



# THE FREEWAY NEWSLETTER

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### From the Editor's Desk

Bob Ferris of Bellingham, MA, who wrote the first four enjoyable and informative issues of the Newsletter said in issue #1 "perhaps later on, some one of us...can edit a formal publication."

Well, Bob agreed to let me try my hand at it so here goes. Bob has contributed his 2000 mile report to this issue; and I hope he, as well as other owners, will continue to contribute.

My 450 cc gasoline Freeway (order #171) was delivered about March 1st 1981 and has 1850 miles on it. I believe I am more enthusiastic about the car now than when I ordered it from the book in November 1979. Having the first Freeway in the State of Rhode Island I received a lot of media coverage and everyday since has been like a one car parade.

### News

The Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles still will not allow the Freeway to be registered in that State. To quote Donald Burr, the Assistant Director of Management Services, "The Freeway vehicle does not fall into the category of a motorcycle as defined by Connecticut statutes and is considered unreasonably dangerous in light of present traffic volume and percentage of heavy commercial vehicles using Connecticut highways". The States' position is based on the opinion of certain unnamed consultants. Having lived in the Hartford area for four years it is my guess that it is the same consultant that designed the Interstate Highways there.

The headlight replacement number listed in the owners manual is H6064. The correct number is 6052 or H6054.

If your local repair shop is stocking any parts for you he can obtain nylon buttons (wear pads) by contacting Dave Quigley (317) 966-8161 at Comet Industries Div. of HOFFCO, re: #49 D clutch.

Someone has installed an adjustable main jet in their 450 carburetor and is averaging 83 mpg. See your engine service station.

The drive belt number is #6028 Gates, and can be ordered from the factory for \$12.00 not including shipping. Champion spark plug RL85 is not a normal shelf item because of its resistor for radios. Order yours several weeks in advance from your local auto parts dealer.

In a May fuel economy test five vehicles averaged 100.45 at 40 mph. H-M-Vehicles says an increase of 10% can be expected after break-in plus add 2% odometer loss. The tires were at 35 PSIG. Results are available from the Company.



### The Shrinking Automobile

General Motors and Ford both will reportedly introduce their own new minicars in 1984. They will have three-cylinder gasoline engines and get between 40 and 50 mpg in city driving, but will be about the same size as models currently sold in the United States by Toyota and Honda—and will be larger than the two-passenger commuter cars these and other Japanese companies already build and sell in Japan. It is interesting to note that despite the continuing slump in auto sales generally, the smallest cars available here (four wheels)—Honda's Civic and Toyota's Tercel have continued to sell well. I expect Detroit will fall even further behind its foreign competitors.

### Three Wheelers of the Past

Messerschmitt (1953-1962) The former German aircraft company built a 175cc one cylinder 2 stroke and replaced it with a 200 cc in 1955.

Isetta (1953-1955) In France; BMW version in Germany (1954-1963) had a one cylinder 4 stroke engine. Isetta of Great Britain Ltd. under BMW license made 3 & 4 wheel models from 1957-1964.

Morgan Motor Co. Ltd. (1910-1965), 1100cc air cooled with 2 speeds forward and direct steering. Two seats were normal after WWI.

Raleigh Cycle Co. Ltd. (1933) became Reliant Motor Co. (1935) and produced a 742cc v/twin, 3 speed gear box, shaft drive, with a single front wheel until 1962.

### The Editor's Freeway

I am using AMS/oil Synthetic Motor Oil, an AMS/oil filter and AMS/oil gear lubricant on the chain. It is more expensive at retail but was a gift from my local dealer. We will be appearing together at Northeast Energy Expo '81 at the Providence Civic Center in September.

The factory has been very cooperative with me. They sent a new mud flap with rivets when mine fell off, and shims when the chain stretched.

By the way, if anyone is interested, the spare tire comes mounted on a rim and balanced.

### Electric Vehicles

Mechanix Illustrated magazine is marketing plans to build a three wheeler called the Urba Sport Trimuter. They say the cost is about \$1,900 for the gas version and about \$2,700 for the electric plus \$15 for the plans. The gas model uses a 16-hp Briggs & Stratton 2-cyl engine mounted in the rear, gets 50 mpg with a top speed of 60 mph. It is personal transportation (one seat) with a single wheel in the front. LED instruments (no dial gauges) add about \$500 to the cost. See the February 1980 issue if you are still interested.

With the new Federal budget will come cuts in the DOE-EHV program and I have noticed one way that air quality rules are being relaxed—the "bubble policy". It is a variance to Air Pollution Control Regulation No. 8: the Sulfur Content of Fuels. By restricting operation or burning cleaner fuel at one of its electricity generating plants, the electric company can burn cheaper, high sulfur oil at its other facility.

### About this Newsletter

A Carousel (Webster's-1980) is a tournament or exhibition in which horsemen execute evolutions. Evolution (1) the process of change in a certain direction—unfolding emission, growth, (2) one of a set of prescribed movements. I have always liked the saying—why pull a wagon if all you need is a horse.

The Circulation of Vol. 1 No. 1 was four including Dave Edmanson. The circulation of this newsletter will be twenty four. With order #387 rolling out of Burnsville last week, and order numbers up to 1700 at the factory the Newsletters can no longer be a free-bee.

For those who wish to help finance a newsletter, get reports from other owners, and give some association among owners; I will improve on the next issue.

I have tried to separate the issue into several different topics. If my estimate of the profile of the average Freeway owner is correct some of these are bound to raise a response. The next issues should be professionally printed with quality pictures. If circulation goes up, cost per newsletter goes down.



The newsletter could certainly use some humor. Anyone want to try cartoons?

If you will contribute \$1.50 I will continue to act as a clearing house and get the next four issues out to you (quarterly) or return your money. The money will cover stamps, printing, telephone calls, etc. Have a good summer!

### Transportation

According to the March '81 Issue of the National Association of Railroad Passengers News "Americans are getting priced out of the automobile and airplane and those who can afford to buy cars are buying smaller models uncomfortable on long trips". I am on the NARP mailing list although I haven't ridden on a train since I was a child.

Airlines are making up for the more expensive jet fuel by such things as removing life rafts from coastal flights and reducing fresh air per passenger. In my opinion, and to repeat a statement of former Secretary Adams, our type of vehicle will be the common vehicle in ten years. Other vehicles will be specialty types and many will be leased for short periods rather than owned. In the long run and for the long haul I have to be a rail fan.

### Letters

#### A Two Thousand Mile Status Report

Registration in Massachusetts: The Freeway has been thoroughly inspected by the head of the Equipment Division of the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles, and has been classified with certain mandatory modifications, as a motor vehicle. These modifications are as follows:

Headlights: All motor vehicles registered in Massachusetts must have at least two headlight and for single units mounted on each side these lights must be 7" in diameter and meet DOT specifications.

Windshield: The windshield must be DOT approved safety glass, and, in fact, all glass or synthetics used for windows must have a DOT stamp on it, not only for the Freeway but for all motor vehicles.

Number Plate Light: The number plate light must be above the plate and must not show any white light directly to the rear, that is, it must not show in such a way as to interfere with other driver's vision.

These were the only items that the Massachusetts registry found lacking on mine, and I have been given two weeks from the date of the inspection to correct them and submit the vehicle for a final inspection, at which time they will issue me a regular automobile plate. No special license, no helmet.

The inspection was carried out at my home, by Dick Griffith, head of the Boston Equipment Division, and was the most complete and thorough inspection of a motor vehicle that I have ever seen. It began with a run through of all lights, horn, safety belt, braking systems, and continued on to a dynamic braking test, a sound pressure test (96db at two feet for you acoustical engineers).

The braking test involved a panic stop by the owner from 20 mph with a decelerometer mounted in the back of the vehicle, and she stopped in 7 feet, in a perfectly straight line.

Though largely non-committal, they seemed pleased with Dave's thoroughness in meeting DOT standards, and commented especially on the dual braking system and the radial tires, stating off-the-record that H-M-Vehicles "went first class".

The next step will be for the Massachusetts Registry to contact Dave Edmanson with their findings.



This all came about because the local office submitted pictures and specifications to the Boston Legal Department. Though the wheels of justice do turn slowly, due to a tremendous work load on the Equipment Division, they grind exceedingly fine.

And though some of us have them registered as motorcycles, they are not and apparently never will be, motorcycles by Massachusetts definition.

My representative in the state house offered to submit legislation especially for commuter vehicles of this type, but Registrar McLaughlin informed him that the present definitions are adequate, and all vehicles must conform to them. A motorcycle in Massachusetts simply cannot have a roof, or "cover", on it, as this automatically makes it a motor vehicle, and as such it must conform to all motor vehicle requirements.

Hard work, but the only way.

Now I must say here, to be fair, that although I have met a lot of resistance on the local level, depending on where I went, that the top men from the Boston office are professionals, and straight shooters all the way, and that once I had contacted the right people, chiefly Dick Griffith, the whole matter was taken care of within two weeks, to everyone's satisfaction. Knowing who to talk to was the big problem, because, as some of you know, I have been trying to get an inspection and a decision since July, 1979!

Thanks also to Stanley Kasper and the Milford, Massachusetts Registry, who all went out of their way to bring this about, and hisses and boos to the "other" local branch, who refused to register it, test me in it, or even look at it, threatening, in fact, to impound it if I brought it over there for their inspection. You could have bent a little, amigos, and we would have loved you for it. After all, we are all in this energy crunch together, and a true high-mileage commuter vehicle, such as the Freeway, will benefit us all.

Now to the vehicle: No major problems as yet. I did develop a little shimmy between 45 and 50, but had the front wheels dynamically balanced and this seems to have taken care of it.

My steering box leaks a little oil down on to my white buck shoes, and I'll get to that on the first sunny day that I dare to open the body up.

My chain got a little loose so I shimmed the pillar blocks with front end shims, about two hours work, and this really did the trick. (Thanks to Andy Fabricant for that tip.)

Still getting between 60 and 70 mpg at commuter speeds (40 - 45). Gentle acceleration and smooth stops improve this a lot.

In closing my portion of this newsletter, I want to go back to philosophizing for a moment, and say that although my Freeway is now officially an automobile, we must continue to drive them as motorcycles.

No amount of legislation will change the handling characteristics of the vehicle, and super defensive is still definitely a must.

Bob Ferris  
April 1981