

Comstock Chapter News

Antique Motorcycle Club of America

Fall 2017

Saturday Coffee

By Rodd Lighthouse

Saturday coffee is the idea of Comstock member, Jerry Meadows. Although it took awhile to consistently schedule Saturday coffee on the events calendar, it has been popular with the membership. On the average, nine members, spouses and children have been attending each Saturday, and most members have been riding their antique bikes. To date, Saturday coffee has been held at eight locations in Reno, Washoe Valley, Carson City, and Minden. If you haven't been to Saturday coffee, you should check it out. It's fun!



Typical Saturday Coffee Line-up

Comstock Chapter 2nd Annual Picnic – Sparks, NV

By Rodd Lighthouse

After having so much fun hosting the June Comstock Chapter general meeting at their residence, Gus and Pat Assuras offered up their beautiful home for the 2nd annual Comstock Chapter picnic on July 8. Over twenty members, spouses and children were treated to burgers, dogs, salads, desert and more beer than the liquor store. In addition to the spread, some members and the kids enjoyed the pool, while others were wheeling and dealing on some of Gus's spares.

A couple weeks prior to the picnic, Gus had his Harley-Davidson sidecar hauled to the AMCA national meet in Dixon in an effort to get rid of it, but it did not sell. I don't know the exact details, but while showing off his collection and entertaining Comstock members during the picnic, Mark Lobsinger found out that Gus had a sidecar for sale. Being the wise man that he is, Gus offered Mark the opportunity to take his 1938 H-D ULH sidecar rig for a ride with kids in the sidecar. Of course, Mark, the youngster, took the bait and rode the kids around sparks for about 30 minutes. Seeing the kids have so much fun, Mark had no choice but to purchase the sidecar. Mission accomplished.



Hopefully, Gus has something to sell next year so we can have another great picnic. Thanks to all who attended and helped out and thanks for the great time, Gus and Pat.

30th Annual Sierra Ride/Chili Cook-off – Sparks, NV

By Jerry Meadows

Four of us left Gold Ranch at 7 am on August 19 to meet up with ten riders from the Northern California BSA Owner's Club in Grass Valley, California. Retuning to Reno via scenic ride on Highway, we stopped in Downieville to chat and kick tires.



Arriving at the Meadows' home/backyard, we were joined by neighbors and friends to partake in the 30th annual chili cook-off. Twelve different salsas and nineteen different chilis were entered in this year's cook-off competition, and all participants were seeking the coveted salsa and chili trophies. Salsa was sampled first, but due to a brief rain shower the sampling took place in the garage. With the rain letting up, the party resumed outside and chili was sampled and voted upon in the usual backyard setting. Voting is by people's choice and when the votes were tallied, winners were announced. Jerry Meadows, the host won the salsa division, and Keith Hill of Gardnerville won the chili division.

Cake and home-made berry ice cream capped off the day.

My First AMCA National Road Run

By Rodd Lighthouse

As a member of the AMCA, I have been reading with interest about the national road runs in the AMCA's publication, *The Antique Motorcycle*. I wanted to participate in one, and while reviewing the 2017 AMCA calendar, I realized that the Fort Sutter Chapter was hosting their 9th national road run in our backyard September 11 thru 13, how fortuitous. In addition to me, two other Comstock Chapter members signed up for the road run, "Indian" Jim Coe, and Jeff Park. Knowing that Jeff recently purchased a Ducati Desmo, I thought it would be fun to ride our Desmos on the twisty routes mapped out by Fort Sutter, and Jeff agreed. On the ride up to the Beach Treat Resort in South Lake Tahoe on Sunday to register for the event and check out the happenings, I realized that I had made a mistake. Although Ducati's 900 Super Sport is one of the most beautiful motorcycles ever produced and is fun to ride, at my age, they are not meant to be ridden for long periods of time. I didn't want to be a whimp and back out, so I was prepared to ride it out.

Even more fortuitous than having the national road run in our backyard, the Ducati had electrical problems on the first day of the ride. The key switch broke the first morning, but with the help of fellow Comstock members, I was able to hotwire the Duck and ride a good portion of the route before blowing a fuse early in the afternoon. I know what you're thinking, how is that fortuitous? Because the event was so close to home, Jeff and I commuted the first day, driving home after having the second bout of electrical problems. The following morning, the Ducati seemed to have a dead battery, so I fired up the trusty Velocette and headed out to meet Jeff at the predetermined spot and then ride up to the Lake. Although the Ducatis were well received, the Velo was also appreciated by some of the participants, plus it was way more comfortable to ride. Hang in there, I'm getting to the fortuitous part.

One gent in particular, Dennis Magri, enjoyed the Velo and asked Jim, Jeff and I to join him and his buddy Gary on the Tuesday ride. Riding one of the neatest motorcycles at the event, a Vindian (Vincent engine in and Indianish frame), I thought it would be cool to ride with Dennis. Throughout the day we would stop and chat and discuss the Vindian. Dennis was also impressed with the Velo and said that it encouraged him to get his going. Due to threatening skies, we cut our lunch stop chat session short and headed back to the Beach Treat Resort to get ready for the banquet later in the evening. Upon arriving at the resort, the chatting resumed and Dennis asked if I would like to ride the Vindian. Duh!



I took the Vindian on a five mile ride around South Lake Tahoe. Dennis has the bike well sorted and it was a joy to ride. After the ride, the chatting continued about the Vindian, and Dennis informed that he has compiled a complete parts catalogue including all of the iterations for all of the parts, including 60 iterations for the shift lever. Dennis has also compile a complete repair manual for the bike as well. Amazing! Thanks for the ride Dennis.

Bike of the Month

July 2017

Sonicweld Honda CB 350

By Peter Hipp

In 1989 at an American Federation of Motorcyclists (AFM) race weekend at Sears Point, I was racing my Honda CR750. There was a motorcycle swap meet near the race pits and at the end of my race day, I wandered into the swap area. There was one swapper with a lot of different parts, and leaning on his pick-up truck I saw a Honda CB 350 in a special frame. I asked him the price and he said, "\$350". Without hesitation, I immediately pulled out the money and gave it to him. He said, "Maybe I was too cheap, do you know what frame this is"? I replied, "Yes I do, it is a Sonicweld frame with Betor forks set up for flat tracking". The seller told me he was on the way to the Sears Point swap and stopped at a yard sale, where he purchased the bike for \$100. There was moss growing on the frame from being stored in an old barn in a wet climate.

I put the Honda onto my 2-rail trailer, facing backwards, between the two race bikes and transported it to my shop/house on the north shore of Lake Tahoe. Weeks later I started cleaning the carbs, adjusting the valves, setting the timing, changing the oil and more. After all the fettling, I installed my remote fuel set up and started the motor up. It sounded good and was not smoking. Driving it around the block, it ran and shifted great.

As winter set in at Lake Tahoe I started the process to make it into a road racer. I was thinking that I was going to start racing with the AHRMA (American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association) club. The class I would go for was Sportsman 350, which could bump up a class to Sportsman 500. All AHRMA vintage bikes are eligible to race in two classes. After market frames (Trackmaster, Champion, Sonicweld, etc.) are legal in the Sportsman classes. The Honda 350 motors are actually 325 cc and the rules allow the engines to be pumped up to 350cc, plus you can bore to 4th over, which makes it 362cc. Another criteria of the class is that the front brake must be a drum brake. Number plates are yellow for this class. AHRMA uses different color plates for different classes because there are multiple classes participating on the track at any given time.



Sonicweld Honda CB 350

The different colored plates help the spectators determine who they are watching. In 1998, the AHRMA race was at Sears Point was in May or June and my Sonicweld Honda CB 350 ran in the top 5 in 350 Sportsman class.

I like the Sportsman 350 and Sportsman 500 classes, bikes and riders out there, and raced the 350 Sonic for 10 plus years at tracks all over the nation. My brothers, Steve and Kurt, as well as Steve's son, Kevin all have and currently race Honda CB 350's. Over the years, I have learned how to build these motors and my bikes are currently some of the fastest in the nation.

August 2017 **1976 Harley-Davidson FXE** **Liberty Edition**

By Jan McCauley

My interest in antique motorcycles began in 1992 when I was privy to a one on one tour at Paughco's. I grew more interested when I met Frank Vavra, who had a 1965 Harley Davidson Panhead sitting in a box in the garage.

Frank was one of the founders of the Comstock Chapter of the AMCA and I went to one of the first meetings Comstock Chapter meetings and got hooked. There was some debate on whether or not I should join the AMCA and the Comstock Chapter because I didn't have an antique motorcycle. That was definitely enough reason for me to find one.

When looking through the AMCA magazine for antique motorcycles for sale I found one that was



exactly what I was looking for, a 1976 Harley-Davidson FXE, the year I graduated high school. I contacted the owner, Paul in Michigan, and that's a whole other story, but eventually we came to an agreement and the bike was shipped to Carson City. I have never been happier and I was even more excited when I found out that it was a liberty edition, it looks so cool. With the exception of all of the rubber parts being replaced, it is an original bike with about 4,000 miles on it.

I'm not 100% sure that one antique motorcycle is going to be enough.

1976 Harley-Davidson FXE Superglide

September 2017

1970 BSA A65L Lightning

By Paul Giese

Blue...A Survivor's Tale

Blue is a 1970 BSA 650 Lightning that found me more than I found it. While attending the Run-a-mucca event in 2006 I rode on my father-in-law's (now mine) newly restored 1966 BSA Lightning and was encouraged to enter the bike show Sunday morning. Another competitor entered his BSA and we got to making small talk. He asked me if I'd be interested in another Lightning his friend had down in Riverside, CA. Sure, send me pictures. The fellow competitor was none other than Ken Lighthouse, our prez' father. He said he was going down to SoCal and would bring the bike back on his return trip. So I made the deal and free shipping was included. I also won the "Vintage" category and got a nice plaque and \$100 to boot.

That summer I got it running after pulling out several little green soldiers from the gas tank. The tranny was filled with water, so it was flushed and refilled with oil. I went through the carbs and added a new electronic ignition. The bike fired about the fifth kick. Just because you bring a Brit bike back from the dead does not mean all is well. There is a gremlin way down deep inside the crankshaft called the sludge trap. I was warned by at least two authorities that it was probably plugged or not passing the amount of oil required. Anyway, I rode it around that summer and while racing up Washoe Hill at eighty plus, the engine started passing copious amounts of blue smoke. It got me home and as soon as it was cool enough I tore into the motor. The oil ring on number two piston was broken in half. The rod under that piston had enlarged its big end and the bearing was paper thin. I don't know what failed first, but I'm willing to bet the sludge trap either caused the failure or made it worse.

So now it was 2013 and Blue got torn down all the way. The motor's bottom end went over the hill to Raber's in San Jose where cases were welded, machining was done and a modern oil pump was installed. While I was waiting the rest of the bike was torn down and reassembled from the swing arm bushings out to the tires. Having one restored BSA, I decided to leave this one with all the original finishes. The bike was a survivor and I wanted the scars to show.

Now that the bike is completely done with all new power plant, 200w alternator with solid state regulator and AGM battery, oil filter/cooler and a few other modern mods its probably a better bike than when it was new. Blue isn't as fast as the red '66. but he's a lot sweeter ride. The frame and suspension really give an amazing, quality ride. The engineers really knew what they were doing. If ridden within limits, Blue will do anything I ask. Very comfortable at 60mph. The buzzing starts in the handgrips about



1966 and 1970 BSA A65L Lightnings

65 and continues with the foot pegs. At 70mph things start getting frantic and I feel like I'm pushing it.

Like anybody else, I'd like an Indian Four or a Vincent, but these old BSA's are closer to what I was riding fifty years ago and I feel very privileged to have them.

Upcoming Localish Events

October

- October 7 thru 9 – SoCal Chapter “D-V” Run XXXI Run – Death Valley, CA
- October 13 thru 15 – Comstock Chapter Comstock Classic Road Run – Minden, NV

November

- November 4 – BSA Owner’s Club All Brit Ride – Novato, CA
- November 5 – Comstock Chapter Fall Picnic – Sparks, NV
- November 5 – NorCal Cycle Swap – Sacramento, CA
- November 11 – CJMC Fall Meet and Lunch Ride – Los Altos, CA

December

For other AMCA events, please see the AMCA’s website, antiquemotorcycle.org, under the “Events” and “Chapter” tabs.

1st Annual Comstock Classic Fall Run



**Carson Valley Inn
Minden, Nevada
October 13 thru 15, 2017**

**3 Scenic Loops!
Friday loop- 120 miles
Saturday loop - 140 miles
Sunday loop - 75 miles**

Antique Motorcycles

**Participant Pins and
Awards**

**Banquet
Saturday Night**

50/50 Poker Run

**AMCA Membership
Required**

Carson Valley Inn
Reserve your room or RV spot
carsonvalleyinn.com
(775) 783-6629
Reference Group Number 522

Info
ComstockAMCA@gmail.com

Website
Comstock-AMCA.com

Comstock Chapter AMCA

Comstock Classic Fall Run

Minden, Nevada

October 13th, 14th, 15th, 2017

Rider's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

AMCA # _____ Chapter: _____

Year/Make/Model of Motorcycle _____

Insurance Company/Policy #: _____

Passenger Name: _____

Note: All Motorcycles MUST be manufactured before 1982 for this Road Run

**Registration includes - participation pin, T-shirt, banquet and ride routes -
\$80 per person**

Rider T-shirt Size: S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ 2X ___

Extra T-shirt - \$15 ea. Quantity and size/s _____

Extra Banquet - \$35 ea. \$ _____

Late Registration Fee after September 1, 2017 - \$10 additional

Total Payment Enclosed \$ _____

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Sparks, NV 89436

Comstock Chapter Directors

President – Rodd Lighthouse
Vice President – Jeff Park
Secretary – Jan McCauley

Treasurer – George Canavan
Director – Frank Vavra

To contact the Comstock Chapter or any of the directors, email comstockamca@gmail.com.

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