

The Retarded Spark

The Official Publication of the Omaha Chapter AMCA®

Farewell

Jarl Rue

Hello everyone! I hope you are all doing well and staying safe. If you have not heard by now, this will be my last "lowdown" because I am officially out of office as of the end of the year. It has been a nice 4-year ride as your president, plus, with the time as Swaney's vice president, let's just say I have been around for a while now. I would like to thank all of you for your support and participation as it does not happen without you!!!

So with that said, we need to say hello to our new President elect Robert "Bob" Hess and vice president Roger Greckel. They have both graciously volunteered to help steer this chapter into 2021 and beyond. Thank you gentlemen for stepping up and helping out.

So, when you get out this next year and see Bob or Roger, stop and say hello, introduce yourself if you have not already, and make them feel welcome. They will need your support as much as we have. Oh, and do not worry, I will still be around, I ain't moving to Florida!

See you on the flip side! **J.R.**

The President's Lowdown

Bob Hess

I just want to start off with introducing myself. My name is Bob Hess, and I will be the 2021 President. I am a year-old member that has enjoyed all events that I have attended. I hope everyone is well through these trying times. I do hope the swap meet is able to happen in February. I know a lot of work goes into this and so many people enjoy the camaraderie. I can't wait for spring to do more awesome rides. Hope to see more of you in the coming months!

Notes from the Editor-in-Chief

Bruce (Scoop) Johnson

Happy Holidays! We got together in October for our usual business meeting and voted in some new officers…Bob Hess is now our exalted President and Roger Greckel is our esteemed Vice President. (I lost my notes, I think they are the only new officers elected. I am sure I will be corrected if I am wrong, tune in next time for corrections if necessary).

We discussed the swap meet and show coming up…looking forward to that event! I also floated the idea to merge the newsletter with our Facebook page. This will enable us to reach more people, easily archive things, share event news, and make it much easier to pass the reins to someone else when I retire from the newsletter next year. So, changes are in the air! Be sure to follow us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/amcaomaha

And, as always, to keep our *Name That Antique Motorcycle* section going, please send in past photos of yourself or other members on a motorcycle to OmahaAMCA@gmail.com.

Farewell to Farmall Land (September 2020)

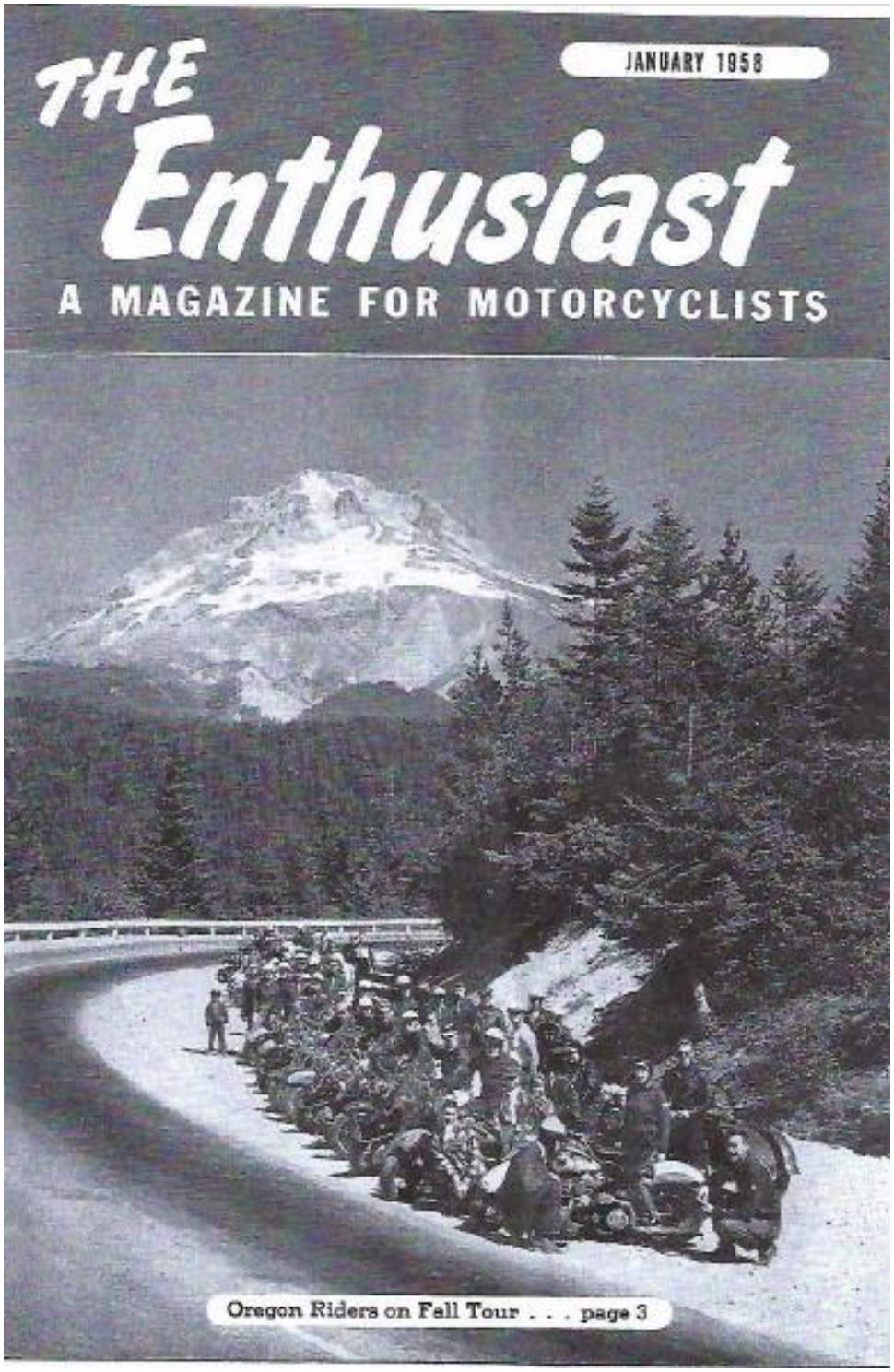
For full size pictures from the event, click here:
https://photos.app.goo.gl/mKZH410JfTGF8vmL8

It was kind of short notice but we were able to muster quite a few riders to head to Avoca Iowa for the last weekend of the Farmall Land Museum. It is a shame that this place folded, but like most things these days, the old owners can't find anyone to pass the business down to. If you missed it, well, you missed it. It reminded me of what my Aunt Marlene always says... “if it ain't red, it stays in the shed!"



Blast from the Past

Materials from the Bob Butterfield Vault



the MIDNIGHT RIDE

By Tom Gerber



IT all started when I saw the article in Popular Mechanics Magazine, entitled, "MOTORCYCLES INVADE THE WILDS". I showed this story to several of the senior boys in the high school at Berlin, Pennsylvania, where I teach, exclaiming, "That's for me." But little did I dream that I would actually fulfill that desire.

This past spring, I acquired a job for the summer, with the U. S. Forest Service, in Clearwater National Forest in central Idaho. My family and I were to be located at the Canyon Ranger Station, right on the North Fork of the Clearwater River.

One day, I asked the Assistant Ranger, Walt Smith, if he had ever heard anything of the fishermen who ride the trails on the little motorcycles. He calmly informed me that this was the place where they do much of their trail-riding. My

Tom Gerber at Goat Ridge Lookout, 6175 foot altitude.



to HEART LAKE

heartbeat increased about 50% for a few minutes. Walt assured me they would be out sometime this summer. I patiently awaited each weekend.

Two young fellows arrived early one Sunday morning, late in July. They were riding motorcycles of assorted brands, each powered by a 200 c.c. motor. When they were ready to leave for Skull Creek, one of the machines wouldn't start. That poor fellow had to hike, while the other one rode. Upon inquiring of the people coming back along the Skull Creek Trail, I learned that the boys had made it only two miles to the swinging trail bridge, and then hiked the remaining four miles. I assumed that these weren't the fellows I was looking for.

But on August 3, 1957, a yellow pick-up, with three Hummers, arrived at the Ranger Station. I introduced myself to Mr. Everett Stranahan, Harley-Davidson



Along the North Fork of the Clearwater. The long tube contains the fishing rods.





"Chuck" tied on a fly at Heart Lake and prepares for some fine fishing.



Hard at it and looking for the big ones. Rainbow trout made up most of the catch.

"Chuck" Snyder rests a bit and poses for a snapshot on arriving at the end of the trail . . . Heart Lake.





"E. B." Stranahan takes his Hammer over a log-festooned Isabella Trail Bridge.

Dealer of Lewiston, Idaho. He had with him, a young man and the young man's father, who had won a free fishing trip on the lightweights. After E. B. (as I later came to know Mr. Stranahan) finished inquiring about some trails, I told him that if he had another bike, I'd like to ride with them. Realizing my intense interest, he told me he would return another weekend and we would ride together into Heart Lake. It had to be the following weekend because I had to return to Berlin, Pennsylvania, within two weeks. E. B. was to let me know, during the week, if he could arrange it.

The following Wednesday, I received a radio message, through the Orofino Forest Service Office, that E. B. would arrive shortly after Noon on Saturday, August 10. I prepared a packsack and my fishing tackle. Saturday noon came and no E. B. On through the afternoon I waited, gradually losing hope. But at five o'clock, someone shouted:

"Gerber, your motorcycles are here."

I ran down to meet E. B. and Chuck Snyder, an employee who works at Stranahan's Harley-Davidson Sales and Service. From that very first moment, Chuck impressed me more than anyone I had ever met. If there is such a thing as a magnetic personality, Chuck has one.

In fifteen minutes, we were off down the road. I was glad for this two-mile ride to accustom myself to the bike, not having been on one for years. At the Aquarous Camp Ground, we picked up the trail for Goat Ridge. A mile down the North Fork, we veered north onto the Goat Ridge Trail and started to climb from 1400 feet. Being inexperienced, I slowed the others down, and darkness overtook us after about five miles. That left six to go to an abandoned lookout where we planned to spend the night. Chuck and E. B. could ride

(Please turn to Page 14)



Stranahan takes his bronc through some rough going. Look at those rocks!

MIDNIGHT RIDE TO HEART LAKE

(Continued from Page 34)

campground before loading it onto the pick-up. We bade our goodbyes, and they were off for E.B.'s motorcycle shop in Lewiston.

Someday, I'm going to have one of those little motorcycles for hunting and fishing. The amazing thing about them is the way they can keep up the grueling pace in that rough country. Never once did we have trouble — not even a fouled plug.

The following week, I stopped in at E.B.'s shop on my way home, and what a surprise I got! His is no ordinary place, but one that ranks with the finest automotive establishments anywhere.

Chuck proved to his in-laws that he could get to Heart Lake. I fulfilled my dream and E.B. proved once again, in his crusade for trailriding, that here is really a great sport.

OREGON MOUNT HOOD LOOP TOUR

(Continued from Page 5)

Mary Stimac, also of the East Side Motorcycle Company. We now were headed south on a narrow paved road that snaked its way through the valleys, most of the time following the rushing course of a clear mountain river. Campers waved to us from the many roadside areas provided by the state of Oregon. At mid-afternoon, we were gliding downhill through the famed Hood River valley, source of some of the best apples in the world. Another twenty miles brought us almost back to sea-level, for we were at the Columbia River where it starts its journey through the heart of the Cascade Mountains. Even though this part of the trip lies only an hour away from Portland, and is visited often during the year, there is a new thrill on each visit. When one looks upward at the sheer rock cliffs that rise perpendicularly for 2,000 feet from the river's edge, topped with tall, rugged fir trees, it is hard to realize nature has provided us with so much glorious scenery, almost in our own backyard.

But all good things must come to an end. Darkness was falling, so we reluctantly headed on west for the final stretch to our homes. The Mount Hood Loop Tour provided a fitting close to a splendid summer of riding weather, and there were also memories of earlier tours provided this year by the Oregon Harley-Davidson dealers. Seasons have a habit of flying quickly by as we get older, so for the next few months, we shall dream of the past and look forward expectantly to many more Harley-Davidson tours in the months and years to come.

CEREBRAL PALSY BENEFITS FROM LOCAL FIELD MEET

THE Crescent City Motorcycle Club of New Orleans, La., held a Field Meet on December 15. At this time, the Cerebral Palsy Telethon was in progress on television, and city-wide appeals were being made for donations in any form. We decided to pass the hat at our Field Meet and give all the entry fees and other returns to this worthy cause. One of the members delivered the money to the Auditorium where the Telethon was going on. The chairman was very grateful for the gesture, and he announced over TV how much good motorcycle riders can do, which was a great boost for all riders in the eyes of the public. The announcement over television was received with great applause. High point winner of the day was Merrill Marchadie; second place going to Forest Meyers, Jr., and third place to Shelby Lewis.

MIDNIGHT RIDE TO HEART LAKE

(Continued from Page 9)

in the dark just as well as in the daylight. The worst was yet to come, for I had told those fellows that the ridge top was so rocky, I felt the bikes wouldn't make it. Each time E. B. or Chuck would come back with the same question:

"Can you take a horse over it?"

I had ridden a horse over the same trail, to a fire, several weeks before. At places, the edge of the trail would drop off for several hundred feet and because of rock formations, the trail was always most narrow here. Upon reaching the ridge top, the moon was in all its splendor and added to the light situation. To me, this would be the real test for the 125 c.c. iron ponies. Without any hesitation, Chuck, who was in the lead, went bounding up and over the rocks faster than I ever saw any horse pick his way over a rocky trail.

Just before midnight, we arrived at the abandoned Goat Ridge Lookout at 6,375 feet, a climb of about 5,000 feet. Those little one-lungers performed perfectly at any altitude. We pooled our grub and Chuck made the best beef stew I've had in a long time. I got the sleeping accommodations ready.

Next morning, we were up early and it wasn't long until Chuck had breakfast ready. I squared away the beds and we took some pictures. Chuck had a movie camera and was making some footage for a television short subject about the trip.

The roughest part of the trip to Heart Lake was yet to come, with about four miles left to go. Out across Goat Ridge we went — Chuck in the lead, then E.B., and I brought up the rear. At one point, I got ahead of E.B. to take some colored pictures for slides. Just as I snapped the shutter, E.B.'s miniature bronc reared on its hind wheel, but he managed to hold it down. In a half hour, we were standing on a rocky point, looking down into Larkins Lake and northward to the St. Joe National Forest.

At this point, I had to leave the boys and return to the Station. Before leaving them, I again questioned whether they could make it into Heart Lake from Heart Pass, because there were several rock slides and two treacherous snow banks to cross. Again, Chuck came back with the same reply:

"Can you take a horse in?"

Of course, he knew you could because his in-laws had made the trip the season before by horse. Then, I discovered that this was a personal thing with Chuck. He had to make it to Heart Lake or bust. Not only that, but this was to be a motorcycle FIRST and I was proud as punch to be a part of it.

We parted, and I headed back to the lookout, stopping now and then to listen to the roar of those little engines, cracking the quiet and stillness of the wilderness. I had lunch at the lookout and started down the trail, half scared to death. I kept thinking of what would happen if I'd lose control along one of the drop-offs. Maybe E.B. and Chuck wouldn't find me if I would spill. After the first mile, I soon learned that going down hill was a lot easier than climbing because you have one less control to bother with. The longer I rode, the more relaxed I became. For the first time in a long time, I was doing something that was really exhilarating. I rode through stands of virgin timber, the likes of which I'll probably never see again unless I go west. Here was really a great sport. At various points along the trail, I left markers to indicate my progress without mishap.

I arrived at the Station late Sunday afternoon. I still didn't have enough riding, so I kept riding around the Station for extra kicks.

E.B. and Chuck arrived the next day about noon, displaying a great catch of rainbow trout. They had made the thirteen mile trip in less than two hours.

I just had to have one more ride on one of those little Harley-Davidsons. E.B. allowed me to ride down the road to the

(Please turn to Page 16)

2 THE POOP SHEET 1964

WE HOPE WE WILL HAVE ENUF

The latest word from Triumph is the non-availability of some models for the rest of 1964, and the season hasn't even started yet. We placed our orders early and even then will have only a limited number of the scarce models. If you are planning on a new Triumph this year, and this will be holding true of BSA too, better get your plans made early.

MESSED UP

You will notice the Activity Schedule is included with this POOP SHEET. Some of the dates are out of sequence and this resulted from not editing the original AMA schedule. We were in a hurry to get it out, and went down the line as it was given to us.

HO-HUM. JUST ANOTHER TRIUMPH

We got a 1955 Triumph T110 in trade a few weeks ago, and Don Thomas bought it to make it a next winters project. Well, knowing Uncle Don as we do, we didn't figure he would really wait that long, and sure enuf he tore the engine down. If you could have seen the whole bike, you would wonder how it could get in the condition it was. Anyway, when Don brought in the crankshaft we just figured that if any Triumph would need a re-grind on the shaft that here it was. No doubt the oil has seldom been changed, and it is a sure bet it probably had every kind of oil made used in it. What did we find? One throw was worn $\frac{1}{2}$ thousandth, and the other was worn 1 thousandth. Even the main bearings were still good, and the engine showed no evidence of having been down previously.

LOW VOLTAGE

This winter was especially easy on batteries. The real cold weather came early while the battery was still somewhat charged and able to stand a hard freeze. But just because the case isn't cracked doesn't mean the battery hasn't been damaged by setting around in a discharged condition. This will cause sulphation or hardening of the plates so they won't take a charge and cuts down the life of the battery.

DAYTONA NEWS

Canadian Don Haddow, riding a Sexton tuned Triumph 500 was in second place at Daytona until an exhaust pipe bracket broke. After 3 pits stops to make emergency repairs, he lost so much time that he finished out of the first 20 places. Haddow timed at 127 MPH, and was still in 3rd gear when he started the trial. Bill Erickson timed at 117 on his Yamaha YDS road racer, and was doing well in the race until another rider took him down, putting both out of the race.

ONLY THREE OF THEM

Because of the large delays we knew were coming in getting 1964 BSA models, we got in some late 1963s. Since there are no particular changes in these two models, you can make a good saving on a new bike.

SPRING PHYSIC-AL

In addition to the regular Castrol oils which we carry in 10,20,30,40,50,60,70, we also stock the Racing Castrol Castor Oil. This special oil is generally regarded as the best special purpose oil, and will stand the high heat conditions encountered in racing engines.

TIME TO START

With spring already here it's time to start getting the old job ready for the coming season.

If you put any polish or preservative on the chrome, be sure you remove it from the pipes before you start the engine or you will end up with discolored chrome. Blue-dray will remove the discoloration already on the exhaust pipes.

If your machine uses an oil tank, drain the engine to remove any excess oil which may have dribbled through the pump. In any case it is a good idea to change the oil, and check the gearbox and primary drive levels.

If you drained the gas tank refill with fresh gas and on two strokers don't forget to add the oil.

If you removed the battery, check the fluid level, be sure it is charged, clean all the connections & install

It would be a good idea to check the tappets,plugs, points,tire pressure, chain adjustments, wheel alignment, lights, brakes, and fork to frame bearing for adjustment. Squirt some oil into each cylinder and over the valves and rockers before you start it up.

If you have never checked the fork fluid level this would be a good time to drain and refill.

After you have started the engine check to see that the oil is returning to the tank and if it has an oil pressure indicator that it shows pressure. Cushman owners should be carefull since the check valve in the oil pump body may have corroded and will cause the pump to fail to pick up oil.

If for any reason the engine shows lack of compression, you may have a valve stuck open. You might have to remove the head to get this operating.

Before you put the bike on the road be sure you have lubricated everything that swivels, turns, slides or moves. We have that marvelous Wonder-lube for the rear chain in easy to use spout cans.

HIGH VOLTAGE

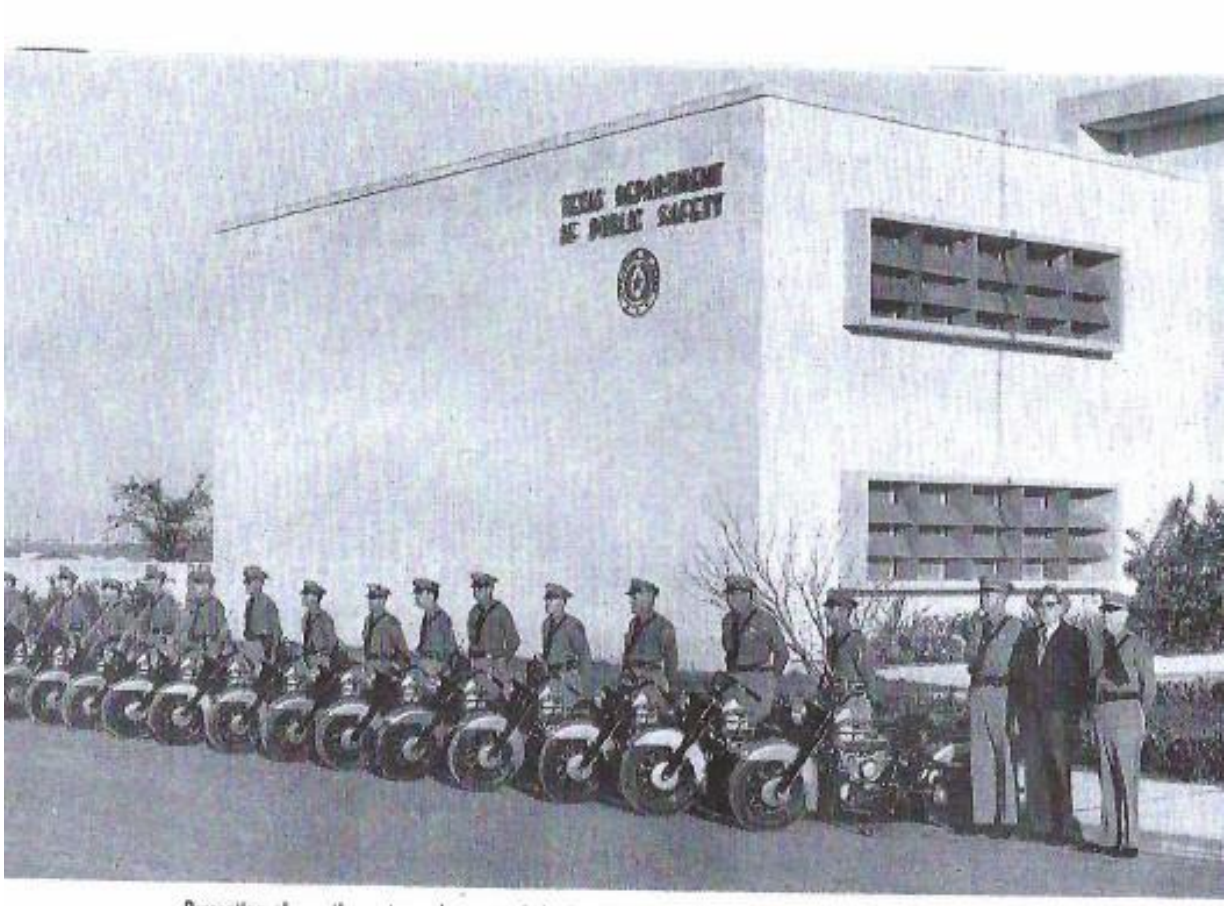
Reports from the few BSA Lightnings that so far have been sold around the country give the impression that it makes the Super Rocket appear like a 250. The new Lightning should really be a charger.

PUT 'EM ON

Just because spring is in the air and days are warmer don't make the error of taking too little outer wear. The weather can change in a matter of minutes, so put on the clothes. You can always take them off and tuck them under the elastic strap which you should have on the seat. If you don't have one, get one for 80 cents.

LOTS OF ACTIVITY

All the local scramble races for this year are to be run on the track which is south of the airport off Iowa #28 toward Norwalk. Milliolabs will be held west of the John Deere plant where they have been in the past. The only dirt track $\frac{1}{2}$ mile race is scheduled at Cedar Rapids, and the State Rally will be held at Ft. Dodge this year. With nearly 60 events scheduled it looks like 1964 will be a really active year with lots of places to go. We'll be at a lot of these to record the events in 8mm color movies.



Presenting above, the motorcycle corps of the Texas Highway Patrol taken the day before Governor Price Daniel's inauguration. From left to right are: R. W. Wright, John Rogers, Rufus Taylor, Eugene Dmuth, Jeff Heard, H. L. Rebuck, R. J. Richardson, Billy Beavers, P. M. Slaton, W. H. Nord, E. M. Hale, H. F. Bennett, J. W. Bissitt, Capt. E. K. Brewing, Austin Harley-Davidson dealer P. R. James and Chief W. J. Elliott.

Name That Antique Motorcyclist

Who Am I? Stay tuned to the next edition for the answer.

Please submit your photos to OmahaAMCA@gmail.com to be included in future newsletters.



Name That Antique Motorcyclist



March's Motorcyclist
Thomas Gardels

Classifieds

FOR SALE: 1955 Omaha license plate, parts books, manuals, and other books. Selling for a fair price to anyone interested. Reach out to Chuck Pfitzer at cpfitzer68@gmail.com.

Please send classified ad requests to OmahaAMCA@gmail.com

Omaha Chapter Directors



Bob Hess
President
(402) 690-0883
bobhess22@gmail.com



Roger Greckel
Vice President
(402) 510-5527
rggreckel3@gmail.com



Nancy Larson
Treasurer
(402) 660-4199
quiltaholic62@gmail.com



Paul Shedd
Secretary
(402) 330-4856
paulbe155@yahoo.com



Scott Larson
Road Captain
(402) 660-3932
bentbike62@gmail.com



Bruce Johnson
Newsletter Editor
(402) 677-3003
bruce.g.johnson@gmail.com



Larry Clare
At Large Director
(712) 310-3347
clarel1@peoplepc.com

Newsletter and Membership Information

This newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to Omaha Chapter members, the editors of other AMCA® Chapters, the Directors and Officers of the Antique Motorcycle Club of America®, as well as individuals and businesses that support the Omaha Chapter, AMCA®, Inc. Membership in the Omaha Chapter of the AMCA® is open to all National AMCA® members in good standing. Omaha Chapter dues are $15 per year, which entitles each member to an annual subscription to the chapter newsletter, all chapter announcements, and an Omaha Chapter membership card. The membership year begins January 1st and ends December 31st. Please see the website (www.omahachapteramca.org) to join online, or mail dues and membership applications to Omaha Chapter AMCA® (PO Box 1712 Bellevue NE 68005