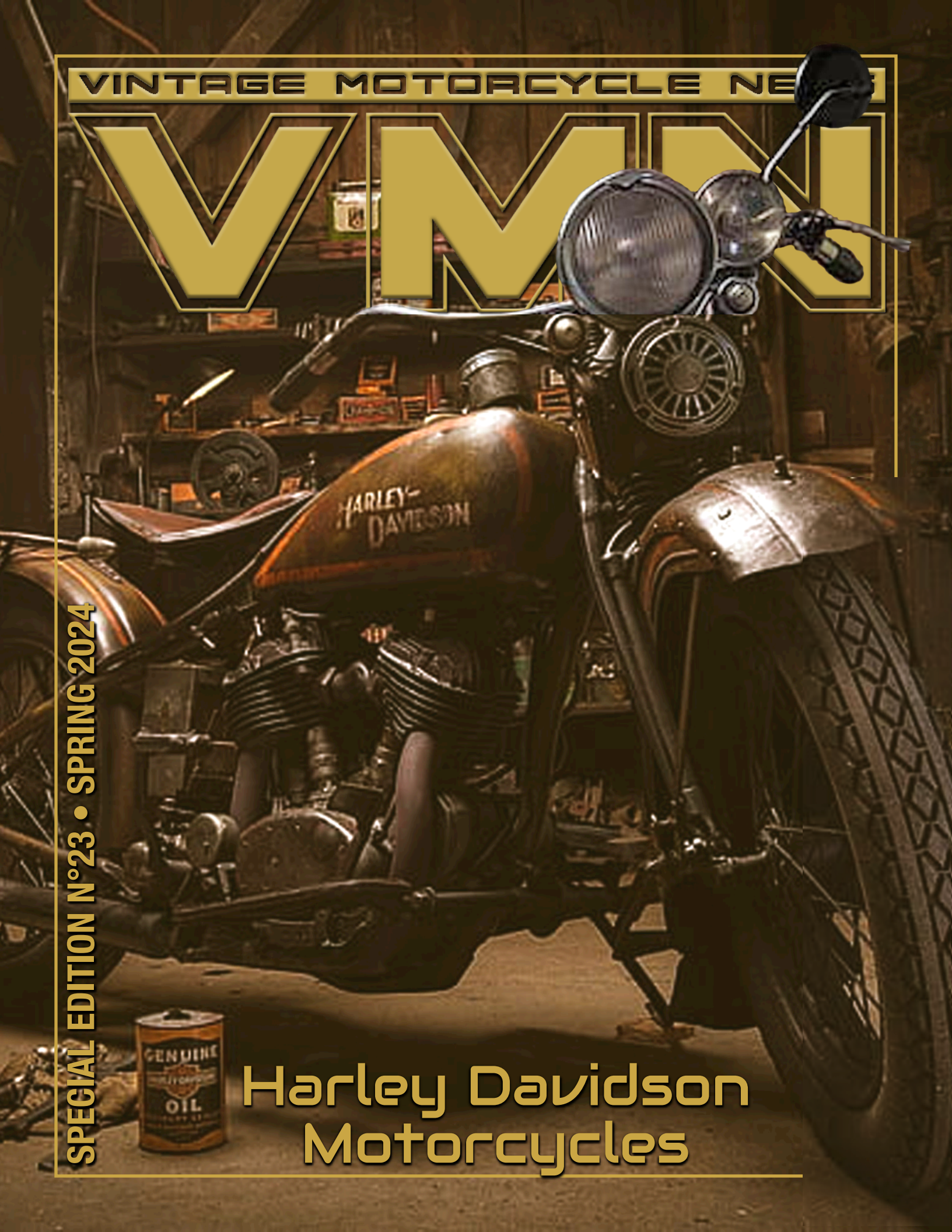


SPECIAL EDITION N°23 • SPRING 2024

Harley Davidson Motorcycles

VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE NEWS
VMN

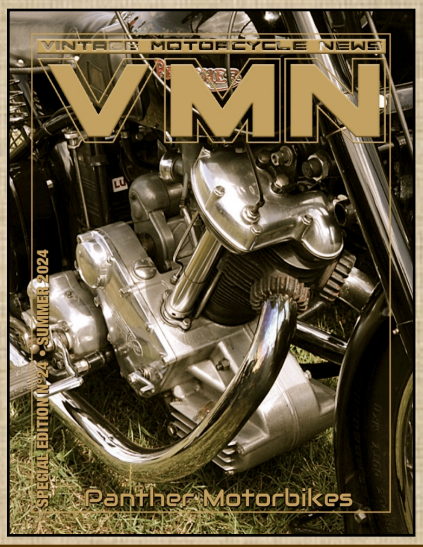
A motorcycle publication for the vintage enthusiast.

EDITOR
Pat Castel
VMN.Canada@gmail.com

COVER PAGE
The perfect vintage garage

Next Edition

Panther were motorcycles produced between 1904 and 1968. under the original name of Phelon and Moore.
With the arrival of the sports model came the Panther name that was to stay with the firm throughout its existence.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hopefully this new year will take us far away from all these bad news we had to endure during these past two years...

Born in Europe, when I was a young lad and like many of my generation the Harley-Davidson name was synonym of freedom, American highways and bad boys.

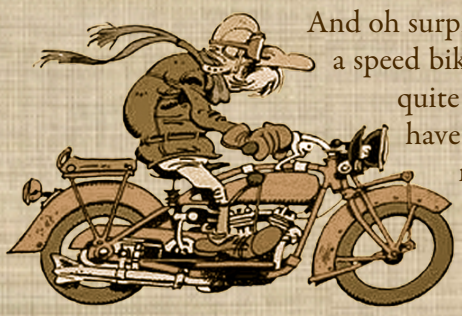
Owning a Harley meant you had money or your father was loaded. The name sounded great but we were far from ever riding one, even used. On top of that, they were so expensive that you could barely see any on the roads, in fact, the first one I could see and admire, was years later when I was working in Paris and parked next to the Café de la Paix, there it was... a beautiful Electra-Glide, fully loaded. What a sight. It was really impressive and big.

Most of the Harley owners riding the roads of France in those days were rich and therefore snobs and full of themselves. They would look at you from the seat of their bikes like if they were seated on top of the Empire Building. But it did not matter, the effect of the bike was there and like many, I went to the theater to watch Marlon Brando and his bad boys.

Life goes on and what you used to like, changed also. The Harleys were not in my mind anymore and the reason was simple, we had plenty of great brands in Europe.

One day, I decided to see the world and when I stopped to be a globe trotter I landed in Canada. It was then that the Harley myth came back to me. Not that I would change my ride for an american made motorcycle, but I could not help it, the sound of the Harleys and their looks always made me think "and what if...".

There is so much to say about Harley, one issue won't suffice to share everything there is to share about this motorcycle, and I am very sorry about that. However, I'll do my best at offering you a nice palette of articles, anecdotes and photographs but the highlight of this issue was to be able to share with you how the name Harley-Davidson came to be. And like many, I always thought it involved two persons, how wrong was I when I got my hand on the article explaining the whole thing.

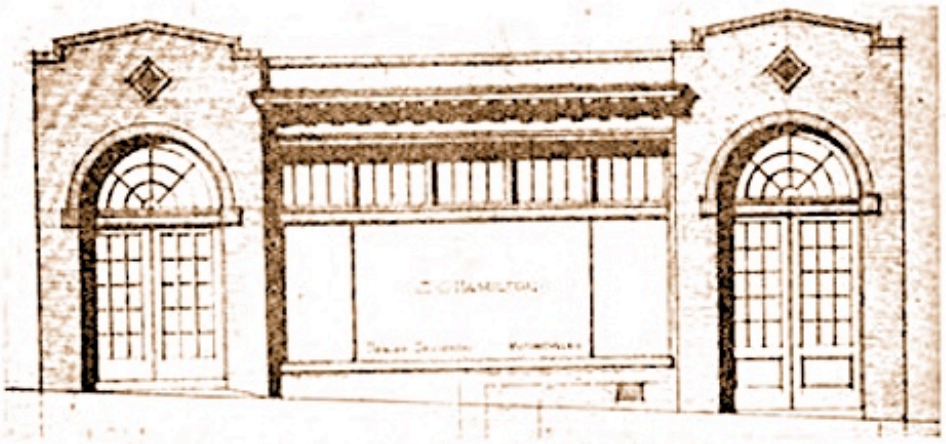


And oh surprise, I also discovered that Harley had a speed bike running on a flat twin in 1919 and quite a copy of the BMW R71 in 1942 and have you seen that miniature engine? A must-have for the Harley collectors.

Hope you will have as much fun reading this issue as I had to create it.

Till next time... Ed.

Pat Castel is known for his involvement with the MOA organization as well as his Editor position in many past and present club newsletters. He began riding five decades ago and spent his youth surrounded by BMW, Moto Guzzi, BSA, Motobecane and Peugeot motorbikes and remains as much in love with motorcycles as when he got his first 49cc Mobylette.



Architect's drawing of S. C. Hamilton's new Pittsburgh store

Motorcycles *Are* "Classy" Vehicles

Pittsburgh Dealer to Erect New Store That Will Rival Handsome Salesrooms of Finest Automobile Agencies—Says That's the Way Motorcycles Must be Sold in the Future

S. C. HAMILTON, Harley-Davidson distributor for Allegheny County, with salesroom and shop located at 5817 Penn avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa., has just let the contract for a new building, which when completed will be one of the handsomest, largest and most completely equipped motorcycle salesrooms and repair shops in the country.

The building itself will be patterned after the latest approved automobile type of construction and will be unexcelled by any in appearance, interior appointments or equipment. It will be fifty feet wide and about one hundred and twenty-five feet deep. Entrance to the shop is made accessible by a ten foot wide driveway from the front. The driveway is separated from the salesroom by a fire wall, allowing a width of forty feet for the salesroom and a depth of about forty feet. The salesroom will front on Penn avenue, the main thoroughfare through the city.

An expanse of plate glass window, twenty-five feet in width, will permit an unobstructed view from the street of the polished marble floor, on which the different H-D models will repose in all their grandeur. The full line of the Milwaukee product, with and without sidecars, will be on display at all times.

Mr. Hamilton, or just plain "Ham," as he is more generally known, is a firm believer in the policy that motorcycles can be sold from a marble floor much easier than from the oil-soaked floor of a dirty, gloomy shop, amidst a smoky atmosphere which a great many dealers deem a necessary adjunct to their business and which the general public has almost come to accept as being the natural home of the "dirty old things."

The question arises, as to whether or not the average motorcyclisth will not feel out of place amidst such ornate splendor, but "Ham" contends, and he should know, that anyone who is really acquainted with the motorcycling fraternity will readily admit that no more adaptable human being lives than the American motorcycle fan. Give him a dirty, little "hole-in-the-wall" where motorcycles are sold and repaired and you will find him following the example of the dealer, dressing and conducting himself in the same slovenly manner. Give him a modern type of salesroom, clean surroundings, dealers, clerks and other employees dressed in neat riding togs, to set the style, and you'll find your rider tagging right along, doing his level best to look just as neat.

S. C. Hamilton

To quote "Ham"—"This idea of selling motorcycles amidst the same surroundings as those in which high class cars are sold, is spreading amongst the majority of motorcycle dealers. And the sooner we all realize this and take advantage of the new order of things, the better off we all will be, because anything that tends to elevate the motorcycle can do nothing else but create a much higher respect for it in the mind of the general public."

MOTORCYCLES IN GERMANY

German officials figures for 1921, just received in Washington, show practically a doubling of motor vehicles for the year, as compared to 1920. In the motorcycle division the figures are nearly tripled. The number of passenger cars increased from 32,450 to 60,966; trucks from 19,742 to 30,424, and motorcycles from 9,369 to 26,792.

USE SIDEVAN FOR MAIL

Postal authorities at Ogden, Utah, are using a new motorcycle and sidecar for gathering mail. It is proving a great boon, it is said. Bicycle thefts have been numerous of late and stern measures have been decided upon for their repression.

The Founders of Harley-Davidson

Source: Harley Davidson Museum

William Harley and Arthur Davidson sold their first motorcycle in the backyard of the Davidson family home in Milwaukee in 1903. That same year, they were joined by Arthur's brother Walter. By 1907, their brother William joined them. They could have scarcely imagined what they had started.

William S. Harley

William Sylvester Harley was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on December 29, 1880. He began working at the Meiselbach bicycle factory in Milwaukee at age 15 and worked his way up to a position as a draftsman. His next job was with Barth Manufacturing in Milwaukee as a full-time draftsman. It was in that job where he met coworker Arthur Davidson, who worked as a pattern maker. They developed a friendship that would grow into something no one could have foreseen.

About 1901 William and Arthur began experimenting with single-cylinder engines adapted to bicycles. They received help from colleague, friend and fellow draftsman, Henry Melk. The project was shelved in favor of a true motorcycle with larger engine displacement and frame designed for the job. The first motorcycle sale is believed to have been to Davidson friend Henry Meyer in 1903. A new motorcycle manufacturer was born.

Not long after they built the first production motorcycle, William Harley enrolled in the School of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He graduated in 1907 and promptly returned to the rapidly growing Harley-Davidson Motor Company. His training as an engineer would prove to be one of the key factors in the successes the company would enjoy in the coming years.

As head of Harley-Davidson product development, evidence shows Harley's tireless passion and forward-thinking ideas, even in the lean years of the Great Depression. He had a hands-on approach with

his team members and projects, making sure to test ride new motorcycles himself. All of the most important motorcycles in the first four decades of H-D history were developed with William Harley's oversight.

William S. Harley died of natural causes in Milwaukee Sept. 16, 1943. He was survived by his wife, Anna, and their children John, William J. and Ann. His direct descendants William J. Harley (son), John Harley (son) and John Harley Jr. (grandson) also worked at Harley-Davidson.

Arthur Davidson

Arthur Davidson, born in Milwaukee, Wis. on February 11, 1881, was only twenty years old when he and his childhood friend William S. Harley teamed up to work on their idea for a motor-driven bicycle structured for personal use.

In the beginning stages of their partnership they brought their respective designs and skill sets to the table, Arthur, with his own pattern for a small, air-cooled gasoline engine, and William, with his previous experience building bicycles.

The Harley-Davidson Motor Company was incorporated in 1907, with Arthur as its secretary and general sales manager. Arthur's outgoing personality, good sense of humor, and passionate belief in the Harley-Davidson® product made him a natural to take charge of sales at the new company.

He tirelessly traveled the country recruiting dealers and establishing a strong dealer network, while also advocating for expanding global presence and foreign business.

In the process of developing the dealer network, he foresaw the need for skilled mechanics who understood the specific needs of Harley-Davidson® motorcycle owners; the subsequent development of the Harley-Davidson Service School serves as one of his legacies.

After the company's incorporation, Arthur embarked, with a single cylinder Harley-Davidson® motorcycle, no doubt, on a dealer recruitment mission to New England.

Due to the success of his trip, dealerships were established in numerous major cities by the end of 1908, including New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Newark.

His activism within the company's dealer network proved even more successful by 1912, when over 200 Harley-Davidson dealers were fully operating in the United States, and the first overseas distributorship was established in Japan.

He connected to dealers even further through the impassioned articles that he wrote for the Harley-Davidson Dealer magazine about the benefits of high-quality retail displays and service.

In his professional career, Arthur remained consistently active. In the 1940s he served as president of the American Motorcyclist Association and the Motorcycle and Allied Trades Association.

Because of his keen business sense, he served as director for organizations such as the Koehring Company and the Kellogg Seed Company.

His personal interest in youth activities and outdoor sports led to earnest involvement with the Milwaukee Boys' Club, the YMCA, the Izaak Walton League, and the Boy Scouts of America, from which he received scouting's highest award for distinguished service.

Arthur Davidson was the last surviving member of the four founders when he and his wife were tragically killed in an automobile accident in Milwaukee, Wis., Dec. 30, 1950.

Walter Davidson

Walter Davidson was born on September 30, 1876 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to William C. Davidson and his wife Margaret. In his youth, Walter raced bicycles and often did his repairs and maintenance in the family kitchen.

In his teen years, he became a talented self-taught electrician, and knew how to make his own batteries. Possibly, his first paid job was working for an electrical contractor. Later, he learned a trade as a machinist working for the Milwaukee Railroad. In early adulthood, Walter also worked in Parsons, Kansas for the "Katy Road," known more formally as the Missouri-Kansas-Texas railroad.

In 1903, he received a letter from his brother Arthur, who had teamed up with their longtime friend William Harley. They made it clear that Walter's machining experience would come in handy in completing a new motorcycle they were building. Walter quit his position and relocated back to Milwaukee. Together, the three finished the first production motorcycles sold to the public. William Harley and Arthur Davidson later credited Walter with the actual building of the first production motorcycle. They worked first in a ten foot by fifteen foot wooden shed. Within ten years, they had built a red brick factory site of over 300,000 square feet and HDMC was already one of the largest motorcycle manufacturers in the world.

The founders incorporated Harley-Davidson on September 17th of 1907 and named Walter the company's first President and General Manager. The remainder of his life would be spent with the Harley-Davidson Motor Company.

Among his responsibilities was addressing the stockholders at the annual meeting. These speeches often outlined the successes, challenges and strategic direction of H-D through key periods of the Motor Company's first four decades. Those speeches and other written evidence indicate that Walter was a man with a direct and honest approach.

Walter Davidson quickly became a great motorcycle enthusiast and accomplished competition rider. The Chicago Motorcycle Club awarded to Walter Davidson the first prize trophy for its "Ten Mile Open" on July 4, 1905.

In 1907, Davidson won at least three more competition events in southern Wisconsin. But, his winning of the Federation of American Motorcyclists endurance run in the Catskill Mountains of New York in 1908 vaulted the name Harley-Davidson into the motorcycling world. Earning a perfect possible 1,000 points, Walter competed without any support from a repair crew. As both an accomplished rider and machinist, Walter demanded the highest quality of the Motor Company's products.

His experience also developed his reputation as a business expert. His service as a trustee of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company and as a director of the Milwaukee Gas Light Company was among his business accomplishments outside of Harley-Davidson

In a 1919 speech given to a local Rotary club, Walter stressed that "personal service is really the keynote of our [Harley-Davidson] organization, and that ... service has proven a good investment as evidenced by the fact that the company has been successful from the start."

According to his brother William, Walter gave disproportionately large amounts to charity and was a great believer in complete honesty. As with other founders of H-D he was known to visit with motorcyclists and other guests who stopped to visit the factory. His favorite past times included fishing and running the H-D bowling club, but he was never far from building motorcycles, even in his free time.

He died on February 7, 1942, still serving as President. He was survived by his wife, Emma (who he married in 1910) and three sons, Gordon, Walter Jr. and Robert. To date, no one has served as President (or CEO) of Harley-Davidson for a longer tenure than Walter Davidson

William A. Davidson

When William A. Davidson joined with his two brothers Arthur and Walter, and with family friend William Harley in their efforts to design and build a new and better motorcycle, he completed the quartet that would go on to found the Harley-Davidson Motor Company. Although the automotive industry at the time was new and highly unstable, William was intrigued by the work his brothers and Harley were doing.

He was already a skilled mechanic, and had been the tool room foreman at the West Milwaukee shops of what was at the time the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad. His experience brought a wealth of knowledge to the budding company, and his efforts went far to assuring its future success.

When the company was incorporated in 1907, William Davidson, who preferred being called "Bill," became the works manager. As a tool maker, he was ideally suited to identify and purchase the presses and other equipment needed to refine the manufacturing process.

His desk was always covered with parts from various stages of the manufacturing process: a semi-finished hub, bearing, shaft or rod. He knew the steel from which it was made, the processes it had undergone and those which were necessary for completion. He used this knowledge to continually improve factory operations, since the demand for Harley-Davidson® motorcycles was rapidly growing. His expertise in the manufacturing process kept William Davidson in close contact with Harley-Davidson's factory employees, whose insight he relied on to keep continually informed about any problems or possible improvements in factory operations.

Among them he was known for his compassion, generosity, and willingness to listen to even the smallest problem. Remembering the days when he, himself, was pounding a hammer, it was his pleasure on Christmas to pack baskets for people, some of whom he had never seen. Sometimes it was to buy coal for the needy or lend an overcoat to a friend who had none. Never were these deeds publicized. This affability extended to everyone he encountered; with everyone from machinists to dealers, bankers to politicians, he was willing to share his time.

Well respected throughout the business community when he passed away April 21, 1937, at the age of 66, William A. Davidson probably did not realize how far his legacy would extend.

His son William H. Davidson would serve as President, as would his son John. William H.'s other son William G. Davidson, known more affectionately as Willie G., now serves as Chief Styling Officer Emeritus and Brand Ambassador for the Motor Company after an illustrious career spanning almost five decades, and is perhaps the most familiar face of the Harley-Davidson family.

Willie's G.'s children, Bill and Karen, make the fourth generation to contribute to the legacy of Harley-Davidson that William A. started 110 years ago. Typical of the tributes paid "Bill" Davidson is the following from one of his co-workers: "To have known Mr. Davidson, to have worked with him, to have been associated with him, was indeed a rare privilege. His example, his precepts, his deeds, have left their influence on all those with whom he came in contact. The world is happier, a cheerier, a better place for his having been among us."

The Japanese Harley-Davidsons

By Paul D'Orléans | Source: thevintagent.com

The early history of Harley-Davidson in Japan is little known in the West, but the complex relationship with its #2 export market in the 1920s (after Australia) is fascinating. Relations between the Motor Co. and its Japanese subsidiary became very contentious in the 1930s, as the Japan transformed into an aggressive Imperial power, with a militarized, nationalist, and protectionist political system.

Baron Kishichuro Okura, while a student at Trinity College at Cambridge University, entered the very first race at Brooklands in 1907. He drove a 120hp FIAT, and came in 2nd in the race! Okura was the first (unofficial) importer of Harley-Davidsons to Japan. [BritishLibrary]

Harley-Davidsons first began trickling into Japan in 1912, when the Japanese Army purchased a small contingent of machines for study, but oddly, they never requested any spares. More machines were ordered in 1922, by the Tokyo import company Nippon Jidoshe KK, headed by Baron Kishichiro Okura, who was among the first to import cars into Japan.

Okura spoke excellent English, as he was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge: he even participated in the very first automobile race at Brooklands in 1907, where he won 2nd place! Okura's company ordered a few 'J' model Harleys, in 1922 and a few dozen more in the following two years, but also never purchased spares with his bike orders, which confounded the H-D brass.

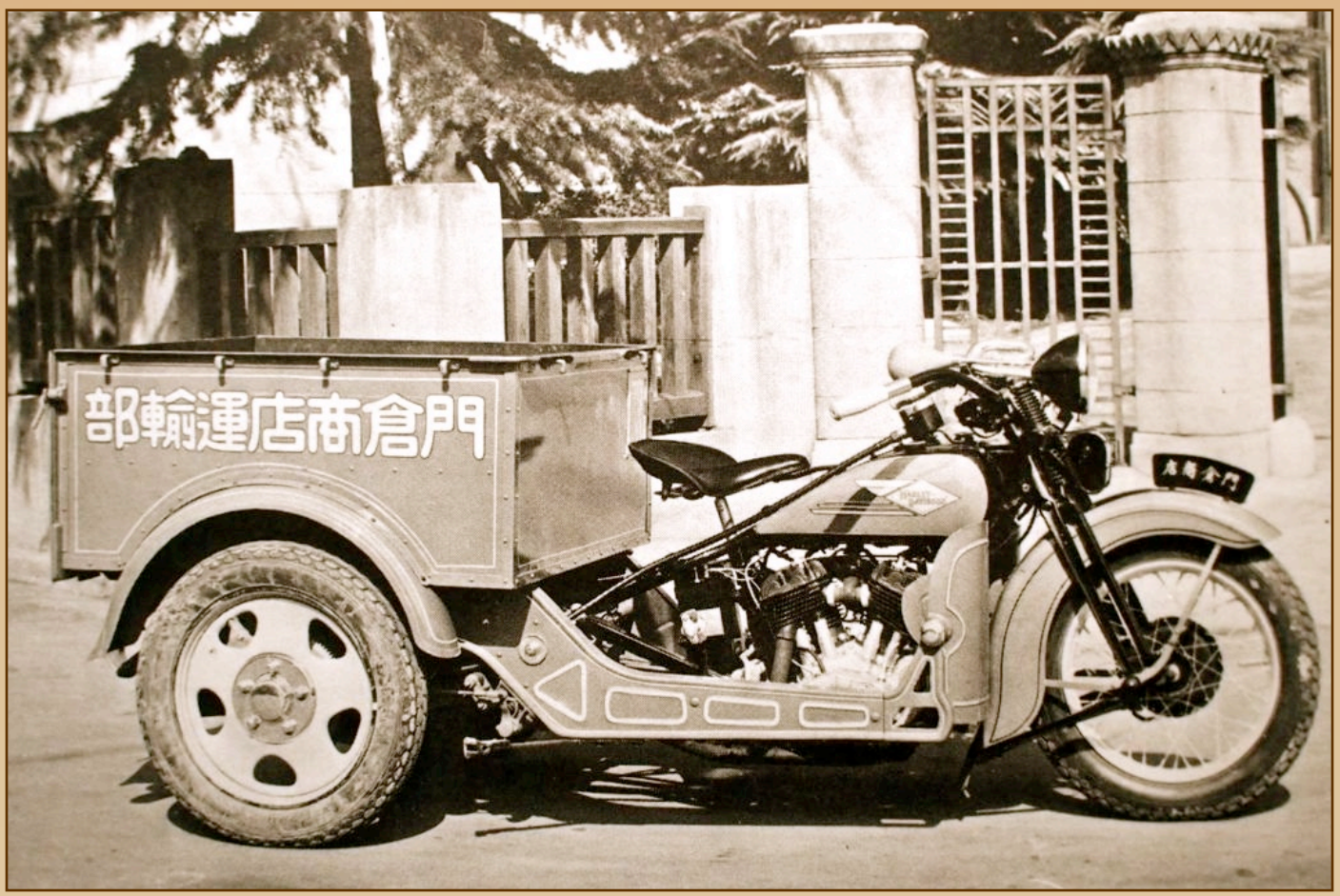
This, plus a large order from Outer Mongolia, also without a spares supplement, spurred H-D to send

Alfred Rich Child in the early 1920s [AMA Hall of Fame Museum]

Alfred Rich Child to sort out the Japanese situation in 1924. One of Harley-Davidson's earliest credos was dealer support and spares availability, and its Japanese dealers were not following the company's guidelines.

Negotiations with Baron Okura (the semi-official importer) to set up a proper H-D import scheme were a failure, but while in Japan, Child befriended Genjiro Fukui, US-educated and a wealthy founder of the prestigious Sankyo Pharmaceutical Company.

Fukui ran an import/export division of Sankyo, the Koto Trading Co., which had been selling 'bootleg' import Harleys, brought into Japan from the Outer Mongolian shipments, and sold under Baron Okura's nose. Since no love was lost between Child and Okura by this point, and a friendship blossomed between Child and Fukui, and since Fukui's Koto Trading Co. had set up a successful Harley-Davidson import and sales organization, it seemed natural that Alfred Child join forces with Fukui. They set up the Harley Davidson Motorcycle Sales Company of Japan in 1924,



After the great Tokyo earthquake of 1923, three-wheeled vehicles were the best way to get around Japan's difficult roads and cities, and many manufacturers built special chassis for all manner of passenger and utility machines. This is a ca.1934 Harley Davidson VL 'rear car' [Sucher]

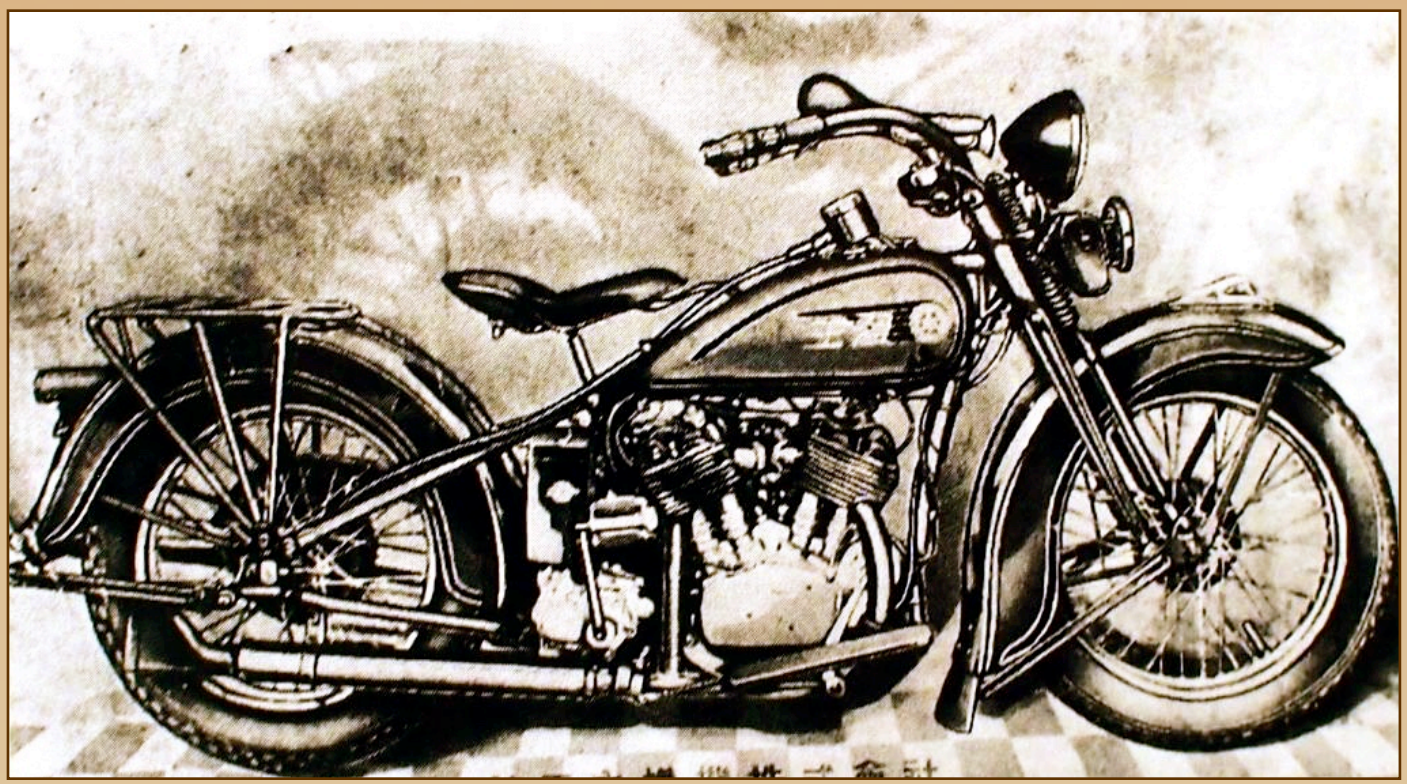
with Fukui/Sankyo providing investment capital, and Child as Managing Director, whose 'cut' was 5% of gross sales in Japan.

Their initial order included 350 H-Ds, each with a sidecar (three-wheelers having been found extremely useful as utility vehicles in Japan, after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake), plus $20,000 in spares, and $3000 of factory repair tools.

As Sankyo already had pharmaceutical contracts with all branches of the Japanese military, Harleys were suddenly required for all manner of police, military, and Imperial Escort duties. The new venture was very successful, selling about 2000 bikes/year.

In common with the American parent factory, H-D Japan hired professional motorcycle racer Kawamada Kazuo (who later became president of Orient Motors), after Alfred Child watched him win a 350cc race at Naruo in 1925, coming 4th in the 1200cc race on his Harley. *"An American came up and hit me on the shoulder. 'Would you like to come and work at the Harley-Davidson sales office?' he asked. I jokingly replied, 'Will you pay me Y100 a month?' but I left for their Tokyo office for a visit anyway. At that time the monthly salary at a private university was Y28...Alfred Child said, 'Depending on your results, we'll pay you Y100 a month,' so I joined the company. A week later I won first prize at Shinshu Matsumoto City Race, riding a 1200cc Harley Davidson, and they did indeed pay me Y100..."*

After the global economic crash of 1929, the Yen was devalued by half; this combined with new import tariffs made importing any foreign-built vehicle nearly impossible. With the price of Harley Davidsons suddenly more than doubled, Child reasoned the only future for Harley in Japan was to license the outright manufacture of H-Ds to a Japanese company: his company. He sailed in 1929 to Milwaukee, with a representative of the Sankyo Co to discuss a deal, armed with an undisclosed cash payment (reputedly $75,000) from Sankyo. This stunned the Harley-Davidson management, who granted exclusive rights to manufacture H-D bikes and spares in Japan to the HDMSCoJ. That reputed $75,000 payment from Sankyo, in the worst year of the Depression, probably

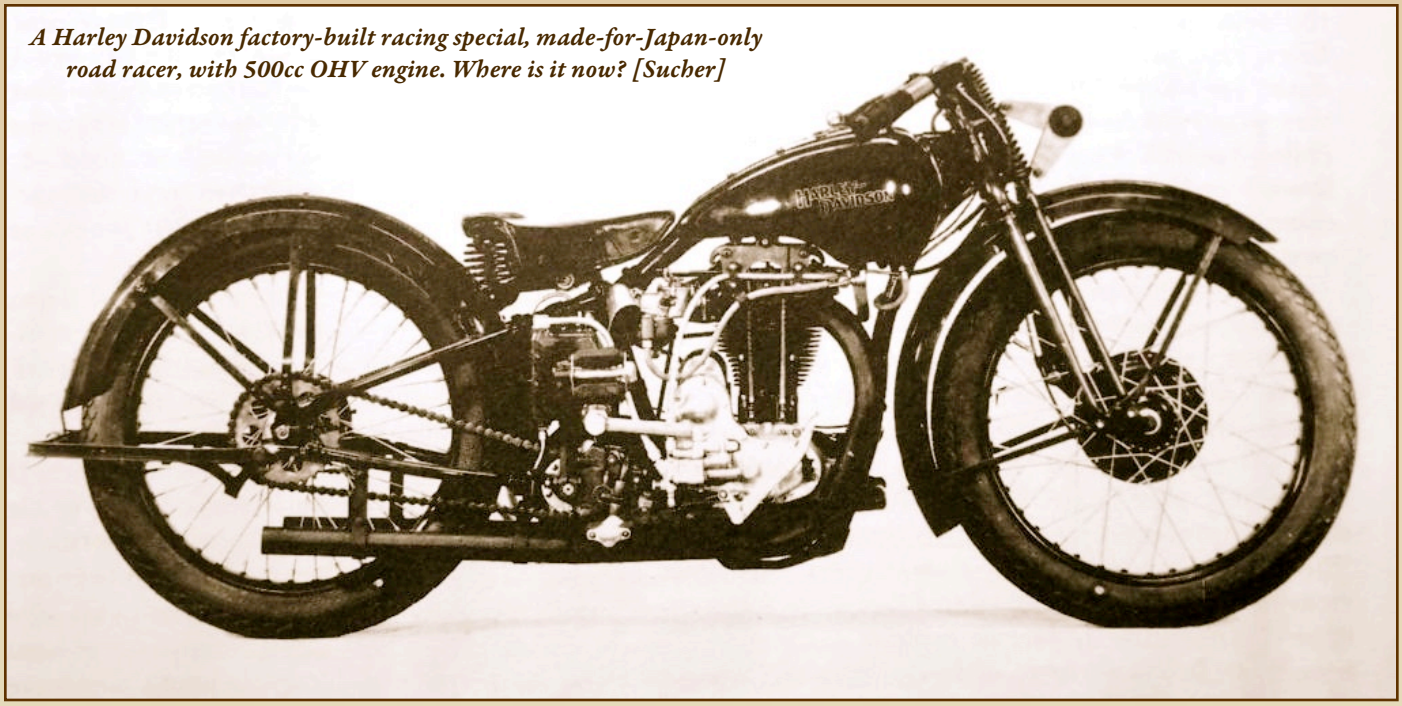


The Harley Davidson 'Rikuo', the Japanese version of the 1200cc Harley-Davidson VL model [Iwatate]

saved Harley-Davidson from bankruptcy, and was a company secret for generations. In return for these rights, Childs promised never to sell Japanese-built Harleys or spares outside Japan [The same situation is established by H-D in India today, with H-D factories making bikes in-country, which are never seen in the USA]. Childs brought motorcycle industry veteran and H-D employee Fred Barr with him to Japan, to set up a new factory in Shinagawa (Tokyo), using H-D tooling, processes, and blueprints to build parts and machines to exact specifications. No other Americans were sent, and none were ever employed. Production began in 1932, and no mention was ever made of this unique agreement in the American press, nor was it publicly discussed by Harley Davidson until the 1980s.

The first Japanese Harley-Davidsons were built in 1935, the 1200cc Model 'VL', and were branded the Harley Davidson 'Rikuo' (Road King) model.

A Harley Davidson factory-built racing special, made-for-Japan-only road racer, with 500cc OHV engine. Where is it now? [Sucher]



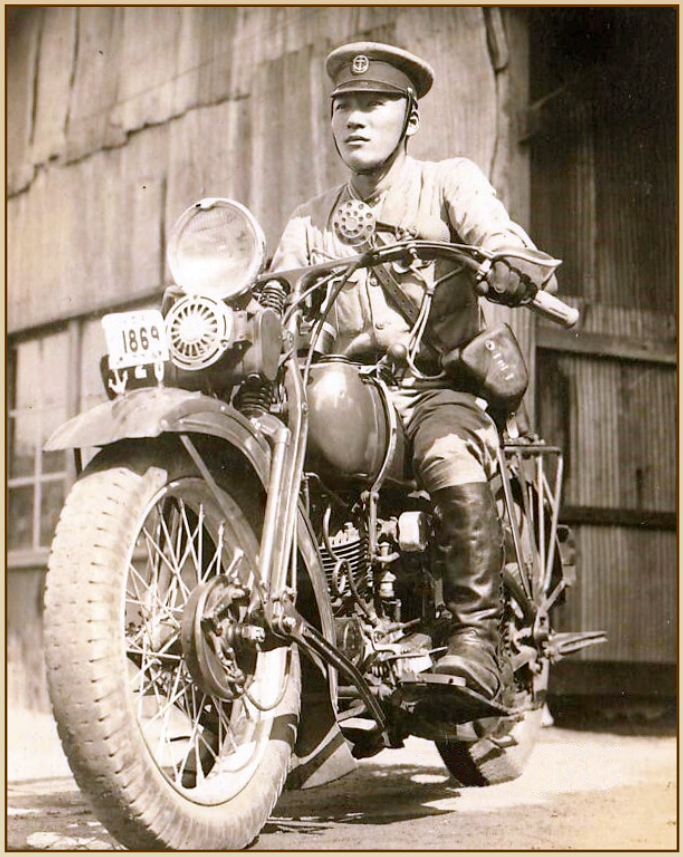
Alfred R Child with one of the first EL 'Knucklehead' models imported into Japan in 1936 [Sucher]

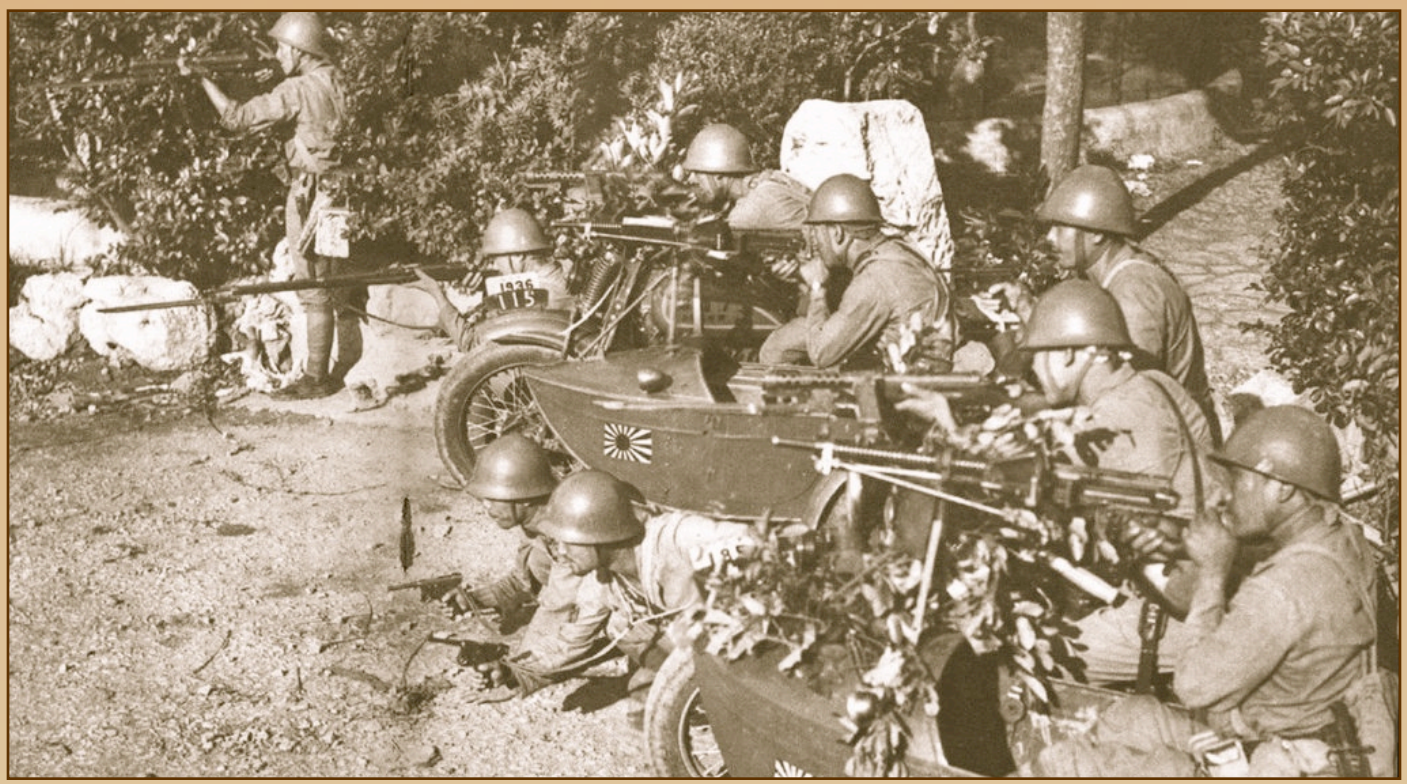
Their #1 customer was the Japanese military, who were rapidly expanding their arsenal under aggressive Imperial politics. Complications emerged in 1936, when H-D sent a prototype Model EL 'Knucklehead' for testing in Japan, and the home factory pressured H-D Japan for higher licensing fees. After test-riding 400 miles on the 'Knuck', Alfred Childs' son Richard felt the machine was unsuitable for the Japanese market, and not ready for production.

Sankyo was unhappy with both the licensing pressures and the new bike, so the company sent its New York representative, Mr. Kusanobu, to pay a heavy-handed visit to the H-D Board in Milwaukee. He complained of Childs' 5% commission (which made him a wealthy man) and the increased licensing fees, and insisted Childs be removed from the Board, or Sankyo would cease financing H-D imports into Japan.

Not only that, but the existing range of sidevalve machines would now be sold simply as the 'Rikuo', with no more licensing paid to Harley at all. Kusanobu was nearly thrown out on his ear, but he delivered on his threats. In 1936, Rikuo was re-born an independent marque, with no connection to Harley-Davidson,

A Japanese Imperial Navy Rikuo circa 1937, part of the special landing force that took Shanghai. [Vintagent Archive]





From the Battle of Shanghai in 1937, several Rikuo sidecar outfits used as machine gun platforms. Note the 1936 registration of the far machine. [Vintagent Archive]

barring its design.

As compensation for Childs' loss of a lucrative business, Harley-Davidson made him the exclusive H-D importer for Asia (Japan, Korea, North China, and Manchuria): he had, after all, saved the company's bacon with the 1929 deal.

Of course, Child's new job description didn't last long. With the Japanese military increasing their grip on both government and industry, agreements with foreign companies operating factories on Japanese soil were voided. The military encouraged/supported other factories to make H-D copies, without paying licensing fees to H-D. Japanese companies Kurogane, Aikou, Toko Kogyo, and SSD all produced H-D clones by 1937, with production almost exclusively destined for the military. In August 1937, Japan invaded China, and Alfred R. Child was warned to leave Japan immediately. He might have lost everything, had his friend Mr Fukui not purchased Childs' homes, businesses, and his remaining H-D stock. By 1939, Ford, Chrysler and General Motors were in the same boat, with all American employees forced to leave Japan, their companies effectively nationalized by the military, with no compensation to their American owners. Rikuo produced 18,000 'VL' models through 1942, which is about the same as Harley-Davidson's production of the same model! In 1942, Rikuo switched to making torpedos, but after the war, in 1947, they resumed production of the old 750cc WL sidevalve model, and in 1950 the resumed the 1200cc sidevalver too. Rikuo continued production on these pre-War machine until 1962, when Harley-Davidson once again established a dealership network in Japan.

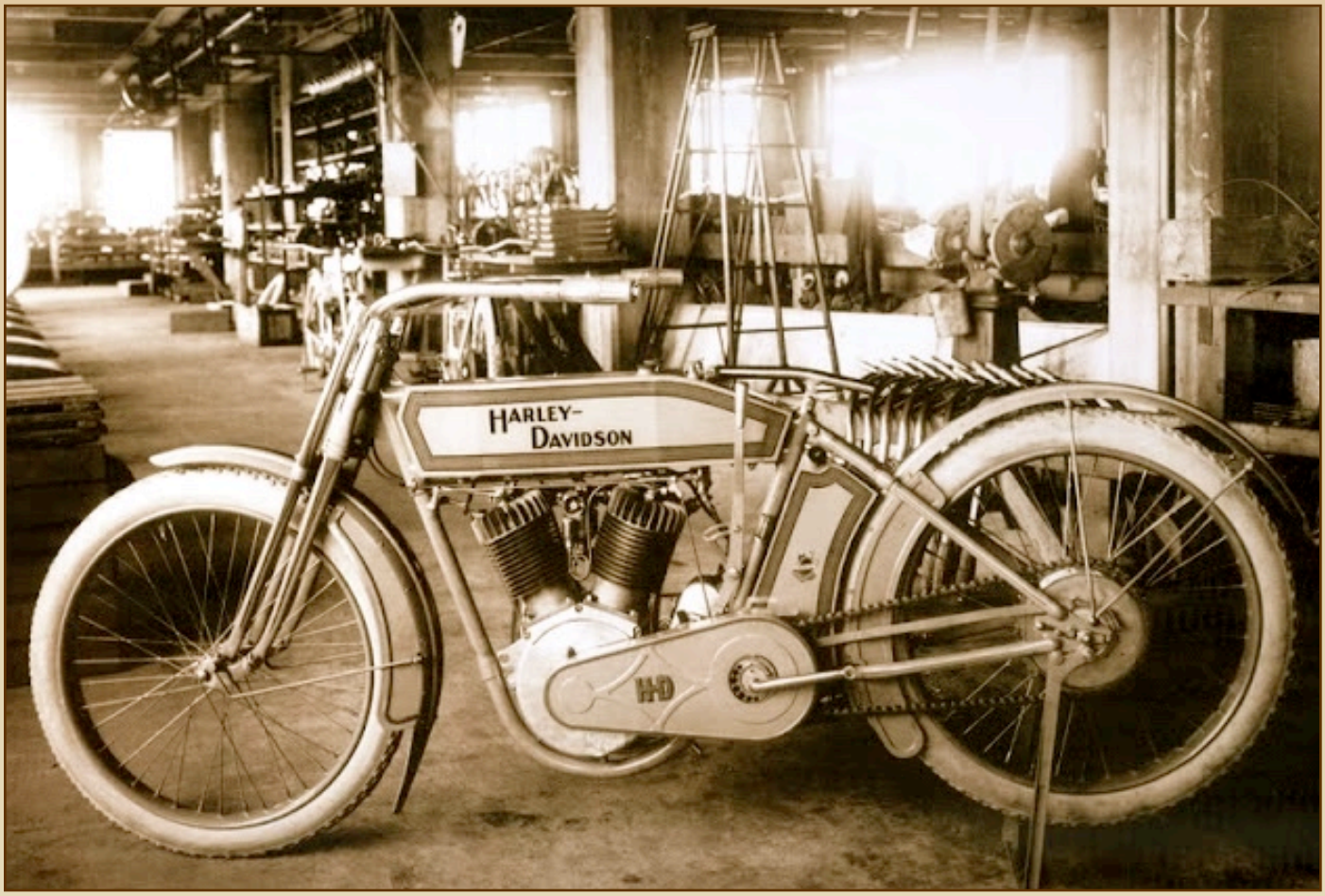
Information and photographs for this article were sourced from 3 excellent books:

- **'A Century of Japanese Motorcycles', by Didier Ganneau and Francois-Marie Dumas**, which is to date the only comprehensive English-language book covering all years of the Japanese motorcycle industry. Given the market dominance of Japanese motorcycles since the 1960s, this is a remarkable poverty of books, compared to every other nation's motorcycling contribution. Photos scanned from here are listed as (Iwatate). It's a must-own book!
- **'Japan's Motorcycle Wars', by Jeffrey Alexander**, was reviewed in The Vintagent here. An excellent dissertation, admittedly not a 'bike book' per se, but full of good stuff.
- **'Harley Davidson' by Harry Sucher**, for the Rikuo story; the first complete history of the H-D marque, with much info from people who were still alive in the early days. Extremely informative. Photos listed as (Sucher).

A Rare Look Inside the Harley-Davidson Factory From Their Early Days

Harley-Davidson assembly line.
1909


Close this Door
Notice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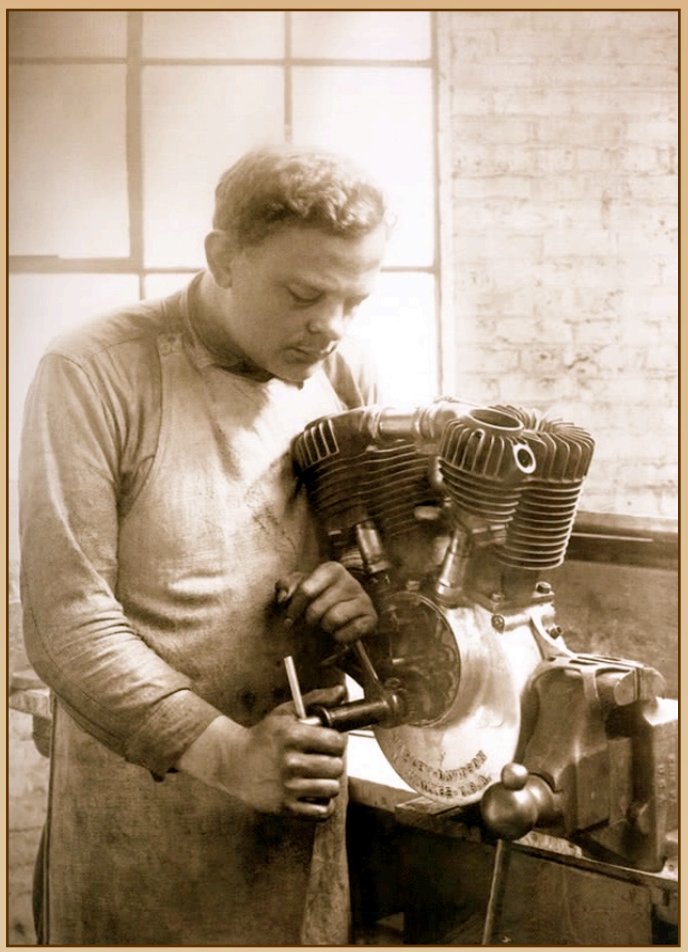


Harley Gets the Mail Delivered On Time

By Panhead Jim from ridingvintage.com | Source: United States Postal Service

1907 was the first year that Postmasters were officially authorized to allow their mail carriers to use motorcycles on their rural routes. Previously, they would have delivered the mail on horseback or by horse drawn cart. Many US motorcycle manufacturers were quick to respond to this change in mail delivery guidelines and soon the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association's magazine was filled with advertisements for motorcycles. Harley-Davidson's approach was to advertise not only how good their machines were for delivering the mail, but also how much fun you could have on them when you were away from work.

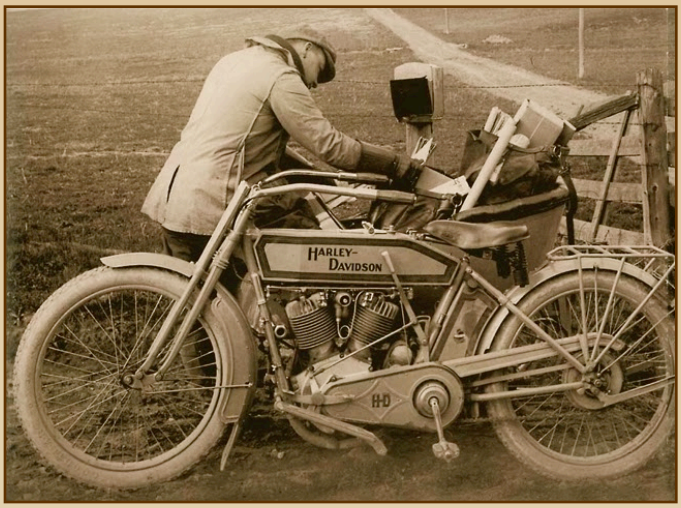
Harley-Davidson also made a new vehicle called the motorcycle truck which was tested by the US Postal Service in Wisconsin during the winter of 1912-13.

Everything was going fine until 1915 when the Postmaster General decided to change regulations allowing for automobiles and banning motorcycles altogether by 1916. This was repealed at the end of 1915 and motorcycles were allowed to remain in service as long as they had a waterproof commercial body to protect the mail.

After WWI, the US War Department transferred over 1,000 motorcycles to the US Postal Service. Many of these found their way into cities as well as rural routes.

In the early 1920's following an armed robbery of a US Mail truck in New York, some motorcycles were assigned to escort duty in large cities to help protect shipments of valuable mail. Notice the passenger in the following picture has a rifle or shotgun across his lap.

The US Postal Service continued to use motorcycles through the 1920's, but they eventually gave way to automobiles. Although the US Postal Service no longer uses motorcycles in its operations, at least they still produce the occasional run of motorcycle themed stamps...



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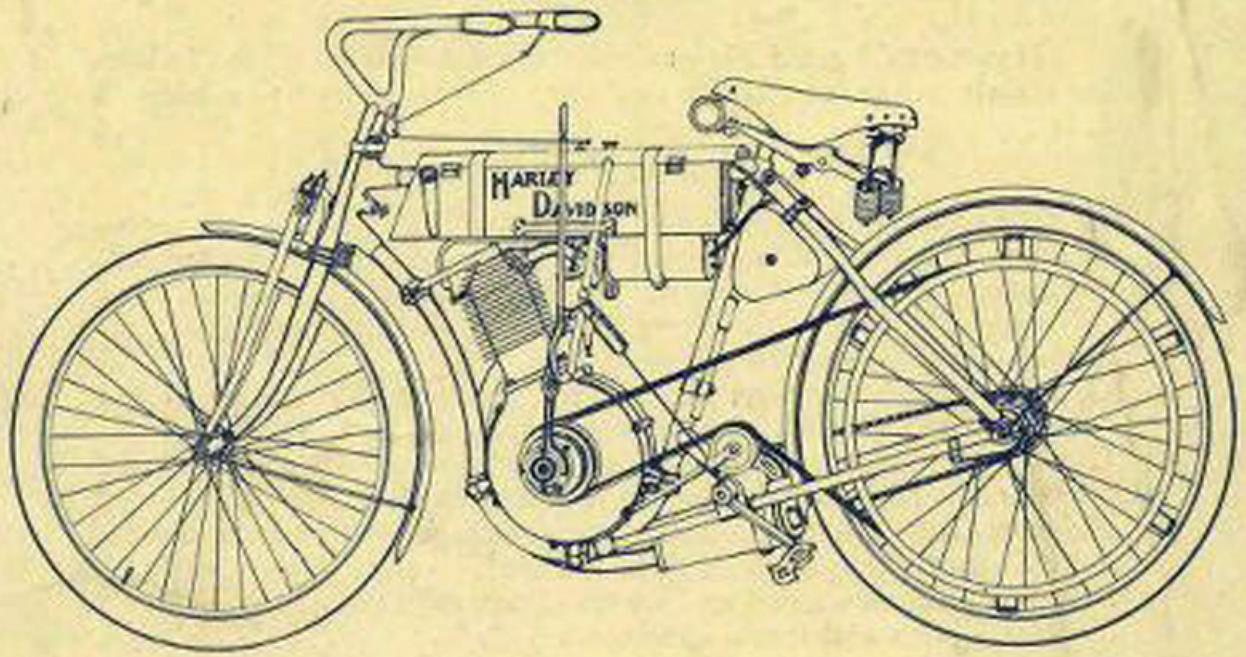

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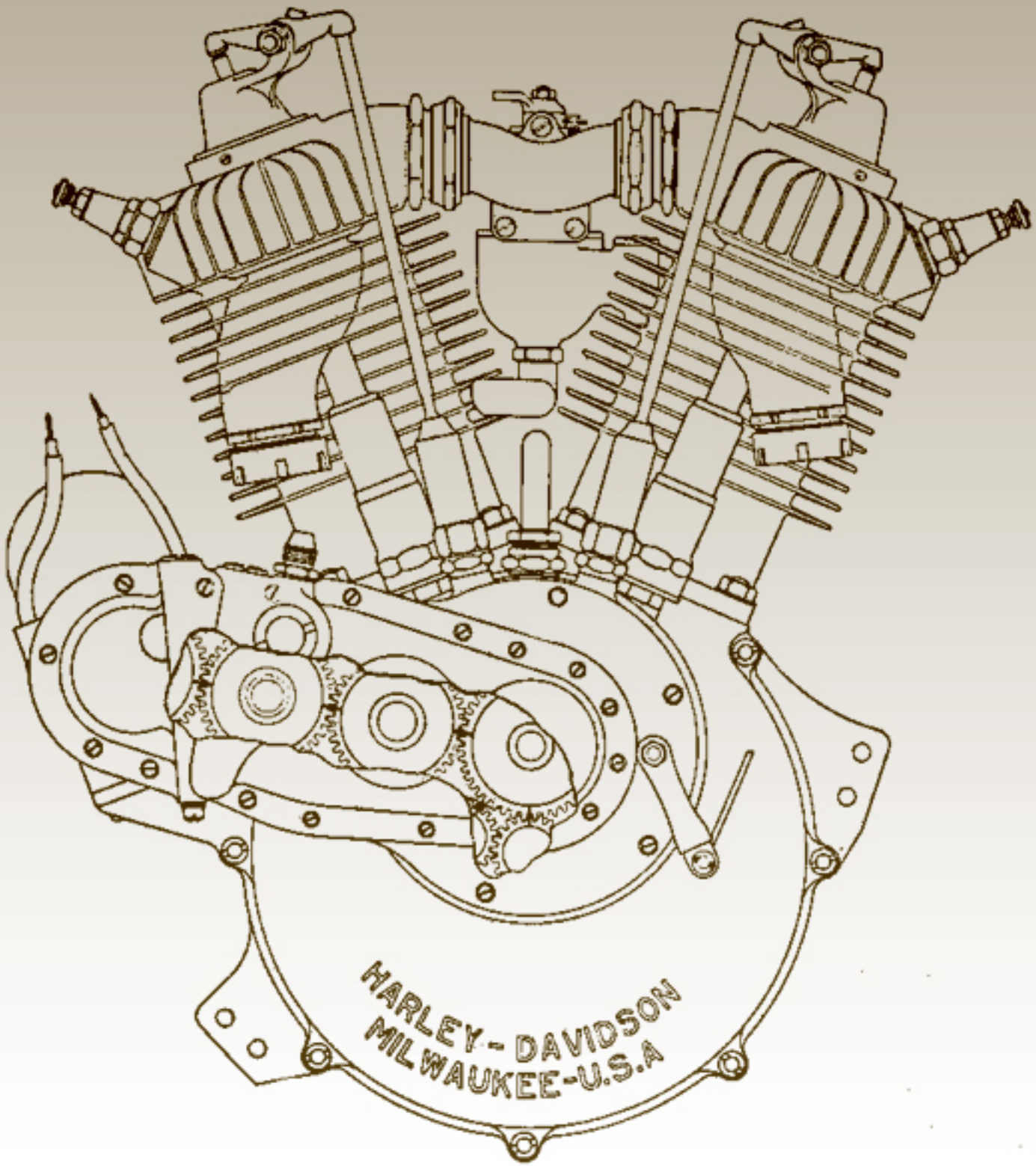

HARLEY-DAVIDSON
MILWAUKEE-U.S.A

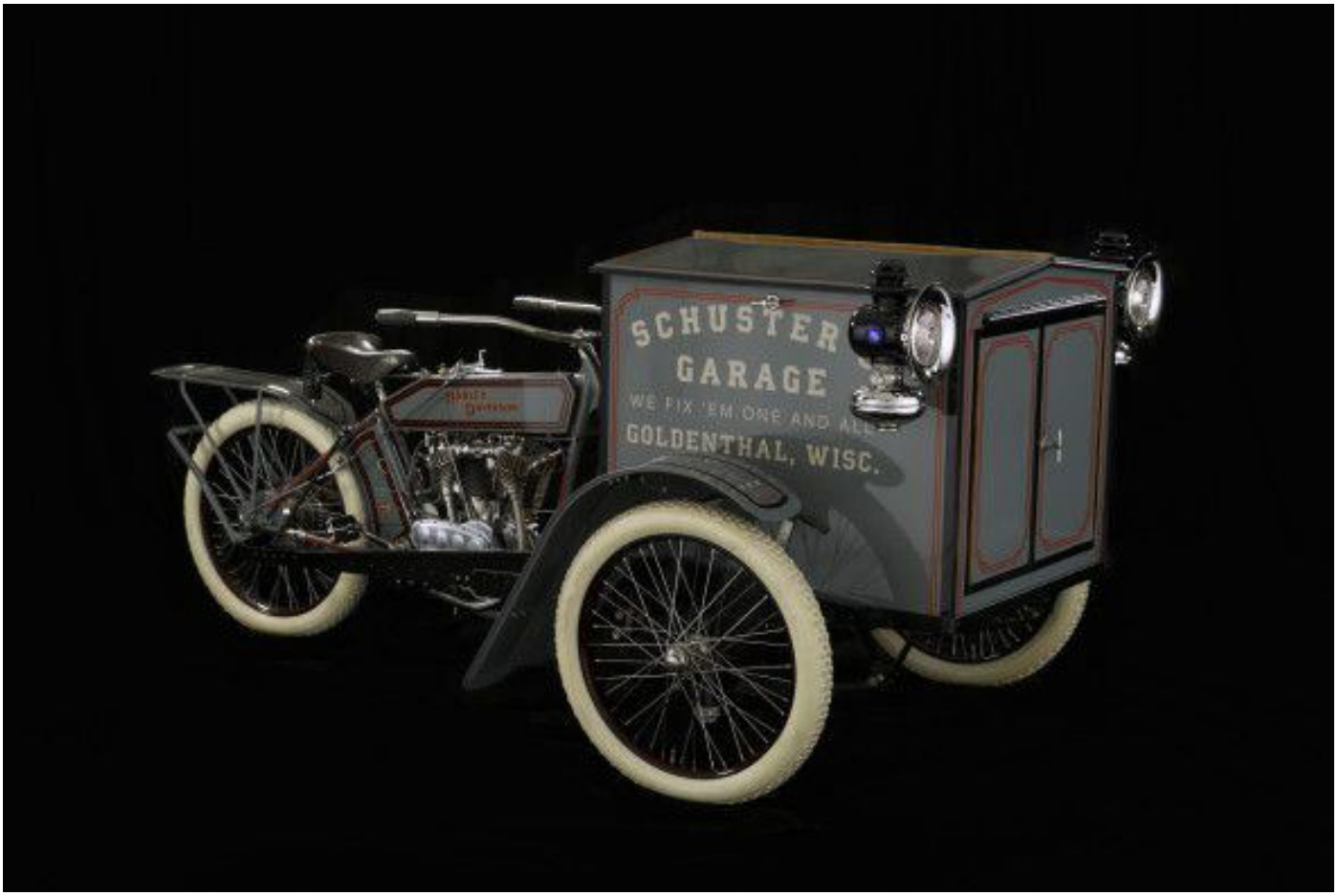
MILLION DOLLAR HARLEY: THIS STRAP TANK SET A RECORD FOR MECUM

Last year at Mecum's Las Vegas auction, a rare bike nearly sold for nearly $1 million, and it wasn't a Henderson, or an MV Agusta, not even a Vincent or a rare Indian. Nope. It was a Harley-Davidson.

1908 Harley-Davidson Strap Tank. This rare bike has an interesting pedigree that makes it a one of a kind. Less than a dozen of these bikes exist.

1908 Harley-Davidson Strap Tank

This particular Strap Tank was found by motorcycle collector David Uihlein in 1941. He kept it for 66 years.
Yes, it was restored, but it's one of the most correct and original bikes from that era.
It has the original tank, wheels, engine belt pulley, seat cover and muffler sleeve.



Local Harley antique bike tells a real story

1913 Harley-Davidson 9G Forecar

By Mike Morgan | Source: onmilwaukee.com

In the age of so-called "reality" television, there is a local antique Harley-Davidson motorcycle that actually has a real story to tell.

Shows like "American Pickers", "pawn Stars" or "Antiques Roadshow" all highlight both fantastic finds and dubious duds when it comes to treasure hunting, preservation and restoration. Many of these antique treasure hunters are looking for easy money or the quick fix. In the case of the local Harley barn bike affectionately known as "Walter", the story goes a lot deeper and tells an emotional story.

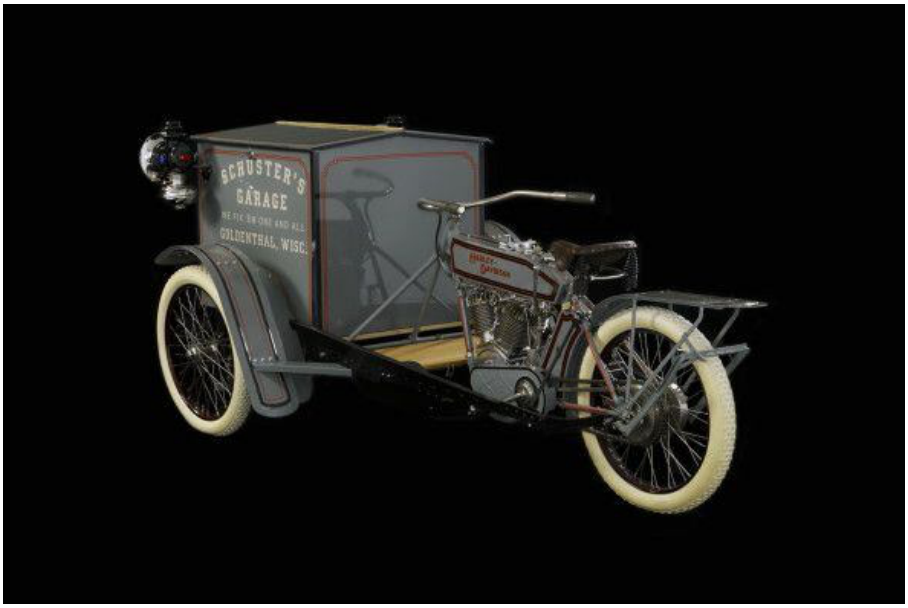
It's a story of Wisconsin's hard-working early 20th century immigrants, a grandfather's special relationship with his grandson, perseverance and a passion for one of the world's most well-known brands. While there is some drama and debate behind the scenes, it's not staged like many of those TV shows.

As the current owner of the 1913 Harley-Davidson 9G Forecar motorcycle, Mike Schuster of West Bend has truly a valuable piece of history. In fact, the story of the vehicle has inspired James Cutting of The Edge Ltd. in Slinger to document the bike and its story on film.

The story dates back to 1913 when a relatively new Milwaukee company was looking to make motorcycles for commercial use. Harley-Davidson built 63 G model Forecars that year and a few hundred more over the next two years that sold for around $400 each.

The Harley Forecar had an unusual design with the cargo or storage unit on the front on the bike, compared to later models called "Servicars" thatb had them in the back. They were used as delivery vehicles and even by the U.S. Postal

service. Apparently nearly all the early Forecars went out of service, and many were scrapped during the World War years.



The forecar that managed to survive until today was originally used by Lemke Electric in Milwaukee until it broke down. Sometimes in the 1910s, it was bartered for auto repair work and then stored in the barn of Joseph "Ally" Schuster for the next four decades.

Fast forward to 1964 when Ally Schuster, now in his early 70s, decided to restore the bike to its original condition. However, due to his age and health issues, Ally needed help, so he turned to his 12-year-old grandson, Mike Schuster.

"*Increasingly, I began to become grandfather's eyes, hands and feet as we began to disassemble the motorcycle,*" Mike Schuster said. "*I was my grandfather's constant companion as he helped innumerable people with the restoration of their antique engines and vehicles. We disassembled the motorcycle together.*"

One of the first things the Schusters did when their project began was to contact Harley-Davidson. They ended up in the office of Walter C. Davidson Jr., an executive and son of of one of the company's four founders.

"*I went with grandfather,*" Schuster said. "*We were met by his assistant and treated like royalty as we were about to meet with the highest authority of Harley-Davidson.*"

After discussing details of the Forecar and the restoration, Schuster says that Davidson made an incredible offer of a $20,000 check, a new motorcycle and accessories in exchange for the yet-to-be-restored Forecar.

Ally Schuster politely declined the generous offer in order to take on the restoration project with his grandson, but the bike did gain the nickname "Walter" from the experience. The two worked meticulously on the mechanics of the frame and engine, but especially on thw aesthetics of the bike.

"*Hand sanding, hand wire brushing and scraping through the coats of lacquer and around the hundred of rivets, we finally got to a point where we could actually see all of the original gray paint with the decals, colors and all of the lettering,*" Schuster recalled.

He said the motorcycle was nearly all there within a couple years with the exception of the seat, or the "saddle" as Ally Schuster called it. It turned out that one of Schuster's business rivals may have taken the seat out of the barn storage, but then it mysteriously returned shortly after Ally Schuster's death in January 1967.

Over the next three decades, Mike Schuster and a host of friends, supporters and other in the community continued the Forecar restoration project before its first public appearance at the Harley-Davidson 100 Anniversary events in Washington County in 2003.

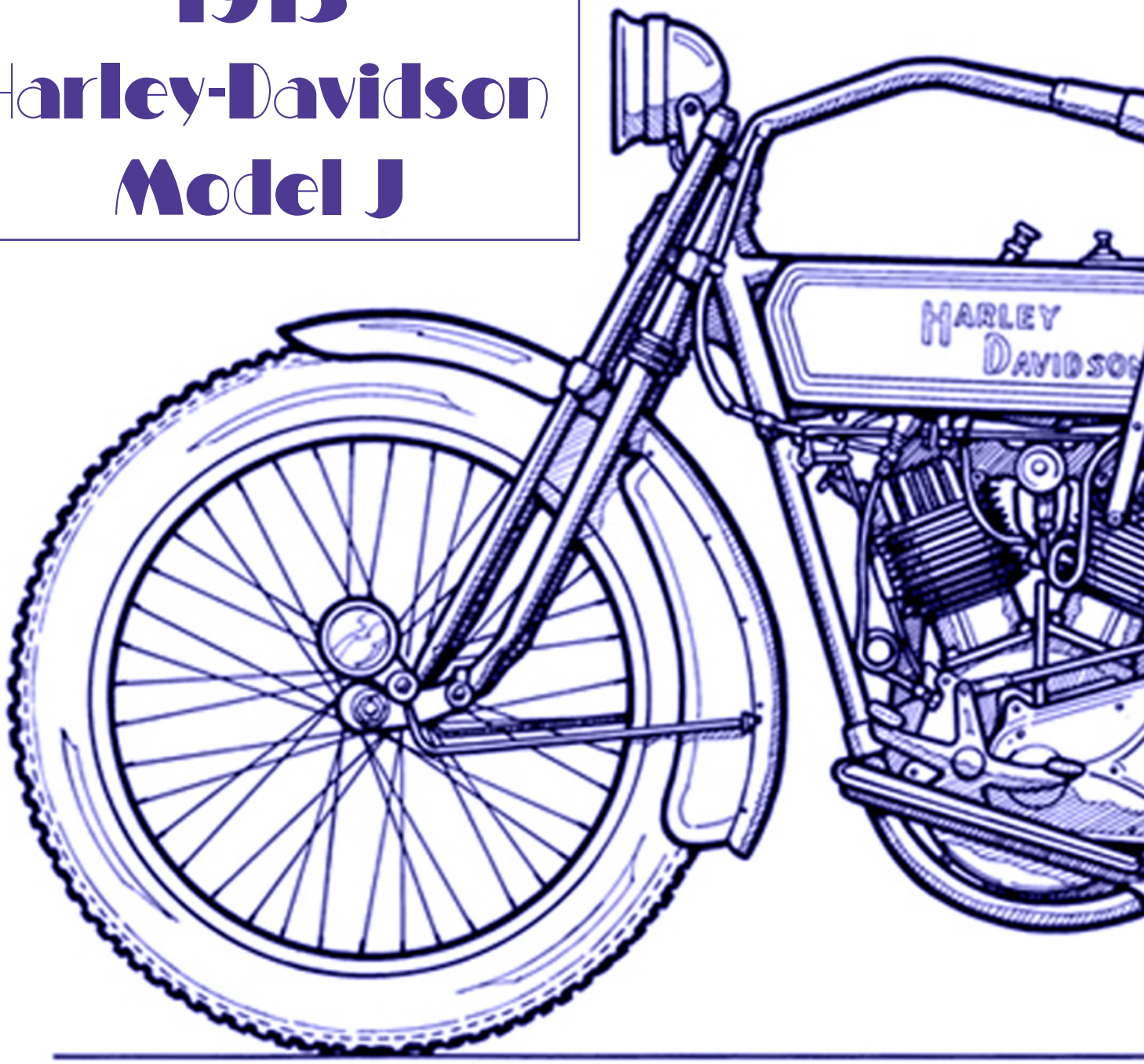
After appearing at other Harley events over the years, the last known Forecar in existence is spending this winter on exhibit at the National Motorcycle Museum in Anamosa, Iowa. While the bike's value has been estimated somewhere between $600,00 and $1.2 million, Cutting is hoping that his "Missing Link" documentary project can tell the story of how a motorcycle can inspire people and conclude by finding a new owner(s) for this very rare motorcycle artifact.

"*To my knowledge, this has never been done in a motorcycle-related documentary,*" Cutting said. "*It's the ultimate barn bike discovery story.*"

1915 Harley-Davidson

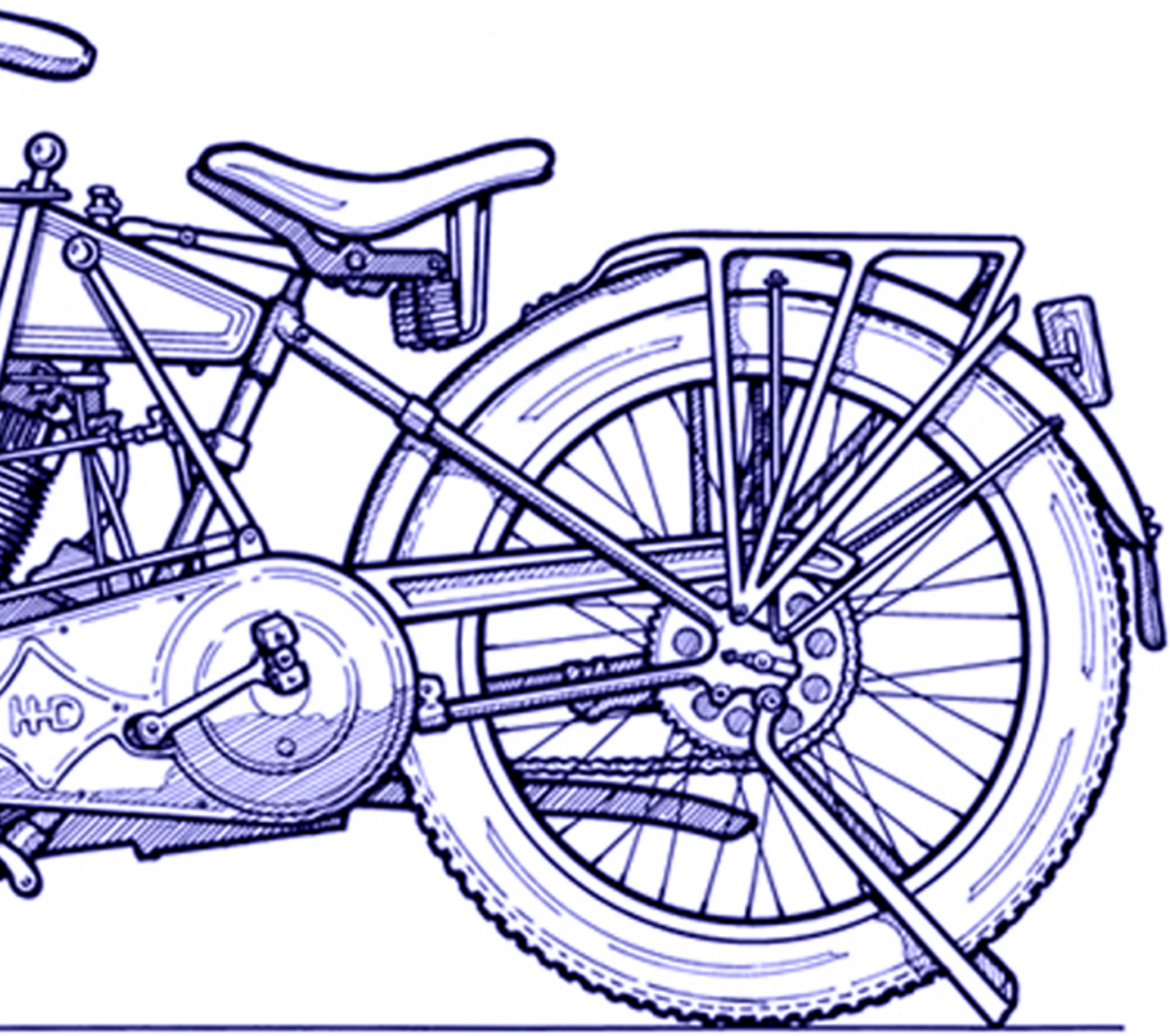
Model 11F

1915 Harley-Davidson Model J



Powered by its hefty 1000cc V-twin engine, the **1915 Harley-Davidson Model J** furthered the transition from the motorized bicycle to the true motorcycle.

Cranking out 11hp at 7200rpm, the 325lb machine was able to reach a speed of 60mph. It featured a three-speed gearbox, chain drive and optional electric headlight



An interesting note about the technology of this period can be drawn from the loops in the fuel and oil lines shown in this blueprint. Because the metal used to fabricate these lines was brittle, a coil or loop was needed to absorb the engine and road vibration that might otherwise have cracked the lines.

1915 Harley-Davidson 11K Board Track Racer

Harley-Davidson's First Purpose-Built V-Twin Racer

The Harley-Davidson 11K Board Track Racer

By Ben Branch | Source: silodrome.com

The Harley-Davidson 11K was the American company's first purpose-built V-twin racer – it was developed by Bill Ottoway, an early engineering genius who had been poached from Harley-Davidson's rivals over at Thor.

Although Harley-Davidson motorcycles had been used in competition previously, including a first race win in 1904 at The Milwaukee Mile with the single-cylinder Model 6E, they hadn't tried their hand at large-capacity factory-built racing machines. In 1915 that all changed.

William "Bill" Ottaway was cunningly hired away from the highly-successful racing department at Thor by William Harley in 1913. Bill had been the brains behind Thor's racing efforts, and he was made chief engineer at the new Harley-Davidson Racing Department – working directly alongside company co-founder William Harley.

Rather than starting from scratch with an all-new engine, Ottaway used the pre-existing Model 10 production bike as his starting point with its intake-over-exhaust 61 cubic inch V-twin, Bill experimented by increasing the size of the intake ports and the intake manifold, a larger carburetor was fitted, along with stiffer valve springs, a special racing cam, a steel flywheel, and the oil pump was cast into the gear case cover.

The first competitive season for the new Harley Davidson 11K "Stripped Stock Racer" was 1914, and it showed immediate promise by winning major races in Minnesota, Alabama, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, South Carolina, Massachusetts, Ohio, Nebraska, Oregon, Texas, and across the borders in both Canada and Mexico.

In 1915 the 11K would be offered to privateer racers for the first time through dealerships across the country. Later in the 1915 season the now legendary Harley-Davidson "Eight Valve" racing engine would reach maturity and begin being used in competition. While faster than the simpler engine it replaced it was also less reliable, so Harley often ran entrants on both motorcycle types to help ensure a win.

The 1915 Harley-Davidson 11K

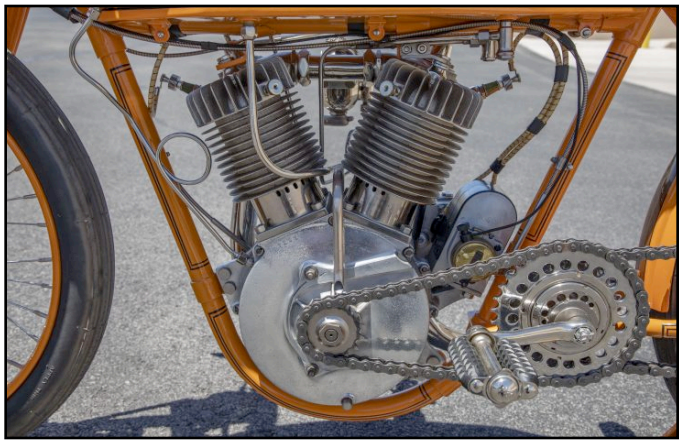
The motorcycle you see here is one of the exceedingly rare 79 original racers, and it was almost lost forever – abandoned in a pile of engine scraps in Argentina.

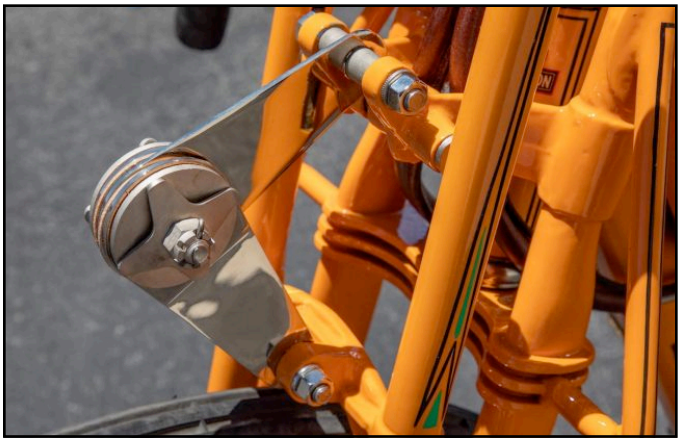
It had been abandoned as a result of a dropped valve, which had punched a hole in a piston and bent the connecting rod. Spare parts for these are almost impossible to come by, and at the time its value was multiple orders of magnitude less than it is today, so it was left with a pile of other motorcycle parts.

Fortunately it was noticed by someone with an eye for these things and painstakingly restored back to such accurate original condition that it won the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance Most Outstanding Motorcycle award in June 2017.

The remaining parts of the original frame were integrated into a new, period-correct frame. The original engine was carefully restored, new wheels were laced to the surviving hubs, and the braced racing forks with rare André dampers were rebuilt.

The bike is presented as it was when it won at the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance.

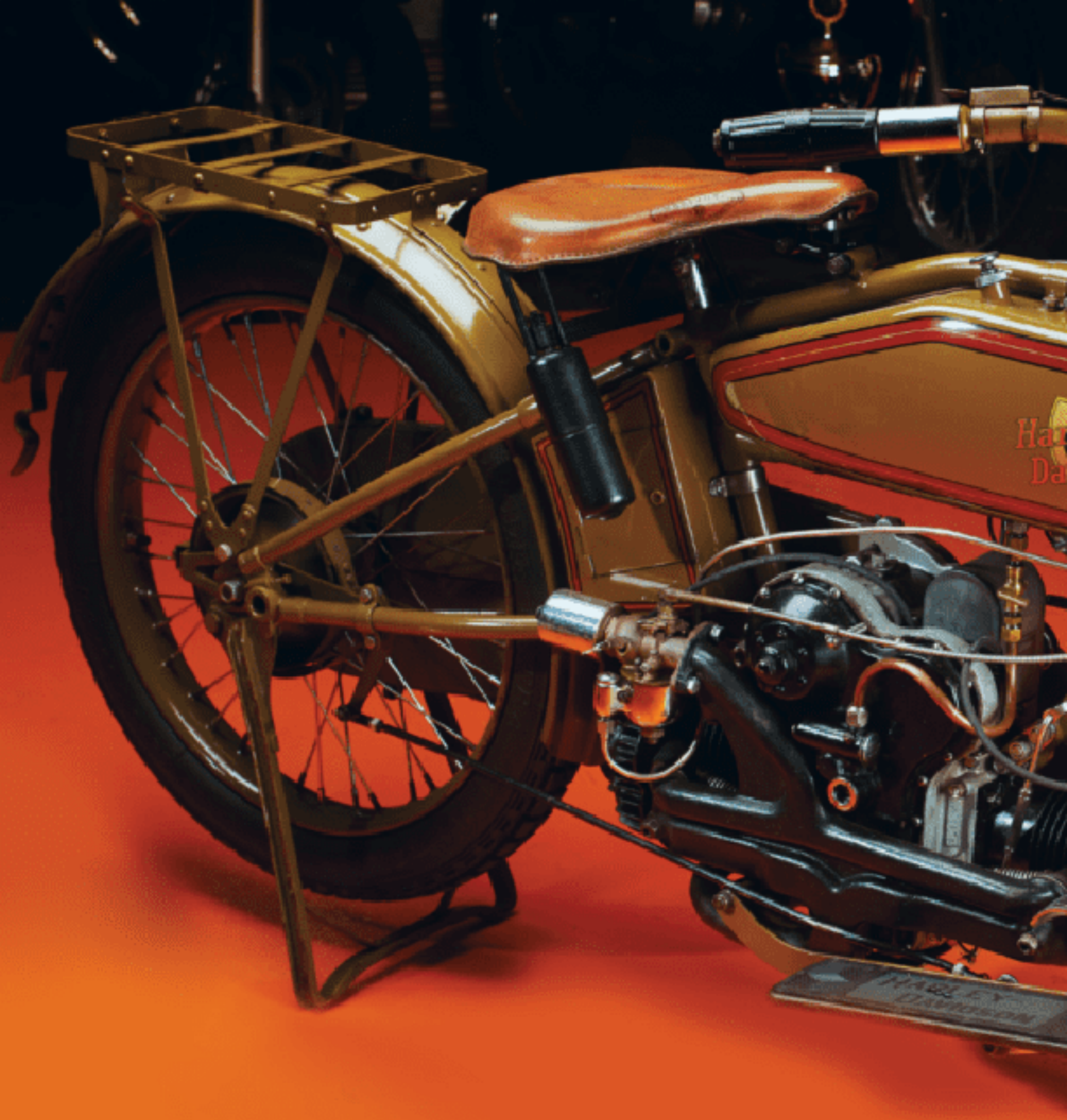




1924 Harley-Davidson JCAD

The J series Harleys were versatile and popular motorcycles. Originally designed to fill the needs of the US Military in WW 1, subsequent civilian models were offered in various versions with 61 cubic inch (1000cc) motor introduced in 1915 and a larger 74 cubic inch (1200cc) engine in 1922 up to 1928.

The engine was an F-head (one overhead and one side valve per cylinder) air-cooled, V-twin design. It became a time-honored engine that has held up impressively well over the years.



1919 Harley-Davidson Model W Sport

The leading-link front fork of the Model W Sport used a central spring link connected to the downtubes through pull rods instead of a more common leaf spring.

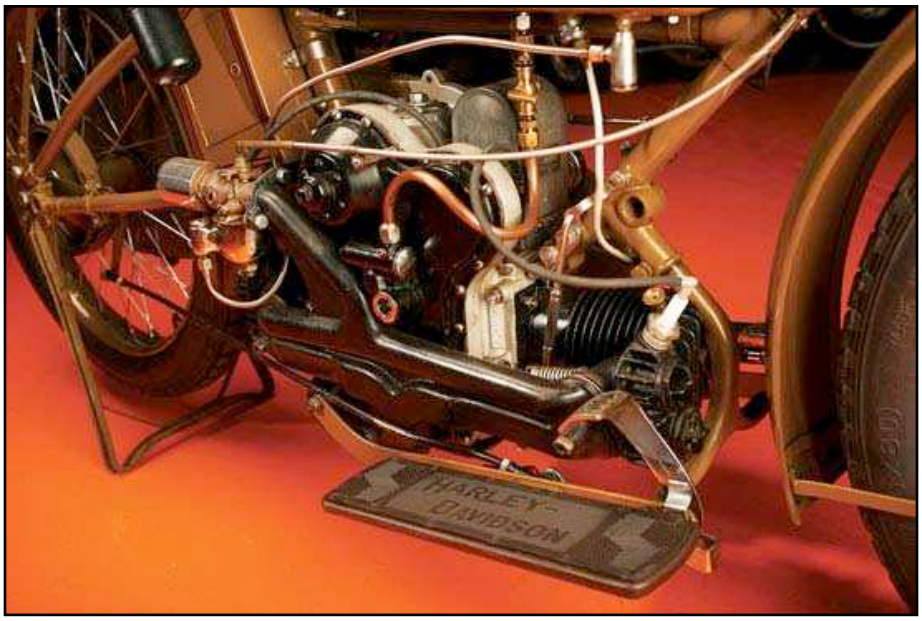
Missing Link:

1919 Harley-Davidson Model W Sport

By Margie Siegal | Photos by Nick Cedar | Source: motorcycleclassics.com

1919 H-D Model W Sport

- **Engine:** 35.64ci (584cc) air-cooled sidevalve horizontally opposed twin w/cylinders in line w/frame, 2-3/4in x 3in (69.9mm x 76.2mm) bore and stroke, 3.75:1 compression ratio (est.), 6hp (factory claimed)
- **Top speed:** 50mph
- **Carburetion:** Single 3/4in (19mm) Schebler
- **Transmission:** 3-speed handshift, chain final drive
- **Electrics:** Magneto ignition
- **Frame/wheelbase:** Single downtube keystone-style w/engine as stressed member/57in (1,448mm)
- **Suspension:** Trailing link w/single spring front, rigid rear
- **Brakes:** 7in (178mm) external contracting drum rear
- **Tires:** 3in x 26in front and rear (3in x 20in modern equivalent)
- **Weight (wet):** 250lb (114kg)
- **Seat height:** 29.5in (749mm)
- **Fuel capacity:** 3gal (13.6ltr)
- **Price then/now:** $355/$25,000-$45,000



The horizontally opposed twin sits inline with the frame.

During most of its long existence, Harley-Davidson has built its reputation more on making powerful, reliable and sturdy V-twin-powered motorcycles than on innovation. Yet in 1919, Harley introduced an entirely new engine with essential features that wouldn't become part of the family lineup for almost another decade.

By the end of 1918 and with World War I over, the Harley-Davidson company looked forward to peace, prosperity, and selling motorcycles — especially to veterans who had been introduced to motorcycles while in the military. Company engineer William Harley thought these new riders would want an innovative, user-friendly motorcycle with updated features, and he headed for the drawing board to deliver.

The bike that H-D introduced to dealers in mid-1919 was definitely innovative. Advertised as the Harley Sport, the Model W was the first Harley with a sidevalve top end, which was state of the art at the time. Before 1919, all Harley-Davidson engines featured the intake-over-exhaust valve configuration used on most motorcycle engines since the 1890s.

Running without valve seals, inlet-over-exhaust engines routinely blew oil mist all over the rider's pants. Competitor Indian was proving that sidevalve engines were not only quieter and cleaner, but also powerful, reliable and fast, and Indian's sidevalve motorcycles regularly won both speed contests and endurance races. It seemed reasonable for Harley to experiment with a setup that had been proven by other companies.

Harley's Flat Twin

The engine William Harley conceived was unlike any previously built by Harley-Davidson. Unlike Indian's V-twins, Harley's new engine was a flat twin. Except unlike the now-familiar BMW with its cylinders sticking out to either side, the cylinders on Harley's new sidevalve were in line with the frame, one forward of the crankcase and one aft. Interestingly, this cylinder arrangement, chosen to minimize vibration, was used by Indian on the 1917-1919 Model O, which was taken out of production the same year Harley introduced its own flat twin. A single casting combined the intake from the carburetor and the exhaust to the muffler. Advertising literature of the time claimed that heating the intake charge helped atomize the fuel for combustion. Given the poor quality gasoline that was generally available, it probably did.

One camshaft operated both the intake and exhaust valves. The engine and gearbox for the 3-speed transmission were housed in the same set of castings, split vertically. A "bacon slicer" outside flywheel was covered by a pressed steel cover. Oil was circulated by a plunger pump, and rear drive was by an enclosed chain.

The clutch is operated by the rider's left foot.

Motorcycles of the era needed constant maintenance thanks to a combination of dusty roads, lack of air cleaners, and oil that was chock full of carbon coating the interiors of gasoline-powered engines with a black goop that needed to be cleaned out on a regular basis. The Harley Sport had features that made maintenance easier. The valve guides on the Sport screwed into place, and the cylinders could be removed for cleaning and the valves could be ground without removing the engine from the frame. The frame used the engine as a stressed member.

A Sport selling point was its 29.5-inch seat height. Early motorcycles, most based on bicycle frames, were very tall, and often scared new riders trying to get a foot down on a gravel road. Sport sales brochures pointed out that the flat-twin engine lowered the center of gravity, helping with easy riding, making the low seat on the Sport ahead of its time. In the mid-1920s, frames began to be designed that would allow a short rider to firmly plant both feet on the ground, and low seat heights were trumpeted in advertisements.

Yet another innovation of the Sport was the front fork, which was different from other Harley models. Like contemporary Indians, it was a trailing link design, but instead of a large leaf spring the Sport had a central spring link

The handshifter sits on the left side of the tank.

connected to the downtubes through pull rods. The chain final drive was fully enclosed, helping the bike stay cleaner and helping with chain lubrication. The Schebler carburetor was protected by Harley's first-ever use of an air cleaner.

Competition

On paper it all sounded wonderful. In the real world, there were a few problems. First of all, the competition for the Harley Sport was not other motorcycles — it was the Ford Model T. Before World War I, four wheelers were too expensive and complicated for the average person to own. The first Model T's cost $825 when introduced in 1908, at a time when the average worker's salary was about $3,000 a year. By 1919, the price of a Model T had dropped to a little more than $500. People bought motorcycles to get from Point A to Point B. A motorcycle had to be either significantly cheaper or much more fun to compete.

The 1919 list price for the Sport was $335. Advertising for the Harley Sport emphasized its advanced features, its powerful engine, and the pleasure a rider would experience. Advertising copy assured the prospective buyer that all of the Sport's new components had been thoroughly tested. Harley-Davidson claimed the opposed twin was designed for cross-country riding, and to back this up sponsored Hap Scherer on a long-distance run on the Sport while also trumpeting the achievements of Jack Fletcher, who rode his Sport up loose rock and dirt to the top of 10,064-foot Mt. San Antonio north of Los Angeles.

The top speed on a Harley Sport was 50mph. That actually wasn't too bad for the era, a time when most roads were dirt. The Sport sold reasonably well after its introduction in the second half of 1919 and for the start of the 1920 season. Then Indian introduced the Scout, powered by a 596cc sidevalve V-twin.

Even though the Sport had a comparable displacement of 584cc, the Indian Scout was faster. Indian's chief engineer, Charles Franklin, may have happened upon the "squish" principle of flame propagation in cylinder heads independent of Harry Ricardo, who is usually credited with its discovery, and employed it on the new Indians. The Scout broke the Three Flags (Canada to Mexico) and transcontinental records set by larger bikes, and set a world record for covering the most miles over a closed course. The Scout was peppy — 11 horsepower compared to the Harley's 6 horsepower — and it was reliable: the Harley Sport's rear cylinder was out of the airstream and had a tendency to overheat. Not hurting things, the Scout also had that great V-twin sound. The Sport, by comparison, sounded tame.

Sport sales sputtered. In its first year, Harley built and sold fewer than 800 Sports. In 1920, that number jumped significantly, with over 5,000 Sports produced. But in 1921, less than half of that left dealers' showrooms, and in 1922,

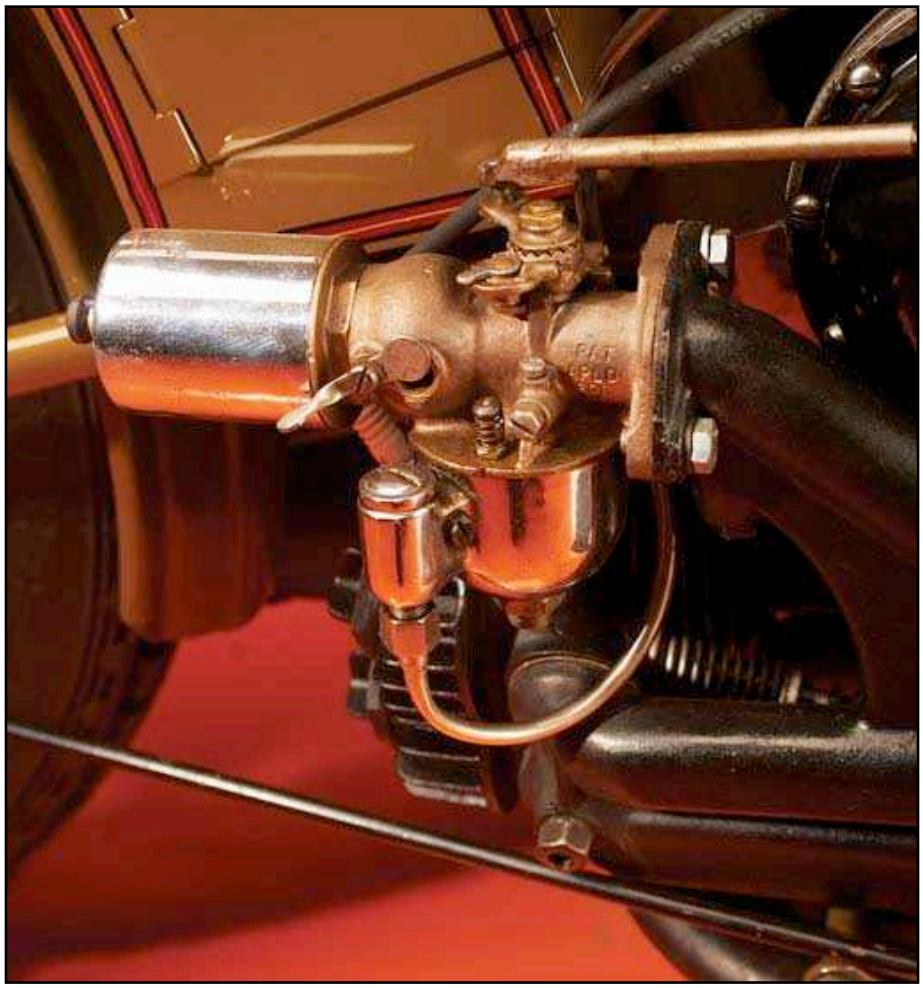
Harley sold fewer than 1,000 Sports. In 1923, 1,095 Sports left the factory. At that point, Harley gave up and retired the model.

Few changes were made during the model run. 1919 and early 1920 Sports were not available with electric lights. Riders wanting to ride at night used accessory acetylene lights, powered by a gas now mostly used as a welding fuel. From the mid-1920s on, Sports could be ordered with much safer electric lights. Changes for 1920 included a new battery case, a new toolbox cover and miscellaneous small parts. For 1921, a new tank logo was used and some additional, minor parts were changed. The engine was beefed up in 1922, but for 1923, with the model clearly on its way out, there were no changes.

Aftermath

Although the factory gave up on the Sport, it did not give up on sidevalve engines. In fact, the Model W paved the way for the future. Harley's intake-over-exhaust top ends were reaching the end of their possible development. Although overhead valve engines were being developed for racing in the 1920s, they were not yet practical on the street. Metallurgy and lubrication development had not yet reached the point where an overhead valve machine was reliable enough for everyday use.

Sidevalve engines appeared to be the way to go, and in 1924 Harley started developing a sidevalve single, largely for overseas markets, introducing its first motorcycles with this engine in 1926, featuring squish head technology licensed from Harry Ricardo. Sidevalve 45-inch V-twins appeared in dealers' showrooms in the summer of 1928, and 74-inch sidevalve V-twin twins appeared in 1929 — just before Wall Street collapsed. These sidevalve engines were accepted by riders and got Harley through the worst of the Depression.



The single 3/4-inch Schebler carburetor feeds both cylinders.

Not wanting to give up on a proven — and frankly inexpensive — design too soon, Harley stuck with sidevalve engines for years. The company continued to build street sidevalve two wheelers until 1956, and KR racing sidevalves until 1969. Harley produced three-wheeler Servi-cars, powered by a 45-inch sidevalve engine, for parking enforcement use until 1975.

Survivors

Few Model W Sports have survived. The Sport had something of a following in Europe (Harley-Davidson had a big export business there) and several have been found there, and in New Zealand and Australia. A few made it through the World War II scrap metal drives in the U.S. One, a 1919 machine, came to the capable hands of master motorcycle restorer Mike Parti.

In his earlier years, Mike was a hot rodder, motorcycle racer and all-round hell-raiser. In 1975, he broke both arms in a crash and decided to turn his interests and skills to restoring motorcycles. Mike was one of the earliest restoration experts, getting involved just before collecting antique American motorcycles went from the preoccupation of an eccentric few to a mainstream hobby. Like most restorers, Mike built bikes for customers, and if he

took on a project on spec, he sold the bike as soon as it was finished in order to finance the restoration of the next machine. This Sport went to one enthusiast, who sold it to a second, who eventually decided to include it in the yearly antique motorcycle auctions in Las Vegas, Nevada. Which is where it came to the attention of Thom McIlhattan.

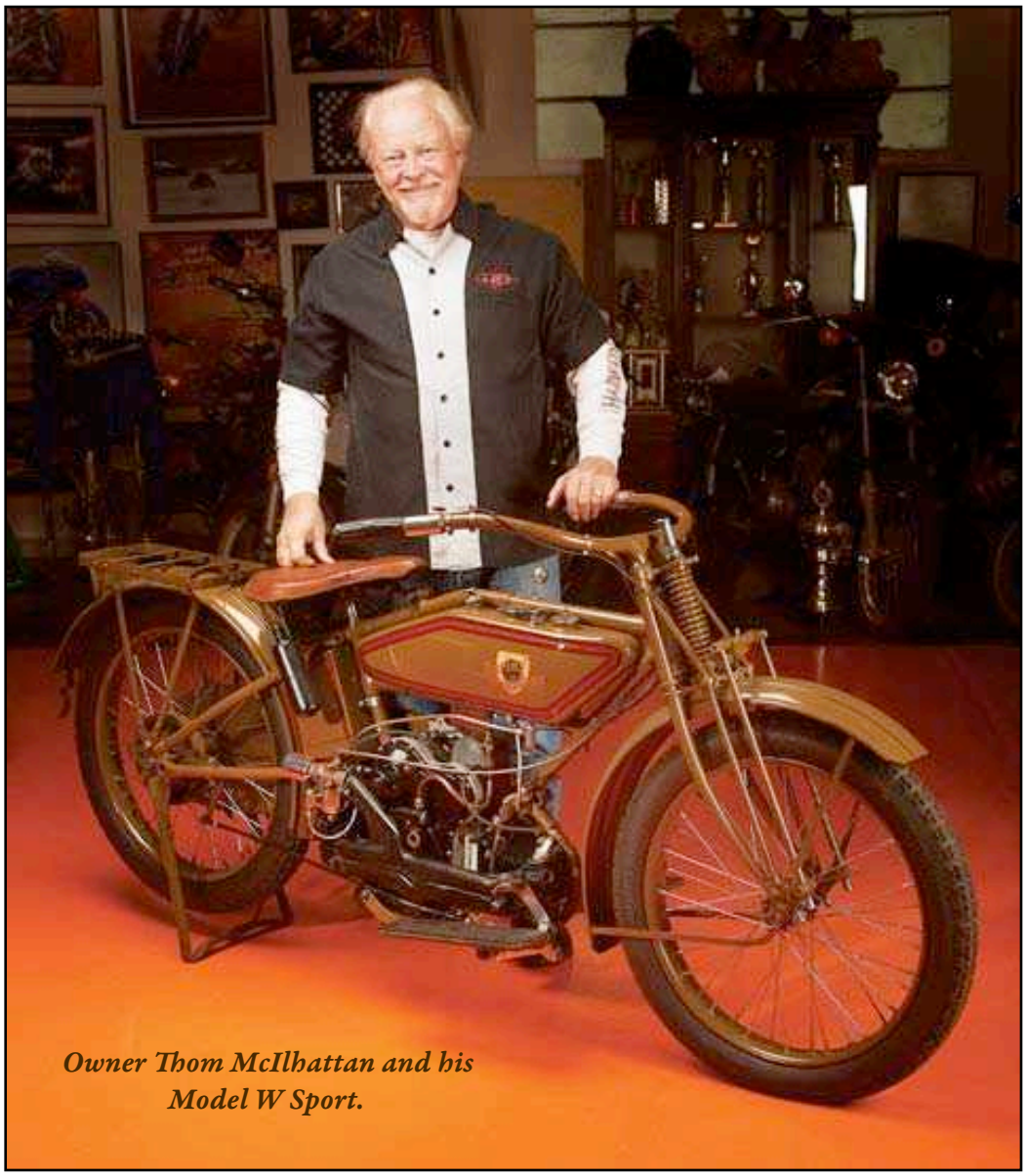
Thom is a man with many interests, and the former owner of Harley-Davidson of Vallejo in Northern California. Now more or less retired, Thom is assembling a collection of vintage motorcycles, which mandates frequent trips to the Las Vegas auctions.

"I got into collecting by a total mistake. I was still running the dealership at the time, and someone showed up with a 1950s K model in a pickup truck." Thom bought the K, and soon afterwards, he started looking to buy other historic bikes, with the intention of assembling a display of the evolution of the American motorcycle.

"I have a fascination with how things came to be. I wanted the Sport because I didn't have anything to fill that particular time period in motorcycle history. The Sport was such a change from what Harley Davidson had been doing — so much was new, and the bike was lower and narrower than other Harley models. It's a shame about that rear cylinder, though. If the rear cylinder would overheat, you could kiss your exhaust valve goodbye." Thom continues: *"There was only one other person vaguely interested in the motorcycle at the auction. The bike was in running order and needed no work at all. A collector's delight. I usually don't want to do much to a bike I buy for my collection, and this bike fired up when I bought it."*

Thom points out that in 1919, people viewed motorcycles much differently than they do today. "The most important thing at the time was reliability. A motorcycle was a tool, something you used to get around. For example, the luggage carrier on the Sport was part of the bike as delivered and not an accessory. It had to work. I found a story about a contractor who used a Sport to survey Death Valley. He rode it 1,200 miles around some very unforgiving terrain with no problems," Thom says.

Although the Sport was Harley's first venture into sidevalve production and was not a success, Harley used the experience to improve its next sidevalve models, which were very successful. And the Sport still has its attractions — and increasingly its attractors — today. *"I like looking at the Sport,"* Thom says. *"I like its lowness and its narrowness, and I like that it is kind of Harley-Davidson's missing link."*



Owner Thom McIlhattan and his Model W Sport.

1928 Harley-Davidson Peashooter

By Ben Branch | Source: silodrome.com

The Harley-Davidson Peashooter is a single-cylinder motorcycle originally released in 1926 to compete in the hotly contested AMA 21 cubic inch class. Indian and Excelsior were the established forces to be reckoned with in the smaller, single-cylinder racing world but Harley decided to dive in and compete – and also sell a line of smaller-engined road bikes.

The market for big twins was strong in the 1920s, but there was a larger (though less lucrative) market for simpler, smaller motorcycles. Harley-Davidson had started out making single-cylinder bikes but since the advent of their big twins, they'd paid a lot less attention to the genre – but 1926 would see this all change.

Countries like Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Rhodesia, and regions like Europe, were more interested in economical and less expensive motorcycles – so a new 350cc Harley-Davidson could potentially open up new markets for the American marque.

In 1926 Harley-Davidson introduced the Model A and the Model B, both single-cylinder motorcycles with 350cc (21 cubic inch) engines.

Both were sidevalve-engined (the A had a magneto, and the B had a battery/coil), for those who wanted to go racing the models were also offered with an OHV engine offering 50% more power – in Model AA and Model BA designations.

Understandably, the side-valve engine was cheaper and sold far better – but it was its overhead-valve brother that would become an icon of the then-new dirt track racing scene.

The quickest iteration of the bike was to be the Model S, it used the same basic OHV engine as above, but with modifications from Harley-Davidson engineers giving it 30hp and a reported top speed in the 100mph range – solid numbers for a 350 single even today.

The nickname "Peashooter" was given to the bike as a reference to its unusual exhaust popping sounds – a side effect of the performance tuning done on the OHV race bikes.

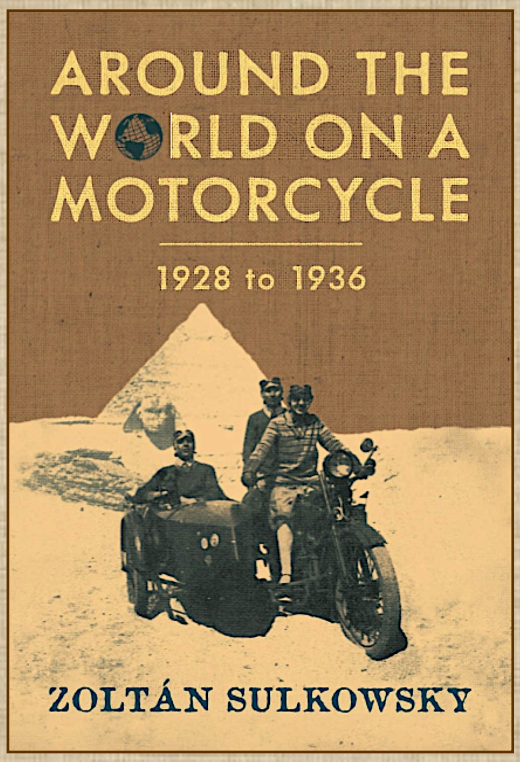
The 1928 Harley-Davidson Model SA Peashooter you see here is a restored original bike that was in the EJ Cole Collection, it was sold by Mecum Auctions in 2023.

BOOKS

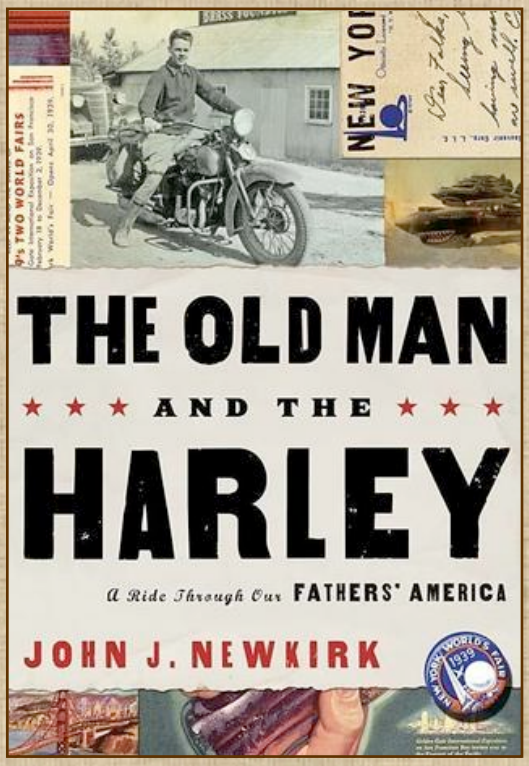
AROUND THE WORLD ON A MOTORCYCLE

The year was 1928 when two young Hungarians decided to travel around the world on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle with sidecar. This account of his trip with friend Gyula Bartha gives a very clear-eyed view of the world in the 1930s -- a world where the colonizing influence of Europe had affected much of Africa and Asia but not all. The two experienced the riches of sultans, witnessed remote cultures and extreme poverty in far-flung villages, travelled through wilderness with the ever-present danger of wild animals, and traversed roads of all descriptions.
They dealt with mud, sand, extreme heat and cold, and rivers where the motorcycle had to be taken apart to cross in a small boat. This intelligent and engaging book, now in a paperback edition, offers a unique world view between the World Wars, flavored by the great diversity of cultures and the wide variety of human life that exists on the planet.

From: amazon.ca
Price: $27.99
Paperback



The Old Man and the Harley



Ride with a father and his son on an amazing journey through America's past.

In the summer of 1939, with the nation balanced between the Great Depression and the gathering winds of war, young Jack Newkirk set off on a rickety Harley to see both the New York and San Francisco Worlds Fairs. He had no way of knowing it was to be the autumn of his youth, and that his entire generation would soon be thrust into the most devastating conflict in history.
Seven decades later, author John J. Newkirk retraces this epic ride with his father, Jack, in a silent hope the old soldier will still be proud of the America he fought for. Each mile brings discovery as the author learns of his namesake, the heroic Squadron Leader of the legendar Flying Tigers, and of his fathers life on the road and in the jungles of the South Pacific during World War II.

From: Amazon.ca
Price: n/a
Paperback

Pinup by Randy McPherson

1929 Harley-Davidson JDH

the machine that helped the Twenties roar.


VIDSON

The Stuff of Legends:

The 1929 Harley-Davidson JDH

By Margie Siegal | Photos by Sedrick Mitchell | Source: motorcycleclassics.com

1929 Harley-Davidson JDH

- Claimed power: 29hp @ 4,000rpm
- Top speed: 85mph
- Engine: 1,207cc (74.7ci) air-cooled IOE 45-degree V-twin, 3.424in x 4in bore and stroke, 6.5:1 compression ratio
- Weight (wet): 408lb (185kg)
- Fuel capacity: 4.75gal (18ltr)
- Price then/now: $370/$45,000-$65,000

Is the Harley-Davidson JDH the first Superbike? When motorcycle magazines started talking about Superbikes in the late Sixties they were big-bore motorcycles with speed and panache, bikes that broke quarter-mile times and turned heads with equal ease. The implication in the excited magazine articles was that this type of machine was a recent development. As Exhibit A in the "It Ain't Necessarily So" department, Motorcycle Classics presents the Harley-Davidson JDH, the machine that helped the Twenties roar.

The JDH

The JDH has been the stuff of legends for over 80 years. It weighed about 408 pounds, was powered by a 74-cubic-inch V-twin and was good for 85mph in standard trim — 100mph if you matched the manifold to the cylinder heads and knew how to tune the beast. Based on factory racing designs, a JDH would blow away almost everything else on the road, two wheels or four, when it was introduced in 1928. In the late Twenties, if you had a need for speed, a JDH was the cat's pajamas.

The bike that became the Harley JDH took shape in the period around World War I, a time when Harley-Davidson's archrival Indian concentrated on selling bikes to the American expeditionary forces, starving its dealers and leaving the field open for Harley to expand. In 1915, Harley sold over 16,000 motorcycles, mostly 61-cubic-inch twins. Good sales led to improvements in the product. An electric headlight and taillight were offered as an option, as well as Harley's first 3-speed transmission. The oiling system was improved, and Harley guaranteed its twins would develop 11 whole horsepower.

The valve gear on Harley's 1915 V-twins was inlet over exhaust, with the intake valve operated by a cam lobe in the crankcase via a long pushrod and an exposed rocker to the valve, which sat atop a valve pocket cast into the cylinder. The exhaust valve, located in the bottom of the valve pocket, was also moved by a cam lobe, but with a much shorter pushrod. This inlet-over-exhaust top end was messy — oil mist got over

everything from the exposed valves. Yet it worked, and worked well, and Harley used this system for the next 15 years.

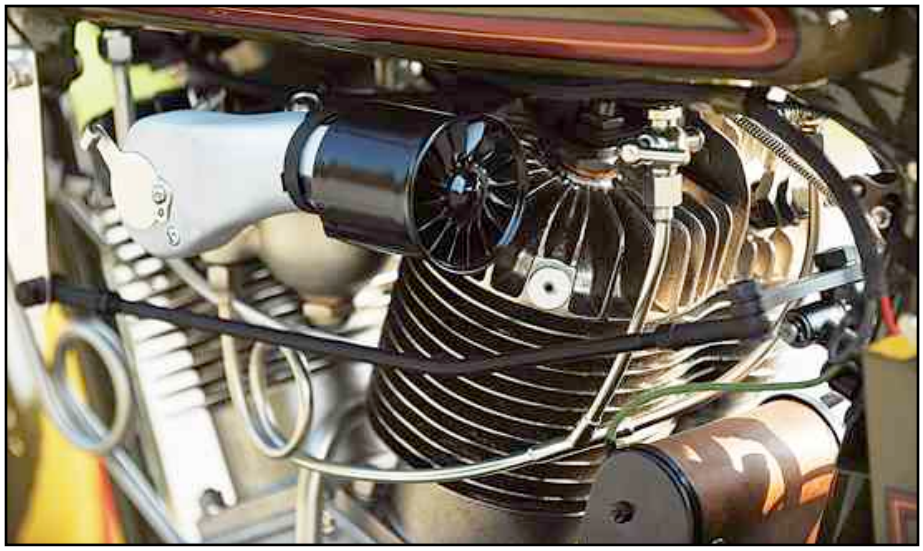
In 1917, in a bow to the doughboys of World War I, all Harleys were painted a shiny olive drab livened up by fancy pinstriping instead of the gray used previously. Except for two years when Harley tried a different green, the stock color on all its bikes through the early Thirties was olive drab.

In 1919, Harley started building racers with two cam gears (with two lobes on each gear) on separate shafts instead of having all four cam lobes mounted on one gear shaft. The idea was to reduce reciprocating weight and reduce the length of the cam followers. The two-cam engines could rev higher than comparable Harley single cam twins, and they were fast and reliable in a racing environment. In the beginning, two-cam engines were only available to factory racers.

In 1920, Harley-Davidson finished constructing the largest motorcycle plant on the planet, and started building its own generators and coils. By then, the company employed 2,400 people. Only 14 years earlier, the Harley shop was so small it was picked up and moved back a couple of feet to avoid encroaching on a railroad right of way.

Changing Markets

The American motorcycle market had changed considerably in those 14 years. When Harley started production, most motorcycles were bought for economical transportation. With the advent of the Ford Model T, an increasing percentage of the economical transport crowd abandoned their bikes for four wheels. Most



American motorcycle manufacturers went out of business, and the few left got by through a combination of overseas exports, sales to sport riders, urban commercial sales and police sales. A major market for Harley-Davidson was motorcycle-based commercial delivery vehicles, which could thread through crowded city streets. The commercial purchasers demanded reliability, and police purchasers also wanted power.

In 1921, Harley came out with its first 74-cubic-inch V-twins. Harley continued to build two-cam racers, refining the design every year, but they were still not available to the general public. Some dealers with an "in" to the factory were able to get one, but the hot engines were out of reach for the average enthusiast.

Good times led to an increase in the number of sport riders. Starting in the mid-Twenties, Harley-Davidson pushed the idea of motorcycle clubs all over the country. Dealers were encouraged to sponsor clubs and provided with literature on how to get clubs started. Numerous enthusiast clubs had sprung up in the early years of the century, but many had fallen by the wayside after the get-to-work riders bought Model Ts.

However, the combination of general prosperity and Harley's push for club formation brought

new riders into the fold. Harley dealers found that supporting clubs and social events was good for business: An active local motorcycle club meant increased sales of motorcycles in general and sport bikes in particular. Harley's sales numbers, which had been stagnant, started to rise, and the sales leaders were the faster twins. By 1927, Harley was selling over 18,500 bikes a year, over 13,000 of which were the Model J 61-cubic-inchers and the Model JD 74s. However, these were basically commercial machines; many sport bike enthusiasts preferred Indian 101 Scouts and Excelsior 45-cubic-inch Super X twins, while still others bought Henderson Fours. Harley felt the need to offer a sporting machine to compete.

The only gauge on the bike is an amperage meter, complete with its own light.

One for the road

In 1928, Harley finally broke down and started offering road going versions of its two-cam engines to the general public. Available in JH 61-cubic-inch and JDH 74-cubic-inch versions, the production two-cammers had the same general setup as the contemporary two-cam racers. The twin cams acted through tappets to actuate the overhead intake valve pushrod and the exhaust valve. The intake valves had double valve springs and the springs on the exhaust valves were uncovered for increased cooling. Lifter blocks on top of the right case helped route oil back to the crankcase and pistons were domed magnesium alloy, producing a compression ratio of 6.5:1.

Harley offered a sports package, called the Sport Solo, which included narrower gas tanks and 18-inch wheels. The package also included shorter handlebars that were more like the bars on modern bikes and less like the wheelbarrow-like bars on earlier motorcycles. Many two-cammers came with this package, and the package was also available for the standard V-twins. The 74-inch JDH cylinders are identifiable by continuous fins around the exhaust valve area, which increased cooling. Some time earlier, the company had started to make optional colors available, another bow to the needs of sport riders. Although these optional colors were not advertised to the general public, dealer circulars and paint chip sets that have surfaced show that the optional 1928 colors included cream, white, coach green, azure blue, police blue and maroon.

A JDH was not cheap. The sticker price of $335 in 1928 dollars increased to $370 in 1929. At the time, $385 would buy a bare-bones Model A Ford. A tuned JDH could not run on the low-octane fuel available at most pumps, however, so owners who increased the compression ratio and horsepower had to buy or concoct expensive high-octane fuel mixtures.

All Harley Big Twins, including the two-cammers, received three important updates in 1928: a new air cleaner, a throttle controlled oil pump and a front brake. Riders had considered front brakes dangerous on the largely unpaved roads of early Twentieth century America. During the 1920s roads had gradually improved, and better roads meant higher speeds were practically possible — a front brake was both safe and necessary.

The 1929 version of the JDH included a lot of one-year-only parts, including a four-tube muffler that many riders disliked because it was too quiet! Other one-year-only items included dual headlights, a bigger Klaxon horn, and an adjustable generator that let the rider turn the amperage up or down.

In late 1929, Harley switched from the inlet-over-exhaust valve configuration to sidevalve V-twins. These sidevalve engines were heavier than the JDs, and JDs often beat the newer bikes in races during the 1930s. However, the sidevalve engines were more reliable and needed less maintenance.

Hard to find

Harley has never provided production figures for the two-cammers. The only sales figures available lump the JH and JDH with JD V-twin production. Harley sold a lot of JDs in both 1928 and 1929, but most of these were probably single-cam machines. JDHs don't turn up for sale very often. Pre-1931 Harley-Davidson restoration specialist Steve Thielicke says many JDHs and JHs he sees have welded cases from being ridden past redline too often.

Steve is the owner of Preston Cycle Works in Preston, Washington. He first fell in love with vintage bikes at age 19, and acquired five JDHs "before they were worth anything," he says. He eventually sold them off for a pile of Henderson parts. Steve's father-in-law was a hill climber back in the day, and he stoked Steve's lust for old bikes with stories of crazy biker stunts back in the day, with motorcycles that would now be worth a fortune. "I have a compilation of films of bike events from this area," Steve says. "People are doing all sorts of things, having fun. We hold these bikes up on a pedestal, but at the time, they were just vehicles."

One night, Steve was flipping through Hemmings Motor News when he saw an ad for two JDHs at a more than reasonable price. Thinking it had to be a joke, he let it go. Shortly afterwards, he ran into the guy who bought the bikes — which actually turned out to be seven disassembled bikes. "It turned out to be the real deal," Steve says. The buyer and Steve came to an agreement, and he ended up with all seven basket cases.

Restorers expect basket cases to be missing hard-to-find parts, but amazingly, the two JDHs had all their sheet metal (the hardest to find item) in restorable shape, and almost all other parts present. Steve, like many old bike enthusiasts, has a stash of parts, and was happy to find that almost all the needed missing pieces were in his parts collection, except the exhaust. "Of the JDHs, this one was spectacular. The other had been blown up, and the cases welded. I used the best parts for this bike," Steve says. Steve does his own sheet metal, his own painting and his own machine work. He sends out parts to be plated, but not before doing the prep work himself. The major challenge was replicating the exhaust — the 1929 four-pipe exhaust has a lot of separate pieces. "It took me two weeks just to make the exhaust."

Having most of the components is especially important for a 1929 JDH, as finding missing pieces is often impossible. "There are so many one-year-only parts on this bike," Steve says. "Figuring out what is correct can be difficult. There is some, but not much literature. Sometimes, the correct parts are not in the catalog. They would make changes over a model year and not note the changes," he says.

Another hurdle is figuring out the correct finish for a particular part. Should it be nickel-plated, painted or Parkerized? Parkerization, a metal preservative finish used on many small parts, may have turned out differently in the 1920s due to the different chemicals available. "I have come up with my own Parkerizing solution, but even so, the hue on new metal is not the same as the color on old metal that has been cleaned," Steve says. "The hue does not take uniformly, no matter what you do."

Steve says the JDH is easy to start and fun to ride, and with careful blueprinting and internal polishing, Steve thinks this machine may be able to reach the fabled "ton." American Iron Magazine publisher and vintage bike fan Buzz Kanter rode a JDH in the 2012 Cannonball coast to coast endurance run, and kept it running for most of the almost 4,000 mile event (he had to have it trucked for one day of the event because of water in the tank). In published interviews, he agrees with Steve's assessment of the JDH as a fast, easy-to-ride bike.

These days, the bike belongs to vintage car and bike collector Don Hart. "The JDH is a part of the Harley saga," Don says. "It's a piece of the puzzle, and there aren't a lot of them around." The stuff of legends, indeed.

Scavenger Hunt:

1936 Harley-Davidson EL

By Greg Williams | Photos Jeff Barger | Source: motorcycleclassics.com

Relatively speaking, it's easy to restore a motorcycle when it's already complete. Wheels, gas tank, saddle, engine and transmission and all of the ancillary components that make up the machine can be photographed and documented before disassembly, then cleaned, repaired, painted and plated and put back together again.

That's just too simple for some.

Others prefer to hunt for the parts and pieces to build up a complete machine, scouring deep in the bottom of dusty boxes at swap meets and constantly scanning eBay and other online sources for the last elusive shafts and gears.

Then there are those such as Paul Woelbing of Franklin, Wisconsin, who would choose to piece together, part by part, a rare 1936 Harley-Davidson EL, a model introduced mid-year in the Motor Company's production run, and one with more than 155 changes in the first six months of its release.

1936 Harley-Davidson EL

- **Engine:** 60.33ci (988.56cc) air-cooled OHV 45-degree V-twin, 3-5/16in x 3-1/2in bore and stroke, 7:1 compression ratio, 40hp @ 4,800rpm
- **Top speed:** 95mph
- **Carburetion:** Single Linkert M5
- **Transmission:** Constant mesh 4-speed, hand shift, chain primary and final drive
- **Ignition:** 6v, coil and breaker points ignition
- **Frame/wheelbase:** Dual downtube steel cradle/59.5in (1,511mm)
- **Suspension**: Double leading link forks w/double springs front, rigid rear
- **Brakes:** 7.25in (184mm) SLS drum front and rear
- **Tires**: 4 x 18in front and rear
- **Weight (wet)**: 565lb (234kg)
- **Seat height:** 32in (812.8mm)
- **Fuel capacity/MPG:** 3.5gal (14ltr)/35-50mpg
- **Price then/now:** $380/$75,000-$150,000

Paul blames his friend Mark Jonas for that.

The pair met in the mid-1990s when Paul bought his first old motorcycle from Mark, a 1948 Indian Chief. A 1949 Harley Davidson Panhead followed the Indian into Paul's garage, and it wasn't long before he realized he was amassing a small collection of interesting motorcycles. As part of his nascent motorcycle education, Paul and Mark made annual pilgrimages to many of the antique motorcycle swap meets, including those in Wauseon, Ohio; Davenport, Iowa; and Farmington, Minnesota.

"After I'd met him, Mark really took an interest in 1930s Harley Davidsons," Paul explains. *"And, he took a particular interest in the 1936 Knucklehead as a noteworthy machine."*

The Knucklehead, so-called because the rocker covers atop the V-twin cylinders slightly resemble two knuckles on a clenched fist, was Harley-Davidson's first full-production overhead-valve V-twin engine. Prior to this, the only overhead-valve V-twin built by the Motor Company was a specialized piece of equipment constructed for racing, and on a very limited basis. In 1926, Harley-Davidson did offer a 21-cubic-inch single-cylinder machine called the BA, better known by its nickname, the Peashooter, that was available as a flathead or with an overhead-valve layout.

For their bread-and-butter large-capacity V-twins, though, Harley-Davidson relied on sidevalve, or flathead, engine technology. By the late 1920s H-D customers riding the larger twins

were demanding more power and according to well-known motor-journalist Kevin Cameron, the cast-iron sidevalve cylinders of these engines wouldn't readily accommodate the request.

"The enduring problem of the sidevalve engine is that its very hot-running exhaust valve seat and exhaust port must be cast as part of the cylinder casting itself," Cameron wrote in an online Cycle World column about the advent of the Knucklehead engine. *"The more power such engines made, the hotter these parts became, distorting the cylinder out of round and making oil control and combustion gas sealing difficult."*

In order to offer the sporting rider a faster mount, in 1931 Harley Davidson engineers were tasked with developing an overhead-valve V-twin engine that could be put into regular production. The rockers would be operated by pushrods, and the two valves — one intake, one exhaust per cylinder — situated in a cast-iron head with plenty of fins to better channel cooling air over the hottest areas.

Further adding to the design brief, overhead valves required a

recirculating oil system, with a pump and separate tank, to ensure sufficient lubrication would reach the valve gear. For comparison, traditional sidevalve engines were most often lubricated by total-loss systems. On the older Harley Davidson sidevalve engines, for example, oil was gravity-fed from the tank (part of one side of the gas tank, where it was separated by a double-skinned steel wall) to a pump on the cam cover. From there, oil was distributed throughout the engine and was not pumped back to the tank. Instead, the oil would eventually leak past piston rings to burn in the combustion process or otherwise seep out between castings — total-loss.

Bad news

Worldwide economic difficulties of the Depression, however, were taking their toll on Harley Davidson — from sales of 22,350 motorcycles in 1928 to 3,703 in 1933. Regardless, the Motor Company carried on funding development of the new overhead-valve engine with dry-sump lubrication. For this new recirculating system, a double gear oil pump found a home at the rear of the aluminum crankcase and from a separate tank, fed lubricant under pressure to the critical internal components, including the overhead valve train. Meanwhile, the scavenge side of the pump returned hot oil from the crankcase back to the tank, where the process would simply start over.

As first designed and tested late in 1933 and through 1934 and '35, the new overhead-valve engine did not feature return oil lines from the rockerboxes. Plus, the 'boxes were open, without a sealed cover, so that oil would leak out copiously. Harley-Davidson tried to better meter the flow of oil to the valve train, without success. But that didn't stop Harley-Davidson from debuting the overhead-valve machine at a dealer meeting in late November 1935 at the Schroeder Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"I think Harley-Davidson was fairly nervous about the launch," Paul explains. *"I've seen a photograph of that meeting, and that overhead-valve motorcycle is not the highlight in the room."*

By the time Harley-Davidson officially launched the overhead-valve model in 1936, the oil issue had been somewhat, but not completely, rectified. Two small caps on each rocker cover now protected the valve stems. Kevin Cameron notes, though, *"Much of the reason for this chronic leakage was the complex shape of the surfaces to be sealed, which were over-ambitious. When heads heat up and cool down, gaskets are subjected to expansion and contraction of the parts they seal, and this remains a difficult problem to this day."*

The machine was available as the lower 6:1 compression ratio model E, good for approximately 37 horsepower, and the sportier 7:1 compression model EL that made 40 horsepower, both at 4,800rpm. Bore and stroke of the 61-cubic-inch engine was 3-5/16-inches by 3-1/2-inches, and the cast-iron cylinders were each secured to the crankcases via four bolts. The crankshaft rotated on roller main bearings and the two 8.125-inch-diameter cast-iron flywheels sandwiched fork and blade connecting rods that turned on caged 1/4-inch roller bearings on a 1.125-inch steel crankpin. A four-lobe cam, located on the right side of the engine, operated four separate pushrods to motivate the rockers and overhead valves.

Power pulses were transferred to a new 4-speed constant-mesh transmission through a redesigned multi-plate clutch, while a new single-butted double downtube frame and a twin-leg springer fork constructed of smooth, extruded tubing were also introduced. Overall, the new motorcycle — with fluids — weighed in at 565 pounds.

While beautifully and dramatically styled in the Art-Deco sensibility of the era and strong-running, the freshly released overhead-valve Harley-Davidsons were far from perfect. This was a design process Paul refers to as, clearly tongue-in-cheek, *"release and develop."*

Noted Knucklehead restorer Matt Olsen of Carl's Cycle Supply in Aberdeen, South Dakota, says Harley-Davidson produced just over 1,700 examples of the E and EL in 1936. As Paul alluded to earlier, there were many revisions made to bring the machine up to a satisfactory standard during the first year of its production run. On-the-fly changes include the fitting of three different types of timing covers and two kickstarter gearing ratios while the ignition timing was also altered. Oil tanks and lines were changed seven times, there were modifications to valve springs, rocker oil feed and improved rockers themselves, and five different frame alterations.

In its first year of production, Harley's "release-and-develop" method yielded more than 150 changes to the Knucklehead

Over the next few years, Harley-Davidson dialed in the overhead-valve motorcycle and while sales numbers weren't particularly strong, it eventually became a popular-selling model for the company. In 1941, engine capacity was increased to 74 cubic inches to create the FL, and after the war, sales figures of the larger model surged. The last year of the Knucklehead was 1947, as

Harley-Davidson released a new, aluminum-head model that fall.

When that machine was released, V-twin enthusiasts dubbed it the "Panhead" thanks to what looked like upside-down cake pan rocker covers. After that, the earlier overhead-valve model was nicknamed the Knucklehead — and the names stuck.

Build beginnings

It wasn't too difficult for Paul to become interested in Mark's passion for the early Knucklehead models, and when the pair located a 1936 EL frame and engine, Paul bought the parts as the basis for a complete build. This happened in 1998, back when eBay was just emerging. A few components were purchased through the online auction site, but several important pieces were sourced from the late Clete Borchert of Old Dude Vintage Parts & Service. The shop, located in Lilburn, Georgia, is now owned and operated by Clete's son, Bart.

"The way you restore one of these early Knuckleheads is by the serial number of the engine, as that will indicate early, mid or late production through 1936," Paul explains. *"The engine number on what I had fell into a mid-production period, and you do your best to guess what changes occurred and when."*

Harley-Davidson did not stamp date codes on their cast components until late in 1938, and frame serial numbers were not marked until 1970. That means Paul and Mark played the role of detectives and searched for four years to locate all factory-correct parts based, for the most part, on visual clues.

They were lucky to find a transmission that would have been originally built midway through the first year of production. And for 1936 and 1937, both front and rear fenders featured a butterfly clip to retain the mounting braces, and a set was found at a swap meet.

The engine and transmission were rebuilt by the late Ken Presson of The Motor Company in Davenport, Iowa, using all original parts. *"Kenny died in 2011,"* Paul says. *"But back in the 1970s, he got to be friends with a guy who'd had a Harley dealership in the 1930s and Kenny eventually bought out tons of new-old-stock components at a time when nobody was putting much value on the old parts."*

Throughout the restoration, it was Mark's academic approach that appealed to Paul. Whenever possible, Mark would find an original Knucklehead and do only what was necessary to make it run. But, if a bike was too far gone, he'd

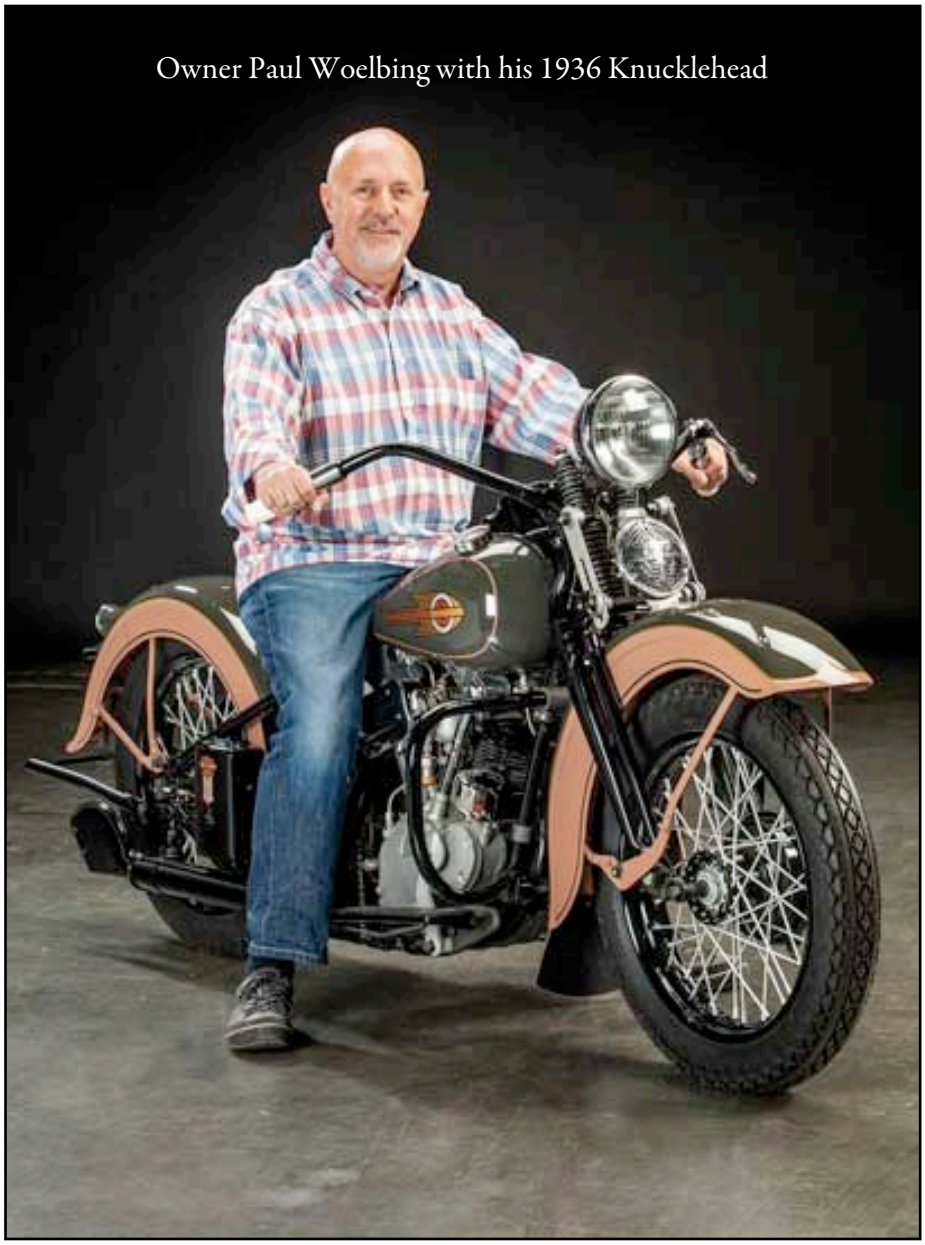
restore it, correctly, right down to the last detail.

"Mark really studied the bikes, and in an obsessive way," Paul says. *"For example, Mark would look and see runs in the factory-applied paint indicating that these parts were dip painted, so he'd replicate the painting process, leaving the runs. He also made canvas covers to keep the white rubber of the grips clean, just like Harley did."*

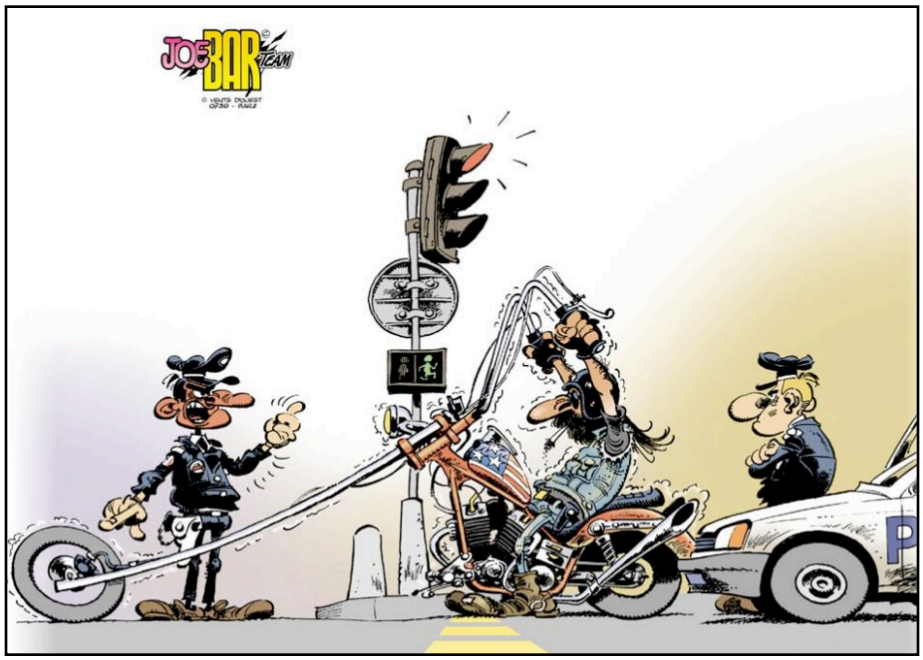
For 1936, the EL could be bought in two-tone paint jobs including Sherwood Green with Silver, Teak Red with Black, Dusk Gray with Royal Buff, Venetian Blue with Croydon Cream, and Nile Green with Maroon. It was the last combination that Paul originally wanted to use, but finally decided to finish it in the Dusk Gray and Royal Buff colors. After an original seat pan was restored, it was covered in fresh leather by Howard Heilman.

With the Knucklehead finished in 2003, the bike has since been sitting in Paul's office. He has several other classic machines that see regular use, however, he's decided 2021 will be the year the '36 EL finally sees the road. *"Because it's not really ever been broken in, and because it's been sitting, I think it needs a good recommissioning,"* Paul says of the motorcycle. To that end, Matt Olsen, who specializes not only in Knuckleheads but also Panheads with his dad, Carl, at Carl's Cycle Supply, is planning on picking the bike up later in 2019.

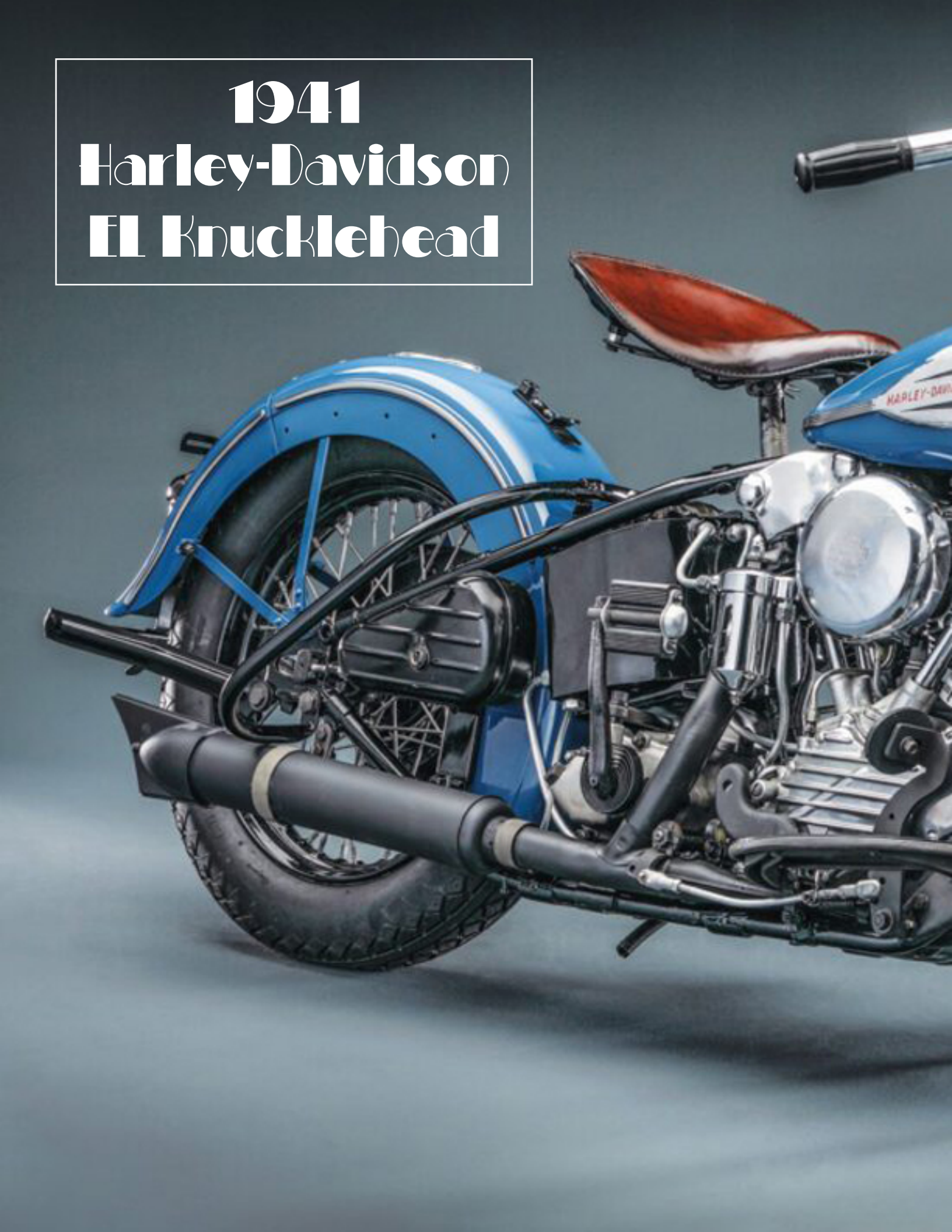
That'll give everyone enough time to ensure that this Knucklehead — built the hard way, finding piece after piece at swap meets like some kind of mechanical scavenger hunt — is ready to roll for its 85th birthday.



Owner Paul Woelbing with his 1936 Knucklehead



1941 Harley-Davidson EL Knucklehead



Pride and Joy

1941 Harley-Davidson EL Knucklehead

By Greg Williams | Photos: Jeff Barger | Source: motorcycleclassics.com

Follow the journey of this 1941 Harley-Davidson "Knucklehead" motorcycle and see how its latest owner finished a restoration project that began in the 1980s.

In 1950, decorated World War II veteran Carl Frank Schmidt was playing cards. Instead of cash, one of his poker buddies wagered a 1941 Harley-Davidson EL "Knucklehead."

We don't know the hand Carl held — it could have been four aces — but whatever he'd been dealt won him the motorcycle and he rode it home. According to family, the Knucklehead was used on their Delafield, Wisconsin, farm. Apparently, Carl enjoyed herding cattle with it and generally buzzing around the property, and once rode it as far as Texas to visit another war-time friend.

Carl used the Knucklehead for many years but began restoring it in the late 1980s. Sometime in 1993, he wrapped up the recommissioning of the machine, and at that point, he occasionally rode the bike, and would proudly display it at local shows. With failing health, however, Carl died at age 89 in 2010. Three years later, his daughter Carolyn Danek was clearing up her dad's estate and offered the Knucklehead for sale. Enter Tony Hessner of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

When Tony learned the Harley-Davidson was for sale, he arranged to see it, liked what he saw, and was happy to pay the cash asking price. For him, the Knucklehead was a desirable machine that joined several others in his collection, including a Honda Nighthawk S and vintage single and twin-cylinder BMWs. *"I had a friend with a large collection of bikes,"* Tony says of his initial attraction to the Harley-Davidson. *"He's got just about every year Knucklehead that Harley produced, and I rode one of his and quite liked it. He simply said, 'Get yourself a Knucklehead sometime,' and at that point it was more a dream than anything else because they weren't inexpensive nor often available for sale. But this one turned up in 2013,*

1941 Harley Davidson EL Knucklehead

- **Engine:** 61ci (1,000cc) air-cooled OHV 45-degree V-twin, 3-5/16in x 3-1/2in bore and stroke, 7:1 compression ratio, 40hp @ 4,800rpm
- **Top speed**: 95mph
- **Carburetion:** Single Linkert
- **Transmission**: 4-speed, hand shift, chain primary and final drive
- **Ignition:** 6v, coil and breaker points ignition
- **Frame/wheelbase**: Dual downtube steel cradle/59.5in (1,511mm)
- **Suspension:** Double leading link forks w/double springs front, rigid rear
- **Brakes**: 25in (184mm) SLS drum front and rear
- **Tires**: 4 x 18in front and rear
- **Weight (wet):** 565lb (234kg)
- **Seat height**: 32in (812.8mm)
- **Fuel capacity:** 5 gallons gas, 3.5 quarts oil

and I jumped at the chance to own it."

Digging deeper

Tony was happy to get the Knucklehead and appreciates Carl's connection to the machine. When Tony bought the bike, he was given several pieces of documentation. One of those pieces was an undated story about Carl from the Waukesha Daily Freedom newspaper. In the story, reporter Jack Burke wrote about Carl finally receiving the Legion of Merit — 50 years after he saved the lives of three Army friends in German-held territory in France.

It's quite the story, and Jack wrote that it was in November 1944 when "Schmidt and four others were on patrol ... [and] they crossed into a field of land mines. One soldier was killed instantly, and Schmidt and the rest were wounded after a land mine exploded. The two lead soldiers were stranded inside the field, surrounded by unexploded mines. Schmidt's lieutenant was hit in both legs and bleeding. Schmidt, who was wounded in the legs and arm, had to act. To keep his lieutenant from bleeding to death, Schmidt used his belt and his lieutenant's belt as tourniquets. He then ran back toward his unit to find help."

The story continues, "Schmidt brought back medics to tend to the lieutenant, and then risked his own life to save the other two wounded soldiers. Using his bayonet tip to gently prod for buried mines, Schmidt slowly laid out a safe path to the two men and carried them back to safety." That wasn't Carl's only act of bravery during the war, and he was also awarded the Silver Star and Legion of Merit for gallantry in action. With that background, as Tony rides, shows and talks about the Knucklehead, he is more than happy to carry forward Carl's stories of bravery.

Tony believes he is the third owner of the Knucklehead, and says, *"When Carl won it in the poker game, it was at the time a relatively common, 9-year-old motorcycle — but I wonder if he'd have ever imagined how popular Knuckleheads would become?"* He continues, *"Carl did use it, enjoy it and preserve it well for years before undertaking a thorough cosmetic and mechanical renovation using the technology and methods most popular in the late '80s and early '90s. As the next steward, I have attempted what is commonly done today by mimicking an appearance as close to factory original as modern methods allow."*

Harley-Davidson Knucklehead Model history

A brief overview of the Knucklehead's development goes like this. Prior to the early 1930s, Harley-Davidson's large displacement V-twin engines featured flathead, or side valve, technology. In the mid-1920s, however, the Motor Company had offered the BA, or "Peashooter" model, with either flathead or overhead valve layout. Powered by a 21 cubic-inch single-cylinder engine, the BA was a limited-production model built

solely for racing. By the early 1930s, however, riders of the company's bread-and-butter road-going machines were requesting more power. In order to modernize their V-twin powerplant and meet the power demand, Harley-Davidson set its engineers to work designing an overhead valve V-twin powerplant that could be put into production.

During the height of the Depression era, even though motorcycle sales had dramatically tumbled, Harley-Davidson carried on developing an OHV engine. Instead of the total-loss oiling system found in their flathead twins, the new engine was given dry-sump lubrication. This featured a double-gear pump located at the rear of the aluminum crankcase delivering oil to the internal components and overhead valvetrain before returning the fluid to a separate tank for continuous circulation. Harley-Davidson had running prototypes late in 1933, and continued development through to 1935, when their new OHV layout debuted at a dealers' meeting at the Schroeder Hotel in Milwaukee in November of that year.

As launched to the public in 1936, the new motorcycle was a 61 cubic-inch ironhead V-twin with 3-5/16-inch by 3-1/2-inch bore and stroke. The model E had a 6:1 compression ratio, while the EL was slightly higher with 7:1. There was only a difference of 3 horsepower between the two, with the E producing 37 and the EL making 40, both at 4,800rpm. Fork-and-blade connecting rods rotated on 1/4-inch caged roller bearings on the 1.125-inch crankpin between beefy 8.125-inch diameter flywheels. Overhead rocker gear that had finally been fully enclosed by the time of production — but was still prone to seepage — was operated via four separate pushrods riding on a four-lobe cam located in the right-hand side timing chest.

A new double downtube frame and twin-leg springer fork completed the new Harley-Davidson, and only 1,700 E and EL models were built in 1936. Changes were being made almost continuously in those early days of production. There was a total of three different timing covers fitted, two kickstarter gearing ratios installed and ignition timing also altered. As well, a total of seven different oil tanks were used together with revised oil lines, improved rockers and rocker oil feed, valve springs and five different modifications to the frame. Harley-Davidson didn't sell many of the overhead valve models at the start, but as the machine was refined, customers began to appreciate the

technology.

By 1941, Harley-Davidson boosted engine capacity to 74 cubic-inches, and offered that as the model FL. The 61 cubic-inch EL, such as Tony's machine, was still available and the Knucklehead was in production until 1947, when Harley-Davidson introduced an updated model with alloy cylinder heads and upside down pan shaped rocker covers. The earlier model, with rocker covers that resembled the knuckles of a fist, was dubbed the Knucklehead by Harley-Davidson enthusiasts while the newest was called the Panhead.

Tony's Knuck

As purchased by Tony, the Knucklehead was a good runner and rider. The two-tone red and white paint, while not correct, was in good condition and Tony familiarized himself with the starting and riding procedure and kept Carl's Knucklehead pretty much the way it was for more than eight years. During those eight years, Tony rode the motorcycle close to 8,000 miles while collecting correct parts and pieces prior to starting a complete restoration to return the machine to factory-correct specifications.

"The way it left the factory is some indication of history in tangible form right in front of me in my garage that I can look at, enjoy and ride," Tony says, "I would attempt to mimic the history book as much as possible, because that's what it is to me, a piece of history that tells a story."

Tony is a capable wrench who has rebuilt and restored several motorcycles. However, as this Knucklehead was his first Harley-Davidson, he wasn't as familiar with the brand and in 2021 commissioned Mike Lichner of Knucklehead Motorworks to take on the bulk of the work. Mike's shop was located in Muskego, Wisconsin, at the time. Now retired, he has moved to North Central Tennessee. Only occasionally does Mike now take on repairs to help keep old American iron in running condition.

To start the restoration, Mike removed many parts of the Knucklehead, including the tinwork, and gave them to Tony. Getting his hands dirty, Tony took on the task of cleaning and prepping many pieces to hand off to his painter, Jason LeCavalier of Artistimo Customs in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Jason took on any sheet metal repairs before proceeding with priming and painting them Skyway Blue, a Harley-Davidson factory color. Carl's daughter Carolyn told Tony the bike had been blue before being re-painted red and white, and Tony confirmed this after locating evidence of the hue under a screw head on the rear fender, and under the chrome bezel of the front fender light.

Meanwhile, Mike pulled the 61 cubic-inch Knucklehead engine which had some oil leaks and a couple of broken fins on one of the iron cylinder heads. The engine was taken completely apart to check internal components, and all repairs, including a new pinion shaft, trued flywheels and new bearings went into cleaned cases with fresh gaskets. Up top, cylinders were honed and fitted with plus-.040-inch pistons and rings. Also installed were new lifter rollers, an Andrews camshaft, new exhaust valve guides and new intake and exhaust valves. For increased longevity, the heads were sent to Advance Cycle Machining in Superior, Wisconsin, for the installation of hardened valve seats. Mike ran the rebuilt engine in a test stand to sufficiently break it in before any serious road use.

While the engine was out, Mike further stripped the machine to the bare frame in order to have the front downtubes repaired. With such a low ground clearance, Tony says over time many Knucklehead frames received front downtube damage at the lowest point where they curve to go under the engine. For this specialized work, the frame was shipped to Wasco Frame Service in Tacoma, Washington, where the tubes were cut out and new ones were welded into place. With the frame shipped back, Tony had it and many of the other black components painted black. Very little was powder coated, in fact just the twin-passenger Buddy seat pan and springs (not fitted to the machine as photographed here).

Tony had Reliable Plating Works of Milwaukee de-chrome several pieces, including the front and rear crash bars, handlebar, derby cover and license plate bracket. One of the only parts he had re-chromed was the front fender light.

Harley-Davidson Knucklehead restoration: Nuts and bolts

As Mike put the Knucklehead back together, Tony opted to fit 18-inch rims to original Harley-Davidson hubs. In 1941, H-D had introduced 16-inch wheels front and rear, and Tony's Knucklehead was rolling on chrome 16s. However, he much prefers the look of the slightly taller 18-inch wheels and built and trued both himself. Any incorrect fasteners were removed and replaced with proper items, and fasteners were glass beaded in

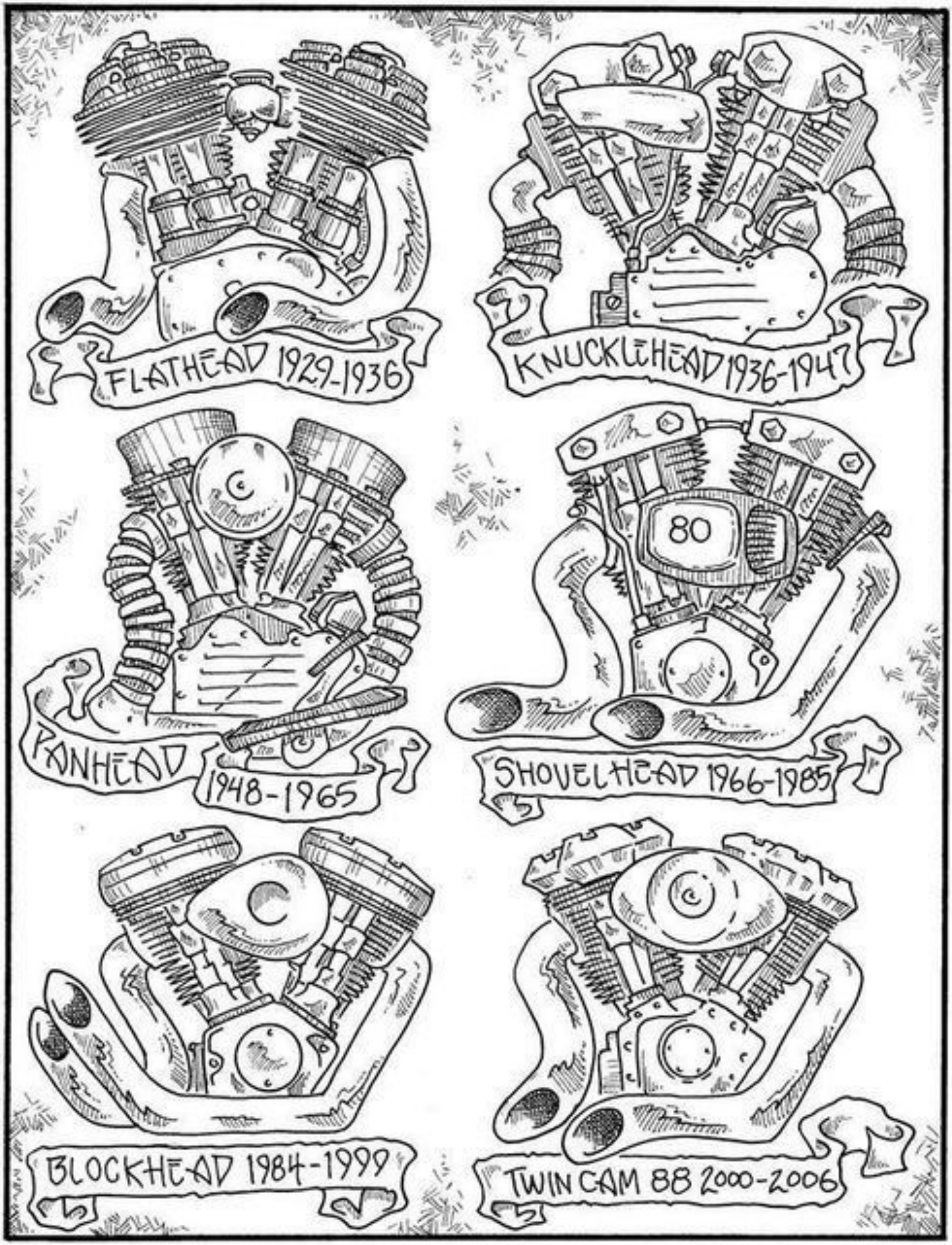
preparation for refinishing. Originally Parkerized black, Tony bought a Parkerizing kit to perform the fastener refinishing process at home, while Mike also re-Parkerized many nuts and bolts.

A faithful aftermarket wiring harness was used in the restoration as Mike pieced the bike back together with the original ignition system and 6-volt electrics. Although Tony had the Buddy seat recovered, he prefers the look of a solo-style seat and bought a reproduction in Dark Umber to complete his Knucklehead. After 18 months of work, with plenty of help from Mike, Tony says he had a running Knucklehead back in his garage. However, he had a little trouble getting the engine to run happily when under power. The issue was traced back to the Linkert carburetor, and this was sent to Matt Olsen of Carl's Cycle Supply for a full refurbishment.

Now, to bring the Knucklehead to life, Tony retards the spark about halfway, turns on the fuel, gives it full choke, cracks the throttle slightly and kicks the engine through twice on the compression stroke. Next, he turns on the ignition, reduces the choke to one click open, and gives it one good swift kick. The engine fires every time, he says, and once running, the ignition is fully advanced. "It's very, very predictable to start," Tony says. With a left foot clutch and hand shift lever on the left side of the gas tank, Tony doesn't find the Knucklehead difficult to ride at all, and in the summer of 2022, added more than 500 miles to the refurbished machine. He says, "I dream of going farther on the bike, and wouldn't discount it, because I think it'd go the distance."

Tony concludes, "As the next steward of this bike, I hope to have given it the attention to detail that Carl did. I would have loved to have met him and have enjoyed speaking to and getting to know his daughter Carolyn and her spouse John. I greatly appreciate Carl Schmidt's fascinating lifetime, and his wartime bravery. I'm proud to own his Knucklehead."

Won in a poker game by decorated World War II vet Carl Schmidt in 1950, Tony Hessner, seen here, acquired the bike in 2013 and restored it.


FLATHEAD 1929-1936
KNUCKLEHEAD 1936-1947
PANHEAD 1948-1965
80
SHOVELHEAD 1966-1985
BLOCKHEAD 1984-1999
TWIN CAM 88 2000-2006

1942 Harley-Davidson WLA "Liberator"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The Original Harley Adventure Bike

1942 Harley-Davidson WLA "Liberator"

by Ben Branch | Images courtesy of Mecum | Source: silodrome.com

This restored Harley-Davidson WLA is finished in olive drab and it's been equipped with period-correct ammunition cases, a leather rifle scabbard, and a non-functioning Tommy gun.

The Harley-Davidson WLA was developed to be a tough-as-nails dual sport adventure bike decades before the concept of a dual sport adventure bike would become mainstream. The WLA was created for military use during the Second World War – over the course of the conflict the tens of thousands of WLAs that were built would see service in the deserts of North Africa, the towns, cities, and forests of Europe, and throughout Asia and the tropical islands of the south Pacific.

Fast Facts – The Harley-Davidson WLA

- The Harley-Davidson WLA was developed as the militarized version of the earlier WL model, it was given a range of upgrades and modifications to make it better suited to military and off-road use.
- The upgrades varied depending on specific model but they typically included olive drab or black paint, a skid/bash plate, crash bars, an oil bath air cleaner, a heavy-duty luggage rack, blackout lights, and modified fenders to better shed mud and dirt.
- Over 90,000 examples of the WLA were built during WWII and many thousands were built later when production was restarted for the Korean War.
- Most WLAs were sold cheaply as military surplus after the war, they become a popular choice for returned GIs and were one of the most important motorcycles in the early days of the bobber scene and the formative years of outlaw motorcycle gangs.

How Harley Built "The Motorcycle That Won The War"

By the late 1930s it became clear that another world war was likely, much of East Asia was already at war and Hitler's ambitions for European domination weren't a particularly well-kept secret.

As a result of this Harley-Davidson began developing a series of military motorcycles, the most famous of which would be the WLA.

The mechanically simple air-cooled 45º V-twin is capable of 25 hp at 5,400 rpm. It's a simpler flathead/side-valve design that proved remarkably reliable and resilient.

The model name WLA follows the standard Harley model code, "W" is the family of motorcycles, "L" means high-compression, and "A" stands for Army.

Although we associate high-compression with performance nowadays, back in 1939 the WLA's compression ratio of just 5:1 classed it as high compression, it retained the ability to run on low quality fuel down to 74 octane gasoline which was critical during the war.

Rather than using one of their newer, more complex overhead valve engines in the WLA, Harley opted to use their tried and tested flathead (side valve) V-twin. Though less powerful than its OHV siblings the flathead was tough, reliable, cheap, and easy to build in vast numbers.

With a swept capacity of 45 cubic inches (740cc) the air-cooled 45º V-twin was capable of 25 hp at 5,400 rpm. Power was sent back via a 3-speed transmission with a hand shifter, and there was a chain drive to the rear wheels.

The total weight of the WLA was relatively high, it tipped the scales at 540 lbs, which made riding it off-road a significant challenge for anyone – let alone new 18 year old recruits who had never ridden a motorcycle before.

All of that said, the modifications made to the WLA for military and off-road use made it a solid and relatively rugged machine when used off-road everywhere from the deserts of North Africa to the muddy bogs of Europe and the beaches of the South Pacific.

The exact changes applied to the WLA did vary depending on year of production and sub-designation however most had some combination of the following: a skid/bash plate under the engine for protection, a heavy-duty luggage rack, crash bars on either side, blackout lights, simplified fenders for shedding mud, an oil bath air cleaner, and either an olive drab or black paint scheme.

War Time Production

Interestingly almost all Harley-Davidson WLAs that were produced were stamped as 1942 models, likely because they were built to this specification. A small number of special Canadian motorcycles were built with the WLC designation, and many examples of the WLA were sent to Allied countries including Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Soviet Union – in fact the USSR received over 30,000 of them.

By the end of the war Harley had built almost 100,000 WLAs, by far their most popular military motorcycle to date. They experimented with a number of other military motorcycles at the

time including the Harley-Davidson XA with its BMW-derived flat-twin boxer engine, and the far more rare Harley-Davidson TA Knucklehead.

The Post War Years

The vast majority of WLAs used during the war were sold into civilian hands as military surplus after the war. Most were civilianized and many were turned into custom bobbers, then later into custom choppers.

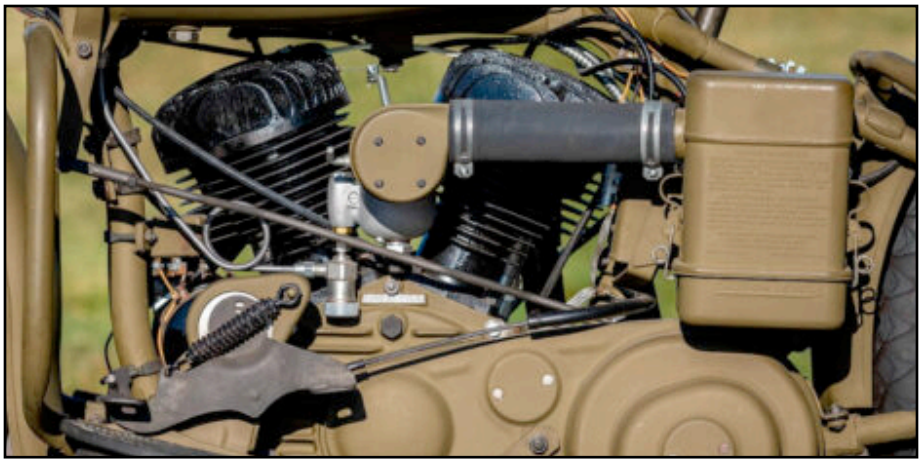
The rise of American motorcycle gangs after WWII, some of whom were formed by disaffected, returned GIs, often rode modified Harley-Davidson WLAs and the link between outlaw biker gangs and the Harley-Davidson marque was formed.

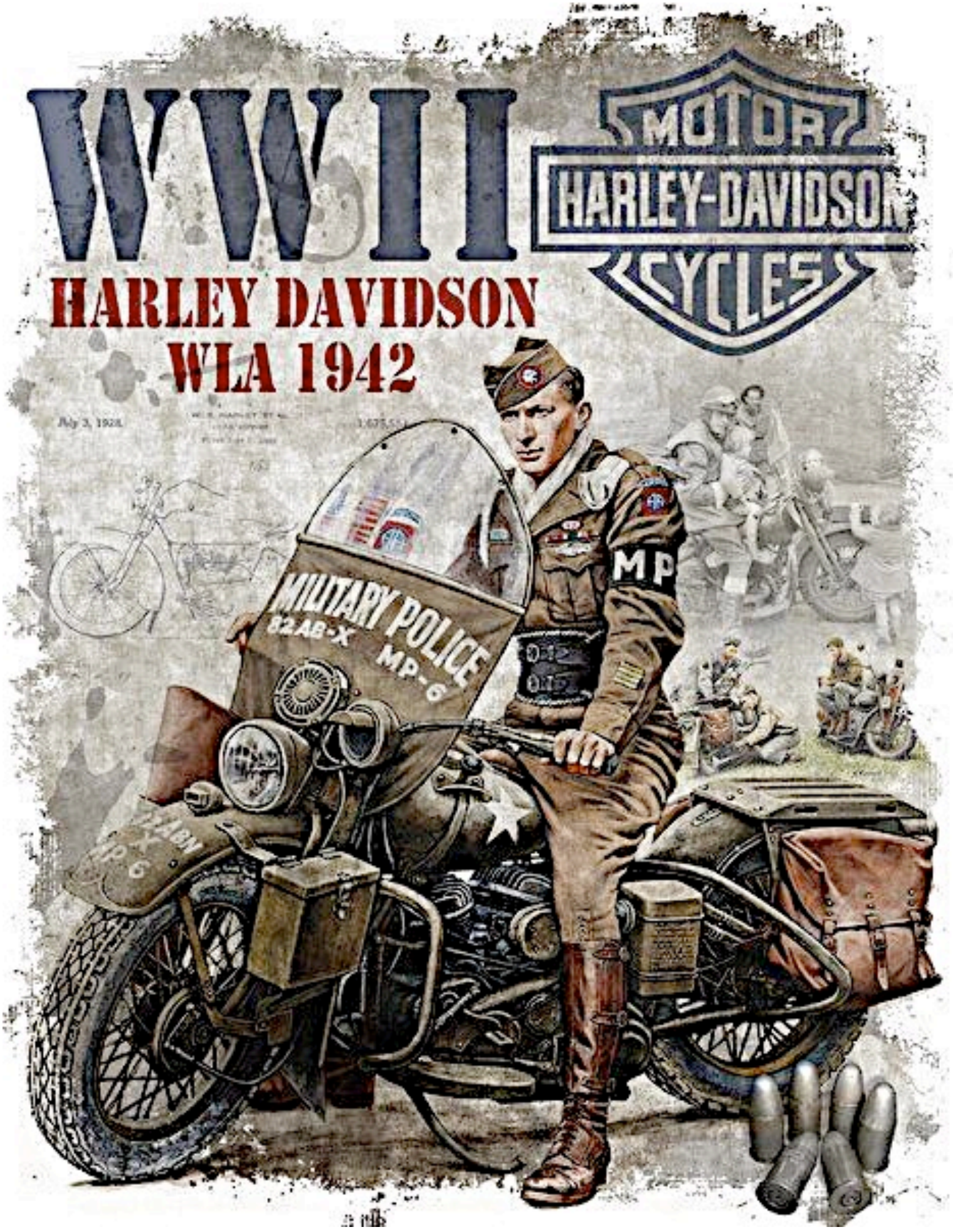
Today it's far more difficult to find an original WLA than it is to find a civilianized or modified example.

The 1942 Harley-Davidson WLA Shown Here

The WLA you see here has been meticulously restored by a marque expert, it's been finished in the most common paint scheme – a matte olive drab.

A number of period-correct parts have been fitted including ammunition boxes, blackout lights, a military oil bath air cleaner, the under sump skid plate, front and rear crash bars, and the front mounted rifle scabbard containing a non-firing Tommy gun.




WWII
MOTOR
HARLEY-DAVIDSON
CYCLES
HARLEY DAVIDSON
WLA 1942
MILITARY POLICE
82 AB-X
MP-6
MP

1942 Harley-Davidson XA


TP 16

The Great-Grandfather Of The Pan America

1942 Harley-Davidson XA

by Ben Branch | Images courtesy of Mecum | Source: silodrome.com

The Harley-Davidson XA was based closely on the BMW R71 which was being used extensively by the Germans in the early days of WWII.

Although most people don't realize it, the Harley-Davidson XA is the forefather of the recently-released Harley-Davidson Pan America adventure bike. Before emails from offended Pan America owners begin pouring in let me clarify that statement below.

Fast Facts – The Harley-Davidson XA

- The Harley-Davidson XA was developed to meet a demand from the US military for an American equivalent to the BMW R71, with a flat-twin engine, good ground clearance, and shaft drive rather than chain.
- Harley-Davidson engineers copied many parts of the R71 almost exactly as the German motorcycle had already proven itself highly-capable in the European theater of WWII.
- The flat-twin engine layout resulted in vastly superior cooling to the V-twin layout typically used by HD, the XA engine ran close to 100°F or 38°C cooler than the V-twin Harley WLA.
- Despite the promise shown by the XA the US military decided to instead stick with what they already had – the Jeep four-wheel drive and the Harley-Davidson WLA motorcycle. Just 1,000 examples of the XA were built.

Both the Harley-Davidson XA (Experimental Army) and the Pan America were built primarily to compete with similar, more established German machinery. The XA was built to compete with the BMW R71 and the Pan America was built to challenge the BMW R1250GS. Both bikes were built with significant influence from their German counterparts, and both were intended to work well both on and off-road.

The Mighty BMW R71

BMW released their first motorcycle in 1923 at the Berlin Motor Show, it was called the BMW R 32 and it was powered by a flat-twin boxer engine with a shaft drive to the rear wheel – a layout

This restored XA is equipped with twin leather ammunition boxes on the rear and a front rifle holster containing a (non-firing) reproduction Tommy Gun.

the company still has in production today.

BMW, or Bayerische Motoren Werke, first started out in 1916 in the closing stages of WWI as a German aircraft engine manufacturer. In the post war years they needed to line a new line of business to keep from going bankrupt, and motorcycle production was chosen.

Interestingly, BMW started making motorcycles five years before they started making cars, and both took signifiant influence from pre-existing British machines. The BMW boxer motorcycle engine was said to have been influenced by the Douglas motorcycle engine of the same design with a different layout (longitudinal vs transverse), and the first BMW car was the BMW 3/15 which was an Austin Seven built under license.

BMW would see great success with both their motorcycle and automobile production lines which continues to the current day.

The BMW R71 was released in 1938, perhaps the most notable new feature was the use of plunger-type rear wheel suspension rather than the more traditional hard tail rear end. This rear suspension had been trialed by BMW riders in the grueling International Six Days Trial a year earlier in 1937 with much success.

The R71 is powered by a boxer twin mounted longitudinally with the heads and cylinders out the sides in the clear airflow for optimal cooling. The engine has a swept capacity of 746cc, a compression ratio of 5.5:1, and it was capable of 22 bhp. Though low by modern standards this was reasonable power output for the era, and the engine's good torque characteristics resulted in a motorcycle with solid performance.

The relatively simple design and the engine that was able to run on very low octane fuel proved to be perfect for the German war effort during WWII, and the R71 was put to extensive use in Europe and North Africa both with and without a sidecar attached.

The BMW R75 with its more advanced overhead valve engine would begin to replace the R71 in the early 1940s, but both models remained in use through to the end of the war.

With its cooler-running engine and 7 inches of ground clearance, the XA proved ideal for use off-road, particularly in regions like the North African deserts.

The Arrival Of The Harley-Davidson XA

The success of the BMW R71 encouraged the Americans to get their own version made – it was clear that the shaft drive and flat-twin engine was ideal for use in places like North Africa where the high temperatures and desert sands proved challenging for many motor vehicles.

Exactly how the engineers at Harley-Davidson got their hands on an R71 has never been disclosed, however we know that the XA was

so similar it must have been the result of careful reverse engineering.

Both Harley-Davidson and Indian worked on their own versions of the bike, with the resulting Indian 841 being more closely related to a Moto Guzzi with its longitudinally mounted, air-cooled V-twin and shaft drive to the rear wheel.

The Harley-Davidson XA is powered by a flathead boxer twin with a swept capacity of 45 cubic inches (740cc), a bore x stroke of 3.063 in × 3.063 in, a compression ratio of 5.7:1, and 23 bhp at 4,600 rpm.

Power is sent to the rear wheel via a 4-speed gearbox and a shaft drive. Remarkably the engine in the XA was reported to stay up to 100°F or 38°C cooler than the V-twin used in the Harley WLA, largely because the XA had its cylinders out in the clear airflow.

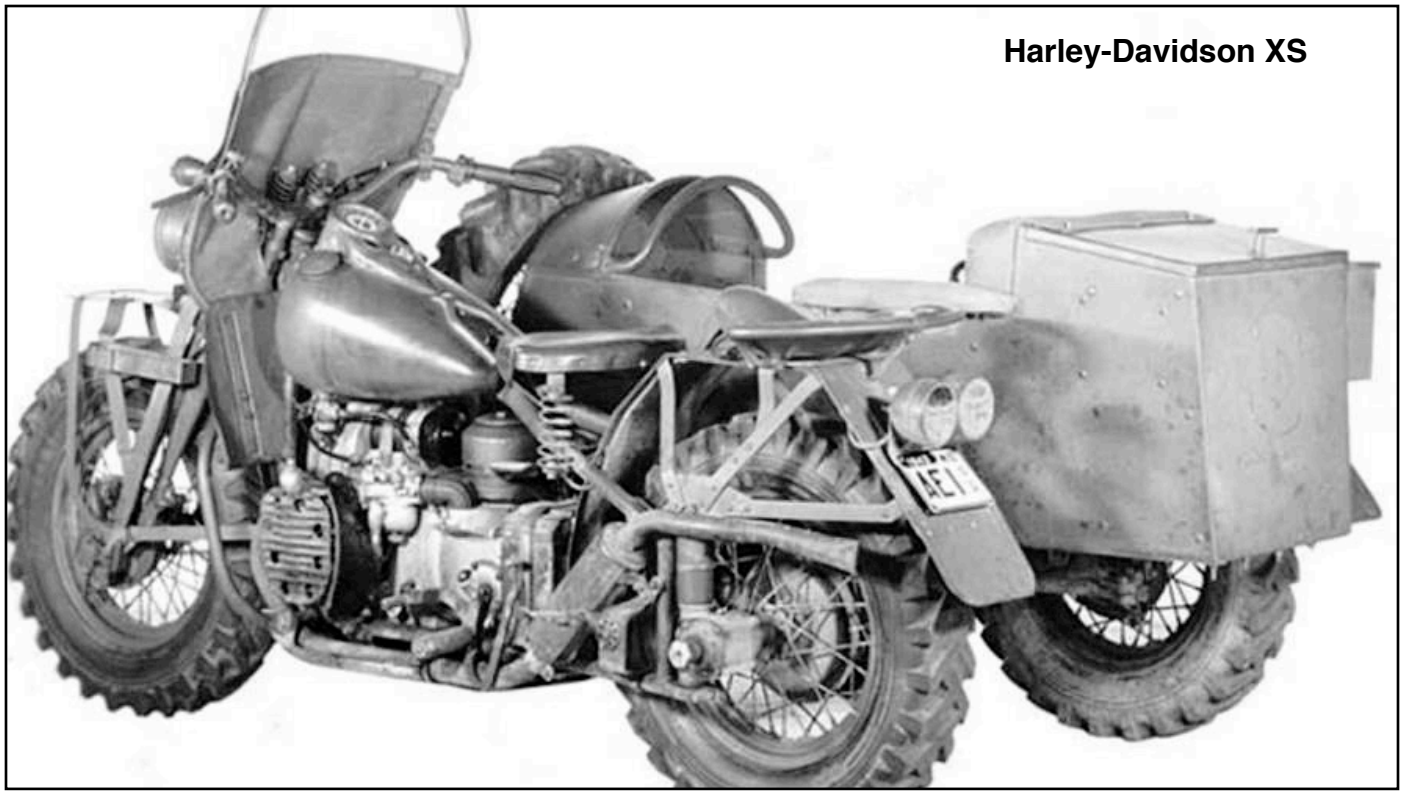
Despite the promise shown by the XA only the original 1,000 or so examples were ever made, it was never approved for full production. The Indian 841 experienced a similar fate, and the US military instead decided to focus on the Jeep and the Harley-Davidson WLA.

Harley-Davidson attempted to find other uses for the flat-twin engine from the XA, experiments were done using the engine for generators, including as blower-cooled generators on tanks, Willys-Overland experimented with the engine as the power source for their mini-Jeep named the "Peep," and Harley-Davidson made a three-wheeled Servi-Car prototype using the engine.

The Harley-Davidson XA Shown Here

The XA you see here is a 1942 model that has been restored by a marque specialist. It's been finished in the period-correct color scheme.

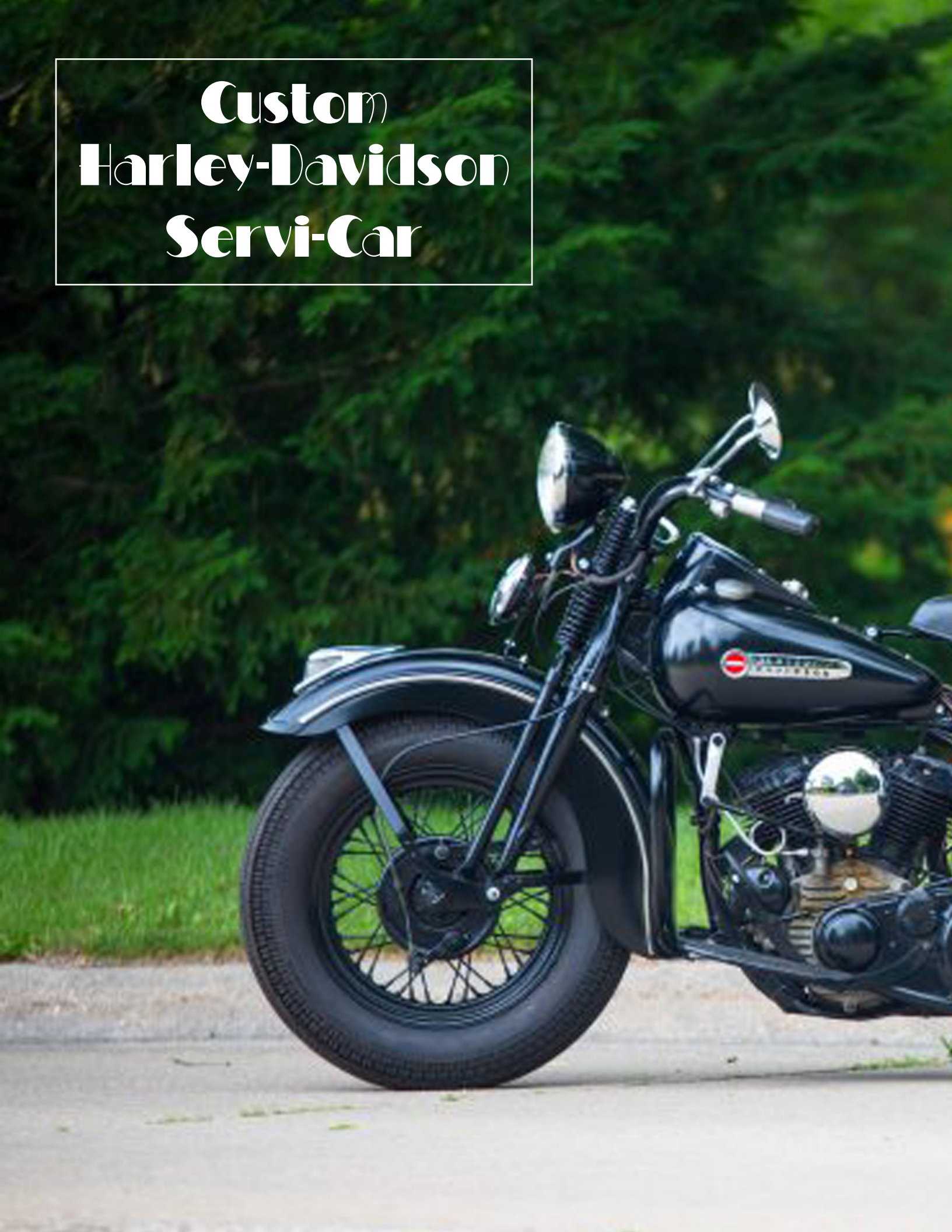
The bike is also fitted with twin leather ammunition boxes on the rear and there's a rifle holster up front fitted with a reproduction (non-firing) Tommy Gun.



PROTOTYPE: Harley-Davidson XS

Capitalizing on the new XA drivetrain, Harley built another variant known as the model "XS". At first glance, this looks just like an XA with a sidecar, but it is actually Harley's only attempt at a two-wheel drive vehicle. Similar to a modern Ural Patrol, the XS used a rear axle which powered the sidecar wheel off of the rear wheel. The result was a much more capable all-terrain vehicle. Unfortunately the Jeep was already starting to fill this need for the Army and only three prototypes of this machine were ever produced, one of which currently resides at the Harley-Davidson Archives.

Custom Harley-Davidson Servi-Car



Harley-Davidson Servi-Car

Source: https://stfrancismotorcyclemuseum.org

The models offered in 1932, the first year of production were:

G - with small box and tow bar
GA - with small box and no tow bar
GD - with large box and no tow bar
GE - with large box and air tank

In 1933, the GDT, with large box and tow bar, was added to the line.

The Harley-Davidson Servi-Car was a three-wheeled utility motorcycle manufactured by Harley-Davidson from 1932 to 1974.

The Servi-Car was designed during the Great Depression when Harley-Davidson was desperate to expand its product base to increase sales.

Targeted at the automotive service industry, the vehicle was designed to be towed behind a car to be delivered to a customer; when the car was delivered at its destination, the driver would unhitch the Servi-Car and ride back to the garage. For this reason, it was available with a tow bar at the front and a large 60 Ah battery.

In addition to its intended use for car delivery and retrieval, the Servi-Car was also popular as a utility vehicle for small businesses and mobile vendors. They proved to be particularly popular with the police departments, some of which still used Servi-Cars into the 1990s.

In 1942, the small and large boxes were replaced with a standardized intermediate-sized box that was manufactured for Harley-Davidson by the Chas. Abresch Co. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A gold, red, and black water transfer decal from this company was affixed to the top inside of the box lid. This box lasted until 1966, after which it was replaced by a fiberglass box; all preceding boxes were made from steel.

The Servi-Car used variations of Harley-Davidson's 45 cubic inch flathead. From 1932 to 36, the Servi-Car used the engine from the solo R model. It was changed in 1937 to the engine used in the W model, which differed mainly in having a recirculating oil system

instead of the constant-loss system of the R. The "W" flathead engine continued until the end of production in 1973, despite the "W" solo series being replaced by the "K" series in 1952.

An electric starter became available on the Servi-Car in 1964, making it the first civilian Harley with an electric starter, one year before the debut of the Electra Glide.

When the Servi-Car was introduced in 1932, it used the same transmission as the R solo model. This was replaced the next year by a constant-mesh transmission with three speeds and a reverse gear.

The Servi-Car was designed for the road conditions of the day, where surface roads might still be crude and unpaved. It had a rigid rear axle with a differential. The rear axle had a track of 42 inches (1,100 mm), similar to the track of most available cars. This was done so that the vehicle could use the same tracks that had been made by regular cars.

A prototype of the Servi-Car with rear suspension had been tested and was found to be unstable. The production model had its axle mounted directly to the frame with no suspension at all.

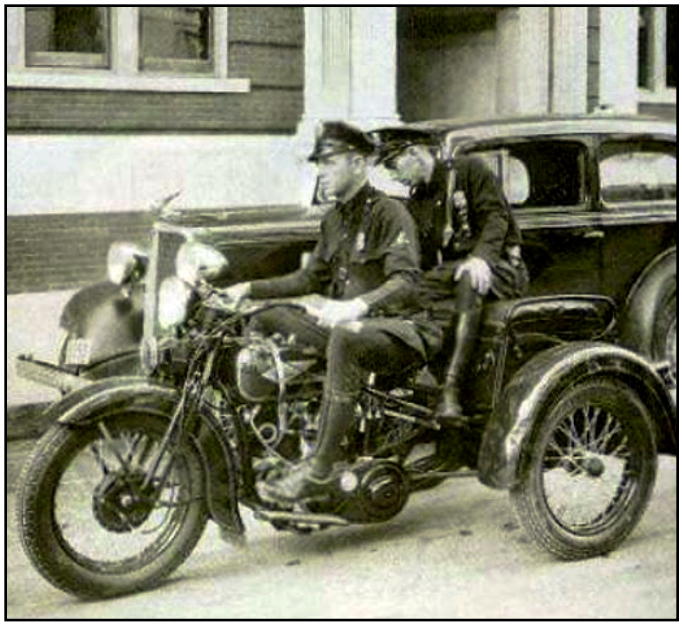
Until 1957, the front forks of the Servi-Car were the springer-type leading-link forks used on the R-series and W-series solo motorcycles. From 1958 on, the Servi-Car changed neck stem length and inner diameter to use Hydra-Glide front forks.

As introduced, the Servi-Car had a drum brake on the front wheel and another drum brake inside the rear axle housing, decelerating both rear wheels. In 1937, the braking system was upgraded to have a drum brake on each wheel. A hydraulic rear brake system was introduced in 1951 The very last Servi-Cars, built late in their last model year, would have disc brakes on all three wheels.

The engine powering the 1956 Servi-Car was a 736 cc (44.97 ci) air-cooled, four-stroke, 45o, V-twin flathead with two-valves per cylinder. It was transverse-mounted in a steel, double cradle frame. The brakes, both front and rear, were drum brakes.

The engine was kick-started and featured a single carburetor, one spark plug per cylinder, and a dry sump lubrication system. The fuel tank held five gallons of fuel.

The three-speed transmission was manually shifted using a cable operated, multiple disc, wet clutch. Final drive was by chain.



Harley-Davidson Flathead Dirt Tracker

KOMPRESSOR KULTUR:

Uwe Ehinger's Flathead Dirt Tracker

By Chris Hunter | Images by Bernd Westphal | Source: BikeExif.com

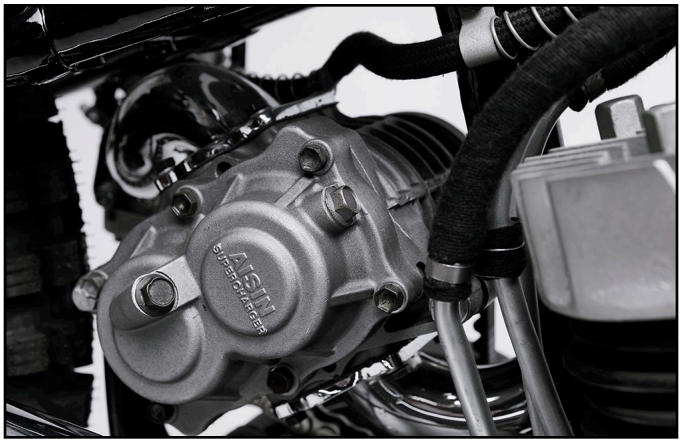
UWE EHINGER describes himself as a 'motorcycle archaeologist,' and the description is apt. He knows where to find the most obscure parts, and he knows which parts are worth finding. His motorcycles are always imbued with history, using vintage components in unusual yet appropriate ways. This flathead is the perfect example: it's an odd amalgam of pre-War Harley bits, but somehow it makes sense.

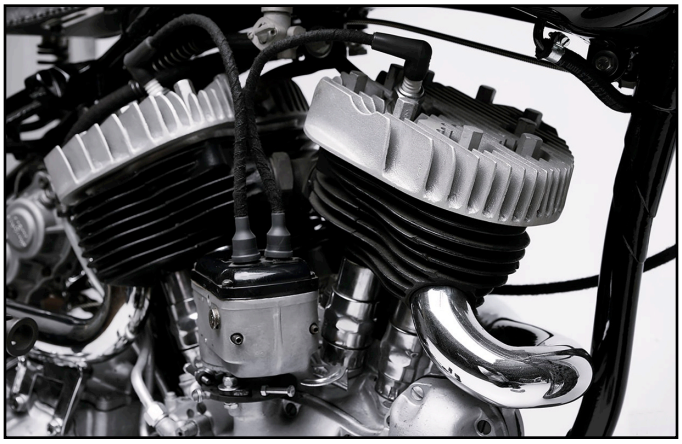
Uwe runs the Ehinger Kraftrad studio with his partner, the designer Katrin Oeding. They're based in Hamburg, Germany, but focus on machinery from Milwaukee.

This bike is a personal project for Uwe, who has always wanted to build a dirt track bike for himself. The core of the machine is a 1937 ULH big twin, which means it's a high-compression version of the regular side-valve flathead.

This particular 80ci (1340cc) unit has earlier VLH-spec cylinders sandwiched between the cases and heads, though—a tweak that reveals Uwe's attention to detail.

"The V cylinders were only built for one year, 1936," Uwe explains. *"Their casting is better than the U cylinders. But*





the lower part of the U engine is better than the the VL engine, due to the oil supply/pump."

Uwe has used the interchangeability of the parts to build the best possible engine, but he hasn't stopped there. He's added a more noticeable modification—an Aisin AMR 300 supercharger. It sits right behind the rear cylinder, filling out the triangle of the hardtail frame nicely.

These roots-type units are commonly found on tiny Japanese kei cars, and they're about the size of three soda cans. Uwe located a secondhand unit and rebuilt it with new bearings; it offers a low but useful dose of boost without causing maintenance or reliability issues.

As with most vintage machinery, the whole setup is relatively simple: Uwe tells us that he can switch from flathead to knucklehead power in about 20 minutes if he wants to!

The frame is from a 1932 VL flathead, and discovered in a barn in South America in the 80s. (*"I have a lot of engine fragments from the 1930s and 40s that I like to combine."*)

The springer front end is from an even earlier vintage: it left the factory in 1927 as part of a Harley JD and has been restored and modified to fit the VL frame. It's fair to assume that there is no three-way adjustability on this elegant apparatus, but it certainly looks the part.

Uwe has cleverly integrated the drum brake from a forty-year-old Honda XR500R enduro bike. (Incidentally, like this build, the XR sported a 23-inch front rim.)

The back wheel is only slightly smaller at 22 inches, so lean angle is not going to be a problem on this Harley. Both rims are old speedway stock, with modified lacing to match the drum brakes. The brake at the back is a 1937 Milwaukee design.

Virtually everything else is custom made, including the gas tank, which Uwe hammered out from steel. It's a completely custom design, but follows the traditional teardrop shape and retains separate chambers for gas and oil—plus clearance for quick engine swaps.

Perched atop the hardtail frame is a one-off seat, with substantial springs to provide posterior support. In a previous life, the springs cushioned the valves in an Evo engine.

After adding period-correct controls, Uwe had a rideable bike, and it looks like nothing else we've seen. The question is, where can he ride it? *"I would love to get a simple road permit for it, or ride it in one of the beach races—the Rømø Motor Festival [Denmark] or the Race Of Gentlemen [New Jersey], for example."*

And what an incredible sight and sound that would be: the rumble of a classic big twin, mixed with the whine of a supercharger. It'd make it worthwhile having to clean all the sand off afterwards...

Bill and Lois' Big Adventure:

The Foundation of A.A.

By Charles Fleming | Source: vintagent.com

The happy couple starting out on an adventure that would take much longer, and be much harder, than either anticipated.

In April 1925 Bill Wilson and his wife Lois left Brooklyn, New York riding a Harley-Davidson on a journey through the Eastern United States. Wilson was an energetic stock speculator who at age 29 was struggling to develop a method of predicting rises in stock values. He believed the secret was better information about the inner workings of publicly-held corporations. He and Lois, then 34, planned to spend as much as a year visiting factories and home offices of companies that looked promising.

It was a bold idea, madcap and risky. They had only recently acquired the motorcycle – for weekend trips to the beach, Bill said later – but it was well-supplied. Bill had strapped his old Army trunk to the back, and filled it and the sidecar with tent, blankets, kapok-filled mattress, camping gear, food and clothing and a gasoline cooking stove, along with four volumes of Moody's Manual on public utilities, each as large as a full-sized Webster's dictionary. Lois wrote in her diary that they looked like travelers *"bound for the Arctic with presents for all the Eskimos."*

Lois Wilson on the 'Hobo' Harley-Davidson, which she drove as well: the couple took turns at the handlebars on their two years on the road.

They had all they needed to live on — but only $80 in their wallets. *"Our friends thought a lunacy commission should be appointed,"* Bill would write later. Lois may have been skeptical about the whole scheme, but she had her own agenda.

What she wanted, she said decades afterward, was to help her husband control his excessive drinking. *"I wanted to get him away from New York, with bars (saloons they were called then) on many corners, and away from his buddies,"* she said. *"A*

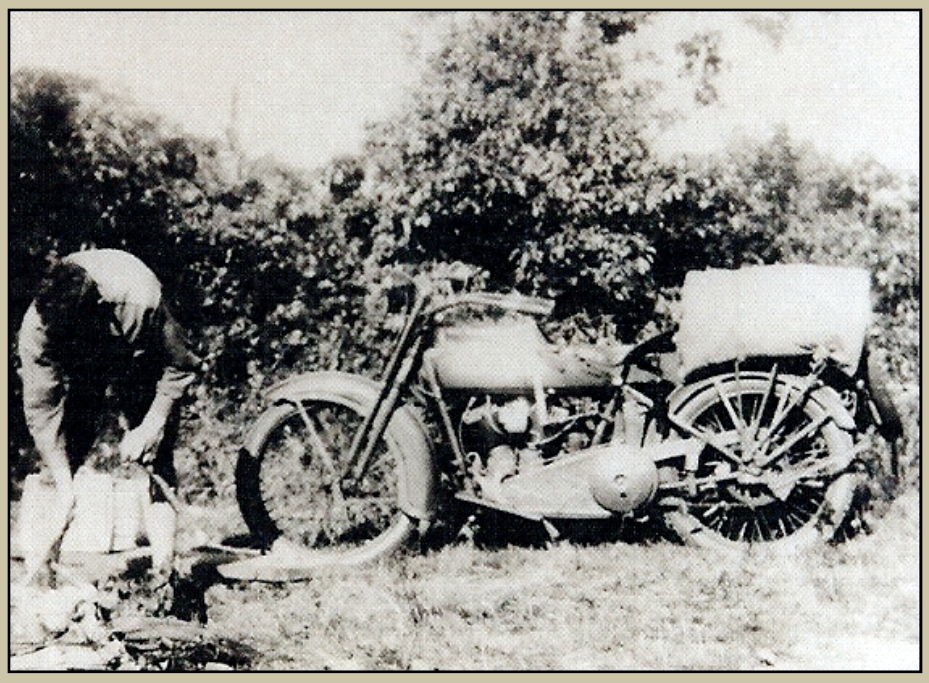
year in the open, which we both loved, would give me a chance to straighten him out."

Their machine was likely a used 1919 Harley-Davidson Model J with a factory sidecar. Powered by a 61-cubic-inch twin, with a three speed hand-shift transmission, it was one of the first H-Ds to feature a full electric package, featuring a headlight, taillight and horn.

It retailed at $370 and was the most expensive bike in the Harley line. The sidecar cost an additional $110. Bill Jackson of the Harley Davidson Museum in Milwaukee said the company records show that 9,941 Model Js were produced in 1919, out of a total of 23,279 total motorcycles produced in Milwaukee that year.

It was an ideal vehicle for trips to the beach. Modified, it looked like the perfect vehicle for a tour of the Eastern Seaboard. But the travelers made it only to Poughkeepsie the first day, having discovered that riding through upstate New York on a motorcycle in April, in the rain, without a windshield, was a chilly business, even in the "homemade waterproof zippered coveralls" they were wearing, Lois wrote in her diary.

They also found their overloaded sidecar was rattling to pieces, and stopped at a blacksmith's shop so it could be reinforced. The smithy's repair was the first of dozens. As they toured New England and then headed south, camping each night, cooking and dining out of doors, bathing in lakes and streams and hiding from the rain in a tent that Bill had fitted with an electric light and a radio he could run off the Harley's battery, the Wilsons suffered one breakdown after another.



Packing the Harley-Davidson Model J with everything needed for two years on the road certainly taxed the outfit, and many repairs were needed.

Packing and unpacking must have been a time-consuming ritual when they moved from place to place.

They threw a chain twice, had innumerable punctures and blow-outs – four in one long unlucky day before they realized the tires were worn through — replaced broken spokes and were repeatedly forced to adjust the timing and clean the carburetor. For weeks at a t time the machine that Lois called the "pop-cycle," "the old bus," "the old boat" and "the fuzz wagon" refused to run right.

On one occasion the carburetor fell off entirely. On another, a short circuit in a rainstorm sidelined them for hours.

One afternoon, trying to help motorists whose car had broken down, Bill hitched the Harley to the car's front bumper and towed it into town – burning out the bike's clutch. Another day, having failed to adequately secure their camping gear, they spent the whole

Bill and Lois Wilson with their Harley-Davidson Model J and sidecar.

afternoon retracing miles of roadway, collecting the blankets, sheets, towels and pajamas they had strewn over the countryside. On multiple occasions, as the weather warmed, they found themselves stuck in bogs and mudholes, Lois at the helm while Bill tried to pry the rear wheels loose with boards and branches.

They seldom encountered other motorcyclists, except for one hapless Indian owner. He had traveled south from New Jersey on a bike also equipped with a side car – serving as the cockpit for his traveling companion, a dog. But his machine was failing him. Lois reported in her diary that he was offering it for sale at $20.

Forced occasionally by bad weather to pay for food or shelter, despite their best efforts to camp wherever possible and feed themselves by fishing and foraging, the Wilsons were soon out of funds.

In July, they found a farmer who was willing to take them on as summer help – Lois cooking and cleaning, Bill repairing farm equipment and doing general labor. Through the fall and winter they were back on the road, fighting the falling temperatures with a newly-acquired windshield for the motorcycle and a mattress and hot water bottle for the sidecar.

Bill continued to visit cement factories, electric power plants and other companies – even getting invited to a private display of the new cinema development known as "talking pictures" – while sending reports back to his friends on Wall Street. One was sufficiently impressed to send the Wilsons some much-needed money.

Including time off for visiting with friends and family, Bill and Lois stayed on the road for almost two years, clocking uncounted miles and investigating dozens of companies.

They might have ridden longer, too, but for an accident. In Eastern Tennessee, hurrying home to attend a wedding, Lois failed to negotiate a sharp turn while piloting the Harley down a sandy road. The motorcycle went end over end, launching Bill and the contents of the sidecar over Lois' head.

He suffered a broken collarbone, and she badly damaged her knee. For the next week they were under a doctor's care in a small hotel – there being no hospital in the small town – before returning by train to Brooklyn, and having their Harley shipped back home after them.

Bill's drinking problem grew with his bank account. By the time of the Wall Street crash of 1929, he was almost a full-time drunk. After the crash, the descent was even steeper. He lost his job, his friends, his home and his health. The Wilsons moved in with Lois'

Lois' plan to keep Bill sober was only moderately successful. She managed to keep Bill away from the bottle for weeks at a time. But whenever alcohol was present, and he took a drink, extreme drunkenness followed. One time he stepped away from Lois saying he needed cigarettes, and did not return. Left alone on the street, with no money, in a strange town, Lois waited for hours until, well after dark, she began to search from one barroom to the next. *"At last I found him, hardly able to navigate–and the money practically gone!"* she wrote. Bill's plan proved more effective. By the time he'd finished his tour of the east coast, he had convinced backers on Wall Street to invest in his companies and bankroll his own investments. Soon he and Lois were back in New York, living like royalty. *"For the next few years fortune threw money and applause my way,"* Bill said later. *"I had arrived."*

Pictured: Lois B. Wilson in her wedding dress, circa 1921.

parents, and Lois took a job working in a department store.

Bill was hospitalized multiple times as his family and his doctors tried to interrupt his alcoholism. He knew he had to quit drinking and stay quit, but he couldn't. Lois was told her husband was at risk of sudden death or permanent insanity. *"(Lois) was informed that it would all end with heart failure during delirium tremens, or I would develop a wet brain, perhaps within a year,"* Bill wrote. *"She would have to give me over to the undertaker or the asylum."*

But an old drinking buddy had recently gotten sober. He visited Bill, and told him how that had happened, and encouraged Bill to give it a try. A short time later, Bill took his last drink.

He then commenced to help other men get sober, using some techniques passed on to him by his friend and others that he developed on his own. In June of 1935, at the end of a failed business trip to Akron, Ohio, he met a disgraced proctologist named Bob Smith, and helped him get sober. The two formed a partnership, and slowly refined Bill's ideas about sobriety. Those ideas became the basis for the program of recovery that became known as Alcoholics Anonymous.

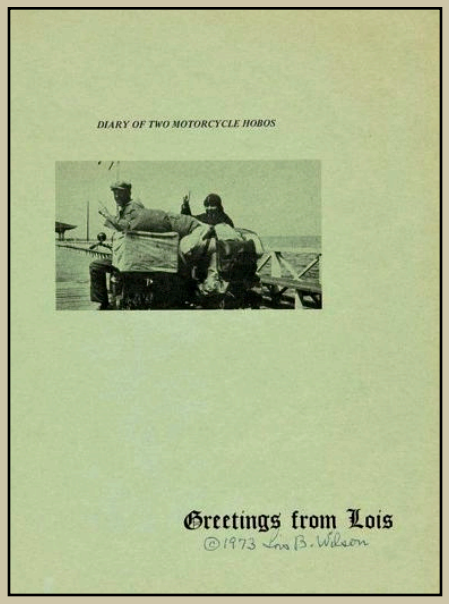
Bill lived another 35 years, dying in 1971 at the age of 75, after overseeing the growth of AA from two recovering drunks in Akron to several million worldwide. Lois survived him by 17 years, dying in 1988 at age 97, having turned her frustrated inability make her husband stop drinking into the program known as Al-Anon.

There is no evidence that either of them ever owned or rode a motorcycle again. It is not known what became of their Harley Davidson.

Lois and Bill Wilson in later life, after founding Al-Anon (Lois) and Alcoholics Anonymous (Bill).

Lois did write about their motorcycle adventure in her 1973 book **'Diary of Two Motorcycle Hobos**', which was initially self-published and sent personally by her to various A.A. and Al-Anon centers around the world, but has since been continuously in print,.

Today the book is still available.



1952 Harley-Davidson Panhead

A modern antique:

Walt Siegl's 1952 Panhead

by Michael Hilton | Images by Gregory George Moore | Source: Iron & Air Archives

A client in France left the door wide open for Walt Siegl when he asked the New Hampshire-based craftsman to build him "a Harley." Over three years, Siegl turned a 1952 Harley-Davidson Panhead bobber into a masterpiece.

While he's best known for his high-end, Kevlar-clad Italian exotics, Siegl has a fondness for hot rod bikes of the 30s and 40s—and a particular soft-spot for Panheads. "There's something about the small cylinder heads and castings," he says. "The design speaks to me."

The fact that this particular Harley would be a daily-ridden émigré in France meant Siegl wanted to have full confidence in the bike before shipping it across the Atlantic. He found a solid 52 1,200 cc Panhead engine and sent it to his go-to Harley mechanic, Andrew Rosa of Rosa Cycles in Long Island, New York.

As Rosa started a top-to-bottom rebuild, including boring it out to 1,340 cc, Siegl went to work on the bike's frame. Rather than using an aged original, he went with a reproduction wishbone frame—a faithful reproduction with original markings on all the castings, and an overall shape that allowed him to get the stance he wanted.

Siegl used as many stock-looking components as he could, trying to stay true to the look of the original bike and wanting his creation to pass as a lightly customized Panhead. The oil tank, battery, clutch basket, and starter system all had to be heavily modified to fit.

"It wasn't easy," he confesses with a laugh. "It took a lot of massaging of stock components to make them work with the modern systems."

Siegl bought the bike's gorgeous rear fender some 20 years ago in New York and has dragged it around ever since, waiting to find the right application. "It had the visual attributes I was looking for," he explains.

He narrowed an aftermarket tank and adorned it with a vintage-looking Motogadget speedo (in kilometers per hour, of course). The pipes were sleekly and tightly shaped, and capped with a Knucklehead-style exhaust.

The leather-wrapped seat is based off an old Bates pan with a urethane cushion-shaped by Siegl himself. He also replaced the original front drum brake with a disc for added safety, and the bike's 19-inch front and 18-inch rear wheels wrapped in narrow tires give the Harley an aggressive stance and a trim, built-for-speed look.

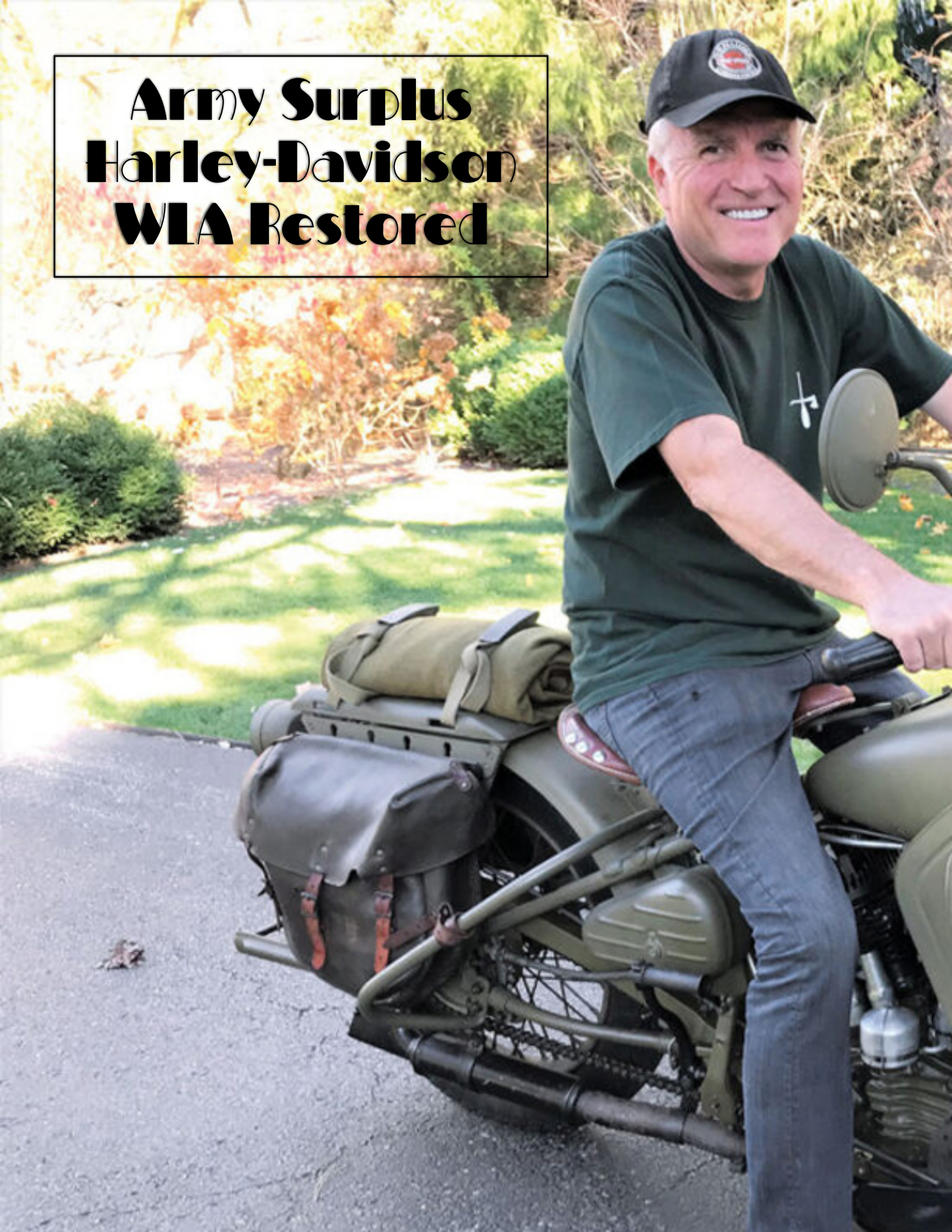
A stout, streamlined bobber three years in the making, this Panhead exudes a strong sense of confidence and highlights Siegl's creative range and expertise.

While it's not representative of the direction his company is heading, "It was a very, very enjoyable build," he says, smiling. "But then, of course, I just love building bikes."

Build specs: 1952 Harley-Davidson Panhead Engine 1,340 cc Carburetor S&S Super E Transmission Early 4-Speed Primary drive Belt Ignition Electronic Fuel tank Narrowed Fat Bob Frame Wishbone reproduction Front fork Harley Springer Front brake Aftermarket disc Rear brake Drum Wheels Spoke, front 19″ X 325 mm, Rear 18" X 400 mm Seat Bates Sheet Metal, Spofford Upholstery

Article originally featured in issue 29 of Iron & Air Magazine.

Army Surplus Harley-Davidson WLA Restored




U.S.

Restored
Army Surplus Harley-Davidson WLA

By Burt Richmond | Source: motorcycleclassics.com

Collector Fred Wacker restored a custom hot-rodded bike to its former glory as an Army surplus bike used in WWII.

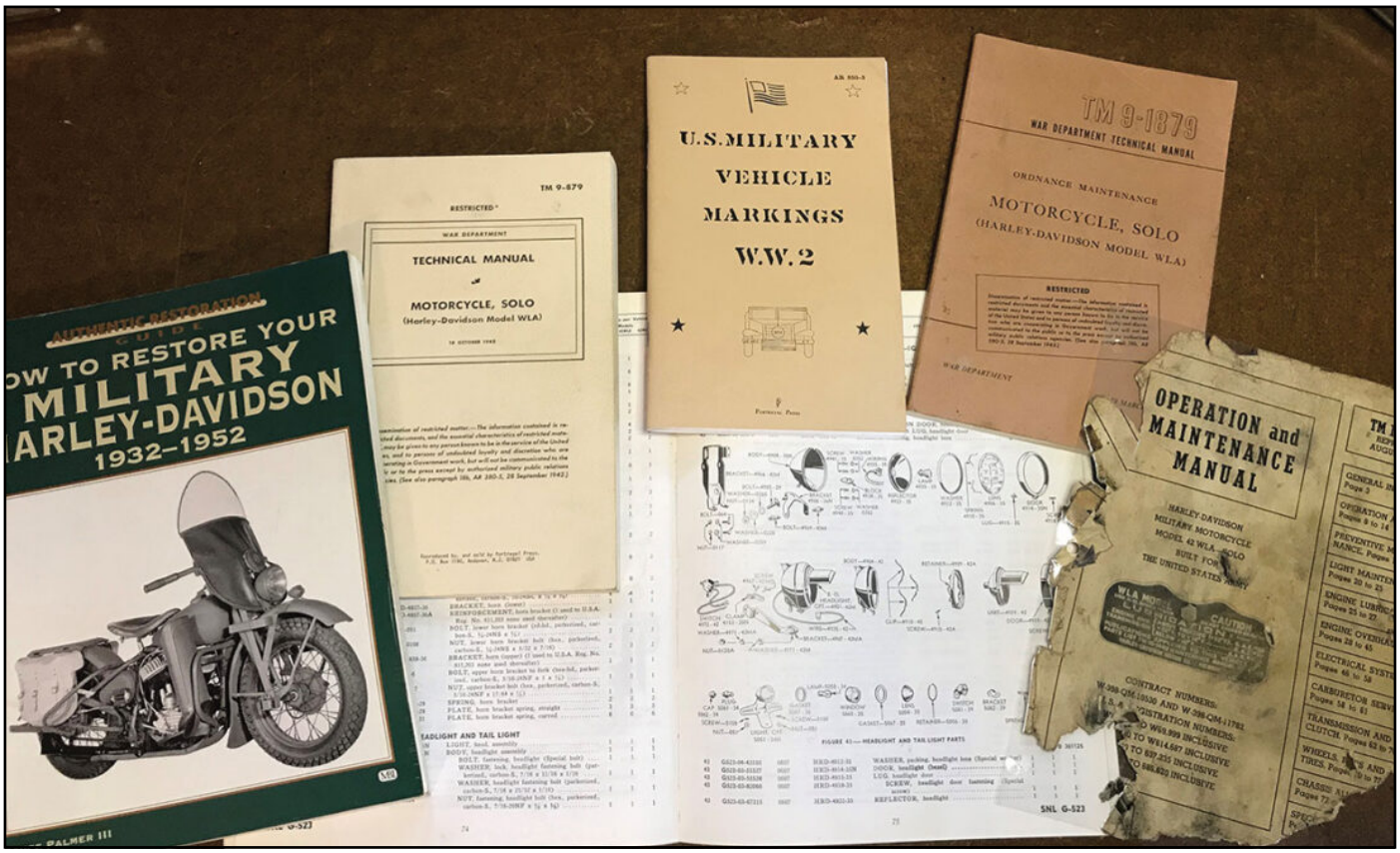
Most of us had difficulty getting parental approval to ride a motorcycle.

Mom would remind us about how dangerous they are. Dad would tell us that he never wanted to see a motorcycle in the woodshed. Imagine how lucky Fred Wacker was, as he had a Bonanza mini-bike when he was only 7 years old!

On his 16th birthday in 1976, Fred's father gave him an adult-sized yellow Harley-Davidson, which happened to be an old WLA Army surplus bike from World War II. Fred Sr. was not only a fellow motorcyclist, but was also a British sports car fan, competing in MGs and other race cars of the 1950s. Luckily, Fred had a great role model in his dad, who taught him how to ride safely and how to keep his 1942 Harley tuned and running properly.

Fred Wacker, Sr. paid $250 for that old Army surplus bike. The seller had removed or cut-off all the non-essential military components and added a large buddy saddle instead of the single bicycle-type seat. He also had the front-end chrome plated — it was a perfectly hot-rodded bike for a teenager. WLA was Harley-Davidson's abbreviation for their military model: W= flat head 45 cubic inch engine; L= high compression and A=Army. The yellow Harley took Fred through high school and college. Well into his working career, Fred decided to freshen up the bike in 1987. He dismantled the bike, stripped off the old school bus yellow paint, and sandblasted the frame and the sheet metal. The tired and pitted shiny parts were re-chromed — all part of Fred's love affair with anything with two wheels and an engine. The family business was manufacturing tools, so it was natural for Fred to learn how to use them with proficiency. Like father, like son. Fred grew into a competent weekend mechanic.

Restoration was guided by original U.S. Army manuals.



The WLA was given a faithful restoration by the owner, from the rifle scabbard to the leather saddle bags and the U.S. Army blanket roll.

Years ago, Fred, Jr. was on the hunt for a replacement seat for his Moto Guzzi 175cc Lodola Sport. It was an important bike as it was the one his parents bought in Italy for their honeymoon in the 1950s. Fred enjoys rescuing abused and unloved motorcycles, which, over time has morphed into a serious collection, several of which he has personally restored. It gives him great pleasure to escape from corporate captivity by tinkering in his garage workshop on winter nights and weekends.

Back to original

Fast forward to the mid-2000s, during a dinner conversation with one of his sons who was studying World War II in middle school. The son asked why the family motorcycle collection didn't have any military bikes. Fred pondered that for a few minutes and responded, *"We already have an old relic from 1945. Yep, our yellow Harley was actually a 1945 Army surplus relic that your Grandfather gave me. It was used by messengers and scouts in the front lines of the European theater!"* That dinner conversation got Fred inspired about restoring his WLA.

First, he researched the Harley-Davidson archives to learn that they actually produced 88,000 military models from 1942 through the end of the war in 1945. However, all of them were titled as 1942. Via the internet, Fred was able to find several Harley-Davidson operator's manuals, illustrated parts manuals, and various sources for the many missing military parts. How to Restore Your Military Harley-Davidson was a great find — not necessarily an actual do-it-yourself guide, but an indispensable assistant to understand the production-run variations caused by war-time changes.

Fred's WLA is from the end of the war in 1945. He began finding other collectors who had many of the parts that he needed. The most daunting missing pieces to locate were the so called "black-out" lights made by Guide & Cycle Ray, which had small horizontal rectangular openings so that aerial observation at night was nil. According to Fred, the nighttime lighting is akin to four lightning bugs in a pickle jar! It was very hard to discern the war-time dirt roads in the dark. Therefore, most nighttime mobile military operations were during full moons when the ground forces could see where they were going and could see the enemy.

During their training, riders were taught that if they encountered enemy fire, that they should "drop" the motorcycles on the side and crouch down behind it to let the engine deflect enemy fire. Many soldiers reported back after such incidents that Milwaukee's metal saved their lives!

Once again, the bike was on Fred's lift being disassembled for the second time. It took more than

five years for the complete restoration, but Fred is delighted with the finished product. No details escaped his touch. Notice that even the heads of machine screws and bolts are painted OD (olive drab) or finished with the correct Parkerizing non-rust finish. Check out the leather toe shields at the bottom of the leg shield to keep the rider's boot more stable on the foot platform.

David Sarafan, a nationally known expert on WLAs, directed Fred to other known sources for literature and parts. At this juncture, those black-out lights are virtually non-existent; same for the NOS tank-mounted speedometer, which drives their price off the charts of affordability.

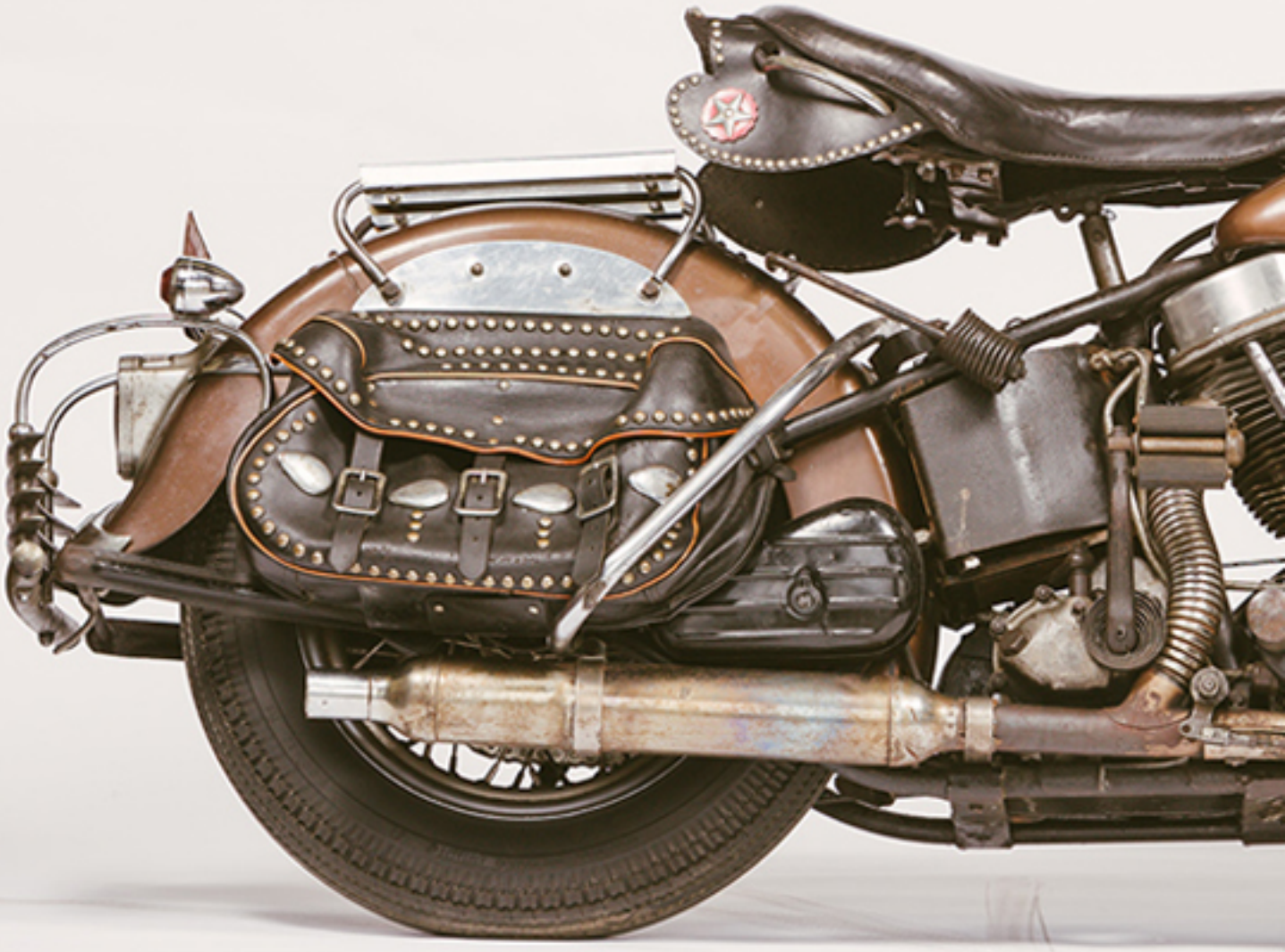
The MVAA (Military Vehicle Association of America) was able to supply the correct, toxic, dull OD paint. The paint is thick and clings to all the metal parts, which is essential for military use as exposing any metal to sunlight reflections could be observed by the enemy. This machine is not a shiny trailer queen. It is an authentically restored 75 year old Army work horse.

The engine went to the local Harley-Davidson dealer whose shop machinist had been servicing the engine for years. He did a complete upper-end including a valve job, honed the cylinders and replaced the piston rings. The crankshaft journals, camshaft and bearings were checked for wear, but checked out as okay. The bike was finally completed in 2006. Much of the fun and sense of accomplishment occurred piece-by-piece when long awaited parts arrived and were added.

Fred's constant searches for authentic pieces for his restoration included the Thompson submachine gun scabbard and the handlebar mounted shovel bracket. After a long search, a pair of very stiff leather saddlebags were found in Europe that had Cyrillic (Russian) writing inside the bags — a reminder that Russia was an ally during World War II via a program called "Lend Lease." The U.S. supplied the Soviet Union with $11.3 billion in food, uniforms, and military equipment including planes, tanks, jeeps and 30,000 WLA motorcycles to help fight the Germans. That represented a third of Harley-Davidson war production! No surprise that those saddle bags were sourced from behind the former "Iron Curtain"! There was and is an abundance of WLA machines and parts readily available from the old Soviet Union and satellite states.

Fred lives a few miles from Fort Sheridan, a former Midwest Army base. The most appropriate ride after the motorcycle's metamorphosis from yellow and chrome to a "Monument of a Bygone Era" that saw active duty during World War II was through Fort Sheridan. He experienced several thumbs-up as he rode through Fort Sheridan's Parade Grounds, where General George Patton trained as a cavalry soldier during World War I. That ride around the Parade Grounds was an incredible source of pleasure putting the proverbial bow on the proper restoration to return this bike to its original military configuration. Between the bike that his father had given him 44 years ago and thanks to his son's inquiring mind, Fred has achieved a high level of pride with research and his hands.

1952 Harley-Davidson FL Hydra Glide




OHV

American Dream

1952 Harley-Davidson "Bronco Bronze"

By Scott Hopkin | Source: PypeBurn.com

Nearly everyone has their own definition of the 'American Dream', but the original meaning was not a dream about individual wealth; it was a dream of equality, justice and democracy for the nation. The unfortunate reality was, however, that there was a time in the 1950s when there were barriers in place for people of color to do many things, such as buy their dream motorcycle – even when they had the means to do it. These were unprecedented times in America's history. United States soldiers were fighting against communism in the Korean War while, on their own soil, racial tensions were heightened; one of history's most well-known Supreme Court cases, Brown v. Board of Education, centering around racial segregation in schools, was taking off. The case became a cornerstone of the civil rights movement during a period where the country's values were in question.

At the same time, it was also a pivotal time for the economy, as the country was recovering from the Great Depression and World War II. The more materialist 'American Dream' was starting to feel like a reality. The manufacturing industry was booming and providing many with well-paying jobs – people had more money than ever before, and they wanted to spend it. Cars, motorcycles, homes and consumer goods were being bought like they were going out of style.

In 1952, North Carolina's Melvin Graham found himself at the intersection of these two realities. *"It wasn't culturally okay for African Americans to ride or own motorcycles in those days,"* explained Derrek and Casey Graham, Melvin's sons. *"It just didn't happen with the way things were. But, Dad saw the Harley-Davidson motorcycles used by our military during World War II and decided that he really wanted one,"* Derrek continued.

Melvin worked at Freightliner in Charlotte, NC, after coming home from the war and, thanks to much hard

work, had the means to buy his very own bike. Despite the cultural boundaries in place as an African American, he figured out a way to purchase a brand new 1952 Harley-Davidson FL Hydra Glide from Creech Motorcycle Company, a Harley-Davidson dealer in the Queen City.

Not only did Melvin want his very own brand new Harley-Davidson, he also wanted one with the latest bells and whistles. The bike featured new foot-shift and hand-clutch technology and was adorned with a special, one-year-only color, Bronco Bronze Metallic paint.

"We can remember listening for him to come home on that bike," the sons told us. Their family lived roughly a mile away from Freightliner's facility and they, as boys, would sit outside listening for the faint thump of that Panhead rolling down the street as dad rode home.

"For him to own and ride that motorcycle around town at that time... man... that was BIG," Derrek exclaimed. Melvin rattled people's perception of racial barriers by owning that Panhead and helped forge a path for the next generation.

It wasn't long before the boys both learned how to ride their dad's Panhead and Casey, the younger brother, caught the same motorcycle bug as his dad. Eventually, as time passed, thanks to his father and others like him, Casey was able to buy his very own motorcycle. In fact, to this day, he proudly rides and represents his club on his jacket while sharing old stories.

The 'Bronco Bronze' when it first arrived at Prism Supply.

But as for their dad's '52 Pan, the motorcycle was eventually parked in a shipping container near Charlotte in the early '90s, although it still remained part of the Graham family. In recent years, as Melvin's health began to decline, the family decided to sell some assets, including the '52 Panhead which had been sitting under a leaky roof for the past three decades.

That's where Prism Supply comes in. As a fellow Charlotte native and bonafide vintage Harley Davidson enthusiast, Prism Supply co-founder, Jake Hindes, helped the caretaker of Melvin's assets assign value to some of the motorcycles he was tasked with selling for the family last year.

After expressing interest in purchasing the Panhead for himself, which was described as a "pile of rust" at the time, Jake patiently waited for a verdict from the family. Jake knew the motorcycle was in rough condition and buying it would be a gamble, but there was also something clearly very special about the motorcycle. The cultural significance of Melvin's ownership makes this particular Panhead a symbol of the Civil Rights movement and of African Americans' right to own and ride motorcycles of their own.

After considering how they felt about Prism Supply becoming the new owner of their dad's motorcycle, the family and caretaker decided to sell the bike based on the plans for it. *"We see ourselves as the custodian of a piece of history. We don't want to change a thing,"* Jake explained. *"We want to preserve the bike by performing a mechanical restoration, while leaving it untouched – just how Melvin had it."*

Once the Panhead got placed on a lift at Prism Supply's shop at Camp North End in Charlotte, Jake and the team, in conjunction with DicE Magazine, started work on the bike which was soon named the 'Bronco Bronze' after it's very rare 1952-only paint color.

Derek Fearheiley, owner of Duane's Powertrains, expressed his hesitancy based on the rusty exterior. Nervous about the possibility of the engine running again utilizing original components, he broke the seals and exposed the Panhead internals for the first time since production. Amazed by the original craftsmanship, he quickly realized that everything was in pristine condition and saw the path to having a running engine again. Derek stated, *"I have never seen an engine in this good of a condition and I'm not sure I ever will in my lifetime."*

While Derek operated on the Panhead, Ben's V-Twins helped by rebuilding the transmission using all of the

original internals as well. And, although an aesthetic restoration wasn't in the plan, Dean Micetich, with DicE, helped revive the 69-year-old Bronco Bronze Metallic paint that graced various parts of the entire motorcycle to ensure that the motorcycle looked the same as when it was parked in the '90s.

Meanwhile, the rest of the team tore the motorcycle down and meticulously cataloged every piece of hardware in order to reuse the factory parts. A few pieces had to go due to the complete inability to salvage the part. A good example of this is the wiring – it was all original, but so brittle it couldn't be reused.

So, vintage style wires were sourced for the entire bike to ensure reliable and safe functionality.

In addition, the speedometer was mechanically restored by John Bordas, while Prism rebuilt the windshield using the good parts from two separate '52 Panhead windshields. The rusted wheel spokes had to make way for some NOS spokes and the wheels were wrapped with some fresh rubber from Coker Tire. Thankfully, the team was able to tap into their friends, Matt McManus and Rick and Ramsey Allen, who helped tremendously by identifying and providing various parts.

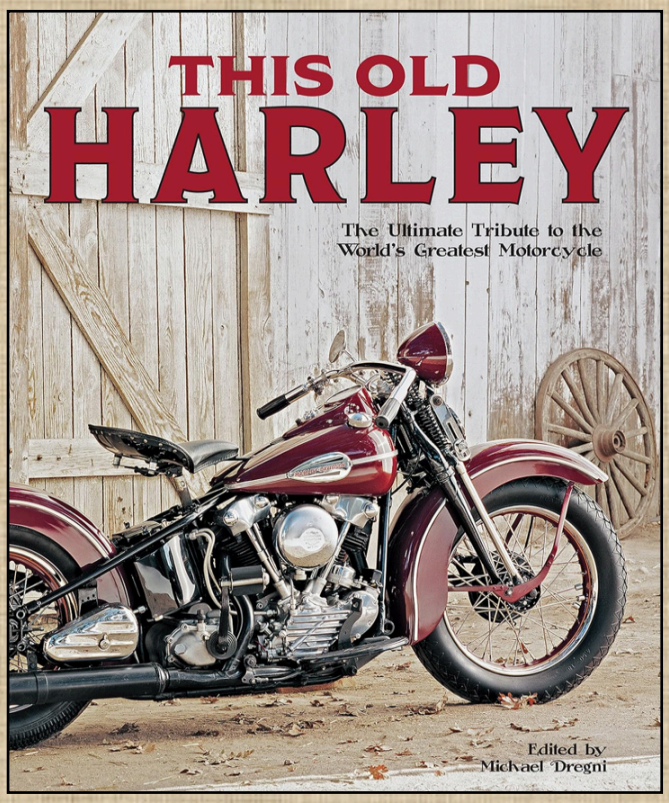
After three months of late nights and what felt like endless labor hours from the team, in April 2021, the 1952 Harley-Davidson FL Hydra Glide that Melvin Graham helped change history with started up again under its own power for the first time in over 30 years.

With the family in close communication, Jake and the Prism Supply team are coordinating a reunion so the brothers and family can see the Bronco Bronze breathe again in the same city it originated.

As for future plans for the motorcycle, Jake's intentions are clear: *"This motorcycle will live on and continue to represent Melvin Graham's legacy and his impact on the motorcycle community and our country's culture as a whole."* The bike is exactly how it was when he proudly rode it around town – even down to Melvin's Freightliner employee parking pass nestled in the windshield.

BOOKS

This Old Harley: The Ultimate Tribute to the World's Greatest Motorcycle



In This Old Harley, editor Michael Dregni compiles the stories, tall tales, essays, and reminiscences of some of the biking world's most respected characters. Featured here are the words of the late daredevil Evel Knievel, custom bike-builder extraordinaire Arlen Ness, renowned motorcycle journalists Peter Egan and Allan Girdler, and many others--including Harley-Davidson historian Martin Jack Rosenblum and several ordinary folks with a love for Harleys and a good yarn to tell.
Fully illustrated with special artwork (including historic and contemporary photos, posters, illustrations, old postcards, and more), this book tells the entire story of our fascination with these incredible bikes.
This Old Harley offers a tribute to the bike that stands alone in American motorcycling history, told exclusively by those with Harley in their hearts.

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Rare old book of Lois and Bill Wilson. Quite entertaining! **A VERY RARE OUT OF PRINT, FIRST EDITION FIRST PRINTING,** each is individually numbered inside the front cover.

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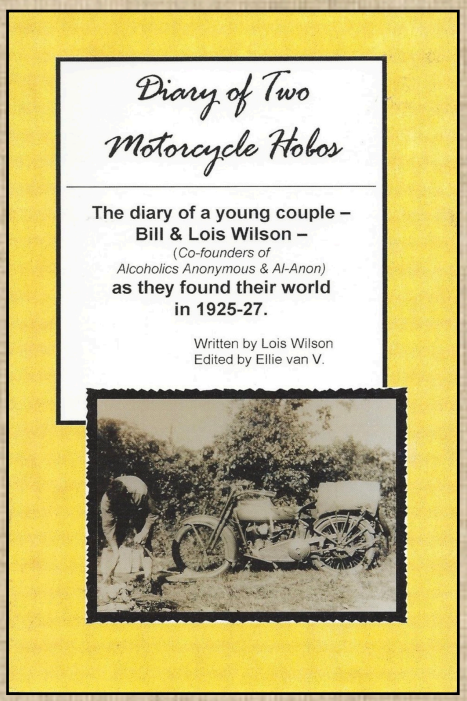


My 1979 Winter Vacation

by Bruce Grant | Source: oldlayabout.ca

Monday, February 27th 1979, I prepare to make an escape from the non-motorcycling season.

I've been looking forward to this, but now it seems so ridiculous. There's a nice warm house, a wife and two little ones, and I'm going off to freeze on a motorcycle. Mary Beth has no more sense than I; she comes out with her Brownie box camera to record the event and say good-bye.

A neighbour has attributed my strange behavior with motorcycles to a mid-life crisis. Maybe so, but this has been going on for an awfully long time. Perhaps teen-age angst has merged directly into mid-life crisis and I never noticed the difference. Will this continue then as I slip, oblivious to the change, into the age of physical decline and confusion? Will my neighbour then give me credit for all those years in the saddle?

Or will he just say "there's no fool like an old fool"? Is there a way to

alter this tragic chain of events? Do I care? No, not really.

I know from past experience that out there on the open road and far from home, I'm going to be on another plane of existence. There's no explanation for that; you just have to understand.

Buzzing along on the 401, it's a bit shivery but not too bad really, when I hit a patch of ice. Suddenly I'm down on my bum, sliding along beside the bike. I slide a long way, long enough to take in this whole new experience.

This icy pavement is not the "other plane of existence". A woman driving right behind me is wearing a caricature of a shocked expression. I watch her face while sliding along just in front of her.

When we all get stopped, I find only a broken mirror and some scratches on the bike.

I have so many layers of clothing that I look like a teddy bear, but this has saved me from scrapes. I ride off, waving to this woman who is still in shock. Well, good for her; she set out on a long boring journey down the 401, and now she will have a story to tell.

Soon I hear the speedo cable screaming, the needle spins up to 120 MPH and then goes bust. Now I'm feeling really daunted.

Only two hours out; I've crashed, my machine is falling apart and I'm freezing. Maybe this is a dumb idea, maybe I should go home. But the impulse is checked because you can't turn around on the 401. It'll be better, I argue, once I get south of the Poconos. It'll be better, even if I have to walk.

I win the argument and continue on my journey.

Riding through Syracuse on an elevated expressway, there's freezing rain, it's dark and I've had to remove my face shield because it loaded up with ice.

In the rush hour traffic, I squint through almost closed eyes to follow the tail lights ahead. A car comes alongside, the driver shouts and points to my rear carrier. One of my bags is gone, all my tools. Here in this maelstrom of ice and salt and machinery, someone has noticed and reached out to help. I drive back alone the side and find the bag lying in the centre lane.

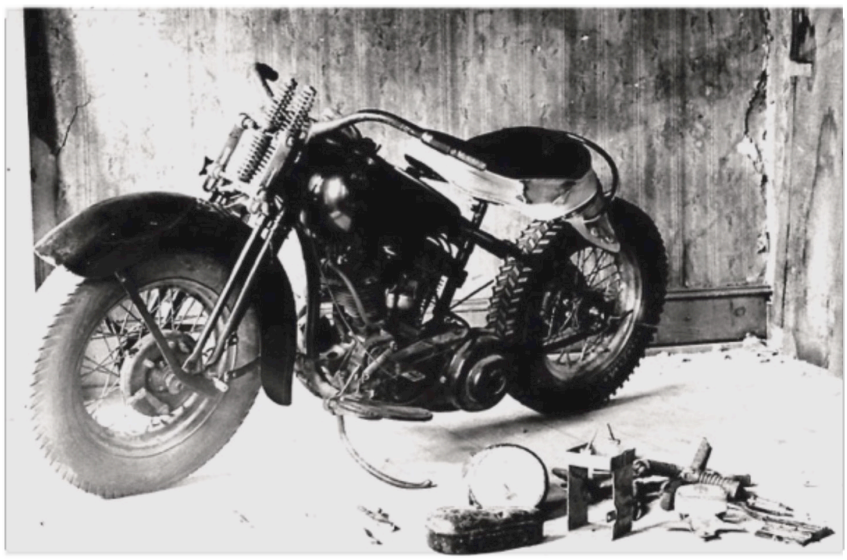
There's no thought of going back now; it's as far to go back as to go ahead. If I don't freeze first, I'll make it to my first stop.

The freezing rain continues and ice completely covers the bike. The front wheel grows icicles that radiate in all directions from the hub. The iron leg shields catch the spray and build up thick slabs of ice, but thanks to them, my feet feel OK.

I make frequent coffee stops, gulping the stuff down quickly. Five minutes in the warmth of the restaurant and I'll start shaking so hard that I can't drink any more. Back out on the road, the shaking soon stops. No danger of frost bite; it's just not that kind of cold, but, oh my, it's unpleasant.

Climbing into the Poconos, the rain turns to snow and it gets colder. On the way down the southern slope it clears and I can feel it getting warmer. See? It's just like I said.

The first stop is Dan Martin's place in Lansdale Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia. It's after midnight when I pull in there, but Dan and Sandra have to stay up with me until I can stop shaking and get settled down. That's 400 miles to-day.



I flop into a nice warm bed and five minutes later, or so it seems, I awake in bright sunshine and smell the coffee. It's so quiet here, so warm and cozy. Am I alive?

Dan and Sandra are old friends; we have a good long breakfast, talk and bring the bike into the workshop for a checkup. Feeling pretty good except for swollen eyes, I get away at noon, leaving the heavy winter clothing with the Martins. Won't need that stuff again.

The route is south along the coast, through Chester, Wilmington, Dover and Ocean City with warm sunshine all the way, a real good all-day ride. This is what I came out for, not such a dumb idea after all.

The destination is Orlando Florida, where the Antique Motorcycle Club of America holds a winter rally. There has to be a destination, see, else you don't know if you're going the right way, and you'll get back home not knowing if you ever arrived.

The motorcycle is a 1942 Harley Davidson model WLC, a military machine built for the Canadian Army. It called out to me from the classified ads in the Ottawa Citizen:
"I need a good home" it cried, *"I'm a veteran, I deserve better than this."* The machine had been stripped down to make a dirt bike, then it was raced around in the sand until it wouldn't go any more.

The next day takes me down the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, 17 miles long, a great engineering project. At the entrance to the Dismal Swamp, a sign advises "Lights on at all times", and yes, it's dismal. Eventually, the swamp

yields to sunshine and dry land and the road carries on to Myrtle Beach.

By now I have quite forgotten my name, address and occupation; I'm a traveller, a rolling stone, some guy on an old Harley, no fixed address. It feels great!

It's a long flat ride through the Carolinas and Georgia. My old bike can't keep up with traffic on the Interstate and there's nothing to see out there anyway. So, we putt along on the #17, a two-lane highway, an endless landscape with stove pipes, dusty little towns and pick-up trucks.

I pull up to a corner near Savannah with a flat tire. This is not so bad because there's a gas station just across the street. Right beside me is one of those cabins with a verandah across the front. An old whiskered negro is snoozing in a stuffed chair. He opens one eye briefly, but takes no further interest in the traveller.

As I spread out the tool kit in the dust, another man approaches, a younger man from the gas station. He studies his strange visitor and the machine from every angle, takes plenty of time to form a conclusion, then he speaks, — slowly. *"Dat sho is a ode motacycle"*

We talk about it while I work. He's interested in my little stories and sees the humour that is in every little event. From time to time he dashes, not too quickly, to his gas pumps.

"Reckon it won't be very long now" says he, *"the way things is goin'. . . . "*
"The tire?"
"No, —Armageddon! Yep, the way this ol' worl's goin' it gon' be real soon".
"You s'pose I got time to fix this here tire?" (by now I am starting to talk like he does) He laughs. *"Oh yes."* He can't say just how much time is left, but he's sure there's enough time to fix a tire.

I have very little patience with religious zealots who appear on my doorstep, but this time I'm on his doorstep. For a zealot, he's quite gentle and humorous, and he explains it all to me patiently, as one explains things to a simpleton. I listen and work.

The old man on the verandah raises his head, opens both eyes at once and speaks:
"Abraham!"
"Huh?"
"Shaddap!"

I know where I have seen this man before. He is the figure of God painted on the ceiling of the sistine chapel, with the shaggy head and the pointed finger. Abraham obeys and returns to his gas pumps. I finish my repair alone.

When I've got the wheel assembled, I carry it over the street, where Abraham helps me with the air hose. *"Thanks Abe."* Soon I'm back on the road.

I have discovered the best way to arrive in Florida. Ride your bike down a minor road called the A1A to the St John River. There's no bridge. You leave behind the red dust of stove-pipe alley and cross the water on a little ferry boat. Cross the river at night and watch the twinkling lights along the shores, feel the tropical dampness of the river, take in the sounds and the smells and the soft movement of the boat through the current. When you start up again, you will feel that you have entered a very special place.

Mind, I didn't say that Florida would keep the promise. I just said it was a great entrance.

Next day, I set up my tent at Maguire Airport, a small grass airfield near Orlando, where the meet will take place. This wheezy rider and his lady arrive on a beat-up Kawasaki. He likes my bike, tells me I should sell it to him.

He's tough looking, like an old leather boot and he stands almost on my toes while we talk. How do you refuse a guy who stares right down into your face with a third eye tattooed on his forehead?

He tells me about his thirty years working in the Cyclo-drome and about riding with Hell's Angels. His only recollection of Canada has to do with crashing his Harley through a show-room window in Montreal. I still won't sell him my bike, but I'd nominate him for best antique biker from the early period.

A guy from Antique Harley Works in Tampa drives in hauling a closed trailer. He's got an army bike, same as mine except it's the US Army version, in perfect condition.He tells us how he built the entire motor from new-old-stock parts. Several people are conscripted to help him ease it out of the trailer. — *"Careful now, don't scratch it."*

I had thought of washing the road dirt off my bike for the show, but no, no way!

On Sunday morning they give out the awards. I get the prize for longest distance ridden, that it to say, for not trucking the bike over from Tampa. Mr Perfect Harley doesn't win anything. Around noon, the tent comes down and we're off to Daytona where thousands of bikers have begun arriving for next week-end's annual Speed Week. It's fun to hang around, meet the people and drink beer, but a week of this would be worse than the freezing rain. Time to go.

At Jacksonville I indulge in a motel with a bath tub and a real bed. Next morning, just out of the front door, I take this picture (on the left) to mark the beginning of the return trip. There's a phone booth right beside me, but I'm not ready to make contact with the real world that I must return to. I will hear about this decision later.

The generator has quit. I can still putt along for now, but there won't be any night riding if I can't get it fixed. In Alma Georgia I find Sweat's Electric Co, apparently the main industry in this dusty little place. As I unroll the tool kit several good ol' boys come out to watch, ask questions and tell good ol' motorcycle stories.

Inside the generator, I find a broken wire that just needs a terminal clip. One of the lads brings the part from the shop and the repair is quickly done. Now I approach Mr Sweat (Can that really be his name?) who has been watching all this through the window.

"All them fellas" he wants to know, *"was they fixin' or was they jes' watchin? "They us jes' watchin"* (I can't help it) *"Be a coda dall" "Huh?" "Co da dolla"*

I feel stupid. Why don't I understand what he's saying? To make him understand what I'm asking, I empty a pocket onto the counter, some change and small bills. He reaches into the pile and takes out a quarter. That's it. Quarter Dollar!

I ride all day; stove pipe alley stretches before me. It's ride, stop for gas, ride, stop for a burger, ride again. . . . . As it gets dark, I'm aware that the headlight is blown, probably from fooling around with the generator and regulator. I have a spare lamp with a low-beam filament that still works.

There are places in the South where you ride through miles and miles of uninhabited pine forests. In such a place the engine decides to stop for the night. It coughs and clatters and back-fires; it runs down slower and slower and shoots flames out the tail pipe. A truly operatic death scene.

This is a really dark place; the sky is overcast, there are no lights, no moon, no stars and I can't even make out the tops of the pines against the sky. Sitting there on the dead bike, I try to work through a list of possible causes. How does it go, that old cowboy song, — I'm so lonesome in the saddle since my horse died?

With a flashlight I poke around until the problem turns up, a fouled plug. A tiny speck of carbon. I clean it up and gratefully pull back onto the road.

On highway 301 in Florence, South Carolina there's a garage, a very old garage, old enough maybe to have some old headlight bulbs. It's after midnight, but the door is open and a man is standing in the bright light of the office. He's old too.
"Would you have some old Mazda lamps, the kind with the flange base, six volts?"

He's a wiry, nervous little guy, moves quickly like a squirrel, and he talks fast too. Must be the only fast talker in the Carolinas. We scurry into a back room and climb over a jumble of boxes filled with ancient auto parts. On two of the metal shelves there is an assortment of Mazda lamps.

"Look at this mess! Had a nigger in here not long ago to clean the place up and look at this. If ya need something done ya don't need a nigger. Look at this mess."

It seems to me that nothing has been thrown out of here in the last fifty years and it's himself who makes all the decisions. But I'm not arguing. This is Florence, South Carolina, and this is the old South talking to me. I'm looking at a hoard of antique lamps, neatly stacked in their little boxes on two shelves, and I need a Mazda lamp.

No, I don't argue.

Out front again, I spread out the tool kit, open up the headlight and start trying lamps. These lamps weren't only made for Harleys, they were for Tin Lizzies and Durants and whatever. The trick is to find one that will work OK. I've got lamps and tools spread all over the front steps.

A car pulls in, slides past me, and stops, facing out to the highway with the engine still running. It's a shabby old car with Alabama plates and a noisy exhaust. Two young black men jump out and raise the hood. They think maybe they need a shot of brake fluid. The old man stands in his doorway.
"I don't fix cars at night. I'll sell ya a can of fluid." "Can you check it for us and put it in?"
"No"

They stand by the car, holding up the raised hood, the engine still rumbling. He steps back to his desk and opens a drawer, then comes back to his position in the open door. He stands there and looks at them; they look at him. I'm sitting between, on the step. The engine rumbles. Waiting.

The two men let down the hood and drive away into the night. We hear the clatter of the engine far down the road until it disappears into the buzz of the fluorescent lights. I turn and see the old man standing over me with a gun in his hand. He steps inside and puts it away in the drawer.

It's 2 AM now, a long day since I left Jacksonville, but I don't feel a bit sleepy. We fill the tank and the jerry can too, so I can ride all night. The new lamp puts out a dull orange glow; it doesn't project a beam. It's like riding in fog by following the white line just in front of the bike. There's an illusion of great speed, and detachment from the real but invisible world.

At 4:30 AM it's raining. It started very light, but now it's getting more persistent. I'm running low on gas a few miles north of Lumberton, North Carolina, as good a place as any to pitch a tent and go to sleep.

Away again at 10 AM in a very light drizzle. US 301 is a real good two-lane road that was the main highway until they built the parallel interstate I-95. Now it carried local traffic and old Harleys. I ride until midnight and flop into a motel in Baltimore. The next day, a short ride takes me to the Martins' place and some much needed motorcycle maintenance. I need some maintenance too.

Thursday March 8th is the last ride. Up until now I have taken alternate routes and seen everything for the first time. Today's ride is on the same old freeway, and it's cold, and it's just a dash home.

Pulling off the 401 at Prescott, just 50 miles from home, I see a police car following close behind. He lights up the flashers and pulls me over. *"There's nothing wrong"* he says, *"I just wanted to get a good look at your bike."*

Oh, fine, I'm freezing out here, I'd like to get home, and I'm not feeling chatty. But he's chatty, oh yes, has to know all about the bike, and what make is it? *"Harley"*
And what year would it be? *"42"*
And how far would you be going on such a cold day on such an old motorcycle? *"Ottawa"* This last information really amazes him, *"all the way to Ottawa!"* He waves good-bye at last and returns, shivering, to his nice warm cruiser.

One more hour and I'll be in my nice warm house.

Clifton's Harley-riding 92-year-old grandma has a story to tell

By Matt Fagan | Source: northjersey.com

You know you've made it when you get your own Wikipedia entry.

Clifton's Gloria Tramontin Struck, 92, meets that standard, even if the first thing in her entry is wrong: Wikipedia has her as an original member of the Motor Maids. This kind of false claim bugs her.

Struck, a lifelong Clifton resident, was not an original member of the Motor Maids.
The motorcycle club for women was founded in 1940. In 1940, she was only 15 years old and a year away from taking her first ride.

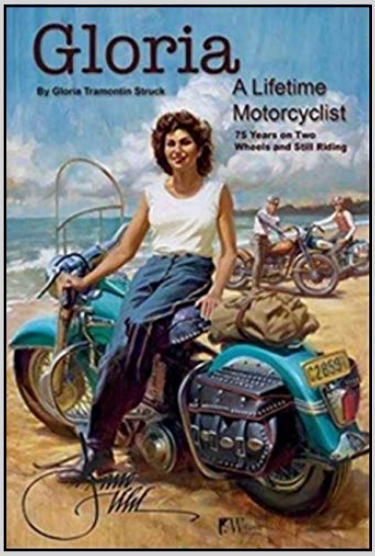
Struck said she gets annoyed when people get it wrong, because all too often, her peers in the motorcycle community think she's embellishing her legacy — one that friends say needs no embroidering.

Wikipedia's next entry, however, about how she belongs to the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame, is right on the money. She was inducted in 2011.
The Harley-riding grandma has figured out a way to set the record straight.

Her account, "**Gloria: A Lifetime Motorcyclist**, **75 Years on Two Wheels and Still Riding**," was recently published by Wolfgang Publications of Minnesota.
"I wrote it," she said. *"No one wrote it for me."*

Struck's autobiography isn't just for gearheads. Local historians might be interested in her recollections of prewar Clifton, and she also takes the reader through the golden years of biking.

Gloria: A lifetime Motorcyclist, 75 Years on Two Wheels and Still Riding



Gloria Tramontin Struck rode a motorcycle for the very first time at age 16 in 1941. Women simply didn't ride motorcycles in 1941, but at the urging of her older brother, a very reluctant Gloria gave it a try, and it changed her life forever. She has been riding ever since, and at age 89, still rides regularly and continues to participate in cross country rides.

As you might expect, any woman regularly riding a motorcycle in an era when women didn't ride motorcycles has a lot of stories to tell. In Gloria Struck: 75 years on Two Wheels and Still Riding, Gloria shares with you all of her favorite stories, from back when she was being raised behind her father's motorcycle shop in Clifton NJ, through 75 years of riding tales, all the way to the present, where she is rightfully celebrated at motorcycles rallies and events. Complementing her life and riding stories is an extensive scrapbook of photos, over 100 of which are included in this autobiography.

Of course, Gloria's book and her stories, are as much about overcoming prejudice and personal obstacles, as it is about riding motorcycles. Because of that, this book resonates with riders and non-riders alike. The message is about more than riding, it's about meeting and conquering life's challenges with courage and humor

From: amazon.ca
Price: $56.00
Paperback

Todd Blubaugh Interview

By Sam Bendall | Photography by Sam Bendall | Source: petrolicious.com

American Style: What It's Like To Ride A 1949 Harley Davidson EL

Just west of downtown Los Angeles, Todd Blubaugh opens a gate and invites me into his workshop, The Chun. In the courtyard rests a half-built hot rod and just beyond, inside the garage overhang, sits Hayduke, Todd's 1949 Harley Davidson EL.

At first glance one can tell this bike is no show pony. It's been beaten, used. For the term of Todd's ownership, the EL has covered countless miles over highways and fire roads across 10 states. It oozes character and has the patina to match. There is no doubt that it's been worked on by the side of the road, coaxed to that next hotel, cursed at for its failures and then duly praised for the triumphs born from its mercurial nature. It wears these scars openly, and it's a beautiful thing.

Todd Blubaugh is the author behind the book **Too Far Gone**, a modern pan-American journey via motorcycle that combines documentary photography, short essays, and select letters written from the road. So as somebody who can tell a story and has a cool piece of vintage American metal to talk about, I thought he'd be an interesting chat. I sat down with Todd to discuss this particular bike and afterward, he and I enjoyed a spirited ride through downtown Los Angeles, Echo Park, and Glendale.

Sam Bendall: This bike looks like it's lived a long life, how did you and it cross paths? What was your intention for the build?

Todd Blubaugh: The project started back in Kansas when my buddy Jess was building the motor for his dad. They changed direction and built a big twin flathead instead, so I commandeered the abandoned panhead project. It then sat for a long time before I had a clear vision. I found some new-old-stock automotive tires from the '30s at a car swap meet and coincidently the mission to make a wide obnoxious road dog. However, I burned through those tires pretty quickly after i finished the bike, and have not been able to find another set. I pieced the frame together from three nearly unusable scraps (heavily Bondo'd), a shoveled neck, and some schedule 40 steel pipe. I left everything else about the bike true to the condition in which I found it.

SB: What's your favorite thing about it? What still excites you?

TB: I named the bike Hayduke, from the Abbey novels. Jess's dad, Dennis (who originally started the project), designed and engraved the name of the bike onto a steel badge where the shift gate used to be. This, along with the seat are my favorite parts. My dear friend Ginger from New Church Moto made the seat. She is an amazing upholsterer and made it from a leather couch that used to be part of a cocaine smuggling operation. I'm not kidding, they used to put drugs in the couch cushion of a fancy sailboat and move the cocaine across the Caribbean. She may be lying but I don't care. It came out far better than I imagined.

SB: Have there been any hiccups along the way in getting this bike running?

TB: Every damn day. It's an old machine and with age comes gremlins. He's a crotchety bike but one with character and style, one that keeps my mind occupied.

SB: Is the end machine what you had envisioned from the start?

TB: Yeah. I've modified it every which way so that it can run parts from almost any NAPA Auto Parts place. The points in the distributer are the same found on a Chevy, the oil and fuel lines are over the counter pieces, and I rigged an onboard 300psi hose and tool fitting that I plug into my rear cylinder when I need an air compressor in the middle of nowhere. I also run an auxiliary automotive oil filter and I hid a power steering cooler under the tranny that keeps my 60W cool in the desert.

SB: That's rad. I like that you have this bike built out to be completely self sufficient. I have to ask, how does it ride? I looks like it could be a tad vicious.

TB: Vicious wouldn't be too far off. Riding Hayduke feels like riding a bucking radiator blindfolded across a field of buried landmines. However it does well in deep sand despite the weight and spans distance quickly and comfortably. The two things I need it to do, because my primary residence is out in the desert.

SB: Why subject yourself to that kind of punishment?

TB: I cannot fully explain it but it means something when you feel like you earn every mile.

SB: I totally respect and understand that mentality. Tell me about your riding history, when did you first start riding and what got you into motorcycles?

TB: Besides drawing and painting, motorbikes have been the longest running obsession I've had. I grew up on the edge of a small town in the middle of nowhere, Kansas. Our backyard was a wide open field where people came to ride off-road and I would sit in the grass watching and listening to the bikes fly around. Us kids would ride BMX around the trails pretending we had motors, and eventually we all did. My first motorbike was a KE 100 Kawasaki. I was 12 when my dad agreed to let me mow lawns in the neighborhood to finance the toy. I wish I still had that little yellow bike.

SB: I'm sure you could score one off eBay and live up the halcyon days of your youth once again.

TB: Perhaps. It would be a fun little bike to mess around with in the desert.

SB: Until then, wanna get out of here and go for a ride?

TB: Absolutely.

Chicara Nagata Interview

By Wes Garcia | SOURCE: megadeluxe.com

Chicara Nagata makes some of the most unique motorcycles you'll ever see. In this interview, Chicara tell us what it takes to craft his motorcycles – some of his designs can take up to 7,000 man-hours.

About Chicara:

He lives in Saga Prefecture, Kyusyu Island located in the Southern part of Japan. He has been working as a graphic designer for about 30 years and in the meantime he has been making motorcycles for about 20 years.

You design and construct your frames, suspension and steering components. What kind of machinery do you use?

Almost all process – design, metal working, leather craft for the seat etc – I do all by myself.
I do not have an expensive high level machine. I do shave, sheet metal, welding and metalworking using a hand tool. It takes about 5000 to 7000 hours to make one motorcycle that you can see on my website.

You use vintage engines in your motorcycles. Which engines do you like to work with?

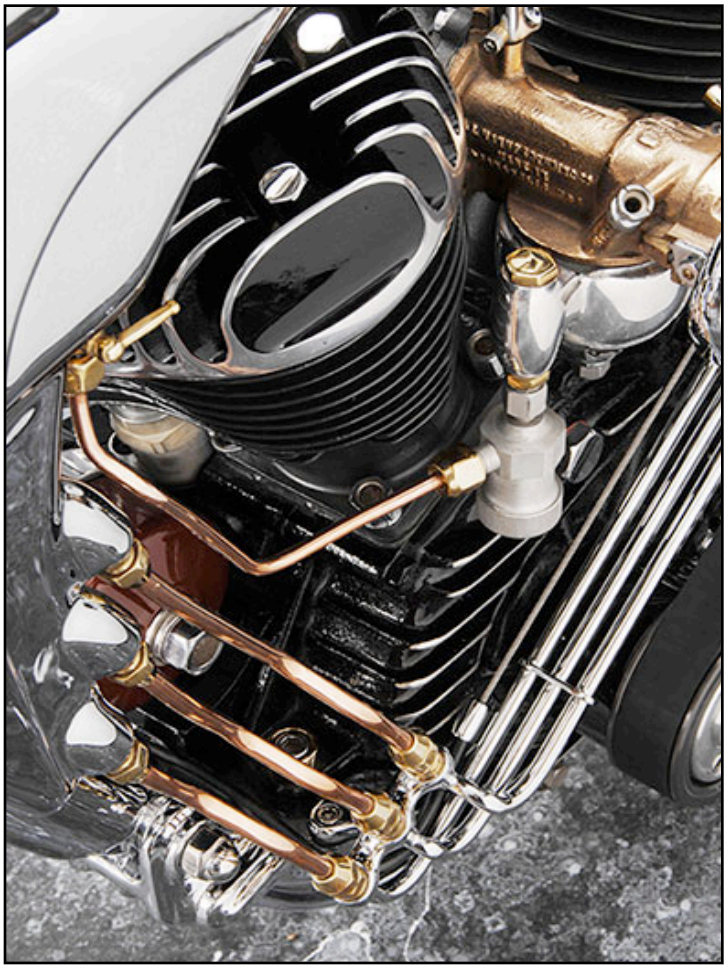
I can't tell which engines I like to work with. But when I see a certain vintage model engine, I feel like creating. This is what I like to work with.

You choose the engine first when you start to build a bike. Why start with the engine first?

Most of the time I choose the engine from its beauty not only from its function. I would like to give the stylish detail for well-balanced engine. That's why I pick up the engine first.

You took several years to complete your first motorcycle. How was that experience?

Every progress, I encounter many many problems. I can't count how many times I give up to make motorcycle. But I noticed that " If we don't give up, We can make it ."
In another word, we can make the impossible possible. This is what I learn from making motorcycles, but still on the way.



Your first creation won the 2006 AMD World Championship of Custom Bike Building. How did that feel?

I was really happy. Because I put so much time into fixing it up and my effort paid off. The World Championship is just like a very special bonus.

Do you work on one bike at a time, or several at a time?

I create the image first and produce. Basically I work on one at a time, but in my mind I create some images at the same time.

How many people work with you at your studio?

I am the only one who makes the motorcycles. Because I am the only one who has the conceptional drawing.

Do people who purchase your bikes ride them?

Yes, they do. Of course, some of them don't ride and just take a look.

For designing you bike, do you use paper and pencil, computer, or a combination of both?

Basically every design, structure and style are in my

head and I create the images again and again. So I seldom draw the design and use PC. I am an analog type.

What out there inspires you?
I live on the graphic design. To make motorcycles is not my job but something like my lifework.

I would like to show my identity and my existence to all the people through creating motorcycles.

You're a graphic designer, do you bring any of that experience into building bikes?
Yes, I do. The graphic designs are basically two dimensions. When I make the motorcycles, I go back and forth between 2Ds and 3Ds. I think it is important to complete 2Ds design perfectly first even when to make 3Ds motorcycles.

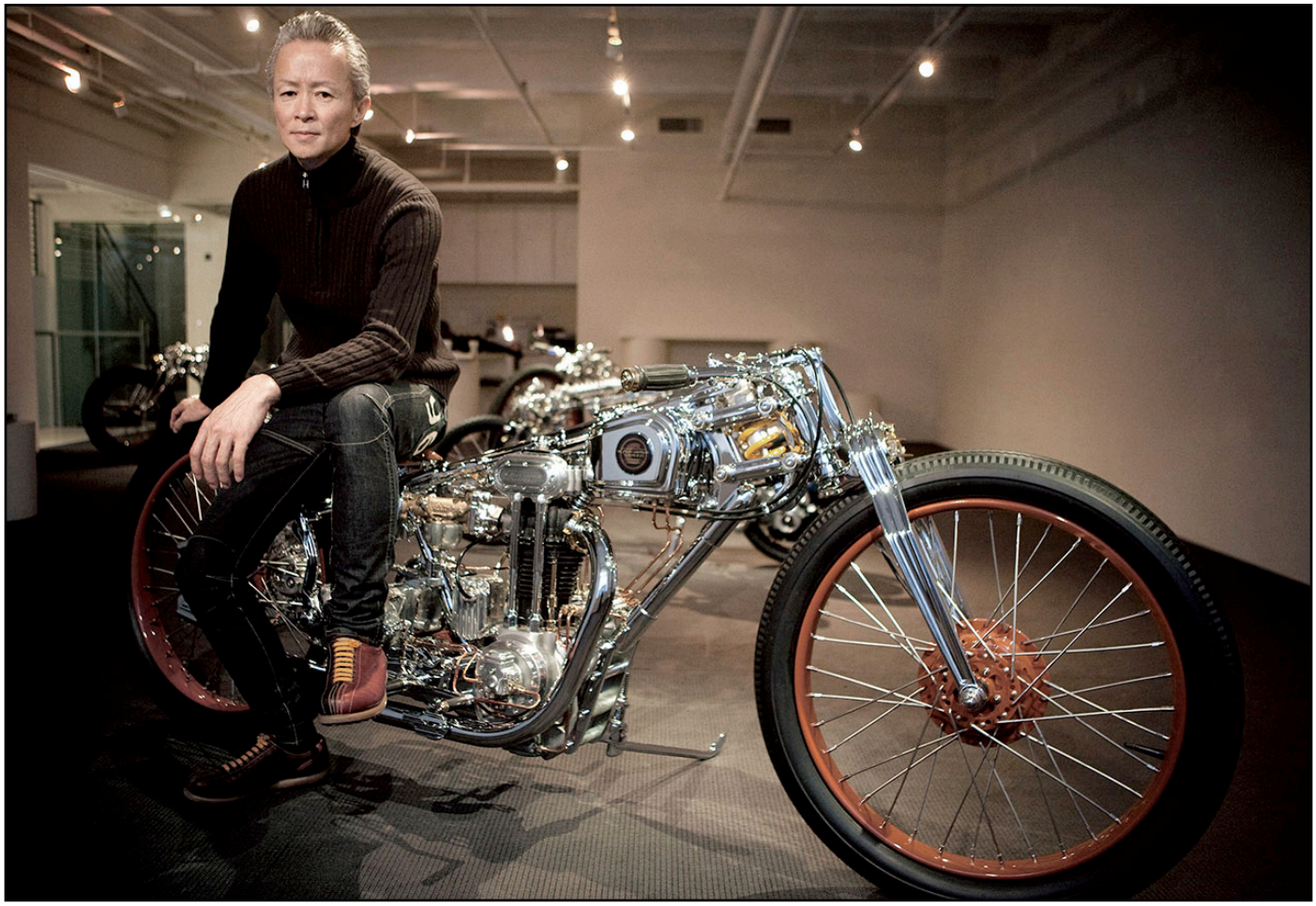
What part of the bike usually takes the longest to design?
I spend more time before I start to make motorcycles. That means I need more time to fix my style and design. I don't spend much time for thinking about metalworking or welding.

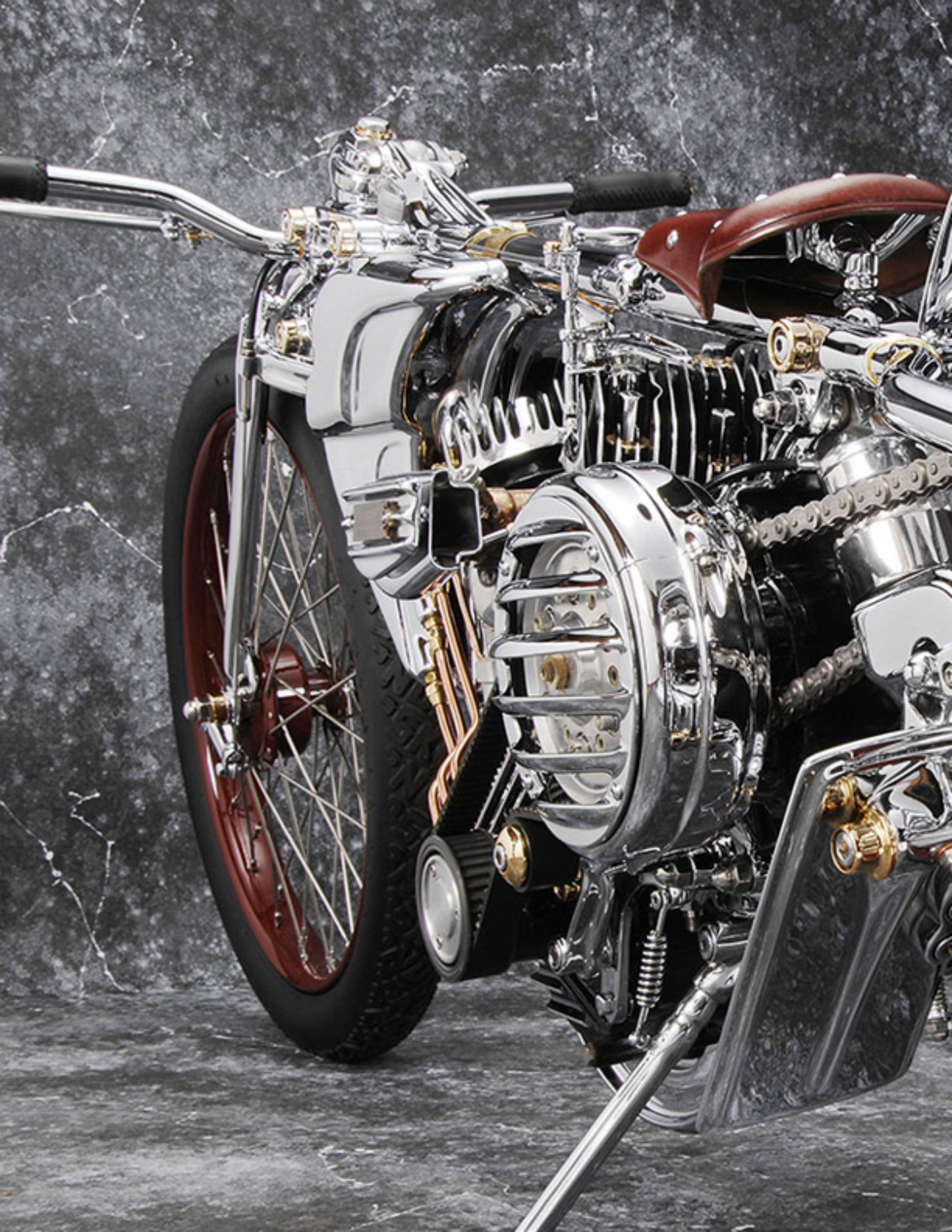
How often do you ride?
Unfortunately, once I started to make motorcycles, I have been busy. So I don't have much time to ride.

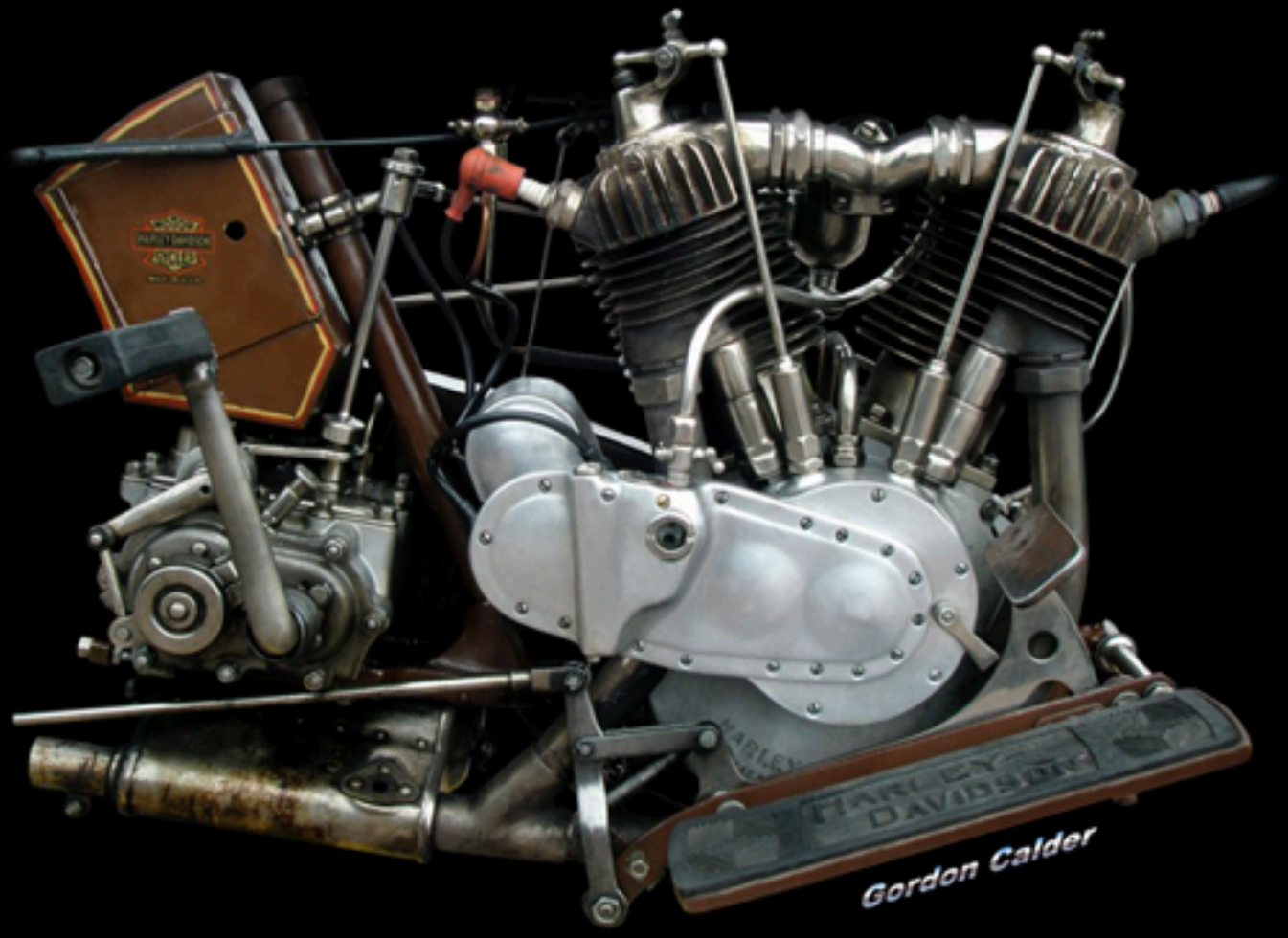
Best city in the world to ride a motorcycle?
I have not been to many countries in the world, so I can't tell. I like to ride a motorcycle, of course. But I like to see the motorcycle in the beautiful scenery. I prefer the place that have four seasons like Japan.

Your favorite movie of all time?
I like all kinds of movies. But I saw `The World's Fastest Indian` more than ten times. He was obsessed by speed and I was obsessed by beauty of motorcycles. He and I were devoted into motorcycles, so I empathize with him.

What do yo do when you're not creating motorcycles?
I do my job or I think about the design for my new motorcycle or sleep.

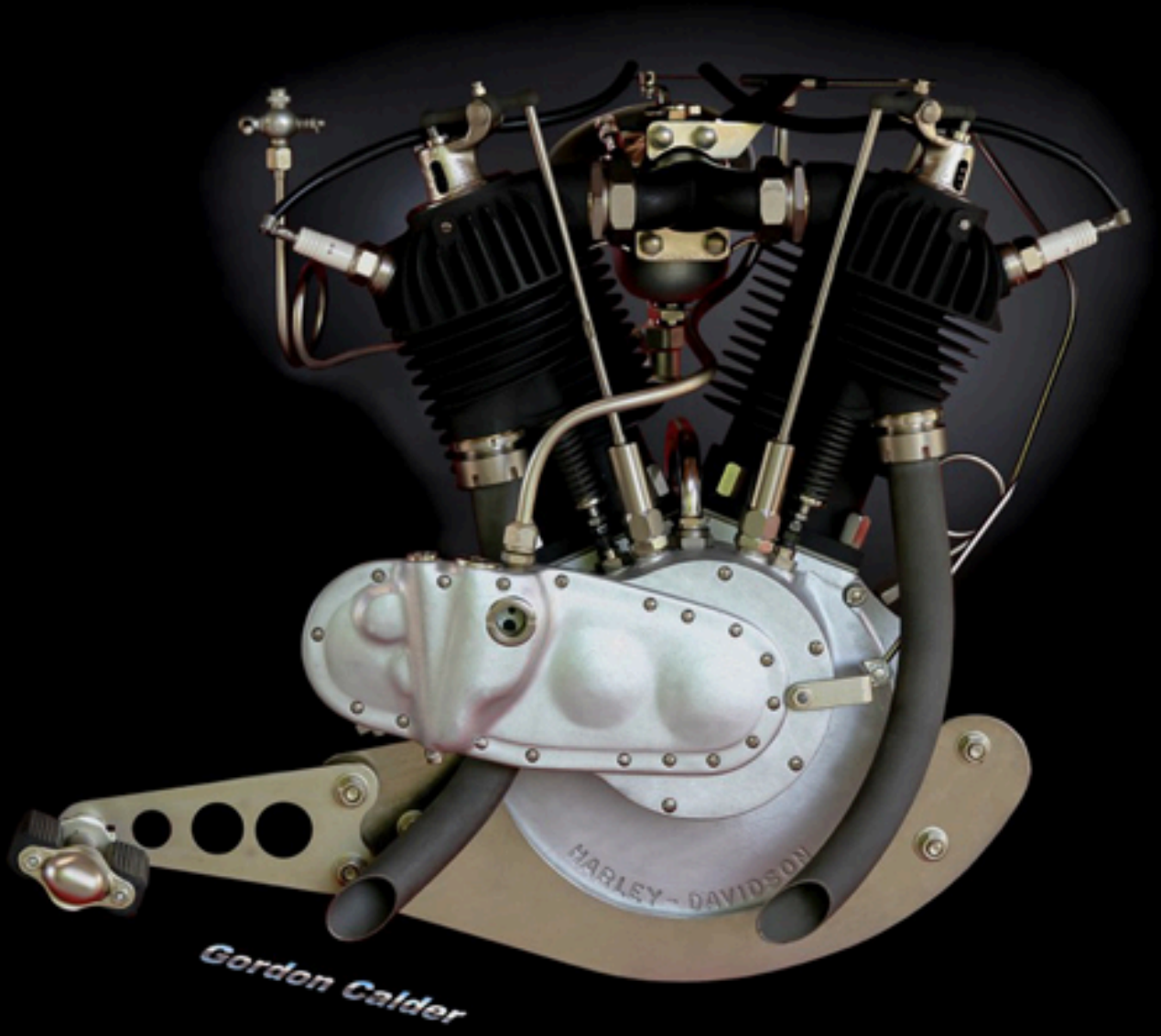






Artwork by Gordon Calder

DAVIDSON "F-HEAD" V TWIN ENGINE (1917)



Artwork by Gordon Calder

VINTAGE HARLEY DAVIDSON T SERIES (1920)

MFH

Model Factory Hiro

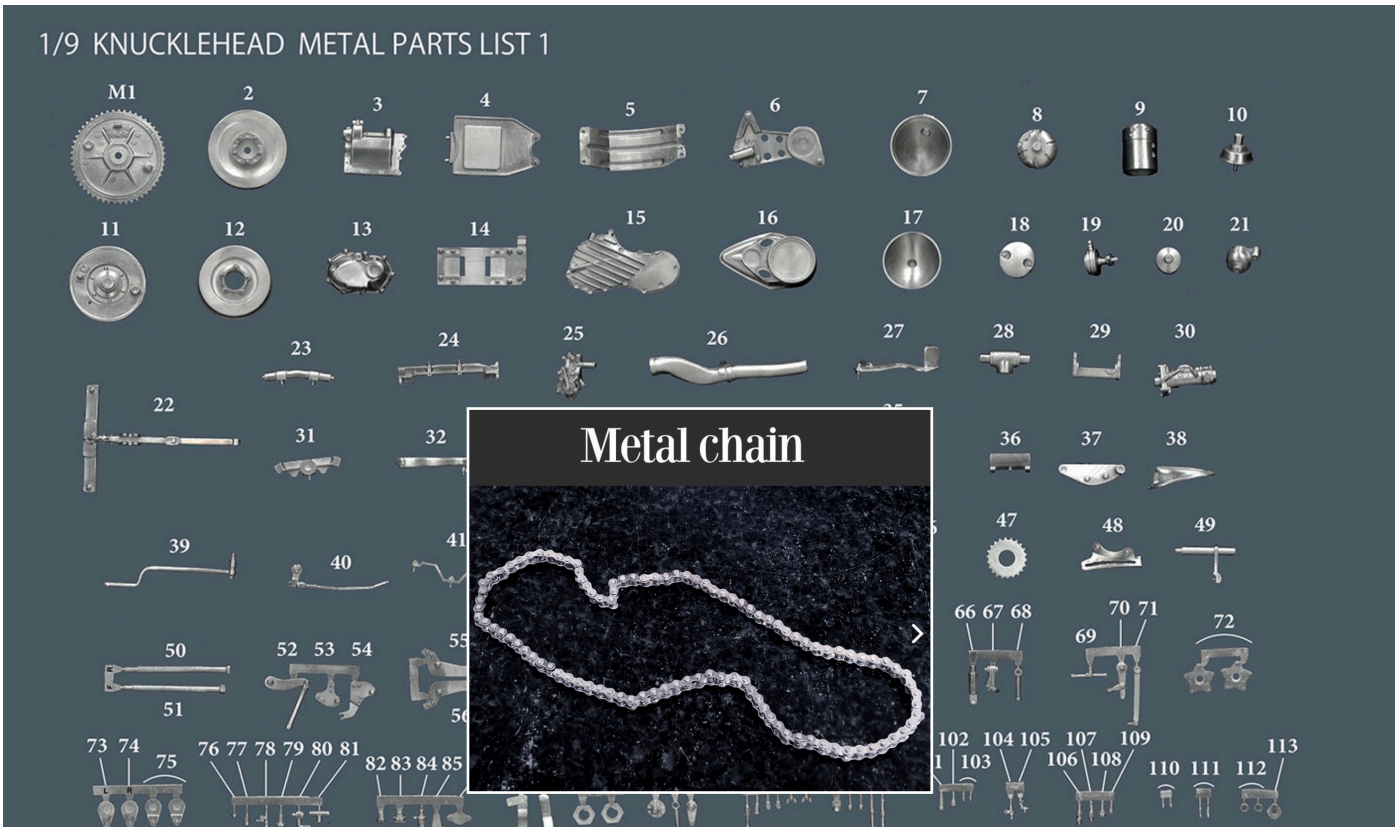
1/9 Scale
Full Detail Kit

Note from the editor:
All 1/9 scale models are presently OUT OF STOCK.
MFH has not confirmed when they will be available for sale.

1/9 scale Fulldetail Kit : Panhead 1940/1947

https://www.modelfactoryhiro.com/SHOP/K637_K638.html

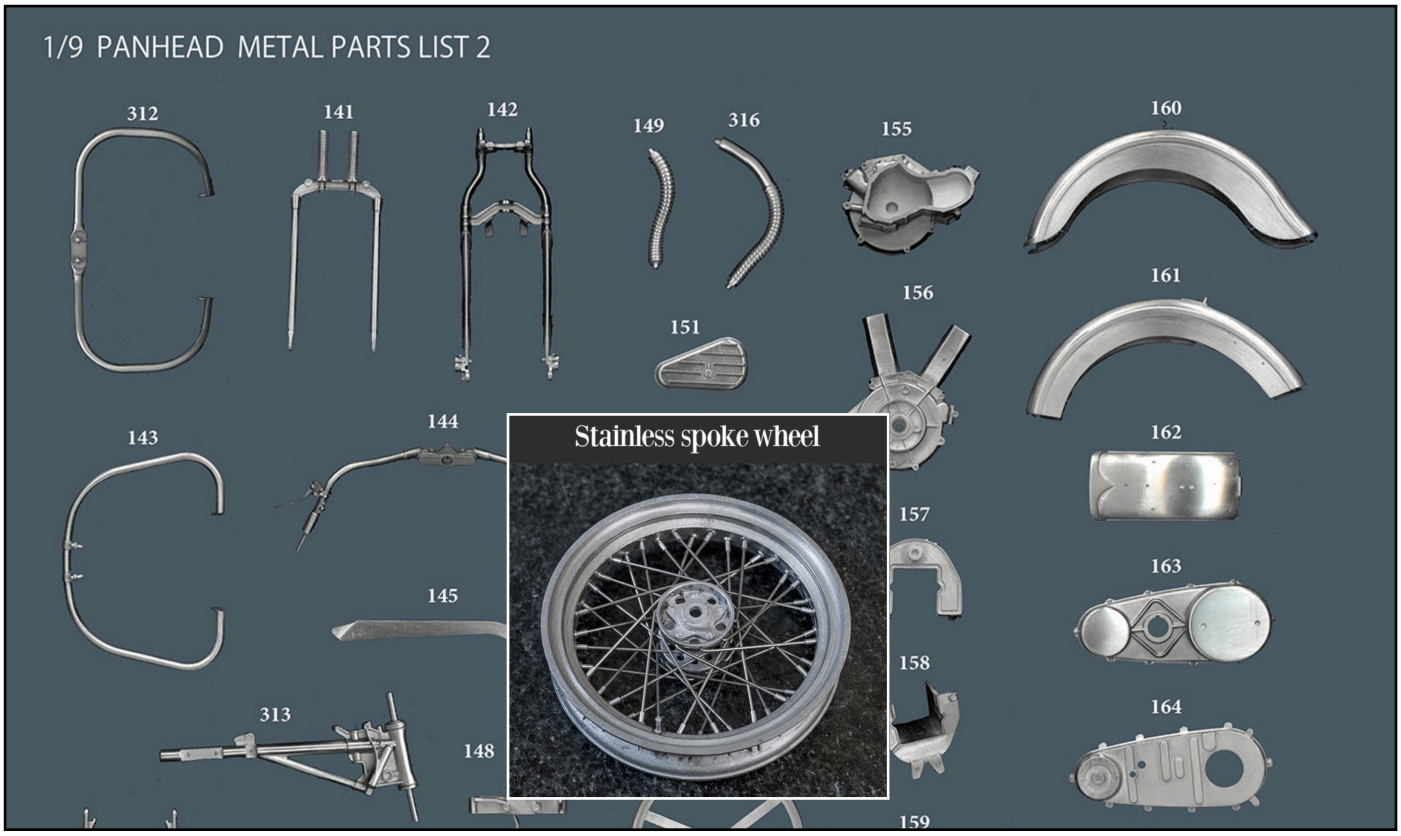
This is a multi-material kit contains of lathe-cutting aluminium parts, photo etch sheet, decal sheets, white metal, rubber, etc.
The chain is assembled from photo etch parts and totally movable.



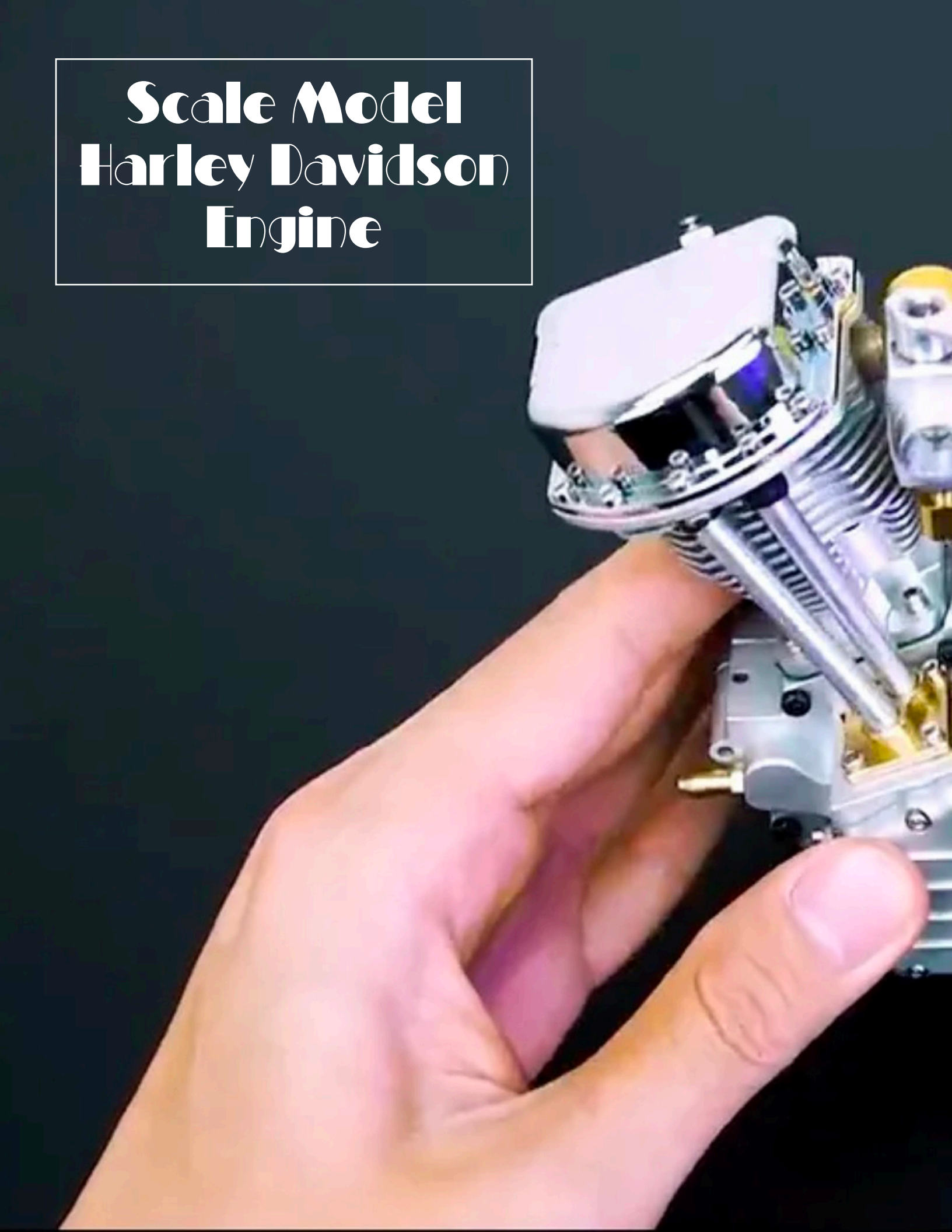
1/9 scale Fulldetail Kit : Panhead 1948

https://www.modelfactoryhiro.com/SHOP/K712.html

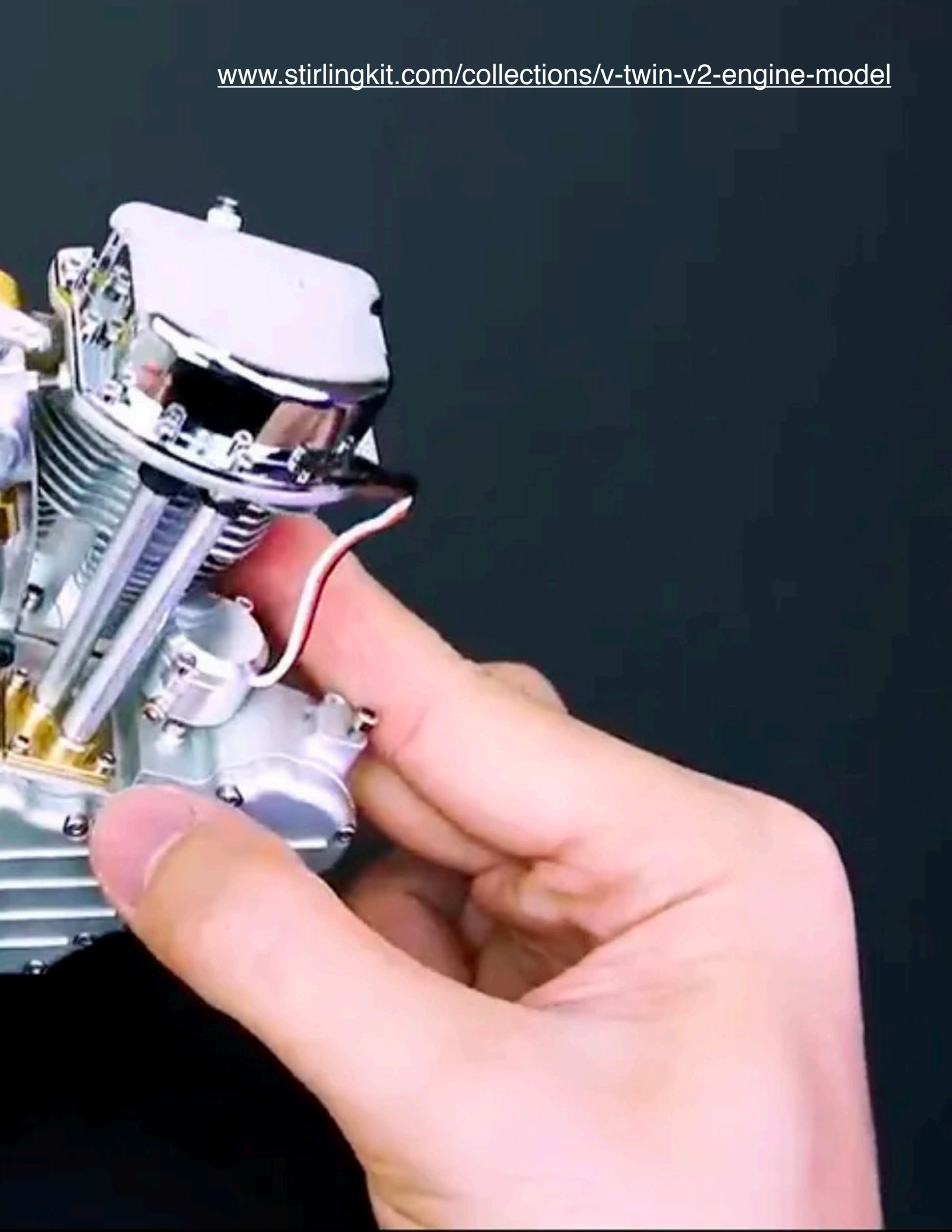
This is a multi-material kit contains of lathe-cutting aluminium parts, photo etch sheet, decal sheets, white metal, rubber, etc.
The chain is assembled from photo etch parts and totally movable.



Scale Model Harley Davidson Engine



www.stirlingkit.com/collections/v-twin-v2-engine-model



Small engine: big sound!

Scale Model Harley Davidson Engine is Perfection in Miniature

By Harry Fisher | Source: topspeed.com

Beautiful scale model of the Harley Davidson Pan Head engine, correct in every detail, including the potato-potato sound the engine makes at idle.

Scale model Harley Pan Head Engine Makes All the Right Noises

Scratch any car or bike enthusiast and, underneath, you'll likely as not find a passion for anything that runs on petrol. It doesn't even have to be useful, as this scale model of a Harley Davidson Pan Head engine proves.

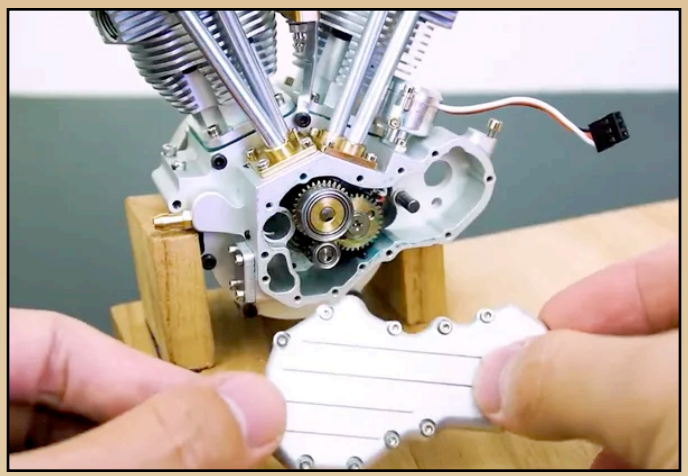
To call it a scale model is to imply that that is all it is: a model. But to call it merely a model would be to do it a disservice as this one runs. Not only runs but sounds exactly like a Harley at tickover.

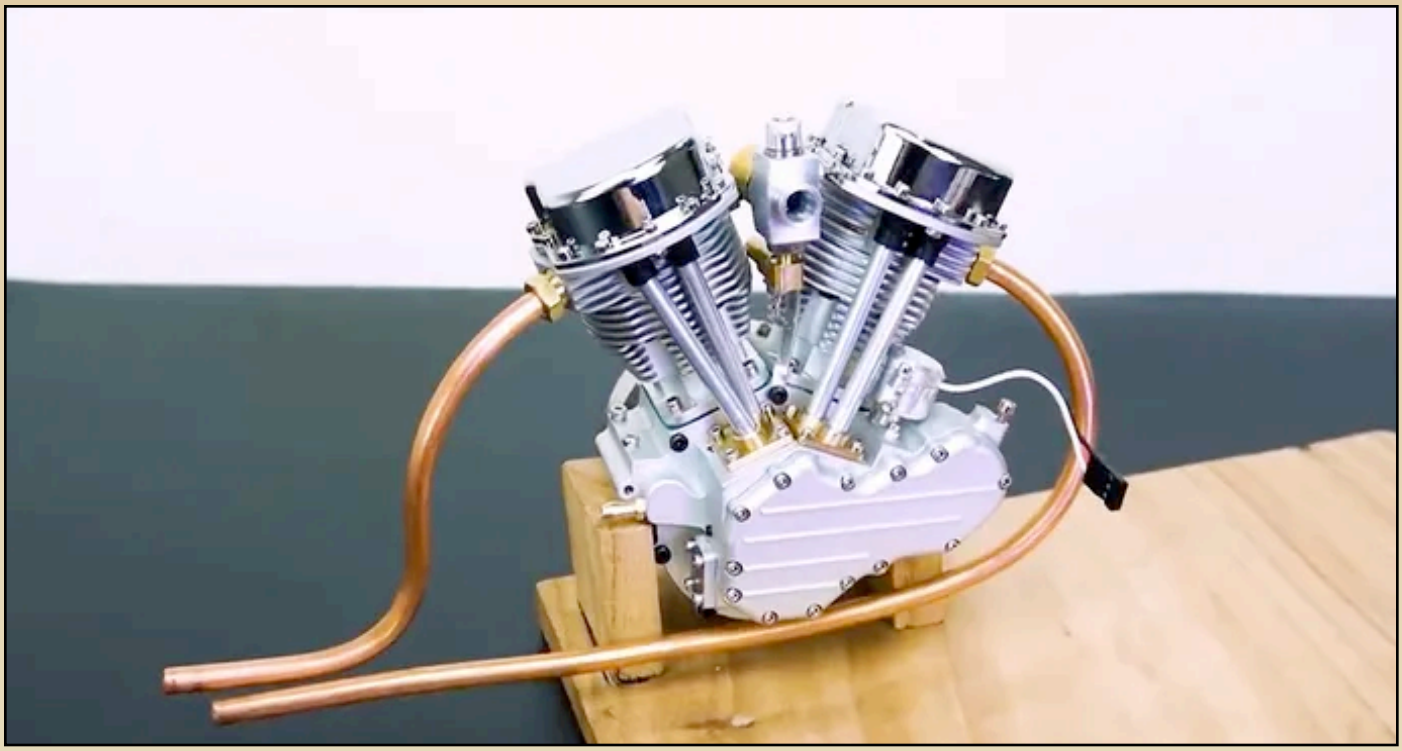
The Cison FG-VT9 is a 9cc, four-stroke v-twin that produces 0.8hp. The tiny 16.67 x 21mm bore and stroke give an 8,000rpm redline, not something that your full-size Harley is capable of.

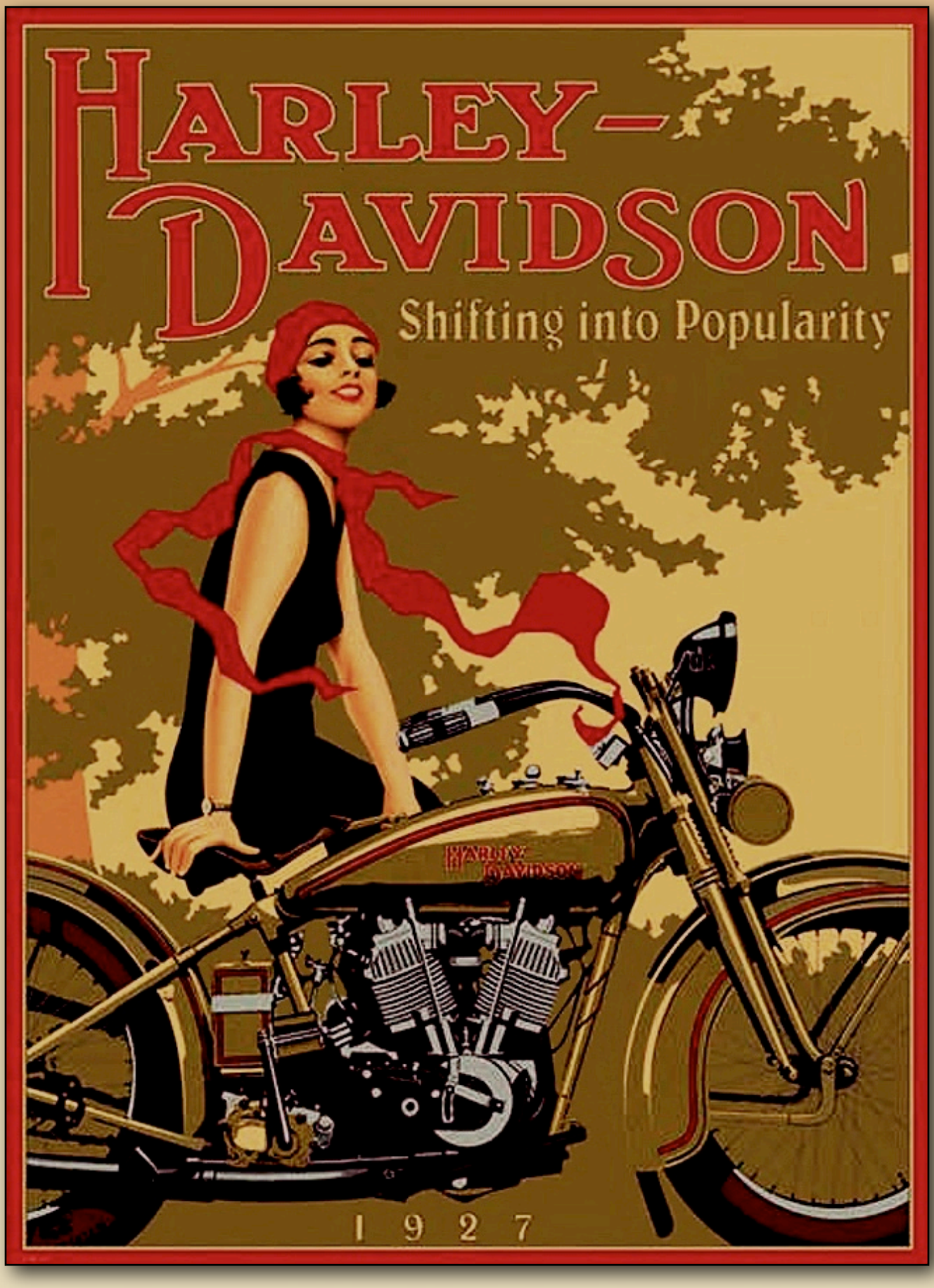
The video shows the unboxing of the engine (could it correctly be called a crate engine...?) and the bolting to a rather inappropriate piece of wood before it is fired up.

It's a beautiful piece of engineering and the only pity is that it can't be fitted into a bike that could carry a passenger.

The engine comes from www.stirlingkit.com who have an incredible range of miniature petrol engines, both two-and four-stroke. The Harley engine comes in at a not inconsiderable $599.99 but you'd have to say it was worth it.






HARLEY-DAVIDSON
Shifting into Popularity
HARLEY-DAVIDSON
1927

Artwork By

Makoto Endo

@makoto_endo

Artwork By

David Vicente

dvicente777@yahoo.fr

Recap and conclusion

HD has been in business for 116 years — but the iconic American company is facing numerous challenges

Matthew DeBord | Photos from Getty Images | Source: www.businessinsider.com

- Harley-Davidson has been around since 1903.
- The motorcycle manufacturer has seen it all — including two world wars — but the company is now up against new challenges.
- The brand remains an American icon and its history is fascinating.

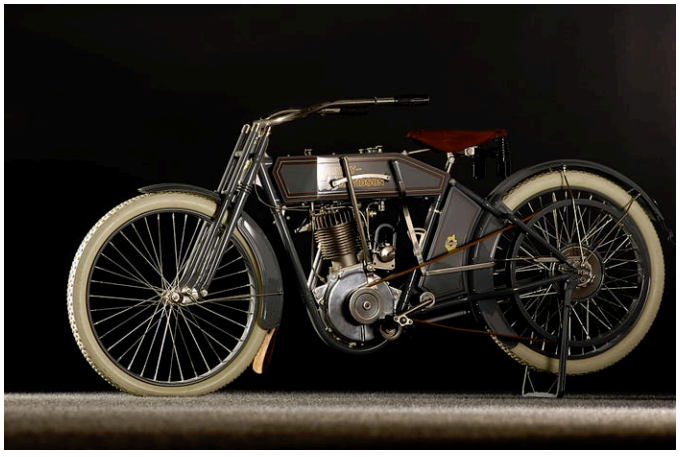
Harley-Davidson isn't just the most famous motorcycle company — it's also one of the most legendary and beloved brands in human history.

Harley-Davidson got its all-American start in 1903, at the dawn of the "Motor Age." Two friends got together and combined bicycles with newfangled engines. Horses would never forgive them. Fast forward 116 years, and Harley's market capitalization is nearly $6 billion.

That's not to say that the past 100 or so years have been a completely smooth ride. Harley made it through two world wars and a very rough restructuring during the financial crisis. And now it's up against new challenges as CEO Matt Levatich works to globalize sales amid a US market decline, recruit younger riders, and contend with the itchy Twitter finger of President Donald Trump, who has praised and penalized Harley in equal measure.

Let's take a look back at Harley-Davidson's long and illustrious history:

In 1903, William Harley and Arthur Davidson founded the company that would bear their names. William's brother Walter (shown here) became the company's first president and an early Harley racer.



Harley-Davidson's first motorcycles were essentially bicycles with engines.

Two world wars helped Harley-Davidson to create the brand's image of freedom that it's still known for today. The company produced bikes for both World War I and World War II.

The motorcycles earned a reputation for performance and attitude. Here's the world-land-speed-record holder Malcolm Campbell astride a Harley in 1935.

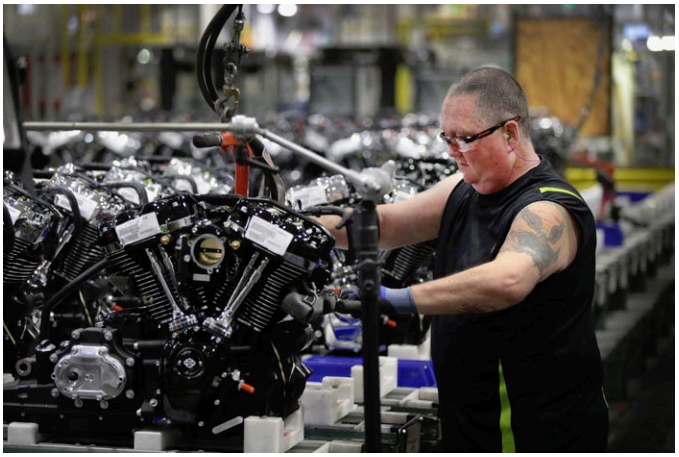
Robert Craig "Evel" Knievel put Harley XR-750s to use in his widely watched stunt jumps.

And, of course, Harley's rebellious image was enhanced Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, and their Harley choppers hit the road for 1969's "Easy Rider." (With Fonda recent death, both stars are now sadly no longer with us, as Hopper passed away in 2010.)

Hopper took a seat on Fonda's bike a few years later.

Harley continues to be known for big highway cruisers that can sell for more than $40,000.The Harley rider community is vast. And it likes nothing more than to gather for massive annual rides, especially the one that ends in Sturgis, South Dakota.

The company is still proudly headquartered in Milwaukee.



Two American factories — one on Wisconsin and one in Pennsylvania — produce the legendary V-twin engine ... and the all-American motorcycles that have made the company's reputation.

CEO Matt Levatich, consequently, has the toughest job in the business.

Harley hit a rough patch during the financial crisis and refocused the company on the core brand. The Buell sport-bike brand was dropped, and Harley shed the Italian MV Agusta nameplate.

But he's pushing Harley into the future. The all-electric LiveWire is scheduled to arrive in 2019.

The comeback worked, but Harley has new problems: declining ridership in the US and an aging customer base. And then there's President Donald Trump, who's messing with business by threatening trade wars and complaining about Harley shifting production outside the US.

And Harley has been developing smaller bikes to appeal to younger riders ...

... while maintaining its cruiser game to compete with a resurgent Indian, one of Harley's historic rivals.

Harley-Davidson bikes are lined up at a bike fair in Hamburg.

Ultimately, the company's success could depend on getting a new generation of riders into the saddle and convincing them to "live to ride and ride to live."

Regardless of what happens, Harley will remain Harley. It isn't yet time for the sun to set on the greatest motorcycle brand in history.

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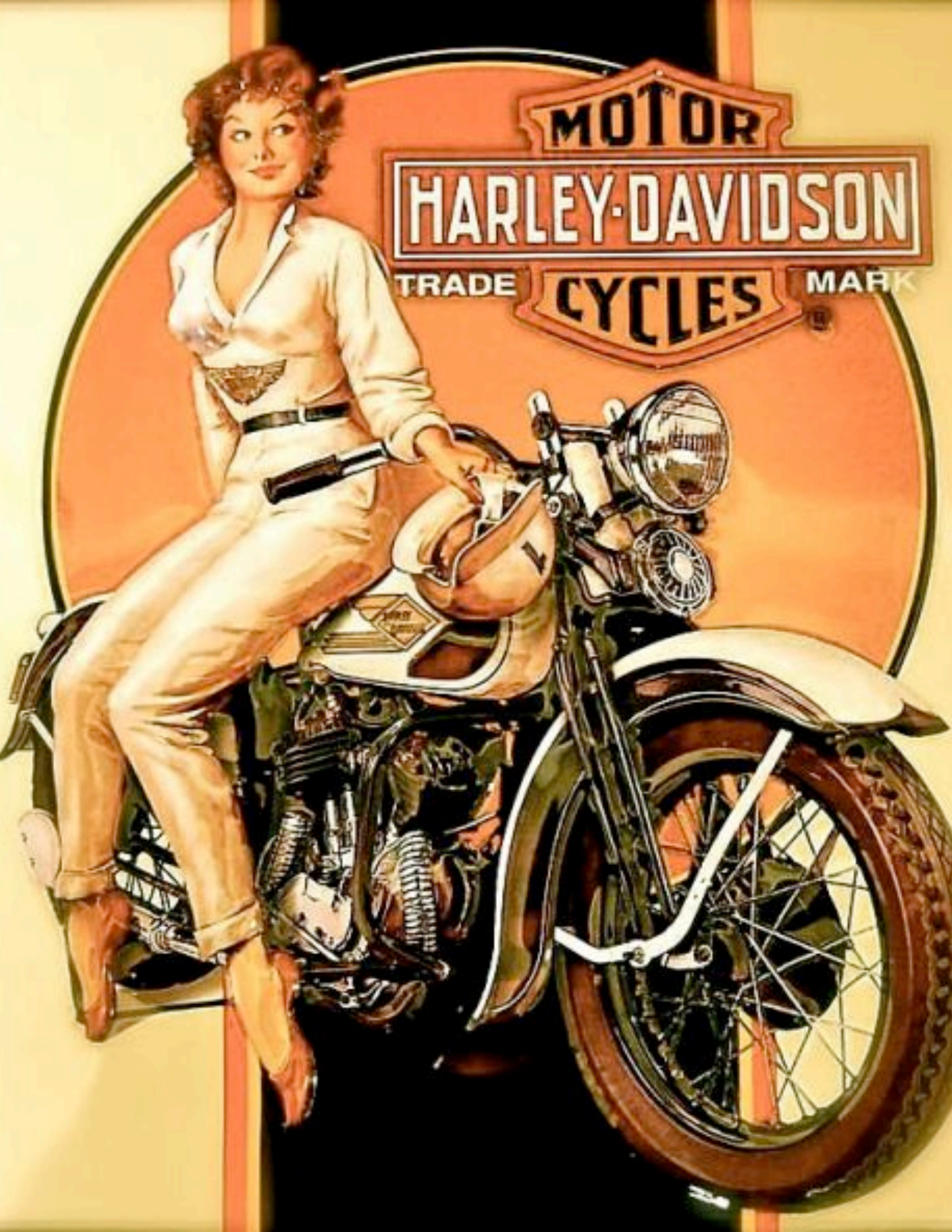
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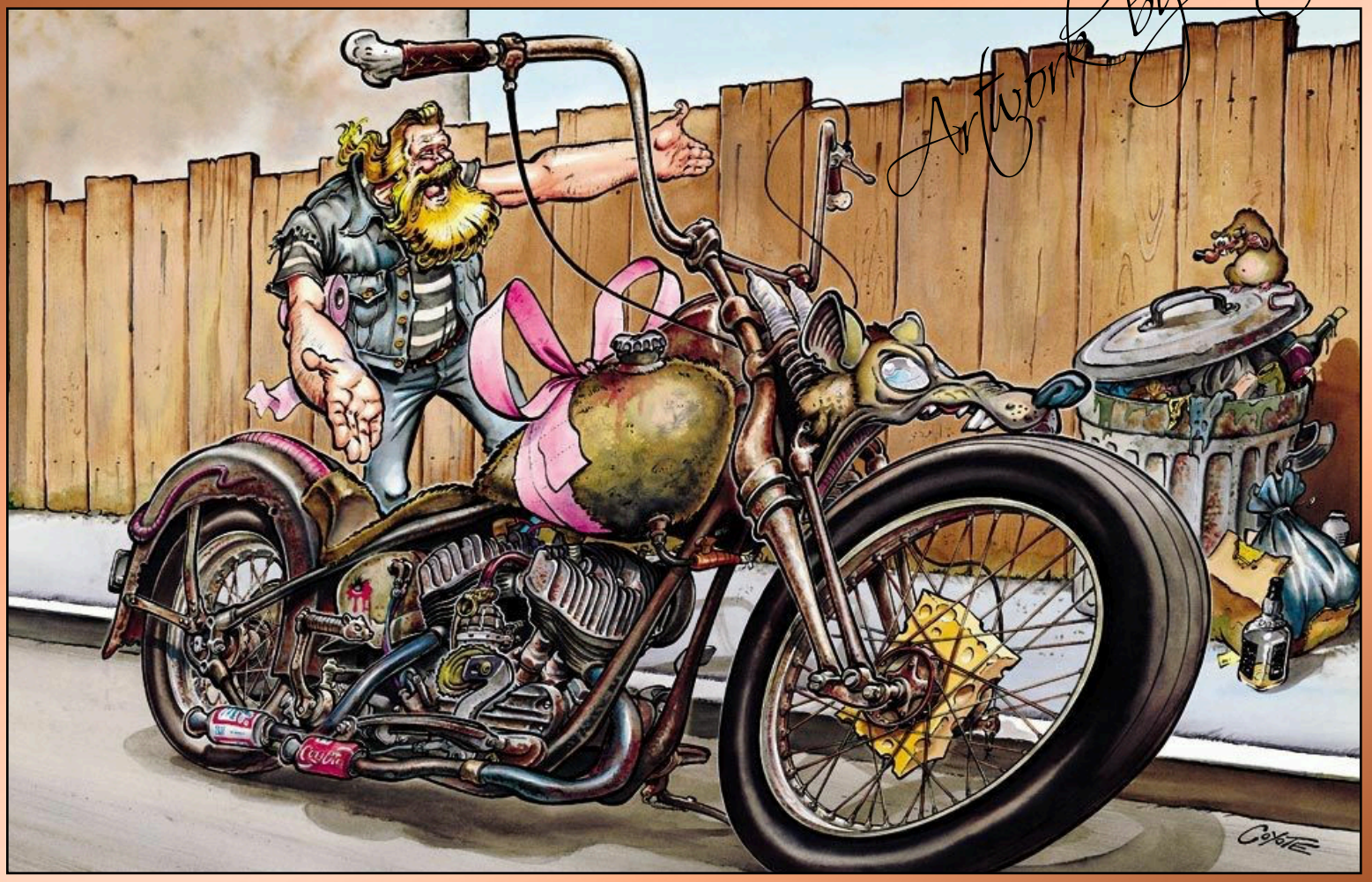
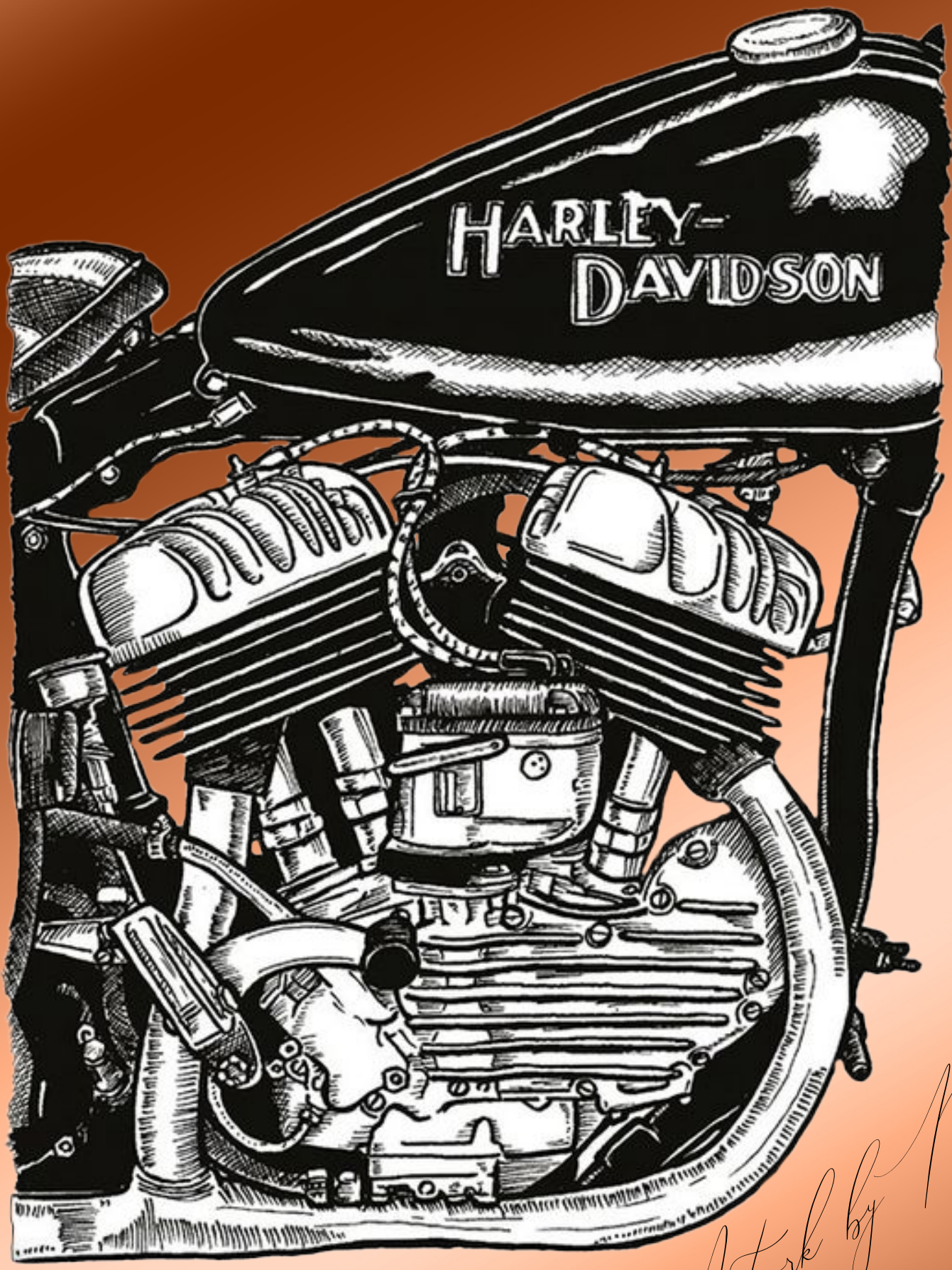

Artwork by Coyote
COYOTE



Artwork by Nisse

The Gazette from the Past

1929 SOURCE: MOTORCYCLETIMELINE.COM 1929

You are surely not old enough to remember that in 1928 a hero named Jeff Munro lapped Australia on a 500cc Ariel which was literally a near-death experience.

A year later and two more Aussies decided to do a lap on a combo.

Once again I'm obliged to Peter Whitaker of Old Bike Australasia for this yarn:
"Jack Bowers' motorcycling days began out of sheer necessity, his trusty (read:leaky) BSA delivering him to work before dawn and back well after dark each day.

With 1928's depression starting to bite like a Pit Bull in a Butcher's, Jack and close mate Frank Smith did the sensible thing of jacking it all in and going for a record 'lap' around Australia.

For transport they chose a Harley Davidson to which was attached a coffin-like hardwood box, the bottom of which was extended to accommodate an eight-gallon petrol tank from a Model T Ford. We're guessing they didn't have a mate brave enough to ask 'Why?'.

The sidecar seat was a circular inflatable cushion, spare tyres were strapped on either end and a pair of two-gallon galvanised-iron water tanks finished the oddity off nicely.

Catering was by means of a 12-gauge, a repeating Winchester rifle and a steady hand... it was Independence Day [26 January] when Jack and Frank headed north from Sydney with a grand total of 60 quid in their money belt.

The hardships they encountered are legendary. Through 'blackpella' country—where skirmishes and spearings were still common—to the far north, at the time so unexplored that the pair were commissioned to map a route from Katherine to Darwin.

Food was never an issue with bush turkeys an easy-to-whack favourite.

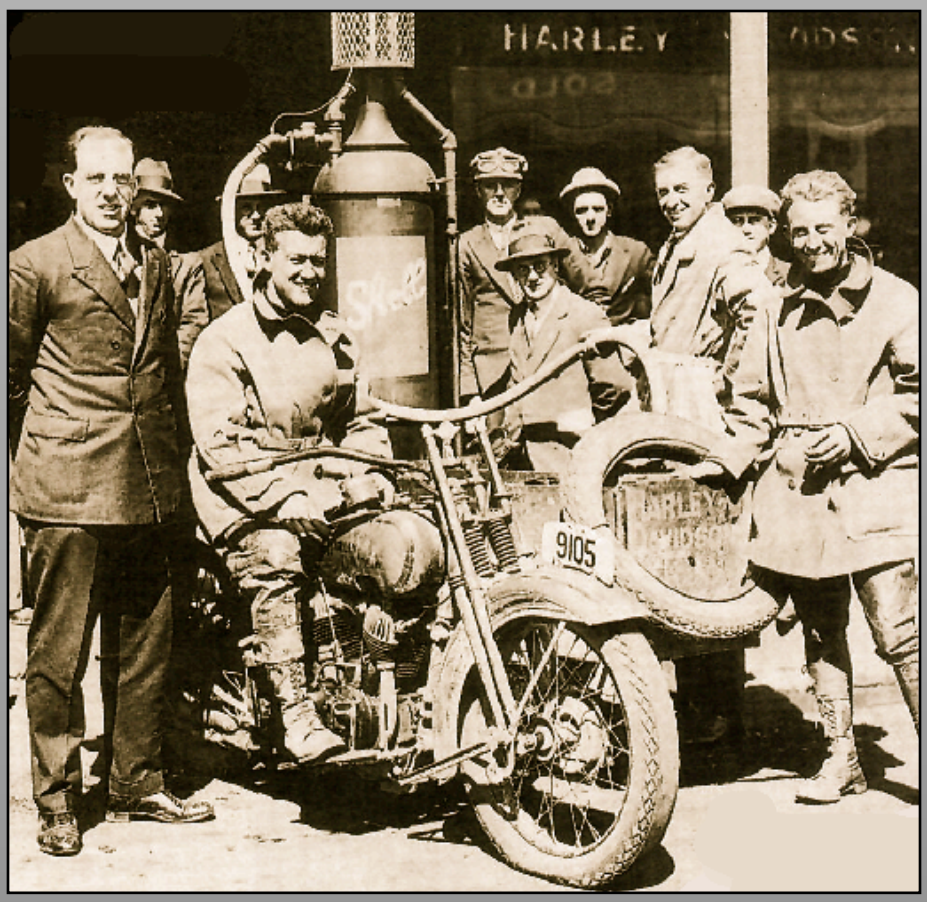
The exorbitant cost of petrol was an academic problem, matched only by actually finding the stuff.

The search was harder for water, but the intrepid duo could travel like kings as long as the sun rose every day, the petrol held out, they didn't die of thirst, they didn't run across a Kalkadoon War Party and, most of all, they remained mates.

Jack Bowers and Frank Smith returned to Sydney in triumph. With the final stamping of their Auto Cycle Union of Australia card at the GPO on September 21 they were not only recognised as the first to fully circumnavigate including the return trip to Darwin) the continent on a motorcycle and sidecar, but set a new record for any motorised vehicle by more than a month.

And in Jack's final words, 'We also dispelled all doubts about man not being able to live with man for long periods of isolation. We really felt as though we had achieved something.'"

Jack Bowers and his mate Frank Smith tooled up and rode a Harley outfit round Australia in record time



The Gazette from the Past

1929 SOURCE: MOTORCYCLETIMELINE.COM 1929

FEW ITEMS IN THE MOTOR CYCLIST'S equipment are more important than the tool kit. It is essential that the owner of a motor cycle should have enough tools of the right quality to enable him to make any adjustments which may be found necessary from time to time. In the past, the motor cycle makers have got into disrepute owing to the inadequate tool kit they supplied with their machines, but, at the present time, there is a decided tendency among manufacturers seriously to consider this question, and very few, if any, additions will be required to complete the tool kits on future machines...

Hundreds of machines are changing hands just now, and quite a large number of them have been bought and sold many times, it is probably true that fully 50% of present-day motor cyclists will require to purchase new tools, because it is not uncommon for a rider to retain the best of his kit on selling his machine.

For these reasons, the three tool kits illustrated here will be of interest."

From left to right:

"**Maude's Motor Mart**—The C spanner is by Abingdon-Ecco,the cycle spanner is a genuine BSA, and the adjustable wrench a Lucas. The pliers, screwdriver, file, and the other two spanners, also appear to be of first-class quality; there are plans for 3/16, 1/4, 5/16, 3/8 and 9/32in box spanners with a screwdriver tommy-bar.

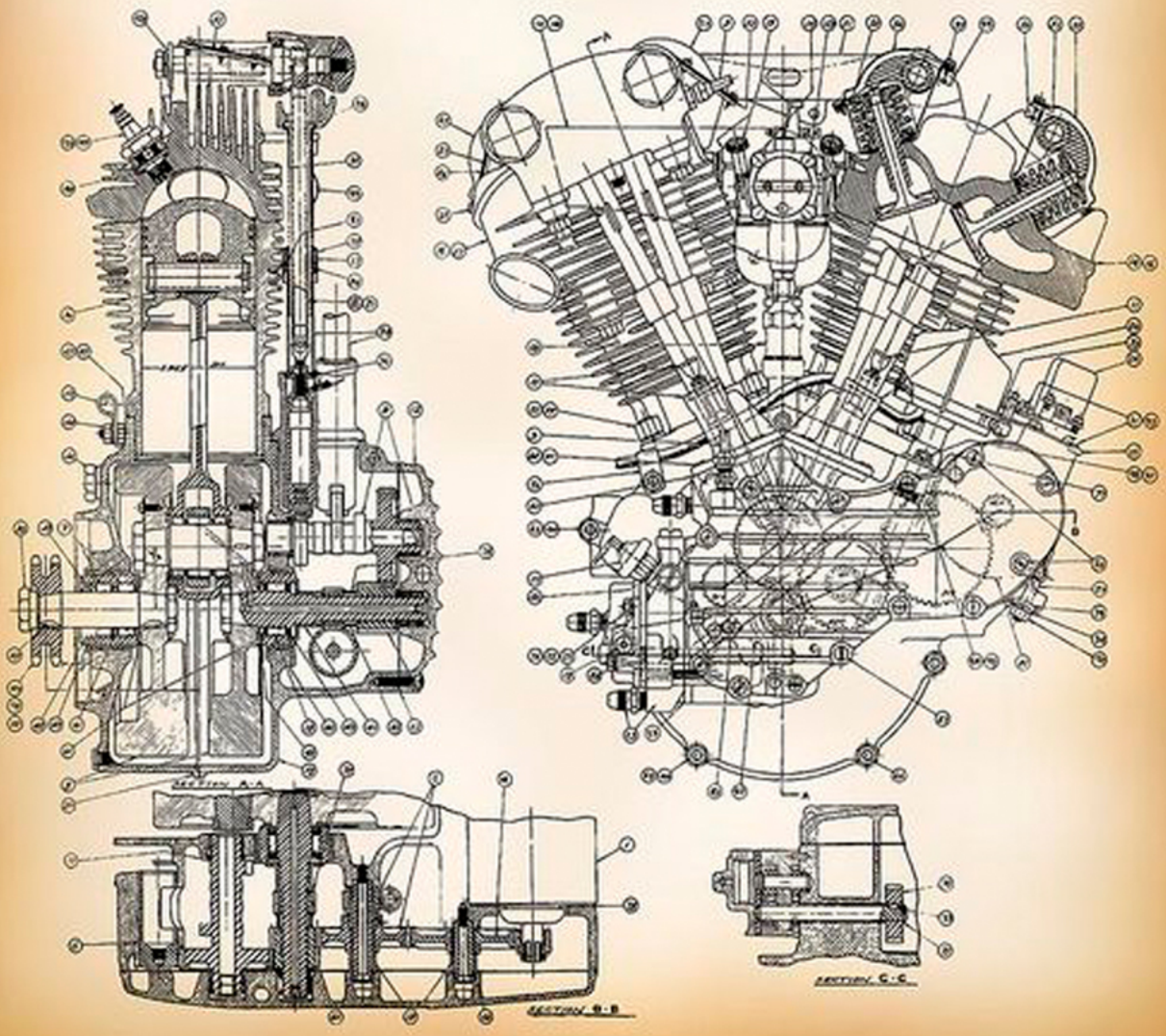
Messrs Jenks Bros—The kit includes two tyre levers, an excellent pair of combination pliers, a screwdriver, three box spanners, a punch, and an ordinary large adjustable spanner, while in the pocket provided there is an oilcan, etc.

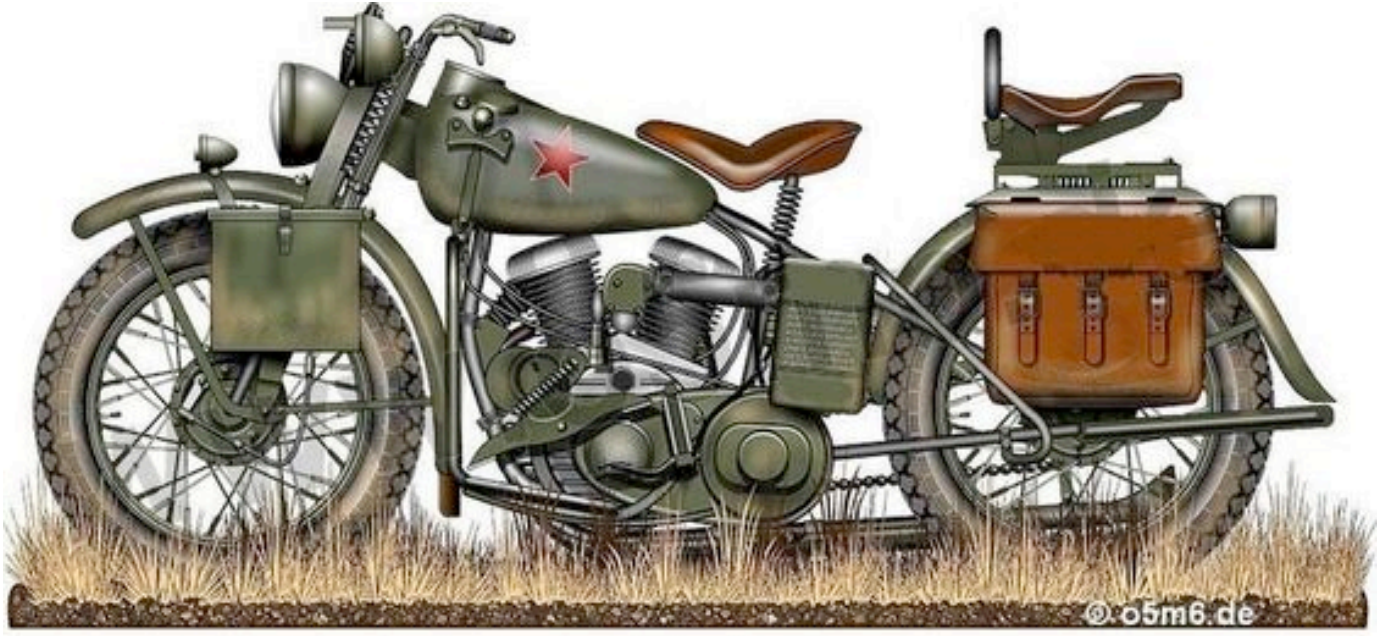
Tuck and Blakemore—Includes two adjustable spanners, pliers, reversible screwdriver, box spanners, file, punch, tyre levers, oilcan, and belt punch."

1929-Members of the London Ladies MCC, pictured at Elstree

Harley-Davidson

KNUCKLEHEAD 61 C.I.

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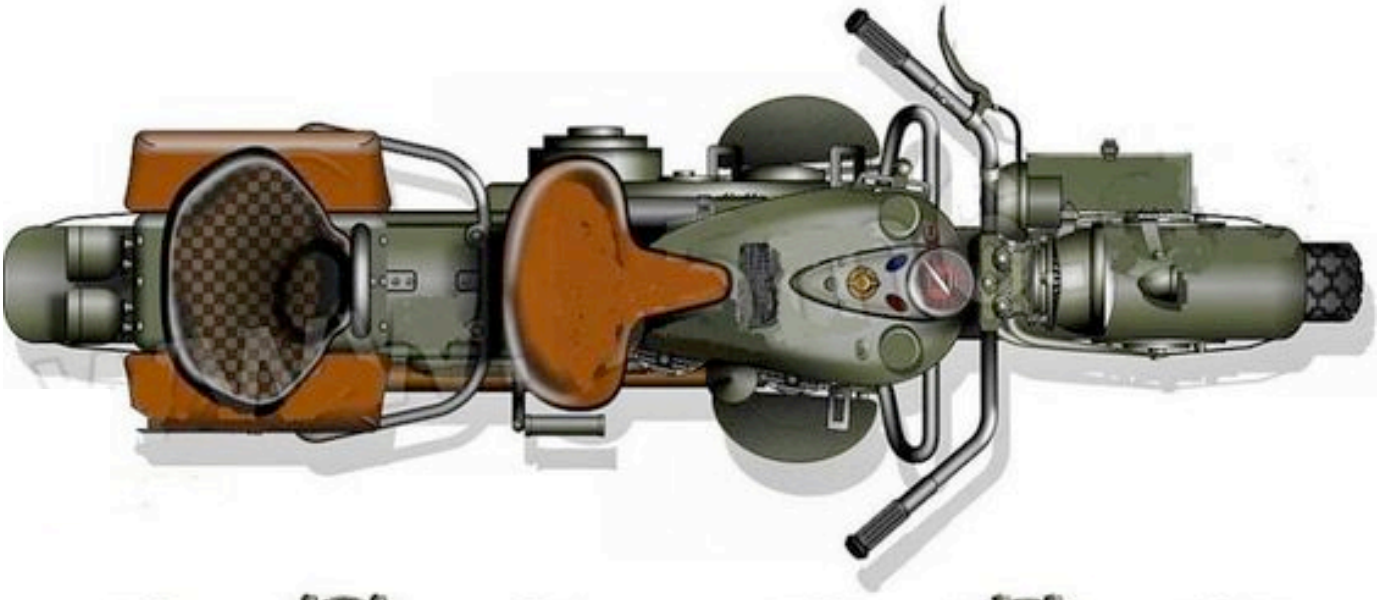

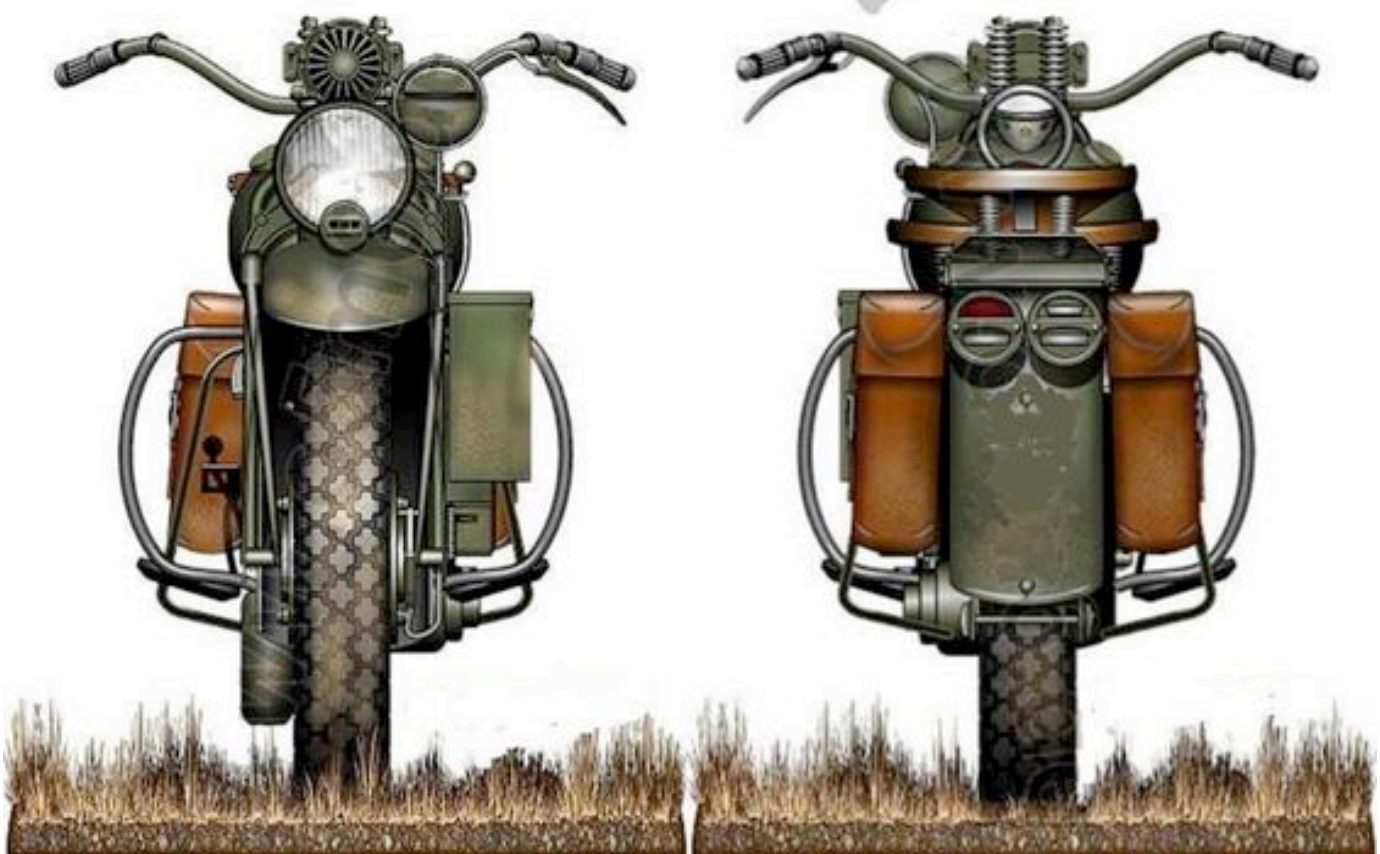

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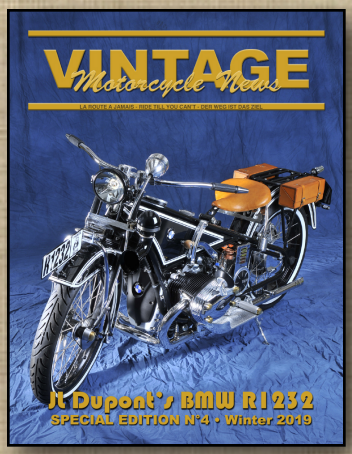

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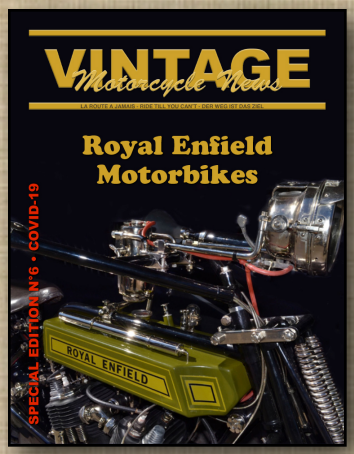

ROYAL ENFIELD

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RADIAL ENGINES

NER-A-CAR

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AJS

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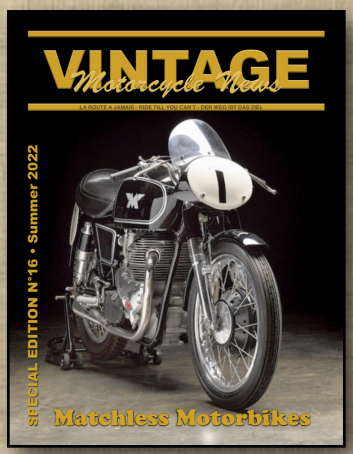
DOUGLAS



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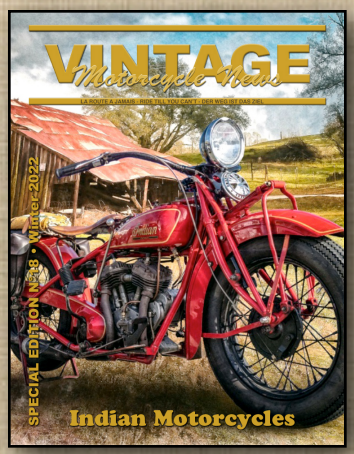
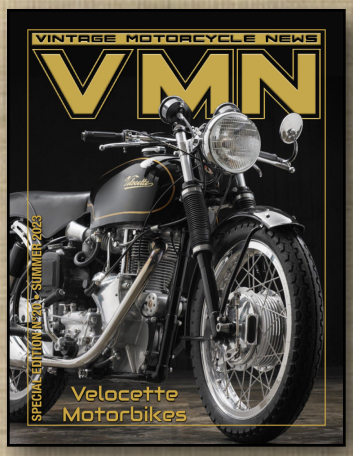


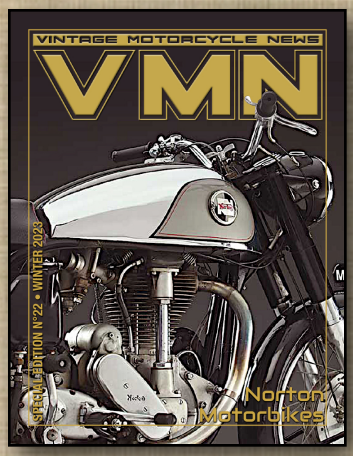
INDIAN

MOTO GUZZI

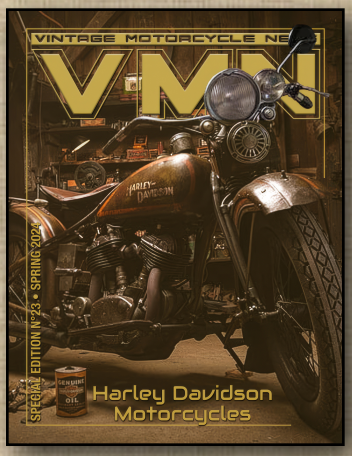


VELOCETTE

BMW ISETTA



NORTON



HARLEY-DAVIDSON

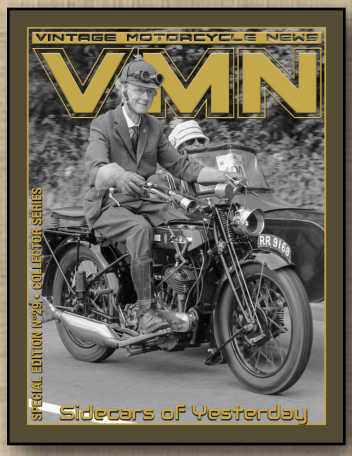
PANTHER

MOTORCYCLE MUSEUMS

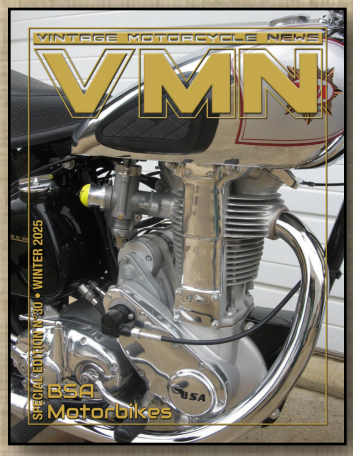
SUNBEAM

NIMBUS

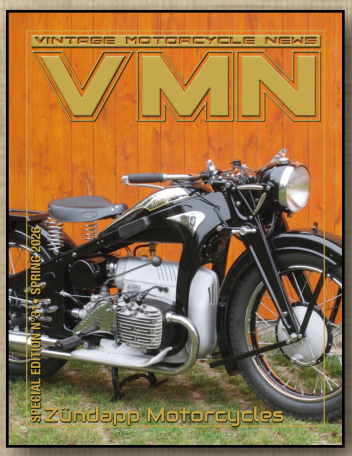
DUCATI



OLD SIDECARS



BSA



ZÜNDAPP

RUDGE

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