



SMOKEY'S CORNER #6

Al Greaves

A Trip to Kamloops

One day my first Wife said to me "My Mother was telling me about when she lived in Kamloops, they used to go to a small park beside the Train Station and sleep on the grass at night.

It was a lot cooler than being indoors in the summer." "Oh" says I. She continues, "Why don't we take the motorcycle and go up there and sleep out, it should be FUN!" "No" says I. She wouldn't stop carrying on about going, so one day I said "O.K., O.K., you win, get on the bike."

Off we went on my 1958 650 twin A.J.S., time, about 1962, gas was about 37 cents per gallon! 500 miles to Kamloops and back, cost, at 55 m.p.g. about \$3.00. By the time we got to Cache Creek she says "I want to go home, this is too uncomfortable." My reply? "WE ARE GOING TO KAMLOOPS". We arrive about midnight, find the train station, and the park next to it. The ride was tiring, so we lay down on the grass with our heads to a large shrub and off to dreamland.

Next thing I know, she's shaking me awake, in a loud whisper says "There's someone sneaking up on us around the bush. Sure enough some guy, looked like a bum was on his hands and knees about four feet away from us! I eye him and he eyes us not making a move. We get up and leave and ride around looking for some other place to sleep. We find a small park down near the river, park the bike, find a bush and fall asleep. Next thing I know, we are awakened by a loud roar, here comes a four-wheeler right up on the grass! Two guys jump out, now what? It's the R.C.M.P.! "What are you doing here?" "Sleeping, Officer". "Where are you from?" "The Coast, Officer." "Be out of here at Daybreak." "Yes Sir!" Back to sleep.

Next thing I know, we are awakened by rain, rain? No, the automatic sprinkler system has come on! We stumble out to the parking lot, daybreak is at hand, so we doze for a while on the park bench. The wife says "I'm hungry" I consult our financial situation, 65 cents! We need this to get on our way. The wife says "we can't afford to eat and don't have enough money for gas to get home either, what are we going to do!?" "Don't worry", says I, "get on the bike and I'll show you." Just out of town we stop, park the bike on the roadside. I say "You check this side of the road for pop bottles and I'll check the other side," in no time we have a pile of bottles, I stuff 27 bottles in my jacket! That's right 27, she carries the rest. First store we come to takes them all at two cents each, except for the Coke bottles, for some reason up there they pay five cents, wow! what a haul! From this we buy four apples, two for breakfast and two for lunch! We collect more bottles and cash them in at Cache Creek (no pun). This gives us enough gas money to get back home and then some.

We stop at Boston Bar for gas, I pay and walk towards the bike, my heart sinks -- the back tire is flat! and I mean FLAT!! I check it out, discover a screw right in the middle of the tread! An older woman had pumped our gas, I went to her and told her my problem. She said, "My husband is out on a call and won't be back for quite a while." My heart sinks farther. She continues "If you can fix it yourself go ahead!" - off with the wheel (thanks to the quick detachable feature) and I have it repaired in no time.

With my heart in my mouth (how much will she charge me?) I ask her "how much?" She says what did you use? I reply "one patch". She thinks for a second and says, "35 cents will do!" I pay her and off we go, no further problems.

Strangely the wife never asks to go anywhere again, I guess there's no understanding women!