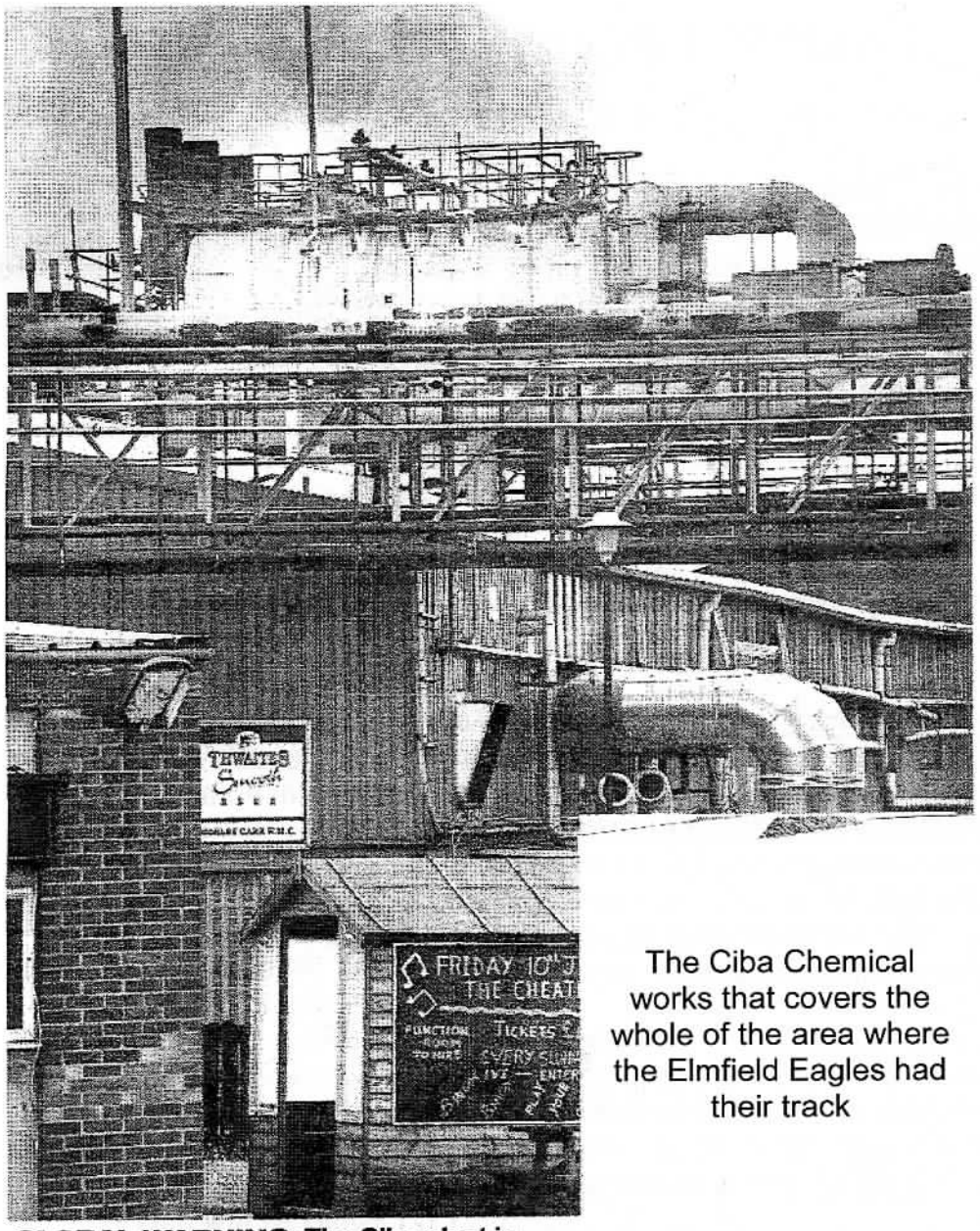


GLOBAL WARNING: The Ciba plant in Bradford (above).

The Ciba Chemical works that covers the whole of the area where the Elmfield Eagles had their track

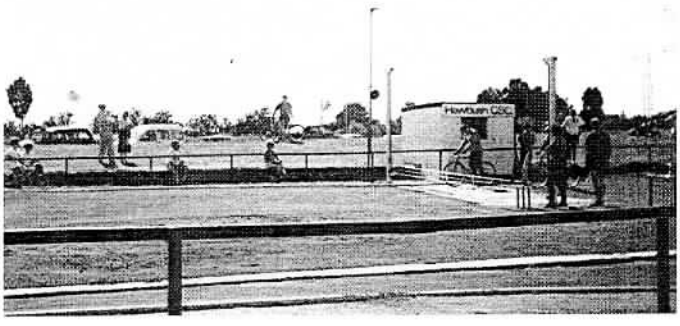
FUTURE EVENTS

If you are planning or know of any event ,being planned. A get-together, a ramble, a nostalgia night or dinner being planned in your area please let us know (in good time) and we will publish the details. Contact Bill or Colin

A Sad Day for the Veterans

The home our of our Race/Fun Days for our first few years, the Hawbush Hammers track alongside Fairlop Waters at Ilford Essex is no more. Unused for the past 2 or 3 years the local council decided to flatten it to make way for another civic amenity ahead of the 2012 Olympics. The pictures below were taken Pete Chubb ,a Hawbush rider for most of his long racing career.

HAWBUSH HAMMERS FAIRLOP 2006



HAWBUSH HAMMERS FAIRLOP 2010 FEB

Secretaries Notes - April 2010

Election of President

Firstly I would like to thank all those who voted for me, your support for my efforts is appreciated.

A total of 90 voting slips were returned, representing a very encouraging 42% of the membership. Myself receiving 56 votes and Pete Leckie 32. After discussion the committee felt that it was appropriate that Pete Leckie, runner-up for the past 3 years should be installed as President for 2010/11 and I should follow on and be installed as President for 2011/12, Olympic year!

VCSRA Annual Dinner Dance

The committee have been pleased to accept an offer by Pete Leckie to investigate the possibility of holding a Dinner/Dance in November 2010 at the Paradise Wildlife Park and we will be publishing the results and details of his study in the next issue.

Renewal Time

Its that time of the year again, time for all except the recently joined new members to renew their membership, still at £7.00 PA a renewal slip is included with this 'Track Record'

VCSRA Archive - Any Ideas for a Permanent Home

Since 2004 when I first took over the secretaries roll I have accumulated quiet an array of Pictures and Memorabilia and it would be nice if we found a permanent home for them. A place where they could possibly be put on display and most certainly be looked after and be made available to anyone who may in the future put pen to paper and put on record the phenomenon that was the birth of Cycle Speedway in the 40's & 50's. The committee would be pleased to hear from anyone with any ideas about how this could be achieved. I would not like it to end up in a house clearance skip.

Spring Golf Day

As both Roy Garnham and myself will be away in Canada and Turkey respectively until the 1st week in June Len Adams is arranging our Golf day and is hoping to make a booking at the Darenth Valley Golf Course for Thursday 10th or 17th June. If you would like to join us please contact Len on 01440 785474 or email at lenatadams@hotmail.com for details.

Requests for Information

Melvyn Smith, who I understand rode Cycle Speedway in Kent or Sussex has emailed us asking if anyone knows if and how he could get hold of a copy of a publication that he read about in his local paper, 'Cycle Speedway in Kent & Sussex, by a former rider Robin Richardson. He has tried to contact Robin Richardson with no success and was wondering if one of our members could help ? A clue, Robin Richardson had an article entitled ' Cycle Speedway in Surrey' published in the April & July 2004 issues of the 'TR'. Robin's name last featured in the 2003 VCSRA Directory as living in Gosport, Hants and is no longer a member. Melvyn's email is smith36@tiscali.co.uk

Alf Payne, I have had a phone call from his son asking if we could put him in touch with anyone who may have known his father. As I was not familiar with his fathers name I suggested he emailed me some photos he said he had and we would feature them in our newsletter to see if they prompted any memories. But to date the photos have not arrived.

Phone Calls.

Southampton 1950/51. We had a call from our new member in Cornwall, Roy Gosling identifying a couple of the characters in the picture published in our February edition, on the left he thinks was the Turfs manager Mr. Pike, whose son Norman rode and in amongst the crowd he feels sure is speedway rider Alby Golden.

LEICESTER by CHRIS LYMN From Cycle Speedway Star 19th September 1957.

COALVILLE STARS CLOSE.

Leicestershire's strongest ever club for the last two years, Coalville Stars are no more. Their failure to make headway in the National Team Championship for the second year and the collapse of League Racing, made such a strong side unnecessary. Many reasons I believe, have contributed to the failure of this club.

They are in no particular order :-

The failure of young lads from Coalville to make the team, either because they were not good enough or because they did not get the chance.

Manager "Perce" Sutton's untimely illness.

Dissension in the club between various people, which led to two riders leaving to ride for Leicester clubs.

The failure of the Leicester League which meant supporters of the mining town saw only one team, Belgrade Red Devils, visit the Stars track.

Lastly the reason which I believe is the cause of the closing down, namely the Stars progress in the National Team Championship. It was always the Coalville Clubs main ambition to win this cup for Leicestershire.

In 1956 they were to ride against Carrs Wood Tudors at Sutton Stars track in Warwickshire. Although everything suggested the Lancashire riders had used the track before the match, and although the steward (Grade B.) made some quite fantastic decisions against the Leicestershire team, the Stars rode on and lost by three points.

This year, the big match was at Coventry, the opponents, Kingstanding Monarchs from Birmingham. The date that the match should have been ridden, rain turned the track into a lake. N.A.C.S.A. rules demanded that the match be settled within seven days, but Kingstanding were leaving for the Continent on the following Friday, which meant that Coalville were forced to agree to a re-run date for which they knew half their riders may not be available. Coalville could not form a team and forfeited the match.

Two attempts at the National Team Trophy. Both frustrated. Coalville closed.

NEW CITY CLUB FORMED.

With the collapse of Coalville making several riders "Club less" a new club has been formed in Leicester. The riding strength is made from Pickering, Newberry and Simpson from Coalville, Lymn from Belgrave, Bird and Halford from Atlestone, plus newcomers Stevenson, Sanders and Evans.

The club will be known as "Leicester All Stars" and will ride in all black, except for a yellow and black breastplate and white turnover socks. Manager is 22 year old Maurice Barks.

They will share the reshaped Slater Street circuit with Belgrave Red Devils and Aylestoe Aces. This is the only remaining track in the county now and is shared by these three remaining clubs.

The All Stars first match was due to be held on Tuesday September 3rd, but only two of the Aylestone riders arrived. Wednesday will be the official race night for the club next year.

The Colville Stars track, behind the Fox and Goose. Taken during the visit of Wembley All Stars in 1956

BOURNEMOUTH CYCLE SPEEDWAY
2010 GOLDEN REUNION

Sept 1962 - Ken Bailey presents Mike Pretty with the Bournemouth Individual Championship Trophy.

Bournemouth Cycle Speedway was formed in March 1960 by Jim Cooke & Mike Pretty and the Council built track was opened by Ken Middleditch (ex - Poole Speedway Star) on June 4th, followed by a Challenge match against Hungerford Panthers.

In 1961 the Club became the first team in the South West to be admitted to the British League & was selected to stage the First Test Match between the British League & The Rest of England in 1962. A further honour was bestowed when the BCSF Gold Cup Final was held at the track in 1963.

Unfortunately the Club was disbanded during the Eighties, but this year would have been its 50th Anniversary, so Jim Cooke & Mike Pretty who have recently been reunited after many years, have decided to organise a Reunion get together on

FRIDAY 4th JUNE at 7.30 p.m. at the BLUEBIRD SOCIAL CLUB.
Opposite Haskins Garden Centre Longham, just North of Bournemouth on the A348.
Bar & Light Buffet available. Price £6 per person

In order to assess the numbers interested , anyone who was involved with the Club over the years in any capacity and would like to attend, should contact either
Mike (01202-871484) or Jim (01202 528313, or e-mail - james.cooke80@ntlworld.com).
As soon as possible but by May 15th at the latest.

You are welcome to bring any photo, souvenirs etc along , but please bring them in a marked folder or box, so that they don't get mixed up with anyone else's items.

Above BUSHEY TRACK AS IT IS NOW

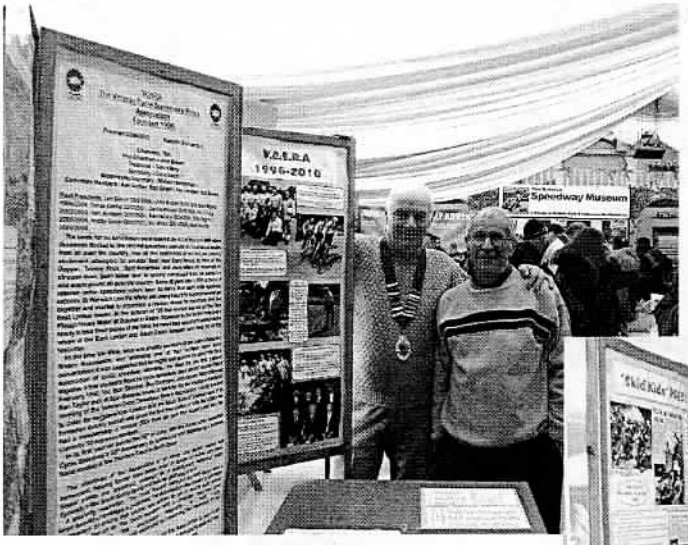
Below BEST PAIRS at BUSHEY 1949

Above PETE LECKIE Coming through on the inside
Below Start of the race.

Pete Leckie and Eddie Collett receiving the winners cup.

Celebration of Speedway
Sunday 21st February 2010
Paradise Wildlife Park Broxborne Herts

As advertised in the last issue of 'Track Record' the association exhibited a display stand in the marquee illustrating what the VCSRA is all about, its history and its activities in the hope of attracting some new members. The stand, manned by the associations committee attracted plenty of interest from the large number of speedway enthusiasts and many VCSRA members who visited the event. Quiet a few recounted their ventures into the world of cycle speedway in their youth, sadly though, despite the fact that we had piles of application forms on display we attracted no new members. However all those who manned our stall felt that it had been a very successful and enjoyable day. Also on display was the cup to be presented by the association to the winners of the Cycle Speedway match, organised by Dave Hunting from Ipswich in conjunction with Terry Stone, the current WSRA President and Museum helper to be held in the afternoon. A report of the racing by Roy Delaney appears elsewhere in this issue.

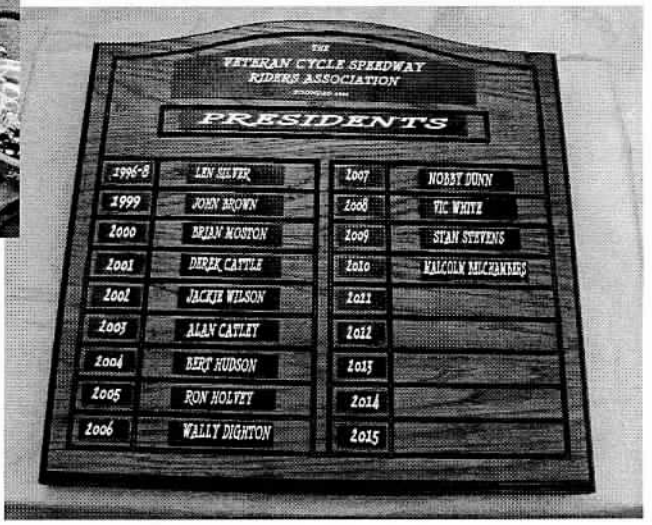


Above. Malcolm Belchambers & Colin Booth pose alongside the VCSRA stand

Right. Roy Delaney & Ray Gingell checkout the display

Left. Kesgrave/Ipswich CSC manager, David Hunting introduces Harry Swallow's team to the celebrity guest, Barry Briggs

Right. The Magnificent VCSRA Presidents Roll of Honour hand crafted by Pete Chubb that should have been on display at Paradise Park. To Pete we offer our apologies. It was left waiting to be loaded into my car, a what is known these days as a senior moment !



CYCLE SPEEDWAY IN PARADISE

By Roy Delaney

It was a pleasure watching the young cycle speedway riders in action at the recent Celebration of Speedway event at Paradise Wildlife Park Broxbourne, which was organized by VCSRA members Terry Stone and David Hunting on a track temporarily marked out on the tarmac car park.

The ping starting device immediately cast my thoughts back to the bomb site days, the only diversity being the modification of track habiliment and of course the bikes.

The boy and girl competitors who traveled in from Ipswich, were much younger than what we were in the 1947 era, but they were equally as keen as us originals. I was most impressed with the weeny boppers who were well mannered and complied with David Hunting's instructions, this was indeed discipline carried out in a psychological sagacious manner, well done David.

The racing programme was made up of two teams from the Kesgrave Panthers Cycle Speedway Club under the appellation of The Harry Swallow 7 v The Matthew Gifkin 7, two matches were played on a home and away basis, the first match resulted to a draw 80 points apiece, the second match proved to be a close encounter with The Harry Swallow 7 claiming a three point win on aggregate.

The Celebration of Speedway Trophy which was sponsored by The Veteran Cycle Speedway Riders Association, was presented to the Kesgrave Club by VCSRA President Malcolm Belchambers and Hon Secretary Colin Booth. Terry Stone has kindly invited Kesgrave back next February with a view of staging a junior and senior event, needless to say that Kesgrave Manager David Hunting was pleased--and most honoured with Terry's 2011 request which he has accepted,

FOOTNOTE The one important thing which was missing at this other wise successful meeting was a public address system, hopefully this problem will be rectified by next winter.

Pictures by Brian Barnett
www.cyclespeedwayphotos.co.uk

Left. The winning teams captain, Harry Swallow happily holds the cup presented on behalf of the association by President Malcolm Belchambers ably assisted by Colin Booth.

Above. Harry Swallow attempts the outside line around an enthusiastic rider holding the inside.

Left. A young competitor comes to grief on the wet and slippery tarmac track.

EDITORS NOTES

The article on page 5 "Coalville Stars Close" was taken from "Cycle Speedway Star" a duplicated magazine that I produced in 1957-58. Chris Lymn was a regular contributor with news from Leicester. The photo of the Coalville track was taken during the visit of the Wembley All Stars in 1956, as was the team photo below.

From left to right:- Eddie Hill, Vic Merner (manager) Alec Fraser, Roger Dewhirst, Keith Bristow (capt.) Bill Gadsby & Den Green. Kneeling Roy Humphries (younger brother of "Tiddler Humphries" alias Tyburn Gallows) & Norman Hunter

Of course 1956 was the year of "Suez" so we were without our Captain Dixie Dean for are few weeks, as he had been recalled to the army as a reservist. A bigger problem could have been petrol rationing. Vic Merner had withdrawn the team from the league and arranged a full year of challenge matches all over the country.

I had an old Ford 10cwt van that I used to transport most of the team and their bikes to all the matches. As it was a commercial vehicle, I got a reasonable amount of petrol coupons and Vic applied for and got an extra supply for our travels. To make the petrol go even further, I borrowed Vic's NSU Quickly motorised bike, which I would put in the back of the van, drive to the outskirts of London, strap my toolbox on the back of the bike and get a days work done on a spoonful of petrol! Although the van looked as though it had seen better days, it was mechanically sound and never let me down on our travels. There were only two problems, it had a canvas roof, and quite often when throwing the bikes on the roof rack a pedal would go through the canvas. Eventually I got fed up with patching the roof, so I had a metal one fitted. The other problem was that the accelerator pedal was in the middle instead as on the right as is normal. This lead to one or two "hairy" moments when driving a normal car or lorry.

I have received a number of emails. The first from Derek Baker.

Well done and thanks for the publication of my cycle speedway memories. I hope you and all other readers got enjoyment from reading them. Thanks also for the attached photograph. As well as Don Wilcock, there are three other faces that I know. The guy supporting Don is the late Ron Pracey, who I mentioned in my article. The young lady became my sister in law and behind her is her (then) boyfriend and my and Don's schoolmate Ron Martin, who I also mentioned. Where this event was held I have no idea, but I was probably there.

From Bernard Howard

Have just come across an article in "Best of British" Mar 2007. This brought back memories of 1947. I used to support a Dagenham team the Thameside Tigers who had a track on a cinder heap next to the Barking Power Station by the River Thames. Peter Hustwaite was their star rider (Hope I've got his name right) Among the various matches held were visits to Stratford Hammers, memories of a young Len Silver and a terribly bumpy / rutted track on a bomb site. Crowds of spectators. Also Forest Gate Tigers who I believe had a track on an ex Gun Battery site at Forest Gate. Memories of Ron "Tiger" Genz, who I believe also went on to ride speedway.

I did have a poor photo of the Thameside Tigers, which I passed on many years ago. Unfortunately in those days, photos were not very commonplace to us peasants.

Memories of old battered bikes with enormous handlebars made by bending lengths of gas pie tubing in slots in the nearest drain hole cover. Quite a sight riding to and from matches. And of course visiting West Ham Speedway to see Aub Lawson Eric Chitty etc. Tracks were very basic, no frills just a track. Of course in later years things started to get very organised. Hope this is of some interest.

The email and picture on the opposite page is from John Goldsmith.

An Email From John Goldsmith

Dear Bill, The current excellent edition of the Track Record set me thinking about the very early days in the East End. Having been indoctrinated into the West Ham speedway craze by my elder brother just before the war and having attended each of the five New Cross scratch meetings in 1945, I couldn't wait to strip the bike down and start broadsiding.

Our first track was behind the Royal London Hospital on a disused cinder tennis court built over a "plague pit" from the bubonic plague. It was OK but a little small so we soon migrated to a blitzed Convent site on the Bow Road. This was perfect in that what had been the Nuns garden was waiting for cycle speedway. It once had boasted an immaculate lawn bounded by two avenues of trees on either side. The aisles created by the trees were ideal to contain the pits and the spectators. The surface was devoid of grass and when dry was superb. We raced there for about six months but soon the hoardings went up and it became a petrol filling station.

One night before we sought a new track, my mate, Ronnie Busby tugged too hard on his utility handle bars and one half came away in his hand. Nothing for it then but to ride back home to raid the piggy bank for a new set of bars. It was now dark and following our usual back street route we were surprised by a figure which jumped out from the shadows and pointed a torch into our eyes. He didn't need to say, "Hello, hello, hello. What have we got ere then", for us to know it was a copper. We stopped and he started to ask us questions like, "Where do we live? Are these your bikes? Where have you been? Etc etc. We gave what we thought were the right answers but then he stumped us. "What are the frame serial numbers?" "What?" We both replied. Frame serial numbers, we had never heard of them. It was then that he became friendly and told us to turn the bikes over so that he could look under the cranks. After removing the oily dust from the frame, there they were. Numbers punched into the crank and clearly visible. "Always note your serial number just in case your bike gets nicked", he said.

We thanked him very much and 'walked' the bikes until we were out of site of the Bobby. We thanked our lucky stars that he had not pulled us up for no lights and no brakes and Ronnie's performance of turning his bike over as if he had a full set of bars deserved an Oscar. I hope these memories might trigger similar thoughts in other members. I know we entertained the Stratford Hammers second team on one occasion and I think Peter Antell and Roy Archie rode against us there.

I recently had this picture restored from its rather tatty original. It is my fathers cycle club around 1898. The intriguing thing is the bikes. No mudguards, no lamps, no BRAKES. The contrast with our own bikes is striking except for the "bars". Dad is the little lad seated at the right hand corner, Great Uncle John is behind him in his frock coat. Keep up the good work. Cheers, John Goldsmith

ERIC HOCKADAY

1953 - 1956
ALDERSHOT
CALIFORNIA
SOUTHERN ROVERS

1961 - 1963
EXETER
LEICESTER
STOKE

1956 - 1960
COVENTRY
ALDERSHOT
RAYLEIGH

1964 - 1969
CRADLEY HEATH
SHEFFIELD
LONG EATON

CALIFORNIA RIDERS CHAMPIONSHIP
WINNER - 1955 & 1957

80 YEARS YOUNG
9 September 2009

POST CARD

Eric William HOCKADAY
born Hammersmith 9 September 1929

THIS IS YOUR 'SPEEDWAY' LIFE
HIGHLIGHTS

Cycle Speedway - Thames Valley Champion 1949

Speedway - Aldershot Junior 1953

Southern Area League - Aldershot 1954, California 1954-55, Southern Rovers 1956

National Leagues - Coventry 1956-7-8, Aldershot 1959-60, Rayleigh 1960, Exeter 1961, Leicester 1962, Stoke 1962-63, Cradley Heath 1964-5-6, Sheffield 1967, Long Eaton 1969

Individual Honours - Included, California Championship 1955 and 1957 (last ever winner), Thomson Memorial Trophy 1956, Essex Championship 1960, Sussex Championship 1960, Hussey Memorial Trophy 1960, Provincial League Championship Trophy with Rayleigh 1960, 3rd in Provincial League Riders Championship 1960, Second GB Round of World Speedway Riders Championship 1960, Holder of Aldershot Track Record (71.0 sec's on 21 May 1960), which remained unbeaten when the Tongham Road Track finally closed in August 1960.

Eric is the oldest living former CALIFORNIA POPPIES rider and is, without doubt, one of the most successful riders ever to come out of the SOUTHERN AREA LEAGUE 1954-59.

[redacted]

Limited Edition of 100 postcards in recognition of his 80th birthday and long association with California Speedway.
Designed by Caroline Horsnell and produced by Beejay Soccer Enterprises
(Email: beejaysocent@hotmail.com Tel: 0118 942 4448)

Copy of Post Card from Pete Saunders.