



The Apex

February 2004

Well, the club business meeting has come and gone, and here are the results.

Hubert Burton, the president for 2003 presided over the meeting. He then turned the meeting over to the new president for 2004, Paul Elwyn. We then proceeded to ask for volunteers for President-Elect, which is actually a vice presidential post to be president for 2005. Allan Walthers volunteered for this position and after VERY little discussion was unanimously elected to this post. Boone Sutherland, of course, was recognized as the club secretary/scribe. Roy Rowlett will continue as Treasurer and Rally Chairman. Gary Dehner has been reelected to the position of Club Activities Coordinator. He promised to try not to get all broken up this year, so we can have more events.



Past and current president's
Hubert Burton and Paul Elwyn



New President-elect
Allan Walthers

Some of our members are quite adept word-smiths. The following is from Paul Rice.

I ran into a bike that I really like!

I guess I could have called this "A tale of two Rices" or "three twins and a pair of fours" or, my favorite, "It's all your fault, John!" I am sometimes asked why I ride my BMW, the question is just a nice way of saying, "Why do you like that!?" (I ride it because I haven't figured out anything else to do with it.) I like it because, well....I just do. I can't speak for the rest of them, but I'll try to touch on why I ride, and how it took me 23 years to move forward, about a foot and a half.

The real story takes about 30 years, so I'll give you only the parts that involve relationships, emotion and passion, you know.... bikes. I have an uncle that was quite influential, for this story we'll call him "John." It's all your fault, John! I'm sure he's heard that one before, but it's not really true, he didn't cause it, he just facilitated it. When I was very young, he let me ride his son's Honda 50, I was fascinated with riding, just twist the grip and go as fast as you want, turns out I should have learned more about braking, but I'll get to that later. Over the next few years I went to several trials events with him, and thoroughly enjoyed riding, either on the 50, or on the back of his Bultaco or Montesa. It was there that I also came to appreciate the attitude, camaraderie and friendships that come from riding.

When I was 14, "John" showed up at my house on a street bike, a green R90/6! We went for the ride, and I say "the ride," because it was the final straw, the moment I realized that I was hooked. It was a feeling unlike any that I had ever experienced, bending into corners, then feeling the acceleration, it produced all the

right sounds and sensations. Euphoria sets in, with the realization that this could go on forever, it's a great big world out there. The act of riding was very entertaining, but the thoughts of endless possibilities were addictive. All we did was go get ice cream, but we could have gone anywhere we wanted.

Over the next few years I would beg, borrow or steal, to get a ride, then at 17 came my first time at the controls of a street bike, this would be a short ride. A friend of mine had just gotten an old Honda 750, and with me being so experienced and all, I had to do it. Exactly two blocks from his house, (a short limping distance,) I discovered a lot of things; gravel is slippery, Honda 750s are heavy, and skin is not very abrasion resistant. I replaced his scratched side cover, but it took about four years to repair my bruised ego.

In 1987 I purchased my first motorcycle, a blue '80 Suzuki GS750E. An old guy (must have been in his 30's) had it set up to tour, with a Windjammer and tall bars. I put the stock headlight back on and switched it to drag bars, had the seat cut down and took off all the unnecessary chrome junk. Life was good; I managed to keep it upright, and running for about 30K miles over the next 5 or so years. During that time, my brother Doug acquired a new Kawasaki 1000, it may have actually been the fastest thing at that time, and it was certainly the fastest thing I had ever ridden. I fondly remember the day though, that it occurred to me, how little the bike, any bike, has to do with the performance of the rider. It happened just after a family gathering, Doug and I had ridden to the outing, and met up with John and Brenda, who came over on the green /6. After all, I am her favorite nephew! (Sorry Doug.) When it came time to leave, we decided to take the long way back, and with them riding two up, on "just a twin", that John should lead, so that we don't run off and leave them. Out the twisty roads we went, roads that Doug and I knew, yet somehow John never seemed rushed or hurried, but I did. It was just a casual ride, but the further we went, the harder I was working just to keep him in sight, maybe there was something wrong with my bike? Whatever it was, it was wrong with Doug's bike also! Searching through every bike magazine we could get our hands on, Doug and I discovered that an R90/6 did not have the 150 horsepower, that we had assumed! What? Our Japanese fours

were inferior to a fifty horsepower twin, ridden two up? No, just WE were! Forget the pipes and jets, I need to learn how to ride!

Eventually the old Suzuki developed a few little problems and then I moved to a house that would require parking it on the street, it was sold by the end of the week. My thinking then was that I'd get another one in a year or two, whenever I had the money to buy one and a place to park it. I must be slow, because that "year or two", turned into nearly ten.

Years later, John and I were at the local BMW dealership, picking up his new GS from the shop, I had been bikeless for a few years and a black '93 R100R really caught my eye, I sat on it, and for a minute was seriously considering purchasing it. I decided to think on it a while as John told me he knew the history of that particular bike. I walked away, but it was years before I knew his true motive.

In early spring of 2002 I was walking in the local dealership to pick up some parts for a machine at work, and there it was. Another blue Suzuki 750, only this one was a new GSXR, my GSXR, or it soon would be. I tried to be objective, looking at other models, but I always ended up back at the Suzuki. I told him I'd take it, money was just a minor detail, except that I didn't really have any. Oh well, I worked that out, and off I went. It had been too long since I felt the wind rush past me, too long since I felt the way a shifter clicks into the next gear, and far too long since I had leaned into a corner. Life was, once again good, or at least a lot better, instantly I was back, doing what I had loved.

It had been some time since I had seen my uncle, but I knew he was still a bit interested in bikes, so one day I rode over to his house, only to discover him tinkering on one of no less than the 8 bikes in his garage! After twisting his arm (and helping fold his legs), he was suited up and ready to take my new machine for a ride. He then suggested that I accompany him, on one of his bikes. After scanning his collection, for one reason or another I wasn't real comfortable with the idea of riding any of them. The green bike had been around too long for me to chance wadding it up, after all, that's what really started all this, the PD was a bit tall for the uninitiated, and everything else has the shifter on the wrong side! Asking if he had any that were "normal," he remembered the one he had up on the lift, a black R100R! The same black R100R that I didn't buy, the motives are becoming much clearer now! I decided that it was normal enough, and off we went, but my plan wasn't working at all. I thought I was convincing him of how wonderful my modern new Suzuki was, as it turns out, I was really becoming quite fascinated with this old boxer I was on. By the end of the

day, he did not go off looking to get himself a Gixxer, but I came away very impressed with the Beemer. I like the way it looked, the way it felt, and the ultimate utility of the machine.

During the next few months we rode together on a few occasions, one of the most memorable being, the day I ran into a bike that I really like. Yes, that same R100R, but I don't mean that I "happened upon it," I mean I ran into it! I hate it when that happens! It was another day of learning, just like nearly 20 years earlier, I learned that BMWs have good brakes, and very sturdy racks on the back. I also learned that GSXRs have rather fragile headlights and upper fairings. Damn! my ego was just about healed from the last time! The better rider, on the more substantial machine had won, his requiring only a taillight, mine on the other hand, had suffered a bit more. Consulting my owners manual, I noticed there was no mention of impact absorption. I was once again, temporarily bikeless. It took 13 of the longest days I'd ever seen to get my replacement parts, a long time to wish I had another bike to ride, more than enough time to figure out that I didn't know how to ride the one I had. The more I considered it, the more I wanted to have another bike, and I had grown quite fond of BMWs. I can't explain exactly what had drawn me to them, because I had only ridden them maybe 50 miles, and half of that was 20 years ago, on the back seat. To most people it would appear that I had completely turned around, and I'm calling myself one of those people! But my first street ride was on a boxer, and I enjoyed my first time piloting one, so I knew that there was more to them than meets the eye, (and upper fairing) John has always been quite a proficient rider, and the German machines certainly didn't hinder him. Then again, I don't ride as well as him, and obviously can't brake as well, but I needed one anyway!

I called the only reliable source that I knew of, for a BMW (John) and he put out the A.P.B. Within a month he had located an 82 R100RT, at a reasonable price. But an RT has a big fairing, oh well, so did my first Suzuki, and that didn't stop me, it's a lot easier to remove parts than to add them, so I thought. A test ride was arranged, and upon arriving to inspect the bike I was quite underwhelmed. There was a motorcycle somewhere under the dirt, but this thing is huge, and seems to be somewhat out of proportion, with a rather large windshield and top case, but no side cases. The test ride was even less inspiring, though I was certain that it had never been abused, it

was suffering from a serious case of neglect. It started, as long as it was on a charger, the tires were dry rotted, the brakes shuddered badly and the steering head bearings were loose. A guy would have to be crazy to want something like that! A big ugly fairing, with bugs on it that were older than my other bike, a test ride that revealed a host of problems, and the price was firm! So, I did the only reasonable thing I could, I went home and ordered some tires and parts, and went back with a trailer and some money. How could I resist? It wasn't really what I was looking for, but the only thing wrong with it was; well, everything!

The deal was done and now it's all mine, maybe it's not too bad, just give it a little T.L.C., and well, OK, everything. That day, just a short 23 years after my first street ride, I pulled into John's driveway on my own BMW, just as he had mine. It's only about a foot and a half from the back seat up to the front one, I just don't know why I took so long to get there.

Maybe it really is all your fault, John? Thanks, for all of it.

The Spring Thaw:

Or How to get your BMW ready for spring riding: Most of us have not winterized our motorcycles, since we take any warm day as an opportunity to ride. For those few who put your's away for the winter, here's some tips on returning them to service:

First: Fresh oil and filter. If you didn't change these when you put it away, now's the time.

Second: Battery check. Be sure to check the acid level in your battery and give it a good top up charge before trying to start it up.

Third: Tires. Be sure to check the tire pressure, this is very important. Most tires will lose some pressure just sitting. Be sure also to check your tires for wear and or dry rot, the hairline cracks that develop in older tires, especially close to the wheel rim.

Fourth: Clean and wax your motorcycle. It's a good idea to get the dust and dirt off that may have accumulated over the winter and a clean bike just seems to run better.

2004 Beemers In The Bluegrass Rally Notes:

We're gonna do it again in 2004. The rally committee is already busy putting together the details for the 2004 rally. This year the admission fee will be raised from \$15.00 per person, to \$20.00 per person. We've contracted with Western Kentucky Barbecue once again, and this year they will be providing not only the Saturday evening supper meal, but also a breakfast on Saturday morning. This was the deciding factor in raising our fee. We've put the rally on now for 10 years without raising our rates, and lots of folks have been amazed that we could do that. Thanks to the volunteers and great participation of our club members we've been able to hold the line.

There will be only one type of day pass this year, instead of the 2 we previously offered. The \$10.00 day pass that included the meal and door prize tickets will be phased out. We will offer a \$5.00 pass for day visitors, but this doesn't include any meals or door prize tickets. We will offer door prize tickets for sale, to day pass and regular attendees. The price will be \$5.00 for 7 tickets or \$1.00 each.

Alan Atherton has graciously agreed to put on the poker run for us this year. We're still in the planning stages for the route and type of poker run. We hope to have some returning vendors this year also. Helen Twoheels had a good weekend and mentioned she'd be back.

BMW of the Tris-State and BMW of Louisville both are great supporters of our rally. Let's try to show em some appreciation. These 2 dealerships have been with us since our first Rally in 1994.



The Birthday Bunch:

January Birthdays:

Ron Atkins, Rick Ferguson, Mike Gill, Mark Rense, Steve Rohlfing, Randy Scott and Jay Smythe.

February Birthdays:

Chris Adkins, Joe Bark, Steve Bishop, John Hafner, Paul Reed, James Street, George Walls, Mary Beard and Paul Frazier

March Birthdays:

Phil Baugh, Pete Galskis, Paul Heflin, Chery Jarboe and Ron Russell.

Happy birthdays to each of you..If you don't see your name listed here, either these months aren't your birthday, or I don't have your birthday in my files.

Please send me the info....

Roy Rowlett

Open House at BMW of Louisville:

Jeff and the gang at BMW of Louisville are having an open house on Saturday February 14. There's gonna be a waffle breakfast this time. These events are always a good chance to get together with other BMW riders and grab some good bargains from Jeff, and the folks who bring their wares to sell.



Here's some great pics of the 2003 rally site taken by Fred White.

And now, a word from our sponsors: These are some of the business who we've used in the past and who help support or club and rally. Keep em in mind when you need parts or service.

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