

Editorial

I have never been so short of material for 'The GeN' before. If you are bored with reading a GeN written almost entirely by David and me you have only yourselves to blame !

Better late than never I am afraid so far as this issue is concerned. Several problems conspired against us including David's computer and a hill-climb-packed May/June. You should all receive a renewal form with this issue unless you opted not to be on the database. Thanks to those who have already sent in your subscriptions who should find their form stamped 'PAID'.

Lots of activity on the Gilera front at Piaggio recently - see David's article on page 12. The Gilera Internet mailing list recently featured the "New Saturno" rumour. Could be that 'Motociclismo' were talking about the planned launch of an updated Saturno which was scotched by the closure of the Arcore works in October 93. We can but dream.

Unfortunately I never did make it over to the Island for the 40th anniversary of the 100 mph lap, but Raymond Ainscoe and Mick Noblett were there to fly the Gilera flag (see page 16). Perhaps I stand a chance if I book a crossing for the 2007 TT now !

The Cadwell bash looks like being very well subscribed this year so don't delay enter today. Entries received before August 1st still cost only £43 if you are riding a Gilera.



Now read on ...

T Shirts & Mugs

Mike Riley has come up with an excellent new 'NETWORK' design featuring the network logo and many of the Gilera logos past and present. All the following cartoon designs are therefore available :

'NETWORK': Network logo and multicoloured Gilera logos past and present on an ash (light grey) T-shirt

'Nordest Wheelie' : 2 tone blue, black/yellow or pink/white on a white T-shirt

'Nordwest Stoppie' : black/pink or 2 tone blue on a white T-shirt

'Saturno' : on ash T-shirt

'GFR' : on white T-shirt

Order sizes M,L,XL or XXL (add extra £2 for XXL) - all T-shirts are £12 each including P&P (£1 of which goes to club funds)

Mugs cost £9.40 each including P&P (40p to club funds). The design is made up of a network logo, a black and red 2 ring Gilera Logo and a cartoon. There is a choice of cartoon: Nordwest Wheelie in blue, Nordwest Stoppie in black/pink, Saturno or GFR (all full colour).

Please send all orders with cheques made payable to MIKE RILEY at 9 HAWKSHEAD AVENUE, BREADSALL ESTATE, DERBY, DE21 4EH.

Orders should be delivered in 7 days. To take advantage of the forthcoming Cadwell track day/AGM orders can be placed at discount prices (i.e. NO POST AND PACKING !) - T-SHIRTS = £11 each, MUGS = £7.60 each.

Providing orders reach Mike 7 days before 15 August '97 he will bring them along to Cadwell/AGM !

**Bob McIntyre
Memorial Meeting
Knockhill
21/22 June 1997**

To say that I am displeased with the Scottish Classic Racing Club would be an understatement. John Rushworth spent a lot of time talking to Charlie Pirie early in the year about a Gilera parade to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first 100 mph TT lap. He made it clear that whilst there would be several classic machines taking part there would also be modern Gileras to represent the history of the marque as a whole. Those interested in taking part eventually received entry forms, and although the scheme had been reduced to tagging on to a 'classic' parade on just the one day a few of us were still keen to make the trek to Scotland to take part.

With only three weeks to go before the event I received a phone call from the Secretary of the Meeting to say that entries from any machine made after 1975 could not be accepted with the exception of Raymond's Piuma which Mick Noblett lapped at 100 mph on in the '94 singles race. Apparently their committee thought that allowing modern machines in would open the floodgates to any local rider on a Fireblade who fancied a bit of cheap circuit time. This was a

disappointment to me, but a huge blow to Mike and David Riley who had arranged a week long holiday in accommodation for all the family near Knockhill and had booked a van to transport the Northwest and GFR. Now I dare say a Gilera Northwest is a rarer bike than many of the 'classics' that will be circulating in the parade, and a GFR is most certainly a machine that some spectators would have never seen before. I would have thought that such a one-off could have been justified as within the spirit of this particular event and I think the greater loss is theirs. To add insult to injury at the time of writing I am still awaiting the return of my entry fee. My apologies to John for not taking the Norturno for him to have a ride on and to our President Eleanor Quigley for my failing to support this event in honour of her father. I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet her at the Scottish Show in March.

Raymond is fielding his stable of classic Saturnos so I am sure it will still be a unique opportunity for spectators to acknowledge the renown of the Gilera name.



NORTHWEST FRONTIER

If there was ever any doubt in my mind that the ultimate test of a bike is the mountain climb from Ramsey it was quickly dispelled by one unofficial practice run up the Ramsey 5000 Lerghy Frissel hill climb course. The 604 had done over 200 miles on the road and two 'mainland' hill climbs without any problem but on reaching the start of the mountain mile on the Wednesday evening before the long hill event I looked down at the bike to see the all too familiar sight of a raised level of coolant in the expansion tank *%\$£@~!!!!

Despite the help of Dave Morris in loaning me a torque wrench to check the head nuts the damage was already done. Once again the symptoms only show up when severely provoked but 5 kms of the ultimate thrashing most certainly reach the parts other rides cannot reach. The rate of pressurisation was not quite as bad as last year and thanks to Gilera special tool number 42 (the trusty Halfords bike pump) the motor survived all the climbs plus a couple of runs over the mountain with the other road bike equipped competitors.

Once again there was little between me and Robin on his standard Northwest after the first run on the long hill and we both matched our best runs last year in that first practice thanks to better weather and course familiarity. Robin soon started to pull out the odd second on me each run, however, due to his ability to hold his Nordie flat out all the way from the Gooseneck to Guthries. The 604 was a few mph faster through the finish, but it's the bends that win hill climbs and Robin had a clear 3 seconds on me by the last timed run despite my shaving over seven seconds off my previous best time.

The short hill was dry for practice on Friday and once again Robin had the advantage despite the significant extra grunt of the 604. A bike swap in the evening confirmed that the additional power and torque translated into an increase in urge which Robin noticed out of Waterworks and Gooseneck. On the last practice run Robin explored the outer limits of the Northwest handling envelope. He described this as feeling as if both wheels had a mind of their own as he

found the bump on the left hander before the Gooseneck on full chat. This detuned him somewhat and the first run on Saturday was taken in circumspect fashion given a still very slippery Hairpin after rain overnight. The 604 grunt actually proved an advantage in these conditions by enabling me to 'short-shift' and pull a high gear to get more grip on the section between the Hairpin and Waterworks. So purely in terms of the 'timed' runs I was a couple of tenths quicker as well as holding off the Tricati this year.

Another memorable experience, which was enhanced by copious quantities of free Guinness acquired by winning a 'Who Said That' promotion running at the Viking hotel. The task was to correctly match four photographs of famous people with a choice from eight quotations. The combined memory pool of several 'grey-hairs' amongst the bike hillclimb fraternity together with some inspired guesswork, meant that we managed to become remarkably successful - so much so that the bar staff started to get a bit miffed at how many free pints they were pulling.

Our plans for a leisurely ride round the Island on Sunday (no Jurby sprint this year) were foiled by the weather and so a scenic tour in Robin's car had to suffice. We called in at Dave & Kath's in May Hill again just in time to witness the starting of Dave's Nordie fitted with a one-off silencer he had commissioned. The bike was a bit reluctant to start but the float bowl draining dodge worked as usual. The note was very pleasant although rather too loud for use where the police are less tolerant I fear.

Speaking of intolerant police the ex-John Rushworth Norturno earned me my first ticket for many years on the way to watch the Easter Sunday Darley Moor Race Meeting. No - not speeding this time. As I

approached the circuit they were pulling in virtually every bike for a roadside check. Oh curses ! An illegal silencer, no indicators and a push-bike digital speedo to be booked for. Luckily the constable homed in on the slightly undersized rear number plate. It seems that they had latched on to this as an easy nick. Hold plastic template over number and if it does not touch the edge all round it is illegal. Mine were about 1/10 inch too

the Nordie than I had on the Husqvarna by turning in a 56.55.

The Post TT classic races at Mallory provided the opportunity for Robin and me to swap bikes on the way there. It is some time since I rode a standard Northwest and it seemed very smooth after the 604. I reckon it goes better than most and Robin claims the rev limiter is set particularly high. He enjoyed his ride on the Norturno and was surprised to find that the unhurried feeling accurately indicated 6000 rpm in 5th equated to 90 mph.

I returned to the car park to find someone keen to hear the Norturno running and wanting to purchase it - sorry NOT FOR SALE !

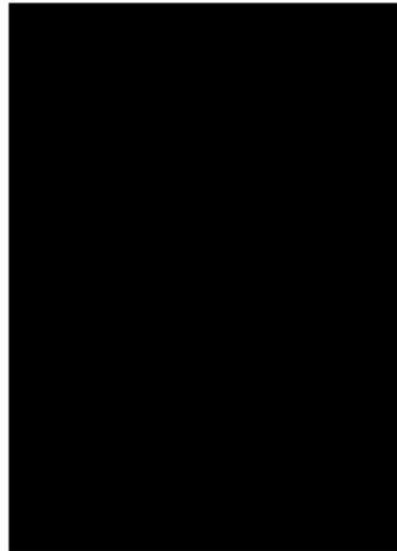
 Pete Fisher

604 at Gursto Down

small ! Glad that a more thorough inspection was thereby avoided I pleaded ignorance, blamed John for fitting the offending digits, and accepted the fixed penalty notice for £20.

I pobbled on to Darley in the glorious spring sunshine where I was gratified to find John's handiwork drew more attention than the almost common braces of 916 Ducatis littering the car park. Leaving early I enjoyed a brisk ride home marred only by a plonker on a VMAX who insisted on passing down a couple of long straights only to get under my feet at the next bendy bit.

The Isle of Man trip must have boosted my confidence as my very first run at Gurston Down the next weekend was under 40 seconds. For the last climb of the day I got down to 39.48 - a Northwest best at that hill and only half a second slower than my best Husky time in '94. The story was repeated at Prescott a fortnight later when for the first time ever I managed to go quicker on



Editor astride Norturno



Arrangements for the Cadwell weekend are going well and the Morini Riders Club tell me that there are already 30 riders pre-booked. So if you want to be sure of a place get your entry in as there is a limit on numbers and the event has been extensively advertised this year. For the first time we have to nominate 'instructors' and the two Nigels (Windys and Lee) and Ian Calvert will be doing the honours. They will, however, just be showing any newcomers to Cadwell the way round for a couple of laps rather than giving stoppie tutorials.

I would like to be able to take the 604, Norturno and the 2C/375 Morini, but they won't all fit on the trailer so it will be make your mind up time between the Gileras nearer the day - probably influenced by the weather forecast.

AGM

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE GILERA NETWORK WILL BE HELD AT 11 AM ON SUNDAY 17th AUGUST 1997 at THE BLUE BELL BELCHFORD LINCS.

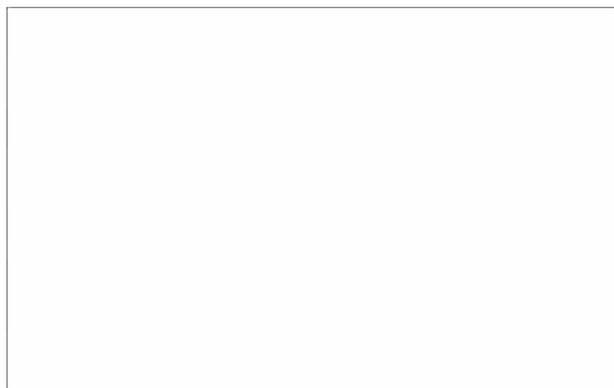
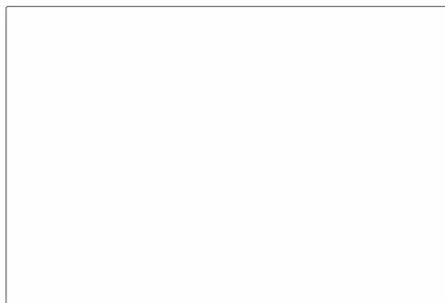
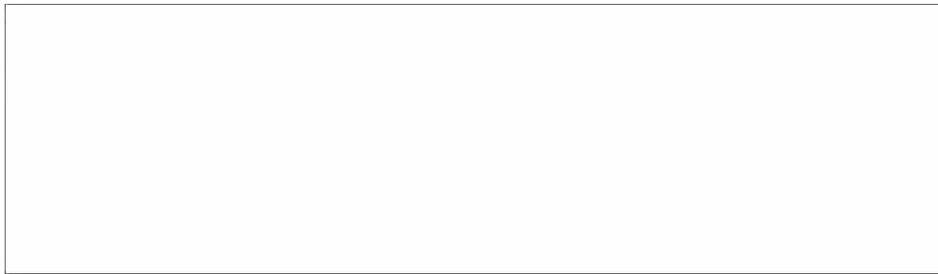
Belchford is off the A153 road between Horncastle and Louth

Yes folks its your chance again to have a say in the future of the Gilera Network. Why not make a weekend of it by staying at the Blue Bell after the Cadwell track day. The Morini Club is organising improved 'facilities' this year and the Gilera Network are going to organise an official 'silly game' - Cam Belt Hoopla.

Unfortunately the weekend clashes with the British GP again but I am sure that those who have attended previously will vouch for its vast superiority over that minor event at Donnington.

GILERIMAGERY

A selection of images from the new WWW.GILERA.COM site on the Internet



Chairman's Chat

If this GeN is latter than you think it should be, you have my permission to hold me personally responsible. I had let it get a bit late to get on writing my bit so I was trying to hurry up. Yes we all know what more haste makes. First I could not get the sprocket drawings back off their disks and then I lost the GFR fact sheets. I have no idea what I did or how I lost the fact sheets but I was able to retrieve the sprocket drawings without the text so that was not too bad. The GFR fact sheets have gone and I have started again. Sorry but you will have to wait till next time for them.

I have told you before about my visits to the Czech Republic. Well I think I may go next year. Is anyone interested in going? It will be a two week trip, camping. I will not do huge miles each day and I tend to stay off the motorways so that means good roads, interesting villages and a more leisurely pace. Three days each way, a day in Prague, three days at the rally, that's ten days so there is plenty of scope for stopping to do extra sight seeing. About 3000 mile round trip. If you would like to know more talk to me at Cadwell or give me a call. I have made good friends there and I can tell you lots of good stories about the place. And don't worry Czech Republic is the more "westernised" part of the old east Europe.

I NEED YOUR HELP

The technical articles that appear in the GeN tend to centre on the big four stroke singles, because that is what we know about, because that is what we have. Quite a lot of us have Nordwests, Saturnos and RC600's but I am all too well aware that those of you with other models do not get a lot of useful technical information from this magazine. I am collecting manuals and sales leaflets where I can and I will probably try and produce some interesting articles based on them but I do need YOU to let me know any useful info. about your model.

If you have had a problem that you have solved or if you have found that a bit off a 1984 Honda can be used to replace an unavailable part for your 1957 Gilera please let me know. If you have an old parts catalogue or workshop manual that could be photocopied please let me tell others who may really need some help. People who own Gileras do seem to like using them and I think most members are more interested in keeping them running rather than finding out if they should have chromed or nickel plated nuts holding on the mudguard stays. Please, if you have anything that may be worth passing on, drop me a line or even better still write me a letter about how you did a job or a trip you made or whatever.

SATURNO MIRRORS

If you order replacement mirrors for your Saturno p/n: 939156 you will be supplied with GFR mirrors which are p/n: 951321 because Italy seems to have run out of the original mirrors. The GFR mirrors have the same fixing but the stalks are shorter and the mirror backs are a gloss black finish rather than matt black. They look OK and they still have the Gilera rings logo on the backs. I have them on my Saturno and I can still see past my elbows.

GFR POWER VALVE CONTROL BOX

The part numbers quoted in the parts catalogue for the power valve control box are not necessarily correct. The part number you find is 337839 which is a box with a built in six pin socket. This is the box for the early electronic power valve engine used in MX-1, MX-R etc. The GFR uses a box that has a four pin socket and a single socket both on the end of wires. The part number for this box is 953792.

RC 600 CHAIN TENSION

The RC 600 owners hand book quotes 35mm free movement for the chain tension. This is very wrong! he correct setting is 70mm which is

just about touching the bottom of the swinging arm. The setting should be made with the bike on the side stand. This should mean that the suspension is fully extended. The suspension travels a hell of a long way so when you sit on the bike the chain will tighten a lot. Be careful that the chain is not too tight, it is very easy to have it pulling tight and you may not realise it. When you are sitting on it make sure there is still about 30mm or so of free movement. I have seen several rear sprockets that have cracked for no apparent reason, I suspect an over-tight chain could be the cause. And thats not to mention the possibility of bearings failing or chains breaking. Check it now.

CAM BELT MAINTENANCE

Don't just fit it and forget it. The cam belt should be changed every 12000km but it should be checked every 4000km. That check does not take long and could save you a lot of grief. Take off the cover and look round the belt, front and back. Take out the plug so you can rotate the engine easily and make sure that the belt is perfect all the way round. Any sign of wear or damage and it should be changed. When you change the belt at 12000km it should look like new but the writing will have been rubbed off the back. Next you should check the tension and adjust if necessary. To adjust the tension first set the engine to TDC on the firing stroke as you would if you were changing the belt then slacken the adjuster nut then retighten it. The tension is very important, if the belt is slack it can hit things and get damaged, if the belt is too tight because you "helped" the adjuster spring just to make sure, then the belt can be under a lot of extra strain and may snap.

SILENCER & EXHAUST PIPE NEWS. NORTHWEST & RC600 (92)

Mike Riley has called me to say that

unfortunately Rodan is no longer trading and the stainless silencer for Northwest / RC600 is now unavailable.

Quill on the other hand are still very active, too active in fact they are so busy that they are turning people away. Just when we thought we had good after market silencers available they disappear.

Now some good news. Bob Wright can supply a very good stainless silencer that is BSI approved. Price is £299 inc. vat. The silencer fits straight on to the original fittings and goes under the side panel. The outlet does not blow onto the indicator so no more black lenses. Carburation seems to be unaffected so I expect power is unaffected as well. Bob has also been trying to get some black steel silencers from Italy but these have turned out to not have the BSI mark so will not be imported.

And if you want stainless exhaust pipes for your Northwest or RC600, the total cost of all the bits is about £170. So a total stainless system is not cheap but I think it's reasonable.

Bob Wright Motorcycles 01934 - 413847

LOCKING PETROL CAP

Good news and bad news. First the good news; I have found a locking petrol cap for the Northwest / RC600. Now the bad news; It's rubbish. It is made by the company that makes the original cap and it looks the same but instead of having a breather coming out of the top there is a key hole. When it is locked the top is free to rotate so it can not be unscrewed. When it is un-locked a metal latch engages with a serrated ring to lock the two parts so it can be unscrewed. The problem is that as you know the cap is tight on the thread and is hard to turn. The latch mechanism is just not strong enough and the latch can jump the teeth, so you can't unscrew the bloody thing. Looks good, sounds good but it don't work. I have a slightly used one if you want it.

NORTHWEST SPROCKET CARRIER

I have now heard of three cases of the sprocket carrier getting damaged or breaking up on

Nordvests. The apparent cause is the bolts being slightly loose and then the sprocket can move about and the carrier gets worn and damaged so the sprocket can move even more etc. Check your bolt regularly and check that the only movement you can detect is the small amount in the rubber cush blocks that are behind the carrier.

Bolt torque should be: 20 - 22 Nm.

REAR SPROCKET SATURNO

This information should be sufficient for you to get a pattern sprocket made or ensure that an existing sprocket is the correct one for your bike. The original Gilera sprocket is steel, part number: 939211

Front sprocket is 15 tooth, part number: 321586
When replacing front sprocket replace oil seal, part number: 328232

Chain is 520 x 104 links. Chain should have rounded ends to the links. Angular links will rapidly wear the nylon chain guide. O ring chain is recommended.

43 tooth for 520 size chain

Flat sprocket

Centre hole: - 80mm dia.
Mounting bolts - Qty 5. Equally spaced.
- M10.
- "Allen" head. Steel
p/n: 939212

Retaining nuts - Steel shouldered nuts.
p/n: 319416

Torque: 48 - 52 Nm

Mounting holes - 10.2mm dia. (M10 clearance)
- 47.1mm radius to centre from sprocket centre

REAR SPROCKET RC600 (91)

This information should be sufficient for you to get a pattern sprocket made or ensure that an

existing sprocket is the correct one for your bike. The original Gilera sprocket is steel, part number: 324896

Front sprocket is 14 tooth, part number: 328016
When replacing front sprocket replace oil seal, part number: 328232

Chain is 520 x 110 links. Chain should have rounded ends to the links. Angular links will rapidly wear the nylon chain guides.

43 tooth for 520 size chain

Flat sprocket

Centre hole: - 130mm dia.
Mounting bolts - Qty 6. Equally spaced.
- M8 x 30mm long
(overall) p/n: 319483
- Counter sunk. 90deg.

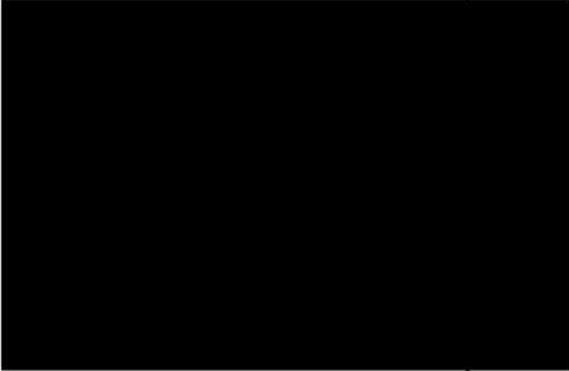
"Allen" head Steel
- 10mm plain shank
(from base of head)
Retaining nuts - Steel "Nyloc"
p/n: 319458

Bolt holes - Torque: 20 - 22 Nm
- 8.2mm dia. (M8 clearance) Counter
sunk 90deg.

- 75.1mm radius from sprocket centre to bolt hole centre.

STRADA PROJECT BIKE

Progress is about as slow as I expected. I have got all the bits made for mounting the central radiator and I have a neat little square header tank but I



Cost is £4.10 each including p&p or £3.85 each if you order more than one. And every order will come with a FREE Gilera lapel badge. Cheques payable to Gilera Network please. Order from Dave Champion. Overseas members please add sufficient to cover the extra postage cost to your country. Payment in Sterling only please.

If you are missing any copies of the GeN. Pete Fisher can supply back copies at £1 each.

have not worked out where to put it yet. I intend to scrap the instruments and just have a speedo from an RC600R. This only has two built in idiot lights so I will use one for indicators and main beam and the other for oil pressure and high water temperature. I will fit diodes in the live wires so they will not feed back and upset the other function. Main beam and indicators do not tend to be used together and if the other light comes on something is wrong and I need to check it out. A practical and minimalist instrument panel. I do not need a rev counter and a temperature gauge is a luxury I can do without as long as I have a warning light. The light will be powered by a temperature switch that will replace the gauge sender in the head so it is separate to the fan circuit. Next I must start looking for a petrol tank and decide what I will do with the headlight.

GeN BINDERS

Yes the promised binders for your copies of the GeN are due to arrive shortly. So "roll up roll up, place your orders".

The binders are excellent quality, ridged, hard back book style, with sprung cords to hold the magazines. Each binder will take twelve copies. The magazine is easily inserted and can be taken out just as easily without damage. They are what I will describe as antique red with the spine gold embossed with our name. Keep all your copies of the GeN neatly together in something that will look smart on your book shelf. If you have all the copies of the GeN you have one full already and this GeN is starting the next.

GLASS FIBRE BODY WORK for NORDWEST & RC 600

Bob Wright can supply top quality Glass fibre replica body work for Northwest or RC 600 (92) The panels are made from aircraft quality fine weave long strand glass cloth and come in grey primer almost ready to paint. Apart from standard panels there is also a rear hugger for the Northwest that can be used on its own or the standard chain guard can be retained, and a nose cone that takes a pair of 7" headlights, it fits the standard mountings, the only modification you will need to make will be to the wiring to suit the headlights. You should be able to get headlights cheaply from a bike breaker. The panels are cheaper than original plastic so even when painted they work out to be excellent value.

- TANK SIDE PANELS - £118 each
- REAR SIDE PANELS - £49 each
- FRONT MUDGUARD
- FRONT SECTION - £56.45
- REAR SECTION - £17.23
- REAR PANEL (behind seat) - £43
- NOSE CONE (letter box light)- £47.96
- NOSE CONE (to accept twin 7" lights) - £99.87
- REAR HUGGER (primer)- £68
- " (gloss black)- £74
- HUGGER MOUNTING KIT - £11



Contact Bob Wright Motorcycles. 01934 - 413847.

BMF RALLY

We had our marquee booked and I was going on the Saturno. That was about all that was planned. Several people called to say they could come on Sunday so I knew we would have a few bikes. Then new member Dick Stapley called to say that he and his girl friend Kay could come for the weekend with his custom Nordwest and a few bits and pieces.

I set off for Peterborough after work on Friday and got all the way across London before it started raining. The lightning was very impressive and the rain was very wet. It managed to keep raining till I got onto the site then it left off, bloody typical. I found our marquee and was greeted by Dik saying "I bet you could do with a cup of tea". The world started to look a bit better as I sat in the back of their Chrysler "people carrier / day van". A bit like a Renault Espace but big enough to get a couple of bikes in the back. Put the bikes out and swivel the seats round and there is plenty of room for a couple of people to sleep along with all the cooking gear etc. Oh yes and it is dry inside. I had taken my sleeping bag and I slept in the marquee. In the morning it was warm and misty, as the day progressed it got very hot and humid. On Friday Piaggio received the first of the new Gilera scooters just in time for us to get them in a van and up to the show. Two models, the Runner and the SKP. Both are bright red of course. The Runner is a sports 50 that looks a bit like a motorbike with 12 inch wheels and the SKP is an off road style 50 that looks a bit like the Typhoon or Yamaha B-Wizz. Most of the "Bikers" liked the Runner and the "Lads" liked the SKP. This is the beginning of a range of sports scooters and motorbikes that are set to re establish the Gilera name, so watch this space for future developments. You may not like scooters but don't knock them, they may lead the way to something more to your taste. I think they look really good and when the 125cc & 180cc Runner appear next year I think the Gilera name will start to become hot news. In the daylight I was able to see what Dick had bought along to brighten up the Marquee. Dik is a keen special builder and has recently won 'Best Special' at the Stafford show with one of his creations. His Nordwest has glass fibre replica body work and a custom paint job that

makes it look very different but still fairly original. 7" twin headlights are the obvious difference. The glass fibre panels are being marketed by Bob Wright and include a rear Hugger and standard nose cone or the 7" twin headlight version that uses all the standard mountings. Quality is excellent and prices are better than the original plastics but you do have to paint them. In addition to his bike and a selection of body panels they had also bought some of Kay's airbrush work. Kay is a professional artist and she is also "Nightshade" from Back Street Heroes. She does a lot of custom paint work on bikes and helmets. Now we are not talking about bad copies of Chris Acheleos women. We are talking about top quality, pin-sharp original ideas that are worthy of any art gallery. The one thing Kay had on show that everyone liked and laughed at was a helmet that depicted the last moment in the life of a wasp that had just realised it was about to "splat" into the white helmet, very funny and excellent detail. If you have a few hundred quid to spare and want something original on your bike or helmet give her a call, you won't be disappointed. When Kay and Dik saw the Runner they very quickly realised it was a custom paint job just waiting to be done. "Look, the side of it looks like a road and it has bikes racing along it, old ones at the back and more modern ones at the end. The scooter has a whole history of Gilera all over it". I could see what they were talking about and I hope they can persuade Piaggio to let Kay do it.

Saturday night was mainly wet but good food, beer and a live band in the show ground's permanent hospitality centre meant that the weather did not really matter. Sunday morning started dull and foggy but it soon brightened up and the people started to arrive and arrive and arrive. By twelve o'clock it was taking people an hour to get in and standing looking down the hill to the main bike park was a great sight. Thousands of bikes, row after row, glinting in the sun. Suddenly you don't feel like a member of a small minority. Plenty of Gilera folk turned up and we added a Nordwest and GFR to the display. A couple of Nordwests did not make it. Pete Myers was still waiting for the correct crank case half and Mike Riley discovered that his sprocket carrier was less than perfect. Pete went for a test

Continued on page 18

G-Mail

☰ Mike Riley

As you know my sprocket carrier sheared its lugs, from what I assume to be loose sprocket bolts - as the price of a new plate is expensive (£110 inc. postage [that includes the bearing - Ed.]) I thought it was worth a mention and was worth owners checking their sprocket tightness ! I can't find a torque setting anywhere - mine are now 40 ft-lbs which is slightly over the recommended figure for high tensile bolts of that size. [I had the same problem when experimenting with alloy rear sprockets on the hillclimber. Excessive cush drive rubber wear may also be a factor. It is always worth checking them if the wheel has to come out. - Ed.]

I've got 'The GeN' back to issue No.1 and I've been meaning to get around to writing in for a long time, I've just never quite managed it until now.

☰ Tim Harnett

Starting from the beginning I own a blue Nordwest bought from GT motorcycles in Plymouth back in July 93. Prior to this I had a ZZR 1100. This was becoming a pain as all my riding was either across the traffic light infested Plymouth or out on the bumpy B roads on Dartmoor. The Nordwest was a breath of fresh air and I found I was travelling faster A to B despite taking a 100 bhp power cut !

The 600 single turned out to be a perfect match for the 250 2-strokes favoured by my mates. The obvious advantage being that the Gilera is also good at going slowly when you want to relax in comfort, which can't be said for the RGV !

My particular bike has proved itself to be a true Gilera by suffering from every single ailment known. Your article warning of cambelt failure arrived days after the cambelt snapped. The AA man was less than impressed as I was on the M27 outside Southampton and he had to relay me and bike back to Yorkshire. Talking of motorways I've found the taller sprocket invaluable for long trips,

however, it comes off again for normal use.

Less than 100 miles after the top end was rebuilt the drive sprocket bearing collapsed. I'll put my hands up here and admit that on long journeys the chain wasn't always lubed as often as it should have. I would strongly advise other NW riders to stay on top of chain maintenance and especially avoid overtightening. I've also had cracked panels, snapped speedo cables (several), weepy fork seals (2 sets), rusty end can and bits vibrating loose all over the shop.

The bike often gets left standing outside while I'm working away. Initially I just used to jump start it on my return. I've now found that a far better way is to switch the fuel off while it's running to drain the carbs, then disconnect the battery. I've had no starting problems when I've done this.

Another classic mistake was using throwover panniers on a trip to Le Mans. On the return journey the weight of the pannier forced the rear panel against the exhaust and melted a hole through it. Other panels I've seen have had foil stuck to the inside, mine didn't (it does now !) [The foil has a tendency to come unstuck with age, particularly if subjected to a lot of wet weather riding once it starts to come away at the edges - worth checking occasionally - Ed.]

Due to my spending a lot of time away the bike is only showing 13k and is presently running well and has just been treated to a new rear Hi-sport.

Any rumours about Gilera riders being more fertile would also seem to be true as I also became a father in February, Daniella Jane weighed in at 8lb 51/2 and is proving to be even more trouble than the bike ! [see pages 7 and 15 ! - Ed.]

Finally I would like to thank (and plug) Peter Bloomfield of "Yorbike" in Kirkbymoorside. He is a Ducati specialist by trade, but has carried out all the major work on my Gilera so is now very familiar with the bike. Any Yorkshire based members who need work done will probably find him more helpful than your average Jap only dealer. He is on 01751 433301.

The GeN is an excellent newsletter, so keep up the good work, it is appreciated !

 Trevor Henderson

I have had problems with my Nordwest fuel cap leaking, the rubber seal in the top of the cap has split.

A cheap and easy fix was to buy one of those cheap £2 push in caps that you get from petrol stations, remove the sticky backed foam seal, remove the rubber seal from your Nordwest cap (one side is ribbed and the other side is flat), stick the foam seal onto your Nordwest rubber seal's flat side then trim off the excess foam with a pair of scissors, fit back into your Nordwest cap with the foam facing out and you're done.

Having done this my fuel cap has stopped leaking, even when the tank is filled to the top.

Happy biking.

Former member Alan Hopkins also wants to part with his Nordwest:

*Nordwest, L Reg, 10,000 Kms,
Very Good Condition, £3000,
Birmingham (0121) 428 2822*

FOR SALE

AIR FILTERS

A useful snippet from the G-Net mailing list Apparently paper element type filters meant for Fiat/Lancia cars with the 'fire' engine will fit the NW and RC according to contributors in Italy. The filter is probably marked UFI. A quick look under the bonnet of a Cinquecento was encouraging. I must try comparing one in Halfords.

GILERA
RETURN TO RACING

Piaggio Ltd. have announced that the one make scooter racing championship planned for this year will be known as the "Carnell-Gilera scooter championship". The scooter being used is a 50cc water cooled Piaggio Zip SP that has been fitted with the 70cc Malossi race kit which boosts power from 3.5 bhp to around 17 bhp and gives the racer a top speed of over 80 mph. These scooters proudly wear a large sticker proclaiming "Powered by Gilera".

40 of these specially prepared scooters will be racing at major meetings during the year and the first race will be the Good Friday meeting at Brands Hatch.

This may not sound like a wonderful revival of the Gilera marque but it is a beginning and during this year Gilera scooters will be on sale in Britain and next year there will probably be small motorcycles as well. It will not all happen at once but Piaggio have committed to the use of the Gilera name for its sports scooters and motorcycles. And don't laugh at scooter racing until you have seen it, I think you will be amazed at the speed and closeness of the racing.

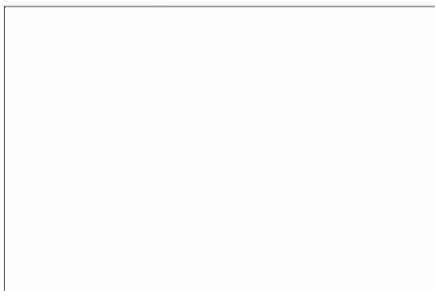
 David Champion

Press Cuttings

Gileras make the odd appearance in newspapers and magazines and if you send me an item that caught your eye I will put it in 'The GeN' for everyone to enjoy.

To start with in this issue two very different images of Gilera - then and now, sent in by Les Wassall.

The first is an article about a vintage rally which called at the Talbot Inn Biddulph Staffs. which features a photograph of machines. Appearing



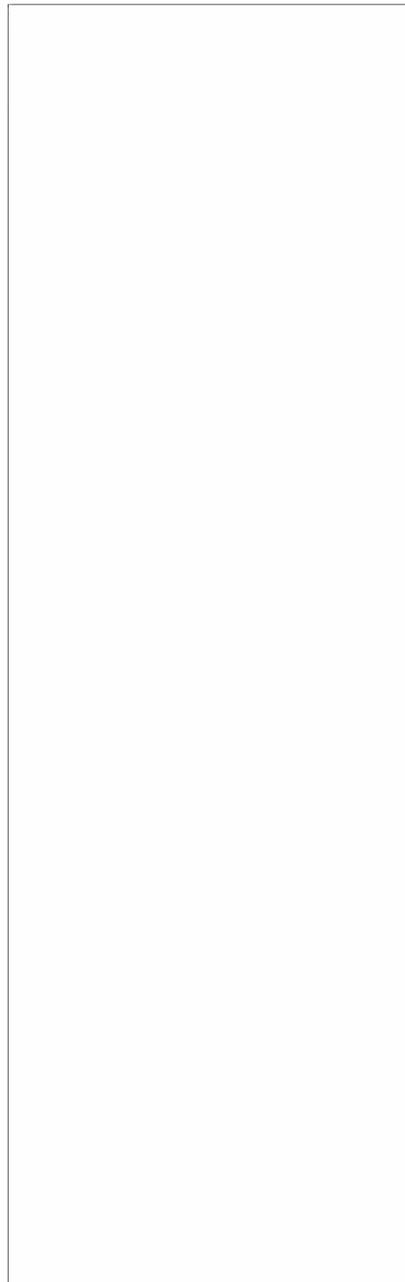
prominently in the foreground is what appears to be a classic Saturno from the 50's.

The second is a snippet from MCN showing an advert running in Italy for the new Gilera scooters. The text is as follows:

SCOOTER firm Gilera reckons its new Stalker machine is so sexy it is promoting it with free condoms ! The contraceptive campaign hopes to attract a bigger share of Italy's massive teenage scooter market.

Mind you the slogan looks more like Greek than Italian to me.

Could it be that the advertising copy writers at Pontadera have been reading 'The GeN' ?



ILKLEY RACING NEWS

Just a few lines on recent outings. Mick Noblett and I secured entries in the TT Lap of Honour; the clutch on my 1949 Sanremo gave way on the starting line, but Mick's 1949 Competizione ran well until the top of the Mountain when a holed piston sabotaged his efforts. (At least he finished both the F1 and the Production races, on his Suzuki twin - dubbed a lethal bike by the comics. As an aside, what a pity there were no Gileras in the Singles TT.)

However, Gilera enthusiasts will have been absorbed by the Arcore marque's representation at the static display in Castletown Square and the next day's parade lap. The Lap was headed by Roberto Patrignani (TT fan and one-time works racer on the the 1957 Gilera 175 twin) on a 500 cc four, in 1966 trim. Another multi was ridden by Renzo Brioschi, probably the owner of the largest private collection of Gileras, from the exotic to the dowdy, from the mega-expensive to the bargain basement. (try to obtain a copy of the Febraury edition of the Italian mag 'Moto Storiche' which has a story illustrated by photos of his modern Saturno and Piuma.)

Saturnos were represented in the Parade by road going models to racers, in Competizione (ie girder fork), Sanremo (ie pressed steel frame) and Piuma (ie telescopic) versions. Particularly mouth-watering were what probably represented first time appearances on these shores for a 175 twin and a 150 Dimonstrazione, ridden by 'Motociclismo' magazine's long time journalist/tester Carlo Perelli.

Geoff Duke and Bob McIntyre's daughter Eleanor were on hand to flag the bikes away. A wonderful occasion to mark the 40th anniversary of the Magic Ton.

That auspicious event was also marked by the Scottish CRMC's Knockhill race weekend, over 21/22 June, although the first day was a total washout. Unfortunately, John Rushworth's attempts to secure a Gilera parade were frustrated by the organisers, but they relented to the extent of permitting classic Gileras into Sunday's opening parade.

My Sanremo once again let me down in mid-parade, while Mike Schofield's 300 B refused to start, despite having fired up cleanly in the morning. At least Ian Martin's 1950 Saturno sport packed in a healthy number of laps. And it was fitting that the star turn was the last Gilera to achieve a 100 mph lap of the Mountain course as Mick Noblett reacquainted himself with his 1994 Singles TT Piuma.

Guest of honour was another racer closely associated with the Arcore marque: Derek Minter, who sampled the multis in 1963 and 1966. He led the parades with some gusto aboard a Summerfield Norton. Pity he was not re-united with a fire-engine !

Whilst writing, a few other thoughts. I had always thought that replica Saturno racers were restricted to Competizione and Piuma versions, as the racers basically shared a frame with the road bike. By contrast, the sanremo had a one-off pressed steel frame. However, a recent Italian classic bike mag had a photo of a Sanremo with a replica frame, at a price of 30 million lire - almost expensive as the real thing.

The same mag had an advert for an unused 1990 Piuma, no price mentioned - when I last saw one the owner, a restorer in Arcore, was asking 24 million lire.

The Italian Legend Bike magazine has had some interesting Gilera articles recently: Feb 96 has a 1950s saturno GP sidecar. Oct 96 has the 175 twin, and May 97 the 98 Giubileo; even if you cannot read Italian the photos are excellent.

At present, I am putting together the finishing touches to a paperback entitled 'Gilera Racers: Singles and twins'. It covers the Saturno in all its forms, the Bialbero (only two bikes built), Saturno specials, the GP 125, the 175 twin, the 250 GP bike of 92/93 and the final flowering of the Saturno/Piuma.

It will be 96 pages, and will have about 130 photos - most never seen before - some are really cracking - mostly from the collection of Gianni Perrone, the proud owner of a genuine Gilera four. Should be out in time for Xmas.

✉ Raymond Asinscoe

Classics Corner

WANTED

**Regulator box to suit
B300 and wiring
diagram, also generator
stator assembly.**

Dick Brown: 01603 870787

FOR SALE

*GILERA 150cc
ARCORE*

**1974, 5 speed, 4 stroke
single. Fully restored.
£1000 o.n.o.**

Stephen Harvie: 01634 668180 (Kent)



Members list

All members who have no objection to their details appearing in the members list should have received a renewal form with this issue. The form shows what details are held for you and whether each item of information appears on the list or not. Everyone gets membership number, name and machine type. Everything else is optional - as much or as little detail as you like. If the form says "LISTED AS" then that item was on the 1996 list. If there is just a 'tick box' thus: [] it was not on the list but you can add it for 1997 if you tick that box. If you decide not to show something this year please strike through the "LISTED AS". Lets have a few more 'EXPERTISE' entries - No need to be a works racing mechanic or famous marque historian - humorous character sketches are welcome ! Oh, and please send back your form even if you have already paid your subscription. If you have paid the form will have been stamped appropriately.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

239 Ian Cameron GFR Midlothian
240 A. P. Cooper Yorks.
241 Celia Willcox Northumberland NW
242 J. C. Forrester USA 124 5V
243 Richard Bowker Somerset NW
244 Richard H Stapley Humberside NW
245 A. George London NW
246 Oliver Bulleid London NW
247 Roger Meadows W. Midlands SAT
248 Anthony Moore Lancs. NW
249 Dominik Sagstetter Germany NW
250 Greg Hall Northern Ireland NW
251 Adrian Hawking Avon NW
252 Bert Dawson Berks. RC
253 Peter Hardy Berks. NW
254 Johnny Campbell London NW
256 R. Poole Merseyside NW

..... Continued from page 12

ride on a Harley just to remind him why he was fixing his Nordwest. Mike turned up with excellent new T-shirts. He has good quality shirts with his cartoons printed on by a full colour process that is machine washable and can be ironed. He has also done a shirt that has the front covered with Gilera Logos, old and new. He can also get mugs printed. If you are interested give Mike a call: 01332 -722736 Don't forget that Julie and Mike have a baby daughter so they will not appreciate you calling late. I think I have sorted out the correct part number to get Pete a crankcase that is the right colour and takes the right ignition system. Pete, I hope your grin will start to broaden again soon.

the original plastics but you do have to paint them. In addition to his bike and a selection of body panels they had also bought some of Kays airbrush work. Kay is a professional artist and she is also "Nightshade" from Back Street Heroes. She does a lot of custom paint work on bikes and helmets. Now we are not talking about bad copies of Chris Acheleos women. We are talking about top quality, pin sharp original ideas that are worthy of any art gallery. The one thing Kay had on show that everyone liked and laughed at was a helmet that depicted the last moment in the life of a wasp that had just realised it was about to "splat" into the white helmet, very funny and excellent detail. If you have a few hundred quid to spare and want something original on your bike or helmet give her a call, you won't be disappointed. When Kay and Dik saw the Runner they very quickly realised it was a custom paint job just waiting to be done. "Look, the side of it looks like a road and it has bikes racing along it, old ones at the back and more modern ones at the end. The scooter has a whole history of Gilera all over it" I could see what they were talking about and I hope they can persuade Piaggio to let Kay do it.

Saturday night was mainly wet but good food, beer and a live band in the show grounds permanent hospitality centre meant that the weather did not really matter. Sunday morning started dull and foggy but it soon brightened up and the people started to arrive and arrive and arrive. By twelve o'clock it was taking people an hour to get in and standing looking down the hill to the main bike park was a great sight. Thousands

of bikes, row after row, glinting in the sun. Suddenly you don't feel like a member of a small minority. Plenty of Gilera folk turned up and we added a Nordwest and GFR to the display. A couple of Nordwests did not make it. Pete Myers was still waiting for the correct crank case half and Mike Riley discovered that his sprocket carrier was less than perfect. Pete went for a test ride on a Harley just to remind him why he was fixing his Nordwest. Mike turned up with excellent new T-shirts. He has good quality shirts with his cartoons printed on by a full colour process that is machine washable and can be ironed. He has also done a shirt that has the front covered with Gilera Logos, old and new. He can also get mugs printed. If you are interested give Mike a call: 01332 -722736 Don't forget that Julie and Mike have a baby daughter so they will not appreciate you calling late. I think I have sorted out the correct part number to get Pete a crankcase that is the right colour and takes the right ignition system. Pete, I hope your grin will start to broaden again soon.

The weekend was a great success and thanks to everyone who helped. Shirley Pattison from Piaggio has kindly offered a sizeable contribution to the club to help with the cost of the weekend. Thank you Shirley. I think we will definitely be back next year and who knows maybe we could win an award for the marquee.

LANGEMARK '97

I have told you about it before and I have tried to encourage you to make the trip but I was the only Gilera that got there this year. All the usual things that I have come to expect were there in abundance, warm welcome, beer, food, good live music and more beer.

In case you have missed previous articles. Langemark is a village in Belgium about sixty miles from Calais. The rally is run by the "Italian Motorcycle Club" of Belgium. It is not a muddy field and bring your own six pack rally: it is held in the village at the modern sports complex. That means local restaurants, hot showers, proper loos, dancing in a proper dance hall and they even lay on a bar. Barbecue and breakfast is included in the price. They have an organised run on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday the local vintage bike group meet for a run out.

The Saturno? well it ran faultlessly of course. I have owned that bike for six years and it still amazes me how good it is to ride. OK an extra five horsepower would be nice and the rattly floating disk is an embarrassment on European cobbled streets. But that is being picky. It usually starts first kick and it averages over seventy to the gallon, goes round corners like it's on rails and I know that I can control the brakes right up to the limit, wet or dry. I don't care what anybody says. The Japs just don't make bikes that are this much fun to live with.

RUMOUR CORNER

The Italian motorcycle magazine "Motociclismo" has been rumouring about a new 650 Saturno. I don't know where the story came from but I can not find any evidence to suggest that it may be true. Don't worry, if I hear anything you will be the first to know. No one I have spoken to has any idea but it does not look as if Piaggio are doing anything. The only possibility is that they are doing a deal to sell the design and tooling to someone else. Maybe we will see the engine appear with another name on it. Do not forget that it nearly got sold to Norton a few years ago.

 David Champion



A POTTED HISTORY OF PIAGGIO

Part 1

The following text has been lifted from Piaggio's excellent Internet World Wide Web site - thanks for helping me to fill up 'The GeN' guys !

It all began in Genoa as the brainchild of Rinaldo Piaggio in 1884. The Piaggio's were sea-faring folk but also good businessmen. Rinaldo Piaggio had his bright idea at just twenty years old when on arable land bought two years previously at Sestri Ponente he expanded the joinery built by his father, transforming it quickly into a modern steam-driven sawmill where he began to produce top quality naval outfits. The master carpenters and joiners of the Sestri Ponente plant soon made a name for themselves, not just for their skills but also for their ability to

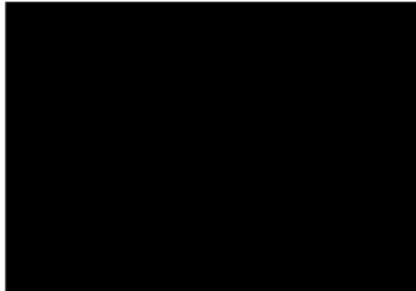


apply those skills to the customers' specifications. Meanwhile the company management was quick to win the confidence of the best shipyards. It took Piaggio & Co. just 5 years to gain the monopoly over Ligurian naval outfitting. Whereupon it began to cast its net wider, in Italy and abroad. And by the early twentieth century elegant wooden fitments and furnishings bearing the Piaggio name were adorning the saloons and cabins of some seventy lines flying the flags of every nation. That first empire was built on timber and canvas. When Rinaldo Piaggio decided it was time to widen his company's horizons he identified railway rolling stock as a promising investment and sheet steel joined the timber and the canvas.

Before the end of the century, the Sestri Ponente factory had begun to build and fit out railway carriages alongside its ship-fitting operations. By 1906 the newcomer had outstripped the ship-fitting operation and was transferred to a new factory in Finale Ligure. The move gave a decisive boost to Piaggio's wheeled transport operations and the company was soon manufacturing goods vehicles of all kinds, as well as luxury cars, trams and even special truck bodies. The First World War offered Piaggio the opportunity to try out a variety of new industrial experiences. Like all the other Italian manufacturing companies it was obliged to convert to the production of arms and munitions but this did not close its mind to new ideas. On the contrary, it raised the prospect of two new

manufacturing operations: motor boats and planes. Worthy representatives of the first group were the deadly MAS anti-submarine boats that decimated the AustroHungarian fleet. In the second, Piaggio's Sestri Ponente factory assumed responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the Ansaldo, Macchi and Caproni planes operating in the war zone.

The Finale Ligure and Sestri factories were already experts in the processing of the timber, canvas and steel that planes were made of then and it took no time at all to equip them for the mass production of complete aeroplanes. However Piaggio had no intention of abandoning his rolling stock operation which was transferred to a new factory in Pisa in 1917. Later, in 1924, he also bought a small factory at Pontedera from a local car manufacturer. The Piaggio company began producing aero engines at Pontedera in 1924, starting with the manufacture, under Gnome Rhône licence, of the 400 HP Bristol Jupiter engines and, under Ansaldo licence, of the



then famous SPA 6, a unit with 6 cylinders in line. Subsequently Piaggio began to design and build its own aero engines, propellers and transmission systems. In 1928 the Finale Ligure factory was equipped with an up-to date laboratory with a wind tunnel for aerodynamics and a tank for hydrodynamic testing. Even before that, in 1923, it had turned out the advanced P2 single-engined fighter plane with cantilever wings. This was followed in 1934 by the all steel three-engined P 16 and in 1938 by the celebrated P 108, one of the most advanced four-engined planes of its day which Piaggio created in bomber, cargo and passenger versions, the latter with a ultra-luxurious cabin. The Pontedera engines were equally impressive. They adopted a single or twin-star layout with 7- 18 air-cooled cylinders

and developed 300-1750 bhp. These engines were all superior performers, so much so indeed that Piaggio won as many as 21 world titles with them in 1937- 1939.

The aviation business was a priceless source of ideas and technological know-how. As early as 1926 Rinaldo Piaggio was promoting the development of air links for passengers, goods and mail services both domestic and international. Indeed he was enthusiastically involved in the creation of flying boat ports in Syracuse, Palermo, Tripoli, Naples, Genoa and Barcelona, through, for example, the setting up of SANA (Società Anonima Navigazione Aerea) in 1924. The planes were Dornier Wall and Super Wall flying boats (mostly built under licence at Finale Ligure). Piaggio, in fact, had considerable experience in this field culminating in the construction of the futuristic P7 monoplane built in 1929 for the famous Schneider Cup, a world flying boat speed race. The P7 featured an underwater propeller activated in the takeoff phase before the air propeller took over. Piaggio's advanced experimental work also produced outstanding results in the railway sector and I from 1937 the company was producing Europe's best stainless steel locomotives. In the aviation sector it conducted research on cells, engines, variable pitch propellers and stratospheric flight. The first airtight Piaggio plane was tested in 1941, the year in which the company began designing the P127, a big civilian transport plane for transoceanic flights. The P127 featured six engines in four wing groups, double counter-rotating propellers, a pressurised fuselage and a keel for emergency landings as well as a luxury cabin, complete with bunk beds. Bombed by the Allies and mined by the retreating Germans, the Pontedera factory was completely destroyed. Only a few machines were rescued, transported by the German troops to Biella where Piaggio set up an engineering office in the last months of the war.

Perhaps happily, Rinaldo Piaggio did not survive to see the total destruction of his marvellous factory. He had died on January 15 1938 leaving the business to his sons, Armando and Enrico. Armando took over the management of the Sestri Ponente and Finale Ligure plants, with Enrico assuming responsibility for Pontedera and Pisa.

Enrico Piaggio's first job was reconstruction. Left with absolutely nothing, Italy's industrialists were not burdened with too many options to choose from either. They had to find a product with a potentially mass appeal that they could sell at a reasonable price.

Enrico Piaggio turned his thoughts to cheap transport, bearing in mind the previous experience of the company's technicians and workers, as well as the straitened circumstances of his potential customers. He was no motorcyclist and the vehicle he invented was something half-way between a motorbike and a car. This hybrid creation, known as a scooter, had been attempted by others several times since the Twenties but had always failed and it was still not clear what the theoretically sensible scooter needed if it was to succeed. What Enrico Piaggio needed most was a top class engineer which he found in the person of Corradino D'Ascanio, from the Abruzzo region, who had won fame as the creator of the world's first fully operational; helicopter. In 1933 D'Ascanio built Piaggio's first variable pitch propeller and remained one of the Pontedera factory's chief engineers. In 1938, he won the confidence of Enrico Piaggio, who agreed to his experimental development of a new helicopter for possible manufacture by the company in this still virgin aviation territory.

To be continued in GeN#14

