

### A Story Not to be Told

Jim Scott

This is not the story I wanted to tell. Well, not like this anyway. I wanted to sit with him and record his memories of riding with the clubs. In the days before crotch rockets and nice people on rice grinders. In the days of service veteran bikers, back from places like Korea, and a few older ones who got their card punched in Europe, or the South Pacific. I wanted to record the tales of busting things up just to have a good time, before he is gone and the tales with him. He got pretty sick last year and when I visited him in the rehab center, all of this story stuff crossed my mind. After all, we talked about it on occasion and I wanted to share it. So I asked him what he thought about sitting down and putting it together. Seemed like a good idea at the time. But then time passed. So did the "good idea" part.

He had told me of times when they road in weather that froze your hands to the bars. You never said no. You went because they all went. It was family. You would thaw out later. There was a need to be some place, or to party. If a brother went down, or was in want, off you went.

Then there were the two things you always carried in the bags. A blanket and a bottle. If the little babes on McKinley beach wanted a ride, there was a bargain to be made. One wanted to have the necessary items to close the deal. Seemed to be pretty successful.

The pictures he showed me are great. Working men. Worn levis. Tee shirts, oil smeared, for sure. Open leather jackets and big cigars sticking out of hairy faces. As he went through the roll call, a lot of their names were followed with, "he's dead". No explanation. But remembered. I once read that the scariest thing about death for old people is the notion that they will not be remembered. No problem here.

And when they got hungry, it was time to see what was available at the road side diner. It did not really matter what the special was. When they all walked in the door, the folks eating decided it was time to leave....and they did, with their meals still warm on the plates. No sense leaving perfectly good meals go to waste. Just have a seat in the vacant booth and finish what was left behind. The price was right.

There are rumors of other incidents. Not all of them suited for publication, and

I think that might be the reason for reconsidering the sit-down. Too much respect for both those who passed and the few that still exchange oxygen. So I respect that too.

I am proud to call him a friend. He can tear down and put a bike back together like no one else. In an age when the dealers will not touch your machine if it has more than ten seasons on it, he never saw one he could not get back on the road....to this day. His shop was right out of the B-movies set. So were those who frequented it. The smart ones brought something to replenish the old refrigerator. His HOG number is a single digit. It would take a wardrobe to carry the rockers.

He told me he might sit down some day and write up some of his memories. I hope he does. I hope he calls me when he decides to do it. I hope I live that long. In the meantime, this man who was part of a life style alien to most people, a hard worker and a good family man, and above all, a loyal and true friend, is going to keep the details close to his well-worn vest. It is a story that I cannot tell, and I respect that.

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