

# The Story



The early days 1962 Bonneville.

Being a lifelong motorcycle enthusiast I have always kept an eye out for that special something. Perhaps the streamline shape of a Z1 fuel tank or the six tube exhaust of a Valkyrie or GL. Invariably some small artistic design or specially placed chrome would entice me to desire this new ride.

I became interested in motorcycles at a very young age. I remember sitting out in front of the Veseli beer joint with friends at the age of 12 or 13, in those days hanging out in the bar was okay as we drank soda and played pool. A local “hood” pulled up on his old pan head Harley with pipes roaring. Most of the guys were afraid of this rider however I paid little attention as I was more interested in the machine not the man. It was shortly after that I got my first scooter which went through many customizations and reconfigurations. I had a friend who owned a Motobecane moped and another who had 125cc Suzuki’s which I borrowed whenever I had enough money to bribe them into submission. Eventually I acquired my own real motorcycle, a 1962 Triumph Bonneville 650. It was purple and dirty and needed all sorts of work. It was immediately torn apart, gearbox fixed, magneto rebuilt, twin Amal carbs cleaned and synced.

I guess this old Bonnie was the start of it all; I worked on it daily trying to keep it running. In those days British and American bikes were so poorly made that a warehouse full of extra parts were needed even for the shortest of trips, not to mention oil that dripped from places that didn’t even contain oil. The lighting system was by Lucas electric (*prince of darkness*). Riding at night was best done during a full moon.

I have always said this old bike was a real pain and a lot of work but the most fun I ever had on two wheels.



Norm and Monica. Kokes 1974 heading to Yellowstone

As time progressed my eyes drifted from one model, one brand to another. I have had Triumph, BSA, Norton, Yamaha, Kawasaki and to date some 100+ different bikes. I went to see Evil Knievel jump 11 school buses at the old Met Stadium in St Paul. Those twin tuned intakes on his XR750 really caught my eye. I was working part time at the Faribault Harley Davidson shop as a foreign bike mechanic so I was able to get one cheap. I rode it for a couple days and was offered \$100 more than I paid for it so away it went. That was a common occurrence in the early tinkering days.

Being a lifelong non-conformist I shied away from what was popular and “in”. Consequently while my friends just kept riding the same brands, same models I kept changing it up and the diversity was outrageous at times. In general every time I changed to a new and different bike (*at least yearly*) I would view it as an upgrade.

My current GL1800 is, and has been for the last 11 years, my main bike. I still had to have at least one second bike to keep me occupied. The 2nd bikes were again a mix of Valkyries, ST1100s, Excelsior Henderson’s and classic old bikes of all brands. Most of these received total work overs and new paint and were sold as restored classics on eBay.



Norm with a pair of Excelsior Hendersons

In 2009 the Can-Am Spyder caught my eye. It was right up my alley as it was different and I like different. I did a test ride and was impressed with what I would call a “sport trike”. Unlike the conventional rear wheel trike configuration this reverse trike concept is definitely sporty and in my mind meant off highway gravel and back country riding. I was inspired to create at this point.

Now I had the itch again. I went out and bought a totally crashed 1995 Honda ST1100 and pulled the front wheel and associated trim. I designed and constructed a front frame and using parts from an ATV. I modified and fortified them. In the end I created the first prototype. The Stealth11.

I didn’t know it was the first prototype at the time as I just was on a mission to create a reverse trike that handled well, was safe and contained a solid decent engine and drive system. The 1100cc V4 and shaft drive was a good choice and after several major front end geometric changes the complete package worked very well indeed! I put over 30,000 miles on this conversion and discovered my poor GL1800 spent more and more time parked in the corner while I enjoyed this new contraption.



The first prototype, the “Stealth 1100”

In 2011 I was contacted by Kim at the local salvage yard [Sport Wheels](#). She said they just took in several GL1800s and three Valkyries. She wondered if I would be interested. Silly girl of course I was. So I ran over and quickly became owner of another 1999 Valkyrie interstate. It had hit a

deer so the fairing was gone along with some minor chrome damage. In general a decent repairable though.

This Valkyrie quickly became prototype #2 as the Valk3. The 2nd is better than the first as it is with most endeavors. This one was a bolt on system which was removable and allowed the option to transform the bike back to stock. The Stealth11 was a weld on and once done it was done for good.



The second prototype, "The VALK-3"

The Valk3 was definitely more stable, softer riding and overall superior to the first prototype taking advantage of what was learned regarding front end geometry, load distribution and windage. Many lessons were learned along the way and to date the V3 has logged well over 35,000 miles without a hitch.

In 2013 things took on a new twist. I had resisted converting my GL1800 as it was the only full time two wheel bike I currently owned. I was unsure if I really wanted to abandon two wheels and go permanently to three. But just about the first of the year I made the decision to bite the bullet and commence with the GL1800 RT conversion.

I used a more practical approach to construction on the GL conversion, again taking advantage of lessons learned. The GL uses an aluminum frame so the mounting had to be strictly bolt on. I really thought about the ability to add the front assembly in such a way as it could be reverted back to two wheels without modification. This new conversion would be done without any structural modifications, a true bolt on bolt off fabrication.

I decided to build a simple frame segment or adapter cradle. This small frame structure would bolt to the motorcycle frame using existing mounting locations formerly occupied by crash bars and misc non-needed trim pieces. The forward facing part of the adapter cradle would bolt to the main trike frame assembly. Steering is done via a shaft which couples directly to the lower triple tree and the entire front structure is completed with a nine piece bolt on skin assembly.

The entire build took just over 2 months working only a few hours per day. I would guess some sixty hours total which included fabrication, bodywork and paint. None of the work was sublet as I do all my own welding, machine work and paint.

In spring 2013 on its maiden voyage I knew I had a real winner. I had again learned some lessons on wheel placement and weight distribution. These adjustments made the GL conversion a step above the Valk3 conversion. The ride is smooth and predictable and the stability is first rate. I was initially concerned over handling in windy conditions as the stock GL1800 is not good with wind. As it turned out the conversion takes even the harshest wind in stride. It was and is a winner!

In early August we were slated to go on our normal annual motorcycle trip with our friends. This year I booked a cabin in Estes Park, CO where we would home base and ride the various mountain roads and do some fly fishing while lost.

We ended up leaving a day early so we had to kill an extra day somehow. We decided to head into Sturgis for the bike rally not wanting to spend it in Nebraska (*no offense*). My buddy always wanted to go there, so why not. The moment we hit the South Dakota border it started to rain and rain and rain. This was the first major trip on any reverse trike so it was a true test of this newly created GLAT (*GL adventure trike*).

Rain was not an issue at all and we rode 75 mph down the interstate all the way to Sturgis. Along the way and every time we stopped for gas I was besieged by onlookers wanting to know how does it handle? How does it ride? Who builds it? My answers were given in almost robot fashion as I have been asked the same questions over and over for four years. It handles very well, rides like a dream and I DO.

What was different about this period though was the fact everyone kept saying I should patent this concept and design and build them for the public. My wife being fairly conservative would ordinarily and with determination, make every attempt to dissuade me from any new endeavor resulting in financial expenditure. During the trip and much to my surprise she started to encourage me to look into patent and promotion of this invention.



The third prototype, "Endeavor III"

The day we returned home I began a patent search and found there were no patents issued regarding any RT conversions. The options were wide open. So the stage was set, attorneys hired and to date Endeavor is patent pending in 148 countries.

We discovered a real niche as my design allows for modular construction, a one fits all approach with the generic main frame assembly mated to the motorcycle via the now patented adapter cradle. This system allows the end user to do all the work themselves and easily convert the original bike back to stock at any time. Inter-changeable and customizable body panels allow for a change in look simply by changing the body panels. integrated cooling assist via fans and duct work for air cooled engines and radiators for liquid cooled. Everything about this kit is customizable including the steering geometry. This design is also first to market as our first production unit was sold in 2014. A once in a lifetime accomplishment for sure.

I formed a new company called IDO-Endeavor. The IDO comes from the fact every time someone asked who builds it I would answer “why I DO”! Endeavor comes from the fact this is a radical new endeavor. Something I had never done before, invent and patent an idea. I am unsure where this will lead but I am sure my endeavor conversions will take me wherever I wish to go.

And as always “**Take the right turn!**“

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