

March 2013

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
MOA #146 RA #4-49 <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>



Concept from 2008 scheduled for production offers promise: For those who appreciate BMW history and actually ride, how about a retro Hans Muth-styled R120 based on this chassis?

See Page 4

***Saturday* @ Frisch's 7-9 am**



Hanging out following breakfast on February 23rd were (from left) Ted Cowan with his 2004 Triumph Bonneville T100, John Rice, Lowell Roark, and Johnny Cebak with his 2004 MV Augusta Brutale ORO 750.

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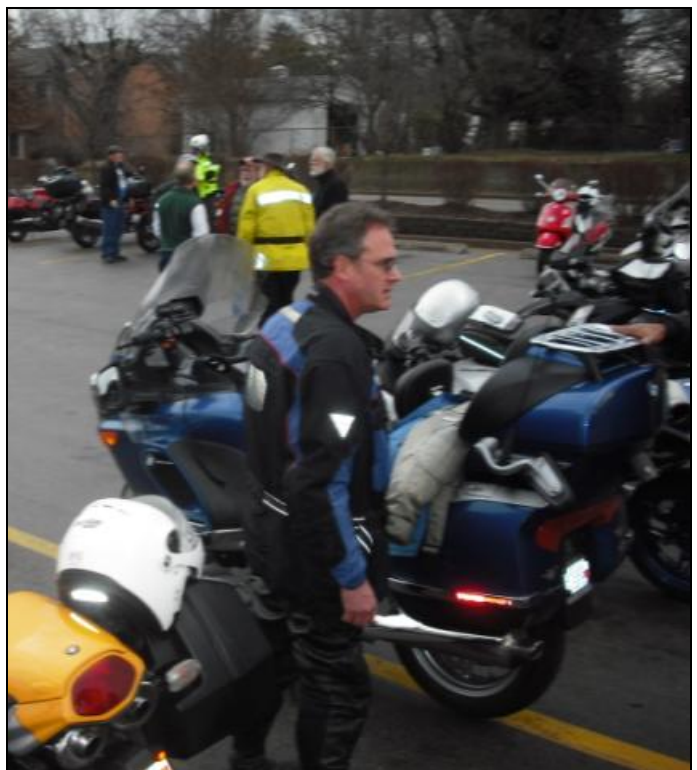
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Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

Back issues of *Apex* can be accessed at <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>

**Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.
on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.**

Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9 am



BMW Concept headed for production



By **ROY FURCHGOTT**

BMW 2008 BMW Motorrad Concept Lo Rider.

Four years ago at the International Motorcycle Show in Milan, BMW presented drool-worthy drawings of a brawny looking cafe-style concept bike.

But that bike faded from memory as BMW's 193-horsepower S 1000rr superbike was introduced in 2009, then the K1600 6-cylinder touring bikes in 2011.

Now, for the 90th anniversary of BMW the concept bike is on track for completion, as a trib-

ute to the original BMW, the R32.

The new bike, which is still being called the concept bike, is likely to be the last new model that will have an airhead-type engine.

BMW will start converting its boxer powered bikes to a water-cooled version this year, starting with the R1200GS.

The R32 was born following World War I, when BMW was forced to diversify from making aircraft engines. Many BMWs today still have the shaft drive of the original 1923 R32 and horizontal cylinder heads that stick out for improved cooling. That feature of the design led devotees to dub the design the airhead.

The current boxer engines are called the oilhead, for the addition of an oil cooling system seen on the 1994 R1100 RS.

But this year the boxer starts going fully water cooled. Details are still scarce, but BMW expects the concept bike to arrive in the United States by the fall of 2013.

No word yet on final design or price.

Editor's Note: This Concept image features a Hexhead engine from 2008, not an Oilhead as reported. The production engine likely will be the outgoing Camhead. Actual exhaust, seating, and fuel cell designs also likely will be different from what we see in this image.

Concept opens garage for retro Muth-styled R120 series

By **Paul Elwyn**

BMW often has said they will not build retro models, a curious position for a company that has been building motorcycles since 1923.

I'm a retired English teacher, not an engineer or marketing specialist, but I think retro makes sense for BMW, especially now that they have a modern, yet traditional (sans Telelever) chassis to carry a retro series.

This Concept bike (above) going into production looks good, from an artistic perspective, but doesn't capture much to my eye that is BMW, except the engine/shaft drive.

Beyond the cool chassis the Concept is....silly, everything BMW should *not* be. Useless fenders, race-appropriate seating, and high exhaust to toast the rider and eliminate luggage

capacity are features that relegate this bike to merely toy status. Surely, the production model will offer more sensible features, but wouldn't it be smarter to offer a more versatile motorcycle that celebrates BMW history?

Ironically, a role model of product development exists in a company that builds motorcycles far removed from the BMW value system, with one key exception: celebration of history. Harley-Davidson, despite building nearly their entire lineup around retro, has done well. Yes, they should have given Erik Buell freedom to develop sport bikes with his own engines, but the cruisers have been tremendously popular with approximately 61,000 motorcycles sold in the third quarter of 2011 during a struggling economy.

Cruisers are not part of BMW



Hans Muth (kneeling) and his design team discuss the solo seat option for the new R100RS.

history, but BMW has a rich history to honor, which they have done to the extent of continuing the boxer engine.

How about a Muth-styled (R90S-R100RS, etc.) sport

touring range of bikes? Emulating the image of the R100 give us an R120 (1200cc) classic S or RS with Muth updated fairing, tank and seat pan from 1974-1988, and the RT fairing

Concept opens garage for retro Muth-styled R120 series

(with electric shield, please)
that was popular through 1995.

I was wrong once in 1982, but I think broad market appeal would exist for BMW naked and fairing-equipped sport touring models that would look, more or less, like an R90, R90S, R100RS, or R100RT but with all of the performance that riders expect today. Imagine placing the R90S bodywork, including the excellent Hepco-Becker Krauser replica bags, and R90-style exhaust on the Concept chassis.

Granted, the outgoing Oil-head engine and the new liquid-cooled engine do not look like the old Airhead, although liquid-cooled engine cam covers could be designed to resemble the Airhead valve covers. Engine cylinders could be finned more deeply, and the Muth RS and RT fairings easily could conceal liquid cooling. These new engines do have their own appeal. Packaging everything to look as clean as possible with the Muth-styled bodywork could capture the look of yesterday with today's performance, just as H-D has managed to do with their bikes.

BMW resumed production of the R100RS in 1988 in response to requests from riders, but the cash-strapped company gave us a less powerful version of the '77 RS, albeit with better brakes, improved chassis, and tubeless wheels. Imagine if the



'88 RS had featured performance comparable to other liter bikes of that year, instead of that of the reliable but dated 60 hp Airhead.

Okay, I love the Airhead and wish BMW had continued to develop that engine as Moto Guzzi has done with their air-cooled twins, not that Moto Guzzi is a model of good business practice. Actually, I would be happy with a new 60 hp Airhead model, with ABS brakes.

I'm not stuck in the past; I want today's hardware, and I like nearly all of the current

BMW models. But I also want *elegant* styling with curves instead of creases. Is that asking too much of a company that has been building sensible motorcycles since 1923?

Today's BMW line of bikes is impressive, segment-leading, technically progressive, and much broader in range than the offerings of the '70's and '80's, but cash now exists to address the retro niche, to celebrate BMW heritage.

Any modern retro model with competitive performance would only enhance the values

of vintage BMW bikes, and would ensure growing awareness of the history of BMW motorcycles.

The Concept chassis from 2008 now going into production could be a step in the direction toward a retro twin.

An R120S, R120RS, or R120RT in Motorsport white/red/blue paint with Muth solo seat option added to the two-up seat would win my money (see above and squint your eyes).

—PE

Bluegrass Beemers
Annual Awards Banquet
March 30th 6:30 pm
Chop House, 2640 Richmond Rd., Lexington



Photo: Tyler Stableford/Getty Images

Aging Easy Riders Beware

By Anahad O'Connor
New York Times
Online
Well Section
February 8, 2013

If you're over 40 and planning to hop on a motorcycle, take care. Compared with younger riders, the odds of being seriously injured are high.

That is the message of a new study, published this week in the journal *Injury Prevention*, which found that older bikers are three times as likely to be severely injured in a crash as younger riders.

The percentage of older bikers on the road is quickly rising, and their involvement in acci-

dents is a growing concern. Nationwide, from 1990 to 2003, the number of motorcyclists over 50 rose from roughly 1 in 10 to about 1 in 4. At the same time, the average age of riders involved in motorcycle crashes has also been climbing. Injury rates among those 65 and older jumped 145 percent from 2000 to 2006 alone.

Because of the increase in motorcycle ridership among older Americans, the researchers, led by Tracy L. Jackson, a graduate student in the epidemiology department at Brown University, wanted a closer look at their injury patterns. So she and her colleagues combed through a federal database of motorcycle crashes that were serious enough to require emergency medical care. That yielded about 1.5 million cases involving motorcyclists 20 or older from 2001 to 2008.

The researchers then split them into groups: riders in their 20s and 30s, another group between

40 and 59, and those 60 and older.

Over all, the study found that injury rates for all three groups were on the rise. But the rise was steepest for the oldest riders. Compared with the youngest motorcyclists, those 60 and older were two and a half times as likely to end up with serious injuries, and three times as likely to be admitted to a hospital. The riders who were middle age were twice as likely as their younger counterparts to be hospitalized.

For older riders, the consequences of a collision were also especially alarming. Older and middle-age bikers were more likely to sustain fractures and dislocations, and they had a far greater chance of ending up with injuries to internal organs, including brain damage.

The researchers speculated that it was very likely that a number of factors played a role in older riders' higher injury rates. For one, declines in vision and re-

action time may make older riders more prone to mistakes that result in collisions. Another theory is that older riders tend to ride bigger bikes, "which may be more likely to roll or turn over," Ms. Jackson said. Then there is the greater fragility that comes with age. Older riders may be involved in the same types of accidents as younger riders, Ms. Jackson said, but in some cases, a collision that a 20-year-old might walk away from could send a 65-year-old to the hospital. "Your bones become more brittle, and you lose muscle mass as you get older," she said. "It could just be a matter of aging and the body being less durable."

A version of this article appeared in print on 02/12/2013, on page D5 of the New York edition with the headline: Older Bikers More Injury-Prone.

See comments by Bluegrass Beemers on the next page.

Bluegrass Beemers Comment: 'Aging Easy Riders Beware'

of us is to look at ourselves honestly and adjust our riding to the reality of our individual situations....and to know without a doubt that any of us can get hurt at any time on a motorcycle by our own error or that of someone else. We have to make that risk calculation every time we ride.

—John Rice



My two cents worth:

What seems cogent to me is that 1) our skills do deteriorate with age, and 2), our bodies don't bounce as well as we did when we were young and supple. Those factors are pretty much beyond dispute. The assumptions made by many of the commenters [online] below the article and to some extent by the reporter, tend to deal with broader all-inclusive stereotypes.

As we know, groups can be described in macro terms, but trying to drill that down to individuals loses accuracy as it gets more specific. There is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for this, or any other problem involving large groups of people.

(Someone once said that for every problem there is a solution that is immediately obvious, simple to understand...and wrong.)

There are some very quick but competent older riders and there are very slow but unsafe younger riders and every gradation in between. The important thing, in my opinion, is for each

Amen to what John said!

Let's don't dismiss the value of wisdom that also comes with age. Risk management is an individual responsibility and commitment that should be at the forefront of any potentially dangerous activity in which we choose to engage, whether it is riding our motorcycle or strapping on a gun, or both.

I may be wrong but it is hard for me to believe that a youngster on a crotch rocket preps more physically and mentally before a ride than I do, and I never pull off without praying for a safe return.

And let me say that I have ridden with John for as long as I could keep up, and I have ridden a lot with Joe [Bark], and I would put them up against any younger rider in terms of skill level and riding awareness.

I believe that we do everything we can and the rest is ultimately in God's hands anyway. There are certain of my relatives that I dread even being around because they always ask

"Are you still riding that motorcycle? There was a guy in Arizona that got hit by a car and killed just yesterday."

Yeah, and what about the tour bus whose driver fell asleep and crashed and killed six seniors?

Linda and I ordered Chinese take out for dinner last night. My fortune cookie said "To live your life in fear of losing it is to lose the point of life."

—Ray Brooks

[In response to John Rice's comments] I can attest that 2) is an extremely true statement ! I may have bounced but it sure hurt like hell !

—Dave McCord

It has never been a secret that more and more untrained and inexperienced people are buying motorcycles...and heading on down the road. They have no idea that accident prevention is different on a motorcycle than in an auto, and the throttle response is twice as quick, or

that braking is roughly two thirds faster on a cycle. How many times have u seen "Joe" hop on a motorcycle, told everyone that "he knew what he was doing" and laid it down?

Too many, I'm sure! It is as if they were born with the knowledge.

The figures they [New York Times] are quoting are misleading. They are also not showing the driver pulling out without actually looking to see the motorcycle coming towards them (personal experience.)

Even with outboard running lights, she claimed she didn't see anyone coming...and there ya go! Inexperienced riders do not know how to instantly deal with such mental melt downs. Motorcycle safety training should be mandatory in order to get a license, and that license should be separate from the car license the way California does it...but they don't write about such things.

—Allan Walthers

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Chop House, 2640 Richmond Rd., Lexington**

Snow day at the farm, 02-02-13: four boys, one old geezer, and an old Bultaco (and a dog)



Alpinas rock in the snow! (left) Ian...the other boy fell off.





Roy Rowlett in the '70's on his TL 125

Photo submitted by John Rice

Gorillas and the missed



By John Rice

By now most of us have heard of the "Invisible Gorilla" experiment in which subjects were assigned to watch a video of men passing a basketball back and forth and count how many times certain players got the ball.

In the middle of the game, a man in a gorilla suit walks out onto the court, faces the camera and beats his chest, then walks out of the frame.

The vast majority, up to 80% or more, of the subjects in the experiment missed the gorilla. Their attention was focused on the game, the task they'd been assigned, and the huge simian just wasn't on their radar.

I recently heard of an update to this experiment when a researcher took it a step further. He reasoned that the best detail searchers in the world were radiologists, who spend their days looking for tiny anomalies in CT scans and x-ray images, picking out things that most of us cannot discern. He designed an experiment in which the

radiologists were to look for a certain type of cancer image in a series of scans and, in homage to the earlier experiment, he placed in some of the scans an image of a gorilla, postage-stamp sized, somewhere on the sheet.

With sophisticated equipment, he was able to track the eye movements of the subjects as they looked for the signals they were assigned. He found that a majority of these highly trained searchers still failed to see the gorilla, even when their eyes were looking right at it. Not that they didn't take it into account, their brains actually didn't see it.

This phenomenon has implications for motorcyclists (and everyone else, if perchance you have a gorilla embedded in your body somewhere, undetected by radiologists).

In my law practice I often dealt with motorcycle accidents, including the most common scenario where a car driver turns left in front of an oncoming bike, or pulls from a side street out into the bike's path. In almost every case the driver's response was 1) "I never saw him" or 2) "he came out of nowhere, he must have been flying".

I concluded that drivers (all of us, if we're honest with ourselves) don't devote their whole attention to the task of driving. We have other things on our mind and we let the automatic parts of our brain tend to the attention to hazards. Keith Code talks a bit about this when he speaks of learning to ride. He says we have an imaginary \$20 worth of attention and in the beginning, we spend most of that allowance on the basics, such as getting the clutch engaged, shifting gears, staying

balanced, etc. As we progress, those things become automatic and we can shift more of the amount to focusing on speed. Car drivers are no different. The average person is letting the subconscious mind look for hazards while the up-front parts of the brain are mulling over what's for dinner, are the kids home from school, the fight with the boss, and all the other trivia of life.

The subconscious, for those who don't ride motorcycles, is looking for car-shaped things in the path. Car shaped and car sized. When that part perceives a motorcycle, if it "sees" the bike at all, it processes it as a car-shape/size farther away. The driver pulls out, with the sub-processor telling him that the thing is at a safe distance. Then, when the collision occurs, the mind tries to make sense of what just happened and concludes that the motorcycle "came out of nowhere" or must have arrived at a much faster speed than normal. The same calculation works in the minds of witnesses to the accident, who weren't paying attention until the action happened.

The Gorilla Studies seem to confirm this theory. **Even when one is trained to observe anomalies in a field, only the ones you're looking for stand out.** The thing we aren't looking for is, for most of us, invisible. And, Mr. or Ms. Motorcyclist, that's you.

We are a minority on the road and hardly a thought in the minds of most motorists (unless it's a bad one, brought on by some of our less responsible brethren) and therefore we don't show up on the subconscious radar at all.

All this is to say that conspicuity helps. Be something that

the mind of the driver has to pay attention to. I'm not subscribing to the "loud pipes" screed, that part of the perception loop isn't involved here (ask a policeman or ambulance driver how often drivers ignore the siren).

We're talking visuals. Make your profile larger with running lights, with bright colored jackets and helmets, with anything that makes the subconscious of the Buick operator sit up and take notice of the image that doesn't fit into a preconceived pattern. I sometimes swerve just a bit as I approach an intersection so that the driver takes notice. Noises like horns and pipes tend to fade into the general background noise of the world and aren't as directionally obvious as visual cues. (Don't flash your headlight...drivers sometimes think that's a signal to go ahead.)

Just be visible. And perhaps follow the advice I was given a half-century ago by an old rider, "Assume you're invisible and everyone else is crazy" The gorillas prove that the first part of that is accurate and our experience on the road tends to support the second part pretty well.





Pleasant mid-40's weather greets riders at The Kickstand Polar Bear Run

Raymond and Lynn Montgomery staged another excellent Polar Bear Run on February 23rd.

Registration from 10:30 am to Noon provided lots of time for people to mingle, drink coffee, eat cookies, and check out the wide range of motorcycles.

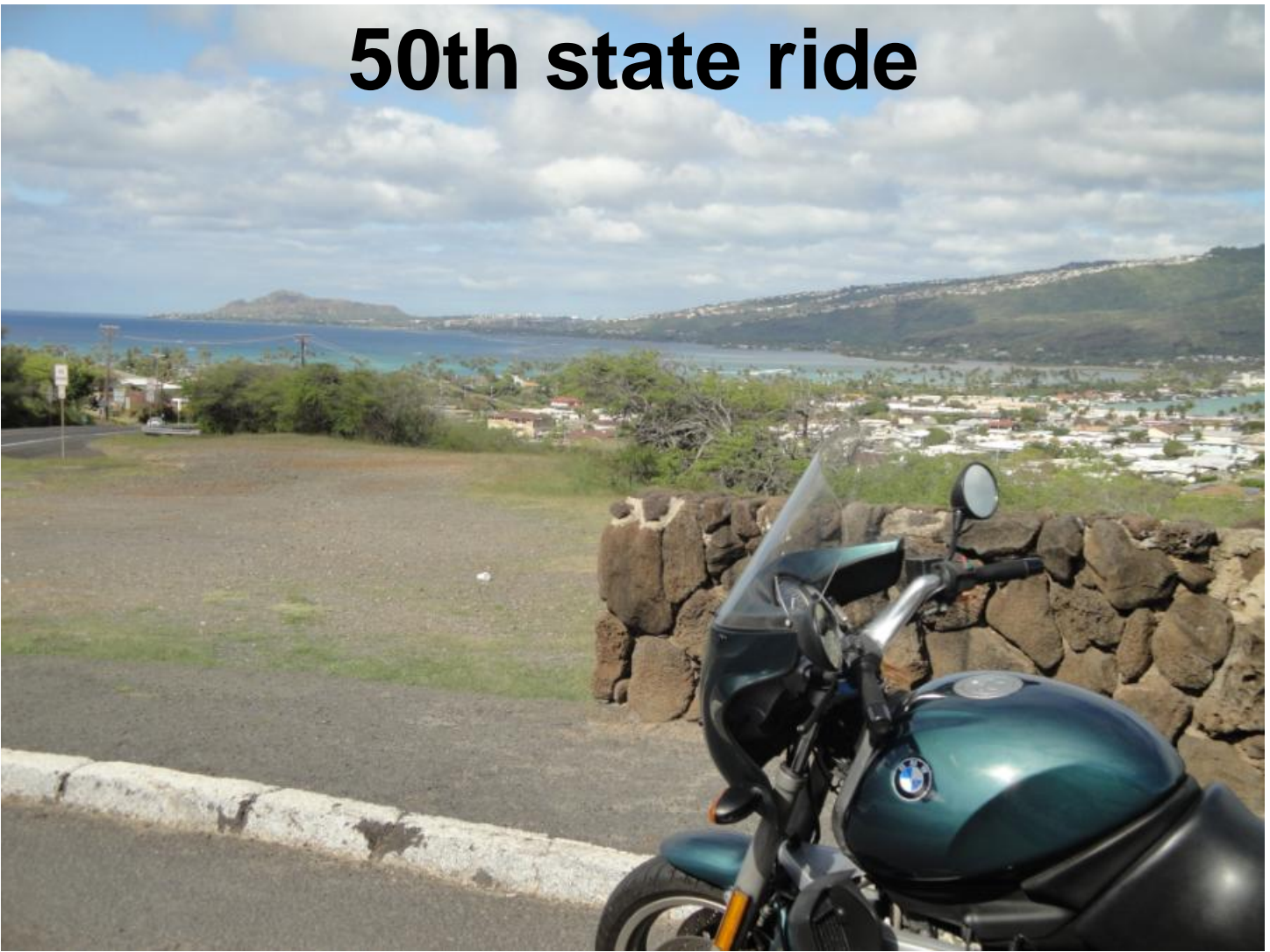
Following the ride that began at Noon and ended around 2pm, riders enjoyed a hot bowl of chili. Participation in the Polar Bear ride and chili cost \$10.



Coffee and cookies greeted registrants in the Kickstand service area.



50th state ride



By Lowell Roark

I went to Hawaii to visit Pearl Harbor and to complete my 50th state riding BMW motorcycles.

The Pearl Harbor visit was impressive. It really makes one think about what really happened there. It was a very real experience.

The BMW ride in the 50th state was made possible by the generosity of our friends and fellow Bluegrass Beemer members Bob and Mary Beard. I rode Mary's R 850 R around the island of Oahu for a total of 150 miles.

Bob laid out a very nice route for me. I don't know where he got the weather but I could not have asked for better, not a

drop of rain and beautiful sunshine.

I basically followed the coast in a counter clockwise direction and was able to explore some out-of-the-way places.

I found an old coffee mill and a soap factory that is not on a tourist list. I saw some awe-

some scenery along the coast and rode some very twisty roads.

I want to say a special thank you to Bob and Mary Beard for

their very generous and gracious hospitality.

Mahalo, (thank you)

Lowell





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