



W.M.C.C.GAZETTE

APRIL 2025.

Editorial. The AGM is always a time of reflecting on the last year and planning the current one. The Fossilsrun is celebrating 20 years this year, and proving just how our local community benefits from it. On the night of the AGM we heard that the air ambulance had been deployed to our locality and a

short time after attended a stabbing in North End. Proof that charity is not a one way street!

Although having had an association with the club since the 50s/60s, I marshalled at the Hoad and local scrambles, I was not a member of the club. My cousin, Margaret Theobald was going out with some bearded geezer, whom my friends and I, looked up to. Returning to two wheels twenty years ago, I joined the club and went on some of the (old) Fossils runs before volunteering to do an annual marshalling stint. It was nice to bump into Mike Bowley at the AGM. When he was planning the route for the run, he kept the details shrouded in a cloak of secrecy. (we joked that he would have to kill us if we knew the route before the day).

A little while back, the Gazette was in danger of becoming extinct after so many years. I reluctantly took on the role, and at my first committee meeting, said I had "imposters syndrome". I had always turned up at events like the Fossils with no thought for the hours of work that went into the running of these events. Many of those organising it, having worked their magic since the '50s/'60s and '70s!

Gordon White is one of "the few" and now having to give up the manning of the checkpoint below.

The club has for many years, run a control for the ACU National road rally. We are looking for someone to take over the running of this control.

Please contact Gordon on 07846230847 or g.white5775@yahoo.com for more info. The rally this year is Sat. 5th to Sun. 6th of July.

Perhaps someone, not riding, would like to volunteer as a marshal at 2025 Fossil on 20th July!

Summer sunshine! Glorious countryside! A flask of tea, waiting for riders to come galloping over the hill!

Below, Al Straughan, of this parish, on his way to marshalling duties.



And Mr. Wood below.

Alan messaged me in March 2010 to say that he had bought a B31 in boxes. Alongside "the cheque's in the post" and "trust me, I'm a doctor", "the bike was disassembled and put in boxes" could alarm some people. Not Alan! A mish mash of different years and a Triumph clutch, was no problem. The engine, clutch and gearbox were built up from the parts alongside the rest of the bike. I sprayed it in black in good old synthetic (sticky). My Tbird (below), was resprayed black and a Citroen gold base and clear 2 pack three years earlier after being rebuilt by Andy Thayer of this parish, giving me almost twenty years of trouble free riding.

The rebuilt B31 was surprisingly fast and reliable.



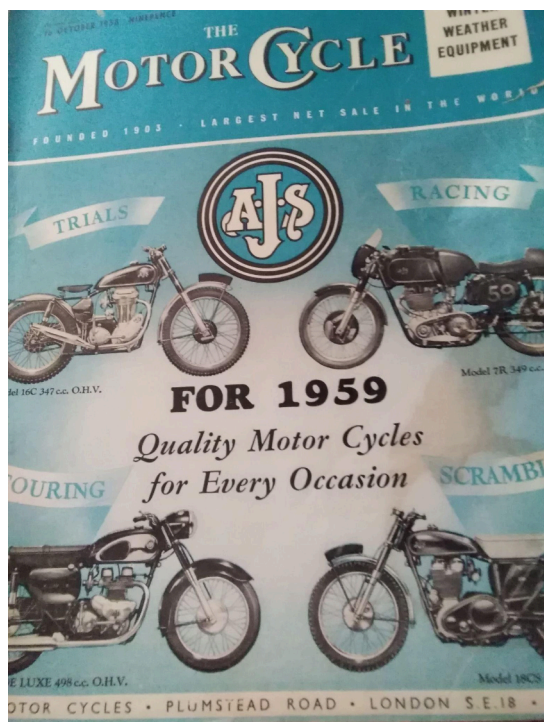
TEA BREAK(NOW).The law is an ass!or,more correctly,as Mr Bumble remarked”the law is a ass”.PerhapstheDVLA is in the same category.Along term prescription of alpha blockers has made me feel a little unsteady on my feet and less confident in solo riding.What about a sidecar on my trusty Thunderbird?A Vincent owners club post said “this is a minefield”. The post went on”I sent the registration document off to alter to sidecar combination. They did not seem to understand the concept,andthought it was a trike and demanded a full engineers report.”

Would fitting a new sidecar alter the “classic” tax status? The DVLA are currently doing a consultation on historic vehicles and the VMCC has concerns that they may alter legislation in line with other countries with tighter legislation on our vehicles.

Would insurance companies infuriate a modern day Mr. Bumble? Confused.com say that fitting a sidecar will usually increase the cost. Back in the day a combination was deemed safer with a lower premium!

Another Bumble bugbear is that, apparently, some companies are classing runs like the Fossils as competitions and not covered.

TEA BREAK(THEN). 1928, "The Autocar" magazine introduced the idea of road tests, starting with the Austin seven. The rev. Bruce also founded our club in this year. Alongside his motorcycling, he may well have used a similar car for parish duties. It was easy to see the push bike origins of a lot of the motorcycles with similar frames and often with a petrol tank underslung from the top rail. Rigid frames with girder forks completed the format. Just 30 years later, and the 1958 range of two wheelers included Triumph Tigress/BSA scooters with electric start and the watercooled LE Velocette! A world away from those early offerings!



Left, the "Motor cycle" mag. Of 16th Oct. 1958 (we don't just throw this Gazette together!) Hah!.

Inside the well thumbed magazine is an editorial putting forward the theory that third party insurance should be managed by the state and collected alongside road tax. Further in the issue - our very own "Hollister"! (you may recall American bikers descending on the town of Hollister for a

“rally”,outraging the residents),andgenerating the “outlaw biker”image and paving the way for Marlon Brando’s“Wild One”.

A night rally organisedby a london club in a small village in the Mendip area,hada check point near houses.The land owner refusedpermission for future gatherings after resident’s complaints.

The Hollister “riot”caused national condemnation of “outlaw bikers”,whereasours probably consisted of a letter in The Mendip Times and muttering in the local post office!

Going back a few lines,perhapsit’s just as well that the state insurance wasn’t adopted-they might have handed it to the Post Office!!

BITS&PIECES.BradSkeateshas been in touch with the organisers of Gosport Rotary club’s vehicle rally at Stokes Bay on Monday 25th August. Bikes can be entered to be judged or just displayed and must be in place by 10 a.m.

Contact the secretary,Penny, at sec.gosportvehiclerally@gmail.com

One of my neighbours has returned to biking and askedme to drop details of the fossils through his letterbox.I thought I’d include an old Gazette with it.Nov.2022 came to hand.Reading it again,Ithought that Irfan Sheik’sarticle would be an inspiration to anyone,having read it,.Bimbling through East Meon,he might think of a RoyalEnfield campaigning through deserts and 12,000 feet up, along Himalayan mountain passes.Inspirational to me are sections on celebrating growing old,the smell of flowers in a park and giving joy to others.

The Rev.BruceCornford would be pleasedthat the torch has been passedalong the generations to members like this.



Bike for sale.

A lady club member's machine.

Just 1200 miles. Virtually as new. With the benefit of tec parts. Much improved gear lever and adjustable handlebar levers. Comes with new GIV hard panniers and frames (not fitted). £2250 for quick sale. Contact Colin Gordon on 02392 632418

Don't forget, if you are thinking of buying or selling, this is a secure way to do it with people you trust.

AMBERLEY MUSEUM ANNUAL M/C DAY MAY 5th.

W.M.C.C. will have a stand there as in previous years.

Members wishing to display their bike contact secretary Sue. on wmcc.secretary@hotmail.co.uk

There is no entry fee, but you are asked to provide

Make, model, year and reg. Ridden or trailered any info about your pride and joy.

Eric Fernihough & Charles Mortimer

250cc Motor Cycle World Records success at Brooklands.

With thanks to the author Cyril James

and also Peter Turnill,

Editor of 'Fishtail', the magazine of the Velocette Owners' Club

On the morning of Friday 11th October 1935 the weather was quite bright and cheerful as Eric Crudgington Fernihough and Charles K. Mortimer had both risen early from their beds. Eric or 'Ferni' as he was often referred to having again listened intently to the BBC radio early morning weather forecast as he had done so for the previous few days. The weather would play an important part in what was to take place on potentially a very special day. After many months of intense preparation an attempt was to be made to set new World Records for a 250cc motorcycle at the Brooklands Circuit.

Other early risers were Richard 'Dick' Chapman and Francis Beart who would meet with Eric and Charles at Brooklands at the pre-arranged time of 7.00am. Also scheduled to arrive early at the circuit was George Reynold the Official Timekeeper appointed by the Auto Cycle Union (ACU) who would be responsible for verifying any new records set. This article records the details of what took place on that momentous day.

Eric, or 'Ferni' as he was known was an experienced motorcycle race competitor who had ridden extensively and successfully in this country and on the Continent in numerous Grand Prix events, but ironically only once as an entrant at the Isle of Man - in the 250cc Lightweight Class of 1927. 'Ferni' together with Francis Beart, Jock Forbes, Noel Pope and Charles Mortimer were 'regulars' at the Brooklands Circuit and it was there, much earlier in 1935, that the idea of an attempt on the 250cc solo motorcycle World Records was first thought of. One day whilst taking lunch in the paddock he mentioned making an attempt on the 500cc sidecar record on the outer circuit. Eric's response was a typically emphatic 'Go for it, lad!'

As it happened Eric also had a plan of his own. As well as his road racing interests Eric seemed to be possessed by an overwhelming desire to break or set speed records and his plan was to set new World Records from 500 kilometres to 12 hours for a 250cc solo motorcycle. That was the initial idea, but more on this later. Due

to his limited experience Charles Mortimer was surprised to be invited to be 'Fernihough's' co-rider and the proposal from Eric was: That he, 'Fernihough', would provide and prepare the bike and each would ride alternate 90-minute sessions up to the 12 hours with fees for the track, timekeeper etc. being shared as also would be the financial rewards should they be successful. If the record attempt was a failure, then Charles Mortimer would be responsible for any costs involved. On the face of it this seemed like a risky arrangement for Mortimer as the bike would need to run continuously for 12 hours, virtually fault free and fast enough, but he readily agreed.

Arrangements had to be made with the Brooklands committee for exclusive use of the circuit and the date of Friday 11th October was agreed. Eric was intelligent enough to know that his aim was very much weather dependent as by late afternoon during the 2nd week of October the autumnal daylight would be fading and this was going to be a problem as the Brooklands track did not have any illumination facilities. The record attempt was scheduled to commence at 8.00am and if all went well, very well, would be completed at 8.00pm in the evening. Should the weather be cloudy and overcast and the daylight diminishing, it would probably be necessary to end proceedings at 6.00pm with records set up to 10 hours.

Eric Fernihough owned a garage with an Excelsior franchise in Weybridge, not far from the circuit and Francis Beart had only recently left his position as assistant to Eric at the garage to be replaced by Dick Chapman. This change must have been completely amicable because for the record attempt Beart would 'run the pits' with Chapman being 'on the spanners' responsible for the mechanical well-being of the bike. The choice of machine was a Cotton with a 250cc JAP engine for this ambitious record attempt and may well have seemed somewhat unusual taking into consideration the fact that the Fernihough garage at Weybridge was an accredited agent for Excelsior models. Apparently three Cotton models had been entered in the Isle of Man TT of that year on which Eric and Dick Chapman had done much of the engine preparation. With Gloucester-based Cotton Motorcycles in their usually precarious financial situation Eric accepted the offer of one of the bikes in lieu of payment from the owner Frank Willoughby Cotton. An added attraction may have been that Eric thought the Cotton frame probably had better road-holding qualities when compared to an Excelsior model.

Between Eric and Dick Chapman a considerable amount of time-consuming work was carried out on the engine including much polishing of the ports in the JAP bronze cylinder head, but a very interesting modification was the replacement of the cylinder barrel, piston and piston rings. The standard JAP cast iron barrel with steel liner was removed and replaced with an aluminium alloy liner-less barrel,

special piston and piston rings all designed and developed by Mr. Roland Cross (1895-1970) at his factory in Bath.

At the time, Roland Cross, founder of the Cross Manufacturing Company, was probably best known as the inventor of the Cross Rotary Valve engine where a cylindrical ported valve (one port for induction and the other for exhaust) mounted horizontally in the cylinder head was an alternative arrangement to a side or overhead poppet valve system. For the previous decade Cross had also used aluminium alloy liner-less cylinder barrels for his engines and, contrary to the opinion of many sceptics, exceptionally high mileages were recorded with unmeasurable wear. A crucial design feature from the ingenious engineer Roland Cross was the almost unbreakable piston rings manufactured by a virtually unique process from high carbon steel wire. A bearer ring was positioned on the skirt of the aluminium piston and this prevented the piston from coming into contact with the aluminium alloy cylinder bore and alleviating wear between the two aluminium components. Of course, there was another advantage in using the Cross-aluminium alloy barrel in that it would be only 1/3rd of the weight of the standard cast iron version. Dick Chapman most certainly had connections to Bath at the time and latterly lived at Box in Wiltshire not many miles from the city. Eric Fernihough also had contacts in the West Country and as such they were both very well aware of the developments of Roland Cross.

When approached by Fernihough evidently Cross was very willing to design and manufacture a liner-less aluminium cylinder and a piston for Eric together with a set of the special piston rings all to be used for the Brooklands record attempt. Although no documentary evidence has been discovered it is generally accepted that Roland Cross provided some form of sponsorship as, after all, World Record success and the resulting publicity would be commercially beneficial for him and his company.

With the Cross cylinder cast it was sent to Messrs. Boneham and Turner at their Mansfield, Nottinghamshire works for bore machining. Although Roland Cross had his own engineering factory, plant and skilled machinists, the work was entrusted to Boneham and Turner who Cross had used on previous occasions as their machining was known to be of the very highest standard and they were capable of meeting the very tightest of tolerances. With the cylinder completed it was despatched to the Fernihough Garage at Weybridge together with the Cross piston and special rings.

On attempting to assemble the cylinder onto the JAP crankcase Dick Chapman was dismayed to find two of the holes at the base were slightly out of line. Chapman was later recorded as saying it took him some time arduously working with a round

file to elongate the holes and fit the cylinder barrel to the crankcase. With the Cross cylinder, piston and piston rings in place and other bits and pieces such as the carburettor and exhaust pipe fitted, it was time to 'fire up' the engine. Unfortunately, the differential effect in expansion between an aluminium alloy cylinder and a cast iron version had not been the subject of consideration and the four studs holding the cylinder pulled from the crankcase as the engine warmed up. Dick Chapman the vastly experienced engine builder immediately realised what was happening and on the second occasion just lightly tightened the studs and the long bolts which passed through the cylinder barrel fins and up into the bronze head. The tappet clearances were reduced accordingly to compensate for the expansion as the engine heated up. With the engine started again it was blowing from the head gasket but as the engine temperature increased the head sealed perfectly and the tappets achieved the correct clearance.

In addition to the engine preparation Dick Chapman was also responsible for much work on the cycle parts and frame. He fabricated and welded a large capacity steel petrol tank so that refuelling stops would be minimised and made the race style handlebars from tube. Metal strips were welded to the frame down tube to strengthen it, and spare throttle and clutch cables were taped in place ready for exchange should either break. Also, the ignition system was sealed to protect it from water should the weather turn inclement. Two sets of footrests were fitted in order that Eric and Chas. Mortimer could change position during their respective stints on the track and a sorbo rubber pad was installed on top of the fuel tank. This would be helpful when the rider was in the prone position and it would also give Eric a degree of protection and comfort to an abdominal scar as he had recently suffered from appendicitis and undergone an appendectomy operation.

The Brooklands Circuit with its concrete surface was likely to cause excessive tyre wear over such a long distance and advice was sought from David MacDonald the resident Dunlop representative at the track. As Charles Mortimer later recalled in his 1974 book 'Brooklands and Beyond' there was concern that the tyres, particularly the rear would not last the intended 12-hour duration and, as the Cotton did not have quickly detachable wheels, a wheel change and the time involved was not an option. MacDonald, a cheerful chap with balding head was affectionately known as 'Dunlop Mac' and usually easily recognised in his white overalls. David, 'Dunlop Mac' recommended that to preserve the tyres holding a steady 80mph would be advisable, but 'Ferni' and Chas. Mortimer discounted this suggestion as it left far too little margin to effectively better the existing record of just over 77mph and the 4-hour record of 77.54mph.

The Cotton/JAP had already recorded a top speed of over 90mph in testing running up to the day, and was certainly capable of circulating at a consistent speed of well

into the mid 80`s and possibly a bit above. Taking into consideration the required pit stops for refuelling and any unforeseen mechanical problems that might arise, this was the speed 'Ferni' and Mortimer decided to aim for and then trust that the tyres would last the distance.

Known for his fastidious attention to detail and meticulous preparation, Eric ensured every nut, no matter what its function, was wired or split pinned. The JAP engine was fitted with hairpin type valve springs because these could be quickly replaced should one break during the day and Dick Chapman had made a special tool for this purpose, just in case.

With the party assembled at the circuit at 7.00am as arranged the final few preparations and adjustments were made. Between Eric and Charles Mortimer it had already been agreed that they would each ride 90-minute sessions. Just before 8.00am the bike was 'fired up' and moved to the start line. Dick Chapman and Francis Beart were ready in the pits with fuel, tools, spare parts and anything else deemed necessary all ready. It had already been agreed that Eric would ride the first 90-minute session and at 8.00am George Reynolds, stop watch in hand gave the signal and said in his usual relaxed, friendly and informal manner "Okay Eric, off you go" and the World Record attempt was on!!



Eric Fernihough & Charles Mortimer

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PART 2:

It is October 1935. We are at Brooklands. After months of careful preparation, the day of the record attempt has finally arrived ...

After the first 90 minutes Eric came into the pits dismounted and Charles was quickly on the bike and away. With the Cotton/JAP and the Crossbarrel, piston and rings running amazingly well and rider changeovers quickly and smoothly executed, the 500 kilometres record was the first to go with a new World Record set at 78.74mph together with the George Reynolds verified time of 3 hours 56 minutes 43.93 seconds. Just under 4 minutes later a new record for 4 hours was set at 78.72mph and although this was success indeed, Eric and George Reynolds were both concerned. The difference between the previous record for 500 kilometres was just 1.21mph and the 4 hour 1.18mph. The margin was far too small and left so little room for any unforeseen problems that Eric realised both himself and Mortimer had to be a bit more enthusiastic with the throttle and reduce the circuit lap times as the previous World Records needed to be bettered by a larger margin.

With Eric and Charles relentlessly hustling the Cotton around the circuit during their respective 90-minute sessions new records were set hour by hour and at the seven-hour stage the differential between old and new record had increased to 2.68mph giving everyone more confidence. Previously, at the 5-hour stage one of the hairpin valve springs had broken and Dick Chapman with his specially designed tool was able to fit a new one in just 30 seconds whilst Francis Beart refuelled the tank. For some reason no one could quite understand, the gearbox was consuming copious amounts of oil and required topping up by Chapman using an oil gun at every pit stop. In comparison the engine oil usage was minimal and this together with the reliability and performance at this stage of the day suggested Eric's approach and subsequent decision to use the Roland Cross aluminium alloy liner-less barrel, piston and special rings was an inspirational idea.

As each hour passed George Reynolds confirmed another new record had been established and not only for Fernihough and Mortimer, but also for everyone involved, total and absolute success was in sight although there was a problem or two beginning to arise.

By 6.00pm in the evening all existing records had been broken with new World Records up to 10 hours having been made. Worryingly, the light was fading and Eric after his recent appendicitis operation was suffering badly from the physical demands of the day. At this 10-hour mark over 771 miles of arduous riding had been completed and although the alternated 90-minute stints provided some respite 'Ferni' and Mortimer would have each spent five hours in the saddle. With the time at six o'clock in the very early evening Eric declared that he was in some abdominal discomfort, exhausted and could not continue. Having set new World Records up to 10 hours Eric was prepared to call it a day which was surprising for someone with a reputation for such determination.

Charles Mortimer was not so easily persuaded to end the attempt and was keen to ride the additional 2 hours. It was then dependent on George Reynolds as without him continuing his time keeping duties there would be no official ACU verification of the 11- or 12-hour World Records. Fortunately, Reynolds readily agreed to stay at the track, but the problem of the quickly-diminishing October daylight was an issue that even the reputedly determined 'Ferni' had no control over. With the decision made that Charles would ride the required final 2-hour session to set records up to 12 hours Eric seemed to regain his enthusiasm. Never one to be beaten he had an idea.

Eric owned a bright red Railton Light Sports car that had a top speed of well over 90mph and he had driven it to the circuit that morning, so he approached George Reynolds and suggested that he could drive the car around the track with the headlights on to illuminate the way for Mortimer on the bike. George Reynolds was understandably apprehensive, after all World Records were being made and there could be no suggestion of slip-streaming or pace-making that would invalidate the records. Clearly, the car must remain behind the bike at all times. After a moment of careful consideration George Reynolds agreed to Eric's suggestion. Mortimer was continuing to lap the circuit and Eric now driving the Railton with Dick Chapman in the passenger seat joined to follow the bike with headlights on 'full-beam'. On this occasion Eric's idea was not so good as with the Railton following behind the bike the headlights created a dark shadow of the rider and bike on the track surface ahead making it difficult and quite dangerous for Charles Mortimer to see safely. Obviously, there had to be another way to illuminate the track for Mortimer to safely continue, and when George Reynolds was approached again, he consented to this second suggestion that the car could drive beside the bike.

Reynolds agreed to this providing the front of the car was never ahead of the front wheel spindle of the bike. It takes very little imagination to realise what a terrifying experience this must have been for Charles Mortimer particularly with the Railton and Cotton motoring at 80mph beside each other on the notoriously steep Brooklands banking. As if this was not enough for Mortimer to contend with, another problem developed when the headlights of the Railton Light Sports car attracted a multitude of Brooklands rabbits onto the track. Collisions with the 'furry' creatures were unavoidable causing several frightening 'tank-slapper' moments, but keeping control of the bike and undaunted Mortimer continued and maintained lap times high enough to ensure that the previous 11 hour and 12-hour records were bettered. The time was now 8.00pm and as he crossed the line George Reynolds' finger depressed the button on the stop watch for the last time.

At 73.09mph the previous 12-hour record had been surpassed by a very comfortable 5.73mph and the Cotton/JAP with the special Roland Cross barrel, piston and rings had almost faultlessly, with just one broken valve spring, covered just over 877 miles. Charles Mortimer cut the engine and dismounted from the bike tired and fatigued but also elated and satisfied at what had been achieved. Apparently, Eric was not one who would outwardly display his emotions although inwardly he must have been absolutely ecstatic as the two riders together with Dick Chapman and Francis Beart congratulated each other on this momentous day. They had achieved everything they had set out to do and a total of 12 new World Records had been made.

Surprisingly, considering the events of the previous day and his discomfort and exhaustion, Eric was at his garage the next morning quite early and Dick Chapman arrived to commence stripping down the engine. The barrel, piston and rings were to be returned to Roland Cross at his factory premises in Bath for detailed evaluation and measurement. Dick Chapman is reported as commenting that the engine was running as 'sweetly' at the end of the 12 hours as it was at the beginning and when dismantled the fine boring lines in the cylinder were still clearly visible. A lesson possibly for those who doubted Roland Cross. Charles Mortimer arrived at the Fernihough garage a little later probably to collect his fee reportedly to be £20 for his efforts on the World Records breaking day. Knowing that Eric had collected the rabbits that were victims of the collisions the previous evening, he asked Eric about them only to be told they had already been sold to a local butcher. Charles Mortimer was somewhat aggrieved as he believed he was entitled to at least a share of the proceeds, but Eric thought otherwise and explained that the bike was in a 'bloody mess' which he had had to clean. Apparently, Eric did relent and Mortimer received £2 as his share of the rabbits. The fee of £20 might seem like a derisory amount of money for Charles Mortimer's World Record breaking efforts,

until calculating that as of today with the inflation over 86 years it would be worth almost £1000.

Unfortunately, no written records can be found in the extensive Cross Manufacturing Company archives that record any dimensional details of the cylinder barrel upon its return to Bath. The barrel, piston and piston rings are treasured exhibits in the company museum and using the most technologically advanced measuring equipment now used by the company today, the maximum amount of wear from the original bore dimension is just 0.0016". In common with all internal combustion engines the majority of this wear can be attributed to the 'bedding in' that takes place during the very earliest stages of 'running in'. Surely, there can be no better endorsement regarding the engineering ingenuity and vision of Roland Cross and his design, manufacture and use of the aluminium alloy for his liner-less cylinder barrels.

Subsequent to the amazing achievements of that momentous day at the Brooklands Circuit aided by the use of the Roland Cross components, 'Ferni' was keen for the relationship to continue, but the problem was the costs involved in casting another cylinder barrel to the record-breaking design. Roland was obviously enthusiastic and decided that to avoid the cost of casting another cylinder the answer could be to machine one from a solid round aluminium ingot. This was done and is generally referred to by the people at Cross Manufacturing as the "Fernihough Mk. II cylinder", although this seemingly hurriedly manufactured barrel had fins that are parallel in diameter from top to bottom as opposed to the conventional tapered shape (smaller at the bottom) of the JAP original and also the Cross version used to set the new records. There was an obvious mutual respect between Eric Fernihough the racing motorcyclist, and Roland Cross the exceptionally inventive and innovative engineer, as a search of the Drawing Records Book from the Cross Manufacturing Company archives, as recorded in longhand is Drawing No. 597 "Detail of Gudgeon Pin for Mr Fernihough's Poppet Valve Engine". Although unfortunately undated this entry is almost certainly from late 1935 or early the following year.

Moving forward through the pages of the Drawing Records Book there is Drawing No. 651 "Detail of Cylinder Base – 250 Poppet Valve Engine (Mr Fernihough)". Although this entry is also undated it is clearly from very early in 1936 just a few months after that momentous day at Brooklands.

Next to be found is Drawing No. 653 and that records "Dirt Track Cylinder (Fernihough) Sketch". On the next page of the book is Drawing No. 677 and most helpfully this is dated as 3rd March 1936 and records "Piston for T.T. JAP

(Fernihoughs)". Dated 20th March 1936 is the penultimate entry on this page Drawing No. 694 "Gudgeon Pin for 500cc D.T. JAP(Fernihough)".

It was in 1936, the year following the World Records' successes, that 'Ferni' sold the Cotton to David Whitworth. another T.T. racer, and photographs of Whitworth taken with the bike clearly show the parallel sided Cross Mk II cylinder in place on the engine. David Whitworth rode the bike in the 250cc Lightweight Class Isle of Man T.T. of 1937 and 1938, but disappointingly is recorded as DNF (Did not finish) on both occasions.

The commencement of the Second World War brought racing to an end for everyone although the Cotton is known to have been owned by Frank Fletcher at sometime during the 1940s. Norman Webb, a former T.T. rider, unexpectedly came across the record-breaking Cotton in the 1950s when he recognised the number 1937 stamped into the frame. Webb subsequently visited Cross Manufacturing Company and tried to purchase the record-breaking cylinder barrel and piston although understandably his offer was politely declined. There is quite a story about Norman Webb's quest to find the ex-Fernihough Cotton record breaker, but that is for another time.

The Roland Cross-aluminium liner-less cylinder barrel, special piston and rings were wisely chosen replacements to the standard JAP components and proved to be a significant part of the World Record success by being both performance enhancing and reliable. As the Cross Manufacturing Company archive records show, it is entirely understandable that Eric continued to draw upon the Roland Cross expertise and use various engine components for some time after the October 1935 Brooklands achievements. One can easily imagine these two quite exceptional men in their own fields becoming great friends as a result of that momentous day.

Sadly, 'Ferni's' desire to make or break speed records was eventually to cost him his life. On 23rd April 1938 in Hungary, whilst attempting to reclaim from German BMW rider Ernst Henne the World Motorcycle Speed Record he had previously held, Eric lost control of the streamlined Brough Superior and crashed into a ditch and wall suffering fatal head injuries. Ferni' was just 33 years of age. Roland Cross would have been understandably shocked and hugely saddened on learning of the tragic loss of Eric Fernihough. Just 30 months previously there had been a much happier time of achievement at Brooklands for Fernihough the remarkable and exceptional motorcycle racer and also recognition for Cross the talented and innovative engineer.

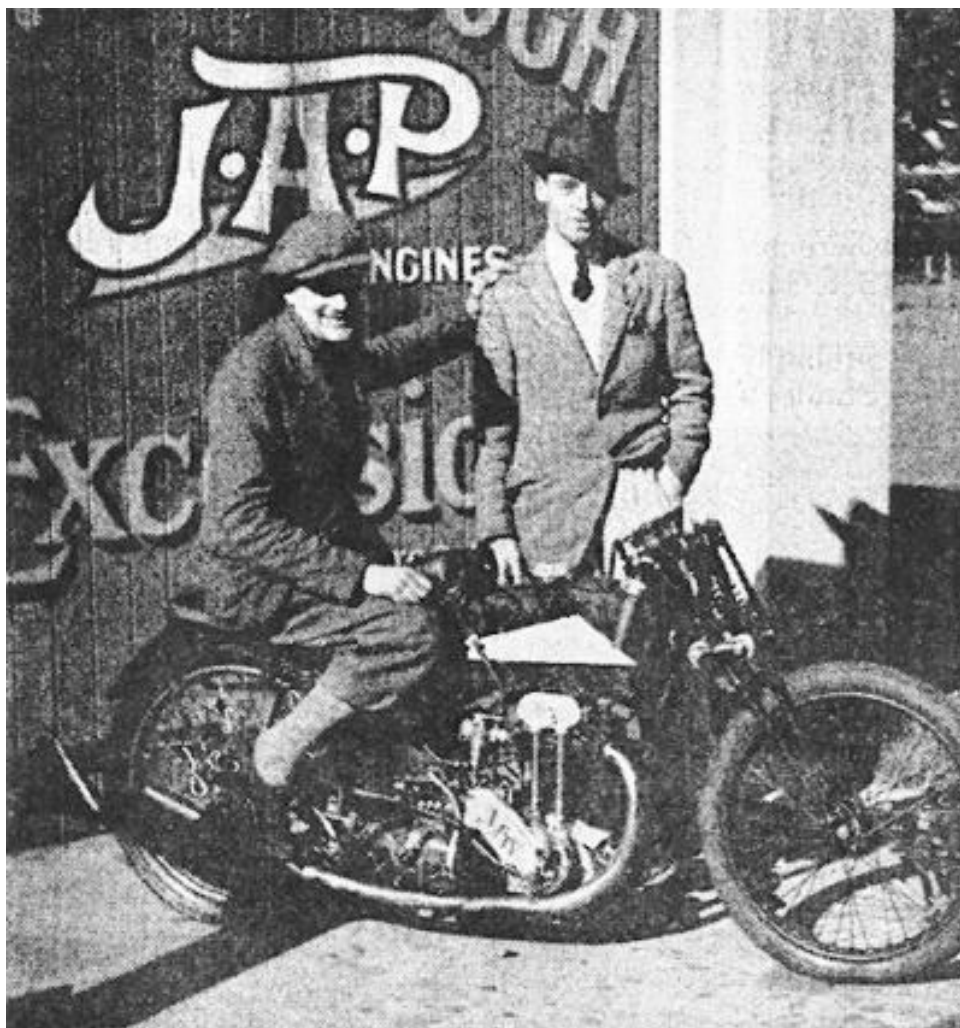
Eric Fernihough sets new record

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1320218801676889>

(copy & paste into browser)

This footage from the Pathé Archive is from the 12th March 1938 race meet at which Eric Fernihough set a new Brooklands flying kilometre record of 143.39mph, just a month before his tragic death whilst attempting to set a new World Land Speed Record in Hungary.

The publicity photo of Eric Fernihough and Charles Mortimer with the record-breaking Cotton taken the day after their success'



List of Records made by Mr. E. C. Fernihough and Mr. C. K. Mortimer on the 11th October, 1935, with 250 c.c. Cotton J.A.P. Motor Cycle fitted with
“CROSS” Linerless Aluminium Cylinder & Piston Construction.

500 Kilometres in 3 hours 56 mins. 43.93 secs. 78.74 m.p.h.
 500 Miles in 6 hours 23 mins. 11.88 secs. 78.29 m.p.h.
 1000 Kilometres in 7 hours 59 mins. 16.49 secs. 77.79 m.p.h.

4 hours, distance covered	314 miles 1526 yards	78.72 m.p.h.
5 " " "	389 " 1160 "	77.93 m.p.h.
6 " " "	470 " 1069 "	78.43 m.p.h.
7 " " "	546 " 354 "	78.028 m.p.h.
8 " " "	622 " 665 "	77.80 m.p.h.
9 " " "	698 " 1702 "	77.66 m.p.h.
10 " " "	771 " 335 "	77.12 m.p.h.
11 " " "	831 " 112 "	75.55 m.p.h.
12 " " "	877 " 177 "	73.09 m.p.h.

(These records being international world's records are of course subject to confirmation by the F.I.M.C.)

The above Records were broken after the engine had been fitted with the—

“CROSS” Linerless Aluminium Cylinder and Piston.

YOUR motor cycle can also be fitted with the “CROSS” system NOW!



On behalf of SERV Wessex I would like to thank everyone within your club for donating £1500. I am truly humbled by your continued & ongoing support, and we look forward to supporting WMCC in future events, when we can, & look forward to the 20th Fossils Run later this year.

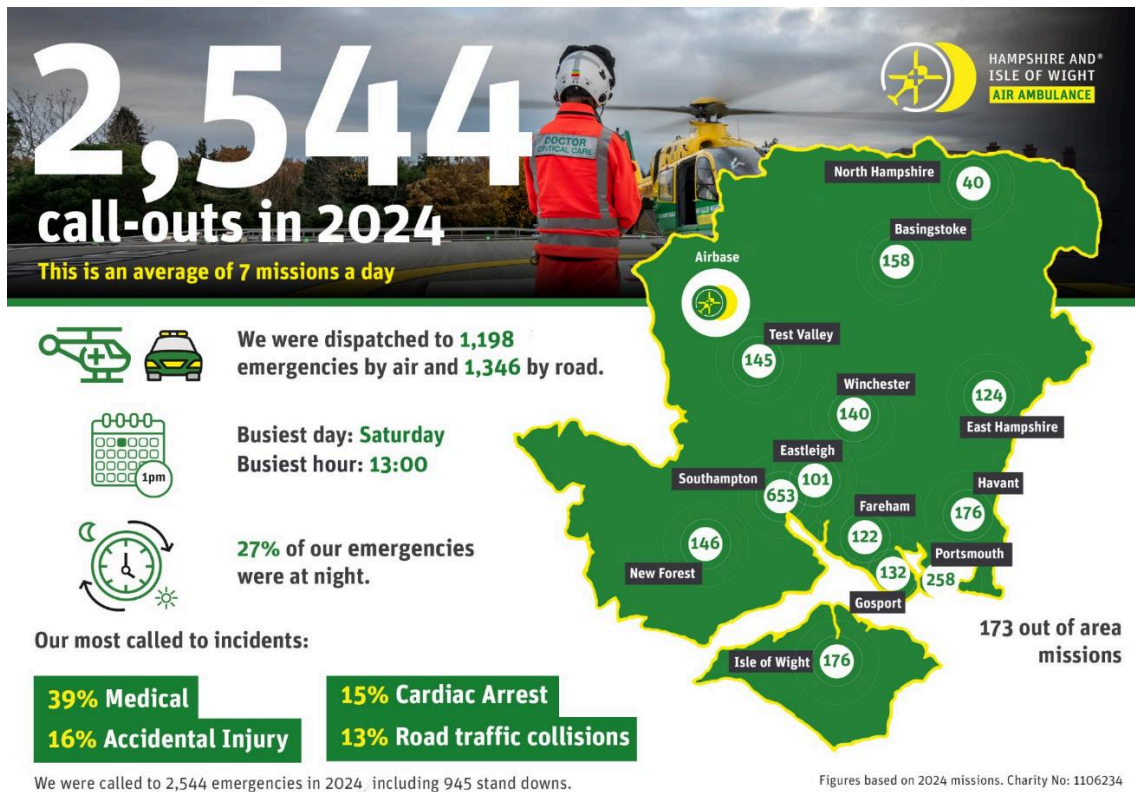
During 2024 we had over 2000 requests to move products from our hospitals. We carried 277 boxes of Human Donated Breast Milk from donor mums to Neo Natal units for premature babies.

Doing these requests 128,000 miles were covered by our volunteers, of which 33,000 miles were done just replenishing the fresh blood carried on the Hampshire Air Ambulance, which involved moving 1100 boxes.

Your donation will mean our volunteers can cover 6,250 miles at no cost to themselves. The majority of these requests are done at night and at no cost to the NHS.

Thank you one & all,

Tim Bennett SERVWESSEX



We are once again humbled by the support shown year on year by WMCC. Thank you to every member who played a part in raising funds, whether you bought a burger at Fossils, put some coins in a pot, or sourced sponsors for the event.

I had a stark reminder of the importance of the air ambulance this week, when a life-threatening assault occurred outside my house in Portsmouth. Thank to you and other supporters, the crew landed via helicopter and gave the victim a fighting chance.

Patients and their families rely on your support, now more than ever.

Your latest gift will cut emergency response times to Waterlooville, from 17 minutes to just 8. Some patients cannot hold on for 17 minutes. Thank to you, we're now a third of the way towards the life-saving move to Southampton Airport. With your continued support, we aim to be operating there this time next year.



Southampton MAG & Hunters Inn One day bike show



**Sunday 25th May 2025
From 11am to 4pm**

Everyone is Welcome

Prizes for Best Bike and more...

Traders needed at £20 per pitch

Information & Trade Enquiries

Rose: 07954420210 or Jeff: 07554213569

Location: Hunters Inn, Swanmore, SO32 2PZ

18:04





WATERLOOVILLE MOTOR CYCLE CLUB

Affiliated to the Southern Centre Auto Cycle Union

THE FOSSILS CHARITY

20TH BIKE RUN

Horndean Technology College, Barton Cross, Horndean, Hampshire
PO8 9PQ

IN AID OF HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT AIR
AMBULANCE & SERV WESSEX BLOOD BIKES
FOR BIKES AND RIDERS OF ALL AGES

20TH JULY 2025 – SAVE THE DAY

For more information:

Website: www.waterloovillemotorcycle.club.

Email: wmcc.secretary@hotmail.co.uk



Waterlooville Motorcycle Club



HAMPSHIRE AND
ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE

