

SANDY'S AMAZING ROAD TRIP!

Report & Photos by: Sandy Kennedy

I decided to make the four hour drive to Byron, Michigan in mid October to see what is considered one of the largest collections of racing outboard motors in the world – The Mark Suter Museum Open House and Swap Meet.

The Suter collection did not disappoint. His Museum contains approx. 180 vintage outboard racing motors from 1930 – 1970 and an extensive collection of racing memorabilia. Racing brands like Quincy and Hubbell were well represented and many of the motors featured racing pipes or Stacks. The display was pristine and several of his rare motors had detailed descriptions of who raced them, when they raced and championships they won.

To round out the Museum, his wife Elaine has her own collection of low horsepower outboard motors and other historically significant motors under the same roof. The two diverse themes made for a very entertaining day. It took me over four hours to complete my guided tour and I felt like I hadn't seen everything by the time I had left.

The second day of the road trip was a visit to the shop of outboard motor "Wheeler – Dealer", B.J Pawlaczyk in Au Gres, Michigan. B.J's place was the polar opposite of Mark Suter's Museum. Mark's place was extremely well organized and told a story of one man's passion for collecting and preserving vintage outboard motors.



Three German Konig Race Motors



Stacks, Stacks & more Stacks. Amazing!



An overview of a portion of Mark Suter's overwhelming Collection of Racing Outboards.

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BJ's place was a random pile of outboard motor parts and you had the feeling of being at an outboard motor "wrecking yard". BJ's passion is to restore antique outboard motors and sell them to collectors that do not want grease under their fingernails (ie – Sandy Kennedy type people). For BJ it is important to have a large stockpile of parts so that he, and his two sons, can complete their restoration projects quickly and not have to go looking elsewhere for the parts they need. BJ's place consisted of a two-story shop for polishing and painting, a large storage barn with outboard parts piled to the rafters and two shipping containers full of partially complete motors and more parts.

There were outboard motor carcasses piled outside on the front lawn. It couldn't have been two more diverse days, the "Pristine Collector" vs the "picker/restorer/reseller".

It also reconfirmed my belief that there are many ways to be involved with antique outboard motors and to show your passion for the hobby. Some people just want to restore the motors, some prefer to run their motors while others just want to display their treasures. And some want to be buyers & sellers. The beauty is that all are welcome in our amazing hobby. Nobody judges which way is best. The main goal is to enjoy your way & have a great deal of fun doing it.



Parts Motors or Restoration candidates, they are all here.



A rare Aerothrust Air Cooled Twin awaiting restoration at BJ's.



Part of BJ's extensive Outboard "wrecking yard" filled with trash & treasures.