



▲ This pair of 1972 SL Motosports—an SL125 (left) and SL175 (right)—foreshadowed Honda’s nearly indestructible four-stroke dual-sport and off-road bikes. In the background is a 1973 SL350 with its 21-inch front wheel and polished aluminum fenders. “It’s hard to find original SL Motosports because they were trashed,” Maloney said. “They were dirt bikes and few survived intact.”

Daniel Piker

HONDA HEAVEN IN TACOMA

Brown Maloney Has Been Collecting Since The '80s

By Peter terHorst

There is a remarkable motorcycle collection on display at America’s Car Museum in Tacoma, Wash.

The stunning, 165,000-square-foot museum opened its doors in 2012 to showcase the privately

owned automobile collection of Harold and Nancy LeMay. The assemblage of Honda motorcycles owned by AMA member Brown M. Maloney is the museum’s first motorcycle exhibit.

Designated an ACM Master Collector, Maloney, 62, is a lifelong enthusiast who

lives in Sequim, Wash., on the Olympic Peninsula, where he owns and operates three radio stations. He has been collecting Hondas since his late 30s and the quality of his machines is impeccable.

American Motorcyclist interviewed

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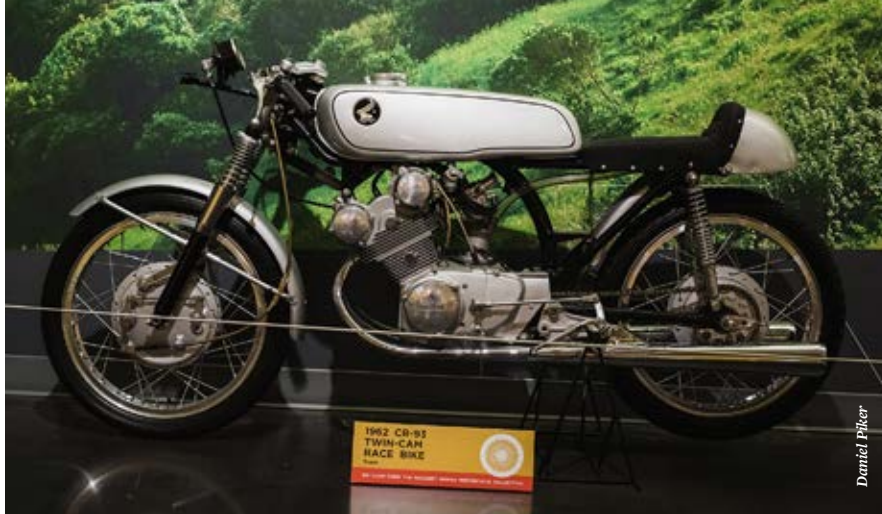
Maloney at the ACM exhibit to learn more about the man (see sidebar) and the incredible Hondas that are on public



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▲ **TOP:** The 1962 CR93 was a limited-production racer that produced nearly 20 horsepower and redlined over 13,000 rpm with a top speed of 100 mph. The 125cc DOHC air-cooled two-cylinder is a work of art and featured a 360-degree crankshaft and a five-speed gearbox. A double leading shoe front drum brake provided stopping power. A very rare roadgoing version of the CR93 is also in display. “By any measure, these are the rarest bikes here,” Maloney said. “The CR93 race bike with its open pipes is the loudest bike I’ve ever heard.”

▲ **BOTTOM:** The Elsinores—the 1973 CR250M (left) and the 1974 CR125M (right)—were completely new motocross designs featuring Honda’s first purpose-built two-stroke motocross engines. Each bike featured an aluminum fuel tank and magnesium side cases. The popularity of the Elsinore series was boosted when Hall of Famer Gary Jones won the AMA 250 National Motocross Championship in 1973.

display for the first time.

Sit back and soak in the gorgeous details of these machines in the following photographs. Better yet, ride (or fly) to Tacoma to see them for yourself. The exhibit closes after Labor Day Weekend.

AM: Why is the collection a single marque?

BMM: I think it was my sense of understanding the history [of Honda] and my comfort level was really high. Without exception, you just get them out, put a little oil in the cylinders, a

battery in them, crank them by hand a few times and they just start right up.

AM: With literally millions of used Hondas in the marketplace, how did you select bikes for purchase?

BMM: It was the consistency I wanted, I wanted them to be just the top 1 and 2 percenters. And just about every bike here was bought before the internet, when you called people up and talked to them. You’d have a conversation, and you were buying the story and the person, as well.

One of the things that was also very

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FEATURING THE HONDA MOTORCYCLE COLLECTION OF BROWN MALONEY



▲ LEFT: This 1958 JC-58 125 Benly touring bike produced 9.5 horsepower at 7,500 rpm from its 125cc, OHV air-cooled single.

▲ CENTER: Before building motorcycles, Soichiro Honda strapped engines to bicycles to meet the growing demand for transportation in the post-war years. This 1952 Cub Type F “Cubby” used a 50cc air-cooled, two-stroke single-cylinder engine. This very early example of Honda history is almost never seen in the U.S.

▲ RIGHT: The graceful 1957 ME250 Dream was a classy touring machine built around a 246cc single overhead cam, air-cooled single producing 13 horsepower. The leading link front suspension was similar to European designs at the time.



▲ Only 200 to 300 Rickman CR750s are estimated to have been built. Distributed by AMA Motorcycle Hall of Famer Craig Vetter in the United States, the CB750-based package included a nickel-plated frame and swingarm, Betor fork, Girling shocks and Borrani alloy rims with Lockheed disc brakes, with fiberglass fairing, gas tank, seat and tail section and front fender. This motorcycle, like others on display, is fully original.



▲ Having the original tires was an important clue for Maloney when assembling his collection over the years. It was essential that a motorcycle was stock, had tight-to-no-use and very low miles. This theme is visible throughout the collection. “Almost everything here that’s original has the original tires,” he said.

important, I would ask them if the bike had the original tires. That gave credibility that it was a 500- or 1,000-mile original bike, and also quite likely, it just hadn’t been fitted with anything afterward.

AM: Honda made so many models over the years. What bikes did you look for?

BMM: I have a high watermark with what I collected. I just didn’t want to collect anything, just to say “OK, I filled that slot.” This is what makes all these bikes reasonably scarce, because everything in here is the top, the best of the best, or as near as. If it was restored, it had to be spot on.

AM: Who has been visiting the exhibit?

BMM: A lot of people are riding Harleys now, but so many people started on small bikes, because that’s where they got their legs, their comfort zone, if

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◀ ABOUT THE COLLECTOR

Brown M. Maloney's motorcycle story starts off like many: His first two-wheeled adventure was on a Briggs and Stratton minibike.

"Then, of course, Honda came out with the mini trail and my dad bought one," Maloney said.

"You could start it with your foot, like the big boys, and it had three gears even though it was an automatic. It just didn't break and it started every time."

And so began Maloney's lifelong passion for Hondas.

"When I was in my early 30s, I bought a couple of Hondas, actually from my own newspaper [classifieds]," he said. "And when I was in my late 30s, I had a chance to buy an existing collection of about 14 or 15 top notch bikes. So, I came into the hobby with a pretty good understanding of bikes and what was in the different eras."

Daniel Piker



▲ Maloney's collection of 50cc Mini Trails spans 14 models sold in the U.S., from the 1968 Z50A to the Z50R, which was replaced by the XR50R in 2000. Also on display in the exhibit are seven 50cc "Monkey" special edition bikes, originally sold only in Japan.

Daniel Piker

you will.

That's where they got their confidence and, whether you run a backhoe or you ride a motorcycle, confidence brings experience and maturity.

AM: What are your favorite bikes?

BMM: I pretty much ride off road. But when I ride on road, I prefer a scrambler. I just love the high pipes.

Of the street [only] bikes,

personally, I like the 350 four. I can throw my legs around it. The seat height is just a little bit lower.

It's a typical four cylinder that just loves to rev. Keep me at seven [thousand rpm] as long as you want, but if you want to go nine, it doesn't matter!"

Peter terHorst is an AMA Charter Life Member from Port Townsend, Wash.

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