



1971 BSA A65T

Thunderbolt 650cc

18<sup>th</sup> June 2017

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My 'Next Project' (following on from my Harley / Norton KJ Special rebuild project) was supposed to be a Velocette Venom or Viper Project . . . BUT . . . After searching for over a year now for the right bike to come along (at the right price that is ) i.e. a Velo in bits, &/or in need of massive overhaul - for less than an 'Arm & a Leg'. And Yes! I realise it's both an optimistic and quite unreasonable notion . . . But . . . there's bound to be one out there 'somewhere' with my name on it? Anyhoooo! (as the Americans say) I'll keep looking but in the meantime . . . This BSA A65T Thunderbolt 650cc came along, looking for someone to reinstate it and get it back on the Road again.

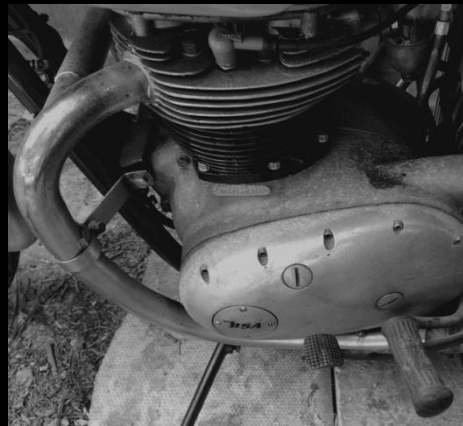
This Beeza (according to the BSA Owners Club Register was built in 1971: identified by the Engine & VIN numbers i.e. H = July & E = 1971). This was one of the first 'Oil in the Frame' models - more commonly referred to as OIF model (incidentally, this frame was also used from 1971 for the Triumph TR6R 650cc Tiger). It was registered in 1972 and has been owned by the previous owner since 1984. I was told that it's only done 10,264 miles from New, and the last time it was on the road was in 1989. So, for the last twenty eight years it has been 'Off the Road' and carefully stored in the family Garage – all covered up – in Dry storage. Complete apart from the missing Battery.

So, it's more than ready now for a WELL EARNED REFURBISH. It looks in near-original condition with matching engine & frame numbers and the only modifications made to this lovely bike are all sensible 'Mods' such as; Hyde Oil Cooler, Norton Commando Oil Filter Conversion and a Devimead Engine Conversion ("as per race spec" I was told). Two more modifications include a pair of Hagon Rear Shock Absorbers and a chrome Rear Carrier. This model also has the latest ) Conical Hubs & Twin Leading Shoe Front Brakes (and according to all of the 'Test Ride' literature I've read) , these Brakes & Hubs are suggested the Best BSA made – with the best test results recorded.



The Good-News is that it is a Complete Bike! The Bad-News is that it is a None-Runner, but that's only to be expected from a bike that's not been 'Fired Up' for over twenty-odd-years. The Beesa looks really good in the above photographs, but on closer inspection it's obvious the photos belie the real condition of the Bike.





Some would say it just needs re-commissioning . . . but I'm guessing it's more complicated than that and is in need of quite a lot more work to get it back to its former glory. I'm still waiting on DVLA to send the relevant paperwork through, but have started work on it anyway (1<sup>st</sup> August 2017).

The first day's work was to get the Tank & Seat off and start to remove the Air Filter Side Panels, so that the Carburettor can be removed. The Throttle Twist Grip Handlebar Control was completely seized, and it was discovered upon dismantling that the Carb Throttle Slide was totally stuck in the closed position.

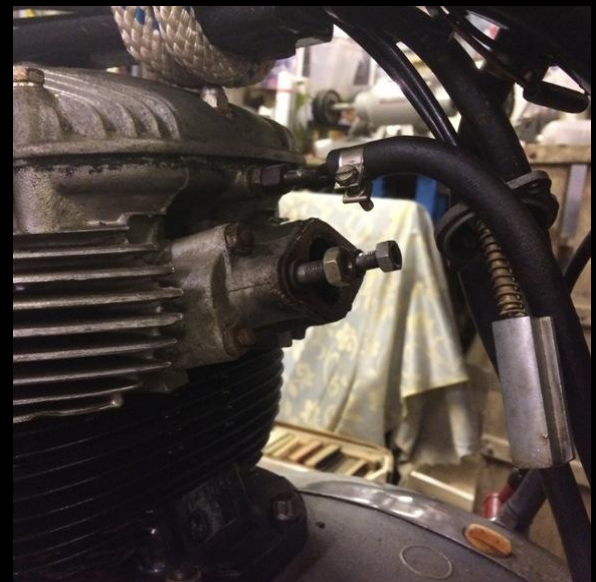
The Clutch is also totally seized – so that also needs detailed inspection & attention. And . . . the Brakes are sticking, but that's no surprise really! As can be seen, there are a few holes – here and there, in need of attention.



The following photos represent the next stage of work.



















I re-bushed the Central Stand pivot points and this proved effective, taking all of the 'play' out of the Stand. Central Stand refitted – job done!







Sticking Brakes sorted. Chain thoroughly cleaned & re-lubricated, then adjusted.



Engine Sump 'Drained' (of 28 years of sumpt' oil) and the correct amount of fresh oil inserted into the engine refill point and the 'Oil in the Frame' (OIF) was filled to the correct level – in readiness for starting soon.





The Exhaust Silencer 'Hole' with temporary fix – just to get it through the MOT – until I can 'Source' a complete new exhaust system. Rear Hub cleaned.



The next job was to Flush-out the Petrol Tank (with added Nuts to shake about and loosen-up the rust & muck in the tank). This Cleaning & de-Rusting process took over three days to complete by draining, re-filling, shaking and refilling again until no more crap came out. Plus; re-threading Fuel Tap holes















Now the Clutch has been 'Freed-up' and the Brakes un-seized and readjusted, and a New Battery fitted, I've managed to get the Engine started and the Bike runs really well now. It sounds great and feels surprisingly Small for a British Classic 650 BSA.

All that's needed now is to 'Sort' the Electrics, Switches, Lights and Directional Indicators, and get them all working again properly. It will then be ready for it's first MOT Test in 28 years !

Unfortunately, paid work and other commitments have hindered this final stage . . . But I will keep you all informed when its finally MOT'ed.

To do justice to this beautiful bike, I need to source and fit a complete New Exhaust system (Front Pipes, Balance Pipe and Rear Silencers) and probably fit a New Seat too. And then it'll be 'Well Fit to Go' (Anywhere !).

**Electrics Now Sorted. Now it's ready for it's first MOT in many-a-year.**









