



# Newsletter

November 2016

## Winter jobs

As the dreary months of winter overtake us, my thinking turns toward "shed time" and the jobs that have been put off during the riding months.

I'm pleased to say I have had an enjoyable season this year and can use the term "summer" and feel quite justified. It also feels like quite a while since we had such a pleasant spell of weather late in the season - seems like we have just had the best display of Autumn colours for years. But still, the days are short and dull, the nights longer so it's time to start organising maintenance.

I'm thinking that I may fit indicators to the Commando this winter. I'm not a huge fan of things like flashing indicators and daytime headlights because I believe they disguise the fact that too many road users drive around half asleep. Rather than looking at what's going on around them and trying to read the traffic, they sit passively like a passenger waiting on something catching their attention - a brake light, a headlight an illuminated road sign - and then (sometimes) react to that. Soon this becomes the norm and only these triggers work.

Now, while I don't like it and don't think we are helping ourselves by perpetuating this reduction in an already low skill level, I'm not inclined to risk life and limb to make the point!

I should also point out that in Argyll it is normal practice to only indicate to confuse. Indeed, turning in the direction one has indicated is seen as some kind of double bluff. But it has been made very clear that people no longer see or understand the most basic hand signals such as "I am turning left". I know this because I have seen people "waving back" to my turn signals.

I believe in 1972 when my Commando was built, flashing indicators would have been optional. Looking at period advertisements and road tests, it would seem that the chrome Lucas indicator



lights we all know and love were fitted to Interstate models but not the Roadsters. It would seem hot pants were also an option, but authenticity can go too far.

I would like to use LEDs to keep the consumption to a minimum, but really couldn't fancy the tiny units that modern riders seem to favour. The standard pattern indicators are available from many retailers in a variety of qualities and this would seem like best option in terms of style, perhaps with LED replacement bulbs fitted. I have the original Lucas grey block switches fitted, and although a bit clunky and chunky, they are robust and functional. Unfortunately a previous owner had unsoldered the cable from the indicator and kill switch side.

Some people insist the switches are identical - they are not, although the whole block can be swapped over left to right on the bars. If you are raking about at an auto-jumble, its easy to tell the difference as the dip/main beam paddle has only two positions, while the indicator has a central "off" position.

My original plan was to re-solder wires and try to maintain the original colour codes, but during routine checking and servicing a couple of other things came to my notice - the headlight switch was unreliable and the clutch lever pivot was well worn allowing the lever to flap about.

My thinking then became, replace the headlamp switch with a modern "all in one" left bar switch with lights off-pilot-on, indicators and horn allowing me to permanently remove the headlamp switch. This would also allow and/or necessitate replacing the clutch lever with a more ergonomically designed separate item eliminating the floppy lever.

So far, I have gathered up the parts (at huge expense) - indicators and stalks (Andover), LED bulbs and a special flasher unit (eBay), switch and lever (Holland Norton Works). The wiring is quite straight forward and the front stalks will fit into the headlamp mounts as original, but the back ones are going to be more of an issue as I have a custom alloy tail light unit with no mounting holes or brackets.



More of the usual knock on effects, and while it shouldn't be beyond the wit of man to make something that works but doesn't look like a dogs dinner, the proof of that remains to be seen.

## **NOC calendars**

We have bought a batch of 10 NOC calendars, and very nice they are too. By buying a bulk order we have saved some money on postage and can sell them on for £6.00 each. Let me know if you would like one (or even more).

## **Events**

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December

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Christmas Dinner in the company of sidecar club  
Killin Hotel, Killin  
Saturday 10th December 2016

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February

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TVNOC AGM  
Pitcairngreen Hotel  
February 16th 2017

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