

Wanderings International

North American JAWA/CZ Register Newsletter

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From the Editor

It certainly has been a rough winter in North America, even in “Sunny South Florida” where Pavel went riding in Hobe Sound, just north of Jupiter on January 18. It was 31 degrees, thus the unusual riding gear!



In Kenosha,WI Don Kueny reported a similiat temperture and reflected on his riding days then and now. From the early 1950’s he rode his CZ all winter long, but that was before they salted the roads which is common today. His Perak will stay indoors lest the salt ruin its finish.

Don’s story of the “Good old Days” which follows reminds us of how things were nearly seventy years ago!

Winter in the Good Old Days!

January 18, 2018. It is 31 degrees in Kenosha, WI today! I'd ride if it was not for the salted roads which ruins bike finishes and leave the rider covered in dirty slush. I rode my CZ 125t virtually every day for three winters, 1951-2-3, often on ice covered roads before salt began to be used as a melting agent. It makes the streets slushy and wet all winter. I remember the first few warm spring days as the worst as I got all wet from the melting snow and ice. Two miles to high school and five miles to college, down to 0 degrees F. Bike always started well. Only change was to add a short pipe from the float bowl overflow over to the air cleaner, which gave both quick starting and follow thru enrichment. Often rode with both feet on the frozen pavement. A lot of scary moments as cars would leave frozen ruts that the narrow bike wheel would follow, around corners and up driveways. I only remember crashing once when I used the front brake on what had been wet pavement that had frozen to sheet ice late in the day. The front wheel locked instantly and when it hit the gravel shoulder I went "out the front door" (over the handlebars). Was not hurt, just picked it up and continued on. Emergency stops were accomplished by locking the rear wheel, turning the bike sideways and laying the bike over to dig the non-folding foot peg into the ice. Gloves were a pair of WWII surplus B-17 gunner's gloves; soft leather with thick natural lamb's wool inside. Helmets did not exist then and I never wore a hat as, believe it or not, I had hair then!

Don Kueny

Editorial Continued

We all age and we make changes to try and deal with that. Some are more pleasant than others, but we just have to cope and see the positive side as we do. The Register is no exception and my role is also changing. Seeing the Register's leadership pass to the capable hands of Pavel Karasek is a great relief to me. Let me explain why....

As you know the Register has discontinued its web page and now has a presence on Facebook which you can visit whether you are a member of Facebook or not (joining is easy and allows you to add comments to our site). Just go to www.facebook.com/jawaczregister and check it out. Pavel has done a wonderful job with the site and it gets far more visitors (readers) than *Wanderings* ever did and many from outside North America. When I started working on this edition of the newsletter I realized that story after story that I had been saving since the last issue were already on our Facebook page. People sent in pictures and captions far more readily than they did stories for the newsletter and their submissions went out right away, not weeks or months later. Our Facebook page is a lively place to see and share information.

When I started the newsletter in the mid 1990's there was nothing like Facebook, or even the modern internet. For several years I used the postal service to send out each issue, and had to charge dues to cover the costs of printing and mailing. It also took quite a bit of time to keep up the membership list. Things got worse when we started a website which Vic Simmons looked after for many years. Every year the domain and website got more and more expensive and the time required of Vic also got more and more burdensome. When I started all this in 1995 I was still using a fountain pen and could not type at all. I still can't, really, but the fountain pen is long since gone. However, I do not handle excel well at all!

Since we no longer have expenses we no longer need to collect dues, or keep a membership list, though I will see that the excel list is preserved and I will try to keep it current. However we won't be using it on a regular basis, only to announce events which will also be on our Facebook page. This Spring I will see that our library, back issues of *Wanderings* and the Archives goes to Pavel and he will respond to requests for manuals. The charges for this service will be used to support this important aspect of the work of the North American JAWA /CZ Register.

Vic will continue to help Pavel, but some others could join in. It is a lot of work for two young men with families and jobs to do. So, please pitch in and help smooth this transition.

The Register has been an important and valuable part of my life this past quarter of a century and I will continue to actively participate in it as much as I can. However, I can no longer ride and my eyesight is not so good. I will be 76 in June. Even Catholic priests get to retire at my age! I want to thank all of you who have supported me and the Register, especially our friends and colleagues in the UK, Ian Bridge for *Swindon Smoke Signals*, Pete Edwards and John Woods for *Torque* and Arthur Fleming for his archives and repeated help as we tried to set up a similar, if smaller service here. The UK JAWA/CZ Owners Club was always a great help in many, many ways.. In the Czech Republic Libor Filak was also a great help with badges, belt buckles and most of all, encouraging advice. None have been more help and support than our own Don Kueny and Pavel Karasek. I will stop there with naming names, but there are many, many more who have built the Register. It has been a great pleasure to work with our members in Canada and the United States as we are truly a North American organization! Thank you all!

Pavel's email address is joch73@seznam.cz . His phone number is 954-934-3895. Try the email address or text him first.

This will be the last issue of *Wanderings* I will do, but the editor's position is open if you think we need to keep it going. I think Facebook will be more than enough, however **Mike Thomason**

A Classic CZ Motocross Saved



The CZ 980 Before Pavel's Restoration



and After he Finished

Back in the fall of 2017 Pavel Karasek began the process of finding, then acquiring and restoring a CZ 980, 250 cc Motocross bike. Its former owner died and his widow wanted it to go to someone who would love it as much as he had. The bike was in Oregon, and Pavel is in Florida. He and Karen, Bill's widow, worked out the sale and shipping details and by early December the bike was in Pavel's shop. Karen also sent a box of spare parts which enabled Pavel to return the machine to its original factory specs. This included installing the original gas tank, the Jikov carb, front fender, original air box and handlebars, even Bill's race number 341. He decided to keep the original paint, preserving its fine decades-old patina. All this while he studied for his up coming Captain's exam as a firefighter/EMS professional, entertaining his mother visiting from the Czech Republic, helping Kimmie with their three children and doing other restoration jobs. As I have said before Pavel doesn't sleep much!

After he had put the finishing touches on the 980, Pavel opened the carb petcock, tickled the Jikov and the bike started on the second kick. Then it as off to the "Hunger Land" a twenty acre bit of undeveloped land near his house. The bike amazed him with its acceleration and handling. He intends to run it at a nearby track soon.

So another beautiful Czech bike has been saved and returned to service. A happy story I think we all can agree and an example of Pavel and the Register at their best . **Editor**

From Ohio to Scotland



In Ohio Awaiting Transport to Scotland

In January, a scruffy-looking Californian appeared on eBay. It was a pretty basic listing from a small town in Ohio, and one got the impression that the seller – a small-time dealer in second-hand bikes and parts – probably didn't appreciate the difference between any other barn-find and a Californian. Pavel Karasek saw the listing and shared it onto the Register's Facebook page. Over the following week a series of bidders went backwards and forwards against each other in increments of \$25. Seven seconds from the end of the auction, however, in came the classic "snipe": one shot, the absolute maximum you can afford, you hope it's more than anyone else's snipe, and not enough time left for anyone to outbid you. Sorry to anyone reading this who was one of the unsuccessful bidders: you obviously didn't want it as badly as we did! As this is written in mid February, the bike is on a pickup on its way from Ohio to New York in the first stage of a long journey to its new forever home in Scotland.

So who are we, why have we bought a Californian, and in particular how does it make sense to buy an old JAWA in the mid-west and then ship it to Scotland? Let's answer these questions in turn. Hello America, we're Bob and Andrew Clark, father and son. We live in south-west Scotland, and are active members of both the JAWA-CZ Owners Club of Great Britain and the UK's Vintage Motor Cycle Club. Bob is a museum curator who's had bikes since his teens. He bought his first JAWA-CZ, a 471, in 1986. Andrew is at University studying law. His first classic bike, aged 17, was a 473. We've got a shed full of bikes. A 1925 Sunbeam Model 6 "Long stroke" 500cc, a 1949 Velocette LE Mk 1 150cc, a 1965 JAWA-CZ 473, a 1974 CZ 981 "Yellow tank", a 1974 CZ 477, a 1976 CZ 472.1 from the first production batch, a 1989 CZ 472.6, a 1991 JAWA 640.632 from the homologation batch of 6 bikes for the 640-based successor to the JAWA Model 632 which never went into production, a 1995 CZ 488.4, a 2002 Honda Varadero XL125, and a 2007 Kawasaki ER6f. Plus we have a couple of 20-year-old Saab 9000 cars.

So why a Californian as well? In every generation, there are some bikes that become the stuff of myth and legend. In the UK in the 1960s and 1970s, a particular fascination was with models produced for the US market, styled often as a European interpretation of West Coast desert and custom bikes. We thought they looked so cool. We read about them and saw pictures in magazines, but we didn't know anyone who owned one and generally couldn't buy them. This was because most if not all of what were often quite limited production runs naturally went to the USA. Thus it was with bikes such as the Norton P11, the first Honda CB750s, the Kawasaki H1 ... and the JAWA Californian.

Now roll forward to the classic motorcycling world of today, where the myths and legends of the past remain as strong. We've got a shed full of JAWAs and CZs, but apart from our CZ 981 these bikes are still what they always were: oddly-styled, cheap and basic bikes to ride to work, ownership of which indicated either a complete lack of good taste in motorcycles, or extreme poverty! Against this background, why wouldn't we want a 362, which represents the one time as far as the western world was concerned where JAWA got it spot-on and captured the spirit of the age?

So why buy a bike in the USA? The simple answer is price, availability and quality. In Europe, particularly in Czechia, 362s are in short supply. There never were very many: less than 15,000 were built, and most went to the USA. Very few come up for sale, and when they do, anything that isn't a complete wreck or substantially unoriginal sells for silly money. The chances of being able to buy a sound, complete, original, "barn-find" 362, which someone else hasn't messed around with, are so remote as to be unimaginable. In the USA, Californians regularly come up for sale, tend to sell for substantially less than in Europe, and original bikes are still emerging from dark corners. We'd been looking out for a suitable Californian for around five years, so it was pretty much a no-brainer when this one came up for sale. The arithmetic is simple: the purchase price of the bike, plus shipping and all the other costs that get added in on the way, works out less than you'd pay in Europe for a bike that's not as nice.

When it came to it, however, buying the bike was the easy bit. Having won the auction and paid the deposit through PayPal, the next two weeks were positively scary. The seller would only communicate through the eBay message equivalent of grunts with extended silences between each, and basically wasn't helpful. We had expected US legal systems and legal requirements to be unfamiliar, but what we had not anticipated was the big difference in how business seems to be done in the USA in comparison to the UK. Over here, if you ask a question you get an answer, even if that is "sorry, no". We learned through experience that if a US company can't or doesn't want to do what you've asked them, they simply don't reply: it seems as though in US business-speak no reply means "no", but you have to wait a day or two to work out that's what's going on.

Our first problem was to establish that the bike was genuine. This required bite-sized messages to get the seller, who doesn't know JAWA-CZ bikes, to confirm first that the factory VIN plate was present on the headstock, and then to get the frame number stamped on that. However, getting him to check if the engine

number on the VIN plate was the same as the engine number on the engine was a step too far, and we still don't know the engine number!

The next issue was paying for the bike. The seller wouldn't accept payment by international bank transfer or PayPal, but still wanted payment in seven days. In Europe that wouldn't be a problem, because the specialist companies who move bikes around will generally delivering or receiving cash where necessary. We lost time working out that this isn't the way things are done in the USA. Fortunately, however, just as Andrew was working out Plan B – buy dollar bills in Scotland, fly to Cleveland, hire a truck, pick up and pay for the bike, drive to the shipper's depot in New York, drop off the hire truck, then fly back to Scotland, Pavel Karasek came to our rescue. We sent him the money via PayPal; he bought a cashier's check and mailed it to the seller on tracked delivery. Um: thank you, Pavel, we don't even have cashier's checks in Scotland.

And then there was the paperwork. The bike was being sold without a title, and whilst the auction was still running we researched the significance of that. US and UK vehicle registration systems bear no resemblance to each other – yours is much more complex! Once again Pavel came to our rescue, putting us in touch with a specialist company in Pennsylvania which uses what they describe as “a loophole” in the vehicle registration regulations in Vermont to obtain new titles for classic bikes and cars that don't have them. Dealing with this company has proved really easy (thank you again, Pavel!), but they need a Bill of Sale. So do the shippers, to show to US Customs. The shippers provided a template for a Bill of Sale that meets requirements, but – an outcome achieved through the “ask a question, don't get a reply to your email, deduce this means the answer is no” process – the shippers were not willing to pick up and transport the Bill of Sale with the bike! So – an outcome achieved through the “exchange bite-sized grunt-messages with the seller through eBay” process, we ended up with us creating a Bill of Sale as a Word document and emailing it to the seller to print out, date, sign and post to the company handling the new title. How can an apparently-simple thing become so complex for one piece of paper?

A lot of work which without the kind help of Pavel would have been literally impossible, but it looks as though things are sorted. The bike is on its way, the Bill of Sale is in the mail, and the rest looks straightforward.

So what of the bike itself? The frame number confirms it is a Model 362 built in November or December 1972. The photos (which are all we have seen so far, of course) appear to show a very substantially original bike still in first paint and chrome. It's been fitted with a ghastly white nose fairing and a set of aftermarket indicators which will easily be removed, but it's all there apart from the right hand side panel and the airbox rubber. Even most of the original toolkit seems to have survived! Our preference is for bikes that are cosmetically original and unrestored, but which are mechanically and electrically sound. When the bike reaches the UK there will be another paperwork process to get it registered, but this is tedious rather than difficult. Whilst that's underway the bike will be deep-cleaned, polished and finished with protective coatings for the paint, alloy and chrome. Everything will be checked for wear, with new items being fitted as necessary. The engine will be stripped and reassembled, with new bearings, seals, etc. It will get 12-volt VAPE ignition and lights. And then it will be ridden, generally in the good summer weather, at Club rallies and runs, so that it is nice and sweet for when Pavel comes to Europe in a couple of years to try it out!

Bob Clark

Classified Ads

For Sale: I still have some copies of Katalog motocyklů ČZ left in my garage that I would like to sell. The price is \$77 (\$70 book + \$7 shipping). I can accept PayPal. Best to contact at email

honza.vosalik1@gmail.com

The book has 480 pages A4 size, 512 model description, 2200 factory pictures. There are examples of the pictures here; <http://www.cezetmania.info/obsah/katalog-motocyklu-cz-90.html>

This is an excellent book, very useful even for those of us who don't read Czech.

Editor

On the Web; <https://indd.adobe.com/view/ff787aae-2648-4794-a455-925b2e35ad80> The JAWA Club Ireland's newsletter

Epilogue



What better way to close out the newsletter than a picture of me and Don Kueny and a Czech beer? Thanks go to Pavel for this picture taken at the last Gathering at Ervin Bittner's.