



SOLEX OZ

January 08 Newsletter

RECENT HAPPENINGS

Christmas and New year is normally a quiet time, a chance to take it easy, well not for Solexists! The past 2 months have been a busy time for our group with several runs, bikes changing hands, new members and more interesting bikes surfacing.

My dream has been to own one of the very first Solexes, the 45cc model, produced between 1946 and 1952. It has always held great appeal with its spindly 26" wheels and very desirable patina. I thought my only chance to ever own one of these, now rare machines was to search France on my next visit and maybe acquire one of the very few still remaining. You can imagine my surprise when scanning eBay in mid December only to find one 30 kilometres from home in Bacchus Marsh. Better still, it had only appeared 10 minutes earlier on eBay with a buy now price. I pressed the "buy now" button and left the very difficult "explanation to the wife" for latter?

A few days latter with the ever-generous help of Andrew McD, we picked up the beast and could not believe how original it was. Although the paint was a bit tired it appeared that it had very little if any use, the original white Lyotard pedals were not worn and everything looked liked it had just left the factory at Courbevoie in 1949.



1949 45cc. 650

After making enquiries, I found that this Solex had only recently been purchased from the original owner of 55 years, in Sydney. The reason for the little or no use, I believe, was the fact that the fuel pump lines were installed the wrong way round, probably during initial assembly upon arrival in Australia in the late forties, hence it was “sucking instead of blowing” and after changing them back it started instantly and I went for a fabulous 20-minute run. I will leave it as found with only a small amount of detailed cleaning and painting see photo above.

A new member to our group is Huw M of Canberra who, co-incidentally purchased a “1700” off the same vendor I bought the 45cc off. Huw is making good progress on his restoration and hopes to come down to Melbourne for one of our runs.

Another new member is Gordon S. of Barnawartha Vic. Who has a great collection of auto-cycles including a very original “1700”. Gordon originally ran the Chiltern auto museum and still has a fabulous collection of vintage auto memorabilia at home.

We also welcome Don and Deidre S. of Chadstone, Vic. owners of 3 Velosolexes, We look forward to seeing them on future runs.

Shayne H. of Perth W.A. has just acquired another 3800 to add to his stable which includes a very rare “1010”. (See photo section). I mentioned previously the generosity of Andrew McD, well to prove a point, Andrew has just purchased his wife, Frances, a Solex 5000 to use on our runs, forget the diamond rings and Prada handbags, Andrew has real style!

RUNS

A week before Christmas we had an impromptu run starting in South Melbourne and traveling via the bay trail from Pt.Melbourne to St.Kilda and Elwood. Then along Barklay St. to Classic Cycles in Grey St. where Richard the proprietor opened up for us to see his marvelous collection old cycles and accessories. We then went to a café in Middle Park for coffee. Attendees were Bryan L. down from Bendigo for his first run with our group, Andrew McD, Peter H, Don D.ErnM. and Myself.



Arrival at Victoria harbour during Dockland Run

On 28 Jan '08 (OZ day W/E). We had a great run around Melbourne's Dockland area from Port Melbourne through Westgate Park and along Fisherman's Bend and South Wharf to Melbourne's new Dockland precinct and Victoria Harbour for Coffee. Our attendees were Frances McDougall on her first run along with Andrew, Ern Miller, Ted C., Bryan L. and Myself. Peter H. was excused whilst sunning him-self on a beach in Barbados (tough Life). Whilst enjoying the coffee and views at Victoria Harbour we had the obligatory Frenchman come up and tell us of his fond experiences of riding his Solex in Paris as a young man.

Our next run will be either late February or early March, we will email details as soon as planning is complete.

TECHNICAL

We did advise in a previous issue the correct fuel mix for Solex motors should consist of 3% Oil. But some qualification is necessary. With modern un-leaded fuel burn profiles and the use of semi or full synthetic oils, a mix of 2% is more than enough. Also, this time of year with regular outside air temperature above 30 deg C. the fuel evaporation rate is quite likely to be very high, leaving the oil percentage to increase rapidly if the Solex is not used for several weeks at a time. This can cause poor performance, oiled plugs as well as soot build up and oiled up fuel lines.

So if you have not used your bike for some time during summer you should drain the fuel and put a fresh mix of 2% in before use.

Ern M. has been very busy producing some goodies for our Solexes. After much searching, he has found the correct thickness rubber and has made an initial batch of fuel pump diaphragms. In addition, Ern has been busy producing original design Solexine fuel holders as well variable carbi jets. Any of these items can be purchased at cost from Ern by contacting him through our website at solexoz.org or email at solexoz@gmail.com



Shayne H's Collection. (See text).

That's all for now, Geoff S.