

Editorial

1998 looks like being another good year for the Gilera Network. Membership has passed 140 again and I regularly receive new enquiries. Non-members sometimes ask for their machines to be advertised in 'The GeN' and I am happy to oblige so that members get the chance to acquire a machine they have been looking out for.

Items to note in this issue include David's piece on the NW (RC and Saturno) clutch shock absorber mechanism. No need to panic, but if you tend to do a lot of town work and hence use the clutch a lot it might be worth a bit of preventative maintenance in the form of good old 'Loctite'. There are several chances to meet up with other members this year. See page 17 for details of some that are definitely planned and let me have ideas for any others (the Oliver's Mount bike week in September might be a possibility).

Whilst the new Norton single might prove fun to ride it just doesn't compare with a Saturno so far as I am concerned - a bit too 'retro' in styling for my liking and the Rotax lump has not got the lines of the Bialbero unit which was so very nearly acquired by 'Norton'. I wonder who else might be interested in a similar venture - see Chairman's Chat and page 17 !

I had intended to spend quite a lot of time in the garage this winter, even though the 604 didn't need another go at the head gasket. The 2C/375 Morini was going to get spruced up and I was planning to investigate the feasibility of reinstating indicators on the Norturno if necessary. As it was, a prolonged bout of 'very persistent virus' kept me out of the cold. The positive side effect, however, has been that this issue should be ready to go out soon after the closing date thanks to keeping myself occupied in front of the PC.



Now read on ...

Chairman's Chat

I have a few interesting topics this month including a brief test report of the new Gilera Runner 180cc scooter.

First I will tell you what is going on in my garage. I am still riding the RC600 to work everyday so it has not changed much in the last couple of months. I have just not had time to get on with it. I have bought a second Saturno. I bought it at a good price because it is looking very sad. I have been spending a lot of time working on it. I must admit that I bought it with the intention of doing it up and selling it. That may sound a bit mercenary but it will give me some money to lavish on my Saturno and the RC. I have also just bought a Nordwest from Italy ! Well you know what it is like, someone says do you want a Gilera and you just have to say yes. It is a black & pink, long seat bike with a black rear rack and the gold coloured engine. It is like new, obviously never been out in the rain and has only 6000km on the clock. Although it is the early colour scheme it has all the late mods, starter shock absorber, anti crack panel mods, screws in the top of the forks and the short type petrol tap. It is a very nice bike but I cannot keep it so I will put it on the market once I have done things like change the belt and all the oils. If you want a clean low mileage Nordwest give me a call.

Now other things. Something is going on! and I don't know what. I keep hearing strange rumours that seem to centre on the 600cc (Nordwest) engine. I am starting to think that the engine is poised to reappear with another name on the side but I cannot find anyone who can give me any information about this. I will not waste space speculating now, maybe I will know more by the next issue of the GeN. Watch this space. [see page 17 ! -Ed.]

In this GeN I have updated the index of technical articles and technical topics that have appeared in previous issues. If you need any back copies Pete Fisher can supply them for £1.50 each. Now that we are talking about money, don't forget that I have GeN Binders to keep all your GeN's neat and tidy. Order now before I run out!

RUNNER 180. A BRIEF REPORT

Yes the new Gilera Runner 125 & 180cc scooters are here. I have had the opportunity to ride a 180 and I think it is upholding the Gilera name admirably.

The design has moved away from the traditional step through with the addition of a "top tube" between the head stock and the front of the seat. The Runner looks a bit like a bike with small wheels. 13" wheels in fact, with sticky radial tyres and a twin piston calliper on the disc. The technology is pure Piaggio automatic scooter but the look is very different and the feel is much more solid, predictable and bike like. Power comes from a 175cc water-cooled, single cylinder, reed valve, two stroke engine with electronic variable ignition. 19 bhp is claimed which is a big increase over the 12bhp 125's like the Typhoon that we all thought were fast. This is an 85 mph scooter with tyres brakes and chassis to suit.

Transmission is the common C.V.T. (constant velocity) "V" belt and expanding pulleys with a centrifugal clutch. You just open the throttle and it goes, open the throttle more and it goes ballistic. Do not be fooled by "only 19 horse power". These things are very light and the automatic transmission makes very good use of the power. The 180 can be controlled very easily and is more user friendly than some of the smaller engined scooters that just suddenly launch you a while after you twisted the grip. I found I could ride continuous circles with the steering on full lock, to do that you need very good throttle response as well as a well balanced bike. Pulling away from the lights can be very leisurely but a bit more throttle and the front end goes light and the speedo winds up to seventy in no time. I did not find the scooter trying to wheelie even two up but it is fairly easy to get the wheel up if you want to. I did not want to scratch to hard because the tyres were new but it certainly felt very solid and precise in corners. The suspension is basically the same as the Typhoon but the feel is so different. The Typhoon tends to skip about and gives a fairly choppy ride in comparison. Altogether a very good scooter. Piaggio are creating Gilera dealers as fast as they can so there is probably one not too far from you. Call in and try and get a test ride.

TECHNICAL ARTICLES

Technical articles available from Dave Champion. If you want any of these articles please send me an A4 sae with enough postage for the number of pages you want.

NORDWEST & GFR Headlight modification to make light dip to the left - 1x A4. issue 1.
 NORDWEST & RC600 Body panel mods to help prevent cracking - 1x A4. issue 1.
 NORDWEST & RC600 Carburettor data and information. inc. drawings - 2x A4. issue 2.
 NORDWEST & RC600 Handlebar choke conversion - 1x A4. issue 1.
 NORDWEST Fact File. As published in GeN 11. now updated - 4x A4. issue 2.
 NORDWEST Changing the fork seals - 2x A4. issue 1.
 NORDWEST Rear sprocket drawing, for getting a pattern sprocket made - 1x A4. SOON.
 RC600 Rear sprocket drawing, for getting a pattern sprocket made - 1x A4. issue 1.
 RC600 Fact File. As published in GeN 12 - 4x A4. issue 2.
 SATURNO Fact File. As published in GeN11. now updated - 4x A4. issue 2.
 SATURNO Rear sprocket drawing, for getting a pattern sprocket made - 1x A4. issue 1.
 GFR 125. Fact File - 4x A4. issue 1.
 CHANGING CAM BELT, CHECKING TAPPETS. now updated with drawings - 4x A4. issue 4
 STARTER CLUTCH INFORMATION. 500 -

I am also collecting a list of chassis prefix numbers if you are interested. I have identified 136 prefix numbers so far.

INDEX OF TECHNICAL TOPICS

Up to and including GeN#15 During the past issues of the GeN we have published letters and articles on many technical topics. Here is an index to help you find all we have on a particular subject.

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CARB ADJUSTING TOOL Update

In the last GeN I talked about making a short screw driver for adjusting the slow running mixture screw on Northwest and RC600 carbs. The article should have had a drawing but technology beat us and it got missed. Here it is. If you do not want to make it, send me a couple of pounds and I will send you one.

HANDLEBAR CHOKE CONVERSION

Latest news on handlebar choke conversion. There are two options that work and will give Northwest and RC600 owners a much more convenient way of operating the choke.

- 1. Choke operated by a vertical linear knob that can be located beside the ignition switch. All the parts for this are from early Yamaha XT600/660.*
- 2. Choke operated by a rotary control located between left hand switch cluster and the rubber handlebar grip.*

The first option is the easiest because you can buy all the bits except the handlebar mounting bracket and that is easy to make. The second option needs



you to get a cable made. Then you have to make a special shaped nipple to fit the choke unit and carefully drill two holes in the outside of the left hand switch body. The rotary control is from a Gilera Dakota and looks neat on the bike. I have had option two fitted to my RC600 for several months and I am completely satisfied with the way it works.

If you want to fit one of these I can supply a complete kit for only £25. All you will have to do

is drill the holes in the switch body and follow the fitting instructions. Cheque made payable to D.Champion please.

UNLEADED PETROL

Lead was originally put into petrol to improve its characteristics and to help protect the valve seats in four stroke engines. In the year 2000 leaded petrol will become illegal ! It will start to disappear from petrol stations before then.

What will this mean for our Gilera engines? Some Gilera engines can use unleaded and some can not. Read on. All two stroke engines can use unleaded. High compression engines like the GFR 125 should use super unleaded or an octane booster.

Only one model of four stroke engine was designed for use with unleaded petrol. Engines with the prefix 227 can use unleaded petrol: this is all Northwests and the last version of the RC600. All other four strokes need leaded petrol.

So if you have a Saturno or a Dakota or a 175 Extra or a B300 or any one of dozens of Gilera four strokes, what can you do? There are additives available that claim to allow engines like yours to run safely on unleaded petrol but at the moment no serious independent tests have been done on these so we do not really know which is the best and which should be avoided. We are assured that tests will be completed and products will carry an official approval before leaded petrol disappears. Alternatively you could have hard (unleaded) valve seats put in your engine at a cost of around £100 per seat. You will find adverts in magazines like "Classic Bike".

SATURNO HEADLIGHT

The standard light in the Saturno is not the best in the world and any improvement must be worth the effort. Until now the only option has been to fit a complete new headlight that can use a 60/65w halogen bulb. The standard bulb is a 40/45w tungsten with a Bosch bayonet fitting. The Bosch bayonet was common on European cars and bikes before halogen took over.

At last you can get a halogen bulb with a Bosch bayonet. Its only 35/35w but that is better than the tungsten original. Why only 35 watts? you

may ask. Because most of the vehicles that may use this are fairly old and they tend to have dynamos or small alternators that will not cope with any more demand. Your local bike shop should be able to order these bulbs or you may get them from a car spares shop that specialises in European cars.

NORTHWEST / RC600 CLUTCH INFO

I don't know if I wanted to laugh or cry when I read Mark Gracie's humorously written account of his expensive nightmare clutch episode. I'm glad that you found a way to smile, Mark.

The problem that Mark had was the same failure I have heard of two or three times already. Now that is starting to worry me a bit ! The problem is this:

The rear of the clutch basket contains springs that are intended to take the engine shocks out of the transmission. The basket is held onto this back plate by three countersunk "Allen" screws. The screws do not transmit any load, they only hold the parts together, the springs take all the load. If these screws break or come loose then the clutch will start to fall apart with catastrophic consequences. The evidence I have suggests that one or more of the screws come loose and everything starts rattling around, eventually the screws shear. Once one has gone the others will soon follow. The threads do not seem to strip nor do the screws fall out.

I think the factory became aware of this potential problem because they stopped supplying the parts of the clutch basket assembly individually. It is only possible to buy a complete pre-assembled unit. I expect that early engines had the clutch basket put together on the production line but later engines were built using pre-assembled units. This would give the opportunity for more careful matching of parts and better quality control. I have not yet been able to verify this and I have no idea when the change may have taken place.

Be aware of how your bike sounds. if it starts to make any nasty noises, do not be tempted to carry on. If the clutch has only come loose it can easily (and cheaply) be repaired. If you keep going till the bitter end be prepared for a big bill. If you fancy fiddling or you have any reason to remove the right hand side engine cover I think it would be well worth taking the clutch off and checking the

screws. I will soon be taking the clutch off a Saturno. I will take the screws out to identify them and then get some good quality ones that we can use as replacements if needed. Incidentally I have never heard of a 500 having problems nor do tuned engines seem any more at risk. I think it is an assembly problem rather than a mechanical weakness.

BITS WE IGNORE #2. WHEEL BEARINGS

Wheel bearings do not need any regular maintenance and that is probably why they get ignored. I expect most often these bearings only get changed when the bike fails its MoT because of them.

A couple of quick checks can tell you if all is well. First get the wheel off the ground. Spin the wheel and listen / feel for any roughness in the bearings. Kneel beside the bike and grip tyre near the top and bottom. Try and rock the wheel from side to side to see if there is any movement in the bearings.

Most wheel bearings are now the sealed-for-life kind and if there is any sign of damage or wear you will have to change them. Wheels get very dirty and there is a great temptation to use the jet wash at the local garage to get all the dirt out of all the corners. Problem is that the high pressure blast can penetrate the bearings seals and blast all the grease out. Then it is not long before the dry, rusting bearing fails.

It is not a big job to knock the bearings out and put new ones in. Remember these points: If the bearing has a dust seal replace that at the same time. When pressing in the new bearing. Use a tubular drift or large socket to press on the outer race only. Make certain that the bearing has gone in square and is fully "home" against its shoulder or bush. If there is a spacer tube between the bearings do not forget it before you put the second bearing in.

"Bits we ignore" will continue appear in future copies of the GeN.

3. Swinging arm and suspension linkage.

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ITALIAN BIKE RALLY AT LANGAMARK 12-14 JUNE 1998

I have told you about the Langamark Rally in Belgium before and I will tell you about it again.

Langamark is a small town near Ypres about 60 miles from Calais. The rally is held in the middle of town at the sports centre. Camping is on the football pitch and hot showers etc. are in the sports complex. They run a bar and barbecue all weekend. There is an organised ride out on Saturday afternoon and in the evening there is a dance with a couple of rock bands. On Sunday there is a vintage rally and ride out. The town has a few bars and there is no way you will ever get through all the different beers in a weekend!

This year will be the last time that this event will be held because the couple who organise it are emigrating to Portugal. How about a club run to Portugal in 2000? just to see how they are getting on. I will be going and it would be great if another Gilera came as well. Friday afternoon ferry and home on Sunday evening or you could stay a few days and visit places like Bruges, a very picturesque lace-making town which used to be on a large river that has now gone, leaving a network of canals with nothing to do but take tourists around the sights. If you are interested please give me a call.

GEN BINDERS - GEN BINDERS - GEN BINDERS - GEN BINDERS

Do not forget that we have superb hard binders for your copies of the GeN magazine. Antique red with gold blocking on the spine. Each binders holds twelve copies. £ 4.10 each or £3.95 each if you order more than one. P&P included. Cheque made payable to Gilera Network for Binders.

Also I have: Red T-shirts with Gilera logo on left breast in white. L. XL. XXL. (L will fit about 38 chest). £5 each + 75p p&p (for any number). Red base ball caps with Gilera logo in white. One size fits all. £2.50 each inc. p&p. Embroidered badges. Golden yellow logo on black

or red. £2.50 each.

Cheque made payable to D.Champion for these please.

 David Champion

NORTHWEST STARTING PROBLEMS

Over the time we've had the Gilera Network, I've noted in the newsletter that we've had quite a few starter problems for Nordwests (or is it just my perception?). Over the 30th/31st December I found a small problem with my Nordie which might have some bearing upon the failure of starter clutches and the like.

On the 30th, since the weather was good (no garage), I gave my NW a good 'once over': cleaning/adjusting/lubing the chain, oil and filter change, checking cambelt etc etc. After a few hours work, I was ready for a spin to check that everything was OK. I started the bike up, let it warm for a few minutes, and set off into the fading sunshine (!). About a mile up the road there was a horrendous racket coming from the engine as I slowed for a T-junction. It was loud enough to hear even with earplugs in and my loud pipe. I cut the engine, as I thought it might be the cambelt or something like it going after all.

Once off the bike, I had a quick look. Nothing externally visible, so I started the bike up again. The engine ran fine, no noise at tickover, so I got on, and blipped the throttle. The loud noise started up again. I turned off the ignition and stopped the engine. I turned on the ignition, and the starter motor kicked in and started the engine, without me touching the electric start button!!! The engine was running at tickover, and the starter motor was still going as well. This is what the noise was! Although this is the first real problem I've had with the NW in its 20,000Km, I was a bit pissed off, and pushed the bike home.

On New Year's Eve, I started to look at the bike. Whoever got to design the bike's electrics was either a sadist, a gynaecologist, or got to look at the bike's design last of all the design teams! The electrics are squeezed into the bike in a very awkward manner. Eventually, after removing:

seat, left side panel, left/front panel, battery, battery holder (with the bloody awkward crankcase breather hose), starter solenoid, I could start poking around with my DVM.

✍️ Bob Dysart

The wires from the starter button on the handlebar proved to be fine, no shorts or loops. The solenoid was operating correctly, no sticking. The starter motor clutch was working too. I was puzzled. Then, as I started to re-assemble the bike, I noticed a dirty mark on the orange wire to the starter solenoid. This is one of the 2 wires from the wiring loom, connected eventually to the starter button. The mark was on the exposed portion of the wire between the spade connector and the black overall sheath, maybe only 0.5 cm of the orange insulation was showing.

When I cleaned the dirty mark from the wire all became clear, I could see the copper strands of the wire where the insulation had been worn away in a very small area. The problem is caused because there is a frame cross member immediately above the solenoid's mounting position, and the solenoid is rubber mounted. The rubber mount on the battery holder, allows the solenoid to bounce around a bit. The low current wires of the starter circuit connect to spade connectors on the top side of the solenoid, and due to the juxtaposition of the battery holder and the frame tube, the low current wires rub against the frame tube. QED.

I put two layers of shrink wrap insulation (great stuff) over the low current wires, and when I re-installed the solenoid I put a piece of thin hard plastic sheet between the now heavily insulated wires and the frame tube. The hard plastic was formed to fit round the solenoid and its wires by heating the piece of sheet over a gas ring, the new shape making the plastic hold itself in place.

So, problem solved. I think I was fortunate that the problem only occurred at a low engine speed. God knows what internal mechanical damage may have resulted to the starter motor, starter clutch etc etc, if the fault had occurred while 'making progress' !!! If you own a Northwest, it might be a good idea to check for this problem when you have the bodywork off for some reason. Better safe than sorry.

Where My “Sickness” Began

I'd seen the ad in the magazines, and wondered if it would qualify for a restricted license, and if there were any dealers nearby. I wrote for more information, and Gilera Atlantic kindly answered my questions and sent me a color brochure !

That baby went on my bedroom wall ! No Sir, nothing else affordable and legal at age fourteen anywhere close. Nah, a Honda Sport 90, Yamaha Twin Jet 100 or their 125 2-stroke single all seemed pretty dull next to the classic styling of that Gilera.

Had to have it ! Next to the brochure, I put a graph, where I would chart my progress towards the purchase price. Next I worked on announcing my intent to the adults, and then convincing them. That process continued while I put in my “sweat equity” doing landscaping work in the summers. (Doing that in the Florida heat is where I personally decided upon the potential merits of an education - I figured one day I'd better get paid for what I knew rather than for just what I did.)

Finally, about eighteen months later, I had my first real motorcycle, a Gilera 124 FL ! Not just on

my wall and in my dreams, but for REAL ! I was up before dawn the next day, a balmy September Sunday. Ah, yes, it was great !!! and remained that way for the next two years (unless I remember those Italian electrics Ducati and

Aprilia, you've come a long way !). Alas, my destiny was to eventually trade the Gilera for my first car, under pressure from my parents and my rising testosterone level (a car did have a bigger back seat, I probably uncsciously figured).

But, by then I had the “sickness”. Not one that has ever been recognised as such, but is commonly known by those who suffer from it. I never forgot about my Gilera, even though I've owned a score of other bikes since. I tried to keep up with the Gilera, and finally, through the inspiration of OLD BIKE JOURNAL, I got serious on locating another Gilera 124 FL. Through the help and good will of many similarly afflicted, I found it, detailed it, cherish it, and RIDE it !

As a practising, Board Certified Psychiatrist, you can call my office for a consultation for any of your standard problems with thought, mood, or behaviour. But, I probably can't help you with this one, particular problem. For it, just give me a call at home, and we'll talk motorcycles !

I read initially with shock about the closing of Gilera, a little over a year ago. I've just gone through all the stages of my mourning process, and I hope you can enjoy my Gilera, and the heritage of this fine marque with me.
[see page 20 for another of Bill's bikes - Ed.]

NUTS AN BOLTS FOREVER

 Bill Hunt

A GFR YEAR

I've really enjoyed my first year as a member of the Network since purchasing the GFR in October 96, though I have to confess I was already very much aware of the workings of the Network through Mike owning a Northwest for the past four years. Indeed, it was he who discovered the GFR for sale via Bob Wright.

The bike actually belonged to Leigh Millward now of "Apache in Athens" fame ! With only 3700 km on the clock L839 SHW was in as new condition. After many phone calls between Derby & Bristol, Leigh also sent me a copy of the original MCN road test, we finally hired a van and went to collect it on 12 October 1996. I promised to look after the bike, but even with thirty plus years experience, I managed to fall off returning from its first MOT test, within a week of getting it ! So with the phrase 'Pride Comes Before a Fall' ringing in my ears I placed an expensive order with Bob Wright and wondered if I would dare ride the thing again. A few days later a large box duly arrived, a top fairing panel being the main item and so settled down to spend the winter months getting to know the GFR and replace the damaged parts.

The main objectives for 1997, apart from plucking

up courage to ride it again, were the BMF Rally, The Bob Mac Memorial Parade at Knockhill and the Cadwell Park track day/AGM. However before any of this was more than marked on the calendar and what was to be one of our proudest moments, daughter-in-law Julie stole the show and grand-daughter Leeanna was born on 11 January 1997. This of course gave meaning to the GFR, which we now knew stood for GRAND FATHERS RACER !!

By May the bike was ready for the BMF Rally and a van was booked to take the GFR, Mike's NORDIE and double as a nursery for Leeanna, at least that was the plan. "Murphy's Law" deemed the Northwest sprocket carrier to break the day before the Rally but everything else worked out fine.

It wasn't until a short time after the BMF that I rode the bike again. Much debating went on about replacing the original Dunlop Sportmax tyres. In the end a long and very helpful chat with Pat Sproston, who was still running his originals, convinced me to leave them on. Thanks Pat, the mileage I've done since then proved you were right.

Arrangements were now well under way for the Bob McIntyre Meeting but as the time drew near, the weekend of 21st, 22nd June, it became clear that "Murphy's Army" had seriously attacked

our careful planning, most of which was recorded in a previous GeN. We weren't the only ones disappointed by any means. Because the accomodation was pre-booked we could do no more than have a week's family holiday in Fife and Mike and I went to Knockhill Circuit as planned, minus the bikes. Saturday was literally a 'wash out' the meeting was cancelled on that day. Somehow they managed to run the whole show on the Sunday, with the GILERA PARADE run

Gilera Network stand BMF Rally 19 May 1997 (with Dave's GFR)

with everyone else around lunchtime. To make up for the disappointments we did get to meet quite a few people including Derek Minter and the Ilkley Racing Posse and help fire up Mick Noblett's Piuma.

By comparison Cadwell Track day was a splendid affair for us at least, everything worked out and the Nordie & GFR ran well. Yes, the 15th August was a very special day. I've never done a track day before, it was certainly an eye opener. The GFR is the trickiest bike I've ever ridden but at least on the track with no traffic to worry about it was down

to me. I managed not to frighten myself too much, which for me was the object of the exercise. Life begins at 7500 rpm when the power valve opens, O.K. in a straight line, but a different story on the twisty bits. I did improve gradually as the sessions went on. Warming the thing up is quite an art and even a hot August day took a few laps before the needle was high enough. (Top 3 inches of radiator was still blanked off !) I did five sessions in the day, averaging ten laps per session covering approx. 65 miles in the process. After all the warnings about engine temperature, oil, tyres etc.

no one told me how thirsty it would be, but I think 26 mpg was well worth it for the grin factor alone ! (Not to mention PRO 2 OIL at £11.50/LITRE)

So that was my year with the GFR, thanks to all the Network members who gave me help and advice along the way. Hope to see you all again this year.

 Dave Riley

[The Editor apologises for losing Dave's article for a while !]

In the paddock Cadwell Park
1997

SATURNO - SOUGHT AND SORTED

Being a member of several clubs, I have always enjoyed reading their magazines. As a new GeN member, I thought it was about time I made a contribution (the hint in GeN#13 helped to persuade me !)

Sadly my DOC membership has now lapsed since my 1995 750SS was stolen from my locked attached garage. The last time I saw the Ducati was 11-30 p.m. just after fitting a new flip-up screen. The next morning at 7-30 a.m. it was gone having been manhandled out of the garage rear door (steering lock was on), down four flights of steps, carried 100 feet down the garden, and lifted through a gap cut in the rear fence. It was then hot-wired and ridden away (the thieves kindly left behind the busted out steering lock and my tools that they borrowed !) The house and garage now have a security system fitted and my bikes are chained to ground anchors. So BE WARNED install some security NOW !!

It is a horrible feeling when you are robbed. Funnily I had just changed insurance company and new cover started 1st July - the bike was stolen on 2nd July. It had not been used for five weeks. Do you think there could be a link somewhere ? - since the proposal form asked all the questions a thief would want to know. So enough of that. Once paid out, what to buy as a replacement ? I had seen a Gilera 500 Bialbero parked at Old Warden aerodrome. Also a friend had one - so could I call in for a closer look ? O.K. looks good, feels good to sit on but cannot have a go since it had expired last time used and was trailered home. Spoke to Bob Wright, bought road test reprints and decided to go for it. Found 1993 K reg with 3872 kms on the clock in MCN at 3X motorcycles. Agreed price on phone paid deposit and decided to travel by train to Bournemouth to collect, which proved to be a nightmare journey taking six hours - not cheap either. 3X collected me from the station and took me to the showroom. True to the salesman's word it was in immaculate condition and looked very pretty sitting amongst Ducatis, Triumphs, Guzzis and the like with 'SOLD' on the screen. Paid the balance, shown

round the bike and then set off for home 150 miles away.

First impressions:- small, light, lovely tickover, nervous steering, bloody awful riding position so stop a few miles down the road to investigate. The clip-ons are fully adjustable but unfortunately one is much lower and at a different angle to the other and I do not have the spanners with me. So off we go again one hand on the throttle and the other resting on rather than gripping the left bar. Now becoming more used to the bike.

Second impressions:- holds road well, very good brakes, nice gearbox (easy to find neutral), lovely sound at 7500 rpm, clonk at rear, jangling noise somewhere, jingling noise somewhere, pip pop noise from exhaust on the overrun, needs to rev over 3500 to avoid snatching, vibrates, and finally when I arrived home - maybe I should have bought another Ducati !

Too late now to change my mind (or the wife's) so what can be done to improve the bike ? First the clip-ons were removed and adjusted to one notch up from right angles to clamp and angled back so that included angle in plan view is about 85 degrees. This required reducing the steering lock to stop the bars touching the tank. Steering lock now only works on right lock but much nicer riding position further back in seat against bum-pad and much less strain on wrists. If you decide to adjust the clip-ons a tip is to buy a longer allen-headed bolt which screws into the end of the serrated bar and strike the head of this bolt on a solid surface. This frees the stanchion clamp from the bar.

Next, order all back-issues of GeN magazine and read up on other owner's comments. The one article that interested me the most was the high collar carb modification. This part was ordered and fitted but I did not realise that the drawing enclosed showed how to modify the collar before fitting, to avoid slide hitting collar and making engine idle too fast. After removal/modification/refitting collar the engine now idles as before and is so much nicer - it pulls smoothly from approx 2250 rpm with no snatching. This modification transformed the bike - starting to like it now !

Still a few things to sort out though. Vibration is annoying so handlebar grips were replaced with

'Baja' foam ones. Once again an improvement. The 'jangling noise' was traced to the tank touching the frame at front. Extra shims and careful mounting cured this problem. 'Jingling' was traced to a loose washer in the bottom of rear suspension unit. Not wanting to remove this I poured some thick oil onto it. No more 'jingling'. I decided to remove the exhaust sytem to fit new exhaust pipe gaskets. This cured the pip pop noise and also found the cause of the clonk at the rear. The silencer had been hitting the hugger and melted edge of same. After pouring two cups of Shell Ensis fluid inside and swilling around (it really does stop internal corrosion - Waxoil is similar) I sprayed the silencer with VHT paint. It was carefully refitted - no more clonks.

So I am now very happy with my Saturno and hope this article has been interesting and useful. Cannot wait until the spring to get it on the road again - fair weather rider me ! Finally I took the often mentioned advice and changed the cambelt. Further tips to add:- unbolt coil, disconnect wiring etc. in order to get at adjusters, loosen adjusters and slide curved feeler gauge into gap, carefully turn adjuster screw until feeler is a tight sliding fit and lock. Note the number of teeth between camwheels before removing old belt since timing mark on front wheel is obscured by fairing (I did not want to remove the fairing unnecessarily)

In GeN#15 mention is made of some Saturnos returning from Japan - any more details available ? [One or two bikes have been imported recently including a 350 - apparently Saturnos can be picked up quite cheaply in Japan at the moment - Ed.] Anyone know which fender extender fits Saturno front mudgaud ? Any one got an RC600 barrel for sale ?

 **Graham Winch**

G-Mail

 **Christopher Gould**

I have had my Nordwest from almost new (800 km) and had just had the full 12000 km service, cambelt etc. as well as having Stan Stephens flow the head and assemble the motor, when I had to return to New Zealand. I thought about selling it or putting it in storage, but for the cost of three months storage I could ship the bike back to NZ.

The bike has proved ideal for NZ conditions and has attracted a lot of attention. My friends all ride non-Japanese bikes of all ages and descriptions and at times up to 40 of us get together for a ride through the back country roads. The only time that the bike is off the pace is on the straight stretches which thankfully are few and far between near where I live. Most of the time I had no trouble keeping up with the fastest bikes as on the tight roads the power-to-weight ratio and excellent brakes and tyres more than made up for the lack of grunt !

Unfortunately, I think the benefits of the flowed head have been negated by the shit fuel that our Government has introduced as there have been a lot of problems with both bikes and cars running poorly. It just isn't as crisp at the top end as it was in the UK and a lot of the guys are using aviation gas as it gives much improved performance.

The clutch had just started slipping when I left NZ and I don't know if it is just a matter of adjustment or something more serious ? Any suggestions ? [Tuned motors have been know to promote a bit of slip. Nigel Windys recommends replacing one friction plate with a Honda (VFR I think) item which is thicker - Ed.] Whatever the case I will be looking to take back a few spares and maybe some performance parts. [see Jeroens's letter re 'Heim' - Ed.]

Friends recently wrote and said that the bike was electronically timed at a local B.E.A.R.S. meeting over the flying 1/4 mile at 107 mph which pissed off a few guys on sportsters ! Not bad with a dodgy clutch.

Well I am looking forward to catching up on the

news and other people's experiences.

Jeroen Baack

German Gilera specialist Heim has a new catalog.
I'll give you a short summary of the goodies available. There is a lot more, but I don't want to spend the whole evening typing. ;-)

For the Saturno:

RC-R Valves
RC-R or MegaCycle camshafts (in exchange)
561 cc Cilinder Kit (complete)
604 cc Cilinder Kit (complete)
Carillo conrods
Bigger waterpump
White power front fork kits
White power rear shocks
Clip-on sets

Carbon for Saturno:

Rear mudguard
Front mudguard
Fairing as original
Chain cover
Chain wheel cover front
Rear seat
Belt cover

And futher lots of parts for the Northwest and RC-600 (C).

Also a front mudguard for the Northwest and the Piuma !

General parts:

Several 2-1 and stainless steel exhaust systems for the Saturno, SP-01 and SP-02 and the RC-600/91
Northwest: 2 in 2 exhaust system complete
All: Brembo parts & K&N filters
Saturno: H4 head light
Saturno: shorter blinkers
Saturno: oil cooler kit complete
Saturno: immitation exhaust system in STAINLESS STEEL !!

Complete bikes: RC 125/ 154 new

Sprockets:

Saturno: 41,42,43,44,45
RC600/C: 43,44,45,46
RC600R : 50,51,52,53

Nordwest/NordCape, call !!

And lots and lots more, also complete tuning.

Please contact:

Zweirad Technik Heim
Rossbacherstrasse 3
35649 Niederwiedbach
Germany

Phone: +49-6444-1852

Fax: +49-6444-921777

For anybody NOT speaking german please contact me, I will pass on your questions.

[Joachim Heller may also be able to help but he warns that the prices are astronomical ! - Ed.]

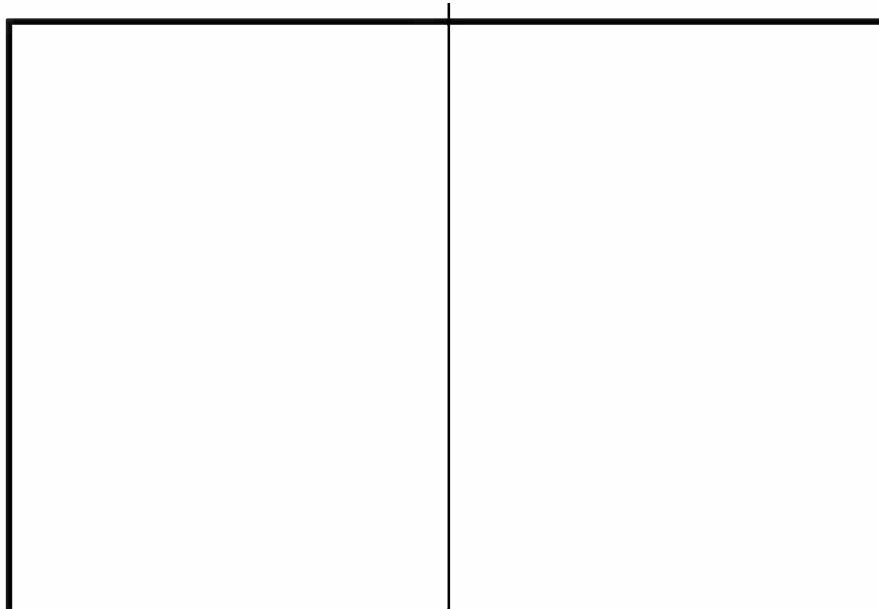


Daniela Daniels

I am sending you a few pictures to give an idea of who I am and what my racer looks like. It is a Saturno base, the motor perked up to 65 HP comes from my Piuma, from which I took the forks and the wheels too. It does about 210 kmh. She (and I) won quite a few SOS races here in the Sound of Singles scene organised by German promoters.

I took the picture of the street-Piuma about two months ago - it has a Dutch licence plate so its legally streeted ! - which is impossible here in Germany.

The other pictures are my Cafe where the Gilera gathering took place on August 16th. It was great - there were about 70 machines here and about 130 people. 176 Gileras (of all sizes and ages) are officially registered here in Germany and so, since I had not planned the gathering very well and had sent out almost no advertising, it really was quite well frequented. I have an address list of most of the people who were there. I am sending the beginning-letter of a Gilera club here in Germany, with the addresses of two people to contact.



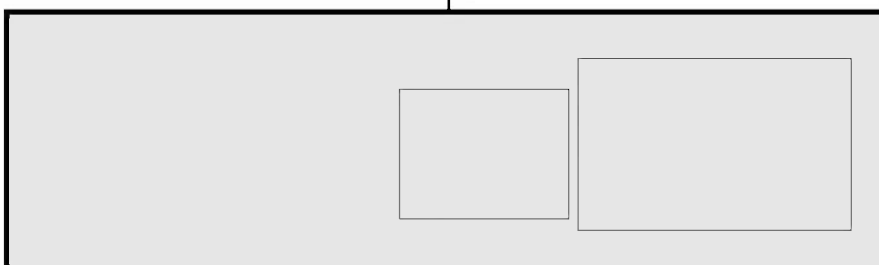
Daniela's Saturno Racer - Wow !

Here is some stuff for your membership: I have a Saturno, a RC600, a Piuma, a 50cc scooter "wind of passion" and my racer.

*Lots of info can be found
at
<http://www.gilera.com>
on the new 180 Runner*



*A Dutch registered
'Street-Piuma' !*



FOR SALE

GILERA JACKETS

Les Wassall can get Gilera Jackets made by Top Shot. The jackets are first quality guaranteed made from Cordura with a Thinsulate lining. All sizes are available. Price per jacket will be between £100 and £110 plus p. & p. depending on the amount ordered at the time. Each jacket will be customised with the customer's preference of colours in the front panels, also for an additional cost pockets could be sewn inside for body armour.



To order or for more information Les can be contacted on 0973 696742 (Orange) or if anyone wants to look at the artist's copy of the jacket he can send them a colour copy. The only condition of sale is that the jacket will not have the company logo on the label due to them not being able to produce the Gilera name, as they no longer have the copyright.

Les also has for sale a **full steel exhaust system for an RC or Northwest**, the back box has only done 2500 kms so it is in very good condition - sensible offers.

NORDWESTS

David Champion can sell you a very nice 'Black 'n Pink' Nordie. It has the early colour scheme, but all the later specifications (long seat and rack etc.) 8000 kms, supplied 'R' registered with a new MoT. **£3000**. Phone 0171 639 3466.

Adrian Hawking wants to sell a 1994 two-tone blue NW. Excellent condition. Serviced by Bob Wright Motorcycles. **£2,900**. Contact him on 0117 9407393 (Bristol)

David Frith has a late '93 I reg Nordie for sale. 7,000 kms only. Niceley run-in and virtually unmarked. 15t sprocket & new belt. Rotor puller and manual included. Never dropped or abused by mature owner. **£2700**. Telephone 01492 530908 (N.Wales) - evenings.

David also wants to sell a

1974 150 ARCORE

Red, 12,000 miles, one previous owner from new. Lovely, gutsy lightweight. Including rotor puller & manual. £750. Phone as above.

SATURNOS

Two non-members have Saturnos for sale: '88, 12,000 kms., very good condition. MoT, Tax. **£3000** or swap for Guzzi, or big vintage/classic bike. Phone Nick 01508 570143 or 01603 625938 (Norwich)

'92, 5900 kms, immaculate, MoT. Can be delivered.

£3500.

Phone Russ Hardy on 01767 650049 (Cambs.)

Simon Roberts has more used NW parts on offer:

Sump Guard - £10 .00
 Tank - £50 .00
 Standard Silencer (13k km's) - £50 .00
 Passenger F/rests and Hangers - £20 .00
 Indicators (no bulbs) - £5 .00
 Shock (30k km's) - £30 .00
 Swing Arm - £100 .00
 Linkages & bolts - £35 .00
 Chainguard - £10 .00
 Fuse Box and steel compartment - £15 .00
 Right Rad & Header Tank - £35 .00
 Left Rad - £10 .00
 Cooling Fan - £10 .00
 Clutch Lever & Mount - £5 .00
 Airbox - £5 .00
 Tool Box - £5 .00
 Rear Mudflap - £5 .00
 Rear Light (no bulb) - £10 .00
 Instrument (30k km's) - £40 .00
 Fr. Master Cyl. (Scratched Lid) - £20 .00
 Mirrors (new pair - £25 .00) (old pair - £15 .00)
 Battery Carrier - £5 .00
 Starter Relay - £5 .00
 Carb. - £140 .00
 Handguards (scuffed) - £5 .00
Simon Roberts
 Diakenhuisweg 57
 2033 AP HAARLEM
 The Netherlands
 Phone: +31 (0)23 - 533 05 43
 Fax: +31 (0)23 - 533 85 54
 Email: simon@socom.nl

STOP PRESS

Moto Guzzi to use Gilera Bialbero Engine

Nigel Lee confirms David's rumour ! Guzzi are to acquire the design and tooling for the 4-valve OHC unit that originally powered the Dakota. The first machine will be a 'trail-bike'. Sports models could follow. An all-Italian bike is good news, and engine spare part supply seems more secure for the future, but does this mean no chance at all of a new Saturno ?

Forthcoming Attractions



Time to open up those 1998 calendars and heavily pencil in some dates for your diary.

Spring Gathering

The Spring Gathering at the National Motorcycle Museum (junction x M42) has become a regular event. As well as a chance to get together for the first time after the winter we usually take the opportunity to hold an informal 'open' committee meeting. Also, vehicle passes and tickets for the BMF Rally are distributed to those who are able to get to Peterborough the following weekend to support our stand. Meet outside the main entrance (park bikes on the 'pavement') at

12.00 noon. Sunday 10 May.

BMF SHOW

Sunday 17 May

As there is no Ramsey 5000 hill climb (sigh !) the Secretary/Editor will be able to make the BMF SHOW for once. Let's see if we can get a really good turn-out of machines this year. We have booked a bigger stand and marquee in anticipation ! So long as you can get your bike there by reasonably early on the Sunday (10 am !) (or Saturday morning or evening) I can let you have a free ticket and vehicle pass so that you can bring your bike to be part of the display. The Saturday is members privilege day. I only get passes shortly before the event so it would help enormously if anyone willing to display a

machine could contact me well in advance. Thanks to the efforts of David and others we have done amazingly well in the club display competition in previous years. Let's do even better and also get some practice in for the Gilera 90th Anniversary next year.

Midlands & Marches

Rob Pearson's Meet

AJS/Matchless club and RC600 owner has organised what promises to be a very enjoyable 'do' to fill the gap between the BMF and the Cadwell weekend. The focus is a lunch-time meeting at the Charlton Arms Hotel, Ludford Bridge, Ludlow Shropshire on **Sunday 21 June**. Those who know the area will need no introduction to the wonderful motorcycling roads to be enjoyed in the vicinity. There are excellent places to be visited by riding these classic rolling roads including Stokesay Castle, Offa's Dyke, the Severn Valley Railway, Ironbridge Gorge, and several home brew pubs including the famous Three Tuns at Bishops Castle. In Ludlow there is the 11th century castle and thriving book and antique shops. Why not make a weekend of it? The Charlton Arms serves real ales from Woods and Hobsons local brewers, and an extensive menu. Rooms are available from £20 per person including full English Shropshire breakfast. You can contact them on 01584 872813. Rob has visited the venue several times and reports that they are 'biker friendly' with a large off-street river-side car park. He is happy to supply more information if you ring him on **01384 374920**.

Friday 24 - Sunday 26



July 1998

No excuses for not having this weekend put aside for the most important event of the Gilera Network year. Last year proved very successful all round including financially. The Morini Riders Club will be publicising the track day again well in advance so don't take the chance of not getting an entry. Word will get round that the MRC/GeN day is great value so as soon as I have regulations and entry forms I will let you have them rather than wait for the June GeN. This year there will be a time set for all Gileras to get together during the lunch break. Camping at the Blue Bell as usual with the traditional barbeque and silly games on Saturday. Formal(ish) Gilera Network AGM on Sunday from 11 am. Your annual chance to stage a coupe. Some of us will soon have been at it for five years - time for some new blood perhaps?

If I take a stand for this show will anyone else be?

Classic Mechanics Show Stafford 17/18 October

a Morini and help out on the MRC stand each year, but it struck me that our bikes are becoming more and more interesting to the visitors to this event. There seems to be space for us and I am told there is no charge for club space so get in touch with me if you are interested. A two-bike NW/Saturno display would be OK, but an RC, GFR and the odd 'classic' would make it much more impressive. - **PSF**



<http://www.gilera.co.uk/gilera>

Those of you with Internet access will probably already be aware that the Gilera Network WWW pages have finally found a new home. I eventually decided (for various reasons including possible plans for post-retirement 'e-business') it was time that I had my own domain name. As Piaggio seemed not to want it I grabbed gilera.co.uk while it was still going. I am happy to accommodate the Gilera Network pages on my virtual server at no charge except for phone expenses involved in up-loading and maintaining the site so long as it does not grow too big. Jereon Baack is going to help develop the pages by linking to some projects he is setting up on his own site including a list of all known models of Gilera. It is early days, but things are pretty much back to the excellent state that John Rushworth had reached. A very big thank you to John for getting things going in the first place and for continuing to maintain a link from motorcycle.co.uk.

So to visit the site including a nifty keyword search engine point your browser at:

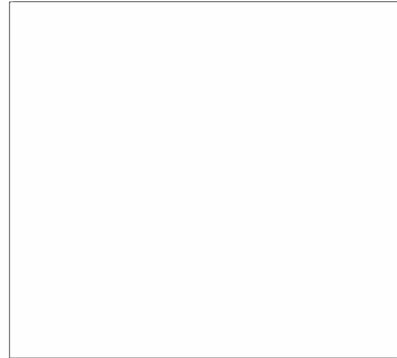
<http://www.gilera.co.uk/gilera>

Plans for the future include on-line access to technical articles from back issues of 'The GeN' including David's excellent Fact Sheets. Such valuable information will, however, only be available by password protection to paid up members of the Gilera Network.

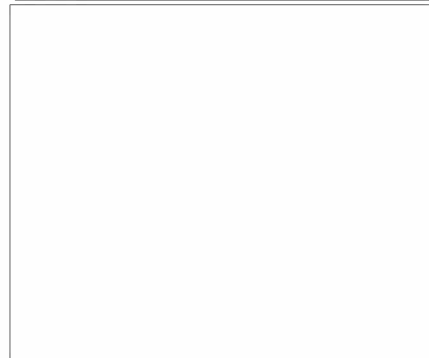
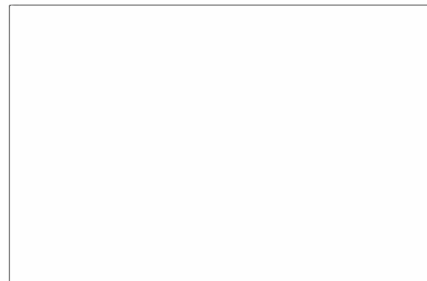
The G_net Mailing List has been relaunched and is back up to 16 subscribers. Details of how to subscribe are on the web site, but if you have no browser, only e-mail just send a message TO: admin@gilera.co.uk with the SUBJECT: subscribe g_net (note all lower case).

WWW.GILERA.COM

If you haven't done so already make a visit to the



official www.gilera.com site. There is an excellent potted history of the marque including some of the wonderful photographs I have taken the liberty of reproducing here. Technical specifications for the Runner can also be found here. By the way, if you visit the www.piaggio.com home pages you can vote for your favourite model from the current range - could it be anything other than the Runner 180 ?



Classics Corner

A MINI-REPLICA SANREMO

1966/68 Gilera 124 5V

The Gilera Saturno was a 500cc, OHV single, produced first in 1936. It remained in the Gilera catalog until 1953 or 1956, as a street bike, and was also raced successfully on European road racing circuits until the early sixties, with the factory racing effort utilising the Saturno in the long distance endurance races. (They were more reliable than the famous Gilera Four). It won the 1947 Monza Grand Prix, the Spanish Grand Prix in 1950, and had five consecutive wins at Sanremo, which is why that name was added. In the years from 1951 to 1953 the Saturno SanRemo was most radically modified. The cylinder was rebuilt, and front telescopic suspension was added.

THIS Gilera 124 was built as a mini-replica of the 1953 Gilera Saturno SanRemo Endurance racer, with a 1966 Gilera 124 FI frame and tank, and with the engine, swingarm, seat and fenders from a 1968 Sears Gilera 124 5V. The "FI" in 124 FI stands for "Florida", as the East Coast distributor was Gilera Atlantic, in Miami FI. (That company evolved into a Honda motorcycle, then Honda car dealership, I think). Sears sold some Gileras in the mid-sixties, in addition to those offered through a

small network of Gilera dealers. The Sears versions were different, generally pared down, for cost cutting. However, the 124 5V, sold only one year, was a little different. It had the majority of the Racing Kit (racing cam, larger intake valve, ported cylinder, larger carburettor with velocity stack) offered to Gilera owners earlier, in 1956, when 50 hand-built kits were offered. In addition, the 124 5V had a five speed transmission, rather than the four speed offered on the 124 FI.

This bike is dedicated to Giuseppe Gilera, ... and my good friend, Dave Bruce.

✍ Bill Hunt

B300 WORKSHOP MANUAL

All being well a B300 twin workshop manual is on its way to me from South Africa as a result of an item posted on the euro-moto Internet mailing list. It should arrive any day now, so if you are interested in a copy let me know. PSF

Joachim's Bit

First some thoughts about Mark Graceys article. He's talking about a Nordie fitting clutch cable. I think a teflon coated cable would also improve a Saturnos clutch, especially while traveling in cities. Maybe another owner could give an advice, which one should fit. On Marks bad luck with the clutch, I remembered an older article in a German magazine. They had a RC600(1990) in a long-distance test and they had the same problem. Two of the three screws had been sheared. So it would be a good idea to have a look at this screws when one has opened the engine. German importer stated that he had never heard about this problem (what else would he say ?).

My penny on the lead free problem. When I bought my Saturno, leaded fuel was still available in Germany. But price was very high, due to our fuel taxes. So I asked the importer for help. They claimed for using fuel in a alternate way. One time leaded Super (98 Octane) and two times unleaded Super Plus (98 Octane) or Euro Super (95 Octane). This worked, but wouldn't be a help if you can't get leaded fuel at all. Therefore I switched to a lead free additive. Castrol produces it for scandinavian countries and for Austria. In those days it was hard to get this stuff

called TBE. There was only one guy in Germany who sold it. When leaded fuel disappeared from the market, there where a lot of other offerers, but Castrol is still the cheapest and easy to handle (1cc for each litre of fuel). With both kinds of Super fuel my engine tends to ping a little bit on high load. But this seems to be not a problem of the octane number, but of the mixture. With Jeroens high collar part this problem ws nearly gone. For the future it seems to be a good idea to switch to the bigger and 'lead free' valves of the Nordie engines. Most of the engine tuners and many of the older Guzzi and Ducati traders offer this service.

Here are some pictures of a Gilera KZ125ES. The owner has about 19 Italian bikes ! Some details:

Gilera KZ 125 ES

built : 1986-1988

power : 25 HP at 9250 rpm

weight : 132 kg

max speed :133.8 kph (funny Italians)

tyres front : 100/80-16

rear : 120/80-16

engine with APTS (automatic power tuning system) in the exhaust port

watercooled

mono rear suspension

ant-dive Marzocchi fork

high exhaust system

fuel consumption about 5.8 litres/100km

✍ Joachim Heller