

CAPE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE CLUB NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2017

What is a classic or vintage motorcycle - The International standard benchmark guide - By Andre du Plessis (cell 072420 0329)

There are many types of motorcyclists and motorcycle enthusiasts. Some love just riding the latest bikes, some like racing, off roading or just collecting motorcycles. Obviously there are many more types of bikers and bikes and scooters and one of the traditional and popular categories is riding and owning a true Classic or Vintage (or antique/veteran) machine(s).

In itself the category is diverse with many “experts” and many different opinions on what is a classic and what is a vintage motorcycle (Where I refer to motorcycle, please accept that it includes scooters). The car collectors have gone through many debates over the qualifying age for a four wheeler to be regarded as a “classic” or a “vintage”. Very old machines are accepted as antiques or also referred to as veteran vehicles.

The interesting fact is that the motorcycling community does not follow the four-wheeler community in the determination of categories of collectible and vintage motorcycles. The trend over the past +-35 years to determine when a bike is a “classic” would be two-fold:-

1. The age of the motorcycle; and
2. The general desirability to own one of those classics.

Firstly the accepted rule is that all vehicles have their birthday on 1 January of every year. So if your bike was built on 12 December of a year, it will be regarded as a year old model on the 1st of January, even if it is only 19 days old by then. That is the rule and that stands to create the universal norm.

The general rule for a classic is 20 years but some clubs might accept 15 years from manufacture date. Most overseas **insurance companies** will accept 20 years for insurance purposes and some also accept 15 years and some 25. [I have not tested that in RSA] So any motorcycle built before 1 January 1998 is now a Classic.

As there are millions of motorcycles manufactured, and as we all know, most of them are produced for the purpose of being commuter bikes. More so today than 37 years ago. In 1980, motorcycling was still regarded by most of the Western World as a “counter culture” for ducktails, hippies, rockers and hooligans. Today motorcycling has become a main stream fashionable collectible and consumable item, very much as is the fashion of getting a tattoo.

How does this influence motorcycles and the status of a model in becoming a classic ? It is not much different than in 1980, with the exception that there are many more bikes that will never reach that iconic status of a “must have” motorcycle. Lets take a sample: The Kawasaki and Suzuki triples were both ground-breaking two stroke sport machines in the seventies but in both manufacturer’s case they were short lived in architecture and engine type. This meant that a mere 10 years after the last Suzuki GT750 or Kawasaki KH500/KH750 rolled off the assembly line, they were in demand amongst classic riders. Yes, maybe one could pick up samples for very little money but I am not discussing money value under this point.

Now lets look at a recent bike, lets take Honda’s NC700 - It has a unique engine configuration, The tank is a cubby-hole and the bike is really a nice, well designed bike. Will it become a true classic like a GT750 or KH750 ? Who knows, it might just be too early to tell. One thing is for sure. The first edition NC700's will be classics by definition after 20 years but as they were produced in much larger numbers than the triples one would have to ask if they will be desirable bikes to collectors?

In the end it really does not matter whether your bike or my bike or our favourite bikes are collectible and valuable or not. For those that own bikes for the investment value. Good. Rare and collectible bikes will grow faster in value than, say, Silver. But then the bike must be in showroom condition or be very rare and exotic.

Take Buell for instance. Eric Buell's factory existed for around 25 years. The later XB range might not be of any value now as riders dump them because of problems in getting chassis and other parts but in 10 years from now, it is my bet that you will hardly see a good neat XB12 or XB9 Buell on the road. The picture changes with that and it is then that collectors want one and if they become scarce, they will become desirable. And so it will be and so it is with most classic bikes.

So let us look at the term "Vintage". A strong debate is currently on the go amongst car owners as some influential "person" recently decided that cars are no longer vintage if they are 40 years or older as was the standard for many years.

Fortunately this debate does not affect motorcycles. The American antique racing club has an official designation of what constitutes a vintage motorcycle and that originated from the American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association, which even has two different designations for vintage, depending on the type of racing the bike is going to do. The AHRMA defines motorcycles as vintage for motocross racing if they were built before 1975, and vintage for road racing if they were built after 1975.

According to the Antique Motorcycle Club of America, an antique motorcycle is one that is 35 years or older. This is the only "true" official designation in the U.S.A, but because some states allow motorcycles to be registered or licensed as antiques after just 20 years, sometimes the definition becomes unclear.

The benchmark in South Africa has always been 40 years. That is a descent cut-off date as it is a rolling date that moves every year. It allows one to own a Vintage without too much debate and argument. So for 2017, all bikes built before 1 January 1978 will be classified as a vintage motorcycle.

Antique motorcycles, are only sometimes referred to as those built before 1915 (bikes that are 102 years old and I guess the date would have to be rolling as well, i.e. 1917 for this year)

This is not the general rule as most specialist clubs and associations will regard a bike as an **antique** if it is **50 years** and older. (So for 2017 it would be bikes of 1967 and older). The most used benchmark is fifty years and older.

No matter how old your classic is, you still need to get a motorcycle to be registered and you need a license before you hit the road. But the most important things to remember about your motorcycle – whether it's classic, vintage, antique or historical – is to be safe and enjoy the ride.

I personally belong to that class of riders that love classics and vintage bikes but they must not become an expensive piece of art in my garage or man-cave. No, life is too short. I want to be able to ride the bikes. Every day if I want. In fact 90% of my riding takes place on my classic and vintage machinery. If your bike is in good reliable condition, safe and fun to ride, why park it in a garage? As my personal hero, Ogric*, always says "Its not what you ride, its the way you ride it....."

(*Ogric - The iconic biker cartoon character by Paul Sample, UK)



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
A festival of music with top bands and live artists

TRADERS & EXPO
View the latest Harley® motorcycles and Official Rally Merchandise

DEMO RIDES
Free Demo rides are available each day. Don't know how to ride? The Jump Start allows you to experience riding a Harley® without the worry of balance. Helmets available for loan.

MASS RIDE
Experience the sound and spectacle as thousands of bikes ride through the streets of East London, or even better... get involved.
The Mass Ride takes place on Saturday 29 April 2017. Times and venue to be announced

STUNT SHOWS
Including trial bike and extreme bike shows, watch the stunt riders perform amazing tricks that will enthral you.

Biking events South Africa

MAR 4 Sat	TAINED SOULS MASS RIDE Mar 4 @ 9:00 am	MAR 23 Thu	Goldrand HOG Rally in Swaziland @ Piggs Peak Hotel and Casino Mar 23 @ 2:00 pm – Mar 26 @ 9:00 am
MAR 11 Sat	Family Day Jol @ Hippo's Mar 11 <small>all-day</small>	MAR 25 Sat	Super GP: Round 2 @ Killarey Mar 25 <small>all-day</small>
MAR 16 Thu	5th Annual RATEL RALLY!!! @ Springs Holiday Resort. Mar 16 – Mar 19 <small>all-day</small>		Friendz Riders Witbank Annual Dayjol @ Reyno Ridge Pub & Grill Mar 25 @ 6:00 am – 5:30 pm
MAR 19 Sun	Wolf Spirit mc birthday bash @ The cock and Bull. 7km past Upperpect towards Rustenburg Mar 19 @ 8:00 am – 8:00 am	MAR 31 Fri	Cimarron MC National Rally @ 7 Freathers Club House Mar 31 @ 10:00 am – Apr 2 @ 2:00 pm
	Wolf Spirit Mc Breakfast Run @ Cock & Bull Pub & Restaurant Mar 19 @ 8:00 am – 5:00 pm	APR 1 Sat	Naughty Bash @ 14 Toyota street,Aureus, Apr 1 <small>all-day</small>
MAR 23 Thu	Goldrand HOG Rally in Swaziland @ Piggs Peak Hotel and Casino Mar 23 @ 2:00 pm – Mar 26 @ 9:00 am		Day Jol @ Elsberg Rugby Club Apr 1 @ 10:00 am

WESTERN CAPE REGION

March 2017						
MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2	3	4	5
					 Bond of Brothers  Scattered Links	 Knights of St Christopher
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
						 HBW Bible Run
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
 MAWC Meeting						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				 Swallow Rally	 Swallow Rally	 Swallow Rally
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
				 NOBS		 CMA Joy Run

NEXT Month - International Guide - Comprehensive Vintage (and classic) Motorcycle pricing.