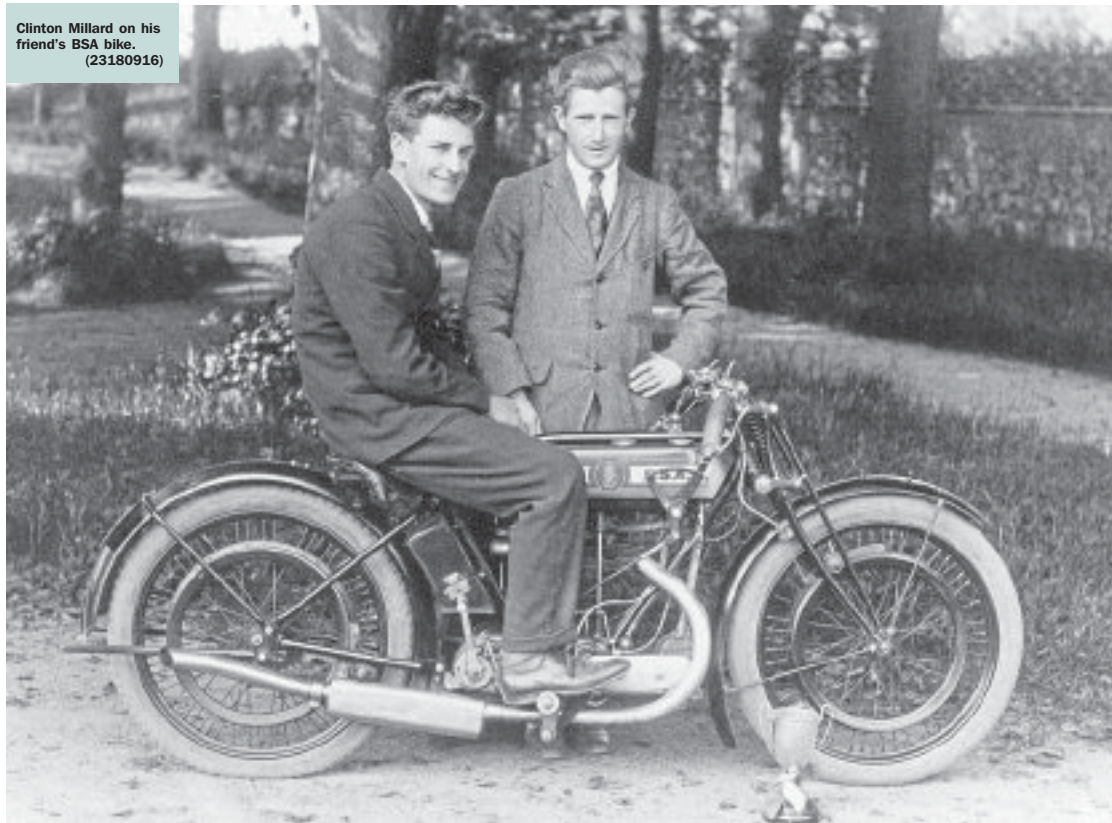


MOTORCYCLING

Clinton Millard on his friend's BSA bike. (23180916)



Another generation: Sophie-Jo Whitaker with 10-month old Holly, who is the great-great granddaughter of Clinton Millard, on the BSA motorcycle. (23135124)

Right: A Millards advertisement in the Press



RIDE

A VINTAGE BSA motorcycle has been rescued and restored to its former glory, making its way back to the shop from which it was first purchased 95 years ago. The bike is thought to be one of the only few surviving from the post-First World War era after many were destroyed or abandoned. BSA, or Birmingham Small Arms, once rubbed shoulders with the likes of Triumph and Norton as an iconic British bike brand. Having drifted somewhat off the radar in recent years, the brand is steeped in historical significance. BSA was the manufacturer of the Browning .303 machine guns used on the Spitfires and Hurricanes that fought the Battle of Britain. After adapting its machinery to make bicycles, BSA was at one point the largest motorcycle firm in the world. In 1923, a brand new, state-of-the-art 498cc Model S landed in Guernsey and was delivered straight to leading cycle shop, Millards & Co. The bike's original specification included three speeds, a mechanical oil pump, hand-operated clutch and all-chain drive, costing around £70. Primitive machines of its kind were eventually muscled out by advancements in engineering such as drum brakes, electric lighting and

foot-gear chains throughout the evolution of motorcycles. Those who recognize such as this few many were scrapped or disrepair. In August 1923, The Guernsey Millard racing at 'Vazon Sane' one of the most racers in the Channel Islands is the grandfather who, along with continue to run more than 100 opened. The bike's sore eyes for the 1950s were the BSA motorcycle. What happened initially purchase official records missing. However, it was found its way to Gavey, who has back to full working order. The previous complete but in mid-1970s. It was pending a total overhaul and it remained until May 1998, Ernie recalled.

A vintage BSA motorcycle that was rescued from ruin and restored to its former glory has returned to the shop from which it was first purchased 95 years ago. Mica Ramsey reports



The BSA motorcycle back in Millards, Victoria Road, after 95 years. (23135114)

Tim Millard with the BSA motorcycle that was sold from the family-owned shop in 1923. (23135112)

'It will run along happily at about 30 mph, and no doubt is a lot faster, but with the lack of suspension and poor brakes, this is quite sufficient'

Ernie Gavvey



Pictures by Steve Sarre

ON

...ges, which progressed in the 1920s. As motorcycles re closely resemble those of today, models are in vogue and out of favour and are appreciated or condemned to oblivion. A second mention in the Guernsey Press reports that a Mr. C. Clinton Millard was at the celebrated motorcycle channel Islands and the son of Tim Millard, with his daughter, Sophie, in the family business years after it first began. The return is a sight for sore eyes until the island's sole dealer of motorcycles. After the bike was found in poor condition in the early life of the owner, the bike eventually was lovingly serviced it in working order over the years.

original and hard to replace bits had survived – all embossed with the BSA logo. Ernie endeavoured to bring the old motorcycle back to life but events such as moving house and changing jobs made progress slow and infrequent. 'In 2007 I decided that I must either continue the project to completion or sell it – and work recommenced at a faster pace,' he said. But restoring a bike of this age and era would be no simple feat, with its original parts long out of production. Ernie sourced and commissioned elements from all around the world with parts being made from drawings and patterns and acquired through adverts. 'The remanufactured wheel rims came from New Zealand, rear brake rim from Czech Republic and the crankshaft was overhauled at a specialist in the UK,' said Ernie. 'The fuel tank, which was in a terrible state with rust holes, was sent to a Vintage Motor Cycle Club member who specialises in repairing vintage tanks using soldering. The tank was painted at Graham Brown's while Dowling Signs undertook the stripes and fitting the transfers. All of the polishing and nickel plating was carried out at home using a kit,' Ernie explained. The bike was finally completed in late

2014 and its first major run was the 2015 Liberation Day Cavalcade. Ernie said 'It will run along happily at about 30 mph, and no doubt is a lot faster, but with the lack of suspension and poor brakes, this is quite sufficient.' Some modifications have had to be made in order to bring the bike up to contemporary standards. An early 1930s BSA drum brake front wheel was acquired from Austria to replace the previous belt rim brake, which posed a safety concern. Ernie has also installed a computer battery in the wicker basket allowing for an LED brake light and bulbs have been fitted in the originally acetylene headlamp and rear lamp. The original Amac carburettor rendered the bike almost impossible to ride in Guernsey so a new Amal carb as used in the 1930s was fitted. The final touch was a replica of the original long bellmouth, decorating the new carb with all the charm and sophistication of its prototype. With a new lease of life, the bike now enjoys Sunday morning rides in the summer and has completed three Liberation Day Cavalcades without a fault.

A sand racing report from August 1923 that mentions Clinton Millard racing the BSA motorcycle at 'Vazon Sands'.

