

Biker artist memorializes legendary Harley dealer

By John Gunnell

It is never a happy occasion when motorcycling legends pass and that's why Lynden Bute was inspired to create his latest artistic masterpiece. Bute recently finished a painting depicting Wayne "Pappy" Pierce Sr. and Wayne Pierce Jr. astride their black Harleys. The artwork memorializes the father and son who owned Pierce Harley-Davidson in DeKalb, Ill. The dealership is now run by Marylou Pierce Smith, the daughter of Wayne, Sr.

In a strange twist of fate, the son died in a 2007 motorcycle accident and his father died only a few months afterwards. The elder Pierce had founded his first motorcycle shop 50 years prior to his passing. During those five decades, he amassed a collection of 90 historical Harleys that reside in a private museum where Bute's painting will hang.

The painting is circular and mounted on the wall in the entrance of the museum, which is located at the dealership, inside an old Harley-Davidson whitewall tire. The artist—who is a retired carpenter—talked to Marylou's mother, Eleanor Pierce, before lifting his brushes. She was happy with the idea of hanging it where the family's bike collection is on public display "It's something I wanted to do," Bute told the DeKalb Daily-Chronicle "I'm proud to have it here."



Racing bikes of various vintages are also displayed in the Barb City Motorcycle Museum.

Known as the Barb City Motorcycle Museum (barbed wire was invented in DeKalb), the collection housed at Pierce Harley-Davidson includes machines representing the years 1903-present. It includes a 1929 Model B, 1933 VLE, 1942 UL, 1942 WLA, 1957 XL Sportster, 1958 FLH DuoGlide, 1965 FLH Electric Glide 1200, 1971 FX 1200, 1984 XR 1000 and 1998 XL 1200. Some of the bikes are virtually new or very low mileage machines.

DeKalb sits west of Chicago and makes a great tour for Wisconsin-based motorcyclists looking for a great day trip. The rural countryside in the area is perfect for cruising and a stop at the museum adds some extra interest. For information contact: Pierce Harley-Davidson, 969 Peace Road, DeKalb, IL 60115. You can call (815) 756-4558 to reach the dealership or visit www.piercehd.com.

Check my blog Gunner's Garage at www.oldcarsweekly.com



Lynden Bute's artwork memorializing "Pappy" Pierce and his son Wayne hangs inside a whitewall motorcycle tire.



Some historical antique motorcycles are in the collection of approximately 90 Harleys.



After you have viewed the bikes, you can be amazed by the motorcycle memorabilia the Pierces collected.

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