

## ELEVATING THE HALL OF FAME

New Exhibit Expansion Is Only The Beginning

By Rob Dingman

In addition to protecting the future of motorcycling, the AMA also has the responsibility to preserve the history of motorcycling for tens of millions of motorcyclists. What began as a vision to create a world-class national museum of motorcycling resulted in the creation of the American Motorcycle Heritage Foundation (AMHF) in 1982, and the opening in August 1990 of what was then called the Motorcycle Heritage Museum, located at the AMA headquarters building, then in Westerville, Ohio.

In order to grow the museum beyond the roughly 7,000 square feet available to it in the Westerville offices, former AMA President Ed Youngblood moved the Association headquarters to its location in Pickerington, Ohio, where the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame occupies a dedicated 26,000-square-foot building. This would not have been possible were it not for the tens of thousands of dollars donated by AMA members and others to support the foundation.

As president of the AMA, I feel a sense of responsibility to continue the work of those before me to preserve the heritage of motorcycling and the AMA and, wherever possible, improve upon what has been done.

Just as we have refocused the AMA mission and the pages of this magazine on the people of motorcycling, so too have we refocused the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame on the incredible individuals inducted into its hallowed halls. The original philosophy of the foundation was to regularly change its major exhibits, which resulted in a succession of a number of great displays. The Hall of Fame, however, was in need of an upgrade.

Until now, the Hall of Fame occupied a portion of the lower level of the facility. To visitors, the Hall of Fame could have more appropriately been called the "Wall of Fame." That's because the plaques dedicated to each Hall of Fame inductee were velcroed to a carpeted wall adjacent to a crowded display of motorcycles associated with Hall of Fame members. There simply was not adequate space for the inductees and their bikes to be truly appreciated by visitors.

Fast forward to July 2010. After a great deal of work undertaken by our dedicated staff, the Hall of Fame now occupies the entire main exhibit hall, and visitors are led through a series of displays that culminate in a new 360-degree Hall of Fame Gallery. Hall of Famers' plaques are affixed to the walls of this gallery in-the-round, and the



centerpiece is a remarkable statue called "Glory Days."

This Steve Posson-cast sculpture was commissioned and donated in 1990 by Mike and Margaret Wilson, AMA Life Members, AMHF Board Members and Hall of Famers themselves. It is a three-quarter life-size bronze statue depicting former motorcycle racer, AMA race official and Hall of Famer Jim Davis on a 1919 Indian. Glory Days has played a special role in the development of the Hall of Fame. It served as the inspiration for the AMHF logo, and is a recognized icon that represents the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame today. It is only fitting that this sculpture occupy the prominent spot it does in the Hall of Fame Gallery.

This recent elevation of the Hall of Fame inductees is only the beginning. We trust that the improvements we've made will generate more interest and financial support for the Hall of Fame so that further enhancements can be made. For 20 years, the AMA has shouldered the responsibility for building, growing and funding the Hall of Fame. To make the Hall of Fame a truly world-class destination, the AMA can't do it alone. We need the support of the entire motorcycling community. Each of you can help. To learn how, please visit [MotorcycleMuseum.org](http://MotorcycleMuseum.org) > Support.

Better yet, come visit the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame in Pickerington, Ohio, and see for yourself the tremendous improvements being made to honor the legacy of motorcycling. You'll be glad you did. And you might just ride away with an inspiration of your own.

*Rob Dingman is the AMA's president and CEO.*