

ARIEL CHEVAL de FER

Magazine of the Ariel Owners Motor Cycle Club

January 2026



MOTOR CYCLES
1926 *2026*



ARIEL

OWNERS MOTOR CYCLE CLUB

www.arielownersmcc.com • forum.arielownersmcc.com
www.arielownersmcc.com/members-only/

Members area username **taper** (lower case) • password **wheelbearing** (lower case)

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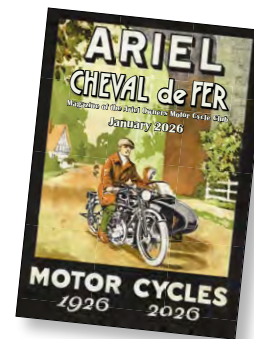
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Copy for each issue should be received on or before the penultimate Friday of the preceding month. See opposite for the editor's details.

AOMCC AGM & AUTOJUMBLE

Sunday 19th April 2026

Rolleston Scout Group, Station Road,
Rolleston-on-Dove, Staffordshire DE13 9AB

The Autojumble will feature a clearance sale of surplus Club spares stock at reduced prices! Don't miss out! Admission is free and entry is restricted to AOMCC members only. Hot food and drinks will be available.

ALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE AND MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO NOMINATE CANDIDATES

Note: The Membership Secretary has previously announced his intention to step down at the next AGM. All other Committee members are willing to stand for election again.

Nominations for Executive Committee posts and proposals for AGM motions must be submitted in writing to Kevin Moore, General Secretary and signed by a Proposer and Seconder. **The closing date for receipt of proposals and nominations is Wednesday 25th February 2026 – note this date has changed.**

Nominations are also invited for the award of the following Club Trophies: President's Cup, Clubman of the Year

Timetable:

08.30	Hall opens for stallholders
09.30	Autojumble opens for buyers
11.30	Autojumble closes
12.00	AGM Commences

To reserve a table please contact Mike Morgan by email at: chairman@arielownersmcc.com

Tables are subject to availability and must be pre-booked. Members only!



DIARY DATES

- Iron Horse Rally 2026, 6 - 8 March, Dent
- Hampshire Branch Autojumble, 18 April Long Sutton
- AGM, Sunday 19 April, Rolleston-on-Dove
- Kinlochleven, 30 April - 3 May
- 50th Anniversary of Italian Annual Rally 1 May 1976-2026
- The Sardinia Rally, 2 - 8 May
- Dutch Rally, Borkel En Schaft, 7 - 10 May
- Side Valve Rally, 11 - 14 June Westbury on Severn
- German Rally, Arieltreffen, 12 - 16 June Spiegelau Bavaria
- Cuddy Rally Aberfeldy, 3 - 5 July
- Annual Rally, 10 - 13 July Lydney, Glos
- Austrian Rally, 5 - 6 August Kötschach-Mauthen
- LDR - Douglas, 9 - 13 September Isle of Man
- Bevy Camp, Gullane, 25 - 27 September
- Black Ariel Centenary weekend, Llandrindod Wells, Wales, 9 - 11 October

SUBSCRIPTIONS

including postage

UK	£ 24.50
Rest of the World	£ 33.00
Family members	£ 5.00
Associate	£19.80
Joining fee	£ 10.00

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Happy new year to you all.

2026 is an important year, with a great deal to celebrate: the 100th anniversary of Val Page's first line up of black Ariel models, the 75th anniversary of the UK club, and 50 years of our key parts supplier, Draganfly, and the 60th Anniversary of the Dutch Club, and 50th Italian Rally. As I mentioned last month, many members don't currently take part in the social side of the club. Why not make this the year to change that and discover what you've been missing?

We were fortunate enough to join the Gloucester Branch for their Christmas meal, with an excellent turnout and great company - many thanks to Peter Kent for organising. I was slightly perplexed when everyone headed home around 10pm; being more accustomed to the Scottish Branch meal, which runs into the wee

hours, ending with a messy after party at Hugh Ramsay's house. It was also the first time I had properly travelled through the Forest of Dean in many years, and those wonderful roads reminded me why the area has become the preferred retirement spot for so many club members.

On the same weekend, we also held a productive Spares Organisers meeting where we planned for the year ahead and discussed future projects. It was good to meet Mike Endicott in person, who is taking over the Twin Spares remit. Mike is very enthusiastic, and we expect to resume advertising this service again very soon.

There has been an excellent run of technical articles in the magazine recently, all of which have been fascinating to read - please do keep them coming.

Finally, bookings for the LDR will open next month, so please keep an eye on *Cheval* and the club website for further details. It's going to be a popular one!!

All the best for the year ahead!

Mike

VH PISTONS



**ONLY £110
each, plus
postage**

These pistons have been made exclusively for the club by a well-respected UK supplier. They are a direct copy of the late Hplex 10503 piston.

- 6.8:1 compression
- Available in std, +20 thou, and +40 thou sizes
- Three strengthening ribs on the underside of the crown
 - Non-split skirt
 - Correctly weighted
- Taper ground gudgeon pin and ground 10 thou oval as per the original design

To order, contact Mark Whitaker by Email: whitaker268@btinternet.com or Phone: 01623 552442. Note - Orders will be posted Fridays.



Annual Rally 10th-13th July 2026

Forest of Dean

Deanwood Holidays,

Yorkley, Gloucestershire, GL15 4TY



2026 is extra special as we're celebrating 100 years since Val Page's first Ariel model hit the showrooms. To mark the occasion, we're organising a lineup of 40 bikes to reflect 40 years of Ariel designs from 1926 to 1966. Furthermore, 2026 is the 75th anniversary of the formation of the Ariel Owners Motorcycle Club. The rally will also include a scenic Tour of Dean run, concours competition, autojumble, live music, silly games, and more.

So, join us for the largest AOMCC gathering of the year and bring your iron horses to stay at a former equestrian center in the Forest of Dean. We have exclusive use of the secure 14-acre site which boasts large function rooms for socialising, beautiful views, a manicured campsite, cottages, and comfortable ladies and gents dormitories with privacy screens available. We've organised an on-site bar and pre-bookable catering (details to follow). Situated close to many tourist attractions, there is plenty to please riders and non-riders alike.

There is on-site accommodation to suit all budgets.

Dormitory bunk, (mattress only, so bring your own bedding & pillow) £15 per night

Optional dormitory linen/blanket/towel/pillow bundle, £30 for entire rally

Tents, (non EHU/EHU) £20/£25 per pitch per night (max 2 people)

Motorhomes/Caravans/Campervans, (non EHU/EHU), £25/£30 per pitch per night (max 2 people)

Extra adults per pitch £7/night, children £4/night

All the cottages are now fully booked

Photos at deanwoodholidays.co.uk

To enjoy the full rally, book the nights of Friday 10th, Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th July, however extended stays are welcome for all accommodation, subject to availability.

Book direct with the site by emailing enquiries@deanwoodholidays.co.uk and quoting "Ariel Rally". If you can't email, call 01594 563585.

Early booking advised for the remaining electric (EHU) camping pitches.

Day visitors welcome.

Rally fee £10 per adult, payable upon arrival.

Whether you're a club veteran or a new member, live locally or are travelling from overseas, we look forward to seeing you there.



Single Spares Organiser



ACP is an important part of the club which provides members with... elsewhere. We rely on a team of dedicated volunteers to look after... process sales orders, procure new parts and provide input to the...

Can you offer help either individually, or as a small group... to work together and offer a few hours per week??

Ideal candidates will have:

- A reasonable knowledge of...
- Good communication skills...
- Ability to work with others...

This is a role which will enable you to get acquainted with members throughout the world, and make a difference to the club. If you think you can help, please contact the Chairman for a chat. (Details on page 2)

Full support will be given.



Global Membership Secretary



After over 10 years in the role, Roger has decided to stand down at the next AGM. We are now looking for a willing volunteer(s) to take over this important role to help in the running of the club.

The ideal candidate will have reasonable computer skills; particularly email, word-processing, internet banking and data entry. Full training will be given.

The main tasks of the role are:-

- Logging subscriptions
- Enrolling new members
- Banking cheques and reconciling bank transfers
- Issuing monthly membership lists to various parties
- Answering phone queries (typically 1-3 per week)
- Respond to email enquiries
- Send out replacement magazines

The average time required is 2-3 hours per week although when the renewal notices go out in February and August, for a few days a couple of hours per day will be consumed. The role holder(s) will also have the option to join the Executive Committee.

If you feel that you can help, please contact Roger Gwynn (details on page 2)



Scottish Branch Rallies for 2026

Cuddy rally to be held once again at the bunkhouse in Aberfeldy, dates are 3rd 4th and 5th July 2026. The cost for this is £85 pp. Money to be paid on booking to the branch account. We have only booked the main block this year, so places are limited.

Bevvy camp, this is a different venue from Peebles. It is Whatton Lodge in Gullane, dates are 25th 26th and 27th September. The cost for this is £100 pp. Money to be paid on booking to the branch account. The property is in an exclusive area of Gullane, therefore keeping any noise down is a must. Towels are not supplied. There is a gated drive which will be for motorcycles and trikes only, cars and vans will have to be parked on the road outside the property, there is plenty of room there. There is no area for camping.

Please contact me for booking either/both rallies, and for any questions you may have. steveline52@gmail.com 07853271128

Steve Line

Sporting Arrows

Taken at Mallory Park circuit in August 2025. I was at the circuit for the weekend riding my two Arrows on track camping in my Bedford CA and at the same time taking the opportunity to advertise the Super Sports Arrow using a copy of one of Ariel's period salesroom brochures made into a banner. Super Sports Arrow on the



left is universally known as The Salt Arrow that was built by Ariel in 1961 with tuned engine and special swinging arm to take part in long distance production races such as the Silverstone 1000 and Thruxton 500 miler.

Machine on the right is my very early 1959 Arrow also fitted with a tuned engine. The engine was originally fitted into a different Arrow that was a special order by the first owner, hence the tuning work carried out. The factory stamped the wording, 'Special' across the top of the front engine mount and the name of the first owner across the top of the gearbox housing.

Roger James

VMCC Founders Day 2026

The VMCC's very popular Founder's Day rally and Autojumble is once again to be held at Stanford Hall, near Lutterworth, Leicestershire on Sunday 19th July 2026. The theme for this year's event is 80 years of the VMCC and the Flat Tank section will be featured as its center piece. The AOMCC will again be attending along with many other one-make clubs with our usual small display of Club machines.

With the 75th Anniversary of the AOMCC and the Centenary of the introduction of the Val Page 'Black Ariels' we would like to display a selection of 'Black Ariels' from the 1926 to 1930 period. We are limited to a maximum of around 8-10 bikes by the size of the display pitch size so it would be



great to display a range of different models from this period. If you would like to include your machine for this display, please contact stand coordinators Wali Taylor and Kevin Moore (details inside front cover). We will be issued with a limited number of free-entry passes for exhibitors.

For this anniversary event, overnight camping will be available on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th July by prior booking only with Stanford Hall. This should enable the Club display to be set up from Saturday. A beer tent and food stalls will be provided over the weekend.

Kevin Moor, AOMCC General Secretary

A nice find

I found what appears to be an early Ariel lapel badge at last Saturday's Kempton Park Autojumble.



It was made by H Jenkins & Sons Ltd of Birmingham. They were in business as medalists pre-1900 and they produced medals for the First World War. As it has the pre-First World War Ariel insignia and does not appear to be a modern replica I presume that it is an early badge.

Chris Pierce

Brian Marshall

My husband, Brian Marshall sadly passed away on 25th of September. His father was James Marshall, and they were both dedicated members of the AOMCC. James bought from new his Ariel Square Four Mkii in 1954 and eventually added a sidecar. It was eventually passed on to Brian some years ago. They both won many cups at the Annual Rallies etc and at one stage Brian's name appeared on a cup under that of his father!

There is now a new owner of this much cherished Ariel, and I hope it brings him as much pleasure as it did to Brian and his dad.

Yours sincerely,

Glenys Marshall

Val Page Annual Rally anniversary lineup

The booking spread sheet is now getting populated with bikes booked in for 1926, 1927, 1928, 1937, 1940, 1942, 1947, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1961 and 1965. Some owners have sent in photos of their bikes and by the looks of it there are going to be some truly wonderful machines in the lineup. A good spread of models so far from singles to Sq4s.

If you have a machine manufactured in a year not already booked, please come and join in, by emailing details of your machine to me at rthomassonr@aol.com.

Years still available (as of 27th Dec): 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1938, 1939, 1941, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1966.

Best Regards

Richard Thomasson



BRANCH REPORTS

Cornwall

By now I assume you will have read Bill's report on their Portuguese trip. Another long trip for them worthy of an award at our Christmas Dinner, another successful evening with friends. 5 couples was a manageable number for conversation etc. A pleasant surprise was Reis and his wife Beth and their 2-year-old daughter popping in to say hello. There were awards too, Mark gaining the Frank Andrews Cup for services rendered to the Branch and of course the AOMCC in general in the role of Company Secretary. Also been known to expose his immaculate Square Four combination and pretty girder NH to the Cornish climate on several occasions. The Double Sprocket award that would have gone to Bill and Lo again, as it has on successive years to become an embarrassment, went to Chris and Rena in acknowledgement of their participation and enthusiasm since joining us in Cornwall earlier this year. They seriously took on the challenge of recruiting young blood in buying Reis member-



ship for his birthday. They seem to be pleased. Congratulations to both and well deserved. I'm pleased to report that Mike's invitation to the assembly of the gearbox was a success even without my help. It was found that the kickstart shaft bores were out of line and when the front cover was tightened the shaft bound in the bush. The inner bush was not seated square but brute force prevailed to restore alignment. I did play a small part by communicating our editor's recommendation for the headstock bearing cup removal proving successful, if you have the kit that is. Luckily Chis did, applying a blob of weld to the inner surface of the cup and allowing it to cool, the contraction, as the weld cools, shrinks the diameter enough for the cup to fall out. Thanks Wali and well done the team who enjoyed the day and hospitality of Mike and Marianne. It just remains for me to wish all our readers and friends a Happy and healthy 2026 and hopefully more riding in good conditions. **Colin Snooke**

Swindon

Things are quieter now that winter has arrived. We are still out on the bikes though, with our Branch meetings being well attended at vari-

ous cafes in the area. Even in winter it's nice to get out on the bike and ride along some quiet country lanes, and we have loads of cafes within easy reach. If you are in our area (or maybe fancy a longer ride), why not join us? Email me at the address on the back of *Cheval*.

Winter is a time for garage work but not really painting petrol tanks. But that is where I find myself after my tank started to blister its paint. The obvious culprit was pin holes. Modern petrol and paint don't seem to like each other. So, off with the tank, remove the flaking old Petseal, then clean, prime and coat the inside with POR 15. I've found this stuff to be very good despite the rather ominous warnings on all the labels. And now to repair the paint. Of course, the paint can I was using has almost expired and I think was probably made in the 1970s...so how to match old and new paint. Well, I couldn't - so it's a new topcoat then a 2K lacquer. Should be sorted soon. **Tony**

Lancs

The December meet-up was a lively and entertaining evening as usual and was attended by nine members. "Big Dave" Brown, Peter Fox, Steve Sullivan, Jack Wilcox, Graham Goral, Phil Boffey, Jim Haydock, Brian Jeffries and yours truly. Incidentally there were no forms of two-wheeled transport in the car park, hardly surprising with the recent inclement weather that we have experienced. Just as a matter of interest the average attendance this year for our meetups was ten, with a maximum of fifteen and a minimum of five. Phil arrived later than usual as he had been diverted due to road closures and had been frustrated by numerous diversion signs resulting in "dead ends." Dave our resident entertainment officer and Brian kept us amused with tales of their adventures in Holland, one of Dave's more printable stories revolved around a competition involving two large Dutch ladies in traditional dress. Both the competitors were given a big block of wood, a large nail and a hammer. The aim of the contest was to see which lady could drive the large nail into the block of wood the quickest. Make of that what you will, I thought that Ariel owners did some strange things but I have never seen anything like this at an Ariel

event. Brian also told us a story about an attempt to save some cash on accommodation whilst working in Holland, (probably so that they had more beer money). Rather than using the rather expensive hotel which had been budgeted for they moved to a cheaper establishment very close to a major railway station. Neither of them had any sleep whatsoever and were kept awake by some untoward activity on the floor below. I will leave the rest to your imagination, he and his friend did go back to the original hotel but unfortunately for them by then the hotel was fully booked. Moving on swiftly, Graham has now got his Huntmaster fully recommissioned, Steve Hughes who was unable to attend sent me an Email and is looking for a buyer for his 1928 model A. Anyone interested give me a call or Email me, my details are on the rear cover of *Cheval* and I will forward you Steve's contact info. Steve Sully told us a tale of woe regarding his electric start DOT Mancunian and how he has damaged at least two handlebar switch units which he was unable to repair despite his best efforts. On a sad note Jim and Myself attended the funeral of Carole Howard who recently passed away. The AOMCC was well represented by Mark and Sue Rollins, Andy and Jane Hemmingway and the Wallwork family, sorry if I have omitted anyone from this list. At the funeral wake Tilly produced a number of photographs one of which was a group of us including Erik and Carole in front of the John O Groats Hotel in 1990 or 1991, when I had a full head of dark hair. I can recall that it was after the Cuddy Rally that we made this journey around Scotland, the weather was not the best. However we had a good time and I can recall Erik in a pub getting a poker red hot in a coal fire and making his own mulled ale, happy days and memories. Unfortunately I forgot to wish everyone a happy Christmas and New Year in my last report and as it will be January before you see these rabbitings, may I wish you all belated seasonal greetings from up North.

And as us folk up North say,
"Am proper pewfagged an off up wudden ill"
(Translates to "I'm rather tired and off upstairs to bed")

Remember to add this valuable information to your translation note book in case you ever travel to Lancashire.

Regards,

Duckuth ▷

▷ Hampshire

Well, that's another year which has raced by, but I can safely say we've had some excellent riding opportunities in some stunning scenery around the county of Hampshire and great camaraderie along the way. Fingers crossed that 2026 will be more of the same!

Since our last report we have had two WhatsApp group ride outs. For those of you who are new to our Club, we at the Hampshire Branch set up a WhatsApp Group specifically for impromptu ride outs. When the weather is looking favourable any member of the group can suggest a meeting point and general direction of the run and this can result in any number of riders, from two up to about seven, riding any bike, classic or modern-ish for a nice morning of gentle rides around the Hampshire lanes, normally topped off with coffee and cake at a local café at the end. So, our first run was held on Thursday 27th November where three of us had a 30 mile run across the Test Valley ending up at the Apache Café which adjoins Middle Wallop Army Air Museum and the second was a couple of weeks later on Thursday 11th December where four of us again rode across a 40 mile differing route through the Test Valley but this time ending back at The White Horse, Ampfield for coffees and a roaring log fire to warm us up!

Our much-anticipated Branch Christmas Meal was held on Saturday 6th December, where 16 of us were spoilt by the gastronomic delights served up by the attentive staff at The White Horse, Ampfield. However, there was a slight calamity towards the end with the Eton Mess which a few diners had booked. This had sort of melted into a bit of a creamy, gloopy mess but the pub quickly replaced it with Ginger Pudding, which from all accounts, was a better choice. Funny how some things work out for the best!

Moving onto our next branch event which was Club Night held on Wednesday 17th December. Being the last one of the year Steve Carter arranged for Sausage Rolls and Mince Pies for all 13 attendees which went down a treat. Great display of Christmas Jumpers worn by the majority, which I have to admit that my reminder email of the sartorial code for the evening was still stuck in my email Outbox for some reason so well done

all who remembered from previous discussions. Simon brought in his latest 3D Printing efforts which turned out to be excellent copies of the bulbous handlebar dummy grips favoured by BSA and Triumph in the late 60's and early 70's. Is there no limit to this man's talents? Next was a tale of woe from Rob who is currently restoring various elements of his 1938 VB. Needing a replacement set of front wheel bearings, he purchased a set from a well-known and respected supplier who had these items specifically manufactured as they were no longer available from usual bearing suppliers. Trouble was, unbeknown to Rob, these bearings had been incorrectly manufactured 8 thou oversized resulting in the hub cracking with an almighty bang when the bearing were being pressed in. With the benefit of being a branch member, advice was sought in-house and the hub is on its way to being laser welded and hopefully being brought back from the scrap pile. Maybe this is a lesson we all need to heed, don't assume the new part is going to be a direct replacement, especially if it's been manufactured specially. Keep the old item and use it for careful measurement prior to fitting. What's the old adage... measure twice and fit once... or something like that!

Towards the end of the evening our Treasurer, Keith, advised that he will be producing an interim fiscal report at our next January Branch meeting to discuss suggestions of a possible discount structure for club night dues, and how / where to spend our increasing balance for the benefit of Branch members. So, thinking caps on gentlemen, and bring all your suggestions to the next meeting being held on Wednesday 21st January.

This year we are going to attend a Boxing Day event for Classic Bikes / Cars as the weather is forecasted to be favourable (hopefully I'm not sticking my neck out too far here!). There were two choices in our vicinity, being the Wickam Square classic vehicle meet, normally very busy and what with the M27 being closed for 12 days over Christmas, we anticipate all local roads will be well and truly stuffed with overflow traffic, so we have elected to attend the Classic Bike meet at The Coach & Horses, Cadnam which commences at 10.00hrs and finishes around the midday mark. I've been informed that a couple of chaps will go there direct, due to living locally, but I would suggest the rest meet at The White Horse, Amp-

field for 10.00hrs and we can all ride from there together, arriving around the 10.30hrs mark. A reminder will be sent out on the WhatsApp group, so please let me know your attendance via that.

Looking a bit further ahead into 2026, we have now committed to hold our Fourth Annual Hants Branch Autojumble on Saturday 18th April back at The Four Horseshoes, Long Sutton, RG29 1TA. We have chosen this date so as not to clash with the Club AGM and Autojumble being held on the 19th April at Rolleston-on-Dove and the Stafford Classic Bike Show and Autojumble being held the following weekend of 25th / 26th April. You'll find our advert in this month's copy of *Cheval* and bookings are now open for selling pitches, remaining at last year's charge of £5 per pitch which goes towards Branch Funds.

And finally...

May we take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year from the Hampshire Branch, and that the sun shines on all your riding exploits for 2026.

Kind regards,

Roger Armstrong

Herts

It's the time of year where we're more often to be found in the garage (or the pub!) rather than riding our bikes, although we did hold the annual Christmas Lunch on the 13th December – and one member, Bryan Marsh, turned up on his bike. Very impressive. We had 23 seats booked and paid for, although unfortunately on the day three members missed the event due to illness, of which there is a lot going around, sadly. The lunch was a great success, with a good venue, excellent food and great company. The service was very slow though and led to some people not getting their main course until after others had finished, which was a disappointment. It didn't detract too much though from what was a very enjoyable event.

The first run of 2026 will (hopefully) have taken place by the time you read this — our annual trip to the 'Vintage Stoney' New Year's Day Vintage Car and Motorcycle Gathering, at Stoney Stratford. This is a very enjoyable way to get out after the excesses of Christmas, although it was postponed last year due to dreadful weather. Fingers crossed for this year.

On the garage front, I stripped my 1929 Model F front end to get the worn and juddering forks overhauled down at Jake Robbins on the South Coast. Chairman Pat Turley did the same so we had a joint trip out to St Leonards on Sea to drop them off. My bottom steering head bearing was flopping around on the yoke stem, and Pat's forks were found to be bent. The joy of old bikes huh? Nonetheless Jake turned them round, for a very good price, in just two weeks. Can't wait to try them out.

Not long now until the riding season is here. Have a great month folks,
Adrian

Selly Oak

Wishing you all a Happy New Year, Christmas now over and our Christmas meal on the 17th December at The Bull and Butcher had 3 last minute cancellations due to the flu virus. Thanks to Trevor and Jacky for organising the meal and supplying gifts, safe to say we all enjoyed the meal and free mince pies that followed just in time for our magazine editor to wish us all Merry Christmas.
Bob



OVERSEAS NEWS

German branch christmas dinner

Once again, another blank spot on my personal map of Germany has been filled. Around 30 Arielists met in beautiful Burghausen in south-eastern Germany. The beautiful old town, located on the banks of the Salzach River, is dominated by the longest castle in the world. The fortress stretches over a kilometre along a mountain ridge. The obligatory tour provided numerous insights and views. The evening Christmas market and the city tour were particularly beautiful. Here, the paths were illuminated by thousands of real candles in addition to electric lights.

As usual, parts were exchanged, deals were made, technical and worldly problems were discussed, and delicious Bavarian beer was enjoyed until well after midnight at the hotel.



Unfortunately, with temperatures around zero degrees and precipitation, there was no Ariel to be seen. Due to the remote location, some guests travelled over 1000 km in Germany, which can be considered true enthusiasm. Among the international guests were Sean and Jo from Great Britain and a few Austrians, who only had to cross the nearby Salzach River. The German Branch's Christmas dinner was once again a good success and is set to continue in Weimar in 2026.

Next Arieltreffen will take place from 12 to 16 June 2026 in Spiegelau in the Bavarian Forest, watch out for announcement in this paper. *Markus*

German Ariel Rally 2026

94518 Spiegelau - 12.06.2026 to 16.06.2026

- Three days of riding in the beautiful landscape of the Bavarian and Bohemian Forest -

Get together at the Hotel Tannenhof on Friday,
12th of June 2026

Our special rate until 31st January 2026: 4 nights
half-board (breakfast & Dinner)

Single room: 380 € p.p./Double room 312 € p.p.

Please book via: gerhard.noessner@web.de or
+49 170 919 371 3

ARIEL MOTORCLUB ITALIA

Dear Arielist, the next 1st May 2026 we will celebrate the 50° Ariel Rally in Uboldo. I hope you will come to enjoy the feast with the Sardinia Rally 2 - 8 May.

2 May Departure to Genova for the ferry and embarkation to Porto Torres

3 May We will be in Sardinia and we will go to Castelsardo to the hotel (Riviera and Janus)

4-7 May Tour to discover the Sardinian beauty

8 May Transfer to Porto Torres for the ferry in the afternoon

9 May Arrival to Genova and end of Rally

Costs

1 person: Euros 840 (hotel + ferry + cabin and 7 lunches)

1 motorcycle: Euros 110

1 van (Lg 5mt - H 2.20): Euros 340

1 van (Lg 6mt - H 2.20): Euros 370

1 car and trailer (lg 7 mt - H 2.20): Euros 430

It is not include the breakfast and the dinner on the ferry

IMPORTANT

The cabins on the ferry are four places and you must inform me which person you want share the cabin, otherwise I will decide.

You must book by 31.01.2026

IBAN for the payment : IT02 H032 5022 8000 1000 0159 754 registered Ariel Motorclub Italia.

The Ariel Motorclub will give a contribution of 150 euros to the participants on the saddle of Ariel Motorcycle.

A.M.I. Via Fiume, 2 - 21047 Saronno (Va) - Tel. 02 96702789
www.arielmotorclubitalia.it email: arielmotorclubitalia@libero.it

Iron Horse Rally 2026

(Dales, ales and tall tales)

Friday 6th – Sunday
8th March 2026
at Dent, Cumbria

Ring John Duckworth on

07745 516 279

/ 01254 201 076 or email

jimi.haydock@hotmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

26TH AUSTRIAN
ARIEL RALLY 2026

5TH - 9TH AUGUST



Kötschach-
Mauthen
CARINTHIA

THE BLACK ARIEL CENTENARY CELEBRATION WEEKEND

Llandrindod Wells, Wales

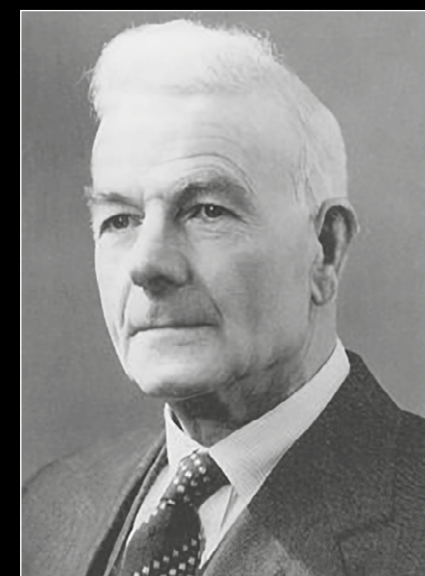
OCTOBER 9-11, 2026

Book directly with the refurbished Commadore Hotel on 01597822288 quoting reservation number 132333 and state you are in the AOMCC, (insist on talking to Andrea or Jojo). Weekend cost £238 (£25.00 deposit on booking) for a twin room with breakfast (bring a friend and share the room price).

Saturday night celebration dinner 3 courses £29.

Saturday ride in the Welsh hills.

For more information / any problems
email the Editor





SPECIALIST INSURANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARIEL OWNERS MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Ariel Owners Motorcycle Club Insurance is provided by Peter James Insurance and gives club members access to a range of exclusive benefits.

Policy benefits include:*

- ✓ Exclusive rates for members
- ✓ Member to member cover – ride another club member’s Ariel with fully comprehensive cover
- ✓ Free salvage retention
- ✓ UK & European breakdown cover
- ✓ Free agreed value
- ✓ Tools and spare parts cover (up to £3000)
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COVER AVAILABLE FOR MODERN BIKES WHEN INSURED AS PART OF A MULTI-BIKE POLICY



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DOCIDM425

Let's talk about insurance...

Regular readers of the pages might recall that, last summer, we announced the launch of a new Ariel Owners Club Insurance scheme.

Ariel Owners Club Insurance also offers several new insurance benefits, and one of the most popular is having fully comprehensive cover to ride a bike belonging to another member. To fully understand the ins and outs of this cover we answer a few member queries below:

What is member to member insurance cover for classic bikes?

Quite simply, member to member cover enables Club members insured with Peter James Insurance through the Club scheme to ride another member’s bike. This is fully comprehensive cover and takes away the need to fill out extra paperwork for adding named riders.

Do both bikes need to be insured under the Club scheme for me to be covered?

No. Each Policyholder will be covered whilst they are riding any classic motorcycle not belonging to them provided that the owner of the bike is a current member of the Ariel Owners Club. If you have a policy under the Club scheme, then you are covered. Obviously if you’re swapping bikes then both riders will need to be covered.

Does the borrowed bike have to be an Ariel?

No, cover is extended to ride another club member’s classic bike regardless of manufacturer. The policy stipulates that the borrowed bike must be aged 20 years or older and is valued at less than £500,000.

Are there any geographical limitations?

Cover will be provided whilst the vehicle is being ridden in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.

If your insurance is due this month then why not give the Ariel Owners Club scheme a try — just contact the team at Peter James Insurance on the dedicated Club number — 0121 506 6028.

UK EVENT INSURANCE – Important Information for Event Organisers

The club insurers no longer require us to retain records for each event where all participants must sign to accept the insurance requirements. However, to ensure events organised by the club in the UK are covered by our Public Liability insurance provider, all organisers and attendees must ensure:

- Drivers/riders of any vehicles which can move under their own power, must have third party insurance cover.
- To have third party event cover, the insurer must be notified of any event where you believe the attendees will exceed 3,000 people and/or you have been requested by the venue or local authority to have £10m of public liability. This can be done via the club Company Secretary.
- Full details of any incidents must be recorded and shared with the club Company Secretary at the earliest opportunity.

If a copy of the Public Liability insurance certificate is required, or you have any questions, please contact the club Company Secretary — Mark Colton-Taylor

TELEPHONE,
OFFICES, SELLY OAK 271 (4 LINES)

TELEGRAMS,
ARIEL, SELLY OAK.
CODES:—BENTLEY'S, MARCONI,
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ARIEL WORKS LTD.

MAKERS OF
ARIEL CYCLES & MOTOR CYCLES

BOURNBROOK



VHM/MB

BIRMINGHAM. 3rd Sept: 1925

SALES
MANAGERS

REPLY TO DEPT.

Dear Sir(s),

We have acquired the services of a prominent engineer who has been responsible for designing motor cycle engines that hold most of the classic records of the world, and his higher knowledge is incorporated in the 1926 Ariels, which are unequalled for speed and reliability.

Our new models :-

5.50 h.p.	Side Valve Standard Sports
5.50 h.p.	" " Touring "
5.00 h.p.	Overhead Valve Super Sports
5.00 h.p.	" " Fast Touring

are now leaders of their class.

The Ariel agency will interest you because of its new value - and to enable you to educate your district to appreciate the outstanding performance of the new Ariels, we are prepared to supply specially finished models for demonstration and competition work without extra charge, upon terms generous to yourself.

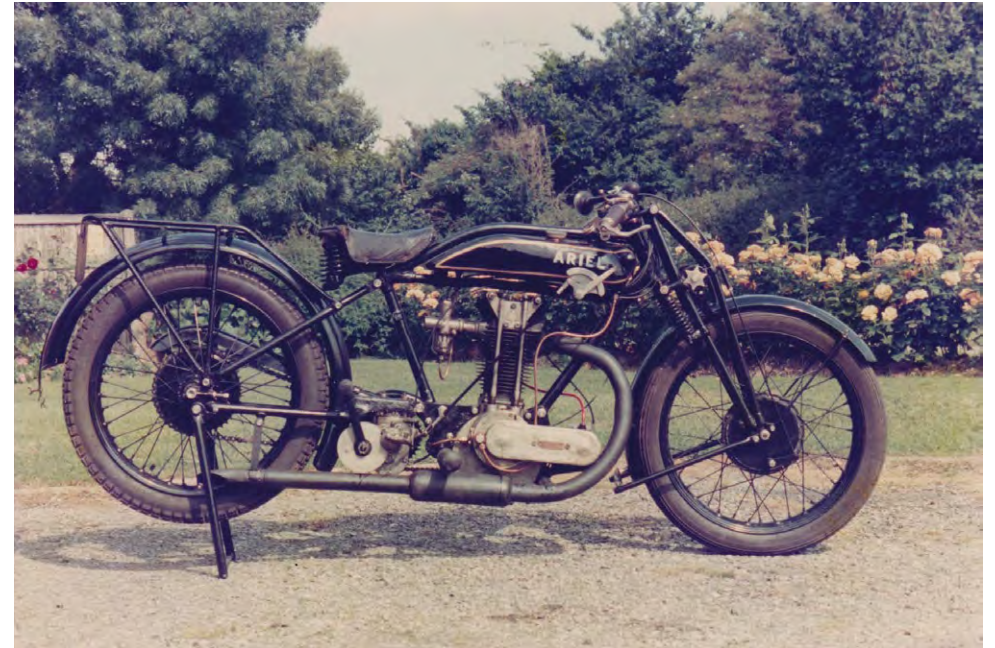
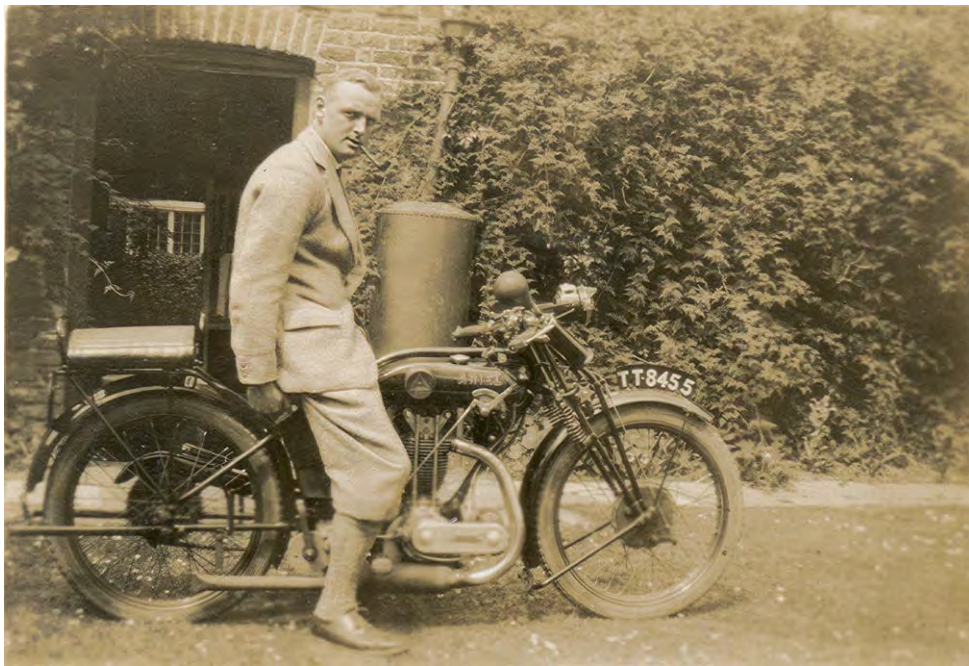
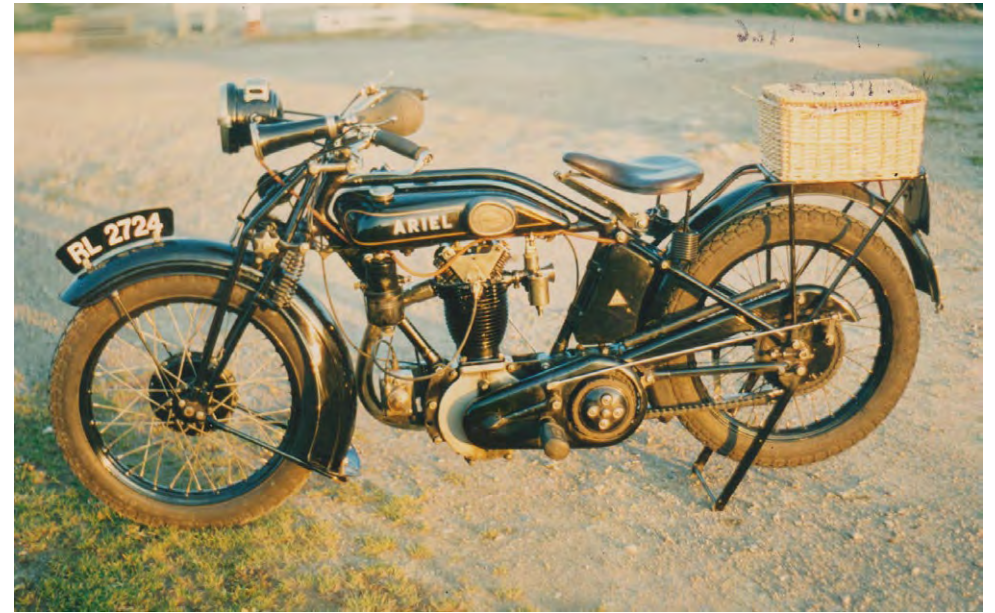
We are commencing to negotiate agencies for the 1926 Season, and invite correspondence. In view of the early date of the Show now is the time to secure agencies.

Yours faithfully,
ARIEL WORKS LIMITED,
V.H. Mole,

SALES MANAGER.



AN ARRAY OF 1926 MACHINES past and present



Photos: Jerry Mortimer, Mike Macdonald and Wali Taylor

A doctor writes

Reg Eyre has acquired a rarity from the Ariel stable

I have been looking for a 1926 Ariel side valve machine, the first of the Val Page designed motors for Ariel in the 1925 Ariel frame that formerly wrapped itself around the venerable White and Poppe side valve motor, where the valves did not see eye to eye and were therefore separated by quite some distance. I just know, even though I have never owned one of these machines, that it is very light, such that the newly designed side valve engine would propel it forwards with vim and vigour because it would handle superbly and corner with attitude. The trouble is that no one is selling such wonderful machines, or if they are, they know they will extort a grand price for their Ariel.



1926 Ariel Model A sold from the Car & Classic website

I read a report about owning and riding an MSS Velocette, which caused me to research the lighter 350 MAC version as well as the even lighter 250 MOV version.

While I was looking at Velocettes I became distracted by the 250cc GTP two stroke machines. Can you believe that there was a sporting version with a racing magneto that, allegedly, could rattle along at over 60mph? There is also a U-tube video clip of one such machine going great guns up Brookland's Test Hill.

I was suitably impressed and well off the scent of what I thought I was heading for in terms of a 1926 Ariel side valve, so a major rethink had me writing down my expectations, budget and some ideas about how I envisaged using the 'new' machine.

I enjoy taking part in Road Trials such as the Levis Cup, which sadly was cancelled for 2025

due to the untimely death of the ever cheerful organiser Martyn Round. I was in the habit of loading 'Uncle Alf's' 1942 Ariel W/NG, driving up to Worcestershire, unloading, riding about 100 miles through 1920s fords and test hills on roads that still have their original pot holes, then loading the van, and driving home. During the previous four months, I had managed to drop the Ariel, due to being unbalanced and felt that Alf would understand if I replaced the heavy war department machine with a lighter 250 machine. So would the Velocette, in MOV or GTP form, give me a good ride over 100 miles? From reading riders' reports of the GTP, it was clear that many owners would not attempt such distances over such a challenging course.

At this point, up popped a 1939 Ariel 250 ohv single four stroke. This would have a similar frame to the W/NG and a sporting 12bhp to propel itself and this 'portly' rider at about 45 to 50 mph around the Levis Cup Trial course, and it would not be too different to riding the 350 WD machine, and it would be lighter to load and unload when transporting it.

On contacting the current owner, it turns out it was his recently deceased father's machine, who was a dedicated Ariel rider in many disciplines including off road trials machines such as the models HT3 and HT5 in rigid and springer forms. Speaking with Mark, his son, revealed that the machine for sale was bought from the factory in 1940 so the frame and engine numbers indicated a mostly 1938 machine that was probably a model OG or OH with the sporting upswept exhaust. It is obviously not a concourse machine and has not been used for several years, but since my background is also with Ariel machines, this should not be too much of a project.

We have on an agreeable price with a possible meeting to hand over money and machine, somewhere near Bristol and my new winter project has begun.

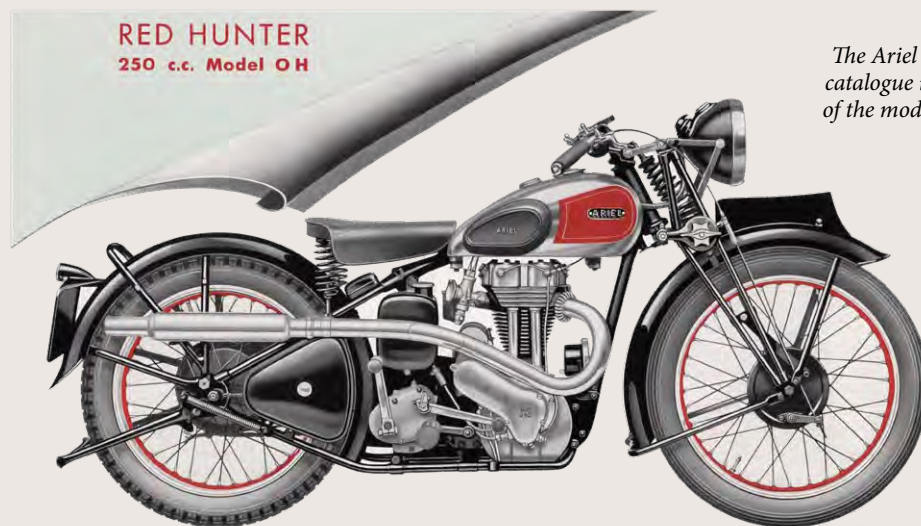
There are many questions that arise from knowing too little about this machine and its origins. For example, does a frame number of XG11003 suggest a W/NG frame? What about an engine number of AE600, doesn't this suggest an early start of series motor? It left the factory in 1940 and was registered in May 1940. Surely Ariel were deep into producing W/NGs for the



The 1939/40 Model OH 250 Ariel as advertised and nearly ready to become a transport of delight!



Interesting shot of the primary chain case, used for one year only?



The Ariel 1939 catalogue image of the model OH

French forces and too busy with contract work to be selling a machine to the public? The engine is clearly based on the 1938 Model LG and LH with open valve gear, that became enclosed in 1939 as the models OG and OH, known and referred to as 'Red Hunters'?

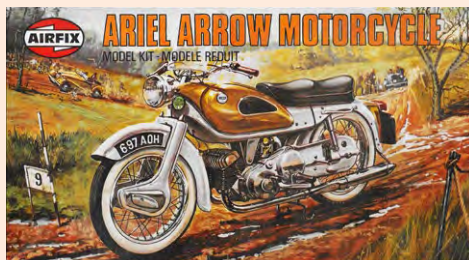
My new acquisition has had various parts removed, presumably for use on other machines in the Seward stable of Ariels, so there is no horn, tool box, a carburettor of no known fixed abode, a bent rear stand, a copper fuel pipe, no oil tank cap and a fuel tank cap that needs a gasket and fixing plate.

I have made a start on various jobs, but I know that acquiring a centre bolt lidded tool box will prove elusive. The primary chain case had a thick coating of an oil and petrol mixture on it, which has cleaned off with determined effort, but the design looks like a 'one off' to me, but is the same as a 1939 OG sold by Andy Tiernan.

I am hopeful that maybe some readers may know something about the history of these 1939/40 Red Hunters to help formulate an action plan for conserving my next motorcycle project, and probable competition machine for taking part in road trial type events. This will not be a con-course restoration, but rather my effort to keep a less well known model of Ariel on the road while

Dr Reg Eyre
21st December 2025

AN AIRFIX ARIEL ARROW – PT. 1



Having just bought a 1960 Ariel Arrow — in reasonably standard spec, in quite good condition, at a good price and right here in Malvern — Roger Bibbings told me: “That’s not quite the bike we are used to seeing you ride, is it John?” — but he then accepted it and turned up with a totally original Airfix kit of the Ariel Arrow for me, all still sealed in its plastic bag, in its pristine box!

The Model

The box seems to show a 1961 Sports Arrow — or ‘Golden Arrow’ as it was soon to be called because of the gold-finished tank-cover and rear number-plate unit — clearly with the registration number 697 AOH. The rhs engine cover, fork-link covers and the tool box lid were chrome plated, which would have to be represented by silver paint on the plastic kit. It certainly all looks good on the box lid, shown here somewhat inappropriately in Section 9 of some trial or other. I wonder if anyone ever rode a quite standard Arrow in a trial? Unlikely — but then, knowing the MCC, possibly someone did — and is that a Morgan 4/4 hampering up another Section in the background?



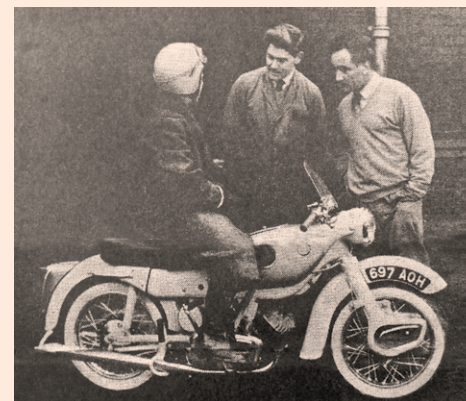
The Real Thing

Then another helpful Roger — Mr. Gwynn the Club’s Membership Secretary — told me that 697 AOH actually is a real bike! It was Factory No. 8896, with its reg.no. being issued in November 1959. So it had started out as an early, quite standard Arrow, with matching frame & chassis numbers: T8896/S.

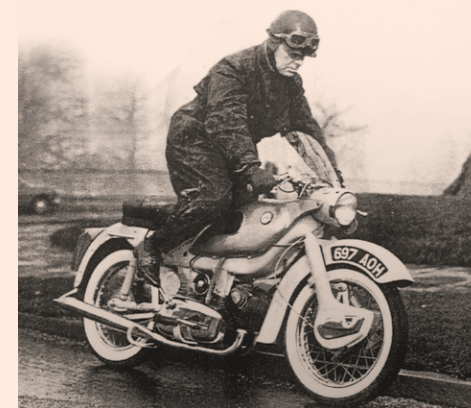
The Evolution of 697 AOH into a Super Sports Arrow

One of the first reports of the Arrow was in *Motor Cyclist Illustrated* in February 1960, where it was stated that the colour scheme would be “...in two tones of grey, in best quality enamel,” later to be defined as being “Seal Grey & Light Admiralty Grey”. However, 697 AOH didn’t actually leave the factory until 1961, by which time it was no longer a Standard Arrow, having undergone a number of mechanical and cosmetic changes over the previous couple of years. The most significant change was the increase of the compression ratio from 8.3:1 up to 10:1, with ‘squish’ type heads, a larger Amal carb and oval-section con-rods, so briefly being labelled as the ‘Sport’ version. Roger James (one of our Two-Stroke Experts, along with John Ellis) identified it as clearly being a ‘Factory Special’. It was finally entered in the Despatch Book in late 1961, still with engine & frame numbers] T8896/S, despite the engine having been modified to ‘Super Sports’ spec, which would have justified it being re-labelled with a ‘G’ suffix. By that time it had also been re-finished in “Polychromatic Gold” on the pseudo ‘tank’ and rear number plate housing, although probably retaining its standard light grey for the frame and forks for a time. The ivory colour for the frame and forks was first used in August 1961, with the first Super Sports Arrow, aka SSA or TS3, having Factory No. 20384. Meanwhile, AOH had been used as one of the Press Demonstrators and probably that is when it was modelled. Despite having the new gold paintwork, the Airfix box clearly shows it still having ‘upright’ handlebars, as had a second gold-painted Arrow demonstrator, reg.no. 871 COH, seen in *Motor Cycling’s* road test in the 24th November 1960 issue. I wonder if that one still exists too? Then the 18th January 1961 issue of *Motor Cycle News* had their journalist Peter Howdle testing the latest incarnation of AOH, with the article entitled: “A NEW GOLDEN ARROW — Super

sports (sic) 250 from Selly Oak” — which may have been what resulted in the ‘Super’ label soon being tagged onto the name — and possibly the first (unofficial) use of ‘Golden’ too? Certainly the labels stuck! The article had this photo of Peter Howdle on 697 AOH, with Sammy Miller in the centre and Clive Bennett to the right.



Simultaneously, the 19th January 1961 issue of *The Motor Cycle* carried another road test of the new model: ‘GOLDEN ARROW — the Sports version of the popular Ariel 249cc Twin’. It went on to say: “There are now three 249cc two-stroke twins in the Selly Oak line-up: the Leader, Arrow and the Sport Arrow”. Their test machine had the reg.no. blanked out, so it could have been AOH — or COH while AOH was with MCN? However, while a higher c.r. and a larger Amal justified their third model’s ‘Sport’ label, there still seems to have been some inconsistency in just what it was called. In the very same issue of *The Motor Cycle*, Bob Currie made a comparison between a DMW Deemster and what appears to be the very same Arrow, but which he then called the “Ariel Super Sports Arrow” — although Bob surely could not have had time to read the MCN article before he wrote his for *The Motor Cycle*? *MotorCycling* also covered it of course — and naturally the journalists had nattered... MCN reported that the Sports engine had “cylinder inlet tracts and transfer ports... contoured to suit (the larger carb and) it is therefore emphasised by the makers that a Standard Arrow cannot be readily converted to the Sports specification.” The Sport Arrows then had a

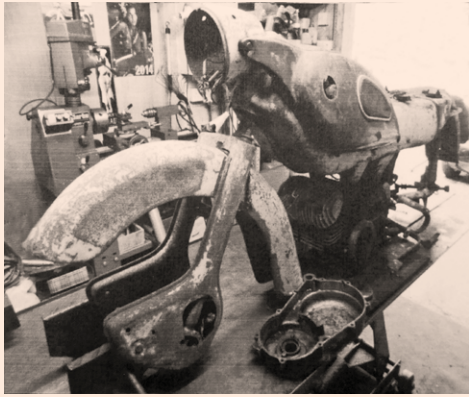


MotorCycling, 1961

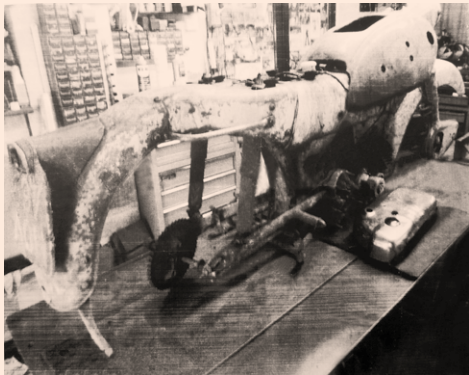
‘G’ suffix on the engine numbers — although not on AOH’s, despite having been ‘tuned’. So, looking back, maybe there had overall been five Ariel two-stroke twins, although probably not simultaneously: Leader; Standard Arrow; Sport Arrow; Super Sports Arrow and 200. The ‘Super’ prefix was justified by adding dropped handlebars; ball-ended levers; bright red handlebar grips; a ‘racing’ fly-screen; polished primary case; a side stand; chromed spats, toolbox lid & engine cover — and white-walled tyres. However, ‘Golden’ was only the name used by the Press, not by Ariels. Roger G says: “Only the Sales Dept referred to their products by their names, such as ‘Red Hunter’, ‘Square Four’ and ‘Super Sports Arrow’. Other departments rarely used names, preferring more accurate labels such as ‘NG’, ‘NF’, ‘NH’, ‘4G’ etc, while the two-strokes were usually referred to as ‘TS1,2,3 & 4’ in the later Despatch Books — although they had briefly used the terms ‘Leader’ and ‘Arrow’ initially.

The Fate of 697 AOH

697 AOH was eventually supplied to Aston Autos Ltd in Birmingham on 29th October 1961, some 18 months after it was built, having been one of the first or prototype Golden Arrows and by then being just a well used ex-Factory Special, albeit presumably then cleaned up for sale. Since then it must have seen a fair bit of life in the subsequent 64 years and so was in a pretty dire state when it fortunately ended up in the care of the Club’s long time Two-Stroke Spares Organiser, John Ellis.



This is much how it was in 2020 when John first saw it in the workshop of Club member Ian Williams in nearby Swindon.



Ian said that they knew what was, but back then it was just junk, having come from the motorcycle shop at the bottom of the garden. He had taken it as a possible source of spares — which fortunately had never been needed. John then got it from Ian in exchange for the remains of an NH. So it was mostly still all there and, being John Ellis, he saw it as being quite restorable. Thanks to Bennett Longman's help, the original registration number was retained and a V5 issued. The bodywork was in such poor condition that John had the tinware acid dipped before setting to repairing it all. The chassis and forks were powder-coated in ivory as per the production SSAs, while the tank-cover and

tailpiece were 'properly' spray-painted in the correct polychromatic gold colour. The engine and gearbox were totally stripped and restored too of course and the result is almost certainly as good as new — but then that's just what John has always done...



After the restoration in 2023, John has enjoyed riding it and showing it at a number of events. One of the events was the 2024 Stafford Show, when he exhibited it on the Arrow-Leader Group's stand. He made the significance of '697 AOH' quite clear by also having a couple of the Airfix models on the saddle, housed in a neat Perspex pyramid, one painted exactly as the machine beneath it and the other one left quite unpainted. But then he spotted Sammy Miller nearby, so he asked for a re-run of the 1961 MCN photo — and Sammy agreed.

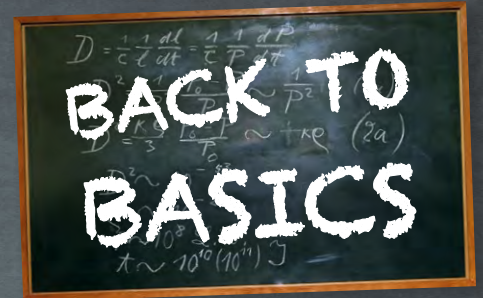
If Only...

John Ellis knows a lot about the Ariel two-strokes, having rebuilt dozens of them over the years, as well as being the Club's Two-Stroke Spares Organiser for decades.



Consequently he has naturally thought about how the Leader and Arrow could have worked out, if only BSA had not killed it all in 1965. He says: "It's a shame that they only changed the colour, chromed a few bits and stuck on a bigger carb, when they could have competed with the Japs! They should have fitted the engine with reed valves, given them 5 gears and 17 inch wheels — and then the thing would have been awesome!" Roy Bacon, in his 1990 'Motorcycle Monograph' booklet on the 'Leader & Arrow — 1958 to 1965', was of a similar opinion: "Take a twin-cylinder, two-stroke engine, add water-cooling and a couple more gears in the box, 12v, an electric start and disc brakes — and the result would have been not far off a modern specification."

JRB Thanks to: Roger Bibbings, John Ellis, Roger Gwynn, Richard Thomasson Refs: Ariel Motors Dispatch Book; MCN Jan 1961; *The Motor Cycle* Jan 1961; *Motor Cycling* Jan 1961; *The Motor Cycle* April 1962; *Ariel Leader & Arrow* — Bacon 1990; *Ariel — The Complete Story* — Walker 2003
To be continued.



Removing steering bearing cups

It is extremely difficult to remove the bearing cups as, especially with the lower one, there is almost no ledge on which to lodge a tool to knock it out.



This simple technique of spot welding a bolt or something similar to the cup, makes it easy, without damaging the frame.



The cup can then easily be hammered out.

Bill Bowers ▶

▷ More on center stands!

Just thought that I'd add my two pennyworth to the Great Centre Stand debate. I also fitted longer shocks to my FH Touring Special (See Ariel's and their Owners - Volume II) and needed to extend the centre stand accordingly. The stand needed a lot of work involving welding and strengthening. Rather than repair the original feet I fashioned some solid replacements from 14mm alloy plate bolted to the original side plates.



I've also now added a substantial extension which enables me to put the bike on its centre stand even when fully loaded with all my camping gear).



As for re-fitting the springs I'll share with you a tip that I got from Ducky. Use a long substantial Philips Type screwdriver i.e. PZ4. With the springs located on the frame mounts and the stand down, slide the screwdriver through the lower eye of the spring, locate one of the tip grooves on the stand spring mount and lever down to extend the spring.



Then simply slide the spring over the tip using a large flat screwdriver or similar. A smear of grease will help to slide the spring along and hey presto it's on. Works a treat!
Jim Haydock

THE FACTORY TESTER

Article Submitted by Roger James

SQUARE-JAWED and supremely confident, the factory tester sits astride his throbbing mount, its tank panels painted a sombre black to disguise the maker's name. As he adjusts his goggles, the words of the chief designer are still ringing in his



Johnny Hughes leaving the factory through the rubber doors

ears: "This is it, Brown, our latest creation and our best yet. Take it up into the mountains and do your darnedest to break it; I hope you won't succeed, but at least you can try. And above all, watch out for the spies from the XYZ factory; they must not learn of the new Thunderbolt until we are ready to break the news. Good luck!"

Is that your mental picture of a factory tester? Alas, in reality the glamour is less thickly laid. True enough, there are occasional new models to be put through their paces, and long-distance tests to be made on samples from the existing range, but such work falls within the sphere of the experimental or development departments.

The normal work of a tester is far more humdrum, but for all that he must be a man of responsibility with above-average riding ability and a keen interest in his job; typical of the breed is Johnny Hughes-employed at the Ariel factory in Selly Oak, Birmingham.

Johnny, who spends his working day clad in a two-piece suit and gum boots, is 25 years old and has been a tester for four years. Yes, he applied for the job-and what red-blooded motor cyclist would not? It is a fine open-air life in which a rider has considerable freedom and is left to himself to make decisions. Hughes has had a liking for motor cycling for, well-ever since he can remember; and his chosen job certainly provides him with the opportunity for plenty of roadwork. A keen clubman until marriage curtailed his free time (at the moment the garden of his new house makes inroads into those off-duty hours) he is keenly interested in trials and scrambles; indeed, he is looking around for a machine-something cheap, something small, something suitable for an out-and-out novice at mud-pluggery-with which to break into the world of competitive motor cycling. But application for any job does not necessarily imply that acceptance will follow. ▷

“Some men,” declares Frank Round, in charge of the Ariel road-test squad, “are born testers. Others may be able to ride a motorcycle, but that is all. “To begin with, a budding tester is set to work in the rectification bay for at least a month, so that he may come to learn what troubles can arise and how they may be put right. And after that, he may be given an occasional day on the road, just to get the feel of the job.”

In Frank’s view, there is no room for men who lack the confidence to make a decision and stand by it; no room for the waverer who says, “come and listen to this engine—tell me whether you think I’m right.” The tester is the man who is right, every time.

Johnny spent his month or so in the rectification bay, the small area of the factory which is set aside for minor adjustments or the correction of any simple faults that have shown up during road test. From there he progressed to the normal road-test routine; and from there, indeed, to such special testing as the development engineers might require—endurance runs in which testers, working as a team, keep a machine on the road for 24 hours at a stretch; long, fast trips to the coast and back to put mileage on a prototype model or test a modification to a current design. But such work as that occurs only occasionally. Normally each tester operates a full day from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., in the course of which he will put through their proving runs from 15 to 18 machines of all types.

Models are taken as they come, as each one leaves the constantly moving assembly track. One machine may be a 197 c.c. Colt, the next a magnificent Square Four; side- or overhead-valves, roadster or Mark II scrambler, maybe cow-horned for the American market. A tester must be familiar with each type, for adaptability is a prime asset in his job. There is no time to waste. Whatever the weather the work must go on—in rain or shine; a tester, says Johnny Hughes, must take the rough with the smooth. Are the roads under black ice? Well, it is still possible to test for a sweet engine, for carburation, for gear whine in the indirect ratios, for suspension faults—and what a fine chance to try out the handling! On such occasions the normal brake test on the road must be foregone, but at least the machine can be crash stopped in the assembly shop.

Johnny Hughes and his fellows are set to cover no pre-determined route. The mileage logged by an individual machine and according to its characteristics. The decision is left to the man in the saddle; should the engine seem sufficiently free, and there are no faults to investigate, then the road mileage can be as low as six or seven. On the other hand, a tight engine can cause the road to be extended to, say 25 miles—or until the tester is satisfied.

In any factory there are errands to be run, and if there is at hand a force of motor-cycle-mounted men, then obviously it is an advantage to make use of them. And so, the tester becomes, on occasion, a postman or a chaser-up of components from outside suppliers. Ah well, it makes a break in the routine—and the machine of the moment receives its road-test mileage just the same.

At the Ariel factory, as at many another, there is a procedure to be followed; and it begins when the tester wheels his next assignment from the group of waiting machines. The model has no battery — and for a reason; each is finally dispatched with a new, dry-charged battery fitted, and so for test purposes (for the horn, lights and charging rate must obviously be checked) a slave battery is issued to each man and transferred from one machine to the next as required. Oil is put in the gear box, front fork, oil tank and primary chain case during the machine’s journey along the assembly track, and the tester’s first job after fitting his slave battery is to pour into the fuel tank enough petrol to carry him through the road test. The engine is then started, and with the oil-tank filler cap removed a check is made that the lubrication system is in order and that oil is duly returning to the tank.

It is not yet time to go out on the road, for further tests must be made — for freedom of operation of the clutch, for slow-running and for cleanness of carburation. The assembly fitters have ensured that one of the headlamp fixing bolts has been left un-done, so that the front trade plate can be speedily affixed. The rear plate is snapped in place over the rear number plate with a rubber band, the tester places the blue test card in a convenient pocket and rides out of the factory, pushing aside the rubber exit door with a practised art, cleaving a passage with one elbow and one booted foot.



Listening to the engine

Hughes has just returned from a run with a machine destined for the United States, a six-fifty twin in bright Cherokee Red. He fills in the test card, enters the relevant details in the testers’ ledger just inside the factory door, and turns to the next machine in line. Less flamboyant, it is a 497 c.c. single, a model VH which carries a “Home” sticker on the headlamp glass.

The dispatch card on the handlebar bears the address of a well-known dealer in Reading. The frame number is APR 4866, the engine number is AMB 1254; hullo there, you Reading reader, this is your new model!

Initial checks completed, the tester pushes open the rubber door and heads the VH for Birmingham’s double-track Bristol Road; I follow him on a 646 c.c. Huntmaster twin, feeling every inch a true road tester. As Johnny clears the built-up area of Selly Oak and reaches a less-frequented stretch of the road, he lifts his right knee away from the tank and tilts his head to one side. That way, he can listen to the beat of the big single while on the move. He seems satisfied, but after a while he draws to the side of the road and stops. No, nothing serious; just a minor adjustment to the clutch cable. The engine, he reports, is perhaps a little on the tight side, but he thinks it will free off presently. Though he has no occasion to use them on this trip, he carries a pocketful of spanners and is prepared for all emergencies.

On again, past the sprawling Austin factory and so to Rednal, at the foot of the Lickey Hills. Trade plates there seem to outnumber the more normal black-and-white variety, for Johnny’s opposite numbers in the car world are busy about their own business, checking and taking notes. By now the Ariel under test is performing sweetly, and a turn is made for home; on the way the brakes are given an opportunity to show their power—and come up to the required standard.



Talking over problems for rectification

Back at the factory comments are written on the test card: “Reset tappets. Adjust rear and primary chains.” The machine is passed over to the rectification bay for attention; and before the final “O.K.” is given it “will be road tested again.”

Just occasionally, a machine may require more serious rectification. In that case it will be taken straight to the bay as soon as it returns from test. "Hear it hot," is the tester's motto-and he will insist that the rectification mechanic does indeed listen to the afflicted engine while it is still panting. A report on a test card may be all very well, but if the trouble can be explained personally to the man who is going to put it right, then so much the better.

There is a duller side to all this, of course. It is Frank Round's policy to make each tester responsible for washing down the machines he tests on a wet and dirty day. The idea is to make each man take care of the pristine condition of his temporary charge, keep clear of the worst of the puddles and ride well away from the kerb so that there is less risk of the paintwork being splashed. But it is all a part of a tester's life, part of the "rough with the smooth."

What must a tester test for? Everything and anything. Freedom from vibration, freedom from oil leaks; the ignition timing must be right and, if automatic advance and retard is employed it must be operating correctly. Adjustments to the carburettor and brakes, and to the positions of control levers, come within his sphere; more serious faults



That cup of coffee can taste mighty good at times

are noted on the test card. It is a demanding job but an obviously enjoyable one, none the less, as the cheerful grin on Johnny Hughes' face bears witness. He, for one, would not swap it for an office desk or a workshop bench. And it has decided compensations: a tester is permitted to call at a coffee shop once during the morning and once during the afternoon.

By Bob Currie, Motorcycle magazine, July 1957. Attempts to contact the publisher proved futile as they went out of business many years ago - Editor

60TH Anniversary Rally Dutch Ariel Club

7 - 8 - 9 - 10 May 2026

PROGRAM

- Thursday Arrival of the participants.
Friday Tour with museum visit and lunch stop. Silly Games, start at 15.00 Hrs.
Saturday Tour with stop for lunch. Afterwards Concours d'Elegance. All day Large Ariel Museum on the Rally field.
Sunday Joint breakfast at 8.30 Hrs. (sponsored by the Dutch Ariel Club). Presentation of three Ariels by thier owners. Closing of the event. 

Campsite: Camping Dommelvallei, Schafterdijk 9, 5556 VK Valkenswaard (Borkel en Schaft)

Tel: 0031402068290

Email: info@campingdommelvallei.nl

4 persons chalets for rent at the campsite at € 300 for the weekend. Chalets must be booked directly at the campsite.

Booking are open from 1 Januari 2026 for the Chalets, for just camping, meals and rally fee book directly on www.arielclub.nl

Booking close on Sunday 1 March 2026

*All weekend Swapmeet.



FOR SALE

1929 Model F 500cc ohv



owned by me for 50 years, good runner, comes with spares. £7500 ono. Patrick Robotham, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire. 01889 500479 or patrick.robotham@gmail.com

WANTED

Solex FH 26 Carbie to suit 600SQ4.

Oil pump to suit 1928 Ariel Side Valve.

Contact email: donnapaulr@gmail.com

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Magazines are usually despatched around the 17th of the month but can be delayed for various reasons. At the end of December we had 1,702 members compared to 1,683 members at the end of November.

NEW MEMBERS FOR DECEMBER

Name	Town / Area	Model
Matthew Morris	Newstead Abbey Park, Nottinghamshire	1951 VH, 1955 KH, 1951 VB
Andrew Neall	Overstrand, Norfolk	1955 MKII
Doug Carpenter	Southend-on-Sea, Essex	1958 MKII
Martyn Smythe	Newent, Gloucestershire	Arrow
Laurence White	Stanford-in-the-Vale, Berkshire	1955 VH
Terence Cantelo	Enfield, Middlesex	1953 NH
Jerry Paull	Netley Abbey, Hampshire	1958 FHS
Andy Best	Whitehead, Antrim	1957 NH
Mark Stubbs	Lewes, Sussex	1958 HT5
Barry Craig	Wiveliscombe, Somerset	1934 NH
Michael Holmes	Longdowns, Cornwall	1958 Leader
Hamish Barbour	Longniddry, East Lothian	KH, NH, VH
Dave Harris	Kirby-le-Soken, Essex	Looking for 1939 4G
Chris Rooke	Sheffield, Yorkshire	Matchless Model X

OVERSEAS

Julian Holzweber	Liebenfels, Österreich	1958 MKII
Ken Mogus	Moorebank, NSW, Australia	1956 VH
Billy Decker	Mustang, Oklahoma, USA	
Matti Harkoma	Ylöjärvi, Suomi	1954 NH

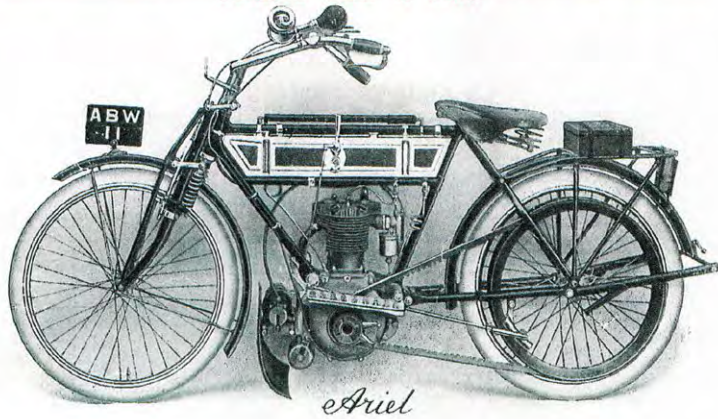
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£1.73 1st class or £0.90 2nd class.
Regalia address on page 2.

Attention all members

The club has recently commissioned year bars to acknowledge members with over 40 and 50 years in the club.



Any member or branch secretary who has or knows of someone to reach either milestone, please contact me and I'll post out the appropriate year bar.



Dave Owen, contact details on page 2



The 4th Annual Autojumble
Hampshire Branch
of the
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Saturday 18th April 2026 - 11am to 3pm

Selling pitches for any Classic Bike club or Individual- £5.00

Free entry to all visitors from 11am to 3pm

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Contact Roger on 07810 111222 or rs.armstrong@talktalk.net for bookings

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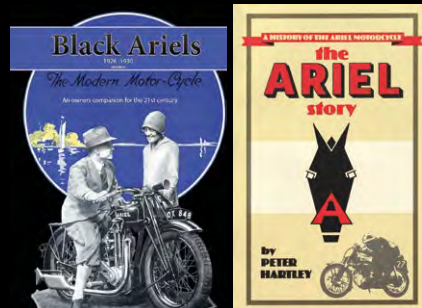
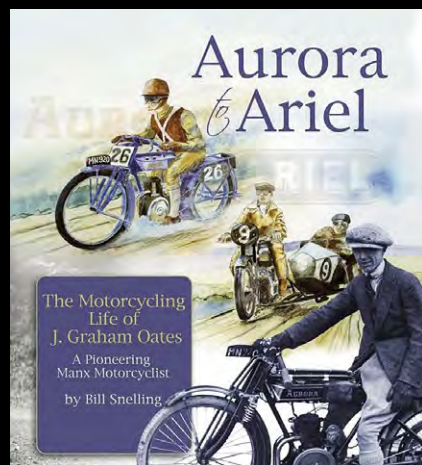
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THE Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs exists to maintain our freedom to use Yesterday's Vehicles on Tomorrow's Roads. Additionally, we encourage the preservation and promotion of all types of vehicle within the broader context of our national heritage.

Our five-year strategy incorporates six elements: Legislation, Research, FIVA, Heritage and Culture, Trade and Skills, and Technical and Events. These are the fundamental elements of what we do and indeed are complementary to each other.

Embracing these elements, Communications and Engagement with our members, specialist and national media is critical to our success. Legislation is the most fundamental element of what we do and embraces how we engage those who draft legislation, debate what is appropriate and finally agree and implement this legislation.

We are fortunate to have the support of the All-Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicle Group, which embraces both Houses of Parliament and all of the major political parties.

The FBHVC is the UK member of FIVA, which is the international body representing the historic vehicle movement. FIVA is fundamental to what we do and is the principal mechanism by which we engage EU legislators.

Research commissioned by the Federation in 2012 confirms that the historic vehicle industry is worth £4 billion per annum to the UK economy.

We represent the interests of over 250,000 members through 560 member clubs. More information can be found out about us on our website:

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Booking is not required for camping, tourers or motorhomes. A limited number of static caravans can be booked for hire by contacting the site directly on 01855 831279. Or alternatively, there are many hotels and B&Bs in Kinlochleven Village.

For further information contact Mike Morgan (Details on page 2)

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Val Page anniversary line-up



As part of the 100 years celebrations since Val Page took charge of design at Selly Oak there will be a line-up of forty bikes, one per year, on the Saturday of the 2026 annual rally in addition to the usual concours competition on the Sunday. The idea is to show the progression and evolution of Ariel design. It's a bit of a one-off and should make a unique and very different line-up for a special occasion.

You can book your machine a slot by emailing me directly on rthomassonr@aol.com. Please include the model and registration as this will help me organise things on the day.

Inevitably some years will be oversubscribed and this being the case I will let you know if you're first or second reserve. Each month in the *Cheval* between now and the annual rally there will be an update with which years are filled and which ones are still available.

Please join in and make this Val Page anniversary year an annual rally to remember.

Best Regards, *Richard*

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BRANCHES OF THE ARIEL OWNERS CLUB

See map at www.arielownersmcc.com/people.html

- AUSTRIA** HERMANN ASAMER, Bründlweg 19, 4694 Ohlsdorf, Austria • Tel +43-664-4342567 • hermann.asamer@hotmail.com
- CARDIFF** HOWARD ARIS, 81b Victoria Avenue, Newport NP19 8LR • Tel 07926 071438 • howard.aris@btinternet.com
- CHESHIRE** ALLAN WILLIAMS, 66 Cedarway, Bollington, Macclesfield SK10 5NS • Tel 07989 109732
The Military Arms, 28, Congleton Road, Sandbach CW11 1HJ – first Monday
- CORNWALL** BILL BOWERS, bill.lo.bowers@gmail.com
Plume of Feathers, Mitchell, Cornwall, TR8 5AX – first Thursday, 7.30pm (room available from 6.30pm if eating)
- DENMARK** HENRIK LARSEN, Toftekaersvej 32, 2820 Gentofte, Denmark • Tel +45 2462 7473 • hensla57@gmail.com
- FINLAND** VEIKKO VIRTANEN, Verstaantie 7, 17130 Vesivehmaa, Finland • Tel +358 400 918592 • veikko.virtanen@pnet.fi
- GERMANY** MARKUS NIKOT, German Branch Secretary, Buchwaldstr.1, 61479 Glashütten, Germany
Tel +49 (0)6174 9529168 • aomcc@nikot.de
- GLOUCESTER** GEOFF BROWN, Churches Farm, Bromesberrow, Herefordshire HR81SA • 07746 377075
geoff.brown8m@btopenworld.com
White Hart Inn, Broadoak, nr Newnham – second Thursday of the month (except January)
- HAMPSHIRE** STEVE CARTER, Swift Farm, Hensting Lane, Eastleigh SO50 7HH • 02380 602410 / 07818 067330 • ispltd@hotmail.co.uk
The Worthies Sports & Social Club, Lovedon Lane, Kingsworthy – third Wednesday
- HERTS** ADRIAN BAKER • Tel 07906 033525 • t20suzuki@gmail.com
The Cross Keys, Gustard Wood AL4 8LA – First Friday of the month at midday, and every Thursday night at 8.30-8.45 pm
- ITALY** ARIEL ATZORI, via PR Giuliani 9, 21047 Saronno (Va), Italy • arielclubitalia@libero.it
- KENT** PETER ROBINSON, 18 Oaks Park, Canterbury, Kent CT2 9DP • Tel 01227 379990 • squariel@hotmail.com
The Wagon & Horses, Charing TN27 UNR – first Wednesday, 8pm
The Cock Inn, Luddesdown DA13 0XB – third Wednesday, 8pm
- LANCS** JOHN DUCKWORTH, Tel 01254 201076; Mob 07745 516279 • jmduckworth@talktalk.net
The Lord Nelson, 7A Out Lane, Croston, PR26 9HJ – second Monday
- NORTH ATLANTIC** CHRIS SHEARWOOD, 30A Billings Road, Sutton, Quebec JOE 2K0, Canada • chris@granby.net
- NOTTS/DERBY** KEVIN MOORE, Tel 07920 483027 • secretary@arielownersmcc.com
The Old Reindeer, Edingly, Notts NG22 8BE – last Thursday of the month, 7pm
- POLAND** MARCIN JAZDZYK, +48 603 701 296 • www.arielklub.pl • info@arielklub.pl
- RUTLAND** GILBERT THOMAS, 01572 812734 • gilbert28@btinternet.com
The Crown, Main St Casterton, PE9 4AP – second Tuesday of the month from 7pm
- SCOTLAND** LYND SAY MORGAN, 162 Allan Crescent, Dunfermline KY11 4HF
Tel 01383 841781 (24-hour answering machine) or 07977 134393 • linz.a.morgan@btinternet.com
Tulliallan Bowling Club, Walker Street, Kincardine – first Wednesday, 8pm
- SELLY OAK** BOB WARD, Tel 0777 87 87 961 • bobward26@yahoo.com
The Coach & Horses Inn, Weatheroak, B48 7EA – first Wednesday at 6:30pm
The Bull & Butcher, Common Lane, Corley Moor, CV7 8AQ – third Wednesday, noon till 3pm
- SLOVAKIA** KAROL BURGER, Ariel Klub Slovensko, Rudinka 107, 023 31 Kysucké Nové Mesto, Slovensko
kajovtelefon@gmail.com / karol.burger@arielklub.sk • +421 903 553 982 • www.arielklub.sk
- SWINDON** TONY BARNETT, 9 Langdale Drive, Freshbrook, Swindon, Wilts SN5 8NP • arieltt13@gmail.com
Monthly lunchtime meeting – contact Secretary for details
- WEST ANGLIA** DREW DOWN, 14 Victoria Terrace, Hemingford Rd, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HD • Tel 01480 462756 • drew.down@live.co.uk
The Walnut Tree Worlington IP28 8RU tel. 01638713345. Road B1102 – third Wednesday
- WEST RIDING** MARTIN EMERY, 14 Beaufort Grove, Eccleshill, Bradford, West Yorks BD2 4LJ • Tel 01274 639469 • mandm.emery@live.com
The Swing Gate Pub, 413 Idle Road, Bradford BD2 2AH – alternate Wednesdays
- WEST THAMES** PETER MILLER, 143 Ash Hill Rd, Ash, Surrey GU12 5DW • Tel 01252 326545
The Good Intent, 60-62 The Street, Puttenham, Guildford, GU3 1AR – second Wednesday, 12.30pm