

# **RETREADS® History & Origins**

## **THE NAME "RETREADS®"**

The name RETREADS® comes from the name of vehicle tires which were initially used during World War II. Retreading (putting new treads on used tires) was a process that permitted many civilians during the war years to continue to use their vehicles when their tires wore out, as new tires were very difficult, if not impossible to get during those rationing years. Similarly, many of us began our motorcycling years back when we were young. When we got married and started raising a family, many of us had no time or money available for such luxuries as motorcycles. However, once the children were well on their own, and free time and more money were available, our thoughts of motorcycles returned and we were itching to get back on the bikes we loved so much. So in a way, we were "Retreaded".

## **ORIGIN OF THE RETREADS®**

The "RETREADS®Motorcycle Club" was conceived and founded in 1969 by five men through a letters column in a motorcyclist magazine. George Spidell, a Navy Chief Petty Officer living in El Cajon, California, had read a letter to the editor in a national motorcycle publication. The comments of the letter are long forgotten, but the writer's signature stirred George's curiosity. It was signed "Sheep Dip". George wrote to the magazine with the request that they forward his response letter to Sheep Dip. Instead, they published his letter in its entirety with an explanation that they were not a clearing house for letter writers. But they did publish George's letter! Sheep Dip never did answer, but five other motorcycle riders did: Bob House of Topeka KS; "Kanney" Brown of PA; Baurgaurity Laughland of London, England; Jack LeCain of British Columbia; and Ludwig Speidel of Quebec, Canada. George made copies of those letters and sent them to the other five. Then he copied the answers to those and sent them out again. Before long it was a regular thing for the six geographically separated riders to write each other. George continued copying the letters and circulating them to the entire group.

In time, the group agreed they should form a correspondence motorcycle club. An inquiry to the AMA for a charter brought back the information they would have to have 10 members to qualify.

Once again George appealed to the letters column of the motorcycle press. Soon, ten kindred spirits applied for their AMA Charter. The RETREADS® became a formal club in July, 1970. Their monthly newsletter was called the "RECAP" - another name given retread tires.