HISTORIC POLICE MOTORCYCLES' NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 DECEMBER 1997

Merry Christmas

1997 has come to an end and what a good year it was for showing your ex-Police Motorcycles. I'll start by saying THANKS to all the people who attended events and to others who have shown interest but have not been able to get to them. We hopefully will see you ALL in 1998. We covered over 20 events from runs to static shows and for the first time we had rain at most of them--but this did not stop you, your bikes were ridden or shown and were the envy of the public onlooker.

Holland-1997
UK Paramedic Honda ST1100 (left)
Dutch Police Honda ST1100 (right)
at Hilversum Fire Station.

The Hampshire Weekend in June was the main event. It went very well, 60 machines attended despite the heavy rain with a mixture of sunshine and the Police escort enjoyed the ride around the Hamble area with you and your machines.

We have been involved with various Police Forces such as Surrey, Hampshire, Essex, West Mercia and South Yorkshire to name a few and a lot more Forces are now aware of the Historic Police Motorcycles.

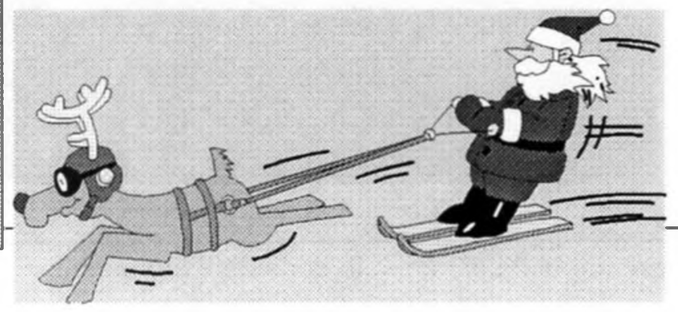
ON TO 1998: We intend to arrange similar Events, Runs and Meets throughout the year; so if there is an event in your area you want to advertise, please write to us so that it can be included in the events calendar. PLUS we need articles, profiles of your machines, anything to do with ex-Police Motorcycles.

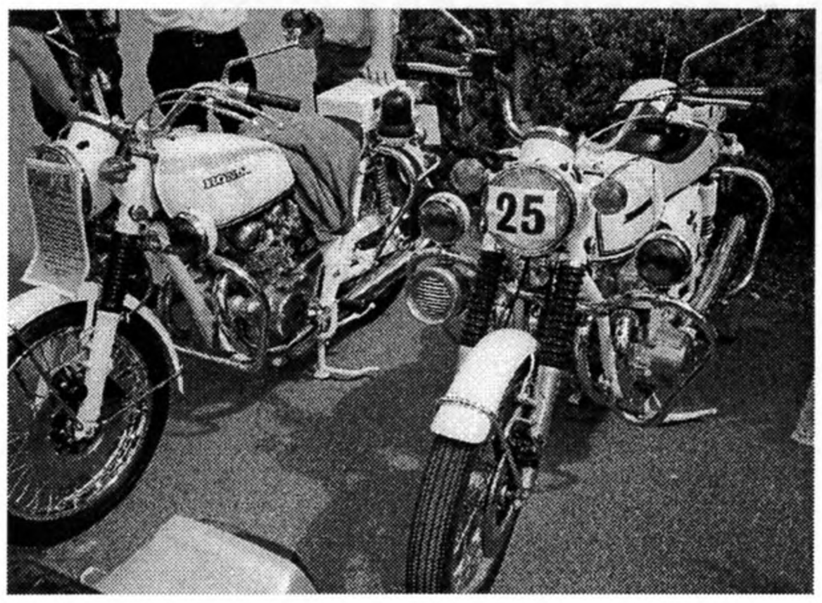
MAIN EVENT is the 2nd International Run, Hilversum, Holland. Date to be arranged. We would like to see a large number of you there. If interested please contact David Bragg. Our Dutch chums are working on the event details; there are good hotels and a safe area for the motorcycles in the town.

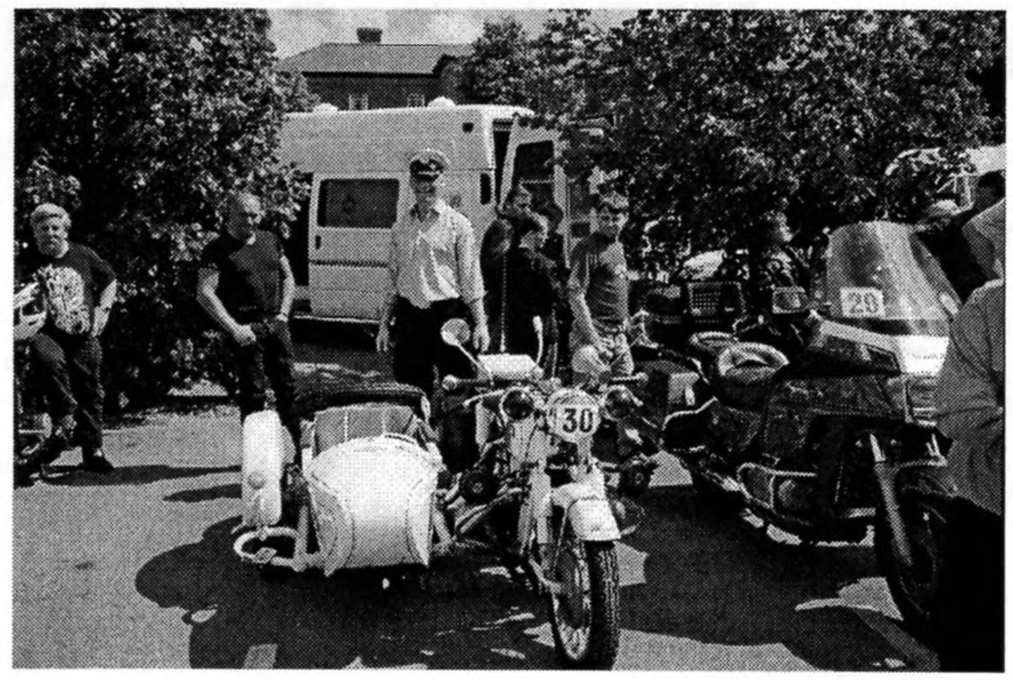
SURREY Constabulary are interested in having as many machines as possible at their Emergency Services Day on the l7th MAY 1998, so if you cannot get to Holland make this our "Big British Event". There will be a Run or Cavalcade and arena displays. So we will hope to see you there or at the other various events through 1998.

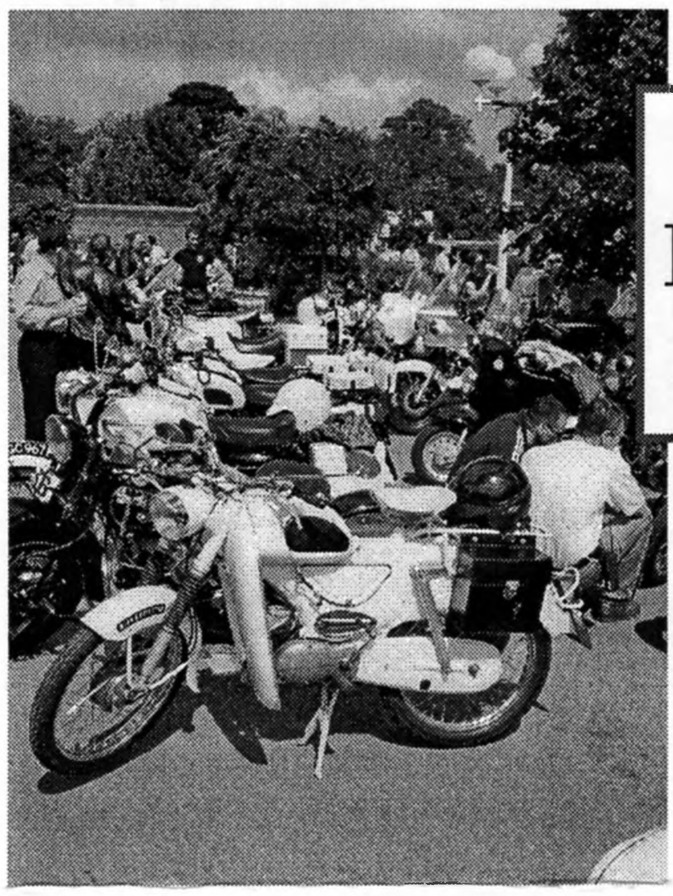
SERIOUS NOTE: Make sure your vehicle is Road Legal. We do mix with Police Forces and we are in the spotlight when in contact with them, so make sure you have insurance, tax, mot. Keep blue lights and Police signs Covered, index plates must be correct--You are the rider it's your responsibility.
We are a good group of motorcycle owners/riders and have very little trouble, so lets make sure we have NO trouble.
Your machines are excellent and admired by all the members of public who see them.
Keep it up---see you all in 1998.

One final note - We have collected £130 for charity and this has been donated to the Star and Garter Home for Disabled Army, Navy and Air Force Officers in Richmond, Surrey.

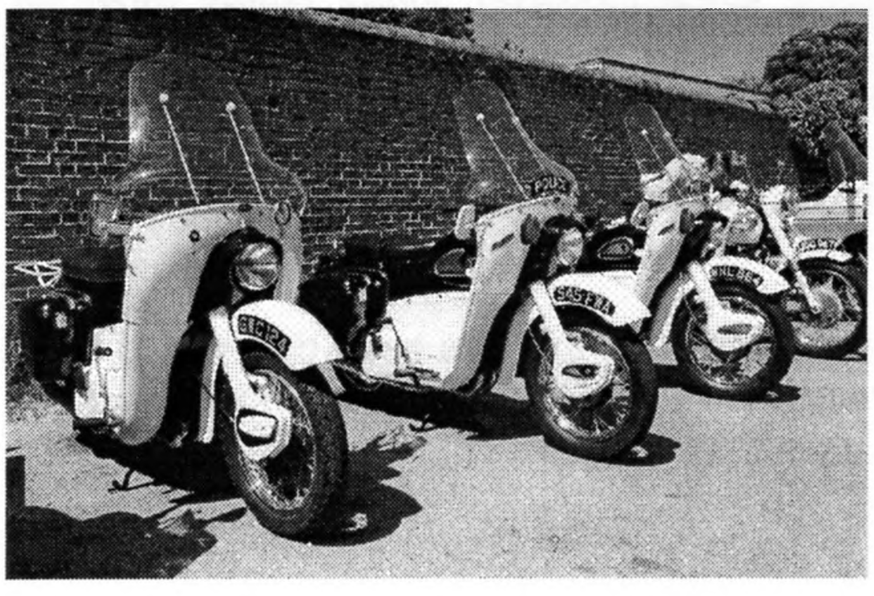








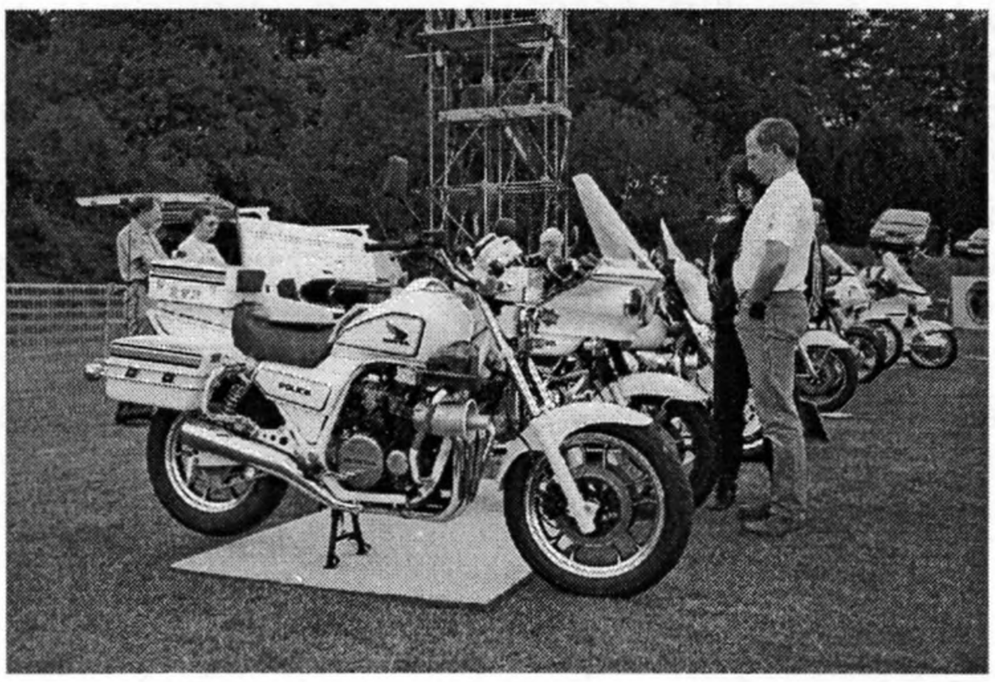
Images of Hampshire 1997



Holland-1997

Holland-1997

West Mercia Open Day



Surrey 999

Lord Mayor's Parade, City of London

Essex Charity Run

If you have any interesting photographs or articles, could you submit them to me care of David Bragg,

Paul H.

Dave Smith's "Adventures in Wonderland"

Day One 19th August 1997 Tuesday

I arrived San Francisco International airport 1410, 1hr 45 mins later I arrived in the Arrivals Hall expecting to see Tim. His flight arrived at 1350 at the Domestic Terminal. He has no customs or immigration to go through, so he should have been there waiting for me. But he wasn't. After 15 anxious minutes, I felt a hand on my shoulder and badge thrust under my nose. It read, "Special Officer", it must be Tim. I turned around and he was wearing a navy blue T shirt with the words "West Palm Beach Police" front and back; this could be a sign of things to come! The hire car must be a Ford Crown Victoria or a Chevy Caprice in the preferred colours of black and white or just white. So we go from Hertz to Avis to Dollar. Eventually Budget have a Crown Victoria, "yes we will have it no matter what the cost". The colour was a bit of a problem, British racing green, so we would be undercover for two weeks! When I left London it was 30c and very humid, I couldn't wait to get away. San Francisco was about 18c and wet. Excellent. The plan is to drive directly to Sacramento, find a motel and have an early start in the morning. Tim drove us from San Francisco to Sacramento in our Crown Victoria. We found the "Motel 6", you can't beat them, $45 two people per night, excellent value.

San Francisco Airport Police

Day Two 20th August Wednesday

There is not a cloud in the sky, 25c and no humidity, excellent. The plan is to find the CHP Academy, get a tour, and then spend lot's of money in the PX. (Ed note- what is a PX?) But first, breakfast. Now another good thing about Motel 6 is that they usually have a Denny's Restaurant close to hand, again excellent value and food. So having been fed and watered we set of in search of the Academy. Set in landscaped grounds it would put the best Police training establishment in England to shame. We are introduced to our guide, Officer David Harms of 22 years. The academy has a main square, the centre of which is a memorial to officers lost in the line of duty. Each has a small brass plaque with their name, number and the date they were lost. We were fortuitous to witness a procedure that is carried out every Thursday by the junior class. This involves the cleaning and polishing of the name plaques and is the only time that recruits are allowed into the centre of the square, all other times they must only use the outer perimeter. The cleaning is a precise affair carried out with military precision. We were then shown the remainder of the academy. Everyone is very polite. All recruits acknowledge visitors with a good morning and a good afternoon. This didn't stop at the CHP. Every officer we met acknowledged us.

San Francisco Airport Police

Part of the tour included the Motorcycle training centre. We were just in time to see them preparing to go for a spin around the Sacramento countryside. We did meet one of the mechanics who was most interested that we had American police motorcycles here in England, The talk was cut short as he was driving the support vehicle that follows the ride outs; they even take a spare bike along on a trailer. He said he would like to see us again to talk more, but we didn't know when we would be back that way. We said we would try and return. The tour continued via one of the recruits accommodation blocks. Two recruits to a room and they are only allowed small photograph and a radio/alarm, no other personal items whilst training. The rooms are plain but comfortable and immoderately tidy, not for the likes of Tim.

We finally end up back at reception, where we thanked our guide and made directly for the PX. While in the PX spending lots of money two motorcycle officers from the Sacramento PD came in. This seems like a good time to get the photo album out and introduce ourselves. They also were surprised that anyone would be interested in the American Police. After torturing them for far too long with our photos, they invited us over to their station. The department had just renewed their radio equipment. They asked us, "would we be interested in the old ?".You bet we would. You could not wish to meet a more affable bunch of guys. The Sacramento PD gave them 3 Electra Glides, a couple of FXRPs and 1 BMW to play with. Two Motorola radio boxes and radio heads later we get a tour of their station, After looking around we are all standing in the yard, they then introduced us to a Dog Handler. His dog, a German Shepherd, is having a lie down in the back of the air-conditione Police car. His handler called his name, this is from a distance of about 50 feet. The dogs head pops up, looks around to see who is calling then and then leaps through the open window and runs across to meet us. After some time the handler tells the dog to go back to the car, the only trouble is that there are 8 cars that all look identical. Amazingly after much screaming and pointing, the dog found the right car and jumped back through the open window to his air-conditioned compartment. I was quite impressed. We had taken up much of their time and it was time to move on. We thanked them for their hospitality with a British Bobbies helmet and said our goodbyes.

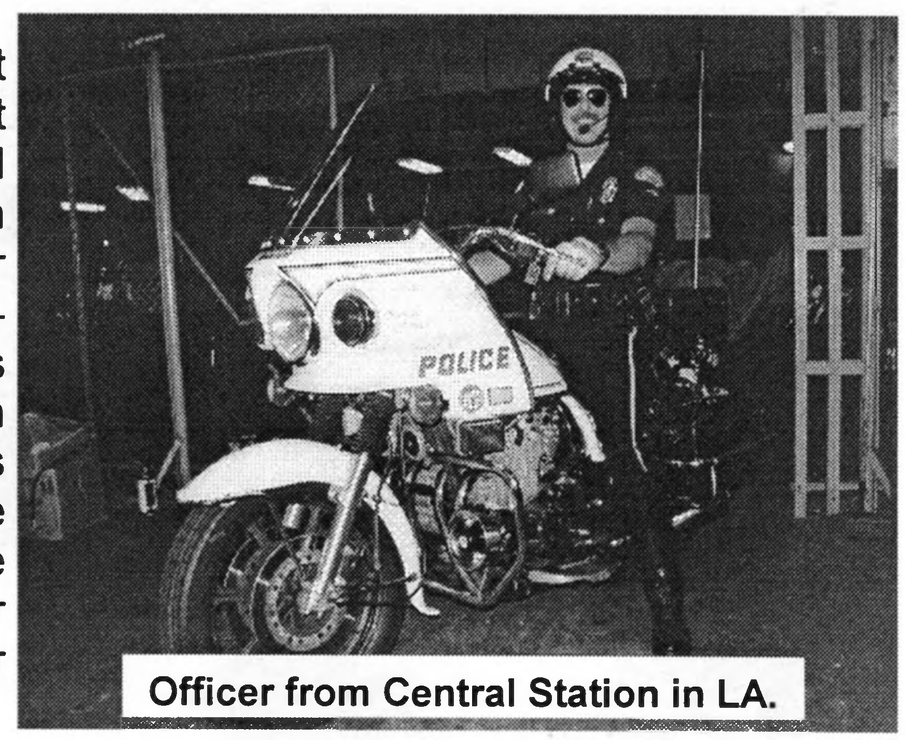
Sacramento Police Dept.

Day Three 21st August Thursday

Weather: 25c, not a cloud, excellent. After a hearty breakfast in Denny's, it's of to Yosemite National Park. But first it's a visit to Butler's uniforms in Sacramento to buy Tim a pair of Denner motorcycle boots and CHP breeches. Half a day in Yosemite is not long enough, you need at least a week, but we got the idea, lots of trees and stunning scenery. We stopped over that night in a small skiing town called Mammoth Lakes on Hwy 395. DISASTER, Motel 6 is fully booked. Not to worry, it's Tim's turn to pay, no expense will be too much!! So we end up in a Hostel for $25. The problem was we had to share the bathroom and toilet with 20 14 to 16 year olds. Why do they make toilet doors three feet from the floor? You just can't get comfy. Needless to say a shower was out. We were given a free roast beef dinner and then we retired to the dustbins to watch the bear!

Day Four 22nd August Friday

Weather: In Mammoth Lakes because of the altitude, it is a lot cooler, around 17c. Still no clouds, but as we descend from the forest of the National Park into the valley that runs between California and Nevada, the temperatures rises dramatically. We stop in a town called Bishop on Hwy 395 for a soda. As we step out of our air conditioned Crown Victoria, the heat is 35c. In Death Valley temperatures of 45e are the normal. The distance from Bishop to Las Vegas is 300 miles. The drive through Death Valley takes longer than expected. We arrive in Las Vegas at 9pm, stop at the tourist office as there isn't a Motel 6 here.By luck the motel next to the tourist office has vacancies, the rooms are large and air-conditioned. The out side temp at midnight was 30c and best of all we have ensuite shower and bathroom with a door that goes all the way to the floor, all this for just $25 per night.



Officer from Central Station in LA.

Day Five 23rd August Saturday

Weather: Hot, very very hot. We booked a flying tour of the Grand Canyon. The bus collected us from our motel and eventually ended up at the airport. We are introduced to our fellow flying companions. The tour takes the best part of the day. We fly off in convoy with other small aircraft with a quick stop for lunch, followed by a bus

excursion to the best vistas of the canyon. Then its back to the airport so that we can fly back to Las Vegas. I would recommend the flying tours as you see a lot more than if you were to drive, and its quicker. That evening we spent marvelling at the sights of Las Vegas.

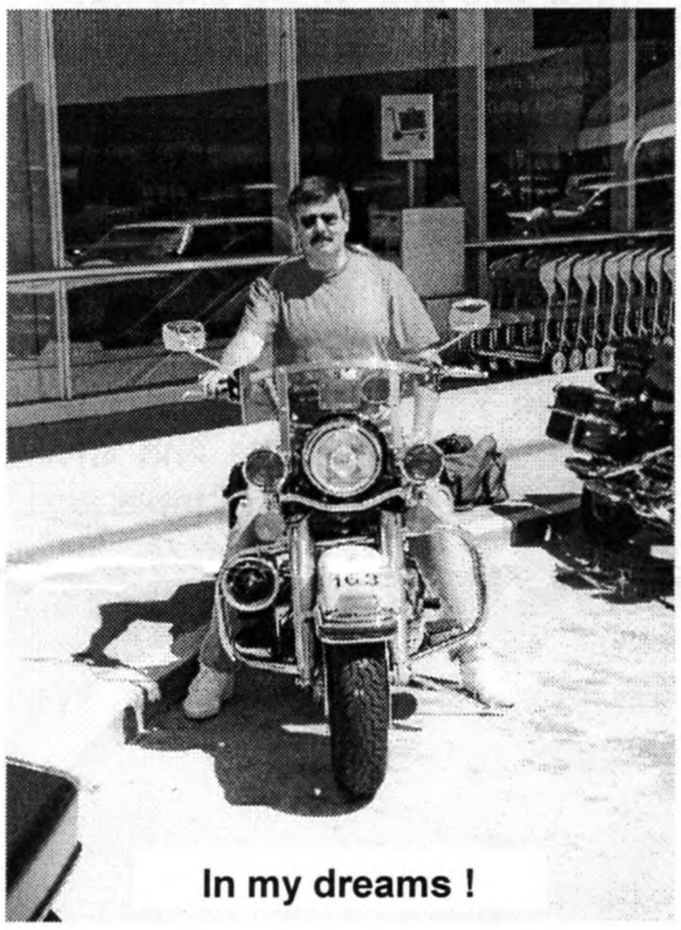
City of Cypress PD. - Chromed engine

Day Six 24th August Sunday

Weather: Hot and sunny. Day spent driving to Los Angeles.

Day Seven 25th August Monday

Weather: Have a guess? We are now in Buena Park, one of Los Angeles many suburbs, and you were right about the weather. It is once again excellent, 24c and sunny. Today we are of to V.I.P. Kawasaki to spend lots of money on my 1994 police 1000. Two things surprise me here. One, they have everything in stock. Two, its half the price it would have been back in the UK. So needless to say, I'm quite happy. Now we just have to get it all through customs. V.I.P. Kawasaki do the servicing for the local Police Departments, some of which are Fullerton PD, City of Cypress PD and the CHP. These are all inside the Greater LA area. Most of the small PDs allow their officers to customise their bikes, mostly in the form of chrome plating the engine. Looking around their workshop we got talking to a CHP officer and again we get invited over to his station for a tour. Every one is so approachable, its amazing. After being shown around inside the station, its outside into the sunshine to look at the cars and motorcycles. Having spent so much time in V.I.P. and the CHP station, we arrived too late to be shown around the L.A Police Academy. All we can do is take pictures and we still had the drive up to Santa Maria, a small town 200 miles north, along the coast on Hwy 101.


In my dreams !

In part two:

On location with Walt Disney.
Why Tim wore a bullet proof vest?
We pop in to see Clint Eastwood.
We ride along with the Oakland PD.

Profile - Norton Commando Interpol 750cc 1972

My 750cc Norton Commando Interpol, UTF 6 L, is a 1972 model, being one of two machines delivered to Lancashire Constabulary on 20th. December 1972, at a cost of £583.37 each. Delivered with them were two sets of disc-brake conversion components, invoiced as £51.96 for the two. The supplier is recorded as being 'Norton Villiers International, Hampshire'.

The two machines went through VMU at Traffic Headquarters, where any detail changes and special fitting-out took place to meet the Constabulary's specific requirements. On 5th January 1973 they were registered and licenced. The one with engine and frame No. 200777 became licenced as UTF 5 L while the other, 200792, became UTF 6 L. They joined over 80 similar machines, delivered over a three month period earlier in 1972, which carried 'GTJ ** K' registration marks, so replacing a number of older Triumphs.

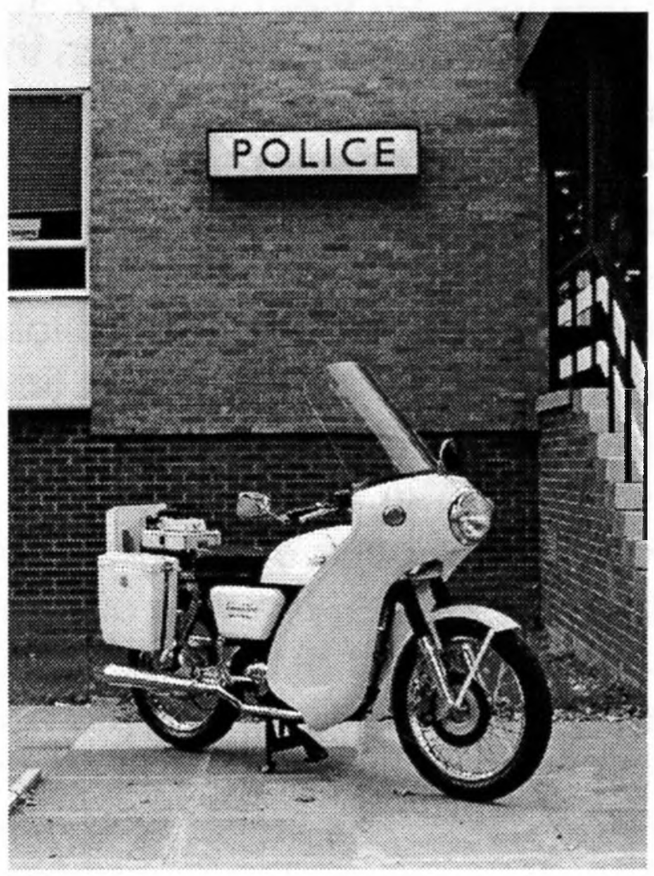
When the County Boundary changes took place in 1974, the process of amalgamation, taking over some of the smaller forces through the years, became reversed. Parts of Lancashire Constabulary's area and resources moved with the new boundaries. Interpol UTF 5 L moved to Greater Manchester Police and no more is known of it. UTF 6 L stayed with Lancashire, possibly operating in the Blackpool area, until eventually being auctioned off at Ormskirk Motor Auctions in August 1977, where it was sold to a Liverpool dealer for £268.58, then bought from that dealer by its present owner and used daily for a number of years.

Between the Spring of 1995 and the Spring of 1997, this machine has been completely stripped and rebuilt, using modern processes and materials where necessary, to provide a long-lasting and durable finish, resembling and preserving as closely as possible that which it had while in service with Lancashire Constabulary.

Being the first owner after Lancashire Constabulary withdrew the machine, I have been able to keep the equipment that was left on, not being part of the specialist equipment such as blue lights, two tone horns and police/stop sign or radio equipment which has to be removed before sale. These parts have now been refurbished and re-fitted. The refurbished items include fairing, panniers, seat, radio carrier plate and associated fittings.

In service, examples of this fleet ran with either a fairing mounted blue flashing light, by PMG Thorpe, or an amber flashing fog-light, by Raydot (still legal for police vehicles then). The vehicle came with an amber fog light, but its significance was not realised until last year, and has been refurbished. A correct blue light has also been obtained and may be fitted instead. A new 'Police/Stop' sign has been obtained, which is of a type only used for about two years, and made of fibreglass. As far as I know, only three examples of this type of sign now exist - mine, one on another preserved police bike, and one at Vehicle Developments.

The bike carries its correct radio equipment, an ex-Lancashire Pye Westminster. All the radio kit is mounted behind the rider, for safety reasons, as the norm was still tank mounting.



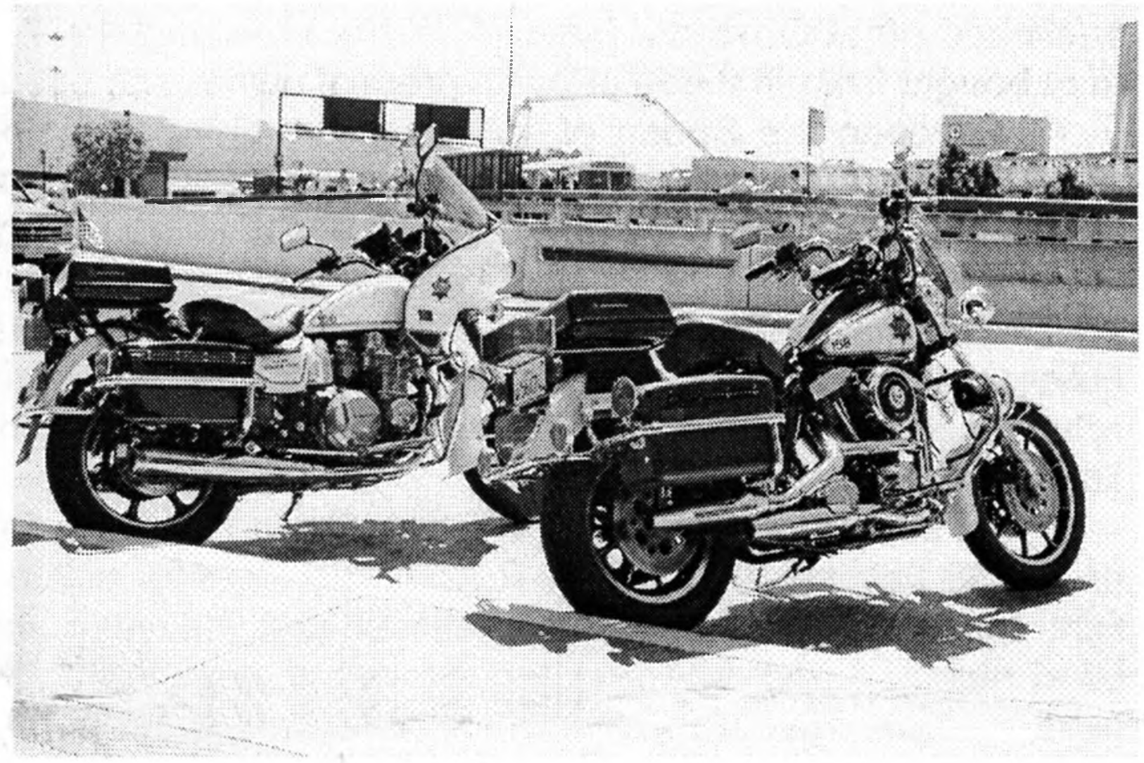
To summerise -
Norton Commando Interpol, 750cc
Delivered Dec 72, registered Jan 73
ex Lancashire Police. Matching serial numbers.
Norton 'Northway' Fairing, Craven panniers,
Police spec. including all lights, signs and radio.
Fully restored, powder coated, loads of stainless.
Mk3 Isolastics, oil filter kit, Boyer ignition.
New chrome wheel rims with polished stainless spokes.
New camshaft, exhaust, battery and wiring.
Same owner since police service.
One of only a few preserved Interpol MkIs,
and only known example of a Lancashire machine.

Gerry Scott 1997

Royal Barbados Police - Suzuki GS500

Military Police - Honda ST1100

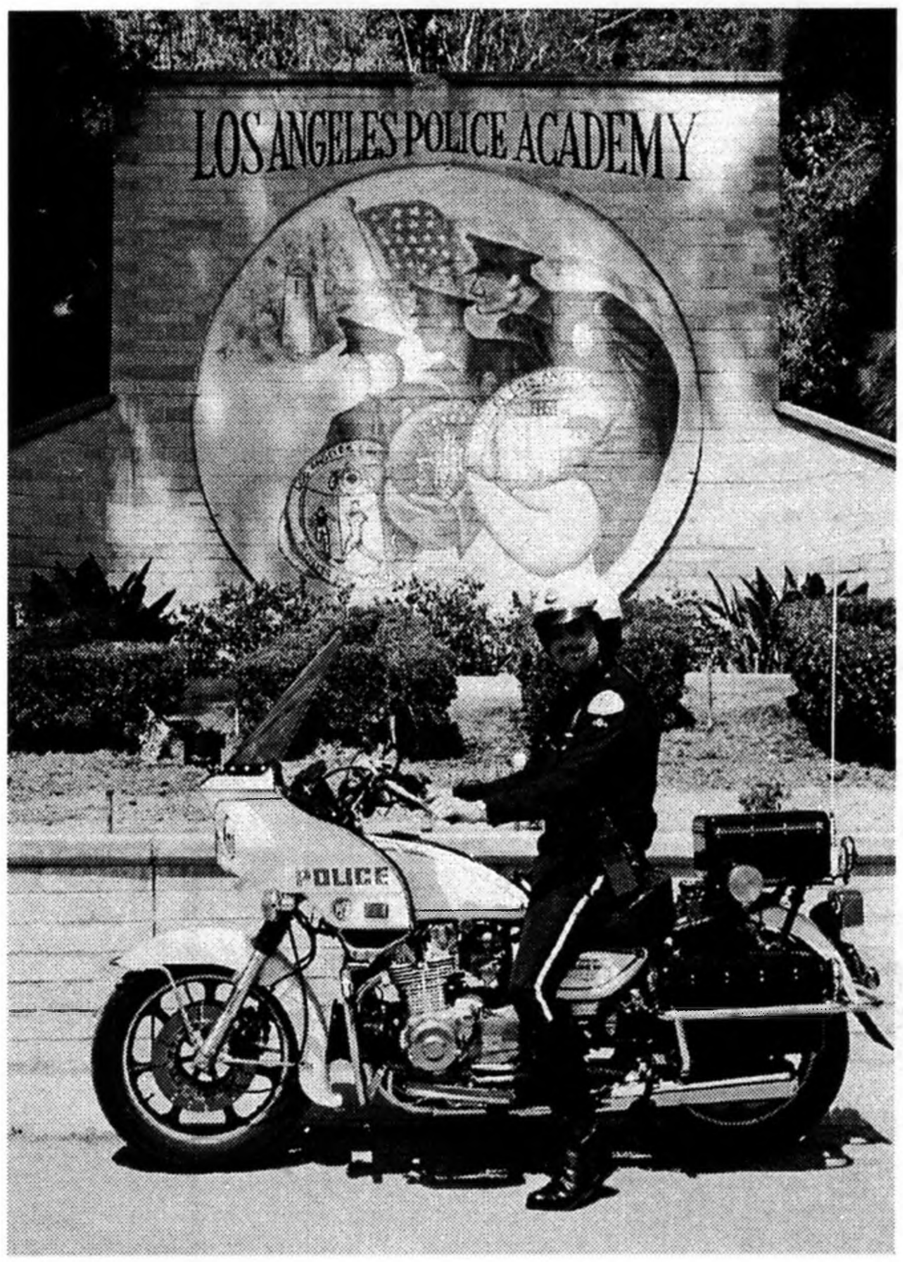
Durham Constabulary - Honda ST1100

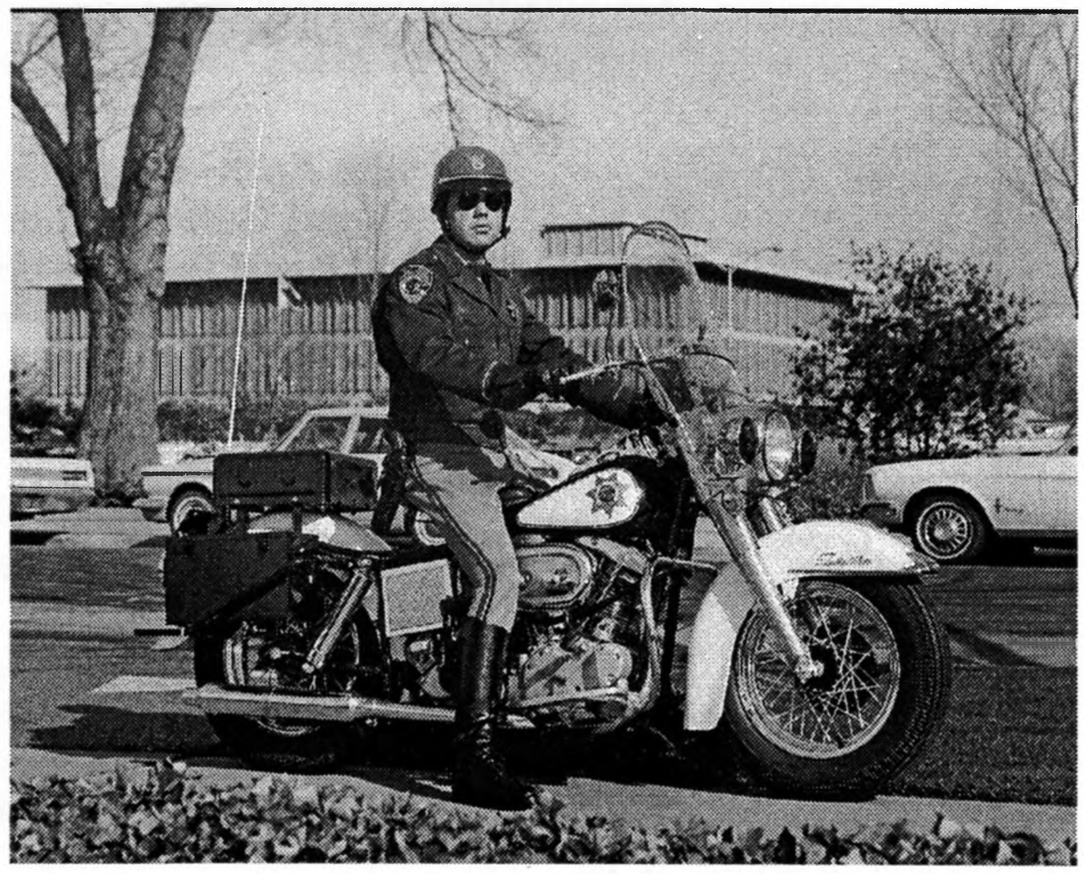


San Francisco Police - Kawasaki KZ1000 & Harley Davidson FXRP

Extract of a letter to Fred Baker with reference to L.E. Velocette from Harry Awty, retired PC based at Forest Gate, 'K' Division.

For my part, the bike you have is a radio controlled vehicle. One was held on each Sub-Division and was operated from 8am to 12 midnight each day. One usually had a posting of four weeks on the r/t bike, rotating 8 - 4 and 4 - 12 midn. Being radio controlled from Information Room led to a much more interesting tour of duty, even though one frequently found oneself the sole officer responding to an emergency call. To swing the lamp for a minute or two: A most memorable call was one lunchtime I took an assignment to 'A man threatening a household with a hand grenade and dagger'. Sure enough on arrival at the scene, in the rain, I found the street all but deserted. A scruffy looking bloke in a demob mac was loitering outside a Victorian terraced house. I approached with caution, in time honoured tradition. In reply to my initial query he replied: "What hand grenade? I ain't got such a fing". On searching his raincoat pockets, sure enough he had a live Mills grenade in one pocket and a dagger point uppermost in the other. He had written on the dull khaki coloured base of the grenade: 'For Sykes and Skidmore.' It turned out that these were the occupants of the house. His wife of three days (Skidmore) and some bloke she had run off with. Suffice to say, I marched him along to the Nick. My service training had told me that the grenade would be perfectly safe so long as the pin was not removed. More than the Late Turn Relief knew. They were parading for duty in the Charge Room when I entered with my prisoner and dumped the grenade on the charge desk. The Relief scattered through various exits - Just a tale from the past.





These three pictures were supplied by David Smith. The above is an early 80's Kawasaki KZ1000P with the LAPD.
Above right is an early 70's Harley with the CHP and right is a late 60's. If anyone has any ideas about their true dates, could you let us know.

South Yorkshire Constabulary - BMW K100LT

Dutch Military Police - BMW K100LT

If you have any interesting photographs or articles, could you submit them to me care of David Bragg, 41 Shawford Road, West Ewell, Surrey KT19 9SW

Paul H.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 1998

18th April - Tippetts Open Day.
Ewell Road, Surbiton, Surrey. Static show.
Contact David Bragg, 41 Shawford Road,
West Ewell, Surrey, KT19 9SW

2/3rd May - Motorcycle Extravaganza
Show being organised by Surrey Police.
Just turn up and take part in the fun.
Police HQ, Mount Brown, Sandy Lane, Guilford.

17th May - Emergency Services Day, Surrey Constabulary
Possible run or cavalcade. Please can we have as many machines turn up.
Police HQ, Mount Brown, Sandy Lane, Guildford.
Contact David Bragg.

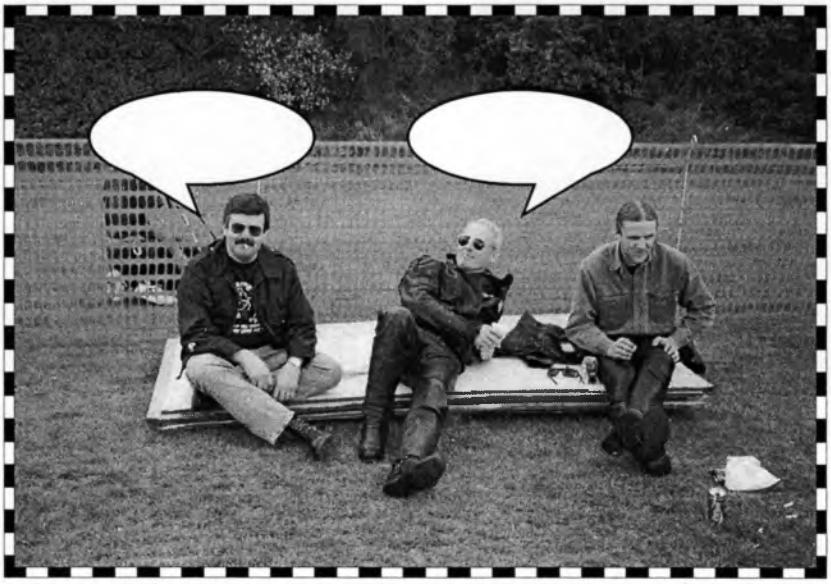
30th May - Derby Festival Fete
Roseberry Park, Epsom, Surrey. Ride and static show.
Contact Nick Carter 01372-458816

4/5th July - Emergency Services Show.
Port Solent Marina Complex, Portsmouth. Static show.
Contact Steve Woodward, PVEC, 01705

30th August - West Mercia Constabulary Open Day.
Cavalcade through Worcester and static show at HQ.
Please make a note in your diaries. Contact details to follow.

Main Event, 2nd International Run in Holland.
Dates are to be arranged, possibly in September.
We will notify you as soon as we have confirmation

Hampshire Videos from the Run in June are still available
from David Bragg at the cost of £5



Comments please for the above.