



San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

# The Herald

Volume 27, Issue I

January 2010

## Garage Crawl - July 18, 2009

Our first stop was Tim Stafford's shop in Grantville. As most of you are aware, Tim has become one of the country's foremost BMW restorers. Just as we were dismantling Tim drove up, threw down the tailgate on his pickup, and offered us some liquid refreshment. Upon entering his impressive shop, we saw a row of recently repainted frames, awaiting reassembly. Stepping into the back storeroom, were a number of partially assembled engines, along with an incredible number of miscellaneous parts. Of particular interest to me were the Bultaco Metrallas that Tim had stashed away awaiting restoration. In the well equipped workshop was kind of a funky machine sporting a genuine Von



Arriving at Stafford Restorations, , ,



Tim Stafford explaining that the upholstered knee pads were NOT stock. . .

Dutch pinstriping job, and upholstered knee pads. I suggesting that Tim might want to apply some tasteful pink and purple monkey fur as a finishing touch. Up in the rafters were some of the trophies that Tim had won at various concours d'elegance events.

Next, we stopped at the residence of Gordon Clark Jr., in Kearny Mesa. Gordon Jr. wasn't present, but Gordon Sr. and Lynette served as gracious hosts. Gordon's immaculate garage contained some vintage Jap hardware, including a Honda Dream and a Honda Superhawk.

We next traveled a couple of miles to the home of Mark and Donna Lemieux. Evidently, the Garage Crawl provided Mark the motivation to get his new

Continued on page 4 . . .

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## **Monthly Meetings**

Are held at:

### **Giovanni's Restaurant**

9353 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego  
(the corner of Clairemont Mesa Blvd and Ruffin Rd.)

On

**The Second Monday of Each Month**

**At 7:00 p.m.**

**Arrive early and join us for dinner!**

## **Herald Policies & Editorial Statement**

*The Herald* promises to provide an interesting forum for all antique, vintage, and classic motorcycle related information and will attempt to do so in a timely manner. Since we publish bi-monthly, please present any items for publication early enough for inclusion. We accept no responsibility for items furnished after the deadline.

As a volunteer staff, we expect other members to help by providing items from time to time. We have a large club membership base with a varied interest in all aspects of motorcycling and, as such, we believe all members have stories of interest.

Let us hear from the garages, sheds, and shops of the membership. This publication will remain viable only with the help and consideration of all. Our Editorial phones and e-mail addresses are available. We look forward to publishing your stories.

## **SDAMC Charter**

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation of antique motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal and educational activities among its members and the public, with membership open to all persons having an interest in antique motorcycles.

## **Editorial Disclaimer**

IDEAS AND THOUGHTS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER REFLECT ONLY THE VIEWS OF ITS EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE, CONTENT OR ANY OTHER PART OF THE HERALD, PLEASE LET US KNOW. ONE OF THE BENEFITS OF OUR CLUB IS THE SHARING OR EACH OF YOUR IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES. THEN WE ALL LEARN.

Please send your contributions to any of the editors listed above.

## **2010 SDAMC Ride Calendar (check SDAMC.Net website)**

<b>1/16 Sat</b>	Campo Train Ride
<b>1/31 Sat</b>	Mod V. Rockers Ride
<b>2/21 Sun</b>	Past Presidents Ride
<b>3/27 Sat</b>	Classic Motorcycle Ride
<b>4/24-25</b>	Idyllwild Overnight—MEMBERS ONLY!
<b>5/8 Sat</b>	Full Moon Ride
<b>5/15 Sat</b>	Desert Tower Ride
<b>6/19 Sat</b>	T-Shirt Ride
<b>7/4 Sun</b>	Alpine 4th of July Parade
<b>7/17 Sat</b>	Garage Crawl
<b>8/1 Sun</b>	National City Heritage Day Parade and Show
<b>8/9 Mon</b>	Pot Luck (in lieu of Club meeting)
<b>8/21 Sat</b>	Classic Bike Ride
<b>9/??</b>	Bike Field Trials
<b>10/23-24</b>	Borrego Springs Overnight—MEMBERS ONLY!
<b>11/1 Sun</b>	Hanson Dam Meet (SoCal Norton Owners Club)
<b>11/25 Thu</b>	Turkey Day Ride
<b>12/4 Sat</b>	SDAMC Holiday Party
<b>12/12 Sun</b>	Year-End Ride

## Garage Crawl . . . (continued)

garage completed (just in the nick of time!). Mark and Donna, being the smart people that they are, had their beautiful dogs roaming the back yard to insure that I wouldn't make off with Mark's '73 (?) Honda XL250! I almost forgot. . . We did have a minor **WTF** (What The F\*\*\*!) moment as we arrived. One unnamed SDAMC member (Kurt Kohanowich) drove across the front lawn of the house across the street from the Lemieux's! After I picked my jaw up off the ground I came to realize that it was Kurt's home!!!

Stop number four was the residence of Rick and Charlie Calou in La Jolla. The Calou's live in a nice gated community, and I felt a little uptight worrying about all of the grief the Calou's would receive at the next home owners association meeting. Rick has a number of vintage pieces in his garage. We all got a big kick out of the old photo of the the world's largest motorcycle, the infamous "Roadog" built by the late "Wild Bill" Gelbke. Rick also had a way-cool roll-around work stool equipped with a saddle taken off of an old Indian that Rick used to own. The origins of the saddle caused some debate. One of our resident Harley experts opined that "the hand rail suggests Panhead". Hopefully everyone had an opportunity to see the interior of their home. Charlie, an interior decorator, did an awesome job!

Our final stop, required a jaunt up I-5 to the residence of Phil and Mary Blackburn in Vista, where a terrific barbeque spread awaited us. The home, over an acre in area, featured a backyard bigger than some city parks, with a little stream running down the middle. I suggested to Phil that the backyard had more than enough room to some club field events, or perhaps a small motocross course. (Phil was somewhat less than enthusiastic about my idea!). Phil's massive garage contained his award winning BMW (restored by Tim Stafford). At about the time we were drooling over the BMW, Virgil Foreman reported that the clutch cable on his Bonneville had just broken, right at the soldered cable end. A bunch of us spent about a half an hour trying to repair the cable using some rosin core solder and a propane torch. Alas, the surgery was not successful.

Continued on page 5 . . .



# Garage Crawl ... (continued)

Thankfully, Phil's son volunteered to truck Virgil's horse back to the barn.

This was probably one of our best Garage Crawls ever! Thanks to all of our hosts and hostesses for their efforts and hospitality. People keep asking me when they'll get to see my garage. I tell them that they can see my garage just as soon as they promise to bring along their brooms, dustpans, and hazmat suits!



# Temecula Winery Run – October 24, 2009



The Jensen clan (Bob, Fran, and Karen) organized another outstanding ride to Temecula's Wine Country. This year we journeyed from The Wagon Wheel restaurant in Escondido to the Oak Mountain Winery in the foothills at the southeastern corner of Temecula valley. We had a fairly large group, about twenty bikes. Frequently, when riding in a group in an urban area with lots of traffic lights, it's not unusual for the group to get split up. This time, we didn't go two blocks before the group broke apart! Evidently, one of the bikes at the rear of the group "flamed out" at the first intersection. Shortly thereafter, the lead group pulled over to await the stragglers. After about five minutes, the survivors saddled up, trusting that someone in the trailing group could follow the ride route. C'est la guerre!

The weather was superb, and we enjoyed a pleasant ride to Temecula. Heading north, the lead group again got split up. Our group, led by Bob Jensen, promptly got lost, having made a wrong turn. It took us only a couple of minutes to get back on track. In a few more minutes, our group (what I thought was the "lead" group) arrived at the winery, only to find that the other two groups had arrived ahead of us. At least we all made it to the destination!

The hosts gave us a brief tour and history of the winery, and allowed us into their back room where the wine barrels were stored. During the Q&A period, someone asked what one was supposed to do if an earthquake struck while you were in the storeroom. The short answer was that he were supposed to run like hell. It was at



that point that we departed the storeroom (with alacrity), and headed out to the patio area.

On the patio, we were invited to taste a number of their wines, and were treated to equally delicious box lunches.

A big "Thank You" to Bob, Fran and Karen Jensen to organizing this enjoyable ride!



# Smiths Chronometric Speedometer

by Ron Caudillo

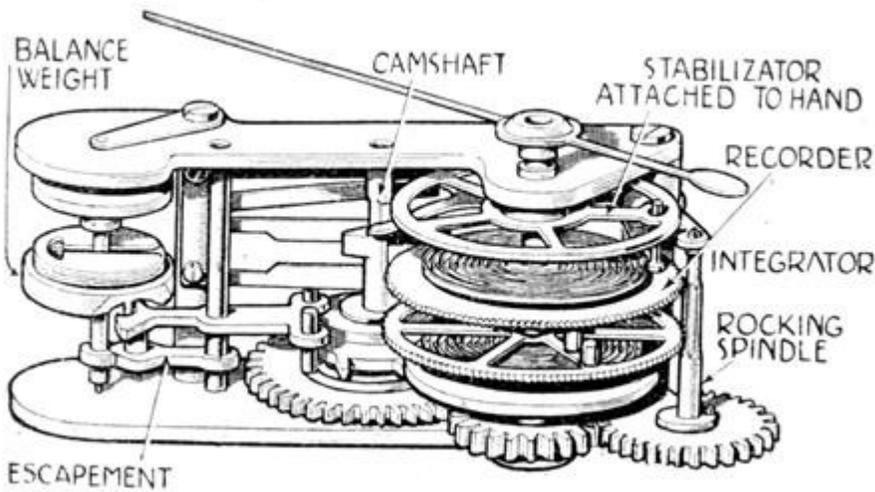


Figure 1: Assembled View

One of the things that I find most attractive about old bikes is that they're so damned mechanical! Nowadays, tiny microchips have replaced massively complex analog mechanisms. These Chronometric speedometers are about as mechanical as a contraption can get. Figures 1 and 2, show the assembled and exploded views of the mechanism.

For those of you that aren't familiar with these speedometers, their distinguishing characteristic was that their needles "ticked". Yes, I mean "tick", like an old watch. Go onto YouTube, and search for "Smiths Chronometric". You'll find some film clips of how these speedos functioned. Instead of moving in steady, sweeping motions, like more modern magnetic speedometers, the Chronometric needles move at precise  $\frac{3}{4}$  second intervals. In the famous Formula One movie, *Grand Prix*, there is a scene showing a close-up of a Smiths tachometer, showing the needle ticking, as the engine is revved. By the way, speedometers and tachometers are essentially the same, one measuring the speed of the vehicle, and the other measuring the speed of the engine.

By the way, these speedometers were actually invented by the French company, Jaeger, back in the 1920's. Later on, the English company, Smiths, bought Jaeger. Vive l'France!

[Author's Note: My apologies for the quality of the illustrations in the article. I pirated them, along with most of the text, directly off the Internets. . .)

According to my Webster's dictionary, **Speed equals Distance Traveled divided by the Time of Travel.** Hmmm. . . That's simple enough!

The Smiths Chronometric speedometers, which graced most Brit bikes through the mid-1960's, took the dictionary definition of "speed" literally, meaning that they employed an internal clock mechanism to produce highly-accurate "time slices". Then, by measuring the distance traveled during each time slice, the vehicle's speed would be reported.

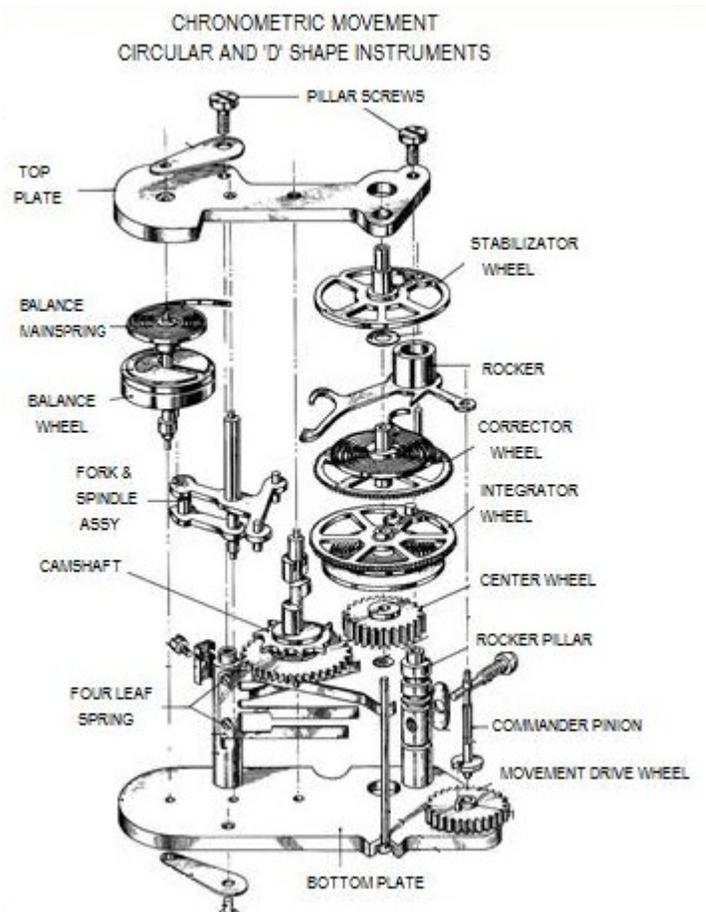
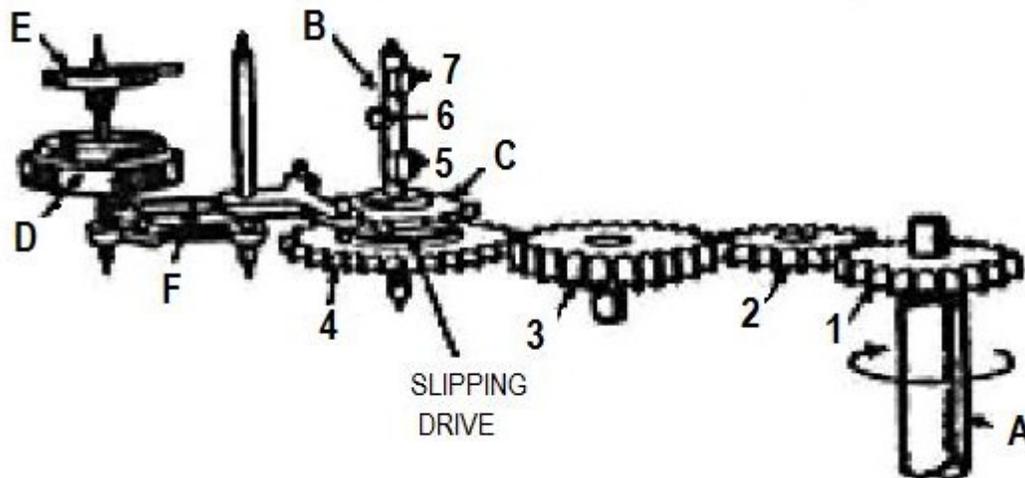


Figure 2: Exploded View

Continued on page 8 . . .

## Smiths Chronometric Speedometer—continued

This particularly neat and accurate design uses the clock movement or chronometrics principle, whereby speed indications are obtained at intervals of  $\frac{3}{4}$  second, by means of an escapement mechanism. Okay, so let's take a look at how the Jaeger/Smiths engineers solved this problem:

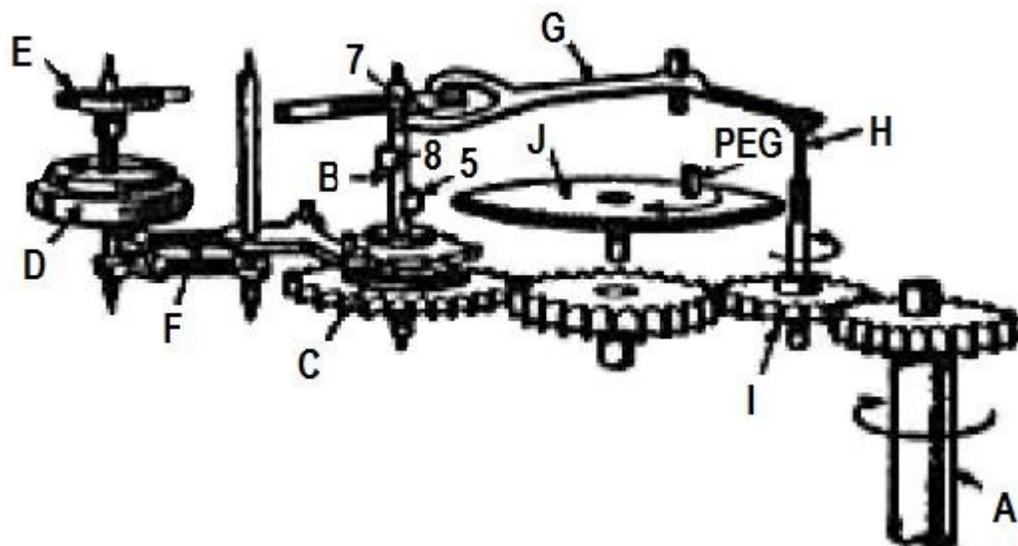


**Figure 3: Showing gear wheels and camshaft**

Referring to Figures 3, 4, and 5, the driving shaft from the tachometer or speedometer drive is at A. By means of the four gear wheels 1, 2, 3, and 4, the drive is taken to camshaft B. The camshaft is an intricate piece of work, and needs to be studied closely. Mounted on it are the gear wheel 4 and the toothed escapement wheel C, along with three lobes ( 5,6, and 7). The cam lobes will operate leaf springs which will be discussed later.

The gear wheel 4 has a slipping drive on the camshaft (mounted on a sleeve) so that there is only a friction drive between it and the escapement wheel C, which is keyed to the camshaft.

The rotation of the escapement wheel (and therefore of the camshaft) is governed by the balance wheel D with its  
**Continued on page 9...**

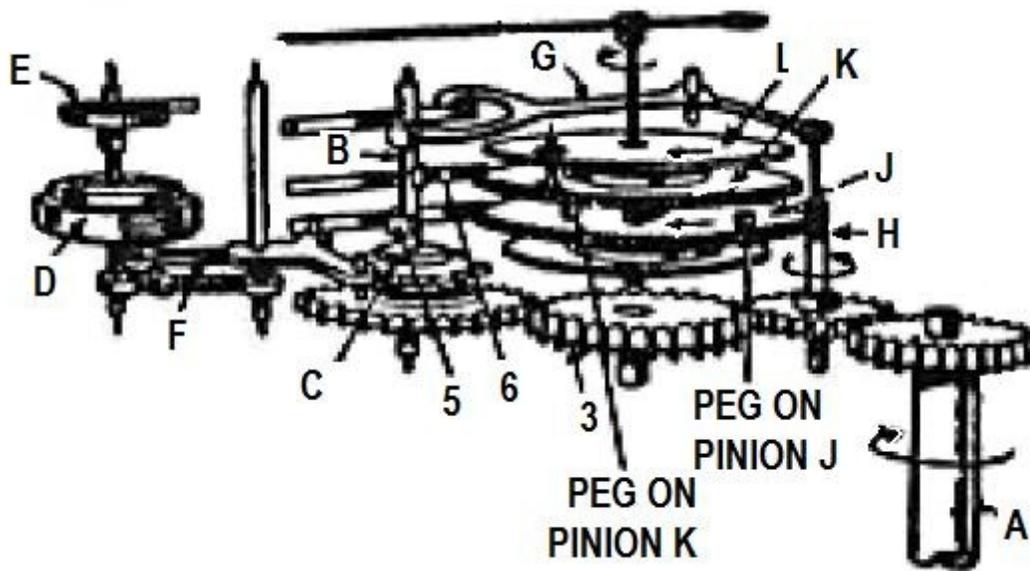


**Figure 4: The rocking lever and its leaf spring, the rocking spindle, and integrator gear**

## Smiths Chronometric Speedometer—continued

hair spring E, and by the escapement lever F. This part of the mechanism works exactly like a watch. Regardless of the speed by which the drive wheels are turned by the driving shaft, camshaft B will only rotate at the speed permitted by the escapement. In other words, the friction drive between the escapement wheel C and the gear wheel 4 allows the drive to overrun. Thus, we have the camshaft rotating at a constant speed, no matter what the rate that the machine is traveling.

Referring to figure 4, held against cam lobe 7 by its leaf spring is one end of a rocking lever G. The other end of the rocking lever is connected to the rocking spindle H, whose central portion has finely cut gear teeth to mesh with integrator wheel J. Owing to the action of cam lobe 7, the rocking lever G will be continually moving the teeth cut on rocking spindle H in and out of engagement at regular intervals. Note that rocking spindle H is also being rotated by gear wheel 2 at the speed of the driving shaft A. During the periods that its teeth are in engagement with the integrator wheel J, it will turn the integrator



**Figure 5: complete Smith Chronometric Speedometer mechanism**

wheel a greater or lesser degree, according to the speed at which it is being driven by the driving shaft A. In other words, if the driving shaft, and therefore the teeth cut on the rocking spindle, are rotating at high speed, the integrator wheel will be moved a greater distance in the fraction of a second that the teeth are engaged, than if the driving shaft A is being rotated at a slower speed.

Protruding upward from the integrator wheel J is a peg, and when the integrator wheel is driven around, this peg butts up against a similar peg protruding downward from the recorder wheel K. Both of these wheels, it should be understood, are a loose fit on their shaft and are not driven by gear wheel 3. The recorder wheel K is connected by a short link to a third damping wheel L, upon whose spindle the speed recording needle is mounted. The damping wheel L is damped by the friction of a fourth leaf spring (not shown) bearing on it which rests lightly against the camshaft, but is not touching any of the lobes.

As a speed indication arrives from H, the integrator wheel J is driven around a certain distance, and its peg butts up against the peg on the recorder wheel K, causing the recorder wheel to be pushed around. Both the integrator wheel and the recorder wheel are equipped with hair springs which tend to return them to zero, but they are kept stationary by leaf springs operated at regular intervals by cam lobes 5 and 6, with the ends of the leaf springs engaging with the teeth of the wheels J and K.

When the teeth cut on the rocking spindle H come out of mesh with the integrator wheel J, its leaf spring has just come into engagement and holds the wheel stationary; meanwhile K's leaf spring is out of engagement, but K is held in position by the two pegs, which are still butting against one another. The next movement is that cam lobe 5 lifts J's leaf spring and J flies

continued on page 9 . . .

## Smiths Chronometric Speedometer—continued

back to zero, but just prior to this, cam lobe 6 has engaged K's leaf spring so that K still remains where it is, holding wheel L locked in position registering the speed. Then the teeth cut on H come back into mesh and commence to drive J, and after a slight pause, K's leaf spring lifts, releasing it.

Now if the speed has remained unaltered during the next measurement cycle (3/4 of a second), the peg on the integrator wheel J will catch up with the peg on the recorder wheel K and hold it in position during the next measurement cycle. If the speed has increased, J's peg will push the peg attached to the recorder wheel farther on.

If the speed has decreased, J's peg will not be driven so far as the position occupied by the peg of the recorder wheel K, and the hairspring will cause K to fly back till the two pegs meet once more.

This operation of the whole mechanism is thus covered entirely by the escapement, and as the teeth cut into the rocking spindle H are drawn in and out of engagement at regular intervals, the instrument's needle connected to L is moved at those periods only, at all other times being locked in position, and when it does move it moves only the difference to correspond with any variation in speed that has taken place during the last 3/4 second.

I have often heard that these "clocks" would frequently break. I theorize that part of the problem might have been that the instrument's needles could become "stuck". Suppose that you were riding along at say 25 mph. If you locked up the rear wheel (which probably would have occurred in less than 3/4 of a second), the whole mechanism would have stopped, without the needle having returned to zero. Shortly after this occurrence, the typical "Elroy Jetson" would have tried to disassemble the instrument, to figure out how to fix the problem. Needless to say, this complex mechanism was not something that an amateur should have been messing with!

By the way, does anyone have one of these instruments that I might perform surgery on???

## Book Review:

Book: **The Vincent in the Barn**  
*Great Stories of Motorcycle Archaeology*

Author: Tom Cotter

Publisher: Motorbooks

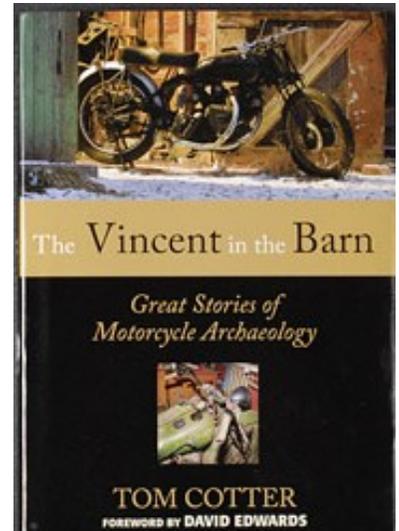
You will really enjoy this book! It is full of stories about barn finds, the ones that got away, tips on successful sleuthing, and patience, lots of patience to pursue the old bike owner who says, "Not for sale at any price!"

I grew up in the Corn Belt, pre-TV, among story tellers which is why I enjoyed *The Vincent in the Barn* so much, it's chocked full of great stories. It's just like the San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club's monthly meetings or Saturday morning breakfasts at the Waterfront where stories abound – so entertaining.

Motorcycle riders are the most interesting people I know and Tom Cotter's book validates that with engaging stories of people who follow the dream of finding and restoring vintage bikes.

This book is a "must have" for your library; or, as the holidays are just around the corner, something to keep in mind as the perfect gift for a motorcycling enthusiast.

**David Knetzer**



## My First Norton Experience

I had seen Nortons around and stared at them longingly at Suzuki City (Inglewood, CA) in the early seventies. In the early spring of 1974 Dennis, the head mechanic, was getting gas at my father's garage where I was making \$1 a day pumping gas after school. He knew me from my time loitering about the shop and spending what little money I had on parts for my 1971 TS90. He asked me if my dad would let me work at the motorcycle shop as the gofer for \$1.65 an hour (minimum wage). That was a NO-BRAINER! That Saturday morning 07:30 was my first day on the job. Dennis had to open the store so he told me to wipe down all of the bikes on the showroom floor. After that I swept the parking lot and the service area, and went in the back to clean up the bathroom (My dad insisted that our gas station have a clean restroom). It was the classic garage bathroom-grease stained sink, nasty toilet. I attacked it with the Ajax and the toilet brush, polished the faucets, Windexed the mirror, came out and started sweeping the shop again. Dennis went in to use the restroom and was stunned... By the end of the day I had washed all of the bikes in for service, cleaned out the junk corner of the shop and wiped down the bikes on the showroom a second time. At 6:00 after closing up the shop Dennis told me that Monday after school I could set myself up at the bench in the now clean corner of the shop. By the end of the week I was un-crating and assembling new bikes that came in...

Three big crates arrived with new 850 Commandos and I couldn't believe that I was getting PAID to put them together and ride them around the block to "break em in". I might have been a skinny kid (97lbs, 4-11, really!) with those dumb-ass glasses taped together, but I was now certifiably cool... a King among Nerds.

Continued on page 12. . .

## Hylomar Gasket Dressing And Thread Sealant



Sonny Angel once 'splained to me that it is dangerous to use non-hardening silicone sealants in an engine. With the typical, thick silicone sealants (like the various GE/Permatex RTV types), you usually end up with a thick, lumpy sealant layer on the gasket surfaces. Once the parts get torqued down, the silicone layer gets squished, and the excess is extruded out the edges of the gasket surfaces. Eventually, this excess can become dislodged, and the stringy remnants might clog vital oil passages. (Of course, with Black Mariah, that would be an improvement!)

Hylomar is a silicone RTV sealant developed back in the '60s for Rolls-Royce to solve leakage problems encountered on their jet engines. While similar to other pliable, non-hardening silicone sealants, Hylomar is much less viscous, almost like a thick syrup. Because it's so thin, Hylomar can be applied in a smooth, thin, uniform layer on gasket surfaces. Since is impervious to all aviation/automotive liquids (fuels, lubricants, coolant, etc.), and can withstand temperatures up to over 600 degrees F, it can be used virtually anywhere on a motorcycle. In my experience, Hylomar greatly reduces the possibility of clogging engine passages with excess silicone rubber.

Hylomar is produced in a number of varieties, including aerosols. They're all basically the same stuff, but tailored slightly for specific usages. I happen to like their "Racing Formula" since it dries sticky, and I find that it holds gaskets in place better than their "Universal Blue" formula.

Hylomar, a British product, used to be manufactured in the U.S.A. under license by Permatex, and was relatively easy to obtain. Evidently, Permatex is no longer marketing Hylomar, so it might be a little more difficult to find in auto part stores. Although, I had no difficulty purchasing Hylomar on the Ebay

Despite being more expensive than the average silicone "acky-pucky", Hylomar is the only gasket dressing that I use. Check out [www.hylomar-usa.com](http://www.hylomar-usa.com).

- Ron Caudillo

## My First Norton Experience—continued...

Come June, my Kingdom was sadly destroyed when my father told me that I couldn't stay home alone on the weekends (my family had some property in Soledad Canyon and went camping there almost every weekend) and he needed me to run the gas station because the junior mechanic had quit. Dad told me that he would pay me \$2 an hour and I would be doing the lighter repair work (oil and lube, tires, batteries, etc) but I was still heartbroken.

This summer I finally bought a 750 Combat Commando (all the parts anyway).

I didn't get to Hanson Dam this year, but wait till next year!

Remembering the birth of my children, walking off the MEDEVAC flight back from Iraq, the bugler playing Taps for my SPC Angel Franco, my first ride on a Commando... these are things that bring tears to my eyes.

Mark Lemieux

## Confessions Of A Bike Magazine Junkie:

I didn't establish any scholastic records as a high school student. Basically, I "cruised" all of my courses, expending the least amount of effort as possible. You remember me, I was the lazy, smart-ass that sat in the back row, closest to the door. Just couldn't see the point to living up to my potential, I guess. . .

Looking back, it is obvious that, with such limited faculties, it was imperative that I conserve my energies for the important things in life. . . . Like reading motorcycle magazines. Not a school day went by when I didn't have at least one motorcycle magazine stashed in my three-ring binder. When things got boring, I could simply read some magazine article or gaze at the pictures. Actually, this habit of mine started back in junior high. Remember "study hall"? That's right, the period where you were supposed to actually improve your mind. My study hall was in the school library, which was well stocked with periodicals. After finishing off the latest issue of *Life* magazine (the graphic Viet Nam combat photos were something to behold!), I always gravitated to *Cycle World* and *Cycle* magazines.

Before I got my first motorcycle, these magazines sort of filled a hole in my heart, that some nice and shiny motorcycle was meant to fill. Although I didn't have enough money to buy an actual bike, I could always afford to be well read. Each month, I would typically buy four or five magazines, and would read each them cover-to-cover repeatedly, until their wisdom was burned into my psyche.

Each month there were a number of road tests for entry-level enduro bikes, one of which was destined to be my first motorcycle. I committed each bike's specifications to memory. Predictably, each month I fell hopelessly in love with a new bike (the one that just happened to be featured in one of that month's road tests).

Besides the road tests, my favorite articles were the letters to the editor. I used to love how some of the readers could get themselves so riled up by what they read in the magazine. There were mainly three types of letters to editor:

**You Hurt My Feelings And I Hate Your Guts** - The reader (typically a Harley owner) was incensed by some comment or opinion. The letters always included the following two phrases: "**Cancel my subscription**" and "**publish this letter if you have the guts**".

**My Bike's Better Than You Think** - Road tests would occasionally pronounce some bike as "the best", or "the fastest", or "the worst", or "the slowest" etc., etc. Without fail, the rider of some "roach bike" would take offense, stating that his bike was, without a doubt, the best motorcycle ever made. I remember one letter in the aftermath of a BSA 441 Victor (Victim?) road test. Anyone familiar with 441s knows that the testers couldn't have been too complimentary (to put it mildly). One irate owner submitted a flaming letter, defending his Victor. He went on to explain that 441 engines generated so much torque that one had to be careful traveling eastbound for fear of slowing the rotation of the Earth! Indeed. . .

**I Bought This Piece of Shit On The Strength Of A Road Test Appearing In Your Magazine!** These letters were almost always written by British bike owners. Recall that by the early '70s, the British motorcycle industry

Continued on page 13. . .

## Bike Mag Junkie—continued. . .

was on the verge of collapse, with BSA, Triumph and Norton-Villiers were hanging on for dear life. Quality and reliability of Brit bikes were at an all-time low. The advertisements for Brit bikes absolutely oozed sex appeal, and the road tests tended to emphasize the subjective attributes like “personality” and “manliness”. Each of these letters would chronicle the writer’s misadventures with his crappy bike, starting with some glowing road test article. Here’s a portion of a letter, appearing in the March 1972 issue of *Cycle World*, from an owner of a 1971 BSA Lightning:

**“I bought the bike on June 5; since that date it has spent 93 days in the shop. Since I bought this brand new bike, the gas tank split open, the clutch blew twice, one coil burned out, the Xener diode burned out, the fork seals blew, the horn mount broke, the primary chain stretched, and right now the clutch is gone again, and the valve train and cams are on their last legs. And it’s not out of warranty yet.**

**‘To make it even better, when it is on the road, it blows out from 100 to 500 cc’s of oil a week, and only gets about 35 to 45 miles per gallon of gas.**

**‘So much for my say on the BSA. I’ve tried to get this bike replaced by the factory, but they refuse to even talk about it or even repair it in a normal length of time.’”**

Even though almost forty years have elapsed since high school, I can still see myself reading bike mags during class. One particularly vivid memory has me sitting in Mrs. Prine’s third period Chemistry class. The morning was overcast and cold, so it had to have been during the winter of 1969-70. I spent the whole period reading *Cycle* magazine’s superbike shoot-out.

This shoot-out was a face-off of the following legendary (or almost legendary) bikes: Honda 750-four, Kawasaki Mach 3, Harley Sportster, BSA Rocket 3, Triumph Trident, Suzuki Titan, and Norton Commando. This article was instrumental in forming some of my motorcycle-related persona:

- Being a Suzuki rider, and owing to the fact that the Suzuki Titan was soundly trounced by the other bikes in the test, I was to become a die-hard Suzuki apologist
- Owing to the sexy appearance and performance of the Commando “S”, I was to become a die-hard Norton Commando fan
- In the test, the Harley Sportster was shown to be far from stock, having received larger valves and some serious head porting. I thus came to realize that motorcycle manufacturers would sink to any depth to make their bikes look good.

In the ensuing 39+ years, I’ve frequently thought about Suzukis, Nortons, and those dastardly Harley Sportsters. Each and every time, I flash back to that Chemistry class, and that issue of *Cycle* magazine. Just for the helluvit, I started checking out Ebay, in search of that particular issue of *Cycle*. Sure enough, I found it! It was the March 1970 issue, and was only going to cost me about ten bucks! (For those of you that don’t remember, the newsstand price of *Cycle* was fifty cents, and a one year subscription cost only three bucks!)

Within a few days, the highly anticipated magazine arrived in the mail. I forgot to mention that I also bought several other issues from about the same time period. I was in heaven! Just like old times. Because I had read these mags so many times, most of the articles, photos, advertisements, and letters to the editor were familiar.

**Continued on page 14. . .**



## Bike Mag Junkie—continued. . .

It was like meeting up with an old friend that you hadn't seen in thirty or so years!

I heartily recommend this pastime for any of you that had a motorcycle magazine addiction back in the old days. I almost forgot. . . The real "holy grail" for me is that issue of *Cycle World*, probably from the winter of 1970-71 that contained an article about Suzuki's three-cylinder 50cc GP bike. That's right. . . The magazine that I repeatedly read during Mr. Peasley's first period Civics class!

**Ron Caudillo**

## BMW Rally At Big Bear (Never Say Die!)

So there we were, all loaded up and ready to head up the hill to the BMW rally at Big Bear. Driving up the 215

near Colton I realize that we are almost out of gas... no problem, I'll just get off right here and pull into that station. Of course it is slightly uphill and my truck coughs, sputters and comes to a stop 200 feet from the station. No problem. I just grab my can and stroll over for 2 gallons, get it in the tank, spin, spin, spin. . . Nothing. No problem, I'll just dribble a little into the carburetor, spin, spin, VROOM... The mighty '77 GMC is alive!

We pull up to the pumps, fill it up, take the dogs around for a little potty break and some water. Wow! Look at the thermometer. It's 107! As I get ready to pull out I think "Hey, better check the lug nuts on that new Harbor Freight trailer". Close

call... the lugs are half way off! Grab the trusty 4-way lug wrench and tighten those puppies up. Just a short delay.

Up the road we go and start up the 330... Sure is hot!!! UH OH, where is that steam coming from? Pull over, pop the hood, DAMN... Coolant is squirting out the shaft seal on the water pump! Donna says that we should call AAA, but I throw down the man card... "No problem, I can handle this myself!" Spin a U-turn and ease down the hill to Highland. Ask the tech at the WalMart auto center where I can get a water pump. "Just down the road at Baseline Dr. is an Auto Zone".

No problem finding it, sure we have a water pump, hoses, and coolant. You can even fix it in the parking lot. No problem, I'll just get started by popping the pressure relief on the radiator cap (which happens to be corroded and breaks off) YEOWAH... scalding coolant, HOT HOT HOT!! I pull off my T-shirt and pour a bottle of ice water on my hand, arm, chest and face... (Note to self: Get new cap too.) Donna asks if we should just have it towed home... NONSENSE! I would just wind up fixing it in our driveway and we would miss the rally! This should only take 2 hours max! Wrench, wrench, wrench... damn it's hot! Disassembly complete, carefully start reassembling... Damn it's hard to see with the sweat running into your eyes! Wrench wrench. It's getting there, just a few more bolts, pour in the coolant, OK it's done, let's go!



**Man it's HOT!!!!**

**Continued on page 15. . .**

## Never Say Die—continued...

Up the hill we roll, elevation 3000 feet, elevation 4,000 feet, cough, stumble, fart and we roll to a stop with a row of cars behind us and a turnout 200 feet ahead of us! I grab the tow strap and wave down a passing pickup driver who pulls us out of traffic... Hmm... Feels like a fuel problem, but we have lots of gas... Although a while back I did pour a couple of gallons of stale gas from one of the bikes into the GMC... Hmm... I'll just crawl under the truck and pull that fuel line to see what comes out. Damn it's hot under here, and this hot asphalt isn't real comfy! Look at that, nothing coming out, so I blow into the line until I hear bubbling in the tank. Lo and behold now it's flowing like crazy. I catch some in an empty water bottle and check for contamination... looks OK but it smells like paint thinner, that's not good. Spin, spin, spin, VROOM... Lets go! Seems fine for about 2 miles of the climb, but the combination of steady uphill and altitude has the engine running hard. Suddenly cough, fart, stumble and I barely make it into a turnout. Under the truck I dive and repeat the process, unclamp, blow, listen for bubbling, flow resumes, re-clamp, re-fire, we roll again! For about 4-5 miles, cough, sputter, fart, die, repeat... 4 more times! "Maybe we should call AAA?" Nonsense, we're almost there, look there is a sign, Big Bear Lake 17 miles! Cough, fart, stumble, die, coast, re-start, run, run, run, cough, fart, stumble, die, repeat. Big Bear Lake 8 miles, cough, fart, etc. Finally, we arrive just as the sun is setting, hustle to set up our little camp, throw some burgers on the grill catch a shower, and pass out. The rest of the weekend was wonderful and the truck ran fine down the hill, but gave me one last opportunity for roadside repairs when it pulled the cough, fart, sputter, stall going up the hill from the 76 southbound on the 15, of course by now I can clear the fuel line in 2 minutes flat. Overall, you have to take the good with the bad... it's an old truck and sometimes it has issues, but I don't have a payment and I can fix it myself with a toolbox that I can lift with one hand!

**Mark Lemieux**

[Uh, Mark... Repeat after me: "Cash For Clunkers" – ed.]



**We Made It!**

## Meanwhile, Back in Estonia...

It was in August 2002, in Jogeva, Estonia at the Jogeva Tref. The Jogeva Tref was an international motorcycle rally that's attended by riders from all over Europe. Estonia is a former Soviet Union republic that is now a fully independent state. They have come a long ways in westernizing, but still have a ways to go. There were, I believe, more than a couple of thousand persons and motorcycles from all over Europe. It was a fun event. I won the long distance award, California being the farthest away someone came from to get to the rally. There were three of us traveling together to the rally. Two friends from Germany, one on a new Triumph Bonneville, and one on a BMW R80GS.

We stayed at a hotel about 10-15 miles from the rally operated by an older Russian lady. There was a band playing each night at the rally. I was getting tired so went home early. A couple of hours later my friends came in and went to bed. We had a big room with 3 beds. We were on the second level. Our bikes were parked in a fenced area around back. I had no alarm on my old 18 year old Yamaha. A couple of hours later probably 2 or 3:00 am, the alarm went off on the Triumph. Someone was messing with the bikes! My friends decided to go down to confront them. They woke me up and asked if I wanted to accompany them. I replied that I would deal with the aftermath in the morning, and that I wasn't interested in getting injured by the intruders.

Well, my friends hurriedly put on their clothes, ran downstairs, and found out they were locked inside the hotel. They found a window, unlocked it, and climbed out of it. They ran back to the parking area and found NO ONE messing with the bikes. They had parked the motorcycles under an apple tree, and the falling apples had set off the alarms!! When they got back upstairs and told me of their findings I had a good laugh and went back to sleep.

We left the next day for Tallin, Estonia and stopped for gas at an old Russian gas station. The basic pumps only read quantity and not prices or total owed. So there was a somewhat long line of people lined up while this little old man, long hand with pencil and paper computed how much every one owed. It took a while but we made it.

We traveled north to Helsinki, Finland then north to above the arctic circle, then down through Sweden, Norway, Denmark and back into Germany. A VERY GOOD TRIP.

Wesley Lee Stark, Jr.

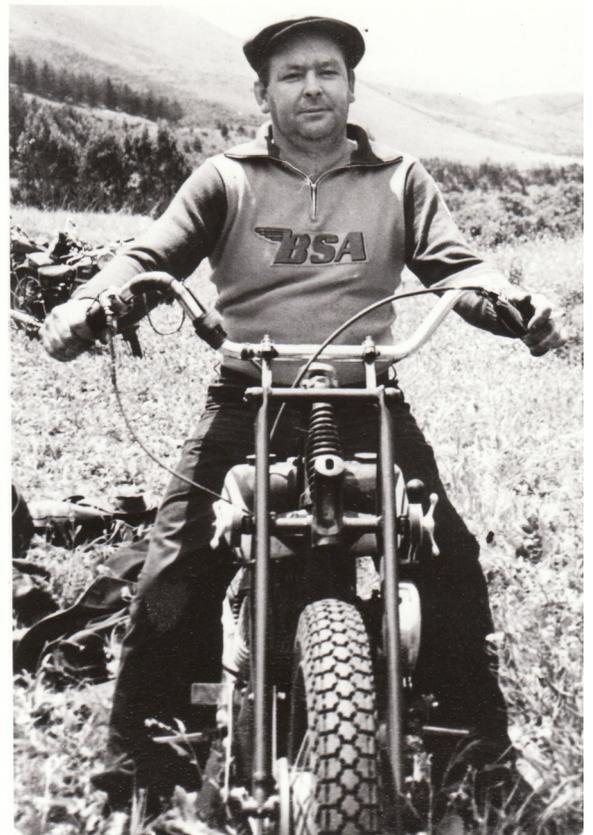
## My Friend, Eddie Bratton

In the early 80's I lived in Santa Rosa where I owned and rode a 1948 Indian Chief. I bought the Chief and a 1941 Indian, 4-Cylinder from a non-riding collector in San Francisco. Riding an Indian continually led to talk about Indians with many people who saw it. One person I spoke with told me about an old man living in Calistoga who had an Indian Chief. Well, that is about where this story starts.

Calistoga was about 25 miles from where I lived. I took off one morning on the Chief, got to Calistoga and asked myself "How do I find someone with a motorcycle and no name?" I stopped at a gas station and asked the attendant if he knew an "old guy with an Indian Motorcycle." The world being as small as it is, the guy said "You must mean Eddie Bratton. He doesn't own the Chief anymore, I bought it from him. It's over here."

There was the Indian Red Chief, very similar to mine sitting right there in a stall of the gas station. The gentleman gave Eddie a call which ended with me being invited over to Eddie Bratton's house. When I drove up Eddie came out to look my Chief over and say hello. This was the start of a friendship that lasted until Eddie died.

Eddie was full of salt and vinegar, and motorcycle stories from the '30s, '40s, and '50s. I met his wife and riding partner (Sorry I can't remember her name.



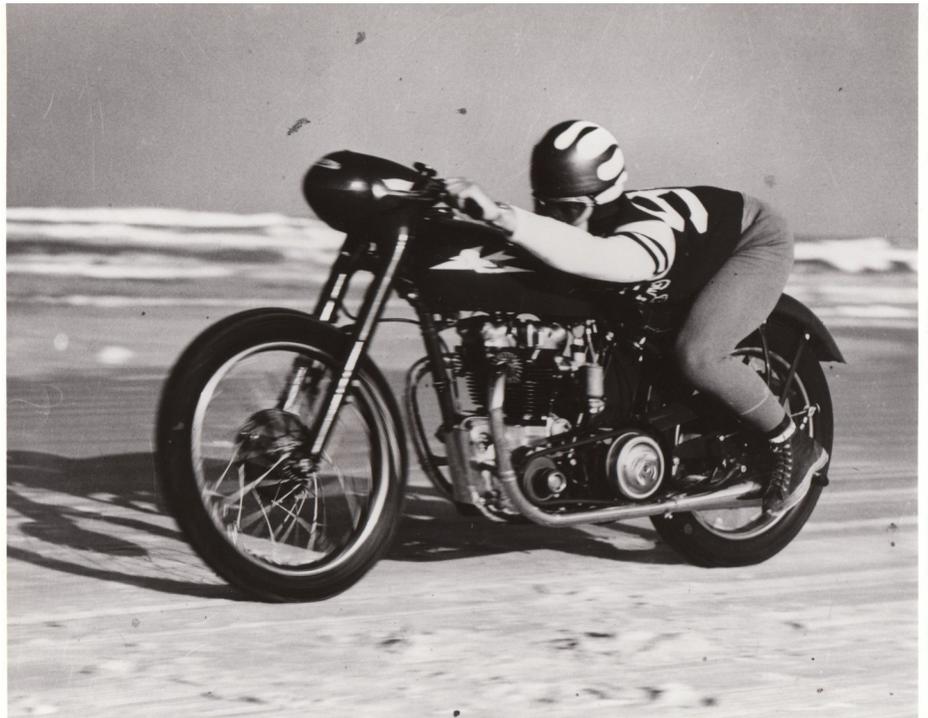
Continued on page 17...

## Eddie Bratton—continued. . .

I will refer to her as Louise.). At Eddie's request the three of us sat down with ice cold beers and talked. I spent about an hour with them that first day and promised to return in the future.

During the course of our friendship Eddie took me to his garage and showed me his tools and photos. Eddie had ridden motorcycles most of his life. He raced Indians in the '30s, '40s, and '50s. Eddie and his Louise used to ride on both AMA and local rides. He showed me their riding jackets and a lot of AMA yearly membership pins. I think he had them from 2 to 25 years of membership.

He spoke of one of their favorite tricks when riding. He and Louise would drop behind the group of riders. He would stand on one foot peg and raise his body off the seat on that side. Louise would scoot under him and he would slide back, reversing the driver while moving. This was a motorcycle version of the Chinese fire drill except they were moving. They would catch up with their group and surprise their fellow riders. A good story.



He showed me a long handled pry-bar made solely for the purpose of straightening handlebars on race bikes. Eddie showed me his Snap-On Tools stashed in an early vintage Snap-On Tool Chest. Several tools had been modified for specific Indian needs, to remove barrel nuts and such. It was amazing.

Eddie had a collection of photos from his racing days. At every race the photographer would sell 8 x 10 photos from the previous week or month's race. I borrowed the photos from Eddie and had large negatives and full sized prints made. I went over them with him and listened to stories about Peanut McDougal, Meeks Hubbard, Cy Homer, Digger O'Dell, Max Bubeck and others. My favorites concerned the Catalina Island Run. One photo shows a hundred or so motorcycles lashed to each other on a barge heading for Catalina. Another one showed all the bikes parked on a point in Catalina with men standing around shooting the breeze with each other before the races began. There is one photo of Eddie "heading out of Avalon on up to Summit then down a steep shale hill."

During the course of our friendship Eddie asked if I wanted to buy some of his tools. I bought a grinder mounted on Model-T axle housing, a set of Oxy Acetylene welding torches and tanks, Snap-On offset-open-end wrenches, his handle bar straightener and other things. I expressed interest in his 40's to 50's vintage Snap-On toolbox. I left him a \$200 deposit on it while he made up his mind.

I dropped by a month or two later and Louise answered the door and invited me in. "Eddie died two weeks ago" she said. I looked at her, and the sadness in her eyes, and hugged her. We both cried. Eddie's declining health had manifested itself slowly. He had been doing well, but then had chest pains. He was hospitalized and passed in several days. Louise was still sorting out what to do next. She offered me a beer but we both had some coffee. She told me that in his hospital bed Eddie had mentioned that he had taken my \$200. She told me Eddie said "You know Louise if you say 'I don't know anything about \$200' Rick would have to let it go." She told him that wouldn't be right.

**Continued on page 18. . .**

## Eddie Bratton—continued. . .

It turned out Eddie's brother came by after his death and took the Snap-On tool box for himself. Louise told me Eddie and his brother were not on the best of terms when Eddie died but she had to let it go. I was disappointed but heck, the box stayed in the family. She asked me if I would like some of Eddie's Trophy's. I was dumfounded.

Louise took me out to the garage and pulled out several boxes of trophies Eddie had won over the years. They represented triumphs of Eddie Bratton's past. I pulled out seven (see photo) and have them proudly displayed in my shop. Trophies (L to R)

- Bay City MC, Championship Field Meet, Belmont Speedway, 7/25/48, District Champion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Eddie Bratton
- SFMC, Perfect Score, Tours & Runs, Won by Eddie Bratton, 1945
- SFMC, Perfect Score, 2nd Place, Won by Eddie Bratton, 1944
- Bay City MC, Championship Field Meet, Passenger Pick Up, Belmont Speedway, 7/25/48, Won By Eddie Bratton
- SFMC, Men's Activity Award, 573 Points, First Place, Won by Eddie Bratton
- Open Field Meet, Hayward, 2/1/1948, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Eddie Bratton
- P.E.T.R., First, Field Meet, Hayward Cal., August 19, 1948, Won By, Eddie Bratton



Old bikers never die, they become legends, in our memories.

Thank you Eddie and Louise . . . .

**Rick Calou**

# Deep Impact! (or tear stains on the dinner table!)

I wasn't always as profoundly wise as I am today. It took considerable effort. For example:

By the time that I got my first motorcycle, in 1969, motorcycle technology (read "Japanese") had progressed to where a total imbecile, like me, could ride the shit out of a small dirt bike without having to worry too much about maintenance. About all I had to worry about was keeping gas in the tank (25 cents would fill it up!), and keep 2-stroke oil in the oil tank. Adjust and lube the chain? Huh? Clean the air filter? What's that?? Mostly, I just repaired (frequent) crash damage. . .

Abuse and neglect a motorcycle long enough, and funny noises start emanating from the engine's bottom-end. My more experienced motorcycling acquaintances would frequently utter ominous phrases such "clutch pushrod oil seal", or "clutch basket", or "split the cases". These terms all seemed pretty scary, and they were to be avoided at all costs. Thankfully, the bike magazines of that era were much more "hands on" than they are today. Just about every issue contained some sort of tech article explaining the fundamentals of motorcycle mechanics. After absorbing a couple of years of these articles, I felt that I had a pretty good theoretical understanding of what was going on inside of a motorcycle engine. I also purchased a shop manual, just in case. The 1960's Japanese shop manuals were a trip! They appeared to have been translated from Japanese to English by some Lithuanian with no knowledge of either Japanese or English!!!

For example, here is a passage taken from a 1967 Suzuki T200 shop manual:

**"In designing the T 200 transmission, utmost attention was paid to the intensity of gears and pinions. Dog-with-dog engaging system instead of the dog-with-hole system is employed with the exception of the low gear, which needs no dog hole to be machined into free gears and pinions and thus making it possible for the center part of them to be thicked [sic]."**

Or

**"A piece of new mechanism is ingeniously contrived into the T 200 carburetors. With the high speed engine, carburetor settings are selected with the principal point put at high revs of the engines so that the mixture metered at low revs below 4,000 rpm is inevitably on the rich side and engine response becomes poor when engine speed is out of the power range. This type of engine will prove rather hard to handle in the stop-and-go city traffic. This disadvantage can't be overcome in the carburetor design so far in use.**

**"With the T 200 carburetors, however, the problem has been successfully solved by doing away with the air vent in the mixing chamber and providing a special channel, between the air funnel portion and float chamber, which produces negative pressure in the float chamber and makes it difficult for fuel to be primed up at low revs."**

Was that clear???

One pearl of wisdom that I encountered was that fast motocross racers rarely used their clutches when shifting. Being as slow as I was, I took this tip to heart, and started doing clutchless gear shifts when trail riding. I must have glossed over the part where the author discussed all of the damage that clutchless shifts inflict on a motorcycle transmission.

You can probably guess where this is heading. . .

Eventually, my bike's shifting got to be quite ragged, with both missed shifts, and popping out of gear. The consensus amongst the Lemon Grove/Spring Valley dirt bike intelligentsia was that my bike's tranny suffered from something called "bent shift forks". . . .

Oh Shit!!!

**Continued on page 20. . .**

## Deep Impact! - continued...

I knew what shift forks were, I had a shop manual, I had the use of my Dad's tools, and I had a Suzuki dealership near by. With grim determination, I decided to tackle the repair job. The disassembly was actually pretty simple, except that I needed Suzuki of Lemon Grove to pull the magneto flywheel. (Please don't tell anybody that I committed a cardinal sin when I used screwdrivers to pry the cases apart!) Sure enough, just as my gurus suspected, one of the shift forks was bent and discolored blue from the friction. After procuring the replacement part and gaskets, I began the assembly process.

I can remember that day like it was yesterday, my girl friend (eventually Spouse, Mk I), was assisting me at my parent's house, and it was raining like hell. I had been doing this work on the patio. Since the weather was so bad, and since my Mom wasn't home, I decided to complete the reassembly on the dining room table. Hell, Mom wouldn't mind (much).

It took a little finesse, but I eventually got the two center case halves together, and set about torquing down the screws. In the '60s, Japanese fasteners were lousy. Stripped bolts and screws were commonplace, and making every mechanical task an adventure. The only way that you could possibly remove or replace Phillips-head case screws was with an Impact Driver. This mechanical marvel is like a chisel, with a screw driver bit at the tip. Internally, there is a cam mechanism that converts the linear force of a hammer blow into a twisting motion at the bit. With an impact driver it is possible to apply enormous torque to a screw without rounding off the screw head.

With my girlfriend holding the engine cases steady, I began torquing the center case screws with my trusty impact driver. I was smart enough to lay down a hunk of plywood so as not to mar the table's high-buck formica surface.

With the strength of Thor, I began to torquing the crap out of each screw using my Dad's claw hammer and the impact driver. Everything was going smoothly, until my last hammer blow. . .

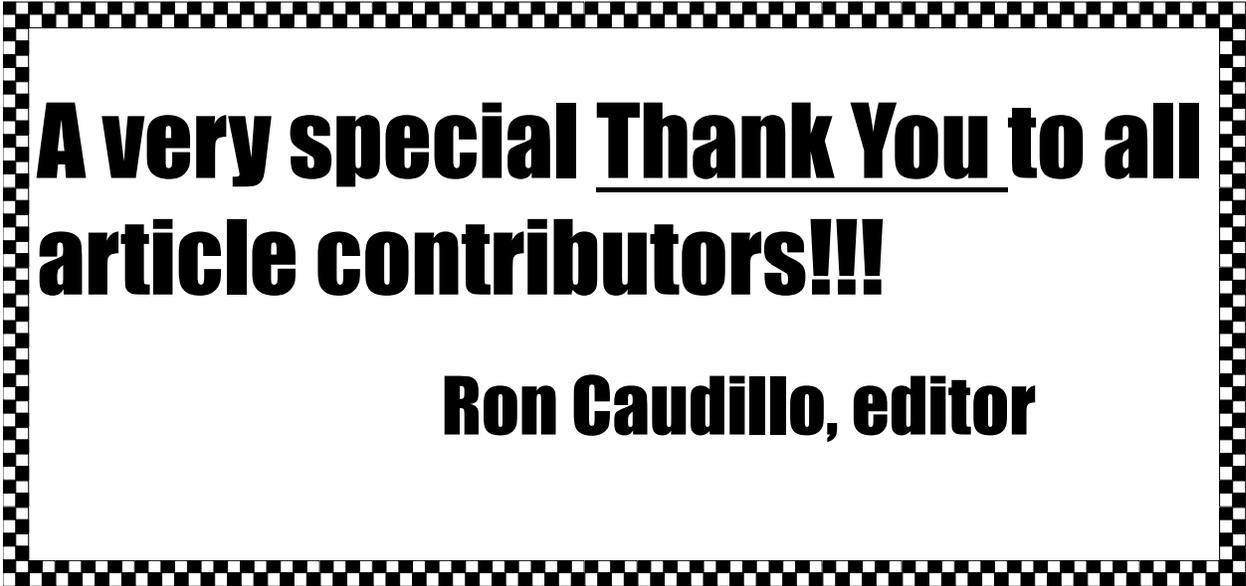
BAMMMMM!!! Almost as if the table was telling me "No Mas!", two of the table's leg's snapped off, and the engine slid to the floor!!!! (This was the kind of shit that would happen to Wally Cleaver any time he followed Eddie Haskell's advice!)

Ultimately, I did get out of this predicament. All it took was a fist full of 16-penny nails, and some Wil-Hold glue. It took about four months before my girlfriend would set foot in my house, owing to her embarrassment!!!!

I almost forgot . . . Despite ending up with a couple of surplus parts, the bike shifted perfectly. So what was the lesson that learned from this sordid affair?

**DON'T MARRY AN IRISH CHICK (just kidding!)**

**Ron Caudillo**



**A very special Thank You to all  
article contributors!!!**

**Ron Caudillo, editor**



# San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

## Membership Application

### Purpose of Club

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation of antique motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal and educational activities among its members and the public, with membership open to all persons having an interest in antique motorcycles.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY : \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ (FAX) \_\_\_\_\_

May we include your name, phone numbers and e-mail address in our Club Roster sent only to SDAMC members?

YES NO NOTE: HOME ADDRESS IS EXCLUDED

**Note: THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY. DO NOT SIGN UNLESS YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS RELEASE.** The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club, Inc. hereafter referred to as SDAMC, Inc, the board of directors and members shall not be liable or responsible for damage to property or any injury to persons, including myself, during any SDAMC, Inc. meeting, activity, or event even where the damage or injury is caused by negligence (except willful neglect). I understand and agree that all SDAMC, Inc. members and their guests participate voluntarily and at their own risk in all SDAMC, Inc. meetings, activities, and events. I RELEASE and hold SDAMC, Inc. its board of directors and members harmless for any injury or loss to my person or property which may result there from. I understand this means I agree not to sue SDAMC, Inc, its board of directors or members for any injury resulting to myself or my property in connection with any SDAMC, Inc. meeting, activity or event.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual dues are \$25. Please make checks payable to SDAMC**

**Mail Application to:**

**San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club  
P.O. Box 178197  
San Diego, CA 92177**