



**Visit Germany!
Arizona Man goes
Black Forest.**



It had been two years since I was in Germany. It had also been two years of looking forward to riding an INDIAN with my friends in Germany. I have been home in Arizona for a few weeks now and the ride was great.

The tour started with a trip to Andi Höttemann's home for supper on a Thursday evening. I brought my two sons to Germany this time and we had the opportunity to meet Andi's new son Jakob and Andi's fiancée Kathrin. During the evening we looked at a map of the route we would be taking. I was somewhat sad that I had to wait till Monday to leave on the tour since I still had three more days of Photokina to attend. (I build cameras for a living.)

On Sunday evening Stefan Kupfer picked me up at the Köln Bahnhof, took me home to his flat where I spent a delightful evening with Stefan and Steffi. The next morning, as soon as Andi and Dirk arrived, we were off on the tour. Sometimes I don't quite understand what I am being told because of my lack of German language skills. I thought Stefan told me that the left side tank was full of gas. It was not! After riding a few kilometers the Chief stopped running. I tried starting it but things did not work well. I did not check the gas because I thought the tank was full. After several minutes of not being able to get the Chief started I looked in the tank. It was empty! I switched tanks, kicked it over and it started right up. I hoped that this was not an omen for things to come.

It was not long before we were at the Rhine. We followed along the river a good part of the day. It was beautiful. It was also cold. I didn't mind because I was having so much fun riding with my friends. I came better prepared this time. I brought warmer clothes and my own rain suit. We rode into France late in the afternoon. I didn't know just when we went from Germany to France since there was no border station. At about dusk we took a ferry ride and were back in Germany. By the end of the day we arrived in Baden Baden. We stayed there with Klaus, Kerstin and Björn (ANDI PLEASE FIX THESE NAMES IF THEY ARE NOT CORRECT). I met Klaus and Kerstin on my last tour in Germany two years ago. They have a beautiful house. We shared a good meal and conversation. I must admit I didn't understand much of the discussion. Andi filled me in later.

It really doesn't matter that I didn't understand what was being said since it is just great being with friends. It was nice to have a hot shower, too. The next day was spent sight-seeing in Baden Baden. It was a warm and sunny day which we spent riding bicycles around. Klaus also showed me his INDIAN motorcycles. What a treat!

The next morning Klaus said he was going to ride with us up into the Black Forest. It was raining lightly and again was very cold. Klaus decided not to come. We rode through the forest. As we climbed the mountains the temperatures dropped. (At home a cold winter day is a high temperature of 10 degrees). It never rained enough for me to get my rain suit out. That was good. We rode through the area where the hurricane Lothar came through and knocked down all the trees. It was quite a sight. As we rode out of the mountains we entered into a valley with several saw mills. In the afternoon we arrived at the border of Switzerland. Dirk did all the talking to the border guards and they waved us through. I think that he told them we were all from Germany. It was good to know that I had my passport in my pocket. By the end of the day we were at a small village in Switzerland. We stopped at a house that was about 500 years old. It was the home of the Walthards. They have a vineyard and two INDIANS. I was welcomed into their home and treated like an old friend. I had a wonderful time sitting around the kitchen table listening to everyone catch up with each other.

The next morning we went to visit Josi Rieser's place. It is amazing to me that there is a man in Switzerland who makes a living restoring INDIAN motorcycles. I keep thinking "How can there be enough motorcycles built in the United States, by a company that went out of business in 1953, to keep anybody in Europe busy?" The shop was interesting. I always enjoy looking at INDIANS. In the afternoon we went to a museum that had a photography exhibit. I explained to Andi about photographic processes as we walked through the museum. Before heading back to Petra and Tommy's home we went to the Rhine Falls. Truly amazing. So much water going over the falls was hard to comprehend. After a good night's sleep we headed back to Baden Baden and Klaus's home. It rained a bit, but again it was not enough to get my rain suit out.

Saturday morning we headed to the Veterama. I was looking forward to this. We call these things "Swap meets" in Arizona. I was hoping to find a bargain (by the way I am looking for a hardtail frame and fork of the late 30's). I suspected that there was no way since the meet started on Friday and all of the good stuff would probably be gone. I was correct at least as far as INDIAN items. I did get a tail light lens for my 1961 Mercedes as well as a generator. I bought a 5 liter gas can to carry with me when I tour on my INDIAN. In Arizona it is possible to find stretches of road where the towns are so far apart you do not have enough gas in the motorcycle to make it. Veterama was fun and I got to see some people that I had met two years ago when I was touring in Germany with Stefan, Andi, and Dirk.

Sunday morning we left Baden Baden. It was at this point that I realized I had a problem. On Friday when we rode my gloves got wet. When we arrived at Klaus's I left the gloves lying on the front of the Chief. In Arizona they would have dried overnight. In Germany they do not! I should have taken them inside the house. My gloves were damp when we left and as we headed into the mountains it got cold. By the time we were high in the mountains it was about 3 or 4 degrees. My gloves were not dry and it was foggy. My hands were now cold and the fog was getting worse. At times

you could not see 5 meters. It was a wild ride. It was not raining but it was like riding in the rain. I was running into rain drops because I was in the clouds! I decided to put on my rain pants. It may have been cold but I would not have traded what I was doing for anything. I was having fun! On this day we made one more stop. It was at one of the saw mills we saw earlier in the week. They let us come inside and see how everything worked. It was fascinating. Before the day was over we rode along the Rhine again. The scenery always makes it hard for me to keep my eyes on the road. About 6:00 P.M. we arrived back in Köln. My tour of Germany for this year was over.

Now I will look forward to the next tour in two more years. Some things did change this time. I left one of my sons in Germany. He is studying for a PhD in Physics at the University of Bonn. I now have another reason to come to Germany. The next time I come I will bring my wife. We will be visiting our son in Bonn, and my wife will get to meet some of the wonderful INDIAN friends I have made in Germany.

Finally, I hope that some day Stefan, Steffi, Andi, Kathrin, Jakob, and Dirk will get a chance to visit Arizona. Maybe they can come and take a tour. Keith Canham, Mesa, Arizona



