



**Antique Motorcycle  
Club of America**

# Fort Sutter Newsletter



**April 2024, Vol 43, Number 2**

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April 2024

## President's Comments

Hello Fort Sutter!

Spring is here and I hope everyone is getting their winter projects finished up and ready for the summer riding season. I wasn't able to get my 49' Panhead chopper ready for the Borrego road run, but add that to the list of my (currently) unfinished projects. It think many within the club can attest to the constant cycling of projects on and off as they progress, and that there's just not enough time in the day sometimes.

It was great to see everyone at our last business meeting. Much was talked about (especially Dixon) and the news that we have Club hats again. Danny Marquis took the time to get some made, so there's plenty to go around for the people who requested hats for so long.

Speaking of Dixon, its coming in hot so I hope to see a bunch of Fort Sutter's smiling faces at the event along with the boots on the ground we need to make it a success. The core group of your Board of Directors along with other key players have made sure the Administrative, Merchandising and Vendor registration requirements are in place to make the event take place. Let's all get together and make it a fun, smooth, and easy going event I know it's gonna be.

Saturday, June 1st is our next meeting and it will be at Mark Loewen's shop. We are going to have a BBQ, small meeting and a RAFFLE! Yes, I've been lagging on the raffle at the meetings, but I promise I'm gonna bring something only half of you will want to keep to raffle off. I also promise to not talk TOO much about Dixon, because at that point, it's basically a done deal. Look forward to seeing everyone and remind us why we are doing this in the first place, for the fun of it!

As we go down the road, together-

Bob Henry

**Our Next Club Meeting will be Saturday,  
June 1, 2024**

**12:00 pm BBQ, 1:00 pm meeting  
6956 Florin Perkins Rd. Sacramento, CA 95828**

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## Fort Sutter Meeting Minutes April 6, 2024

**Call to Order:** The April 6, 2024, meeting was called to order at 1:02 pm by Bob Henry, Fort Sutter President

- **Welcome New Members:** \_\_\_\_\_ **None** \_\_\_\_\_ **Guests:** 1 at the meeting
- **Membership:** Karie Schenken, Charmain reports there are: 78 Primary members, 25 Associates, 3 Junior members, and 11 Honorary members. (117 total members)
- **Treasury Report:** Presented by Mark Loewen, filling in for Julie. Mark reported on account balances. Finances are in good order.
- **Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as written for the February 2024 meeting. Passed with no opposition.

### Old Business

- **Prior Club Rides:**

SoCal Winter run at Borrego Springs (February 29 - March 2) was attended by several Ft. Sutter members. Bob, Tom, John, Tracy, Stan and others discussed conditions from current and past runs. All agreed it was a fun and interesting run.

John and others talked about Sean Kohmescher's March 16 ride. Sean set a good pace on the '51 Indian that was new to him.

Bill Cruz had a run planned for April 4. He and Joe Giammona went on the ride and encountered some rain, but both thought it was a good ride despite the rain.
- **AMCA National Update:** John Markley reports that Don Djurik, although retired as chief judge, is now on the board of directors of AMCA national. He will also be on the judging board, although not the lead. AMCA is doing well with new chapters being added. New chapters in Utah and Florida are starting up. Liability waiver will be signed by all vendors at Dixon, as it has in the past. Every member should sign individual liability waiver each year.

### New Business

- **April Rides:** Bill Cruz is proposing a ride on Thursday April 25th. Ride down by Rio Vista, lunch at Calistoga, end up by Woodland. More info to come via email.
- Some Ft. Sutter members are signed up for Yerba Buena's National Road run in Sep.
- **NORCAL Cycle Swap:** The next NORCAL Cycle Swap will be on April 14, 2024. Tracy and Bob will both be going. Meet early at 5am at gas station. Gate opens at 7am for vendors. Contact Bob Henry or Tracy Stahlman if interested.
- Ride to ISHI chapter meet May 26.
- **Club T-shirts:** T-shirts available for those who ordered them. Some extras are available for sale to members.
- **Fort Sutter National Meet in Dixon.**
  - Sign-ups for tasks: most tasks covered but more help always welcome. Motorcycle judging could use more help. Banquet needs more help (setup and clean up). Fairgrounds contract signed and mailed out. Food vendor permit for club as organizer done. Individual vendors also need permits, 1 done, other working on it. Stan made a motion for up to \$500 for raffle prizes; seconded and passed by voice vote. Motion for up to \$200 for decorations; seconded and passed. First place awards only, 2nd, 3rd get hat and pin. Gas bbqs needed for Dixon; some members volunteered loan for Dixon.
  - Recognized "Doinksters" (sp?) for donation to support Dixon, and Sean Kohmescher (Temple coffee) for his donation.
  - No specific donation level for sponsors; refer potential sponsors to Tracy or Bob to determine what they expect in return for donation.
- **August BBQ:** Tracy Kleber was given go ahead to get park in Elk Grove for Aug 10. Would be BBQ and meeting.
- **June meeting:** BBQ at Mark Loewen's shop.
- **Club hats:** Hats were available at the meeting. \$25 for red hat; \$20 for black. Red are members only; black for Dixon event hats. \$967 cost to club. Motion made and seconded for club to cover costs; passed by voice vote.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm**

## SoCal chapter Winter Road Run February 29 - March 2, 2024

A number of Ft. Sutter members attended the SoCal National Road Run in Borrego Springs, California. This has been an annual event for the SoCal chapter for years, and this year in addition to being a National Road Run, the club celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding.

Joe and Carol Giammona have attended the SoCal Borrego Springs Road Run four times, and Joe notes that no two years (or even two days) have had the same weather. They've experienced 80-degrees with clear skies, snow on the ground, wind, overcast temps in the 30's, wind, rain, hail, wind, sand drifts across the road and wet roads with slush in shaded curves. Last year, snow cover came all the way to the roadside in some areas.

This year, the weather was warm at the host hotel, getting up to the high seventies. As usual the run was a variation of three routes , two of which led into the mountains over 4,000', so temperatures dropped significantly in parts the run. No snow near road level this year, though. It can also be windy, but this year the strong winds held off until the last day.

(Following photos thanks to Tom, Jayne, Joe, and Tracy)



Joe and Carol and Stan,  
prepared for the first day's  
ride.



# SoCal run (continued)

*At the hospitality tent, participants could register and sign up for a scavenger hunt and a poker draw. Snacks and coffee were available in the morning.*



*Bikes from many different eras were represented at the run.*





# SoCal run (continued)

**A stop at the Julian Pie Co. is almost mandatory.**



**Right: Joe, Tom, Carol, Rich, Tracy, Kim, and Bob after a satisfying snack.**



**Above: A typical desert canyon.**

**Below: Bob Henry rides through some of the woods at higher altitude.**





**(SoCal run, continued)**



**Left: Lunch was at the Pub at Lake Cuymaca.**

**Below: A sampling of a couple of the many fascinating sculptures around Borrego Springs.**



**Above: The views from the switchback roads in the area look out over a vast expanse of desert.**



**Above: The hotel parking lot becomes a bike show in itself.**

**Right: Blue skies mottled with clouds were the rule for most of the run.**





**SoCal run (continued)**

***Sometimes the roads appear endless.***



***Left and above: 2nd day lunch at Mountain Center Cafe.***



***The curves abound.***





**SoCal run (continued)**

*The unpaved, sandy road to lunch at the Canebrake community center made for a bit of a challenge.*



*Some of the Ft. Sutter members after lunch.*



*A successful fuel transfer operation on the way back from lunch.*



# SoCal run (continued)



***In the evening, we gathered for the banquet and awards.***

***This 50cc Zundapp ridden by Oliver from Germany traveled over 17,000 miles in North America getting the high mileage award.***



***Some Ft. Sutter members were lucky in the raffle.***



***The '24 Ner-a-Car got the people's choice award.***



***Photo with engraved frame made a nice souvenir.***



March 16 club ride, led by Sean Kohmescher  
Riders included Bill Cruz, John Markley, Danny Marquis, Stan Randall,  
Jerry Bland, and Stan Smith

Dick Crawford and Carl Grone met the group for lunch at Poor Red's.

Great ride - Clear but cool to start but warmed up as the day wore  
on. Oldest bike was Sean's '53 Indian.

(Thanks to John Markley for photos)





(March 16 club ride, continued)





Bill Cruz' club ride April 4, 2024.

It was just Bill and Joe, but both agreed they had a good time. They encountered some rain (but they look prepared for it), and didn't end up going all the way to Calistoga.

(Thanks to Joe Giammona for photos, and there are some further comments on Joe's Facebook page.)





# Dr Sprocket's Column

## A FINE LINE (PART 1): KENNY HOWARD



*I went to high school in SoCal on the corner of Atlantic Blvd south to north and Artesia Blvd east to west: the line dividing North Long Beach from Compton to the north. Above Compton was Lynwood, then Southgate, Bell and last, Maywood.*

The giant donut on top of Dale's Donuts on the next main street to the north, Alondra crossing Atlantic, has been featured in a lot of TV shows

and movies. One mile east and west and ten miles north to Slauson Blvd and Maywood created an area that contained most of the shops and their owners who became icons of the 'Kustom Kar Kulture', as it became known in the mid-1980s. Between 1950 and 1970 this was the hotbed of customization in southern California, and the nation.

George Cerny's shop was near Alondra and Long Beach Blvd in Compton, the Barris shop was on Atlantic in Lynwood, Dean Jeffries' shop was next door to Barris, Roth's studios were on Slauson in Maywood. Motorcycle-related shops included CB Clausen's shop in Southgate, which later moved down to Florence Blvd in Compton, not far from Jungle Jim's shop and Al Titus's in Lynwood, both on Atlantic.

For a teenager just getting his first car (a 1948 Ford) and starting school in 1963, what more could you ask for?

Most of these shops were just trying to make a living with their craft and talent in the fairly new medium of car and motorcycle modification. Torch welding, leading, speciality painting and new aftermarket parts development kept them in business and made their names known. Many

became very successful but I think they would have been puzzled by the 'hero' status given to them down the road by others.

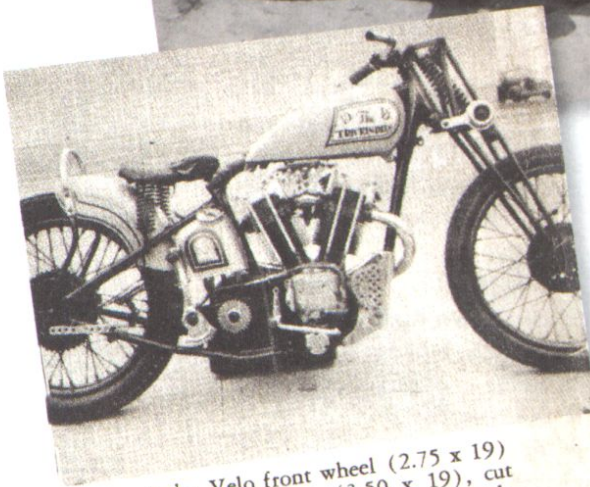
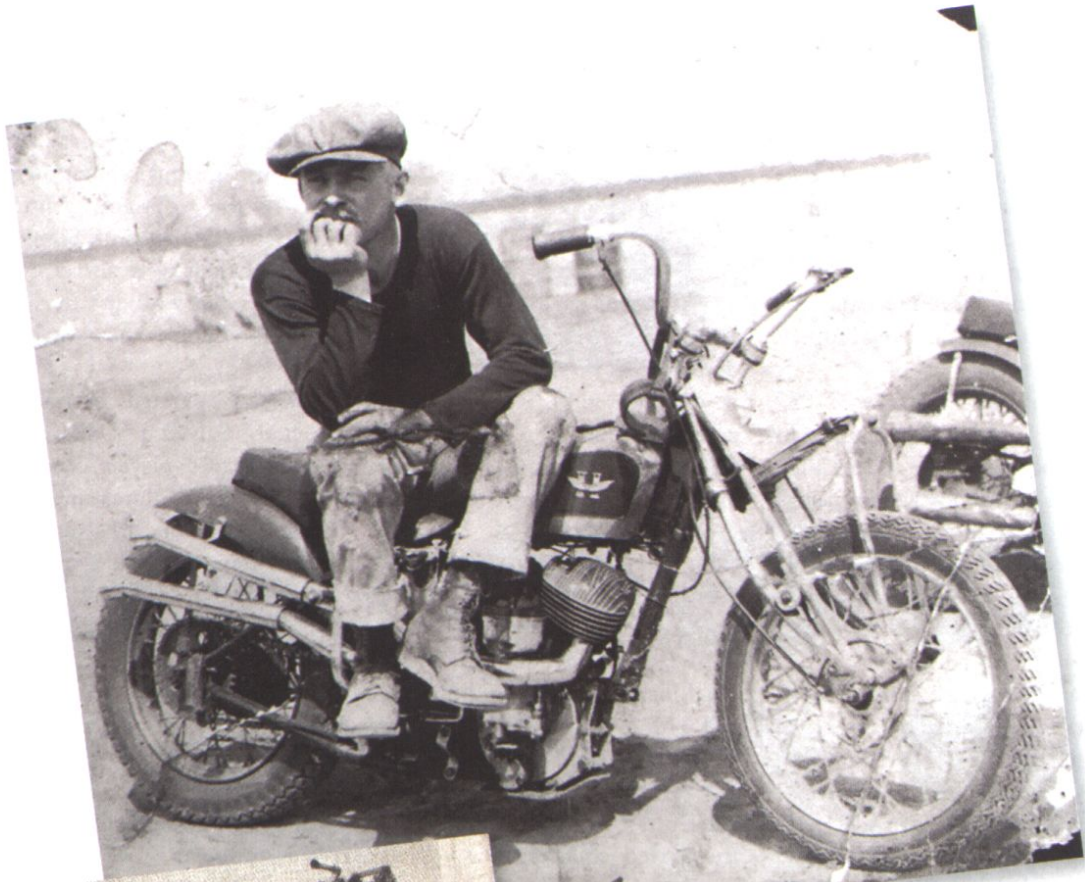
Let's go back to yesterday and follow one of these characters through his rise to fame, even though he never wanted the reputation that was assigned to him by others and was never interested in monetary gain.

Kenny Howard started learning his craft from his father, Wally (who was a very accomplished sign painter and pinstriper) when he was just ten years of age, around 1939. When he was 15 he went to work at George Beerup's motorcycle shop. Kenny always considered himself a mechanic and machinist first and foremost. The earliest photo of Kenny on a motorcycle was taken in 1946 with him perched on his magneto-fired Indian Scout, complete with Flanders risers, high bars, dual pipes, chrome English tank and an earlier Scout leaf spring fork.

In 1947, the year after that photo was taken, Howard started painting

>





Panther forks, Velo front wheel (2.75 x 19) and Triumph rear wheel (3.50 x 19), cut down Triumph oil tank, Excelsior gas tank, hand formed motor mounts, and that rear exhaust pipe should please the back pressure worry warts—oh yes! cubic inches? Only 43. No more will I get that "You've got more inches than me" from a vanquished opponent. Now I can use it.

Von Dutch, Compton, California  
 (Von "Flying Eyeballs" Dutch is the cyclists' Salvador Dali, dreams up those surrealistic tank designs seen about the Southland. More about Dutch later.—ED)

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**From the top:** 1) 1946, Kenny astride his neatly modified Indian Scout. 2) July 1952, Cycle Magazine readers' letters page. 3) How Kenny was advertising his skills in the '50s.



signs and started earning money from pinstripping around 1950. He was, of course, influenced by dad Wally but his main inspiration was Tommy 'The Greek' Hrones from the NorCal Bay area. Like Kenny, Tommy was a bike nut and had various Harleys, Indians and Triumphs. He started striping in the late '20s and closed his last shop in the mid-nineties. He was the originator of the spits, or teardrops.

It's no surprise that by 1952 Kenny was working out of CB Clausen's shop, painting and striping motorcycles. Look for Kenny's work on early fifties photos of CB's 'Brute' salt flat Knucklehead. While at CB's he built himself another Indian Scout with a rare Crocker OHV conversion.

In the early fifties, he helped Dean Jeffries start his pinstripping career; he also did work for George Barris and George Cerny. Sources say he moved to the Hollywood area in the mid-fifties until he went to work for Bud Ekins around 1960. Kenny would stripe cars to earn a buck but his real joy came from motorcycles.

Bud Ekins, as you probably know, was an off-road scrambles and desert racer of much accomplishment, a motorcycle dealer, a great Hollywood stunt man and a prominent collector of early American motorcycles. His shop stood on the corner of Van Nuys Blvd and Ventura Blvd. Kenny worked for Bud throughout the sixties, helping him restore his huge bike collection. Whilst working there he also built several unique machines for himself.

One was the XAVW that was sold to Randy Smith of Custom Cycle Engineering and was then sold on to Tom Burke of B&O Cycles in Long Beach. It now resides in Iowa having been purchased by Mike Wolfe of 'American Pickers' TV fame.

Another of Kenny's creations was a VW powered C-cab trike, also later owned by Tom Burke. After Tom's shop closed in the early '70s, it disappeared; I have it on good authority that it is still stashed in SoCal, yet to be found by the monied and crazed collectors of all things 'Von Dutch'.

After being asked to leave Bud's employment, Kenny moved around in his famous bus equipped with small machine shop and living quarters. In the mid-1970s he ended up working for Jim Brucker who owned the 'Cars of the Stars and Planes of Fame Museum'; Kenny's job was to keep the varied collection of vehicles in good repair.

Ed Roth was also working for Jim Brucker at this time, building display sets and sign painting. Jim had bought most of Ed's cars when his Roth Studios closed down in 1970.

In 1979, when Jim closed down the museum, he allowed Kenny to move his bus out to a ranch he owned, where Kenny spent the remaining 13 years of his life doing a little pinstripping and hand-crafting knives and pistols. All highly valued today. He died just after his 63rd birthday.

There was a time in the early fifties to early sixties where Kenny led a very colorful life; what I like to call his bohemian, avant-garde, beatnik days. He was the dictionary definition of 'artist' and his reputation was created by the uptight, buttoned-down society of that time. Some of his ideas and beliefs were also a product of the times and wouldn't fly when viewed in the light of today by most.

Kenny painted abstracts (like his hero Salvador Dali), created wild sculptures, played cool jazz on his horns and flute, and drank wine from his bota bag. It was during this bohemian decade that he created his wild style of cluster-type pinstripping with characters included.

A friend of mine told me Kenny told him that he striped those elaborate designs originally on the trunks and hoods of cars because some painters covered over grinding marks where customizers had removed emblems and it was a good way to disguise them. Who knew! Kenny was a hepcat and too cool for school before cool was in fashion; I wonder what he'd say about the wealthy hipsters making money off his work today?

Stay tuned for part two of 'A Fine Line', next issue; I'll be looking at Ed Roth's motorsickle days.

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# Fort Sutter National AMCA Swap Meet and Show

June 14-15, 2024

Dixon Fairgrounds,  
Dixon California

Antique Motorcycle Parts and Bike Show SATURDAY

*FREE parking and entry to the public*

For Vendor and camping information

please visit:

[www.fortsutteramca.org](http://www.fortsutteramca.org)

