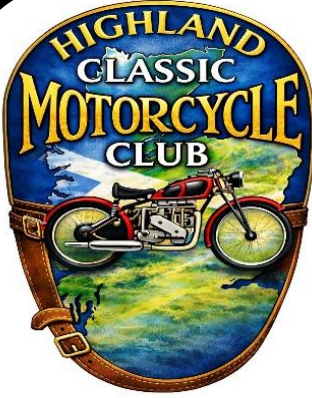




July 2026

Helmet & Goggles

The Newsletter of the Highland Classic Motorcycle Club

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Willie Urquhart's much admired 1954 BSA A10 Golden Flash at the Loch Ness Rally. It was deservedly the Riders' choice for the Belhaven Best of the Best trophy. A lovely bike in almost original condition, a great example of the classic era and one of the first swinging arm A10s.

June was another busy month with the Loch Ness Rally and a couple of club runs. The Club also attended the Dallas Gala with a 'Bikes Through the Ages' display.

Pictures from the Loch Ness Rally have been copiously distributed on Facebook and WhatsApp and it now seems ages ago but here's a few reminders of some of the sights.



Left: This one might have qualified as the best Bitsa with an AJS frame, Norton engine and gearbox and Kawasaki front end!



This BMW special has transparent rocker covers.



Step-throughs (left) are becoming popular as are MZs (below). This one is a late model 250cc.





Not all the nice bikes were in the rally. This lovely BSA Shooting Star (left) was only a spectator – a pity.



Right: No show would be complete without a Triumph Trident. This immaculate T150V would have been one of the last produced in BSA's factory in Small Heath. How does the owner keep the oil inside the engine?



The Chairman's Laverda - left.

Below - Winton Campbell's Z as immaculate as ever.



There was an excellent turnout with 92 entries on the day. A donation will again be made to the Forres and Nairn Riding for the Disabled from the proceeds of the raffle.

Raffle Winners:	£200	Andy Loosemore
	£100	Colin Rose
	£ 50	Bert McKay
	Whisky	Garry Inglis

The full list of trophy winners is included at the end of the newsletter.

The following weekend was the Tiddlers Run organised by Paul Marrs from Muir of Ord up and down Strath Glass and around the local area stopping at the Old Post Office at Kiltarlity for lunch. This is now a regular thing with the Old Post Office staying open especially for the club event.



Quite a variety of bikes on the Tiddlers Run. All shapes and sizes!

And then there was the Club Run at the end of June. Can there be a busier club than this one? On his leadership debut Scott led the group from Forres along the coast to Lossiemouth and eventually to Dufftown station for lunch. Then to Tomintoul and back to Grantown and over the Dava to home although the map he posted seemed to show the run ending at the turn off to Aitnoch farm on the edge of the Dava moor.

Right: gathering for the start.





Above: Scott putting on a brave face before leading. How did he do?



Left: Tomintoul main street.



Above: That Africa Twin looks seriously tall. Nice colour scheme.



Left: Covetable Z650 at Tomintoul.

Then there was the Dallas Gala at the beginning of July where the club has for some years now put on a show of 'Bikes through the Ages.' This is always good fun and this year the word has spread as there were lots of bikes from other local groups. Over 30 bikes in all with around a dozen from HCMC and some from the Mischief MCC and others from the Elgin area.



But this event is not about the bikes but about the sights and here are some of them.



There were crowds of people there even though the Forres games were being held on the same day and in spite of a forecast of rain which didn't arrive until near the end.





This was best picture I could find of the Gala Queen and her entourage courtesy of Dawn Blackmore. I was distracted watching Andy Loosemore trying to get his Panther started. The chauffeur was a very distinguished gentleman with genuine scrambled egg on his cap!



Lots of attractions including country dancing, pipe band and trapeze artists.

And tractors and stationary engines from yesteryear.



This one was working fine until a few moments before. The owner looks puzzled.

Below: the Grand Finale was as usual a hilarious spectacle involving an enactment of a football match between the Dallas Cowboys and the Scotland national football team. It was a laugh a minute.

The teams arrived on a bus led by a couple of cheerleaders played by two local beauties.



The teams emerged and lined up for the game. Scotland was represented by Rod Stewart, Billy Connolly, Rab C Nesbitt, Graeme Souness and Nessie who arrived separately in her own customised water-filled trailer.



The referee was Douglas Ross. Donald Trump who can be seen in the background of the line-up was there to ensure fair play (he knows about these things apparently).

The final score cannot be revealed here as I was unable to stay for game itself but it probably doesn't matter anyway. A great time was had by all who attended.

The entertainment at the July club meeting was a talk by Ken Stoll on his admirable Vincent Comet which he brought into the meeting room. His PowerPoint presentation is reproduced below because it was impossible to leave anything out. The chopstick referred to is the dipstick he used down the spark plug hole to position the piston – it broke off inside necessitating some dismantling of the engine to remove it.



Welcome to the story of my
1950 Series C Vincent Comet
OPE836

The early days ...

- OPE 836 is a 500cc single cylinder C series Vincent Comet and was registered on 1st July 1950
- The supplying dealer was Millars Motors of Mitchum, Surrey
- Alistair was the 1st owner however. He sold the bike in '57 when he'd saved to buy a Vincent Rapide.
- The bike subsequently moved to South Wales in 1959 (my birth year!) and stayed local until I did a part ex deal with the last owner against my 1960 BSA Super Rocket



Improving things ...

The bike was fairly standard and had matching numbers on the upper frame number, the lower frame number, each engine case and the timing cover – all these matter to some of the Vincents.



Improving things ...

- It being "fairy standard" extended to the original Amal 229 1"carb which didn't feel like was flowing enough air / fuel mixture so swapped this for a new Amal 1 3/16s 389 that I bought new for BSA but never fitted it – it ran much stronger
- The ignition fitted was originally fitted with a D series Rapide coil ignition but pinked under load and gave condenser problems so was replaced with an electronic ignition system that sits behind the front cowl.
- Some things to notice on a Vincent is that they have 4 x drum brakes. Mine is fitted with rare vented racing front brakes which are good even in today's mad traffic!
- Interestingly – PCV invented and patented rear cantilever suspension in 1928 or about 50 years before the world caught on!

Did you know that 99% of spare parts remain available from the Vincent Spares Company



Breaking things ...

- 2025 T A M run I intended riding up to Dochgarroch but young Vincent was sounding a bit tappety ...
- The Chopstick of doom ...
- Correcting it resulted in a major strip down which includes separating the front end from the rear end to remove cylinder head.
- A relatively straight forward process they say ...
- The rider's handbook states that "a competent motorcyclist be able to achieve separation in 15 minutes"!!



Insert swear words here!

Finding things ...

- Lifting the head off lead to a few discoveries ...
- Series B cylinder head fitted. 1949 ~ '50 was crossover from B to C model range but series B heads cast of superior alloy
- Cast Omega 8.5:1 piston crown standing proud of liner (evidence of cylinder deck skimming)
- Excessive piston to bore clearance with evidence of minor piston seizure
- Pushrods and adjusters, rocker arms, valve guides, cam followers and camshaft all worn out of specification
- Worn cam chest bearings
- Unknown maker larger inlet and exhaust valves
- Ported and polished inlet & exhaust ports
- Exhaust port thread partially stripped



Fixing things ...

- Sent top end to Vincent engine specialist for inspection and engineering re-work
- Exhaust port strengthened and new thread inserted
- Polished port refinished for better gas flow. 4 x new valve guides fitted along with new rocker arms (valves in spec)
- Original Mk2 camshaft Stellite treated and reground to original spec, interference fit to camwheel and fit new bearings using factory tooling
- New forged Omega 8.5:1 piston and liner bored to correct spec and fitted with 0.60" compression plate to reduce compression to 9.75:1.
- Supply new pushrods, adjusters, cam followers, timing chest bearings and thrust washers.
- Assemble clinically clean components using ZX1 anti friction coating and ThreeBond 1215 silicone liquid
- Midlands Vincent specialist set up cam timing using dial test indicator method (there are no reliable timing marks on Vincents!)
- Builder advised high compression piston matched to big valve polished cylinder head, carb and Mk2 performance camshaft with open Burgess exhaust would likely yield similar horsepower to Grey Flash at around 34BHP up from standard 28 BHP.

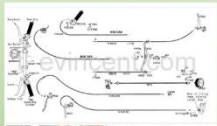
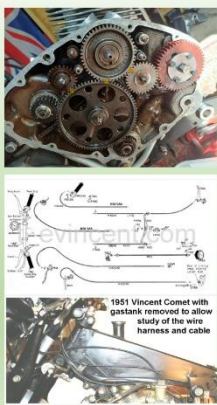


A big job's broken out ...

- While the engine work was being performed, I decided to check the rest of the bike out.
- New tyres & tubes were fitted along with new brake shoes
- Powder coated some of the cycle parts
- Rewired the whole bike from 6v to 12v (Vincent don't do coloured wiring diagrams so this consumed a lot of time to get it right!)
- Fitted an Alton 12v generator to replace Lucas 6v in case I go down the electric start route.
- Fitted BTH self generating electronic ignition for reliability of starting and running high comp engine (ignition retarded to 34DBTDC from 39 – runs e10 fuel no problem).
- Fitted new dampers front and rear
- Rebuilt Girdraulic forks with new shims



Going back together ...



Loch Ness Rally 2026
Club Trophy Winners

<u>Trophy</u>	<u>Entry #</u>	<u>Motorcycle</u>	<u>Rider</u>
Milburn Shield: (Oldest Motorcycle)	1	1916 Triumph LW Junior "Baby"	J. A. Lloyd-Moss
McKay Shield: (Oldest Rider/Oldest Motorcycle)	1	1916 Triumph LW Junior "Baby"	J. A. Lloyd-Moss 179 Years
Eric Stevens Trophy: (Youngest Rider/Oldest Motorcycle)	14	1956 Matchless G3	John Adamson
Loch Ness Shield: (Longest Distance Travelled to Rally)	5	1939 Francis Barnett 47 Seagull	Alan Summons 560 Miles
Fraser Shield: (Best Club Entry Pre-1965)	7	1948 BSA M33	Miles Stubbs
Claude MacKenzie Trophy: (Best British Motorcycle up to 250cc)	17	1959 James Captain	Simon Freeman
Stewart Shield: (Best Two-Stroke Motorcycle)	65	1981 Yamaha RD250 LC	Simon MacKenzie
HCMC Memorial Trophy: (Best Non-British Motorcycle)	36	1974 Moto Guzzi 850T	Scott Muir
The Bent Conrod: (Rider & Motorcycle with Most Character)	19	1959 Messerschmitt Cabin Scooter KR200	Ronald Menzies
Belhaven Best of the Best: (Voted by LNR Entrants)	11	1954 BSA Golden Flash	William Urquhart

Loch Ness Rally 2026 Concours Trophy Winners

	<u>Pos</u>	<u>Entry #</u>	<u>Motorcycle</u>	<u>Rider</u>
<u>Veteran/Vintage:</u>	1	1	1916 Triumph LW Junior "Baby"	J. A. Lloyd-Moss
pre 1930.	2	3	1929 Panther 500	Andy Loosemore
	3	2	1928 Triumph NP	Gordon Williamson
<u>Post Vintage:</u>	1	6	1941 Indian 741-B	David Crow
1931 - 1945.	2	5	1939 Francis Barnett 47 Seagull	Alan Summons
	3	3	1936 AJS Model 2 (Conv to OHV)	Sid Leitch
<u>Post War:</u>	1	8	1950 Vincent Comet 500 Series C	Ken Stoll
1946 - 1955.	2	7	1948 BSA M33	Miles Stubbs
	3	12	1955 Vincent Black Shadow Series D	William Williams
<u>Early Classic:</u>	1	17	1959 James Captain	Simon Freeman
1956 - 1965.	2	23	1962 Triumph 5TA	Paul Marrs
	3	18	1959 Velloccette Venom	Colin Barclay
<u>Classic:</u>	1	36	1974 Moto Guzzi 850T	Scott Muir
1966 - 1975.	2	33	1972 Triumph Bonneville T120 R	Miles Stubbs
	3	32	1971 Yamaha XS1 650	Tommy Sanderson
<u>E. Mod. Classic:</u>	1	65	1981 Yamaha RD250 LC	Simon MacKenzie
1976 - 1990.	2	63	1980 Triumph Bonneville T140	Donald Morrison
	3	44	1976 Honda 550 Four	Billy Mutch
<u>Modern Classic:</u>	1	85	2001 Honda VTR1000 SP1	Stephen Porter
1991 - 2006.	2	83	1998 Triumph Thunderbird Sport	Inus LeRoux
	3	82	1996 Honda XRV Africa Twin	John Ross
<u>Special:</u>	1	97	1979 BMW R80	Cameron MacDonald
Up to 2006.	2	95	1970 MacKay Special	Robert MacKay
	3	98	2002 Ducati 851 Replica	Derek Gunn

Send your news and views to the Editor at: msdavidson50@gmail.com.

The Editor reserves the right to edit the articles included. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the HCMC.

(but I will reproduce almost anything)

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