

San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

The Herald

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July 2011

(Continued on page 5)

"Mad" Max Bubeck: 1917 - 2011



Editor's Note: Our featured piece appeared in the May 2005 issue of "AMERICAN IRON".

Max Bubeck: Still an Indian Man

Joe Michaud

Max Bubeck, a pioneer of Southern California motorcycling, has ridden Indian Motocycles for 71 years and he'll quickly tell you that he is "in seven Motorcycle Halls of Fame" because of it. He bought his first machine, a 1930 Indian 101 Scout, in Los Angeles in 1933 when he was 15 years old. "I never looked back," he says. In 1935, Bubeck began riding with "the local hounds," as he calls them, and was soon accompanying them to the California dry lakes of Muroc and Rosamond where timed top speeds events were being held. In 1936, he rode 107 mph on a specially prepped Indian Chief...quite an accomplishment when Indians were using a side-valve motor technology. Bubeck discovered off-road riding and, in 1937, entered the

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Monthly Meetings

Are held at:

Giovanni's Restaurant

9353 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego (the corner of Clairemont Mesa Blvd and Ruffin Rd.)

On

The Second Monday of Each Month At 7:00 p.m.

Arrive early and join us for dinner!

Herald Policies & Editorial Statement

The Herald Newsletter promises to provide an interesting forum for all antique, vintage, and classic motorcycle related information and will attempt to do so in a timely manner. The Herald is currently published on a quarterly basis. Any member can contribute, and are encouraged.

As your volunteer editorial staff, we need other members to help by providing items from time to time. We have a large club membership base with a varied interest in all aspects of motorcycling and, as such, we all have stories to tell.

We hope to hear from the garages, sheds, and shops of the membership. This publication will remain viable only with the help and consideration of all. Email your editor directly, or any board member. We look forward to publishing your stories!

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SDAMC Charter

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation of antique motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal and educational activities among its members and the public, with membership open to all persons having an interest in antique motorcycles.

Editorial Disclaimer

The ideas and thoughts expressed in this newsletter reflect only the views of its editors and contributors. If you have any suggestions to improve the appearance, content or any other part the Herald, please let us know. One of the benefits of our club is our collective experience, our passion of motorcycles and our individual ideas. Share it with the club: then we all learn.

Please send your contributions to any of the editors listed above.

Events

JULY 3, 2011 SUNDAY ALPINE PARADE

JULY 23, 2011 SATURDAY GARAGE CRAWL. (MEMBERS ONLY)

AUGUST 7, 2011 SUNDAY NATIONAL CITY HERITAGE DAY

AUGUST 8, 2011 MONDAY POT LUCK NIGHT

AUGUST 27, 2011 SATURDAY CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE RIDE

SEPTEMBER 24, 2011 SATURDAY FIELD TRIALS DAY

OCTOBER 15, 2011 SATURDAY OCTOBER FEST RIDE

NOVEMBER 7, 2011 SUNDAY Hanson Dam (Non Club Event)

NOVEMBER 24,2011 THURSDAY THANKSGIVING DAY RIDE

DECEMBER 4, 2011 SATURDAY CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 2011, TBD PACIFIC BEACH PARADE

DECEMBER 10, 2011 SATURDAY YEAR END RIDE

From the Prez.

And here we are at the half way point in this year 2011. Even from my armchair this year has raced on by with a record breaking pace, so it feels anyway. We have had many good events and rides, Idyllwild, Borrego Springs and the most recent, the T-Shirt Event.

As we enter the hottest time of the year the club is looking forward to more popular events such as the Garage Crawl which is usually a member's only event, however this year the crawl will be at several commercial businesses so invite a non-member to join in on the fun. Also in July is the Alpine 4th of July Parade so dust off the old machines and show them off in the parade.

The National City Heritage Parade and motorcycle show has become another popular event in August; this event gives our club an opportunity to show what this club is all about. Also coming up in August is our Pot Luck meeting which has always been a popular event, and one of our evening events so bring a jacket. If you're reading this and you can't always make the general meetings, (second Monday of every month) please go to our web site, www.sdamc.net and check out our upcoming events, there is something for everyone.

As always ride safe and I'll see you all soon, Virgil

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Max Bubeck: Still an Indian Man! (cont)

first of many enduros. Enduros are timed events in which checkpoints must be reached on a precisely predetermined schedule with penalties being assessed for arriving at those points early or late.

Bubeck favored the legendary Greenhorn Enduro that was named after the Greenhorn Mountain west of Kernville, CA; riders that were able to finish this grueling 400-mile, one-day off-road event were anything but greenhorns. He rode the Greenhorn 32 times in his 42 years of organized competition and was the man to beat in this event for many years.

In 1939, Bubeck traded his 1936 Four for a new Four from Los Angeles bike dealer Floyd Clymer. Max was developing his own theories about improving the stock four-cylinder motor. Before riding the new bike, he performed extensive modifications on it, utilizing Clymer's machine shop. He drilled the crankshaft for additional oil passages, lightened the flywheels, installed an oil cooler, and made other changes that improved the reliability of the stock machine.



Tł

Mad Max Bubeck on his famous & record setting Indian "Chout".

Bubeck's modifications are now considered common upgrades by modern collectors,

his theories having been proven over years of riding. His new '39 Four was also fast---108.43 mph in 1941 over measured time events. He continued to ride the dry lake speed trials as well. In 1940, Bubeck rode a "stroked" Indian Chief to a speed of 128.7 miles per hour.

World War II suspended all competition activity, but Bubeck resumed his record setting pace in 1947 when the Greenhorn Enduro was reinstated by the Pasadena Motorcycle Club as a two-day 500-mile event. Bubeck won it on the Indian Four that he still rides today.

In 1948, he installed a Chief engine into a lighter Scout frame. The Chief motor, built by the legendary Indian tuner "Pops" Shunk, included specially ground cams and twin Schebler alcohol carburetors. At Rosamond Dry Lake, Bubeck rode the much-modified "Chout," to 135.58 miles per hour, making it the fastest normally aspirated, non-streamlined Indian. This record stood for 54 years until March 2002 when it was broken by Peter Arundel at Lake Gardner in Australia with a run at 158.8 miles per hour on a purpose-built race bike. That motor, built by Lindsey Urquardt, was an Altoona flathead crankcase reworked with an eight-valve head. Bubeck says, "Peter used an

Max Bubeck: Still an Indian Man! (cont)

overhead valve motor, a 'special' built race engine. Hell, mine was done right.... A flat head motor." Bubeck may smile when he says this, but he is a racer and racers do not like being bested, even by close friends like Arundel.

His life is heavily interwoven with his '39 Four and he remembers the highlights in detail. He enjoys telling a favorite story of racing Indian legend Ed "Ironman" Kretz in October 1941, at a one-mile blacktop road in the Puente Ranch area east of Los Angeles. The hounds would gather there for "speed runs" using a new invention---timing lights.

As Bubeck arrived at the "Puente Strip," he saw three bikes beginning a timed run and he decided to catch them. The bike on the left was Kretz riding his factory-prepped Indian Sport Scout race bike and the other two were "hopped-up" Harleys. Bubeck accelerated in second gear and passed the two Harley machines at 75 miles per hour. He caught Kretz and got his front wheel even with Kretz's rear tire on the left.

Bubeck recounts, "Ed looked over his right shoulder and saw the two Harley machines dropping behind...he snapped into third and laid down on the tank. I did the same on my Four but his Scout started to pull away at about 90." Bubeck edged into the draft three feet behind Kretz and stayed there through the lights at 112 mph. The standard procedure after going through the timing lights at Puente was to sit straight up and stand on the brakes in preparation for the dangerous upcoming right-hand S-turn. "So Ed



Max Bubeck sitting on his 135.58mph hybrid Indian Chief/Scout that he rode at Rosamond Dry Lake on June 27th, 1948

did the usual and turned around to see how far ahead of the Harleys he was. I still laugh when I think of the look on his face when he saw me three feet behind him at one hundred miles per hour. His eyes bugged out and almost pushed his goggles off his face. As we slowed, he said, 'Where the hell did you come from?' I said, 'I was there all the time."

In 1986, Bubeck restored his beloved 1939 Indian Four, parked in 1953 after 120,000 miles, and began riding it to vintage motorcycle events where he is regularly treated like a star.

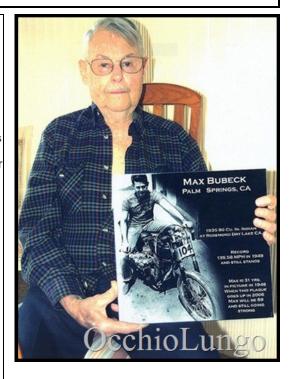
Bubeck's face shines brightly when he talks about his past. "Those were great days...I had the privilege of traveling with Ed Kretz, and sometimes Jimmy Kelly--another good Indian rider. We usually piled into the car late on Saturday and drove long, hard, and late through the night to make a Sunday race at some distance from LA. Many were the pranks and jokes. The world was our playground and we would never grow old. "Bubeck is eighty-eight years old and still rides old Indians. He says, "You don't stop riding because you get old, you get old because you stop riding."

Epilogue:

From the mydesert.com obituraries page:

Max Bubeck

6/28/1917 - 4/8/2011. Died peacefully at the age of 93 in Palm Springs. Born in Los Angeles. Survived by his wife, Suzi, his children Lon Bubeck and Laine Gates, their spouses, grandson Erik Bubeck, several step children and their families. Max will also be missed by many friends and fellow motorcycle enthusiasts. His passion was Indian motocycles; he held the unstreamlined Indian speed record from 1947 until 2002 and was inducted into numerous related Halls of Fame. He also water and snow skied with similar intensity and enjoyment. He co-founded Glendale Saw Works in 1946. Max's life is the subject of the book Bubeck - the Life of One of America's Motorcycling Legends. A memorial gathering is planned May 7th, in Long Beach. Contact Ionbubeck@verizon.net for details. To view and sign this guestbook, please visit: mydesert.com/obituaries.



Member Spotlight: Nina Pacelli

Half Fast Q and A--- getting to know SDAMC members...

By Marc Lemieux

Q. When did you first start riding motorcycles? A. About 1966 when I was around 13, I started on a Honda 55... not a step thru, it had a manual clutch!



Q. When did you know you were hooked?

A. I was hooked after that first day of riding my friend's uncles' Honda 55 around and around and around an old oak tree, for hours. Starting, stopping. Getting the feel of the clutch, begging the uncle to teach me the next step which finally came in the afternoon. We rode down the long driveway to San Vicente Rd (now where San Diego Estates is). No one on the road in 1966. It was there that I felt the wind in my hair, the accelerating feeling in my body, the joy!

I then proceeded to hound my parents for a motorcycle. My brother stepped up and bought the Suzuki 80 for me. I then

tended his bikes when he was in Vietnam. A Honda Superhawk, and a Triumph 650 Bonneville. The latter was the best ride. I got to ride that until I was seventeen or so. Rain or shine I rode most everyday illegally on the streets of Ramona until I got my permit the day I turned 151/2.

Q. What was your first bike?

A. It was a Suzuki trail 80

Q. Where did you grow up?
A.. Chula Vista, then up in Ramona where I went to High School.

Q. How long have you been in SDAMC?

A. I can't even remember... 2001?



Our very own Nina on her Honda, back in 1966

Member Spotlight (continued): Nina Pacelli

Q. What bikes do you own currently?

A. The 1975 BMW R75/5 (since 1997), a 1971 DT1 Yamaha 250 (not running when It was given to me in 2008, but all there)

Q. Crashes?

A. Way back when, on the Suzuki 80. I was on the back with my drunken friend at the controls, he ran us into a big rock and I got catapaulted into/through a barbed wire fence. Got a broken arm, toe, some scrapes. No helmet back then and I was wearing shorts and a T-shirt with moccasins on my feet, great safety gear!

Q. Close calls?

A. Just a couple of months ago right near home, I was coming up Fairmont from Mission Valley and a car turned left in front of me. I was going kind of fast (typical hooligan!) but I was able to brake and shift my line enough to miss the car, the good news is that the city just put in a divider to prevent left turns there.

Q. What is your favorite classic bike?

A.. Mine... DUH! It's reliable, it's comfortable, and it's pretty (what more could you want in a relationship).

Q. If you could only have one bike, what would it be?

A. My /5 of course! Like you had to ask.

Q. What is your favorite piece of gear and why?

A. I like my riding jackets; I have a Hein-Gericke in leather and a First Gear Kiliminjaro in textile. They are warm, comfortable and give a great feeling of security.

Q. Is there anything that you simply must have with you when you go for a ride?

A. I haven't really thought about it, but I try to envision a smooth and safe ride. (This question was a fishing trip for FIRST AID KIT... sheesh!)

A Spring Break Ride.

Virgil Foreman

It had been a long eight months at school with very little time off. I was either in class or working to support my college life style: rent, motorcycles, girls, food, and pretty much in that order (though sometimes rent was at the end of the priority list). All my buddies had gone home for spring break and I was left alone to my imagination, which some of you know cannot be a good thing. Well anyway, I had two weeks left before it was time to head back to the halls of academia and I needed a break.

It was Sunday night. I decided to pack the XS650 with my camping gear and head up the coast and see where two weeks of free time would lead me. I figured I would stop in Santa Cruz, my old home town and kick around there for a couple of days and after that, who knows.

I left San Diego early Monday morning with no cares, new tires, fresh tune-up and an extra quart of motor oil; not only did the XS look like a Triumph, it burned oil like one. I wanted to hug the coast as much as I could which meant traffic all the way past L.A. I got off of I-5 at Dana Point and continued North on 1 through Newport and Huntington Beach all the way up to Long Beach. By this time I needed to stop for gas and a rest, the traffic was brutal. Traveling through this part of greater L.A. sucks, way too many traffic lights and it was easy to get lost, which I did. I didn't get back on 1 until somewhere around Redondo Beach and it was more traffic all the way to Santa Monica before it thinned out. I made good time getting to Santa Maria before dark.

Since this trip was put together at the last minute I hadn't made any reservations (I didn't need no stinking reservations! I had a sleeping bag!). Well as it turns out, there was a national rodeo event in Santa Maria that week and ALL the great camping spots were filled. I decided to head back into town for dinner and figure this out on a full stomach. As I was riding up and down the main drag I saw a group of motorcycles parked out in front of a diner, so I stopped there. As it turned out I met a group who had a large camp site with room to spare and they invited me to join them, which I did happily. That night we all stood around a roaring camp fire telling motorcycle stores while passing a bottle (s) of wine and some smokables until late into the night.

At the crack of dawn I was on my bike, back on 1 and heading north with Santa Cruz as my next location to stop. Once I got to Pismo Beach the coast appeared on my right side and I knew this was going to be a great trip. I continued through San Luis Obispo on 101 until I picked up 1 at Cabrillo Highway just outside of SLO. It wasn't long before I got to Morro Bay, Cayucos, and then Cambria, where I stopped for breakfast for me and the XS.

If you have never been to this part of the California coast you must make this a trip in your future! It is one fantastic panoramic view after another. I continued up 1 to Big Sur, Notleys Landing, to the Sea Otter Game Refuge. This was a great place to stop and stretch the legs, the XS also vibrated like a Triumph. From there I headed towards Carmel and Monterey. My mother was born and raised in Monterey so as a kid we spent a lot of time at the beaches around here.



THE CORNER MARQUEE

The 1938 BSA EmpireStar



The Birmingham Small Arms Company was a major industrial combine, a group of businesses manufacturing military and sporting firearms (1861); bicycles (1880); cars (1907); buses (1910) and of course motorcycles from 1919 to 1977. At its peak, BSA was the largest motorcycles producer in the world. Loss of sales and poor investments in new products in the motorcycles division, which included Triumph Motorcycles, led to problems for the whole group.

In November of 1919 BSA launched their first 50 degree V-Twin, Model E, 770cc side valve (6-7hp) motorcycle for the 1920 season. The machine had interchangeable valves, total loss oil system with mechanical pump and an emergency hand one. Retail price was 130 pounds. Other features were Amac carburetor, chain drive, choice of magneto or Magdyno, 7-plate clutch 3 speed gear box with kick starter and new type of cantilever fork.

The BSA of interest for this article is the 1938 Empire Star, a 500cc, overhead valve 1 cylinder machine. Responsible for the 1937 range of BSA machines was brilliant engineer Val Page.

He reshaped the complicated system of machine types that had become confusingly diverse over the years. The 150 cc machines was dropped and all 250cc and 350cc models were catalogued in the group "B" group, while all the other singles from 350 to 600cc came into the "M" group.

Page replaced the forged backbone frame system with a fully brazed-up frame with one top tube. The crankcase sump was discontinued, the magdyno became rearward

-mounted again and the valve gear enclosure was improved in such a way that for the first time there was a complete coverage for the whole of the overhead gear.

The cylinders were air-hardened to reduce wear. Top of the range was the 496cc "Empire Star" model that had bore/stroke dimensions of 82x94mm. This model had been developed for the 1936 range and was designed by David Munro. Val Page introduced a number of refinements, such as a stiffened-up crankcase with two main bearings on the drive side. Each engine was specially tuned and the Empire Star soon got an excellent reputation; The BSA catalogue copy writer started the 1938 model description like this: "The famous BSA 500 Empire Star "The masterpiece of the industry"-combining brilliant acceleration, extreme flexibility, and magnificent road handling with perfect steering.

Its reliability and performance were proved by the honors gained in the 1937 International Six Days- with five Gold medals without losing a mark.

Editor's Note: Also, check out Joe Michaud's article on the 1938 BSA Gold Star at: http://www.vintagenet.us/sdamc/worsch.html

A Spring Break Ride! (cont)

From here it I was just a few hours from my old backyard, Santa Cruz. I stayed on 1 until the Emeline Ave. exit, and once again I was back in my old hood.

It had been 11 years since I was last here, and as you might have guessed it had changed a lot. The house I grew up in was still there and the yard I spent many hours playing was still the same. The brick school building I attended was gone and now it was a park. I even stopped by some of my friends' homes only to find out that they had all moved away, as I had.

After a good night's sleep at a Motel Six I was on my way again, up 1 through Davenport, Pescadores State Beach, Half Moon Bay, all the way to Presidio State Park in San Francisco. After an early lunch and a few hours maneuvering a motorcycle through down town San Francisco, I got back on the Redwood Highway, crossed over the Golden Gate Bridge and headed towards the Shoreline Hwy which would put me back on the coast route 1. I remember Shoreline Hwy as a kid; it was a very busy route to the coast, always crowed with



cars packed with beach goers. The motorcycle gods were with me this day. I almost had the entire road to myself all the way to Muir Beach. I continued up 1 past Bolinas Lagoon to Tomales Bay where 1 heads inland. This was a good place to re-fuel and rest up. At this point I had no idea where I was going to go next. Aah life was good back then. I continued up 1 towards Valley Ford Cutoff. This would lead me back to the coast and into Bodega Bay; yes, the same Bodega Bay where the Hitchcock movie The Birds was filmed.

The urge to move on was still strong so I motored my way out of town all the way hugging the coast as much as I could. I made

my way up to Arena Rock Marine Preserve. There are so many post card views along this road you could stop every 500 feet with a new view! I got as far as Stronetta where I decided that I had had as much of the coast as I wanted and it was time to head east. The XS was running strong and not having any concerns with the bike made the ride that much more enjoyable.

In Stronetta I stopped at the only gas station to look at my map and talk to the locals about a road, Rte.20 Mountain View Road, which was on my map. I could not tell whether or not it was paved. The attendant told me that the first few miles were paved but after that he didn't know. That worked for me. I was on my way across the state on an unknown road. As it turned out there were sections that were only dirt, thankfully well-maintained.

Mountain View Road lived up to its name. The first few miles there were a few scattered ranches and after that there wasn't a soul until I got to Route 128 and Booneville, a third of the way across the state. Good thing the XS ran well. This was way before cell phones, and if I had broken down I might still be out there somewhere. At Booneville I picked up Rte. 253

to 101 and then north back to Rte. 20 which I was determined would lead me to Lake Tahoe.

Once on Rte. 20 I took a southern route down to Clear Lake, riding through little towns like Lucerne, Pepperwood Grove and Clearlake Oaks. Leaving Clear Lake behind me and riding east through low valleys and high ridges, (twisties, to you and me), I came to a lonely freeway over pass. This bridge just appeared out of nowhere and below it was Interstate 5. Rte. 20 continued over I-5 to a little town called Colusa. After the usual pit stops I found a park that I thought would be a nice place to bed down for the night. I came across a few hippies enjoying the local herbage so I had to stop and introduce myself, you how it is.....As it turned out it was a fortuitous meeting. The longhairs told me that the local law enforcement would not allow overnight camping in the park. It was getting dark so I pressed on until I came across a motor lodge just outside of town. I was asleep before my head hit the pillow.

The next morning I stayed on Rte. 20 through Yuba City, Penn Valley, Grass Valley, and up to Camp Spaulding where Rte. 20 skirts alongside State Route 80. Rte. 20 took me over Donner Pass and into Truckee, some of the most spectacular scenery ever. Just outside of Truckee I took Rte. 267 down to Kings Beach on the North shore of Lake Tahoe. I slowly rode my way down to the South Lake area to a Park called Emerald Bay. I set up camp with a few other riders and began to kick tires and swap motorcycle stories.

The next day I and a couple of my new friends went for a ride around the lake and through South Lake where we picked up Rte. 50 and crossed over at Stateline into Nevada. First stop was at Zephyr Cove for breakfast and gas. I remember this because I paid over \$4.00 a gallon and this was 1974! We continued on until we got to Rte. 28 which took us closer to the lake, spectacular views. We worked our way back around to the North Shore and back



down to the camp site. By this time it was getting late, already early evening and I didn't want to spend another night in Tahoe so I packed up and headed south. I picked up Rte. 89 a few miles out of Tahoe and headed southeast toward the desert and Interstate 395 thinking I might be able to get to Bridgeport for the night. I under calculated the distance and my stamina. Nearly 10 p.m. and I was still on the bike and so tired I was hallucinating. Thank goodness it was a full moon or I would have been driving in total darkness. Another thing the XS had in common with the Triumph: poor lights. Out of nowhere a motor lodge came into view

just in the nick of time. To this day, I have no idea where I was.

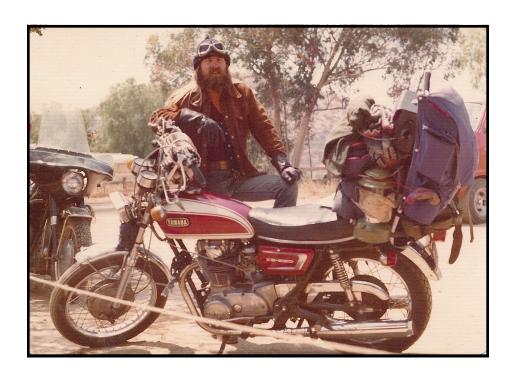
I was up and gone before dawn. I figured I could push the envelope and make it back to San Diego before 0'dark thirty. Mono Lake appeared on my left and soon became a distant blur in my vibrating mirrors. Up and over Lee Vining pass, past June Lake and into Mammoth for breakfast. The one thing I do remember about Mammoth was that for August it was cold and windy. Back in those days there wasn't a big after market for motorcycle apparel like there is today. My out-fit was a heavy sweater from the surplus store, a denim jacket and Levis; I did have leather boots and gloves however. On my head I wore a wool Navy watch cap; yep, it was pre-helmet days.

I was soon astride my bike (well actually the bike belonged to my friend Chris. I did have his permission to use it though). Bishop came into view next, a quick stop for coffee and fuel and I was on my way. Over the years to come I would ride this stretch of 395 many more times, the biggest changes I have noticed was to the road itself, new black top, otherwise the geography hasn't changed much. Pretty soon Big Pine came into view; I remembered to slow down as I went through, because it's a big speed trap, the same for Independence and Lone Pine. The little town of Brady soon appeared a gas station and a hotel and where 395 and Hwy 14 split, I stayed on 395. This stretch of road is a long and boring ride to Johannesburg, all the way to Kramer's Corner's. Back then Kramer's Corner was a four way stop, if you got stuck behind a lot of traffic it could take a while to get through. Now it was a straight ride to Adelanto where 395 becomes Interstate 15.

Once I got through Cajon Pass, I never liked that section of I-15, the ride back to civilization took about 4 hours or so. I pulled into my driveway just about dark, with enough day light to unpack the bike, shower and have a cold beer with my friends, who at this point were wondering where I had disappeared to.

The XS-650 handled the trip without any flaws even though I compared it to its Limey counterpart more than once. As I mentioned before, this bike was on loan to me and about six months later the owner, my friend Chris, sold it to someone else, and roughly a year after that I bought the bike where it remained in my stable for many years.

Virgil.



The Classic Bike Ride! 15 May 2011













The Classic Bike Ride! 15 May 2011









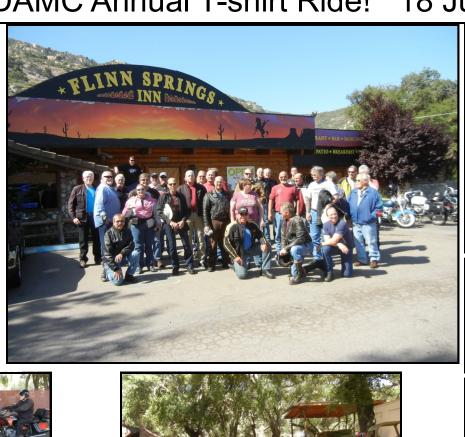








The SDAMC Annual T-shirt Ride! 18 June 2011















The SDAMC Annual T-shirt Ride! 18 June 2011

















NAME:

San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

Membership Application

Purpose of Club

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation of antique motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal and educational activities among its members and the public, with membership open to all persons having an interest in antique motorcycles.

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