

VOLUME 19, NUMBER 2

SPRING 2000

# CBXpress<sup>®</sup>

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CBX MOTORCYCLE™



*Visions of Stan*

# visions of *Stan*

So the Two Petes are steeling themselves and their CBX motorcycles for the ride to Death Valley.

One Pete says to the other Pete, "Let's go see Stan."

Tony MacNeill, down from British Columbia, is hooking up with the Washington and Oregon CBXers for DV2000.

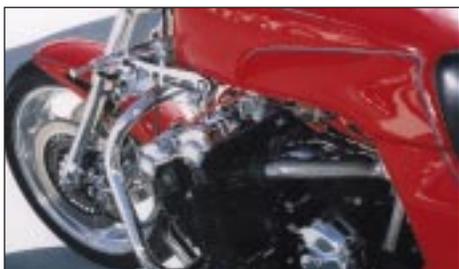
"I'll be riding with you, eh," he says. "On my Zed."



*Tony MacNeill, ICOA Member number 6, would cover more than 3 thousand miles on this jaunt.*

It is only 900 more miles. The Death Valley Trek traditionally begins with the Friday rendezvous at China Lake of the Northern and Southern California contingents, a marvelous cross-section of CBX ownership and motorcycling expertise.

Much tire-kicking, punctuated by admiration for Terry Ward-Llewellyn's scarlet CBX custom masterpiece and a genuine, if slightly bemused, interest in the saga of DD's motorcycle maintenance, is stimulated by



*Terry Ward-Llewellyn's truly magnificent custom*

many refreshing lagers and capped by huge quantities of Mexican food and anejo.

Saturday the roving CBX melting pot rides for Furnace Creek, the very heart of Death Valley.

This is a phantasmic passage north from the saline industrial crud of Trona through the awesome Panamint Valley at very high speed and then east, up and over and down, down into the legendary deep valley of the Armagosa River walled by the Panamints and the Funerals.

Here, remote from the nasty entanglements of daily life, in an extraordinarily comfortable dry heat, a day or two of leisure is spent exploring the valley, swimming and sunning, hobnobbing among fellow-travelling CBXers, well and truly goofing off.

That Sunday after Easter in Death Valley is the day of two sunrises. From windchilled Dante's View we watch the startlingly quick leap of the sun into the dawn, then we descend to warming Zabriskie Point and watch it happen again.

The glorious backroad from the Armagosa to the Nevada border is fast, beautiful, almost perfect in its isolation. The area has been lightly inhabited for many years, but remains nearly unmarked by man. Between Pahrump and I40 below the Grand Canyon, we quickly cross the churning Las Vegas urban sprawl, tall palaces of pleasure rising from an ugly superheated pool of exhaust gases and dust raised from construction.

On southeastward through Kingman and the remnants of Route 66 to US93 and the stark Joshua Tree passage into the Sonoran Desert.

We halt in the hot afternoon at Wickenburg on the dry Hassayampa River, in the wooded trace of hills 60 miles northwest of our destination.

Here we will wait on the trail, refreshed by conversation, pemmicam, and beer, to make ready for Tuesday and Phoenix.

Stan introduces his cats as "C", "B", and "X". Stan bought his first '79 CBX used in the Spring of 1979, for a song. "Of the first five guys who bought CBXs in Phoenix, three of 'em got killed and the other two sold their bikes, too scared to ride them again. I bought one of those, and I eventually had four." (See CBXpress, Vol 19, No 1, page 7.)

Stan saw the faired and sporttour-softened 1981 CBX as the harbinger of doom for the magnificent Supersport of 1979 and its Euro-detuned 1980 sibling.

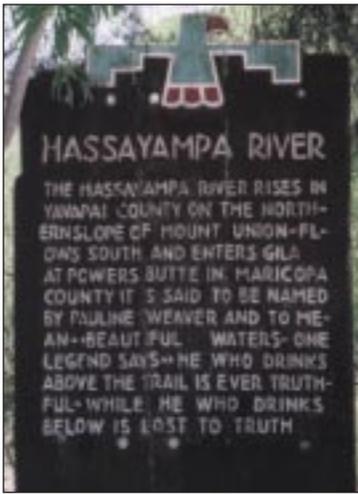


*ABOVE: Rule #1 in Death Valley: Go to Dante's View  
Rule #2 in Death Valley: See Rule #1*

*BELOW: Dawn breaks at Zabriskie Point*



*Pete Ruff and Tony MacNeill high above Furnace Creek*

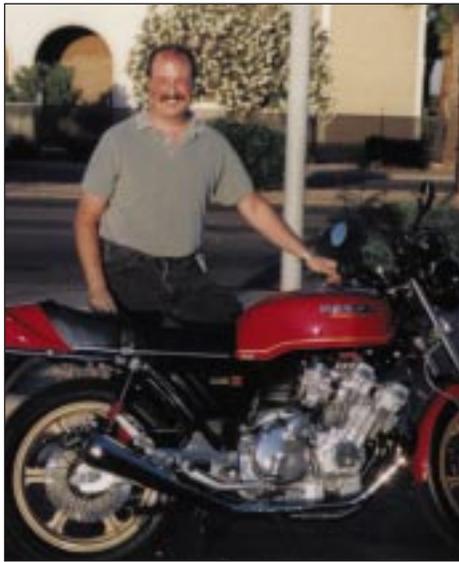


*ABOVE: A man on a motorcycle must honor the spirit of the trail*

*BELOW: At Wickenburg, Tony preps his CBX to enter the presence of the Man*



*Obligatory tourist shot. Hoover Dam is around here somewhere*



*ABOVE: Pete Aronson's beautifully resurrected 1979 CBX*

"When I saw the '81, I knew I had to do something." Honda was backing away from its finest creation.

I told Stan that Mr. Irimajiri is not even mentioned in the "50 Years of Honda" Official Commemoration Volume. The CBX gets one deprecating, apologetic sentence. Someone suggested the CBX was just a showroom attraction.

"No," says Stan. "They made more than 10,000 CBX's. They wanted to sell them.

But when the '81 came out, I could see they weren't going to make any more of them!"

"Oh, I'd been a member of this and that, but me start a club—forget it!"

It was hard to get anyone seriously involved. Stan's wife Faye handled much of the paper chase. When Stan tries to remember someone from the early club days, he asks Faye.

"I thought long term from the start. I didn't want it to be the 'Mesa CBX Club', or the 'Arizona CBX Riders' or hook up with the 'X-calibers', so I went with International.

All of you reading this today are living proof that Stan got it right. Bob Snyder and Pete Aronson join us for dinner in Scottsdale.

Bob Snyder's nicely repainted '81 is running the engine Stan crashed on that bad day in 1982. Stan examines the telltale scar under the right side crankcase, "Yep. That's it!"

We have crossed Death Valley and the Sonoran Desert to meet our CBX Club founder, to learn of his hardships and simple pleasures, to see his and Faye's happiness today, to carry some of Stan back with us. We are very glad we have made this journey. The following day, we easily maintain a 68 MPH average speed on, ironically, a brace of 1981 CBXs, covering 607 miles from Camelback through the Mojave and across the LA superslab between Indio and Ventura to Morro Rock. Tony and his Silver 1979 CBX, Stan's favorite for sure, make it to Boise, Idaho, an astounding 1063 miles.

We ride with pride.



*Bob Snyder's workhorse, powered by Stan's crashed '81*



*L-R: Bob Snyder, Faye, Stan*



## Tony MacNeill's Death Valley Journal

### The Journey to Visit #1 - As Told By #6

When Pete Ahrens emailed me many months ago of his and Pete Ruff's intention to visit our founder, Stan Carpenter after the Death Valley Rally, I said "what the hey, you only live once!" Herein lies the story of a 4000-mile trek to Death Valley and beyond to Mesa, Arizona. When the little germ of going to Death Valley formed in my head last fall, I realized very soon that it would be tough to find a few good idiots to partake of this journey from the frozen north to the lowest point in the



L-R: Pete Ruff, Bob Snyder, Stan, Faye, Pete Aronson, Tony MacNeill

Tom, saw five crazies setting out for Rod and Angela Libby's in Livermore, California, 900 miles away. My mouth watered for the famed Libby RoadKill dinner, which Rod assured us, "was no problem". The next twelve hours on I-5 proved to be quite interesting. High winds near Weed, California almost blew us off the road, which up to that point, were the strongest I had experienced on my CBX of eighteen years. Later, these "little" gusts would prove to be but a little primer of what was to come. An exhausting buffeting, while careening down this California interstate led us to Sacramento for a little, er, fun on the side of fourteen lanes of 70 mile per hour traffic and wind. Apparently, because of an Oregonians inability to differentiate diesel and High Test Gasoline, they are not allowed to dispense their own fuel. This little tidbit of information proved to be our downfall in Sacramento. Once in California, land of self-serve fueling, Tom, diesel mechanic that he is, accidentally filled his tank up with, you guessed it, Diesel. Orin, not to be outdone, gleefully followed suit. Well, needless to say, we all spent a couple of hours on the side of the road at two locations five miles apart troubleshooting the now non-running bikes. Tom, twigged on the problem, and sent Terry back to tell us the good news. As I did not know they were having the exact same problem further down the road, I was beginning to think Tom and Terry would reveille us in great tales of the Death Valley Rally in three days time. Five Gallons of diesel was drained on the roadside and a friendly Public Service tow truck driver provided the correct Gasoline. Tom and Orin SWEAR that they pushed the premium button and got diesel. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged... After yelling out our predicament to Angela Libby on a cell phone in the din of the fourteen lane interstate, Terry and I proceeded to the Libby's, while Orin and Tom went on to Santa Nella, apparently not quite up to the RoadKill buffet which awaited us. Once again, with prior emailed directions from Rod, we managed to roll into Rod's over twelve hours after we had begun that day. You just can't put a price on fun. Unfortunately, upon arrival at the Libby's home, Terry received bad news that his home had been broken into. He would leave the next morning right back to Puyallup to help his wife get things sorted out. To his benefit, he bravely made the best of that evening, with the Libby's



L-R: Bud Anderson, Kim David, and Kim's son at Badwater, Lowest point in the valley.

northern hemisphere, Death Valley. Terry Muskopf, the Washington State Director was the first foolhardy soul to agree to join me on the ride. Soon, Tom Whaley, and his good friends Orin, and Sal, all of Springfield Oregon area, threw in their hats. The stage was set. Months of planning, tinkering and emails followed, with the departure date finally arriving on April 25th. Armed with an arsenal of tools, parts, winter clothes, and a leatherman, I saddled up the palomino fully outfitted, for the first leg to Puyallup, Washington, home of Terry and Fran. The temperature was 36 degrees F with heavy rain forecast and snow in the mountain passes- this was not for the faint of heart! I immediately had to bypass the Coquilhala Pass with "compact snow and blowing snow" flashing on the highway conditions sign. After an uneventful trip through Washington State's Snoqualmie Pass with six feet of snow on the road side and a torrential downpour to boot, I arrived at my first destination, lost in Puyallup at a gas station phoning Terry for help, even, as he pointed out, with his explicit directions. Help did arrive in the form of Terry in his Jeep with Phil Johnson and Art McGoogala in tow. After a long meal at a local eatery and much coffee and catching up to do, I tumbled into a warm bed courtesy of the MusKopf. The next day around noon, I met Terry at his place of employment, a chocolate factory. A tour of the place, yielded rich buttery smells and, honest, conveyor belts heaped with Almond Roca! Thus began the second leg, on to Springfield Oregon to meet up with Tom Whaley, Orin and Sal. With Terry at the helm for the directions emailed earlier by Tom, we found our motel and later, Tom's place for pizza and a refreshing beverage, and a tour of his stash of CBX stuff. His 140-pound rottweiler, Chopper, said hello and we retreated to the motel for some shuteye. Our forced 6:00 AM departure, compliments of





providing wonderful Chinese food, refreshments, and later, a refreshing soak in their glorious hot tub. Early the next morning, Pete Ruff, Pete Ahrens arrived, followed by Kim David and his well mannered teen son Joey and finally, by Bud Anderson on a sweet, sweet '80 red CBX. We were to enjoy Rod & Angela's famous 7:30 AM breakfast of a special egg casserole, which everyone had seconds of. Then we were off to Ridgecrest, after stopping at Santa Nella to pick up Tom and Orin with their now gas burning CBX's. We burned off to Bakersfield and on to the Kern River Highway, which was the highlight of the day. After a lunch stop at Lake Isabella, we met up with very gusty winds just before Ridgecrest, which almost blew us off the road, except for Randy ("so she brought out a pizza, which looked like a hubcap with ketchup on it") Patton, with his low center of gravity Valkyrie. We arrived at the motel in Ridgecrest greeted by Double D and his friend Gloria, Terry Ward-Llewellyn and his son Danny, Darrell Peck and finally, Herb Marcus. That evening's feed on Mexican food was well received by all, and we enjoyed the two-mile stroll back to the motel. Rod will always remember rolling on the bed laughing at DD's stories as a census taker for Uncle Sam, and his excursion into real estate scams. Our motley crew mounted up for the 140-mile ride to Death Valley, via Trona, the next morning, led by Rod Libby. Terry W.'s son, Danny was following me at one point while, unknown to him, I was snapping photos at 70 MPH on the bumpy road down to the valley floor. He suddenly charged by me on his Ninja, and I found out at the next stop, that he thought he was following an idiot rider as I was driving just a little bit erratically. Heck, I always ride like that! Ha! After a brief stop at Stovepipe Wells, we arrived at Furnace Creek Ranch and we all checked in, with the "staff" members getting their rooms immediately, whilst the rank and file had to wait several hours longer. As my speedometer was acting up I asked Rod Libby on the off chance that he had a spare cable. He said "Sure, OEM or Motion Pro?" Later he told me they had packed enough tools and spares to rebuild a CBX and I believed him. That afternoon, we lazed around on the lawns drinking several refreshing beverages, before sitting down to fine dining at the Furnace Creek Restaurant. Carousing at the Corkscrew Saloon was to follow, before a group of CBX brethren were to partake of the annual ritual of stargazing at the end of the golf course till late in the evening. I admit that I had not looked into the night sky for quite some time, and it was a very splendid sight to witness as the crystal clear desert sky enhanced the viewing

immensely. By the way, the guard watching the 15 rare old Bentley sports cars seemed quite worried as we were not far from where the cars were roped off for the night. We were informed that these beautiful green cars were shipped over from England to America by a very exclusive club for its members to frolic across half of the U.S.A. for fun—"Let's go to the colonies in the Bentley—Cheerio!" Later we would pass them several times on our way to Stan's place in Mesa, Arizona. At exactly 5AM the next morning, three stalwart but sleepy eyed members went in the Libby's truck to view sunrise at Dante's Look Out, which they said was awesome but cold. This vantage point was over 5000 feet above the valley floor. Later, I joined Pete Ruff and Pete Ahrens for a stroll up to an old teahouse on a hill across from the Ranch. A couple of government geologists we met half way up, told us that the tea house was frequented in the thirties by pampered movie stars, who would have afternoon tea served to them during visits to the swanky Inn nearby. Vandals have almost destroyed this interesting historical vista point. A return trip via the Inn, allowed us to see what luxury they would have experienced. That afternoon, while Rod changed out Tom Whaley's brushes as usual, we sipped cold ones on the lawn. What a life! More food and more carousing at the Corkscrew Saloon followed that evening, to round out another day. Now the second leg of my journey was to begin. After saying good-byes and loading up our CBX's, the two Petes and I began the two day trip to meet the His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, Stan Carpenter in Mesa. We charged across the sweltering desert to our first stop, Las Vegas. Here in the city that never sleeps, we would gas up and I would slather on sun blocker to try to preserve my snow white Canadian tan. Next stop was a photo op at the Hoover Dam and on to Kingman Arizona for lunch. We could hardly wait to visit Nothing, and Santa Claus, as shown on the map. Santa Claus was boarded up, and Nothing turned out to be, well, nothing. While fueling up and satisfying our thirst at Wikieup, we spotted two custom Harleys with 230/18 tires on the back. We had never seen such a wide tire on a bike. These low riders with seats only a few feet off the ground looked very uncomfortable to ride, especially with the rigid frame. Our final stop that day was a very quaint little western town called Wickenburg. We splurged and stayed at the Best Western with a beautiful palm lined pool. After a couple of cool ones we headed off in search of a nice eatery. A fella standing outside Anita's Cocina said "Come on in, it's the best food in town!" So we did and it was. The next morning, we

had more Mexican food, except breakfast style. That Mexican food burns...twice. After a nice stroll downtown to check out guns and leather, we headed out on the final leg of our trek to seek out the Defender of the Faith. A 100-mile blast through the desert took us to our destination, Mesa. Amidst the 100-degree heat at the motel, we sought out refuge at the pool with a chatty southern belle keeping us amused, along with her hubby and in-laws. Pete Ahrens did not have the courage to phone His Holiness and Ocean of Wisdom, Stan Carpenter, so the other Pete called him up, with Stan's wife answering that we should come over to their home before joining Bob Snyder and Pete Aronson later for a buffet dinner. I remember thinking on the way over, that Stan would hand write letters in the beginning, to the members. I still have the picture he sent when I joined, with his "That Seventies Show" look on his trusty 1979 CBX. (Sorry Stan, we all looked that way...ha) We arrived in his walled community, and there was "The Man" looking fit and bronzed, with his lovely wife Fay at his side. We gathered inside to listen to Stan's recounting of his reasons for starting the club and how he wanted to call it the "International CBX Owners Association" because he wanted to think big. He said, he knew there was going to be a lot of CBX owners in Texas and California and the East Coast, and further in Europe and beyond. I quizzed him further, "Come on Stan, was there not another name you thought of first?" He said the name we now use was the only one he thought of! Stan then spotted Pete Ahrens' lizard belt buckle, and said "Come on, I'll show you a live one of those!" Stan disappeared, and brought back a two foot long "cousin of the Komodo Dragon"! We found out Stan and Fay raised lizards, ferrets and previously, parrots as a business. It was now time to meet Bob and Pete for dinner. We wondered why Fay sat on the floor of the van when we left for dinner. Turns out Ol' Stan still had a lead foot, and we got to the restaurant lickety-split. Lively conversation and food was to follow, when we realized it was closing time. A hasty drive back to the Carpenter's found us in their driveway shaking hands goodbye after viewing a dusty photo album. That album contained a thumbnail sketch of Stan's lifelong involvement with fast vehicles. It began in the fifties with a snap of a hot rod go-cart and went on through Triumph motorcycles in the sixties to be followed by Corvettes, Kawasaki 900's, dirt bikes, and many street bikes in the seventies. Finally, we viewed pictures of Stan's many CBX's. His unfortunate accident in 1981 delivering the first issue of the Xpress on his CBX put an end to his pursuit of things that go fast. Several business ventures, including a pet shop, breeding parrots, and ferrets were to keep the carpenter's occupied over the years. Thankfully, Stan accepts his role as the founder of the ICOA and humbly recalls the early history and the very beginning of our club, although he swears Fay did most of the work. After a final farewell, we rode back to our motel in the hot night heat to sit back and savour our evening's visit with Stan. Waking up the next morning at 5AM, Pete Ruff and I



began to pack up our stuff. The two Petes were to head off to the California coast, while I was to begin my eighteen hundred-mile solo journey back to Lumby, B.C. I opened the door to find a young fellow lying down on the front seat of a Chrysler luxobox apparently trying to steal the stereo. As Pete and I continued to load our bikes, it now looked like he was to hot-wire the ignition. I phoned the front desk, who then called the Mesa Police who arrived momentarily with the lights flashing and guns drawn. The cop was yelling "Hands in the air! Hands in the air!" All this excitement was too much. After being frisked and questioned, the police drove off, leaving our alleged felon, to wonder who called the police? We calmly finished packing, and I said my good-byes to the two Petes. That day's ride was to be the longest of my journey. I rode non stop, on this desolate highway 93 averaging 69.5 miles per hour for 1060 miles, only stopping for gas and a burger in Las Vegas at noon. My destination was Boise, Idaho, and I arrived at 9:30 PM. The final sixty miles was in a fierce gusty wind. Whenever I passed a semi-truck, or it passed me, I would receive the full brunt upon emerging from the lee side of the truck. As there was no civilization till Boise, I had to soldier on. I am quite sure the many truckers I encountered thought I was nuts! By the way, this was in a pouring rain. You just can't put a price on fun! My tired aching body rolled out of the motel bed at 10:00 AM for the next day's ride through New Meadows Idaho via HWY 55. This scenic byway was very picturesque as it wound along the meandering Payette River for quite a distance. I rode through Clarkston Washington and up through central Washington on a dead straight secondary road to Grade Coulee Dam and west to Omak to end that days trip of 550 miles. The third day was fairly short, as I passed through the border back into Canada and rode up through the arid Okanagan Valley amidst fruit orchards and wineries and cactus. I must admit it was a welcome sight to see my driveway around 1 PM and to turn the CBX's ignition off for the last time. I had just covered 4000 miles, with the last 1800 miles along hot lonely roads in just 2 ? days. Over the next few days I reacquainted myself with my wife and two teenage daughters and reflected on what had transpired in the last ten days. Besides rain on the way to Seattle and near Boise, I had seen no rain and mostly hot sunny days. It was most unfortunate that Terry Muskopf had to turn around after 900 miles because of the burglars. My most enjoyable journey to Death Valley and on to Stan Carpenter's place was over. And that's my story and I'm sticking to it.



L-R: 6-1459-1-275, Tony MacNeill, Pete Ahrens, Stan Carpenter, Pete Ruff