



1959 Royal Enfield Crusader Sports 250cc single. Lovely looking bike and went quite well eventually. This was another hard work restoration, I doubt I will do another but it makes a nice photograph. However, see the Super 5 below

1939 Velocette MSS, 500cc single based on the earlier 250cc MOV model. Originally bought it in 1972 as a box of bits. Has been through several 'restorations' and at one time was my only means of transport. Has now moved on to someone who will give it the restoration it really deserves.





1958 Ariel Colt. A 200cc 4 stroke; badge engineered out of the 250cc BSA and the plunger Bantam. Lovely looking bike and it sounded right to my 17 year old ears when I had one in 1961. Restored this one and used it for several seasons of VMCC events. Incredibly reliable starter and steam engine tickover. Pity it was so gutless

1961 Ariel Leader 250cc 2-stroke twin. Almost certainly not an original colour scheme but it looked ok. A nightmare to restore, as bad as a car with all those pressed steel bits. Handled very well but it needed more tlc than I was willing to give so it moved on to a professional car restorer







First saw this 1964 BMW R50/2 at my local garage. The owner had just imported it from South Africa where it had been fully restored. After months of nagging, it finally became mine for a lot of money. In truth, I did not ride it much as it cost so much and is in such superb condition that I was afraid to use it for my normal VMCC events and suchlike. In the end I guess it just did not give me enough of a buzz to want to keep it so like so many other of my toys it was sold to fund another project. Pity really as every time I look at this picture I drool. For once the reality was even better than the picture.

1971 Puch M125 as it arrived in October 2001. Some electrical bits missing together with dented headlight and bent forks. One of those bikes I had always wanted to try and only the second time I had seen one advertised in over 20 years. Had to buy it as I could not be sure when another one would turn up. Bike is registered as a 1973 model so I will have to talk to DVLC about getting it re-classified.





This is the first M125 after a fitting the engine and headlight from the second bike and a bit more tidying. It now has an MoT and is being ridden on local journeys whilst I find out how reliable it is likely to be. For a 125 the pulling power is quite impressive and it is a handsome bike. The electrics however are somewhat daunting and I have jury rigged them for now. The second bike is being completely stripped and will be painted in the alternate colours of silver with red frame. I have also managed to source enough bits from Austria to rebuild the original engine

Advertising for parts for the first M125 resulted in the purchase of a second M125. This one does at least have 4 working gears and a complete headlight assembly. 10 years of sitting in a barn in rural Wales has given it a patina of chicken manure and a healthy dose of rust but it does have a complete set of documents including a parts book and owners manual. Strangely enough I have also been offered a third M125 quite local to me. I am still agonising over whether 3 is a crowd but as it is a very early model, I am sorely tempted.







This is the second M125 after its winter overhaul. Looks pretty in its silver/red colour scheme which was originally used on the 68/69 models. Only snag is that I cannot get the engine to run. Initially I thought it was carb trouble, but the problem now seems to be ignition. Getting parts is very difficult and it may have to go on hold for while until I can locate a new flywheel magneto assembly. Footnote, fixed the problem in the end, it turned out to be the flywheel which had turned on the central boss. Once correctly aligned and welded in place, it worked perfectly and has been my commuter bike and VMCC rally bike for most of summer 2002 and 2003

1931 Velocette GTP. Actually a 250 single cylinder 2-stroke. Another bike I had always fancied but never owned. Bought from a friend in Gloucester in April 2003. Still having problems mastering the hand gear change and Velo clutch and it smokes like a chimney on fire so some work is going to be needed over the winter. Intended to be my VMCC ride for 2004. Well, that was one promise I did not keep. In the end I decided it was doing nothing for me. I was much happier with the MZs which I am now into in a big way. The GTP went to a collector only a couple of miles away.





Fast forward to August 2006 and a conversation over a pint about an M20 sidevalve BSA I was admiring. The result was a transfer into my garage of a really scruffy collection of parts which were once allegedly a complete VB600 Ariel. As usual, many of the parts turned out to be from other bikes in addition to the bits which were missing altogether. A pleasant surprise was that the engine, frame and gearbox were all as shipped by Ariel in October 1954 according to the Club's dating expert. The picture left was taken in December 2006 on the day it went for MoT. Though it looks quite tidy, this has been more a question of reassembly than restoration. Only the minimum amount of painting has been done where parts were the wrong colour or badly needed something to stop the rust. Once it is sorted (which can only really be done by riding it), I will strip it down and repaint it properly. The engine and gearbox have not been touched and to my surprise it neither rattles, smokes nor leaks much oil. For the eagle eyed, the front wheel is actually from a Norton with 8" brake. Not original but probably a lot better than the original (which I do not currently have) . For the money spent so far I could have bought several nice MZs!! Update, in Jan 07, I finally got it inspected by DVLA and it now has a new age related regn number 174XUB. During the Spring of 2007 I rode the bike in a few section runs and VMCC road trials.

Not sure if I like it or not. Visually it gives great pleasure, it really is a handsome lump. On the road is a different matter. It vibrates horribly over 50mph and leaks oil (I was optimistic in my first assessment) like I have shares in BP. Curiously though it still burns no oil and never smokes. Not sure if its going to stay long term but on the other hand I have no other British bikes these days and there are runs where only a British bike is eligible. Who knows.





I obviously spoke too soon when I said that I would probably not have another Enfield. This 1962 Super 5 came into my possession in early 2009. I was hankering after another British Bike ( a triumph of hope over experience) and could not resist the synergy of the model names with my beloved TS250/1- Supa5. The Enfield is very complete and original and the photo shows it as found. It was exported to the US and spent from 1962 to 1997 in Los Angeles. When the (British) owner died his brother brought it back to the UK and put it back on the road. Then it sat festering for 9 years in a friends shed until I heard about it and could not resist the challenge. It is now running, looking a lot tidier and is MoT'd and taxed. The speedo shows 11k miles which is probably correct. However, it still has a few problems needing sorting before it can safely be ridden any distance on the road. First of these is a monster oil leak from the primary chain case, closely followed by a 5 sped gearbox which will only deliver 4 ratios most of the time, plus a number of neutrals. Watch this space as I get to grips with the beast. Not nearly as pretty as my previous Crusader Sports, in the non original dark Land Rover Grey. The original colour is an even less inspiring light grey more like primer. I am presently researching some alternative brighter colours which came into the brochures in 1963/64 but getting it reliable is the first priority

Well I have to admit defeat with the Super5. I kept it for most of 2009 and got it reasonably tidy. Used it a fair number of times on VMCC events during which it proved to be very poky and reliable in that it never broke down. The handling confort and roadholding provided by the leading link forks was outstanding. I used to deliberately ride through potholes as the forks just seemed to soak them up. However, it was not a pleasant bike to ride in traffic due to the total inability to select neutral. My foot used to be bruised and sore after a run. After several rebuilds to to cure the oil leaks and fitting a4 speed cluster without any improvement, it just had to go.







Something I forgot to mention was that when I bought the Super 5, I also had to buy a Crusader Sports. This was something of a mongrel, having been put together with parts sourced from many locations. The frame was 1960, the engine was a 1962 Continental. I am not sure the tank was crusader at all and the front mudguard was probably BSA. Despite this unpromising combination, after some fettling, it ran well, the electrics all worked, the clutch and gearbox worked properly and it did not leak much if any oil. As I was hell bent on restoring the Super5, the Crusader got a quick and dirty tidy up, an MoT and was sold, (to a guy from Finland strangely enough but that is another story). In retrospect, it was a far better bike than the Super5 from a riding point of view. Anyway by the end of 2009 both Enfields had gone and I seriously doubt I will have another. The picture shows it after tidying and back home after its MoT.

For some time I had wanted an AMC bike to more fully participate in the Jampot Club's Westward Ho night trial ([click on this link for the story](#)). With the departure of the A65, I had some spare cash so went looking. This 1961 Matchless G3 seemed the ideal mount and was purchased from a very nice man in Folkestone, a near 200 miles from home. Only had it a few days and not many miles done yet. Starts easily and runs very nicely with no nasty noises or smoke. Not particularly fast - best cruising speed seems to be 45-50 but makes all the right noises and looks good. Certainly a very handsome bike. Well I kept it for nearly two years and did two of the Westward Ho Night Trials on the bike, I have now sold the bike to provide some dosh for a 600cc twin from the AMC stable which is next on my wish.







And as if by magic, here indeed is Matchless G11 600cc twin dating from 1958 when they were fitted with the shiny alloy chaincase instead of the leaky tin thing. Bought in July 2012 from a Jampot Club member in Leamington Spa. Looks wonderful and sounds even better though getting past horses can be tricky. First ride on a club run of circa 80 miles in September was incident free and I am very pleased with my purchase.

This is 1956 Ariel VH500. It was left to me in the will of a great friend who died in July 2012 but only came into my possession in October once his estate had been settled. It started first kick even though it was very dirty and sad looking when I collected the bike. A day of washing and polishing improved matters no end though there is a lot more I will want to do to the cosmetics over time. It now has an MoT and is taxed ready to ride..





A Francis Barnett Cruiser J45 dating from 1939. Bought with a view to taking part in the VMCC Post Vintage (1930-1945) class in Autumn 2012. Never really got to grips with it and really it was much to low and small for me. Sold it in March 2013 to the guy I originally outbid on Ebay