seasonal rallies, the first one affected is the Crazy Horse Rally at Corryong mainly this is our premium event and when it was shifted in 2016 everyone that went at that time wanted it to return, well folks it's back with a bang so show your support and book now the entry form is in this e-mag, room rate are good and your association is throwing a free BBQ Friday night.

Regards, Phil Pilgrim



Letters To The Editor

Feel free to write to the editor about anything you like – brickbats, bouquets or whatever. It would of course be helpful if your letters related in some way to the club, Indian's or Smoke Signals.

In this edition there is, unusually, a letter FROM me, the editor as this is my first edition and I am very much learning the ropes. And things can only improve with your constructive suggestions.

" It says your signal is important to us. "

Hello Smoke Signal readers and welcome to the first edition I have edited. Each season Smoke Signals will have a content of material along the following general lines – provided YOU send some to me!:

1. Club Contacts
2. The Front Cover (credit for member submitted photo used on front cover and maybe a bit of a story about it?)
3. Message from your President
4. Letters to the Editor
5. Ride Reports
6. Events this quarter
7. News items
8. Book Reviews
9. More for your diary (future events)
10. Equipment Reviews
11. From the Workshop (members hints, tips etc about maintaining their bikes)
12. Bit of history (reprints of old magazine articles etc)
13. Event Entry Forms for rallies, rides etc to be completed
14. The Trading Post
15. The Last Page – Photo or Image selected by the editor, changes with each edition

Smoke Signals will only ever be as good as the material submitted from you the readers – if you don't send me anything, don't expect to see anything of substance in your newsletter – the ball is at your feet. It is YOUR newsletter.

Your editors contact details for ALL things about Smoke Signals are:

Email: iirozeditor@gmail.com

Phone: 0419 499 901

Till next season, Martyn Goodwin, your new chum Editor of Smoke Signals

Ride Report

RAIN IN THE FACE RALLY , 2021

By: Phillip White, Australia

The 2021 Mid-July "Rain In the Face" Rally has come and gone and it went very well. It almost goes without saying that a rally held in the dead of winter is never going to draw a large number of attendees. Only a dozen club members participated but what we lacked in numbers we made up for in Quality. For the next three days we had perfect blue skies and, as little we knew then, this was to be the last week end where we would be allowed out to play. Carpe Diem!

We based out of a large red brick motel near the Main Street of Echuca. This is a port city on the Murray with a long history. Therefore, it is touristy and ergo it boasts a goodly number of pubs, bars and restaurants. The Motel was well located but looked a lot like that brick jail in metropolitan Melbourne they built a few years back. To reinforce that similarity, there were lots of Police staying there. They were there as part of the border protection against the Dreaded Covid Bug.

Most of the attendees drove up on the Wednesday and a noticeable number of them brought more than one bike. To arrive early is becoming a fairly common practise, most attendees have control of their time and departing on the Sunday leaves time for family.

On the Thursday it was the coldest day of the Rally with temps down around 2 degrees C. A few of us had the rather excellent heated jackets and gloves from "Venture". All I wore on my torso was a t-shirt, the Venture jacket and a light leather jacket and it was fine. Such a step up from the layers of stuff we all had to wear in times past. We were on the road at the crack of ten thirty and headed for Bridgewater and its famous Bakery. In 2020 the general public voted this establishment as having the best pies and vanilla slices in all of Victoria. We then meandered up the street to a shop that specialises in Classic Nortons - but they were shut. Back on the bikes we went a couple of km's up the road to a winery where most folk bought a bottle or three of rather good value wine. The return ride was pleasant and apparently uneventful..... wrong, wrong, wrong.

To comprehend what follows it is helpful to understand the layout of the motel. As mentioned, it is a large two-story complex built in the form of a hollow rectangle. Access is via a fairly long entrance passage way that opens on to the central courtyard. On the right is a concrete apron that would hold around twenty or more cars. After that there is sheltered parking under the building which is bounded by a brick wall at the side boundary, stairs to the right and on the left a 6-metre glass partition with sliders that forms part of the fencing for the swimming pool. I arrived slightly ahead of the main group so I had a grandstand view of what transpired next.

There was a milling mass of bikes either on the concrete apron or trying to get up the narrow driveway. Noel was bringing up the rear on his trusty 47 and tried to avoid the miniature traffic jam by jumping the gutter. Now the foot clutch on a Chief is a sturdy and trouble-free piece of equipment but.... they can bite you. When the bike hit the gutter, Noel put a foot out for balance whereupon the clutch smartly dropped in to full engagement. The resultant lurch and further loss of control caused him to wind open the left-hand throttle. Indians are torqued old brutes and the bike took off like a scalded cat. All Noel could do was hang on and try and avoid the milling mass of bikes, riders, parked cars and brick columns and he did a great job. He had the horn blaring and in flat track style, managed to wrench the bike to the left - away from a nasty head on into the looming brick wall. This put him on course towards the glass fence. Ever seen "Stargate" where there is a flash of silver as people go through the portal?

I got a rear view of an Indian and rider momentarily silhouetted by 6 metres of spectacularly exploding glass. The front wheel wedged into a buttress with enough force to snap the bottom fork link spindle like a crisp carrot, the front end collapsed and the bike finally stalled. That's What I Call An Entrance! Noel was a little shaken and bruised but otherwise O.K. Definitely Beer O'clock after that! Dinner that evening was at the Star Hotel and perfectly adequate for a pub.

The first stop on Friday's run was the town of Colbinabbin. There is not much there but like many towns in this region the city fathers have opted to paint large murals on a group of silos. I suppose that if people have a reason to stop in the town, then they have a reason to spend money in the town. The arvo run took us to Kyabram where we had a brief stop and regroup. Club Member Garry was mounted on his very clean 1976 Triumph Trident. Gary has owned this bike for many trouble-free years but in the recent past the bike has been

plagued with engine and electrical problems. This time the bike was quietly parked when suddenly vast quantities of thick blue smoke erupted from the headlight. Much frantic fuse pulling saved the day. The culprit turned out to be a shorted-out blinker wire so the machine was still rideable. On to Rushworth for our lunch stop and more Silo Art.

After return to base camp, we dined that night at a hotel that shall remain nameless - appalling would be too kind an epithet to describe the food. I had a rack of lamb with ribs so huge that they looked like a prop from "Jurassic Park"! I am sure this particular lamb died of old age. Other folk reported inedible curries and such like. [I have been advised that the steak was acceptable] Later in the evening a number of us felt the need to party on to recover our equilibrium.

Saturday's run was supposed to start early for an extended run to Kerang where a pub had been booked for lunch. I was not planning to join this particular run as my Vincent was out of action with ignition problems and my Enfield had nipped up briefly the day before. So I thought I would just nurse the bike to Kerang and back with John F riding shot gun in case the bike crapped out and needed recovery. John and I set out for a leisurely breakfast at the rather excellent café right next to the motel. I kept expecting to hear departing bikes but no. When we meandered back to the hotel the group was still 'faffing' about! Here are just a few of the reasons for this tardy departure:

1. Garry had left his choke on the day before and a plug change was necessary.
2. John's bike suffered a sunken float.
3. Phil Pilgrim could not find the keys to his Vindian. [after a lot of frantic searching of the premises by the group, they were found in the pocket of his previous days riding jacket!]

Although the Enfield had zero compression on one cylinder, I thought I would chance it. The bike started and ran ok but very smokey. We made it to Kerang by the direct route and found the lads and laddette in the pub. I didn't eat there but reports were good. The proprietors were very solicitous. I guess things are just so tough on the tourist scene that they wanted to be sure we were happy. Apparently, the main group basically crisscrossed the Gun Barrel Highway back to town. My bike was over heating so I set off on my own but my 200-year-old GPS steered me wrong. I ended up doing many extra km. I got within 9 km of town when the bike expired. A call to John saw him drive out in my Ute for a rescue. That night we hit the Royal Hotel. This is also a Gin Distillery with yummy finger food. A welcome break from pub grub.

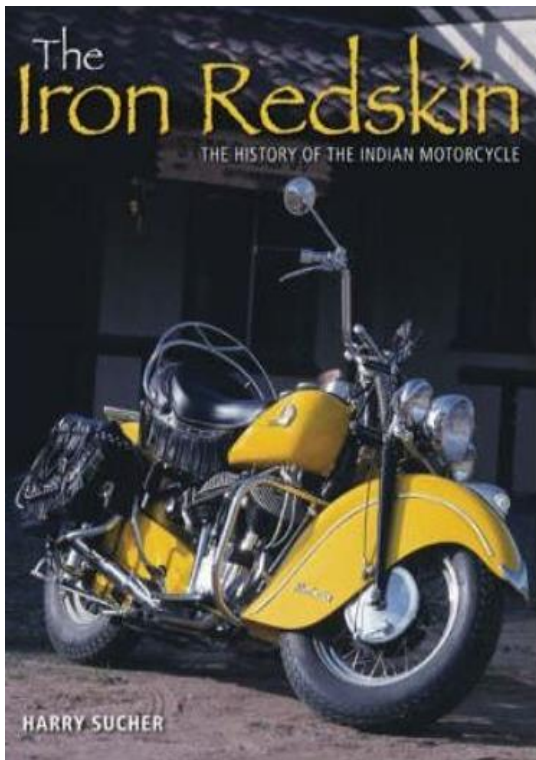
There was mooted to be a Sunday morning run but it did not transpire. No matter, a very good time was had by all. This entire event was planned and organised by Iron Indian Rider's President Piercy and Wonder Woman A.K.A. Sandy so a very special thanks to them for their efforts.

If you missed this Rally, try hard to make the next one. It is said you only regret the things you do not do.

Attendees:

Alistair 2015 Chief; Sandy 47 Chief; Phillip 47 Vincent and 37 Royal Enfield; Dave 2015 Chief; John F 54 BSA Gold Star; Noel "Cannonball" 47 Chief and 57 BSA B33; Gary "FireBall" 76 Triumph Trident; George F 44 Chief; John M 47 Chief; Phil Pilgrim 47 Vindian Replica; Heath Pilgrim 68 Trumph Bonneville; and John S 47 Chief

Book Review



The Iron Redskin By Harry Sucher.

Published 1977

The story of that most loved of American motorcycles, the **Indian**.

The Iron Redskin brings back the memories of those first machines and follows their evolution. Captures the verve, style, artistic functions of design and handling abilities of the **Indian**.

A year to year description tells of the good and bad times the **Indian** factory at Springfield, Massachusetts. A superbly produced hardcover book measuring, 7 1/4"x 10", 335 pgs.

Reviewed copy from the library of the Classic Motorcycle Club of Victoria. Second hand copies may (not will) be found from one of these sources

[Amazon.fr](https://www.amazon.fr)

[Amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de)

[Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

[Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

[Amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca)

IIRA Events This Season (Sept – Nov)

| When | What | Where |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Sept 27, 2022 | General Meeting & AGM | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Sept 30 - Oct 2 | Crazy Horse Rally | See Entry Form |
| Oct 25 | General Meeting | see web page |
| Nov 6 | Club Day Ride | see web page |
| Nov 29 | General Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Nov TBA | Tepee Rally | TBA |
| Nov TBA | IIRA Christmas Party | TBA |

Your Webmasters ravings

[CLICK HERE to visit our web site](#)

It's the most exciting time in the last 11 years since the association started, after a few false starts we are getting a new website. A small history lesson at this point, the IIRA website was originally set up by me for the IMCA (Indian Motorcycle Club of Australia) in 2009-10 but they said it wasn't worth the bother! Seriously! Eventually the IIRA was formed and the website with a few minor changes was up and going about a month after we started, this was done with the help of Jeremy Furness and Richard Monty who is doing our new website now, the generosity of both of these gentleman cost us absolutely zero - thanks' to both of you.

Now Richard is setting up a new website again as our 11-year-old site is the equivalent age of a PowerPlus Indian in computer years, you will notice this in the club calendar area if you don't view it on a Mac or PC it won't show you much at all. These days people wish to access it on phones or tablets, this is very close now so keep visiting the site. By the way we are heading toward 3 million hits so 50% of these are overseas but at least 1.5 million are Aussie, well worth the exposure we have had making people aware of our existence.

Regards, Phil Pilgrim



IIRA Club Permit Reminder — important information for all members

- The VicRoads Club Permit Scheme allows IIRA members to operate classic motor cycles (25 years or older) for a limited time without the requirement of full registration.
- IIRA ONLY supports CPS for Motor Cycles, no cars or any other crap.
- For new CPS applications for bikes manufactured after 1949 you will require a current Victorian Road Worthy Certificate [RWC] for the bike. For bikes manufactured on or BEFORE 1949 you may choose to have either a IIRA Machine Examiners Certificate or a Roadworthy certificate.
- VicRoads do NOT require you to present your vehicle. The Club Permit Application forms and supporting documents is all that is required to process your application.
- Contact the IIRA Machine Examiner for more detailed information.

Do you already have a bike on CPS thru IIRA?

- VicRoads requires your club to maintain a database of photographs of ALL bikes on CPS thru IIRA. **This is a legal requirement – no options.** So if you have a bike on CPS please NOW take the following SEVEN digital photos of each of your CPS bikes. (1500x1000 pixels is ideal)

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Front, | 5. Frame Number, |
| 2. Back, | 6. Engine Number, and |
| 3. Left hand side, | 7. View of handlebars, controls and |
| 4. Right hand side, | speedo taken from the riders |
| | position |

Once you have your digital photos, EMAIL them to [Richard Onyon](mailto:Richard.Onyon@vicroads.vic.gov.au), our Machine Examiner.

- CPS is a Permit, not registration, however your Permit covers you with Victorian TAC insurance.
- You are NOT required to be a resident of Victoria.
- **Your CPS motor cycle MUST be garaged within Victoria for AT LEAST 9 months of each year – NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- It is your responsibility to become familiar and comply with ALL of the conditions of the VicRoads Club Permit Scheme. Full details are on the VicRoads Web Site [CLICK HERE](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au).

Future IIRA Seasons' Events — update your diary now

| When | What | Where |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Summer 22/23 (Dec-Feb) | | |
| Jan 1st | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| Jan TBA | Midnight Express Ride | TBA |
| Jan 31 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Feb 5 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| Feb 28 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Autumn 23 (Mar- May) | | |
| Mar 5 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| March TBA | The Sitting Bull Rally | TBA |
| Mar 28 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Apr 2 | Club day Ride | See web site |
| Apr 25 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| May 7 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| May 30 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Winter 23 (Jun-Aug) | | |
| Jun 4 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| Jun 27 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| July TBA | Chief Rain in the Face Rally | TBA |
| Jul 2 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Aug 6 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| Aug 29 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Spring 23 (Sep-Nov) | | |
| Sep TBA | Crazy Horse Rally | TBA |
| Sept 26 | Annual General Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Oct 1 | Club Day Ride | See web site |
| Oct 31 | Club Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Nov 5 | Day Ride | See web site |
| Nov 28 | General Meeting | Cross Keys Hotel |
| Dec 5 | Day Ride | See web site |



Maintain Yourself First, and only then your toys

September is Prostate Awareness Month in Australia.

This is a rare message from the editor

Just like our cherished bikes, our own bodies need regular check-up's and the occasional maintenance to keep them travelling along life's ever evolving road.

Now 77 years old, for many years as part of my regular annual health checkup I have been having my PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) checked – just a quick, painless and simple blood test arranged by my local doctor (GP). Around 6 years back there was a slight, but noticeable increase in my PSA level so a biopsy was performed. That was done as a day procedure under a light general anesthetic and the good news at the time was that nothing untoward was found. At my last test, just 26 months back my PSA level had jumped up from less than 5 to just over 10. Another biopsy was performed in October 2020 and evidence of Prostate Cancer was found. BUGGER!

December 11,2020, I had a robotic radical prostatectomy [CLICK to learn more](#) with the subsequent pathology of the removed tissue revealing that I did have a grade 2 cancer but it was totally contained, with no escape outside of the prostate. While the cancer is contained in the prostate the recovery rate is close to 100%. But if the cancer escapes and gets outside the prostate that's when the shit hits the preverbal fan and the chance of recovery and ongoing life expectancy is dramatically reduced – just a further 5 years would be considered good!.

A little-known fact is that world-wide more folk, irrespective of their gender, die from the effects of Prostate Cancer than those who die from the effects of Breast Cancer. Approximately 3,500 Australian men and about 35,000 USA men die of prostate cancer each year. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in American men, behind only lung cancer. Prostate cancer is the number one killer cancer in Australia – well ahead of Breast cancer. About 1 man in 40 will die of prostate cancer. **Don't you be one of them!**

Also not widely appreciated, is that while the majority of Prostate Cancers are diagnosed in males over the age of 60, it can present in much younger men as well. Untreated, you WILL eventually die.

[Young prostate cancer patient discusses robotic prostatectomy](#)

[Another persons experience](#)

With regular PSA testing and early diagnosis and treatment, the recovery rate for Prostate Cancer is over 98% while the cancer remains contained within the prostate. BUT if you muck about, don't have regular checkups, even though you may feel fine, if you fail to have a regular PSA check, if when you are eventually diagnosed, and the Cancer has spread beyond the prostate, the recovery rate plummets. Yes, I am repeating myself – but I figure it's worth doing so.

Not me did you say? Prostate cancer is an age-dependent disease, which means the chance of developing it increases with age. The risk of getting prostate cancer starts to increase from around the age of 40, by the age of 75 it is 1 in 7 men. By the age of 85, this increases to 1 in 6 men.

If you have a first-degree male relative with prostate cancer, you have an even higher chance of developing it than men with no such history. The risk increases again if more than one male relative has prostate cancer. Risks are also higher for men whose male relatives were diagnosed when young. Are you really prepared to make that gamble with the rest of your life?

[CLICK HERE to learn more about prostate cancer.](#)

Got the message? Have your annual PSA test so we can all enjoy motorcycling together into the future. Life is too short to muck about.

Forma Motorcycle boots

No Clive they aren't new tyres they are boots for your feet, so I used to wear flying boots from Army disposal stores at \$5 a set they were cheap and smelly held water like 44 gallon drum, reasonably warm though and not long lasting unless you flew a Lancaster bomber or a Spitfire!

A short time later I had Tony at Medal handmade boots in Fitzroy make me a set unfortunately they were always tight but well made and the cops wore them as well so they were durable, I particularly liked they were knee high and your calves were protected, they had leather soles and could be slippery.

I went to UK in 1979 and every body raved about Derriboots they were warm, synthetic one piece and waterproof they smelled and were very comfortable to wear at £9 a set cheap as well I rode around Europe in them and when I came home left them in UK as I realised in summer in Aussie they would be undesirable to say the least.

About 8 years ago Andy Strapz came to the Classic Club and did a guest speaking review on his products, he had Forma Voyager boots made in Romania and although they are short mid calf (I didn't like this immediately) one piece boots and a bit over \$200 they are light, comfortable, not smelly and easy to get on and off I've worn out 2 pair!

I recently bought another set I know your editor is on his third pair and we both agree they are comfortable, durable, waterproof and great value for money boots.

To visit the Forma website [CLICK HERE](#)

Contributed by Phil Pilgrim (also endorsed by your editor)



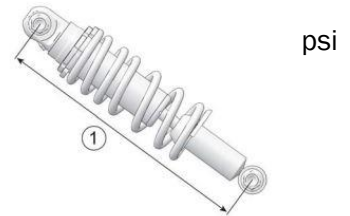
Spannering – Tales from the workshop

Adjusting the Shocks on Your Modern Day Scout

Periodically measure the rear shock preload on your Indian Motorcycle Scout, Scout Sixty, Scout Bobber, Scout Bobber Twenty or Scout Bobber Sixty model. For the most comfortable ride and proper ground clearance, you'll need to adjust the preload if your ride height is out of specification. You'll need an assistant to help you with this procedure, which is detailed in your [Owner's Manual](#).

Inspection

1. Verify that your tire pressure is at specification. The tire pressure should be 36 (248 kPa) on the front tire and 40 psi (276 kPa) on the rear tire.
2. Load the motorcycle with all intended cargo. Wearing your riding gear, bring the motorcycle to the upright position and sit on the operator's seat. If you plan to carry a passenger, have the passenger – with riding gear – sit on the passenger seat. Do not carry a passenger unless the motorcycle is equipped with a passenger seat and passenger footrests.



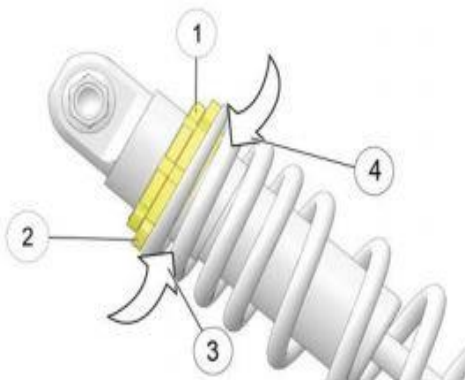
3. Measure the shock preload from the upper mount bolt center to the lower mount bolt center, eye-to-eye (1). Perform this measurement on both shocks.

4. The ride height for a Scout or Scout Sixty should be 282 mm (11.10 inches). For a Scout Bobber, it should be 275 mm. If the measurement differs, adjust the preload.

Adjustment

Special tools are required to perform the rear shock preload adjustment on your Scout. To adjust the rear shock preload, you'll need a shock spanner wrench or shock adjustment tool. See your Indian Motorcycle Dealer with questions. To find a dealer near you, use the [Dealer Locator](#).

Warning: Uneven adjustment may cause poor handling of the motorcycle, which could result in an accident. Always adjust both the left and right shock preload equally or have your dealer perform the adjustments.



1. Verify that your tire pressure is at specification.

2. Rest the motorcycle on the sidestand.

3. Ensure the threads are clear of all dirt and debris before loosening the lock nut (1). Loosen the lock nut by turning it counterclockwise (as viewed from the top of the shock) with a spanner wrench or shock adjustment tool. The upper spanner nut on the shock is the lock nut. The lower spanner nut is the adjuster nut (2). **Warning:** Ensure the threads on the shock body are clean and clear of debris before adjusting the spanner nuts. Before attempting to adjust downward, spin the spanner nuts one full revolution upward and then adjust in the downward position.

4. Spray a light lubricant on the adjuster nut where it contacts the spring. DO NOT allow the spray to contact the drive belt.

5. Adjust the shock preload by rotating the adjuster nut clockwise, as viewed from the top of the shock, to increase preload (3) (firm) or counterclockwise to decrease preload (4) (softer).

6. Recheck the preload measurement after adjusting.

7. Tighten the lock nut securely against the adjuster nut.

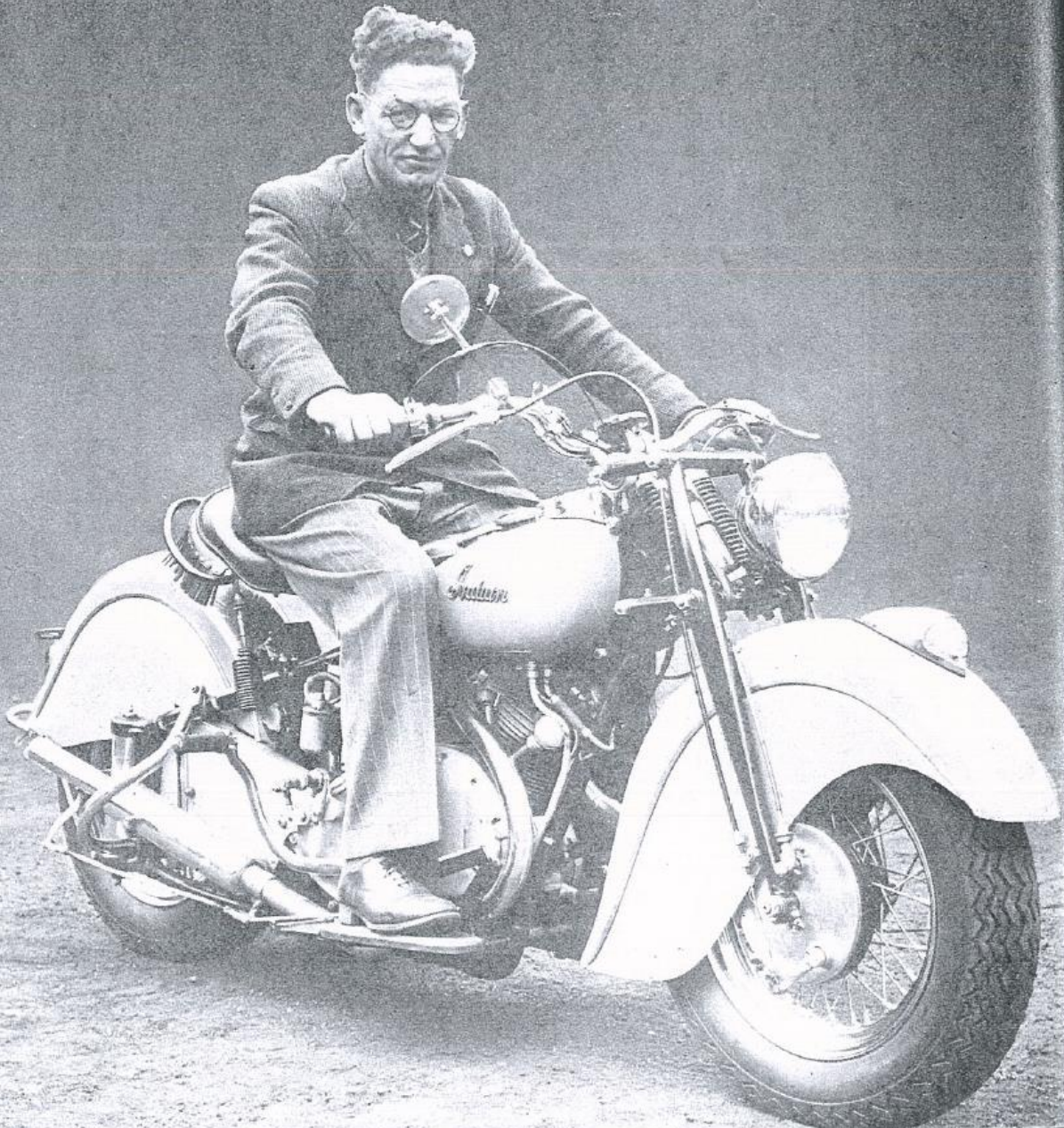
In The Rear View Mirror – an item from the past ..

A MAN OF MANY
MOTORCYCLES

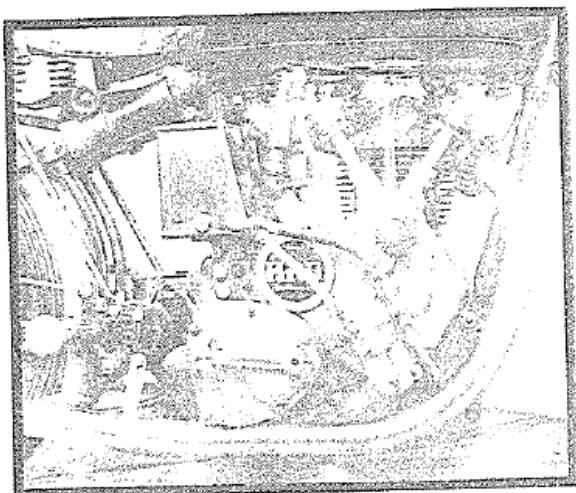
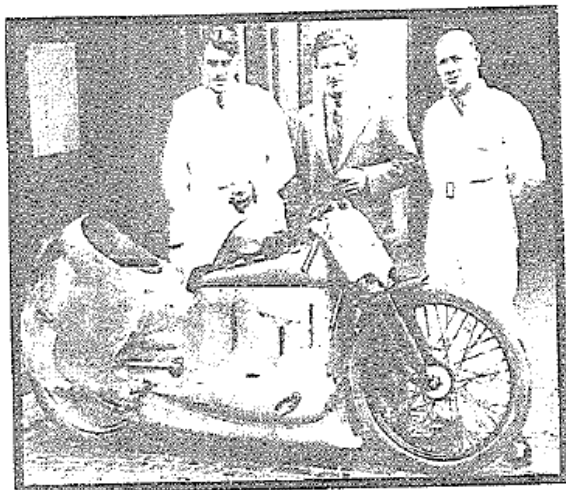


PHIL IRVING

By Rab Cook



This item was provided by Phil Pilgrim. If you have something like this from the past, send it to the editor so we can all share it.



IF YOU WERE riding motorcycles in the good old days when all the best makes had names starting with "V" you'd know all about Phil Irving.

Or if you have been a keen student of Grand Prix car racing you could know quite a bit about him from that angle, too.

But if you have only recently come upon the scene and think that all motorcycles should have three cylinders and two strokes you require education. Phil, you see, was the guy who... well, it's rather a long story so let's start at the start — right here in Australia.

Philip Edward Irving, or PEI as he was always known in the British motorcycle industry, or "Sliderule" as he called himself, was born on May 6, 1903, which means that he'll be 70 next year. The happy event took place in Melbourne, in which city he was educated, attended Melbourne Technical College, and left there aged 18 to work as a draftsman with an outfit called

Left: Irving on a rare beast — the 998 cc Vincent motor is his own design, the bike is an Indian.

Crankless Engines Ltd, which... made crankless engines. He also did stress calculations there, worked in the machine shop and generally got a good grounding in the things you can do with metal when you put your mind to it.

A fair part of his time was spent working under a man called Sherman who, among other things, designed valve gear for Bentley cars, so Phil obviously had good tutors.

After about four years the firm of Granter and Irving was established in Ballarat, selling AJS and Velocette motorcycles. But it wasn't all that good a time to be starting such an enterprise because the area had suffered bad drought and money was scarce. In any case, it was the lead-in to a world-wide depression and when the Victorian Government brought in a moratorium — in effect, a standstill on debts — which meant among other things that nobody could buy on hire-purchase, that rather put the lid on it and the doors closed for the last time in 1929. Phil worked for a while on the design of road rollers with a firm called McDonald and then did a bit for Stillwell and Parry, the Melbourne AJS agents.

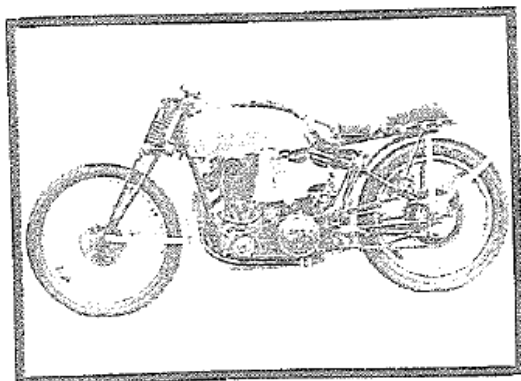
Irving (centre) with Alan Bruce (left) and Arthur Simcock and the JAP-engined Brough Superior — the famous "Leaping Lena".

In 1935 the Series A Vincent-HRD 500 engine came into being. This bike was one of four starters in the 1000 TT of that year.

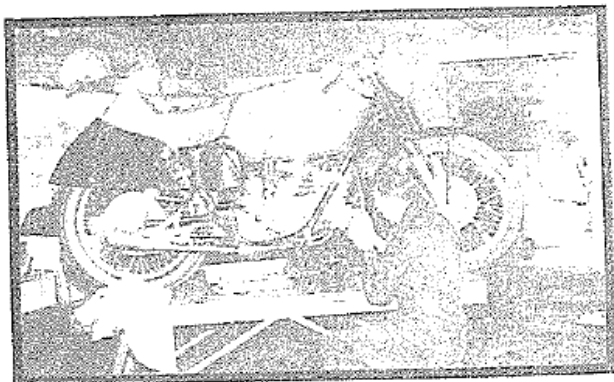
End of Act 1 Scene III. In 1930, an Englishman by the name of Jack Gill arrived in Melbourne riding a 600 cc JAP-engined Vincent-HRD motorcycle with sidecar. He was driving this side-valve outfit around the world to prove something about the reliability of V-HRD motorcycles and since it had been hacked all the way through Europe and a large part of Asia it wasn't in too good shape.

Gill had also shed his passenger because, to quote PEI, "... as I subsequently discovered, he had run out of money, time and patience but not necessarily in that order".

Anyhow, when the outfit left Australia after suitable refurbishing on February 20, 1930, it had a new passenger, Irving, and they ambled off across Canada via New Zealand

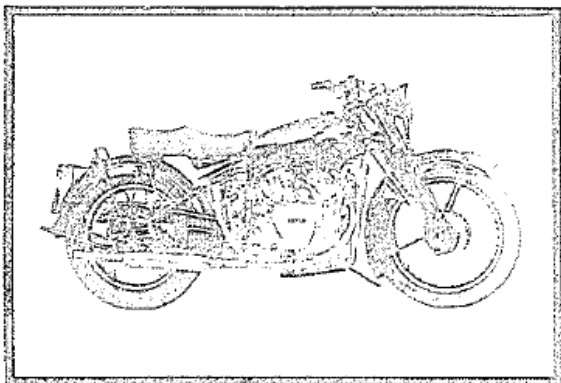


The first of the greats — early supercharged 500 Vincent-HRD racing model

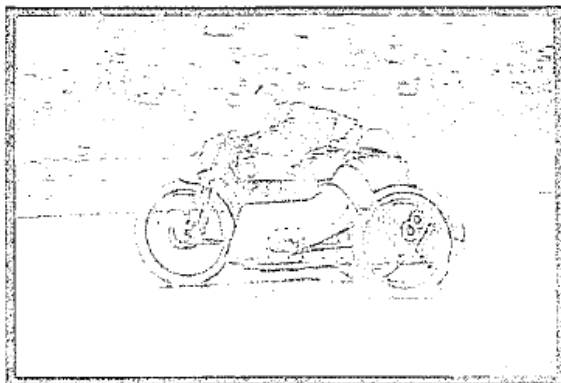


"Old Porker" was designed by Irving as a supercharged powerplant to beat the might of the blown BMWs

The Series C Rapide with 998 cc 50-degree V-twin motor. This design is considered to be the finest of them all.



Banking sidecars — another Irving innovation. Note steep head angle and wheel in chair controlling banking



"...and we didn't hurry. We accepted all the hospitality that was offered and that was quite a lot". They reached England on July 30 of the same year, which makes one wonder how much time they would have taken if they had hurried, and found it even more depressed than Australia.

It isn't recorded what the other Phil (Vincent) remarked when he saw what had come back in his sidecar but there might be some significance in the fact that PEI managed to get a job as a draftsman — with Velocette. He had won two races in Australia on Velos and maybe that helped and, of course, he had at least shown willingness to sell their motorcycles in Ballarat so perhaps they felt a moral obligation.

On the other hand, they maybe thought he was a good draftsman and, knowing the old Velocette set-up, I'd think that would have been the real reason.

But the depression got more depressing and Velo hinted that while they weren't going to sack him, any attempts to find another job wouldn't be misunderstood.

For some reason PEI decided not to take a job at all but to team up with two other Victorians, Arthur Simcock and Alan Bruce, with the object of building a motorcycle to take the world speed record. The offer of sponsorship by Shell helped them along. The machine had a Brough Superior frame, a JAP V-twin engine with Power-Plus supercharger, Burman gearbox, Dunlop tyres and a semi-streamlined shell designed by Irving.

Solo records were attacked on a road in Hungary but it wasn't closed to the public long enough and the intrepid rider, Arthur Simcock, had to dive straight into the timing traps without a trial run.

The first kilo on "Leaping Lena" was at 150.5 mph, which exactly equalled the then world record, but about two-thirds of the distance was covered on one cylinder because the front piston was being burned. Arthur removed the plug and came all the way back as a 500 cc single at 135 mph, which rather suggests a true top speed of over 160 when everything was chiming.

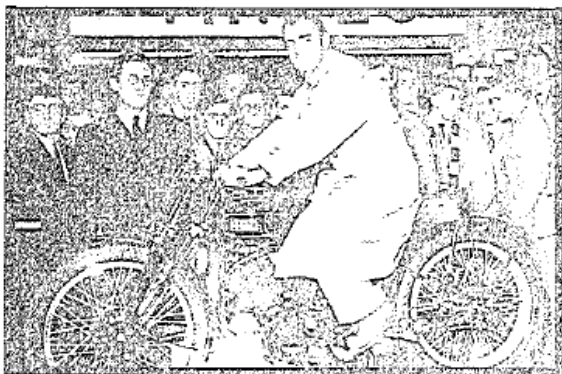
Alan Bruce got the sidecar record at 124 mph with Lena and it is an interesting sidelight on progress that seven years later, in 1938, a speed of 128 — only 4 mph more — was achieved with a Vincent outfit.

With that exploit behind him, Phil went to Vincents, at Stevenage, in Hertfordshire (No. 1 Great North Road, to be exact — in premises which are now scheduled as an Ancient Monument because they are based on England's oldest brewery; in Australia it would be a place of pilgrimage) where his first job was to redesign the welded frames as a brazed-up assembly.

The first fruits of this appeared at the 1931 Olympia Motor Cycle Show with JAP and Rudge engines. Attempts were made on the Isle of Man in 1934, but the engines gave a lot of trouble.

"But not so much," says Phil with a twinkle, "as JAP were having themselves". Anyhow, the outcome of this, coupled with a shutting of the supply of Rudge units, was a sort of: "Hell with it — let's build our own engines."

(Continued on page 71)



Famous men and a famous bike. Fans crowd around a '48 show as film star Alan Ladd tries a Black Shadow.



Aces from both sides of the fence — a word in the ear of Geoff Duke from PEI during the '63 IoM TT.

PHIL IRVING

Continued from page 50

"They can't be any bloody worse" and that was how the Series A Vincent-HRD 500 cc engine came into being.

The decision was made in 1934 and the engines were being sold in 1935 although the factory had little more than milling machines and lathes.

They had four starters in the 1935 TT and "... they did pretty well". The Comet Special was road tested at 94 mph, the fastest road test of the year, and the name of Vincent-HRD gradually became linked with sound, fast and comfortable motorcycles.

The next step was a supercharged machine and anyone who has blown a 500 cc single will know that you have a choice between irregular cylinder filling or else long pipes between the blower and the inlet valves to dampen out the impulses. But if you have that, you have a motorcycle that keeps on keeping on for quite some time after you have closed the throttle, thanks to the mixture in the tube.

Well, many good ideas come about because of a trifling happenstance and that was how the first Vincent Series A Rapide 1000 cc V-twin was born. Phil was sitting at his beloved drawing board and — I must digress momentarily here lest you are unacquainted with the habits of draftsmen. They have this trick of drawing on tracing paper you see. Right then ... Phil was sitting at his beloved drawing board, when he happened to push the top sheet of paper to one side, at an angle, and there, before his very eyes, was a V-twin because there was another sheet with another Comet engine drawing showing through from below.

Of course, V-twins were nothing new but, in this instance it was obvious to the thoughtful Irving that the timing gear of the Comet was such that if a 47½-degree V-twin were built, all the existing timing bits could be used. And that is how a 47½ degree engine was born! The later B and C engines were at 50 degrees because they were designed before the corresponding singles. And no — they weren't 25 degree singles ... In all, 70 Series A Rapide engines were built and they were very much appreciated by the people who bought them, hairpin valve springs and all. They had a top speed of 120 mph.

Then, believe it or not, Irving went back to Velocette to design a rather unusual racing engine which was of 500 cc with twin parallel cylinders, one beside the other, with twin crankshafts geared together. Like an Aerial Square Four sawn through the wrong way and turned 90 degrees.

At the same time he invented and patented the adjustable rear suspension used on Velocettes, which consists of the upper ends of the rear telescopic dampers being adjustable in an arc which doesn't have its radius about the lower end of the damper. In other words, you loosen the upper mounting, slide it along in the curved slot and thus alter the distance from upper mounting to rear wheel spindle.

The parallel twin, the Model O, wasn't gone ahead with (although one was built) because someone started a war and almost overnight Velocette were making aircraft parts and military motorcycles.

Round about 1940, as a sort of relaxation from working on motorcycles — actually, while he was nursing a bomb-damaged knee — Phil did the drawings for what was to become the LE Velocette, with flat-twin water-cooled engine, outstanding quietness, built-in legshields and other goodies. He had already done something along the same lines with the Vincent-HRD Model W which had a water-cooled Villiers XIVA 250 cc engine fully enclosed, legshields and a radiator to keep your knees warm. It had, like all Vincents from an early date, triangulated rear suspension with the spring-boxes under the seat.

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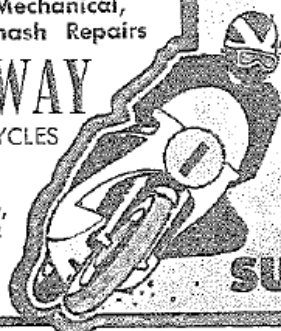
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Next came the Series C which differed in having the Girdraulic front fork with forged alloy blades. PEI was never keen on telescopic forks because of wheelbase variation on bumps and lack of rigidity in sidecar work. But the sidecar is now more or less gone and the wheelbase thing doesn't seem to matter so much as keeping trail constant, but the fact remains that a C Vincent steered like a dream because of the sheer rigidity of the set-up.

A whole range of models stemmed from the B Rapide: Black Shadow, Black Lightning, Meteor, Comet, Grey Flash, Black Knight, Black Prince and Victor. The last three were the enclosed models and PEI had nothing to do with them.

The cylinder heads and carburettors were fiddled about with and they never quite got them right and whereas a C Shadow could be depended upon to do 125 mph, a Prince with allegedly the same power was often hard-pressed to make the 100. It wasn't much of a problem but I'm sure it would never have arisen had Phil still been at Stevenage.

Records fell to Vincents like autumn leaves and perhaps the most spectacular was the performance of one Rollie Free who, attired in crash hat and bathing trunks on an unstreamlined Lightning, did 159 mph on the Bonneville salt flats. They tell me he was quite sane both before and after.

After World War II Phil went globe-trotting. He came back to Australia in 1949 as chief draftsman with the Rolloy Piston Co, where, among other things, he was involved in the design of a flat-twin 6-litre tractor engine, the Chamberlain. Then to Repco Research where he designed a cylinder head that gave FJ Holdens 90 bhp instead of the normal 60, plus racing versions, and there are plenty of these still around.

Today these heads, or complete Repco engines, are in great demand, especially by boating people, and can fetch more than the \$900 the engines cost originally.

Ten years in Australia were followed by six going backwards and forwards to London by sea, never seeing a winter during that time, and writing furiously. Phil has always been a splendid journalist and now he was turning out books: Tuning for Speed, Motor Cycle Engineering, Automobile Engine Tuning, Two-Stroke Power Units, and he is working on another one. He also managed to fit in during one of his stays in London the design of the engine which swept Jack Brabham to world championship victory in 1966 and '67.

This design he started on March 15, 1964, and finished in September of the same year. It was running 53 weeks after pencil was put to paper for the first time. People say that this engine succeeded because it was reliable — sure was, but it also got Brabham pole places time after time, so it was fast, too.

Since then he's been freelancing as a designer (connected with the F5000 Repco Holden engine) and writer and I imagine that another article of the same length as this one could be written about the things that have been left out. Banking sidecars for a sidecar TT that was cancelled, for example.

Today, Phil lives in the house he has owned over the years. It is called "Owl's Rest" because so much midnight drawingboard work was done there — his son Denis named it. It's at Warrandyte, a few miles from Melbourne in the bushfire country. If you were to ask him what activity he is most proud of the answer would probably be, "Everything I've designed I've made and put together myself".

At the age of 69 he looks good for another 20 years yet and that means that a lot of designs are floating about between his ears waiting to be released.

I leave you with a tip-off... keep an eye on Irving, for you never know what piece of mechanical brilliance he will produce next.

And have a good look at your motorcycle and see how many parts of it can be traced to his ideas. *

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Club stalwart and founder Phil Pilgrim has the following **1947-51 Chief** parts for sale:

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=====

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Phil also has (he must be doing a tidy up!) the following **Gilroy parts for a 2002 Chief** for sale.

Individual item prices are listed but if you want the lot, and get in early, he will accept just \$1,500 for the whole lot as a single sale. Again, contact Phil at unionjackmotorcycles@gmail.com.

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