

# Honda homage!

Opening soon: the Dave Silver Spares Museum of Honda Motorcycles.  
John Nutting took a sneaky peek!

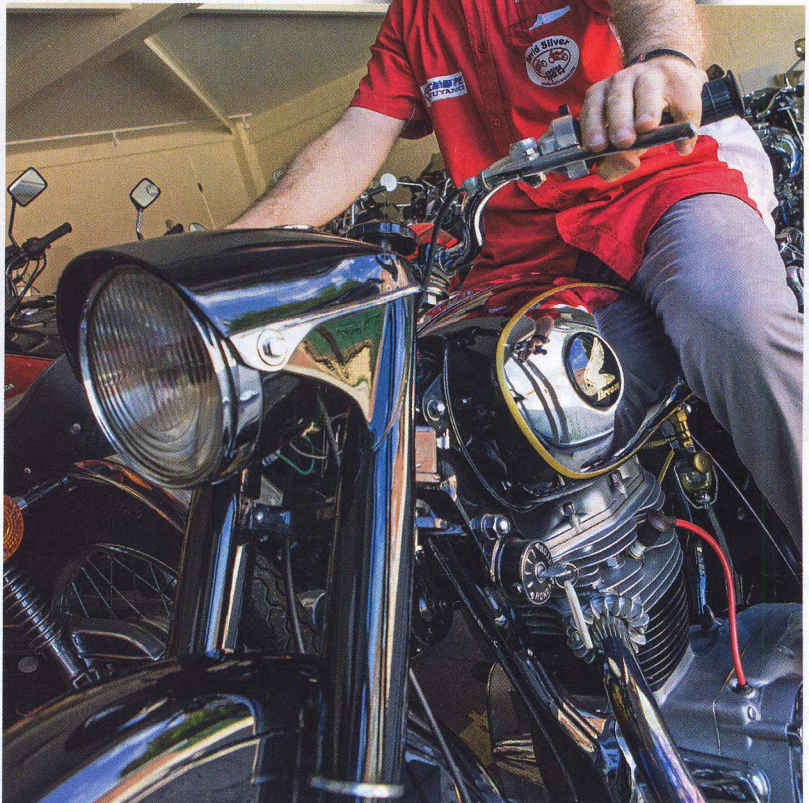


**A** new venture for spares supremo David Silver will be a remarkable museum of Honda motorcycles that even founder Soichiro Honda himself might have been proud.

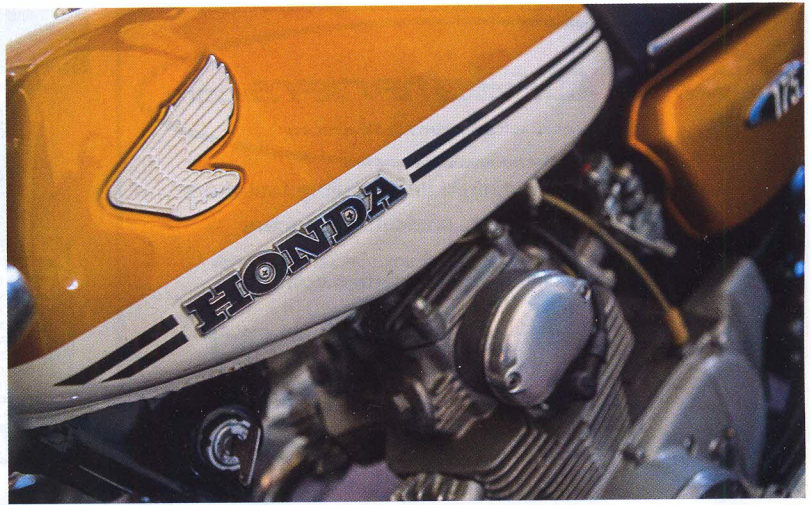
While the Honda Collection Hall in Japan contains restored examples of almost every machine the factory produced, Silver's museum will mostly provide a rare snapshot of many unrestored – but almost unused – machines dating from the late 1960s to the 80s, as well as restored Hondas from the 1950s that have rarely been seen.

The plan is to have the museum completed before the end of the year in a new building adjacent to the offices and warehouse of David Silver Spares at Leiston in Suffolk. Many of the machines originated from a collection in the US once owned by Bob Logue, a Honda dealer in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

It was acquired after a long period of negotiations by Silver's US spares business run by his brother-in-law David Currie in Hanover, Pennsylvania, and brought to the UK. Dave Silver says: "Over a period of 35 years, Bob would take Hondas in part exchange, many with just a few hundred miles on them, dust them off and put them in his own collection."







So many of them are almost as if they had come from the showroom floor. One or two are not on the average classic bike fan's wish list. "My favourite," says Silver, "is a 1969 CD175A K3 twin with frame number 20000122. It's so original, and with a number that low must have been made on the first day of production."

There are several CB750 fours (both ohc and dohc), CB500 fours, CX and CB500 twins, CB72 production racers, CB250 and 350 twins, trail bikes such as the XL250 Motorsport, many lightweights such as the CB100 and even an unmolested mint NT650 Hawk GT – the US version of the sporty vee-twin better known in the UK as the Bros.

These will be augmented by Dave's own collection of immaculate machines, pride of place going to a number of models from the earliest days of Honda, including a Cub F-type powered bicycle, a 1954 90cc Benly J, a handful of Dream 250cc singles from the mid-1950s and priceless gems such as a 125cc CYB92 twin. Dave Silver's US business continues to make amazing finds from dealerships that have closed, and after their owners have died and left the premises fixed in time. One such was in Covington, Virginia, which Silver had been aware of for a number of years, but couldn't persuade the son of the dealer to sell up. Eventually the son relented and the legacy is a mountain of literature, mementoes, manuals, paraphernalia and some 60 to 70 machines that were in various conditions, from a new Z50 Xmas special and a TLR200 Reflex trials bike, C77 twins, several CB550 fours to a Gold Wing 1100.

"I'm taking a big gamble and renting a 50 foot truck for \$7000 to ship them one way to the next Bonhams auction in Las Vegas," says Silver. "I've not thought yet what to do if some don't sell. Perhaps I'll just leave them."

The origins of David Silver Spares go back to 1987 when Dave says he started buying up unwanted parts from Honda dealers and selling the bits piece by piece through the weekly bike paper. "Back then it was very much a discount bargain-basement operation," he says.

"I worked out there were parts distributors in the UK and they had to sit on a huge amount of stock. If you were a Honda dealer then you had to go to a parts



distributor, not Honda direct, so they had to service all their customers and keep huge volumes of stock. Very quickly – when new models came out, seats and tanks that insurers were not prepared to cover with the cost of write offs and things – there were lots of parts that were obsolete. They were still available; everything was back then but at a hell of a price exceeding the value of the bike. So I would just buy all the stock for a few pence on the pound. Then I'd work out what I had, discard all the gears, get all the cycle parts, make up a list and put it in the press. Ironically parts now such as 750K2 tanks are selling at three times whatever a Honda one ever cost."

Now David Silver Spares has a comprehensive warehouse that is augmented by a sales office with teams responding to calls from customers looking for elusive parts. Only occasionally do they arrive in person. Another warehouse is dedicated to storing machines that have been acquired for parts – including the lines of CB400 Fours. **cm**

■ The David Silver Spares Museum collection is still being added to, so if you have an early Honda that you would like to sell, get in contact with Dave on 01728 833030 or by email: [david.silver@davidssilver.com](mailto:david.silver@davidssilver.com)

