



BIT BY THE MOTORCYCLE BUG! My name is John Calicchio. I was raised in southern California, in the most exciting time; the fabulous 60s. One day in 1965 while walking to high school, I saw a guy come flying down Fairview Road doing a wheelie on a Triumph 650 Bonneville. There is nothing more stunning than watching a guy wheeling a motorcycle at a 45-degree angle with even throttle. That was it; I got bit big-time by the motorcycle bug. Within 4-months, I would be eligible for my learner's permit and could legally ride a motorcycle to school. While looking for a small bike to get started with, I ran across an ad in the local Pennysaver magazine which said "fix 14 rental Honda 50s and take one for yourself". Well, that was it. Answering the ad, I got the job and fixed the 14 bikes. When finished, the owner said "take that one; it's the best of the bunch". Thanking the owner, I rode off on a low-mileage, 1960 Honda C-100 step-thru (girl's bike) Cub. It was a beautiful summer day and although not having a motorcycle license, I just couldn't resist a short detour to the beach. While riding up Newport Blvd, two tough biker looking guys rode up next to me on either side. With a big smile on my face, I thought "Wow, I could be part of a cool motorcycle gang". While tanked out at 30-mph, one of the guys looked over and swiftly kicked me over where I proceeded to tumble down to the ground suffering minor bleeding and scrapes. OK, I get the picture and proceeded to limp back home with my tail tucked between my legs. Time was moving slowly, but finally I got my learners permit followed up with my driver's license. One day while working on my bike along with my friend's bikes, I figured it's about time to open up a motorcycle shop in my parent's garage and call it John's Cycles.

What followed was a lucky string of events that would contour my future in the motorcycle business. In 1968, I went to work for Award Motors in Costa Mesa as a Honda mechanic. We carried the lines of Honda, Yamaha, Triumph and Bultaco. After twisting wrenches for awhile, the Triumph mechanic, Gary Thomas, asked me to tune-up a 1967 Bonneville. I said OK. After carefully studying the bike, I found that the crankshaft had a 360-degree configuration just like the Honda Dreams that I was used to working on. Further investigation uncovered some weird anomalies. I said to Gary "What in the heck is this with the ignition setup; 2 sets of points with a 360 crank" Weird. Gary smiled and brought over his degree wheel, buzz-box & pointer (a piece of wire) and showed me the ropes. I timed the Bonne to 38 degrees BTDC, adjusted the valves, changed the oils, adjusted cables, adjusted both chains, lubed all pivots, checked the tire pressure, etc. When I went on the test ride (after Gary reminded me that Triumph's shift on the other side), it was love at first ride! Holy Crap, the bike had a silky, powerful delivery, a sound that was irresistible and handling like my Bultaco; it bit me real hard. While Honda's were good reliable machines, they just didn't have the personality of the British bikes. It was time to say "Goodbye Honda & Hello Triumph".

In 1969, I was appointed service manager. One day a guy came in with his 1968 Triumph Bonneville which had the primary chain tossed through the left crankcase. Even though the bike only had 3k miles, the warranty was voided because no service work was ever done. Consequently, the guy bought a new '69 Bonneville and traded in his '68 for which I immediately bought for \$225 bucks. I welded up and dressed the DS case, added a new primary chain and bingo.

By 1970, it was time to open up my own shop. I located a 3000 sq. ft. building in Costa Mesa at 2255 Harbor Blvd. Because of my need for speed, I renamed my little venture "John's Racing Cycles" and began racing flat-track and TT. Racing was definitely in my blood.

The business grew quickly and by 1971 I added the line of Bultaco and in 1972 Suzuki. My love for Triumphs was strong and while racing a Triumph 750, I just had to have the Triumph dealership. I asked the owner of Award Motors if he would sell me his dealership but, no dice. Frustrated, but not beaten, in 1975, I sold John's Racing Cycles and founded JRC Engineering; a company that manufactured hard-to-get parts for Triumph Motorcycles. With my engineering and machinist background, we began producing engine parts like clutch pushrods, thrust washers, and later all aluminum connecting rods. 2-years later, I bought a new 8000 sq. ft. building housing the parts inventory along with an R&D department and motorcycle restoration area.

Needing an inventory control system that would more effectively manage my business, I turned to Algorithm Computers in Costa Mesa for a solution. They sold me a turn-key system which unfortunately never worked; they also quickly went out of business. With operating hardware and no software, I did what I had to do and began learning how to program. Fortunately, it came naturally to me and I was able to build a suite of programs called Signature Series. Coupling the software with a line of Secure Workstations and file servers completed the package which is still in use today.

With JRC running on auto-pilot, I found myself getting more involved with computer programming and hardware design. Because of this, I felt compelled to reach out for a new challenge. The emerging computer explosion satisfied this. In 1988, Bill Getty purchased my baby; JRC Engineering and I left the motorcycle industry to pursue the computer business.

I've now turned back full circle to my first love; **Restoring British Motorcycles...**