

Caveat Emptor: More Experiences

Contributed by BMWVMCA NEWS
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It was with great interest that I read the recent article in the VMCA News concerning old BMWs being sold in a condition not reported accurately by the seller.

Several years ago, I purchased a supposedly restored 1938 R66 BMW from a "reputable" authorized BMW Motorcycle dealer who also sells antique and classic BMW Motorcycles.

The R66 was offered to me as a fully restored machine. It was two thousand dollars above then current blue book retail value.

My first mistake was to not take someone with me who had intimate knowledge of this particular model. Had the bike offered been an R12 or an R75WH, I would have spotted the now glaring wrong parts on the bike.

I can save you some reading time by listing the parts on the bike that were original BMW. The frame, engine case, wheels, fuel tank and rear drive were original. That's it! I had about \$2500 worth of correct BMW parts in which I had invested a shocking \$12,000!

I chose not to confront the dealer who sold me this bike, because I believe he was just as fooled by the mostly Russian M72 parts and other poorly made East European reproduction items that made up about 80% of this bike.

With the help of knowledgeable friends from as far away as Norway, Sweden, Germany and various parts of the US, we accumulated the critical engine components such as crankshaft, camshaft, pistons, timing chest and front cover, distributor and generator,, front forks, headlight, speedometer, transmission...I think you get the picture.

With my friends' help, this bad investment is turning into a superb running and accurate representation of an original R66.

This reminds me of the most important part of our old BMW hobby, the friendship we share with our fellows, a friendship that helps us turn lemons into lemonade.

Cheers,
John Harper