



Toby Morriss **1974 - 2010**

On February 20, 2010, Toby Morriss took part in a trial and then a cross-country event at Aonia Pass MX. He won both his classes. The following evening, he fell victim to a hit and run motorist while stationary at a traffic signal. Even though he was left unconscious and bleeding on the side of the road, because he was wearing full protective clothing, his main injuries were two fractured ribs, chipped vertebrae in his neck, and a crushing fracture in his left forearm that required surgery. The surgery was successful, but sadly Toby died from an

apparent pulmonary embolism exactly one week after the accident.

Toby, a Hurricane Katrina refugee, arrived in Columbia, South Carolina seeking shelter and liked it so much he stayed. He was quickly immersed in the European Motorcycle Club, made many new friends, and shortly after he arrived made the first of many visits to Aonia Pass MX.

In life, Toby was a photographer, teacher, mechanic, inventor, a true friend, and to many people a wise and thoughtful surrogate younger brother. Toby preferred to be known as a Bricoleur; a term first used by Levi Strauss meaning to describe a person who uses a few non-specialized tools for a wide variety of purposes, and indeed, Toby's talents were many and extended to manufacturing special tools; know as "Toby Tools," for friends with a special need.

It is fair to say that Toby lived life differently to most people. He didn't drink alcohol, didn't smoke, and was a vegetarian. He would take the scenic route (usually the long way) home just so he could enjoy the scenery along the way, and never tired of trying to get others to do the same thing.

His friends in the motorcycle community will remember him as a passionate motorcycle enthusiast to such an extent that he didn't own a car and travelled almost exclusively by motorcycle. He particularly enjoyed British bikes, and having been given a non-working Pre-65 BSA B40 engine he sought out a frame and began the task of building himself a trials mount. True to Toby's free spirit, the finished bikes distinguishing feature is a set of Greeves leading link forks. The tank too had the Toby touch. Finding a tank with a large dent in one side, rather than send it away for re-furbishing, Toby made a matching dent in the other side and with the careful use of a ball-peen hammer, gave it a dappled finish. A front number-plate was fashioned to have the same look.

For those who knew him, Toby's death has left a huge gap in their lives. We will miss his solid judgment, his sage advice, his willingness to listen, and his ability to put the most sensitive and complex things into perspective.

Written by Michael C. Taylor for the Toby Morriss Memorial Trail, May 15, 2010 at Aonia Pass, GA © 2010.