

## **Celebrating 70 Years of the BSA Bantam at Ardingly: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

We're celebrating 70 years of the BSA Bantam at The Summer Classic Bike Show & Jumble on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July. The Bantam is one of the most popular British motorcycles ever made, beloved by learners and commuters, trials riders and racers alike.

Despite being the quintessential British lightweight motorcycle, the two-stroke Bantam engine was based on the German DKW RT 125, a design that was received as part of post-WWII war reparations. Starting out with a 125cc engine machine with no rear suspension in October 1948, over the years the Bantam evolved into a 175cc motorcycle with full suspension. With good fuel economy it was cheap to run, and with a wide range of models it was popular in many spheres. Easy to modify, the Bantam was also put to sporting use from trials to racing.

The Star of the Show is Peggy, the Overland to Egypt Bantam. Peggy is a 1952 BSA D1 Bantam that took owner Gordon May over 5000 miles from Manchester, UK, to Cairo, Egypt and back. A challenge for most motorcycles, but quite something on an antiquated 1952 BSA Bantam. Gordon's first attempt at the journey, in August and September 2009, ended with a major engine failure in north-eastern Italy. Undeterred, Gordon set off again in the spring of 2010 with a completely rebuilt engine, with a new route across the Mediterranean to Tunisia then along the north coast of Libya and Egypt. On the return leg, the plucky little two-stroker crossed the Sinai before heading north through Jordan and Syria, to Italy by ferry and then up through Europe to the UK. Gordon tells us "My Bantam is called Peggy as a tribute to undoubtedly the best-known Bantam rider of all... Peggy Iris Thomas. Miss Thomas bought her Bantam, a rigid-framed D1, in 1950. She immediately named it Oppy after its registration number, OPE 811. Within a few weeks she set off on a 4,500 mile tour around Scandinavia accompanied by her friend, Prudence Beggs.... However, Peggy's most famous journey was an 18-month, 14,000 mile epic in North America." Gordon has reissued the book Peggy Iris Thomas wrote of her journey 'A Ride In The Sun'.

The Bantam can be seen in the Queens Jubilee Show Hall at Ardingly still fully loaded and covered in layers of oil and sand accumulated on the journey. You can buy 'Overland to Egypt', Gordon's book about the adventure, direct from the author and signed at the show.

There's dozens of Bantams booked in for the Show, and together with the BSA Bantam Owners Club it promises to be a great event.

To mark 100 Years of The RAF, a team of riders will be circumnavigating the coast of the UK in September. Sponsored by Royal Enfield India, they'll be doing the run on Bullets. Meet them at Ardingly and sponsor them on their RAF Centenary Ride around the coast of the UK, in aid of the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Long-established Dorking and District MCC will be celebrating 50 Years of the Triumph Trident and the BSA Rocket III, look out for their club stand.

### **The Summer Classic Bikeshow & Jumble: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018 - Event Details:**

Four indoor halls of motorcycles & bikejumble: Large indoor all motorcycle show for pre-1980 motorcycles with Club Stands and hundreds of machines on display.

Coming by bike? Lookout for The Royal British Legion Riders' Branch Helmet Park in aid of the RBL in The Stockman's Building.

There's the popular all-motorcycle Bikejumble with new and used spares, bikes, clothing & accessories for sale. This takes place over four halls plus outside, and there are tons of bargains. There's a free BikeMart display-to-sell area for private vendors, or cheap garage clear-out stalls are available for just £10 if you're clearing your shed or garage. Enquire for more details, These aren't for regular traders, and must be pre-booked.

Free parking, refreshments available, previous events featured local hog roast, toasty sandwiches and real coffee in addition to chips & burgers. Well-behaved dogs on leads welcome.

**Opens :** 10am - 14:30 (last admission 13:30)

**Public Admission** at 10am: £6 adults; £5 for 65-and-Over; kids under 16 free

**Venue:** The South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6TL.

**Location** Eight miles from M23 junction 10, sign-posted SOE / Wakehurst Place. Nearest train stations are Haywards Heath and East Grinstead.

Entrance to the Showground is via the North Gate, opposite the Gardener's Arms pub.

Our events are all-motorcycle and are family-run by enthusiasts for over 25 years. Real Not just Retro! Visit [www.elk-promotions.co.uk](http://www.elk-promotions.co.uk) for more details.