

Bob Haggart

I was born in a small steel mill town in south western PA in 1940. During WWII my uncle was an equipment tester at the Aberdeen proving grounds. One of the things they tested was motorcycles. He often came home on a US Army motorcycle. That was when I was in the ages of 4-6 years old. Then, at age of 13, I discovered a motorcycle shop across the river from us. Motorcycles in my neighborhood!

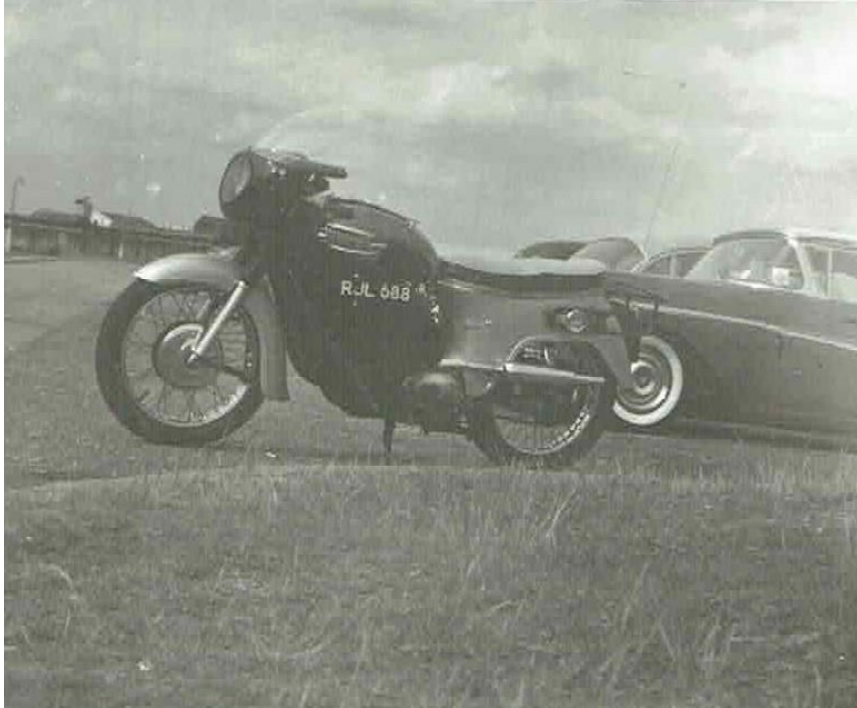


For a year and a half I worked there at the local Harley Davidson shop after school and all day on Saturdays. The owner was Marty Zennoti. His brother Dominick, owned an Indian and Triumph/ BSA shop next door. They were bitter enemies. Never spoke to each other for over 30 years. I just did clean up jobs like sweeping the floors, cleaning the hand tools, going after lunch and such.

My mother remarried and my family moved away to a town where there were no motorcycle shops, and besides, I was now 16 and for some strange reason, my attention turned away from motorcycles to automobiles. As my stepfather and I didn't see eye to eye with each other, I quit school and the day after my 17th birthday, I was in the USAF.

After all my training I was transferred to Germany, then France where the base closed and we moved it to England. January 6th, 1960. I was there for about 6 months when this old Sgt. had a motorcycle for sale for \$35. It was a 1938 Ariel 350cc single. The rear sprocket was so worn out about every 5 miles or so the chain came off the sprocket. I then traded that bike in for a 1956 BSA 350. I was in my glory.

Four months to the day, a guy in an English mail van made an unauthorized left turn in front of me while I was passing, that placed me in the hospital for the next 6 months. What a bummer. My good friend had a 1955 Triumph Thunderbird for sale and I bought it while I was still in the hosp. This bike soon was discarded to a friend and I bought a 1960 Triumph Thunderbird with the bath tub on the rear.



Slow but sure I began to change it, piece by piece into a Bonneville. This was done by many bottles of Johnny Walker Red and the Triumph export manager, Mr. Robertson. But I still had the bath tub and just couldn't get rid of it. All this time, I was learning to ride and race on the highways and race tracks there in England. No speed limits except in built up areas, (towns 30 mph). I really felt a fool with the Bonnie engine, clip on bars, rear foot rests, full racing fairing, a Bonnie front fender but a bath tub on

the rear. Then it was time to return to the USA. I took my bike up to Triumph to have them ship it back to my home town at the price of 6 Johnnies.

April 1963, went to the rail yard in Pittsburgh to get my bike. It was only about 50 miles one way but let me tell you on the way back, it was more like a thousand miles, and hit every red light in town. I got home and the next morning I unloaded the crate from the rear of the pickup. Started to unpack it and as the sunlight shown into the crate, I was shocked to see it wasn't my bike. This one was a fire red & silver color and no bath tub. What the heck was going on? I quickly finished unpacking it. My God, it was a 1962 Bonneville, I thought. Then I checked the serial numbers, it was my bike. Thanks to Mr. Robertson & Triumph, they didn't want that bath tub in the US. There was a letter with the paperwork from Mr. Robertson. He said as he knew how much I wanted to road race here in the states, so he had my engine upgraded to a Factory Thruxton engine, (I think they only made 60) and a close ratio gear box...and a racing I did go.

I was stationed at Beale AFB, Calif. but all the road racing was mostly in the south. No problem I had plenty of leave time to go anywhere. I took a lot of 3 day leaves. My favorite race track was at Vaca Valley (it also was the closest) and second was Willow Springs raceway which was a very fast track. We raced in a parking lot of a very large stadium, somewhere once, I Just can't remember where it was, and I guess getting old has something to do with that.



It was Nov. 1964, Kennedy had been killed and we were deep into the Viet Nam war. I got orders to go to Nam. Not knowing what was to come of me and my family, I sold my bike (I regret that to this very day) and prepared for the move. Then at the last minute, my orders were changed, I was being reassigned to Germany...and away we went with no bike.

While in Germany, I got involved with automobile drag racing. I had a Chevy Corvair. I modified it by installing a Carter 4 barrel on it. What a rush...then the summer of '67 the newer cars were coming over and I got hooked on the

'68 Camaro. It was Nov. '67 in New Jersey where I picked up my '68 Camaro and drag racing we went to Washington State. Then again orders for Germany in Nov '68. While there in '71, I bought a '72 Daytona 500cc. Loved that little bike but it wasn't a Bonneville, but it was a motorcycle. I was transferred to Grand Forks, ND. Oh, whoopee, I lot of good weather to ride there. Sold it and that was the last of my bikes for the time being.

In 1980, I found myself in Colorado Springs. Bought another used Daytona. It cost more to run it than I had money willing to spend on it. Sold it 1981. I was still interested in motorcycles, but started my own business and felt I needed my money for the business and the family. One day a lady came into our store and wanted to buy a computer for our local library. Her name was Lynn Kerr. She rode a motorcycle! My kind of person. Then, through Lynn, I met Carman and John Scheibeler. They were trying to keep a British Motorcycle Club, (British Motorcycle Association of Colorado) going and was needing help. I told them I would help them with all their printing needs at no cost to them. This went on for about 8 to 10 years. During this time I was considered an "Honorary Member" and I received a 5 year and a 10 year pin. Then time just kind of got away and so did the club.

Fast forward about 20 years and June of '14, I bought a 2014 Triumph Thruxton. In no way shape or form did I think about the BMAC until one day I was at Apex and I overheard a guy talking about a local British motorcycle club. I found out when the meetings were and the rest is history...

I was in the USAF for 23 years; retired April 1, 1980, then 3 years designing, building and installing welding robots for IGP, a local company, three of which went into the old Denver Equipment Co; and was the owner of Innovative Concepts Computer Co. for 23 years.

So, now you know a bit about me. I'm really not new to the club, just a new paying member.
How may I help?