

# Remembrances

*Dave Bucher looks back at some little gems of experience from his 45 years of riding and writing.*



## Mona Lisa Bike

**By Dave Bucher**

**Photo by Dave Bucher**

Part of the perks of writing for a motorcycle publication is that, occasionally, in an effort to make up for the paltry rates they pay for your brilliance, they let you feather your own nest. So it was, in February of 1988, that I trailed my newly acquired, used, quite ugly 1986 BMW K100 to Athens, Ohio, to the paint shop of one Kent Holt. His reputation as the foremost painter in the universe of BMWs had prepared me for rejection. But when I had explained that I was doing a makeover article for a national motorcycle magazine, he'd bought in.

When I delivered the bike, and the other goodies I'd scammed for it...like a Parabellum fairing, a belly pan, an engine air scoop and a Corbin seat with blue piping...he said, "Sure, we'll take the tank and all the plastic bits and give them a coat of Glasurit Police White."

"Sounds great," I said. "I'll be back in May to pick it up."

When May rolled around I talked my brother-in-law into flying me out to Athens. That plane ride and the subsequent motorcycle trip I survived to make it back home are totally separate remembrances. All I'll relate here is my shock when Holt unveiled his creation.

Like all great artists, he'd gotten carried away. Painted the whole damn thing white. The engine. The final drive. Fork. Wheels. Everything but the tires. He must have had to disassemble the entire bike to be able to do the meticulous job he did.

It was the most beautiful thing I have probably ever possessed, and certainly something I could or would never have been able to justify paying for myself.

Well, I kept my part of the bargain,

writing the article and even persuading a very talented automotive photographer I knew into taking the bike into his studio and taking some amazing pictures of it. Also had another photographer friend lean out of the back of his Volvo station wagon and do some pics of me on the move. And that's where the story takes an amusing twist.

Later that year, when those goofy ads for motorcycle-themed Christmas cards come out, there it was. My beautiful white bike. A bike absolutely like no other in the world...coming down a snowy road with Santa Claus aboard. Somebody had taken the highway picture from the article, copied it, put it in a winter setting, and replaced me with Santa.

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, so I took the Santa thing in that spirit. But the best part of the deal came a couple of years later when I got tired of that bike. Despite its good looks, it was still a K100. For those who never had one, they were uncomfortable to ride, had quirky electronics and a dangerously annoying habit of vapor locking and shutting off if you dared use the wrong kind of fuel.

Fed up, I took it back to the dealer who'd sold it to me for \$3,400 and asked him if he'd sell it on consignment. "For how much?" he said.

"Five thousand," I replied. He was very skeptical, but it was the dead of winter and he didn't have much else going on. Wouldn't you know, in under a month some dang fool came in and plopped down the asking price without any bargaining at all. They told me the guy was absolutely smitten.

I've run across many of the bikes I've owned and sold over the past 40 years, but I've never seen that beauty again. Wish I could. I can only hope, like any great work of art, it has been conserved. It has to be one of the greatest Holt's ever.