



SALISBURY CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE

A Celebration of the Art & Design of the Automobile

The Vintage Motorcycle Class

Two Wheeled Thunder Returns to the Salisbury Concours d'Elegance



2011 Concours 1st Place - 1947 Indian Chief



2nd Place - 1955 Harley Davidson Hydra-Glide FL Panhead

The idea of the motorcycle may have begun (although there is disagreement among historians as to accuracy of the claim) with a 14th century sketch by a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci for a two-wheeled machine with pedals and a leather “chain”.



Much later, in 1817, Baron Karl von Drais built the first two-wheeled rider-propelled frame, the Laufmaschine (running machine), later also called the velocipede. Without pedals or steering, a person sat on it and pushed with their feet to glide along.

For the next fifty years and more, attempts were made to create a true motorcycle - but all such attempts are now considered merely curiosities because the only power plant available was a steam-generated engine.



Photo: Joachim Kohler

The first true motorcycle is considered to be an experiment that Gottlieb Daimler and associate William Maybach devised in 1885 while building a version of the first high-speed, four-stroke internal combustion engine that had been invented by engineer Nicolaus Otto. Daimler constructed, purely as a test-bench, a crude, wooden-framed two-wheeler (with 2 additional outrigger wheels), powered by an air-cooled 267 cc motor,

developing 0.5 bhp. As a bicycle, it was 20 years out of date, and once it had served its purpose, Daimler discarded it to work on a horseless carriage.

What has been called “the perfect machine” has come to assume many forms and a fascinating range of variations.



Photo: Stahlkocher

The first successful production motorcycle was in Munich, Germany in 1894, the Hildebrand & Wolfmuller. It had a step-through frame with a fuel tank mounted on the downtube and a 2 cylinder engine that developed 2.5 bhp. .

The first successful American motorcycle placed into production was the 1898 Orient-Aster, built by the Metz Company in Massachusetts. This was soon followed by the Indian (1901) and the Harley-Davidson (1902).



Photo: Stahlkocher

What was once a rich man’s folly has become the most popular mode of transportation in the world - millions of the Honda 90 have been sold worldwide, continuing to this day.



Photo: Grantuking

What was once the simplest form of transportation, with the most elementary design fabricated from basic materials, has become in current day a leading edge of technology in both design and materials – with innovations such as oval shaped pistons, carbon fiber frames, and titanium fasteners.



Photo: Quatro Valvole

What was once used as a strategic machine in the World Wars is now a part of a modern war arsenal as well as law enforcement around the world - the same basic machine that is now favored by “outlaws” and the biker culture, formula racers, and day-to-day commuters.

Join us for a wonderful opportunity to view the fantastic and wonderful world of motorcycles as we celebrate the Art and Design of the Motorcycle.