

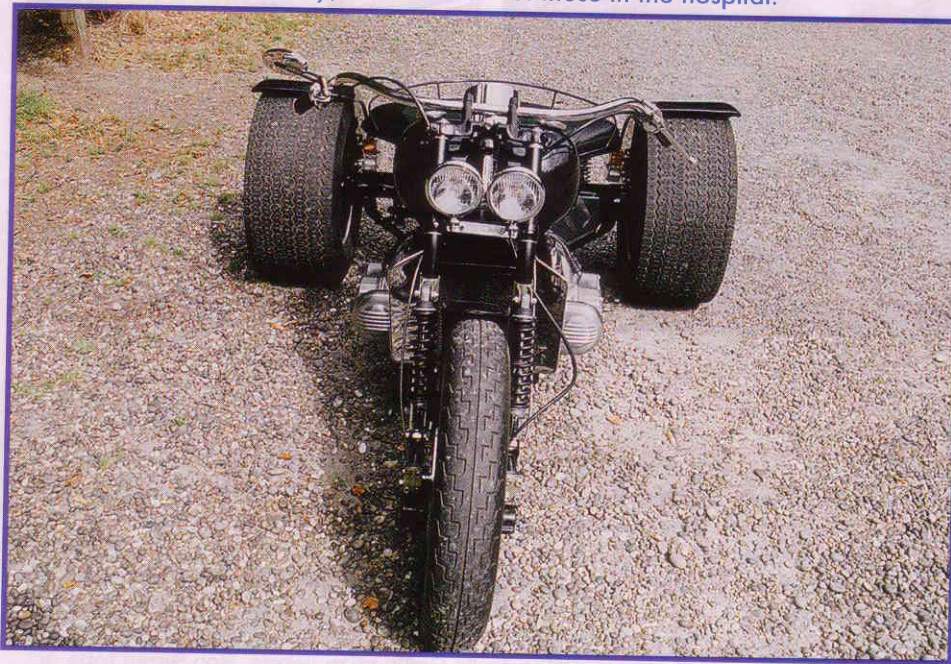
# Honda Goldwing Trike

a tale in two parts

## Part 1: Me

My wife and I had always had a hankering for trikes having seen a Yamaha XV750 based one in Hastings some 5-6 years back. "One day ... " I thought. Fate conspired to lend a hand together with the rather careless rider of the Z750 Kawasaki who hit me on the evening of 31 March 98.

I was on my way home from work in the City to rural Kent on my trusty old R75 BMW at about 8 o'clock that evening. It was a dry, clear and



reasonably warm evening with most of the rush hour traffic long gone. I pulled up at a pedestrian crossing in Rotherhithe to let a lady cross the road. She had got about halfway across the crossing when I caught a fleeting glimpse of a dark shadow for a mere fraction of a second in my left hand mirror and then BANG. I was convinced my bike had been rear-ended as I laid down in the road alongside the bike. It was only when I saw that my left leg looked a little bit bent back that I realised all was not well and it was most definitely broken. I could feel a warm and wet feeling in my left boot and knew it was bleeding rather badly.

Fortunately, several years with the Red Cross on first aid duties and qualified at the time to crew an ambulance stood me in good stead to deal with the injuries and not to panic. Luckily (I), the injuries seemed to be confined to my left leg. Police and ambulance were soon on the scene and I was swiftly on my way to Guys Hospital in

London where, a bottle of Entonox and several injections later, I was made comfortable for the night and placed in an observation ward. The leg was put in traction the next day and then I underwent a further exploratory operation in Guys before being transferred to St Thomas' hospital 2 days later. The view from my room on the 12th floor at Tommy's with the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben immediately outside my window was quite spectacular, especially at night - and I was to spend quite a few of those in the hospital.

stainless steel pin through my heel with a large weight attached to it - I could roll over, sheer bliss.

Determination and hard graft in physio saw me out of hospital 5 weeks after amputation, walking with the first of my artificial legs and a stick for support. Not easy, but it was a target I had set myself and with the tremendous encouragement of family, friends, colleagues at work and in the Red Cross, I wasn't going to let them all down by throwing in the towel. We had already booked a holiday in the Isle of Man for the '98 TT Races well before my accident and there was no way I was going to miss out on this.

I returned to work in July for a few hours a day, 3 days a week and did a few hours 'hard physio' for 2 days a week at my local Limb Centre. This gradually built up the strength in my residual limb to the extent that I was back at work full time by October 98, albeit now travelling by train. I was determined not to give up two wheels, but changing gear without a left leg below the knee was going to prove a challenge.....or was it?

## Part 2: The trike.

A friend of mine, Simon, had spotted the Wing at Bat M/C's in Biggin Hill in October 98 on account of its unusual leading link front end and mentioned it to me on one of his visits to me as the ideal donor vehicle for a trike. A trip was arranged to BAT's, a deal struck and the Wing was duly delivered "as seen". Simon has a friend, Bootsy, who had built a trike or two before and we duly met up to discuss the project. Before any work could be done however, the bike had to be registered in the UK as it was a US import and was duly prepared for an MOT to acquire the all important age-related plate. As soon as this was done, out came the angle grinder and off came the rear frame and everything else behind the gearbox. At this stage of the project, the bike was already down at CC Racing in Swanscombe, Kent where the initial frame modifications and welding were so competently carried out.

A new rear section of frame was made up to accommodate a suitably shortened and modified Cortina Mk2 rear axle. Wheels came from a Ford Mustang and matched the standard Honda front wheel rather well after

being polished and painted. Half shafts and hubs were modified to accept a 5 stud fixing for the wheels. We now had a rolling chassis. Quality of workmanship on the build and welding was excellent. Due to so many parts being one-off, it took 9 months to complete the build. Dummy tank came from a Harley but this was cut up and a panel welded in to accommodate the speedo and fit over the standard airbox. The real tank is situated under the seat and holds about 11 litres, so I have a range of about 90 miles maximum. The seat was made by the previously mentioned Simon, who is an upholsterer by profession. It looks the dog's, but it's just as well I have a short range with the tank, because comfort is not something that springs to mind after about 60 miles. Basically, Bootsy did all the hard work on the trike; I just coughed up the money whenever anything had to be bought.

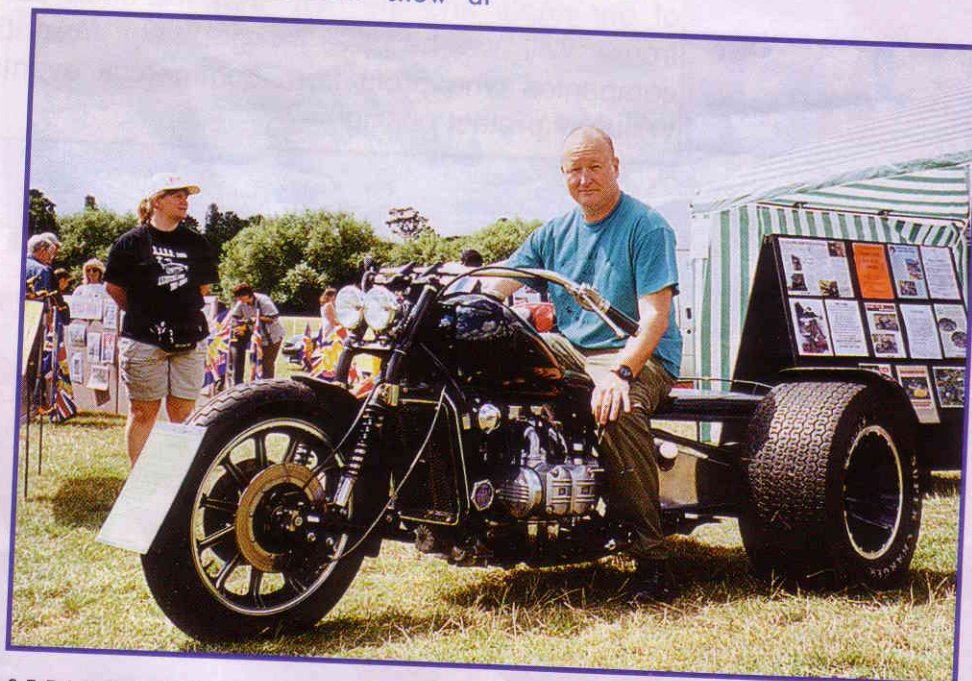
Having read about NABD in hospital and then joined, I had become aware of Kliktronic gear changers, so one was ordered one to take care of my gear changing requirements. It was fitted during the build and worked well initially. I have had reoccurring problems with it for the last few months where it changes down ok but steadfastly refuses to change up. A new handlebar switch has failed to resolve this problem despite speaking to Bob and Keith at Kliktronic, so this winter the whole lot will be coming off and returned to the Kliktronic workshop for a thorough checking out in time for next season's rallies.

I've also had a few teething problems with the mudguard mountings, which have required re-welding now on 3 occasions since it first went on the road. Its first big public airing after the Mayday run to Hastings was on the NABD stand at the BMF show at



Peterborough last May. It has also been on the NABD stand at various shows down here in the SE (see Gary Tompkins report for the region). It normally does a double act with Gary's adapted Ducati Monster. The duo works well at drawing people to the stand so the work of NABD can be explained. We always have two working examples of different approaches to the same problem - half a leg missing - Gary uses the mechanical approach for changing gear, I use the electronic one. We have found it really does make a difference having real examples on display rather than pictures, so if you've had an adaption done, please help your local Rep to advertise the practical work of NABD and take yours along.

During 2001 the Wing has picked up a rather pleasing 4 awards. 3 Best Trike, the most recent of which was at the Autumn NABDness at Cornbury Park and 1 Best in Show at the NABD Bonfire Bash at Crewkerne in Somerset in November.



I'd like to think that it shows that with a bit of determination, coupled with advice and guidance from an organisation such as NABD, disability is not a problem to getting back on the road. I've been fortunate in that so far, I haven't really encountered too many problems with my artificial leg so I can still get around pretty much ok. I was also fortunate enough to be in a position where I did not require any funding from NABD for this project, although it would be nice for the insurance Company to settle my claim after almost 4 years of prevarication. I am always happy to display the trike for NABD and look forward to continue doing so in the coming year with our SE Rep Gary.

Thanks to the following:

Bootsy - The main man with the ideas and hard work.

Doug and the guys at CC Racing, Swanscombe - Tube bending, welding & spraying.

Simon - The seat and for spotting the Wing in the first place.

Mrs H - Patience and support after the accident.

Nott Pybus & Assoc. - Insurance at reasonable rates (as advertised in Open House)

All the best for 2002

**Richard Hooper**