NEWSLETTER

Beehive Beemers Motorcycle Club of Utah
MOA 169 / RA 299

December 2026

December's BMW Enthusiast: Ewan Mcgregor and Charley Boorman



You knew that was going to be the final BMW enthusiast in this year's series, didn't you?

Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman are best friends known for their "Long Way" motorcycle adventure docuseries. The series began with Long Way Round in 2004, a journey from London to New York, and was followed by Long Way Down (2007) from Scotland to Cape Town, South Africa.

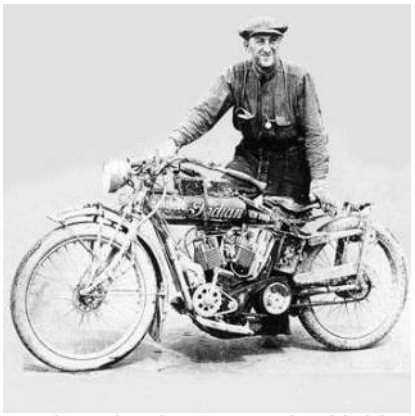
Both individually huge motorcycle collectors and riders, but advocated by McGregor, the bikes chosen for these original advertures were BMW R1150GS and then the R1200GSA for the second trip.

It is hard not to argue that the success of these two adventures and docuseries made the BWA GS bikes even more popular.

Among Ewan's collection of bikes, he retained his two BMW adventure bikes from the series.

Well, that takes care of another "Page One" theme, and I'm proud of myself that I didn't have to use Tom Cruise as one of the month's enthusiast, haha.

Now I need to figure out 2026's theme.



Erwin Baker in New York with his Indian motorcycle after his 1912 international journey

CANNONBALL RUN

Cannonball Run was established by Erwin "Cannonball" Baker in 1914 when he deamed of a project to do the transcontinental run 'Coast to Coast' of the United States, from one ocean to another, with the goal of setting the very first record time of this unofficial run.

Well prepared, he set off on his Indian and covered the distance of 3,379 miles (5,438 kilometers) in 11 days and 11 hours. This completely crazy feat for the time was unanimously hailed by all the media.

Baker broke his own record in 1922. It was ultimately broken only three times in almost 14 years; the last holder being set in 1936 by Rody Rodenberg when on an Indian Scout did a time of 71 hours and 20 minutes. From 1936 to the end of the 1950s, despite numerous daring attempts and road conditions improving, no one had yet broken the record.

Until 1959... John Penton
John was an ordinary guy hailing from rural America. He lived in Ohio, rode motorbikes with his brothers on the family ranch and they all competed in local enduros.

1949 marked his first major event, entering the 500 Miles Jack Pine enduro and finishing 4th, blaming his heavy Harley Davidson machine. However, the following year he finished 2nd on his BSA B33. He showed distinct signs of promise and from then on John continued to win.

Any money he made from racing was meager and not enough to give him a decent lifestyle, so in 1950, aged 25, with the help of his brothers and the fame he'd gained, he started a motorcycle business.

Then in 1953 the Pentons and fellow riders formed a club, buying 38 acres west of Amherst, Ohio and carving out a race track. Their club, the Amherst Meadowlarks M.C. remains active to this day. He went on to compete, all across the USA, most notably in his favorite discipline, the long distance enduro, (now called rally-raid), notching up many victories.

One favorite anecdote says everything about his character. In 1958 he won the Ohio State Enduro riding his trusty NSU 175. So the story goes; without getting off his bike he headed straight to Atlanta to compete in the Stone Mountain Enduro, which he also won. Then he rode down to Florida, won the Alligator Enduro and finally rode back to Michigan, to win the famous Jack Pine Enduro.

That same year, 1958, he left for a trip to Mexico with his BSA B33. Riding back home, he made a bet with himself to get back to Ohio in one go. A personal challenge that he achieved. It was at this point that Ted, his brother, suggested attempting the Coast-to-Coast record.



John Penton on his original BMW R-69 that broke the Coast-to-Coast record. His outfit perfectly reflects the magical look of the American motorcyclists of the 1950s

In 1959 John Penton succeeded in breaking the Coast-to-Coast record he coveted so much in 52 hours 11 minutes (nearly 19 hours faster). His ride was his original, standard BMW R-69, the only modification being a larger petrol tank.

For the record, he was also the first to have his performance recorded by Western Union agents.

Following his performance, BMW USA used Penton and his record-breaking BMW bike in a number of its Stateside advertising campaigns.

The modern era of 'Coast to Coast' had begun.

John Penton didn't have much left to prove, but his nature kept him sharp and craving further adventures and success. The years from 1962 to 1970, saw him participating in the American enduro team, traveling worldwide to take part in ISDTs and other major off-road international events.

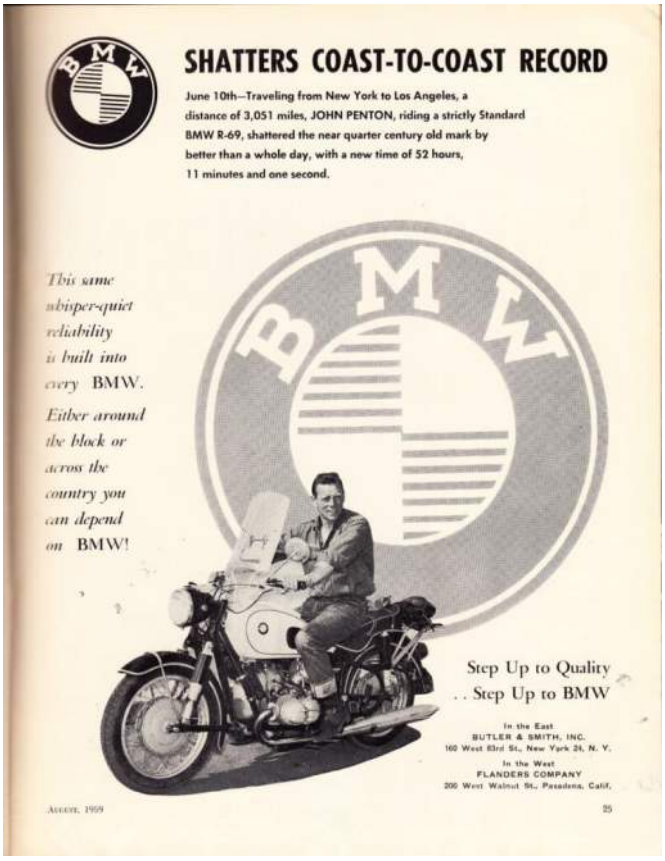
He was inducted into the A.M.A Hall of Fame in 1998.



1968 - Tibor Sarrossy
Almost ten years later, in the summer of 1968, after who knows how many unsuccessful attempts, a young 22 year-old student called Tibor Sarrossy crossed from New York to Los Angeles on his BMW R69S in 45 hours 41 minutes.

This giant of a man with the physique of a basketball player, equipped his machine with a magnificent Glaser fairing and additional handcrafted tanks placed on the luggage rack; as shown in this BMW advertisement where he poses on his record-breaking machine.

Upon arrival, Sarrossy said he'd only stopped four times during the 2,687 mile crossing and hadn't slept at all. The only incident to report, close to the finish, was when he felt faint and nearly passed out. For the record, he was the first to wear a rubber sleeve connected to a hosepipe to avoid time spent stopping to pee.





BMW took advantage of the records to promote the brand in numerous advertisements in the American press of the time. Left: John Penton. Right: Tibor Sarrossy

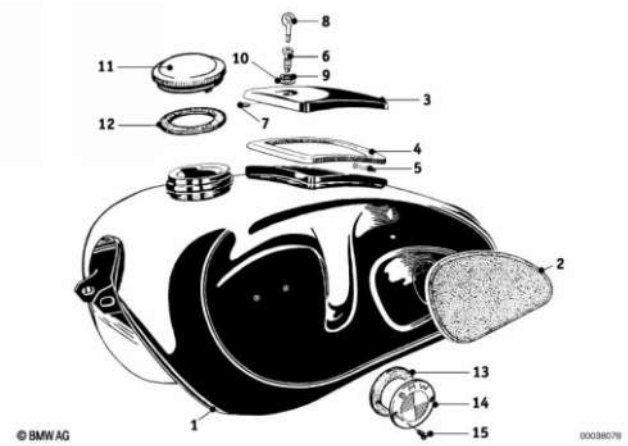
1983 - George Egloff
Once again, there's a large gap between Sarrossy's 1968 record and the next one, established in 1983. That year George Egloff set a new record of 42 hours on a Honda 6 cylinder 1000 CBX. However, there's very little evidence of this record and only three known photographs of George Egloff and his record-breaking machine. Interestingly though, he is reputed to be the first to have his performance validated by an invigilator, at the start, and again at the finish.

2015 - Carl Reese
Some 32 years later, more precisely August 2015, Carl Reese, on a BMW K1600, sets the record bar even higher with a time of 38 hours 48 minutes. It was shortly after this that, for safety reasons, the Cannonball was no longer officially recognized.

The Original Cannonball Run (and BMW)

NUTS & BOLTS

General Announcements & Information



END OF THE YEAR DINNER for 2026:

A huge thank you to Kristi for coordinating our end of the year meetup at Red Iguana. This will be a late lunch from 11:00am to 3:00 pm on Saturday the 13th.

This year Red Iguana 2 will be preparing an afternoon meal for the Beehive Beemers at their Private Event Space, the Red Tea Room.
The Red Tea Room is located behind the Red Iguana 2 (on the north) with parking and entrance off of 900 West.

One the menu: Chips, and Salsa, Guacamole Appetizer.
Steak and Chicken Fajitas, and an Enchilada Suizas.

$35 / person this includes 2 drink tickets
We need a final count / RSVP by Thursday December 4th (for the catering order and kitchen staff preparations)

NOTE: you must RSVP either by prepaying through the Beehive Beemer's webpage OR if you wish to pay at the event by emailing utahbeehivebeemers@gmail.com for you and your guest by the cutoff date of December 4th.

If paying at event (after RSVPing to email) please bring cash/venmo or check.
Credit cards will not be accepted.



BUSINESS AS USUAL

Membership Renewal

Club renewal membership can be obtained via the club's website: https://beehivebeemers.org/

Click on the “Join/Renew” tab, fill out the renewal information on the form and use PayPal for payment. You should receive a confirmation from the Treasurer.
Of course, you can always print and mail your membership renewals, along with a check, to our mailbox.

Beehive Beemers Motorcycle Club of Utah
P.O. Box 521683
Salt Lake City, UT 84152-1683

EUROSPORTS UTAH / BMW Motorcycles of UTAH

Eurosports Utah (formally Harrisons) generously offers a 10% discount to our club members on parts, accessories, and apparel.

Check out their ever expanding apparel and gift items. If there are licensed BMW items that you would like to see added to the sales floor, please let them know, as they would appreciate input from their customers.



Share your trips!

I am encouraging members to get involved by sharing their stories that I will publish in the Newsletters. Reach out to me about your trips and rides. Let me help share your adventures and photos with our members as well as those interested in joining our club.
(re: 2023 Spring Q/2 Quarterly for examples)

You can either write the story - or send me the bullet points and I'll be happy to create the narrative.

Things I know people like to see: route map, points of interest, and fun unique places to eat/drink/lodge.

December

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End of Year Gathering
11:00am -3:00pm

Red Iguana 2

RSVP ONLY via
https://beehivebeemers.org/

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly club meetings are the second Saturday of each month (unless noted otherwise). Recommendations are welcomed. Reminders and RSVPs will be emailed to members one week prior to breakfast/brunches.

Please note that event dates, locations, and times are subject to change. Any changes, additional information, and updates will be emailed to club members, updated to website, and announced in the monthly Newsletter sent by the 1st of every month.

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