



AMCA EUROPEAN CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

"Having fun with old motorcycles"

March 2025

Hello AMCA Europe Members,

We start this time with a story from Juris Ramba, our Latvian Country Ambassador, about his adventures recovering a Henderson DeLuxe from Moscow. We then have a report on the recent big Mecum auction, another episode of 'What's in the Garage' followed by pictures from some of our new members.

A Henderson in Moscow

I have a story to tell about how I acquired my 1928/29 HENDERSON De Luxe. That happened before Latvia became independent about 40 plus years ago. This is a photograph of my De Luxe in its current state.



The story goes that two Henderson sidecar outfits were brought to Moscow from the USA back in 1929 by two Russian engineers by the surnames of Seleznev and Izotov, who were returning from a working visit to the USA. They, of course, had to seek permission from the Russian authorities to buy these secondhand machines...

Both machines were driven by the respective families on the roads of Moscow and surrounding villages until they wore out, and understandably there were no spares available in Russia at the time, as well as no know-how to keep them on the road. The other De Luxe model is still in Moscow and has always been in a much better shape and more complete, but

not restored for several reasons. One of the reasons was transmission problems, worn out gears. This information is from the times before Putin's war in Ukraine when I communicated with a couple of Russian enthusiasts.

This is the second survived 1928 De Luxe outfit in Moscow.



In 1980 at a motorcycle rally in Riga we had some participants from Moscow and from them I heard rumours that there was a 1920s Henderson stored on a 7th floor balcony at a house of flats in central Moscow. "Almost too good to be true", I thought, but I had to verify this information, just in case. The owner, one comrade Malinovsky, did not want to sell his Henderson, but he wanted to exchange it for a running 1920s motorcycle, preferably American.

At that time I did not have anything suitable on my swops list, but I had a WLA 42 Harley-Davidson complete with leather pannier bags, searchlight, original glass headlight and other period accessories. So I could quickly exchange my H-D for a more or less complete 1925 Indian 101 Scout in running condition, but held together with wire and even strings...

The next step was to find a friendly truck driver who could help me deliver the Indian to Moscow and help with the exchange. In Soviet time there were no borders between Russia and Latvia. I found a club mate, who was a truck driver at the Riga Aerosol factory. He was assigned the task to deliver some goods to a town past Moscow and he agreed to help. Here I must mention that this happened in the middle of a severe Russian winter with temperature below minus 30 degrees Centigrade. We had to sleep overnight on the road in the truck cab and the driver had a pair of army sheepskin sleeping bags. Yet we froze thoroughly in those sheepskin clad sleeping bags, but luckily morning dawned and we could continue our journey. We arrived at the house of flats where the Henderson had to be picked up at 2 o'clock the following morning. There was one foot of snow around the house...

Comrade Malinovsky had already taken the Henderson, which was in bits and pieces, down to the ground floor by using the lift of the house. Despite the bitterly cold weather I could easily start the Indian Scout and the new owner was happy to hear it running. So the deal was struck there and then in the early hours of the morning. I also got the original sidecar chassis in good condition and a terribly rusty Goulding sidecar tub which could only be suitable as a sample to make a new body. I have been looking far and wide for a replacement Goulding body in reasonable condition, but so far have not had any luck.



By Russian standards this Henderson was beyond restoration because someone had sawn out a piece from the bottom frame tube to facilitate cylinder removal!? Later the seat lug broke while the machine was ridden with a heavily-laden sidecar attached. Besides the gearbox gears had worn out beyond use

and at the time it was impossible to manufacture a new pitch system gear set in Moscow.

A new "lost wax" steel casting of the Henderson seat lug was produced to replace the broken original.



The previous owner had been some kind of an artist soul and had added extra valances to the original mudguards, possibly to avoid mud splatters on the Russian village roads. The machine had been painted with some white lead paint which was flaking off easily...Yet when the extra sheet metal work was removed, the original mudguards were found to be intact.



Yours truly with my new acquisition, praying for life, long enough to rebuild this beautiful machine to pristine condition...



Below shows my eldest brother Viktor, who was 10 years senior, and our children with my new acquisition back in the 1980s. Far right is our eldest daughter Santa and she is 50 this year. My eldest son Reinis is with the white cap. I am 74 now... The other girl is Dace and she is Viktor's daughter. How time flies!



This photograph was supplied by the owner of the second Henderson in Moscow. This is the then owner's wife trying the bike for size.



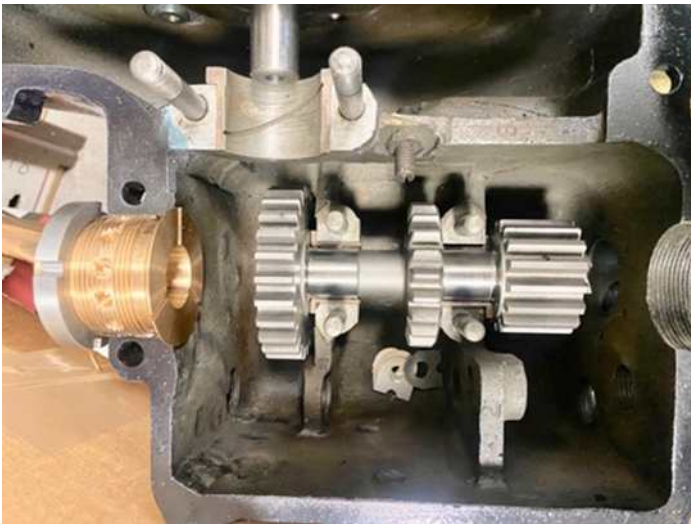
The picture below shows both De Luxe models as they were used by the two Russian families after the Hendersons arrived in Moscow in the 1930s.



After studying notes and the front fender bracket design it turned out that my model is from 1929, could be one of the last De Luxe models produced.



I am currently preparing the engine main bearings and con-rod bearings for line boring. This job takes a lot of know-how, which is not readily available these days...



During my half century with historic motorcycles I have had several desperate, if not hopeless motorcycle projects to rebuild. To conclude, I think that my prayers regarding the De Luxe model have been heard by the Almighty and I intend to finish it before this year wears out...

Juris Ramba – The Baltic Pioneer.

European Meets

Once again a reminder that our next European Meet is 30/31 May at the American Motorcycle Museum in Raalte, NL. Our theme is Original Paint so please bring out those treasures. And don't forget judged bikes should be pre-registered at the AMCA Website.

Malle Mile Beach Race

This is at Margate, Kent UK 3-4 May 2025. It looks like the second year, with an attractive video on the Website. For our beach racing fans this is a short drive from the Channel Tunnel or the Dover Ferry, so as accessible as the Normandy Beach Race later in the year. Did any members make it last time? I plan to be there as a spectator if not a competitor.

Mecum Auction 30 Jan-01 Feb

This Las Vegas auction is the largest in the world and gives us some clues as to the market for old motorcycles. The highlight was \$1.32 million for a 1915 Cyclone restored by Stephen Wright, surely a world record price. A well-documented 1938 Crocker fetched \$880k, two 1913 Hendersons went for \$352k and \$159k, a 1929 Indian 4 for \$184k, and a 1928 Indian Ace for \$192k. Away from this exotica of 1500 lots were 165 unsold where 'the bid goes on'. This included two more Crockers not going past \$250k and three 1920s BMWs which had fetched fancy money in earlier auctions. Undocumented eight valve bikes were going near the cost of building them, custom bikes and choppers were either unsold or going cheaply, and there were some late model bikes I thought were bargains. In thousands of dollars there was a 2002 Harley V-Rod for 5.5, a 1988 chopper for 3, a 1985 FXEF for 2.75, a 1969 XLH for 3.3, a 1973 FLH for 3.3, a 1969 XLH for 1.9, and a 1981 XLS for 1.1. Several knuckleheads went for under \$50k but a few good ones made nearly twice that. A 1941 TA trike fetched \$82k and a 1942 WLA built out of mostly nos parts fetched \$55k, yikes!

There were numerous pioneer bikes from Harley, Flanders, Marsh-Metz, New Era, Pope, Comet, Excelsior, Marvel, Reading Standard, Wagner, Minneapolis and Pierce. Most of these were single cylinder but you can see from the prices that bidders wanted the twins.

Login in to www.mecum.com and browse through the results. In a three day auction prices were all over the place, starting around \$300 for a step-through Honda, so think about the might-have-beens and the bargains you could have picked up.

What's in the Garage?

It's my turn again, this time with a recently acquired 1950 Sunbeam S8.



As always, the technical side interests me. This is a 500 cc overhead cam engine with the cylinders in-line rather than side-to-side. It has shaft drive, a four speed gearbox, a rubber mounted engine and plunger rear suspension. Earlier Sunbeams had a good reputation for quality, but the marque fell on hard times and was bought by BSA in 1943. The S7 was launched in 1946 and designed by Erling Poppe, based loosely on the BMW R75 but without the boxer cylinders. With the heavily finned crankcase it looks like an aero engineer trying to design a motorcycle, as the Sopwith and ABC marques after WW1. The S7 had fat tyres and was designed to attract US buyers, but suffered handling problems at speed. The shaft drive was to a worm gear rather than a stronger bevel gear so maximum power was not sought, and this expensive machine suffered in comparison with the regular BSA and Triumph 500 cc parallel twins.

In 1949 the S7 de luxe was introduced, with the S8 a somewhat lighter and sportier variant with regular size wheels as seen. Neither model was particularly

successful, and production stopped in 1956 after about 16,000 were built, split roughly 50/50 between the the S7 and S8. The earlier model with its distinctive looks is now the more collectable, with the later S8 more popular as a rider.

New Members

Welcome to Zdenek Votipka from the Czech Republic. Here he is with his Indian Four:



Thierry Rebert has rejoined after about twenty years, and is still riding his 1935 Harley RL. Welcome back Thierry.



We are also pleased to welcome Stéphane Coppola from France with his several bikes:



From Germany Christoph Schlundt has rejoined:



And Greg Polz is very welcome:



And Peter Häfliger joins us from Switzerland:



Welcome to our great Club! More new member pictures to follow.

Director Photos

Juha Finholm suggested we include pictures to help you identify those working for our Chapter, so some are attached and I hope to see more next time.

2025 Events

Below is our latest timetable for the year. The AMCA events are firm, but some of the others are provisional, and will be updated as more information is received. Please advise me of any corrections, or additional events you would like to see included. Any events cancelled or postponed are marked with an asterisk (*). Please check with the organisers before travelling any distance.

2025 Special Italian Challenge

Pan American Highway In 2025 Patina Garage's crew, our members of Langhe Hills Italian Chapter and also other European friends, will start from Europe to run the longest American Highway on vintage motorcycles. (see our map)



The first stage will be from Prudhoe Bay in Alaska to Texas.

Very important: these guys have connected their challenge to raising funds for a pediatric hospital that cares for children suffering from terminal illnesses. VISAS - Assistenza ai Malati inguaribili. (Assistance to the incurably ill).

All the money raised will be for the hospital - try to be part of it !

We'll keep you updated.

Instagram: [#patinagarageitalyfrance](https://www.instagram.com/patinagarageitalyfrance)

2025 AMCA National Meets

Jan 31-Feb 01 Music City Chapter, Lebanon TN

Feb 27-Mar 01 Sunshine Meet, Daytona FL

Mar 22-23 Omaha Meet, Fremont NE

Apr 25-26 Perkiomen Chapter, Oley PA

May 30-31 European Chapter, Raalte NL

June 06-07 Viking Chapter, St. Paul MN

June 13-14 Fort Sutter Meet, Dixon CA

July 17-19 Wauseon Coalition, Wauseon OH

July 25-27 Yankee Meet, Greenfield MA

Aug 22-23 Australian Meet, Bulli NSW

Oct 03-04 Chesapeake Meet, Upperco MD

Oct 10-11 Southern National, Denton NC

2025 National Road Runs

Apr 22-24 Phoenix Road Runner Chapter, Sierra Vista AZ

May 20-22 Riveter Chapter, Berea KY

June 18-20 Oregon Trail Chapter, Cottage Grove OR

Sep 02-04 Roosevelt Chapter, Detroit Lakes MN

Sep 16-18 Blue Ridge Chapter, Maggie Valley NC

European 2025 Events

Austria

September 02-07 European Bike Week, Faaker See
www.europeanbikeweek.com

Belgium

August 17 Oude Klepper Parade, De Haan

Croatia

June 12-15 European HOG Rally, Medulin
www.harley-davidson.com

Czech Republic

Denmark

May 29-31, Skagen Run, this time Skagen to Copenhagen, for pre-1935 bikes. Details from elleham07@gmail.com

Check. Aug tba Laholm Beach Jutland, pre-1947 beach racing and partying www.romomotorfestival.dk

Finland

January 11 Swap (Rompepäivä) in Jyväskylä 250km north from Helsinki. Mostly Japanese and Eastern Europe bike parts, but some vendors of vintage American and British. For 2026, second weekend in January.

Jan 31-Feb 02 in Helsinki: is said to be the largest motorcycle exhibition in Northern Europe. Some vintage bikes and choppers. More info in English <https://mp.messukeskus.com/?lang=en>

Apr 18-20 Helsinki American car show, with some custom, vintage and modified Harleys.

May 03-04 Classic Motor Show, Lahti, emphasis on vintage cars, but also some old bikes.

May 19. Walkka swap meet, mostly modern H-D and choppers, but some older stuff plus an evening party.

mid-July Flathead Rally, location and date to be confirmed

Late August is the "Pannuralli" meet for Panheads. 60+ km NW of Helsinki.

01 November. Walkka swap meet, mostly modern H-D and choppers, but some older stuff plus an evening party.

France

May 08-11 Euro Festival, Port Grimaud www.harley-davidson.com

Beach racing pre-1947 cars and bikes in Ouistreham, Normandy. Next one is Sep 24-27 2025.

www.normandybeachrace.com

Germany

January 26 Winter Classic Bike, Ruesselheim www.diewerkhalle.de

Feb 27-Mar 02 Retro Classics Stuttgart www.retroclassics.de

April 05-06 Technorama Kassel www.technorama.de

April 25-27 Veterama Hockenheim www.veterama.de

May 03-04 Technorama Ulm www.technorama.de

April 25-28 Retro Classics Stuttgart www.retroclassics.de

May 24-25 Technorama Hildesheim www.technorama.de

June 19-22 Magic Bike Week, Ruedesheim magic-bike-ruedesheim.com

August 23 Velodrom Racetrack Darmstadt, board track racing www.vollgas-rennspass.de



September 12-13 Hindenburg Dirt Track racing hindenburg-dirt-track.com

Oct 10-12 Veterama, Mannheim. Biggest European swap meet. www.veterama.de Our AMCA stand is open to all members who want to sell their own parts.

Italy

Jan 24-26 Motor Bike Expo Verona, custom bikes www.motorbikeexpo.it

May 09-11 ASI Vintage Vehicle Day www.asifed.it to be confirmed

May 21-25 FIVA Italian Rally, Emilia Romana, Tuscany www.fiva.org

Latvia

Sep 12-15 Kurland Rally. Details from Juris Ramba at ramoto1992@gmail.com

Netherlands

May 30-31 AMCA European Meet – see you there
www.amca-europe.eu

June 06-08 Silent Gray Fellows International Meet, Oosterhout. 21th meet for pre-1966 American bikes.
www.silentgrayfellows.nl

Nov 02 Silent Gray Fellows swap meet, Chaam
www.silentgrayfellows.nl

Norway

Feb 07-08 Enköping Market for Indian Parts
www.indianklubb.no

June 27-29 Kogsløpet 2025 (*this is the NVMC Norwegian Vintage Motorcycle Club main event*)
Selbu Camping, arrangement hosts are Stjørdal Veteran Motorsykkel Club. More info on the event;
www.nvmc.no/ekstra2/ekstra_00/

August 14-17 Indian Summer Rally, Hunderfossen
www.indianklubb.no (tbc)

Poland

Here are the proposed dates for Oldtime Club Poland (OCP) events in 2025.

25-27 April 2025 season opening – Brzeg

15-18 May 2025 North East – Suwałki

04-08 June H-D Super Rally - Bydgoszcz
www.superrally.com

05-07 Sep 2025 Vintage Indian Days Rally

16-19, October 2025. End of the season Bieszczady Mountains

Spain

January 24-26: 17th edition of Jabalinera; Location: Noja, "Cantabria"; www.mcpiston.com

May 23-25: 3rd Centenary Rally for cars and motorcycles up to 1925; Location: Salou (Tarragona); Contact: motos@feva.es

May 30 - June 1: 25th edition of Vuelta Cantabria; Location: "Cantabria" www.mcpiston.com

June 8-14: *Road Run Spain; Small locally organized Road Run with daily tours in Northern Spain/Pyrenees for a limited number of participants.*; Contact: amcaspain@gmail.com

September 13-14: 5th National Meeting of Antique Motorcycles; Location: El Burgo de Osma, Soria; Limited number of participants (organized by FEVA); Contact: motos@feva.es

September 11-14 40th edition Big Twin Club Spain Catellón; Location: Grau de Castellón; bigtwinclub@gmail.com

September 21-28: 38th edition of Pistón Rally; Location: Santander and surrounding areas; Website: www.mcpiston.com

Sweden

To be announced.

Switzerland

March 01 Sam's OTM Swap meet Vianco Arena Brunegg, AG <https://www.samsotm.ch/>

March 22 Auction Oldtimer Galerie Toffen
<https://www.oldtimergalerie.ch/de/5/20163/?oid=10129&lang=de>

April 05 FAM Oldtimer-Markt swap meet Pratteln

April 05 „Einstellfahrt“ FAM Linthgebiet Airfield Mollis (ride on airfield for adjustment of vehicles without registration - not for flying)
<https://linthgebiet.fam->

amv.ch/index.php/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen-2-blog/05-04-2025-einstellfahrten-mollis

May 02-04 Goudron Bike Days, Brig VS
<https://www.goudron.ch>

May 03-04 Retromecanika swap meet Palexpo
Geneve <https://retromecanika.ch/>

May 04 Love Ride Switzerland Dübendorf ZH
<https://loveride.ch>

May 18 The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride (in
different cities in Switzerland)
<https://www.gentlemansride.com>

May 30-31 Rock this town Solothurn (rock'n roll
weekend) <https://www.rockthistownsolothurn.com/>

May 30-June 01 Swiss Classic World Luzern
<https://www.swissclassicworld.ch>

May 31 Swiss Classic World Rallye
Luzern <https://rallye.swissclassicworld.ch/details>

June 13-15 Motor Classics
Lenzerheide <https://www.lenzerheidemotorclassics.ch>

June 13-15 Harley Davidson Mountain 4StarWeekend
Arosa <https://www.waldhotel.ch/de/harley-davidson-mountain-weekend>

June 29 Oldtimertreff
Schwaegalp <https://www.oldtimertreff-schwaegalp.ch/index.htm>

July 04-05 Hangar Rocking in St.
Stephan <https://www.hangarrockin.com>

July 12-13 Rally Tremola
2025 <https://motoepocaticino.ch/>

August 23-24 Toefftraeff The valley & motorworld
Kemptthal <https://www.toefftraeff.ch/>

August 23-24 Bergsprint Walzenhausen-
Lachen <https://www.bergsprint.ch/>

October 26 Oldtimermesse swap meet St.
Gallen <http://www.oldtimermesse-ch.com/>

November 01 Sam's OTM Swap meet Vianco Arena
Brunegg, AG <https://www.samsotm.ch/>

United Kingdom

April 25-27 Stafford classic bike show and auction
www.staffordclassicbikeshows.com

June 08 Banbury Run, Gaydon, 250 pre-1931 bikes
www.vmcc.net

Aug 01-04 International West Kent Run, 250 runners
at The Friars, Aylesford, ME20 7BX www.vmcc.net

September 05-07 Beaulieu International
Autojumble/Netley Marsh motorcycle jumble
www.beaulieu.co.uk/weekend-events/international-autojumble/

Oct 05. Pioneer Run, 350 pre-1915 bikes, Epsom
Downs to Brighton.
www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk/events/the-pioneer-run

Oct 10-12 Stafford classic bike show and auction
www.staffordclassicbikeshows.com

European Chapter Directors 2025

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Country Ambassadors

In addition to those Directors marked with asterisks (*) above, we also have the following country ambassadors:

Denmark. Michael Pedersen, elleham07@gmail.com

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Italy. Claudia Krause, amca.europe@aol.de

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Please volunteer if you would like to be representative for a country not mentioned. You just need to know what bike-related events take place in your country, and answer occasional Email questions.

Don't forget to renew your subscriptions at www.antiquemotorcycle.org

And keep me up to date if you change Email address.

The next newsletter will probably be in June, so please keep sending me articles and photos on bike related items, and safe riding until then.

Stay safe, wishing you happy riding, and best regards,

Steve Slocombe,
President AMCA European Chapter



