

November 2018

Hello AMCA Europe Members,

This time we have reports on the Mannheim show in Germany, the Bonhams auction at the Stafford UK show, a salutary lesson, a nice day out, a new book, and the shows scheduled for next year.

Mannheim

This is the biggest European swap meet, and the one that traditionally closes out our season. For the first time in 25 years I did not go, as I have little left to sell and don't really need anything to buy. However, members Martin van Kuijk and Olivier Blainville took over my old spot, so the AMCA was once again represented. Here's Olivier, last seen on a 1937 original paint knucklehead at Raalte, caught on a little Kawasaki runaround at the show.



Thanks to Claudia Krause, our German country ambassador, for the picture. Claudia also said the weather was unseasonably warm at 26C/79F and the 2500 vendors had 48,000 visitors over the weekend.

Pete Reeves tried flying in to Frankfurt and renting a car for the show, had a good time, found nothing, left at 1630 Saturday and was back home near London at 2030 UK time. That sound like a plan for next year.

Stafford Show/Bonhams Auction

This UK show and auction 13/14 October always clashes with the Mannheim meet and did so again this year. As I was not going to Mannheim, it was a chance for me to scarf up those American bikes that I thought Bonhams did such a poor job of selling in the UK. There was a 1930 Henderson KJ in the auction, much like my '29, which I did not want to go cheaply given what I have put into my bike. I checked out the downloaded auction catalog, borrowed Pete Reeves' hard copy to save the £25 admission charge, and made my plans... Unfortunately I spent so long developing my cunning plan that I missed the bidder registration deadline, decided against a 400 mile round trip in heavy traffic, then spent the weekend agonising over what would happen.

Well, here are the results, translated into dollars at £1=\$1.31 for our American readers. The Henderson, with a significant weld repair on the cases and a custom paint job, fetched a gratifying \$74k so my wife might be a well-to-do widow one day. It was at this time I realised the sale was from the estate of a guy younger than me when he died – time to get out for some serious old bike riding! A nice 1919 Henderson made \$63k, a 1920 Harley W flat twin \$24k, a 1925 Excelsior small twin \$29k, a 1923 Indian Scout \$30k and a 1917 Reading Standard Big Twin the same amount.

There were four Vincent twins in the sale, with the three Rapides making \$53k, \$48k and \$42k and the 1951 Shadow going for \$81k. I would say this shows a slight softening of Vincent prices.

Three of the Danish Nimbus 750 cc straight fours went for \$11-12k with a fourth not meeting reserve. A Munch Mammoth also failed to sell.

The madness was with the four Brough Superior SS100 bikes, where the bidders were certainly buying the dream. A 1933 project bike in bits fetched \$211k, a similar 1928 project with a KTOR motor took \$165k, while an incomplete 1925 'sand racer project' was the showstopper at \$346k, making the restored 1927 with KTOR motor look a bargain at \$218k.

Some auction fatigue could be seen towards the end of Day 2, as several less exalted British and Japanese

bikes failed to sell, but Bonhams reported the auction a great success at £3.4 million/\$4.5 million in sales. As they take about a third total in commission from both buyers and sellers, I can see they will be happy with a million in gross profit...

A pal went to the swap meet, was charged £14/\$20 entry, and said it was becoming Tee shirts and belt buckles with old stuff hard to find. Bah humbug!

A Salutary Lesson

Here's my 29 KJ again, showing all that non-factory nickel gleaming in the sunshine:



During the rebuild everything was replaced except the clutch, which I thought was OK. The engine was tight with a reground crankshaft and all new bushings, so I've been breaking it in carefully over a specially chosen route with no stop signs or traffic lights. After about 250 miles it came to a stop with the engine running but the bike not moving in gear – the clutch! My long suffering wife recovered me and the bike in the van, and I started phoning round for new clutches. One manufacturer has stopped trading, and another is out of stock because the many Hendersons on the Cannonball Run cleaned him out. Well, it's an engine-out job so time to start...

I drained the oil, removed the throttle and magneto cables, took off the carburettor, removed the fuel line, took off the dash panel, removed the tanks, disconnected the battery, removed the saddle, battery box and tool box, wrestled off the exhaust pipes, removed all the oil lines, took off the rear chainguard, removed the drive chain – and found the key had broken in the rear drive sprocket. So I cancelled my clutch order, put in a new \$2 key, replaced the chain, put back the exhaust, and you know the rest. The lesson is that Occam's Razor is right, and often the simplest explanation is the correct one.

A Nice Day Out

On 16th October I got a call from two people I didn't know who live about 30 miles away and were having trouble starting their newly acquired 42WLA Harley. Next morning, two older guys arrived with the bike on a trailer.



I removed the carburettor and stripped it on the bench. The basic problem was that it was a Linkert M41 with a 1 1/16" venturi, when the bike was originally fitted with a M88 and 15/16" venturi. However, I found dirt in the idle passages and the slot between the two tiny idle holes was blocked, so honour was satisfied. We broke for lunch at the Cliff Top Cafe near me, and sat outside in the autumn sunshine, looking out over the Channel to France seen clearly 22 miles away, eating bacon sandwiches and a cup of strong tea and yarning. A Spitfire did a slow roll over the Battle of Britain memorial, a Stearman biplane chugged along the coast on a pleasure trip, a late season Red Admiral butterfly went by the picnic table and I had a severe attack of lyricism.

Back at the shop I refitted the carburettor and the 78 year old owner jumped excitedly on the bike and started it up second kick. Wow! Does it get any better than this! Yes it does, because the bike was unregistered and I was able to take photos, write a dating certificate for the UK authorities, and take a fee off the happy owner for our Chapter.

A New Book

In a triumph of desktop publishing economics over common sense, I've just written a four volume 1400+ page series on 'The Harley-Davidson VL Years'. This covers the 1930-36 model years, with 1937 and 1938 included for good measure. That's 113 copies of the Enthusiast magazine, all the sales brochures I can find, the dealer announcements, a list of the surviving 1200+ VL engine numbers, technical changes by year, and colour pictures of restored and unrestored bikes. Check out www.vlheaven.com for details, and the first 50 copies will get half price postage!

Sidecar Racing

It was back to Lydden Hill circuit for me on 21 October for my first exposure to modern 'kneeler' sidecar outfits. Here's one with the body off in the pits:



I think with a 600 cc Honda engine, a chassis made in Switzerland, and a very long drive chain.

And here they are out racing:



Membership

Some prospective European new members have had problems navigating the Website at www.antiquemotorcycle.org, and I had problems with it too in the early days. We want our Club to be easy to join and hard to leave, so please let me know of any difficulties. Our Executive Director takes this seriously, and will work with Cornerstone Registration to fix any problems you may find, so please report any areas for improvement.

Poland Ambassador

I'm pleased to announce that Krzysztof Pedryc has volunteered to be our Country Ambassador for Poland. Chris is a restorer of mostly Indians, and his son Majiec makes those excellent saddles we see at the shows.

Chris is helping to organise the fourth Vistula Run next year, a rally for American old timer vehicles featuring period costume. Dates next time.

Bikes Wanted

We have a French member looking for a 1952 Harley Panhead, and a UK member looking for a Pope motorcycle, any year. Any help out there?

2019 Events

Below is our latest timetable for next year. The AMCA events are firm, but some of the others may be provisional. Please advise me of any corrections, or additional events you would like to see included.

2019 AMCA National Meets

February 22-23, Omaha Chapter, Fremont, NE
March 08-09, Sunshine Meet, New Smyrna Beach, FL
April 26-27, Perkiomen Chapter, Oley, PA
May 17-19, Southern Meet, Denton, NC
May 24-25, European Meet, Raalte, NL
June 14-15, Viking Chapter, St. Paul, MN
June 14-15, Fort Sutter Chapter, Dixon, CA
July 05-07, Empire Chapter, Trumansburg, NY
July 19-21, Wauseon Meet, Wauseon, OH
August 02-03, Yankee Chapter, Terryville, CT
August 24-25, Australian Chapter, Sydney, AUS
September 27-28, Chesapeake, Jefferson, PA

2019 AMCA National Road Runs

April 08-10, Cherokee Chapter Road Run, Kerrville, TX
June 09-12, Allegheny Chapter, Ligonier, PA
September 04-06, Music City Chapter, Nashville, TN
September 23-25, Yerba Buena Chapter, Monterey, CA

Other 2019 Events

Austria

September 03-08 European Bike Week, Faaker See
www.europeanbikeweek.com

Finland

Jan 5 Jyväskylä swap meet, *provisional*

June 05-09 Harley-Davidson Super Rally, Himos
www.superrally2019.fi

July 26-28 International Indian Rally, Sastamala
www.indianmotorcycle.fi

Croatia/Slovenia/Italy

June 27-30 FIVA World Motorcycle Run, www.fiva.org

Germany

Jan 20 Winter Classic Bike Show, Im Alten Opel-Werk, 65428 Rüsselheim, *provisional*

Jan 25-27 Motorrad Bodensee www.motorradwelt-bodensee.de

Mar 07-10 Retro Classics Stuttgart www.retro-classics.de

Apr 05-07, Veterama, Hockenheim www.veterama.de

June 20-23 Magic Bike, Rüdesheim, www.magic-bike-ruedesheim.com *provisional*

Sep 07, Board Track racing at Bielefeld. Contact motoholic@web.de *provisional*

Oct 11-13, Veterama, Mannheim. Biggest European swap meet. www.veterama.de.

Italy

Jan 17-20 Motorbike Expo Verona
www.motorbikeexpo.it

Jan 11-12 Harley and Snow Hillclimb, Bolzano
www.harley.bz.it/de/harley-snow

May 10-12 ASI Moto Show, Parma race track
www.asifed.it *provisional*

Sep 07 Roll'n Flat Beach Race, Caorle
www.venicebeachrace.com *provisional*

Latvia

July 10-13, Kurland Rally. A 60 bike limit this year, so book early at www.kurlandround.lv. *provisional*

Netherlands

Feb 17. Swap Meet, Hengelo, www.alemite-motoren.nl *provisional*

June 8-10, Silent Gray Fellows Meet, Ulicoten. 15th meet for pre-1966 American bikes,
www.silentgrayfellows.nl *provisional*

Aug 09-11, Old Timers Run, Den Haag. Pre-1966 American bikes for the 41st time.
www.hdctheoldtimers.nl

Sep 06-08, Alemite Run, Beuningen. www.alemite-motoren.nl.

Sweden

Jan 24 Eskiltuna swap meet, Harleys/bobbers 1940s up *provisional*

Feb 07 Enköping Indianmarknaden. Indian/early Harley *provisional*

Switzerland

Feb 21-24 Swiss Moto/Custom Zürich www.swiss-moto.ch

May 25-26 Swiss Classic World, Luzern
www.swissclassicworld.ch

June 22-23 Oldtimermesse, Uster *provisional*

Aug 26 Gran Prix Suisse Berne Memorial, Bern *provisional*

Oct 27 Oldtimermesse, St. Gallen *provisional*

United Kingdom

March 24. Pioneer Run, 350 pre-1915 bikes, Epsom Downs to Brighton.

June 17 Banbury Run, Gaydon, 600 pre-1931 bikes

Oct 11-13 Stafford show and auction

European Chapter Directors 2018/19

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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,
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France. Stuart Graham, harleyman3@wanadoo.fr

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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 February, so please keep sending me articles and photos on bike related items.

Wishing you safe and happy riding, and best regards,

Steve Slocombe,
President AMCA European Chapter

