

The Outlaws Ride Again! Tombstone '97



Alan Gruening

arriving a little behind schedule due to a fuel pump problem—quickly rectified by Wayne Baker and his emergency kit containing a 6 volt pump with regulator and all the plumbing for a fast exchange. Guess all that racing experience pays off.

Lunch, and a tune-up on another stumbling steed, then we were on to Bisbee and Tombstone. That evening the streets of the small western town were packed with 356's. Three groups of 15-25 hungry Outlaws sent chills down the spines of the cooks and waitresses as they packed three of town's finest restaurants. After chowing down, "Big Nose Kate's" was the spot for some liquid refreshment, music, dancing and a peek into what it might have been like 100 years ago; the locals still look and dress the part. Fortunately, no shoot-outs or hangings occurred before we parted, although a couple of backfires kept the locals on their toes.

By Mike Wroughton

Twenty nine brightly colored 356's converged on Tucson, the starting point of a driving tour to Tombstone. Just after high noon the city sounds were broken by that distinctive tone of 356's arriving alone or in groups. They

represented five states, which included Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Virginia. Yes, Mick (the flamingo man) Michelsen and his wife Dawn drove more than 1800 miles just to see Tombstone. Seems Dawn has seen the movie Tombstone more times than I have fingers and toes. She developed a crush for Val Kilmer and just had to go west and visit "The town that was too tough to die."

Registration and a wonderful warm-up reception, planned by Barb and Dennis Crowley, began as everyone swapped tales of their journey and concluded with a walk across the street to dinner.

Saturday at dawn we saw oil level checks, valve adjustments and final road prep being made before the drivers' meeting. First stop was San Xavier Mission,

which turned out to be just a few miles down the road (a computer mapping error demonstrated to the out-of-towners we keep it loose.) After a short off-course excursion for some, all were assembled at the mission to enjoy the historic beauty of the "White Dove of the Desert".

South to Patagonia and our lunch stop,



Top Left: Boa, are we having fun! Marie Carlson and Mike Wroughton

Top Right: Mick Michelsen drove all the way from Virginia in his trusty Flamingo-mobile. The pink guys were suitably "duded up" for a tour of the wild west.



Sunday's activities began before sun-up. The skies were clear and some of us arose to view the Comet Hale-Bopp, without the big city lights, at 5:30 am. Outside we went to view the truly spectacular sight—and what a sight we were too, in our PJs.

Directions to Tucson were dispensed, hand written (we don't need no stinking



computers!) 9:00 am brought our departure; twenty-plus 356's stampeding through the high desert and the roller coaster undulations of the road.

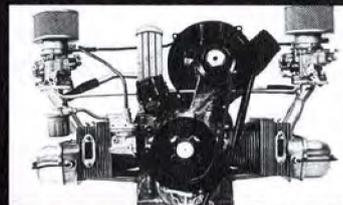
Arriving for brunch at the home of Dick Ecelbarger, we admired his La Carrera Panamerica Coupe poised in front of the house. Racing videos played as we all soaked in the beautiful desert setting and drank Mimosas. More stories of the weekend were exchanged over the culinary delights prepared by our hostess, Laura. Afternoon came

OK, fellas; hands in pockets, everybody smile. The usual suspects ham it up for the camera: from left, Mike Wroughton, Bob Fitzpatrick, Chuck House and Dennis "Boots" Crowley.

and we realized a weekend filled with great cars, nice people and the old west was coming to a close. We all unhitched our trusty mounts and rode into the sunset with fond memories, until the Outlaws ride again.



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