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Schedule of Events

NOTE: Board of Directors (B.O.D.) meetings are open to all members. When held at a chapter members home, please notify the host ahead of time.

Jan 12 (Wed) – B.O.D. Meeting 7:00 pm
Dulano's Pizza 607 West Lake Street Mpls, MN 55408 (612) 827-1726

Jan 15 (Sat) – VIKING CHAPTER HOLIDAY PARTY 4:30-9:00 pm Roseville Community Center 2661 Civic Center Drive Roseville, MN (651) 792-7000

Feb 4-6 (Fri-Sun) - Cycle World Motorcycle Show Minneapolis Convention Center 1301 2nd Ave S. Mpls (612) 335-6000

Feb 9 (Wed) - B.O.D. Meeting 7:00 pm
Taste of Scandinavia (Festival Foods) 401 West 98th Street Bloomington, MN (952) 358-7490

Feb 16 (Wed) – February General Meeting 7:00 pm - Indian Motorcycle of the Twin Cities 2967 Hudson Road St. Paul, MN (651) 765-9988

Mar 9 (Wed) – B.O.D. Meeting 7:00 pm - Baker's Square Restaurant 611 W. 98th St., Bloomington, MN, 55420. (952) 881-4080

Mar 16 (Wed) – March General Meeting 7:00 pm - Jack Crane Museum 1301 East Cliff Road Burnsville, MN (952)-212-8126

RE-CYCLE

DECEMBER

Newsletter of the Viking Chapter
Antique Motorcycle Club of America Inc
Published Quarterly

2010

March, June, September, December

vikingamca@yahoo.com

http://www.vikingmc.org

DAVIDSON'S HARD TALES

by Paul Davidson

Hello Fellow Viking Chapter Members,

The offseason certainly came upon us fast and furious. Sort of like I prefer my bikes but unfortunately we will not be doing any significant riding for a few months. Hopefully many of you have a good project to keep you busy over the off season and it will have you looking forward to getting back on the road in the Spring time.

National AMCA has been busy this past year implementing a number of changes in the judging system. They have created a Judging Guidelines Manual to better define the points deduction system for engine and frame authenticity also including options and accessories. This is designed to better reward those bikes that contain factory original parts including fasteners and finishes. The intent is also to create more uniformity in judging across chapters and judges.

The Board also approved on November 7, 2010 an Honor Competition Class Proposal. Eligibility is as follows: The AMCA Honor Competition Class is reserved for competition modified antique motorcycles 35 years or older that were operated in a documented contest of speed, acceleration or handling in the period of their manufacture. Modern replicas and motorcycles with only modern race history are ineligible. Eligible contest include dirt track, speedway, road racing, hill climb, TT/motocross, drag race, trials, etc.

There have also been significant personnel changes within the National Board of Directors starting in 2011 including our very own Trudi Johnson-Richards. Trudi will be moving on from her past position as Secretary taking over the Vice President duties. Please extend her a word of thanks for the many years of great service she has provided in helping the AMCA function smoothly.

This will be my last newsletter column as I have decided to step aside as your President. I greatly enjoyed my time serving all of the fine people of the Viking Chapter and it was certainly an honor. My service has provided me the opportunity to meet and befriend a great number of exceptional people as well as become more knowledgeable in the motorcycle world. I will not be going anywhere so I hope to still see many of you at the various Viking Chapter events and gatherings.

I will like to invite all of you to attend our wonderful Holiday party Jan 15. We moved to a wonderful new venue last year at the Roseville community center and everyone had a great time. I expect it to be even better this year.

Hope to see you down the road.



Editors Note

First off, this months Re-Cycle is a bit late getting out due to your editor practicing his CRAP (Cold Riding Avoidance Program) skills. Somehow I just couldn't bring myself to assembling another literary masterwork (Re-Cycle) while sitting on the beach for a week in sunny Mexico. PardonMe!

A special THANK YOU! to all the members that contributed content for this issue.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
EVERYONE!**



Mid-America Fall 2010 Auction

submitted by Trudi Johnson-Richards

The Viking Chapter members volunteered at the Mid-America Second Fall Classic Motorcycle/Car Auction on Saturday, September 25, 2010 at the Grandstand, Minnesota State Fairgrounds in St. Paul, Minnesota. Members pushed and handled vintage motorcycles: Jim Geisler, Craig Kotval, Dena Natins, Ivar Natins, Sean O'Neil and Sean's Brother, Jim Petsch and Tom Whittles. The Viking Chapter will receive a contribution for assisting at the auction. Tom Whittles was the Viking Chapter Coordinator.



Honey, Look what I found! Can we keep it?



Wings & Wheels Sept. 11, 2010

Another great turnout. All survived..



"Now Hold On Tight! This baby is Soooo streamlined..."



2011 Viking National Meet Plans

by Sean O'Neal

It's Harleys vs Indians at the 2011 National meet! We're reviving the great rivalry of the 20th century with the return of the Harley Indian Wars at our national meet next summer. Let's see how much American Iron we can get into our bike display. The posters and photos this year will bring our visitors through the struggle to "win on Sunday, sell on Monday" that typified the technology race between these two great American icons. Of course, our show is famous for its diversity so please don't forget to bring your British, German and Japanese bikes too!



Feature display bikes needed! Many visitors to our National Meet have voiced their desire to learn more about old bikes. They see our machines and appreciate their beauty and style, they can tell that the bike is important to somebody, but don't know why that bike is special. They may not even know anything about that specific manufacturer or model. We are looking for a handful of bikes for special displays to educate and entertain our visitors. The special display will include posters describing the facts about the bike, its manufacturer, the time period in which it was made, and what makes it special. If there's any personal story, let's tell that too with photos of the restoration process and other memorabilia that goes with that bike. I'm looking for at least 15 bikes but will take as many as I can do. Please contact Sean O'Neil right away so that I can start working on your display. You can be as involved as you want from simply sitting down to a 20 minute interview to helping out with the posters.

Tech Talkers wanted! We want to have restoration Tech Talks running throughout the National Meet. Our clubs mission to ride, restore and enjoy antique bikes takes a fair amount of arcane knowledge so let's share! If you've documented a restoration with photos, let's put that together into a short presentation. If you have a skill or trick that can help the rest of us on our restoration project, let's set up a quick demo. Sharing our skills and lessons learned is a great way to hang out with your fellow club members and an excellent way to bring in new recruits to the club. By hosting Tech Talks at our National Meet, we'll show the public what we're all about and make sure we're bringing in the next generation of Antique Motorcycle gear heads!

All Members...

submitted by Trudi Johnson-Richards

AMCA National is looking for a Forum moderator (a job description is available). The National Board is attempting to fill this position by Dec. 31, 2010. Anyone interested in the position should send an email to the AMCA Secretary Trudi Johnson-Richards trudijr@visi.com with a brief indication of interest and qualifications. If you are a heavy user of the AMCA forum and have an interest in improving its usage and function - here is your chance.

Vacancy

The Viking Chapter is still looking for a Secretary to serve a two year term on the Board of Directors. Make a few phone calls, attend the B.O.D. Meeting and take some notes each month... GET INVOLVED!

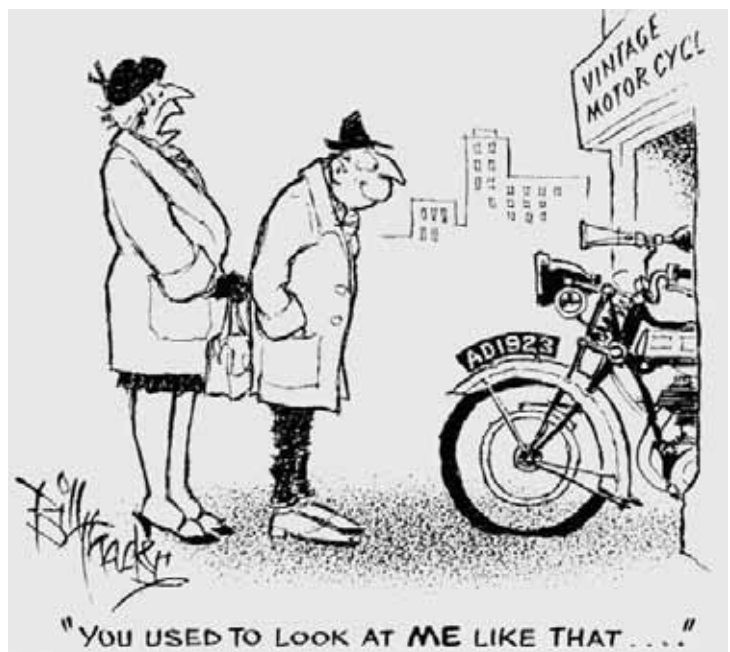


*Viking Chapter
Holiday Party 2010*
Saturday Jan. 15th 2011 4:30-9 PM

New Location!
2661 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, MN




It's a Pot Luck!
Post cards with
"what to bring to share"
suggestions coming
SOON.
Watch your mailbox!



Death From Above (A Bit Of Harley-Indian War Background)

submitted by Jerry Richards - author unknown

I recently watched a program on the History Channel, "Modern Marvels; Motorcycles" (first aired 11/15/1999). I soon discovered that the subject matter was "The War Between Indian and Harley-Davidson". Naturally, the program suddenly seemed worthy of a couple hours of my time.

Most of the commentary was presented by the program narrator, but there were also numerous interviews with several individuals, who, for the most part, did a pretty good job of describing the American motorcycle industry from 1901 through 1930.

The consensus was: Indian was first on the market, and they were hard pressed to meet the huge demand for their popular machine; Harley-Davidson had a strong and reliable product, but they were several years late getting to the market, and they trailed Indian in annual production of machines for many years. At one time there were more than 150 American motorcycle manufacturers. All but a few of them were put out of business in the early 1920's by Henry Ford's "Tin Lizzie" which cost less than a big twin motorcycle with a sidecar; The Great Depression of the early 1930's eliminated all of the American motorcycle manufacturers, except Indian and Harley-Davidson. Competition between these two companies was very keen for as long as they both existed.

Fifty years of competition was described, and it began when Harley-Davidson introduced a motorcycle to compete with Indian. It then continued through the early days of motorcycling, through WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, and into the postwar years, until 1953 when production of Indian motorcycles ceased. Eventually, the topic of conversation shifted from describing the war between Indian and Harley-Davidson, to that frequently asked question ... Why did Indian fail?

As the program guests presented their opinions, it quickly became apparent that none of them had ever read "The Iron Redskin", by Harry V. Sucher. They merely repeated all of the old rumors and tales from past years, and none of them actually knew what caused Indian to fail.

One of the guests speculated that Harley-Davidson unfairly won the contract to supply motorcycles to the U. S. Army during WWII, providing large profits for Harley-Davidson's early post-war era, while the loss of the military contract hurt Indian financially, causing them to cease production in 1953. This opinion is not even close to being factual. Why? Because the fate of Indian motorcycles was determined almost thirty years before WWII even began! And the real truth is... Indian also profited greatly during WWII, which allowed them to set aside \$500,000 dollars for post war operation.

All rumors, tales, and opinions aside, the event that would ultimately cause the demise of Indian motorcycles happened in August of 1916, when George M. Hendee resigned as President of the Hendee Manufacturing Company. Oscar Hedstrom had already left the company, having retired in 1913. After just fifteen years of tremendous success, the two founders of Indian motorcycles retired to enjoy their great wealth, and the company would never be the same again.

An obvious question quickly comes to mind... With such a successful company, why did Hendee and Hedstrom retire so early?

The answer is.... Hendee had lost control of the company by 1911. From then on, Hendee and Hedstrom constantly quarreled with management over financial matters. They could no longer control the design and quality of Indian motorcycles, so they simply took their money and got out!

The next obvious question is.... How did Hendee lose control of the, company that he had founded?

The answer is... He lost control of his company because it was too successful. Annual production of Indian motorcycles had risen from just a few hundred units a year in 1901, to nearly 20,000 units a year by 1911. His huge increase in annual production numbers required frequent expansion of the Indian factory, and that required large amounts of capital.

This continual need for expansion capital was neatly solved the easy way.... The company sold shares of stock to bankers and investors on a regular basis. As it turned out the easy way was not the best way.

By 1911, after ten years of large stock sales to investors, George Hendee owned less than fifty percent of the outstanding stock, and he no longer controlled the company he had founded. He was still the President of Hendee Manufacturing, but he was also a minority stockholder.

Even worse, he was controlled by a Board of Directors who had absolutely no interest or knowledge about motorcycles. To them, motorcycles were just a product to sell in order to provide a return on their investments. This short-sighted and narrow-minded philosophy had a negative impact on the fortunes of The Indian Motorcycle Company.

Just like the founders of Harley-Davidson, George Hendee and Oscar Hedstrom were motorcycling enthusiasts, and the Hendee Manufacturing Company prospered as long as it was a closely held corporation, controlled by motorcycling enthusiasts. Although the name of the Hendee company did not change immediately following the departure of its founders, the company management did change, and the difficult times for Indian began.

The Hendee company was being run by a Board of Directors composed of people who knew nothing about motorcycling. True, there were officers and plant managers in the company who were experienced in the motorcycle industry, and to their everlasting credit, they managed to keep Indian alive until 1953. But they were always directly controlled by the Board of Directors, and the Board frequently made decisions that were serious mistakes.

From 1916 to 1953, the Hendee Manufacturing/Indian Motorcycle Company had numerous majority stockholders, and many different Boards of Directors. The Company was constantly in financial trouble, and each crisis was solved with a new majority stockholder, and or, new Board of Directors. How could it not fail? To put it bluntly, Indian was mismanaged out of existence.

Serious problems for Indian began in 1916, with a racing season that was a disaster. Harley-Davidson won 15 national championship races, and they had also become Indian's biggest sales competitor. But the racing disaster was nothing when compared to the Board of Directors decision to make some quick easy money from the U. S. entry into WWI. It wasn't quick, it wasn't easy, and by 1919 Indian was nearly bankrupt.

From the Board's decision, here's what was supposed to happen. Indian would supply approximately 20,000 motorcycles to the Army, making a nice profit for the Indian treasury, from which to pay dividends to the stockholders.

That was their intent, but here's what actually happened. The Army negotiated a very favorable price, which was very close to the manufacturing cost. Meanwhile, the cost of raw materials increased dramatically, due to wartime inflation, and Indian was forced to deliver the machines at a substantial loss.

And that's the good news! The bad news is.... Indian committed the major portion of their production to fill the Army contract, and very few new Indian motorcycles were available to the civilian market for a couple of years. Indian dealers had very little to sell, and even much needed replacement parts were difficult to obtain from the factory. Many dealers, upset with Indian management, gave up their dealerships and switched to other brands.

The inept Board of Directors that created the fiasco, bailed out by selling the company to a new group of investors in December of 1919. Their job would be very difficult, because the Indian dealer organization was nearly wrecked, many civilian buyers had switched to other brands, and the company treasury was just about empty. Conversely, Harley-Davidson came out of WWI in much better financial shape than Indian.

From 1920 through 1953, Indian's fortunes would be like a yo-yo. Up and down... depending on the wild schemes coming from the various Boards of Directors. The following list of disastrous ventures describe their ill-advised attempts to diversify, in an effort to increase their profits and pay higher dividends to stockholders.

- *A financial disaster is created when Indian attempted to revive the Flying Merkel motorcycle. Indian was forced to obtain high interest short term loans to keep the factory in operation. Indian lost \$1,273,000 in 1922.*
- *Indian announced their entry into the automotive accessory field with a patent shock absorber. Thousands were produced but they were a total failure. Huge losses for R&D, production costs, and reimbursement for returned merchandise.*
- *Indian announced their entry into the home appliance field with a natural gas refrigerator. None were ever produced and the project was dropped. Unknown amount of losses for R&D.*
- *Indian announced they would produce outboard motors for boats. There was some production and distribution, but it was a total failure as they only had one model, and the engine size was inadequate. Huge losses for R&D and production costs.*
- *Indian considered producing two small automobiles, one powered with a Chief engine, and the other with a water cooled four-cylinder engine. Only five prototypes of the latter were*

produced before the projects were abandoned. Huge loss for R&D and prototype construction.

- *Indian Motorcycle Company created a subsidiary company named the "Indian Acceptance Company", which was created for the express purpose of speculating (read gambling) in the stock market. Motorcycle Company funds, as well as management efforts, were diverted to the new company, and production of Indians motorcycles suffered as a result. Actual losses unknown, but reported to be huge.*

These misguided efforts by totally inept Indian management reveal the true problems that were experienced by the Indian Motorcycle Company during the difficult times of the 1920's. At one time during 1928-29, the company had three management changes in just sixteen months. This would hardly reassure buyers, investors, employees, and dealers that Indian was a stable company, and it's quite likely that Harley-Davidson thought the "war" was over.

But the war wasn't over yet. Somehow Indian hung on, and as they entered the decade of the 1930's, Indian still had another twenty years of life. Indian had faced bankruptcy many times before 1930, and they would face it several more times before they eventually ceased production.

It was fortunate for the world of motorcycling, and Indian aficionados past and present, that "The War Between Indian and Harley-Davidson" did not end in 1930. If it had the world would never have seen the beautiful full-fendered Indian models that were introduced in 1940. Despite their beauty, however, they could only delay the unavoidable result of constant mismanagement.

There's no denying the esthetic beauty of the full-fendered Indian models, but there's an old saying about beauty, which can also be used to describe a motorcycle. "Beauty is only skin deep", and that was an accurate description of the Indian models for 1940. These "new" Indians featured a new frame and new sheet metal, but the power train was still a side-valve engine coupled to a three speed transmission.

Regardless of the fact that side-valve engines were a reliable and time-proven design by 1940, many motorcyclists had come to view them as less desirable than an engine with overhead valves. Harley-Davidson introduced the 61 cubic inch Model EL in 1936, which featured an overhead valve engine, a new synchronized four-speed transmission, a new frame, and all new sheet metal. When the "new" Indians appeared in 1940, the Model EL was already in its fifth year of production, and they were tough competition for Indian. As usual, Indian management either failed to recognize the world-wide trend toward overhead valve engines, or they were financially strapped and unable to respond. It was a sad day when production of "The First American Motorcycle" ceased in 1953. But make no mistake about the cause of their failure ... Harley-Davidson did not put Indian out of business. The inevitable failure of The Indian Motorcycle Company was caused by forty years of inept and grossly incompetent top-level management.

What a shame!



It's About Time

by Ron Spargo

I think we have all experienced sellers remorse at least once, especially when selling a motorcycle. My first time (yes, it has happened more than once) was when I was only 18 years old. The motorcycle was a 1962 Triumph 3TA. It was a 350cc twin and a sweet ride it was. Light silver blue with large skirted fenders. It was my first real motorcycle after several well used and abused scooters and mopeds. It took me places I could only dream about going before and brought me home as well. I sold that bike in 1964 to help pay for school. As soon as I put the money in my pocket I knew I had made a mistake but the bike was gone. During the next 45 years I owned almost 50 motorcycles and cars but never stopped looking for another 3TA just like the one I had sold.

This past August after selling a couple of bikes (no remorse) I started looking for another 3TA. I found one in Texas but it was pretty rough and way too expensive. One or two more surfaced but they too were more of a project and were too expensive. I finally found one on the internet and tracked it from the UK all the way through a couple owners to the present owner in Southern California. A call to the owner found that the bike was for sale. He had bought it for his wife but she wanted something newer with electric start. I used some of my wife's frequent flyer miles and flew out to see my potential purchase. After a detailed inspection of the bike I opened the petcock, tickled the old Amal monoblock, turned on the key and gave it a good kick. It started on the first try. The idle was smooth and it made all the right sounds I remembered from 45 years ago. The deal was done!

I had the bike shipped door to door as it was far less expensive than going to get it. It only took 4 weeks and 4 days to get the bike here but it seemed like 4 months.

The day the bike arrived I had my jacket and helmet on as soon as I signed the delivery ticket. Again, a one kick start and I was off for a ride down memory lane.

My wife, Kath, insists that all of our vehicles have names. She says that they listen better when we talk to them. So far, all of our cars, trucks and bikes have had male names. The new 3TA, however, has a female name. Kath says that since she is just a little smaller than my other bikes, is light silver blue, wears a skirt and I have been waiting 45 years for her to get here, her name must be "Patience". Welcome home Patience. It's about time!



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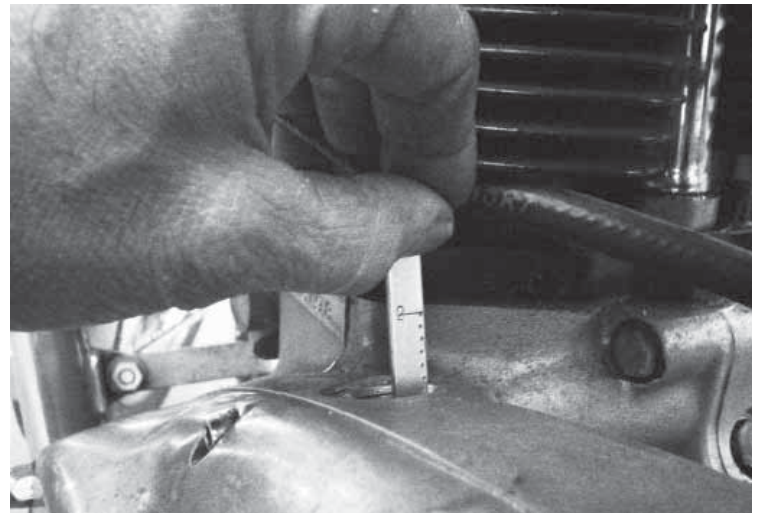
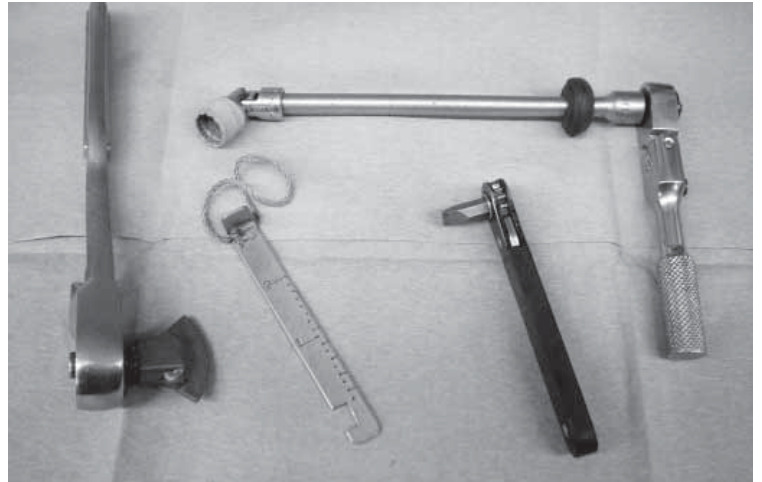
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Vintage Triumph Unit Twin Primary Chain Adjustment

submitted by Joe Anania

Triumph's require a predetermined amount of free play (chain slack) for their primary chains, this will cover using a tool i designed to accurately measure it. I see many out of adjustment chains due to the decade old subjective procedure the manufacture specified in the manuals which shows using your index finger to ck total vertical movement. Remove the upper access plug and insert and hook the tool onto the upper chain run, with light pressure move the tool from upper to lower limits while reading the tools ruler as it passes the edge of the case. The proper location to set the tension (chain slack) is the same as a final drive chain which is at the tightest (min. slack) point so you should check it at several locations by rotating the engine and rechecking until you find the minimum reading (tightest point). Check when the engine is cold and most models specify 1/2" play/slack but you should check your models manual. Tight chains cause high load on bearings, chain, sprockets and accelerates wear, and a loose chain not only causes rotating parts wear but case erosion from the chain contacting the case as it whips from being too loose. This will show up as aluminum in the primary oil normally and is not detrimental on older unit engines but later engines were manufactured to breath through the primary case. To adjust the chain you will need to remove the lower aft plug, if access is an issue use a short 1/4" drive slotted screw driver bit on a 1/4" ratchet wrench to rotate the adjuster. www.joesv-cycle.com



A Quote from "Brit Bike" forum:

submitted by Paul Davidson - author unknown

"I specialize in roaring up behind very bourgeois-looking cars droning along just under the speed limit with uptight parents in the front and desperately bored kids in the back. A Vincent twin is a hard thing to ignore even if Valium Mum is playing Dire Straits at 105 decibels. Once the poor little blighters are plastered against the rear window, getting an eyeful of a thug in a tarmac-distressed leather with filthy denims, big boots and a really, really daft-looking pudding basin helmet, on a BIG, LOUD, BLACK motorcycle emulating the Hounds of Hell, they get a wide smile, a wink and then I drop a gear, pull out and take off at full bore. Result? Small boys turned from bed-wetting milksops into future bikers and small girls who definitely won't be going out with mummy and daddy's ideal nice boy when they grow bumpy bits..."

For Sale:

A few years ago, the AMCA bought a one-ton lot containing about 4,000-5,000 mostly British motorcycle magazines from 1950 to 1990. The purchase was designated for a library project at the AMCA Museum in Hershey, PA that did not develop.

The Club is now offering this collection to members, collectors, vendors, etc. The collection will be sold in one lot. The magazines have been partially cataloged, and they include The Motorcycle, Motorcycling, VMCC, Bike, Classic Bike, Motorcycle Mechanics, Old Bike Mart, Motorcycle Weekly and other titles. A list of the magazines is available in spreadsheet form from Club Treasurer Raymond Dhue.

Bids must be received 12/20. You can send them to Dhue by e-mail at raymond@tampabay.rr.com or by mail at P.O. Box 93430, Lakeland, FL 33804.





Viking Chapter AMCA, Inc.
 Antique Motorcycle Club of America, Inc
 7314 Chicago Avenue South, Richfield, MN 55423

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