



Yankee Chatter



Spring 2019

www.yankeechapter.org

Est. 1973

Antique Motorcycle Club of America
Yankee Chapter

Ride 'em, don't hide 'em!



-CONTENTS-

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
EDITOR'S PAGE
GATHERING OF THE FAITHFUL
MY TRIP TO WAUSEON
ROBIN'S MEMORIALIZED INDIAN SCOUT
UPCOMING EVENTS
OTHER STUFF

Spring 2019 President's Message

With our Christmas party and the holidays behind us, winter was dragging on and on and on. The January Springfield Bike show did provide a little relief. Our Saturday display was well attended and fun. Sunday brought an ice and snow storm that put a damper on attendance and put a damper on our fun. My thanks to everyone who brought bikes to display and help man the booth.



If I sound like I was becoming desperately bored, I was. I was so desperate that I broke character and bought a shiny brass 1948 front fender ornament. The ornament's owner was a tough negotiator. He was so tough the only way he would sell the ornament was for me to buy the 1948 Scooter, it was attached to and his 1946/1947 Side-Kar rig. Now that I have two rusty incomplete barn-find scooters to tinker with; winter is flying by.



Our 2019 calendar is filling up with Camp & Rides, local events and our National Meet. As you read this, your Board of Directors is hard at work putting together this year's Terryville National Meet. Considering 2018 was our first year in Terryville, our meet came off surprisingly well. All credit for this success goes to the many volunteers that put it together and worked out the growing pains that come with a first-year event.

National Meets require a tremendous amount of planning and on-site management. Last year the lack of volunteers required several people work the entire weekend without a break. Please step up and help this year. Two hours of your time at the gate, at the hospitality tent, guiding people to their camping/vending spots, etc. will make a tremendous difference.

Last spring, I tried to thank everyone that had helped throughout the preceding year. Unintentionally, I missed a few people and hurt some feelings. I don't want to make that mistake again. This year I'm playing it safe by simply saying to everyone THANK YOU for making and keeping the Yankees number one!

Ted



Editor: Ted relayed that he has absolutely no intention to do such fine external restoration, but rather is retaining the external patina, whilst giving all the innards every attention needed to make his two new treasures reliable runners, including the one sans side kar replete with its swine association!

Editor's Page

Well, as you might be able to guess, this issue subtly reflects my interest in what was surely THE superbike of its era, the Crocker. As with the story of most individual industrial visionaries, Al Crocker produced exciting and quality products without benefit of much "business acumen". What he did possess was the ability to produce some kick-ass motorcycles that could outrun almost anything else that had two wheels at that time.

In this aspect, he did indeed stand in good company (no pun intended!) - Hendee and Hedstrom of Indian come to mind, including George Brough and Philip Vincent, as well as scores of others, both domestically and abroad that couldn't outlast the "successful businessman" moniker.

I think it's fair to conjecture that we have such fine examples of motorcycle engineering and production because these gentlemen refused to be throttled by the mundane perception of "success" defined as some large, excessive financial reward. These guys had specific visions and goals primarily driven by passion more than profit... at least as long as they could keep their doors open.

To be fair, I can't discount Harley's longevity, nor that of Cioishiro Honda and his dogged pursuit of success for their contributions to the motorcycling world.

As with anything we are passionate about, which for our fellow Yankees is the maintaining, restoring and riding of some (now) kick-ass machines (including Ted's Cushman scooters!) defined by their very survival. It's not about making money, but facilitating our own individual happiness as we journey through life.

On a personal note from what I wrote in the last edition, I am making a bit of progress in addressing my ability to squeeze the clutch on my '09 Wee Strom (yeah - that's 2009, not 1909!), but it's slow going. I'm hoping the physical therapy and upcoming neurology tests (and warmer weather) will get me there not only the Suzuki (which has a rather easy cable actuated clutch) but the other bikes I have, including Rosa, my Italian mistress that used to be an '86 MG LeMans IV; its clutch pull is more challenging.

I say "used to be" as I'm trying to make Rosa appear more like a LM II or III that eliminates the "swoopy" and "plastic" look of the IV that has the side panels integrating into the square, rear fender. I just hacked a single seat for it by modifying a Honda cruiser seat I got from Bob at The Classic Motorcycle Company at last year's Britjam. With some luck I'll complete the rewiring I did to replace the dash and controls and complete the other mods (including paint) by the first or second camp & ride. Look for photos and story here in the next edition!

Greg

A special thanks and shout-out to our contributors in this issue, "Doc" Kyller, Bill Thoare and Robin Gazza!



Gathering of the Faithful

By George Kyller

2018 Annual Gathering of the Faithful Car Show

Can this be a new Yankee Chapter tradition?

I have attended the "GOTF" for a few years now, formerly held in Acushnet MA. It has always been a fantastic car show with some very unusual and rarely seen pre-1960 autos. Everything from totally stock street cars, sprint cars from the 30's, front engine dragsters, customs and more. In 2016 GOTF was moved to Middleboro, and for the first time I decided to take a motorcycle. I rode in on my recently completed 1951 Nimbus, which was one of but 3-4 motorcycles in attendance. It was a little chilly and extremely windy to the point I was nervous the bike might fall off the center stand. I didn't expect to show the bike, this being a car show, but they pointed me onto the field at the gate and it was a lot of fun. Not warm being late October but certainly worth the ride.

Fast-forwarding to October of 2017, about 2 weeks before the show I received a phone call from Jack Wegman, the show promoter. He asked me if I would be interested in showing a few vintage bikes. It was very short notice but I told him I would make a few phone calls and do my best. Thanks to Daryl Cutter, Mike Giordani, Peter MacMurray, Paul Paddock, Ted Smith, and Russell Wilder, we were able to commit to a gathering of 12-14 bikes for display. The weather forecast was terrible, yet they all made long drives to attend, exhibit their motorcycles and support the event. It did not take long for attendees to gather around the bikes. It was truly amazing to me that our corner of the field seemed by far the most popular of the show. Amazing because prior to this the event had been exclusively automobiles.

True to forecast, the weather didn't treat us well and it descended into full-on rain by 11:30 or so. We had set up a pair of pop-up shelters which I expected to put the bikes under once the rain began. Instead we all gathered around a couple of tables beneath the tents, sat, ate and had a wonderful lunch that my wife Laura had put together for the group. I still laugh; all these rare and beautiful machines being pelted by rain drops while we ate, drank and had a wonderful time enjoying each other's company and stories. To our amazement, as the rain began the automotive exhibitors began to abandon the field. As the rain intensified the departures became a rout and within a short time, we found ourselves almost alone on the field. Being Yankees, we all made the best of it and continued to enjoy ourselves, eventually packing up a few hours later, the last of the exhibitors.

Following the show the promoter asked me if I would be interested in doing it again for 2018. "Of course, I'll do what I can" was my response. I put the word out in September asking for some old iron to attend. Laura, again, offered to be on board with helping me and prepped several trays of sandwiches, snacks and a cooler filled with beverages. From the response I received it looked like 20 bikes should be on display at the show. I was hopeful and would be happy going from 12 to 20. The forecast was for a bit of rain in the morning. Of course, I thought, there goes the show! I set up my little corner spot on Friday night to avoid any possible confrontation with a vendor which we all know can get dicey.

Saturday morning, I arrived early and thought, well, last year was a blast, let's make the best of it. As I was starting to unload my bikes, I see the first bike coming across the wet grass, John Dolber on one of his vintage BMW's. I had called John 2 days before to inform him of the event. It's 8 AM and John had rode from Whitinsville MA, not a short ride, to attend. He jumped right in and asked what he could do to help unload and set up. As the day unfolded people rode in

from central MA, the South Shore, Cape Cod and beyond. Trailers came in from Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Needless to say, I was pleasantly surprised. The weather was improving and a few more bikes showed. People I had never met came to introduce themselves and ask what they could do to help. Before I knew it, the 20-bike count goal was met and exceeded. We had to take up a little more space than I had planned for so we formed an area shaped like a U so people could walk along and view all the bikes.

One of many favorite moments of the day was to see Tony Lockwood on his '75 Norton come across the field with a big smile. I had recently met Tony at the Barnstable vintage show and sent the invite to him. For those of you that may not know Tony, he's an extraordinary guy. He left his home on the Cape while the roads were still rain soaked and traveled 50 plus miles to attend. We learned a little something about Tony that day, he had celebrated his 80th birthday back on January 21st ! I may get in trouble for sharing this, but I heard that he celebrated 80 by touching 80 on the speedometer of his Norton on that day!!

The temperature continued to rise into the 60s and the sun came out. The count exceeded 30 and the conversation amongst everyone was full on. It was a great thing to watch. People showing their machines, spectators hovering, others sitting relaxed. The air filled with sounds of a 1903 Clement, 1914 BSA, 1939 BMW R, 1938 Nimbus and others idling for all to hear. Additional bikes came across the lawn and the count of machines hit 40! The cameras were firing away. I was going a bit crazy to do my best to keep everything in motion but couldn't help notice Ted Smith and others putting future motorcycle riders on their machines to pose for pictures with mom and dad. Mark Turkington putting spectators on his beautiful 1964 Ducati and which kept the cameras clicking away. One person came up to me looking for someone they knew years ago and oddly enough, I was able to point and say, you mean him? What a pleasure it was to see groups of all kinds mingling and talking bikes, family or whatever. Personally, to see Laura sitting with Tony Lockwood, Peter MacMurray, Ted Smith and Alfred all with big smiles was another one of those special moments I'll treasure. Paul Paddock showing off his newly acquired and very rare 1969 Sandcast CB750, it will be another of his amazing restorations, I'm sure. People pointing at the various minibikes and reminiscing about the one they had back in the day and should not have sold it. Much to my surprise, as I met more people that came in on bikes, I learned of 8 or 9 neighbors within 3 miles of our home housing some type of vintage motorcycle.



To say the day was a success would be an understatement. The goal was to gather and show vintage bikes, enjoy good company, meet new and old friends, enjoy some food and drink, learn something new, look at some old unique 4 wheeled vehicles and just relax. The goal was achieved. There was no competitive edge to the event nor should there be in the future. As the crowd thinned and most headed home, a couple of us enjoyed an end of the day beverage and conversation while packing up. Expecting to be there late doing this alone, I was pleasantly surprised as people pitched in and helped cleanup and pack which was completed in no time. Being the last event of the year for many, we made it last as long as we could and as the previous year, we were among the last departing.

As I lay in bed smiling that night, thinking about the day and going thru every bike in my head, it dawned on me that we had represented every decade of the 20th century within our display! I still can't believe it. Thanks to Mark Turkington bringing his 1902 Clement and a 1914 BSA, one of my neighbors bringing his 1928 Indian; Ted Smith with his 1936 and 1939 BMWs; Mike Westgate's 1947 Indian; Several Tumbleweeds showing Harleys of the 40's thru the 80's and many more machines ending with a 1993 Harley Soft tail. Honda, Suzuki, Harley-Davidson, BMW, Clement, BSA, Triumph, Moto Guzzi, Nimbus, Norton, Indian and Ducati were all there for people to enjoy. Very impressive and thank you all !!!!

Every time I looked, there seemed to be a crowd interested in the bike show within the 19th annual car show. I wasn't sure if the end result would be a handshake saying goodbye and thank you for coming or an invite for 2019. It was ultimately the invite that came from Jack with enthusiasm. I have to thank those who attended, assisted and displayed bikes for making the 2018 GOTF such a success, THANK YOU.

Details for 2019 are October 19th in Middleboro MA. I have the okay to take as much space as I need. If you have an antique motorcycle (35 years & older) or vintage motorcycle (25 year & older) and are interested in displaying a bike, feel free to contact me at georgekyller@gmail.com or 781.696.6238.

It's a great end of the year event; motorcycles, cars, flea market and a \$10.00 admission.

Can this be a new Yankee Chapter tradition?.



Photos courtesy of George Kyller

My Trip to Wauseon

By Bill Thoare

This story is not about my bikes or wrenching tips just the adventure of getting to the swap meet...

This was my first time going to Wauseon in 2018. My friend Jerry just purchased a 22 foot toy hauler. He asked if I wanted to go on a trip, then ride bikes around once we got there. Said we can split the gas. I look at the event calendar see the feature bike is a Norton (good sign). Next month is Wauseon; I have never been. How easy can it be when we have a month to plan? We decide to leave on Thursday morning and get the truck serviced. It's a 2103 GMC 3500. Replaced the transmission lines, check everything; \$1,500. We load bikes into the trailer Wednesday night. Wake up Thursday morning and hit the road.

Well, Thursday morning it's pouring we head north on 395. Trailer is shaking a little. Oh yeah, this is our first time towing this trailer; the trailer is all over the road... this is within the first 10 miles. We pull over make sway bar adjustments and it gets worse. We pull over again, adjust the sway bars the other way now; with the rain and wind we can do 65! Awesome! Lets settle in for a nice long ride. Jerry says I got some pretzels in the back seat. Lets have a snack. I break open the seal and try some; can't believe that pretzels can go bad! I almost puked right there. I'm like what the f**k kind of pretzels are these? I look at the date they are 7 years old! At least the bag seal was still intact. That was funny.. to Jerry!

We are cruising along and figure we can stop every time we get to $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tank and fill up. This is working great. Stop at nearest rest area at quarter of a tank fill up switch drivers. We got a system. 5 or 6 hrs into trip we go by gas station and we are above $\frac{1}{4}$ tank it says 35 miles to next station we are feeling lucky. As we are driving along, I decide to do the math: we are getting 7 miles to the gallon. Oh sh*t! And, it's all up hill. We turn off AC and coast down hills, so we should be OK. Gas station sign up ahead! I can read it even without my glasses! We averted disaster! Pull off interstate and the truck bucks. Then it bucks again. Put it in neutral we are coasting. This should be close enough. Better here than on road. Keep coasting there is an open pump! Sweet! 20 mph, then 10 mph, then 5 mph, then 1 mph and we made it! Awesome this is a good story to tell our friends. Ran out of gas at the pump!

A couple of hours later we start to hear a tin knocking noise. We pull over and it looks like heat shield on exhaust manifold is loose, so we rip it off. Noise goes away. 5 more hrs of driving somewhere in Ohio . of course now we get gas if needle is below half a tank! Truck makes a bang noise then a smell .. now we are coasting again. I look at Jerry I think I broke your truck. #\$\$%, *%^(%%!@. Jerry is a little cranky. Understandably. We call AAA. They say we need 2 tow trucks. One for truck one for trailer. Okay what ever.. how soon? They reply we will get back to you. We have 4 beers in the middle of nowhere. 20 min later we have no beers! While we are killing time we just space out at the night sky. It is a much prettier sky out in the middle of nowhere. Bright idea! We separate the truck from trailer so the tow trucks can load us up quickly and head towards Cleveland to get repaired... I hope. Well, the sky is beautiful still. Then we see shooting stars and contemplate... This we take as a sign that there are greater forces looking out for us. It's nice but really want to be on the road. Let's get some sleep till the AAA arrive. Hard to sleep when you keep thinking that the next tractor trailer is going to plow into you and send you tumbling across the turn pike like a possum.

Four hours later, we heard a knock on trailer door. I stumble off the couch there is a 20 yr old kid there. "You guys need a tow?" YUP!! Rub my eyes clear, ask where is the other truck. "Just me." OK; we hook the truck back up to trailer. He backs the old school Ford 10 Cylinder tow truck up. We hook up and are glad to back on road we still are not sure what town we are in. Alex is the kid's name. Says he drove all the way from Cleveland just to pick us up. Nice guy !! Great guy!! Drove us 20 miles to Painsville OH. Dropped us off at Conrad's garage. Small lot so we had to separate trailer and truck again. We go two more hours of sleep. We wake up and go into Conrad's. "We are the guys in the trailer " Figured that. I think the transfer case is shot. The repairman gets in truck starts it up and drives away.. what the hell!. 10 minutes? A bit later: "yup I think it's your transfer case." \$2,000 and a day later we can be back on the road.

OK, so we got bikes and we got time. Let's see what Painsville OH has to offer.. 30 miles down Route 20 and we find a town - "Welcome to Geneva on the Lake" greets us on a huge archway sign. It spans the roadway looks like it was from the 1950's. The strip adjacent to the lake has a Ferris wheels and mini golf courses, bar rooms, dough nut shop, a trailer park, souvenirs shops, restaurants and more bars. All overlooking a lake... but the lake has 3 ft waves! And large barges. It is the biggest lake that I have ever seen!! Waves are greater than the waves off the coast of R.I.



It has been over 24 hrs since we left CT. We could use a refreshing rinse. We keep riding till we see a boat launch or beach. Sure enough if you drive around Lake Erie long enough you will find a beach. Change in to shorts and we jump into the water. Strange to have big waves but no salt water. Jump back on bikes ride around with shorts and boots. Not cool looking, but we don't care. Find food and beer - \$1.50 for a Bud Lite. GOOD times!! Cruise around the lake for a couple hours stop and look around and cruise for another couple hours. We stop to eat. Awesome views, beautiful water! We momentarily forget about the truck repairs. We cruise around more cause we can't continue on to Wauseon till is truck is repaired. Night time comes so we might as well go back and sleep in the camper that is in the parking lot the repair shop. Next morning (Friday) they expect the transfer case to be in by noon. Go for another nice ride to Geneva on the lake and eat breakfast.



Figure we will head south this time towards Cleveland and we stop back at the repair shop to grab some supplies. The nice gents at the shop stop us and tell us that the truck is almost done. Sweet! Its almost 10am. Load bikes in trailer, use restrooms while we can. Back up truck to trailer hook up and 15 point turn we are back on the road. 3 hours later we are in the Wauseon camp ground RD 2122 .

All the roads are numbers and letters once we get on correct number we just drive. Pull into a 800 site campground set up camp 45 min later we take another ride to explore. Before we go grab a snack of some” gummy bears”. Strange only 4 to a pack. Oh well, I take 2 and Jerry takes 2. We ride and ride, kind of just spacing out. Look to the right and saw corn, looked to left and saw beans! 10 more miles and the beans a corn swap sides.

We stop eventually at this nice little town. Things seem strange here... We find a place to eat and ordered a beer. Take a sip of beer it tastes weird; I order a different beer that tastes odd. Order wings and burger. Take one bite of wings . Jerry looks at me and asks are you OK? I am messed up I should have eaten only one gummy bear. I think okay, Jerry is going to help me get out of this place. My savior!! Then he says Billy, I'm f**ked up!! We just start laughing or asses off! We pay our bill and got a lot of odd looks from patrons but we aren't harming anyone. Stumble outside and stand on the side walk.



This is in an old town with a main street and horizontal parking for maybe 5 cars. Two girls and a dog come walking up to us. The dog is a small furry gray type, cute and it has a flower in its mouth. They stop say hello dog drops flower in front of us. Then he looks at us we start laughing nonstop . Here we are two grown men laughing like a bunch of hyenas. Tears are rolling down my face. We get it together for a couple seconds. Look up there is a cop driving by. We wave that stupid ass wave like we know the man, cause that's what you do in Mayberry.



20 min later we feel like we can drive. So we head out in the direction that we arrived. There on the edge of town is the same police officer so we give another goofy looking wave. Then we head out laughing for the next 45 min. til we see our road letter. We find camp ground then I see camp site. Jerry cuts across to site. Not wanting to look like a hooligan I stay on road and want to pull into site with out making a big commotion. Well this is a 800 site camp ground, somehow with in the 50 feet to the camper I get lost. Now I'm trying to find a white camper in a 800 site camp ground. They are all white and am starting to feel the effects of my snacks again. So I cruise around the campground for a while. Finally find our camper when I see Jerry coming back from the showers he asks where did you go? I say I don't know but I'm here. That night we head to swap meet. Saw lots of bikes. Parts that I sold the week before for 350\$ were selling for 800\$. Typical swap meet stories.. Watched flat track racing and met some great people. Had a great time.

This story isn't about the swap meet; it's just the adventure that took me to it.

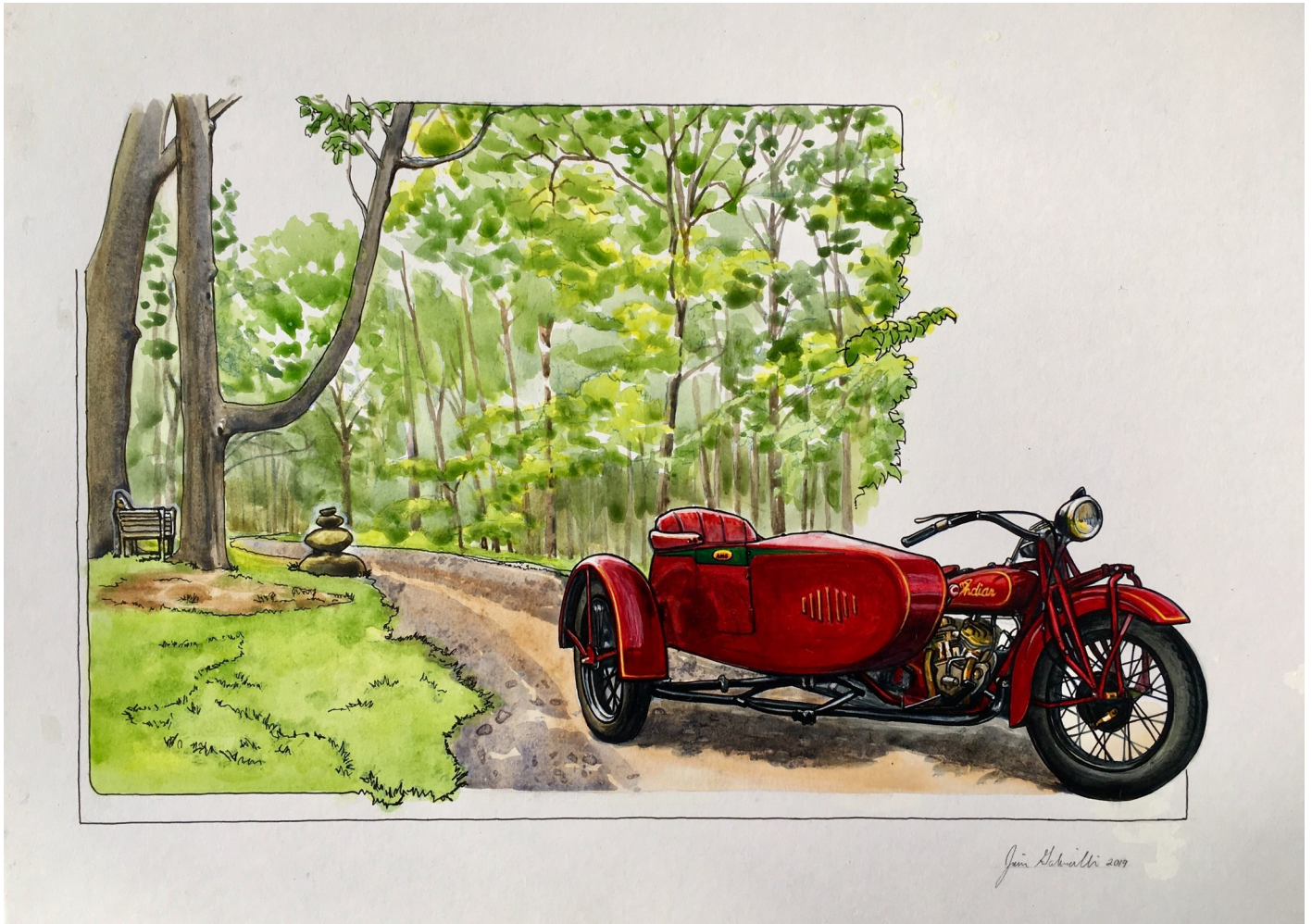
Robin's Memorialized 1929 Indian Scout

By Greg Ravizza

Robin Gazza sent me an e-mail back in January with the following:

"At the 2017 Hebron meet we had a vender, Jim Gabinelli, an artist who specializes in painting antique and classic cars and motorcycles. He donated one free painting to the club, a raffle was held, and I won it. Due to some unforeseen life events Jim got behind on his painting, but he is now back on track and he delivered the painting to me the other day. It is of my 1929 Indian 101 Scout with a sweetheart sidecar, in water colors. He is looking for people who want paintings of their machines. He has a website: [Motorcycle, Automotive & Heavy Equipment Art](#) Attached in a photo of the painting, as well as a photo of Jim presenting it to me. I am the one on the left in a plad shirt. Hope you can use this in the Chatter."

Well, Robin, I certainly appreciate your contribution! Jim's work is impressive indeed!



I went out to Jim's website to get a better idea of his other work and found the page where he describes his inspiration:

"When I encounter certain types of machinery, I am transported back into a mindset of young person. Times were simpler and things, more importantly machines, were the most inspiring to me. Specifically when I encountered cars, trucks, bulldozers, and motorcycles, I was always intrigued by how they were constructed, their physical attributes, and the fact that they all were man-made to some degree. There was and still remains today a curiosity or admiration for what these machines can do. Whether their task they complete, or the satisfaction they provide, machines are what inspire my art."

Here's a photo of Jim (on the right) presenting Robin with what I imagine is now his second most prized possession, the first of course being his 1929 Indian sidecar rig!



If you'd like to take a gander at Jim's mechanically oriented art and services, please visit his website at:

<http://www.machineartbyjim.com/home>



Upcoming Events

FUTURE EVENTS * Yankee Chapter or National Sanctioned Event ** Other

- May 5 - Keene Swap Meet **
Cheshire Fairgrounds, Swanzey, NH
- May 17 - 19 - Nooseneck/RI Camp & Ride *
Tavern on the Hill, West Greenwich, RI
- June 1 - Tumblewood MC Vintage Motorcycle Show **
Taunton, MA
- June 7 - 9 - Maine Camp & Ride *
Winslow Park and Campground, Freeport, ME
- July 27 - 28 - Indian Day Camp & Ride
Baystate Drive (off Route 20), Chester, MA
- September 22 - 23 Fall Camp & Ride
Mohawk Park Restaurant and Campground, Charlemont, MA
- August 1 - 3 - Yankee Chapter National Meet *
CT Lions Fairground, Terryville, CT
- NOTE THAT VENDOR REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN AT:
<http://yankeechapter.org/terryvillernationalmeet.shtml>
- September 6 - 15 - Cross Country Chase **
Sault Ste. Marie, MI to Key West, FL
- September 22 - Keene Swap Meet **
Cheshire Fairgrounds, Swanzey, NH
- October 19 - Gathering Of The Faithful **
Middleboro, MA
- December 8 - Yankee Christmas Pot Luck and General Meeting *
Oxford VFW, Oxford, MA

Other Stuff

FOR SALE OR SWAP/WANTED, OTHER EVENT NOTICES, STORIES, ARTICLES OR PICS

Please send your contributions or requests to me at:

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Ted and two of his new scooter friends!





Yankee Chatter



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