



THE AYR CLASSIC NEWSLETTER July 2022

ISSUE 248

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From the Editor

Since the last newsletter where I mentioned that I had hurt my back, I finally managed to get out on the Trident on the 11th July. Four weeks of pain had left me as a passenger. The first ride out though reminded me of how bad the roads are in Ayrshire are as I hit a number of potholes that jarred my back, but not enough to detract from my enjoyment.

In the garage I have refitted the re-chromed rear mudguard to the 1972 A65. With fresh fuel in the tank it started first kick. Amazing! It has never done that in 30years of ownership. Something is obviously going to break.

The club has two additional events in August that require support from our members. The first is on the 21st August and is the opening of Allan Niven's new venture, an American Diner style café located at the old Co-op building, Galston. The second is on the 28th and we will be attending a vintage rally at the Doon Valley Railway, Waterside. Further details for both will be issued shortly.

Many thanks to David Rowell, Nigel Wanless, David Wilson, Owen McGeary, David McLeman, Alistair McQueen and Drew Robertson for their run reports and articles this month.

Paul Wilkinson

(Front cover: The Shipbuilders of Port Glasgow)

Club Member of the Month

Name - Doug Harvey

Club Position – Member Age - 76

How old were you when you bought your first bike? – I bought my first motorcycle at 16 years old

What was it? - A 1958 Velocette Valiant 200cc.

Do you still have it? – No, it was traded in for a 1957 Norton Dominator 600cc, which I later converted to a Triton using a 500cc Triumph Grand Prix Engine

What do you currently ride? – Stopped riding about 5 years ago due to dodgy hips and sold my 2015 BMW R1200ST



How long have you been a club member? - Member for approx. 20 years,

What is your favourite club event or memory? — Getting best in show with my 1965 BSA Spitfire Hornet



What is your favourite motorcycling memory? – Watching John McGuiness break the 130mph lap record at the centenary Isle of Man TT,

Any other information – My collection peaked at 13 bikes and was very varied from a 1937 Coventry Eagle Silent Superb to a year 2000 Ducati Mike Hailwood Evolution MH900E.



I still have my 3 favourites, 1957 Velocette Valiant, 1965 BSA Spitfire Hornet, 1966 BSA Spitfire Mk2 Special. Once a biker always a biker.





Ayr Classic Motorcycle Display at Burns Museum, 25th June (The Mooserider Heads South) – Nigel Wanless

The following is a day in the diary of the Mooserider (explanation follows!).

Up early and well prepared and Fred the Dog duly walked (he produced well, in his regular way). Motorcycling togs on and a quick squint out the window saw the heavens renting asunder all of a sudden. B@@@er that, methinks, I'll wait for it to pass... And it did pass, eventually. Knowing I was not going to be my usual early arrival self, the '47 Moto Guzzi Superalce 500 single was wheeled out the garage, fuel on, and started second kick for a warm up before setting off on still very wet conditions under-wheel. 'Alce' is Italian for 'Elk', or 'Moose', and the MG Supermoose is an apt nomenclature for this substantial, sturdy, reliable model.



With the 500 single firing 'every second lamp post' we thumped off to Alloway from West Kilbride into the teeth of a somewhat brisk southerly wind. The still early hours meant a relatively quiet traffic experience and machine and rider arrived at the Burns Museum where the majority of members had already mustered. There was immediate interest in my trusty steed. The word 'quirky' was bandied about in profusion as experienced motorcycling eyes studied the Superalce. Could it be the equally-exposed valve-gear?, or the exposed bacon-slicer flywheel?, the rear passenger handlebar?, the unusual rear suspension with underslung damping (a la Buell of modern-day design)?, the sturdy big-foot side-stand appearing as if it had been directly purloined from the Forth Railway Bridge? – or maybe it was a combination of all these and more.

Duly parked up on the grass, it was a delight to meet up and chat with Ayr Club members, many of who I've not seen for some time due to the dual effect of heavy workload and a

certain pandemic. 21 machines were laid out for the public to view and the day progressed well from a blustery overcast start (the Club table blew over a number of times before the idea was abandoned) to a warm sunny afternoon. There was a second display of machines in the car park (just like our normal Shows!) as fellow motorcyclists came and went. My favourite of these had to be the early 70's loop-frame V7 Guzzi – anybody know who the owner is?



The Museum facilities were well used, their flat whites were scrummy, as was the Clootie Scone (thanks David W!) although the staff appeared to struggle with some food orders (sorry Steve M!).

It seemed in no time at all that man and machine had to prepare for the trip home. With the Moose off its side-stand and onto its equally-substantial centre stand, all present, it would seem, gathered to watch the starting procedure. Of course, the inevitable happened and a stall was incurred. Back on to its stand and (eventually) back into neutral, the Moose did not start first or second kick and its owner was having thoughts of personal overheating, helmet and leathers off etc. But no! the Moose mercifully started (3rd or 4th kick?) and we chuffed off, daring not to look back to see any belly-laughing. The journey home was busier, with many passing cars producing curious looks from within at the old-timer machine and its rider, sporting a daft grin on his open-faced helmet visage. With a trailing wind we sailed home to West Kilbride after what had been a fabulous day.

For the record, those valiant Club members in attendance on bikes were: Nigel Wanless, Niall Sommerville, David Wilson, Robert Mitchell, Ken Robson, Brian Ballie, Ricky Leiper, Owen McGeary, Stuart Miller, Billy Kirkpatrick, Campbell McCreath, Robert Faulks, Russell McBride, Steve Mosyton, Kevin Wood, David Anderson, Robin Campbell, Gordon Hallett and Kenny Collins.

Well done to them all – as a classic bike club it's great to see the 15+ years old machines out getting used.





Thank you - Niall Sommerville

Thanks to all who managed to support the club at the recent display. A respectable turn out and decent weather, if rather blowy. It was a testament to those members that they turned up early, got things in place and cleared up afterward. It was very well received by the Museum staff and I had a comment that nobody would have known we'd been there after we were all cleared up. Well done everyone.

Thank you - Ayrshire Hospice

The club collected monies during the display and a cheque for £54.10 was duly donated to Ayrshire Hospice. A very nice letter of thanks was received by the chairman.

The Sculptor's Oldest Apprentice (Part 2) - David Wilson

Another interesting aspect to sculpting is casting, so I was pleased to be involved when John asked for assistance to cast some bronze in his foundry he set up back in 2006. (John ran courses in bronze casting for several years) I learned about ceramic shell creation and bronze casting which involves temperatures of 913-1082 degrees Celsius. It is all about safe working with extreme heat, using team orchestrated manoeuvres; the lost wax technique being more complex than any of the sand-casting aluminium we had done with students at school. I realised what a range of skills are involved in a sculptor's work. On that occasion, we cast a life-size Jersey calf.







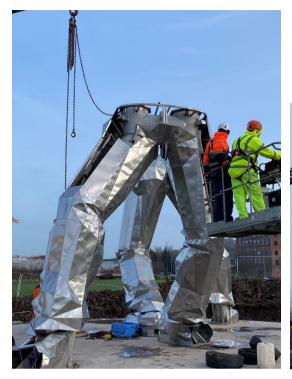
For other works, I got the job the job of transporting the fibre glass moulds of Khan the dog and a WW2 sentry to the commercial foundry Castle Fine Arts Foundry at Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant, North Wales. (Yes, we did need the satnav to find the place!)

Six busy years after my metal shoe-making career began, the lorries arrived at High McGowanston to transport the shipbuilder sculptures to Port Glasgow.

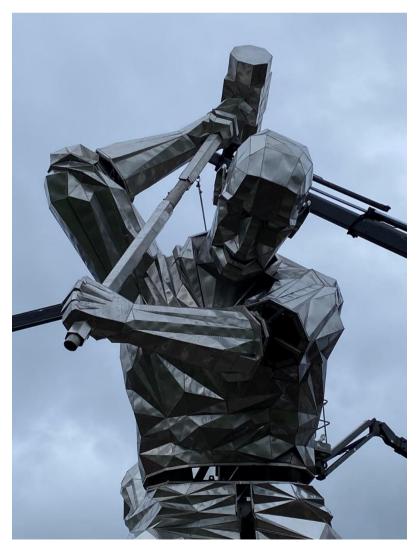


This year, I had a fun-packed February week dodging the weather while helping to install the giant figures. Despite the weather, it was my good fortune to see the Shipbuilders of Port Glasgow finally home where they belong. Just as in the shipyards, workers are not long in labelling their mates with nicknames. Soon the giant sculptures were nicknamed the Skelpies.

It has been such a privilege to work on creating these sculptures which will last for generations to come.







Something Completely Different - Paul Wilkinson

Once you have finished installing a new state of the art kitchen in your home, what do you do to pass your time? Well if you are John Hay Snr, you attach a small petrol engine to an old bicycle that you have lying around and create a motorbike very much in the style of the original pioneers of 120 - 130 years ago.

John explained that while trawling the internet one day he had spotted brand new engine kits that could be attached to a bicycle. He thought he could have a go at this and all he

needed now was an old bicycle. He duly discovered a Viking mountain bike lying in some bushes behind his son-in-law's house. The complete kit, comprising an 80cc two stroke engine with exhaust, petrol tank, clutch lever, throttle, rear wheel sprocket, chain and guard were bought from eBay for only £62. Although it was manufactured in China it only took two weeks to be delivered. A few days and it was ready for the test ride.



John explained that in July 2021 the law changed in the UK and this arrangement is legal, as long as the engine is below 100cc and the pedals still work. Prior to then it would have been illegal.



He says he did it "Just for fun" and that if the police stop him, well he is 85 and what can they do to him?



Tiger Rally, 2nd July - Owen McGeary

The morning of the show was overcast and the weather forecast was not the best. I had collected the club Gazebo and banner etc, earlier in the week from the club storage. Looked out bits and pieces for my autojumble stall and put the awning on the van, to give us some cover from when the rain started, not if LOL. Jim Young and Ian Howie were coming to my house at 8.30am to assist with the stalls. Jim and Ian would take the van to the show while I rode my 1974 Trident T150.



On arrival at the rugby club there were only another 4 or 5 stalls setting up shop. With Jim and Ian's assistance we soon got the club stand and Autojumble stalls set up. The Show started at 10.00 and the showground was nearly deserted at that time, and I did think that was going to be it, how wrong can you be. By 11:30 the showground was packed with more still coming in.





Jim Fulton and Alex Crawford arrived earlier, Jim on his BSA and Alex on his BMW special with Davy Anderson and Robin Campbell arriving by car. I always enjoy my Autojumble stall, to be honest selling anything is an afterthought. It's more the social aspect of it. We always have a great "crac" with everyone and catch up.



David Rowell and a few other members showed up later in the day. They had been out on a run beforehand. Alex Crawford also won an engineering award for his BMW special - he will be needing a bigger shelf in the house soon. There was quite a heavy rain shower around 2:30 and I thought the showground would be empty, but no, people seemed not to mind and were busy enjoying themselves.





The show ended at 4pm, a great success. Yes, I sold a few bits and pieces, but we all agreed it was more the time spent chatting and laughing with friends that made the day. Looking forward to the next one

Ad-Hoc Club Run 3rd July - David Rowell

We got rained off last week, when our scheduled run to the the Glenbuck Heritage Village was meant to happen, so we elected to try again today. It was dry but still overcast this morning, Jim Hamilton and Brian Bailey got to Cumnock before me, then John Stewart joined us. I was hoping to see more members on Sunday, but quite a few of them got 'wet' on Saturday, at the Tigers event.



In my worklife the A70 was almost a weekly commute for me and it turned out that Jim shared my experience, thankfully travelling by motorcycle without the prospect of customers, or dealers ahead was still an enjoyable experience. The 'lost village' memorials were jointly funded by East Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Mines Restoration Trust, while the shrine to Shankly was funded in part by Liverpool supporters and devotees visit regularly.



Brian always intended to break away after Glenbuck, so he headed back to Muirkirk and revisited the B746 route from our run to Strathaven earlier this year. Left to our own devices we decided to risk the B740 from Glespin to Leadhills, which turned out to be a great single track through forests of wind turbines. My only issue was falling over after stopping on an adverse camber to admire the spectacle of big windmills, thankfully big John caught me before I hit the ground, marginally better than having to pick me up.



We witnessed an unusual gathering of hairy campers at Wanlockhead and soon discovered that they were participating in the 10th Wildfire Music Festival, it was somewhat surreal to be regaled with wailing and screaming heavy metal music in the middle of the day. Maybe next year ...



Three wise men then decided to head for the coast where the skies were a lighter shade of grey, going through the Mennock Pass to Sanquhar, then in New Cumnock taking the B741 Dalmellington Road, before joining the B734 to Girvan. I would like to thank Campbell McCreath, David Mcleman and Garmin for showing me the way.

The sun was shining by the time we got to Girvan which topped off an excellent adventure, with Brian, John and Jim.



Isle of Whithorn Run, 10th July - David McLeman

Twelve bikes turned up for the run to the Isle of Whithorn, in addition to the club members a local from Dalmellington arrived on his home-made petrol driven converted mountain bike he informed us that he was 85 years old and had carried out the conversion himself and had bought the engine for £50.00. When he was asked what would happen if he was stopped by the police, he just shrugged his shoulders and said what's the worst they could do. (*David Anderson trying the home-made motorcycle*).



We proceeded down to Clatteringshaws where some of us had refreshments. Sitting out in the sun was unfortunately not very pleasant as we were being attacked by midges, some others decided to carry on down to Wigtown. The remainder of the group headed to the Isle of Whithorn and had lunch and later met up with those that had stopped at Wigtown. Myself and John Stewart came back up the road via Stranraer, Girvan then coast road, others went up to Girvan by the hill road after a fuel stop in Newton Stewart. It was a very good run and the sun was out for most of the day, no incidents reported.

Coffee Morning Run 13th July - Paul Wilkinson

There was another good turnout when we visited the Balkenna Tea Room café just south of Turnberry on the A77. There were 12 members present, including three members who had not been to a previous gathering – James Brown, Alistair Bruce and Derek Crossley. There was a good selection of bikes present and Alistair came on a lovely Ariel NH. Unfortunately, the café was rather busy when we arrived and we were not able to sit as a group. However, I do not think this spoiled the day too much.



Afterwards, myself, David W, Niall and Alistair visited the workshop of John McKenna to view his latest masterpiece, a life-size sculptor of the footballer Billy McNeil. It was very realistic and lifelike.

Present –David Wilson, Owen McGeary, "Taffy" Bee, Paul Wilkinson, Robin Campbell, David Anderson, Niall Sommerville, Derek Crossley, James Brown, Alistair Bruce and George & Ellen Campbell.



James & Alistair



Robin, David A & David W



Derek & Owen

Ad-Hoc Club Run 17th July - David Rowell

Having missed 10th July Isle of Whithorn run, I was keen to get away on this ad hoc run in fair weather. Our first challenge was where to go and in the absence of any viable alternative, we decided to revisit the 12th June Aberfoyle run we had dropped due to adverse weather conditions.

The forecast for Aberfoyle was good, but I wasn't sure how many riders would turn out in the middle of the holiday season. In my heads-up notifications on Facebook and WhatsApp, I teased the prospect of travelling over the Duke's Pass then turning around at the Loch Katrine visitor centre and other coming home through Callander 140 miles round trip. Alternatively, we could make it an extended run, travelling up to The Green Welly Stop, then down to Inveraray before taking the Dunoon ferry home, which was a distance of 224 miles.

It was great to see 9 bikes at muster - Alistair Macqueen, John Stewart, David Anderson, Robin Campbell, David McLeman and myself. It was especially good to welcome Graham Lauder back after his self-imposed exile and he brought in Dave Watson on his Ducati Diavel and Daniel Gourlay riding his Harley Davidson Ultra. Danny endured the piss taking normally reserved for Al's big chopper in good grace.

Most of us headed over Duke's Pass and took the red route north, but I think Dave and Robin skipped the pass and headed into Callander for lunch, before taking a more direct route home.



The Green Welly stop was busy as usual, but the cafe was closed due to staff shortages - we shared a Victor moment, since this was so hard to believe. I think John tried to sell his sandwiches, to no avail. After Tyndrum it was my afternoon's delight on the undulating, sweeping curves of the A85 probably my favourite road and I'm not ashamed to say enjoying running with Graham again, we got a wee bit ahead of ourselves, before stopping to wait for the group. Then I did my idiot act sitting on the clutch in 5th gear as the rest of the guys caught up, stomping wildly down through the gears, then having to play catch up. Big Al' was having fun too, having taken the lead, but knowing the turn off onto the A819 signage was obscured by trees, I managed to catch up and signal him to turn just in time to witness a well-executed tail braking left turn onto the Inveraray road. Thereafter he harnessed his adrenaline to lead us at a brisk pace onto the A83 heading for Dunoon.

We had a pleasant encounter on board meeting Janice McGeechan and friends, on their way back from an Inverness theatre trip to see The Stamping Ground, an uplifting new musical featuring the songs of Runrig - I looked it up Janice. After this brief cultural intervention, we elected to stop off at Largs where I ordered the coffees, but managed to get Al to pay for most of them - there's no doubt who's paying next week.

In summary, we had a great day, in good company. I know we always say that, but sometimes we don't mean it so much as on our Aberfoyle adventure.

Ad-Hoc Club Run 24th July - Alistair McQueen

And Then There Were Three

In a similar situation to the Club Run on 12th June. The weather forecast was not good, but better in the South than up in the North. Indeed Inverary, Tyndrum, Dunoon were all forecast for thunder and lightning storms. Therefore, once again Port William was the chosen destination, rather than the original destination of Inverary. Although we did need

to be back before 16:00 hrs as this was when the really bad weather was to hit Ayr & Prestwick.

Three hardy souls turned up; David Rowell – BMW R1200 GS, John Stewart – Honda Pan European, Alastair MacQueen – HD Electra Glide Ultra Classic. Whilst at Monkton we were parked next to a group of Honda Gold Wing Enthusiasts. There were 3 trikes and 1 bike. Dave, ever curious, was asking about the cost of such machines, £30K for a brand-new bike, £60K for a brand-new trike. Wow. Who do Honda think they are; Harley-Davidson?



We set off down the A713; Hollybush, Patna, Dalmellington, Carsphairn, Dalry etc. Instead of cutting right to New Galloway and onwards to Clatteringshaws we continued on the A713 to Crossmichael and on the A75. This is where it got interesting, Dave was our leader and our destination was Port William via Wigtown. Or so we thought! We turned off the A75 way to early and

ended up in Kirkcudbright. What I believed to be a whim at the time, turned out to be a wrong turn by Dave! Never mind, I like Kirkcudbright. Interesting observation in Kirkcudbright is that there are four places across from the car park that sell coffee, 2 cafes, 1 takeaway place and 1 general shop. All four were closed, in the height of summer! Thankfully there was a mini fare happening on the grassy park just beside the shops. So, a coffee was had.

We set off from Kirkcudbright to Port William and tried to keep to as much coast line as possible via Borgue before re-joining the A75. It was a really nice drive and the sun was still shining on us. Thankfully this time Dave did get us to Port William where we stopped for lunch. I choose to park up beside the View Café entrance and turned in whilst applying the front brake at the same time, on heavy gravel! I thought the big Harley was going down, thankfully I saved it, it was close! A good reminder about the perils of gravel. The sun was still shining on us so I sat outside with John & Dave on a bench with a takeaway from the View Café. Last



time I was here I ate in the Café with Campbell & Gordon, and the food was excellent. This time I got 2 rolls & square slices with a coffee; all of which were bloody awful! The gulls and crows got ¾ of my rolls. The grass got ½ of my coffee. Next time I'll play safe and sit inside again! The usual photographs were taken beside the green man, then we headed back.

The chosen route for the homeward leg was the A77 coast road. We passed our Goldwing enthusiasts as we neared Stranraer, they appeared to be travelling eastwards. We carried on towards Girvan, the weather was still good, although the traffic was a little heavy. But the coast road is always nice when the weather is. We arrived at Girvan, probably around

15:50 and stopped for a coffee. Mistake! Knowing the weather was due to turn at 16:00 hrs, we should have kept going. Anyway, we stopped for a coffee and Dave was chatting with a good old boy who was interested in joining the club. So hopefully a new recruit.

Just as we were leaving Girvan, the rain started, and got heavier, and heavier. By the time we got to Ayr / Prestwick we were drenched. What if Dave hadn't taken us to Kirkcudbright, would we have stayed dry? I jest, it was a good day's biking, and better than expected. With the added bonus that the rain washed away my fly collection on the front fairing. Approximate mileage 179 miles.



<u>Technical Article</u> – Drew Robertson

Over the centuries (or so it feels) I have spent a fortune on batteries for the Guzzi. Trouble is that the starter is inefficient, poorly matched and places inordinate demands upon the battery. The original battery was pitch sealed, lasted about a week, and driving through the winter it was fortunate I lived on a hill. Some Guzzi owners slotted in a Ford Anglia battery but it meant losing the tool tray so I kept buying the specific item. A few years back I bought an Odyssey, far smaller and it swung the starter like never before. It's losing a wee bit of its original vigour (ain't we all) and I'd long had a hankering for a modern Valeo starter to extend battery life but they are horribly not cheap. The difference between ye olde starters and modern, is the field coils are replaced by permanent magnets, plus instead of being slow speed, high torque they spin much faster and recover the torque with inbuilt gearbox. Altogether much more efficient.

In the last few years, Chinese knock-off Valeo types have become available, the consensus being favourable. Not that the original Bosch and later Valeo are exemplars of reliability so the bar was quite low and at less than 70 quid it was worth a shot. Much mention of slimming down a neutral switch bolt, easy enough, but no mention of a more problematic fitting issue. The bottom leg-shield bracket doesn't fit. I could have fabbed a new bracket, or even modded the original but it's served for over 40 years. It's a spiritual thing. So I

modded the boss on the starter and for strength bonded in an insert. I say "inset" glibly but it took a few hours to sculpt. Pictures say it all.



One other slight issue is that the starter body is a mm thicker than the original, pushing the mount for the leg-shield a wee bit further back. No worries, Guzzi bodywork was never precision fit anyway.

So, the moral of the tale. If you have an old Guzzi, perhaps old BM too, and you wanna save wads in the long term fit one of these starters. Also, of course, if you want to shave off a few kg.

Where is it now?

Triumph T140E - XSN 54T - First registered 9th Feb 1979. Sold to Coopers of Troon 1983 - last MoT'd 22nd Aug 2009.

I spoke to a gentleman at the recent Burns Museum display, who was the second owner from new. He has some history he'd like to pass on to the current owner and would also be interested in its current status. If any members own or know the current owner and want to know more, they can contact Mr. C Heaney by email at "jcsh62@yahoo.co.uk" Niall Sommerville.

For Sale

Top box - 40 litre. Make - Tech

In very good condition, complete with mounting adaptor plate, backrest pad, top rack and two keys. Will take a FF Helmet. £40





Matched Pair of Panniers 2 x 22 litre. Make - Givi (E22 commuter type) top hinged lids. Compact, robust and watertight. Good undamaged condition with frame mounting bobbins, latches, drill template and one key. £35





If interested in either of the above items then please contact Niall Sommerville - 07413 582 485

Events Calendar

Date	Event
7 th August 2022*	Dam Bike Run
	Lothian & Borders Classic & Vintage Motorcycle Club
	Eastgate Car Park, Peebles
7 th August 2022	Peebles & St Mary's Loch
	Approx 160 miles
	Cumnock Bus Station at 10:00
10 th August 2002	Coffee Morning Run
	Venue to be confirmed
12 th , 13 th & 14 th August	Scottish National Rally for Classic & Vintage Motorcycles
2022*	Pitcrocknie, Alyth PH11 8JJ
4.44	VMCC Central Section
14 th August 2022*	Biggar Vintage Rally
	Showfield, Edinburgh Road, Biggar
21 st August 2022	Mull of Galloway
	Approx 120 miles
21st August 2022	Monkton at 9:00 and Girvan at 10:00
21st August 2022	Galston Old Co-op Building, off A71
	A gathering to support Allan Niven's new business venture
24 th August 2022	Coffee Morning Run
24 August 2022	Bacas Café, Dalmellington 11:00am
28 th August 2022	Doon Valley Railway Display
20 August 2022	Dunaskin Ironworks, Waterside, near Patna
	Bullackiii ii cilworko, watoroido, ilour i dilla
4 th September 2022*	Run to Kirkcudbright
	Route 74 Truckstop. 10:00am start
	VMCC Clyde Valley
4 th September 2022	Moffat & Kagyu Samye Ling Monastery
	Approx 150 miles
	Cumnock Bus Station at 10:00

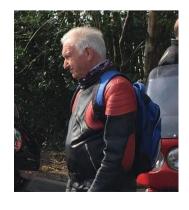
Items in **bold** are club events. * Alternative event, sometimes on club run days.

Club Tools

The club owns a selection of tools which are available for borrowing by club members.

To borrow tools, please contact Ian Howie (pictured) M: 07792 827 835

In addition, some members may have specific workshop tools that are relevant to the marques they are interested in. Contact the specialist for more information.



Valve Lifter Gudgeon Pin Remover

Engine compression tester Torque Wrenches, Med& Large Voltmeter Ohmmeter (self powered)

Oil Filter Wrench
3 Jaw Ratchet Wrench
Multimeter
Carb Balancer (4,3 or 2)

Set of Circlip pliers
2 Micrometers
Timing Disc

Carb Balancer (4,3 or 2) Timing Disc Impact Driver Set of Taps

Norton Clutch Tool Norton Exhaust C Spanner Tyre Bead Breaker Chain Breaker and Riveter

Motor Cycle Wheel balancer Valve Grinders (suction cups with paste)

Contacts / Useful Links

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Club Website - https://ayrclassicmc.com/

Club Facebook Page -

https://www.facebook.com/groups/ClassicMCCMembersAndFriends

Club Community Page - https://www.facebook.com/AyrClassicMotorcycleClub

Club Flickr Photo Stream – https://www.flickr.com/photos/ayrclassic