



Vintage Japanese
Motorcycle Club
South America, Inc.

Monthly Newsletter to the Midwest **VJMC** Community

Editor: Buddy Walton

Associate Editor: Mark Bayer

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This is a newsletter covering what is going on in the Midwest with our VJMC friends.

Please send us your events, activities, or interesting stories. We will keep you informed about the above topics and want to see our region grow. We will have at least one central event yearly.

The *Meetin-In-The Middle Rally* will be one of these events in which we want to develop an annual reunion. We want to add to this as we grow. Please pass this newsletter to any of your friends and let's build a community. Any correspondence will be kept private and no information will be given out without your permission.

December 2021 Edition

Topics: **Buddy Walton** will discuss his early years on two wheels.

Mark Bayer has interviewed **Bill Brown**, the Kansas VJMC Field Representative.

Buddy Walton: In the beginning: For a million dollars I couldn't remember every motorcycle I have owned. Yes I have fond memories of many, but like old girlfriends I remember well and others, not so much. I do believe I might be able to remember the girlfriends with a million dollars sitting in front of me however. I started riding on an old "Lil Indian" mini-bike powered by a Briggs and Stratton 3.5 horsepower lawnmower style engine. Several of my neighborhood friends had similar machines and we would run through the back alley's and streets burning up 20 cent gas as fast as we could.

The shiny Schwinn Stingrays bicycles we all rode together for several years had quickly found their way to the back of the garage replaced by mini-bikes which had noisy clattering centrifugal clutches, leaky carburetors, friction brakes against the rear tire, and gold and purple sparkled helmets bought at a local discount store. All part of the “negotiation of deals” which our parents made along with homework, boundaries and curfews, we accepted in order to enjoy this new freedom being discovered. Soon 3.5 horsepower wasn't enough. Not because it wasn't fast enough but because one of your best friends had a 5 horsepower mini-bike with rear wheel suspension and front and rear brakes! I grew up in Texas where in the late 1960s and early 70s a rider only had to be 14 years old to have a street legal motorcycle license limited to 5 brake horsepower which equated to about 90cc of 2 or 4 stroke fun. Of course there were a few rebels in our group before we turned 14. One of them showed up with a new gold Honda CT70 which his dad had bought in Japan partially disassembled and brought back to Texas in two large cases. It was an amazing, shiny, quiet machine which was also STREERT LEGAL! Folding handlebars also. It was one of the most jealous moments of my young life sitting on my lawnmower powered tube frame clattering machine looking at my friend next to me who had just turned 14 who had his license and added to his coolness with a matching helmet and Ray Bans. I think his dad paid \$325 in Japan for it and in 1969 they were just appearing at USA dealers. I had another friend a year older than me with a Honda CL90. About 2 months before my 14th. birthday he asked me if I wanted to buy his CL90 for \$225. His dad was buying him a CB175. I had \$150 from mowing lawns and I begged my mom to loan me \$75 to acquire this object of desire. She agreed, I sold my mini-bike to a kid down the street for \$75 and quickly paid her back. A lifelong passion was started. I would not trade my early experiences for anything, not even that million dollars.



I can remember when the little CK90 Honda was almost seen as a big bike!

Mark Bayer interviewed Bill in November of 2021. Bill has been the VJMC Field Representative for the state of Kansas for several years though he was active in VJMC a number of years before accepting that position. Bill calls himself “a passionate biker” because of his fathers interest in motorcycles. His father brought back to the states a 1938 German Zundapp 600 from his tour during WWII. He had to cut it down in order to get it back to the states but once he did, he welded it back together and set it up on blocks. Bill remembers playing on it as a child waiting for the time that he could acquire his own bikes. To earn money for his first machine Bill mowed a 2 acre field with a push mower!

His first bike was a 25cc Playboy scooter which he still has. He then purchased a Doodlebug which would be called a mini-bike today and it barely had brakes. Because of the poor brakes he wrecked it causing a motorcycle Cop to come after him! That would be another story. His family had seven kids so the budget was tight but once able to afford motorcycles himself, has purchased quite a group of machines. Bill owns a large number of small machines of numerous brands as well as having a nice collection of Honda motorcycles. These including a really nice Honda Cub, a clean CL160 and an FT500 big single. My guess is that he has at least fifty motorcycles in his collection.

In 2020, Bill won a “Lifetime Service Award” for his work in the Kansas City motorcycle community. A picture is attached. I have also included a picture of his personal museum! Bill is well known in our area for his shows and events and his generosity in having a public workday at his large shop. Bill has earned his stripes and his efforts have been appreciated. Thanks Bill.



Bill with his Lifetime Achievement award.

A part of Bills motorcycle collection.