

Packages In the Mail

Bill Stevens – President



I started out naming this article “Winter Wrenching”. Then I realized I was the one holding up Rick Griffith’s completion of what would be the spring newsletter. Why would I write an article about winter events when everyone who owns



a 2 wheeled vehicle is praying for spring??? For those of you that live in the lower 48, Spring may have already sprung. For many in the Northern climes, we are all waiting for the snow, sand and salt to be washed away by spring showers and for the riding season to begin.

If you have ever undergone the restoration of a vintage motorcycle, you will know that the quality of the finished product is in direct proportion to the number of packages you receive on your doorstep during the metamorphosis period. The greater the number of packages, the more you have spent to bring what was to what you want it to be.

I have been accused by my wife Rozy to be obsessed with Motorcycles. I have no idea which gene pool triggered this obsession. My Uncles both had Indian’s back before WW II. My father never really cared for

bikes. I never figured out why. He was much more interested in double barrel shotguns and bird dogs. My brother owned a BSA 441 Victor in my high school years. Mike Johnson, my high school buddy owned a Honda CB350. “Boots” as he was called, would ride from Issaquah to Renton (more than 40 miles) to save \$.05 cents per quart on Castrol oil back then. He too was obsessed, only at an earlier age than me.

For those of you that ride, but never work on bikes, you are missing out on a great experience. For those of you that know the dance, working on your bike is the antithesis of ownership – especially during the winter months. There is nothing like a cold beer, a BMW parts manual, and a good shot of rock n’ roll to stir the soul while restoring your favorite ride.

Most projects are “never” as straight forward or as simple as what you think they will be. This is especially true of bike projects-when owners become obsessed to achieve the perfect result. That which starts out to be a simple “paint touch up” turns out to be a bead blast, epoxy prime and powder coat. This followed by a host of other projects, more detailed than ever.

In 1967, most BMW motorcycles were still black with white pin stripes. The BMW R69S combined a constant design principle with quality engineering and

unique styling to create a bike often thought as ugly by the typical motorcyclist. The bike was fitted with Earles fork, shaft drive, and a flat twin motor with distinctive and protruding “jugs”. Motor Cycle magazine distinguished the R69S as the “most aristocratic of motorcycles.”

BMW sold more than 11,000 R69S models over a nine year period ending 1969.

This past winter, I had the opportunity to get up close and personal with a 67’ R69S. What started out as a polish and shine turned into a complete frame-off restoration project. Virtually every nut, bolt, and appendage was disassembled, cleaned, polished or painted to restore the bike to its original factory condition. To say the least, there were numerous packages shipped to and from the stable door over the winter months. The frame was stripped of decay and epoxy primed and powder coated. Numerous small parts received the same treatment. The tank and fenders were stripped, primed and painted in traditional gloss black with dual white pinstripes. The original chrome plated rims were replaced with polished aluminum of the same period. Corroded spokes gave way to SS. The Boxer twin motor was disassembled, slingers serviced and top end reconditioned.

The time to reassemble all of the above, including help from professionals in their field was more than double disassembly time. I

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Special points of interest:

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- *Tech Tips Galore!*
- *Inaugural R90s Photo Contest*
- *West Coast Rendezvous*
- *7th and Last Rally Info.*
- *Membership Update with John Yee*
- *Erik Bahl finds a Classic*
- *A little Kirk Ratzel History*

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Packages in the Mail cont. by Bill Stevens

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would estimate well over 300 hours not to include those jobs hired out. This didn't include keeping track of all the plastic bags of parts and pieces and boxes stored over a 6 month period. I hope to have the bike on the road in just a few weeks. Hope springs eternal.

There are several individuals and businesses that deserve recognition for their participation and contribution to this project:

John Thill, Detroit, MI: Previous owner and dedicated B'merphile.

Rick Griffith & Ken Claus: BMW Devotee's & R90S Aficionado's

Pacific Powder Coating, Ferndale, WA: The obvious

Bob Clement, Bob's Motorwerks, Roberts, MT: Engine, transmission & tech support

Elaine & Craig Vechorik, Bench Mark Works USA, Sturgis, MS: Parts & tech support

Ray Atwood's Cycle, Bolton, VT: Paint & striping

Coming Soon: The R90RS Transformation! Let there be no mistake, the R69S was the predecessor of things to come.



Tech Tips

EASY "ON" AND HARD TO REMOVE

Driving longer rides on your R90S you will get to a point where your feet just want to be moved to a different position, just to relax your legs. Sometimes we move our feet into different positions on the front foot pegs, and sometimes we utilize the rear pegs and then there is the time when you are between pegs and touch the exhaust. When you arrive at the next stop you notice boot burns on your pipes. In most cases it can be removed with chrome cleaner. The last burns I had to remove were very difficult and chrome cleaner was no match for the large burn spot on the pipes. I tried paint thinner, tar remover, gasoline, brake cleaner etc. My next thought was to reverse the process. Whatever is melted on, can be melted off! So here we go:

I used a propane torch, keep it about 3" away from the burned spot and move it around in small circles. Heat the pipe to a temperature to where you can no longer touch it. With a shop towel soaked in chrome cleaner wipe the burned spot. If you don't see results right away, increase the heat and keep on wiping, rotating the shop towel to an unused portion. Heat and wipe and repeat! It will come off as it did for me. Just be careful to not burn your fingers!

Safe Riding!

Rick Huemmerich,

pics by ed.



Won't win many Concours events with these pipes!



Wow, I might get 1st place after all!!

Membership Update John Yee, Treasurer and Membership Chairman

As of this printing, we have 94 club members in good standing with 5 new members for 2006. We are hoping the rest of you will come to your senses and support the club with your renewals. On a personal note, this is a big thank you to all that have renewed your membership & have sent me very nice notes on the job I've been doing with the membership rosters & mailings. I thought about stepping down a few times to let someone else handle this because of my time constraints with business travel but your well wishes have kept me going. I couldn't do it without all the other officers' help so they also deserve a lot of thanks & credit.

New members with their comments:

BAHL, ERIK: Huntsville, AL. 1974 Silver Smoke, serial #4071024, unknown mileage. Basket case R90S under restoration. Missing some parts, matching numbers. Has engine, tranny, rear end, frame, and wheels. Came with a Luftmeister, /6 seat and Japanese rear chrome fender mounted. Engine was frozen. "I am going to take this bike as close to stock as I can. I plan on using this as my touring bike". Website is: <http://www.coretek.org/db/erik/R90S.htm> It has large photos which are slow to load.

BLACK, TONY: Colorado Springs, CO. 1974 Silver Smoke, serial #4070007. Braced frame and swingarm. Engine is heavily modified. This was Butler & Smith's race bike in the Heavyweight Production class in 1974 with Reg Pridmore riding. Still has the engine from those days and still revs to 9,000 RPM.

SIDE NOTE: Congratulations to Tony. He has knocked Steven Doctor off the top of the serial number list by having the oldest serial numbered bike in the club!

CASTELLANI, JON: Croton-on-Hudson, NY. 1976 Blue, serial #4092420 with 56,000 miles. Euro model, not yet sure why it's blue. The bike hadn't been ridden in over 6 years when I got it and it's in the shop getting some TLC for the first time in a long time. Seems to be in great shape. C'mon spring!

MOUTON, JEROME: Metairie, LA. 1976 Silver Smoke, serial #4990684. Well, I am born (1951) raised & will die in New Orleans. Graduated from LSU in 1974, architecture. Principal architect in firm Mouton-Long for over 25 years, specializing in restaurant & night club design all over the country. We recently designed comedy clubs in New York & Chicago. Married with 3 kids. Purchased bike new in 1976. Have 70,000 miles mostly road riding. Bike never used for transportation, never stored outside, never ridden in rain on purpose, never ridden by anyone but mechanic. I go to a few rallies each year but basically I like to ride alone. This is how I get away. When I graduated from college I wanted to buy something for myself, you know the best of something. So I went to buy a Harley! I had the cash in my pocket. They wouldn't let me test ride the bike so I went to a

BMW dealer & bought the bike (R90S) after the first ride. I knew nothing about BMW. How lucky can you get! A defining point in my life. I am very active & have many hobbies. I fish every chance I get, I go camping with Boy Scouts (I have twin 16 year olds). I play guitar in 2 bands & of course I work too. I lived in Lakeview, about a mile from the levee break. My home was built in 1916 & had cypress doors, windows, trim, hardwood floors, high ceilings & all that. Hurricane Katrina put 4 feet of water in my house for 3 weeks, but I am well insured & everything will eventually be ok.

SIDE NOTE: In the Feb. '06 issue of BMWMOA, Jerome has a picture of his beauty before it took a 3 week bath. In light of what has happened to him, the club officers thought it would be a nice gesture to give him some support & encouragement with a complimentary membership in the club for 2006.

PHILIPPE DROIT: Frahier, FRANCE. 1976 Daytona Orange, serial #4083979 with 120,000 kms. (Approx. 74,564 miles), no modifications.

Renewing members with their comments:

DEBOER, JORRIT: Munich, Germany.

In the spring of 2005 my twin brother Robert informed me that an almost unused R90S of the late Wolfgang Hopff was available in Kuesnacht near Zuerich, Switzerland. From the widow Barbara, he learned that Wolfgang, who had died in April of cancer had put the bike away about 25 years ago because it made a strange "clunk" noise in the engine. From then on he used his beautifully restored 1953 R51 for motorcycling. He suspected his son to have ruined the R90S while running it or by tinkering with it.

My brother suggested to Barbara a value of 5000 Swiss francs for the motorcycle, corresponding to 3000 Euros or \$3600 US dollars and I decided to buy it for this price.

The room besides the Hopff's garage where the R90S was stored had in the meantime been transformed to an office for the retired chemist and a new - narrower - door had been installed. Only after dismantling the protective bars and by tilting the boxer did we finally just manage to pass. With a friend's help I transported my new acquisition on a trailer to Munich on June 27, 2005. At the border I had to pay 350 Euro re-import duty.

At home I tried to fix the engine myself. Inspection revealed a loose alternator rotor and a leaky oil retainer ring at the ruptor. With a new seal, new spark plugs and a new battery, I managed to get the engine running hearing the reported "clunk" with every turn. I brought the BMW to Mani's Garage, a local old-boxer specialist. After a lengthy search he found nothing wrong in the motor but he found one slightly too long bolt in

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Membership Update cont.

(Continued from page 3)

the flywheel in the clutch protruding just enough to produce the “clunk” sound when touching the housing once on each turn. I paid Mani almost nothing for parts but 400 Euro for several hours of labor. We will probably never learn what was done for what reason 25 years ago.

The fairing was missing. I bought a new painted one at BMW for 400 Euro (with windshield). Only then I noticed that the rest of the bike (tank, front fender and end piece) had been sprayed by a protective varnish that had turned brownish over the decades. I will have the new fairing varnished to match the old parts.

It has cost me a bit more than 4200 Euro (\$5000 US dollars), a price it would easily fetch on the local market – probably also in the US.

SIDE NOTE: If you are sitting on the fence about whether or not you will be attending the 7th & Last R90S Rally, Jorrit has already purchased airline tickets to North Carolina & has a room reserved at the Iron Horse Motorcycle Lodge.

DUFFNER, KARL: Bristol, PA. 313,000 miles, 13 gallon Heinrich gas tank, 5 quart Fallert oil pan, 4 gauge dash, Krauser “wing” air foil mirrors, (2) 8” Cibie Super Oscar 200 driving lights, Telefix and San Jose fork braces, re-inforced braced swing arm, San Jose top fork clamp.

DYSON, CHIP: Sacramento, CA. Enclosed are my dues plus a little extra. I really enjoy getting the newsletter and appreciate everyone’s hard work. Use the extra for some Carlton next time you’re all together. Maybe I’ll see you at the Grass Valley Fairgrounds in June. It’s just up the road from here.

A short North Carolina story. My wife had a business conference in Atlanta, GA on Oct. 5 so we went on a 7 day road trip before her meetings. Rented a car at Hartfield Airport and headed north as soon as we arrived. Overnight in some little town then next day onto the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) at Cherokee. Next night in Asheville. After 50 miles on our third day we did the math and realized we weren’t doing the whole 469 miles of the BRP in 5 days so we turned east off it just above Blowing Rock. Overnight in Chapel Hill then next day to the Wright Brothers Memorial at Kill Devil Hills and down the Outer Banks. North Carolina is a beautiful state. Overnight on Ocracoke Island, ferry to mainland, down to Charleston, a couple of nights there in a Bed & Breakfast. Walked around a lot. Fort Sumter tour boat ride and back to Atlanta. Great trip. We vow to go back, fly into DC, rent a bike (allowing a week) and do the whole BRP, then fly out of Atlanta. I highly recommend any part of our trip to bike riders but remember, the 45 MPH signs on the BRP mean it! Best, Chip Dyson.

GRIFFITH, RICK: Farmington Hills, MI. 122,000 miles. Latest updates: Dyna green coil, San Jose fork brace, hope to install

new Koni’s with the stock covers this spring. “I just got my 200,000 mile award from the MOA. That **can’t** mean I’m getting old?”

GRUNNER, STEVE: West Chester, PA. You may be aware of this but for kicks I’m including this anyway. I’m in the process of possibly repainting/restoring my Silver Smoke ’76. I went to Devon MC dealer in Devon, PA. and asked about new body parts – here is what they told me:

Fairing with dash: Prime paint: ? Painted smoke or orange: \$530.00

Windshield: \$85.00

Tank: Prime paint: \$525.00 Painted smoke or orange: \$1260.00

Side Covers: Prime paint: \$45.00 Painted smoke or orange: ?

Front fender: Prime paint: \$126.00 Painted smoke or orange: \$338.00

Rear Fender: Prime paint: \$173.00 Painted smoke or orange: ?

Seat Cowl: Prime paint: \$130.00 Painted smoke or orange: ?

If the above is true (they told me the parts would take about 3 weeks to get) why would someone send \$2000.00 to Holt in Ohio to paint their OLD parts? The parts guy had just ordered 2 or 3 parts for an R90S guy in Silver Smoke and he said they were done beautifully. He claimed all were available but the “?” represents is not sure if they come painted or not. He told me he could find out more. Sounds interesting to me.

HERL, BOB: Anderson, S.C. 124,000 miles, 3/4 seat, oil cooler, upgraded triple clamp & swingarm, fork brace, Wile E. Coyote side covers & stickers. Could use a re-paint, God help me with the O.P. (Originality Police)

A huge thanks to the following members who sent in a donation (the largest was \$50!!) with their membership renewals: Bob Dean, Peter Deets, Norm Delezenne, Karl Duffner, Chip Dyson, Steve Gruner, Rick Huemmerich, Wayne Kosaka, Janet Meador, Jim Plavcan, Don Plocinski, Kirk Ratzel, Steve Rauch, Laszlo Repay, Lowell Roark, Dennis Shirk, Bill Stevens & John Yee.

Correction: Our last newsletter somehow had these 2 items left off after ‘The Origin of ‘LAST’ Rally’ article:

** See “The Incredible Story...” in the Summer ’04 Vol 1, Issue 4 of the club newsletter.

***Check out the Jan. 2001 issue of BMW MOA. On the cover is a group picture of all the attendees of the 1st & Last R90S Rally held at Mac Kirkpatrick’s house along with an article inside.

TOTAL R90S PRODUCTION

By Mac Kirkpatrick

Question: I’ve read that there were a total of 17,465 R90S’s produced. Does anyone know how many came to the U.S. and the breakdown between Silver Smoke and Daytona Orange?

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Membership Update cont. by John Yee

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Answer: The 17,465 sounds correct.

However BMW does not have complete records about each R90S. When inquiring about the color, build date, etc. of a particular serial number, BMW's response for some serial numbers has been effectively "We know your serial number was produced between Sept. 1975 and Jan. 1976 but that is all the information we have." They cannot always verify color for instance.

I spoke to Fred Jakobs, the head of BMW Mobile Tradition and he said that years ago when computer storage space was expensive, the information that was in books that had that information were input in computer storage, but only a little information was put in the computers due to the expense (at that time) of computer space. Then some of the books from the 1970's were discarded, which was, in hindsight, criminal. So the books are gone forever and BMW does not know for all serial numbers, which ones were produced in what color, or anything else about each bike.

Some of these books were retained, not all were lost. Additionally, when BMW forecasts production for each quarter, they set aside xx,xxx serial numbers for bikes to be produced during that quarter. However, that does not mean that xx,xxx bikes were actually produced. (The same applies to car production also.) The end of the quarter would come and production simply stopped whether they made the forecast number or not. Thus, BMW does not actually know for sure how many R90S's were actually produced. I hope that helps.

Additional comments - John Yee:

From what Mac has stated, I would guess that the maximum amount of R90S's that could have ever been produced would be the 17,465 figure and it might very well be possible that the numbers produced could be less than 17,465. If you break it down, that is only an average of 5,822 bikes available for each of the three years, worldwide! If we get even more anal about this, it breaks down even further to 3,493 bikes per year if 60% of the production was sent to the U.S., which would average less than 70 bikes per state if they were equally divided. Now you can see why it would be very difficult to get a huge number of R90S's together in one spot, so cherish the R90S rallies that you will be attending & take lots of pictures!

SUPPLEMENT TO TOTAL R90S PRODUCTION

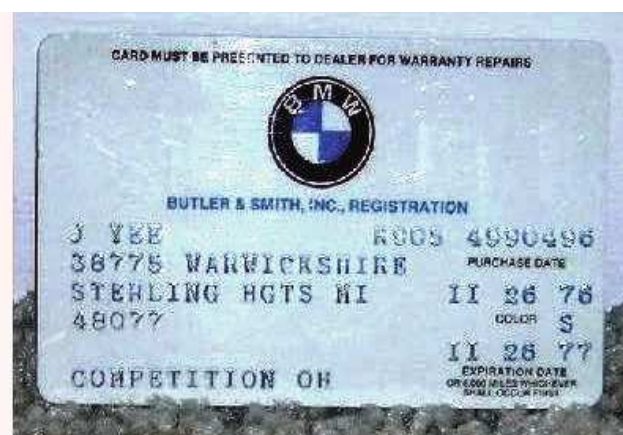
By John Yee

As per Mac's article from above, there have been many questions & speculations if a certain R90S was delivered from the factory in either Silver Smoke or Daytona Orange.

All we know for now (and we might not even be sure about that) is that the Silver Smoke color was the only color offered when

the bike made its first appearance in 1974. For 1975 and 1976, Silver Smoke was again offered along with (back then) a garish Daytona Orange which has become a must have for many of us.

The only way to (kind of) positively know for sure what color your bike was when it left the factory is to produce a warranty card from the original purchaser of the bike. What is this card & who has one? Well, it just so happens that I do! As the original owner, I received a plastic credit card sized warranty card. As you can see in the photo, this warranty card has my



name & (old) address embossed on it. Below my address are embossed 'COMPETITION OH' which stands for the selling dealer (Competition Accessories) & his location (Xenia, Ohio). The serial number, date of purchase & expiration is on the right hand side. Between the purchase & expiration date is (drum roll) color! The 'S' embossed after color can either stand for Silver or Smoke or maybe both? Can anyone shed some light on what the 'S' stands for? I have yet to see a warranty card from an original owner who has purchased a Daytona Orange bike. Does anyone in the club know if there would be a 'D' or an 'O' embossed for Daytona Orange? If anyone has this information it would be great to find out. For information purposes I would even like to take a poll to find out how many owners has a warranty card & what is embossed on them. Please send or email any info to me so it could be included in the next newsletter.

WANTED: I am hoping someone out there has or knows a source for the O.E. '74 R90S fairing decals. The originals were printed white on black & digital reproductions will have a very different look. I'd like to find N.O.S. or someone who has reproduced them the correct way. The left decal concerned spark plug & tire pressure. The right side was oil. They were both in German & English.

Thanks,

Chip Dyson (916)488-6451 or chip5183@yahoo.com

A few notes by Ed

As the Newsletter Editor of this fine club, I consider it a privilege and certainly an honor that I get to put this little rag together every three months or so.

Working with our fine Officers enables me to stay connected to what I like most about Motorcycles. The People who ride them.

I recently rode to Breakfast and listened to a bystander tell me why he hated BMW's so much.

"They're so nose up in the air", he stated. "and the people who ride them think they're really better than everyone else". While he didn't see my white Shoei sitting on the seat of my S parked only a few feet away, I let him ramble on and on about how corrupt and evil the Bavarian Motor company is.

I thought back to my youth and remembered the hatred that my older brother had for anything that didn't say Harley Davidson on it, and how I too had once been touched by the same prejudice.

It's always amazed me that as Motorcyclists we often look to our differences rather than to our similarities as some sort of declaration of who we are.

A fellow worker of mine named Steve rides a Yamaha R1. Impressive bike by any ones' standards to say the least. So one day last fall I invited him to join fellow member Chris Dobyns, another Vintage Enthusiast (Ernie Hilton) and myself for a little ride in southern Michigan. I don't know Steve that well so I expected a crazed, Stunt Rider who would probably blow by us in every turn (possibly on the inside) and would remind us were weren't worthy of the Yamaha's serious HP.

Instead, he was out just like the rest of us for a Day's ride, taking in all the colors and the cool crisp Midwest air for that one little blast before winter. The next day at work he told me how good it was just to get out for a ride, even though he thought we might look down on him for riding another brand.

And I guess that's the point. We all ride. And most of us rode something else in the past or have other brands in the garage. I know when I had my '71 Sportster that there was no doubt it was the greatest bike in the world. So as I strapped on the helmet, my philosophical BMW hating friend watched me turn the petcocks to "On" and press the starter to hear that old Twin come to life. His puzzled look only changed a little when I said, "We're not THAT stuck up, most of us like ANY kind of motorcycle"

Rick Griffith



Nothing Like a Track Day

A recent article in the BMWMOA Magazine described the track day experiences of an owner of a R100S. One of the issues that the author raised several times was the relative age of his bike compared to the other bikes at the track. The author indicated that one of the instructor / tech inspectors and some of the other riders thought such an old bike was inappropriate on the race track. The story went on to show how the bike and rider overcame those initial prejudiced statements and attitudes and had a great time on the track.

The point of this little article is to nudge you, gentle reader, into considering a track day outing for yourself and your R90S.

In the first place I have never encountered one of the tech inspectors or track day organizers who was considering keeping my bike off of the track. So I wouldn't let that part of the MOA article stop you. In fact the older bikes are treated with curiosity and interest, even if our bikes are older than many of the riders at the event.

For most track day situations it's enough to remove or tape over your mirrors, tail light and headlight. It is strongly suggested that you have fresh tires, front and back. The CLASS Schools run by Reg Pridmore require very recent tires and the threat to keep your entry fee but send you home are enough to ensure compliance, I would think. Other track day sponsors are not so strict, but obvious tire wear or cracking, loose steering head bearings, sticking throttle return spring and brake problems are grounds for tech failure although the same folks will work with you to correct the correctable.

A dealer run track day may not require full leathers (either one piece or zip-together two piece) but full body protection such as Aerostitch will be required. The details of this requirement have to be checked with the organizers of the event, but you can be sure that jeans and a light jacket will not be acceptable.

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Nothing Like the Track cont.

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Some of the more racing oriented track days have full leathers to rent right on site. In addition you will need gloves that fully cover the wrist; boots that go higher than the ankle and ideally encompass your leather pants are needed. And, of course, a modern helmet is necessary. The AMA requires SNELL 2005 or equivalent be used – most track day sponsors are not that stringent but, face it, if your helmet is 5 or more years old, it's time for a new one anyway.

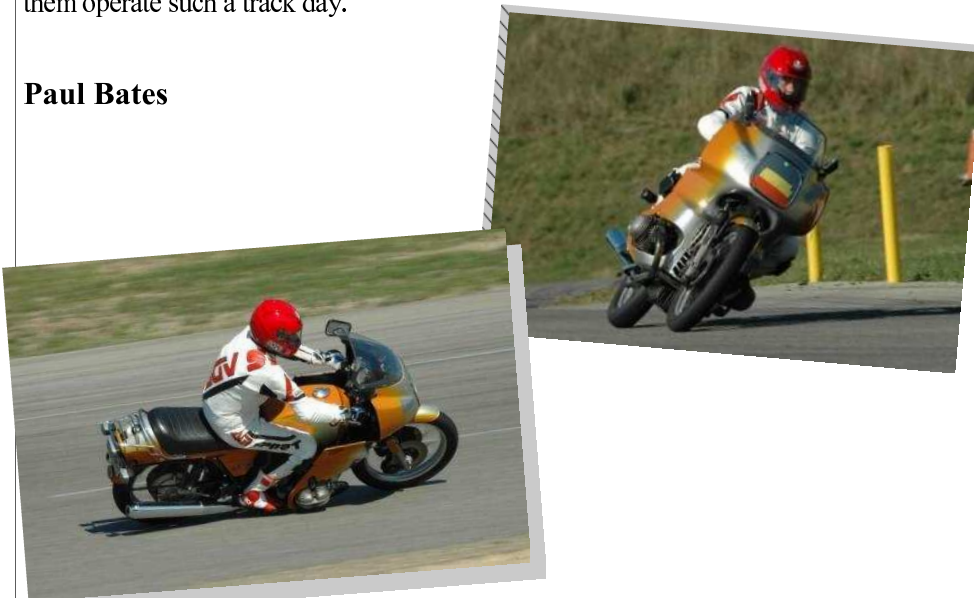
After checking out your bike and equipment you will be asked about the group you intend to ride with. Generally there are beginner groups for those never on the track before or with limited experience, an intermediate group having some recent track time and an expert group. If you're not sure what group to go in, then you belong in the beginner group. Depending on the rules of the event, you may be able to petition one of the organizers to allow you to move up a group – they may wish to ride with you and observe before granting approval.

Usually the track day sponsors will have expert riders with each group to observe and offer advice. In the beginner group the session would begin with the experts showing the newbies the proper racing line at slow, then gradually increasing speeds. On-track sessions are typically about 20 minutes; then the other two groups take their turn such that you are on the track once an hour. During the down time there are frequently class room or at least group sessions to discuss the track, approaches to corners, how to handle various situations and so on. This time is usually very valuable, giving you time to consider what you have done and will do in the next session.

You will find your speed and smoothness increasing; you can learn the limits of your lean angle and braking ability on the relative safety of a track without oncoming cars, stray animals, immovable objects and police. And did I mention – it is great fun!

http://www.sportrider.com/ride/146_0308_prep_list/ This website gives many links to established schools and track time organizations. Don't be put off by the racing school aspect of some of the groups – check out their web sites and email them for information and schedules. They nearly all have beginner groups with limited track knowledge that old farts like us can join. Don't forget to check with your BMW dealer too, as many of them operate such a track day.

Paul Bates



7th and LAST R90S RALLY

By **John Yee**

Treasurer/Membership Chairman

It's not too early to start making plans to attend the 7th and Last R90S Rally for 2006, to be held at a place called Iron Horse Motorcycle Lodge, located in Robbinsville, North Carolina, at the western part of the state.

Check out their web site at www.ironhorsenc.com I think you'll agree that it will be one of the most beautiful places to visit, meet up with new/old friends, ride the great roads and hang out to admire the classic R90S.

This lodge is located just minutes away from some of the best riding roads in the world like the Cherochala Skyway, the Blue Ridge Parkway and US-129, the road that's also known as, 'Tail of the Dragon' which is famous for its 318 turns in eleven miles.

For those without internet access, here is just a small list of amenities: Private, semi-private, and bunk house rooms; rent-a-tents or bring your own tent, RV sites with hook-ups, washer/dryer, pavilion with surround sound, large screen TV (I'll bring my 'On Any Sunday' DVD), internet service, pool table, karaoke, and covered bike parking.



Across the Pond with European R90s President Kirk Ratzel

Bol D'Or classic

Helmut Dähne took a third place in the 1973 Bol D'Or . In 2005, the famous "RS3" R90/S owned by Paris area BMW dealer, Arcueil Motors, took to the track again at the Bol D'Or Classic at Magny Cours raceway in France. TB racing came away with a solid 7th in the first heat and 9th in the second for a 6th overall finish. Fitted with one of the first 5 hand built R90s engines built to campaign the 1973/74 season, the RS3 also sported a R90s Sport Owners Club on the windscreen!

That's the eventual race winning Godier-Genoud Kawasaki setting up on the outside line, with Alain Genoud himself in the saddle 25 years after winning the 1975 Bol D'Or aboard this very bike. In tow is the 2003 winning Moto Bel' Guzzi, and eventual 3rd place finisher. There is no substitute for HP!

The 2006 edition will take place on April 1st-2nd.



Coupes Moto Légende 2006

European R90s club members are invited to meet at the Dijon-Prenois in France for the Coupes Moto Légende on June 3rd-4th - Europe's biggest classic bike event.

All are invited to rendez-vous in the Paris area on Friday, June 2nd for a casual 350-400 km "autoroute-free" ride to Dijon. For more information contact Kirk Ratzel at eur90s@hotmail.com or GSM +33 6 03 98 06 22

<http://www.coupes-moto-legende.fr/index-en.htm>



Member Profile

R90s European President Kirk Ratzel

The Right Bike, is like the Right Woman

by Kirk Ratzel

I have always admired those who acquired a R90s new, and somehow managed to hang on to it over all of these years. In these terms, I am a relative “newbie”.



(1974 growing up in New Jersey)

Instead at its launch in 1974, at 16 years old, I became the proud owner of a Kawasaki KS 125, as I dreamed of getting my drivers license and one day riding enduro's. That bike that would eventually see me half way through college before collapsing from total fatigue. In 1976 I earned my NJ state drivers license, partly thanks to my parents who insisted for reasons of frugality, that I ride a bike verses drive a car – hard to argue with that! Anyway, I had been on 2 wheeled motorized transport since age 11, so I was already an old hand or sorts.



(Lining up for a GP start in the Mojave desert in 1979)

When I graduated from Cal Berkeley, my parents whom were living in Germany at the time, offered me a 1950 Victoria KR25 Aero as a graduation “gift”. By that time, I was a 30+ weekend per year “dirt-bike warrior”, entering every enduro within driving distance of Northern California, and closing in on my dream of achieving “A” rider stature. So after a few spins around the block, that old wreck of a German bike languished unappreciated in my garage.



(1981: My graduation gift “fresh off the boat”)

Because I didn't know what else to do with it, it followed me to Europe in 1993 when my life was to take a big geographical change. After moving from Germany to Belgium in 1996, and missing bikes badly while wrapped up in the rat race, I decided to try my hand at restoration. In about a year's time, a beautifully restored pre-war technology 2-stroke took to the road again. Complete with: non-existent suspension, a pathetic power band, lots of noise and blue smoke and brakes which involved a lot of coasting and praying. But cruising the back roads of Walonia was an adventure.



(1996: Restored 1950 Victoria KR25 Aero)

A couple of things happened as a result of getting my hands dirty from this project. I had discovered another aspect of

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The Right Bike cont.

(Continued from page 9)

motorcycling that gave me infinite pleasure, but I began longing for more. There must be a classic bike out there that could cope with modern driving conditions, and tackle even the pothole ridden back roads of Brussels.

Having only peripheral knowledge about classic bikes, I set out doing my research based on a specification that I had set for myself:

- Eligibility for classic insurance rates
- Capable of maintaining high way speeds
- Nothing pre-disc brakes
- Good parts availability
- Reliability
- Classic bike styling

Affordable = 25,000 French Francs (about \$3,500 USD)

These criteria lead me to some bikes that particularly intrigued me: Moto Guzzi V7 Sport or maybe a Le Mans I, Honda 750 K0, Laverda SFC, Kawasaki 900 Z1, etc. Then one day I saw a R90/s in a motorcycle book for the very first time – and I knew that I would have to have it.

Shortly thereafter, I found a Daytona Orange for sale in southern France, and plotted to make the long drive a few days after Christmas together with my father-in-law, André, to buy it on the spot. But when the bike was sold out from under me 2 days before departure I was crushed.

Meanwhile, André took to the phone and located a Paris area classic bike shop, Moto Légendes, with 2 R90s's on hand. The very next day we checked them out, it would be the very first time I saw an R90s "in the metal". But I was quickly dismayed by the sorry state of both examples. I wanted a challenge, but never imagined ground up restoration. Once again André enters into the picture and asks the shop owner, Jacky, if he perhaps didn't have another R90s somewhere "a little less rustic".

His reply was "just mine, weather permitting, I've ridden it everyday to the shop for the last 10 years, but I have never considered selling it". My father-in-law pulled me aside and said, "did you see that guy's workshop, you can tell he is a pro – that's the bike we want. So, André wrangled a visit that evening to Jacky's home to have a look.

What I saw was a road grim encrusted 1974 Silver Smoke; I swallowed hard and tried to believe in the theory that underneath all that crud and grime laid a mechanical marvel. So on a cold winter night, I took a spin around the block, which confirmed all

my research on the R90s and addicted me forever. I made a silly offer, to my surprise Jacky said: "yes, you can come pick it up tomorrow". So on New Years eve 1997, I picked up the bike and made the 300 km trip in freezing rain back to Brussels. Jacky's last words were "hold her a 4500 rpm and she'll run all day". And sure enough, despite appearances, the bike ran like a clock.

Clean-up indeed revealed a mechanically perfect machine. Far from original, more of a compilation of parts really, my cosmetically challenged "rolling restoration" project was born. Via the internet I came to "know" Franck Cachia, Ken Claus, and Mac Kirkpatrick and learned that the model BMW I had stumbled upon was a real gem.

Then in 1998, a recent acquaintance and "fellow-American similarly with a French wife living in Belgium" (what are the odds?) asked me if I wouldn't come check out an old bike that one of the guys at work had up for sale. An avid tuna fisherman now 1000 miles from the Mediterranean sea, Carl had last ridden a bike when his 1979 Yamaha XS 750 was new, and was looking for a weekend pastime. He didn't even know the make or model, so when we rolled up I was surprised to see another 1974 Silver Smoke.



(1998: Carl Hemingway with my future café racer project bike)

Well bikes weren't meant to replace fish in Carl's life, so I eventually bought that tired, clapped-out R90s from him in 2003. I affectionately refer to it as my café racer project bike, although its restoration so far has cost me so far more than the purchase price of both bikes combined, so far just to have collected several boxes of "interesting parts" waiting to be a motorcycle again. But hey, when you are in love, "who counts"?

Well, I no longer have the French wife, and my father-in-law has since succumbed to cancer – but, I have still got the pair of R90s, as well as the Victoria, and my very first scoot' ever, a Japanese model 1969 Honda Z50A Monkey. Bikes have been my therapy when times were tough, and the common thread through life's travels, providing me with a passport to new friends and

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The Right Bike cont.

(Continued from page 10)

kick-starting life again when it had sputtered to a halt. I've since met the real "woman of my life" in front of the BMW flagship store in Paris, while running an errand for club president Bill Stevens. My R90s café racer will take on the Swiss Flag colors to honor her nationality, and my own 13 year odyssey working in Europe for a Swiss company. Life is full of strange twists of fate.



(2005: My female equivalent of the R90/S)

I struggle to keep my treasured '74 close to perfection, but I wanted a classic bike "to ride", so I do. I am proud of the patina she is taking on from seeing lot's of road use. In 2005, my Silver Smoke carried me thousands of km's from my home in Paris to: Magny-Cours for the Bol d'Or classic, Dijon-Prenois to the Coupes Moto Légende, to the classic road races in Chimay, Belgium to Luxembourg for the European BMW Club Meet, two boxer café racer meets, and dozens of shorter jaunts. Even with 165,000 km on the clock, she never once left me stranded on the road-side and didn't leak a drop of oil, and my son has literally grow up on the passenger footrests. But best of all, every time I climb on, I feel the same thrill as that 17 year old first hitting the road.



(2005 : Coupes Moto Légende – Dijon, France)

The R90s is a stunning piece of industrial art and a delight to own and ride, whether restored to perfection or as the French says "in its juices". I admire those of you who had the good taste, financial means, and foresight to acquire one new and somehow manage to hang on to it after all of these years. I also appreciate your acceptance of us "newbie's" into the fold, who may have wandered motorcycle life blindly before we figured out (or perhaps could afford) what you had learned years before. Is this a great bike or what!

Kirk Ratzel

Who runs this little organization anyway?

Well, basically our members do, but these folks graciously give their time and energies to make the club what it is:

President: Bill Stevens

European Chapter President: Kirk Ratzel

Australian Chapter President: Philip McCardle

Vice President: Ken Claus

Treasurer: John Yee

Secretary: Norm Delezenne

Newsletter Editor: Rick Griffith

Road Captain: Dale Wright

Safety Chairman: Howard Cobb

Historian: Mac Kirkpatrick

Help A Member Out

As we all know, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the south coast of our country with little mercy last fall. Imagine having to leave the area knowing that your beloved R90s will have to fend for itself.

Just some metal, rubber and steel you say. Well maybe to some, but not to R90s devotee Jerome Mouton. What was once a pristine example of our favorite Rolling Art suffered irreparable damage as the flood waters came and stayed and stayed and stayed.

If there's anything you can do to help out a fellow member, I'm sure he would appreciate your help getting his bike back to it's former glory. (ed)

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING. THE SUPPORT HAS BEEN OUTSTANDING

I AM LOOKING FOWARD TO MAKING ONE OF YOUR RALLIES IN THE FUTURE

THE BIKE IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING SAVED.

JEROME MOUTON

601 PAPWORTH ST. SUITE 200

METAIRIE, LA. 70005



Bringing it Back to Life by Eric Bahl

I am a new member and thought it might be interesting to some to follow the rebirth of my newly acquired R90S.

Some background, my name is Erik Bahl; I have been riding BMW's since 1988. My first bike and BMW was a 1964 R50/2. It was a rider, and I rode it hard. At that time I was a young Airman in the U.S Air Force. I did not know anything about bikes but slowly learned as I had to maintain it. In those days the internet was but a dream, and my only source of information was the small handbook that came with the bike. Wow, how things are different today. Information is just a few keystrokes away.

Well, I rode that bike for several years and it found a new home because of the need to liquidate for a house purchase. Fast forward to 2006, with a degree in Electrical engineering, and a lot more disposable cash. My focus the past few years has been vintage BMW's. I currently have a 1967 R60 with Hollandia sidecar. It is a rider that I travel to rallies on with my daughter Emily.

I have a 1941 R12 that I bought unrestored and spent 2 years restoring. My wife Jennifer has a 1967 R69S that I bought from a co-worker who purchased it new upon graduating from college. I had been looking at it for a couple of years. It had been parked in the back of his garage with 1/2 tank of gas (turned into molasses) since 1983. I purchased it about two years ago, disassembled the bike, redid the engine and updated all the necessary items. It was put back on the road last year. I decided, after making attempts to keep up with Jennifer on the R69S when riding my sidecar rig that I needed a more modern bike in order for us to realistically travel around the U.S. as I have planned on doing.

In the fall of 2005 I started putting out feelers for a 1970's BMW that would fit this requirement. As luck had it, I was at the Vintage Races at Barbers Motorsports in Leeds Alabama when I bumped into John Harper (I am sure several of you vintage guys know him well). He told me of a rough, but pretty complete R90S that was located about an hour south of me. Sounded interesting, the price that was floating around was \$900.00. He said it was rough on the eyes, but was matching numbers and had all of the important components. After some phone calls, I was able to connect with the owner of ~ 25 years. Boy was the bike rough looking. On top of that, it turned out the engine was seized. With one loose sparkplug, I was sure water had entered the cylinder. I found out that many years ago the bike suffered a hit to the rear. This damaged the rear sub frame and fender. This is why the bike was sporting a fender from a Japanese motorcycle. Also the front

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Bringing it Back to Life *cont.*

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fairing is an aftermarket version (Luftmeister).

The bike has 55k miles on the odometer. The serial number on the engine, ID plate and frame match (4071024). According to BMW archives this bike was built in November 1973 (they state this makes it a 1974 model). So a deal was struck for \$500.00 and the bike came home. Here is a photo of it as I got it. My diamond in the rough



Yep, the bike was cheap, and I have no illusions of what I will end up spending getting it back on the road. I plan on tearing every component down, rebuilding, repairing, repainting and replacing. I am not going for a show bike, but I am planning on taking the bike back very close to original. I decided the starting point would be the engine. This happened to be the source of the seizure as well. After tearing the engine down I was very pleased to find the pistons were not seized in the bores. It turned out one of the camshaft bearing screws had loosened up and gotten into the camshaft timing gear (see following photo).

Another good sign was that there was no water in the oil drained from the engine, transmission, and rear drive. I stripped the engine down, sent the cylinders to Bore Tech, and the heads to Randy Long.

The cylinders were original bore and required 1st overbore. Bill Moeller did a great job. I now have freshly painted cylinders with new pistons and rings. The heads required a good bit of work. Randy Long replaced the exhaust seats, valves, guides as well as some other general repair. Right before Randy was finished up, I found that the club offered improved aluminum intake tubes. Bill Stevens was gracious enough to drop ship a set to Randy and they are now installed on the ready to go set of heads on my workbench. Right now I need to have the crankshaft measured properly to determine what shell bearings I will need to reassemble the engine. Since this is the first time

I have been into an engine that is post 1970, I am waiting until I can get with some "experts" on the 70's bikes to show me how this is properly done. While I have been working on the engine, I have also been accumulating missing/damaged body parts. I have found a seat (post 74 model), cowl, rear fender, fairing, battery box, and a host of other parts. I now have all of the body work and hope that the expensive paint job will find its way into the bike budget this fall. I know that I could have bought a running R90S for less than I will end up spending once I finish this project. However, I will know this bike inside and out, and should have a bike that should be ready for several years of travel with minimal work. I can't wait to get this one done.

I belong to the MOA, Alabama BMW owners, as well as two vintage clubs. I have to say I have really been impressed with the R90S group so far. I had just got involved in the Yahoo group when John Borella was putting the group buy on the Boyers together (one is now in my garage). The R90S book buy was another great deal (Thanks Mac). I joined the R90S club for a whopping \$15.00 and club items keep arriving in the mail. Thanks to John Yee and all others involved. During the restoration process I will send a couple of write-ups in on my progress.



Another good sign was that there was no water in the oil drained from the engine, transmission, and rear drive. I stripped the engine down, sent the cylinders to Bore Tech, and the heads to Randy Long. Here is a photo of the engine after I degreased it, and bead blasted it.



Photography Contest Gets Rolling

Now is the time to get involved. Show off your talents, bedazzle your friends...and even your enemies.

Announcing the 1st ever **R90s Sport Owners Club Photo Contest**. Prizes are too illustrious to discuss here without a retained lawyer, but let's just say, "they're pretty illustrious!"

Here's the straight dope....

Contest starts April 1st and concludes June 1st.

Theme of the Contest: **Beauty within the R90s**

A maximum of three pictures please in jpeg or gif format. Bmp is acceptable also if you have to.

E-mail all pictures to me the Editor, **Rick Griffith**,

classic_r90s@earthlink.net or mail directly to:

32070 Nottingwood, Farmington Hills, MI 48334 if you're still using film.

Judging will take place by **You** the members as the pictures will be placed for viewing on the R90s Yahoo Group. Photographers names will be displayed while the pictures are being voted on. Officers are eligible (*hey, we need accolades too!*)

Here's a few tips on getting that prize winning shot. We've all seen full size pics of an R90s. Do something different. Instead, move in, get close, use simple compositions to concentrate on smaller areas of the bike, (if that's going to be your sole subject matter). Maybe combine parts of the bike with a pretty young lady???

Almost all of the parts that make up our favorite motorcycle are works of art in themselves. Experiment with the black and white setting on your digital camera or try some black and white film. You'll be amazed at what that old medium can deliver.

When the pics start rolling in I will place them on the Yahoo R90s Group. There will be more complete instructions but basically the winners will be chosen on or about June 1, 2006. Plans to make a 2007 R90s Calendar might be possible using your same pictures so don't be shy about submitting. And most importantly, have fun. *ed*



Parts Wanted:

Hi-Volume oil cooler just like shown in the photo. Fair price paid for example in very good to excellent condition.

Contact Kirk Ratzel at:

eur90s@hotmail.com

Thanks for your help!

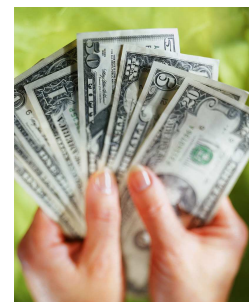
yours truly, Kirk Ratzel

Paris, France (Bern, Switzerland)



Let's Buy Some Beer!

Club Treasurer John Yee reports we are \$2215.76 to the good and the club money's are in good hands. Hey, it could be worse. Like the US Government, we could be printing up worthless R90s paper money!



Several highlights include \$110 from the sale of Billet machined venturi's as well as \$156.00 from Club member's who have donated to the club over and above their annual dues.

A special group of people you are indeed. Ed.

I Miss the MOA National Rally

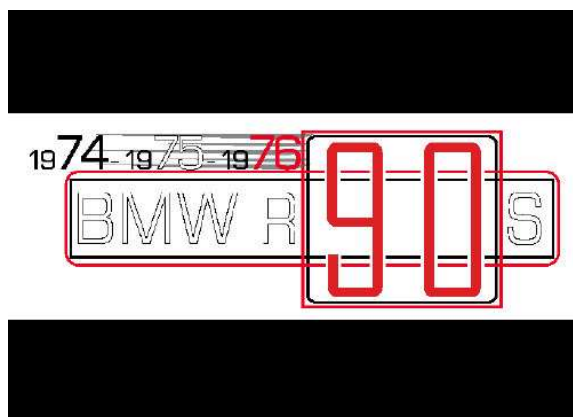
A few pics of the 2005 R90s get-together by Ken Claus. Was that really nearly a year ago? Thanks Ken for the pics.



New R90s Note Cards

Send your riding buddy a personalized note using an R90S Note Card. Flaunt the ownership of your favorite super bike. Send your favorite out of town sweet heart a note- let her know when you will be taking that next long ride! R90S Note Cards are now available complete with "plain Jane" white mailing envelopes for \$.75 each by the dozen not to include postage. To order, or for additional information, contact Bill Stevens at

wcestevens@lfsinc.com. Proceeds to benefit future club activities.



Annual R90S West Coast Rendezvous

Sponsoring Club: National R90S Sport Owners, BMW MOA Charter #67

Nevada County Fairgrounds, Grass Valley, CA for the weekend of June 9th-11th. Centrally located in the Sierra foothills. Located on McCourtney Road minutes from highway junction CA-49 and CA-20. Follow the signs to Fairgrounds.

\$21.00 per night reserved R/V campsites. Plenty of room for your tent, RV or trailer rig. Showers, restrooms, picnic tables, BBQ pits, and other amenities @ site.

Lodging, restaurants, & grocery nearby.

Group ride w/stop for lunch on Saturday. Nevada City wine tours available. Saturday evening dinner at fairgrounds. Pass the hat Saturday night to cover expenses.

Bring a door prize to give away.

R90S owners, enthusiast's, friends, and Bmer'philes welcome.

Please RSVP. For details and registration contact:

Bill Stevens Tel 360-592-2451 Deming, WA or email: wcestevens@lfsinc.com



VINTAGE Motorcycle Swap Meet

Mount Vernon, Wa

Vintage Motorcycles/Parts/Reproductions

Saturday, April 22, 2006

Skagit County Fairgrounds

Exit I-5(#225) at Anderson Road and Follow Signs to Fair Grounds

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC 8 am to 3 pm

Event Vendor Stall Rental Fee: 10'x10' at \$25US ea or 10'x20' at \$35 each or bike stall at \$10 per bike. Opens to vendors at 6:00am. All booths are inside pavilion. Stall reservations and fees must be received prior to April 10, 2006. One Day Only. Free Admission. Free Parking. Food Service will be available on site. Priority for location based on date application received.

Information:

Information: Daytime (9am to 3pm) call Gary at 360 675-8204. Evenings (3pm to 9pm) call Terry at 360 293-6480. E-mail: nsvme@clearwire.net

Camping Reservations: Call Fairgrounds Office 360 336-9453 (8:30 to 4:30) The VME Swap Meet will be held concurrent with the 25th annual Mt Vernon Automotive Swap Meet sponsored by the North Cascade Street Rod Association featuring vintage cars/trucks/parts/accessories. This event fills the fair grounds. The Vintage Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club of Washington sponsors the motorcycle swap.

The 21st annual Classic & Vintage MC Swap Meet and Show 'N Shine is the following day in Tsawwassen, BC, Canada at the South Delta Recreation Centre, just 60 miles north of Mt Vernon. (604) 299-0020 for info.