

Classic Bike Guide

by Tim Britton

July 2007

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**THE HERE AND NOW
OF OLD BIKES**

CLASSIC

BIKE • GUIDE

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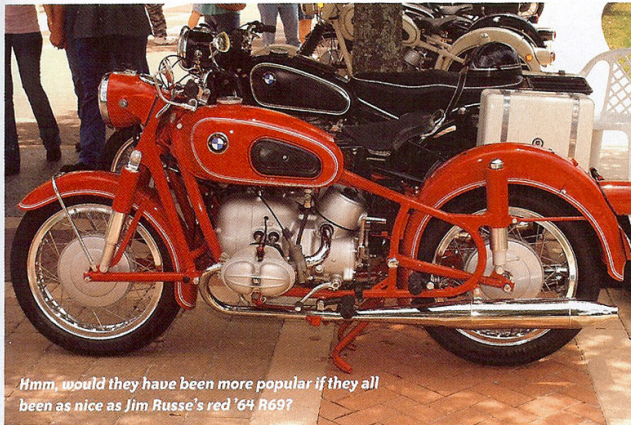
No 195 July 2007 £3.50



WE WERE THERE

Riding into History, Knebworth CBG show

RIDING INTO HISTORY



Hmm, would they have been more popular if they all been as nice as Jim Russe's red '64 R69?



If you're going for a pair of pre-war Triumphs then this is as nice a pair as you could get. Boyd Uzzell restored these two to a very high standard indeed.

Riding into history

Imagine going to a major golf centre in the UK – let's say St Andrews, for no other reason than, as a non-golfer, it's the only one I've heard of – with the proposal that for one day they turn the area over to the organiser of a motorcycle concours event. Do you think it would happen? asks **Tim Britton**.

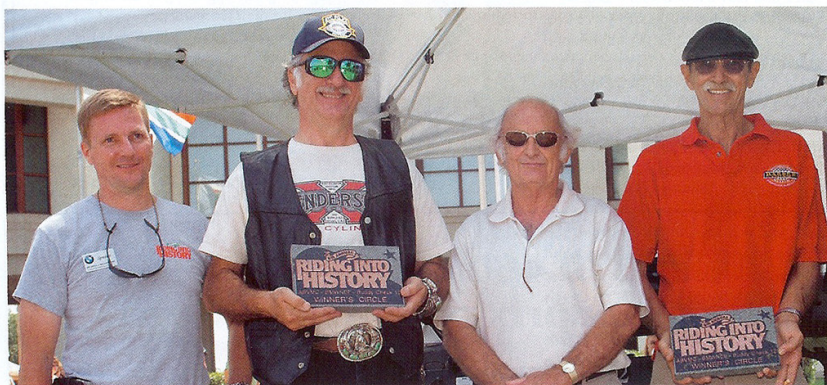
But this is effectively what the Riding into History team did in Florida at the World Golf Village near St Augustine. And what an event it is too, with concours competitions for all manner of classes as the American enthusiast isn't quite as compartmentalised as enthusiasts in Europe. So you'll see things like an early 1900s Yale rubbing handlebars with a line-up of restored Honda Dreams, racers and roadsters next to choppers and cruisers, which is how it should be really as they're all motorcycles of one form or another.

Naturally, I didn't just go out there on spec or come across this spectacular event by chance, no I'd been the

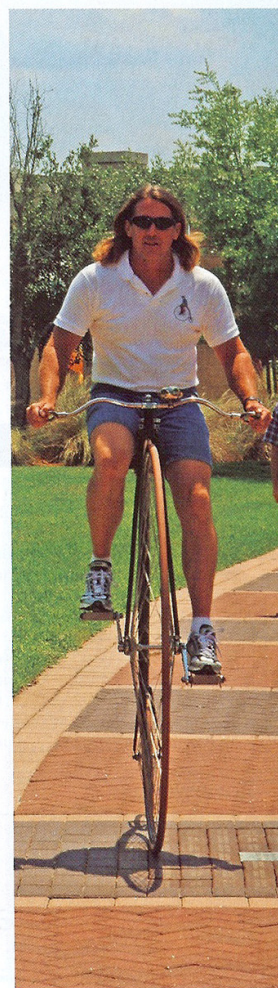
target of a team of guys who'd been involved in restoring some of the Daytona-winning BSAs from that historic 1954 race when the Birmingham company dominated the top ten.

A major force in the restoration team is internationally renowned artist Don Bradley. Don has been involved with the event for a long time, it's his stunning artwork that publicises the annual event, and he wasn't going to rest until I agreed to go. The promise of a selection of British bikes to ride helped a bit too...

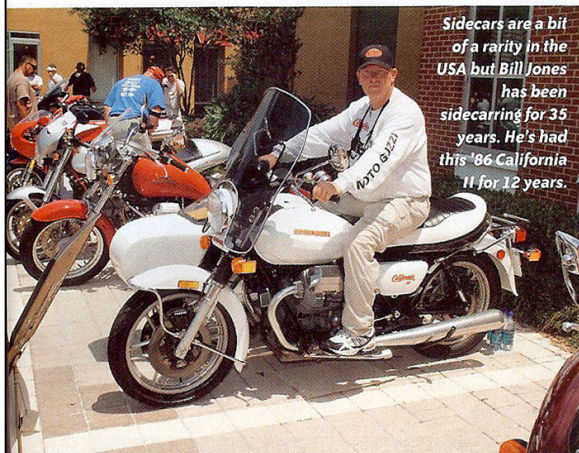
**Words Tim Britton
Pics Al Singer/Tim Britton**



From the left, Bill Peterson, Marty Megrejian, Kel Carruthers, Don Bradley



It wasn't all motorcycles though...



Sidecars are a bit of a rarity in the USA but Bill Jones has been sidecaring for 35 years. He's had this '86 California 11 for 12 years.

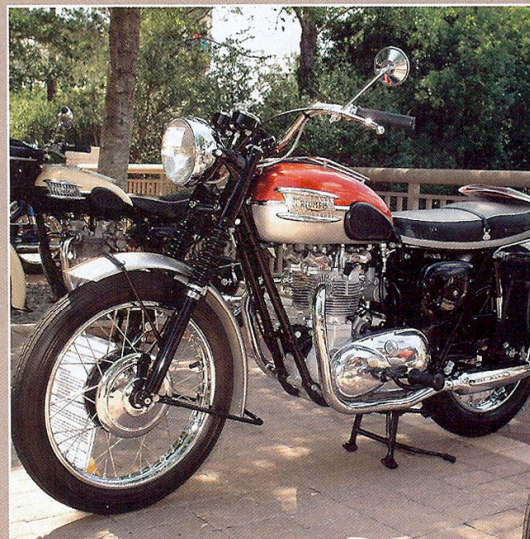


"The parts supply was difficult," says John Walsh about the restoration of his '62 Falcon, '63 250 Scrambler, '64 125 Bronco and a '65 MkII.

End of the line

Nice looking TR6 isn't it? Well restored and not a drop of oil to be seen. Bet you're thinking "well, there's likely none in it..." That's where you'd be wrong, the owner, Mick Barton, believes his motorcycles ought to be ridden as that's where the true value of a motorcycle lies. So, the bike is fully functional and ready to go.

This particular 1962 model of Mick's is one of the last six off the production line and therefore must be the ultimate development of the pre-unit TR6. You'll note that it isn't exactly to brochure specification as it wears a few period accessories that came from the TriCor catalogue. Now TriCor as all good Triumph enthusiasts will know was the official factory importer to the eastern USA and had a catalogue of officially sanctioned goodies like the leather panniers, grab rail, gear lever and rockerbox caps.



Left: The USA models wouldn't normally have this four gallon petrol tank.

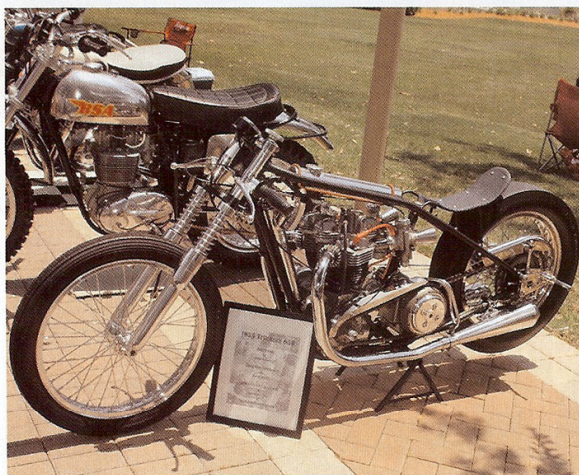
Top right: It's hard enough finding the correct standard kit for a restoration, try seeking out period accessories.

Above: Here the optional rev counter kit is clear as are the finned rockerbox caps, and the rocker feed.

RIDING INTO HISTORY



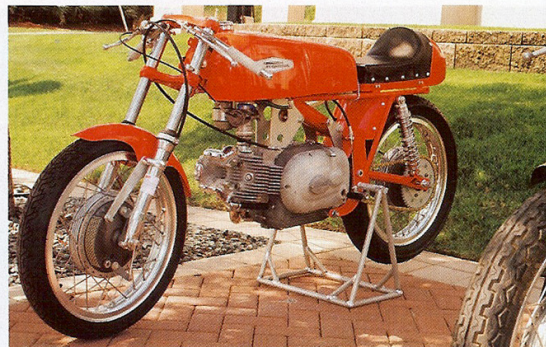
Marty Megregian took Best in Show with his '31 Henderson KL and Goulding sidecar. Marty claims he was more of a 'project manager' to the rebuild. Grand Marshal Kel Carruthers and special guest Nobby Clarke pose happily with the winner.



The Stuart family Triumph was very quick in its day.



Another bike I was lucky enough to see in the assembly stages, Harris Turner's late model Goldie.



Earlier in the week Bob Birdsall's Aermacchi wasn't quite as together as it was on the day.



Norton's Electra was a brave attempt to produce a modern machine with electric start and other features. It's much maligned but they can be made to work well.



Original and unrestored Harley, nice bike.

The organisers

- Riding Into History is a joint effort of the BMW Motorcycle Club of Northeast Florida (BMWNEF) and the Atlantic Beach Vintage Motorcycle Club (ABVMC). The actual event is run by the Riding Into History Committee, which is composed of members from those clubs.
- Leading instigators for 2007 were:
 Bill 'Sparky' Peterson, event chairman;
 William Robinson, marketing;
 Billy Aldridge, founder
 Norm Nelson, concours chair;
 Don Sipler, ball chair;
 Alan Singer, registration/data systems;
 John Duss, chief judge; Don Bradley, artist.
- This was the eighth annual event – all located at the World Golf Village in St Augustine, FL. There were over 300 classic and vintage bikes on display. \$30,000 was raised for Buddy Check 12, a breast cancer prevention foundation. Next year's event will be on 17 May at the same locale. It will feature competition motorcycles. 2008 chairman is Walt Brown, most others are reprising their roles.

Charity events 'do' - The Bikers Ball

That things are done differently in Florida is obvious by the scale of the evening 'do' associated with Riding into History. This is no 'buffet in a barn' but a full scale evening do where dinner jackets are much in evidence.

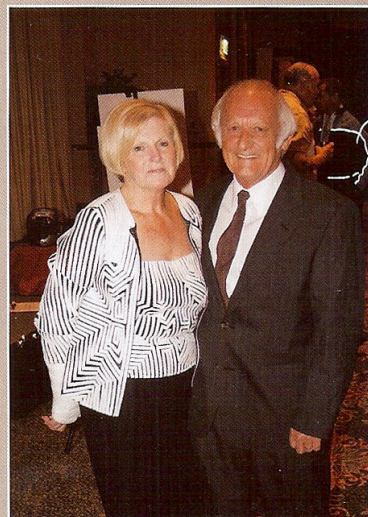
Throughout the night a silent auction is conducted in aid of the cancer charity Buddy Check 12 that aims to help fight breast cancer. The dedicated team of organisers manage to encourage a huge number of businesses, large and small, to come up with all sorts of desirable goodies – a Ducati Multistrada for instance – that guarantee a decent payout to the charity.

The auction results go into the pot, along with the entry fees from the Big Breakfast Ride and when it all got added up \$30,000 went to the Buddy Check 12 charity, so well done to everyone who bid on the evening.

There was more going on than just the auction throughout the evening and a major highlight had to be the talk by 2007 Grand Marshal Kel Carruthers. The 1969 250cc World Champion entertained the audience with tales of GP life in the 60s and 70s, his background in motorcycling and some of the highlights of his long career in motorcycle racing.



It only looks like Don Bradley has his hand clamped over Bill Peterson's mouth during his trophy acceptance speech.



Jan and Kel Carruthers made the flight out from California to be special guests at the St Augustine event.

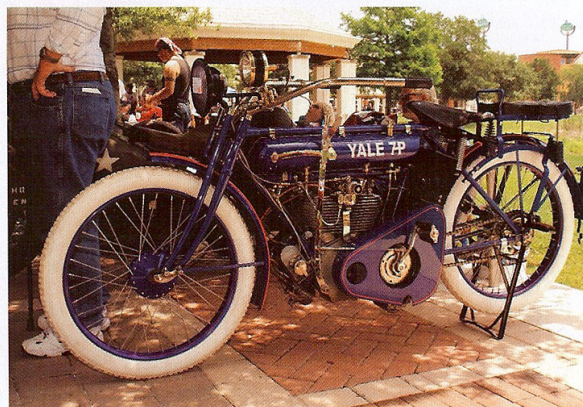


As a top GP mechanic Nobby Clarke is as famous as the riders he built engines for, therefore he's often asked for an autograph... Patti supplied an alternative to a poster.



Norton's Mercury was an early attempt to stretch the basic Dommie engine to 750cc.

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Larry Woods took 12 years to restore this 1912 Yale 7HP and had to make lots of parts for it. He's made a modification or two as well, like an electric starter...

One of Séñor Bulto's Finest

Jack Forrester was delighted to find that his Bultaco Matador had been judged the best Competition Off-road. Developed for long distance trials like the ISDT the Matador line has helped many riders to earn gold medals and brought fame to the Spanish Bultaco factory. The bike bristles with features to help it hold together during the cut and thrust of off-road competition. Note the upswept exhaust, quick release tommy bars on the wheel spindles and the tank top bag for your route card and the few tools needed for repairs.



...and a profile slim enough to squeeze through the narrowest of gaps.



Oodles of ground clearance, good riding position and a comfortable seat for blasting along mountain trails...



Bultaco's Matador looks right for the job – and was.



The Harley-Davidson-badged Aermacchi was very successful on the short tracks of the dirt racing circuit.



As Triumph twins were blasting around the dirt tracks and beating the home grown American V-twins, Indian thought 'let's do the same.' Sadly not a success, pretty though.



Did you do catalogue shopping in the 70s? Bet you never bought a motorcycle from one. The Sears company catalogued this Puch and called it the Allstate. George Weightman tracked down the parts to do a superb restoration.



Morini V-twins do have their fans...

The all American motorcycle company

Doc Batsleer brought along his '08 Marsh and Metz. A real multi-faceted bike – it was also known as a M&M and the American Motorcycle Co made proprietary engines for other makers and supplied them from their Brockton Massachusetts base. Doc has owned it since 1970 and does run it. It apparently has only had the tyres changed from new.



Very bicyclesque...



Inside the leather toolbox were papers from 1910 that showed the bike to be a 1908.



Doc Batsleer with his true antique.